

**Concept Note on Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL)/
African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA)**

Inception Workshop, Kampala, Uganda

September 4, 2019

1. Introduction

Since its inception in August 2018, the Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) training programme has grown phenomenally. Over 900 university academics in 40 universities have participated in the training and mainstreamed pedagogical innovations in courses spread across a number of university programmes in the social sciences, arts and humanities as well as STEM. The synergy created with a number of university networks has broadened the scope for uptake of pedagogical innovations across universities on the continent.

2. Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL)

The Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) is a formal partnership of eight institutions that aims to embed and catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning practices and to maximize learning outcomes through strategic interventions in graduate social science programmes. PedaL is one of nine partnerships supported by the Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) grant scheme to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. SPHEIR partnerships seek to transform the quality, relevance, access and affordability of higher education to achieve sustainable, systemic change. SPHEIR has been established by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to deliver systemic and sustainable change within higher education systems, enabling them to meet labour market needs and generate the job-ready, entrepreneurial graduates needed to accelerate development, build inclusive societies and promote strong economic growth.

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is leading 7 partners to develop and roll out PedaL in graduate social science programmes: Alliance for Research Universities in Africa (ARUA), Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the University of Sussex, UK as well as five implementing partner universities: Ibadan in Nigeria; Egerton in Kenya; Ghana in Ghana; Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; and, Uganda Martyrs in Uganda. It is envisaged that the five founding partner universities will provide entry points for engaging other universities within the host countries. PedaL is therefore expected to be replicated across other universities on the continent that express interest in pedagogical transformation.

The PedaL initiative is organized around a series of interlinked activities with the following specific objectives:

- Design and implement features and processes that drive PedaL pedagogy in selected social science graduate programmes;
- Develop the capacity of lead course instructors to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning methods/pedagogy;
- Create and sustain an active community of practice around PedaL pedagogy;



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- Support delivery of graduate social science programmes using PedaL pedagogy and share lessons across the partnership;
- Facilitate the institutionalisation of PedaL in partner universities.

3. PedaL Progress to Date

From planning to design, pilot and roll out; PedaL has realized unprecedented success in its first year. The eight PedaL partners designed the PedaL training programme collaboratively in June 2018. Teaching staff from 13 African universities were assisted by higher education stakeholders and a rich mix of experienced resource persons from within and outside the continent to design the programme. The rationale for the programme is provided in Appendix 1 while programme details are elaborated in Appendix 2. The programme was successfully piloted with a similar audience in July 2018 and the results confirmed that PedaL is demand driven, of high quality and relevant.

In August 2018, effort was directed towards developing the capacity of lead course instructors to drive innovation in teaching and learning practices across university programmes. A total of 149 teaching staff (47 female and 102 male) were trained in a centrally organized PedaL training workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on August, 7 -13, 2018. During the training, work commenced on redesigning 76 courses spread across the social sciences, as well as arts and humanities. Feedback from the participants confirmed that PedaL training is demand driven, novel, robust and exciting.

Following popular demand, plans to launch university specific PedaL workshops in 2020 were frontloaded. In January 2019, a total of 23 collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy programme (MRPP) teaching staff (8 female and 15 male) of the University of Nairobi were trained in PedaL. This was closely followed in March by the Entebbe hub training of 110 teaching staff (54 female and 56 male) from seven universities in Uganda: Uganda Martyrs, Uganda Christian, Makerere, Kisubi, Kyambogo, Gulu and African Rural University. Building on this momentum, 71 managers (27 female and 44 male) of postgraduate programmes of the University of Ibadan were trained in curriculum design in April 2019. For PedaL, outstanding success was marked by the training of 211 teaching staff (89 female and 122 male) of the University of Ibadan at the International Conference Centre, Ibadan on May 20 to 28, 2019. That this training was cost shared with the university signalled decisive uptake and commencement of institutionalization of PedaL at the university. Ibadan undoubtedly revealed its leadership in this respect.

On June 24 – 28, a total of 168 stakeholders convened in Mombasa, Kenya to reflect and celebrate one year of the PedaL journey under the theme: *Pedagogy on the Move: Our Journeys*. The pivotal event brought together teaching staff from 21 universities who had been trained in PedaL pedagogy and had translated the newly acquired skills into practice over a period of one year. The event was also graced by university leadership and a number of policy makers from eight African countries. The opportunity inspired exchanges; and, leveraged the sharing of resources, knowledge and technology that will enhance and broaden best practice in teaching and learning in African universities. It also strengthened linkages with policy actors and stimulated discussions on strategies for creating an enabling physical micro and macro policy environment for implementation of PedaL.



On July 31 to August 8, 2019, PedaL training moved to Ghana. The opening ceremony was an ostentatious event graced by the Minister of Tertiary Education and other leaders. The Minister stressed the need for learning and innovation centres where a project like PedaL could be hosted to embed cutting edge teaching methodologies within university programmes. A host of university leaders also participated in the PedaL training including Vice Chancellors of the University of Ibadan as well as University of Ilorin, provosts/deans of post graduate studies as well as those of various faculties. A total of 124 teaching staff (81 female and 43 male) were trained in Ghana. In all, the total number of university academics trained in PedaL in one year is 729 (317 female and 412 male). This excludes another estimated 200 teaching staff trained in university specific workshops led and supported by the University of Ibadan where the PedaL training programme is being integrated within university structures.

4. Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR)

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is the lead partner in PedaL. It is responsible for managing the grant while providing strategic and intellectual guidance for developing, broadening and sustaining the partnership as well as its activities that are implemented in universities across the continent.

PASGR is an independent, non-partisan pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 12 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, higher education institutions, research think tanks, civil society organisations, business and policy communities both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.

PASGR's vision is '*a vibrant African social science community addressing the continent's public policy issues*'. PASGR's work is organized around three core programmes: Research; Professional Development and Training (PDT); and, Higher Education. Over the past decade, PASGR has succeeded in creating positive change on the higher education and research landscape on the continent. Through PDT, 1600 researchers have undertaken training to enhance their research competencies. The Research Programme has not only contributed to the production of new knowledge but has also spearheaded appropriate and negotiated policy actions and uptake. In higher Education, PASGR works with 14 universities¹ in 8 African countries to implement a collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy programme. Since 2014, the programme has enrolled 709 students (241 female and 468 male) and graduated 172 students (121 male and 49 female) in four cohorts and at an average rate of 47%.

¹ University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, University of Jos in Nigeria; University of Ghana in Ghana; University of Sierra Leone in Sierra Leone; University of Nairobi, Egerton University and Maseno University in Kenya; University of Dar es Salaam and Mzumbe University in Tanzania; Uganda Martyrs University and Uganda Christian University in Uganda; University of Botswana in Botswana; and, University of Pretoria, South Africa



Through the PedaL partnership, PASGR continues to confer benefits to staff as well as students enrolled in programmes that have integrated pedagogical innovations in participating universities. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the enhancement of the profiles of participating universities with regard to teaching excellence.

5. African Research Universities Alliance

Inaugurated in Dakar in March 2015, the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA)² is a network of sixteen (16)³ of the region's leading universities from different countries and different historical backgrounds, but with a common vision. The network aims at expanding and enhancing significantly the quality of research done in Africa by African researchers. ARUA is unique in its approach of bringing together a number of peer African institutions that are willing to work together by pooling their own limited resources to leverage additional resources from outside. The resources mobilized effectively support their limited, but growing numbers of researchers. ARUA develops local research excellence through collaboration to find solutions to the development problems of Africa. It is a pan-African network that brings research and academic excellence to the fore throughout the region by developing strong and viable research universities. This formidable network is pursuing its goal of enhancing research and graduate training in member universities through a number of channels, including the setting up of Centres of Excellence (CoEs) hosted by member universities. PedaL is a viable channel for enhancing excellence in graduate training through pedagogical innovations critical for producing the next generation of excellent researchers.

6. PedaL – ARUA Inception Workshop

The one-day workshop will be hosted by the Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa on September 4, 2019 in Kampala Uganda. It is estimated that the workshop will bring together 40 participants including: deputy Vice Chancellors, directors of ARUA Centres of Excellence and ARUA leadership, SPHEIR representatives, members of the PedaL Steering Committee (VC-appointed representatives of partner institutions), PedaL resource persons, selected national level policy makers and PASGR staff.

Designed to deliver exceptional learning moments synonymous with PedaL, the workshop will enable sharing of information on the vision, structure, content, activities and emerging outcomes of SPHEIR in general and PedaL in particular. This will be accomplished through a show-and-tell fashion organized around: guided presentations, world café sessions, high level panel discussions, plenary question and answer forums as well as an interactive case study session. It is envisaged that these activities will engender a deep understanding of SPHEIR and PedaL and also generate important learning points for enhancement of project activities. The ultimate goal is to catalyse interest and uptake of pedagogical innovations in ARUA network universities.

² <http://arua.org.za/about/>

³ Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia; University of Ghana in Ghana; University of Nairobi in Kenya; University of Lagos, University of Ibadan and Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria; University of Rwanda in Rwanda; Cheikh Anta Diop University in Senegal; Makerere University in Uganda; University of Cape Town, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, University of Pretoria, Rhodes University, university of Stellenbosch and University of Witwatersrand in South Africa.



Appendix 1: Rationale for PedaL

Several actors on the African higher education landscape lament the quality, relevance and sustainability of the education system. The Association of African Universities notes that the greatest conundrum confronting African universities is how to become relevant to local needs and social realities while simultaneously responding adequately to the opportunities and risks of globalization. As globalization continues to challenge the content and delivery of education programmes, blur boundaries and complicate education spaces, most institutions in the West are adapting while African universities are left struggling behind.

This situation is compounded by: a) Resource deficiencies and infrastructural challenges that constrain the teaching and learning environment; b) Massification of higher education which has led to phenomenal increase in student enrolment at undergraduate and poor preparation of students for post graduate studies; c) Heavy teaching loads which translate into an emphasis on content and surface learning rather than deep learning; d) The old adage of ‘publish or perish’ which has shifted attention from classroom content and teaching and learning dynamics to research. Systemic weaknesses have therefore conspired to entrench a transmission model of teaching and learning that legitimizes some form of content tyranny across programmes.

PedaL is premised on the need to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. African university lecturers are highly qualified in their disciplines, yet may lack appropriate pedagogical skills. This affects their ability to deliver effectively in the teaching and learning process, and to sustain holistic development of student competencies; the mismatch between skills and labour market needs cannot be underrated. While this situation can be attributed to the many known underlying factors, it is also true that pedagogical competency is a determining factor granted that it is not a requirement for teaching at African universities.

There has been hue and cry over eroding standards of higher education and failure to effectively equip graduates with the skills needed in a rapidly changing and complex knowledge-driven society. By developing and sharing PedaL pedagogies, the PedaL partnership aims to enhance the teaching capacity of university teaching staff to improve student learning outcomes, thereby to produce high quality social science graduates who are employable; and creatively able to use their education to sustain opportunities that stimulate economic growth and social transformation. It has been argued that even gains from the best designed curriculum are often lost without competent teachers to interpret the objectives, organize the content and determine the stimulus that meets the prescribed objectives. Academics must constantly resolve the tension between ‘what should be learned’ and ‘how it should be organized’ to achieve exceptional learning moments for optimization of learning outcomes. The problem is that teachers’ dispositions, needs and motivation that could help them stimulate active learning among students have not received the right attention. This brings into sharp focus an urgent need not only to reform the curriculum but also to address conditions that facilitate desirable shifts in pedagogical practices.

Taking cognisance of the neglect and under investment in social sciences as African countries and development partners put STEM at the heart of their development strategies; PedaL initially deliberately privileged the social sciences. The goal remains to gradually replicate PedaL across all other university programmes so as to catalyse systemic change.



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Appendix 2: PedaL Training Programme

1. Introduction

PedaL training is designed around PedaL pedagogy - a suite of intentional and integrated interventions in design, context, processes and content of teaching and learning aimed at maximizing learning outcomes among participants. PedaL pedagogy (schematic presentation in Appendix 3) is developed around the six modules summarized below:

- Pedagogical models and strategies - flipped classroom, case study teaching, simulation, role plays, guest speaker, Threshold Concepts tools, group work and reflective practice;
- Educational foundations and learning theories - personal teaching philosophy, theories of learning, and, education and society;
- Technology Enhanced Learning;
- Transformative curriculum and learning design – curriculum design, constructive alignment, learning design, threshold concepts, hidden curriculum and engendering curriculum;
- Leadership in pedagogical practice;
- Innovative assessment - innovative assessment strategies as well as e-Portfolios.

Central in the PedaL training are student-centred teaching and learning strategies that integrate use of case studies, flipped classroom, role plays, simulations, reflective practice as well as a range of problem based learning activities. The training is interactive and hands-on with the outlined pedagogical strategies infused in all the modules. PedaL places responsibility on teaching staff as facilitators to create the appropriate environment for a holistic teaching and learning experience. The PedaL experience integrates the student, content and a variety of learning resources to make learning interesting and effective both inside and outside the classroom.

PedaL training immerses participants in a process of self-reflection and discovery. The training empowers teaching staff to question their assumptions about teaching and learning and to draw on their new knowledge, skills and experiences to construct, reconstruct or reinforce their set of coherent rational beliefs that guide their practice. The training helps to influence the teachers' ability to articulate or interpret course objectives, organize content and determine the stimuli that moves students towards attainment of expected learning outcomes.

2. Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the PedaL training, the participants (university teaching staff) should be able to:

- Articulate and implement a personal teaching philosophy and employ reflective processes to improve practice;
- Analyse and employ effective teaching and learning strategies using applied, authentic and learner-centred practices informed by relevant theories, models and empirical evidence;
- Design and deliver inclusive teaching and learning experiences that address the diverse needs of learners and are responsive to emerging trends locally, nationally and internationally;
- Select and use appropriate teaching and learning materials, and monitor and adapt technology to facilitate learning;



- Construct and implement effective assessment practices for assessing learner progress and achievement in a range of learning experiences;
- Demonstrate pedagogical leadership in distinct contexts by identifying and sharing good practices across their universities and beyond.

3. Programme Architecture

PedaL training is offered in a flexible and blended mode with face-to-face sessions interspersed with online engagement and practical application of skills in the classroom. The programme is offered over a period of one year as illustrated in the diagram below:

	July-Sept 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-March 2020	April-June 2020	Duration
Face to Face sessions					42 hours
Online engagement					36 hours
Reflective practice					Continuous
Pedagogical leadership					Continuous
Annual convening					24 hours

4. Face to Face Sessions

Sessions are delivered in a centralized location or in individual universities depending on the context. The training is facilitated by a core team of female and male trainers from across the continent and beyond. Initially, the training was notably supported by the Open University, UK; IDS, University of Sussex and University of Minnesota, US. Over time, capacity has been embedded within the participating universities with a critical number of teaching staff undertaking a Trainer of Trainers programme to join the expanding team of resource persons.

The face-to-face training facilitates acquisition of pedagogical knowledge and skills through practical application of tools and technologies that facilitate exceptional learning moments. The training draws on the teachers' experience to extend and modify the teachers' pedagogical practices by applying pedagogical tools such as case studies, flipped classroom, simulations, role plays and threshold concept. Particular attention is paid to gender dynamics in the content of modules, selection of teaching and learning materials as well as classroom interactions.

Best practices on inclusivity such as equitable class participation and seeking the voices of the marginalized groups to bring issues that affect them at the centre of learning are also a critical feature of this interactive training. By the end of the face-to-face training session, the teaching staff are prepared to create and implement innovations in their teaching practices.



5. Online Engagement

The face-to-face teaching and learning experiences are reinforced by synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences on a virtual platform. Online engagement facilitates intra and inter staff interactions within their institutions and in the wider community of practice around PedaL. The PedaL virtual platform actively supports reflective practice, knowledge transfer and mentorship.

6. Reflective Practice

As part of the training, teaching staff formulate a personal teaching philosophy as well as pedagogical goals that shape their teaching and learning strategies. The goals are pursued over the academic year through application of the knowledge, skills and experiences in selected graduate social science courses. Teaching staff are expected to capture and share a summary of reflections on their pedagogical experiences periodically.

7. Annual convening

Teaching staff are provided an opportunity to share their experiences and lessons learnt with peers implementing PedaL pedagogy in graduate programmes in a 3-day annual convening at the end of each year; this marks the end of the PedaL training cycle. The convening is held either centrally or hosted in participating universities. During the convening, teachers share the feedback from students, peers, resource persons, university administration as well as their personal reflections on teaching and learning experiences in their classrooms. Important learning points are fed forward into a continuous process of improvement of the PedaL training programme. The annual convening also serves to strengthen PedaL network effects as well as linkage to relevant stakeholders.

8. Certification and Recognition

There are three levels of certification for completion of distinct training activities:

- Upon successful completion of the face-to-face session and online engagement activities, participants are awarded a certificate of accomplishment;
- Upon completion of all training, reflective practice and pedagogical leadership activities participants attain a PedaL fellow status attesting outstanding competence;
- Once the full PedaL programme is accredited by participating universities⁴; participants who pursue various training programmes at the universities will obtain respective degrees: post graduate certificate; post graduate diploma; or master's degree in pedagogical innovation and leadership.

9. Participant Feedback

To date, all PedaL trainings have been very successful and participants have perceived the training as an “*eye opener*” and “*a project for the future*”. The feedback continues to provide impetus for scaling the heights in integrating pedagogical innovations in programme delivery.

⁴ Egerton University and Uganda Christian University have launched the accreditation process for a post graduate diploma while Uganda Martyrs University is accrediting a master's programme in PedaL.



Some of the observations shared on past PedaL trainings are captured below:

“The workshop has opened up a new world for me for experiential learning. On day one, I thought the training was unnecessary but at the end, I realized my students have been missing out on many interesting and engaging ways of sharing knowledge, rather ‘impacting knowledge.’”

“The workshop and strategies are extremely useful and will help improve teaching and learning in my classes. This should not be a one-time event but a continuous engagement to fully understand and integrate the strategies.”

“I used many of the pedagogical strategies that we have been learning about. I enjoyed it a lot. So I am really grateful.”

“I’m highly privileged to be associated with PedaL. It is injecting life, excellence, and hope into our higher education. It’s creating a bright future.”

10. Conclusion

The PedaL training programme embraces teaching and learning as an art to be orchestrated in classrooms through thoughtful preparation of university teaching staff. This is consistent with the perspective expressed in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that:

‘...teaching is a craft, learned not just in a single class, practicum, or workshop. Rather, it’s a recursive process, developed through trial and error — and yes, by “fire” — but also through conversation with others: a mentor, a cohort, your peers⁵.’

For PedaL, the journey of pedagogical transformation is gathering momentum as additional university academic staff and universities express interest in this unique training programme. The past and anticipated sequence of PedaL activities is captured in Appendix 4. Going forward, PedaL aims to secure strategic partnerships with universities for effective and sustainable delivery of the PedaL training so as to create the desired impact.

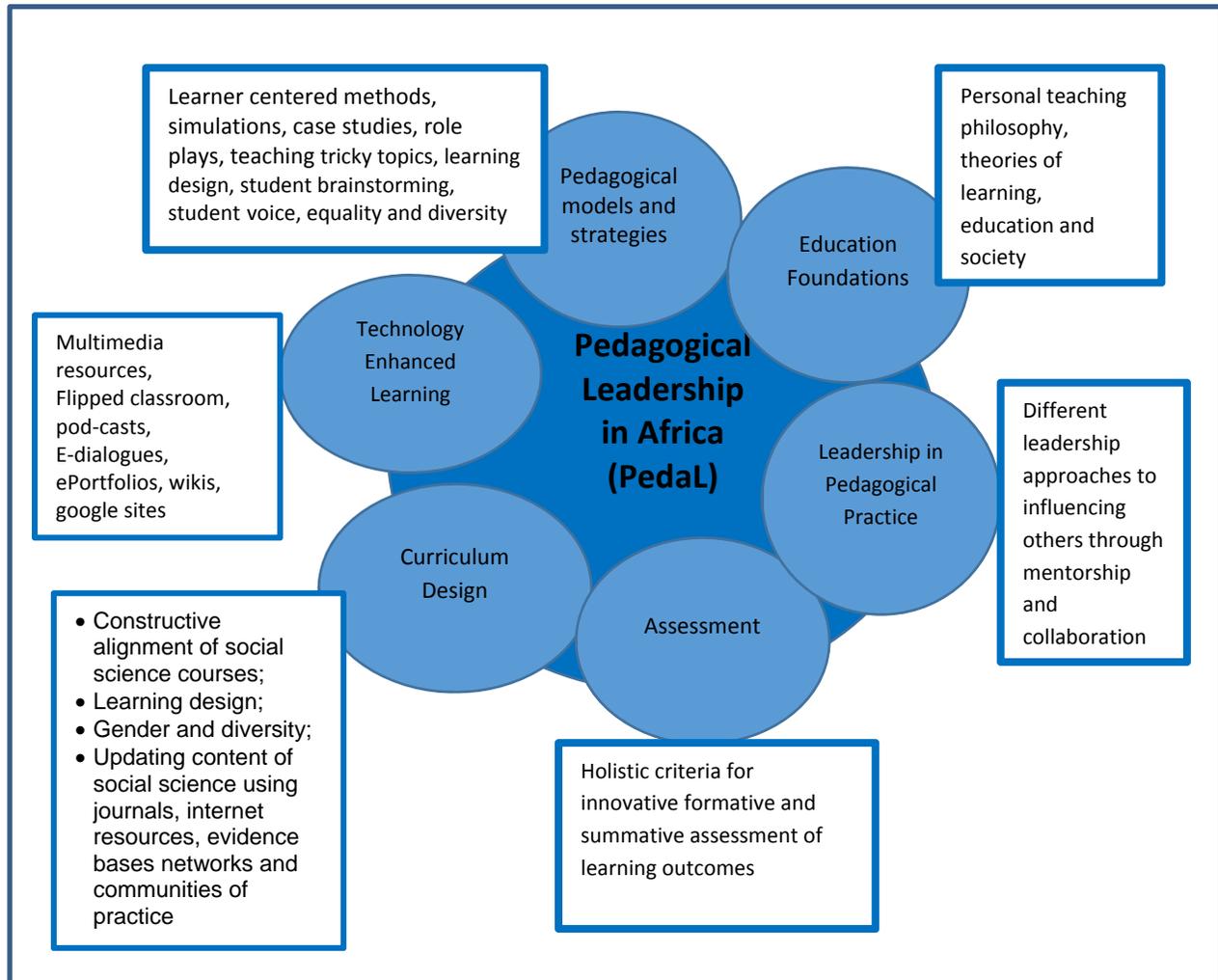
⁵ Elizabeth Alsop, 2018: Who’s Teaching the Teachers? In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 11, 2018

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Who-s-Teaching-the-Teachers-/242488>



Appendix 3: Schematic Representation of PedaL Pedagogy

PedaL pedagogy comprises the six building blocks/modules illustrated in the Table below: pedagogical models and strategies; educational foundations; Technology Enhanced Learning; transformative curriculum and learning design; leadership in pedagogical practice; and, innovative assessment.



Appendix 4: Schematic Representation of PedaL Programme Implementation

