**Developing a University-Community**

**Engagement Conceptual Framework and Typology**

A Case Study of a South African

Comprehensive University

***Along with teaching and learning, and research, community engagement is cast as one of the pillars of the South African higher education system. The transformative***

***White Paper on Higher Education of 1997 called upon universities to demonstrate social responsibility and their commitment to the common good by making expertise and infrastructure available in order***

***to be responsive and better serve their communities. One of the key objectives was to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness among students and***

***staff of the role of higher education in social and economic development through engagement with external communities. Differences exist between South African universities on how they conceptualise their engagement activities.***

George de Lange

George de Lange is Director of the Centre for Academic Engagement and Collaboration and Professor of Cooperative Education of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa

**Introduction**

A number of unique factors determine, shape and underpin community engagement concept- tual frameworks at South African universities. At a national level engagement has overcome its association with the legislation that initiated the restructuring of South African higher education and, as a result, these universities have started developing engagement conceptual frameworks that are unique to specific institutions.1 Differing typologies of best practices have developed that best suit the diversity of institutional and devel- opmental contexts. There is not a ‘one that fits all’ conceptual framework for engagement in South African higher education.2 Appropriate engagement for South African higher education cannot be prescribed in a template.3 Owing to its contextual nature, it is impossible to describe and prescribe what worthwhile engagement for all kinds of institutions is; it is a dimension of fitness for purpose – not of purpose. The type of university–community engagement that will take place is therefore dependent on the kind of institution and its academic mission. Within the South African context, engagement concep- tual frameworks for higher education are not about setting narrow, tight and exclusionary

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definitions, but rather about setting some broad parameters for engagement aimed at establish- ing a relationship between engagement and the other two core functions of teaching and learn- ing and research. South African universities are diverse in terms of history, politics, geographi- cal positioning, goals and contexts. As engage- ment is a contextual activity depending on the mission, vision, values, focus areas, types of programme offered, the ingenuity of academics concerned as well as research capacity, institu- tions will differ in how they engage.4 The nation- al goal is for a differentiated higher education system which allows for differentiated interpre- tations of engagement; there is therefore more than one legitimate kind of engagement which changes as contexts change.

**Approaches to Engagement in South Africa**

The most common approach to community en- gagement in South African universities is that it should not be seen as a separate activity but that it should be integrated into the other two core functions of teaching and learning and re- search.5 Engagement should acknowledge the inter-connectedness and integration with other core activities without being exclusionary and is no longer a peripheral or supplementary ac- tivity, but something at the core of scholarship in higher education. Engagement should invig- orate, enhance and contextualise teaching and learning and contribute to research relevance and opportunities and invigorate the knowledge project.6 Engagement therefore needs to be rede- fined as such and approached in a manner that it is integral to the practice of scholarship. The level and extent of the integration of engage- ment into the core functions at South African universities varies and differs from university

to university. Engagement has always happened in different forms and times and in institutions that are strong on the ‘new regime of technol- ogy’ engagement is a *fait accompli* and virtually embedded in their core functions.7

**The Process of Developing an Engagement Conceptual Framework at a South African Comprehensive University**

The merger of the University of Port Elizabeth, Vista University and the Port Elizabeth Technikon (University of Technology) in 2005 to form the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University provided the opportunity to develop an engagement conceptual framework unique to the new institution. In this process, the dif- fering histories of the institutions, the new con- text of the institution with its new vision and mission, its inherited precepts and practices, as well as the differing understandings, required that existing definitions and interpretations of engagement had to be accommodated with the aim of achieving institutional consensus on an engagement conceptual framework. This re- quired a process of looking back longitudinally in time at how the practices had developed over time and to give recognition and make sense of where the new institution was at the time of the merger. This process has been referred to as

‘portraits of practice’ of existing engagement activities.8 A NMMU Discussion Document on Engagement was developed in 2006 and includ- ed the first draft of an engagement conceptual framework. This served the purpose of provid- ing structure for further input and debate on related aspects such as the NMMU’s approach to engagement, the philosophy that should underpin engagement activities, engagement

governance structures, quality assurance and

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monitoring, recognition and reward and en- gagement support structures.9

The development of the engagement con- ceptual framework occurred through a process of dynamic debate and input on the above as- pects, which were characterised by differing un- derstandings and interpretations from diverse constituencies that had to be accommodated in order to achieve institutional consensus. The development of the conceptual framework in- volved two distinct processes of auditing and documenting all pre-merger and post-merger engagement activities and a process of analys- ing the data and ordering them into categories. Through this process it was evident that some of the engagement activities spanned categories and that there were links between engaged and non-engaged activities. Moreover, engagement activities often occur along a continuum. The engagement activities were categorised accord- ing to (1) their integration and interconnected- ness with teaching and learning and research, and (2) peripheral activities which supplemented the core functions of the institution.10

**The NMMU Engagement**

**Conceptual Framework**

The four broad categories comprising the NMMU Engagement Conceptual Framework are reflected in the table below. It should, however, be noted that the engagement activities falling into these categories are often linked, interde- pendent, synergistic and integrated and may fall into more than one category, but for the purposes of ordering and recording these ac- tivities and providing structure, the conceptual framework attempts to categorise these activi- ties as accurately as possible.

● Engagement through community interaction,

service and outreach

● Engagement through professional/discipline- based service provision

● Engagement through teaching and learning

● Engagement through research and scholarship

**Engagement through community interaction, service and outreach**

The activities falling into this category of en- gagement include programmes and services which are identified by the university and are de- signed to inform local communities or to improve the quality of life of under-serviced or marginal- ised sectors of the community.11 Programmes of this nature are usually initiated from within a department, faculty or the institution. These ini- tiatives may be generated in response to requests from the community, but do not imply a mutually beneficial exchange or partnership.12 In most cas- es these activities are characterised by a one-way flow of information with the community being a passive recipient and the primary goal being the provision of a service.13 14

Examples of these activities include commu- nity outreach projects, volunteerism, access and enrichment programmes (maths, science, engi- neering), community service and development projects, networking and stakeholder exchang- es, information provision, student recruitment programmes, sociocultural and sport activities, student placement, serving on internal and ex- ternal academic and professional committees and organisations, community organisations as well as serving on non-academic community organisations and committees. These activities are performed by academics, students, profes- sional support and administrative staff.

**Engagement through professional/**

**discipline-based service provision**

This is service to the internal and external communities that relates to the academic dis- cipline or staff member’s role at the university.

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Professional and discipline-based service to the internal university community may in- clude increased collaboration and participa- tion in inter-departmental learning communi- ties, faculty committees or institutional task teams and working groups. Professional and discipline-based services to the external com- munity include, inter alia, partnering, services to support or enhance economic and social de- velopment, providing consulting help, techni- cal assistance, demonstration projects, impact assessment, public debates and lectures, exhi- bitions and performance of artistic works.15

**Engagement through teaching and learning**

This is the contextualisation of learning in community contexts as well as the experience of participating in or being a part of a commu- nity from which learning is gained collabora- tively. It includes credit bearing and non-credit bearing course or curriculum-related teaching and learning activities that involve students and staff with a community in mutually ben- eficial and respectful collaboration. It is char- acterised by a two-way flow of information and reciprocity; it is done in partnership for mutual benefit.16 17

These interactions address community identified needs, deepen student civic and aca- demic learning, enhance the wellbeing of com- munities, and enrich teaching, the curriculum and the scholarship of the institution. They in- clude service-learning, work-integrated/based learning, short learning programmes, clinical practice, internships, part-time off-campus programmes, study abroad programmes, semi- nars and workshops, continuing education and professional development programmes for adults, programme advisory committees as well as discipline-related volunteer opportuni- ties for students, skills development and train-

ing partnerships.18 19

**Engagement through research and scholarship**

This includes research partnerships leading to the direct benefit of external partners, the outcomes of the research lead to improved evidence-based practice. It includes applied research, contract research, demonstration projects, participatory action research, evalua- tion and impact assessment studies and servic- es, policy analysis, community-based research, technology transfer, innovation and commer- cialisation.20 It is characterised by research collaboration with community partners, reci- procity, mutual benefit and a co-determination of research design and outcomes and is also referred to as ‘democratic research’.21 Research that is engaged, is more local (rooted in a par- ticular time and setting), applied, collabora- tive, multi-directional (in terms of sharing expertise and knowledge gained), and is not always university-centred and campus-bound (i.e. it often occurs in a setting outside of the university).22 23 24

**The scholarship of engagement**

The scholarship of engagement is a term that captures scholarship in the areas of profes- sional service, teaching and learning and research.25 It involves university staff in mu- tually beneficial partnerships with the commu- nity and has the following characteristics: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate meth- ods, significant results, effective presentation, reflective critique, rigour and peer review. 26

The scholarship of engagement connects Boyer’s dimensions of scholarship (teaching, discovery, integration, application), when aca- demics apply their expertise to public purposes as a way of contributing to the fulfilment of the core mission of the institution. ‘These four dimensions of scholarship interact and form a rich and unified definition of scholarship.’27 It

involves a reciprocal, collaborative relationship/

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partnership which consists of (1) research, teaching and learning, integration and applica- tion scholarship that (2) incorporates reciprocal practices of engagement into the production of knowledge. 28 29 The scholarship of engagement generally

● draws from many sources of distributed knowledge

● is based on reciprocal partnerships that are mutually beneficial

● is shaped by multiple perspectives and ex- pectations

● is long term, both in effort and impact, of- ten with episodic bursts of progress

● requires diverse strategies and approaches.

● crosses disciplinary lines.30 31

The types of activity and method used for in- teracting with the external community falling

into the above four categories are expanded on in Figure 1. It should be emphasised that the activities and categories are often linked, in- terdependent, synergistic and integrated. The activities undertaken by academic staff there- fore often straddle more than one category of engagement and can be placed on a continu- um. For the purposes of providing a diagram- matic representation of the NMMU Engagement Conceptual Framework and Typology, these integrated activities are separated. The frame- work is further structured according to the basic distinction between what the univer- sity does (activities) and what it is able to do (capabilities). The expanded Engagement Conceptual Framework and Typology reflected in Figure 1 provides the structure of the NMMU Engagement Management Information System,

used for recording and measuring the nature

**Table 1** A diagrammatic representation of the NMMU engagement conceptual framework

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Engagement through community interaction, service and outreach** | **Engagement through professional/ discipline-based service provision** | **Engagement through teaching and learning** | **Engagement through research and scholarship** |
| • Graduate and student placement  • Networking  and partnership development  • Open days/  careers fairs  • Clinical service  • Non-discipline- based volunteerism  • Media consultation  • Outreach  programmes to under- serviced communities  • Winter schools  • Counselling services  • Socio-cultural activities | • Consulting and professional services  • Partner in socio- economic projects  • Contribute to public debate/conferences  • Partnerships with local and national agencies  • Research-based policy recommendations  • Expert testimony  • Public scholarship  • Technology commercialisation | • Service learning  • Work-integrated/ based learning/ clinical practice  • Discipline-related volunteerism  • CPD/customised programmes/SLPs  • Part-time off-campus programmes  • Project-based learning  • Internships  • Clinical practice  • Conferences | • Participatory  • Action research  • Applied research  • Collaborative research  • Professional services  • Technology transfer  • Contract research  • Evaluation and impact studies  • Problem analysis and solving |

*Source: De Lange, 200932*

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**Figure 1** NMMU engagement conceptual framework and typology



Engagement Mechanisms Associated Engagement Activities

Work integrated learning, internships, service learning, clinical practice, curriculum alignment, advisory boards, professional boards and councils

Engagement through

Teaching and Learning

(a) Teaching and learning

Non-formal learning activities (short learning programmes, customised, professional development programmes)

Conferences, seminars, workshops

Distance education and part-time programmes

National and international academic partnerships and exchanges

h g u

Contract research

(b) Research

**ACTIVITIES**

Collaborative research

Community based research (participatory/action/applied/

o r h

t

t

e

e g a

n

m

Research and

Scholarship

problem solving/evaluation studies, impact studies)

E

g

Technology transfer

n

(c) Information and service provision and transmission

(d) Socio-cultural and Sport

(f) Knowledge translation and application

**CAPABILITIES**

(g) Marketing of expertise and commercialisation of facilities

Networking/partnerships/stakeholder exchanges/ recruitment/websites/media articles/interviews/public conferences

Student placement

Engagement through Outreach

and Community Service

Community outreach, access programmes, empowerment, volunteerism, community development, clinical services and capacity development

Sport and cultural activities Technology commercialisation Consulting and professional services Entrepreneurial activities

Engagement through the provision of

Professional/Disciplined based service

Public scholarship/information dissemination/expert testimony

Facilities linked to teaching & research

(Institutes, centres, units)

Physical facilities and infrastructure

(sporting, conference, etc)

*Source: (De Lange, 2010)34*

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and extent of engagement activities across the institution.33

**The Engagement Continuum – the Overlapping and Integration of Engagement Categories and Activities**

The engagement interactions and activities of academics can be placed on a continuum as they often occur across categories and not only within one category. The engagement activities linked to teaching and learning, research and scholarship, professional serv- ice provision and outreach and service are

often interdependent and integrated. For ex- ample, an academic’s engagement activities may start off with an action research project which may result in the development of a new or the enhancement of an existing academic programme or short course, followed by the provision of consulting services based on the research findings. A Venn diagram is used to depict the overlapping and integrative na- ture of the various categories of engagement. A detailed representation of the engagement continuum represented by means of depicting the overlapping and integration of engage- ment categories and activities, as well as the evidence indictors that can be used for devel-

oping engagement portfolios for the purposes

**Figure 2** Engagement continuum and integration of engagement categories

Research and scholarship

Professional/ discipline- based

service

Engagement with community

Research and scholarship

Teaching

and learning

Teaching

and learning

Professional/ discipline- based

service

Outreach and community service

Scholarship of engagement

Outreach and community service

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of recognition and reward for engagement is provided as Appendix A.35 The criteria used for the recognition of and reward for excellence in engagement at the NMMU requires appli- cants to report on how they have integrated engagement into the teaching and learning, research and service and outreach functions of the university.36

**The Underlying Philosophy**

**of the University’s Approach to Engagement**

**A broad conceptualisation of scholarship**

One of the strategic priorities of the university is to position itself as an engaged institution that will contribute to a sustainable future through critical scholarship. Its approach to engagement and scholarship is underpinned by the work of Boyer who postulated a much broader and holistic conceptualisation of scholarship, instead of focusing exclusively on traditional and narrowly defined discipline- based research as the only legitimate avenue to further knowledge. His broader conceptual- isation proposes five interrelated dimensions of scholarship, namely, discovery; integration; application; teaching; and engagement. In addition to the development of a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the Scholarship of Engagement is advanced as a key element to enable the university to respond to the communities it serves. In the Scholarship of Engagement, service or engagement is regard- ed as being scholarship when it requires the use, application and/or generation of knowl- edge that results from the scholarly work of an academic in collaboration with community stakeholders.37

One of the principles that underpin the uni-

versity’s approach to multiple career pathways

for academics is that the core academic func- tions should be integrated where possible. In all three pathways, academics are expected to participate in Engagement activities in rela- tion to their academic scholarship, Teaching and Learning and/or Research activities. Furthermore, it supports the view that the Scholarship of Engagement is a boundary spanning scholarship and that it can mani- fest itself as engaged scholarship in teaching, engaged scholarship in research, or engaged scholarship in outreach and service.38 Even more commonly it is integrated across teach- ing, research and service. It is scholarship guided by an engagement ethos that results in work connected in a coherent, thematic and scholarly manner.

Scholarship remains at the core of staff ac- tivities and their interaction is about extend- ing the knowledge resources of the university. It is core to their disciplinary commitments and is not an ‘add on’ to ‘normal’ academ- ic work in that it cuts across teaching, re- search and services in an integrated manner. Academics in all fields engage in teaching, research and outreach and service, and each of these take engaged forms when they benefit the external public/communities. Engagement often occurs along a continuum in integrat- ed ‘bundles of activity’ forming part of a re- search-teaching-service and outreach nexus, resulting in teaching, research and service feeding into one another.

**Integrated and scholarship based**

The university ascribes to a holistic and sys- temic approach to engagement and views en- gagement as a fundamental idea and perspec- tive infused in and integrated with teaching and learning and research. In this approach, engagement is informed by and conversely informs teaching and learning and research.

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The staff and students are, furthermore, encouraged to approach all three missions (teaching and learning, research and engage- ment) from a scholarly perspective and to increasingly integrate their scholarly activi- ties across the missions in intentional and meaningful ways, with this approach being referred to as engagement built on the archi- tecture of scholarship.39

Teaching and learning and research, are enriched in the context of engagement, and engagement in turn is enriched through the knowledge base of teaching and learning and research. An outflow of this approach is that engagement and service activities are inte- grated into the core functions, policies, rec- ognition and reward structures and priorities of the institution. It is not a bolt-on activity but is embraced as a means of improving in- stitutional responsiveness as well as improv- ing the quality and relevance of teaching and research.

In general, the kind of engagement that the university ascribes to and deems relevant will essentially be educational in nature and consist- ent with its vision and mission. The approach to engagement is underpinned and guided by its values and the unique graduate and staff attributes it strives to develop. Its definition of engagement distinguishes three elements that should underpin all engagement activities:

● It should be informed by scholarly activity.

An academic/scholarship-based model of engagement involves both the act of engag- ing (bringing the university and the commu- nity/stakeholders together as partners) and the product of engagement (the spread of discipline-generated, evidence-based prac- tices in communities).

● It is integrated and is not a separate activ- ity, but a particular approach to university–

community collaboration.

● It is reciprocal and mutually beneficial. It involves a two-way flow of knowledge and information and there is a high potential for joint learning. It should deepen the under- standing of all participants, strengthen schol- arly activities and contribute towards devel- opment and empowerment. There should be mutual planning, implementation and as- sessment among partners.40

Engagement is defined as a reciprocal proc- ess of sharing knowledge, information, skills and expertise between the university and the broader community (both internal and exter- nal). The aim of engagement is to enrich schol- arship, research and creative activity; enhance the curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated and engaged citizens; develop unique graduate and staff attributes; strengthen dem- ocratic values and civic responsibility; con- tribute to the public good and transformation and enhance social, economic and ecological sustainability.41

**Excellence in research and teaching a prerequisite**

To engage effectively and be of ser vice to its external communities, expand its engage- ment structures and diversif y its income streams, the university, believes that excel- lent research and teaching is essential. As a comprehensive university the combination of traditional university disciplinar y knowledge with the technologies of the previous tech- nikon, NMMU is able to respond to the de- mand for knowledge that transcends original disciplines and that it is able to provide the multiple and interdisciplinar y knowledge and technolog y that is required to solve particu- lar problems in society.

Faculty-based multi-disciplinary research

and engagement entities have been established

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within the institution which serve as effective structures for integrating engagement activi- ties linked to research, teaching and learning, and outreach and community service. These entities and other institutional engagement enabling structures serve as effective vehicles for engagement. It is understood that the man- ner in which knowledge can be used and ap- plied through engagement will vary between disciplines. Applied disciplines, for example, will differ from fundamentally theoretical dis- ciplines. While in engineering direct channels of application exist, in theoretical disciplines it may be long term and indirect.42

**A balance of core functions**

Within the context of the integrated approach to engagement it is understood that engage- ment and non-engagement activities over- lap, influence and contribute to each other and that a balance between the extent of en- gaged and non-engaged activities should ex- ist. Examples of engaged activities in terms of research include applied, action and contract research as they relate to engagement with ex- ternal partners. Non-engaged research refers to basic or ‘blue sky’ research that is campus bound and laboratory based and aimed at the discovery of new knowledge. The appropriate balance between these activities should be set through a dynamic process of discussions and negotiations at institutional, faculty and departmental level. This dynamic interaction enables the university to adjust to changing circumstances and pressures without losing its equilibrium.

**Setting of engagement priorities**

The terms and conditions for engagement and responsiveness at institutional level are clearly defined by means of a ‘social contract’ with the communities the university serves.

An important part of this contract, which is formally documented by means of an institu- tional position paper on engagement, is that the university should maintain a balance be- tween responsiveness and institutional au- tonomy. This allows it to play a constructive role in addressing challenges and problems in the external environment, but also allows it to remain sufficiently independent to be able to play a critical role in societal debate.

As the needs of communities will exceed the ability of the university to respond, it has identified engagement thrusts and priorities based on careful consideration of available re- sources, expertise within the institution, as well as regional and provincial socio-economic development needs. A total of thirteen institu- tional engagement thrusts have been identified through a process of institutional debate and consensus. Examples of these thrusts include Manufacturing Technology and Engineering, Strategic Energy Technology, Sustainable Hu- man Development, Bio-diverse Conservation and Restoration, and Health and Wellness. These engagement thrusts are not separate but are integrated with the research and teaching thrusts of the university. The nature and type of research, for example, will be characterised by the manner in which engagement activities are integrated, resulting in engaged research be- ing manifested by either action, participatory, community-based or applied research activi- ties. Meaningful engagement therefore requires an internal and external process of setting pri- orities through formal communication and the development of partnerships that are of mutual benefit and reciprocal in nature. It is understood that even when the expertise within the univer- sity exists to address community issues, the hu- man resources, time and money will fall short of demand and the university cannot respond to

every request and be everything to everyone.43

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**Key Indicators and Defining**

**Characteristics of Engagement**

The underlying philosophy and the integrative and holistic approach to engagement are man- ifested by a range of key indicators and defin- ing characteristics that have evolved within the institution through debate, strategic plan- ning and policy formulation. The progress made by the university in positioning itself as an engaged institution is manifested by the following:

● The inclusion of engagement in the mission statement and strategic plans of the institu- tion and a reciprocal relationship between mission and practice exists.

● The establishment of an institutional Engagement Committee and other engage- ment governance and management struc- tures.

● The executive positioning of engagement within the portfolio of the DVC: Research and Engagement.

● A policy environment that supports engage- ment.

● Curricula that contain a variety of ways for students to engage with the community.

● The recognition of the value of multiple forms of knowledge (academic, popular, practical, indigenous etc.) and that there is a developmental loop in that the curricu- lum is constantly emerging from ongoing and multifaceted engagement activities.

● An understanding that engagement activi- ties are reciprocal and of mutual benefit and that there is a simultaneous generation of value in society and the academic environ- ment according to multiple criteria.

● The comprehensiveness of the university be- ing reflected in the scope of academic and vocational approaches as well as the wide

range of qualifications offered.

● The existence of multiple sites of learning and knowledge creation both inside and outside the academic context.

● Evidence of the curriculum and scholarly activities being engaged through a spec- trum of core disciplines and multi-inter- and trans-disciplinary thrusts that respond to the needs of external communities.

● Its espousal of curricular multiplicity and the use of multiple modes of teaching and learning (classroom, experiential, team, dis- tance, part-time, project etc).

● Its campuses being located at multiple sites and being user friendly.

● The existence and support of an extensive range of partnerships, linkages, strategic alliances and networks between the univer- sity’s key stakeholders in politics, industry, business, the professions, the media and the community in general.

● The fostering of regional engagement initia- tives, aligned to university focus areas with specific research strategies that are both in- dustry and community driven.

● Individuals/’champions’ throughout the uni- versity playing leadership roles in engage- ment.

● Engagement forming part of staff key performance areas and the inclusion of the scholarship of engagement in the rec- ognition and reward systems of the insti- tution.

● The support and recognition of multiple ca- reer pathways for academics.

● The provision of institutional engagement support and the establishment of engage- ment enabling structures.

● An institutional culture and approach to scholarship that includes inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary work, supported by a range of programmes and research,

and engagement entities (units, centres,

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institutes) that respond to the needs of ex- ternal communities through basic and ap- plied research activities.

● Academics being encouraged to approach all three missions from a scholarly perspective and to increasingly integrate their scholarly activities across the missions in intentional and meaningful ways.

● The quality assurance and, where applica- ble, peer review of engagement activities.

● Providing the broader community access to university facilities as well as partici- pation in its cultural, sporting and other activities.

● Engagement work being valued, celebrated, communicated and profiled internally and in the external media.44

**Conclusion**

Achieving institutional consensus on an en- gagement conceptual framework and on what the underlying philosophy and approach to engagement should be within the context of a newly merged institution proved to be a lengthy process. The merger process brought together differing views and interpretations of what constitutes true engagement. Over the past five years the debate has moved from one of protection and postulation of ideas on engagement that were developed and under- stood within the pre-merger institutions to a common understanding of what will work and is of value in the new comprehensive university with its new mission and values. The merger process provided the opportunity to bring about changes and to introduce new structures that would be aligned and sup- port the integration of engagement into the core functions and policies of the institution. Within the context of tremendous change,

insecurity of staff and the uncertainties brought about by the merger process, it creat- ed the opportunity to rethink, make changes and introduce new ideas to the new institu- tion that would possibly not otherwise have been possible. It allowed the space and op- portunity to have a relook at existing struc- tures and ways of doing things and to break down pre-existing structures or protected

‘empires’that had ser ved their purpose in the previous institutions.

In addition to creating more effective en- gagement enabling and support structures by grouping together units of the previous institutions into more effective engagement support structures, further impetus and the increased importance of engagement within the institution was brought about when the responsibility for engagement at strategic level was positioned within the portfolio of a Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement. The importance of engagement as the third core function continues to be elevated by integrating it into the new in- stitution’s policies, key performance areas, performance management systems, and per- son and promotions criteria, and the multiple career pathway system for academics, the in- troduction of engagement excellence awards and an effectively functioning Engagement Committee which is a sub-committee of Senate. An institutional engagement man- agement information system based on the engagement conceptual framework is in the final stages of development. The system will provide reports of staff engagement portfo- lios identif y institutional, faculty and de- partmental engagement strengths and weak- nesses and will be used as an engagement monitoring, evaluation and quality assur-

ance tool.

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**Appendix A**

Developing a University-Community Engagement Conceptual Framework and Typology | George de Lange

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| **Engagement**  **Continuum – From Community Request to Scholarly Work** | | | | | |
|  | **Service and Outreach (SO)**  (Communities benefit, one-way flow of information, community passive recipient) | **Engagement through Professional/ Discipline Based Service**  **(ES)**  *‘[an academic] summarises current research literature about an issue for working professionals or community organisations, offers research-based policy recommendations*  *to legislators at a committee hearing or provides medical or therapeutic services to the public’ (Fitzgerald,*  *2006)*  (Two-way flow of information, done in partnership for mutual benefit, reciprocity) | **TEACHING Engagement through Teaching (ET)**  *‘credit and non-credit learning opportunities are taken off campus, and to community- based settings to increase access; or when service-learning experiences advance students’ knowledge about social issues while contributing to*  *the immediate goals of the project’ (Fitzgerald,*  *2006)*  (Two-way flow of information, responsiveness, partnerships, reciprocity, mutual benefit) | **RESEARCH Engagement through Research (ER)**  *‘... a collaborative partnership conducts an investigation for the*  *direct benefit of external partners; outcomes of the research lead to improved, evidence based practice’ (Fitzgerald, 2006)*  (Two- way flow of information, research collaboration, co- determination of outcomes partnerships, reciprocity of mutual benefit) | **Scholarship of Engagement (SoE)**  *‘the scholarship of engagement consists of research, teaching, integration and application*  *that incorporates reciprocal practices of engagement into the production of knowledge’ (Barker,*  *2004)*  1. Must be collaborative  2. Must be an active partnership (decision-making role shared by collaborating parties)  3. Must be sustainable over time  4. Builds self- sufficiency in communities  5. Must embrace all three components of T&L, research and engagement |

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| **Engagement**  **Continuum – From Community Request to Scholarly Work** | | | | | |
| **Partners**  • External communities  • Community  • Industry/ civic/business organisations  • Governmental organisations  • Basic education/ feeder high schools/ FET colleges | **Activities**  • Education workshops for trainers and teachers  • Community service and outreach programmes to under-serviced, disadvantaged communities  • Acts as a consultant to NGOs, public and private sector organizations  • Student placement  • Networking  and partnership development  • Serve on governance boards  • Serve as discipline expert on committees  • Open day, school or college visits to promote career education  **Sample evidence/ Indicators**  List of workshops and audience, letter of invitation to serve on board | **Activities**  • Partnerships with local and national agencies in response to societal needs  (e.g. combating xenophobia, providing cheap and quality  housing, promoting community health)  • Consulting and professional service  • Partnerships in  social and economic development projects  • Contributes to public debates based on discipline expertise  **Sample evidence/**  **indicators**  Short description of partnerships, list of group membership and role played | **Activities**  • Facilitating learning tailored to the needs of the external community (incl. SLPs, seminars, public talks)  • Developing and delivering community education projects with community partners  • Work integrated/ based learning/ clinical practice  • Training partnerships  • Part-time programmes off-campus  • Organise discipline- related volunteer opportunities for students  **Sample evidence/**  **indicators** Name of module or programme,  description of project and community partnerships | **Activities**  • Industry-funded research: grants or contracts from  business, industry, or commodity groups that address practical problems  • Non-profit or government funded research:  grants or contracts that address practical problems experienced by the public  • Other contractual research  • Community-based research  • Technology transfer partnerships  • Policy analysis  • Evaluation research  • Needs assessments/  evaluations  • Exhibits/ demonstrational projects | **Activities**  • Documenting/ publishing workshops (community relevant content)  • Publish relevant papers/manuals for practising managers  • Development of public/national policy  **Sample evidence/**  **indicators** Evidence of Scholarship: articles/ publications in peer- reviewed journals, presentations  at disciplinary conferences, book chapter, textbook chapter, creative  work, artefact, media, exhibits, computer software, |

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| **Engagement**  **Continuum – From Community Request to Scholarly Work** | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | **Sample evidence/**  **indicators** Evidence of Scholarship: articles/ publications in peer- reviewed journals, presentations  at disciplinary conferences, book chapter, textbook chapter, creative work, artefact, media, exhibits, computer software, (discipline-specific and advancement versus established would need to be  benchmarked within faculty) | (discipline specific and advancement versus established would need to be benchmarked within faculty)  May include consultation or technical reports if these are examples of scholarship |
| Discipline-specific communities  (including professional organisations) | **Activities**  • Media consultation  • Active participation in professional societies, associations and organisations  Sample evidence/  indicators  List of associations and nature of involvement | **Activities**  • Learning communities/ increase cross- disciplinary collaboration  Sample evidence/  indicators  List of learning communities and level of involvement | **Activities**  • Developing and delivering public lectures, seminars and workshops based on discipline expertise (includes CPD workshops)  Sample evidence/ Indicators  List of lectures, seminars and workshops- | **Activities**  • Convener at national/international conferences  • Editor of national journal  • Member of an international editorial team | **Activities**  • Media contribution (e.g. newspaper reports based on engaged research)  • Publishing textbooks or text book chapters  Sample evidence/ Indicators  Lists of outputs |

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| **Engagement**  **Continuum – From Community Request to Scholarly Work** | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | Sample evidence/  indicators  Letters of invitation to be convenor or editor, list of team memberships |  |
| • Internal communities  • NMMU  • Institution  • School/unit  • Department/faculty  Students | **Activities**  • Take leadership role  (e.g. HoD, DoS)  • Contribute to the development and management of the university campuses  • Participate in institutional committees (selection, disciplinary, residence)  • Participate in recruitment, marketing and PR of the university  • Staff development/ mentoring of junior staff  • Represent department at faculty-level events  • Manage research contracts and grant applications | **Activities**  • Increase collaboration with other institutions  • Participation in inter- department learning communities  • Participate in inter faculty committees or groups  Sample evidence/  indicators  List of collaborative activities and role played | **Activities**  • Organise discipline- related volunteer opportunities for students  Sample evidence/ indicators Description of opportunities | **Activities**  • Publications on institutional research projects  – Reports on institutional research projects  – Position papers  Sample evidence/  indicators  List of outputs |  |

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*Source: Adapted from Foxcroft, Nel and Seymour (2009)*

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| **Engagement**  **Continuum – From Community Request to Scholarly Work** |  |
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| • Contribution  to department administration (e.g. programme coordinator)  Sample evidence/  indicators  List of research contracts/grants, name of module/programme coordinated, list of committees served  on and role played, written reflection of leadership provided |
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