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Title: The ASSET© FRAMEWORK

Abstract: Just as a flower cannot blossom without sunshine, so too academics at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) cannot be successful in the sudden transition from face-to-face lectures to adopting an online learning space, necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic without, amongst other prerequisites, re-skilling. These unprecedented times required of academics to adapt to this unexpected change, sometimes with minimal digital teaching skills and capabilities. This sudden shift was compounded by the forced work-from-home (WFH) scenario, which brought with it its own set of challenges. It became evident that academics need to equip themselves with a new skillset for successful navigation of the online teaching, learning and assessment spaces now created. When educating online, where lecturers no longer have immediate face-to-face engagement with their students, the academic skills set is vastly different from the skills set required in a traditional face-to-face environment. Bringing these skills together has led to the development of the ASSET© (Academic SkillSET) framework for online teaching, learning and assessment. The framework outlines eight basic skills that academics need to develop/possess to support a smooth transition from the face-to-face to the online space, which will most likely find its balance in a blended space post the pandemic.

Biography: Dr. Upasana Singh is the Academic Leader and a Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Information Systems and Technology at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Westville Campus, in Durban South Africa. She is also appointed as an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the Victorian Institute of Technology, Australia. She has a keen interest in Educational Technologies and has served as the lead researcher in a number of international research projects on Digital Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. Her research profile includes 4 Edited books, 24 Journal Papers, 12 Book Chapters, and 26 Peer-reviewed Conference Papers in internationally accredited conferences. Besides serving as a keynote speaker at over 25 international conferences and webinars, she is the convener and Chair of the International Conference on Digital Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (digiTAL2K), which has successfully completed 3 editions, attracting high-quality academic papers from over 45 authors, across 8 to 10 countries, in each edition. Dr. Upasana Singh completed her Fellowship in "Teaching Advancement in Universities" (TAU), from the CHE in 2019. Since 2018, she has championed over 1500 academics in South Africa, Mauritius, India, and Malaysia, in the adoption and design of digital teaching and assessment. She has been the recipient of a number of research grants, the most recent being a substantial grant from the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa, for a collaborative research project focusing on Digital Capital at South African Higher Education Institutions (HEI)s. She completed the Higher Education Leadership and Management Programme in 2021. She was nominated for the Distinguished Teachers Award in 2021, and the Future Professors Program in 2022.