EVALUATING THE LEAP EXPERIENCE USING A CONTEXTUALLY ORIENTED MODEL

CECILIA JACOBS

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a model for the evaluation of educational innovation in a context of transformation. The model incorporates formative, summative and illuminative evaluation goals and emphasises the need to locate the innovation which is being evaluated within the context and policy framework of its operation. The evaluation framework provided by the model takes into account the full range of variables impacting on innovative educational practice and subjects the innovation, along with its transforming educational context, to the scrutiny of evaluation. The ten-stage generalised evaluation model is presented as a framework for the evaluation of any type of educational innovation.

In this study the model is applied to the evaluation of an innovative intervention, LEAP (Learning in English for Academic Purposes), at a tertiary institution in South Africa. The LEAP course aims to develop English academic literacy skills in students, foster student-centred learning and teaching and promote the transfer of academic literacy skills across the curriculum. The background to, theoretical underpinnings and development of the course are expanded on in the study. In line with the model, the LEAP intervention is located within the context and policy framework of its academic context. The principal stakeholders in the LEAP intervention are identified. They are used as sources to identify the aspects of LEAP to be evaluated, as well as to identify the criteria for evaluation. An eclectic approach is adopted in the evaluation of the LEAP course. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are employed, using a variety of instruments. A range of sources is consulted to cross-validate the analysis of the data, and recommendations are made on the basis of conclusions drawn from the interpretation of the data. The final section of the study reflects on the whole evaluation process and areas for further research are also discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

FRAMING THE STUDY

1.   INTRODUCTION

Practices and policies relating to access and admission to tertiary institutions in South Africa have changed over the past decade. These changes have heralded an era of more open admissions policies and practices where potential students, who were previously denied access through discriminatory legislation and the exclusive entrance requirements of tertiary institutions, now have an opportunity to further their studies. These changes have necessitated innovative interventions at the levels of student learning, teaching methodology and the tertiary curriculum. Interventions at the level of student learning became necessary since the debased secondary education system which the majority of the students were coming through, had inadequately prepared them for the demands of tertiary education. Interventions at the levels of tertiary teaching methodology and curriculum became necessary as well, since the content-overloaded curricula and transmissive, lecture-style presentations which predominate in this sector were reinforcing the rote-learning patterns entrenched at secondary level. The LEAP (Learning in English for Academic Purposes) course, further discussed and evaluated in this thesis, is an attempt to address the need for an academic development (hereafter AD) intervention at first-year level.

2.   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate an innovative intervention (LEAP) at Peninsula Technikon, namely, an academic literacy course designed to improve student retention and academic success. The secondary purpose was to develop a theoretical framework (model) for the evaluation of innovative interventions at tertiary level and to evaluate the LEAP intervention within such a framework.

The model developed in this study provides a flexible framework for the evaluation of educational innovation, in a context of transformation. It was developed after the researcher had surveyed other evaluation models presented in the literature, and found

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them inappropriate when applied to a context of transformation. The model was therefore derived from a combination of reading and the evaluation experience of the researcher.

The model incorporates formative, summative and illuminative evaluation goals and emphasises the need to locate the innovation which is being evaluated within the context and policy framework of its operation. The evaluation framework provided by the model takes into account the full range of variables impacting on innovative educational practice and subjects the innovation, along with its transforming educational context, to the scrutiny of evaluation.

This ten-stage generalised evaluation model can be used as a framework for the evaluation of any type of educational innovation. Each of the ten stages, which are expanded on and discussed in detail in the thesis, is illustrated in the evaluation of the LEAP intervention. The demonstration of the model in use provides practical guidance for prospective evaluators of innovative educational practices at transforming tertiary institutions.

3.   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Globally, educational evaluation is increasingly becoming a part of educational policy. In its final recommendations to the Minister of Education, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) states that "[T]he issue of the quality of higher education programmes has become a priority on the international agenda as a way of ensuring accountability and value for money" (NCHE Report, 1996: 107). In South Africa, where policy is in the process of being formulated for a transformed education system, a keen awareness of the importance of evaluation and quality assurance in education is evident in state policy documents. The state-appointed NCHE, in its final report to the Minister of Education on a new policy framework for higher education transformation, proposes a Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) as an "umbrella body for co-ordinating quality assurance in higher education, with specialist bodies undertaking the external evaluation function" (NCHE Report, 1996:109). The report further proposes that such a system be underpinned by a combination of institutional self-evaluation and external

evaluation. State acceptance of these proposals is evident in the 1996 Green Paper on Higher Education as well as the 1997 Draft White Paper on Higher Education. This awareness, especially regarding evaluation in the tertiary education sector, brings a welcome change to an education sector previously lacking in a culture of evaluation.

There is a dearth of evaluation models relating directly to academic development. Since AD has become the site, in most tertiary institutions, for initiating transformation and innovation, the evaluation model developed in this study aims to address this dearth. This model is flexible enough to be adapted for the evaluation of any kind of AD intervention, from academic literacy courses to staff development workshops, and a wider application of the model could contribute towards the building of a culture of evaluation, so necessary in tertiary education during the present period of educational transformation in South Africa. There is also a dearth of South African research into educational evaluation. This research could bring about a better understanding of the evaluation needs of the transforming South African educational situation.

Furthermore, the evaluation model applied in this study could provide a quality assurance framework for institution-wide evaluation. Since the Technikon, through its career-focussed provision of education, collaborates very closely with industry, any quality assurance framework informing Technikon education will directly benefit industry, the sector for which Technikon students are largely being prepared.

4.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Although a literature survey and the personal experience of the researcher were used to achieve the secondary purpose of this study, participatory action research was the methodology employed towards achieving the primary purpose of this study. This was because an AD intervention, designed to affect human behaviour and bring about educational reform, was evaluated in this study. The nature of this purpose of the study therefore precluded research methods from the positivist research tradition. The positivist approach has its roots in the Physical Sciences and its rigorous experimental design with its emphasis on control does not adapt well when applied to educational research. Although this approach is still prevalent in South African educational research, "the relevance of the 'positivist' research tradition is being widely questioned

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in and for current contexts" (Van Rensburg, 1995). The interpretive tradition emerged with the shift away from positivism (Schwandt 1990, Goodman 1992). This trend rejects the "de-humanising and technicist elements of the positivist research tradition" and lays its emphasis on "the meanings constructed by individuals and the complexities of educational situations" (Van Rensburg, 1995). According to Carr and Kemmis (1986:156) "positivism views educational reform as technical; interpretive research views it as practical." Both the positivist and interpretive approaches, according to Carr and Kemmis, see the researcher as standing outside the researched situation, disinterested in critically evaluating or changing the educational realities being analysed. In the action research tradition, however, educational reform is viewed as participatory and collaborative. Educational research is thus "conducted by those involved in education themselves" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:156). Practitioners are therefore directly involved in theorising their own practices, understandings and situations. Action research therefore sees education as a dynamic process aimed at transforming situations which impede the achievement of educational goals, where positivism, by contrast, sees education as "a purely technical process of achieving higher yields of educational attainment" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:180).

Cohen and Manion refer to action research as "a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention" (1980:217). They further identify the following tangible features of this research method: that it is situational, collaborative, participatory and self-evaluative. This study chose the specific context of the Technikon, it was collaborative as the researcher and practitioners were working together on evaluating the LEAP intervention, it was participatory as the team members were directly involved in implementing the research and the research was participatory in the intervention evaluated; and it was self-evaluative in that the continuous evaluation of the intervention informed ongoing practice.

Ebbutt (in Burgess 1985:152) defines more specifically educational action research as "the systematic study of attempts to change and improve educational practice by groups of participants by means of their own practical actions and by means of their own reflection upon the effects of those actions." This study evaluated an AD intervention attempting to change and improve educational practice at the Technikon. This study

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also evaluated both teaching practice and student learning using a variety of data collection methods in order to reflect on the effects of the intervention.

Since evaluators conduct their investigations in a real context and not in artificially controlled laboratory settings, the issue of validity was called into question. However, if a study is to have any implications for practice, it has to take reality into account and the environment therefore cannot be artificially controlled. Beretta (1986) suggests that relevance be prioritised above the issue of control. However, he acknowledges that validity is of crucial importance to any researcher who wishes to generalise her findings. So, he suggests the following ways in which the evaluator might increase the 'generalisability' of her findings. The settings of the evaluations should reflect reality, so that the researcher can confidently extrapolate to other settings. The elements or components impacting on the intervention cannot be segmented or treated as isolated variables, since these variables may exhibit different effects when treated this way than they would when treated in combination. The population from which the sample is drawn should correspond closely to the population to which the researcher wishes to generalise. Beretta's final point on validity relates to duration. The intervention should be evaluated over a period of time which reflects real conditions. In conclusion Beretta states that "if we use all the means at our disposal of documenting what happens when innovations are implemented and if we use such controls as are feasible and desirable, we at least arrange our priorities to provide for plausible extrapolation" (1986:152). This advice was reflected in the variety of data collection methods and sources consulted in this study.

Cohen and Manion (1980:220) outline five categories into which they classify the purposes of educational action research. The primary purpose of this study, to evaluate an AD intervention, falls into category 3, namely that "it is a means of injecting additional or innovatory approaches to teaching and learning into an ongoing system which normally inhibits innovation and change." They also trace eight possible stages and procedures that may be followed in an action research programme. Action research literature does not always agree on the number of stages involved in the action research programme or on a metaphor for the process, with some researchers (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988, Elliot 1991) referring to it as spiral and others such as Winter (1993),

seeing it as a series of successive cycles. However, all literature sees the action research process as being cyclical, involving planning, acting, observing and reflecting. This process is reflected in the chapters following this one.

The research conducted in this study includes the methodologies of literature review, consultation with various stakeholders using both qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as the application of this research through the evaluation of an actual AD intervention. A variety of data collection methods were used such as questionnaires, interviews, personal observation and scrutiny of relevant documentation.

The pilot implementation year of the LEAP course was evaluated as a preparatory study to inform this research. The results of this largely qualitative research indicated that the course was well received and valued by both students and facilitators. However, the results also indicated that AD interventions could not be evaluated in isolation, but needed to be evaluated as an integral part of the academic context which shaped their chances of success or failure. This realisation then influenced the development of the evaluation model which was then used as the guiding conceptual framework for the evaluation of the full LEAP intervention.

The study consists of eight chapters. This first chapter provides an overview of the study by discussing its purposes, outlining the background and explaining the research methodology chosen. The second chapter presents a ten-stage generalised evaluation model which provides the conceptual framework for the evaluation of the LEAP intervention in the later chapters. The third chapter is a critical exposition of the history and development of LEAP and provides the theoretical basis for the direction of the LEAP course curriculum development. The fourth chapter locates the LEAP intervention within the context and policy framework of its operation, determines the goals of the evaluation and identifies the principle stakeholders in the evaluation of LEAP.

The final four chapters describe, analyse and reflect on the qualitative and quantitative research undertaken in evaluating the impact of the LEAP course. Chapter 5 introduces the formative evaluation phase by outlining the aims and scope of this phase, discussing the aspects and criteria identified for evaluation, indicating the sources of evaluative

information and explaining the methods of data collection employed. Chapter 6 summarises, analyses and interprets the qualitative data collected during the formative evaluation phase. Chapter 7 introduces the summative evaluation phase by outlining the aims and scope of this phase, discussing the aspects identified for evaluation, exploring some of the difficulties inherent in obtaining and analysing quantitative data and finally interpreting the data obtained. Chapter 8 makes recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data emerging from the formative and summative phases. The whole evaluation process is also reflected on and areas for further research are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

A MODEL FOR EVALUATING EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

1. INTRODUCTION

Evaluators of academic development interventions at tertiary institutions need to take into account the peculiar nature of academic development (hereafter referred to as AD) work. By its nature this kind of work is innovative as it seeks to address the challenges of a tertiary education sector in transformation by responding to the needs of its academic communities. While academic communities, for the most part, are aware of the need for individual and institutional transformation, they often view innovative interventions with fear and suspicion. There is also a range of interpretations as to how and where transformation should take place, all of which is compounded by a lack of shared understandings regarding AD work. Due to all the uncertainty and insecurity surrounding the issue of AD, most interventions occur outside of the funded, mainstream functioning of institutions. It is my contention that this context, within which AD interventions operate, requires an extensive evaluation framework which takes into account the full range of variables impacting on such interventions. Such a framework could serve to strengthen the presently marginalised position of AD in the tertiary education sector.

This chapter presents a ten-stage generalised model, developed by the author, for the evaluation of AD interventions at tertiary education institutions. Each stage in the evaluation process, as represented in the model, is then expanded on and discussed in detail. In chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 the application of this general model is demonstrated through the evaluation of LEAP (an AD intervention at Peninsula Technikon).

2. THE EVALUATION MODEL

The model (see figure 2.1) consists of 10 general stages in the process of evaluating an AD intervention. While generalised models of evaluation are commonly found in the evaluation literature (see Guba and Lincoln, 1989:186-187; Madaus et al, 1983), it is

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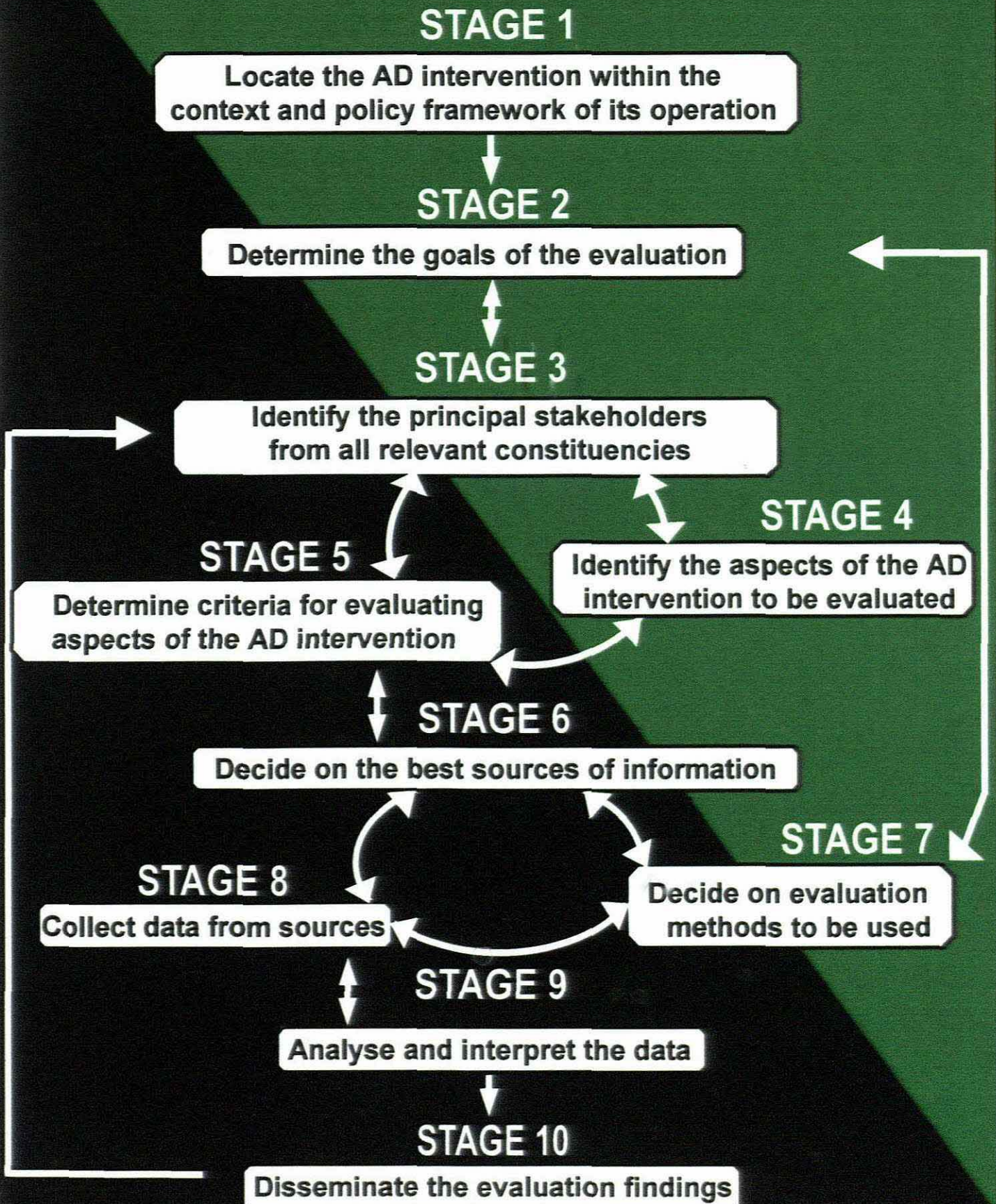
this very general nature which limits their applicability for specific use within the field of AD in South Africa, although they do provide a useful point of departure. This field itself is an emerging one in the South African educational context and calls by academics in this field are being made for the development of an AD theory which connects the various areas of AD work to educational theory (Frielick, 1995). Since the multi-disciplinary nature of AD work requires an AD theory which draws on a range of disciplines, so too a model for the evaluation of AD interventions needs to draw on evaluation theory across a range of fields such as educational philosophy, teaching and learning theory, curriculum theory, applied linguistics, tertiary didactics and so on. While some of these fields, such as applied linguistics, have yielded detailed evaluation models (Rea-Dickins and Germaine, 1992; Mackay, 1994; Lynch, 1990) they tend to be limited by the dictates of that particular field and cover specifically programme/course evaluation.

There is a dearth of evaluation models relating directly to the field of AD, and where they do appear (Paxton, 1994), they tend to cover the evaluation requirements of a specific kind of AD intervention (in the case of Paxton a writing centre) rather than AD interventions generally. The evaluation model presented in this chapter hopes to address this dearth. It emphasises the need to locate the AD intervention which is being evaluated within the **context** and **policy framework** of its operation.

The academic context surrounding AD work at any given educational institution and the policy framework governing the tertiary education sector both have a significant impact on AD work. For this reason, Stage one of the model, which takes these factors into account, is viewed as a crucially important one. It is also a stage which the aforementioned models lack, in their endeavour to be too widely generalisable or too context specific. While the model is responsive to the specific dictates and evaluation needs of AD interventions at tertiary level, it is flexible enough to be adapted for the evaluation of any kind of AD intervention, from academic literacy courses to staff development workshops.

Although the 10 stages making up this evaluation model are presented sequentially, in figure 2.1, the goals of the evaluation will determine whether the sequence of these

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stages is rigidly adhered to or used in a more cyclical fashion, as represented in the diagram. The evaluation needs of a particular AD intervention will also determine to what extent the specific detail of each stage is used.

3.   STAGE 1 OF THE MODEL

This stage locates the AD intervention being evaluated within the context and policy framework of its operation. This stage is necessary at the outset of the evaluation process in order to understand fully the complex variables impacting on AD interventions. Everitt (1995:2), on evaluating public sector organisations and projects, claims that "to evaluate practice without taking account of the **context** of that practice and the **policies** which constrain it or provide opportunities for it, assumes that practice exists as a commodity on its own that may be separated out for study" (author's emphasis). Evaluating AD interventions as though they exist devoid of a context or accepting that the academic context and governing policies are unchallenged and unchangeable givens, serves to further exacerbate the already marginalised position of AD at tertiary institutions in this country. Decontextualising evaluation, according to Everitt, serves also to remove policy, social structures and processes from critical scrutiny. Such scrutiny is imperative given the fact that the tertiary education sector in this country is in a state of transformation. Unless the academic contexts within which AD interventions occur and the policy frameworks which shape these contexts are seen to be part of the process of transformation and challenged to change, there will be no significant reshaping of the tertiary education sector and AD initiatives will continue to have minimal impact.

Figure 2.2 illustrates how an AD intervention is located within the academic context and policy framework of its operation. If we accept that three elements making up any educational encounter are curriculum, teaching and learning and that these interacting elements are common to any tertiary educational institution, then any AD intervention will be designed to have an effect on these elements. In evaluating such an AD intervention the three most immediate levels for consideration would then be the curriculum, the teaching and the learning. Each of these three levels will in turn have to be located within their broader spheres of functioning and the effects of these levels on

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FIGURE 2.2 STAGE 1: LOCATE THE AD INTERVENTION WITHIN THE CONTEXT AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF ITS OPERATION.

FIGURE 2.2   **STAGE 1: LOCATE THE AD INTERVENTION WITHIN THE CONTEXT AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF ITS OPERATION.**

POLICY FRAMEWORK

CONTEXT

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

BROADER CURRICULUM

CURRI-CULUM (COURSE)

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

POPULATION OF LEARNERS

STUDENT LEARNING

STAFF TEACHING

TEACHING COMMUNITY

ACADEMIC STAFF SUPPORT SERVICES

(effects of the academic context of institution)

(effects of the policies governing tertiary education)
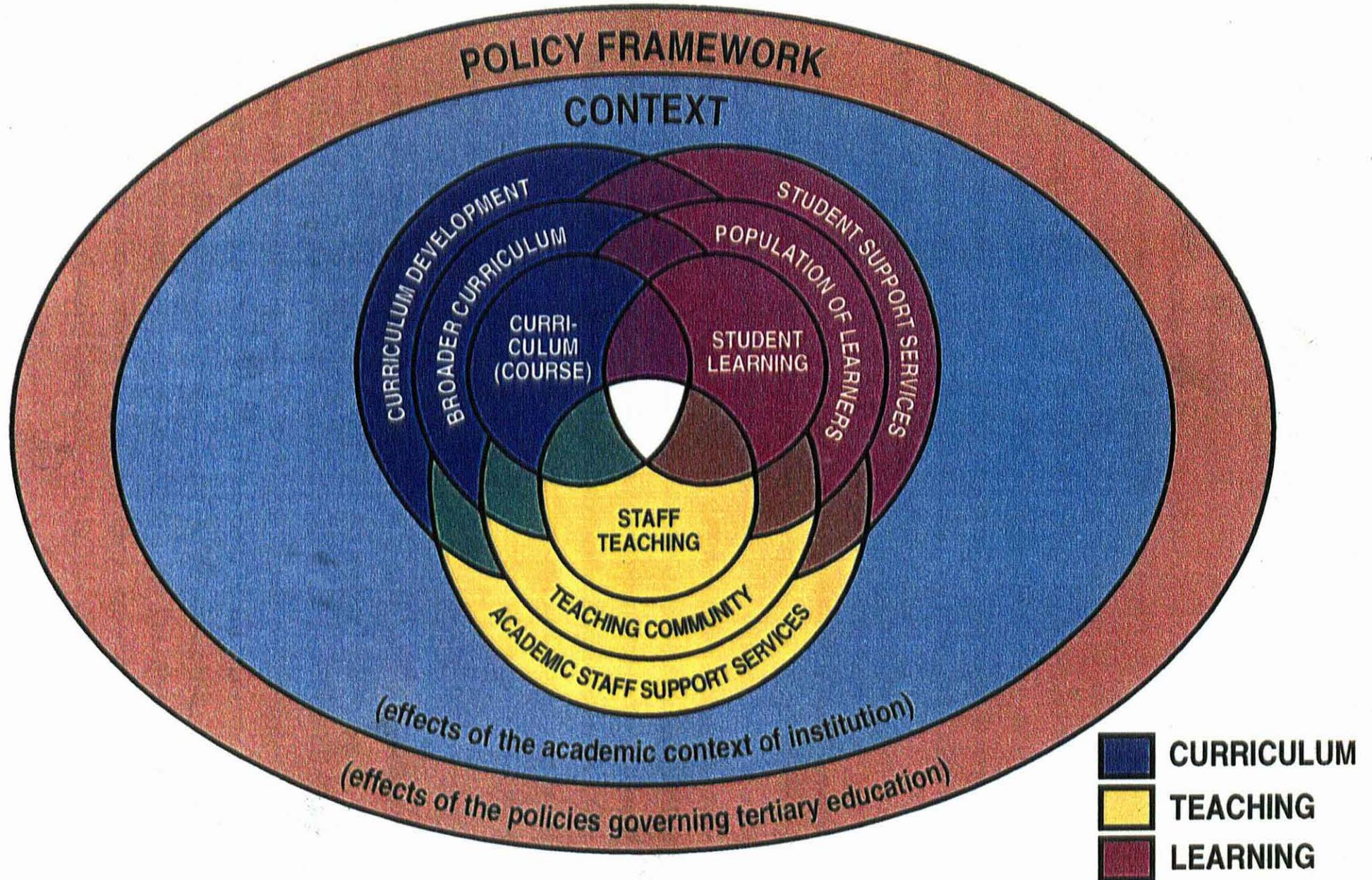
- CURRICULUM
- TEACHING
- LEARNING
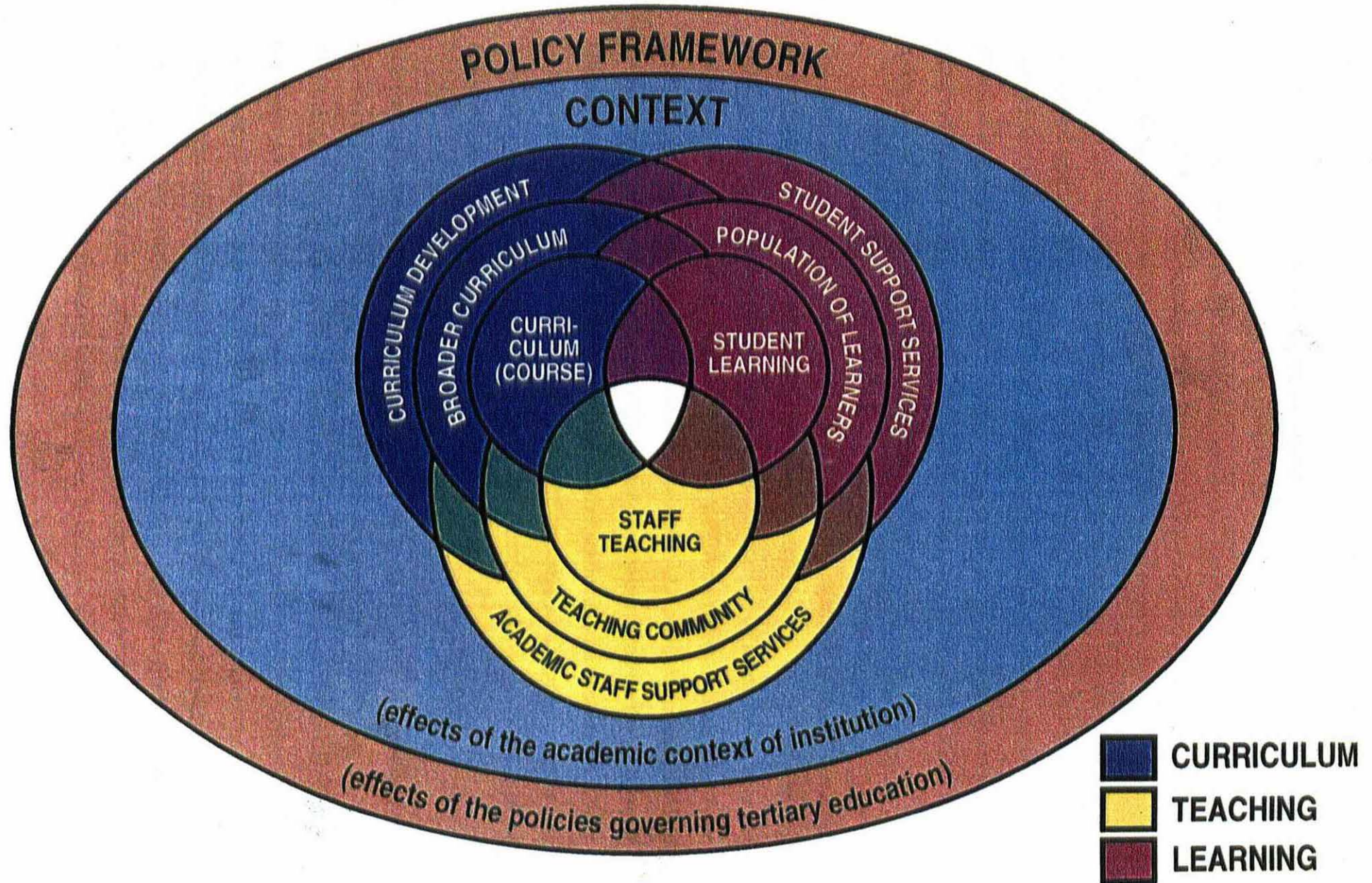
each other will have to be considered, for example:

3.1 The particular **curriculum** (course) being targeted for evaluation is located within the broader institutional curriculum, which in turn is influenced by curriculum development initiatives occurring at the institution. An evaluator would therefore have to consider the effects of the specific curriculum being evaluated on the broader institutional curriculum and the effects of the broader institutional curriculum on the specific curriculum. Also the effects of institutional curriculum development initiatives (so prevalent in this period of tertiary education transformation) on the specific curriculum being evaluated and the potential of that specific curriculum to impact on institutional curriculum development initiatives would need to be considered.

3.2 The particular **teaching** being targeted for evaluation (usually by specific academic staff, although in the case of distance teaching it would be via interactive teaching materials) is located within the broader teaching community of academic staff at the institution, who are in turn influenced by the staff development initiatives of the academic staff support service at the particular institution. An evaluator would therefore have to consider the effects of the specific teaching being evaluated on the teaching of other academic staff members and the effects of other academic staff members' teaching on the teaching being evaluated. The effects of the academic staff support services (the level influencing transformation in academic staff functioning) on the teaching being evaluated would also need to be considered and vice versa.

3.3 The particular **learning** being targeted for evaluation (predominantly as a result of the students interacting with the particular curriculum and teaching methodology, but also the learning of staff members involved in the intervention) is located within the broader population of learners/students, who are in turn often influenced by the student support initiatives of the student support services at the particular institution. An evaluator would therefore have to consider the effects of the specific learning being evaluated on the learning of the broader student population and vice versa. The effects of the student support services (the level influencing transformation in student functioning) on the specific learning being evaluated would also need to be considered and vice versa.

The aforementioned levels of curriculum, teaching and learning interact with and influence each other at various points of contact. These points of interaction should also be considered in an evaluation. For example, the point where the process of teaching interacts with a curriculum or where the process of learning interacts with a curriculum, also the point where the process of learning interacts with the process of teaching and so on.

Once the evaluation framework for the AD intervention has taken into consideration the specific levels of curriculum, teaching and learning, as well as all the broader levels surrounding these three processes, it needs to locate the AD intervention within the levels of :

- the **academic context** of the particular educational institution and
- the **policies** governing the tertiary education sector in this country.

An evaluator would therefore have to consider the effects of the broad institutional academic context and its governing educational policies on the AD intervention and vice versa. Such evaluation considerations will inform a critical scrutiny of the constraints and opportunities operating at these two crucial levels of context and policy. It will also illustrate the potential of the AD intervention to shape and impact on these two levels. Evaluators of AD interventions at tertiary institutions in this country have too often removed their objects of evaluation from the broad contexts and policy frameworks within which they operate. This not only removes the institutions and policies from the illuminative spotlight of evaluation but also raises them to a level beyond which they need to take responsibility for the challenges of transformation.

4.   STAGE 2 OF THE MODEL

This stage determines the goals of the evaluation. In the model the author proposes that evaluators of AD interventions should consider formative, summative and illuminative goals when planning an evaluation framework. This eclectic approach is proposed in an attempt to satisfy all stakeholders and clearly link the goals of the evaluation to the needs of the evaluation audience. The **formative** approach, commonly employed in the evaluation of AD interventions, has as its purpose the improvement and increased

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effectiveness of the intervention. The **summative** approach has as its purpose accountability and judgement of impact, often using the demonstration of outcomes as evidence. Both of these approaches are commonly referred to in evaluation literature and used most often in evaluation studies. The **illuminative** approach, a term coined by Parlett and Hamilton (1972), is however seldom referred to and used less often in evaluation studies. This approach has as its purpose the illumination of innovations. Since most AD interventions are a response to the need for transformation, they are by nature innovative. Such interventions are therefore viewed with uncertainty, met with a resistance to change and often surrounded by misunderstandings in the broader academic context. Hence the need for the illuminative approach, which will shed light on the intervention and in this way clarify uncertainties, ease the broader academic community into the challenges of transformation and create a space for dialogue where understandings can be voiced and shared understandings reached.

Although most AD interventions at tertiary level are evaluated, due to the insecure and marginalised position of this field, these evaluations serve either the formative purpose of evaluation for improvement, or the summative purpose of evaluation for accountability. The two approaches are seldom used together as a tension exists between the dual purposes of evaluation for improvement and accountability. The reflective nature of formative evaluation would highlight areas of weakness with the aim of improving them whereas summative evaluation would seek to highlight areas of strength in the hope of providing evidence of worth. The former purpose might be seen to undermine the latter purpose, which may explain why these two approaches are seldom used together. The illuminative approach, on the other hand, would seek to expose such tensions with a view to enhancing a deeper understanding among stakeholders.

The challenge for evaluators of AD interventions is therefore to combine these three methods effectively without allowing one purpose to undermine the other. In this way they will serve the multi-faceted purposes of most evaluations of AD interventions. Figure 2.3 illustrates the audiences that each of these three approaches will serve, the evaluation needs of these audiences which will be met by each approach and the evaluation methods best suited to each approach.

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FIGURE 2.3   STAGE 2: DETERMINE GOALS OF EVALUATION

FORMATIVE	SUMMATIVE	ILLUMINATIVE
audience	*audience*	*audience*
TEACHERS AND LEARNERS	POLICY-MAKERS	ACADEMIC COMMUNITY
evaluation needs	*evaluation needs*	*evaluation needs*
Improvement and increased effectiveness	Accountability, judgement of worth, evidence of learning outcomes	Engage in debates, develop shared understandings, inform policy decisions, gain support
methods	*methods*	*methods*
Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative

4.1   The **formative approach** will serve the audience of teachers and learners who will have the need for interventions which are constantly being improved and refined in accordance with their changing needs. The evaluation methods best suited to describing AD interventions, understanding teaching and learning processes, probing possible areas of weakness and establishing the responsiveness of AD interventions to the needs of this audience, are qualitative methods.

4.2   The **summative approach** will serve the audience of policy-makers to whom the AD intervention is accountable. This audience could range from institutional policy-makers to external funders, depending on the AD intervention in question. This audience has the need to make judgements about worth, since they will make policy decisions affecting resourcing which are based on these judgements. They generally undervalue qualitative methods as these are viewed as unscientific and unable to prove anything. This audience seeks the quantitative, empirical evidence of learning outcomes in terms of student achievement, untainted by the feelings and attitudes of those involved in the intervention.

4.3   The **illuminative approach** serves the academic community making up the particular institution. The evaluation need of this audience is to engage in debates on the AD intervention in question through which they will develop shared understandings of the intervention which in turn will inform future policy decisions around the intervention. The evaluator has the added bonus of using these debating forums to promote the work of AD and gain the support of the academic community for the AD intervention.

Because the illuminative approach opens up debate around the attitudes and understandings of the academic community regarding AD issues and because the purpose is for these people to share perspectives, perceptions and assumptions, qualitative evaluation methods are best suited to achieve this purpose.

5. STAGE 3 OF THE MODEL

This stage identifies the principal stakeholders from all the relevant constituencies at the institution. For a tertiary education institution the principal stakeholders in any AD intervention would fall into the four broad categories of students, academic staff, institutional support services and policy-makers. Figure 2.4 illustrates these four categories and the detail flowing from each one. An explanation of each of the four categories on figure 2.4 follows:

5.1 Students

This category would include all the students at a particular tertiary institution, as well as students seeking access to the institution. For evaluation purposes however, a distinction should be made between participants and non-participants in the AD intervention. While the non-participants would not have had the direct exposure to the AD intervention that the participants would have had, they would certainly hold opinions on the overt objectives and principles underlying the intervention. For this reason and the possibility of their future participation in such an intervention, they would have a stake in any AD intervention. The non-participating students would also serve as a useful pool from which to draw a control group (if this is required) for the summative goal of the evaluation.

The student participant category of stakeholders can be further subdivided to include students presently participating in the intervention, past participants who have fully experienced the intervention (if the intervention has taken place over a period of time) as well as participants who have partially experienced the intervention but dropped out before completion. All of these participant sub-categories would yield vital formative and summative data in an evaluation study.

5.2 Academic staff

This category refers to all mainstream academic staff, and like the student category, would be subdivided into participants and non-participants. The staff participant

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FIGURE 2.4   STAGE 3: IDENTIFY PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS FROM ALL RELEVANT CONSTITUENCIES

STUDENTS
- Participants
  - Present
  - Past
  - Dropouts
- Non-participants

ACADEMIC STAFF
- Participants
  - Teachers
  - Trainers of teachers
  - Moderators of student tasks
  - Curriculum Developers
- Non-participants
  - Teachers of non-participating students
  - Teachers of participating students

SUPPORT SERVICES
- Staff
  - Teaching Development Units
  - Staff Support Groups
  - A.D.
- Students
  - Writing Centres
  - Counselling Centres

POLICY-MAKERS
- Institutional
  - Rectorate
  - Council
  - Faculty/ Dept. Heads
  - Academic Board or Senate
- External
  - State
  - Funding Agencies

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category would include sub-categories like teachers (used interchangeably with the term lecturers), trainers of teachers, curriculum developers and moderators of student assessment tasks, all of whom would have a stake in the intervention.

The non-participant category makes a distinction between those lecturers who teach participating students but who themselves are not directly involved in the intervention, and those lecturers who teach non-participating students. While all lecturers would have a stake in any AD intervention, these two sets of non-participating lecturers would have different interests in the intervention and different contributions to make to an evaluation study.

The academic staff who form part of the AD units at tertiary institutions are not included in this broad category but have been placed under the next broad category, Support Services, as they tend to function (if they do exist at all) on the periphery of the mainstream at most tertiary institutions in this country.

5.3   Support services

This category includes all units which function as support services to the mainstream functioning. Often these units are partially or even completely dependent on external funding for their continued existence and they are often undervalued by those who function in the mainstream and viewed as convenient sites to bear the responsibility for institutional transformation. From this unfortunate position they have a clear stake in any AD intervention and a particular interest in the illuminative goal of an evaluation study.

This category makes a distinction between staff support services and student support services, since many tertiary institutions make this distinction. Teaching development units, staff support groups, staff associations and so on, would form part of the staff support services category; while student counselling centres, writing centres and so on would form part of the student support services category. AD units would straddle both of these sub-categories as their functions include both staff and student support under

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the broad area referred to as academic development.

5.4   Policy-makers

This category includes those who are in decision-making positions regarding policy matters surrounding AD interventions and the resourcing of such interventions. This group would have a clear stake in any AD intervention and a particular interest in the summative goal of an evaluation study, since they would constitute the powerhouse among the four broad categories and hold the other three categories accountable.

This category is subdivided into institutional policy-makers and external policy-makers. The institutional policy-makers would include the rectorate of an institution, council, the faculty and departmental heads and the academic board (in the case of Technikons) or senate (in the case of universities). The external policy-makers would include the state (ministry of education), funding agencies (both private and public) and so on.

Once this stage in the evaluation process has been completed and all relevant stakeholders have been identified, the evaluator may wish to revisit stage 2 of the model, as indicated in figure 2.1. A clear understanding of the range of stakeholders might further clarify the goals of the evaluation since the audiences represented in stage 2 will be constituted from among the stakeholders in stage 3. The evaluator should thus move freely back and forth between stages 2 and 3, allowing these two stages to inform each other.

6.   STAGE 4 OF THE MODEL

This stage identifies the aspects of the AD intervention to be evaluated. These aspects should be determined collaboratively, involving input from as many stakeholders as possible as this process affords stakeholders "a measure of control over the nature of the evaluation activity" (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:184). This cycle of collaboration, linking stages 3, 4 and 5 , is indicated in figure 2.1.

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In keeping with Stage 1 of the model, two broad aspects are suggested for evaluation, namely, the AD intervention itself and the institutional context within which the AD intervention operates. Figure 2.5 serves as a guideline for aspects of the AD intervention which could be negotiated through a cyclical process of collaboration; and it illustrates how these two broad aspects can be further subdivided.

As illustrated in figure 2.5, the aspects of **the intervention** itself which should be evaluated are:

6.1   The model

This refers to the type of intervention being evaluated, for example, whether it is a stand-alone academic literacy course for students, a series of staff development workshops or a curriculum development initiative. The evaluator needs to ascertain what the strengths and the weaknesses of the particular model are, and how the model being evaluated compares to other possible models of intervention.

6.2   The curriculum

This refers to the curriculum that the AD intervention is targeting. It may be a new course which has been developed to serve a particular need, or the reinterpretation of an existing course, or even an attempt to target the broader curriculum of an entire teaching department at the institution. Once the curriculum in question has been identified, the evaluator needs to consider the effects of the AD intervention on:
- the curriculum development process,
- the curriculum objectives,
- the curriculum content and activities and
- the instructional materials.

6.3   The teaching

This refers to the teaching which the AD intervention is targeting. It may be the teaching of a particular lecturer, or a group of lecturers teaching a particular subject, or

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FIGURE 2.5   STAGE 4: IDENTIFY ASPECTS OF AD INTERVENTION TO BE EVALUATED

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ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION				INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT		
model	curriculum	teaching	learning	social climate	political climate	economic climate
strengths	development process	methodology	outcomes	understandings	state	cost of A.D. intervention
weaknesses	objectives		attitudes		tertiary education sector	
comparative advantage	content and activities	teachers	processes	attitudes	institution	institutional resources (human, physical, financial)
	instructional materials					

even the lecturers making up a particular teaching department. Once the teaching in question has been identified, the evaluator needs to consider the effects of the AD intervention on: ·

- the teaching methodology and
- the teachers themselves.

6.4   The learning

This refers to the student learning which the AD intervention is targeting. It may be the student learning as a result of their interacting with a particular course, or the student learning resulting from an integrated learning experience across the students' curriculum, or even a learning experience outside of the mainstream curriculum. Once the learning in question has been identified, the evaluator needs to consider the effects of the AD intervention on:

- the learning outcomes,
- the attitudes to learning and
- actual learning processes.

The aspects of **the institutional context** (within which the AD intervention operates) which should be evaluated are:

6.5   The social climate

This refers to the institutional understandings of and attitudes towards the AD intervention. The evaluator needs to describe the understandings which the institutional academic community have of the AD intervention. These prevailing understandings should be described from several potentially different points of view and the evaluator should make it possible for the differing opinions to be heard by each other. The evaluator should also, if necessary, negotiate with the different opinion-holders and attempt to bring about a shared understanding of the AD intervention at institutional level. The evaluator also needs to gauge the prevailing attitudes at the institution towards the AD intervention. Once again the evaluator should ensure that the range of

attitudes are exposed and that an institutional awareness of these attitudes is created. The effects of these institutional understandings and attitudes on the AD intervention will then have to be considered. The evaluator would also need to consider how these understandings and attitudes reflect on the institution.

6.6   The political climate

This refers to the policies impacting on the AD intervention at the levels of:

- the institution,
- the tertiary education sector and
- the state.

The evaluator needs to describe the political framework that governs the functioning of the institution in question. The constraints and opportunities provided by state policy and the consequences of this for the tertiary education sector should be considered. Also the constraints and opportunities provided by the policies of the tertiary education sector and the consequences of this for the institution should be considered. Finally the constraints and opportunities provided by the institutional policies and the consequences of this for the AD intervention should be considered.

6.7   The economic climate

This refers to the resources (financial, human and physical) which the institution has at its disposal to feasibly carry the cost of the AD intervention and secure its wider institutional implementation. After costing the AD intervention, the evaluator needs to consider whether the institution has the economic capacity to fund the AD intervention. The willingness of the institution to use its capacity for AD interventions should be considered under the social and political climates.

7. STAGE 5 OF THE MODEL

This stage determines the criteria for evaluating the aspects of the AD intervention which were identified at the previous stage. Since criteria for evaluating are determined very largely by the peculiarities of a specific AD intervention and the particular context within which the intervention operates, the model proposes only broad criteria which should then be tailored to meet the needs of the specific evaluation study. There should also be a constant cyclical movement between stages four and five, as the determining of criteria will require the revisiting of aspects to be evaluated and vice versa. This cyclical movement also implies the continuing attempts by the evaluator to gain collaborative input regarding criteria for evaluating the various aspects of the AD intervention from as many stakeholders as possible. In figure 2.6 the aspects of the AD intervention (which were identified for evaluation purposes at stage four) are tabulated in the first two columns and criteria for evaluating these aspects are proposed in the third column.

7.1 The proposed criteria for evaluating each of the three aspects of **the model** of intervention (as outlined in figure 2.5) are discussed below.

- **Strengths**

The strength of the model of intervention should be evaluated in terms of its **institutional location.** This refers to whether its position is within or outside of the mainstream functioning of the institution. Such location will impact on a range of factors such as funding of the intervention, status of the intervention, time and space allocation for the intervention and so on. The strength of the model of intervention should also be evaluated in terms of its **adaptability and growth potential.** The adaptability refers to how easily the model is able to adapt and be tailored to meet changes in participant needs, time frame, scheduling, numbers of participants, delivery modes and so on. The growth potential refers to the potential of the model to expand its functioning to target the needs of a wider audience and extend its sphere of influence at the institution and beyond.

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FIGURE 2.6 STAGE 5: DETERMINE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THESE ASPECTS OF THE AD INTERVENTION.

ASPECTS TO BE EVALUATED		CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ASPECTS
MODEL	strengths	institutional location; adaptability; growth potential
	weaknesses	sustainability
	comparative advantage	potential to impact on mainstream; ability to diversify.
CURRICULUM	development process	inclusivity of decision-making; effectiveness of materials development; success of staff training and liaison.
	objectives	meeting of needs and expectations; clarity; achievement.
	content & activities	relevance; level of interest; usefulness; level of difficulty; volume of work.
	instructional materials	accessibility; clarity; usefulness; flexibility
TEACHING	methodology	effectiveness of application; extent of application; attitudes towards it.
	teachers	attitude; student-teacher relationships; preparedness; effectiveness; sensitivity.
LEARNING	outcomes	attainment; general academic performance; relationship between above two criteria.
	attitudes	motivation; commitment; behaviour changes; value shifts.
	processes	independent learning; reflection on learning; transfer of learning.
SOCIAL CLIMATE	understandings	why; where; how AD should take place; the need the intervention serves.
	attitudes	transformation at all levels; the AD intervention.
POLITICAL CLIMATE	state	⎫ policy reflecting the need for AD;
	tertiary educ. sector	⎬ opportunities provided by policy for AD;
	institution	⎭ constraints imposed by policy for AD.
ECONOMIC CLIMATE	cost effectiveness of intervention	human, physical and financial resources
	institutional resources	economic capacity; sustainability.

- **Weaknesses**

The weakness of the model of intervention should be evaluated in terms of its **sustainability.** This refers to the capacity that the model has to sustain itself over the period of its required existence.

- **Comparative advantage**

This refers to the effectiveness of the model of intervention being evaluated in relation to other models of intervention. Here the evaluator should evaluate the model of intervention in terms of its **potential to impact on mainstream academic functioning** against the potential of other models to do this. The evaluator should also consider the model's **ability to diversify.** This refers to whether the model could serve as a prototype from which different versions or models of intervention could be derived as the need arises.

7.2   The proposed criteria for evaluating each of the four aspects of **the curriculum** being targeted by the AD intervention (as outlined in figure 2.6) are discussed below.

7.2.1   Curriculum development process

The curriculum development process should be evaluated in terms of the **decision-making** process which informed it. The evaluator should consider how inclusive this process was and whether the interests of all parties were served. Another criterion should be the effectiveness of the **materials development process** that arose after the decision-making phase. Finally **staff-training and liaison** is a process that should also be considered by the evaluator, as the failure of this process could undermine the entire curriculum development process.

7.2.2 Curriculum objectives

The curriculum objectives should be evaluated in terms of the extent to which they were successful in **meeting the needs and expectations of the participants.** The evaluator also needs to consider the **clarity** of the objectives and whether they were in fact clearly explained to and understood by the participants. Finally the evaluator needs to consider the criterion of **achievement** of curriculum objectives. In evaluating this criterion, the perceptions of participants should be validated by observable learning outcomes.

7.2.3 Curriculum content and activities

The content of the curriculum and the learning activities should be evaluated in terms of their:
- **relevance** to the demands of the academic context,
- **level of interest** to the participants,
- **usefulness** for wider application,
- **level of difficulty** as perceived by participants and
- **volume of work** in relation to the total workload of participants.

7.2.4 Instructional materials

The instructional materials used to aid the teaching and learning process should be evaluated in terms of their:
- **accessibility** or user-friendliness,
- **clarity,**
- **usefulness** as a teaching and learning aid and
- **flexibility** in adapting to the particular teaching and learning environment.

7.3   The proposed criteria for evaluating the two aspects of **the teaching** being targeted by the AD intervention (as outlined in figure 2.6) are discussed below.

7.3.1 Methodology

The teaching methodology promoted by the AD intervention should be evaluated in terms of the **effectiveness of its application**, the **extent to which it is being applied** and the **attitudes** of all participants towards it.

7.3.2 Teachers

The teachers who are facilitating the learning in the AD intervention should be evaluated in terms of their:

- **attitude** to the teaching,
- **student-teacher relationships,**
- **preparedness** for the teaching,
- **effectiveness in** teaching and
- **sensitivity** towards the needs of the learner.

7.4 The proposed criteria for evaluating the three aspects of **the learning** being targeted by the AD intervention (as outlined in figure 2.6) are discussed below.

7.4.1 Learning outcomes

The **attainment** of the learning outcomes targeted by the AD intervention should be measured through controlled tests and tasks which should be assessed according to pre-determined assessment criteria. Qualitative methods, such as student and teacher interviews, should also be employed as a measure of learning outcome attainment as a means of cross-validating the quantitative data from tests and tasks. A record should be kept of the **general academic performance** of the participants and using a control group of non-participants (if available), a **relationship between the AD intervention and general academic performance** should be statistically explored.

7.4.2 Attitudes to learning

In evaluating the attitudes of the learners to the learning process, the evaluator should

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consider the following criteria:

- the level of **motivation** on the part of the learner,
- the level of **commitment** towards the intervention,
- observable **behaviour changes** attributable to the intervention and
- **value shifts** in the learners.

7.4.3 Actual learning processes

In evaluating the learning processes that the learners were engaged in, the evaluator should consider the following criteria:

- the ability of the learner to function as an **independent learner,**
- the development of the practice of **reflection on the learning process** and
- the **transfer of learning** across the curriculum.

7.5 The proposed criteria for evaluating the two aspects of the institutional **social climate** regarding the AD intervention (as outlined in figure 2.6) are discussed below.

7.5.1 Understandings of the AD intervention

The criteria for evaluating institutional understandings of the AD intervention should be based on the views expressed by a range of stakeholders regarding:

- why the AD intervention should take place,
- at which levels the AD intervention should take place,
- how the AD intervention should take place and
- the need the AD intervention is serving.

7.5.2 Attitudes towards the AD intervention

The criteria for evaluating institutional attitudes towards the AD intervention should be based on whether the institution is conducive towards:

- transformation at the levels of curriculum, teaching, learning and institution
- the AD intervention being evaluated.

7.6   In order to evaluate the three aspects of the institutional **political climate,** namely: the **state, tertiary education sector** and **institutional** policies; and the effects that these policies have on the AD intervention, the evaluator should consider the following criteria:

- whether state, tertiary education sector and institutional **policy reflects the need for AD,**

- the **opportunities** that the state, tertiary education sector and institutional policy provide for AD and

- the **constraints** that the state, tertiary education sector and institutional policy impose on AD.

7.7   The criteria for evaluating the two aspects of the institutional **economic climate** surrounding the AD intervention (as outlined in figure 2.6) are discussed below.

7.7.1   The cost-effectiveness of the AD intervention

In evaluating the cost-effectiveness of the AD intervention the evaluator should consider the following criteria:

- **human resources,** such as expertise in the fields of materials development, teaching, administration and staff development. Where the expertise does not exist, consultancy should be costed. The cost should always be calculated in relation to the size of the target population at whom the AD intervention is being aimed.

- **physical resources,** such as teaching and training materials, availability of teaching facilities and equipment, the technology to support administrative functions and materials development.

- **financial resources** to cover the costs of salaries e.g. for teachers and materials developers, administrative costs, consultancy fees, staff development workshops and networking or marketing ventures to promote the AD intervention.

7.7.2   The institutional resources (human, physical, financial) available

In evaluating the capacity of the human, physical and financial resources of the institution, the evaluator should consider the following criteria:

- the **economic capacity** of the institution in human, physical and financial terms. However, should the institution be found wanting regarding the human resources (such as a shortage of teaching or administrative expertise) or even physical resources (such as a shortage of teaching venues or computer equipment), this would have immediate implications for the financial resources of the institution.

- the institutional **sustainability** of carrying the future implementation of the AD intervention. Since external funding remains a vital source of short-term funding for AD interventions in this transitional phase of educational transformation, the evaluator needs to consider the institution's willingness to accept responsibility and make budgetary provision for the sustaining of the AD intervention in the long term.

8.   STAGE 6 OF THE MODEL

At this stage the evaluator decides on the best sources of information for evaluating the various aspects of the AD intervention using the criteria determined at stage five. Criteria may need to be re-looked at depending on the availability of sources, so there should be movement between stages 5 and 6 as one reshapes and informs the other.

Just as the goals of the evaluation (determined at stage 2) should serve the multi-faceted purposes of the evaluation, so too the sources of information should reflect the eclectic nature of an evaluation of AD interventions. As far as it is possible, given the timeframe and budgetary constraints of the evaluation, an attempt should be made to include all principal stakeholders (as identified at stage 3) as sources of information in the evaluation.

In addition to the principal stakeholders, the evaluator becomes an important source of information, especially in the illuminative phase of the evaluation. Parlett and Hamilton (1972:66) emphasise the role of the evaluator and the central place that observation occupies in illuminative evaluation. They stress the importance of building up "a continuous record of ongoing events, transactions and informal remarks" through observing and documenting, as field notes, the day-to-day activities and environment surrounding the object of evaluation.

Besides utilising stakeholders and personal observation records as sources of information, the evaluator should also consider non-stakeholder opinion regarding the AD intervention. Here the evaluator might approach educational experts and professionals outside of the institution where the AD intervention is occurring. Non-stakeholder opinion is valuable when cross-validating information from stakeholders in the interests of objectivity.

Another important source of information is documentation relating to the various aspects of the AD intervention being evaluated. Here the evaluator should analyse records ranging from institutional and state policy documents, statistics, survey profiles, funding proposals, correspondence, minutes of meetings and reports; to instructional materials, student scripts and assignments, assessment criteria, marksheets, attendance records and other such course documentation.

Finally, a source seldom mentioned in the literature surrounding educational evaluation but one that should be considered by the evaluator is the body of professional literature. Guba and Lincoln (1989:211) cite this as a source from which additional information can be drawn but they caution that the information arising from a review of the literature deserves "to be treated no differently from information gleaned from local documents and records, or from local observations." The evaluator should therefore not elevate the knowledge contained in any body of literature to that of ultimate truths, but rather view the knowledge in much the same light as the information arising from the evaluation itself.

The way in which decisions are made about which sources to approach for what information will depend on the nature of the information which the evaluator is seeking. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, which illustrate the application of the model, will show how decisions were made regarding which sources of information to use for evaluating particular aspects of the LEAP intervention. However, since most information reflects only people's perception of reality, the evaluator should attempt to gain information about any aspect of the AD intervention from more than just one source. This will ensure a more valid interpretation of the data at stage 9.

9. STAGE 7 OF THE MODEL

At this stage the evaluator decides on the evaluation methods to be used. As with stage 6, an eclectic approach is recommended but choices will ultimately be determined by a range of variables such as the type of AD intervention being evaluated, the timeframe and resources allocated to the evaluation, the sources of information available to the evaluator and so on. The type of information required by the different goals of the evaluation will also influence decisions about evaluation methods. A revisiting of stage 2 is suggested here to enable the evaluator to reflect on the formative, summative and illuminative goals of the evaluation as well as the qualitative and quantitative methods which were broadly linked to these goals at that early stage of the evaluation.

Stage 7 also initiates the second cycle in figure 2.1 which links stages 6, 7 and 8. The evaluator will need to move freely through these three stages. For example, in an attempt to ensure congruency between data sources and methods of collection the evaluator may see the need to change to a different methodology to suit the source; or on analysing and interpreting data, a shortage of information may become clear and there may be a need to go back to the data collection stage. This cycle of movement will continue until the final data interpretation has taken place. This final interpretation comes about after the evaluator has validated the findings with the sources of information and attempted to negotiate the interpretation with as many stakeholders as possible. The importance of this process is emphasised by Stake (1985:282) when he states: "Negotiating drafts with key actors is more than a courtesy; it becomes essential to accuracy and completeness."

The evaluator is advised to employ the best available method for meeting the evaluation criteria of each aspect of the evaluation. According to Parlett and Hamilton (1972:64) "the problem defines the methods used, not vice versa." They further state that no method should be used exclusively or in isolation, but rather that different methods be combined to throw light on a common problem. This use of triangulation techniques allows the evaluator to view the object of evaluation from a number of angles which in turn facilitates the cross-validation of data. Cohen and Manion (1980:269-270) endorse this view by stating that "exclusive reliance on one method, may bias or distort the

researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality he is investigating" and "the more the methods contrast with each other, the greater the researcher's confidence" in the findings. The use of contrasting methods, such as qualitative and quantitative, will also assist the evaluator in meeting the needs of the various audiences that the evaluation of an AD intervention should serve.

The audience of teachers and learners who will be served by the formative approach, for example, will benefit from qualitative methods such as interviews (both structured and unstructured), questionnaires and observation which allow the evaluator to explore the complex variables at play in the interaction of curriculum, teaching and learning.

The audience of policy-makers who will be served by the summative approach, for example, will derive benefit from quantitative methods where an experimental and control group are compared using the pre and post-test model. Objective data, such as scores reflecting general academic performance and achievement of learning outcomes, are useful for statistical analysis although these should be cross-validated and fully interpreted with additional qualitative data.

The academic community who will be served by the illuminative approach, for example, will benefit from qualitative methods such as interviews, meetings and discussion forums, examination and analysis of existing documentation as well as the observation and recording of daily events.

Finne (Finne et al, 1995:16), who presents an action research model for evaluation including both formative and summative activities, argues that "securing validity in evaluations is hardly enough, if the purpose is to make the evaluations useful." He suggests that the evaluator goes beyond validity and considers what makes stakeholders trust evaluation results. This process, of ensuring the usefulness of the evaluation, he terms 'credibility'. In his opinion attention to this challenge will make the evaluation more credible to both the participants in the intervention being evaluated and the outside stakeholders. In creating a credible evaluation the evaluator should ensure that each evaluation method used is accompanied by arguments for its validity, that attention is directed to an in-depth knowledge of the intervention which will enable the evaluator

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to make informed suggestions for improvement, and that objectivity (so elusive in educational action research methodology) is substituted "with honesty, critical distance, integrity and avoidance of conflict of interests".

Macdonald (1974:45), who favours the democratic evaluation model, highlights the importance of using data-gathering techniques which are accessible to non-specialist audiences, offering confidentiality to informants and giving them control over the use of the information they provide. This approach would have far-reaching implications for the evaluation model proposed in this chapter, where the evaluation serves such a wide range of audiences and where a multi-method approach to data-collection is advocated. The evaluator would need to consider the respective audiences when selecting data-gathering techniques and negotiate the subsequent use of the findings with those same audiences.

10. STAGE 8 OF THE MODEL

At this stage the evaluator collects data from the sources decided on at stage 6 using the methods decided on at stage 7. The interdependence of these stages, at this fieldwork phase in the evaluation process, is clear. Data collection instruments have to be designed, taking into account the aspects to be evaluated as well as the evaluation methods decided on and the particular sources of information. Measures should be taken to ensure the reliability and validity of all data collection instruments. For example, to increase the reliability and validity of a questionnaire designed for students who do not speak English as a first language, Pennington and Young (1989:630) suggest that :

"- The instruments and procedures should be constructed by evaluation specialists sensitive to the nature of the ESL context.

- The instruments must provide opportunities for responses other than choices on rating scales.

- Students need to be oriented to the content and purposes of the evaluation instruments and procedures."

The evaluator could also engage in pre-evaluation data collection where questions or instruments are tested with a sample of stakeholders to ensure their appropriateness. If

time constraints do not allow for such pre-evaluation, the evaluator might need to refine or change evaluation questions as the data collection process proceeds. To distinguish each phase of data collection, Riley (1990) suggests that the evaluator should record the occasion, setting and method of collection. After each phase in the data collection process the evaluator should reflect on the available information and allow each phase to inform and shape the next.

11.   STAGE 9 OF THE MODEL

At this stage the evaluator analyses and interprets the data collected at the previous stage. The methods of analysis will be largely determined by the methods of evaluation determined at stage 7. Other influencing factors however would be the number of respondents to a given instrument, as well as the evaluation need/s being served by the data.

Qualitative data would be more suited to methods such as discourse analysis, textual analysis and impressionistic interpretation. For example, in analysing an interview the evaluator should look beyond the content, to issues such as whether all questions are answered, where the silent periods in the interview occur, which words frequently crop up and the non-verbal cues from the interviewee. If the qualitative data is extensive, the evaluator may need to employ the method of content analysis which converts the qualitative into quantitative, but, as Stake (1985:281) points out, "the uniqueness and contextuality of case data may be quickly lost" when this is done. The evaluation need being served by the data should then be considered. If the need is to "increase subjective and intersubjective understanding among all stakeholders" (Vander Plaat, 1995:89), a key concern of illuminative evaluation, then content analysis would not serve that need.

Quantitative data would lend itself to statistical methods of analysis, although the limitations of this method for the evaluation of educational reform, innovation and transformation (the lifeblood of AD interventions) should be explained by the evaluator. Where possible the statistical analysis should be further illuminated with supporting qualitative data. The experimental design, usually the basis for generating quantitative

data, has moral and ethical implications for educational research as a control group is being denied the opportunity to experience the educational reform or innovation being evaluated. Further problems related to the use of experimental designs are that in an attempt to deliberately control and manipulate the conditions being evaluated, the researcher creates an artificial 'laboratory' setting quite unlike the untidy reality surrounding AD interventions. The isolating of particular variables for scrutiny also creates a limited understanding of the total effects of any educational encounter. Beretta (1986:153) suggests that "what is required is a judicious balance between internal and external validity, between reliability and usability, and between certainty and relevance." He further states, however, that the word causality should be deleted from evaluation vocabulary and that "if true experiment is to legitimise causal statements, then true experiment is beyond the evaluator's reach."(151)

After the data has been analysed and an initial interpretation made, the evaluator should return to as many stakeholders as possible to negotiate the 'findings'. This phase is especially important for the illuminative goal of the evaluation, which seeks to generate debates around the AD intervention and create shared understandings. Everitt (1995:7) charges the evaluator with the responsibility "for ensuring that different views of participants in the practice, project or programme are not only expressed but are also heard by each other." She sees the evaluator as facilitator of this process as well as being tasked with providing evidence that will help inform disagreements and bring about resolution. This task would be best executed at this stage in the evaluation process.

12.   STAGE 10 OF THE MODEL

At this stage the evaluator disseminates the evaluation findings. If, as a result of time and budgetary constraints, the evaluator has been unable to consult all stakeholders regarding the interpretation of the data, then at this final stage the evaluator should ensure that all stakeholders are informed of the evaluation findings, hence the cycle connecting stages 10 and 3 in figure 2.1. The presentation format could differ depending on the range and needs of the various stakeholders. For example, one may consider a

formal evaluation report too lengthy and daunting to present to students and more applicable for funding agencies. A public forum may suit the needs of the broader academic community where there is an opportunity to ask and answer questions, whereas a formal presentation might be a format better suited to the needs of the institutional policy-makers. Besides the format used for dissemination of the evaluation findings, the evaluator should also consider the way in which the information is conveyed to the different audiences. The goal of illumination and enlightenment could be undermined by factors such as complicated language usage, evaluation specific discourse and incoherent structure. Finally the evaluation findings need to be disseminated timeously or else the utility value of the findings will diminish.

13.   CONCLUSION

The evaluation model developed by the author and fully expounded in this chapter is inclusive and stakeholder-based. This places an onerous and immense responsibility on the evaluator/s, but in so doing it also places the institutional context under the scrutiny of evaluation. In this way an AD intervention is not evaluated and understood in isolation, but rather as an integral part of the context which so powerfully shapes its very chances of success or failure.

The following chapter will present a critical exposition of the history and development of the LEAP course. Since the LEAP course is the AD intervention which will be evaluated using the model as a conceptual framework, this exposition will include a discussion of the theoretical basis for the direction of the curriculum development of the course.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEAP COURSE

1. INTRODUCTION

The changes in practices and policies relating to access and admission to tertiary institutions in this country has necessitated AD (academic development) interventions at the levels of student need, teaching methodology and curriculum. The LEAP (Learning in English for Academic Purposes) course, discussed in this chapter, is an attempt to address the need for an AD intervention at Technikon level. This chapter will trace the history and development of the LEAP course under the following headings:

- the background to the AD intervention
- the need for an AD intervention
- the design of the LEAP course
- the theoretical framework of the LEAP course
- the LEAP course materials and methodology
- the LEAP pilot
- the LEAP course as a model of AD intervention

2. THE BACKGROUND TO THE AD INTERVENTION

The motivation for implementing the LEAP course at Peninsula Technikon was formulated against the background of the issues the Technikon has had to deal with since its shift to a more open admissions practice. In line with this practice, the Technikon enrolled students from diverse language backgrounds. Thus the student profile has dramatically changed from a bilingual profile, to one which more accurately represents the multi-lingual nature of South African society. For approximately 80 % of the first-year students, English is a second or third language. Considering that English is the most widely used medium of instruction at the Technikon, a lack of competence and confidence in the use of English could impede academic progress for students. The LEAP course, being evaluated in this study, is an attempt to begin addressing the academic challenges of improving student retention and academic success by

developing English academic literacy skills in the students using learning-centred teaching methodologies and materials.

3. THE NEED FOR AN AD INTERVENTION

The need for an AD intervention at Peninsula Technikon has been voiced from many quarters, such as:

- the Report to the Academic Development Team on English as a Second Language (1992),
- the Annual Report of the Department of Languages and Communication (1994),
- the Research Project on Student Performance Monitoring (1995),
- the Report on the Peninsula Technikon English Proficiency Testing (1995),
- the Report on English Proficiency at Peninsula Technikon and Recommendations for Language Policy (1996).

There have been differing opinions as to how this intervention should take place, whom it should serve and whose responsibility it should be, but the voices are united in their concern about the need for an intervention.

3.1 Department of Languages and Communication

The Department of Languages and Communication is a quarter that has not only voiced concerns but also initiated some responses. This department has had to re-define its role at the Technikon generally, but most specifically with regard to the teaching of the subject English Communication. Prior to the change in admissions practice at the Technikon this subject was taught to a student population which

- had a fair command of the English language (as most students doing this subject were first language speakers of English) and
- was divided into small class groups (as the student intake at the Technikon was much lower then, creating a more favourable staff/student ratio.)

With the change in admissions practice and a decision by management to increase student numbers, in the period between 1978 and 1987, both of these factors changed. The student intake figures grew and the language profile shifted to a predominantly English Second Language (ESL) one. This resulted in larger class groups (as many as 100 students in some cases) and a student population of which the majority did not have the language of instruction as a first language. A 1995 survey of 1086 first-year students revealed that only 22,35% of these students spoke English as a first language.

In response to these realities the department looked into ways of dealing with the challenges facing them. Their responses were to

- re-interpret and develop their existing curricula,
- review and revise their teaching methodologies and
- put in place support structures for students.

The LEAP course, an outcome of these responses, brought about liaison between the Department and the Academic Development Unit (ADU).

3.2   Academic Development Unit

The ADU had also been engaged in research on the campus around student needs and AD interventions. In 1992 a report documenting research into issues relating to the English language needs of students at the Technikon was submitted to management. The report was based on information from formal and informal discussions with students, lecturers, departmental heads, directors and administration staff. The concerns raised in these discussions echoed the concerns raised by the Department of Languages and Communication, namely:

- that the changing student profile had implications for the use of English at the Technikon,
- that the ESL students may be disadvantaged by English as a medium of instruction,
- that the extent and nature of student needs would have to be identified, following which,
- a response to these needs would have to be established.

The report suggests strategies similar to those advocated by the Department of Languages and Communication, namely, that:

- all lecturers "need to be sensitised to the complexities of second language acquisition and to the links between language use and the subjects they teach", so that "they are sufficiently aware of when modifications to curriculum and methodology" are needed;
- all lecturers "are equipped with the strategies and practical skills to effect the appropriate changes" (Duggan, 1992:6) to their curricula and teaching methodology;
- basic language skills courses be designed to develop the English of students.

During the period 1994 –1995, the ADU engaged in a research project that monitored student performance. This project focussed on the needs of students with reference to their academic performance, with the aim of identifying "ways in which educators could further assist the students so that learning becomes an enjoyable, constructive and successful process" (Paulsen and Badenhorst, 1995:1). Data was gathered using a questionnaire which 191 students completed. Three groups of students were identified in terms of their academic performance. 'Not at risk' students had all passing grades, 'at risk' students had one or two failing grades and 'high risk' students had three or more failing grades in their subjects (Paulsen and Badenhorst, 1995:2). An analysis of these questionnaires revealed that:

- participation in peer tutorials was regarded as of great importance for academic performance;
- students, particularly the two 'at risk' groups, were experiencing language-related difficulties in their academic programmes such as understanding lecturers, understanding English, communicating confidently in English and answering essay-type questions in English;
- students, particularly the two 'at risk' groups, would prefer changes to the academic programme such as a more student-oriented academic structure, smaller class groups and learner-centred activities in class.

The report recommended that programmes to promote language proficiency in the medium of instruction should be developed and that "schools interrogate their curricula with the view of identifying to what extent staff could change their methods of teaching to accommodate difficulties with the medium of instruction" (Paulsen and Badenhorst, 1995:27).

3.3   English Proficiency Testing

Both the Paulsen and Badenhorst (1995) and Duggan (1992) reports highlighted the need for a means of screening or identifying students with difficulties relating to the medium of instruction. This need has been addressed to a certain extent by English Proficiency Testing in 1993, 1994 and 1995, the results of which are tabulated in table 3.1.

Table 3.1   ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TESTING (1993 - 1995)

	1993	1994	1995
Number of students in the sample	345	588	1 086
Sample spread across Schools	Business Studies	Business Studies, Science, Education, Engineering (Mech./Elec.)	All Schools
Percentage of students who scored below 40 % on the test	48,4	43	39
Percentage of ESL students	71,6	81	77,7

The above table consistently reveals that the institution is drawing a majority (in excess of 70%) of first-year students who are receiving tuition in a language (English) other than their first language, and that more than a third (39% - 48%) of these students have a level of English proficiency which places them at risk with regard to understanding

the medium of instruction. The Report on the Peninsula Technikon English Proficiency Testing 1995 concludes that:

- "those schools which have a very low proportion of English first language speakers tend to be also the schools with a large number of students scoring less than 25 % in the test" (Wood et al, 1995: 4), and

- there is a "relative lack of proficiency of speakers of home languages other than English in comparison to their first language English-speaking peers, which surely represents educational disadvantage" (Wood et al, 1995:7).

Amongst its recommendations the report states:

"The test data at present shows that certain Technikon courses include students who are at a greater linguistic disadvantage than students in other courses. This suggests that these should be regarded as priority areas in the Technikon for academic development initiatives" (Wood et al, 1995:10).

While the test data revealed valuable information regarding the language profiles of students and their English proficiency levels, it was not very enlightening regarding the correlation of English proficiency with academic performance in the institution. The report thus further recommended that "a more academically relevant test should be devised" (Wood et al, 1995:10). In accordance with this recommendation a new test was devised for 1996 and administered Technikon-wide.

The new test "was designed in such a way as to target the various linguistic competencies that were considered to be relevant to academic performance" (Wood et al, 1996:1). The new test was written by 1383 first-year students across all six schools of the Technikon. The benchmarks for an analysis of the new test were slightly different to the benchmarks set for the previously used test. Three of the benchmarks set were for students in the:

- 50% - 70% range, who were "considered to be at risk and likely to experience difficulties with some materials and tasks", and

- 30% - 50% range, who were "considered to be highly at risk and unlikely to cope well with normal academic functioning,

- Less than 30% range, who were considered to be "very severely at risk" and unable "to function communicatively in any English speaking milieu".

78.6% of all the students tested fell into the first two ranges (50%-70%, 30%-50%), with 57.12% falling into the first range and 21.48% falling into the second range. Regarding the percentage of ESL students for the 1996 first-year intake, there is an increase from 77.7% in 1995, to 81.27% in 1996, and the statistics show that this is due to a notable increase in the percentage of Afrikaans-speaking students. The general picture which emerges from these figures is that although the ESL profile has increased, the level of English proficiency appears to have improved from 1995 to 1996. The picture is somewhat different, however, when one looks more closely at particular schools at the institution. The English proficiency levels are quite unevenly distributed across the Technikon schools, a factor which is corroborated by the findings of the 1995 test. The schools which have consistently large numbers of students falling into the high risk range (30% - 50%) are the schools of Business Studies, Education and Art and Design. Almost half of the intake for the school of Education, for example, fall into this range and the below 30% one. Another interesting observation is that none of the schools have a majority of students falling outside of the risk ranges. While these differences across schools may be due to different approaches that schools have regarding English in their student selection processes, it remains clear that certain schools more urgently require some form of AD intervention around the issue of academic literacy in English.

3.4 The LEAP Course - a response

Although the research outlined in sections 3.1 - 3.3 is of a fragmented and sparse nature due to institutional constraints such as a lack of resources (both physical and financial) and a reluctance to acknowledge concerns and recommendations, it left the institution in no doubt about the need for AD interventions which would address issues of both English language and academic skills development in the learner. Furthermore, the interventions would have to address needs at the levels of teaching and curriculum as well. The changing profile of the classroom also necessitated a change in teaching

practice from a teacher-centred approach to a learning-centred approach, as the teacher-centred, transmission mode of delivery predominantly utilised at the Technikon encouraged rote-learning and passive learners, not the independent, critical and active learners required by tertiary education. The broader curriculum, too, still reflected only the discipline-specific content to be taught and did not integrate the development of academic literacy skills or promote the transfer of English language skills across the curriculum.

An English academic literacy course, such as the LEAP course, was envisaged, by both the Department of Languages and Communication and the ADU, as a possible vehicle to start addressing the need for an AD intervention. Although the primary aim of such a course would be **to develop English academic literacy skills in students** and in this way serve the learner's needs, it was also seen as a vehicle **for promoting a more learning-centred and interactive teaching methodology for staff**, and in this way serve the teaching process. A further aim was that through staff development workshops and wider implementation and integration of the course, the transfer of English academic skills and interactive teaching methodology across the mainstream curriculum would be promoted, Technikon-wide.

4. THE DESIGN OF THE LEAP COURSE

In 1994, the Department of Languages and Communication together with the ADU embarked on the design of the course, which was informed by the following processes:

- discussions and correspondence with other tertiary institutions and a review of their programmes of similar nature;
- consultations with experts in the fields of ESL teaching, curriculum design, cognitive development and co-operative learning;
- a series of DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) workshops with Peninsula Technikon staff and students to determine the learning outcomes for the course.

4.1 Discussions with tertiary institutions

After corresponding country-wide with a range of tertiary institutions, responses were received from the following institutions: Durban College of Education, Vista University, P.E. Technikon, Rhodes University, M.L. Sultan Technikon. The Technical English component of the Pre-technician course at P.E. Technikon; the English 1AP credit-bearing, academic literacy course at Rhodes University and the Educational Development Programme at M.L. Sultan Technikon were reviewed. Discussions were also held with staff members from the Universities of Stellenbosch and Western Cape as well as Khanya College.

At Khanya College the four English Courses, relating to different aspects of language, which formed part of their year-long bridging programme were reviewed. At the University of Stellenbosch the Academic Support Programme, a voluntary course offered to students who were under-performing in the English Communication course was reviewed. At the University of the Western Cape the English 105 course, a credit-bearing academic literacy course, was reviewed. This networking, exchange of material, sharing of ideas and experiences had an informative role in the shaping of the LEAP course.

4.2 Consultations with experts

Consultations with experts in the fields of Curriculum Design, Cognitive Development, Co-operative Learning and ESL took place in a range of workshops, all of which informed the design of the LEAP Course. Naledi Pandor, a staff member on the Academic Support Programme at the University of Cape Town at the time, was consulted about approaches to ESL teaching and learning and how this could influence curricula at the Technikon. Alyce Miller, of Metagroup Communications, was consulted on the integration of co-operative learning and teaching strategies into curricula and Professor Art Wouters of the Centre for Cognitive Development in Cape Town was consulted on the integration of cognitive skills into curricula. The design of the LEAP course curriculum was also greatly influenced by the COTIL (Community

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Outreach Through Institutional Linkages) programme. This programme was the result of extensive consultations in Canada and South Africa. These consultations were initiated by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), Technikons and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The aim of the COTIL programme was to develop partnerships between Canadian community colleges and Technikons "in support of institution strengthening and capacity building." (COTIL Partnership Project, 1992:1.1) COTIL linked the Peninsula Technikon to the Algonquin College, a community college in Canada. The COTIL programme identified seven initiatives of which the Curriculum Development Project was one. One of the objectives of this project was to demonstrate the use of a curriculum design model using the DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) process. In line with this objective workshops, presentations and discussions on curriculum development were arranged by a number of staff members from Algonquin College who visited Peninsula Technikon. Peninsula Technikon staff were thus familiarised with the DACUM approach to curriculum development.

4.3   DACUM workshops at Peninsula Technikon

One of the reasons why the DACUM approach to curriculum development was used for the design of the LEAP course curriculum was because of staff familiarity with this approach as a result of the COTIL experience. Another reason was due to a world-wide, and more specifically a South African, shift to outcome-based education. Spady (1992:6) claims that "Interest in Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is growing at an astounding rate in all parts of the U.S." Frequent reference is made to OBE in a range of South African policy and planning documents such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme of the ANC and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The DACUM approach, fully explained in Norton (1985), is usually employed in the workplace to determine skills, competencies or tasks to be performed by employees. The DACUM analysis (usually charted as a graphic portrayal of these skills, tasks or competencies) can then be used as a basis for curriculum development of training

programmes. The DACUM chart is developed by a group of people who are considered experts from the various sectors of the particular occupation being analysed. Their collective expertise then informs the DACUM chart.

The DACUM process, outlined above, had to be modified slightly to suit the purposes of curriculum development at an educational institution such as Peninsula Technikon. The experts were therefore chosen from among the staff and students of the Technikon and the competencies, tasks or skills related to student academic functioning at the Technikon.

Thirty-six experts, representing a range of sectors at the Technikon, were invited to participate in the DACUM process. The sectors represented were:

- mainstream Academic staff (both language and content area lecturers)
- Academic Development staff
- Centre for Continuing Education staff (from the Access Programme)
- Student Counselling staff
- Teaching Development staff
- Management sector (directors and the academic Vice-rector)
- Students (both entrance and exit level).

Of the 36 invited participants only 24 attended the initial workshop, thus the management sector was not represented although all other sectors were.

After an introduction to and a discussion of the DACUM process, the following procedure (for determining the learning outcomes of the course being designed) was followed. Six major curriculum areas were identified, namely reading, writing, listening, speaking, thinking and social. The learning outcomes for each of these major curriculum areas were then generated by participants. After a process of review and refinement of the learning outcomes, they were then prioritised and sequenced. (See Appendix 1 for the final DACUM chart). This DACUM chart was then further refined and developed by smaller task groups, each looking into the learning outcomes for one of the six major curriculum areas.

4.4   Course Content and Structure

The learning outcomes generated by the DACUM process shaped the course content upon which the LEAP course was developed (See Appendix 2 for LEAP course content). The skills, knowledge and attitudes reflected in the course content are what is hoped to be developed in learners and what is required for their successful completion of the LEAP course. The structure of the course and the processes by which the skills, knowledge and attitudes outlined in the course content could be taught, were the subject of discussions in the smaller task groups emerging from the DACUM workshops. It was decided to structure the course as a one-year programme with 70 hours of contact time, to allow for easy incorporation into the present Technikon mainstream curriculum. (See Appendix 3 for LEAP course structure and objectives) The structure of the course reflects its developmental nature and process approach to teaching. The philosophy underlying the developmental approach (adopted by the smaller task groups emerging from the DACUM workshops) is that to acquire, further develop and finally refine English language and academic literacy skills, the students need to practice them in a variety of academic situations before they are truly internalised and students can really 'own' the knowledge and skills. This process takes time, requires practice and needs opportunities in the curriculum for application and transfer of learning. The repetitive element in the course was thus intended to serve the process approach to and developmental nature of the course. It is for this reason that LEAP was developed as a year course rather than an intensive, total immersion 'crash course' preceding the start of the academic year. These types of courses tend to tacitly accept the existing curriculum structures and teaching methodologies. They 'quick-fix' the students and leave the curricula and teaching unchallenged by the needs of a tertiary education sector in the process of transformation.

The LEAP course consists of 4 units, developed to coincide with the 4 terms making up an academic year. The first unit facilitates the students' orientation to and socialisation within the Technikon while developing their practical research skills. This unit builds on the assumption that the tertiary institution is a foreign environment for all first-year students and that they are unfamiliar with how the institution functions and what is

expected of them since the context is very different to the secondary (or in some cases working) environment from which they come. The context and focus of unit one is thus the tertiary institution, and the practical research skills are developed through a process involving :

- the interviewing of various staff members and senior students regarding the institution,
- recording and summarising this information as notes,
- sharing this information with fellow students by orally reporting the findings and
- producing an expository essay, based on the practical research, using the process approach to assignment writing.

The second unit develops basic academic skills such as reading, note-making from texts and argumentative writing while developing the students' library research skills. This unit builds on unit one skills by initiating the students into the discourse and conventions of research-based academic assignment writing and focuses on the national language policy of South Africa as a theme. The library research skills are developed through a process involving:

- learning to use the library for research purposes,
- approaching academic texts for information,
- extracting relevant information from texts,
- taking a position and supporting it in oral debate,
- incorporating references to support logical argumentation in an assignment and
- producing an argumentative essay, based on the library research, using the process approach to assignment writing.

The third unit refines the research and academic writing skills from units one and two, by applying them in a content subject from the students' field/discipline of study. This is done in an attempt to stimulate the transfer of learning from one academic context to another and to facilitate the incorporation of academic literacy skills into the broader curriculum. This unit requires the LEAP facilitators to enter into a process of negotiation with a content lecturer/s who is willing and available to engage in such a collaborative venture. The LEAP facilitators hook into a research-based assignment set

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by the content lecturer and facilitate the process involved in completing that task while reviewing and refining the skills covered in units one and two.

The fourth unit reviews the range of study skills covered in the course and applies them to an examination context. The unit focuses on student learning by raising awareness around learning styles, study methods and examination techniques. This unit also includes a student evaluation of the LEAP course.

4.5   Academic Staff views on Student Success Courses

In November 1995 the Student Counselling Service at the Technikon circulated a questionnaire to all academic staff at the institution. This questionnaire was an attempt to survey the views of academic staff regarding what should be included in a Student Success Course. The outcome of this survey, completed by 71 academics representing 30% of the academic staff, complements the outcomes of the DACUM process outlined above. The questionnaire circulated by the Student Counselling Service asked staff to comment on 29 possible items for inclusion in a Student Success Course at the Technikon. Of the 29 items, the ten which received the highest ratings for inclusion are listed in table 3.2 on the next page (in sequence from the most highly rated item) along with the percentages of staff members who responded by indicating the highest rating on the scale, namely, 'very much':

A comparison of the LEAP course content and the 10 items listed in the table will show that the learning outcomes have been similarly, if not identically, identified and prioritised. An examination of the 6 broad themes emerging from the qualitative analysis of written comments on the questionnaire reveals that these areas (listed below) complement the content and methodology underlying the LEAP course:
- Academic abilities (e.g. ability to conceptualise learning material as opposed to memorising)
- Learning skills (e.g. exam writing techniques)
- Social issues (e.g. confidence in own abilities)
- Motivation (e.g. an awareness of the amount of work in a course)

- English Language skills (e.g. ability to understand and communicate effectively in class)

- Work related issues (e.g. developing a strong work-ethic)

Table 3.2   STUDENT SUCCESS COURSE SURVEY RESULTS (1995)

ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE STUDENT SUCCESS COURSE	PERCENTAGE RATINGS FOR EACH ITEM BY LECTURERS
Learning how to learn	80.3%
Note taking skills	78.9%
Making summaries	76.1%
How to use the library & Reading skills	74.6%
Writing skills & Time management	70.4%
Skills in taking exams	69.0%
Assessment of the demands at the Technikon	67.6%
English Language skills	64.8%
Research skills	60.6%
Self-management skills	59.2%

The questionnaire also explored the issue of how the Student Success Course should be offered at the Technikon. Here 49.3% (on the 'very much' rating) answered that the course should be part of the formal curriculum but taught by outside presenters. The other two options presented on the questionnaire, that it be taught in the students' free time by outside presenters or that it be integrated into the subject content and presented by lecturers, were given the same responses (21.1%) on the 'very much' rating. The responses to this section of the questionnaire have interesting implications for the implementation of the LEAP course. It suggests that while staff see the need for and support the implementation of a Student Success Course at the Technikon, they are not

ready to take responsibility for the teaching thereof. These attitudes will be further explored and analysed in the actual evaluation of the LEAP course.

5. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE LEAP COURSE

The LEAP Course attempts to develop the academic literacy skills required of tertiary level students, as well as to reinforce and refine the students' use of English (the medium of instruction) in the tertiary institution environment. The course thus combines elements of ESL and student success courses. It is therefore necessary to position the course with regard to research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory and learning theory.

5.1 Lessons from Applied Linguistics

In his keynote address at the 16th annual conference of the SAALA (South African Applied Linguistics Association) in 1996, Christopher Brumfit (a world-renowned Applied Linguist from the UK), while outlining the important developments in research in this field, stressed that the theories upon which researchers based their work should be viewed as the available knowledge and understood to be provisional. These theories needed to be 'tested' by critical communities to see whether existing understandings 'worked' in practice. Another renowned Applied Linguist, Stephen Krashen, states that theory is always subject to challenge and open to counter example. He further asserts that practice in second language teaching should be based on theory, also on applied linguistics research that attempts to show what works and what doesn't, and finally "it should also be based on the intuitions and insights of experienced teachers" (Krashen, 1981a:97). It is from this perspective that the LEAP course developers operated.

5.2 The contribution of Learning Theory

Because of the cognitive demands made on learners at tertiary level and the identification of thinking skills in the DACUM learning outcomes for the LEAP course,

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the developers drew on the cognitive approach to language learning. In the literature supporting this approach there is a general acceptance that language and thought are linked although theorists hypothesise differently on how these two elements are linked (Vygotsky, 1962; Adams, 1972; Piaget and Chomsky in Piattelli-Palmarini, 1980; Greene, 1987). Theory supports the view that combining the teaching of thinking skills and a second language promotes language acquisition. The results of research conducted in South Africa (Van der Vyver, 1987) provide support for this view.

An initial decision by the LEAP course developers to develop four separate modules, (one for Social Skills, one for Thinking Skills and two for Language Skills) was abandoned with a growing realisation that these skills were too integrated in the learning process to be separated in this way. A shift was then made towards a task-based, learning-centred approach. This approach, evolved by Prabhu (1987), is based on the principle that the learning of language forms is best achieved when attention is given to meaning. Prabhu distinguishes between a learner-centred approach and a learning-centred approach. The learning-centred approach emphasises the learning process in which the learner is engaged in order to complete a particular task. The focus of the classroom interaction is thus on the learning process rather than the learner or the teacher. Reid (1996:3) places learner-centredness and teacher-centredness on either end of a continuum, referring to the former as "anarchical, overly permissive and chaotic" and the latter as "autocratic, overly structured and fearsomely quiet". The LEAP course situates itself in the middle of such a continuum, with a focus on what passes between either end, the learning. The basis of this approach is "tasks which engage the learner in thinking processes, the focus of which is completion of the task rather than learning the language." (White, 1988:103) Tasks are therefore broken down into smaller units that the learner finds more manageable and understandable. The tasks can also be selected and graded in terms of cognitive complexity. The three major written tasks for the LEAP course, for example, were graded as follows:

i)   expository writing using practical research skills,

ii)   argumentative writing using library research skills,

iii)   research-based writing in a content subject discipline.

The reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking and social skills making up the course content were then integrated into the processes required for completion of the above tasks. A knowledge base covering these skills was built into the course through the explicit teaching of these skills, and provision was made for the application of these skills in the classroom, through the tasks set. This was done in attempt to develop what theorists from the field of cognitive psychology refer to as *declarative* as well as *procedural* knowledge. Sorani and Tamponi (1992:6) define these terms in the following way: "According to current developments in cognitive psychology, information is stored in memory in two forms: *declarative knowledge*, i.e., what we know about a given topic, and *procedural knowledge*, i.e., what we know how to do." The explicit teaching of the skills listed in the LEAP course content is to activate and develop declarative knowledge while the application of these explicitly learned skills (through the tasks set) activates and develops procedural knowledge. Greene (1987:152) asserts that "virtually all the education which goes on in schools, polytechnics and universities is confined to declarative knowledge about facts, as opposed to how to do things." She goes on to say that "It has been said of university lectures that information passes from the notes of the lecturer to the notes of the students without passing through the minds of either." What makes the LEAP course innovative, if the bleak scenario outlined by Greene in the above quotes is generally true of education in South Africa today, is that it does not confine itself to declarative knowledge production but makes a firm commitment to the production of procedural knowledge through the process, task-based approach detailed in the teaching materials.

5.3   How SLA research informed LEAP

SLA theory and Linguistics (the primary discipline from which SLA grew) are well-researched fields in which major theoretical shifts have taken place over the past few decades. In the period from the 1930s till the present time there has been a shift away from "what some called the 'mindless' drilling in audiolingual classes" (Rivers, 1982:5) to a communicative approach to language learning (Brumfit, 1984) which proposes that the subconscious acquisition of language takes place while the conscious mind is focused on meaning. Lightbrown (1985:181) refers to the convergence of language

acquisition research findings and proposals for communicative language teaching practice as "one of the happy coincidences of language teaching and learning".

The LEAP course draws on the communicative approach to language learning and teaching. It is also strongly influenced by the research of Krashen (1981a; 1981b) who distinguishes between subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning, two different and independent means that adults have for developing ability in second languages. He states that fluency in second language performance is due to acquired language while formal accuracy is as a result of learned language. The most important application of his research concerns the importance of acquisition as opposed to learning. He claims that "the fundamental goal of pedagogy should be to encourage acquisition" (1981a:102) and that the formal study of grammar is clearly peripheral. Grammar is thus not taught explicitly in the LEAP course, but where students have this need (and a minority of first-year students at the Technikon certainly has the need) a self-access learning package, tailored to meet the needs of the learner, is recommended.

Further in line with Krashen's hypotheses, the LEAP course aims to provide students with comprehensible input which is relevant to their new role as tertiary students. The skills covered in the LEAP course are therefore applied and practised in a context relating to the Technikon environment and the content-area relating to the students' chosen course of study. This is done in an attempt to centralise language in the curriculum and to make the material meaningful, relevant and interesting. SLA theory supports the view that when material is meaningful, relevant and interesting, learning is enhanced and the language is internalised. The transfer of knowledge and skills into other curriculum subjects is also promoted in this way and gains significance for the students when acquired within the discipline being studied.

The LEAP course also places great emphasis on the affective domain of the learner. Krashen stresses the need to lower students' affective filter by avoiding excessive error correction, not forcing students to speak before they are ready and not putting them on the defensive. As most learning and teaching at tertiary level focuses on the intellect, the LEAP course emphasises the importance of both feelings and intellect and in this way

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attempts to forge "a relationship between personal and academic development" (Volbrecht, 1992:5) by creating a pleasing, comfortable and non-threatening learning environment.

5.4   The Purpose of the LEAP Course

Figure 3.1 outlines the purpose, aims, principles and approach of the LEAP course using the mindmap format taught in the LEAP course. The first three areas will be expanded on in this section while the approach will be covered under the section on course materials and methodology.

The LEAP course has a threefold purpose: targeting the needs of the learners, enhancing the role of the teachers and influencing transformation of the curriculum. This threefold purpose is in line with current thinking in the field of Academic Development in this country. Kotecha (1994:8), in a paper based on the findings of her research, states that "[I]ncreasingly, the combination of student development, staff development and curriculum development is being advocated. In practice, all three need to be placed on a continuum of educational development work at our universities. A more organic relationship between mainstream curricula, staff and learner competencies needs to be effected." This applies equally to Technikons. The focussing of AD interventions at student level only is problematic as it encourages the type of thinking which sees students as 'the problem' and AD interventions as needing to fix and fit students into the mainstream curriculum and teaching. In an attempt to challenge this type of thinking, the LEAP course was conceptualised as an academic literacy course:

- to assist first-year students in adapting to the challenges of Technikon education and English as a medium of instruction,

- to encourage lecturers to use learning-centred teaching materials and shift them from the role of lecturer to the role of facilitator of learning, and

- to promote the transfer and integration of academic literacy skills across the curriculum.
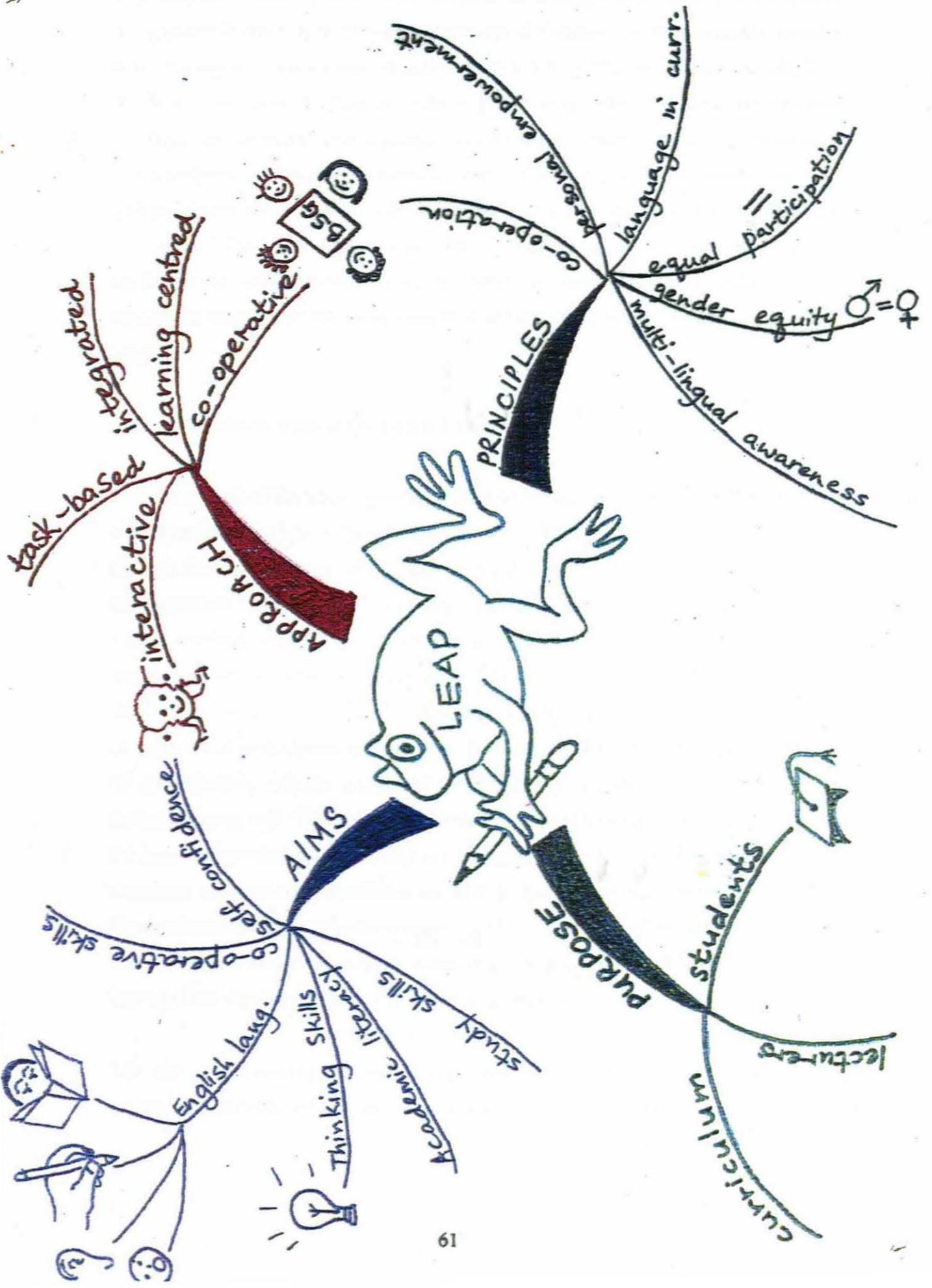
This threefold purpose is understood, however, in developmental terms. The acquisition of academic literacy skills through the medium of English is a developmental process, requiring an enormous investment in time. Researchers are uncertain about exactly how much time is required. Krashen (1981a:104/5) states that "The language teaching profession has seriously underestimated the amount of input it takes to promote even moderate levels of language acquisition" and Lightbrown (1985:179) asserts that "One cannot achieve native-like (or near native-like) command of a second language in one hour a day." The LEAP course is thus seen as only a first step towards addressing the challenges of tertiary transformation at Peninsula Technikon. These challenges will require the response of the entire institution and the education sector within which it is placed.

5.5   The Macro Aims of the LEAP Course

The macro aims of the LEAP course, as outlined in figure 3.1, are further expanded on in this section. The aim of developing the self-confidence of the students is addressed through the methodology of the course (further explained under section 6 in this chapter) which is premised on the assumption that an academically competent student is a more confident student. As a result of their active participation in the learning process and the practical application of their learning in the classroom, they are enhancing their ability to communicate in English while refining the processes required for completion of the kinds of academic tasks required of first-year students at tertiary level. A process of self-reflection (further elucidated in section 6) is woven through the course methodology as well. This thread is included in an attempt to make explicit to students the learning processes in which they are engaged, and in this way make their learning conscious and accessible for future use both in the tertiary environment and beyond. The methodology/approach (the terms are used interchangeably) is thus a key factor in developing self-confident students, hence the link between the blue 'self-confidence' branch of the mindmap and the red 'interactive' branch.

The aim of developing students' co-operative skills is also strongly linked to the approach underlying the course. The co-operative skills, although taught explicitly to

students at the start of the course, are integrated through the teaching methodology. The co-operative approach comes through clearly in the detailed teaching materials and is practised throughout the course. The facilitator creates situations in the classroom where students work co-operatively, in an interdependent relationship. This approach is extended beyond the classroom in a programme of independent learning, the Base Support Group (BSG) programme, which is further explained in section 6 of this chapter.

The aim of developing students' English language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) is met through the integration of these skills into virtually every session in the course. The methodology also furthers this aim as it creates opportunities for students to practice these skills in small groups. These skills are directed at an academic context so they are guided in the reading of academic texts, in writing for an academic context, in active listening with the aim of note-taking, in speaking and questioning in a formal academic environment. Linguistic competence at the level of sentence structure is assumed (although not always present in a minority of students) and the course starts by developing competence at the level of paragraph structure.

The aim of developing the thinking skills of students is met by the developmental and task-based nature of the course. The thinking skills are integrated in the learning processes required of students for successful completion of the tasks. As the tasks themselves are graded in complexity, the thinking skills developed earlier in the course inform the more complex processes dealt with later. The course thus builds on the thinking skills previously developed.

Developing students' academic literacy is the overarching aim of the entire course, but it is placed with the macro aims for the sake of clarity. The term is used in its broadest sense, and refers not only to becoming au fait with the discourse and conventions of academia in general and the specifics of a particular field or discipline, but also to becoming orientated into the 'culture' of the particular tertiary institution at which the student is studying. Each institution, whether a technikon or university, has a unique mission, ethos, policy framework and set of practices with which the incoming student

body needs to become acquainted. The LEAP course sees this interpretation of academic literacy as a part of what it aims to do by making the institution the context of the very first unit. This very broad aim can be accomplished to only a limited extent though, by a course of this nature. To truly fulfil such an aim, as is the case with all of the other macro aims, joint responsibility needs to be taken by all members of the academic community at macro level.

The final macro aim listed in figure 3.1, to develop the study skills of students, is linked very closely to the development of thinking skills, already outlined above, since the course encourages study skills at the conceptual level rather than the level of rote-learning and memorisation without understanding. This position with regard to study skills is also borne out by the teaching methodology which promotes interactive rather than transmissive methods of delivery, in an attempt to engage the learner at a conceptual level. A range of study skills are therefore taught and applied throughout the year as a part of the process of task completion, but this range is reviewed and applied to an examination context at the end of the year, as explained previously under 4.4.

5.6   The Principles underlying the LEAP Course

The principles underlying the LEAP course, as outlined in figure 3.1, are explained and expanded on in this section. Co-operation is a fundamental principle underlying the LEAP course and it permeates the aims of the course (through the explicit teaching and application of co-operative social skills), as well as the approach of the course (through the co-operative teaching methodology promoted in the materials). The course promotes and encourages an atmosphere of co-operation rather than competition in the hope of creating a caring and committed community of learners and a comfortable, non-threatening learning environment. Widdowson (1990) emphasises the principle of co-operation in his work on the negotiation of meaning. Classroom interaction, according to Widdowson, involves the reciprocal negotiation of meaning between the expert (lecturer) and the novice (student). For successful reciprocal negotiation of meaning to take place, the social relations between lecturer and students need to be negotiated. Students need to feel free to engage in a mutual exchange of ideas with the lecturer and

they need to feel safe about asking for clarification. The lecturer needs to be open to student perspectives and sensitive to their personal development. The establishment of rapport and the focus on the affective domain of the learner are crucial for effective learning and these become as much pedagogical principles as the acquisition of knowledge and skills. To this end the LEAP course encourages a collaborative and interdependent classroom atmosphere and promotes small group interaction where students acquire the social skills required for successful group functioning. Fellow students are seen as a resource in the learning process and learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own and each others' learning.

The principle of personal empowerment, previously referred to in section 5.3, underlies the 'whole' person approach of the LEAP course. The intellectual and personal development of the learner are not separated but seen as two complementary elements, both necessary for the development of the whole person. While interdependence and co-operative learning are encouraged in the course, this should not be confused with dependence. Individual accountability to the group of learners is stressed and independent learning encouraged. The principle of personal empowerment is also strongly linked to the aim of developing the self-confidence of the students, previously explained in section 5.5.

Another principle underlying the LEAP course is that of language in the curriculum. The course attempts to straddle the great divide between language and content in the curriculum, in a number of ways. It incorporates content from the students' course of study, it influences task design, assessment and teaching methodology in a content subject, it structures collaboration between language and content teachers, it stimulates student reflection on learning processes employed in the LEAP classes and raises student consciousness about the wider applicability and transfer of their learning across the curriculum, through regular journalling. The LEAP course, although essentially an adjunct model for promoting academic literacy, attempts to be itself content-sensitive while promoting language-sensitivity in the content courses with which it shares a curriculum.

The principle of equal participation relates to the dialogic relationship between the lecturer and the student described earlier under the principle of co-operation. The lecturer adopts the role of facilitator of learning rather than the role more usually associated with tertiary education, that of transmitter of knowledge. The learner and teacher participate more equally in the learning process, neither becoming the focus. This principle promotes a greater degree of participation on the part of the learner and an invitation to the learner to engage in a dialogue (with the facilitator, fellow learners and self) about the learning process. With the focus on learning, the facilitator is able to shift to a monitoring role in the classroom while retaining responsibility for preparing learning materials and creating opportunities for interactive and reflective learning.

The principle of gender equity informs an awareness-raising regarding gender-neutral language in the course. In the spoken and written language used in the course an attempt is made to use words which include all people. The objective is to create language which is inclusive of all people rather than exclusive or biased towards a particular group of people. The Mission Statement of the institution refers to a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic community and the LEAP course strives to consciously uphold this vision by choosing words carefully.

The principle of multilingual awareness has its roots in the multilingual community of learners. Multilingualism is viewed as a resource in the learning environment and the course attempts to create an awareness of the variety of home languages represented in the classroom. This is done in a number of ways. Students are encouraged to learn greetings in all of the official languages to promote the social interaction so necessary among students for co-operative learning to take place. Students are encouraged to enrich each other by sharing what their home languages can bring to the course. To this end the medium of small group classroom interaction is not prescribed although plenary sessions are conducted through the medium of English. Multilingualism is also woven into the course materials as a theme, allowing students to engage in debate and position themselves with regard to the national language policy after considering various perspectives on this matter.

The six principles outlined above, informed by the purpose, macro aims and skills content of the course, guided the LEAP materials development process.

6.   THE LEAP COURSE MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

Four staff members from the ADT and Department of Languages and Communication engaged in the collaborative development of lessons and teaching materials for the four units of the course.   Since the course was conceptualised as an AD intervention targeting not only students but also staff and curriculum, the materials were developed in great detail. One of the reasons for the level of detail was to enable non-language specialists to use the materials with minimal training and in this way facilitate transformation at the level of curriculum through the integration of academic literacy skills. Another reason was to promote the learning-centred, interactive and co-operative teaching methodology as an alternative to the widely practised transmission-based approach and in this way facilitate transformation at the level of staff.

The classroom activities and tasks for each lesson are described in great detail and master copies of all transparencies, peripherals, worksheets and notes used in the course are provided. The aims of each session are spelt out clearly and in detail to allow for flexibility where facilitators, who are language specialists and familiar with the methodologies being promoted, may feel restricted by the detail of the materials. The LEAP course materials adopt an eclectic approach to teaching, and do not promote a particular teaching methodology to the exclusion of others. The materials draw primarily on the teaching experience, creativity and expertise of the course developers as well as methodologies which are interactive, task-based, integrated, learning-centred and co-operative.

Small class sizes (20 -30 students per class) are advocated for the teaching of a course such as LEAP, as this allows for the successful implementation of the teaching methodologies outlined above. It becomes difficult to actively involve students in the learning process and introduce the process-oriented teaching required of a task-based syllabus, when confronted by large classes. The application of skills in the classroom

and interpersonal development through small group interaction becomes almost impossible as well.

A significant aspect of the course methodology is the development of a practice of reflection about the learning process. Students use a dialogue journal for this purpose and reflective journal entries are required at the end of each lesson in the course. These journal entries are stimulated by guide questions given to students at the end of most lessons, as this kind of reflective practice is new to most students and seldom reinforced across the curriculum. The primary objective of the reflective journal is to stimulate the transfer of learning into other learning contexts but it also serves as a useful ongoing evaluative tool through which teachers and course developers can gain insights into the learning processes of their students.

The 'whole' person approach, referred to previously in section 5.6, is another significant aspect of the course methodology. Interpersonal social skills are thus explicitly taught and practised along with the academic language skills. This happens both in the classroom, using structured co-operative small-group activities, and outside the classroom, using an independent learning programme for structured peer groups. This programme of independent learning, the BSG programme, challenges students to take full responsibility for their learning without direct supervision from the facilitator. While the content of this programme is prescribed and complements the LEAP course, the students complete the work in their own time and space (determined by each particular peer group) and report back to their facilitators on a weekly basis.

The collaborative approach to the materials development process and the decision to finely detail the materials in order to promote alternative teaching methodologies and facilitate integration into mainstream, has required a huge investment in time and human resources. This investment will be evaluated in chapter 6 of this study.

7. THE LEAP PILOT

During 1994, the second unit of the course, in which the skills for the writing of an academic assignment are developed, was piloted with a group of students while the materials were being developed.

7.1 Evaluative information

Fifty-four students from the School of Business Studies were approached to participate in the programme. All of these students had scored below 30% on the proficiency test referred to in section 3.3 of this chapter. Their participation in the programme was voluntary and required a commitment of 3 hours per week over and above their academic commitments. Thirty-three students agreed to participate. They were asked to evaluate the programme at the end of the unit using a questionnaire. (See Appendix 4) The questionnaire revealed that:

- 69,6 % of the students felt that the programme had definitely given them confidence to communicate in English and they would recommend the programme to others,

- 56, 5 % saw a definite improvement in their assignments and tests generally,

- 54,5 % felt that they could definitely use what they had learned in their other courses,

- 38,1 % felt that the programme had definitely improved their grammar and vocabulary in English,

- 60,8 % felt that their motivation and commitment had been adversely affected by having to do the programme in their free time.

Comments made at the end of the questionnaire corroborated the above statistics as students emphasised the positive effects on their communication skills generally and highlighted the difficulties of attending extra classes which they saw as an added burden. Attendance of these classes, which was monitored by the facilitators, was erratic and numbers dropped towards the end as students felt pressurised by the approaching end-of-term tests and assignments.

In piloting these materials the facilitators worked in close collaboration with three content-area, mainstream lecturers. They found that the material was relevant and responded to a real need among first-year students, namely, effective assignment writing skills. However, the close collaboration with these content lecturers also raised some concerns. It was found that assignment topics set for the first year students varied greatly in complexity and scope from lecturer to lecturer, with some topics too broad and complex for first-year level and others requiring no critical thinking but a mere regurgitation of content. Research support for students also varied greatly, with some lecturers providing detailed reading lists and others giving students just the essay topic. A general concern arising from this collaborative experience was also that plagiarism in academic assignments was not being adequately addressed by mainstream lecturers. Some lecturers were ignoring it completely and crediting plagiarised work while others were noting it in written feedback only.

7.2   Evaluation Implications

This pilot, although of an ad hoc nature, was able to inform many aspects relating to the implementation of the LEAP course. It became very clear to the developers that the envisaged course was serving a definite need but that its relevance to students' mainstream tuition needed to be made clearer. For this to happen, all mainstream staff needed to reinforce the skills developed in the LEAP course. This would require a planned and well co-ordinated staff development intervention.

The voluntary, non-credit-bearing nature of the course affected student motivation and attendance adversely. Martino (1992:22), in discussing the non-credit status of ESL courses at universities in the U.S., argues that "If universities desire to be truly multicultural institutions dedicated to educating people regardless of color or place of origin, then they need to demonstrate that they value the learning achievements of all people." She also expands on how the non-credit status of the ESL courses adversely affected student motivation. David (1993:10), arguing for the accreditation of student success courses in the U.S., has the following to say, "A well-designed student success

course deserves full academic credit." SLA theory also hypothesises that attitude relates directly to language acquisition and that attitudinal and motivational factors are more important for successful language acquisition than aptitude. (Krashen, 1981b:5)

The pilot also raised implications for staff development initiatives on the campus. The variation in complexity of assignment topics given to first-year students, lack of support for students during the process of researching and writing assignments as well as inconsistency regarding plagiarism were all potential issues around which staff members could workshop in an attempt to set a 'standard' for the institution. There needed to be agreement among staff members regarding the kind and extent of support they gave to students during the process of researching and writing the essay and the way plagiarism was dealt with. Referencing techniques also needed to be taught explicitly by all staff members following guidelines set out by the institution.

The implications that the student evaluations and staff reflections had for the LEAP course developers were the following:

- that ways of time-tabling and crediting the course needed to be explored,
- that staff development opportunities needed to be created to facilitate the reinforcement of academic literacy skills by other mainstream lecturers, and
- that curriculum development initiatives needed to be launched to effect the transfer and integration of academic literacy skills into the existing mainstream curriculum.

8.   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEAP COURSE

In 1995 the entire LEAP course (units 1,2,3 and 4) was implemented in the School of Education as a re-interpretation of an existing, compulsory, credit-bearing English course. It was thus offered to all first-year students and therefore did not give rise to some of the concerns, such as the voluntary and non-credit status, raised by the pilot.

Incorporation of the LEAP course into the mainstream curriculum of the School of Education had been facilitated by the credit-bearing 'space' for the teaching of English communication skills over the first three years of the diploma course. This phenomenon,

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unique to the School of Education, allowed for the teaching of English academic literacy skills in the first year of study (the first-year English syllabus requirements being broad enough to allow for such re-interpretation). The second and third year of study then allowed ample time for the teaching of workplace-specific English communication skills.

However, this was not the case with the diploma structures at the other five schools at the Technikon. The School of Business Studies, for example, offered space for the teaching of communication skills (in either English or Afrikaans) in only the first year of study for the full year, while the Engineering Schools offered curriculum space for this purpose over only one semester. Also, there were some diploma courses in both the School of Business of Studies and the Engineering Schools which did not have curriculum space for the teaching of communication skills at all. The incorporation and integration of academic literacy skills into the curricula at these schools clearly required a different strategy to that employed at the School of Education. However, since an opportunity for incorporation of the LEAP course presented itself through the curriculum structure at the School of Education, and since the student need at this school was very great, it was there that the implementation of the course was first effected.

The entire first-year intake in 1995 sat the proficiency test, referred to in section 3.3, and the results were used to ensure an even spread of proficiency levels in each of the six class groups into which the students were divided. Six facilitators then piloted the course in three one-hour sessions per week, for the full year. Different aspects of the course were evaluated by the students, facilitators, materials developers and mainstream content lecturers. This was done using both qualitative and quantitative methods and will be fully described and analysed in the following chapters. In response to this formative evaluation the LEAP course was reviewed and revised in preparation for its second implementation year at the School of Education in 1996, during which the course was once again evaluated by all stakeholders.

9. CONCLUSION

The peculiarities of the School of Education curriculum allowed for the LEAP course to be incorporated as a stand alone academic literacy course, compulsory and credit-bearing for all first-year students. This model ensures that the AD intervention targets student needs in the first year but it does not ensure transformation at the levels of teaching and curriculum in the first year. Although the course has built into its content and methodology a process of collaboration with content lecturers and the transfer of student learning across the curriculum through reflection, these measures remain limited means for effecting real change in the teaching and curriculum beyond the LEAP course.

The key to transformation at these levels lies in the commitment among mainstream lecturers to reinforcing academic literacy skills through adapting their approaches to teaching, as well as integrating academic literacy skills through recurriculation of the courses they teach. Without this level of commitment, the broader curriculum and existing teaching practices militate against the success of such a model of intervention. The level of commitment among mainstream lecturers to reinforcing academic literacy will be explored in the evaluation of the LEAP model of intervention, in chapters five and six, along with an analysis and interpretation of the formative evaluation phase. The following chapter will introduce the first three stages of the evaluation model (which was presented in chapter 2) as it was applied to the evaluation of the LEAP intervention.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXTUALISING THE LEAP EVALUATION

1.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter illustrates the first three stages of the generalised model presented in chapter two, using the evaluation of LEAP to demonstrate the application of the model. LEAP will be located within the context and policy framework of its operation (stage 1), the evaluation goals of LEAP will be determined (stage 2) and the principal stakeholders in the prospective evaluation of LEAP will be identified (stage 3).

2.   LOCATING LEAP WITHIN THE CONTEXT AND POLICY FRAMEWORK OF ITS OPERATION (STAGE 1)

The purpose of the LEAP intervention is to effect change at the levels of institutional curriculum, teaching and learning. The designing of the LEAP course itself is a curriculum development initiative, in that (academic literacy) courses of this nature do not form part of the formal curriculum structures at Technikons and this type of course did not previously exist at Peninsula Technikon. LEAP is designed to promote the transfer and integration of academic literacy skills across the broader Technikon curriculum through a process of collaboration (written into the materials) between LEAP facilitators and mainstream content lecturers. This transfer and integration of academic literacy skills is also promoted at student level through a process of reflective journalling which forms an integral part of each lesson. Through its learning-centred teaching materials and the interactive teaching methodology woven into the materials, LEAP is also designed to encourage lecturers to shift from the role of transmitter of knowledge to that of facilitator of learning. Finally, LEAP is designed to target the academic needs of first-year students through their explicit learning and practising of academic literacy skills during 70 hours of contact time. With the aforementioned as the overt goals of the LEAP intervention, the context which so powerfully shapes the chances of success or failure in the meeting of these goals will be analysed in accordance with Stage 1 of the model, as illustrated in figure 2.2. of chapter 2.

Stage 1 of the evaluation model states that the three most immediate levels for consideration in evaluating an AD intervention such as LEAP are the **curriculum**, the **teaching** and the **learning**. However, each of these three levels operates within an **immediate academic context** which itself operates within the **broader sphere of tertiary education** and its governing policy framework. Each of the above-mentioned levels (as illustrated in figure 2.2 of chapter.2) will be contextualised for the LEAP intervention in the following way. The tertiary education sector in South Africa and its governing policies will be scrutinised as the broadest sphere within which LEAP operates. The more immediate sphere of operation, provided by the institutional academic context, will then be scrutinised. The institutional context provided by Peninsula Technikon will be located within the context of South African tertiary education. Finally, the three most immediate levels providing a context for LEAP (curriculum, teaching and learning) will be scrutinised in terms of how they operate within the academic context of Peninsula Technikon.

2.1   Tertiary Education Policy Framework

There is an assumption underlying much of the literature analysing South Africa post-April 1994 that a transformation of the wider South African society has in fact taken place. However, despite the changed legislation, the reams of idealistic policy documentation and the costly commissions, committees and consultants, little has happened to change materially the lives of the majority of South Africans. To sensibly examine the policies and practices which create the context of tertiary education, or in fact the context of education generally in this country, one needs to understand the determining economic and political factors. The budget, presented to the Government of National Unity (GNU) in the first quarter of 1996 by the then Minister of Finance, Mr G. Liebenberg, speaks to an economy unable to provide for the basic needs of South Africa's people. "The GNU has chosen to run this country on behalf of local and foreign investors who own and/or control the wealth-producing factors for their own benefit" (Kies, 1996:1). This picture emerges very clearly on closer scrutiny of the state Macro-Economic Policy which promotes private investment as the driving force behind economic growth, and aims to cut state expenditure on non-productive services such as

Education, Health and Social Services. The situation in education nationally therefore reflects a lack of resources, and the reconstruction and development of education does not appear to be a priority in the state's macro-economic plan. There is also a close convergence between South Africa's new Macro-Economic Policy and the international financial policies dominating the global economy. An article in the *Mail and Guardian* of 24 April 1998, entitled 'A revolution betrayed', states that "[T]he Americans, the British and the World Bank made it clear, without spelling it out publically, that South Africa would be 'welcomed into the global economy' on condition that its new government pursued orthodox, 'neo-liberal' policies that favoured big business, foreign investors, deregulation, privatisation and, at best, a 'trickle down' to the majority who effectively were to be shut out of the economy." The trend in the global economy, if one looks at countries such as Britain and the U.S.A is to privatise state enterprises and cut back on state funding of services which do not generate profits. A similar trend is apparent in South Africa's Macro-Economic Policy. This would imply that international financial policies have in fact influenced the direction that South African economic policy has taken.

One of the effects of this new direction in South African economic policy has been a cutback in state expenditure on education, particularly in the Western Cape region. This situation has come about as a result of a state decision that existing funds needed merely to be redistributed in such a way that more was spent on the disadvantaged sectors and less on the advantaged. The pro-rata allocation of funding to each of the nine provinces was therefore changed. The Western Cape, a formerly advantaged province, suffered a cut of R560 million, whereas formerly disadvantaged provinces were granted increased allocations. One of the ways in which the then Western Cape Education Minister, Martha Olckers, responded to this cut was to downsize the teaching corps in the Western Cape and cut the teacher-training institutions by closing down 50% of the colleges in the Western Cape. She further reduced the intake of first-year teacher trainees that institutions were permitted to enrol (with dire consequences for the School of Education at Peninsula Technikon, where LEAP is being implemented, as will be outlined under 2.2).

One needs to analyse the official state policy documents such as the *White Paper on Education and Training*, the report by the *NCHE (National Commission on Higher Education) on a Framework for Transformation*, and *the COTEP (Committee on Teacher Education Policy) Document* against these realities. These documents propose changes to the system of education (such as a commitment to an integrated approach to education, a rejection of rigid divisions between theory and practice, the promotion of an outcomes-based process approach to curriculum rather than an input-based product approach, as well as the empowering of citizens with a strong foundation of general education and the desire to engage in lifelong learning) which are commendable but not realistic given the political and socio-economic factors outlined previously. These documents fail to spell out **how** these changes will be implemented or financed (despite the massive sums spent on no fewer than sixty commissions created within the Bengu Education Ministry to explore these issues), nor is the ministry embarking on any programmes to prepare and train educators for implementing these changes. This then is the policy framework governing education generally.

2.2   Academic Context

Peninsula Technikon, the academic context within which LEAP operates, is an autonomous tertiary education institution, offering career-specific education and training. Although the Technikon was granted full autonomy in 1993 with the passing of the Technikons Act, it is still predominantly funded through a state subsidy and therefore reports to the National Education Department. It is an institution which in many ways, for example through its progressive alternative admissions practices and among the lowest tuition fee structures in the country, pioneered a process of transformation in Technikon education during the 1980s. In 1987, against the prevailing apartheid policy which required of the institution to admit students designated by the state as belonging to a particular "race", Peninsula Technikon opened its doors to all South African students. Through the low fee structures Peninsula Technikon makes tertiary education accessible to greater numbers of impoverished students and through their alternative admissions practices they give access to a generation of students who as a result of their interrupted and incomplete secondary education (the outcome of intense

political strife and turmoil impacting on education in the country) would otherwise have been denied access to a tertiary education. This progressive stance, adopted in the 1980s, has resulted in great growth in student numbers and a student profile reflecting the non-racial nature of the institution. Most of the students at Peninsula Technikon come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and have been through the disadvantaged sector of the apartheid system of discriminatory schooling.

The commitment of the institution to the process of transformation is enshrined in its mission statement, drawn up in 1992 and proudly displayed in every building at the institution. This mission statement has as its institutional vision a "centre of excellence for career education", with a "non-racial, non-sexist and democratic community" which will be "recognised by the community, commerce and industry as well as the public sector as being responsive to the needs of society". The mission statement further commits to a belief in the values of "mutual respect, trust, freedom with responsibility, unity of purpose, loyalty, accountability and honesty." Finally, the statement has as its mission the development of "academically, socially and technologically competent students who are responsive to the broader needs and challenges of society by:
- promoting an environment conducive to human development
- **facilitating appropriate tuition, co-operative education and support according to the academic needs of our students**
- **encouraging staff commitment to quality education and service**
- **offering programmes for educationally disadvantaged students**
- fostering lifelong learning."

It is the three areas of the mission statement, highlighted above, which relate most directly to the three key objectives of the LEAP course. The mission statement displays an understanding of the need for curriculum development initiatives, such as LEAP, in that it supports the offering of programmes for educationally disadvantaged students, who form the overwhelming majority of the Peninsula Technikon student population. The mission statement also commits itself to facilitating appropriate tuition and encourages staff commitment to quality education, a key objective of the LEAP curriculum as well, which places much emphasis on interactive teaching methods

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designed to engage learners actively. The third area where the mission statement endorses a key LEAP objective is that of student need. While the mission statement commits itself to providing support according to the academic needs of its students, LEAP provides one kind of student support intervention designed to begin addressing the language and learning needs (identified and agreed upon institution-wide) of first-year students.

The Technikon statement of Vision, Values and Mission (referred to above) governs the strategic objectives of the institution and the process of strategic planning. This process of institutional self-study is driven by a body representing all units and major stakeholders within the institution, including students. The primary function of this body is "to assist the Rector in positioning the Technikon so as best to meet changing needs and challenges" (Draft Facts Book for Peninsula Technikon, 1996:83). New objectives have been set, by this body, for 1997 and beyond. The Technikon's priorities, as set out in these new objectives, are:

- Student Success and Development,
- Research,
- Quality,
- Science and Technology,
- Staff Development.

Of the five areas prioritised by the Technikon, three of them (namely Student Success and Development, Quality and Staff Development) are areas which directly overlap with the stated objectives of LEAP. This overlap should signal an enabling environment for a project such as LEAP. However, the strategic planning process itself has not been problem free. In a Strategic Planning document dated 14 May 1995 (page 2), it states that to have an impact, the strategic planning process "requires significant refinement and support from all sectors". The document further alludes to staff who "were somewhat sceptical about the process and the capacity of the institution to sustain it" and mentions that "it might have proven very difficult to excite a general sense of enthusiasm in the strategic planning process" without the outside funded initiative supporting the process. During 1996, when the strategic planning process was

implemented, the scepticism of staff members was apparent in their poor attendance at the open meetings and commissions which were held to refine each of the five priority areas. The June 1996 Strategic Planning report, on page 1, states that "attendance at the open meetings and commissions was poor, despite wide advertising." Despite the prevailing apathy of academic staff members regarding the strategic planning process, the plans for 1997 and beyond were refined and accepted. The challenge for the institution now, according to the Strategic Planning Facilitator, is to draw up action plans which are realistically linked to and provided for in the institutional budget, not the 'wish list' basis of previous planning. He further states in his report that the inability of the institution to meet this challenge has resulted in the failure of the strategic planning process in the past, where planning and budgeting were completely unrelated activities. This is not the case at present and earmarked resources have been allocated for the promotion of the new objectives. However, the strategic planner, in his report, recognises that the allocation of funds is not sufficient to ensure effective implementation as it does not spell out **how** to transform the objectives and the resources into a detailed plan of action or how to pursue the plan effectively. Departments and units also have to bid and compete for access to the earmarked funding due to the limited nature of the resources, a reality which seems unlikely to change in the near future. The Rector, in his status report on strategic planning in November 1996, raises a concern about "the present uncertainty around the financing of higher education." Despite these factors constraining the strategic planning process, two developments (a staff development policy and a model for student support) resulting from this process could signal the creating of an enabling academic context within which LEAP will be better able to meet its aforementioned threefold objectives.

A Staff Development policy has been drawn up and a subcommittee appointed to implement the policy. The purpose of this policy is to assist staff in the improvement of their qualifications and skills. Although the primary focus of this policy is to encourage staff members to upgrade their academic qualifications rather than improve their teaching practices, it does allow for the allocation of funds for workshops, conferences and breakaways. The utilisation of these funds for 1996, however, indicated that most of

the staff members accessed the funds for the completion of further degrees rather than for purposes of improving their teaching.

The strategic planner was tasked to assist the AD unit and Student Counselling to develop a holistic student support system at the Technikon. The development of the model, planned for completion in 1996, was however delayed and could not be pursued with vigour. This was due to the sudden resignation of the Vice-Rector: Student Affairs and the organisational change to the location of the AD unit, which now resides under the leadership of the head of the Educational Development Centre (EDC). With the shift of the AD unit to the permanent, Technikon-funded, EDC and the appointment of a new Vice-Rector: Student Affairs, the model for student support and its implementation was prioritised for 1997, according to the Strategic Planning Facilitator.

Another area around which policy has been formulated at the Technikon, and which has a direct bearing on the LEAP course, is that of admissions. The admissions policy of Peninsula Technikon was formulated in accordance with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Technikon. This policy was formulated as a further way of consolidating progressive practices, such as opposing the apartheid role which the previous government had defined for the institution, which already characterised the ethos of the Technikon. In the preamble to the admissions policy document the Technikon states its position as follows: "having to cater for the needs of a student population which includes a large number of educationally and economically disadvantaged students." Further in the preamble it states that "the Technikon undertakes to address these problems (serious and urgent developmental problems) in the most constructive ways possible, taking full cognisance of the developmental needs of the students that it admits, and the special learning problems that they may be experiencing." This undertaking by the Technikon signals an understanding of the developmental nature of a course such as LEAP, which concerns itself with the long-term developing of language and learning competencies and does not see its role as that of a quick-fix immersion intervention. In the admissions policy document the Technikon commits itself to planning and prioritising "based on an understanding that certain historically defined problems, such as those associated with language in education, multiculturalism and

unevenness in academic achievement are deep-seated and require long term strategies, as well as interim measures." This understanding and commitment by the institution should have a positive effect on the LEAP intervention.

Two of the admissions policy objectives have a direct bearing on the LEAP intervention, namely, student enrolment and equity. The former objective aims at increasing student enrolment and admitting as many students seeking access as it can accommodate, taking into account financial, human and physical institutional resources. The LEAP course structure is not intended to deliver mass higher education but rather caters for small group teaching allowing for interactive methodologies and experiential learning. It also aims to effect the transfer of interactive methodologies and experiential learning across the curriculum. The student enrolment objective could therefore undermine this LEAP aim as the increasing student numbers and staff rationalisation (already taking place at the School of Education and Department of Languages and Communication) would promote transmission-based modes of delivery and superficial rote learning across the institution.

The latter objective, regarding student equity, highlights the need for the further implementation of courses such as LEAP. This objective recognises that students from disadvantaged backgrounds would not be able to display the same level of ability as their more advantaged peers. The institution, in its admissions policy document, states its willingness to admit students who are able to demonstrate the *potential* to succeed while committing itself "to providing academic support to those students who are admitted but due to educational disadvantage require extra support" to assist them to realise their potential. LEAP could provide one form of support for such first-year students.

The English language focus of the LEAP course could have special significance since the admissions policy document lists language under its admissions criteria. The policy document raises the contradictory concerns that:

- "students should have a high level of English proficiency in order to perform satisfactorily, given that English is the most regularly used language of instruction in the institution." and

- "an insistence on a high level of English proficiency as a selection criterion would be discriminatory, on the grounds that it is the first language of certain applicants, perhaps a minority, who would enjoy an advantage in selection over others."

The Technikon resolves to address this contradiction by never using proficiency in English as a criterion in isolation without balancing it against a variety of other criteria and never allowing the students' home language (whether English or another language) to be a consideration in selection. The Technikon further commits itself to addressing the language contradiction "through language support programmes, research into language issues and the formulation of a language policy". Again, this aspect of the admissions policy paves the way for further implementation of a course such as LEAP.

While institutional policies (such as the mission statement, strategic planning and admissions) in some ways create opportunities for AD interventions and in other ways constrain them, it is the actual decision-making processes and practices informed by these policies which have a more direct impact on interventions. These decisions and practices are often contradictory to the very policies which inform them.

Institutional management, ever mindful of financial considerations, has (in the course of the two-year period over which formative evaluation of LEAP took place) decided to introduce the notion of cost centres in an attempt to locate responsibility for cost-effectiveness within the schools. Each school is thus seen as a cost centre which needs to take responsibility for its own financial viability. Since the bulk of the state subsidy comes about as a result of the numbers of students registered by an institution, most schools see student intake as a major source of financial resourcing. Because the biggest budget item for the Technikon is staff salaries, this is seen as a drain on resources. Staff rationalisation (in the form of reduction of existing staff and institutional reluctance to appoint additional staff) is thus seen as a way of ensuring financial viability for schools. The decision to regard schools as cost centres has had

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major implications for the School of Education (the School where LEAP is located). Because of state policy which severely limits student intake into the teacher training sector in education (previously discussed in detail under 2.1) the School of Education has been unable to exploit student intake as a possible source of funding as is the case with the other schools at the Technikon. They have therefore been forced to consider staff rationalisation as a means of remaining solvent. While this action would make sense given that there are fewer incoming students, it hampers the capacity for developmental work at a school which has a student intake with among the lowest levels of English proficiency at the Technikon (see section 2.5). Staff rationalisation and budgetary considerations also contributed towards a reluctance on the part of management and staff members at the School to fill the vacant position of Director of the School of Education. The lack of leadership at the School, the dwindling student numbers, the staff rationalisation, the crumbling teacher training education sector in the country and the financial insolvency facing the School created an ethos of apathy, lack of motivation and general demoralisation among the staff members at the School. It is within this context that the LEAP intervention (fully discussed and contextualised in sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) operates.

2.3   Curriculum/Course

LEAP is an academic literacy curriculum framework in English, packaged as 70 hours of tuition including:

- an explanation of the aims, principles, approach, structure, content and learning processes underlying the curriculum,
- 70 lessons with an explicitly detailed interactive teaching methodology,
- master copies for transparencies, classroom peripherals and wall charts that accompany each lesson as teaching resources for the facilitator,
- prepared worksheets, notes and reflective journalling exercises that accompany each lesson as learning resources for the students.

An 18-hour structured programme of independent peer-group learning, which complements the 70 hours of tuition outlined above, forms part of the LEAP resource

package. The materials contained in this independent learning programme are detailed in the same way as described above. The full LEAP resource package of instructional materials covers approximately 1000 pages and exists as 4 facilitator/teacher manuals from which an accompanying students' workbook can be drawn and duplicated.

The LEAP curriculum focuses on the academic demands of the Technikon and is based on learning outcomes determined by Technikon staff and students. The curriculum targets **all** first-year Technikon students, not any particular group. This is because all South African students, for the next ten years at least, will be experiencing the effects of a secondary schooling which is only just emerging from an education system based on the unequal and segregated apartheid philosophy. This inadequate schooling system would not have adequately prepared students for a tertiary education. An article in the *Cape Times* of 18 March 1998 entitled 'Hidden shame of school system', points out some of the inadequacies of the schooling system. The article refers to two studies which show that "many pupils at South Africa's disadvantaged schools – which make up most of the 21 000 in the country – have the most rudimentary literacy levels". It further states that "[P]upils manage to slip through the system without learning to read because of large classes, outdated teaching methods and inadequate testing" and "pupils get to high school without being able to read and write adequately".

One can therefore deduce that the pupils emerging from such a system would not be adequately prepared for tertiary education. It is on this premise that the curriculum was built. Since the curriculum assumes basic communicative and linguistic competence in English at the level of sentence structure, first language speakers of English will have a linguistic advantage over their second language counterparts. This reality is no different however to that of any other Technikon subject taught through the medium of English.

Although it was developed as a stand-alone, one-year course, LEAP was implemented at the Technikon during 1995 and 1996 as a reinterpretation of an existing mainstream, compulsory, credit-bearing course, English A. It is this implementation of LEAP which is the object of evaluation in the following chapters. The reinterpretation of the English A course was enabled by a shift in the national Technikon movement towards greater

flexibility and autonomy in the curriculation of courses. Although the process of review of curriculum design is still co-ordinated nationally through a system of convenor Technikons for each programme, changes to programme content can be made internally, subject to the approval of the Academic Board of individual institutions. This shift resulted in nationally prescribed syllabi for all Technikons which were very general in nature and outlined only broadly what was required of a particular subject. This new type of syllabus, along with the autonomy granted to individual Technikons to reinterpret curriculum content in line with the needs of their student populations, provided an opportunity for the implementation of LEAP. The new-found autonomy also gave rise to other curriculum development initiatives at the institution and created an institutional environment which was more accepting of and open to change at the level of curriculum.

While the institutional environment allowed for the development of an academic literacy course and its implementation via the reinterpretation of an existing course, the potential of this course to effect change at the level of the broader institutional curriculum through the integration of academic literacy skills and the transfer of student learning across the curriculum, was seriously constrained. These constraints were caused by a lack of understanding on the part of mainstream lecturers regarding the integration of academic literacy skills into their largely content-based syllabi and a reluctance to take **co-responsibility** for the development of these skills in the students.

Since LEAP was implemented as a reinterpretation of English A, the intensity of LEAP was determined by time allocated to the existing English A course. The LEAP curriculum therefore spanned one academic year, divided into four terms. The instructional hours allocated to the existing course through which LEAP was being taught, was 2 hours 20 minutes per week. However, an additional 1 hour 10 minutes was negotiated with the academic department offering the diploma, so LEAP was taught over 3,5 hours per week. Given that the academic year for the teacher training diploma is shortened by three weeks as a result of the experiential training period when students are at schools, and allowing for study and test week at the end of each quarter, the actual contact time for the first-year English course amounted to about 70 hours.

LEAP was therefore offered as a compulsory, credit-bearing diploma subject to all first-year students registered for a teacher training diploma at the Technikon. The teacher training diploma was the only diploma at the Technikon which then offered three years of English as part of the compulsory diploma structure. It was therefore the only diploma which could introduce an academic literacy course, with a focus on the academic demands of tertiary education, and still have two years of curriculum space available for the teaching of workplace-specific English communication skills.

In 1995 the LEAP course was taken by 152 students who were equally divided into 6 class groups after their English proficiency had been graded. Each of the 6 class groups were mixed ability and had an even spread of English proficiency. In 1996 the LEAP course was taken by 97 students who were divided into 4 class groups after their English proficiency had been graded. In this instance however, the students were streamed and those with the lowest levels of proficiency were placed together in a slightly smaller class group than the other three.

2.4   Teaching/Staff

The LEAP course, both in 1995 and 1996, was taught by facilitators who are experienced English teachers with a clear understanding of the student profile at Peninsula Technikon and trained in the teaching methods promoted in the course. In 1995 there were six facilitators and in 1996 there were four, one for each of the class groups respectively. In 1995 four of the six facilitators were also the course developers, and in 1996 three of the four facilitators were course developers. The fact that most facilitators were developers too, the structured weekly meetings among facilitators and the detailed LEAP resource package made available to each facilitator, ensured that there was a high level of collaboration, familiarity and consistency with regard to materials and methodology.

The staff members teaching the LEAP course were drawn from the Department of Languages and Communication, a mainstream Technikon-funded department with

mainly permanently appointed staff members, as well as the Academic Development (AD) Unit, a support service unit funded by an external agency with only temporary contract staff members. This reality both enabled and constrained the teaching of the LEAP course. The teaching of LEAP was enabled by the fact that both of these units had experience in and an understanding of the developmental nature of language learning and skills development. There was also a certain familiarity with interactive teaching methodologies and an openness to adopting creative teaching methods and using creative learning materials. Teaching continuity was however seriously affected by the temporary, contract status of the AD Unit staff members. In 1995 one of the three AD Unit facilitators of the LEAP course took a permanent position in another department at the Technikon, and that class group had a replacement facilitator from the start of the second term. In 1996 two of the three AD Unit facilitators left the Technikon to take up employment elsewhere, leaving two class groups with replacement facilitators from the middle of the year. The temporary nature and uncertain future of the AD Unit and its staff had implications beyond the teaching of LEAP. It resulted in a **general lack of continuity and consolidation of the work that the unit engaged in at the institution** as a whole. As a result a negative institutional attitude towards the unit prevailed causing the unit and its work to be marginalised.

The potential of the LEAP teaching/facilitators to effect change in the broader teaching community at the institution was constrained by the aforementioned institutional negativity towards the work of the AD Unit as well as a general apathy among staff members at the institution to interrogate, reflect on and enhance their teaching practices. This apathy is apparent in the lack of interest displayed by staff members in staff development workshops and initiatives arranged by the academic staff support services at the institution. Maria Snarski, a visiting academic from the U.S., who spent two years at the institution as an English Teaching Fellow (ETF), made the following observations in her final report:

- "At Peninsula Technikon, it seemed as if few (educators) were motivated and management remained just as unmotivated and therefore changing lecturing styles was not seen as a priority."

- "From what I have observed and experienced, staff members were very rarely interested or encouraged to take part in staff development workshops, seminars or presentations."
- "These (staff development) workshops on the whole had rather low attendance."

A further constraining factor militating against the potential of LEAP teaching/facilitators to influence changes in teaching methodology at the institution was the location of the LEAP course at the School of Education. The prevailing ethos at this school was one of general disinterest, lack of motivation and a reluctance to work collaboratively. This ethos arises from funding policies and decisions made at the levels of institutional management and the state, which have been discussed previously in sections 2.1 and 2.2, and will be discussed in greater detail in section 2.5 following.

2.5   Learning/Students

As previously mentioned, the LEAP course was taken by all first-year students registered for a teacher training diploma at the Technikon because it was being taught as a reinterpretation of a compulsory credit-bearing diploma subject. There was therefore no student selection process for LEAP. The students taking the LEAP course were those selected and admitted by the school and this selection process was significantly influenced by the state educational policy. Limited numbers of students were applying for admission to the teacher training diplomas as the state was enforcing a policy of rationalisation of teachers resulting in the cutting of 6000 teaching posts in the Western Cape region in 1996 alone. Those students who were selected by the School of Education were often registered for only their second or third preferred course of study, having been unsuccessful in their applications elsewhere. This reality has a negative impact on motivation and learning generally. Also, in an attempt to raise the limited numbers of applicants and ensure the financial viability of the school, previously used selection criteria were dispensed with. Students were being admitted on arrival at the institution at the start of the academic year, without having formally applied to the institution in the final schooling year and without the academic record required for admission previously. These changes in selection processes generated a student profile

for 1995 and 1996 which was academically weaker than the profiles of former years. In addition to this, the students were all products of the apartheid schooling system which was designed to create learners who are passive, dependent on transmission teaching, uncritical and lacking in confidence.

Furthermore, 85.93% of the 1995 first-year intake at the School of Education spoke English as a second or third language (1995 Report on Proficiency Testing). Although figures for the 1996 intake are not available, the ESL percentage profile for the Technikon as a whole rose from 77.7% in 1995, to 81.27% in 1996 (1996 Report on Proficiency Testing), suggesting a proportional rise in the School of Education figures. The English proficiency levels of the 1995 and 1996 students who were tested indicated that more than half of the School's students fell into the at risk category. With English as a medium of instruction, these levels of English proficiency would also impact negatively on learning. The previous exposure that these students have had to the English language, a factor also impacting on learning, relates to their place of origin. Urban students, even those who speak English as a second or third language, have had some exposure to English. If not in the home or through the schooling system, this would have happened through involvement in the community and through the media. Rural students however, given the nature of the rural areas in South Africa, would have had very limited, if any exposure to English at all. For many of these students English would be virtually a foreign language. In 1995 and 1996 more than half of the student intake consisted of rural students. While the large percentages of ESL and rural students signalled constraints to student learning with English as the medium of instruction, it however provided a population of learners the majority of whom perceived the need for the kind of tuition they were exposed to in the LEAP course, although a dissenting minority were clearly convinced that they did not require a course of this nature.

The potential of the LEAP learners to effect change in the broader community of learners is constrained by the nature of the learners' timetables, which keeps them tied up in classes from 8.30 in the morning until 3.15 in the afternoon almost every day. This leaves little time for independent peer group discussion and cross-pollination of learning. The absence of a structured, small-group, tutorial programme to supplement

lectures in the School, further compounds this problem. However, the fact that some 1500 of the approximately 8600 students (taken from 1995 figures) are resident on the campus, allows some opportunity for this process to take place voluntarily after class time. A much greater opportunity for LEAP to effect changes in the learning of the broader population of learners at the institution is provided by the range of academic staff members who teach these students. However, these academic staff members would need to be convinced that the integration of academic literacy skills into their teaching programmes was a worthwhile endeavour and then make the necessary commitment to reviewing their teaching methods and materials. In this way the learning of far greater numbers of students could be enhanced than through a voluntary process of student-to-student sharing of learning.

The potential of the student support services, such as the writing centre and the student counselling service, to influence transformation in student functioning and enhance student learning should not be underestimated. However, given the lack of adequate resources, such as space, staffing and equipment, the student support services cannot hope to significantly influence the learning of the broader student population. For example, the Writing Centre, a resource directly serving student needs and one utilised beyond its capacity, was still being funded by an outside sponsor, giving rise to insecurity and uncertainty regarding the future of this support service and a concern as to whether the institution was in fact serious about providing student support services.

Section 2 has attempted to outline the range of complex variables present in the context, which are impacting on the LEAP intervention. The following section will explore the goals of the LEAP evaluation.

3.   DETERMINING THE GOALS OF THE LEAP EVALUATION (STAGE 2)

The decision to evaluate the LEAP intervention was intrinsically motivated. It was a decision taken by those directly involved in the materials development as well as the implementation and teaching of the course. The evaluation was initially motivated by

formative goals and a desire on the part of the materials developers to evaluate the materials they had produced and thereby improve them. This initial evaluation of the materials grew into a wider formative evaluation including aspects of the curriculum, teaching, learning and the model of intervention. The aim was to improve and increase the effectiveness of the aforementioned aspects for the audience of teachers and learners.

The institutional circumstances surrounding AD initiatives, (such as the fear, suspicion and resistance to innovation and change), as well as the broader issue of uncertain funding (and the resultant insecurity this brings) gave rise to a call for a **summative** evaluation of LEAP from the management of the institution. They were unconvinced by the subjective and introspective nature of the formative evaluation and required an objective form of evaluation using independent measures of outcomes by which they could judge the worth and effectiveness of LEAP and then effect policy decisions around the future of the intervention.

It was only at the end of the first year of implementation and after the first phase of the formative evaluation that the need for **illuminative** evaluation became clear. The developing team, in an attempt to market LEAP and gain institutional support for the intervention, encountered a lack of shared understanding at the institution about what exactly LEAP was, as well as a range of interpretations as to *how* and *where* institutional transformation should take place regarding the issues of language and learning. In an attempt to engage the academic community of the institution in debates around these issues, develop shared understandings about LEAP and hopefully inform policy decisions around the issue of transforming language and learning at the institution, a decision to embark on illuminative evaluation was made.

Two factors led to the decision to conduct an internal evaluation rather than an external one, even though an external evaluation was favoured by the management of the institution. One factor was that management was not prepared to provide the funding for a costly external evaluation, the other factor was that the developers of LEAP required an evaluator who fully understood the complexity of all the variables impacting on the

object of evaluation and was familiar with the social, political and economic climate prevailing at the institution. It was on this basis that I was tasked with the evaluation of LEAP. In an attempt to satisfy the evaluation needs of as wide a range of stakeholders as possible and to increase the credibility of the outcome of the evaluation, an eclectic approach was adopted, combining formative, summative and illuminative evaluation goals.

4. IDENTIFYING THE PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE LEAP EVALUATION (STAGE 3)

The LEAP evaluation identified three groups of institutional stakeholders, namely, the students, the academic staff and the support services. The fourth group of stakeholders, the policy-makers, were from within and outside of the institution.

4.1 The Students

The LEAP evaluation incorporated students participating in the LEAP intervention and students who were not participating. The non-participating students served as a control group in a quasi-experimental design where the experimental group of participating students was compared to the control group using an institutional measure of English proficiency in a pre and post-test. This formed the basis for the meeting of the summative goal of the evaluation as outlined under section 3 above. The participating students also contributed extensively towards the meeting of the formative goal of the evaluation since they had directly experienced the intervention. This category of stakeholders was divided into three sectors:

- present students (those who were currently experiencing the intervention in 1996),
- past students (those who had fully experienced the intervention in 1995),
- dropouts (those who had only partially experienced the intervention in either 1995 or 1996).

The reason for these distinctions was because the LEAP course was evaluated over a period of two years. The past students (from the 1995 implementation year) were

therefore also participating in the pilot year of implementation. Their contribution to the formative evaluation and in fact their experience of the intervention was substantially different to that of the present students. The present 1996 students experienced a LEAP changed and improved on the basis of the formative evaluation of the past 1995 students. The dropouts were consulted in the evaluation process as a distinct group in order to explore the reasons for their discontinuation of the LEAP course. The evaluation needs of this category of stakeholders would be related to their academic needs and expectations as first-year students. The evaluation goal of students would be an improved course which is relevant to and addresses their level of need.

4.2 The Academic Staff

This category of stakeholders was also subdivided into the participating and non-participating academic staff members. The participating staff members had different levels of involvement in the intervention. There were curriculum/materials developers, trainers of teachers/lecturers, teachers/lecturers and a moderator of student tasks/tests. All of these academics contributed to the evaluation of LEAP from the different perspectives which their involvement allowed them. In some cases individuals were part of more than one category, e.g. a curriculum developer as well as a teacher. In these instances the evaluation yielded deep insights and novel perceptions as a result of the cross-pollination of experiences.

A distinction was made between staff members who taught participating students and those who taught non-participating students. The teachers of non-participating students contributed to the evaluation by assisting in the pre and post-testing process of the control group students. The teachers of the participating students had a very different contribution to make to the evaluation. They were able to evaluate issues around the transfer of the LEAP teaching and learning across the curriculum.

The evaluation needs of this category of stakeholders would be related to the curriculum they were teaching, the actual teaching process as well as the student body they were serving. One of the evaluation goals of academic staff would be to improve their

curricula by making them more relevant and responsive to student need. Another goal would be to improve and increase the effectiveness of the processes of teaching and learning occurring in their classes.

4.3 The Support Services

The support service directly involved in the LEAP intervention was the AD unit. The nature of this unit at Peninsula Technikon was such that it functioned as both a staff and student support service. The level of involvement that this sector had in the LEAP intervention was so extensive that they had a great deal to contribute to the evaluation. The staff members from this unit were involved in the curriculum/materials development process, the training of and liaison with the prospective teachers and the actual teaching process. Their ability to reflect on the many facets and themes of the evaluation, as well as the cross-pollination of their varied experiences and perspectives of LEAP, was invaluable.

The evaluation need of this category of stakeholders would be to reflect on the effectiveness of the service they were rendering to the institution. The evaluation goals of the support service staff members would be related to the increased effectiveness of their service and the exploration of means of better serving the needs of the institution.

4.4 The Policy-Makers

For purposes of the LEAP evaluation a distinction was made between institutional policy-makers and external policy-makers. This was because a major part of the LEAP intervention, (the curriculum/materials development process, the training of teachers and more than 50% of the teaching) was being funded from an external donor source, the Independent Development Trust (IDT). This source required quarterly reporting on the progress of all projects it was funding and the LEAP evaluation formed part of these quarterly reports.

The evaluation need of this external policy-maker was to ensure that the money they were investing in the LEAP project was being used fruitfully in addressing the academic development needs at Peninsula Technikon. A major evaluation goal of this external funder was to ensure that the projects that they were funding, such as the LEAP project, were being integrated into the mainstream, Technikon-funded functioning of Peninsula Technikon.

The institutional policy-makers who were consulted in the LEAP evaluation included those sectors which were in decision-making positions regarding the future implementation and resourcing of LEAP. They were the Rectorate of the institution, the Directors (or Deans as they are referred to in the present context), Heads of Departments/Units participating in the intervention, as well as the most representative decision-making forum at the Technikon, the Academic Board.

The evaluation need of this category of stakeholders was to determine whether the LEAP intervention justified the investment in institutional resources that it required for its continued implementation. A major evaluation goal of the institutional policy-makers was to establish a firm link between improved general academic performance of students and the LEAP intervention, since such a link would ensure institutional benefit and a financial return on their investment.

5.   CONCLUSION

Once the full range of stakeholders had been identified, the evaluation goals were revisited to ensure that the evaluation needs of all the stakeholders were being met by the goals. Where possible the evaluation needs of different stakeholders were clarified and negotiated at this stage of the evaluation process. This access to stakeholders was also utilised for the purposes of identifying the aspects of the LEAP intervention which were to be evaluated, stage 4 of the evaluation model. Stage 4, along with stages 5 to 10, will be fully discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7, which will examine the formative and summative phases of the evaluation of LEAP. The illuminative phase will not be discussed since it goes beyond the scope of this study.

CHAPTER 5

THE FORMATIVE EVALUATION PHASE:

Aims, scope, aspects, criteria, sources and methods

1. INTRODUCTION

Formative evaluation goals informed the initial stages of the evaluation process since the LEAP intervention was an innovation which was being piloted at the Technikon. The formative approach to evaluation aims at improving aspects of the intervention while it is still in operation. Williams and Burden (1994:22) see formative evaluation as a guiding force, helping the decision-making process throughout the duration of the intervention. They claim that "the very process of evaluation helps to shape the nature of the project itself and therefore increases the likelihood of its successful implementation." It was with this intention, then, that the materials developers initiated the formative evaluation process, one which was to continue for the duration of the internal evaluation.

This chapter will outline the aims and scope of the formative evaluation phase, discuss the aspects and criteria identified for evaluation as well as the sources of evaluative information and finally explain the methods of data collection employed.

2. AIMS OF THE FORMATIVE PHASE

The motivation for the ongoing formative evaluation of LEAP came from the staff responsible for the development and teaching of the curriculum and materials. Their primary aim was to evaluate the materials that had been developed and the impact of these materials on the teaching and learning processes for which they had been created.

The evaluation outcomes would then inform an ongoing process of curriculum development for improvement and increased effectiveness. The secondary aims were to reflect on the process out of which the curriculum emerged, examine the effectiveness

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of the model of intervention and evaluate the feasibility of its further implementation Technikon-wide.

3.   SCOPE OF THE FORMATIVE PHASE

The formative phase spanned a period of two years. It addressed the evaluation needs of the five course developers, eight teachers and 249 (official course registration figures) learners, all of whom were involved in the evaluation process. The formative evaluation created a space for reflection on the processes of curriculum development, teaching and learning, and provided the respective stakeholders with evaluative information on which to base future improvements.

4.   ASPECTS EVALUATED IN THE FORMATIVE PHASE

The aspects of the LEAP intervention which were evaluated in this formative phase, were determined collaboratively by the team of developers. It was decided to evaluate:

- **the model** (type) of intervention which LEAP represented i.e. a stand-alone, skills-based, academic literacy course by examining its strengths and weaknesses and comparing it to other models of intervention at the Technikon;
- **the curriculum** which the LEAP intervention targeted, namely, the recurriculated credit-bearing English course for first-year students at the School of Education by examining the LEAP curriculum development process, the LEAP curriculum objectives, content, activities and instructional materials;
- **the teaching** of the LEAP course by examining the teaching methodology promoted by LEAP as well as the LEAP teachers; and
- **the learning** as a result of students' interacting with the LEAP course by examining the learning outcomes, student attitudes to learning and actual learning processes experienced in the LEAP course.

5. FORMATIVE EVALUATION CRITERIA

The criteria, as with the aspects evaluated, were determined collaboratively by the team of developers and informed by the formative aims of the evaluation as well as the peculiarities of LEAP intervention and the Peninsula Technikon context. The criteria also evolved over the two-year process of formative evaluation, as the aspects to be evaluated were constantly being revisited and influenced by the preceding evaluation processes.

5.1 The model

The aspects of the model which were evaluated were its strengths, weaknesses and comparative advantage, as illustrated in table 5.1 later in this chapter. This section will elaborate on the criteria used for the evaluation of each of these three aspects.

The strength of the LEAP model of intervention was evaluated in terms of its **institutional location, adaptability and growth potential.** Institutional location refers to the position of LEAP in relation to the mainstream functioning of the institution. Adaptability refers to how easily LEAP is able to adapt and be tailored to respond to a tertiary curriculum in transformation and the needs of the changing teacher and learner profile. Growth potential refers to the potential that LEAP has to expand its functioning and in this way target the needs of a wider audience of teachers and learners, as well as its potential to extend its sphere of influence on teaching and learning both at the institution and beyond.

These criteria, all of which impact on the ultimate effectiveness in meeting the goals of the intervention, were determined on the following grounds. The location of an intervention impacts on crucial factors such as: funding and status of the intervention, time and space allocation within mainstream, as well as factors relating to staff attitudes towards the intervention and student motivation and interest in the intervention. The adaptability is an essential element for any intervention in the presently transforming tertiary education sector, and the growth potential is vitally important given the extent

of the need for access to tertiary education in a country where this right was previously denied to the majority of its population.

The weakness of the LEAP model of intervention was evaluated in terms of its **sustainability.** This refers to the capacity of a stand-alone, skills-based, academic literacy course to sustain itself over the period of its required existence, in this case an estimated period of 15 to 20 years. This criterion was determined on the basis of the past experiences and track records of similar interventions at other tertiary institutions in the country and the nature of AD interventions generally. Scott (1994:3-4) in his position paper on the role of AD programmes in the reconstruction and development of Higher Education, points out that most AD interventions "have been confined to supplementary or 'add-on' activities which of necessity take the existing mainstream process as a given." The picture emerging from this background is one of short-term, superficial, ad hoc interventions operating on a crisis-management basis without addressing the root causes of the crisis in higher education or challenging the status quo to take responsibility for transformation.

The comparative advantage of the LEAP model of intervention in relation to other possible models of intervention was evaluated in terms of its **potential to impact on mainstream** and its **ability to diversify.** The potential to impact on mainstream academic functioning refers to the potential of LEAP to effect changes in mainstream curricula, teaching and learning regarding the integration and reinforcement of academic literacy skills, while the ability to diversify refers to the extent to which LEAP could serve as a prototype from which different forms of intervention could be derived. Such prototypes provide useful points of departure for related work in the emerging field of academic literacy.

These criteria were considered crucial measures of the success of interventions such as LEAP since they consider issues of transfer and integration of academic literacy skills across the curricula, teaching and learning in mainstream. This integration and reinforcement in mainstream is essential for the transfer of learning to take place.

5.2   The curriculum

The aspects of the curriculum which were evaluated were the development process, the objectives, the content and activities, as well as the instructional materials. (See table 5.1) This section will elaborate on the criteria used for the evaluation of each of these four aspects.

The LEAP curriculum development process was evaluated in terms of its **decision-making, materials development** and **staff training and liaison** processes. Decision-making refers to the process by which decisions were made regarding how the development of the actual LEAP curriculum would take place, materials development refers to the actual development of teaching and learning materials for the LEAP course which evolved from the initial decision-making process around issues of curriculum aims, purposes, approach, structure and content. Staff training and liaison refers to the processes through which staff members (participating in the LEAP curriculum development, teaching and reinforcement of learning) were trained in the use, application and integration of the LEAP materials and methodology.

These were considered important criteria because of the range of stakeholders in a prospective academic literacy course such as LEAP. A high level of stakeholder inclusivity in the decision-making processes, for example, would be one way of ensuring that the interests of all stakeholders were being served. The effectiveness of the materials development process required scrutiny since Peninsula Technikon, at the time, lacked expertise in the area of materials development generally and more specifically in the field of academic literacy. The materials development process was therefore a costly one, which involved huge investments in time and human resources as capacity-building and consultancy were the order of the day. The success of staff training and liaison, as with sustainability of the LEAP model of intervention (discussed in section 5.1), was singled out for evaluative scrutiny on the basis of past experiences and track records of other AD interventions at Peninsula Technikon and other tertiary institutions. Professor Ian Scott, in his address to the 1996 SAAAD (South African Association for Academic Development) conference, pointed out that millions of IDT (Independent Development

Trust) funding went unutilised in the period 1991-1996 due to the inability of tertiary institutions to operationalise their key AD goals and carry them to the level of sustainable implementation, geared to a permanent positioning within mainstream institutional functioning. At Peninsula Technikon this breakdown most often occurred due to insufficient training and ongoing liaison with mainstream staff members as they experimented with and implemented change in response to the challenges of transformation. Because the failure of staff training and continued liaison during the implementation phase of AD interventions has so often resulted in an undermining of the entire curriculum development process, this was considered a crucial criterion.

The LEAP curriculum objectives were evaluated in terms of the extent to which they were successful in **meeting the needs and expectations** of the participants, how **clearly** they were explained to and understood by the participants, as well as the extent to which they were in fact **achieved.** Both the demonstration of observable learning outcomes by participants as well as their perceptions regarding the achievement of objectives were considered here.

The above were considered important criteria because, for example, the expectations of participants and their levels of need were often vastly different in the ill-defined field of academic literacy. In the case of the LEAP intervention, it was of particular importance to evaluate the meeting of both needs and expectations of participants, since there were differing levels of English Language ability within the participant group. An examination of the extent to which objectives were achieved was considered important too, as this highlights areas of both weakness and strength. Such an examination can become the basis for improving and increasing the effectiveness of the curriculum, which is the previously-stated goal of the formative evaluation phase.

The LEAP curriculum content, (including the accompanying classroom learning activities and tasks), was evaluated in terms of its: **relevance** to the broader demands of the academic context, **level of interest** for participants, **usefulness** for wider application across the participants' curriculum, perceived **level of difficulty** for participants, and **volume of work** in relation to the total workload generated by the first-year curriculum.

These criteria were determined on the grounds that relevance and interest, for example, directly influenced participants' level of motivation which in turn was an essential element in the learning process. The importance of usefulness as a criterion relates to the transfer of learning and the application of learning experiences in different learning contexts. Level of difficulty was considered an important criterion as the LEAP course targeted a group of mixed ability participants who could be expected to have a range of perceptions of and responses to the level of difficulty. This criterion also has the capacity to impact significantly on learning, as previously discussed in section 5.3 of chapter 3. Volume of work is a criterion which has far-reaching implications for the very objectives of academic literacy courses, which is to assist first-year students in making the transition to tertiary education. Scott (1994:8) cites "jamming" of the curriculum as an internationally-recognised "general curriculum problem in Higher Education that obstructs desirable learning outcomes". If courses such as LEAP merely add a further burden to an already crowded first-year curriculum and are not seen to enhance the learning processes across that curriculum, then the criterion of workload could undermine participant success in the first-year.

The instructional materials accompanying the LEAP curriculum were evaluated in terms of **accessibility** (user-friendliness), how **clearly** they were understood by participants, how **useful** the participants found them as an aid in the teaching and learning processes, and how **flexible** the materials were for possible adaptation to the needs of particular teaching and learning environments.

The LEAP instructional materials contain a great level of detail in an attempt to make them accessible to non-specialist teachers as well as students who are working independently of the teacher. It was thus considered important to evaluate whether this purpose had in fact been achieved. The clarity of the materials has implications for factors such as staff training and liaison (discussed under the curriculum development process earlier in this chapter), as well as student success which will be examined more closely in chapter 7, on the summative evaluation phase. Since the materials development process (as outlined earlier in section 5.2 of this chapter) was a costly one,

it was considered important to evaluate just how useful the materials proved to be for the audience of teachers and learners. The teaching environment and the student profile were factors which were constantly changing in this transition phase of tertiary education. In such a transient environment one needs instructional materials which are flexible enough to meet the changing needs. It was on this basis that the evaluation of flexibility was determined.

5.3   The teaching

The aspects of the teaching process which were evaluated were the methodology and the teachers themselves, as illustrated in table 5.1. This section will elaborate on the criteria used for the evaluation of each of these aspects.

The interactive teaching methodology of LEAP was evaluated in terms of its **effectiveness** and **extent of application** in the classroom, as well as the **attitudes** which participants displayed **towards it.** The detail of the LEAP instructional materials was largely due to an attempt to promote an interactive teaching methodology in an academic context where such methodologies are little practised (Duggan:1992). Much of the detail in the materials therefore revolved around issues of actual teaching methodology and explanations to the teacher. It was therefore considered important to evaluate whether the methodology being promoted was in fact applied effectively and extensively in the classroom, as well as how the teachers and learners perceived and responded to it. Since the interactive teaching methodologies are little used and experienced in the Peninsula Technikon context (as previously pointed out), as well as the secondary context from which the students come (a reality publicly acknowledged by the Minister of Education in the White Paper on Education and Training, March 1995), it was considered important to evaluate how this was being received.

The LEAP teachers were evaluated in terms of their **attitudes** to teaching, **student-teacher relationships** in the classroom, **preparedness** for teaching, **effectiveness** of teaching, and **sensitivity** towards the needs of the learner.

All of these criteria were considered crucial to an evaluation of the teachers. Since no materials, however detailed, are teacher-proof and because the teachers are such an important factor in the teaching and learning processes, it was decided to subject them to the full scrutiny of evaluation as well. Attitudes, relationships and sensitivity were included in the criteria, along with the more usual criteria of preparedness and effectiveness, because these were considered important in the context of academic development interventions, in itself a sensitive area within tertiary education.

5.4   The learning

The aspects of learning which were evaluated were the outcomes, attitudes and actual processes, as illustrated in table 5.1. This section will elaborate on the criteria used for the evaluation of each of these three aspects.

The LEAP learning outcomes were evaluated in terms of the **attainment** of these outcomes. This criterion was measured using largely quantitative methods and will be described fully in chapter 7, which discusses the summative phase. However, qualitative methods were also employed as a means of cross-validating the summative data and these methods will be included in section 7 later in this chapter. This cross validation of summative data is considered important by House (1980:82-83) who claims that:

> "Quantitative argument should always be used in conjunction with human judgement, and human judgement should be given the superior position. Quantitative methodology should be seen to be based on human judgements and on intuitive reasoning and should be justified accordingly."

The attitudes towards LEAP learning were evaluated in terms of the level of learner **motivation,** the level of learner **commitment** towards the LEAP intervention, the observable **behaviour changes** and **value shifts** which learners attributed to the LEAP intervention.

These criteria were considered important in determining students' attitude towards their learning, a factor which SLA theorists such as Krashen (1981), Brumfit (1984), Long (1985) and others, claim has a great impact on success. Krashen (1981b:5) asserts that attitude relates directly to language acquisition and that attitudinal factors and motivational factors are more important for successful language acquisition than aptitude.

The learning processes or experiences that the LEAP students were engaged in were evaluated in terms of the ability of the learners to function **independently,** the development in learners of the practice of **reflection on the learning process,** and the **transfer of learning,** by the learners, across their first-year curriculum. These criteria were determined on the grounds that the evaluation of learning outcomes alone presented an incomplete picture of learning and that the processes by which the outcomes were achieved merited the scrutiny of evaluation so as to provide a complete picture of the complex element we call learning.

6.   FORMATIVE EVALUATION SOURCES

Since an eclectic approach (previously elaborated in chapter 4) had been adopted for the evaluation of LEAP, with the intention of satisfying the evaluation needs of as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, these stakeholders then became the major sources of evaluative data. Prominent evaluation theorists such as House (1980), Stake (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1989), although they do not subscribe to any particular evaluation approach, all agree that stakeholder-based evaluation is crucial to an evaluation study which subjects the social context to scrutiny.

A range of sources was thus consulted in the formative evaluation phase of the LEAP evaluation. The stakeholders considered most relevant for the formative evaluation were those participating directly in the LEAP intervention. These consisted of 249 students, 8 teachers, 5 trainers of teachers who were also the curriculum developers and one course moderator. A group of non-participating stakeholders was also included in the formative evaluation. This group was indirectly involved in the LEAP intervention and consisted

of stakeholders such as 6 of the other mainstream teachers of participating (LEAP) students, 23 Technikon staff members with whom LEAP students interacted as part of their course work, approximately 20 staff members from the School of Education who were participants in two training workshops, an independent review panel of 4 people who internally assessed the LEAP materials, two facilitators using the LEAP materials at the Technikon in models of intervention different to LEAP and the internal evaluator of the LEAP intervention.

Besides the above-mentioned stakeholders, another source used in the formative evaluation was a range of documentation relating to various aspects of the LEAP intervention, such as:

- moderator's reports,
- review reports,
- student scripts and assignments,
- student journals,
- various evaluation sheets,
- informal meeting notes,
- LEAP course material and attendance records for LEAP classes and workshops.

The range of sources consulted reflects the efforts to gain information about each of the various aspects of the LEAP intervention (outlined in sections 4 and 5 of this chapter) from more than just one source. This was done in the interests of a more valid interpretation of the data in the following chapter. Riley (1990) advocates that qualitative data should be collected in as many different ways and from as many different sources as possible. This concept of triangulation (previously elaborated in chapter 2), as it is referred to in evaluation literature, addresses the thorny issue of the validation of qualitative data.

Table 5.1, overleaf, illustrates the extent to which the effort to validate data and consciously introduce the concept of triangulation, was successful. In the table each of the aspects which was evaluated is tabulated, as well as the sources from which data was collected on each of these aspects. The methods used to gather the data in each case

TABLE 5.1 FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF LEAP

| | ASPECTS OF LEAP INTERVENTION WHICH WERE EVALUATED | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | MODEL | | | CURRICULUM | | | | TEACHING | | LEARNING | | |
SOURCES OF DATA	STRENGTHS OF MODEL	WEAKNESSES OF MODEL	COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF MODEL	CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES	CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES	INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	METHODOLOGY	TEACHERS	LEARNING OUTCOMES	ATTITUDES TO LEARNING	LEARNING PROCESSES
LEAP STUDENTS					*quest.'s *interviews	*questionnaires *interviews	*questionnaires *interviews	*questionnaires *interviews	*quest.'s *interviews	*quest.'s *interviews *analysis of student docs	*quest.'s *interviews	*quest.'s *interviews *analysis of st. docs
LEAP TEACHERS				*analysis of meeting notes	*quest.'s *interviews	*questionnaires *interviews *individual lesson questionnaire	*questionnaire *interviews *individual lesson questionnaires	*questionnaire *interviews *individual lesson questionnaires	*interviews	*survey of assessment criteria	*interviews	*quest.'s *interviews
TRAINERS OF LEAP TEACHERS				*analysis of meeting notes	*interviews							
LEAP CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS		*analysis of meeting notes		*group interview *analysis of meeting notes	*individual interviews *group interview							
LEAP MODERATOR					*interview	*interview	*interview			*survey of moderator's reports		
MAINSTREAM LECTURERS OF LEAP STUDENTS	*quest.		*interview			*questionnaire *interviews				*quest.		*interviews *quest.'s
OTHER TECHNIKON STAFF MEMBERS	*quest.		*workshop analysis	*workshop analysis		*questionnaire						*quest.'s
LEAP REVIEW PANEL							*analysis of internal report					
LEAP DOCUMENTATION	*survey of docs	*analysis of meeting resolutions	*survey of reports and memos	*survey of workshop documents		*individual lesson questionnaires	*individual lesson questionnaires *analysis of docs					
OTHER USERS OF LEAP MATERIAL	*interviews	*interviews										
INTERNAL EVALUATOR	*analysis of docs *field notes	*analysis of documentation *field notes	*analysis of documentation	*field notes	*analysis of course documentation	*analysis of course documentation	*analysis of course documentation	*personal observation of teaching	*personal observation of teaching	analysis of *course docs *student docs	*survey of attendance records	*personal observation of learning

are also indicated but will be fully discussed under section 7. A close scrutiny of the table reveals that for each aspect which was evaluated, no fewer than three of the eleven different sources listed, were consulted for data collection. In some cases, such as the aspect listed as the curriculum development process, data was collected from as many as six different sources.

7. FORMATIVE EVALUATION METHODS

A range of qualitative methods was employed in the formative data collection phase. Qualitative methods were favoured over quantitative methods at this stage of the evaluation, as the former method yields greater insights into the understandings and interpretations of stakeholders involved in the intervention being evaluated. Carr and Kemmis (1986:103) refer to the failure of positivist approaches in recognising "the importance of the interpretations and meanings that individuals employ to make their reality intelligible." Quantitative methods limit the respondents to illuminating predetermined criteria for evaluation, for example questionnaires "eliciting responses to predetermined questions" (Cohen and Manion, 1980:41), whereas qualitative methods, which are "an exploration of processes and interactions" (Threadgold in Burgess, 1985:258) allow respondents to reflect and interpret their reality, which is essential for the exploration of an innovation such as LEAP. While some questionnaires used in the formative evaluation, such as those distributed to the largest group of stakeholders, the students, did in fact make use of predetermined questions with fixed rating scales for answers, these were always balanced by allowing respondents the space to expand with further commentary. Quantitative methods however dominated the summative evaluation phase, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 7.

Essentially four qualitative methods were employed at the formative phase they were:
- the questionnaire method,
- the interview method,
- personal observation and
- survey and analysis of documentation.

7.1   The questionnaire method

Seven distinctly different types of questionnaires were used to collect formative data. The primary data source for this method was the students (both the 1995 and 1996 groups of participating LEAP students). The other data sources which were consulted using this method were the 1995 LEAP teachers, three of the mainstream lecturers of the 1995 LEAP students and 23 Technikon staff members with whom the 1995 LEAP students interacted as part of their course work. The questionnaire method predominated in the 1995 evaluation as this was considered to be an expedient way of consulting large numbers of stakeholders. The limitations of the method, such as poor response rates and limited written responses with no opportunity for in-depth exploration with respondents, led to a predominance of the interview method in the 1996 evaluation.

1995 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS (See Appendix 5)

A closed-ended course evaluation questionnaire was completed by students mid-year and at the end of the 1995 year. Students, in their respective class groups, completed the questionnaire anonymously, during the final class meeting of the second and fourth terms. This process was supervised by their class facilitators. Of the 152 registered students, 98 completed the mid-year evaluation and 108 completed the end-of-year evaluation. The same questionnaire, adapted from one used at a university in the United States, was used for both evaluations. The adaptation of that particular questionnaire was used in 1995 on the grounds of expediency. It was a decision made by the course developers at the time, who felt that student evaluation of the course was needed by the middle of the 1995 year. They were simultaneously developing the teaching materials, carrying out the actual teaching of the students, as well as evaluating their teaching and the teaching materials. As the institution was unwilling to fund an external evaluator at that time (previously discussed in chapter 4, section 3), and one of the course developers had access to the US questionnaire and the facilities for the analysis of the questionnaire, it was decided to use it.

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The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions and each question was rated on a five-point scale. For 14 of the questions a letter-rating, I-M, was used, where I represented the most positive answer and M represented the most negative answer. This was the case for all questions except questions 6 and 11, where the most positive ratings were K and M respectively. Questions 1, 5 - 7 and 12 - 16 evaluated the instructor, questions 8 and 10 evaluated the student and questions 2 - 4 and 9 evaluated the course.

1996 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS (See Appendix 6)

A closed-ended course evaluation questionnaire, with space at the end of each question inviting further commentary and explanation, was completed by students mid-year and at the end of the 1996 year. Students completed the mid-year questionnaire anonymously during a scheduled class session towards the end of the second term. All class groups were placed in one venue and the process was supervised by the internal evaluator who explained to the students the purpose of the evaluation and how the data would be utilised. At the end of the 1996 year the questionnaire could not be administered directly to students during scheduled class time as the LEAP teachers were reluctant to make class time available at that time of the year. The internal evaluator therefore distributed questionnaires to all students, allowing for completion in their own time and requesting the return of completed questionnaires to the individual LEAP teachers within a week. Of the 97 registered students, 49 completed the mid-year evaluation and 57 completed the end-of-year evaluation. The same questionnaire, drawn up by the internal evaluator, was used for both evaluations. Since the questionnaires were completed anonymously, in the interests of objectivity and to protect the confidentiality of the respondents, it was not possible to determine the amount of overlap between the mid-year and end-year respondents. The poor response rate to these questionnaires resulted in further data-collection methods targeting this source. In this follow-up phase, the interview method (further described in section 7.2) was employed.

The questionnaire consisted of 50 items. Thirty-eight of the 50 items required a rating on a four-point semantic differential scale. Items 39 to 48 had individual rating scales,

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different to the scale used for the first 38 items. The final two items on the questionnaire were of an open-ended nature. The varying response scales in the questionnaire were determined by the needs of the evaluation rather than expediency in the analysis of the findings. The questions broadly evaluated the LEAP:

- curriculum (specifically the objectives, content, activities and instructional materials),
- teaching (specifically the methodology and teachers) and
- learning (specifically the outcomes, attitudes and processes).

1995/1996 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES TO STUDENTS (See Appendix 7)

At the end of the first three terms of 1995 and the first term of 1996, LEAP students were asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire, consisting of six questions, in which they evaluated the course content and classroom activities for that particular term. These questionnaires were distributed to students at the end of each of these terms by their respective LEAP class teachers and returned at the start of the new term. An open-ended questionnaire was used for this aspect of the evaluation since an in-depth reflection was required to augment the more general reflections in the closed-ended questionnaires.

The response rate at the end of the first term in 1995 was poor since only two of the six class groups were represented. This was due to the fact that one of the facilitators left the course at the end of the first term, two others had not distributed the questionnaire and another had neglected to supply the researcher with the data. The fact that this was the very first attempt at evaluating a part of the LEAP course, the general lack of a culture of evaluation at the institution, as well as the pressures of end-of-term marking may account for the poor co-operation of the LEAP teachers at this initial stage in the evaluation process. The response rate at the end of the second term in 1995 was much improved, with all teachers co-operating fully. This time all of the six class groups were asked to complete the questionnaire and 55 students out of a possible 152 responded. The still poor response rate of the students may be accounted for by two factors. One factor may be that a three-week vacation period delayed the prompt return of the

questionnaires. The other factor (and this became clear on analysing the data from the term 2 respondents) may be that at the end of a term students had difficulty in reflecting on the term as a whole and in giving commentary on the detail of the term activities rather than simply general impressions. In an attempt to address some of these problems the students were given a list (which accompanied the term 3 questionnaire) of all the activities they had engaged in during the course of the third term. Students were thus better able to comment on the detail of the course, as the questions required, and not simply give general impressions as they had done with the previous two terms. While the quality of the responses improved at the end of the third term, the response rate did not. Forty students out of a possible 152 responded to this questionnaire.

Due to the poor response rate to these open-ended questionnaires, additional data was sought using the students' dialogue journals as a source. All of this data was also supplemented by the data received from the LEAP teachers themselves, as they reflected on their students' classroom feedback in their informal weekly meetings.

The open-ended questionnaire to students was repeated at the end of only the first term of 1996. This was done because the course was substantially reviewed and altered at the end of 1995 and it was the first term/unit which was most radically altered. The teachers and internal evaluator thus felt it necessary to subject this particular unit of the 1996 version of LEAP to the scrutiny of the students.

1995 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES TO LEAP TEACHERS (See Appendix 8)

The 1995 facilitators of the LEAP course were asked to complete a 10-item, open-ended questionnaire at the end of each term of teaching. Since the fourth term was a very short one, the third and fourth terms were evaluated together. The questionnaires were handed to the respondents on the last day of the term and most were returned by the start of the new term. Only five of the six facilitators were approached to complete the questionnaire. As the internal evaluator was also a facilitator in 1995, she declined to complete a questionnaire herself in the interests of objectivity. Of the five facilitators approached to complete the questionnaire, only three responded at the end of the first

term and two responded at the end of each of the other terms. One of the facilitators who failed to respond at all indicated that she had an aversion to completing questionnaires, while the other two indicated that it was simply a question of workload and time constraints and that they eventually would complete the questionnaires. However this promise was never fulfilled. Due to the poor response rates to these 1995 questionnaires and because there were only 4 facilitators in 1996, the internal evaluator decided to use the interview method for this phase in the 1996 formative evaluation.

The aspects which were evaluated in these questionnaires were the course objectives, content, materials, methodology and learning processes. As with the open-ended questionnaires to students, this method was used to achieve an in-depth reflection from facilitators which could cross-validate the responses of the students. These student and facilitator evaluations then formed the basis on which the course was reviewed and revised in preparation for the second year of implementation in 1996.

1995 INDIVIDUAL LESSON QUESTIONNAIRES (See Appendix 9)

At the end of each of the sixty-five lessons taught during the course of 1995, the six facilitators were asked to evaluate each activity making up the particular lesson. These evaluations were completed on a set evaluation form. (See Appendix 9 for an example of such a form) The aspects of each lesson activity which was evaluated were: clarity, time, facilitator preparation and learning outcomes. Each facilitator was required to respond to a question (and in some cases two questions) relating to each of these aspects, by giving a rating on a five-point scale where one represented the most negative answer and five represented the most positive answer. The evaluation form consisted largely of closed-ended questions but there was one open-ended question asking for suggestions for a more successful lesson in each case.

An average of four evaluations per lesson was received from the six facilitators, who found it quite difficult to complete the forms if too much time had elapsed between the teaching of the lesson and the completion of the form. These individual lesson

evaluations formed the basis of the data used for the refining and redeveloping of each lesson.

1995 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES TO MAINSTREAM LECTURERS OF LEAP STUDENTS (See Appendix 10)

The third term of the LEAP course required collaborative working between the LEAP facilitators and willing mainstream lecturers who taught the same group of students. The reason for this collaboration was to facilitate the transfer of academic assignment writing skills across the curriculum. This venture required the collaborative setting of an academic assignment based on the content area taught by the mainstream lecturers. The content and concepts required of students for completion of the assignment would be covered by the mainstream lecturers, while the skills, conventions and discourse of academic assignment writing would be covered by the LEAP facilitators.

This collaborative venture was evaluated by the mainstream content lecturers using an eight-item open-ended questionnaire. Three content lecturers were involved in the process but only two completed the questionnaire. The aspects which were evaluated in this questionnaire were the strengths of the LEAP model of intervention, the LEAP course content and activities, as well as the learning outcomes and processes.

1995 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO OTHER TECHNIKON STAFF MEMBERS (See Appendix 11)

During the second term of 1995, LEAP students interviewed particular Technikon staff members as part of their course work. The object of the exercise was twofold. One objective was to familiarise them with the functions of the institution and in this way further orientate them, the other objective was to introduce them to practical research skills. Since these interviews took place outside of class time and involved various staff members, and because the materials developers wanted to retain this exercise as a part of the LEAP curriculum, the staff members were asked to evaluate the actual interviews.

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A copy of the questionnaire, with an explanatory covering letter, was mailed to each of the 28 staff members who were interviewed. Of the 28 who were interviewed, 23 completed the questionnaire.

7.2   The interview method

The interview method was used to elicit data from seven different sources in the formative evaluation phase. The primary data source for this method, as with the questionnaire method, was the students. The other data sources which were consulted using this method were the 1996 LEAP teachers, the mainstream lecturers of LEAP students, the LEAP course moderator, other users of the LEAP material and the materials developers. The interview method predominated in the 1996 phase of the formative evaluation since the questionnaire method yielded poor response rates in the 1995 phase.

1995 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP STUDENTS (See Appendix 12)

At the end of the year 18 students were approached by their respective facilitators to participate in a qualitative evaluation of the course using the interview method. Each facilitator was asked to select three students, one from the top range, one from the middle range and one from the bottom range of their class groups. This was done so that the interviews would reflect the opinions and attitudes of students who had excelled in the course, as well as those who had an average performance and those who failed the course. The decision to interview students was made because the materials developers of the course felt that the questionnaire method had not yielded sufficient detailed insights into the various aspects of the course, and the interview method lent itself to a detailed probing of issues raised.

In the interests of objectivity and to encourage students to speak openly about the course, interviewers made certain that students were not being interviewed by their own facilitators. All facilitators recorded their interviews, except one, who was unable to record because of a shortage of recording equipment at the Technikon. The interviews

were structured, with all interviewers asking the same set of questions. Each one lasted about 30 minutes. The aspects of the course which were covered in these interviews were:

1.   Aims and Objectives
2.   Planning for the future
3.   Journal
4.   Base Support Groups
5.   Reviewing the whole course

1996 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP STUDENTS (See Appendix 13)

At the end of the 1996 year, 12 students were approached by the internal evaluator to participate in a qualitative evaluation of the course using the interview method. The evaluator made the selection of the three students from each of the four class groups in 1996. This was done to ensure greater objectivity than was the case in 1995, when facilitators had made the selection. The evaluator followed the same selection procedure and rationale as in 1995, randomly selecting one student from the top range, one from the middle range and one from the bottom range of each of the class groups.

The evaluator conducted and recorded all the interviews, ensuring all respondents of confidentiality. The interviews were structured, using a predetermined set of questions. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes. The aspects of students' experience of the course which were covered in the 1996 interviews were:

1.   Needs and Expectations
2.   Transfer of Learning
3.   Methodology
4.   Workload and Pitch
5.   Future Implementation

The structured interviews with the 1995 and 1996 students differed somewhat. This was because these interviews were pursued as alternative data-collection instruments to augment the information gathered via the questionnaires, which had had rather poor

response rates. The interview questions were thus directly linked to the content of the questionnaires.

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP STUDENTS WHO HAD 'DROPPED OUT'

It was established that 12 students had dropped out during 1995 and 4 during 1996. Due to the nature of the circumstances, it was difficult to reach these students, but an effort was made as data from this source was considered important to a complete evaluation of LEAP. Four of the 12 students from 1995 had left the institution completely. Of the remaining students, the evaluator was able to conduct an interview with two students from 1995 and two from 1996. The interviews were unstructured to allow for free and open discussion of the issues surrounding these students' decision to opt out of the course. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes and yielded valuable insights.

1996 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP TEACHERS (See Appendix 14)

All of the 1996 LEAP teachers were interviewed. This method was favoured over the questionnaire method used in 1995, since there had been a poor response to the open-ended questionnaires the previous year. The teachers also tended to explore the questions somewhat superficially when faced with pencil and paper methods, whereas the interview provided a better opportunity for in-depth exploration. Although there were four class groups, six teachers were interviewed, as two of the original teachers had vacated their posts halfway through the year. The interviews were all recorded and conducted by the evaluator. They lasted between 45 minutes and one hour per interview.

A structured interview format was used but free discussion was encouraged, especially since some of the teachers had had multi-faceted experiences with the teaching of LEAP. For example, four of the teachers had taught the course over the two-year period and were able to draw on their experiences in 1995 and make comparisons with the 1996 experience. One teacher in particular could evaluate from the vantage point of

having taught the LEAP course for two successive years, and being a teacher to a group of second-year students who had experienced the LEAP course the previous year. He was thus able to make comparisons and track issues such as the transfer of learning into the second year. His multi-faceted experience with the course yielded valuable insights. Another teacher in the 1996 year was simultaneously a user of an adaptation of the LEAP course in a totally different context. His insights and comparative experiences were invaluable to a full evaluation study. The aspects of the course which were covered in these interviews were:

1. Achievement of course objectives
2. Reflective Journalling
3. Independent Learning in BSG's
4. Streaming versus Mixed Ability Groups
5. Curriculum activities and materials
6. Methodology
7. Workbooks
8. Collaboration with Content
9. Personal/Professional Development

1996 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH MAINSTREAM LECTURERS OF LEAP STUDENTS

Four of the mainstream lecturers of past and present LEAP students were interviewed towards the end of 1996. As with the LEAP teachers, and for the same reasons, this method was favoured over the questionnaire method used the previous year. The interviews, each about 30 minutes in length, were all recorded and conducted by the evaluator. Although a structured interview format was used, each interview differed somewhat in that the respondents had had varying levels of involvement with the course.

One of the four respondents, for example, was a mainstream content lecturer to both the past 1995 LEAP students (in their second year), and the 1996 LEAP students who were still completing the LEAP course. Another respondent was both a lecturer to the past

1995 LEAP students (in their second year), and the internal moderator for the LEAP course. As with the teachers of the LEAP course itself, the differing levels of exposure which these respondents had, made their evaluative data valuable, insightful and critical. The aspects of their experience which were covered in the interviews were broadly: a comparison of LEAP students and the other first-year students they teach, 'evidence' of the transfer of learning in LEAP students, their level of preparedness for the second year of study and the 'gaps' in their learning which still remain.

1996 UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH THE LEAP COURSE MODERATOR

This interview, which lasted nearly an hour, was a free, unstructured discussion of the insights of the respondent as an internal moderator of the LEAP course over the 1995 and 1996 period. The focus of the interview was around the actual abilities of the LEAP students as demonstrated in their course tasks and tests, as well as the assessment and grading procedures of the teachers. Since she was familiar with the course outline, materials and methodology, being the moderator, she was able to give evaluative input on these aspects as well. An interesting dimension was added to the interview by virtue of the fact that she also taught a group of second-year students who had experienced the LEAP course in the previous year.

1996 UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH OTHER USERS OF THE LEAP MATERIAL

Adapted versions of the LEAP course were implemented in two other curricula at the Technikon during 1996. One version was implemented as part of a bridging programme to provide access to students wishing to further their studies at the Technikon. Here the course was adapted to fit a semester model, with daily contact sessions. The other version was implemented as part of an existing Technikon first-year curriculum in the School of Science. Although it was also a year-long model, the course was modularised and adapted to the needs of a student body with above average English language proficiency and a more advantaged secondary schooling background than that of the students at the School of Education.

The teachers of these two adaptations of LEAP were interviewed by the evaluator using an unstructured interview format, since their experiences were very different in nature. The aspects of their experiences with the LEAP materials which were covered in the interviews were broadly: the process of adaptation, the LEAP materials as a resource and framework, the LEAP methodology, the flexibility of the materials, their students' experience of the adapted course and their personal response to the material as teachers.

1996 UNSTRUCTURED GROUP INTERVIEW WITH THE LEAP MATERIALS DEVELOPERS

The four materials developers of the LEAP course participated in an unstructured, recorded, group interview on the materials development process. An unstructured, group session was used for this evaluative data, as the evaluator formed part of this team of developers and an open discussion and reflection forum was better suited to the needs of these persons who had worked as a team for the entire development period. The group interview allowed for reflection and commentary, by team members, on each others' contributions. This cross-pollination of reflections and commentary stimulated and enhanced a deep analysis and evaluation of what had been a very complex process.

7.3 Personal observation

In the formative phase of the evaluation the method of personal observation, using the evaluator as a data source, was employed in only two different settings. Since the formative evaluation focussed primarily on the LEAP curriculum and its application, and because the evaluator was a member of the LEAP curriculum development team, this method was employed with caution. In an attempt to maintain a high degree of validity and credibility with regard to the evaluation findings, the evaluator was used as a secondary source, for purposes of cross-validation, in settings where there was only one other data source. In the formative phase there were only two such occasions, namely:

- the observation and evaluation of the actual teaching process, where the primary data source was the students; and

- the observation and evaluation of the structured, independent learning process of students, where the primary data source was the students in their BSG groups.

1996 OBSERVATION OF CLASSROOM TEACHING

Each of the six LEAP teachers was observed for an entire lesson. They had agreed to this beforehand and were expecting the evaluator for the particular lesson being observed. Students were informed of the purpose of the observation, although neither the teachers nor the students were aware of which aspects of the teaching process were being evaluated. The evaluator did not play an active role in the lessons, remaining an uninvolved observer. The following aspects of the teaching process were evaluated:

1. Teaching methodology, its effectiveness, the extent of its application and attitudes towards it,

2. Attitude of teachers towards teaching,

3. Student-teacher relationships,

4. Preparedness of teachers,

5. Effectiveness of teaching, and

6. Sensitivity of teachers towards learner needs.

1996 OBSERVATION OF BSG INDEPENDENT LEARNING PROCESS

For the purposes of a structured programme of independent peer learning, each of the four LEAP class groups was divided into BSG groups consisting of four students, in most cases. There was a total of 24 BSG groups across the four class groups. These BSG's were required to meet for one hour on a weekly basis and since this was an independent, unsupervised activity, the students were the only source of evaluative data regarding this aspect of the LEAP course. In order to provide a secondary source of evaluative data, the evaluator included personal observation of these sessions as a method.

Thirteen visits were made by the evaluator, in an attempt to observe at least 50% of the 24 groups. The students were informed, in advance, by their teachers that spot visits would be made by the evaluator. The purpose of these visits was also explained to all classes. Of the thirteen visits paid by the evaluator, only three witnessed a BSG meeting in operation. For the other ten visits, there was no visible sign of a BSG meeting. On further enquiry a number of reasons for this state of affairs emerged. It transpired that some of the groups had become completely dysfunctional, some had rescheduled the particular meeting visited to another time or venue and others had been forced to cancel the particular meeting visited due to external circumstances such as occupied venues. In the three BSG meetings observed, the success of the task completion, as well as the group functioning was evaluated.

7.4   Survey of documentation

A range of relevant documentation was surveyed by the evaluator as part of the formative evaluation phase. These documents were, in some cases, surveyed and analysed to supplement the three methods previously elaborated, for example, the internal moderator's written reports were surveyed to supplement the data arising from the interview with her. In other cases it was necessary to consult documents relating to earlier LEAP activities, such as curriculum development and staff training workshops, which predated the two-year span of the formative evaluation phase.

The documents surveyed included:
- Moderator's reports (surveyed in the evaluation of the curriculum and learning),
- Review panel report (surveyed in the evaluation of the instructional materials),
- Workshop documentation (such as evaluation sheets, surveyed in the evaluation of staff training and liaison),
- LEAP course material (such as lessons, assessment criteria and marking scales which were surveyed in the evaluation of instructional materials and curriculum generally),

- Attendance records for classes and workshops (for students it was surveyed in the evaluation of attitudes towards learning; for staff it was surveyed in the evaluation of the comparative advantage of the LEAP model of intervention),

- Student documentation (such as journal writing, actual tasks and test scripts which were surveyed in the evaluation of learning outcomes and processes),

- LEAP project documentation (such as project reports, sales records and internal memos which were surveyed in the evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses and comparative advantage of the LEAP model of intervention),

- Evaluator's informal notes (recorded during meetings, personal observation, workshops and other related activities).

8. CONCLUSION

The summary, analysis and interpretation of the data discussed in this chapter will be covered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

THE FORMATIVE EVALUATION PHASE:
Summary and analysis of formative data

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, data relating to the evaluation of the LEAP model of intervention (see Table 5.1 under Aspects of LEAP Intervention which were Evaluated, in chapter 5), will be summarised and analysed first, after which data relating to the evaluation of the LEAP curriculum development process will be summarised and analysed. Although the curriculum development process is an aspect which forms part of the broader aspect termed curriculum (see table 5.1), it will be dealt with separately in the summary and analysis. This is because the process of curriculum development was initiated some time before the actual implementation of the curriculum and also because the primary data source (the students) for the formative evaluation of the other aspects of the curriculum were not used as a source in the evaluation of the curriculum development process.

The other aspects relating to the broad aspect curriculum (objectives, content and activities, instructional materials) will be summarised and analysed individually, after which the broad aspects of teaching and learning will be analysed, using the structure as set out in Table 5.1 in the previous chapter. The student questionnaire summaries will be used as the initial basis for the analysis, after which data from the secondary sources will be integrated. This is because the primary data source for all of these aspects was the students, through their responses to the various questionnaires and interviews. [NOTE: Where sources are directly quoted from interviews and written responses on questionnaires, double quotation marks are used to signal this. The spelling in the written responses from the students has been corrected by the researcher. However, the grammar usage and turn of phrase have been left unchanged so as not to interfere with possible shades of meaning.] All conclusions drawn from the analysis of the data have been italicised.

2.   EVALUATION OF THE LEAP MODEL OF INTERVENTION

The LEAP model of intervention can be defined as a stand-alone, skills-based, academic literacy course. The model was evaluated in terms of its strengths, weaknesses and comparative advantage.

2.1   Strengths of the model

The criteria for evaluating the strengths of the model were its **institutional location**, **adaptability** and **growth potential**. A survey of LEAP project reports and minutes of quarterly meetings of the School of Education revealed that LEAP was located within the mainstream Technikon curriculum, as a reinterpretation of an existing, compulsory first-year diploma subject, English A, at the School of Education. This mainstream location ensured that the LEAP course was credit-bearing, government-subsidised, Technikon-funded and compulsory for all first-year students at the School of Education.

It can be concluded that all of the above-mentioned factors contributed positively towards the strength of this model. The course, by virtue of its location, enjoyed givens such as: space and time allocation within the mainstream timetable, venues for its teaching, staffing to carry out the teaching and a student body which was motivated to attend and complete the course as a credit towards their diplomas.

Since the LEAP model of intervention was developed for the specific context provided by the School of Education and the needs of its first-year students, its **ability to adapt** and to be tailored to the needs of different contexts and changing student intakes was crucial in determining the strength of this model. Since the LEAP course (embodied in four facilitator manuals of teaching material covering approximately 1000 pages) had been introduced into two contexts very different to that of the School of Education and with two sets of students who had very different sets of needs (see section 7.2 of chapter 5), these two teachers were considered the best sources for an evaluation of the criterion of adaptability.

Interviews with each of these two teachers revealed that both of them found the existing LEAP model adaptable. The teacher on the Access programme (T1), who had no induction into the use of the materials and no ongoing liaison while adapting the course to his context, indicated that he would have benefited from a short briefing period prior to his implementing the course. He however mentioned that the course worked well as a "pick-up package" and that he had found it easy to "adapt it to myself, my particular teaching style and to my students and their particular learning styles. On the whole it's given me some very useful insights".

The teacher at the School of Science (T2), who had had an intensive induction into the use of the materials, as well as weekly liaison meetings with two of the LEAP curriculum developers for most of 1996, found this experience beneficial but very time-consuming. He pointed out that the LEAP lesson structures and ideas were easily transferable to his context and what needed adapting, in most cases, was peripheral material, such as providing more challenging texts for the more proficient student body. T1 felt that the single most important factor in integrating LEAP into a pre-tertiary bridging programme was that it related to everything else being taught in the programme. T2 felt that the most important factor in determining the actual teaching materials that were used, was student need. He had the following to say: "[S]tudent need has guided what we've put into the course more than anything else".

From this data it can be concluded that while the LEAP model of intervention is indeed adaptable, it requires some form of induction for first-time users of the material, and it should be adapted according to the needs of the particular group of students it is serving, as well as the broader curriculum within which it is placed.

A survey of LEAP project reports and minutes of LEAP project presentations to Director's meetings and Academic Board meetings revealed that **the growth potential** of the LEAP model of intervention was severely restricted at the institution. The stand-alone model, because it required curriculum time and space from departments, had funding implications for the institution and required recurriculation of the standard Technikon diploma structures, was met with considerable resistance from the major

decision-makers at the institution. One of their concerns was that the overfilled first-year curriculum could not be further burdened with an additional subject that was not even discipline-related. They also claimed to lack the funding required to implement and provide staffing for the teaching of such a course, preferring to appoint additional staff from within their disciplines. The growth potential beyond the institution presented a more positive picture as a survey of the LEAP sales records revealed. This area of growth developed largely as a result of outside interest generated through three conference presentations in the course of 1996.

It can therefore be concluded that the growth potential of the LEAP intervention within the institution is being severely hampered because of funding constraints and limited curriculum space, while the growth potential beyond the institution appears to be positive.

2.2   Weaknesses of the model

The criterion for evaluating the weaknesses of the model was its **sustainability**. Given its institutional location, the course is guaranteed a sustainable future as long as the School at which it is located continues to function. Chapter 4, section 2.4 outlines why the very future of this School might be threatened. However, assuming the School continues to function, which guarantees the course a sustainable future, it is unlikely that the model will be sustained in its original design. LEAP was designed as a skills-based course, employing small-group, interactive teaching methodologies, allowing for practical application of learning within the classroom environment. These aspects of the model could be implemented during the two-year period of the formative evaluation only because additional teachers were being donor-funded to allow for the small-group teaching. Decisions taken at the end of 1996 during the planning sessions for the 1997 academic year revealed that the Technikon was unwilling to fund extra teaching staff in order to maintain this aspect of the model.

It can be concluded, therefore, that while the course continues to be sustained by the institution, its design and very philosophy has been altered.

2.3   Comparative advantage of the model

The criteria for evaluating the comparative advantage of the LEAP model in relation to other possible models of intervention were its potential to impact on mainstream and its ability to diversify. A variety of methods were employed to evaluate **the potential of LEAP to impact on mainstream.** These included questionnaires to and interviewing of seven mainstream lecturers of LEAP students as well as the analysis of various reports and a workshop.

The questionnaires evaluated one unit of the 1995 LEAP course, where three content (two of whom completed the questionnaire) and six language lecturers worked collaboratively on a shared assignment. The questionnaires revealed that the two content lecturers (C1 and C2) valued the opportunity for openness and sharing of ideas with their language counterparts and enjoyed "working with a group from which to tap information" (C1) and "share concerns about students"(C2). An area which caused some dispute was that of assessment of the assignment. Content lecturers were unsure of their ability to mark for language usage and therefore resistant to apportioning too much of the final mark to this criterion. They however expressed a realisation that language and content could not be separated, and suggested that more content lecturers be involved in such collaboration in future.

This positive written response, indicating LEAP's potential to impact mainstream teaching by way of collaboration, was not borne out by action though, as these content lecturers showed a distinct reluctance to work collaboratively the following year.

The impact of LEAP on mainstream teaching practices, such as assessment, seemed somewhat limited. This was evident too in the poor attendance levels (referred to in the workshop evaluation forms and a report on the workshop) of content lecturers at a staff development workshop in 1995, on language and learners. This workshop had as its aim the opening up of a conversation concerning language in all classrooms and an examination of how different teaching strategies might better serve the language needs of the students. Although all aspects of the workshop were evaluated very positively

(see Appendix 15) and there were calls for follow-up workshops, these never transpired as staff could not reach consensus on a suitable time or date.

It appeared that content lecturers paid lip service to collaboration between language and content.

This emerged from an interview with a language lecturer (F2) who taught on the LEAP course in both 1995 and 1996, when he stated that the LEAP skills "ought to be drilled in all the courses they (the students) do. We're not making connections. I'm talking about shared responsibility here, I'm talking about the academic writing that occurs in all the courses that we teach and unless other people pick that up and we all do it together, there's no sense in English (LEAP, the subject) feeling accountable. I'm concerned about bailing out other courses. We don't have serious debates going on in our schools. We are not really engaging with each other. We're not talking about the holistic approach to teaching."

A Biology lecturer (C3, teaching ex-LEAP students in their second year of study) who was interviewed, felt that she had successfully integrated the LEAP skills into her discipline only because she had read the LEAP materials, sat in on LEAP classes and liaised informally with one of the LEAP curriculum developers. She endorsed the view that few content lecturers were really interested in knowing more about the LEAP intervention and in applying what it taught to the specifics of their own curricula. Some of her suggestions for improving the potential of LEAP to impact on the mainstream curriculum were that:

- a structured programme needed to be set up, where content subject specialists interacted with the LEAP facilitators,
- a circular, outlining the LEAP work programme for the year and highlighting at which points in the first year the various skills would be dealt with, needed to go out to all content lecturers to let them know what was happening in the LEAP programme so that they could reinforce the skills in their classes,
- each content lecturer should purchase and read the set of LEAP manuals,

- at the end of an academic year, the LEAP facilitators and content lecturers should plan their year programmes and manuals for the following year together, and that the LEAP manual could serve as an example for how content subject manuals could look,

- at the start of a new year before lectures commenced, a number of staff development workshops be held on how the skills and methodology of the LEAP course could be integrated into the content subjects,

- at the end of each term an evaluative session be held to reflect on the successes and failures of the term and plan for the new term,

- that LEAP facilitators observe the content classes to compare the skills being integrated into the content classes with those taught in the LEAP course and that the standards for assessing these skills be compared by the two sets of lecturers or that co-assessment of classroom activities take place between content and language lecturers,

- where there was resistance to this process, a core group of committed and interested content lecturers be targeted and that they infuse their skills and experience gained into their respective departments, triggering a possible cascading effect,

- this collaboration with content lecturers continue into the second year of study as students needed further development of academic literacy skills in their second year.

The impact of LEAP on the mainstream learning of students was revealed by content lecturers in their questionnaires as well as English lecturers in their interviews. They commented on the improved essays by LEAP students and that the quality was better when compared to students of prior years. Plagiarism and poor integration of sources was mentioned as an area of concern though. English lecturers teaching ex-LEAP students in the second year also raised these areas as requiring further reinforcement in the second year of study. The three English lecturers (E1, E2 and E3) teaching in the second year all agreed that they could see the impact of the LEAP experience on their students' ability to structure their writing and to speak willingly and with confidence. They felt, however, that while they could see the logical development of thought in the students' writing, this was often hampered by poor grammar usage. Comments like: "[T]heir writing made sense, it was only the grammar" (E3) and "[T]heir text is

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meticulously structured but the grammar is extremely weak" (E1), often recurred in the interviews. Since the LEAP course assumes grammatical competence at the level of sentence structure, and does not explicitly teach grammar, this was raised as a need. The lecturers were not in agreement as to how this might happen though. E3 suggested "an initial course before they go into the first year. We should try and work and achieve something so that they can get up to a standard or a level of proficiency." E2 felt that "it needs to be addressed but not in the LEAP course or any credited course because that is not the level at which a tertiary institution functions." E1, however, felt that grammar needed to be integrated into the LEAP course as separate grammar classes did not work. This reality was clearly demonstrated in 1995, when both basic and intermediate grammar classes were offered to LEAP students who had been tested and diagnosed as having these needs. Attendance was poor from the start and the classes were eventually terminated. In 1996 a self-access grammar programme was recommended to students who had the need. This also enjoyed limited success as students were not sufficiently committed to working on their own initiative. E3, when he was interviewed, made the following observation in this regard: "[O]ur students are not mature and dedicated enough to do this (self-access grammar remediation) on their own. They need to link with a teacher and reflect on their learning".

Clearly this area of poor grammar usage needs to be effectively addressed. Since the two methods (separate classes and self-access materials) already attempted by the LEAP facilitators in 1995 and 1996 respectively were less than successful, a point of departure for future LEAP models might then be the suggestion to integrate grammar into the existing LEAP curriculum.

The full potential of LEAP to impact on mainstream was clearly not realised. This may have been due to an inherent shortcoming in the stand-alone model of intervention. It appears that when change is packaged and delivered in a stand-alone intervention it provides teachers of other courses in the curriculum with sufficient reason to remain the same. This was clearly demonstrated in the LEAP evaluation despite structured collaboration with mainstream.

The **ability** of the LEAP model of intervention **to diversify** was evaluated by surveying a range of documentation surrounding various initiatives to derive and implement different versions of LEAP or where LEAP was used as a framework for the development of other courses. The November 1995 Report on the LEAP Project records the successful implementation of LEAP as a stand-alone, credit-bearing, one-year academic literacy course for all first-year students at the School of Education during 1995 as well as future plans to retain the course as a reinterpretation of the English A course. A memorandum sent to the co-ordinator of the Access Programme at Peninsula Technikon, from the LEAP Project Co-ordinator, recorded that the original LEAP model was adapted at the start of 1996 for implementation as a part of a semester bridging programme for students wishing to gain admission to Peninsula Technikon without the necessary entrance requirements. The model required by the Access Programme necessitated that LEAP be taught over six months, as opposed to one year. The contact time offered by the Access model, however, was more than the 70 one-hour sessions in the original LEAP model. This was because their students were given a 90-minute session, five days a week. The Access teacher (T1), when interviewed at the end of the semester, indicated that deriving his model from the original LEAP model was easily accomplished as he had simply taught the planned one-hour sessions over 90 minutes, allowing more time for discussion and the application of skills. His view was that the lessons were more successful when taught over 90 minutes, as they were quite tight and full for one hour.

The May 1996 Progress Report on the Dental Technology Communication Course records that a derivative of LEAP was implemented within the first-year Dental Technology curriculum as a credit-bearing year course. This version of LEAP required that the original model be modularised and content-based. The developmental sequence of the original model was therefore removed and sections of the course were blocked and taught as discrete units, each separately assessed. This was in line with the block system used in other subjects in the Dental Technology curriculum. The lecturer (T2) teaching this version of LEAP was interviewed at the end of the 1996 academic year. His opinion on the ability of the LEAP model to diversify was that it provided a useful framework which was easy to work from. "We haven't really changed the structure of

the lessons or the lesson plans or even the wording in some cases. What is different, is rather the peripheral material that's being used. The material that the students will be looking at would be different. They were looking at dental technology materials and assignments. ...it's quite difficult compared to the LEAP that gets taught at Education. It's a higher - it's more difficult than that, and that suits the student that is there."

The July 1996 Report on the LEAP project records that "the (LEAP) course is also presently being incorporated into a curriculum development initiative taking place in the Department of Electrical Engineering". This initiative targeted a different student audience, as students from this department had one of the highest standards of English proficiency on the campus. In a memorandum to the head of the Languages Department, the co-ordinator of this curriculum development initiative indicated that although their proposed programme would not seek to replicate LEAP, it would use the LEAP materials, lesson plans and the experience of the LEAP designers as a resource. The October 1996 Report on the implementation of LEAP at the Technikon records that the "new syllabus (at Electrical Engineering) contains elements of LEAP." In an interview in 1996, the co-ordinator of this Electrical Engineering project said: "Well the LEAP course provides a very flexible framework, so it can be adapted to the needs of various academic departments. I would see being infused into that framework the information literacy needs, the subject content of different subjects. So the course will be adapted and I think it's very important that we've got that flexible framework."

The last-mentioned report also refers to talks which "are underway between staff members of the Department of Languages and Communication and the Department of Human Resources, to assist them with integrating academic literacy skills across the entire Human Resources Diploma". This initiative, which is seeking funding for 1998, will use the LEAP framework as its primary resource.

The November 1996 Report on the LEAP Project records that a set of LEAP materials was handed to the Director-General of the Western Cape Education Department who "identified the following three areas where LEAP could be used in the education

department: training of pre-service teachers, training of in-service teachers and curriculum planning."

The survey of documentation and the outcomes of interviews with people who have used LEAP as a prototype suggest that the existing LEAP model of intervention is a flexible one, which has the ability to diversify easily.

3. EVALUATION OF THE LEAP CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of the LEAP curriculum included a process of initial decision-making, the generating of classroom materials and the training of users of the materials. All of these aspects were evaluated.

3.1 The decision-making process

The criterion for evaluating the decision-making process was its **inclusivity.** Chapter 3 section 4, details the decision-making process followed in developing what was to become the LEAP programme. Section 4.3 outlines the range of Technikon stakeholders who were invited to be a part of the decision-making process. These included: academic staff from both the content and language disciplines, CCE (Centre for Continuing Education) staff, staff from three support units (AD, Counselling and Teaching Development), Management and students. Besides the Technikon stakeholders who were consulted, there were also discussions with a range of other tertiary institutions who were already implementing academic literacy or bridging programmes (see chapter 3, section 4.1). Section 4.2 of chapter 3 outlines the range of experts who were consulted around particular curriculum areas where institutional expertise was lacking.

These endeavours point to a decision-making process with a high level of stakeholder inclusivity, where attempts were made to ensure that a wide range of interests were

being served when making decisions about curriculum aims, principles, approach, content and structure.

3.2   The materials development process

The criterion for evaluating the materials development process was its **effectiveness**. In an unstructured group interview with the materials development team, the following comment was made: "The materials development process is determined by the aims and objectives of the specific curriculum and one doesn't necessarily present the same model for any curriculum development project." The model chosen for the LEAP curriculum was a team approach, which the group felt was highly instrumental in producing the quality and detail of the materials. They felt that the diversity found within the team allowed them to conceptualise the lessons to match the needs of the changing student profile at the institution. They also felt that the high level of commitment among the team members sustained the process and that the team dynamic positively influenced the process. All team members felt valued and affirmed, and were able to criticise each other constructively without feeling judged because of an openness which existed. They acknowledged that the team approach was time intensive, as many hours were spent brainstorming with the team, speaking through individuals' ideas with other team members, discussing draft work with the team and then revising after such discussions. On reflecting on their process, the team was in agreement though that the time and effort spent was vindicated by the success of their group work. All felt that they had developed both personally and professionally. They acknowledged the frustrations of working closely with different personalities but always found in the team approach, a trigger for ideas and a stimulus for creativity.

An observation made in the interview was that the nature of AD work constrained the materials development process. Here team members referred to the fact that mainstream staff members were "tied up in class" with no time made available for materials development. AD was charged with the responsibility of facilitating materials development on campus but they were not a mainstreamed or institutionally-funded

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unit. The institutional message underlying this was that materials development work was not considered important enough to warrant institutional time or money. Also, the materials development capacity built in the AD staff members was not expanded into other units on the campus as a result of their non-permanent status as staff members. By the end of the two-year evaluation period, two of the team members had already taken up more permanent employment elsewhere, another was facing an expired contract and had re-applied, hoping for a position at the institution in the following academic year, while only the fourth team member was in fact a permanent staff member. The team was of the opinion that the only way to expand capacity and take the institution along with such projects, was to mainstream them and fund them institutionally. This included creating conditions for teachers to be able to do materials development, such as providing training to build the capacity of lecturers to become materials writers, then intensive time initially for teachers to develop resources, then the opportunities to implement resource-based learning. All of this had implications for staff loading. An observation made during the interview was: "If we really want to transform the teaching and learning processes at Peninsula Technikon we need to spend more time on materials development than on teaching". The materials would ultimately replace the teacher as directing the learning in the classroom and the student learning would become the focus rather than content.

There were implications for students too, since resource-based learning required them to operate as independent learners. One team member said that there was "no way students would be able to operate in that kind of (resource-based) learning context without having an upfront course that teaches them how to work on their own, to take responsibility for their learning and make themselves accountable to other students, their lecturers and ultimately their qualification because at the moment they sit back and expect the teachers to do it all and their institution to pay for them to do it." This view was echoed in two separate interviews (previously discussed in this chapter) with mainstream lecturers who were evaluating the potential of LEAP to impact on the mainstream learning of students.

Another constraint frequently raised in the group interview was the nature of the working conditions at the institution, such as the lack of administrative support for AD, poor equipment, limited physical space and the constant noise and interruptions due to the location of the AD offices. All of this had a negative effect on individual energy and motivation levels, as one team member observed, "This institution has to look at looking after its people. It's spent a lot of time creating magnificent buildings and putting the structures in place and it doesn't care about the people."

It can therefore be concluded that the nature of AD work (non-mainstream, non-funded, non-permanent), the poor working conditions of the AD staff, as well as the nature of mainstream teaching loads, are the key factors inhibiting further materials development at the institution.

3.3   Staff training and liaison

The **success** of staff training and liaison was evaluated after surveying the documentation from a three-day training course which preceded the implementation of the LEAP course in 1995, as well as notes from informal weekly meetings held among the facilitators teaching the LEAP course over the two-year period of the evaluation. The training course documentation revealed that while the attendance from the Department of Languages and Communication and the AD unit was good, there was poor attendance from lecturers in the content areas. The training course evaluation data showed that it was enjoyed but that participants were not very clear on how to relate what they had learned from the LEAP curriculum, to their own teaching. Although the training course was of a practical nature, the principles were applied to the LEAP materials provided in the course. Better transfer of learning may have occurred had the practical application been geared towards participants' own teaching materials. Follow-up liaison with the participants revealed that very little of what had been targeted in the training course (the co-operative learning and teaching strategies and the academic literacy skills) was in fact being integrated in the mainstream courses that these lecturers were teaching.

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For the six 1995 and four 1996 LEAP facilitators the initial three-day training course was followed by informal weekly meetings throughout the two-year evaluation period. This continued liaison was valued greatly by all concerned, as it provided the space for reflection on their teaching, a forum for sharing and solving problem areas, as well as an opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings regarding the implementation of the teaching materials. The immediacy of the curriculum which they were all teaching sustained this liaison and gave impetus to their collaboration. Similar interest groups were structured for the training course participants who were not teaching the LEAP course. However, since these groups did not have the immediacy of a shared curriculum which they were teaching to sustain their liaison, the initial impetus soon faded and these interest groups had stopped meeting before the end of the first term.

It appears that regular liaison is a necessary element after a training course, as this process nurtures the shaky implementation of something new and innovative. Without this liaison and left to function individually, staff members appear to revert to those strategies with which they are most comfortable and familiar.

Even when such liaison is structured and linked to a common teaching experience, this alone is not sufficient to sustain it. There needs to be a more widely shared teaching experience than just one course. This was the case with the 1996 group of LEAP facilitators. They were different to the 1995 group, which consisted of three AD staff members who shared a very similar overall work experience, and three mainstream staff members whose overall teaching load was very similar. There was thus a balance of common experience in the group and these six facilitators met regularly throughout that year. The 1996 group of LEAP facilitators consisted of three staff members from the AD unit and one mainstream staff member from the languages department. The only teaching experience common to this mainstream staff member and the other three was that they shared the teaching of the LEAP course. Their weekly meetings were less successful, eventually becoming an informal meeting of the three AD facilitators and communication, in writing, with the other facilitator.

4. EVALUATION OF THE 1995 LEAP CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

The aspects of curriculum (objectives, content, activities and instructional materials), teaching (methodology and teachers) and learning (outcomes, attitudes and processes) will be dealt with separately in the summary and analysis following as they were evaluated as separate aspects by the primary data source (the LEAP students) in two sets of questionnaires, as well as structured interviews. These aspects were evaluated by the LEAP teachers as well, who completed questionnaires in 1995 and who were interviewed in 1996. The summary and analysis of the first year of evaluation, in 1995, will be presented separately from the second year. [This is to allow an illustration of how the curriculum was changed and improved for the 1996 implementation, in accordance with the formative data from the 1995 evaluation.] Evaluative data from other secondary sources, such as the personal observation of the evaluator and the survey of LEAP documentation, will be summarised and analysed where it relates to the areas evaluated by the primary data source.

Table 6.1 (on the next page) summarises and compares the frequency distribution of the ratings on the 16 questions for both the mid-year and end-year questionnaires (see Appendix 5) distributed to students in 1995. These questionnaires have been previously discussed in section 7.1 of chapter 5. The separate frequency distribution tables for the two questionnaires, with the frequency of responses to the complete five-point rating scale, can be found in appendix 16.

Table 6.1 combines the ratings of the six class groups and shows the frequency in both percentages and actual numbers of students. The ratings in response to the five-point scale on the questionnaire, have been summarised as three ratings. Ratings I and J have been combined and viewed as a positive rating, rating K remains unchanged as a neutral rating, and ratings L and M have been combined and viewed as a negative rating.

There is a strong, overall positive tendency in the answers to both the mid-year and the end-year questionnaire although the mid-year ratings are uniformly higher than the end-

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MID-YEAR (N = 98)
END-YEAR (N=108)

| ITEM | POSITIVE | | | | NEUTRAL | | | | NEGATIVE | | | |
| | MID-YEAR | | END-YEAR | | MID-YEAR | | END-YEAR | | MID-YEAR | | END-YEAR | |
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
1 Instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	82	80	60	65	9	9	19	21	1	1	5	5
2 Overall quality of course.	67	66	56	60	19	19	26	28	7	7	4	4
3 Were course objectives met?	69	68	57	62	19	19	30	32	9	9	10	11
4 Overall quality of instructional materials.	83	81	72	78	9	9	21	23	5	5	6	7
5 Assignments promptly returned?	78	76	64	69	14	14	20	22	5	5	11	12
6 Rate grading standards for course.	55	54	51	55	40	39	37	40	6	6	10	11
7 Instructor's evaluation of work.	85	83	76	82	6	6	13	14	7	7	8	9
8 More competent due to course.	82	80	60	65	17	17	32	35	5	5	6	7
9 Course increase interest in subject?	75	74	58	63	13	13	22	24	13	13	17	18
10 Prepared before coming to class?	82	80	39	42	34	33	41	44	10	10	16	17
11 Not enough student participation?	43	42	27	29	15	15	19	21	41	40	52	56
12 Instructor enjoyed teaching?	95	93	89	96	1	1	7	8	3	3	3	3
13 Instructor's ability to explain?	91	89	84	91	7	7	10	11	1	1	3	3
14 Instructor well prepared?	96	94	90	97	2	2	6	7	0	0	1	1
15 Instructor sensitive to students' understanding.	78	76	77	83	10	10	14	15	13	13	8	9
16 Instructor involved all students in activities.	93	91	87	94	4	4	6	7	0	0	7	8

year ratings. This may be due to the fact that the course was developmental and became cognitively more demanding as it progressed. The more demanding nature of the second half of the course might have had a negative impact on students' attitudes towards the course and the facilitator, which in turn could account for the lower ratings in the end-year evaluations. In the sections following, both the mid-year and the end-year percentage ratings are given when analysing the questionnaire. The mid-year percentage appears first and the end-year percentage follows, in brackets.

4.1   1995 Curriculum

Questions 2, 3 and 4 evaluated the LEAP curriculum. Of these questions, number 2 rated the overall quality of the course. Here the majority of the students 67% (56%) rated the quality of the course positively, with only 7% (4%) giving a negative rating.

With regard to whether the course **objectives** were met, 69% (57%) of the students responded positively while 19% (30%) gave a neutral rating. This positive rating was endorsed by the 16 students who were interviewed, who were unanimous in agreeing that the course had met its objectives and who displayed a clear understanding of the course objectives in their interviews. The course facilitators, given their wider experience and deeper insights, were more hesitant in their evaluation of course objectives, saying that the objectives were met, but superficially. They felt that much more reinforcement of the LEAP course skills was needed in the other mainstream subjects that students were taking, so that the transfer of learning could be facilitated. Students, on the other hand, felt that LEAP had in fact contributed positively towards their studies, especially with regard to assignment writing skills. Comments such as: "I used to write my essays in a very haphazard manner, but now i find that I structure my essay. I'm not conscious of it while I'm writing but I find it when I read my essay", occurred quite frequently in the interviews.

It appears that most of the course objectives were met but that further mainstream reinforcement is required for the effective transfer of the learning and teaching taking place in the LEAP course.

The questionnaire asked students to give an overall rating of how interesting they found the course **content and activities** in question 9. Once again the response was largely positive, with 75% (58%) of the students finding it very interesting. A more in-depth and detailed evaluation of the course content and activities emerged from the open-ended questionnaires completed by students and those distributed to the facilitators at the end of each term. Facilitators were in agreement that the content of all four terms was relevant. However, there was a concern that students did not make a connection between the process of personal development initiated in the first term and their broader education at the Technikon. This concern was borne out by the student interviews, in which no students gave term 1 as the answer to the question: "Which term was the most beneficial?" and six out of the 16 students interviewed indicated that they had enjoyed term 1 the least. However, it should be noted that 6 students also indicated that term 1 had been their favourite term. The reasons given (by five different students) for these differing responses were that term 1: "focussed on self", "was not difficult" and "was enjoyable" on the one hand, and that it had "irrelevant activities" and "unclear aims" on the other hand.

Since misgivings were expressed about the relevance and usefulness of term 1, by both students and facilitators, and because facilitators were concerned that many students were not sufficiently competent by the end of the year, it was decided to remove term 1 from the 1996 curriculum and allow more time for the teaching and practising of the academic skills. Terms 2, 3 and 4 however, were found to be very relevant and beneficial.

The following statements from different student interviews reveal their attitudes towards the final three terms: "I think all semesters were very important and I liked it," and "That one (term 3) where we had to write assignment and learn to develop your own writing skills and all that stuff, that really was exciting" and "Like going out for an interview where we having tasks like going to the different people to interview them about their places, the interview of the Technikon, it was the most effective one (term 2)." and "I think it's very important. I ask myself the question why don't we learn that

(term 3) at school, maybe in matric or even before that, sort of getting an idea of how to write an assignment." None of the students interviewed made negative comments about the benefits of the final three terms. At the end of the interviews, students were asked to make general comments about the course. While some declined to comment, many positive comments emerged here too, for example: "I felt this course was well planned, I got the feeling there was direction."

Question 4 on the questionnaire, which received very high positive ratings 83% (72%), evaluated the quality of the **instructional materials** used in the course. Since an enormous amount of resources, both human and financial, were invested in the developing of the LEAP materials (see section 3), such a rating by students could go a long way in justifying the expenditure. Facilitators, however, expressed mixed feelings regarding the detailed instructional materials as the year progressed. Initially the lesson plans were considered too detailed and sometimes in conflict with the personal teaching styles of facilitators. However, as the year progressed, facilitators indicated that they valued the detail more as they became used to it and that it was very helpful for busy and inexperienced lecturers.

One concern raised was that the lessons were too tightly packed, leaving no time for spontaneous discussion and that this was stressful for the facilitator. This concern was echoed by students who, in different interviews, referred to the course as "too demanding" and "too much work" and requested a reduction in the workload. In view of these concerns and bearing in mind the comments that the Access teacher (T1), who had taught the 60-minute lessons of LEAP using 90-minute sessions, had made (see section 2), it was decided to plan more time and a slower pace for the 1996 lessons.

When each of the 70 lessons was reviewed, in accordance with the individual lesson evaluations from 1995, more time was allowed for lesson activities and discussions. In some cases one lesson was divided to create two, and each lesson was planned with 10 minutes of unstructured time to allow for spontaneous discussion.

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Another concern raised by facilitators was that the volume of support material which they needed to copy for students for each lesson, was a time-consuming burden and that the students were not keeping the material filed in an orderly manner. When the revised materials for 1996 were being planned, it was decided to create a bound students' workbook from the facilitators' teaching manuals.

The 1996 students were therefore required to buy workbooks which removed the printing burden from their facilitators and ensured that the student support material remained together.

4.2   1995 Teaching

Question 1 on the questionnaire, which asked for an overall rating of the teaching, was given a high positive rating, 82% (60%), by the majority of the students. Question 11 related more directly to the teaching **methodology**. In this question, the only negatively phrased question, the desired response of a majority negative rating was achieved. This indicated that students felt they were participating in the lessons. This question was negatively phrased and placed after 10 positively phrased questions deliberately, to check whether students were in fact reading and comprehending the questions and responding to them in a truly reflective way, rather than completing the questionnaire mechanically, as students often do when faced with yet another questionnaire. The response to this question would indicate that the majority of students were in fact comprehending the questions and responding in a truly reflective way and this in turn strengthens the validity of the evaluation.

The very high positive rating on question 16, 93% (87%), reinforces the response to question 11, as it reveals that facilitators attempted to involve all students in the classroom activities. As the teaching materials were written in such a way as to actively involve all the learners in the learning process, the high rating of question 16 shows that students really felt that this was happening in their classrooms. All facilitators, in their interviews, commented that the methodology was promoting co-operative learning in the classroom. They were concerned however that this methodology was not reinforced

at the institution generally and that the co-operative learning methodology might encourage plagiarism among students. The former concern was addressed through staff development workshops and discussions with content lecturers, but with little success. The latter concern was dealt with by addressing the issue of plagiarism directly as part of the course and making students aware of the penalties.

Students, in their open-ended questionnaires at the end of each term, also commented on the high level of student participation in the classes. Their responses often referred to the group work as being something that they liked best about the classes. Some of the reasons given were that it created an opportunity for the sharing of ideas, students developed a togetherness and they felt less scared of talking when in small groups. Students also commented that they liked the informal approach, the co-operative learning and their active participation.

One could thus tentatively say that the teaching materials and the underlying methodology running through the materials, had achieved their purpose.

Questions 12-15 on the questionnaire, which evaluated the **teachers**, were given the highest positive ratings on the questionnaire in both the mid-year and end-year evaluations. 95% (89%) indicated that their facilitators enjoyed teaching very much, 91% (84%) indicated that the facilitators' ability to explain was very good, 96% (90%) indicated that the facilitators were always well-prepared and 78% (77%) indicated that the facilitators sensed when students did not understand. This could be due to the fact that all of the six facilitators were experienced English teachers with a clear understanding of the student profile at Peninsula Technikon, and trained in the teaching methods being promoted in the course. Question 15 achieved the lowest of the ratings on these 4 questions. The ratings of question 15 would indicate that instructors were not as sensitive as they could have been towards students who did not understand. This has serious implications for an academic literacy course where students not only have to understand but also transfer their newly acquired knowledge and skills. The lessons, written in great detail and packed with activities, may account for the lower ratings on this issue. In the weekly meetings of the instructors, as already mentioned in the

previous section, a recurring concern was that the lessons were too full and that there was not enough time to do remedial work in class.

It can therefore be concluded that the teachers were very well-equipped to facilitate the learning of students in the LEAP course.

4.3 1995 Learning

Questions 5 to10 evaluated the students' learning. Questions 5, 6 and 7 evaluated the facilitator's assessment of the **learning outcomes** of students. In all of these questions the anticipated response was demonstrated. Both questions 5 and 7 had a strong positive rating. For question 5 the rating was 78% (64%), while the rating for question 7 represented 85% (76%) of the students. In question 6 the desired response, of a high neutral rating, was achieved. This indicated that the standards for grading the students were perceived as being at the correct level by 40% (37%) of the learners. The overall positive ratings of 55% (51%) however, were slightly higher than the neutral ratings indicating that those students found the standards for grading too high. This might relate to the fact that students found the course (according to interview data) somewhat demanding. When asked to suggest changes to the course, 9 of the 16 students interviewed alluded to a reduction in workload. This concern emerged from students' open-ended questionnaires as well. Comments such as: "In the English class there is too much work", "The lecturers of English don't think of us 'cause they give us more work and they don't think of us having other subjects" and "I propose that the workload should be decreased. We should not get something to do every time it's English" occurred frequently in the questionnaires of different students.

Facilitators felt that it was the interactive and participatory nature of the teaching methodology which students perceived as being hard work and that this perception was enhanced by the commonly practised transmission mode of delivery at the institution, which rendered the learner passive. However, it needs to be recognised that the curriculum of these first-year students is very tightly packed, with up to 13 subjects in

some cases and students attending classes from 8.30 in the morning until 3.15 in the afternoon almost every day. This leaves little time for independent study and research.

It can therefore be concluded that the workload of the LEAP course is considered too demanding by students given the very full first-year curriculum.

Questions 8, 9 and 10 evaluated students' **attitudes towards** their **learning**. In response to question 8, 82% (60%) were positive that they had become more competent in academic literacy due to the course, while 17% (32%) gave a neutral rating. In question 9, 75% (58%) were positive that the course had increased their interest in the subject matter, while 13% (22%) gave a neutral rating. On question 10, however, by the end of the year, only 39% indicated that they prepared before coming to class. This question was given the lowest rating on the end-of-year questionnaire. This could be because students generally do not prepare before coming to class but it may also be as a result of first-year students' general feeling of ill-preparedness for the tertiary environment in which they find themselves.

It is clear that students need to be encouraged to prepare before coming to class. It was therefore hoped that the printing of student workbooks (see section 4.1) would motivate students to cover the lesson material before the actual class session.

Facilitators expressed a concern about student learning in their open-ended questionnaires. They indicated that the linguistically weaker students were being left behind and that there was an apathy and unpredictable attendance by the linguistically stronger students. They also felt that the limited English proficiency among some of the students was militating against their success in the course. One response to this was to introduce a voluntary grammar course over lunchtimes. It was found however that attendance at these sessions was poor (as mentioned in a previous section) as students prioritised credit-bearing activities above voluntary ones and lunchtime sessions were often utilised by mainstream lecturers.

The grammar course therefore had little impact on the English proficiency of the participating students.

While the 16-point, closed-ended questionnaire summarised in table 6.1 did not directly evaluate **learning processes**, two learning processes (fundamental to the LEAP course) were evaluated by the students in their interviews, and by both students and facilitators in their open-ended questionnaires. These areas of student learning were their reflective journalling and the base support group (BSG) activities. While the purpose of the reflective journalling was to encourage students to reflect on their learning and its wider relevance, the BSG activities were to promote independent learning among students and in this way encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

In response to the question as to whether the reflective journalling had achieved its purpose, facilitators agreed that the journal had in fact stimulated reflection on learning. However, they felt that as the year progressed the journal entries had become rather superficial or that students were not doing it at all because they perceived it as extra work. This activity was seen as important by the facilitators who suggested that journalling should happen during class time, in silence, and not as a homework activity. In different interviews, when students were asked about the journalling, they displayed a clear understanding of its purpose, mentioning reasons like: "developing personal communication between the learner and facilitator", "creating a personal file of learning", "cultivating insight" and "improving fluency in writing English". 14 of the 16 students interviewed indicated that they had benefited from the journalling and two indicated that they had not. Students also suggested that the journalling be brought into the classroom and even suggested that journalling be extended across the curriculum including the second, third and fourth years of study.

The evaluation of the BSG activities however, indicated that this was a problematic area of student learning. Facilitators felt that the BSGs were working well in the class but that they had failed outside the class, as an independent peer learning programme. Some of the reasons offered for this failure were: absenteeism of certain students, no mark attached to the work done in the BSGs, no checking by the facilitator to see if these

groups were in fact meeting, tasks not having a built-in reason for students to work co-operatively, a lack of facilitator feedback on the tasks and that this was a new concept for students and the institution so instant success could not be expected.

Different students, when interviewed, displayed a clear understanding of the purposes of the BSG programme, mentioning reasons such as: "improving communication with other students", "working co-operatively", "supporting each other", "sharing ideas" and "learning from each other". However, when asked whether these purposes had been achieved, ten of the 16 students felt that it had not been achieved. The reason given by most of these students was that there was not an equal level of commitment among all members in the group. Some suggestions from students about how to improve the BSGs were: that there be more facilitator involvement in this activity, that these meetings take place during class time initially, that group membership be open to changes and that the BSG tasks be of a more practical nature. These suggestions were incorporated into the BSG programme which was planned for 1996.

It can therefore be concluded that while the reflective journalling appeared to have achieved its purpose, the BSG programme of independent learning had not. There appears to be a need for a more structured and supervised approach to the BSG programme.

The issue of the future implementation of the course was also raised in the open-ended questionnaires and interviews with students. In response to the question as to whether the course should continue or not, the interviewed students were unanimous in their agreement that it should. They cited reasons such as improved English skills, improved orientation to Technikon education, increased ability in dealing with English as a medium of instruction and improved academic skills across the curriculum.

5. EVALUATION OF THE 1996 LEAP CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

A glance at the 'omit' columns in appendix 16 will show that questions 1 and 2 of the 1995 closed-ended questionnaire to students, have the highest omission rates. A number of reasons may account for this fact. These two questions were printed in a much smaller font than the rest of the questions on the questionnaire; also the five-point scale used for these two questions had numerical ratings rather than the letter ratings used for all the other questions. A numerical rating of 1-5 could be much more value-laden for students than an I-M letter rating, which may be why they were reluctant to answer these two questions. A further reason for the high omission rate for these two questions could be the fact that these questions asked students to give a blanket rating of the overall effectiveness of the teaching and course quality. Such a rating, particularly on a numerical scale, could be seen as rather daunting and even disloyal by students and this may also account for the high omission rate. In response to these observations the 1996 questionnaire (summarised and analysed in this section) had all questions printed in the same size font and placed the questions asking for overall ratings at the end of the questionnaire, when students had had a chance to evaluate the smaller aspects of the course first.

Table 6.2 (on the next page) summarises and compares the frequency distribution of the ratings on the first 38 items for both the mid-year and end-year questionnaires (see Appendix 6) distributed to students in 1996. These questionnaires have been discussed in section 7.2 of the previous chapter. The separate frequency distribution tables for the two questionnaires, with the frequency of responses to the complete four-point rating scale, can be found in Appendices 17 and 18. Table 6.2 combines the ratings of the four class groups and shows the frequency in both percentages and actual numbers of students. The ratings in response to the four-point scale on the first 38 items of the questionnaire, have been summarised as two ratings. Ratings 1 and 2 have been combined and viewed as a negative rating, while ratings 3 and 4 have been combined and viewed as a positive rating.

TABLE 6.2: 1996 MID-YEAR / END-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

MID-YEAR (N =49)

END-YEAR (N = 57)

NO.	ITEM	NEGATIVE				POSITIVE			
		MID-YEAR		END-YEAR		MID-YEAR		END-YEAR	
		%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
1	Has LEAP assisted in understanding other lectures?	0	0	7	4	95.9	47	86	49
2	Has LEAP developed self-confidence?	4.1	2	5.3	3	95.9	47	89.5	51
3	Has LEAP developed English language skills?	4.1	2	1.8	1	89.8	44	91.2	52
4	Has LEAP developed study skills?	8.2	4	17.5	10	81.6	40	75.4	43
5	Has LEAP developed group skills?	20.4	10	8.8	5	79.6	39	84.2	48
6	Was LEAP what you expected it to be?	42.8	21	35.1	20	44.9	22	49.2	28
7	Has LEAP helped in coping with other diploma subjects?	2	1	10.5	6	89.8	44	80.7	46
8	Was LEAP content interesting?	10.2	5	19.3	11	83.7	41	75.5	43
9	Did LEAP classroom activities aid student success?	6.1	3	5.3	3	83.6	41	82.5	47
10	Did LEAP teaching material aid learning?	4.1	2	8.8	5	87.8	43	85.9	49
11	Were LEAP student workbooks easy to use?	40.8	20	31.6	18	57.1	28	63.2	36
12	Were you actively learning during LEAP lessons?	14.3	7	5.3	3	77.5	38	91.2	52
13	Should students actively participate in learning?	8.1	4	0	0	83.7	41	93	53
14	Do students actively participate in other subjects?	26.5	13	8.8	5	65.3	32	80.7	46
15	Do you enjoy groupwork in LEAP classes?	22.5	11	12.3	7	77.6	38	80.7	46
16	Do you have something to offer to your LEAP classmates?	24.4	12	17.5	10	61.2	30	70.2	40
17	Do you have something to learn from your LEAP classmates?	6.1	3	10.6	5	91.9	45	84.2	48
18	Have your other subjects improved as a result of LEAP?	6.1	3	12.3	7	85.7	42	79	45
19	Did your prepare before coming to LEAP classes?	32.6	16	35.1	20	65.3	32	59.6	34
20	Did the LEAP homework help you learn?	6.1	3	22.8	13	89.7	44	73.7	42
21	Has the journal developed thinking about learning?	10.2	5	10.6	6	89.8	44	78.9	45
22	Has your BSG functioned independently?	38.7	19	38.6	22	57.1	28	52.6	30
23	Have the self-access grammar lessons developed independent learning?	20.4	10	17.6	10	75.5	37	75.5	43
24	Has your behaviour or attitudes changed as a result of LEAP?	16.3	8	12.3	7	65.3	32	68.4	39
25	Are you glad you are doing this course?	10.2	5	19.3	11	83.6	41	66.6	38
26	Does the physical environment of LEAP classes support learning?	34.7	17	17.5	10	59.2	29	70.2	40
27	Were the process by which your learning was measured fair?	10.2	5	15.8	9	87.7	43	70.1	40
28	Were the orals and written assignments useful?	2	1	3.6	2	91.8	45	92.9	53
29	Were you informed about how you would be assessed?	4	2	15.8	9	87.8	43	77.2	44
30	Has your facilitator been effective in helping you learn?	0	0	7	4	93.9	46	87.7	50
31	Are the explanations of your facilitator clear?	2	1	10.6	6	93.9	46	84.2	48
32	Is your facilitators sensitive to your needs?	6.1	3	3.6	2	89.8	44	82.4	47
33	Did your facilitator enjoy teaching?	0	0	1.8	1	85.7	42	87.7	50
34	Was your facilitator well prepared for the class?	0	0	8.8	5	91.9	45	87.7	50
35	Did your facilitator involve all students in class?	4.1	2	0	0	87.7	43	94.7	54
36	Was there a good facilitator-student relationship?	4.1	2	12.3	7	85.7	42	80.7	46
37	Did your facilitator assess/mark fairly?	4.1	2	15.8	9	81.6	40	72	41
38	Were the facilitators comments on your work useful?	2.1	1	7	4	87.6	43	87.7	50

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There is a very strong, overall positive tendency in the answers to both the mid-year and the end-year questionnaire. Of the first 38 questions on the questionnaire, 29 were answered positively by between 75% and 95% of the students. The question with the lowest positive rating was answered positively by between 45% and 49% of the students. This positive trend continued from question 39 through to question 50, which asked students what they felt was the worst thing about the course. In answer to this question, the most frequent answer was the heavy workload. However, second to that answer, was the response that there was **no** 'worst thing about the LEAP course'.

The mid-year ratings are not uniformly higher than the end-year ratings though, as was the case with the 1995 closed-ended questionnaire. These differences will be explored in the detailed analysis of the questionnaire later in this section. In the analysis following, both the mid-year and the end-year percentage ratings will be given when analysing the questionnaire. As in the previous section, the mid-year percentage will appear first and the end-year percentage will follow, in brackets.

5.1   1996 Curriculum

Question 46 asked for an overall evaluation of the LEAP curriculum. In the end-year questionnaire, 67% of the students rated the course positively (from good to excellent) and 30% rated it as fair. There were no negative ratings (poor to very poor). Questions 2 to 6 evaluated particular **objectives** of the LEAP curriculum. Question 2, which asked students to rate the impact of LEAP on the development of their self-confidence, was given a 96% (90%) positive rating. This rating, the highest positive rating on the entire questionnaire, was endorsed by written commentary on the questionnaires of different students such as: "It is a course you can pursue without feeling scared", "For the first time I was able to relax in a class without feeling scared and I was able to make friends" and "Today I can say that this course give me confidence. I will be a patriot for English learning, as this course make me feel good." The students who were interviewed frequently referred to the confidence-raising objective as well. Interestingly, the word 'free' was used by three different students in describing how the course made them feel: "It made me to feel free to speak with other people and other students and make me to

have views, my own views and keep me free to speak to the lecturer", "When I came I was afraid to speak, now I can. I am free now" and "I feel freer to communicate with other students in English, even though I'm a Xhosa speaker." All facilitators, in their interviews, also agreed that this objective had been met, with comments such as: "I think that self-confidence definitely happens. Without a shadow of a doubt, I see those students feeling a much greater sense of esteem in terms of how they use these skills they're taught. [T]he fact that they can clearly articulate, in their second language, that these are the skills I've learnt, this is where I use them and I feel better about myself as a learner" (F1).

Questions 3, 4 and 5 rated the development of the more academic skills. These ratings, 90% (91%), 82% (75%) and 80% (84%) positive respectively, were also borne out in the further commentary on the questionnaire. When asked what the "best thing about the LEAP course was" (question 49), most students referred to the acquisition of the academic skills, with comments such as: "The best thing is that we practice many things from this course. Most of the things we don't learn in our subjects, we just have to do them. LEAP teach us about these things so that we can use them also in our other courses", and from a different student: "The LEAP course has been my gradient to all subjects, for note-taking, reading, assignment writing - the different stages involved, and presentation." The facilitators felt that the skills acquisition was developed more successfully in 1996 than in 1995, when more time was spent on the personal development of students. One facilitator (F4) commented that the removal of the personal focus "gave us an opportunity to address the critical areas of assignment writing and note-taking earlier on, in a more academic context than we did in 1995, then reinforcing that immediately in term 2." He felt that there was more time to work on skills in 1996 than in 1995, resulting in better-prepared students. Another facilitator (F2), however, felt that the objective of skills development had been met in different ways for the different levels of students. He commented that the linguistically sharper students knew **of** the skills and **how** to use them by the end of the year, but that the average students knew about the skills but could not always apply them. The weaker students, on the other hand, had learnt the labels but could not even identify the skills, let alone apply them. While he acknowledged that the weakest group formed a minority

of the students, he felt that the LEAP objectives needed to be "picked up in all disciplines or else we don't meet the needs of all three levels" of students.

It can be concluded therefore that the skills acquisition process (particularly for weaker students) requires reinforcement in a variety of academic contexts before they are able to internalise, apply and transfer the skills.

Students themselves, in the interviews, indicated that their need for the acquisition of academic literacy skills was being successfully met by the LEAP course. They did allude to another need though, time management, which they felt was being complicated by the LEAP course. Seven of those students interviewed indicated that the LEAP course was "too much work" and "more work than other subjects", and that they were worried about the attention to their other subjects. In answer to question 45, 81% responded that the amount of work in the LEAP course was more than in the other major diploma subjects. When asked, in question 50, about the worst aspect of the LEAP course, the majority of the responses raised the issue of workload. Some comments from different students were: "Lots and lots of work", "More work than majors, is sort of an obstacle in my other courses", "It is demanding, a lot of work lies in the hands of students", "It has a lot of work and make us to lose attention of the other subjects", "We tend not to do work in time and it piles up, getting in the way of other courses", "We don't have enough time to practice the skills we have acquired to the other courses because of pressure" and "I think you don't consider the fact that we are not only doing English, there are also other subjects who also needs more attention". Some students expressed conflicting views on this matter. In one questionnaire, for example, the student stated that the worst thing about the LEAP course was that "because of more work, it is not possible to do other subject's work" but in the very next question made the following statement: "I say forward with the LEAP because it makes me to cope very easily to other subjects. The tasks, like assignments in other classes, we wrote them very logically".

In the interviews, when students were asked how the problem of workload might be overcome, they were reluctant for any part of the course to be removed. Even with the

two areas which were evaluated with mixed feelings, namely the journalling and the BSG's, students felt they should not be removed to reduce the workload, but rather that solutions should be sought to make these aspects more effective. Some suggestions for how the workload might be reduced were: that the present one-year LEAP course be extended over a three-year period, that some of the LEAP skills become part of the other first-year subjects and, that more of the content subjects be brought into LEAP (as was the case in unit 3).

It is clear that the workload of the LEAP course is perceived as too heavy by both the 1995 and 1996 students. This relates back to section 4.3 of this chapter, where the tightly-packed first-year curriculum of these students was discussed. Clearly this curriculum requires review.

Question 6, which received the lowest positive rating on the questionnaire as a whole, 45% (49%), evaluated the students' expectations of the LEAP course. Commentary on the questionnaires, as well as further probing in the interviews, revealed that students were expecting grammar and literature, as they had experienced at high school level. They indicated, however, that even though they were expecting something different, they were not disappointed by what they had experienced and found it very valuable. They did express the need for grammar to be included in the LEAP curriculum though. This need had arisen in the 1995 evaluation as well, and due to the poor success of the 1995 lunchtime grammar classes, a self-access grammar package had been included in the 1996 curriculum. In question 23 on the questionnaire the students gave a 76% positive rating that this self-access grammar package had developed their ability to learn independently, but in the interviews it became clear that the package had not had a significant effect on the actual language usage of the students. Students indicated that the grammar needed to be brought into the classroom, a view echoed by their facilitators: "I do think that there should be an element of grammar and that perhaps it shouldn't be the way we have it, as self-access, that there should be a more concerted effort to teach grammar" (F6) and "LEAP is not meeting basic language skills in terms of grammar and spelling and vocabulary. I think grammar needs to be included, but I have no idea how or where that would be done" (F5). F6 felt that at least 5 minutes of

every lesson could be devoted to general grammatical problems arising from the students' writing, while F5 said: "I think they definitely need it and it should be offered, but I also don't think it should be a requirement for them to pass the course."

It is clear that alternative means of addressing students' English grammar proficiency needs should be sought as the means already employed have not proved effective.

Question 8, which asked students to evaluate the LEAP **course content**, was rated positively by 84% (76%) of the students. The **course activities** received a similarly high positive rating of 84% (83%). When interviewed, most students indicated that the course was at the right level of difficulty, but that it was necessary to work hard. In their interviews, facilitators indicated that the students responded enthusiastically to the course content and activities: "I think they found it (content) very relevant. I generally felt they loved the range of activities that was there, and every lesson was a surprise package" (F1), "My group realised the value and they would say it spontaneously. They would say, you know, that 'LEAP is the only course which helps us' and I would marvel, you know. Shame, this would be the student who maybe failed an essay but still it was wonderful to think that they could still see value in it" (F6). It became apparent, from the facilitator interviews, that students with different abilities responded differently to the course content and activities, and that the spectrum of student ability was too wide for the course to meet all needs. One facilitator (F4), felt that the way he interacted with the course materials could dictate the level of difficulty and that every lecturer needed to do this in response to the needs of the particular group of students.

In 1996, two of the four class groups were streamed and two were mixed ability. When asked to evaluate the effect of this on the course content and activities, the facilitator of the weaker streamed group, (F5), had the following comments: "I found that whereas in the other classes people were finishing lessons with no problems that my class was a lot slower in getting through the work. My pace was affected and I had to get extra classes to let them catch up. They just take longer and also explaining what they have to do, is quite a task." The facilitator of the stronger streamed group, (F4), said that he could make more assumptions about the students' abilities. More drafting and rewriting could

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be done as homework as students could respond to written feedback and incorporate it by themselves. He was therefore able to teach at a faster pace and the students were better able to challenge each other, giving rise to a higher level of debate in class. Having taught a mixed ability group the previous year, he felt that the streaming had worked better because in 1995 the idea of using stronger students as group facilitators had not worked.

The two facilitators teaching the mixed ability groups in 1996 expressed negative views regarding streaming: "I'm against streaming. I think we need to develop strategies to cope with the diversity in the mainstream" (F1), yet they acknowledged that they were having problems teaching their mixed ability groups: "[S]o that I'm starting to think that a good, strong English language person with a very weak person isn't working. The weakest students ended up in a group together because the strong student who was with these two very weak students and one mediocre student, just stopped coming to class because he was not being challenged. He was so bored in that group and therefore he has special needs that were not being addressed. We often forget, that our gifted student is neglected when we address the mass of weak skills that we have" (F1).

One facilitator, (F2), when interviewed, commented that the stronger students were concerned about the repetitive element built into the LEAP course. F6 referred to "an arrogance on their (stronger students) part" and suggested that "the course should be condensed for better students. There must be some way that students like [X] and [Y] can actually do the course in a semester and that will also form some form of motivation in which they think that if I finish this course I'll have fewer subjects to do next semester. They could be encouraged to do it and then just as a little cherry on top, they don't have to do it in the second semester." In an interview with one of the content lecturers of ex-LEAP students in their second year (C3), she also referred to the negative attitude that the stronger English students displayed in her classes. She felt that this negative attitude was related to learning generally and not to language per se. These students showed poor levels of attendance and a reluctance to play a facilitating role in her classes too. On speaking to these students she discovered that "They don't really

want to be here, they want to be some place else." It appeared that most of these students were not really in the diploma course of their choice.

In an effort to gain insights into the views of these students themselves, the evaluator sought out the 16 'dropouts' across the four class groups. It was discovered that 4 of these students had left the Technikon, implying that their poor attendance was related to broader curriculum issues than simply LEAP. Of the 12 remaining students, only 7 could be tracked down by the evaluator, of whom 4 actually turned up for the interview. When the reasons for their poor attendance of the LEAP course was explored, it emerged that one student had found the course "boring", "primary schoolish" and "too easy at the beginning". He claims that he lost interest soon, was not challenged by the role of group facilitator and then stopped attending. It also emerged that he had completed a private enrichment course in academic skills during his matric year, which had covered much of what was taught in the LEAP course. Interestingly, this student, although he expressed the need to be more personally challenged, was not in favour of streaming. He felt that all students needed to be tested and that the stronger ones, while remaining part of the mixed ability group, had to be provided with more challenging work and materials.

When the other three students were interviewed, they claimed that their poor attendance was due to the fact that they were repeating students, who had experienced timetable clashes, and were unable to attend all of the LEAP sessions per week. The reasons they gave for their failure in 1995 were: lack of personal commitment, test-taking problems, irregular consultation with the lecturer and pressure of too much work. One of these students indicated that he felt pressured, in his BSG, to do all the work because he was linguistically stronger. Despite their experiences in the LEAP course, all of these students felt that the LEAP course should remain a part of the first-year curriculum and should be offered to all students.

Both streaming and the mixed ability approach appear to be problematic in different ways. An approach should be sought which effectively meets the needs of the students with both weak and strong English language proficiency levels.

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Questions 10 and 11 on the questionnaire evaluated the LEAP **instructional materials.**
In question 10, 88% (86%) of the students felt that the LEAP instructional materials had
had a positive effect on their learning. In their further commentary on the questionnaire,
students commented that the LEAP materials made the teaching more vivid and
understandable, and that it provided a good example for them to follow in their own
preparation as future teachers. The two other users of the LEAP materials (see section
7.2 of chapter 5), in their interviews, commented on their use of the LEAP materials as
teachers. T1said: "Though I did find the details and instructions very useful, just to have
there as a back-up, I didn't always stick to it, but to have that there as a back-up, I found
very useful"; while T2 said: "What I found very useful and helpful with the LEAP
material is that it gives you the opportunity to give a very structured lesson that has a
specific aim and you're always clear about that. I also find that the materials that have
been developed for each of the lessons are very well thought out, and very carefully
planned."

The LEAP materials were also reviewed by an independent panel of four Technikon
staff members who had no part in the developing or teaching of the materials. They
selected sample units from the materials and assessed them first individually, in the light
of the kinds of claims that are made for the course as a whole, and then compiled their
joint assessments in the form of a report. Some of their observations, which echo the
views expressed by T1 and T2 in the previous paragraph, are listed below:

"The most immediately impressive feature of the LEAP materials is the amount
of work that has been put into them. All the lessons are extremely detailed and
well thought out, particularly in terms of the dynamics of classroom activities
and the role of the facilitator in relation to the students. Clearly the materials are
the product of an experienced and committed team."

"Another highly positive feature of the materials is the genuine attempt that has
been made to put learning at the centre of the whole project. Great pains have
been taken to ensure that the students will be actively engaged with the materials

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throughout the course. This is reflected in detailed instructions to the facilitator on how to organise the students, particularly in terms of groupwork, and in effective management of classroom time. Although there is probably no such thing as a 'teacherproof' set of materials, every attempt has been made to ensure that the facilitators adhere to the spirit of the project (learning-centredness) in every minute of classroom time."

"A generally laudable set of aims is provided at the beginning of each lesson and this shows that the team have paid attention at each stage to the role of individual lessons in terms of the broader purpose of the course as a whole. A closer examination also reveals that the aims tend to cover the areas of skills, knowledge and attitudes, indicating once again that the course has been very broadly conceptualised. It may be however that a set of well-defined outcomes would have considerably enhanced understanding of the aims and have been an added benefit to the facilitator."

[It should be noted that the final observation made above, regarding a set of LEAP outcomes, was not entirely valid, since the LEAP materials in fact contained a full set of learning outcomes for each major curriculum area, at the start of the teacher's manual. This part of the manual had not been reviewed by the panel, who indicated in their report that only sample units from the materials had been assessed.]

It can be concluded that materials as extensive as those in the LEAP curriculum, require a comprehensive review process.

Another concern expressed by the review panel was that minor errors relating to spelling, grammar, word choice and the use of abbreviations, were detected although "not numerous enough to seriously detract from the effectiveness of the materials". They also referred to the layout of the materials which were found to be "adequate" but "not of DTP industry standard." These concerns relate back to section 3 of this chapter, where the materials development team raised similar issues.

It appears that the DTP quality of the LEAP materials is adequate given the institutional conditions under which they were developed. However, the quality could have been much improved had there been financial support from the institution for processes such as external editing, proofreading and professional DTP.

The LEAP facilitators also evaluated the materials. They found the structure and level of detail in each lesson very useful, although all of them did not follow every detail. One facilitator (F5) used the materials in this way: "I followed the lessons fairly rigidly. I use the material and I generally follow the time that is allocated and I find that in most cases you can present the material whichever way you feel comfortable with. It is still reaching the aims and objectives of the lesson. So I don't find it constraining in any way", while another (F2) felt: "It's extremely useful to have the materials, to know that you have something there to fall back on." Another facilitator (F1), who was also one of the materials developers, said: "How we packaged these essential but boring skills, was very well done, and I think all along the way, the material supported the learning. I think our students felt safe, secure and they always commented on the high level of professionalism of the staff and their preparedness, and I think that is what the materials do."

Another facilitator (F6) expressed a concern about the level of detail and the fact that all answers were provided for facilitators: "I do think that more should be expected of the facilitator as far as the preparing is concerned because what the LEAP materials do most of the time is lull you into thinking everything's there, all I need is to read over it quickly and I'll basically know. What that then does also is that it doesn't allow you to engage with the materials as effectively because if the answers are given to you then you don't have to go do it yourself, you don't have to go and engage with the text that they (the students) have been given as a comprehension. So I think that you can almost over-provide. The facilitator must be forced to do more preparation. Maybe you could provide either / or's in the manual." The LEAP review panel, in their report, also expressed a reservation about the materials being "too prescriptive and that the almost total lack of freedom for creativity on the part of the facilitators was a problem."

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The LEAP teaching materials appear to support the teaching process well. However opportunities should be created for individual facilitator input.

Another reservation expressed by the LEAP review panel was the "low degree of integration with the mainstream Education subjects which raises the question of transfer: To what extent can academic literacy be taught as a 'thing-in-itself'?" This question of transfer of skills and knowledge, previously explored in section 2 of this chapter (where the potential of LEAP to impact on mainstream teaching and learning was evaluated) as well as section 4 (where the learning processes of the 1995 LEAP students were evaluated), will be further explored in a later section of this chapter when the learning processes of the 1996 LEAP students are evaluated.

The LEAP review panel, however, were also concerned that the conscious focus of the LEAP materials on language and learning, as well as "the introduction of a fairly extensive metalanguage to students" which was an added burden to them since they were already required to learn "the extensive terminology and concepts of their mainstream subjects."

This concern emerged from two other interviews, with T1 (an 'other' user of LEAP) and E1 (a second-year English lecturer of ex-LEAP students). E1 felt that "They (the students) might sometimes be inundated with all sorts of technicalities and in the process not be as much aware of actual language usage as they ought to be. The spontaneity of the writing might fall by the wayside. The entire course might suffer from too many technicalities, such as a thesis statement and a paragraph hook." She felt that the students were being bombarded with terminology and that they should rather be shown, by way of example, that writing needed to be linked, without naming the processes. T1 felt that what he was teaching were not the examples but rather how to apply the skills. He claimed that he was using the terminology and exercises on paragraphing, in the LEAP materials, as "merely background information so that my students can write stronger paragraphs" and not as a substitute for the actual writing of paragraphs by the students.

It appears that the explicit teaching of the discourse of academic literacy to students requires careful consideration given the range of discipline-specific discourses which students have to learn in their chosen field of study.

Question 11 on the questionnaire indicated that 57% (63%) of the students felt that the LEAP student workbooks were easy to use. These workbooks, which were introduced for the first time in 1996 in response to the 1995 formative evaluation, were also evaluated by the facilitators. All facilitators evaluated the workbooks positively, with comments such as: "[T]hey (the students) really did use it. I think it was nice to have everything just there, compiled. It was a means of them keeping their things in one place. Most of my students bought books. The other facilitators' students didn't really but I do think that they did see the value of it" (F6). Another facilitator (F5) found: "Most of them haven't bought it. I think the workbook is great and that they should have it, but there needs to be a better way of getting it to them. Add R15.00 or whatever to their fees." He said that the students had money on their cards for copying, but did not have the cash. F2, who felt that the workbooks were used very well in class and liked the link between the teaching materials and the student workbook, suggested that students needed to buy one book at the beginning of the year. This was when bursaries were available, and the workbook at the start of each term was not well received by students. F4 endorsed this view as he found that many students did not buy the term 3 and term 4 workbook. This caused an added burden to the facilitator who felt obliged to bring extra copies of student material to each class session.

Facilitators had different experiences regarding how their students used the workbooks. F3 said: "They actually started to learn to look ahead and look back because it was all there. I think it was something they could refer to" and F5 said: "I think it's essential (the workbook) as well, because they've got all the things they need to do and they have an idea what to expect from the lessons, individually, because they know the aims, objectives, it's all there for them and they can see where we're going." However, F4 felt that the workbooks were not really being used as a resource by his students, who only opened them in class. He needed to make the links between the lessons and the workbook explicit.

It can be concluded that the workbooks, for the most part, achieved their purpose but that some attention needs to be paid to the matter of purchasing these books.

5.2   1996 Teaching

Question 47 on the questionnaire asked students for an overall evaluation of the LEAP teaching. In the end-year questionnaire, 81% of the students rated the teaching process positively (from good to excellent) and 14% rated it as fair. There were no negative ratings (poor to very poor). Questions 12 - 17 evaluated the teaching **methodology** specifically. Question 12, which asked students to rate how actively they were involved in their learning during the LEAP lessons, was given a 78% (91%) positive rating. This high rating was endorsed by all of the facilitatcrs, who agreed that the methodology inherent in the materials had in fact created an active learning environment in the classroom. This active learning environment was observed by the researcher during a single classroom visit to each of the facilitators' classes. In each of the lessons observed, co-operative, peer-group learning occurred for more than 50% of the class time. Students appeared comfortable with the methodology, although some groups functioned more successfully than others. For example, where there was clearly a linguistically stronger student in a group, this student tended to dominate the group discussion and take charge of the task, whereas where there was an even spread of ability, there was a greater level of equal participation.

In question 13, 84% (93%) of the students were positive that students should actively participate in their learning. This increase, in the students' 84% rating at mid-year to 93% by end-year, could be attributable to the fact that they had become more accustomed to the methodology as the year progressed.   F1, in her interview, commented on this change in students' attitude towards the methodology. She said that students initially found it "unusual and a little confusing". They needed one term to adapt, she felt, after which they found it "satisfying and truly learner-centred". Another facilitator, F2, said he could see the transfer of LEAP methodology into students' practice teaching lessons when he went to do the practical evaluation at schools.

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In question 14, 65% (81%) of the students indicated that they were actively participating in the classes of their other subjects. In their interviews, however, students expressed a concern that interactive methodologies were not widely experienced in their other subjects. One student commented that they tended to be lectured to in their content subjects: "The lecturer explains by himself about the subject matter." This view was endorsed by facilitators who felt that most of their colleagues from the content-area disciplines were not reinforcing interactive teaching methodologies. F2 mentioned that he had been questioned by his students as to why the LEAP methodology was not happening in their other classes, while F1 said: "[A]ll of last years' students who came back to me at the beginning of the year said that their classes they were doing are so uninteresting. They're just sitting and listening. They never interact, they never talk, they never sit in groups".

It appears, that while the interactive methodology promoted in the LEAP course is successfully carried out in the LEAP classes, this methodology is not being widely reinforced in the other subjects.

Another aspect of the LEAP methodology, which was evaluated in the student interviews, was the process approach to teaching and learning. All the students who were interviewed indicated that they found this approach very valuable, especially with regard to writing. This was apparent to their facilitators as well, one of whom (F4) commented that in some cases his students would hand in more drafts than required: "I had one student who went through four complete drafts before handing in his final assignment, others went through three. Not because I told them to, but because they wanted to, because they could see the comments that I was making on their assignments was relevant." Student responses to question 38 on the questionnaire would appear to corroborate this facilitator's view. Here 88% of the students, in both the mid-year and the end-year questionnaire, indicated positively that the facilitators' comments on their work were useful.

This facilitator (F4) also mentioned that eight of his students had come to him for comment on their content subject assignments. This seems to indicate that students were not receiving support for the process approach to writing from their content lecturers. Comments from students, in their interviews, support this view. Students mentioned that they were not successfully applying the process approach to writing in their other subjects because their lecturers wanted only one final copy of assignments. One student made the following comments: "Other lecturers are not the same as English lecturers. If you can do the assignment once, that is all. They (other lecturers) must apply that thing (process writing), then we can all pass at the end of the year.

The same student cited a reaction from a particular content lecturer, to the process approach: "He just said to me that if you submit this thing to me to check it, that it is the final draft. He's got no time to do that. If you hand in, that is all. You'll get that mark." This student felt that: "I do write something without knowing if it's right or wrong, as compared in English. In English, if you are writing something, if you are wrong the lecturer is going to correct you, but in other subjects if you just write, no matter you are off the topic, you just write it." One facilitator (F1) expressed the following view on the matter: "[O]ther lecturers don't do it (process approach) easily. Quite clearly I've encountered that again and again. 'I'm not a high school teacher, I'm not here to mollycoddle, to support and help my students. They're independent and they've got to take their own responsibility'."

It can thus be concluded that the process approach, especially to writing, is valued by LEAP students and facilitators. It does not appear to be widely used in the broader curriculum however.

In question 15, 78% (81%) of the students indicated that they enjoyed participating in the groupwork in the LEAP classes. This response was borne out by all the facilitators and students, in their interviews. Some of the reasons for this, given by different students, were: that it taught them to share with others, that they were able to learn from others, that they found groupwork empowering, that it brought students from different backgrounds closer together and that it promoted a better relationship between the

lecturer and students. The LEAP review panel, in their evaluation report on the LEAP materials, made the observation that "the relentlessly interactive methodology might not suit the learning styles of all students". However, no negative comments were made in the student interviews about the interactive methodology per se, rather students raised issues such as: the lack of tolerance for each others' views and the domination by linguistically stronger students.

In the student interviews, one of the reasons given for why students enjoyed the interactive methodology, was that they were able to learn from others. This was clear from question 17 on the questionnaire too, where 92% (84%) of the students felt that they had something to learn from their classmates. Question 16, however, which asked students whether they had something to offer to their classmates, received a much lower positive rating, at 61% (70%). This difference may point to a lack of belief, by students, in their own ability to positively influence the learning of their peers. This issue will be further explored under attitudes to learning in section 5.3.

Questions 30 - 38 evaluated the LEAP **teachers** specifically. As with the 1995 student questionnaires, in 1996 all the questions relating to the facilitators were given very high positive ratings consistently, for both the mid-year and the end-year questionnaires. In question 30, 94% (88%) of the students felt positive that the LEAP facilitator had been effective in helping them learn, and in question 31, 94% (84%) were positive that the explanations of the facilitator were clear. Among the many positive reasons, cited by students in their further commentary, for these high ratings (such as a willingness to help students at all times) there was only one concern raised by students from the two classes where there had been a change in facilitators during the course of the year. Students from both of the affected classes mentioned that the change in facilitator had been a disturbing factor to their learning, as a period of adjustment had been necessary. Both of the facilitators who had left mid-course, had been appointed non-permanently, on a contractual basis (as mentioned previously) and were located in the AD unit.

In question 32, where students were asked to rate their facilitators' sensitivity towards their needs, 90% (82%) responded positively. In their further commentary students

mentioned that this was the case for needs both course-related and beyond. These first-year students appeared to value greatly the support and interest of their facilitators beyond the classroom. The researcher, who observed each of the facilitators in a classroom session, provided a second evaluative source for the aspects evaluated by students in questions 30 to 36. For question 33, 86% (88%) of the students were positive that the facilitators enjoyed their teaching. This was evident from the researcher's observation too. All except one facilitator had a relaxed, informal style of teaching and appeared to be enjoying their sessions with much enthusiasm. Only one facilitator (F5) looked a little strained. This could have been due to the presence of the researcher and the fact that he had not been with the class very long at the time of the observed session. He had taken the group over from F3 not too long before. The other relieving facilitator (F6), who had taken over from F1, did not appear distracted by the presence of the researcher, but she had been with her group six months longer than F5.

For question 34, 92% (88%) of the students indicated positively that the facilitators were well prepared for their classes. This was apparent to the researcher as well in the observed sessions. This preparedness applied to both the teaching and the learning materials for all facilitators, as well as venue preparation in the case of some facilitators. In one observed lesson, although the teaching material had been carefully prepared, its effectiveness was hampered by the physical constraints in the teaching environment. The visual aid was not clear due to the poor state of the very old overhead projector and the fact that light was streaming in through the large classroom windows which had no blinds in working order. 35% (18%) of the students, in response to question 26 on the questionnaire, felt that the physical environment of the LEAP classes did not support learning. These negative responses came largely from the class group of F3 (later F5), who was forced to take their classes in a large lecture hall with fixed seating in rows. This was because there was no other available space for them at the school. In their further commentary on the questionnaire, these students mentioned that the fixed seating hampered their groupwork activities, making it difficult to communicate well. This class, when observed on two different occasions with their two facilitators, were the quietest of the four groups. They were very active but tended to communicate in whispers when in groups. The fact that they were in such a large lecture hall, where they

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filled only the first three rows leaving seven empty rows behind them, seemed to inhibit the kind of busy buzz observed in the groupwork sessions for the other three groups.

It can be concluded that the smaller classrooms, with movable tables and chairs, were more successful venues for the promotion of interactive teaching methodologies.

Question 35, which evaluated the facilitators' attempts to involve all students in class, was given an 88% (95%) positive rating by the students. The six facilitators made attempts to involve all students in the class sessions observed by the researcher. Where students were reticent to participate voluntarily, facilitators called on them by name and tried to draw each one out. In some cases facilitators responded to students' questions by seeking an answer from their fellow students first, allowing for peer explanation and greater student involvement in the lesson.

In question 36, 86% (81%) of the students indicated that they had a good relationship with their facilitator. This was clearly evident in the class sessions observed. F2 constantly displayed a sensitivity towards his students' feelings. How a classroom activity was experienced was discussed at the end of each activity, as well as the content and the learning. In his classroom there was always a balance in focussing on the students' feelings/experiences, their learning processes as they completed their tasks, and the learning outcomes required by the tasks. In the observed class session of F6, a very relaxed atmosphere prevailed, with much laughter coming from both students and the facilitator.

It appears that the LEAP teachers, both in 1995 and 1996, were well-prepared and effective in facilitating their students' learning.

The LEAP teachers, in their interviews, were asked to evaluate their personal and professional development through their contact with the LEAP course. All of them acknowledged that they had grown both professionally and personally as a result of their experience with the LEAP intervention. The facilitators referred to the enhancement of their teaching practice and the value of collaboration with colleagues.

On how LEAP enhanced his teaching, F5 had the following to say: "I've become far more confident with LEAP. I find it a lot easier to get students to do things in class, than I did before. I've used a lot of things in other places as well. It has affected my methodology in my other teaching, in the sense of, I don't lecture as much as I used to." F6 felt that: "The real learning was the confidence that I have now. Also the realising, what for me was probably a more important benefit, is that before I didn't think that teaching could be creative. Because that's what I'm going to do, is be a teacher, and the fact that it can be creative as well, just makes it so much more interesting for me. It made me feel much better about my job as teaching."

F1 said that she developed: "a greater understanding of the interdependency of activities for students and the teacher's methodology, of how materials support the chosen method and the interface with institutional policies and practices." She also referred to a "great satisfaction from the team approach". This was echoed by F3, who enjoyed the collaboration: "[It] was good. You can have these ideas and if it's only you, and if you can't bounce it off on somebody, and all it takes is like one little conversation, maybe, and it opens up everything. It doesn't normally happen, unless you sort of make time for it, it's a team thing." F2, while he enjoyed the team approach, felt that even closer liaison was needed between facilitators. Since he was only a facilitator, and not a materials developer as well, he felt that he was not as completely a team member as the other three.

The three facilitators, who were also materials developers, alluded to issues which were not raised by those who were only facilitators. F4 raised the issue of how he was personally affected by his efforts which were not valued by the institution. This came up in the interview with F1 as well, who felt: "The emotional drain when the purpose of the project is misunderstood, not valued or disregarded. The lack of informed debate around educational issues and transformation of the curriculum is very disheartening."

It can therefore be concluded that the LEAP intervention had contributed positively towards the personal and professional growth of all the facilitators. There appears to be

a need for greater institutional debate around curriculum transformation, as well as a
more supportive attitude towards such initiatives.

5.3   1996 Learning

Question 48 on the questionnaire asked students for an overall evaluation of their own
learning as a result of the LEAP course. In the end-year questionnaire, 86% of the
students indicated that they had learned a lot. There were no negative ratings in
response to this question. Questions 27-29, 37 and 44, evaluated the learning **outcomes**
specifically. These learning outcomes, as mentioned previously in chapter 5 section 5.4,
were evaluated in terms of their attainment. Since this criterion was measured using
largely quantitative measures, the analysis of the attainment of learning outcomes will
take place in chapter 7, under the summative phase. The qualitative data arising from
the above-mentioned questions on the questionnaire, as well as further qualitative data
from student and facilitator interviews, will be analysed in chapter 7 as a means of
cross-validating the quantitative data.

Questions 19-20, 24-25 and 39-41, on the questionnaire, evaluated students' **attitudes**
towards their learning. In question 24, 65% (69%) of the students were positive that
their behaviour or attitudes had changed as a result of LEAP. In their explanatory
comments on this question, most students gave the examples of increased confidence
levels and the ability to work in groups. Comments such as: "I am able to participate in
group work", "Learnt to listen to others, not to crush them when voicing their opinions"
and "to socialise with people" were made by different students regarding their group
skills. On the issue of confidence levels, different students made the following
comments: "Today I am not scared to present in the front of a class, with the help of
LEAP", "Now I am not scared to speak in group discussions", "I know how to express
my opinion to somebody", "I am more open and confident" and "I've learnt to express
myself freely and ask questions where not understand". These comments were borne out
by the responses to questions 39 and 40. When asked how they had felt about their
academic abilities on arrival at the institution, 30% indicated that they had felt

confident, 35% had felt okay, and 33% had not felt confident. However, when asked how they felt about their academic abilities at the end of the year, 54% indicated that they were confident, 39% felt okay, and only 4% did not feel confident.

In response to question 25, 84% (67%) of the students indicated that they were glad that they were doing the LEAP course. This positive attitude was borne out by the facilitators, three of whom referred directly to their attendance levels. F5 said: "One thing I find about the students in LEAP is that they are very diligent. Far more so than students I have in other schools. They come to class. My attendance is practically 100%. Work is done on time, it's done properly, always." F3 endorsed this view with: "I had great attendance. Very few that didn't show up. They always came and always seemed very eager to do everything." F1, who also commented on students' good attendance levels, felt that they were motivated too. She co.nmented on their level of participation in class and the fact that they met deadlines. F4 also reported: "100% hand-ins on all three assignments, term one orals all on schedule and 23 out of 24 students completing the term three oral."

Although 90% (74%) of the students indicated that the LEAP homework helped them to learn (question 20), only 65% (60%) of them agreed, in question 19, that they prepared before coming to LEAP classes. This issue received an even lower positive rating in the 1995 evaluation and a tentative reason has already been forwarded for this phenomenon. In 1996, however, workload was raised as a concern by students and this might account for the lower positive rating on question 19. The response to question 41, however, seems to indicate that despite the perceived heavy workload by students, 88% still feel that the LEAP course has had a significant to very significant effect on their personal development.

Students appear to be motivated and generally have a positive attitude towards their learning in the LEAP course.

Questions 1, 7, 18, 21-22 and 42-43, on the questionnaire, evaluated different learning **processes** which the LEAP students experienced. One of these learning processes was

independent learning. Although a fundamental principle underlying the course was that of co-operation, and interdependence was promoted in the teaching methodology, the need to develop independent learning skills in the students was also recognised. For this reason the BSG programme of independent learning, previously detailed in chapter three, was introduced into the LEAP curriculum. The LEAP review panel, in their report, raised a concern about the LEAP "aim of promoting inter-dependence among students, given the already high degree of dependence of many students." They state, in their report, that "[T]he promotion of independent learning, which some might argue is a more urgent priority, does not appear to have been a key consideration in the design of the course and it does not appear among the aims of the lessons looked at." This conclusion was reached by the review panel since their evaluation had not included the BSG programme of independent learning. The location of the BSG programme, outside of the classroom learning, is what gave the BSG programme its aim (developing independent learning) but was also largely what caused it to fall short of meeting its aim.

In question 43 on the questionnaire, 65% of the students indicated that the BSG programme was beneficial, while 35% felt that it was not. This ambivalence was evident in the student interviews as well. Despite their mixed feelings regarding this programme, all the students who were interviewed recommended that the programme remains in place for the following implementation year. This was the case in 1995 as well, although some changes were suggested. Some of the changes suggested in 1995 were implemented in 1996, such as, allowing the groups to regroup after the first term and integrating the content of the BSG programme more closely with the actual LEAP lessons. In 1996, the recommendation that the BSG tasks bear credit towards the final mark, was again made by interviewed students. This recommendation was not implemented in 1996 as facilitators had felt that such crediting would undermine the very aim, which was to promote independent learning through self-motivation and self-discipline.

In their interviews, all the facilitators felt that the BSG programme should remain, but that it needed to be modified. Most felt that the programme needed to operate on a

volunteer basis. F6 suggested that it be encouraged "enthusiastically and determinedly in the first quarter and then let it go", F2 and F1 felt that the whole programme needed to become part of a tutorial system, "using the supplemental instruction model of voluntary class attendance" (F1). F4 suggested that the emphasis of the BSG's should be expanded to operate more as a study group, with a reduction in the structured tasks to allow for other work to be brought in. When asked about the actual functioning of the BSG groups, most facilitators were not really sure how the groups functioned, as they had not supervised or monitored the actual sessions. They all had a sense, however, that the meetings had started out fairly well during the first term, but that it had fizzled out by the second half of the year as pressures and deadlines from other subjects became more prevalent. F5, who relieved F3 in October, stated that the BSG meetings were not happening at all for his group.

When asked whether their BSG's functioned independently, in question 22 on the questionnaire, only 57% (53%) of the students answered positively. In an effort to gain evaluative data on the actual functioning of these BSG meetings and in this way evaluate the process of independent learning taking place, the evaluator attempted to observe a sample of BSG groupings from each of the facilitators' classes. This proved to be a fruitless endeavour. Thirteen visits were made by the evaluator, over a three-week period, to groups from each of the facilitators. These visits were made at the times and venues where the groups claimed they met each week. Only three BSG groups were observed in this time, as the other 10 groups had failed to meet due to reasons such as: lack of commitment by group members, venue problems and the prioritising of other work. Of the three groups which were observed, two were from F1 and one was from F3. These three groups functioned co-operatively, coped very well with the BSG task and appeared to be very committed. They indicated that they met regularly and derived much benefit from the different views which their peers brought to the group.

The BSG programme of independent learning remains a problematic aspect of the LEAP course for various reasons. The programme does not appear to successfully meet its aim, that of creating self-motivated, self-disciplined, independent learners.

Another learning process, fundamental to the LEAP course, which was evaluated was that of metacognition. This process of reflection on learning, previously detailed in chapter three, used the dialogue journal as a vehicle for expression. In question 42 on the questionnaire, 74%of the students rated the journal reflections in the LEAP course as beneficial to very beneficial, while 25% felt that they had derived few benefits. No students indicated that they had derived no benefits at all. It emerged from the open-ended term questionnaires, that the reflective journalling had not had the same impact for all students. For example, in the open-ended questionnaire at the end of term one, one student had the following comment: "[T]he journals allowed us to think about what we were actually learning. This journal also makes me feel relaxed and gives me the opportunity to rethink the knowledge I had gained and how I was going to use it". Another student, when asked what activities were not enjoyed, responded: "To write journals. The writing of journal, I see that we go. a lot of work and even we don't have opportunity to read our books because we have a lot of work".

In their interviews the facilitators felt that the general attitude of their students towards the process of reflective journalling was positive: "[L]ooking at what they say in their journals, they definitely feel that what they're learning here, is important for their other subjects. I can see that they are thinking about and are aware of how these skills they're learning are going to help them for the next three years, not just now" (F5). There was also a sense though that "students just don't have the time to do it, but I think that what is more the problem is that they consider LEAP to be a lot of work" (F6). On the subject of how the actual journal entries were completed and the level of reflection, F1 had the following: "I don't know if it works for every single person, this reflective practice. Some pick it up straight away and they go with it and I think it's the nature of how they are". F2 felt that the questions were answered somewhat mechanically and that: "They write about learning but don't reflect on it". F4 expressed a similar concern, that students did not always "show the transfer of the learning link". F3, who had the weakest streamed group, suggested that her students did not always "understand the questions and so they would talk to each other" and then hand in very similar responses, while F1 said that the entries became more analytical and reflective as the year

progressed. Question 21 on the questionnaire revealed that 90% (79%) of the students felt positive that the journal had developed their thinking about learning.

On how the reflective objective might be better achieved, the facilitators had some suggestions. F1 suggested that the journalling "must be linked to the immediacy of the learning and for that reason we need more reflective practice in class time. Otherwise it doesn't serve a purpose, because the memory is jaded and that whole experience is far too distant". F6 endorsed this view and added: "[O]r it must be voluntary, a spontaneous wanting to write. I think it doesn't have to happen for each lesson. Maybe at the end of a series of lessons". There was also a feeling from F2 and F1 that it was essential to encourage journal writing or reflective practice in other subjects. " So if in Biology they could find a way of developing log books and yet call them journals, or in Teaching Practice which is ideal. It can be developed to a great extent if we had support from other lecturers".

Students, in their interviews, also made some recommendations. They were unanimous that it should remain a part of the course, but suggested that it happen once a week and immediately after the learning experience. All students indicated that they valued the experience, citing reasons such as "it makes me remember the LEAP work better", "I came up with my own opinions", "it helped me to have views on the subject matter of LEAP" and "it was a way of communicating with the lecturer" from different students. One student in particular raised a concern about feeling that he could not say in the journal that he did not understand, so he said it was okay, even when it was not okay. In exploring this issue a bit deeper, the interviewee revealed the following: "I'm afraid of disappointing the lecturer because he have presented this to me, now how can I say I didn't understand this?" The student indicated that while he had felt free to raise problem areas in class, while the lesson was progressing, if he had (for some reason) not raised his confusion in class, he could not afterwards raise it in the journal. Although this was an isolated concern, it does have some implications for the close student-teacher relationships which were an integral part of the LEAP philosophy.

It appears that the students value and have a positive attitude towards the reflective journalling. The actual intended learning outcome, however, may not have been completely achieved. Students tend to be engaging with their learning at a more superficial level rather than the deep level reflection intended.

The final learning process which was evaluated was that of the transfer of learning. Questions 1 and 7 on the questionnaire related to this process. In response to these two questions respectively, 96% (86%) of the students were positive that LEAP had assisted them in understanding other lectures conducted in English, and 90% (81%) were positive that LEAP had helped them cope with their other diploma subjects. In the student interviews, the reasons for these high positive responses were explored: "If any lecturer says each student must write 5 pages, we don't have the fear to write it because we know how to write it and we are free to write the essays". Other reasons offered were that they could apply skills learned in LEAP, such as mindmapping, to other subjects such as Business Economics and Didactics. Many students also referred to their writing skills, reading and research skills, referencing and bibliography, as well as an understanding of plagiarism, which they brought to their other classes. The more social skills, such as peer group functioning, the ability to express opinions and the willingness to participate in other classes, were also mentioned: "To be honest, at first I found the course very boring, but as we went on things started to get into my mind. I suddenly faced reality, that this LEAP course doesn't only help a student academically but in a great deal socially. This LEAP course teach an individual how to approach any matter. It makes a teacher a teacher". Two different students even cited learning processes which had changed for them and which they were applying elsewhere. One said: "I learned how to tackle problems", while the other said: "I don't study to memorise, I now study to understand".

In question 18 on the questionnaire, 86% (79%) of the students were positive that their other subjects had improved as a result of LEAP, and some even cited improved marks in their further commentary. The facilitators, however, were concerned that the transfer of the academic skills learned in the LEAP course was not being made automatically into the content subjects despite the structured collaboration between the LEAP

facilitators and a content lecturer in the third term of each year. All the facilitators felt that the content lecturers were not really committed to the collaborative process. F1 commented: "[O]ur missing link is the other lecturers. That purpose is not being met. If a lecturer doesn't encourage that transfer, it's not reinforced with the student." Some of the reasons given for this reticence were: a poor level of commitment to go through the whole process of collaboration, a lack of team feeling between content and language lecturers, an antagonism in content lecturers towards having to take language skills into account and a laziness or 'too busy' attitude from content lecturers.

Facilitators felt that the skills development was taking place in students but the reinforcement of the skills and the transfer of the methodology to the content classes was not happening. F2 had the following comment: "I don't think there's a very good understanding of how we prepare students and what they are being prepared for, at our school (Education). I don't think people are confident in themselves to open up to other people. We talk about co-operative learning. If we don't teach co-operatively, we can't model it to students. They perceive us as not teaching co-operatively, so what signal are we sending out?" A comment made by one of the students on the end-year questionnaire seems to endorse the view expressed by F2: "LEAP course is the best course than other subjects or courses we have here in Pentech because we are taught many things, like how to write an assignment. In other classes we are not taught that, we are just given to do it."

It can therefore be concluded that the students are applying the skills and knowledge gained in the LEAP course, to their other subjects. However it appears that there is little reinforcement of these skills, or the interactive teaching methodology, by the content lecturers teaching the first-year students at the School of Education.

6.   CONCLUSION

The unanimous feeling of students interviewed regarding the future implementation of the course was that it should definitely continue to be part of the first year curriculum. They cited reasons such as: it helped them cope with other academic subjects, it

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prepared them for their second year of study, and it prepared students from high school who did not have the skills and confidence to cope with tertiary level study. In their space for additional comments at the end of the 1996 questionnaire, some students made further suggestions regarding the future implementation of the LEAP course. Comments from three different questionnaires were: "The LEAP course is a subject or course for any person, young or old, no matter if you do Education or Engineering, it can really assist any person to become successful.", "LEAP course can be the course which is not only done in the Education department, even in other department here at Pentech. I think there are students who suffers from these skills that the LEAP course develops to us, as a result they fail their courses." and "It can remain the subject here for the rest of Peninsula Technikon. It is a subject which is useful for our learning as the students of Peninsula Technikon." Finally, in the words of the relieving facilitator (F5), who was the last facilitator to join the course in October 1996: "I think it (LEAP) should be used everywhere. A first-year, credit-bearing course in academic literacy, in every single school. Professional communication should be offered as well, but in a separate course at exit level.

The recommendations, based on the conclusions drawn from the formative phase discussed in this chapter, and the summative phase in the following chapter, will be made in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 7

THE SUMMATIVE EVALUATION PHASE

1. INTRODUCTION

Summative evaluation goals informed the final stages of the LEAP evaluation process. The summative approach to evaluation aims at providing evidence of outcomes and measures the effectiveness of the intervention after it has taken place. This approach has increasingly become a necessary aspect of the evaluation process for academic development interventions. Agar (1992:93-94), in analysing the evaluation processes for AD interventions over a period of six years, states that an eclectic evaluation strategy appears to emerge. He describes the strategy as "one which uses as wide a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data sources as possible." He further states that "[U]sing both qualitative and quantitative data and techniques of analysis and interpretation has the added effect of the one set of techniques compensating for the weaknesses of the other". It was from this perspective that the summative evaluation phase grew.

This chapter will outline the aims and scope of this summative evaluation phase, discuss the aspects identified for evaluation, explore some of the difficulties inherent in obtaining and analysing quantitative data and finally attempt to interpret the data obtained.

2. AIMS OF THE SUMMATIVE PHASE

The summative phase primarily addressed the evaluation needs of the institutional policy-makers who required objective and independent measures by which the LEAP intervention could be judged. Only with such 'evidence' available, which they regarded as more scientific than qualitative data, would they be prepared to make policy decisions around the future of the intervention. An acknowledgement of these concerns of management and an interest from participants motivated the summative evaluation of LEAP, along with factors such as a desire to cross-validate qualitative data and

quantitative data. This cross validation was considered vitally important, especially where the data was inconclusive or the means of analysing it was inherently weak.

The aim in exploring summative methods was therefore to provide the evaluation study with independent measures of outcome and then to examine these statistics in the light of the LEAP objectives. The value of this kind of statistical data is that it provides the evaluation with objective measures which then balance the more subjective nature of formative data.

3.   SCOPE OF THE SUMMATIVE PHASE

The summative phase tracked a period of five years. It included quantitative data from the two years prior to the LEAP intervention, data from the two-year implementation period, as well as data from the year after the two-year implementation period. While addressing primarily the evaluation needs of institutional management, it involved students participating in the LEAP intervention, as well as two groups of non-participating students. This was done in an attempt to provide some basis for comparison.

4.   ASPECTS EVALUATED IN THE SUMMATIVE PHASE

The summative phase focussed on the learning outcomes aspect of the LEAP intervention and examined the attainment of these outcomes, as well as the relationship between the LEAP intervention and the general academic performance of the participants. The data sources which were explored included:

- the scores representing the assessments of the LEAP learning outcomes,
- statistics representing percentage pass rates both for the LEAP intervention and other first-year courses taken by the participants,
- graduation and dropout rates for the 1995 participants, and
- the statistical analysis of an independent measure of learning outcomes for both the LEAP participants and a group of non-participants.

The above measures were used since they yielded statistical data that was available at the time of the LEAP evaluation. An evaluation of LEAP was not part of the planning when this intervention was implemented. It was something that grew out of participants' needs for constant improvement (as outlined previously in Chapter 4). Independent and objective measures of outcome were therefore not designed with a summative evaluation in mind. Instead, as the need for such measures arose, the available statistical data was explored and analysed.

5. SUMMATIVE EVALUATION METHODS

The methods employed in the summative phase were largely quantitative. Where this form of evaluation was too limited to shed light on the learning processes, it was either compensated for by drawing on available qualitative data, or the inherent weaknesses of the summative measures available at the time of the LEAP evaluation were exposed. There is a paucity of published research on the summative outcomes of AD interventions at South African tertiary institutions. This would indicate a need for AD researchers to include such measures in their evaluations. Researchers such as Agar (1992:94), who has researched this topic at a large, established university in South Africa, emphasises that a "multifaceted strategy", which includes statistical measures, needs to be applied to the evaluation of AD interventions.

In the US, where research on the outcomes of 'student success courses' (the closest equivalent to an academic literacy course such as LEAP) at 34 colleges and universities has been published in the form of a monograph, the editor (Barefoot, 1993:7) comments that "research on an intervention designed to affect human behaviour" is inherently difficult and that there is a "virtual impossibility of achieving a true experimental design". I would further argue that it is not even desirable to attempt a true experimental design in the summative evaluation of AD interventions, for the following reasons:

- There are moral and ethical implications in denying a control group the opportunity to experience the innovation being evaluated,
- There are usually deliberate attempts to control and manipulate the educational conditions, creating settings which are artificial and not truly representative of the

realities surrounding innovative educational practices,

- There are usually deliberate attempts to isolate particular variables for scrutiny, which oversimplifies the complex nature of an educational encounter and creates a limited understanding of the total effects of the range of variables at play during innovative educational practices,

- It is virtually impossible to design an unbiased, independent measure of educational outcomes which satisfies the educational experiences of both the experimental and control groups. This weakness is inherent in the design of such a measure though, and does not necessarily reflect on the value of the method.

Since the LEAP intervention was not initiated with an evaluation study in mind, an attempt was made to balance the internal and external validity of the evaluation, yet reflect the existing conditions realistically.

5.1 Assessment of LEAP learning outcomes

The attainment of LEAP learning outcomes was monitored through regular, individual assessments of all students throughout the year. The assessment instruments used across the year were three class tests, three written assignment tasks, three oral presentations and a cumulative journal writing mark. The detailed table of scores representing the outcomes of these assessments for the 1996 participants can be found in Appendix 19. A summary of the statistics arising from Appendix 19 can be found in table 7.1 on the next page.

The minimum figure of nought, in the table 7.1, indicates that the statistics include students who had initially registered for the course but cancelled before the first assessment took place. Students such as these (there were six such cases in 1996, numbers 1, 4, 8, 18, 49, 94), are included in the official institutional statistics even though they had not completed the course. Although these six cases would cause the overall statistics (such as the pass rate, the mean and the minimum) to appear lower, they were not removed from the calculations since such cases are generally included in the institutional statistics. In order to accurately compare LEAP to other first year

subjects taken by LEAP participants (see section 5.2 of this chapter) it was necessary to include these cancellations in the calculations.

TABLE 7.1 : SUMMARY OF FINAL RESULTS FOR LEAP 1996

Mean	52.94
Standard Error	*1.48*
Median	56.05
Mode	0
Standard Deviation	14.56
Variance	211.93
Kurtosis	5.30
Skewness	-2.23
Range	73.2
Minimum	0
Maximum	73.2
Sum	5135.42
Count	97
Confidence Level (0.950000)	2.90
No. less than 50%	15
Pass Rate	84.54

Despite the inclusion of the six cancellations, the LEAP 1996 participants achieved a pass rate of 84.54% (excluding the cancellations and repeats it rises to 87.34%), with a mean score of 53% (excluding the cancellations and repeats it rises to 57%). These figures indicate that the LEAP learning outcomes were successfully attained. Further summative evidence of the successful attainment of LEAP learning outcomes was provided by the statistics arising from a t-test. This t-test compared the scores obtained in the term 1 LEAP test, with the final mark. The results of the t-test are summarised in table 7.2 on the next page.

TABLE 7.2 : COMPARISON OF LEAP TEST 1 SCORES AND LEAP FINAL MARK

LEAP Test 1 **Mean**	47.39
LEAP Final Mark **Mean**	52.94
Multiple R	0.31
R Square	*0.09*
Adjusted R Square	*0.08*
Standard Error	*13.97*
Observations	97

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

	Df	*Sum of Squares*	*Mean Square*	*F*	*Significance F*
Regression	1	1912.97	1912.97	9.8	0.0023
Residual	95	18550.58	195.27		
Total	*96*	*20463.54*			

	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*T Statistic*	*P-value*	*Lower 95.00%*	*Upper 95.00%*
Intercept	40.53	4.18	9.70	6.66	32.23	48.82
x1	0.26	0.08	3.13	0.0023	0.095	0.42

The statistics indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the population who wrote the first LEAP test and the population who attained the final mark. The significant improvement from the first term test to the final mark at the end of the 1996 year provides further summative evidence of the attainment of LEAP learning outcomes by the participants.

The assessment instruments used and the marking were moderated by an outside course moderator who was neither a developer nor a teacher on the programme. In all her moderator's reports she expressed a satisfaction with the standard of marking, with comments such as "[E]xaminers marked carefully, giving students

comments/indications that will help them to learn from the exercise" in response to the moderation of one of the three tests, "[T]he assignment was carefully and fairly marked by all examiners, and extensive commentaries were provided to help students focus on their strengths and weaknesses" in response to the moderation of one of the three written assignments, and "[M]ost evaluators were applying virtually identical standards" in response to the moderation of one of the three oral assessments. All examiners used the same detailed assessment criteria, which varied for different kinds of assessments.

In the 1996 questionnaire to students (see Table 6.2 in chapter 6), 70% of the students indicated that the process by which their learning was measured was fair, and 72% indicated that the facilitator had assessed fairly. In response to the question, "Were the orals and written assignments useful?", 93% of the students indicated that they were. However, although students found the written assignments and orals valuable, Appendix 19 shows that for these two types of assessments, students showed little improvement in their scores across the year. This was revealed in the facilitator interviews as well, where F6 referred to the fact that students were still failing their essays despite huge improvements which were not reflected in the marks. These improvements were apparent in the drafting process: "I still had to fail someone like X even though the improvement was so great. She sometimes gave drafts to me that I couldn't give a mark to because it would be too demoralising. Then I'd rather say, 'write me another draft and I'll give you a mark for that'. Then she would give me a final draft where I could understand what she was saying, you know, maybe it wasn't the most mindboggling argument but she was engaging in it."

F1 attributed the apparently slow development in students' writing to "the fact that our students don't come from traditions of writing things down and therefore the whole development of literacy is slower and it has a different value." While the summative scores in Appendix 19 do not seem to reflect the real improvements in student writing, the test scores indicate that most of the students showed consistent improvement across the three tests. Table 7.3 (overleaf), which compares the average scores for each of the LEAP 1996 assessments, clearly demonstrates how the test averages rise from test 1 through to test 3. This could be attributed to the fact that students come from a

TABLE 7.3:   COMPARISON OF AVERAGE SCORES FOR LEAP 1996
              ASSESSMENTS
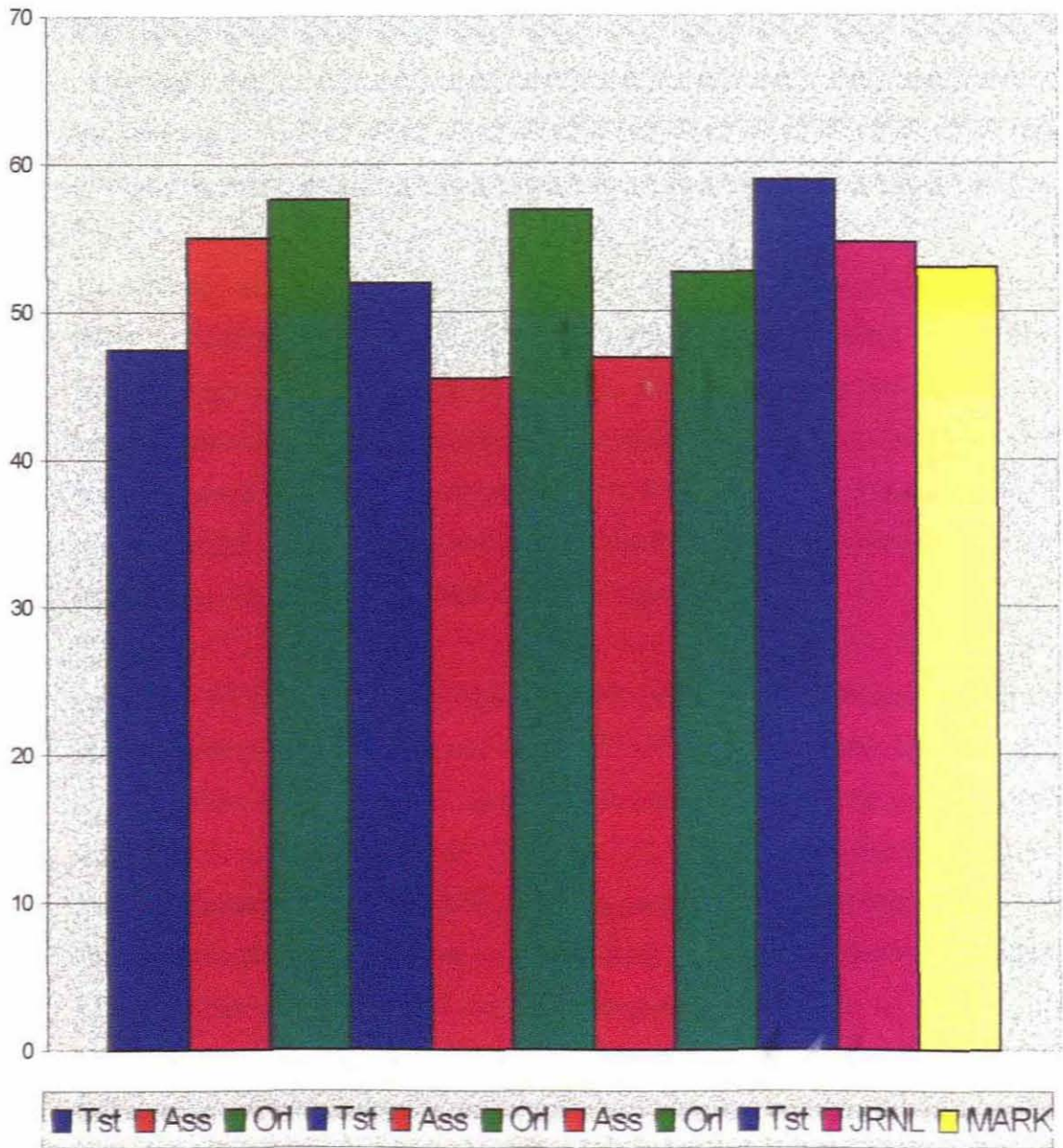
schooling system where tests are the dominant form of assessment, and one with which students are very familiar and comfortable. Despite the test improvement levels evident in Table 7.3, students found the LEAP method of testing quite difficult. This was evident during classroom observation by the evaluator. During this classroom session students of F2 were articulating their difficulties with LEAP tests. They indicated that they were not used to applying their learning in a test situation. They wanted the "scope of the test", that is, a list of content that they could rote learn. They appeared confused and worried when they could not concretise their learning in this way. They indicated that it made them feel unprepared and insecure in their own knowledge and ability.

The students were clearly unfamiliar not only with the process approach to learning and skills application, but also with how one *prepares* for an assessment where learning is tested in this way and how to *demonstrate* their learning in the actual test. They indicated that they found the questions tricky and it appeared that they were unsure of how to answer because they had no handy model answer to plug in. The moderator commented on this in her interview as well. She felt that although the tests were fair, the students did not always understand what was expected of them.

Appendix 19 shows that 82 of the 97 LEAP participants successfully completed the course in one year. This figure was endorsed by F1 in her interview when she said, "the purpose of the LEAP course, to assist students with entry level skills as they come into a technikon, is definitely achieved." However, F2 was concerned that both students and other staff members had unrealistic expectations of a one-year academic literacy course. He indicated that both students and other staff had the idea that on completing the LEAP course students would be fully competent in the use of English and the application of academic skills. He felt that there was a general lack of understanding on the campus of how language and academic skills are developed. He also felt that mainstream staff members were reluctant to integrate academic literacy skills into their curricula, a factor which hampered the transfer of these skills.

In response to question 44 on the 1996 questionnaire, "[H]ow does the level of difficulty of the LEAP course compare to the level of difficulty of your other major

diploma subjects?", 23% of the students responded that it was easier, 44% responded that it was at the same level of difficulty, and 28% responded that it was more difficult. Both the moderator and F2 raised this issue in their interviews. The moderator said, "If the course is geared to students who have been identified as not having good language skills, then I would say that some of this (course content) was too difficult, but if it's part of a curriculum, where we want to maintain standards, then it would be quite acceptable."

Both the moderator and F2 felt that there was a tension between the reaching of the required standards of a credit-bearing course (which LEAP was), and the meeting of student needs in a developmental course (which LEAP claimed to be). The rationale underpinning a bridging course is that you start at the students' level and tailor the course to the students' needs. If the course is credit-bearing, the outcomes are already determined, regardless of the students' level at the start. In the face of this dilemma the moderator felt that it would be more appropriate for a bridging course, such as LEAP, to be non credit-bearing and focussed on student need. F2 mentioned that the very goal of an academic literacy course, making it easier for students to cope with the academic demands of tertiary level study, could be undermined by institutional standards, "How can something that they're struggling to do, help them to do something else better?" He felt that the course needed to start at students' level, and through a developmental process of grading and scaffolding, they needed to be taken to the institutional standard.

Both viewpoints present further dilemmas. If academic literacy courses were non credit-bearing, the voluntary nature would adversely affect student motivation which would in turn have a negative impact on learning and attendance. This was clearly illustrated in chapter three, section 5.2. Also, if such courses focussed entirely on student need, their levels would constantly need to change from one class group to another and from year to year.

Attempting to meet both institutional standards and student need through grading and scaffolding creates a dilemma regarding the transfer of learning. If the LEAP course, for example, started at the level of students' need, and they experienced early success in

applying a skill in the LEAP course, they might be more confident about transferring the skill to another learning context. However, if course developers simplified initial texts and tasks in order to meet the needs of incoming students and boost their confidence levels, they might be conveying a false impression of what students could expect in their other courses. In so doing, students might start off with a view that the course was a 'mickey-mouse' one, and not take it very seriously. Question 44 on the LEAP questionnaire, however, clearly illustrated that the majority of the respondents did not have this perception.

5.2   Comparison of percentage pass rates

Official institutional statistics were used to compare the percentage pass rates for the LEAP course (previously called English A), over the five-year period 1993-1997, with the percentage pass rates for four other first-year subjects also offered at the School of Education across those years, namely, Economics, Business Economics, Accounting and Didactics. These figures are tabulated in table 7.4. It should be noted, however, that the LEAP course was first introduced into the curriculum in 1995, as a reinterpretation of the old English A course. The figures for the years 1993 and 1994, therefore, represent the old English A course and not the LEAP course. The figures for 1995 and 1996 represent the LEAP course evaluated in this study, while the 1997 figures represent a condensed version of the LEAP course. In 1997 the course was offered with one-third less contact time per week.

The student composition for the various courses across each particular year did vary slightly, with some courses drawing larger student numbers than others. However, there was a high degree of overlap, as all students were required to complete the subjects English and Didactics, while most of them registered for Economics. Generally students exercised a choice between Accounting and Business Economics, so these two subjects drew two different sets of students.

In analysing this quantitative data, some inherent weaknesses need to highlighted. The statistics alone provide the reader with no information on the student profile for each

year, which could have a significant impact on the percentage pass rates. These statistics also lack information on the nature of the teaching in each of these subjects, as well as the standards for the assessments making up the percentage pass rates. All of these factors have the potential to significantly affect percentage pass rates. The reliability of the statistics is a factor for consideration as well. The IT (Information Technology) staff members who provided the researcher with these official institutional statistics, themselves expressed reservations about its accuracy and validity. They mentioned, however, that the institution was in the process of upgrading its IT systems and equipment.

This scenario is not unique to the institution in question, and while researchers are encouraged to explore such information, they are advised to analyse it with caution. Where possible, statistics of this nature should be supplemented with further data, preferably of the qualitative kind. This view is endorsed by evaluation theorists such as House (1980), who was previously quoted in chapter 5 section 5.4. Researchers are also advised to be on the alert regarding subject codes and the actual curricula they represent. These are some of the problems the researcher encountered while gathering the quantitative data provided in the table. The subject codes punched into the IT system, representing the same curriculum, would sometimes change from year to year. In some cases the same curriculum would have two different codes for the same group of students. Also, in one instance the researcher found that one subject code had been used for two different curricula. In cases like these, the IT system pass rates would not accurately represent the particular curriculum being researched and further calculation would be necessary.

In Table 7.4 on the following page, two sets of percentage pass rates have been provided for each subject, as well as the actual numbers of students representing the percentage pass rates in each case. The first percentage (including cancellations) is what appears on the official institutional records. This figure includes students who have cancelled their registration for that particular subject, and who have in effect not completed the course. The second percentage (excluding cancellations) is based on the achievements of students who have completed the courses in question. I would argue

that the second percentage is a more accurate reflection of attainment of learning outcomes.

TABLE 7.4 : COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE PASS RATES 1993 – 1997

(In. = Including cancellations, Ex. = Excluding cancellation)

	ENGLISH A (LEAP)		ECONOMICS		BUSINESS ECONOMICS		ACCOUNTING		DIDACTICS	
	In.	Ex.	In.	Ex.	In.	Ex.	In.	Ex.	In.	Ex.
1993	85.5% n=124	88.3% n=120	73.5% n=113	79.0% n=105	83.9% n=112	89.5% n=105	62.6% n=131	65.1% n=126	87.9% n=116	91.9% n=111
1994	83.7% n=98	84.5% n=97	65.4% n=78	68.9% n=74	86% n=86	88.1% n=84	54.7% n=64	64.8% n=54	61.2% n=103	61.8% n=102
1995	74.6% n=173	80.6% n=160	44.2% n=113	46.3% n=108	77.1% n=118	79.8% n=114	32.4% n=68	42.3% n=52	62.18% n=185	64.6% n=178
1996	84.5% n=97	87.3% n=79	87.5% n=48	91.3% n=46	75.9% n=54	80.4% n=51	37.5% n=32	48% n=25	38.1% n=118	39.8% n=113
1997	71.7% n=92	91.7% n=72	47.7% n=65	48.4% n=64	59.4% n=64	64.4% n=59	71% n=31	73.3% n=30	92.1% n=101	94.9% n=98

The table clearly shows that when the cancellations have been excluded, the percentage pass rate rises. Where there have been large numbers of cancellations, for example English A 1997, the inclusion of these cancellations significantly influences the percentage pass rate. In the case of a subject like English, where students have a choice of three languages at registration, there are many cancellations as students become aware of their choices. In many cases these cancellations represent students who have never participated in the course for which they originally registered and the cancellation could have occurred as early as the first week of the academic year. Including such cases in calculating the end-of-year percentage pass rates gives an inaccurate reflection of the achievements of the group of students who in fact completed the course.

Figure 7.1 on the following page provides a visual comparison of the percentage pass rates excluding the cancellations, for each of the five subjects across the five years. With the exception of the subject Didactics, there appears to be an overall downward trend in pass rates from 1993 to 1995. This could reflect the shifting student population.

As discussed previously in chapter 4, section 2.3, the student profile shifted to a progressively weaker one, academically, from 1993 to 1995. Viewed in isolation, there appears to be 3.9% drop in the English pass rate when LEAP was introduced in 1995. However, with the exception of Didactics again, when compared to the other subjects this drop is the smallest one from 1994 to 1995. The drop in pass rate for the other subjects ranges from 8.3% to 22.6%.

There is a general improvement in pass rates in 1996, except for Didactics, which drops

FIGURE 7.1: COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE PASS RATES 1993 - 1997 (excluding cancellations)
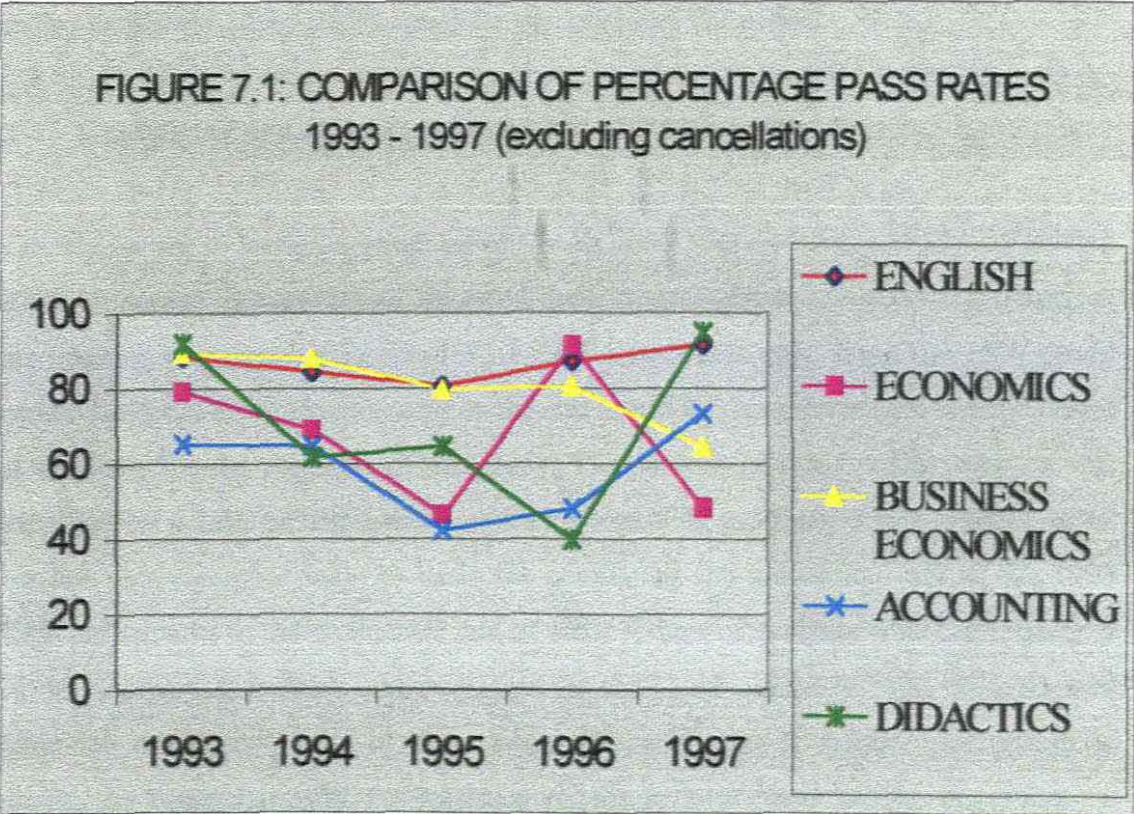
by 24.8%. For 1997 there appears to be no trend, with some pass rates (such as Didactics) rising dramatically, and others (such as Economics) dropping dramatically. Further investigation into the subject Didactics, which seemed to demonstrate atypical trends, revealed that although the teachers remained fairly constant across the five years, there had been a process of recurriculation in 1995 which changed the nature of the curriculum, as well as the forms of assessment, quite markedly.

It is clear that the statistics representing pass rates, because they do not reflect issues

such as the nature of the student population, the quality of the teaching or the standards of assessments making up the pass rate, present problems when it comes to interpretation. Researchers should draw definitive conclusions with caution from such statistical data, due to the limitations discussed earlier in this section. Mindful of these limitations, the statistical data from this section shows that the pass rates for all the subjects showed a decline over the period 1993 to 1995. However, the steady improvement in the LEAP course pass rates (implemented 1995 to 1997), surpasses that of any of the other subjects. The LEAP course is also the only one with a pass rate that remains within the 80% - 100% range for the 1995 to 1997 period.

5.3   Graduation and dropout rates for 1995 LEAP participants

In an endeavour to track the progress of the students who had successfully completed the LEAP course, the researcher followed their progress from first-year to graduation. This tracking was possible for the 1995 LEAP participants only, since the 1996 group would be eligible for graduation only at the end of 1998. This information was therefore not available for the purposes of this study. The success of this tracking venture was bedevilled by a lack of institutional statistics regarding graduation and dropout rates. This left the researcher with no basis for comparing the graduation rate of the 1995 LEAP participants to the graduation rate of other groups of students who had registered in 1995. Of the 152 students who registered for the LEAP course in 1995, 72 graduated within the minimum period of three years. However, the IT system was unable to provide the researcher with the statistics regarding how many of the remaining 80 students had in fact dropped out completely and how many were still in the process of completing their studies.

The available institutional statistics regarding graduation and registration rates for 1996 revealed the following: the School of Education registered 9.8% of the total Technikon intake of students for that year, and capped 17.2% of the total Technikon graduates. These statistics, however, do not provide any basis for comparing the LEAP 1996 statistics given above.

A scrutiny of the School of Education statistics for the subject English (offered over a three-year period), provided some means of tracking the English language progress of the 1995 and 1996 LEAP students. A comparison of the English (LEAP) percentage pass rates for the two LEAP groups in their first year of study to the percentage pass rates for their English courses in 1997 reveals the following:

TABLE 7.5: COMPARISON OF ENGLISH PERCENTAGE PASS RATES FOR LEAP PARTICIPANTS

	LEAP (English A) % Pass rate	English B % Pass rate	English C % Pass rate
1995 LEAP participants	80.6%	Not available	95.1%
1996 LEAP participants	87.3%	90.6%	Course still in progress

Although all the information was not available, it is clear from the above table that the English pass rates for both the LEAP 1996 and 1995 groups had risen as the students progressed to their second and third year of study respectively. The 1996 LEAP group, who displayed a pass rate of 87.3% for English in their first year, had improved their English pass rate by 3.3% by the time they had completed their second year of study. Since they were still engaged in completing their third year of study at the time of this research, the pass rate for English C was not available.

The 1995 LEAP group improved their English pass rate by 14.5% by the time they had completed English C. The pass rate for English B was unavailable for this group of LEAP participants. This was because the institutional statistic for the English B pass rate in 1996 included a group of students who had not participated in the LEAP course. However, from the 14.5% improvement by the time they had completed English C, one could infer that they would have shown a steady rate of improvement over the three-year period. The statistical data from this section shows that the LEAP participants continued to succeed and improve in their English courses as they progressed to their second and third years of study.

5.4   Independent measure of learning outcomes

In an attempt to provide a basis for comparing the attainment of LEAP learning outcomes, the pre and post-test model of evaluation, using both experimental and control groups, was employed. The limitations of this scientific model for educational evaluation has been well documented in the literature. Prabhu (1987:8) lists some of the major problems with such experimentation in language teaching. Of the problems he raises, the one most pertinent to the evaluation of LEAP is that "there is, ultimately, no way of attributing, with any certainty, any specific piece of learning to any specific teaching: (language) learning can take place independently of teaching intentions and it is impossible to tell what has been learnt because of some teaching, and what in spite of it." Brumfit (1984:21) also argues that there is little sense in treating teaching "as if it can be prescribed as a result of experimentation." Ericson and Ellett (1982:506) take this argument even further by stating: "[I]n educational research, as in education as a whole, good judgement should be seen as the prized intellectual capacity. Good judgement will not yield certainty, but it can yield interpretations and analyses far more acute and powerful than even the most skilful application of the empiricist 'scientific method'".

With a keen awareness of the limitations of the scientific method, and guided by the arguments against true experimental design (presented in section 5 earlier in this chapter), the LEAP evaluation proceeded in the following manner. The purpose of this phase of the evaluation was to assess, using an independent measure, whether there was any significant difference in terms of the attainment of learning outcomes, between the 1996 LEAP participants and their peers who had completed the usual communication course offered to two other academic departments at the institution. The most immediate problem which presented itself was that of experimental control and validity.

The evaluation design regarded a sample of 1996 LEAP participants as the 'experimental' group and two different samples of Technikon first-year students who had completed the usual communication course as the 'control' groups. Since the LEAP course was offered to all first-year students at the School of Education, it was not

possible to establish a control group of Education students. The control groups used were therefore not being denied the LEAP intervention, they were simply the only first-year groups at the institution who were being exposed to a different one-year experience in English. Students were not randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups, instead all students from the relevant groups were invited to complete the post-test. The samples finally included in the statistical analysis, consisted of those students who had completed the pre and the post-test, both of which tested the level of English language proficiency. No attempt was made to isolate particular variables for scrutiny. However, in the interests of internal validity, the experimental and one of the control group samples were matched, as far as possible, in terms of home language, rural/urban origin and pre-test scores. These three variables were singled out for matching since they impacted most directly on level of English proficiency. Trends in institutional English proficiency testing prior to the summative evaluation had shown that English first language speakers had a distinct advantage over Afrikaans first language speakers, who in turn had a distinct advantage over African first language speakers. Also, urban students generally had an advantage over their rural counterparts. The second control group was an unmatched sample since too few students had participated, to allow for a matching exercise.

To avoid test content bias, since the experimental and control groups were following different syllabi and experiencing different teaching methods, the independent measure used was not devised by the evaluator. Instead the existing institutional English proficiency test, which all first-year students had written at the start of the academic year, was used. This test focussed on areas common to the syllabi of both the experimental and control group. It should be noted, however, that while this test favoured neither the experimental nor the control groups, it was not necessarily the best measure of attainment of learning outcomes for either of the groups. This is a dilemma that will always face an evaluator attempting to apply the scientific method to educational innovation. With particular reference to the evaluation of AD interventions, however, there seems to be a need to investigate the best quantitative measure of English academic skills development.

An equivalent post-test was devised by the same researcher who had devised the pre-test, and this test was administered to both the experimental and control groups at the end of the academic year. The research purpose of the post-test was made explicit to both the experimental and control group, with the researcher addressing all groups personally at the start of proceedings. It was expected that student motivation levels would be lower for the writing of the post-test than they had been for the writing of the pre-test. This was because the pre-test had been written as part of the orientation programme, when students were new, highly motivated and not pressurised by their academic studies. The post-test, however, was of necessity scheduled at the end of the academic year, a time when students were very pressurised by their final examinations and not keen to give of their time for assessments which were not contributing towards their final academic credits. In an effort to secure reasonable attendance at the writing of the post-test, and to motivate the participants to complete the assessment to the best of their ability, all groups were offered prizes as incentives for the greatest degree of improvement, regardless of the level of their initial pre-test scores.

Both the pre-test and post-test were designed "to target the various linguistic competencies that were considered to be relevant to academic performance."... "The test was divided into three sections. The first section, the reading test, was a multiple choice test with the focus on text comprehension and lexical understanding."... "The second section required the students to produce a written summary of a piece of text that they had read."... "The third section required students to produce a composition on a current social issue"(excerpts from 1996 Report on English proficiency at Peninsula Technikon).

To ensure that the reading passages were equivalent in terms of their level of difficulty, the passages for the post-test were taken from the same source as those in the pre-test. In the case of reading passage one (for both the pre and post-test), the source was a 3000 word level, intermediate EFL (English as a foreign language) text. In the case of reading passage two (for both tests), the source was a newspaper article (See Appendices 20 and 21 for copies of the pre-test and post-test respectively). Equivalent types of questions were set on the reading passages for the post-test.

Both the pre-test and post-test was assessed according to the same assessment criteria. However, while the post-test was assessed by only one marker, the pre-test was assessed by a range of markers. This was because the pre-test was an institutional instrument which had been administered to 1383 first-year students, and marked by various language lecturers. To avoid marker subjectivity, it was decided to include only the section A (multiple choice section) scores in the statistical analysis, since this section was assessed objectively. It is important to note though, that this section tested only reading skills and text comprehension. Writing skills, which makes up the bulk of what is taught in the LEAP course, were not tested in the multiple choice section. Despite this, the results of a statistical correlation between the section A scores obtained by LEAP 1996 students on the pre-test, and the first test mark obtained by the LEAP 1996 students, indicated that there was a strong linear correlation (0.7530) between the two. The linear correlation between the section A scores obtained by students from the control group, and the first test mark obtained by them for their communication course, was also strong (0.7866).

The section A (multiple choice) pre-test and post-test scores, for the experimental group and both control groups, were statistically analysed using a t-test. The results of the t-test appear in table 7.6 on the next page.

The results of the t-test were inconclusive, as both the experimental and control groups showed no significant improvement in their post-test scores at the end of the first year of study. The experimental group was statistically the same sample as before, while the control groups both showed deterioration. In the case of the unmatched sample, the deterioration was greater than for the matched sample.

The results, although inconclusive, might suggest that the LEAP course had been a more effective intervention than the usual Communication course taken by the other students. However, the fact that both the experimental and control groups showed no significant improvement, even though they had been exposed to a full year of academic tuition, raises some concerns.

TABLE 7.6: RESULTS OF T-TEST (Paired Two-Sample for Means)

	Experimental group (LEAP 1996)		Control Group 1 (Matched sample)		Control Group 2 (Unmatched sample)	
	Variable 1	Variable 2	Variable 1	Variable 2	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	57.96	54.64	69.11	64.51	68.62	59.38
Variance	211.39	206.11	234.92	257.82	127.24	218.15
Observations	47	47	47	47	45	45
Pearson Correlation	0.57		0.72		0.51	
Pooled Variance	202.39		246.37		172.69	
Hypothesised Mean Diff.	0.00		0.00		0.00	
Df	45		46		44	
T	1.74		2.69		4.68	
P(T<=t) One-tail	0.04		0.00		0.00	
T Critical One-tail	1.68		1.68		1.68	
P(T<=t) Two-tail	0.09		0.01		0.00	
T Critical Two-tail	2.01		2.01		2.02	

It could be concluded that the common confounding variable, for all groups of students, was motivation. The poor attendance at the second sitting of the post-test (control group 2) seemed to indicate this, as well as students' general attitude during the writing of the post-test. Despite the efforts to motivate students with prizes as incentives, they were clearly not very motivated to participate to the best of their ability and many finished the test well before the allocated time. A very different scenario was witnessed when the pre-test was written at the start of the year. Attendance was not a problem because students completed the pre-test as one of their orientation activities. Students appeared eager to do well and most groups used all their allocated time to complete the test.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while researchers should be aware that quantitative measures distort our understandings of reality, neither these measures nor the stakeholders calling for them can be ignored. When all the quantitative data presented in this chapter is pooled, a consistent pattern of benefit seems to emerge. All the summative data, such as the LEAP test scores, the LEAP throughput figures, the LEAP pass rates and the independent measure of outcome, show that the LEAP participants have benefitted as a result of their participation. However, the outcome of the LEAP summative evaluation seems to suggest that quantitative measures should be used circumspectly when evaluating educational innovation. Attempts at rigour often create other confounding variables. Researchers should display their awaieness of these inherent limitations at the start of the evaluation and reflect on the kinds of quantitative data that can be used.

The evaluation instruments should also be planned and carefully designed before the intervention is implemented so that the summative data generated is justifiably measuring the desired outcomes. The appropriate qualitative data should then be obtained to inform and complement the quantitative data.

In the summative evaluation of LEAP, no attempt was made to control or manipulate conditions. Rather, the intervention was evaluated within the existing conditions and the researcher attempted to show how the existing conditions impacted on the apparent success or failure of aspects of the intervention. While there is benefit in reflecting reality in this way, the weakness lies in using existing measures which may not justifiably measure the desired outcomes. Evaluators need to take cognisance of this tension before embarking on an evaluation study.

The final chapter makes broad recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from both the formative and summative phases of the evaluation. Areas for further research are also explored.

CHAPTER 8

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

1.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter makes recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data emerging from the formative and summative phases. The evaluation process will also be reflected on and areas for further research will be discussed. The recommendations are presented within the conceptual framework of the evaluation model in chapter 2. The model not only provided the conceptual framework for the recommendations, but also for the entire evaluation process. It enabled the evaluator to approach the evaluation in a structured and coherent manner, and facilitated the writing up and dissemination of the findings and conclusions.

Stage 1, locating LEAP within the context and policy framework of its operation, engaged the evaluator in a deeper understanding of the institutional context, as well as the policies and practices that shape it. It ensured a close scrutiny of the range of contextual factors both constraining and enabling the LEAP intervention. It also provided a space, early on in the evaluation process, for reflection on the macro issues impacting on the intervention. This reflection provided insights that informed the direction of the evaluation, and brought about a keener understanding of the micro issues, relating to the LEAP intervention itself.

The second stage of the model, determining the goals of the evaluation, brought into sharp focus the evaluation needs of the respective audiences and the best methods to satisfy these disparate needs. It was a stage that flowed logically from a scrutiny of the context and one that prepared the ground for the third stage, where the principal stakeholders were identified. The process of identifying stakeholders ensured that the evaluator considered and reflected their varying interests in the LEAP intervention, in the kinds of evaluative questions underpinning the enquiry.

The following three stages, not rigidly sequential but rather each informing the other, highlighted the need for LEAP aspects which were evaluated to be congruent with the criteria for evaluation and the best sources of this evaluative information.

The final cycle in the model, especially stage 7, which required the evaluator to revisit the goals of the evaluation, was particularly crucial in the LEAP evaluation. The LEAP evaluation had been motivated by formative goals at the outset, and this revisiting of the goals at stage 7 drew the evaluator's attention to the evaluation needs of the broader audience of policy-makers and the best evaluation methods to meet their needs. Although it was difficult to design the kinds of instruments that would best generate the data needed to measure the outcomes at this stage in the evaluation process, it did result in a more balanced evaluation which could speak to the disparate needs of the various audiences.

2.   EVALUATION IMPLICATIONS

Three substantive themes emerge from the evaluation findings and conclusions drawn in chapters six and seven. These themes relate to:
- curriculum restructuring,
- reviewing of teaching and learning processes, and
- the use of quantitative data.

2.1   Recommendations for curriculum restructuring

Clearly a major restructuring of the Technikon curriculum is required. At present the national Technikon curricula do not make provision for academic literacy courses such as LEAP. A submission at national level, for the inclusion of an academic literacy course within the mainstream Technikon curriculum, would need to be made. This would enable such a course to enjoy state subsidy, and to be offered as a credit-bearing diploma subject.

However, there is a tension between maintaining the academic standards of a credit-

bearing course and meeting the bridging needs of an inadequately prepared student population. This tension emerged in the summative evaluation of LEAP, which attempted to use a credit-bearing course for bridging purposes. The tension could be resolved by introducing a foundation or bridging year into the Technikon curriculum. Such a bridging year would address the needs of those students whose secondary schooling had inadequately prepared them for tertiary education, while at the same time provide them with an opportunity to build credits which would enable them to gain entry into a particular field of study. This is essential for maintaining a motivated population of learners but it has particular implications for the academic literacy course. To serve both the credit-bearing function as well as the bridging function, the course would need to integrate content and concepts relevant to the particular field of study that a student has chosen, rather than be of a generic nature. This in turn has implications for staff training in curriculum design and the development of materials for the teaching of academic literacy skills.

Such a course would require a process of curriculum and materials development, as well as some form of induction for lecturers, as academic literacy courses are not presently part of the Technikon curriculum. This process would include the training of and continued liaison with staff members who are teaching the course. Alternatively autonomously qualified staff could be employed to teach such courses.

Besides being relevant to a particular field of study, the materials would also need to be adapted according to the bridging needs of the particular student population it was serving. In the case of the LEAP course, grammar might need to be integrated for a linguistically weaker student population, while more challenging reading passages might need to be added for a more proficient student population.

Formative evaluation data revealed a lack of understanding among non-participating staff members about the purpose of an academic literacy curriculum, such as LEAP. There also appears to be a poor understanding, among both staff and students, of how academic literacy skills are developed, of how adults learn a second language, and that it is a lengthy process which needs nurturing. Both LEAP students and non-participating

staff members had the unrealistic expectation that competence in English could be achieved in a 70-hour, one-year academic literacy course such as LEAP. This lack of understanding about how language and academic skills are developed needs to be addressed. A course such as LEAP should include discussions on the nature of second language acquisition and development in adults. Such discussions should take place at the start of the course so that students have realistic expectations of the process.

Staff members' misconceptions also need to be addressed. This calls for a staff development initiative through which lecturers could be made aware of the complexities of second language acquisition. Lecturers need to understand the links between language use and the subjects they teach so that they are enabled to modify their curricula and teaching to meet the needs of their students. Staff members also need to be equipped with the necessary skills to bring about appropriate changes to their curricula and teaching strategies. This has implications for materials development.

Curriculum and materials development need to become mainstream, institution-funded functions, rather than the externally-funded AD functions that they presently are. Institutions need to create conditions, such as the necessary time, training, funding and implementation opportunities, to enable lecturers to do materials development. Mainstream teaching loads will have to be adjusted to allow for staff capacity-building and the actual processes involved in materials development.

Ongoing liaison and support for staff needs to be built into the implementation phase of the materials development process. Implementation needs to be sustained and nurtured by the institution, for example, through the creation of staff support groups for those lecturers who share courses. Special provision should be made for new staff members, who should be introduced to curriculum and materials development in a staff orientation programme. Institutional understandings of what the processes of curriculum transformation and materials development entail, should also be clarified through institution-wide debate and discussion. A more supportive attitude towards curriculum transformation initiatives is required from the institutional academic community.

The summative phase evaluated the LEAP learning outcomes and their attainment. The assessment scores and course statistics revealed that the LEAP outcomes were successfully attained. However, of the three types of assessment (tests, orals and written assignments), students showed consistent improvement in the tests but not in the other two forms of assessment. It appears that further refinement and reinforcement of students' speaking and writing skills needs to take place in the second-year curriculum. This would apply equally to the further refinement and reinforcement of students' use of English. By the end of the first year students were not displaying competent use of the English language. In addition to this, the formative evaluation revealed a perception that the LEAP course workload was too heavy.

All of this implies that an academic literacy course, such as LEAP, should be extended over a two-year period. In this way the simpler academic skills could be covered in the first year, with more time for practice and application, while the more complex academic skills could be covered in the second year, when students have already been exposed to a year of study at the institution. However, the tightly-packed first-year curriculum of all students also requires some attention. The negative effects of this jamming at entry level could be avoided by allowing students more time for independent learning and research. This can be achieved by using classroom time for activities other than information transmission, and employing more effective delivery modes, such as those which actively engage the learners. Ideally an extended curriculum should be introduced.

The need to address the English grammar proficiency of students, beyond simply the first year of study, emerged from the formative evaluation of LEAP as well. As the present Technikon curriculum (besides one or two national diplomas) does not make provision for the formal teaching of language beyond the first year of study, and because students display wide-ranging levels of competency in this area, it is suggested that a competency-based model for language learning be introduced to address this need.

Self-access language learning resource centres, such as those used around the world at

tertiary institutions with a large intake of ESL (English Second Language) students, could be established at Technikons to serve this need. Such resource centres, if equipped with developmental language learning programmes, could combine self-access, computer-based learning with small group facilitation and remediation. Students would need to be evaluated at the start of each academic year to establish their level of competency and then placed at the correct programme level. The resource centre could then serve students for the duration of their studies, depending on their competency levels. The use of such a resource could be extended beyond the confines of the institution, in an outreach venture to address English competency needs at pre-entry level through liaison with secondary schools and local community organisations.

2.2   Recommendations for the reviewing of teaching and learning processes

The formative evaluation of LEAP revealed that while interactive teaching methodologies were being successfully carried out in the LEAP classes, this methodology was not being reinforced in the other subjects that students took. This has implications for the institution as a whole, as well as the tertiary education context, where transmission-based delivery modes prevail. What is needed is a paradigm shift for those teachers, students, institutional management and administrators who continue to see education as a commodity and who depend on the transmission of information as a means for educating. Such stakeholders, according to Lenox and Walker (1992), need to accept the fluidity of instruction and shift their instructional emphasis from the acquisition of a product to the execution of a dynamic process. Institutional management and administrators, who allocate and design educational resources, need to do so with this paradigm as a guiding vision. The introduction of an accredited course in teaching and learning for tertiary academics, especially those who teach in content-based disciplines, could assist in bringing about the paradigm shift. Teachers need to be trained and encouraged to incorporate interactive methodologies in their teaching and students need to become active participants in their learning.

The formative data also revealed that students were not displaying the transfer of their learning to other contexts. Students need to be taught explicitly to transfer their

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learning. The academic literacy skills they have learned require further opportunities for application in the other subjects which students take, through the integration of these skills into those programmes and co-operative teaching among all the lecturers who teach the first year students.

Closer ties need to be forged between an academic literacy course such as LEAP and the mainstream content subjects in a diploma, so that the academic literacy skills are reinforced in these content subjects. The collaboration should be structured by establishing links with particular courses rather than through arbitrary liaison with particular lecturers. The skills and content of the syllabi of such content subjects and the academic literacy course should be synchronised, and collaboration on at least one major research project, in each content subject, should take place.

The integration of academic literacy skills across the institutional curriculum requires co-operation from a range of institutional stakeholders. Partnerships need to be established between academics with pedagogical expertise, discipline-specific expertise and those with expertise in the acquisition of academic literacy skills. Such teams could drive curriculum innovations that promote academic literacy. Institutional management should promote a vision of collaboration and play a significant role in influencing policies and attitudes that foster the integration of academic literacy skills across the curriculum. An institution-wide needs analysis should be conducted with regard to staff capacity in academic literacy skills. Staff developers should provide opportunities (for example workshops) for the teaching staff to build their capacity for integrating academic literacy skills into their curricula. Such opportunities should be followed by continued liaison with interested staff through the implementation phase.

Formative evaluation findings revealed that another strategy promoted in the LEAP course, the process approach to writing and its assessment, does not appear to enjoy wide support in the broader curriculum. Staff in all academic departments should be encouraged to give students written feedback on all written tasks that are assessed, as well as opportunities to revisit, correct and re-submit their written tasks in response to written feedback on drafts. Staff should also build a credit into the overall mark for the

written task, for the drafting, revising and editing stages in the writing process. Students also need to be enabled to adopt the process approach to writing for all their written tasks. To achieve this all students would require basic training in the use of a word processing package, need to be logged in to the computer network of a particular department and require access to a computer facility with adequate printing facilities.

The explicit teaching of the discourse of academic literacy was raised as a concern in the formative evaluation. To overcome this an academic literacy course, such as LEAP, should place emphasis on the *application* of the academic literacy skills, rather than the *naming* of these skills. While such terminology could be used to exemplify the various skills, students should not be encouraged to learn these labels, but rather to apply the underlying skills to their various learning contexts.

2.3   Recommendations for the use of quantitative data

Evaluators should use official institutional statistics, such as percentage pass rates, with caution. Where such statistics are used and compared, they need to be supported by information about the nature of the student profiles they represent, as well as the nature of the teaching in each course and the standards for assessments making up the statistics. The summative evaluation also revealed that the reliability of the institutional statistics was questionable. This raises the need for a thorough upgrading of the Information Technology (IT) systems and equipment at the institution. Such an upgrading could also improve the kinds of statistical data which can be made available to researchers for purposes of comparison. Institution-wide statistics on graduation and dropout rates over a period of time were not available at the time of this study, due to the shortcomings of the IT systems and equipment.

When using independent measures of learning outcomes, evaluators are cautioned to design instruments with care. This emerged from the summative evaluation. When experimental as well as control groups are used, the instrument should adequately measure the learning outcomes for both groups. Where the educational experiences of the two groups is very diverse with little overlap, the instrument should be expanded to

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encompass both sets of outcomes. Special attention should also be paid to variables that may have a direct impact on the outcomes being measured. Where possible these should be matched in the control and experimental groups, so that they are equivalent. Where the pre-test and post-test model is used, equivalence should be built into the design of these instruments.

3.   THE ILLUMINATIVE GOAL

Chapter two, which described the evaluation model, suggested that evaluators of AD interventions should consider formative, summative and illuminative goals when planning an evaluation framework. In chapter four, where the LEAP evaluation goals were discussed, the importance of all of these three approaches was outlined. Although the LEAP evaluation included the three approaches, only the formative and summative approaches are reflected in this thesis, as an exploration of the illuminative data would have been beyond the scope of the study. Although a discussion of the illuminative phase of the evaluation has been omitted in this particular study, its importance in the evaluation of innovative educational interventions cannot be overemphasised. It is this goal that engages the institution in debates around the innovation and in this way develops shared understandings which can then inform policy decisions relating to the innovation.

This phase in the evaluation process would address the evaluation needs of the broad academic community at the institution and provide an opportunity for debate and discussion on the intervention. This need emerged clearly in the formative and summative data discussed in the previous two chapters, and it would be from a preliminary analysis of this data that the illuminative phase would grow. The aspects of the LEAP intervention which could have been evaluated in this phase of the process are the understandings and attitudes of the academic community towards the intervention. The sources to be consulted would have been all stakeholders previously mentioned in the formative phase, as well as institutional management and a range of institutional and state policy documents regarding institutional transformation. Qualitative methods would be used during this phase, with unstructured interviews, open discussions,

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personal observation and the analysis of documentation predominating. The method of analysis best suited to disclosing understandings and underlying attitudes would be discourse analysis. This is because this method analyses beyond simply *what* is said, by looking also at *how* it is said, what is left unsaid, as well as the context within which it is said. The challenge to the evaluator would be to find ways of ensuring that the different views of the various data sources were not only expressed but also heard by each other (Everitt:1995).

4.   REFLECTIONS OF AN EVALUATOR

This section of the chapter will briefly explore some of the strengths and weaknesses of this multi-faceted, three-year evaluation process. This exploration is based on my reflections as an evaluator, while the evaluation was proceeding.

One of the areas of weakness became apparent when the student questionnaires were being analysed. Anomalies in the answers to some of the questions suggest that not all students understood these questions. This raises the need to facilitate the filling in of formative questionnaires when one is dealing with an ESL student population. Although the use of simple wording and accessible language was taken into consideration when designing the instruments, some students clearly still had difficulty. It appears as though further explanation of questions may have been needed for these students or they need to have been given the opportunity to ask for clarification. While encoding the questionnaires and summarising the data, I had access to a wealth of detailed formative data of direct relevance to the facilitators. Since this level of detail is what is lost in summarising and analysing, it became apparent to me that facilitators would have benefited directly by encoding and summarising this data themselves, something which is usually done by the evaluator.

Another area of weakness emerged from the student interviews and this was also related to the fact that the majority of the students were second language speakers of English. During the interviews students had great difficulty expressing themselves when answering open-ended questions. This was evident in the long pauses before they

ventured an answer, and the many sighs after the question had been put to them. Even when the meaning of the question had been explained and clarified by the interviewer, (sometimes questions were rephrased three or four times), some of them still had difficulty answering. The students appeared to have difficulty with reflecting on their experiences and the interviewer had to draw students out to get them to expand on a point or to give examples to illustrate a point they had made. Often the answers given were monosyllabic and much prompting was needed. It is clear that interviews are vital to support and better understand the data emerging from fixed rating questionnaires. However, with an ESL student population enough time should be allowed for the interviews and they should take place in a relaxing, non-threatening environment.

The interviews served a counselling purpose too, and this emerged as an area of strength in the evaluation but potentially an area of weakness too. Because students often expressed some of the problems they were personally experiencing with regard to their learning, the interviews were used as an opportunity to give students advice. For example, where students felt overwhelmed by their studies generally, coping skills were discussed. Students were also encouraged to speak to their facilitators about the areas of difficulty regarding the LEAP course. One student was counselled about the purpose of the journal and encouraged to use it not only for reflection but also to dialogue with the facilitator about difficulties he was experiencing with some of his learning. While the use of an internal evaluator (familiar with the course, the nature of the student population and the institutional context) appears to have enriched the interviews, it raises the difficulties inherent in the dual roles of participant and researcher. Evaluators should remain conscious of this tension and the lack of critical distance it can engender.

Another area of strength was the cross-pollination of ideas from one interview into another. This happened frequently in the interviews with staff members. For example, when interviewing a facilitator who referred to the benefits of language lecturers collaborating with content lecturers, I was able to make reference to the perspective of a content lecturer whom I had interviewed previously. I was also able to test one interviewee's views against those of others whom I interviewed later. This gave me the opportunity to make cross references. The advantages of this cross-pollination of ideas

would be most apparent in the illuminative phase of the evaluation, which has not been included in this study. Because the purpose of this phase is to develop shared understandings, to clarify misunderstandings and to ensure that the different views of the various data sources are heard by each other, interviews would become the vehicle for the achieving this purpose. For example, misunderstandings regarding the nature of second language acquisition could be explored and clarified during interviews and different views regarding the locus of responsibility for language development could be carried from one interview to another and be debated.

As the results of the LEAP evaluation became available, this information was used to inform transformation that was taking place in the broader curriculum as well as teaching and learning processes at that particular time. For example, while LEAP was being formatively evaluated in terms of its potential to impact on the mainstream curriculum, the actual three-year English curriculum at the School of Education was being transformed into a two-year curriculum. The LEAP evaluation could therefore inform this process and the interviews with staff provided an opportunity to assist in this re-curriculation process. Many of the decisions made during this re-curriculation process were based on the results of the formative evaluation of LEAP, for example, which aspects of the LEAP course should remain in the first year, which aspects of the second year curriculum should filter down into the LEAP course.

The fact that many of the LEAP participants had multi-faceted experiences of the intervention, strengthened the evaluation greatly. In the LEAP evaluation one of the participants was a curriculum developer, a facilitator and a trainer. Another participant was simultaneously a LEAP facilitator and a lecturer to ex-LEAP students who were in their second year of study. The course moderator for LEAP was also a lecturer to ex-LEAP students who were in their second year of study, and one of the LEAP facilitators was also a teacher of another model of the LEAP course being taught in the Science curriculum. The multi-faceted experiences that these people brought to the evaluation generated a deeper level of reflection and enhanced the quality of the data, which in turn led to a deeper level of analysis.

The LEAP model of intervention (a stand-alone academic literacy course, compulsory and credit-bearing for all first-year students in a particular field) ensures that student needs in the first year are targeted but it does not ensure a more radical transformation at the levels of teaching and curriculum in the first year. Although the course has built into its content and methodology a process of collaboration with content lecturers and the transfer of student learning across the curriculum through reflection, these measures remain limited means for effecting real change in the teaching and curriculum beyond the LEAP course.

In the case of the LEAP intervention change in the mainstream curriculum and transfer of student learning was not demonstrated. The key to transformation at these levels lies in a commitment from mainstream lecturers to reinforcing academic literacy skills through adapting their approaches to teaching, as well as integrating academic literacy skills through the recurriculation of the courses they teach. Without this level of commitment, the broader curriculum and existing teaching practices militate against the success of such a model of intervention. Given the Peninsula Technikon context an integrated model would better serve the purposes of the LEAP intervention. Such a model would focus on the integration of academic literacy and English language skills into existing mainstream courses across the curriculum, rather than insulating change in one area as a stand-alone intervention tends to do.

5. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Academic literacy courses, such as LEAP, do not exist at most South African tertiary institutions. This is so even though the need is very clearly illustrated through poor retention and high attrition rates, as well as the legacy of inadequate primary and secondary schooling plaguing our present and future generation of tertiary students and lecturers. Current research in South Africa should focus on establishing reliable statistics on where such courses are presently being taught at South African tertiary institutions. This research should also investigate how exactly these academic literacy courses fit into the first-year curriculum, as well as the student needs they are targeting and their measures of success. Where such courses are not being taught, research should

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focus on areas of need among the first-year student populations across tertiary institutions and standardised diagnostic tools should be developed.

On the basis of the results of such diagnostic testing, curricula and materials should be developed to meet the needs of first-year students. Such work should be co-ordinated countrywide and enjoy state funding as it is a significant step towards redressing the inadequacies of our schooling system.

Issues around the implementation of such interventions require extensive research as well. The model best suited to the needs of our system of higher education should be investigated. One would have to look at various options such as:

- a foundation year preceding a particular course of study,
- a credit-bearing course forming part of the first-year of study,
- the integration and incorporation of such an intervention into the existing courses which are offered in the first-year curriculum,

to name but a few options.

Another important area of research would be an exploration into the best measures of success for such interventions. These measures would need to take into account the multi-faceted goals of an intervention such as LEAP. Evaluators would be challenged to design instruments which would measure outcomes which are not easily quantifiable, such as the social skills listed in Appendix 2. The effective evaluation of interventions of this nature would play a vital role regarding future implementation countrywide and state funding of such interventions.

Finally, the area of training programmes for potential instructors of such interventions requires research. Since interventions around student success are a relatively new phenomenon in South African higher education, it is unrealistic to expect that our lecturers are adequately prepared to teach, or incorporate into their teaching, such interventions. Comprehensive staff training programmes are needed to maintain first-year interventions. Research should focus on the developing and implementing of such

training programmes which should precede the implementation of interventions targeting student needs.

6. CONCLUSION

The challenges confronting South African higher education for a generation to come and the research opportunities presented by these challenges are vast in scope and complexity. What is to be learned from the international community of educators in higher education is that success in dealing with these challenges is built on commitment and team effort. No sector in higher education is able to face the enormity of the task individually and have an impact. A co-ordinated effort from students, academic and administrative staff, institutional management, the education ministry and central government is required. Commitment is called for in the form of personal sacrifice on the part of individual educators and students alike, but also in the form of economic commitment to the funding of such interventions on the part of management, the ministry and the state, as well as their constant commitment and support throughout the research and implementation phases. Without this we may all find ourselves accountable to history for our failure to intervene and successfully re-shape higher education in this country.

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APPENDICES

A STUDENT WHO HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE AND COGNITION COURSE WILL BE ABLE TO???

MAJOR CURRICULUM AREAS	LEARNING OUTCOMES					
LISTENING	to develop the ability to concentrate	to actively co-operate with a speaker	to interpret oral instructions	to gain information from radio & T.V.	develop interpersonal skills	to respond to ideas in group discussion
SPEAKING	talk about self	participate in small group discussion	project voice	ask questions	speak informally to clarify thinking	formulate answers
READING	read with a purpose	identifying the structure of a text	speed reading techniques	read critically	become familiar with different kinds of material	academic reading (literacy)
WRITING	to identify reader	free writing	to formulate pre-plan	to design writing plan	to draft document	to revise document
THINKING SKILLS	assimilation	think creatively	identifying patterns/trends	abstract thinking	identifying bias	reason critically
DEVELOP THE SELF	to create self awareness	to develop self esteem	to build self confidence	to develop self discipline	to foster self reliance	to accept self responsibility
STUDY SKILLS	teach group skills for peer group learning	develop healthy learning practices	to reflect on learning	to memorize	highlight important points	find relevant sources
PRACTICAL APPLICATION	contextualization	present an argument	make a formal public presentation	make an impromptu presentation	conduct an interview	chair meetings
INDEPENDENT LEARNING						
LANGUAGE CONSCIOUSNESS						

to be able to give feedback in an oral situation	to identify main ideas in lectures	to listen critically to any speaker				
speak fluently	give instructions	express ideas on the subject concerned	lead a discussion	summarize a group discussion		
co-operative reading						
to proof-read document	to write "final" draft	presentation of a written text	academic writing	report writing		
solve problems	reflection	conceptual organization				
to enhance self motivation	to foster self determination	to achieve self actualization				
plan time	set study objectives	take notes	make notes	to classify components	to analyze information	
to apply acquired skills to specific discipline	use peer learning support system	debating	critically understand the subject matter	basic research – information gathering	to use lang. skills for improvement of personal and social skills	

LEAP COURSE CONTENT BY SKILLS

READING SKILLS	WRITING SKILLS

PREVIEWING
    -text structure
 	
SKIMMING
    -overview
 	
SCANNING
    -specific information
 	
INTENSIVE
    -reading with a purpose
 	
DICTIONARY USE
 	
LIBRARY USE:
    -orientation
    -function
 	
ACCESSING SOURCES
 	
ACKNOWLEDGING SOURCES
 	
COMPREHENSION:
    -instructions
    -types of texts
    -interpreting graphic representations
      -basic visual literacy
 	
CRITICAL READING:
    -writer's purpose
    -fact and opinion
    -bias
 	
TEXT DEVELOPMENT:
    -extracting main/ supporting ideas
    -distinguishing principles from examples
    -connecting devices
    -text cohesion
      -time links
      -compare/contrast
      -expressing reasons
      -cause/effect
      -add/restate information
      -give examples
	NOTE TAKING/MAKING:
	    -paraphrasing
	    -referencing
	
	JOURNAL WRITING
	
	PREWRITING:
	    -brainstorming
	    -free writing
	    -identify purpose
	    -personal
	    -academic
	    -identify audience
	    -register
	
	DRAFTING:
	    -planning (mindmapping)
	    -sentence construction
	    -sentence types
	    -word order
	    -sentence length
	    -common errors
	      -paragraph construction
	    -topic sentences
	    -supporting detail
	    -connectors
	    -text development
	    -linking paragraphs
	    -introductory/concluding paragraphs
	    -logical development
	
	REVISING
	    -evaluating purpose
	    -evaluating text
	    -cohesion, clarity, conciseness
	
	EDITING
	    -proofreading for:
	      -grammatical correctness
	      -spelling
	      -punctuation

LEAP COURSE CONTENT BY SKILLS

READING SKILLS	WRITING SKILLS

READING SKILLS

PREVIEWING
- text structure

SKIMMING
- overview

SCANNING
- specific information

INTENSIVE
- reading with a purpose

DICTIONARY USE

LIBRARY USE:
- orientation
- function

ACCESSING SOURCES

ACKNOWLEDGING SOURCES

COMPREHENSION:
- instructions
- types of texts
- interpreting graphic representations
  - basic visual literacy

CRITICAL READING:
- writer's purpose
- fact and opinion
- bias

TEXT DEVELOPMENT:
- extracting main/ supporting ideas
- distinguishing principles from examples
- connecting devices
- text cohesion
  - time links
  - compare/contrast
  - expressing reasons
  - cause/effect
  - add/restate information
  - give examples

WRITING SKILLS

NOTE TAKING/MAKING:
- paraphrasing
- referencing

JOURNAL WRITING

PREWRITING:
- brainstorming
- free writing
- identify purpose
- personal
- academic
- identify audience
- register

DRAFTING:
- planning (mindmapping)
- sentence construction
- sentence types
- word order
- sentence length
- common errors
  - paragraph construction
- topic sentences
- supporting detail
- connectors
- text development
- linking paragraphs
- introductory/concluding paragraphs
- logical development

REVISING
- evaluating purpose
- evaluating text
- cohesion, clarity, conciseness

EDITING
- proofreading for:
  - grammatical correctness
  - spelling
  - punctuation

LISTENING SKILLS	SPEAKING SKILLS
ACTIVE LISTENING (CONCENTRATION)	VOICE PROJECTION
NON-VERBAL AWARENESS: -emphasis. pause. pitch. tone	READING ALOUD
INTERPRETING/FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS	ASKING QUESTIONS
	ANSWERING QUESTIONS

EXTRACTING:
    - main ideas
    -relevant information
	EXPRESSING OPINIONS, IDEAS

FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS	GIVING INSTRUCTIONS
SUMMARISING	INFORMAL DISCUSSION: -paired or group
CRITICAL LISTENING	REPORTING : -summarising discussion
	FORMAL PRESENTATION
	PRONUNCIATION

THINKING SKILLS	SOCIAL SKILLS

ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE:
    -remembering previously learned information
    - describing,labelling,identifying,naming
    - stating,locating,listing,defining,outlining
 	
COMPREHENDING:
    -data gathering from relevant sources
     -understanding information
    -distinguishing, predicting
    -summarising
        -rephrasing/rewriting
    -extracting main ideas
 	
APPLYING KNOWLEDGE:
 	
    -problem solving/creative thinking
    -inferring changing,discovering,relating
    -showing, using, modifying, demonstrating
ABSTRACTING
    -concept attainment
    -understanding abstract concepts
    -applying in a variety of settings
 	
ANALYSING (INDUCTIVE/DEDUCTIVE)
    -planning (structure)
    -organising
    -breaking down/selecting components
    -classifying components,
    -categorising,
    -prioritising
    -analysing tasks
    -defining problems
    -hypothesising
SYNTHESISING (INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)
    -compiling,describing, illustrating
    -explaining showing relationships
EVALUATING (MAKING JUDGMENTS)
    -judging, comparing,contrasting
    -justifying, drawing conclusions
 	
REFLECTING (THINKING ABOUT LEARNING)
	NON-VERBAL
	    -eye contact
	    -gesture
	    -posture
	    -facial expression
	    -use of space
	
	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
	    -creating self awareness
	    -developing self esteem
	    -building confidence
	    -enhancing motivation
	    -fostering self-reliance
	
	INTERPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
	    -greetings
	    -expressing opinions
	    -accepting other views
	    -asking for clarification
	
	CO-OPERATIVE GROUP SKILLS
	    -team building
	    -creating interdependence
	    -building trust
	    -sharing
	    -enhancing group dynamics (praiser/encourager)
	    -practising group roles
	        -facilitator
	        -recorder
	        -timekeeper
	        -reporter

LEARNING IN ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

STRUCTURE

This course is structured so that each unit builds on the knowledge and skills developed in the previous unit. The activities, tasks and content are also graded in complexity, becoming academically more demanding in successive units. The objectives of each of the units are outlined below.

OBJECTIVES

* A one-year course
* 3 units; each of 20 hours, 1 unit of 10 hours, a total of 70 hours

UNIT 1   20 hours

* To facilitate students' socialisation within the Technikon community
* To introduce practical research skills
* To assist students' orientation to the Technikon environment

UNIT 2   20 hours

* To develop basic academic skills such as reading, notemaking, and assignment writing
* To practise library research

UNIT 3   20 hours

* To transfer academic skills into content subjects
* To refine skills for the process of researching and writing an academic assignment

UNIT 4   10 hours

* To refine study skills and examination techniques
* To evaluate the programme

1.	Were the goals/aims and objectives of the course clear?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
2.	Did the course help you acquire confidence in communicating in English?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
3.	Did the course help to improve your grammar and vocabulary?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
4.	Could you use what you learned here in other courses?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
5.	Did you see any improvement in your assignments and tests in your other courses?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
6.	How would you rate the amount of information you received in this course?	too much 1 2 3 4 5 too little
7.	How would you rate the level of this course?	too difficult 1 2 3 4 5 too easy
8.	Were the activities in class helpful?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
9.	How would you rate the teacher's preparation for classes?	absolutely thorough 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
10.	Were the teacher's explanations clear?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
11.	Were the lessons interesting?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
12.	Was the teacher sensitive to the needs/interests of the students?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
13.	Was your motivation/ commitment affected by having to do this course in your free time?	increased interest 1 2 3 4 5 lost interest
14.	Would you recommend this course to others?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
15.	Do you think this course should be offered for credit?	definitely 1 2 3 4 5 not at all
16.	What do you like best about the course? *(Write your answer below)*	
17.	What do you dislike most about the course? *(Write your answer below)*	
18.	Can you suggest any changes/improvements to the course? *(Write your answer below)*	

SIDE 1 INSTRUCTOR AND COURSE EVALUATION SYSTEM ■ ■

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

FOR: GERM

See Side 2 for directions. Use pencil only on this side.

For Items	Respond
I –	
J –	
K –	
L –	
M –	

1. Class Status
- ○ Fresh
- ○ Soph
- ○ Junior
- ○ Senior
- ○ Grad
- ○ Other

2. When registering, what was your opinion about the Instructor / Course (Negative / No opinion / Positive)

3. This course was
- ○ Specifically required
- ○ Required but a choice among several
- ○ An elective

4. Course in
- ○ Major
- ○ Minor
- ○ Other

5. Sex
- ○ Male
- ○ Female

00– 16

6. Expected Grade
Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ

CODES FOR ITEM USE

C Campus Comparison
D Department Comparison
S Student Publication
I Instructor Feedback

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

	A	B
	①	①
	②	②
	③	③
	④	④
	⑤	⑤

Items 1 and 2 use a common scale

#	Question	Code	Left	Scale	Right
1.	RATE THE INSTRUCTOR'S OVERALL TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS.	C	Exceptionally High	⑤④③②①	Exceptionally Low
2.	RATE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THIS COURSE.	C		⑤④③②①	
3.	WAS THERE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ANNOUNCED COURSE OBJECTIVES AND WHAT WAS TAUGHT?	D	STRONG AGREEMENT	①②③④⑤	NO AGREEMENT
4.	HOW WOULD YOU RATE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS USED IN THIS COURSE?	D	EXCELLENT	①②③④⑤	POOR
5.	WERE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS RETURNED PROMPTLY?	D	YES, ALWAYS	①②③④⑤	NO, ALMOST NEVER
6.	DID THE INSTRUCTOR SET TOO HIGH/LOW GRADING STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS?	D	TOO HIGH	①②③④⑤	TOO LOW
7.	THE INSTRUCTOR EVALUATED MY WORK IN A MEANINGFUL AND CONSCIENTIOUS MANNER.	D	STRONGLY AGREE	①②③④⑤	STRONGLY DISAGREE
8.	I HAVE BECOME MORE COMPETENT IN THIS AREA DUE TO THIS COURSE.	D	TO A GREAT EXTENT	①②③④⑤	NOT AT ALL
9.	DID THIS COURSE INCREASE YOUR INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT MATTER?	D	YES, GREATLY	①②③④⑤	NO, NOT MUCH
10.	I PREPARED BEFORE COMING TO CLASS.	D	ALWAYS	①②③④⑤	NEVER
11.	THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH STUDENT PARTICIPATION FOR THIS TYPE OF COURSE.	D	STRONGLY AGREE	①②③④⑤	STRONGLY DISAGREE
12.	DID THE INSTRUCTOR SEEM TO ENJOY TEACHING?	D	YES, VERY MUCH	①②③④⑤	NO, ENJOYED IT LITTLE
13.	HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE INSTRUCTOR'S ABILITY TO EXPLAIN?	D	EXCELLENT	①②③④⑤	VERY POOR
14.	THE INSTRUCTOR SEEMED WELL PREPARED FOR CLASSES.	D	YES, ALWAYS	①②③④⑤	NO, SELDOM
15.	THE INSTRUCTOR SEEMED TO SENSE WHEN STUDENTS DID NOT UNDERSTAND.	D	STRONGLY AGREE	①②③④⑤	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16.	THE INSTRUCTOR ATTEMPTED TO INVOLVE ALL STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.	D	STRONGLY AGREE	①②③④⑤	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17.				①②③④⑤	
18.				①②③④⑤	
19.				①②③④⑤	
20.				①②③④⑤	
21.				①②③④⑤	
22.				①②③④⑤	
23.				①②③④⑤	
24.				①②③④⑤	
25.				①②③④⑤	

APPENDIX 6: 1996 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS

LEAP COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Your answers to the following questions will provide the developers of this course with information about **your** perceptions of the LEAP course. Your responses will assist us in improving this course.

Please answer the questions below by circling the number (1-2-3-4-0) that best represents your feeling on the question. The space below each question is provided for short written comments, should you wish to make them. If you need more space than the two lines please use the back of the page. We appeal to students to respond to **all** questions, and to give written comments on all the questions which are marked with an (*), as well as any other questions you may wish to comment on. Thank you.

LEAP FACILITATOR'S NAME:..

1 = not at all,   2 = not really,   3 = sort of,   4 = definitely,   0 = no comment

1	Has the LEAP course assisted you in understanding other lectures conducted in English? *..	1 2 3 4 0
2	Has the LEAP course developed your self-confidence? *..	1 2 3 4 0
3	Has the LEAP course developed your English language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)? If not, why?..	1 2 3 4 0
4	Has the LEAP course developed your study skills?	1 2 3 4 0
5	Has the LEAP course developed your ability to work well in a group? *..	1 2 3 4 0
6	Has the LEAP course been what you expected it to be? *Why?..	1 2 3 4 0
7	Has the LEAP course helped you to cope with your other diploma subjects? (academic reading and writing, speaking etc) *..	1 2 3 4 0
8	Was the content of the LEAP course (The Technikon, Multi-lingual language policy etc.) interesting to you?	1 2 3 4 0

1 = not at all,   2 = not really,   3 = sort of,   4 = definitely,   0 = no comment

9	Did the classroom activities you engaged in during the LEAP lessons help you become a more successful student? *...	1 2 3 4 0
10	Did the LEAP teaching materials (overhead transparencies, charts, posters, student workbooks) help your learning during lessons?	1 2 3 4 0
11	Did you find the LEAP student workbooks easy to use? *...	1 2 3 4 0
12	Were you **actively** involved in the learning during the LEAP lessons? *...	1 2 3 4 0
13	Do you think that students should actively participate in their learning in the classroom? *...	1 2 3 4 0
14	Are students actively participating in the classroom during other diploma subjects that you do? *...	1 2 3 4 0
15	Do you enjoy participating in the groupwork during LEAP classes? *...	1 2 3 4 0
16	Do you feel that you have **something to offer to** your classmates in the LEAP course?	1 2 3 4 0
17	Do you feel that you have **something to learn from** your classmates in the LEAP course?	1 2 3 4 0
18	Have you seen any improvements in your other subjects which you think is as a result of your learning in the LEAP course? *Examples...	1 2 3 4 0
19	Did you prepare before coming to the LEAP classes? *...	1 2 3 4 0
20	Did the homework from the LEAP classes help you learn? *...	1 2 3 4 0
21	Has the journal developed your ability to think about your own learning?	1 2 3 4 0

1 = not at all,   2 = not really,   3 = sort of,   4 = definitely,   0 = no comment

22	Has your Base Support Group functioned independently (without facilitator supervision)?	1 2 3 4 0
23	Have the self-access grammar lessons at the back of your workbook developed your ability to learn independently (without a facilitator)?	1 2 3 4 0
24	Have you detected any changes in your behaviour or attitudes which are as a result of your participation in the LEAP course? *Examples?..	1 2 3 4 0
25	Are you glad that you are doing this course? *Why?..	1 2 3 4 0
26	Do you think that the physical environment (ventilation, noise levels, classroom size, teaching equipment) in which the LEAP course is being taught supports learning in class?	1 2 3 4 0
27	Do you feel that the processes by which your learning was measured (tests, assignments, orals) were fair?	1 2 3 4 0
28	Were the orals and written assignments useful?	1 2 3 4 0
29	Were you informed by your facilitator as to how you would be assessed in tests, assignments and orals?	1 2 3 4 0
30	Has your facilitator been effective in helping you learn? *..	1 2 3 4 0
31	Are the explanations of your facilitator clear?	1 2 3 4 0
32	Is your facilitator sensitive to your needs? *..	1 2 3 4 0
33	Did your facilitator enjoy teaching?	1 2 3 4 0
34	Was your facilitator well prepared for classes?	1 2 3 4 0

35	Did your facilitator attempt to involve all students in classroom activities?	1 2 3 4 0
36	Was there a good facilitator-student relationship in your class? *..	1 2 3 4 0
37	Did your facilitator assess/mark your work (tests, essays, orals) in a fair way?	1 2 3 4 0
38	Did you find your facilitator's comments (both written and the discussion) on your work useful?	1 2 3 4 0

Circle the word that best represents your feeling on each of the questions below:

39. How did you feel about your academic abilities when you arrived at Peninsula Technikon?

    Confident   Okay   ·Not confident

    Why?..
    ....

40. How do you feel about your academic abilities now?

    Confident   Okay   Not confident

    Why?..
    ....

41. How would you rate the effect that the LEAP course has had on your personal development (values, attitudes, enthusiasm, interest)?

    very significant   significant   insignificant   no effect

    Explain..
    ....

42. How would you rate the journal reflections in the LEAP course?

    very beneficial   beneficial   few benefits   no benefits

    Why?..
    ....

43. How would you rate the Base Support Group activities outside of LEAP classes?

    very beneficial   beneficial   few benefits   no benefits

    Why?..
    ....

44. How does the **level of difficulty** of the LEAP course content compare to the level of difficulty of your major diploma subjects?

    Easier   Same   More difficult

45. How does the **amount of work** you have to do in the LEAP course compare to the amount of work you have to do in your major diploma subjects?

Less   Same   More

46. What is your overall evaluation of the **LEAP course?**

excellent   very good   good   fair   poor   very poor

47. What is your overall evaluation of your **facilitator's teaching?**

excellent   very good   good   fair   poor   very poor

48. What is your overall evaluation of **your own learning** as a result of the LEAP course?

learned a lot   learned a little   learned nothing

49. What is the best thing about the LEAP course?..
....

Why?..
....

50. What is the worst thing about the LEAP course?...
....

Why?..
....
....

For additional comments please use the space below:
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....
....

******THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE******

APPENDIX 7: 1995/1996 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS

(This questionnaire was repeated at the end of terms 1, 2 and 3 in 1995; and term 1 in 1996)

1. What activity(activities) did you find the most interesting, beneficial, informative?

2. What things did you like best about this class? Why?

3. What activity(activities) did you not enjoy? Why?

4. What would you like to see more of in the next term?

5. What would you like to see changed for next term?

6. Other comments.

APPENDIX 8: 1995 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO LEAP TEACHERS

(This questionnaire was repeated at the end of terms 1, 2 and 3 in 1995)

1. Do you feel that the course has achieved its 'term' objective?

2. Do you feel that the content for the term (topics, readings,skills) was relevant?

3. Do you feel that co-operative learning is taking place in your class? Explain.

4. Do you feel that the journal has stimulated the development of relective practice about the learning process? Explain.

5. Do you feel that the Base Support Groups have achieved their purpose? Explain.

6. How do you feel about the detailed lesson plans and the prepared support material?

7. What did you like best about the term and why?

8. What did you dislike about the term and why?

9. How do you think the term can be improved upon?

10. Other comments.

LESSON EVALUATION

Please complete the following evaluation by circling a number on the continuum.

| 1=No, not at all | 2= somewhat | 3= more or less | 4=yes, sufficiently | 5=Yes, definitely |

	ACTIVITY 1	ACTIVITY 2	ACTIVITY 3	ACTIVITY 4
CLARITY				
DID STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THE ACTIVITY?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
DID YOU UNDERSTAND THE ACTIVITY?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
TIME				
DID THE STUDENTS HAVE ENOUGH TIME?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
DID YOU FEEL THERE WAS ENOUGH TIME?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
FACILITATOR PREPARATION				
WAS THE ACTIVITY EASY TO EXECUTE?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
LEARNING OUTCOMES				
WAS THERE EVIDENCE THAT STUDENTS ACQUIRED THE SKILLS SET OUT BY THE ACTIVITY?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
DID THE ACTIVITY FOSTER COOPERATION?	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5

FUTURE
DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR A
SMOOTHER/MORE SUCCESSFUL LESSON?

APPENDIX 10: 1995 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRES TO MAINSTREAM LECTURERS OF LEAP STUDENTS

(This questionnaire was given to 3 lecturers at the end of the third term in 1995. A summary of the responses follows each question)

1. Do you think that the essays were an improvement on the quality of essays you usually receive from first-years?
   If yes, how had they improved?

   Lecturers felt that the essays had improved when compared to their 1994 first-year essays, especially regarding structure, bibliography and language usage. However they still encountered problems regarding plagiarism, in-text referencing and interpreting of sources.

2. How do you feel about the collaborative planning of the essay topic?

   Lecturers found it helped them focus on the topic and the expectations of first-years. They also felt it should happen more often.

3. How do you feel about the collaborative assessment criteria for marking?

   Lecturers felt that it created greater uniformity, although it required compromise, as there was not always agreement on the criteria for assessment and the weighting of the criteria. Despite the compromising, they felt it heralded a new era in terms of openness and sharing of ideas.

4. How do you feel about the collaborative marking of assignments?

   The response here was positive as it helped lecturers complete their marking in less time and they found it to be an enlightening and learning experience. The content lecturers did however express concern about their ability to assess language-related criteria.

5.   What did you like best about our joint venture?

They liked the idea of working with a group from which to 'tap' information and share concerns about students. They also realised that language and content could not be separated.

6.   What did you dislike about our joint venture?

They disliked the constant explaining of the joint process to students, who kept enquiring during every class period. They also had a problem with second-year repeaters who were not benefitting from the LEAP course and needed to be 'tagged along'.

7.   How do you think we could improve this venture for 1996?

Some of the suggestions here were:
*   *that more people should become involved as it was a way for staff and students to improve their practice, and*
*   *that the process of academic assignment writing should be introduced to students earlier in the year e.g. a compulsory week-long programme during orientation.*

8   Any other comments?

Under this question they responded that students showed a lack of understanding of the concepts they had to discuss and they simply repeated what was said in the sources, often plagiarising.

APPENDIX 11: 1995 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE TO OTHER TECHNIKON STAFF MEMBERS

Evaluation of the interview with a Technikon Staff member

Please complete this evaluation form and return to
.... at ....

NAME: .... PHONE NO.: ....
DEPARTMENT: ....

1.   Did the students arrive on arrive on time?   YES   NO

2.   Was the venue prepared for the interview?   YES   NO

3.   Who determined the seating arrangements?

      ....

4.1   Did the students introduce themselves?   YES   NO
4.2   Did students explain the purpose of the
      interview?   YES   NO
4.3   Did the students explain how the information
      was to be used?   YES   NO

5.   Did the interviewers establish a relaxed,
      co-operative atmosphere?   YES   NO
      Comments if necessary?

      ....

6.   Did students take turns asking questions?   YES   NO

7.   Was there equal participation or did certain students
      dominate?

      ....

8.   The general note-taking by students appeared to be non-
      existent... adequate... tedious...

      ....

                                                        P.T.o.

9. Comment on ways in which students were prepared for the interview:

    Appearance: ....
    Questions: ....
                 ....
    Confidence: ....
                 ....

10. Did students ask for additional information
    to supplement the interview?   YES   NO
    What did you provide?
    ....

11. How long did the interview last?
    ....

12. How did you, the interviewee, feel during the interview?
    relaxed...tense...confused...impressed...
    Other responses:
    ....

13. Do you have any suggestions to make the interview more
    effective?
    ....
    ....

14. Do you believe this to be a worthwhile exercise for
    students?
    ....

15. Would you be willing to participate again?
    ....

16. Additional Comments:
    ....
    ....

Thank you for your co-operation!

APPENDIX 12: 1995 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP STUDENTS

Questionnaire

1. ### Aims and Objectives

    1.1 What do you think the aims of the subject were?
    1.2 Were these aims achieved?
    If so, what evidence of achievement and/or behavioural change is there?
    1.3 Did this subject contribute positively towards your studies?

2. ### Planning for the future

    2.1 Do you think this subject should continue or not? Why/why not?
    2.2 If it continues, should there be changes?
    If so, what changes?

3. ### Journal

    3.1 What was the purpose of the journal?
    3.2 What benefit, if any, did you derive from the journal?
    3.3 How should the journal be used in this subject in the future?

4. ### Base Support Groups

    4.1 What do you think the purpose of the B.S.G was?
    4.2 Was this purpose achieved?
    4.3 Did you benefit from the B.S.G?

    (Probe for issues regarding size and groupings).

5. ### Reviewing the whole course

    5.1 Which term was your favourite and why?
    5.2 Which term was the most beneficial?
    5.3 Which term did you least enjoy and why?

APPENDIX 13: 1996 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP STUDENTS

Questions for structured interview:

1. NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

1.1 **Has the LEAP course been what you expected it to be? Why?**
(Probe the expectations which were met and those which were not. Most students indicated that their expectations were not met, as they expected grammar and school-type English. Probe as to whether they preferred what they actually experienced or whether they would have preferred something more like what they expected. Check on whether the self-access grammar was used at all and whether it was found to be effective.)

1.2 **Has the LEAP course addressed your academic needs as a first-year student, new to the Technikon? Why?**
(Probe the needs as perceived by the student and how effectively LEAP addressed each. Ask for examples of how needs were addressed. If not addressed, ask how LEAP could/should have addressed them.)

2. TRANSFER

2.1 **Has the LEAP course helped you to cope with your other diploma subjects? How?**
(Probe the reading of academic texts, the writing of academic assignments, presenting formally, taking notes etc. Check for 'evidence' of improvement/impact on other subjects e.g. higher marks, lecturers' comments)

2.2 **Has the LEAP course assisted you in understanding other lectures and prescribed readings in English? How?**

2.3 **Has LEAP helped you to become a more successful student? If yes, How? If no, Why not?**

2.4 **Have you detected any changes in your behaviour or attitudes towards your studies which are as a result of your participation in the LEAP course? Explain.**
(Probe whether they are <u>doing</u> anything differently or <u>feeling</u> differently about anything as a result of LEAP)

2.5 **Has the journal developed your ability to think abjut/reflect on your own learning? How?**
(Probe whether it has stimulated application of the learning to other contexts. If yes, ask for actual examples. Check whether journalling is valued and whether students feel it should remain.)

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 **Did you enjoy the way (groupwork, active involvement, student-focussed) the LEAP course was taught? Why?**
(Probe whether this is generally experienced in other classes. If not, find out what is experienced.)

3.2 **Has the BSG group helped you to become an independent learner and**

function more effectively in a group?
(Probe whether the BSG is a valued activity and whether students feel it should remain.)

3.3 **Did you find the 'process approach' (focussing on <u>how</u> to do things/skills rather than <u>what</u> to do/content) was helpful?**
(Probe whether the practical application of skills in the classroom helped students acquire the skills, and whether the repetition in unit 3 and the drafting/process approach to writing helped them to become more competent or if this was seen as unnecessary.)

4. <u>WORKLOAD AND PITCH</u>

4.1 **Could you cope with the workload in the LEAP course? Why?**
(Most students **are** saying it is too much work and causes them to neglect their other work. Probe how they think this issue could be addressed, especially in cases where students have a dire need to acquire the LEAP skills.)

4.2 **Was the LEAP course pitched at the right level of difficulty for you? Explain.**
(Probe as to whether students were challenged by the course or bored. Check their feelings on the teaching of mixed ability groups versus streaming.)

5. <u>FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION</u>

5.1 **Do you think LEAP should continue as a first-year subject? Why?**
5.2 **Should every first-year student do such a course? Why?**
5.3 **If LEAP continues as a subject, should there be any changes? If yes, what should be changed?**

APPENDIX 14: 1996 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH LEAP TEACHERS

QUESTIONS FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEW:

1. Did the course achieve its objectives?

    1.1 Were student needs and expectations met?
    1.2 Is there any evidence of the above?
    E.g. Outcomes, attitudes which may be attributable to LEAP?

2. Did the journal meet its objectives?

    2.1 How was it done/ How did it happen?
    2.2 What were student attitudes towards it?

3. Did the BSG's meet their objectives?

    3.1 How did they happen?
    3.2 What were student attitudes towards it?

4. What are your views on the streaming in 1996 as opposed to the mixed ability grouping in 1995?

    4.1 Did you have to teach differently across the two years because of it?

5 How did your students respond to the course? (Curriculum, materials, activities...)

    5.1 Was the level of difficulty right?
    5.2 Was it relevant, interesting and useful to your students?
    5.3 How did they view the volume of work?

6. How did students respond to the methodology?

    6.1 Was it effectively applied?
    6.2 To what extent was it applied?
    6.3 What were the student attitudes towards it?

7. Evaluate the student workbooks of 1996 in terms of their accessibility, clarity and usefulness for students and teacher.

8. Evaluate your collaboration with the content lecturer in Unit 3.

9. Evaluate your personal and professional developmemt through your contact with the LEAP course.

LEARNERS AND LANGUAGE WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM:

1. The workshop has attained its objectives   not at all 1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - ♦ - - - - - - 5 yes, definitely
   * to open up the conversation concerning language in ALL classrooms
   * To get a sense of the needs of the school in terms of language
   * to promote staff development

2. The level at which the workshop was pitched was: too low 1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - - 3 - - ♦ - - - - - 4 - - - - - - - - 5   too high

3. the competency of the workshop team was: low   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - - - ♦ - - - - 5   very competent

4. The material/information presented was: of no value   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - - - ♦ - - - - 5   very valuable

5. The extent to which I feel i will be able to apply what i have learned today is: not at all   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - ♦ - - - - - - 5   yes, definitely

6. The relevance of the material/information to me is: none   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - - ♦ - - - - - 5   highly relevant

7. The relevance of the workshop to my department is: none   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - - - - - ♦ - - - 5   highly relevant

8. The prereading was useful in preparing for today's workshop   disagree   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - ♦ - 4 - - - - - - - - 5   agree

9. My overall evaluation of today's workhop is: low   1 - - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - 4 - - ♦ - - - - - 5   high

COMMENTS FROM THE EVALUATION:

I forgot about the prereading. Please remind us next time round. A Friday afternoon perhaps not the best time. Try Saturday morning.

Useful. Concerned about high absenteeism. Friday afternoon not ideal.

Well done!

THE WORKSHOP WAS REALLY INSPIRING.   *Well done. I think people enjoyed it more than they were expecting to!*

Well organised-- needs to be followed up in various ways (not necessarily another similar workshop).

I want to compliment the team with the organisation of the workshop. Well done.

An effective and well-organised workshop--enjoyed by all present! We are looking forward to future workshops in order to put theory into practise.

APPENDIX 16: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLES FOR 1995 MID-YEAR AND END-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1995 MID-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

High Rating/Strong Agreement   I - J - K - L - M   Low Rating/No Agreement

% RESPONSE (N=98)

	ITEM	I	J	K	L	M	OMIT
1	Instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	38	44	9	1	0	8
2	Overall quality of course.	33	34	19	4	3	9
3	Were course objectives met?	35	34	19	3	6	5
4	Overall quality of instructional materials.	58	25	9	4	1	3
5	Assignments promptly returned?	46	32	14	3	2	3
6	Rate grading standards for course.	28	27	40	3	3	0
7	Instructor's evaluation of work.	60	25	6	3	4	4
8	More competent due to course.	35	40	17	2	3	5
9	Course increase interest in subject?	41	34	13	4	9	0
10	Prepared before coming to class?	32	24	34	5	5	1
11	Not enough student participation?	16	27	15	10	31	2
12	Instructor enjoyed teaching?	84	11	1	1	2	1
13	Instructors ability to explain?	67	24	7	1	0	2
14	Instructor well prepared?	87	9	2	0	0	2
15	Instructor sensitive to students' understanding.	56	22	10	6	7	0
16	Instructor involved all students in activities.	81	12	4	0	0	3

1995 END-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

High Rating/Strong Agreement   I - J - K - L - M   Low Rating/No Agreement

% RESPONSE (N = 108)

	ITEM	I	J	K	L	M	OMIT
1	Instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.	34	26	19	3	2	17
2	Overall quality of course.	29	27	26	3	1	15
3	Were course objectives met?	31	26	30	4	6	4
4	Overall quality of instructional materials.	45	27	21	5	1	1
5	Assignments promptly returned?	47	17	20	9	2	5
6	Rate grading standards for course.	27	24	37	4	6	2
7	Instructor's evaluation of work.	52	24	13	8	0	3
8	More competent due to course.	40	20	32	5	1	2
9	Course increase interest in subject?	36	22	22	11	6	3
10	Prepared before coming to class?	20	19	41	12	4	4
11	Not enough student participation?	11	16	19	21	31	3
12	Instructor enjoyed teaching?	73	16	7	3	0	1
13	Instructors ability to explain?	62	22	10	1	2	3
14	Instructor well prepared?	72	18	6	1	0	4
15	Instructor sensitive to students' understanding.	50	27	14	4	4	2
16	Instructor involved all students in activities.	75	12	6	3	4	0

APPENDIX 17: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLE FOR 1996 MID-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1996 MID-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1=NOT AT ALL
2=NOT REALLY
3=SORT OF
4=DEFINITELY
0=NO COMMENT

% RESPONSE (N = 49)

NO.	ITEM	1	2	3	4	0
1	Has LEAP assisted in understanding other lectures in English?	0	0	14.3	81.6	4.1
2	Has LEAP developed self-confidence?	4.1	0	20.4	75.5	0
3	Has LEAP developed English language skills?	0	4.1	10.2	79.6	6.1
4	Has LEAP developed study skills?	0	8.2	24.5	57.1	10.2
5	Has LEAP developed group skills?	4.1	16.3	18.4	61.2	0
6	Was LEAP what you expected it to be?	20.4	22.4	16.3	28.6	12.2
7	Has LEAP helped in coping with other diploma subjects?	2	0	16.3	73.5	0
8	Was LEAP content interesting?	4.1	6.1	14.3	69.4	6.1
9	Did LEAP classroom activities aid student success?	2	4.1	36.7	46.9	10.2
10	Did LEAP teaching material aid learning?	0	4.1	10.2	77.6	8.2
11	Were LEAP student workbooks easy to use?	16.3	24.5	26.5	30.6	2
12	Were you actively learning during LEAP lessons?	4.1	10.2	20.4	57.1	8.2
13	Should students actively participate in learning?	2	6.1	4.1	79.6	8.2
14	Do students actively participate in other subjects?	6.1	20.4	26.5	38.8	8.2
15	Do you enjoy groupwork in LEAP classes?	14.3	8.2	8.2	69.4	0
16	Do you have something to offer to your LEAP classmates?	2	22.4	20.4	40.8	14.3
17	Do you have something to learn from your LEAP classmates?	2	4.1	18.4	73.5	2
18	Have your other subjects improved as a result of LEAP?	0	6.1	20.4	65.3	8.2
19	Did your prepare before coming to LEAP classes?	12.2	20.4	30.6	34.7	2
20	Did the LEAP homework help you learn?	4.1	2	22.4	67.3	4.1
21	Has the journal developed thinking about learning?	8.2	2	20.4	69.4	0
22	Has your BSG functioned independently?	22.4	16.3	22.4	34.7	4.1
23	Have the self-access grammar lessons developed independent learning	6.1	14.3	20.4	55.1	4.1
24	Has your behaviour or attitudes changed as a result of LEAP?	4.1	12.2	24.5	40.8	18.4
25	Are you glad you are doing this course?	6.1	4.1	12.2	71.4	6.1
26	Does the physical environment of LEAP classes support learning?	4.1	30.6	14.3	44.9	6.1
27	Were the process by which your learning was measured fair?	4.1	6.1	22.4	65.3	2
28	Were the orals and written assignments useful?	2	0	10.2	81.6	6.1
29	Were you informed about how you would be assessed?	2	2	10.2	77.6	8.2
30	Has your facilitator been effective in helping you learn?	0	0	6.1	87.8	6.1
31	Are the explanations of your facilitator clear?	2	0	14.3	79.6	4.1
32	Is your facilitator sensitive to your needs?	4.1	2	14.3	75.5	4.1
33	Did your facilitator enjoy teaching?	0	0	2	83.7	14.3
34	Was your facilitator well prepared for classes?	0	0	4.1	87.8	8.2
35	Did your facilitator involve all students in class?	0	4.1	6.1	81.6	8.2
36	Was there a good facilitator-student relationship?	0	4.1	12.2	73.5	10.2
37	Did your facilitator assess/mark fairly?	4.1	0	12.2	69.4	14.3
38	Were the facilitator's comments on your work useful?	2.1	0	6.3	81.3	10.4

APPENDIX 18: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLE FOR 1996 END-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1996 END YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1=NOT AT ALL
2=NOT REALLY
3=SORT OF
4=DEFINITELY
0=NO COMMENT

% RESPONSE (N = 57)

NO.	ITEM	1	2	3	4	0
1	Has LEAP assisted in understanding other lectures in English?	0	7	19.3	66.7	7
2	Has LEAP developed self-confidence?	0	5.3	15.8	73.7	5.3
3	Has LEAP developed English language skills?	0	1.8	19.3	71.9	7
4	Has LEAP developed study skills?	0	17.5	19.3	56.1	7
5	Has LEAP developed group skills?	0	8.8	38.6	45.6	7
6	Was LEAP what you expected it to be?	15.8	19.3	21.1	28.1	15.8
7	Has LEAP helped in coping with other diploma subjects?	7	3.5	28.1	52.6	8.8
8	Was LEAP content interesting?	5.3	14	24.6	50.9	5.3
9	Did LEAP classroom activities aid student success?	1.8	3.5	35.1	47.4	12.3
10	Did LEAP teaching material aid learning?	0	8.8	26.3	59.6	5.3
11	Were LEAP student workbooks easy to use?	3.5	28.1	35.1	28.1	5.3
12	Were you actively learning during LEAP lessons?	1.8	3.5	22.8	68.4	3.5
13	Should students actively participate in learning?	0	0	15.8	77.2	7
14	Do students actively participate in other subjects?	1.8	7	36.8	43.9	10.5
15	Do you enjoy groupwork in LEAP classes?	5.3	7	22.8	57.9	7
16	Do you have something to offer to your LEAP classmates?	3.5	14	26.3	43.9	12.3
17	Do you have something to learn from your LEAP classmates?	1.8	8.8	28.1	56.1	5.3
18	Have your other subjects improved as a result of LEAP?	3.5	8.8	21.1	57.9	8.8
19	Did your prepare before coming to LEAP classes?	12.3	22.8	42.1	17.5	5.3
20	Did the LEAP homework help you learn?	8.8	14	40.4	33.3	3.5
21	Has the journal developed thinking about learning?	5.3	5.3	22.8	56.1	10.5
22	Has your BSG functioned independently?	22.8	15.8	19.3	33.3	8.8
23	Have the self-access grammar lessons developed independent learnin	5.3	12.3	28.1	47.4	7
24	Has your behaviour or attitudes changed as a result of LEAP?	7	5.3	31.6	36.8	19.3
25	Are you glad you are doing this course?	12.3	7	14	52.6	14
26	Does the physical environment of LEAP classes support learning?	7	10.5	31.6	38.6	12.3
27	Were the process by which your learning was measured fair?	3.5	12.3	36.8	33.3	14
28	Were the orals and written assignments useful?	1.8	1.8	17.5	75.4	3.5
29	Were you informed about how you would be assessed?	3.5	12.3	21.1	56.1	7
30	Has your facilitator been effective in helping you learn?	0	7	10.5	77.2	5.3
31	Are the explanations of your facilitator clear?	1.8	8.8	22.8	61.4	5.3
32	Is your facilitator sensitive to your needs?	1.8	1.8	33.3	49.1	14
33	Did your facilitator enjoy teaching?	0	1.8	17.5	70.2	10.5
34	Was your facilitator well prepared for classes?	1.8	7	12.3	75.4	3.5
35	Did your facilitator involve all students in class?	0	0	19.3	75.4	5.3
36	Was there a good facilitator-student relationship?	5.3	7	14	66.7	7
37	Did your facilitator assess/mark fairly?	1.8	14	21.1	50.9	12.3
38	Were the facilitator's comments on your work useful?	3.5	3.5	17.5	70.2	5.3

APPENDIX 19: LEAP FINAL RESULTS 1996

0=PASS   1=FAIL

Student	UNIT 1			UNIT 2			UNIT 3		UNIT 4		FINAL	
	Tst	Ass	Orl	Tst	Ass	Orl	Ass	Orl	Tst	JRNL	MARK	
1	52	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.60	1
2	14	40	55	23	52	55	48	59	46	60	50.45	0
3	47	50	77	64	47	61	48	46	76	83	56.76	0
4	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.40	1
5	59	50	57	68	51	74	62	63	71	70	63.81	0
6	81	66.5	70	57	60	53	60	71	78	35	61.43	0
7	60	61	75	66	48	73	52	61	66	67	63.65	0
8	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	5.25	1
9	56	58	45.5	30	35	48	42.5	47	48	88	47.70	1
10	45	67	70	56	61	62	51.5	63	63	63	61.10	0
11	50	58	65	49	55	58	50	61	66	80	59.93	0
12	72	68	80	68	53	72	68	64	78	85	70.08	0
13	76	77	65	76	56	80	65.5	62	76	80	70.28	0
14	54	66	82	69	54	73	53	54	69	0	57.19	0
15	60	71	69	64	63	65	58	53	70	60	62.85	0
16	33	50	70	55	55	63	41	48	59	50	53.65	0
17	63	80	69	73	71	70	56	64	65	85	66.95	0
18	75	68	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13.15	1
19	48	58	60	49	56	59	48	43	68	43	53.25	0
20	66	71	58	66	43	70	53	69	79	44	61.70	0
21	28	38	0	39	36	30	25	6	39	35	24.00	1
22	60	70	68	58	41	65	57	66	70	63	62.00	0
23	88	65	80	81	69	40	0	0	77	40	42.44	1
24	50	63	78	44	49	80	54	69	64	60	67.97	0
25	65	78	68	60	57	60	47	65	75	45	60.60	0
26	51	54	63	62	48	66	61	61	71	60	60.50	0
27	31	46	60	44	45	63	44	66	58	60	55.65	0
28	46	50	50	67	0	65	0	68	61	70	49.80	0
29	62	60	54	45	49.5	46	67.5	65	71	52	57.00	0
30	41	47	45	67	52	60	63.5	53	65	65	56.15	0
31	59	66	47	82	58	40	56	0	76	0	38.23	1
32	38	53	59	49	50	65	62	56	48	60	56.70	0
33	40	70	69	66	47	61	53	59	63	83	59.15	0
34	61	70	55	74	48	67	0	68	67	60	56.90	0
35	39	50	58.5	43	52.5	60	64	51	63	73	56.75	0
36	46	68	67	50	43	65	49	59	56	53	58.50	0
37	13	23	45	56	45	60	44.5	51	51	70	49.81	0
38	44	55	58	63	51	58	48	44	51	50	51.76	0
39	55	75	72	66	65	69	49	61	65	82	63.85	0
40	28	42	55	40	46	56	58	62	0	50	50.00	0
41	25	54	50	38	34	47	52	51	49	53	46.80	1
42	32	50	56	44	20	62	45	68	49	60	52.85	0
43	63	68	60	0	0	40	53.5	0	71	0	29.46	1
44	38	56	55	68	57	60	63	62	74	63	59.70	0
45	27	48	59.5	34	40.5	47	60	57	59	82	51.40	0
46	45	69	61	39	48	54	54	51	59	55	53.40	0

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47	19	57	55	48	55	60	59	57	51	66	55.05	0
48	19	23	0	52	45	61	42	41	60	60	42.80	1
49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	1
50	71	66	69	54	50	70	47	62	51	59	60.90	0
51	54	55	60	54	44	41	51	54	65	59	51.80	0
52	29	59	58	52	57	60	60	59	57	59	56.15	0
53	48	59	70	73	54	69	63	67	64	59	63.10	0
54	55	61	64	66	64	72	63	53	74	67	63.60	0
55	51	26	61	25	43.5	48	46	54	50	67	49.75	0
56	50	50	50	39	40	56	38	58	56	59	50.35	0
57	15	57	60	56	53	65	51	56	54	75	57.19	0
58	50	72	70	50	57	60	61	54	56	54	58.40	0
59	25	53	60	29	45	50	46	53	34	61	48.85	0
60	55	84	77	69	67	74	83	75	70	88	73.20	0
61	65	57	46	60	52	55	47	50	61	63	53.96	0
62	11	19	40	31	43	58	48.5	48	54	65	46.59	1
63	48	58.5	66	53	73.5	57	65	59	70	75	62.63	0
64	61	62	67	53	54	67	79	66	57	78	66.05	0
65	39	58	61	49	31.5	52	50	56	58	58	51.85	0
66	37	44	66	55	56.5	61	52	64	65	65	59.00	0
67	32	53	59	58	51	60	55	58	67	66	56.60	0
68	62	72	68	58	68	67	65	60	55	85	64.35	0
69	48	45	60	69	47	58	42.5	53	59	75	55.69	0
70	49	50	60	51	58	62	0	60	66	40	51.00	0
71	60	65	58	73	49	59	55.5	49	69	75	58.69	0
72	57	53	56	69	60	71	72	55	60	89	62.85	0
73	41	48	65	61	43	64	50	59	49	67	56.05	0
74	81	59	59	57	54.5	54	58.5	51	63	54	55.60	0
75	31	38.5	63	22	21	56	52	59	48	63	48.88	0
76	38	50	46.5	38	45.5	60	67	55	51	63	54.05	0
77	74	62	58	50	55	61	57	67	73	62	61.75	0
78	41	67	58	61	50	60	0	61	66	39	49.75	0
79	49	59	53	59	45	56	52	80	74	68	56.25	0
80	58	64	68	70	60	70	58	72	76	59	65.40	0
81	48	72	66	68	70	67	57	84	71	67	65.15	0
82	63	52	84	63	58	68	66.5	66.5	63	78	67.61	0
83	55	64	63	66	54	55	41.5	53	66	74	57.41	0
84	41	50	64	36	36.5	68	46.5	54.5	54	53	53.55	0
85	47	61	60	65	0	64	62	64	69	50	54.90	0
86	70	82	76	61	82	65	58	70	69	89	69.60	0
87	39	54	45	46	48	42	53.5	50	63	58	48.95	0
88	36	61	65	70	0	76	0	76	71	50	53.80	0
89	16	57	50	54	52	58	60	57	63	58	53.70	0
90	47	55	60	69	0	66	58	66	63	59	54.90	0
91	43	55	50	56	62	62	47.5	54	66	68	56.96	0
92	64	63	60	66	64	56	0	58	66	40	52.15	0
93	53	0	50	57	55	59	50	44	74	70	52.32	0
94	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.05	1
95	55	75	73	69	61	61	52	51	63	59	60.00	0
96	62	70	60	58	65	71	64	54	63	55	62.05	0
97	60	61	50	57	0	57	0	58	54	50	44.60	1

APPENDIX 20: PRE-TEST

PENINSULA TECHNIKON
ENGLISH DIAGNOSTIC TEST

Your Surname: _____

First Names: _____

Student Number: _____

The Course that you have enrolled for: _____

Matric English Symbol and Grade: _____

Home Language: _____

Place of Origin/Home Town: _____

Date: _____

Test Instructions:

1. This test contains two reading passages. Read both passages carefully and answer all the questions which follow them.

2. There are two sections in this test. In Section A the questions are of the multiple choice type. This means that you must draw a circle around the letter that stands next to the correct answer. You must not encircle more than one letter for each question because **only one answer is the correct answer.**

In Section B the questions require written answers. Use the spaces provided to give your written answers. In this section you must answer the questions in your own words. This means that you must try not to quote from the reading passages in your answers.

3. Note that Section A counts 50% and Section B counts 50%. This means that you should allow approximately the same amount of time for each section. You must complete the entire test in two hours.

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

PASSAGE NUMBER ONE

1   In its search for alternatives to fossil-fuel energy sources, science is looking back in history - at the windmill. Small windmills once were seen everywhere in rural America, but most were abandoned with the coming of rural electrification programs in the 1930s. Now energy shortages and rising petroleum prices have brought renewed interest in putting the wind to work.

2   Near Sandusky, Ohio, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is testing a 30-meter-tall experimental steel windmill with two slender 18.6-meter aluminum blades that look like enormous airplane propellers. NASA's windmill, designed to whirl at a steady 40 revolutions per minute even if the wind varies, generates 100 kilowatts of power - enough to supply the needs of 30 homes. Perhaps the most significant fact about the NASA experiment is that it is the first large-scale test of windmill technology in more than 30 years. Some scientists estimate that with enough investment in research and development, windmills could supply 20 percent of U.S. electrical needs by the year 2000.

3   The Sandia Laboratories in New Mexico are testing an altogether different device that looks more like a giant eggbeater than a conventional windmill. Its principal advantage is that its symmetrical shape catches breezes from any direction. All designers of new windmills face one very old problem, however: what to do when the wind dies. One solution would be to use windmills to pump water uphill into storage reservoirs; when the wind stops, the water would be released to drive hydraulic turbines.

4   Meanwhile, U.S. ranchers and farmers in the Southwest are so eager to utilize wind power that New Mexico State University is offering a special course in the operation and maintenance of windmills built a generation ago.

1. By the year 2000, it is possible that with enough advancement in technology, windmills could provide all but _____ of electrical needs in the United States..

A.   80 percent
B.   20 percent
C.   40 percent
D.   70 percent

2. Science is interested in the windmill as another source of energy instead of

A.   electricity
B.   turbines
C.   fossil-fuel
D.   uranium

3. During the 1930s, electrification programs for rural areas caused the use of _____ as a source of energy to diminish greatly.

A.   steam engines
B.   kerosene
C.   water
D.   windmills

4. A basic problem for designers of windmills is what to do when

A.   it rains
B.   there is no wind
C.   the sun doesn't shine
D.   there is too much wind

5. Interest in wind power has been stimulated by

A.   space scientists
B.   increasing petroleum prices
C.   water shortage
D.   new inventions

6. in its search (paragraph 1) means the same as

A.   while looking at
B.   as it sees
C.   during its investigation
D.   in the background

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7. **a large-scale test** (paragraph 2) means the same as
A. to a great degree
B. an extensive examination
C. strong indication
D. huge undertaking

8. **altogether different device** (paragraph 3) means the same as
A. completely distinct machine
B. totally distinguishing mark
C. separate way of operation
D. combined general functions

9. **looks more like** (paragraph 3) means the same as
A. appears frequently and often
B. as it happens to be
C. more like it
D. has the appearance of

10. **principal advantage** (paragraph 3) means the same as
A. major degree
B. one course of action
C. chief gain
D. essential point

11. **Now energy sources and rising petroleum prices have brought renewed interest in putting the wind to work** (paragraph 1) means the same as
A. The wind has brought about an increase in petroleum prices and caused a shortage of energy.
B. There is a rising interest in increased petroleum prices and the use of wind to lower prices.
C. Using wind power to offset increased petroleum prices and energy shortages has attracted recent interest.
D. Increasing the price of petroleum by using wind power is interesting.

12. **Its principal advantage is that it symmetrical shape catches breezes from any direction** (paragraph 3) means the same as
A. Breezes are an advantage to its form and symmetry of design.
B. Having a design that can catch any breeze is a definite advantage.
C. Because of wind direction, its symmetrical shape attracts interest.
D. Its greatest advantage is that it looks like a giant eggbeater.

13. **Ohio is in**
A. South America
B. Europe
C. The United States
D. The United Kingdom

14. **To whirl is to**
A. revolve
B. jump
C. vibrate
D. flop

15. **Hydraulic refers to the use of**
A. metals
B. water
C. wind
D. earth

16. The topic of passage number one is
A. wind power
B. petroleum prices
C. rural electrification
D. NASA

17. Passage number one is mainly
A. personal opinion
B. criticism
C. general information
D. an interview

PASSAGE NUMBER TWO

1   The South African Police Services has warned that continuing attacks on policemen not only undermined police morale, but negatively impacted on the police attitude towards the communities they served.

2   In 1994, 241 policemen lost their lives as police came under fire on 1 150 separate occasions. Eleven more policemen were murdered in January 1995.

3   In 1989, 71 policemen lost their lives; 107 were murdered in 1990; 145 in 1991; 226 in 1992; and 271 in 1993.

4   So the figure of 241 murders in 1994 actually represents a decline in the problem, the first since 1989. Sally de Beer of police headquarters in Pretoria said yesterday police management believed the motive for attacks on policemen had changed over the past year.

5   Whereas police killings were mostly politically inspired in the past, the motive for last year's attacks seemed to have shifted to being of a purely criminal nature.

6   "We have found that the majority of these members are being shot in order to steal their firearms. Also, members have been killed in the course of attending complaints such as armed robbery." ·

7   But, regardless of the motives, the situation was still far from under control, and was extremely worrying to police, Major De Beer said.

18. To **undermine morale** means
A   to be unfriendly
B   to put someone in a negative frame of mind
C   to impersonate a policeman
D   to attack a police station

19. A **motive** is
A   an engine
B   a weapon
C   the scene of a crime
D   a reason for doing something

20. In 1994
A   fewer policeman were killed than in 1993
B   more policemen were killed than in 1993
C   fewer policeman were killed than in 1989
D   no policemen were killed

21. According to the passage, Sally de Beer is
A   a newspaper reporter
B   an officer in the police force
C   the wife of a murdered policeman
D   a convicted murderer

22. **Police killings were mostly politically motivated in the past** (paragraph 5) means the same as

A.   Since there have been political changes killing of policemen has stopped.

B.   In the past the killing of policemen happened mainly due to political reasons.

C.   In the past police were killed mainly by criminals.

D.   Police killings in the past had nothing to do with politics.

23. **The situation was still far from under control** (paragraph 7) implies that

A.   The police had the situation well under control.

B.   The position was totally hopeless.

C.   The situation was far from the police headquarters.

D.   Greater control was still needed.

24. The main point of passage number two is that

A.   the rate of police killings is still a matter of grave concern

B.   there are fewer police killings happening

C.   policemen are doing their job well

D.   there are too few policemen in the force

25. Passage number two is

A.   a work of fiction

B.   a narrative poem

C.   an instruction

D.   a factual report

SECTION B: WRITING

1. Write a short summary of passage number one. This means that you must write a short passage which contains only the most important points that occur in passage number one. You should try to use your own words as much as possible and your summary should be approximately 75 words.

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2. Passage number two is about the killing of policemen. Write a short essay in which you discuss the reasons for the killing of policemen and/or the moral question of whether the killing of policemen can ever be justified or not. You must give sound reasons for your opinions. Your essay should be approximately 125 words.

APPENDIX 21: POST-TEST

PENINSULA TECHNIKON
ENGLISH DIAGNOSTIC TEST

Your Surname _____

First Names _____

Student Number _____

The Course that you have enrolled for _____

Matric English Symbol and Grade _____

Home Language _____

Place of Origin/Home Town _____

Date _____

Test Instructions:

1. This test contains two reading passages. Read both passages carefully and answer all the questions which follow them.

2. There are two sections in this test. In Section A the questions are of the multiple choice type. This means that you must draw a circle around the letter that stands next to the correct answer. You must not encircle more than one letter for each question because only one answer is the correct answer.

   In Section B the questions require written answers. Use the spaces provided to give your written answers. In this section you must answer the questions in your own words. This means that you must try not to quote from the reading passages in your answers.

3. Note that Section A counts 50% and Section B counts 50%. This means that you should allow approximately the same amount of time for each section. You must complete the entire test in two hours.

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

PASSAGE NUMBER ONE

1   Throughout history volcanoes have erupted in different parts of the earth. Some of them have been newly formed "babies" that grew into adult volcanoes, and others have been old volcanoes that have come to life again. This raises a question: Can people be sure that a volcano is extinct or dead, or is there danger that it may erupt again? Although they feel it probably will not, scientists admit that they do not know for sure.

2   There are a number of examples in history of extinct volcanoes coming to life again. In Costa Rica a few years ago, a volcano called Mount Arenal suddenly came to life. It had been extinct for more than 500 years. Many people, as well as hundreds of cattle, died from the effects of the exploding volcano and the resulting flow of lava.

3   Volcanoes in Hawaii, Alaska and along the West Coast of the United States are part of a "chain of fire" that runs around the Pacific Ocean. The chain of fire is a string of volcances and earthquake zones running along the borders of the Pacific Ocean in the Western Hemisphere and in Asia in the Eastern Hemisphere. In 1959 a part of the chain of fire erupted after having been quiet for 91 years. At the height of its 1959 activity, two million tons of lava per hour gushed from the volcano's opening, spreading over a wide area and hardening to form new rock.

4   An interesting story of the birth of a volcano concerns the formation of a new island off the coast of Iceland. On the morning of November 13, 1963, Olafur Vestmann was standing quietly at the rail of his fishing boat. Suddenly, the boat began to move as if it were caught in a whirlpool. A large, black cloud of smoke began to rise from the water. The captain turned his boat around and approached the cloud of smoke. He and his crew could see that the smoke contained ashes and pieces of lava that were being thrown into the air from an underwater volcano. That same night the volcano broke through the surface of the water. By morning a small volcanic cone stood ten meters above the water.

5   The volcano continued to grow. In two days it was nearly 40 meters high and 545 meters long. A column of smoke nearly 17 kilometers high could be seen 125 kilometers away. By the end of the year the volcanic cone stood 150 meters above the surface of the ocean and the new island was about a kilometer wide. Icelanders called the island Surtsey.

1.   A **chain of fire**, as used in paragraph 3, refers to
A.   volcanoes
B.   earthquakes and forest fires
C.   volcanoes and earthquakes
D.   lava and ashes

2.   *Surtsey*, a recently formed volano, was named by residents of
A.   Costa Rica
B.   Hawaii
C.   Alaska
D.   Iceland

3.   An example of a volcano that had been extinct for 500 years but which suddenly began to erupt again is
A.   Mount Olafur
B.   Mount Surtsey
C.   Mount Arenal
D.   Mount Everest

4.   Only one of the following statements is true. Indicate which one it is
A.   Volcanologists first discovered Surtsey.
B.   Olafur Vestmann was in his boat when he saw the birth of a new volcano.
C.   There are "chains of fire" in every area of the world.
D.   It took two years for Surtsey to reach a height of 150 meters above sea level.

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5.   Only one of the following statements is true. Indicate which one it is:
A.   Mount Arenal is off the coast of Iceland.
B.   Mount Arenal was the first extinct volcano ever to come to life again.
C.   The chain of fire around the Pacific Ocean erupted in the nineteenth century.
D.   Surtsey was formed in the nineteenth century.

6.   Only one of the following statements is false. Indicate which one it is:
A.   Lava is a liquid substance that is emitted from volcanoes.
B.   Surtsey became a small island within a year of its birth.
C.   Lava hardens to form rock when it cools.
D.   It is impossible for a volcano to emit a million tons of lava in an hour.

7.   Only one of the following statements is false. Indicate which one it is:
A.   It is possible for a volcano to erupt after being extinct for 400 years or more.
B.   The eruption of Mount Arenal a few years ago was a non-lethal event.
C.   The eruption of Mount Arenal a few years ago was an unexpected event.
D.   The birth of Surtsey was an event that was witnessed by fishermen.

8.   Which one of the following words has a completely different meaning to the others?
A.   extinct   .
B.   ashes
C.   lifeless
D.   dead

9.   Which one of the following words has a completely different meaning to the others?
A.   explode
B.   burst
C.   erupt
D.   spread

10.   Which one of the following words has a completely different meaning to the others?
A.   thrown
B.   beat
C.   flung
D.   tossed

11.   **Many people, as well as hundreds of cattle, died from the effects of the exploding volcano and resulting flow of lava (paragraph 2) means the same as**
A.   When the lava flowed, the volcano exploded and killed everyone.
B.   The result of the volcanic eruption and lava flow was the death of a large number of people and cattle.
C.   Many animals and people were affected by the volcano's exploding lava flow.
D.   The volcano was severely affected by many people and hundreds of cattle.

12.   **Although they feel it probably will not erupt, scientists admit that they do not know for sure (paragraph 1) means the same as**
A.   Scientists express uncertainty about the possibility of its erupting again.
B.   Since they have admitted it, scientists probably are uncertain.
C.   By feeling uncertain, scientists reveal that they're unsure about admitting something about the eruptions.
D.   Scientists are reluctant to admit that they can predict the future eruption, although they are certain.

13.   A volcano normally takes the shape of a
A.   whirlpool
B.   cloud
C.   column
D.   cone

14. **Gushed** (paragraph 3) means
A. a rapid, forceful flow
B. a trickle of hot liquid
C. a sudden explosion
D. a rapid, whirling motion

15. **Chain of fire** and **string of volcanoes** (paragraph 3) are both
A. sentences
B. verbs
C. metaphors
D. abstractions

16. A **ton** is a measure of
A. height
B. weight
C. volume
D. width

17. Passage Number One is mainly
A. criticism
B. general information
C. personal opinion
D. an interview

PASSAGE NUMBER TWO

One of the major problems confronting South Africans is how to deal effectively with socio-economic inequalities caused by the politics of the past. A close look at the public-sector staff composition illustrates the degree of the problem. Currently whites constitute more than 40% of the total staff complement of the public sector and it is estimated that white males hold 98% of the managerial positions. It is also estimated that in the private sector white managers earn on average 48 times more than their workers.

Over the years blacks have constructed a negative picture of whites as being exploitative and selfish. Public and private sectors acknowledge that something needs to be done to narrow the income gap. Everybody agrees that a system of empowering the underprivileged groups needs to be worked out. Some companies have gone further and implemented affirmative action programmes.

At face value these programmes appear to be progressive because they increase the number of black managers in the company, but in essence they are not. Most of the blacks that are paraded as affirmative action products are mere ornaments to beautify the image of the company. And in most cases they are not placed in decision-making structures.

What is surely needed at this time is a realisation that affirmative action is not about enriching the few without building their capacity. Nor is it about beautifying the image of big companies. Especially important is the setting up of job-related training programmes to enable the affirmed persons to develop their skills.

18. **Public Sector staff** refers to employees of
A. big companies
B. educational institutions
C. the state
D. non-governmental organisations

19. **The degree of the problem** means
A. the extent of the problem
B. the solution to the problem
C. the cause of the problem
D. a problematic qualification

20. **A negative picture** refers to
A. an unhealthy situation
B. a photograph
C. a bad image
D. insulting language

21. **The income gap** refers to
A. an unofficial entrance
B. a power differential
C. inequality before the law
D. a disparity in remuneration

22. The writer of passage number two claims that
A. the affirmative action programmes are not essential
B. the affirmative action programmes are truly progressive
C. the affirmative action programmes are not quite what they seem
D. affirmative action programmes are a total waste of time

23. **Building their capacity** means
A. increasing their consumption
B. providing new homes
C. the ability to construct
D. increasing their abilities

24. Passage number two is
A. a factual report
B. personal opinion
C. fictional narrative
D. a private joke

25. Passage number two is from
A. a job description
B. a newspaper article
C. a government communique
D. a company brochure

SECTION B: WRITING

1. Write a short summary of passage number one. This means that you must write a short passage which contains only the most important points that occur in passage number one. You should try to use your own words as much as possible and your summary should be approximately 75 words.

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2. Passage number two is about inequality and affirmative action. Write a short essay in which you discuss the problem of inequality in South Africa and possible solutions to it, such as affirmative action. You must give sound reasons for your opinions. Your essay should be approximately 125 words.

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