



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

## **Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education for Academic Developers**

### **Call for applications for 2023-2024**

#### **Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MBkWz-5H3Y>

The Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning at Rhodes University invites applications for a two-year, part-time

#### **Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education for *Academic Developers* (2023 – 2024)**

#### **Purpose of the qualification**

The aim of this Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education, registered on the NQF at honours level (HEQSF level 8), is to enhance the knowledge and competencies of staff in teaching and learning units/centres whose role it is to contribute to the transformation of higher education in a range of ways, including student development and professional development for academic staff as educators in higher education institutions.

Shifts in higher education around massification, globalisation and the discourse of ‘high skills’ have brought a changed workplace for academics and academic developers in which they have to negotiate new expectations and identities. These international changes have particular nuances in the South African context where historical disadvantage, social justice, transformation and calls for decolonisation need to be addressed. This course aims to contribute towards academic developers’ ability to respond to these challenges and to meet the teaching and learning needs of the students and academics in their contexts.

Due to the current low pass rate of the increasingly diverse South African higher education student body it has become crucial to ensure greater success for more students. To achieve this, effective academic development initiatives, including student development and professional development for academic staff, is a priority for the sector.

The purpose of this PGDip (HE) is to advance academic developers’ knowledge of higher education as a field of study and to enable them to conceptualise, design and implement formal and informal academic development initiatives (with a particular focus on academic staff development) appropriate to their specific contexts.

## Outcomes

### After engagement with the course processes and materials, participants should:

- be able to analyse the higher education context (at international, national, institutional, departmental and disciplinary levels) in order to understand the academic/academic development needs of specific institutional contexts;
- develop an understanding of the university as an academic workplace and as a community of practice;
- develop in-depth knowledge of the conceptual domain of teaching and learning in higher education, including the purposes of higher education, theories of learning (and teaching), theories of knowledge and relevant social theories;
- engage with knowledge and research related to the practice of teaching in higher education including curriculum development processes, assessment of student learning and academic literacy;
- engage with the theory, research and practice related to the development, enhancement and assurance of quality teaching and learning in higher education;
- develop the strategic competence to know how, when and where to implement academic development initiatives appropriate to specific contexts;
- develop a philosophy to underpin the conceptualisation and implementation of academic development initiatives appropriate to their institutional contexts; and
- exhibit evidence of having acquired some of the attributes and dispositions needed for academic development work.

## Admission requirements

1. Applicants need to be currently employed in academic development or teaching and learning centres or hold positions in which they have responsibility for the strategic development of teaching and learning in a faculty or across an institution.
2. Applicants should preferably hold at least a master's degree (in any discipline).
3. Applicants should be computer literate and have reliable access to the Internet to ensure access to the on-line Learning Management System used to support teaching and learning in the course.
4. Part of the admission process is an online (ZOOM) interview with prospective candidates.

## Structure of the course

In order to obtain the qualification participants are required to meet the outcomes of **six compulsory modules (20 credits each)**.

1. The higher education context
2. Teaching and learning

3. Curriculum development
4. Assessment of student learning
5. Development, enhancement and assurance of quality teaching and learning
6. Conceptualising and designing contextually appropriate staff development initiatives

## **Assessment of the course**

Participants will be required to complete module tasks as well as an integrated final assignment which will require them to document the design and implementation strategies for staff development initiatives for their institution. This assignment will include *inter alia* discussion of theories and principles underpinning the proposed initiatives.

The course will be summatively assessed by means of an integrated professional portfolio. The assignments from all the modules will be synthesised to complete the portfolio which provides evidence of the participants having met the course outcomes.

## **Time commitment**

Participants are required to attend at least **six one-week block contact sessions** at Rhodes University over the two years.

**Preliminary dates** for block teaching sessions in 2023:

|                                       |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Module 1 The higher education context | 6 – 10 February 2023 |
| Module 2 Teaching and learning        | 1 - 5 May 2023       |
| Module 3 Curriculum development       | 7 – 11 August 2023   |

Contact time is supplemented through the use of ‘RUconnected’ – an on-line Learning Management System (LMS). Using the LMS, participants will be required to engage in course processes and submit tasks between block contact sessions. Contact time to independent learning has been estimated as 1:4.

## **Cost**

Tuition fees will be approximately R20 767,00 per year. Additional costs will include initial application fees (approximately R100,00) and cost of materials is approximately R600 per year. A non-refundable fee of R800,00 is payable on acceptance of an academic place at Rhodes University and is later credited to your student account. These are the current fees. They may be increased by up to 10% next year.

## **Application processes**

Prospective candidates are required to complete two application forms which can be found below:

PGDip for AD

1. [https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/registrar/documents/forms/PG\\_Dip \(HE\) for AD application form 2020 .docx](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/registrar/documents/forms/PG_Dip_(HE)_for_AD_application_form_2020_.docx)
2. [https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/registrar/documents/forms/2015 External Hons Applications.pdf](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/registrar/documents/forms/2015_External_Hons_Applications.pdf)

Please complete these and send them to Nomfundo Siqwede ([n.siqwede@ru.ac.za](mailto:n.siqwede@ru.ac.za)). There is no cost attached to this initial application process. Once candidates have been notified of successful selection by the advisory board they will be required to complete further application forms through Rhodes University's Registrar's Division. Normal application and acceptance costs are then payable (see the Rhodes University Fees Booklet for further information <https://www.ru.ac.za/studentfeesandfinancialaid/>).

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| Closing date for applications: 15 October 2022 |
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For further information, please contact Prof Jo-Anne Vorster or Prof Lynn Quinn

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**Jo-Anne Vorster** is HoD and associate professor in CHERTL at Rhodes University. She has been working in the field of academic staff development for more than two decades. She designs and teaches on formal programmes aimed at enhancing the knowledge and practices of professionals in the fields of academic development, academic leadership and quality assurance. Jo-Anne research interests are in the areas of the sociologies of knowledge and the curriculum, academic development and leadership in higher education. She supervises masters and doctoral students in the field of Higher Education Studies.

**Lynn Quinn** is an associate professor in CHERTL at Rhodes University. Her main role both at Rhodes and nationally is to contribute to the development of academic staff as teachers. She has been centrally involved in designing and facilitating a formal postgraduate diplomas in higher education for lecturers and for academic developers from Southern African higher education institutions. Her research interests include all aspects of academic staff development, including leadership, teaching and learning, curriculum and assessment. She is also involved in the supervision of Higher Education Studies masters and doctoral students

Please note that if we do not receive enough applications for a cohort of participants then we will not commence with a new cohort in 2023. Participants will be informed as soon as possible.