# Tutorial Letter 201/1/2018

**Human Capacity Development**

# IOP2605

# Semester 1

**Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology**

| IMPORTANT INFORMATION |
|---|
| This tutorial letter contains important information about your module. |

Define tomorrow.

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## CONTENT

Dear Student

We hope that what you have learnt so far about human capacity development has kept you interested and motivated and that you now have a better idea of the effect you want to have on the development of people in South Africa. Furthermore, we trust that the assignments have provided you with food for thought and an opportunity to reflect on the learning content.

The purpose of this tutorial letter is to

- provide feedback on Assignment 01
- provide feedback on Assignment 02
- provide some guidelines for the examination

## 1    LECTURERS

The details of the lecturers for the IOP2605 module are as follows:

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To contact us by telephone, use the number of the Industrial and Organisational Psychology helpdesk (see Tutorial Letter 101/3/2018). The helpdesk will refer telephone calls to the first available lecturer.

## 2    FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS

The primary purpose of assignments is to ensure that you understand the study material thoroughly and that you have the ability to apply theory to practice. Ultimately, doing assignments will help you prepare for the examination.

We have designed assignments that will stimulate your interest and keep you thinking about what is happening in the discipline of human capacity development. When you answer an assignment question, we want you to enrich our thinking about the discipline in order to improve our development of the subject. Your knowledge of the underlying theory, together with your ability to apply it to a practical situation, and your own reasoning and ideas are important to us. Pay attention to individual comments that the marker has made on your assignment.

### 2.1    Feedback on Assignment 01

**Question 1**

Organisations want their employees as productive as possible and change can influence this productivity considerably. Illustrate your understanding of change by:

a)    Defining the concept of change.                                                                    (5)
b)    Explaining the necessity of change.                                                             (5)
                                                                                                                            **[10]**

**Answers**

**(a)**     **Reference:** Learning unit 2, section 2.2
*(1 mark each for any 5 relevant points)*

- Change is a set of behavioural science-based theories, values, strategies and techniques.
- It is aimed at improving and enhancing organisational work setting, individual development, as well as organisational performance.
- It involves a sequence of activities, emanating from disturbances in the stable force field surrounding the organisation, object or situation.
- It embodies the notion that what was once stable will be altered by the mere existence of change, which is a constant in life.
- Change occurs when something becomes different.
- It can be defined as the significant alteration of any number of elements in the organisation, including behaviour, structures, technology, processes and/or strategy.

(5)

**(b)**     **Reference:** Learning unit 2, section 2.3
*(1 mark each for any 5 relevant points)*

- Change is the constant everywhere.
- It has become so pervasive that it has become part of normal organisational life.
- Change secures the survival of any organisation.
- Organisations that are resistant to change normally wither away.
- Change makes it possible to meet present and future challenges.
- It makes good business sense.

(5)

**Question 2**
Illustrate your understanding of personal mastery by:

a)     Briefly discussing ways to increase self-awareness.                              (5)
b)     Defining personal values as explained by Roberts (1999).                     (3)
c)     Clarifying how organisations can apply good values.                             (2)
**[10]**

**Answers**

**(a)**     **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.3.1
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Analysis is the best tool of knowledge.
- Get feedback from someone who knows you well.
- Use a 360 degree assessment method.
- Integrate and discuss the results of the 360 degree assessment.
- Take time to reflect.

(5)

**(b)**     **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.3.1
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Values are qualities we deem important.
- They affect the choices we make and the options we perceive for ourselves in life.
- They come from many sources, e.g. parents, schools, religion, peers, our culture and the people we admire.

(3)

**(c)** **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.3.1
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Organisations that value honesty are more transparent with their financial records.
- Valuing employees would mean carefully considering them before implementing lay-off strategies.

(2)

**Question 3**
Critically discuss the following characteristics of self-actualisers as described by Abraham Maslow:

a) A democratic character. (5)
b) Creativeness. (5)
c) A general acceptance of nature, others and oneself. (5)

**[15]**

**Answers**

**(a)** **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.2.4
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Democratic leaders tolerate and accept all people regardless of social class, level of education, political or religious affiliation, race or colour.
- People's differences do not matter to these self-actualisers as they are seldom aware of them.
- Their behaviour goes deeper than tolerance; for example, they do not regard themselves as superior to the less educated or less intelligent.
- They are quite ready to listen to and learn from anyone who can teach them something.
- They are genuinely respectful towards the skilled individuals who display skills and knowledge that the intellectual does not possess.

(5)

**(b)** **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.2.4
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Self-actualisers are original, inventive and innovative, although they do not always produce artistic creations; they are not all writers, artists or composers.
- They display an unbiased and direct way of looking at things.
- Their naive inventiveness and imagination can be compared to those of a child.
- Self-actualisers retain their childhood creativeness or regain it later in life.
- They possess a creative attitude.

(5)

**(c)** **Reference:** Learning unit 1, section 1.2.4
*(1 mark for each point)*

- Self-actualising people accept themselves, their shortcomings and their strengths without complaint and worry.
- They are accepting of their natures and do not falsify themselves.
- There is no defensiveness about them and they do not hide behind masks or social roles.
- In general, they are equally tolerant of the shortcomings of people they know.
- Self-actualisers sometimes feel guilt, shame, worry or regret about some aspects of their behaviour, particularly about discrepancies between their nature at the moment and what they could or should be. For example, they are bothered by shortcomings – in themselves or in others – that could be improved, such as laziness, thoughtlessness and jealousy, because weaknesses inhibit full human growth and expression.

(5)

**Question 4**
Illustrate your knowledge of the impact of globalisation on developing countries by discussing the following:

a) Godinot (2012) international charters, which could be used as instruments to fight for greater justice in the poorest countries. (5)
b) The benefits of globalisation. (5)
c) Problems brought about by globalisation. (5)
**[15]**

**Answers**

**(a)** **Reference:** Learning unit 2, section 2.13.3
*(1 mark for each point)*

- **Income from natural resources:** Income from oil, or other extraction industries, must be available for the development of the producer countries.
- **Democracy:** There is a need for transparent election and a need to ensure that opposition can be voiced freely. In particular, television and radio stations should be free of government monopoly.
- **Budgetary transparency:** Create strong pressure from civil society for change by making public the fact that 30-90% of subsidies intended for schools or health clinics do not reach their destination.
- **Post-conflict situations:** Provide guidelines to donor countries and draw lessons from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- **Investment:** Guarantee that governments, whether domestic or foreign, will not confiscate private investment.

(5)

**(b)** **Reference:** Learning unit 2, section 2.13.4
*(1 mark each for any 5 points)*

- FDI has increased. Research and development have flourished and intense competition is a major factor in gaining access to global markets.
- An increase in interdependence and global institutions, such as the WTO and World Bank, that manage the settlement of government-to-government disputes has enabled international political and economic tensions to be resolved by a "rules-based" approach, rather than which country has the greatest economic or political power. Importantly, it has bolstered peace as countries are unlikely to enter into conflict with trading partners, and poverty reduction helps reduce the breeding ground for terrorism.
- There has been a reduction of trade barriers and cross-border regulations which aim to permit easier movement of goods, services, finance and labour.
- Markets have been deregulated, which leads to the liberalisation of trade.
- In the developing world, globalisation of knowledge has brought improved health, with lifespans increasing at a rapid pace.
- The integration of markets, nation-states and technologies enable individuals, organisations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before. It has deepened the integration of African countries into the global systems of production, finance and administrative reforms that relate to the functioning of the state in the international sphere. This has encouraged capital inflow mainly from developing countries. The exchanges of economic, cultural and social elements across the world provide economic trade and this in turn spurs on cultural awareness and increases social interaction globally.
- ICT has been the fastest technological change in history. The creators and distributors of information products and services, as well as the producers of hardware and software for the information sector (based largely in the richest countries) have grown exponentially to become one of the largest economic sectors.
- Improved environmental awareness and accountability has contributed to positive environmental outcomes by encouraging the use of more efficient, less polluting technologies and facilitating economies' imports of renewable substitutes for use in place of scarce domestic natural resources.

(5)

**(c)** **Reference:** Learning unit 2, section 2.13.4
*(1 mark each for any 5 relevant points)*

- The African continent as a whole is experiencing distinct challenges in implementing economic development initiatives, namely a lack of human resources and limited financial, institutional and technical capacity.

- With globalisation, the world is experiencing unprecedented levels of conflict, accompanied by gross violations of human rights. There are some who argue that globalisation can have only negative social, political and economic effects. As such, globalisation undermines human rights. Corruption and poor governance brought about by globalisation increase the risks and costs of trade and investment, and this deters investors and business people.

- Economic and trade policies espoused and introduced by globalisation have led to an increase in the debt burden of many African countries, thereby limiting their ability to provide for their people.

- The liberalisation of financial and capital markets has posed risks to developing countries without commensurate reward. The liberalisation has left them prey to hot money pouring into the country and, just as suddenly, the money is pulled out, leaving in its wake economic devastation.

- The spread of HIV/AIDS and Ebola is believed to be facilitated by the tools of globalisation through travel, immigration and trade. Research has shown that there is a strong link between HIV/AIDS and poverty. Globalisation has become a threat to the poor rather than an opportunity for global action to eradicate poverty.

- This integration has brought about Western ownership of formerly African public-owned enterprises. This has led to the obliteration of the African culture and to a Eurocentric view of the realities of Africa.

- The majority of poor developing countries are likely to face the risk of a widening digital divide. This fast-paced technological revolution is also divisive within countries as individuals are in different positions to adapt. The digital divide can be seen on the same level as the difference in income and access to services, such as education and health, between developed and developing countries. For many developing countries global connectivity is still a major problem. This connectivity challenge can have disastrous effects on capacity building and education. As ICT are transforming education systems, so connectivity challenges will result in a further widening of the knowledge gap and deepening of existing economic and social inequalities among the developed and the developing countries.

- African resources are exploited by developed countries, due to inequities in power relations and trading and economic relations, and the inequalities in global economic structures. Africa is the repository of scarce global resources, yet it is powerless. Weak African nations, relative to the West, are brutally exploited in every way.

(5)

**TOTAL*:* [50]**

## 2.2 Feedback on Assignment 02

**Question 1**
Explain the application of social learning in organisational learning. (10)

**Answer**

- Social learning theory in organisational learning introduces a view to the content, process and relationship between the individual and the organisation as well as an understanding of the organisation.

- According to social learning theory, learners are social beings that construct their understanding and learn from participation in practice within the specific sociocultural settings of an organisation. The role of the individual learner is to be engaged in sense making.

- In organisations, as viewed from the social learning theoretical perspective, learning is universal and part of everyday organisational life and work. Learning cannot be avoided; there is no choice for or against learning. Learning is not restricted to taking place in individuals' minds, but as processes of participation and interaction.

- Learning takes place among and through other employees and artefacts as a relationship activity, not an individual process of thought. This view changes the locus of the learning process from that of the mind of individuals to the participation patterns of individual members of organisations in which learning takes place.

- In individual learning theory, learning is to come to know about actions and practices; in social learning theory, learning is a way of being and becoming part of the communities of practice that make up an organisation; in the central issue of learning, it is to become a skilled practitioner.

- Learning involves a change of the term "knowledge" as knowledge becomes the situated knowledge of the organisation and not something stored in books and information systems. In social learning theory, knowledge is the active process of knowing, the processes and results of participation in organisational practices. Learners are to make sense of their participation in the social processes of organising.

- It is not just the individuals who solely retain knowledge, but knowledge is distributed within and among artefacts and organisational members. The content being learnt is context specific, and the learning itself is the discovery of what is to be done, when and how to do what according to the specific organisational routines, as well as which specific artefacts to use where and how.

- Learning also involves being able to give a reasonable account of why things are done and of what sort of person one must become in order to be a skilled member of a specific organisation. In social learning theory, to know is to be capable of participating with the requisite competence in the complex web of relationships among employees, artefacts and activities.

- Learning is what enables employees to modify their relationships to others while contributing to the shared activity. Moving learning away from inside the mind to social relationships is also moving learning into an area of conflicts and power. This makes the issue of empowerment essential, as learning requires access and opportunity to take part in the ongoing practice of learning. The social structure, its power relationships and its conditions for legitimacy define the possibilities for learning.

- In summary, regarding the content and process of social learning theory in organisational learning, social learning theory emphasises informality, improvisation, collective action, conversation and sense making and creating knowledge within and among the trajectory of participation.

- The concept of participation draws attention to the importance of learning processes. Newcomers to the organisation become mainstream members of a community of practice (e.g. workforce, sport club, hobby group) by having the opportunity to learn through participating in the social relationships of the community. The community of practice is embedded in social relationships in which learning is by and through the collective.

- A situated learning perspective is one that conceives learning as a process which is embedded within the activities, tasks and social relationships that constitute social settings (such as the workplace). From the situated learning perspective the idea of learning transfer between settings is problematic. This means that explicit support should be given to people (e.g. newly qualified professionals) entering the workforce to help them contextualise the knowledge gained in one setting (e.g. specialist educational institution) in the new setting (e.g. the workplace).

- In social learning, the individual (worker) and cultural (workplace) development (learning and change to work) occur through relationship processes. Individuals' personal unique interpretations and enactments of their work and workplace reveal the limits of social support or suggestion. The capacity of the social world to project and secure its support during the learning process is neither comprehensive nor complete because it is limited by individual interpretation.
- Individuals all have personal experiences of events, but also the capacity to deny much of what they experience through the social world, which would otherwise overwhelm them. Yet, conversely, individuals' freedom and capacity to protect their intentions are limited by the activities and interactions their work affords them. Moreover, the workplace's invitation and projection of its contribution is exercised in different ways and forms, depending on workplace circumstances and individuals taking up those suggestions.
- To understand learning through work, it is necessary to account for the relationships present during the learning process. However, a consideration of relationships between the individual and the social environment is far from new.
- Particular attention should be given to the selectivity, understanding and engagement of the learners in their accounts of human development. Negotiated between individuals' personal cognitive experience and the social world (norms, dialogue and practices), including forms of close and indirect guidance that comprise the social support given the limits and ambiguities in how the social world projects its suggestion (i.e. its contributions, norms and practices), individuals have to actively construe and construct the meaning being suggested by the social world (e.g. the requirements to practise effectively in the social world).
- It is important to understand how ways in which the personal and social contributions are enacted differently across instances of work. For example, extensive research has been conducted to promote the notion that there are social contributions to individuals' knowledge construction in relatively rich social settings (e.g. educational institutions and large workplaces). Such settings afford accessible direct and indirect social support. Yet, much of work-life learning (and learning throughout life generally) occurs in situations where the social support is weak, including the absence of direct support by more expert partners.

(10)

**Question 2**
Explain the five main antecedents that influence team learning. (10)

**Answer**

**Reference:** Learning unit 5, section 5.3.3
*(2 marks for each point discussed)*

- **Team commitment**: Team learning appears as a concerted effort to get all people to participate in innovation. All the members learn together and manifest a level of collective intelligence greater than the sum of the intelligence of the individual members. The essence of team learning is a shared commitment.
- **Leadership**: The most successful teams have leaders who proactively manage the team learning efforts. Leadership inspires the innovation and creation of knowledge in team members.
- **Goal setting**: Goal setting is important in order to measure the result of team learning. Once people are committed to team learning, they set clear goals for the team and themselves.
- **Development and training**: Team skills are important for successful team learning. To be effective, team members must possess both genetic and specific team competencies. Training of team skills enhances collaborative learning.
- **Organisational culture**: The impact of culture on learning is inevitable in the knowledge economy. A learning organisation's culture should support and reward learning and innovation; promote inquiry, dialogue, risk-taking and experimentation; allow mistakes to be shared and viewed as opportunities for learning and value the well-being of all employees. Improved team performance and knowledge sharing are the anticipated outcomes of team learning.

(10)

**Question 3**
Discuss the following three of the five disciplines of a learning organisation summarised by Bui and Baruch (2010) from Senge's framework:

a)     Mental models.                                                                                           (5)
b)     Shared vision.                                                                                           (5)
c)     Systems thinking.                                                                                      (5)
                                                                                                                      **[15]**

**Answers**

(a)     **Reference:** Learning unit 5, section 5.3.3
*(1 mark each for any 5 points)*

- Mental models refer to the ideas and beliefs we use to guide our actions. We use them to explain cause and effect and to give meaning to our experience.
- Mental models have the power to influence human behaviours and mindsets. Thus, they are important in the process of organisational learning. They form the underlying basis of tasks which involve non-current skills and problem solving.
- Mental models are influenced by a set of antecedents, such as organisational commitment. By sharing best practices, mental models strengthen people's commitment to learning.
- Committed and loyal employees make up the core of a successful organisation's leadership. When the organisation obtains employee commitment, leaders should play roles as designers, stewards and teachers.
- Mental models are believed to lead to outcomes such as knowledge sharing and better performance. When mental models are developed and learnt throughout the organisation, one of the outcomes is a higher level of knowledge sharing and knowledge creation; for example, when organisational members acquire strong teamwork, skills and behaviours such as mutual help and knowledge sharing improve.
- Developing appropriate mental models would generate more knowledge and can consequently lead to improving job performance, the second outcome of mental models. The acquisition and utilisation of knowledge, particularly in an age of fast-changing business environments, is very relevant.

**(b)     Reference:** Learning unit 5, section 5.3.3
*(1 mark each for any 5 points)*

- Shared vision is a vision that people throughout an organisation are truly committed to.
- Building a shared vision is important for bringing people together and fostering a commitment to a shared future because shared vision provides members of an organisation with a direction by which they can navigate and a focus for learning for its employees.
- Personal vision is an antecedent to shared vision. During the pursuance of personal mastery, people bring along their personal visions. Personal visions are pictures or images that people carry in their minds. In an organisation it will remain as isolated individuals' visions unless they are shared to build up a picture of the future the organisation seeks to create. The second proposed antecedent to shared vision is personal values.
- Personal values are rooted in an individual's own set of values, beliefs and aspirations. Leadership is the third antecedent to shared vision. Leaders who inspire others usually possess extraordinary visions and commitments to high ideals and constantly look for new information and opportunities that can help fulfil their visions.
- Mastering the discipline of shared vision means that people have to give up the idea that visions come from top management or from an institutionalised planning process; it will grow as people interact with their own visions – as they express their ideas and learn how to listen to the ideas of others. The fourth antecedent to shared vision is organisational culture.

- Shared vision seems to be more effective in organisations that are embedded in a high societal collectivism and future orientation culture. Shared vision brings benefits for both individuals and organisations.

(5)

**(c)** **Reference:** Learning unit 5, section 5.3.3
*(1 mark each for any 5 points)*

- Systems thinking can be understood as people's capacity to examine a problem in the full setting of the interconnecting elements. It is a discipline for seeing the structures that underlie complex situations and for discerning high from low leverage change.
- Systems thinking simplifies life by helping us to see the deeper patterns lying beneath the events and the details.
- It also enables understanding of systems behaviour, which is not a function of parts but of how different parts interact. Any attempt at creating a learning organisation must start from the premise of the organisation as a system.
- Individual competence and leadership are antecedents to systems thinking. Individual competences include emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills and particularly systems thinking which actively contribute to personal and professional success. Individual competences and leadership are linked together because people from all parts of the organisation, who are competent and genuinely committed to deep changes in themselves and in their organisations, are leaders. Once they can visualise profound changes, they can become systems thinkers. Leadership becomes the quality of a competent individual.
- Organisational culture is another antecedent to systems thinking. Systems thinking can be taught and learnt, and organisations can promote a culture that encourages sharing mental models of systems thinking among members. Organisations embedded in cultures with high societal collectivism are more likely to be successful when working collectively as their staff tend to be more inclined to take part effectively in teams for systems thinking.
- Systems thinking provides the integrating force throughout the organisation that can shape the organisation as an entire system of various patterns of intercorrelated actions. Systems thinking can help people to better understand the dynamic relationships among various components of the organisational systems.

(5)

**Question 4**
Your human resources director asked you to prepare a presentation on the types of skills needed in the new world of work. Write down the content of your discussion. Remember to start with an introduction and end with a conclusion.

**(15)**

**Answer**

**Reference:** Learning unit 6, section 6.3.1
*(3 marks for an introduction, 2 marks for a conclusion, 1 mark x 10 relevant points based on any of the themes below. The introduction should provide a clear layout of what will be covered in the presentation. The conclusion should provide an integrated summary of what was discussed in the presentation).*

Cognitive skills

- Skills required to recognise problems while not knowing immediately how to resolve them. In each problem there is an initial state and a goal state (what the person wants). As people solve problems, they determine how to move from the initial state to the goal state.

- Most problems that occur in ordinary life have many viable solutions. There is no single correct way to perform many jobs (particularly knowledge-based jobs), raise children, bring about community betterment, or ensure the sustainability of planetary resources. Such tasks are called ill-defined problems by cognitive scientists. Clarity about what constitutes an adequate solution comes only after problem solving has begun.
- The discipline of cognitive science is a promising vehicle for promoting human capacity development in low-income countries. This assertion stems from the major finding associated with cognitive science research: It is possible to facilitate a learner's development by helping that individual to build better rules to solve problems.
- People can be assisted, through explicit instruction, to develop schemes that influence what they notice, recall and remember. They can learn how to encode information and remember it in appropriate ways. This, in turn, allows them to construct more useful initial representations of problems they seek to solve.
- Cognitive presence is characterised by learners' ability to connect ideas, share and relate to experiences and apply new knowledge; social presence is characterised by learners' risk-free expression of emotions and by their collaboration and actual and initial motivation to learn; teaching presence implies the design and organisation of facilitated learning and instruction while the course is active.
- The cognitivist approach to learning demands active participation on the part of the learner, which is natural for adults. Changes in behaviour are to be observed by the cognitive facilitator, but only as evidence of the process occurring in the learner's mental schemata.
- Cognitivism uses the metaphor of the mind as a computer, the information processing model where information is input to the brain, processed and stored in short- or long-term memory, and is retrieved at the beck and call of the learner to effect some outcome.
- The more traditional view of cognitive psychology emphasises the acquisition of knowledge; newer approaches are dubbed constructivism and stress learning as construction. Both views are evident in the following commonly accepted goals of cognitive education:
  - ➢ Help the learners to process information in meaningful ways so that they can become independent learners.
  - ➢ Facilitate less able learners to use appropriate learning strategies to become more successful in the learning context.
  - ➢ Identify how the information processing system influences learning.
  - ➢ Plan and implement lessons based on declarative and procedural learning tasks.

Thinking skills (metacognition)

- Thinking skills might include ways to organise and evaluate information, techniques for selecting relevant facts and strategies for comparing and contrasting a concept newly learnt to one that is well understood.
- Thinking skills are reflected by the ability to activate prior knowledge which enhances understanding and retention. Learners might receive explicit instruction on how to access what they already know and connect it to what they are about to learn (a technique called elaboration).
- With thinking skills there are ''intelligent novices'', people who learn new fields and solve novel problems more expertly than most, regardless of how much specific knowledge they possess. These people control and monitor their thought processes and use general and domain-specific skills in appropriate ways.
- It is important to recognise the role of expert performance rather than domain-specific knowledge and skills as this can account for differences among individuals in their problem-solving abilities.
- With regard to thinking skills, metacognitive instruction is important as it would address the learners' abilities to plan, classify, think divergently, identify assumptions, recognise misleading information and generate questions.

- Metacognition refers to an individual's ability to think about thinking. It involves being consciously aware of one's role as a problem solver and describes an ability to monitor and control one's mental processing.
- Metacognition is distinct from other cognitive skills (general thinking and problem-solving skills) as a demonstration of effective memory, the ability to perform defined tasks, or the use of generic strategies for solving new problems (such as outlining a chapter in a textbook in order to bolster comprehension).
- The person who is metacognitively aware is one who can monitor comprehension and predict results while undertaking a learning project.
- Basic metacognitive development includes skills that enable individuals to check the results of their own actions, track their progress towards a solution and gauge the reasonableness of their actions and solutions against some larger reality.
- Although learners might first develop these skills in the context of some specific subject matter, once learnt, they can be applied to other learning situations. Such transfer will occur only if the learner has also been helped to understand and internalise the notion that the skills may be usefully applied in other learning situations.
- A key to enabling learners to use metacognitive strategies effectively is helping them select which strategies are most appropriate for specific settings. Learners need to know in a context-rooted way which strategies will work and what makes particular strategies especially effective in specific settings.
- In recent years, researchers have begun to combine the teaching of thinking skills with instruction in specific content areas; this is called the new synthesis. New synthesis is a term coined to convey the need to fuse mastery of domain-specific subject matter and thinking skills with general thinking skills and techniques for controlling one's own thinking and learning.

Problem-solving skills

- It is possible to teach general problem-solving and information-processing skills within the framework of specific content and domains. Much of the task of education in problem solving may be to identify the encoding (strategies) that we would like people to have on specific problems, and then to devise instructional methods to help them attain it.
- Research indicates that the transfer of problem-solving strategies to new contexts relates to what the problem is about and how familiar learners are with that context. The more they know about a particular domain, the more likely learners are to use a general memory strategy.

Learner competence

- The focus of learner competence is on informal learning. Informal learning is considered to be one of the most important recent trends in the workplace that partly arose from the concern that off-the-job learning may often be far from the realities of the workplace.
- The idea of accumulating specific knowledge to master particular work tasks is gradually being overridden by a learning concept based on interaction, reflection and developing the ability to learn.
- Informal learning is seen to promote the acquisition of experience-based knowledge, which is tailored to the work context. It is based on real-life problem solving and situated within a specific social context. Therefore, the focus is shifting from the organisational to the individual perspective, underlining the subjective dimension of skills, competence and learning.
- The fact that informal learning is mainly learner-led implies that it requires a high degree of self-regulation. This means that learners must be able to self-diagnose their learning needs, set specific goals, choose appropriate strategies to attain these goals and evaluate their learning in terms of progress towards goals. These three levels of competencies can be summarised under the term "learning competence".
- Learning competence is not an ability or talent, but a roughly specialised system of abilities, proficiencies, or individual dispositions to learn something successfully. Unlike intelligence, learning competence can itself be acquired and be improved by training.

- Learner competence also involves successful learning, which means to learn in an effort to learn properly; learners must invest time and effort in keeping up motivation and concentration and deal with negativities.
- Learner competence also refers to the conceptualisation of the biographical notion, which reflects individuals' ability to actively engage and respond to the increasing complexity of work- and non-work-related contexts. Biographical notion also refers to the disposition (or capacity) of a person to act and actively shape their environment, particularly being able to recognise and effectively react to unstructured, unknown, uncertain and changing demands.
- The concept of learning-how-to-learn, which means teaching adult learners how to learn, is also important when discussing learner competence. A working definition of learning-how-to-learn is a matter of the adults having (or acquiring) the knowledge and skill essential to function effectively in the various learning situations. Learning-how-to-learn can also be defined as possessing or acquiring the knowledge and skill to learn effectively in whatever learning situation one encounters.
- Adult education is a process and it is important to involve the learner in every phase of the process. Involving the learner in this process includes participation in planning, conducting and evaluating learning activities. Critical to this process is the development of each learner's awareness and capacity for effective self-monitoring and active reflection.
- Learning competency also involves timely learning and unlearning. Timely learning is a key element in the change process. As a key element, it usually requires employees to acquire new skills and knowledge while unlearning the old methods as job descriptions are modified. This process will lead to stabilising the new knowledge.

**(15)**
**TOTAL [50]**

## 3   GUIDELINES FOR THE EXAMINATION

### 3.1        Format of the examination

This tutorial letter contains **ALL** information pertaining to the examination and examination preparation. **Please prepare for the examination according to the information in this tutorial letter.**
The examination paper will be structured as follows:

**Total marks:**     **80**
**Pass mark:**        **50%**
**Time:**             **2 hours**

### 3.2   Guidelines and study themes for the examination

The examination paper will consist of two sections.

Section A will consist of four questions, of which you must choose two to answer. Each question will be worth 25 marks. Each of the 25-mark questions is divided into smaller sub-questions, with a mark allocation next to each sub-question.

Section B will consist of five questions, of which you must choose three to answer. Each question will be worth 10 marks.

Your ability to integrate the information in one learning unit with the information in all the other learning units will definitely be to your advantage.

Remember that **theoretical knowledge** is important, but you must be able to apply your knowledge to a **practical** situation. Your answers to paragraph questions should be structured as follows:

- Start with a short, introductory comment.

- Present factual information.
- Apply factual information to the given context or provide your own examples.
- End with a short, concluding comment.

We realise that your answers will differ; you will be assessed on the accuracy and applicability of facts and on your ability to present these facts logically and coherently.

**NOTE: We would like to stress a very important point.**

**The content of this module was redesigned in 2016. Therefore, you cannot use examination papers prior to 2016 for your examination preparation. Please note that previous exam papers (2016 and 2017) only provide you with examples of how the exam paper is structured. There will be less than 30% overlap between this exam and prior examinations. Studying exam papers will not enable you to pass. Please focus your exam preparation on the themes outlined in the scope of exam provided under additional resources.**

## 4    CONCLUDING REMARKS

We wish you all the best as you prepare for the examination. If you have worked hard and if you prepare for the examination properly, you can be confident of a pass mark.

**Your IOP2605 lecturers**

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