National Institute for the Deaf

Higher Certificate Programme for Educators of the Deaf and Persons with Hearing Loss

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

June 2014

# Background

The Deaf and persons with hearing loss have the same human rights as their hearing counterparts to access equitable and quality education and training opportunities that enable them to acquire the competences they need to take their rightful place in a largely hearing world in which the increasingly widespread use of technology is creating new ways of living and working. Unfortunately Deaf and learners with hearing loss are usually at a disadvantage, as educators typically do not receive adequate professional development to respond appropriately to their specialised learning needs and challenges. (Storbeck, 1998)

There are many Deaf and persons with hearing loss who are working as teaching assistants in classrooms in schools for the Deaf who lack formal qualifications and hence the opportunity to access further formal training and career progression opportunities. The majority of these practitioners, for a variety of reasons, do not have the necessary qualifications to access formal teacher education programmes at Diploma and Degree level and few of these programmes make specific provision for the Deaf. With the introduction of sign language into public schooling there will be need to significantly expand the pool of practitioners able to assist with the teaching of the Deaf.

In this document the term Deaf is used inclusively to denote Deaf and persons with hearing loss.

# National and International Comparability

A desktop review was carried out in order to compare educator training programmes specifically developed for Deaf students both nationally and internationally. The research included programmes offered by higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa, United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA) and Australia. Information pertaining to the country, institution, qualification and admission requirements was collected. [*Appendix 1: National and International Comparability,
Table 1 – List of Qualifications and Admission Requirements*].

The research revealed that although a number of HEIs offer programmes specifically targeted at developing competency in the training of Deaf students, the vast majority of courses offered are unattainable to most Deaf persons. A significant number of programmes offered are at a post graduate and specialised level and thus the minimum admission requirement is a Bachelor Degree. Some institutions specify that applicants should have qualified teaching status and have a minimum of two years teaching experience. This is a considerable challenge for the majority of Deaf students, as research into the acquisition of reading and writing skills in Deaf students has revealed low levels of literacy[[1]](#footnote-1).

The lowest admission requirement is a senior certificate with endorsement (university exemption) and relates to two courses offered by the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS). Even this relatively low admission requirement could potentially be a barrier for Deaf students in South Africa. Of the students who do reach Grade 12 level, most do not qualify for eventual matriculation exemption as they do not have a ‘second official language subject qualification’. This ‘hearing based’ admission criterion complicates access to tertiary education for Deaf students and underscores the need for accessible entry requirements.

The Programme for Educators of the Deaf and persons with hearing loss will be developed as an NQF Level 5 Higher Certificate Programme with accessible entry-level requirements and will offer prospective students a springboard into a career in education and training of the Deaf. The diagram shows how the proposed Higher Certificate (Education) Programme links with the Education Qualification Pathway. The Higher Certificate (Education) Programme will be referred to as the
HCE in this document.

Diagram 1: HCE is an alternative access pathway into Education

The design and development of the HCE is informed by requisite entry requirements for the Grade R Diploma or the BEd Degree and includes the necessary scaffolding and support to enable students to progress and achieve the required competences. In addition it may be possible for students to be credited for 1 or 2 modules that overlap with modules in the two specified programmes.

# Rationale for Programme

[[2]](#footnote-2)The rationale for the HCE is to enable students with potential who do not meet the minimum university diploma/degree admission criteria to:

* Follow an alternative access pathway to enter accredited diploma and degree courses in teacher education.
* Improve current practices in working with the Deaf.
* Acquire Open Distance and eLearning skills (ODeL), higher education language and learning skills, information management skills and basic teaching skills to support ongoing professional development.

The HCE provides a first stepping-stone towards becoming a qualified teacher. For those who are interested, it provides a Learning Pathway into the Diploma or Degree programmes that meet the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (RSA 2011). It provides an NQF Level 5 qualification for the many teaching assistants in Deaf schools and strengthens their competence and confidence to work with learners and enable them to achieve success.

Students who have successfully completed the HCE would be in a strong position to support the introduction of sign language into SA public schools in ways that will also develop their own language and academic literacy skills. Successful completion of the HCE may open opportunities for further study and/or for further work and/or an enhanced community contribution.

# Key Programme Outcomes

The HCE exit level outcomes are based on a sub-set of the BEd exit level outcomes. By the end of the HCE students are expected to have acquired the following competences:

1. Demonstrate an introductory level knowledge of South African Sign Language Linguistics.
2. Demonstrate an introductory knowledge of who their learners will be, how they learn, and understand the need to gauge their learners’ individual needs in order to tailor their teaching and assessment practices accordingly.
3. Communicate effectively in general, as well as in relation to their subject(s).
4. Demonstrate NQF Level 5 appropriate competence in language and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.
5. Demonstrate an introductory knowledge of one or more aspects of the school curriculum.
6. Demonstrate ability to identify learning or social problems.
7. Demonstrate a positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct themselves in a manner that befits, enhances and develops the teaching profession.
8. Reflect critically, in increasingly theoretically informed ways and in conjunction with their community of peers on their own practice in order to constantly improve and adapt it to evolving circumstances.

# Intended Target Group

The HCE is primarily intended to offer the Deaf an opportunity to enter the field of education and training. [[3]](#footnote-3)Candidates for the HCE would be:

* Teaching assistants at the NID College and schools for the Deaf. Teaching assistants are usually Deaf persons who are competent or fluent in South African Sign Language and who show a particular aptitude to provide assistance to learners involved in diverse learning programmes. They have successfully completed an NQF Level 4 programme and can use participation in the Programme as a stepping-stone to a possible career in teaching and/or training.
* Students at NID who have completed an NQF Level 4 Vocational programme and who are interested in an education and training career.
* Persons who are already involved in working with the Deaf and who would be interested in a programme that develops their competences as educators.

In addition, the HCE would offer a unique professional development opportunity to vocational and occupational educators at the NID College in Worcester, teachers in South African schools for the Deaf, teachers in inclusive education schools, and teachers in Education of Learners with Special Needs (ELSEN) schools. This group of educators comprises mainly hearing persons.

# Programme Access

The [[4]](#footnote-4)NID team has endorsed open access to the HCE with a view to widening participation. By open access we mean Deaf and Persons with hearing loss and hearing persons who are interested in the HCE can register. Prospective students are expected to provide evidence of:

* A completed Grade 12, Level 4 Occupational Training Programme, or equivalent.
* An ability to read, write, and understand English at an NQF level 4.
* Fluency in South African Sign Language (SASL) is highly recommended but basic competence will be a pre-requisite. Assessment of sign language skills is included in the selection process.

A selection and ability screening process should be implemented to:

* enable access to the HCE for persons who do not have an NQF Level 4 qualification but who have proven experience of working with the Deaf and individuals who wish to embark on a career path in education and training of the Deaf;
* determine the suitability of candidates for participating successfully in the HCE;
* identify pre-programme support and/or specified short skills programmes for candidates who are not yet ready to participate in the HCE. For example, applicants who lack sufficient South African Sign Language competence will be referred to a provider where this competence can be gained prior to re-application.

# Programme Design Features

The design of the HCE is informed by principles that support experiential, reflective, self-directed and collaborative learning. Learning from experience is a natural process in which we learn by doing. The focus in experiential learning is on individuals finding out things first-hand, reflecting on what they are discovering, and in the process building their knowledge base. Over the years theorists have tried to explain what happens during experiential learning and many models and methods exist. David Kolb, a prominent proponent of experiential learning, views experiential learning as a continuous process grounded in experience. His Experiential Learning Model (ELM) comprises four interrelated elements: concrete experience, observation of and reflection on that experience, formation of abstract concepts based on reflection, testing the new concepts. And then the process is repeated. Kolb recognizes that experience alone is not necessarily educative and that reflection is a crucial element of experiential learning:

In order to gain genuine knowledge from an experience, certain abilities are required:

* The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience;
* The learner must be able to reflect on the experience;
* The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience; and
* The learner must possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience. (Kolb,1984)

A consistent focus in the different experiential learning models and methods developed over time is the central place of reflection. An approach to reflection developed by Boud and Walker highlights three phases of reflection.

1. Preparation for experiential events, where it is important to focus on the learner, the learning milieu and the skills and strategies employed in reflection;
2. Reflection during an experiential activity, with its phases of noticing and intervening; and
3. Reflection after the event, involving the individual in returning to experience, attending to feelings, and re-evaluating the experience. (Boud, Walker, 1990 cited in Andresen, Boud, & Cohen)

Experiential learning models and methods continue to be adapted and remain a helpful framework to inform the design of training and development interventions in a range of contexts. Active participation, individual critical reflection, collaborative sharing, and reflections on experiences are key features of learning interventions that have a high likelihood of success for learners. The HCE design includes features of experiential and collaborative learning as shown in Diagram 2.

Diagram 2: HCE Programme design at a glance

## Activity driven learning

Activities are central to the learning process and students are involved in diverse activities linked to learning and teaching practices. Key activities include:

* Navigational activities on the LMS.
* Investigative activities to engage with selected readings on learning and teaching strategies, blended learning, the needs of learners and how best to facilitate learning for Deaf learners, use of technology in creating interactive learning environments, facilitation methods, role of the teacher as facilitator of learning.
* Observation of how teachers in the classroom facilitate learning.
* Evaluation of videotaped learning sessions.
* Learning journal activities linked to practice teaching sessions.
* Skills practice activities, e.g. planning learning sessions, facilitating learning sessions, grading assessment tasks, commenting on assessment tasks, compiling a year plan.
* Reflective and evaluative activities to identify insights gained, level of skills acquired and progress made.
* Communication activities, e.g. team work, presentations, share ideas on the LMS Forum.
* Compilation of an e-Portfolio to demonstrate planning skills, facilitation competence, ability to grade assessment tasks and provide students with constructive feedback, and interventions that show evidence of ability to identify learners’ problems and provide appropriate and supportive responses.

## Guidance and Support

The Learning Pathway on the LMS is a guidance and support mechanism that enables students to navigate the HCE learning environment comprising online, offline and contact learning activities linked to diverse learning resources. The Learning Pathway includes:

* an overview of the modules;
* detailed descriptions of what students will learn in each module, supporting guidelines and lists of selected resources and weblinks;
* an assessment guide with descriptions of the assessment activities;
* details and descriptions of the types of support available to students, e.g. start-up orientation workshop, online and offline support, regular contact sessions, support during practice teaching.

## Content and Experience

Content and experience is presented as a menu of diverse sources of information with which students engage. It includes carefully selected primary resources such as core readings, articles, inputs by experts in Deaf education and training, video clips showing how to facilitate learning and how to use technology with learners. Supplementary resources are indicated as weblinks and students are also encouraged to compile a list of sources of information they find particularly helpful. The students’ own experience and the experience of teachers, facilitators, and mentors with whom students engage are rich sources of information which students reflect on and learn from.

## Reflection and Demonstration

Students are involved in reflective activities during the year, and they will use a learning journal to record their reflections. They are expected to demonstrate knowledge about learning and teaching methods and their level of relevant skills, e.g. planning and mediating learning sessions, use of rubrics to assess and grade assessment tasks, preparing a year plan. Demonstration may take the form of presentations, skills practice activities which are videotaped, and compilation of a portfolio.

### Communication and Collaboration

Students can communicate with their facilitator and peers in multiple ways:

* Regular, structured face-to-face sessions enable students to experience the benefits of engaging with their facilitator and peers and deepen their understanding of what they are learning. They can work collaboratively on specified team activities.
* The discussion forum on the LMS offers students opportunities to share their ideas both online and offline around specified themes.
* Email enables students to send the facilitator and each other messages at any time.
* Skype is a powerful way of communicating online in real time.
* Interactions with an internal and possibly an external mentor encourages reflective behaviour and helps students to broaden their views about their role as teacher and facilitator of learning.

# Programme Learning and Teaching Strategies

The delivery of the HCE follows a resource based, blended learning approach. The intention is to create a learning environment that allows students to experience the approach and methods they can use with their learners. The main methods included in the Programme are: workshops, technology supported learning, resource based learning, independent learning, team work, community of practice activities, teaching practice activities, mentoring, a learning journal, and an e-Portfolio. The programme incorporates principles and approaches that enable Deaf students to develop the competencies they need to achieve success.

To meet the diverse demands of their students, teachers should integrate, across all teaching situations and instruction, central themes in their planning that will help deaf students gain the language and experiential background that they need for accessing and learning the curriculum. Four such themes are:

* Creating authentic experiences
* Integrating vocabulary development
* Creating opportunities for self-expression
* Providing deaf role models. (Stewart, Kluwin 2001)

Students will not only experience these approaches as they progress in the Programme; they will also include them in their planning and facilitation of learning sessions in their practice teaching activities.

## Start-up Workshop

The purpose of the start-up workshop is to introduce students to the HCE, the LMS, how to participate in a blended learning environment that combines supported e-learning and face-to-face sessions, how to manage an assessment portfolio, how the teaching practice activities are organized and what support they can expect from facilitators.

Workshops remain a popular method through which people develop their knowledge and vocational competence. Referring to workshops,

[[5]](#footnote-5)Rowntree maintains that ‘they are not a vehicle for the transmission of information but for the thinking through of ideas or practising of competencies and for the sharing of individualised feedback.’

Workshops that have been successful in helping people to develop specific skills and that enable people to acquire competence and confidence are those that have paid attention to the following factors:

* The timing of the workshop coincided with the immediate needs of staff;
* Direct work relevance that makes the transfer to real work situations easier;
* Workshops that were followed by immediate on-the-job practice resulted in consolidation of skills.

Workshops as isolated events have limited impact. When they are planned as part of a holistic learning and teaching strategy as in the HCE, it is possible to optimise their effectiveness.

## Technology supported learning

The students will experience [[6]](#footnote-6)technology supported learning by engaging with different kinds of activities on the LMS and on the Internet. They log in to the LMS where they follow the HCE Learning Pathway which guides them to the activities, suggested readings and resources, and the individual learning journal in which students record their learning experiences. They will experience online and offline communication with their facilitators and peers on the forum, Skype and email.

## Facilitator-led contact sessions

The technology supported learning activities are complemented with face-to-face activities in the contact sessions where students are able to participate in facilitator-led discussions and reflections on emerging issues and difficulties, work in teams to find solutions to common problems, and offer each other support.

## Resource based learning

Resource-based learning has become the norm in the information age as our ability to access multiple sources of information continues to increase. Students will engage with a selection of relevant resources linked to key learning and assessment activities designed as part of an accessible online Learning Pathway. Wherever possible, suitable Open Education Resources (OER) are identified, adapted as necessary, and used. Students will have access to three main categories of resources:

* Primary resources are available on the LMS and include, for example, core readings, videos, teleconferencing with selected experts.
* Secondary resources are listed as supplementary information.
* Online resources: Students search for their own resources on the Internet as the need arises. They build up their own set of supportive resources which they can share with their peers.

The use of multiple resources encourages students to deepen their understanding of their learners and how they can improve their response to and support of them. Appropriate support is embedded in the Learning Pathway across modules to strengthen the students’ ability to learn from a variety of resources.

## Independent learning

Independent or self directed learning is what most people do anyway mostly in an informal and self directed way. There is usually a high level of motivation on the part of the learner because of the strong linkage to real work needs. Independent learning activities are included on the LMS and during contact sessions and students are expected and supported to continue to take responsibility for improving their learning and teaching practice skills.

## Working in teams

Team activities are included in online and offline learning activities and particularly during contact sessions. They provide multiple opportunities for students to collaborate and collectively develop their insights and skills. Team work is a central component of the Community of Practice Forum that students participate in for the duration of the Programme. Working collaboratively provides students with much needed peer support and the motivation to continue along the Learning Pathway in order to achieve success.

## Community of practice

People who share a common interest have been sharing information and learning together informally for years. In recent times, the term community of practice was coined and the concept is being adopted by individuals and organisations across diverse contexts as a powerful mechanism for building the capacity of the members individually and collectively. In a nutshell:

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people.

Members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other.

They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice.

(Wenger, Trayner)

A vibrant community of practice offers multiple opportunities for students to share their experiences, engage in critical reflection on their experiences, seek solutions to problems, support and energize one another, and help to sustain motivation levels. Students can forge contacts with other students as well as internal and external educators. Hopefully this experience will continue beyond the Programme and afford students a powerful network of support in the future.

## Teaching practice

During the course of the HCE each student is expected to complete 4 teaching practice assignments that require the application of her or his total knowledge base – applied competence – with all modules contributing to a well-rounded, balanced and well-informed professional educator.

A portfolio completed over all four teaching practice placements is a visual tool to illustrate a student’s professional and personal growth over the period and to enhance her or his reflective competence as an emerging professional teacher.

## Mentoring

The term mentoring is used broadly to include coaching. Mentoring by mentors who are able to provide appropriate support to an individual can be a helpful way of building capacity. The locus of control in the relationship usually resides with the learner. The mentor is the critical friend who listens and questions to encourage the learner to deepen her or his understanding of the issues, to broaden perspective, to reflect critically on practice, and to provide constructive feedback. The students will experience different kinds of mentoring:

* During the orientation and contact sessions the facilitators offer mentoring in the form of critical reflection and constructive feedback.
* During the teaching practice sessions an appointed mentor provides critical feedback and coaching.
* During the course of the Programme students can engage individually with the facilitator or an appointed mentor as the need arises.

## Learning journal

A learning journal is not just a record of learning experiences. It focuses on ongoing issues over time and the main purpose is to reflect on experiences and actions with a view to learning from them. The digital learning journal which students are encouraged to maintain is a tool that encourages reflective and critical learning behaviour. The learning journal as a written and/or video record of experiences and insights at key points is a valuable resource that can be shared with other students in the Community of Practice Forum.

### e-Portfolio

The e-Portfolio is a tool that shows a record of the student’s performance at key moments throughout the year. Evidence could include: record of participation in workshops and contact sessions, year plan, learning session plans, adaptations of learning activities to contextualise learning and support learners, additional learning activities to support learners, practice teaching reports, graded assessment tasks, feedback comments on assessment, reflections from the learning journal.

### Creating authentic experiences

By authentic learning experiences we mean experiences that have real-life meaning to students and learners. The focus is on providing students with new and diverse opportunities to learn to construct and verbalize patterns and sequences that help them develop cognitive constructs and concepts. For example, in their teaching practice activities students will learn that the facilitation of a learning session requires attention to three interlinking phases: planning the learning session, facilitating learning, evaluating the learning session.

### Integrating vocabulary development

Various strategies are used to help students build and expand their vocabulary, e.g.

* Words of key concepts and terms are introduced as parts of related systems and explanations are given to help students understand the relationships among related words.
* Words of key concepts and terms are shown in context as the context defines their meaning.
* Use is made of relevant visual representation of key concepts and terms.
* Students are encouraged to use new words in different ways.

### Creating opportunities for self-expression

Self-expression is an essential part of the learning process as it encourages students to practice their verbal skills and gives them an opportunity to define and refine their ideas. Students give expression to their ideas in a variety of ways: learning activities stimulate engagement with relevant resources and nudge students to formulate written and signed responses; sharing ideas with peers in forum discussions and team activities; giving expression to ideas in presentations; teaching practice activities.

### Providing Deaf role models

Role models present students with positive images of what they can achieve and how they can go about achieving success. At crucial points in the Programme students are introduced to Deaf teacher education and training role models to inspire and motivate them.

# Programme Structure

The Higher Certificate (Education) comprises 8 fundamental modules, which are compulsory. The NQF Level 5 modules are each allocated 15 credits and have a combined total of 120 credits.

### Overview of Modules

Module 2 is a cross cutting module that provides guidelines for the teaching practice sessions that run throughout the programme.



Diagram 3: Overview of modules

The following table shows the focus of each of the 8 modules.

| **[[7]](#footnote-7)Module Title**  | **Focus of the module.** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Understanding the Needs of Deaf Learners.
 | This module includes an orientation to Deaf culture, Deaf identity, medical issues, understanding the psychosocial impact on language development, the politics of Deafness, other challenges such as dyslexia, emotional barriers etc. |
| 1. Teaching Practice.
 | This module provides guidelines for the teaching practice sessions that run throughout the programme. It also includes guidelines towards the development of a professional e-Portfolio of evidence of the student’s growing competence as an educator. |
| 1. Language across the Curriculum.
 | This module explores the role that language development plays in learning achievement across the curriculum. It provides opportunities for students to develop their own written English + Sign Language skills and those of their learners, and to better understand how these two languages can support one another to aid meaningful learning. |
| 1. Being a Teacher of the Deaf and Persons with hearing loss.
 | This module addresses questions like what do I need to know and be able to do? Why am I teaching in this context? It will explore professional ethics; implications of the inclusion agenda; and the educator’s integrated roles of knowledge worker, manager and carer.  |
| 1. Learning and Teaching Strategies.
 | This module explores the changing nature of classroom teaching generally and the implications for working with the Deaf in particular. It includes guidelines for managing the classroom and learning resources, planning, use of space, managing discipline, administration, group work, culture, differentiated teaching approaches; and working with support services and other stakeholders. |
| 1. Assessing Learners.
 | This module provides a general overview of the role of assessment in the learning process as well as contemporary approaches. It then narrows down to consider how these general approaches can be modified to suit the assessment of the Deaf in particular. |
| 1. Integrating ICTs into Learning and Teaching.
 | This module explores the wide range of technologies available to support planning, teaching and assessment processes and helps students to make informed decisions about how to select appropriate technologies and use them in appropriate ways. |
| 1. Working in a Hearing World.
 | This module recognises that the Deaf need to be able to survive and thrive in a world that assumes everybody can hear. It explores strategies for coping with the challenges and opportunities that present themselves and for developing supportive mechanisms such as communities of learning and practice. |

### Overview of Time Allocation per Semester

The following table reflects the types of learning activities and % of learning time per semester.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of Learning Activities**  | **% Learning Time** | **Details**  |
| Lectures (face to face, limited interaction or technologically mediated. | 0 |  |
| Tutorials: individual groups of 30 or fewer. | 30% | 40h orientation to Programme. 60h (12 x 5h) maintenance and consolidation per semester.  |
| Syndicate groups. | 0 |  |
| Practical workplace experience (experiential learning/work-based learning etc.) | 13%  | 40h per semester: structured teaching practice experience, observation, teaching assistance, team teaching, and independent teaching. |
| Independent self-study of standard texts and references (study guides, books, journal articles). | 20%  | 60h per semester. |
| Independent self-study of specially prepared materials (case studies, multi-media, study guides etc.) | 37% [130h per semester]. |  |
| Other  | 0 |  |
| * Students receive study materials on completion of registration.
* Students attend a 1-week orientation to the Programme.
* The bulk of the teaching and learning interaction is electronically mediated. The platform allows for email communication, asynchronous discussion forums, access to digital copies of specifically developed learning resources, and submission and return of assignments.
* Students participate in fortnightly contact sessions at the main or any of the satellite campuses. A schedule of discussion topics is included in student study materials.
 |

### Programme Timeline

The table below shows a semester timeline of learning and assessment activities including contact sessions. Students study 2 modules per semester and participate in six contact sessions per module.

Diagram 4: Timeline of learning and assessment activities for a semester

# Assessment

The [[8]](#footnote-8)methods of assessment support the student’s understanding of key learning and teaching principles and practice. The focus is on helping students to implement in practice what they are learning and to learn from their practice. Assessment is continuous and the students will keep a record of evidence of their teaching practice in their e-portfolio. Items included in the e-portfolio are: examples of student learning session plans; examples of successful learning activities with analytical commentary; examples of learning activities that were not successful with analytical commentary; examples of assessment tasks; examples of student graded assessment tasks; reflection on student assessment results; and reflections on own performance and practice in a learning journal.

Each module in the HCE typically comprises eight formative assessment tasks linked to face-to-face contact sessions, online discussions and/or classroom practice counting for 50% of the final module mark. The formative assessment tasks can be flexibly configured: they can be a series of four sub-tasks linked to a specific assignment or they can be individual tasks.

Each module in the Higher Certificate also involves a [[9]](#footnote-9)proctored summative assessment task of a consolidating nature linked to face-to-face contact sessions, online discussions and/or classroom practice counting for 50% of the final module mark.

A combination of both written English and South African Sign Language evidence of competence will be required for all assessment tasks. This accommodation removes unnecessary barriers and offers students a fair chance of demonstrating their developing competences.

The ongoing portfolio of evidence constitutes an additional requirement aimed at helping students to see the programme more holistically; as a basis for ongoing further professional reflection and development; and as the basis for engagement with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) for those who pursue further formal studies in teacher education programmes recognised for employment and registration as qualified teachers.

Although each module in the qualification is assessed independently, all modules model the development of a prospective teacher as a reflective practitioner. This involves engaging students in an iterative process of reflection on questions such as the following: What should I do and why? What did I do and why? What will I do differently next time and why? The answers to these questions are captured in an e-portfolio of evidence of competence that is developed across the duration of the Programme.

# Programme Delivery Mode

The HCE uses a [[10]](#footnote-10)supported e-learning mode that offers prospective students the flexibility of learning in their own space and time and enables them to integrate their studies with the demands of their work and personal responsibilities. The supported e-learning mode offers a blended learning approach that combines digitally supported learning with appropriate face-to-face support provided by trained facilitators. This mode of delivery is characterized by:

### A well-designed online Learning Pathway linked to appropriate resources available on the Canvas Learner Management System

The students use their own devices and Internet connections to engage with the Learning Pathway on the Canvas LMS and interact with their facilitator and peers online and offline. The following tools for managing and promoting learning are integrated on the LMS:

* Learning Pathway management;
* Resource management;
* User logging and tracking;
* Assessment management;
* Communication tools;
* Video integration;
* Assessment and rubrics;
* Facilitator journaling;
* Student e-Portfolio management.

Students can use their devices and Internet connectivity to access the online Learning Pathway and their facilitators and peers at times that suit them. Well trained facilitators are available to interact with students online and offline. [*Refer to Appendix 2: Overview of Technology Infra-structure and Capacity to deliver the HCE.*]

### Decentralized student support system to be implemented in phases

Approximately 30% of the notional learning hours for the Programme take the form of face-to-face contact support at an accessible support centre, which enables students and facilitators to interact using South African Sign Language (SASL).

The students are able to participate in a structured set of contact sessions in each module with a specified facilitator and peers in selected locations or sites. The face-to-face interactions offer students cooperative learning experiences and the support they need to progress in the Programme. At the curriculum framework workshop held at NID in Worcester on 27 March, it was agreed that NID would employ a phased approach to offering the Programme to enable NID to build the necessary infra-structure and capacity. The phase Programme Delivery Model could be implemented as follows:

### Phase 1

The focus is on a small group of participants who are located in and around Worcester. Such a group of about 20 - 30 persons would be comprised of:

* Teaching assistants in the College and De La Bat School (Deaf).
* NID college students who have completed a Level 4 Vocational Qualification and who are interested in a career in education and training (Deaf).
* Staff teaching at NID and De La Bat school (Deaf and hearing).

The principles of a decentralized student support system would be implemented in one context. It is critical at this stage to develop a student support model that can be scaled to other sites and not fall into the trap of drifting into what is easy in the short-term. Year one affords NID the opportunity to learn what is involved in setting up a student support system and delivering the Programme within a manageable context.

### Phase Two

The student support system is expanded to incorporate 3 - 4 decentralized sites. The challenge in Year 2 is to implement programme delivery and student support that worked at NID to selected sites further afield. The student support sites are organized in conjunction with local schools or organizations. NID would be responsible for establishing and coordinating the support provided in these sites.

### Phase Three

NID consolidates the delivery of the programme and the decentralized student support system and explores partnerships with other providers in order to scale the HCE to national provision.

The benefits of the supported e-Learning mode are:

* Up to date core digital learning resources are accessible on a learner management system (or a CD/DVD if connectivity is poor).
* Some learning resources can be printed for ease of portability if needed.
* Students and facilitators have immediate access to any additional resources they may need as they progress in the programme.
* A stimulating and supportive Learning Pathway is designed to enable students to study on their own with adequate support built in.
* The flexible format of the Programme aids equal opportunities for Deaf and persons with hearing loss and hearing students as diverse needs can be accommodated and responded to.
* External expert knowledge and support is available to students as needed.
* A high degree of interactivity is possible between facilitators and students through email, Skype discussions, and discussion forums.
* A high potential for creating communities of practice that include students on the programme and members from diverse contexts nationally and internationally.
* The learner management system makes it easy to:
	+ Respond immediately to students by giving feedback on assessment tasks that students can access easily.
	+ Keep a record of student progress, which facilitators and students can access.
* The costs of creating a technology supported learning environment are not necessarily lower than used in setting up a face-to-face learning environment. The costs associated with the delivery of the Programme are differently apportioned and money does not need to be spent on accommodation which is a huge expense item in a face-to-face learning context. Instead the focus is on establishing and maintaining a technology infra-structure which gives students the opportunity to engage with carefully designed learning materials online, participate in a range of interactive activities with facilitators and peers online and offline, and participate in selected face-to-face contact sessions.

NID is responsible for developing and implementing the Programme delivery strategy over a series of phases and for engaging with potential partners with a view to expanded provision and appropriate articulation. DKSS is only contracted to develop the learning programme to be delivered by NID in Phase One.

Partnerships with selected other providers, including University Colleges of Education, Universities of Technology, TVET Collegs and new Community Colleges, will be explored progressively as a means both towards expanded provision and articulation.

# Accreditation

The Programme would be a new qualification and registered as a ‘Higher Certificate’ at NQF Level 5.

“*This is an entry-level higher education qualification. The qualification is primarily vocational, with a strong industry-oriented focus. The qualification also serves to provide students with the basic introductory knowledge, cognitive and conceptual tools and practical techniques for higher education studies in their chosen field of study. It emphasises selected general principles together with more specific procedures and their application. This qualification signifies that the student has attained a basic level of higher education knowledge and competence in a particular field or occupation and is capable of applying such knowledge and competence in an occupation or role in the workplace. The Higher Certificate typically includes a simulated work experience or work integrated learning (WIL) component.”* [Purpose and Characteristics of a Higher Certificate; The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework as revised January 2013 (p21)]

With a Higher Education Certificate, assessment is on the basis of exit level outcomes and not unit standards. Working with exit level outcomes has the advantage of enabling an integrated approach to teaching, learning, and assessment.

There is some uncertainty in the sector at the moment regarding the accreditation of Level 5 Higher Certificates. At one point it was thought that these might be accredited through the QCTO and its constituent SETAs but the QCTO has placed a moratorium on the accreditation of new qualifications due to the already existing backlog. Also the recent White Paper opens the possibility of TVET providers offering Level 5 and 6 qualifications even after the current National Higher Diplomas are phased out or replaced with new equivalents. The most likely accreditation pathway in the short term is therefore likely to be:

1. Application to the DHET for approval for NID to offer the Higher Certificate within the mandate of its current registration.
2. Application through the CHE’s online system for accreditation of the Higher Certificate.
3. Registration by SAQA of the Higher Certificate on the NQF.
4. Formation of partnership agreements to offer the accredited Programme nationally (such partnerships will be needed given that face-to-face contact will always be a key component of the Programme design).

As noted during the workshop held in Worcester on 27 and 28 March 2014, Unisa might in time be an appropriate partner for provision of the HCE but will be unlikely to consider articulation of the proposed HCE with its new Programme Qualifications Mix (PQM) until after 2017, as its primary focus in the period 2014-2016 is the redevelopment of its core teacher education programmes.

NID is responsible for researching the process of accrediting the HCE Programme and exploring articulation with the new teacher education qualifications registered by other providers in line with the new Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (RSA 2011).

## CHE approved criteria for delivery of the HCE

As preparation for the envisaged CHE accreditation process, NID will need to start developing written positions on the following issues (including links to appropriate supporting policy documents, reports, budgets etc.)

### Criterion 1: Programme design

*The programme**is consonant with the institution’s mission, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, meets national requirements, the needs of students and other stakeholders, and is intellectually credible. It is designed coherently and articulates well with other relevant programmes, where possible.*

### Criterion 2: Student recruitment, admission and selection

*Recruitment documentation informs potential students of the programme accurately and sufficiently, and admission adheres to current legislation. Admission and selection of students are commensurate with the programme’s academic requirements, within a framework of widened access and equity. The number of students selected takes into account the programme’s intended learning outcomes, its capacity to offer good quality education and the needs of the particular profession (in the case of professional and vocational programmes).*

### Criteria 3 and 4 on staffing (it is useful to consider these together)

*Academic staff responsible for the programme is suitably qualified, has sufficient relevant experience and teaching competence, and their assessment competence and research profile are adequate for the nature and level of the programme. The institution and/or other recognised agencies contracted by the institution provide opportunities for academic staff members to enhance their competences and to support their professional growth and development.*

*The academic and support staff complement is of sufficient size and seniority for the nature and field of the programme and the size of the student body to ensure that all activities related to the programme can be carried out effectively. There is an appropriate ratio between full-time and part-time staff. The recruitment and employment of staff follow relevant legislation and appropriate administrative procedures, including redress and equity considerations. Support staff members are adequately qualified and their knowledge and skills are regularly updated.*

### Criterion 5: Teaching and learning strategy

*The institution gives recognition to the importance of the promotion of student learning. The teaching and learning strategy is appropriate for the institutional type (as reflected in its mission), mode(s) of delivery and student composition, contains mechanisms to ensure the appropriateness of teaching and learning methods, and makes provision for staff to upgrade their teaching methods. The strategy sets targets, plans for implementation, as well as mechanisms to monitor progress, evaluate impact and effect improvement.*

### Criterion 6: Student assessment

*The different modes of delivery of the programme have appropriate policies and procedures for internal assessment; internal and external moderation; monitoring of student progress; explicitness, validity and reliability of assessment practices; recording of assessment results; settling of disputes; the rigour and security of the assessment system; RPL; and for the development of staff competence in assessment.*

### Criterion 7: Library services

*Suitable and sufficient venues, IT infrastructure and library resources are available for students and staff in the programme. Policies ensure the proper management and maintenance of library resources, including support and access for students and staff. Staff development of library staff takes place on a regular basis.*

### Criterion 8: Programme administrative services

*The programme has effective administrative services in order to provide information, manage the programme information system, deal with a diverse student population, and ensure the integrity of processes leading to certification of the qualification obtained through the programme.*

# Support for the Programme

## Trained Facilitators to Support Students

Facilitators play a pivotal role in creating a learning environment that integrates face-to-face and technology supported learning interactions. For most facilitators the blended learning and teaching approaches and methods designed in the HCE is a new and challenging experience and they will need adequate training and support to perform this crucial role.

NID is responsible for appointing facilitators and developing a suitable training strategy that comprises the following key elements.

* The Facilitator Module Guides are a primary resource that have detailed guidelines on how to provide online and offline support to students and plan and facilitate contact sessions. The Module Guides are developed by DKSS as part of the HCE learning resources package.
* The LMS offers facilitators helpful tools that enable them to manage each student’s progress.
* Start-up training is organized by NID to orient facilitators to their role and provide them with the necessary skills training to be able to work with the LMS, support students online and offline and prepare and facilitate structured contact sessions.
* Participation in a Community of Practice is a central support component. Peer support is readily available when needed and plays a vital role in encouraging facilitators to share their experiences, solve emerging problems, and keep up their motivation level.
* Several planned training events are organized that focus on emerging training needs.

## Support for Teaching Practice

As noted by NTI[[11]](#footnote-11) (2009:47-48), the conducting of actual teaching practice requires a phased intervention involving several role players. They make the following recommendations which can inform the work of the NID:

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| Conducting the Actual Teaching PracticeThe following procedures are to be followed in conducting the actual teaching practice:**(i) Orientation of Staff Members**The coordinators, managers, supervisors, facilitators, course tutors, and cooperating teachers should first of all undergo an orientation before teaching practice to familiarize themselves with the requirements for this category of trainees on teaching practice.**(ii) Orientation of Student-Teachers**The course managers/supervisors and the cooperating teachers should orientate the student-teachers in areas such as the concepts, modalities, procedures and guidelines for organizing teaching practice activities. This should last for the first week of the teaching practice.**(iii) Guided Teaching practice** The orientation activities are followed by guided teaching practice in which the student-teacher works under the cooperating teacher in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of lessons. The guided teaching practice should be participatory, interactive, and collaborative. It should last two weeks of the semester preceding the teaching practice exercise.**(iv) Full Teaching Practice Sessions**The remaining teaching practice sessions of the programme are devoted to full teaching supervision in the sense of coaching and preliminary assessment of the students. These sessions should involve: observation of lesson notes’ format, procedures, language and organization, supervision and assessment of the lesson (introduction, presentation, activities, evaluation, summary and conclusion); immediate feedback after each lesson observed; and the return of the students’ assessment forms with comment.**(v) Monitoring of Teaching practice Activities**It is desirable that Teaching Practice activities are monitored by the State Ministries of Education, Federal Inspectorate Services and NTI State and Zonal offices. Their efforts will be complemented by NTI Headquarters Staff and the External Moderators. In each case, comprehensive report should be written and submitted to Headquarters. |

Useful OER for teaching practice:

* <http://www.tessafrica.net/files/tessafrica/Briefing_note_general_June_2012.pdf>
* <http://www.tessafrica.net/NTI-Toolkit>
* <http://www.oerafrica.org/resource/supporting-teaching-practice-manual-supervisors-and-mentors>

## ICT Infra-structure

The delivery of the HCE requires technology architecture that can successfully implement the e-learning platform and decentralized student support system. *Appendix 2, Access to Technology Architecture for the Educator Certificate Programme*, has been prepared primarily to identify and shape the deployment of appropriate software, platform, infrastructure, and network services required to run the Educator Certificate programme in Phase One (first year) as well as Phase Two and Phase Three of implementation. While the HCE programme will run at the NID College initially, the plan assumes that it will also be offered at decentralized sites and affiliate institutions in the near future. The solution proposed includes:

* Cloud Services;
* Local ICT Infrastructure (at NID and decentralized sites/affiliate institutions);
* Canvas Learner Management System (LMS);
* Student Information Services (SIS);
* Resource Repository: Custom-Built OER Repository;
* Local Network and Internet Access;
* Staff and Student Computing Devices;
* Software; and
* Additional ICT equipment such as data projectors, scanners, printers, camera’s etc.

## Management Strategy

The following [[12]](#footnote-12)criteria from the Nadeosa Quality Criteria for Distance Education highlight key elements that can inform NID’s management strategy.

|  |
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| **Assessment Management**6.13 Marking procedures for both formative and summative assessment promote consistency and accuracy of marking, grading, and provision of feedback to learners. 6.14 There are clear procedures to receive, record, process, and turnaround assignments within a timeframe that allows learners to benefit from formative feedback prior to the submission of further assessment tasks. 6.15 An appeal system is in place for when learners have a complaint about the fairness of the assessment. **Human resource strategy*** 1. The educational provider employs sufficient administrative and technical staff to handle specialized tasks of registry, despatch, management of assignments, administrative support, as well as technical IT support to learners and staff.
	2. Staff are trained, monitored, and supported for the specialized roles and tasks they perform, including design, management and delivery of electronically-offered programmes.
	3. Staff engaged in online tutoring and moderation of online discussions are qualified and trained for the intensive engagement and direction, which is required.

8.15 There is an effective performance management and appraisal system for all staff. **Management of communication** * 1. There are effective systems for communication with current and potential learners, with key outside bodies, with governance structures, and with all staff and tutors involved in courses.
	2. Enquiries, applications and complaints are dealt with quickly and clearly within a structured administration system.
	3. Learners’ questions are answered quickly, clearly, and supportively.

**Management of the curriculum** * 1. Appropriate schedules are developed for all activities forming part of the distance education system, with due attention given to lead times needed to meet deadlines.
	2. Enrolment practices include provision of accurate, helpful information to prospective learners, as well as efficient handling of money and registration information.
	3. Production and delivery of course materials is fast, accurate, and reliable. Where existing systems prove inefficient, creative alternatives are found.
	4. There are systems to organize decentralized support for remote learners–grouping of learners, allocation of tutors, and location of suitable sites of learning.
	5. There are clear procedures to receive, record, process, and turn around assignments.
	6. The turnaround time on assignments is kept to a minimum.

9.14 The examination system, where it is necessary, is reliable and valid. **Management of information** * 1. Learner records (for example, contact details, assessment results) are detailed, up-to- date, and accessible to tutors, academic and administrative staff.
	2. Tutor records (for example, qualifications and experience of tutors) are detailed for each tutor and available to tutor-monitors.
	3. Records of course results and other management information can be analyzed to:
	+ give completion rates for each group of learners;
	+ identify at risk learners;
	+ Identify inactive learners.
	1. Pass, throughput and retention rates are monitored.

**Management of facilities and equipment** * 1. Facilities and equipment support the learner and are appropriate for the education and training services provided.
	2. In the case of electronically-offered programmes, the provider ensures the reliability and predictability of a ‘fit-for-purpose’ teaching and learning delivery platform, and there is a budget for regular upgrading.
	3. Equipment and facilities are well-managed and maintained and secure against damage or theft.
	4. There are emergency methods of communication for use in the event of a failure of the primary channel of communication, and these are fail-safe.
	5. Staff and learners are trained in the use of the equipment, facilities, and communication and information systems.

**Management of finances** * 1. Proper budgetary processes are in place to ensure that allocation of resources reflects the goals, values and principles of the educational provider.
	2. Financial procedures (for example, handling of fees, orders, accounts, receipt of external funds, and part-time and full-time salaries) are known and adhered to.
	3. Budgeting procedures are in place to deal with allocation of resources and monitoring of expenditure. Budgeting procedures are flexible enough to promote and enable constructive experimentation in design and delivery methods.
	4. Proper evaluation systems are in place to compare estimated goals and budgets with actual achievements.
	5. Clear decision-making structures exist for seeking and receiving funds and allocation and control of resources.
	6. Financial aid and information about criteria for its allocation are provided for learners, external funding and donations permitting.
	7. Information about financial aid is clear to all learners.
 |

# Roles and Responsibilities

The table below gives an overview of key activities and responsibilities linked to the design, development and delivery of the main components of the HCE.

| **Programme components** | **DKSS (NBA) responsibility** | **NID responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Programme Curriculum Guiding Framework.
 | * Plans and facilitates a Programme Curriculum Framework Workshop
* Prepares a draft Programme Curriculum Guiding Framework.
* Integrates feedback and finalizes the Programme Curriculum Guiding Framework.
 | * NID selects key persons to participate in the Programme Curriculum Framework Workshop.
* Reviews the Programme Curriculum Guiding Framework and provides feedback.
* Provides a venue for the Workshop.
 |
| 1. Learning Programme.
 | * Plans and develops the supported e-learning Learning Pathway that comprises:
* the learning resources package;
* the learning activities linked to the resources;
* the assessment activities and instruments.
* Develops appropriate module guidelines for programme facilitators.
 | * Selected NID persons provide advice and input as and where necessary.
 |
| 1. Programme delivery:

Decentralized student support system. It is recommended that NID employs a phased approach to offering the Programme starting with a small group of up to 30 students supported from the NID campus; then expands to up to 4 decentralised sites; and only then explores partnerships with other provides in order to scale to national provision. * NID will need to engage with the DHET to extend its provision status from TVET to include initial Higher Education in line with the recent White Paper on post-school education and training.
* NID would then be responsible for applying to the CHE for accreditation of the HCE programme.
* NID would also be responsible for managing the learning and providing students with relevant support.
 | * NBA provides consultation on the development of a decentralized student support system.
 | NID:* Pursues registration and accreditation in the short term and explores possibilities for partnerships for expanded provision in the medium term.
* Investigates the partnership process.
* Organises the partnership agreement.
* Develops a decentralized learner support system.
* Appoints NID staff to manage the learning programme.
* Plans and sets up the decentralized student support system.
* Prepares and organizes training for people involved in the decentralized student support system.
 |
| 1. Programme delivery:

ICT Technology Infra-structure. | * NBA provides consultation on the development of an ICT Technology Infra-structure.
 | NID:* Establishes and manages an appropriate ICT Technology Infra-structure.

*[See Appendix 2].* |
| 1. Programme accreditation.
 | * NBA provides advice on accreditation through the CHE.
 | NID:* Investigates accreditation processes with the DHET and CHE.
* Establishes HCE Programme articulation with accredited teacher education providers.
* Manages Partnership Agreements with selected HEIs, TVET’s and community colleges with respect to articulation and expanded delivery.
 |
| 1. Access to the HCE.
 |  | NID:* Investigates what is involved in a selection and ability screening process for the HCE.
* Establishes an appropiriate selection and ability screening process for the HCE.
 |

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| **Key issues** Building and expanded effective and integrated post-school system.* *Ministers preface:* …. Diverse range …. high quality…. provide paths (diversity) …. **no dead ends** …. (VII)
* Employers partnerships …. develop thinking citizens …. Transformation = framework of diversity!
* *Executive summary*: Strategies, TVET colleges, Community colleges (**occupational** programmes, community **responsiveness** and its focus on **citizen** and **social** education (XI)
* *Addressing disability* (XV)
* *Open learning through diverse modes of provision* … connectivity for students … closer to their houses and appropriate to their contexts (Deaf accessible) … OER = open education resources – distance education …. blended learning resources … independent study …. life long learning (XV and p 48-54)
1. Main Policy *objectives* (p4)
	1. Educa*tion and work:* … prepare workers for the labour market … sustainable livelihoods … self-employment, community health education, literacy.
	2. *Responsiveness:* … undertake research … transformation … special needs of various groups (disabled/Deaf) (p10)
	3. The college system: TVET and Community colleges (p 11-26)
2. Addressing disability (p44-46)
3. OER: Distance education, open learning through diverse modes of provision (p 48-55)
4. Workplace (Deaf accessible in hearing world of work) (p 56-63)
5. NQF (p 69-75)
 |

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# Signatures

We agree with the contents of this Curriculum Framework specifying the key components of the proposed Certificate Programme for Educators of the Deaf and persons with hearing loss.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **On behalf of NID**  | **On behalf of DKSS**  |
| Date: | Date: |
| Signature: | Signature: |
| Name: | Name: |

1. Swanwick, R., & Watson, L. (2005). Literacy in the homes of young deaf children: Common and distinct features of spoken language and sign bilingual environments. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *5*(1), 53-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). 2013. *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-school System*, Labour Market Page 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid VII Community Colleges Pages 20 - 25 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Programme Concept Questionnaire, dated 03 March 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rowntree, D. The Role of Workshops in Staff Development, in C. Latchem and F. Lockwood (eds.) Staff Development in Open and Flexible Learning, Routledge. 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). 2013. *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-school System*, Open Learning through diverse modes of provision, XV Pages 48 - 54 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The module titles are placeholders and may change in the course of developing the modules. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid Addressing disability – Deaf accessible Pages 44 - 46 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A proctored exam is one that is overseen by an impartial individual (called a proctor) who monitors or supervises a student while he or she is taking an exam. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid Pages 20 – 24, 45 – 54 and 56 - 68 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. National Teacher Institute (NTI). c.2009. Teaching Practice Manual (PDE 207). Undated document emailed to Saide by Prince Olude Ademola O, 25 May 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Designing and Delivering Distance Education: Quality Criteria and Case Studies, Nadeosa Publication, 2002. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)