ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

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A number of factors can affect whether or not people register for short courses, even when they are keen to do so. These can include, among others,

- the need for long lead times so they can make plans for other staff to provide services while they are away from their workplaces;
- uncertainty about funding to pay course fees;
- uncertainty about funding to pay for travel and accommodation;
- clashes with campaigns / heavy work pressures;
- clashes with religious or school holidays; and
- the political will among managers to invest in the ongoing development of their staff.

If the feasibility of your programme depends on cost recovery from fees and you want to attract those in the state health system as well as civil society, these factors can be particularly important. Helping to minimise the risks through good administration - like having application systems that work, queries that are answered clearly and timeously - can make all the difference. It makes your programme accessible and helps to promote a confident /professional image of your programme and university unit.

Good course administration entails thorough and early planning; thoughtful and efficient systems; and proactive, friendly and clear communication. This chapter therefore addresses the nuts and bolts of the administrative and logistical aspects of running a programme – to identify some of the practical factors that may help to make it successful. They include

- planning and timelines
- the style of your university unit
- administrative systems
- marketing and recruiting
- registration and commitment
- communicating with participants
- accommodation and transport
- meals and refreshments
- setting up the venue and infrastructure

- the first day: registration and welcome
- the last day

As these tips will overlap with some of your existing practices, this is really only to remind you of the aspects that will be useful for running a short course programme within your university unit.

Planning and timelines

While planning the course schedule and planning the administrative systems may take place in two parallel processes, they need to come together fairly often to ensure that the course programme is feasible (enough venues, long enough lead times etc) and so that the administrators can plan their work early enough to ensure that the programme is run well.

Timing and scheduling

Choosing a good time to hold the programme every year is important.

Various factors may affect the time of year at which you hold your short course programme, as well as how many weeks are feasible and how long each individual course should be.

Factors may relate to your organisational context, to the target audiences or both.

An example is seen in our reasons for reducing our short course programme from twice a year to once a year (given above). These included:

- a lack of access in January/February to university residences for accommodation;
- the clash in January/February with the start of the school year, producing a conflict for parents;
- the awkwardness of budgets straddling the year-end; and
- the considerable administrative load that two schools produced for our staff.

Organisational factors that might shape the timing and scheduling of your programme could include:

- existing timetables and priorities
- availability of teaching staff (i.e. not when undergrads arrive; or in ‘conference season’)
- availability of administrative staff
- availability of venues/ infrastructure
- availability of support services (catering etc)

Work and social factors that might need to be taken into account might be

- periods when participants' work is known to be intense (like flu season, yearends etc)
- known annual programmes – like conferences, exam periods, graduations etc
- religious and school holidays
- the weather – which might make attending a course difficult (getting to and fro, or simply being there all day!)
- trends in weekend commitments – including funerals, church, soccer and family obligations.

Issues to consider

When deciding on the timing and scheduling of your short course programme you will need to think about

- When should you run the programme, and how long should it be – to optimise staff's availability and participants' attendance?
- What internal organisational factors do you need to take into account?
- What external factors do you need to take into account?

A checklist on timing and duration is given in Chapter 7 on page 94.

Timeline

Assuming that you have chosen a good time to run the programme, you have to think backwards when you need to start preparing for the programme. An important issue to consider in this context is how much lead time organisations/departments will need in order to organise funding and time off work for their staff. Particularly in the public sector the time needed may be considerable, as courses may have to be factored into public sector training plans.

In the 1995 evaluation of our initial short course programme, employers of some of the participants suggested that 'the notice time was too short to do proper planning regarding which staff could attend'. In response to these needs we have moved our planning substantially forward over the years.

The following timeline should give everyone enough time for people to register and raise the course fee before the programme starts – but you will need to carefully assess your own context.

Number of months before the programme begins	
7 – 10 months	Compile the programme, liaising with convenors and lecturers.
5 months (or when everyone makes their annual bookings)	Book and allocate all venues.
5 – 6 months	Send out a 'keep this date' notice to potential participants/ their organisations, giving some course titles and the dates for the programme – so people can keep this time open.
4 – 5 months	Send out a detailed programme.
6 – 8 weeks	Deadline for applications (after which a late registration fee is applied).
3 – 4 weeks	Decide if any courses need to be cancelled, given poor registration numbers.

Issues to consider

- Develop a timeline for making sure things are done in good time. What are the tasks that need doing before, during, and after the programme e.g. compiling the programme, handling registrations, collecting course fees etc?
- What are the threats that might undermine it?

Style

Since its beginnings, our School has been consistent in adopting a simple and straightforward style – choosing to prioritise the work, collegiality and relationships over too much fuss and formality.

You will obviously choose a style that suits you – with the proviso that as public health people who are interested in equity, we need to do as we say! This includes the way we administer the programme and relate to the participants.

Issues to consider

- What is the 'style' of your department or university? What are you known for?
- Can you run a short course continuing professional development programme based on this style? If not, what would need to change?

Administrative systems

Managing paperwork – be it in paper or electronic form – is one of the backbones of good administration. Some of the things that undermine the reputation of a programme are forms that are difficult to complete, messy incomplete lists, duplications and omissions, names that are incorrectly spelt – as does unfriendly, rigid or unhelpful service from the administrators / convenors.

Good course administration is efficient, friendly and fair.

Forms

As with any course administration, there are a number of standard forms – typically:

- an application or registration form – to be completed by participants (sample template in Appendix A);
- a course evaluation form – to be completed by participants at the end of a course (sample template in Appendix B);
- a form for lecturers' requirements - on which they list the support/equipment they require and materials they may want to reproduce.

How your forms are laid out will need to take into account whether you expect them to be completed electronically or by hand – or a combination of both, depending on your audience's access to computers.

Online registrations

We have recently moved to using an online registration system – having worked with a paper-based system for many years. We did this gradually by allowing applicants to apply either online or by still using the paper form. This enabled us to check if we could manage this well enough, as well as how it worked for our target audiences. We learned the following:

- it made the process easier for some participants who are proficient at working online;
- it increased our productivity as we spent less time on data capturing; and
- it improved the accuracy of information as it avoided data capture errors and the need to decipher people's handwriting etc.

But

- some participants do not have easy access to the internet;
- participants who were not familiar with on-line application processes made errors and we had to rectify mistakes on their behalf;
- there was no secure way of checking when the submission of applications fails.

While we were prepared for teething problems e.g. we had system design problems and also found applications were duplicated – it was important to have technical support readily available. It is important to solve problems quickly if an online registration system is to function successfully - both for administrative efficiency as well as to prevent people from losing confidence in the system.

Once we were relatively confident that most of our applicants had easy access to the internet, we moved to doing registrations exclusively on-line - such that in 2016 the brochure noted that 'we will only be accepting applications online. All participants should apply via our website (http://www.uwcsoph.co.za).'

To make sure that we do not miss out on reaching people who may not have access to the internet, however – be they past participants or new audiences – we also e-mail or fax them application forms on request. We then capture their information on the system on their behalf.

This system is obviously only suitable where the majority of your potential audience has easy and reliable access to the internet. If only some do, perhaps it is better to remain with a paper-based system or a mixed system, where people can apply online or submit a paper registration form, as suits their circumstances.

The other question might be whether your course registration system might be part of the School's / institution's wider student administration system? What would be the pros and cons of this? Would it be feasible? In our case we have chosen to avoid this, as Winter School participants are not formally registered with the university and so do not easily 'fit' the standard student administration requirements.

Lists and systems

Running a short course programme entails working with various lists - like:

- a mailing list – to advertise the programme
- a list of the courses offered – to keep records of course details like their duration, venue, lecturers etc, but also to cross-check these with the brochure
- registration lists – to check participants are registered when they arrive
- course attendance registers – for keeping track of daily attendance, as certificates can depend on this
- certificate lists – to indicate who will receive certificates of attendance
- graduation lists (which may be the same as the certificate list) – to be sent to the University's Department of Lifelong Learning Administrator where a central record is kept.

And you may choose to develop others – like a list of participants' profiles for the lecturers so they have an idea of who will be in the course; lists of contact details of participants so they can network after the course (although you must ask their permission to distribute these) etc.

Ideally these lists are kept in one place on an integrated computer system, depending on the set-up in your department. While slightly slower, it is not a bad idea to start with using a relatively simple system (like Excel or MS Access); and once the teething pains are over, developing this into a more streamlined system. This may depend on whether you already have a course admin infrastructure or are starting from scratch.

Whatever system you set up, it is helpful to:

- obtain all the participants' information using one application form;
- have fields on your database that mirror those on the application form;
- guard against inputting information more than once, to avoid error as well as the extra work;
- be sure that it is easy to send out bulk e-mails or print labels for posting;
- be sure that you can produce lists in the formats you want them – e.g. a register that can be signed, for instance; and
- make sure that if more than one staff member is doing the administration, there is a way for everyone to work on the same system.

Issues to consider

- What kind of application system will work best for your target audience?
- How will your application and payment system work? What problems might arise – and what can you do to pre-empt them?
- Might your registration system be part of your unit's / institution's student administration system? What would be the pros and cons of this? Would it be feasible?
- If on-line registration is an option for your audience, do you have the capacity to manage this?
- Do you have database design/website expertise available to you?
- What forms will you need? How will they be filled in – by hand or electronically?
- What lists will you need to compile? Which do you already have?
- Are there any issues of personal liability that you need to insure yourself against by having participants sign waivers?

Marketing and recruiting

Marketing your courses to the right audience is an important part of ensuring that your programme is a success, attracting the right people for the right reasons. Marketing can take many forms including printed media (like a brochure), website and e-mails, word-of-mouth, newspaper and radio adverts and, increasingly, social media.

A brochure

A short course programme is invariably advertised to a wide range of possible participants by sending them information in good time. This is usually in the form of brochure or a set of information sheets. This typically includes descriptions of the courses, a timetable with the dates of the courses, the course fees, an application form and administrative notes about what the participants must do and what they can expect.

As mentioned above, the timeline plays a crucial role in making sure there are enough suitable registrations. Government departments need significant lead time to allocate budgets and release staff to attend courses – even courses that are only five days long.

For many years we produced a brochure - and we still do, a copy of which can be seen on our website at http://www.uwcsoph.co.za/images/docs/winterschoolbrochure2017.pdf. It includes

- course descriptions – which includes the names of the lecturers, the dates and duration of the course, the aim and content of the course – and the CPD (continuing professional development) points obtained by completing the course
- when and how to apply
- deadlines for payment, and how to submit payment
- information about accommodation and transport
- our contact details

If you want to be able to display your short course programme on noticeboards, a set of separate sheets may also work – though you risk some of them coming loose and getting lost.

'Keep the date'

As suggested in the timeline above, you could send out a 'keep this date' notification a month or two before you send out the brochure, to alert your potential participants that you will be running the programme. In it you could include the names of some of the courses you will be offering as a preview of what is to come. Sending this out allows you to notify potential participants of what is coming, while taking the pressure off having to finalise the courses too early.

This can be done using e-mail, Facebook and /or social media, depending on your target audiences' access to these.

Branding

In compiling these notices and brochures, it is ideal to use a style or 'look' that you will use in all the media to do with your short course programme - in brochures, application forms, evaluation forms, etc. In addition to your logo(s), a consistent use of the same typefaces and style gives the programme a unified feel – and, over time, becomes more instantly recognisable. We have used the same cover design for many years, making the programme readily recognisable to people who know our School and its work.

Distributing the brochures

For quite a long time, we printed our brochure and posted them to those on the mailing list. With the increasing access to e-mail, however, we began to e-mail brochures wherever possible. Now we largely e-mail them and put them on our website. In addition, however, we print a few copies for our own staff to distribute at conferences or meetings, and we also post them to Departments of Health and sister universities for circulation of display on notice boards.

Mailing list

It is essential to develop a comprehensive list of contacts - comprising people's names, organisational affiliations and e-mail addresses - to whom to send your programme information. This could include

- current students and alumni
- partners in projects
- (colleagues in) the provision of health services
- (colleagues in) government departments
- (colleagues in) NGOs / civil society organisations
- other academics / researchers, both local and beyond.

Your department or institution will have some lists of people it regularly contacts; using these is often a good start to developing a dedicated list for your programme.

While you can simply send your brochure to an institution or organisation, it is preferable to send it to a particular person - ideally someone you know who may be interested in telling colleagues about the programme - asking them to distribute the information more broadly within their organisation. In this way, it does not feel like a 'cold call' but rather that the programme is communicated by someone in their organisation with knowledge of your work.

Website

If you have a website, loading the short course programme information onto it – along with an application form – is a good way of advertising. This obviously depends on the extent to which your various potential audiences access the internet, however. If there is any doubt, this should only be used as an additional form of advertising and not as the main one. We increasingly also make use of social media, advertising our courses via Facebook and Twitter, for example (https://www.facebook.com/UWCSOPH/; and @UWCSOPH).

Events and open areas

Printed copies of the brochures can be left in reception areas / put on notice boards in your department / institution. They can also be made available at events leading up to the short course programme or in reception areas / on notice boards of other organisations (with their permission) where new potential participants may see them.

Issues to consider

- What branding do you have that can be used? Do you want/ need to brand the short course programme separately?
- What mailing lists can you use? Which ones do you need to develop?
- Will you send out a keep-the date' notice?
- Will you print a brochure / info sheets – or only send it out electronically ? What are the implications of who you might then attract?
- Are there any events that offer a good marketing opportunity?

Registration and commitment

Applying

Applicants need to submit completed application/registration forms and proof that they have paid the course fee (or a deposit, depending on your policies).

When forms are not fully or correctly completed - as happens more than one might think! - your administrators need to be prepared to contact the person and complete it on their behalf. Sending it back for them to complete can lead to ongoing uncertainty about how many participants have registered - and can seem unfriendly!

We take bookings on a first-come first-served basis, as the courses are often over-subscribed. When the course is full, we let the applicants know that we will keep their applications and contact them on a first-come first-served basis if anyone cancels their registration.

Payment

Our brochure is very firm and clear about the application process only being completed once we have received proof of payment. This is because we depend on the fees to cover our costs. Failure to collect this income would threaten our ability to run the programme - so while we keep the fees low, we do need to receive them!

Our 2016 brochure said the following:

> 'A place will be secured by submitting proof of payment of course fees with your application. …. Your proof of electronic payment and deposit slip should be faxed immediately to [fax number given]. Without this proof of payment your attendance will not be confirmed and your account will remain unpaid. Please note that an Order Number is not proof of payment.'

It adds that

> 'Receipts will be issued for cash payments.
>
> Cheque payments must be marked clearly for: The University of the Western Cape.'

That being said, we are aware that some organisations (like the Department of Health) only pay after the course has been held. In some of these cases, we accept their registrations along with the risk of their paying afterwards. The complexities and implications of this for the School have been discussed above.

Acknowledgements and confirmations

It is important that you let applicants know fairly quickly that you have received their applications and/or payment.

As noted above, you may want to assess the viability of each course so that you can decide whether or not to run the course. We do this after the closing date for applications. So in your acknowledgement of receipt of their application and payment you might want to say something like

> *'Thank you for your application and payment which has arrived in time for us to allocate you a space on the course. Once the deadline for applications has closed, we will confirm if there are enough participants for the course to take place.'*

If you do this, you will need to confirm with every applicant that their course is being held by sending out a second note once the decisions have been made.

It is helpful to include in the confirmation letter the details of the course (what they are attending, the starting time, venue, what they need to bring with them). An example of a confirmation letter is given in Appendix C.

Letters for employers

Some participants' employers require a formal letter confirming that their staff member has been accepted on a course. If you expect this to happen, it may be useful to have a standard letter on your letterhead into which you drop the course details.

Personal liability

Participants can have things happen to them while they are attending a course – and it may be helpful to be clear about what you are prepared and able to help with and what you cannot do.

Our brochure advises South Africans to 'carry your medical aid card or cash in case of an emergency' as 'UWC will not be held liable and will not be able to assist you financially in case of an emergency'. In addition, it notes that:

> 'Participants travelling from abroad should kindly note that the University of the Western Cape will not be liable for any health insurance.'

And it advises that it is

> 'imperative that foreign nationals submit proof of medical travel insurance before arrival. If this is not submitted your application will be cancelled. Please fax/e-mail your proof of insurance prior to your arrival in South Africa.'

Issues to consider

- How will you application and payment system work? What problems might arise – and what can you do to pre-empt them?
- What communication systems will you set up to communicate with applicants regarding their applications?
- Are there any issues of personal liability that you need to insure yourself against by having participants sign waivers?

Communicating with participants

Events tend to run more smoothly when people know what is expected of them beforehand and are kept up-to-date with any changes in good time.

A well written, informative and welcoming brochure and standard acknowledgement/confirmation letter help to set the tone for the programme.

Again a set of standard letters / e-mail messages into which administrators can insert particular information helps to reduce unnecessary work and error as well as standardise the messaging. This could include notices of any changes that will affect participants - like the cancellation of a course, changes of starting times or venue etc. – which should be communicated early and clearly.

Issues to consider

- What communication systems will you set up to communicate with applicants regarding their applications?
- What standard messages/ letters would standardise and ease the communication with applicants?

Accommodation and transport

Depending on where you are running your programme and where your participants are coming from, you will need to decide on whether or not you will be involved in their daily transport (if local) and/or in their travel and accommodation arrangements (if from afar).

When we first ran the short course programmes we were involved in these arrangements – but a combination of factors made this too costly for us in terms of time, money and people. Travel and accommodation arrangements typically require constant detailed and close attention, and this caused so much work for us that we had to employ additional administrative staff – which, in the long-run, became too costly. In addition to liaising with participants we liaised with residence administration (at the university) regarding arrival and departing times and dealt with the consequences of some participants never arriving, which included our having to pay for their accommodation.

Whether you use campus-based or private accommodation, similar issues may arise. So it is important to decide what is possible for you – while also thinking about the consequence for participants if you do not offer this.

Accommodation

We provide participants with information about accommodation, but are clear that we do not involve ourselves in any accommodation arrangements. So, for example, the Winter School brochure for 2016 gives the following information:

> 'The University has limited accommodation available for participants. You can enquire from the Residential Services Co-ordinator, [name] [phone number] or e-mail her at [e-mail address].
> Alternatively, there is also limited accommodation available to participants at xx Residence on campus. Please note that this is on a 'first-come' basis and therefore it is imperative that you enquire early in the year about availability.

Their contact number on campus is: [phone number] and e-mail address is: [e-mail address].'

It added that

'Accommodation is also available off-campus to participants - and a list of nearby guest houses is given, as well as websites where other ideas can be found.'

And it advises applicants that 'some of these places also offer a shuttle service.'

Transport

We also do not arrange transport for participants – either when they arrive in Cape Town or on a daily basis.

Issues to consider

- Will any participants who have travelled from elsewhere need to be transported when they arrive? If so to what extent will you get involved in this?
- Will any participants need accommodation? If so, where are suitable places for them to stay that are affordable? To what extent will you get involved in making accommodation arrangements?
- Will any participants need transport on a daily basis? If so, to what extent will you get involved in making transport arrangements?

Meals and refreshments

Food is crucial to people's sense of an event! As we are public health people working for equity and wellbeing for all, our food is wholesome but not lavish. We are known for this and receive very few complaints!

Our brochure says

> ‘Mid-morning teas, afternoon teas and lunches will be provided for all participants. The cost of the teas and lunches is included in the course fees.’

Our slightly unconventional morning tea has become well-known for comprising brown bread and peanut butter to which people help themselves!

“You are doing an excellent job. The food is alright. The peanut butter sandwiches do help! Now we understand the science behind it and we have the energy to be alert for the whole day.”

Participant at 2013 Winter School: Dr Victor Matabane, *Public Health Registrar based at Pietersburg Hospital, Limpopo province.*

Our lunches are hearty and wholesome: We use a system of meal tickets which all participants receive when they arrive at registration - to ensure that only those for whom the food is intended are able to access it!

Our weekly graduation events are a little bit special – and invited guests are invited to join in the refreshments offered after the certificate ceremony.

Issues to consider

- Will you provide refreshments or will participants have to buy their own at a nearby canteen?
- If you are providing refreshments
  - how much budget do you have for this?
  - what considerations are there regarding the type of food served?
  - how will you control who accesses the refreshments provided?
  - who will you contract to provide this service?

Setting up the venue and infrastructure

As mentioned above, since our short course programme begun 25 years ago, we have moved from modest venues in prefabs buildings - using other venues on campus as we needed to - to the luxury of being able to hold our whole programme within our own, very well-equipped building. This really eases things considerably as we have control over the bookings of our venues, know how each works and where various creative spaces are. We have standard ways of managing the layout of the catering and events and this allows us to streamline a lot of decisions which need to be made.

Venue bookings

You will need to work with whatever venue booking systems you have in your own venues or institutions.

Doing a block booking early on for more venues than you might need will allow you the flexibility to increase or reduce the size of a participant group, moving courses to suitable rooms as the registrations determine. Sometimes the lack of suitable venues can limit participant numbers unnecessarily. In many universities, for example, it may not be easy to find flat venues with movable furniture (rather than lecture halls with fixed benches) to allow group work etc. In addition, you may have specific requirements – like access for people with disabilities.

Paying attention to details of how the course will run can make all the difference. If, for instance, a course requires group work, finding spaces beforehand where people can work well in their small groups can help. If a room is big, there may need to be a PA system - or where a lecturer uses a lot of audio-visual projection, the venue needs to be dark enough. While these may sound picky, they can make all the difference to the teaching and learning experience.

Signage

Having good signage which directs people to their courses and to the bathrooms allows participants to be more independent and self-contained - and relieves administrative staff from answering the same questions many times!

Signs on campus directing people to the venues where you are holding your programme are also important. If clearly branded with your school's name, logo etc, they can serve the double purpose of alerting others on campus to your events.

Furniture

You may need to book

- chairs and tables for classrooms or for open spaces for meal times
- screens and tables for displays and exhibitions
- screens for notices, posters, displays.

Equipment

You may need to book or obtain any of the following – depending on what the lecturers have asked for and what is standard equipment in the venues you have booked:

- flipcharts and pens
- screens / notice boards – to pin up work in progress
- audio-visual projection and screens
- PA system – if the room is large / acoustics are not good

Again if it is possible, it is best to make early provisional bookings that you can modify once you know exactly what is needed.

Course materials

Course materials can be produced in any number of formats – depending on how you want to use them during the course, your assumptions about students' access to technology, the quantities being offered etc. They can be

- hard copies – in the form of photocopied notes, presented in a loose-leaf file or spiral bound etc.' and/or
- electronic on a flash drive/ USB stick.

Additional reading could be offered through a dedicated place on your School's website etc.

Whatever you decide on, course materials need to be reproduced well ahead of time – at least ten days before each course starts – so that the majority are done before the pressure of the final days before the short course programme begins. While it may be feasible to receive a few extra pieces of copying at the last moment (for photocopying or electronic copying onto USB sticks), this cannot be the bulk, as staff need to be available to attend to other things that can only be done at the last moment. Last minute copying also depends on a functional photocopier / person with time to copy docs onto USB sticks etc.

Issues to consider

Factors relating to the venues – already mentioned above – are also given in Chapter 7 on page 95.

In addition:

- How will you do signage – on the campus so people can find the venue? And inside the building to assist people to help themselves?
- In what format will you offer course materials, given your participant profiles? How can this be done most efficiently and cost-effectively?

The first day: registration and welcome

Welcoming participants on their first day of attending their course can set the tone for their experience. If at all possible, make sure that the people on duty at the registration desks are not exhausted administrators!

At registration we check who arrives, give them their course materials and meal tickets and explain to those who have not attended before how the week works.

The last day

Evaluating the courses

As already noted above, we evaluate every Winter School course and use the information to review the content, style of presentation etc. Our evaluation form is included in Appendix B.

The 2017 evaluators noted that

> 'The courses that run during the Winter School are regularly evaluated by the stakeholders. They include the students, course convenors and facilitators, guest speakers, administrative staff of the School of Public Health and partnering institutions…. The overall purpose of the evaluations is to encourage and reward effective and innovative teaching practices, enhance the learning experience and outcomes of students and be responsive to the changing tenets, debates and needs in public health.
>
> 'Each course independently requests students to evaluate sessions daily and weekly, and instructors write a self-evaluation of the course, activities

> and materials, with notes on how to adapt, improve, or restructure the course in future years. … We have observed that various forms of evaluations - which include the daily module evaluation, overall course evaluation, feedbacks and reflections on course contents, activities and programs, complaints and suggestions and online survey - allow for both formative and summative assessments of the modules, courses, programme overall, stakeholder experience, facilities and values of the course.'

They noted that in 2017:

> 'Feedback on the courses highlights overall facilitators' engagement, learning expectations, understanding of concepts and principles, values of the courses towards theory and practice, competence development and overall teaching and learning experience.'

Fortunately they found that 'the average rating across the courses is 4.5 out of 5 points' and that the 'majority of students felt the courses were relevant to their needs and built their capacity'. They added that 'the variation in background and skills of participants meant that some students were overwhelmed by materials and intensity of the courses in the short time' – an ongoing tension that we are constantly aware of and try to address.

In addition the students themselves were also 'evaluated by the facilitators and their colleagues using various strategies to provide feedback relevant to meeting their needs. This led to adjustments in course content and delivery methods'.

The evaluators conclude that 'these multiple sources of evaluation are critical to assess the course continuously'.

Graduation

The 2016 Winter School brochure advises applicants that 'a Graduation Ceremony will be held at the end of each course on the Friday from 13h30 to 15h30. We encourage all participants to attend their graduation event at which senior staff of local institutions or other dignitaries are invited to speak and officiate.'

Participants from outside of Cape Town are requested to 'book your return ticket for Friday night or Saturday morning' so that they do not miss this celebratory event.