CONTENTS

Acknowledgements xi

Introduction 1

PART ONE 3

1 Overview of course planning 4
Introduction 4
Can-do approach 5
Integrated approach to course design 5
Realistic innovation 6
Layers of planning 7
Activities and tasks 9
Assessment 10
Conclusion 11

2 Issues in course planning 12
Introduction 12
Overview of the history of curriculum and syllabus planning 12
Challenges in course planning 14
Coherence 14
Content 17
Learners as individuals 17
The real world 18
Forward, central, and backward design 19
Conclusion 23

3 The CEFR and its related tools 24
Introduction 24
Persistent issues in language course planning 24
Lack of coherence 25
Difficulties with defining content 26
Lack of attention to the needs of individual learners 27
Lack of orientation to real-world needs: the management perspective 27
Relevant aspects of the CEFR 28
CEFR levels 28
CEFR's descriptive scheme 31

CEFR descriptors 37
The ELP 39
Eaquals descriptors and other sources of CEFR-based descriptors for adults 42
Descriptors for young learners 42
Illustrative performance samples 42
CEFR training materials 43
The Core Inventory 44
Conclusion 46

4 Needs analysis 47
Introduction 47
Types of needs analysis 47
Before the design of a new course 48
At the start of the course 52
During the course 54
Roles and processes 55
Roles 55
Processes 56
Conclusion 57

PART TWO 59

5 Specifics of course planning 60
Introduction 60
Basic principles of course planning 60
Issues to consider 61
Step-by-step design process 62
1 Stating the institution's educational philosophy 63
2 Establishing a system of courses and levels 65
3 Describing recommended teaching approaches 69
4 Preparing syllabuses for different courses and levels 71
5 Deciding on assessment during and at the end of each course 72
Approaches to curriculum and syllabus planning 72
Option 1 From coursebook-based content to curriculum design 73
Option 2 From CEFR and inventories to syllabus design 74
Option 3 From learners' individual needs to syllabus design 74
Some 'dos and don'ts' of curriculum design 75
Dos 75
Don'ts 76
From documents to course delivery 76
Conclusion 77

6 Syllabus design and classroom implementation 78
Introduction 78
Process of syllabus design 79
Suggested approach to syllabus design 80
Course components 81
Choosing coursebooks and teaching resources 82
Cross-referencing and organizing resources 85
Triangulating course objectives, course materials, and learners' own goals 85
Classroom implementation of course objectives 88
Schemes of work 88
Planning and managing lessons 90
Conclusion 99

7 Using scenarios in course implementation 100
Introduction 100
Use of scenarios 100
Examples of language teaching scenarios 102
Core Inventory scenarios 103
Table of objectives 104
Implementation table 107
Developing and using scenarios in teaching 109
Conclusion 114

PART THREE 115

8 Principles of Assessment 116
Introduction 116
Meaning of assessment 116
CEFR descriptors and assessment 117
Continuous assessment 118
Checklist approach 118
Module approach 119
Performance assessment 120
Validity and reliability 121
Placement testing 122
Using a commercial standardized test 123
Developing your own test 124
Communicative assessment tasks mapped to key CEFR descriptors 126
Conclusion 128

9 Assessing speaking and writing skills 129
Introduction 129
Continuous assessment 130
Progress in relation to overall objectives 131
Progress in a particular course module 133
Advantages of continuous assessment with can-do descriptors 135
Assessment of speaking and writing 136
Selecting tasks 136
Criteria for assessment 137
Standardization training and moderation procedures 141
Standardization training 141
Moderation procedures 146
Conclusion 147

10 Assessing listening and reading skills 148
Introduction 148
Challenges in assessing listening and reading 149
Criteria for choosing texts 149
Relating results to CEFR levels 149
Thinking top-down 150
Simple continuous assessment solution 150
Tasks based on CEFR assessment scenarios 153
Overview page of objectives 154
Implementation section 154
Key aspects for specifications 157
CEFR descriptors 157
Microskills 158
Text types 159
Text features 160
Item types 162
Classroom implementation 165
Introducing CEFR-based assessment 166
Selecting texts 167
Selecting information to target 168
Selecting item types 168
Conclusion 168

PART FOUR 171
11 Managing change and innovation 172
Introduction 172
The context 172
Planning the process 173
Curriculum content 174
Syllabus review 175
Level system 176
Initial consultation 177
Forward, central, or backward design? 178
Deciding on a way forward 179
Writing the syllabus and guidance documents 181
Consultation with teachers 184
Seeing the plan through 185
Scenarios 186
Assessment 186
Schemes of work 188
Teachers' guide 189
Conclusion 189

12 The learner's point of view 190
Introduction 190
Needs of language learners 190
Awareness-raising as a course strand 191
Learners, levels, and descriptors 192
Language lessons and learners 193
Role of the learner 195
Conclusion 195
Glossary 197
Website references 205
References 209
Index 215