Curriculum for English and Soft Skills component for all NVQ courses

This course is intended to provide students on other courses with basic employment skills. The curriculum ensures development of competencies, in addition to those related to their field of employment, that will enable them to work productively.

All recent studies make it clear that one of the greatest problems noted with regard to the employability of students in this sector is with regard to English. The need of more soft skills has also been accepted. However it should also be noted that the latest ILO study indicates that wider cognitive skills too are lacking, in the sense of conceptualization skills.

This curriculum, which is to be used on all NVQ courses, and is advised for other courses in the sector too, is divided into five sections, which cover English as well as two aspects of soft skills. At least a third of the course should deal with development of soft skills. Teachers are advised to start each lesson in this curriculum with an ice-breaker exercise, for instance to strengthen concentration, ensure responsiveness, encourage speaking and self-confidence.

A textbook has been prepared for the course, and against learning outcomes the page on which exercises to promote these are available is noted. Teachers however are encouraged to develop other exercises to fulfil the purpose, and to adapt these as appropriate. Students should also be requested to maintain individual portfolios in which they record what they have learnt. Teachers should also ensure study and practice outside class hours, and also introduce project work which should be done in groups outside the classroom.

Students should work on as much of the prescribed textbook as is possible, with judicious selection of what can be omitted, and what needs greater time allocation. It should be possible to ensure in the time allotted that the basic competencies given here are acquired, though entrenching them may be more difficult because there will be little time to practice. However, given that many courses are of more than 3 months duration, even at Level 3, it is hoped that students will derive the benefits anticipated.

Level 3 Courses

At the end of course, students should be able to

- Understand and use simple expressions to communication, so as to
  Introduce themselves

  Pronounce words and letters clearly

  Interact with others politely and appropriately
  Frame and respond to simple questions

  Ask for and offer help

  Make suggestions and requests
  Give dates

  Follow simple instructions

  Describe tools and workplaces

  Describe daily routines

  Describe processes

  Discuss costs
  Give directions

  Participate in conversations

  Express likes and dislikes with reasons

- Read with understanding and write effectively at appropriate levels by

  Forming capital and simple letters correctly and using basic punctuation correctly
  Paying due attention to spelling

  Finding specific information from a text or manual
  Understanding the main points of a text or manual

  Understanding simple notes and notices, instructions and information
  Following a simple story and answering questions about it

  Taking down a short message

  Describing processes Writing

  personal letters Presenting

  estimates

- Understand the structure of English so as to use it effectively, with regard to
The simple present and past tenses of the verb to be and other verbs
Common nouns in singular and plural (regular and irregular)

  Simple adjectives and adverbs and their opposites Determiners - a, the, all, some, none

  Pronouns , subject and object forms and possessive adjective Basic prepositions

- Be introduced to the following cognitive skills with regard to effective work Identifying patterns and systems

  Thinking clearly and in sequence Assessing quality

  Developing visual thinking capacity

  Noting differences and similarities and recognizing what is relevant
  Understanding the concept of variables, what changes occur in a pattern

  Reading and understanding maps, plans, construction sites and organizational charts Classification and categorization

  Calculating systematically
  Comparing visual data

  Giving and collating information systematically
  Presenting information in reports and charts
  Preparing estimates

- Students should develop the capacity to work effectively on their own and in harmony with others, with particular attention to

  Developing confidence to speak about themselves
  Engaging in planning, prioritization and time management

  Planning a group activity, allocating responsibilities and reporting results Understanding routine and identifying their own routine

  Understanding different points of view
  Grooming and self presentation

Social norms

Learning to concentrate and react swiftly

Ability to identify themselves and express their skills and abilities

Trying to learn about the world and practices elsewhere

Developing social commitment

Engaging in reference work for specific tasks

Students will also be introduced to the tools of Information Technology

Textbook – Building Career Skills, TVEC

Assessment

The course will be assessed through formative assessments for 75% of the total mark. This will include

10% for classroom participation

20% for oral responses to questions

20% for short quizzes testing English as well as cognitive skills

There should be several tests during the course and the best three marks should be taken into account

15% for a group project

10% for the report on the group project

- A summative test for 25% inclusive of an oral component for 10% will be conducted at the end of the course.