



2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) REPORT

HELTASA's **mission and vision** is to promote quality in higher education practice through the creation of a synergistic network and the professionalisation of higher education practitioners in Southern Africa in three main areas of focus: policy matters in higher education; developmental practice and educational research.

The core values of HELTASA are: collegiality; professionalism; quality; equity; excellence; development; creativity; criticality; innovation.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. CONFERENCES	2
3. 2014 AT A GLANCE.....	2
4. SPECIAL EXECUTIVE MEETING.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
5. COLLABORATIONS AND PROJECTS	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
6. HELTASA/CHE TEACHING AWARDS.....	4
7. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)	4
8. CONCLUSION	5
<i>Financial report</i>	5
<i>Elections/Vacancies</i>	5

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Dr Amanda Hlengwa, *Deputy Chairperson:* Dr Melanie Skead, *Treasurer:* Dr Delysia Timm, *Secretary:* Dr Jo-Anne Vorster, Dr Pieter du Toit, Dr Azwy Tshivhase (Conference 2013), Dr Masebala Tjabane, Ms Kasturi Behari-Leak, Prof Brenda Leibowitz, Prof Francois Strydom (Conference 2014), Mr Maneotsile Mohlake, Mr Siyabulela Sabata

1. INTRODUCTION

HELTASA has come a long way since its re-launch in 2006. It is now the premier organisation for learning and teaching in Southern Africa providing support for hundreds of professionals working in the field of higher education teaching and learning across the region.

Currently, the association has six active Special Interest Groups (SIGs). HELTASA and the Council on Higher Education (CHE) have convened the National Excellence in Teaching Awards for the past six years. In September 2014 the two parties renewed their commitment to raising the profile of, and supporting excellence in, teaching and learning by extending their long-standing memorandum of understanding in relation to the administration of the awards.

2. CONFERENCES

We are grateful to Dr Azwy Tshivhase and the University of South Africa team for convening the 2013 HELTASA conference. The conference attracted 312 delegates with 130 abstracts, six workshops and 29 poster presentations.

It is a great pleasure to announce that we have volunteers to host the following forthcoming conferences:

2015: North-West University

2016: Western Cape Universities (in conjunction with ICED)

2017: Durban University Technology

3. 2014 AT A GLANCE

- The Executive Committee held an important special two-day meeting with influential past executive committee members to help shape the strategic plan of HELTASA for the next five years.
- A new HELTASA website aimed at providing up-to-date information on HELTASA activities as well as HE-related news was launched in July.
- The Teaching Excellence Award MoU between CHE and HELTASA was renewed.
- Professionalization of the activities of the HELTASA Executive Committee.

4. SPECIAL EXECUTIVE MEETING - APRIL 2014

- In April 2014, Dr Matete Madiba, former HELTASA chair, led a consultative process between the current Executive Committee and former Executive Committee members who are leaders in the field of Academic Development. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of HELTASA's achievements to date and to deliberate on how HELTASA could continue to fulfil its vision and mission in the future. It was noted that HELTASA enjoyed national and international recognition. This was evident from invitations for HELTASA to be represented on the Teaching Development Grants advisory panel as well as to become a member of the ICED Board.
- Part of HELTASA's five year plan is to develop a reputable presence in the policy arena. It was agreed that HELTASA should continue to develop and support initiatives aimed at fostering and sustaining partnerships between the organization and various actors in the Higher Education sector.
- Over the next five years HELTASA will focus on the following: building of a scholarly community, strengthening and supporting SIG activities, pay attention to achieving a more even spread of award winners from across all HEIs.

5. COLLABORATION AND PROJECTS

- HELTASA's international visibility has increased considerably over the last few years as a result of the organisation's membership of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED). The Western Cape conveners of ICED 2016 made a memorable impression at the ICED 2014 conference with a video presentation advertising the ICED 2016 conference. More than ten South African scholars presented papers at ICED 2014. The active participation of South African scholars drew attention to efforts to advance teaching and learning in the SADC region.
- The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) approved a collaborative Teaching Development Grant (TDG) led by Professor Brenda Leibowitz for a project that "... aims to contribute towards the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education in South Africa by supporting the development of a cadre of academics across institutions and disciplines as scholars, leaders and mentors in their fields". For the next three years TGD funds will be used to pilot a teaching fellowship programme for a cohort of 25-30 participants from across the country. Invitations were extended to all public institutions in South Africa to nominate academics to participate in the Teaching Advancement in University (TAU) Fellowship.

The TDG advisory panel recommended that the co-ordinating team conduct a study visit to Canada and the USA to learn about successful schemes such as the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education (FAIMER) and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE). The visit is planned for May 2015

- HELTASA is a partner in another collaborative TDG project led by Professor James Garraway from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The aim of the “Enhancing the scholarship of teaching and learning in Teaching Development Grant activities” is “*to give conceptual development and writing support to staff working on TDG projects across all universities in South Africa, so that national collaborative projects can be identified and developed towards a 2016 international conference*”. HELTASA is to host this project since the SIGs will contribute to preparing and writing up TDG-funded research projects as well as developing support material to improve teaching and learning. It is envisaged that the research generated from regional working groups focused on TDG activities in the SIGs will be presented at ICED 2016.

6. HELTASA/CHE TEACHING AWARDS

The HELTASA Executive Committee would like to thank the National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards Committee for their hard work in making this year’s selection process a success. Their efforts in evaluating portfolios were especially stellar.

In 2014 18 applications were received from 11 institutions. The committee short-listed 11 applicants who were subsequently interviewed via Skype. The five winners were announced at the gala dinner during the 2014 conference. On the last day of the conference the winners participated in a panel presentation. The winners attended the conference free of charge.

7. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

Dr Melanie Skead, in her capacity as the SIG liaison person, contacted all the SIG co-ordinators early in 2014. This communication was in response to concerns raised in the special executive meeting held in April (see section 4) regarding the adequacy of support received by the SIGs. A letter was addressed to each SIG co-ordinator to ascertain the level of functionality of the SIGs. Each SIG co-ordinator was also requested to provide an update on SIG information on the new HELTASA website (see section 3). The co-ordinators provided information related to past SIG activities as well as a two-year plan for activities for 2014 and 2015. In addition a meeting of all SIG coordinators was held during HELTASA 2014. There is a need to ensure that SIG activities are aligned with the vision and mission and the strategic initiatives of HELTASA such as the collaborative TDG

led by Professor James Garraway from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (see section 5).

8. CONCLUSION

The Chair would like to thank all members of the Executive Committee for their invaluable contributions to HELTASA during 2014.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The **financial statement** is included in the conference package and is open for discussion.

ELECTIONS / VACANCIES

Elections will be held to fill vacancies.

Dr Amanda Hlengwa (Chairperson)



.....
29 November 2014