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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The Postgraduate and International Office at Stellenbosch University has been very fortunate to have Dr Layla Cassim present a number of workshops this year as part of the Stellenbosch University Postgraduate Skills Development Programme.

Dr Cassim was willing to share her experience and expertise in postgraduate support in a way that matched the requirements of our particular programme. We asked her to develop a set of three workshops coinciding with specific milestones in a postgraduate student's journey, and she did this with professionalism and a sincere clientcentred approach. The topics of the three workshops were initial steps in a research degree, writing a wellstructured dissertation and finally editing, proofreading and publishing your research. We asked Dr Cassim to deliver and facilitate 2 sets of each of the workshop to small groups of Masters and Doctoral students from a range of disciplines. In total she delivered 6 workshops at Stellenbosch Campus this year and these were extremely well received by the students. In particular they valued her practical approach and many were encouraged that they could indeed continue and complete their degrees in the allotted timeframes.

Dr Cassim has a wonderful facilitation and presentation style. She is gentle and encouraging, but at the same time authoritative on her subject matter, which includes research principles, research project management, supervisorstudent relationships and how to progress in your research degree and in academia. Workshops always included exercises, group work and plenty of question time. In their feedback students were full of praise for the practical advice offered, the use of relevant examples and case studies from her own experiences and her ability to answer their questions and to tackle the problems they were experiencing in completing their research degrees.

Working with Dr Cassim has been an absolute pleasure. She is professional, very well organised and a pleasant collaborator which makes working with her feel like working with a true colleague rather than an only external service provider.

Dr Cassim is clearly dedicated to postgraduate skills development and her critical reflection and insight into obstacles students encounter in their postgraduate journey makes her a valuable partner and voice in this field today.

I am happy to recommend her to any project and initiative in this field.

Ronel Stevn

Co-ordinator: Postgraduate Skills Development



