



Adapting to the new age of teaching and learning

A one-fit-for-all approach in technology integration at universities is not the answer.

Dr Sheila Kumalo is an e-learning and curriculum development specialist at UNISA.

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For years, many South African universities have considered the adoption of technology to enhance teaching and learning, as well as for research and administrative purposes.

It has taken the COVID-19 crisis to transform the higher education landscape. Universities have been abruptly pushed to embark on full technology integration due to

the pandemic's impact. Not only are students suddenly faced with unfamiliar learning platforms, but lecturers are presented with an e-learning setting in which they are not confident. Academics are operating in trial-and-error mode to get through daily functions under the lockdown restrictions.

Dr Sheila Kumalo, an e-learning

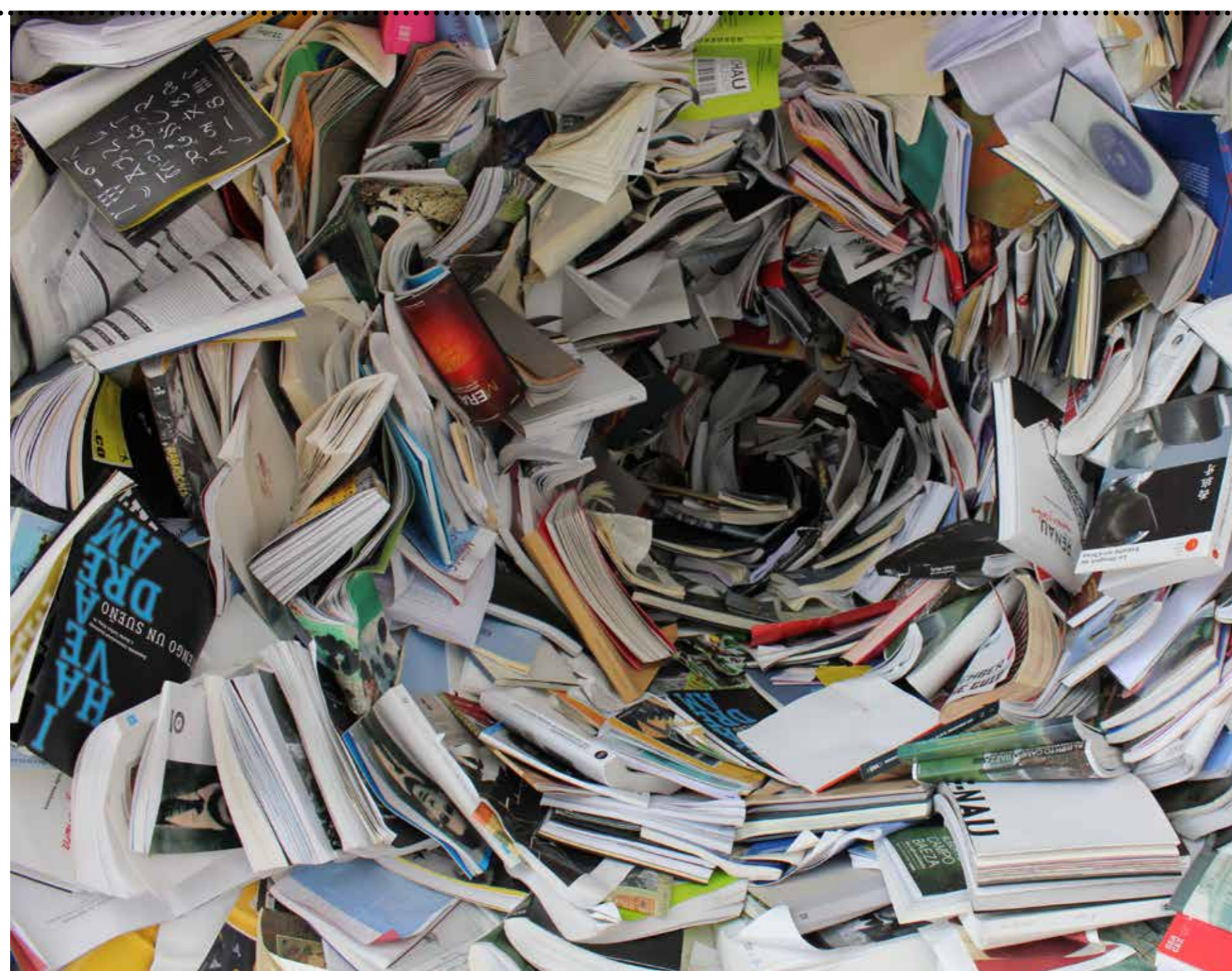
and curriculum development specialist at UNISA, believes that universities should not haphazardly adopt the quickest learning technology that they find, but that careful consideration should be given within the context of the institution.

"There is no one-size-fits-all solution to curtail technology integration challenges in developing countries. As countries differ from each other, developing regions differ in many ways from industrialised regions. Direct technology transfer just does not work."

Kumalo has designed a technology integration framework for technology integration at universities.

"Universities unknowingly place barriers to student learning by having a lack of flexible access to education and transforming ways of modern tuition delivery," she says. "Although higher education institutions have been rudely awakened by COVID-19's impact, technology integration should not be haphazard, but should consider important issues in the context-dependent educational characteristics of each university."

Technology integration at universities should not be done haphazardly.



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