
Instructional Design Workshop

Sponsored by
Mzuzu University and
The Commonwealth of Learning

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Contents

Purpose	2
Participants	3
Workshop Activities	4
Workshop Outcomes	11
Recommendations	12
Appendix: Participants' Comments Provided on the Evaluation Form	14

Purpose

According to the Commonwealth of Learning, the purpose of the workshop was to help Mzuzu University academic staff “gain an understanding and insight into how to design and develop instructional materials” for an open and distance learning setting.

Specifically, the workshop was mounted to:

- expose Mzuzu University academic staff to the theory of designing and developing open and distance learning materials;
- offer the academic staff an opportunity to practice designing and developing open and distance learning materials; and
- enable participants to produce at least one unit of open and distance learning materials by the end of the workshop.

The workshop facilitator informed the Commonwealth of Learning that the latter objective would be difficult to accomplish within the timeframe provided. The facilitator could guide the participants as they developed the material, but the participants must be able and willing to work during the evenings to draft the learning material. The responsibility for completing the units lies with the participants, not the facilitator.

The expected outputs of the training workshop were:

- a folder of guide notes and illustrations for developing open and distance learning materials;
- a blueprint of a unit of learning material; and
- one complete draft unit based on the blueprint.

Participants

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Workshop Activities

An outline of the workshop activities is presented below and does not reflect the numerous opportunities provided to participants to pose questions, discuss issues, and to participate in interactive activities and group work.

Day 1, Monday

- Event registration commenced at 8:00 a.m. and the opening speech was presented by Professor Landson Mhango, Vice Chancellor, Mzuzu University. He emphasized the importance of distance learning to his institution and the need for participants to apply themselves. His introductory remarks were followed by comments from Dr. Fred Msiska, Director, Centre for Open and Distance Learning at Mzuzu University.
- The facilitator provided an overview of the workshop and indicated that he would primarily focus on:
 - exposing participants to the benefits and constraints of distance education, and the theory of designing and developing open and distance learning materials;
 - offering an opportunity to discuss and practice the design and development of distance learning materials;
 - enabling participants to work on the development of one unit of distance learning materials;
 - providing notes participants could use to guide them during the development of distance learning materials.

The first part of a 162-page handout was distributed to all participants. Each participant received an overview of the workshop, definitions of open and distance learning, a basic instructional design model, overview of course development, steps in course production, expertise required for distance delivery course development, and course blueprinting.

- Ground rules for the workshop were established including those covering collaboration, punctuality, refreshment breaks, and the use of mobile phones. Emphasis was placed on respecting the views of others.
- The participants were divided into pairs. They were asked to introduce their partners by providing their partner's name, title, area of expertise and to complete one of the following statements "At the end of this workshop, I want to be able to..." or "I want this question answered...". Participants were also asked "If you were the president of Malawi, what changes would you make to benefit others? During this exercise, it was revealed that there was 341 years of teaching experience in the room as well as 24 years of administrative experience. However, only two participants had taken courses via a distance learning format. Thus, distance education theory and methods were new to almost all of the audience.
- The facilitator asked all participants to stand and face their partner. They were asked to take a pledge affirming their commitment to full participation during the workshop and a commitment to courtesy and professional behaviour.

- Expectations for the workshop were written on pieces of paper. Later, these notes were attached to the front wall in the room. Most of the expectations were related to the design and development of learning materials and the development of a unit within a course. As the expectations were mounted on the wall, the facilitator reminded the participants about the length of the workshop and what was achievable – draft units could only be produced if the participants were able and willing to work several hours in the evening. It was recognized that not all had access to reliable electricity in the evenings.
- Participants reviewed various definitions of distance learning and spent a significant amount of time discussing the meaning of “openness” and the importance of the concepts of accessibility, equity, equality, and flexibility.
- Discussions ensued regarding the suitability of a course for distance delivery and why one would consider mounting a distance course instead of a traditionally-delivered course. Thus, the group needed to discuss why learners would want to take a distance course or program and what institutions would need to do in order to support distance learning effectively.
- An overview of the course development process was presented in detail. Participants were asked to refer to the workshop handout.
- The importance of blueprinting was emphasized as it provides the foundation for the development of the course. The more detailed the blueprint, the easier it is to develop the course. In some institutions in which course development is contracted out, contractors receive 25% to 33% of their fee for a completed and approved blueprint.
- The participants were assigned their first homework assignment – to develop a blueprint for one unit. Details of what should be covered in the blueprint were presented.
- Challenges encountered in developing distance courses were discussed including the provision of administrative, academic, technical, and professional support.
- Generic components of a module were outlined. These components would be covered in more detail later in the workshop, but the components were introduced during the first day of the workshop to ensure that participants were aware of the final product due on Friday.
- As 94% of the participants had no experience with distance learning, the facilitator asked the participants to become more familiar with the challenges of developing and delivering distance learning in developing countries. Participants could work in small groups to prepare and deliver a short presentation about the challenges of distance learning in Malawi. These presentations were scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- The facilitator asked each participant to summarize their impression of the first day of the workshop by stating what they had learned and how it could be applied in Malawi.

Day 2, Tuesday

- As a larger room was available in the building in which the workshop was held, the participants and facilitator moved into this room as it allowed for more comfortable seating, enabled participants to have a table to write on, provided uninhibited view of the digital video presentation, and permitted small groups to discuss topics within the same room. (When small groups worked outside of the building on picnic tables, it was more difficult to monitor their activities and to re-assemble them into a large group.) This larger room was only available on Tuesday during the workshop.
- The facilitator led a review of the discussions that occurred the previous day. Emphasis was placed on the limitations/constraints of distance learning and the challenges distance learning presents to developing countries. This discussion was followed by an overview of upcoming workshop activities.
- The participants were asked to define the terms “program”, “course”, “module”, “unit”, and “section”. Initially, this seemed to be a simple task, but as the discussions progressed, the task seemed to be more challenging. The facilitator did not try to define the terms for the Malawian educators; instead, he described the history of some of the terms and encouraged participants to define and consistently use definitions that were acceptable in Malawi. It did appear, for example, that the term “module” in Malawi was considered to be equivalent to the definition of “a course” used in many other countries.
- The need for common understandings of terms, styles, and formats was discussed. Details of what should be covered in a style guide were presented and debated as well as the contents of the course guide, module, tutor guide, and institutional handbook. During this discussion, the following style guides were referred to: the *American Psychological Association (APA) Style Manual*, the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and the *Commonwealth of Learning Style Manual*. The dictionary used in Malawi is the *Oxford Concise Dictionary*.
- The roles of those involved in course development were outlined. It was noted that there were a variety of responsibilities and duties that must be executed. These could be performed by a few or many. However, it was paramount that course developers have their work reviewed by another professional colleague or editor – it is almost impossible for one to see all the errors in one’s own work.
- Different approaches to learning were discussed, particularly behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, and connectivism as well as problem-based learning and Gagné and Briggs’ nine events of instruction. Small groups discussed each of the approaches and made presentations regarding the applicability of these approaches in a Malawian context. All agreed that a blended approach would be best for learners and instructors in Malawi.
- Goals and objective statements were defined. Participants were asked to draft objective statements for different levels such as knowledge, application, and problem-solving.

- The blueprints, developed the previous night, were reviewed by colleagues who provided written comments on each blueprint.
- Homework was assigned. It included improving the title of the blueprint, revising goals and objective statements, providing an estimate of the time required to accomplish each objective, and detailing the instructional strategies with an emphasis on application and problem-solving skills.
- The few participants, who had some knowledge about distance education in Malawi, offered a detailed overview of current distance education initiatives in the country, challenges being faced, and future developments in the administration and delivery of distance education.
- The activities of the day were summarized. Each participant was asked what they had learned that they could apply to their work.

Day 3, Wednesday

- The goals of the workshop were reviewed as well as the accomplishments to date. The activities for day three of the workshop were outlined.
- Unless the course developers are aware of the characteristics and motivational attributes of the learners, they will be unable to develop effective material. Thus, a significant amount of time was spent discussing the attributes, expectations, learning styles, and the implication of these learning styles on the design and delivery of distance learning materials. This activity is usually conducted prior to the discussion about goals and objectives; but due to the room change on Tuesday, this activity was conducted on Wednesday so that participants did not need to move the notes they placed on the wall concerning learner attributes and their affects upon the design of course materials.
- A small group of participants conducted a presentation on technology use in education in Malawi. During this presentation, one of the participants fainted. Nurses in the facility were contacted as well as her husband. After about 75 minutes, the woman was taken to the hospital by her husband. (On Friday, the participant returned to the workshop.)
- Selecting and sequencing course content was discussed in detail. Participants were presented with numerous sources of free content and a variety of ways to sequence the content. Some sequencing techniques were better for some subject matter than for others.
- A number of suggestions for writing content were presented including the use of hooks, anecdotes, motivational devices, humour, and case studies. Participants were asked to be sensitive to gender issues as they prepared their modules. A short, but lively discussion about gender issues occurred.
- A lengthy discussion ensued about copyright and intellectual property. Participants were reminded to treat the work of others as their own. They were instructed to

give credit for the work of others and to seek permission when they wanted to use lengthy passages of someone else's work. Those who were familiar with copyright law in Malawi outlined the legal statutes as best as they could.

- A small group presentation was conducted on the challenges offered by the lack of and/or the inefficiency of infrastructure in Malawi. Infrastructure includes transportation, postal services, electrical systems, and so forth. For example, the inefficient postal system affects the timely distribution of course materials and assignments between learners and their instructors.
- A small group presentation outlined the challenges of obtaining equipment when funds are limited. The group suggested that using equipment and labs in existing schools may be helpful as well as the need to promote sharing and collaboration. The One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) Project and similar low-cost laptop computer initiatives were discussed.
- The homework assignment for day three included the drafting of a unit in a participant's field of expertise. The participants were instructed to follow the blueprint they had developed, and:
 - insert revise goal and objective statements;
 - select content;
 - sequence content;
 - provide learning activities – one individualized, the other involving others (a community-based activity); and
 - provide feedback to possible responses to learning activities.
- Each participant was asked this question: "What new idea presented today could help you develop effective distance education units/modules?" During the discussion that followed, the facilitator presented some ideas that could be used to address issues regarding self-confidence and self-motivation.

Day 4, Thursday

- The overall progress made to date was reviewed as well as a detailed review of the ideas generated during day three. A preview of the day four events was presented.
- A lengthy discussion about instructional strategies ensued. Various strategies used in a traditional setting were adapted for distance learning. The feasibility and importance of using case studies was presented and participants were provided guidelines on how to create effective case studies. The participants received a list of frequently used distance education learning strategies.
- A small group presentation about the cultural imperialism of courseware imported from elsewhere was discussed. Suggestions on how materials could be adapted were briefly outlined by the facilitator.
- A small group presentation covered the challenges of dealing with limited resources in developing countries.

- The homework assignment was reviewed. Participants exchanged the draft units with their colleagues then the facilitator suggested items that everyone should have included in their drafts.
- The topic of evaluation was presented. Covered were its various forms and its importance to inform the development and delivery of distance learning materials. Suggestions for writing achievement tests were provided.
- Then, participants were asked to examine the draft units written by their colleagues and incorporate any suggestions mentioned during the discussion about evaluation. Written comments (feedback) were provided on each of the draft units before they were returned to the writers of the drafts. Note, that not all participants had completed their drafts/homework assignment.
- A small group of the participants covered the importance of quality assurance in distance education and the mechanisms that could be implemented to monitor and measure every facet of the administration, development, and delivery of distance learning.
- Addressing student needs was the topic of another small group presentation. Emphasis was placed on the importance of learners – without learners, educators and support personnel would not have a job. The facilitator followed the small group presentation with a short presentation about quality assurance.
- The homework assignment for day four included revising the learning strategies used in the draft units, adding evaluative instruments, and reading about the components of a module (pages 103 to 106 in the workshop handout).
- At the end of the day, participants were asked to indicate what they had learned on day four that they could apply to the design of effective units/modules.

Day 5, Friday

- By 8:00 a.m., only four participants were present and by 8:20 a.m., only 12 participants were present. (The timely attendance of participants was an issue that popped up several times during this workshop. Participants had difficulty arriving in the morning or returning from lunch or refreshment breaks.) Thus, the facilitator conducted a detailed presentation about quality assurance until the majority of participants were present. He defined quality in a distance education setting, what should be measured, and what could be measured.
- The components of a module or unit and what could be covered under each heading was described in detail. Participants were referred to the extensive module description provided in the workshop handout.
- The participants were also reminded to create the following documents that were attuned to their educational system: *Style Guide*, *How to Use This Module/Unit*, and *Learning Guide*.

- A communication activity was conducted to enable participants to get an idea/impression of what it is like to be a distance learner and to re-emphasize the importance of writing simply and providing effective feedback. The exercise was conducted under the following conditions: no feedback, limited feedback, and full-interactive feedback.
- Writing style and readability scores were discussed. Focus was placed on arousing and maintaining the interest of learners in a distance setting. The facilitator stressed that good distance education materials presented “a meaningful conversation between the learner and the instructor”.
- A small group presentation about faculty concerns was held. It was noted that faculty need additional resources, training, and time to convert from a traditional mode of delivery to a distance format.
- The learner profile wall chart dealing with learner attributes and their implications was reviewed. Each pair of participants outlined what they had placed on the wall. Other participants commented and a few changes/additions were made to the wall chart. The facilitator emphasized that unless the course developers knew who their learners were, it would be most difficult to prepare materials that suit the needs of the learners. Thus, instructors must take the time to construct a similar chart for the various groups of students that they deal with. The last column in the chart would provide some guidance as they prepare and delivery the learning materials.
- The draft units/modules that participants were writing were reviewed by their colleagues. The facilitator suggested a few items that the participants should examine and referred them to three different evaluation criteria that were printed in their handout. Two units/modules that had been composed on a laptop computer were shown via a digital video projector so that all could see and discuss the draft unit. A few format suggestions were provided for print learning materials.
- A small group of participants outlined sources of up-to-date resources of educational material. The facilitator directed the participants to a list of open-source resources available in their handout.
- Mobile learning was presented by one participant who was quite knowledgeable about the technical aspects of mobile technology. The facilitator suggested that perhaps future mobile technology could spur the growth of distance education within developing countries.
- Participants were asked to present and discuss their concerns with implementing distance education in Malawi. Many of the concerns were raised previously, but at the end of the workshop, they were discussed in greater depth. In order to encourage discussion, each participant was given a sheet of paper listing a condition (e.g., the nearest library is 50 km away, the reading light is provided with a paraffin/kerosene lamp) that was likely to be encountered by distance learners.
- The participants were given one last chance to ask any questions about distance education and its implementation. Few accepted the facilitator's invitation. Perhaps

their questions had been answered during the workshop or perhaps the participants wanted to go home after an intense week of training.

- The facilitator wrapped-up the workshop by reviewing the expectations that participants had written at the beginning of the workshop; he referred to the sheets of paper they had placed on the front wall of the training room. All agreed that their expectations had been met, but they wanted additional time to draft their units. Thus, a longer workshop was needed. Then, the facilitator asked each participant what they had learned that they could use when developing courses for distance delivery. Every participant provided one or two responses to this question.
- Dr. Fred Msiska, the local organizer of the workshop, thanked those in attendance for their participation and asked them to complete the Mzuzu University workshop evaluation form.

Workshop Outcomes

According to the contract signed by the facilitator, several outputs were expected. These are discussed below.

- Folder/folio guide notes and illustrations for developing open and distance learning materials: Each participant was provided with a 162-page handout that covered the agreed upon topics. In addition, many participants made extensive notes and the notes generated on flipchart paper by the participants were copied by a secretary from the Centre of Open and Distance Learning at Mzuzu University. These latter notes will be distributed to the participants.
- One complete draft unit of the learning materials designed and developed from the module online: Every participant drafted a blueprint, but not everyone was able to complete their draft unit/module. As indicated by the facilitator at the beginning of the workshop, it would be difficult to complete a draft of a unit in the time available as most were new to distance education. Further, participants would need to spend considerable time in the evening to draft their modules. Unfortunately, some were unable to work on their modules due to electrical power failures and the need to attend to family matters. Others would have preferred to work with participants at the workshop who had similar content expertise.

At the end of the workshop, participants were able to discuss the topics listed below.

Defining Open and Distance Learning Overview of Course Development Steps in Course Production Expertise Required for Distance Delivery Course Development Blueprinting a Course or Program Outlining Syllabus, Module, Student or Learning Guide, and Instructor's Guide A Few Possible Approaches to Designing Instruction: Gagné and Briggs Nine Instructional Events, Problem-Based Learning, Constructivism, and Connectivism Learner Attributes and Their Implications to the Design of Distance Education Materials
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Developing Goal and Objective Statements
Selecting and Sequencing Content
Distance Delivery Modes
Instructional Strategies
Common Learning Activities Frequently Used in Distance Learning Situations
Developing Case Studies
Writing Instructional Materials
Copyright
Learning Resources and the Availability of Open-Source Materials
Designing Evaluation Procedures
Designing Independent or Distance Study Materials
Formatting Instructional Materials
Print Course Material Checklist
Implementing Open and Distance Learning in Developing Countries
Recurring Issues Facing Distance Educators in Emerging Nations
Quality Assurance Resources

The written comments provided by the participants at the end of the workshop are listed in the appendix. Below is a brief overview of their comments.

- The workshop was relevant and useful to the participants. Their questions, with few exceptions, were addressed.
- The facilitator was knowledgeable, responsive, and effective.
- Overall, the workshop achieved a rating of 4.5 out of 5 or 90% based on 26 responses.
- The 26 people who completed the workshop evaluation form would recommend the workshop to their colleagues.
- Below are a few suggestions that could be implemented in an effort to improve the workshop.
 - Increase the length of the workshop (This was the most frequently noted comment that appeared on almost every evaluation form.)
 - Make computers available for the workshop.
 - Select a different venue for the workshop.
- The following are a few topics that participants would like to spend more time on:
 - Drafting or writing a module (This was the most frequently noted request.)
 - The use of information and communication technologies
 - E-Learning or online learningThe appendix contains a complete list of workshop topics that could be held in the future.
- As a result of the workshop, 25 of the 26 respondents indicated they would be able to implement the principles of instructional design and increase its use within Malawi.

Recommendations

Those new to distance education need additional time to draft a distance education unit or module. A workshop for novice writers should be two weeks in length so that there is adequate time for them to learn about the context of distance education and prepare draft material that can be reviewed in detail.

A follow-up workshop would be beneficial to those who participated in this initial workshop. The workshop could focus on the actual preparation of distance material and address a number of the implementation concerns raised in the June 2009 workshop. Many, but not all, of these concerns were recorded on flipchart paper before they were transcribed by the secretary of the Centre for Open and Distance Learning at Mzuzu University.

As few participants had experience with distance education, perhaps a distance course about distance education could be offered to them.

In the future, a more appropriate meeting room should be provided – one in which there is adequate space to accommodate learners, tables for them to write on, and space in the same room for group work.

It would be beneficial, but not essential if participants had access to laptops on which they could draft their lessons. Thus, they could make changes easily and, via a digital projector, all participants could view the best portions of their work.

Since participants experienced some difficulty with an 8 a.m. start time, perhaps future sessions should be scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

The Commonwealth of Learning and their clients must achieve a reasonable balance between quantity and quality. The shorter the time provided to achieve specified workshop goals, the less likely the topics will be covered sufficiently to satisfy the participants. Thus, fewer objectives or outcomes must be specified for a shorter time period. Novice distance educators need additional time to learn about and absorb important distance learning concepts. The greater the number of participants and the less experienced they are, the less likely a facilitator can provide the individual attention demanded by participants – the less likely that the facilitator can review the work produced by the participants on a daily basis and provide the interactive exercises that promote long-term learning. Thus, if the number of participants is increased and there is the expectation that participants will receive quality individual attention, then the length of the workshop must be increased. The best workshops are interactive, but they are also time consuming. Expectations of the client must be managed prior to the delivery of the workshop so that there is a balance among the number and type of objectives or outcomes to be achieved, the number of participants, the level of interactivity, and the length of the workshop.

Appendix:

Participants' Comments Provided on the Evaluation Form

Below are the comments provided on the evaluation sheet distributed by the facilitator. **These have not been edited**; thus, grammatical and incomplete statements are included in the participants' comments below. The actual handwritten evaluation sheets were sent to the Commonwealth of Learning so that the contents of this section of the report could be verified for its accuracy.

Note, not everyone submitted an evaluation form. For example, three participants had to attend a funeral on the last day of the workshop and one had to pick up his children from school. Thus, the total number of evaluation forms recorded is 26.

1. How relevant and useful was the workshop? Were your questions addressed?

- Yes, it was relevant, though much (more) time could have been beneficial.
- The programme was and still is very relevant. However some, a good number, of my needs were not addressed as we had to learn a lot of things within a short time and be able to apply them too. I would prefer a follow-up programme to this one so I can learn more things.
- Need for more time for participants to develop a unit, otherwise the needs were fully addressed.
- The principles were well covered but there was not enough time for practical during the sessions.
- I am about to launch an ODL programme in my field. Without this workshop I would have had big problems. I wanted guidelines and I have got them. I had practice at developing a unit and almost made it. If the workshop were to be covered in two weeks I am sure I would have got even more out of it.
- The workshop was a success in the sense that it touched specific area where I am working (ODL) to design distant learning material.
- The workshop was relevant, useful and managed to address my questions
- The workshop was an eye-opener as most of my questions, needs regarding the designing of a course, module or program has been answered.
- Very relevant, it has given me clear direction as to what to do to design and write effective material for open and distance education.
- The workshop was very relevant. I has sharpened my skills in module writing and I've never attended any workshop of this kind before. The workshop was really an eye opener.
- The workshop was relevant to the work of designing instructional material for distance learning. More workshop would be needed in looking at other issues related to open distance like technology, resources and skill development.
- I found the workshop most useful and very relevant, even though this was my first experience with distance education. The material was also very appropriate. Not all due to time.
- It was relevant as I was a participant who was going to complete a module. The skill and knowledge gained from this workshop have enabled me to have a blueprint for a unit of a module and even some sections of a module.

- The workshop was very relevant. As a gender specialist, I was also impressed that the presenter emphasized the need for an inclusive module that addresses the needs of both men and women.
- It was quite relevant and helped many people acquire new skills in module development.
- The workshop was very relevant. The world is moving towards ODL. And attending this workshop has introduced the principles and what is involved in ODL. All the questions I had before the workshop were addressed.
- The workshop was partly relevant. Some of the questions were not answered. We should have involved UNISA (in South Africa) staff because they have a big program on distance
- The workshop gave me a chance to be introduced and practice on the design of a module for distance learning. Most of the questions were addressed.
- The workshop was useful, however due to inadequate time, I haven't been able to come up with a module.
- It was relevant. Some questions were addressed but others not because the time allocated for the workshop could not permit.
- Very useful and relevant to what I will be expected to do.
- I have gained the basics to enable me produce modules after going through the notes.
- Questions were well answered (at least most of them). We needed to finish some work except for lack of time. Period of time was very short, however. Two weeks would have made more sense than one week.
- The workshop addressed most of my worries and I have learnt a lot more than I expected. Overall it was a nice experience.
- It has been very useful to me because I have acquired a lot of new relevant and practical information that is central to module writing and mounting a distance learning program.
- The workshop was relevant and useful in different areas regarding module writing. However, one week was not enough considering the quantity of material we had to learn.

2. Was the facilitator knowledgeable, responsive, and effective?

- Absolutely yes. He was knowledgeable, experienced. He could relate issues to real life experiences from a lot of places.
- He benefited from his experience in and knowledge on the same issue from around the globe. He clarified in a clear manner when asked to.
- More than adjectives above. He is exceptional, meticulous, dynamic and accommodating.
- Very knowledgeable. The explanations were thorough, a lot of materials were provided.
- Facilitator is extremely knowledgeable, in my opinion. There was effective interaction which shows that the delivery was effective. Use of examples and practice enhanced understanding of the concepts.
- Absolutely.
- Yes!
- Yes, the facilitator has an excellent knowledge on all the areas covered in the training.
- Knowledgeable but funny.

- Very knowledgeable, responsive and very effective
- Yes
- The facilitator was one of the few I have come across who has been all of the above.
- Yes. He was ready to respond to our questions and he ensured that there was effective learning all the time by providing relevant examples.
- Yes
- Yes
- He was very knowledgeable, responsive to our needs.
- The facilitator was very knowledgeable, and responsible. However, he always went beyond the agreed about time at the end of each day.
- He is excellent.
- The facilitator was indeed knowledgeable, responsive and effective.
- Excellent facilitator. He was knowledgeable, responsive and also effective. He explained the concepts very clearly.
- Yes, in fact, very knowledgeable and lively.
- Knowledgeable, responsive and effective
- Facilitator was very knowledgeable. He was responsive too.
- Excellent
- The facilitator was knowledgeable, approachable, effective, and has a good sense of humour.
- Strongly yes

3. Overall, how do you rate the success of this workshop?

Average rating: 4.5 out of 5 or 90% based on 26 responses.

- Experienced, practical approach
- At the beginning of the course, I did not know a single thing about module writing. Currently, I have gained considerable knowledge and skills in the same.
- Very participative, interesting, informative and eye opener to what distance education is.
- The material was very informative but because of the shortage of time the delivery had to be intensified.
- We sat for too long in the sessions – that affected rate of absorption.
- As a first workshop on ODL, I think I got more than I bargained for.
- At the end of the workshop, everybody presented his blueprint, unit and module with relevant format.
- But time was not enough, otherwise it was very successful
- The workshop has been a success in the sense that all the five objectives set out at the beginning of the workshop have been covered. I am able to develop an instructional design.
- But should have been given more time.
- It would have been very successful if enough time was given to this workshop, that is, too much work in one week which made the whole workshop tedious.
- We had less time to work on our assignments. There was less time to rest and for that reason we will have to complete our unit after the session.
- Despite time limitations, the facilitator ably presented the ideas and involved us into various activities
- The facilitator was active and involved the participants in various activities that led to the participants enjoying and appreciating the importance of the workshop.

- We needed more time next time to practice more.
- But, I think it would be better if my colleagues attended a two week workshop, away from work place to enhance concentration and punctuality.
- Should have concentrated more on development of unit.
- The facilitator was too intensive due to inadequate time.
- It was really important and I enjoyed it.
- Could not get a better workshop
- If participants shall implement the course contents in the same enthusiastic way as was during course content delivery then the course be declared successful.
- There was a great deal of interaction, team work and sharing of ideas and experience.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your colleagues?

Yes = 26

No = 0

- The workshop opened my eyes to things I was blind to in my career, e.g., questioning by delivery modes, content in case of too much failures.
- Distance education is dynamic and practitioners need refresher courses to accommodate emerging issues.
- Very useful principles have been covered. However, the practical work should have been done during the day. After a long day, homework was not easy to factor in.
- I would recommend that I bring along some of my colleagues to the workshop so that more trainers are oriented to ODL processes.
- The information acquired is as well good for blending (blended) learning
- Yes I would, because it would benefit them in coming up with relevant objectives and course or module.
- Very educative and eye-opening
- Good for their module writing
- Content is very relevant and useful not only to distance education but also traditional education.
- Because I have gained necessary and relevant skills for module writing.
- Our university training does not prepare us enough to write ODL module. ODL is present in Malawi, but there is lack of knowledge on how to run it.
- It is quite interesting and an eye opener
- It's a good source and necessary as we move towards open distance education.
- This would help faculty coordinated efforts to be realized.
- Very useful.
- But I think it would be better if my colleagues attended a two week workshop away from work place to enhance concentration and punctuality.
- The course is ideal for all academic staff in the University. More staff should have participated.
- Why not? Oh, yes!
- It is beneficial
- The workshop is indispensable to any one involved in module writing.

5. What changes would you recommend, if any, to improve this workshop?

- Time. Need to make it at least three weeks.
- More time should be allocated to the programme, e.g., two weeks.

- Since we are required to produce a unit, module during the course and we need to constantly improve it during the same course, inclusion of computer use should be more effective than writing by hand.
- Increase time for workshop
- Better working space
- Make it longer, at least two weeks so that groups can work on assignments together.
- I would certainly recommend more time for facilitation, assignments that can be reviewed post-workshop and re-grouping at some interval to review progress.
- Enough time. Should be at least two weeks.
- Timing: Period to be extended.
- Venue: Needed to be away from Mzuzu
- I feel time should be adequate so as not to squeeze a lot of stuff in one week.
- Fusion of education and technology, i.e., education technologies
- The workshop should not be too crammed and intensive – we used to knock off late and tired
- Make it longer
- Time allocated was too little given the background of no experience in distance education.
- Giving it more days – two weeks in total
- Dedicating a day or two to module writing
- It should be allocated more time, at least two weeks.
- We need more time on these trainings and some more training.
- Commonwealth should help in sponsoring more members in ODL to do their further education by distance delivery mode.
- COL should help in procuring computers for ODL.
- Should only be given enough time, one week was not enough
- The next workshop should be two times longer than this one
- Duration of the course should be longer than one week (5 days).
- The workshop should take two weeks, away from workstations to prevent absenteeism.
- The time allocated for this workshop should have been longer than the 5 days.
- Two weeks would have been ideal and away from Mzuzu so that homework can be easily done
- The period of one week was too short
- Be done during semester recess/holiday so that we spend more time in it/on it.
- It needs sufficient time so that material delivery is not done in haste.
- I would recommend that more time be provided for the workshop (two or three weeks)
- There should be enough time for group work and enough time to rest.

6. In future activities on this topic, what topics would you like to spend more time on?

- Practical aspects
- Quality assurance
- Unit development (The exercise so that the trainer can have more time to give me feedback.)
- Learner support services
- E-Learning

- Writing – all aspects of module starting with goals and objectives
- Development of a unit as this is the basic block for developing a module.
- How to motivate learners on the benefits of ODL learning
- Writing modules
- Evaluation
- I wish to spend more time on designing objectives.
- Quality assurance in online education
- Course development and blueprint
- Online learning
- The actual writing-up and development of a module
- Topics on strategies used in distance learning
- Topics to do with the actual writing of a module
- The actual production of the module, i.e., practice
- Copyright
- Module designing process
- Addressing support from family, community, from the learner
- Course content and quality assurance needed more time
- Development of goals, objectives and activities
- Compiling module
- Production of a module
- Designing distance study materials
- Module layout
- Role of ICT in distance learning
- Integrating new technologies in distance learning
- I would like to spend more time on writing tasks in my subject area.

7. Do you anticipate being able to implement principles of instructional design or increase its use within your institution/state/country as a result of this workshop. If yes, please elaborate.

Yes = 25 No = 1

- We plan to introduce a distance learning programme in tourism. I will be one of the module writers and so I will definitely apply the principles.
- Will improve the use in instructional design and service delivery
- Subject to the requirements of the institution.
- We have almost been provided by the “Bible” from the facilitator’s own work and referenced material in hard copy, electronic and web references.
- I would apply the knowledge gained in my institution especially how to come up with short courses.
- In writing effective material
- I have some level of confidence to get started and do some reasonably good work. But further workshop and more guided practice will easily significantly improve performance.
- I have learnt quite a lot of stuff that can assist me in implementing principles of instructional design – besides that the notes are quite useful to me including the handout
- We will use this training in producing modules for ODL at Mzuzu University
- We will manage to implement this programme since this training has actually increased the ?? of our writers.
- Just after this workshop, I will design at least one module for ODL

- The learning has taken place, all is required is to start practicing in order to have perfect work.
- I have basic knowledge from their workshop and the notes provided will help me in referring to some material I may have forgotten.
- Because I have learnt many things that I did not know before this workshop.
- I have got the basic guidelines and skills to do it.
- More practical ideas about distance learning have been learned.
- I am in a position to develop almost quality modules. But further workshop/training is required.
- With what I have learnt and the reading material I have, I am confident that I will be able to write modules that can be approved internationally.
- This is because I have learnt all the important skills and information on distant education.