



**FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT (DELM)**

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**UPLANDS OUTREACH 2020 REPORT  
ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT)**

**Introduction**

School principals, deputy principals, heads of departments (HODs), teachers and education district officials are key to developing and maintaining successful and effective schools. However, in South Africa many principals and officials operate without the necessary knowledge and skills required to act effectively as leaders and managers of schools. In the training of prospective school principals, research has shown that when schools and districts engaged in developing instructional leadership capacity, there is significant improvement in learner performance.

Uplands Outreach was proactive in this regard, and has seen the gap in the Mpumalanga province and more specifically in the Insikazi district, where the schools suffered because of poor leadership and management. Funder(s) who were solicited have echoed this sentiment, and with generous contributions to the ADE programme, made sure that this gap could be addressed.

**Rationale for the ADE**

The ADE in School Leadership and Management aims to facilitate the development of competent educational leaders and managers for the growing educational leadership and management national market. It is hoped that this programme provides an entry criterion to principalship – providing aspirant principals with a professional qualification, which is career-related and consistent with the Job Profile of school principals, and other school leaders/managers. This programme's focus is to empower educators to develop skills, knowledge and values to lead and manage schools effectively and to improve the delivery of education across the school system, taking into account the diversity of school types and contexts.

**Role of Uplands Outreach and the University of Johannesburg**

Since the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) introduced to Mpumalanga in 2008 was a huge success, the Department of Higher Education introduced the Advanced Diploma in Education in School Leadership and Management (ADE) in Education Leadership and Management, which is a higher qualification than the ACE. At the end of 2018 students enrolled (identified by the district manager) for the new ADE of which the first group will graduate in 2021. They will be the FIRST cohort of students who will graduate in South Africa with the new ADE (School Leadership and Management).

This report is a testimony to Uplands Outreach's commitment to ensuring that the province is provided excellence in teaching and learning, alongside its commitment, encouraging research in the

field of education. We are particularly proud to be partnered with Uplands Outreach's longstanding commitment to both access and success of all our students, with particular focus on those who have been disadvantaged because of ongoing inequality in education provision.

During 2018/2020, Uplands Outreach continued its multiple interventions (with the offering of the ADE in School Leadership and Management) and focused on renewing skills, improving access and throughput, enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning experience, and supporting online provision. The report underscores the commitment of Uplands Outreach and individual academics to the mainstreaming of innovative solutions for improving throughputs and enhancing the experience of students. Uplands Outreach has engaged with issues around online learning (especially during COVID 19 lockdown), at a programme level for online students. Uplands Outreach also provided sufficient data to all the ADE students to stay connected to the challenges of online learning.

Dr Nicky de Bruyn and Ms Violah Moya of Uplands Outreach (with the assistance of support staff) were instrumental in the planning and organising of the programme, and providing facilities where the ADE could be offered. Prof Pierre du Plessis and Prof Raj Mestry presented the ADE on behalf of the University of Johannesburg, and they delivered the academic part of the ADE. The support of Uplands Outreach was always excellent and they have secured the funding for the ADE. We are very grateful for this funding and support from donors.

**The academic content of the ADE was divided in in three (3) modules in 2019 and three (3) modules in 2020. The curriculum was as follows:**

#### **2019**

- Module 1- Leading and Managing Teaching and Learning in the School
- Module 2- Leading and Managing People and Change
- Module 3- Leading and Managing the School as Organisation

Students had to identify a project/gap in 2019 at their respective schools, which they want to improve (Example: To improve the Grade 12 Mathematics results by 10%). They had to build evidence (which flowed over into the second year of study) of every effort made to improve the intended project (which forms part of the Portfolio of Evidence in the second year)

#### **2020**

- Module 4- Working with and for the Wider Community
- Module 5- Leading and Managing Extra-curricular and Co-curricular activities
- Module 6- Working within and for the School System
- Module (ongoing since 2019) - Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) which is submitted towards the end of the academic course. The PoE must be submitted as evidence of the project identified in the first year of study.

Each of the modules had two (2) assignments to complete, with the focus on practical assignments, which can be very useful in the school situation.

#### **Programme offering**

In 2019 the contact sessions (Fridays and Saturdays) were face-to-face. In 2020, the February and March sessions were still face-to-face. With the challenges of COVID 19 and the lockdown in South Africa, we had to change the mode of programme delivery to an online mode, offering sessions on Google Meet and Teams. Uplands Outreach provided each student with monthly data to secure contact with the students for the online classes and to support students with assignments. This is highly commendable of Uplands Outreach.

## Impact of the ADE

The ADE in School Leadership and Management has shown that the impact of leadership in the schools tend to be greatest where the learning needs of students are most acute. The ADE saw how school leaders from different quintile (some of the poorest) schools achieved success. These include:

- Setting direction - charting a clear course that everyone understands;
- Establishing high expectations and using data to track progress and performance;
- Developing people - providing teachers (school leaders) and others in the system with the necessary support and training to succeed
- Making the organization work - ensuring that the entire range of conditions and incentives in schools and districts supports rather than inhibited to teaching and learning.

There is still much more to learn about the essentials of quality leadership: How to harness its benefits and how to ensure that we do not continue to throw good leaders into bad systems that will grind down even the best of them?

## The way forward at Uplands Outreach

Uplands Outreach staff and the academic staff of the University of Johannesburg, have put in much energy and commitment into the delivery of the ADE, that will lead to more effective policy and practice at a time where fully justified public impatience for school improvement prevail.

It is therefore crucial to continue the ADE at Uplands Outreach, as this programme (ADE) contributed to the improvement of the leadership skills of the leaders in the Mpumalanga province and more specifically, in the Insikazi district. Prof Pierre du Plessis and Prof Raj Mestry have visited schools to do quality assurance to see how students in the ADE have implemented what they have learned over the past two (2) years. It was amazing to see the differences they had made, not only in showing much improved leadership skills, but how their positive attitude has improved teaching and learning in their respective schools. It can be recorded that the ADE students were promoted to higher positions in the Mpumalanga province during the two-year programme.

The ADE programme has become a flagship programme in the Mpumalanga province, and that is a feather in the cap of Uplands Outreach. It will be sad day if funding cannot be secured to continue with the flagship programme. Funders can make an enormous impact if they support such a flagship programme, because it uplifts schools and school communities. There are not many documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without the intervention by powerful leaders. Many factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst. The ADE in School Leadership and Management is undoubtedly one such means of improving learner performance and educational standards in Mpumalanga, and more specifically, in South Africa.

In conclusion, we are proud on what the students have achieved, and the enormous input of the Uplands Outreach team, to make the delivery of the ADE a great success.

Sincerely yours



**Professor Pierre du Plessis**



**Professor Raj Mestry**