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NEW ZEALAND  
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# Quality Assurance for Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (QA4ODFL2) for Pacific Countries

## Course description

Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (ODFL) has the potential to enhance access and achieve equity in educational provision. However, it is important for providers to have sound quality assurance mechanisms in place to maximise learning benefits and gain positive perceptions of this mode of provision from the public.

This course, QA4ODFL2, follows on from an earlier course, QA4ODFL1, which focused on quality assurance issues at the strategic level. This new course is designed to help education officials and teachers create enabling environments for implementing high-quality ODFL at the operational level.

The course takes participants through key aspects that affect quality delivery, like course content development, supporting learning through assessment, human resource strategy and managing communication to support open school learners. Although officials and teachers in the Pacific Region are the main target audience for the course, ODFL practitioners working in any developing country context will find the course highly beneficial, especially those working in or interested in open schooling. The course will run over four weeks. It will require five hours of time each week. Participants will learn from readings, videos as well as discussions with peers and the facilitator in the discussion forum. There are assignment tasks at the end of each unit, which will also encourage learners to check their understanding of the concepts covered in each unit. There is a Course Summative Quiz at the end of the course.

## Dates

The course will be facilitated online by Dr Ephraim Mhlanga (Programme Specialist: Quality Assurance at the South African Institute for Distance Education - *Saide*)

from 16 October 2023 to 17 November 2023. Thereafter, the content will remain freely available for self-paced learning.

## Learning outcomes

After going through this short course, participants will be able to:

- Select and align appropriate curriculum content for open schooling;
- Design and implement appropriate assessment;
- Consider appropriate Human Resource strategies for open schooling;
- Identify and implement appropriate communication strategies to support learners in open schooling;
- Advise on the most appropriate technologies that can be harnessed to leverage the quality of ODFL in their context; and
- Evaluate the content of ODFL provisioning in their country or any country in their region, including assessment, human resourcing and learner support mechanisms used.

## Course details

This is a hands-on, activity-based course in which participants will complete four (4) learning challenges/units that would prepare them to better implement ODFL in their contexts:

- Course and content development for open schooling
- Assessment
- Human resource strategy
- Management and administration for student support

## Course summary

**No of Challenges:** 4

**Length of the Course:** 4 Weeks

**Workload:** 5 hours per week

**Language:** English

**Level:** Introductory – Basic knowledge of planning and implementing education systems

**Prerequisites:** None

## Certification

Participants who complete the Course Summative Quiz at the end of the course and get at least 50 per cent will get a Certificate of Participation. Participants who complete the Course Summative Quiz at the end of the course and get 70 per cent or above will receive a QA4ODFL 2 Course Completion Badge.

The learning activities in the units will prepare learners for the Course Summative Quiz. It is essential for learners to engage with all these learning activities.

## Registration

To register, please go to: <https://oer.nz/qa4odfl2oct23>

## Pacific Partnership for Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (ODLF)

ODFL is an important channel for increasing education opportunities and outcomes. It is particularly relevant for the Pacific, given the small, dispersed remote populations and limited access to secondary and post-secondary opportunities in rural and outer island locations. Despite the importance of ODFL to the region

and the immediate need to build capacity, there has been limited investment. The Covid-19 pandemic has further reinforced the need for the Pacific to be well prepared for non-contact teaching and learning approaches outside traditional classroom-based practices.

Partnership for ODFL in the Pacific is a five-year project (2020 – 2025) funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade to support enhancing capacity and efficiency of education sectors in the Pacific through greater use of innovative delivery mechanisms and technology. The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), together with the Pacific Centre for Flexible and Open Learning for Development (PACFOLD), implements the project in the nine Commonwealth countries in the Pacific (Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu).



**Commonwealth of Learning (COL)** is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987 to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

The Pacific Centre for Flexible & Open Learning for Development (PACFOLD) is a collaborative initiative between COL and the University of the South Pacific (USP) since 2013 to facilitate flexible and open learning for sustainable development in the Pacific region through advocacy, communication, innovation and research. The Centre for Flexible Learning at USP has a strong and long track record in the adoption of ODFL methods in the Pacific region and is best placed to coordinate the work of PACFOLD.

## For more information

Commonwealth of Learning  
4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M2  
CANADA  
email: [pacificpartnership@col.org](mailto:pacificpartnership@col.org)  
[www.col.org](http://www.col.org)



[info@col.org](mailto:info@col.org)



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