

Wholesale & Retail LEADERSHIP CHAIR

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RESEARCH PROPOSES NEW MODELS FOR ASSESSMENT CENTRES

A combination of public, private and workplace solutions is necessary for the creation of a new model for assessment centres, according to research conducted by the Wholesale & Retail Leadership Chair at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Among the advantages of the model put forward by the researchers, is there would be no reliance on private and for-profit assessment, which would have the effect of reducing the cost of assessments. There would also be little need for development of new resources, as many Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges proposed as assessment centres would be able to utilise their existing facilities. To make this possible though, some work would be required. Capacity building would be necessary to meet industry-specific requirements, and resources, including staff, would need to be developed.

Initial research focused on identifying models from international assessment centres and quality assurance bodies. These were presented to research focus groups, made up of industry experts, education providers and quality assurance experts. Qualitative research then took place amongst the members of the focus groups. This provided much of the high-level input, which dealt with what they specifically considered to be the value of such a system.

- 60% of respondents thought the proposed model was more practical, implementation-wise, than the alternative.
- Considering the advantages of this model, 24% named flexibility, 18% named assessment centre availability (TVET colleges and private centres) and 15% named the use of own technology when in-house centres were used, as major advantages.
- When asked to give a summarising decision taking all the factors into account, 91% of respondents felt the proposed model to be most appropriate. A major challenge to be overcome is South Africa's large geographic footprint, but the researchers are confident that utilisation of TVET colleges, with their widespread national presence, will provide the solution.

According to the WRLC researchers: "Greater engagement with the quality assurance body and industry role-players is critical to the successful implementation of the recommended model. With this in place, hopefully a model that works for all stakeholders will be the result, and will serve as inspiration for other Assessment Quality Partners."

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