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GUIDANCE SUPPORT FOR UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

by

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PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

In the Faculty of Education

Department of School Guidance

University of Pretoria

Promoter: Prof. Dr. C.D. Jacobs

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In early May of 1993, Mr Andrew Hofmeyr of Junior Achievement South Africa observed the following events which occurred in a regional office of a town council in Northern England.

A group of boys were presenting a case for why they needed a grant of two hundred pounds, to a local representative of the international chemical giant, ICI.

Under the new "education through enterprise" system employed in the UK, school children are supposed to gain experience of the business world through actually setting up their own small businesses. In order to do so, they often require money. They are not necessarily expected to repay grants or even to make a profit on their businesses.

The point of the exercise is to expose them to the ways in which businesses are managed.

The boys presenting the case witnessed by Hofmeyr had come to the conclusion that their school's tuckshop offered only junk food. They had decided to go into competition with the tuckshop and to offer health food as a preferred option. They had canvassed the pupils, decided on which foods were most likely to sell well, contacted local suppliers, and worked out the required costing figures. Indeed, they were so organized that none of the adults present felt the need to offer advice or to correct any misconceptions the boys may have had about how to go about setting up their small business.

The money was duly granted to them without much ado. In fact, the whole presentation took only a very short while. The surprise to Hofmeyr was that the boys seemed so young.

Their average age was seven.

(Hofmeyr 1993b)

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SUMMARY

TITLE: Guidance Support for Undergraduate University Students

CANDIDATE: Peta Lynne Odette von Hörsten

STUDY LEADER: Prof. Dr. C.D. Jacobs

DEPARTMENT: School Guidance

FACULTY: Education - University of Pretoria

DEGREE: Philosophiae Doctor (Career Guidance Counselling)

The implications of the rapid political, social, economic and technological changes at present occurring both in South Africa and internationally demand a review of the traditional approach to university training with regard to its relevance in terms of preparing students both for life in general and for the successful practising of a future career in particular.

The Information Age requires that a shift take place from the teaching only of the mastery skills of previous eras to the encompassing of life or core skills that can be adapted to changing circumstances.

As it cannot be assumed that students will acquire these skills incidentally or vicariously, they need to be consciously and deliberately taught in order to provide graduates with the ability to adjust to and cope with the uncertainties of the future. Universities as a whole need to become involved in an alternative approach to higher education.

The aims of this study are:

* To employ a life-skills questionnaire that may be used as a diagnostic medium designed to ascertain if and where problem areas lie with regard to university entrants so as to facilitate addressing of said problem areas

* To ascertain the needs and expectations of both employers and private practitioners in order to identify where the training of graduates falls short of the above with respect to life skills, and to establish what steps both employers and the self-employed are having to take to remedy the situation
* To suggest the concept of relevant Guidance Support as a means to both address and redress problems surrounding issues of insufficient training of graduates with respect to life or core skills.

The study comprises a title and concept elucidation, methodological justification, formulation of the problem and research hypotheses, an exposition of the aim of the study and an outline of the programme. Perspective is gained on the level of life skills present in university entrants via the presentation of a Life Skills Questionnaire and its possible uses are discussed.

A survey of the needs of both employers and the self-employed, comprising a literature review, a Life Skills Questionnaire aimed at deans of faculties and councils and personal or telephonic interviews, revealed that graduates are insufficiently prepared to meet the demands of the world of work in terms of life competencies and skills.

The concept of Guidance Support, concomitant with the notion of establishing a guidance support department is explored. The value of considering such a concept is covered, followed by a discussion of the functions and the advantages to a university of a guidance support department.

The study contains a number of recommendations with regard to promoting the training of graduates sufficiently skilled to meet the demands of the world of work.

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OPSOMMING

TITEL: Voorligtingondersteuning vir Voorgraadse Universiteitstudente

KANDIDAAT: Peta Lynne Odette von Hörsten

STUDIELEIER: Prof. Dr. C.D. Jacobs

DEPARTEMENT: Skoolvoorligting

FAKULTEIT: Opvoeding - Universiteit van Pretoria

GRAAD: Philosophiae Doctor (Beroepsoriënteringpedagogiek)

Die implikasies van die snelle politieke, sosiale, ekonomiese en tegnologiese veranderinge wat tans in beide Suid-Afrika en in die buiteland plaasvind, verg 'n hersiening van die tradisionele benadering van universiteitsopleiding met betrekking tot die voorbereiding van studente vir die lewe in die algemeen en vir die suksesvolle beoefening van 'n toekomstige loopbaan in die besonder.

Die Inligtingsera vereis 'n verskuiwing van die onderrig van net die bemeesteringsvaardighede van vorige eras, na 'n onderrig wat lewens- of kernvaardighede kan behels en akkomodeer en wat by veranderende omstandighede aangepas kan word.

Aangesien daar nie aanvaar kan word dat studente hierdie lewensvaardighede toevallig bekom nie, moet hulle bewustelik en doelbewus onderrig word ten einde die graduandi toe te rus om by die onsekerhede van die toekoms aan te pas en dit te hanteer. Universiteite, in die algemeen, moet betrokke raak by 'n alternatiewe benadering na tersiêre onderwys.

Die oogmerke van hierdie ondersoek is:

* Om 'n lewensvaardigheidsvraelys voor te lê as 'n diagnostiese medium vir moontlike gebruik om die vlak van eerstejaarsuniversiteitstudente se bevoeghede in

lewensvaardighede te bepaal en om die bepaling van toepaslike optrede met betrekking tot lewensvaardigheids-opleiding te vergemaklik

* Om die behoeftes en verwagtinge van beide werkgewers en privaatpraktisyns te bepaal om uitskakelings en tekortkominge in verband met lewensvaardighede te identifiseer en die stappe wat hulle neem om die situasie te verbeter
* Om die konsep van toepaslike voorligtingsondersteuning voor te lê om probleme te identifiseer en te hanteer in terme van ontoereikende opleiding van graduandi met betrekking tot lewens- of kernvaardighede.

Die ondersoek behels 'n titel- en begripsverheldering, metodologiese verantwoording, probleemformulering en hipoteseformulering, 'n uiteensetting van die oogmerke van die ondersoek en 'n beskrywing van die program. Perspektief word verkry op die bevoegheid in lewensvaardighede van eerstejaarsuniversiteitstudente deur die aanbieding van 'n lewensvaardighedevraelys, en die moontlike gebruike daarvan, word bespreek.

'n Ondersoek na die behoeftes van werkgewers en die privaatpraktisyns wat 'n literatuurstudie, 'n lewensvaardigheidsvraelys wat op dekane en beroepsrade gemik is en persoonlike of telefoniese onderhoude behels, het getoon dat graduandi ontoereikend voorbereid is om die vereistes van die beroepswêreld met betrekking tot lewensvaardighede te vervul.

Die konsep van voorligtingsondersteuning, sowel as die ideë van 'n voorligtingsondersteuningsdepartement word ondersoek. Die waarde, funksies en voordele van die konsep vir 'n universiteit is bespreek.

Die verslag bevat 'n aantal aanbevelings ten opsigte van toereikende voorbereiding van graduandi met betrekking tot die bereiking van die vereistes van die beroepswêreld.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature and structure of South African social and economic systems are undergoing complex and far-reaching changes, as are the values and beliefs individuals hold about themselves. The "post-industrial, rapidly changing society" experienced by the rest of the world has not passed us by - quite the contrary in fact. For some time now, many authors and researchers (compare Borow 1984, Miller-Tiedeman & Tiedeman 1985, Hofmeyr & Moulder 1988, Patterson 1985) have been commenting on the shift that is taking place from an industrial era to an information age and that is characterized by a knowledge explosion (HSRC 1081:9). Gysbers (1984:18-19) noted that the world is moving from a goods-producing economy base to a service-information economy while we continue to experience rapid acceleration in the use of higher technology and automation. According to Godsell (1993:1), South Africa's transition away from apartheid is underpinned by these much deeper, broader and more fundamental transitions.

In effect, the changes in trends currently taking place both nationally and internationally mean that future entrants into the labour market will need both generic and specific skills in order to be able to compete for the available jobs, to adapt to expanding career opportunities and to practise their chosen careers successfully.

Taking into consideration that we have moved from a paradigm of predictability to one of uncertainty, it would be safe to assume that we cannot enter the future with outmoded and obsolete ideas. Rather, life skills for life career development (Gysbers & Moore 1975:1981 in Gysbers 1984:7-11) have become necessary. If our universities are to produce graduates whose training is to have relevance in the "new South Africa", cognizance will have to be taken of the call on the part of both employers and the self-employed for successful provision of much-needed life competencies and skills.

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1.2 TITLE AND CONCEPT ELUCIDATION

1.2.1 Title elucidation

A careful inspection of the title of this study, "Guidance support for undergraduate university students", reveals a relationship between the need for guidance support of undergraduate students via the use of certain, pertinent life skills and the successful managing of both life and the future careers of said students.

1.2.2 Concept elucidation

Certain concepts allied to those used in the title need to be defined more clearly.

1.2.2.1 Guidance

The **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980: 334) defines **guidance** as "1. **n** the act of guiding; direction; leadership. 2. something that guides. 3. advice or assistance. 4. the process of directing the course of a spacecraft, missile, etc."

Webster's Dictionary (Gove 1981: 430) includes the following: "1b. advice in choosing courses, preparing for a vocation for further education, or coping with personal problems given to students by a teacher or a professional counsellor."

Downing (1968:7), describes **guidance** as follows: " ... an organized set of specialized services established as an integral part of the educational environment. It is designed to promote the development of students and assist them toward a realization of sound, wholesome adjustment and maximum accomplishments commensurate with their potentialities."

An analysis of the above elucidation and definitions indicates that guidance involves a treatment wherein one person (the counsellor) undertakes to guide another (the student).

The report of the Work Committee: Guidance of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (HSRC 1981:8,10) refers specifically to School Guidance. Nevertheless some of

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what it has to say about guidance can as easily be extrapolated to include guidance of students studying at university level. It sees guidance as incorporating education towards and preparation for adulthood (inclusive thus of career adulthood), and involving a particular view of man which implies "the common human dignity and basic rights of all persons" as well as "the importance of individual differences within every person".

Overall, the aim of guidance as seen by the authors of the HSRC report (HSRC 1981:11) is "the self-orientation and self-actualization of every individual, with particular stress on self-knowledge, autonomous choice and self-development". The above includes effective decision-making and coping skills regarding life situations as well as career choices so the youth can "successfully manage his adult life in a changing world, in work situations and in other social activities" (HSRC 1981:11). It is the opinion of the researcher that the above-mentioned life skills, amongst others, be actively taught at university level as well.

1.2.2.2 Career Guidance

The noun **career** is defined in the **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:112) as "1. a swift course. 2. one's progress through life in a particular vocation. 3. a profession or occupation". Super (1981:17) speaks of a life career rainbow, which includes "the continuation and sequence of roles played by a person during the course of a lifetime and the pattern in which they fit together at any point in time" (Super in Gysbers 1984:17). Thus the roles of "child, student, leasurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, pensioner" (Super 1980:284) are included in this definition.

Gysbers and Moore, who proposed the concept of life career development, define it as "self-development over the life span through the integration of the roles, settings and events of a person's life" (in Gysbers 1984:17).

In devising a syllabus for School Guidance, the authors of the HSRC report proposed the term **career education** in preference to career guidance. They maintained that the term included more than guidance in that it represented "a comprehensive and systematic, vocational, educational programme which will help pupils to choose a career and which will provide them with skills, attitudes and knowledge useful for survival and progress." It should enable pupils to make their own career choices consciously and to cope with their

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life situations, and should cover aptitude assessments, skills preparation, the world of work, decision making and job strategy (HSRC 1981:80-82,91). Guidance of a similar nature could equally be made available to university students.

1.2.2.3 Skills

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Onions 1973:2009) defines the word **skill inter alia** as follows: "...3. Having practical ability; possessing skill; expert; dexterous, clever. +4. In the phr. can (or could) s., to have discrimination or knowledge, esp. in a specified manner. 5. Practical knowledge in combination with ability, cleverness, expertness ME. c. a craft, an accomplishment (now US)." The word is derived from "ON. **skil** distinction, discernment" (Onions 1973:2009).

Webster's Dictionary (Gove 1981:906) defines skill as "a developed or acquired aptitude or ability".

Bolles (1981:142-150) and Bolles and Fine (in Pickworth 1989:2-3) identify three distinct types of skills. They are adaptive or self-management skills, functional or transferable skills and work-content or specific-content skills.

1.2.2.4 Life Skills

Powell (in Pickworth 1989:3) defines life skills as being "the life-coping skills consonant with the development tasks of the basic human development processes, namely those skills necessary to perform the tasks for a given age and sex in the following areas of human development: psychosocial, physical-sexual, vocational, cognitive, moral, ego and emotional."

Hopson and Scally (1980:78) list the following as skills necessary for effective living: relationship skills, management and growth skills, skills needed for education and skills needed at work, at home, at leisure and in the community. These authors (Hopson & Scally 1982:11) see life-skills teaching as being "about growth and development for all groups to enable them to become more self-empowered and through this become more creative, innovative, and committed members of our human community."

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1.2.2.5 Support

The Collins Concise English Dictionary (Guralnik 1980:756) defines **support** as follows: "1. *a)* to carry or bear the weight of; hold up *b)* to carry or bear (a specified weight, pressure, etc.) 2. to give courage or faith to; help; comfort. 3. to give approval to or be in favour of; uphold."

According to **The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973:2196) support may be defined in the following ways: "**Support** *sb.* I. The action of supporting. 1. The action, or an act, of preventing a person from giving way, backing him up, or taking his part; assistance, countenance, backing. b. Spiritual help; mental comfort 1500. c. Corroboration or substantiation (*of* a statement, principle, etc.); advocacy (*of* a statement, motion, etc.) 1771. 2. The action of keeping from failing, exhaustion, or perishing; *esp.* the supplying *of* a living thing with what is necessary for subsistence; the maintenance *of* life 1686. b. The action of contributing to the success or maintaining the value of something 1912. II. One who or that which supports. 1. A supporter, 'prop', 'stay' 1594. 2. That which supports life; means of livelihood or subsistence 1599. b. One who or that which furnishes means of livelihood, or maintains a person or community 1745.

"**Support** *v.* 2. To strengthen the position of (a person or community) by one's assistance, countenance, or adherence; to stand by, back up. late ME. b. To uphold or maintain the validity or authority of (a thing); also, to give support to (a course of action) 1638. 3.b. To furnish authority for or corroboration of (a statement, etc.); to bear out, substantiate 1761. c. To maintain the truth of (an opinion, etc.) 1736. 8. To keep (a person, his mind, etc.) from failing or giving way; to give courage, confidence, or power of endurance to...1602."

1.2.2.6 Undergraduate Students

a) Undergraduate

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Onions 1973: 2409) defines **undergraduate** as follows: "A. *sb.* 1. A university student who has not yet taken a degree. 2. *fig.* One imperfectly instructed or inexpert (*in* something). 1659."

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The Collins Concise English Dictionary (Guralnik 1980:819) defines an **undergraduate** as being "n. a student at a university or college who has not yet received a bachelor's degree".

b) University

A **university** may be defined, according to the **Shorter Oxford English Dictionary**, as being "1. The whole body of teachers and students pursuing, at a particular place, the higher branches of learning; such persons associated together as a society or corporate body, having the power of conferring degrees and other privileges, and forming an institution for the promotion of education in the higher branches of learning; the colleges, buildings, etc. belonging to such a body."

c) Students

According to the **Collins Concise English Dictionary** (Guralnik 1980:747) a **student** is "1. a person who studies something 2. a person who is enrolled for study in a university, college, etc."

An undergraduate student is, therefore, someone who studies at a university or college in order to obtain a bachelor's degree in, for example, the fields of the Arts, Sciences or Commerce. One may study at a university in order to qualify oneself to enter a profession upon successful completion of the required course of study. The University of Pretoria, for example, currently maintains eleven faculties offering a variety of courses.

English (in Mathee 1991:12) describes a student, from a psycho-analytical perspective, as being a person who is busy with important independent study which is focused on a theme or subject and which has, as a goal, problem-solving, the acquisition of knowledge and training in memory.

From an educational perspective, Hawes (1982:139) typifies a student as "a person attending an educational institution or enrolled in an educational programme."

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It can be presumed that the majority of undergraduate students are youngsters who have either just completed secondary schooling or who, should they have spent some time in the Defence Force or have taken a moratorium, may yet be considered to be inexperienced with regard to the world of work, especially as pertains to a chosen profession.

The student, therefore, may be presumed to be someone in need of guidance in relation to his studies, his role in the adult world generally and his chosen profession or future career. It could be argued that support and guidance should be given to students which make conscious and deliberate use of pertinent life skills training in order for self-actualization to take place with regard to each student's unique potential, and to assist him with the successful practice of his future career.

1.3 METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

This study employs methods (or ways of disclosing) with a view to solving problems that meet the requirements of science and that comply with stipulated views on life and work.

The following methods were used to direct the scientific thought process of the study:

1.3.1 The phenomenological method

According to Kilian and Viljoen (1974:3), Pedagogics is "a particular form of (practising) science" via the "systematic assimilation of scientific insights", with education as the object of the research. The phenomenological method is employed in order to discover the essences of a phenomenon as they appear against the background of universal reality. Initially the essentials have to be distinguished and separated from the non-essential features of the phenomenon being studied. These essences subsequently disclose themselves only via contemplative thinking, reflection, description, elucidation and interpretation. Reflection includes going to the roots or radical discovery of the aspects: thus Edmund Husserl (in Landman & Gouws 1969:17) calls this method "radical empiricism".

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The essences are then described in formulations called categories, which themselves are descriptions of ways of thinking via which the matter itself is penetrated or reached. The categories must have the quality of universal validity and they must, furthermore, be irreducible or ontologically determined. The relationship between categories may be established, but no hierarchical structure of categories exists - only "structural enunciation" (of real pedagogic essences) (Kilian & Viljoen 1974:17).

Criteria are constituted from categories and these criteria are used to judge whether or not an appearance is an authentic manifestation of the phenomenon it appears to be, or not. Criteria link theory to practice (see Landman & Gouws 1969:15-78; Landman, Van Zyl & Roos 1975:1-49; Kilian & Viljoen 1974:3-8, 117; Pickworth 1989:7).

According to Husserl (in Landman & Gouws 1969:24-25) and Landman (University of Pretoria 1989:2), Phenomenology is the method that allows the phenomena to be seen as they allow themselves to be seen. Thus from a phenomenological standpoint, the method entails going back to the matter itself with the phenomenologist reconnoitring reality by allowing said reality to describe and explain itself as it would have done if it could.

Via the use of phenomenological thought processes and steps, the essentials of the research theme can be uncovered in order to penetrate, non-judgmentally, to the nature thereof. These essentials can then be described and interpreted in a conscious attempt at problem solving.

The point of departure for the phenomenologist is neither subjective nor objective, but rather the subject-object relationship or the relationship between people and the world (Landman & Gouws 1969:28). In order to describe the nature of reality accurately, certain steps need to be followed, the justification of which forces the phenomenologist to test the characteristics he determines against the reality. These steps include:

i) The identification and delineation of the phenomenon being studied and the use thereof as a point of departure.

ii) The suspension of all beliefs, dogmas, opinions, theories, philosophies, and presuppositions that might affect the outcome.

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iii) The phenomenologist looks at the diverse ways in which the phenomenon manifests itself from a variety of perspectives, having excluded non-relevant features.

iv) He distinguishes between and separates the essentials from the non-essentials and deals only with the former, namely those features which do not change, are ontic, real and apparent.

v) Reflection on how the natural, ontic characteristics can be intentionally and radically empirically constituted which, to a degree, involves the use of intuition.

vi) The consideration of the alliance and relationship between the characteristics must take place.

vii) A hermeneutic layout must be applied in order to interpret the meaningfulness of what has been found in the whole structure (Landman & Gouws 1969:30-33).

As regards the present study, the phenomenological method as the fundamental or basic method complies with acceptable methodological requirements as follows:

* The life-world of the undergraduate student itself represents the point of departure in this study in order to determine the relevance of guidance support for said student in the form of life skills training.

* Phenomenology-as-method lends itself to a purposeful, critical and systematic investigation of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students.

* Via the phenomenological scrutiny of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students, the true essence of the contribution it can make to a student's ability to successfully manage his life in general and a career in particular is revealed.

* Phenomenology-as-method is free of all prejudicial obfuscation of a metaphysical or theoretical nature so that the knowledge of the relevance of guidance support of undergraduate students is revealed.

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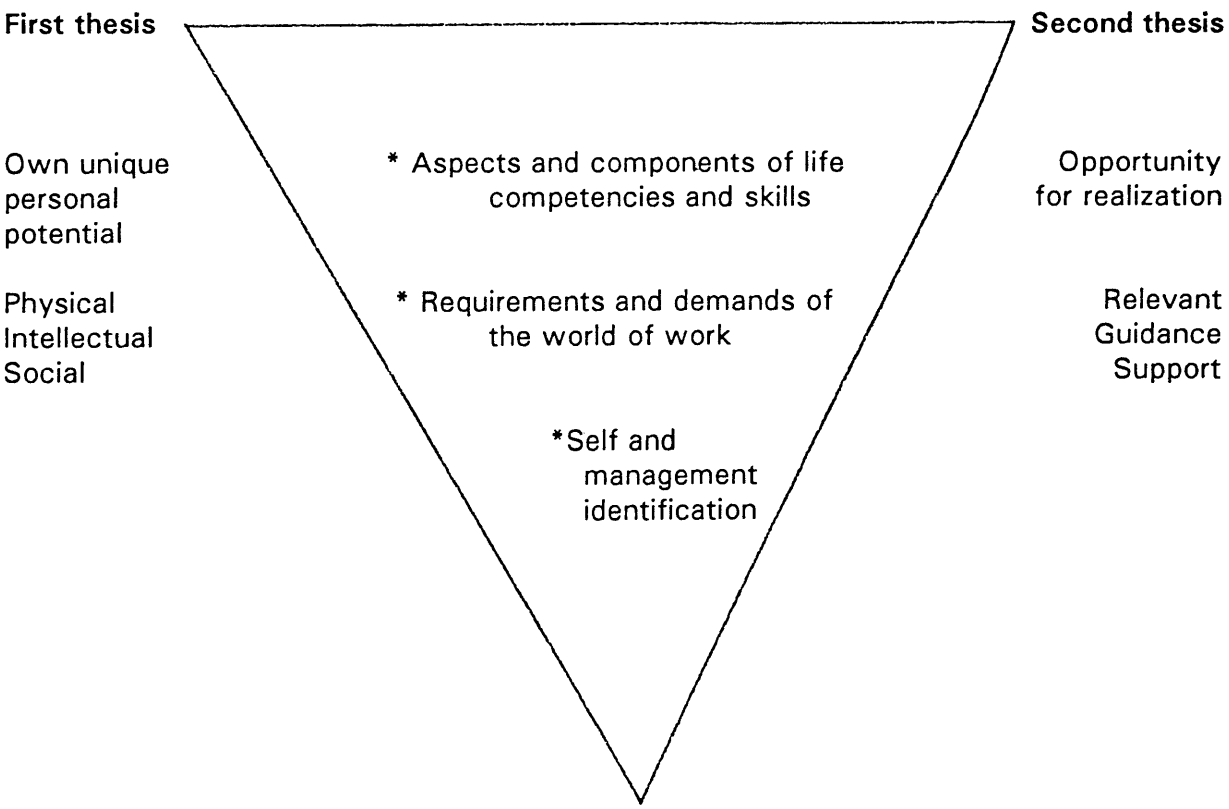
* For the purpose of this study the phenomenological method is anthropologically and pedagogically accountable and, from a guidance support (life skills) perspective, phenomenology-as-method is also viable and permissible from a life and work view (see Van Wyk 1985:22-23).

1.3.2 The triadic method

Using the triadic method involves moving from a first premise or thesis to a second premise or thesis, followed by a level or niveau elevation when synthesis is reached.

The triadic thought process can be schematically represented as follows (Joubert 1982:232):



* Meaningful self-realization
* Meaningful self-management
* Choice of occupation
* Career planning
* Career development
* Successful practising of a career

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Explanation of the triad

* First thesis

  Each person possess his own, unique potential. This potential can be realized through relevant guidance support resulting in the acquisition of self-knowledge and career development knowledge, and competence in essential life skills needed for the world of work.

* Second thesis

  Relevant guidance support, as covered in this study, offers the student the opportunity to realize his potential.

* Synthesis

  In this study, the concept of guidance support, consisting of both personal and career guidance, will be investigated in an attempt to establish the relevance of the contribution it may make in the areas of self-management and the successful future practising of a career.

1.3.3 The hermeneutic method

The hermeneutic method involves the science of laying out a matter in order to establish what the goal, sense and purpose of the matter under investigation is. Etymologically speaking, the concept **hermeneutic** derives from the Greek verb **hermeneuein**, which means to interpret, explain and create (Landman & Gouws 1969:32-33).

As hermeneutics is defined in the **Shorter Oxford English Dictionary** (Onions 1973:956) as "pertaining to interpretation", it is used in this study for the purpose of understanding, explanation and interpretation. The hermeneutic question posed in this study is: What is the purpose and meaning underlying the establishment of the relevance of guidance support for undergraduate students?

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1.3.4 Literature study and critical study of texts

An effective literature study of both primary and secondary sources is essential as it forms a fundamental part of research. It serves as the point of departure by enabling the researcher to acquaint himself thoroughly with the latest research and developments covered in the field being studied. This prevents both trivial and superficial research and unnecessary duplication.

Furthermore, it enables the researcher to determine the boundaries of his field and provides him with the opportunity to place his problem into better perspective which, in turn, results in a better evaluation of his own findings (Landman 1980:33; RAU 1986:7-12).

In support of an effective literature study, a critical study of texts should also be made, inclusive of the following:

* Analysis of the title and subtitles of the literature consulted
* Analysis of content pages and table of contents
* Study of the index
* Analysis and evaluation of problem statements and the hypothesis formulation appearing in the various texts
* Analysis and evaluation of the methodological justification of the various texts
* The compilation of tables of essentials found in and taken from the texts consulted
* The analysis and evaluation of the meaning of the texts with regard to guidance support
* Logical and phenomenological verification of various statements made as regards guidance support
* Acquisition of an overview of the commentaries made in the texts consulted (Van Wyk 1985:2-6).

A literature study using relevant primary and secondary sources and inclusive of a critical study of the texts was undertaken. Cognizance was taken of the phenomenological (reduction) steps.

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1.3.5 Field study method

When a researcher seeks a solution to a problem entrenched in the present, he frequently makes a survey of the current conditions prevailing in the field being studied with the aid of, for example, questionnaires, interviews or schedules. This constitutes field research (RAU 1986:31).

Employment of the field study method entailed studying the phenomenon of guidance support with the aid of surveys, interviews and questionnaires, the processing and interpretation of data thus acquired and the compilation of profiles from said data.

* Life Skills Questionnaire (see 2.3 p.25)

A structured life skills questionnaire was given to first year residential students of the University of Pretoria (see Chapter 2 and Annexure A for results). The questionnaire consisted of components covering both general and career guidance. Six key areas of life skills were identified, each comprising five subsections. The six main subheadings included:

* Community and social development
* Development of person and self
* Self-management
* Physical and sexual development
* Career planning
* World and life orientation

All students available in the hostels on the days the questionnaire was administered were included in the sample.

1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.4.1 Introduction

Problem formulation requires the precise formulation of certain questions that need to be answered by means of investigation or research. Relevant questions direct and motivate

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the researcher to find meaningful solutions and to disclose the reality of the educational phenomenon under investigation (Landman 1980:44).

1.4.2 Problem formulation

According to Godsell (1993:1-2), the worldwide transformation which is taking place as societies change from a feudal, pastoral and traditional character, to a modern, industrial, urban-based culture, has changed not only the nature and the acquisition of knowledge, but the nature of learning as well. The rapidity of change in both knowledge and technology has particular consequences for the world of work. One of the consequences is that learning has become "continuous - a life-long endeavour...holistic, generic, or inter-connected" (Godsell 1993:2).

Statistics can often act as indicators of potential problem areas. A glance at the statistics presented below can help one to gain perspective on the importance of considering the introduction of guidance support for undergraduate students.

* The estimated unemployment rate in South Africa at present is 40% (Bengu 1993:3). Simultaneously, there is a global recession which is exacerbating the situation. As regards OECD countries, for example, the current unemployment rate in Australia is over 11%. In Ireland and Spain rates are as high as 18% and 22% respectively, and Germany is rapidly reaching a 10% unemployment figure (Tothill 1993:42:CNN 1993). This global recession is one of the reasons for the decline in local and international levels of investment in South Africa (Bacchus in Bengu 1993:3).
* The South African growth rate experienced an annual decline of 0,5% in 1992 when at least a 5% growth rate was required to match the needs of a growing population and to maintain reasonable standards of living (Ryan in Bengu 1993:3).
* Inflation and interest rates are still in double figures whilst a growth of unemployment or under-employment of 3,1 million has occurred over the last 10 years (Ryan in Bengu 1993:4). Predictions are that, 10 years from now, 80% of school leavers seeking jobs will be in unemployment queues (KO in Bengu 1993:4).
* Furthermore, there is a decline in job opportunities in the formal sector. Between 1985 and 1990, only 7% of all new labour market entrants could obtain

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employment (National Manpower Commission 1992:26). Hence there was a shortfall of 2,5 million jobs in the formal sector during the nineteen eighties (van Aardt 1993:7).

In a talk presented by Clem Sunter on his book, "Quest for Survival" (Sunter 1990), he identified the dilemma posed by the population explosion of the Third World sector. In 1990, 40% of South Africa's population was under 15 years of age. This makes unprecedented demands on the country's education infrastructure if the population is to be adequately equipped to participate in the economic growth of the nation. In Sunter's opinion, provision of jobs and opportunities for economic growth to improve the quality of life for all may constitute South Africa's greatest challenge. A possible answer could be to stimulate the informal sector of the economy via encouragement of free enterprise and entrepreneurial skills (Sunter 1990, Huntley, Siegfried & Sunter 1989:19-94).

As regards university training, Sadie projected that a deficit in executive/managerial and high-level manpower would occur in the period 1980-2000, while a surplus of unskilled manpower was predicted (in Pickworth 1989:12). Thus employment opportunities would decrease due to an oversupply of unskilled workers and an undersupply of the skilled manpower necessary to generate economic growth, namely, those qualified in areas of technology and management.

Bengu (1993:5), maintains that, according to the multi-factor productivity indices (which reflect the changes in the amount of labour and capital used in production, and clearly show the joint effect of the many influences, including changes in technology, production, capacity utilization, managerial skills, characteristics and efforts of the labour force, and the like), there are notable factors that hamper productivity in South Africa.These include:

* The lack of high level human resource skills
* The lack of technology relating to the application of new knowledge, methods, products and processes
* Economic policies of the last decade (Liebenberg in Bengu 1993:5).

Bengu (1993:5), feels that the above are only a few of the many factors which relate in an important way to the role of universities in training and educating for employment.

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"They relate to the training, research and outreach activities of these institutions and the impact they make on job opportunities" (Bengu 1993:5).

In nearly all areas requiring high-level trained personnel, there is a continuing shortfall. The National Manpower Commission has pointed out that the ratio of top occupational or executive personnel to the remainder of the workforce was 1:52 in 1989, compared to approximately 1:15 in the developed world and 1:10 in America (National Manpower Commission 1989:28). According to Bengu (1993:5-6), on average South Africa has only 10,4 per 1000 of the population receiving university education while, just to maintain current levels of economic development, the number needs to be increased to 16,51 people. In order to achieve a mere 2% average growth rate until the year 2000, there will need to be 210 200 executives and more than one million highly-skilled white-collar workers by the year 2000 (Bacchus in Bengu 1993:6).

According to Barker, "Education for the requirements of the economy is thus absolutely necessary. Educating without taking careful account of economic realities and manpower needs is a luxury we can no longer afford" (in Niebuhr 1993:9-10). Niebuhr maintains that holistic development of a human being for as long as possible is an approach supported by the World Bank. This implies, amongst other things, the importance of the acquisition of general life skills, including the achievement of adequate levels of literacy and numeracy (Niebuhr 1993:11).

According to Mauer (1993:31-32) potential employers place a great deal of importance on certain basic skills such as literacy and computer literacy skills, the ability to think critically, to assume leadership roles and to be creative. Management training, statistics and interpersonal skills which could translate into the ability eventually to assume management roles, were also desired. He felt that the questions which career guidance counsellors at universities needed to address systematically (with regard to BA graduates) were:

* The identification of marketable skills which have to be acquired
* Bridging the gap between the academic environment and the world of work
* Creating opportunities for students to apply their disciplines to learn about career options
* The involvement of university teaching staff in the counselling process and

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* The involvement of practitioners in the various disciplines as a link between students and employers (Mauer 1993:31-32): in order to produce graduates able "to address issues surrounding the nation's political and economic well-being, which depends on citizens who are informed, critical and articulate" (Duminy 1993:55).

Appropriate and effective guidance needs to be given to students in order adequately to prepare them for the world of work and for a future which, in all likelihood, will be very different to the situation prevailing when most of their lecturers where themselves students. Provision for training in life competencies and skills should be made if universities are to retain their relevance in a changing South Africa.

1.4.3 Problem refinement

The following serves as problem refinement for this specific study:

(a) Can a diagnostic medium successfully be employed in order to establish the level of life competencies and skills of university entrants with the aim of isolating and identifying possible problem areas? (See Chapter 2, p.20.)

(b) Can the needs and expectations of the world of work be ascertained via the employment of a variety of research methods and what are the implications for future graduates? (See Chapter 3, p.40.)

(c) Can steps be taken in order both to address and to redress possible problem areas via the establishment of a Guidance Support Department? (See Chapter 4, p.83.)

In order to arrive at a solution to the problem, meaningful answers to the above questions should be found.

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

This research is further directed by the following over-arching hypothesis, in the light of the preceding problem formulation and problem refinement: relevant guidance support, incorporating the life skills necessary to enable students to successfully manage life, become more employable and to practise a career in such a way as to satisfy the demands of the world of work, can be and needs to be provided to facilitate optimum

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self-actualization of each individual's personal potential and to increase both employability and economic productivity.

The research hypothesis formulated above necessarily leads to the following refined formulations:

(a) With regard to university entrants, specific fields of essential life competencies and skills can be identified and diagnoses of potential problem areas can be made via use of a life skills questionnaire (see Chapter 2, p.20).

(b) Needs of employers and of private practitioners and shortcomings in the training of graduates as pertains to life skills, can be identified (see Chapter 3, p.40).

(c) Problems can be remediated via the provision of relevant guidance support for university students (see Chapter 4, p.83).

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The study has three aims:

Firstly:

* To employ a life-skills questionnaire that may be used as a diagnostic medium designed to ascertain if and where problem areas lie with regard to university entrants (see Chapter 2, p.20).

Secondly:

* To ascertain the needs and expectations of employers and of private practitioners to establish where the training of graduates falls short of the above in respect of life skills (see Chapter 3, p.40).

Thirdly:

* To suggest a means of overcoming the above via the introduction of relevant guidance support for university students (see Chapter 4,p.83).

The achievement of the above aims will make a meaningful contribution to ascertaining whether or not the current approaches to the education of undergraduate students can be

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improved upon and made more relevant for the students themselves in terms of both life and future career management.

1.7 PROGRAMME OUTLINE, REVIEW AND CHAPTER PLANNING

In order to gain perspective and an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, namely: guidance support of undergraduate students, the following were dealt with in Chapter 1: title and concept elucidation, methodological justification, problem formulation, formulation of research hypotheses and an exposition of the aim of the study.

The following programme will be covered in this study in order to arrive at a problem resolution:

* A life-skills questionnaire, designed to identify possible problem areas with regard to university entrants, will be administered (Chapter 2, p.20).
* An exposition of the needs and expectations of future employers and private practitioners will be undertaken in order to identify shortcomings in said expectations and steps both employers and self-employed graduates are having to take to remedy the situation (Chapter 3, p.40).
* Guidance support for students will be suggested as a possible means of both addressing and redressing the situation (Chapter 4, p.83).
* A review and summary of the study will be given with the primary aim of making substantiated recommendations (Chapter 5, p.130).

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CHAPTER TWO

LIFE SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Presented below (under 2.3.p.25) is the Questionnaire on Life Competencies and Skills (Life Skills Questionnaire) used by the Department of School Guidance, University of Pretoria and published by the Human Sciences Research Council. Where the questionnaire was initially constructed to ascertain the level of life-skills competence of pupils, it could easily be adapted to perform the same function with regard at least to first year tertiary students. It was employed here because the students tested were first years who, at the time of testing, had had no experience of university life other than an orientation course and who, therefore, had had no academic experience other than that gained at school level. It is felt the questionnaire could be employed as a diagnostic medium to assist University Counsellors in identifying possible problem areas experienced by students with regard to life skills in terms of

* overall areas requiring attention with regard to all undergraduate students;
* areas requiring specific attention with regard to given faculties;
* areas requiring specific attention with regard to given departments (e.g. at Colleges of Education);
* areas requiring specific attention with regard to groups of students within faculties or departments;
* areas requiring specific attention with regard to individual students within faculties or departments.

By constructing profiles, the University Counsellor could ascertain at any stage on which problem areas to concentrate assistance, and for what length of time during a given year. Testing could be done at the beginning of the year and Counsellors could then pass the relevant information on to the faculties concerned or render assistance to faculties, departments, individual lecturers or individual students as required in an attempt to ameliorate problems students or groups of students may be experiencing. Examples of group profiles indicating the degrees to which students experienced problems with the life

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skills covered by the questionnaire are given later in the chapter and in Annexure A (see pp.153-169).

2.2 DEFINITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF A QUESTIONNAIRE

Before presenting the questionnaire on life competencies and skills itself, a definition of a questionnaire and a description of what a questionnaire entails are needed. (The following is translated and adapted in part from the work of Noeth (1990:131-140) and in part from a RAU (1986) publication on research methodology).

2.2.1 Definition of a questionnaire

According to Odendaal **et al** (in Noeth 1990:131), a questionnaire comprises a list of questions concerning a specific subject to which answers must be provided. A questionnaire is used by researchers in order to gather required information.

Benecke and Fowler maintain the following:

(a) "A questionnaire is not just a list of questions or a form to be filled out. It is essentially a scientific instrument for measurement and for collecting of particular kinds of data."

(b) "Designing a good questionnaire involves the questions needed to meet the research objectives, testing them to make sure they can be asked and answered as planned, then putting them into a form to maximize the ease with which respondents and interviewers can do their jobs" (in Noeth 1990:131).

2.2.2 Types of questionnaires and questions

There are two types of questionnaires which may be employed in order to acquire desired information. These are structured and unstructured questionnaires, examples of which are as follows (Jacobs **et al**; Schuman & Presser; Fowler; all in Noeth 1990:131 : Shertzer & Stone 1980:256-257 : RAU 1986:33-36).

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i) Structured questionnaires
   * checklists
   * comparisons, ranking, and alternative placement
   * judging, verbal-numerical and attitudinal (Likert and semantic differential scales).

ii) Unstructured questionnaires
   * open-ended questions
   * autobiographical texts
   * critical incidences

By definition, questionnaires require questions. These questions may be divided into two groups, namely the group wherein a list of acceptable answers is tendered (ie closed answers are given), and the group wherein no acceptable answers are given (open-ended questions) (Noeth 1990:132).

2.2.3 Characteristics of a good questionnaire

A good questionnaire should contain the following characteristics:

* it should be goal directed;
* it should be logically ordered and as simply planned as possible;
* clear instructions must be given to the respondents as to how to complete the questionnaire. These instructions must be given separately;
* simplicity;
* the whole questionnaire, as well as isolated questions must be comprehensible;
* validity: in other words the questionnaire must meet the purpose for which it was designed;
* reliability: consistency must be demonstrated over a period of time. (With regard to the Life Skills Questionnaire, reliability can be seen as the degree to which measurements actually reflect individual differences);
* usability: the questionnaire must be easy to administer with reference to the available time, extent, instructions, marking, potential for interpretation and the applicability of the results;

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* neutrality: questionnaires must not, either as a whole or in a specific sense, create any impression that previously determined answers exist or are expected and
* it should satisfy certain ethical aspects, namely
  a) the purpose of the questionnaire and the results must be clearly stated
  b) no one may be forced to answer questions of a deeply private nature
  c) answers must be kept confidential
  d) embarrassing questions or those which might be considered to be of a negative nature must be left out (Benecke, Landman and Fowler in Noeth 1990:132-133).

2.2.4 The construction of a questionnaire

a) The goal of a questionnaire

A definitive investigation should be undertaken when one is involved in the construction of a questionnaire comprising, firstly, the establishment of the purpose underlying the compilation of the questionnaire and, secondly, a distinction being made between the purpose of the questionnaire and the purpose of the investigation. Generally speaking, the purpose of the questionnaire is simply to acquire certain information either from individuals or from a group of people. The problem lies rather with determining the purpose of the investigation, namely, why is the required information needed and how is it going to be used? Therefore only once complete clarity has been achieved should a questionnaire be constructed and the desired information acquired. Furthermore, before administering the questionnaire, respondents should be informed as to the purpose of the investigation itself (Steenkamp 1989:1).

b) The experiential world of the respondent

The experiential world of the prospective respondents rather than that of the researcher must be taken into account when constructing a questionnaire. It is essential therefore that the person constructing the questionnaire acquires a clear image of the following:

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* the personal circumstances and level of literacy of the respondent
* the relationship between the required information and the attitude of the respondent towards it
* the degree to which the respondent is motivated to answer the questions
* the social environment of the respondent and its influence on him
* the meaning of the words used and the respondent's ability both to comprehend them and to express himself
* the relationship between the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the respondent (Steenkamp 1989:2).

c) The construction of a questionnaire

According to Fowler and de Wet (in Noeth 1990:135-135) and Steenkamp (1989:52-55), the following steps should be applied when constructing a questionnaire:

* the goal of the questionnaire must be clearly described and operationalized. A preliminary description of the questionnaire is also necessary
* once operationalization of the goal has been achieved, the questions themselves must be designed in such a way as to be able to measure both said goal and the content of the questionnaire
* each question must be evaluated in terms of content validity
* once the questions under consideration for inclusion in the questionnaire have been identified, they must be subjected to a question analysis
* pretesting of the preliminary questions should now take place using a representative, "guinea pig" sample. Use should be made of the usual controlled conditions applicable to pretest situations
* once the above has been done, the reliability and validity of the final questionnaire must be determined
* instructions, methods to be used for the gathering and analysis of data, and application and interpretation of said data must be clearly set out
* application of the questionnaire
* analysis of the data (in Noeth 1990:135-136).

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Obviously there are a number of other factors that have to be taken into consideration when constructing a questionnaire, such as the length thereof, the costs involved, the ordering of the questions, the degree of sensitivity involved or how personal respondents may consider the content to be, and whether or not respondents may be influenced by the belief that some of the questions they are answering are possibly loaded. (Compare Noeth 1990:137-138).

It should also be borne in mind that it is seldom possible to construct a truly objective questionnaire; which can lead to criticism of the results obtained via this method of data gathering. It is possible to avoid criticism via examination of all relevant hypotheses before construction of the questionnaire takes place, formulation of a clear statement of the aim, and via making both the complete questionnaire and results thereof available for scrutiny (Steenkamp 1989:53-55 : RAU 1986:36).

2.3 GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ON LIFE COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

The life-skills questionnaire used by the Department of School Guidance, University of Pretoria is reproduced fully below (Eds. Jacobs, Olivier & Gumede 1992). It should be noted that the life-skills questionnaire contains aspects of general as well as career guidance.

1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1.1 *Purpose of this questionnaire*

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine your **competency and skills** in different fields. This knowledge will help you to identify those **competencies and skills** which may possibly cause you problems. By giving the required attention to them, you may improve them.

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1.1.2 *Answering the questionnaire*

The questionnaire has 150 questions. These questions do not have a **right** or **wrong** answer. Indicate whether the statement given in each question is applicable to you or not. If your answer is **YES**, colour in **A**. If your answer is **NO**, colour in **B**.

Example

Question	Answer	
	Yes	No
I worry about my schoolwork	A	B

If you have marked **A**, it means that you worry about your schoolwork. If you have marked **B**, it means that you do not worry about your schoolwork. REMEMBER that you must answer whatever is true as far as you are concerned and not answer to please other people.

2. INSTRUCTIONS

Mark your answers on Side 1 of the separate answer sheet.
Do not make any marks in this booklet.

2.1 GENERAL DETAILS

Use a pencil to write the following information on the appropriate answer sheet.

(a) Area number
(b) School number
(c) Pupil number
(d) Your SURNAME
(e) Your INITIALS
(f) Name of school
(g) Sex
(h) Language
(i) Age
(j) Standard
(k) Date of testing

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2.2 ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer the questions on the separate answer sheet by blackening the relevant oval space which you have chosen (A or B).
TAKE CARE THAT YOU ANSWER THE QUESTION NEXT TO THE CORRESPONDING NUMBER EVERY TIME.

2.3 TIME

There is no time limit for completing this questionnaire.
Work as fast as possible without being careless.
Take care that you answer **each** question.

2.2 CHANGING ANSWERS

If you wish to change your answer, you must very carefully rub out the mark that you have already made, before marking another answer.

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE

1. Do you think you are an unhappy person?
2. Are you unwilling to help keep your school grounds neat?
3. Do you think that other people have cheated you in dealings/business?
4. Will you drive a car if you do not have a licence?
5. Do you think technological development threatens your chances to find a job?
6. Do you dislike rules and regulations?
7. Do you think attending school is unnecessary?
8. Do you feel uneasy if you have to speak in front of other people, e.g. deliver a speech?
9. Do you allow yourself to be influenced by your friends?
10. Do you find it difficult to make independent decisions?
11. Are you often late for appointments?
12. Do you feel that you do not have enough friends?
13. Would you like to change certain of your personal qualities?

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14. Do you need a place where you can study conveniently and undisturbed?
15. Do you have a speech or hearing defect?
16. Are you shy of members of the opposite sex?
17. Do you think it is acceptable to smoke?
18. Do you think it is wrong to exercise your body until you are tired?
19. Are you sometimes untidy with regard to your personal appearance?
20. Do you feel unhappy about your body?
21. Do you prefer working for a salary rather than having your own business?
22. Do you find it difficult to solve your problems?
23. Do you feel uncertain about the job you wish to do one day?
24. Do you have doubts about your aptitudes, interests and ideas about careers?
25. Are you in doubt about what you require of your intended job?
26. Do you sometimes experience doubts about your beliefs?
27. Are you confused by ideologies such as capitalism, communism, socialism, etc.?
28. Do you feel ignorant about political affairs?
29. Are you uncertain about the value your own culture holds?
30. Do your regard your parents merely as figures of authority?
31. Do you often feel lonely?
32. Have you damaged school property, such as school books/desks, by scribbling in or scratching on them?
33. Do you think that people discriminate against you as a person?
34. Are you impatient with other road users, e.g. pedestrians and cyclists?
35. Do you think that careers in the technological fields are inferior?
36. Do you avoid taking responsibility for others?
37. Would you like to leave school as soon as possible?
38. Do you find it difficult to get along with other people?
39. Do you feel rebellious if your parents refuse to let you have certain persons as friends?
40. Do you find that you need the assistance of adults (parents/teachers)?
41. Do you feel your life is disorderly?
42. Do you think it is impossible to plan your money matters and keep to this plan?
43. Are you unhappy with your table manners?
44. Do you think it is unnecessary to study according to a fixed programme?
45. Do you find it difficult to talk to other people?

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46. Do you wonder about specific sexual questions?
47. Would you drink alcohol when you are with your friends?
48. Do you think it is unnecessary to take part in sport?
49. Are you dissatisfied with the amount and quality of the food that you eat daily?
50. Are you troubled about your body?
51. Is it more pleasant being one of the ordinary team members than being the leader/captain of the team?
52. Do you think the majority of schoolchildren find it impossible to solve their own problems?
53. Do you want assistance on how to apply for a job?
54. Do you need more information about the world of work?
55. Is salary the most important consideration in the choice of a job?
56. Do you believe that only your religious convictions are correct?
57. Are you uncertain about which particular philosophy of life you follow?
58. Do you believe that only your political convictions are correct?
59. Do you believe that cultural differences are usually the cause of friction between different groups?
60. Do you think that parents are old-fashioned as a rule and therefore hinder the social development of young people?
61. Does life make you tense?
62. Will you refuse to help at a hospital/nursery school if you do not get payment for your services?
63. Do you think that advertisers mislead people?
64. Have you ever driven a vehicle or ridden a bicycle that is not roadworthy in the street, e.g. the lights or hooter are not working?
65. Do you need more information about careers in the technological field?
66. Do you find it difficult to be a follower?
67. Do you think that post-school training has little value?
68. Are you uncertain about your real abilities and talents?
69. Would you hesitate to go against your friends' decisions?
70. Are you confused by the demands made on you by your friends and other people?
71. Do you think it is wrong to plan each day's programme thoroughly?
72. Do you think it is wrong if schoolchildren do part-time work in order to earn pocket money?

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73. Are you sometimes tired mentally?
74. Do you dislike being given homework to do?
75. Are you afraid to look another person in the eyes when talking to him?
76. Would you like to attend a course in sex guidance?
77. Do you know friends who use drugs?
78. Do you spend too much time on recreation and sport?
79. Do you feel uncomfortable to attend church services?
80. Do you feel self-conscious about your body?
81. Is it wrong to risk your money on an undertaking that has a 50% chance of failing?
82. Are you afraid to make important decisions?
83. Are you afraid that you may possibly lose your job one day?
84. Do you find it difficult to make a decision about a job?
85. Would you hesitate to work in a job where you have to teach or care for other people?
86. Do you find it difficult to form an opinion on religion?
87. Do you have doubts about whether the various philosophies of life make room for religion?
88. Do you find it difficult to form an opinion on politics?
89. Do you doubt whether members of a group should adhere to their own culture at all costs?
90. Do you prefer to leave your parent's home as soon as possible and to be self-supporting?
91. Are you unhappy with yourself?
92. Have you ever behaved badly in the streets by screaming and making a noise?
93. Have you ever wondered if the death penalty is unjust?
94. Are you unsure of the meanings of most traffic signs?
95. Will you avoid following a career in a technological field?
96. Do your friends find it difficult to regard you as a leader?
97. Do you think it is more desirable to work than attend school?
98. Are you often dissatisfied with yourself?
99. Do you regard it as essential for your friends to accept you?
100. Are you uncertain about where you are going in life?
101. Are you uncertain about your career possibilities?
102. Would you buy something you badly want on credit?

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103. Do you experience tension at home and/or at school?
104. Do you experience problems with your studies?
105. Do you find it difficult to talk to a person in another language?
106. Do you think a homosexual relationship is acceptable?
107. Have you ever used cigarettes/liquor/drugs?
108. Are you afraid to study so hard that you become mentally tired?
109. Do you think going to performances/shows/sports meetings is a waste of time?
110. Has anyone ever paid you a compliment on your appearance or physique?
111. Do you think your friends are better equipped for the business world than you are?
112. Do you think it is impossible to learn how to make wise decisions?
113. Are you concerned about the country's unemployment situation?
114. Are you still uncertain about what your career plan should be?
115. Do you think it is unnecessary to always want to reach the highest level in a chosen job?
116. Do you sometimes feel the need to discuss your religious doubts with someone?
117. Do you sometimes wonder whether there is only one correct philosophy of life?
118. Do you sometimes want to discuss your political uncertainty with someone?
119. Do you think that the mixing of groups causes cultural impoverishment?
120. Do you find it difficult to communicate with your parents?
121. Do you think that life is more important to other people than it is to you?
122. Are you dissatisfied because you will have to pay tax?
123. Are you unsure about your rights as a citizen?
124. Do you think that traffic officers have an inferior job?
125. Are you unsure about what technological developments hold in store for you?
126. Have you ever been discharged from a leadership position you have held?
127. Do you consider post-school training unnecessary?
128. Do you find it difficult to communicate with members of the opposite sex?
129. Do you have problems making good friends and keeping them?
130. Do you find it difficult to adjust to the changing world?
131. Do you feel that your school life is disorganized?
132. Are you worried that you will earn too little to care for yourself one day?
133. Do you feel that the demands life is making on you are too much?
134. Do you think you can do better in your school subjects than is the case at present?
135. Do you think other people easily understand when you explain something?

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136. Do you avoid talking to your parents about sexual matters?
137. Do you think that smoking/drinking/taking drugs can be a good thing sometimes?
138. Do you think it is unhealthy to study hard?
139. Do you feel that you have fewer belongings than most other people you know?
140. Do you think that some physical disability may make it difficult for you to find a suitable career?
141. Are you so afraid of failure that you fail to tackle a task?
142. Would you like to learn more about ways to make better decisions?
143. Do you think a personal interview requires special preparation?
144. Do you want assistance to implement your career plan?
145. Is it wrong to choose a job which offers a great deal of free time?
146. Do you disapprove of people who adhere to religions other than your own?
147. Are you sure that your philosophy of life has already been established and will not change?
148. Do you mistrust all politicians?
149. Do you think that one culture acquires mainly the negative from another culture?
150. Do you think it unfair that children have to do tasks at home?

STOP HERE

2.4 PROCESSING OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The life-skills questionnaire consists of 150 items or questions, each of the which the students answer by shading either A or B.

2.4.1 Scoring

Each A that has been marked counts one point. Each B answer counts nil. There are 30 subfields, the total possible score for each of which is 5. A score of less than 3 out of 5 (60%) in a subfield indicates a "problem" in that subfield. The subfields can be grouped into six broad fields in order to determine whether or not problems exist in any of these fields.

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The maximum score obtainable in a broad field is 25 points. A score of less than 15 out of 25 (60%) indicates a "problem" in any broad field. Should a score for the whole Life Skills Questionnaire be desired, the scores for the six broad fields can simply be added together. The maximum score is 150. A score of less than 90 out of 150 (60%) indicates an overall "problem".

2.4.2 Fields of the Life Skills Questionnaire

The six broad fields of the Life Skills Questionnaire are:

A	COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
B	DEVELOPMENT OF PERSON AND SELF
C	SELF-MANAGEMENT
D	PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT
E	CAREER PLANNING
F	LIFE AND WORK ORIENTATION

The 30 subfields consist of the following:

ITEMS

A1	Mental Health	1, 31, 61, 91, 121
A2	Community Responsibility	2, 32, 62, 92, 122
A3	Human Rights	3, 33, 63, 93, 123
A4	Road Safety	4, 34, 64, 94, 124
A5	Technological Development	5, 35, 65, 95, 125
B1	Leadership	6, 36, 66, 96, 126
B2	Literacy/Education	7, 37, 67, 97, 127
B3	Self-concept/self-assertion	8, 38, 68, 98, 128
B4	Peer Group Influence	9, 39, 69, 99, 129
B5	Identity Development	10, 40, 70, 100, 130

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C1	Time and Self-Management	11, 41, 71, 101, 131
C2	Financial Management	12, 42, 72, 102, 132
C3	Handling Stress	13, 43, 73, 103, 133
C4	Study Methods	14, 44, 74, 104, 134
C5	Communication Skills	15, 45, 75, 105, 135
D1	Sex Guidance	16, 46, 76, 106, 136
D2	Alcohol and Drug Abuse	17, 47, 77, 107, 137
D3	Exertion and Recreation	18, 48, 78, 108, 138
D4	A Healthy Life Style	19, 49, 79, 109. 139
D5	Acceptance of One's Own Body	20, 50, 80, 110, 140
E1	Entrepreneurship (Initiative)	21, 51, 81, 111, 141
E2	Problem Solving/Decision Making	22, 52, 82, 112, 142
E3	Finding and Keeping a Job	23, 53, 83, 113, 143
E4	Career Planning and Development	24, 54, 84, 114, 144
E5	Work Values	25, 55, 85, 115, 145
F1	Religious Orientation	26, 56, 86, 116, 146
F2	Life and World Orientation	27, 57, 87, 117, 147
F3	Political Orientation	28, 58, 88, 118, 148
F4	Cultural Orientation	29, 59, 89, 119, 149
F5	Family Education	30, 60, 90, 120, 140

2.5 RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The results obtained from the questionnaire that was administered to a sample group of first year residential students at the University of Pretoria (namely, those students available on the days of testing: N 645) are represented in Tables 1 (p.35), and 2 (p.36). (Tables representing results obtained by female and male students, and graphic representations of both a comparison of the differences between the two sexes (Figure 1 p.37) and overall results obtained by all students are given in Annexure A (pp.153-169).

The following profiles are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

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TABLE 1 :

Rank Order of Life Skills needs for a sample group of first year University of Pretoria students (N 645) at the beginning of 1993.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO NEED GUIDANCE ON:

Life Skills	%	Rank	Sub-Field
Finding and Keeping Work	50.8	1	E3
Human Rights	38.6	2	A3
Study Methods	36.1	3	C4
Career Planning and Development	35.6	4	E4
Acceptance of One's Own Body	33.8	5	D5
Cultural Orientation	33.5	6	F4
Handling Stress	30.7	7	C3
Alcohol and Drug Abuse	30.7	7	D2
Political Orientation	28.7	9	F3
Road Safety	25.6	10	A4
Life and World Orientation	24.2	11	F2
Entrepreneurship	23.8	12	E1
Problem Solving/Decision Making	21.1	13	E2
Peer Group Influence	19.4	14	B4
Sex Guidance	19.2	15	D1
Religious Orientation	18.8	16	F1
Self-concept/Self-assertion	17.8	17	B3
Community Responsibility	15.3	18	A2
Identity Development	13.5	19	B5
Mental Health	12.7	20	A1
Technological Development	11.8	21	A5
Time and Self-management	11.4	22	C1
Financial Management	8.2	23	C2
Leadership	7.3	24	B1
Work Values	6.9	25	E5
Exertion and Recreation	6.7	26	D3
Family Education	6.1	27	F5
Communications Skills	5.8	28	C5
Healthy Life Style	5.4	29	D4
Literacy/Education	3.7	30	B2

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TABLE 2 :

Rank Order of Life Skills needs for a sample group of first year University of Pretoria students (N645) at the beginning of 1993.

A	Mental Health	17.40
	Community Responsibility	21.75
	Human Rights	39.95
	Road Safety	34.85
	Technological Development	13.30
B	Leadership	10.85
	Literacy/Education	08.65
	Self-concept/Self-assertion	20.85
	Peer Group Influence	21.30
	Identity Development	14.40
C	Time and Self-management	12.80
	Financial Management	09.25
	Handling Stress	30.30
	Study Methods	35.60
	Communication Skills	08.60
D	Sex Guidance	22.65
	Alcohol and Drug Abuse	37.00
	Exertion and Recreation	08.90
	Healthy Life Style	10.00
	Acceptance of One's Own Body	29.10
E	Entrepreneurship	23.85
	Problem Solving/Decision Making	19.35
	Finding and Keeping Work	47.75
	Career Planning	34.36
	Work Values	10.25
F	Religious Orientation	22.40
	Life and World Orientation	23.80
	Political Orientation	27.50
	Cultural Orientation	30.25
	Family Education	09.40

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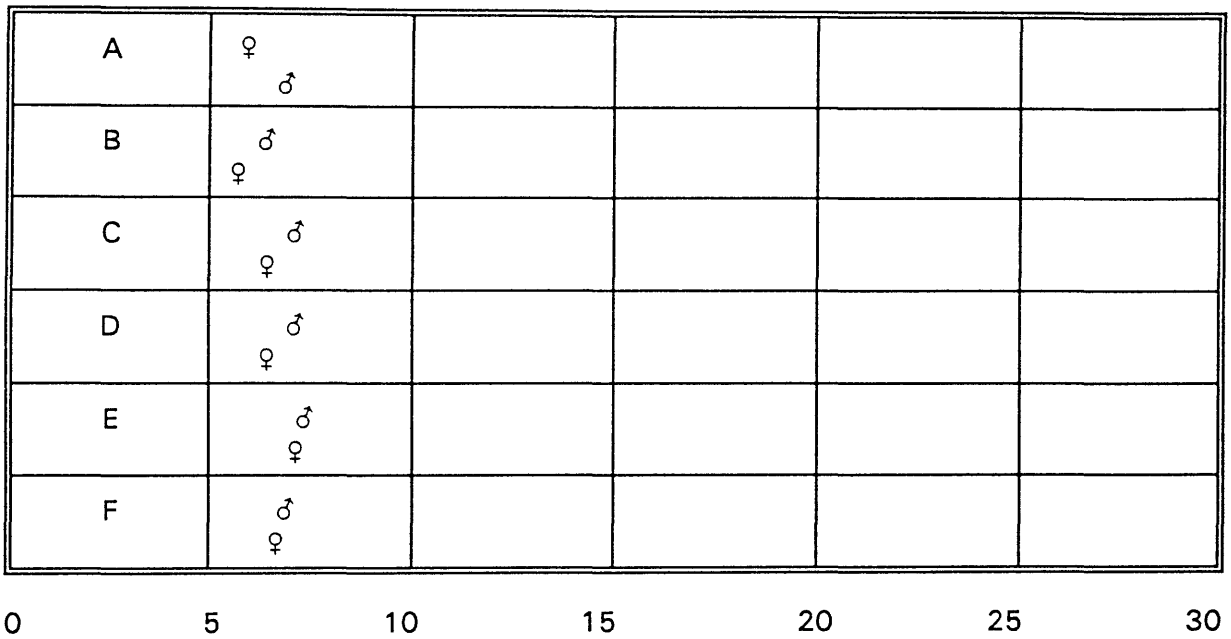
FIGURE 1 :

GRAPH SHOWING A COMPARISON BETWEEN SCORES OBTAINED BY FEMALES AND MALES ON THE LIFE SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE.



KEY

A = COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

B = DEVELOPMENT OF PERSON AND SELF

C = SELF-MANAGEMENT

D = PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

E = CAREER PLANNING

F = LIFE AND WORLD ORIENTATION

MALES: A (32.88%), E (26.44%), F (25.96%), D (25.30%), C (24.44%), B (19.82%)

FEMALES: E (27.90%), F (19.38%), A (18.02%), C (17.98%), D (17.76%), B (10.06%)

♂ = MALES
♀ = FEMALES

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* Table 1 gives a profile of all students tested on the relevant days indicating results obtained within specific subfields
* Table 2 gives a profile of all students tested on the relevant days indicating overall results obtained

Results of the questionnaire indicated that all students tested scored below acceptable levels of competence and that all of them should therefore benefit from some assistance with regard to life skills training.

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, profiles and/or graphs as per the examples given in this thesis can be used to assist University Counsellors to identify problem areas in students and react accordingly with regard to providing the necessary assistance required to ameliorate the situation. Furthermore, students and their parents should be provided with the results so that they can identify and gain insight into areas of strengths and weaknesses and respond appropriately.

Apropos the above, McDonald (1993:64), speaking on behalf of Unilever as a company which he believes "is probably one of the largest employers of graduates in South Africa", feels that an onus rests on students in terms of self-development. He believes that "the whole process of career development should begin in first year", and refers to "...this thing called a "CV" that students prepare two weeks before we come to interview them!" He feels that a *curriculum vitae* should be prepared "as soon as a student goes to university", so that areas in which a student feels he might be weak or underdeveloped can be identified and appropriate remedial action taken. An evaluation and update in terms of strengths and weaknesses should be made by each student at the end of every year. However, McDonald also holds the opinion that a "problem lies in lack of communication between counselling departments;...between academics and counselling departments; and ...between counselling departments, academics, tertiary institutions and industry" (McDonald 1993:64).

2.6 CONCLUSION

Noah and Eckstein noted the following comments made by the Association of British Chambers of Commerce: "Curriculum policy should be customer orientated. It should begin

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with an audit of the skill requirements which people used in their normal daily life, including their *working life*, followed by the matching of these requirements against what the schools are providing" (own italics) (in Badenhorst 1989: 415). It is the opinion of this writer that cognizance should also be taken by the universities of the above comments. The intention is not in any way to suggest that academic standards should be compromised or that the time devoted to the teaching of the academic curricula should be cut into or undermined to accommodate the teaching of life skills. Rather, it means that the possibility of teaching at least sections of the curricula from a Life Skills perspective should be explored and implemented where the potential to do so has been identified: and that universities should take cognizance of the needs of their primary, secondary and tertiary customers (e.g. the students, the State and the world of work for which they are presumably preparing the students) in an attempt to provide a means for meeting their respective needs as far as life skills are concerned (See Chapter Four pp.83-129).

The life-skills questionnaire presented in this chapter represents an example of an audit of skill requirements in terms of students. It does not presume to be definitive but it is offered both as an existing diagnostic medium and as a possible point of departure for further research.

In Chapter Three, an exposition of the situation with regard to graduates will be attempted.

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CHAPTER THREE

SURVEY OF THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO GRADUATES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two, the results of a life-skills questionnaire administered to first year, University of Pretoria students indicated that the respondents scored below acceptable levels of competence with regard to the life skills covered in the questionnaire. In this Chapter, an attempt will be made to discover whether or not graduates can be considered to be sufficiently life-skilled to meet the requirements of the world of work.

The aims are to attempt to ascertain the following:

* which life skills do employers, the self-employed (e.g. private practitioners), Deans of Faculties (University of Pretoria), Councils, Associations, and those involved in Human Resources Development consider to be of value to graduates and to the world of work?
* how proficient, with regard to life skills, do the above-mentioned people believe graduates are?
* which, if any, life skills are being or should be deliberately and consciously taught at university?
* which, if any, training courses in life skills are being offered so as to assist graduates to become either more employable and more productive sooner, or more able to maintain viable private practices?

In order to achieve the above, a three-pronged approach was used.

1. An overview of the needs of employers and of private practitioners was gleaned from the writings of Mathee (1991:119-122) : Walters (1990:78-104), Lund (1993: 33-35), van Aardt (1993:8), Tothill (1993:40-44), Edey and Molin (1993:21) and McDonald (1993:62-64) and from short, confidential interviews (See 3.2. pp.41-55).

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2. Short, confidential, personal and/or telephonic interviews were held with, and a questionnaire was given to, both the Deans of the Faculties at the University of Pretoria (or a representative), and either Councils registering professional graduates or selected Associations/Institutes representing said graduates (See 3.3. pp.55-68). The Deans were selected to answer the questionnaire as it was believed that they would be in the best position to represent both their faculties and their students, and because contact is maintained between the university and the Councils via the Deans. Similarly, the Councils and Associations were selected because they are in contact with both the universities and the world of work (including graduates following given professions). Furthermore, the Councils are involved in the training of graduates in terms of the setting and maintaining of standards.
3. An investigation of the material covered by a small sample of Human Resources Development Departments and Training Companies was made in an attempt to establish which, if any, courses that pertain to life skills training they offer (See 3.6. pp.80-82).

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS

3.2.1 The needs of employers

A Report published in 1990 by the Department of Education and Culture on the evaluation and promotion of career education (known as the Walters Report 1990:78-104), made a number of observations with regard to the requirements employers had of school leavers. Those sections of the Report which showed some agreement with the findings of **inter alia** Lund, Kedian & Thurlow, van Aardt and McDonald (See pp.43-54), all of whom are concerned with requirements employers have of graduates, have been reproduced below. The observations of all these people would indicate that successful life skills training is not taking place either at school or at university level.

Cognizance is taken of the fact that Provincial Departments of Education are attempting to address the problem of life skills training. For example, the Transvaal Education Department introduced a new Guidance syllabus in 1993 entitled "Guidance for Living", which focuses on life skills. However, it would appear that, at this stage, universities

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cannot simply presume students are in possession of necessary life skills and thus ignore any training in them if they wish to assist their graduates to become more employable.

According to the above-mentioned Report (Walters 1990:80-81), the following aspects may be singled out with regard to employers' requirements:

1. General work ability, attitudes towards work, personal characteristics, ability to think, social skills, language skills, bilingualism and arithmetical skills. Although considered important, employers tended to exempt school leavers from having an understanding of business concepts,
2. According to employers, the most important lack in terms of abilities of school leavers lies in the areas of work attitudes (work ethic) and thinking skills. Employers from the public sector also indicated serious shortcomings in terms of the language ability of school leavers,
3. Somewhat better levels of ability were found with regard to personal characteristics, language skills, bilingualism and arithmetical skills. The most acceptable level of ability was found in the area of social skills (Walters 1990:80-81).

Apparently, the majority of employers believe the responsibility for development with regard to personal characteristics, bilingualism, thinking skills, social skills, language and numerical skills belongs to schools or colleges. On the other hand, they are prepared to accept joint responsibility for training with regard to general work skills, attitudes and business concepts.

Further shortcomings identified by employers included: inadequate career guidance counselling and allied matters such as poor career planning, unrealistic expectations, little knowledge of how to conduct an interview and a general lack of knowledge of the world of work (Walters Report in Mathee 1991:120).

With regard to *work disposition and work ethic*, it would seem that employers feel that school leavers do not measure up to expectation in terms of:

* general work attendance
* willingness to work hard

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* the taking of initiative
* the taking of responsibility for tasks
* the taking of personal responsibility for self-development
* the ability to adapt to changing demands at work
* an understanding of the concept that work is a way in which to make a contribution to society
* a willingness to let their superiors control their work
* the ability to get on with the job as usual despite insecurity or uncertainty (in Mathee 1991:120-122)

With regard to *personal characteristics*, it would seem that school leavers do not measure up to employers' expectations in terms of:

* thoroughness
* motivation
* perseverance
* self-discipline
* honesty
* ability to make moral judgments
* self-knowledge.

With regard to *social skills*, apparently school leavers do not measure up to employers' expectations in terms of:

* the ability to work in a group or team
* the ability to work under supervision
* the ability to work with members of other race groups
* leadership potential (Walters in Mathee 1991:120-122).

A similar project was done in Wisconsin in America (Grover in Steyn 1992:20), in 1985. A total of 23 000 of the companies surveyed mentioned the same or similar deficiencies in the readiness of school leavers for working life as those given above.

With regard to graduates, Kedian & Thurlow (in Lund 1993:33-35), in a survey of the views of commercial and industrial companies employing Natal University graduates,

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obtained the following responses from both a postal survey (of 120 organizations) and a consultative seminar (to which 20 organizations were invited) conducted by them.

1. In response to the question aimed at ascertaining which skills and attributes their companies looked for in recruits from **all** universities (emphasis mine), respondents noted the following:

* Leadership ability
* Management skills/administrative skills
* Independent, analytical and lateral thinking
* Critical evaluation
* Ability to work in a team
* Ability to work unsupervised
* Self-motivation
* Self-confidence
* High level of social skills
* Awareness of responsibility
* Good interpersonal and communication skills
* Holistic view
* Varied extra-mural experiences
* Awareness of the need for breadth of experience
* Versatility and flexibility
* Academic ability
* Organizational skills
* Ability to delegate
* Good problem-solving and decision-making skills
* Time management skills
* Business acumen/orientation
* Geographical mobility
* High level of adaptability, to social change and the workplace
* Trainability and the willingness to learn
* Breadth of perspective
* Well developed personal value system
* Literacy and numeracy skills
* Sense of reality

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* Ability to apply knowledge (in Lund 1993:33-34).

2. According to the postal survey done by Kedian & Thurlow (in Lund 1993:34), the following ten skills and attributes were regarded as the most important by the respondents:
   * Leadership ability
   * Management skills
   * Achievement orientation
   * High level of motivation
   * Initiative
   * Ability to anticipate problems and solve them creatively
   * Flexibility/adaptability and willingness to learn
   * Ability to apply knowledge
   * Good communication skills (in Lund 1993:34)

Apparently, the skills and attributes *least often* found (in University of Natal graduates) included:

* Leadership skills
* Management skills
* Ability to apply knowledge
* Achievement orientation
* Communication skills
* Acceptance of high standards
* High level of numeracy and literacy
* Realistic perception of their own role in an organization
* High standards (Kedian & Thurlow in Lund 1993:34)

These researchers noted that some employers wanted graduates who could be considered "finished products" able to be fitted into particular jobs with little additional training; while others wanted graduates with a broader education and skills range. The latter usually represented large organizations which had their own training programmes; the former required more career-specific training. Nevertheless, apparently all respondents desired the general qualities mentioned above (Kedian & Thurlow in Lund 1993:34).

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Lund (1993:34-35) conducted a similar survey but he focused on the views of the legal profession. General skills and attributes noted by him and not included in the findings of Kedian and Thurlow were as follows:

* Determination and drive
* Honesty and integrity
* Judgment and common sense
* Logical reasoning ability and independent thinking
* Quick comprehension and the ability to think on one's feet
* Thoroughness and commitment
* Compassion, social conscience, sense of justice and fairness, commitment to human rights
* Enthusiasm and keenness
* Research ability

According to Lund (1993:35), the qualities *least often* found in (all) university law graduates were as follows:

* Ability to apply knowledge to practice, to apply law to facts, to establish and assess facts
* Knowledge of practice, procedure and procedural law
* Ability to communicate
* Hard-working and self-disciplined
* Business acumen (including skills, understanding of business)
* Experience
* Research ability
* Analytical ability
* Creativity, initiative and lateral thinking
* Judgment and common sense
* Language ability
* Accounting knowledge or skills
* Compassion, social conscience, sense of justice and fairness
* Knowledge of law (including the integration of knowledge from different areas)
* Ability to draft documents
* Logical and critical thinking
* Technical skills e.g. computer literacy, presentation, negotiation

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* Appropriate behaviour (including humility and modest expectations) (Lund 1993:35).

Where a few of the above *qualities* are indeed just that, a large number of them fall into the category of life competencies or skills.

Of the 13 qualities listed by both Kedian & Thurlow (in Lund 1993:34) and Lund (1993:35) himself, as being *most often* found in either University of Natal graduates or all law graduates, only 5 could be considered to fall into the category of life competencies or skills. These are

* willingness to learn
* ability to reason logically and analytically
* appropriate behaviour and appearance
* hard-working (work ethic)
* technical knowledge (Kedian & Thurlow/Lund 1993:34-35)

In response to a question asking respondents to list the qualities they expected a university to produce in graduates generally, respondents seemed to value the following highly: communication skills, an independent and inquiring mind, integrity, hard work, problem-solving ability and research ability (Lund 1993:35).

Given the similarity between responses to his survey and those of Kedian and Thurlow, Lund (1993:35) concluded that "there is a group of skills, abilities and qualities, often called general transferable skills, that are highly desirable *in most, if not all*, work situations (italics mine).

The Graduate Recruitment Manager of Unilever, Mr Geoffrey McDonald, appears to agree with the above. As a representative of an employer, he considers the following to be some of the criteria that his company looks for when employing graduates:

* Leadership ability
* Extra-mural/extra-curricular experience (including learning how to delegate, how to chair a meeting, how to make certain judgments and how to make decisions i.e. skills considered important with regard to how to manage a business)
* Initiative

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* Social skills
* Effective communication skills
* Ability to work in a team
* Independence or self-reliance
* Motivation
* Intellectual ability (assumed by all researchers mentioned to be present in graduates)
* Decision making
* The whole job-search process
* Organization and planning skills

McDonald believes it is "...the possession of these attributes together with the degree that make the graduate employable" (McDonald 1993:63-64).

With regard to overseas trends, Tothill (1993:40-44), in a paper entitled Higher education and employment in the OECD: lessons for South Africa?, investigated the ways in which the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (comprising the United States, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Scandinavia and almost all of Western Europe) has dealt with calls for the provision of higher education to be linked more closely to economic needs, and the ways in which systems of higher education have diversified and expanded as a result of social and economic pressures. (The United Kingdom, for example, has implemented the concept of enterprise education.) (See Chapter Four 4.4. pp.95-101)

According to Tothill (1993:41), post-industrial theory maintains that the economies of developed countries have become increasingly knowledge-based, making an even more highly educated work-force increasingly necessary. Thus an ever greater proportion of the labour-force is becoming engaged in creating and manipulating *information* rather than *objects*. This new view of the economy is known as the information or service age (Tothill 1993:41; Patterson 1985:136; Smith 1993:68; Hopson and Scally 1982:7 and 1986:15).

Tothill (1993:41), maintains that, in OECD countries, post-industrial trends over the past 20 years have been towards:

* "Information-processing occupations, with growing proportions of graduates employed.

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* A growing proportion of graduates employed in high-level 'service' occupations, such as banking and finance, accountancy, computer services, management and marketing (OECD in Tothill 1993:41).
* High levels of unemployment, in part due to technological developments, with graduates less seriously affected than other sections of the population.
* Growing employment opportunities in small businesses and consultancy-type self-employment. This is due in part to an 'externalization of function', whereby large corporations contract out certain specialized tasks" (Tothill 1993:41).

Patterson (1985:135) poses the questions: "how do we orient our young people and adults across the life span to a new age of jobs, opportunities and basic skills?" He answers that we must shift from the systems and concepts that served the industrial age to new ideas and ways of serving the information era by taking cognizance of the new basic skills for success which are emerging; as well as concepts such as "career transferable skills" (Patterson 1985:137). Apropos this, he identifies the following as the "four basic skills of the information society":

* Decision-making skills
* Future-planning skills
* Life-coping skills or social and personal life skills
* Learning to learn or skills for becoming a good learner (Patterson 1985:137) (See Table 3 p.51).

In an attempt to adapt to the changing demands of the economy and society, Hopson and Scally (1982:7) maintain that there will be an increased focus on developing "a range of personal competencies that will equip young people to fulfill a variety of life roles in a rapidly changing world" (Hopson & Scally 1982:7). Table 4 (p.52) contains examples of the skills advocated by these authors.

Smith (1993:68), maintains that "the current world trend of the 'learning organization' emphasizes 'multi-skilling' and general knowledge" (Smith 1993:68).

Tothill (1993:42,44) considers the following to be a few of the skills and abilities employers world-wide are looking for, as the ability to process information becomes more important than possession of a specific body of knowledge:

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* The need for life-long learning and flexibility in light of the rapid obsolescence of skills
* Personal transferable skills
* Skills of written and oral communication
* Logical thinking skills
* Problem solving abilities
* The ability to work in teams
* Skills related to taking initiative
* Presentation skills (Tothill 1993:42,44)

In the opinion of Tothill (1993:44), "OECD research gives content to the relationship between education, employment and economic development, a relationship often reduced to shallow slogans in South Africa. The OECD confirms that education and the economy are becoming increasingly intertwined - but emphasizes that the needs of the economy cannot be met by embracing a narrow vocationalist ethic". She further maintains that "with the internationalization of the world economy, South Africa cannot expect to remain untouched by the trends observed in the OECD" (Tothill 1993:44).

Finally, mention should be made of a study done by Edey and Molin (of the Placement Office of the Counselling and Careers Unit, University of the Witwatersrand) (1993:19-21), arising out of the premise that liberal arts graduates experience problems with being integrated into the work force. These authors conducted a survey of the (Faculty of Arts) graduates and postgraduates themselves. The study covered graduates who had completed their studies in 1990. In response to a question about which skills they commonly regarded as being essential to their jobs, respondents identified the following:

* Verbal and written communication skills
* Compiling, searching, researching, keeping records
* Instructing, teaching, training
* Managing, supervising, organizing (Edey & Molin 1993:21)

When asked if they would do a BA degree again, respondents said they would but they frequently included a 'but' clause. The proviso of interest here was that a BA degree should be more skills specific (Edey & Molin 1993:21).

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TABLE 3 : THE FOUR BASIC SKILLS OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

DECISION MAKING	FUTURE PLANNING	SOCIAL AND PERSONAL LIFE SKILLS	LEARNING TO LEARN
Survival and success depend on a process for making well-considered decisions : * A personalised process for making well-considered decisions * Problem solving, critical thinking and logical reasoning skills * The capacity to develop long- and short-term goals * Skills for organising and managing information, resources and one's energy	Skills for life, career and education, including anticipation and projection into the future. Subskills include : * Future focus i) Technological literacy ii) The ability to establish a clear and positive vision of oneself in the future iii) Skills for learning from the present how to anticipate the future * Career life planning skills i) Skills for seeking and organsing knowledge of self and work ii) Identification with one's transferable skills as the foundation of career iii) Employability skills	Skills of responsibility, interpersonal relationship and self-esteem : * Responsibility includes : i) Moral and ethical knowledge and behaviour ii) Respect for self and others iii) A clear sense of purpose and commitment iv) "Other-oriented" values and habits of behaviour * Interpersonal relationship skills i) Clear expression ii) Careful, active listening iii) Conflict resolution iv) Stress management v) Networking establishing * Self-esteem i) Skills for achieving personal goals ii) Skills for achieving social goals	Skills for becoming a good learner. The elements include : * A liberal arts education of language, maths, social studies and science * Study skills * Achievement skills, habits and abilities to start, continue and complete tasks within a given time

(Source : Patterson 1985:138-141)

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TABLE 4 : REVISED CLASSIFICATION OF LIFE SKILLS ACCORDING TO HOPSON AND SCALLY

SKILLS OF LEARNING	SKILLS OF RELATING	SKILLS OF WORKING AND PLAYING	SKILLS OF DEVELOPING SELF AND OTHERS
Literacy Numeracy Information-seeking Learning from experience Using whole-brain approaches Computer literacy Study skills	Making, keeping and ending relationships Communication Assertiveness Being an effective member of a group Conflict management Giving and receiving feedback Parenting Influencing	Career management Time management Money management Entrepreneurship Choosing and using leisure options Preparation for retirement Seeking and keeping a job Managing unemployment Home management Setting objectives and action planning	Being positive about yourself Creative problem solving Decision making Stress management Transition management Managing sexuality Maintaining physical well-being Making the most of the present Proactivity Managing negative emotions Discovering interests, values and skills Discovering what makes us do the things we do Developing the spiritual self Helping others Developing the political self

(Source : Hopson & Scally 1986:15)

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The above dealt with the conceived needs of employers (whether of school leavers or of graduates). It would appear that there is a remarkable similarity between the needs of employers both in South Africa and overseas. The needs of the self-employed will be discussed below.

3.2.2 The needs of the self-employed

Confidential interviews were held with a sample group of self-employed graduates. The sample comprised the following:

* a newly qualified Chartered Accountant
* two consulting engineers (one mechanical and one civil)
* a lawyer
* a medical doctor (a gynaecologist who also holds an MBA degree), involved both in private practice work and in the training of interns
* a psychologist, involved in private practice and in the training of interns
* a speech therapist
* an occupational therapist

A list of life skills was shown to the sample group. The below-mentioned were most often selected as skills and abilities the majority of them felt were essential for anyone considering self employment to have.

* Knowledge of business/business acumen/skills
* Entrepreneurship
* Management/administrative skills
* Organization and (future) planning skills
* Financial, stress and time management skills
* Assertiveness and initiative
* Knowledge of common/tax law
* Research/literacy skills (e.g. report writing)
* Computer literacy and numeracy skills
* Communication and interpersonal communication skills
* Problem solving and decision making skills
* Teamwork and networking skills
* Professional ethics and/or a well developed personal value system

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* Adaptability/flexibility/versatility
* Independent/lateral/creative/critical thinking skills
* Ability to work unsupervised and take responsibility
* Ability to apply knowledge and to learn
* Self-motivation and self-confidence.

Apropos the above, van Aardt (1993:8), in a paper entitled "The labour market, the needs of the economy, and the Humanities", refers to the training of clinical, counselling and research (sic) psychologists. He states that "although their training is geared towards the acquisition of professional skills for conducting private practices, they are seldom, if ever, taught basic business skills such as accounting, how to set up a private practice, how to obtain clients, how to invest earnings, and how to expand and/or adapt their private practice over time. In this way, although they acquire the professional knowledge to become private practitioners, the world of private practice remains closed to many, owing to the lack of business skills and the business acumen to set up a successful practice" (van Aardt 1983:8).

Both Mr Dereck Jackson (Head: Educational Aid Services, Johannesburg North East) (March 1991), and Mrs Lynne di Giandomenico (Dental Association of South Africa) (June 1993), feel that one of the reasons many practitioners (in this instance, psychologists and dentists) cannot sustain private practices, is a lack of knowledge of how to run a business. According to the Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Pretoria (Seelinger June 1993), the Dental Faculty recently introduced courses for students on how to run private practices. These courses include training in computer literacy. The Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science stated in an interview (Couborough June 1993), that he is interested in the same package being made available to his students.

As can be seen from the above, self-employed graduates seem to value at least some of the skills and abilities required by employers.

3.3 SURVEY OF THE DEANS AND OF COUNCILS

Short telephonic and/or personal interviews were held with, and questionnaires were given to, the Deans (or their representatives) of the Faculties at the University of Pretoria.

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Telephonic interviews were held with either Registrars or representatives of Councils, Associations or Institutes and a questionnaire almost identical to the one presented below (See 3.3.1. pp.55-66) was telefaxed to them. The aim was to attempt to survey the **opinions** of the respondents relating to both the **levels** of, and the **importance** attached to, given life competencies and skills with regard to students and graduates.

A 100% response was received from the Deans and 93.3% of the Councils, Associations and Institutes responded.

As regards the construction of the questionnaire and in particular general information such as a definition of a questionnaire, different types of questionnaires, characteristics of good questionnaires, the goal thereof, the experiential world of the respondents, the length, sequence, application and evaluation of a questionnaire, etc., refer Chapter Two (2.2. pp.21-25).

Questions were drawn from a variety of sources including personal interviews and discussions, the Questionnaire on Life Competencies and Skills presented in Chapter Two (See 2.3. pp.25-32), the University of Pretoria's Mission Statement, the writings of the aforementioned authors (See 3.2. pp.41-55), and the personal experience of the writer both as a lecturer and as a psychologist (career guidance counselling) in government employ and/or private practice.

Several test runs were done and appropriate adjustments were made before the questionnaire was given to the respondents represented in this study.

3.3.1 Life Skills Questionnaire submitted to Deans

Reproduced fully below is the Questionnaire on Life Competencies and Skills (Life Skills Questionnaire) given either to the Deans or representatives of the following faculties at the University of Pretoria.

* Faculty of Law
* Faculty of Education
* Faculty of Natural Sciences

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* Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences
* Faculty of Agricultural Sciences
* Faculty of Dentistry
* Faculty of Medicine
* Faculty of Veterinary Sciences
* Faculty of Engineering
* Faculty of Arts and Philosophy (Representative)
* Faculties of Theology: Sections A and B
* Dean of Student Affairs

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LIFE COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

The **aim** of the following questionnaire is to attempt to gain some insight into the level or degree of competency of graduating students with regard to the below-mentioned life or core skills.

The questionnaire is presented in two parts. Each of questions **1** to **55** requires two responses. Space has been provided for responses to questions **56** to **59**.

Where it may be preferable to be able to make mention of specific faculty results in the overall analysis of data gathered, **confidentiality will be maintained** if so desired. Please indicate with a circle (see question number 60) whether or not you would prefer your answers to remain confidential.

Please feel free to draw on any and all sources of information available to you (e.g.student evaluations, lecturer evaluations, feedback from employers, professional boards etc.) in order to complete the questionnaire.

A **4 point rating scale** with the following *values* applies to the first response to questions 1 to 55. Please simply circle the *number* corresponding to the chosen answer thereby indicating the level or degree of competence, *in your opinion*, your students have. The *symbols* found alongside the above-mentioned numbers refer to the *importance each skill has, in your opinion, for students graduating from your faculty.* Please simply circle the chosen *symbol* underneath the relevant question.

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1	uncertain	A	uncertain
2	inadequate	B	not important
3	competent	C	important
4	excellent	D	essential

Questions 56 to 59 should be answered in the spaces provided.

Please answer all questions to the best of your knowledge at the time of response.

A similar questionnaire has been sent to the relevant professional boards for the same purpose as stated in paragraph one.

For an example of the covering letter attached to the Questionnaire sent to the Councils, Associations and Institutes, see Annexure (p.170).

The Questionnaire consists of seven subfields, namely self management skills, personal development skills, thinking skills, life and work orientation skills, career planning and development skills, community and social development skills and physical and sexual development skills.

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A SELF MANAGEMENT SKILLS

1 *Effective Communications Skills* including oral and written communication

1 2 3 4 A B C D

2 Skills for *seeking, organizing and managing information*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

3 Skills relating to the ability to *give and receive feedback clearly*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

4 Skills of *how to be an effective member of a group*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

5 *Public Relations skills* including basic relationship skills

1 2 3 4 A B C D

6 *Interpersonal relationship skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

7 *Conflict management skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

8 *Negotiating skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

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9 *Skills of learning how to learn* (including skills for seeking and organizing knowledge)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

10 The ability to deal with *self-initiated projects*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

11 *Time Management skills* (indicating management of resources with a clear sense of purpose and commitment in terms of the ability to start, continue and complete tasks punctually/within a given time span)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

12 *Action planning and objective-setting skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

13 *Proactivity and the ability to take initiative*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

14 *Future planning skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

15 *The ability to adapt to the changing demands of work*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

16 *The ability to take responsibility for tasks and the self-discipline* needed to be able to finish what one has begun

1 2 3 4 A B C D

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17 *Stress management* including the ability to get on with the job despite insecurity or uncertainty

1 2 3 4 A B C D

18 *Financial management skills* with regard to own affairs

1 2 3 4 A B C D

B PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

19 *Leadership skills* including being able to identify one's strengths and weaknesses

1 2 3 4 A B C D

20 *Moral leadership*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

21 The ability to *manage work and people* (supervisory skills)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

22 The skills of *good organizational behaviour*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

23 The ability to *assert oneself/be assertive*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

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24 The ability to *manage personal growth*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

25 The ability to *influence one's peers*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

26 The skills needed for *the maintenance of self-esteem* including the necessary social and personal skills that impact positively on the achievement of personal/social goals

1 2 3 4 A B C D

27 The ability to *take personal responsibility for self-development*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

28 *Literacy, numeracy and computer literacy skills* resulting in the availability of high levels of all three types of language competence

1 2 3 4 A B C D

29 *Adequate technological awareness/skills* (including knowledge of modern forms of information seeking and communications)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

C THINKING SKILLS

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30 *A reasonably balanced education resulting in flexibility of thinking and open-mindedness* (so as to be able to accept and adapt to changing conditions or circumstances)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

31 The ability to *learn from personal experience*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

32 *Metacognitive and transference skills* (i.e. the ability to think about thinking and to employ skills already acquired over a broader spectrum than that for which they were originally intended)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

33 *Access to whole brain approaches* (indicating a synthesis as well as analysis and creative problem-solving skills)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

34 *Critical Thinking skills* (including logical reasoning and the ability to evaluate an argument in terms of cogency)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

35 *Lateral/Creative Thinking skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

D LIFE AND WORK ORIENTATION

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36 A good *Work Ethic*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

37 *Good Work Values* (indicated via general work attendance and the willingness to work hard)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

38 Skills for *establishing Networks* (indicated via the ability to organize effective study groups, activate resource data bases etc)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

39 *Understanding of business concepts* necessary to entering the world of business/private practice (eg basic financial management/sound financial practices)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

40 *General Work Disposition* including willingness to let superiors control one's work, honesty, loyalty, courtesy, thriftiness, and respect for others

1 2 3 4 A B C D

41 Skills indicating *some knowledge of how to measure and manage productivity* (may be indicated via use of effective study methods)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

42 *General management skills* indicating and including effective time, financial resources, business, work and people management

1 2 3 4 A B C D

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43 Skills indicating *knowledge of the interrelationship between business, social, economic and political environments*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

E CAREER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

44 *Entrepreneurial* skills

1 2 3 4 A B C D

45 *Skills of how effectively to plan and to develop a career* (eg the skills of finding, keeping and leaving a job)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

46 Skills of *how to manage unemployment*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

47 *Transition management skills including future-planning skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

48 Skills relating to *critical path planning including problem-solving, decision making and goal setting skills*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

F COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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49 *Community responsibility* including a good community work ethic, sense of community responsibility and basic conception of work as a way in which to make a meaningful contribution to a multicultural society

1 2 3 4 A B C D

50 *Basic political knowledge/skills* including the understanding of and ability to work with members of other race groups

1 2 3 4 A B C D

51 *Awareness of fundamental human/legal rights* (eg street and/or labour law)

1 2 3 4 A B C D

52 Skills for *maintaining overall Mental Health* indicating a balanced personal philosophy of life and a sense of personal integrity which underlies the ability to commit to reasonable ethical and moral codes of conduct

1 2 3 4 A B C D

G PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

53 Knowledge of the *dangers of substance abuse*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

54 *Effectively healthy lifestyles* including knowledge of how to deal with both exertion and recreation

1 2 3 4 A B C D

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55 Awareness of the *dangers of contracting and how to prevent contracting AIDS*

1 2 3 4 A B C D

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SPACES PROVIDED BELOW THEM

56 Are any of the above skills intentionally and deliberately taught by your faculty (other than as part of specific academic curricula)? If so, please specify which ones they are.

57 Which skills, if any, do you believe should be added to the above list?

58 Given the university's resources in terms of manpower and knowledge (eg access to experts in their fields, psychologists, student services/guidance departments and the like), do you believe it would be feasible for the University of Pretoria to consider offering elective and/or extra-mural, certificated courses in some or all of the above skills? Please specify.

59 Do you think that competence with reference to the above skills would increase both the employability and productivity levels of UP graduates? Please specify.

60 Do you wish results of this questionnaire to be kept confidential? Please circle your choice.

YES NO

ANY FURTHER IDEAS OR INFORMATION YOU MAY WISH TO ADD OR TO CONTRIBUTE WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Thank you for your kind co-operation.

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3.3.2 Life Skills Questionnaire sent to Councils, Associations and Institutes

An almost identical questionnaire to the one presented above was telefaxed to either Registrars or representatives of the below-mentioned, selected Councils, Associations or Institutes. (Councils were preferred as the registering bodies of professionals. In some instances professionals are registered with Societies or Boards, in which case the questionnaire was sent to them.)

* The South African Veterinary Council
* The Teachers' Federal Council
* The Pharmaceutical Council of South Africa
* The Public Accountants and Auditors Board
* The South African Engineering Council
* The Institute for Mining and Metallurgy
* The Law Society of South Africa
* THe Institute of Personnel Management
* The Economic Society of South Africa
* The South African Council for Natural Scientists
* The South African Council of Architects
* The South African Medical and Dental Council
* The Medical Association of South Africa
* The Dental Association of South Africa
* The Psychological Association of South Africa

Questions 56, 58 and 59 differed from those in the previously presented questionnaire. They are reproduced fully below.

56 Do you believe it would benefit graduates in terms of future employment if any or all of the above skills were to be included in their (professional) training?

58 Given a university's resources in terms of manpower and knowledge (e.g. access to experts in their fields, psychologists, student services/guidance departments and the like), do you believe it would be feasible for the University of Pretoria to

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consider offering elective and/or extra-mural certificated courses in some or all of the above skills? Please specify.

59 Do you think that competence with reference to the above skills would increase both the employability and productivity levels of graduates? Please specify.

A copy of the covering letter telefaxed with the questionnaire to the above-mentioned people is given in Annexure B (p.170).

3.4 PROCESSING OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consisted of 60 questions, 55 of which were closed questions requiring two responses each.

The first response attempted to ascertain the degree of **proficiency**, in terms of life competencies and skills, of students in the opinion of the Deans of the Faculties surveyed. Similarly, the Councils, Associations and/or Institutes (hereinafter referred to as the Councils) were asked to rate graduates in the same way. Choices included uncertain, inadequate, competent or excellent.

The second response attempted to ascertain how **important** the Deans/Councils considered the life competencies or skills to be in terms of either students graduating from their faculty, or graduates registered with their Professional Boards. Choices of possible responses included uncertain, not important, important or essential.

Questions 56 to 59 were open-ended questions with space provided for responses. Question 60 dealt with confidentiality and, lastly, respondents were invited to add or contribute any other information they felt might be of value.

3.5 RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

With respect to questions 1 to 55 of the questionnaire, the **Wilcoxon Rank-Sum Test** (a nonparametric test) was applied to the data by the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria. The results were as follows:

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1. **Deans of Faculties**

The test indicated statistically significant differences at the 5% level of significance between proficiency and value for:

A. Self Management Skills
B. Personal Development Skills
C. Thinking Skills
D. Life and Work Orientation
E. Career Planning and Development
F. Community and Social Development
G. Physical and Sexual Development.

2. **Councils**

No statistically significant difference at the 5% level of significance was indicated for:

G. Physical and Sexual Development.

All the other components mentioned above did indicate statistically significant differences.

Results are given diagramatically in Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 (pp.71-76) and Annexure D (p.173).

With regard to questions 56 to 59 the following responses were obtained.

1. **Deans of Faculties**

Question 56: Are any of the above skills intentionally and deliberately taught by your faculty (other than as part of specific **academic** curricula)?

Of the respondents, 46,14% answered **no**: 7,69% answered **yes**, and 46,14% gave a qualified **yes** response. Qualifiers included critical/thinking skills, communication skills, leadership and moral leadership skills, flexibility, work ethic and values, knowledge of the dangers of substance abuse and of AIDS, healthy life-styles, computer training, environmental awareness, basic economics, self-esteem, and fundamental human/legal

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rights. One respondent felt that student leaders should be offered management/strategic management skills, leadership, pro-active planning, and sexual and health development skills. He also stated that the above skills should be made available to ordinary students.

Question 57: Which skills, if any, do you believe should be added to the above list?

Of the respondents, 76,9% seemed to consider the list adequate and 23,1% added (restated) the following: written communication and language usage skills, personal development, career planning, entrepreneurship, goal setting and thinking skills. One respondent felt the political naivety of students should be addressed.

Question 58: Given the university's resources in terms of manpower and knowledge...do you believe it would be feasible for the University of Pretoria to consider offering elective and/or extra-mural, certificated courses in some or all of the above skills?

69,21% responded in the affirmative (**agreed**): 15,38% did **not agree** and 15,38% did not respond. Of those who did respond, 81,8% gave an unqualified yes answer and 27,27% mentioned the following qualifiers: financial skills and leadership development. One respondent suggested part-time, short courses should be offered to students.

Question 59: Do you think that competence with regard to the above skills would increase both the employability and productivity levels of University of Pretoria graduates?

Of the respondents, 92,28% agreed: 7,72% did not agree and 7,72% added the qualifier that "theory must be translated into reflective practice".

Five Deans responded to the invitation to contribute further ideas or information. These responses included:

* Skills training forming a part of the objectives of every subject
* Skills training being essentially practical in nature
* The necessity for logical/thinking skills
* The necessity for including skills of learning how to learn ("how to re-educate oneself").

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TABLE 5: RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE TO DEANS AND COUNCILS.

DEANS: N14 — 100% RESPONSE

COUNCILS: N15 — 93.3% RESPONSE

COMBINED: N29 — 96.5% RESPONSE

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES PER SUBFIELDS –

1. COMPETENCY LEVELS OF GRADUATING STUDENTS/GRADUATES

	DEANS %				COUNCILS %				COMBINED %			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
A	4.19	41.4	42.33	12.09	10.32	44.44	39.68	5.56	7.49	43.04	40.9	8.57
B	7.63	43.51	41.22	7.63	15.58	48.05	31.82	4.55	11.93	45.96	36.14	5.96
C	6.94	45.83	34.72	12.5	17.86	39.29	40.48	2.38	12.82	42.31	37.82	7.05
D	15.63	43.75	29.17	11.46	17.86	40.18	34.82	7.14	16.83	41.83	32.21	9.13
E	25.42	54.24	16.95	3.39	20.29	56.52	20.29	2.9	22.66	55.47	18.75	3.13
F	6.52	39.13	45.65	8.7	16.07	55.36	21.43	7.14	11.76	48.04	32.35	7.84
G	8.33	22.22	52.78	16.67	11.9	21.43	45.24	21.43	10.26	21.79	48.72	19.23
	9.16	42.6	37.86	10.38	14.69	44.6	34.72	5.98	12.15	43.68	36.17	8.01

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES PER SUBFIELDS –

2. LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE/VALUE OF LIFE SKILLS

	DEANS %				COUNCILS %				COMBINED %			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
A	0	3.26	40	47.44	0	5.95	50.79	43.25	0	4.71	45.82	45.18
B	0	3.82	54.2	33.59	3.9	11.04	62.99	22.08	2.11	7.72	58.95	27.37
C	0	5.56	43.06	40.28	2.38	5.95	55.95	35.71	1.28	5.77	50	37.82
D	3.13	5.21	39.58	43.75	0.89	7.14	57.14	34.82	1.92	6.25	49.04	38.94
E	3.39	8.47	52.54	27.12	4.35	10.14	62.32	21.74	3.91	9.38	57.81	24.22
F	0	2.17	60.87	30.43	0	19.64	37.5	42.86	0	11.76	48.04	37.25
G	0	5.56	72.22	13.89	7.14	11.9	61.9	19.05	3.85	8.97	66.67	16.67
	0.76	4.43	47.48	38.47	1.95	8.84	55.4	33.68	1.4	6.81	51.76	35.88

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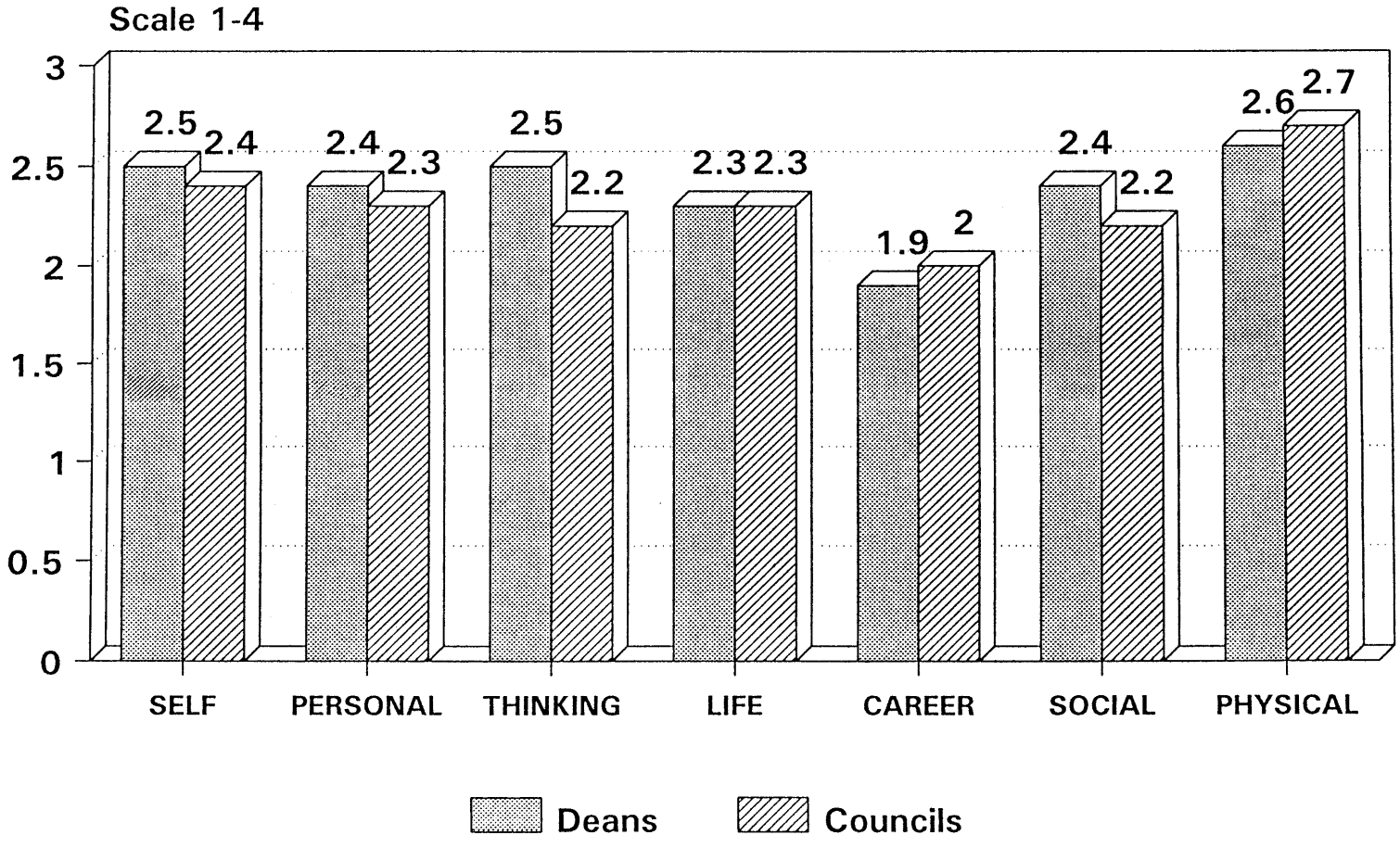
DEGREE OF SKILLS COMPETENCE



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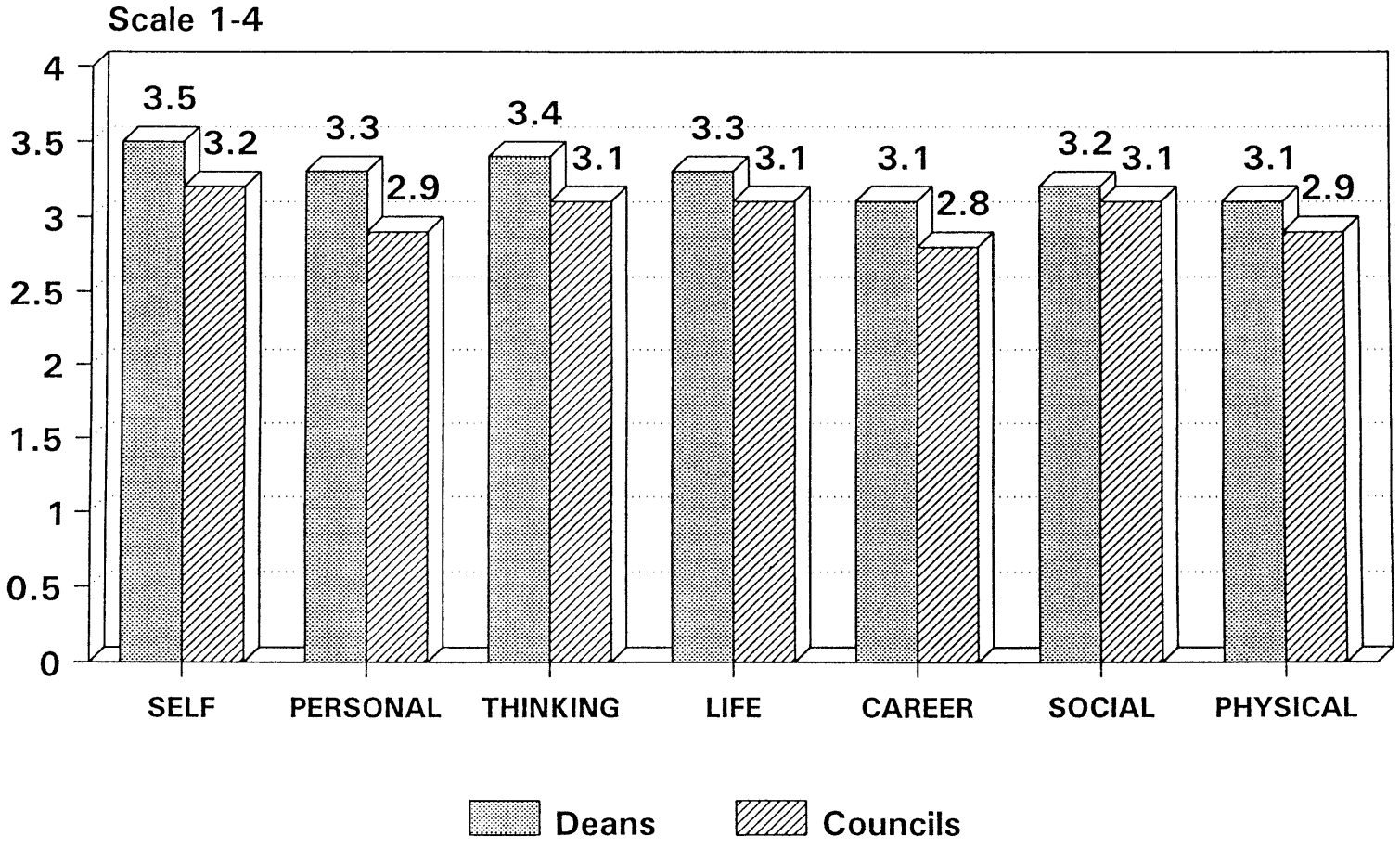
DEGREE OF SKILLS IMPORTANCE



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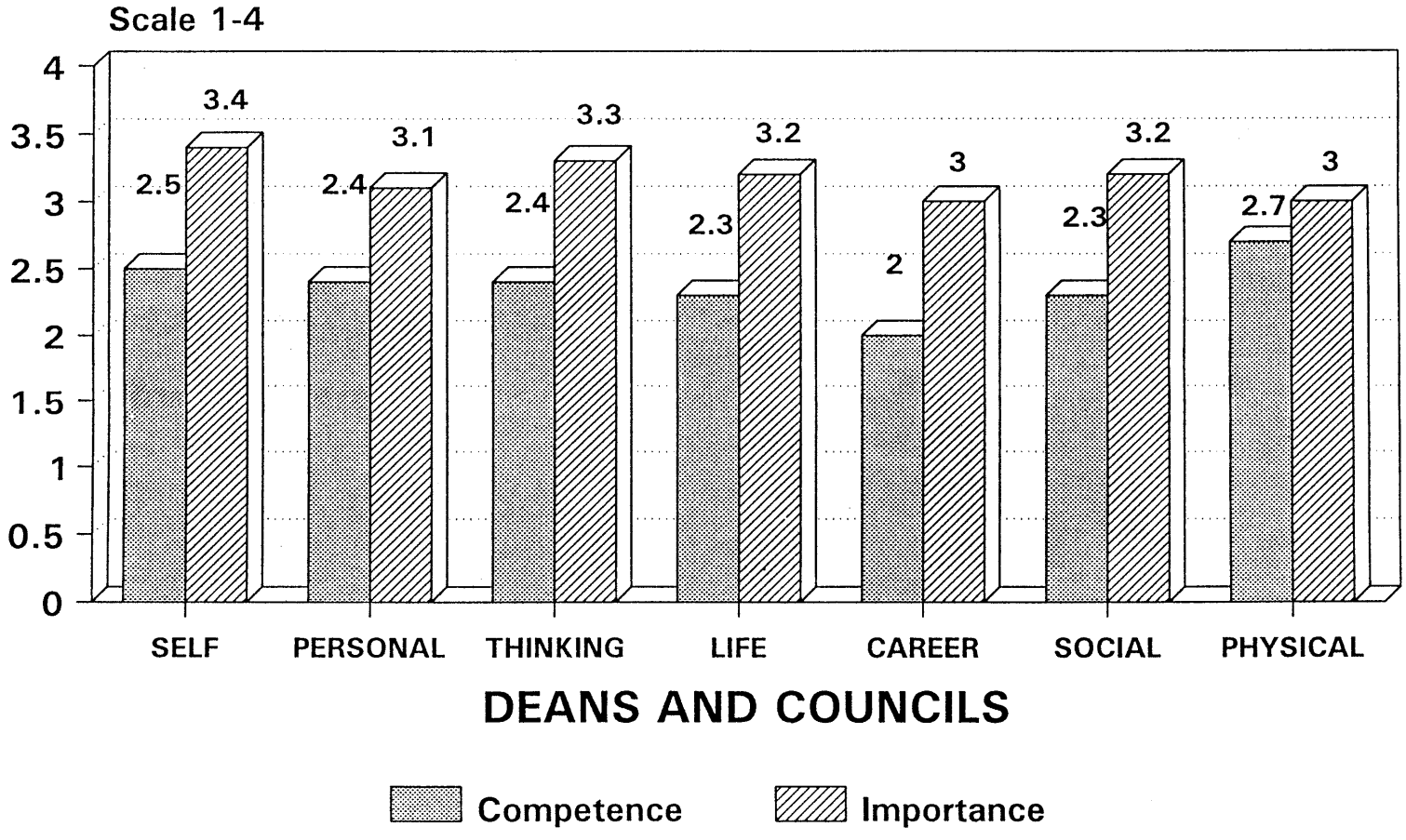
COMBINED DEGREE OF SKILLS COMPETENCE AND IMPORTANCE



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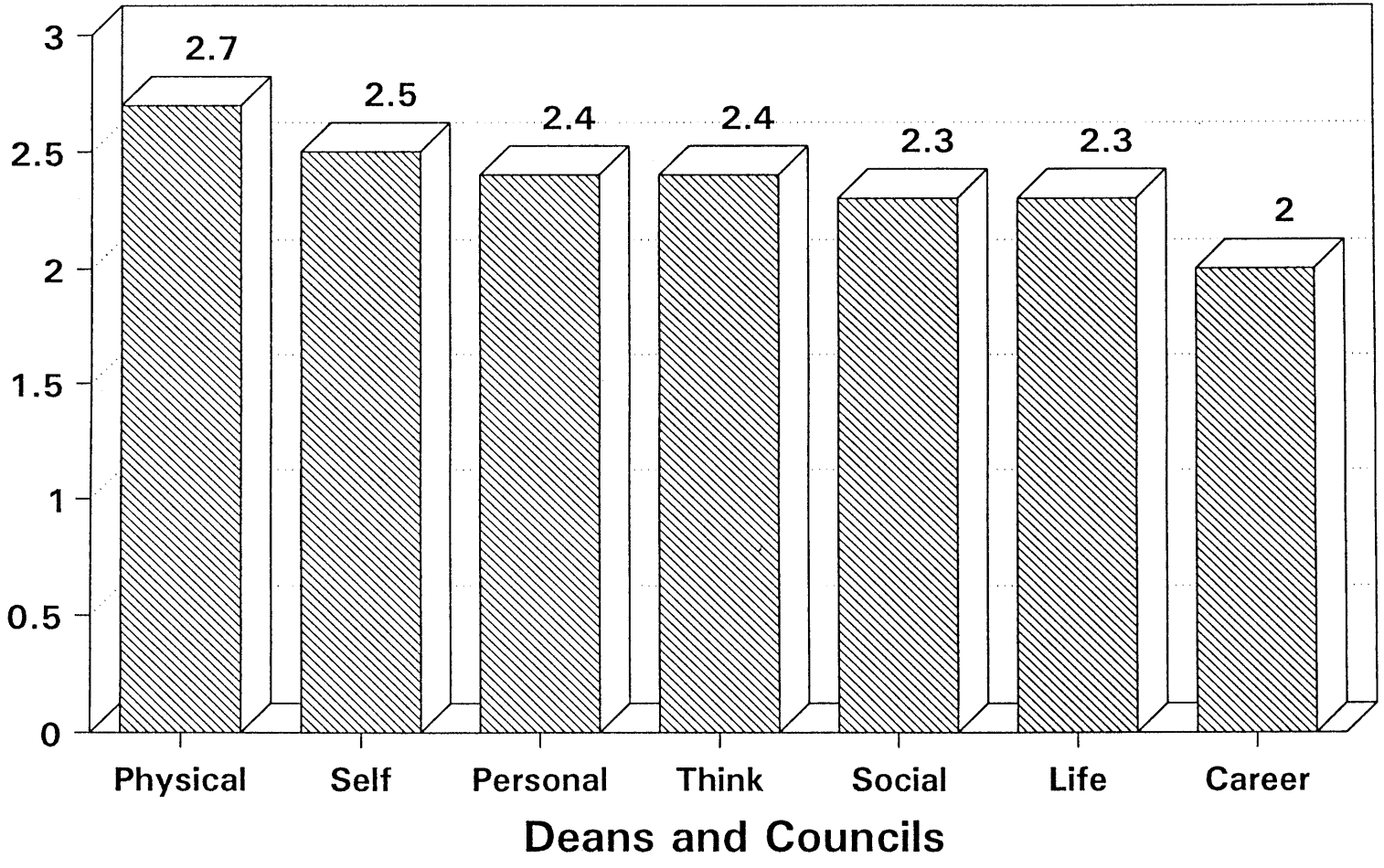
DEGREE OF SKILLS COMPETENCE



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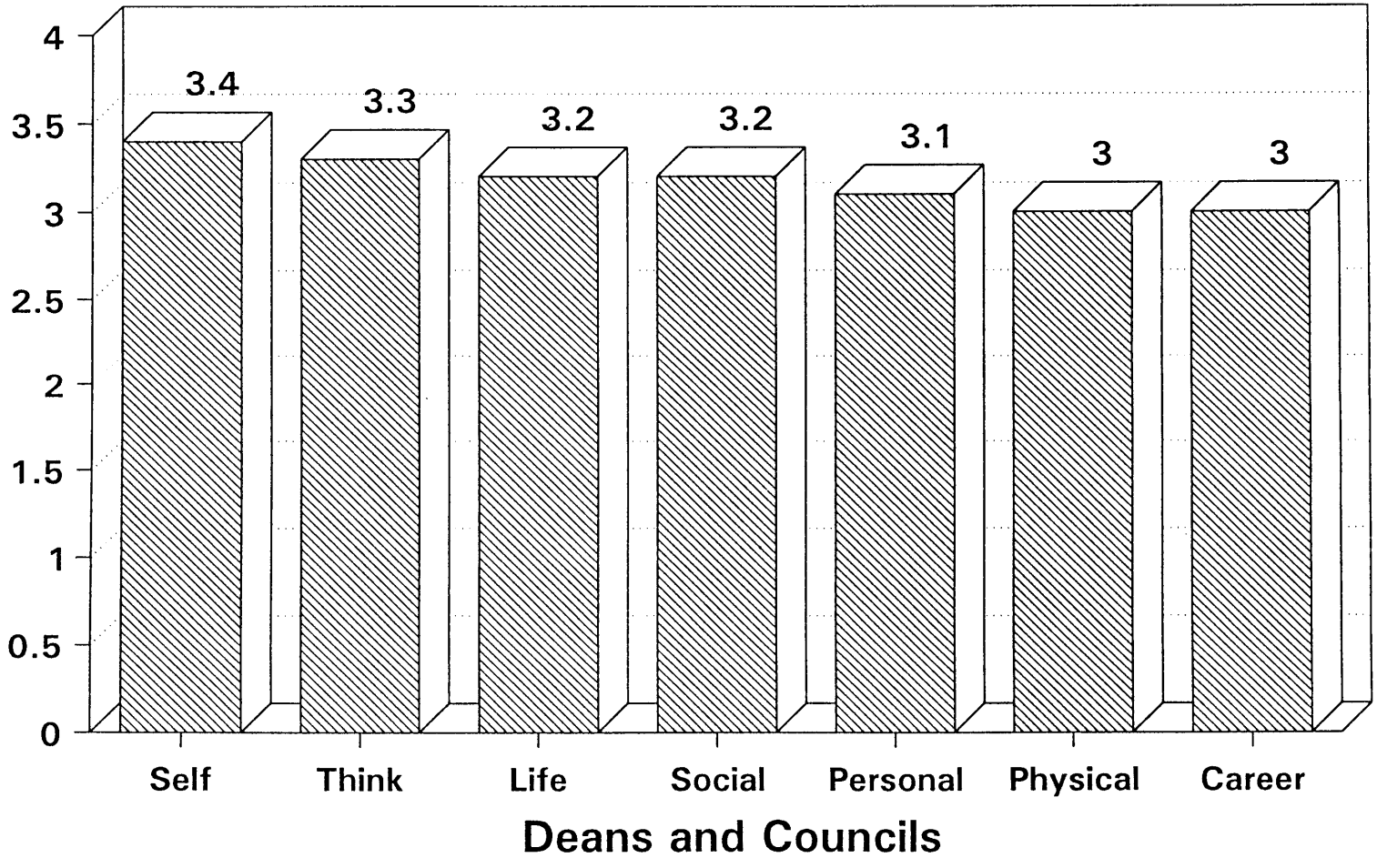
DEGREE OF SKILLS IMPORTANCE



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2. Councils

Question 56: Do you believe it would benefit graduates in terms of future employment if any or all of the above skills were to be included in their (professional) training?

Of the respondents, 100% agreed with 42,84% qualifying to the effect that, as the academic curricula were already so full, time would be a problem.

Question 57: Which skills, if any, do you believe should be added to the above list?

70,14% found the list adequate and 28,56% added the following qualifiers: knowledge of how to market oneself within the (ethical/professional) codes of the appropriate Council; inclusion of the full ("commercial and financial") range of business skills; business management, community development, networking skills and practice management.

Question 58: Given a university's resources in terms of manpower and knowledge...do you believe it would be feasible for the University of Pretoria to consider offering elective and/or extra-mural certificated courses in some or all of the above skills?

There was 92,82% agreement with 1 failure to respond. 28,56% added to or qualified their answers. One respondent qualified by saying that life skills courses should only be offered extra-murally as the academic curricula were already so full that no extra time could be allowed for anything else. Another respondent felt that skills training should rather be built into academic curricula as extra-mural courses might fail to stress the importance of such training to the world of work . Still another suggested that MBA part or full time modules should be looked at with the recommendation that they be included in (academic) curricula: while one respondent felt that life skills courses should form part of both the professional development and the continuing education of graduates. (See Chapter Four 4.5.2 pp.115-128).

Other additions included: skills of learning how to learn, communication skills, skills pertaining to how to interact with other race groups, the fostering of multicultural awareness and the suggestion that courses should be inter-disciplinary in nature with

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students being offered the option to include "skill content based courses" (presumably in their general training).

Question 59: Do you think that competence with reference to the above skills would increase both the employability and productivity levels of graduates?

Of the respondents, 85,68% agreed, 7,14% disagreed and 7,14% were uncertain. 31,33% qualified their agreement. Two respondents stated that skills must relate to the world of work i.e. be market related, and one respondent felt that the answer depended on whether or not graduates were to be employed by the formal (state) or private sector. In his opinion, skills such as the ability to take initiative and critical thinking would not be valued by state employers of graduates registered in his profession. One respondent felt that productivity would be improved but was uncertain as to whether or not the same would apply to employability.

Three Councils responded to the invitation to contribute further ideas or information. Responses included:

* The difficulty of measuring competence ("Can graduates deliver?")
* A **caveat emptor** "not to raise employment expectations unrealistically (in graduates) as adaptation to the reality of post-university conditions is critical"
* the opinion that said courses would "add value" especially in terms of the "new dispensation in South Africa"
* The importance particularly in dealing with difficulties resulting from an open university policy
* The need to "educate some lecturers too" as many lack life skills and are finding it difficult to cope with multiculturalism.

3. Combined Results

The following indicates combined percentages in terms of responses from both Deans and Councils.

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With regard to Question 57 (see above), 70,26% of respondents found the list to be either adequate or comprehensive and 29,74% either failed to respond or accepted the list with qualifications.

With regard to Question 58 (see above), 80,05% of respondents agreed and 19,94% either disagreed or failed to respond.

With regard to Question 59 (see above), 87,04% of respondents agreed and 12,95% either disagreed or failed to respond.

As can be seen from Table 5 (p.71), a significant number of both deans and Councils' responses indicated that graduates may be considered insufficiently trained in terms of life competencies and skills to meet the requirements of the world of work. Similarly a significant number of both sets of respondents considered training in life competencies and skills to be valuable. Consequently it can be concluded that provision should be made for training in these skills.

3.6 SURVEY OF COURSES OFFERED BY HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTS AND TRAINING COMPANIES

Finally, a small-scale survey was done in an attempt to ascertain which, if any, courses in life skills were being offered by Human Resources Development departments or independent Training Companies. Sources included the following:

* The South African Breweries Beer Division: interview Mr S Jackson (January 1993)
* Old Mutual: interview Mr P Gilbert (January 1993)
* The South African Breweries Beer Division : Central Office Course Directory (1992)
* The South African Breweries Information Systems Department : Course Catalogue (April 1992 - March 1993)
* The South African Breweries Beer Division Training Course Catalogue : Training and Development - Beer Division (1992/1993)
* Gillian Kat of GKA Development and Training (1992)
* The Business Entrepreneurship Initiative (undated brochure)
* IPM Training Course Directory (1993)

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* The National Training Board (Annual Report 1991)
* Executive Development Africa (February - July 1993)
* MaST (sic) Public Seminars (May - December 1993).

A correlation of the courses which pertain to life skills training offered by the sources mentioned above indicated that said courses could be grouped under the following headings: community commitment, leadership, general management, communication and relationship skills, thinking skills and knowledge of the law.

Courses subsumed under these headings included those dealing with:

1. Community Commitment
   * The interrelationship between business, social, economic and political environments
2. Leadership
   * Situational/moral leadership
   * Managing work and people (Supervisory Skills)
   * Good organizational behaviour
   * Assertiveness/empowerment
   * Managing personal growth
3. General Management
   * Everyday service excellence
   * Return on investment approach
   * Measuring and managing productivity
   * Management skills/team building/performance management (including stress, time, financial, resources, business, work and people management
   * Action learning/critical path planning
   * Business knowledge
4. Communication and relationship skills
   * Effective communication (including written communication) skills
   * Interpersonal relationship skills including problem-solving and negotiating skills
   * Conflict management skills
   * Public relations skills

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5. Thinking skills
   * Metacognition
   * Mediated learning
   * Cognitive skills training
   * Organizational behaviour
   * The establishing of career development systems
6. Knowledge of the law
   * Street law
   * Labour law
   * Common law.

Apropos the above, Penny Smythe presented a programme on Agenda (14 January, 1993), dealing with the availability of legal services to the general public. The conclusion reached was that legal services are so expensive as to be beyond the means of the average citizen. Where legal aid is available to the poor, the manpower provided is insufficient to cover demand. In light of this, it is understandable that training courses dealing with an understanding of the law are being offered.

3.7 CONCLUSION

It would appear from the above and in light of the aims stated in the introduction (See 3.1. p.40), that:

1. A larger number of life competencies and skills are considered important by employers, the self-employed and those surveyed in this chapter, than graduates can currently be said to possess. Where it is not feasible to assume that universities could address all of them, provision could be made for tuition in quite a large number of them.
2. Proficiency levels assessed in graduates with regard to the life competencies and skills covered in this chapter are not adequate to meet the demands of the world of work.
3. Insufficient or inadequate deliberate and conscious teaching of life skills is taking place at university level.

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4. Human Resources Development departments and training companies are providing courses in life competencies and skills in order to improve employability and productivity. At the same time courses are also being offered, for example by educational organizations such as Damelin Centre for Business Studies and Wits Graduate School of Business (as frequently advertised in the Sunday Times: Business Times) and via professional associations such as PASA, to the self-employed to assist them to remain economically viable.

According to Edey & Molin (1993:24), referring to problems associated with employability of Arts graduates, it is important for universities to acknowledge first and foremost that a problem exists. They believe that "whilst it is the responsibility of the individual to secure suitable employment, the institution must surely consider the ultimate destination of its 'products'. Investment in a university education is a waste of money from all points of view if graduates cannot contribute to the economy" (Edey & Molin 1993:24).

Mauer (1993:31-32), contends that "there is a frequently-encountered tendency among teaching staff to undervalue the need to prepare graduates for their chosen professions". Reid and Bates (in Mauer 1993:31), conducted a study in the United States of America and discovered that as few as 4% of teaching staff believed this to be an important aspect of their duties. Mauer (1993:31), believes there is a distinct possibility that the same situation applies in South Africa.

According to Mauer (1993:31-32), in order to assist graduates to become sufficiently skilled to cope with the demands of the world of work, university counsellors will have both "to join forces with teaching staff", with whom they will probably "have to be sufficiently persuasive to gain the necessary cooperation", and facilitate "the involvement of practitioners in the various disciplines as a link between students and employers" (Mauer 1993:31-32).

In Chapter Four, an attempt will be made to explore a way for universities to address the problem of underskilled graduates via the provision of Guidance Support.

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CHAPTER FOUR

GUIDANCE SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A conclusion was reached in Chapter Three that graduates could be considered insufficiently competent in terms of life skills to meet the demands of the world of work. This appeared to be the case irrespective of whether graduates entered into employment in the public or private sector, or went into self-employment.

As there appears to be a growing body of literature, both nationally and internationally, calling for increased levels of life competencies and skills with regard to graduates (See Table 11 p.85), the aims of this chapter are to attempt both to address and to redress the situation via the introduction of the concept of guidance support.

Before the above can be dealt with, however, it becomes necessary to take a look at the situation with regard to the traditional role of universities, current perspectives and alternative approaches.

4.2 THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

Traditionally, universities have been seen as "ivory towers divorced from the pressures of the working world to pursue knowledge, truth and beauty for its own sake" (Lund 1993:35).

The traditional function of universities has been twofold. Firstly, a university functions as an institution of higher learning and secondly, it is a place where meaningful (usually basic or applied) research is done. Universities are autonomous in character and they are not centrally controlled.

Du Plessis (1987:29), referring to the Universities Act, 61 of 1955; University of Pretoria (Private) Act 13 of 1930; and University of Stellenbosch Act, 37 of 1959, as well as the

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SAPSE 115 - First Report, May 1982 (all in du Plessis 1987:29), has the following to say (under the subheading Formulation of objectives for the modern university):

> "In terms of legislation for the establishment of universities in South Africa, the objective of a university, simply defined, is to supply education that secures to the postgraduate, upon successful completion of a course, a level of competence corresponding to satisfactory university standards, whereupon an acknowledging certificate is issued. In addition, the state subsidises universities, expecting in return research that will lead to the collection, processing, classification, publication and generation of new knowledge. There is a fair degree of unanimity on these two components, namely education and research, as the main objectives of a university" (du Plessis 1987:29).

In summary du Plessis (1987:30), states that universities are still subject to two traditional objectives, namely that "students are trained in the basic and fundamental truths developed through the ages, and that simultaneously research is carried out to analyse and classify existing knowledge while generating new knowledge. This remains the main objective, even for South African universities" (du Plessis 1987:30).

According to Strydom and Bitzer (1988:94-95), it is the opinion of the CUP that universities should be the leaders in teaching and research activities because the acquisition and promotion of basic knowledge must be considered to be one of their primary functions (Strydom & Bitzer 1988:94-95).

According to the Report of the Main Committee of the CUP investigation into macro-aspects of the university within the context of tertiary education in the RSA (1987:19-20), research, along with teaching, is a "primary academic function" of a university. This research can be of a basic, applied or developmental nature. The Report goes on to state that if, "by applied and development research is meant practical research, the universities then have a major role to play - indeed such research constitutes an important part of their research function" (CUP Report 1987:19-20).

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TABLE 11 : EXAMPLES OF CORE SKILL REQUIREMENTS OVERSEAS

AUSTRALIAN KEY COMPETENCIES	UK (NCVQ) CORE SKILLS	US (SCANS) WORK KNOW-HOW	NZ ESSENTIAL SKILLS
* Collecting, analysing and organising information	* Comunication	* Information * Foundation : basic skills	* Information skills
* Communicating ideas and information	* Communication * Personal skills : improving own learning and performance	* Information * Foundation : basic skills	* Communication skills
* Planning and organising activities	* Personal skills : improving own learning and performance	* Resources * Foundation : personal qualities	* Self-management skills * Work and study skills
* Working with others and in teams	* Personal skills : working with others	* Interpersonal skills	* Social skills * Work and study skills
* Using maths ideas and techniques	* Numeracy : application of numbers	* Foundation : basic skills	* Numeracy skills
* Solving problems	* Problem-solving	* Foundation : thinking skills	* Problem-solving and decision-making skills
* Using technology	* Information technology	* Technology * Systems	* Information skills * Communication skills
	* Modern foreign language		

(Source : Wood & Phillips 1992:2)

For an elaboration of skills requirements in Australia see Annexure C pp. 171-172

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According to Strydom and Bitzer (1988:94-95) the view of the CUP is that occupational training should be offered by universities only with regard to the training of high-level professional people so as to provide leaders for the country in economic, technical, political, social and cultural fields. Universities should also make their specialised knowledge and skills available to the general community (Strydom & Bitzer 1988:94-95).

Conversely, du Plessis (1987:29) notes that unprecedented reactions to the traditional role of universities, traditionally regarded as being unconventional, have been seen on certain South African campuses in recent years. He maintains that new thinking is required with regard to the main objective of a university.

According to Riesman (in du Plessis 1987:29), "universities are to many students simply a place to prepare themselves for an occupation, for many professors a base for their research activities, and for society a source of knowledge and skill for sustaining the industrial machine" (in du Plessis 1987:29).

Du Plessis (1987:29) notes there is nothing new about the criticism that the private sector levels at universities with regard to the fact that graduate students often require long periods of adaptation and training before they are able to make a productive contribution to the world of work. He believes that "the last word has certainly not been spoken in this regard" and that "the key issue centres round the purpose of the modern university" (du Plessis 1987:34).

4.3 CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

The problem with the traditional approach is that it does not appear to be able to accommodate either the rapid changes taking place in society, or the demands of the new information/service age. Thus it does not seem able to produce graduates sufficiently prepared to meet the needs of the world of work. Some technikons (for example Vaal Triangle and the Port Elizabeth Technikons) and even schools (see 3.2.1 p.41), on the other hand, are already making attempts to address the above-mentioned needs via the inclusion of life skills training. This begs the question of whether or not universities can afford to fall behind. According to the opinions of some members of the academe, this writer included, the answer is, clearly, no. (See authors quoted in Chapter Three pp.40-82 and below). (For a comparison between the functions of technikons and universities, see Table 12 p.87).

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TABLE 12 : A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FUNCTIONS OF TECHNIKONS AND UNIVERSITIES

TECHNIKONS	UNIVERSITIES
a) Technical courses have a practical orientation.	a) University courses have a theoretical orientation.
b) Technikons concentrate on the promotion of technological thought and creativity, and those intellectual skills that are necessary for the successful implementation of technology.	b) Universities concentrate on the development of intellectual abilities that contribute to the acquisition of new concepts, the promotion of independent critical thought, the preparation of the student for life-long self-study, and the inculcation of flexibility in the application of knowledge.
c) Training is more occupation oriented. Technikons provide people who can occupy advanced technical positions, implement various technologies and make a significant contribution to development.	c) Training has a more fundamental and scientific nature. Universities provide people for the learned professions - people who can help develop learned subjects and scientific disciplines and possibly also practise professions in the technical field.
d) Concerned with development research.	d) Concerned with basic and applied research.
e) Concentrate on technology.	e) University courses are concentrated on the development of science (in the broadest sense - including all academic activities), thus training the basic scientist and basic researcher.
f) At technikons the emphasis is more on what is immediately required for the effective use of technology in the work situation.	f) At a university a wide range of subjects is offered to the student.
g) Technikons play a leading role in training students for careers where ready skills are required.	g) Universities train the leaders and thinkers in a community, and are the leaders in the field of tertiary education at all levels.
	h) Universities are responsible for renewal in the education system in that university graduates are appointed on the staff of other tertiary institutions.
	i) Responsible for the development of the cultural life in their respective communities. Universities also have a renewal function in society as a whole.
	j) Enable students to enter high-level occupations.
	k) Primary goal is to broaden the cultural and intellectual horizons of students and to promote honest scientific thought and study among students.
	l) Generate new knowledge through research.

(Source : Sheppard 1992:76-77)

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Should one take so much as a cursory look at comments being made by academics from a number of universities, it will become apparent that said academics are taking some cognizance of the above-mentioned need for skills training.

Ullyatt (1989:159), expressed the following opinion in an article entitled The management of change and the change of management in South African universities. "If we are to serve the society to which we belong and in which our students are expected to find a place for themselves, we must have a clear idea of our function in that society. We should be asking ourselves precisely what sort of service we should be offering at tertiary level"...and..."whether society's needs are being catered for by the various tertiary level institutions. If society is changing dynamically, tertiary education must at least keep up with those changes. Better still, it should be initiating many of them. If we are preparing young people for tomorrow, shouldn't we be asking what the South Africa of tomorrow will look like?" (Ullyatt 1989:159).

Ullyatt feels the above questions "assume considerable importance", because he believes that "South African universities are, in some ways, allowing themselves to become further and further removed from society and from the dynamic and complex realities of the twentieth century." In his opinion this is due in part to the "high resistance-to-change factor among academic personnel"; to the fact that a number of academics "are apprehensive about change and innovation simply because they have had no experience of managing it, or they feel they lack the skills necessary to manage it"; and to the fact that academics appear "unwilling to adopt more business-like attitudes and procedures" (Ullyatt 1989:160).

Alvin Toffler (in Ullyatt 1989:161), maintains that "what passes for education today, even in our "best" schools and colleges, is a hopeless anachronism. Parents look to education to fit their children for life in the future. Teachers warn that lack of an education will cripple a child's chances in the world of tomorrow. Government ministries, churches, the mass media - all exhort young people to stay in school, insisting that now, as never before, one's future is almost wholly dependent upon education.

"Yet for all this rhetoric about the future, our schools face backwards towards a dying system, rather than forwards to the emerging new society. Their vast energies are applied

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to cranking out Industrial Men - people tooled for survival in a system that will be dead before they are" (in Ullyatt 1989:161). Tofler was writing the above in the nineteen seventies.

In response to the above, Ullyatt (1989:161), believes that, in order to avert future shock, super-industrial education systems should be created using objectives and methods found in the future and not in the past (Ullyatt 1989:161).

Speaking more specifically, Khoapa (1993:46), notes that the business community is complaining of the difficulty in recruiting literate university graduates. He states that "remedial programmes designed to compensate for lack of skills in the use of the English language, are in evidence in the corporate world"...and that..."writing as an undergraduate experience, as an exploration of both communication and style, is widely neglected" (Khoapa 1993:46).

He further notes that "scientific and technological development have so outpaced the understanding of science provided by most universities in South Africa that we have become a people unable to comprehend the technology that we invent and unable to bring under control our capacity to understand the natural world" (Khoapa 1993:46). Where the above opinion is certainly open to debate, what is of relevance here is Khoapa's awareness that an increase in skills training is necessary. This is evidenced by his comment that contemporary student populations are "less well-prepared, more vocationally-oriented, and apparently more materialistic than their immediate predecessors" (Khoapa 1993:47).

Khoapa (1993:47-48), maintains a more coherent curriculum approach is being investigated at his university (Fort Hare), including training in the following skills:

* Thinking skills (inquiry, abstract and logical thinking, and critical analysis)
* Literacy skills (reading, writing and speaking)
* Numerical/scientific skills
* Historical consciousness (complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty as intractable conditions of society)
* Values (including self-responsibility)

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* Art (including creativity, an understanding of freedom and instruments of social cohesion)
* International and multicultural experience
* Study in depth (Khoapa 1993:47-48).

With reference to the BA degree (although it is the opinion of the writer that the same may be extended to include any degree), Khoapa (1993:48) recommends that;

1. "University faculties and staff in each institution should agree upon and disseminate a statement of the knowledge, capacities and skills that students must develop prior to graduation"...(i.e. be "less grandiose about their statements of goals and far more specific about their objectives") and
2. "Liberal education requirements should be expanded and reinvigorated to ensure that curricular content is directly addressed, not only to subject matter but also to the development of capacities of analysis, problem solving, communication and synthesis; and students and staff (should) integrate knowledge from various disciplines" (Khoapa 1993:48).

In an attempt to extend and update an investigation into the image of the university carried out by the Main Committee of the CUP in 1987, Sheppard (1992:72-86) conducted a similar investigation, the aim of which was to study a number of social groupings' perceptions of and attitudes to universities as teaching and research institutions. The focus of the investigation fell on the effectiveness/efficiency and relevance of university training, and the issues included the perceptions of the respective stakeholders of the role of universities as well as the degree to which universities fulfilled this idealized role. His target groups included the general public, employers (usually canvassed via human resources managers), trade unions, professional boards and new first-year students (Sheppard 1992:72-74).

According to Sheppard's research, universities should concentrate on aspects of general development and character building of students, the development of leadership for high-level manpower, the development of intellectual skills and promotion of innovative and creative thinking, preparation of students for further training, the development of adaptability to changing professional requirements, and the development of scientific

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literacy. It was further felt that universities should take the lead in research and in tertiary education in general (Sheppard 1992:81).

Apropos deficiencies in university training, respondents mentioned the following (as pertains to life competencies and skills): inadequate development of the cultural values of students, the inability of university students to apply technology satisfactorily, inadequate development of practical skills, economic literacy and that the course composition of many students is too general. On the other hand, courses covered by technikons were considered to be more relevant to the requirements of the workplace, more likely to maintain relevance and better at preparing students to adapt easily and quickly to the work situation (Sheppard 1992:82-83).

According to Sheppard (1992:72-73), all the response groups surveyed by him appeared "to press for more career-oriented training", as well as development of the ability to apply technology to enable university students to adapt more quickly to the work situation. All seemed to feel that career guidance especially needed urgent attention (Sheppard 1992:72-73).

Some of the recommendations made by Sheppard (1992:85-86) with regard to life skills training included:

* The skills already mentioned above including the need for more applied research
* The course composition of university students should be directed towards a specific field of research, or towards an occupation
* Updated research on these issues needs to be done regularly in order to determine whether or not the university is fulfilling the needs of the changing South Africa (Sheppard (1992:85-86).

On the other hand, du Plessis (in Sheppard 1992:78), believes that a university should concentrate on the pursuit of science, on people and on giving guidance to the community (in terms of refresher courses, etc.). He maintains that a university should not be reduced to a state where it merely meets practical needs - a degradation he feels is promoted by a community that believes that only bread-and-butter subjects are required for progress and security in life. According to him, the interaction between university training and an

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occupation should not be seen merely in terms of occupational skills, but should also be understood in terms of academic input (du Plessis in Sheppard 1992:78).

The University of Pretoria is currently in the process of attempting to address the Thatcherite notion of "added value" as a way of producing graduates with leadership abilities and skills. To this end, it makes mention in its mission statement of the qualities it hopes to foster. The mission statement is reproduced fully below. Statements which may be considered to indicate an awareness of the need for life skills training are marked with an asterisk.

STATEMENT OF MISSION

"The University of Pretoria

- is an autonomous institution financially supported by the State as well as by the public;
- is academically and scientifically active in a comprehensive field;
- has, in terms of its origin, an Afrikaans and Christian character;
- is open to everyone who complies on academic merit with the University's admission requirements and accepts its institutional character.

The University fulfills its obligations towards its own community, the Republic of South Africa, the sub-continent of Southern Africa as well as the international scientific community by means of

- training in order to meet the demand for high level manpower;*
- the creation and dissemination of knowledge through scientific research and teaching;
- community service;*
- a balanced education.*

The University, encouraging excellence at all levels, strives towards the cultural, intellectual, and personal development of its students by

- integrating student life with academic programmes;*
- developing leadership qualities and preparing its students for responsible citizenship and meaningful participation in society.*

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The University endeavours to fulfill its mission and to meet continual demands by

- consciously striving towards excellence in all spheres;
- co-operating fully with private and public sectors, other universities, scientific institutions, and the international scientific community;*
- constantly evaluating its own progress;*
- promoting its image as a dynamic, future-oriented institution"* (University of Pretoria 1993).

At the same time, the Vice-Chancellor and Rector of the University, Professor Smit, in his address at the opening of the 1993 academic year (the year of student development), acknowledged the difficulty in achieving the above when he entitled his address, "Doen ons genoeg?" (Are we doing enough?).

Professor Smit (1993:1-3), maintains that universities are currently being confronted with political and socio-economic realities which call into question their commissions, traditions, rituals and social codes as never before (Smit 1993:1-3).

According to Smit (1993:1-3), the University of Pretoria should be producing graduates able to take up future positions of leadership in the community. To this end, he emphasizes the need for increased attention to be paid to leadership development programmes which place stress on "added value". A table showing strategies for the implementation of said leadership development programmes is shown in Annexure D (See p.173) (Smit 1993:1-3).

Other attributes and skills stressed by Professor Smit include those of adaptability, innovation, ethics/work ethic, honesty and respect for others (Smit 1993:1-3).

Notwithstanding the above, it is indisputable that graduates do leave universities with competencies and skills they would not have had prior to completion of their degrees. What is of concern here, is the degree to which and the manner in which these skills are consciously and deliberately acquired. It could be argued that skills are being too narrowly employed due to a lack of metacognition and transference. At the same time, it may be equally true that there is a lack of awareness on the part of some employers at least, and

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hence a lack of employment (in both senses of the word), of the skills graduates do possess.

It should be mentioned at this stage that, having identified that a need exists for training in life competencies and skills, either in terms of students or in terms of the community at large, faculties within given universities have already begun engaging in activities designed to promote life skills competence. A few examples are given below:

1 The University of South Africa offers legal assistance via a legal aid centre.

2 The University of Stellenbosch is engaged in life skills based community work in areas such as Khayelitsha and Crossroads. The University of the Witwatersrand's Melvin Freeman has launched a similar sort of project to assist disadvantaged youth in the PWV area.

3 Graduate Schools of Business, countrywide, offer a range of courses primarily in the field of business skills, entrepreneurship, and allied skills.

4 The University of the Witwatersrand includes the Business Achievement Programme (an adapted version of the widely-used Junior Achievement programmes) as as one of their Academic Support options. The course covers basic business and enterprise skills.

5 The University of Pretoria is engaged in Educare programmes and in projects dealing with life skills training in Kwandebele. The University of Fort Hare is also considering possible ways of upgrading the skills levels of educationists in their community.

6 The Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Pretoria includes knowledge of practice management and computer literacy skills as part of its courses. Other universities such as those of the Witwatersrand and Stellenbosch offer similar packages.

The few above-mentioned examples serve to demonstrate that an awareness of the need for training in life competencies and skills exists. The problem, however, is that faculties and departments within universities appear to be acting discretely. No centralized co-ordination of courses, sharing of knowledge and expertise, central resource or media centres, or close co-operation to facilitate cross pollination or availability of courses/training appears to be taking place anywhere. It is the opinion of this writer that the above situation constitutes, certainly not a waste of resources and expertise, but, at the least, a limited

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distribution of training that could be of benefit to both the whole student population of a given university as well as the community it serves.

Finally, an overview of an alternative approach used overseas will be given. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to cover in any depth the range of approaches used internationally. Consequently, the United Kingdom has been selected primarily because South African universities tend to follow British/American and European trends.

4.4 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Before going into detail with regard to the United Kingdom, brief mention will be made of the current situation in the United States of America, Canada and Western Europe.

According to van Vught (1991:3-4), the market is the most important form of co-ordination in higher education in the United States and Canada. Competition between higher education institutions is generally accepted and said institutions are organized on a basis that is to a large extent similar to private corporations.

According to Clark and Young (in van Vught 1991:3-4), there is considerable power at the top of the higher educational institutions demonstrated by the fact that "they have a corporate board or its equivalent and a true chief executive officer". Thus in these countries, governmental steering is limited and higher education institutions are expected to regulate themselves if they do not want to lose resources, students and scholars to their competitors. Simply put, there is an emphasis on market co-ordination and a high level of institutional autonomy as regards higher education systems in the United States and Canada (van Vught 1991:4).

Van Vught (1991:5-6) maintains that, in contrast to the United States and Canada, the predominant form of co-ordination in the Western European higher education systems has generally been state control. Western European higher education systems have been strictly controlled by governments for a long time: hence institutional autonomy has been limited and funding has generally been provided by the state.

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With the rise to power of conservative governments in many Western European countries in the 1980s, a "so-called value-for-money approach with respect to the public sector led to the end of the more or less unconditional government funding of public higher education". In practice, this implied that public funding of higher education was increasingly becoming linked to the performance of higher education institutions, coupled to the rise of the governmental strategy of 'self-regulation' of said institutions. In other words "several governments in Western nations advocated deregulation by central ministries and increased competitiveness among the higher education institutions and, as indicated, at the same time (they) sought 'value-for-money'. Governments wanted more attention to societal needs... whilst...there was also to be greater awareness on the part of society and the public of the quality of study programmes". Simply put, the strategy of 'self-regulation' has led to increased autonomy for higher education institutions in Western Europe (van Vught 1991:5-6).

In Britain, an approach to quality assessment that is linked to a highly political process in which the drive for 'more value for less money' is the catchphrase, (refer to the rationalization process currently taking place in most South African higher education institutions), has resulted in a rather heavy emphasis being placed on performance indicators, 'ranking and competitive tendering' (van Vught 1991:6).

Nevertheless, as far back as twenty years ago, commerce, educationists and career guidance counsellors were calling for a more skills based curriculum to be employed at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) of education. (Refer Hopson & Scally 1981 and Hoyt & Shylo 1987). It should be noted that Britain has one of the poorest records of post-16 year old education or training of any country in the industrialized world (Jones 1990:5).

4.4.1 Theoretical and philosophical perspectives

According to a publication by the Educational Methods Unit of Oxford Brookes University entitled Teaching Enterprise Skills (Gibbs, Rust, Jenkins and Jaques 1993:5), concern arose in the United Kingdom (UK) during the nineteen seventies about study and learning skills: those skills which had an impact on the effectiveness and outcomes of student learning.

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They included essay and laboratory report writing, using libraries, note-taking and being organized.

The awareness grew in the nineteen eighties that these skills were not only vital for effective learning but also that they had many similarities to those skills students would need after they left higher education, namely communication skills, information skills, record keeping and time and task management. During this period in the UK, these skills were referred to as transferable skills. Gibbs **et al** (1993:5) maintain that, by the nineteen nineties, these concerns had been taken up by the Conservative Party, and had materialised into a large programme, initiated by the Manpower Services Commission. Some thirty institutions and forty million pounds in funding were involved, in an attempt to re-orient higher education so that it more explicitly addressed the needs of industry and commerce. Naturally, the institutional and philosophical divide between, and division into, academic and vocational routes had also to be addressed (Jones 1990:6).

The above-mentioned authors, (Gibbs **et al** 1993:5), had the following to say about the move to enterprise education:

> "Initially there was some fairly blatant concern for entrepreneurialism and initiatives concentrated on links with industry, work placements and short courses in finance and management. This has evolved into a fairly broad concern to involve students more actively in learning and to bring aspects of the world outside academia into the ways courses are run and assessed. In particular it became widely accepted that many students were not being at all well prepared for the world of work, whether in the commercial or public sector. Students left higher education without being able to communicate effectively orally or in writing; without being able to co-operate with others; computer illiterate; lacking in autonomy; and unaware of the demands jobs would make on them. Students were said to lack enterprise and initiative" (Gibbs **et al** 1993:5).

According to Hofmeyr (1993a:1-3), the UK education system at present is becoming highly supportive of enterprise education. As the capacity of the formal sector to provide employment for the majority of workseekers shrinks - a problem exacerbated by the global recession - the formal and informal education sectors in the UK are placing increasing focus on enterprising and work-related learning experiences (Hofmeyr 1993a:1).

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The central impetus driving developments is the belief that neither the traditional curriculum, nor traditional methodologies, are suited to producing school leavers and graduates equipped to create their own employment opportunities, or to meet the employee requirements of a modern economy. The impetus comes from a government increasingly concerned at the rising levels of unemployment, and an industrial sector unhappy with the type of education offered, particularly insofar as it fails to meet the growth needs of the economy.

Hofmeyr (1993a:1) maintains that what is perhaps most striking about these developments is, firstly, the level of structural complexity in the education system as it tries to redesign itself and secondly, the level of partnership between the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Employment and Education, the formal education sector, representatives from industry, training providers and the community at large. Out of the complexity has grown some confusion (at least for outsiders), while from the partnerships has grown an extensive and innovative network of enterprise educational opportunities for young people (Hofmeyr 1993a:1).

The concept of education through enterprise represents a shift away from both a purely academic, rarefied curriculum and traditional didactic methodologies.

According to Hofmeyr (1993a:1-2), from a curricular perspective, two major trends are evident. Firstly, within the formal curriculum, subjects such as Technology and Enterprise have been introduced at all levels of schooling. These provide a more specific view of the world of work than had ben the case in traditional curricula. Secondly, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), in which specific work-related skills are addressed, and National General Vocational Qualifications (NGVQs), in which generic work-related skills such as communications, computer literacy, interpersonal and other life skills are addressed, are offered as alternative curricula to the purely academic, to post-16 (year old) candidates (Hofmeyr 1993a:1-2). Naturally, it is the generic type skills which would be of relevance to university training.

Methodological shifts underpin the above-mentioned curricular changes. Experiential learning is stressed. Concomitant with the methodological shifts, is a shift in the

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relationship between the school and industry at large. Partnerships are set up between local education institutions and industries.

According to Hofmeyr (1993a:2), speaking with regard to schools, 45 000 teachers per annum (or 10% of the workforce) spend time working in an industry of their choice, improving subject-specific knowledge and skills and gaining a perspective of how their own subjects are applied in industry. Simultaneously, employees from industry spend time in schools (either on a one-off lesson basis or for extended periods), teaching their areas of specialization. In addition, pupils do work experience, in which they themselves spend time in industry, gaining a perspective both on the application of knowledge and skills, and on the range of work opportunities in industry (Hofmeyr 1993a:2). (As a matter of interest, the Johannesburg College of Education is currently investigating the possibility of lecturers returning to schools for a term at a time every 5 years, in order to gain experience of the changes occurring in South African education).

Hofmeyr (1993a:2), maintains that the above-mentioned curricular, methodological and relationship changes are encouraged and financed by government and the private sector in the form of grants, secondments and institutions set up specifically to facilitate these changes. Furthermore, in keeping with work-related philosophy, assessment of NVQs and NGVQs is predominantly criterion and activity referenced. Thus assessment is largely carried out through the observation of skills, successfully demonstrated on three occasions, in three different contexts - either in the workplace, or in a workplace simulation. The assessors are training providers of all types who have qualified and have been formally certificated as assessors, by the government. Specially constituted examining bodies oversee this function (Hofmeyr 1993a:2-3).

Apropos assessment, the Director of Education at the University of Oxford, Professor Richard Pring (1990:3) maintains that a problem lies in the traditional assessment and public examination system.

> "They (examinations) often do not do justice to the many qualities and understandings of personal, community and economic values that young people have attained in the course of their studies. Assessment usually requires a product, something objective that can be scrutinized by internal and external examiners, and then graded. But this tends to devalue the more ephemeral aspects of education:

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> the performance; the process of learning; the practical mastery of a task; or oral communication. And yet it is precisely the ability to do and to communicate, to solve a practical problem and to assume control over one's own learning, to test out and to reject proposed solutions, to negotiate and to argue, which are equally demanding of the intelligent learner and which can often be acquired through the hard graft of a well-structured course" (Pring 1990:3).

Pring (1990:3) believes that assessments look for individual achievement, and generally cannot cope with the co-operative teamwork characteristic of many innovative courses and required by employers. Despite its supreme importance either at work or at home, teamwork thus becomes downgraded under the powerful control of public examinations (Pring 1990:3).

Finally, a new "academic" record-keeping system has also been implemented. All courses, work experience, placements, projects that a scholar does and academic assessment records are collated. Each individual has a copy of his/her record, and this becomes a valuable **curriculum vitae** tool (Hofmeyr 1993a:3). (See 2.5 p.38).

A large number of the programmes used in the UK, or adapted versions thereof, could be employed in South Africa to assist with the education of disadvantaged youth. These include those advocated by members of the Durham University Business School, Enterprise Education Unit and/or Overseas Development Group; Young Enterprise; the University of Warwick's Mini Enterprise in Schools Programme (MESP) and School Industries Curriculum Project (SCIP); the International Award Scheme and Prince's Youth Business Trust; and Trickle Up (Hofmeyr 1993a:4-9). According to an interview with Michael Rice of Procivitas, some of these organizations are already operative in Southern Africa (Rice September:1992).

Where a discussion of the above lies outside the scope of this thesis, the reason for mentioning it will become apparent later (See 4.5.2 pp.115-116).

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The philosophical and theoretical backgrounds to the new approaches to education in the UK have been given. It now becomes necessary to consider the practical dynamics of implementing a system such as enterprise education. To this end, Oxford Brookes University (formerly a polytechnic but upgraded to university status in 1992) has been chosen to serve as an example. Before continuing, however, it is important to mention two factors. Firstly, the UK has elected to use the words **core skills** in preference to **life skills.** To all intents and purposes, the terms are interchangeable (Walker 1993). Secondly, the literature surveyed indicated that training in core skills is given either in modular form (i.e. compulsory, supplementary or extra-curricular modules are covered), or it is subsumed as a perspective on the general academic curriculum.

4.4.2 Practical Approaches

The information given below is taken from the Oxford Brookes University: Educational Methods Unit publication, Teaching enterprise skills (Gibbs **et al** 1993:53). It is meant as a guide for lecturers. It is presented below in an abridged form and in a series of steps in order to facilitate both expedition and ease of apprehension.

It would seem that, presently, there is in existence no definitive, prescriptive or even agreed list of what enterprise skills consist of (Gibbs **et al** 1993:5). Apparently it is up to each institution to select the content it would consider most appropriate to its particular circumstances. The list used by Oxford Brookes University is reproduced in Table 13 (p.102).

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TABLE 13 : ENTERPRISE SKILLS: OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

ENTERPRISE SKILLS	EXAMPLES
Communication	writing reports, giving presentations, using media (e.g. video, posters)
Group work	leadership, chairing, co-operation, teamwork
Personal	independence, autonomy, self-assessment, self-confidence
Interpersonal	influencing, counselling, listening, interviewing, assertiveness, negotiation
Organisational	time management, project management, objective setting, project evaluation
Teaching and training	identifying learning needs, designing and running workshops, coaching, peer tutoring
Learning	reading flexibly and with purpose, note-taking flexibly and with purpose, literature search and review
Information	locating information sources, evaluating sources and data, extracting relevant information, interpretation of data, presentation of data
Financial	costing, pricing, budgeting, obtaining sponsorship and funding
Problem solving	problem analysis, creative problem-solving, decision making
Language	oral skills, use of a foreign language
Information technology	using word processing, databases, spreadsheets, graphics, desk top publishing
Entrepreneurship	taking initiatives, seizing opportunities, creativity

(Source : Gibbs et al 1993:4)

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STEP ONE:

SKILLS REVIEW

A skills review should be done by lecturers/tutorial leaders both of themselves and of their students. It may be necessary for lecturers to develop certain skills themselves before they are able to assist students with practice in skill development. Checklists can be completed for both lecturers and students.

The self review (i.e. lecturer checklist) is a simple, tabulated document listing the same skills given above with space provided for comments. Lecturers answer the following questions about themselves:

* "What are you good at?
* "What do you feel less confident about?
* "What specific skills would you like to develop for yourself?"

Space is also provided for lecturers to note conclusions about their enterprise skills.

The student skills review is slightly more complex as it is considered useful to make three judgements about the skills students have in order to identify on which areas of skills to concentrate. The questions asked are:

* "To what extent is this skill valuable to the learning of your subject?
* "To what extent is this skill valuable to students in the kinds of jobs they will go on to after they have studied your subject?
* "To what extent and to what level do your students already possess these skills?"

The table can be broken up into sections containing a list of the skills with space to record the value to study, the value to work and the current skill level.

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STEP TWO:

THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

According to Gibbs **et al** (1993:9), "students do not become proficient in the use of a skill simply by being told about it, discussing it or thinking about it - they have to practise the skill. But practice, on its own, is also ineffective. It is necessary to notice what went well and not so well and to reflect on this and why it happened. It is necessary to develop an 'informal theory' or personal explanation of what is going on and what being skillful consists of. And this informal theory needs to be used to help to make decisions next time about what to do differently" (Gibbs **et al** 1993:9).

Learning skills involves a four-stage cycle of doing, reflecting, forming principles and planning. For example:

DO	Experiential exercises, actually using the skills, work placements.
REFLECT	Watching a video of yourself, discussing what happpened, using a checklist to assess the use of a skill, keeping a reflective log or diary, profiling skills.
FORMING PRINCIPLES	Listening to a lecture about a skill, reading, summarising general features from a discussion.
PLANNING	Preparing for a presentation or for team work, setting action plans, identifying priorities for skill development using a profile.

A skills development checklist can also be used to ensure efforts have not been ineffective or insufficiently comprehensive. The checklist can be used as a diagnostic medium to indicate areas in which efforts might be enhanced or to review any skill development process e.g.

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Tick

- ☐ Do students feel the need to develop the skill?
- ☐ Are students given advice about using the skill?
- ☐ Do students get feedback on the use of the skill?
- ☐ Are students given examples or models of expert use of the skill?
- ☐ Are students given some form of initial training in using the skill?
- ☐ Are students given a chance to practise the use of the skill?
- ☐ Is the practice 'safe' for students so that they can experiment?
- ☐ Are students encouraged to experiment and to take risks?
- ☐ Is attention paid to the emotional climate in which skills are developed?
- ☐ Do students get the chance to use the skill in different contexts?
- ☐ Are students encouraged to follow a 'recipe' in using a skill, or to become flexible?

Other important questions you would want to add...

. . . . . .

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STEP THREE:

HOW SKILLS CAN BE DEVELOPED IN THE CONTEXT OF ACADEMIC COURSES

Implementing effective skill development programmes involves four elements. These include training, demand, monitoring and assessment. Examples of ways of covering each of these elements (i.e. actual lessons) can be found in Annexure F pp.178-193.

Once again, Oxford Brookes University uses a checklist to identify which aspects of skill development are built into the way the degree programme, or Modular Course Field, or course the lecturer teaches on develops enterprise skills. Much skill development work may be implicit and informal. The checklist should enable the lecturer to identify which of the four aspects of skill development needs most attention.

STEP FOUR:

PROFILING

Profiles are summaries of learning outcomes and are often used as a way of indicating the range and quality of the skills students have acquired. There is a wide range of types of profile used for different purposes. This range includes:

* Assessment of course outcomes
* Assessment of transferable skills
* Records of achievement
* Assessment of prior learning
* Records of work-based learning
* Personal development and career orientation

An example of a performance appraisal profile used by the BA Technical Communications course at Coventry Polytechnic (in Gibbs **et al** 1993:52), to assess and record the student's learning on the work-based component of the course is given in Table 14 p.108). The prescribed learning objectives are those which the course team want all students to achieve whilst on placement and the negotiated ones are identified and described by the students and workplace assessors at the beginning of the placement and will vary from student to

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student. These negotiated objectives are agreed with the visiting tutor. The system is also an example of a graded profile. Each learning objective is graded according to a set of performance standards. The total marks accrued from this assessment make up a percentage of the overall degree award (Source for all information related to Oxford Brookes University: Gibbs **et al** 1993:1-52).

An interview was held at the Johannesburg College of Education with Mr Laurie Walker, Director of the Enterprise in Higher Education Programme at Oxford Brookes University, on February 9th 1993. What follows is a transcription of comments he made during the interview.

According to Mr Walker (1993):

1 Knowledge based learning and programmes are no longer good enough as they produce learners who lack enterprise and initiative. Students themselves recognized this and began calling for skills based learning.

2 There is a vocation recession in the UK.

3 Due to the exponential growth of learning and a rapidly changing society, the skills of communication, literacy and numeracy, thinking and conceptualizing, teamwork, information technology, project management, self-initiated learning, problem-solving and, most especially, the skills of learning how to learn have become vital.

4 Methodologically-speaking, skills and knowledge must develop together in an integrated way. Learning and training are considered to be the same thing and skills competence must be integrated into general assessments.

5 There is a responsibility on the part of universities to provide graduates with the sort of training that will enable them to be employed on completion of their courses.

6 New teaching methodologies are being employed. Professional staff are being retrained via development programmes and induction programmes are available to new lecturers. All of this is resulting in tremendous interplay taking place among members of the academic staff.

7 Courses are presented in structured and sequential modular form in order to avoid repetition of introductory courses. Students may choose any combinations within given curriculum structures. A curriculum will include academic, technical, professional (as necessary) as well as core skills content. Core skills courses are certificated upon completion.

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TABLE 14 : EXAMPLE OF A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROFILE: COVENTRY POLYTECHNIC

Skills	Unsatisfactory (0.0 - 1.9)	Fair (2.0 - 2.4)	Good (2.5 - 2.9)	Very Good (3.0 - 3.4)	Outstanding (3.5 - 5.0)
Social Skills Working effectively with others, individually and/or as a member of a team	Has not worked effectively with others	Has some difficulty in working with others, needs to improve	Has worked effectively with others in straight-forward situations	Has worked very effectively, even in difficult situations	Has demonstrated excellent personal skills, in a wide variety of situations
Working to Plans Using time, people and other resources effectively to deliver work on time	Has wasted time, or has not used available resources, or has refused to help	Has attempted to meet deadlines, but needs to make better use of time and/or resources	Has met deadlines, where these deadlines were not exceptionally demanding	Has consistently met deadlines, even where this involved extra effort or replanning	Has planned own work, obtained resources, and met deadlines in demanding situations
Quality of Work Producing work that is well-written/well-designed, and is fit for the required purpose	Has been badly written, numerous errors have been made, had to be redone	Work has needed extensive correction, shows only basic grasp of principles	Work has been well written, only needing a modest amount of correction	Work has been very well written, showing creativity and good design	Exceptionally high quality, showing creative and innovative flair, always accurate
Understanding Grasping complex concepts, recognising and solving problems	Slow on the up-take; has not recognised problems; inadequate technical grasp	Takes longer than usual to grasp new concepts; does not readily offer solutions to problems	Generally quick on the up-take; can analyse problems and contribute to solutions	Grasps new information well; analyses problems well and makes good suggestions	Has readily grasped complex concepts; perceptive analysis of complex problems
Learning Accepting criticism, reflecting on their own performance, using this information to raise their level of performance	Refuses to take criticism; unable to improve level of performance	Needs prompting to reflect on experiences; makes only fair use of criticism	Able to reflect on what has been learnt; and change behaviour accordingly	Actively seeking learning experiences; can improve performance from feedback	Exceptionally high ability for self reflection; excellent use of feedback

(Source : Gibbs **et al** 1993:52)

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8 Assessment of learning outcomes takes place at the end of a course. Students must have explicit knowledge and understanding and be able to demonstrate that they can apply what they have learnt in practical situations (i.e. the focus is on doing and not just learning). Assessment involves self-assessments, peer assessments and external assessments.

9 Professional staff audit course content continually. They work very closely with students in this regard. Competence is the aim of both students and lecturers. Coherence with regard to curricula is essential as is the maintenance of both academic rigour and standards. Lecturers, however, become involved in the development of their own curricula.

10 Induction of students is essential. One cannot expect skills just to be there. One must actively teach them and provide feedback to students.

11 The profiling system is extremely important. It is supportive, it provides a reflection on learning outcomes, it acts as an assessment record for both staff and students, it indicates future needs and it facilitates action planning.

12 It is vital that close links between the university and the end employer with regard to employer needs, employability of students etc., are maintained.

13 The advantages of the system include flexibility, self-pacing, community accessibility, and the accommodation of part-time and distance learning.

14 Problems with the system include the fact that the modular system itself can be too broad and disparate resulting in a lack of depth and integration can be hard to achieve. Furthermore, a decision on the underlying concept of the university itself has to be made. This is the age-old question of whether the university should be research based or teaching based (Walker 1993).

According to Mr Bob Hale, Director of The Enterprise Centre at Edinburgh University (September 1993a), similar problems are being experienced by his university. Edinburgh concentrates on what it calls PLUS factors of which there are four. These are:

☞ "PLANNING AND MANAGING CHANGE
problem analysis, creative thinking, strategic implementation and evaluation.

☞ LEADING AND MOTIVATING PEOPLE
working and communicating with people individually or as groups.

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- ☛ UTILISING RESOURCES
  effective resources within social and environmental constraints.
- ☛ SELF-DEVELOPMENT
  to undertake personal and professional development, career planning, and life-long learning" (Hale 1993b:1).

Having completed the above survey, it becomes necessary to mention a few points that have arisen out of the research covered thus far.

1 It has been established that graduates are insufficiently prepared in terms of life competencies and skills to meet the demands of the world of work.

2 Members of the academe, universities and other institutions of higher learning in South Africa, are taking or have taken cognizance of the above. Attempts are being made to address the problem but it would seem that, at the moment, no single institution is employing a concerted approach. Rather, various faculties and departments appear to be acting discretely.

3 It has been demonstrated via reference to the British concept of enterprise through education that it is possible to address the problem using a co-ordinated approach. It should be noted, however, that it is not the writer's intention to suggest that the British system be adopted in South Africa. Apart from any other considerations, enterprise education is based on the particular circumstances that pertain to the economic policies and conceptualization of capitalism found in Britain. Furthermore there are differences between the two countries as regards the conditions covering issues such as personal development, societal needs and social justice. On the other hand, it is perhaps possible to assume that, at this stage, a platform has been laid for the introduction of the concept of guidance support.

4.5 GUIDANCE SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

4.5.1 Rationale, definition and aims

The majority of universities in South Africa make some sort of provision for the support of students who may be experiencing academic difficulties either via bridging courses and/or academic support programmes. It could be argued, however, that in terms of the life

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competencies and skills needed to cope with a rapidly changing society and to meet the demands of the world of work, all students are "disadvantaged". (See Chapters Two and Three pp.20-83).

Guidance Support was loosely defined in Chapter One (p.7) as being that support and guidance given to students which makes conscious and deliberate use of pertinent life skills training in order for self-actualization to take place with regard to each student's unique potential and to assist him with the successful practice of his future career.

What this means, in effect, is that the current educational reform process needs to address:

1 the conscious and deliberate teaching of academic curricula from a life-skills perspective

2 the notion of courses on life competencies and skills being consciously and deliberately included in academic curricula where feasible and

3 the offering to students of opportunities to take compulsory, supplementary, extra-concurrent, elective and/or extra-curricular, certificated courses in life competencies and skills.

In a document given to the writer prior to submission for publication and entitled Evaluation of academic programmes - what we have learnt in the last six years?, the then evaluator of the Wits Academic Support Programme, David Agar (1991:abstract), speaking in reference to the Academic Support Programme offered at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), which exists in a variety of forms across 8 of the 10 faculties (Agar 1991:1) and which takes the form of "extra-concurrent courses" (Slonimsky 1986:1), noted that during the last few years, a much wider audience than was originally the case has been showing interest in the potential of these programmes. "This interest, among academic and administrative staff and among private sector and community groups, has been stimulated by the increasing numbers of black students at traditionally white institutions, the growing awareness regarding the mismatch between manpower needs and manpower supply, the strengthening and entrenchment of the education crisis, as well as some major shifts which are taking place in the field of academic support itself" (Agar 1991:abstract).

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Whatever the rationale for the introduction of academic support programmes, a brief glance at the aims of the Wits Programme will show that a number of skills classifiable as "life skills" are mentioned. According to Agar (1991:1), the aims of the Programme can be summarized as follows:

"The immediate aim of the ASP is to maximize academic performance in students disadvantaged by the inadequacy of previous educational opportunities. The concern is not only that these students pass their courses as well as possible, but that they become learners who are critical, independent, exploratory, creative, and effective in processing, organising and communicating facts and ideas.

The longer-term concerns of the ASP staff are

* to increase the number of professionally qualified people from the disadvantaged sectors of our society;
* to contribute its experience and insights to developments in University policy and practice that are directed towards the priorities of a changing South African Society (emphasis mine) (Academic Support Programme Annual report, 1987 in Agar 1991:1).

Notwithstanding the value of ASP, a number of authors appear to have become concerned about the scope of the concept in recent years. Agar (1991:26) maintains that educational support programmes in themselves are too limited. "Most educational support programmes have not been designed to impact upon the educational experiences of students"...and..."educational support has not managed to impact much on the educational or socio-economic expectations of tertiary institutions" (Agar 1991:26).

Mehl (1988:17), in an article entitled Academic support: developmental giant or academic pauper?, maintains that the status of academic support units must change. He believes that academic support units are evolving into centres which have the potential significantly to influence the development of universities and argues that academic support units need to be transformed into university **development centres** (Mehl 1988:17).

The above-mentioned authors are referring to changes which they believe need to occur within the conventional concept of academic support, although Mehl's notion of

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development centres acknowledges that **all** students have to develop, "while the centres should provide the necessary support for the universities to enable the development to take place" (Mehl 1988:17).

Guidance Support, on the other hand, predicated as it is on the belief that the skills covered by ASP are insufficient to produce graduates able to cope with the demands of the world of work or to promote levels of employability and productivity, would be capable of subsuming both academic support and the concept of development centres by expanding on both.

Guidance Support could do much to address all of the above-mentioned problems. In order to do so, however, a guidance support department would need to be established. This would not need to be a daunting task if one takes into consideration resources and structures already in existence. All universities have student advice bureaux and counselling services of one kind or another in addition to the academic support previously mentioned. A wealth of experience and expertise is thus already available. It would simply be a matter of subsuming these units/departments under one central, overarching umbrella.

There would be no need to compromise the activities of these essential services. On the contrary, the aim would be to expand rather than to replace in order to improve the quality of training given to students.

Speaking more specifically, the aims of Guidance Support could be very similar to those of the Wits Academic Support Programme (see p. 112), namely:

1 to maximize future career performance in students disadvantaged by the inadequacy of previous educational training in life competencies and skills,
2 to ensure not only that students pass their courses as well as possible but that they graduate in possession of the high levels of life competencies and skills required by the world of work,
3 to increase the number of professionally qualified people able to meet the demands of the world of work, hence improving employability and productivity levels and,

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4 to contribute research, experience and insights to developments in university policies and practices that are directed towards the priorities of a changing South African Society.

A look at the mission statement of America's National Center for Research in Vocational Education (in Hoyt & Shylo 1987: mission statement), might provide a clearer indication of intention with regard to the concept of Guidance Support. The statement is reproduced fully below:

THE NATIONAL CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education's mission is to increase the ability of diverse agencies, institutions and organizations to solve educational problems relating to individual career planning, preparation, and progression. The National Center fulfills its mission by:

- Generating knowledge through research
- Developing educational programs and products
- Evaluating individual program needs and outcomes
- Providing information for national planning and policy
- Installing educational programs and products
- Operating information systems and services
- Conducting leadership development and training programs (in Hoyt & Shylo 1987: mission statement).

Again, it is not the intention of the writer to suggest American systems should be adopted in South African universities. However, judicious reference to the above points could prove useful with regard to providing guidelines for the possible establishment of a guidance support department, should one accept the contention that universities have facilities, expertise, infrastructures and resources which are currently being underutilized.

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4.5.2 Functions of Guidance Support

Below is a layout, in point form, of how Guidance Support could function within a guidance support department. It should be noted, however, that both the creation and the workings of such a department would be futile, if not impossible, without the support of the majority of academic and administrative personnel. Needless to say, any academic support, bridging course or remedial unit activities, as well as counselling or student advice services should not be jeopardized by the creation of a guidance support department. However, close ties should be maintained in order, on the one hand, to obviate any duplication and, on the other hand, to pool resources in terms of experience and expertise. Similarly, close ties should be established with faculties or departments already offering or engaged in life-skills training activities for the same reasons as those given above.

Bearing in mind the mission statement given in Hoyt and Shylo (1987) and quoted on p. 114, Guidance Support could function in the following ways. It could:

1 Assist with staff training and development with regard to teaching from a life-skills perspective;
2 Evaluate existing research (including course material) and generate new knowledge through research;
3 Design/develop and produce educational programmes, courses, modules and products including visual media based packages (e.g. video tapes, computer based learning programmes etc.);
4 Liaise with faculties and departments in order to service their needs whether within single faculties, across faculties or inter/intra departmentally, and install educational programmes and products where desired;
5 Liaise with schools in order to achieve the same purposes as those mentioned above, in order to promote life skills required by potential future graduates and in order to prevent duplication of courses;
6 Liaise between and on behalf of faculties, councils, professional boards and associations/institutes, graduates, employers and the self-employed with respect to life competency and skill needs experienced by any or all of the above;
7 Facilitate partnerships between education and the world of work;

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8 Conduct courses for or on behalf of faculties or departments on an inter or extra-curricular basis where desired;

9 Assess and evaluate individual faculty/departmental needs and outcomes;

10 Become involved in assessment, evaluation and standardization of courses so as to obviate any devaluation of certification requirements or procedures;

11 Establish media centres where a variety of resources on life skills could be gathered, classified, stored, co-ordinated and made available when desired (i.e. operate information systems and services);

12 Give students opportunities to upgrade their abilities wherever (e.g. via distance learning) and whenever they choose through offering elective or extra-mural/curricular courses in life skills;

13 Offer opportunities for retraining in cases where skills have become obsolete;

14 Provide a service to the community by way of offering said courses not only to graduates/alumni, but also to anyone wishing to take them or who could benefit from them;

15 Provide information should the occasion arise for national planning and policy.

Several of the above-mentioned points require either elucidation or elaboration. Single points can be grouped into topic clusters and dealt with as follows:

1 **Points 1,4,5,6,7:** Assisting with staff training and development with regard to teaching from a life-skills perspective and liaising with all stakeholders (e.g. students, academic staff, councils, end employers or representatives of the world of work including private practitioners etc.) with regard both to this perspective and general curriculum development.

Many members of the academic staff may find the idea of teaching from a life-skills perspective intrusive, revolutionary , threatening, or not worth the bother. They may resent the concept as an extra burden on already overloaded schedules and curricula. Actually, teaching from a life-skills perspective is:

* Based on sound educational principles. Some of the most respected educational theorists (refer Socrates, Plato, Peters, Dewey, Buber, Rogers, Piaget, Bruner, Vygotskii, Bloom and Feuerstein to name a few) have advocated this type of

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teaching under various forms, names or guises. There is very little that is new about it.

Simply put, life skills teaching should result in experiential and problem-solving learning: approaches to which most of the giants of educational theory subscribe. Hofmeyr (1993a:3), referring to the changes in educational approaches in the UK ("education through enterprise"), has the following to say. "In the final analysis, the new developments are in some respects not new at all, in that they represent a philosophy well entrenched in educational theory - the belief that learning is best achieved through action. However, the new developments differ from past innovations, such as the (learner-centred) movement of the 60's, in that they are more structured, criterion referenced and work-focused than in the past" (Hofmeyr 1993a:3).

* Teaching from a life skills perspective does not have to entail any radical or drastic alterations with regard to existing curriculum content. The operative word is **perspective** i.e. it involves restructuring in terms of an approach to teaching **existing** curricula rather than a reformation of curriculum content.

* Teaching from a life skills perspective is rather easier to do than it may sound to those unaccustomed to employing this approach (See Annexure F pp.178-193).

* Teaching from a life skills perspective is not only educationally sound, but also educationally constructive. Students tend to become far more motivated to learn because they take more responsibility for solving their own learning problems and dealing with their own learning needs and outcomes. Thus they become more independent learners who are genuinely committed to engaging in learning activities in an active rather than a passive way.

* Ultimately, teaching from a life skills perspective can release time for overburdened lecturers because they assume less responsibility for student learning outcomes without in any way compromising professional accountability. Rather, the process of allowing increased (personal) responsibility to devolve on students sufficiently **skilled** to be able to "get on with the job", results, on the one hand, in a student body **empowered** in terms of life **competencies** both whilst they are students and

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after graduation, and, on the other hand, in lecturers who have more time to spend on research.

The shift to teaching from a life skills perspective takes time initially but it will benefit all stakeholders in the long term. Examples of **how** to teach from a life skills perspective are given in Annexure F pp.178-193).

It should be noted, however, that commitment from at least the majority of academic staff to this approach to teaching would be necessary for it to succeed. Apropos this, the dean's role is a vital one.

Steyn (1992), in a study and workbook on Curriculum design and evaluation, mentioned that leadership with regard to curriculum implementation should come from the top. He was referring primarily to schools but his research could as readily apply to universities. The following is adapted from Steyn (1992:39-41). (See Figure 2 p.119).

It is generally accepted in the literature on curriculum implementation that the dean is and should be curriculum leader in the faculty. This leadership role has to do with implementation of designed curricula through teaching as well as formative curriculum evaluation. The dean should ensure that subject curricula are implemented in such a way that the educational goals of the university are met.

In order successfully to implement a newly designed or **adapted** curriculum, the dean needs to recognize and plan for stages in the implementation process. These stages include:

- creating a climate for change
- communicating the rationale for and managerial/organizational implications of the implementation process
- facilitating of staff development
- guiding of instructional planning (Steyn 1992:39-41).

As regards lecturers, according to Elbaz (in Steyn 1992:41), lecturer participation in curriculum development (design, implementation and evaluation) can be Socratic, Scholastic or somewhere in-between. (See Annexure E p.174).

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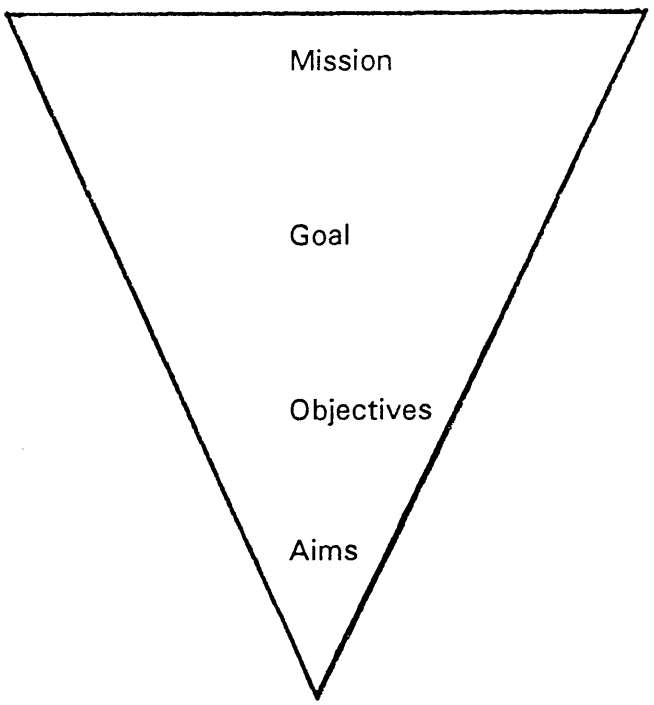
FIGURE 2 :

EXAMPLE OF AN HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE USED FOR CURRICULUM DESIGN

LEVELS OF DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MISSION, GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF A GIVEN CURRICULUM.



University mission
Faculty mission
Departmental mission

Course goal
Subject goal
Subject course goal

Syllabus/theme
Objectives

Learning aims

(Source: Malan & du Toit 1991:33)

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Steyn maintains that "in the tertiary context (university) it is the rule more that the exception for the lecturer and curriculum developer to be the same person" (Steyn 1992:41).

Faculty based curriculum development, according to Sabar (in Steyn 1992:42-44), has both advantages and disadvantages. The movement implies that decentralized and legitimate decisions related to planning, designing, implementing and evaluation of curricula take place within the university and its community, rather than being imposed from the outside (i.e. nationally).

Advantages include:

- providing an attractive, supportive and motivating climate for lecturers to work in,
- easing of communication with regard to curricular matters,
- enhancing of professional status, growth and development,
- promotion of effective utilization of existing curricular materials,
- facilitation of an improvement in the quality of teaching,
- provision for students' views to be taken into account in curricular planning, which results in their feeling that learning is more relevant to their needs,
- emerging topics of immediate relevance can be easily integrated as the resulting curriculum is flexible,
- contributions to curriculum matters can be made by all the relevant stakeholders.

Disadvantages include:

- problems in terms of breadth and depth may arise as lecturers are not trained to be specialists in developing high quality curriculum materials. (Here a guidance support department could, where needed, play a facilitative role by liaising with the relevant specialists on behalf of lecturers),
- the heavy burden lecturers already carry which leaves them with little time for curriculum adaptation,
- the dependency on faculty initiative, human and financial resources and community support involved,
- potential lack of commitment on the part of new lecturers who may not have participated in the development of the curriculum with regard to specific changes

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or innovations and who may also lack specific competencies to implement planned actions,

- the differences that exist in terms of access to resources which may endanger national goals of equality (Steyn 1992:42-43).

It could be argued that a guidance support department could facilitate finding solutions to all of the above- mentioned disadvantages/problems. Curriculum committees could be set up in order to adapt and localize curricula and curriculum materials to fit in with given needs without compromising accepted standards. Simultaneously, interaction between all stakeholders could be facilitated.

2 **Points 2,11,15:** Evaluating existing research and course material; generating or assisting with generating, collating and evaluating new research/course material; and establishing a media centre where all material or information related to life skills could be gathered and made available on request.

The above is reasonably self-explanatory. More detailed information with reference to evaluation of specific material will be given under point 4 (see p. 124).

With reference to the evaluation and collation of existing material and the generation of new research, clearly close ties would need to be maintained parochially, regionally, nationally and internationally with all parties (including those involved in human resources development) interested in the acquisition and provision of life competencies and skills. Catering to the needs of potential users would, in itself, result in the generation of new research and development. A guidance support department could assume a central role e.g. as both a facilitator and overall co-ordinator of faculty developments in this field, and as a generator, evaluator and repository of relevant material on behalf of the stakeholders.

3 **Points 3,8,12,13:** Designing, developing and producing course material in whatever form necessary and conducting courses on either inter or extra curricular/mural bases.

The material provided should (in harmony with good curriculum practice) supply users with a rationale and background information with regard to targets, goals, aims and objectives,

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content, sequence and guidelines for methodological application and evaluation, and teaching/learning strategies and methods. It should also fulfill the general criteria of allowing for differentiation, relevance, continuity, balance and comprehensiveness. In terms of specific subject material, design should cover the following steps or phases: situation analysis, setting of aims, selection and classification of content and suggested guidelines for selection of teaching methods and evaluation strategies. Naturally, content should be directed at preparing students for the world of work in terms of life competencies and skills (adapted from Steyn 1992:3-25).

With reference to point 3 specifically, many courses could be directed towards self-study or self-learning e.g. computer based learning packages or self-instructional videos could be used.

In a paper entitled Increased productivity through self-instructional video at the University of Stellenbosch faculty of medicine, Walsh, Hugo, van Zijl and Groenewald (1988:143-144) maintained that the annual teaching load of physical examination techniques to large numbers of medical students, which is repetitive and time consuming, was reduced through the use of a series of self-instructional videotapes and accompanying booklets.

Walsh **et al** (1988:143) maintain that the use of video material in medical education is not new (overseas at least) and that the value of video is based upon the medium's inherent ability to present students with a diversity of learning experiences. Conradie asserts that, "no other medium can handle pre-recorded, live and broadcast programming, no other medium functions as a display, distribution and duplication device, and no other medium covers such a range of communication purposes - information, motivation, education, instruction and entertainment" (in Walsh **et al** 1988:143).

The factors which precipitated a project to improve productivity via the use of television and video material were not simply motivated by an attempt to save lecturer time but included recognition of the fact that, currently, the accent in teaching is on economy, productivity and cost-effectiveness. Silberman (in Walsh **et al** 1988:143) remarked on the shifting emphasis in education from a labour-intensive, human-dependent enterprise to a capital-intensive, technology-dependent enterprise which has led to the transfer of some

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educational tasks to the burgeoning communication and information media. Similarly, Heinich (in Walsh **et al** 1988:143) stressed that lecturers need to be made aware of technological possibilities. "Teachers need to understand the critical necessity of organizing instruction so that mechanical and repetitive functions can be delegated to machines to free their time for creative and truly professional work. Technological answers should be sought...to allow teachers to devote a greater proportion of their time to the instructional needs of small groups and individuals". In this way, the lecturer can "spend less time talking and become an educational executive. This enables more attention to be given to individual student problems as well as other aspects of educational programs such as planning, management, control and research" (Heinich in Walsh **et al** 1988:143).

According to the above-mentioned authors, the particular package to which they refer was evaluated by means of the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) technique and results indicated no statistical difference between this learning strategy and the traditional (lecturer input) method. Thus, although the video package lightened the lecturers' load, the standard of tuition was not compromised in any way. However, over 240 man hours and 120 specialist hours were saved. The authors grant that there is no increase in productivity for the first year if the whole team effort is evaluated but that, when the whole team effort is viewed over the life-span of the video programmes (approximately 5 years), the benefits become readily apparent. "Moreover, the videotapes are available to students every day of the year for revision in the library or at home - which cannot be said of the specialists" (Walsh **et al** 1988:144).

The conclusions reached by Walsh **et al** (1988:144) were that the clinical lecturers' teaching load was lightened without affecting the quality of tuition, the lecturers realized that media are not peripheral but central to the concept of human reliability, and that productivity could be enhanced via the use of (visual electronic) media (Walsh **et al** 1988:144).

With regard to points 12 and 13 specifically, it is clear that the sorts of materials/packages mentioned above, could be made available to students (inclusive of distance learning, alumni and members of the community) wherever and whenever desired. Updating of material should not entail the same investment, timewise, as initial production did and would allow for retraining with reference to obsolete skills.

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With regard to point 8 specifically, a guidance support department could analyze needs on an inter or intrafaculty/departmental basis, and, armed with pre-prepared material developed in conjunction with the appropriate people, could conduct the required courses. On occasion, more than one faculty could require the same or a similar course (e.g. practice management). On other occasions, more than one department within a faculty could require the same or similar courses (e.g. interpersonal communication skills or computer literacy). If compulsory courses could not be built into academic curricula due to time or any other constraints, students could take electives, supplementary or extra-concurrent courses. High fliers could take extra-curricular courses, while struggling students could come in during vacations or back after graduating to do chosen courses. If at least the majority of courses offered could be certificated, students would gain "added value" which should facilitate the finding of employment and increase productivity levels.

4 **Points 2,9,10:** Assessment and evaluation of course material, needs, and outcomes, and standardization with regard to certification.

With regard to assessment, Steyn (1992:30-37) refers to the concepts of formative and summative evaluation of curricula (or course material). These forms of evaluation could apply to newly designed and developed courses and they will be discussed in more detail below. Other forms of evaluation could include (work-focused) observation, making use of certificated assessors and specially constituted examining bodies, profiling, action based and criterion referenced assessments. (Refer Hofmeyr, Pring and Gibbs **et al:** pp. 99-101).

Formative evaluation involves the following phases:

- the trying out and revision of existing materials and
- the gathering of evidence for or against intended outcomes i.e. in terms of judgemental data (oral and written), observational data and the results of student learning (Steyn 1992:31-36).

Summative evaluation is the kind that is conducted after implementation of a curriculum or presentation of a course. "It is an evaluation of the product and not the process of curriculum design" (Steyn 1992:30). (Refer Table 15 p.125, for an example of Steyn's model).

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TABLE 15 : AN EXAMPLE OF FORMATIVE CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Development	Evaluation
Pre-development planning	* Needs assessment * Appeal studies (what aspects of curricula were favoured and liked by the students in the past?) * Context studies (what curriculum materials were used successfully in which contexts?)
Production of prototype components and in-house assembly	* Prototype evaluation (individual units of the curriculum can be tried out) * Comparison of alternatives (if more than one version of curriculum units exist)
Release of in-house version; preparation of revised edition	* Intrinsic evaluation (evaluation of formulated aims - although empirical data is not yet available) * checklists (experts can judge different aspects of the curriculum and respond on checklist items) * criticism (textbooks, instructional material and actual classroom situation) * Empirical evaluation * tryout * error analysis * verification of structure (modular units)
Publication of revised edition, diffusion and implementation	End of formative evaluation, start implementation evaluation and quality control studies.

(Source : Lewy in Steyn 1992:37

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Clearly, both kinds of evaluation would be relevant to any attempt to introduce training in life competencies and skills. With regard to all types of assessment and evaluation mentioned above, a guidance support department could bring together the appropriate experts (academics and members of the world of work) whose specialized knowledge, experience and integrity are acknowledged by the relevant stakeholders in order to ensure acceptable levels of evaluation and standardization.

5 **Point 14:** Providing a service to the community in terms of training in life competencies and skills. (See 4.4.1 p. 100).

It should be stressed that, particularly in the economic and political climate currently prevailing in a rapidly changing South African society, the ability to provide services to the community which could benefit both them as individuals and the country's economy could be tremendously valuable. The large majority of South African people has been disadvantaged educationally. Where ASP and individual faculties and departments within universities do very valuable work in attempting to cater to the needs of students and (field specific) sectors of the community, a guidance support department could make a range of courses in life competencies and skills available to all interested parties, whether they be university graduates or not. In this way, a number of problems in terms of successful, economically viable employment could both be addressed and redressed, and the realization of personal potential could be facilitated.

There are a number of advantages, to graduates, to the university and to the community at large, which could come out of the establishment of a guidance support department. These include:

* Graduates who enter the world of work with "added value". In the short term, the aim would be to give graduates a "competitive edge" in a time of economic recession and dwindling job opportunities. However, even in times of economic growth, South African graduates will need life competencies and skills if the country is to make any attempt to keep up with overseas trends. Furthermore, an economy such as the one currently prevailing in South Africa can no longer afford the luxury of graduates who take anything up to 2 years to become truly economically

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productive. Productivity levels should be positively affected by the entrance into the world of work of graduates trained in life competencies and skills;

* The university which can produce graduates skilled enough to meet the demands of the world of work will have an "edge" over others also competing for top students and dwindling financial and human resources. At the same time, credibility and image levels should be boosted while the achievement or retention of international recognition should be facilitated;

* Universities capable of offering extra-curricular or extra-mural courses to anyone seeking training in life competencies and skills would be able to render a valuable service to the community, thereby also gaining potentially substantial community credibility. Furthermore, training in these skills would do more than assist people to meet the needs of the economy. Because many of the skills impact on personal qualities and abilities, such training would be capable of facilitating the shift to a more just and democratic society. Many of the principles of democracy (e.g. non-repression, non-judgementalism, tolerance, respect for the dignity and rights of others, freedom of speech and ideas etc.) are covered either explicitly or implicitly in life skills such as effective interpersonal communication skills, assertiveness training, problem-solving and decision making skills, conflict management skills and the like. Training in these skills would thus produce a spin off in terms of increased actualization of personal potential, increased levels of general mental health, increased tolerance levels and increased levels of political stability. Marginalized youth could also be assisted in a co-ordinated and well researched way;

* Apropos mental health levels, too few social scientists and psychologists are being adequately trained in South Africa at present to meet the needs of a country with serious social problems such as high levels of violence, breakdowns in family structures, general insecurity, marginalization, a disenchanted and poorly educated youth and the social and psychological effects of an economy in deep recession. Freud defines an adult as someone capable of love and work. A university able to assist the youth it serves to achieve Freud's definition of adulthood, could make a valuable contribution to a country's levels of mental health. Similarly, the establishment of a guidance support department should facilitate the training of

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future social science graduates. It could even offer internships thus increasing the numbers of students who could be trained in the social sciences;

* In a time of rationalization, the establishment of a guidance support department could open up job opportunities so that valuable knowledge, experience and expertise would not be lost;

* Universities have all the facilities and expertise needed to undertake such a venture as guidance support. At the moment, many academics (e.g. educationists and especially psychologists) complain that private training companies run courses based on their research, run by trainers less qualified than they are, and for which a lot of money is frequently charged. A university, which after all would not have to pay for half the overheads private companies have to meet as the necessary infrastructures already exist whether used in this way or not, could offer similar courses run by highly qualified people for much less money while still earning for itself sufficient income to pay for the guidance support department. Furthermore courses designed, either by the department alone or in conjunction with individual lecturers, could be published, thereby earning royalties. In an incidental and peripheral sort of way, the highly problematic issue of educational profiteering could be addressed at the same time;

* Clearly, the community which the university serves would also benefit in ways already mentioned.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Wood and Phillips (1993:1-4), advocate the introduction of a "flexible, responsive but coherent system of general and vocational education and training", based on the following key competencies which they believe should be covered by training at 3 levels of performance in order to address problems with employment and productivity.

- "Collecting, analysing and organising information
- Communicating ideas and information
- Planning and organising activities

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- Working with others and in teams
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques
- Solving problems
- Using technology" (Wood & Phillips 1993:3).

According to Wood & Phillips (1993:4), "it is not overdramatic to say that we are presented with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change; to make a significant difference; to renew our entire education system. The action taken now will impact significantly on our ability to compete internationally in the years to come. In addition, the consequences of decisions to be taken in the current debate (pending education forum) will strongly influence future patterns of economic and social development in this country (Wood & Phillips 1993:4).

The establishment of a guidance support department would not be without problems - perhaps similar to those experienced by Oxford Brookes University in terms of depth, coherence and integration; perhaps similar to those mentioned by Ullyatt (1989:159-164) in his article entitled The management of change and the change of management in South African universities, or by Mauer (1993:28-32), in his article entitled Liberal arts degrees, employment opportunities, and the counsellor's role. Clearly, a lot of detailed research would need to be undertaken to ascertain the viability of such a venture. Nevertheless, an attempt has been made in this Chapter to offer the concept of guidance support as a way to "take significant action", with reference to university training, in order both to address and to redress the problem of matching the skills of graduates to those required by the world of work.

In Chapter 5 a summary of this study is made and recommendations based on the reasoned exposition thereof are given.

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

According to a well-known comment the trouble with the future is that it is no longer like the past. Paradoxical as this statement may appear to be at first, the message itself is quite clear: the future is not predictable. Rather, in a world that changes so rapidly that yesterday's innovation may well be redundant by tomorrow, certainties have been replaced by, at best, probabilities and more often simply by possibilities. If it is accepted that making effective life decisions really depends on one's capacity to make educated guesses, relevant education becomes extremely important.

It has been established in previous chapters that graduates are not being adequately trained in the life competencies and skills demanded by the world of work and by the rapidly changing South African society. Much rhetoric is currently being bandied about by the many authors who seem aware of these problems.

According to Finch and Crunkilton (in De Jager 1989:441), "any curriculum that hopes to be relevant tomorrow must be responsive to tomorrow's as well as today's needs". Olivier (1988:352) feels that South Africa's still predominantly academic, tradition-based education system is not solving the problems created by a lack of training in basic skills.

Anglo American Corporation's Director of Industrial Relations and Public Affairs, Mr Bobby Godsell (1993:1), acknowledges that "from the foundations of our theoretical knowledge - across the spectrum of traditional academic disciplines: physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine and the social sciences - we are constantly acquiring not just additional new knowledge, but also fundamentally different knowledge"... in consequence of which ... "learnt facts become obsolete at an ever increasing rate".

In Godsell's opinion, the traditional idea of a corporate career - along with traditional professions - is out of date. Rather it has become clear in the 1980s and 1990s that "the rigid demarcation of occupations is crumbling. Fifteen years ago the German mining

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industry abolished the position of miner - and combined these skills of production with those of tradition artisans; to produce the miner/fitter, miner/electrician. Increasingly production work is organized around flexible work teams: a broad range of competencies is needed rather than narrowly-defined (and once and for all) craft skills" (Godsell 1993:2).

Apropos the above, it would appear that Technikons, which in terms of the Technikon Act passed in Parliament in June 1993, are now allowed to confer degrees (SA Communication Service 1993:7), have already taken note of current trends with regard to training in life competencies and skills (refer Vaal Triangle Technikon for example). Universities in South Africa, on the other hand, are clearly lagging.

According to Cartwright (1993:27) South African universities (as well as commerce and industry) have not escaped the disease of mediocrity engendered by several generations of apartheid and sheltered employment. In his opinion, academics have become complacent and intellectually lax, content with recycled or second-hand ideas. "In this atmosphere, the greatest excitement is provided by occasional five-year-old fads from the United States or Japan" (Cartwright 1993:27).

Cartwright feels that universities have perhaps been exceptionally culpable as their special contribution to society is not merely to provide trained personnel for defined social or economic slots but to attempt to think the unthinkable and to question established assumptions. "Much of the energy of South African academics in recent generations, however, ... has been taken up by, on the one hand, elaborating specious intellectual rationalizations for the idiocies of apartheid, or, on the other, fighting off political control and defending an increasingly sterile academic independence" (Cartwright 1993:27).

Khoapa (1993:48) believes that the best preparation for the future is an education that will enable students to adapt to a changing world. In his opinion, adaptation to change requires that one draw on history and on the experience of other nations, and that one apply the theories and methods of empirical investigation. "It requires a disposition toward lifelong learning and the ability to partake of and contribute to the rightness of culture and citizenship of our nation. These requirements are as relevant to the future medical technician-in-training at a technikon as they are to the biology major at a university" (Khoapa 1993:48).

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In the opinion of van der Linde (1993:67), professionals in South Africa are joining the ranks of the unemployed in a steady flow. He feels that a close fit with reality, in terms of improving the potential contribution of graduates in a work place, is essential for any qualification. He believes that universities in South Africa "must take cognizance of political, social and economic aspects." Furthermore, there should not be a "definite demarcation between natural sciences, the business sector and humanities" as each covers skills the others can employ (van der Linde 1993:67).

Ryan (1993:70) agrees with the above opinion. He feels that "it is not a question of battling against other faculties or controlling the market. We need to see the total skills required by the emerging cultural and economic situation that the new South Africa is going to produce and provide the necessary trained people" (Ryan 1993:70).

Tothill (1993:43) acknowledges that the idea of basing university curricula on key competencies (understood in terms of a narrow, mechanistic classification of skills) generally finds little favour with academics. On the other hand, she believes that "a more flexible vision of competencies sees them as a synthesis of skills and knowledge, a conceptual means of bridging the vocational/general education divide." In her opinion, "it is inevitable, given a high level of interest in the economic functions of education, that competencies should be on the agenda" (of debate concerning the future of higher education) (Tothill 1993:43).

Whilst in agreement with most of the above, it is the contention of this writer that enough evidence to support the need to include some sort of training in life competencies and skills in university/higher education has been found. If, as Godsell (1993:2) maintains, "education is about knowing how to learn" and "the preparation for work is about learning how to do: how to act in society in a way that adds value; how to produce useful goods or perform useful services", then the time has surely come to find a way both to address and to redress the situation discussed above. Guidance support for undergraduate students is offered as an attempt to achieve this.

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5.2 SUMMARY WITH A VIEW TO RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 Chapter 1

The following were dealt with in this chapter with a view to gaining perspective and an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, namely Guidance Support for Undergraduate Students: title and concept elucidation, methodological justification, problem formulation, formulation of research hypotheses, an exposition of the aim of the study and an outline of the research programme.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

In this chapter a life skills questionnaire was presented which could be employed as a diagnostic medium by University Counsellors in order to assist with ascertaining the levels of competence university entrants have with regard to said life skills. It was proposed that the results of the questionnaire could serve as an indication of possible problems experienced by university entrants, either individually or as a group (for example within departments, faculties or the university as a whole), thereby enabling counsellors and academic staff to react accordingly. Furthermore, the students could thus be assisted with regard to the discovery, recognition, grasping and evaluating of areas of strengths and weaknesses. The compiling of CVs from the first year of university training could also be facilitated via the use of said questionnaire.

The life skills questionnaire was administered to all first year residential students available on the days of testing. Profiles indicating both overall results and results obtained within specific subfields were given.

It was discovered that all the students who responded to the questionnaire were in need of training in life competencies and skills.

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5.2.3 Chapter 3

This chapter attempted to ascertain whether or not graduates could be considered sufficiently trained in life competencies and skills to meet the demands of the world of work.

The aims of the chapter were to discover which skills relevant people considered to be of value, proficiency levels of graduates, which skills were being consciously and deliberately taught at universities and whether or not training courses were being offered to address problem areas. In order to achieve these aims, a survey was done of the needs of employers and the self-employed via a literature review, a questionnaire which was sent to the deans of the various faculties at the University of Pretoria and to Councils, Associations and Institutions, and an investigation into the types of courses covering life skills training offered by Human Resources Development departments of companies and various Training Companies.

A conclusion was reached that a need exists to train students in life competencies and skills in order to increase productivity and employability levels and to improve the preparation of graduates for the practising of their future careers.

5.2.4 Chapter 4

This chapter introduced the concept of guidance support for undergraduate students. It covered the traditional role of universities, current perspectives and alternative approaches employed internationally. A rationale, a definition and the aims of guidance support were discussed and suggestions were made with regard to implementation of the concept via the establishment of a guidance support department. The advantages of implementing such a concept to the universities, to students, to graduates and to the community at large were given.

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5.3 REPORT ON HYPOTHESIS VERIFICATION

In summary it can be said that the hypotheses were verified phenomenologically (see hypothesis formulation, p. 17) and by means of the appropriate research procedures (see pp. 7-13).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below can be made on the basis of the preceding study.

5.4.1 Guidance Support

Much of what follows has already been covered incidentally in Chapter 4 (see 4.5 pp. 110-115). Reiteration and enumeration are given below for ease of reference.

* The concept of Guidance Support needs to be seriously considered as a means of both addressing and redressing problems surrounding levels of employment and productivity.

* Guidance Support in terms of life competencies and skills should be conceptualized as a cohesive, long-term system of training able to cater to the appropriate life and career development needs of all students.

* Guidance Support should prepare young people for the service age that is replacing the technological era by empowering them to deal with the realities of the world of work. The lifelong learning required by the service age presupposes the possession of skills such as how to learn, effective decision-making, problem-solving, entrepreneurial skills and value clarification. The fact that societies are changing as rapidly as they are both in South Africa and internationally emphasizes the need for students to receive life skills training not only to assist them with the practising of their future careers, but also to ensure that their training does not fall too far behind current international approaches.

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* Due to its proactive and preventative approach, Guidance Support should be able to redress some of the problems surrounding mental health in South Africa, while allowing for remediation of said problems where necessary.

* The concept of Guidance Support should facilitate a concerted approach to the teaching of life skills in place of the discrete one currently prevailing. It should encourage transference of skills intra and inter-departmentally, and between faculties and disciplines where applicable.

5.4.2 A Guidance Support Department

A guidance support department should be established in order to carry out the following functions. It should:

- Approach all suitably qualified people to assist with the facilitation of life skills training and exploit all relevant sources of information;

- Act as a co-ordinator of information and resources gathered both nationally and internationally including ASP departments, student advice bureaux, faculties and departments within universities, outside institutions such as councils, associations and institutions, the Department of Manpower, the world of work and the like;

- Collate and classify all resources gathered and establish a media centre for the storing and accessing of said resources;

- Evaluate and update existing resources as well as generate new resources via relevant research done alone or in conjunction with other interested parties;

- Act as a transferrer, advisor and facilitator of said resources where and when required;

- Be prepared to assist with training of all persons involved in life skills i.e. professional staff, students, graduates, alumni and the community at large;

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- Be prepared to assist with the adaptation and/or design of curricula so as to accommodate life skills training;

- Be prepared to assist with the construction and evaluation of assessment techniques (e.g. profiling);

- Ensure that, particularly in the case of certificated courses, standards are maintained;

- Be prepared both to generate and to teach life skills packages, programmes, modules and/or courses wherever and whenever required e.g. in terms of compulsory, supplementary or elective courses, extra-concurrent, extra-mural or extra-curricular programmes and community service based or distance learning packages;

- Be prepared to run induction courses for both students and newly appointed staff members;

- Be prepared to act as a link between institutions of higher education and the world of work;

- Be prepared to assist with the training of social science graduates (e.g. social workers and psychologists) via the offering of internships so as to increase the number of graduates in these disciplines and thereby address problems of mental health currently experienced in South Africa;

- Offer opportunities for the employment of expertise currently being lost due to the process of rationalization.

5.4.3 University Personnel

As was stated in chapter 4 (see 4.5.2. p.115), the creation and the workings of a guidance support department would be futile without the support of the majority of the academic

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and administrative personnel of a university. The most important stakeholders will be discussed below.

* Firstly, the deans of faculties should be the leaders in terms of implementation of designed curricula through teaching as well as formative curriculum evaluation. The deans should ensure that subject curricula are implemented in such a way that the educational goals of the university are met. Deans need to recognize and plan for stages in the implementation process including creating a climate for change, communicating the rationale for and managerial/organizational implications of the implementation process, facilitating staff development and giving guidance with regard to instructional planning (Steyn 1992:39-41). Thus the responsibility for ensuring training in life competencies and skills, particularly with regard to teaching from a life skills perspective, would devolve on the deans. Equally, they would need to ensure that close ties between both faculties and departments within faculties were maintained in order to share skills and expertise and to obviate possible duplication of any kind. A guidance support department should assist with the above. Du Toit (1993:69) has suggested a series of workshops for deans of faculties as the people who have access to heads of departments, lecturers, students, Councils and employers, in order to facilitate restructuring of courses to ensure they prepare graduates more adequately for the world of work. A guidance support department should be able to organize and/or facilitate sponsorship (Edey & Molin 1993:24) of such workshops for the deans.

* Secondly, lecturers should be persuaded as to the many advantages involved both in teaching from a life skills perspective and in making use of a guidance support department in terms of finding solutions to any disadvantages and providing the lecturers with the support they may require with regard to management of change, auditing of courses, assessment techniques and the like (refer pp.115, 147 and 163-164).

Lickindorf has suggested that lecturers may be assuming too sophisticated an ability on the part of even final-year students to make the links for themselves between what is learned in their courses and how it can apply in "real life". She feels that it may be taken for granted that exposure to selected course content is sufficient

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for a course's relevance to be perceived by students and for its material to be applied in their lives. She recommends that BA teachers (at least) build into their courses "specific applications - to life and employment - of competencies acquired at each stage of a course, and of practical ways of resolving issues by applying such skills systematically" (Lickindorf 1993:51). A guidance support department should assist lecturers with the concretizing of the above recommendations.

* Thirdly, guidance counsellors should be prepared to reconceptualize their traditional role and to appreciate the complexities of their work in a changed and changing world. A guidance support department should be in a position to assist, especially career guidance counsellors, with keeping up to date with latest developments and with retraining where necessary.

  Furthermore, many counsellors are often expected to work in isolation. In order to prepare students for the realities of the world of work, counsellors need to join forces with teaching staff and they would, in the opinion of Mauer, "in all probability, have to be sufficiently persuasive to gain the necessary cooperation" (Mauer 1993:31). A guidance support department should be able to facilitate co-operation between teaching staff and counsellors.

* Fourthly, close links should be maintained between students (and recent graduates) and professional staff in order to ensure both sides understand and maintain relevance with regard to course content. A guidance support department should facilitate consultation between students and academic personnel.

5.4.4 Other Stakeholders

Close ties should be maintained between institutions of higher learning and the world of work. In the opinion of Unilever's Geoff McDonald, what is really needed is "some kind of body that could be representative of employers, so that (an) interface between tertiary institutions and industry could be enhanced" (McDonald 1993:64). The opposite is equally important, namely that the universities need a similar kind of body to represent them. This function could be performed by a guidance support department. Furthermore:

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* A guidance support department should attempt to ensure graduates are sufficiently trained in terms of the life competencies and skills required by the world of work. In order to do so, all relevant sources of information should be accessed including appropriate university personnel, other universities both here and overseas, deans, Councils, Associations, Institutions, Professional Societies, employers and the self-employed. The department should also ensure appropriate dissemination of such information.

* A guidance support department should attempt to keep employers informed as to the skills graduates should be in possession of once they enter the world of work and what certification of courses in life skills entails in terms of giving graduates "added value".

* A guidance support department should consider the possibility of attempting to arrange employment experiences for students e.g. in terms of part-time employment, mini internships, placement in relevant organizations for short periods of time, vacation employment and the like. This should facilitate the finding of fulltime employment or the successful practising of self-employment after graduation. Simultaneously, it should facilitate the maintenance of close ties between the worlds of work and the academe.

* A guidance support department should also keep alumni and the local communities aware of courses which might possibly be of interest to them and offer said courses, programmes and/or packages where and when desired, thereby providing opportunities for "continuing education".

5.4.5 Employment of the Life Skills Questionnaire

The questionnaire should be used as a diagnostic medium in the following ways:

* With individual university entrants, or groups within departments, colleges, faculties or the university as a whole.
* At the beginning of the first year of university to assist relevant personnel to identify problem areas, to plan forecasts and to adjust course content accordingly.

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* To provide relevant information any time during the year when required.
* To provide students with results in order to promote insight into their own problems. They can then be encouraged to remediate these problem areas and to avail themselves of any course material on offer so as to gain practice in the required skills.
* To provide indicators with respect to further research in terms of which skills have value for a particular career, which are unnecessary and/or which could be scrapped altogether.
* To act as a point of departure for further research with respect to the designing of a questionnaire aimed at assessing the skills levels of graduates, who may wish to take extra-mural courses in life skills.

5.5 RESEARCH

The concept of Guidance Support with the concomitant notion of a guidance support department necessarily entails a certain amount of further research.

* Research should be undertaken into the feasibility and viability of establishing a guidance support department.

* The above would necessitate investigation into a number of areas such as the concept of Guidance Support itself, attitudes and reactions of university personnel, of students and of the world of work, and the availability of manpower, resources and finances.

* Research should be undertaken either by or on behalf of each faculty in order to determine which skills are the most in demand with respect to each course offered.

* Research should be undertaken in order to determine the effectiveness of overseas approaches to the teaching of life or core skills. Information obtained should be carefully examined before any adaptation to the South African context occurs.

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* The establishment of a guidance support department would, of itself, involve ongoing research. For example, the content of courses, programmes, packages and modules should be a matter of ongoing research.

* Alumni, post-graduate students, new entrants into the world of work, Councils, Associations, Institutions and Professional Societies, employers, the self-employed and the local communities should be canvassed: firstly, in order to ascertain their reactions to such a concept and secondly, in order to establish levels of interest with regard to courses/course material a guidance support department might be able to offer.

* Research should be undertaken with regard to the evaluation and standardization of material so as to enable a guidance support department to offer certificated courses which would in no way compromise academic standards of excellence and which would allow graduates to enter the world of work with "added value".

* Research should be undertaken with regard to methods of course assessment and the possible employment of profiling techniques.

* The extent to which distance learning could be facilitated should be researched.

* The extent to which the community at large could benefit should be researched.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is of fundamental importance that cognizance be taken of the extent to which graduates appear to lack adequate training in life competencies and skills. That graduates are inadequately prepared to meet the demands of the world of work or successfully to deal with the implications of a rapidly changing South African society can no longer be denied.

In the opinion of Godsell, "education prepares the individual for life. It can provide a survival kit for living in a society that is complex, dangerous and characterised by rapid

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change. Education can be a crucible in which we refine values and make vital personal and individual choices" (Godsell 1993:2).

The concept of Guidance Support, concomitant with the establishment of a guidance support department, could go a long way towards providing such a "survival kit": whilst both addressing and redressing some of the areas of concern discussed in this study.

Implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations could significantly contribute to

* the relevance of university training in terms of producing graduates able to make meaningful and positive contributions to the economic, social, cultural and political situation in South Africa;

* the producing of graduates empowered to actualize their potential with regard to both self and career management;

* the relevance of universities with regard to both community responsibility and accountability, and

* improvement in the quality of life for all South Africans.

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ANNEXURE A :
Rank Order of Life Skills needs for a group of University of Pretoria male students at the beginning of 1993.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO NEED GUIDANCE ON:

Life Skills	%	Rank	Sub-Field
Road Safety	49.6	1	A4
Alcohol and Drug Abuse	47.1	2	D2
Finding and Keeping Work	42.9	3	E3
Human Rights	42.1	4	A3
Cultural Orientation	38.1	5	F4
Study Methods	34.7	6	C4
Career Planning and Development	33.0	7	E4
Community Responsibility	32.2	8	A2
Handling Stress	29.7	9	C3
Sex Guidance	28.2	10	D1
Religious Orientation	28.2	10	F1
Self-concept/Self-assertion	25.6	12	B3
Political Orientation	25.6	12	F3
Mental Health	24.8	14	A1
Peer Group Influence	24.8	14	B4
Entrepreneurship	24.0	16	E1
Life and World Orientation	23.1	17	F2
Acceptance of One's Own Body	21.5	18	D5
Healthy Life Style	17.3	19	D4
Problem Solving/Decision Making	16.6	20	E2
Leadership	16.5	21	B1
Literacy/Education	16.5	21	B2
Technological Development	15.7	23	A5
Identity Development	15.7	23	B5
Work Values	15.7	23	E5
Time and Self-Management	14.8	26	C1
Family Education	14.8	26	F5
Communication Skills	13.2	28	C5
Exertion and Recreation	12.4	29	D3
Financial Management	10.8	30	C2

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Rank Order of Life Skills needs for a group of University of Pretoria female students at the beginning of 1993.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO NEED GUIDANCE ON:

Life Skills	%	Rank	Sub-Field
Finding and Keeping Work	52.6	1	E3
Human Rights	37.8	2	A3
Acceptance of One's Own Body	36.7	3	D5
Study Methods	36.5	4	C4
Career Planning and Development	36.3	5	E4
Handling Stress	30.9	6	C3
Political Orientation	29.4	7	F3
Alcohol and Drug Abuse	26.9	8	D2
Life and World Orientation	24.5	9	F2
Entrepreneurship	23.7	10	E1
Cultural Orientation	22.4	11	F4
Problem Solving/Decision Making	22.1	12	E2
Road Safety	20.1	13	A4
Peer Group Influence	17.8	14	B4
Sex Guidance	17.1	15	D1
Religious Orientation	16.6	16	F1
Self-concept/Self-assertion	16.1	17	B3
Identity Development	13.1	18	B5
Community Responsibility	11.3	19	A2
Technological Development	10.9	20	A5
Time and Self-Management	10.8	21	C1
Mental Health	10.0	22	A1
Financial Management	7.7	23	C2
Exertion and Recreation	5.4	24	D3
Leadership	5.2	25	B1
Work Values	4.8	26	E5
Communication Skills	4.0	27	C5
Family Education	4.0	27	F5
Healthy Life Style	2.7	29	D4
Literacy/Education	0.8	30	B2

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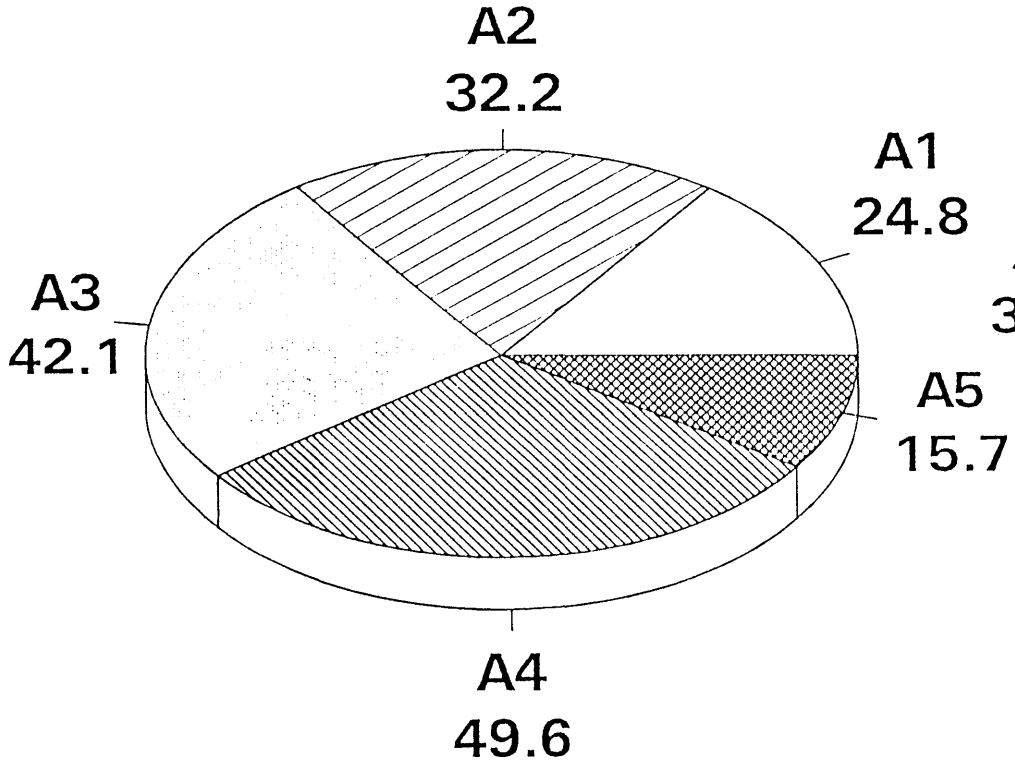
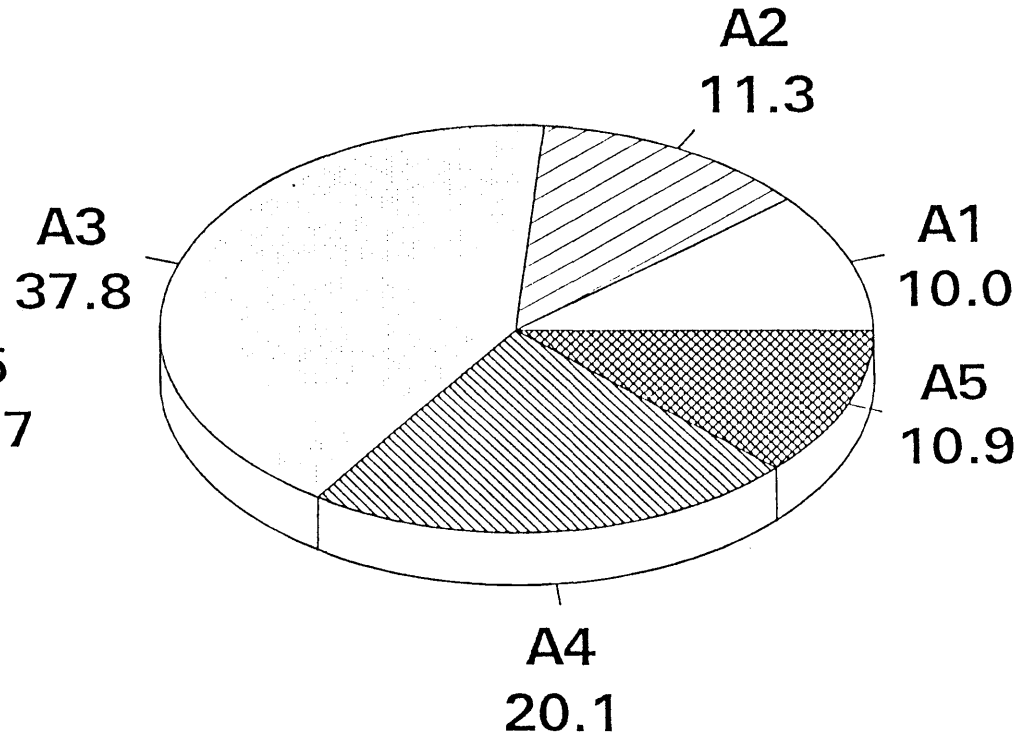
LIFE SKILLS

Community and Social Development



MALE



FEMALE

A1 Mental Health

A3 Human rights

A2 Community responsibility

A4 Road safety

A5 Technological development

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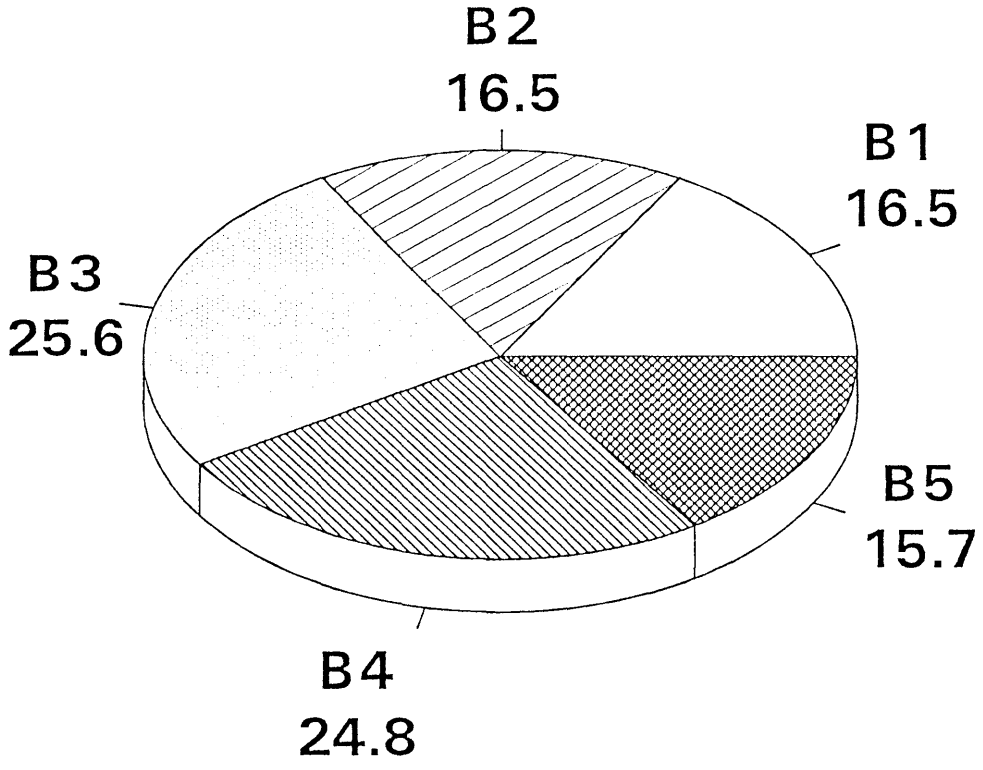
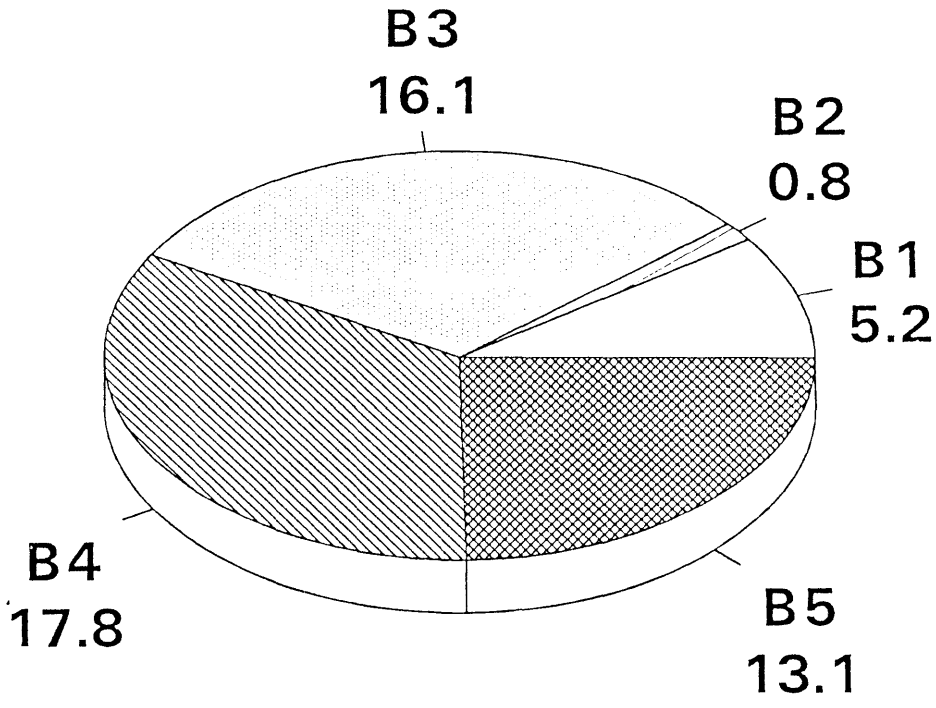
LIFE SKILLS

Development of person and self





MALE

FEMALE

B1 Leadership

B3 Self-concept / Self-assertion

B2 Literacy / Education

B4 Peer group influence

B5 Identity development

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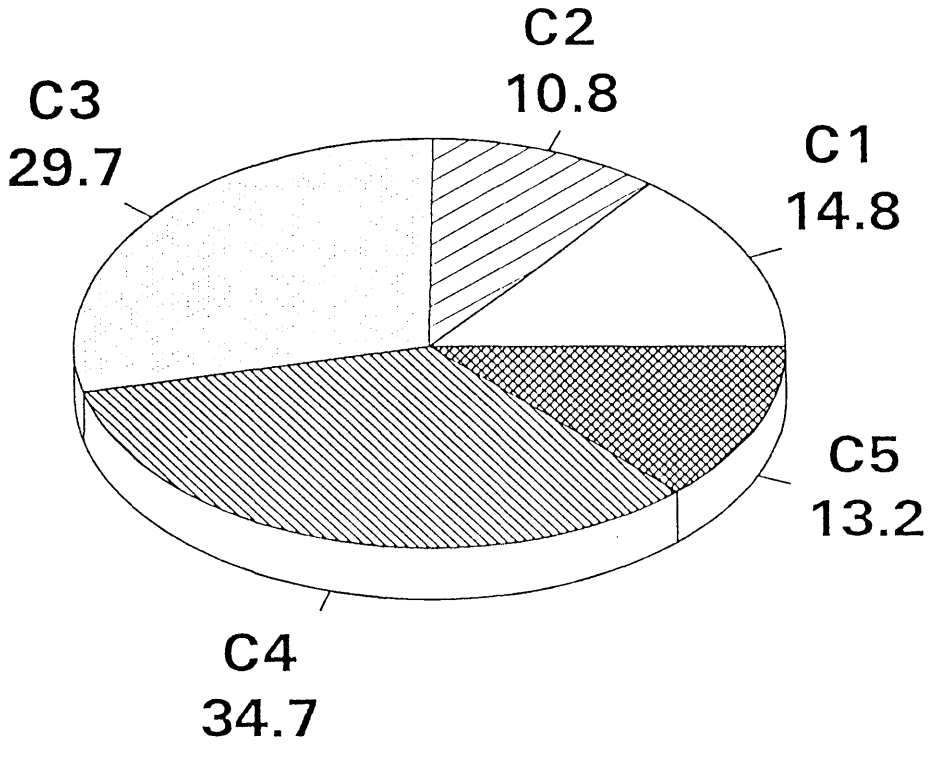
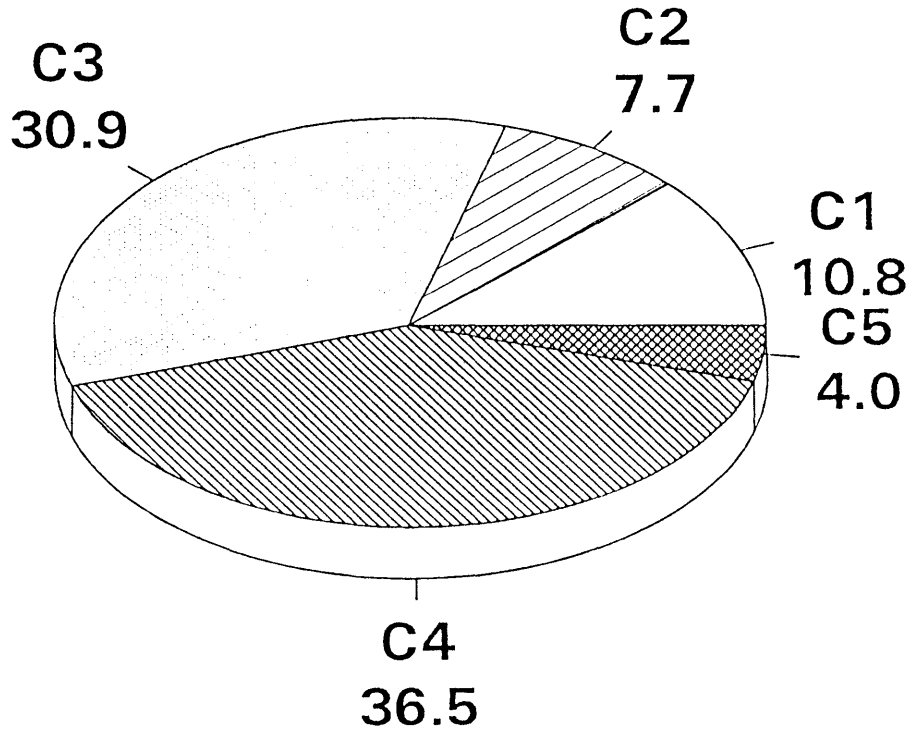
LIFE SKILLS

Self-management



MALE



FEMALE

C1 Time and Self-management

C3 Handling stress

C2 Financial Management

C4 Study Methods

C5 Communication Skills

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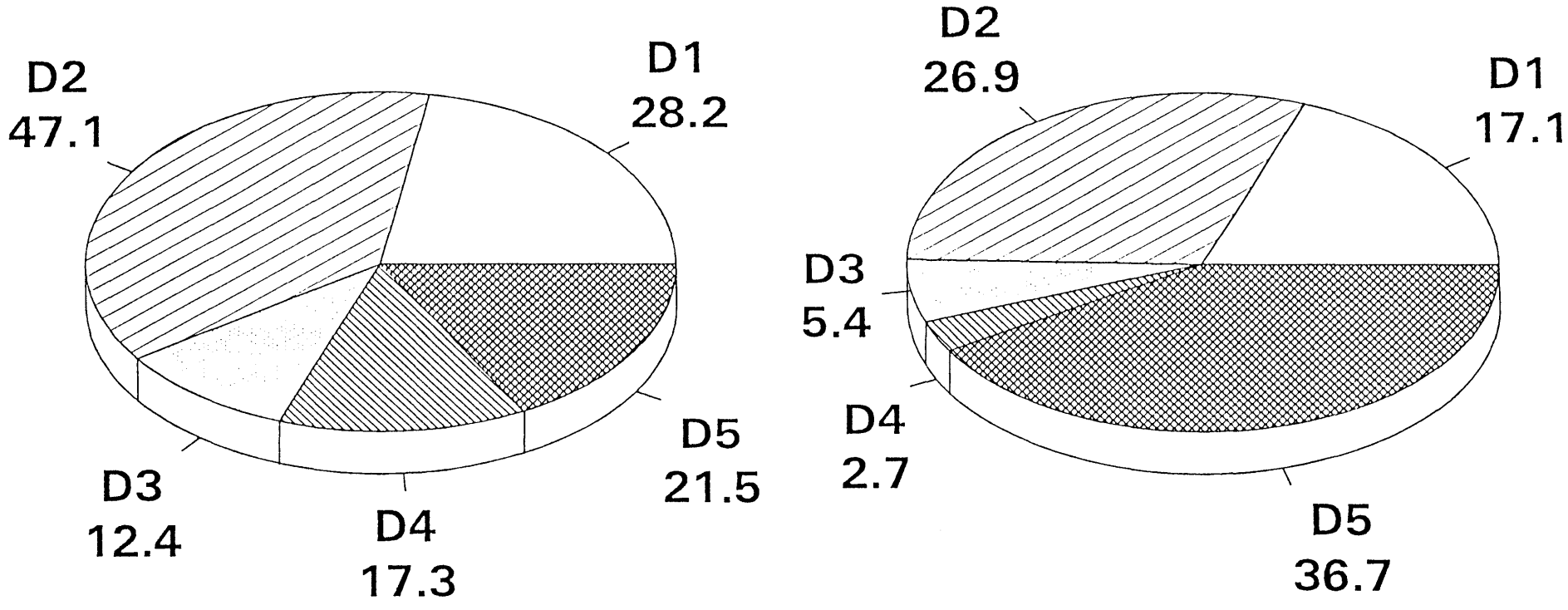
LIFE SKILLS

Physical and Sexual Development



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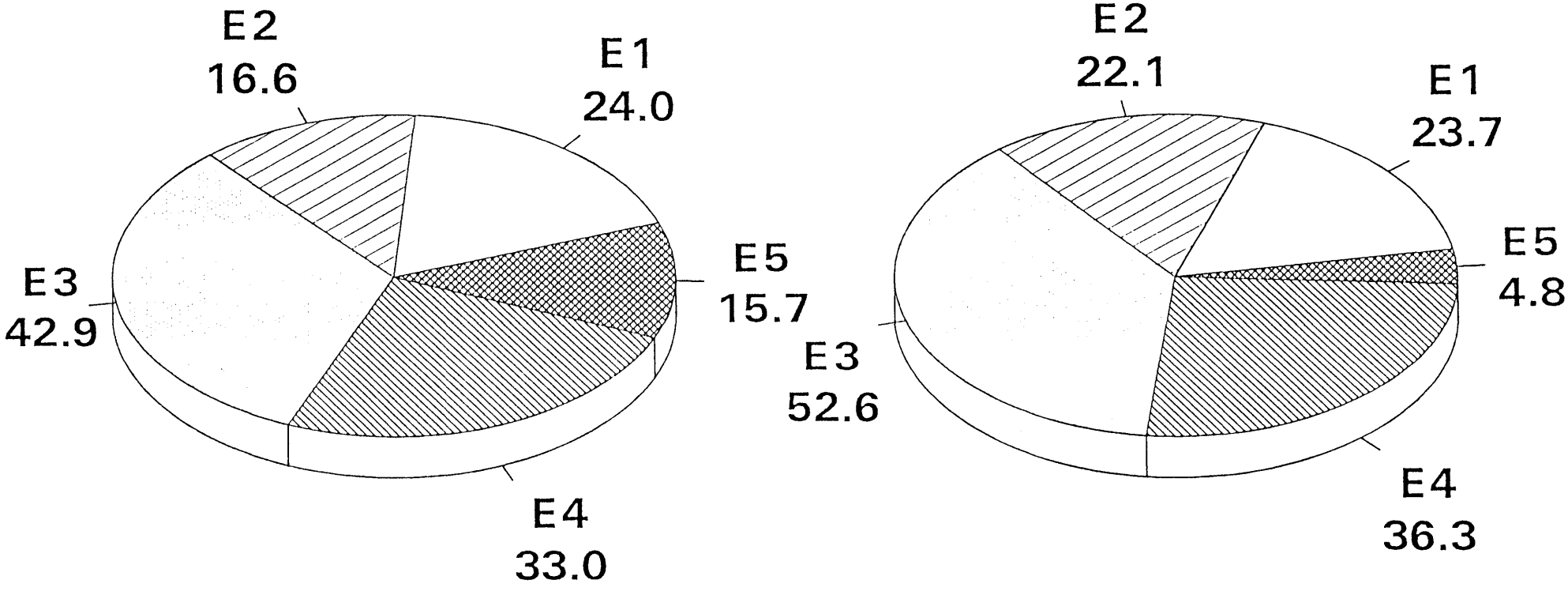
LIFE SKILLS

Career Planning and Development



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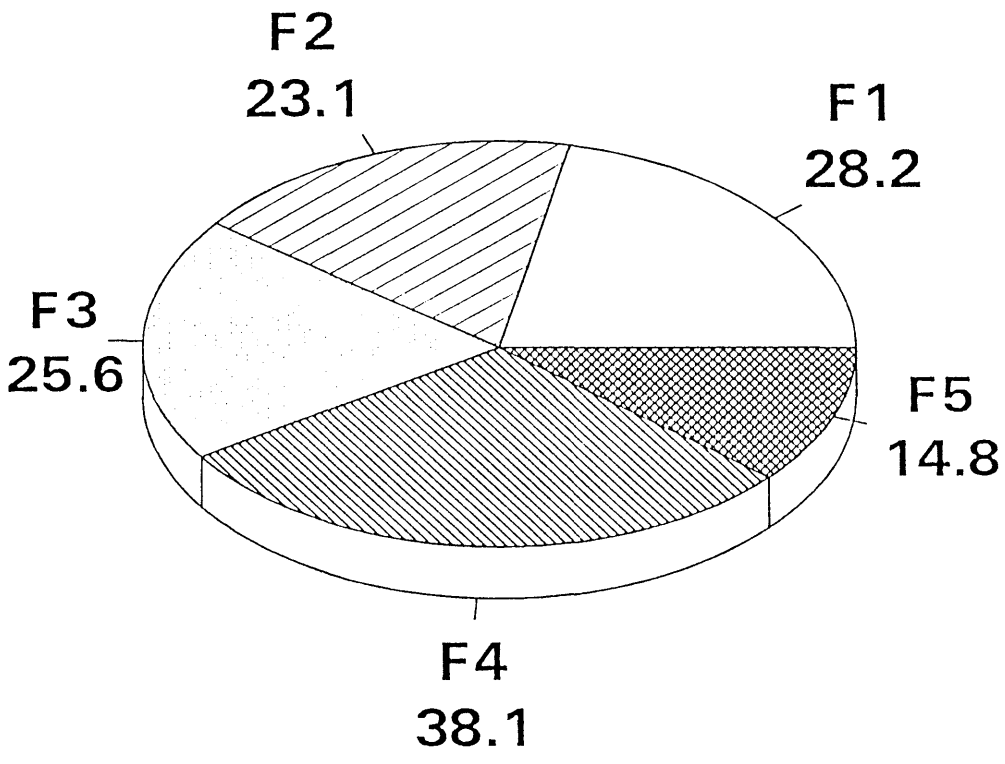
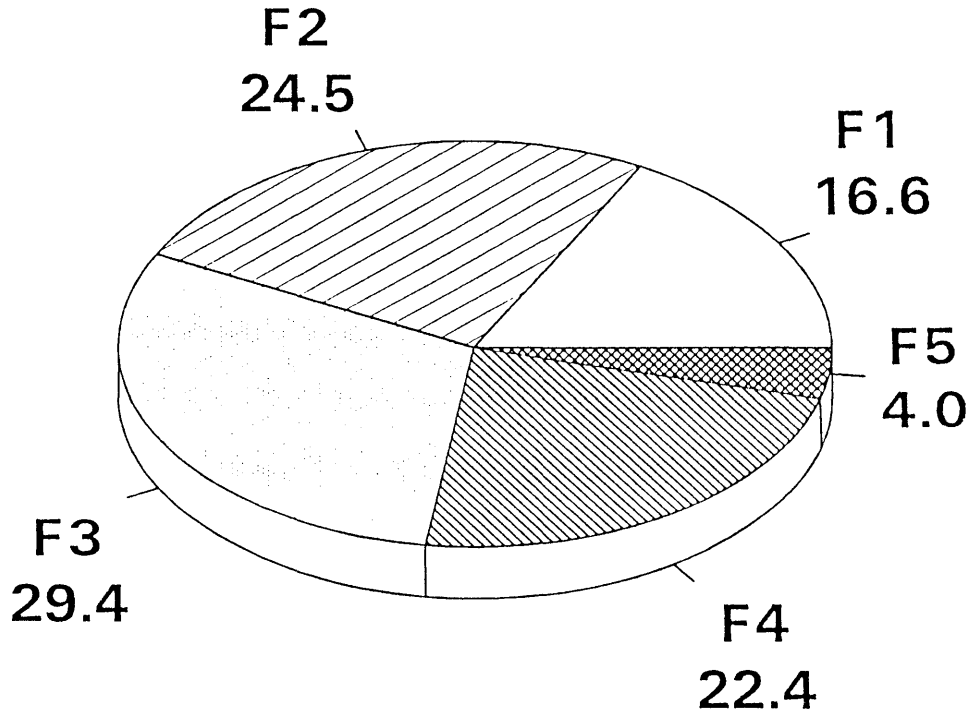
LIFE SKILLS

Life and Work Orientation



MALE



FEMALE

F1 Relgious Orientation

F2 Life and World Orientation

F3 Political Orientation

F4 Cultural Orientaion

F5 Family Education

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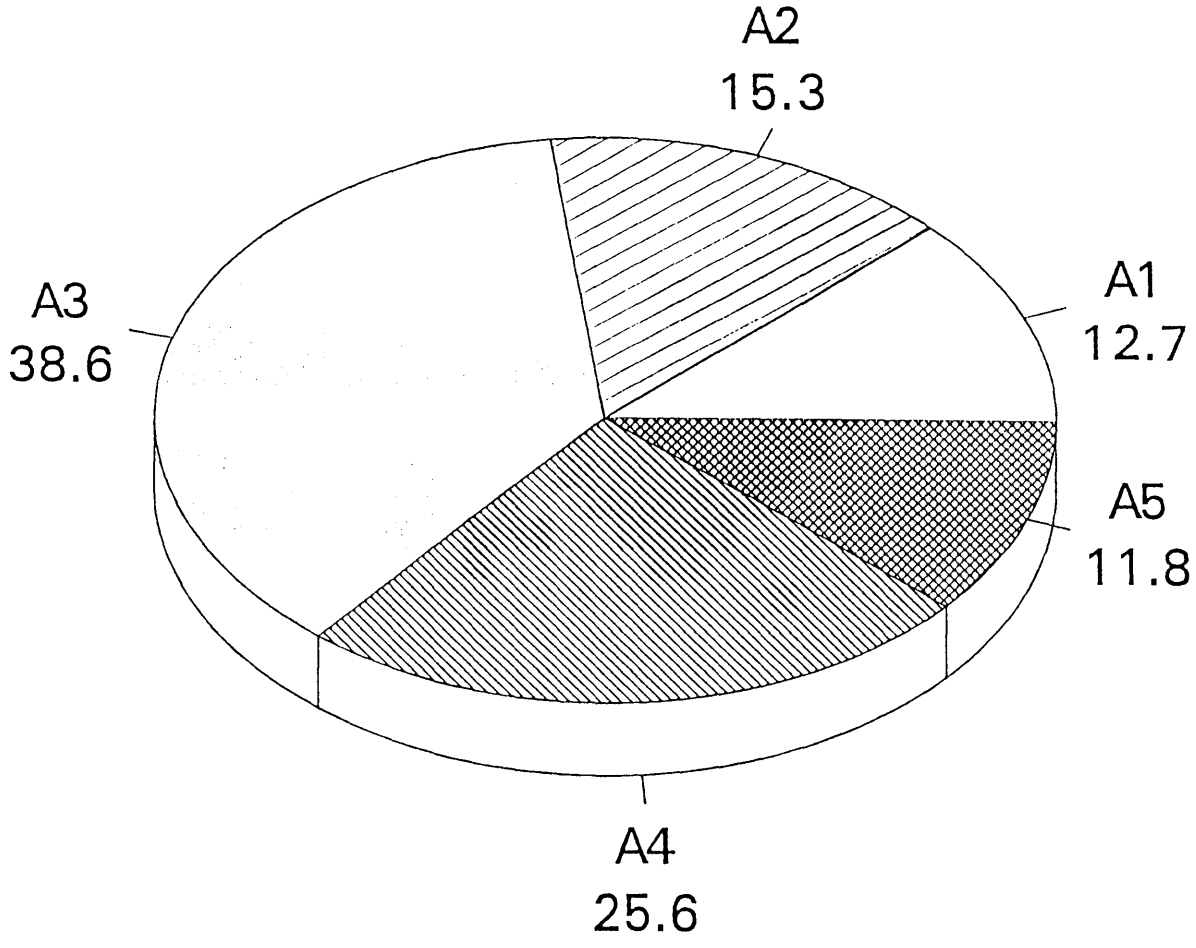
LIFE SKILLS

Community and Social Development



A1 Mental Health

A2 Community responsibility

A3 Human rights

A4 Road safety

A5 Technological development

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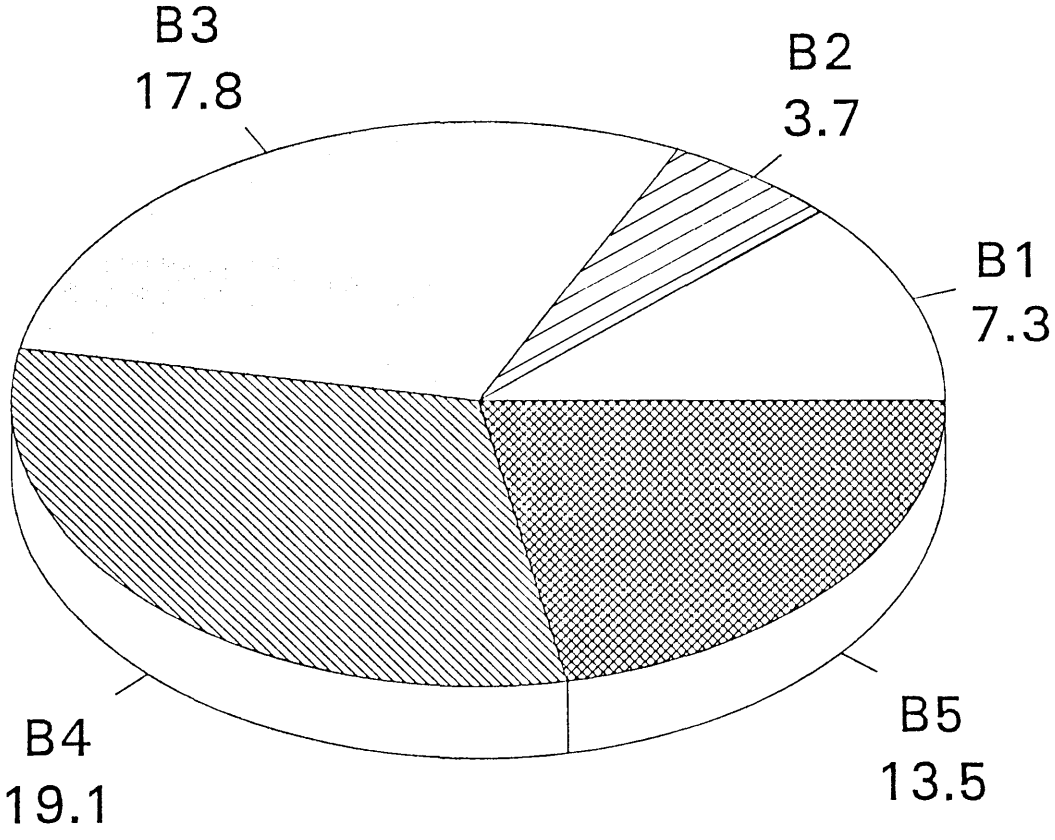
LIFE SKILLS

Development of person and self



B1 Leadership

B2 Literacy/Education

B3 Self-concept/
Self-assertion

B4 Peer group
influence

B5 Identity
development

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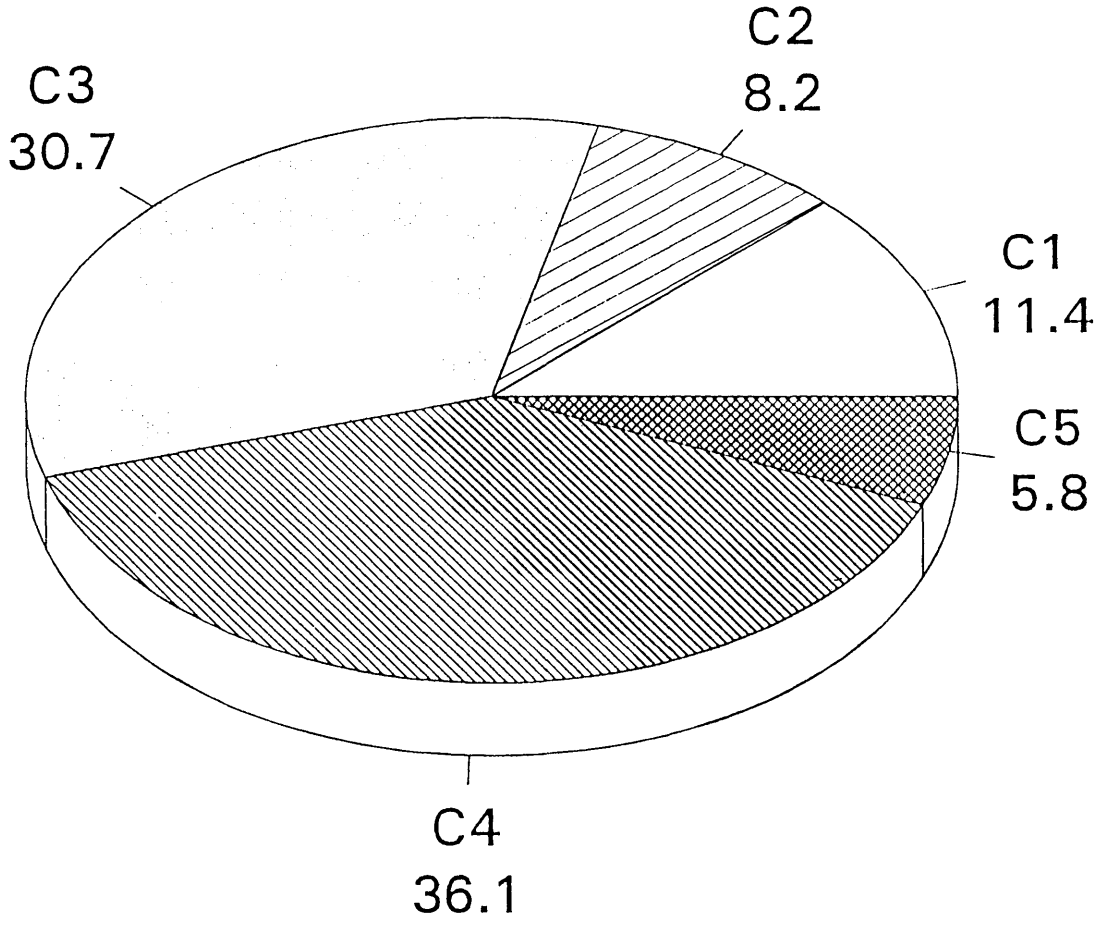
LIFE SKILLS

Self-management



C1 Time and Self-management

C2 Financial Management

C3 Handling Stress

C4 Study Methods

C5 Communication Skills

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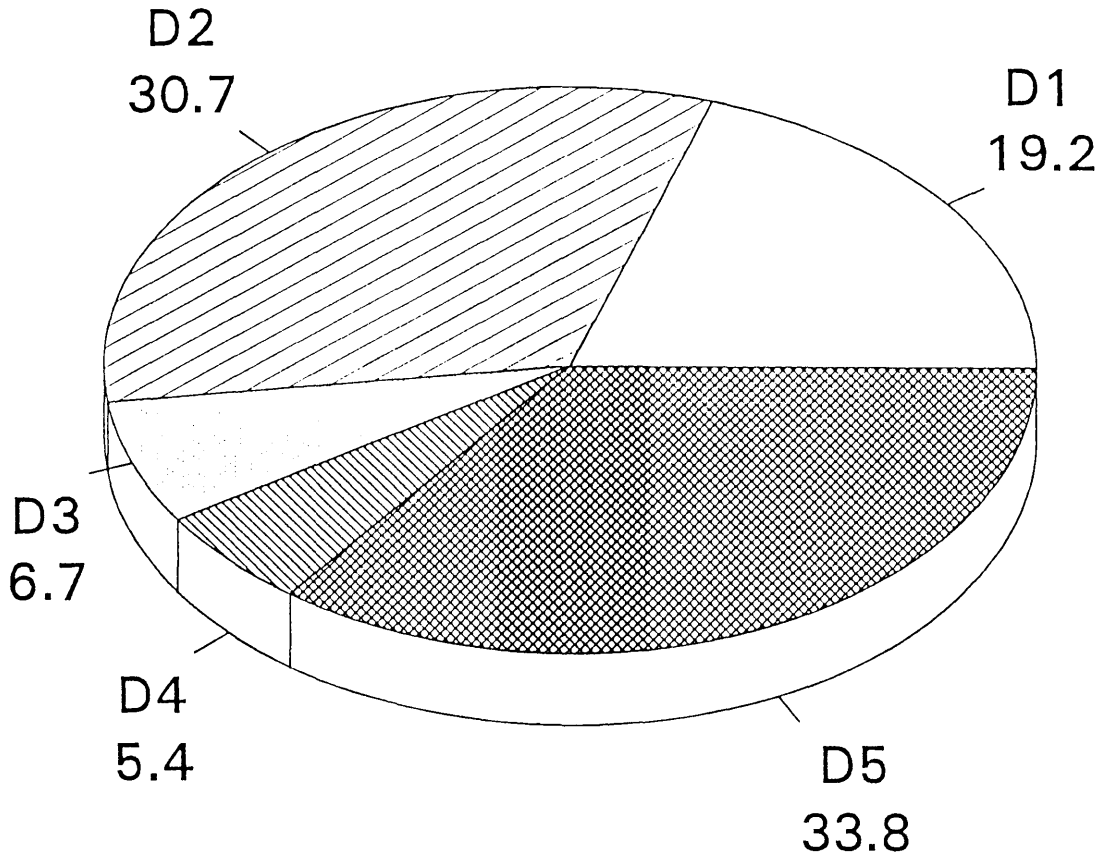
LIFE SKILLS

Physical and Sexual Development



D1 Sex Guidance

D2 Alcohol/Drug abuse

D3 Exertion and Recreation

D4 Healthy Life Style

D5 Acceptance of one's body

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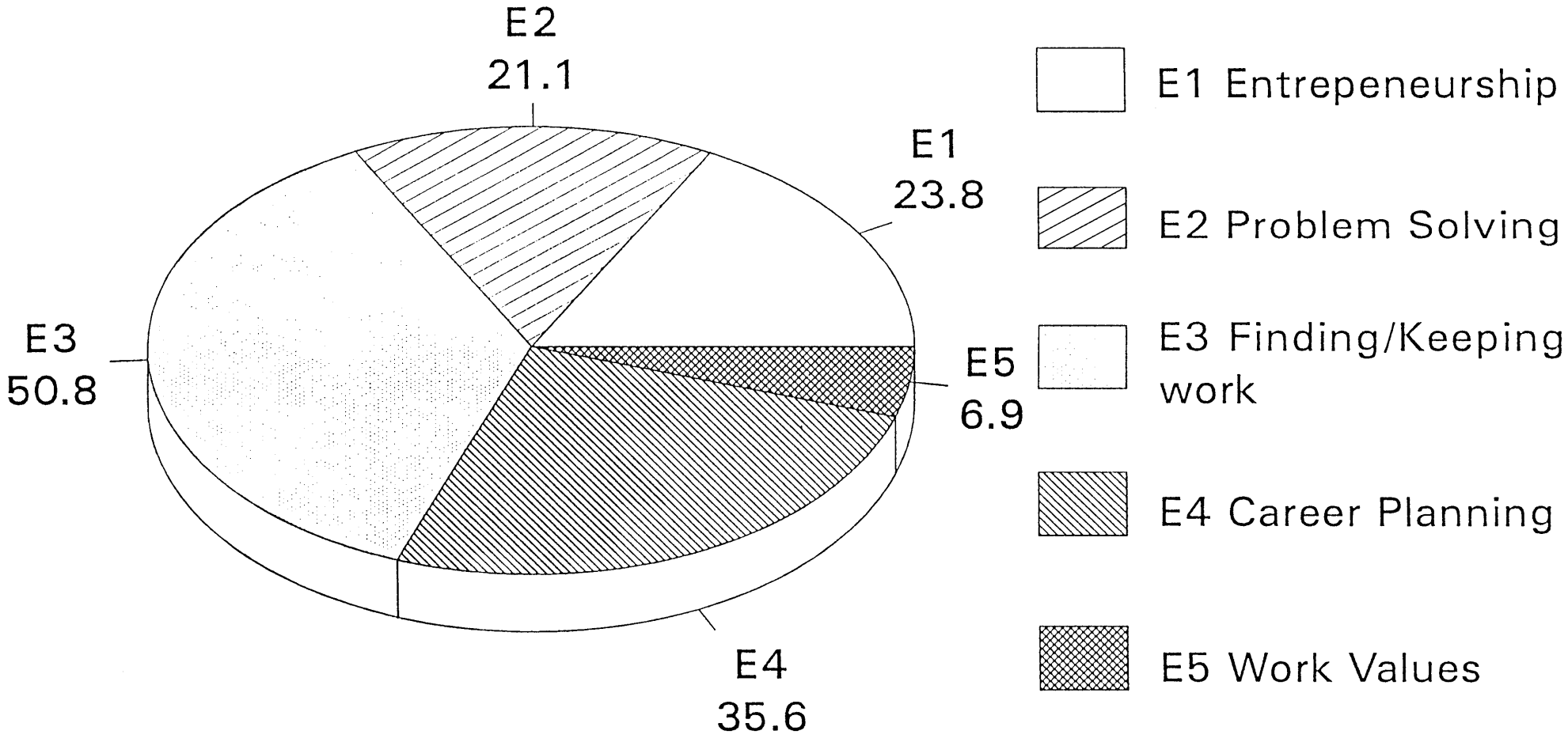
LIFE SKILLS

Career Planning and Development



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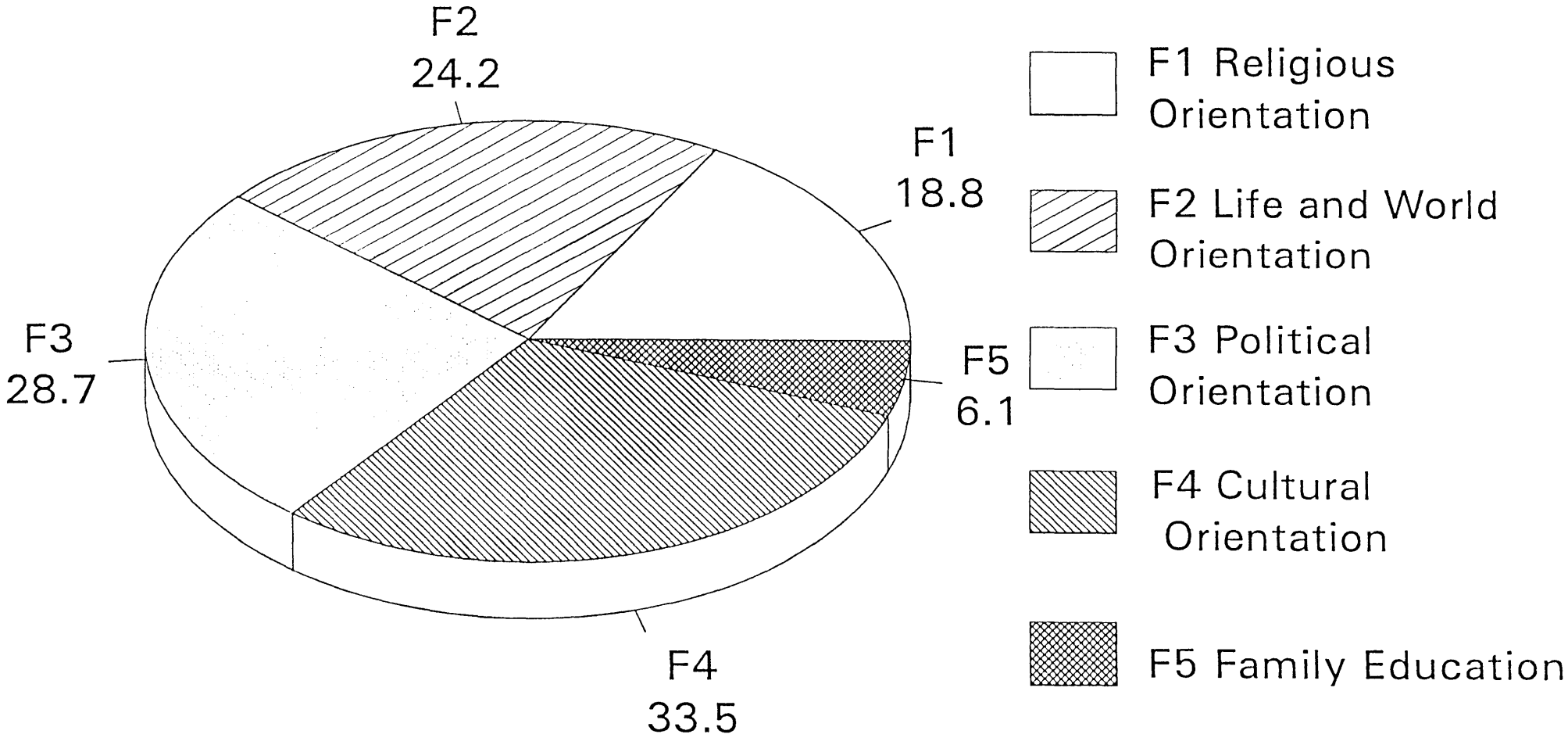
LIFE SKILLS

Life and World Orientation



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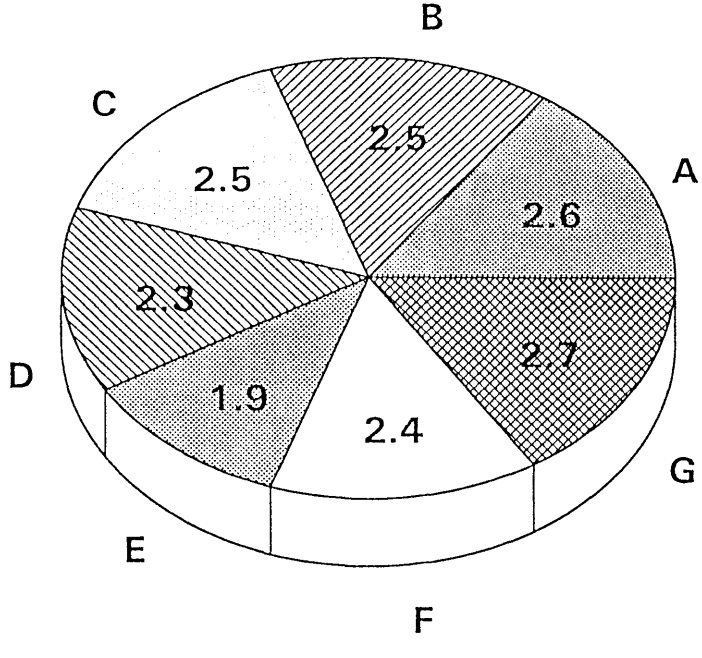
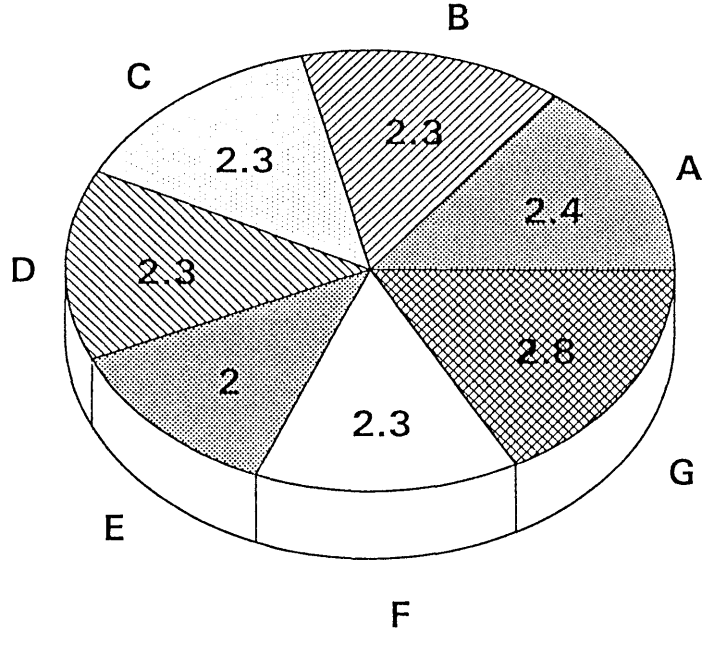
DEGREES OF SKILLS COMPETENCE



Deans



Councils

A = Self
B = Personal
C = Thinking
D = Life
E = Career
F = Social
G = Physical

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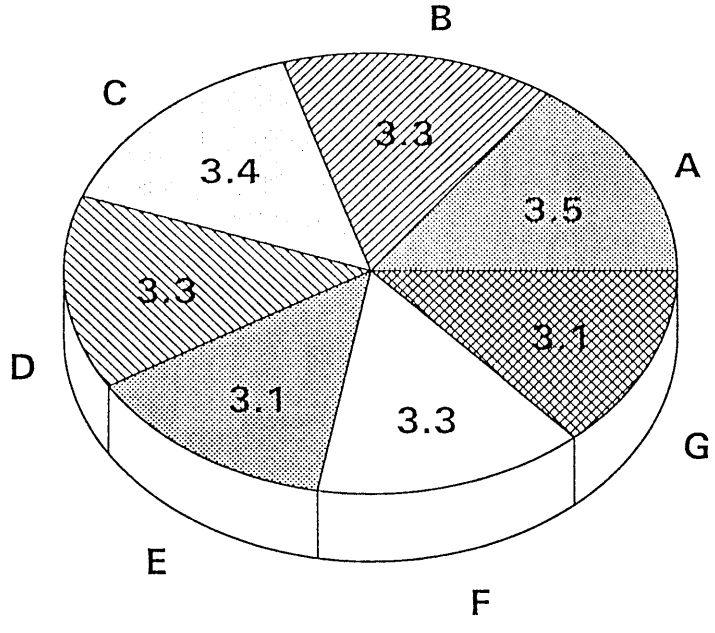
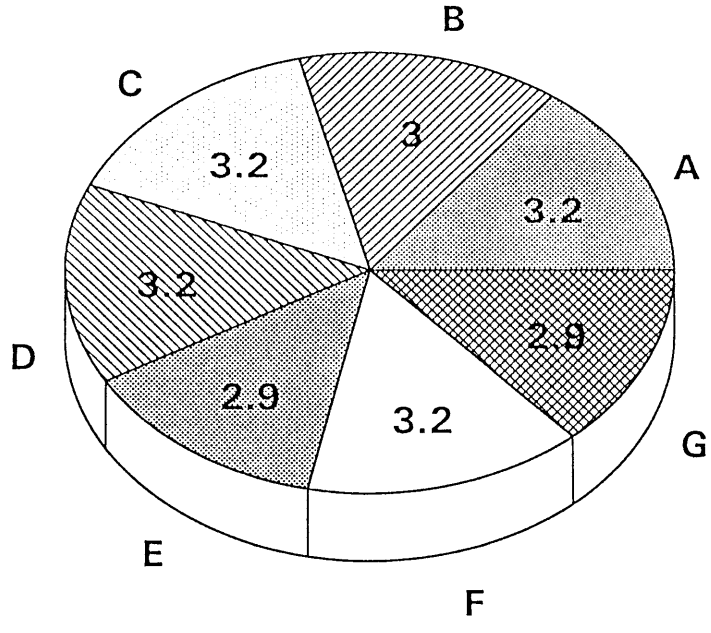
DEGREES OF SKILLS IMPORTANCE



Deans



Councils

A = Self
B = Personal
C = Thinking
D = Life
E = Career
F = Social
G = Physical

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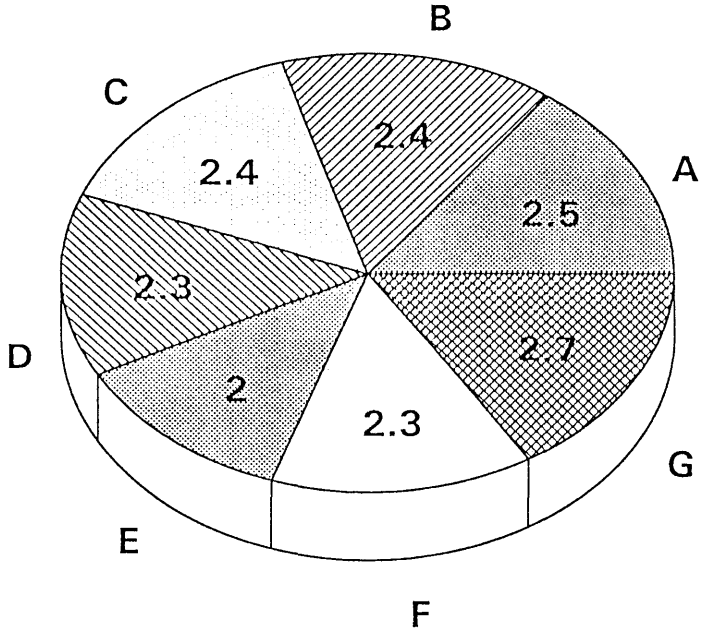
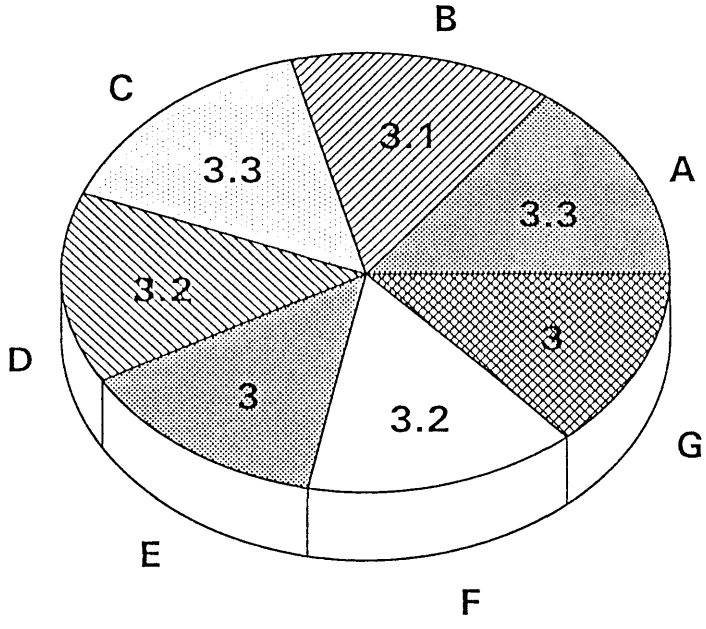
COMBINED DEGREES OF SKILLS COMPETENCE AND IMPORTANCE



Competence
Deans and Councils



Importance
Deans and Councils

A = Self
B = Personal
C = Thinking
D = Life
E = Career
F = Social
G = Physical

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ANNEXURE B : COPY OF THE LETTER SENT TO THE COUNCILS

"I am a PhD student with the University of Pretoria.

The title of my thesis is Guidance Support for University Students and the main aim of the thesis is to attempt to establish whether or not the training provided by the university to its graduates could be improved via the following : 1) attempting to educate from a Life Skills perspective and 2) attempting to ascertain the value of including certificated courses in Life Skills in order to improve both the employability and the productivity of our graduates. Simply put, Academic Support Programmes may be too limited in scope and the idea of expanding ASP to include General Guidance Support with a Life Skills focus might, at this stage, be a possible/viable alternative.

In order to consider the above, it is necessary to ascertain the areas in which the training received by our graduates may be falling short of desired results, including employer expectations. To this end a number of questionnaires have been compiled, one of which I have taken the liberty of sending to you. The aim of the questionnaire is to attempt to gain some insight into the level or degree of competency of graduating students with regard to certain core or life skills it was felt employers might either expect them to be in possession of, or would feel might increase and expedite productivity levels.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would please be so kind as to complete the attached questionnaire at your earliest convenience and fax it back to me as soon as possible.

The questionnaire itself is presented in two parts. Each of questions 1 to 55 requires two responses. Space has been provided for responses to questions 56 to 60.

Where it may be preferable to be able to make mention of results obtained from specific Professional Boards in the overall analysis of data gathered, confidentiality will be maintained if so desired. Please indicate with a circle (see question number 60) whether or not you would prefer your answers to remain confidential.

Please feel free to draw on any and all sources of information available to you in order to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you in anticipation of your kind co-operation."

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ANNEXURE C : ELABORATION-SKILLS REQUIREMENTS IN AUSTRALIA

Using the Australian description, the competencies would be as indicated below. An examination of the suggested descriptions should allay concerns stakeholders may have about others manipulating content to serve narrow, sectional ends.

Compentency 1 :

Collecting, analysing and organising information

The capacity to locate, sift and sort information in order to select what is required and present it in a useful way, and evaluate both the information itself and the sources and methods used to obtain it.

Competency 2 :

Communicating ideas and information

The capacity to communicate effectively with others using the range of spoken, written, graphic and other non-verbal means of expression.

Competency 3 :

Planning and organising activities

The capacity to plan and organise one's own work activities, including making good use of time and resources, sorting out priorities and monitoring one's own performance.

Competency 4 :

Working with others and in teams

The capacity to interact effectively with other people both on a one-to-one basis and in groups, including understanding and responding to the needs of a client and working effectively as a member of a team to achieve a shared goal.

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Competency 5 :

Using mathematical ideas and techniques

The capacity to use mathematical ideas, such as number and space and techniques, such as estimation and approximation, for practical purposes.

Competency 6 :

Solving problems

The capacity to apply problem-solving strategies in purposeful ways, both in situations where the problem and the desired solution are clearly evident and in situations requiring critical thinking and a creative approach to achieve the outcome.

Competency 7 :

Using technology

The capacity to apply technology, combining the physical and sensory skills needed to operate equipment with the understanding of scientific and technological principles needed to explore and adapt systems (Wood & Phillips 1992:2-3).

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ANNEXURE D : STRATEGIË VIR DIE IMPLEMENTERING VAN DIE LEIERSKAPSONTWIKKELINGSPROGRAM

1. AGTERGROND

Die moontlikheid bestaan dat die program geimplementeer kan word deur 'n keuse te maak tussen twee alternatiewelike modelle (Model A en Model B). Model A word beheer en aangebeid buite fakulteitsverband, terwyl Model B binne fakulteitsverband aangebied word.

2. MODELLE VIR LEIERSKAPSONTWIKKELING

Die aangeleentheid kan skematies soos volg verduidelik word :

STRATEGIË VIR IMPLEMENTERING	**MODEL A** Buite fakulteitsverband **AKSIESTAPPE**	**MODEL B** Binne fakulteitsverband **AKSIESTAPPE**
1. Programbenaming	* Professionele oriëntering * Leierskapontwikkelingsprogram * Lewens- of werkvoorbereiding * Burgerkunde	* Professionele oriëntering * Leierskapontwikkelingsprogram * Lewens- of werkvoorbereiding * Burgerkunde
2. Tydsduur van aanbieding	Een lesing per week vir een of twee semesters	Een lesing per week vir een of twee semesters
3. Jaargroepe (Teikengroepe)	Verpligtend vir alle eerstejaarstudente van 'n betrokke Fakulteit	Verpligtend vir alle eerstejaarstudente van 'n betrokke Fakulteit
4. Verantwoordelike persone vir die aanbieding van die program	Kundiges word geïdentifiseer en aangewys binne en buite fakulteitsverband	Kundiges word geïdentifiseer en aangewys binne en buite fakulteitsverband
5. Implementeringsimplikasies	* Ruimtelike implikasies * Roosterimplikasies * Finansiële implikasies : Vergoeding van kundiges wat lesings aanbied	* Ruimtelike implikasies * Roosterimplikasies * Finansiële implikasies : Vergoeding van kundiges wat lesings aanbied
6. Kernkurrikulum	6.1 Kernkurrikulum (Algemeen) Moet aansluit by die missie van die Universiteit van Pretoria, asook die missie van die betrokke Fakulteit.	6.2 Kernkurrikulum (Spesifiek) Moet aansluit by die missie van die Universiteit van Pretoria, asook die missie van die betrokke Fakulteit.

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ANNEXURE E

The following will be covered in this annexure:

1 A rationale for goal directed teaching
2 Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives

According to Malan and du Toit (1991:29-32), only goal directed teaching will ensure successful learning outcomes. Goal directed teaching needs to adopt an approach that takes cognizance of learning in order to bring about positive change and growth in students and which is underpinned by effective curriculum design in terms of the following:

* facilitation of the development of expertise, competence and a positive attitude towards learning;
* development of the ability to communicate, to formulate and to reason scientifically;
* stimulation of the ability to think logically, critically and creatively;
* development of the ability to treat content in analytical, synthetical and evaluative ways;
* facilitation of the realization of general scientific foundations;
* optimum realization of flexibility and transference between subjects (Malan & du Toit 1991:30).

In the opinion of these authors, the lecturer is not simply a tranferer of knowledge to a passive student body.

Rather, they believe students must take at least some measure of responsibility for their own learning outcomes and academic development. Learning content needs to be individualized via each student's independent use of learning activities.

According to Malan and du Toit (1991:32-42), the use of goal directed teaching is not new. A well-known example of this type of approach is Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives which, furthermore, facilitates the design of assessment/evaluation procedures in order to ascertain whether or not a student has managed to achieve the expected level of stated goals.

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Bloom's taxonomy is given below. More detail has been supplied in terms of cognitive objectives as these are the ones most specifically dealt with at tertiary level.

1 Cognitive Objectives

1.1 Knowledge (which relies on memory, recall and reproduction):

* for example, vocabulary, terms, meanings, definitions, elements, facts, characteristics, methods, causes etc.,
* in order to be able to recall, demonstrate, distinguish tabulate etc. in examination situations.

1.2 Comprehension (which implies understanding):

* in order to transfer essentials of a given piece of knowledge to similar situations via demonstrating an understanding of metaphorical language, definitions, relationships, analogies, theories, consequences, factors, implications etc.,
* so as to be able to paraphrase, illustrate, summarize, extrapolate, clarify, interpret, deduce and so on.

1.3 Application (which implies transferring of existing knowledge to unknown situations):

* ideas, theories and principles must be analyzed and used to solve problems,
* via asking students to demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge.

1.4 Analysis (which implies the ability to break up wholes into their component parts):

* demonstrated via the ability to distinguish between that which is applicable and that which is not, the ability to uncover a theme and identify an argument,

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* in order to distinguish between, classify, compare, contrast and the like.

1.5 Synthesis (which implies the ability to build a whole out of separate parts):

* demonstrated via, for example, the ability to set up a series of principles which apply to the solving of a given problem,
* in order to be able to deal with structures, patterns, designs, specifications, solutions, schemes, theories, generalizations, discoveries, etc., and plan, design, classify, formulate, deduce, combine, create and produce.

1.6 Evaluation (which implies making comparisons in terms of internal and external criteria):

* demonstrated via the students's ability to identify accuracy, consistency, weaknesses, errors, injustices, standards, theories, effectiveness etc.,
* in order to be able to judge, determine, bear in mind, construct and evaluate.

2. Affective Objectives

2.1 Receiving (attending)
2.2 Responding
2.3 Valuing
2.4 Organization
2.5 Characterization (by a value or value complex)

3. Psychomotor Objectives

3.1 Cognitive
3.2 Practice and establishment
3.3 Automatization (in Malan & du Toit:1991:37-42).

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Because of the complexity of the above, ongoing evaluation of both general courses and individual lectures increases the chances of success.

In the opinion of Malan & du Toit (1991:37), Bloom is not without his critics. Nevertheless, a careful look at the examples of actual lessons given in Annexure F will show many similarities in terms of learning objectives.

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ANNEXURE F : ACTUAL LESSONS

1) TRAINING

Presentation Skills Training Exercise;

How to give an effective group presentation

Context

This is a training exercise designed to highlight and demonstrate the skills of effective (group) presentation. It requires student groups to make brief presentations on effective and ineffective group presentations. It assumes that a course requires students to make a group presentation as a formal course requirement. Originally developed for trainee district nurses and access students in physics, this exercise can be adapted to very different courses or used as a model to develop an exercise that better suits your students' needs. It requires about an hour and a half.

Basic Idea

Students know from experience - largely through what they have seen teachers do - what makes for an effective (or ineffective!) presentation. However, they may not have reviewed that experience systematically to make their own presentations effective. Nor are they likely to have practised and internalised the necessary skills. After they have done an exercise such as the one described here it may be useful to refer them to written guides on effective presentations, to show them training videos and/or to develop exercises on particular aspects of giving a presentation, e.g. using the OHP.

A Suggested Procedure :

(The key instructions given to the students orally/by OHP are in italics)

1. Divide the class into groups - it may well be appropriate for these to be the same groups that are later to give a formal presentation in the course. (The description that follows assumes groups of c.4 students, with about 30 in the class). Ensure that they are sitting where they can readily talk to each other and are away from other groups.

2. Remind them that the course requires them to make an effective group presentation.

   "The aims of this exercise are to :

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a) *review your experience of what makes for an effective group presentation.*

b) *give your experience of giving a group presentation.*

c) *help us all to develop guidelines for giving effective presentations in this course"*

3. *"In your group decide which of you is an A, B, C, and a D."*

4. Remind them, or if necessary tell them how to brainstorm. *"For this section of the exercise I want A to chair, B to be scribe and C to be timekeeper. Brainstorm why you think group presentations are an important part of this course. Then agree on three principle reasons. You have till ..."*

5. Get three or four groups to give one principle reason. Get one of the students to write them on a flip chart. Then you state your three principle reasons for making group presentations a course requirement. We suggest that at this stage you don't get into questions and explanations on the details of the course requirements, but if necessary re-assure them you will deal with this later.

6. *"For this section of the exercise B is to chair, C is scribe and D is timekeeper. Think back over the group presentations you have seen or done yourself. Brainstorm as many ways as possible to make them totally ineffective. Then agree on five principle ways to make a group presentation ineffective. You have till ..."*

7. *"C is now chair, D is scribe and A is timekeeper. Now brainstorm ways to make group presentations effective. Then agree on five principle ways to make a group presentation effective. You have till ..."*

8. Divide the group into two sets; one you designate as being responsible for effective group presentations, the other for ineffective.

9. *"D is responsible for chairing this stage. I suggest you also appoint a scribe and a timekeeper. As a group you should*

* *go back to your five basic rules (for either effective or ineffective presentations); do you now want to amend them?*

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* *at* (state a time) *you are ready to come to the front and make a group presentation;*
one of you will state the rule
another person will act out the rule
after this those who have not spoken so far will answer questions from the audience on the value of the rule or how to ensure it is carried out.
As a group, you are responsible that for each rule different persons take on different roles."

10 Depending on the numbers of groups and the time available you will have to adjust how you proceed. One first calls on the groups responsible for ineffective presentations. In turn each gives a presentation on one rule. Those who come later are told they should choose a rule they have developed but that is different from those that have preceeded them.
You then call on the groups responsible for effective presentations to go through the same procedure.

11. Your role is to set things up clearly, to act as chair (or designate someone else to do that) and to be as unobtrusive as possible. Students have to feel they are centre stage.

12. After all groups have performed you could clarify any student uncertainties about course requirements. After an exercise such as this students will ask more penetrating questions. Again it can be valuable to require groups to specify the three (or four!) questions they want you to answer.

13. When you have answered these questions, ensure you give the groups time in this class period, to reflect on this experience and plan for when they will give a formal presentation in the course.

Some Possible Variations

There are many! They include: reminding them at the beginning of the exercise how (if at all) presentations are to be assessed and your criteria for assessment; alternatively after

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they have completed this exercise you may choose to get them to negotiate with you the criteria they think appropriate; they may now wish to specify the aspects of presentation skills they need to work on and pehaps where they want further training...

Advice to students on seminar presentations

Seminar Presentation Mistakes

1. Forgetting there is an audience
2. Including too much content
3. Lack of direction
4. Lack of structure
5. Nothing to look at
6. Nothing to do
7. Only note-taking
8. No questions
9. No questioning
10. No summary
11. No discussion
12. Not drawing on what your audience knows
13. Reading out notes in full
14. No follow up
15. No fun
16. No responsiveness or flexibility
17. No improvement

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Seminar Assessment Criteria

20% of the marks for the course are awarded for each of two seminar presentations, which you share with your seminar partner. These marks are awarded by the audience at each seminar. Please assess your colleagues' seminar presentations using this form. Think about each criterion separately and thoughtfully rather than giving one global snap judgement. Add comments explaining your marks under each criterion and some helpful comments at the end. Complete the form immediately at the end of the seminar and hand it in to your tutor.

Seminar presenters: 1 ..... 2 .....

Criterion		Mark
Content	clarity of argument, understanding, explanation, overview, conclusions Comments	0 1 2 3 4 5
Sources	breadth and relevance, acknowledgement of sources, references, reading list Comments	0 1 2 3 4 5
Presentation	voice, use of a.v. aids, pace, variety, liveliness, handouts Comments	0 1 2 3 4 5
Discussion	involvement of group, questioning, answering, use of discussion methods Comments	0 1 2 3 4 5
Best things about the seminar... **What you should pay attention to next time...**		
		Total Mark

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ANNEXURE F : ACTUAL LESSONS

2) DEMAND

Stimulation of Technical Experts Bidding for a Contract

(This example was devised by Martin Haigh.)

Brief Description

Groups of about four students represent different technical groups who are bidding for a contract. Each group espouses a different analytical technique and argues that the contract should be given to them because of the superiority of that technique.

Skills developed

Communicating technical issues to a non-specialist audience; working in groups; speaking and report writing.

Courses used in

Soil Types and their Management. Particularly suitable for science and technology courses.

What the teacher does

Establish the topic to be investigated. This approach is well suited to practical problems where contrasting or conflicting 'technical' solutions can be used. See the enclosed example of an Indian state which, as a basis for an agricultural development programme, requests international assistance in carrying out a soil survey. Students represent different 'technical' groups, arguing the value of contrasting methods of soil analysis.

Students are divided into groups, each group being given a particular technical approach to master. The teacher gives guidance over reading and sets out the timetable and what is required.

The teacher then plays the role of the 'client', inviting bids for a contract of work. This can be done solely by means of a written statement. Alternatively the teacher can give an aural presentation (perhaps accompanied by a written statement). The client's statement or presentation should acquaint students with the practial problem for which a solution is required and should give them all the necessary background information. It is very important that the client's needs should not be stated from a technical perspective. Rather they should be from someone in an official position facing a practical problem and requiring specialist advice.

It is very important that the client's needs are stated in a very professional manner for it sets the tone for what follows. This is why you, the teacher, may choose to play the role of the client.

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You may choose to see the various groups separately before they do a presentation, helping to clarify their understanding of the technical issues and thinking through how to communicate that in a non-technical way.

The class then takes on the form of competitive technical presentations for a business contract. You as client are in the chair. Each group has to make a presentation in its bid to get the 'contract'. Your guidelines will have indicated that the presentation must state the basis of the methodology. An effective way of doing this is through a poster. Each group then has to make a verbal presentation to the client saying why its method should be used to solve the problem. After each group has done a presentation it is questioned by the client (you) and the competing groups. Here it is important that the questioning is probing and seeks to uncover whether they really understand the technical issues involved and can explain why that approach is the best 'buy'. After all student groups have completed their presentation the 'client' says who is to get the contract. You as teacher then state your marks and your reasons.

Problems for the teacher

This technique is probably most suited to classes of 10 - 20 students. As the number in each group should be kept to 2 - 4 and each group has to have a very different perspective it can be difficult to get enough competing methodologies to meeet the needs of a large class. There is a limit to the number of presentations which people can assimilate (even if they are spread over a number of class sessions). Many presentations can take up too much course time.

It is essential that there is a good range of accessible published material on each of the perspectives. You will need to spend much time before the exercise making sure all these resources are available.

Students have been set a hard task. The material which each group has to assimilate may well be difficult. Groups also have to be able to communicate it in a non-technical way. Particularly if the (reading) resources are limited or difficult, students could become discouraged. You probably need to see them periodically before the presentation to advise and encourage.

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ANNEXURE F : ACTUAL LESSONS

3) MONITORING

Monitoring of transferable skills

Giving and receiving feedback

An essential part of the process in learning skills is receiving feedback on our performance. The problem is that we often defend ourselves against the possibility of negative feedback and so fail to listen and thus to act upon what may be very helpful information. On the other hand much feedback tends to be presented in such a way that it creates a defensive reaction. The following guidelines embody two basic principles; the existential one of "I can speak of my own experience; I cannot speak of yours", and the learning one; "I have heard what you say and this is what I propose to do".

Giving feedback

a Invite the recipient to speak first. This fosters the skills of self criticism and protects self respect.

b Be specific rather than general. To be told that one is disorganised will probably not be as useful as to be told: When you lost your place during the lecture and couldn't find the right notes I found it distracting.

c Balance positive and negative feedback. Positive feedback on its own allows no room for improvement and negative feedback on its own is discouraging.

d Direct your feedback towards behaviour that your colleague can control. It would not be helpful, for example, to comment on someone's lisp.

e Ask for confirmation from a third party. For example, if you are giving feedback to your colleague at the end of a seminar and the students are still present, then check out the accuracy of your feedback with them.

Receiving feedback

a Listen to the feedback without comment. You will hear more if you concentrate on listening rather than explaining or justifying yourself.

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b Ask for clarification at the end. You need to be sure that you understand exactly what your colleague is saying about you and what evidence the comments are based on.

c Devise action plans. Specify ways in which you want to change, new ideas you want to try etc.

d If there is anything your colleagues can do or not do to help you achieve your action plans, tell them.

e Keep a written record. This can be used for later reflection, action planning and appraisal interviews.

f Thank your colleagues for their feedback.

Monitoring project work in teams

Students are often asked to work in teams for quite long periods without outside support. They are bound to run into all kinds of difficulties but social conventions may make it very difficult to raise issues which might imply criticism of individuals or of the team as a whole. It is often necessary to use an exercise explicitly designed to make public what team members know or suspect but which they are not acting on.

There are many checklists of the kind offered below which focus on different aspects of team behaviour; leadership, goal setting and task orientation, emotional tone, co-operation, meeting skills and so on. This list identifies the most likely problems teams encounter and invites group members to say whether or not they are occurring in their team. In effect it gives permission to team members to speak up.

Such checklists can be used in a variety of ways:

a the whole team can go through the checklist together, discussing what they think is happening in the team. This raises the danger of members not speaking up and the team colluding in pretending that nothing is going wrong.

b individuals within a team can fill in the checklist individually and then pool and discuss their responses and what they might do to rectify the situation. This may still confront individuals with difficulties if the team appears to have responded to the checklist differently from each other.

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c students form 'cross-over' groups made up of one member from each team, and discuss the checklist in relation to their own team. This is much more likely to lead to open and honest discussion of problems. Students can then go back to their own teams with some confidence and, hopefully, some ideas about what to do to tackle problems.

It can be helpful for teams to be explicit about the problems they have identified and to record decisions about what to do to tackle problems. A future review could then check on the extent to which these actions have solved the identified problems. Teams need to monitor their own performance on a fairly regular basis - for example having five minutes of review at the end of each meeting. Even a short time spent on process can pay off handsomely in productivity and learning outcomes.

A simple exercise to monitor team work might take the following form, with all teams together in one room :

Stage 1

Form cross-over groups made up of one member of each of the teams.

This helps to widen the range of experience being reviewed and also to give students the freedom to discuss their own team unchallenged.

Stage 2

Each student in the cross-over group, in turn, reports :

One thing we have done as a team which has helped us to work effectively and learn is...

Followed by an open discussion.

Stage 3

Each person in turn reports :

One thing which goes wrong/which we have trouble with in our team is...

and seeks help from the others in suggesting ways to tackle and overcome the problem.

Stage 4

The teams re-form and discuss what they think they can do to build on their successes and overcome their problems in the future.

Stage 5

Each team reports to the whole class one change they will make :

One thing we are going to do differently in the way we work is...

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The following checklist may help students identify the problems that their team is facing:

Teamwork Checklist - What Is Going Wrong?

Tick	What might be going wrong	Comments
	Not clarifying what your task or objective is	
	Not checking on progress	
	Not checking on the time	
	Not clarifying or recording what has been decided	
	Not clarifying who is going to do what	
	Not clarifying what has to be done by when	
	Not establishing procedures for handling meetings	
	Not keeping to agreed procedures	
	Not listening to each other	
	Allowing individuals to dominate and others to withdraw	
	Not compromising individuals' wants for the sake of the team	
	Not recognising the feelings of members of the team	
	Not contributing equally to the progress of the team	

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ANNEXURE F : ACTUAL LESSONS

4) ASSESSMENT

Assessing transferable skills

Assessing the skill components of essay and report writing

Presumably the skills in writing essays and reports are assessed every time a tutor puts a grade on such a piece of coursework, but the danger is that all too often such assessment is subjective and implicit, and offers no formative help to the student. To overcome this there are three golden rules.

1 **Specify the skills**

If you make clear exactly what skills you are expecting this means that the student does not have to guess what they are - and risk the chance of guessing wrongly. It can also help you when it comes to marking the piece of work as it can act as a checklist. It can also help you to check your subjective reaction against this set of criteria. It can then help you to give feedback to the students in identifying in which of these skills they are weak or strong, and form a useful starting point for any dialogue with the student in a subsequent tutorial.

2 **Model the skills**

In addition to stating the expected skills, it can help to model them by indicating through examples what good and bad practice in each skill might look like.

3 **Allocate marks**

Unless all the required skills are equally important, which seems unlikely, weighing them with different shares of the overall mark will clearly indicate to students those which are most valued and which they need to spend most time on.

If these three rules are kept to when the assignment is set, you can expect an overall increase in the quality of work that is done, with the beneficial spin-off that you may need to spend less time on remedial feedback. If the skills are included as part of an assignment attachment sheet (see the example below), listing all the criteria for the assignment, this can also reduce the amount of time needed to be spent on writing components.

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Such sheets can also be used in the development of self and peer assessment in that the student can be asked to fill out the form for his own work (or for a peer) possibly before you mark it (at least initially), and then any discrepancies between the two can be discussed. It is possible to build up students' assessment skills until their marking decisions can be allowed to stand.

Essay Marking Criteria

Knowledge			
Text	deep, thorough, detailed	. . . . .	superficial
Author	wide knowledge, used in	. . . . .	no knowledge or not used
Genre	analysis		
Historical and social	wide knowledge, used in	. . . . .	no knowledge or not used
context	analysis		
	wide knowledge, used in	. . . . .	no knowledge or not used
	analysis		
Essay			
Structure	clear, logical structure	. . . . .	confused list
Quotations	correct, purposeful use	. . . . .	incorrect, arbitrary use
	properly referenced		
Other sources	wide range, relevant	. . . . .	few, irrelevant
	properly referenced		improperly referenced
Grammar, spelling	correct	. . . . .	many errors
Personal			
Response to text	vivid, personal	. . . . .	little response
Viewpoint	clearly expressed	. . . . .	no viewpoint
Creativity	imaginative, surprising	. . . . .	predictable
Critical Theory			
Understanding	clear grasp	. . . . .	little grasp
Use of methods	wide range appropriate use	. . . . .	little or inappropriate

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ANNEXURE F : ACTUAL LESSONS

4) ASSESSMENT

Assessing transferable skills

Self and Peer Assessment of Written Assignments

All marking of written work involves the use of criteria and standards, many of which are never made explicit and even when they are, are rarely internalised by the students. Frequently there is a semi-conscious hit-or-miss approach in which the students gradually learn to conform to the requirements. But ask them to spell out what these are and they'd be hard pressed to come up with an answer. The main reason for this lacuna seems to be the external imposition of criteria and standards and the lack of shared discussion with other students on what seems to count in getting good marks.

If, however, students can be engaged in the process of deciding criteria, negotiating standards and applying both of these in marking and giving feedback for written assignments, they can not only learn a professional skill - that of making judgements about the value of their own and others' work, but can relieve the tutor of a lot of tedious and repetitious work in giving detailed feedback on each assignment.

Stage 1 (30 mins)

When setting an assignment put students into groups of 4 - 6 and ask them to share what they think will count for a competent piece of work by completing sentences such as :

It will look good if I...

I'll feel OK about it if...

I know I get good marks when I...

Ask each group in turn to shout out one of their criteria and write them on the board or OHP. Invite them to consider these when writing the assignment.

Make it clear to them at this stage that you expect the assignments to be handed in at the start of a future class and that they will be looked at by the same groups before being handed in to you.

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Stage 2 (30 mins)

At the class in question, ask them in the same groups as before to pass their completed assignments round so that each member of the group reads everyone else's. Ask them then to write on a sheet of paper an agreed "provisional grade" for each piece of work with a brief comment to justify it. Collect the work for marking.

Stage 3

When you mark the work, there are two options :

a write copious comments on the script and keep your marks or grades hidden

b write comments on a separate sheet of paper, but again keep the marks hidden

Stage 4 (20 mins)

Before you hand the work back, organise the scripts so as to pair those gaining better grades with those gaining poor ones, as far as you can, and thereafter on a random basis. Tell them that you want them to work in pairs and that you are going to hand the scripts back to the opposite partner such that A sees B's script and B sees A's. The task then is for A to mark B's and vice versa. Depending on whether you chose (a) or (b) above, ask each "surrogate tutor" either to decide what grade to give to their partner's work on the basis of your comments or to write both comments and marks first before you give them access to your comments at a later stage. Once each surrogate tutor has decided the comments and grades ask them to get together with their partner and give them a 10-minute tutorial, i.e. 10 minutes each way. Do not reveal your grade at this stage.

Stage 5 (10-20 mins)

Ask whether anyone in the class minds if there is public discussion of their grades. If not, invite each surrogate tutor in turn to call out the grade they gave for their partner's work. Then reveal your grade for the same work; where there is a big discrepancy ask their reasons and give yours. At this stage you may decide to accept the surrogate tutor's mark, negotiate a new mark or agree to differ with the promise of a second and final opinion from another tutor. If anyone does object to this public discussion then you can go through the same process with her or his surrogate tutor privately in the class.

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Stage 6 (30 mins)

Now ask the pairs to write a shared list of "what makes for a good written assignment" (or whatever you call the piece of work) for 5 minutes. Then ask pairs to join others to form fours and for them to produce a composite list of the most important criteria (10 minutes).

Finally ask for one criterion from each four in turn and write them up. Process these through open discussion into a short list of not less than 5 and not more than 10 criteria. You may have to add one or two of your own but that is unlikely. Explain, if this makes sense that you will expect these criteria, weighted appropriately, to apply to subsequent assignments and that they will be expected to assess their own work using these and write a justifiation that will itself receive a mark.

Then next time you collect a written assignment for marking you will have

a had each student think more carefully about how their own piece of work measures up to the criteria

and

b some pointers from the self assessments as to which scripts are going to need more attention than others and some measure of their ability to asses their own competence

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