



NATHEP

NEW ACADEMICS TRANSITIONING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT

**A CASE FOR CRITICAL PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND CONTEXTUALISED
INDUCTION PRACTICES**

Editor
Kasturi Behari-Leak

**New Academics Transitioning
into Higher Education:
a case for critical professional
development and contextualised
induction practices**

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FOREWORD

Never has the question of professional development been more important than now: how do we equip and support new academics in the higher education (HE) space (UNESCO, 2024)? This book, edited by Kasturi Behari-Leak, written by diverse and inspiring authors, begins to answer this question. The book offers rich case studies from universities across South Africa (SA) on how academics are inducted, supported and indeed inspired, to facilitate the teaching and learning project of higher education.

Each author shares Prof Behari-Leak's commitment and inspiration for meaningful professional development and relevant induction programmes of teaching and learning staff in higher education. Each chapter situates itself in a unique context, not only providing a rich case study, full of lessons learnt, but also inspires in ways that encourage each institution and the higher education sector on the whole to embark on a comprehensive and systemic approach to staff development in higher education in South Africa. Quality teaching is required to sharpen the impact of the HE sector on student success, and the book highlights the how, the who and the why.

While there are debates on what professional development means in the higher education sector, perhaps preceded by the question around which profession it even refers to, Behari-Leak and her co-authors provide a conceptual roadmap locating professional development in a theoretical context, followed by case studies from the 10 participating higher education institutions (HEIs) which all make the project real, show the applicability and relevance and how the project was articulated to the various HEI contexts and cultures. The last chapters (12 and 13) focus on meta reflections and implications for the HE sector.

I thoroughly appreciated the personal reflections by Prof Behari-Leak, which locate the motivation for this project and contextualises its relevance. The book is a cogent argument why staff development for academic staff is so sorely needed and raises key questions on how such development might be undertaken, who does it, in what way and for whose benefit. New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) is shaped and designed in the 'cascading' quasi-train-the-trainer model which is adaptable and responsive to all contexts across SA HE as the case-study chapters illustrate so well.

This book focusses on conscientising the teachers/academics about their role and agency and how they need to be "better" and "different" teachers/academics to what they themselves probably had. NATHEP aims to awaken agency and responsiveness in the teachers/academics to become teachers/academics that

empower and embolden students in ways that are relevant to the needs of our institutions and our context. NATHEP equips us to shape the teaching and learning (T&L) context into a new, more relevant, and humanising context.

This concept of “apprenticeship by observation” embodies, for me, the very challenges that we face with our teaching staff and perhaps all staff in HE. We need to shift our ability and understanding towards a post-colonial teaching and learning paradigm which is new for all of us. The second concept that permeates the book is the idea of a “profession” or “professional development”. Prof Behari-Leak raises the discussion around professional development as it relates to a “profession” – perhaps defining, or at least attempting to define a profession, the gatekeeping aspects, the non-profession, the inclusion and exclusion factors, and what makes a profession, indeed, if at all, necessary, etc.

NATHEP locates itself in this debate and is not just a professional training but offers an argument to bring domains into closer relations. This can be extended beyond the T&L domain and is applicable to all of HE: indeed all management and leadership, including Student Affairs and Services, requires an NATHEP-type induction, so that we can shift the sector more significantly into a responsive, attuned and engaged sector. I would like to see the impact of NATHEP extended to all HE induction programmes – for all staff.

The book “aims to inspire” (pg. 5) and indeed it does!

Prof Birgit Schreiber

HELM Senior Associate

September 2024

Birgit Schreiber



Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
UNESCO. (2024). Online consultation on the Revision of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel Confirmation. (1997). <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-concerning-status-higher-education-teaching-personnel>

in his legitimisation code theory (LCT). Siyabulela is currently developing linkages between LCT and the racial contract of Charles. W. Mills to strengthen the external language of description necessary to engage with social practices in a racialised HE context.

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PRELUDE

The New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) was launched in August 2018 with 20 academic staff developers from 10 universities nationally, each represented by two staff developers from that institution. The overarching aim of the project was for each participating university to develop a relevant and theorised approach to induction practices for their university, without minimising or essentialising the specificities of contextual constraints faced. Through NATHEP, university participants were supported to initiate well-conceptualised induction programmes in their institutional contexts, where these were non-existent or needed enhancement. The vision of NATHEP was to address historical and systemic challenges in higher education by promoting a critical approach to staff development and professional learning, and to creating enabling conditions for a new cadre of academics to respond meaningfully to the pressing challenges of institutional and national contexts.

It was the intention of NATHEP to disseminate its work widely to share insights, reflections, challenges and responses garnered through the project. As a scholarly endeavour, emanating from the practically implemented project, this book serves as a collaborative research output, where each university partnership had to reflect, theorise, create, critique and apply what was learnt in the project to their real contexts of induction. Throughout this process, we encouraged staff developers to work in the nexus between teaching and research to legitimise and validate staff development programmes as a rigorous scholarly activity, embedded in a field of educational/academic development practice that has been long established.

Through this book, we become acutely aware of institutionally differentiated contexts and the structural and cultural constraints that work against staff developers, and by extension their institutions and their new academics, in optimising induction as a scholarly practice. The book showcases the opportunities and affordances of professional development interventions already in place for new academics, and how these can be adapted. This book thus provides the container and the conduit for the dissemination of critical insights gleaned regarding induction programmes in the interest of student and staff success.

The book is also pertinent in that it recognises the work of educational/academic development as a necessary practice to support staff and student development. In “commissioning” and supporting this project, the DHET demonstrated its recognition of the important work done by academic staff developers in their teaching and learning centres, nationally. Enhancing the capacity of professional staff who provide support for university teachers and teaching through professional development interventions is also critical to the success of the entire academic enterprise.

This book is written for anyone involved in teaching and learning at universities to inspire them to exercise their agency towards meaningful change. It especially addresses academic and professional staff developers to provide creative strategies for enhancing professional development practice, based on rich theorisation, contextualisation and relevance in the current context. This book can support new and experienced staff developers in understanding the design of new programmes and interventions by reflecting on what counts as effective pedagogy. It engages with how teaching is/should be conceptualised if relevance to context is critical to creating more inclusive, represented and socially just university classrooms.

In using the phrase “university classroom” instead of lecture hall, we retain the focus on teaching and learning as interactive engagements between teacher and student; not unidirectional as suggested in the use of traditional nomenclature such as “lecture”. Also, the university “classroom” extends beyond the physical space into online and virtual spaces which have opened up since the pandemic. This phrase also encompasses the symbolic coming together of teacher and student in this partnership. By engaging in the methodology the book offers, university teaching can become less reliant on external frames and tools or outside experts. If academics and staff developers know how to harness what they know already to be change agents, we have a good prognosis for the sustainability of the HE system and university teaching and learning centres as well.

It is also relevant for new academics who must navigate what it means to be an academic today in the current context of global and societal challenges. Given the diverse teaching staff and student body in HE, contextual continuity no longer exists as a predictable and sustainable marker for students or staff. Intergenerational gaps exist in social and cultural capital as well as in the access to the kinds of knowledge needed to succeed. New academics entering the field are especially vulnerable, only partially understanding the full complexities of the social world of the university they are expected to enter, mediate and/or change. Where once being an academic had more to do with what one knew than who one was, in the current ethos, one’s identity, positionality, position and agency are important in terms of these intersections as important levers to understand how one fits in, if at all. Moreover, the conceptual shift from discipline expert or professional to teacher/educator is an overarching challenge for many new academics, making it somewhat difficult to transition into the HE classroom with confidence and understanding.

We hope this book provides a useful channel for linking pedagogy with theorised practice. The journey of NATHEP sheds light on the possibilities in different contexts. It has been curated at the nexus of theory and practice, to assert that professional

development and teaching emerge from theoretical conceptualisations that are appropriately contextualised.

The book is divided into three parts. In Part One, the introductory chapters 0-4 provide a framing for the project and its backstory, context, theory, discourses and methodology. Where relevant, field-specific knowledge is applied in the different parts to show its relation to how theories, concepts and discourses were activated in the project.

In Part Two, chapters 5-14 present the unique case studies of the ten participating universities. The case studies can be read in any order and may be clustered for different purposes, for example, urban, rural, comprehensive.

In Part Three, the final chapters 15 and 16 offer a cross-case analysis and a meta-reflection of the insights gleaned, assertions made, conclusions drawn and suggestions for future use by the sector as a whole.

It is with a sense of hope and courage that we exercised our agency in meaningful ways through NATHEP to imagine a different reality for higher education. This journey and commitment find expression between these covers. Even though it is a small contribution to change, relative to the seismic challenges that still confront HE, it is a hopeful one.

Onwards and upwards for us all!



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ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Academic Development
ADU	Academic Development Unit
CHATGPT	Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DUT	Durban University of Technology
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EASCEP	Existing Academic Staff Capacity Enhancement Programme
ECAs	Early Career Academics
HBU	Historically Black Universities
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HoDs	Heads of Departments
HR	Human Resources
HR&D	Human Resources and Development
ICED	International Consortium of Educational Developers
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDs	Instructional Designers
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
IT	Information Technology
LMS	Learning Management System
MEDUNSA	Medical University of Southern Africa
MUT	Mangosuthu University of Technology
NAs	New Academics
NA	Needs Analysis
NAQ	Needs Analysis Questionnaire
NAPP	New Academic Practitioners' Programme
NATHEP	New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project
NATRC	New Academics' Transitions into Higher Education Regional Colloquium
NBI	Needs-Based Induction
NFFEAUT	National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers
nGAP	Next Generation Academic Practitioners
NMU	Nelson Mandela University
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
OD	Organisational Development
PAD	Professional Academic Development

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PDPs	Professional Development Practitioners
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
RDG	Research Development Grant
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SC	Steering Committee
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SMU	Sefako Makgatho University
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSAUF	Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework
TDG	Teaching Development Grant
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
UCDG	University Capacity Development Grant
UCDP	University Capacity Development Plan
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UL	University of Limpopo
UNIVEN	University of Venda
UniZulu	University of Zululand
UoT	University of Technology
VC	Vice-Chancellor
VUT	Vaal University of Technology
WSU	Walter Sisulu University
WITS	University of Witwatersrand



PART ONE

Setting the Stage:
the “Parts and the People”
in NATHEP

CHAPTER ZERO

The significance of zero in NATHEP

Introduction

When one considers the structure of a book, it is common to start with Chapter One which provides the introduction, background and context for the subject matter. This first chapter, however, does not provide any background or responses as to the why, when, who and how questions that led to the origin and content in the first place. This input is often bracketed off from the main content.

This book intentionally starts with Chapter Zero, to reinstate the significance of the concept of zero, often thought of as “nothing” but is the real beginning, the embryo from which great things are birthed. In paying homage to the concept of zero as “something”, I also included a Chapter Zero, in my doctoral dissertation, to acknowledge my process of coming into being as a doctoral candidate and scholar who challenged the notion of nothingness, and asserted that it is from “zero-ness” that something can be developed, shaped and nurtured into substance and form.

Zero is important across various fields, including mathematics, science, philosophy, and culture. Zero plays a crucial role as a placeholder in the decimal number system and is the identity element for addition in arithmetic. In computer science, zero is one of the two binary digits (0 and 1) used to encode data. It is critical in defining negative numbers, fractions, and limits in calculus. In economics and finance, a “zero-sum game” refers to the idea of balance or neutrality where opposing forces or ideas cancel each other out. The concept of zero is also used in cosmology to describe the lowest possible energy state of a quantum system. Zero as a symbol of “emptiness” is a positive concept in Buddhism and Taoism, to emphasise the “emptiness” in existence and consciousness. In different cultural understandings, zero is a symbol of cycles and rebirth, marking the beginning and end, linked to the ideas of rebirth, infinity, or circular time.

The concept of zero holds profound significance in the creation of this book which emerged as a process of coming full circle as well as a potential for new beginnings. It demonstrates the intertwined nature and entanglements of a rhizomatic view of life and energy where all matter is connected in some way. Like holons, we are simultaneously a whole in and of itself, as well as a part of a larger whole. So is this book, which is an emergence of multiple forces, contributions and energies. Ubuntu in action!

Coming full circle

As an academic staff developer, I have been closely connected to the field of

practice of new academics for many years, so much so that I undertook a doctoral study entitled “Conditions enabling or constraining the exercise of agency among new academics in higher education, conducive to the social inclusion of students” (Behari-Leak, 2015). My interest in my doctoral study was born out of my involvement in 2011 as the convenor and facilitator of an academic staff development initiative known as the Teaching Development Programme (TDP) for new academics at a South African university of technology. My vantage point as TDP facilitator offered me profound insights into the challenges of new academics as they struggled to immerse and embed themselves in the educational ethos of the institution.

From field of practice to PhD

The TDP became the basis of enquiry for my doctoral study which focused on the exercise of agency among new academics, conducive to the social inclusion of students. The unit of analysis was the new academic, whose narratives were analysed through six in-depth case studies. Using Roy Bhaskar’s critical realism and Margaret Archer’s social realist theory, I explored how new academics transitioned from varied entry points into higher education while they negotiated their identity and agency in their contextual settings at an institutional, faculty and departmental level. My study showed that despite difficult contextual influences, the positive exercise of agency is a marked feature of new academics whose actions are driven through their own concerns, commitments and projects in higher education. In addition, my study revealed that current induction practices for the transition of new academics into HE, were inadequate to the task of transformation because systemic conditions, conducive to critical agency and social justice, were not enabling. This finding had immediate implications for academic staff development programmes at disciplinary and departmental levels, pointing to how staff developers could approach the professionalisation of new academics through more conscientised and contextualised practices.

From PhD to institutional practice

My doctoral dissertation has been instrumental in shaping my staff development work at many levels, locally and globally. I have drawn on theory and insights to deepen my understanding of the university as a structural and cultural entity, influenced and changed by choices agents make. Based on my PhD study, I was able to successfully re-design and implement an existing professional development programme for new academics known as the New Academic Practitioners’ Programme (NAPP) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). When I took over convenorship of NAPP in 2015, I infused the induction programme with a theorised and contextualised layering to create conditions for newcomers to exercise their agency in ways that respond to the challenges and opportunities in a complex higher education context.

From institutional to regional practice

To extend this intervention beyond my university, I, together with my staff development counterparts in the four Western Cape universities, convened a regional colloquium in 2017 to bring together five new academics from each university to share scholarly ideas and strategies on how they were navigating their contexts and mediating their challenges. This led to an annual event known as New Academics' Transitions into Higher Education Regional Colloquium (NATRC). Based on the success of both NAPP and NATRC, and the evident need for such an intervention, I submitted a proposal for funds for a regional professional development programme targeted at new academics in the Western Cape region. This programme aimed to provide a holistic and enabling orientation for new academics to strengthen their teaching, learning, assessment and technology practices for the postcolonial higher education classroom.

From regional to national practice

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) invited me to apply to lead a national collaborative project on new academics' transitions into higher education (HE), to target the enhancement of academics as university teachers through a capacity building funding intervention, the University Capacity Development Plan (UCDG). Leaning into my knowledge, experience, and research undertaken in this area, I submitted the national collaborative grant application proposal, highlighting the implications of my doctoral study (Behari-Leak, 2015), namely that if the concerns, commitments and projects with which new academics enter HE are harnessed optimally at the outset of their academic journeys, new academics would most likely maintain this commitment, continued support, to ensure their success as well as student success in university classrooms. This resonated well with DHET's agenda for transformation, and given the diversity across the project, the proposal also aligned well with the UCDP goal 4.1: "to provide a development resource to address transformation imperatives in the university system through the provision of quality research development and teaching development opportunities for all academics from recruitment to retirement" (DHET, 2017). In response to my UCDG application, the DHET included a caveat that suggested the new project should include universities that did not have staff development programmes aimed at induction, as well as those universities in dire need of enhancing existing ones.

And so...NATHEP was born

The proposal was accepted, and the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) was born. I reached out to colleagues to invite them to join the steering committee (SC) of NATHEP. My selection of SC members was

based on colleagues' track record of successful staff development initiatives at their own universities as well as their role in the national arena of teaching and learning and professional development.

As soon as the SC was confirmed, the NATHEP launched in August 2018 with two academic staff developers (project participants) each from 10 universities nationally. Through NATHEP, project participants were supported to initiate and convene well-theorised and conceptualised induction programmes in their institutional contexts to address historical and systemic challenges and to contribute to the transformation of higher education. A further aim of this project was to see if academic staff developers would be driven by corresponding but different concerns and commitments. Through the intervention provided by NATHEP, each university team created its own contextualised and customised new academic induction programme, where this was nonexistent or needed enhancement. The pandemic years in 2020–2021 were difficult for the project as we lost momentum and time. With the willingness of the SC and participants, we were able to switch to online meetings and workshops to ensure NATHEP moved at a steady (even though slow) pace, despite challenges. The biggest casualty during this time was the loss of a dear colleague and university participant, Dr Sithembiso Ngubane (UniZul) whom we honour and memorialise as we launch this book.

Heartfelt acknowledgement and gratitude

Although the SC endured many changes over the years, all members played a valuable role in bringing the project to life in the time they served on the committee. The following colleagues are acknowledged for their contributions to the project in its formative years: Jo-Anne Vorster, Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela, Kwena Masha (four months) and Joe Makua; Amanda Hlengwa (who joined for a short period as nGAP researcher); Anthea Metcalfe who served as project manager in 2018; and Goitsione Mokou, Amandla Ngwendu and Xolelwa Ngantweni who served as research assistants for short periods in years one and two. We are also thankful to Hayley Gewer who supported the case study process as academic development writing consultant. The current SC, namely Noluthando Toni (NMU), Rieta Ganas (Wits), Nalini Chitanand (DUT) and Siya Sabata (CPUT) are the longest standing academic members and the stalwarts of NATHEP. From the time they joined, they shared the vision of the project and believed in its tenets and principles. It is through their unique efforts as academic staff developers, their leadership, professionalism and expertise in the field as well as their support, commitment and dedication to transformation and decolonisation, that NATHEP achieved its outcomes as a meaningful contribution in the national HE landscape. Each colleague also served as a mentor to the university case study teams and worked tirelessly to support and guide them through the book project. Together we built a healthy container for the project to grow and succeed.



Figure 1 NATHEP Steering Committee

The work of the SC and participants would not have thrived without the support of Ms Avrill Dawson (administrative officer in CHED, UCT), who became the backbone for the administrative, operational and logistical management of the project. Avrill's disposition and generosity of spirit endeared her to everyone in the project as she became the go-to person when challenges arose. Avrill's dedication and commitment contributed to the success of NATHEP in myriad ways. Avrill's expanded repertoire through working on this national platform makes her a good role model, demonstrating possibilities and achievements if we work in the same direction towards the realisation of a common goal.

We were later supported by Zinhle Mthombeni (research administrator in CHED, UCT), who joined the project in 2023 at an appropriate and critical time, to support the overall book project and the case studies specifically. Zinhle's keen eye and professional gaze has added much value to various iterations of the book. She has worked diligently to support the various stages and phases of the compilation process, and she is commended and appreciated for her scholarly approach to her work. Ms Deidre Schippers, (programme manager of academic staff development in CHED, UCT), joined the project in 2024 to assist with the book production process. Deidre has a penchant for the creative and innovative in her work and her dedication, willingness and generosity of time, effort and attention to detail are

acknowledged and valued highly.

NATHEP was intentional about blurring the boundaries between the proverbial academic and administrative divide and this proved to be a generative experience, creating new possibilities and practices for project teams. A critical outcome of coming together in this way meant that as we worked with the project and its transformative imperatives, we could not help being transformed ourselves. This change, known as double-loop morphogenesis (derived from double-loop learning), represents a deep, transformative form of learning and adaptation. While single-loop learning involves making adjustments within existing frameworks, double-loop morphogenesis drives change at the foundational level, impacting underlying structures, assumptions, and beliefs. It plays a critical role in systems that require both responsiveness and the capacity for profound change, whether in organisations, educational settings, or social systems. I asked the SC members to reflect on their transformative journeys through NATHEP and it is evident from their meditations below that NATHEP has had a profound influence and impact on each of us, in similar, yet different ways. Each piece attests to the possibilities and imaginaries that can be realised if projects come together with the right people who have the right intention, right action and right purpose.



Siya Sabata

Teaching and Learning Specialist: Academic Planning Unit, University of the Western Cape

My participation in NATHEP broadened my understanding of the challenges facing higher education in South Africa. While the focus was the induction of new academics into HE, the scope of the project challenged the team to engage not only with the complexities of what it means to be an academic in a historically racialised higher education, but also to understand how new academics continue to navigate the “afterlife” of this racial order in the post-apartheid era. NATHEP created a conducive platform for the SC to stretch imaginations in an attempt to co-construct theoretical tools which guided enactment of induction programmes across all participating universities.

Through this process of collective struggle, deep study and critique, we became the NATHEP family driven by desire to strive towards just and equitable higher education and society. This family grew from strength to strength and became an affirming, caring and most importantly, an intellectually stimulating space that sharpened my academic gaze. These NATHEP family bonds and commitment towards struggle for justice made it relatively easy for the SC to impart these values to the participants. Our workshops and reflective sessions with participants emboldened the NATHEP

vision and enforced camaraderie to the entire team. We benefitted enormously from interactions with participants and the different university contexts opened our eyes to varied, complex challenges facing universities in South Africa.

Siya Sabata



Dr Nolutando Toni

**Director of Teaching Development in the Learning and Teaching Collaborative for Success (LT Collab) Division
Nelson Mandela University**

I joined NATHEP in May 2018. Over the years, my participation in the project assisted me to identify my professional gaps and blind spots in providing academic leadership to my colleagues and peers. As I reflect on my journey, I am mindful of the influence of fellow SC members as well as the academic developers I have interacted with for the duration of the project. Prof Kasturi Behari-Leak, the visionary behind the project emphasised the importance of theorised academic programmes. She provided guidance on the theory of change and used critical realism not just as a lens but as a firm foundation for the (re)conceptualisation of the academic induction programmes. This (NATHEP participation) to me was a rewarding action research experience. The biggest lesson for me was the importance of a clear philosophical foundation for any programme of action in academic development.

I realised that as much as I always claimed to know this as an academic, my understanding was at a “mechanical” level where I was applying steps and processes of postgraduate learning. NATHEP amplified the benefits of going beyond “common sense” and digging deeper to get to a stage of being scholarly, critical and contextual in one’s approach. The notion of not providing useful tips and process for academic induction and any teaching enhancement programme was re-enforced. NATHEP’s CRITical framework proved useful not just for our academic induction, I extended elements thereof to my leadership approach. I have come to appreciate the value of authenticity and the legitimacy of who I am, what I have been through (my lived experiences) and what I bring to the learning and teaching environment. I have come to realise the need to be constantly alert to how academics respond to our interactions and how connections are formed, leveraged and used for forward action. I am grateful for the opportunity to be positively influenced by my peers and share my views and expertise with my fellow academic developers.

Nolutando Toni



Ms Rieta Ganas

Lecturer and educational developer, Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development (CLTD) University of the Witwatersrand

Being invited onto the SC was such a privilege, little did I know it would become the catalyst to my evolving professional identity. The impostor (only two years in the field) feeling at first coming to work amongst such AD stalwarts, but this turned into continuous confidence through genuine collaboration, engaging all ideas and distributive leadership by a project lead with a vision to enhance the agency of EVERY project participant. NATHEP under very thoughtful, caring and visionary leadership was a space for relational building, first challenging our relational and professional self, understanding our lens on life, aligning our inherent values and our cultural beings to our African soil and context.

Amidst all the disrupting, discomfoting, theorising, workshopping, researching professional learning work, was hours of rolling laughter, connections, care, love, action, camaraderie and belief in each other, from project lead to SC to administrator to researcher and AD participants – everyone was a significant part of the precious NATHEP circle. It has certainly been a catalyst to my inspiring and transformative AD learning journey every step of the way, becoming the driving force behind the conceptualisation of my PhD and which continues to shape AD practices and my ways of knowing, doing and being,

Much love and gratitude is extended to: Kasturi for taking on such a project and growing so many of us with the processes that started off as your ASD/HE intuitive and depth knowledge, Avriill for always holding us before during, after and in between the years, Zinhle, for all the research, technical and scholarly work towards the book project and being an integral part of the team, the SC, all my possibilities, through this journey with you all could only be possible with you as this encouraging, motivating and when needed challenging and passionate team, and finally to the AD participants, your energy, passion, hunger for AD, institutional and HE transformation is what kept me going endeavouring to be as responsive and relevant as I could be as the NATHEP collective continues to rise within and beyond the project!

Rieta Ganas



Mrs Nalini Chitanand

Academic Development Practitioner: Staff Development, Durban University of Technology

Having spent three decades in academic development, with 20 years in academic staff development, I have consistently advocated for transformative and sustainable practices in higher education and academic development. Reflecting on these three decades I have realised the gaps and limitations in my own understanding and practices of transformative education.

My participation in NATHEP has been pivotal to my transformative learning experiences as an academic developer, prompting me to question my own values, assumptions, prejudices and actions. This illuminated further gaps and revealed the emptiness of my AD practices. It sowed the seeds for understanding what a truly transformative and socially just higher education environment ought to be, particularly in recognising and valuing the plurality of knowledges, ways of knowing and becoming. I realised my own complicity in perpetuating the status quo of the neoliberal university, where the focus often centred on metrics such as throughput rates and success rates. While I long advocated for transformative education, I realised that my approach remained largely performative and I knew that deeper engagement with contexts, examining whose interests are really being served (or not served) by higher education, what kinds of knowledges we are legitimating, and why, who and what's been centred or marginalised - became central and critical questions for my AD practice. These imperatives underpinned by a decolonial focus have been instrumental in my own transformative learning. They have significantly influenced and shaped my academic staff development practice and research following my participation in NATHEP. Currently, I am leading a large institutional project on epistemic decolonisation and a scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) programme underpinned by a decolonial lens.

My developing PhD thesis on academic staff development promotes a southern gaze for academic staff development - this approach entangles contextualised knowledge, being and ethical commitment for a truly transformative and socially just higher education, society and world - an ethico-onto-epistemology, following Barad (2007). Such an approach compels us to question and recognise who and what matters in higher education, society and the world, and to contest and rework who and what is excluded. Academic staff development I believe, has this ethical and moral obligation to humanity and the more-than-human world.

I promote collaboration, co-creation and dialogue for my staff development programmes. I have experienced this first hand being enacted during the NATHEP

engagements. Our project leader Prof Kasturi Behari-Leak has been a key driver for nurturing our own professional learning as well as co-learning with our SC members and participants that have been invaluable to me. This demonstrates Ubuntu in action. I recognise that I am on a continuous spiral of learning, unlearning, relearning and becoming-with, entangled within the fabric of higher education. My NATHEP journey has been a significant moment in this process.

Nalini Chitanand

Dr Zinhle Mthombeni



Research Coordinator, Academic Staff and Professional Development Unit University of Cape Town

I joined NATHEP at the beginning of the book compilation project as a Research Coordinator. Reading through the journeys of academic developers as they navigated the redesign of their institutional induction programmes, as reflected in the case studies, has been quite enlightening. Each case study offers insights that can be gleaned for the different types of universities our country offers.

As the NATHEP project, in part, aims to deepen academics' understanding of the conditioning structures and culture that influence classroom practices and enable academic developers to conceptualise well-theorised induction programmes for new academics, insights contained in this book provide value for academic developers in the higher education sector.

Zinhle Mthombeni



Avrill Dawson

**Administrative Officer, Academic Staff and Professional Development Unit
University of Cape Town**

My journey with New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education (NATHEP) started in 2017 when the Dean of CHED and Director of ASPD, Assoc Prof Kasturi Behari-Leak and I were attending our New Academics' Transitions Regional Colloquium (NATRC) regional programme's first planning meeting which brought together new academics in the region, and we thought about doing the same programme nationally. I mentioned to Kasturi that in two years, the programme could be offered nationally. With her dedication and commitment to academic staff development, she started with a proposal, and not even a year later, in April 2018, the first planning meeting was confirmed.

Starting the NATHEP journey as the administrator of the programme was a new challenge for me and included administration duties on an advanced level of communication, logistics and planning as the project brought together 10 universities across the country and seven SC members.

Working with the NATHEP steering committee (SC) and participants over the past few years, I have built different relationships with each university's groups. Being part of the programme even during COVID-19, with online meetings, I have learnt and shared my experience as well as being an administrator. With the book launch and the NATHEP programme coming to an end, I share the joy and success of the project. I am grateful and blessed with the opportunity and experience I was graced with from God. With humbleness, I would like to thank all involved for giving me the opportunity to serve as the NATHEP Administrator.

Avrill Dawson



Ms Deidre Schippers

**Programme Coordinator, Academic Staff and
Professional Development Unit
University of Cape Town**

I joined NATHEP in the book production process, and it allowed me to learn about the project, its goals and its outputs. It also allowed me to learn about the importance and value of true collaboration in the national space.

To me, not only did this project become a platform to knowledge-share and co-create systems and structures to support new academics, but it also provided a contextual and meaningful account of staff development at the 10 participating universities, acknowledging the associated challenges and more importantly the collaborative effort towards creating consistent programmes so that ALL new academics can benefit from the same kinds of support regardless of what institution they teach at.

It has been a beautiful and humbling experience to be part of a project with such a far reach. I truly believe that if these types of projects would be embarked on as a means of standard practice and provide this kind of critical reflection and conceptualisation on practice at all the different points in an academic's journey, it could transform the academy as we know it, making space for academics to be supported, capacitated and enabled in their role as university teachers, and ultimately translating into student success.

Deidre Schippers



From
NATHEP,
this book
is born...

This book emerges out of NATHEP, as a tribute to the academic staff developers on this project and their meaningful contributions to professional development capacity building, in particular. These project participants, through their commitment to professional advancement and expansion of the sector, ensure that teaching and learning is facilitated by university teachers who are appropriately supported and capacitated. Authors' imprints on the collection of case studies which form the substantive spine of this book, are acknowledged and valued. The case studies provide a snapshot of institutional staff development practices in a differentiated national landscape in sharp relief to contextual challenges, documenting the rich and nuanced journey that project participants embarked on, to create well-considered, theorised and relevant models of induction for new academics, under the guidance of the NATHEP SC members who acted as mentors to each university partnership.

As we launch the NATHEP book, I acknowledge the full circle this project has come. From its humble beginnings in a doctoral study to its extended reach into the national landscape as a research output, the book illuminates the meaning of taking the road less travelled, to show how we can make a difference, each step of the journey, together.

CHAPTER ONE

Situating and Positioning NATHEP in the Higher Education Context

Kasturi Behari-Leak

Introduction

The New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project, known as NATHEP, was a national collaborative project in Higher Education (HE) in South Africa, focused on the professional development of academic staff developers involved in the induction programmes of new academics transitioning into HE. This chapter sets out the aims and goals of the project and provides a rationale and justification for NATHEP's purpose and necessity in the current context. The importance of academic staff development/professional development was given significant emphasis in the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)'s framework (2018), which recognises the need to increase and enhance the capacity of academics who teach, to shift the needle on student throughput. University Capacity Development Plan (UCDG) projects in the 2018–2020 cycle, of which NATHEP was part, were keenly focused on staff and student developmental activities, as well as on decolonisation of the curriculum.

Following the 2015–2016 student protests in South Africa and globally, the DHET used redress and responsiveness as two significant levers to respond to students' challenges, namely the inequalities, prejudices and structural disadvantages that continue to characterise South African society, our universities and our classrooms. For example, to address local, cultural and social absences in the curriculum as part of their UCDG, student development activities at one university focused on:

"... reducing alienation, empowering students to write, ensuring access to academic discursive practices; bridging the gap from high school into university, increasing throughput and success rates for students and closing achievement gaps; improving the completion rate, reducing the average time to completion of PhD students and psychosocial support" (UCDG, 2017).

The importance of induction is critical to the DHET's transformation plan (DHET, 2017) to provide teaching, research and holistic professional development opportunities for all academics from recruitment to retirement. While this was a DHET funded and initiated project, the mandate and responsibility for addressing national needs and goals lie not only with the DHET but with institutions themselves, who articulate these aspirations in their mission and vision statements, as well as through their curricula, pedagogy and assessment practices within each of the institutional contexts. Accordingly, staff development activities at some universities focused on:

"... increasing capacity of both researchers and teachers, to accelerate the pipeline of future academics through holistic professional development opportunities, and by investing in growing the pipeline of black, women academics" (UCDG, 2017).

Given the unequally resourced HE landscape, there is a range of existing induction practices at several universities. Many of these belong to well-resourced and historically advantaged universities. There are an equal number of institutions where induction as professional development is non-existent or offered in a very ad hoc manner. NATHEP set out to try to 'level the playing fields' by engaging academic development (AD) practitioners responsible for academic induction at universities where formal induction practices are non-existent by initiating and establishing induction practices at institutions that needed it the most. Acknowledging that institutions need support (funding and human capital), NATHEP asserts that it would be erroneous to believe that the onus should be placed on academics to remedy a challenged system. The responsibility must be borne by all components of the university.

Why this project?

New academics form a critical target group in South Africa as many established academics are retiring (HESA, 2011) and the window for succession planning and longevity is closing. Many retirees leave the institution with much sought-after knowledge about curriculum and teaching, as well as organisational and methodological memory. Recruiting and retaining quality teachers is an imperative (Trowler & Knight, 2000; DHET, 2018), a call echoed in local as well as international contexts, for example in the Dearing Report (Gosling & Hannan, 2007). The impending exodus, however, also presents a unique opportunity. There is space now to recreate and reshape the course of teaching and learning by using what has emerged in the context over the last 10 years to define practices in new ways. Inclusive, collaborative and socially just education is paramount and should be the guiding principle in all scholarly activities, including professional development. For NATHEP, this was an opportunity to review the uncritical reproduction of traditional induction practices against current challenges in the sector and society at large. For teaching to be responsive and relevant (Kotluk et al., 2018), teachers need to bridge the gap between the social and the epistemic domains. Students are more aware now of the blurred boundaries between the affordances (or lack thereof) of their social contexts and how these impinge on their academic success (Thomas, 2014). All teachers, not just new academics, need to be able to mediate these domains in how they curate content and material and how they make their teaching relevant for the students they teach.

Induction practices at many universities are viewed in different ways based on who

is convening the induction programme. From an operational and human resources (HR) perspective, for example, induction is viewed against proficiency and efficiency drivers and the ability to hit the ground running. In HR-driven induction, there is very little emphasis on pedagogy, curriculum or assessment, which are important for new academics to understand. While “productivity, participation and quality” (White et al., 2010, p.181) are important, these are not useful to new academics in understanding the teaching function of their academic role. Among our participating universities in NATHEP, it became evident that many induction programmes were still convened under the auspices of human resources, which although useful, does not prepare the academic for the HE contemporary classroom.

It is highly possible that underlying these practices are assumptions about who can teach (Gravett & Petersen, 2002) and who gets to teach. Further assumptions that formal training programmes on their own will make better university teachers (Coffey & Gibbs, 2000) perpetuate the belief that anyone can teach, even without formal qualifications. To “hunt” these assumptions (Brookfield, 1995), universities are becoming more cognisant of the importance of professional and staff development capacity-building interventions (Quinn & Vorster, 2012; Behari-Leak, 2017), to promote student success. This thread is foregrounded in this book as an important indicator of how we can improve throughput and success rates of students from enrolment to graduation.

From the perspective of NATHEP, to do this effectively, academics learning to teach in HE need more than peripheral teaching support. They need to be exposed to a range of cognitive, affective, epistemological and ontological theories, stances, frameworks and positions that challenge and develop who they are and who they need to be in the current context. In order for academics to be effective change agents in teaching and learning, they must have changed themselves, from states of ignorance and disbelief to a space of understanding the challenges of contemporary HE.

When professional development involves more than learning new teaching tips, tricks and techniques but includes an internal transformation that changes limiting worldviews and conservative practices, it embraces critical professional development (CPD) (Kohli et al., 2015). CPD is an emerging form of social justice professional development that prepares educators to develop their critical consciousness, teach with critical pedagogy and challenge inequity (Kohli et al., 2015). In other words, it is an approach to shaping critical agents in the teaching and learning space (Postma, 2015). This approach aims to deepen academics’ understanding of the conditioning structures and culture that influence classroom practices (Behari-Leak, 2017). While massification, neoliberal policies, austerity and other questions seem to occupy a huge space in global higher education debates

(Bertelsen, 2004), the urgency of the contextual teaching and learning challenges at South Africa's universities, compounded by a complex past, makes South African higher education a highly contested space; one that needs to be engaged with in a critical way. "The transformation taking place in the South African university system is about addressing inequality and improving quality and academics as teachers are required to be change agents within this process" (DHET, 2018).

Why now?

In NATHEP, we take the 1994 watershed moment in South African history as a departure point for the changes that led to a new HE sector to address/redress the inequalities of the past. While many gains have been made since the new dispensation in South Africa (DHET, 1997) to transform HE, there are still legacy gaps to be addressed. Given the historical imbalances in the sector, there is a need for mechanisms to level the playing fields by addressing transformational imperatives related to equity, quality and success in the university system.

The DHET recognised this need by ensuring that "apartheid era student and staff participation and success patterns are disrupted and transformed" (DHET, 2017). To respond to the challenge of a siloed HE system, fragmented by a plethora of activities which vary significantly between universities based on resources, improved coordination was needed at institutional, regional and national levels. There was thus an urgent need to provide a development resource to enable, for example, the development of programmes that are of strategic importance and are national priorities.

In addition to redressing the ills of a segregated HE system under apartheid, institutional differentiation not only affects material resources but influences cultural ethos as well. In some contexts, institutional culture is debilitating, especially where it is authoritarian, managerialist and corporate, and where academics and students "feel marginalised, silenced or threatened by the demands for change or unable to respond to the evolving environment" (DHET, 2017). Worse still if the culture at the university is driven by a compliance ethos, with little or no critical thought or engagement (Boughey & McKenna, 2021). The overarching danger is that no matter how many initiatives are in place, and how much money is thrown at the problem, if the interventions are not critical and change-oriented, there will be a reproduction of the status quo with minimum impact on systemic issues in the sector. The sector has not only been challenged by systemic issues but current challenges that are often out of its control. The HE sector today into which new academics are inducted is beset with many challenges, such as student protests and calls for decolonised education. A study on new academics' transition found that despite support for transformation in the higher education sector, new academics entering higher education were especially vulnerable to

reproducing the status quo if sensitisation to issues of critical agency and social justice within teaching in postcolonial contexts were not an explicit part of their professional induction (Behari-Leak, 2017). The sustainable development goals (SDGs) have become important to raise awareness about climate change through the curriculum. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021) which brought the entire world to a standstill, presented unique challenges as HE pivoted to online provision to mediate the challenges of physical distancing. Even more recent is the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (CHATGPT), which are wreaking havoc with university assessments and plagiarism policies.

NATHEP's aims and aspirations

To build staff development capacity in the sector to address the challenges discussed above, NATHEP engaged with 10 universities across the country to conceptualise and contextualise well-theorised induction programmes for new academics to address their university's needs, at the same time shaping the national landscape for induction practices. The overarching aspiration of NATHEP was therefore to develop an approach and orientation to induction practices for new academics (NA) in HE and to develop principles and practices for contextualised induction programmes in the sector. Newcomers need support in taking up positions as future teachers, researchers and leaders (Åkerlind, 2003). To achieve this, professional development activities targeting new academics can no longer be generic (Archer, 2008) but need to be relevant to the extent that they consider the university context as well as the global context into which newcomers are entering (Sutherland, 2019). Professional development programmes need to demonstrate a concern with the challenges of teaching and learning in a complex context (Leibowitz, et al., 2016). The NATHEP methodology was designed with this aspect in mind, to enable project participants (staff developers) to engage with institutional induction in mindful, reflective, reflexive and critical ways (Behari-Leak, 2017).

The overarching aim of NATHEP was to develop a relevant and well-theorised approach and an orientation to induction practices, without compromising the specificities of contextual constraints that many higher education institutions (HEIs) face. The plan was also geared to address historical and systemic challenges, as well as to create conditions for a new cadre of academics to emerge to respond to the pressing challenges of the current institutional and national contexts, the retiring professoriate notwithstanding. By equipping new academics to engage in critically reflexive and well-theorised teaching practice, enabling them to create the pedagogic conditions needed to enable students from across the cultural divide to thrive, staff developers on NATHEP would also be able to exercise their agency in meaningful ways.

This project also sought to better understand how induction practices were being conceptualised and delivered across the sector and where gaps existed for development and strengthening to achieve the transformation goals of the sector, articulated in the Education White Paper 3 of 1997. Given the current HE context, it is perhaps more important now than it has ever been, to deeply theorise how new teachers are trained for the university classroom; how curricula, pedagogy and assessment are conceptualised and actualised at different institutional sites; and what this means for student success. It is incumbent on institutions to provide professional development offerings that respond to the demands of the HE context. This is in keeping with the UCDP goals to seek development interventions that enable high levels of success for undergraduate and postgraduate students, which supports one of the overarching purposes of the UCDP, namely, to provide capacity development opportunities for professionals that manage specific programmes. Through its rationale, contextual underpinnings, theoretical spine and pedagogical and methodological approaches, NATHEP sought to develop principles for a range of induction approaches, relative to different contexts, through a collaborative, consultative and inclusive process. It shines the torch on the need for well-theorised, scholarly and critical approaches to academic staff development in the national sector. By engaging professional developers in ways that build their confidence in creating and convening successful induction programmes at their institutions, NATHEP aimed to address historical and systemic challenges, as well as to create a new cadre of academics who can respond to the pressing challenges of the present but also an unknown future.

NATHEP's focal areas

NATHEP was focused on developing a national (not nationalised) orientation and approach to contextualised induction practices and principles across the sector. It stemmed from a need to induct new academics in more considered ways (Quinn, 2012) into the sector so that they understand their roles as university teachers and the importance of teaching and learning as critical levers for student success and throughput. In addition to working from the premise that the positive exercise of agency is a marked feature of new participants in HE despite contextual challenges (Leibowitz, et.al., 2016), NATHEP focused on how structural and cultural contexts might act as a trigger or dampener for academic staff developers' agency. Importantly, we needed to know the extent to which contexts would have immediate implications for ways in which professional and academic development programmes are conceptualised and implemented. It was hoped that with an alternative theorisation and creation of conducive conditions for the uptake of critical agency, in both disciplinary and departmental programmes, staff developers would create emergent induction programmes for new academics that are contextualised, sensitised, responsive and informed.

NATHEP's key questions

- 🦁 How are university induction practices conceptualised and theorised by professional development units and staff developers in the current HE context with new academics' transitions and student success in mind?
- 🦁 What insights, ideas, beliefs, values, ideologies and theories about professional development broadly, and about the professionalisation of new academics specifically, are useful in the South African higher education context today?
- 🦁 What are the implications for professional and academic staff development and departmental programmes in creating and sustaining conducive conditions for new academics' success at the university and for their students' success?

NATHEP's theory of change

As with any process of change, one cannot proceed until one takes stock of what has come before (structural and cultural conditioning) and how this sets the scene for agents to bring about change or not. This is the starting point for change, i.e. to provide a rationale and need for the change and to create the conditions for it to happen. To explain the process of change, we draw again on Archer's Social Realism which provides a "user-friendly" methodological toolkit for analysing and understanding change in various phases and stages of the NATHEP in its three-year cycle, namely the Morphogenesis Framework (discussed in Chapter 3).

NATHEP's theory of change is to empower staff developers and new academics to be change agents themselves, creating and designing teaching and learning opportunities that transcend the structural and cultural limitations they face at their institutions (Archer, 2000). Based on experiences of working as professional developers in our context, the SC held the view that participants learn meaningfully in social groups or communities of practice, where ideas and perspectives are shared and exchanged. When academics are able to engage with their own identities, their institutional and professional identities as well as their disciplinary identities in meaningful ways, there is scope for their discourses and practices to be deepened, expanded and better theorised, leading to more relevant responses to pedagogic and research challenges (De Rome & Boud, 1984). Also, a plurality of epistemologies and pedagogies is possible when you have a diverse group of educators responding to common challenges. This interdisciplinary way of working is critical in the current university, where more and more academics are being asked to connect and link with knowledge that sits outside our specific disciplines and training. In a context where new academics have increased teaching workloads and research demands, as well as challenges of transformation and decolonisation of curricula, pedagogy and assessment, we need to provide strategies for thinking

differently and creatively about how academics enable their students to succeed (Clegg & Stevenson, 2013).

While success is desired at all levels, it cannot be achieved at all costs. For a long time, the discourse of “fixing the student” (Ramos et al., 2020) has pervaded academics’ approach to students’ learning difficulties. NATHEP was mindful that the project did not perpetuate this belief in terms of fixing the university teacher. From a critical realist view (Bhaskar, 1995) there is no direct causal link between teaching and learning. This is dependent on structural and cultural contexts and emerges through choices and actions, i.e. through their agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). It is therefore highly contextualised and cannot be used as a foolproof recipe to fix anyone (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). NATHEP’s approach to this dilemma was to create the conditions with the relevant input, for staff developers on the project to make meaningful choices against the challenges of their specific contexts. While we offered a smorgasbord of approaches and tools, we were not prescriptive in how these were taken up or refuted. Our approach to staff development was based on emergence (Elder-Vass, 2010).

NATHEP’s approach to capacity building

NATHEP’s methodology was based on targeted support through a cascading model of capacity building and enhancement (Hayes, 2014). Known well in HR practice as the “train-the-trainer” model of staff development, the cascade model (discussed in detail in Chapter 4) was reframed by NATHEP by muting “training” and amplifying the recognition of capacity building for teaching. This involves intense academic and affective labour (Shechtman et al., 2004) as staff developers have to work deeply at the ontological, epistemic, methodological and axiological levels to bring about changes, first in themselves and then in others. The NATHEP target audience/participants were staff developers themselves, who through their own transformation in the project, were able to effect change in their university contexts through their new induction practices.

The “cascading model” of staff development was designed to have a ripple effect on teaching and learning practices in a critical and responsive way in different contexts. While the unit of targeted benefit in NATHEP is the staff developer, the intended beneficiaries are the new academics entering HE, who in turn have a huge impact on students and their success at the university and in the sector. In using the cascading model of staff development, NATHEP brought together ASD practitioners at these universities responsible for academic induction, over a series of engagements to develop specific approaches to address the micro and macro needs identified earlier. NATHEP explored structural and cultural opportunities and constraints that inhibited or promoted the emergence of critically reflexive induction programmes to respond to new academics’ needs and to the needs

of students. Adopting a collaborative, consultative and inclusive approach, professional developers were supported to initiate and convene contextualised induction programmes at their institutions, aimed at supporting the teaching, research and professional development of newly recruited academics. Through this approach, NATHEP hoped to realise its aim to advocate for the emergence professional developers who are critical agents of change (Postma, 2015).

The NATHEP project team

NATHEP was led by an academic staff developer based at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in the role of project leader, under the auspices of Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) at UCT, which provided location and infrastructural support for the national collaborative project.

Cognisant of the need for representation (Carolissen et. al., 2015), the project leader brought together a diverse group of experienced staff developers to form a SC (SC) to facilitate and implement the planned activities of the cross-institutional project. Each SC member brought a special nuance to the project based on their years of experience in leading professional development at their universities. Over the duration of the project, there were changes in the NATHEP project team based on extenuating circumstances. Five SC members based at UCT, the University of Witwatersrand (WITS), Durban University of Technology (DUT), Nelson Mandela University (NMU) and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) respectively, an administrator and a research assistant were committed till the end of the project in the face-to-face components as well as the research project. The success of NATHEP is due in no small part to the commitment of the administrator, researcher and SC who brought their passion, vision, knowledge and experience to this project to support the task of capacitating other staff developers to transform induction processes in the HE sector. The project also drew on guest speakers and experts in the field to contribute to its work and engagements.

NATHEP university partners

Given the wide range of existing, even disparate induction practices at several universities, this project sought to identify universities where formal induction practices were nonexistent or in need of enhancement. Cognisant again of the need for demographic and institutional representation across an unequally resourced HE landscape, it was important that as a UCDP collaborative project, NATHEP invited 10 universities, each represented by two staff developers, on the basis of diversity and need. For the three-year cycle of the project, the following 10 universities signed an offer of acceptance with NATHEP so that there was joint understanding of responsibility and commitments:



Figure 2 Universities participating in NATHEP

- University of Venda
- University of Limpopo
- Tshwane University of Technology
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- Nelson Mandela University
- Vaal University of Technology
- Sefako Makgatho University
- Walter Sisulu University
- University of Fort Hare
- University of Zululand

Each university identified two staff development representatives to attend all engagements and to share the workload for the university-based, project-related tasks for implementation of their induction programmes. This meant that there were 20 participants from the sector at each of the project engagements per year. While the target audience over the duration of the project is the group of twenty PDPs, the intended beneficiaries of this project, as mentioned already, are new academics, who will indirectly benefit from good induction programmes convened at their universities. The ultimate beneficiary is the student and shifting the needle on student success.

We remember and acknowledge the university partners we lost to the pandemic as well as staff developers unable to continue due to institutional demands on their

time. By the time the case studies were completed and submitted, 17 university participants were part of the closing phase of the project. These participants must be acknowledged for the meaningful work they did in transforming their induction practices for their universities. The evidence of this is captured in the institutional case studies, which bear out the rigorous engagement that took place in shaping and designing contextualised and relevant induction programmes.

NATHEP's life cycle

The project, planned around a three-year life cycle (2018–2020) as per the UCDG funding cycle, was initially launched in August 2018 as part of DHET's UCDG intervention to increase staff development capacity in the sector. It was scheduled to be completed in 2020 but had to be extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NATHEP in-person/online facilitation component of the project therefore officially concluded in 2021. All planned activities regarding input for shaping the contextualised models of induction had been completed and participants had engaged thoroughly with theory, context and critical debates. All new university induction programmes had been trialled on site and each one received feedback from their stakeholders.

While most staff returned to work in 2022, it took time to regain the momentum of the project as the project team had been focused on catching up on their core institutional work. The project then entered a reflective, scholarly mode to harness the lessons learnt and identify areas for further development. In this phase (2022–2023), each university team was tasked to write up a contextualised and theorised case study, in preparation for the publication and launch of this book before the end of 2024. These case studies and reflections are presented in Chapters 5 to 11. Guidance and expert assistance were provided by a writing consultant, and group and individual consultations were provided. This helped to shape the case studies and prepare them for publication. Each SC member was assigned two universities with whom they worked closely on the case studies, as mentors. Their mentorship of colleagues and the case study process was invaluable to the success of the book project. In addition, NATHEP recruited the services of a research administrator to oversee the progress of the book. The SC plans to host a national colloquium and book launch in 2024. Additional dissemination mechanisms include international conference presentations and a special journal issue, with credit to the DHET for its support.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a situational analysis for the location of the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) as a national collaborative project. Given the complexity and contested nature of the current higher education

landscape (UCDP, 2018), based largely on the historical imbalances as well as the current demands on the system, this chapter unpacked the numerous challenges new academics face as they embed themselves in disciplinary and institutional contexts. With systemic conditions not being conducive to critical agency and social justice, current induction practices for new academics are inadequate to the task of transformation in higher education (Behari-Leak, 2015), making new academics especially vulnerable (Behari-Leak, 2017). NATHEP thus makes a strong case for critical professional development as an imperative.

CHAPTER TWO

Key Concepts and Discourses Shaping NATHEP

Kasturi Behari-Leak and Rieta Ganas

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the key discourses and concepts related to new academic induction, as these exist in the literature. In conceptualising NATHEP, a deep dive into the literature and scholarship in this field was necessary to identify extant and new constructs regarding new academics and how they transition. Discourses related to being new in the higher education (HE) space proliferate with sometimes negative effects (Mathieson et al., 2023). Until these are unpacked and challenged, they continue to influence how values, ideas and beliefs shape and inform the discursive terrain of new academic induction into HE, negatively. Staff developers themselves might carry some of these assumptions and associations into their interaction with new academics, compromising trust even before the professional relationships have begun.

Professionalising HE

The discourse of professionalising HE is ubiquitous as it is not easy to define the “profession” of HE itself. It is easier to identify professional disciplines in HE than it is to define HE as a profession in and of itself. This could be linked to the composition of a university, with faculties established with clear but traditional delineations between disciplines and cognate disciplinary fields. As an epistemic project, this is how the university understands itself. Schreiber and Lewis (2020) offer some interesting views on the benefits and drawbacks of describing an epistemic community as a profession. Among these faculties there is a host of professional disciplines, which include but are not limited to engineering, accounting, law, medical sciences and commerce. Each of these professions is regulated by their own professional bodies, who share an interesting relationship with the university through their various gatekeeping mechanisms, policy briefs, assessment regimes, etc. By being overt and connected to funding and reporting lines, disciplines get the lion’s share of attention.

The closest we come to a direct indication that HE is in fact a profession is signalled by the title “professor”, obtained when academics advance successfully through the career track to reach a stage where they are “professing” something. When this “professing” leans more towards proselytising rather than engaging in meaningful excursions into knowledge forays, it might mean that the said professor, while exemplary in research, lacks the pedagogical repertoire that brings the worlds of

scholarship and teaching together. While disciplinary foci are an important part of a university's makeup, there are tacit components and areas of work such as student success, leadership, administration, management and support staff development that also need to be professionalised (Schreiber et al., 2020). When staff join a university in academic roles and positions for example, they are obliged to embrace and enact the full ambit of academic work, albeit incrementally as they progress through their career trajectories. This includes but is not limited to teaching, research, social responsiveness, professional service and academic citizenship.

This brings us to the notion of the "academic practitioner" who is responsible for teaching as a core activity in their academic roles, in addition to a host of other activities and deliverables. Professionalising HE could then mean developing capacity in the academic teacher, as opposed to the academic researcher, who is at the coalface in the university classroom, involved in practice. If the profession of HE is to ensure that students thrive and succeed in ways similar to a medical doctor or engineer who assesses their professional contribution through their impact, professionalising HE might be seen as a necessary means to that end. With a more acute attention to quality learning in recent years, it makes sense that the quality of teaching and teachers is high on the list of change imperatives for the DHET nationally.

In recognising high student dropout and low throughput rates, the DHET signalled its focus on teaching to improve national patterns of student success. Academics' ability to teach in ways that respond to students' learning needs was identified as a key lever. Acknowledging that academics entering the academy bring with them a wealth of disciplinary expertise, research and lived experience, the sector and academy are slowly recognising that this is not enough. To fulfil their roles, academics need to be effective teachers too. The University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) from which NATHEP is funded, is intended to support and to strengthen the development of university teachers within the staff development component of the programme. The DHET recognises that it is essential that, "across the career continuum from emerging academics to established professionals, there are development opportunities for university teachers and teaching support professionals, including those in teaching leadership roles" (DHET, 2018).

While many initiatives are afoot, the sector is still disparate and unequal in its resources and infrastructural arrangements. In some contexts, institutional culture might be debilitating, especially where it is authoritarian, managerialist and corporate, and where academics and students "feel marginalised, silenced or threatened by the demands for change or unable to respond to the evolving environment" (DHET, 2018). Worse still if the culture at the university is driven by a compliance ethos (Bougey & McKenna, 2021), with little or no critical thought

or engagement. The overarching danger is that no matter how many initiatives are in place, and how much money is thrown at the problem, if the interventions are not critical, contextualised, responsive and change oriented, there will be a reproduction of the status quo with minimum impact on systemic issues in the sector. It must also be pointed out though that focussing on academic professional development alone is an insufficient and impoverished view on how to shift the success of the South African HE sector (Schreiber, et al. 2020). We need to focus on HE holistically because the whole and the parts are equally important.



What does professionalising HE mean for NATHEP?

The professionalising of HE through supporting the teaching role is seen through NATHEP as critical to the transformation of the sector. This position is supported by the DHET Framework (DHET, 2018), which serves as an advocacy role to focus attention on nurturing, supporting and developing new academics as university teachers. This has immediate implications for ways in which professional and academic development programmes are conceptualised and implemented. While massification, neoliberal policies, austerity and other questions occupy global HE debates, the urgency of the contextual challenges at South Africa's universities, compounded by a complex past, makes South African HE a highly contested space; one that needs to be engaged with in a critical way. Professional developers need to engage with these imperatives and find ways to build these into their programmes.

The conceptual framing for the project proposal and plan also drew primarily on a doctoral study exploring how new academics exercise their agency and how new academics transition into HE despite contextual challenges. The critical insights from the study (Behari-Leak, 2015), on the gaps in induction processes and how they need to change, was key to the design of this project. Where pedagogy was once heavily reliant on psychological theories, they now need to be based on critical social theories (Freire, 1993; Bartolome & Macedo, 2001; Hooks, 1994) that are socially situated and highly contextual to address real issues that academics face. Social and cultural contexts in higher education and critical agents must be considered in the design and implementation of professional development programmes.

New academics are differently positioned and enabled at their point of entry and therefore require different interventions to acclimatise to university life and its requirements. In many cases, this is related to inexperience in teaching, assessments and curriculum design. Here, professional development with a

focus on teaching becomes the focus of induction and probation. In NATHEP we were very concerned about academic identity and by extension professional identity, but the latter is less about disciplinary identities and more about the “profession” of being an academic. For many, this is experienced as being stuck between a rock and a hard place as their disciplinary identity, strongest on arrival, clashes with the emerging identity as academic that they need to nurture. An architect for example might find it difficult to distinguish between the studio as a site of practice for master-apprentice as well as the university classroom, as a site of practice for teacher-student. This identity clash is compounded by a tension between being a novice and an expert simultaneously, which often is a significant challenge in the initial years in how academics exercise their agency. The NATHEP, conceptualised and optimised for induction in our context, targeted staff developers to influence their understanding of induction as a transitioning phase for inductees, into their being and becoming in relation to their agency and newness.

Activating discourses on new academic transitions

What follows is an engagement with different discourses that guided the project. These are not mere phrases or themes imposed after a literature search. In a social realist sense, these discourses are real ideas, values, belief and attitudes that people draw on when making choices about and for new academics (Fairclough et al., 2004). In this chapter, key concepts and discourses related to new academic induction are unpacked to explicate the layered meaning in this cultural domain. After each discourse is unpacked, the question of what it means for NATHEP will be addressed. In this way, the project demonstrates how it engaged with and contextualised the discourses for its work during the deliberations and implementation of the NATHEP activities over the project life cycle. This will be illustrated through the use of this symbol:



Newness

“Newness” is a complicated concept in HE. Where “new” can infer meanings of novelty, freshness and innovation, newness at a university can also draw on meanings that denote inexperience, incompetence and lack of knowledge that leave newcomers feeling like impostors (Young, 2011). Impostor syndrome is well known by new people in HE to indicate a sense of “diminished self-worth and

incompetence" as a person (Behari-Leak, 2015). This can have a debilitating effect on newcomers' engagements with peers and management in departmental settings where they need the most support. In some spaces, "new" is conflated with inexperience to the extent that it can mean that the new academic does not fully understand how things work. This stymies newcomers' chances to make informed decisions in groups as they are seen by others as still inexperienced. Many staff do not see novice academics as having a great deal to offer or contribute, especially because their position on the periphery suggests they need to cover more ground to make it to the centre (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Feeling like the proverbial deer in the headlights, new academics sometimes experience severe anxiety and a lack of confidence from those around them, especially students (Behari-Leak, 2015). When we draw on the discourse of "newness" in this way, we tend to misrecognise that newcomers have both "tacit knowledge" (Polanyi, 1983) as well as fresh views and ideas that come with them being a "stranger in a strange land" (Northridge, 2003). They are often experts already in many professional areas that benefit the institution, but they are not always enabled to bring their experiences to bear on HE practices in certain spaces. HE thus loses out on tapping into the potential of the very newcomers we deemed fit to "hire".

Being new sometimes means being treated like an initiate. There is sufficient precedence for this in the social world as one just has to look at freshman classes, first year initiation rites, etc. to make the links between newcomers and the rituals they are subjected to. We have heard of many events where initiation practices are still considered a rite of passage for newcomers to a social or professional space before they are part of the "tribe". While initiation ceremonies are now prohibited at many universities, given the grave consequences extolled on "victims", the traditions continue in subtle ways. New academics report that their "initiation" means that they are rendered silent and invisible for the first three years, not allowed to take on new projects alone, not given space to have their voices heard in staff meetings and have to prove themselves before departments and managers trust them (Behari-Leak, 2015) especially with funded projects or other high stakes deliverables. Heads of department are hypervigilant regarding evaluations of newcomers by students, even when little support in teaching is offered or available to them.

Newness also depends on perceptions, needs and expectations that new academics have of others. A new academic to HE can be very different to an academic new to the institution. Where one finds themselves on their career trajectory can influence how one navigates newness. Being new is also linked to how new academics are perceived and perceive themselves. Early adopters have a more confident edge and present themselves more forthrightly. Those more reticent tend to wait in the wings until they are stronger (O'Meara, Louder & Campbell, 2014).

When new academics join HE from research-rich environments or industry, they

come in as experts in their own right (Sales, 2014). While they might be new to HE, they are not new to the world of work. This can lead to a clash of professional and academic worlds, especially if there is a perceived loss of status from expert to newcomer in joining a university (Boyd, 2010). This can also lead the newly appointed academic to feel all the insecurities that come with being a novice. While many universities have put in place some form of induction or orientation, research indicates that the increasing academic staff turnover that results in a revolving door syndrome, is due to a lack of institutional support for their academic roles (Watanabe & Falci, 2016). Being experts and novices at the same time can make new academics both vulnerable and robust (Tierney, 2003). Where newcomers enter from cognate fields like information technology (IT) and computer science, newness can be an advantage as those coming in are seen as having had exposure to the latest technologies and *modus operandi*. The protocols and traditions at universities however are very different to those in industry. Institutional innovation and cultural practices churn slowly. Newcomers have to adjust to how (slowly) things are done in the institution even while they are called on to share their expertise in different educational and professional settings that require an extremely fast pace (Levine & Moreland, 2013).

The concept of “newness” can thus be an enabler and a constraint in how new academics navigate their transitions and how they mediate obstacles. Where newly appointed academics are research-active with little experience of teaching in higher education, they can feel a threatened sense of wellbeing and uncertainty in developing an academic identity that balances research and teaching, in the context of unsupported demands and work overload (Mathieson et al., 2023). While being knowledgeable in their respective disciplinary fields, being new to HE and the university classroom makes it difficult for them to make contextual and conceptual shifts into their classrooms, where they must make critical decisions that sometimes have a negative impact on the social inclusion of students (Behari-Leak et al., 2019).

Key to academic induction is “identity work” regarding the many hats a new academic must wear. Professional development programmes must recognise that new university teachers more than others need to do “identity work” by “making and remaking their identities” from novice to expert to establish themselves in their new environment and culture (Trowler & Knight 2000, p.34). Identity formation usually emerges in the initial period of becoming a university teacher, when the professional typically retains an identity as a professional in a new context, for example, as an architect or physiotherapist (Boyd, 2010) expert. In the transition period, newcomers redefine their identity, for example, as “architect teacher”, in which they integrate their identity as professionals with their new career identity as academics. Professional development programmes for induction must engender an intentional and well-designed process of socialisation (Becher & Trowler, 2001;

Clegg, 2008; Henkel, 2000; Trowler & Knight, 2000) into the profession of teaching and the practices and expectations of this role (Boyd, 2010; Field, 2012; Janhonen & Sarja, 2005). This challenges the “expert to novice” discourse, suggesting that there is a complementary relationship between previous practitioner and the new teacher identity, theorised as moving from first order (practice setting) to second-order practitioner (within a higher education setting) (Murray & Male, 2005). The downfall, however, in trying to engage with the university as a structural entity, is that new academics identify strong social and cultural factors that affect their sense of agency (Kahn, 2009).



What does the discourse of *newness* mean for NATHEP?

NATHEP

NATHEP was sensitive to the importance of identity formation that engages with the complex, dynamic set of demands on the new academic. New therefore cannot be conflated with level of experience. Academics can be new to HE but still have a range of experiences in related fields. NATHEP was also acutely aware of how the transition period influences choices newcomers make as novices. Given Wenger’s (2008) argument on the profound connection between identity and practice, NATHEP emphasised that induction curricula must be aware that most academics enter HE while still holding on to a professional practitioner identity aligned to their discipline or field of study. It can become conflicting and confusing to navigate the institutional and curriculum spaces as university teachers of the discipline. This suggests that academic induction is critical in providing a space that supports multiple identity shifts as academics continuously construct and reconstruct their reflective teacher, researcher and scholar identities. NATHEP asserts the need for professional development induction programmes to provide a physical and conceptual space (embedded in teaching and learning curricula) which supports this transition (Kandlbinder, 2011; Knight, 2002; Ramsden, 2003; Scheckle, 2014).

While induction programmes are successful in being geared towards a meaningful introduction into teaching, these are sometimes too generic (Behari-Leak, 2017). Challenges faced by new academics and the tensions of juggling multiple roles and identities are not covered by generic interventions. Induction programmes that encourage and educate individuals to take responsibility for their socialisation can enhance positive outcomes. What is missing, from a NATHEP perspective, is specific induction into cognate areas that respond to unique university and regional contexts. Much of the literature from the Global North assumes that the curriculum and content of induction-to-teaching applies universally across the globe. Context really does matter and how new academics understand and respond to the South African context, for example, given its apartheid and colonial

legacy might be vastly different to a new academic in Sweden, embedded in a different historical and cultural milieu. In South Africa, professional development programmes include topics on diversity, language, culture, interpersonal skills, literacy practices, classroom management, innovation, and technology and challenge discourses such as underpreparedness, students as customers etc.

NATHEP has a keen focus on critical agents (Postma, 2015) and critical professional development (Kohli et al., 2015). Contextualised induction shapes the extent to which new academics feel they can exercise their agency in their departments and faculties, based on what they have encountered in the induction programme. Many new academics who are grateful for the support will admit pedagogical or curriculum knowledge gained in professional developmental spaces is not easy to link to disciplinary ways of knowing and doing, making it difficult to transport the knowledge gleaned (Fanghanel, 2007; Kahn, 2009; Mathieson, 2011), without guidance from professional development interventions.

Induction programmes need to be designed so that academics can problematise ‘newness’ in relation to how they enter HE and what they see as their roles in influencing change. Being (new) in the classroom is not only about the personal and affective domain but involves the epistemic. Critical thinking about how knowledge is structured, reinterpreted and facilitated for different cohorts of students (Bernstein, 2000; Gamble, 2006; Maton, 2008) is needed. More recently, universities have been called on to decolonise their curricula (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) to focus on whose knowledge interests are served. Newcomers need to engage with epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007), epistemic access (Morrow, 2009) and inclusion (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018). Inability to have some mastery of these aspects in relation to the university teaching role could mean perpetuating social and epistemic injustice and exclusion unwittingly. A lack of engagement with these aspects restricts the ability of new academics to exercise agency in being innovative in facilitating effective curriculum change and learning for their students.

Transitioning

Historically, the transitioning process of new academics into the university is sometimes not afforded the luxury of time and care as the “business” of the university does not allow for it. The aim is to get newcomers up to speed quickly. From management’s perspective, induction should be a once-off event even though management does see newcomers’ transitioning as a way to shape the attitudes and behaviour of the people they employ (Scheckle, 2014). Viewed as an organisational HR function, new academics are onboarded through orientation

or welcome sessions to give them information to “hit the ground running”. Hitting the ground running is not easy when historical differences make the ground itself uneven and unstable. Like shifting sands, new contextual challenges are faced daily. Given the disparate entry points based on newcomers’ background and prior learning, there is no foolproof recipe or formula for inducting academics into a space that is contested, fraught with challenges and often complex even for established staff.

“Transitioning” can be as long or short as needed provided it is a process and not an ad hoc or arbitrary compliance exercise (Hurst, 2010). There are limited opportunities available for ongoing professional development with a process-oriented approach. The time taken to transition has consequences for other aspects of newcomers’ professional life. Many HE induction programmes do not provide a much-needed intensive professional development for newly appointed lecturers (Wong, Britton & Ganser, 2005) to transition well, with new lecturers often left in isolation to work through the challenges within their own classrooms. Academia, it seems, is the only professional system that does not support its newcomers in discovering how to do what they will spend most of their time doing (Reddy et al., 2016). Not being properly inducted to their university roles can have serious consequences for the newcomer and for the ecosystem in which they work.

How the academic community draws on the discourse of transitioning places new academics in a dubious position. In the transition phase, newcomers are seen to be in a state of limbo, neither here nor there. This liminal state is not always considered an advantage or a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1979) but seen rather as murky waters in which one swims or sinks (Rust, 1991). To be a transitioner as a new academic is to deal with unwarranted assumptions from colleagues and line managers about one’s capacity and capability; often casting aspersions and doubt on one’s ability to do the job well (Cangelosi, Crocker & Sorrell, 2009). Again, for new academics who straddle the murkiness of being experts (in their fields) and novices (new in HE) simultaneously (Jansen, 2010), this might be an overwhelming task. Apart from managing their own discomfort, the HE context into which they are being inducted is complex. What makes it complex is that what it means to be an academic in South Africa in HE is complicated by the political, economic, financial, social and cultural complexity in HE and society at large (HESA, 2011; Waghid, 2001; Badat, 2011).



What does transitioning mean for NATHEP?

The process of transition, which sometimes needs to be slow, is often neglected by institutions who tend to focus on a rapid immersion into all aspects of the job without dedicated time for proper induction and introduction. Transitioning, as an important temporal and spatial segue in the career trajectories of new academics, should not be fast tracked, ignored, minimised or dismissed. Probation periods extend over three years in some cases, but little transitioning support is provided in this time. Research shows that employees who enter a fairly stable and well-oiled machine through well-designed induction processes have a better chance of learning the ropes quicker and transitioning more effectively (Mathieson et al., 2023). Through NATHEP, staff developers are acutely aware that new academics need to be inducted into the academy in much more structured and deliberate ways than in the past (Quinn & Vorster, 2012). The Higher Education Studies field recognises these challenges and has worked rigorously and in a scholarly way to canvas and advocate for professional development for new lecturers through postgraduate diplomas to become an established feature of higher education, nationally and internationally (Gosling & Hannan, 2007; Fanghanel & Trowler, 2007). In an era of a neoliberal sensibility, employees today (Adams, 2023) are looking for more humane policies, more aligned leadership, more connectedness, and more meaning. To this end, NATHEP encourages induction as a process of supported, guided and meaningful orientation to teaching as part of the slow movement (Kahneman, 2013).

Transitioning through a well-considered induction programme should ideally be a gradual process, like a period of probation that allows newcomers to find their way from novice on the periphery to the expert positioned at the centre of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Professional development programmes with an emphasis on identity and “journey” work would be optimal. Through NATHEP, staff developers are made aware of the need to slow down processes that will enable newcomers, from different backgrounds and entry points, a fair chance of learning how to be an academic in a supportive environment. This is not to suggest that staff developers will hold newcomers’ hands throughout their transitioning process, but it does propose that there is empathy and understanding of the challenges that newcomers face and strategies to help them overcome these processes that will enable newcomers from different backgrounds and entry points a fair chance of learning how to be an academic in a supportive environment. This is not to suggest that staff developers will hold newcomers’ hands throughout their transitioning process, but it does propose that there is empathy and understanding of the challenges that newcomers face and strategies to help them overcome these.

Induction

Although sometimes used interchangeably with orientation or onboarding, induction refers to the act of combining people, process and technology to optimise the effect that newcomers have on business outcomes (Snell, 2006). An induction process is slightly different to onboarding in that it usually encompasses the very beginning of the new employee's work life, whereas onboarding can stretch to a year and beyond. Induction can also focus more on introducing the new starter to the role and what is expected of them, while onboarding considers more of the wider organisational culture (Adams, 2023). Induction may be viewed through many lenses but it should not be inconsequential to the effects on the academic project and its relation to student success.

When we view induction through a business or corporate lens, it is easy to see how new employees can be perceived as cogs in a machine to increase efficiency, productivity and the bottom line. Where induction is seen as the initial organisational training (Klein & Weaver, 2000) with appropriate content, process, support and follow-up to improve employee retention and brand identity (Brodie et al., 2007), its value is a direct link between new employee talent and productivity (Hendricks, 2009). This neoliberal discourse focuses on efficiency by reducing employee vulnerability and staff turnover (Butler, 2008) while increasing profit making potential (Fritz & Vonderfecht, 2007), customer satisfaction, professional socialisations and a sense of belonging (Killeavy, 2006). Linked to their use in industry, human resources departments in universities approach induction as the process of getting new employees acquainted with the "business", helping them to settle in and giving them the information required for them to become a valuable team member (Adams, 2023). By introducing new employees to the organisation, their work department and their jobs, they are inducted into the organisational culture by receiving and obtaining information, values and behavioural skills associated with their new role (Byars & Rue, 2001).

The question is whether the university is a business, programmed on a technocratic, managerialist logic, or something entirely different. If induction is seen as instrumentalist, it will place the focus on technical skills. This performative thrust leads to alienation and disengagement between the act of teaching, the person doing the teaching and the person learning. Performative processes might then be transferred to the classroom to foreground management, competencies, evaluation, tips and techniques, classroom control and discipline instead of deep engagement with knowledge and being.

When we look at induction through an efficiency lens, as discussed above, we place the onus on the individual newcomer to do what is needed to become productive in the shortest required time. This makes the induction of new academics especially

complex as it locates the deficit that accompanies being a new university teacher in the incumbent, whether it is lack of knowledge about the institution, teaching, classroom practice or working with students. The perceived remedy is a dominant focus on the “doing” rather than the “being and becoming of academics in their practice, university employment and identity formation” (Ennals, Fortune, Williams & D’Cruz, 2015, p.5). Traditional, one-size-fits-all induction that focuses on the “doing” of academic practice leaves individuals unequally prepared for academic life (Billot & King, 2017). Personalised, professional scaffolding for scholarly development as part of a more supportive academic culture should be the goal of induction (Billot & King, 2017).

Induction programmes that focus on new academics in their teaching and academic roles are usually provided by the universities’ higher education development or teaching and learning centres who have the specialist knowledge and expertise to provide academic/ professional support to students and staff. Given the unequal distribution of material resources and human capacity across the HE sector, academic development (AD) units are differentially resourced, with practitioners themselves differently trained and prepared for their roles, resulting in a very wide range of competing conceptualisations of what it means to be an academic staff developer in HE today. Sometimes these understandings are not aligned with the national goals for transformation or decolonisation, and this significantly influences the way professional developers induct and support new academics in their teaching roles, especially those with no prior experience in HE teaching. How new university teachers are prepared for teaching affects their sense of self and belonging in the academy, which is in turn reflected in how they engage with students and their learning.

When we view induction through a colonial lens, it could be seen as a socialising process into the organisation that acculturates, subjugates and denies one’s identity (Spivak, 2016). This can lead newcomers to inhabit dispositions incongruent with their sense of self which in turn can cause cognitive damage (Amin et al., 2016). Alienation and detachment create a deep sense of alterity (Mafeje, 1998) where fitting in and becoming like the rest is favoured over respecting the individuality and uniqueness of each newcomer and the diversity they bring. If any academic is denied their full ontological density, there is little opportunity for teaching and learning to advance and innovate in ways that expand the sector in meaningful ways. What we then have is induction on a conveyor belt of reproduction, which provides a false sense of stability to the university but an increased sense of compliance, mimicry and reductionism (Wa Bofelo, 2017) to staff and students. Countering coloniality requires induction processes to recognise newcomers as whole human beings with ontological depth: personal, social, educational, professional and spiritual who have to in turn work with epistemological depth with disciplines, curricula, and learners.



What does induction mean for NATHEP?

In many ways HE uses the HR definition of induction (above) to describe its value proposition for the organisation. Many HEIs only offer an HR-focused induction, which is very different to the induction practice that NATHEP is concerned with, namely induction provided by staff developers with a focus on the academic, intellectual, cultural and social transition into the HE field. Induction into the HE field and the classroom require a different set of practices and goals that prepare new academics for life in the classroom.

One cannot assume that new lecturers will become effective educators, with the requisite pedagogical knowledge about teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum and quality frameworks, as well as understand the student experience and integration of research, scholarship, and professional activities with teaching and learning (Fanghanel & Trowler 2007; HEA, 2006; Ramsden, 2003), by osmosis. Even early adopters struggle with this transition and upskilling. Transitioning is a process that needs to be treated with due consideration for who is being inducted and into which context and university system. Universities have listened and successful completion of such programmes is a now requirement of probation (Sales, 2014; Stefani, 2004) at many institutions.

NATHEP is supportive of contextualised induction, which enables not only an understanding but being effective with university culture, departmental practices, policies and guidelines. The South African HE context demands a conscious shift towards the enhancement of the new academic as a knower and the academic being coming to know to enable enhanced ways of doing (Ndebele, 2013) to help new employees settle into the organisation. In the South African literature, Wadesango and Machingambi (2011) speak of induction enabling an understanding of university and national ethos and culture. Ardtts and Jansen (2001) value effective and efficient socialisation for new academics to develop relevant institutional attitudes and behaviours. Hendricks and Louw-Potgieter (2012) agree, and suggest employee social networks being established via induction programmes. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2005) call for induction to create a community of learners comprising experienced and new academics continuously working towards improving their practice. Mlindazwe (2010) asks for programmes to focus on academic confidence and competence to enhance employee value and respect. Given the concern in South African HE with academic retention and institutional quality, NATHEP pays attention to induction programmes that provide emotional, social, academic and institutional environmental support (Kelley, 2004).

Kandlbinder and Peseta (2011), drawing on a research survey on higher education teaching and learning across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, identified five concepts that hold “key” status in professional development courses for most academics, new and established: reflective practice, constructive alignment, student approaches to learning, scholarship of teaching, and assessment-driven learning. NATHEP brings into focus these various layers and strands of induction, necessary to differentiate induction from HR onboarding processes, which are not located in the university classroom.

Context matters

“Global South” is not just a geographical concept. It is geopolitical, historical and developmental, all at the same time (Jacob, 2023). Many countries included in the Global South are in the northern hemisphere, such as India, China and all of those in the northern half of Africa. Australia and New Zealand, both in the southern hemisphere, are not regarded as being part of the “Global South”, which tends to describe countries with a relatively low level of economic and industrial development, typically located to the south of more industrialised nations, with lower levels of technology and resources. The Global South is not an entity that exists per se but has to be understood as something that is created, imagined, invented, maintained, and recreated by the ever-changing and never-fixed status positions of social actors and institutions.

While the term has been critiqued for oversimplifying challenges faced by marginalised communities, it has explanatory power to account for actions of agents and social actors who consider themselves to be in subaltern(ised) positionalities of global networks of power (Spivak, 2016; Mignolo, 2007). In linking this to critical professional development practitioners (PDPs) that are contextualised, there are huge opportunities for new modes of knowledge production. This is even further enriched if context and positionality are used as levers (Manathunga, 2017) to provide causal reasoning and through that, a spectrum of agential options for professionalising HE in ways that are relevant and socially just.

If social justice is what is needed, where we hold a concern for individuals as well as the broader issues of race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, religion, ethnicity, nationality, social class, and other divisive differences in society (Griffiths, 2003), then we need social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of responsibility towards others, their society and the broader world in which we live (Adams et al., 2007). In other words, what is needed in the South African context is a “critical agency”, where one’s voluntary and purposeful actions as an educator respond to the wider historical, social and political context in

the service of educating students to be thoughtful, active citizens (Giroux, 1988). Critical agency and social justice lenses are often not readily included in current induction practices or in the repertoire of academic staff development as a field (de Kadt, 2019). Critical agency, in the context of education, explores how agency is linked to identity and social justice, especially in shaping pre-service teachers' understanding of their role in addressing issues like racism and sexism by enabling teachers to recognise and challenge inequities in the classroom, thus promoting more socially just educational practices (Francis & Le Roux, 2011). In Postma's (2015) perspective, informed by Foucault (2000), critical agency is about resisting dominant power structures and imagining alternative ways of being. It is not just about recognising systems of control but also exercising freedom by developing new modes of thinking and acting, particularly within educational contexts.

To be critical professional developers, we need to stand outside of our histories and examine our epistemological and ontological assumptions (Bartolomé, 2004; Haggis, 2003). For staff developers and new academics to enunciate and act from a place that locates them, conceptually, culturally and epistemically in a legitimate space of belonging, means that the changes that can occur will probably be high impact, authentic and poignant. Generic ways of induction, transitioning and mediating newness are made potent if one is clear about what one is doing in relation to context.



What does the Global South/African

context mean for NATHEP?

Working in a context located in the Global South and in Africa, NATHEP was intentional in situating and positioning professional development for induction as a Global South endeavour that is contextualised. The point has been made already that induction cannot be decontextualised. It needs to consider context as key. To neglect this can negatively affect new academics' sense of self and belonging. If PDPs are presented as universal truths that apply generically to new academics everywhere, it means that newcomers have to do the heavy lifting themselves in trying to understand how they fit into a complex context. Using frameworks from the Global North as a springboard, NATHEP went further by using its own critical framework to ensure that these five layers (Kandlbinder & Peseta, 2011) and others are deeply connected to and ensconced in relevant context, so that choices made are not generic and respond directly to real challenges that students face in their learning.

NATHEP aspired to shape staff developers as critical agents, who according to Francis and Le Roux (2011) are transformative intellectuals, who combine scholarly reflection and practice to critically examine the world and its processes, including the political and educational institutions that maintain social inequalities, and subsequently transform it (Giroux and McLaren, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

NATHEP encouraged staff developers to consider what a contextualised pedagogical engagement could look like as part of induction. Decontextualised induction promotes disengagement with who is doing the engaging and who is being engaged (Behari-Leak, 2020).

NATHEP promoted a critical, conscious, fully present and socially aware engagement to challenge the power dynamics prevalent but hidden within a university's structural and cultural spaces. It further challenged traditional induction participation as often being docile, passive and conformist, while assimilating recipients of information. NATHEP encouraged considered methodological selection and creation to contextually engage a critically conscious relational thinker and academic scholar capable of generating, producing and disseminating new knowledge. This was critical also for NATHEP's African-centred approach, which locates Global South HE as part of the continent that has historically had to defend and advance its own social justice, epistemic justice, decolonisation etc to assert itself as a credible and authentic creator of new knowledge and practices that respond to context sensitively and meaningfully.

Given the cultural register embedded in induction and its related discourses, NATHEP was intentional in excavating assumptions, bias and archaic views related to induction practices in our context. Based on a cascading model of staff development where the ultimate beneficiaries, namely students, are able to thrive and succeed under the tutelage of capacitated academics, who in turn are supported by institutions' professional development units and practitioners, NATHEP's first task was to unsettle hegemonic assumptions and knowledge held by the 20 academic staff developers in this project. If the aim is to support staff developers to initiate and convene well-theorised and conceptualised induction programmes in their institutional contexts, to address historical and systemic challenges and to contribute to the transformation of higher education, we needed to see how much of transformation was needed of the self, first.

NATHEP argues that the curriculum design for induction needs to be contextually and theoretically responsive to encourage academics to take up their responsibility and agency within a new context and self-direct professional learning opportunities for socio-academic integration to enhance positive work experiences

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the main discourses that guide and influence our choices in professional development programmes and in our understanding of what professionalising HE means. In NATHEP, being acutely aware of these contested discourses, the project homed in on whether academic staff/professional developers, eager to see change, could conceptualise and reimagine an alternative theorisation and creation of critical-social induction programmes that focuses on context. We encouraged the view that induction, like other processes, needs to create conducive conditions for the uptake of critical agency by academics, new and established. In both disciplinary and departmental programmes where the structural and cultural contexts might act as catalysts that advance or dampen efforts to effect meaningful change, induction programmes for new academics need to be contextualised, legitimate, relevant, responsive and critical.

CHAPTER THREE

Mapping the Theoretical Landscape of NATHEP

Kasturi Behari-Leak and Siyabulela Sabata

Introduction

The meta-theoretical framing that guides the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) draws on critical realism (CR) (Bhaskar, 1979, 1990) and social realism (SR) (Archer, 2000) to inform the theoretical basis and vision for the project methodology (residential workshops) and the scholarly outputs. While the field of CR and SR are too extensive for discussion here, key components used explicitly in NATHEP are discussed to provide the intellectual rationale and basis for choices staff developers made when they created their contextual and customised induction programmes and later case studies. In this chapter, the theoretical tools used to theorise induction are explained; then each conceptual tool is discussed in relation to NATHEP in the italicised text. In this way, we share how theory was used in NATHEP and how it scaffolded the design and enactment of the project. The approach taken is to facilitate understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, rather than this chapter being an exposition of the theory per se.

Critical realism (CR)

Ontology: Critical realism (CR) as a philosophy of reality has “its main focus on ontology, not epistemology” (Sayer, 2000, p.78). CR acts as an “underlabourer” to social research (Bhaskar, 1975) to diagnose and resolve problems at their roots. It works well with complementary social theories such as social realism (Sayer, 2000) and critical social theory. CR is premised on the existence of a dual reality: the real world (ontological realism) and our knowledge of that reality (epistemological relativism) (Bhaskar, 1979).

Epistemology: Our knowledge will always be fallible because knowledge of the natural and social worlds is not identical to those worlds, as these worlds exist independently of us (Bhaskar, 1998). To conflate reality with what we can say or think about it is a one-dimensional view that would constitute an “epistemic fallacy” (Bhaskar, 1979). Knowledge according to Bhaskar (1979) is two-fold: the intransitive dimension, which is not dependent on our conceptions for its existence (Sayer, 2000), and the transitive dimension, which constitutes our theories and is produced as a result of human agency (ibid.).

What does this mean for NATHEP?

The logo for NATHEP, featuring a stylized map of Africa in gold and red, with the acronym 'NATHEP' in white text on a red rectangular background.**NATHEP**

In NATHEP, we observe the CR tradition of a dual reality by acknowledging that existing induction practices at our universities are influenced by a host of underlying mechanisms including finance and culture. These are out of the control of the institutional unit or staff developer. The reality that exists is also independent of new academics' experience of the programme; and response to programmes and ultimately students' ability to exercise their agency to enable success. This reality refers to institutional reality or reality in its broadest sense. In addition to critical realism, participating universities drew on theories such as Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1994), Watson's theory of human care (2007) and Mezirow's transformation theory (1994).

Critical realism and its three pillars, ontological stratification and depth, epistemological relativism and judgemental rationality assert that the social world is stratified, differentiated and intransitive. "What the world is and how we think about the world can affect what we know about it; and how we can shape or change it" (Bhaskar, 1998). The work of CR can be likened to an iceberg. Rather than restricting our theorising to that which we can see and experience (Wheelahan, 2007), CR excavates to find the underlying causal mechanisms of experiences and events by identifying the generative mechanisms that produce them (Danermark et al., 2002). The concern with causal mechanisms is what sets CR apart from positivism, which sees the empirical as the only possible explanation for the existence of objects and phenomena (Collier, 1994; Sayer, 2000).

What does this mean for NATHEP?

The logo for NATHEP, featuring a stylized map of Africa in gold and red, with the acronym 'NATHEP' in white text on a red rectangular background.**NATHEP**

In using the above CR pillars to theorise induction, NATHEP sought to make explicit the generative mechanisms that give rise to certain responses and to lay bare the reality that exists, and to account for it. Only after surfacing the tacit, can one hope to change it, if needed. To assume that professional staff developers or new academics in this project and study are no more than the sum total of their performative competence constitutes epistemic as well as ontic fallacies (Danermark et al., 2002. This denies the richness and depth involved in the complex construction of what it means to be an educator or a new academic in HE today.

Emergence

The concept of “emergence” is a salient feature of CR (Elder-Vass, 2010) and refers to something new that comes about as a result of the interaction of two or more things (Archer, 1995; Sayer, 2000). Both structures and agents have emergent powers and properties. These can be activated in different ways and can trigger agents to make choices in response.

Human action and social structure act on each other differently based on properties possessed by social forms, which may be very different from those possessed by the individuals upon whose activity they depend. Emergence may be applied to the three pillars; namely, ontological stratification and depth, epistemological relativism, and judgemental rationality, which together integrate and overlap in ways that advance the importance of agency in the structural and cultural domains.

What does this mean for NATHEP?



In NATHEP, we created conditions for emergence in the various sessions and retreats. While we had a specific plan and design, we could not predict or determine the outcomes of our deliberations. The social and cultural contexts are imbued with nuances that influence agents, or in this case NATHEP participants, from making choices that are unexpected or contrary to what was envisioned. It is the concept of emergence that advances the dynamic and critical nature of CR projects. This is where we saw that staff developers need to be acting as critical agents who can counteract the compliance-driven ethos at many universities. While compliance is necessary at times, it is a severe impediment to innovation and advancement. When staff developers can assess a context and use its properties to inform their choices (agency), there is confidence that the system can change and allow something new to emerge. Critical agency is therefore important when academic staff developers work with new academics who in turn work with students to mediate their structural and cultural conditions to bring about change. As an outcome of emergence in the was the creation of a critical framework for NATHEP. This heuristic is unique to this project and as such relates specifically to aspects that we found relevant. In using the framework in other contexts, be aware of the conflation between meanings of the different levers and what these purport in different contexts. Our project participants used the framework as a heuristic to see if and how they had addressed criticality in their induction programmes.

Margaret Archer's social realism: the parts and the people

As an outcome of emergence in the project was the creation of a critical framework for NATHEP. Using critical realism (CR) as an underlabourer for her social realist theory, Margaret Archer (1995, 2000) offers a fully theorised account of what it means to be human and how this is linked to agency. Social realism perseveres in linking “the parts” (structures and culture) and “the people” (the agents) by trying to be more precise about the properties and powers of human beings, and how these emerge through our relations with the world (Archer, 1995). Agents, whom Archer always refers to in the plural sense, are people who operate in specific contexts that are structurally and culturally nuanced. The individual shapes his or her identity by prioritising concerns, and exercises agency in a social context with an acquired self-understanding and a broader social understanding of the relationship between the self and the broader context (Wheelahan, 2007).

Social realism was an important lens for NATHEP as it foregrounded the importance of agency, i.e. that things do not happen without agents. Agency points to the capacity of people to act on their social worlds in a voluntary way, based on their personal and psychological constitutions. Social realism allows one to explore the varying levels of agency exercised through personal emergent properties, which respond to structural emergent properties (SEPs) and cultural emergent properties (CEPs). In other words, Archer foregrounds the relationship between the parts and the people. Applying this to HE at a systemic level, we see that SEPs and CEPs contribute to the frustrations or advancement of the academic project in different but consequential ways. The full responsibility of the success and failure of the teaching and learning endeavour cannot and should not be at the behest of academics or academic developers alone; rather, the responsibility needs to be shared across the system.

What does this mean for NATHEP?

Drawing on social realism (SR) as an explanatory framework for this project and study, NATHEP explores how individuals understand, exercise and reflect on their voluntary efforts (agency), given the opportunities and constraints (through structural and cultural systems) at their university (Archer, 1995, 2003). To recognise the personal emergent properties (PEPs) of staff/professional developers as agents, as they face up to the corresponding emergent properties of the institutional and national contexts they confront (structural and cultural), is



to acknowledge that there is not a linear relationship between what practitioners do in their classrooms and the outcomes for learners in these spaces. For staff/professional developers as they try to make sense of their teaching and learning contexts, in relation to induction practices, they have to weigh up the losses and gains in making choices for the professional development of their academics. When university teachers and students come together in any pedagogic relationship, the “outcomes” cannot be predicted, since contextual powers and properties are activated and triggered, and influence what people do in different or similar situations.

Roy Bhaskar’s seven levels (laminar) of scale or seven scalar being (2010)

To inform and guide the methodology of the project and the research study, NATHEP used an organising framework derived from critical realism, namely and Bhaskar’s seven levels (laminar) of scale or seven scalar being (2010). The term “laminated system” was first introduced by Collier (1994) to refer to ontologically different levels or layers for the exploration of social and natural phenomena. The analogy of a laminar conjures up an image of a flexible but hard structure made up of ontological levels that cannot be separated and cannot be dissolved. Much like the layers of an onion, the laminated system radiates from smallest to largest layer in inseparable and irreducible ways. In their seminal work in the field of disability, Bhaskar and Danermark (2006) used the first “laminated system” to analyse the ontological features in their study in relation to social interaction and reality. This system allowed for a significant depth of analysis as well as a conceptualisation of social interaction in interconnected and relational terms.

Each social level, according to Bhaskar, must also be located in “a hierarchy of scale, that is of more macroscopic or overlying and less macroscopic or underlying mechanisms” (Bhaskar, 2010, p. 14). In this project, the seven scalar being allows for analysing and accounting for relationships at different orders of the hierarchical scale, through which critical realists develop the concept of a relational social science (Nunez, 2014). The distinct levels of ontology, agency and collectivity with which this project is concerned incorporate the seven levels of scale, defined in the list below (Bhaskar, 2010):

- i. The sub-individual or psychological level
- ii. The individual or biographical level
- iii. The micro-level, for example, the classroom
- iv. The meso-level, for example, faculty or institutional level
- v. The macro-level, for example the national context
- vi. The mega-level, for example the international context
- vii. The planetary (or cosmological) level, concerned with global level

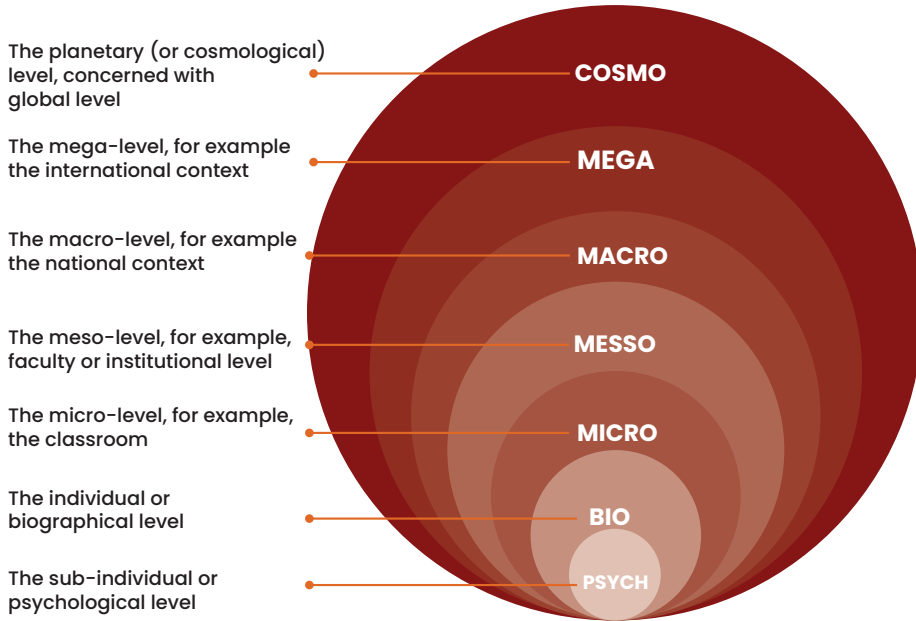


Figure 3 Bhaskar's Seven Scalar Being (1996)

What does this mean for NATHEP?

NATHEP

Drawing on Bhaskar's seven scalar being (1996), we analysed how the project enabled us as participants and facilitators to engage with our contexts at seven different layers. At each level we had to confront and uncover our own biases, assumptions and preconceptions about inducting "new" staff, by becoming "unstuck" ourselves. Data generated through a dialogic and reflective process among the facilitators enabled us to theorise and analyse our scholarly practice, in order to gauge how we may or may not be creating impulses for waves of change needed in the sector today. The intricate "laminations" from the levels of self to cosmology offered by the Bhaskarian model provide a framework for us to raise deeper questions for the field of professional development (PD) in relation to the purposes of higher education today, especially in the context of heightened awareness of the need for critical social and cognitive justice.

The internal conversation

For Archer (2007) internal conversations allow individuals to identify their primary concerns or those areas of one's life that are personally most important, and then decide how to act upon these concerns in pursuit of 'projects' (Barratt et. al., 2020). Archer's 10 mental activities involved in the internal conversation or inner dialogue include to plan, rehearse, mull over, decide, relive, prioritise, imagine, clarify, imagine conversations, and budget (Archer, 2003; 2007b). In this project, the structural and cultural conditions at universities are mediated through the exercise of academics' agency through a nuanced and complex unfolding of different sets of emergent powers and properties. To explain agents' actions, one has to understand agents' intentions, arrived at through "external inspection and inner dialogue" (Archer, 2000). The way that they do this is through their powers of critical reflection upon their social contexts and of creatively redesigning their social environments, their institutional or ideational configurations, or both. How it is possible for human beings to become agentially effective in these ways, is at the heart of Archer's argument on agency. It is also the focal point of this project and this research study.

What does this mean for NATHEP?



How university representatives (staff developers) on NATHEP respond to the above during the project involves a dialectical interplay between their "concerns" and their "contexts" (as they reflexively respond to them) (Archer, 2007). These are derived through an internal conversation, made external in NATHEP through the participatory learning and action methods used (discussed in Chapter 4), which encouraged participants to reflect openly with the rest of the cohort about reasons for their choices in their new, customised induction programmes. This project is particularly concerned with whether staff developers draw on the discourses of social justice and social inclusion within and outside of higher education (HE) when they formulate and develop their induction programmes for their universities. Or do they, shaped by more personal ambitions, draw on discourses related to the conveyor-belt system used in many induction practices currently?

Archer's morphogenetic model (M/M) framework

To explain the process of change, we refer to the morphogenetic model (M/M) (Archer, 1995, p.135) which consists of three phases: T1 = time 1; T2-3 = time 2; T4 = time 4. Each aspect of the MM was used in the design of the phases in NATHEP.

Structural and cultural conditioning phase (T1)

The first stage describes and analyses the conditions at T1, which is the first stage of the morphogenetic (M/M) cycle in this study. This phase is concerned with structural and cultural conditioning at all scalar levels of the HE system. When new academics enter the university, they confront contexts that predate them, and in this moment, various powers and properties are triggered or activated in the incumbents. The extent to which agents can effect change depends on their ability to negotiate the enablements and constraints that structural and cultural contexts afford them (Archer, 2000).



What does this mean for NATHEP?

This is known as the structural and cultural conditioning phase. In this project, this phase must be viewed against the backdrop of the crisis in higher education currently as well as the historical context that leads us to the present moment. This historical context implies that current challenges in higher education could be easily traced to complexities and problems that span the colonial situation into post-independence social institutions. According to Ekeh (1982) the current higher education sector is the residue of migrated social structures and constructs which were parcelled from metropolitan centres of the imperial West to Asia and Africa.

What is significant about these migrated social structures is that they were disembodied of their European moral contents and unfortunately, were also not recontextualised into morality of Africa and Asia. Consequently, these disembodied social structures are locked into their archaic hierarchical and authoritative models of colonial university structure both in organisation and administration.

It is therefore not surprising that three decades into democracy, South African HE faces a crisis of identity, relevance and legitimacy. Students are calling for higher education to be more responsive to historical and contextual constraints so that they feel less alienated, marginalised and invisible. Institutional reforms such as the UCDP and now the framework document, have nudged universities to focus on transforming their culture, practices and traditions so that students feel included and become the successful graduates that society needs i.e. informed, responsible and critical citizens who can contribute meaningfully to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge for the public good. While some gains have been made in this regard, the sector has been criticised, especially in the last 10 years, for not being rigorous enough in its attempt to redress systemic inequality and injustice in HE associated with the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

These factors have affected student throughput and success rates significantly and attention is now being placed on curricula and pedagogy to see what can be done there to overcome the constraints and hurdles that prevent students from graduating in time and from achieving the success they are capable of. Calls for curriculum interrogation and transformation have been expressed as “decolonising the curriculum, advancing epistemological diversity, advancing a post-apartheid knowledge agenda, developing responsive and relevant curricula and so on” (DHET, 2017).

Social interaction phase (T2-3)

In the next phase, known as the social interaction phase, agents interact with contexts (structural and cultural) to exercise their agency in specific ways, in an open system. While social agents have influence over their social conditions based on their vested interests and bargaining power (Archer, 1995), there are also consequences of interaction (context dependent) that cannot be predicted. In this phase, social actors and primary and corporate agents interact to demonstrate their agency in relation to context. These actions or choices show agents’ personal emergent properties which through concerns, dedication and deliberation interact with structural and cultural emergent properties of the context. Based on how they read and respond to the challenges and opportunities before them and by analysing agents and their choices, we are able to see how power is mediated and whether systems can actually change.

What does this mean for NATHEP?

The emergent properties of context have a bearing on the choices and actions of staff developers, new academics and students, and the actual enactment of staff developers’ reflexive decisions in creating induction programmes for their cohorts and their contexts. In the interactions, SC members used two interventions to condition the contexts for uptake by staff developers. Firstly, a cascading model of staff development was used in this phase to enable the cascade or flow of input from one level to the next, creating the ideational conditions for change to occur. Secondly, a critically reflective and critical approach to professional development, to model goals and intentions of NATHEP at all levels of the scalar being, was used.

**NATHEP**

Elaboration phase (T4)

In the third and last phase of the MM, known as the elaboration phase, the project aimed to identify whether genesis (change) or stasis (no change) had occurred. This is a period where the outcomes of the interaction between agents and contexts result in reproduction of the status quo or transformation. Either way, the system is described as “elaborated” (Danermark et al., 2002). Future agents encounter the outcomes of elaboration (T4) as the new conditioning context (T1) for the next morphogenetic cycle (Archer, 1995). The explanatory power of social realist theory allowed for explanations of how and why the parts and the people interacted in the way they did, and by implication, what can be done about it.



What does this mean for NATHEP?

Given that the project sought to better understand how induction practices were being conceptualised and delivered across the sector and how these could be strengthened to achieve the transformation goals of the sector, the elaboration enabled the evaluation of whether the project had succeeded in its attempts to “level the playing fields” by initiating and establishing inclusive induction practices where these were non-existent and at institutions that needed it the most.

How staff developers exercised their agency in the design of their induction programmes revealed much about their PEPs, but also illuminated the underlying and systemic conditions that influenced events and experiences in the HE system. In most cases the project identified overarching constraints that prevented or stymied the induction programme from being enacted as a mechanism to induct newcomers to the teaching and learning contexts, where they are expected to be agential with students. Given the complex ecosystem of the HE classroom, new academics need to be able to consider many levels of context, ranging from the self, the disciplinary and to the ability to teach, assess, design curricula, mediate online teaching etc. When this level of agency is enacted towards creating new programmes that enable new academics to exercise discretion in their teaching and learning choices, instead of being robots or automatons who carry out technical tasks, this means that there is elaboration of the system and a morphogenesis of agency, which can in turn lead to changes in the structural and cultural systems as well.

This also told us about the current context, and how new academics without proper training or orientation were doomed to fail, even before they began their academic careers, contributing to the “revolving door” syndrome of high staff

turnover in the sector. Those who remain are often overlooked for developmental opportunities when ironically, they are in most need of support. It is mostly new academics who, almost as a rite of passage, are given large classes to teach and a packed teaching workload with little wriggle room to take up development opportunities. While opportunities are available for the further professional development of established academics as teachers, either through teaching development grants or other staff development initiatives, there has not been a corresponding response to the induction and development of new academics, who are often thrown into the deep end of academia with no support and are expected to sink or swim, almost as a way of proving their tenacity in a “survival of the fittest” competition to stay in academia. Professional staff developers on NATHEP will reveal if they have gained a thorough understanding of the needs of new academics and their challenges in order to plan effective induction programmes to address their needs. The elaboration will also tell us if NATHEP as a national project is based on real challenges and needs experienced in different contexts and whether it has managed to develop strategies and ways to address these needs.

Putting the theory to work: A critical framework for NATHEP’s

curriculum and pedagogy

Emerging from the project work in 2018 and 2019, NATHEP created its own critical framework to guide its curriculum, pedagogy and methodology, but more importantly to act as an indicator of the different levels of criticality NATHEP was engaging in. The central question guiding NATHEP was whether the critical professional development (Kohli et al., 2015) approach embraced by the project creates the necessary and sufficient conditions for the positive exercise of responsive agency required by academic staff developers from differentiated institutions in the current context (Behari-Leak, 2020).

This critical framework draws on critical social theory (CST) (Collins, 1998; Calhoun, 1995), which brings together two strands of a multidisciplinary knowledge base. CST uses a language of critique at the centre of its knowledge production, to explore tools and frameworks by highlighting their contradictions, thereby advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge (Freire, 1993) and encouraging the production and application of theory as part of the overall search for transformative knowledge (Leonardo, 2004). CST resonates well with the aims of critical realism in that critical social theorists try to link theory to the immediacy of lived realities (Said, 1983) and opens up interpretations of theories to human and social needs, resonant with social realism.

The NATHEP critical framework also draws on decolonial theory (Mignolo, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018; Mills, 2017; Mafeje, 1998). As written about elsewhere (Ganas et.al, 2021), we assert that the legacy of colonial education challenges academics to constantly examine ideological biases inherent in colonial education, which renders education incapable of facilitating liberation and shared democracy (de Sousa Santos, 2007). If induction is designed to reproduce unequal relations of power towards an African subjectivity and colonial stereotype characterised by lack and deficit, it is difficult to transcend this level of epistemic and ontological injustice to reimagine a world beyond the present (Ganas et.al., 2021).

“To achieve epistemic justice requires ‘centring of African culture’ at the heart of the academy and development” (Nyoka, 2017). Decolonial pedagogies challenge academics to reimagine theoretical frameworks able to account for our lived experiences (as African people) and our relationality with other learners rooted in our cultures, histories, and heritage (Dei, 2012; Ganas et al., 2021). Two critical decolonial concepts that became important for NATHEP’s work on reframing induction practices helped us to understand the CR and SR framework in contextualised ways that kept the project grounded in an African reality. The first is “endogeneity” (Mafeje, 2011) which is centred on the need for an authentic African scholarship, grounded in African ontological discourses and experiences. The second is “extraversion” (Hountondji, 1990) which challenges Eurocentric assumptions about the existence of universal knowledge and theories used to explain social phenomena across space and time.

Through the lens of extraversion, we were challenged to recentre our knowledge and pedagogies imposed by Eurocentric models. This did not mean complete rejection of theoretical tools from the Global North but a critical curation of the epistemes and methods used from the West. We actively challenge the project to resist being “captured” (Alatas, 2022, p.8) where uncritical application of theories from elsewhere means a reproduction of Western social sciences without appropriate adaptation and contextualisation. In engaging the decolonial archive, NATHEP was able to complement the meta-theory (CR and SR) with decolonial pedagogies, which are realist pedagogies that require a focus on the realist transcendental question: what must the world be like given that black students (and academics) continue to experience alienation and marginalisation in South African HE? The NATHEP critical framework emerged from grounded transformative and decolonial practice in the project and demonstrated our understanding of a curriculum model relevant to a Global South context, one that speaks to our situatedness and positionality as professional developers. As the framework has already been written about by the SC in a chapter elsewhere (Behari-Leak et al., 2021), we reference that chapter here to avoid duplication of information and provide a summary of the framework next.

NATHEP CRITICAL FRAMEWORK

NATHEP



Each aspect of the CRITICAL Framework is unpacked below in relation to NATHEP’s epistemic onto pedagogical encounters. We are guided by the realist question

WHAT WORKS FOR WHO, IN WHAT CONTEXT AND WHY?



Conceptual, Contextual and Critical

- **Conceptual** - considered, creative and a thoughtful ideation
- **Critical** - linked to issues of power, race, class, gender and other systematic underlying mechanisms
- **Contextual** - relate to time, place, space, people, historicity and socio-cultural dimensions of lived experiences

Responsive, Reflexive, Relational, Re-centered, Relevant

- **Responsive** - decisive and quick to present challenges
- **Reflexive** - use reflection for forward action
- **Relational** - connect, relate, guided by purpose & project
- **Re-centered** - Africa focused is locus of enunciation
- **Relevant** - closely connected to and appropriate to the time and substantive content of work



Theorised Praxis

Using theory in a functional application to explain, trouble, problematise, confirm, affirm, position, thoughts and ideas to relate directly praxis

Authentic

...with genuine commitment and original thinking towards enhanced practices and deep changes



Legitimate

...with authority and gravitas, founded on authentic purpose and goals based on context and towards realisation of goals of all concerned

Figure 4 NATHEP’s CRITICAL Framework

How was the CRITicAL Framework used in the NATHEP

curriculum?

Each aspect of the CRITicAL Framework is integral to the NATHEP's curriculum and its epistemic-onto-pedagogical encounters. The word "critical" is used as an acronym, CRITicAL, and each component is integral to the project's goal, aims, deliverables and curriculum (see Figure 4). Each component discussed below informs the staff development work in NATHEP. As such, each has a bearing on the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the project.

The "C" in CRITicAL refers to three different concepts. Conceptual aspects, which include "considered", "creative" and a thoughtful ideation of "concepts" related to induction programmes. The second "C" refers to "contextual" aspects, which relate to time, place, space, people, historicity and socio-cultural dimensions of lived experiences (Leibowitz et al., 2016). Context is understood as time and space that go beyond geographical boundaries (Conrad, 1998). We have underscored the maxim, "context matters" in all our engagements thus far. The third "C" points to the need for invisible and intangible aspects, which are linked to issues of power, race, class, gender and other systemic underlying mechanisms (Quinn, 2012) to be given "critical" attention when induction programmes are designed. Critical agency in both disciplinary and departmental programmes is crucial, as structural and cultural contexts can serve as triggers that advance or dampen efforts, in this case to create robust new academics' induction programmes or to perpetuate instrumental ones. Both contexts and concepts needed to be embedded in a critical orientation to practice and knowledge generation (Smyth, 2003). A critical approach to professional development is informed by critical theory and critical pedagogy and draws attention to social justice, decoloniality, equality and change.

The "R" in CRITicAL stands for being "responsive" where decisive, swift and integrative thinking is needed in relation to present context and challenges (Loads & Campbell, 2015). The "cascading" model of staff development in NATHEP encourages responsive praxis (Groves, Price & Mencke, 2013) across different levels of agents. The "R" is also about the NATHEP curriculum working "reflexively" by exploring what it means to engage with enabling and constraining conditions at national, institutional, faculty, departmental and teaching and learning levels (Hayes, 2019). This reflexivity is critical for designing well considered, theorised and contextualised models of induction relevant to new academics at differentiated universities (Trowler & Knight, 2000). The "R" is "relational", referring to the need for rich relationships between academic staff developers and their new academics through induction programmes (Su & Wood, 2023). Building relationships encourages newcomers to see their own potential as change agents who can adopt effective curricula, pedagogic and assessment practices to respond to challenges across a wide

range of disciplinary backgrounds and institutional contexts (McGrath, 2020). Further, the “R” is also linked to “recentering” as a reminder to respond to the call for a decolonial pedagogy (Mignolo, 2013; Walsh, 2003) by foregrounding Africa as our locus of enunciation in induction programmes. Recentering the induction programme in this way addresses the experiences of mainly black students and staff, who still feel alienated, marginalised and invisible at the university (Bhana, 2014; Arday et al., 2021). This offered an additional challenge for NATHEP to address. Finally, the “R” also links to the need for curricula to be “relevant” to the needs of all involved (Blignaut, 2021). Professional development practitioners need ongoing development too as they are equally challenged by the complexity and contested nature of the current higher education landscape (Ingleby & Hedges, 2012). Many find themselves between a rock and a hard place, having to occupy a third space between university management and academics in the various faculties (Behari-Leak & Le Roux, 2018).

The “T” in CRITicAL stands for “theorised” praxis. NATHEP was intent on promoting the induction programme for new academics as a theorised model, using theory in a functional application to explain, trouble, problematise, confirm, affirm, position thoughts and ideas to relate directly to praxis (Hayes et al., 2021). It is important for staff developers to believe in, enact and promote the idea that teaching is not a commonsense or craft activity (McLean & Bullard, 2000; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). Disciplinary knowledge alone or holding a PhD in a specialist disciplinary area is not a licence to teach or the basis for pedagogical engagement. In fact, “disciplined” knowledges (Garuba, 2017) have historically constrained pedagogical approaches and have failed to engage with how students’ backgrounds, history and context affect the teaching and learning process (Bartolome, 2004; Behari-Leak & McKenna, 2017; (Hindhede & Højbjerg, 2022).

The “A” in CRITicAL stands for “authentic”. Here NATHEP was concerned with genuine commitment and original thinking towards enhanced practices and deep change. Since 2015, universities have been trying to respond to calls for decolonisation of the curriculum by student activists insisting that who teaches matters (Kessi & Cornell, 2015). The lack of diversity in teaching staff, they claim, results in a dearth of a representative teaching body and role models to attend to the needs of diverse student groups who struggle with issues of identity, cultural displacement and language, to name a few (Jabbar & Mirza, 2019). Academics who are not reflexive about how their positionality, background and cultural values shape students in particular ways for success or failure, unwittingly reproduce socially unjust pedagogies, and perpetuate high attrition and low participation and success rates (Davis & Steyn, 2012). Induction programmes must focus on the positionality of new academics and their orientations within their curricula and their response to possible tensions (Ndebele, 2013; Reddy et al., 2016).

The “L” in CRITicAL stands for “legitimate” and refers to practice that is done with authority and gravitas, founded on authentic purpose and goals. Practice is based on context and towards the realisation of goals of all concerned (Conrad, 1998; Smyth, 2003). The who (teachers) and the how (teaching methods) are important markers of change in NATHEP and play an important role in mediating the what (content) of teaching through knowledge production and the design of learning experiences. Historically, we have taught in an alienating and marginalising curriculum environment, where content represents examples that South African students struggle to identify with (Le Grange, 2020; Mahabeer et al., 2016). Being a university teacher in Africa must mean something, least of all that the content used to teach concepts and frameworks draws richly on what it means to be an African, in relation to the world. Situating Africa as the centre of epistemic diversity is an important positioning that teachers need to understand.

Limitations

When working with CR and SR, it is important to note that these are meta-theories and as such, do not automatically provide the contextualisation needed. Theories derived in studies located in different settings do not always travel well and cannot be transported without a deep level of interrogation and recentring. This chapter aimed to elucidate how the theoretical framework was applied to NATHEP, using our context and reality to inform the theory, rather than the other way around. This discussion also laid the foundation for understanding how the project partners applied the theoretical lens and NATHEP’s CRITicAL Framework to the case studies presented in the chapters that follow. This was not driven by a formula but emerged relative to how much or how far the project partners were prepared to include these, given their institutional contexts. The application of CR theory in the NATHEP project concerned an examination of whether structures, culture and agency as they are embodied or presented in induction practices, worked to include or exclude new academics and students in the higher education environment. By focusing on context, the theory allowed the project to explore the nature of conditions that either enable or constrain the exercise of agency of academic staff in differentiated higher education structural and cultural domains. Given the legacy of South African HE, the structural and cultural conditioning that predates both staff developers and new academics is complex as a result of a double layer of oppression through apartheid and colonisation. This history cannot be ignored when trying to understand the contextual baggage that many universities carry, despite being in a new dispensation since 1994. Professional development programmes must acknowledge and engage with these contexts as the tacit triggers and intersectional discriminations are still present and pervasive through HE today.

Conclusion

The theoretical interrogation and exploration that informed NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework and its application in the project was brought to light in this chapter. By looking into historical imbalances in induction practices across the sector, and bringing to the fore the structural and cultural conditions that exist, this project encouraged academic developers to evaluate their interactions with their contexts, universities, and induction programmes, and they had to engage in a self-reflection of how they had exercised their agency to bring about elaboration in their newly formed or amended induction programmes. The examination of the interplay of these elements in situational contexts accounted for the nature of induction programmes developed by academic developers, how they related to institutional concerns, and linked with the idea of inclusive practices in the sector. The case studies that follow in part two of this book are guided by and draw on the theory detailed here, and which influenced the project through its cycle from conditioning to reflection to creation and implementation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodological Considerations in NATHEP

Kasturi Behari-Leak and Zinhle Mthombeni

Introduction

In this chapter, we focus on the overarching methodology used in NATHEP over its life cycle. As evident from our initial comments above, the philosophical orientation of a project is critical to its methodology. When a project is conceptualised, one needs to be very clear about intention and outcome, as well as the gaps the project is addressing and how. According to scholars, all projects are created for a reason and to address a need. The NATHEP comprised many interrelated components that hinged around the project's goals and purpose. How well the project ultimately addresses that need defines the project's success or failure (Watt et al., 2014). The residential programmes over the three years were conceptualised on two levels; namely, the practical implementation level and the scholarly reflective level. At the practical level, the project lead conceptualised the draft programme, which was shared with the SC for their input and feedback. At the scholarly level, each staff developer (also project participant) needed to incorporate the input and feedback into their models of induction for their universities. Here, we discuss the approach and architecture of the project i.e. how it was conceptualised and created and how the methods are intentionally designed to align with the project aims and goals for internal coherence.

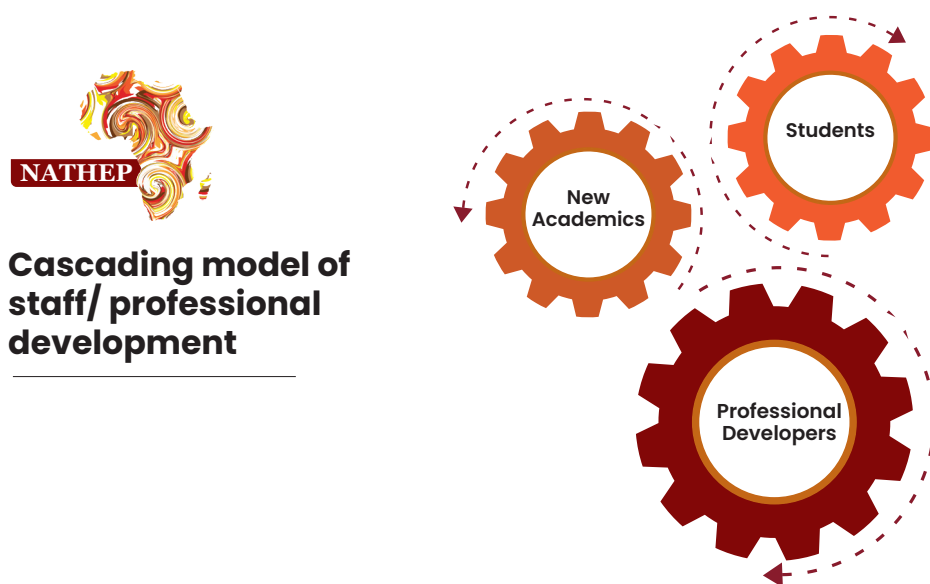
As discussed earlier, the approach to staff development in NATHEP draws on critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and critical professional development (Kohli et al., 2015) (see Chapter 2). This approach is designed to orientate staff developers to new and critical understandings of induction, transitions and newness in the context of a transformative HE in South Africa. Context is a key lever for change and ensures that generic interventions that address superficial problems are avoided. Criticality and reflexivity enable participants to engage creatively but with an acute awareness of how context at some universities can enable or constrain advancement and change. Rather than becoming a victim to forces that seem insurmountable, exercising one's agency as a staff developer or new academic is crucial in how one mediates teaching and learning challenges. While this approach can likely be seen as meritocratic in that it can mask systemic inequities, it is also liberating in that agents can exercise control over their fields of practice, albeit in differentiated ways.

The cascade model of staff development in NATHEP

The underlying staff development framework (discussed below) draws attention to

the fact that we were a staff development project working with project participants who were staff developers as well. It was therefore important for us as the project facilitators to model current and robust pedagogies that could be used by our participants in their institutional induction programmes with their new academics, who in turn could use these pedagogies in their classrooms with students.

Before discussing the key elements of the methodological components to the project, some discussion is needed about the underlying framework used in the approach to staff development in NATHEP, namely, the cascade model (Hayes, 2014). Borrowed from industry, the cascade model was adapted as a layered approach in NATHEP known as the “cascading model of staff development”. This term was coined by the project to demonstrate the many levels of influence staff development interventions can have with different groupings.



Cascading model of staff/professional development

Figure 5 Cascading model of staff/ professional development

This also highlights the value of staff development programmes being conceptualised, designed and implemented as ways of enhancing teaching and learning. This requires well-considered, theorised, contextual and relevant offerings to increase the status and gravitas of pedagogy rather than technical programmes that anyone can convene.

As per the NATHEP project proposal to DHET, one of the strategic aims of this intervention was to benefit many stakeholders at different levels, simultaneously. The one-to-one consultancy model of staff development is no longer cost effective or efficient in the current climate of financial fragility in the university system. While

efficiency is important, NATHEP asserts that this cannot be achieved at the expense of criticality and reflexivity. The main principle in NATHEP's cascade model was to distribute the affordances of the input to enable participants to customise and imbue their programmes with contextual relevance. This cannot be achieved if everyone is "trained" to replicate the same practice, irrespective of context. The cascade model of staff development as adopted by NATHEP therefore cannot be conflated or equated with the train-the-trainer model (Bennett, 2019) of staff development, based on dissemination and compliance.

Cascading or training?

The cascade model (Martin, 2023; Wedell, 2005) is borrowed from industry and refers to 'training' that is able to reach many through a few. It involves the delivery of training through layers of trainers until it reaches the final target group. This model is used in different forms of business, corporate and industry training and even in strategic planning sessions. According to Martin (2023), when strategic choices must be decided on, the cascade model assists in prioritising the most important decisions from less onerous ones. The cascade allows for efficiency and proficiency in that expert input can be disseminated by a few to many.

While the idea of cascading input from facilitators to project participants through interactive engagement was an innovative and productive one, its link to the discourse of "training" was troublesome. "Training" as a form of staff development is counterproductive to the outcomes of the critical professional approach for NATHEP participants, namely, to encourage agency rather than complacency. "Training" implies a passive recipient who has little choice or recourse to stray too far from what is "provided" (Scace, 2015) to order to uphold the unwritten notion of beneficence from the "service" provider. The word "training" does not resonate well with the goals of NATHEP as we did not want to encourage a transmissive model that was not experiential, diffused and reflective (Hayes, 2014). NATHEP encouraged a model that was diffused and open to interpretation and adaptation. Although presented by the SC, all project participants were free to adjust and temper the input given to suit their contexts. When training suggests that something is mandatory and imposed (Scace, 2015), it reduces agency. NATHEP's conceptualisation of staff development, which draws on a social realist approach (Archer, 2000), is concerned with how new academics respond to their structural and cultural contexts at their universities, to bring about change.

Hayes (2014) identified five criteria that connect well with NATHEP's staff development aim and assist in mitigating the ill effects of designing and delivering training models. The first criteria points to the need for development opportunities to engage with the beliefs and perceptions of participants. Given that beliefs are exceptionally difficult to change (Murphy & Mason, 2006) participants are afforded

the opportunity to restructure beliefs that may be deeply held, thus enabling them to be more receptive to the information they are exposed to. Rather than imposing procedures in a top-down manner, as is often the case in training models, the second criterion provides opportunities for participants to design, revise and possess ownership of systems that are part of the development. This principle ensures that systems and procedures resonate with participants, thereby contributing to their effectiveness. While development opportunities often include resources, the third principle proposes that resources in themselves are not enough. According to Hayes (2014) participants experience increased benefits when they are encouraged and given opportunity to express their opinions to identify resources that could be used to meet specific needs. This results in better familiarisation and engagement with resources. The fourth principle relates to inviting participants to not only identify resources that may be beneficial but to additionally invite them to contribute to their development. Resources developed by participants with the support of facilitators often provide alignment with what participants need, have clear aims and are appropriate to their development levels. The final principle indicates that support needs to be provided for the problem solving and evaluation skills of participants where difficult questions need to be asked and challenges must be identified and solved, thus facilitating critical thinking around issues presented by the development opportunity. In using the cascade model and not the “train the trainer” model in NATHEP, we were keen for the learnings to have a ripple effect in a bidirectional way even though the project curriculum was provided and facilitated by the project.

Training or engagement?

In NATHEP, the word “engagement” has been used as a proxy to signal the thoughtful, agential and reflexive options available to project participants. As NATHEP was a staff development project aimed at enhancing capacity of academics as university teachers, engagement took place during the various stages of the project, mainly during residential retreats, in the form of staff development sessions.



Figure 6 NATHEP SC (SC) preparation meeting

The input engaged with, to create customised and relevant induction programmes for participants' universities, was facilitated through pedagogical methods. This means the facilitators engaged with various pedagogical strategies to facilitate learning and expansion while simultaneously modelling pedagogies for critical practice. In fact, the SC published a paper on pedagogies for critical agency (Ganas et. al, 2021) based on the engagements in NATHEP, to highlight the importance of considered approaches to teaching, facilitation and interaction and exchange. This will be discussed shortly.

NATHEP's cascade model of staff development

Stakeholders

The key ingredient in using the cascade model for staff development is to identify the key role players or stakeholders so that you can design the intervention accordingly, to address the needs of each cohort. The main partners or stakeholders in NATHEP included the SC of staff developers who were project facilitators; the two project participants who were staff developers themselves from each of the 10 universities; new academics at the 10 participating universities who would benefit from more theorised and considered induction programmes that supported them in their roles as university teachers; and ultimately the student, who benefits from university teachers who can think deeply and meaningfully about what it means to facilitate university teaching and learning in our current context. To understand role players in this way is to ensure that each group in the cascade understands their overall commitment to the project in the stipulated timeframe and shares responsibility for the successful achievement of project outcomes. Matching outcomes with project deliverables is key to the progress and success of the project and this ensures "buy-in" from all parties concerned. To this end, memoranda of understanding were signed between NATHEP and each university partner. In these documents, DVCs declared support for participants' involvement (SC and project participants) over the project life cycle and participants accepted responsibility for their participation.

Levels of cascade

The second aspect is to plan and design the different levels of cascade in the project, to understand the different audiences and to facilitate the correct pitch and purpose for each group. Appropriate levels of complexity and difference must be accounted for across all groups, and gaps need to be filled or bridged. In NATHEP, there are five levels of cascade where five to six facilitators engaged with 20 project participants simultaneously to share knowledge, practices and insights.

- Level 1:** Peer development among SC facilitators to understand the task at hand.
- Level 2:** Facilitate the themed discussion with project participants.
- Level 3:** Participants apply the input received and customise for use in induction programmes with their new academics at their universities.
- Level 4:** New academics learning from and facilitating teaching and learning in meaningful and relevant ways in their classrooms.
- Level 5:** Students and their ongoing success.

Input at the top tier is disseminated and shared with the layers beneath. As each level engages with the input, they are free to adapt and contextualise the resources and input shared, as long as these changes align with the broad goals of the project. As stated already, the logic behind the cascade model was to ensure the success of the ultimate beneficiary in higher education, namely, the student. While levels one to three above are directly linked to involvement in NATHEP, levels four and five are intended consequences of the project and its intervention through the other levels.

Time

The cascade model also works temporally, and the different time stamps of the project track the key milestones and achievements with a focus on time on task. As discussed in Chapter 1, NATHEP unfolded in three phases, which ran chronologically in tandem with each calendar year. This approach coincides with Archer's M/M approach (see Chapter 3) which is congruent (Archer, 1995) with the three distinct temporal phases (see figure 7) identified for NATHEP. While in reality these phases overlap and intertwine, the distinct time frames enabled the project to activate the theory based on a "before" (preexisting social forms), a "during" (the process of transformation itself) and an "after" (the transformed, since social structures are only relatively enduring) of the social realist framework.

PROJECT CYCLE - 3-YEAR LIFE CYCLE (2018-2020)

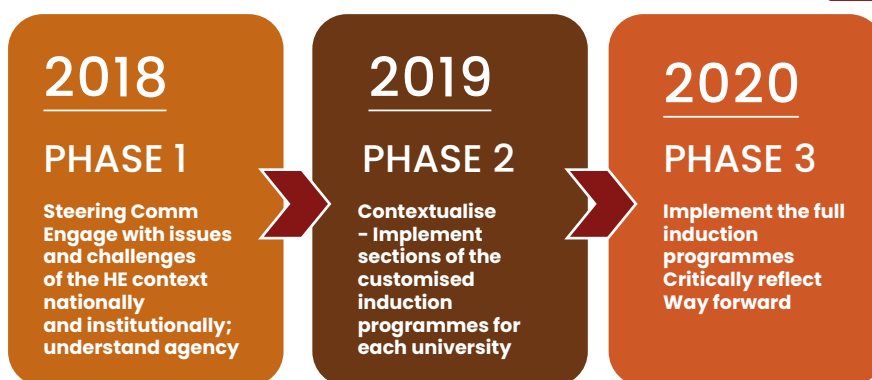


Figure 7 Phases of the three-year NATHEP cycle

Project themes

Each phase had a thematic focus, discussed in detail in Chapter 1 and linked to the project deliverables, which had to be reported on to our funders. In Phase 1/Year 1, the thematic focus was orientation (approach) and conceptualisation (theorisation); in Phase 2/Year 2, contextualisation and customisation; and in Phase 3/Year 3, implementation and critical reflection. Using these overarching themes to guide the project’s design and deliverables, various events and engagements were facilitated by the SC facilitators with the project participants using the relevant theme. All the engagements were aligned with the project goals and adhered to the scholarly/reflective underpinnings that guided each practical/implementation phase.

Methodological highlights in each phase

NATHEP Year 1/Phase 1 2018 (project launch): orientation and conceptualisation

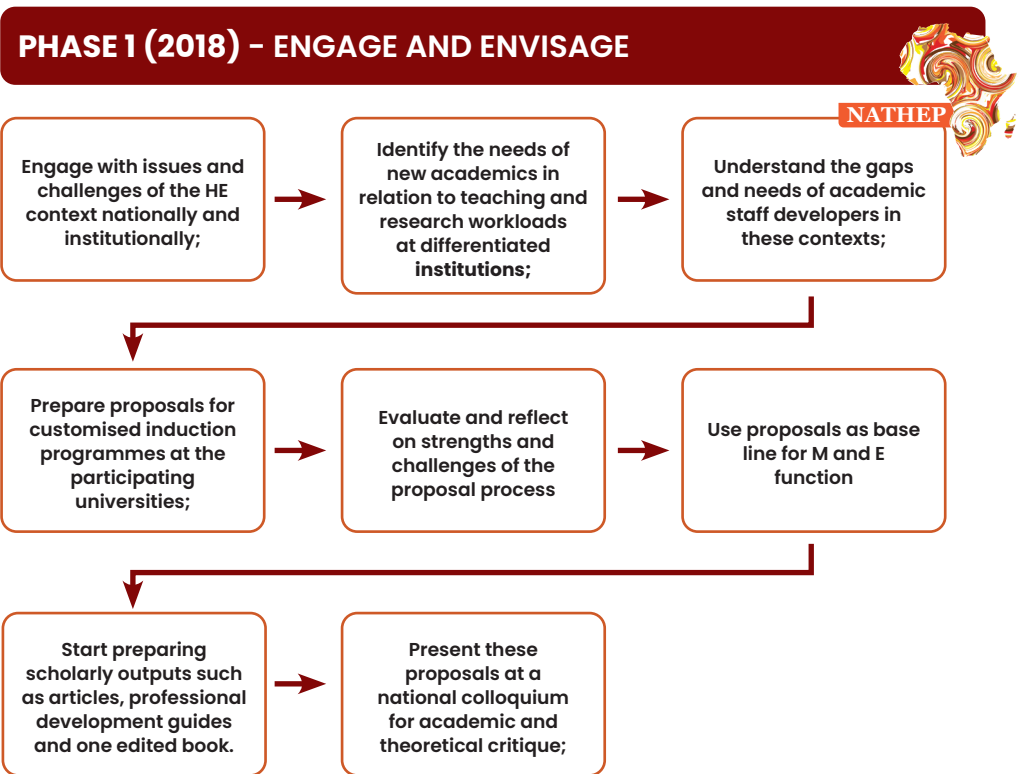


Figure 8 NATHEP Phase 1 Methodological Highlights

In this first phase of the project, it was important for both the SC and participants to be orientated well to the different levels and stages of the project to ensure we were setting realistic targets for achievements of the deliverables. We were acutely aware that we were beholden to DHET as the funder. We also knew that ultimately these were public funds, which we had to ensure we spent meaningfully as per our project plan. Given how we came into the project, there was a need to be clear about these technical but necessary details even though as staff developers, we are not used to working in this way. The first circle of influence was the SC, who needed to share the responsibility of the project with the project lead. Planning meetings were thus more critical in the first phase, to ensure a shared understanding of goals and commitments. In the interest of time and cost, planning meetings were scheduled as “bookends” to the residential retreat. The pre-residential meetings were geared towards programme implementation and distribution of workload while the post-residential meetings focused on debriefing and reflexive deliberations to acknowledge achievements against the project plan and to shape the next workshop.



Figure 9 SC engagement during debrief session (August 2018)

At times and when needed, the SC availed themselves for additional planning meetings to keep track of programme objectives, milestones and achievements outside of the full project meetings. During these SC meetings, the project team learnt together and stretched each other to be creative and scholarly in their deliberations. This first level of the cascade was hugely important to the peer-to-peer learning in staff development where each of us, among equals, could critique each other and support each other to new professional standards in a safe and trusted space. The level of trust at this level is also important for the SC to function as a joint container for the substantive content of the project.

Residential workshops

The residential workshops took place over two to three days, three times a year. The target audience of these residential workshops was the participating staff developers from each university, who were wholly focused on creating customised induction programmes where these did not exist and for others to strengthen the programmes, if already in existence. Most residential workshops paid a lot of attention to context and focused on issues and challenges in HE nationally and institutionally to explore the needs of new academics in relation to teaching at differentiated institutions. These engagements further aimed to unpack the gaps and needs of the academic staff developers (ASDs) in these contexts.

In Phase 1, as part of the theme of orientation (approach) and conceptualisation (theorisation), the first residential workshops addressed the organising framework and theoretical underpinnings of NATHEP. This was essential to provide a framework of theoretical tools to be used in workshops and other project engagements. The words “theory”, “theoretical” and “theorise” are constantly used in scholarly and academic work. For instance, Arbend (2008) notes that it is a common understanding that empirical research needs to be driven or informed by “theory”. Collins and Stockton (2018) articulate the vital role played by theory in scholarly work as that which provides a guide that links the abstract and concrete towards ultimately achieving relevant and research application-oriented practice. The theoretical level that NATHEP drew on as a project was very much part of the methodological considerations for the residential workshops. We were keen to advance the idea that staff development is based on theory/scholarly underpinnings and therefore should not be dismissed as intuitive or pedestrian work that anyone can do.

As discussed already, the organising and meta-theoretical frame guiding both NATHEP’s methodology, pedagogy and research outputs, draws on critical realism (Bhaskar, 1990) and social realism (Archer, 2000). This has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3 in relation to this project’s goals. This also informs the theoretical basis and methodology for the residential workshops as well as related research outputs such as this book.

Bhaskar’s seven scalar of being

In Phase 1, we engaged in an in-depth consideration of Bhaskar’s seven scalar of being (Bhaskar, 1975, 1979, 2014) to make links with how induction practice can be contextualised. Here participants could see first-hand how theory can inform the knowledge, frameworks and tools used in professional development. As written about elsewhere, “NATHEP explored a spectrum of contextual influences, from the self to cosmology, to unpack how these influence how academic staff developers conceive of their roles in induction programmes and how new academics

understand their roles as they transition into HE" (Ganas, 2021, p.17). The seven scalar of being also makes possible a "laminated analysis" (Vanharanta et al., 2022) where each NATHEP-facilitated engagement with participants was designed according to each level of the seven scalar being model. Facilitators used specific methods and foci drawn from all seven levels of ontology and explored the importance of different layers of context – the self, the departmental and faculty contexts, institutional differentiation, the regional and national HE contexts and global issues in academic development – in influencing thinking about staff development.

The seven scalar being system is thus used in the project as a critical heuristic to synthesise the methodology, analysis and explanations in relation to the goals of the project and the people. It is also used as a theoretical framework to guide the scholarly level. In showing how the seven scalar being related to staff development and induction practice as a laminated system (discussed in detail in Chapter 3), we explored how induction programmes could use the seven different levels, such as the psychological, biographical, micro-level, meso-level, macro-level, mega-level, and the planetary or cosmological level, to design relevant and appropriate pedagogies and other interventions to link with each level. In this way, we showed how theory and practice are linked and how these can be supported to enrich induction programmes. Discussions relating to Bhaskar's theory were centred around how new academics could be supported in departments and faculties to exercise their agency. While theoretical underpinnings were the focus of the first residential workshop, other sessions were composed of broader discussions of key global issues in higher education, contextual challenges and opportunities in the sector. We also wanted to illustrate that relationships between individuals are mediated by agency and the context within which they exist. Relational agency is crucial to how staff developers work with new academics to mediate their contextual conditions. It is also a form of collective agency that professional development programmes need to embrace, given the interrelated nature of the university and HE as a structural and cultural social system.

Models of induction

In line with the aims of NATHEP, to enable new academics to critically engage with contextual challenges and opportunities in the sector for the promotion of socially just pedagogy, curriculum development and assessment practice, the second residential workshop (held in October 2018), explored with participants the development of models of induction practice relevant for the South African context. Institutions of higher education vary in their models of inducting new academics into their institution. For instance, Sutherland (2019) notes that some institutions follow human resource and/or organisational development models of induction when inducting new academics. While these models aim to introduce new academics to their new environments, structures, and processes at the university,

they often do not equip new academics to gain better understanding about the nature of effective teaching and learning (Mathieson, 2011). The SC led this charge by describing and discussing the induction models in practice at their universities.

Pecha Kucha

As part of the proceedings, group discussions were held in which participants, the academic staff developers, shared induction practice using examples from their own university contexts. Participants were guided to reflect on induction practice through theoretical lenses such as the NATHEP CRITicAl Framework and Bhaskar's theory (Bhaskar, 1975, 1979). In one session, for example, participants were invited to critique induction models and case studies based on Bhaskar seven scalar of being methodology. This session further incorporated an opportunity for academic developers to reflect on elements of the self by interrogating aspects such as who they are and their positionality. It was important to surface how each participant's context, such as being an academic developer in a specific university located at a specific geographic region, positioned them to be an agent of change within those contexts.

Participants were encouraged to experiment with different presentation methods such as the Pecha Kucha format, which is a creative alternative presentation style to Power Point. PechaKucha or Pecha Kucha is a Japanese presentation style in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each (6 minutes and 40 seconds in total). The format keeps presentations concise and fast-paced. In this way, we were sharing possibilities with participants that could be realised in their own induction workshops.



Figure 10 Pecha Kucha presentations of institutional induction programmes

Critical dialogue

Phase 1 closed at the end of 2018, with plans and preparations for facilitating a critical dialogue at the 2018 Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA) conference at Nelson Mandela University. Participation in HELTASA enabled the SC and ASDs to share their learnings, thus contributing to academic citizenship (Pfeifer, 2016). The University of Miami of Ohio (2010) defines academic service as “applying one’s knowledge, skills, and expertise as an educator, a member of a discipline or profession, or a participant in an institution to benefit students, the institution, the discipline or profession, and the community in a manner consistent with the missions of the university and the campus” (Pfeifer, 2016, p. 239). The goals of the project were perceived as having implications not only for participants’ programmes at their respective universities, but for everyone’s understanding of professional development as a social practice in the current context. Given NATHEP’s social justice agenda, the opportunity to share their journeys, and knowledge was valued as examples of academic citizenship. This was the first time that NATHEP was introduced to a national conference space, with the SC leading a dialogue entitled “Confronting common-sense induction practices as professional developers”. The presenters were Jo-Anne Vorster, Nalini Chitanand, Kasturi Behari-Leak, Rieta Ganas, Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela, Joe Makua and Noluthando Toni. In this critical dialogue, the SC reflected on how the SC had begun to conceptualise and facilitate the initial phase of the project. As a team of NATHEP facilitators, the SC recognised that diverse entry points into HE and academic development influence practice in diverse and unequal ways.

NATHEP Year 2/Phase 2 2019: contextualisation and customisation

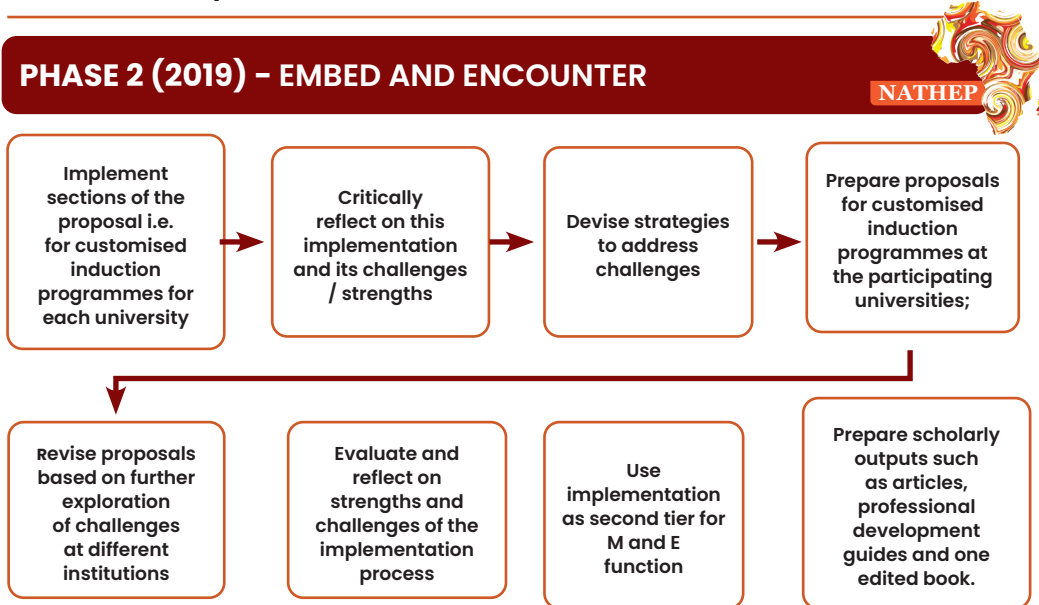


Figure 11 NATHEP Phase 2 Methodological Highlights

In Year 2/Phase 2 in 2019, the focus was on designing induction programmes that reflected the needs and realities of various contexts. In other words, participants who had been exposed to various theories and models of induction as well as plenary discussions on the HE context, had to now design programmes for their own institutions by applying their learnings from 2018 to their practice by creating bespoke and customised induction programmes for their universities. SC members were attached to two university partners as their mentors and worked closely with them to shape these new programmes. As noted by Shulman (2004), while it is important for professionals to integrate learnings with practice, this process is not a simple linear exercise of merely taking learnt knowledge and applying it to the field. This further distinguishes the “training model” from NATHEP engagements. Shulman and Wilson (2004, p.534) argue that the process of judgment intervenes between knowledge and application by creating “bridges between universal terms of theory and the gritty particularities of situated practice”.

Given this, the start of Phase 2 in 2019 commenced with academic developers engaging in a critical reflection on what a new induction programme would look like in the context of their universities; what it would mean to implement the induction; as well as what a critical and objective evaluation would entail. Such an evaluation meant devising strategies that would address the identified potential challenges while maximising the strength of the implementation plan (Neumann et al., 2018). To guide deliberations, we drew on specific university contexts to achieve the breadth and depth required in the design of new programmes.



Figure 12 Engagement during critical reflection workshop (April 2019)

A renewed focus on pedagogy

Pedagogical encounters were the focus of the April 2019 residential gathering, where a series of brainstorming sessions on several pedagogies were undertaken.

Many scholars have written about the plethora of pedagogies that have emerged in response to challenges of specific contexts (McInerney, 2009; Farren, 2016; Gadsden, 2008; Bannerji, 2020). Notably, many academics are familiar with Mbembe's pedagogy of presence, Freire's pedagogy of hope (1970) or a pedagogy of care. As NATHEP, we identified four pedagogies which emerged from the project that seemed most fitting for induction practices, and which could also address the challenges evident in the complex, diverse context that is the HE classroom. We matched these pedagogies with four corresponding modalities also used in research, namely the epistemological (knowing), ontological (being), methodological (doing), and axiological (valuing) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) to provide a scholarly focus, often not considered when working with pedagogy (seen as practical application mainly). The set of pedagogies chosen for work on NATHEP included the pedagogy of engagement (methodological/doing), the pedagogy of knowledge generation (epistemological/knowing), the pedagogy of being and becoming (ontological/being) and the pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation (axiological/valuing), which enabled robust engagement at various levels. Although all the pedagogical approaches are intertwined in reality, we separated them out to identify the detail required for contextualisation.

The NATHEP facilitation team was keen for participants to identify the links between pedagogical purpose and social responsiveness. Hinchliffe (2018) differentiates between pedagogy and education by defining education as "learning for its own sake" whereas pedagogy is mostly learning that is directed toward social goals. Parini (2005) states that teaching is not only about achieving certain objectives, but it is a task for the teacher to acclimatise their learners to the nature of a contextual reality by rigorously introducing them to certain topics while sensitising them to what it means to be a socially responsible citizen. The axiological aspect of NATHEP was high on the agenda when unpacking the different pedagogies.

Each of the pedagogical approaches with their corresponding modalities was shared by the SC to expand participants' repertoires on using pedagogies for developing critical agency when inducting new academics into the academy. These were modelled using various collaborative methods to encourage participants to use these pedagogies in their design. This exercise enabled the university partners to constructively reflect on their own institutional practices and generate new ideas for contextually relevant induction programmes aligned to their institutional realities.

The SC wrote about the four pedagogies above in a paper entitled "Pedagogies for critical agency: Portals to alternative futures" in 2021 (Ganas et al., 2021). These pedagogies, in the context of academic staff developers and new academics induction transitioning into higher education, explored the interplay between academic staff, institutional development, and contextual influences in shaping

professional learning processes. What follows is a synopsis of each to pedagogy to capture their essence:

The pedagogy of being and becoming (PoBB)

The pedagogy of being and becoming explored what it means to recognise the full humanity of people who have a right to express their ontological density as thinking, feeling and doing individuals in a collective, irrespective of race, gender, ability and religion. This pedagogy looked at how intersectionality manifests across structures to complicate the relational aspects of what it means to be a new academic in SA higher education today. With its transformative and decolonial underpinnings, NATHEP recognises and acknowledges the self and who the self becomes through the process of engagement with pedagogical encounters. By focusing on a PoBB, it is important to evoke the whole person into the pedagogical encounter. The teacher and student should be in a relational interaction that recognises positionality, lived experiences and dispositions. Being and becoming are not mutually exclusive but entangled and occur intra-actionally (Barad, 2007).



Figure 13 SC at Inaugural NATHEP Workshop

Pedagogy for knowledge generation (PoKG)

A consideration of the pedagogy for knowledge generation seeks to understand epistemological access in relation to personal and contextual relevance while acknowledging the three essential elements of epistemology: the knower, the known and the process of knowing (Sprague et al., 2016). Collectively this triad allows for an analysis of the ways in which power relations shape who is believed and why (Collins, 2000). This pedagogy engaged NATHEP participants around how opportunities have to be created in induction programmes, especially in the context of Africa, to recentre the knowledge of the other, to reassert marginalised voices and to legitimate their visibility and authenticity as knowledge producers (Gadsden, 2008).

Pedagogies of engagement (PoE)

Discussions centred on pedagogies of engagement were used to explore the spectrum of approaches used to create interactive learning contexts where all can find a sense of belonging and assert their voice (McInerney, 2009). What it means to “engage” pedagogically is relative to who is being engaged and who is facilitating the engagement. Engagement then is at the behest of the person in power in that space, namely the teacher. Educators use a variety of social constructivist strategies and interventions to engage their students (Edgerton, 2001), namely active and cooperative learning, learning communities, service learning, cooperative education, inquiry and problem-based learning, and team projects (Smith et al., 2005). These pedagogical tools are used differently in disciplinary contexts to achieve different objectives. In NATHEP, the SC have found that until “engagement” is critical, conscious, and socially aware, it can do very little to disrupt the power relations in pedagogical spaces based on race, class, gender, ethnicity, language and age. Power imbalances often keep people trapped in hierarchies of power and servitude, socialising them into reproducing the status quo (Freire, 1996).



Figure 14 SC during Pedagogies of Engagement (PoE) workshop

Pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation (PoTD)

The pedagogy for decolonisation/transformation on the other hand, extended the transformation narrative to the realms of delinking (Mignolo, 2007) from traditional practices which reproduce the status quo. Decolonial pedagogies work from the premise that context matters in education. Here context refers to the legacy of colonial education, which continues to shape ways of thinking, acting and being as the victims of colonialism. This challenges academics to constantly examine ideological bias inherent in colonial education, which renders education incapable of facilitating liberation and shared democracy (de Sousa Santos, 2007). At the centre of decolonial pedagogies is a concern with ways in which the colonial education system is structured so as to reproduce unequal relations of power and perpetual subjection of the colonial subject.

World Café sessions

The WorldCafé format, well known as a participatory facilitation method (Brown, 2010) was used in NATHEP engagements as an example of the pedagogy of engagement. It consisted of knowledge-sharing round tables as part of a participatory action research (PAR) and participatory learning and action (PLA) approach for learning about and engaging with communities. PLA techniques, according to Chambers (2006), enable people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect. PLA techniques refocus attention on criticality and positionality by allowing participants to understand causal relations both experientially and conceptually (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010).

In a World Café setting, participants presented their induction programmes with a focus on pedagogical strategies that enabled maximum exercise of agency for new academics in their contexts.



Figure 15 Participants engagement during World Café exercise

These plenaries offered comments and feedback that identified dominant, competing, and marginalised discourses in teaching and learning at the different institutions; and structures that enabled or constrained new academics' practices; as well as the effects of agency on the new academic. During the workshop, each participant discussed their induction role at their home university, showcasing their induction programme and unpacking programme aspects by analysing, *inter alia*, whether and/or how the programme created conditions for agency (Mathieson, 2011); whether the programme content facilitated notions of belonging by enabling new academics to feel like they were part of the bigger system (Billot & King, 2017); and whether the programme featured and represented the true life histories, experiences and narratives of new academics (English, 2021). During this phase, proposals for customised and contextually relevant induction programmes at participating universities were prepared and further enhanced for presentation at the 2019 HELTASA at Rhodes University, a national conference for academic and theoretical critique.

Site visits

In this phase, while workshops were focused on social interaction among SC and project teams to critically reflect on piloting the induction programmes and working with feedback on the implementation, site visits were planned to each university by SC members. Each SC member was assigned as a mentor to two universities each, to see the new induction programmes "in action" and to offer feedback, *in situ*, on how various aspects of context played out in the new and customised induction programmes designed at NATHEP. Site visits were important for the project to make contact in person with the partner university and each visit was used as an opportunity to meet with the teaching and learning centre director as well as the DVC for Teaching and Learning. Given the timing of the site visits, midway through NATHEP, it was also a good temperature check to see how the input at the residential workshops was manifesting in real contexts of practice. NATHEP participants being visited welcomed the intervention and were grateful for the feedback provided, to develop their programmes further.

Site visits were included in Phase 3 instead of the initially envisaged Workshop 4 (2019). The SC decided to replace the residential workshop (which would have been held in August) with a site visit to each university (during July, August and September). The SC hoped to engage with the NATHEP participants in their actual context of practice, during their induction programme. This enabled the SC to offer more feedback, perspectives and insights regarding the further strengthening of the model.

While our SC member was on site, they met with the respective DVC for Teaching and Learning and/or the Director of the Teaching and Learning Centre or any

other appropriate academic development/staff development role player at the university to discuss progress and implementation of the newly created induction programme further.

We thanked each university for their involvement, and we were hugely appreciative of universities’ contribution to NATHEP. Through collaboratively building a theorised understanding of induction across the sector, we hope that the greatest benefit is to each university through the customised induction programme developed.

Reflective visualisation

At a writing retreat in July 2019, academic developers were invited to participate in a task where they visually depicted their journey of life up until the point where they had entered NATHEP. As an extension of PLA techniques, the visualisation tasks are part of the signature pedagogy of staff development to promote reflexive agency. Often these techniques involve the use of open-ended, flexible, visual learning methods, which include visioning, mapping, mood lines, one-way and two-way matrices, impact diagrams, problem and objective trees, community maps, body maps, and rivers of life, among others (Pretty, Guijt, Scoones & Thompson, 1995). The reason for this activity was for each participant to reflect on how much they had grown and accomplished (or not) while on NATHEP. Govaerts et al. (2010) describe reflective visualisation activities as techniques that promote deep thinking about a specific topic, event or idea. The potential of visualisation activities to amplify cognitive processes for producing self-reflective and expressive data have been established in several studies (Choe et al., 2017; Aseniero et al., 2020; Stentoft & Sørensen, 2019). This task assigned to academic developers could be depicted through the use of any metaphor or form. Through this task, ASDs noted the major highlights and lowlights; and saw themselves in terms of their positionality within their own institutions and within NATHEP.



Figure 16
Participants responses to Reflective Visualisation exercise

Creative writing for case studies

The writing tasks that followed enabled each participating university representative to reflect on their newly developed induction case study through a series of interrogative questions such as: how new academics were inducted into the institution; whether the induction took place in the form of an orientation programme; and among others, who had the responsibility of planning the academic induction, and so on. This form of creative writing served as tool for recollection and discovery. Participants had to critically reflect on their ability to carve a pathway ahead, given the challenges or opportunities at their university, to design and create relevant induction programmes. Used as a discovery tool, agency was maximised with a wide canvas for futures thinking, with agential freedom to create anew. Other aspects of the new academics' induction that were explored through creative writing were its aims; aspects of the academics' professional life that the programme focused on; who the facilitators and presenters at the programme were; as well as the extent to which the academic development centre of the university was involved in the programme. This task was designed to promote deep thinking on the part of academic developers around current induction practice at their institutions.

NATHEP Colloquium

The NATHEP Colloquium took place on 6 and 7 November 2019 at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Johannesburg. The guest of honour was Mandisa Cakwe from the DHET, who was invited as a respondent to the various scholarly presentations offered by the university partners.

The colloquium programme featured topics that spoke to the journeys of developing and reconstructing theory-based induction interventions that academic developers had undertaken as part of the NATHEP project. Presentations included topics such as “Conceptualising a theoretically underpinned needs-based induction programme for new academics at the University of Venda”; “The MUT academic



Figure 17 NATHEP Collaborative Conversations Colloquium Poster

induction programme: A roadmap of a worthwhile journey”; “Moving academics from the periphery to the centre of teaching and learning”; “Continuing our journey, alongside those who are beginning theirs”; “Comfortable spaces and creative expression: Capturing the courage of professional identity reconstruction”; “Turning the tides: NATHEP’s influence in reimagining UL new staff induction”, “The greatest induction that never was” and “Reflections on the University of Fort Hare induction programme”.



Figure 18 NATHEP Team during the Collaborative Conversations Colloquium

The work done in preparation for the colloquium became the basis for the case studies that institutions have written, with their mentors, for this book. The collection of case studies speaks richly to how NATHEP influenced thinking and doing in institutional contexts to create new induction programmes that are contextually relevant.



Figure 19: The late Sithembiso Ngubane presenting at the NATHEP Collaborative Colloquium

The engagement at the colloquium was interesting for presenters, as they were discomfited by how their existing and new programmes were received and critiqued by the panel of respondents. This was a huge growth moment for all as it was evident that power differentials in the room, manifested in race or class, and other intersectional markers, meant that staff development practices were seen by some as closely related to their sense of self and academic worth. This was a catalyst for entire project, as after this moment, participants moved more deeply into their contexts and the debilitating aspects that prevented them from realising their own aspirations and professional vision for their work.



Figure 20 Participants and SC at the NATHEP Collaborative Colloquium

Pedagogical encounters: HELTASA conference workshop

Based on the work done earlier in the year on the four pedagogies, the SC facilitated a pedagogical encounter at the 2019 HELTASA conference through a workshop for national and international academic staff developers and academics. Drawing on practitioners' lived experiences, the conference workshop explored dominant assumptions about the selection and use of pedagogies within various academic contexts. Given that the way we select contextually relevant pedagogies has a direct and inseparable link with who we are as practitioners and more importantly with our level of comfort with our own sense of being, delegates were invited to explore how different pedagogies can enhance, disrupt and challenge knowledge, being and doing. Through active participation and experiential approaches various pedagogical approaches were modelled and a collaborative learning, teaching,

and dialogic space was fostered among diverse conference delegates who were able to generate innovative, responsive, relevant, and transformative strategies aligned to the goals and imperatives of higher education.

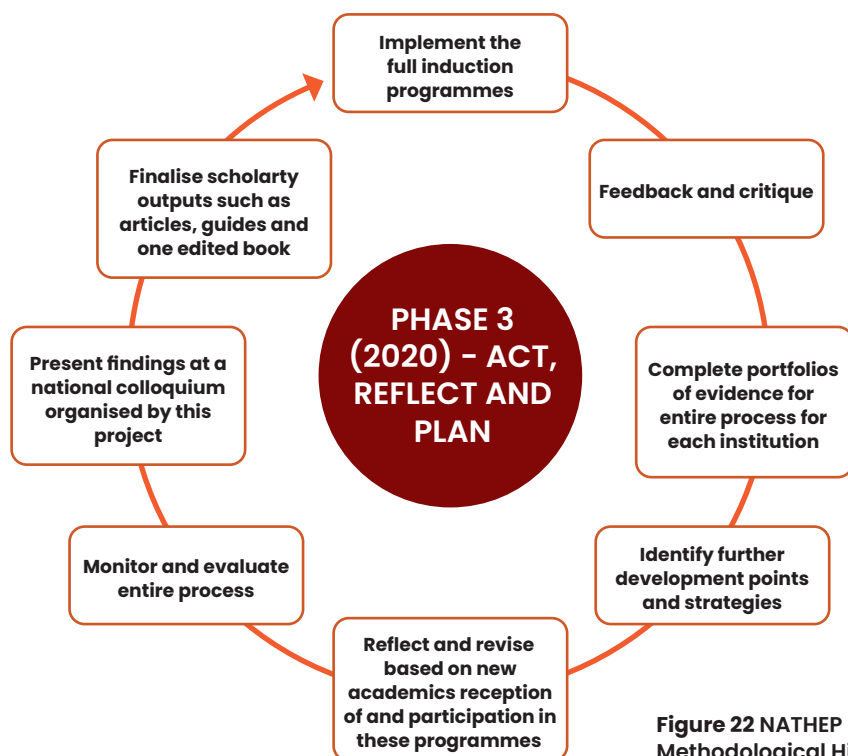


Figure 21 SC facilitating pedagogical encounter at HELTASA 2019

NATHEP Year 3/Phase 3 2020: online migration during COVID-19

When the third phase of NATHEP began in 2020, participants and their mentors (from the SC) continued to work in earnest on their programmes, preparing them for full implementation with their new academics in 2020. Little did we know that the ensuing pandemic would throw the whole world off course, let alone NATHEP. In 2020, we had aimed to achieve several project milestones. Among these were the rollout of induction programmes at the 10 participating universities as well as critical reflection on their reception by new academics and other stakeholders. We had even hoped to conclude the interactive project components. When the global pandemic hit with unprecedented consequences, the project had to change course. Like many universities, the NATHEP project engagements were rerouted to online platforms to facilitate social distancing. Watermeyer et al. (2020) noted that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic had caused the closure of many residential campuses around the world, leading to the pivot and migration of all learning, teaching, and assessment to online platforms.

After the hard government lockdown in March 2020, NATHEP too had to revert to remote workshops and meetings with project partners and the SC. The project was challenged by COVID-19 in many ways. The social distancing protocols and lockdown meant that we could not continue with the planned NATHEP curriculum, goals and deliverables; all of which were premised on face-to-face pedagogical



**Figure 22 NATHEP Phase 3
Methodological Highlights**

and social interactions between facilitators and participants. Although minor tweaking was needed to pivot the original induction programmes to an online mode, this caused severe delays in the progress of the project as universities were reeling from the crisis. Here again, we take note of the cascade model in action, only this time precipitated by forces external to the project. As NATHEP moved to online engagements to continue with the project, our project participants were pivoting online with their own new academics at their universities, who were in turn moving to online teaching with their students.

We had to re-conceptualise the theorisation and creation of induction programmes with our university partners for online induction. We decided to adjust the induction programmes to be prepared for future induction of new academics, online. The challenge here was for these online induction programmes to be equally contextualised, legitimate, relevant, and responsive, in the time of COVID-19, despite change in platform and mode. We were also concerned that the goals and central tenets of NATHEP; its aims and deliverables; and its espoused theory would be sacrificed in the haste to pivot online. The consequences of COVID-19 had serious impact on the project and its curriculum, pedagogy, deliverables and participants. The important opportunity of course that the pandemic moment offered was

to consider how our participants would be future ready to face any crisis and continue with their work in a sustainable way, whether in face-to-face, online or remote mode. The crisis gave us a chance to test the ability of the NATHEP induction programme to make the shift but still keep the focus. This phase and year were no doubt a difficult year for most people but problematic for NATHEP, as maintaining momentum in a physical and social-distanced way had its own challenges. Keeping the motivation up for all to complete their induction programmes was not easy. We decided that key elements of the NATHEP in person workshops would be maintained in online mode: investing time in a “check-in” session to offer a space for mental health; keeping the community alive and connected and the relational protected; and offering assistance to participants in exploring strategies for online teaching and facilitation in this new mode of engagement in their own contexts. All of these aspects are crucial for criticality and authentic HE practices that embody and value deep change and the sustainability of ourselves, others, and our social and environmental systems.

To circumvent the delay caused by the pandemic and given that we had to cancel our planned in-person workshops, NATHEP decided to focus on the scholarly level of the project, which could be undertaken more easily in remote ways. This included online meetings and workshops to discuss and prepare for pre-agreed outputs such as a special issue for the South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE), the submission of a conference paper for HELTASA, an online symposium planned for the end of 2020 and a two-day online writing retreat that was to take place in October 2020. It was also used to focus on case studies, which each university had to compile on their contextually relevant induction programmes, including the pivot to online teaching. We wanted the case studies to be an accurate reflection of the induction programme journey at the specific university, from the start of NATHEP until completion. This approach would enable us all to reflect on the gains and losses of both modes, both in their own practices, but also for new academics who have to be inducted to HE in an online mode.

The unforeseen Year 4: 2021

Year 3/Phase 3 moved unexpectedly into an unforeseen Year 4 in 2021. Permission for an extension was granted by the DHET. The year 2021 kicked off with a planning meeting in which the SC organised upcoming events including attendance at the International Consortium of Educational Developers (ICED) hosted in the following year (2022) in Denmark. Later that year, the online writing retreat event included warmup tasks; a goal-setting session to help ADs think about what they wanted to achieve from this retreat; and sessions designed for participants write on their own towards the achievement of their writing goals. The 10 universities spent the year implementing their new induction programmes and by the end of 2021, most participating universities succeeded in implementing all or parts of

their newly designed induction programmes. They were in a suitable position to reflect on action (Schon, 1983; Brookfield, 2017) or enrich their case studies based on what they had done before NATHEP, what had changed during NATHEP and how these changes had been received in each context after NATHEP. The case studies also engaged in reflection for action (Thompson & Thompson, 2008) to consider what could be improved and enhanced as an ongoing process of refinement and advancement, relative to context. Chapters five to 11 reflect the rich collection of case studies from each of the participating universities to share the journey of their customised and contextualised induction programmes for new academics.

Reflective phase of NATHEP:

2022–23

In 2022 and 2023, the contact part of the NATHEP plan had been completed and NATHEP moved into its reflective phase of scholarly documentation and theorisation of institutional cases. This was part of the reflective methodology of NATHEP but also a signature pedagogy (Shulman, 2004) of academic staff development. At the start of the year, NATHEP offered all project participants Personal Development Programme (PDP) Sessions focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, facilitated by an external training company. These sessions helped participants to reflect critically on their biases, blind spots and assumptions about themselves, their peers and

NATHEP

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

A Personal Development Programme (PDP)

Two Workshops

1 AN INTRODUCTION TO DEI
22 March 2022, 13h30 - 17h30 (in person)
 Focusing on:

- Deepening our understanding of the importance of engaging with DEI
- Exploring the complex range of thoughts and feelings related to DEI (both our own and others')
- Reflecting on where we are currently in our DEI journeys
- Strengthening the muscle to engage constructively with DEI

2 UNDERSTANDING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS
Date TBD (4-hour online workshop)
 Focusing on:

- Better understanding what Unconscious Bias is and how it shows up
- Exploring the experiences and impact of Unconscious Bias
- Exploring ideas for interrupting and overcoming Unconscious Bias

.....

Additional modules available through our public online DEI Personal Development Programme:

- Contributing to Constructive and Safe Spaces for Engaging with DEI
- Understanding Diversity
- Understanding Equity
- Understanding Inclusion and Exclusion
- Understanding Microaggressions
- Understanding Rank, Power and Privilege
- Developing Essential Skills for Courageous Conversations
- Engaging in Courageous Conversations

for further information email
 samstern@mweb.co.za or zedxaba@ndizale.co.za

Brought to you by  **ndizale**
 NDIRA LE MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION CONSULTANCY

 **Journeys to Remember**
 Reflect, Reconnect and Rediscover

Figure 23 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Workshop Programme

the staff they worked with. This first step in the reflective phase was a necessary intervention before participants commenced with their case study writing.

Pleased that the DHET had granted a generous extension to complete this phase, NATHEP focused on reflective writing workshops to provide writing development and enhancements for project participants. A writing consultant was enlisted and the workshops she ran were extremely beneficial to all. Each case study forms the evidence-based data of the project, study and book. The focus of the project in the two years that followed the pandemic were aimed at finalising scholarly outputs such as the completion of the case study write-ups, the writing of journal articles and the production of the planned book.

Case studies

NATHEP adjusted its programme in 2022-23 to set in motion the writing up of case studies pertaining to each of the newly developed or reconstructed inductions. Central to the focus of case studies were how the induction was developed, methodologies used in grounding the induction and how participating in NATHEP workshops and other engagements contributed to the pedagogies for customised and contextual induction programmes.

We chose case studies as a research design as this is an appropriate option for a university-based intervention where the context of the university matters equally to the content/curriculum being developed, as well as the new academics and students in this context. Case studies are also extremely useful for explanatory projects (Yin, 2003) such as the “how” and “why” of the research and project. In addition, case studies are in alignment with a critical and social realist theoretical framing as case studies and unstructured or semi-structured in-depth interviews are acceptable and appropriate within the paradigm (Danermark et al., 2002). A study of a “case” would be especially effective to observe the interplay between layers (Bygstad & Munkvold, 2011) such as social (academics) and systems (university context). Answering the “why” questions involve developing causal explanations, and these cases are thus appropriately referred to as “causal case studies” (Yin, 2003). Each university worked with an SC member as a mentor and coauthored the different reflections in the case studies. Each case study was also read by a writing specialist and participants had to include revisions before the final submission date, which was late 2022.

In 2023, the NATHEP book project commenced, during which the SC along with project participants worked on final revised submissions planned to collate their learnings, experiences, and entire journeys on the project into the present book. This planning involved a series of meetings wherein the structure of the book, the

chapter distribution, allocation of authors and co-authors, timelines, deadlines and prospective publication dates were discussed. These planning sessions were preceded by the authorship of case studies by academic developers who had participated in NATHEP. Once case studies were authored, writing mentors read the cases, and provided feedback to the authors, which enabled their refinement until finalisation.

Conclusion

This chapter explicated the cascading model of staff development as a layered approach used in NATHEP to respond to new academics' needs in a complex higher education landscape. This approach, implemented during residential workshops, World Café sessions, and critical dialogues, highlights the value of staff development programmes being conceptualised, designed and implemented as ways of enhancing teaching and learning through considered, theorised, contextual and relevant offerings to increase the status of pedagogy in higher education. It also demonstrated the many levels of influence staff development interventions can have when participants are enabled to customise and imbue their programmes within their own contexts.

**NATHEP
launches in
August 2018
with twenty
university
participants -
a community
of support and
collaboration.**





NATHEP

PART TWO

**University case studies of
contextualised induction**

CHAPTER FIVE

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA



University of Venda



A Needs-Based Induction Programme for New Academics at the University of Venda

Fhatuwani Ravhuhali and Hlayisani Fredah Mboweni

Introduction

Our case study focuses on our journey to conceptualise and implement a needs-based induction (NBI) programme at the University of Venda (UNIVEN). We reflect on our participation in the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), an initiative we viewed to be significant in supporting new academics in transitioning into higher education. Our engagement with NATHEP was instrumental in shaping the NBI induction programme. Our case study examines the institution type and induction policies that guide and underpin induction at UNIVEN. We describe the steps we undertook to conceptualise and implement our NBI programme and its key features, guided by the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework. Lastly, we explore the lessons we have learned from the NATHEP journey from 2018–2022, reflecting on the value of the initiative.

Our university: location and institution type

The University of Venda is one of the small comprehensive universities in South Africa located in the rural town of Thohoyandou in the Limpopo Province. It was established in 1982 to serve the former Venda Bantustan of the Republic of Venda (UNIVEN History Book, 2012). As part of the transformation agenda of South African higher education (HE), UNIVEN was mandated to transform into a comprehensive university and was expected to offer a wide range of vocational and academic programmes. This would ensure that students had access to a much wider range of programmes leading to certificate and diploma qualifications in work-related fields (Department of Education, 2004). Our observation was that the mandate of the Department of Higher Education (DHET) had not been adequately addressed as the institution was still grappling with ensuring that technikon-type programmes were made available for students. This was attributed to the fact that unlike other universities whose mergers involved technikons, UNIVEN was not merged with any university of technology or technikon. The challenges in developing these programmes included a shortage of qualified academics with appropriate skills; and the university's location made it difficult to attract diverse and experienced personnel in key positions due to its remoteness to the rest of South Africa (Ndebele, Muhur & Nkonki, 2016).

The 2021–2025 Strategic Plan and its implications

for our NBI programme

UNIVEN had adopted a new Strategic Plan (2021–2025) which unlike the former (2016–2020) plan incorporated student-centeredness and entrepreneurial thrusts in its comprehensive mandate. This also necessitated the adoption of the new vision and mission statements of UNIVEN:

New Vision: A leading university in engaged scholarship

New Mission Statement: The University of Venda is committed to producing graduates who are locally relevant and globally competitive

This new strategic plan was intended to respond simultaneously to the university's local rurality (Chigbu, 2013) and to broader global contexts. Central to the achievements and realisation of the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan were the academics themselves, which included new academics (NAs) or new university teachers (NUTs). Although the former plan highlighted that academics/lecturers identified inadequate academic support for both students and staff, resulting in low academic success for students, the new 2021–2025 strategic plan was skewed towards student academic support and silent on staff academic support. This startling lack of strategic focus on academic support meant that the new plan overlooked the central role that academics play and the need to invest in their professional development.

Given this, the strategic plan had major implications for our NBI programme, which should align with the university's strategic direction. This was crucial as our NBI programme needed to be agile and to adapt to a variety of HE dynamics and landscapes, and most importantly, it needed to be sensitive to the diverse nature of NAs that were attracted to our institution. Such an undertaking would mean that the way we engaged with NAs should be a journey that necessitated adaptation and agility by us as academic developers (AD), while remaining fit for purpose. Again, it was imperative that our NBI programme stressed the need to enable NAs or NUTs to adapt, to be agile and responsive to the entrepreneurial context they were transitioning into. Therefore, the induction had to be relevant and contextualised.

Induction policies at UNIVEN

Policy on Orientation and Induction Programmes

In the past, and before our NATHEP journey, induction of NAs at UNIVEN was underpinned by UNIVEN's Policy on Orientation and Induction Programmes

(UNIVEN, 2011). This policy has since been amended and is now ratified as the Policy on On-Boarding, Orientation and Induction Programmes. In the original policy, the induction of NA staff was aimed at integrating new staff members into the University to enable them to adapt to their jobs quickly in a positive and supportive working environment and to ensure that academics are able to obtain a good understanding of how the organisation works, including its principles, values and objectives. Moreover, the policy describes induction as “the process of integrating new staff members to the University by giving them the necessary support to enable them to quickly adapt to the workplace culture” (UNIVEN, 2011, p.3). It further stipulates that “every new staff member is obliged to attend the orientation session which was organised by the Organisational Development and Training Unit of the HR department” (UNIVEN, 2011, p.3). This would mean that any logistical arrangements pertaining to induction at UNIVEN were exclusively administered and organised by the Organisational Development and Training Unit of the HR department.

Initially, there was no involvement from the Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning (CHETL)’s Academic Development Unit (ADU), in setting up dates on which induction for the NAs would be held. Moreover, although the policy prescribes that induction should happen within the first two months of NAs’ appointment, we observed that such induction was never done within the prescribed time frame. It could be argued that HR-led induction adopted a corporate programme, reinforcing the neoliberal agenda in which the provision of engaged and collaborative induction was never considered critical in the lives of NAs. We attributed this to the fact that AD work was still misunderstood by many at UNIVEN, and a profound understanding of what induction of NAs entailed was still lacking from many of the university’s major stakeholders. This was also shown in the academic structures of the university, which position the AD work, role, and posts as administrative and not as academic or university teaching-related, a challenge experienced by academics in other university settings as well (Marhaya et al., 2017; Kensington-Miller et al., 2015; Boud & Brew, 2013; Harland & Staniforth, 2008; Green & Little, 2013; Kinash & Wood, 2013; Quinn, 2012; Rowland et al., 1998). Our observation was that induction at UNIVEN was held once, during the third quarter of the academic year. As a result, NAs would have started with their academic duties of teaching and ensuring that students learn without being inducted. It could be argued that such inductions were envisioned yet not enacted in the policy. We contended that such induction programmes were for compliance purposes only as they appeared too generic, lacking in theoretical basis or underpinnings, and with no follow-up sessions held with the academics.

Policy on On-Boarding, Orientation, and Induction Programmes

The amended On-Boarding, Orientation, and Induction Programmes policy stipulated that new or returning employees must attend the academic induction sub-programme within the first three months of joining the University (UNIVEN,

2020). This would mean that these academics could be inducted in their first, second or even in the third month of joining the university, and having taught or engaged students. This was not aligned with the conceptualised NBI, which seeks to induct new academics/teachers immediately after being employed before they can start teaching students.

It was simultaneously exciting and worrisome to note that the policy further stipulated that “the Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning must facilitate a three-day, new academic, staff-induction programme called a ‘New Academic Preparation Programme’” (UNIVEN, 2020, p.13). One major challenge came from the realisation that the three days stipulated in the policy were insufficient for the robust engagement and interaction that is supposed to occur during the induction process. In the past, three days were usually spent orienting new staff members to familiarise themselves with UNIVEN processes, which resulted in AD practitioners presenting PowerPoint slides rather than engaging with NAs. At the end of the three days, there was no follow-up on how the NAs were exercising their agential role in their new environment, how they related to the different structures within the university, and whether they could adapt to the culture at UNIVEN. Moreover, as key stakeholders, agents or partners, students were not involved in the induction of NAs. On this basis, we argued that the three days apportioned to our centre, CHETL, were inadequate to cover all aspects of teaching and learning; hence, the NBI programme was developed as a five-day induction process.

NATHEP journey: steps towards realisation of our induction programme

The engagement during NATHEP allowed us to reimagine an induction programme for our university. This proved we could move from our comfort zones and conceptualise a context-responsive, theoretically underpinned induction programme for our institution. This meant that we needed to reflect deeply on how NAs were inducted into our institution, and what could be done differently from what we observed was a “compliance” or “tick-box” induction programme. With renewed and reinforced agency, we embarked on a journey of conceptualising and implementing our NBI programme. This necessitated that from 2018 to 2022, we had to pull away from the human resources (HR) or organisational development (OD) department induction processes and logistical arrangements.

1st Step: pulling out of HR tentacles – disrupting induction status quo within the University of Venda

As noted in this case study, initially, HR was the main driver of the induction program for new staff members at UNIVEN given that the Organisational Development and

Training Unit (ODTU) was responsible for funding the induction. That essentially meant that all the logistical arrangements and the drafting of the induction programme were the responsibility of ODTU. Considering this, one of the critical steps we undertook was separating core teaching and learning-related activities from HR activities and organising to engage the NAs once they assumed their contractual obligations at the university. This was achieved through ongoing discussions and maintaining a close relationship with the HR OD Unit. This involved having several meetings coupled with various correspondences in trying to sell our ideas on how we would like our induction at UNIVEN to be done, which would not be for compliance purposes but to benefit the university's key core business, which is teaching and learning. Another key aspect of the discussion with HR personnel was the quest to transform induction from an event into a process-oriented induction hosted in the Academic Development Unit (ADU).

Once an understanding was reached with HR, we planned key features that should constitute our context-responsive needs-based induction (NBI) programme for NAs (see Figure 24 in the section below titled "Transformative features of UNIVEN induction"). It is worth noting that our pragmatic approach; the philosophy of induction of new academics and the conceptualisation of the NBI programme was based on the DHET's (2017) National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers. This framework states the following fundamental principles that underpin what we were trying to tentatively propose:

- The need to recognise that teaching can only be advanced when the discipline and the people involved identify and address their own teaching development needs.
- Ensuring that any professional development (PD) initiative is not imposed on any individual academic but must be undertaken by the person concerned. The emphasis is on academic agency, and when they take ownership and agency of what they need to improve on as academics and take responsibility for their own development, real change can be realised.
- University teachers know their own limitations through their own reflections and collaborative interaction in terms of what and where they need to improve as teachers, as opposed to having such learning needs prescribed to them.

As AD practitioners, we drew from Pierce and Hunsanker (1996), Ravhuhali et al. (2015a), and Ravhuhali et al. (2015b), in advocating for professional development (PD) of academics, by academics, and for academics, hence the conceptualisation of a context-responsive, theoretically underpinned induction programme for our institution. Moreover, we understood that the new academic staff needed to be introduced to the university structure and culture so that they can exercise their agency to advance the mission and vision of the university.

We also believed in and advocated for induction programmes that were developed with more attention paid to the individual needs of academics/teachers both on a professional and personal level (Eisenschmidt et al., 2013), and the needs of their students; hence we developed a needs-based induction (NBI) programme. Based on our reflections, such induction sessions organised and led by HR OD were simply reduced to employee relations sessions at the expense of the advancement of teaching and learning pedagogy, as well as positioning and strengthening NAs' agency to be innovative and transformative as university teachers. It was on this basis that through the capacitation from NATHEP, we realised the need to exercise our agency by thinking of new ways in which NAs at our institution could be inducted. One such way was understanding how NAs could be part of knowledge co-creation in their induction process to contribute meaningfully to the core businesses of the institution.

2nd Step: the birth of our NBI programme and its transformative features

The rationale to conceptualise the NBI programme of induction arose from the need to disrupt ways in which induction was being conducted in our institution as we felt uncomfortable doing induction that we regarded as a "box-ticking" event meant for compliance purposes. Moreover, during the various NATHEP sessions, we delved deeper into our own existing induction programme, learned good practices from other institutions, and felt challenged to come up with a context-sensitive induction programme. Our strength in the NBI programme lies in the fact that once we conceptualised the plan, we implemented it from 2019 until this year (2024), and we have observed and reflected on practice and in practice to enhance our programme thus far. We gained understanding of what worked and what did not and how to address challenges.

The conceptualised NBI programme has four key features that are critical in ensuring that it is transformative while at the same time being agile and adaptable to our changing contexts, our university context, as well as the changing HE and national contexts. We use transformative features to highlight how NATHEP transformed our thinking about how we induct NAs and how such transformative thinking resulted in the conceptualisation of the NBI programme. The four key features, shown in Figure 24 opposite, are a multifocal theoretical framework, a needs analysis questionnaire (NAQ), student inclusion, and the NBI programme as a process and not simply an event.

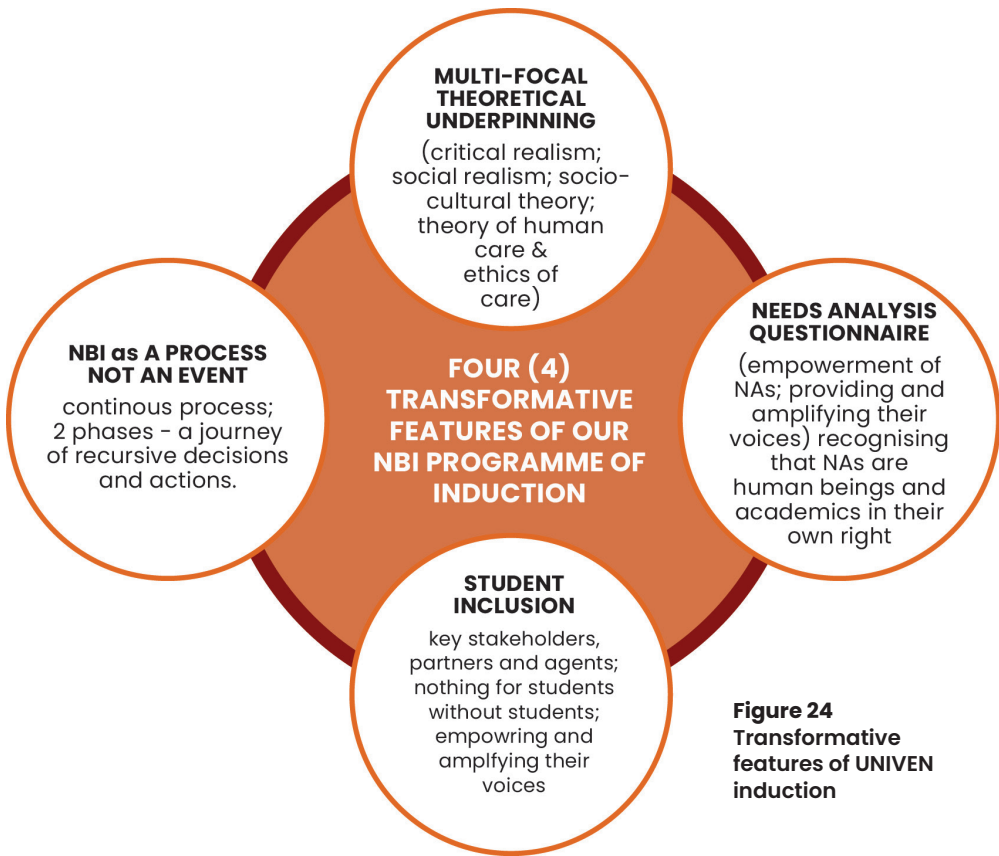


Figure 24
Transformative
features of UNIVEN
induction

1st feature: multifocal theoretical framework

One key feature of the NBI programme is that it is underpinned by a multi-focal theoretical framework. As shown in Figure 25 below, the NBI incorporates a theory of change, which embraces Bhaskar’s (1975) critical realism, seven scalar being (Bhaskar, 2010) and Archer’s social realist theory (Archer, 2010, 2003), with its focus on ensuring that NAs are able to understand the structural, cultural and agential settings they might encounter in their new environment. This was to ensure that NAs were able to engage deeply and interrogate their own positioning as well as the other levels within which they engage, and how the structure and culture may be enabling or constraining their roles as university teachers.

We utilised Bhaskar’s seven scalar being to provide a platform for new academics to be active agents, able to “‘act back on their world’ by reflecting on their own concerns, commitments, and projects in HE” (Behari-Leak, 2017, p.488). Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1994) provides some elements of social adaptability, which entail that the environment where people live is a source of development for both the personalities and characteristics of a person. This complies with Watson’s

theory of human care (2007), which provided us, AD practitioners and NAs, with a platform to question ourselves as to what it means to be human and to care for our diverse student population. For us, the theory of human care encases the values of ubuntu and humanity, which should ideally remain central to what we do when engaging with NAs, with a view that NAs, in turn, will take that care with them to their classes; hence we developed a needs analysis questionnaire (NAQ) for each of our induction processes.

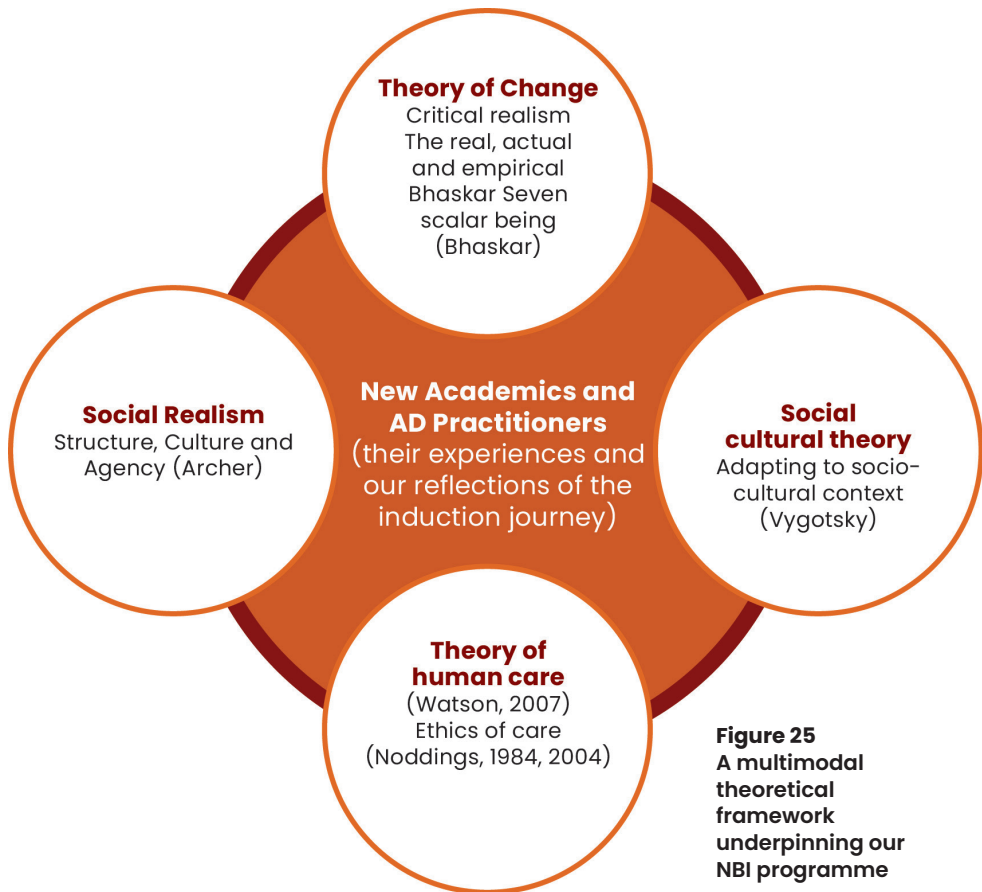


Figure 25
A multimodal theoretical framework underpinning our NBI programme

**CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING ACADEMIC
DEVELOPMENT UNIT INDUCTION PROGRAMME 09th – 13th September 2024 –
NEEDS ANALYSIS SURVEY**

Good day, colleagues.

Kindly complete the short survey provided below. This is to assist us in customising the presentations to your needs. Please email back your responses to nndweleni.mathase@univen.ac.za or hlayisani.mboweni@univen.ac.za or Khuliso.muthivhi@univen.ac.za

Questions	Responses
Faculty	
Department	
How many years have you been a university teacher?	
How long have you been a university teacher at UNIVEN?	
What is exciting about being a university teacher/academic/lecturer at UNIVEN?	
On average, how many students do you have per module?	
What challenges have you encountered thus far as a teacher at UNIVEN?	
Have you ever attended an induction programme before? If YES , did you find the workshop helpful in terms of improving your teaching skills at university? If NO , Provide a reason	
Are you well conversant with online teaching and or remote teaching? If YES , what is your experience in relation to online teaching?	
What are your challenges regarding online teaching? If you were to choose between face-to-face and online teaching, which one would you choose as your preferred mode? And Why?	
What are your professional development needs with regard to Teaching and Learning (e.g. curriculum development, assessment, teaching and learning, etc.)?	
What are your expectations from this upcoming induction workshop/ programme?	
What are your views about the inclusion of students in the induction of new academics such as you? Explain fully	

Figure 26 A needs analysis questionnaire (NAQ)

<p>Please add any other information that will be helpful to us.</p> <p>NB: Your answers to these questions are very important to us and may not be used for any other purpose than preparation for our induction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kind regards</p>	
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2nd feature: needs analysis questionnaire

In preparation for the induction, a needs analysis questionnaire, as shown in Figure 26 above, is sent three or four weeks before the start of the workshop. The main aim of the NAQ as a preparatory and engagement tool for the induction, is to solicit the professional needs of the NAs and to provide key background information pertaining to their teaching and learning experiences in HE institutions (Ravhuhali & Mboweni-Pataka, 2022). It is equally important to note that as AD practitioners, we are mindful of the fact that being an NA (new in the profession and new in the context) can be a daunting proposition to many staff. Our induction programme is therefore tailored to support NA staff members during such a trying transition through the NAQ. Drawing from our own experiences, we understand that the initial few months of employment at a new institution are generally the most trying. The NAQ is meant to avoid persistent failure to take into consideration the needs of individual academics or university teachers when they are inducted (King et al., 2018).

We acknowledge that the NAs might not necessarily know exactly what their professional development needs are. The NAQ provides the information which helps us prepare the induction accordingly. From the NAQ's responses, we are able to identify the major areas where the NAs require support. These include issues around curriculum development, teaching and learning, assessment, and relevant teaching and learning policies. Apart from these, other areas that are identified by NAs include large classes, teaching diverse students, and integrating within UNIVEN as an institution. This, in turn, helps us to prepare accordingly so that we design the programme towards the NAs needs (see programme structure in Appendix A). In our induction programme, we also consider key aspects of decoloniality, where we engage NAs on issues such as curriculum (re)formation (or transformation) looking into various discourses such as the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), decolonisation, Africanisation, academisation, internationalisation and globalisation. This is done to balance their needs with issues they may not necessarily consider in the NAQs. It is for this reason that we utilise various pedagogies learned at NATHEP to encourage NAs to delve deeper into conversation with themselves and their colleagues to interrogate their beliefs, assumptions and thoughts around those discourses.

3rd feature: inclusion of students in induction (key agents, stakeholders, partners, and knowledge co-creators)

The inclusion of students in an induction process is one of the first to have ever been done in our university. We argue for student inclusion in the induction of new academics as a way of advancing and enhancing epistemic justice, collaborative knowledge-building, knowledge-sharing, and knowledge co-creation, as well as ensuring inclusive participation for all, particularly students (Ravhuhali et al., 2022, p.95). Our quest to include students in induction is drawn from the University of Venda Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which stipulates:

“Our students are at the centre of our Strategic Plan, and their success remains our performance yardstick. The University of Venda aims to promote excellence in teaching and learning through a variety of academic programmes, enhanced learning experiences, and instructional approaches as well as academic support strategies that are intended to address the diverse learning needs, interests, and aspirations of students. The University strives to ensure a co-creation of knowledge that shifts students and community groups from being knowledge consumers to knowledge producers and become partners in problem-solving” (University of Venda Strategic Plan, 2021-2025, p.11).

The quest to include students is aimed at disrupting cultural tendencies and the longstanding normalised status quo (we elaborate below in our fourth feature of the programme), of not seeing students as key stakeholders who can contribute to how NAs are inducted (Ravhuhali et al., 2022). Other notable scholars, such as Mbembe (2015) and Sophia and Stein (2020), have also advocated for the inclusion of students so that their voices are heard by providing them with platforms to share their overall experiences on how they were previously lectured or taught and what their expectations from NAs are.

It is on this basis that the NBI programme includes both undergraduate and graduate students. Among them are students who are living with disabilities or differently abled students. The rationale for student inclusion is that the induction of NAs is meant to capacitate them to understand the students they will be teaching. We contend that since induction is meant to capacitate NAs, anything planned for students will only be successful if such students are involved in the planning and the conceptualising. Student inclusion in the NBI involves debriefing sessions with selected students two weeks before the induction and seeking questions they would like to ask their lecturers (Ravhuhali et al., 2022). The most appealing or intriguing questions from the listed questions are selected and included in our needs analysis questionnaire (NAQ) form designed for our induction programme. During the induction session, students are involved in round-table discussions and make presentations on the challenges they face and on their expectations of NAs (Ravhuhali et al., 2022).

Moreover, the inclusion of the student component is based on our beliefs and arguments that if we are to do anything right for our students, it certainly makes sense to involve them rather than assuming that they cannot contribute meaningfully to the overall induction. Scholars such as De Bie et al. (2019), Cook-Sather et al. (2018), O'Shea (2018), Sophia and Stein (2020), Bovill (2014), Matthews (2016), Cameron and Woods (2016), Behari-Leak (2017) and Warner (2014), have advocated for student partnership and collaborations in teaching and learning spaces. This is seen as a platform to advance and enhance epistemic justice as well as ensure inclusive participation for all, where students are not understood as key agents and stakeholders or partners in the entire teaching and learning journey. It is on this basis that our NBI programme involves students as key agents and stakeholders in learning and teaching matters.

4th feature: NBI programme – induction as a process, not an event

Wong (2004) argues that teachers who are hired by institutions of learning and teaching are teachers who are envisaged to be key figures to support the next generations of students, and their success can be ensured if they are provided with a comprehensive, coherent professional development programme. It is on this basis that the NBI programme is tailored to engage the NAs beyond the actual induction period either through informal follow-up conversations or meet-and-greet sessions during the follow-up induction sessions. As argued elsewhere in this case study, one of the key aspects of the NBI was that NAs are engaged as soon as they are employed and have become part of the university teaching staff. This is mainly because the appointment of NAs at UNIVEN happens throughout the academic year. In cases where the NAs are employed towards the end of the year, such as October and November, we engage them at the beginning of the following year. This is a great shift from the past when the HR OD would wait for a few NAs to be employed, and then provide induction for them. This kind of structural or cultural practice is used to render the induction of NAs an event rather than a process. Again, the process itself was in contravention of the university policy on induction, which states that NAs need to be inducted within two months of employment. Drawing from Fullan (2001), we also argued that induction was not about having just one special event, meeting or activity; rather, its success lies in understanding and sustaining a process that entails a journey of recursive decisions and actions.

As a way of enhancing and strengthening the NBI process, we have transformed the induction sessions from a mere PowerPoint presentation to adopting various pedagogies that we have learned through the NATHEP project. The pedagogies learned from NATHEP are the pedagogy of being and becoming (ontological), the pedagogy of engagement (methodological), the pedagogy of knowledge generation (epistemology), and the pedagogy of transformation (current discourse such as decoloniality, academisation, and Africanisation, fourth industrial revolution), as a way of also modelling such practices for NAs (NATHEP, 2018). This was done considering the NATHEP CRITicAl Framework as a lens that shapes the induction programme as we try to meet the needs of NAs (see Table 1).

Key features of the induction (NATHEP CRITICAL Framework)	Topics responding to the feature in the induction programme	The rationale for the session	NAs identified needs in the NAQ
Conceptual and Re-centred Pedagogy of Engagement (Methodological); Pedagogy of Knowledge generation (Epistemology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity in (and) knowledge: Whose knowledge matters the most? • Re-Thinking curriculum transformation 	Providing a voice to the historically voiceless and recognizing that knowledge comes from many different sources.	Curriculum development identified as a need through a needs analysis
Contextual Pedagogy of Being and Becoming (Ontological); Pedagogy of Transformation	UNIVEN context: histories, present and future	Exposing NAs and engaging them on issues relating to HE in South Africa and abroad how injustices of the past have influenced and shaped what the university of Venda has become.	University policies and other frameworks to fully comply with the standards set by the university.
Responsive Pedagogy of Engagement (Methodological)	Promoting student's centeredness through diverse teaching and learning methods Teaching students living with disabilities	Exploring how NAs as university teachers can respond to the strategic plan of UNIVEN and produce graduates that are relevant to societal needs and possess the 21 st -century skills.	Principles of teaching and learning and what is expected from them as new members of the UNIVEN community
Reflexive Pedagogy of Engagement (Methodological)	Using students' evaluation of teaching as a reflective tool	Promoting reflexivity and reflection in NAs' teaching through teaching evaluations (student, self ,and peer evaluations)	Learning how to be an excellent university teacher
Theorised praxis Authentic Pedagogy of Being and Becoming (Ontological)	Being and becoming an academic at UNIVEN	Promoting ontology, identity, and an idea of self in university as well as enhancing agential powers as university teachers	Confidence curiosity, continuous learner, ability to empower, leadership, team player and innovative
Relevant Pedagogy of Engagement (Methodological)	Students' experiences Who are our students? Understanding students in late adolescence and early adulthood	Promoting diversity in classroom	Learn how to interact and engage better with students

Table 1 Mapping the NBI programme to the NATHEP CRITICAL Framework

Reflexivity on the NATHEP journey so far: 2018–2022

Archer (2003) argues that the interplay between our internal concerns and our social and environmental contexts is shaped by what she calls a “mode of reflexivity”. A “mode of reflexivity” is the way we think about our thinking, our “inner conversations”, which then shape our actions. Our NATHEP journey as AD practitioners and how we experienced the needs-based induction (NBI) programme is captured in Figure 27, which shows how through the NATHEP experience we transformed the NBI programme to be relevant and responsive to our university context, while also bearing in mind the broader contexts within which HE is located. Most importantly it provides our reflective position as AD practitioners in sharing what can be viewed as the “below the iceberg” or simply the source of tension between academic-led induction and HR-led induction in our institution. These include who the NAs are, and the challenges we encountered as we implemented the NBI programme of induction.

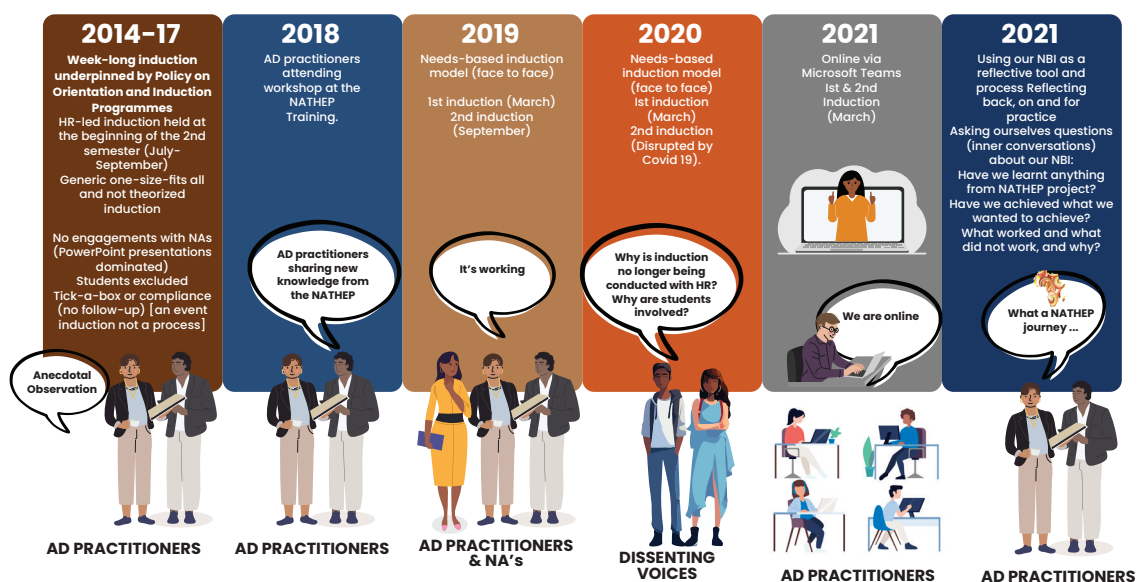


Figure 27 Our NATHEP journey and our needs-based induction programme

Fathoming NAs at UNIVEN: who are they?

As we embarked on our journey, we discovered that the concept of “new academics” (NAs) is as complex as it is reflexive and contextual. Boughey and McKenna (2021, p.122) highlight that academics in HE come from different contexts and, in most cases, tend to take up positions in different kinds of institutions to the one they had previously worked. Furthermore, such NAs bring with them assumptions and beliefs

they held in their previous contexts, and often experience their new contexts as unwelcoming, and feel unable to fit in (Boughey & McKenna, 2021). It is against this backdrop that our understanding of “newness” in relation to the NAs is four-fold. We were influenced by the findings we drew from our NAQ responses as well as the engagements we had with academics during induction processes. Notwithstanding that, we would like to caution that our understanding and description of NAs should not in any way be generalised as the trend in all HE, but is based solely on our NAQ responses.

Firstly, NAs are those academics employed to teach in university soon after completion of their studies in either Master’s or PhD, or any required qualification for the position; they have met the required employment requirements for the position and have never taught before. These NAs are new to the environment (structure), which is a university, and are “new” in the teaching profession at the university.

Secondly, some NAs have been university teachers for a while but in another institution of higher learning. These academics are new in their current employment, structural or environmental settings but have some experience as university teachers. Such NAs are new to the structural and cultural orientations, especially ways of doing things, which are largely influenced by the new context in which they find themselves.

Thirdly, our concept of NAs also refers to those who are new in the HE landscape but were initially attached to industries or private institutions other than universities or colleges. This category of academics are used to how things were and are done in the industries where they previously worked, but lack an understanding of the teaching and learning practices relevant to university settings.

Fourthly, there are academics who are part of the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP). These academics are regarded as highly capable scholars who are recruited in South African universities. Such NAs who are part of the nGAP are appointed into permanent posts or positions firmly factored into long-term staffing plans right from the outset, and appointments are governed by contracts which clearly spell out the expectations, obligations, roles, and responsibilities of the “employing university and of the newly appointed academic” (SSAUF, 2015, p.1).

We assert that even though NAs are new, their newness does not necessarily mean that they are new in the HE sectors or to teaching and learning. Our assumptions about new academics coming to our induction are that they have curiosity and certain beliefs and expectations of what they would be inducted on, whether such would be met or not.

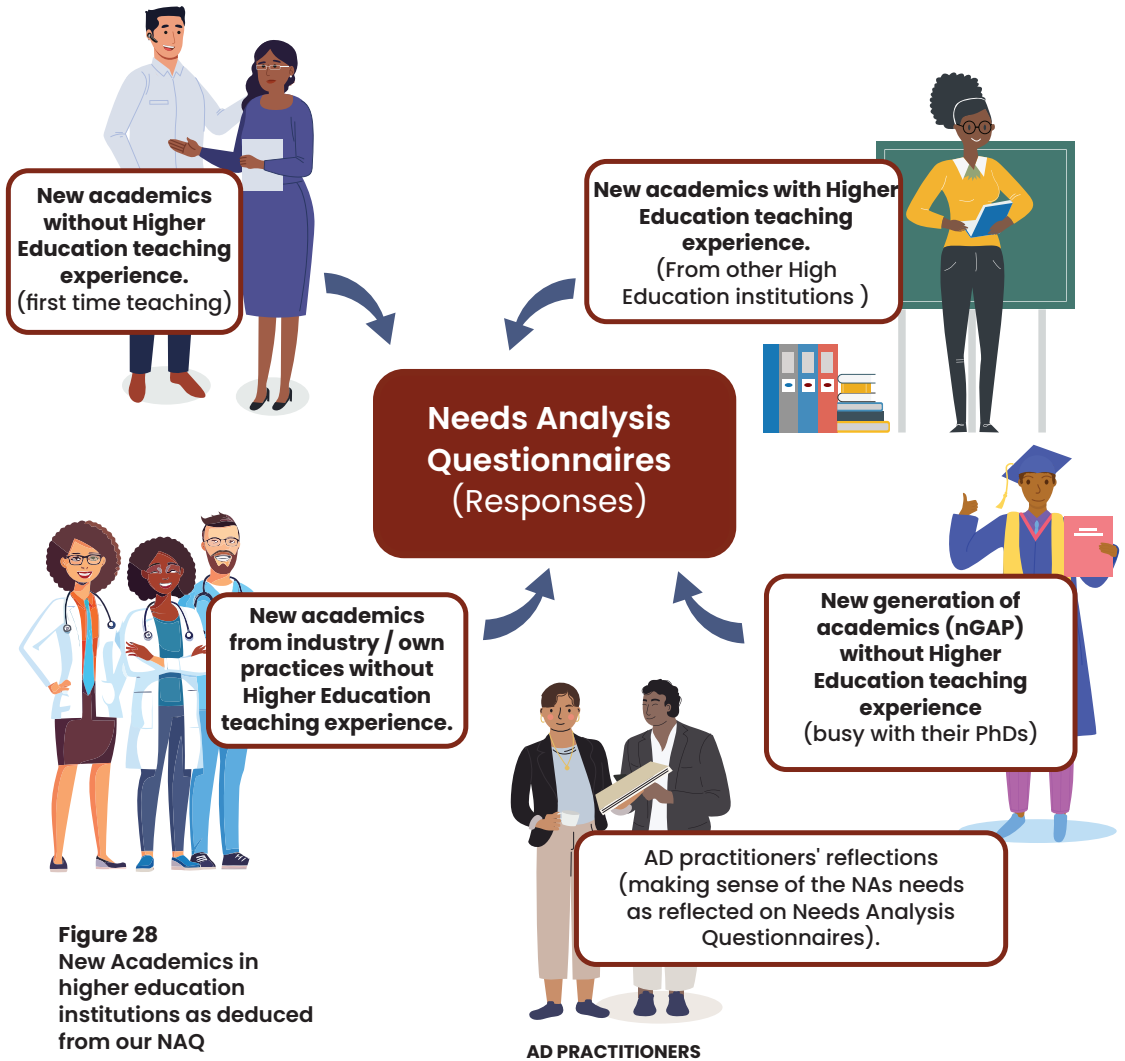


Figure 28
New Academics in higher education institutions as deduced from our NAQ

Weathering storms through dissenting voices in pursuit and implementation of our NBI programme

As we have indicated earlier in this chapter, several consultations were done with key stakeholders before commencing with the NBI programme. Nevertheless, we encountered numerous challenges emanating from dissenting voices. The dissenting voices have persisted since 2019 during the first induction that was done separately from HR, even though we constantly communicated with relevant stakeholders about when we intended to host the induction. The imperative concerning who should lead induction for new academics between the HR and an AD unit persists, with the

constant perception that AD practitioners are regarded as rogue academics whose quest is to move induction away from traditional mechanisms by introducing radical changes concerning ways through which NAs should be inducted. This is also fuelled by the perceptions and views that the NBI is a breakaway, which is informed by a selfish desire not to work in collaboration with other stakeholders and directorates. As a result, many concerns regarding our new practices concerning the induction programme were raised. This, we perceive, might expose induction to issues of institutional enunciation.

We would like to argue that the dissenting voices or “doubting Thomases” are affected by how people in our institution were conditioned and socialised into the induction systems before new learning attributed to NATHEP structures (in this case, HR) and key agents (head of organisational department). Furthermore, people’s cultural orientation has embraced them to such an extent that it has now become “business as usual” concerning the induction of new academics. We assume that agents in HR and within our teaching and learning centre felt threatened and alienated by the new ways of doing the induction of NAs. Though anecdotally, we perceive that they felt alienated by the new powers and privileges, as well as the culture brought in by the agency as proclaimed AD practitioners in terms of how we now understand induction. As AD practitioners, we intend to engage higher structure and the DVC Academic further to exemplify our resolve to have an ADU-led induction that focuses mainly on teaching- and learning-related matters and involves engaging NAs soon after their appointment by the institution. Apart from that, we plan to host a university-wide webinar through which we will be able to share our ideas on the NBI programme as a way of using it to reflect further and refine it better.

Adaptability and agility during the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic caught us unprepared and disrupted the foundation we had laid in 2019, necessitating us to reflect on what we saw working and not working for the NBI programme. Our institution was unprepared, and this impacted how we communicated with the NAs and, most importantly, how we dealt with the second phase of the induction. As shown in the figure above detailing our NATHEP journey, we could do the first phase of our six-month induction in March, but were not able to complete the second part due to structural (connectivity infrastructure and organisation), cultural (the rurality and rural-based as well as the disadvantaged HBU pedagogy), and agential (whose powers is it to provide induction programme to NAs and ensure that things do work despite unforeseen circumstances) constraints. Although the pandemic was challenging, it presented us with an opportunity to review, revise, refresh, and renew certain critical aspects concerning the NBI programme.

One such important factor is that of adaptability and agility that we use to engage our NAs about being and becoming an academic at the University of Venda, drawing from the chameleon metaphor by Kensington-Miller, Renc-Roe and Morón-García (2015). We now understand that as much as the NAs need to adapt to and forego their past cultural experiences and beliefs about working at a university with its contextual enablers and constraints, we also need to do the same. Drawing from Vygotsky (1994), the context of our university is an environment critical for shaping and reshaping our being, including our personalities and characteristics as persons. The NAs and ourselves, as human beings, are always conscious of varying cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1979) and are therefore capable of changing and adapting accordingly to any given environment we might find ourselves in. Those structural and cultural mechanisms provide change, adaptability, agility, and actual engagement with the NBI programme and ensure our reflection of the whole induction process.

Summing up the NATHEP journey

With the knowledge and new learning gained from our NATHEP journey, which began in 2018, as well as the good practices learned from other participating institutions, we are currently implementing our NBI programme. Central to our NBI programme is how well we can reflect in and on practice as AD practitioners and be innovative, agile, and adaptable to the dynamics of current times. Through the NATHEP project, we were able to identify our positions and reignite our agency to organise the induction in consultation with, but not led by the HR department. It would be prudent to mention that the HR-related induction is still happening, and it only covers HR-related matters and introduces NAs to various other stakeholders and directorates within the university.

In our first iteration toward a transformed induction programme relevant to our context, we developed a programme that focused on the process of professional development rather than a once-off event held later in the year long after staff were initially employed. As we have argued elsewhere in this case study, such a practice was consistent merely as compliance or as a box-ticking exercise given that by the time induction was conducted, the majority of academics would have been in class, teaching and assessing their learners. By exercising our agency through our learning shaped during our NATHEP participation, the induction programme is now conducted as early as February or March and, most importantly, at any time during the year as and when an NA joins the university. Although one could argue that having more than one induction session in an academic year may require a lot of resources that we may not necessarily have, during the 2022 academic year, we conducted three induction sessions with three NAs cohorts with limited human capacity. Another key aspect which legitimises our tenacity to work closely with NAs as they navigate their journey of becoming UNIVEN teachers has been

the introduction of a second part or phase of our induction. This is conducted in the sixth month after our first induction session as part of a catch-up or follow-up session. During the follow-up session, NAs share good teaching practices related to what they learned in the first phase of the induction, as well as some challenges they encountered in their journey as teachers at UNIVEN. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020–2022, we only managed to conduct the first part or phase of induction online via Microsoft Teams.

It is also worth noting that looking at how NATHEP has positively influenced us, we can identify four critical aspects that changed how we view and facilitate induction. Firstly, the need to forsake compliance or tick-box induction by making sure that the induction is theoretically underpinned and that such induction is key to any NAs in our institution, is understood as a process and not an event, and is inclusive of students as key agents and stakeholders in the learning and teaching agenda. Secondly, the use of pedagogies as outlined in Table 1 (Mapping our NBI programme to the NATHEP CRITicAl Framework), which include, amongst other things, a pedagogy of being and becoming (ontological), a pedagogy of engagement (methodological), a pedagogy of knowledge generation (epistemology), and a pedagogy of transformation (current discourse such as decoloniality, academisation, Africanisation, fourth industrial revolution, etc.), during induction as a way of also developing such practices for NAs to use in their own classrooms or lecture halls. Thirdly, there is a need to believe in ourselves as AD practitioners as that enhances our agential properties and ensures that we feel uncomfortable in our comfort zones when inducting our NAs. Fourthly, there is a need to legitimise our beliefs of the NBI programme as transformative and progressive, and such legitimisation needs to be cordially shared further with those who are sceptical of its relevance and application. Though we have not undertaken research to determine the impact of the NBI on teaching practices and students' learning, we believe that innovations such as the inclusion of students positively impact student learning. This is shown in the following comments drawn from some of the evaluation questionnaires, which also formed part of the article extracted from this case study.

It was useful as it indicates the expectations students have for us, where we, as academics, can improve in our teaching practices, and how we can understand and relate well with them. (NA23)

It is a good idea because we can understand their expectations. (NA6)

Yes, it is useful. I believe that the inclusion of students not only helps students to gain knowledge of their new academics, but new academics can gain more knowledge on students' expectations, experience, and behaviour. (NA26)

Amplifying students' voices and placing them as key stakeholders in teaching and learning-related matters. (NA23) (Ravhuhali et al.,2022).

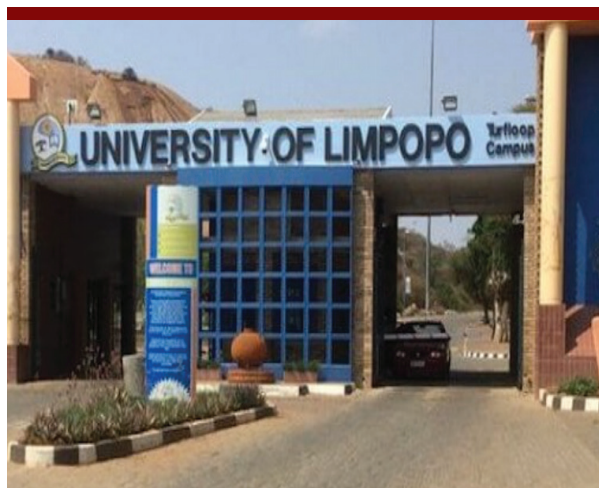
These comments, as reflected on the induction evaluation reports, provide some glimpses of how the induction is experienced by NAs.

Conclusion

As we have noted throughout this case study, at our university, just like other South African universities, the HR department has always been responsible for organising the induction of NAs. Through our participation in NATHEP, we have realised that for induction to be effective at UNIVEN, we need to disrupt the status quo and change this narrative. This led us to conceptualise an ADU-led NBI process-orientated and theoretically underpinned programme responsive to the needs of academics in which students were included as key partners and co-creators of knowledge. The NBI programme ensures that NAs are inducted as soon as they are appointed to avoid structural and cultural shock, which may determine their attrition. This is critical given that UNIVEN is a rural-based university, which means that it often struggles to recruit and retain academic staff. During our induction process, the NAs are provided with a platform to reflect deeply on themselves and better understand their students and their new context. This is made possible by utilising the pedagogies learnt from the NATHEP project, as well as responding and aligning our NBI programme to the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework. Through Bhaskar's (1975), critical realism and Margaret Archer's (2010; 2003), social realism as theoretical lenses, NAs are provided with opportunities to think deeply and interrogate themselves through the seven scalars (Bhaskar, 2010), and how the university's structure and culture may act as an enabler or constraint to their agency. Again, Vygotsky's (1994), sociocultural theory allows NAs to contemplate UNIVEN as a place for holistic development despite its geographical location. Watson's (2007), theory of human care helps us embed the spirit of ubuntu and care towards NAs and our students. The NATHEP journey enabled us to realise that with the changes happening in HE spaces, there is also a great need to be bold in transforming the induction programme, bearing in mind that academic success can be achieved when the needs of both academics and students are catered for.

CHAPTER SIX

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO



Turning the Tides of New Academic Staff Induction at the University of Limpopo

Owence Chabaya, Evelyne Chia and Kasturi Behari-Leak

Introduction

It is widely recognised that the South African (SA) university system currently experiences severe challenges in relation to size, composition and capacity of its academic staff largely due to the loss of staff owing to retirement, death, emigration and moves to other sectors (SSAUF, 2015). Likewise, Samuel and Chipunza (2013) say competition for top academics across the higher education (HE) and research landscape of South Africa has assumed a prominent dimension, resulting in the ever-increasing fluidity of such seasoned employees within institutions. These factors compel some institutions to recruit young and inexperienced staff. Such new staff need professional learning programmes that will assist them to be more effective in their teaching. HE institutions across SA offer various academic staff development programmes aimed at promoting quality teaching and learning (T&L). One of the programmes offered to new staff upon joining an institution is a new staff induction programme. This induction programme is meant to welcome staff, increase their sense of belonging to their new environment, provide space for interaction, engagements, and networking opportunities, boost morale and support their professional development (Hendricks & Louw-Potgieter, 2012; Ndebele, 2013; Wadesango & Machingambi, 2011). New staff induction facilitates the professional development of staff and aims to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This can be achieved by exposing academics to new ideas and strategies relating to how to teach and enable students to learn better in diverse ways (Dall'Alba, 2017; Luckett, 2012).

Another critical area of induction is the context of the institution within which the academics work as this has considerable influence upon their practice. However, this is not usually included, as the induction mainly focuses on teaching quality improvements and the individual development of academics (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014; Price & Kirkwood, 2013). Kirkwood and Richardson (2016) emphasise that to appreciate the complexity of teaching in HE, it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach, noting individual differences in conceptions around T&L, the sociocultural and the structural context within which the staff work, and the relationship between these conditions. Also, new staff entering HE would benefit if teaching in a postcolonial classroom is discussed in the induction. Therefore, induction should enable new academics to understand enablers and constraints of university settings and how these influence their practice. New academics should be assisted to see their potential as change agents who can respond to challenges

across disciplines, backgrounds and institutional contexts in HE (Behari-Leak, 2017; Englund et al., 2018).

At the University of Limpopo (UL), it seemed that the old influences the new, which leads to a recycling of same ideas. Most of the new staff members were once students at the University. These new staff members were products of elderly academics still adhering to traditional ways: silencing students' voices and having the power to control them in their roles as departmental academics. Naively, novices do as their old professors did, without questioning the systems. Obviously, these scenarios unfortunately stifle innovation, creativity and growth for both new staff and students. This case study examines how a previous staff induction programme at UL was transformed into a theorised one after interactions and influence from the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) participation. This chapter will proceed with situating the UL case and explain the sequence of the induction phases as the journey unfolded as follows:

- The UL induction before NATHEP (T1). This section discusses the context, assumptions and the characteristics of the generic induction.
- Colleagues' interactions during the NATHEP sessions (T2-T3) elaborates on the key interactions and thought-provoking engagements with the NATHEP SC members and other academic developers who took part in the programme.
- The induction after NATHEP with all its embellishments (T4) explains the implementation of what was learned and all the changes that took place towards the new theorised induction.
- The synopsis of the UL Induction Journey in figure format will be shown. This is followed by key takeaway points of the chapter and a conclusion.

Situating the case study

This case study is based on the induction processes at UL, where the authors are academic developers (ADs). The two ADs participated in a national project, the New Academic Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), which had the aim of providing professional development training for ADs in relation to inducting new academics. The programme sought to better understand how induction practices were conceptualised and delivered in the 10 participating national universities. It offers a critical analysis of the generic new staff induction that was being offered at UL and the customised new staff induction that was eventually developed after interactions with NATHEP. The latter emphasises the importance of considerations around structure, culture and agency if authentic, transformative T&L is to be achieved. The case study will take the reader on a UL contextual journey of the former and subsequent induction programmes. The main focus of the case

study is efforts towards improved induction through a sequencing of the following morphogenetic phases:

- T1 (Induction before NATHEP – context: enabling factors and constraints, and the induction)
- T2-3 (Interactions during NATHEP)
- T4 (Induction after NATHEP with all its embellishments)

Please note that T (alongside the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4) is a symbol used to denote time, indicating the sequencing of the UL induction phases.

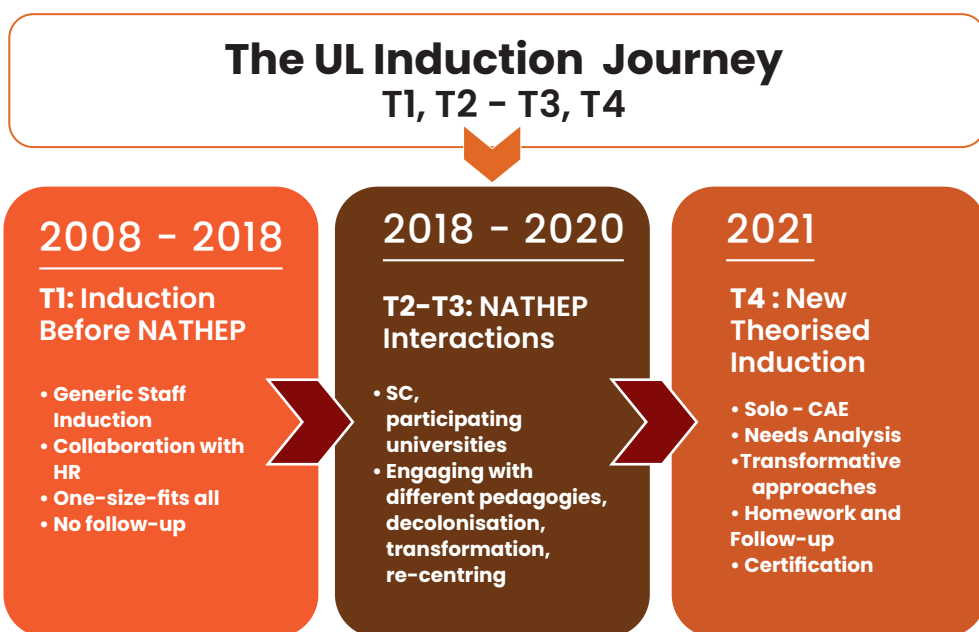


Figure 29 The journey of the UL induction phases

T1: institutional and induction context before NATHEP

The section presents an introduction to the institutional and induction context, and all that transpired before UL's participation in NATHEP.

Institutional context

The University of Limpopo, formerly known as University of the North, was established in 1959 under the apartheid regime's policy of creating separate, ethnically-based institutions of higher learning. The university is situated about 30 kilometres east of Polokwane City at Turfloop, Mankweng. This area is also known as SOVENGA,

owing to the area's three predominant ethnic groups, namely, Sotho, Venda and Tsonga. Most of the student population come from rural communities dominated by speakers of Sepedi, Xitsonga, Tshivenda and IsiSwati, who come mainly from the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces. The remaining students are from other parts of the country (North-West, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Northern Cape), and both neighbouring and far-flung countries (Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria).

UL is classified as a traditional rural university with most of its students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and many not being competent in English, the official language of instruction. This, coupled with socio-economic problems, creates serious challenges that negatively influence the academic preparedness of students, leading to high failure and dropout rates. Petersen et al. (2009) highlight how dropout rates tend to be higher for students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and low socio-economic populations because of poor adjustment to tertiary academic and social environments. This is evident at UL, with a large number of African students who were schooled in rural communities and who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2015, the University had 18 907 students, of which 18 894 were Black, three were Coloured, five were Indian, and five were White, as reflected in the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) database (HEMIS, 2016). Most students from disadvantaged backgrounds found themselves facing increasing challenges such as lack of access to online technology, compromises around connectivity and data necessary for online learning. The situation was exacerbated by COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 when most of the teaching and learning had to be taken online. Students who came from such disadvantaged communities needed more academic attention to curb high dropout rates. To achieve this, academics should not only be aware of such context and these considerations but should also be well trained and supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities in enabling student access and success.

The history and location of the university negatively affects staffing, as most of the recruited academics do not remain employed at the institution for very long. Furthermore, a lack of effective and efficient infrastructure contributes to a lack of expertise retention. Some experienced and knowledgeable teachers feel that they cannot work for long in rural areas. Accordingly, the location of the institution works against its desired principles of transformation, since people who bring change and different ways of working seldom remain employed at the institution. Given this high staff turnover, the institution resorts to recruiting young, inexperienced staff who need a well-planned induction programme that supports them to be effective, reflective teachers. This was the motivation behind UL's New Academic Staff Induction Programme for the new academic.

Assumptions about new staff before NATHEP

Generally, academics in South Africa and globally seldom have formal training as teachers (CHE, 2017). Most get recruited on the basis of their specialised subject knowledge, while pedagogic abilities are given lesser consideration. At UL, these academics will encounter students mostly from “disadvantaged” backgrounds, with reading and writing challenges, gaps in conceptual knowledge, a lack of critical thinking skills, and who are in dire need of language support and development (Boughey, 2005). Such staff need to be prepared to engage with issues related to students at risk and in need of support. If academics are from historically white institutions, recruits may be overwhelmed by differences in institutional culture and structures. Staff induction then should equip these inductees to embody their professional roles in socially aware ways. Christie et al. (2007) acknowledge that this is a long process; there are neither quick fixes nor a one-size-fits-all formula.

The University of Limpopo believes that for effective and efficient in-service delivery, all employees must be taken through a comprehensive induction process. Previously, the Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE) organised the new staff induction, in collaboration with the human resources (HR) division. The purpose of induction was to integrate new employees into both the organisational culture of the institution and their roles in the organisation, which had to be done quickly and effectively. The induction took place twice a year; one in each semester, usually around March and September. Both CAE and HR were responsible for planning and executing induction annually. From its initiation in 2008, the induction was conducted for five days, with the first three days allocated for HR and the last two days for CAE. While HR dealt with employment and labour issues, CAE dealt with teaching and learning issues. This introduced new academics to key aspects of learning, teaching and assessment, policies, approaches and practices in HE, and research practices. The intention was to transform academics and in turn both transform students to become lifelong learners and engage in ongoing evaluation of their practice. The three days with HR were known as general orientation for all newly appointed academic and non-academic staff. These HR sessions introduced staff to various departments, finance, and HR policies and procedures. The HR orientation additionally helped new staff understand the hierarchy of the institution, and different divisions such as quality assurance, library, safety and security, finance and HR. While HR formed an important function through the induction, CAE had specific expectations of induction as an intervention to introduce new appointees to the university classroom.

Despite there being an induction programme at UL, there were a number of weaknesses which remained ignored for some time due to not having a clear policy on these issues. For example, there were operational challenges such as the manner in which sessions were organised and facilitated, having to work with

HR on their terms while also having a limited number of days allocated for the academic teaching and learning portion of the induction. Subsequently, a draft submission was made to senate, and the policy, at the time of writing, is still a work in progress. Due to a shortage of staff within CAE at times, there was no proper planning of the induction programme. It became more of a congested information dumping session for new staff. During induction, traditional basic facilitation modes were used to speedily complete topics in the programme, with neither deep learning tasks nor follow-up workshops given. Mostly, topics were determined by expertise available to facilitate the programme rather than the needs of inductees. The completion of the programme was primary, which meant rushing through, compromising understanding, and attending to arising teaching and learning topics in an ad hoc manner through group work or general discussions. There was also low staff turnout. In addition, the practice was the same every year. We did not consider that the staff who came in were different and had diverse needs, and there was no innovation in how induction was thought about or delivered. At the end of induction, participants were given questionnaires to evaluate the workshop, but their inputs and feedback were not used to inform subsequent workshops. Certificates were issued by CAE to all inductees to acknowledge attendance, but not to recognise competence. However, it is worth noting that participants were always appreciative of what they learnt and of the space provided for discussions. This meant that the induction that existed at UL was not poor but was more of a ticking-the-box event. We did not like the way we operated but we also did not know how to improve until our participation in NATHEP presented itself. Figure 9 summarises characteristics of the generic induction:

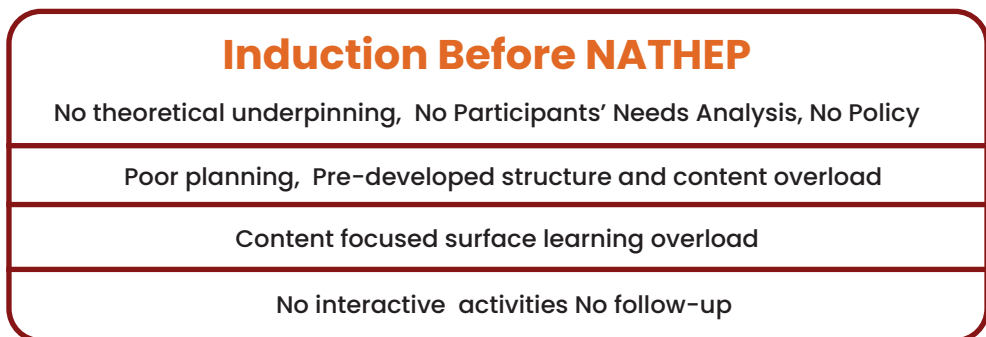


Figure 30 Generic induction characteristics

T2-T3: NATHEP interactive sessions

On being introduced to NATHEP, we were exposed to a number of considerations that invited us to rethink what we were doing with induction at our institution. NATHEP exposed us to work done by other AD practitioners within academic development centres in participating institutions. We were provided with various platforms to discuss issues affecting the scope of our work and we shared ideas on best practices with regards to staff induction. We were also provided with space for presentations and deep discussions of theories and practices underpinning the work of ADs. These discussions included theories such as Archer's (1995, 2019) critical realism, and how the realist attaches more meaning to structural and cultural constraints and to agential inventiveness in transforming them; Bhaskar's seven scalar (Bhaskar et al., 2018; Lotz-Sisitka, 2011), showing the patterns of emergence relations between layers as with the ADs' interactions with different stakeholders and the need for interdisciplinary wellbeing; as well as critical decolonisation and *carpe diem*. We developed an understanding that theory adds value to and informs practice since it serves as guidelines and the base for AD practitioners' practice. The NATHEP sessions helped us to transform our work, seek recognition and develop a unified voice while appreciating our own and participating institutions' differences and uniqueness. We were encouraged to disrupt the staff development status quo and develop agency.

During sessions, academic induction was the main agenda. Engaging with this topic, we deliberated on a range of questions such as:

- Why induction? Induction into what, by whom and how? Why now? Who do we consider a new academic? What is involved in our induction programmes?
- What pressures are we attending to and what specific needs of academics?
- What kinds of knowledge do new staff bring into the university context and how does it affect the kind of induction we offer?
- What kind of "knowledges" do new staff in different disciplines need to access?
- What are the cultures, structures and agencies in the institution and how do Bhaskar's seven layers (Lottz-Sisitka, 2011) unfold in our institution?
- What is the duration of an induction programme? What kinds of follow-ups do we institute and do inductees really use the information beyond the induction?
- Do ADs have a voice? How is their work perceived and received? Do ADs feel supported?

NATHEP gave us access to powerful epistemologies to begin unpacking and rethinking our practices. Through interrogating these questions, we were able to

develop an understanding and facilitation style for a holistic induction process linked to knowledge, educational pedagogies, and self. As participants, we presented our imagined inductions through a Pecha Kutcha presentation during a workshop that was hosted in Durban and we took part in the NATHEP Colloquium in 2019 in Boksburg, Johannesburg. The diagram below summarises key interactions and thought-provoking engagements.

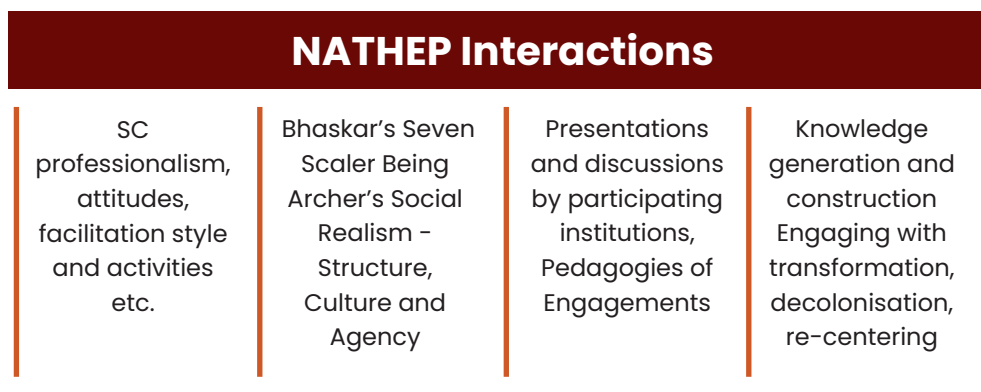


Figure 31 Key interactions and thought-provoking engagements at the NATHEP Colloquium

Through NATHEP processes we could reimagine and theoretically ground our induction practices. Our participation in NATHEP was invaluable to us as ADs for our work beyond new academics and into our work with academics at other stages of their academic careers.

T3: The implemented induction after NATHEP

New initiatives around social transformation invited rethinking around an academics' agency within HE practices. Interplay between the context and the individual's agency was emphasized, which demonstrated that there is no "one size fits all" when it comes to different institutions, different individuals and different groups of inductees. Following the process of transformation through NATHEP, our endeavour was to reimagine our new staff induction, to conscientise and support inductees to become agents of change for both students and the institution in which they operate, and to reclaim their voices. This was meant to seek to be relevant and responsive, and what better place to start than by using Bhaskar's critical realism (Bhaskar & Norrie, 1998), as a lens for an in-depth look at structure, culture and ways of enhancing agency in a context. Transformative learning and critical reflection become necessary and, as ADs, we had to dig deep and revise not only our processes but also the content of our induction.

Critical realism and its influence

In this case, as authors we considered critical realist (CR) approaches in developing the newly theorised staff induction programme. CR proposes that the world is real, structured and complex. This is useful when examining aspects such as academic staff induction taking place in structured and complex institutions. Additionally, CR argues for ontology of being which is real and independent of epistemology, and contends that our reality consists of the real, the actual and the empirical. The real (structures and mechanisms) generate the actual (events) and is distinct from the empirical (experiences of humans) (Bhaskar & Norrie, 1998; Khazem, 2018).

By implication, when a new staff member joins an institution, he/she will find that it has its own managerial and operational structures and culture that drive how things should be done, and these are independent of experiences he/she brings in. Accordingly, an effective induction should include ways of making inductees aware of and enable understanding of these structures and cultures, since these mechanisms influence their actual roles in HE spaces (Quinn, 2012; Luckett, 2012)

At the outset of our reimagined induction programme, we had to look at the word “new” in relation to new staff in induction. We had to understand different dimensions of “newness” as it came across as being problematic (as there are many different dimensions to the “newness” of a newly appointed staff). The challenge was identifying and categorising these nuances, which involved asking “New to what?” and its implication with reference to teaching, HE, the university, discipline, geographical location, student type, language and so on. Hence, understanding new staff and their needs was our first priority. The first step was to request inductees to respond to a needs assessment survey, which assisted in guiding the content of induction programme. Feedback from the survey provided a sense of the degree of differences among new staff with regards to years of teaching, training received, kind of support needed and more. The next question was thinking of ways to enable new academics to exercise their agency in T&L in the new institution. This meant looking at the programme structure, length and content as narrated in the subsequent paragraphs.

Influenced by NATHEP, our greatest aim for the new induction was creating conducive environments wherein interactive engagements could occur to uplift, clarify or build positively towards a better understanding of and service to the institution, students and policies. Furthermore, engagements during the NATHEP process highlight how issues such as identity, experiences and academic roles are relevant and need to be discussed to alleviate fears; to break barriers; to question assumptions and beliefs; and to see constraints as opportunities. Such eye-opening interactions during the NATHEP workshops and the literature helped us to realise that meaningful new staff induction could be enhanced by:

- developing new ideas of actions that could be taken in the face of challenges by pushing for open and honest discussions in a safe space;
- determining choices, preferences and adaptations that speak more to context of the new institution;
- breaking false assumptions, seeing reality by acting on rather than pointing fingers;
- using knowledge and power for greater good to transform, emancipate and be genuine to self and course; and
- discussing difficulties and enablement and finding pathways whereby teaching can occur with limited resources.

Through the NATHEP workshops we clearly saw the need to (a) bring change where needed and possibilities of learning, unlearning and relearning due to socio-cultural factors, (b) address challenges or even introduce teaching practices that were innovative, and (c) enable new discourses that can be utilised for (dis)continuity of good practice. From the above, it can be seen that being responsive, relevant, authentic, caring and sharing – as per the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework – was our focus.

The new staff induction: what changed

After the interaction with NATHEP, several changes occurred. The following details explain what we explored at NATHEP, and how CAE set about transforming the UL induction.

- Going solo: firstly, we considered time needed for induction, which necessitated a break away from HR involvement. We sent out a call to the entire university, specifying it was the new academic staff induction. To date, all is well and we continue the status quo of facilitating induction on our own.
- Time-frame changes: we changed from two to four/five sessions, and additional follow-up during the year. This is further discussed below.
- Needs survey questionnaire and analysis: we provided a programme that was not only relevant to all but attempts to respond to needs of new staff.
- Programme and content: the programme is run in a venue outside campus to ensure that the inductees stay focused and are not distracted by students. The content is delivered by various relevant divisions in the institution.
- Student voices and support services: were invited to sensitise new staff.
- Changes that occurred are further diagrammatically shown in Figure 32, which summarises our new induction:

Key Changes in UL Induction

Going solo &
Time-frame
changes

Needs survey
questionnaire
and analysis

Programme
and Content &
Facilitation and
Engagements

Student voices
and Support
services

Figure 32 Key changes in UL induction

New staff induction survey (needs analysis)

A needs analysis was required to begin understanding what “new” could mean for academics, ADs and for the induction process. This gives vital information to inform not only the induction process but future needs of “new” academics. Through responses provided by the survey, a customised induction that was more appropriate, relevant and responsive was created. To better support new staff at UL, we believe that knowing and understanding them (employee) better will enable us to be relevant and responsive to their needs. Accordingly, a needs analysis survey questionnaire was created with a variety of questions, ranging from training as a teacher, current roles and responsibilities, teaching philosophy and approaches, to challenges and skills or opportunities relevant for new staff to teach effectively. Selection of their preferred topics (from the list below) gives them some ownership of the programme and secures buy-in.

HE and context	Curriculum
Assessment and moderation	Student Voices
Teaching Philosophies and teaching methods, Student engagements	Diversity and Inclusivity for relevance and responsiveness
Knowing yourself and your environment	Communication and presentation skills
Teaching Large classes	T&L policy
Classroom Management	Integrating technology in classroom
Different student support programmes	Evaluation of T&L

Table 2 Topics in the needs analysis questionnaire

The programme duration and content

After realising the need for more time with new academics, CAE decided to cease partnering with HR and to have academic-focused induction periods of four to five days. This realisation necessitated a rethink of programme duration and

content. The needs of participants, drawn from the needs analysis, influenced the content and structure of the programme. Relevant support services from across the university were invited to participate so as to broaden the scope of induction input. All invited presenters were briefed on the direction we were taking, and we negotiated points of interest and key issues to tackle based on the redesign of the induction programme. The workshop programme and content are shown in figure 13 below including a short description of the topics and the facilitation.

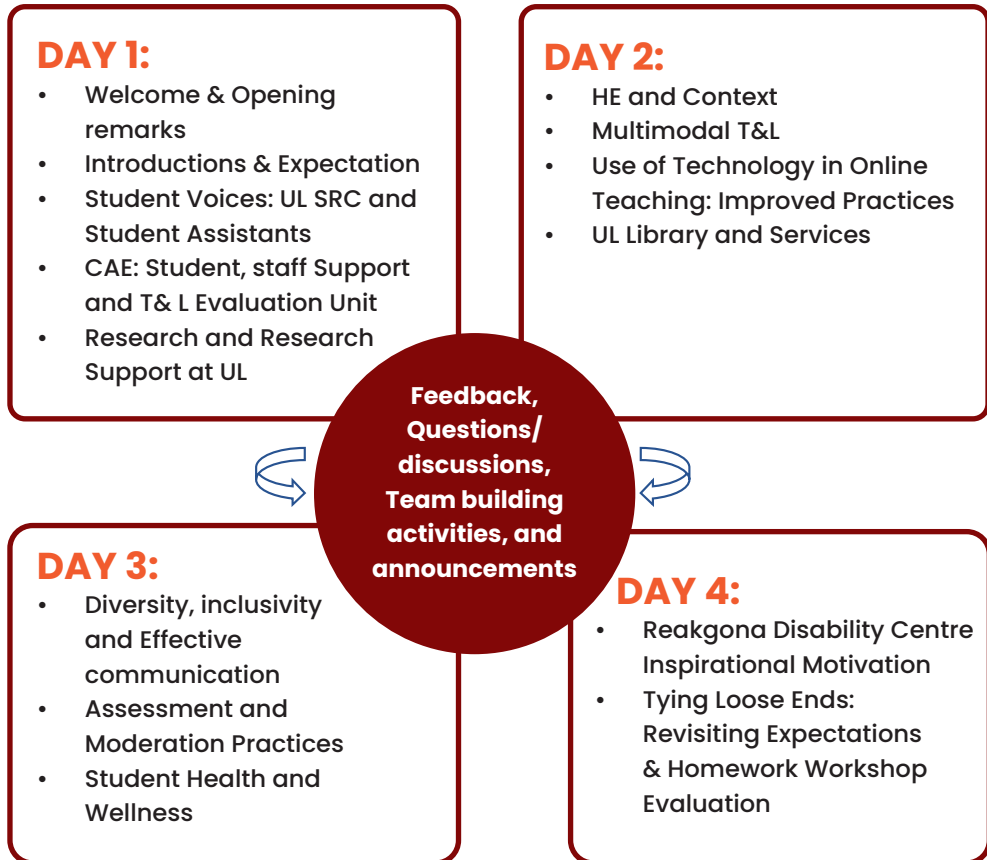


Figure 33 The four-day induction programme and content

Teaching and learning approaches, methods, techniques and strategy were dissected at length including related challenges and opportunities. This emphasised the point that context and experiences matter, which created awareness of social injustices and history that plagued the institution. Our programme aimed to shape academics who are knowledgeable, well-prepared, motivated and inspired, and are key in ensuring achievement of the university’s strategic objectives and goals.

In our enhanced induction programme, another important session was on e-learning practices for transformation to 21st-century practices. The need to develop responsive e-learning for customised teaching and assessment was discussed to enable academics to embrace changes and improve technical skills. This session explained educational technology theories for effective teaching and learning, and issues around the fourth industrial revolution, self-directed learning, flipped classroom, e-learning at UL, the use of Blackboard Collaborate, and developing your own course. Academics not only need to understand how to use technology in their teaching, but also need to understand how to help students use technology in their learning and research activities. Follow-up sessions with homework were scheduled for this session.

Elements of constructivism and critical reflection guided our facilitation style. The questioning and probing practices of facilitators were enthralling, and most participants were engrossed. Sessions were interactive and engaging. Participants were free to pause the facilitator at any point to debate, seek clarity or share their own experiences and knowledge of topics. Participants were also prompted to reflect on the needs, experiences and feelings of students and themselves. Facilitation styles of induction strived for transformation and activation of agency towards social justice as influenced by NATHEP. Facilitation of induction was done through PowerPoint presentations, and for the first time, our induction was virtual due to COVID-19.

The student voices

By listening to students' perspectives, facilitators can tailor content and instruction to meet the individual needs and interests of students. In this regard, the induction offered to new academics should assist staff to appreciate and give value to the context of both the students and the institution as it influences their effectiveness. Thus, the new induction sought to help academics better assist students holistically to know, to act in and to value the discipline. In other words, lecturers have to acknowledge their students' background and history and, in the process, prioritise the students' needs in teaching and learning. As such, the programme created awareness of student support programmes for their students as such programmes are centred on the students' needs.

In this regard, some students as well as Student Representative Council (SRC) members were invited to speak at the induction. They expressed their general challenges with academics' attitudes and lack of professionalism, their need to be heard, and their demands to be consulted for actions that would impact their studies and wellbeing. Some academics were criticised for not acknowledging experiences that students bring to classrooms. During the induction, SRC members, CAE student support assistants in the mentorship programme, supplemental

instruction, the reading and writing centre, and tutorship were invited to talk to the new staff members. This was meant to give new staff some first-hand information about their new place of work and inform them about what to expect as student challenges, as well as being informed about avenues for support available for their students. It was good for new staff to hear first-hand information about challenges that student assistants face in implementation of programmes and how new staff can assist in fostering effectiveness of programmes.

The inclusion of other support centres

Different support facilities are vital for quality teaching and learning. Figure 34 presents the centres that were invited to make presentations on the diverse offerings and support they render to staff and students. Careful consideration was given as to which support services to include, thinking specifically about the direct and indirect needs of new academics. As such, the revised induction programme brought in support around research, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), health and wellbeing and community engagement. The inductees were also shown how to do sign language, Braille reading, and enlightened on the different operations of the Reakgona Disability Centre. These invitations to some students and staff from other support centres from across the university enabled new inductees to understand the lived experiences of students, to know what support exists and to know who to contact should a need arise. Thus, in a single workshop, inductees got an overview of the student populace, referral procedures and how to suitably assist such students in their classes.

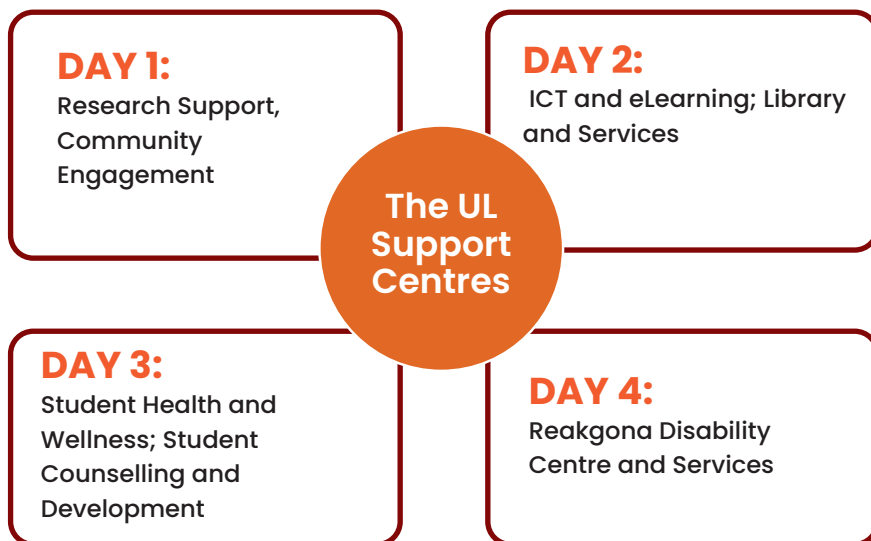


Figure 34 UL support as part of the induction

Follow-up workshop

Considerations around teaching and learning are vast and consist of many important topics with which new staff may need assistance. Before NATHEP, our interest was in completing the programme, with few interactions with participants. The new induction had a follow-up workshop four months after the end of the initial four days of induction. The purpose was to offer inductees an opportunity to share successes and challenges encountered after the induction and provide answers to questions guided by the results from the needs analysis survey and any other issues that they deemed fit for exploration.

Challenges encountered and some thoughts

Teaching and learning is a dynamic and lifelong process which will always have challenges. It is important to understand the circumstances in which they occur and learn to adapt and resolve them. Sometimes, these challenges/constraints may become opportunities for growth.

Below are some of the challenges encountered:

- Running the new staff induction online for four days due to the pandemic posed some challenges of data and connectivity to some inductees;
- Scrambling for time and getting everyone on board. It was very challenging to get a perfect time that suited all faculties;
- Some colleagues from the Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE) took time to understand and appreciate the proposed changes for a newer version of the new staff induction programme;
- The identification of new academics took a long time. However, other means like writing to the deans, directors or all academic staff requesting them to enlist their names, was a success; and
- Connectivity and network problems, and staff who are technophobic.

Challenges are inevitable but can be stepping stones to improved practice. We learnt to be proactive, strove to be excellent, and be ready to explore new things. By way of concluding the case, we provide a synopsis of the UL induction journey as depicted in Figure 35.

Synopsis: UL Induction

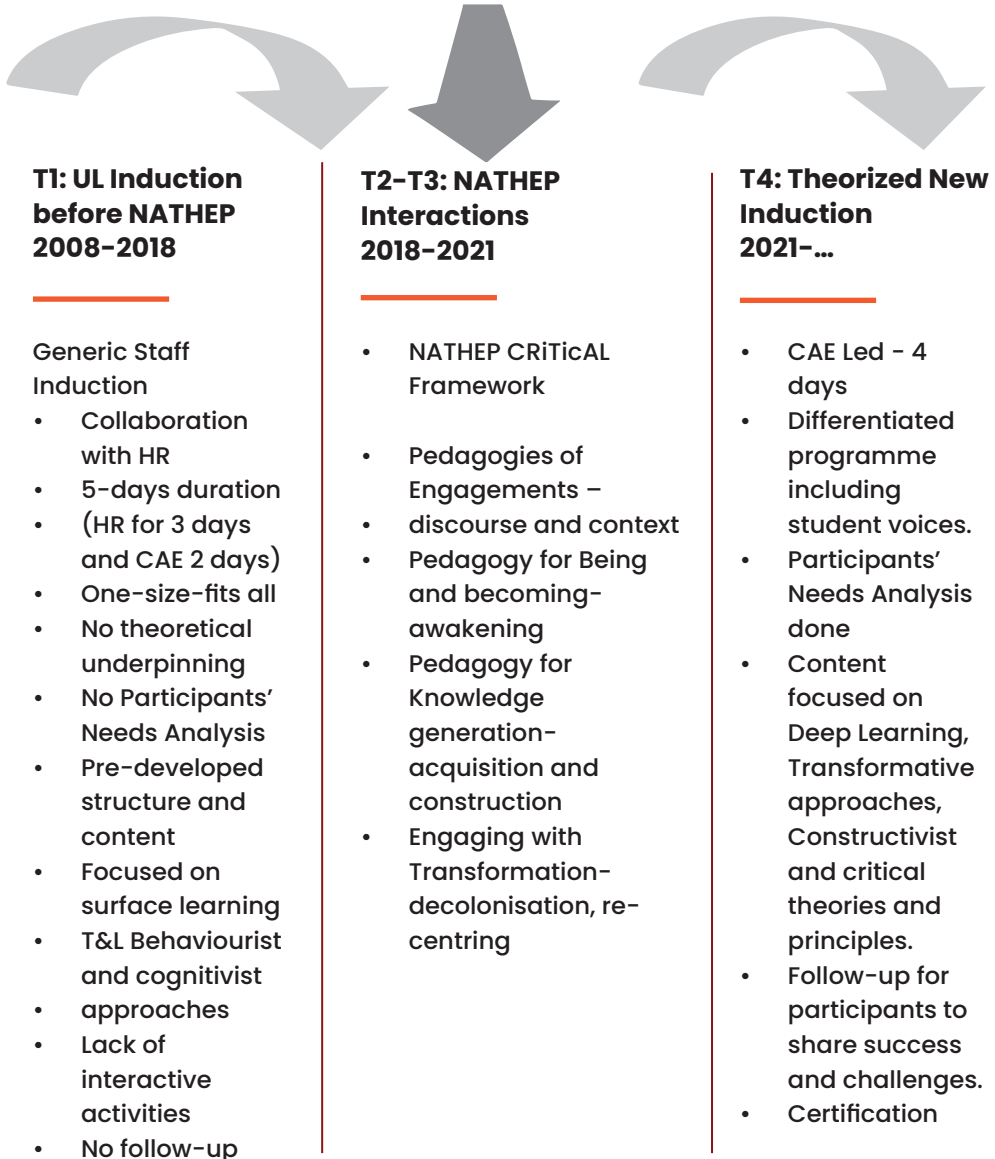


Figure 35 The UL induction journey

Key points to take away from this case study are:

- Induction with a theoretical stance is transformative and provides both best value and authentic knowledge for participants;
- A needs survey and analysis make induction relevant and responsive;
- Inclusion of students' voices creates holistic development of students and awareness of challenges, which helps clear bias and assumptions that academics have about students in the new context;
- Inclusion of support services in the institution provides orientation to the entire range of professional services that support academic roles;
- New staff should engage in ways that make explicit the racial, gender and class-based constraints experienced in context; and
- Follow-up work is essential for ongoing professional development and the sustainability of the programme.

Induction is a continuous work in progress. There is always room for revisions and improvements. It is important that universities ensure that new staff are not left on their own to traverse the new context of a teaching and learning environment without appropriate and meaningful guidance and support. It's important to note that, in terms of focus of new staff induction, no "one size fits all" and cohorts are diverse. Whatever you do should be authentic, relevant, and responsive to the needs of staff and the institution's vision and mission.

We are called upon to learn, unlearn, relearn and be innovative in the practice. In being fit for purpose, we must constantly review, reimagine, reconceptualise, and refocus our own AD practices. Such abilities are very beneficial for the development of both new staff and ADs as critical and reflective practitioners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, effective new staff induction is crucial for setting the tone for a positive and productive employment experience. Provision of comprehensive and supportive induction processes can lead to improved job satisfaction, increased staff retention rates and enhanced performance. As institutions continue to evolve, it is important to consider making the induction an ongoing process rather than a once-off event. By so doing, a culture of continuous learning and development is cultivated that would ultimately drive success for both the individual and the institution. It is vital to value the voices of other stakeholders and advocate for collaboration. Become an agent for change! A call as ADs to colleagues in HE is succinctly intoned in the poem opposite.

The Power Voice and Choice

The Voice-Be Purposeful

Make your voice count for positive change, empowerment and support

Make your voice count in creating spaces for decentring and indigenising

Make your voice count in acknowledging the Histories and experiences in your practice classroom and corridors

Make your voice count when saying “nothing for academics without academics” and “nothing for students without students”

Make your voice count for inclusion and access for success

Make your voice count in the services you render in T&L, research and community engagement...

The Voice-Be intentional

Your voice should be for balance, not glorifying one while demeaning the other.

Create spaces for engagements, interrogations for multiple meanings, and ‘knowledges’

Be not quiet, nor forced, nor coerced into silence out of intimidation, fear, race, class, qualification, or title

The language and tenses may be incorrect, and confidence not adequate – it shouldn’t matter the most

Listen to the Message and don’t disagree just for the sake of it

The Voice-Be unwavering

Acquired knowledge and understanding- use your voice and make it count!

Open your eyes wide, see, say and act

Break silos, break glass ceilings and break the red tapes

Tell them! Make the necessary Noizzz! Disrupt!

My context counts, my story counts, my voice counts!

I Am Free! Be Free!!!

E. Chia & O. Chabaya

Figure 36 The power of voice and choice poem

CHAPTER SEVEN

TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



Tshwane University
of Technology

We empower people



Teacher Identity and Critical Reflexivity in an Academic Orientation Programme at Tshwane University of Technology

Annelise Wissing, Jeannie Snyman and Rieta Ganas

Introduction: reconstruct

As the case authors, and academic staff developers known as curriculum development practitioners (CDPs) at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), we introduce and provide an overview of the **re**imagining and setting the scene for the **re**building of the Academic Orientation Programme at TUT. This process is narrated using the prefix **re-** to explore the process of reconstructing and continually redesigning the Academic Orientation Programme (AOP) at TUT. Aligned to Behari-Leak's (2017) declaration that change in higher education (HE) will require academics to implement a professional approach to teaching, this case study shares similar views for new academics as university teachers.

This idea influenced us to **re**learn and **re**centre ourselves as we **re**design and **re**imagine professional learning offerings. This case study explores the refinement of the TUT institutional induction programme in alignment to principles emerging from the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), a national collaborative project funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) through the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG). This case study narrated this process using the prefix **re-** to explore the process of reconstructing and continually redesigning the Academic Orientation Programme (AOP) at TUT. It highlights the necessity of these efforts in response to a constantly changing world, employing critical reflexivity to reflect on past practices with the aim of intentionally constructing a teacher identity.

The focus of the project was on professional learning by university teachers as they transition into their academic roles within the South African Higher Education context. The project also focussed on the transformation of university teachers in HE by developing induction programmes with a scholarly, critical, contextualised and professional approach to teaching (Behari-Leak, 2017). The theoretical framing guiding NATHEP's methodology draws on critical realism (Bhaskar, 1998) and social realism (Archer, 2000) specifically the concepts of structure and agency and how these concepts shape induction programmes while simultaneously being shaped by it. In this case study, the reconstruction of the initial AOP at TUT is conceptualised within the metatheory of social realism in relation to Archer's (2008) morphogenic approach.

According to Archer (2008), morphogenesis occurs in an endless cycle, which is similar to the cycle of redesigning and reimagining professional learning.

Archer's (2008) morphogenic framework not only allows us to analyse the interplay of structure, culture and agency over time, it also allows us to account for why the emergence of change happens (morphogenesis) or does not happen (morphostasis). The structure of the case study will therefore focus on the first period of the morphogenesis cycle of TUT's initial AOP, which is termed T1 (Archer, 2000). This specific part of the cycle describes the conditioning structures and cultures that were in place at the beginning of the initial AOP at TUT. The historic context of the AOP before participation in the NATHEP project will be discussed during this part of the cycle. The next step in the morphogenetic framework involves the analysis of the interaction that took place in a given time period, termed T2 to T3. According to Archer (2000), in this period agents interact with structure and culture. This part of the morphogenesis cycle of the AOP, named the rediscover, relate and redesign phases, is a reflection on the relearning and co-learning of and with the participants in the NATHEP project. The focus was on embedding NATHEP's critical values and principles within the initial AOP with the aim of achieving structural and cultural change. In this case study, we unpack the states of being and becoming and interlink these with the concept of transformative learning.

Relevance

In which we contextualise TUT geographically and within a professional learning regulatory framework

TUT is a university of technology. Universities of technology (UoTs) have less stringent admission requirements than traditional universities, thereby providing access to many students who might not be able to enter the traditional university sector. UoTs focus on providing students with relevant, well-designed, career-focused programmes (McKenna, 2009). Furthermore, the vision and mission of UoTs should focus on improving the capacity of students to generate new knowledge and contribute to increasing technology transfer while the institution offers technology-focused, vocationally relevant programmes that meet the needs of students, the economy and society at large (Du Pre, 2006).

TUT is a large, multi-campus university with six campuses in the greater Tshwane Metropolis, two in Mpumalanga, one in Limpopo, and two distance service points in Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Western Cape. TUT annually enrolls more than 60 000 students and just over 4 000 staff members, whose composition reflects national demographics in terms of race and gender. The student racial profile is 92.9% black and 5.7% white, while the gender profile is 51% female and 49% male (TUT Institutional Audit, 2022).



Figure 37 TUT All campuses, 2022

The majority of the students are first-generation university students. Due to the complexity shaped by the university's size, multi-campus nature and wide geographic footprint, equity of provisioning and consistent alignment of policies across all learning sites is difficult to achieve with severe financial, human, and infrastructural resource implications and constraints. However, the university's management prioritises the equity of resource provision at the different campuses, including the provision of professional learning and development for academic staff.

The conceptual framework for all professional learning and development endeavours is grounded in the TUT mission and vision statement and the TUT Learning and Teaching Strategy. The vision statement of TUT related to the principles of a UoT, is stated as "A people's university that makes knowledge work." The mission also speaks to the identified strategic pillars, described as: "We advance social and economic transformation through relevant curricula, impactful research and engagement, quality learning experiences, dedicated staff and an enabling environment." The TUT Learning and Teaching Strategy includes the foundational assumptions of student-centredness, digital approaches that integrate technology with the process of learning, and the way university teachers and students collectively create learning interactions that are respectful of all students by recognising student diversity and promoting student engagement and inclusivity.

The professional learning of academic staff forms part of the endeavour to enhance equity of service to all campuses. The Curriculum Development and Support (CDS) directorate of TUT is responsible for offering programmes focussing on the professional development of academics. CDS resides under Higher Education Development and Support (HEDS) and all expected functions are fulfilled by us as CDPs to partner with academics in developing relevant student-centred curricula responsive to student employability and socio-economic needs, and to initiate and facilitate effective and targeted professional development opportunities to the university.

Reconceptualising the initial curriculum of the T4L programme

In which we summarise the reconceptualisation of the “Licence to Teach AOP” as the “Teaching for Learning AOP”

One of the professional development programmes offered at TUT is an induction programme termed an Academic Orientation Programme (AOP), aimed at supporting new academics in their role as university teachers. “New” here refers to academics new to the TUT context even if they have higher education teaching experience. The original TUT induction programme comprised an organisational introduction but lacked a teaching focus. This original induction programme was organised and facilitated by human resources. A change in focus from organisational induction to university teacher induction prompted the name change from induction to orientation; therefore reference is made in this case study to the AOP.

This programme was first titled the Licence to Teach (L2T) programme but was renamed Teaching for Learning (T4L) during 2021. By this time, we were part of the NATHEP programme which provided spaces for dialogue and reflection, supporting us in rethinking the name. Through this collaboration, we realised that the name “Licence to Teach” did not reflect the current conversations in higher education learning and teaching, nor did it support the underlying principles of the redesigned AOP professional learning programme and so needed changing. T4L reflects the focus on optimising student learning. We believed that the principles espoused in the TUT Learning and Teaching Strategy could not be recognised and implemented if “learning” was not the distinct focal point of this professional learning programme. During the pandemic the programme was again reconceptualised to fit a more blended approach, where the blend can be adapted on the spectrum from contact to online, based on contextual circumstances. In order to ensure our programme remained dynamic, fluid and responsive, we surrendered to an ongoing process of reconceptualisation and reconstruction, which included a name change, a curriculum change and a change in mode of provision.

The AOP forms part of the university's policy on induction, which states that as part of the probation requirements of permanently employed staff, it is compulsory to complete a formal induction programme. L2T was offered from January 2009, twice a year to all permanently employed academic staff. The purpose of the programme was to familiarise newly appointed university teachers with issues integrally part of an academic's life at TUT. The programme provided a general introduction to learning and teaching at TUT, with a main focus on teaching for optimal student learning. There has been consistent positive feedback from programme participants, creating the assumption that the programme was fulfilling its mandate. During the debriefing processes we however often questioned the positive feedback as we were aware of the programme's possibility to be improved.

The debriefing usually takes place after the completion of the programme, with all CDPs who design and facilitate sessions. During the debriefing we considered the L2T's curriculum and learning design, the attainment of outcomes by programme participants, and our role in that process. We then considered what we could do to improve the programme regarding curriculum, learning design, facilitation, being research-based, and impact on student learning. The NATHEP programme helped catalyse this continuous rethinking process by exposing us to best practices and renewed thinking on theoretical anchors.

L2T had a five-day contact session, during which the underpinning theory for teaching in HE is shared. The session included practice-based assignments and critical reflection on practice through the submission of a portfolio of evidence (PoE). Although framed within the intended curriculum's timeline of six months for completion of the PoE, the reality was that the submissions were mostly individually paced. Participants frequently requested submission extensions and this was always granted to emphasise relational building with colleagues through aspects of the curriculum. Through assignment activities, university teachers learn "on the job", with the guidance, mentoring and support from other participants in the programme including CDPs and the heads of departments (HoDs) of respective departments the university teacher teaches in. The reconceptualised T4L, at the time of writing, facilitated asynchronously online, follows the same pattern as L2T but with more inclusion of digital literacy expectations. After the disruption caused by the pandemic, there was also a focus for university teachers to design and facilitate learning experiences that are adaptable to fluctuating conditions. By changing the mode of facilitation to a fully online programme, we hoped that the participants in the T4L will learn how dynamic learning settings necessitate adaptive interactions between students, university teachers, learning material, and technology functionalities.

The T4L programme continues for six months after the online, asynchronous

sessions. The intended outcomes for the programme are forecasted to be achieved within this six-month timeframe and reads as:

By the end of this programme the participant should be able to:

- write a personal teaching philosophy aligned to provided guidelines;
- facilitate a transformational learning activity within an authentic environment, applying interactive teaching strategies focused on student-centredness and self-directed learning (a teaching evaluation observed by a CDP and the HOD);
- develop outcomes and assessment criteria within a constructive alignment process while following provided criteria;
- apply learning and teaching principles by reflecting on current learning and teaching practices, relevant research, as well as learning theory principles; and
- develop a PoE that reflects evidence of reflective practice in learning, teaching, and assessment in HE.

The preceding paragraph is further clarified by the following summarised depiction:

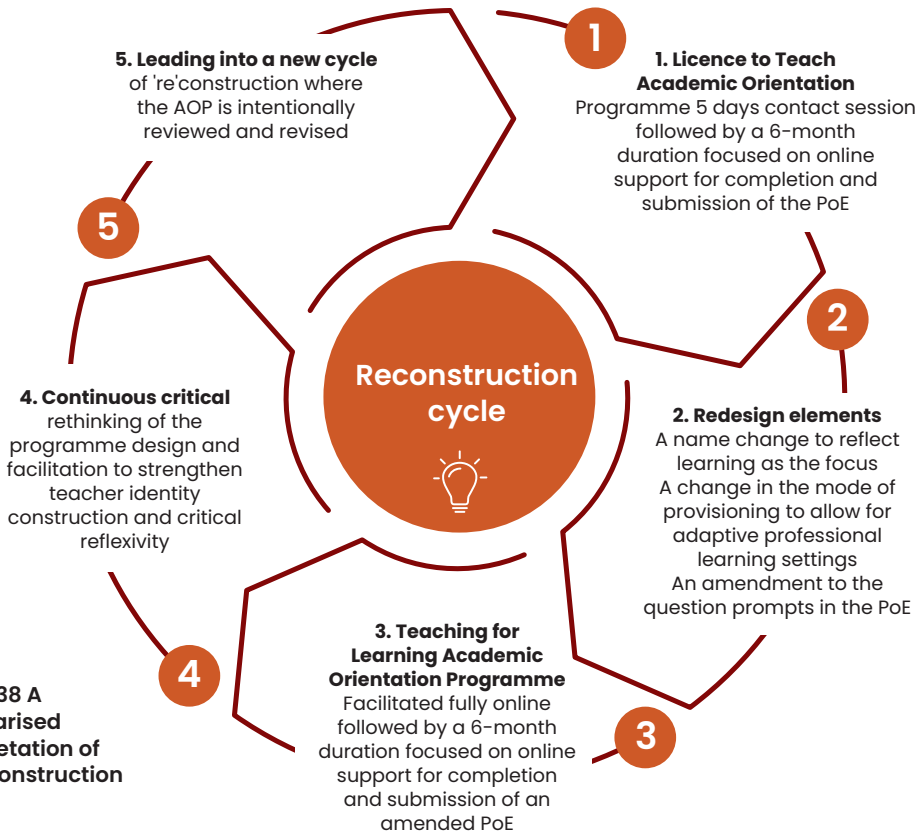


Figure 38 A
summarised interpretation of the reconstruction cycle

Further reflection on the T4L programme currently in

use as the AOP

In which we consider the significance of teacher identity reconstruction and critical reflexivity incorporated in the T4L AOP

Reflecting on the structure of the T4L made it clear that there was an opportunity for lecturers to build their foundational knowledge by exposing them to further knowledge and theory of learning and teaching in HE. The programme also allowed for the development of practical competence through engagement with a transformational learning activity in an authentic environment. The submission of a PoE allowed university teachers to practise self-reflexive thinking. However, the AOP did not support a focus on university teachers' epistemic knowledge by developing their reflexive competence. There was no opportunity to develop metacognition and to think epistemically in order to recognise and evaluate the assumptions and limits of theories of knowledge and to be able to suggest alternatives (Luckett, 2001). This process of transformative learning, if present, would allow university teachers to critically reflect on assumptions, theories and beliefs, and test the validity of these assumptions. This view was based on university teachers being disciplinary experts and often not having engaged reflectively with their teacher role. Taking on a teaching role in HE requires a repertoire of insights which go beyond merely amassing skills and knowledge about disciplinary learning and teaching. It is also about adjusting identities so that new university teachers can dip their toes in the water of this new teaching profession or context with, among others, autonomy, constant changes, and possible compromises. T4L's design and facilitation strategies should echo the demands placed upon new university teachers and support them to intentionally engage in critical evolutionary practice conversations. These conversations could then be followed by reflexive questioning and the opportunity to reorientate their worldviews with new possibilities for practice.

Rediscover

In which we attempt to restore a focused role for the T4L AOP

A key construct that reflects new university teachers' varied responses to the structural, historical, and cultural conditions which enable and constrain their growth as teachers, is that of reflexivity (Archer, 2007). According to a study published by the Council of Higher Education (2017), academics would be able to deal better with challenges related to contemporary higher education contexts by adopting the identity of a reflective practitioner. Critical reflection on one's own

teaching practice stands central to development and growth (Winberg, 2017). The focus on positionality, change, and on transformation as an evolutionary practice frames the concept of reflexivity, which is unpacked below.

The usual expectation of university teachers in the previous L2T programme was to reflect on their teaching and their philosophical beliefs, explaining why they facilitate learning in a certain way. The programme was designed to guide university teachers on how to reflect effectively by, for example, critically reflecting on feedback from students and heads of departments, and reconstructing consistencies between theory and practice. These reflections were done according to guided questions in the PoE, designed to encourage university teachers to become reflective practitioners and to question traditional pedagogies and conduct, as well as traditional ways of assessing student learning. The activities and guiding questions provided to new university teachers prompted them to reflect on, for example, what good teaching is or what they expect from their students. From these two questions it was clear that these types of guiding questions that were in the initial PoE were often ambivalent and did not adequately address the level of reflexivity needed for purposeful learning and teaching practices.

Although this process used in the initial PoE was quite successful to achieve a certain level of critical reflection, we agree with Vorster and Quinn (2017) that it was time for us CDPs to push the boundaries and challenge university teachers to engage with further critical discourses emerging in the field of HE. For university teachers to transition from thinking reflectively to reflexive competence, the integration of knowledge into a reconstructed teacher identity and into a sense of self required a more focused reflective and reflexive approach. The AOP was framed within history and context as focal points, and it was envisaged to provide a space for critical self-reflection on academic practices, for both the academics as participants (university teachers) and as facilitators.

It became clear during the T4L debriefing sessions when considering participant feedback that the AOP did not place enough emphasis on incorporating the macro cultural, historical, and structural conditions of HE in South Africa. It was important to take these conditions into consideration; to develop a better understanding of the changing context that new university teachers confront in higher education in general, and at TUT specifically. The programme did not purposefully guide university teachers to reflect on (one) their teacher identity construction, and (two) their critical reflexivity in a changing higher education context which shapes their academic practices.

Both identity construction and critical reflexivity influence the role of the academic as university teacher. Identity and reflexivity are both framed as dynamic and impermanent features that will continually evolve as university teachers work with

conditions that enable and impede their practices. The dynamic nature of identity construction and critical reflexivity proposes that our work in learning and teaching needs to be informed by stronger discourses that ask more critical questions related to the way new university teachers construct a teacher identity and how they could become more critically reflexive. We identified the concepts of identity reconstruction and critical reflexivity as two crucial points to focus on as we continue to renew the AOP in relation to what we gained from the NATHEP experience. From the NATHEP framework, we focused on reflexivity and how university teachers and facilitators could use reflection for forward action on contextual matters. We also considered how a teacher identity reconstruction process is framed as a dimension of lived experience, and on authenticity and various deep changes required by all involved to actuate enhanced practice.

How then do we position the design, the curriculum, and the facilitation of T4L as a supportive and emancipatory space where teacher identity construction and critical reflexivity become significant aspects? Firstly, identity helps to answer the “Who am I?” question in a cognitive and “learning-as-becoming” construction of the self. Feather (2010) refers to identity as a representation of a person’s psychological make-up, and Clegg (2008, p.329), notes the “fluidity and multiplicity of an individual’s existence and their personhood”. The emergent territory between personal, disciplinary, and professional domains can be confusing as well as intimidating and the AOP can support new university teachers to clarify this by layering teacher identity with their other identities. Secondly, teacher identity helps to frame the AOP as a value-laden social practice. Whether globally, nationally, institutionally, disciplinarily, departmentally, or personally, the AOP needs to enhance new university teachers as critical reflexive thinkers who “question traditional relations of power, ideas, and norms” (Grenier, 2016, p.154). By creating safe, emancipatory spaces in the AOP, university teachers become aware of the social conditioning that enable “the reproduction of specific understandings of the world” (Grenier, 2016, p.154) and how to critically awaken your own “self-aware meta-analysis” (Finlay, 2002, p.209). In this way the aspects of identity construction and critical reflexivity become evident in the AOP’s curriculum activities. Anchoring these curriculum activities in available literature and in the NATHEP framework will receive attention in the section that follows.

Relate

In which we establish a link of theoretical significance by connecting the AOP reconstruction ideas to a brief literature review and the NATHEP framework

In developing our theoretical underpinning of the reconstruction of the programme, we referred to aspects of the NATHEP CRITicAl Framework which anchored the key considerations motivating the changes. We focused purposefully on critical

reflexivity, relevance, responsiveness, and authenticity as guides, influencing our thinking and action. The framework not only guided these changes for the institution but for our own agency as we, with increased intentionality, used our voice and choice.

For our academics to think differently about their teacher identity and critical reflexivity requires a transforming belief about the self. Mezirow's (1994) transformation theory emphasises critical reflection of the self as an individual becomes increasingly reflexive and agentic. Everyone has an image of who they are as a professional; the arrangement of experiences, beliefs, motives and characteristics they use to describe themselves in their professional capacity (Caza & Creary, 2016). Identity is not a stable entity. It is an impermanent feature that is shaped by contextual factors, is dynamic and decidedly fluid. It interacts with personal agency and is based on personal experiences and critique. A strong teacher identity enables a university teacher to confidently and with professional conduct engage with the aspects of their profession, "thereby giving others confidence in their abilities" (Monrouxe, 2009).

Critical reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself and outward toward the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other contextual shaping forces (Boud et al., 2013; Schön, 1983). Idahosa (2020) refers to reflexivity as a critical, constant consciousness and the ability to learn and unlearn. It disrupts logic and linear structures of knowing. It is a "process of uprooting and uncovering intertwined layers" and it supports a critical awareness of "systems, rules, discourses and assumptions" that allow individuals to see the many ways of "knowing, being in and understanding the world" (Idahosa, 2020, pp.33-34).

In combining these two concepts of identity reconstruction and critical reflexivity, Cunliffe (2009, p.98) notes how the construction of identity requires a guarantee of reflexivity. Self-reflexivity, which is primary to the identity of university teachers, involves a "dialogue with self about our fundamental assumptions, values, and ways of interacting" (Cunliffe, 2009, p.98).

In Archer's terms (2000), the induction programme needs to support the creation of spaces for university teachers to build their personal properties and powers, to become what she calls "meta-reflexives"; that is, people who can consider their concerns, projects and practices in relation to the wider social concerns and thus be prepared to have their entrenched identities, values, and beliefs challenged (Vorster & Quinn, 2017). As such specific aspects of the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework were instructive in helping to inform key considerations for programme change and design. These theoretical framing and anchors informed the redesign and will continue to influence the ongoing reconstruction of the AOP.

Redesign: step one

In which we reconsider the T4L learning design, its facilitation, and the PoE so as to become more responsive to university teachers' identity reconstruction and critical reflexivity

The TUT Conceptual Framework for Professional Development (CDS, 2017) describes the quintessential university teacher and their competence. Fike, Fike and Zhang (2015) refer to this ideal university teacher as a scholar who epitomises respectful professionalism and who has knowledge, ability and intellect, while Faulkner and Latham (2016) note how exemplary university teachers possess dynamic perspectives that can meet current and future challenges. In addition to these authors, the NATHEP framework references university teachers as, inter alia, responsive, rooted in theory and legitimate in their authentic purpose.

Seen against the background of the AOP, the progress of the university teacher from potentiality to proficiency is engrained within their teacher identity. It is this concept of identity, and specifically traversing the gap between personal and disciplinary identity on the one hand, and university teacher identity on the other hand, which the AOP needs to enable more intentionally. In the past, the AOP's curriculum addressed the concept of teacher identity, and certain activities and engagements required of the new university teachers to reflect this evolutionary shift. We believed that to purposefully design for this evolutionary process of teacher identity construction with more depth requires active inclusivity of reflexive prompts in the PoE and purposeful activities in the redesigned AOP.

The PoE was originally designed with guiding questions to support the compilation of a teaching philosophy. These questions, we realised, were often "surface" questions, which required new university teachers to reflect on aspects of, inter alia, good teaching, student roles and realities, and teaching strategies. As CDPs, we felt that although this was a good starting point, these types of questions often lacked depth, and were not thorough enough to challenge fundamental assumptions or support a more wholesome teacher identity reconstruction. We anticipated that with the changes we had already made, and with the changes to still follow in the T4L programme, this lack of depth could be addressed. The following figures (Figures 39, 40 and 41) reflect the initial type of questioning (Figure 39), participant reflection on the completion of a teaching philosophy (Figure 40), and participant reflection on the LtT Version 1 programme itself (Figure 41). These figures provide an overview of aspects of the LtT Version 1 programme and indicate the need for revision and modification thereof.



What do I expect from my students?

What is good teaching?

What part of my professional contexts brings me joy?

Figure 39 Example of guiding questions in the previous PoE

~ The writing of the teaching philosophy guided participants in reflecting on their practices

Teaching philosophy/Example 1: "...in fact, I was even helped by that first assignment, the philosophy... because we were given that, and I had to go and read, and okay, these are the thing, I went online, I even asked my friend to give me her notes... and it is all about student engagement..."

Teaching philosophy/Example 2: "...it is interesting, you know, I did my diploma, you know, you would have this template that you have to do 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – if you are a teacher you have to do this, this, this, this – but the teaching philosophy helps you to think about things, to make a reflection of your reflections as a teacher, so I think it is subjective, but it is also objective according to the context of your subject. So I found it very useful..."



Figure 40 Examples of participants' reflection

Teaching evaluation/Example 1: "The feedback I received after my class visit was not very clear... I haven't really changed anything in my teaching practice since then..."

Teaching evaluation/Example 2: "I really would have appreciated some more specific feedback on my teaching. Feedback that is specific to my situation..."

Relevance of the AOP/Example 1: “The programme is really not aligned to, you know, my everyday teaching, this reality here...”

Relevance of the AOP/Example 2: “When you tell us about teaching hundreds of students at once, then I might pay attention...”

Constructive alignment activities/Example: “We cannot be expected to just write learning outcomes and assessment criteria... it’s demotivating when you struggle so much. More time is needed...”



Figure 41 Examples of participants’ feedback

The PoE was then adapted through redesign to become responsive to incorporating identity construction and critical reflexivity. The PoE in this way was becoming more than just a folder to store assignments. It became an instrument in the process of supporting university teachers to grapple with deep issues. It became a space and opportunity for reflecting on issues of teacher identity construction and taking a positive step towards a deeper engagement with educational issues of the day.

The evolution of the AOP became visible in the curriculum, specifically the activities, and the guiding reflexive prompts in the PoE. We planned for the evolution to be ongoing through redesign cycles for dialogical reflexivity, and to continuously align to the curriculum of the AOP. New university teachers were challenged to share and translate the influence of the “possible presence of premises and narratives” (Grenier, 2016, p.157) on their beliefs and professional or academic conduct. Reflective and reflexive guiding questions challenged university teachers to engage with current learning and teaching conversations in context and to further include community, national and international contexts. The questions aimed to guide university teachers to critically reflect on “the way we construct and absorb knowledge” (Tomkins & Nicholds, 2017, p.5), on the changing nature and forms of knowledge, and on their relationship with knowledges. It also supported them in reflecting on the societal power dynamics of hegemonic influences that they were exposed to, firstly, within higher education, and secondly, the different sources and levels of power within their own relationships with students. These reflections required them to consider whether their teacher–student relationships were missing balance and equity because of unequal power distributions, and whether these uneven assertions of power impeded teaching and learning experiences.

How do I contribute towards students' relevance in a dynamic world and an unfamiliar future?

What is the knowledge base of my field / discipline? Who decides on the knowledge included in the programmes with which I am involved?

How do I design learning interactions so that students can be agentic and accountable about their learning?



Figure 42 An example of guiding questions in the amended PoE

It was anticipated that exposure to the proposed guiding questions in the PoE and the proposed T4L curriculum and design changes would kindle continued engagement with critical reflexivity that will last beyond the duration of the AOP. University teachers would then receive opportunities to continue their learning journey by engaging with other professional learning opportunities facilitated by the Curriculum Development and Support directorate. This reflexive process aimed to support the crafting and adjustment of a university teacher identity in response to the array of perspectives from colleagues and literature (Kreber, 2010). Just as contact and online learning spaces should be safe and emancipatory spaces for students, the spaces of the AOP (including the PoE) should create the same kind of safe space, where university teachers can contemplate, construct, critically reflect, and learn (Kisfalvi & Oliver, 2015). While individual/personal discomfort is welcome when contemplating personal critical reflections and identity, the discomfort should be authentic and should be part of an evolutionary transformation. The discomfort should not stem from hostile spaces, practices, or facilitation, but from delving into taken-for-granted assumptions and questioning these. We, as CDPs, strived to create space for university teachers to be comfortable in any discomfort that may arise, and aimed to continue to reflect on our role during debriefing and planning sessions. We were once again reminded that the AOP should never stagnate but needed to continuously evolve. Following some curriculum changes, and changes to the guiding questions of the teaching philosophy of the PoE, we aimed for the next cycle of change to focus on theoretical grounding for pedagogical choices within a wider spectrum of professional learning opportunities.

Redesign: step two

In which we consider the redesign as this pertains to theoretical groundings, and to us, the curriculum development practitioners who design, facilitate, assess, and support

TUT's spectrum of professional learning opportunities for university teachers, of which the AOP was an integral first step, required continued rethinking and

restructuring. Agentic university teachers should be able to plan their own journeys through various available learning opportunities. This includes workshops, short learning programmes, and self-directed professional learning opportunities via the TUT Learning Management System, enabling them to build and maintain agency aligned to institutional directives. From previous AOP experiences we know that university teachers who are instructed to complete the PoE, can often choose the road of least resistance and regress into silent compliance. By adapting the curriculum, design and facilitation of the AOP, particularly with regard to the guiding questions in the PoE, we guarded against imposing a teacher identity, and rather provided our academics with democratised learning spaces and interactions where personally relevant identity can be individually constructed. A democratised learning space connects to the concept of decolonisation where individuals construct their own truthful authentic teacher identities. These identities recognise and embrace diversity and the absence of a fixed, marginalised paradigm. Reflecting on the authenticity of identity, the curriculum, facilitation and learning and teaching spaces allow university teachers to embrace their own values and culture as well. This was intentionally designed to be reflective of, and authentic to, previously marginalised cultures.

By drawing on their scholarly nature, new university teachers were encouraged to challenge the complexities of an often-unfamiliar professional environment, and step into critical reflexivity mode to embody their practice as disciplinary university teachers. As explained, previously formulated teaching philosophy guiding questions on “good teaching” were expanded with contextual prompts on, for example, introspection, preconceived biases, knowledge claims, individual and collective engagement with current higher education aspects, social practices and critique, structures, assumptions and rules. A further step required the translation of these concepts into the new university teachers’ own curriculum and learning design for the benefit of students. It required consideration of theoretical grounding for pedagogical choices. CDPs and instructional designers (IDs) (residing at CDS) supported the teacher identity construction and critical reflexivity of the programme participants during and beyond the AOP. As CDS practitioners, our roles continued to evolve on two similar pathways of agentic learning. Firstly, as facilitators of the AOP we needed to continuously construct and reconstruct our own teacher identities. Secondly, we needed to be aware of the broad spectrum of current higher education conversations to engage with critical reflexivity in the design and facilitation of the AOP. As we move forward, we endeavour to continue to focus on three crucial points: firstly, continually question the relevance of the AOP’s curriculum and learning design; secondly, continue to support university teachers as participants with professional identity construction and reflexivity for renewed awareness and enhanced practice; and thirdly, pay attention to our own being and becoming as we continually support the entirety of the AOP.

Conclusion: remind

We conclude the case- study with some continual reminders

A thoughtfully conceptualised professional learning programme should reflect institutional priorities combined with national and global awareness. We became aware that our initial L2T and aspects of T4L did not reflect that intentionality clearly. We recognised that the architecture of the AOP, with its theoretical anchors, needed to acknowledge the perspectives, realities and lived contexts of the institution, individual university teachers as well as the facilitators and designers of the programme. It needed to reflect NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework principles of responsiveness, relevance, authenticity and critical reflexivity.

As AOP designers and facilitators, we had to recentre ourselves, reflect on our own teacher identity construction, and bring ourselves wholly to the AOP evolution through our own reflexive processes. We had to immerse ourselves in the malleability of learning design to ensure we continue with authentic changes, theorised praxis and reflexive conduct. Although this is never easy, we have come to know that the AOP can always be redesigned for more responsiveness and relevance.

We had to be reminded of two significant concepts which are the current focus of adaptation of the AOP:

- To intentionally support the new university teachers' construction of a teacher identity within the transition between subject expert and educationist.
- To intentionally address the new university teachers' taken-for-granted practice assumptions through applying critical reflexivity, and consequently raising awareness of the underlying implications of history, power relations and knowledge production (and reproduction) in learning and teaching spaces.

Both these concepts, that is, university teacher identity construction (the journey of adjusting identities), and critical reflexivity (informed insights and control over influencing structures, history, and cultures) reflect the reconstruction of the AOP, as described in this case study. These concepts are connected to aspects of teaching and learning such as curriculum, design, and facilitation, and more significantly to the role of the PoE as a vehicle and an enabling space for reflection and identity formation, evidence for evaluation, for growth and for motivation. The CDPs who design curricula and activities for the AOP aim to continue to reflect on the epistemological and ontological access created by this design process and evaluate whether the AOP provides such access for university teachers to experience the threshold of intersectional, reflexive identities. The following acknowledges this imperative, namely, that through the construction of a professional identity, individuals are able to claim purpose and meaning for themselves and explicate how they contribute to society (Caza & Creary, 2016).

CHAPTER EIGHT

MANGOSUTHU UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY



Transformation of an Academic Induction Programme at Mangosuthu University of Technology

Phiwayinkosi R. Gumede, Muntuwenkosi M. Chili and Noluthando Toni

Introduction

This case study is the culmination of an invitation by the University of Cape Town to Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) to join a national collaborative programme on the induction of new academics, the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP). In 2018, MUT agreed to be part of the project. Three senior academic developers from the Teaching and Learning Development Centre (TLDC) participated as representatives of MUT. It was vital that TLDC participate in the project since the centre was still in its developmental stages. The TLDC was established to support academic enterprise through a recommendation of the 2011 Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) institutional audit, which recommended that MUT establish the TLDC. One of the TLDC's mandates is to implement an academic induction, which would introduce newly appointed academics to teaching and learning pedagogies. Hence the participation of the TLDC to the NATHEP was motivated by a need to improve the academic induction at MUT.

The focus of this case study is to present the emergence of academic induction at MUT; the nature and focus of the general staff induction; and the influence of NATHEP in transforming the academic induction. This case study further gives an account of how participating in the NATHEP has helped the TLDC to transform, reshape and establish a new culture of academic induction. In achieving this, this case study elaborates on the following considerations, namely, institutional context; general staff induction at MUT; the evolution and implementation of academic induction at MUT; impact of COVID-19; and provides an overall summary in the conclusion.

Institutional context

MUT is located in Umlazi, the largest township in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the second biggest township in South Africa. MUT is one of the smallest public institutions of higher learning in South Africa, and among the five public higher education institutions operating in the province. Other institutions of higher learning in this region include the University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Zululand, University of South Africa, and Durban University of Technology. MUT was established in 1979 when it was inaugurated as Mangosuthu Technikon with an initial intake of 15 students in prefabricated buildings. As a technikon, its mandate was to offer vocational and technical subjects. Construction of the main campus buildings commenced in 1980 with the laying of the foundation stone by Dr Mangosuthu

Buthelezi, the founder of the institution who was the chief minister of KwaZulu at the time. The Mangosuthu Technikon was officially opened by Harry Oppenheimer, one of the major sponsors of the institution in 1980 (MUT Strategic Plan, 2015–2019). In 2007, the Minister of Education designated the institution as the Mangosuthu University of Technology. This was part of the transformation agenda of the entire higher education system. At the core of such transformation was the recognition that institutions were unique and hence there was a need to focus on different curriculum offerings. MUT is one of the few institutions that did not merge with others as part of the post-apartheid education transformation agendas. This spoke volumes in the way MUT was able to preserve its own identity and culture, particularly, translanguaging in teaching and learning. Consequently, the focus of the induction programme has not delved into the decoloniality agenda. The institution has a single campus accommodating approximately 200 academic staff members and 14 700 students enrolled for a range of career-focused undergraduate programmes offered in 21 academic departments spread over three faculties, namely, the Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences, and Faculty of Engineering. The UoT is predominantly a science, engineering and technology (SET) university.



Figure 43 MUT Campus

General staff induction at MUT

Until 2014, academic induction did not exist at MUT. The only induction that existed was a general staff induction which was conducted by Human Resources and Development (HR&D) for all newly appointed employees. This HR&D induction focused on the introduction of key agents within the university and covered aspects

relating to institutional structures such as HR policies, missions and visions, etc. The MUT Induction Policy served as enabling structure as it mandated HR&D to conduct inductions for new staff members. Salau et al. (2014) argue that general staff induction exposes new employees to the history and the organisation of the institution as well as to the core values/activities, the competitors and their activities. While acknowledging the significant influence of the induction programme at our institution on staff attitude and behaviour, aspects of teaching and learning were overlooked. Given that MUT is an academic institution, one would have assumed that academic induction could be prioritised. Conceptually and contextually, the induction programme needed improvement because it was focused on general aspects to the exclusion of teaching and learning. As academic developers we argued that a more integrated approach was needed to infuse academic induction into the existing system, or alternatively to be set up as a separate process so that newly appointed academic staff members are inducted into the teaching and learning culture of the university. This omission remained a gap that needed addressing and closing this gap would introduce a new culture in the institution, i.e., a culture that would focus on both general staff induction and academic induction.

Contextual challenges with the existent general staff induction

The conceptualisation of the general staff induction that HR&D conducted did not consider the contextual realities of new academics who sometimes had never taught in a higher education setting before. Therefore, their knowledge was predominantly disciplined-based and needed to be inducted on academic aspects such as understanding higher education, teaching and learning pedagogies, curriculum, assessment, etc. The general staff induction lacked authenticity and legitimacy for these new academics. The generic staff induction only catered for certain groups such as administration staff and academic support staff. Consequently, it was not responsive to the needs of academics, particularly, new academics who are disciplinary experts or specialists but lack teaching pedagogical skills to deliver on their core mandate, which is teaching. It was apparent that there was a need to revisit the nature and the focus of that general staff induction so that it became inclusive of academic imperatives.

The evolution of academic induction

To transform the dominant culture where HR&D conducted general staff induction for all newly appointed employees, the TLDC exercised its agency by proposing an induction programme that would address the needs of academics in response to the training needs and assessment feedback of academics. To effect this change, the Academic Induction Charter was developed and approved by Senate in 2014. This charter became an enabling structure for transforming induction at the institution. It was used as an annexure/extension to the existing induction policy and

its purpose was to distinguish between the general staff induction that is facilitated by HR&D and the one offered by the TLDC. The term “academic induction” was adopted as an identifier. Consequently, a new culture emerged, i.e., MUT embraced two types of induction programmes, namely, general staff induction and academic induction, with the latter focusing predominantly on newly appointed teaching staff and mainly dealing with aspects concerning teaching and learning.

Implementation of academic induction (phase one)

In 2015, the first academic induction was introduced. The academic induction was conducted over one day, twice a year at the beginning of each semester. Its core objectives were to:

- i. Integrate newly appointed lecturers into MUT and its strategic plan;
- ii. Provide pertinent documentation and information on MUT policies and procedures related to its academic activities;
- iii. Orientate academics to the university and academic support services and units for enhancing teaching and learning practices, including educational technology;
- iv. Sensitise academics to their new roles and responsibilities to promote efficiency;
- v. Highlight the academic profession, i.e., contemporary learning and teaching practices and trends;
- vi. Introduce lecturers to the South African higher education landscape; and
- vii. Begin to capacitate lecturers with the skills and competencies necessary to ensure effective teaching and learning.

In an attempt to achieve these objectives, a one-day academic programme was conducted. Figure 44 presents the content of phase one of the academic programme.

Date: 24 February 2016 Venue: New Engineering Boardroom		
9H00 – 9H10	Opening and Introductions	Mr. Gumede
9H10 – 09H20	Welcome and introduction to TLDC mandate.	Dr. Makua
09H20 – 09H35	Presentation from Faculty of Engineering	Prof. Malinga
09H35 – 09H50	Presentation from Faculty of Natural Science	Prof. Small
09H50 – 10H05	Presentation from Faculty of Management Sciences	Ms. Lupaveni
10H05 – 10H20	Awareness of teaching and learning policies and promotion pathways through demonstrated teaching excellence at MUT	Prof. Small
10H20 – 10H40	Comfort break	
10H40 – 10H50	Professional development opportunities at MUT	Mr. Gumede
10H50 – 11H20	An awareness of the teaching and learning support available to students	Mr. Samkange
11H20 – 11H50	Enhancing teaching using Blackboard	Mr. Nyanda
11H50 – 12H20	Incorporating Blooms Taxonomy in teaching and assessment	Mr. Gumede
12H20 – 12H40	Engagement with learning technologies to enhance student learning	Dr. Jugoo
12H40 – 13H10	Lunch break	
13H10 – 13H20	MUT Academic Identity (focusing of graduate attributes)	Ms. Rodebe
13H20 – 13H40	Early identification of “at risk students” using HEDA	Ms. Ramrung
13H40 – 14H00	Quality assurance processes at MUT	Dr. Merkestein

Figure 44
Phase 1 of
academic
programme

As seen in the programme, the induction was structured in an information session fashion and lacked some critical aspects such as an opportunity for new academics to engage with the content presented. It further lacked a theoretical underpinning. The programme was rather too shallow and superficial to achieve its set objectives. Despite the identified gaps, we argue that it provided some aspects of teaching and learning that were valuable to academics. We also acknowledge that it provided an opportunity to source feedback from academics.

In order to transform from a culture which did not compel staff members to attend the induction, the academic induction was made compulsory for newly appointed academic staff as determined by the Induction Charter. According to the Academic Induction Charter (2017, p.1) "all new academic staff members are all teaching staff who join the institution for the first time (whether they have previously taught or not)". The rationale for such a definition was based on the fact that MUT attracts academic staff who are discipline specialists from industry. Most of these academic staff might not have a teaching or pedagogical background, hence a transformative discourse was vital to help capacitate those academics to teach effectively.

The philosophy behind academic induction is that academic staff are introduced to the university teaching culture so that they can begin to orientate themselves in a structured manner. In a differentiated educational system such as in South Africa, being an academic can be a daunting proposition for academics who have never taught or who have taught in a different setting such as a traditional university or a comprehensive university. We argue that teaching in an environment such as ours, that is, a university of technology, is different from the settings indicated above, given that a university of technology focuses on technical and practical aspects with less emphasis on pedagogical underpinnings. Academic induction is therefore designed to assist academic staff members with such a transition.

Implementation of academic induction (phase two)

Although there were clear core purposes to academic induction, feedback from academic staff members who attended the one-day academic induction indicated that time was limited to achieve these goals. To be responsive to feedback from participants, the approach had to change. In 2017, a new approach was introduced where the academic induction evolved from being a one-day session to a two-day-long programme, thus affording more interaction between the facilitators and inductees. Phase two of the academic induction is depicted in Figure 45.



Mangosuthu
University of Technology

2017 Academic Induction Programme

Date: 18 & 19 September 2017		
Venue: New Engineering Boardroom		
9H30 – 9H45	Welcome and the purpose of academic induction.	Dr Gumede
9H45 – 10H05	An awareness of the teaching and learning support available to students	Mr Samkange
10H05 – 10H30	Professional development opportunities at MUT	Dr Gumede
10H30 – 11H00	<i>Comfort break</i>	
11H00 – 12H30	Introduction to Higher Education	Dr Gumede
12H30 – 13H30	<i>Lunch break</i>	
13H30 – 15H00	Understanding MUT teaching and learning agenda	Dr Chiti
<i>Wrap-up for day One</i>		
DAY 2		
09H30 – 10H00	Community Engagement at MUT	Prof Nkonki-Mandieni
10H00 – 10H30	Research and innovation at MUT	Prof Shale
10H30 – 11H00	<i>Comfort break</i>	
11H00 – 12H00	Developing a shared understanding of curriculum at MUT	Dr Gumede
12H00 – 13H00	Using technology platforms in teaching and assessment	Mr Mgijima
13H00 – 13H45	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
13H45 – 14H15	Using Blackboard for teaching and assessment at MUT	Mr Nyondo/Mr Mhlongo
14H15 – 15H00	Teaching Portfolio Development	Ms Lekoa
15H00 – 15H30	Discussion of the academic induction framework	Dr Gumede

Figure 45 Phase 2 of academic programme

The programme transformed from being a show and tell to being more engaging and additionally infused pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning. It included aspects such as an introduction to higher education; understanding the MUT teaching and learning agenda, and developing a shared understanding of curriculum at MUT. While the academic induction was starting to address key aspects of teaching and learning, it however lacked theoretical underpinning.

In phase three the induction was better conceptualised as compared to phases one and two. The comparison between these phases is presented in Table 3 below (“Yes” indicates the presence while “No” indicates the absence a particular variable).

Variables	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Clear conceptual structure	No	No	Yes
Articulation of rationale of the academic induction	No	No	Yes
Articulation of the purpose of academic induction	No	Yes	Yes
One-day academic induction	Yes	No	No
Two-days academic induction	No	Yes	No
Six months academic induction	No	No	Yes
Wide range of teaching and learning topics (content)	No	No	Yes
Introduction of key Agents	No	No	Yes
Theorised academic induction	No	No	Yes
Submission of portfolio of evidence.	No	No	Yes

Table 3 Differences between the phases

This case study uses a combination of Archer’s (2000, 2003) social realism and NATHEP’s CRITicAL Framework to explain how new academics at our institution navigate enabling and constraining conditions in institutional, faculty, departmental and classroom contexts as they transition to academia. While the social realism framework identifies the interaction between structure, culture, and agency, the CRITicAL Framework provides principles and underlying mechanisms that influence these phenomena. Using both frameworks allowed us to interweave key properties, enabling us to reflect and analyse on our induction programme and processes. The frameworks complement each other as these theories lay the foundation of our academic induction programme structure. The rationale for adopting these frameworks was the need to develop a more theorised and customised academic induction.

To better understand and reflect on phase three of the induction, we used a multifaceted approach to gather and analyse data, i.e., autoethnographic approach; academic induction evaluations; and institutional documents reviews.

Although we considered gathering data as a way to improve our processes, we equally felt it was ethical for participants to be informed that data from the academic induction would also be used for the NATHEP collaborative project. Table 4 indicates the sources of data for this case study.

Autoethnographic approach	Academic induction evaluations	Institutional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflections by the two main authors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MUT Strategic Plan • MUT Policies, e.g., Induction Policy, MUT Academic Induction Charter, etc. • 2011 HEQC Audit Report • Teaching and Learning Framework

Table 4 Data sources for the MUT case study

Analysis and discussion of phase three academic induction

Having discussed the various phases of induction the institution went through over the years, we found it imperative to present a comprehensive discussion and analysis of phase three as it encapsulates key components of the reimagined programme. The academic induction is one of continuous professional development, one which encourages a balance between disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge. It is part of the transformational agenda to disrupt the previous culture of teaching and learning. Transforming the culture where disciplinary knowledge is valued more than pedagogical knowledge is contested in higher education and requires deep engagements. The section that follows is a deep dive into the intricacies of phase three of the academic induction.

Theorising phase three academic induction

As mentioned in an earlier section of this case study, until 2014, an academic induction did not exist at MUT. The only induction that existed was a general staff induction for all newly appointed employees. The 2011 HEQC audit had already identified the void caused by the absence of academic induction. This culture had to be changed by integrating academic induction. Phase 3 of the academic induction provided major reflections on the entire academic induction trajectory after its evolution from general academic induction to Phase 1, and to Phase 2. The figure below presents the evolution of academic induction at MUT.

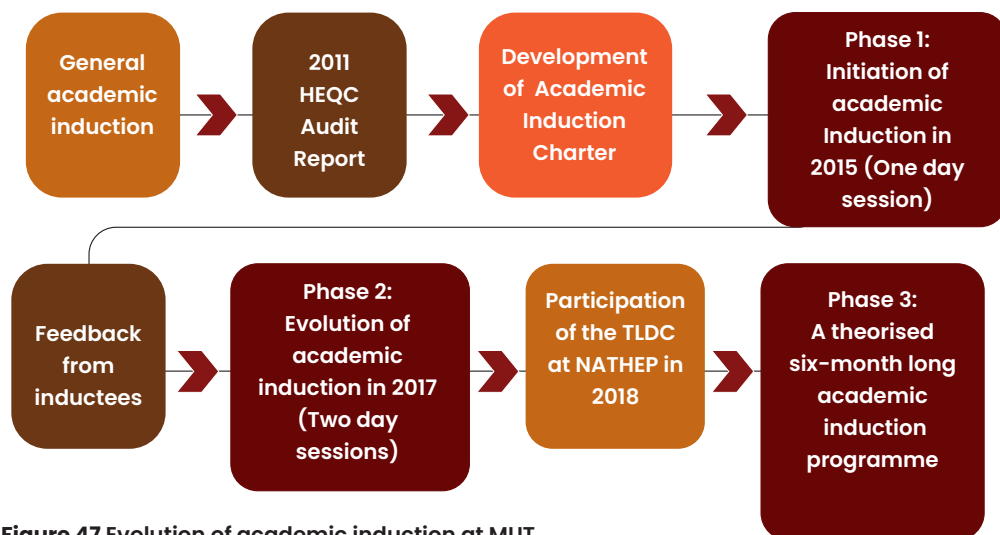


Figure 47 Evolution of academic induction at MUT

We decided to offer the programme as an ongoing process and not the previous model that focused merely on two days of intensive engagement. Engagement with NATHEP enabled us to critique and reflect on our programme and to reconceptualise it. We realised that a two-day induction session was too short to cover a wider scope of the aspects that relate to teaching and learning. Therefore, we had to first accept that the conceptualisation of our academic induction was flawed and there was a need to be critical of our own context where MUT is a UoT and does not offer teacher education programmes. Also, most academics who join MUT are industry experts and do not have teaching background due to MUT's focus on technical and vocational programmes. Offering a superficial academic programme defeated the objectives of the academic induction. New academics are likely to benefit more if the programme offers them basic pedagogical principles.

To enable us to analyse the conceptualisation of our academic induction programme to be relevant for our own context, we used Archer's social realism theory and the NATHEP CRITiCAL Framework. Both Archer's social realism theory and the CRITiCAL Framework provided a critical lens to analyse the conceptualisation of academic induction that is relevant to our own context. Hence, they assisted us to develop phase three of academic induction which was a six-month-long programme.

Archer's social realism theory

During data analysis of feedback from participants, we identified structures, cultures, and agents as enablers and constraints in the effective implementation

of academic induction. Table 5 identifies enabling and constraining factors to academic induction for the effective implementation of academic induction.

Enabling Factors To Academic Induction		
Structures	Culture	Key Agents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction Policy • Academic Induction Charter • University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) • TLDC • HR&D • Department of Higher Education and Training • NATHEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of general staff induction • Implementation of the two-day academic induction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR&D practitioners • Academic developers in the TLDC • DVC • Directors
Constraining Factors To Academic Induction		
Structures	Culture	Key Agents
	<p>The packed timetables Unpredictable schedules</p>	

Table 5 Enabling and constraining factors to academic induction

The presence of the Induction Policy with its purpose to introduce newly appointed employees to the MUT environment formed the basis for the development of the Academic Induction Charter, which focused on newly appointed academic staff members to assist them in fulfilling their teaching, research and community engagement obligations.

The Academic Induction Charter advocated that the revised academic induction be made compulsory and be linked with probation requirements. To improve from the two-day academic induction, the new programme was structured such that it starts with a three-day session, followed by monthly one-day sessions over a six-month period. This was a radical change from the previous academic induction programme. These sessions were to take place off-campus to promote maximum participation and to avoid distractions. During the six months, participants were introduced to key agents within the institution, institutional teaching and learning strategies, and learning management systems, among other things. The one-day

monthly sessions have a structured programme, covering topics such as teaching for learning, curriculum development, materials development, assessment and moderation, and evaluation of teaching and learning.

Due to the existence and influence of these internal structures towards academic induction, a certain way of inducting staff emerged. Firstly, it was the implementation of the general staff induction and later, the emergence of a one-day and a two-day academic induction. Essentially, these structures legitimised some forms of induction programme at MUT. Legitimation is an important element of NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework because it forms a foundation of a particular culture in an institution, in this case, the general induction and academic induction. Hence both the HR&D and the TLDC were able to facilitate induction programmes separately through HR&D Practitioners and the TLDC's academic developers. Both HR&D practitioners and the TLDC's academic developers exercised their agency to inculcate a culture of staff induction in an institution where no induction was previously conducted. The DVC and directors from various departments were invited to present during the induction, thus playing a critical role in enlightening new academic staff of their roles and how that can assist or enable their work.

Over and above the internal structures, the external structures, i.e., DHET that funded the academic induction via its funding mechanism, the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), enabled the academic developers to fulfil the intentions of the Academic Induction Charter. The establishment of NATHEP became instrumental in influencing the type of academic induction MUT offers as it influenced the development of an academic induction which is theorised.

On the other hand, there were constraining factors that hindered the implementation of the academic induction. We identified two constraining factors, namely:

- The packed timetables for the academics became a stumbling block for their attendance at induction sessions. The packed timetables suggest that the university values and legitimizes teaching as a priority. This has a potential to disadvantage academics from attending capacity development initiatives such as academic induction.
 - Unpredictable schedules for key agents have made it difficult for academics to honour academic induction. Consequently, inductees miss the opportunity to engage with such key agents. The implementation of academic induction depends heavily on the effectiveness of the following agents: line managers, the deans, heads of departments, the new academic staff members, and the implementers of the academic induction within the TLDC. These agents are drivers that influence the culture that the induction adopts.
-

NATHEP's CRITicAl Framework

It is without a doubt that the NATHEPs CRITicAl Framework provided us with the tools to zoom in beyond social realism theory, where we focused on the identification of structure, culture and agency that enables or constrain the implementation of our academic induction. We further used the CRITicAl Framework to analyse underlying mechanisms influencing the academic induction through focusing on the following principles: conceptual, critical, and contextual, responsive, reflexive, rational, re-centred and relevant, theorised praxis, authentic and legitimate. In Table 6 the aspects of the CRITicAl Framework that we used to analyse phase three of the academic induction are indicated.

Critical, Conceptual & Contextual	Responsive, reflexive, rational, re-centre & relevant	Theorised praxis	Legitimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Technology • Academic induction • Duration of the induction programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction • Feedback from induction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of key agents • Higher education topics • Pedagogies of engagement • Introduction of Portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theorised academic induction

Table 6 NATHEP's CRITicAl Framework

Critical, conceptual and contextual

Participating in NATHEP made us critical about our own context and the conceptualisation of our academic induction at MUT. We noticed that the phase two induction was too short to cover most of the higher education content to capacitate inductees who had just joined a university of technology (UoT). As indicated earlier, UoTs focus on technical and vocational programme as compared to teacher education. Indeed, MUT does not offer teacher education, hence the need to reconceptualise and modify the academic induction, which made it evolve from phase two to phase three.

Responsive, reflexive, rational, recentred and relevant

During the induction programme, participants were asked to evaluate the programme and provide feedback on the academic induction programme. On completion of this six months programme, participants were required to produce a reflective portfolio of evidence which was assessed by the facilitators. Both the evaluation reports and the reflective portfolio of evidence were used to evaluate/measure the outcomes of the academic induction. Thereafter the TLDC issued certificates of completion as a fulfilment of the programme. Considering that certificates were not issued in the initial one-day induction programme, the issuing of the certificate of completion could be used as proof to confirm probation. The previous academic induction programme did not provide opportunities for the necessary support to newly appointed academics; hence the academic induction programme was changed to allow for support and scaffolding opportunities. In so doing, it showed how responsive and reflexive the facilitators could be to ensure that the academic induction is recentered and relevant for its purpose.

Theorised praxis

For the phase three academic induction, the assumption is that academics coming to the induction programme bring valuable knowledge that needs to be contextualised to achieve the mission and vision of the institution. Drawing from the multiple knowledges that academics bring to the academic induction helped to enrich the engagements. During the introduction, academics were given an opportunity to share their experiences and trajectories in higher education and to reflect on how they will contribute to the university's strategies. Participation in the NATHEP invoked facilitators to rethink the way in which phase three academic induction had been conducted.

Considering that the initial induction programme used presentation methods as the main mode of delivery, a reconfigured academic induction was inevitable to address the issue of a non-theorised academic induction. The reconfigured induction adopted new pedagogical approaches, i.e., pedagogies for engagement. The two pedagogies of engagement adopted were the pedagogy for knowledge generation and pedagogy for being and becoming. These pedagogies were adopted due to the recognition that the inductees brought both teaching experiences from other institutions of higher learning and/or industrial experience. Their experiences ranged from three to ten years in university teaching. Due to such experience, academic induction took an intentional approach of drawing and learning from the experiences of the participants. Therefore, facilitators built from the previous experiences and knowledge of the academics. This made academic induction exciting for both inductees and facilitators. The inductees were provided with an opportunity to share their trajectories towards becoming lecturers, and

they shared what they were hoping to achieve through the induction and through being academics.

In the pedagogy for knowledge generation, participants were provided with an opportunity to discuss and share their knowledge on a particular topic, e.g., assessment or teaching strategies. Such an opportunity allowed for the co-creation of knowledge between the facilitators and inductees. During the sessions, participants embarked on knowledge café sessions to generate knowledge about a subject matter or task given. One of the inductees in each group served as an anchor. The role of the anchor was to facilitate and collate information during sessions and report to the entire group. The co-creation of knowledge presented an opportunity to engage, critique, and reflect on the knowledge created during the sessions. The main objective was to legitimise the knowledge generation pedagogy as one of the teaching strategies at MUT. Figure 48 depicts the knowledge generation exercise during the induction sessions.



Figure 48 Knowledge generation during induction sessions

In the pedagogy for being and becoming, inductees were afforded an opportunity to submit an academic induction portfolio where they reflected and shared their trajectories leading them to becoming academics at MUT, the lessons learnt during the induction programme, and their aspiration as academics. Setting personal goals is imperative because it provides a sense of direction for an individual. Such a sense of direction becomes a drive to propel the individual to achieve set goals. The personal goals of the inductees attributed immensely towards setting teaching statements for the academics. Some of the goals are presented in Table 7, and are categorised into short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

Short term goals	Medium-term goals	Long-term goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expand knowledge of teaching and learning • expand understanding of higher education environment • to be assisted in conceptualising PhD studies within higher education • learn to develop a professional portfolio of evidence • learn online teaching and learning approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide access and academic support to students, academic and non-academic staff pursuing higher degrees, journal publications and rankings • seek new ways of engaging mobile learning in the classroom as a way to engage with students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide students with the best possible education experience • understand students they were teaching • develop and implement evidence-informed pedagogical practices which would lead to improved learning • equip students with skills that will ensure that they are able to find jobs in their fields of technical skill • seek and implement the evidence-informed pedagogical practice.

Table 7 Participants' goals

Legitimate

The purpose of changing from phase two to phase three of the academic induction was to provide an opportunity for academics to be capacitated on various aspects that characterised the higher education sector. These aspects include topics such as higher education context, learning and teaching, curriculum development, assessment and quality, specifically concerning the national context of higher education and the institutional context of the MUT. The inclusion of these aspects postulated that the academic induction being offered at MUT is contextualised and theorised to achieve specific objectives for academics in a UoT. By so doing, the academics started to appreciate the value of phase three academic induction.

Impact of COVID-19

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 undermined teaching and learning strategies in higher education. The pandemic forced the entire higher education sector to reconsider how things are done and it was never going to be business as usual. Inevitably, with the advent of remote and multimodal teaching, learning and assessment approaches adopted by universities during COVID-19, MUT witnessed accelerated changes in teaching and learning practices as well as staff

engagement strategies. Likewise, the ravaging impact of COVID-19 was felt in our own context where the modality of the academic induction had to change.

The conceptualisation for phase three academic induction was based on face-to-face engagements which were underpinned by the pedagogy of engagement. Unfortunately, the modality of the academic induction had to change to adapt to the new normal because of COVID-19. To adapt to this new normal, we migrated to online academic induction. To the detriment of the phase three academic induction, both the facilitators and inductees could not hold on to the pedagogy of engagement because some sessions were then conducted in an asynchronised model. Hence this resulted in poor attendance of the academic induction. At the time of writing, MUT is reflecting on the best strategy to deal with such a downward spiral experience.

The general induction programme at MUT did not legitimise academic induction, and as a result it disadvantaged new academics. This omission created a void that needed to be addressed. The advent of an academic induction programme has played a critical role in capacitating the academic staff who transition to MUT. Although there were constraining structures during the development and implementation of the academic induction programme, the enabling structures outweighed the latter. Hence the induction programme evolved from being a general induction for all newly appointed staff to a one-day academic induction programme (phase one) which focused on academic staff only. The academic programme coordinators reflected and became reflexive to the evaluations. The evaluation that was conducted at the end of the programme revealed that it was shallow to address the objectives of academic programme.

A second day (phase two) was added, and the academic programme evolved to two days. The addition of the second day provided space for engagement between facilitators and inductees and offered space to address the objectives of the academic programme. While phase two of academic induction addresses the set objectives, participation in NATHEP revealed a gap in our academic induction programme since it was not guided by any theoretical framework/s. Once again, the academic induction programme evolved (phase three) to become a six-month programme, twice a year to ensure that the theoretical framework/s was infused. It is worth noting that the content of the programme in all three phases kept on changing to meet the purpose of academic induction.

Conclusion

There were many lessons learnt during the development and implementation of the academic induction programme. The evolution of academic induction from phase one to phase three bears testimony to some lessons learnt and the need

to be relevant in the delivery of academic development projects. MUT's academic induction uses a combination of Archer's (2000, 2003) social realism, and NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework to guide its academic induction currently. Over and above structural factors, the COVID-19 pandemic imposed an unexpected challenge, which we also had to unravel. We acknowledge these challenges and lessons and endeavour to reflect on them so that we continue to improve the current academic induction programme at MUT.

CHAPTER NINE

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

NELSON  MANDELA
UNIVERSITY



Navigating Our Induction Journey at Nelson Mandela University: Rowing Downstream Alongside Others

Anne-Mart Olsen, Champ Champion-Ntamo and Kasturi Behari-Leak

Introduction

This case study shares two academic developers' process of interrogating, reconceptualising and expanding an academic induction programme at a multicampus, comprehensive university, through our engagement with the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP). We use social realism as an analytical tool in sharing our journey, using the concepts of culture, structure, and agency to critique and reflect on the enhancement of our programme. We adopted conceptual metaphor theory (Li, Li & Zhang, 2017, p.489) to visualise our data and "to analyse and comprehend information efficiently by mapping relationships between visual stimuli and semantic meanings metaphorically" as illustrated by the river of life metaphor in Figure 49.

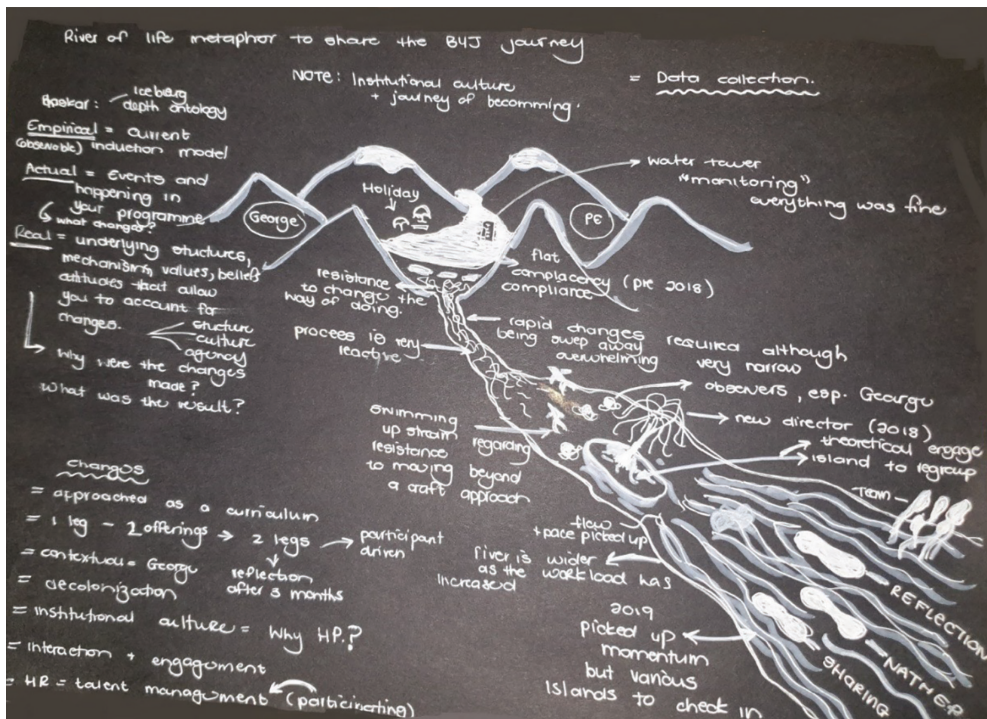


Figure 49 River of life metaphor of Nelson Mandela University's academic induction programme

The river of life metaphor demonstrates our journey from the placid safety behind the dam wall, to navigating rapids and swimming upstream while continuously growing the induction programme toward a tributary with the hope that it continues its journey into the broader higher education (HE) context. The data represented by the metaphor includes the institutional context, the induction programme offerings (2013 to 2021), our own reflections on the programme's various iterations, associated feedback, and the reflections of the induction team, in addition we include our professional growth and development journey. We illustrate how the CRITicAL Framework for the NATHEP curriculum (Behari-Leak, Ganas, Chitanand, Sabata & Toni, 2020) was applied to enable critical reflection on our context, assumptions, and practices. The study also shares the experiences gained from the COVID-19 pandemic before we conclude by highlighting implications of NATHEP on our own practice and the changes it brought to our induction programme.

Working across multiple islands: our institutional context

Nelson Mandela University (Mandela Uni) is a comprehensive, multicampus university, merged in response to the call to redress the inequitable legacies prevalent in the South African HE context post-1994. Nel (2007, p.2) states that "most merged, multicampus universities in South Africa comprise campuses that have historically not enjoyed quality equivalence in terms of the infrastructure, support services and facilities that have been available" and Mandela Uni is no different. In 2005, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) was established by merging two historically white institutions of the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE), which had three campuses in Gqeberha (two were situated in Summerstrand and one in Central) and the Port Elizabeth Technikon (PET), which had campuses in George and Summerstrand, Gqeberha, and the Vista campus, a historically black university located on the periphery of the city, and known as Missionvale campus. Following the merger the Ocean Science campus in Summerstrand was added, resulting in four campuses being clustered in Summerstrand, one in Bird Street, Central, another in Missionvale (formerly known as Vista) and finally, our George campus. The distribution of our Gqeberha campuses is illustrated in Figure 50 and regular shuttles support travel between these campuses. Our George campus is approximately 400 kilometres away from our Summerstrand campuses and our seven faculties are distributed across our various campuses, with some faculties being spread over more than one campus.

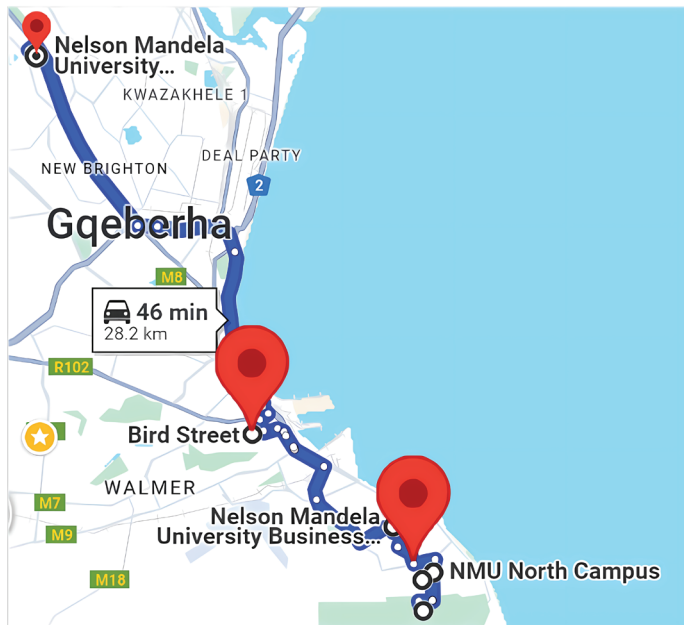


Figure 50 The location of Mandela Uni's six Gqeberha campuses

Although the institution can be defined as "... the grouping of individual campuses under a common framework of governance" (Lee & Bowen, 1971, p.1), there have been indications of the presence of power imbalances in some processes, which needed to be recentred. One such example was the offering of the biannual academic induction programmes on the centralised Summerstrand North campus in Gqeberha, which necessitated that our George campus colleagues travel to Gqeberha to participate in this professional development opportunity (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2018, p.28). The decision to host the induction programme on the North campus was two-fold: firstly, our unit is based on North campus, with dedicated resources and infrastructure allocated to teaching development initiatives, and secondly, it is more centrally located in relation to the Gqeberha campuses and the offices of key institutional agents that are included on the programme.

However, this perpetuated the remnants of a fragmented "us" and "them" discourse that remained after the merger. This is noted in the Higher Education Merger Study Group's (HEMSG) report (2008) and the more recent vice-chancellor (VC) listening campaign (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2018) indicating that the George campus remains isolated from the more centralised Gqeberha campuses. This became a pivotal consideration during the reconceptualisation of our induction programme.

Not always plain sailing: revisiting the academic induction programmes (2012–2019)

The academic induction, which was offered by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Media (CTLM) was often conflated with the Human Resources Development's (HRD) staff induction programme. We would often be asked to elucidate which offering was more important or relevant. The dominant discourse entrenched in that question was initially lost on us and instead of recognising it as a potential discourse, foregrounding how teaching and learning was valued at our institution, we dismissed it as an irritation. In retrospect the question highlighted the need to revisit the programme's purpose to deliberately link it to teaching and learning. During 2012 we managed to negotiate a "stand-alone" induction programme that was not conflated with the HRD. Consequently, we had to generate a new name that resonated with an induction that was specific to teaching and learning.

Teaching and Learning @ NMMU: An Introduction

In November 2012 we revisited the induction programme and established the "Teaching and Learning @ NMMU: An Introduction" programme, implying that it was positioned as an introduction to other academic development (AD) programmes. The programme was full of back-to-back sessions in which academic developers and learning development colleagues were presenting or introducing their teaching and learning development initiatives (see Figure 51 opposite for an example of the programme).

Figure 51 Teaching and Learning @ NMMU: An Introduction (first offering programme)

CTLM




Teaching and Learning @ NMMU for new academics

Monday 6 – Wednesday 8 February 2012 • M218 North Campus

Monday 6 February

Time	Theme	Topic	Facilitator/s
08:30 – 09:15	Getting to know each other.	Registration and introductions	Ms AM Olsen
09:15 – 09:30		Opening and Welcome	Mr L Bezuidenhout
09:30 – 10:30	Dean Teaching & Learning	Teaching and Learning @ NMMU	Prof Cheryl Foxcroft
10:30 – 11:00	Tea		
11:00 – 12:00	Getting scholarly about teaching and learning	What is SoTL and how do we engage in research at NMMU?	Dr M Skead & Dr B Pretorius
12:00 – 13:00		SoTLC success stories	Dr M Skead, MS L Ndimurwimo, Mr L Cowley & Ms S Tessendorf
13:00 – 13:30	Lunch		
13:30 – 14:00	How do we know that we are	Assessment @ NMMU	Dr M Skead
14:00 – 14:45	teaching and our students are	Portfolio development	Ms E Champion
14:45 – 15:15	learning?	Evaluating teaching and courses	Ms AM Olsen
15:15	Closure		Ms AM Olsen

Tuesday 7 February

Time	Theme	Topic	Facilitator/s
08:30 – 10:00	Address by the NMMU Vice Chancellor		Prof Derrick Swartz
10:00 – 10:30	Did you know?	Making NMMU visible	Dr Sarie Snyders and ASD
10:30 – 11:00	Tea		
11:00 – 12:15	Student Success	Together we can!	Dr Sarie Snyders and ASD
12:15 – 13:00		Student Counselling, Career & Development Services	Dr M Ntanjana
13:00 – 13:30	Lunch		
13:30 – 14:15	Student Success	Centre for Access Assessment and Research (CAAR)	Ms B Seymour
14:15 – 14:40		Switched on teaching	Mr Paul Harper
14:40 – 15:10	How do we teach in Higher Education?	Interactive activity on teaching practices	Ms AM Olsen
15:10	Closure		Ms AM Olsen

Wednesday 8 February

Time	Theme	Topic	Facilitator/s
08:30 – 09:30	Address by the NMMU Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic		Prof Plet Naudé
09:30 – 10:30	How do we teach in Higher Education?	Sharing of Higher Education teaching practices	Ms AM Olsen Ms E Champion Dr Sarie Snyders
10:30 – 11:00	Tea		
11:00 – 13:00	Are you a language teacher?	Writing in the disciplines.	Ms A Knott, Ms L Mostert, Mrs S Lamb & Ms M Fouché
13:00 – 13:30	Lunch		
13:30 – 15:00	Lecturer in a blender	Blended Learning @ NMMU	Dr H Johannes & Mr S Goldstone
15:00	Closure	Evaluation of programme	Ms AM Olsen

The programme content included whatever information we thought would be needed by the newly appointed academics at the time they started teaching at NMMU. The aim of the introduction of the teaching development presentations was for the initial engagement on the programme to continue through articulation to other AD programmes. Academics were therefore required to sign a memorandum of agreement, committing to engage with future AD initiatives.

Although this approach seemed appropriate at the time, we found ourselves interrogating the structure and the perceived value, in terms of the relevance, authenticity, and legitimacy this approach lent to our programme. We also questioned whether it was necessary to place ourselves in this position of power, holding academics accountable in this manner. Although the programme was well received and supported by academic staff, the passive approach required participants to merely acclimatise to the context and to assimilate information, which often led to cognitive overload (Kirsh, 2000). When evaluating the programme, the feedback indicated that the two-day programme was content heavy, exhausting and overwhelming.

In response to the feedback, we developed a needs analysis (NA) questionnaire to identify key developmental areas that participants felt they needed to develop as HE teachers. The NA highlighted similar needs across all seven campuses, these focussed on aspects such as managing large classes, technology-enhanced learning, assessment practices and university resources that support the academic project. Based on the results obtained, the programme was extended from two to three days to include topics which were responsive to the challenges the participants identified in their own practice. However, we still included all the previous topics offered, as each presenter was adamant to “protect their territory”, which was possibly linked to the perception that specific fields, knowledges, or expertise were only valued if included. Additionally, our “non-academic status” as academic developers in an academic space was a challenge which perpetuated underlying power struggles. These struggles constrained our agency and each of us vied for the opportunity to “showcase” our meaningful contributions to the academic space to a “captive” audience. Consequently, the programme remained rather generic, content heavy and overwhelming, as we continued to “speak at” academics, punctuating our points with “death by PowerPoint”.

Additional reflection highlighted the need to formally articulate the programme purpose, which was to share services offered by the CTLM and other institutional structures. The target audience was expanded to all newly appointed academic staff, which included contract, full-time and part-time staff, and student teaching assistants. Although the programme remained voluntary it was well supported and newly appointed academics were referred by heads of departments (HODs), colleagues and HRD, which lent the programme some legitimacy, even though it

remained as the introduction to another programme.

From 2013–2016, induction was expanded to include key agents from various teaching and learning structures, such as student wellness, the learning development unit, the examination office, and the disability unit. The dean and DVC Learning and Teaching (DVC:LT) were also invited to contribute to the programme. However, the inclusion of other departments and presenters without a brief was a constraint, as presenters would sometimes contradict what we espoused, effectively undermining the authenticity and legitimacy of the programme. Going forward, we mitigated this constraint by including a brief in our invitation to guide the presenter on the purpose of their contribution within the framework and ethos of the induction programme.

Due to the programme's positive reputation and continued academic engagement, conditions were created for us to exercise our agency to reconceptualise induction from merely raising awareness to preparing academics for the classroom. However, the academics were still only inculcated in the institutional teaching and learning structures, and not the espoused teaching and learning culture.

At this stage, induction was still only offered in Gqeberha and academics from the George campus were still required to travel to participate, even though the programme was not contextualised or entirely relevant to the specific campus. This was particularly evidenced by the programme only including information from support services localised in Gqeberha, not approaching presenters from the George campus centres and units, and not including operational guidance around how certain aspects, such as the evaluation of teaching and courses, are operationalised. In addition, we could not confidently speak to certain processes as there was not a dedicated academic developer on the George campus. This highlighted the disparity between the Gqeberha and George campuses. Additionally, participants travelling from our George campus did not see themselves and their campus reflected in our programme.

Although we espoused an inclusive and collaborative approach, we did not consider how we were perpetuating the perceived inequalities and the “us and them” culture between the Gqeberha and George campuses. As such our actions unwittingly perpetuated the status quo instead of enabling a genuine commitment towards enhanced practice and change (Behari-Leak et al., 2020, p.115).

Beginning Your Journey at Nelson Mandela University

In November 2017, an opportunity to reimagine the programme emerged during the organisational redesign that followed the rebranding from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to Nelson Mandela University. CTLM changed

to the Teaching Development (TD) unit under the umbrella of the Learning and Teaching Collaborative (LT Collab). The restructure enabled the development of collaborative partnerships through purposefully clustering units and departments together, effectively breaking down previous silos. TD was clustered with Learning Development, Digital Learning and Design, Student Wellness, Academic Planning and Quality Advancement. Our induction programme was also re-imagined as Beginning your Journey (BYJ) at Nelson Mandela Uni, affectionately known as BYJ @ Mandela Uni or just BYJ. It was a more “hands on” programme, underpinned by the collaborative approach to learning and teaching espoused by the LT Collab. Furthermore, the programme was envisioned as a vehicle to provide academics with the necessary “tools” to “function” in the classroom. The imagining process was met with some resistance, and it felt like we were swimming upstream as we found ourselves trying to reconcile our own conceptualisation of the programme with institutional demand and the participants’ needs.

Unfortunately, we still adopted a rather technicist approach, which was reactive, and we did not engage with the relevant theoretical underpinnings required to inform our practice. However, this changed in 2018 when Dr Toni, one of the NATHEP SC (SC) members, was appointed as the TD’s new director. She encouraged us to engage more deliberately with the theories that underpin teaching and learning and to translate these into our practices and engagement with academics. Dr Toni created an enabling space, or a proverbial island, for us to regroup and engage with the relevant theories associated with induction programmes. We developed as a team, and we grew together, enabling us to critically reflect on our assumptions, especially those around the George campus. Our reflective process was particularly informed by our TD colleague that was appointed on the George campus. The post was developed during the organisational redesign and informed by the fact that we did not have a footprint in George. Prior to the redesign there was not a dedicated academic developer on the George campus and members of the TD team occasionally travelled to George to offer condensed AD workshops based on our availability and the perceived need.

As part of our reflection and based on the feedback received from our TD colleague in George, we realised that although “changes in the relevant structures can contribute to changes in the culture of an institution” (Quinn, 2012, p.36), our structures became “relatively enduring” (Case, 2013, p.31), as highlighted by the lack of belonging experienced by our George academics (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2018). Our insistence that the academics from George travel to Gqeberha, instead of collaborating with our TD colleagues in George to present the programme on their home campus, emphasised our perceived position of power on the more centralised campus, inadvertently perpetuating the feeling of marginality.

This perceived power imbalance, combined with our technicist approach, prompted

Dr Toni to invite us to join NATHEP. When we joined, we were confronted with the realisation that certain systemic social-political inequalities are still prevalent in our context. It was clear that it was necessary to reconceptualise and respond to how, and where, the induction programme is offered to enable inclusivity and belonging instead of perpetuating the discourses of alienation, discrimination, and stereotyping highlighted by our colleagues. We also identified strategies to theorise our programme, which enabled us to evolve the programme dynamically and so, we embarked on a reflective journey of becoming (Barnett, 2009) alongside our academic colleagues.

New wind in our sails: applying our learning from NATHEP to BYJ

Active engagement with the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework provided us with tools to reflect on, and then critique our BYJ programme, in order to reconceptualise and recontextualise it. Firstly, through the interrogation of the theoretical underpinnings of the programme informing our institutional culture; followed by the structure of the programme, including the lack of a contextualised offering for the George campus; and finally, deliberately focussing on the relational aspects of the programme, such as the purpose, content, and presentation of BYJ and the goal to develop corporate agency as academic developers and academics alike.

When engaging with the substantive theory presented during NATHEP it became apparent that we often focused on what was on the surface and as coordinators, we realised that we needed to focus on aspects of our programme which were not observable and to identify and reflect on the causal mechanisms that inform our understandings. To achieve this, we applied social realism as an analytical tool to explore the structures and cultures that form our reality and how we may develop our identities as academic developers, as well as the relevant powers and properties to navigate our context as corporate agents. We applied the NATHEP CRITicAL Framework to our case study, as a tool to reflect on and critique key “realist questions: what works, for who, in what context and why?” (Behari-Leak et al., 2020, p.112). As such, we were able to maintain reflexivity throughout our journey, pressing us to acknowledge and critique assumptions of our academic induction programme, enabling meaningful change within our context.

The contextual aspect of the framework further highlighted that we are inadvertently constraining our George campus colleagues’ ability to develop a sense of belonging to the broader institutional context, as “[r]elationality is evident in the interplay between Identity (who we are), Belonging (our sense of community) and Becoming-with (our co-existence)” (Behari-Leak et al., 2020, p.124). We identified the need to commit to using the agency we developed on NATHEP through theorised praxis to revisit and adapt our practices, regarding professional development, to change the perceived culture of isolation and the “othering” prevalent on the George

campus. As such we identified the need to develop a shared understanding of the culture that underpins the practices on the campus and reframe our programme accordingly, while still meeting the purpose of the programme.

During our engagement on NATHEP we proceeded to analyse the George campus context, identifying how institutional structures may lead to a sense of “othering”. We also noted the difference in culture, as this campus had a strong focus on “green economy” and sustainability, as it was “situated in a pristine natural environment at the foot of the Outeniqua Mountain range which not only lends itself to being a ‘natural laboratory’ but offers students an escape from the hustle and bustle of city living” (NMU, 2021). This indicated that both the academics and student experience is significantly different in George; the classes are smaller, enabling academics to build a relationship with students. In addition, the campus had a strong research identity and there was a keen sense of community and collegiality among staff and students alike. The newly appointed academics who participated in the induction programme did not gain the full value from being inducted into their context. It became apparent that induction was not responsive or relevant to our George colleagues’ lived experience. Additionally, there were fewer new participants from the George campus, which inadvertently led to these participants still feeling marginalised, which did not enact the mutual vulnerability espoused by the institutional teaching and learning approach and it further limited opportunities for participants from George to connect with other colleagues.

Secondly, as we reflected on the overwhelming programme, we realised that, while we took pride in engaging with participant feedback, our evaluations were focusing on the “nuts and bolts” of the programme rather than the actual design. We were also overly focussed on the content we wanted to cover and completely overlooked what the programme purpose and desired outcomes should be. We then formulated the programme purpose to be “to empower academics along their teaching and learning journey, from classroom preparation, to delivery, to evaluation and, finally, to reflection to enable their own, and their students’, success at Nelson Mandela University”. The programme outcomes were also formulated so as to: (i) identify that teaching and learning is not a commonsense practice; (ii) enable conducive teaching and learning spaces for students; (iii) identify and engage in teaching, learning and research opportunities at Nelson Mandela University; and (iv) explore opportunities for collaboration across departments.

During NATHEP we were also encouraged to critique the need for adopting a humanising pedagogy in our induction, particularly in the South African HE context. We realised that we needed to understand what it means for an institution to have a pedagogical underpinning, instead of merely including it because it forms part of our institutional learning and teaching culture. We engaged the entire BYJ team, and we soon realised that we had significantly different interpretations of the

pedagogy, which were influenced by our backgrounds, cultures and experiences. As these elements influenced our conceptions and dominant discourses linked to our individual teaching and learning philosophies, underpinning how each of us engaged with participants on the BYJ programme, we realised that we needed to develop a shared understanding of the pedagogy. As a team we critically reflected on our choices regarding what knowledge we legitimised during our programme and how our own practices and engagement highlight our own dominant discourses. Moreover, our engagement with the humanising pedagogy framework empowered us to model the institutional teaching and learning culture by implementing the framework in our own practices. The multilayered framework focusses on the cultural dimensions that influence the engagement and the “interactional relationship” between teacher, student, and discipline (Zinn, Geduld, Delport & Jordaan, 2014, p.108). Although the framework provided the BYJ team with the tools to enact the espoused teaching and learning culture of Mandela Uni, participants indicated that they felt intimidated by the expectations this philosophy placed on them. Following our interrogation of the humanising pedagogy, we proceeded to revisit our programme structure more deliberately, conceptualising the programme as a curriculum aligned to our institutional culture and programme purpose. We identified that we needed to develop the curriculum in a way that encouraged academics to move beyond a craft knowledge of teaching towards a more comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning, which emphasised the application and sharing of knowledge (Scott, Yeld & Hendry, 2007,).

We rearticulated the purpose of BYJ to focus on providing participants with the opportunity to interrogate their roles and to develop an academic identity and communities of practice within our institutional context. We were, however, aware that this approach may not be well received, as there were consistent requests to rather provide participants with tricks, tools, and skills, instead of what Sioux McKenna describes as “a theorised space for interrogating what it is to be an academic” (McKenna, 2012, p.15) at Nelson Mandela Uni. We therefore wanted to include a balance between theory and practice while enabling the development of a teaching identity among our participants. Taylor (1999) suggests that “there are three levels at which academic identity is constructed, one linked to the site of work, the second through reference to the person’s discipline, the third is a universal construction of what it means to be an academic” (in D’Andrea & Gosling, 2005, p.59). In contrast, we were only aiming to inculcate newly appointed academics into the current institutional culture at Gqeberha and to empower them to navigate this space more confidently. This highlighted the need to include an emphasis on the development of an institutional and teaching identity. This is also why it was imperative to have a contextualised programme for the George campus, enabling the development of a uniquely contextualised academic identity.

Taking this all into consideration we approached BYJ as a programme that needed

a carefully selected, sequenced, and paced curriculum (Bernstein) using Lockett's proposal for an epistemically diverse curriculum (Lockett, 2001), as the underpinning framework. Lockett (2001) identifies four ways of knowing and learning: "traditional cognitive learning of propositional knowledge, learning by doing for the application of disciplinary knowledge, learning experientially, and developing epistemic cognition so to be able to think reflexively and contextually about one's learning" (Lockett, 2001, p.49). Lockett suggests that these four ways of knowing and learning may be integrated into the curriculum, along with the transferable and non-transferable skills that form part of the higher education curriculum to develop students as "doers" and "knowers" with a flexible and adaptable skills set (Lockett, 2001, p.52). BYJ endeavoured to facilitate "critical epistemic shifts" (Lockett, 2001, p.56) to provide participants with the space to engage with the propositional and practical knowledge associated with teaching and learning, while developing the foundational and practical competencies (Lockett, 2001), required to teach in HE.

We developed the academic induction as a stand-alone programme that was augmented by other teaching development initiatives and programmes instead of merely an introduction to another programme. The expectation was that the collaboration among the teaching development programmes would develop experiential knowledge (personal competencies) and epistemic knowledge (reflexive competencies) (Lockett, 2001) throughout the academic year. We also realised that we needed to purposefully include opportunities for participants to engage and reflect on the knowledge and competencies included on the programme and to engage with the HE context. As a result, the session on "The reflective higher education teacher" was changed from merely raising awareness to an engaging session focussed on reflective practice. The facilitator of the session introduced the participants to Brookfield's four lenses and asked them to reflect on the lens(es) that they are familiar with, focussing specifically on how the evaluations were implemented and how they experienced the process. She then got to know which lenses were commonly used, which ones were not used, and explained the importance of using all four lenses, namely students, theory, peers and self-evaluations.

All our planning to this point has been collaborative and included our AD colleagues on the George campus to enable a sharing of the knowledge and values developed on our NATHEP journey. We also collaboratively recontextualised BYJ for the George campus, offering it for the first time in 2019. The programme was reconceptualised to address the various challenges associated with a multicampus institution by conceptualising, developing, and offering a contextualised programme for the George Campus. Some of the challenges included the engagements incorporated into the programme, creating the perception of a standardised learning and teaching approach between the "big" Gqeberha campuses and the "small" George campus with different resources and cultures, based on the geographic location

and the size of the campus. In response to that feedback, some sessions where academics have to engage with university leadership were offered online, while the rest were face-to-face, facilitated on the George campus itself.

Navigating down river: implementing the reconceptualised

BYJ Programme

BYJ remained a biannual programme, but we extended the programme to include two legs per offering, representing a journey rather than a single engagement. The first offering commenced in January with the first leg, which was two and a half days long and the second leg of two days commenced in March. A second offering takes place in the second semester in July and September.

Aiming towards a more facilitative approach, we developed a resource guide for the programme and adopted a blended approach, modelling various technology-enhanced teaching and learning strategies through using online tools such as backchanneling, Mentimeter, Jamboard, videos, quizzes and submissions using Moodle. Adopting a flipped classroom approach, enabled by the inclusion of online aspects, enabled the development of a more scaffolded offering. In addition, a problem-based approach was adopted where participants were required to do independent exploration of resources. They were also given tasks to do and submit online, which includes engagement with institutional resources and departments to gain information. For example, they would be expected to check for their timetable, class sizes and demographics. There were some facilitators who would give participants some readings and tasks to do in preparation for their sessions. Participants were sometimes expected to submit tasks that were not completed during the day, and each day was started with a reflection on the previous day's sessions.

In order to encourage the continuation of reflexive processes we introduced a reflective journal as a completion requirement to purposefully guide participants from engaging with the theory, to applying it in their classrooms, evaluating their teaching and students' learning and reflecting on their teaching. We guided participants through each journal entry, linking future entries to developing an identity as a HE teacher within their specific discipline.

The first leg of BYJ

During the first leg of BYJ, we focus on the learning and teaching culture of Mandela Uni, and on ways of being and doing, which is contextualised to the institution and the campuses discussed. There is a strong focus on our participants' needs and their identity within our institutional context, which is why we recentred (Behari-

Leak et al., 2020, p.113) BYJ to respond to the university’s mission of being “a dynamic African University” (NMU, 2021) by including an African “flavour” to the programme. For this reason, we open the programme by requesting academic developers and participants to bring an artefact that represents who they are, and their identities. The notion of an artefact is an African indigenous learning and teaching method for telling a story. This activity is purposefully designed to get to know the participants better, allowing an awareness of the various cultures and beliefs of both academic developers and academics and the influence these attributes have to the presenters’ and participants’ pedagogies. The artefact representation also brings out the academics’ authenticity, which is “concerned with ... original thinking towards enhanced practices and change” (Behari-Leak et al., 2020, p.115).

Keeping with the African theme, we revisited the programme’s session about “Our institutional culture and ways of being and doing” to position the participants within the context of an African university and how it relates to their personal and professional identities. Opening the session with a video clip of Thabo Mbeki’s speech, “I am an African”, participants are asked to engage with the idea of being African by responding to the prompt.

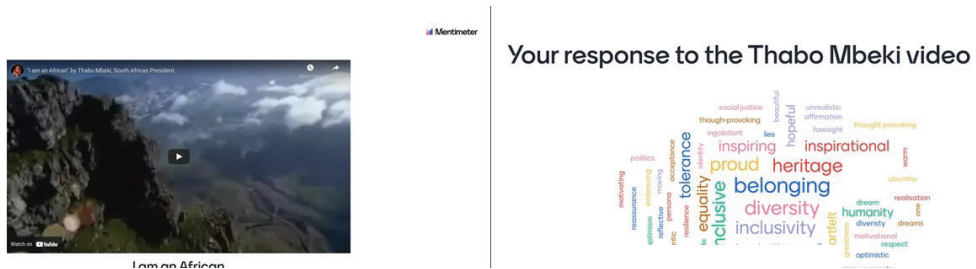


Figure 52 Responding to “I am an African” using Mentimeter

We used Mentimeter to encourage participants to share their responses anonymously and included an activity in our resource guide to encourage a deeper engagement. These activities are well received, and the engagement links being African to one of the concepts associated with the humanising pedagogy, and the university value of ubuntu, which means being seen and heard even when discussing uncomfortable topics.

The activity represented by the illustration in figure 53 was an activity that was presented at NATHEP, and had a significant impact on us, which is why we decided to include it on our programme. During the session, participants are asked to work through the questions, first on their own, then with a peer and finally to share with the broader group, either in the venue or online. This activity also assists in us thinking about what it means to be part of an African university and has sparked insightful discussions and reflections on the programme.

 THINK, PAIR, SHARE ACTIVITY¹
What is my story?
Am I African and in what sense?
Where is African in me and where am I in Africa?
Share: Are there shared values that stand out? How do these values relate to being African?

Figure 53 Being part of a “dynamic African University”

As indicated previously the humanising pedagogy is a key aspect of our institutional culture, and NATHEP highlighted the need to critically engage with the relevance of this particular pedagogy. As such the activity reflected in figure 54 is included on the programme.


 GROUP REFLECTION
Why is there a need to adopt a Humanising Pedagogical approach in the current Higher Education Context?

Figure 54 Humanising pedagogy reflection activity

The humanising pedagogy espouses an active engagement with the redress of various kinds of inequalities, as highlighted by Freire (1970, p.17) in Salazar, 2013:

“Teachers who enact humanising pedagogy engage in a quest of “mutual humanisation” (p.56) with their students [...] with the goal of developing “conscientizacao” (p.26) or critical consciousness, which is “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality”

To facilitate meaningful engagement with the pedagogy we developed an accessible group reflection activity, which we included in the BYJ resource guide and facilitated it during our “institutional culture” session. Participants, working in groups, reflected on the need to adopt a humanising pedagogical approach in the current HE context and linked the adoption of the pedagogy to student success. This activity seemed to enable a much deeper engagement with the implementation of humanising pedagogy in teaching and learning.

Through critiquing our own dominant discourses and contextualising these within our own lived experiences we were able to meaningfully engage with the humanising pedagogy and use the theory “as a functional mechanism to explain, trouble, problematise, confirm, affirm and position thoughts that relate directly to praxis” (Behari-Leak et al., 2020, p.115). We guided our participants to authentically reflect on their own thinking and practices to enable a critical consciousness regarding their students’ learning and how socio-economic, political, and other power structures may impact on their students’ learning.

Since NATHEP highlighted that induction is about laying the groundwork for a new cadre of academics capable of navigating the institutional and the HE contexts, BYJ aims to facilitate the co-construction of academic knowledge to be responsive to the HE contextual realities. One example is adapting the assessment session from only exposing new academics to assessment approaches, tools, and tricks to engaging them in the design and implementation of socially just assessment. Academics are encouraged to utilise their agency in creating a socially just assessment culture by starting with reflecting on their assessment experiences, using collaborative and reflective Jamboard activities. Figure 55 provides an example of the task.

Draw a metaphor that represents your assessment experience(s) and post it here (if you are able to do so) (10min)



Figure 55: Collaborative, reflective Jamboard activity

Following this, participants draw on their own experiences to describe how they envision socially just assessments in their respective disciplines. Prompts are shown in the image extracted from the Jamboard. Participants are required to identify potentially constraining and enabling mechanisms associated with socially just assessment practices. The main aim of the engagement with the prompts is to encourage the new academics' agency in enabling socially just assessment and getting strategies to mitigate the constraints associated with the creation of socially just assessment culture.

Drawing from your experiences, how do you envisage a socially just assessment in your discipline? (15 minutes)

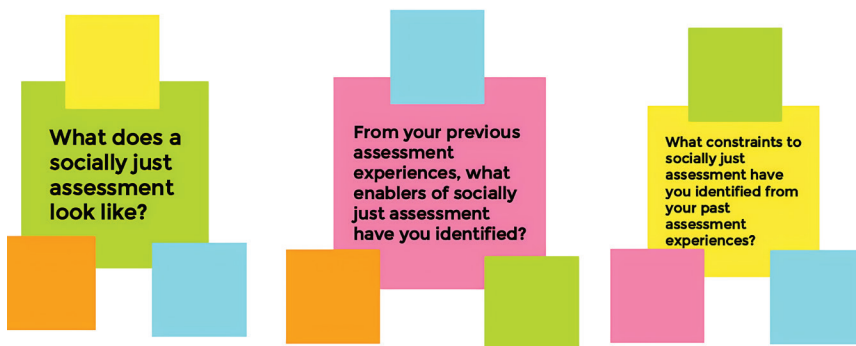


Figure 56: Jamboard prompts on socially just assessment practices

NATHEP empowered us to critically reflect on how BYJ can initiate collaboration among new academics to decolonise institutional cultures and practices. Reflecting on the programme's contribution to the decolonisation agenda, we were reminded that "our academic and epistemological roots have not adequately prepared us for engagement with the concept of decolonisation" (Vorster & Quinn, 2017, p.36). However, it is critical for us as academic developers to initiate conversations with academics about decolonisation, which is why we pushed through our own discomfort to include the engagements with decoloniality illustrated in figure 57.

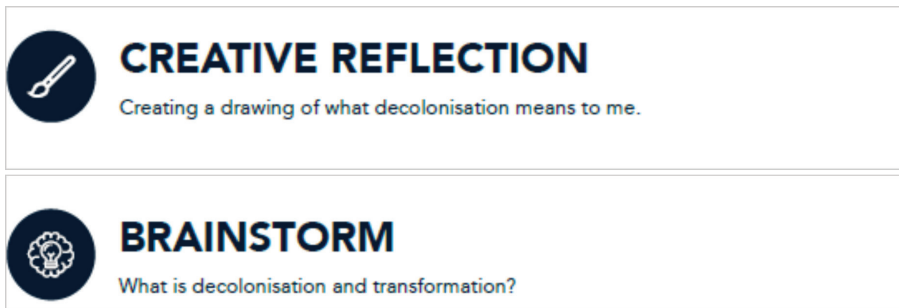


Figure 57 Decolonisation activities

The creative reflection is included in the resource pack that new academics are encouraged to engage with during and after the programme. We recognise that there is a need to explore this aspect further by developing our own knowledge of decolonisation alongside our academics and to include additional sessions that will enable the engagement with academics regarding our and their agency in enacting the HE imperatives.

The second leg of BYJ

The second leg of the programme focuses on enabling reflexive practice, which provides participants with the opportunity to reflect on their experiences while considering both their teaching philosophy and practice (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005, p.220). In this part of the induction, we request participants to reflect on how they experienced implementing the lessons learnt during the first leg. A blended learning space is provided for colleagues to engage, collaborate, and share challenges and experiences. During this process, the BYJ team facilitates peer collaboration and group work to collaborate with academics in co-creating possible strategies to mitigate the challenges they experienced in their learning and teaching spaces.

Still an island: BYJ for our George campus

As planned, a more contextualised BYJ programme was offered on the George campus. The substantive knowledge included on the programme remained the same across campuses; however, the programme's implementation was not prescriptive, and the facilitator had the autonomy to include core aspects, specific to each campus on the programme. However, it was quite surprising when the feedback highlighted concerns regarding additional fragmentation and limiting the development of a shared larger institutional culture that may result in the academics not feeling the sense of being part of a larger vibrant whole. The George participants indicated that there was a potential danger that this approach may be insular and may create a culture of separation among academics that are from the same disciplines. This was quite a surprising turn in understanding, and while we were thinking about how to respond to the feedback, COVID-19 necessitated that we take the programme online.

Being swept in another direction: taking BYJ online

During our response to COVID-19, we had to adapt our blended approach to a fully online offering, and although it was quite intimidating it got our creative juices flowing. We learnt the technical nuances of online teaching, persevered, and were finally able to progress from a face-to-face to an online delivery in 2021. The programme was developed to include focussed topics, which align to the activities previously discussed. These are illustrated by the programme on the next page.

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY Teaching Development Team		
Beginning Your Journey @ Nelson Mandela University 2021 <i>Second offering: First Leg</i>		
Wednesday, 28 July	Thursday, 29 July	Friday, 30 July
<i>Morning Synchronous sessions using MS Teams</i>		
<p>08:00 – 10:00 Welcome and expectations <i>BYJ Team</i></p> <p>Introduction of artefacts</p> <p>10:00 – 11:00 Engagement with the Dean: Learning and Teaching <i>Phumeza Kofa-Nyati</i></p> <p>11:30 – 13:00 Our institutional culture and ways of being and doing <i>BYJ team</i></p>	<p>09:00 – 09:30 Reflections on Day 1 <i>BYJ Team</i></p> <p>09:30 – 11:30 So, What? Assessing for success <i>Eunice Champion, Jenny Clarence-Fincham & Joy Alexander supported by BYJ Team</i></p> <p>12:00 – 13:00 Moodle Introduction <i>Elmien Waning & LXD team</i></p>	<p>09:00 - 10:30 The "Thou" in the age of COVID-19 <i>#4walishavefallen</i> <i>Dave Jenkins and LD team</i></p> <p>11:00 – 12:30 The evaluation of teaching and courses & Introducing the reflective journal <i>Anne Olsen & Vive Ndayi</i></p> <p>12:30 – 13:00 Consolidation, closing & Evaluation <i>BYJ team</i></p>
<i>Afternoon Synchronous sessions using MS Teams</i>		
<p>14:00 - 15:00 The reflective Higher Education Teacher <i>Vive Ndayi and Jenny Clarence-Fincham</i></p> <p>15:00 - 15:30 Setting the scene for the way forward <i>BYJ team</i></p>	<p>14:00 - 15:30 Engaging with Multilingualism and Academic Literacies <i>Thoko Batyi</i></p>	

Figure 58 BYJ leg 1 programme

This progress encapsulated growth in anchoring the programme in the institution's pedagogical philosophy as the feedback from our AD colleagues at George campus indicated that the experience was more authentic, with all the participants engaging together as an institution instead of separate campuses. The online approach to the programme created a space where we could include combined and remotely facilitated sessions, to be more inclusive. The experience we had in the first and second online offering of the programme gave us the impression that this was the best way forward. In the future we are considering a hybrid approach

with combined online sessions, facilitated by academic developers on both the George and Gqeberha campuses, and contact sessions on the different campuses to incorporate different contexts.

Conclusion

This case study shared how Mandela Uni's induction programme transformed from being given a slot in the HRD induction programme, to having information sessions using a drop-in-drop-out model, to a programme with a curriculum that aimed at cultivating a critical consciousness about the realities of the contexts of Nelson Mandela University and the HE context. The transformation was realised through a reflective journey that started by engaging with NATHEP. By engaging with the CRiTicAL Framework we were able to shift the programme from merely raising awareness to enabling participants to approach learning and teaching more purposively. There was also a move from a generic approach to a more deliberate approach in how we presented to the programme. Additionally, we shifted from inducting newly appointed academics to pedagogies of learning, teaching, and assessment to understanding the criticality of using socially just and decolonised pedagogies that will respond to the African and global contexts or realities. Approaching the induction programme as a curriculum has helped the AD team to select and pace the content included in the programme and, as such, the programme has pulled together in a cohesive whole.

The process enabled us to think about how we frame the programme, paying specific attention to the importance of the pedagogy of being and becoming as part of our induction programme. We reflected on our own individual beliefs, and although the programme was underpinned by humanising pedagogy, the pedagogy of self-engagement enabled us to realise the need to collectively engage with the humanising pedagogy's framework to understand what it means in the context of academic development. Working as a team and drawing on each other's strengths breathed new life into the programme, especially as we developed corporate agency, through enabling leadership. The corporate agency we have developed as a programme team and through our engagement with NATHEP has enabled us to continuously reimagine, shape and refine our programme.

CHAPTER TEN

VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



VAAL UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY

Inspiring thought. Shaping talent.

VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



The Life History of Induction Programmes at Vaal University of Technology: Complexities, Contestations, Change

Masebala Tjabane, Sibongile Nthabiseng Hlubi and Nalini Chitanand

A bricolage of our experiences
 Nthabi and Masebala
 Mentored by Nalini, the Lotus
 The joy of writing in Nthabiseng
 The reading of writing in Masebala
 The Lotus flower centres it all
 Gratitude in us for all

The four Rs and much more come to play
 Reflecting, Rethinking, Reimagining, Recreating
 The four Cs and much more come to play
 Contextual, Conceptual, Collaboration and Criticality
 All levels of the taxonomy

We critique and question the traditional
 We re-imagine the transformational
 Living contradictions, we acknowledge and face
 Human flourishing, our ultimate embrace
 Teachers the learners all benefiting
 A cradle of human rights contributing
 THE SDG fostering
 The rationale is Ubuntu, we say
 Community, Collaboration, Care, Decoloniality
 Recentring, Relevant, Responsive, Rationality

The interplay of the prima facie and deep complexity
 We go personal into agency
 We go local into culture
 We go institutional into structure
 Cognisant of institutional capture
 We go global into humanity
 The theoretical interplay informed by Ubuntu
 FUBU to VUT, Mzansi, Africa and the universe
 Ubuntu is in the universe

Introduction

This chapter, titled “The Life History of Induction Programmes at VUT: Complexities, Contestations, Change”, presents a case study that delves into the evolving journey of academic induction programmes at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT). Through conceptualising and framing this study as a life history, we emphasise the organic, evolving nature of the programmes, which are shaped by various forces along its trajectory. The subtitle, “Complexities, Contestations, Change”, depicts the multifaceted nature of this narrative account, highlighting the layered challenges, conflicts and transformative moments that characterise this life history.

We trace the evolution of VUT’s induction programme over a period of two decades: moving from a traditional, information-laden orientation to a more progressive and ultimately transformative approach. VUT, established in the 1960s as a college for advanced technical education and later becoming a university of technology, provides a unique lens and opportunity to examine the complexities, contestations and change in academic development in a historically disadvantaged higher education institution in South Africa.

Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of critical and social realism, we analyse the structural, cultural and agential factors that have shaped the trajectory of VUT’s induction programmes. Our analysis focused on three key moments in this evolution: the traditional orientation of the early 2000s, the progressive phase from 2005–2015 and the recent shifts towards a transformed induction programme grounded in critical pedagogy and drawing on the African philosophical approach of ubuntu (see figure 59). Rather than a linear progression for the various moments, we chose to depict this evolution of academic induction programmes at VUT using the spiral. The spiral denotes for us a continuous process, an evolving dynamic process that remains in-becoming as the contexts of higher education and South Africa more generally grow, change and advance.

As academic developers intimately engaged in academic induction processes and participants in the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), we also reflect on our journeys of professional learning and professional growth and the impact of our engagements during NATHEP on our own learning and its influence in shaping the induction programmes at VUT.

Background and context of VUT

The VUT monograph, *50 Years of Excellence in Education (1966–2016)* highlights key milestones of the institution from a college for advanced technical education established in 1966, to being configured as a university of technology (UoT) in 2004.

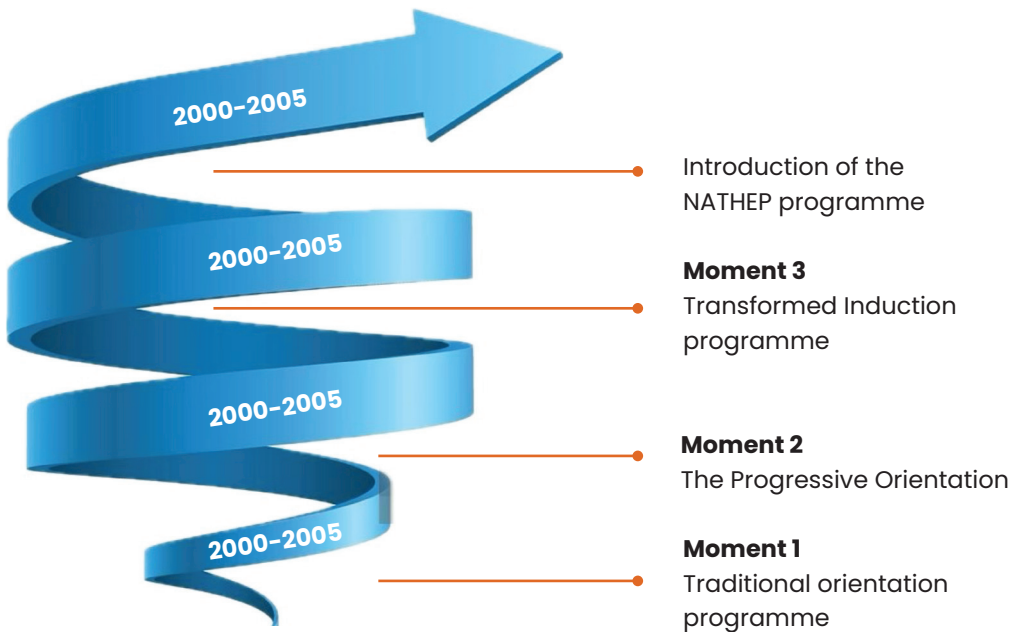


Figure 59 The evolution of academic orientation and induction programmes at VUT

These milestones, referred to as the Founding, Strengthening, Growing, Changing and Building phases, highlight key moments in the history of VUT (see figure 60, below).

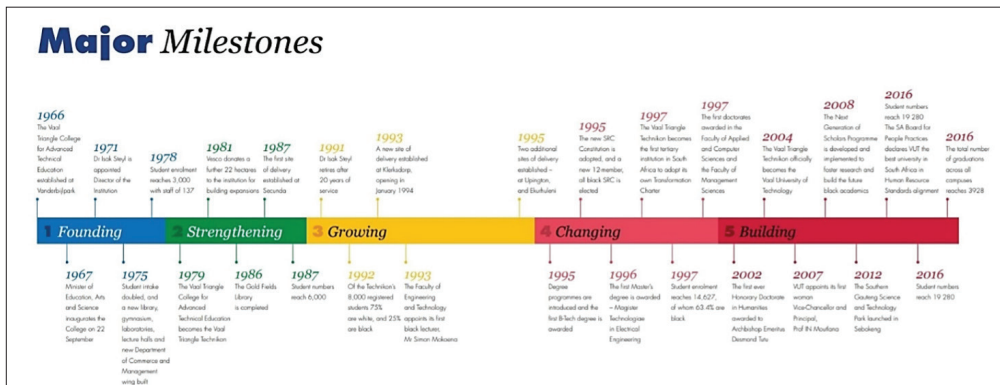


Figure 60: Major milestones of VUT's history (source VUT monograph, 50 Years of Excellence in Education, 2016)

During the apartheid era in the 1960s, the Founding period, the institution was established as a college for advanced technical education. Its primary purpose was to provide a skilled workforce to the growing industry in Southern Gauteng. In the period from 1970–1990s – the Strengthening and Growing periods – it changed its name to “technikon”, continuing with the provision of more advanced programmes and the emergence of doctoral qualifications. During the democratic dispensation in the 2000s, the Changing and Building periods saw a reconfiguring of the institution as a UoT. This was due to the reorganisation of the higher education sector (VUT, 2016a). In terms of institutional classification, the university had evolved from a historically advantaged white institution during the technikon period to a historically disadvantaged black UoT in its current status. Since then, there have been notable expansions in scope, transformation and positional relevance to 21st century learning and teaching discourses. This is evidenced in the adoption of progressive modern discourses of flexible learning and teaching that promote technology education (VUT, 2016b).

The student body is diverse and representative of all the population groups in the countries as well as more than twenty other countries. It is one of the largest universities of technology in South Africa, with an annual enrolment of about 21 000 students. As a historically disadvantaged and black institution, the majority of the students enrolled at the university face various challenges related to academic underpreparedness and challenges to epistemological access.

The institution is classified as a teaching-intensive university with high class size, low research output per academic, low socio-economic status of students, and higher first-generation student ratios (Cooper, 2015). Most academics are drawn from industry with minimal experience and qualification in teaching at the tertiary level. Therefore, the Centre for Academic Development plays a pivotal role in enhancing the teaching capabilities of academics through various academic staff orientation and induction programmes that initiate academics into the culture and practices of teaching in higher education.

The focus of this case study resonates with the mandate of supporting newly appointed academics. We discuss the three moments that characterised the various iterations of orientation and induction programmes and we attempt to integrate the social realist perspectives to understand and explain why particular configurations of induction programmes existed, in the ways that they did. We discuss these three moments in the following sections and include reflective interludes through engaging in a pedagogy of pausing (Patel, 2016).

Methodology

This case study weaves together multiple and varied experiences, theoretical perspectives, and diverse narratives to present the life history of induction of new

academics at VUT. Our position is based on the notion that knowledge building is a relational and social construct. We used the reciprocal self-interview strategy (Meskin & de Walt, 2014) to create an imagined dialogue of the various iterations of the VUT orientation programmes from our perspectives and positionalities. This technique enabled us to provide a thick description of the three moments of the induction of new academics at VUT. We analysed the narrative dialogues, from a social realist (Archer, 2000) perspective, to understand how structure, culture and agency influenced and shaped the induction programmes at VUT.

Moment one: the traditional orientation

Higher education institutions in South Africa and attempts at improving learning and teaching have constantly been part of the transformation agenda. More recently, the focus of the Council on Higher Education in the 2018 Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers is continuing with this mandate. In response, universities have also attempted to address the academic's professional learning needs through a variety of developmental programmes such as academic induction programmes (Council on Higher Education, 2017).

In this first moment we discuss the initial attempts to support and induct new staff to the university. We refer to this as the traditional orientation, that occurred in the period 2000–2005. It traverses the period when the institution functioned as a technikon and then a university of technology.

During the technikon period, the staff orientation was a three-day event that aimed to introduce academics to the varied dynamics of learning and teaching at a UoT. A key emphasis has been on introduction to institutional structural arrangements with broad stroke foci and attention learning and teaching. The programme consisted of the administrative component, for which human resources was responsible, on day one. The academic development sector, Centre for Academic Development (CAD) was responsible for days two and three. Institutional leadership and management presented on the first day, with a welcome message and sharing the strategic direction of the institution. This was followed by the human resources (HR) department with an explanation of VUT's HR processes. The HR component of the orientation was more of a promotional showcase of top management with very limited engagement from the academics. The focus was on the importance of institutional strategy and meeting targets.

Their non-availability at times would signal a key cultural constraint for the induction of new staff to the university context, the focus of this initial orientation programme. The academic component included an introduction to support services as well as dynamics of learning and teaching at VUT. This included the overview of CAD and overviews of learning and teaching policy, teaching perspective inventory, best

practices and the scholarship of teaching and learning. The three-day orientation programme was predominantly traditional in style and adopted a sage-on-the-stage approach with information overload.

The focus on this phase of the orientation programme was on institutional needs with very limited focus on academics as part of the institutional system. The result has been a compliance culture on the part of academics, which appears to reproduce higher education and societal inequality and injustices by hesitancy to intentionally advance empowering discourses and narratives. Orientation programmes have been criticised for the lack of preparing academics holistically and theoretically for their university roles. A further critique by Billot and King (2017), suggests that the traditional, one-size-fits-all induction that focuses on the “doing” of academic practice leaves individuals unequally prepared for academic life.

The structure and content of the orientation revealed the underpinning institutional structural and cultural dynamics and power plays at work and how this interplay constructed the initial orientation programme. While senior management was present to set the strategic tone for the new academics, the session was presented through the discourse of managerialism. The presentations were dominated by graphic displays of figures and numbers indicating pre-determined objectives of the Department of Higher Education (DHET) and targets that needed to be met. The HR and finance components of the orientation was presented by mostly middle management personnel, referred to as business partners. In explaining VUT’s administrative processes, there was frequent reference to the language of business – performance targets and skills development. There appeared to be a disconnect between them and aspects of teaching and learning. This is illustrated through the encroaching business language in higher education discourse, which often alienated academics. During this session there was not much engagement between academics and HR, as expected, because HR and finance were performing their role and their manner was information dissemination. The sessions glossed over the role, of a technikon and pillars of a university of technology with limited discussion on their relation to the role that the academics are to assume after the orientation.

Reflective interlude I: the traditional orientation from the perspective of critical and social realism

The administrative orientation was a representation of VUT’s structural arrangement and can be regarded as enabling for academics to understand the strategic direction of the institution and aligned policies. While information on the policies and procedures was enabling, the structuring of the orientation programme for the day was constraining because it did not allow for activities that

would make academics feel at ease and relax such as ice breakers. In addition to this, the sage-on-the-stage approach to presentation tended to limit participant engagement and heighten passivity. It was not just the day one structuring that acted as a constraining element, there was dominating managerialism discourse from HR and finance. The focus was mainly on being a university of technology that produces employable graduates. The structural elements presented were institutional policy documents such as the VUT strategic direction. The cultural elements were illustrative of the continuation of conservative learning and teaching versus progressive teaching and learning. The broader institutional culture played a significant role as the institution was under persistent institutional capture and political conflict.

The cultural dynamics of the period included VUT's adoption of the Transformation Charter, which was based on the South African Constitution. At the same time, there were remnants of conservatism seen as the "Afrikaner way" of doing things. This emerged as a cultural contestation between inclusive and progressive versus the conservative ways of doing things which may be argued, still exists. As a result, there continues to be an uneasy coexistence of aspirations for transformed culture, and defence for conservative culture in the institution. The custodians of these two ways of doing things continue to live in a contested environment. As a way of addressing this, our transformed orientation will be informed by transformational pedagogies that would contribute to a genuine transformed institutional culture in future.

The institutional capture was illustrated in the crisis in governance and management, resulting in the institution falling under administration three times. While this was happening the academic agenda was being marginalised, even at HR level, through political appointments of personnel who had limited understanding of matters related to learning and teaching and required a strengthened orientation programme. As agents of change, we resolved to adopt a progressive paradigm and drew on experiences from the Basic Education Level. This informed our next moment two (see below). We made use of these experiences because they resonate with our values of promoting progressive learning and teaching with reference to the outcomes-based education (OBE) paradigm. We focused more on student-centeredness while taking into consideration some of its challenges. We also extended the culture of critique further by embracing critical pedagogy in its various forms.

Moment two: the progressive orientation

The academic component of the orientation programme was restructured to align with the university's shift toward student centred learning and teaching, embracing principles of outcomes-based education and training. Many lecturers appointed

at this time were from industry and were expected to follow the principles of OBE and student-centred learning during classroom management, assessment, and student engagement, but OBE principles were resisted by new and experienced academics alike. There was much apprehension and misconception about the OBE approach coupled with resistance to adopting new ways, particularly the guide-by-side metaphor seen in the student-centred ways of foregrounding the learner and adopting the facilitation role of the teacher. Over the 2005–2015 period, the orientation was coordinated and organised by the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) with the HR component taking a less prominent role. The academic component of the programme took a slightly more progressive stance in that the discourses that informed the orientation were based on VUT's learning and teaching model informed by social constructivism. An important component of the orientation was the introduction to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) as an attempt to develop the culture of writing for publication. This component was positively received, and academics were encouraged to contribute to the annual staff development conference. SoTL was valued because of its research and knowledge creation possibility. This possibly reflects the valorisation of research over learning and teaching in higher education. It could be said that while the orientation was traditional, it had in it some elements of soft reform, particularly in embracing student-centred teaching and learning.

The academic agenda of the institution was in a way promoted by the orientation as described above. However, while the institutional academic environment and internal structural arrangement appeared to be stable on the surface, there were many challenges. These sentiments and challenges emerged as we engaged with academics during the orientation. The cultural contestations presented themselves in the form of frequent campus disturbances and protests, marginalisation of the academic agenda and promotion of the administrative staff over academic staff.

A reflective interlude II: morphogenesis during

NATHEP encounters

As academic developers, we have always felt the need to change the orientation as it is not sustainable in meeting the needs of academics within specific learning and teaching contexts and the needs of diverse students. As part of our orientation change strategy, we created opportunities to explore a variety of discourses that provide an alternative to traditional orientation processes.

In doing this, we were guided by Fairclough et al.'s (2004) conception of discourse as social analysis that uses normative and explanatory critique. We identified some of the alternative discourses and practices proposed by the New Academics

Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), based on the critical and social realist perspectives of Bhaskar (2010) and Archer (2000). Engagement with these theoretical perspectives contributed to the need to revamp the induction and consider the potential to include transformative elements. These elements could provide for an in-depth and nuanced understanding of learning and teaching and the process of professional development at global, institutional, faculty, departmental and self/personal levels.

Critical realism (Bhaskar, 2010) and Archer's social realism (2000) provided us with a crucial and relevant lens to understand the underlying generative mechanisms that impacted on the various iterations of our induction programmes. This in turn enabled us to exercise our agency in disrupting the status quo aligned to the traditional academic induction so that it can be transformed and meaningfully contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching practices. Therefore, as we illustrate in the poem in the introduction to this chapter, this case study also includes the metamorphosis of the VUT induction programme through embracing transformational pedagogies.

In critical realism terms, the domain of the real is all-encompassing of entities. It consists of structural and cultural mechanisms, events and experiences that are either reproduced or transformed by all participants in the orientation at VUT. The orientation as an event is an enactment of VUT's structural and cultural elements. The realm of the actual consists of events and experiences, the orientation is an event, and we are writing about our experiences as academic development practitioners. We delve next through an autobiographical portrayal of how our experiences at NATHEP transformed our own learning and roles as facilitators of the academic induction programme. We also reflect on how our metamorphosis manifests itself in VUT's evolved orientation.

Using Bhaskar's (2010) critical realism, we show the stratified social reality elements with reference to the VUT orientation. It became evident how, as we interacted with the structural and cultural components of the internal VUT mechanisms, our experiences influenced and impacted on our agency. In this process our active state of being is better explained by Archer's (2000) development of the interplay between structure, culture and agency and the processes of morphostasis and morphogenesis. As we were continuously grappling with internal contestations in our context seen in unchanging structural and cultural mechanisms, we experienced a change in our agency. An example of this change was the mutual adoption of ubuntu, the adoption of the Sisonke concept and the identification with progressive learning and teaching ideals like inclusion and collaboration. The concept of "sisonke" in isiZulu refers to togetherness. It resonates with ubuntu, and is related to an Nguni expression, "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu", which means "a person is a person through other people" thus also fostering togetherness. These

were not just identified in principle but were also enacted practically through the traditional and progressive orientation restructuring. It was predominantly facilitated through a guide-on-the-side mode as opposed to the sage-on-the-stage mode. In addition, we used the practice of critical reflection with the infusion of transformational pedagogies. This initiated the change in ourselves, making it easier to journey with others in the process of adopting transformational pedagogies. We include a list (see Appendix 1) of the transformational pedagogies that we viewed could be essential in the next phase of the induction programme. Furthermore, the constellation of transformational pedagogies is representative of the constancy of change valued for enabling the disruption of the status quo and promoting human flourishing.

We intended to produce an induction programme that is transformative and embraces the principles of ubuntu. The common explanation that captures the African conception of the term is humanness, elaborated as “I am because we are”. This implies that each person’s existence is closely linked to that of others and therefore the attribute of humanness and doing good is important. We identified with Bhaskar’s (2009) aim of contributing to the flourishing of human beings because it resonates with the concept of ubuntu or botho that we have come to adopt. We also identify with Bhaskar (2010 p.114) in his argument “... that the moral evolution of the human species is unfinished”. This implies we are forever evolving in a context that has complexities, contestations and continuous change within all levels of society. Our vision has been that to create professional learning opportunities through a transformative induction programme will contribute towards a future society that is better than the current one. We envisioned that an ubuntu-inspired programme would foster transformative possibilities towards a good society exemplified in humanism.

Moment three: revamped-transformed induction at VUT towards enhancing professional learning

The desire to change the orientation towards professional learning and pedagogy of engagement emerged from our reflection that the traditionally informed orientation did not develop academics as critically reflective and reflexive practitioners to exercise their agency to question and challenge the cultural and structural factors influencing learning and teaching. In the traditional orientation, academics were just introduced to teaching as a technical and instrumentalist activity with limited consideration of agential, cultural and structural aspects that enable or constrain teaching and learning. The revamped induction programme was developed on paper (see Appendix 2) and partially implemented in practice. COVID-19 and its long-standing effects in higher education was one of the factors that prevented the full implementation of the programme. At the time of conceptualising this

case study, the aspects implemented included the exercise on the teaching perspective inventory and the teaching metaphor that teachers ascribed to their teaching. This activity enabled participants to talk about their perspectives on teaching in a free and safe environment. We also introduced SoTL as an initial step towards professional learning. The rest of the orientation continued as normal, in the traditional format, and so the notion of introducing teachers as agents of change was not implemented. In the section that follow we present the revamped-transformed induction programme and how transformational pedagogies have equipped us as authors to work towards a transformed programme.

The revamped academic induction programme aimed to cultivate the attributes and dispositions of academics' professional learning theoretically and practically. We aimed to achieve the theoretical aspects we envisioned by basing the programme on the social and critical realism frameworks and introducing the progressive pedagogies of engagement, hope, discomfort and strategic empathy. On the other hand, the practical aspects we aimed to achieve by creating a community of practice and cultivating and nurturing critical reflection on action with the aim of improving learning and teaching practices and embedding transformative learning (Mezirow, 1994). We further drew on Whitehead's (2008, p.104) living educational theory, which would enable participants to provide accounts of "their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation" through generating knowledge through a simple yet complex question, "How do I improve what I am doing?" (Whitehead, 2008, p.103)

Reflective interlude III: our reflection on change

In explaining the change, we experienced as academic developers in more nuanced detail, we used Archer's (2000) morphogenesis framework. In sharing our experiences, most of our narrative centres on cultural conditioning and cultural elaboration with limited instances of structural conditioning and elaborations. The guiding question we adopted was: "What are the conditions that enabled and constrained the journey of newly appointed academics in learning to teach through the induction programme?" In response to this question, we reflected on our role through the various iterations of academic induction programmes and adopted the transformational pedagogies as one of the strategies that supports and enables change.

The change we desired, is manifested in the "imagined" and conceptualised revamped-transformed induction that is based on transformational pedagogies. This was influenced by our social and academic identity formation and shaped through our participation in the NATHEP programme – pre-, during and post-COVID-19. The NATHEP experience enriched our exposure and engagement with

transformation and pedagogies of engagement that empower all involved to contribute to change at all levels, starting with agential change. In a way as academic developers, already identifying with progressive and transformative discourses, the NATHEP experiences enabled us to formulate a framework of transformational pedagogies that would inform the revamped-transformed induction programme at VUT. In social realist terms, the proposed framework is referred to as agential morphogenesis, that enabled us to move into brave spaces that facilitated the selection of transformational pedagogies. Our original role as teachers and academic development practitioners was positively influenced by the NATHEP experience to bravely shift from traditional and progressive learning and teaching discourses to transformational and engagement pedagogies that empower us to question the status quo and develop alternatives to further enhance transformation. We are comforted with the knowledge that a community of practice such as NATHEP provides the support and nurturing environment to enable the changes we envision through professional learning opportunities for academic developers.

At the cultural and structural level, we cannot boldly state that there was some form of morphogenesis because the institution was going through crises and challenges in leadership and governance, leading to it being placed under assessment and administration until 2021. So, at the structural level this aspect can be referred to as regression or negative morphogenesis because the status quo was maintained (morphostasis). We acknowledge though that there were simultaneously pockets of good practice that continued to contribute positively to the structure and culture of the institution.

We continued to perform our role as change agents during the contested and challenging times, even though the structural and cultural dynamics appeared to be hostile to the ideals of our transformed induction. We adopted Mahatma Gandhi's position that we should be the change that we would like to see in our induction programme and in the world. The first steps in this change process have been our own reflective and reflexive thinking which has led us to promote transformational pedagogies for a revamped-transformed induction programme which we strive to align with NATHEP's CRiTicAL Framework (Behari-Leak et al., 2020)

Conclusion

The life history of VUT's academic induction programme that we have reflected on and narrated in this chapter reflects the broader academic development and South African higher education context. As reflected by the title of this chapter, this journey has been marked by challenges, moments of conflict and significant transformative intentions and aspirations. Our analysis of the key moments depicted in this study reveal key insights that speak to the complexities,

contestations and changes. The importance of theoretical grounding in academic development work was evident through this case study and crucial for advancing the transformative aspirations for the induction programme. We recognise that the traditional orientation was based on limited theorised pedagogies and practices that appeared to limit change. We therefore advance that the transformed orientation needs to be informed by theory and transformational pedagogies. This could include for example NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework (Behari-Leak et al., 2020). Furthermore, the incorporation of critical and social realism frameworks provided a lens through which to understand and navigate the complex interplay of structure, culture and agency in shaping the induction programmes at VUT.

This case study reflects the critical role of academic developers as agents of change. Our own experiences of morphogenesis through engagement with new ideas and engaging in communities of practice such as NATHEP were instrumental in us reimagining and reshaping the induction programme. Another key insight from our case study refers to the incorporation of indigenous philosophies such as ubuntu and a decolonial focus to inform and enrich induction programmes and academic development more generally. While we recognise that much more engagement, reflection and integration with decolonial approaches is required, we submit that a transformed induction programme grounded in decoloniality and ubuntu principles offers a promising direction for creating a more inclusive and culturally responsive and contextualised induction programmes.

In conclusion the evolving higher education context necessitates that induction programmes and academic development more generally needs continuous reflection, review, reimagining and recreating through theoretical engagement and adaptive practices. It is through these continuous spirals of reflective and reflexive engagements that we can hope to create truly transformative, inclusive and socially just higher education institutions in South Africa.

Appendix 1 Transformational pedagogies informing our conceptualisation of the revamped-transformed induction programme

Transformational pedagogy	Application in the Revamped academic orientation (linked to the NATHEP CRITICAL framework)
Critical pedagogy (Freire, 1996; Giroux, 2010)	Questioning the status quo with education playing a pivotal role in carving a transformed vision of schooling and society that would promote the common good based on principles of social justice. An activity that would enact this is Pratt's Teaching Perspective Inventory with the focus on the Social Reform perspective followed by Whitehead's Living Educational theory as a component of reflective practice
Pedagogy of discomfort (Zembylas, 2015)	The value it places on discomfoting feelings in challenging the status quo or dominant beliefs that perpetuate social inequalities and injustices. This discomfort has possibilities of creating opportunities for transformation or change at a personal and societal level.
Pedagogy of strategic empathy (Zembylas, 2012)	Empowers teachers and students to embrace and deal with past injustices to promote transformation. It does not allow for the glossing over of issues of white privileges and black deprivation and entitlement but allows for the creation of opportunities for genuine conversation about these realities.
Pedagogy of hope (Freire, 1972; Giroux, 1992; Betzabe Torres-Olave, 2021)	For educators, this involves creating a liberating, decolonised educational system since "there is no change without dreams, as there is no dream without hope" Resonates with Bhaskar's creation of a eudemonistic society for human flourishing and ubuntu.
Professional learning (Herman, Bitzer, Leibowitz, 2018; Feldman & Fataar, 2014)	At a more personal level, professional learning assists teachers through multiple reflective events that build up to teachers becoming change agents by engaging with a transformation agenda.
Pedagogy of engagement (Ganas et al., 2021)	Encourages new academics to consider and reflect on the contextual dynamics and nurtures their agency. In doing this, they reflect on the enablers and constraints of their agency and ultimately develop to become more critical agents.

Appendix 2 Developing revamped-transformed induction programme

Day	Focus	Activity
Day one	<p>The self-morning session</p> <p>The relevant theories</p> <p>The critical framework</p> <p>The self, the culture, and the structure</p> <p>Teachers reflect on their context and conceptualize the self, searching deep on their identity</p> <p>Question: Critically think deeply about how you conceptualize your role in relation to teaching and learning</p> <p>Starting with agency is a way of motivating them and reinvigorating their morale, and the important contributions they make to teaching and learning matter.</p>	<p>I am an African Video and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)</p> <p>Ngozi the danger of a single story</p> <p>The Africa agenda and sustainable development goal (SDG)</p> <p>Link: Photo story/ photo voice activity/ teaching metaphor</p> <p>The teaching metaphor</p> <p>Teaching perspective inventory (TPI)</p> <p>Write two or more take - away from the video and show how they might assist in framing your story about your identity as a teacher</p> <p>What resonates with you at personal (self) level? Moving beyond that tell us about yourself what is your understanding of the concept of self in all 11 South African official languages and take it further to the whole continent.</p> <p>What is the significance of the cradle of human rights? VUT is detached from our being. The self and education for liberation Reflection Decolonisation Sustainable development goals resonance?</p>

Day one afternoon	Reflection on the structure (afternoon session)	Reflection of what you learnt about the structural components. Compare how the information delivered in the afternoon and morning reflect on the one that you feel talk to you at a personal, teacher and VUT STAFF How does the VUT mission and vision talk to the self? How does the strategic document talk to the self? How does the teaching and learning policy talk to the self?
Day two	The culture	What is your understanding of culture? What is your understanding of culture related to teaching and learning? As you were listening to the session which components of the culture were more explicit? Which components were hidden? Reading session: reading article about culture. Brief of the presenters in supporting new academics How are things done?
Day three	The self/ agency the enactment of transformative critical pedagogies	Metaphor of teaching Reading, doing and translating to application in the classroom. E.g. flux pedagogy Group work: give participants different pedagogies to read. Teaching and learning policy How are you going to enact an empowering classroom culture?
Day four	Critical reflection and micro-teaching	
Day five	Follow-up activities and scheduling	

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SEFAKO MAKGATHO HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY



SEFAKO MAKGATHO
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY



Induction of New Academic Staff at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University through Connection and Care

Melvin Govender, George Makubalo and Rieta Ganas

Introduction

Integration of new academics into the academic role and their academic socialisation through an induction process at institutions can be fraught with obstacles, difficulties and contradictions (Boyd, 2010). New academics, the world over, struggle with the transition into the academic role and at times come into their academic positions without sufficient understanding of this role. The role of academics often differs depending on the type of institution they enter. Boyer's (1990), idea of scholarship provides an important lens in understanding the role of academics beyond teaching and offers a conceptual lens into how newly appointed academics become scholars (Jansen, 2006). The ever-changing higher education landscape globally and in South Africa, particularly, is characterised by differentiation (Reimer & Jacob, 2010), massification (Fanghanel & Trowler, 2007), changing structures (Arum et al., 2007), reduced funding and of late institutional instability (Jansen, 2017). The recent global COVID-19 pandemic places even more pressure on academics as part of further institutional change (Behari-Leak et al., 2020). The demands for technological innovations, inclusive pedagogies and new modes of delivery such as blended learning are further challenging and changing the academic role (Teferra, 2016).

Induction plays a crucial role in the academic or professional socialisation of new academics and in the lives of early career academics. It lays the foundation for career progression and provides support to new academics who may be appointed after obtaining postgraduate qualifications but without the necessary capacity to teach in a higher education institution (Behari-Leak et al., 2020). This case study explores the development of an induction programme for "new" academic staff at the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), a new comprehensive higher education disciplinary specific institution located in Ga-Rankuwa on the outskirts of the country's capital, Pretoria.

The case study spans a period of 17 months from June 2018, when no induction was held to October 2019 when the first iteration was held. During this period, SMU, and specifically the Centre for University Teaching and Learning (CUTL) was part of the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP). Funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) under the University Capacity Development Plan (UCDP) (DHET, 2017) NATHEP worked with academic staff developers to initiate or enhance their institution's induction programme for

new academics. The case study also reflects on the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the induction programme at SMU since its 2019 CUTL inception, and the consideration of the future of induction programmes. It focuses on the development of an induction programme at SMU within its specific context as a new health sciences university but a historically disadvantaged institution.

We believe that developing an induction programme at SMU was important to enhance the foundation for the professional development of newly appointed academics and influence an academic culture characterised by high-quality scholarship, student-centeredness, reflexivity and critical consciousness. Further to this, the development and delivery of such an induction programme by the CUTL enables academic and professional staff to develop a rapport with the centre, elevating CUTL's current institutional profile. Simultaneously, the increased connection with the centre enables its academic development (AD) practitioners an opportunity to develop their skills, scholarship and agency.

Theoretical framework

This case draws on Archer's (2000) social realist framework of structure, culture and agency in reflecting on the SMU's induction practices of the past, present and future possibilities. Particularly important in thinking about our actions as academic developers, is the concept of agency.

We draw on Emirbayer and Mische's (1998, p.963) argument that agentic action should be "analytically situated within a flow of time" and not just viewed at a particular point in time. When analysing our actions on the induction programme, as academic developers, we consider our actions over a period of time. Using Archer's thinking we explore the influence of structure on agency (Archer, 2007).

Understanding the "new" academic

It is important for teaching and academic development practitioners, in developing an induction programme for newly appointed academics at a health sciences institution like ours, to understand the possible range of who these "new" academics are. In literature the people targeted by induction programmes are often referred to as early career academics (ECAs) (Reddy et al., 2016; Teferra, 2016). When academics join an institution, they arrive with varying experiences and any assumptions made need to be grounded in deeper understanding of the academic trajectories of each individual. While some new academics coming into the university are at the beginning of their professional careers (essentially ECAs), others come with a wealth of experience from other health science professional contexts, and some come with experience of teaching at other institutions. Developing programmes that respond to the needs such a diverse group with different professional needs can be challenging and needs careful consideration.

This may require an understanding of the professional trajectory of every individual and their professional development needs, followed by developing programmes that respond to the need of the individual.

Induction at SMU: “what was”

SMU was established as a separate institution in 2015 after demerging from the University of Limpopo (UL). Prior to the merger with the University of the North that created UL, SMU was established in 1976 as the Medical University of Southern Africa (MEDUNSA). As a historically black institution, SMU shares the legacies of historically disadvantaged institutions that were underfunded, neglected and never given the opportunity to thrive and be among competitive higher education institutions. Still considered a “new” university, SMU continues to grapple with the effects of inadequate and decaying infrastructure, shortages of key staff, lack of stable leadership in executive management, and ongoing student and staff protests. Induction programmes were held during the institution’s various phases as MEDUNSA, as part of UL and currently as SMU. We explore how the interplay of structure, culture and agency at SMU impeded the institution from developing new academics and ultimately delivering a contextually relevant induction programme.

Induction programmes do not happen in a vacuum. They need careful planning and human resources as well as a conducive policy environment that gives expression to staff development. After the establishment of SMU in 2014, induction programmes continued to be held by the human resources (HR) department and an outsourced external facilitator. This induction programme run largely by the external facilitator was contextually flawed as it did not reflect the uniqueness of the institution and its health professions context. It was generalised and did not reflect the immediate needs of the institution or the needs of those varied new academics. Further, outsourcing to an external facilitator also hampered skills development amongst CUTL’s practitioners, required to carry out professional learning activities for academic staff, and academic development within the broader SMU context. Running induction programmes is an important way of developing the capability and agency of staff working with academic staff development. Besides creating a sense ownership of the programme, these initiatives propel the centre and the academic development project as an important teaching and learning engine of the university.

In this section, we reflect on our university’s induction programme from 2018. An HR-led induction programme was held in June 2018, as a three-day workshop on the SMU campus. The programme focused on varying topics, from facilitation of learning to a showcase of services available on campus. The main facilitator was sourced from another institution and compensated with facilitation fees, accommodation, travel and subsistence expenses. The main weakness of the

programme, however, was the generality of topics and the lack of relevance to the institutional context. There was a lack of focus on the vision and the mission of the university, nor were the topics unique to the SMU context. Further, the centrality of the external consultant as the main presenter silenced the agentic opportunity for internal actors to take the induction forward. Most of the programme was outsourced, CUTL was left with the responsibility of only providing logistical support. Topics like “Managing diversity in teaching and learning” did not speak to the unique SMU context and there were no specific topics on clinical teaching or related to the health professions education focus.

In 2019 there was a leadership change at CUTL and delays in HR caused the induction programme to be postponed from February to July 2019. During this intervening period, the new interim director and an academic developer of the CUTL team participated in NATHEP. Participation in the programme was timely in enabling the CUTL team to collaborate and engage with colleagues at other national universities to conceptualise and develop the institution’s induction programme. The programme was designed from a teaching and learning lens rather than an HR one. NATHEP provided an important reference point as the programme’s outcomes resonated with the team’s outlook for the SMU induction program.

Developing an induction programme: “what is”

SMU’s induction policy states that the “objective of the induction programme is to set expectations and assist new employees to perform their roles within the university” (SMU, n.d.). The policy goes on to state that the “line manager is responsible for the induction of the new employee with regard to job responsibilities, and the introduction to the section or department in which the employee will be working” (SMU, n.d.). Induction of newly appointed academic staff, as earlier stated, has typically been combined with onboarding of all staff organised by the HR department. The induction programme for academic staff has thus been seen as an extension of the HR onboarding process. Klein et al. (2015, p.263), define onboarding as “formal and informal practices, programmes and policies enacted or engaged in by an organisation or its agents to facilitate newcomer adjustment”. However, induction of new academics into curriculum development and teaching and learning should not be conflated with onboarding. Induction of new academics has to do with what Behari-Leak (2017) has called the frame of “learning to teach”. In this case study we problematise what it means to teach within the constraints and opportunities of a historically disadvantaged institution that is slowly trying to build a new culture, new governance structures and a new model of a health sciences focused institution.

The prevailing culture at the CUTL provided a space in the university to imagine the induction of new academics differently; a space that developed a theoretically rich and contextually relevant induction programme. This was because the centre was now home to different AD expertise such as teaching development consultants, curriculum development specialists, instructional designers and academic support officers. The induction of new academics had in the past been hindered by the absence of capacity and initiatives to promote theorised and responsive teaching in the university. The legacy of staff shortages prior to 2019 meant that induction was HR's responsibility that was largely outsourced and became contentious when CUTL was capacitated to take ownership of the programme.

Building capacity by bringing in new staff was going to be an important mechanism of building capacity within CUTL. This meant that, in future induction programmes, we could dispense with external facilitators and imagine a different yet contextually relevant programme. However, this shift raised some mistrust as some SMU stakeholders felt that there was really nothing wrong with the existing induction model. From a CUTL leadership perspective, this meant building confidence and agency within the team to believe in their capabilities and capacity to engage with staff development programmes including one for induction. It involved the staff at CUTL working together in developing programmes and most importantly changing the "I can't" culture to "We can".

In October 2019, about 17 months after the last induction, CUTL held an induction workshop on the SMU campus. Although the topics did not change fundamentally compared to the June 2018 workshop, the major development was that for the first time the induction programme was not outsourced and was run by CUTL. Based on our NATHEP participation, there were inputs and presentations from colleagues in the community of practice we had started developing with other units of the university, such as the Skills Centre. What was achieved here was that by using CUTL staff, the induction programme became a site of empowerment for CUTL, a place where academic development staff could collaborate in delivering programmes but also a space of thinking about and reimagining teaching and learning in a health sciences university. Further, the introduction of the concept of cultural humility elicited a reflective opportunity for the participants and staff developers for critical consciousness to be explored. It enabled the participant to reflect, introspect and enhance their critical consciousness. This aspect received positive feedback from the participants as did the overall induction, which proved to be a promising "team building" exercise for CUTL. It provided a foundation on which the next induction program could be built. The next induction was planned for March 2020.

As a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic the induction in March was postponed with the focus of the institution being to "save" the academic year. As the year settled

and the “new normal” took over, it was decided that the induction programme like all the other activities of the university, would need to transition online. CUTL held a two-day online induction workshop in November 2020 with 11 academics from the five schools at SMU. The participants were academics who had been appointed in the period between October 2019 and November 2020 and were invited by the HR department to the staff onboarding and induction programme (CUTL, 2020). The workshop was composed of four interlinked online sessions, namely: “Scholarship and the academic role”; “Teaching and learning at SMU”; “Assessment of learning and assessment for learning”; and “Online learning and online assessment”. Though the induction programme was also evolving in focusing on concepts such as scholarship, the programme seemed to lack contextual relevance from a health professions education perspective. An understanding of the importance of the health profession as a disciplinary focus is significant in thinking about what induction should be at SMU.

Further, we were aware in the online induction programme that virtual spaces by their nature are not natural dialogic spaces. Being physically present in a room enables people to hold conversation naturally supported by gesture, body language and eye contact. In a professional development activity that was premised on giving voice to participants rather than seeing them as passive subjects to be filled with information (Kohli et al., 2015), what was lost more palpably was the possibility of natural conversation between the facilitators and the participants. However, despite these difficulties, Blackboard, the learning management system (LMS) used for the workshop, has built-in tools such as an interactive whiteboard, polling and a chat box as well as video and audio contributions in real time for participation, which make a semblance of dialogic practice possible. The challenge in optimising virtual spaces for professional development going forward will be to ensure that they support “authentic dialogue” (Kohli et al., 2015, p.14) between participants and facilitators to build a trusting support network.

The content of the induction programme was driven by needs that were identified by academics in the questionnaire sent to them prior to the design of the programme. The focus was on exploring the idea of scholarship and the academic role; teaching and learning at university; assessment of learning and assessment for learning; as well as online teaching and learning. Though blended learning had been part of the SMU teaching and learning strategy, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the urgency to develop online teaching and online research capabilities among academics. It was therefore important that the content of induction programmes did not stay static but evolved contextually in response to changing needs, demands and opportunities.

At the time of the writing up of this case study we had not yet sent the formal workshop evaluation instrument to the participants. Notwithstanding the absence

of the formal evaluation, we received positive feedback from the participants during the online session and drew important lessons about the future of the induction programme at SMU. Central to the lessons from NATHEP (Behari-Leak et al., 2020) is the understanding that critical professional development cannot take place on one day. This realisation, coupled with insights from the workshop about knowledge gaps and the expressed needs of staff, made us resolve to strive for an induction programme that could be presented to staff over a longer period. Critical professional development of teachers that involves “cooperative dialogue”, builds unity and meets “the critical needs of teachers” (Kohli et al., 2015, p.11) cannot effectively take place in one day. It requires that CUTL builds a community of practice among the newly appointed academic staff supported by faculty and established academics within their disciplines to develop critical scholarship that responds to contextual dynamics of the different academic units our participants find themselves in.

Looking into the future: “what will be”

At CUTL we have experienced a number of constraints in developing a theoretically sound and contextually relevant induction programme. The absence of an institutional management drive that promotes the transition of new academics in purposeful ways into the university has contributed to the lack of emphasis on induction. The historical CUTL outsourced staff induction, largely driven by HR, was conflated with the general staff onboarding and created a gap in this crucial professional development space.

Despite the multiplicity of constraints on developing an SMU induction programme, the NATHEP project provided a renewed impetus and an opportunity for support from colleagues from other institutions in a critical and robust community of practice. This enabled the opportunity to focus on developing the induction programme in a way that ensures that our practice engages with theory and develops reflective practitioners in the process. Other institutional enablers have included HR sharing the list of newly appointed academics that we could target and work with in enhancing an induction programme.

CUTL has begun the process of developing a contextually relevant and theoretically sound induction programme for academics. We started by administering a questionnaire, before the design of the programme, to newly appointed academic staff. The questionnaire focused on understanding the career trajectories of newly appointed academics, their understanding of the academic role, their teaching and research needs, as well as a consideration of how prepared they are for their role and the level of support they have received and require. This will ensure that the program delivered is contextually relevant and responsive to the academic within a health sciences university.

Threats and opportunities for induction at SMU

The continuing COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa and globally will possibly pose significant threats to the ability of the Centre for University Teaching and Learning (CUTL) to manage an induction programme over an extended period. Developing a viable and sustainable community of practice requires active engagement and meaningful collaboration. However, restrictions that the COVID-19 pandemic comes with, such as reduction of physical meetings and social distancing means that we cannot meet and collaborate in ways that have traditionally made such collaborations possible. However, Hodgkinson-Williams et al. (2008) illustrate the possibility of developing a virtual community of practice with collaborators both from within the institution and beyond. More recently Behari-Leak et al. (2020) have detailed how a national collaborative programme continued and thrived virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic when physical meetings between collaborators were not possible. In this situation developing an induction programme at SMU must take into consideration and draw on institutional affordances of technology and connectivity to sustain the induction programme. One of the main problems that SMU faces, like other historically disadvantaged institutions, are infrastructure limitations such as ICT infrastructure (DHET, 2019). Developments such as Blackboard Ultra to be launched at SMU and the refurbishment of ICT infrastructure will improve the ICT infrastructure and connectivity that makes the building and sustainability of virtual communities of practice possible. A health sciences university like SMU requires that ICT infrastructure capability is developed not only on the university campus but also in other spaces where teaching and learning happens, such as hospital training platforms as well as other off-site curricula spaces.

Conclusion

SMU is the only health sciences university in South Africa and presents a unique yet daunting opportunity to develop an induction programme for academics coming into a teaching-led, health sciences-focused institution. This however requires enabling structures, culture and agency from not only those responsible for these programmes but from all university stakeholders and university spaces. The active involvement of participants is required from identification of topics to the actual professional development activities. The global COVID-19 pandemic presents a further challenge in efforts to develop professional development programmes premised on communities of practice and authentic dialogue. Nonetheless, agile learning management systems such as Blackboard, which provide affordances to maximise the dialogic potentials of virtual mediums, are an opportunity for SMU to ensure new academic staff are provided an opportunity to build successful academic careers while influencing student access and success.

CHAPTER TWELVE

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY



Reimagining Academic Induction Programme for a Multi-Campus, Comprehensive, Historically Disadvantaged University: The Case of Walter Sisulu University

Qonda Makala, Dorris Mnengi-Gweva, Siyabulela Sabata

Introduction

Universities, just like other organisations, induct academics into organisational culture to ensure that they are fit for purpose. This is often viewed as helping academics to become competent, efficient and effective professionals, who are ready to hit the ground running. In many South African universities, the induction of new academics bears a strong human resource management (HRM) focus, with the goal of introducing newcomers to the institution's services. Theoretically, this HRM focus is influenced by Taylor's scientific management, which suggests that scientific methods can be used to rationally match people to organisationally defined jobs (Searle, 2009; Scholz, 2017). In this sense, induction becomes one of the HRM mechanisms employed to ensure that recruited personnel match the jobs or tasks they were recruited for, which is known as the job-fit HRM approach (Searle, 2009; Scholz, 2017).

Job-fit HRM induction approaches are widespread in induction practices of academics in the South African higher education (HE) sector as these approaches embody the discourse of "good practice" driven by the assumption that good teaching can be modelled across time and space. Boughey and McKenna (2021) trace the genesis of this approach in HE to 2004 to the introduction of the funding formular in what seems to be the emergence of the neoliberal agenda in the South African HE sector. Boughey and Mckenna (ibid) observe that in this era, teaching was linked to government subsidy that universities received for student throughputs, which was withheld until the student graduated and just a like a commodity, it was to be managed through quality assurance regimes to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. Induction of academics in their role as university teachers was thus linked to an efficiency discourse and was viewed to be an important mechanism to facilitate student success and throughput rates.

As academic developers at Walter Sisulu University (WSU), we asserted that such a positivist induction approach could not equip academics with contextualised and relevant scholarship of teaching needed to facilitate student success. We were of the view that such an approach to induction ignores the politics of knowledge (Apple, 2010; Giroux, 2010; Popkewitz, 2012; Boughey, 2009) as it downplays the historical and social conditions of the institution in which academics teach as well as its structural practices and beliefs (Behari-Leak et al., 2020). An induction of this type presents decontextualised and narrow instrumentalist teaching models that

are viewed to be applicable everywhere and thereby universal.

In this case study, we reflect on the development of a new induction for new academics at WSU following our participation in the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP). Contrary to mainstream “best practice models” of induction, NATHEP foregrounded reflexive pedagogies with the objective of unmasking certain biases and prejudices embedded in university practices (Ganas et al, 2021; Behari-Leak, 2017) in an effort to facilitate epistemic justice. The strength of engaging with reflexive pedagogy lies in the view that reflexivity is a unique feature of human beings which enables them to imagine new social forms or to think beyond circumstances in which they were born and effect changes.

This pedagogic praxis was framed through the CRiTICAL Framework (Behari-Leak et al., 2020) which identifies imperatives for change as conceptual, critical, contextual, responsive, reflexive, relational, recentred, relevant, theorised and legitimate. At the heart of this framework is the development of well-conceptualised and customised induction programmes in response to each university’s contextual realities. In this case study, we present our journey as academic developers from WSU as we develop an induction programme that is critically driven and relational, with potential to contribute to decolonial pedagogy with liberating effects.

Meta-theoretical framework

In accordance with NATHEP, our approach was guided by critical realism (CR) developed by Roy Bhaskar (1979) and social realism (Archer, 2000) to explain the ontological and epistemological assumptions which informed our approach. CR embodies the notion of depth ontology which signifies the existence of the “real world” of unobservable structures that condition practices in the present. This real world is called the intransitive world and exists irrespective of whether we know about it or not. According to Bhaskar (1979), the intransitive world is stratified into structures, powers, and mechanisms (referred to as the real), the events which they generate (are the actual), and the subset of events that are experienced (are the empirical). The intransitive world, therefore, manifests in the three domains of reality, the real – generative structures and causal mechanisms (such as an organisation’s historical structure), the actual – events resulting from various real tendencies and counter tendencies in a particular context and the empirical – observations of the actual events (in this instance, the induction practices at WSU). Bhaskar (1979) believed that the world cannot be changed rationally unless it is interpreted adequately. His realist approach takes into consideration the historicity of the organisation as the basis to understand the emergence of causal powers of the parts of organisations and the broader context within which they are embedded. In our journey to developing the WSU induction programme, we made use of Archer’s (2000) social realism as the organisational framework which guided the enactment of the project methodology.

WSU's historical background

Our assumption was that WSU as a social entity is made up of individuals who occupy various positions. We were cognisant that it is through the actions of actors in the present that social entities like WSU can transform. A brief consideration of the university's history illustrates the importance of why we speak of transformation in the context of our university. The establishment of WSU as a university dates to the apartheid period between 1948 and the 1990s when a group of higher education institutions were established to drive apartheid higher education policy with its intended objective of separate development (CHE, 2017). These universities were mainly established to train civil servants for the homelands and therefore were never intended to be involved in research activities.

Following the birth of South African democracy in 1994, the South African higher education sector was restructured in accordance with the transformation agenda enshrined in the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997. Given that under the apartheid regime, tertiary institutions that catered to historically disadvantaged communities were under resourced, many universities and technikons were merged to maximise resources (CHE, 2017). WSU was similarly conceived out of a hybrid merger of the former University of Transkei and two former technikons in the Eastern Cape, namely the Border and Eastern technikons, resulting in the formation of a comprehensive tertiary institution. WSU operates under a divisional governance and management system and has four campuses, which are spread across four distant locations in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

Ekeh (1983) observed that all universities in postcolonial Africa are the remnants of migrated social structures which were parcelled from metropolitan centres of the imperial West to Asia and Africa. This suggests that while WSU is traceable to the institutions established during apartheid, the relational network structure resembles that of migrated social structures which were imported from the West. Such social structures were developed around models of social organisation imported to colonised Africa and embedded into the new colonial context. The organisation and administration structure of historically black universities (HBUs) like WSU resembles the archaic hierarchical and authoritative models of colonial universities. While these institutions are led by predominantly black leaders, the practices of actors in the present continue to reproduce hierarchical and authoritative models of the past.

Structural and cultural conditioning phase (T1)

Contrary to studies which locate the problems of the former HBUs in apartheid (Habib, 2010; Ndebele et al., 2016; Leibowitz et al., 2016), this case study shifts the gaze to the effects of colonial structures. In terms of the research methodology,

this case study locates and analyses WSU within the framework of the historical evolution of HBUs in South Africa beyond the narrow white liberal gaze. We pay special attention to the understanding of how structural and cultural mechanisms enabled/constrained NATHEP ideals at WSU.

In examination of culture, it is clear that the neoliberal agenda enables the reproduction of hierarchical colonial structures over time. Prior to our interaction with NATHEP, the induction of new staff at WSU was the responsibility of the human resources (HR) department. While the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLTD) was in existence, its role was merely aiding assistance to the HR department to familiarise new academics with teaching- and learning-related aspects as made clear in the WSU induction policy (2012):

**The human resources department shall be responsible for the programme.
In case of Academic Staff CLTD will be responsible in consultation with
Human Resources.**

The policy also shows encroachment of neoliberalism and new managerialism, which enables reproduction of authoritarianism in HE. Induction policy speaks to issues of productivity and foregrounds efficiency, adaptability and positive attitude towards university. This is captured in the principles of this induction policy as it notes:

3 Policy

3.1 An induction programme shall be compulsory on all new employees for the following reasons:

- a) To make employees productive quickly;
- b) To make employees confident about their roles;
- c) To help create realistic employee expectations;
- d) To facilitate a positive attitude towards the university;
- e) To integrate employees into the university.

Figure 61 Excerpt from WSU Induction Policy

New managerialism and authoritarianism are clear in a way in which legalistic jargon is used to deal with non-compliance.

Social interaction phase (T2-3)

According to Archer (2000) the social interaction phase looks at how actors interact with context to exercise their agency in a field of relational struggles, position

takings and power relations. In this phase, social actors interact to demonstrate their agency in relation to context. However, their actions are always conditioned by their positions in relation to others and structures in a field of relational structures. Relational network structure refers to the European organisational and management structure of these social organisations, which remains the core of these social organisations, even though they have acquired contextual variations that make them peculiarly African.

Based on this understanding, NATHEP focused on capacity building workshops in ensuring that participants were better prepared to engage with their contextual realities. NATHEP not only introduced participants to new ways of thinking about induction programmes, but also provided a better understanding of the higher education context as a 'field' of relational struggles. As participants, during NATHEP, we were introduced to various social theories to understand their complexities in university contexts. In the next section, we briefly explain some of these capacity development initiatives to demonstrate how they guided our approach towards developing a new induction at WSU.

Cultivating agency for the new NATHEP induction programme

In the first workshop, NATHEP explored the importance of different layers of context – the self, departmental and faculty contexts, institutional differentiation, regional and national HE contexts, including global issues affecting practice in our universities.

Facilitated by the SC (SC), the second workshop focused on models of induction programs and provided critical reflection of induction practices in various HE institutions in South Africa. This critical reflection on the induction models presented an opportunity for us as the participants to critically evaluate our own induction practices at our institutions and created space to showcase how good practices can be recontextualised to suit the contextual needs of the different universities. The third and the last workshop provided space for the participants to consider various pedagogies espoused at NATHEP. This third workshop focused on pedagogies in context and the SC explored four different approaches and modalities while illustrating how each pedagogy could be used as a mediating tool to achieve goals of social justice. These pedagogical approaches resonated with the epistemological, ontological, methodological and axiological domains and were explored as a critical self-reflection by the four SC members as they facilitated the workshops. These were:

- Pedagogy of being and becoming (PoBB) focused on the complex notion of identity in context. It was emphasised that NATHEP recognises and acknowledges the self and who the self becomes through the process of engagement with pedagogical encounters. With the emphasis on PoBB,
-

NATHEP is informed by the notion of wholeness, which encourages relational interactions between the teacher and student. Through PoBB, the SC emphasised that as practitioners we may have internalised the coloniality of being at our universities in ways that lead us to doubt our authentic selves and our ability to relate authentically to staff and students. It was made clear that NATHEP foregrounds decoloniality and acknowledges the self and who the self becomes through the process of engagement with the pedagogical encounter. We were also encouraged to be constantly reflexive in our interactions through acknowledgement of the influence of personal and institutional histories in shaping and conditioning particular ways of knowing, being, doing and becoming.

- Pedagogy of engagement (PoE) promoted engagements which are critical, conscious and social, to enable engagement with asymmetrical relations of power – such as race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The NATHEP SC recognised that power imbalances often keep people trapped in hierarchies of power and servitude, socialising them into reproducing the status quo. Induction was spoken of as a pedagogic encounter and participants were challenged to view pedagogy beyond narrow classroom interactions.
- As academic developers, we were challenged to see pedagogy as a liberating critique which seeks to unmask all forms of oppression embedded in various social practices. Through engagement with the PoE, the SC raised our awareness to the reality that we might have been socialised into particular engagement models which we may have uncritically mimicked and reproduced without considering context or purpose. In this regard, emphasis was put on the need for a decolonial pedagogy of engagement which takes the historicity of the university seriously.
- A pedagogy of knowledge generation (PoKG) advocates for engagement with theories of knowledge generation with clear conviction that they are socio-historical, political and cultural processes of meaning making. We were encouraged to critique some induction models as a form of a globalised localism of Eurocentrism which is universalised. It was stated that this monocultural Eurocentric knowledge tends to deny the validity of racially othered knowers and knowledges while promoting an alienating culture.
- The last pedagogy introduced was the pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation (PoTD), which encouraged participants to constantly interrogate the legacy of colonial education which continues to shape ways of thinking, acting and being of the victims of colonialism. We were reminded to constantly examine ideological biases inherent in colonial education which renders education incapable of facilitating liberation and shared democracy.

These pedagogies left us with an indelible mark as scholar-activists committed to struggles for a just and equitable HE that will enable generations of students and academics to reimagine a world beyond the present.

Enacting the NATHEP induction project

Our approach to enacting NATHEP induction programme at WSU was captured through a concept paper we have adapted from fellow participants in this project, Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). We found MUT's induction programme very interesting, and this might have been due to what we perceived to be similar contextual realities. We developed our induction strategy with an idea of complementing the human resource policy of staff orientation and induction. Now drawing insights from NATHEP, we extended what was a one-day HR induction strategy into a six-month induction programme. Our new induction programme took shape as a collaborative induction with the HR department.

In 2018, our first collaborative induction took place at uMthatha campus and was viewed as a pilot project. Our induction programme was offered for each faculty (faculties are different in other campuses) as we were trying to ignite conversations about historical and contextual realities. This initiative generated much interest at uMthatha campus and due to the scope and complexity of the history of our merger, a heated debate ensued about who is the "new" academic and to what extent were the so called "old" academics aware of various issues raised during the induction sessions. The induction programme was converted into a university workshop and the faculty's newly appointed academic staff developers helped with logistics. The induction programme was well received, and we had positive feedback from academics through the evaluation forms. New academics who attended were fascinated with our approach and content and made a bold proposal that we should consider extending our induction programme even further, for a longer time.

Following what we view to be a successful pilot project in 2018, a proposal was made that the induction project be rolled out across the university. In 2019, induction was then conducted for each campus and the programme was stretched for the duration of three consecutive days. This three-day induction, which we now view to be the norm at WSU, was well attended at almost all campuses. In the next section we roughly highlight some of the activities that take place on each day of induction.

Day 1: Academic and support staff orientation

The first day of the induction programme is planned as a collaborative day where all new university staff members are introduced to the university's vision, mission and strategic goals. This day is attended by all new staff members and all university institutional management committee (IMC) members. On this day, the vice-chancellor and principal of the university welcomes new staff members to the university, unpacking the vision and mission of the university while also engaging ways in which the institution responds to societal needs and global relevance.

The vice-chancellor often uses this opportunity to challenge new academic staff members to always think about innovative pedagogies and to encourage them to contribute towards transformation of HE. All the executive institutional members are given an opportunity present about the role and vision of their respective divisions. Most importantly, the deputy vice-chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research uses the opportunity to explain their respective strategies and challenges academics to contribute towards the academic project through teaching and research. This prepares the groundwork for in-depth conversations about pedagogies espoused at NATHEP on the second day.

Day 2: Induction for academic staff

This day was earmarked only for new academics and was meant to ignite engagement with the academic project. Induction on this day is led by the office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Academic Affairs working in collaboration with the DVC: Research, Library and Information Services and the Directorate of Learning and Teaching as they are the strategic drivers of the academic project within the institution. The DVCs present their respective strategies and engage academics to think about how they will contribute towards the realisation of strategic goals. For instance, the DVC: Academic Affairs focuses on the philosophy of learning and teaching that frames the university's approach towards the scholarship of learning and teaching (SOLT). The presentation by the Senior Director of Research and Innovation usually focuses on publications and the university target of research outputs and provides insights on the support available to enhance research outputs. This would also include information on the support mechanisms available in the university to improve qualifications. The Library and Information Services additionally provides information on the resource hubs available for research, teaching and learning, and how the library is embracing technology to enhance innovations at WSU.

Day 3: Introduction to the pedagogies and professional excellence programme

The third day is what we view to be an enactment of the NATHEP-informed induction programme and is run solely by the CLTD. This day pays special attention to academic development, and we provide insights on all academic development support provided by the directorate of learning and teaching. Our sessions also include student support developments, teaching and learning with technology and more emphasis on pedagogic practices. In our academic staff development, we also offer programmes that focus on the professionalisation of academics as university teachers. In this session, we also investigate curriculum transformation and the infusion of technology into learning and teaching. We focus on the

infusion of teaching and learning with technology and new inductees will be also encouraged to showcase their best practices by modelling how to engage with students using various technological affordances available at WSU.

Day 1 – Academic & Support staff orientation**Day 2– Academic staff support****Day 3 –introduction of pedagogies and Professional Excellence Programme**

Figure 62 Road map of the Walter Sisulu University induction programme 2019–2022

Elaboration phase (T4)

In the elaboration phase we identify the extent to which our induction strategy achieved the intended objectives. This last phase presents an opportunity to evaluate whether genesis (change) or stasis (no change) had occurred. We can proudly proclaim that the newly developed induction programme, following our participation in NATHEP, has enjoyed successful implementation. We are also happy to share that curriculum transformation or decolonial agenda is also taking centre stage in our deliberations. While the induction has been successful, we believe that we should embark on an ongoing process which allows us to constantly reflect on our practice and improve over time.

We acknowledge that the enactment of various pedagogies learnt at NATHEP remains a challenge. Facilitators continue to use traditional PowerPoint presentations without active engagement while others take the historicity of the university for granted. In a context shaped by the history of colonialism and apartheid this is dangerous as these practices perpetuate colonial-apartheid relations of power. It is very clear to us that there is need for more focused interventions at the cultural realm, but challenges related to agency may continue to hinder transformative goals. It is also clear to us there remain challenges brought by the dominance of neoliberal discourse, which influenced stasis in the orientation of most senior managers. While staff development initiatives are mainly geared towards young and new academics, there seems to be a greater need to extend such initiatives to senior managers of the university. While these are people who should not be excluded from discussions about induction practices, it is at the same time difficult to engage with them on some of the contentious issues. We aim to continue to advocate for consciousness and decolonial pedagogies as we continue to strengthen our induction practices.

Professional Excellent Programme (PEP)

A short learning programme known as the Professional Excellent Programme (PEP) was introduced to extend the induction programme for a period of six months to empower new academics in specific ways. The PEP short learning programme is structured in such a way that it comprises three modules: Learning and Teaching in HE, Curriculum Development, and Assessment in HE, and it is offered face to face. There robust discussions generated insightful thinking and ideas from the diversity of academics (including middle managers who joined as participants) in this PEP programme, which foregrounds decolonial pedagogies and is facilitated through active learning to encourage fusion of technology. In this programme we are trying to embed most of NATHEP learnings, and these are sequenced in this following manner:

- Pedagogy of being and becoming (PoBB)
- Pedagogy of knowledge generation (PoKG) – this includes decolonisation and construction of new knowledge. The main purpose of knowledge generation was to make sure new academics were engaged in the learning and teaching process
- Pedagogies of engagement (PoE) – new academics discussed freely as they engaged with facilitators in knowledge sharing

Group work is also part of our teaching and learning process and the sharing of honest, theoretically informed reflections is promoted. Facilitators also shared their presentations with students on the MS Teams platform and we encouraged critique.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this case study is a reflection on our journey towards a reimagined induction programme which was inspired by our involvement in NATHEP. We started off by providing a description of the historical and contextual background as the basis to understand how the induction was conceptualised and operationalised in our university before our participation in NATHEP. This was followed by an explanation of our involvement with NATHEP and how we negotiated with management for the adoption of ideas we acquired through our involvement. We then provided full details about how the newly reimagined induction unfolded and explained challenges encountered in this journey. We concluded by providing insights about how our reflections on success and challenges we experienced led to the conceptualisation a short learning programme, the Professional Excellent Programme (PEP), which frames our current induction practice that is now spread over the period of six months.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence



Semantic Analysis of Induction Practices at the University of Fort Hare – Towards NATHEP’s Induction Approach

Luvuyo Ndawule and Siyabulela Sabata

Introduction

The role that ought to be played by induction in organisations can never be underestimated as it is critical in the rise and fall of any institution. In every workplace setting, induction of new employees supposedly takes place to assist new employees to adapt into organisational culture and this is often viewed to be the most important mechanism that enables workers to hit the ground running (Steward & Brown, 2019). Induction is also viewed to be key in the retention of employees as organisations are struggling in the war of talent. The challenges presented by staff turnover challenge organisations to respond by ensuring tight coupling between attraction and retention strategies. Induction is therefore cited as among the important aspects of human resource management (HRM), which contribute towards retention of employees (Brown, Hesketh, & Williams, 2004). However, there is growing critique worldwide which shows that induction practices and HRM practices generally, tend to be dominated by a technical rationality which makes available techniques that can be utilised generically in every organisation to ensure that new employees fit into jobs they were employed to do (Brown, Hesketh & Williams, 2004). Such induction practices, largely derived from psychology and behavioural science and viewed to be neutral and applicable across time and space, are usually packaged as “best practices” (Taylor, 2006; Searle, 2009; Scholz, 2017).

Universities worldwide, just like other organisations, also induct new academics into their organisational cultures to improve student success (Dall’Alba, 2009; Trowler & Knight, 1999). Even in the HE context, professional development programmes like induction are influenced by neoliberalism and this manifests through a “best practice” approach. In the South African context too, most universities induct new academics, but approaches towards induction differ and are mostly influenced by the historicity of such institutions. In some universities, these induction programmes are driven from human resources (HR) departments and in others by academic staff developers (ASD).

HR induction programmes are predominantly information sharing and an orientation to the resources available in the university. On the other hand, ASDs focus more on professionalising academic practice even though this varies, based on university histories (Quinn, 2012).

As ASDs at the University of Fort Hare (UFH), we have committed ourselves to work

towards the professionalisation of academic practice through involvement in various capacity building initiatives nationally. This case study is our reflection on our journey with the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), which provided us with tools to reimagine academic induction at UFH. NATHEP created a platform for ASDs to reimagine the induction programme as a form of pedagogy that might enable new academics understand the complexities of teaching in South Africa's historically structured higher education (HE) contexts.

Meta-theoretical framework

Following NATHEP, in this case we are guided by critical realism (CR) as developed by Roy Bhaskar (1978), an Indian-British philosopher as a reaction to what he viewed as a positivist Western philosophy. In contrast to this positivist view, Bhaskar proposed a broader view of the world as an open system where reality/being/ontology is stratified (i.e. reality consists of three strata – the real stratum, the actual stratum and the empirical stratum) and therefore has depth. CR acts as an “underlabourer” to social research (Bhaskar, 1975) to diagnose and resolve problems at their roots. CR, as a philosophy, works well with complementary social theories such as social realism (Sayer, 2000) and critical social theory. In this case study, we employ various social theories to make sense of the induction programmes at UFH. We have used the work of Archer (1995) and Giner & Archer (1978) as the methodological framework to guide our approach in this case and Maton's (2005, 2013) legitimation code theory (LCT), particularly his semantic dimension, to analyse pedagogical models of the resultant induction programme.

Methodological/organisational framework

Archer's morphogenetic model (M/M) framework moves from the premise that social entities (like UFH) pre-exist the individuals and their current practices today. However, historicity of such entities is important if we are to understand the actions of actors in the present. In this case study, we were therefore concerned with how the structural and cultural conditions at UFH are mediated through the exercise of academics' agency and as such, changed/not their conception of their induction practices.

Historical background at UFH: structural and cultural

conditioning phase (T1/time 1)

UFH, a well-known institution worldwide and a respected university in the African continent, is viewed as one of the emergent structures of modern African nationalism. This university was founded in 1916, with a clear colonial agenda of facilitating indirect rule by educating a small minority of elite African leaders, who

would manage the majority of the African population on behalf of their colonial masters. The university was seen as the cornerstone in building legitimacy and hegemony of mission schools to drive western education for Africans (Wotshela, 2020). Despite this clear colonial agenda, the dominance and hegemony of this missionary education was always contested and at times, subverted. As a result, UFH prides itself in producing outstanding African leaders who have exercised their agency against missionary education. Marrow and Gxabalashe (2000) are of the view that this institution is one of the paradoxes in which South Africa abounds, and has become a shibboleth of modern African nationalism, priding itself on its illustrious alumni, which include many of the great names of the modern black elite in southern Africa. The most well-known alumni from the political sphere include icons such as Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Robert Sobukwe, Mzwakhe Lembede, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Seretse Khama, Robert Mugabe, Christopher Hani and Kaizer Matanzima. Some renowned icons from other fields include Mandla Langa (South African poet, short story writer, and novelist), Tichafa Samuel Parireyantwa (Zimbabwe's first trained black physician and a medical doctor), Joseph Diescho (Namibian writer and political analyst), the list is endless (Kerr, 1968).

Unlike other historically black universities (HBUs), which were established during the apartheid period between 1948 and the 1990s (CHE, 2016), UFH was simply reconfigured and placed under the Department of Bantu Affairs (DBA), thereby falling under the homeland government of Ciskei (Wotshela, 2020). To understand structural and cultural conditioning at UFH we invoke Ekeh's (1983) conceptual of different colonial structures which were parcelled from metropolitan centres of the imperial West to Asia and Africa. Universities, in Ekeh's framework, are presented as migrated social structures which resemble the archaic hierarchal and authoritative models of colonial university. What distinguishes the universities in South Africa could therefore be different forms and shape in which such hierarchical structures work and are mediated.

To understand the inner workings of these universities and complex challenges which they endure requires careful theorisation. Some studies simplistically reduce the problem to apartheid spatial planning (Habib, 2010; Ndebele et al., 2017; Leibowitz et al., 2016) and negate engagement with endogenous African scholars' theoretical contribution. In such studies, challenges which engulf HBUs are simplistically reduced to the lack of resources and corruption, which are then viewed to be effects of apartheid, not colonialism. Contrary to this view, in this case study we see the conditioning structure to be effects of what Mamdani (1996) calls "decentralised despotism". Simply put, we view the continuing authoritarian and bureaucratic nature of practices prevalent in HBUs to be a legacy of colonial university structures now reproduced by black people.

Today UFH operates on three campuses, namely: Alice, which is the main campus;

Bhisho, which is mainly meant for part-time candidates; and East London, which is more urban in terms of location. This is a predominantly black-led university and there is sense of continuing authoritarianism, even though currently playing out through new managerialism and corporate culture. For instance, before our encounter with NATHEP, our induction was led by the human resource department (HRD) and was predominantly information sharing (using a top-down approach). As part of the induction, HRD practitioners presented information about university culture, organisational structure (bureaucratic structure), policies and procedures (legalities), history of the university and information about the university mission and vision statements. Even though the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) was involved in the induction of academic staff, this was simply information sharing (to make academics feel at home) rather than a pedagogical encounter.

In the next phase, known as the social interaction phase, agents interact with contexts (structural and cultural) to exercise their agency in specific ways, in an open system. While social agents have influence over their social conditions based on their vested interests and bargaining power (Archer, 1995), there are also consequences of interaction (context dependent) that cannot be predicted. In this phase, social actors and primary and corporate agents interact to demonstrate their agency in relation to context. These actions or choices show agents' personal emergent properties, which through concerns, dedication and deliberation interact with structural and cultural emergent properties of the context.

Based on how these agents and actors read and responded to the challenges and opportunities before them and by analysing agents and their choices, we can see how power is mediated and whether systems can actually change.

Social interaction phase (T2-3)

In this phase, we report on our interactions with context as we were trying to reimagine induction at UFH in line with lessons gained through NATHEP. Drawing from insights gained during deliberations at NATHEP, we felt strongly that induction at our university had to be reimaged. It became clear to us that academics have different needs, and expectations which relate to pedagogic challenges in the UFH context. A joint sitting between TLC and HRD was proposed to review the programme. This was followed by joint meetings and workshops between HRD and TLC whereby a new induction was eventually developed. This deliberative approach enabled the TLC to insist on the introduction of NATHEP-informed induction programme, which privileges the deliberations of academics over topics and issues around teaching and learning. We also introduced the idea of issuing certificates to motivate attendance at the end of the year, and the certificate is linked with completion of a reflective portfolio (we elaborate on this at T4).

Enacting the NATHEP induction project at UFH

Today, TLC is responsible for academic induction at UFH. Academic developers (AD) focus their presentations on teaching skills, pedagogies/methodologies. Academics are then inducted for three days and this usually takes place in venues outside the institution to allow focus and attention without interruptions. In this induction, new academics are exposed to various student and staff development programmes offered at TLC. We therefore cover topics related to student development and support, staff development, curriculum development and quality assurance.

Elaboration phase (T4)

In this phase, emphasis is put on whether the interaction between agents and contexts resulted in reproduction of the status quo or transformation. We wanted to understand the extent to which our encounter with NATHEP enabled the intended objectives of the project and if not, how such practices could be improved to achieve transformation goals. To capture nuances about efficacy of the pedagogical modality of our induction, we employed Maton's (2005, 2013) legitimation code theory (LCT).

Legitimation code theory

LCT is a sociological framework for the research and analysis of social practices (Maton, 2014). We use the semantics dimension of the LCT to analyse induction practices as forms of pedagogy. In this semantics dimension of the LCT, semantic structures whose organising principles are determined by two constructs which vary in strength, semantic gravity and semantic density, are explored. The continua of strengths of semantic gravity and semantic density can be visualised as axes of the semantic plane with four principal modalities (Maton, 2020):

- Rhizomatic codes (SG-, SD+), where the basis of achievement comprises relatively context-independent and complex stances;
 - Prosaic codes (SG+, SD-), where legitimacy accrues to relatively context-dependent and simpler stances;
 - Rarefied codes (SG-, SD-), where legitimacy is based on relatively context-independent stances that are relatively simpler; and
 - Worldly codes (SG+, SD+), where legitimacy is accorded to relatively context-dependent stances that are relatively complex.
-

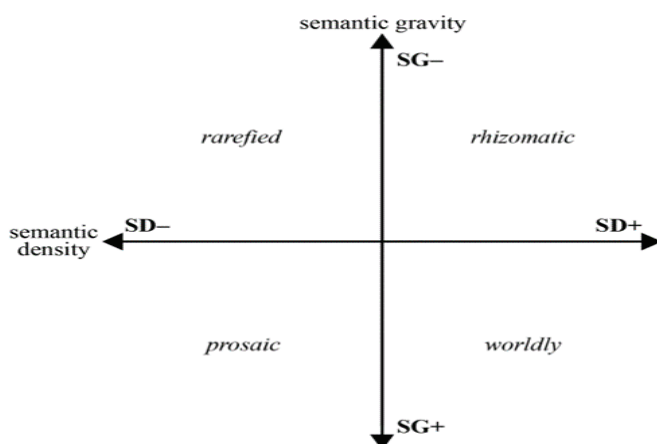


Figure 63
Semantic plane
 – adapted from
 Maton (2014)

Semantic gravity (SG) refers to the degree to which meaning relates to its context. Semantic gravity may be relatively stronger (+) or weaker (-) along a continuum of strengths (Maton 2013, 2020). The stronger the semantic gravity (SG+), the more meaning is dependent on its context; the weaker the semantic gravity (SG-), the less dependent meaning is on its context.

All meanings relate to a context of some kind; semantic gravity conceptualises how much they depend on that context to make sense (Maton, 2013). For NATHEP, context matters, and this is explained in depth in the development of NATHEP's CRITicAl Framework (see Chapter Three). The fundamental question which guided NATHEP was whether the critical professional development approach embraced by the project created necessary conditions for the positive exercise of responsive agency. We wanted to understand how this critical professional development was mediated by academic staff developers across historically differentiated South African universities (Behari-Leak, 2021).

Using the semantics dimension of the LCT, we interrogated the extent to which pedagogical interventions adopted in our induction programme enabled participants to understand our university context (SG+). In that way, we expected the strength of semantic gravity to be stronger when induction practices engage with complexities of our context and weaker when context is ignored. Semantic density (SD) refers to the degree of condensation of meaning within socio-cultural practices, whether these comprise symbols, terms, concepts, phrases, expressions, gestures and clothing (Maton, 2013). Semantic density may be relatively stronger (+) or weaker (-) along a continuum of strengths. The stronger the semantic density (SD+), the more meanings are condensed within practices; the weaker the semantic density (SD-), the less meanings are condensed. The nature of

these meanings may comprise formal definitions, empirical descriptions, feelings, political sensibilities, taste, values, morals, affiliations (Maton, 2013; Georgiou, 2020). The strength of semantic density is not intrinsic to a practice but rather relates to the semantic structure within which it is located (and thus can change). Again, NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework is framed through critical social theory (CST) (Collins, 1998; Calhoun, 1995), which brings together two strands of a multidisciplinary knowledge base. In LCT terms, this speaks to strengthening of semantic density (SD+). The CST adopted by NATHEP goes even further, to strengthen semantic density by embracing decolonial theory and praxis (SD++). One can therefore say, NATHEP embraces explanatory critique which allows for the emergence of new concepts as the theory travels across different contexts (SD++). We take motion to be the fundamental principle of being and as such, we embrace continuous development of theories (SD+++...) as long as people continue to face different forms of injustices. In the next section, we use the LCT semantic dimension to analyse evolution of induction practices at UFH from the pre-NATHEP period to date.

Academic analysis of the induction practices at UFH

As we indicated from the onset, there was a form of induction programme at UFH that was led by HRD. This was a two-pronged approach, in which the general induction was facilitated by HRD even though the academic induction was facilitated by the TLC. This TLC academic induction programme (IP) was initiated in 2007 at UFH through funding from the South African Norway Tertiary Education Development (SANTED). The objectives were:

- to make new employees feel at home in their new positions and working environment as quickly as possible;
- to allow them to contribute effectively as soon as possible;
- to assist new staff members to familiarise themselves with the institutional history, expectations, processes and procedures;
- to refresh their knowledge of teaching and learning paradigms;
- to introduce them to the institutional approach to community engagement and research (two other important pillars other than teaching and learning);
- to introduce them to the different support services;
- to provide opportunities for bonding and bridging with colleagues and important role players; and
- to facilitate their adjustment to the university community as smoothly as possible (UFH induction policy, see Scheckle, 2014).

Looking at these objectives it is clear that this induction model resembles what Maton termed prosaic code (SG+, SD-), as the focus was merely immediate context. Maton describes this code as a situation where legitimacy accrues to relatively context-dependent and simpler stances. The problem with this pedagogical modality is that it flattens the world. Everything is viewed as neutral and

there is no conception of a university as a sociological entity with positions and practices conditioned by history. It is for this reason that we felt that lessons brought by NATHEP required a new conceptualisation of the induction programme at UFH. However, while we have managed to reconceptualise the induction programme to focus on issues raised at NATHEP, the challenge continues due to lack of capacity at UFH. Another challenge is that senior managers would simply come and present information without engagement with complex issues as envisaged by our reimagined programme.

Reimagined induction

Our academic induction programme has been developed to align with insights derived from NATHEP. We have tried to provide workshops for our colleagues who have also tried to embrace the principles and theoretical tools from NATHEP. We note however that our challenge is that TLC does offer leadership capacity development programme and as such, cannot have influence over their presentations. We will therefore not analyse informational presentations, safe to say it continues to reflect a “prosaic code”. Even with TLC facilitators, there continues to be gaps which we believe present challenges that we might overcome through continuous and constant deliberations at TLC.

We have observed that induction about curriculum, teaching and learning assessment continue to be introduction to what Lange (2017) calls the “exoskeleton of curriculum”. This simply refers to the South African HE contexts’ obsession with forms and templates for curriculum development and renewal and this is mainly for compliance and accreditation purposes. In relation to this, academics are also introduced to complicated jargon like exit levels, assessment standards, constructive alignment and many other technocratic concepts associated with outcomes-based education. In our LCT analysis, this resembles what Maton calls “rarefied codes” (SG-, SD-). This is where legitimacy is based on relatively context-independent stances that are relatively simpler. This is basically “no code” as this cannot help academics understand fundamental curriculum problems, which require clear understanding of the constitutive relationship between knowledge and power.

Induction practices also pay attention to the use of technology as a pedagogical resource for learning. Here, we have an interesting move where technology is viewed as a pedagogical tool which can enhance flexible student learning and inclusion. This is captured nicely in one of the presentations: Technology Enhanced Learning (TeL) at the University of Fort Hare serves to enhance student engagement and provide inclusive learning environments through the leveraging of both existing and emerging technologies for the purposes of Teaching and Learning. The TeL team provides flexible support structures for the ongoing support and development of

teaching and learning strategies in the context of Technology Enhanced Learning, informed by pedagogical principles and practices. It is clear that TEL facilitators are conscious that some students are marginalised and therefore pedagogies need to be “inclusive”. This also takes into consideration that technology support should be ongoing to cater for different student needs. At a theoretical level, we also see awareness of different knowledge bases that should be integrated to develop pedagogical technological agency. This is illustrated in the following diagram:

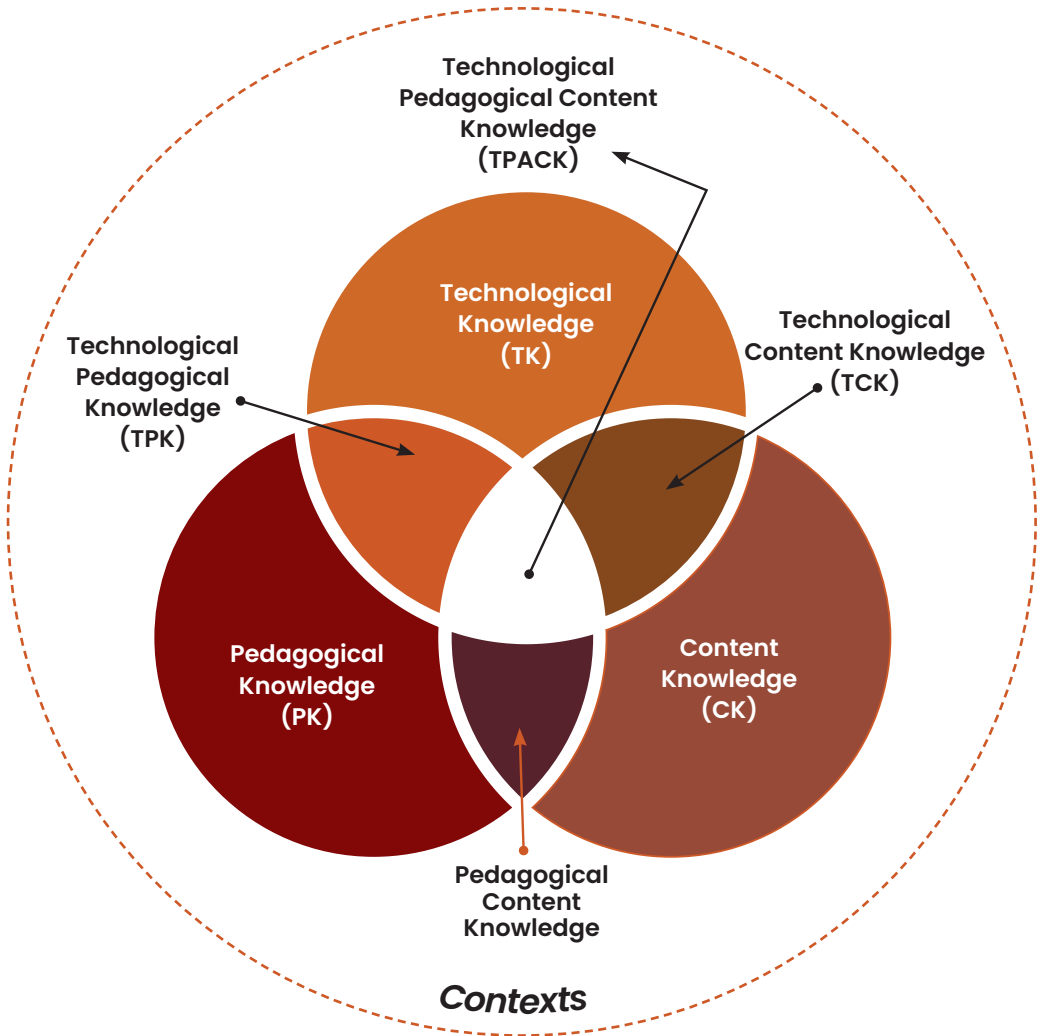


Figure 64 TPACK: Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge

Using LCT semantics, this TeL resembles a worldly code (SG+, SD+). There is a clear understanding of the context (classroom or pedagogical) SG+ and TPACK provide theoretical tools (SD+) which are important for understanding classroom complexities. However, in the context with a history like ours, the strength of semantic gravity should be more strengthened by reference to contextual realities encountered by students from UFH who some, if not the majority, come from deep rural areas where there is a scarcity of resources. One would therefore question as to how these academics engage with TeL for “citizens and subjects” as conceptualised by Mamdani (1996). This therefore means that as the context changes and becomes complex there is a possibility of a more nuanced understanding of TPACK. In Maton’s terms we can therefore see strengthening of semantic density (SD++). Decolonial scholars would therefore see TPACK as mere extraversion if it does not speak to the realities of UFH.

Another interesting presentation was that of the teaching portfolio. Reasons for development of a teaching portfolio were presented as:

- To meet institutional requirements;
- To submit for consideration for the teaching and excellence awards;
- For promotion or tenure process, and
- For personal development and teaching satisfaction.

In this instance, the portfolio is simply presented as a tool for extrinsic factors not intellectual pedagogical development overtime. The e-portfolio is also viewed like a “fashionable” or trending tool with no justification of its pedagogical benefit. We can therefore code this portfolio as “rarefied codes” (SG-, SD-), where legitimacy is based on relatively context-independent stances that are relatively simpler. In this context, the value of this portfolio is not explained. This is not to say there can be no benefits for the e-portfolio but presently, these benefits are not explored.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we provided insights into our journey in enacting insights acquired through NATHEP at UFH. We started by providing the historical context, which we believe continues to condition the practices of actors at UFH. Drawing from the social realist approach embraced at NATHEP, we then moved on to show how we mediated buy-in for the reimagined NATHEP aligned induction programme. This was followed by details on how the revised NATHEP induction is implemented and challenges encountered. In the last phase, we provided an analysis of the current induction practices using the LCT semantic dimension. In conclusion, we want to note that the new MM cycle has begun. The current induction practices are influenced by our NATHEP participation and place emphasis on thinking about induction as a pedagogical encounter. Our new teaching strategy shows clearly how NATHEP played a role to change our orientations to teaching and learning.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND



University of Zululand: A Reflective Account of Participation

Noluthando Toni

Introduction

The University of Zululand (UNIZULU) is one of the universities that joined the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) from its inception in 2018. The institution's representation changed a couple of times due to various institutional circumstances. During the initial stages, the university was represented by two senior academic developers who were also curriculum specialists. In 2019 one of them left the employ of the university and the representation of the university was reduced to one. In the latter months of 2019, another participant who was a writing centre coordinator joined the project and UNIZULU representation was once again restored to two participants.

The senior academic developer (AD) who was on the programme longer, served as the anchor and worked very closely with the writing centre coordinator to ensure the university's full participation. In October 2020 the NATHEP community received the sad news of the senior AD's passing. This incident resulted in UNIZULU being represented by only one participant, the writing centre coordinator, who continued her participation until she also left the employ of the university on 7 December 2021. All three participants contributed in various ways in their attempts to advance the goals of the project and the induction programme at UNIZULU. The succeeding sections provide a synopsis of what they reported at various stages and periods of their participation. Their inputs focused on developments in the induction of new academics at UNIZULU and how their participation on NATHEP contributed to those developments. During the early stages of drafting the UNIZULU case study, the senior AD and the writing centre coordinator framed their case around "moving academics from the periphery to the centre of teaching and learning" at the university. The framing later became the title of the case study. The resignations and the passing of the senior AD led to the non-finalisation of the case study. The synopsis below draws on their previously submitted activities to explicate the work done during their NATHEP participation.

Institutional context

The participants described UNIZULU as the only institution that is located in the northern parts of KwaZulu-Natal within uMhlathuze municipality. It was established in 1960 as a university college and in 1970 it was granted university status. UNIZULU has two campuses: the main campus, which is located at the township of KwaDlangezwa, and an urban Richards Bay campus. Given the rurality of the area where the main campus is situated, most students who are admitted come from

backgrounds of low socioeconomic status. The first-year experience survey shows that 72.06% of students enrolled in the institution are from rural schools in South Africa, with 94.50% being from KwaZulu-Natal (KZN).

Induction of new academics at UNIZULU

According to the submissions of the participants, UNIZULU inducts new academics from the day of appointment. This action is regarded as part of moving the new academics towards the centre of learning and teaching at UNIZULU. This is important because as new academics join the university, many are not familiar with the different activities that relate to teaching and learning, administrative issues, culture and structures of the university. The induction process orientates newly appointed academics into the entirety of the institution and is also meant to provide them with a glimpse of enablers and constraints within the institution.

It is important to note that the induction programme at the university went through various iterations that were influenced by numerous factors, including NATHEP. Some of the developments were intentional and designed to empower new academics to exercise their agency within the institution for improved learning and teaching. The participants facilitated these processes of change because, in my view, they drew from Trower and Knight's explication of induction programmes, as cited by van Vuuren, Herman and Adendoff (2022, p.77) as "professional practices designed to facilitate the entry of new recruits to an organisation and equip them to operate effectively within it". It is for this reason that they reconceptualised their programme around moving it from the periphery to the centre.

Induction stages

During participation in NATHEP, the induction of academic staff at UNIZULU was reported as taking place in four stages as determined by the institution's induction policy. According to data previously submitted by participants, prior to them joining NATHEP, the four induction stages were offered in silos and were done by different departments as follows:

- Stage 1:** Workplace induction – done by the head of department (HOD) or immediate line manager.
 - Stage 2:** Job induction – conducted by the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC).
 - Stage 3:** Occupational health and safety – done by the health and safety representative together with the local area first aid office.
 - Stage 4:** University corporate induction – conducted by human resources (HR).
-

Presenting the four stages in silos meant that some of the aspects were repeated which resulted in academic staff not attending some of the stages because of possible replication and repetition. Feedback received from academics as reported by the participants, after the delivery of the four stages, indicated that there was limited communication among personnel in charge of the different stages of the induction programme. Doing away with the silo approach meant the induction programme was moved away from a box-ticking exercise towards a meaningful academic development process as articulated in the NATHEP curriculum framework that is referred to in the latter parts of this chapter and other chapters of this book.

The participants, as academic developers, were part of stage two i.e., induction by the teaching and learning centre. A brief description of stage two is given as a way of summarising what the participants submitted when they were part of the NATHEP.

Induction before the NATHEP programme

Stage 2 was conducted twice a year. The first cycle was held at the beginning of the first semester and the second one was facilitated at the beginning of the second semester. On both occasions the duration of the programme was three days. The induction programme was facilitated based on commonsense knowledge and practices that an academic should be made aware of. The programme paid less attention to foundational values, knowledge/s and skills that the new academics needed to be adequately inducted to the ethos of the university. The focus was primarily on introducing academics to the fundamentals of teaching and learning and assessment based on the outcomes-based learning approach. The delivery of the programme was mostly in a lecture or presentation mode, with limited participation from inductees.

Aspects that were covered during the three-day induction programme were, among others, understanding the higher education context, fundamentals of teaching-and-learning and assessment within an outcomes-based education (OBE), the link between teaching, research, and community engagement, curriculum design and quality assurance, portfolio development and teaching with technology. The new academics were also given essential UNIZULU documentation that consisted of relevant policies including the Strategic Plan and the Institutional Operating Plan. This was done to give them knowledge related to the legislation guiding their professional practice. Student development and support information was also shared.

Induction during NATHEP

The four-stage format was maintained but the stages were done jointly so as not to repeat similar aspects. The four stages were kept to illustrate to new academics how the different sections of the university assist in doing their work. The same topics and stakeholders (HR, research office, community engagement office, etc.) remained as an integral part of the programme. The key difference was that the induction before NATHEP had no theoretical underpinning. NATHEP participation led to the integration of Archer's (1996) realist social theory of structure, culture and agency and the reflexive aspect of the NATHEP CRITICAL Framework into the planning and delivery of the programme.

The theoretical framework assisted participants with improved ways to frame the induction programme to encourage discussion about enabling and constraining conditions to come up with ways to provide continued support, taking into consideration the new academics' experiences. UNIZULU participants firmly believed that NATHEP participation empowered them to design and deliver interactive sessions that were relevant to each individual that participated on the induction programme. In their submissions, they articulated their efforts in designing a programme that has elements of belonging, peer learning and holistic development as described by van Vuuren et al. (2022).

With the support from the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Teaching and Learning (DVC T&L) a review of the three-day biannual programme was conducted. It was agreed that the programme needed to be extended to six months with four days being the basic (normal programme that was done over three days). After the four days the new academics would be given evaluation forms and parts of the evaluation forms required identification of specific areas needed for enhancement of teaching practice.

This meant that the follow-up six months would focus on designing (and delivering) an induction that concentrates on individual needs. Academics appreciated the revised format, and they saw its relevance to their growth, better understanding of the context and improved teaching practice.

Conclusion

Dr Sithembiso Ngubane who ended up being the key role player was consistent in ensuring that feedback was given at the required times. He was very instrumental in ensuring that there was sufficient data to generate this brief reflective narrative. When Ms Mbalenhle Ngema ended up being the sole participant, she did her best to keep the project going even during the COVID-19 challenges. One of the main challenges that she mentioned was the difficulty of moving the programme

onto online platforms. She reported a desperate need for an intensive training on effective online facilitation. This would have led to a pre-induction course where new academics would be familiarised with the institution's learning management system.

Both Dr Ngubane and Ms Ngema expressed appreciation of the NATHEP journey. They stated that:

“At beginning and end of our participation in the NATHEP programme changed how we viewed our role and how we interpreted structural relationships within the institution. The changed way of thinking resulted in a model of induction that took into consideration all aspects of contexts of our new academics. The changed way of thinking resulted in a model of induction that was informed by reflection of our practices”.

A word of gratitude also goes to Dr Mziwakhe Sibugashe who never hesitated to avail himself to answer questions during bouts of doubts when needed to verify information. Dr Sibugashe also provided summaries and pieces of information that were not at Ms Ngema's disposal.

As the mentor for this team, I witnessed the participants' commitment in ensuring that their induction programme was underpinned by theory and that was reflected in the revised programme structure. The various iterations were not only guided by Archer's (1996) realist social theory, but the participants were also invested in applying the NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework. The participants were invested in designing and delivering a relevant, contextualised, responsive and theorised programme. They reflected on their inductees' feedback and used the inputs to construct a revised induction programme.

 @NATHEP

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NATHEP

**NEW
ACADEMICS
TRANSITIONING
INTO HIGHER
EDUCATION
PROJECT**



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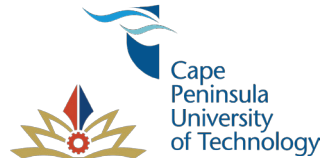


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NATHEP

PART THREE

Conclusion:
**Final Reflections, Future
Directions and Broader
Implications**

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Cross-Case Synthesis: Insights from 10 University Contexts

Noluthando Toni

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the identification and analysis of common themes, discourses, and learnings that emerged from the case studies. It delves into the design, delivery and changes in the induction programmes across the participating universities. The identification of thematic threads was informed by data presented as part of the narratives, discourses and evidence offered and described in the case studies. As much as the case studies share similar principles in terms of expatiating how the induction programmes were framed (consciously or subconsciously) before the authors joined the national collaborative New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP), each case study is presented in a unique format, drawing on the context of each institution and the learnings from NATHEP. The specific and unique nature of each case study called for an analysis that goes beyond the structural changes to appreciate various dynamics and elements that inform how the induction programmes were conceptualised, the kinds of changes that were introduced and the impact of NATHEP on the participants. The changes and analysis of the induction programmes are embedded in Acher's (1995) morphogenetic model of change. Due attention is paid to why certain elements were included or excluded in the narratives and what is excavated from the case studies. Institutional histories (multi-campus elements, institutional types, etc.), strategic foci (missions and visions) and policy imperatives form part of the elements that contribute to the types of changes that were made to the programmes.

The chapter builds from previous chapters that explicate the rationale of the project and the conceptualisation of academic induction programmes in higher education. In line with key elements of social realism, the chapter delves into enabling and constraining factors and how the factors informed the changes. NATHEP's critical curriculum and pedagogical and methodological framework, referred to in the previous and succeeding chapters as the CRiTicAL Framework, serves as a golden thread that runs through all the case studies. Moreover, each case study elicits and expands on elements of the framework to inform and justify the reimagined induction programmes and the repertoire of pedagogical approaches embedded in the delivery of the programme. Due to various circumstances, institutional and contextual factors, some case narratives are incomplete, but there is sufficient data to contribute to the analysis of the processes embarked on by the participants at various periods and intervals of the project.

For ease of navigating the chapter and as a way of providing an outline, I start off by presenting the lens and tools of analysis that I refer to as methodological considerations. The common threads across the case narratives that clarify the conditions before, during and after NATHEP called for an explication of the change process before delving into the pre-, during and post-NATHEP programmes. Contextual and institutional backgrounds are elaborated on as a way of setting the scene for the contents and nature of analysis. The latter sections of the chapter are summative in nature and cover aspects that impacted on the programmes and the participants who were charged with the responsibility of reimagining the induction programmes.

Methodological considerations

Narratives from the case studies dictated that I use categorisation and formation of connections as analytical strategies (Maxwell, 2012). The process involved a certain level of coding where units of data from the case narratives were labelled and put in discrete categories. The examination of the categories led to comparisons where similarities and common themes were identified. It is imperative to mention that this process was not just a similarity-based categorisation, but the process also involved the identification of aspects of the narratives that are closely related, thus forming connections (Bazeley, 2013). In identifying similarities, it became easier to recognise contrasts in practices and that added to the themes and explication of processes and in essence confirming the naming of the categories. The thematic analysis resulted in the identification and examination of common patterns from the summaries of all the case studies. In forming connections, I relied heavily on Labov's structural analysis (Bazeley, 2013, p.208). As much as I had been privy to the developments of practices in the participating institutions as a SC (SC) member, Labov's model and the accompanying elements added a layer of criticality to the process. This was done to minimise potential bias from the perspective of being an insider in being a mentor and a SC member.

The process of traversing the various conceptual and theoretical frameworks (NATHEP's CRITicAL Framework and critical realism) referred to in the case studies, provided me with multiple lenses that also served as additional analytical tools and approaches. The narratives fitted snugly to Labov's six elements of structural analysis indicated below:

- **Abstract** – a summary of the sequence of events in the narrative;
 - **Orientation** – sets up the time, place, situation, participants, and initial behaviour;
 - **Complicating actions** – reports a sequence of events, each given in response of a potential question, "And what happened [then]?";
-

- **Evaluation** – consequences for the needs and desires of the narrator;
- **Resolution** – what finally happened;
- **Coda** – a final return to the present in a way that precludes the question, “And what happened then?”

(Bazeley, 2013, p.208).

The above elements, in most cases, were similar to how the narratives took shape. Participants, as evident in the case studies, gave historical overviews of their institutions; previous conceptualisations of their programmes; developments prior to joining NATHEP; the NATHEP era and influences thereof; the process of revising programmes and what informed the revisions; and finally talking to the nature of the revised programmes and the impact on the designers of the induction programmes (NATHEP participants), the academics who are participants on the induction programmes, and the envisaged impact on students. This process returns to NATHEP framing and purpose and demonstrates the ethos of the cascading model. In the end, the culmination of the stated outcomes is evident in all the sections of the book.

The change process

The theory of change is used as a container for the chapter and identifies various transition points that are evident and discussed in the case studies. The preceding chapters explained the framing of the collaborative project where the case studies were incubated. The explication is underpinned by critical realism (Bhaskar, 1955; Archer, 2000, 2003). NATHEP in its conceptualisation paid particular attention to the professional development of participants, all being academic developers (ADs) who are the authors of the case studies. The professional capacitation of ADs was mainly focused on the analysis and (re)design of induction programmes that aimed to enhance academics as university teachers and ultimately improve the academic experiences of students. One of the main focal points for each institution was to evaluate the previous induction programme as part of the narrative and describe what existed before NATHEP. The subsequent steps involved the identification of the enabling and constraining factors and ultimately designing programmes that are theorised and enhance the pedagogical approaches of both the academic developers and the newly appointed academics. This approach talks to the cascading model that is referred to in the preceding section and the introductory chapters of the book. As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the changes were not only applied to induction programmes, but the participants were also positively impacted by the multi-year programme.

The various transition points of the induction programmes are indicative of the ever-changing nature of the higher education landscape (Dacin, Goodstein & Scott,

2002; Doring, 2002) as well as the static elements thereof. Some of the changes effected in the programmes over time were informed by systemic factors such as mergers, some emanated from organisational redesign processes, and some were due to the evolution of professional developmental practices. In addition, NATHEP served as the catalyst in all the case studies. Of utmost importance is the layered role of academic developers in their quest to establish a legitimate, collaborative foundation for enhanced pedagogical practices (Debowski, 2014). Keeping with the cascading model advocated by NATHEP, the desired educational experiences of students would give credence to or legitimise the adopted pedagogical practices. The succeeding sections delve into the histories of the institutions, the nature of the programmes, and the changes, discourses and lessons learned over the duration of the project.

Contextual matters and institutional backgrounds

It is to be noted that the collaborative project covered various institutional types. When describing their institutions participants saw it fit to include in the background sections the typologies of their institutions as that speaks directly to the South African higher education landscape. Participating institutions ranged from traditional universities to universities of technology (UoTs) comprehensive and merged institutions. Of the four comprehensive universities two were products of a merger and the other two were not. One of the comprehensive institutions that was not part of a merger exited the project due to circumstances covered in one of the preceding chapters, while another merged and then demerged.

The contextual realities of the different institutions are embedded in the cultures and histories of the institutions and the design and delivery of the induction programmes. The delivery of the programmes encompasses pedagogical approaches and the selection of presenters or facilitators. One case refers to “outsourcing” that emanated from historical, structural and cultural complexities. In some instances, the physical location contributed to a high rate of staff turnover, leaving young and inexperienced staff taking up academic posts. This detail about the high rate of staff turnover is highlighted because it provides another layer of analysis between the developmental needs of new staff and the design and delivery of some of the programmes. This thematic strand is linked to one of Labov’s elements of structural analysis, which covers the place, situation, participants and initial behaviour (Bazeley, 2013). Furthermore, some of the contextual issues form connections with constraining and enabling factors.

Narratives around the histories of the institutions brought to the fore factors such as rurality and socio-economic backgrounds of students. In most institutions the demographics of students mirror those of the country. These factors were common

in most of the case studies. Moreover, factors such as rurality and multi-campus design added to the complexities of delivering induction programmes. These complexities were picked up from the data collected for needs analysis conducted by most institutions. Although the data were collected for the development of the new programme, in certain instances the final contents of what was presented were the same as what was presented before. This is a connection formed from what is discussed in the succeeding sections of this chapter around the gaps identified by participants in their original programmes. In explicating the gaps, reference to the constraining cultural and structural factors in most cases are connected to the histories of the institutions. Of importance, the agentic role of academic developers is not only presented as a thematic strand, but also served as a tool that informed the transformation processes on the programmes and participants. It is to be noted that not changing the contents of certain themes and/or focus areas does not reflect a lack of change as most institutions adapted their pedagogical approaches applied by academic developers. Details of the adaptations will be covered in the succeeding sections.

Design of the induction programme before NATHEP

Academic induction programmes are part of professional development of academic staff aimed at enhancing teaching and learning expertise, among others, of new and/or early career academics (Behari-Leak et al., 2020; van Vuuren, Herman & Adendorff, 2022). As much as “new” academics in some institutions included experienced academics who are new to the institution, in most cases new academics are early career academics, hence the need for holistic programmes. Van Vuuren et al. (2022) accentuate elements of belonging, experience, doing and becoming as factors that should be included in induction programmes. That therefore means due care and attention should be given to the design and delivery of the programmes. It is imperative to discuss the various permutations of the programmes in conjunction with the pre-NATHEP curricula.

Structural conditions such as policy frameworks resulted in induction programmes being shared by human resources (HR) departments and learning and teaching or AD centres. This dual location impacted on the length and nature of the programmes. Pre-NATHEP programmes varied from a couple of days to six-month programmes. Whether the collaboration between HR and AD centres was cordial or not, the duration, specifically the shorter ones resulted in extremely full programmes where a lot of information was conveyed to academics. The nature of some of these sessions could be described as “general orientation” to the institution with teaching and learning information and processes also being allocated a slot. Presentations were mainly about university policies and marketing of services offered by various divisions.

The broad institutional onboarding nature of the contents of the programme left limited space for rigorous academic engagements. One example elucidated in one case described the content as being “dominated by graphic display of figures and numbers”. This speaks to the “information overload” referred to in most cases. Descriptions such as showcasing of services available within the institutions and going through aspects of the strategic plans are indicative of the general orientation and/or onboarding elements that were reported in pre-NATHEP programmes. The “information overload” was also highlighted by attendees when providing feedback to the coordinators of the programmes. Furthermore, the information sharing in some cases did not take into consideration cultural and structural factors, thus impeding the development of culturally relevant curricula. In addition, there was limited to no philosophical grounding. In cases where careful consideration to relevant theories was given, gaps about the application of those theories and the necessary linkages with contextual matters were identified. NATHEP’s CRITicAL Framework did not come by chance but emanated from those gaps.

A few cases highlighted processes that are linked to change management and the developmental needs of new academics. These cases are mainly those that had some philosophical foundations and plans for strengthening the curriculum and the delivery approaches. Pedagogical approaches espoused pre-NATHEP ranged from lecture mode (mainly with PowerPoint slides) due to limited time for the various topics, to collaborative learning and facilitation. There was little engagement from the part of inductees as the approaches resulted in them being passive recipients of information. This is contrary to the design elements espoused by van Vuuren et al. (2022), that include among others, establishing communities of practice, being and becoming reflective practitioners, raising contextual awareness and designing teaching, learning and assessment opportunities.

It is clear from the foregoing that participating institutions had some common gaps such as not taking into consideration contextual matters, untheorised programmes and unresponsive programmes. Pre-NATHEP programmes were further constrained by factors such as rurality in terms of sharing or extending resources. Participation of academics was also made difficult by packed timetables and unpredictable schedules.

The split in the use of on- and off-campus venues is an interesting element that emerged from the narratives. This thread is not necessarily only linked to the single or multicampus phenomenon. A few cases (three out of 10) mentioned the use of off-campus venues for more focused time or to minimise disruptions, and in other cases the point is implied. In one case the choice of venue (location or campus) was determined by where most of the university community was located. In one multicampus case, circumstances called for delivery at different campuses, meaning that programmes were facilitated on each campus or on some of the

campuses. In certain instances, faculties would request their own sessions due to specific needs of their staff and as a response to feedback. This factor is specifically mentioned because it formed part of the changes that were implemented.

Turning the tide during and post-NATHEP

As much as in some cases revisions evolved or occurred over time, NATHEP presented opportunities for self-introspection as well as exposure to relevant curriculum development and design for induction programmes. The above explication of the pre-NATHEP nature of induction programmes was gleaned from the evaluative narratives presented in the case studies. Of utmost importance is the alignment of the cross-case analysis methodology with how the case studies are presented. The presentation of the case studies is in line with Labov's six elements of structural analysis that is explicated in the preceding sections. All case studies view NATHEP as an enabling factor in their agentic roles of reimagining their induction programmes. Other enabling factors that emerged from the narratives are policy frameworks such as the induction charter that served as building blocks for the drafting of comprehensive induction policies. The University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), which continues to provide funding to universities for professional development programmes, and NATHEP are credited for offering enabling conditions for the design and enhancement of induction programmes.

Academic developers took bold steps in bringing about change in the (re) conceptualisation and delivery of the programmes. Even in one case where "outside presenters" were used, AD staff took responsibility for the delivery of the programme. The bold steps taken to disrupt the old order brought clear differentiation between general orientation and academic induction. Intentional professional development of academics for enhanced practice instead of presenting sessions for compliance purposes took centre stage. Contextualisation of content and delivery therefore became a common thread even in those cases where institutional participation on the project (NATHEP) had to be halted due to staff turnover.

A common view that ceases to perceive induction as a once-off event but as "continuous work in progress" emerged from the case studies. Some cases refer to an emergence of a new culture of induction. Induction is not just referred to as part of the continuous professional development of staff, ADs advocate for a balance between disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge. The change process instilled intentionality about the identification of constraining and enabling structural and cultural conditions. The intentionality is the agency that enabled ADs to be analytical about their programmes, (re)conceptualise their programmes and "design strategies to accomplish them" (Quinn, 2012, p.39). The reconceptualisation of the curricula is informed by various theoretical frameworks. The project presented a fertile ground for learning from peers as well as the theoretical grounding of the

project. Reflexivity as a critical element of forward action (Behari–Leak et al., 2020) is a thematic thread that is evident in all the case studies. Critical consciousness as the underlying feature of the reconceptualised programmes resulted in transformed praxis. A shift from information dumping to the application of critical pedagogies such as the pedagogy of engagement is another common thread. The case studies refer to blended and interactive learning and teaching strategies. Knowledge generation is at the centre of the transformed practices. Co-creation of knowledge by ADs and academics happens through, among others, pedagogies of knowledge production such as knowledge cafes. Various permutations of pedagogies of discomfort, of being and of becoming are applied in the revamped programmes. This speaks to the espoused cultivation of professional learning that is advocated by van Vuuren et al. (2022) confirming the expressed transformed, reshaped and established new culture.

Although not comprehensively elaborated on in most case studies, the pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation is applied in a few of the cases. In one case study this pedagogy is presented as a form of acknowledging the African culture as part of the lived experiences of academics (Ganas et al., 2021). Learnings from the NATHEP engagements were infused in the delivery of this programme. The extract below attests to adoption of the “centring of African culture”:

“Keeping with the African theme, we revisited the programme’s session about “Our institutional culture and ways of being and doing” to position the participants within the context of an African university and how it relates to personal and professional identities. Opening the session with a video clip of Thabo Mbeki’s speech titled “I am an African,” participants are asked to engage with the idea of being African by responding to the prompt”

NMU

The reconceptualisation of the programmes redefined the nature and purpose of induction for new academics. Participants also realised the importance of taking into consideration student voices. The voices and identities of ADs are evident in the reconceptualised programmes. The stories, analogies, poems and metaphors serve as expressions of ownership of the different journeys embarked on by the participants. The new programmes paid particular attention to the structure, duration and content of the programme. In some cases, the renewal process assisted by NATHEP resulted in the adoption of a variation of blended and synchronous and asynchronous online programmes.

Data gathering through the administration of questionnaires about career trajectories to ascertain teaching and research needs of new academics resulted in the design of responsive programmes that are linked to a “career-long learning approach to teaching development” as articulated in the national framework for

enhancing academics as university teachers (DHET, 2018). Narratives refer to either needs-based or responsive programmes. Reflexivity is also transferred to the new academics as they are required to keep portfolios of learning, not only as evidence of their learning but also as records of their professional development.

As indicated earlier, induction is reaffirmed as a continuous professional development process that is not just confined or squashed into a couple of days. Even in cases where the initial programme is two or three days long, there are follow-on sessions that are intended for continuity and linked to the process of becoming. Programmes in some institutions carry on for as long as six months and in one the continuation is offered in the form of a short learning programme. In other cases, there is deliberate articulation to other available professional development programmes. A few institutions give inductees who complete the programmes certificates of attendance.

As indicated above, the mode of delivery prior to COVID-19 was mainly face to face with one institution that attempted online asynchronous sessions after the initial face-to-face sessions. Challenges presented by the advent of COVID-19 and approaches/activities adopted to mitigate them are discussed in the next section.

Elements of the CRITicAL Framework assisted with the theorisation of the programmes. To supplement and bring practicality to Bhaskar's (1975) critical realism and Archer's (2000, 2003) social realism, participants relied heavily on the CRITicAL Framework. This is evident in the following excerpts from the case studies:

Moreover, to be fit for purpose, we constantly have to review, reimagine, reconceptualise and refocus. Such abilities are very beneficial for the development of both new staff and ADs as critical and reflective practitioners

TUT

Through responses provided by the survey, a customised induction that is more appropriate, relevant and responsive is created. Effective T&L usually takes pace when participants are actively involved.

UL

The artefact representation also brings out the academics' authenticity...

NMU

Navigating through the deep waters of COVID-19

The advent of COVID-19 in South Africa in March 2020 disrupted the traditional face-to-face and blended ways of teaching and learning. Academics were forced to suddenly shift to fully digital learning (Lundberg & Stigmar, 2022) or what was popularly referred to at the time as emergency online teaching and learning. In the beginning the continuation of academic induction programmes had to be

halted. This was also a time when ADs were inundated with requests to support academics to transition from face-to-face to emergency online teaching and learning. ADs themselves had to grapple with challenges of having been used to professional development programmes and activities, including induction programmes that were beginning to apply interactive pedagogies such as the pedagogy of engagement. There was no other alternative but to be agile and embrace online facilitation to academics who were already struggling to adjust. These conditions resulted in delayed implementation of induction programmes. Inequalities in terms of resources and inadequate infrastructure became more visible. Limitations on resources and in certain cases expertise contributed to the delays. Some institutions took the challenges presented by COVID-19 in their stride. Below are the two cases in point:

During our response to COVID-19, we had to adapt our blended approach to a fully online offering, and although it was quite intimidating it got our creative juices flowing. We learnt the technical nuances of online teaching, persevered, and were finally able to progress from a face-to-face to an online delivery in 2021.

TUT

Though blended learning has been part of ... the teaching and learning strategy, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the urgency to develop online teaching and online research capabilities among academics.

MUT

The impact and influence of NATHEP on the participants

One of the benefits of the collaborative project of NATHEP is cross-institutional learning. During the sessions and even in the final case studies, participants identified and applied elements of, and approaches used by other institutions to bolster their own programmes. Most participants/institutions found the pre-induction questionnaire used by one institution pre-NATHEP to be an invaluable instrument for collecting data for designing relevant curricula. One institution consequently labelled their programme as “need-based” induction. Another institution viewed the induction charter as presented by another institution as an element they could use in developing a concept document that would complement their induction policy.

The examples highlighted above demonstrate the value of sharing among professionals and building communities of practice. What emerged from the case studies was that learnings were accumulative or developed through years of engagement with one another and SC members who also acted as mentors. NATHEP workshops also became testing grounds for new ideas and approaches.

It is evident in the case studies that participants were empowered by NATHEP engagements. The extracts below serve as evidence of such development and empowerment.

Through the NATHEP project, we are able to identify our positions and reignited our agency in organising the induction in consultation with, but not led by, the HR department....by exercising our agency through the influence of NATHEP, the induction programme is now conducted as early as February or March and most importantly anytime during the year as and when a NA joins the university.

UNIVEN

...(NATHEP) has contributed to transforming, reshaping and establishing a new culture of academic induction, which has undergone three phases at MUT.

MUT

The transformation was realised through a reflective journey that started by engaging with NATHEP. Engaging with the CRITicAL Framework we were able to shift the programme from merely raising awareness to enabling the participants to approach learning and teaching more purposely.

SMU

Conclusion

It flows from the foregoing that the NATHEP achieved the goals contributing to professional development of academic developers with a focus on induction practices of new academics. A series of learning and engagement opportunities were created for the development and enhancement of theorised interactive induction programmes. As Quinn posits (2012, p.40), for AD practitioners to become a group of powerful corporate agents there needs to be availability of systemic enabling structures. NATHEP served as one such structure. As indicated in this chapter, NATHEP not only capacitated academic developers but also provided opportunities and apt approaches and frameworks for the (re)design and implementation of induction programmes. AD practitioners were provided with tools of analysis and ways of being and doing, as illustrated in the case studies. The journeys travelled by the participants and SC members led to improved programmes. Participants articulated the histories, the contexts and the cultures of their institutions. In doing so, constraining and enabling factors were brought to the fore. Accordingly, narratives of how they overcame and the types of changes that were affected were explained, as was how their agency was exercised.

The chapter not only expatiates on pre-, during- and after-NATHEP practices, but also highlights the common themes of theorised practices, revised curricula, articulation of the stages and ways of developments and the application of relevant pedagogical frameworks.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Closing the Loop: Meta-Analysis, Reflections and Perspectives

Kasturi Behari-Leak

Introduction

As we approach the end of this book and the New Academics Transitioning into Higher Education Project (NATHEP) itself, this chapter pays homage to the project, the participants, the process and the “product” through a meta-reflection of each component’s contributions to the aims and goals of the project. This meta-reflective process has been invaluable in promoting self-awareness and refining thinking and reflective practices on the project’s outcome. As explained in Chapter 1, NATHEP set out to prepare academic and professional developers to embark on well-theorised, conceptualised induction programmes that are contextualised and customised to respond to institutional, regional and national challenges. The project sought to first understand how induction practices were conceptualised and implemented across the sector and how these could be strengthened to achieve the transformation goals needed. This chapter is a critical meta-reflection on the project’s espoused and achieved outcomes and discusses how these played out in the different institutional contexts.

As part of the UCDP, the overarching aim of NATHEP was to enhance staff development capacity. We believe we did this well. Professional developers from the participating universities were capacitated to initiate and convene successful induction programmes at their institutions by focusing on pressing challenges of the current context and agency, with the aim of addressing historical and systemic challenges through a collaborative, consultative and inclusive process. This project enabled the enhancement of professional developers through double loop learning where a double morphogenesis (Archer, 2000) is likely to occur: as the professional developer transformed, so too would their beneficiaries transform through informed practice.

The project was designed to address the issue of scholarly practice, through theorisation and application. Both the practical and scholarly domains of the project were concerned with the conditions that enable or constrain the exercise of agency among professional and academic staff developers in higher education, conducive to the social inclusion of new academics and students. In NATHEP, we took these conditions to encompass structural and cultural contexts. The overarching project, as well as the case studies in this book, strongly proposes that institutional and national conditions, which include structural, fiscal, institutional climate, culture

and context, need to be conducive to the successful transition of newcomers and all academics. The project was intent on foregrounding our location in the global South and Africa as an important lever in induction programmes, to address questions of transformation and decolonisation in HE. The NATHEP practical and research components provided evidence of how stagnant things can become if not injected with the relevant epistemic and methodological infusions geared towards positive change.

What has NATHEP achieved?

Through its rationale, contextual underpinnings, theoretical spine and pedagogical and methodological approaches, NATHEP succeeded in developing principles for a range of induction approaches, relative to different contexts, through a collaborative, consultative and inclusive process. It shone the torch on the need for well-theorised, scholarly and critical approaches to academic staff development in the national sector. By engaging professional developers in ways that build their confidence in creating and convening successful induction programmes at their institutions, NATHEP addressed historical and systemic challenges at these universities, and created a new cadre of staff developers who can respond to the pressing challenges of the present but also an unknown future. Through this approach, NATHEP realised its aim of advocating for the emergence of professional developers who are critical agents of change (Postma, 2015).

Given the complexity and contested nature of the current higher education landscape based largely on historical imbalances as well as the current demands on the system, this book, through the case studies, unpacked the numerous challenges staff developers and new academics face as they embed themselves in disciplinary and institutional contexts. With systemic conditions not being conducive to critical agency and social justice, current induction practices for new academics are inadequate to the task of transformation in higher education (Behari-Leak, 2015), making new academics especially vulnerable (Behari-Leak, 2017). NATHEP thus makes a strong case for critical professional development as an imperative.

NATHEP's insights

NATHEP's deep involvement with 10 university partners in creating contextualised induction programmes for different contexts, has led to specific insights about professional development. This rich set of lenses or foci that emerged in the research may be used by professional development practitioners elsewhere, to imbue their contextual work with criticality and creativity. These foci are presented

below through the intentional and deliberate use of #hashtags, used in social media to attract attention and to give importance to content by driving traffic to content to boost views, likes, and shares (O'Brien, 2023). Here, we use these hashtags to signal the importance of paying attention to specific challenges in the HE context that need our urgent attention if we are to effect change. Linking the hashtags to the cascade model of staff development (discussed in Chapter 4), we acknowledge that while the focus of NATHEP has been staff development and staff developers, the foci presented below are equally relevant to university teachers (new and established), students, management, curriculum developers and learning designers.

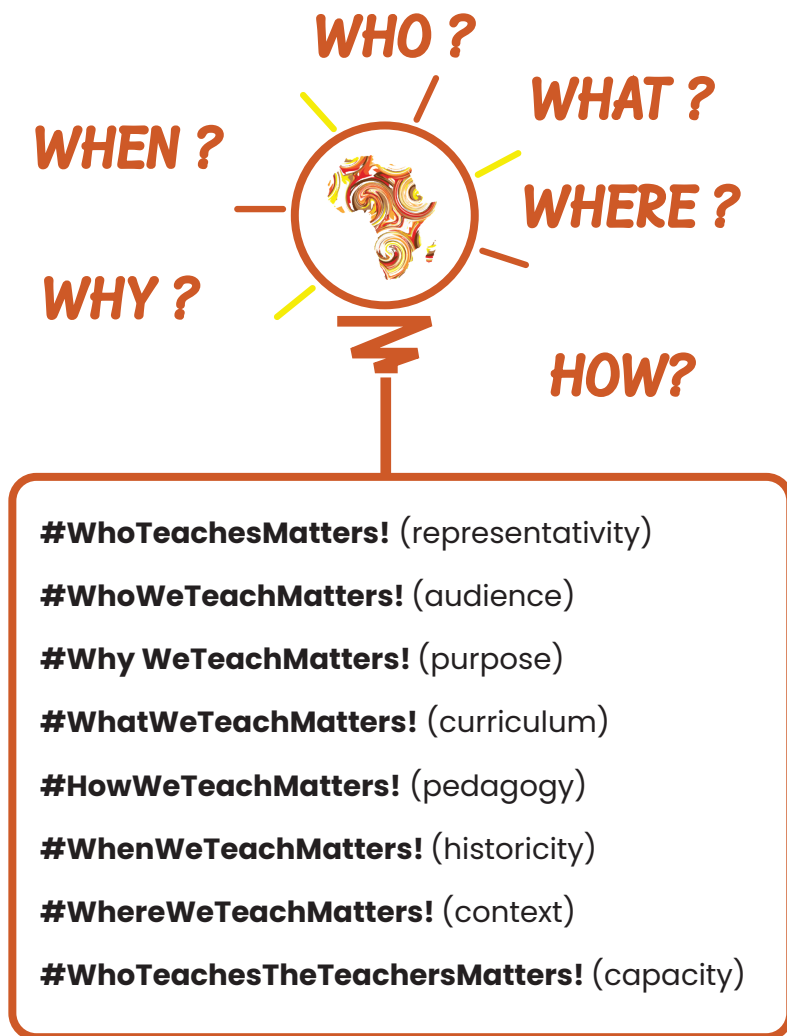


Figure 65 Focal areas for Contextualised Teaching

These hashtags or foci, emergent through each phase of the project, signal what we consider(ed) to be important components if professional development is to be critical and responsive to specific contexts. Through NATHEP as well as this book, we were able to identify and analyse what is needed for moving into a new phase of academic staff development nationally. In relation to the project's aims and goals for induction, we assert that the process must be managed with care, as this is a critical transition for newcomers into HE. By being responsive and not generic in their enactment, we assert that professional development programmes (PDPs) that aim for transformations across systems and not just in individuals, need to recognise that both the parts and the people are implicated and responsible, if real change is to occur.

While all the hashtags above are salient and have been discussed in various ways throughout the book, the focus in this meta-reflection on the espoused and real achievements of the project is two hashtags namely, *#WhereWeTeachMatters!* (context) and *#WhoTeachesTheTeachersMatters!* (capacity). The emphasis on these two key themes in this chapter is to highlight links with the project aims, but in no way reduce or negate the importance and relevance of the full list of hashtags or themes identified above.

#WhereWeTeachMatters! (context)

Throughout the project and the book, we have emphasised the importance of context. In higher education (HE) globally and locally, it is now a well-known refrain that context matters. In the context of decolonisation in Africa, this refocus is acutely important as we need to find a voice that articulates the needs of this context to respond with interventions that are relevant and contextualised. When we delve deeper into the issue of context, we see that it is not merely geographical or physical. Context includes aspects of epistemology, knowledge generation and a sense of being, belonging and inclusion. These textures (nuances, granularity, specificities) are critical to understanding nuance in the context. When we can weave the texture into the context to bring about meaningful change, we are signalling that the combination of context and texture, namely "contexture", is important in bringing different components together, to be viewed holistically (Warren, 2019). By making explicit the act, process, or manner of weaving parts into a whole, contexture allows the invisible to be seen, the silent to be heard and the tacit to become explicit. In NATHEP, contexture mattered not just as time and space capsules or in the geography and locale of universities and their induction programmes, but through the myriad layers and levels of texture that were implicit in the university classrooms that academics and staff developers had to navigate. In NATHEP, contexture surfaced in different ways. As a project located in a specific locale (described in detail in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3), NATHEP views the Global

South as an important locus of enunciation, to imbue professional development practices with ways to be relevant, responsive, current and contextual in their offerings. Context matters in terms of who is doing the “speaking” and the place from which these interlocutors challenge the uncritical reproduction of the Eurocentric canon in curriculum and pedagogy (Dussel, 2011). The term Global South used euphemistically to replace the negative connotations associated with “development” discourse, which in turn is linked to a deficit notion of not matching up to the northern benchmarks set by the USA, UK and other economically powerful nations, is a context we claim as a site of struggle on many levels. Reclaiming a Global South location for NATHEP and PDP in general is not only a matter of geography but a recognition of the biographies of real people who live, work, thrive and struggle in these contexts.

Biography is as important as geography as it foregrounds the positionality and representation of who teaches, which matters almost as much as our consideration of what, how, why and where we teach. These nuances enrich the ways in which teaching and learning agents interact in the university classroom. Historically, we have taught in an alienating and marginalising curriculum context which uses examples and cases that South African students struggle to identify with. Being a university teacher in Africa must mean something, least of all that the content used to teach concepts and frameworks draws richly on what it means to be an African, in relation to the world. Situating Africa as the centre of epistemic diversity is an important positioning that teachers need to understand.

Another element of contexture is that new academics are transitioning into a higher education that is more complex and textured than even 10 years ago. The texture of historical inequality for example, might mean that the progress of African and women staff and students, masked by differentials in their distribution across institutions, qualification levels and academic programmes, is stymied. The intersections between gender, age, class and race are significant in opening up or shutting down opportunities to advance and thrive in HE. In some universities, where the agenda of neoliberalism, through proliferation of research projects, funding, funders, policies, etc., have taken hold, many mechanisms exist that perpetuate the disparity between who is at the centre and who is left at the margins. If induction programmes do not enable new academics to engage with the specificities of their context, so that they can move from the margins to the centre by making informed choices about what and how they teach, newcomers have little control over how they can influence student learning and success, productively.

New academics who have to exercise their agency in meaningful ways to achieve success and to respond to context, must be made aware of how to mediate their contexts. They must be supported to make informed choices based on a solid understanding of what it means to engage in a complex South African tertiary

sector that is trying to balance its social and epistemic role and purpose in relation to students' needs. NATHEP found that when staff developers are capacitated to enable new academics to take on the roles of research, teaching, social responsiveness, leadership, community engagement and knowledge production in ways that are generative and purposeful, this strengthens HE practice and amplifies the Global South voice in the field of pedagogical knowledge and practices. This opens up possibilities to reimagine a decolonial university that can advance epistemic plurality and ontological depth of all people.

Although NATHEP was designed to respond to systemic challenges by focusing on context and textures, it was a relatively small intervention (10 universities/20 staff developers). As such it does not claim to be the answer to all professional development challenges. It provides an exemplar of what is possible if we apply ourselves to critical professional development in the ways NATHEP did. We think that even as a small intervention, NATHEP has surfaced insights that can be extrapolated and generalised for wider use. Being able to theorise, critique and customise induction for different contexts has led our participants to engage in more rigorous and relevant practice. This hopefully has an expansive impact for all.

#WhoTeachesTheTeachersMatters! (capacity)

NATHEP was designed to support those who “teach the teachers”, in other words, academic staff developers. By strengthening the professional development practices of staff developers who in turn professionally support new academics to teach in inclusive, socially just and transformative ways, the whole system is expanded and capacitated. Professional staff developers therefore need to have a thorough understanding of new academics and their challenges to plan effective induction programmes that address their needs. For academics to be effective change agents in teaching and learning, they must have changed themselves, from states of ignorance and disbelief to a space of understanding the challenges of contemporary HE. They need to be exposed to a range of cognitive, affective, epistemological and ontological theories, stances, frameworks and positions that challenge and develop who they are and who they need to be in the current context. The ultimate beneficiary is the student, who is at the receiving end of new academics' teaching approaches and methods.

Academic staff development work however is not always explicitly acknowledged by universities as an important lever for transformation. This significantly influences the way academic/professional developers induct and support new academics into a diverse, complex and contested spaces as they are themselves in need of transformative and critical processes that extend them beyond their traditional “toolkit”. Academic staff and professional developers also need opportunities to enable them to facilitate professional development programmes in ways that

are relevant, contextualised and cognisant of historical legacies. Offering levels of support and enhancement to professional developers means that those who support academics are also supported in ways that expand their own repertoire. This expansion of professional developers aimed at inducting new academics through increased and concerted levels of awareness of what is needed for undergraduate and postgraduate levels, is at the heart of NATHEP and its goals.

Through the creation of a national, collaborative project to theorise an approach and orientation to induction practices for new academics, NATHEP was able to strengthen staff developers' ability to conceptualise, convene, implement and evaluate contextualised, meaningful and relevant (not generic) induction programmes for new academics at their universities. Staff development practitioners were supported to interrogate their historical university contexts and to exercise their agency by engaging, troubling and unsettling their existing knowledge in relevant and generative ways to create inclusive and participatory teaching and learning experiences. In NATHEP, 20 staff developers were required to prepare new induction programmes that responded to their universities' needs, but they needed to do that from a position of knowledge and understanding of how structures and discourses, often taken for granted, still drive and influence outcomes that cause HE to remain in a cycle of homeostasis and not change.

Key to NATHEP was a raised awareness among project participants about the importance of the link between context, approaches to teaching and the ways students learn. This has been the purview and focus of professional developers working with academics to professionalise their roles generally. Effective student learning and success require a scholarly, critical, contextualised and professional approach to teaching (Behari-Leak, 2017) which if not done carefully, could lead new academics to resort to a "common sense" (Quinn & Vorster, 2015) or a "teach-like-I-was-taught" approach (Oleson & Hora, 2014). This compromises the quality of teaching for undergraduate and postgraduate student learning and affects throughput rates. How new university teachers are prepared for teaching, especially those with no prior experience in HE, is critical to their sense of being and belonging in the academy, which is in turn reflected in how they engage with the social inclusion of students and social justice.

DHET recognised the need for a staff capacity-building intervention in the national landscape to strengthen teaching, learning and curriculum in the sector. From the DHET's perspective, this gap needed to be bridged. NATHEP was able to do this through its focus on the professional development of academic staff developers, via an intervention that is responsive to current institutional, regional and national challenges. NATHEP affirms that given high student dropout and low throughput rates, responsive pedagogy is a necessity and not a choice (DHET, 2018).

NATHEP shaping the approach to professional development programmes

At many universities in this project, the induction programmes of new academics initially had a strong HR focus, with the goal of introducing newcomers to the institution's services and offerings and assimilating them into the academic workforce. This was at the expense in some cases of an orientation to responsive teaching and learning strategies, developing relevant scholarship of teaching agendas and engaging with the socio-cultural ethos to find one's place at the university. While the HR induction is important in its own right, it would be remiss if we underestimated the importance of a proper and formal induction programme for new academics as university teachers, to prepare them to respond to the historical challenges of apartheid, transformation and decolonisation, as well as more recent and immediate demands in context such as understanding different students and their needs, among others. New academics who may not have an understanding of this context need to be inducted into the sector in more deliberate ways than before through relevant professional development programmes.

Based on the outcomes of the project, we argue for critical professional development (CPD) (discussed in Chapter 4) to be embraced as a credible approach to professional development practices such as induction. To be critical (in a constructive way) is to explore and disrupt, where necessary, the beliefs, values and attitudes held by university staff – including staff developers – related to how they conceptualise and enact induction programmes in their specific contexts. How teaching and learning are positioned at a university makes a huge difference to the uptake and success of professional development programmes as well as to the quality of teaching and learning across disciplinary domains. To have a substantial effect on student throughput via the relevant and purposeful induction of new academics, each university must counteract the idea that induction is a transactional practice (and not a scholarly one).

NATHEP foregrounds the need for critical professional development programmes to be theorised and conceptualised using research and scholarship in the field of higher education studies. The project's theoretical framing draws on critical realism to enable the understanding that induction practices in universities are influenced by underlying mechanisms outside the control of the academic developers who facilitate these programmes. The focus of CR on ontology was a fitting lens for NATHEP as it provides a support for understanding, identifying and resolving social problems at their root causes by going below the surface to uncover the causal mechanisms that influence induction practices in institutions of higher education. Uncovering these generative mechanisms, and making them explicit, enabled academic staff developers to explore conditions that give rise to certain responses

in their institutions, account for them and effect changes where these were needed. A huge elaboration in the system through NATHEP has been the acknowledgement that professional development programmes, especially for new academics, need to adopt critical perspectives, so that staff development interventions such as induction programmes can be reflexively and responsively designed to address specific concerns in HE. Undertaking the NATHEP project through this theoretical lens enabled academic staff developers to engage with concrete courses of mediation by reflecting on their concerns in relation to higher education, while immersing their sense of self and performative achievement in their teaching contexts to develop contextually relevant inductions at their institutions.

Linked to the advancement of CPD, NATHEP believes in the shaping of critical agency (Francis & Le Roux, 2012; Postma, 2015) which involves individuals' capacity to critically engage with social structures, particularly systems of oppression, and act towards change (see Chapter 2). Data from the NATHEP project and case studies suggest that institutions need to provide critical professional development offerings that challenge the trope that "anyone can teach". Through this approach, capacity can be built and strengthened to support student success across the sector by shaping critical agency and critical agents. Attention to a well-capacitated teaching force is timeous and is linked to other initiatives on throughput rates, attrition, student success and high staff turnover. Critical to this is the issue of how curricula, pedagogy and assessment are conceptualised and actualised at different institutional sites by new academics as well as established ones. If not done well, this gap in professional induction has significant consequences for newcomers regarding their capacity to relate to students' learning needs in their classrooms and how they approach their own academic work, especially if they are first-time employees at a university.

Through NATHEP, we explored the objective structural domains at universities through departments, faculties, policies, and committees, as well as through cultural powers, embedded in the ideational system of teaching discourses prevalent. We noted how these aspects shape agency differently and how these are reflexively mediated by staff developers through their professional development practices with difficulty. The interplay between structure and culture in situational contexts and how these relate to institutional concerns across the case studies show how strongly these influences impact socially inclusive practices nationally.

With the focus on curriculum change at many universities, many academics are now engaged in a deep process of reflecting, reframing and reconstructing the ways they have understood historical and traditional teaching and learning practices, among other concerns. Even though AD started as a way to support mainly black students to succeed at university, AD has relied to a large extent on borrowed frames and theories from the Global North that do not always suit our context or

reality. This sometimes reduces the importance of drawing on context to respond to very complex issues in our context, such as poverty, race, class, inequality. Given the challenges posed by students in the 2015–16 period, the calls for a decolonial curriculum and pedagogy to address the experiences of mainly black students, who still feel alienated, marginalised and invisible at the university, offer additional challenges that NATHEP had to address. For example, the need to understand AD from a Global South nexus became important in shaping contextualised and critical professional development interventions. Given the unequal distribution of material resources and human capacity across the HE sector, many AD centres and teaching and learning units are differentially resourced, with practitioners themselves entering AD from an eclectic range of disciplinary fields (Mathieson, 2011). Many academic developers have been prepared for their roles informally, by learning “on the job”. It is only recently that the uptake of postgraduate diplomas for academic developers has increased. This results in a very wide range of competing and sometimes contradictory conceptualisations of what it means to be an academic or academic developer in HE today.

By sharing knowledge of the different models of induction programmes suited to different socio-academic contexts, we highlighted the importance of reflexivity and how these enabled or constrained different possibilities for PDPs and new academic agency. In NATHEP, we were engaged in reflexive practices through our facilitation, debriefing and research endeavours. We were acutely aware of the need for internal conversations (Archer, 2000) to become explicit for the benefit of all. At all stages participants had to justify their choices and present plausible rationales for their specific interventions.

In generating a unique set of lenses emanating from the insights of NATHEP, we are mindful that these perspectives are not the solution or panacea to current challenges. What they offer is a way to make our current practices more conscious of and awake to the onto-epistemic gaps that we inherited from colonial higher education. To delink from traditional induction practices and colonial pedagogical practices, we need to recognise the relationship between the self and the other and how this relationship, if understood in its full ontological depth, can shape professional development to respond to wounds of alienation, invisibility and marginalisation. A decoupling from past shackles that inhibit progress is necessary for HE advancement in an unknown and uncertain future.

NATHEP’s main challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be the greatest challenge for the project. The pandemic called for an agile and adaptive approach, warranting a move to online modes of engaging. Even though the NATHEP project was implemented before the pandemic and continued despite the challenges of the pandemic, the move to

online modes and the national protocols attached to different COVID-19 waves, meant that many planned activities could not take place in face-to-face (F2F) mode in 2020 and 2021. University partners had various challenges in terms of data connectivity, time challenges, wellbeing etc. Despite these adversities, the NATHEP administration and SC supported each participant to participate as fully as they could, in online workshops and seminars. Admin support was critical to the smooth operation of an online programme and all logistics involved, such as setting up Zoom meetings, were handled well. Although it was very difficult to work in the online space, strategies were put in place to circumvent this, to provide more focused input outside of the main workshops, and to provide support where needed to all participants. We provided scaffolding and additional sessions where partner universities were struggling. Additional writing support was offered in smaller groups and individual consultations. The use of clusters and mentors ensured that smaller groups were in contact with a SC member to work more closely in between the main workshops. Through these efforts, project partners and participants remained focused on the production and creation of case studies that document their contextualised models in their specific locales and spaces.

In online mode it was difficult to replicate the kinds of energy we enjoyed in the first two years of the project, as the online mode is time-intensive and demanding on attention levels. The F2F mode would have allowed for a more natural engagement and authentic sharing of the substantive content and reflective discussions that were needed. In addition, the pandemic has prevented NATHEP from achieving some of its goals and outputs as planned. Constraints of only having online meetings, data connectivity issues, etc. disrupted the implementation of each university's induction models. Despite this, significant strides were made to ensure that the customised models of induction were guided by the overarching research question and the axiological stance, namely, to focus on our location in the Global South, our context in Africa and the imperative to use a social justice lens.

Despite the COVID-19 constraints, the planned activities were successfully adapted to the challenging circumstances, and we managed to achieve the project outcomes regarding the implementation of new induction programmes for new academics at differentiated institutions. The core work in 2022 focused on converting these models for induction into institutional case studies as per the UCDG plan. The goal is to increase national dialogue and collaboration with stakeholders through issues raised through the case studies. Significant strides have been made to ensure that the customised induction models that have been created are guided by the overarching research question, to focus on our location in Africa using a social-justice lens.

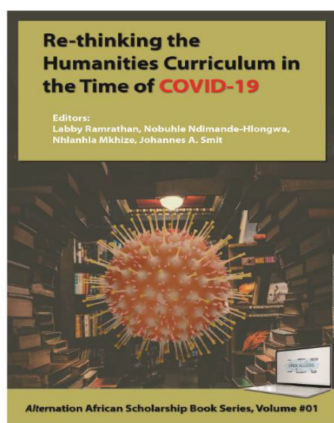
NATHEP's main successes

NATHEP focused on developing a national orientation to induction practices and principles across the sector. Twenty academic staff developers from 10 universities were supported to initiate and convene well-theorised and conceptualised induction programmes in their institutional contexts, to address historical and systemic challenges, and to contribute to the transformation of higher education. Using Roy Bhaskar's critical realism as meta-theoretical framing and Margaret Archer's social realist theory, this book offers a theorised account of how academic staff developers, in devising models of induction practice for new academics at their universities, engaged with enabling and constraining conditions at institutional, faculty, departmental and university classroom levels. Through an analysis of institutional case studies, this project explores a range of agential choices exercised by staff developers to conceptualise and contextualise induction programmes, relative to how they, as well as their new academics, mediate contested spaces. A nuanced social and critical account of the material, ideational and agential conditions in HE shows that the courses of action taken by new academics are driven through their concerns, commitments and projects in higher education. A further aim of this project was to see if academic staff developers would be driven by corresponding but different concerns and commitments.

To this end, the creation of a framework to infuse criticality into professional development practices was a highlight of NATHEP's scholarly work. The CRITicAL Framework is offered as the project's contribution to knowledge generation. Via this heuristic, which was used to embed relevant and contextual practices and values into otherwise generic induction programmes, NATHEP was able to reorientate staff developers and their institutions to their ethical obligation to introduce newcomers to the sector and their institutions in ways that could really help them to belong. Academic developers who participated in NATHEP evaluated the project positively. Comments garnered from sessions included the following:

"What I gained from the presentation was in whatever we do there is need to understand the natural and social world"; "I gained information especially about some obstacles to implementing the new conceptualised induction and possible ways of overcoming them"; and "I find the themes suggested to problematise our induction programme useful and will always use them when we evaluate our programme".

Through a collaborative, consultative and inclusive methodology, and based on a cascading model of staff development, NATHEP prepared staff development practitioners to exercise their agency by engaging with knowledge in relevant and generative ways to create inclusive and participatory teaching and learning experiences that are responsive to institutional, regional and national challenges.



A Deep Dive into Curriculum Complexities in the Time of COVID-19

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Pedagogies for critical agency:
Portals to alternative futures

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Abstract

'Pedagogies in context' are explored through a national project working with academic staff developers and new academics' induction and transitioning into higher education. Causal-layered analysis is used to explore the interplay between academic staff, institutional

Figure 66 NATHEP's Scholarly Outputs

As we reach the conclusion of this book and the NATHEP journey, we sincerely hope that the insights shared in this book will serve as a source of inspiration, knowledge and application for all professional developers wanting to shift into being critical agents for change in HE, here and beyond. It is through meaningful reflection that we contribute to collective understanding and transformation of the parts and the people.

The true impact of NATHEP and this book lies in how the concepts and applications resonate with and inspire change in readers and practitioners. If this book challenges perspectives, provokes thoughtful discussions, and fosters growth both personally and collectively, our intention has been realised. By encouraging a deeper understanding of the world, we trust that the journey within these pages will leave a lasting, positive mark on all who engage with it.

Given the complexity and contested nature of the current higher education landscape, this book reports on a national collaborative project that engages with the challenges and opportunities academic staff developers and new academics face as they embed themselves in institutional contexts. Based on a range of contextualised induction approaches for new academics transitioning into higher education, the book advocates for critical professional development as a theorised, scholarly and critical approach, as a lever for change through academic staff development in higher education.

Featuring ten case studies of induction models at differentiated universities, this book provides an in-depth analysis of academic staff development strategies in practice. Reflecting on a collaborative, consultative and inclusive process through the project, it offers a range of practical strategies to conceptualise, convene, implement and evaluate contextualised, meaningful and relevant induction programmes for new academics at their universities. Curated at the nexus of theory and practice and through its contextualisation, theoretical spine and pedagogical and methodological approaches, this book can support new and experienced staff developers in understanding how teaching could be conceptualised for inclusive, representative and socially just university classrooms.

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Given the complexity and contested nature of the current higher education landscape, this book reports on a national collaborative project that engages with the challenges and opportunities academic staff developers and new academics face as they embed themselves in institutional contexts. Based on a range of contextualised induction approaches for new academics transitioning into higher education, the book advocates for critical professional development as a theorised, scholarly and critical approach, as a lever for change through academic staff development in higher education.

Featuring ten case studies of induction models at differentiated universities, this book provides an in-depth analysis of academic staff development strategies in practice. Reflecting on a collaborative, consultative and inclusive process through the project, it offers a range of practical strategies to conceptualise, convene, implement and evaluate contextualised, meaningful and relevant induction programmes for new academics at their universities. Curated at the nexus of theory and practice and through its contextualisation, theoretical spine and pedagogical and methodological approaches, this book can support new and experienced staff developers in understanding how teaching could be conceptualised for inclusive, representative and socially just university classrooms.

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