



Understanding and building collaborative relationships between universities and employers

Date: Tuesday, 19 March 2024

Venue: Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS), Stellenbosch, South Africa

Time: 08:30–16:30

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE SERIES

With the aim to better facilitate collaboration and innovation between universities and employer partners in the adoption and implementation of **Dual Higher Education (DHE)** in South Africa, the DHEP is delighted to present a series of engaging seminars during 2024 to serve as a dynamic platform for universities, employers, industry role-players, and other key decision-makers to exchange ideas, share best practices, and explore novel approaches to build and enhance these relationships. Each seminar will spotlight different facets of DHE that have been explored over the project’s lifecycle – from *curriculum design, quality assurance, and policy frameworks* to *programme implementation, student placements, and workforce development* – culminating in its penultimate **Annual Conference & Partnership Summit** at the end of the year. This also provides us with the opportunity to build a first-of-its-kind *Community of Practice* for the proliferation of DHE in South Africa along the way.

PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR

The first in this conference series, this seminar aims to create a better understanding of how the relationship between universities and employers (industry) plays a central role in the successful implementation of DHE programmes in the South African higher education landscape by showcasing practical examples of collaboration; considering the challenges, opportunities, and successes; and looking at possible future models of engagement.

OUTCOMES

After attending the seminar, participants will be able to

- demonstrate a better understanding of the relationship between universities and employer partners in DHE
- recognise and appreciate the viability of DHE as an innovative and agile curriculum renewal model for higher education in South Africa
- leverage from enhanced connections and networking opportunities for collaboration between universities and employers, and
- support DHE initiatives that is ultimately aimed at enhancing graduate employability across the board.

PROGRAMME

Time	Topic
08:30–09:00 (30 min)	Arrival and registration Refreshments

SESSION 1

09:00–09:20 (20 min)	<p>Opening and welcome</p> <p>Introduction to the aim, purpose and outcomes of the conference series and seminar</p> <p>+ Instructions, logistics and setting the scene (± 10 min)</p>	<p>Mr Estian Behrens Stakeholder Relations Coordinator: DHEP Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC)</p>
09:30–09:50 (20 min)	<p>Bringing universities and employers closer together: looking at the future of higher education and graduate employability in in South Africa</p> <p>How can we to foster a seamless transition for graduates into the professional world of work? Building a symbiotic relationship between universities and employers can be a transformative force in bridging the gap between academia and industry – and as an innovative new model in higher education, DHE holds a lot of promise.</p> <p>+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)</p>	<p>Prof Eugene Cloete Chief Executive Officer Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC)</p>

Time	Topic	
10:00–10:20 (20 min)	<p>How DHE/dual study programme initiatives have reached success outside of Germany: practical examples on the international stage</p> <p>Delve further into the transformative impact of DHE on graduate employability and employer (industry) collaboration on a global scale as we explore compelling examples and case studies of dual study programme initiatives that have transcended Germany's borders in recent times – considering how this will also have an impact on the South African higher education landscape.</p>	<p>Mr Alexander Turnwald <i>Head of Global Engagement</i> CBS International Business School</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)		

10:30–11:00 (30 min)	Morning refreshments + Networking
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SESSION 2

11:00–11:20 (20 min)	<p>DHE in context: introducing an innovative new model for collaboration between universities and employer partners in South Africa</p> <p>A reflection on the DHEP's achievements over the last three years in introducing and implementing DHE in South Africa. See how new delivery model have made inroads in bringing universities and employers (industry) together; how challenges for collaboration can be overcome; how quality assurance can still be sustained; and how new DHE programmes are shaping up for the future.</p>	<p>Dr Antoinette Smith-Crous <i>Project Director: DHEP</i> Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC)</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)		
11:30–11:50 (20 min)	<p>Providing the right institutional support for university–employer partnerships to flourish</p> <p>Creating an enabling environment where universities and employers collaborate seamlessly is pivotal to the success of any DHE programme. Discover how the right foundations and effective support structures for university–employer partnerships from within a university can provide the confidence to seek innovative ways to change the trajectory and alter the outlook on graduate employability.</p>	<p>Prof Lilani Reddy <i>Director: Community Engagement and WIL</i> Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)		
12:00–12:20 (20 min)	<p>From passion to implementation: putting university–employer partnerships at the heart of curriculum renewal</p> <p>A reflection on successfully reimagining an existing undergraduate programme in <i>Public Relations and Communication</i> to fit the DHE delivery model. Explore with us how the process has unfolded to navigate through challenging protocols and processes, how the right employer partners were onboarded to prepare a new cohort of students for the workplace, and how sheer determination can break barriers to innovation in higher education.</p>	<p>Ms Deidré Porthen <i>Senior Lecturer Programme Manager</i> Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)		
12:30–12:50 (20 min)	<p>Partnering for future success: how university–employer collaboration has reaped the benefits for graduates and employers in the long-run</p> <p>Taking some lessons from a long-established postgraduate programme in <i>Data Science</i> with almost two decades' experience in partnering with employers and industry role-players, we discover how the programme's workplace immersion and real-world application components have enhanced graduate employability over the last few years, and how employers have also reaped some of the benefits.</p>	<p>Prof Renette Blignaut <i>Professor Programme Manager</i> University of the Western Cape (UWC)</p> <p>Prof Helgard Raubenheimer <i>Director: Centre for BMI</i> North-West University (NWU)</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 10 min)		

13:00–14:00 (1 hour)	Lunch and refreshments + Networking
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SESSION 3

14:00–14:15 (15 min)	<p>Creating a space for higher education innovation and growth in South Africa: a new type of university for a new type of graduate</p> <p>Is there space for a new kind of university in South Africa? And can this university make a lasting impact on university-employer partnerships in the region? We investigate the establishment of a new university in Ekurhuleni which is planning to base its programme offering on the DHE model from the onset.</p>	<p>Mr Tembile Khulati <i>Project Manager: New HEIs Feasibility Study</i> Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)</p>
14:15–14:30 (15 min)	<p>Let industry role-players come to the party: engaging with South African employer partners to ignite innovation in higher education</p> <p>How can we entice employer partners and other industry-role players to commit more readily to the skills development and employability of our graduates? We explore how the appropriate channels can be unlocked to access a multitude of opportunities and initiatives for DHE programmes to be implemented and flourish within the Western Cape and beyond.</p>	<p>Ms Wendy Viljoen <i>Knowledge Specialist: Education</i> WESGRO</p>
14:30–14:45 (15 min)	<p>How to effectively engage employer partners to collaborate on DHE/dual study programmes: a German–South African perspective</p> <p>What can we learn from the tried and tested methods that have brought universities and employer partners closer together in the European (German) context and apply it locally? Explore with us as we look at effective ways of engaging with employers by looking at some practical examples of how to onboard them, how to ensure their commitment, and build sustainable relationships for the future.</p>	<p>Mr Jonas Hollstein <i>Director: Career Services</i> CBS International Business School</p>
+ Interactive feedback [Q&A] (± 30 min)		

WRAP-UP

15:15–15:30 (15 min)	<p>Final thoughts and vote of thanks</p>	<p>Dr Antoinette Smith-Crous <i>Project Director: DHEP</i> Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC)</p>
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15:30	<p>Afternoon refreshments + Networking</p>
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