

FET COLLEGES COMING TO GRIPS WITH NEW CURRICULUM

FET Colleges introduced the new Vocational curriculum at the beginning of 2007 for Level 2. The new curriculum provides for outcomes based training, and has been rolled out for Levels 3 and 4 during 2008 and 2009.

Much has been written about the pass rates of students within FET Colleges and Schools. However, says Don Leffler, Director of THSBS not as much has been written about the enormous efforts and resources which have been committed to introducing the new NC V by dedicated specialists; Lecturers and the Department of Education. The literacy level of students is a factor that is grappled with on a daily basis by Lecturers. Text Books are often written in sophisticated English by qualified Educators which can be a challenge for some students studying in their second or third language. Many factors should be considered when debating pass rates; the success of OBE and the value and effectiveness of the NC V and other national education strategies.

KEYS TO SUCCESS: UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

FET College Lecturers, says Don Leffler, has had to come to grips with the requirements of the new Vocational curriculum. In particular, says Don, Lecturers have had to design and develop activities and assessment processes which comply with outcomes based education strategies.

THSBS has, at the request of specific FET Colleges, designed and presented Workshops for Lecturers aimed at assisting Lecturers implement the new curriculum. These Workshops, says Cathy Foden Head of THSBS's KZN campus, have been well received by Lecturers and are adapted by THSBS to satisfy specific FET College requirements for different subjects and levels.

THSBS was contracted by the National Department of Education during 2006 - 2008 to provide training in the NC (V) Level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications in Hospitality, Tourism and Life Orientation. These training sessions were successful in introducing the Lecturers to the new curriculum and, subsequently, many of the FET Colleges have requested more in-depth training and assistance for their Lecturers, says THSBS's Cathy Foden.

The FET Lecturers, says Cathy, are subject matter experts, many with a long history of teaching or with experience in their fields of expertise, and hence this further training has focused on strategies and methodologies of course delivery and assessment practice in Outcomes Based Education within the NC (V).

OBE is a different method of teaching and poses many challenges for the Lecturer, says Cathy Foden. It is not the subject content that is problematic, but more the practical application of meeting the criteria of OBE. Cathy said that from THSBS's training experiences with FET Colleges, it is apparent that the lecturers require further guidance with planning the years programme, balancing the theory and practical application of the subject content, formulating Learner tasks and activities, Student and Lecturer Portfolios of Evidence and most importantly conducting assessments, reporting and recording in terms of the assessment criteria in the new curriculum.

As a result of the challenges being faced by FET College Lecturers, THSBS is not only providing further training in specific NC (V) subjects, but is also providing a workshop focusing on assessment in the NC (V) in both the Vocational and Fundamental subjects.

THSBS's Cathy reported that this training will provide the FET College Lecturers with a practical application of assessment where calculation of topic weightings, mark allocations and recording findings is undertaken. In addition, Student and Lecturer Portfolio's of Evidence are assembled to standards in accordance with the Department of Education requirements.

THSBS has a team of specialist Facilitators and Assessors who have the knowledge and experience to provide training workshops on the new FET College curriculum in all Provinces within South Africa. FET College Lecturers who have attended the THSBS programmes have responded very favourably to this initiative and, says THSBS's Cathy Foden, feel more confident in facing the challenges of effectively implementing the new curriculum for the benefit of the Learners.

Further information on the THSBS Workshops may be obtained from further Cathy Foden or Don Leffler at the **Tourism, Hospitality & Sport Business School** at info@tourismtraining.co.za

Website: www.thsbs.com