

## MEDIA RELEASE

### IAL EMBARKS ON KEY E-LEARNING INITIATIVES TO BOLSTER THE CET SECTOR

*40 CET MOOCs developed for CET community to embrace e-learning for CET*

**10 July 2014** – The Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) announced today that it would harness technology as a key strategy to enhance adult learning and widen access to Continuing Education and Training (CET). The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) will lead the way to experiment and innovate in the use of technology for training design and delivery, as well as enable CET professionals to adopt such technology. The pilot phase of the CET Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) was unveiled by the Minister for Manpower, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, at the fifth Adult Learning Symposium.

The CET MOOC is an example of an e-learning initiative that would shape the future of the CET landscape in Singapore. As a start, IAL has developed 40 CET MOOCs that centres on adult education and pedagogy, which is targeted at adult educators involved in CET. The CET MOOC is aimed at encouraging greater CET participation through its open platform, creating more opportunities for the formation of learning communities. More information on the CET MOOC is provided in Annex A.

The need for alternative modes of technology-enabled learning such as e-learning was affirmed by a recent Training and Adult Education Sector Skills Strategies (TAESS) survey conducted by IAL. The TAESS survey examines the business models, industry practices, work organisations and skills utilisation of the CET sector. The survey identified that one of the key levers of change to enhance the performance and quality of CET professionals, lies in today's changing technologies.

Technology-enabled learning offers the CET community a whole new training and learning experience. Working adults faced with the demands of changing lifestyles and work commitments, will have the flexibility and convenience to learn at their own time, place and pace. CET professionals can explore new models of learning and implement innovative learning methodologies, to make learning more relevant, effective and even fun!

To encourage the CET community to actively participate in reinventing learning through technology, IAL has set up “LearningSpace.SG” as a portal for learners to access Singapore based CET MOOCs, and for our CET providers to offer their on-line courses. Another initiative in the pipeline is the setting up of an Innovation Lab at the Lifelong Learning Institute, to support CET partners and practitioners in their efforts to develop innovative learning solutions that would benefit learners and the CET Community.

“We are now surrounded by technology in all aspects of our lives. Technology has the potential to transform learning – it enables us to not only learn anytime and anywhere, but also fundamentally change how we acquire new skills and competencies. Technology, for example, allows us to deepen our learning through peer interactions, with like-minded learners all around the world. It also provides opportunities for all of us to learn from the very best teachers. To realise the potential, the Training and Education sector will have to systematically and purposefully integrate technology into our learning design and delivery. In this way, we can continue to engage learners who are increasingly tech-savvy, and enable them to better integrate learning in their busy lives, as they juggle work, home and leisure,” said Mr Ng Cher Pong, Chief Executive, WDA.

To enable CET professionals to make better use of technology in their work, IAL has recently revamped the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA), to include technological and e-learning components. For more information on the revamped WSQ ACTA, please refer to Annex B.

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**For media enquiries, please contact:**

**Singapore Workforce Development Agency:**

Sharolyn Chiang (Ms)  
Manager, Corporate & Marketing Communications Division  
Singapore Workforce Development Agency  
DID: 6512 1046  
Mobile: 9147 4706  
Email: [sharolyn\\_chiang@wda.gov.sg](mailto:sharolyn_chiang@wda.gov.sg)

**Institute for Adult Learning:**

Lim Sze Min (Ms)  
Senior Manager, Corporate Communications  
Institute for Adult Learning  
DID: 6579 0855  
Mobile: 9685 5113  
Email: [lim\\_sze\\_min@ial.edu.sg](mailto:lim_sze_min@ial.edu.sg)

**About Singapore Workforce Development Agency**

The Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) enhances the competitiveness of our workforce by encouraging workers to learn for life and advance with skills. In today's economy, most jobs require not just knowledge, but also skills. WDA collaborates with employers, industry associations, the Union and training organisations, to develop and strengthen the Continuing Education and Training system that is skills-based, open and accessible, as a mainstream pathway for all workers - young and older, from rank and file to professionals and executives - to upgrade and advance in their careers and lives.

For more information, please visit [www.wda.gov.sg](http://www.wda.gov.sg).

**About the Institute for Adult Learning**

The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) is at the forefront of building capabilities and continuing professional development for an effective, innovative and responsive Continuing Education and Training (CET) sector. We work closely and support adult educators, businesses, human resource developers and policy makers through our comprehensive suite of programmes and services on raising capabilities and catalysing innovations in CET. IAL also champions research in the key areas of sustaining economic performance through skills, shaping employment and CET decisions, as well as developing innovations through learning technology and pedagogy for informed policies and practices.

For more information, please visit [www.ial.edu.sg](http://www.ial.edu.sg).

**FACTSHEET ON IAL CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CET)  
MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOC)**

**Background**

The changing landscape for “just-in-time” skills acquisition, proliferation of freelancers / self-employed individuals and increased frequency of career change within one’s working life, have added impetus to urgently rethink how we should empower an individual’s learning and development. Coupled with the proliferation of e-learning technologies, ease of network accessibility, high ownership of personal smart devices and the younger generation’s savviness with digital technology, e-learning becomes a natural alternative and an untapped resource to encourage lifelong learning amongst our people.

The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) has developed the CET MOOCs to enhance access to better and more channels of learning, to build innovative and relevant skillsets within the Singapore workforce.

CET MOOCs can empower individuals to take charge of their learning by allowing them to decide when they learn and what they learn. Through it, we can strengthen the culture of lifelong learning and provide opportunities for the workforce to collaborate with others for learning and work.

**User Friendly CET MOOCs**

To meet the needs of users, the CET MOOCs will have the following characteristics:

- Short bite-sized learning segments (approximately 30 minutes long, each)
- Intrinsically motivating (e.g., infusion of humour and thought-provoking elements)
- Relevant reference points (e.g., local contexts and immediacy of application)
- Constructivist design approach, with the learner co-creating the knowledge he/she seeks

Examples of Categories of the various e-designs of CET MOOCs include:

Direct Instruction	Analysis & Decision-Making	Transformational
		
<b>Cognitivist</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction</li> <li>- Theory-building</li> <li>- Illustration</li> <li>- Practice / Discussion</li> <li>- Performance / Quiz</li> </ul>	<b>Constructivist</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Context</li> <li>- Scenarios / Triggers</li> <li>- Reflection / Analysis</li> <li>- Decision-Making</li> <li>- Discussion / Theory</li> <li>- Performance / Quiz</li> </ul>	<b>Socio-Constructivist</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Context</li> <li>- Emotive Triggers</li> <li>- Problem</li> <li>- Collaboration work</li> <li>- Theory-building</li> <li>- Reflection / Quiz</li> <li>- Response / Action</li> </ul>

Currently, IAL is taking the lead to catalyse the development of CET MOOCs in the training community. The initial 40 CET MOOCs, which are developed by IAL, centre round adult education and pedagogy for adult educators. These sample lessons cover areas such as Instructional Methods, Adult Learning Theories, Workplace Literacy and Advanced Facilitation Techniques. IAL will progressively look into developing CET MOOCs with other partners targeted for different industries beyond the Training and Adult Education (TAE) sector.

Future CET MOOCs will cover the following sectors:

- Training and Adult Education
- Retail and Tourism
- Media and Communication
- Inter-cultural interactions

For more information, please visit <http://www.ial.edu.sg/> or contact the Institute for Adult Learning at +65 6579 0300 or email them at [info@ial.edu.sg](mailto:info@ial.edu.sg).

## **FACTSHEET ON WSQ ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT (ACTA)**

The WSQ Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA) qualification is a Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) programme listed within the Training and Adult Education Professional Competency Model (TAEPCM) developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA). It provides training professionals with the competencies to facilitate and assess training programmes.

The ACTA qualification is a requirement for training professionals who are keen to function as WSQ Trainers and Assessors to facilitate the delivery and assessment of competency-based WSQ courses within WSQ Approved Training Organisations (ATO) for various industry frameworks accredited by WDA.

### **Background and Rationale for the ACTA Revamp**

The ACTA qualification has been in existence since 2004, and the Training and Adult Education WSQ framework<sup>1</sup> was one of the first WSQ frameworks to be rolled out by WDA. In its initial form (known as the Competency Module or CM series), there were four modules to equip the WSQ trainer and assessor with knowledge and basic skills for competency-based training and assessment.

Given the developments in the CET landscape, there is a need to continuously review and update the ACTA framework to maintain its relevancy. Studies were conducted by the Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) on ACTA learners and graduates, and feedback was gathered from stakeholders in the training and adult education community. Based on the studies, it was established that both the content and learning methodology of ACTA for the training of trainers and assessors need to be updated in order to adequately prepare future-ready adult educators.

### **Programme Structure for Current ACTA (4th Version)**

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<sup>1</sup> The TAE WSQ framework has been in place since 2005 with a full suite of qualifications ranging from the WSQ programmes to the hosted Masters Programmes offered by Institute of Education (IOE), London and Griffith University of Australia. The WSQ programmes under the framework are designed to qualify WSQ Adult Educators (AE) to function as WSQ Trainers, Assessors and Curriculum Developers within WSQ Approved Training Organisations (ATO) to design, develop, deliver and assess WSQ programmes for various industry frameworks.

The ACTA (4th Version) offers two tracks: Facilitated Learning or On-the-Job Training. Course participants have a choice to choose either track or to complete both.

Table 1: Programme Structure of the ACTA (4th Version)

<b>Facilitated Learning</b>	<b>On-the-Job Training (OJT)</b>
A specialisation that will certify learner's ability in developing competency-based training programmes; delivering them in a classroom-training environment; and assessing a trainee's competency levels.	A specialisation that will certify learner's competence in developing and conducting OJT programmes; as well as assessing the competency level of workers in performing a specific job function.
Module 1 – Interpret the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) System	
Module 2 – Apply adult learning principles and code of ethics relating to training	
Module 3A – Design and develop a WSQ facilitated training programme	Module 3B – Design and develop an On-the-Job Training Programme
Module 4A – Prepare and facilitate classroom training	Module 4B – Prepare and conduct On-the-Job Training
Module 5 – Develop a competency-based assessment	
Module 6 – Conduct a competency-based assessment	

The full programme duration for ACTA (i.e., all 6 modules) is about 110 hours of competency-based training inclusive of classroom training and assessments.

### **New and Improved ACTA (5th Version)**

The new ACTA (5th Version) is designed to be delivered as an integrated curriculum to accommodate the needs of learners, and to facilitate a greater variety of training and assessment methodologies. Building on the previous curriculum, the ACTA (5th Version)'s programme is enhanced to focus on Trainer and Assessor competencies with added emphasis on active learning, facilitation, reflection and the use of technology to aid learning.

The new ACTA (5th Version) consists of six competency units as indicated in Table 2 below. Two competency units are new, i.e. 'Design a Learning Experience' and 'Prepare for Continuing Professional Development'. The previous contents related to curriculum and assessment development were removed from ACTA (4th Version) and transited to the WSQ Diploma in Adult and Continuing Education (DACE) to distinguish the curriculum developer

competencies from those required of trainers and assessors. The contents of the other competency units are refreshed.

For ACTA (5th Version), only the Facilitated Learning Pathway (FLP) is offered. Facilitated Learning Pathway (FLP) allows participant to attend regular training sessions at IAL and enjoy the guidance of full-time IAL educators.

Table 2: Contents of the ACTA (5th Version)

<b>Module</b>	<b>Competency Unit Title</b>	<b>Competency Descriptor</b>
M1	Apply Adult Learning Principles in Training	This unit equips the learner with the knowledge and skills in application of adult learning principles in training delivery.
M2 *New	Design a Learning Experience	This unit equips the learner with knowledge and skills to design lesson plans for a short learning experience applying the understanding of adult learning principles, active learning qualities, and instructional methods.
M3	Prepare and Facilitate a Learning Experience	This unit equips the learner with the knowledge and skills to prepare and facilitate an active learning experience for learners.
M4	Interpret the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications System	This unit specifies the competency required to interpret the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications System and a set of National Competency Standard and apply them in a learning and development context.
M5	Assess Competence	This unit equips the learner with the knowledge and skills to prepare and conduct a competency-based assessment to assess competence.
M6 *New	Prepare for Continuing Professional Development	This unit equips the learner with the knowledge and skills to objectively reflect upon his or her own training practice to engage in continuing professional development for improvement.

### **Training Providers**

IAL rolled out ACTA (5th Version) on 1 April 2014, offering the revamped version to new ACTA participants. Additional providers will be offering ACTA (5th Version). The new training providers include Center for Competency-Based Learning and Development (CBLD) and Sigma Solutions HRD Consultants.

### **Course Duration, Schedule and Fees**

The full programme duration for ACTA version 5 (i.e. all 6 modules) is about 99 hours of competency-based training inclusive of classroom training and assessments.

All Singaporeans and permanent residents are eligible for WDA subsidies. Refer to respective ACTA training providers for details on their course duration, fees and subsidies.