



**ORGANISATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
UNIT**

**TRAINING  
NEEDS  
ANALYSIS  
REPORT**

**future directions for professional development on campus**  
released 16 january 2006

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# Organisational Development Report

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***'Australian universities are on a long-term collision course with mediocrity that can only be avoided by embracing change now. Globalisation, massification of higher education, a revolution in communications and the need for lifelong learning...leave Australian universities nowhere to hide from the winds of change. Increased funding without changes to administration, institutional and individual behaviour will only compound the significant challenges facing the sector.'***

*The Honourable Brendan Nelson MP, Minister for Education, Science and Training: Our Universities: Backing Australia's Future.—updated 21 September 2005*

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## Preface

The purpose of this Report from The University of New England's Organisational Development Unit is to focus on the strategic role of organisational development and its contribution towards the creation of an efficient, agile and innovative enterprise which is able to compete in the global marketplace.

The authors of the Report recognise the vital role that staff play in contributing to the achievement of the University's mission. We believe that resilience in the face of the sweeping social and economic changes that are faced by our current society will be developed by the ongoing professional development of staff. This enhances each person's capacity to contribute to the University's position as a leading provider of higher education.

A commitment to becoming a learning community is therefore critical to the delivery of strategies that support the University in achieving its desired outcomes in teaching and learning, research, administration and regional engagement.

The promulgation of a learning culture and the repositioning of organisational development as a mandated driver of strategic directions would indeed require significant behaviour changes. We hope that this report will support the shift to a pragmatic awareness of what the University needs to equip itself and its staff for future demands.

## Executive summary

Most of the findings in the Report are drawn from data collected through a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) questionnaire conducted by the Organisational Development Unit (ODU) during the third quarter of 2005. The primary objective of the project was to elicit actual responses to the question of training requirements across the University community as a comparison with anecdotal evidence collected by the ODU staff over 4 years. Some of the concerns raised during that time suggested:

- a drop-off in course attendance being caused by funding problems
- a culture of declining priority for staff developmental and skills improvement
- dissatisfaction with management skill levels
- cultural issues arising from inadequately managed change processes.

The questionnaire was distributed widely to both academic and general staff. The process was discussed with all Deans, Directors and Heads of Schools and where possible the rationale was discussed with staff groups and a reassurance of anonymity given before distribution. Participation was voluntary.

As well as the identification of the participants' unit or School, and academic or general staff classification, the questionnaire asked the following three questions:

1. What training and development do you need to do your job even better?
2. What training and development do you believe your colleagues and co-workers need?
3. What are the key factors, if any, that inhibit you from participating in ongoing professional learning?

The response rate was 14% from academic staff, and 17% from general staff, yielding an overall 16% response rate from all UNE staff.

A number of themes emerged from the survey responses covering areas that need to be addressed. These can be generally summarised as strategic, cost / funding, IT, cultural, ODU.

Expanded recommendations are listed under the following headings at the end of the Report. (p 24)

Staff skill set

Centralised funding

Management development program

Change management team

Standard IT platform

The relationship between ODU and TLC

An additional benefit from the project for the ODU is the provision of an updated training needs program for planning purposes. This report and its responses will therefore form the basis of the ODU Strategic Plan.

## Background

The Vision of the ODU is to ...*contribute to developing an environment at the University of New England that is a vibrant and effective, living and learning community* which reflects the University's 5th Strategic Goal ...*to enable staff and students to [become] a vibrant living-and-learning community* ... *achieved through having highly motivated staff, as well as appropriate support for staff.*

The ODU's ultimate aim is to support the University's Vision statement that: *Our ... staff support systems will be open to enable people to excel and to grow professionally.*

The ODU is therefore a critical enabler for the long-term sustainability of the organisation and should provide a strategic focus on the organisational capability requirements and development needs of employees at all levels. Developing a strategic view in this regard is necessary to ensure that UNE:

- addresses the leadership capabilities required to deliver core services and learning outcomes
- attends to the ongoing developmental and skills improvement needs of staff
- provides options and opportunities for career development and enhancement
- closes identified capability gaps
- promulgates and reinforces a service culture

## Emerging issues

During 2003-2005 attendance at training courses declined and the ODU will assess the effectiveness, relevance and general quality of the courses offered. However, other issues emerged through evaluations and training session discussions suggesting that many staff members felt discouraged by their managers' attitude when applying for course attendance approval, and some managers said they were reluctant to nominate funds for training purposes because they believed that funds used for training purposes depleted their operating budgets.

While anecdotal, such information cannot be ignored, and two possible assumptions could be drawn as a result:

- there is a funding issue resulting in an erroneous belief that training is unbudgeted
- ongoing developmental and skills improvement for staff has a low priority.

Other worrying and destructive cultural issues are often unearthed during training course discussions and through requests for support, and some of the main issues that emerged during the ODU training courses in 2005 were directly related to the establishment of the Student Centre. As Ken Baumber noted in his *Review of the Centralisation of Student Administration, June 2005*, '...staff (were) under-prepared and under-resourced for the roles they were expected to play in the new structure, but there is much evidence of staff striving well above and beyond what might reasonably have been expected of them to make the Centre function effectively.' A consequence of the Centralisation of Student Administration process was that the ODU staff were faced with the severe impact the change process had on staff members.

Later in the year union members alerted the ODU to a growing need for staff support during a round of restructures and potential job losses. Many long-serving staff members were confronted with the need to apply for their jobs without relevant or recent skills in writing resumes or applications.

Both the Student Centre and restructuring situations caused severe distress to many individuals and the ODU provided support to staff on a needs basis, but band-aid solutions have limited effectiveness and are relatively expensive. When such widespread dislocation is experienced by an organisation there is an impact on productivity, not only through the affected staff but also through colleagues and clients, both internal and external, and an entire culture rapidly becomes infected and disabled.

The ODU staff members assume responsibility for identifying organisation-wide problems that emerge through training courses but this data is random and unreliable. Without access to a centralised and proactive approach to organisational training and personal development needs, the ODU can only operate in an unplanned and reactive way. At present the ODU is not mandated to take a proactive organisational development role.

## Strategy

The ODU decided to establish the validity of these training assumptions through a Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

The many types of TNAs are each designed to elicit different responses according to the organisation's specific needs and these may include, but are not limited to, context analysis, user analysis, work analysis, content analysis, training suitability analysis, cost-benefit analysis. Techniques used may include direct observation, questionnaires, consultation with persons in key positions, and/or with specific knowledge, review of relevant literature, interviews, focus groups, tests, records & report studies, work samples.

The ODU chose to conduct a simple self-assessment TNA through a voluntary, anonymous questionnaire. This is an appropriate method of obtaining honest responses in an environment where funding for the design, distribution and analysis of the instrument is limited, and where there is a suspected high level of cynicism.

## The process

As well as simple demographics:

*What area, unit or School do you work in?*

*Are you an academic or general staff member?*

the questionnaire asked the following three questions:

- 1. What training and development do you need to do your job even better?*
- 2. What training and development do you believe your colleagues and co-workers need?*
- 3. What are the key factors, if any, that inhibit you from participating in ongoing professional learning?*

The process was discussed with all Deans, Directors and Heads of Schools, and where possible the rationale and reassurance of anonymity were discussed with staff groups before distribution.

Apart from an electronic version of the form being used during another process for two of the groups, the form was issued as a paper copy, filled in by hand, and posted back to the ODU in the internal mail. It was distributed over a 3 month period ending in September 2005. Responses were collected and collated by hand.

Most surveys are considered successful if they return a 3-5% response rate. This survey attracted a response rate of 14% from academic staff, and 17% from general staff, yielding an overall 16% response rate from all UNE staff.

Returned responses were broken down into the following categories:

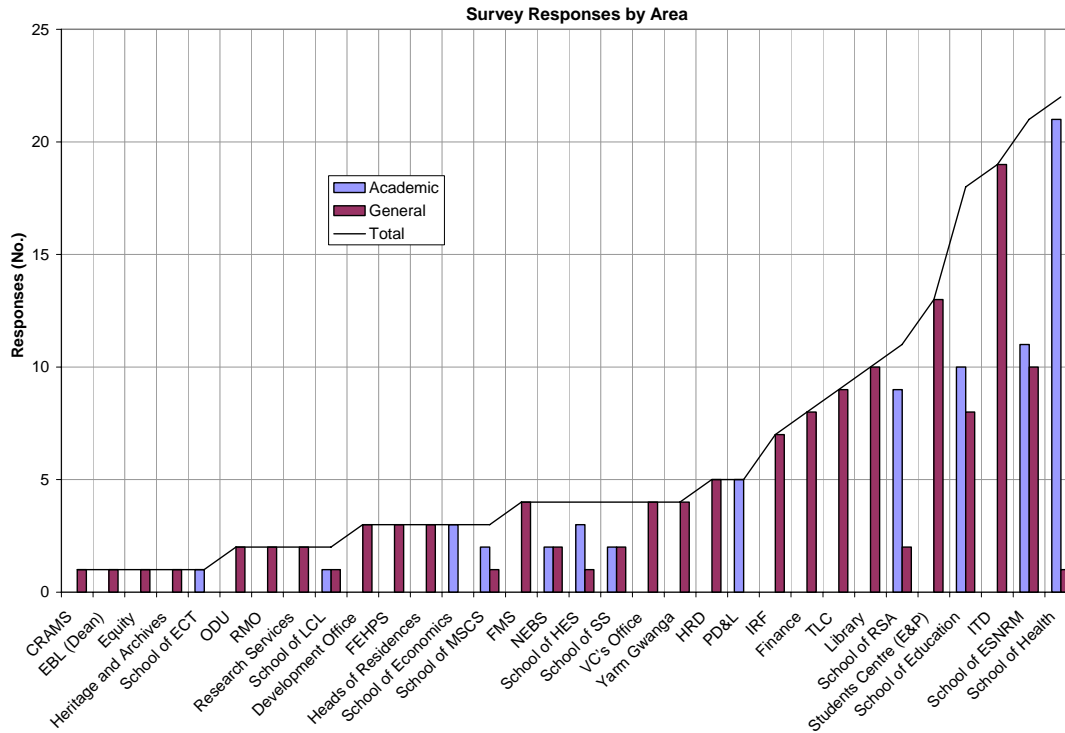
- Job specific
- Supervision/leadership
- General training (including all 'soft skills')
- IT

While the anonymity of the respondents was preserved, the returning areas and numbers have been collected, as well as the general and academic staff responses. Academic staff responses are shown throughout in red.

## The responses

### By area

Area	Number of responses		
	Academic	General	Total
Centre/Research/Aboriginal/Multicultural/S		1	1
Development Office		3	3
Economics, Business & Law (Dean's Office)		1	1
Equity Office		1	1
Facilities Maintenance		4	4
Faculty Education Health & Professional Studies		3	3
Finance		8	8
Heads of Residences		3	3
Heritage and Archives		1	1
Human resources		5	5
Institute for Rural Futures		7	7
IT Directorate		19	19
Library		10	10
NEBS	2	2	4
Organisational Development Unit		2	2
Professional Development & Leadership	5		5
Records Management Office		2	2
Research Services		2	2
School of Economics	3		3
School of Education	10	8	18
School of English, Communication & Theatre	1		1
School of Environmental Sciences and NRM	11	10	21
School of Health	21	1	22
School of Human and Environmental Studies	3	1	4
School of Languages, Culture and Linguistics	1	1	2
School of Maths, Stats and Computer Sciences	2	1	3
School of Rural Science and Agriculture	9	2	11
School of Social Sciences	2	2	4
Students Centre (Enrolments & Progressions)		13	13
Teaching and Learning Centre		9	9
Vice-Chancellor's Office		4	4
Yarm Gwanga		4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>200</b>



## Summary response rate

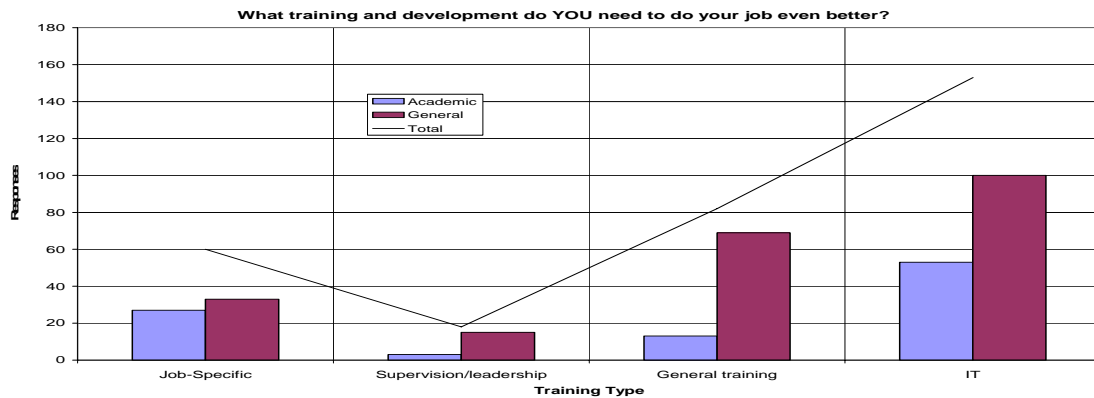
	Responses	Total staff numbers*
<b>Academic staff</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>496</b>
General staff	130	784
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>1280</b>

\* Based on HR figures as at the end of September 2005

## Summary of responses by question

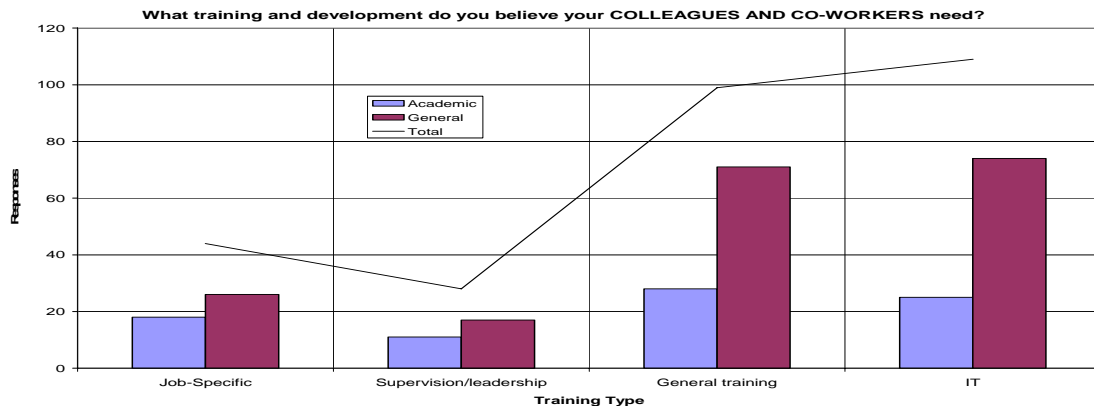
### 1. What training and development do YOU need to do your job even better?

	Academic staff	General staff	Total
Job-Specific	27	33	60
Supervision/leadership	3	15	18
General training	13	69	82
IT	53	100	153



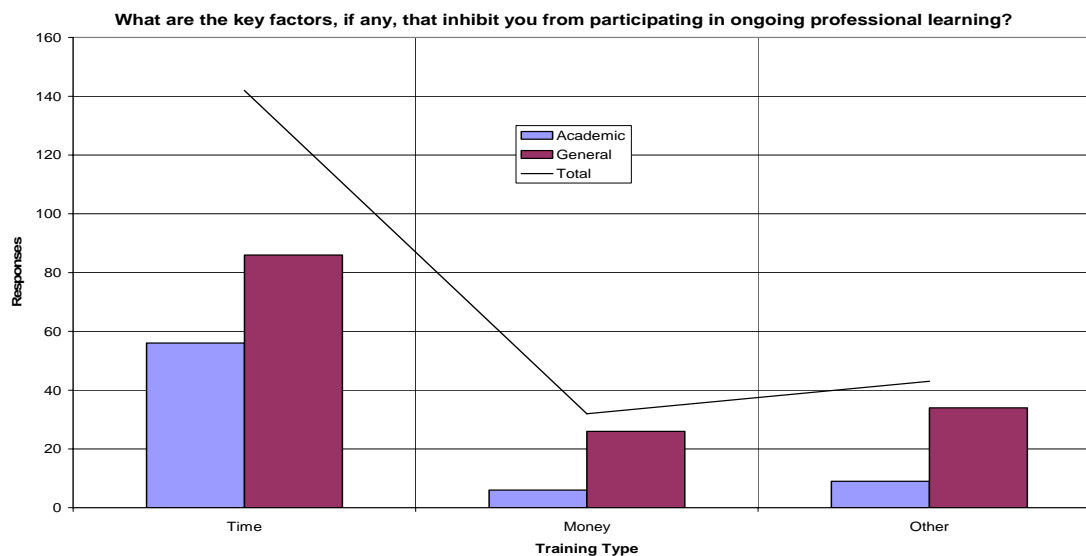
### 2. What training and development do you believe your COLLEAGUES AND CO-WORKERS need?

	Academic staff	General staff	Total
Job-Specific	18	26	44
Supervision/leadership	11	17	28
General training	28	71	99
IT	25	74	109



### 3. What are the key factors, if any, that inhibit you from participating in ongoing professional learning?

	Academic staff	General staff	Total
Time	56	86	142
Money	6	26	32
Other	9	34	43



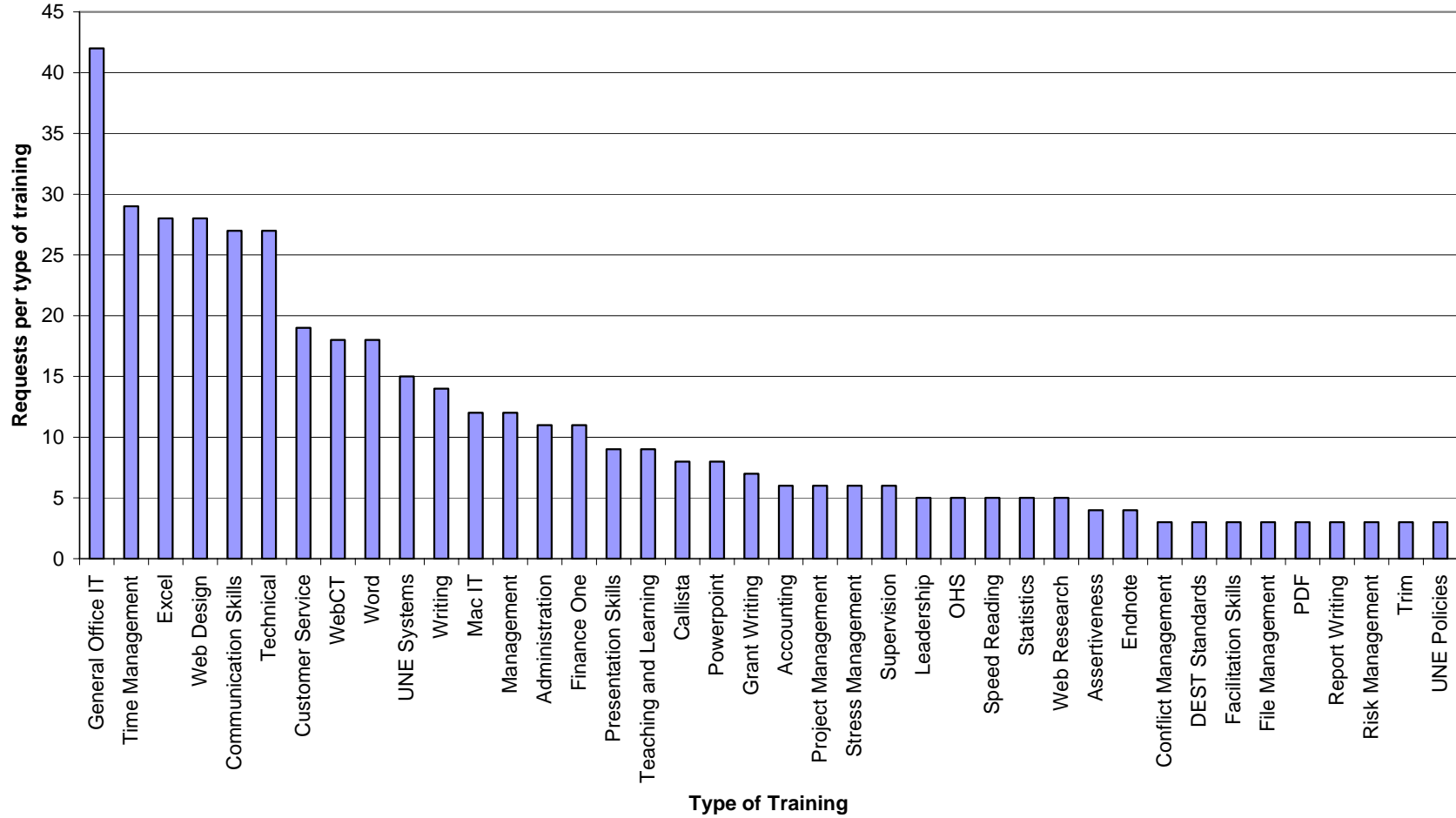
## Summary of requests for ALL training

The following chart shows the most common types of training mentioned for both Self and Others. The responses are summarised, for example 'General Office IT' includes all references to computer training that excludes specifics such as Excel, Word etc. 'Communication Skills' includes all references to interpersonal skills, networking, managing upwards, etc, but not more specifically identified skills such as Assertiveness, Conflict Management etc.

This chart is principally useful for ODU planning purposes, but cannot be used to indicate an accurate incidence of need across the entire community, for example we cannot assume that 13.5% of all staff want technical training. Likewise less than five requests were made for TRIM training and the likely reason for this low response is that few staff are aware of the need to be using this software across campus to maintain accurate corporate records.

# Summary of requests for ALL training

## Most-requested types of training



## Compilation of actual results

### 1. What training and development do YOU need to do your job even better?

Academic

General

Job-Specific (27+33) = 60	Supervision/leadership (3+15) = 18	General training (13+69) = 82	IT (53+100) =153
Inter-office training (within area)	Middle-management (3)	Presentation skills (2)	Excel (12) (5)
Upgrade facilitation of learning	Training from someone who has previously filled my position	OTJ training (1) (1)	Trim (5)
Emotional Intelligence	Supervisory training (1) (2)	Report writing (6)	Word (5) (4)
PhD in OD	Delegation	Minute taking	Outlook
Accounting standards (3)	Practical management	Presentation Skills (2)	Web CT (11) (11)
Alumni information access	Management (6)	Public/committee speaking	DE: on-line course dev't (2) (1)
Networking in my area	Strategic planning	Conferences	e-journals design (2)
Library work methods, policies (2)	Leading through change	Negotiation skills	Visual basics programming (2)
Training in awards, degrees (4)	Staff management	Stress management (2)	MS Publisher
Advanced standing		Facilitation skills	Flash (2)
Early childhood conferences (3)		Admin training	Macromedia
Research skills		Time management (8) (5)	Breeze
Writing papers/journal		Streamlining processes	Smartboard
Teaching (2)		File management (2)	Smart symposium
Grant applications (5)		Remaining calm under pressure	Adobe acrobat
Post-graduate supervision (2)		Concentration techniques	Adobe indesign (2)
On-line units/courses/groups (5)		Assertiveness (2)	Discoverer software
Theory of learning		Communications skills (4) (2)	Dreamweaver (3) (3)
Research teaching presentation		Conflict management (2) (1)	Endnote (1) (1)
Consultancies		Dealing with difficult people (4) (1)	Powerpoint (1) (8)
Researching on the web		Telephone training (1)	Photoshop (2)
Tutorial management		Project management (4)	Starnet training
Dealing with plagiarism		Financial management (2)	Callista (4) (2)
Technical (specific) (3) (1)		Client management (5)	Finance 1 (6)
UNE Web CSS			Nvivo,
Writing CSS		Team training (1) (1)	SPSS
Formal Facilities Maintenance Qualls		First Aid (1) (1)	Computer skills (17) (5)
Australian standards		EEO	UNE admin systems (2)
Scientific writing		OHS (5)	Web-based office systems
Certification farm chemicals		Speed reading (2) (1)	Web for teaching and research
Glasshouse /Microscope maintenance			Software relevant to work. (4)
Design real time PCR assays		Risk management /assessment (2)	MAC training (all programs) (8) (4)
Managing IP		BPI/R	Access
Exotic disease preparedness			Latex (1) (1)
Bomb calorimeter			GIS (2) (1)

## 2. What training and development do you believe your COLLEAGUES AND CO-WORKERS need?

### Academic

#### General

Job-Specific (18+26) = 44	Supervision / leadership (11+17) = 28	General training (28+71) = 99	IT (25+74) = 79
Policy and procedure development	Supervisory skills	Time management (10) (6)	Excel (9) (2)
Upgrade facilitation of learning	Management skills(3)	Communication skills (10) (2)	Word (7) (2)
EI	Financial reporting	Customer service skills (8) (2).	Outlook (2)
Answer students' questions	Management Reporting	Teamwork (5) (5)	Web, internet (3)
Basic accounting		Business writing (5)	Web CT (3)
Accounting standards (2)	Leadership skills (2)	Stress management (3)	Web page (3)
Finance	Leadership (2)	Assertiveness (2)	Units online (4)
Training in awards and degrees (6)	Strategic thinking	Affirmative action	Discoverer software
More training in defined positions	Thinking laterally. (2)	Interpersonal skills (3) (2)	Breeze
Grant Writing (3)	Cultural change	Conflict management (3) (2)	Mozilla firefox
Copyright issues	Succession planning	How to deal with other people (3)	Thunderbird
Keeping the cutting edge of teaching	Retaining corporate knowledge	(Code of Conduct) (3)	Dreamweaver (3) (2)
Student assessment (2)	Understanding role within UNE	Protocols	Adobe acrobat (2) (1)
Dealing with plagiarism	Delegation	Professional standards	Adobe indesign
Research teaching presentation	OTJ Training (3)	Presentation skills	N-VIVO
Conferences out of Armidale	How to manage upwards	Public relations	Pagemaker (2)
On-line units/courses/groups (5)	Equity of workload	Memory retention	Photoshop
Theory of learning	How to overcome obstacles	Problem solving	Powepoint (1) (2)
	Knowledge sharing	Accepting change	MS Publisher
BPI/R	Consultation	Styles and templates	Alesco system
Handling and storing chemicals	Decision making	OHS (3)	Callista (4)
Pedagogy theory		Risk management	Trim (2)
Specialised	Fix academic indolence	Work management systems	Finance 1 (3)
Early childhood conferences (2)	Management	Systems development	IT (4) (3)
Trade and technical training (2)		Project management (3)	PC training (10)
		Coordination of processes	One-to-one short cuts
Risk assessment		Filing (2)	Training in relevant software
Chemwatch for students		Record keeping	Forms on the web
Latex (2)		Streamline Admin work	Open source software (2)
		Admin training	Typing
GIS		Compassion	Endnote etc (1) (1)
		Stats	MAC training (5) (1)
			CD Rom

### 3. What are the key factors, if any, that inhibit you from participating in ongoing professional learning?

#### Academic

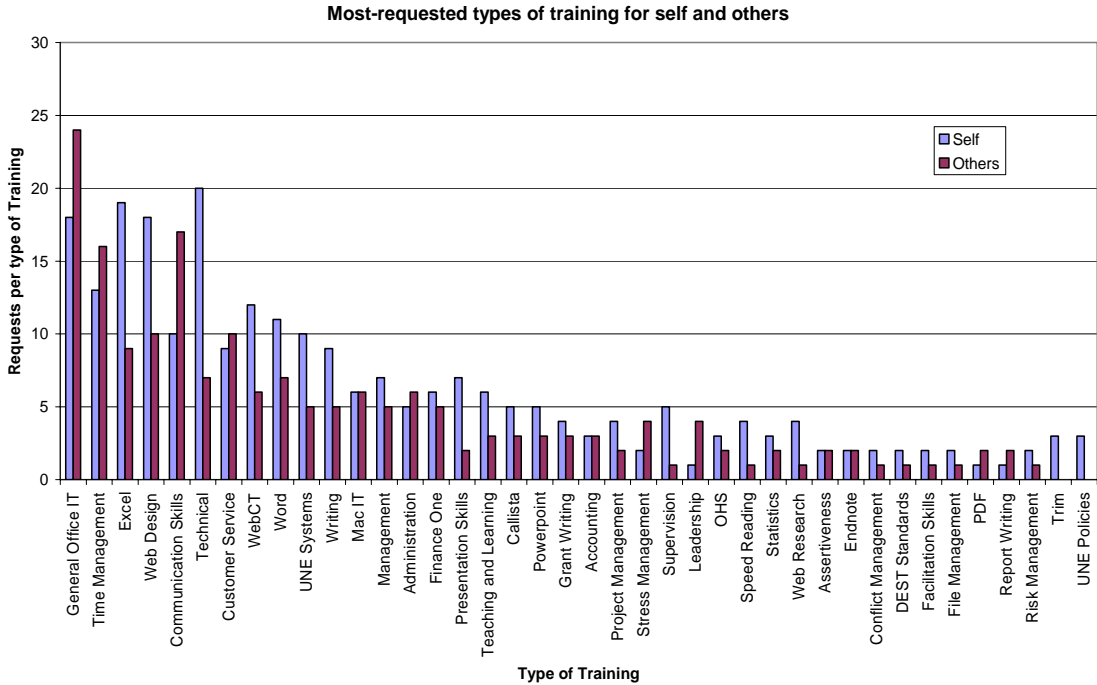
#### General

Time (52) (44)	Dreamweaver—\$350 but bells & whistles not suitable for UNE
Workload (20) (18)	(Don't like) demonstration rather than Doing courses
Timing/scheduling of courses (4) (11)	Appropriate levels of course
Courses too long (2) (1)	Courses not detailed enough (2)
Family commitments (2)	No MAC training (5)
I'm a contract / part-time employee / paid from fund (6)	No work-specific training (childcare)
Cost/budget constraints/funding/expense/resources (26) (6)	Courses need to be targeted for technical/trades people (4)
Training budget appears to be expended on management	Availability of training/course not offered by OD
Management decides what's relevant for us (2)	Irrelevant courses (3)
Management do not see the benefit of training	Lack of suitably trained people to do the training (products other than MS).
No systems to allow for training	Limited interest of courses
No encouragement by HOS	Getting pertinent, specific needs
Poor leadership	Inconvenient venues
Inequity by supervisors	Most training /development activities are hopelessly inefficient in terms of time required.
Inertia	Far too much wasted time carrying out non-core activities ie not performing teaching, supervision, teaching improvement and research.
Low motivation	Poor admin support
Awareness	Waste of university funds. ODU should be closed down
I have no self-confidence / don't like to ask (2)	I know more than anyone who could teach me
am too stressed to concentrate	Facilitators allow participants to whinge
	Courses are good
	IDEAS: Web Cam lectures / ODU to go to the Schools / lunchtime sessions

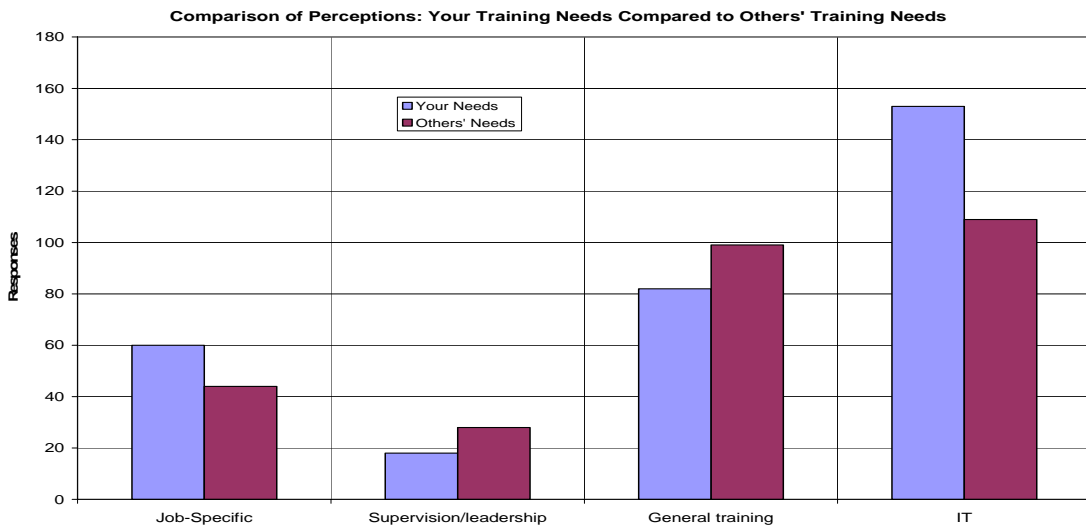
# Analysis of findings

## Self vs Others' needs

The likely issue of self-assessment bias was moderated to a certain extent by the check question ('What do you need...?' balanced against 'What do others need...?').



These two graphs show how the most requested types of training are perceptually split into 'Self' and 'Others'; and how Specific IT skills are requested more often for **Self** while general communication skills, basic office IT and Leadership are suggested for **Others**.



## Summary of issues

To reiterate the statements made by the Minister in his *Backing Australia's Future* paper, we cannot afford to ignore the challenges that are facing the sector. In particular we need to have a controlled approach to achieving a competitive advantage through administrative, institutional and behavioural skills. We need to embody the tangible and philosophical advantages of a learning culture.

The Minister, in his Workplace Productivity Program guidelines lists the key priorities for developing productivity and efficiency improvements as including:

- financial arrangements and operational management
- human resource practices
- professional development through strengthen management, and leadership
- systems development
- mergers, amalgamations and course rationalisation

Some of the priority areas highlighted by the Minister, such as mergers, amalgamations and course rationalisation are not naturally covered by ODU activities, but which do require flexibility, agility and attitudinal adjustments that are not immediately evident in the current culture. However the high incidence of requests for change management training and support shown in the questionnaire is encouraging and suggests that the culture is ready to meet challenges, with the support of strong leadership.

Ken Baumber in his *Review of the Centralisation of Student Administration, June 2005*, stated in his recommendation (9) that 'Early training in customer service and Calista functions has not been followed by systematic training or development activities. Until the management issue is addressed, there is little or no prospect of the Student Centre functioning as an effective team.' The ODU has not been officially involved in the implementation of any of the Review recommendations.

The issues that emerged from the survey results are congruent with the ODU staff experience and fell into five main themes:

1. strategic
2. cost / funding
3. IT
4. cultural
5. ODU

These issues are expanded in the following section. Some issues, for example leadership and management, recur under each heading.

Finally, a cultural scan combining the various sources of information, that is, the survey results, four years' anecdotal evidence from ODU staff, the Baumber Review and the DEST imperatives and guidelines suggest six distinct areas of organisational development need and these are reflected in the Recommendation section of this Report. (p 24).

# Strategic issues

## Findings/general observations

Management training was identified as a need by:

- 18 identifying for self
- 28 identifying for others

Management issues were also identified as the source of some concern in the narrative including 7 people identifying barriers to training access due to poor leadership/management.

Observations from the ODU staff combined with qualitative comments in the survey responses suggest that generally people do not self-assess accurately (either their current skill level or strategic training needs), and in particular self-selection into management courses is unsuccessful.

There is an apparent imbalance between investment in learning processes and the implementation of the resultant learning. Feedback suggests that this is the result of management attitude to new skills.

Soft skills, including emotional intelligence, have been identified in research as being 'the difference that makes the difference'. Organisations that value this knowledge, and who actively encourage their managers and supervisors to develop these skills, are more productive and effective than organisations that rely on technical expertise alone. Soft skills require time and commitment to develop, and formal training programs need to be supplemented with on-the-job coaching and mentoring.

Most training courses, particularly IT courses, appear to be requested on an *ad hoc* basis with little cohesion within areas, or any reference to strategic training for either personal or corporate goal setting benefit.

The use of TRIM has been sanctioned by the University, yet requests for TRIM training are still negligible as are enrolments into scheduled TRIM training sessions.

Despite the verbal commitment to Quality Assurance across campus—and the complaints expressed by 'victims' of the process—there are no requests for any training in Quality processes.

Without the guidance of strategic directives ODU finds difficulty in assessing actual skill needs and levels of courses required. This can be overcome to some extent by the use of a 360° style feedback which will balance the performance review process.

Effective workforce planning requires that the authors of the strategic plans for the university indicate the skill set that will be required for staff in the next 5-10 years and beyond. This will enable the ODU to respond effectively to the needs identified by the survey by aligning them with identified strategic objectives, as well as enabling senior managers to plan for strategically focussed staff development.

## Cost / funding issues

- 32% of respondents cited cost as a barrier to accessing training

### Findings/general observations

Despite requests for specific courses, attendance has dropped causing both the cancellation of courses and/or the running of courses at lower than break-even point. While the quality of the course will be assessed by ODU as an ongoing evaluation process, the questionnaire responses indicate that the current funding arrangements create a cultural resistance to professional development.

Traditionally, training and development drops to a low priority when there are budgetary constraints and compliance demands are great, yet all the evidence suggests that this is the worst time to reduce professional development activities.

Many of the needs identified are better provided on a consulting basis to the relevant work area rather than being provided for in formal courses, and OD intends to continue to do more of this in coming years. This will necessitate a change to the current costing and pricing policy.

If UNE is committed to ongoing professional development it is important that this is funded to ensure that all staff who require training are receiving it. It will also be impossible to guarantee a desired strategic outcome if the professional development of the workforce is not managed and funded in a coordinated manner.

## IT Issues

- 153 (77%) of respondents identified IT training for self
- 109 (55%) of respondents identified IT training for others
- 7 respondents identified barriers due to a perceived Microsoft partiality

### Findings/general observations

The majority of Self requests were for specific/specialised software, whereas Others were seen as clearly needing General Office IT skills (see Most requested types of training for Self and Others chart).

Despite requests for courses and positive course evaluations IT courses are often poorly attended.

There are many requests for one-off specialised IT training courses which cannot feasibly be run. Outsourcing to external providers often prices the course beyond affordability.

Many IT course attendees grade themselves inaccurately, (the levels offered are Foundation/Intermediate, and Advanced) resulting in:

- the individual's learning being impeded by being pitched at too high or too low a level
- the overall course pace being adversely affected.

Less than 50% of all IT courses offered by the ODU are Microsoft products, but we do not offer training in other provider products that are similar to Microsoft applications such

as WordPerfect, Lotus products, and freeware such as Star Office. This is because the more products we offer in training courses the less likely it will be that the University has uniformity of style. Where possible, we train software that is either fully supported or has some support from the ITD Helpdesk.

TRIM has not been recognised as serious need by staff or supervisors. Only 4 people requested training for themselves and no-one saw it as a necessity for any other staff members. The use of a records management system is critically important for the organisation's compliance with legislation and regulations governing the archival of corporate information. Such a system provides users with a method of storage, retrieval and management of information. TRIM has been chosen as UNE's preferred records management system and the neglect of its adoption staff exposes the organisation to serious risk.

Currently there is an *ad hoc* approach to training in corporate systems such as Callista, Finance One, Web Kiosk, etc. The various directorates responsible for these systems take responsibility for the training in these products and in many cases they are not experienced trainers. Furthermore, training for these systems tends to be done at launch stage with limited consideration given to ongoing training. New staff are then typically trained by an existing staff member (without training experience) resulting in a dilution of system processes and quality, and in some cases inaccurate interpretation of system use.

There are obvious and well known advantages to the adoption of a standard IT platform in UNE including cost efficiency, effectiveness of communication, and the presentation of a standard product. As a result of the survey findings, and from the ODU's training and development experience, the current situation also causes problems in the timing, development, and presentation of courses. We believe it pertinent to underline the recommendation that a single IT platform is adopted across the entire University for core productivity software such as operating System, Email, and Office suite (Word processing, Spreadsheet, database etc).

Many misconceptions and associated problems will persist while UNE does not have a standard IT platform.

## Cultural Issues

It should be noted that the cultural issues indicated in this survey are indicative only, as the instrument was not designed to elicit accurate responses regarding the state of the current culture. However, many respondents took the opportunity to comment on cultural issues and concerns as well as their own development needs.

- 68% identified IT and job specific training for self
- 32% identified 'soft skills' training for self
- 65% identified time as a barrier to attending training courses
- 18% identified workload as a barrier

Other comments on barriers to training included:

Family commitments (2)	I'm a contract / pt employee / paid from fund (6)
Training budget expended on management	Management decides what's relevant for us (2)
Management do not see the benefit of training	No systems to allow for training
No encouragement by HOS	Poor leadership
Inequity by supervisors	Inertia
Low motivation	Poor awareness
I have no self-confidence / don't like to ask (2)	I am too stressed to concentrate

## Findings/general observations

'Perception is reality' and when a particular perception recurs it says more about the culture than about individuals' attitudes. If we want to build a strong performance culture that not only meets government requirements but results in a healthy vital workplace in which people are keen to continue working we need to manage such perceptions effectively. The survey results highlight widely held perceptions which translate as major cultural issues.

The statistics show that people feel that 'my needs are different from yours'. This is particularly evident through the Self need for IT training outweighing the Others' need for general/soft skills. This is not only a cultural issue, but in a practical sense this attitude contributes to conflicts of interest regarding resource use, time allocations and perceived importance of job functions.

The 'Time' issue is about priorities. People will invest time and money on things which are regarded as a high priority and these priorities are often the result of cultural norms. There is a clear perception on campus that many people think that:

- they are too busy to be trained
- they will let their team down if they take time out to be trained
- they don't need any training.

Assumptions drawn from responses and observations include:

- Training and Development is not a priority in the University
- lifelong learning is not part of the culture
- individual needs outweigh organisational priorities
- soft skills are less important than technical expertise
- management issues affect the culture

## ODU issues

### **Induction**

In response to a separate evaluation of the ODU Induction program, the unit will continue to run weekly induction sessions which will be extended to include casual staff. These sessions will reflect the findings and recommendations of the recent Induction Survey (see separate report).

### **Workplace change**

In response to recent requests the ODU has been able to assist staff members who are dealing with workplace changes by offering one-to-one or small group CV writing courses, interview skills and other support services. These services would be less disruptive, more cost-effective and less traumatic if they were anticipated and delivered in a planned way. The ODU will develop a support package for staff facing restructuring concerns so that the University community has access to programs that are suitably tailored for the specific work area's needs.

### **Self-assessment**

It appears that self-assessment of skill levels, particularly regarding appropriate level of IT courses required, is unreliable. Research also shows generally that many people over assess their soft skills capabilities. Many people have no formal training in any form of soft skills and yet it is often assumed that people in the workplace will have developed these skills as a matter of course during their life experience. The ODU will need to define a strategy to deal with these issues, but should be informed and guided by the University's overall organisational strategic development planning process.

### **Tailoring courses**

There is no ideal course length, and there are always perceptions that a course is either too long or too short. Some academics comment that they are very fast learners and they only need half hour courses. This may be true of theory, but developing practical skills in 'soft' behavioural changes, where people have been operating out of learned patterns of behaviour takes time and practice in order to undo old habits.

The ODU will be dealing with the timing issue as much as possible by introducing a more tailored consultancy service and by running published courses on demand at the clients' preferred time. We will also continue to run the very successful lunchtime courses.

### **Marketing**

There is currently poor knowledge of the menu of courses offered by the ODU, of the range of courses, and of the comparative cost of courses. Many of the T&D requirements listed in the survey are items that are already provided on campus, published in a calendar, on the web, in emails and followed up by phone calls.

The ODU will be initiating a different marketing strategy in 2006, and this will include the publication of a brochure of available courses on demand, as well as more face-to-face solution-oriented consulting to work units. This will work two-way by allowing the ODU to become aware of special needs courses thereby enabling the Unit to satisfy the client needs more visibly and tangibly.

## **Personal development planning**

There is no evidence of Personal Development planning on campus. There were many responses ranging from '*Nothing thanks*' to '*I know more than anyone could teach me*'. It is tempting to infer that many people believe that they do not need to participate in ongoing learning or lifelong learning. The Performance Management process should deal with this issue. Forming a closer relationship with the client through a consulting role may also encourage people to take responsibility for their own professional development.

## **Cost**

In-house courses are cheaper than those of comparable external providers but people occasionally use external providers for convenience and other reasons. The consultancy role will enable facilitated decisions to be made by clients with a clear knowledge of the comparative costs of training services and therefore enable Cost Centres to manage a more controlled budgeting process.

## **Consultancy services**

In response to the survey findings the focus of the ODU will aim to reflect the clients' needs by offering a responsive menu of courses which will be run only at break-even point and to the clients' convenience. The ODU will offer consultancy services on demand which will diagnose group/unit/School issues, develop mutually acceptable solutions and facilitate interventions and development programs at the clients' convenience.

It should be noted that these actions are only partially proactive and will create a 'spot fire' approach. Central strategically planned organisational development would assist the ODU's planning and efficiency, and streamline the use of corporate funds. Appropriate planning will focus the organisation's workforce towards the future and equip it with the ability to avoid the threatened collision with mediocrity.

## **ODU/TLC**

There still exists some general confusion between services offered by the ODU and other on-campus providers such as the TLC. Some confusion between two similar service delivery bodies will probably always exist and is unavoidable, but there are advantages in developing a close operating relationship between the separate units.

It is important to avoid such misunderstandings, not only because it presents an appearance of deficient consultation, but also to eliminate duplication of effort and waste of time in providing clarification.

# Recommendations

## 1. Staff Skill Set

In response to the survey, and in order to develop an effective workforce plan that will benefit the University, there will need to be an agreed skill set for staff, projected over 5-10 years. An effective way to establish the needs gap could be through an institution-wide skills audit (360° or similar).

Generic training at all levels should include Performance Management, OHS, Risk Management, Quality principles and techniques, Induction and On-the-Job training, and team building.

A mechanism should be in place for establishing and satisfying an ongoing need for TRIM training, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) training as well as general IT training. Supervisor training should have a mandatory component which includes these skills.

## 2. Centralised Funding

To eliminate the current cost and cultural barriers to training, we recommend that central funding is directed towards strategically focused Training and Development outcomes. We believe that the funding barrier undermines commitment, creates inequities of access and is therefore a significant factor morale reduction.

## 3. Management Development Program

A strategically directed, formal management development program is required as a high priority for the University. The program should have four distinct target levels:

- i. A high level leadership development program with emphasis on external positioning, political intelligence, and Emotional Intelligence
- ii. A Head of School induction and development program with emphasis on practical skills such as finance systems and committee training, as well as academic leadership, and interpersonal and change management skills
- iii. A middle management development program tailored for Director and equivalent level, with similar emphases as the HOS program, but with particular emphasis on best practice management skills including financial and quality management
- iv. A supervisory training program, with emphasis on staff management and interpersonal skills as well as practical skills such as project management, financial and quality management

Supervisory training should include Performance Management and Conducting Performance Appraisals, OHS, Risk Management, Quality Principles and Techniques, Managing Induction and On the Job Training, and Team Building.

All programs should have a consistent focus on the vision of the University and a mandatory strategic planning component. All levels of the program should be ongoing and supplemented with on-the-job coaching and mentoring.

## 4. Change Management Team

The University needs a Change Management Team to have carriage of the entire strategy of change both during the introduction of new processes, for example the

Student Centre, and for the introduction and implementation of ongoing Business Process Improvements.

Challenges facing the sector in general and the UNE in particular impose an increasing requirement for a thorough understanding of the impact of change, and for proactively developed strategies and action plans to manage the process.

The personnel involved in the Change Management Team should have appropriate expertise including skills in:

- personal and counselling areas
- training
- risk and quality management
- project management
- communication
- business process improvement
- industrial relations

#### **5. Standard IT Platform and Training**

We believe that it is important to underline the recommendation that a single IT platform is adopted across the entire University for core productivity software such as operating System, Email, and Office suite (Word processing, Spreadsheet, database etc).

All initial training in corporate systems such as Callista, Finance One, Web Kiosk, etc should be mandatory and formally delivered as part of the induction process. Further training should be run on a demand one-to-one basis at a chargeable rate by qualified ODU roving trainers. This training can be booked in advance in multiples of 15 minute blocks and can be delivered to groups if requested.

#### **6. ODU/TLC Relationship**

Formal processes should be developed and implemented in order to strengthen the inter-relationships between the TLC and the ODU.