USE OF ON-LINE WEB REGISTRATION FOR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE STUDENTS' REGISTRATION PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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This paper looks at the use of on-line Web Registration for efficient and Effective students' registration in a selected higher education institution.

The research explored student usage on the online web registration offered at DUT. On-line web registration allows students to register on their own via computer interaction rather than interacting with institution service personnel. Institutions who introduced online web registration gained rapid acceptance and usage of services by prospective students. Online registration was adapted to incorporate the smooth and effective flow of institutions intake, in order to make sure that all students are catered for. With new requirements for online registration, authentication, authorisation and identity management, higher educational institution all over the world has rolled out online registration at much wider scale and with the necessary security measure in place to protect themselves against fraudulent activities. The literature review drew heavily on secondary data.

The purpose of this study was to establish the use of online web registration by students at Durban University of Technology. The objective of the study was to determine whether online web registration is beneficial to the students. The web Single Sign-on (SSO) is one of the influential models for determining the web authentication. This study used quantitative research approach. Questionnaires were distributed to 400 students to collect data and the information regarding individual's behaviours, attitudes and opinions.

The study findings supported the conclusion that online web registration was the most efficient and effective way to facilitate smooth and hassle free registration process.

It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of this research will assist other educational institutions to implement online web registration in the future.

Keywords: On-line, Web registration, Efficient, Effective.

BACKGROUND

At the end of 2009, the selected HEI completed two years as a new university type (University of Technology) that had emerged from the process of mergers and redesignations announced by the Minister of Education in 2002 and 2003. The first technikons became Universities of Technology in 2004, followed by the rest in 2005. However, in 2002, ML Sultan Technikon and Technikon Natal had already merged under the name of Durban Institute of Technology (DIT). In 2006, the merged institution changed its name to Durban University of Technology (DUT) to bring it in line with other previous technikons. During this time, the DIT/DUT continued to operate as a Technikon, with technikon policies, processes, procedures, practices and structures.

In 2007, the selected HEI appointed a new Council, new Vice-Chancellor and new Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic. At the end of that year the HEI consolidated the merger and rounded it off, and in 2008 it embarked on the major mission of its young life: transforming into a University of Technology, not just in name, but in practice.
The selected HEI faced many challenges regarding its plans and efforts to refocus itself as a new type of university. While the two constituent institutions had been similar institutional types (that is, technikons), they had had different cultures and artefacts in relation to academic and religious backgrounds and to their distinguishing colours and symbols. This had been a bedevilling factor during the merger process, which sought to create a cohesive and settled university community (Durban University of Technology Annual Review Report, 2009:34).

The aim of this paper was to look at the use of on-line Web Registration for efficient and effective students' registration at Durban University of Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Online registrations free up invaluable time for staff to spend on more important, strategic elements of the University.

The Student iEnabler system is part of the 'self service' suite of application that are available on Information Technology System (ITS). To use this system the user must have a valid student number, an e-mail address on his/her record and a pin. The process of requesting for a pin is fully automated in the system will automatically e-mail a pin to a student's e-mail address where the e-mail address belongs to the student.

The system basically displays a qualification into which a student is already admitted. On selecting the qualification, a list of subjects is displayed from which a student selects. The fee for the selected qualification and subjects will be displayed, and the student will either register or abort the process.

METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative research approach. Questionnaires were distributed to 400 students who were studying at different level at the Durban University of Technology. The concept of online registration and its *relationship* to effective and efficient registration was explored. Also secondary sources containing DUT official document such as DUT registration process and procedures was conducted to gather information.

The research findings of this study revealed on-line web registration was the most efficient and effective method to conduct students' registration process at Durban University of Technology.

PROCESS OF ONLINE REGISTRATION AT DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Online Registration

For those student who do not have access to a computer or laptop at home, they will have to register online using a computer laboratory at the University. They will need to consult with the registration timetable which is available on the website for the exact times, dates and venues.

In order to register online, First Time Entering Students will need to have:

- Paid the minimum fee instalment due for registration
- Submitted the required documentation to Student Admissions
- Received notification of firm offer from Student Admissions based on their final results
- Complied with the relevant sections hereunder which will allow them to register online.

In order to register online, Returning Students will need to have:

- Settled any arrear fees
- Paid the minimum fee instalment due for registration
- Fulfilled the requirements for promotion to the next level to study in the relevant programme
- Submitted all outstanding documentation
- Complied with the relevant section hereunder which will allow them to register.

You will need, prior to registration, to ensure that you have paid the minimum deposit (at least two working days) and your fees are up-to-date in order to register on the Web. If you do not do this your registration will automatically be blocked.

You may also register on the Web from home via the DUT website and the iEnabler link).

If you do not register at the specified date and time you will register during the late registration period and will be charged the late registration fee.

Outstanding Documentation Affecting Registration

Even if you are a returning student you need the following documentation to register:

- Any outstanding original documents (e.g. Senior Certificate, Identity Document, Study Permit) must be submitted to the Faculty Office at least two days before registration. Your Statement of Results is temporary, so if you previously submitted your Statement of Results to the Faculty Office, you will now need to collect your Senior Certificate from school and submit it to the Faculty Office in order to register.

- No student will be re-registered at registration, without the enclosed Indemnity and Surety forms being returned, completely filled out and all the necessary documentation attached. Please ensure that the form is signed and stamped by a Commissioner of Oath as you will need this form to register.

Registration Costs

Minimum First Instalment on registration
Non-Residence Student: Annual: R3 420-00 and Semester: R2 100-00.

Residence Students: Annual: R6 840-00 and Semester: 4 200-00 (includes tuition and residence). In the event of the fees costing less than the first instalment requested by the University, the lesser amount will be payable on registration.

National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) are required to pay their family contribution, if any, on registration as their first instalment. If the family contribution exceeds the abovementioned amounts, the difference must be paid according to the DUT's fee instalment plan. The instalment plan is specified in the Fee Booklet which is available on the DUT website. In the event of the fees costing less than the first instalment requested by the University, the lesser amount will be payable on registration.

Payment of Fees: To avoid the complications, payment must be made at least two working days before registration through the bank using the M65 Deposit Slip (available on the DUT website) and using your student number as reference. Failure to ensure that all relevant payments have been made will result in your registration being blocked. Proof of payment must be brought to Web Registration. Should you pay your fees in full before registration date you are eligible for a 5% discount.

Postgraduate Students

All Masters and Doctoral Student must register each year.

iEnabler

To access online registration, you will need to enter the Student Portal on the DUT's main website, find the Student Self-Service link, and then access the i-enabler page. For details on how to login, passwords etc. see the online registration guide for details.

DUT4Life Email for Students

DUT4LIFE provides student & alumni with a free 10 GB lifetime e-mail account, 25 GB online storage solution, collaboration, blogging, photo sharing, event planning, instant messaging tools and much more! After registration, consult your General Handbook for details on how to activate your account as this is your official e-mail channel with the University.

SMS Notification

Students are notified of Supplementary exams by SMS. It is important to ensure that you update your contact details with the Faculty Office as soon as they change so that you can also be contact via SMS.

DUT ONLINE REGISTRATION GUIDE

Easy online registration

As a DUT student you can do all sorts of things online, like register, check your examination results and see your exam time table. Registering online is easy – you can access the self-service registration system, called the Student iEnabler, at DUT or your computer at home or work.

It's simple:

- Enter the student portal link: https://dutstudent.dut.ac.za
- Enter your username (your student number preceded by DUT) as follows: DUT\21610787
- Enter your password (first six digits of your Identity (ID) Number preceded by Dut) as follows: Dut980119

Please note login and passwords are case sensitive.

To access iEnabler from the student portal from the right hand menu, go to "STUDENT SELF SERVICE (Web Registration, Results, Academic Record, Statements)" and click on "Off Campus Access" or "On-Campus Access".

To see whether you are able to register online, follow these steps:

- Click on "STUDENT ENQUIRY"
- Click on "REGISTRATION RESTRICTIONS"
- Your iEnabler status must read "ALLOW WEB REGISTRATION"
- You must not have any other "STOP REGISTRATION" statuses.
- Click on "ACADEMIC ADMISSION STATUS"
- You Admission Status must read "ADMITTED FOR WEB REGISTRATION".

You can also register online on your home or office computer by accessing www.dut.ac.za., then selecting "STUDENTS", then "STUDENT SELF SERVICE". Should you experience any difficulties, you will need to register on campus. You can only register online if you do not have academic or financial exclusions. If you have academic exclusions or blocks, please contact your Faculty Officer. If you have financial blocks or outstanding fee, please contact the Finance Department.

HOW TO REGISTER

STEP 1

Log on to the Student iEnabler. If you do not have a PIN enter your student number then click on "Request a PIN". A PIN will be e-mailed to your dut4life e-mail address.

Click on the folder called "Registration" to open up the difference functions within the folder.

Click on "Rules and Regulations". You have to read and accept the institutional rules by clicking on the button before proceeding to the next step. Click ? for help. Click on "I ACCEPT" to continue with the online Registration. Please read the rules before accepting them. The comprehensive rule books are available on the DUT website or from your faculty office.

STEP 2

Once you have accepted the Rules and Regulations and you have been admitted for Online Registration, you will need to click on the next section, "Submit Registration".

Enter your employment status and click on "Save and Continue".

STEP 3

You are now required to select all the subjects that you qualify for in accordance with the rules of the relevant qualification.

Click on the checkbox next to the subject to select that particular subject. All compulsory subjects are pre-selected for you. Click on "Save and Continue.

STEP 4

Subject Verification.
You are now required to verify the subjects you have selected. If you are not happy with the selection, click on "Restart Process". If you are happy with selection of subjects, click on "Continue".

STEP 5

Accepting the Registration with Costs.
The system will now provide you with the fee details for the subjects that you have selected. Click on "ACCEPT REGISTRATION" to accept the registration and costs for the subject selected. You are now registered! Well done!

STEP 6

Address Validation.
The system will display the current address details available. Check these details to ensure that the information is correct.

If you want to change the information, click on the type of address in blue, for example, "Postal Address" and update the information.
Remember to click on "Save".
Click on "Next Step".

STEP 7

Contact Detail Validation.
Check the current contact details on the system to ensure that the information is correct. To change the information, click on the type of communication you wish to update in blue, for example, "Cellphone Number", and update the information.
Remember to click on "Save".
Click on "Next Step".

STEP 8

Print Proof of Registration.
Click on "Printer Friendly Format", File, and print your document.
 Remember to click on "Save".
Click on "Next Step".

STEP 9

Print a Statement of Account.
Click on "Printer Friendly Format", File, and print your document.
 Remember to click on "Save".
Click on "Next Step".

STEP 10

Registration and ID document to collect your Student Card.

Logout

You have now completed all the steps in the Online Registration process.
Remember to proceed to Security with your printed Proof of Registration to collect your Student Card.

Remember that you can access the iEnabler system at anytime. The system is designed to empower you as a student and provide you with access to useful information.

TWELVE WAYS TO CREATE A SEAMLESS WEB REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Build value around Registration
- Eliminate as many fields as possible
- Group field logically
- Break up long registration processes into steps
- Make your security and privacy policies clear as day
- Make password requirement secure, but not ridiculous
- Make password recovery easy
- Give the option to refresh Captcha
- Clearly identify and explain form field errors
- Consider offering social sign-in
- Provide a guest checkout option
- Let visitors determine how long to stay signed in

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to look at the use of on-line Web Registration for efficient and effective students' registration at Durban University of Technology. Online registration free up invaluable time for staff to spend on more important, strategic elements of the University. The findings supported the conclusion that online web registration was the most efficient and effective way to facilitate smooth and hassle free registration process.

REFERENCES

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