

Newsletter 1

October 2016

PrimTEd

## The Phase 1 budgets are officially approved

The Director General Department of Higher Education and Training has approved the overall PrimTEd project plan and the allocation of the Phase 1 budgets to the work groups. The DHET is also sending letters to the relevant Deans.

## More funds already!

Good news on the fundraising front is that JET has managed to raise the funds to support the work of the National Coordination and Management Body. This frees up additional funding for programme work by the Working Groups.

## National Coordination and Management Body

The Department of Higher Education and Training was concerned that it did not have the capacity to coordinate the PrimTEd, given its large and complex nature, and required an agent to undertake this work.

This was announced by Dr Whitty Green at the National Seminar in Pretoria in March this year. DHET would prefer to work with the JET Education Services on this task, given JET's involvement in the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) sector, through the Initial Teacher Education Research Programme (ITERP), over the last six years.

JET's main task here is to take responsibility for the overall programme management and coordination, which will entail:

- being the 'engine room' for the programme – it will hold things together and ensure that projects are kept on track.
- providing both intellectual and technical guidance to the subject-based working groups (WGs) and cross-cutting working groups (CCWGs).
- coordinating activities across the WGs and CCWGs to ensure effective and efficient implementation to meet the deliverables for the projects, to ensure integration across projects, to minimize potential duplication and to ensure that projects get the technical assistance they need.
- organising the annual dialogue event for the programme
- providing quarterly reports on project implementation to the National Advisory Committee and annual reports to the DHET
- acting as secretariat to the National Advisory Committee.

# WORK GROUP NEWS



**Developing new teacher graduate's ability to teach literacy in African languages and in English First Additional Language with a special focus on reading.**

“*In light of the new budget constraints and academic workloads across institutions, it does not make sense to duplicate work. Combining the working groups has advantages for capacity building across Higher Education Institutions.*”

## Literacy Work Groups – Consolidated Literacy Work Group (CLWG)

### And then there was one ....

First one of the original work groups (that dealing with teaching literacy in multilingual environments) faded away.

Then, the co-ordinators of the two remaining literacy working groups, WG1 (Developing new teacher graduate's ability to teach literacy in African languages with a special focus on reading) and WG2 (Developing new teacher graduate's ability to teach literacy in English First Additional language with a special focus on reading), met, together with the co-ordinator of Cross Cutting Working Group 1 (CCWG1) (Knowledge management, including materials development, monitoring & evaluation liaison, communication, marketing and network coherence).

This meeting was a result of the conversations that transpired on 24 June about possible overlap and duplication in the two literacy working group proposals and the absence of a proposal on teaching literacy in a multilingual environment. The two literacy working group coordinators had informally discussed with Whitty Green (of the Department of Higher Education and Training) the possibility of streamlining the projects of the literacy working groups and involving Cross Cutting Work Group 1 in these discussions.

An agreement was made to form a merged group that will be better able to produce the four deliverables of the PrimTEd project (teaching standards, curriculum frameworks, materials, assessment tools).

The decision to reconfigure the language and literacy working groups into a Consolidated Literacy Working Group (CLWG) was made largely because of the commonalities between them. In light of the new budget constraints and academic workloads across institutions, it does not make sense to duplicate work. Combining the working groups has advantages for capacity building across Higher Education Institutions.

Obviously people from the original set of work groups are welcome to join the new Consolidated Literacy Work Group (CLWG) as are members from the cross-cutting groups.

## African languages focus

Lilli Pretorius has written to various people who have published on decoding in African languages and they have sent PDF copies of articles or Masters dissertations. Now she has a basic list, she is needing to make time for the annotated bibliography. Please can anybody who has or knows of articles or any written research (e.g. M or PhD studies), specifically on decoding aspects of reading in the African languages, please email details and if possible, copies to Lilli Pretorius at [Pretoej@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Pretoej@unisa.ac.za)

## English First Additional language focus

Kerryn Dixon, like Lilli, is working on an annotated bibliography (local and international) of language and literacy teaching in Foundation stage in home language and FAL.

## General

The CLWG hopes that in the next month or so it will develop a model for working collaboratively on a literature review that can be rolled out for other literature reviews in later phases of the project. Kerryn Dixon is also writing a brief on the accessing National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) and Test of Academic Literacy Levels (TALL) data for future use in relation to educator competencies. A larger project at this stage, which will be overseen by Yvonne Reed is an audit of HEI language, literacy and reading qualifications, courses, modules, and materials, etc. This project will collect information to enable analysis of HEI teacher training qualifications to ascertain how proposed courses/modules/course outlines/plans for curriculum redesign/materials, WIL requirements, prescribed readings/textbooks, etc. are currently articulated, taking into account the Minimum Requirements for teacher Education Qualifications.

The CLWG wonders if the Maths groups would want the kind of analysis of qualifications and courses that we are starting with for Literacy. The reason is that if they do, there is some point in doing it at the same time and instead of two botherings of education departments at the universities to send us material and course lists there is only one imposition, albeit for both literacy and maths.

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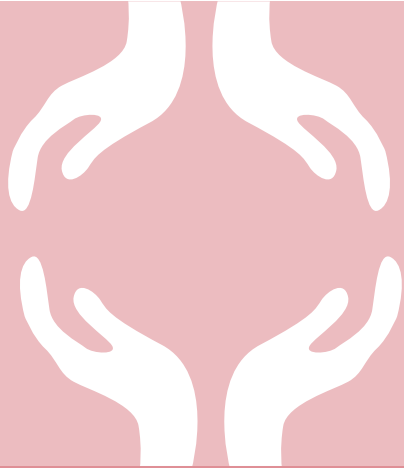
# Mathematics Work Groups

## Maths Indaba

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) intends holding a Maths Indaba in mid- to late-October, on the theme: Meaningful and Effective Mathematics Teaching and Learning: In Search of the 'South African Pedagogical Identity'. What do the Maths Work Groups think of this proposal?

## SAARMSTE

The Maths workstreams and the Work Integrated Learning Group will be presenting at SAARMSTE in January 2017.



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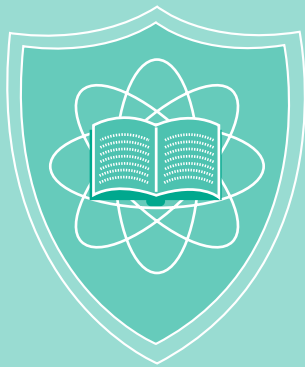


# Cross-cutting Work Groups

## Cross-Cutting Work Group 1 (CCWG1)

An initial tentative agreement has been made that a website will be set up for the PrimTEd Project on the JET server. Parts of it will be accessible only to the various work groups. Equally tentative arrangements have been made with the DHET who have been working for some time on the development of a website portal on which our finished products can be made accessible to Higher Education Institutions.

Whitty Green has been collating the materials collected by the Foundation Phase research and development project funded by the European Union a few years ago. Much of the material was developed by universities with their own specific programmes in mind. In due course a comprehensive list of this will be completed and electronic copies made available on the PrimTEd website shortly. Some of this material could be used as the focus for national workshops for discussion and analysis by subject experts, with particular reference to their use in current Bachelor of Education programmes. We could start small with Work Group members then widen them to include all Higher Education institutions and appropriate education NGOs. Whitty notes that the materials on number sense and counting struck him as one possible starting point.



**Knowledge management, including materials development, Monitoring and Evaluation liaison, communication, marketing and network coherence.**

## Cross-Cutting Work Group 2 (CCWG2)

This working group, looking at both mathematics and language/literacy assessment has the University of Johannesburg as the lead university and they are working on having face-to face meetings to move things forward for the rest of 2016 and to plan for the next three Phases of the project.

Prof Elbie Henning has agreed to join this assessment group to bring in some of the language and literacy perspectives. The group is looking for more people able to work on language and literacy assessments to come into the Working Group.

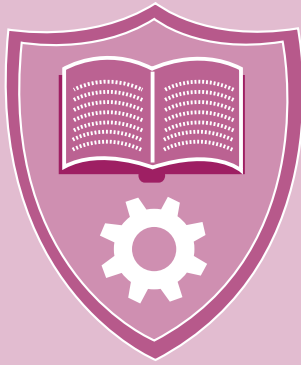
Nicky Roberts has submitted a proposal for a Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education (SAARMSTE) round-table which will allow for an update and consultation on PrimTEd mathematics to be held at the next SAARMSTE conference and which would involve Bruce Brown (WG5 – Mathematical thinking), ig ideas, Rajendran Govender (WG4 Geometry), Corin Matthews (WG3 Number and Algebra), and Charisma Nel - CCWG3 (Work Integrated Learning).

Together with JET, Kelello has been collecting existing assessments focused on Teacher knowledge for primary mathematics (with contributions from Hamsa Venkatakrishnan at Wits Maths Connect Project, input from Mel Graven, Nic Spaull, as well as from Nick Taylor at JET).



**Developing assessment instruments to assess developing competence of primary teacher education students and new primary teacher graduates.**

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**Work-Integrated Learning:**  
Developing models  
and tools to support  
enable effective work-  
integrated learning in  
primary teacher education  
students in the areas of  
literacy/languages and  
mathematics teaching.

## Cross-Cutting Work Group 3 (CCWG3)

This group have developed a survey questionnaire that will be sent out to the all the other groups. Its purpose is to collect information about structural and programmatic features of WIL at the various institutions. We need to know who is involved with developing and coordinating WIL, because we realised that it is very diverse and also that various people were involved and that they were not necessarily language or maths specialists.

In addition, one of the main objectives of the group for Phase 1 is to get everybody on board with regard to a proposed WIL curriculum framework – so we are busy developing a draft document (based on literature mainly) for your comment. The second step will be to get input from all stakeholders.

We are also starting to put in place in the building of relationships with our partners at the Departments of Education (at district level) and also schools that will be participating in our “pilot” (i.e., teaching schools and professional practice schools).

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## A general issue - ethical clearance

Nick Taylor reports gaining ethical clearance from all the universities may be a huge task, if the experience of the Initial Teacher Education Research Project is anything to go by - it took many months!

We therefore need to be clear, first, as to whether we need it, and second, if we do, what we are going to ask for.

Certainly some working groups will be asking the universities for copies of curricula, etc. to be used for descriptive and comparative purposes. But are these not in principle, public documents anyway? What else? Interviewing academics about these curricula?

**What are your views on this? Please let us know.**

The PrimTEd Project is a component of the Department of Higher Education and Training's Teaching and Learning Development Capacity Improvement Programme (TLDCIP), and as such is under the overall authority of the DHET's Director-General. The PrimTEd Project is managed by the Chief Directorate for Teaching and Learning Development, located in the University Education branch of the DHET.



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