UCT signs contract to improve ICT skills and digital literacy

The University of Cape Town has signed a three-year contract with online learning provider Lynda.com, providi access to its video training library for the university's entire body of 4,000 staff and 21,000 students.

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Lynda.com teaches business, technology and creative skills, but will be used primarily to improve the ICT skills and digital literacy of current UCT staff and students, through the site's bank of over 130 IT courses and over 5,000 video tutorials covering a wide range of software packages.

Lynda.com was chosen following a positive consultation with administration staff, lecturers and students and a trial of three services by a focus group representing all users. Staff and students were impressed with the breadth of topics covered, the quality of the content and the ability to track their own learning.

Improving digital literacy and students' employability

Steffne Hughes, Team Leader: Training & Communications, Information & Communication Technology Services (ICTS) sa "We needed to replace a system we were using for ICT-related training which only provided Office and GroupWise trainir Lynda.com covers the latest versions of all of the software packages we need and much more. We are now able to offer students a huge range of personal and professional development courses too, which not only improves their digital literacy but helps to improve their employability."

"Staff and students like the privacy of using Lynda.com. If they have a training need or they are unsure about a certain program (perhaps that they feel they should already know), they can simply log in and train themselves. No one is monitor their learning and they don't have to ask for help, which is sometimes a barrier."

"We expect Lynda.com to reduce calls to our university IT helpdesk. These are frequently 'how to' calls, and we are hopin that users will turn to Lynda.com to find the answer themselves and will then not need to call the IT helpdesk."

Lynda.com is being used across the university in a number of ways: video tutorials are integrated into the University's forr ICT training courses, lecturers are including links to Lynda.com videos in their lecture content or as required reading, and students are encouraged to take the personal development courses through the University's Facebook pages and groups.

Popular software courses include Excel, Word, Python, Java and Drupal (on which, the university's new campus web CM system is based).

Alex Zivoder, Vice President and Managing Director of Lynda.com EMEA, said: "Through a LyndaCampus subscription, universities can support and inspire students, faculty and staff at any skill level with cost-effective video instruction. We ma all of our courses available to everyone, so users can combine their required training with creative courses, to support the hobbies, and personal development courses, to prepare for the world of work."