

CLOSING OF THE WRITING, REVIEW AND REVISION WORKSHOP FOR CBPS AND CAE 1ST TO 6TH JULY 2013

Colleagues, all protocols observed,

You have been gathered here for about a week to participate in a workshop whose objectives had been set as:

1. Share quality assurance strategies of self-instructional materials;
2. Complete the writing of the modules;
3. Finalize the modules for Review;
4. Review the modules;
5. Revise the reviewed module;
6. Review and upload materials to the e-learning portal by ICT officers;
7. Add value to university website.

The Modules being prepared include: 1). M.Sc (Climate Change), 2) B.Sc (Industrial Chemistry), 3) PGD (Energy Management) and 4) B.Com.

That you have been here that long for this arduous but noble task is worth acknowledging and appreciating. I gladly and liberally do so.

Reasons for Choosing the ODeL Mode of Learning

Colleagues,

At the risk of repeating what you have already been told, I mention that students who opt for the open, distance and electronic learning (ODeL) have very good reasons amongst which are learning:

- a) from the comfort of their homes;

- b) the material at a convenient time and place of their choice,
- c) in a manner that fits better with the students' life style,
- d) while still being able to work and close to their families at all times, especially the married ones [Ruparanganda *et al*, 2012].

Increasing access to higher education – known to have higher returns to individuals – is one of the key goals of our government. ODeL has been one of the ways of achieving this. This underscores the importance of the exercise you have been undertaking.

Our university has embraced this mode of access to higher education for some time now. Many modules have been prepared and are in use presently. The policy and direction of the University is to have most, if not all, of the programmes it offers in the face-to-face mode being available in the ODeL mode. This target is now captured in our performance contracts.

Quality Assurance

I want to reiterate that whereas we have experience in developing the instructional materials for this mode of learning, there are issues we must bear in mind, key of which is high quality of instructional materials – your first objective of the Workshop. To safeguard high quality and standards of higher education the instructional materials must also be of high quality and standards. You are very well educated and experienced dons. Bring that experience to bear.

Accountability

An aspect of the exercise of coming to a workshop like this which is never emphasized is accountability. This is accountability for the investment of public and private money. The University (public) and students (private) have invested in this exercise and therefore they expect you to write modules that are of quality and which meet the learners' needs. It is saddening to note that some writers come here, receive the “per diem” but never deliver a module. Others do not value quality. This has been a shame and I exhort this group of qualified academics not to fail in this regard of delivering on the above set objectives. This will make us proud that you are an accountable lot, both at the public and private levels.

Competition

The mode of learning we have embrace - ODeL - for which you are here to write instructional materials has changed the way we compete for students, particularly the part-time students. An institution that develops distance learning enhances the extent and choice of its programmes. For us to outpace our competitors we have to deliver on our promise - **quality, quality, quality** education.

With these many remarks and belief that you have achieved the objectives set before you, it is my humble duty to declare this workshop closed.

References

F. Rugaranganda, C. K. Mukundu, G. Munjoma, Students Perceptions on the Effectiveness and Advantages of the Open Distance Electronic Learning Methodology (ODeL) over the Traditional Face to Face Learning Methodology, "Two Years On", *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, **24** (3) (2012).

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6th July 2013