



**The Impact of the Teaching Development Grant on
Student Success and Learning &
the Quality of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching
Resources at the North-West University:
A qualitative evaluation**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The purpose of this impact evaluation was to determine the perceived impact of the Teaching Development Grant (TDG), which was made available by the Department of Higher Education and Training, on student success and learning and on the quality of teachers, teaching and teaching resources at the North-West University (NWU). This was done by evaluating the six programmes that made use of the grant as well as documenting the activities which formed part of each of these programmes.

Evaluation methodology

A qualitative evaluation research design and semi-structured interviews with 21 participants (which were thematically analysed) were utilised.

Evaluation results

In the case of the **first programme (teacher and teaching development)**, it was found that specific positive outcomes and impacts contributed to the quality of teachers and teaching at the NWU. In addition to an improvement in overall lecturer-student engagement, this encompassed academic staff:

- Being better prepared for their classes;
- Being better equipped to handle large groups of students;
- Being more aware of, and able to cater for, the varying educational needs of their students; and
- Being able to use self-reflection as a means to improve their teaching abilities.

A number of additional positive outcomes and impacts, which relate directly to an increase in the use of technology by NWU staff and students, also contributed to an improvement in the quality of teaching and teachers:

- Academic staff being more comfortable with the use of technology in their teaching practices;
- Diverse types of technology being used;
- Academic staff utilising diverse and creative ways of teaching;
- More students using electronic equipment; and
- Study materials being more readily available.

Another substantial outcome of the first programme is the marked increase in the number of academic staff (50+) that now hold a Master's or Doctoral qualification. A number of academic support staff also successfully completed professional/post-graduate diplomas through other universities.

Two unexpected positive impacts that stemmed from some of the first programme's activities are that many of the students felt that the student-lecturer evaluations (that form

part of the Institutional Course for New Lecturers [ICNL]) empowered them (e.g. by “giving them a voice”) while the ICNL also contributed to a general increase in the “willingness of academic staff to inspire and learn from one another”.

In the case of the **second programme (tutoring and mentoring)**, it was found that this programme contributed directly to student success. What is more, it also appears as if two different groups of students benefited from the interventions, namely the students who were at the receiving end of the interventions, and the students who were responsible for the implementation of some of the activities (e.g. those who acted as tutors, mentors, facilitators, assistants, et cetera). In the case of the first group of students that benefited directly from the programme, it was found that some activities contributed to:

- The establishment of student support networks;
- A source of income for (financially challenged) students;
- An improvement in class attendance and in student participation in classes;
- More enjoyable lectures;
- An improvement in the throughput rate of students; and
- A general improvement in the marks of students.

For the students who were responsible for the implementation of some of the activities, the second programme contributed to a general improvement in their:

- Work experience;
- Leadership skills;
- Communication skills; and
- Confidence.

Two unplanned negative impacts that stemmed from the second programme are that some of the student mentors were so deeply disturbed by the stories and challenges that were reported by their mentees that they either resigned as mentors or assisted struggling mentees financially out of their own pockets. Due to the protracted and strenuous system involved in the claiming process, many an out-of-pocket student mentor did not claim the funds owed to them.

In the case of the **third programme (enhancing the status of teaching-learning)**, which also contributed to an improvement in the quality of teachers at the NWU, it was found that the most positive outcomes and impacts related to the number of staff being rewarded, the transfer of new knowledge as well as professional growth and personal development among academic staff who participated in activities such as the Institutional Teaching Excellence Awards (ITEA), conferences, et cetera.

An unplanned negative impact of the ITEA is that participation is very time-consuming, which caused many participants in the programme to withdraw from the scheme.

The most significant outcomes that were achieved by the **fourth programme (researching teaching-learning)** is that it contributed to an increase in the scholarship of teaching-learning at the NWU and to an improvement in the learning experiences of students (similar to what was documented under the second programme) and, as was the case with the first programme, contributed to an increase in the use of technology. Other significant findings encompass:

- An increase in awareness among academic staff of the importance of T-L, the use of technology, et cetera;
- More research being conducted (the fact that many of the academic staff became more productive researchers also resulted in them being promoted); and
- An improvement in the overall development of academic staff.

Possibly one of the most significant outcomes/impacts – an outcome/impact that was also one of the major goals of this programme from the outset – was the successful establishment of communities of inquiry and practice within disciplines and also across disciplines, faculties and campuses.

In the case of the **fifth programme (managing the Teaching Development Grant)**, it was found that the appointment of administrative staff contributed to a general improvement in the administration of the grant and in reporting thereon. The two assistants rendered assistance to the rest of the academic support staff with all preparations for the training activities as well as handled most of the logistics and, most importantly, the finances. This, in turn, allowed time for academic staff to focus on research, and many of the outputs mentioned in this report are a direct consequence of this programme.

Finally, in the case of the **sixth programme (university priorities)**, it was found that the newly acquired equipment contributed greatly to the quality of teaching resources at the NWU and likely also contributed to student success (e.g. throughput). Other significant outcomes and impacts encompassed:

- NWU staff now having a better understanding of the needs of first-year students;
- Students benefiting from remedial programmes;
- Reading centres contributing to an improvement in the reading abilities of students;
- Writing centres contributing to an improvement in the quality of students' writing; and
- Helping to make some of the tasks of academic staff easier and more effective.

The most significant outcome of the sixth programme is the availability of improved infrastructure that is now available on all three of the NWU's campuses. This output/outcome is likely to continue to have an impact in future. However, according to some of the participants, some of the newly acquired equipment is still not being utilised optimally – an aspect that will have to be explored in greater detail in future.

Conclusions

Based on the evidence that emerged from the qualitative evaluation of the perceived impact of the TDG on student success and learning as well as on the quality of teachers, teaching and teaching resources, the results of this evaluation support the fact that the TDG (made available by the Department of Higher Education and Training via six NWU programmes) is having substantial positive impacts which seem to contribute directly to the development of the NWU's staff (e.g. academic and support personnel), the enhancement of student success and learning and the improvement of the NWU's teaching resources (infrastructure, equipment, et cetera). This implies that the grant has achieved what it was intended for, that the NWU managed to change what it set out to change and that the manner in which the institution set out to accomplish this change worked. However, a couple of unplanned negative outcomes/impacts were also identified, and attempts to mitigate these should be explored in greater detail. Other important aspects, which could improve future evaluations, will also have to be looked at, such as the timing of the evaluation, the time allowed for the evaluation and the systems and processes that are needed for ongoing monitoring and future evaluations.

Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, it is recommended that the timing of the evaluation be reconsidered and that more time and better planning be invested in future evaluations. Furthermore:

- Proper indicators ought to be identified, baseline data ought to be collected and all processes (i.e. inputs, outputs, outcomes, et cetera) ought to be monitored;
- All systems and processes pertaining to the ITEA ought to be revisited and an attempt should be made to make these more effective and less time consuming;
- Student mentors and tutors ought to be debriefed and supported by the NWU's psychological counselling services; and
- An attempt ought to be made to improve the system whereby students can claim money owed to them so that they can be refunded for out-of-pocket expenses much quicker and with far less unnecessary "red tape".

(For details on these recommendations, see the full report.)

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation was to conduct an independent impact evaluation that focused on the perceived impacts of the six programmes that benefitted from the Teaching Development Grant (TDG) – a grant made available by the National Department of Higher Education and Training in South Africa – on student success and learning and on the quality of teachers, teaching and teaching resources at the North-West University (NWU).

In this report, the concepts “outcome” and “impact” are used interchangeably to indicate all primary changes (whether intended, planned or direct) generated by the respective programmes. This conceptualisation is in line with the definition used by Rogers (2012) and a number of other evaluators. Primary changes can be positive or negative in nature, and special reference will be made in this report where negative impacts have been identified together with recommendations as to how these could potentially be mediated.

Furthermore, as Vanclay (2012) noted, many interventions often create a broad range of other types of effects that were not necessarily the core purpose of an intervention. These normally stem from the primary intended outcome/impact and can be described as secondary or unanticipated/unintentional spin-off effects. Collectively, these outcomes/impacts may contribute significantly to the perceived success of an intervention, especially by donor funders (Vanclay, 2012).

Consequently, both the primary and secondary outcomes and impacts that stemmed from the respective programmes were the main focus of this evaluation.

EVALUATOR

This evaluation was conducted by Professor Hendri Coetzee, a research psychologist from the Office for Sustainability and Community Impact at the NWU. Professor Coetzee is well versed in conducting field and academic research and, over the years, has successfully completed several academic studies that encompassed the training and supervising of pre- and post-graduate students, the writing and publication of scholarly articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and the delivery of presentations at national and international academic conferences. In addition, he has also conducted many research studies for a whole array of organisations in the corporate sector.

INTRODUCTION

As a prelude to discussing the perceived outcomes and impacts of the North-West University’s programmes that benefitted from the TDG, it will be pertinent to first state and discuss a few principles and processes associated with impact assessments in general, namely: (a) the donor funder’s strategy; (b) the business case (reason/s) for funding the

interventions (e.g. programmes, projects, et cetera); (c) a theory of practice (what the donor funder/s and implementer of the interventions wanted to achieve); (d) a theory of change (how the donor funder/s and implementer planned to achieve the intended change); and (e) a logic frame model (a model used to indicate the flow of the interventions in terms of inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts) (Gertler, Martinez, Premand, Rawlings & Vermeersch, 2011; Rogers, 2012; Khandker, Koolwal & Samad, 2010).

Firstly, in terms of the planned strategy, the donor funder (the National Department of Higher Education and Training – hereafter “the Department”) wanted to build capacity among higher education institutions in South Africa (DHET, 2014). A similar strategy is being followed in other countries and, typically, involves teacher preparation workshops; teacher induction programmes; ongoing professional support; the introduction of technology; the use of reward systems, conferences and workshops; and the assessment of teaching portfolios (Burke & Minassians, 2001; Javinen & Kohonen, 1995).¹ Seemingly, a couple of alternative approaches are also available to improve the quality of teaching and teachers, such as whole-institution development (D’Andrea & Gosling, 2005) and action research (Gibs, 1995).

The outcomes and impacts of some of these interventions have also been assessed (see Parson *et al.*, 2012 for an overview). For example, Trigwell, Caballero and Han (2012) found that teachers who complete the induction programme evaluated by the authors in question qualified more often for teaching awards (compared to colleagues who did not participate in the programme), and that both students and teachers experienced higher levels of satisfaction as a direct result of said programme. Polly *et al.* (2010) found mentoring courses and the use of technology to be most impactful in the programmes that they evaluated. However, Kopcha (2012) identified several barriers that prevent academic staff and students from using technology/blended approaches in teaching-learning (T-L) practices. In one of the most insightful studies related to teacher development, Ingvarson, Meiers and Beavis (2005) revealed that the impact of most education development interventions are influenced by contextual factors (e.g. ongoing support), the structural features of programmes (the length), process features (e.g. emphasis on content, active learning, examination of student work, feedback and follow-up), a mediating variable (level of professional community generated) and four outcome measures (knowledge, practice, student learning and efficacy). Similar influences have also been identified by Garet *et al.* (2001), Borko (2004) and Kreber and Brook (2001).

Secondly, the development of higher education institutions forms an integral part of the Department’s core business and mandate (DHET, 2014). Two less obvious reasons for funding development initiatives are, first and foremost, that these initiatives can help the

¹ New York University seems to be particularly creative in their teacher development efforts. Some of this institution’s more innovative programmes include a “lunchtime programme”, where food is used to lure staff to training sessions, and a “teaching on-tap programme” which involves training sessions in pubs (<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/teachlearn/teac>).

Department to ensure that the quality of T-L remains at an acceptable level (so that graduates are employable). Secondly, by way of these initiatives, the Department (acting on behalf of Government) can demonstrate that it is serious about higher education and, therefore, willing to invest the necessary resources in it.

In the third instance, based on the NWU's internal reports and in line with the Department's vision for the TDG, it is also clear that the NWU wanted to use the grant specifically to develop its staff (e.g. academic and support personnel), improve its teaching resources (infrastructure, equipment, et cetera) and to enhance student success and learning. This can be viewed as the NWU's overall theory of practice (ToP) or, to quote Khandker, Koolwal and Samad (2010), the overall "end-goals" of its efforts. Consequently, if it is to be accurate, an impact evaluation must reflect on what the donor funder/s and implementer of the interventions set out to achieve, based on the results that emerged from the evaluation (Hum, Amundsen & Emmioglu, 2015). To be specific: If the NWU and donor funder want to claim that the changes that occurred are a direct result of their planned activities, the results of the evaluation ought to support or verify the intended changes that occurred..

Fourthly, the NWU wanted to achieve its ToP by conceptualising and implementing six programmes. As reflected in figure 1, this encompassed programmes related to teacher and teaching development, tutoring and mentoring, enhancing the status of T-L, researching T-L, and the identification of context-specific priorities for the NWU.

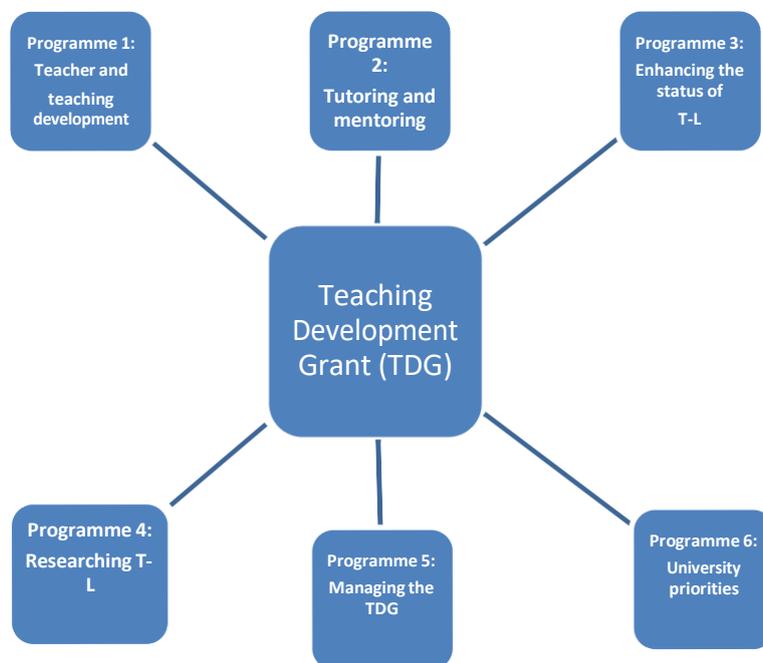


Figure 1: An overview of the six programmes included in the NWU's ToP²

² Each programme is described in more detail in the results section.

The activities of the first, third, fourth and sixth programmes were targeted at improving teachers and teaching, the second programme (and some of the activities in programme 6) at enhancing student success and learning, and the balance of programme 6 at improving teaching resources (e.g. equipment, infrastructure, et cetera). Programme 5 focused on the administration of the TDG. These six programmes can be regarded as the NWU's theories of change (ToC) – in other words, how the NWU planned to achieve the stated ToP. An accurate impact evaluation must show if, and how, these programmes contributed to reaching the end-goal of the planned changes (Rogers, 2012).

Here it ought to be noted that each of the programmes referred to above consisted of several planned activities: Many inputs were made, and many an output has been achieved as part of each activity. To be accurate, an evaluation of this nature needs to carefully consider the programme logic, whether interim steps have been achieved and whether there are signs that longer-term objectives and goals are likely to be achieved (Vanclay, 2012). Therefore, with a simple cause-effect relationship in mind, if the NWU wants to claim that its programmes and activities succeeded in accomplishing the planned outcomes and impacts of the TDG, everything must add up and make sense.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Research design

A qualitative evaluation design was used (Vanclay, 2012). In this type of design, qualitative data is gathered, analysed and reported. More specifically, in the case of this evaluation, data was systematically collected to document the planned activities, inputs and outputs, followed by the collection and analysis of additional data to identify and verify the outcomes and impacts.

Participants

A total of 21 participants (six males and 15 females) between the ages of 23 and 61 were purposively selected (Creswell, 2013) to take part in this evaluation. They were selected based on their experiences as programme leaders or beneficiaries of the programmes in question. The final sample was mostly comprised of beneficiaries (11/21), followed by programme leaders (6/21) and support staff (4/21).

Procedure

The NWU's Office for Sustainability and Community Impact was approached in mid-2017 to conduct an evaluation. A meeting was scheduled in September 2017 to discuss the evaluation process and to identify the information that was needed by the evaluator to do the evaluation (e.g. list of all programmes, activities, contact information of programme leaders, et cetera). At the time of this meeting, contact persons at each of the NWU's three campuses were also identified to assist the evaluator. Unfortunately, due to

miscommunication, at least two months of valuable time for the evaluation were lost. Consequently, the actual evaluation only commenced mid-November 2017 when a second meeting was held to kick-start the evaluation and to acquire the information needed for the evaluation. Even though the evaluator was furnished with the requisite information on the very first day of this meeting, he still had to familiarise himself with the various programmes, the activities that formed part of each programme, on which campus the programmes and activities were being implemented and the people involved in each of the programmes (e.g. programme leaders and beneficiaries). Given that the evaluator hitherto had no prior knowledge of the grant, nor how the grant related to strengthening T-L, compiling a report within the stipulated timeframe turned out to be a rather daunting task. Nevertheless, the contact persons/programme leaders at the NWU's three campuses proved to be very helpful and did their best to ensure that the evaluator made sense of all reported findings and/or statistics as furnished in this report.

The second challenge this evaluator had to overcome was to source the participants. This proved to be very challenging because by the time actual data gathering commenced (end-November/early- December), students were already on their summer-break and most of the staff were either extremely busy with their end-of-the-year tasks (e.g. working with their post-grad students, marking exam papers, finalising projects, et cetera) or attending conferences or on leave.

Nonetheless, the evaluator managed to conduct four data-gathering sessions (three of which took place in December 2017 with a final session in January 2018) to verify, expand on and/or support/reject the initial results that emerged. The first session was conducted at the NWU's Potchefstroom Campus, the second at the Vaal Campus and the third at the Mafikeng Campus. These sessions were conducted over a two-week period early in December 2017.

All data collected via these sessions was collated and thematically analysed on an ongoing basis. The evaluator then commenced to compile a preliminary report and continued to work on this report throughout December and January.

The resultant preliminary report was submitted for editing early in January, where after it was handed to the NWU's Deputy Vice-chancellor for Teaching-Learning and other role-players for their inputs and approval.

The report was finalised at the end of January 2018.

Data collection

Data was collected by means of individual, semi-structured interviews that were guided by an interview schedule. Each interview kicked off with a statement on the goal of the TDG, followed by asking the participants a few broad questions such as "Please tell me what the activities involved" and "What are the changes that you notice because of the

programmes/activities”. The interviews were recorded digitally and systematically captured on paper in a visual and diagrammatic manner. Using these methods in combination provided an instant visual presentation of the data and enabled the evaluator to identify gaps in the data that could be filled by asking follow-up questions.

Data analysis

The data was analysed by means of thematic content analysis (Tracy, 2013). To begin with, the visual data was studied in detail and interview transcripts were listened to several times to ensure immersion in the data. Thereafter, the data was coded inductively by assigning it to the various programmes. Based on conceptual similarities, codes were then grouped into themes. These themes are reported in table format under each programme (the 4th and 5th column) and are further discussed in the sections below each table.

Credibility and trustworthiness

Several strategies were implemented to increase the general credibility and trustworthiness of the evaluation:

- Only those who were directly involved or benefited from the grant were used as participants. This means that the data was gathered from participants who had first-hand experience of the programmes either as the managers of the programmes or as the beneficiaries of the programmes.
- Multiple methods to collect and verify data were used. This enabled the evaluator to compare sets of data and to double-check some of the data that emerged.
- The results that emerged were also checked and confirmed with the participants on an ongoing basis to make sure that it was indeed a true reflection of their perceptions and experiences.

Limitations of the evaluation

Every evaluation must contend with some limitations, which need to be acknowledged:

- This is a qualitative evaluation. Although the methodology was ideally suited to the study, due to the epistemological foundations of this methodology, it nonetheless results in findings that cannot be quantified indiscriminately or generalised beyond the contexts covered by the study.
- The evaluation of the grant’s impact was done at the end of the funding period, at a time of the year when potential participants were busy or not available at all. This made it very difficult to source suitable participants. To overcome this, the evaluator had to gather as much data as possible, work on the report *and* conduct a follow-up round of data gathering.
- It may also be worth mentioning that the primary and secondary outcomes/impacts, in turn, normally lead to further benefits or disruptions that are typically psycho-social in nature such as improved levels of well-being and satisfaction with life (see Coetzee & Nell, 2017). These examples could be considered as tertiary impacts.

However, because of the limited time that was available for this evaluation, these impacts will not be reported in detail because they could not be fully identified and verified.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

From the thematic analysis of interviews with 21 participants, it is evident that there were many different outcomes and impacts which benefited the NWU's students, academic and support staff, and the institution itself.

Programme 1: Teacher and teaching development

The overall goal of the first programme was to create an enabling environment for academic staff where they could improve the quality and impact of their teaching, and grow as teaching professionals. Eighteen planned activities formed part of the programme. An overview of these activities is presented in the first column of figure 2, followed by the inputs (2nd column), outputs (3rd column) and the outcomes and impacts (4th and 5th columns) that stemmed from the process. A similar approach is used under each of the programmes.

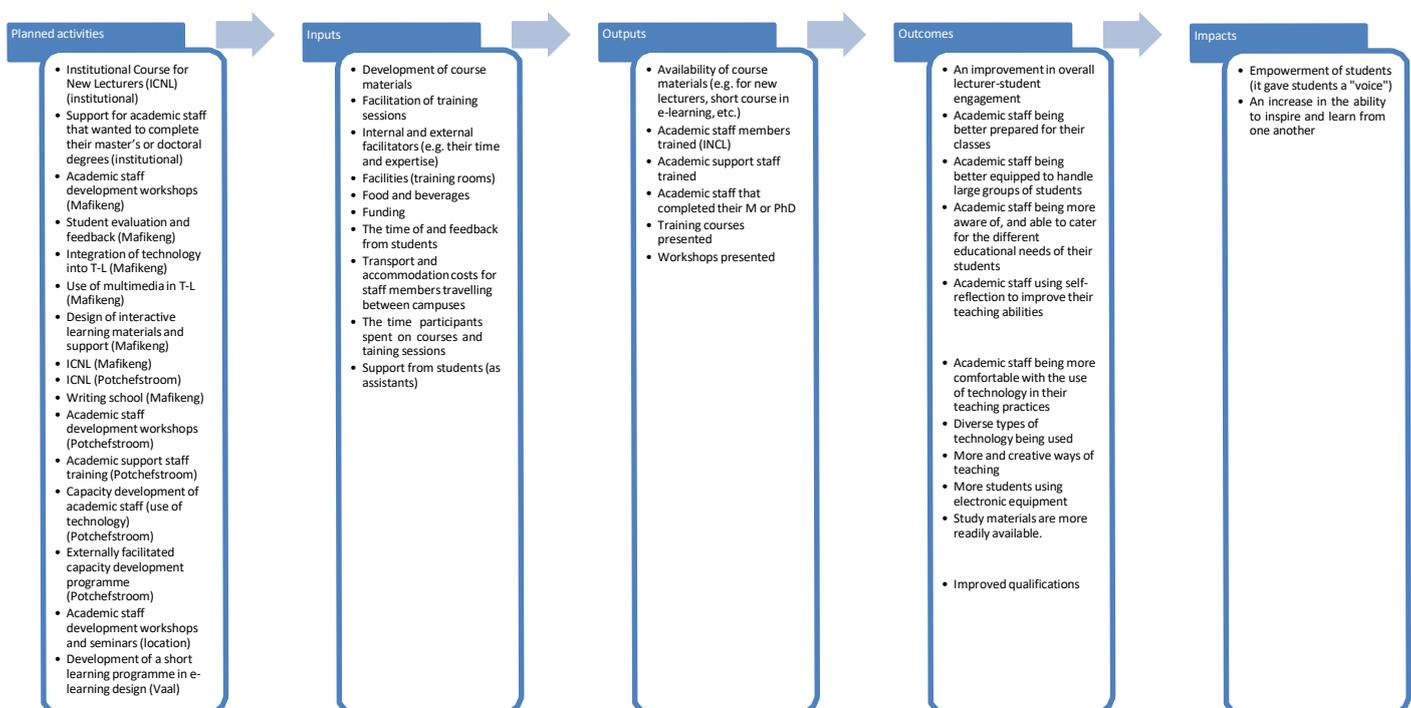


Figure 2: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 1

- The first activity consisted of a three-day orientation course. The course contained presentations by the NWU's language directorate on research development and support, the sources for research funds, commercialisation of research, quality assurance, the role of the lecturer, records management, the NWU's T-L framework, the scholarship of T-L, curriculum development, designing learning experiences, philosophical foundations of T-L, assessment, learning theories, approaches and strategies to T-L, information technology, HEMIS timesheet, community engagement and student development.

Phase two of the intervention included a micro-session where newly appointed lecturers were given the opportunity to apply theory to practice by presenting a lesson and getting feedback from fellow newly appointed colleagues.

Video recordings, evaluation and feedback of contact sessions were also implemented in some cases, for example at the Vaal Campus.

A certificate ceremony was used to reward academic staff for successfully completing the training sessions.

- In the second activity, funds were made available to "buy" time for academic staff that wanted to complete their Master's and Doctoral studies. To qualify for the grant, beneficiaries had to complete their studies in two years. They could use the funds to pay for replacement staff, travelling costs related to their research and the costs of finalising the dissertation/thesis. Progress reports had to be submitted every six months, and these were used to monitor their progress.
- The third activity involved capacity development workshops to develop and nurture T-L skills among academic staff. Internal and external accredited service providers were used. Topics covered during the training sessions included teaching strategies, assessment methods, curriculum design and teaching large classes, while assessor and moderator training as well as research supervision were also covered.
- The fourth activity included a more context-specific version of the ICNL and was hosted on the Mafikeng Campus. The course consisted of a comprehensive campus-based version of the original three-day course. Topics covered during the course included orientation to the campus environment, academic support services, library services and an introduction to university teaching strategies. Participants were also assigned to a member of the academic support team as well as a faculty mentor to assist them in a year-long mentorship programme.
- The fifth activity involved the use of student evaluations and feedback to improve the teaching skills of academic staff. Feedback from the evaluations were, for example, also used to help lecturers reflect on their T-L and to assist them in the development of an improvement plan.
- The sixth activity included workshops and ongoing support to empower lecturers on the integration of technology into their T-L practices.
- The seventh activity involved workshops and individual consultations with lecturers during which they were trained on how to use multimedia effectively in their T-L

practices. Lecturers were also regularly updated on latest developments and equipment upgrades.

- The eighth activity involved workshops which were used to empower lecturers on how to design interactive learning materials effectively. The lecturers were also encouraged to explore new technology to develop interactive materials.
- The ninth activity involved a writing school, which was presented by experienced external facilitators who assisted academic staff members in the development of their abilities to publish their research on T-L.
- The tenth activity involved internal workshops on T-L matters in higher education, e.g. curriculum design and development, teaching and learning strategies, assessment strategies and academic student support.
- The 11th activity consisted of the training of academic support staff (ADS) who attended external training opportunities for T-L skills development. This included enrolment in a post-graduate diploma in higher education (for academic developers) at Rhodes University.
- The 12th activity involved a context-specific course for staff based on the Potchefstroom Campus. The course content and format were similar to the course that was presented on the Mafikeng Campus.
- The 13th activity included the training of lecturers in the use of technology standards and the testing of teaching-learning technology.
- The 14th activity involved academic staff participating in externally facilitated workshops and seminars that focused on the development of blended learning.
- The 15th activity also included various presentations, workshops and seminars on aspects of T-L.
- The 16th and 17th activities included the training and development of academic staff to develop e-learning materials, including e-guides (SMART Guides), and the use of tablets for teaching.
- The 18th activity included the development and implementation of a short learning programme in e-learning design.

The development of course materials, the facilitation of training sessions, the use of internal and external facilitators (e.g. their time and expertise), facilities (training rooms), food and beverages, funding, the time involved in obtaining feedback from students, transport and accommodation costs for staff members travelling between campuses, the time staff spent on courses and training sessions and support from students (as assistants) were invested in the programme.

This resulted in a number of new capacity building courses, which were used to train many academic and support staff at the NWU. Some academic staff is now also better qualified as a direct result of some of the activities.

The participants (especially those who were responsible for teacher development) often mentioned that *“the lecturers that were appointed by the university were academically qualified to teach, but that very few of them were teachers”*. Some of the most significant outcomes of the training that academic staff received include:

- An improvement in lecturer-student engagement: According to some of the participants, they noticed an improvement in the manner in which some of the lecturers, especially the more introverted lecturers, interacted with their students.
- Academic staff being better prepared for their classes: Some of the participants reported that they observed a dramatic improvement in the manner in which lecturers prepared for their classes.
- Academic staff being better equipped to handle large groups of students: Large groups of pre-graduate students are a reality at the NWU. This makes it very challenging for some of the lecturers (especially young, in-experienced lecturers) to give their students a high quality of teaching. According to some of the participants, the training that they received, particularly the specialised workshops and ICNL, really helped them to overcome this challenge.
- Academic staff being more aware of and able to cater for the different educational needs of their students: Some of the participants who had no or very little training as teachers reported that they were not always sensitive to the individual learning needs of their students. However, thanks to the training that they received, they are now not only more aware of the individual needs of their students but also able to cater for these needs. This, according to some of the participants, includes referring some of the students with special needs for further support from academic support services.
- Academic staff using self-reflection to improve their teaching abilities: The use of self-reflection to improve a particular aspect of a person’s personal or professional life has proven to be a very effective learning tool (Helyer, 2015). According to some of the participants, they never realised how powerful self-reflection was until they were made aware thereof, and taught how to use it. Many of the participants who participated in the training reported that they are now much better teachers since they started using self-reflection to improve their teaching abilities.

Programme leaders also mentioned that *“academic staff often appeared to be intimidated by technology”*. This was confirmed by some of the participants. For example, according to them, they did not know what types of technology were available or how to use it. Some of the most significant outcomes and impacts in this category therefore include:

- Academic staff being more comfortable with using technology in their teaching practices: A number of participants said that before they were made aware of and trained on how to use technology, they simply did not use it. As a result of the training, they are now able to use more technology in their teaching practices.

- Diverse types of technology being used: Many participants reported that they noticed a very limited use of the range of technology that was available to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching. According to them, they noticed a dramatic increase in the use of new and innovative teaching technologies by academic staff.
- More and creative ways of teaching: Because academic staff is now using more diverse types of technology in their classrooms, they are often more creative in the manner in which they teach. For example, according to one of the participants, he started noticing *“more interactive and more unconventional teaching approaches in which students are taking a much more active role”* in the classes he evaluated.
- More students started using electronic equipment: Because lecturers were more comfortable with the use of technology, more students started using mobile devices such as their cellular phones, tablets, et cetera. According to the participants, this change in behaviour among both students and staff was found to be particularly useful for distance students who live far from the campuses as well as during the #fees-must-fall campaign when the use of technology helped lecturers to stay in contact with their students and to continue their teaching activities.
- Study materials are more readily available: In the past (before the interventions), only hard copies of study materials were available. This made it very difficult for long-distance students to gain access to some of the materials they needed for their studies. Because study materials were made available electronically, many of the materials can be accessed from anywhere where Internet access is available. According to one of the participants, *“electronic versions of learning material and the use of multimedia also make it possible for students to catch-up on lectures that they missed or if they wanted to listen to specific (difficult) lectures again”*. According to the same participant, this proved to be particularly useful at their campus where language barriers are often a big challenge because most lectures are presented in English which, for many, is a second or third language.

Another substantial outcome is the number of academic staff that now holds a Master’s or Doctoral qualification. According to one of the participants, the fact that she now has an advanced degree makes her more credible among her students and peers, and provided her with the experience that she needed to also supervise her own post-graduate students. A number of academic support staff also successfully completed professional/post-graduate diplomas through other universities.

An unplanned positive impact that resulted from the student-lecturer evaluations was that many of the students felt that *“it gave them a voice”*. In other words, it gave them the opportunity to give feedback on the performance of their lecturers. Similarly, it also assisted faculty managers in identifying problem modules, and to determine if lecturers were equipped to teach a module. This, according to some of the participants, *“had a major impact on the quality of teaching at the NWU as well as on student success”*.

Another unexpected positive impact is a general increase in the “*willingness of academic staff to inspire and learn from one another*”. This phenomenon was particularly evident during the ICNL, but was also evident during other types of capacity building sessions. Some of the programme leaders also witnessed a marked increase in the willingness of lecturers to share their personal experiences with other younger and inexperienced colleagues in order to help them improve their own teaching abilities.

Programme 2: Tutoring and mentoring

The overall goal of the second programme was to implement diverse strategies to improve student access and success through well-established and properly managed student support systems. The second programme consisted of nine activities. An overview of the activities, inputs and outputs as well as the outcomes and impacts is provided in figure 3.

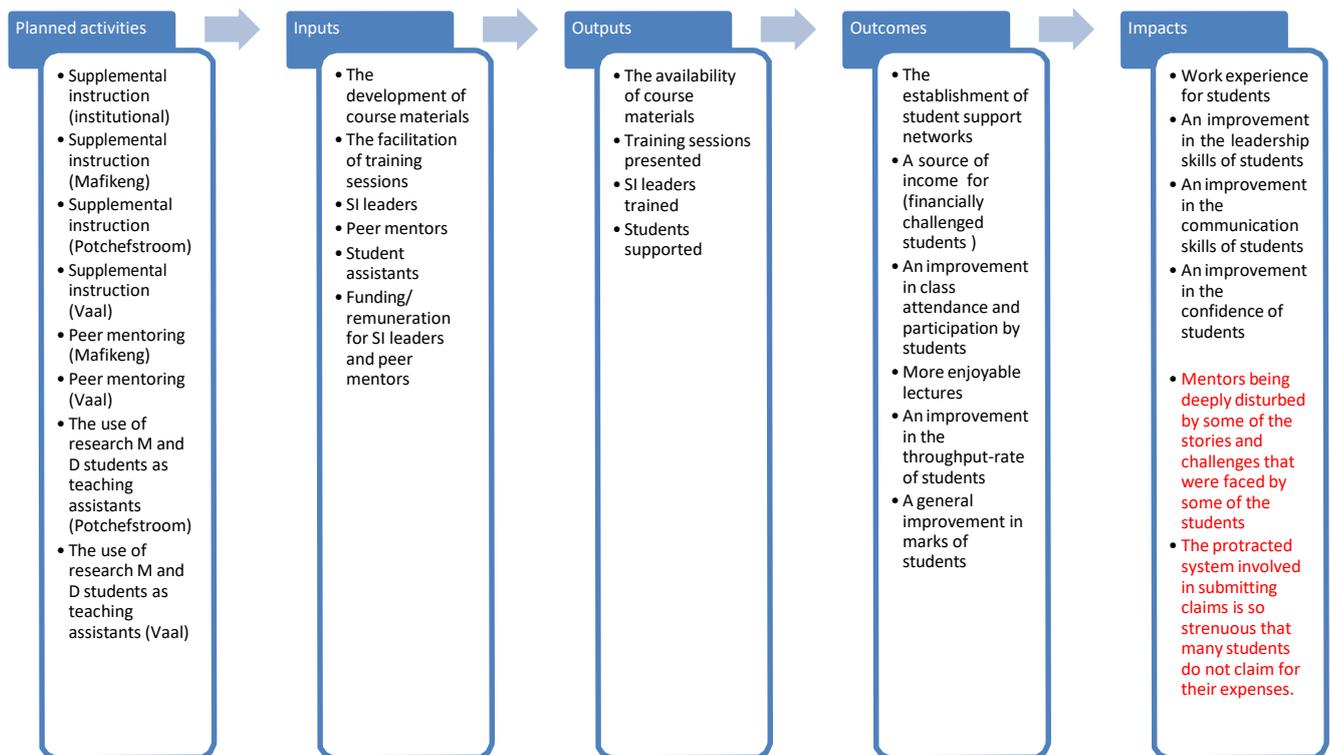


Figure 3: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 2

- The first activity consisted of a peer tutor-based academic assistance programme to support students who were enrolled in at-risk modules³ to assist them in the improvement of their academic skills. Resources required included SI leaders and SI mentors.

³ The NWU SI Policy defines "at-risk" modules as: a) modules with a pass-rate of below 50%; b) modules with large classes; and c) modules with difficult content.

- The second activity consisted of a peer tutor-based academic assistance programme to support students who are enrolled in at-risk modules so that they can improve their academic skills.
- The third activity consisted of a mentoring and ongoing orientation programme for all first-year students. This programme was conducted by senior students in an attempt to provide holistic support to assist students so that they can adapt better to university life, both socially and academically.
- The fourth activity involved a peer tutor-based academic assistance programme to support students who were enrolled in at-risk modules so that they could improve their academic skills.
- The fifth activity involved the use of master's and doctoral students who were deployed as subject-specific lecturing assistants, tutors, demonstrators and mentors in the faculties for student teaching and learning support. These students were also assigned to a mentor within their academic school or faculties.
- The sixth activity involved a peer tutor-based academic assistance programme to support students who are enrolled in at-risk modules so that they can improve their academic skills.
- The seventh activity involved the training of mentors. Two mentor sessions per week were held with mentees, keeping a register of all activities. It also included an annual survey on the success of the programme.
- The eighth activity involved the use of post-graduate students who were appointed in the Faculty of Humanities (Vaal) to assist undergraduate students in psychology to improve drop-out and pass rates.
- The ninth activity involved the appointment of research master's and doctoral students as teaching assistants.

The development of course materials, the facilitation of training sessions, SI leaders, peer mentors, student assistants and funding were invested as the major inputs into the programme (i.e. in the form of remuneration for SI leaders and peer mentors).

This contributed to the availability of new course materials, the presentation of training sessions, the training of SI leaders and the number of students who were actively supported.

As a result, many students have benefited from the programme, including those who were on the receiving end of the interventions and the students who implemented the interventions (the mentors and facilitators of some of the activities which formed part of the programme).

In the case of the students at the receiving end of the interventions, it was clear that some activities contributed to:

- The establishment of student support networks: The peer mentoring programme, for example, provided new students who were unfamiliar with the “*NWU-way of doing things*” with a much needed support network. This took the form of a mentor (typically a senior student) who assisted and supported these students. As part of the programme, the students also received skills that they needed to become successful, e.g. training on study methods, time management, et cetera. The programme also focused on the improvement of their general well-being. Mentors, for example, also reported students who were in need of other types of support services such as career counselling, psychological counselling, medical attention or financial assistance. According to the participants, “*many students benefited from this activity in a positive manner, because it helped students to focus on their studies, while their personal challenges were being taken care of*”.
- A source of income for (financially challenged) students: The money that was paid to student mentors and facilitators as part of SL and peer mentoring really seem to have benefited these students. This was particularly evident in the case of financially challenged students who, according to some of the participants, could “*use the money to pay for the things that were not covered by loans and bursaries*”.
- An improvement in class attendance and participation by students: The participants also reported “*an increase in the number of students who attended class and greater participation among students*”.
- More enjoyable lectures: Many participants reported a “*general improvement in the quality of lectures*”. This was particularly evident during the class evaluations.
- An improvement in the throughput-rate of students: Most of the participants who were involved in the programmes reported “*an increase in the throughput rate of students*”. This, according to some of the participants, “*means that a larger number of students completed their studies*”. As one of the participants put it: “*Our systems seem to be working, and we have the data to prove it.*”
- A general improvement in marks of students: What is more, an increased number of students not only completed their studies, but many also received higher marks as a direct result of the support they received as part of the programmes and activities which formed part of the programmes.

For the students who were responsible for the implementation of some of the activities, their participation contributed to:

- A general improvement in work experience for students: Participation afforded mentors and facilitators the opportunity to gain work experience. According to some of the participants, “*many students listed the experiences they gained while working as mentors and facilitators on their CVs*”.
- An improvement in the leadership skills of students: Participants who were directly involved in the student-based programmes often reported “*an increase in the leadership skills of students*”.

- An improvement in the communication skills of students: All the participants who were involved in the student programmes reported *“an improvement in the students’ abilities to communicate clearly and effectively with their peers”*. This is supported by a statement of one of the participants who said: *“Before the programme, I noticed many students not being able to speak clearly in front of their peers. Now they can do so, so that everyone understands what they are trying to say.”*
- An improvement in the confidence of students: A number of participants reported a general increase in the confidence of the students who acted as mentors and facilitators.

Two unplanned negative impacts that stemmed from the second programme are that some of the student mentors were deeply disturbed by the stories and challenges that were reported by their mentees, to such an extent that they either resigned as mentors or assisted their mentees financially out of their own pockets. According to participants from the Mafikeng Campus, some of the student mentors were *“so shocked about the personal challenges experienced by some of the students that they either became personally involved (by for example giving them some of their personal funds) or decided that they no longer wanted to be mentors”*. In some cases, students also did not claim the funds that were owed to them because of the protracted and strenuous system involved in the claiming process.

Programme 3: Enhancing the status of teaching-learning

The overall goal of the third programme was to enhance the status of T-L by cultivating a culture of excellence in T-L, thereby promoting teaching as intellectual work and as a profession. The third programme included five activities. An overview is presented in figure 4.

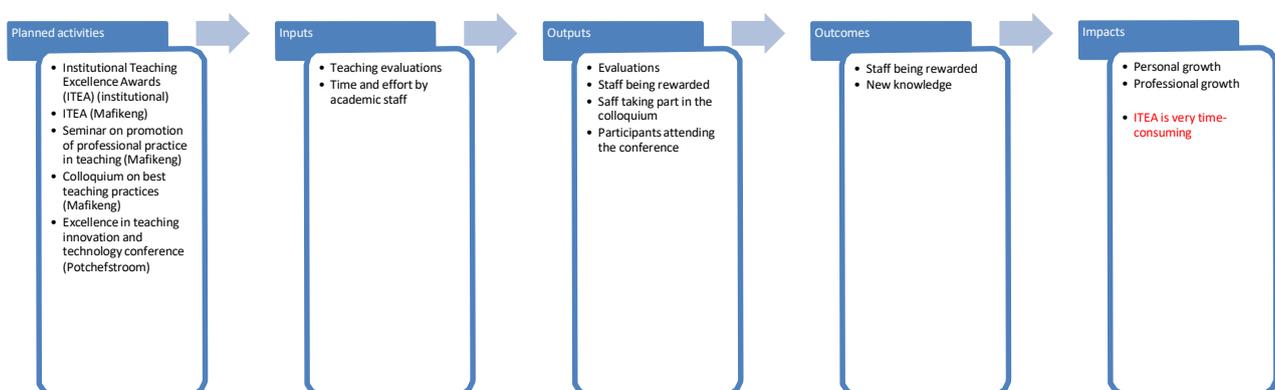


Figure 4: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 3

- The first activity consisted of a systematic framework for the development and recognition of teaching excellence, known as the Institutional Teaching Excellence Awards (ITEA). Candidates are nominated based on observations of the candidate's work during three sessions by a panel, student feedback and the evaluation of their teaching portfolio. The candidates also had to take part in seminars. They were also supported by members of the academic support staff team.
- The second activity is like the first but was listed on a campus level (at the Mafikeng Campus).
- The third activity consisted of a one-day seminar with keynote speakers and a discussion session on topics such as lecturer identity as well as professional ethics and ethos.
- The fourth activity consisted of a colloquium that was aimed at enhancing lecturer confidence, establishing a community of practice and sparking enthusiasm. ITEA participants and lecturers with good practice were invited to share their T-L strategies with their campus community.
- The fifth activity involved an excellence-in-teaching innovation and technology conference. This event was also used to create awareness and to share ideas and opportunities for innovative technologies.

The most significant inputs were the teaching evaluations and the time and effort academic staff had to invest to take part in the awards.

As a result, a number of lecturers were evaluated and rewarded (a good positive outcome). A fairly large number of staff also participated in the colloquium and conference. This greatly contributed to their knowledge base.

The participants agreed that some of the most significant outcomes/impacts were in the context of professional growth. The substantial number of seminars and conferences also seem to have contributed to an improvement in the development of academic staff because, as one of the participants described it, *"it gave them the opportunity to interact with their peers in creative and constructive ways"*. It also provided academic staff with platforms where they could share their ideas and where they could learn from one another.

This further contributed to personal development. Some of the participants who took part in the evaluations that formed part of the rewards programme reported that it gave them a more mature outlook on life, their careers and what they wanted to achieve.

An unplanned negative impact of the awards is that it is very time-consuming. According to some of the participants, some of the academic staff had to withdraw their participation because of other responsibilities such as teaching large classes, student supervision and research. According to them, they *"simply did not have time for all the administration"*.

Programme 4: Researching teaching-learning

The overall goal of the fourth programme was to cultivate communities of inquiry and practice by encouraging the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). This programme included five activities. An overview of these activities is indicated in figure 5.

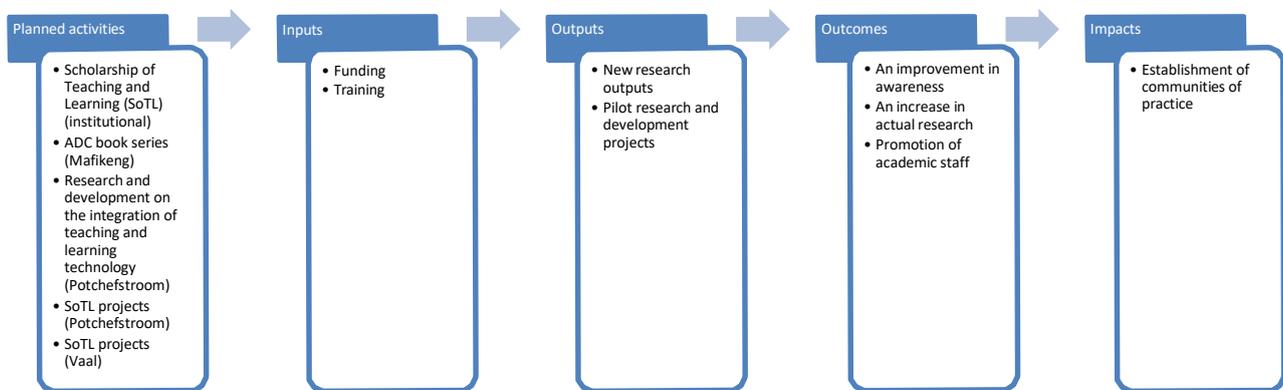


Figure 5: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 4

- The first activity involved the cultivation of a community of inquiry and of practice in T-L through which student learning is improved.
- The second activity included the annual ADC publication and research book series, which afforded lecturers the opportunity to publish papers with original research focused on T-L. All papers are double-blind peer reviewed.
- The third activity involved research and development on the integration of T-L technology. It included several pilot research and development projects. These research projects were conducted under the auspices of the T-L commons project (with technology funded by this project) and were aimed at contributing to a system-wide integration of T-L technology.
- The fourth activity included specific SoTL projects that were implemented on the Potchefstroom Campus.
- The fifth activity included specific SoTL projects that were implemented on the Vaal Campus.

Funding and training were invested as the major inputs into this programme.

This resulted in a number of new research outputs and a number of new and exciting pilot research and development projects (which can also be viewed as an outcome).

One of the most significant outcomes is the fact that this programme contributed to an increase in awareness. According to the participants, this includes *“awareness about the importance of good quality and a high level of T-L, and for specific aspects like the use of blended learning approaches, and the use of technology in the classroom”*. This, however, did not end there.

The new projects also contributed to an increase in actual research. According to some of the participants, *“many of the academic staff who participated in the SoTL projects also published articles and presented papers and posters at national and international conferences”*. This resulted in an increase in the number and quality of research outputs.

Perhaps one of the most significant outcomes/impacts, which were also set out as one of the major goals of the programme, was to establish communities of inquiry and practice in T-L. According to the participants, *“likeminded peers spontaneously started forming small working groups and also started working together on research outputs”*. According to them, this phenomenon was not only evident on a campus level but also spread across the NWU’s three campuses and, in some cases, across different faculties.

The fact that many of the academic staff became more productive researchers, according to them, also helped them to get promotion.

Programme 5: Managing the Teaching Development Grant

The overall goal of the fifth programme was to appoint administrative assistants to coordinate the grant. As indicated in figure 6, only two activities were listed.

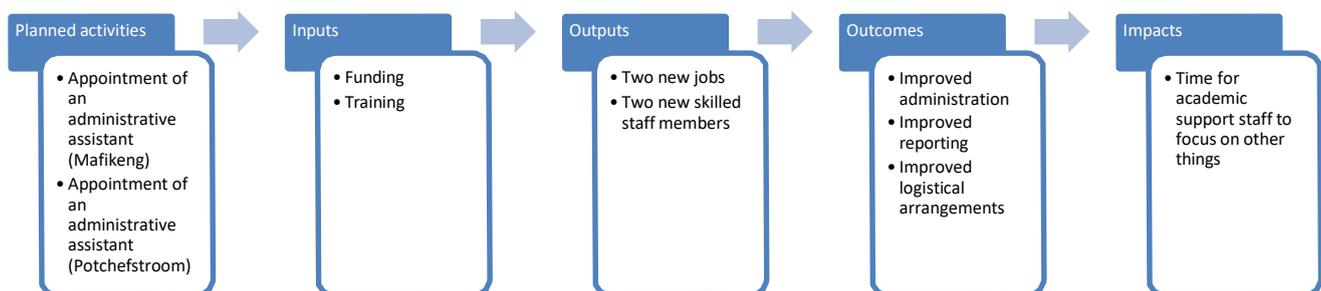


Figure 6: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 5

- The first listed activity involved the appointment of an administrative assistant in the academic development centre at the Mafikeng Campus to assist with the coordination and administration of the TDG activities on the campus.
- The second activity is similar to the first, but was at the Potchefstroom Campus.

Funding and training the new staff members were the main inputs.

This resulted in the establishment of two new jobs and, more importantly, two new skilled staff members for the NWU.

This contributed to a general improvement in the administration of the grant and in reporting. The two assistants also assisted the rest of the academic support staff in all the

preparations for the training activities, handled most of the logistics and reporting and, most importantly, the finances.

This in turn freed up time for academic support staff that could focus on research and many of the outputs that were mentioned earlier.

Programme 6: University priorities

The overall goal of the sixth programme was to identify priorities in terms of the HEQC improvement plan, as well as the preliminary findings of an investigation into the quality of the status of T-L that was undertaken in 2013. The sixth programme comprised seven activities. An overview of these activities can be seen in the first column of figure 7.

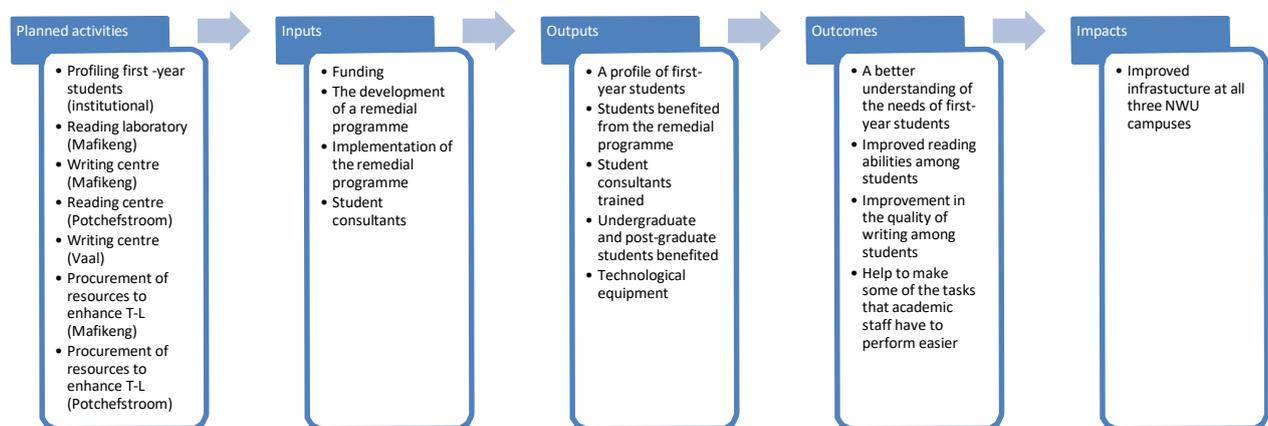


Figure 7: Planned activities, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts related to programme 6

- The first activity consisted of profiling first-year students to determine appropriate intervention strategies and to facilitate an understanding of NWU first-year students.
- The second activity involved the establishment of a reading laboratory at the Mafikeng Campus. All newly enrolled students were required to attend the reading sessions to develop their literacy and reading skills. A remedial programme was also put in place to assist some of the students who were struggling with reading skills.
- The third activity involved the establishment of a writing centre at the Mafikeng Campus. Master's and PhD students assisted both undergraduate and post-graduate students with academic writing. Accordingly, students consult individually or in groups with writing consultants regarding assignments, projects and dissertations.
- The fourth activity involved the establishment of a reading centre at the Potchefstroom Campus. All newly enrolled students are required to attend the reading centre as part of the academic literacy module in order to develop their literacy and reading skills. A remedial programme is also in place to assist some of the students who are struggling academically.

- The fifth activity involved the establishment of a writing centre at the Vaal Campus. At this centre, students are assisted with academic writing skills, and individual appointments are scheduled for consultation.
- The sixth activity involved the procurement of resources (equipment) to enhance T-L at the Mafikeng Campus.
- The seventh activity is similar to the sixth activity but was at the Potchefstroom Campus. This included the procurement of appropriate technological equipment to support academic staff who participated in the Partners@Work (later renamed to Innovators@Work) programme for the promotion of technological innovation in teaching-learning. The specific technology depended on the needs of the project participants but included, for example, the following:
 - Hardware: tablet devices, multi-projection facilities and document cameras
 - Software: e-assessment software, subject-based software and subject-specific databases to support the development of digital study material

Funding, the development of a remedial programmes, the implementation of the remedial programmes and student consultants were the main inputs.

This resulted in the development of a profile of first-year students.

Some of the equipment, another very positive outcome, that was acquired includes specialised facilities at the NWU's Potchefstroom Campus (see figure 8).



Figure 8: Newly acquired (high-tech) facilities at the Potchefstroom Campus

Very advanced and useful equipment was also installed at the Vaal Campus, such as the one-button studio (see figure 9) and recording studios (figure 10) which, according to the participants, are *“often used by students and staff of the NWU to practice their*

presentations or by lecturers to record special lectures that are made available to students as pot-casts”.



Figure 9: One-button studio at the Vaal Campus



Figure 10: Recording studio at the Vaal Campus

The newly acquired equipment, according to the participants, is something that is very useful for planning actions needed to improve student success and throughput. It also resulted in a number of students who benefited from the remedial programmes and the training of a number of student consultants. Ultimately, a large number of undergraduate and post-graduate students benefited from the programme. It also contributed to an increase in the availability of quality technological equipment for T-L practices.

Other activities (such as the reading centres) also contributed to an improvement in the reading abilities among students. This, according to the participants, is something that is likely to contribute to the success of students in their studies.

The writing centres contributed to an improvement in the quality of writing among students. This sentiment was shared by academic support staff and lecturers who were involved in student supervision.

The programme did not only benefit students but also some of the staff by helping them to assess the students' work in a more effective manner.

The most significant outcome is perhaps the improved infrastructure that is now available at all three of the NWU's campuses. This output/outcome is likely to continue to have impacts in the future. In addition, as was the case with some of the other programmes, the availability of improved infrastructure will likely contribute to an increase in the use of technology.

However, according to one of the participants, some of the technology is not yet used in an optimal manner. According to him, further awareness and training are needed in this regard.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this impact evaluation was to determine the perceived impact of the six programmes which formed part of the NWU's TDG on student success and learning as well as on the quality of teachers, teaching and teaching resources. Twenty-one participants participated.

The results indicate that a number of positive outcomes/impacts were achieved by the first programme, which included an improvement in lecturer-student engagement, academic staff being better equipped to handle large groups of students, lecturers being more aware of and able to cater for the different educational needs of their students, and lecturers using self-reflection to improve their teaching abilities. Similar impacts were also documented by Gibs and Coffey (2004) in their evaluation of the impact of training on the teaching skills of teachers. These impacts, according to Ingvarson, Meiers and Beavis (2005), are likely to contribute directly to the quality of teachers and teaching.

It was also found that some of the academic staff at the NWU was initially reluctant to use technology in their classrooms. This was identified by Kopcha (2012) as one of the barriers in efforts to improve the quality of teaching at tertiary institutions. However, the NWU interventions seemed to have worked, because they contributed to a number of other positive outcomes and impacts such as staff being more comfortable with using technology in their teaching practices, diverse types of technology being used, more and creative ways

of teaching being employed and more students starting to use electronic equipment, while study materials are also now more readily available. According to Polly *et al.* (2010) likely to make a big positive impact in the T-L space in the long-term. Especially since, as was also identified in the sixth programme, more staff can now be encouraged to use the improved technology that is now available at the NWU.

Another substantial outcome, linked to the first programme, was the number of academic staff that now holds a Master's or Doctoral qualification. With so many new academic staff now in possession of a higher degree – together with the marked improvement in the quality of teachers and teaching – all of the impacts are likely to equate to an overall improvement in the profile of the NWU over the long term. This is something that could be investigated further in future studies.

In the case of the second programme, it was found that two groups of students benefited from this programme. In the case of the first group, it was found that some activities contributed to the establishment of student support networks, a source of income for (financially challenged) students, an improvement in class attendance and in participation by students in classes and more enjoyable lectures. In addition, a number of unintended positive impacts/outcomes were also identified which included work experience for students, an improvement in the leadership abilities of students, an improvement in the communication abilities of students and an improvement in the confidence of students. All of these factors are also likely to contribute to overall student success and encompass some of the factors that were identified by Ingvarson, Meiers and Beavis (2005).

Other interesting outcomes/impacts related to the second programme include an increase in the throughput-rate of students and a general improvement in the marks of students. Potentially, these indicators can be used in future evaluations to determine the actual impact on student success. The use of specific indicators such as the ones that were used by Trigwell, Caballero and Han (2012) can be considered.

In the case of the third programme, it was found that the most positive outcomes and impacts related to an increase in the professional growth and personal development of academic staff. Both these impacts are likely to contribute to the quality of teachers and teaching (Akerlind, 2003). They are also likely to contribute to student success in the long term (Garet *et al.*, 2001).

The fact that the SoTL projects contributed to an increase in research and, in combination with other programmes, to more research outputs is also good news for the NWU. Attempts should be made to sustain the spread of these positive outcomes over the long term (Haigh, 2012). If this can be sustained, it is also likely to lead to an increase in income for the university (Persellin & Goodrick, 2010). It is something that can influence the NWU's profile as well as its future rating and ranking among other institutions of higher education. It is

also something that seems to have personal benefits for staff because, as some of the participants indicated, it helped them to get academic promotion.

Another very exciting outcome, which was also set out as one of the major goals of the programme, was the establishment of communities of inquiry and practice in T-L. It also makes sense to follow a discipline-based approach, such as proposed by Healey (2000). This aspect was also identified by Ingvarson, Meiers and Beavis (2005) as one of the most important mediating variables when it comes to impact in teacher development.

In the case of the fifth programme, it was found that the appointment of administrative staff contributed to a general improvement in the administration of the grant and in reporting thereon. Perhaps there is a need to build on this in an attempt to further improve the management and future evaluations of the impact of the grant.

Finally, in the case of the sixth programme, it was found that the newly acquired equipment is very useful for planning actions needed to improve student success and throughput. As was discussed earlier, it is likely to be worthwhile to spend more efforts on creating awareness of and opportunities for more academic staff and their students to use the excellent equipment and resources (as indicated in figures 8 to 10) that are available at the NWU.

A couple of unexpected, secondary outcomes and impacts were also recorded. These include that many of the students who took part in the student-lecturer evaluations felt that it empowered them by “giving them a voice”. The use of student evaluations to improve teaching also proved to be a very effective tool (Coffey & Gibbs, 2000) – as became evident in this evaluation.

Another unexpected positive impact linked to the first programme was the general increase in the willingness of academic staff to inspire and learn from one another. This supports Vanclay’s (2012) notion that most interventions can lead to unintended consequences. It is also something that can be used further in activities such as ICNL and ITEA, because it has been shown that peer observation can have a positive impact on the performance of teachers (Donnelly, 2007).

An unintended negative impact of the second programme/some of the activities which formed part of this programme is that some of the student facilitators/mentors were deeply disturbed by some of the stories and challenges faced by some of their mentees. Secondly, the protracted system involved in claiming funds for out-of-pocket financial assistance rendered by facilitators/mentors is so strenuous that many student facilitators/mentors simply do not bother to claim the funds that are owed to them. Both of these negative impacts will have to be mitigated.

An unplanned negative impact of the awards is that they are very time-consuming. This, too, needs to be mitigated so that more staff can participate in the process. This is also a factor that is likely to contribute to the quality of teaching at the NWU in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evidence that emerged from the qualitative evaluation of the perceived impact of the TDG on student success and learning as well as on the quality of teachers, teaching and teaching resources, the results of this evaluation support the fact that the TDG (made available by the Department of Higher Education and Training via the NWU's six programmes) is having substantial positive impacts, which seem to contribute directly to the development of the NWU's staff (e.g. academic and support personnel), the enhancement of student success and learning and the improvement of its teaching resources (infrastructure, equipment, et cetera). This implies that the grant has achieved what it was intended for, that the NWU managed to change what it set out to change and that the manner in which the institution set out to accomplish this change worked. However, a couple of unplanned negative outcomes/impacts were also identified, and attempts to mitigate these ought to be explored in more detail. Other important aspects, which could improve future evaluations, will also have to be looked at, such as the timing of the evaluation, the time available for the evaluation, and the systems and processes that are needed for ongoing monitoring and future evaluations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and conclusion, it is recommended that:

- The timing of the evaluation be reconsidered: The fact that the evaluation took place at the end of the year made it very difficult to source participants. It is suggested that future evaluations take place earlier in the year, once the funding/cycle period has been completed.
- More time and better planning be invested in future evaluations: It is likely that the grant, via the programmes and activities, also contributed to a number of higher level impacts (that are typically psychosocial in nature) amongst the staff and students who benefited from the grant. It will add a lot of value if future evaluations can also include these high-level impacts.
- Because no plans have been made to put the necessary systems and processes for impact evaluation in place, for example to collect data on an ongoing basis, the only design option was to do a qualitative evaluation. It is, therefore, recommended that proper indicators be identified, that baseline data be collected and that all processes (i.e. inputs, outputs, outcomes, et cetera) be

monitored. This will make reporting on and evaluating future impacts easier and less time consuming.

- An unintended negative impact of the ITEA was that it takes a lot of time and a lot of effort from academic staff to complete the process. It is, therefore, recommended that the systems and processes involved be revisited, and that an attempt be made to make this process more effective and less time consuming.
- A second unintended negative impact was that some of the peer mentors were deeply disturbed by the stories and challenges of some of their mentees. It is, therefore, recommended that they receive debriefing and support via the NWU's psychological counselling services.
- A third negative impact relating to students is the protracted system involved in the claiming of funds. An attempt must be made to improve this system so that students can claim the money owed to them much quicker and easier.

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Figure 8: Newly acquired (high-tech) facilities at the Potchefstroom Campus

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