



ASISA

FOUNDATION



Excel@Uni

THE SUPPORT STRUCTURE TO EXCEL AT UNIVERSITY

EVALUATION OF THE EXCEL@UNI FINANCIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

The Excel@Uni Financial Education Programme was implemented in partnership between the ASISA Foundation and Excel@Uni, a student support and bursary management company that manages corporate bursaries for university education and provides academic and mentorship support to the bursary recipients. The programme formed part of the 'Professional and Personal Development' support service offered by Excel@Uni, which aims to equip students with the relevant skills they need before they enter the workplace.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Excel@Uni Financial Education Programme was to target previously disadvantaged university students attending urban universities and equip them with the necessary financial literacy skills so that they can be better prepared to manage their finances as they leave university and enter the workplace.

The programme drew on the content from the 2016 Saver Waya Waya TVET programme and aimed to assess whether this content was transferrable to a university student audience. The ASISA Foundation also piloted new content with the Excel@Uni programme, including the theme of "black tax" and new topics such as investments and risk management.

The programme was implemented between August and October 2017 and comprised two six-hour workshops, held on Saturdays, in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. The target audience for these workshops were current and alumni Excel@Uni bursary recipients from the University of Cape Town, the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Johannesburg, and the University of Pretoria.

TOPICS:

Money and goal setting

Saving and investment

Credit and debt management

Risk management



SUCCESSSES

- The students reported that the content was useful and relevant to their lives. The content was thus found to be transferrable to university students.
- The inclusion of “black tax” as an overarching theme was found to be topical and stimulated good debate among the students.
- Feedback on the implementation of the programme was largely positive. Overall, the majority of participants felt that the programme surpassed or met their expectations in both of the workshops.
- The budgeting tool developed by the ASISA Foundation was found to be useful; however, it still requires further refinement.

CHALLENGES

- Attendance was poor with just 32% of participants attending both sessions. This may have been because the workshops were held on Saturdays.
- Response rates to the monitoring and evaluation research activities were poor post-programme. This may have been because the students were going into their exam period.
- The trainer did not manage his time well enough, and often repeated himself.
- The workshops were too long and the students became restless towards the end of the sessions.
- There was confusion around the concepts of good and bad debt, which suggests that there is room for improvement in the way that the trainers teach this topic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Revise the design of the programme to comprise of multiple shorter workshops, instead of two long workshops.
- The programme should be implemented on weekdays as opposed to the weekend.
- The programme should be implemented earlier in the year so as not to overlap with exams.
- The trainer should stick closely with the agreed-upon agenda.
- Include more information around investing and ensure that the same opportunities are made available to all cohorts.
- The budgeting tool should be further developed or alternatives should be sought out.
- The notion of ‘good debt’ versus ‘bad debt’ should be better explained and reinforced among participants.
- Include the theme of “black tax” into future financial education programmes.

