



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUCCESSFUL  
IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM RENEWAL: A CASE STUDY OF THE  
OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY (OMT) PROGRAMME**

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Management**

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**Date:** August 2018

Doctor of Philosophy in Library and Information Science

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this study represents the original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form at another university. Where use is made of the work of others, it has been duly acknowledged in text and included in the list of works cited.

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**Egashnee Moodley**

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**Date**

*Dedicated to my parents, Pragee and Sandra Moodley  
and my brother, Navendran Moodley.*

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*Aum Shree Ganesha Namah*

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## ABSTRACT

South Africa's tertiary education institutions main goal is to train, educate, deliver high level professional and occupational skills, research and innovation required for development and economic growth for South Africa (Timm, Govender and Gonsalves 2016). To develop the manpower required for the advancement of South Africa's economic development, tertiary institutions need to align their programme with the needs of social, economic and technology developments locally, nationally and globally. In an attempt to enhance the aligning needs of the industry and international education standards towards education, universities had started to accredit and renew their programme curricular.

However, some researchers have identified that even though curriculum renewal of a programme had brought about some advantages for academics and students, there was many disadvantages as well (Bird *et al.* 2015: 19). Wormley (2004: 329) has identified that if there are many challenges, negative perceptions and lack of benefits because of a poorly planned framework for curriculum renewal of a programme. Ultimately it leads to the unsuccessful implementation of curriculum renewal.

The aim of the study is to explore the curriculum renewal process amongst academics and students of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process. As this case study will provide new insights into the perceptions and experiences of those most closely affected, that is the academic staff, the curriculum champion and students of the university involved in the curriculum renewal process, thereby assisting other departments or programmes embarking on a curriculum renewal process

A qualitative methodology was employed for this study. Whereby semi-structured interviews were conducted with OMT academics, the OMT curriculum champion, representative from the Centre for Quality Promotion and Assurance (CQPA), and Academic Development Practitioner (ADP) for the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics (FAI). Focus group discussion with OMT students was held to obtain the students' perspectives on the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

The study revealed that the main barrier for academics implementing the curriculum renewal process and renewed curriculum lagged due to the lack of resources available to the department, lack of tutors for students, lack of student involvement in the advisory board for stakeholders, as well as lack of curriculum expert's in department as the main factors that hinder the curriculum renewal process of a programme.

On the other hand, the students revealed that the "*Blackboard, ThinkLearnZone*" application notification system needs to be improved as most students do not own smartphones to access the internet. Moreover, students suggested that the academics should conduct more practical activities during the lecture period. Interestingly, students also suggested that lecturers begin to record lectures via the Podcast application which always them to download and learn.

The recommendation highlights that students representatives from each level enrolled into the programme should form part of the advisory board for the curriculum renewal process and review, there should be a professional student body from the department, who must be given an equal opportunity to participate in the process discussion. Moreover, to resolve the lack of funds to purchase textbooks and resources, the researcher recommends that the OMT department should start using their own resources from the department and start creating revenue for the department.

## Table of Contents

Declaration .....	ii
Dedication .....	iii
Acknowledgments .....	iv
Abstract .....	v
Table of contents.....	vii
List of Appendix.....	xv
List of Figures.....	xvi
List of Tables.....	xviii
List of abbreviations .....	xx
<b>Chapter one: Introduction and background of the study .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction and background of the study .....	1
1.2 Problem statement.....	2
1.3 Aims and objectives.....	2
1.4 Research methodology.....	3
1.5 Significance of this study.....	4
1.6 Limitations and delimitations.....	4
1.6.1 Limitations.....	4
1.6.2 Delimitations.....	5
1.7 Structure of chapters.....	5
1.8 Conclusion.....	6
<b>Chapter two: Literature review.....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	7
2.2 Definition of curriculum.....	7
2.3 Theoretical framework for curriculum renewal.....	8
2.3.1 Framework for curriculum renewal paradigm .....	8
2.3.2 McKenna's 'Review and Renew' model'.....	12
2.4 Re-designing the curricula of a programme .....	14
2.4.1 Re-designing the learning areas of a programme .....	15
2.4.2 Re-designing the essential skills in a renewed programme.....	16

2.5 Overcoming curriculum renewal issues.....	17
2.6 Curriculum change of tertiary programmes in South Africa .....	19
2.7 Legislation for curriculum renewal .....	19
2.7.1 The Council of Higher Education (CHE).....	19
2.7.2 The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).....	20
2.7.3 The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).....	20
2.7.3.1 Composition required for a qualification to be registered on the NQF .....	20
2.7.4 Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFO's).....	21
2.7.5 The National Qualification Framework .....	21
2.7.5.1 NQF Framework Levels .....	22
2.7.6 Higher Education Quality Committee Framework.....	24
2.8 Curriculum renewal implementation .....	25
2.8.1 Challenges for academics as drivers for curriculum renewal .....	25
2.8.2 Challenges faced by students with the curriculum renewal process.....	27
2.9 Benefits of the curriculum renewal process .....	29
2.10 Conclusion .....	29
<b>Chapter three: Research methodology .....</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	30
3.2 Research design .....	30
3.2.1 Case study .....	31
3.2.2 Research paradigm .....	31
3.2.3 Qualitative research approach .....	33
3.3 Research context .....	33
3.3.1 Research setting .....	33
3.3.2 Target population .....	35
3.4 Measuring Instruments.....	35
3.4.1 Face to face semi structured interviews .....	35
3.4.1.1 Interview with DUT OMT curriculum champion .....	36
3.4.1.2 Interview with DUT OMT academics .....	37



3.4.1.3 Interview with Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance (CQPA) representative .....	39
3.4.1.4 Interview with Academic Development Practitioner (ADP) representative from CELT .....	40
3.5 Focus group discussion.....	42
3.5.1 Student focus group discussion with DUT OMT students .....	42
3.6 Interviews and focus group numbers.....	44
3.7 Ethical consideration .....	44
3.8 Data collection and analysis.....	45
3.9 Pilot study.....	46
3.10 Delimitations.....	47
3.11 Validity and reliability.....	47
3.12 Conclusion .....	47
<b>Chapter four: Presentation of findings.....</b>	<b>48</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	48
4.2 Presentation of findings.....	49
4.3 Findings from interview with DUT OMT curriculum champion.....	49
4.3.1 Section A: Biographical information of curriculum champion.....	49
4.3.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation .....	49
4.3.2. Section B: Curriculum renewal process at DUT .....	49
4.3.2.1 Curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.....	49
4.3.2.2 Source of gathering information .....	52
4.3.2.3 Curriculum renewal process a top down or democratic approach? .....	53
4.3.2.4 OMT students and academics awareness about the CRP .....	54
4.3.3 Section C: Curriculum change for the OMT programme .....	55
4.3.3.1 Stakeholders consultation .....	55
4.3.3.2 Students as stakeholders in the curriculum renewal process.....	55
4.3.3.3 Assessments in new curriculum .....	55
4.3.3.4 OMT programme quality – Old versus renewed.....	56

4.3.4 Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.....	57
4.3.4.1 Influence of the curriculum renewal process on work environment .....	57
4.3.4.2 Challenges of the curriculum renewal process .....	57
4.3.5 Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal process towards the OMT programme.....	57
4.3.5.1 Impact of renewed qualification on students towards the OMT programme and students.....	57
4.3.6 Section F: Benefits and best practices for the CRP.....	58
4.3.6.1 Additional responsibility of academics as drivers for change .....	58
4.3.6.2 Existing internal and external knowledge, resource and support.....	58
4.3.6.3 Key expectations of the curriculum renewal process.....	58
4.4 Findings from interviews with DUT OMT academics .....	60
4.4.1 Section A: Biographical analysis of DUT OMT academics .....	60
4.4.1.1 Faculty, department and programme .....	60
4.4.1.2 Designation of OMT academics .....	60
4.4.1.3 Academics qualification of OMT/BIM academics.....	61
4.4.2 Section B: Academics perception towards curriculum change for the OMT programme.....	62
4.4.2.1 Academics perception towards curriculum change .....	62
4.4.2.2 Benefits of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.....	62
4.4.2.3 Key expectations of the CRP for the OMT programme .....	64
4.4.2.4 Information sharing with the curriculum renewal process.....	64
4.4.3 Section C: Academics as drivers for curriculum change .....	64
4.4.3.1 Quality of old programme content towards new programme content – Academic’s Perspective .....	64

4.4.3.2 Barriers affecting academics to move forward .....	67
4.4.4 Section D: Impact of the curriculum renewal process .....	70
4.4.4.1 Curriculum renewal process on academic's work environment .....	70
4.4.4.2 Impact of the renewed qualification towards students .....	70
4.4.5 Section E: Benefits and best practices of curriculum renewal process .....	73
4.4.5.1 Support given to academics for the implementation of the CRP .....	73
4.4.5.2 Expected key attributes from OMT graduates vs BIM graduates .....	74
4.5.3 Area of improvement in the curriculum renewal process from academic's perspective .....	75
4.4.5.4 Best practices for the curriculum renewal process from academic's viewpoint .....	77
4.5 Interview with Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance (CQPA) Representative .....	78
4.5.1 Section A: Biographical information of CQPA Representative .....	78
4.5.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation .....	78
4.5.2 Section B: Quality assurance for programmes at DUT .....	78
4.5.2.1 Introduction and implementation of the quality assurance for tertiary programmes .....	78
4.5.2.2 Legal framework for quality assurance for higher education programmes at universities in South Africa .....	79
4.5.3 Section C: Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT .....	79
4.5.3.1 Process of curriculum renewal with DUT .....	80
4.5.3.2 Changes to existing programme's curriculum .....	83
4.5.3.3 Curriculum renewal: Phasing-out academic programme .....	83
4.5.3.4 Support structure for the internal quality process at university for the curriculum renewal process .....	87

4.5.4 Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal process .....	88
4.5.4.1 Influence on work environment .....	88
4.5.4.2 Challenges encountered during the curriculum renewal process implementation.....	87
4.5.4.3 Current university resource and support for renewed programme at DUT ...	87
4.5.5 Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal process on the renewed programme at DUT .....	89
4.5.6 Section F: Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process ....	89
4.5.6.1 NQF description of a qualification effects on learning development .....	89
4.5.6.2 Audit for reviewing the curriculum renewal process .....	89
4.5.6.3. Key expectations of curriculum renewal process.....	90
4.6. Findings from interview with Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Academic Development Practioner Representative.....	90
4.6.1. Section A: Biographical information of ADP Representative .....	90
4.6.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation .....	90
4.6.2. Section B: Quality teaching content for programmes at DUT .....	90
4.6.2.1. Underlying values for a programme’s content .....	90
4.6.2.2. Process and skills required for developing content for programmes .....	92
4.6.3. Section C: Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT .....	92
4.6.3.1. New academic strategies of teaching and learning .....	92
4.6.3.2. Forms of assessment and evaluation: Old verse renewed curriculum .....	92
4.6.4. Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme....	93
4.6.4.1 Influence on work environment.....	93
4.6.4.2 Challenges of the curriculum renewal process .....	93
4.6.5. Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme .....	93

4.6.5.1 Curriculum renewal process impact towards students .....	93
4.6.6. Section F: Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process....	94
4.6.6.1. Key expectations of the curriculum renewal process.....	94
4.7 Findings from focus group discussion with DUT OMT students .....	94
4.7.1 Students understanding of the concept “Curriculum renewal process” .....	94
4.7.2 Current programme intellectually stimulating – Agreed or Disagree?.....	95
4.7.3. Perception of the OMT programme .....	96
4.7.4 OMT programme name change .....	96
4.7.5. Lecturers teaching and learning methods in the classroom .....	96
4.7.6. Suggested new teaching and learning methods in the classroom by students at DUT .....	97
4.7.7 Awareness of self-study .....	99
4.7.8 Tutors .....	99
4.7.9 Self-study increase or decrease in renewed curriculum .....	101
4.8 Conclusion .....	102
<b>Chapter five: Discussion of findings .....</b>	<b>103</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	104
5.2 Discussion of findings.....	104
5.2.1 Curriculum renewal process concept .....	104
5.2.2 Curriculum renewal process at Durban University of Technology .....	104
5.2.2.1 Curriculum change drivers for modules .....	106
5.2.2.2 Stakeholders consultation for the renewed curriculum .....	107
5.2.3 Curriculum renewal implementation .....	108
5.2.3.1 Barriers slowing down the curriculum renewal implementation process.....	108

5.2.3.2 Influence of the curriculum renewal process on their work environment ....	110
5.2.3.3 Benefits and best practices of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.....	110
5.3 Framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.....	112
5.4 Conclusion .....	118
<b>Chapter six: Conclusion and recommendations .....</b>	<b>119</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	119
6.2 Summary of findings.....	120
6.2.1 Key findings .....	120
6.3 Recommendations .....	123
6.3.1 Student body .....	123
6.3.2 Creating revenue for the department .....	123
6.3.3 Employing a curriculum expert in the department .....	124
6.3.4 Assistance from other departments for the curriculum renewal process .....	124
6.3.4 Renewed curriculum on podcast and recording of lectures for students .....	124
6.4 Future research.....	125
6.5 Summary and conclusion .....	125
<b>References.....</b>	<b>127</b>

## List of Appendix

<b>Appendix A:</b> Semi-structured interview schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) curriculum champion at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process .....	138
<b>Appendix B:</b> Semi-structured interview schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) academics at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process. ....	140
<b>Appendix C:</b> Letter of information & consent form for curriculum champion & academics.....	142
<b>Appendix D:</b> Semi-structured interview schedule for the Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance representative at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process .....	145
<b>Appendix E:</b> Letter of information & consent form for CQPA representative .....	147
<b>Appendix F:</b> Semi- structured interview schedule for ADP rep for the FAI.....	150
<b>Appendix G:</b> Letter of information & consent form for ADP representative .....	151
<b>Appendix H:</b> Focus group discussion schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) students experiencing curricular renewal of the OMT programme at DUT.....	154
<b>Appendix I:</b> Letter of information for students .....	157
<b>Appendix J:</b> IREC clearance letter.....	160
<b>Appendix K:</b> DUT Gatekeeper permission letter .....	161
<b>Appendix L:</b> Proof read letter.....	162

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Curriculum Renewal Frame .....	9
Figure 3.1 the interconnection between an interprevisit paradigm and qualitative methods is illustrated.....	32
Figure 3.2 Location map of DUT Ritson campus .....	34
Figure 3.3 Location map of DUT Indumiso Campus .....	35
Figure 4.1: Source of gathering information for renewed programme – Advisory Board .....	53
Figure 4.2: HEQF parameter and criteria groupings for aligning programmes towards the industry .....	54
Figure 4.3: Renewed Qualification levels for programmes at UoT's .....	59
Figure 4.4: Department to which OMT academics belong .....	60
Figure 4.5: Designation of DUT OMT Academics .....	61
Figure 4.6: Highest education level of DUT OMT & BIM academics .....	61
Figure 4.7: Academic perception towards curriculum change for the OMT programme .....	62
Figure 4.8 Barriers affecting academics to teach new curriculum .....	67
Figure 4.9: Teaching and learning methods of renewed curriculum .....	72
Figure 4.10: Key attributes expected from OMT graduates vs BIM graduates.....	74
Figure 4.11: The critical path framework for programme review and evaluation process .....	82
Figure 4.12: Critical path for a new programme and curriculum: Stage One .....	83
Figure 4.13: Critical path for a new programme and curriculum: Stage two .....	85
Figure 4.14: Critical path after accreditation, registration and final approval received from the Department of Higher Education - Stage three .....	86
Figure 4.15 Underlying values for a programme's content .....	91



Figure 4.16 New teaching and learning methods that should be adopted in the classroom .....	98
Figure 4.17 Students perspective on tutors for OMT programme .....	100
Figure 5.1: Proposed curriculum renewal implementation framework .....	114

## List of Tables

Table 2.1 The SPICES Model on curriculum development .....	11
Table 2.2: “Review to Renew” Model .....	13
Table 2.3: Essential basic skills required by the Administration Management Industry .....	16
Table 2.4: Sub-frameworks highlighting qualifications registered with different NQF levels .....	23
Table 2.5: The National Qualifications Framework with Sub-Frameworks and qualification type .....	24
Table 3.1: Curriculum champion for the OMT programme interview details .....	36
Table 3.2 Face to Face interviews with DUT OMT Academics .....	38
Table 3.3 Highlighting interview detail with CQPA representative .....	39
Table 3.4 Highlighting interview detail with ADP representative .....	40
Table 3.5: Student focus group discussion details .....	43
Table 3.6: Pilot study interview details .....	46
Table 4.1: Highlighting UoT’s in South Africa offering OMT programme and curriculum renewal status .....	51
Table 4.2: Academic’s perception of benefits that came out of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme .....	63
Table 4.3: Strengths of renewed curriculum content towards OMT curriculum content .....	65
Table 4.4: Weakness and challenges of the renewed curriculum content towards OMT curriculum content .....	67
Table 4.5: Curriculum renewal process on academic’s work environment .....	70
Table 4.6: Renewed curriculum content .....	71
Table 4.7: Area of improvement in the curriculum renewal process.....	75

Table 4.8: Best practices for the curriculum renewal process from academic's viewpoint .....	77
Table 4.9: Highlighting interview detail with CQPA Representative .....	78
Table 4.10: Highlighting interview detail with ADP representative .....	90
Table 4.11: Current programme stimulating or not.....	95
Table 5.1 Overall benefits and best practices of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.....	111
Table 5.2: Review and renew process for curriculum renewal .....	115

### List of Abbreviations

ADP	Academic Development Practitioner
BIM	Business Information Management
CCFO	Critical Cross-field Outcomes
CELT	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
CHE	Council of Higher Education
CQPA	Centre for Quality and Assurance
CRP	Curriculum renewal process
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DUT	Durban University of Technology
FAI	Faculty of Accounting and Informatics
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework
IREC	Institutional Research Ethics Committee
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OMT	Office Management and Technology
QEP	Quality Enhancement Project
S.A	South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UoT	Universities of Technology

## **Chapter one:**

### **1.1 Introduction and background of the study**

South Africa's tertiary education institutions main goal is to train, educate, deliver high level professional and occupational skills, research and innovation required for development and economic growth for South Africa (Timm, Govender and Gonsalves 2016). To develop the manpower required for the advancement of South Africa's economic development, tertiary institutions need to align their programme with the needs of social, economic and technology developments locally, nationally and globally.

In an attempt to enhance the aligning needs of the industry and international education standards towards education, universities had started to accredit and renew their programme curricular. According to Singh (2004: 1), this responsibility is executed through the Council on Higher Education sub-committee, the High Education Quality Committee (HEQC). The initial stages of curriculum renewal process started as early as 2009 but the proper process began in 2012. The curriculum process for the programme Office Management and Technology was accredited in 2015 (Ronald 2016).

All the programmes at Durban University of Technology have to go through the curriculum renewal process in order to align the qualifications to the new Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF). The curriculum champion is the person who drives the curriculum renewal process by organizing meetings for curricular renewal, gathering and sharing information from outside universities or colleges who offer Office Management and Technology programmes (Ngwane 2016).

As from 2017, the National Diploma in Office Management and Technology was phased out and be replaced by the Diploma in Business and Information Management.

### **1.2 Problem statement**

Universities are increasingly committed to offering high quality and high engagement for their students learning experience in all programmes (Hubball, Lamberson and Kindler 2012: 95). According to Hider *et al.* (2011: 205), curriculum renewal of a programme's intention is to provide all students with the opportunity to examine the

core curriculum, academics to embrace the students with critical thinking and present all students with the option to expand their studies in the programme.

However, some researchers have identified that even though curriculum renewal of a programme had brought about some advantages for academics and students, there was many disadvantages as well (Bird *et al.* 2015: 19). Some of the disadvantages included that there was a curriculum drift of the content from the programme, lack of academic input into the new content and students had experienced no vision of the new curriculum content in the programme. Furthermore Thies *et al.* (2014: 44) study revealed that students found the renewal of curricula had 'dumbed down' the programme whilst the remaining students had a positive attitude towards the curriculum renewal as integrating diversity and making the programme attractive to study.

Wormley (2004: 329) has identified that if there are many challenges, negative perceptions and lack of benefits because of a poorly planned framework for curriculum renewal of a programme. Ultimately it leads to the unsuccessful implementation of curriculum renewal. There has been no research study in South Africa that observed the curriculum renewal process of a programme in-depth. The researcher therefore seeks to explore the curriculum renewal process undertaken by the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology with the aim of offering a framework informed by best practices and challenges experienced in the curriculum renewal process being investigated for future implementation by departments that intend going through the curriculum renewal process.

### **1.3 Aims and objectives**

The aim of the study is to explore the curriculum renewal process amongst academics and students of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process.

#### **1.3.1. In order achieve the above aim: the following objectives are set:**

- To establish the best practices of the curriculum renewal process on the OMT programme

- To identify the challenges of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology
- To develop a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process.

### **1.3.2. Critical questions**

Critical questions generated to meet the objective of the study included:

1. What are the best practices of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme?
2. What are the challenges of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology?
3. What framework can be developed for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process?

### **1.4 Research methodology**

The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand participant's lived experience from their point of view from themselves rather than focusing on facts in order to achieve depth of information (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011: 15). Interpretivists interact and conduct dialogues with participants and work with qualitative data in order to enrich the data collected. This study will adopt the interpretive paradigm.

According to Rule and John (2011: 4) a case study allows the researcher to develop and present an in-depth view of a particular situation or event. This study will adopt a case study research approach.

A qualitative methodology was employed for this study. Whereby semi-structured interviews were conducted with OMT academics, the OMT curriculum champion, representative from the Centre for Quality Promotion and Assurance (CQPA), and Academic Development Practitioner (ADP) for the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics (FAI). Focus group discussion with OMT students was held to obtain the students' perspectives on the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme. The researcher included the Academic Development Practitioner (ADP) from Centre of Excellence for Learning and Teaching (CELT) because of their involvement in the curriculum renewal for the OMT programme.

Sixteen academic staff registered, OMT curriculum champion, one CQPA representative, ADP for FAI and 12 students from the department of Office Management and Technology formed the population of this study. However, only twelve OMT academic staff and six OMT students participated in this study. The four OMT academics did not participate in the face to face interview due to their busy work schedule. The remaining six OMT students who did not participate in the focus group discussion was due to their unavailability due to lectures.

Each participant in this research study was informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to not participate in this study or to withdraw from it at any time of either the interview or focus group discussion.

### **1.5 Significance of this study**

Pilerot (2012: 565) emphasizes that information assists the information inquirer to learn about a situation and assists the person in dealing with situations they may face in the future. Therefore, this case study may be beneficial to other departments at Durban University of Technology and other universities, to gain an insight from an academic or student view about the curriculum renewal process. Fatemeh and Leila (2012: 240) pointed out that increased experience and knowledge sharing would have a favourable effect on an organisation's performance. As this case study will provide new insights into the perceptions and experiences of those most closely affected, that is the academic staff, the curriculum champion and students of the university involved in the curriculum renewal process, thereby assisting other departments or programmes embarking on a curriculum renewal process.

This study was conducted at the Durban University of Technology, Department of Information and Corporate Management. It covered two of the campuses in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Although it was a case study of DUT and focused on the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme, the study could have relevance to similar institutions elsewhere, particularly other universities of technology in South Africa.

### **1.6 Limitations and delimitations**

#### **1.6.1 Limitations**

The study is confined to Durban University of Technology, Office management and Technology full time students and staff of 2017. Therefore, the results of this study



cannot be generalised to the entire Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal region and other universities in South Africa. The study main focus is mainly on the curriculum renewal process for the programme Office Management and Technology, in terms of the best practices and challenges with the process.

### **1.6.2 Delimitations**

The research study is situated in a specific context, which is the OMT discipline and as such the researcher cannot make claims of generalizability for all disciplines in higher education.

However, the framework, findings and recommendations may be transferable (with necessary adaptations) to other disciplines in the higher education sector.

### **1.7 Structure of the chapters**

This study consists of five chapters:

**Chapter One** would present a brief introduction to the study. The research problem is highlighted with the support of the relevant literature. The study main aim and objectives are explained in line with the significance and scope of the study along with an insight of the theoretical framework. The chapter ends with an analysis of the contents of each of the five chapters of the study.

**Chapter Two** provides a broad review of the literature related to the study.

**Chapter Three** highlights the methodology and theoretical framework employed for this study.

**Chapter Four** showcases a detailed analysis of the data through an interpretation of the results of the interview sessions and focus group discussion session.

**Chapter Five** is the last chapter of the study and it comprises of the recommendations and conclusion that are drawn from the findings in the previous chapter and the literature discussed in Chapter Two. This chapter also contains suggestions for future research and the limitations of the study are outlined.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

This introductory chapter provided a context to the study and its research problem. The chapter presented the research problem, aim and objectives of the study and

critical questions generated to address the objective, as well as the significance for the study. It provided a brief research methodology adopted, limitations, delimitations and research paradigm of the study were outlined.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter gave a brief introduction to this study. The background, research problem, aims and objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study and the content of the chapters were also discussed in chapter one. This chapter will discuss the literature which relates to this study.

The main aspects for this chapter includes the definition of curriculum, theoretical framework for curriculum renewal, curriculum change of tertiary programmes in South Africa, Legislation for curriculum renewal, curriculum renewal implementation, challenges and benefits of the curriculum renewal process.

### **2.2 Definition of curriculum**

As Wattanacharoensil (2014: 13) highlights that curriculum is what is taught in the classroom. While other researchers define a curriculum as a series of educational experiences a student obtains whilst studying towards a qualification (Airey and Tribe 2006: 48). Similarly, Ornstein and Hunkins (2009: 11) further defines curriculum as “a sequence of steps for achieving goals with reviewing its subject content, foundations, knowledge domain, theory and principals”.

Furthermore, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) the curriculum framework comprises of various dimensions. This goes in line with Kelly (2004: 3) who had identified that there is four nature of curriculum, namely:

- Planned curriculum which is the ‘laid-down’ and formal syllabus. It is described as the formal curriculum which refers to the course of study, the planned syllabus, actual teaching, assessments methods and other materials used in an educational setting (Wear and Skillicorn 2009: 451). Furthermore, the Council of Higher Education (CHE 2017) coincides with this definition of planned curriculum that a planned or formal planned experiences, objectives and content that students are exposed to during their studies.

- Received or enacted curriculum refers to the student's absorption of the syllabus. UNESCO (2017) refers this curriculum to the actions undertaken by the students based on their interpretation of what is required in the formal curriculum documents.
- On the other hand, a hidden or unplanned curriculum is the knowledge learned by students but not openly intended. It is often referred to the social environment of the classroom. According to UNESCO (2017), these curriculum aspects are not explicitly taught but would be beneficial and important towards students at tertiary level. This type of curriculum aspect occurs when a lecturer's industry viewpoints or experience brought into the classroom (Mueller 2009: 29).
- Outside or null curriculum is the knowledge that students learn outside the education environment.

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework for curriculum renewal**

According to Rajkoomar (2015: 15) the background knowledge or theoretical framework enables the researcher to frame the study research inquiry. The researcher needs to be able to use the existing knowledge or background to explain what is encountered in the data produced. Subsequently various paradigms raised to guide the development of curricula. The curriculum renewal framework by Rodger (2011) and the Mckenna 'Review and Renew' model (2013) is the theoretical framework that underpin this study. These will be discussed further in this section.

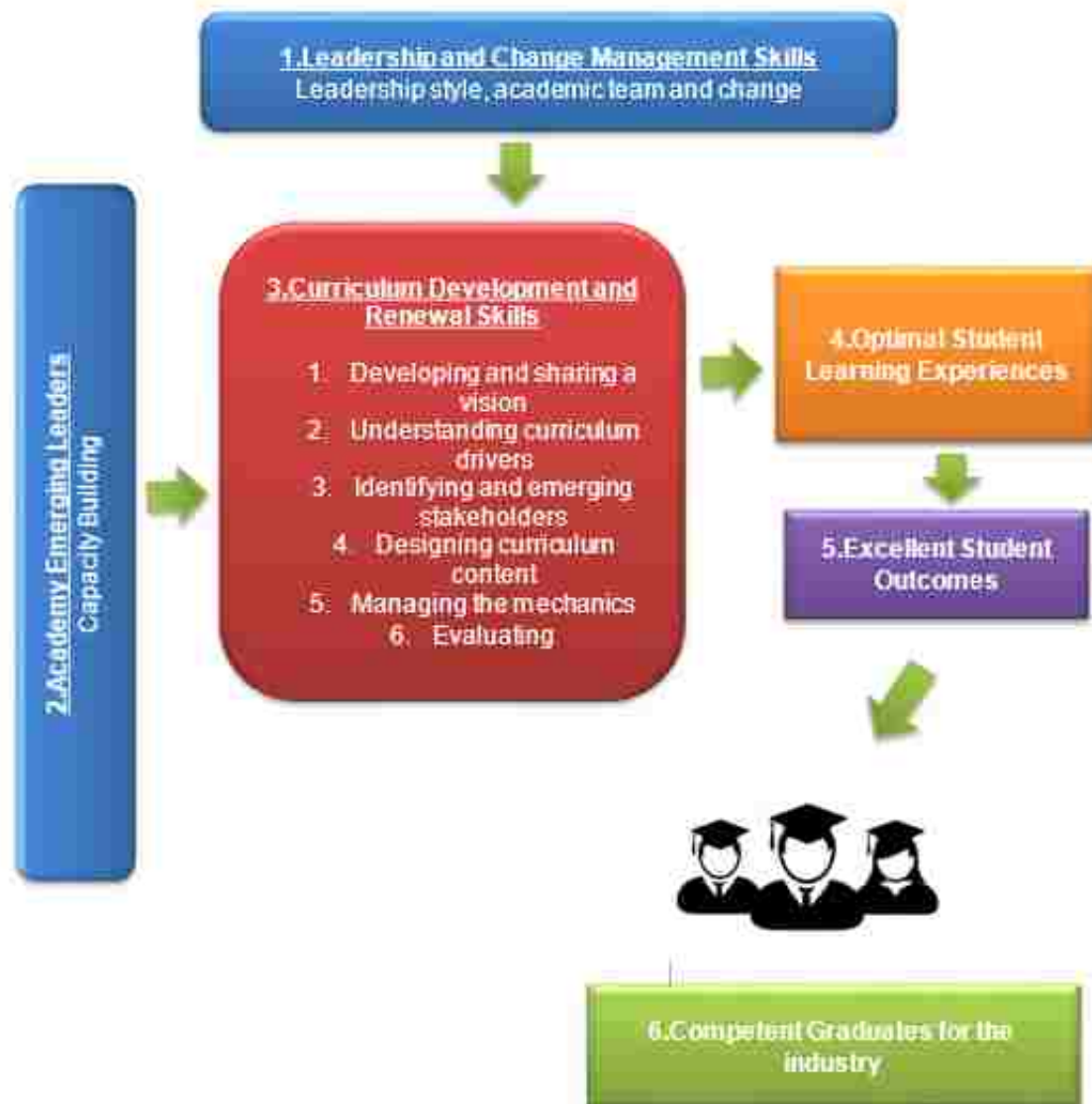
#### **2.3.1 Framework for curriculum renewal paradigm**

According to Rodger (2011: 76), the purpose of the curriculum renewal process is to assist and support with the following:

- The university strategic direction, systems and policies
- Maintenance of standards
- Maintenance of professional industry accreditation standards where required.

As in Figure 2.1 shows the curriculum renewal framework produced by Rodger (2011) highlights the broad outlook of the process at university level. This will be briefly discussed thereafter.

**Figure 2.1 Curriculum Renewal Framework**



(Adapted from Rodger 2011)

### **1. Leadership and Change Management Skills**

According to Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2004), great leaders move people by inspiring and motivating them to move forward, change for the better. This implies that with leadership skills in university management needs to change their leadership style to bring all academics together as a team to move forward to the change.

## **2. Academy Emerging Leaders**

In order for the curriculum change idea to be adopted by all academics and the university, capacity building needs to take place. According to Beesley and Shebby (2010), capacity building in the education environment involves the process of combining resources and elements within a university to benefit all stakeholder and accomplish the mission. The main purpose of capacity building is to innovate and implement programmes that will also allow all academics to enhance their skills, knowledge and abilities to be the leaders or drivers for curriculum change.

## **3. Curriculum Development and Renewal Skills**

In order to undergo the initial curriculum development process for change, academics need to understand the curriculum change drivers. The researcher found that the 1984 SPICES model was ideal to explain this section more in detail.

Thirty-three years after its original description, the 1984 SPICES model on curriculum development still remains the foundation for curriculum development of programmes and skills (Harden, Sowden and Dunn 1984: 285). This theoretical framework consists of six curriculum issues that need to be comprised into curriculum renewal of a programme. It is highlighted in Table 2.1 on the next page thereafter it is discussed.

**Table 2.1: The SPICES Model on curriculum development**

<b>The SPICES Model on curriculum development</b>			
<b>I.</b>	<b>S</b>	Student centred	Student have to take more responsibility for their own learning
<b>II.</b>	<b>P</b>	Problem based	Stimulates students to be critical thinkers
<b>III.</b>	<b>I</b>	Integrated	New curriculum content must allow students to put together all the knowledge gained from each subject into an overall picture of the industry expectation
<b>IV.</b>	<b>C</b>	Community based	Student must be able to use their knowledge and skills learnt to be engaged with the reality
<b>V.</b>	<b>E</b>	Electives	The curricular must be flexible & allow students to choose some of their subjects
<b>VI.</b>	<b>S</b>	Systematic	The programme must be designed for all students and thereafter the depth of student's knowledge must be assessed and reflected upon.

(Adapted from Harden's curriculum development strategies, 1984: 285)

The theoretical framework that is highlighted in Table 2.1, shows that the six curriculum issues need to be addressed during the curriculum renewal of a programme. In recent years, an effective learning environment and student support structures at the university should also be incorporated in the curricular renewal of a programme.

#### **4. Optimal Student Learning Experiences**

As elaborated by Digest (2017), sometimes in university there are students who would become future leaders in the industry one day and as an academic we have to ensure that they grow within the classroom they have created. Therefore, it is important that students obtain the optimal student learning experience.

Education needs to be student centred; their ideas and opinions should be valued and educators needs to understand the students' knowledge and guide them to further their learning.

## **5. Excellent student outcomes**

This is the main goal of the curriculum renewal process of a programme. To create competent graduates for the industry.

The connection between the Rodger (2011) 'Curriculum renewal frame' and the 'SPICES' model by Harden (1984) on curriculum development is that the entire process of curriculum renewal should be focused on the student and their future in their programme industry. The best practices involved in both framework's is used to increase the benefit of excellent student outcomes thereby leading to competent graduates for the industry.

### **2.3.2 Mckenna 'Review and Renew' model**

This "Review and Renew" model is found on the next page in Table 2.2.



**Table 2.2: “Review to Renew” Model**

adapted from McKenna (2013)

Review		Renew			
Current state	Mechanics	Validation & Consultation	Response	New Current State	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Current Curriculum</li> <li>-Current Graduate Attributes</li> <li>-Current Strategic Priorities</li> <li>-Current external Accreditation Standards (Professional Bodies, Licencing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identify items for mapping</li> <li>-Identify data collection approach</li> <li>Identify relationships and alignments from data</li> <li>-Gaps</li> <li>-How, where, when &amp; why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up expert group to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Evaluate</li> <li>-Moderate</li> <li>-Validate</li> </ul> </li> <li>Validate findings                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Survey</li> <li>-Student experience</li> <li>-Academic experience</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Propose areas for renewal or improvement or change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What response/action is needed:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Prioritise</li> <li>-Base on valid and relevant evidence</li> </ul> </li> <li>Action Plan are drawn up                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Assign timeframes</li> <li>-Responsibilities allocate</li> <li>-Resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Implement Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewed curriculum</li> <li>-Justified</li> <li>-Quantified</li> <li>-Qualified</li> <li>-Validated</li> <li>-Tested</li> <li>-Trialled</li> <li>-Targeted</li> <li>-Aligned with University strategy and policy</li> <li>-Aligned with professional accreditation and standards.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Report</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>Report</b>	

The McKenna 'Review and Renew' (2013) model in Table 2.2, highlights the curriculum renewal process in detail from beginning to the end. Namely:

- **Current State**

It is when the current curriculum, graduate attributes, strategies, accreditation of a programme is reviewed.

- **Mechanics**

This involves all processes of the action process of reviewing the curriculum. Identifying the items for mapping, relationships and gaps from the programme contents. At the end, a report should be formed.

- **Validation and consultation**

Thereafter, the report should be reviewed by a panel of experts from the programme. Findings should help to identify gaps and areas for improvement or change. Another report should be compiled at the end of this aspect.

- **Response**

This involves the response actions that are needed for curriculum change to take place. The resources for the renewed curriculum should also be reviewed here. Timeframes and responsibilities to draw up the renewed curriculum for the programme are done. Lastly, an action plan and report should be completed for future references.

- **New current state**

Renewed curriculum is being updated, aligned with university, professional bodies and proper accreditation. A final report should be done and thereafter a panel of expert for the programme should be done to discuss the outcome of the curriculum renewal process.

## **2.4 Re-designing the curricula of a programme**

According to Bhardwaj *et al.* (2006: 29) when re-designing a higher education programme curriculum, attention needs to be given in the following areas:

- Stakeholders, society, industry should be part of the stakeholder in re-designing the new curricula

- There should be a balance of theoretical, conceptual material and practical experiences which should form the integral part of the new programme
- The new programme must consist of approaches that involve community and industry participation
- The new programme needs to be flexible to embrace the frequent industry & country changes
- New programme should emphasis a professional, vocational and entrepreneurial development of students
- In the re-designing of the new curricula, it should incorporate a balance of general understanding of the various disciplines in that programme field

#### **2.4.1 Re-designing the learning areas of a programme**

Curriculum change is necessary when existing content, teaching methods and structures of school or university education do not respond to new demands resulting from political, cultural, technological and economic changes. Researchers have mentioned that without curriculum change, it would be unfavourable for a society to achieve its future goal (Ramzan, Jalal and Akhter 2015: 189). CHE advises that the curricula need to be relevant to the students of today's South Africa, preparing them to succeed in tomorrow's world (CHE 2015).

According to Mossenlechner and Zehrer (2009: 163) emphasise that companies do not want to employ students that simply possess basic administrative knowledge and skills, relatively students who are up to date with the industry needs, are able to work independently and cope with the rapid changes of the business world are considered more favourable.

In order to align the curricula with the recent year's industry needs, the curricula firstly need to be able to contain new and factual information with technological driven components and resources that is in line with the industry (Mossenlechner and Zehrer 2009: 164).

### 2.4.2. Re-designing the essential skills in a renewed programme

From the information presented in Table 2.3 below, it can be argued that the curriculum renewal of a programme should be designed in a manner that incorporate the below skill gap so that the new qualification can close the skill gap. Researchers emphasize that such skills and knowledge would harvest a well-equipped graduate that will be successful in their career path (Rubio *et al.* 2016).

**Table 2.3: Essential basic skills required by the Administration Management Industry**

<b>Basic capability</b>	<b>Skill defined</b>
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuality, Reliable and passion</li> </ul>
Communicating in a business environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal, written, electronic and telephonic</li> </ul>
Technology skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Office Suite</li> <li>• WordPress</li> <li>• Endnote</li> <li>• Online scheduling and travel schedules</li> <li>• Know how to use and maintain office equipment</li> </ul>
Analytical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-reliant, Problem-solving skills, Planning skills</li> </ul>
Conceptual thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical and conceptual thinking,</li> </ul>
Marketing and Public Relation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to use and maintain social media applications in the work environment such as skype for business used in meetings etc.</li> <li>• Must have the skill to speak publicly, presentations or meetings</li> </ul>
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to work in a team, relationship building and conflict resolution</li> </ul>

Initiative of oneself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivated, enthusiasm, willing to learn, proactive, persistent, decisive</li> </ul>
Self confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independence, positive ego, decisive, accepts responsibility</li> </ul>
Tacit skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising, multi-tasking and time management</li> </ul>
Achievement skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative, competitiveness, task accomplishment and aims for standard &amp; efficiency.</li> </ul>
Ethical, values and social sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding ethical and value issues in the workplace</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the student does not possess a qualification with the above skills &amp; knowledge, he/she would find difficulty in succeeding in their career path</li> </ul>	

Mossenlechner and Zehrer (2009: 164) suggested that the basic skills needed by the industry from students could be implemented into the new curricula through 3 ways, namely:

1. Integrating the skills during the re-design and development of the new curriculum
2. Implementation of skills through extra curricula modules or activities in the new programme
3. Internship opportunities which entail students to employ theory absorbed in the lecture hall and apply it during their daily experiences.

This study aims to identify attempts to find this via what the best practices that are used in the curriculum renewal process.

## 2.5 Overcoming curriculum renewal issues

Till date, it is obvious that there are a number of issues related with the development of an ideal curriculum (Nie *et al.* 2010: 114).

This raises specific curriculum renewal issues such as:

- Which stakeholders should be involved in the re-designing of the new curriculum for the programme?
- How would the quality assurance of the renewal process be guaranteed during the re-development of a curricula?
- Whether the previous curriculum should exist and why?

In this regard, Marcus (2016: 103) highlights the importance of an up to date curriculum in a programme towards students to meet the following:

- **The expectations of students or future employees in the industry**

Students are the immediate consumers of the university educational process. The curriculum from which they had absorbed skills, knowledge & attributes have expected.

- **The expectations of organisations employing students**

Employers are the direct consumers of the skills, knowledge & attributes attained by students. It is important that people from the industries be stakeholders in the curriculum renewal process to address the missing links to fulfil the successful employability of students in the future.

- **The expectations of academics implementing new curricular**

As the drivers for implementing the changed curricular, they also have expectations. Academics have expectations from the education structure such as resources and tools to teach the new curricular and effective teaching methods with an assessment instrument

Therefore, the main stakeholders of the renewed curriculum development have expectations of curriculum renewal process. As Botha (2016: 76) suggested that it is crucial to acknowledge the expectation of each role player when re-curriculating a programme to reduce the risk of delivering content to students that is non-beneficial to the student or the industry. Hence, OMT programme main stakeholder's which are the academics and students form part of the participants of this study. This study

attempts to find out who are the stakeholders that were involved in the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at DUT.

## **2.6 Curriculum change of tertiary programmes in South Africa**

According to CHE (2015), South Africa's old curriculum was designed for students who had no family or work commitments and had enabled them to study full time. However, in recent years' majority of students do not fit these characteristics anymore. Wormley (2004: 329) further suggested that the renewal of the curriculum should evolve with the rapid technological advances to attract strong and diverse groups of students. Nie *et al.* (2010: 115) found that by incorporating an attractive content in the curriculum, students were satisfied and appreciated that they had the opportunity to engage with the programme material differently compared to previous years. Universities new curriculum characteristics structure should include online blended or distance learning or part-time studies to attract the diverse learners to their institution.

## **2.7 Legislation for curriculum renewal**

After the 1994 democratic elections, the Department of Education (DoE) had embarked on its first national curriculum policy initiative. The Ministry of Education of South Africa had established its first White paper called '*The White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa: First steps to develop a new systems*' (Asmal 2000: 3). It is a policy document that the South African government authorised the idea of a renewing an integrated education and training systems for the country. Hartshorne (1999: 23) further stated that it was important for South Africa to redevelop the education and training system, so that it would be in line with locals and international requirements. In order for universities to operate legally within South Africa, agreement with the following regulatory frameworks is compulsory:

### **2.7.1 The Council of Higher Education (CHE)**

Established in May 1998, this statutory body functions the Quality Council for Higher Education in South Africa for both private and public institutions (CHE 2017). The role of (CHE 2017) includes:

- Offering guidance to the Minister of Higher Education and Training in South Africa

- Emerging and implementing a quality assurance system such as accreditation, audits and standard development
- Implementing the Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF)

### **2.7.2 The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC)**

The role of HEQC is to review and process the accreditation of tertiary institutions and their programmes (CHE 2017). The most important objective of the HEQC is to ensure that all tertiary education service providers efficiently and effectively deliver training and education of high quality with enriched value and knowledge. In addition, to teach a versatile range of skills and attribute required by students to integrate them into modern society (CHE 2015: 2).

### **2.7.3 The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)**

This statutory body is responsible for the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) by producing policies and criteria to ensure that the standards are met (SAQA 2017).

#### **2.7.3.1 Composition required for a qualification to be registered on the NQF**

According to (SAQA 2017), the follow is required for a qualification to be registered on the NQF:

- Title of qualification
- Field and subfield
- Level
- Credits
- Rational & purpose for the qualification
- Rules of combination
- Access to the qualification
- Learning assumed to be in place
- Exit level outcomes and their associated assessment criteria
- Critical cross-field outcomes
- International comparability
- Integrated assessment



- Recognition of prior learning
- Articulation
- Moderation options
- Criteria for the registration of assessors
- Notes (optional)
- Unit standard title matrix

#### **2.7.4 Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFO's)**

According to SAQA (2013: 13), it is compulsory for tertiary institutions to implement CCFO's during the curriculum development of higher education qualifications. CCFO's or "Critical paths" are the generic outcomes that are crucial for the development of a lifelong student (SAQA 2017). SAQA additionally states that all qualifications must contain the below CCFO at appropriate levels (SAQA 2013: 5):

- "Identify and solve problems using critical and creative thinking
- Work effectively with other members of a team, group, organisation and society
- Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively
- Communicate effectively using language, visual, mathematical skills in the modes of oral or written presentation.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information
- Use technology and science critically and effectively, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation."

#### **2.7.5 The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**

In 1995, the Minister of Education had designated a team to develop a policy document on the National Qualifications Framework (SAQA 2017). The benefit of this statutory body was to bring uniformity and structure to South Africa's education system. The NQF highlights the requirements for an assessment and to accomplish a qualification. A credit is a measure of the notional learning time or hours that a student would take to meet the prescribed outcomes. This includes the structured learning, contact time,

assessments, self- study time and workplace learning which is 10 notional hours equals to 1 credit (SAQA 2017).

#### **2.7.5.1 NQF Framework Levels**

The NQF framework would indicate the descriptions of course guidelines, standards and credits (SAQA 2017). In 1996, the National Department of Education released a discussion document titled, 'Lifelong Learning through a National Qualifications Framework'. The framework is organised as series of levels of learning accomplishments (SAQA 2017). The first reformed framework released in 1996 highlighted the reformed education and consisted of 8 level descriptors. It is understood that the committee advised that South Africa's education system should implement an eight level framework with three bands. These bands are categorized into General Education and Training Band (Grade R to 9), the Further Education and Training Band (Grade 10 to 12) and the Higher Education and Training Band which is for post matric studies at universities or colleges (DHET 2017).

However, in 2001 the NQF level frame work was reviewed and updated. The updated NQF framework incorporated 3 co-ordinated qualifications sub-frameworks (SAQA 2017). These sub-frameworks highlighted in Table 2.4 and Table 2.5 on the next page, have qualifications registered with different NQF Levels. Namely, the following:




**Table 2.4: Sub-frameworks highlighting qualifications registered with different NQF levels**

<b>1. General and Further Education and Training Sub-Framework (GFETQSF)</b>
- NQF levels 1 to 4
<b>2. The Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF)</b>
- NQF levels 5 to 10
<b>3. The Occupational Qualification Sub-Framework (OQSF)</b>
- NQF levels 1 to 10
- For NQF levels 7 and 8, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations in South Africa can motivate for a qualification only with a recognised professional body, the Council on Higher Education in an integrated system by SAQA.

(SAQA 2017)

In Table 2.5 on the next page, the qualifications registered with different NQF Levels are highlighted.

**Table 2.5: The National Qualifications Framework with Sub-Frameworks and qualification type**

Type of Qualification or Certificate	Level	Key
Doctoral Degree Doctoral Degree (Professional)	10	GFETQSF 
Master's Degree Master's Degree (Professional)	9	HEQSF 
Bachelor Honours Degree Postgraduate Diploma Bachelor Degree	8	OQSF 
Bachelor's Degree Advanced Diploma	7	
Diploma Advanced Certificate	6	
Higher Certificate	5	
National Certificate	4	
Intermediate Certificate	3	
Elementary Certificate	2	
General Certificate	1	

(SAQA 2017)

### 2.7.6 Higher Education Quality Committee Framework

From 2004 till 2011, CHE had initiated their first quality assurance cycle which focused on the reconfiguring of the higher education landscape in South Africa. As a result of the process, the number of higher education institutions was reduced from 36 to 23 through a series of merging of universities and colleges. Thereafter, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and higher education sector indicated that the next cycle should be centred on the quality promotion of programmes offered and improving student success at these universities (CHE 2015).

According to CHE (2015: 5), the four main focus areas of phase one of the QEP during 2014 and 2015 were enhancing academics as teachers, enhancing student support and development, enhancing the learning environment and enhancing the course and

programme enrolment management. During 2016 and 2017, phase two of the QEP, tertiary institutions will be asked to focus on enhancing the curriculum, transformation and hearing student voices (CHE 2015).

## **2.8 Curriculum renewal implementation**

The entire curriculum renewal implementation process can be viewed as a sequential set of activities that is aimed towards placing an authorised policy into motion in order to address the formal legalisation process (Nieveen and Plomp 2018: 260). Narayan and Edwards (2011: 7) mention that a curriculum renewal of a programme needs to be implemented in recent years as it would bring the content to a current, responsive, proactive course and be effective.

However, Nie *et al.* (2010: 108) states and highlights some of the challenges in curriculum renewal design & implementation which needs attention:

- Improving learner engagement with materials
- Enhancing the flexibility of the programme such as part time study periods
- Reducing student isolation and encouraging more interaction with students through critical thinking
- Identifying routes to enhance pass rates of the programme.

Moreover, Hubball, Lamberson and Kindler (2012: 101) found an additional challenge was that not always a university's current resources support the delivery of the new curriculum content of a programme. This presents the communication and process of curriculum renewal of a programme. The researcher have identified few challenges with the implementation of the curriculum renewal process from students and academic's point of view from readings in previous literature highlighted below.

### **2.8.1 Challenges for academics as drivers for curriculum renewal**

The thought of a curricula renewal of a programme can be a long, unsettling and exhilarating for academics (Krasny 2009: 1). Dempster, Benfield and Francis (2012: 136) have identified that academics have found the process to be difficult, the resource is intensive and it is time consuming to implement a new curricular. Furthermore, Wormley (2004: 329) had identified that during the implementation phase of the

curriculum renewal process, academics began to rethink their time investment into the process itself as it felt as an overload of work.

The other challenges identified by academic's is that all students who enter a university do not have the same social capital and cultural backgrounds and therefore it is difficult to apply same methods of teaching to all students (Thies *et al.* 2014: 17). Most academics teaching at first year level have to initially introduce certain subjects at introductory level thereafter process the main information of the programme content to students. Academics in South Africa are worried about the calibre of students the universities that are being enrolled at tertiary level as the admission requirements was dropped in the recent years and whether the students would be able to cope with the new curriculum (Naidoo 2012). Kift, Nelson and Clarke (2010: 2) pointed out that with curriculum renewal of programme content, all students must benefit from the reform and not only have those who find had poor learning absorption at university level. This study objective aims to identify the challenges of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology.

Moreover, some students still expect the traditional application of knowledge mode or 'spoon-feeding' whereby the students are an empty vessels waiting to absorb with knowledge given by the academics and accepting then tested on the area (Geduld and Sathorar 2016). In modern times this has changed drastically, as with the curriculum renewal of programmes, the content of the modules is more student centred. This is the need for students to become more active citizens and responsible for their own education as well (Bovill, Cook-Sather and Felten 2011: 133). These are the challenge being faced by academics in recent years.

Dredge *et al.* (2013: 18) also outlined that academics are also pressured with the alignment of international and national level of content and delivery academic standards with their current resources. In South Africa, academics face the challenge of lecturing to students with limited resources such as lack of textbook's in the classroom, load shedding of electricity to make use of Smartboards or online classes or lack of technology in certain classes did affect the learning process (Geduld and Sathorar 2016).

All these challenges can bring about a stressful work environment for academics and could affect them as the drivers for the curriculum content change of a programme. These challenges can therefore increase stress levels for academics to complete the syllabus because of the additional work due to the curriculum renewal thereby creating negative perceptions towards curriculum renewal (Ramzan, Jalal and Akhter 2015: 199).

As Grawitch, Gottschalk and Munz (2006: 135), recognised that most of employee's absences are related to unhealthy and stressful work environments. Dejoy and Wilson (2003: 337) advised that organizations should also look after their employee's psychological wellbeing otherwise it could not only affect them but also affect the organisation's workflow process. This study attempts to find out whether OMT academics have also found the curriculum renewal process stressful in their work environment and whether it has impacted negatively.

Researchers have also identified that not only did academics find challenges with the curriculum renewal process but students as well.

### **2.8.2 Challenges faced by students with the curriculum renewal process**

The argument about involving students' input in the curriculum renewal process of a programme at university level has largely been made internationally (Peseta *et al.* 2015). As Brew (2010: 139) pointed out that without involving students' perceptions in terms of the re-curricula of a programme module learning, teaching, curriculum content, it would be considered an '*academic apartheid*'. Students would feel that their views of what they expect to learn or how they would absorb the new content does not matter to the university just as long as they paid to study.

Thies *et al.* (2014: 44) pointed out that this would affect the student's education journey would impact on their future academic success. When changing the programme content and the teaching methods, it has a significant impact on students' perception of their ability to think, identify and explore opportunities in their field of career and education (Unger and Hanekom 2014: 222).

As identified by Cloete (2015: 61) when students are not attracted to the new content and not actively involved, they find it difficult to absorb the new curricular learning process thereby affecting their journey to move forward in their field of study. Moreover, as highlighted by Peseta *et al.* (2015: 3), students come to university with expectations about the new content; however a lack of good communication skills from academics affects their learning process. Students are not being made aware of what is expected of them or the overall outcome or graduate expectation of the renewed programme. Thereby, leading to students to drop out of the university programme.

As highlighted by Thies (2012: 15), the outcome response felt by students at Australian Universities that undergone curriculum renewal is that they had felt the programme content at 'dumbed down'. The students had felt that the course was too easy and anyone could study the programme or do not have to study the programme to obtain a job in the industry. Thereafter, creating a negative perception about the curriculum renewal process for a programme. The purpose of curriculum renewal of programme content is not only to align itself towards industry needs but to encourage students to be able to think critically and become responsible for their own education future. More student centred learning in other words. Therefore, this study aims to identify challenges faced by students during the curriculum renewal process.

Other researchers such as Green, Hammer and Starr (2009: 3) found that another challenge students faced is the increased class number sizes due to the growth of student numbers to study the renewed programme. Thies (2012: 4) argues that this would result to constraints on resources, different teaching and learning methods due to the large class sizes leaving students and academics frustrated with how content is being delivered to them. This would result towards student's poor graduate attribute in the future. This study attempts to ascertain whether the OMT curriculum renewal process has affected the OMT students and what contributed towards their perception.

However, despite the many challenges academics and students faced due to the curriculum renewal process of a programme as identified by local and international researcher, there is also benefits that came about from the process.



## **2.9 Benefits of the curriculum renewal process**

The process of the curriculum renewal of a programme has many opportunities according to Wormley (2004: 330) such as:

- Developing new goals for the department
- newly programme having well developed goals for the department
- A committed leadership strategy by faculty and administrative
- Additional support for academics to convey the new content such as tutors
- New measures to monitor students' progress and recognition for successful efforts toward academics and students

According to Bray *et al.* (2013: 19) students felt that with the re-curriculating the programme to implement tutoring and new learning strategies in the classroom had been a huge benefit to them. Students highlighted that tutoring in smaller groups as they became more focused on learning the new curriculum better. Therefore, the new teaching and learning methods had been benefitted by both the students and academics. The researcher had identified a gap with the lack of best practices literature articles about the curriculum renewal process implementation. Therefore, this study aims to establish the best practices and benefits of the curriculum renewal process on the OMT programme at DUT.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

This chapter had reviewed the literature related to the objectives of this study. The literature reviews also included the various and relevant themes used to build the theoretical framework of this study. Key to the framework is the understanding the definitions of curriculum, the different models used to conduct curriculum renewal of a programme, redesigning the actual curricula of a programme and overcoming curriculum renewal challenges. Thereafter, the curriculum change of tertiary programmes in South Africa is reviewed along with the legislation for conducting curriculum renewal is reviewed. Lastly, curriculum renewal implementation, challenges for academics as drivers for curriculum renewal, challenges faced by students with the curriculum renewal process and the benefits of the curriculum renewal process was reviewed. The next chapter describes the methodology adopted for this study.

## **Chapter 3:**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided the supporting literature for the research study. This chapter presents the design and the methodology of this study. The research procedure and design utilised for this research study include collecting data by conducting face to face interviews and a focus group discussion to answer questions concerning the objective of the study. To explain the research methodology in detail, the following key aspects will be addressed: Firstly, the study type, study area, sample techniques, sample size will be outlined in order to explain the objectives and application of the investigation. Secondly, the interview schedule and focus group discussion schedule design and administration will be described. Finally, the process of data analysis, reliability and validity used in this study is discussed.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Creswell and Clark (2011: 53) refers to a research design as a road map for a researcher to collect, analyse, interpret and reporting data for a research study. A research design is about planning methods and strategies to find out information systematically with the intention that the findings produced should contribute to the existing body of knowledge (Petre and Rugg 2007: 61).

This research study design only involved the gathering of qualitative data. The aim of qualitative research is to capture the understanding of the social phenomenon as the participants experience it and where the researcher is part of the phenomenon of interest. The data was gathered via interviews with the OMT Curriculum champion, OMT academics, ADP representative, a CQPA representative and one focus group discussion with OMT and BIM students of all levels from the Office Management and Technology department in the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics. Qualitative data was gathered through open ended questions on the interview schedule and focus group discussion schedule which involved semi-structured questions.

The researcher opted to conduct the focus group discussion with students before the third year OMT students leave for their in-service training. The focus group discussion

was conducted with the students who voluntarily agreed to participate for this research project.

### **3.2.1 Case Study**

According to Rule and John (2011: 4) a case study allows the researcher to develop and present an in-depth view of a particular situation or event. This study will adopt a case study research approach.

### **3.2.2 Research paradigm**

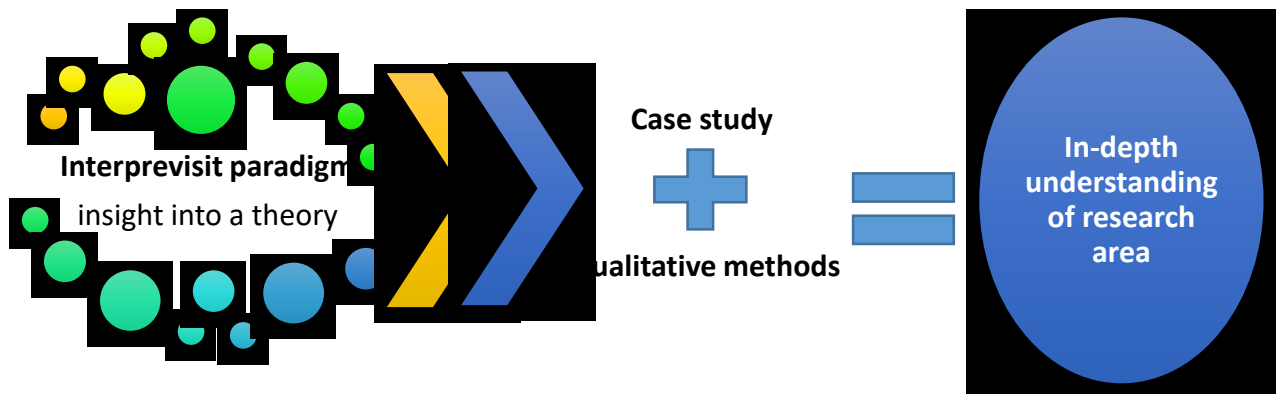
In seeking the answers for this research study, the researcher will follow the interpretive paradigm which uses participant's experiences to construct and interpret an understanding from the gathered data. This study is seeking to explore the curriculum renewal process amongst academics and students of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology in order to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process.

Many international researchers believe that an Interpretivists paradigm predominantly make's use of qualitative data collection methods (Silverman, 2000; Nind & Todd, 2011; Hyett, Kenny and Swift, 2014; Ponelis, 2015)

In the interpretive paradigm, the crucial purpose of researchers is to obtain an 'insight' and 'in-depth' information about their research study area (Thanh and Thanh 2015: 26). Interpretivists maintain that the knowledge is constructed not only from an observable situation but also by the description of participants' intentions, self-understanding, values and beliefs (Henning 2004: 20).

On the next page in Figure 3.1, the interconnection between an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods is illustrated.

**Figure 3.1 the interconnection between an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods is illustrated**



(Thanh and Thanh 2015: 26)

As indicated above, the interpretive paradigm seeks answers for research by underpinning understandings of the participant’s view. According to Wilson (2007), researchers who make use of the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods often seek understandings and perceptions of individuals for their research data collection rather than rely on number of statistics.

The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand participant’s lived experience from their point of view from themselves rather than focusing on facts in order to achieve depth of information (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011: 15). According to Wahyuni (2012: 71), Interpretivists researchers prefer to interact and dialogue with the research participants in order to understand the situation from their experiences in order to enrich the data collected. This study will adopt the interpretive paradigm.

The researcher aimed at working directly with the experience and understanding of OMT academics, OMT curriculum champion, CQPA & ADP representative and OMT students in developing a framework for the successful implementation process of curriculum renewal for the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology.

### **3.2.3 Qualitative research approach**

Qualitative research approach allows the researcher to examine participants experience in detail by using research methods that are in-depth (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2011: 9). This study will use a qualitative approach whereby semi-structured interviews will be conducted with academics, the curriculum champions and the Centre for Quality Promotion and Assurance & ADP representative. Focus group discussion with students will be held to obtain the students' perspectives on the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016: 1) highlighted that qualitative approaches usually make use of non-probability sampling which is also called purposive sampling strategies. In non-probability sampling the researcher cannot forecast that each element of the population is represented. This study used purposive sampling as it involves the researcher intentionally selecting participants that have experienced the central phenomenon that is being explored in this study.

According to Crouch and McKenzie (2006: 14) a qualitative study should consist of up to 15 but no more than 20 interview participants, as it helps the researcher to build and maintain a close relationship & open exchange of information. Furthermore, Latham (2018) advised that the amount of participants in a qualitative study should be enough once saturation has reached and additional participants do not provide any additional insights. This will assist the researcher in avoiding bias and validity threats inherent in a qualitative research study.

### **3.3 The research context**

According to Durrheim, Terreblanche and Painter (2006: 34), the research context establishes the sphere for the research. This section includes the research setting, population and sampling.

#### **3.3.1 Research setting**

The study area is located in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban. This case study area focuses on the tertiary education establishment in Durban, specifically and namely the Durban University of Technology.

When the higher education landscape changed in Southern Africa after democracy, ML Sultan and Technikon Natal merged to form the Durban Institute of Technology on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002. Thereafter in March 2006, the South African Department of Education argued that all former Technikons should be called 'Universities of Technology (Durban University of Technology, 2016). This resulted in the name change of the tertiary establishment to the Durban University of Technology.

The Durban University of Technology is located in Durban and Pietermaritzburg region. This study area focuses on two campuses for obtaining data from the 16 OMT academics, who are namely located at Durban Ritson campus and Pietermaritzburg Indumiso campus.

Durban University of Technology, Ritson campus is situated in the Durban city centre and it is located between Ritson road and Winterton walk road. In the Figure 3.2 below, the yellow star highlighted on the map indicates the location of Ritson campus in Durban.

**Figure 3.2 Location map of DUT Ritson campus**



(Google maps, 2017)

Durban University of Technology, Indumiso campus is situated in Imbali, Pietermaritzburg and is located between FJ Sithole road and Sutherland road. In the Figure 3.3, the red star highlighted on the map indicates the location of Indumiso Campus in Pietermaritzburg.

**Figure 3.3 Location map of DUT Indumiso Campus**



(Google maps, 2017)

### **3.3.2 Target Population**

The population is a complete group of elements that possess information relevant to the research study (Hair Jr *et al.* 2011: 165). The target population for this study comprised of 27 which consists of twelve full time OMT academic staff, OMT curriculum champion, one CQPA representative, one ADP representative and six students of the Information and Corporate department, Office Management and Technology and Business Information Management programme.

### **3.4 Measuring instruments**

#### **3.4.1 Face to face semi structured interviews**

Miles and Huberman (1994: 27) explain that during interviews, the researcher will obtain all the information required and gives respondents the freedom to respond in their own words to provide as much details as they offer. A semi-structured interview is a type of interview, in which the researcher uses a list of questions as a guide, whilst still obtaining the freedom to probe for more information from the participants (Mackey and Gass 2005: 173).

Each interview session was opened with background information about the responding participant. The background information established the characteristics of the respondent and ascertained whether the person who was responding to the question was competent to do so.

### 3.4.1.1 Interview with DUT OMT Curriculum champion

A semi-structured interview was used (refer to Appendix A). The curriculum champion was contacted personally via email correspondence prior to introduce the researcher and arrange the interview date and time that was most convenient for the participant.

At the time of the face to face interview, the participant was requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix C). This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of the interview, the participant was notified of his right to participate was voluntarily and that the curriculum champion had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher also requested permission to audio tape the interview session only with the respective academic permission.

The confidentiality of the curriculum champion was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity. In Table 3.1, the interview details are shown.

**Table 3.1: Curriculum champion for the OMT programme interview details**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
21 June 2017	19 minutes and 27 seconds	Permission granted

The curriculum champion interview schedule was categorized into five sections (refer to Appendix A):

**Section A:** This section requested biographical details of the curriculum champion

**Section B:** Information requested related to the curriculum renewal process at the Durban University of Technology.

**Section C:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to the curriculum change for the OMT programme.

**Section D:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to challenges for the curriculum renewal process.

**Section E:** The focus of this section was to identify the impact of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.



**Section F:** This section requested information regarding the benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process.

#### **3.4.1.2. Interviews with DUT OMT academics**

A semi-structured interview was used (refer to Appendix B). All of the OMT academic that were chosen for the semi-structured interview were contacted personally by the researcher via email correspondence. Thereafter, the researcher had negotiated a suitable interview date and time that was most convenient for each participant.

At the time of the face to face interview, each participant was requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix C). This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of each interview, each academic was notified of his/her right to participate was voluntarily and that the academic had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher also requested permission to audio tape each interview session only with the respective academic permission. Majority of the respondents had given the researcher permission to record their interview session, however six academics declined for the interview to be audio recorded. In this instance, the researcher wrote down the participant's findings.

The confidentiality of the educators was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity. A list of the face to face interviews with OMT academics is show in the Table 3.2 on the next page.

**Table 3.2 Face to Face interviews with DUT OMT Academics**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Duration of interview</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
1	12/06/2017	Academic A	11 minutes	Permission granted
2	12/06/2017	Academic B	10 minutes	Permission granted
3	12/06/2017	Academic C	17 minutes	Permission granted
4	13/06/2017	Academic D	11 minutes	Permission granted
5	19/06/2017	Academic E	10 minutes	Permission granted
6	19/06/2017	Academic F	10 minutes	Permission granted
7	27/07/2017	Academic G	12 minutes	Permission granted
8	27/07/2017	Academic H	10 minutes	Permission granted
9	27/07/2017	Academic I	10 minutes	Permission granted
10	28/07/2017	Academic J	19 minutes	Permission not granted
11	28/07/2017	Academic K	18 minutes	Permission not granted
12	28/07/2017	Academic L	15 minutes	Permission not granted

The academic interview schedule was categorized into five sections (refer to Appendix B):

**Section A:** This section requested biographical details of the OMT academics

**Section B:** Information requested related to academic's perceptions towards curriculum change for the OMT programme.

**Section C:** Respondents were required to provide information relating to challenges faced by academic's as the drivers of curriculum change.

**Section D:** Information on the extent of impact had on academic's during the curriculum renewal process for the programme OMT.

**Section E:** The focus of this section was the benefits and best practices identified by the OMT academics during the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

### **3.4.1.3 Interview with Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance (CQPA) Representative**

A semi-structured interview was used (refer to Appendix D). The CQPA representative was contacted personally via email correspondence prior to introduce the researcher and arrange the interview date and time that was most convenient for the participant. At the time of the face to face interview, the participant was requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix E).

This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of the interview, the participant was notified of his right to participate was voluntarily and that the CQPA representative had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher also requested permission to audio tape the interview session only with the respective academic permission.

The confidentiality of the CQPA representative was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity. In Table 3.3, the interview details are shown.

**Table 3.3 Highlighting interview detail with CQPA representative**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
02/08/17	19.24 minutes	Permission granted

The CQPA representative interview schedule was categorized into five sections (refer to Appendix D):

**Section A:** This section requested biographical details of the CQPA representative

**Section B:** Information requested related to the quality assurance for programmes at the Durban University of Technology.

**Section C:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to the curriculum renewal of a programme at Durban University of Technology.

**Section D:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to challenges for the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

**Section E:** The focus of this section was to identify the impact of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

**Section F:** This section requested information regarding the benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process.

#### **3.4.1.4 Interview with Academic Development Practitioner (CELT) Representative**

A semi-structured interview was used (refer to Appendix F). The ADP representative was contacted personally via email correspondence prior to introduce the researcher and arrange the interview date and time that was most convenient for the participant. At the time of the face to face interview, the participant was requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix G).

This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of the interview, the participant was notified of his right to participate was voluntarily and that the ADP representative had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher permission to audio tape the interview session was declined however, the researcher had written down the findings or answers from respondent with the respective academic permission.

The confidentiality of the ADP representative was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity. In Table 3.4, the interview details are shown.

**Table 3.4 Highlighting interview detail with ADP representative**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
02/08/17	16 minutes	Not approved

The ADP representative interview schedule was categorized into five sections (refer to Appendix F):

**Section A:** This section requested biographical details of the ADP representative

**Section B:** Information requested related to the quality teaching assurance for programmes at the Durban University of Technology.

**Section C:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to the curriculum renewal of a programme at Durban University of Technology.

**Section D:** Respondent was required to provide information relating to challenges for the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

**Section E:** The focus of this section was to identify the impact of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

**Section F:** This section requested information regarding the benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process.

The main advantage of face to face interviews enabled the researcher to ensure that participants understood the questions and the researcher could clarify participant's responses. All OMT academics were interviewed in their offices at Durban University of Technology. The researcher was also able to read non-verbal cues in the face to face interviews with OMT academics, especially when they displayed uncertainty or confusion thereafter the researcher could give clarity.

Neuman (2011: 339) pointed out that participants may be affected by the interviewer's appearance, wording of questions or tone of voice. To avoid participants of the interviews did not experience this, the researcher ensured that she was professionally attired for the interview and communicated in a tone of voice that projected the questions clearly to the participants.

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 251) highlighted that most of the interviewer's time is spent on contacting and arranging a suitable appointment for the interview to actually take place. In this current study, the researcher also found that this is a time consuming process exercise.

The researcher decided to conduct semi-structured face to face interviews with participants with the selected university's employee's for this study because the researcher wanted to interact with the staff about their experiences in order to obtain

the meaning's that they have attached to the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

### **3.5 Focus group discussion**

Polit and Beck (2004: 343) state that focus groups were implemented as a research tool because it allows the respondents to share their thoughts amongst each other; the researcher was able to obtain in-depth understanding of the OMT students' perception on the curriculum renewal process.

Leedy and Omrod (2005: 146) stresses that the researcher should facilitate the discussion in a manner that everyone would have a chance to answer the questions, encourage group interaction and should be kept short. The researcher conducted one focus group discussion for this study and included students from different levels of study from the Office Management and Technology programme.

#### **3.5.1 Student focus group discussion with DUT OMT students**

A semi-structured student focus group schedule was used (refer to Appendix H). After receiving full permission from the Head of Department of Information and Corporate Management, the 4 students of each level was contacted personally via email correspondence prior to introduce the researcher and arrange the focus group discussion and time that was most convenient for the participants.

At the time of the focus group discussion, the participants were requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix I). This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of the interview, the participant was notified of his right to participate was voluntarily and that the students had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher also requested permission to audio tape the focus group discussion session only with the respective full permission.

The confidentiality of the students was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity. In Table 3.5, the student focus group discussion details are shown on the next page.

**Table 3.5: Student focus group discussion details**

<b>Date:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2017			
<b>Duration:</b> 22 Minutes and 45 seconds			
<b>Number of students:</b> 6/12			
<b>Audio recording:</b> Permission granted			
<b>Student number</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>OMT</b>	<b>BIM</b>
1	Third year	✓	
2	Third year	✓	
3	Second year	✓	
4	Second year	✓	
5	First year		✓
6	First year		✓

Initially, the researcher had contacted and a total of 12 students was supposed to participate in the focus group discussion. However, upon the date for the discussion to take place, only 6 students had arrived at the venue.

The remaining 6 students had pulled out of the student focus group discussion due to their studies deadlines to meet and family commitments. The researcher had no option but to continue the focus group discussion with the remaining students who did arrive.

The student focus group discussion schedule began with the researcher doing an introduction to the study and the benefits of participating in the study. Student's confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation was constantly reiterated towards the participants throughout the discussion.

Before the researcher began asking questions towards the students, an ice breaker activity was done to make the students comfortable and thereafter the rules for the discussion was pointed out by the researcher (See Appendix H).

### **3.6 Interviews and focus group respondent numbers**

An email request was sent to the selected DUT target population of this study, to advise their date, time and venue availability to conduct the interview. The researcher attached the interview schedule together with the letter of information and IREC letter which gave permission for the research to be conducted. This gave respondents time to prepare for the interview. Dates and times of the interviews were then discussed between the researcher and the interviewee's individually. In this current study, formal face to face interview was initially supposed to be conducted with 16 fulltime OMT academics. However, due to 4 academics work schedules, the respondents had declined to participate in the interviews. There was some difficulty scheduling interview's with most of DUT staff members due to the fact that it was exam marking period, workshops and mid-year break period was looming. Cancelling and rescheduling of appointments did occur many times due to interviewee's busy work schedules.

The interviews were conducted over a period of 4 weeks starting from June 2017 to July 2017. However, the researcher managed to conduct interviews with the interviewee's. These interviews were informative for the research study as the interviewees were able to provide an insight into the curriculum renewal process and were able to voice their opinions openly with regards to the research topic.

In terms of the focus group discussion with students, initially the researcher had contacted the OMT 12 chosen students who offered to participate voluntary. However, upon the date for the discussion to take place, only 6 OMT students had arrived at the venue.

The remaining 6 students had pulled out of the student focus group discussion due to their study deadlines to meet and family commitments. The researcher had no option but to continue the focus group discussion with the remaining students who did arrive.

### **3.7 Ethical consideration**

The norms of ethical consideration promote the aims of the research such as truth, knowledge and avoidance of error (Resnik and David 2015). Confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent was taken into consideration for this study. Written permission



to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) (refer to Appendix J & K) at Durban University of Technology, the study proposal having already been approved by IREC.

Letter of information and consent forms were attached and handed over to each participant of this study. The researcher assured the respondents that the information provided will be kept strictly anonymous and confidential. The letter of information introduced the title of the research study, how and why the participants should participate in the research study. The researcher's, supervisor and co-supervisor contact details were provided in case the participants needed clarification as far as any aspect of the study is concerned. Each participant in this research study was informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to not participate in this study or to withdraw from it at any time of either the interview or focus group discussion.

### **3.8 Data collection and analysis**

Data analysis process is the application of reviewing the data collected after respondents have answered (Zikmund and Babin 2010: 59).

According to Velentgas *et al.* (2013: 109), primary data is collected by the researcher directly from participants by interviews, focus groups, mail or computerized surveys to address a question of a study. In this study, the qualitative data instruments included semi-structured interviews with 12 OMT academics, a CQPA representative, a ADP representative, OMT Curriculum champion and a focus group discussion with 6 OMT students.

The researcher grouped the research questions per objectives and these were categorised to show patterns and draw a conclusion from the data produced. Nishishiba, Jones and Kraner (2014: 121) states that there are extensive computerized programmes that are available for data entry management such as Nvivo and Microsoft Excel.

The data collected from the responses was analysed with Atlas qualitative software programme version 8.0. The results of interview's and the focus group discussion are

presented in thematic analysis. The findings are presented in chapter 4 according to themes addressing the study's objective and critical questions generated to address this objective:

The qualitative data was analysed into broad categories using descriptive analysis. A multiple analysis was applied, as identified below:

- The first type of data analysis worked at frequencies. Such as, the number of times a certain response was made.
- Variables were then reviewed, identifying those variables that were highly influential on the dependant variables of the study.

Once all data is captured, the results were presented in the form of graphs and charts.

### 3.9 Pilot study

The researcher conducted semi-structured interview questions with the 3 Library Information Studies (LIS) academics, one LIS curriculum champion and a focus group discussion to 3 third year Office Management and Technology students for pilot study. These participants were not included in the main study.

**Table 3.6 Pilot study interview details**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
<b>Face to face semi structured interview with LIS curriculum champion</b>		
20 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	18 minutes	Permission granted
<b>Face to face semi structured interview with LIS Academics</b>		
1. 20 October 2016	10 minutes	Permission granted
2. 20 October 2016	12 minutes	Permission granted
3. 20 October 2016	16 minutes	Permission not granted
<b>Focus group discussion with OMT Students</b>		
21 October 2016	17 minutes	Permission not granted

The pilot study response and findings indicated that all participants felt that the duration of the interviews and focus group discussion was appropriate. The LIS curriculum champion and LIS academics had indicated that the questions asked during the interview was not difficult and appropriate.

The focus group discussion with OMT students felt that the questions was relatable and easy to comprehend.

### **3.10 Delimitations**

Delimitations are those characteristics which limit the scope and explain the boundaries within ones study (Kuada 2012: 123). The delimitations are in the researchers' control. Delimiting factors include the choice of objectives, the research questions, the variables, the theoretical framework adopted for the study and the population investigated. This case study will be linked to only Durban and Indumiso Durban University of Technology campuses only.

### **3.11 Validity and reliability**

According to Connaway and Powell (2010: 64), a reliable data collection instrument is one which is free from error and presents an accurate data. It is a partial contributor to validity. A pilot study was carried out to ensure reliability and validity of the data collection instruments. The researcher made sure that all research questions were clear and unambiguous to avoid biasness. Privacy and confidentiality was maintained when conducting face to face interviews and focus group discussions.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

This chapter gave an overview of the research methodology that was employed to conduct this study. Semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion was used to gather data from participants. The pilot study of the instrument was conducted to take care of reliability and validity of issues in the study. Ethical consideration was taken into account to ensure that the research study was conducted within the established ethical parameters.

The next chapter presents the finding of the study.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **Presentation of findings**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a presentation and an interpretation of the results. The objectives of this study include to establish the best practices of the curriculum renewal process on the OMT programme and to identify the challenges of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology.

#### **4.2 Presentation of findings**

The data collected from the responses was analysed with Atlas qualitative software programme version 8.0. The results of interview's and the focus group discussion are presented in thematic analysis. The findings are presented in this chapter according to themes addressing the study's objective and critical questions generated to address this objective:

##### ***Objective of this study***

The broad objective of this study is to explore the best practices, benefits and challenges faced by academics and students during the curriculum renewal process of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology and to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process.

##### ***Critical questions generated to meet this objective included:***

1. What are the best practices of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme?
2. What are the challenges of curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology?
3. What framework can be developed for the future successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process?

### **4.3 Findings from interview with DUT OMT curriculum champion**

#### **4.3.1.1. Section A: Biographical information of curriculum champion**

##### **4.3.1.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation**

The respondent was from the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics in the Department of Information and Corporate Management at the Durban University of Technology. The respondent that he is currently the Head of Department, curriculum champion for the OMT programme and is a senior lecturer with 17 years of work experience in the department of Information and Corporate Management.

In terms of qualifications, the curriculum champion is qualified with his National Diploma in Commercial Administration, Bachelors of Technology in Commercial Administration, Masters in Business Administration and Doctorate in Administration

#### **4.3.2 Section B: Curriculum renewal process at Durban University of Technology**

##### **4.3.2.1 Curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme**

The respondent was asked to comment about when did the initial curriculum renewal process begin and what necessary steps were taken.

The curriculum champion of the OMT programme had indicated that the planning phase of the curriculum renewal process began in 2012. The respondent noted that initially the department wanted to keep the programme and name and add on new modules. However, it was a directive from top management and Department of Education that National Diploma's will be phased out in 2013.

Therefore, after a curriculum workshop with all academics, it was suggested that the OMT programme would be phased out and the department would have to re-curricula the programme to a Diploma level. In addition, to remove the 'negative stigma' that the course was only for secretaries, a new name was suggested.

The respondent further added that a new programme was developed. The renewed programme was called "*Diploma in Business Information Management*" and it will be a semester based programme. It was important to note that only 3 out of 8 Universities

of Technologies had also followed the same process and renewed programme content.

The curriculum champion stated that even though certain universities had undergone the curriculum renewal process but not all universities changed their OMT programme name as seen in Table 4.1 on the next page.

It is evident to note that one university has not undergone the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme whilst on the other hand the remaining three UoT's do not offer the OMT programme in their Universities.

**Table 4.1: Highlighting UoT's in South Africa offering OMT programme and curriculum renewal status**

<b>Number</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Previous Programme name</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Renewed Programme name</b>
1	Durban University of Technology	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology	Renewed curriculum Changed name completely	Diploma in Business Information Management
2	Mangosuthu University of Technology	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology	Changed diploma Name unchanged	Diploma in Office Management & Technology
3	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology	Renewed curriculum Name unchanged	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology
4	Tshwane University of Technology	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology	Currently undergoing a curriculum renewal process for the programme	
5	Central University of Technology	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology	No change	National Diploma in Office Management & Technology

**Table 4.1: Highlighting UoT's in South Africa offering OMT programme and curriculum renewal status...continued**

<b>Number</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Previous Programme name</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Renewed programme name</b>
6	Vaal University of Technology	Does not offer the OMT programme		
7	University of Mpumalanga	Does not offer the OMT programme		
8	Sol Plaatje University	Does not offer the OMT programme		

The curriculum champion expressed hopefulness that other UoT's would follow DUT footsteps with regards to the curriculum renewal process or offer the programme at their university and broaden the opportunities for students.

The new programme was supposed to be introduced in 2016, however due to the lengthy accreditation process, it did get delayed. The respondent further stated that the new programme was only introduced in 2017 to first year level students.

#### **4.3.2.2 Source of gathering information for renewed programme**

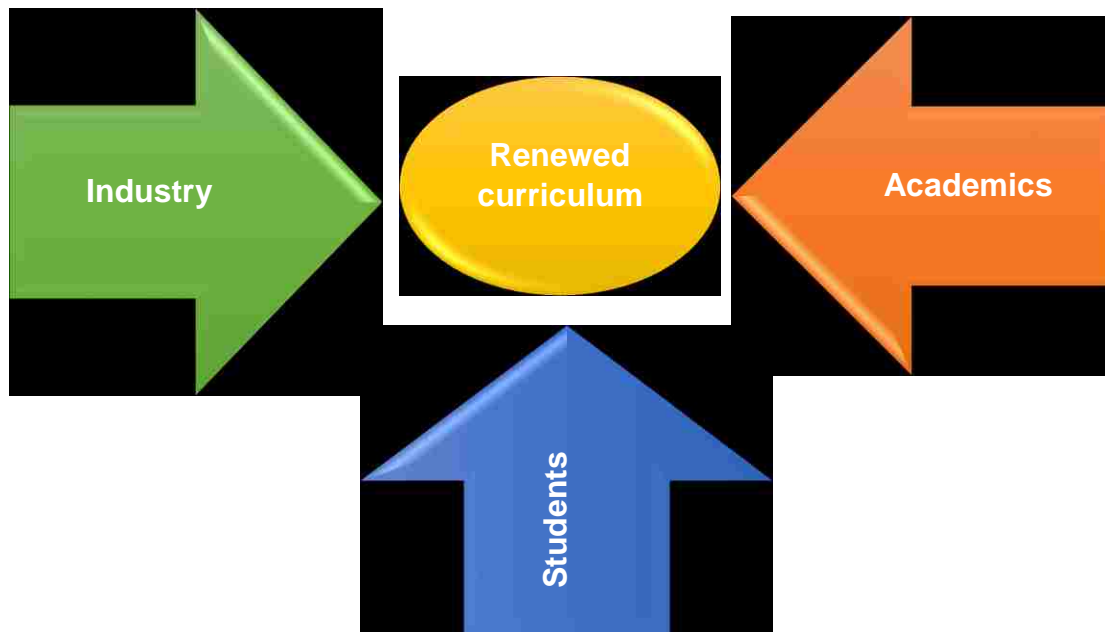
The respondent indicated that there is no professional body that the department consults with regarding the curriculum for the programme. However, there is an advisory board which is consulted regarding the curriculum renewal of the programme content. The advisory board as shown in Figure 4.1 on the next page, is made up of the following people, namely:

- Individuals from the industry which relates to the programme
- Student representatives and alumni students from the programme
- Academics who are involved in the programme, internally & externally.

The curriculum champion further stated that the advisory board is used as a source of gathering information, to guide and align the programme towards the industry.



**Figure 4.1: Source of gathering information for renewed programme – Advisory Board**



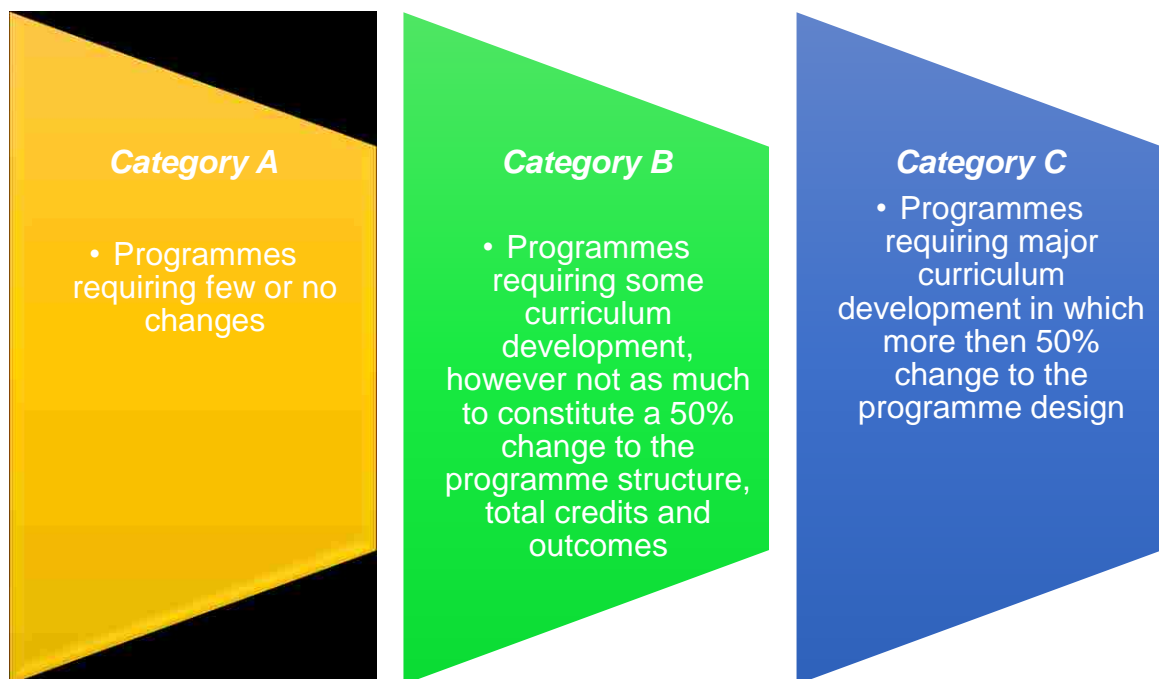
#### **4.3.2.3 Curriculum renewal process a top down approach or democratic approach?**

The curriculum champion was asked whether the curriculum renewal process was a top down approach or a democratic approach.

The respondent had indicated that it did involve both approaches. However, the respondent further stated it is a more top down approach because it was instructions from National level that all National Diploma's will be phasing out.

Thereafter, it went on to be a democratic approach at a university level because everyone's input is being taken into consideration. The Department of Information and Corporate Management had the opportunity to choose between the three groupings with regard to the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. In order, to align itself with the industry requirements according to the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) parameter and criteria groupings as shown in Figure 4.2 on the next page.

**Figure 4.2: HEQF parameter and criteria groupings for aligning programmes towards the industry**



As illustrated in Figure 4.2, the HEQF parameter and criteria highlights the groupings which is used by both private and public education providers to align its programmes towards the industry needs.

The respondent indicated that DUT, Information and Corporate Management had chosen the 'Category C'.

#### **4.3.2.4 OMT students and academics awareness about the CRP**

The respondent was asked to comment on whether DUT academics in the department and current OMT students were aware about the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

The curriculum champion indicated that the phasing out of National Diploma's and the OMT programme was communicated to students including B: Tech degree students via open talks in classrooms and conversations with students. Furthermore, DUT OMT academics was aware about the CRP through meetings and workshops that took place within the OMT department.

### **4.3.3 Section C: Curriculum change for the OMT programme**

#### **4.3.3.1 Stakeholders consultation**

The curriculum champion was asked by the researcher to go in detail with regard to who and how were the stakeholders consulted by the department for information gathering for the curriculum renewal process.

The respondent indicated that formal meetings or workshops took place with the advisory board. In addition, the Department of Information and Corporate Management distributed questionnaires to various companies that are employing DUT OMT students for in-service training.

Furthermore, it was an opportunity for the industry to inform the university and department about what key attributes they expect from students. All information from stakeholders are gathered thereafter discussed and consulting with the advisory board before making final decisions to move forward.

#### **4.3.3.2 Students as stakeholders in the curriculum renewal process**

Respondent was questioned as to what extent is students involved and consulted with regards to the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

The curriculum champion indicated that students were involved to an extent in the advisory board about the content in the programme. However, students were not consulted to a great degree like the permanent members of the curriculum renewal process.

#### **4.3.3.3 Assessments in new curriculum**

The curriculum champion was asked to indicate whether there would be new modes of assessment in the new curriculum. The respondent advised that there will be the normal assessments such as tests, assignments and presentations. However, it will be student centred and creative.

Furthermore, the respondent pointed out that some of the new assessments include video presentations. Reflective journals and community service work. This was to keep students drawn to the programme and give them knowledge and experience.

#### **4.3.3.4. OMT programme quality – old verse renewed**

The curriculum champion was asked to comment on the quality of the old programme content towards the new programme content. More specifically, on the strengths and weakness aspects. These are discussed individually below.

##### **a) Strengths**

The respondent indicated that with the OMT programme, majority of students were mostly entering the administrative field. However, with the renewed curriculum, the department is expecting students to achieve higher positions like supervisors, managers or entrepreneurs.

Moreover, with the renewed curriculum, students are introduced to project management and there are additional general education modules such as sign language. This broadens students learning experience and graduate employment opportunities.

The curriculum champion commented that in 2013, a curriculum indaba took place at DUT and it assisted the department in terms how they can improve the curriculum before, during and after implementation. The curriculum champion did not elaborate in detail about the curriculum indaba to the researcher.

As also the Head of Department, the respondent indicated that in the years to come. there will be students from the new programme at DUT to voluntary participate in an exchange programme to Cape Peninsula University of Technology to see whether both UOT's syllabus is aligned. This gives the students to expand their knowledge and cultural experience which was never done with the OMT programme.

In addition to this, the curriculum champion remarked that currently DUT is the only university offering the renewed programme '*Business Information Management*' and will be marketed across South Africa and Internationally.

##### **b) Weakness**

The respondent mentioned that the department has just completed the first semester of the new programme and it was still early to identify much weaknesses. However, one of the challenge rather that was identified by the curriculum champion is of the work overload for academics. To assist with the work overload, teaching assistants

were employed on contract basis to relieve academics with the work load. This had assisted the departments workflow to meet with deadlines for the renewed semester programme.

#### **4.3.4. Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

##### **4.3.4.1 Influence of the curriculum renewal process on work environment**

The curriculum champion was asked to comment on what influence has the curriculum renewal process had on his work environment. The respondent did indicate that it was stressful and hectic, however, the department worked together and planned for it. Furthermore, all staff had worked with the curriculum champion to drive the change. It was also important to note that the renewed programme had improved the staff morale.

##### **4.3.4.2 Challenges of the curriculum renewal process**

The respondent was questioned about the challenges the department faced whilst undergoing the curriculum renewal process. It was revealed that the constant changing of the curriculum champion over the years was one of the challenge. However, due to all staff working together and informed about the process at every step, it did make the process easier.

#### **4.3.5. Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal process towards the OMT programme**

The curriculum champion was asked about the impact of the process towards the phasing out OMT programme and students

##### **4.3.5.1 Impact of renewed qualification on students towards the OMT programme and students**

The respondent indicated that with the OMT programme, students mostly main streamed into the office workplace mostly. However, with the renewed qualification, students are expected to work in administration, project management and human resource industries. The new programme will assist students to be able to cope in the modern day industry. In addition, students will be obtaining skills that will enable them to work in both public and private sectors.

As compared to the OMT programme, the renewed curriculum also included a module, "Entrepreneurship", which enabled students to start their own business in South Africa in the future.

#### **4.3.6. Section F: Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

This section requested information regarding the benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process.

##### **4.3.6.1 Additional responsibility of academics as drivers for change**

The curriculum champion was questioned as to whether the academics of the department are prepared to accept the additional responsibility of being drivers for the curriculum renewal process.

The respondent informed the researcher that the department academics attitude is positive towards the curriculum renewal process. Bearing in mind of the outstanding leadership from the subject and module programme co-ordinators driving the process and making sure it is running smoothly.

##### **4.3.6.2 Existing internal and external knowledge, resource and support**

The respondent was asked about the OMT academic's knowledge and external supporting content be able to deliver the new curriculum to students.

The curriculum champion pointed out that he has full confidence in staff as majority of academics have obtained their MBA. Therefore, the department was able to absorb the renewed curriculum and are able to lecture the new subjects.

In addition, the renewed curriculum content or subjects that aren't within the academic's expertise would be outsourced with external departments within DUT to ensure that the students receive the upmost benefits of learning the new content.

##### **4.3.6.3 Key expectations of the curriculum renewal process**

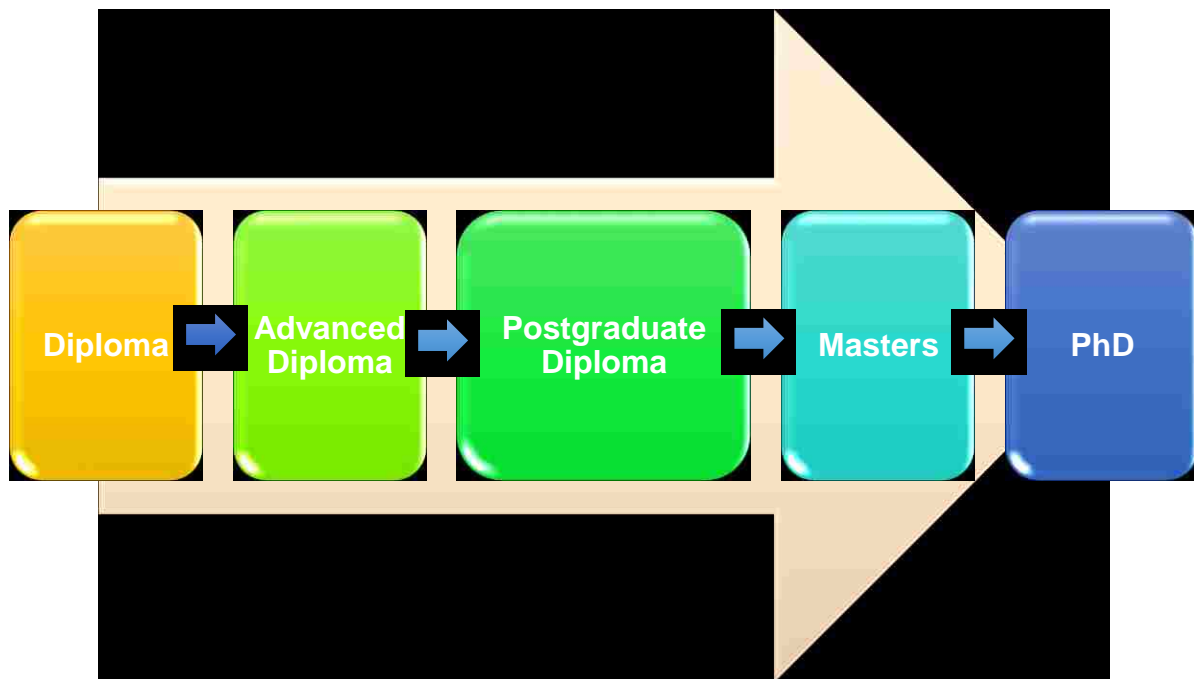
Lastly, the curriculum champion was questioned about the key expectations of the curriculum renewal process and was it achieved thus far.

The respondent indicated that the main key expectation of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme was to develop something new and appealing towards prospective students.

The second key expectation was to ensure the “negative stigma” that the administration programme is only meant for secretaries or females only. Therefore, by undergoing the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme did not only change the stigma but also improved student and staff morale.

The third expectation was to develop a qualification from a diploma till a doctorate level which the department is currently developing. This is highlighted in Figure 4.3 below.

**Figure 4.3: Renewed Qualification levels for programmes at UoT’s**



This qualification setting created an alignment with the national and industry requirements.

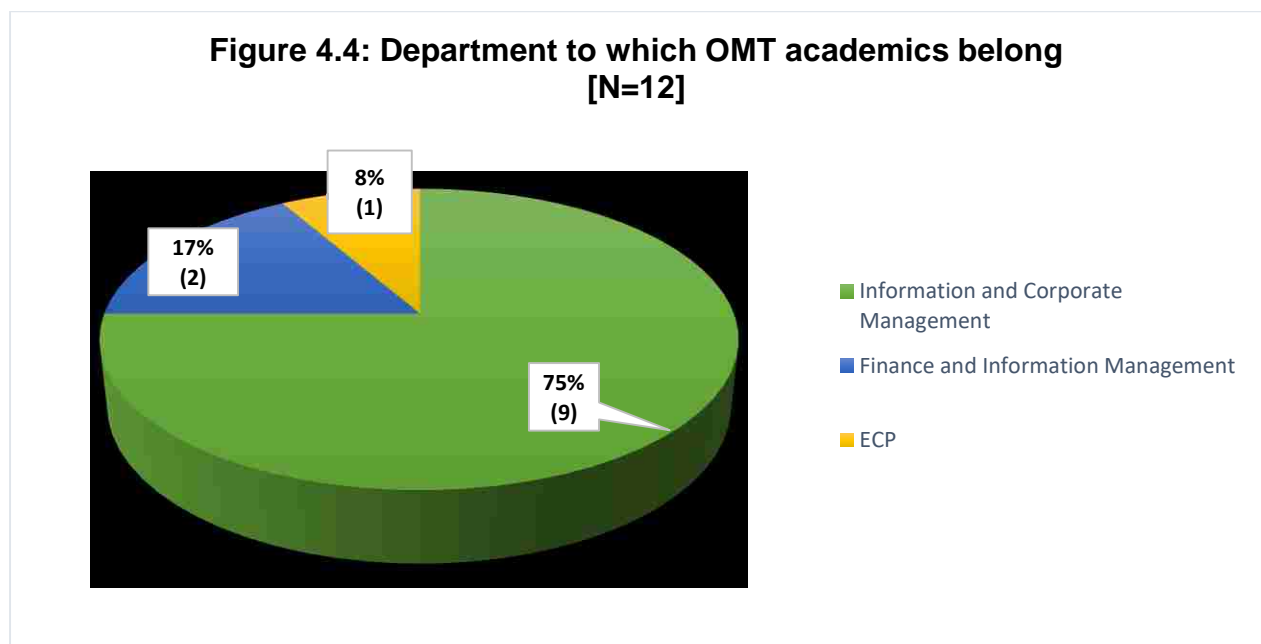
And lastly the renewed programme, ‘*Diploma in Business Information Management*’ is the first in all Universities of Technology across South Africa. The curriculum champion expectation for the renewed programme is it to be the leader in the field.

## 4.4 Findings from Interviews with DUT OMT academics

### 4.4.1 Section A: Biographical analysis for academic staff interview's

#### 4.4.1.1 Faculty, department and programme

All respondents were from the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at the Durban University of Technology. Respondents were asked to indicate the department to which they belonged. A majority of 75% of respondents had stated that they are from the Information and Corporate Management department whilst 17% of the respondents stated that they fall under the Finance and Information Management. The remaining 8% of respondent are from the ECP programme. All these academics fall under the OMT and Business and Information Management programme. These are highlighted in Figure 4.4 below.

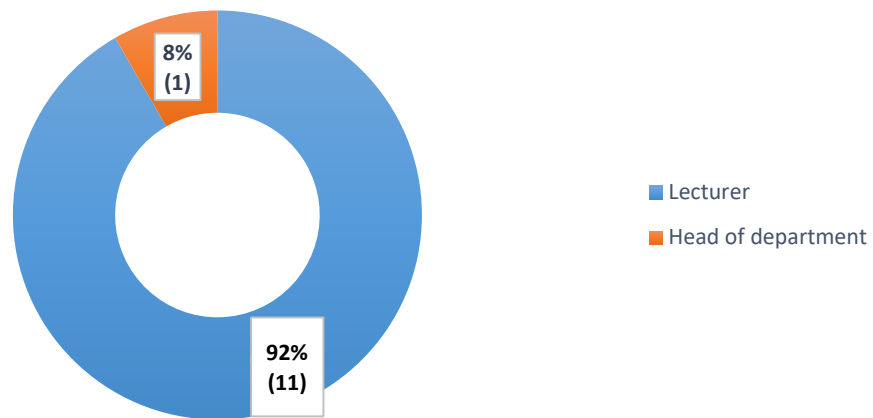


#### 4.4.1.2 Designation of OMT academics

The designation of OMT academics finding of this study shown in Figure 4.5 below, is that 92 percent of respondents were lecturers and 8 percent were Head of department. It is therefore noted that a majority of respondents in terms of academics, were lecturers. It is important to highlight that this study only focused on full time permanent academics only.



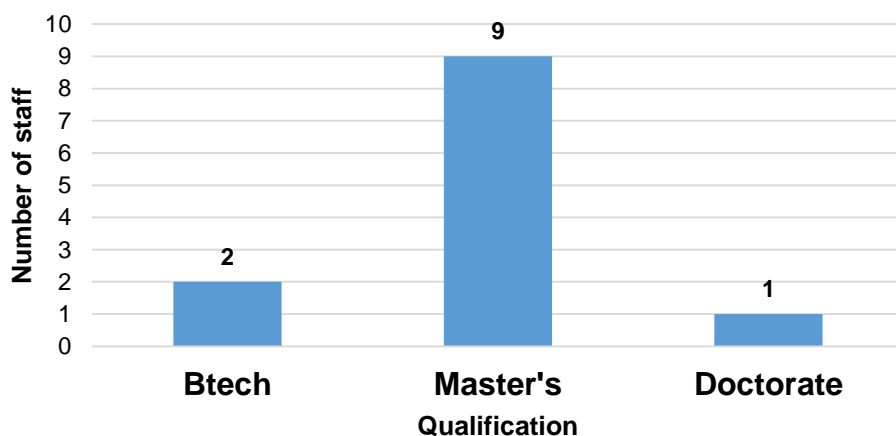
**Figure 4.5: Designation of DUT OMT Academics  
[N=12]**



#### 4.4.1.3 Academic qualification of OMT/BIM academics

The results in Figure 4.6 show the education level of each respondents as 2 respondent obtaining bachelor degree, 9 respondents had master's degrees and 1 respondent had a doctorate degree. Therefore, the results indicate that the majority of the respondents of percent therefore had at least a master's degree. Hence, the results indicate that the majority of the respondents do meet the minimum requirements of lecturing.

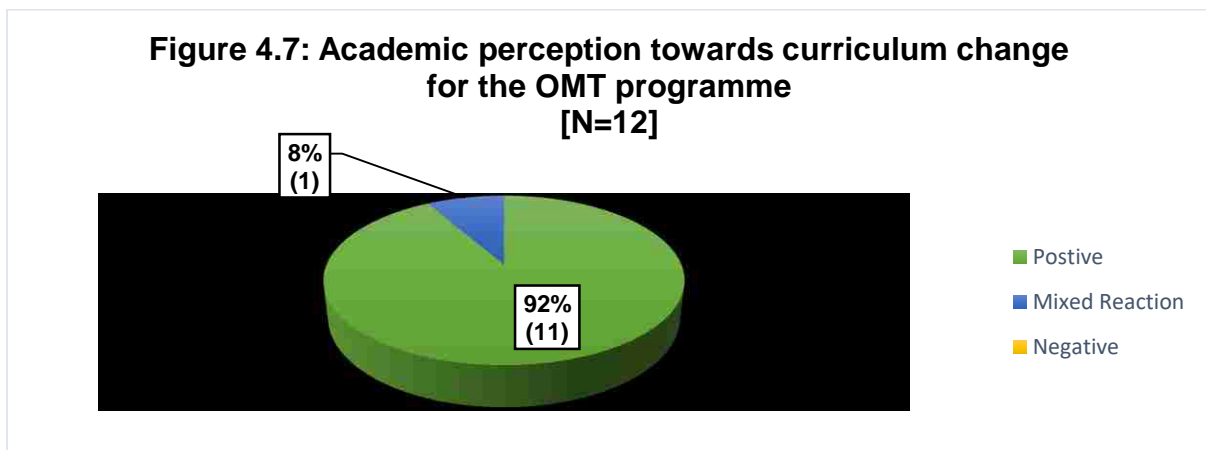
**Figure 4.6 Highest education level of DUT OMT & BIM academics**



## 4.4.2 Section B: Academics perceptions towards curriculum change for the OMT programme

### 4.4.2.1 Academic perceptions towards curriculum change

Respondents were asked as to what was their first reaction when they were informed that the OMT programme will be going through a curriculum renewal process. In Figure 4.7, it is evident that the majority of 92 percent had a positive perception towards curriculum change of the programme. It is excellent to note that there was a zero percent of negative perception towards the process. However, 8 percent had a mixed reaction towards the curriculum change. The positive perception that these respondents were excited about the additional modules but had a negative perception about rehashing some of the old programme content and modules into the new programme.



### 4.4.2.2 Benefits of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme

Academics were asked to comment on the benefits of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. Table 4.2 on the next page, illustrates some of the benefits mentioned by the respondents.

**Table 4.2: Academic’s perception of benefits that came out of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme**

[N=12]

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A new and attractive programme & removed ‘negative stigma’	7	58%
Aligned with the industry needs	2	17%
New programme provides a diverse of job opportunities for students	2	17%
New programme will attract new calibre of students	1	8%

A majority of 58 percent of respondents indicated that the process brought upon something new and an attractive programme for the students and also for the department itself. These academics’ also pointed out that the OMT programme did have a ‘negative stigma’ were it is labelled as a “*secretary course*” and mostly a female type of programme. However, over the years the programme did receive a fair amount of males and females registering for the OMT programme.

17 percent of respondents indicated that with the curriculum renewal process, it allowed a new programme to be developed which was aligned with the industry needs. This finding adapts with the remaining 17 percent respondents as the future outcome is that there will be more diverse job opportunities for students. The remaining 8 percent stated that the new programme will attract new calibre of students rather than the old OMT programme and its “negative stigma” image.

#### **4.4.2.3 Key expectations of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme**

Majority of the respondents had commented similar answers regarding the key expectation of the curriculum renewal process.

The respondents indicated the following:

- It is still the implementation phase, and that is the first key expectation achieved
- Secondly, the renewed programme offered a new dimension of learning for students, whereby students are not only learning office management learning areas but Information Technology & human resource management as well.

#### **4.4.2.4 Information sharing with the curriculum renewal process**

Respondents were asked about how they were informed with changes or developments regarding the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. All respondents stated that the information sharing process was always transparent. As the Head of the Department always kept all staff up to date via meetings, emails and skype.

However, 8% of respondents commented that they were disappointed that when new content was being developed by the curriculum renewal committee, they had only asked remaining academic's for input when they needed information.

#### **4.4.3 Section C: Academics as drivers for curriculum change**

##### **4.4.3.1. Quality of old programme content towards new programme content – Academic's Perspective**

Academics were asked to comment on the strengths and weakness of the new curriculum programme towards the old curriculum programme.

##### ***A) Strengths***

As indicated Table 4.3, 41 percent of respondents stated that compared to the OMT programme, the renewed curriculum programme is aligned with the industry with the implementation of new subjects such as project management. In addition to this, 25 percent of academics added that the curriculum renewal process brought upon advanced content for students to learn from first year level such as research

methodology. Respondents also mentioned that the renewed form of assessments into the new curriculum created an innovative environment in the classroom.

Another factor which improved the strength of academics as drivers for curriculum renewal process and change is that 17 percent had agreed that the renewed module programme co-ordinators provided good leadership skills. Respondents also pointed out that teaching assistants employed in the department also performed their duties well in teaching the renewed curriculum.

Lastly, 17 percent of the respondents indicated that the curriculum renewal process and renewed programme had immensely improved staff and student’s morale in the department. As previously mentioned, a “negative stigma” had aroused the OMT programme. Therefore, with the curriculum renewal process, it had brought upon strengths towards students, academics and the industry.

**Table 4.3: Strengths of renewed curriculum content towards OMT curriculum content**

**[N=12]**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Aligned with industry needs with new subjects	5	41%
New content to expand students’ knowledge	3	25%
Good leadership from programme co-ordinators to drive curriculum renewal change process	2	17%
Improved staff and student morale	2	17%

On the other hand, weakness towards the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme were also identified. The discussion thereafter on the following page in Table 4.4 the findings are highlighted.

### ***B) Weakness and challenges***

The findings indicated that most of the weakness are actually challenges respondents identified and are facing. An amount of 41 percent of respondent indicated that the demanding deadlines is one of the major weakness and challenge being faced by academics. As 17 percent pointed out that this was due to the fact of the renewed programme being semester and the OMT programme was an annual programme. Respondents mentioned that meeting early deadlines was stressful however with the good leadership skills from their programme co-ordinators and new staff morale, it did not create a negative perception towards the curriculum renewal process of a programme.

However, 17 percent of academics did specify that they were not happy about the rehashing of OMT curriculum content into the renewed curriculum content and programme. Respondents indicated that the major or main modules should have completely new content and not just given a revamp with a new name.

Furthermore, 17 percent of respondents pointed out that certain modules should not be given to first year students. As these students are emerging from high school to university level content, and with offering modules such as research methodology and project management might be too 'heavy' for first year students. It may create a negative perception for the current and prospective students studying the renewed programme.

The remaining 8 percent of respondents have mentioned that they are not sure what is the real end of the renewed programme product. These respondents stressed that they are concerned that these graduated students might end up back in the office management field. Below is the summarised weakness and challenges of the renewed curriculum.

**Table 4.4: Weakness and challenges of the renewed curriculum content towards OMT curriculum content**

[N=12]

<b>Weakness</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Demanding deadlines	5	41%
Changing over from annual to semester	2	17%
Rehashing of OMT programme content into renewed curriculum content	2	17%
Disagreement of certain modules that should not be offered to first years	2	17%
Not sure about the end product of the renewed programme	1	8%

#### **4.4.3.2 Barriers affecting academics to move forward**

As evident in Figure 4.8, academic do have many barriers affecting them to move forward to teach the new curriculum towards students. Respondents have indicated that even though the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme was achieved, however there are many barriers affecting them to implement the renewed curriculum.

**Figure 4.8 Barriers affecting academics to teach new curriculum**



As majority of respondents have indicated that they have experienced the barriers as shown in Figure 4.8. These will be further discussed in detail.

**a) Student First language not English**

Respondents have mentioned that it is a challenge to teach new content to those students whose first language is not English. As it is the universal language and academics have pointed out that all study guides, textbooks and even going out to industry English language medium would be used verbally and written.

Therefore, it becomes a barrier for an academic to move forward when a student is not able to understand the language and learning a new concept would take longer. However, there is not much time as the renewed programme is semester and it does become difficult to move forward when students do not understand the content.

**b) Student isZulu language not up to standards**

Furthermore, to the language barrier, a respondent had identified that even though isZulu language is student's first language, it is not up to standards. As some students isZulu language is not advanced level therefore teaching certain concepts is difficult for academics who do speak and write advanced isZulu language fluently.

**c) Fast pace programme**

Academics have previously mentioned that the OMT curriculum and programme were annual. However, with the renewed curriculum and programme was semester.



Therefore, academics have expressed concerned over the fast pace programme whether the student will grasp and learn concepts. As the language barrier imposed as a problem to transferring the new curriculum onto students.

***d) Copyright issues and approval***

Many respondents argued that there were copyright issues and approvals for certain modules textbook. Some of the copyright fees was out of the department's budget and therefore it was left onto students to purchase original textbooks with their books allowance they receive.

***e) Textbooks are expensive***

Majority of respondents emphasised that students should purchase their own textbooks. However, the prices of certain module textbooks are quite costly and students opt to not to purchase but rather loan these textbooks from the library. But the university's libraries do not have that many textbooks for every module and there is a loan period. Therefore, when the renewed content is taught, many students have nothing to study from hence it affects the renewed curriculum to move forward.

***f) Poor venue facilities and lack of technology***

As many academics had explained that to fill the gap of students not being able to afford to purchase textbooks, they opt to project the new curriculum content on a whiteboard or smartboard. However, respondents did indicate that lecturing venues have poor facilities such as plug points not working, venue seats being broken and air conditioner unit not working during the summer months.

Furthermore, respondents also emphasis that there is a lack of technology yet it was a university of technology. Such as smartboards are installed however in certain venue's it does not connect to the internet or is not working. In addition, a respondent pointed out that at university level student intake in classrooms are in large numbers. There is no PA system or workable speakers in venues to accommodate large group numbers. Therefore, the venue and lack of technology does impose as a huge barrier for teaching renewed curriculum to students.

***g) Students not committed to improving themselves***

Academics argued that students are responsible for their own future. Even though they are teaching and assessing the students on the renewed curriculum, it is up to the student to improve him or herself.

A respondent pointed out that the university has libraries and writing centres to assist them to improve their studies however many do not make use of these opportunities. Thus, leading to poor performance in the class and unable for the academic to move forward with new content. Therefore, academics have commented that students need to show commitment to improving themselves to move forward as well.

***h) Lack of tutors***

It was found that certain modules did not have tutors assisting students.

**4.4.4. Section D: Impact of the curriculum renewal process**

**4.4.4.1 Curriculum renewal process on academic’s work environment**

In Table 4.5 below, findings are highlighted in themes as to the impact of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme on academic’s work environment.

**Table 4.5: Curriculum renewal process on academic’s work environment**

**[N=12]**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Stressful	5	42%
Not stressful	1	8%
Workload has increased	5	42%
Overload of other admin duties	1	8%

Respondents were asked to comment on the impact the curriculum renewal process had on their work environment. A majority of 42 percent indicated that the process had made their work environment stressful due to the workload being increased. Nevertheless, respondents did indicate they were preparing for it during the initial phase of the curriculum renewal process as they knew the process is long.

A minimum of 8 percent respondents did emphasize that the process was not stressful on their work environment. As one respondent did urge that if there is passion in your job, it will never feel as a job.

The remaining 8 percent of respondents reported that academics are also overloaded with other administrative duties that are not part of the curriculum renewal process or

teaching of the renewed programme such as subject evaluation questionnaires and lecturer evaluation questionnaires. A respondent suggested that to alleviate academics off admin duties and ease their work environment, an administrative person should be employed full time to assist with the administrative part of duties.

#### **4.4.4.2 Impact of the renewed qualification towards students**

The renewed qualification is called the Diploma in Business Information Management (BIM). Academics were asked about the impact the renewed curriculum and qualification will have on students. The findings are discussed on the next page.

##### ***a) Renewed curriculum content***

Conferring to 33 percent respondents shown in Table 4.6, the renewed curriculum did have an expansion of learning areas. Especially towards the information technology and human resource management field. This finding shows that relation to the increased industry input into the new qualification content as indicated by the 17 percent.

A majority of 33 percent of respondents indicated that the new qualification is more student centred. This goes in line with the remaining 17 percent statement that compared to the theory based OMT programme, the new content student gets to do more practical work. Therefore, before the students enter the industry, they contain more practical experience.

**Table 4.6: Renewed curriculum content [N=12]**

<b>Renewed curriculum content</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Programme</b>
Expanded learning areas	4	33%
More industry input	2	17%
Student centred	4	33%
Students get to do more practical work	2	17%

##### ***b) Teaching and learning methods***

Respondents were asked to indicate what was renewed in the curriculum in terms of the teaching and learning method for the new programme.

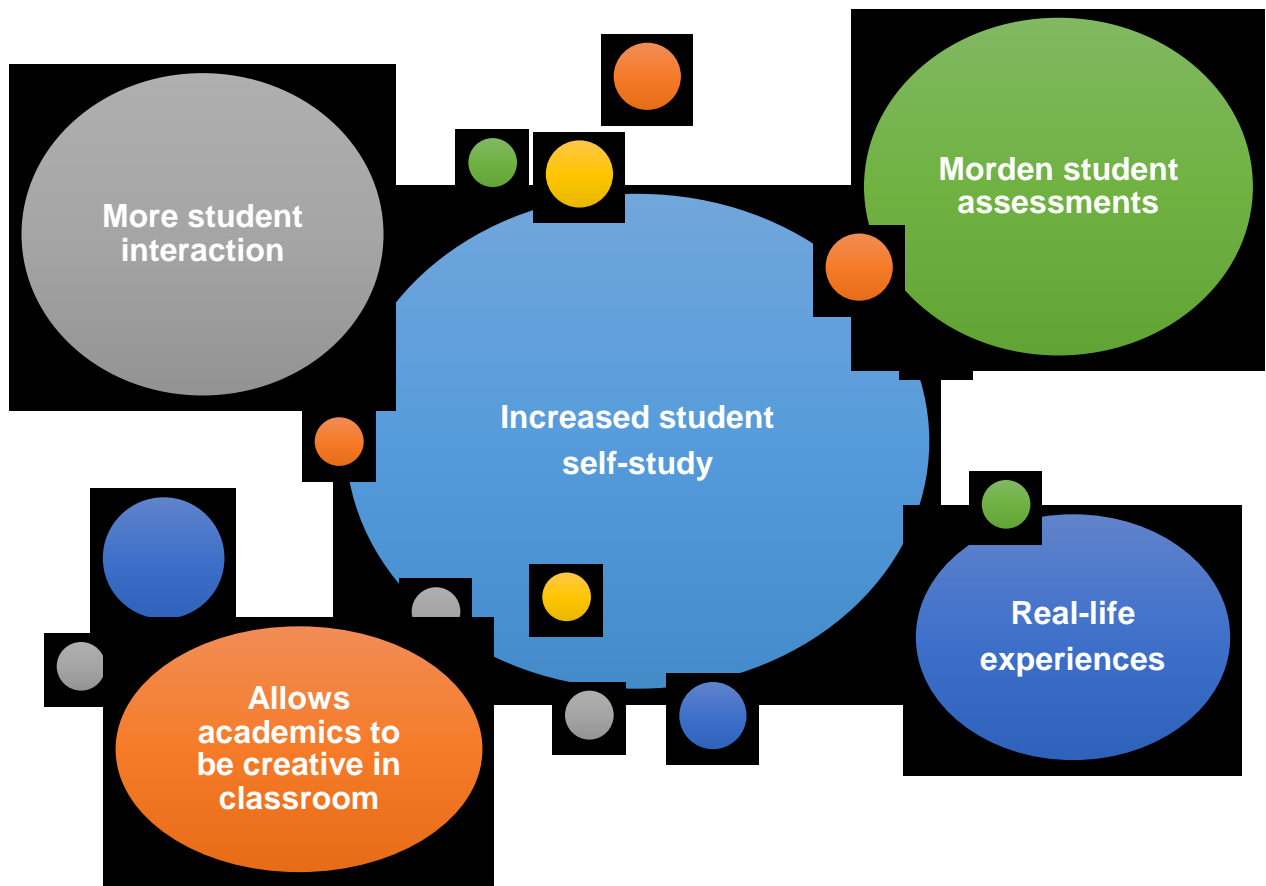
In Figure 4.9 on the next page, illustrates that the new curriculum contained an increased student self-study content. As respondents indicated that the new qualification is semester based and most of the modules required students to put in more of their own efforts to study some of the content on their own.

Academics had indicated that in the classroom, teaching and learning methods had been improved as compared to the OMT programme. Respondents had indicated that the renewed curriculum had allowed them as academics to be creative with their teaching methods and assessments with the use of video presentations, YouTube, e-learning classrooms, quizzes and open student discussions. In addition, respondents highlighted that there is no more 'spoon-feeding' students with notes. Rather students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussions.

Furthermore, modern assessments such as reflective journals and being creative in the classroom was used.

**Figure 4.9: Teaching and learning methods of renewed curriculum**

[N=12]



#### **4.4.5 Section E: Benefits and best practices of curriculum renewal process**

##### **4.4.5.1 Support given to academics for the implementation of the CRP**

Respondents were asked to comment on the support structure, from the university specifically, they had received during the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. Majority of respondents had indicated that the department had received support from the following:

- Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)
- Centre for Quality Promotion and Assurance (CQPA)
- Dean of the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics
- Head of Department for the Department of Information and Corporate Management
- Curriculum champions for the curriculum renewal process

Respondents had indicated that the above support structure had provided the aspects in terms of their expertise, procedures and rules according to the Department of Higher Education of South Africa.

However, a respondent did point out that initially there was no assistance to guide academics through the curriculum renewal process. Furthermore, even though the CELT and CQPA representatives are now assigned to the department and are involved, their participation in the curriculum renewal process is still low.

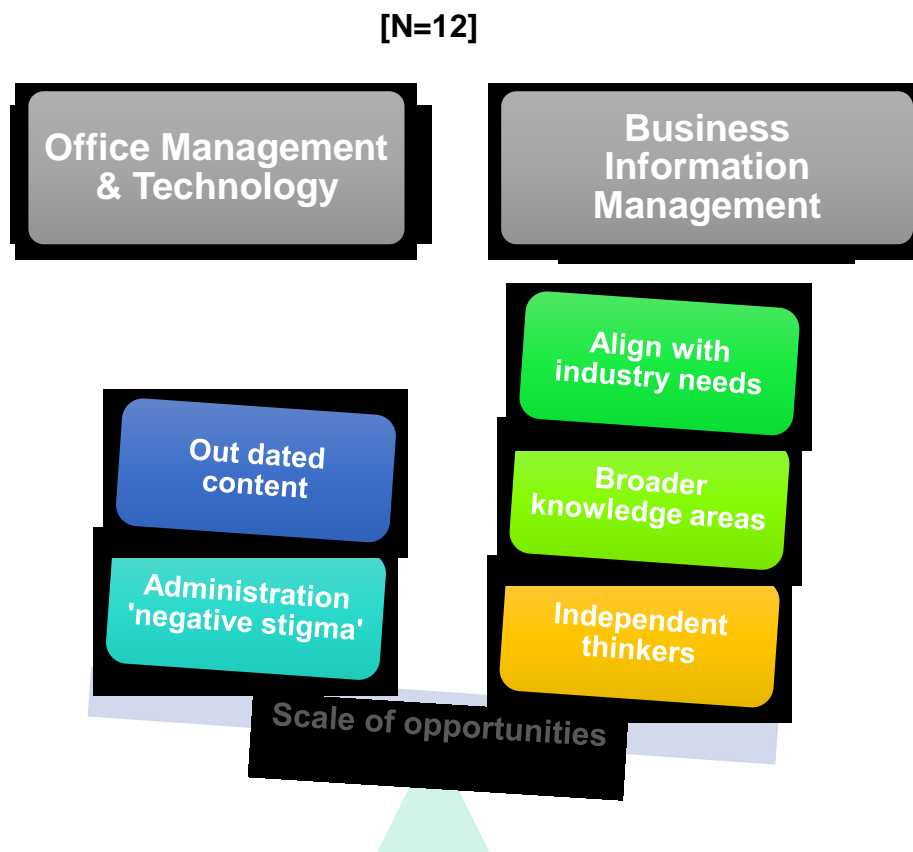
Nevertheless, majority of respondents indicated that the Head of Department of Information and Corporate Management provided excellent leadership and support to drive the curriculum renewal process within the department.

#### 4.4.5.2 Expected key attributes from OMT graduates vs BIM graduates

Respondents were asked to comment on the key attributes they expected from the renewed qualification with the BIM graduates as compared to OMT graduates.

These findings are illustrated in Figure 4.10 below.

**Figure 4.10: Key attributes expected from OMT graduates vs BIM graduates**



Majority of respondents indicated that due to the OMT programme ‘negative stigma’ and outdated content, it led to the low morale of both staff and students for graduates entering the industry.

However, along with the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme not only did staff and student morale improve but also the key attributes of BIM programme. As shown in Figure 4.10, the renewed curriculum was aligned with the industry, contained a broader learning area such as information technology, law, accounting and human resources. Furthermore, the renewed programme had general education subjects such as sign language embedded into the programme. Therefore, allowing students to become independent thinkers and help to adapt into modern work environment and society.

#### **4.4.5.3 Area of improvement in the curriculum renewal process from academic’s perspective**

Academics were asked to comment on any area in which the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme could be improved. Findings are displayed in Table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7: Area of improvement in the curriculum renewal process**

**[N=12]**

<b>Area of improvement in CRP</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Timing	5	42%
Nothing to be improved	2	17%
Change the main subjects	1	9%
Align renewed content with up to date equipment, resources in venues	1	8%
Allocating test and assignment week	1	8%
Capacity building with all staff	1	8%

Give equal workload to all staff	1	8%
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Respondents had various comments regarding this question and were grouped into themes. A majority of 42 percent had indicated that the timing of the curriculum renewal process was difficult even though it has been going on for years. Furthermore, the CRP should be aligned with the department that is undergoing the process and do it when all staff are available and not during busy periods.

Respondents indicated that it was overwhelming as the curriculum renewal workshops did occur during lecture, test or exam period and was difficult to give their full attention to these workshops. A respondent suggested that there should be a time period allocated just for the workshop which does not clash with the busy period so all staff could give their full attention to the process.

On the other hand, 17 percent indicated that there was no area for improved and that they are happy with the process so far. However, 9 percent of respondents suggested that with the curriculum renewal process, the main subjects should be completely changed or updated. A respondent pointed out that some information in the certain modules are completely outdated and updated versions of these subjects should be implemented such as involve current things.

During the curriculum renewal process, 8 percent of respondent commented that the renewed content needs to be aligned with the university's resources in terms of venues and equipment. As these academics pointed out that this is their current challenge with driving the renewed curricular. A respondent outlined that the new BIM programme intake of students for certain modules is much greater than the OMT programme intake of students. Therefore, larger venues with a PA sound system and projectors, smartboards and up to date resources is needed to teach the new content to students.

Currently, students are balancing lectures, test and assignments all together for all modules and has become overwhelming. Therefore, 8 percent of respondents suggested that a test and assignment week needs to be placed into the university calendar. As an academic pointed with the renewed curricular is semester based and if a student skips lectures to study for tests or do assignments, the student will



eventually perform average or poor in certain modules. Therefore, a balance of the student academic calendar needs to be implemented during the curriculum renewal of a programme.

The remaining 8 percent of academics pointed out that for the curriculum renewal process to take place, all staff need to be involved in the process and each person's input should be considered.

Lastly, 8 percent of respondents commented that during the curriculum renewal of a programme and even during implementation phase, all staff should be given an equal amount of workload.

#### **4.4.5.4 Best practices for the curriculum renewal process from academic's viewpoint**

Respondents were given the opportunity to an open ended question whereby they were asked to comment if they would like to add anything else regarding the curriculum renewal process. The findings are highlight in Table 4.8 below.

**Table 4.8: Best practices for the curriculum renewal process from academic's viewpoint**

**[N=12]**

<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Good leadership	8	67%
Teaching assistants and tutors	2	17%
External support	2	16%

A majority of 67 percent of academics commented that with good leadership from the Head of Department in the Information and Corporate Management and the curriculum champions, the department was able to direct itself towards the right direction with the process.

The remaining 17 percent of respondents appreciated the best practice of teaching assistants and tutors. As academics commented that the renewed programme is a

semester study period which is short with immediate deadlines. In addition, a respondent commented that with the renewed programme, large classes make it impossible to focus on academically weak student and to meet marking deadlines. Therefore, employing teaching assistants and tutors were a great benefit towards the department, academics and students.

Academics had commented on the external support received by the department for the curriculum renewal process. The 16 percent of respondents stated that if there was external support to assist with the documentation process from the beginning of the curriculum renewal process, then the entire process would have been much easier.

#### **4.5 Interview with Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance (CQPA) Representative**

**Table 4.9 Highlighting interview detail with CQPA representative**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
02/08/17	19.24 minutes	Permission granted

##### **4.5.1. Section A: Biographical information of CQPA Representative**

###### **4.5.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation**

The respondent was from the Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance (CQPA) department under the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at the Durban University of Technology. The respondent is currently the Quality Promotion Officer designation and was involved with the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

##### **4.5.2. Section B: Quality assurance for programmes at DUT**

###### **4.5.2.1. Introduction and implementation of the quality assurance for tertiary programmes**

The CQPA representative was asked to indicate about the introduction and implementation of the quality assurance system for tertiary programmes at DUT.

The respondent commented that the introduction for curriculum renewal and quality assurance for tertiary programmes began in January 2013. Part of the duty as a ‘*Quality Promotion Officer*’ was to embrace curriculum enhancement with quality

promotion, academic planning, monitoring and evaluation. Preparation for national reviews, accreditation and audit.

Combined with the university and CQPA department, a framework was developed at university level to drive the quality assurance and curriculum renewal process since 2013. In addition to quality assurance practices and processes, the CQPA representative also does the following:

- Maintain and enhance the quality of the students
- Promote and sustain a culture of quality
- Secure and safeguard academic standards of programmes
- Promote self-evaluation at all levels of provision to foster continuous improvement
- Encourage all staff to take responsibility

#### **4.5.2.2. Legal framework for quality assurance for higher education programmes at universities in South Africa**

The respondent was questioned as to whether there is a legal framework for quality assurance for higher education programmes at universities in South Africa.

According to the Quality promotion officer, all academic programmes at the university will be evaluated against a framework of criteria that are aligned with the HEQC criteria for the accreditation of academic programmes. These evaluations are conducted in a six-year cycle with external peer review process managed by the CQPA in partnership with academic departments.

Furthermore, it is the quality committee that will oversight the role in monitoring good practices and are sustained then disseminated within the faculty. Also to improve the implementation plans in response to the outcomes of the programme review process.

#### **4.5.3. Section C: Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT**

The respondent indicated that all programme reviews that are conducted by external bodies such as Professional Bodies and Boards must be co-ordinated through the CQPA. In order to review, a programme review critical path framework was developed.

#### 4.5.3.1. Process of curriculum renewal with DUT

In the framework, each process is not developed to work independently but to review the activities, reports and recommendations from the Annual Quality Monitoring report.

Below is the critical path framework for programme review and evaluation process discussed in numbered order as shown in Figure 4: During the panel process discussion, panel members must conduct the following:

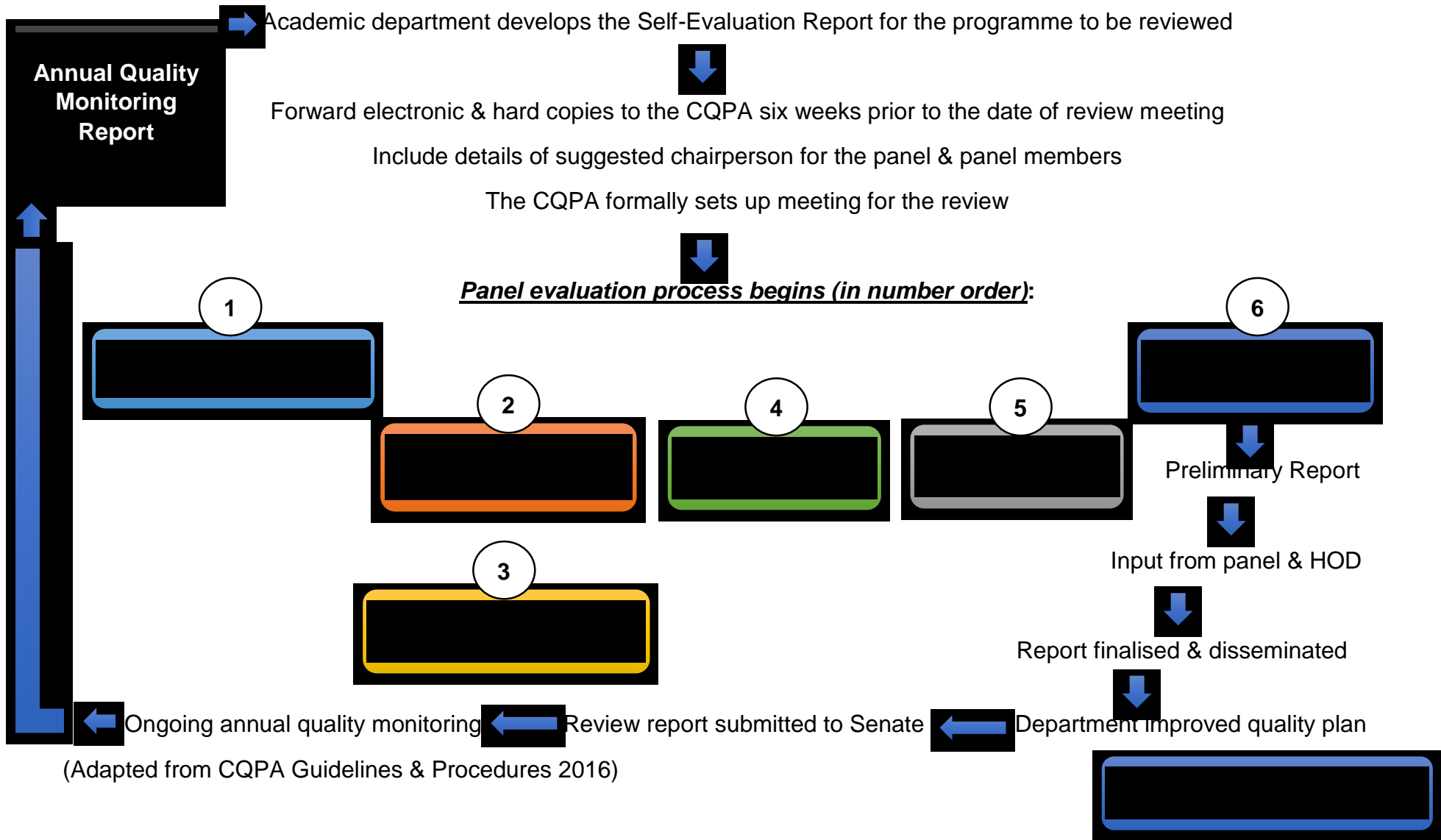
- Confidentiality about the process'
- Validate the academic department service evaluation report in terms of
  1. Evaluate the implementation improvement plans progress to address the programme, departmental, institutional issues identified through the previous year "*Annual Quality Monitoring*" Report.
  2. Triangulate the findings by conducting interviews with academic staff, secretary, technical staff, head of department, students from all levels of the programme, subject librarian
  3. Examine supporting documentation provided by the department
  4. Conduct site visits to programme delivery sites, specialist rooms, lecture venues and the library
  5. Make recommendations for areas that are identified by the panel as being poor or weak.
  6. Based on the concerns mentioned above, the CQPA gives additional review and comments
  7. Promote good and exemplary practice
  8. Provide comment on the draft version of the Panel Evaluation Report as written by the Quality Promotion Officer

Once the programme is reviewed by the panel members in the given year, findings and recommendations are produced into a panel evaluation report by the CQPA representative and panel chairperson. Thereafter, the panel evaluation report is processed through the various stages with the guidance of the CQPA representative before serving at Senate accordingly.

If report is being reviewed by external bodies, the academic department must ensure that the CQPA is informed timeously about external reviews.

In Figure 4.11 on the next page, the critical path framework for programme review and evaluation process is shown. This information was also adapted from the CQPA 2016 Guidelines.

**Figure 4.11: The critical path framework for programme review and evaluation process at DUT**



#### 4.5.3.2. Changes to existing programme's curriculum

The respondent had referred the researcher to the "CQPA 2016 Guideline" with regard to the changes to existing programme's curriculum.

According to the "CQPA 2016 Guideline" report that DUT is authorised to make a maximum of 49 percentage changes to the programme credits. A department that intends to make changes to its current programme curriculum must consult with CQPA first. The changes to existing programmes will be approved at the Faculty Board after promoting the motivation for change by the Quality Promotions Officer. Thereafter, the changes must be approved by Senate.

#### 4.5.3.3. Curriculum renewal: Phasing-out academic programme

The respondent had indicated that the Information and Corporate Management Department had chosen to phase out the OMT programme and conduct the curriculum renewal process by developing a new programme.

According to the CQPA Guideline 2016, the first stage of the process is to meet with the CQPA to discuss the development of the new programme. A critical path for new programme was developed by the CQPA. In Figure 4.12, the first stage is illustrated thereafter, it is discussed.

**Figure 4.12: Critical path for a new programme and curriculum: Stage One**



All applications for curriculum renewal of programmes must ultimately be approved by Senate prior to submission to South African National Educational Bodies. According to the "CQPA Guidelines 2016 Document", once approved by SENATE, the CQPA officer will submit documentation to the Department of Higher Education and Training

(DHET) for review and approval. Thereafter, the DHET will liaise with CQPA Officer to communicate information regarding the renewal process, changes and corrections to the department and faculty.

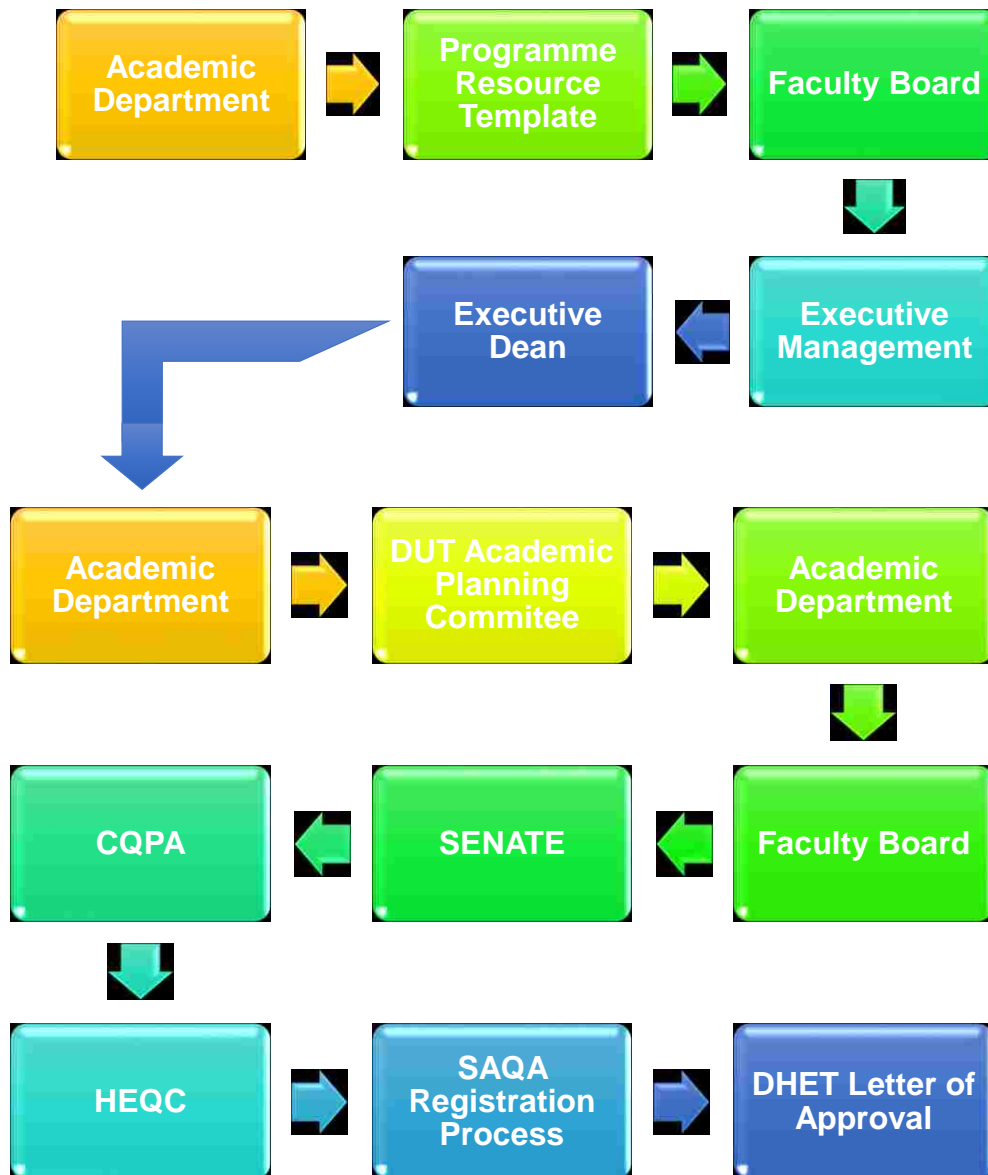
The respondent indicated that the university must ensure that the curriculum development and approval of new programme is aligned with the requirements of the following South African Education National Bodies:

- SAQA
- DHET
- CHE

The process is shown in Figure 4.13 in Stage 2, it briefly highlights the process of the curriculum development of a new programme through the associated internal and external processes.



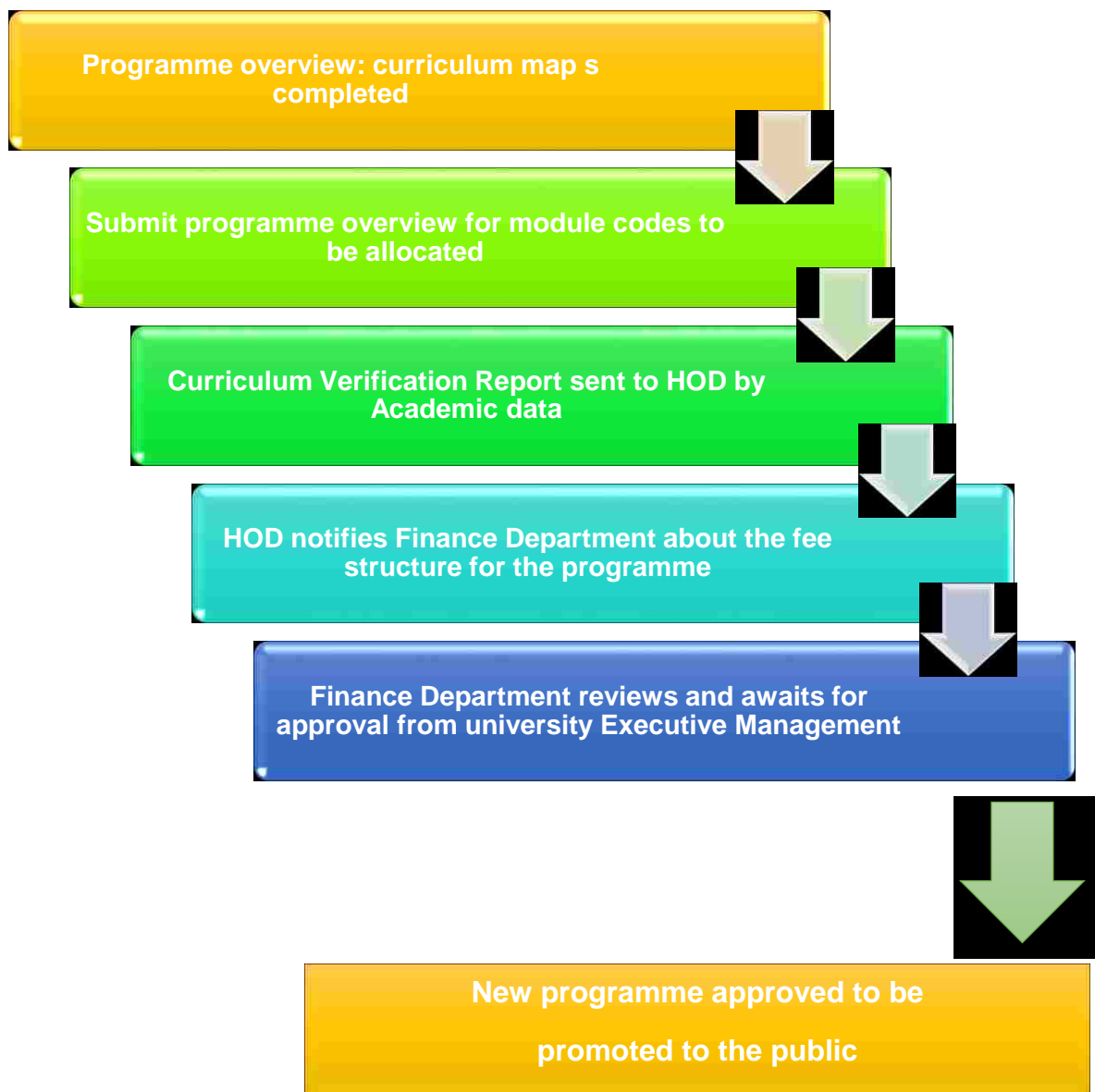
**Figure 4.13: Critical path for a new programme and curriculum: Stage two**



Upon completion through the various stages and final approval from the Department of Education, then the department would need to follow stage three of the curriculum renewal process.

The critical path displayed in Figure 4.14 on the next page indicates the process after receiving accreditation, registration and final approval from DHET.

**Figure 4.14: Critical path after accreditation, registration and final approval received from the Department of Higher Education - Stage three**



The respondent indicated that once a department has followed these necessary stages for curriculum renewal or to develop a new programme and is completed, the renewed programme will be promoted to the public via the university.

#### **4.5.3.4 Support structure for the internal quality process at university for the curriculum renewal process**

The respondent was questioned about what support structure is placed for departments during the curriculum renewal process with regards to the quality aspect.

The respondent explained that since 2013, at the time that deputy Dean and Dean of Faculty of Accounting and Informatics appointed her as the "Quality Promotion Officer" to take charge and implement the curriculum renewal process. It was respondent duty to manage the process from beginning to the end and to monitor the quality of the process.

As mentioned previously, the CQPA advises the curriculum champion and department as to what needs to be done, the approval process, the framework involved and the necessary legislation. This is completed together with the assistance of the ADP.

#### **4.5.4. Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal process**

##### **4.5.4.1 Influence on work environment**

The Quality Promotion Officer was asked about what kind of influence did the curriculum renewal process have on her work environment,

The respondent indicated that even though it is a positive influence in terms of aligning programmes with industry needs but it did have a significant amount of influence on her work environment. Depending on where in the process, it usually takes up to 50 percent of time. The respondent further explained that it is the Quality Promotion Officer duty to assist all departments within the department with curriculum renewal process. On a scale of 1 to 10, the respondent indicated that the stress work environment level is 8 out of 10, as it is very demanding process that has deadlines that must be met within timeframes.

##### **4.5.4.2 Challenges encountered during the curriculum renewal process implementation**

The respondent was asked to comment on the challenges encountered during the implementation of the curriculum renewal process.

The Quality Promotions Officer commented that one of main challenge for the CRP was that some of the departments curriculum champions do not have the expertise to develop or design the curriculum for programme. As majority of curriculum champions are the academic staff themselves. Furthermore, the respondent added that there is no one a “curriculum expert” to guide the departments.

As academic staff are curriculum champions, there is no relief or assistances from their department to continue their normal academic duties in order to do curriculum renewal work. The respondent indicated that there was request for assistance for academic staff to curriculum champions and lecturing however, it was declined.

The last challenge which relates to time and the balance of workload for curriculum champions. As the respondent mentioned that most curriculum champions are academics from their respective departments, the curriculum renewal process along with academic deadlines did create a time shortage.

#### **4.5.4.3 Current university resource and support for renewed programme**

The researcher asked the respondent to comment on the current situation of the university’s resources and support for the renewed programme.

The respondent highlighted that even though majority of the programmes at universities will be going through the curriculum renewal process, however there will be no new resources. The respondent further stated that academics and departments have been told to use whatever resources they have to lecture the new programmes.

With regards to the OMT and BIM programme, the respondent had indicated that the Department of Information and Corporate Management had severe resource constraints with in terms of resources. There will be a shortage of staff as would be still involved in the phasing out annual based programme and also implementing the new semester based programme. The Quality Promotions Officer suggested that the department will need to make use of contract workers to help out with the hectic workload.

#### **4.5.5 Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal process on the renewed programme**

The respondent was asked by the researcher to comment on the impact on what impact will the renewed programme have with regards to teaching and learning methods.

The respondent indicated that the renewed curriculum and programme is more student centred which allows students to become independent learners along with more up to date teaching methods. These teaching methods include student and group discussions, reflective journals and online teaching.

In addition, with the renewed programme, the respondent indicated that general education modules would also be implemented into the programme. This would allow students to even learn sign language.

#### **4.5.6. Section F: Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

The respondent was questioned about the benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process. The findings are below.

##### **4.5.6.1. NQF description of a qualification effects on learning development**

The respondent had indicated that an NQF descriptor had impacted on a programme positively. The NQF descriptor for the Diploma is 6. The respondent had indicated that in this level descriptor, a student will need to have a completed a level of competence in order to move on to the next level.

##### **4.5.6.2. Audit for reviewing the curriculum renewal process**

The respondent commented that there is an audit done internally and it is called a 'Review'. Together with the Academic Development Practitioner and Quality Promotions Officer a workshop is conducted with the department to review the renewed programme. The respondent highlighted that it is in this workshop the audit is conducted. In terms, of identifying the challenges or implementation challenges and trying to improve them. It is one of the best practices and benefit that needs to be in place whilst doing a curriculum renewal process for a programme or department.

In terms of the BIM programme, the respondent had mentioned that a challenge that was identified that currently students felt that the new programme has too many assessments. The CQPA will be reviewing this challenge and identifying how it can be resolved.

#### **4.5.6.3. Key expectations of curriculum renewal process**

The Quality Promotions Officer mentioned that so far the key expectations were met in terms of renewing the curriculum. It is still an ongoing process in terms of aligning programmes with the industry and meeting CHE criteria's. The best practice is to always monitor the process for any changes or gap as there is no room for spillage.

#### **4.6. Interview with Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), Academic Development Practitioner Representative**

**Table 4.10 Highlighting interview detail with ADP representative**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Audio recording</b>
02/08/17	15 minutes	Not granted

#### **4.6.1. Section A: Biographical information of ADP Representative**

##### **4.6.1.1 Faculty, department, programme and designation**

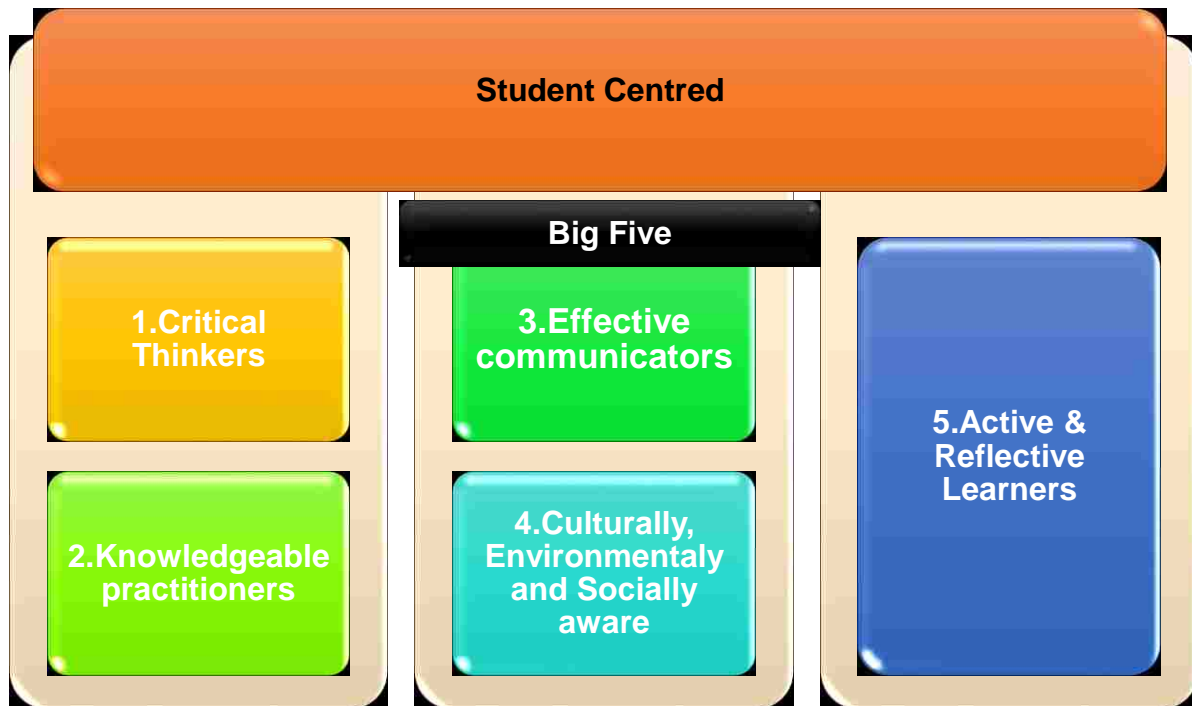
The respondent was from the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) department under the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at the Durban University of Technology. The respondent is currently the Academic Development Practitioner designation and was involved with the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

#### **4.6.2. Section B: Quality teaching content for programmes at DUT**

##### **4.6.2.1. Underlying values for a programme's content**

The Academic Development Practitioner was asked about what were the underlying values for the content for the programmes that are taught towards students. This finding is displayed in Figure 4.15 below and thereafter discussed.

**Figure 4.15 Underlying values for a programme's content**



The respondent indicated that the number one value for the content of the programmes offered at DUT, is that it must be student centred. The content must also enable a student to be engaged with the content in and out of the classroom.

The second underlying values of the programme contents discussed by the ADP representative, falls under the DUT graduate attribute which is called '*The Big Five*'.

Namely:

**1. Critical Thinkers**

Students who graduate will have developed competencies that allow them to solve problems effectively by applying logical, creative and critical thinking strategies.

**2. Knowledgeable practitioners**

Students should have in-depth knowledge about their field, must be able to apply the same knowledge in the field industry

**3. Effective communicators**

The content should encourage students to demonstrate oral and written communication effectively to diverse audience.

**4. Culturally, environmentally and socially aware**

The respondent indicated that students should be aware of these factors and should consider the ethical implications of human behaviour.

## **5. Active and reflective learners**

The content should allow students to become active learners and that they are responsible for the learning and professional career.

The respondent had indicated that the '*Big Five*' graduate attribute is a strong foundation in the underlying values when selecting the contents for a programme. Therefore, it is important for a university to review a programme content to know the true value of its product offering.

### **4.6.2.2. Process and skills required for developing content for programmes**

The respondent had informed the researcher that a programme's content is first researched and selected. Thereafter, after discussion and debate, the final outcome implemented within the chosen modules.

Once it is implemented into modules, it will be bench marked against other institutions who offer the similar qualifications.

The respondent also added that a person involved in the curriculum renewal of a programme is that they should have the ability to work collaboratively and think critically. The person should also contain some curriculum design skills which include incorporating the Think Learn Zone online content.

### **4.6.3. Section C: Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT**

#### **4.6.3.1. New academic strategies of teaching and learning**

The Academic Development Practitioner was questioned about whether the renewed curriculum or programme would allow academics to incorporate new teaching and learning strategies.

The respondent had indicated that renewed programme will contain more student centred teaching and learning strategies. Such as the use of high impact practices like guest seminars, intensive writing task. Integrated projects and work based learning.

#### **4.6.3.2. Forms of assessment and evaluation: Old verse renewed curriculum**

The respondent had pointed out that the old OMT programme was more focused on continuous assessment. The renewed programme, BIM programme has a more



student centred assessments like group projects, integrated assignments, group presentations will be included. Moreover, the renewed evaluation for certain modules did contain an exam component.

#### **4.6.4. Section D: Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

##### **4.6.4.1 Influence on work environment**

The ADP representative was questioned about the curriculum renewal process on their work environment.

The respondent explained to the researcher that the process is part of her job and it was exciting to work with the curriculum team for the programme. At the end, a renewed qualification was developed and it is the first in the country. The staff had to be innovative in the renewed curriculum design to attract students towards the programme. The Head of Department of Information and Corporate had involved the Academic Development Practitioner in the entire process.

##### **4.6.4.2 Challenges of the curriculum renewal process**

The respondent had indicated that the major challenge for the process was that there was a lack of expertise in curriculum development at DUT and within the departments. Furthermore, it was the first time that the Department of Information and Corporate Management staff had engaged in developing a curriculum and it was a challenge for them.

However, together with CQPA and CELT, the department was guided through the curriculum renewal process through planned meetings and workshops.

#### **4.6.5. Section E: Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

##### **4.6.5.1 Curriculum renewal process impact towards students**

The respondent explained that the renewal process was more focused on the students and how it could attract scholars to pursue in this programme field.

Moreover, the renewed programme is more responsive to the needs of the changing industry and requirements of potential employers. In addition, it has a research component which prepares students for post-grad qualifications.

#### **4.6.6. Section F: Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

##### **4.6.6.1. Key expectations of the curriculum renewal process**

Besides the alignment towards the industry, the respondent indicated that the main expectation of the curriculum renewal process is meant to renew the curriculum to reflect the changing landscape of South African Higher Education. The Durban University of Technology also transitioned from a "*Technikon*" to a "*University of Technology*" and the curriculum needed to reflect this change.

#### **4.7 Findings from focus group discussion with DUT OMT students**

A semi-structured student focus group schedule was used (refer to Appendix H). After receiving full permission from the Head of Department of Information and Corporate Management, the 4 students of each level was contacted personally via email correspondence prior to introduce the researcher and arrange the focus group discussion and time that was most convenient for the participants.

At the time of the focus group discussion, the participants were requested to sign a consent form (refer to Appendix I). This form had outlined the study, the benefits and extent of confidentiality. Before the commencement of the interview, the participant was notified of his right to participate was voluntarily and that the students had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher also requested permission to audio tape the focus group discussion session only with the respective full permission. The confidentiality of the students was assured and that all information would be secured and would only be made public with anonymity.

Before the researcher began asking questions towards the students, an ice breaker activity was done to make the students comfortable and thereafter the rules for the discussion was pointed out by the researcher (See Appendix H).

##### **4.7.1. Students understanding of the concept '*Curriculum renewal process*'**

The researcher asked participants as to whether they understood the term. Majority of the students understood what curriculum renewal term is about. The third years had indicated that it was the process of subjects or module involved which is revamped in a programme.

Thereafter, the researcher highlighted Wattancharoensil (2014:13) simple explanation of curriculum of which is what is being taught in the classroom. Furthermore, the researcher indicating that the renewal part comes in when the content needs to aligned towards the students' and industry needs in order to drive a positive economy.

The second question involved about how they were informed about the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. As the first year students indicated that they are registered under the BIM programme and upon application for the programme, they were made aware of the process. However, the second and third year students pointed out that they were only made aware that the OMT curriculum was being renewed but they were not aware that the programme was phasing out.

The third years had further stated that it was only during the introduction of the first years, it became known to the third years the a renewed programme was established.

#### 4.7.2 Current programme intellectually stimulating – Agreed or Disagree?

Students were asked as to whether they find their current programme they are registered under, intellectually stimulating and make them think critically. In Table 4.11, is the finding and discussion thereafter.

**Table 4.11: Current programme stimulating or not**

Level	Frequency	Percentage	Comments
First year	2	33%	Agreed
Second year	4	67%	Mixed reaction  However, First year registered under the BIM programme have more advantage
Third year			

A percentage of 33 percent of first year students agreed that they had found the BIM programme to be stimulating whilst the majority of 67 percent had mixed reaction. Some students had agreed that they found the OMT programme stimulating however

majority stated that the first years even get to learn sign language which is something they didn't.

#### **4.7.3. Perception of the OMT programme**

Students were asked to comment their perception about the OMT programme by the researcher. From the observation of comments, the first years had not commented on this particular question. However, majority of respondents stated that the OMT programme was straightforward yet challenging at times. One of the third year stated that there was not much to go in-depth with the content because it was subjects that they understood.

#### **4.7.4 OMT programme name change**

The students were questioned as to whether they had agreed or disagreed with the name change for the new diploma that attribute to the phasing out of the OMT programme. The researcher had observed that the second and third year level students were not familiar with the new diploma name. The first year level students had informed the panel about the BIM diploma.

Thereafter, a second year respondent had voiced her opinion that the new diploma name, "*Business Information Management*" had a more versatile name and sounded much better than the "Office Management and Technology" programme. Moreover, the respondent stated with the old diploma name, the public would assume it is for secretaries and administrators. However, with the new diploma name, the public would view it as a programme that would attract a variety of career opportunities. The majority of the panel had agreed with the second year student statement.

#### **4.7.5. Lecturers teaching and learning methods in the classroom**

The researcher has inquired about the student's lecturer's teaching and learning methods in the classroom. The researcher had given the panel a minute to the respondents to gather their answers and reiterated that their answers would remain anonymous.

A majority of 60 percent of respondents had indicated that the best teaching and learning method used by their lecturers is the use of a projector. As respondents

further highlighted that students learn better with visual representations and they learn the work content effectively.

The 20 percent of respondents had emphasized that some of the lecturers were professional and extremely knowledgeable about the module content that they did not need notes to teach students. This had made students feel confident about the lecturer and the content being taught in the classroom. Students had appreciated that aspect of having qualified people in the classroom teaching them.

However, the remaining 20 percent of students mentioned that even though they favour the use of projectors in the classroom, the spelling errors and incorrect content projected makes the learning flow slow. As students feel less confident about the lecturer and their work. This affected the teaching and learning adaption in the classroom.

#### **4.7.6. Suggested new teaching and learning methods in the classroom by students**

The panel was asked to comment about what new teaching and learning methods should be implemented in the classroom by their lecturers. In Figure 4.16, the findings are displayed thereafter it is discussed.

**Figure 4.16 New teaching and learning methods that should be adopted in the classroom**



The respondents had similar answers across the board regarding this question. Majority of 50 percent of students had indicated that lecturers should implement more practical content in the classroom such as interactive, open discussion and role play activities as well. These activities would assist students in absorbing heavy theory content of the programme and improve the learning path flow.

Thereafter, 33 percent of respondents had suggested that the notification of information towards students' needs to be improved. As the student group panel did indicate that they are still learning to use "*Blackboard, ThinkLearnZone*" programme even at third year level. Furthermore, the students indicated that not all students have access to the internet or own smartphones to be able to use the programme when they are not on campus. Thereby, making it difficult to receive notification of information on time regarding the programme such as assignments, cancellations, tests and changes. In addition, a first year student had indicated that some student had never seen a computer before and they are already pushed into doing things online and it is frustrating. The researcher observed that a sense of disappointed among students whilst on the topic of '*Blackboard, ThinkLearnZone*'.

Interestingly, 17 percent of respondents had suggested that lecturers should make additional notes for students other than printing or projecting notes. The students suggested that whilst in class, lecturers should start recording the lecture period and make these audio available at the library or in the computer labs during study period for students who did attend lectures. An implementation of the Podcast classroom was suggested by students. As this would assist and improve the lecturer's teaching and learning methods towards the students.

#### **4.7.7 Awareness of self-study**

The researcher questioned the students as to whether they were aware about the concept of "*Self-study*". All students agreed that they understand what the term was about but mentioned dissatisfaction by stating that "*the concept should not be used at university level, if we wanted to do a self-study course then we would have registered at Unisa or a private college*".

A respondent debated that they agree certain modules do require self-study but majority of the modules require assistance for learning the content. The researcher then questioned about whether tutors help them absorb the module content effectively. Thereafter, the students expressed a huge dissatisfaction with the tutors employed to assist them.

#### **4.7.8 Tutors**

##### ***A) Unprofessional, rude and discriminating***

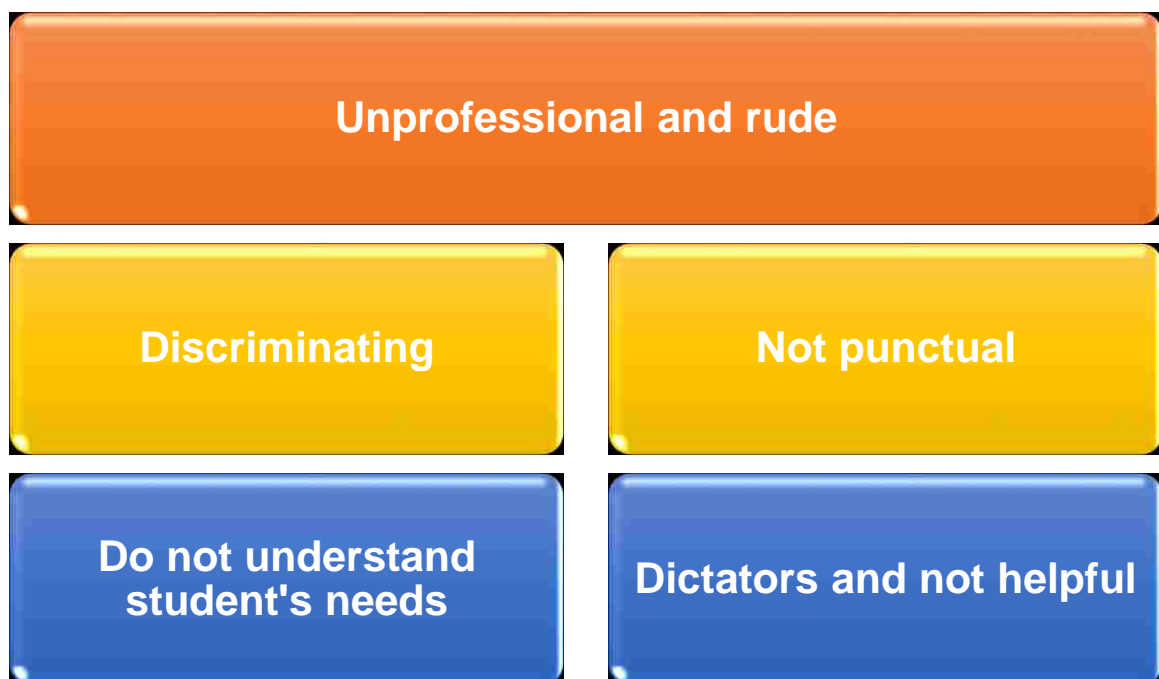
A second year level student responded that some of the tutors are rude, not helpful and do not help the students learn the module content. The student further stated that a particular tutor does not speak English to accommodate all race groups and when the class intervened and requested the tutor to be accommodating, the tutor demanded that the student leave the classroom. This incident had left the respondent having a negative perception about tutors and avoiding attending tutorials and rather adopt to self-study.

On the other hand, a third year level student expressed disbelief when a tutor had requested information from her on how to teach a particular section to first year students. This made the respondent less confident about the tutors employed by the

department. The respondent further stated that if the tutors were knowledgeable, professional and know how to work with students then self-study would not be needed.

All students expressed dissatisfaction with how tutors had conducted tutorials for the OMT programme. Below in Figure 4.17, highlights the student's perspective on tutors and how it affects their learning flow for the modules.

**Figure 4.17 Students perspective on tutors for OMT programme**



***B) Not punctual***

All students expressed negatively as towards the punctuality of tutorials. A respondent had indicated that tutorials are either morning or late afternoon and students make arrangements to be prompt for tutorials. However, when students are punctual, tutors either do not show up or just show up five minutes before the ending of the period for their signatures.

***C) Do not understand student's needs***

Majority of the respondents were confused about what is the actual purpose or objective of a tutors. The panel began to debate as to whether the tutors are there for the students' needs or just to repeat what was done by the lecturer in the classroom for that specific day.



The researcher observed strong points raised by the students. The second and third year level stated that the tutors purpose was supposed to focus on which sections students are failing. A tutor should go to the lecturer or look at past test and exams and see which questions are weak and then tutor on that specific section. Students have expressed dissatisfaction about tutors repeating what was taught by their lecturers in the classroom in the same week.

Furthermore, a first year argued that if tutors did not have so much of attitude and tried to understand the student's needs, the learning flow would be easier and the programme would have a high pass rate. All respondents agreed with this statement.

#### ***D) Dictators and not helpful***

As the students previously mentioned that tutors do not understand the students' needs and are therefore labelled "*Dictators*" instead of tutors by most students. Tutors dictate what they will be tutoring in class and do not care whether the students want to learn the section or not.

Respondents have voiced their concerned about tutors with this mind-set, do not actually improve student results. A third year level student pointed out that only a handful of students attend tutorials and majority do not due to the above reasons.

#### **4.7.9 Self-study increase or decrease in renewed curriculum**

The researcher questioned the panel as to whether self-study should be increased or decreased in the renewed curriculum.

A number of 33 percent of respondents agreed that self-study should be increased in the renewed curriculum. The majority of 67 percent expressed mixed reactions. The second and third year level students indicated that if there were professional and qualified tutors then self-study would not be needed as they would have understood the section. However, the respondents agreed that self-study should be included in the new curriculum.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the results derived from the Atlas programme. The data was presented in the form of descriptive and narrative depicted tables and SmartArt charts. The study revealed the perception of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme from the curriculum champion, OMT academics, ADP & CQPA representatives and OMT students.

The next chapter will present the discussion of the findings of this study.

## **Chapter 5:**

### **Discussion of findings**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented the findings based on the data collected from four sets of interview schedules and one focus group discussion schedule. DUT OMT academics, OMT curriculum champion, CQPA representative and ADP representative participated in the semi-structured face to face interviews while OMT students from DUT participated in a focus group discussion.

This chapter discusses the significant findings relevant to the objective. The researcher's choice of interpretivism as epistemological lenses for the study, a hermeneutic approach is undertaken in understanding and discussing the five sets of findings. This is done from several perspectives and in the context of the theoretical framework underpinning this study as well as the literature that was reviewed.

The broad objective of the study was to explore the curriculum renewal process amongst academics and students of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process.

The critical questions generated to meet the objective were:

1. What are the best practices of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme?
2. What are the challenges of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology?
3. What framework can be developed for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process?

The interpretation that follows will provide the researchers reflections on the specified critical questions. It will also provide a discussion on the extent to which these have been addressed.

## **5.2 Discussion of findings**

Understanding of the concept of curriculum renewal is addressed first, since it is the underpinning point of this study. There are variable interpretations and definitions of the concept of curriculum renewal. It is also critical to clarify the position that this study has taken with regard to the definition of the concept. The findings are then discussed in terms of the critical questions that were generated to address the objective of this study.

### **5.2.1 Curriculum renewal process concept**

During the introduction of the study for each interview to respondents, the researcher reiterated Ornstein and Hunkins (2009: 11) definition of curriculum renewal process, which is "a sequence of steps for achieving goals with reviewing its subject content, foundations, knowledge domain, theory and principals".

Majority of the academics had understood the concept as they are currently involved in the process. OMT students during the focus group discussion were first question was about what they understood by the curriculum renewal concept.

The participants understood what the concept of curriculum renewal process meant. The third years had indicated that it was the process of subjects or module involved which is revamped in a programme. Thereafter, the researcher highlighted Wattanacharoensil (2014: 13) simple explanation of curriculum of which is what is being taught in the classroom.

### **5.2.2 Curriculum renewal process at Durban University of Technology**

According to Rodger (2011: 76), the purpose of the curriculum renewal process is to assist and support with the following:

- The university strategic direction, systems and policies
- Maintenance of standards
- Maintenance of professional industry accreditation standards where required.

Likewise, the curriculum champion stated that the university indicated that the planning phase of the curriculum renewal process began in 2012. It was found that the

implementation of the curriculum renewal process was a top-down approach as it was instructions from National level that all National Diploma's will be phasing out. However, it went on to be a democratic approach at university level. Furthermore, from the findings of this study it was found that to perform the maintenance of standards, accreditation and quality of programmes undergoing the curriculum renewal process, the CQPA department partook in the process since January 2013 to lead the process.

According to Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2004), great leaders move people by inspiring and motivating them to move forward, change for the better. Therefore, the establishment of the CQPA department was important for management to be involved with the curriculum renewal process. To inspire, motivate, maintain and accredit the quality of the curriculum renewal process at DUT. In addition, an CELT representative was brought into the curriculum renewal framework. The Academic Development Practitioner was assigned to analyse the renewed curriculum teaching and learning attributes to ensure that the content is student centred.

In order for the curriculum renewal process and ideas to be "bought" into the department, the leader must ensure that capacity building should take place. Capacity building in the education environment involves the process of combining resources and elements within a university to benefit all stakeholder and accomplish the mission (Beesley and Shebby 2010). Therefore, the curriculum champion pointed out that capacity building a curriculum workshop took place with all DUT OMT academics, CQPA and ADP representative.

This initial stage of the curriculum renewal process was successful as findings indicated in Chapter 4, that OMT academics commented that their curriculum champion was an excellent leader, driver and ensured that the highest level of transparency that took place at each stage of the process. In terms of the OMT academics perception of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme, majority of academics had positive perception and the findings indicated that these respondents were excited about the additional modules. It is excellent to note that there was a zero percent of negative perception towards the process.

In addition, it was found that the OMT programme would be phased out and the department would have to re-curricula the programme to a Diploma level. Furthermore, to remove the 'negative stigma' that the course was only for secretaries,

a new name was suggested. However, few academics were concerned and mixed perception about rehashing some of the old programme content and modules into the new programme. Moreover, these OMT academics also commented that they were disappointed that when new content was being developed by the curriculum renewal committee, they had only asked remaining academic's for input when they needed information.

### **5.2.2.1 Curriculum change drivers for modules**

Harden, Sowden and Dunn (1984: 285) suggested that in order to undergo the initial curriculum development process for change, the academics need to understand the curriculum change drivers. The 1984 SPICES model in Chapter 4, (refer to Table 2.1) on curriculum development still remains the foundation for curriculum development of programmes and skills.

Similarly, the findings from the interview with the ADP, it was found that the SPICES model had been integrated into DUT under the graduate attributes labelled "*The Big Five*". Namely:

#### **1. Critical Thinkers**

Students who graduate will have developed competencies that allow them to solve problems effectively by applying logical, creative and critical thinking strategies.

#### **2. Knowledgeable practitioners**

Students should have in-depth knowledge about their field, must be able to apply the same knowledge in the field industry

#### **3. Effective communicators**

The content should encourage students to demonstrate oral and written communication effectively to diverse audience.

#### **4. Culturally, environmentally and socially aware**

The respondent indicated that students should be aware of these factors and should consider the ethical implications of human behaviour.

#### **5. Active and reflective learners**

The content should allow students to become active learners and that they are responsible for the learning and professional career.

### **5.2.2.2 Stakeholders consultation for the renewed curriculum**

The curriculum champion commented that the OMT department gathers information from their curriculum renewal workshops which include an advisory board. In addition, the Department of Information and Corporate Management distributed questionnaires to various companies that are employing DUT OMT students for in-service training. All information from stakeholders are gathered thereafter discussed and consulting with the advisory board before making final decisions to move forward. Mossenlechner and Zehrer (2009: 164) highlighted that in order to align the curricula with the recent year's industry needs, the curricula firstly need to be able to contain new and factual information with technological driven components and resources that is in line with the industry.

However, it was inadequate and unsatisfactory to find out that students were only involved to a certain extent as being stakeholders in the advisory board committee and curriculum renewal process. As Brew (2010: 139) pointed out that without involving student's perceptions in terms of the re-curricular of a programme module learning, teaching, curriculum content, it would be considered an '*academic apartheid*'. As the researcher indicated that students would feel that their views of what they expect to learn or how they would absorb the new content does not matter to the university just as long as they paid to study.

Furthermore, it was found during the focus group discussion that it was only the first year students who knew about the renewed programme upon registration. The second and third year OMT students pointed out that they were only made aware that the OMT curriculum was being renewed but they were not aware that the programme was phasing out. The third years had further stated that it was only during the introduction of the first years, it became known to the third years the renewed programme was established. When implementing renewed curriculum, universities should take note of As Unger and Hanekom (2014: 222) concern that when changing the programme content and the teaching methods, it would have significant impact on the current students perception and their future education journey in their field.

### **5.2.3 Curriculum renewal implementation**

Narayan and Edwards (2011: 7) mention that a curriculum renewal of a programme needs to be implemented in recent years as it would bring the content to a current, responsive, proactive course and be effective.

Therefore, the participants of this study were asked to comment on the curriculum renewal implementation for the OMT programme under the following headings:

- Barriers slowing down the renewed curriculum implementation process
- Influence of the curriculum renewal process on their work environment
- Benefits of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme

#### **5.2.3.1 Barriers slowing down the curriculum renewal implementation process**

Hubball, Lamberson and Kindler (2012: 101) had found that the main barrier for curriculum implementation process was that a university's current resources support the delivery of the new curriculum content of a programme. This is arguably agreed with findings with the CQPA representative highlighted that even though majority of the programmes at universities will be going through the curriculum renewal process, however there will be no new resources. The respondent further stated that academics and departments have been told to use whatever resources they have to lecture the new programmes.

As Dredge *et al.* (2013: 18) previously mentioned that academics are pressured to align the curriculum content and delivery with that of national and international level of standards. Even though the curriculum champion stated that the academics are qualified and knowledgeable to implement the renewed curriculum, however, the resources of the university is inadequate. In this study, the below barriers are affecting academics to teach new curriculum. These barriers were discussed in detail in the previous chapter in Figure 4.8.

- Students first language is not English
- Students isiZulu language not up to standard
- Fast paced work of semester programme
- Poor venue facilities and lack of technology
- Students not committed to improving themselves
- Textbooks are expensive and copyright issues/approval



- Lack of tutors

Another major barrier affecting the curriculum renewal and implementation process found from the ADP and CQPA interview was that there is no “curriculum expert” in departments across the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at DUT. It was found that most of the curriculum champions were actually the academics or Head of Department from their respective department.

From the OMT student’s perspective, Findings indicated that during the OMT programme curriculum renewal process, the students were part of the advisory board meetings but not to the full extent as other members of the board. Brew (2010: 140) argued that without involving student’s perceptions in terms of the re-curricular of a programme module learning, teaching, curriculum content, it would be considered an ‘*academic apartheid*’.

Therefore, during the student focus group discussion it was found that majority of the respondents did know the curriculum process was being implemented, however, they did not know a new programme name ‘all-together’. The researcher found that it was a ‘curriculum shock’ for the students but in a positive manner. This finding deters the perception of curriculum renewal process as found by Thies (2012: 15), whereby students at Australian Universities felt the process had ‘dumbed down’ the programme.

However, the major challenge or barrier affecting students to support the curriculum renewal process implementation is that the absorption of the module content over the short space of time. Furthermore, findings indicated that the lack of professional tutors employed by the Department to assist the students was:

- Unprofessional, rude and discriminating
- Not punctual
- Do not understand student’s needs
- Dictators and not helpful

As these barriers are then forced students to pursue the self-study route and there is a drop in tutorial class attendance. This finding is aligned with Peseta *et al.* (2015: 3), whereby, students come to university with expectations to learn, however a lack of good communication skills in the classroom affects their learning process. Thus,

affecting the curriculum renewal implementation towards to students. Another barrier affecting students as found by the ADP representative is that students had an overload of assessments per semester. It is a challenge and currently it will be reviewed and improved. As previously stated by Ramzan, Jalal and Akhter (2015: 189) that without successfully implementing the curriculum change, it would be unfavourable to achieve the process future goal.

### **5.2.3.2 Influence of the curriculum renewal process on their work environment**

As the ADP and CQPA representative previously mentioned that the 'curriculum champion' for the curriculum renewal process at DUT, were academics and HOD's of their respective departments. OMT academics stated that they had also felt the workover load. In terms of meeting the renewed curriculum semester deadlines, conduct lecturing and also be involved in curriculum renewal process. This influence of the process towards staff is crucial. As Toohey, McGill and Whitsed (2017: 334) identified that there has been in increase in academic's administration, teaching and supervision workloads. All these challenges can bring about a stressful work could affect academics as the drivers for the curriculum renewal process. Additionally, Ramzan, Jalal and Akhter (2015: 199) pointed out that these challenges can create a negative perceptions towards curriculum renewal implementation.

The findings of this study had indicated that even though the academics, curriculum champion, ADP and CQPA representative had stressful work environment during the curriculum renewal process, they had a positive perception as they are developing something beneficial for the department and university.

### **5.2.3.3 Benefits and best practices of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme**

All respondents of this study had positive perceptions towards the curriculum renewal for the OMT programme as it brought upon benefits towards the department and university. As Wormley (2004: 330) discussed that such benefit for the curriculum renewal process include that the department unity, improved committed leadership strategy, new measures to monitor students' progress and recognition for successful efforts toward academics and students. The findings of the overall benefits of the curriculum renewal process for OMT programme is displayed in Table 5.1 .

**Table 5.1 Overall benefits and best practices of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme**

<b>Benefits of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT Programme</b>		<b>Best practices</b>	
<b>Curriculum Champion And Academics</b>	<b>Internally</b>	<b>Externally</b>	
	Improved staff and department morale	Improved & greater employment opportunities for students	Good leadership, support and motivation
	Up to date modules such as project management and research methodology		Democratic and transparency approach
	Renewed programme is aligned with the industry needs		Team effort for reviewing programme and changing curriculum
	Only university in South Africa offering the renewed programme		
<b>Students</b>	Improved the morale by removing the “negative stigma” from the OMT programme		Effective teaching and learning techniques
	Up to date modules to improve students skills and knowledge about the various industry	Vast industry job opportunities	
	More in-depth content and have to be critical thinkers		
<b>ADP representative</b>	Renewed the OMT programme curriculum to reflect the changing landscape of South African Higher Education.		Leadership skills development

<b>CQPA representative</b>	Aligned with the industry needs	Attracting students towards the renewed programme.	Aligning with current and future industry needs with student centeredness
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As Table 5.1 highlights the overall benefits experienced by the OMT department in line with the best practices for those benefits to take place. Majority of respondents had merged their response about curriculum renewal process benefits and best practices. The findings of this study indicated that the following best practices for curriculum renewal process to take place should be the following:

- Good leadership from curriculum champion and top management from the university
- Support from CELT and CQPA department
- Motivation from seniors for driving the curriculum renewal process
- Democratic approach with transparency measures for every single change in the curriculum renewal process for the programme
- Team effort
- Effective teaching and learning techniques to enhance students learning skills and experience
- Leadership skills development
- Aligning with current and future industry needs with student centeredness

### **5.3 Framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme**

The theoretical framework for this study which includes the curriculum development and renewal framework produced by Professor Sylvia Rodgers (2011) and Suzy Mckenna (2013) 'Review and Renew' model framework, the literature reviewed and the practical aspects discussed from the findings discussed in this chapter, form the basis of developing the framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme.

The framework for the successful curriculum renewal implementation of a programme, proposed by this study, will provide new insights into the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process, the perceptions and experiences of those most closely affected, that is the academic staff, the curriculum champion and students of the university involved in the curriculum renewal process, thereby assisting other departments or programmes embarking on a curriculum renewal process in the future. The framework should not be seen as a prescriptive but rather be used as a design to review when creating curriculum renewal interventions.

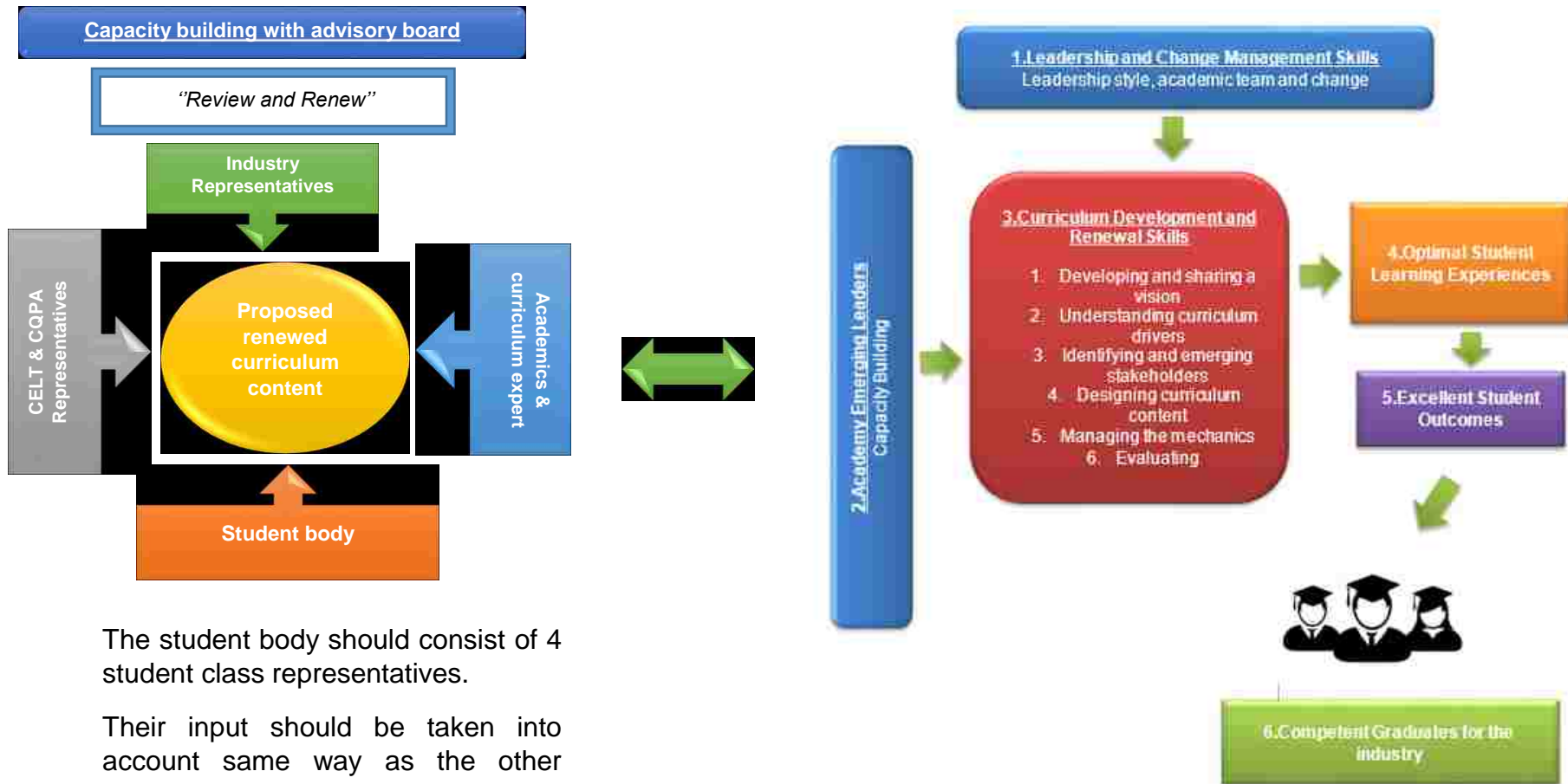
The curriculum renewal implementation framework that is proposed arose from the research problem highlighted in Section 1.2 of Chapter 1. The broad objective of this study was to explore the curriculum renewal process amongst academics and students of the Office Management and Technology programme at Durban University of Technology and to develop a framework for future successful implementation of the curriculum implementation process.

Hence the following process (graphically represented in Figure 5.1 on the next page thereafter Table 5.2 on the following page) maybe followed when designing and implementing the curriculum renewal process of a programme:

- 1. Leadership and change management skills** in the university upper management needs to change their leadership style to bring all academics together as a team to move forward to the change.
- 2. Academy emerging leaders** in the form of capacity building with all stakeholders, combining resources and elements within a university to benefit all stakeholder and accomplish the mission. A student body consisting of 4 student class representatives should be developed by the department and their contribution to the advisory board must be taken into consideration.

A curriculum expert should be established for the programme or department that who will assist with the curriculum renewal process of *“Review and Renew”* of the curricula in each module. The curriculum expert should not be the HOD or academics of the department but rather outsourced to postgraduate personnel.

**Figure 5.1: Proposed curriculum renewal implementation framework**


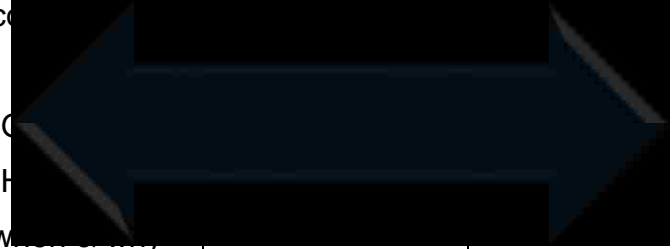
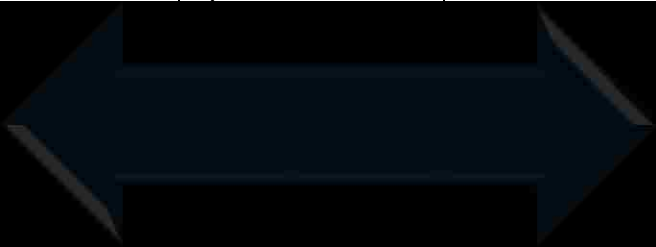


The student body should consist of 4 student class representatives.

Their input should be taken into account same way as the other stakeholders on the advisory board.

During the capacity building with the advisory board, a “review and renew” framework must be employed for the curriculum renewal process. This process is highlighted below in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2: Review and renew process for curriculum renewal**

Review		Renew		
Current state	Process	Validation & Consultation	Response	New Current State
Curriculum	Categorize items for n 	Advisory board should to:	Actions plan needs to	Renewed curriculum -Justified -Quantified -Qualified -Validated -Targeted
Graduate attributes	Data co  -C -H W	Validate findings	Base on valid	Aligned with University strategy and policy
Strategic Priorities	Identify relationships and ali	Propose areas for renewal or Improvement or	Assign timeframes	Aligned with professional accreditation and standards.
Accreditation, Standards (Professional bodies)			should be developed	
	Report	Report	Report	Report

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2, whereby Suzy McKenna 'Review and Renew' model was explained, the broad framework was minimized and re-developed accordingly to the findings of this study. The review and renew process for curriculum renewal is discussed below in bullet form.

- The current curriculum should be reviewed by the advisory board. It should be evaluated, moderated and validated in order for the renewed curriculum to be developed.
- Current graduates review about the current curriculum is important to identify gaps that was found about the students upon entering the industry for employment. Thereafter, findings must be validated with academic's experience of teaching and learning aspects in the classroom for students. It must be reviewed and renewed for the student's benefit. It should also be aligned according to the university strategy and policy regarding curriculum renewal
- Strategic Priorities is whereby most of the areas for the curriculum renewal of a programme has been reviewed. Now for the renewal process to begin, areas for change or improvement should be proposed, thereafter timeframes allocation should be given for obtaining re-curricular of a programme content should be given. Since the process should be democratic and transparent, responsibilities should be given out equally in the department to assist with the process flow. Renewed content should be aligned with professional bodies and accredited appropriately as well.

At the end of each process, reports should be produced to ensure the quality at each stage of the curriculum renewal process which can be reviewed once implementation stage has begun.

The researcher suggests that a professional student body should be developed on the advisory board. It should contain at least 1 class representative from each level (First, Second, Third and Honours level). Master and doctorate students would be included in the industry sector or the curriculum expert hence the postgraduate should not be included in the professional student body.



The researcher also suggests that departments should interact with students by conducting 'staff-student' committee meetings at least once a month to review the implementation process of the renewed curricula.

As students are the reason behind a university existence, they should be valued and their opinions must be taken into consideration for the future of a programme. The student body should be given a chance to be proactive in the curriculum renewal process, the same way as other stakeholders in the advisory.

Students should be asked about their classroom experience, the teaching and learning methods being used in the classroom. Also, what they would like to see be improved or changed with the content that would assist the learning process improve. Therefore, leading to a successful curriculum renewal process of programme whereby there would be an increase in learners passing, graduating and being employed into the industry.

### **3. Curriculum development and renewal skills**

As earlier discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.3.1, the department and academics should identify and develop the renewed aspect as shown in Figure 5.1, under the heading 'Curriculum development and renewal skills.

### **4. Optimal student learning experience**

As the focal point of curriculum renewal is not only to update and align the content with the industry needs but also to increase the student learning level to optimal learning experience with renewed teaching and learning methods.

### **5. Excellent student outcomes**

If all stakeholders input was taken into consideration from the beginning, then the process of curriculum renewal will be successful. By making the curriculum renewal process of a programme more student centred with the involvement of students on the advisory board, then excellent student results for renewed programme is achievable.

### **6. Competent graduates for the industry**

Upon graduation, the renewed curriculum should contribute to the longevity of the renewed programme by making graduates feel 'wanted' by the industry. They must

possess all the necessary and up to date knowledge and skills to work in the intend industry.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the discussion for the findings of this study. It highlighted the main barriers slowing down the curriculum renewal implementation process, impact, benefits and best practices experienced of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at DUT.

The study revealed that the main barrier for curriculum renewal process to slow down was due to the lack of resources available to the department, lack of student involvement in the advisory board for stakeholders, as well as no curriculum experts in department as the main factors that hinder the curriculum renewal process of a programme.

The next chapter presents the concluding remarks, suggestions and recommendations of the study.

## **Chapter Six:**

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter five presented the discussion of the findings from the data collected by the researcher. This chapter covers the achievement of the objectives, develop a framework, draw conclusion and make recommendations. The limitations of the study are also discussed and implications considered.

The objectives of the study were:

- To establish the best practices of the curriculum renewal process on the OMT programme
- To identify the challenges of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology
- To develop a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process

This study was qualitative in design and two methods were used in the data collection process. The qualitative research was used to reveal the trends in opinions, thought and meanings and explored more deeply into the research problem. For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of face to face individual semi-structured interviews and one student focus group discussion. These methods had provided an insight into what perception and experience individuals had with regards to the curriculum renewal process, the range of ideas and opinions.

#### **6.2 Summary of findings**

This study revealed that, although many studies have highlighted that the curriculum renewal process had created a negative perception amongst university academics and student, this study had found that majority of respondents have positive perception towards the curriculum renewal process. It also brought upon many benefits to the department and students such as:

- Improved staff morale
- Improved employment opportunities for students

- Updated and modules aligned towards the industry
- Removed the 'Negative stigma' that the course was only for secretaries
- Being the only university in South Africa offering the renewed programme, thereby increased student intake into the department.

The curriculum renewal process also introduced best practices to follow during the implementation of the curriculum renewal process. Namely:

- Good leadership & motivation
- Democratic approach amongst staff with transparency at every step
- Teamwork

However, it was the barriers and challenges faced by academics and students that slowed the curriculum renewal implementation down. This study further found that, at DUT, the lack of funds to assist with curriculum renewal process of programme in the OMT had majorly affected the curriculum renewal implementation of a programme. In addition, the lack of student involvement in the advisory board about how to improve a programme curriculum was a concern.

### **6.2.1 Key findings**

Key findings from this research:

- It was revealed that the OMT department at DUT, had chosen a HEQF parameter and criteria groupings for aligning programmes towards the industry, option 'Category C'.
- That OMT students at DUT were not given an equal opportunity as permanent staff members on the advisory board towards input for the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.
- Majority of the OMT academics at DUT felt that the curriculum renewal process had created a stressful environment with the overload of work
- Majority of the OMT academics at DUT have their MBA or Master's qualification

- It was found that barriers such as OMT student's first language is not English, OMT students isiZulu language is not up to standard, had affected the academics to implement the renewed curriculum. Furthermore, students not committed to learning or visiting the university libraries to improve their language skills.
- From the interviews with academics it was found that poor venue facilities, lack of technology and textbooks, copyright issues/approval and lack of professional tutors affected OMT academics from implementing the renewed curriculum
- Respondents indicated that the teaching and learning methods was improved in the renewed curriculum programme as compared to the OMT programme.
- According to academic respondents, the area of improvement for the curriculum renewal process is that the timing of workshops, information gathering and submission of documents did clash with their academic work schedule. As a result, not all staff were able to attend or participate.
- It was found that there is no curriculum expert in the OMT department and other departments at DUT, to assist the CQPA and ADP in developing or designing a renewed curriculum or to guide the department itself.
- It was revealed that even though all departments at DUT will need to undergo the curriculum renewal process for their programmes, they would have to their current resources to lecture the renewed curriculum. There will be no new resources.
- According to the findings from the OMT student focus group discussion, it was found that the second and third years did not know about the OMT programme name was also being changed.
- It was revealed that OMT students prefer teaching and learning methods which included OMT academics using visual aspects such as Powerpoint, more

practical aspects like role-plays, interactive open discussions in the classroom, the use of podcast to record lectures and notes availability.

- DUT OMT students stated that the off campus notification of information application, 'Blackboard' does not cater for all students as not everyone can afford smartphones or laptops.
- Majority of OMT students have indicated that the tutors employed at the DUT OMT Department was unprofessional, rude and discriminating.
- It was found that the best practices for the curriculum renewal process as indicated by respondents is good leadership, democratic decisions, transparency and teamwork.
- Majority of the respondents of this study indicated that the benefits of the curriculum renewal process included alignment towards the industry, student centeredness, improved teaching and learning methods.

It was revealed from the findings of this study that the curriculum renewal process for the programme OMT had impacted on the OMT department positively. The renewed curriculum programme which is the first in South Africa, with DUT being the only university currently offering the programme.

In addition, majority of the academics did state that even though their work environment was stressful, they had planned and looked forward towards the curriculum renewal process. Most importantly, to remove the 'negative stigma' attached to the OMT programme and that only females with interest for secretarial career could study the OMT programme.

Results for the current study regarding the curriculum renewal process as being a stressful are supported by Dempster, Benfield and Francis (2012: 136) who have identified that academics have found the process to be difficult, the resource is intensive and it is time consuming.

Furthermore, the findings of a previous study conducted by Naidoo (2012: 72) that academics in South Africa are worried about the calibre of students that enter universities are not prepared for the transition into tertiary education. The same results were found in this study whereby academics experienced barriers for implementing renewed curriculum which includes factors such as some student's first language is not English and their isiZulu language skills are not up to standard. Thereby, affecting the learning process and the absorption of new knowledge by these students because they do not understand at all. The researcher found that this is evident in the current study from interviews with OMT academics.

Another finding from this study which relates to literature review was findings from a previous study conducted by Brew (2010: 139) whereby it would be considered 'academic apartheid' to not include students involvement in the curriculum renewal process of a programme. The results of this study revealed that OMT students were not taken into a great degree as the other stakeholders on the advisory board for the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme at DUT.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

#### **6.3.1 Student body**

As part of the advisory board for the curriculum renewal process and review, there should be a professional student body from the department, who must be given an equal opportunity to participate in the process discussion. As it is ironic that the advisory is developing the renewed programme curriculum to be student centred without students input.

#### **6.3.2 Creating revenue for the department**

As the findings indicated that all DUT departments will be undergoing the curriculum renewal process, however, there are no funds and no resources will be given during the implementation of the renewed programme. This study found that it had a major impact on the department as copyright fees for modules textbooks was costly.

The researcher recommends that the OMT department should start using their own resources from the department and start creating revenue for the department. An option could be introducing a basic business administration workshop with a completion certificate within communities, call centre employees or adult learners. This

workshop should take place for 3 weeks, a set fee should be charged per person, a test should be written at the end and upon completion and pass, a completion certificate should be given. An academic employed at the department could be the facilitator. The workshops should take place at the OMT department computer labs or community libraries or local school halls.

The benefit of creating revenue for the department includes that the OMT department being able to obtain revenue for paying for copyright approvals, paying to employ professional tutors for the department and improve the notification of information towards students in their department.

### **6.3.3 Employing a curriculum expert in the department**

A curriculum expert should be employed and continuously monitor the curriculum of the programme within the department. This person should contain a doctorate or professor title and qualification, with industry knowledge and should possess knowledge for the process of curriculum development and design. The curriculum expert should guide the department towards current trends and identify gaps.

The benefit of a curriculum expert employed within the department is that this individual purely focuses on the programme's curriculum, interview academics and students and identify the gaps and monitor the implementation process. In addition, the curriculum expert would be able to assist the CQPA representative and ADP representative to process documentation for curriculum renewal effectively and efficiently.

### **6.3.4 Assistance from other departments for the curriculum renewal process**

As this study found that the OMT department did not have much assistance or guidance for the curriculum renewal process. The researcher recommends that departments who undergo the CRP should receive assistance from CQPA and CELT department representatives from beginning and continuously monitoring the process.

The benefit of having assistance from CQPA & CELT representatives for the CRP is that the departments have the 'right' direction and know how and what to do for the CRP to move forward.



### **6.3.5 Renewed curriculum on podcast and recording of lectures for students**

In terms of implementing renewed curriculum and lecturing content, OMT students have suggested that academics need to make their lectures more adaptable, by recording lectures via video or podcast and making it available at libraries computer labs. The researcher recommends that the OMT department should review the process of recording lectures to assist students to learn the renewed curriculum much better. These recordings should have an access code and only be given to students who attend lectures regularly.

The benefit of recording lectures is that students, who are academically poor, can listen to the recorded lectures and learn the content for test and exams. Thereby, preventing student drop out and fail. We need to be moving towards an actual University of Technology environment and it is up to departments to create that environment for students.

### **6.4 Future research**

The following recommendations are suggested for further research:

- This study focused on the OMT programme at DUT in KZN. A similar study can be conducted at national level.
- It is recommended that further research be conducted on other universities and private colleges as a comparative study, to explore the perception, best practices and challenges they are facing and what could be implemented to improve the resources for the department in the renewed programme.
- Future research could be on the effects of the implemented renewed OMT curriculum programme alignment on graduates towards the industry can be investigated.

### **6.5 Summary and conclusion**

This final chapter has combined the exploration of the best practices and challenges relating to the curriculum renewal of a programme at a university for the development of a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme. The development of such a framework is captured in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.2.

The discussion chapter was grounded on the main findings of the study in the context of the theoretical framework underpinning this study and literature which informed the research. The discussion of main findings was structured with regards to the critical questions generated to address the objectives of the study which aimed to resolve the research problem. Based on this discussion, conclusions had been drawn and recommendations were developed.

This study has been successful in meeting its objective of exploring the best practices and challenges issues in the curriculum renewal process for the development of designing a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal for the OMT programme. The critical questions generated to address this objective as well as the research instruments designed for the study (Interview schedules for OMT academics, OMT curriculum champion, CQPA representatives, ADP representative involved with the curriculum renewal process and a schedule for the focus group discussion with OMT students) were adequate in collecting the data required to respond to the critical questions.

The outcomes of this study (specifically its proposed framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal) has the potential to contribute to OMT education in South Africa and in other disciplines.

It can be concluded that South African Higher Education needs to embrace the student voices and review their policies and structures to ensure that a student centeredness environment actually includes students input in their stakeholders with regards to the curriculum renewal process.

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## **Appendix A**

### **The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme**

**Semi- structured interview schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) curriculum champion at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process.**

#### **A. Biographical information**

1. Faculty: .....
2. Department: .....
3. Programme:.....
4. What is your current designation?.....

#### **B. Curriculum renewal process at Durban University of Technology**

5. When did the initial process of curriculum renewal for the programme OMT begin and what were the necessary steps to bring about the change of the OMT programme at Durban University of Technology?
6. How was information gathered and from who in order to change the OMT curriculum content?
7. Is the curriculum renewal process a top down approach or a democratic approach? Please elaborate your answer.
8. Are current OMT students and OMT academics at Durban University of Technology aware of the curriculum renewal for the OMT programme? Please elaborate your answer.

#### **C. Curriculum change for the OMT programme**

9. Who were the stakeholders that were consulted?
10. Were students also considered stakeholders?
11. What will the new curriculum assessments consist of?
12. From your experience as an OMT academic can you please comment on the quality of the new program curriculum towards the phasing out OMT course in terms of

A) Strengths

B) Weakness

13. What are the benefits that came out of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme?

14. What are the key attributes you expect from OMT graduates?

**D. Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

15. What influence has the curriculum renewal process has on your work environment? Please elaborate your answer

16. What were the challenges of the curriculum renewal process? Please elaborate your answer.

**E. Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

17. What kind of impact will the new qualification have on students towards to the OMT programme & students?

**F. Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

18. Are the academics well prepared to accept the additional responsibility of being the drivers for the curriculum change for the programme? Please elaborate your answer

19. Will the OMT department's existing internal knowledge and expertise and external supporting content resources be able to deliver the new curriculum to students? Please elaborate your answer.

20. What are the key expectations of the curriculum renewal process & was it achieved?

## Appendix B

**The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme**

**Semi- structured interview schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) academics at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process.**

### **A. Biographical information**

1. Faculty: .....
2. Department: .....
3. Programme:.....
4. What is your current designation?.....

### **B. Academics perceptions towards curriculum change for the OMT programme**

5. What was your reaction when you was informed that the OMT programme will be going through curriculum renewal process?
6. What are the benefits that came out of the curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme?
7. What are the key expectations of the curriculum renewal process & was it achieved?
8. How are you informed with the changes or developments with the new curriculum that will be implemented in 2017? Is it transparent?

### **C. Academics as the drivers for curriculum change – challenges**

9. From your experience as an OMT academic can you please comment on the quality of the new program curriculum towards the phasing out OMT course in terms of:
  - a) Strengths
  - b) Weakness
10. Are there any other barriers affecting you as a academic to move forward with teaching of the new curriculum towards your students like language barrier or lack of textbooks in classroom etc.?

**D. Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

11. What influence has the curriculum renewal process has on your work environment? Please elaborate your answer.
12. What kind of impact will the new qualification have on students towards to the OMT programme in terms of content and teaching methods?

**D. Benefits and best practices of the curriculum renewal process**

13. What support is given to academics at DUT during the curriculum renewal process during implementation phase of the new programme?
14. What are the key attributes you expect from current OMT graduates? Has this changed in the new curriculum?
15. Is there any area's in which the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme could be improved? If yes, please elaborate your answer
16. Is there anything further you would like to add?



## Appendix C



### **Letter of information & consent form for curriculum champion & academics**

Dear Participant

Welcome to my research project. Thank you for participating in my study.

**Title of the research study:** The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

**Principal investigator:** Miss E. Moodley  
(Masters in Management Science in Administration and Information Management)

**Supervisor:** Dr. M. Rajkoomar, PhD: Library & Information (Supervisor)

**Brief introduction and purpose of the study:** This case study explores the impact of the curriculum renewal process in the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme at Durban University of Technology with the aim of developing a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process. The study will attempt to ascertain the challenges, impacts and best practices experienced with regards to the new curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

**Outline of the procedures:** Responsibilities of the participant will be to answer questions in the interview. The face to face interview with each participant will be approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Risks or discomforts to the participant:** There will be no risks during the research.

**Benefits:** The findings for the study would give you an insight into OMT academics and students perception about curriculum renewal of a programme at university level

which would be beneficial to the University. In addition, the findings of this study may assist other researchers for literature review. It might contribute to journals of Office Management and Technology. The researcher may also present the research in conferences.

**Reason/s why the participant may be withdrawn from the study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any stage of the study and will not be penalized should you choose to withdraw.

**Remuneration:** There will be no remuneration for this study

**Costs of the study:** There will be no cost to the participants

**Confidentiality:** All data collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the study only. All data collection tools will be identified will be kept under lock and key and electronic data secured with private pass word for a maximum period of 15 years. All paper based records will thereafter be destroyed with shredding and electronic data wiped off.

**Research-related injury:** No risk or harm to participants is expected. You may report harm if it occurs due to the study to the research council and to the researcher.

**Persons to contact in the event of any problems or queries**

**Researcher:** Miss E. Moodley    **contact number:** 078 270 2688

**Supervisor:** Dr. M Rajkoomar    **contact number:** (031) 3736776

Please contact the researcher or my supervisor or co-supervisor (details above) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or [moyos@dut.ac.za](mailto:moyos@dut.ac.za)



**Consent Form**

**Statement of agreement to participate in the research study:**

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Egashnee Moodley (Name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **121/16**
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Full Name of Participant Right</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Signature</b>

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risk of the above study.

_____	_____	_____
<b>Full name of researcher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>

## **Appendix D**

### **The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme**

**Semi- structured interview schedule for the Centre for Quality Promotions and Assurance representative at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process.**

#### **A. Biographical information**

1. Faculty: .....
2. Department: .....
3. Programme:.....
4. What is your current designation?.....

#### **B. Quality assurance for programmes at DUT**

5. When did DUT start introducing the quality assurance system at DUT?
6. How did you introduce the quality assurance system?
7. Is there a legal framework for quality assurance for higher education programmes at universities in South Africa? If yes, please explain.

#### **C. Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT**

8. How does the process for curriculum renewal of a programme take place within DUT? Please elaborate your answer.
9. What structure do you have in place to support the internal quality process for the curriculum renewal of a programme?
10. How is the renewed curriculum for programme content ultimately approved? Please elaborate your answer.

#### **D. Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

11. What influence has the curriculum renewal process has on your work environment? Please elaborate your answer
12. What were the challenges of the curriculum renewal process? Please elaborate your answer.

**13.** With the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme, is the university library and resources and support adapted to the new programme needs? Please elaborate your answer.

**E. Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

**14.** What kind of impact will the new qualification have on students towards to the OMT programme & students with regard to content and teaching methods?

**F. Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

**15.** How does the NQF description of a qualification impact on the learning programme development?

**16.** Is there a curriculum audit that provides a risk management approach to the timing and prioritisation of the curriculum renewal process for the programme OMT at DUT? Please elaborate your answer

**17.** What are the key expectations of the curriculum renewal process & was it achieved?

## Appendix E



### Letter of information & consent form for CQPA representative

Dear Participant

Welcome to my research project. Thank you for participating in my study.

**Title of the research study:** The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

**Principal investigator:** Miss E. Moodley  
(Masters in Management Science in Administration and Information Management)

**Supervisor:** Dr. M. Rajkoomar, PhD: Library & Information (Supervisor)

**Brief introduction and purpose of the study:** This case study explores the impact of the curriculum renewal process in the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme at Durban University of Technology with the aim of developing a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process. The study will attempt to ascertain the challenges, impacts and best practices experienced with regards to the new curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

**Outline of the procedures:** Responsibilities of the participant will be to answer questions in the interview. The face to face interview with each participant will be approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Risks or discomforts to the participant:** There will be no risks during the research.

**Benefits:** The findings for the study would give you an insight into OMT academics and students perception about curriculum renewal of a programme at university level

which would be beneficial to the University. In addition, the findings of this study may assist other researchers for literature review. It might contribute to journals of Office Management and Technology. The researcher may also present the research in conferences.

**Reason/s why the participant may be withdrawn from the study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any stage of the study and will not be penalized should you choose to withdraw.

**Remuneration:** There will be no remuneration for this study

**Costs of the study:** There will be no cost to the participants

**Confidentiality:** All data collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the study only. All data collection tools will be identified will be kept under lock and key and electronic data secured with private pass word for a maximum period of 15 years. All paper based records will thereafter be destroyed with shredding and electronic data wiped off.

**Research-related injury:** No risk or harm to participants is expected. You may report harm if it occurs due to the study to the research council and to the researcher.

**Persons to contact in the event of any problems or queries**

**Researcher:** Miss E. Moodley    **contact number:** 078 270 2688

**Supervisor:** Dr. M Rajkoomar    **contact number:** (031) 3736776

Please contact the researcher or my supervisor or co-supervisor (details above) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or [moyos@dut.ac.za](mailto:moyos@dut.ac.za)



**Consent Form**

**Statement of agreement to participate in the research study:**

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Egashnee Moodley (Name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **121/16**
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Full Name of Participant Right</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Signature</b>

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risk of the above study.

_____	_____	_____
<b>Full name of researcher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>



## Appendix F

### The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

#### Semi- structured interview schedule for ADP rep for the FAI

##### **A. Biographical information**

1. Faculty: .....
2. Department: .....
3. Programme:.....
4. What is your current designation?.....

##### **B. Quality teaching content for programmes at DUT**

5. What are the underlying values for the selection of content for the programmes taught at DUT?
6. How is it arranged into subjects and what skills & processes are included?

##### **C. Curriculum renewal of a programme at DUT**

7. What new strategies of teaching and learning are academics expected to carry out with the new curriculum of the OMT programme?
8. What are the forms of assessment and evaluation will be used in the new OMT programme in comparison to the old OMT programme?

##### **D. Challenges for the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

9. What influence has the curriculum renewal process has on your work environment?  
Please elaborate your answer
10. What were the challenges of the curriculum renewal process? Please elaborate your answer.

##### **E. Impact of the curriculum renewal of the OMT programme**

11. How does the new qualification for the OMT programme reflect the needs and interests of those it serves? (Students, academics, community, nation, employers and economy)

##### **F. Benefits and best practices for the curriculum renewal process**

12. What are the key expectations of the curriculum renewal process & was it achieved?

## Appendix G



### Letter of information & consent form for ADP representative

Dear Participant

Welcome to my research project. Thank you for participating in my study.

**Title of the research study:** The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

**Principal investigator:** Miss E. Moodley  
(Masters in Management Science in Administration and Information Management)

**Supervisor:** Dr. M. Rajkoomar, PhD: Library & Information (Supervisor)

**Brief introduction and purpose of the study:** This case study explores the impact of the curriculum renewal process in the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme at Durban University of Technology with the aim of developing a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process. The study will attempt to ascertain the challenges, impacts and best practices experienced with regards to the new curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

**Outline of the procedures:** Responsibilities of the participant will be to answer questions in the interview. The face to face interview with each participant will be approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Risks or discomforts to the participant:** There will be no risks during the research.

**Benefits:** The findings for the study would give you an insight into OMT academics and students perception about curriculum renewal of a programme at university level

which would be beneficial to the University. In addition, the findings of this study may assist other researchers for literature review. It might contribute to journals of Office Management and Technology. The researcher may also present the research in conferences.

**Reason/s why the participant may be withdrawn from the study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any stage of the study and will not be penalized should you choose to withdraw.

**Remuneration:** There will be no remuneration for this study

**Costs of the study:** There will be no cost to the participants

**Confidentiality:** All data collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the study only. All data collection tools will be identified will be kept under lock and key and electronic data secured with private pass word for a maximum period of 15 years. All paper based records will thereafter be destroyed with shredding and electronic data wiped off.

**Research-related injury:** No risk or harm to participants is expected. You may report harm if it occurs due to the study to the research council and to the researcher.

**Persons to contact in the event of any problems or queries**

**Researcher:** Miss E. Moodley    **contact number:** 078 270 2688

**Supervisor:** Dr. M Rajkoomar    **contact number:** (031) 3736776

Please contact the researcher or my supervisor or co-supervisor (details above) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or [moyos@dut.ac.za](mailto:moyos@dut.ac.za)



**Consent Form**

**Statement of agreement to participate in the research study:**

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Egashnee Moodley (Name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **121/16**
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Full Name of Participant Right</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Signature</b>

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risk of the above study.

_____	_____	_____
<b>Full name of researcher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>

## Appendix H

### The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

#### Focus group discussion schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) students experiencing curricular renewal of the OMT programme at DUT

##### Introduction

Hello. My name is Egashnee Moodley. I would like to start off by thanking each of you for taking the time to participate in this focus group discussion. We will be here for about an hour.

The reason we are here today is to obtain your opinions and attitudes about issues related to the curriculum renewal of the Office Management and Technology programme.

I would be leading the discussion today. I am not here to convince you of anything or try and sway your opinion. My intention is to pose questions to the group and then encourage and facilitate the discussion.

Opinions expressed would be treated in confidence. All responses would remain anonymous. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your participation at any stage. Your valuable responses would assist in identifying issues related to the curriculum renewal of the Office Management and Technology programme.

*[Ascertain that there are no objections to the use of an audio recorder;*

*then switch it on.]*

##### Ground rules

To allow our conversation to flow more freely, I'd like to go over some ground rules.

- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Please avoid side conversations.
- Everyone does not have to answer every single question, but I'd like to hear from each of you today as the discussion progresses.

- This is a confidential discussion in that I would not report your names or who said what to the university. As indicated earlier, names of participants would not be included in the reporting of this discussion. It also means that, except for the report of the findings that would be written, what is said in this room stays in this room.
- I stress confidentiality because I would like an open discussion. I would like all of you to feel free to comment on each other's remarks without fear that your comments would be repeated later or possibly taken out of context.
- Remember there are no 'wrong answers', just different opinions. Say what is true for you, even if you are the only one who feels that way. Do not let the group sway you. But if you do change your mind, just let me know.
- Let me know if you need to take a bathroom break.

### **Ice breaker**

Each participant has to make 3 statements about themselves, one of which is not true (For example, I was born in United States of America; I am a part time limo driver etc.). The group must vote on which statement is not true.

### **General question**

1. What do you understand by the term curriculum renewal?

***[Here I will firstly get their responses and then elaborate/clarify the terms if there is some confusion on the definitions.]***

2. How were you informed about the curriculum renewal process for the OMT programme?

***[Here I will firstly hear their responses and then inform the students briefly the overview of the curriculum process for the OMT programme at DUT]***

### **Specific questions**

3. Do you find the current OMT programme intellectually stimulating?
4. What is your perception of the current OMT programme?

5. Do you agree with the name change of the new Diploma? Please explain your response.

6. Do your lecturers use different teaching & learning methods in the classroom? If yes, what teaching methods are used?

7. Do you think new teaching methods should be applied in the new curriculum? What teaching methods can you suggest?

8. Are you aware of what is self-study?

9. Do you think more self-study should be included in the new curriculum?

### **Closing**

Thank you for participating in this discussion on the curriculum renewal for the OMT programme. Your comments have given me valuable insights that would assist in identifying the challenges, impacts and best practices of the curriculum renewal process.

## Appendix I



### Letter of information for students

Dear Participant

Welcome to my research project. Thank you for participating in my study.

**Title of the Research Study:** The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the OMT programme

**Principal Investigator:** Miss E. Moodley  
(Masters in Management Science in Administration and Information Management)

**Supervisor:** Dr. M. Rajkoomar, PhD: Library & Information (Supervisor)

**Brief introduction and purpose of the study:** This case study explores the impact of the curriculum renewal process in the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme at Durban University of Technology with the aim of developing a framework for the successful implementation of the curriculum renewal process. The study will attempt to ascertain the challenges, impacts and best practices experienced with regards to the new curriculum renewal process of the OMT programme.

**Outline of the procedures:** During the study, your responsibility is to answer seven questions in the focus group discussion. The focus group discussion will be approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Risks or discomforts to the participant:** There will be no risks during the research

**Benefits:** The findings for the study would give you an insight into OMT academics and students perception about curriculum renewal of a programme at university level which would be beneficial to the University. In addition, the findings of this study may assist other researchers for literature review. It might contribute to journals of Office



Management and Technology. The researcher may also present the research in conferences.

**Reason/s why the participant may be withdrawn from the study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any stage of the study and will not be penalized should you choose to withdraw.

**Remuneration:** There will be no remuneration for this study

**Costs of the study:** There will be no cost to the participants

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**Persons to contact in the event of any problems or queries**

**Researcher:** Miss E. Moodley      **contact number:** 078 270 2688

**Supervisor:** Dr. M Rajkoomar      **contact number:** (031) 3736776

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**Consent**

**Statement of agreement to participate in the research study:**

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Egashnee Moodley (Name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: **121/16**
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
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- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerized system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

<b>Full Name of Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Signature</b>
---------------------------------	-------------	-------------	------------------

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risk of the above study.

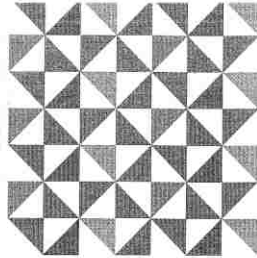
<b>Full name of researcher</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
--------------------------------	-------------	------------------

<b>Full name of witness (If applicable)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
---	-------------	------------------

<b>Full name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
--	-------------	------------------

## Appendix J

### IREC clearance letter



Institutional Research Ethics Committee  
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Berwyn Court  
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus  
Durban University of Technology

P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001

Tel: 031 373 2375

Email: [lavishad@dut.ac.za](mailto:lavishad@dut.ac.za)

[http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional\\_research\\_ethics](http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics)

[www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)

23 February 2017

IREC Reference Number: **REC 121/16**

Ms E Moodley  
17 Tynebridge Place  
Stonebridge  
Phoenix  
Durban  
4068

Dear Ms Moodley

**The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme**

The Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your notification regarding the piloting of your data collection tools.

In addition, the Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of the final 'semi-structured interview schedule for Office Management and Technology (OMT) academics at Durban University of Technology that is undergoing the curriculum renewal process' data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the questionnaire has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that FULL APPROVAL is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Yours Sincerely,



Professor J K Adam  
Chairperson: IREC



## Appendix K

### DUT Gatekeeper permission letter



20<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Ms Egashnee Moodley  
c/o Department of Information & Corporate Management  
Faculty of Management Sciences  
Durban University of Technology

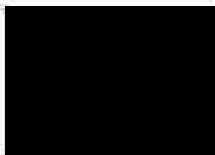
Dear Ms Moodley

#### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT**

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) has granted permission for you to conduct your research "The development of a framework for the successful implementation of curriculum renewal: A case study of the Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme" at the Durban University of Technology.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards  
Yours sincerely



**PROF. S. MOYO**  
**DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT**

## Appendix L

### Proof read letter

