

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING INSTITUTES LANGUAGE POLICY

DIRECTORATE: SECTORAL COLLEGES



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT: August 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Preamble	3
2.	Abbreviations and Terms	4
3.	Flexibility, functionality and tolerance	4
4.	The language of teaching, learning and assessment	4
5.	The student in learning	4
6.	The student assessment	5
7.	The practical implications	5
8.	Objectives and practical implications of the language of management and administration	5
9.	External communication	6
10.	Implementation Plan	6

1. PREAMBLE

The Language Policy of Agricultural Training institutes (ATI) is formulated to be consistent with Section 6 the Constitution of South Africa, stipulations contained in the national Language Plan for Higher Education (2002), as well as ATI vision, mission, values and commitment to development and diversity. The ATI language policy acknowledges the challenges of a diverse environment and wishes to inculcate amongst all its members an awareness of, and sensitivity towards the multilingual nature of its community. The ATIs wish to ensure that language does not become a barrier with regard to the accessibility of information, services and resources nor in regard to student admission for studies at ATI's.

The nature and spirit of these suggest that the ATI should build on a policy of multilingualism. This Policy is flexible to facilitate and promote exchange between the ATI staff and students and the international community.

1.1 Language Policy must:

- 1.1.1 Promote diversity, equity and reconciliation through the principle of functional multilingualism
- 1.1.2 be constitutional i.e. cultivate respect and tolerance for the language rights of the ATI's diverse stakeholder community as reflected by its heterogeneous student, staff and alumni communities
- 1.1.3 be academically justifiable
- 1.1.4 be aware of the fact that for a majority ATIs students English is their second language
- 1.1.5 align itself to the regional languages of the macro environment in which the ATI functions
- 1.1.6 meet the needs of the learners and
- 1.1.7 be cost-effective.

1.2 Each and every student must be able to communicate in the language of his/her choice within consideration of functionality (e.g. the facilitator understands the language or somebody is able to interpret). This is very important especially in dealing with complex subject specific issues.

- 1.3 However, the major language, in which lecturing, study material and books to be presented, will be English or other functional language.

2. ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

- 2.1 ATI means Agricultural Training institutes
- 2.2 Functional multilingualism means the choice of a particular language in a particular situation is determined by the context in which it is used, and that variables such as the purpose of the communication and the levels of language proficiency of the interlocutors play a determining role in the choice of a particular language code or language codes.
- 2.3 Multilingual refers to the use of more than one language, as well as the ability to use more than one language.

3. FLEXIBILITY, FUNCTIONALITY AND TOLERANCE

This Policy underlines a tolerant, flexible approach to matters concerning language. The emphasis is on practicality. Wherever possible, the functional mixing, concurrent or interchanging use of languages in all media will be permitted. All staff will be made aware of this approach.

4. THE LANGUAGE OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 This Policy is to be guided by the following objectives:
- 4.1.1 The lecturer in teaching and educating
- Clarity of expression for lecturing knowledge acquisition and experiential learning activities.
- 4.1.2 The lecturer in assessment
- Clarity in understanding and interpreting the communication by the student in any form of assessment.

5. THE STUDENT IN LEARNING

The student must be clear in:

- 5.1 Understanding and assimilating the learning material

- 4.2 Communicating with lecturers, both in written and spoken language.

6. THE STUDENT ASSESSMENT

The student must be clear in:

- 6.1 Articulate results and or outcome to assessment tasks.

7. THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Both the teaching and learning model to be adopted by the ATI, as well as the subject matter, may determine the nature of learning material and learning experience available to the student.

- 7.2 However, English or another functional language shall be the medium of teaching and assessment within the ATI, with the proviso that where possible :

- Explanations and group discussion may take place in any appropriate language
- Where course material is not translated, the student may be supplied with a terminology list in another major language spoken in the specific geographical area.

In cases where written examinations, portfolios of evidence and tests are administered for assessment, these will be set in English or another functional language, depending on the language of the programme.

Note: *These provisions are not applicable in the case of a language subject.*

8. OBJECTIVES AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE LANGUAGE OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1. Communication: The spoken language.

It is envisaged by this policy that, at any time within the ATI when, communicating it must be understood by everyone present. However, should a speaker prefer to speak in a language not fully understood by all present, it should be interpreted by someone in attendance and should be presented for the benefit of those who do not understand the language used.

8.2. The language of record.

The ATI will utilize English for agendas, minutes and such like at the overall organisational level.

8.3 Organised student life language

The functional multilingual environment of the language policy provides for the protection of the linguistic rights of students and also sees to it that vertical and horizontal communication takes language demography and language preferences of people concerned into consideration.

9. **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The language used by the ATI to communicate to external stakeholders would be mainly English.

10. **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

An implementation plan for the Language Policy needs to be developed and approved by the ATI Council for each ATI.