



COMMONWEALTH
of LEARNING



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere



Quality Assurance for Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (QA4ODFL) for Pacific Countries

Course description

Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (ODFL) has potential to enhance access and achieve equity in educational provision. However, it is important for providers to have sound quality assurance mechanisms in place to maximise learning benefits and gain positive perceptions of this mode of provision from the public. This course is designed to help education officials create enabling environments for implementing high quality ODFL. The course takes participants through key aspects that have implications on quality delivery, like ODFL policy issues; governance and management; structure, funding and financial management; and ICT infrastructure and logistics. Although officials in the Pacific Region were the main target audience for the course, ODFL practitioners working in any developing country context will find the course highly beneficial. The course will run over four weeks. It will require 3-5 hours of time each week. Participants will learn from readings, videos as well as discussions with peers in the discussion forum. There is a learning quiz at the end of each unit. A participant who completes at least three of those quizzes and get 60% or above for each quiz, will get a Certificate of Participation and a Participation Badge. A participant who completes all the four quizzes, as well as the scenario-based assessment at the end of the course and get 70% or above for each quiz, will receive a QA4ODFL Completion Certificate and Completion Badge.

Dates

The course will be facilitated online by Dr Ephraim Mhlanga (Programme Specialist: Quality Assurance at the South African Institute for Distance Education -Saide) from **February 22, 2023 to March 22, 2023**.

Thereafter, the content will remain freely available for self-paced learning.

Learning outcomes

In this short online course participants will:

- Identify key aspects of ODFL that distinguish it from conventional face- to- face education;
- Appreciate the importance of creating an enabling policy environment for ODFL in your country;
- Explain why appropriate governance and management are important in order to realise good quality ODFL;
- Design an appropriate ODFL system in your country which can meet the educational needs of different people in your context and is within government financial means;
- Advise on most appropriate technologies that can be harnessed to leverage the quality of ODFL in your context; and
- Evaluate ODFL provisioning in your country, if there is any, with a view to improving it.

Course details

This is a hands-on, activity-based course in which participants will complete four (4) learning challenges/ units that would prepare them to better implement ODFL in their contexts:

- ODFL policy issues
- Governance and management of ODFL
- Structure, funding and financial management
- ICT infrastructure and logistics

Course summary

Number of Challenges: 4

Length of the Course: 4 Weeks

Workload: 3-5 hours per week

Language: English

Level: Introductory – basic knowledge of planning and implementing education systems

Prerequisites: None

Certification

Participants who complete at least three of the four quizzes in the course and get 60% or above for each quiz, will get a Certificate of Participation and a Participation Badge. Participants who complete all the four quizzes, as well as the scenario-based assessment at the end of the course and get 70% or above for each quiz, will receive a QA4ODFL Completion Certificate and Completion Badge.

Registration

To register, please go to: <https://oer.nz/qa4odflfeb23>

Pacific Partnership for Open, Distance and Flexible Learning

Open, distance and flexible learning (ODFL) is an important channel for increasing educational opportunities and outcomes. It is particularly relevant for the Pacific, given small dispersed remote populations and limited access to secondary and post-secondary opportunities in rural and outer island locations. Despite the importance of ODFL to the region

and the immediate need to build capacity, there has been limited investment. The Covid-19 pandemic has further reinforced the need for the Pacific to be well prepared for non-contact teaching and learning approaches outside traditional classroom-based practices.

Partnership for ODFL in the Pacific is a five-year project (2020 – 2025) funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade to support enhancing capacity and efficiency of education sectors in the Pacific through greater use of innovative delivery mechanisms and technology. The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), together with the Pacific Centre for Flexible and Open Learning for Development (PACFOLD), implements the project in the nine Commonwealth countries in the Pacific (Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu).

COL is an intergovernmental organisation created by the Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987 to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

PACFOLD is a collaborative initiative between COL and the University of the South Pacific (USP) since 2013 to facilitate flexible and open learning for sustainable development in the Pacific region through advocacy, communication, innovation and research. The Centre for Flexible Learning at USP has a strong and long track record in the adoption of open, flexible and distance learning methods in the Pacific region, and is best placed to coordinate the work of PACFOLD.

For more information

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