

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

INTEGRATED
**ANNUAL
REPORT**



Our Vision

To be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

Our Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing educational experiences for a better world.

Our Values

Respect for
diversity

Excellence

Ubuntu

Social justice
and equality

Integrity

Sustainable
stewardship

Nelson Mandela University Annual Report 2025

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Executive Summary

Through Vision 2030, Nelson Mandela University (hereafter referred to as “the University”) affirms its commitment to offering a diverse range of life-changing educational opportunities for a better world. This mission is grounded in the values of social justice and equality, respect for diversity, ubuntu, integrity, excellence, and sustainable stewardship, all of which seek to honour the legacy of the University’s namesake, the late President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. His lifelong dedication to a humane, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society remains the moral compass of the University and underpins the University’s ongoing commitment to be the academic expression of Mandela.

As a socially embedded institution of higher learning, the University strives to promote the public good through humanising learning and teaching, impactful research, innovation and internationalisation, and transformative engagement. It seeks to differentiate itself within the South African higher education sector as one of six comprehensive higher education institutions, committed to promoting student access for success, especially for academically deserving students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2025, the University enrolled a total of 34 564 students across seven faculties, of whom 154 were occasional students, 30 894 were undergraduate (UG) students and 3 516 were postgraduate (PG) students. The student demographic profile reflects the diversity of our nation’s population, with Black (African, Coloured and Indian) students constituting a growing proportion (95%) of total enrolments, and 69% of students in eligible UG programmes funded by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

The overall student success rate rose to 80% for all modules, up from 77% in 2024, reflecting the cumulative impact of wraparound student academic support systems across all faculties and campuses. Graduate outputs improved

significantly, with more than 7 500 graduates in 2025, an increase of more than 12% on the 2024 figure, with both UG and PG targets exceeded.

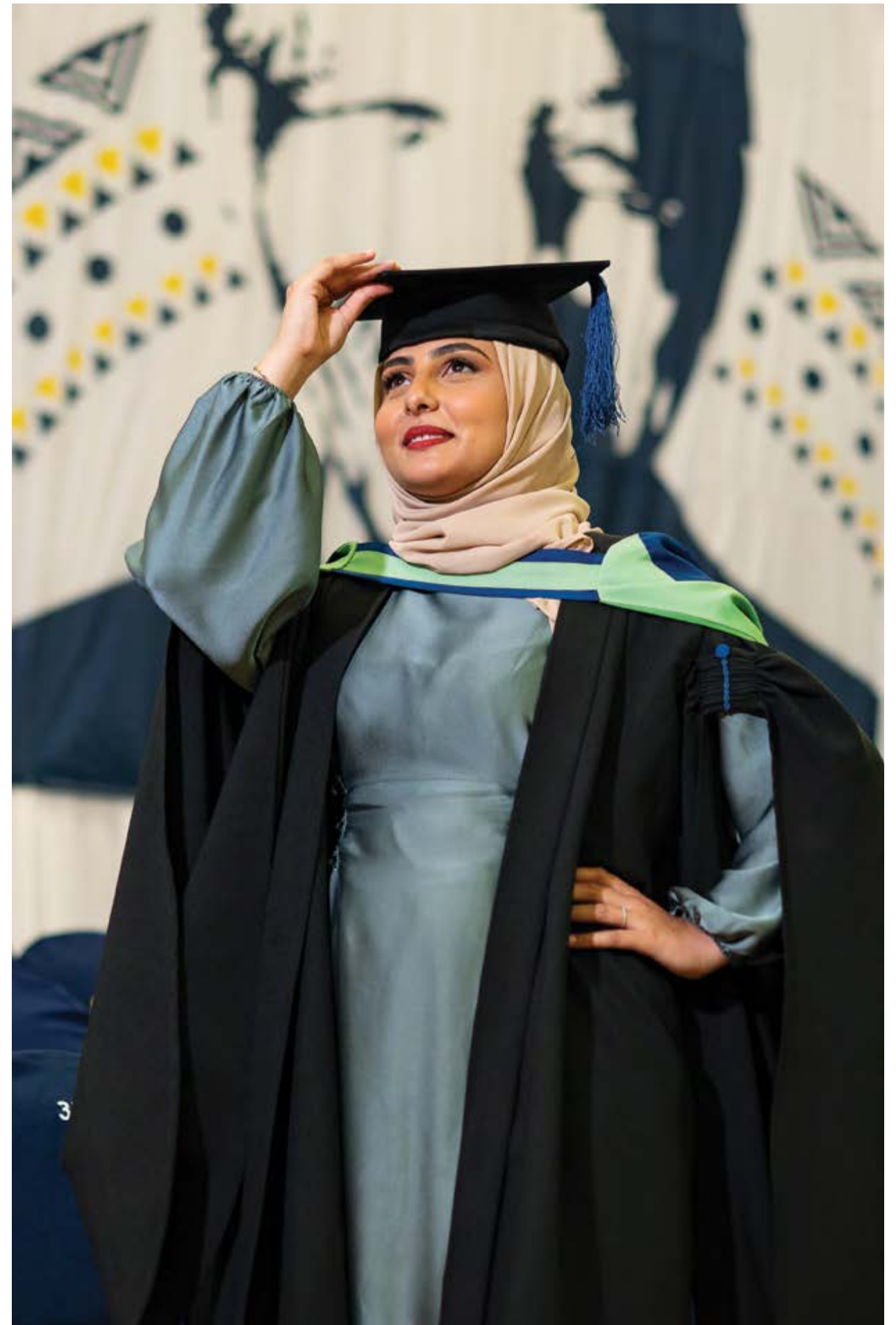
Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting

The University has been evolving in how it reports on its annual performance, and the 2025 Integrated Annual Report continues the stronger focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting introduced in 2024. ESG reporting is important in demonstrating how the University’s purpose is brought to life, how it supports the creation of long-term value and impact, how it strengthens reputation, and promotes accountability to all stakeholder communities. This report is structured in alignment with the reporting regulations of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The University is committed to embracing and aligning with the good governance principles of the King Codes on Corporate Governance, including ethical leadership, value creation, accountability, transparency, and sustainability.

Vision 2030 and Transversal Strategic Priorities

The University continues to pursue transversal strategic priorities to give expression to Vision 2030. This framing reflects an integrative approach that foregrounds cross-cutting alignment, societal responsiveness and institution-wide implementation. The priorities are outlined below and addressed in greater detail in the chapters that follow.

- **Student Access and Success:** The University advances student access for success by providing inclusive, humanising learning environments that meet the academic, financial and future career needs of students



through the provision of quality teaching, vibrant student life, as well as robust academic support and experiential learning opportunities.

- **Transformation, Decolonisation and Institutional Culture:** A values-driven institutional culture, anchored in social inclusion, respect for diversity and zero tolerance of discrimination and gender-based violence and harm (GBVH), is deepened through policy, practice and programmatic interventions. Decolonisation at the University is a core pillar of Vision 2030, which seeks to integrate indigenous knowledges to ensure that the curriculum is grounded in local and global African contexts. These efforts include thinking creatively about how multilingualism can transform the canon, particularly within the context of the University's new language policy aimed at re-intellectualising isiXhosa.
- **Research and Innovation Excellence, including Internationalisation:** The University is focusing on sustaining the drive towards research and innovation excellence in areas of institutional strength and differentiation, while ramping up research outputs and maintaining an upward trajectory for the enrolment of Master's and doctoral candidates. Developing new international partnerships and strengthening existing ones is one of the strategies being deployed and there is considerable appetite internationally to partner with the University. Over the past year, Doctoral graduates rose 61% year on year, while a strong cohort of National Research Foundation (NRF)-rated researchers, research chairs and 52 active international agreements across 25 countries underpinned continued research growth.
- **Repositioning Equalising Forms of Engagement:** The University is actively repositioning equalising forms of engagement with stakeholder communities to co-create innovative solutions to address the persistent challenges of inequality, unemployment and social precarity. The Hubs of Convergence (HoCs) provide an outward focus and benefit from the intellectual and other assets of the University, complemented by the wisdom and knowledge of its stakeholder communities.
- **Ocean Sciences:** The University is the only higher education institution nationally with a dedicated Ocean Sciences Campus. This campus serves as a hub for pioneering transdisciplinary ocean sciences PG studies, research, innovation and engagement that is strategically impactful. The University ranked second nationally in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Life Below Water.
- **Medical School:** The University actively promotes access to comprehensive health services as part of an integrated health and education innovation precinct, which includes South Africa's tenth medical school. Our unique community-focused and interprofessional approach aims to develop socially conscious medical doctors who can compete globally, but who also have a deep passion to

change the lives of underserved communities. The first cohort of medical students entered their fifth year in 2025, recording a 97% pass rate in year four, while 390 students in total are enrolled in the six-year MBChB programme.

- **Revitalising the Humanities:** The University's intellectual project is driven by the need to reinvigorate the value of the humanities in addressing societal challenges, fostering critical engagement, and shaping transformative learning that contributes to social justice and sustainability. The humanities, with open and malleable borders, have been called upon to awaken African scholarship, epistemologies and systems of thought through cultivating an inclusive narrative of progress.
- **Transdisciplinarity and Sustainability:** The University embeds transdisciplinarity into its core strategy to generate engaged, community-focused solutions to complex, real-world sustainability challenges. Key initiatives include the Mandela Institute for Sustainable Futures (MISF), which held its inaugural webinar, foregrounding African epistemologies and context-specific frameworks for sustainable development. Furthermore, the Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) is a specialised research and academic hub that advances Critical Mandela Studies by exploring Mandela's legacy alongside decoloniality, African intellectual traditions, and social justice.
- **Digitalisation and the Virtual Academy (VA):** The University's digital transformation strategy aims to modernise institutional operations, advance the digital economy, and implement "Digital Ubuntu" to ensure that technological advancements empower students, employees and the broader community. Digital transformation has advanced significantly as an institutional imperative, including initiatives to establish a VA as a catalytic intervention designed to foster collaboration across all faculties linked to human-centred digital innovations.
- **Student Entrepreneurship and Youth Employability:** The University has established a Student Entrepreneurship and Youth Employability (SEYE) Working Group to oversee and coordinate an impressive array of initiatives and programmes at the University to promote student entrepreneurship and youth employability. Among these, the Mandela University Africa Hub (MUAH) for Youth Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation is an integrated platform for collaborative partnerships and co-learning that facilitates the nurturing of Afrocentric entrepreneurs and social innovators in critical sectors. MUAH was named the first-ever recipient of the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) Champion Award, and the University was recognised as the most entrepreneurial university of 2025, affirming the impact of its student entrepreneurship ecosystem. In addition, the University was awarded the R26-million Research Chair in Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion funded by the Female Academic Leaders Fellowship (FALF)





and the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation (FREF). Its core mandate is to advance interdisciplinary research in entrepreneurship and financial inclusion, in alignment with national development priorities.

- **Food Sovereignty and Security:** Many of our students, staff and surrounding communities have direct experience with hunger and food insecurity. The University has a highly productive Student Nutrition Working Group and Food Systems Programme to contribute to meeting the challenge of hunger in the context of climate change in Southern Africa. This incorporates a specific HoC dedicated to Food Sovereignty, which brings together multiple faculties and external stakeholders to promote sustainable, inclusive, and culturally appropriate food systems. To combat student hunger and ensure academic success, the University runs nutrition programmes and actively coordinates efforts to reduce food insecurity stigma.

Sustainability and Resource Stewardship

The University's commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability deepened across all campuses during 2025. Through the University Trust, over R133-million was mobilised in 2025, exceeding the R107-million raised in 2024. In addition, Council approved R57.3-million for UG bursaries and R59.7-million for PG bursaries, and R15-million was allocated through the Eastern Cape Office of the Premier to support students with historical debt in engineering and related fields.

The Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) continued to guide the University's response to a constrained fiscal environment, including the sustained decline in the state subsidy as a proportion of total income. During 2025, the University also launched six institutional culture signature programmes, of which the "Masongse Siphuhlise" campaign is one. This campaign recognises the importance of every employee becoming prudent by

showing care and thought for a sustainable future. The intention of this campaign is twofold, namely, to encourage every employee and team to embark on a thought process of how to count every cent and make every cent count as a key dimension of daily operations. Secondly, this programme advances sustainability by increasing revenue generation opportunities in the workplace by reducing waste, enhancing strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and allocation, and promoting academic and financial viability.

Despite these pressures, the University maintained sound liquidity and a positive operating surplus, sustaining the financial trajectory established in 2024.

Conclusion

The University achieved significant improvements in 2025, despite various challenges, many of which emerged from a complex and volatile macro-environmental context nationally and globally. Among these, the University mourned the unprecedented loss of six students in separate circumstances in the final quarter of 2025. As an immediate response, the institution provided psychosocial support to affected students and employees and provided financial support to the families of the deceased. This also called for deep self-reflection and the University initiated investigations to strengthen existing systems and preventive measures to proactively address the impact of social ills such as GBVH and crime.

The University is encouraged by significant improvements in student success and graduate output over the past year. Furthermore, research output is improving, and the University's financial position remains sound. This highlights the collective impact of ethical governance and leadership, dedicated employees, and responsible stewardship. Above all, a commitment to equitable access, social justice and the public good continues to shape every dimension of the institution's work, honouring the enduring values of the University and the society it serves.

7 FACULTIES

- ▶ Business and Economic Sciences
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology
- ▶ Health Sciences
- ▶ Humanities
- ▶ Law
- ▶ Science



418
NUMBER OF
PROGRAMMES IN 2025
(from certificate through to
doctoral programmes)

7 CAMPUSES

2nd Avenue
Bird Street
George
Missionvale
North
Ocean Sciences
South



6 INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH THEMES

- Ocean and coastal sciences
- Social justice and democracy
- Environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods
- Innovation and the digital economy
- Origins, culture, heritage and memory
- Humanising pedagogies

2 494
TOTAL NUMBER
OF PERMANENT
STAFF

719
TOTAL NUMBER
OF PERMANENT
ACADEMIC STAFF

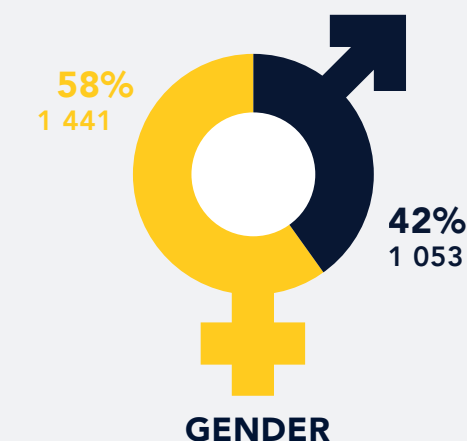
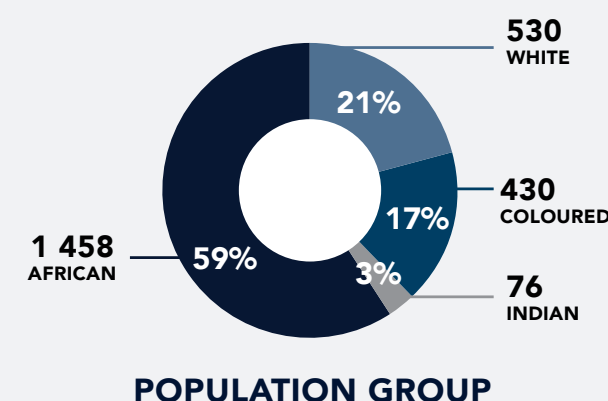
1 775
TOTAL NUMBER OF
PERMANENT PROFESSIONAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE AND
SUPPORT STAFF

29% 71%

31 : 1

STUDENT: ACADEMIC
STAFF RATIO

PROFILE OF ALL PERMANENT STAFF BY POPULATION GROUP* AND GENDER**



*Population groups according to the Department of Labour equity categories

**While the HEMIS statistics refer to gender as including only male and female, the University subscribes to a transformative, non-binary framing of gender

Figure 1: Nelson Mandela University at a glance

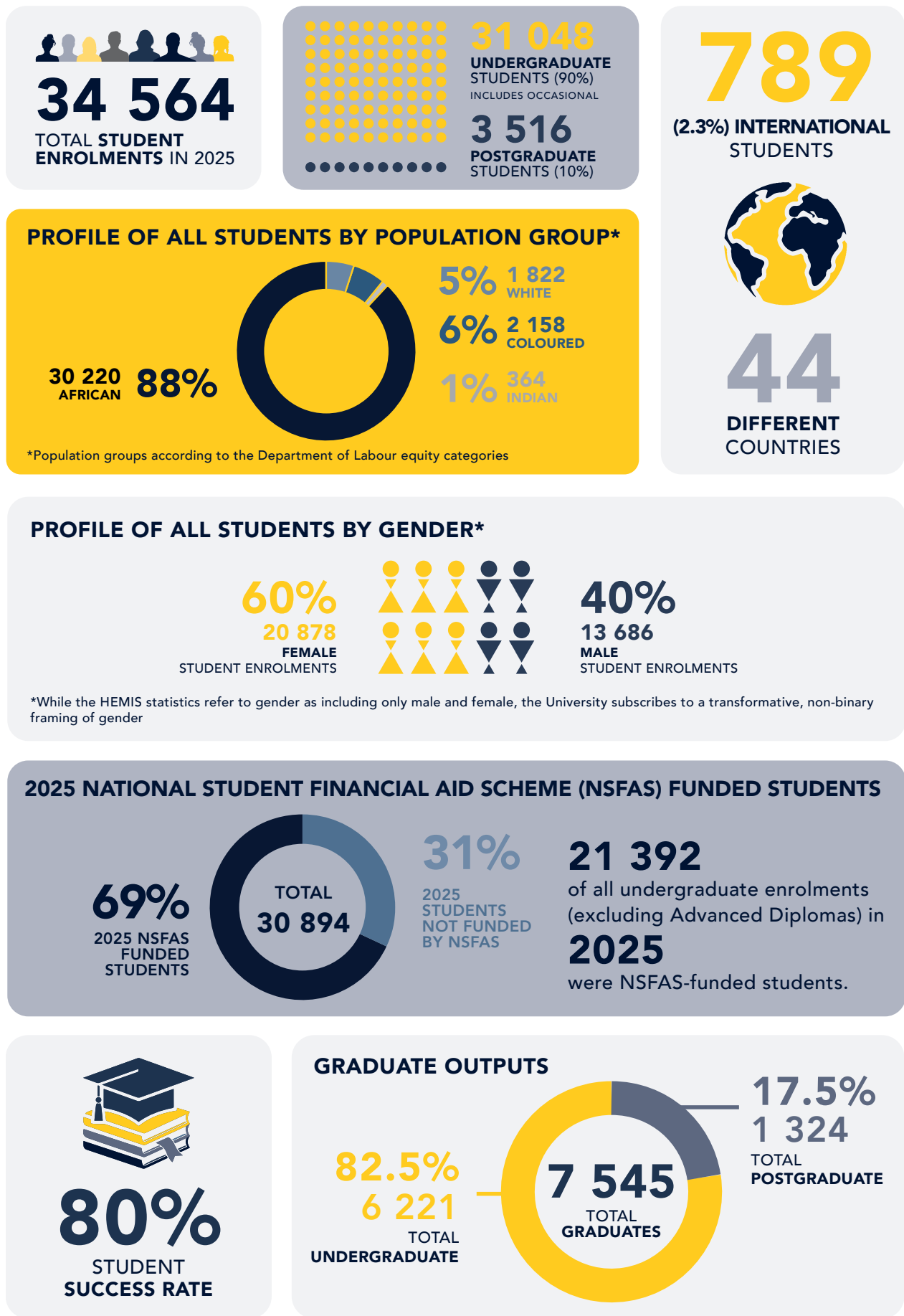


Figure 1: Nelson Mandela University at a glance (continued)

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Strategic Overview

Vision 2030 outlines the University's vision, mission, values, educational purpose and philosophy, distinctive knowledge paradigm, desired graduate attributes, strategic focus areas, and enablers. This is depicted in Figure 2 and the narrative that follows elaborates on each dimension.

1.1 Vision

To be a dynamic, African University recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

1.2 Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing educational experiences for a better world.

To achieve this vision and mission, the University will ensure that:

- Its values inform and define its institutional ethos and distinctive educational purpose and philosophy.
- It is committed to promoting equity of access and opportunities to give students the best chance of success in their pursuit of lifelong learning and diverse educational goals.
- It provides a vibrant, stimulating and richly diverse environment that enables employees and students to reach their full potential.
- It develops graduates and diplomates to be responsible global citizens capable of critical reasoning, innovation, and adaptability.
- It creates and sustains an environment that encourages and supports a vibrant research, scholarship, and innovation culture.

- It engages in mutually beneficial partnerships locally, nationally, and globally to enhance social, economic, and ecological sustainability.

1.3 Values

The Vision 2030 stakeholder engagement processes reaffirmed the importance of all students, employees and alumni living the University's core values. The University therefore holds itself accountable to embodying its values as it executes its vision and mission, designs academic programmes and curricula, engages in academic core missions, delivers professional, administrative and support services, and engages with stakeholders.

1.3.1 Respect for Diversity

The University reflects and serves diverse regional, national, and global communities. It promotes an open society where critical scholarship, and the expression of a multiplicity of opinions and ideas are actively encouraged. It fosters an environment in which diversity is appreciated, respected, and celebrated. It fosters a culture that welcomes and respects diverse identities, heritages, and life experiences.

1.3.2 Excellence

The University encourages the pursuit of the highest levels of academic, civic, and personal achievement. It provides a supportive and affirming environment that enables students, employees, and publics to reach their full potential. It pursues inclusive excellence by embedding equality of access and opportunity in its policies, processes, systems, and practices. It seeks to foster a culture of intellectual and personal growth and lifelong learning. It promotes, recognises and rewards excellence in teaching, learning, research, innovation, creative outputs, engagement, and service delivery.

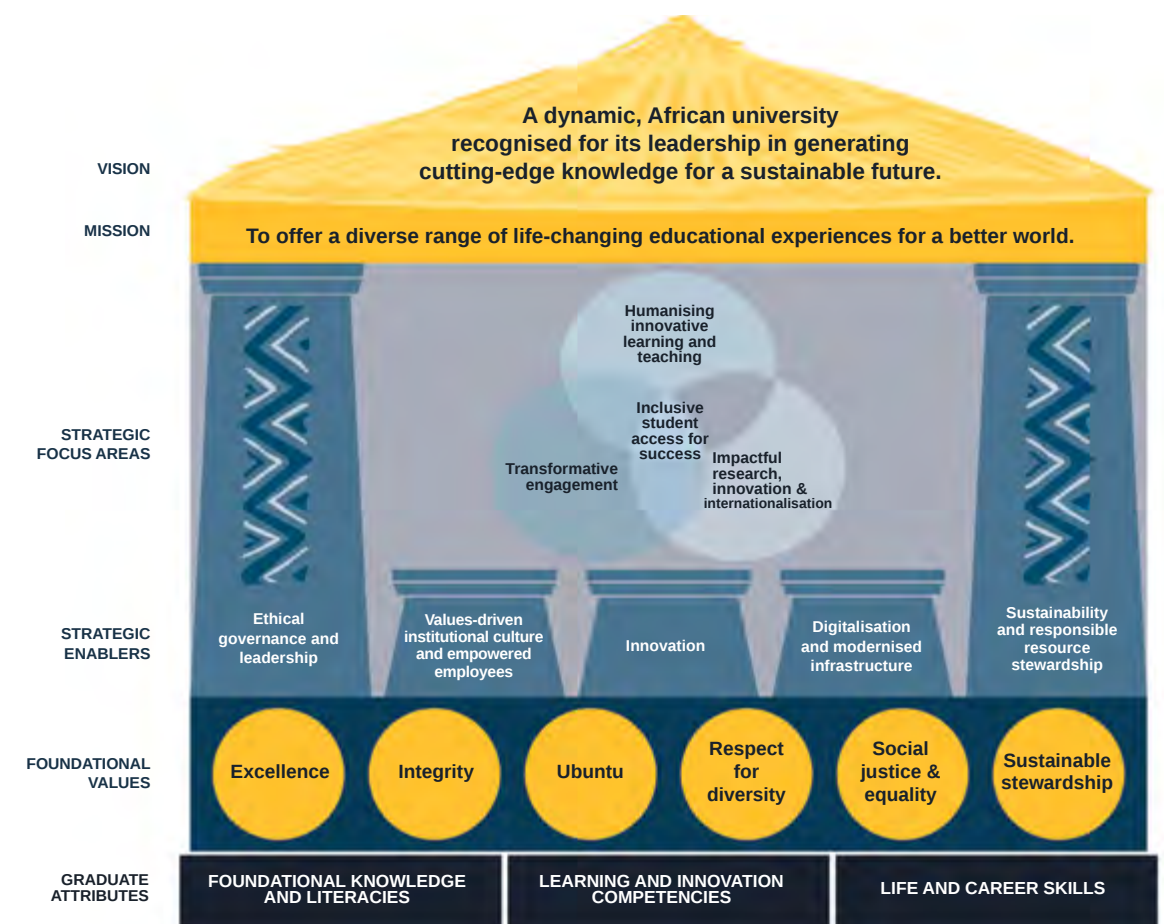


Figure 2: Vision 2030 Strategic Framework

1.3.3 Social Justice and Equality

The University is dedicated to the realisation of a socially just, democratic society that promotes equality for all irrespective of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, age, physical and learning abilities, national origins, religion, conscience, belief, culture, and language. It encourages mutually beneficial, equalising partnerships and engagement with its core publics to co-create sustainable, innovative solutions to persistent societal and planetary challenges. It cultivates living, learning and work environments that enable students and employees to realise their full potential, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. It develops graduates as global citizens capable of developing and applying knowledge across multiple contexts to make meaningful contributions to advancing a socially just, equal society.

1.3.4 Ubuntu

It is a people-centred, values-driven University that seeks to foster a compassionate and caring institutional culture. It respects the dignity of others and strives to be human-

centred and relational. It recognises mutual interdependence and promotes socially conscious and responsible citizenship.

1.3.5 Integrity

The University commits to the highest standards of personal honesty and exemplary moral character. It is dedicated to cultivating an atmosphere of trust. It takes responsibility for its decisions, behaviours, actions, and the consequences thereof. It ensures the integrity of policies, information, systems, and processes.

1.3.6 Sustainable Stewardship

The University is committed to environmental sustainability and recognises the responsibility to conserve, protect and sustainably manage natural resources for current and future generations. It promotes the integration of sustainability into governance, leadership, academic core missions, operations, as well as the design and maintenance of physical and digital infrastructure. It inspires students and employees to embrace responsible stewardship of all financial, human, infrastructural and environmental resources entrusted to them.



1.4 Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture

The University is committed to inclusive excellence and values that celebrate all forms of diversity. Diversity includes race, colour, culture, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, and/or class. It recognises that the University is both a contested and generative space, supporting the concurrent existence of multiple perspectives and experiences.

Its mission, vision and values require the University to engender an inclusive culture, free from bias, prejudice, discrimination, and hurtful conduct towards its students, employees, alumni, and other relevant stakeholders. It supports educational experiences and conditions that encourage social inclusion and cohesion, contributing to a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights.

It denounces all forms of behaviour that conflict with its values and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination and exclusion.

Embedding the values of the University can be realised by:

- Fostering mutual respect, collaborative relationships, unambiguous communication, explicit understandings about expectations and critical self-reflection.
- Honouring freedom of expression, ideals of citizenry and civility of discourse, as fundamental to personal, professional, and organisational growth.

- Challenging and dismantling systemic oppression.
- Freely expressing who we are, our own opinions and points of view.
- Fully participating in teaching, learning, work, and social activities.
- Feeling safe from abuse, harassment, bullying and/or unfair criticism
- Providing effective leadership in the development, coordination, implementation, and assessment of a comprehensive range of programmes and services to promote diversity and understanding of differences.
- Offering educational opportunities towards the development of socially responsible leaders who are willing to engage in discourse and decision-making that can lead to co-creative, transformational change within the University and broader society.
- Intentionally nurturing a culture of open-mindedness, compassion, and inclusiveness among individuals and groups.
- Purposefully building teams and groups whose members have diverse cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences. Creating and maintaining opportunities for engagement, education, and discourse related to issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Providing effective reporting mechanisms to address any form of exclusion and discrimination at the University.

Cascading the *Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture* is a critical enabler for realising the University's Vision 2030 strategic aspirations. To this end, the Engagement and Transformation Committee oversees the implementation of programmatic interventions to foster a values-driven, transformative institutional culture.

The vision, mission, values, and *Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture* are the foundations on which the University cultivates graduates who are known for their social and environmental consciousness, visionary leadership, innovative and pioneering search for solutions to complex challenges, and the ability to adapt their knowledge and expertise in multiple settings through embracing lifelong learning.

1.5 Desired Graduate Attributes

Through benefitting from a life-changing educational experience, the University graduates will be known for demonstrating the attributes shown in Figure 3.

Graduate attributes are the high-level knowledge, skills, qualities, and understandings that a student should gain because of the learning and experiences they engage with while at the University. These attributes equip graduates for lifelong personal development and learning to be successful in society and shape the contribution they make to their profession and as citizens. Within a rapidly changing global context, graduates need to be flexible and adaptive to manage uncertainty, ambiguity, and unpredictability, as opposed to only acquiring a fixed set of knowledge and skills that prepare them narrowly for the world of work.

The Vision 2030 Strategy makes provision for generic, cross-cutting graduate attributes, skills, mindsets and attitudes that equip graduates to grapple with challenges and adapt to new environments quickly and effectively. Moreover, students with these generic attributes are better able to apply their skills in diverse contexts and find ways to innovate by applying the depth of knowledge acquired through their core discipline and/or profession, while also embracing inter- and transdisciplinary thinking to solve complex problems and challenges.

The key categories within which generic graduate attributes have been identified and conceptualised include those listed below.

1.5.1 Foundational Knowledge and Literacies

Foundational knowledge and literacies represent how graduates apply core disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge to everyday tasks. Knowledge includes theoretical concepts and ideas in addition to practical understanding based on the experience of having performed certain tasks.

Foundational literacies serve as the basis upon which graduates need to build more advanced competencies and character qualities. This includes numeracy and various

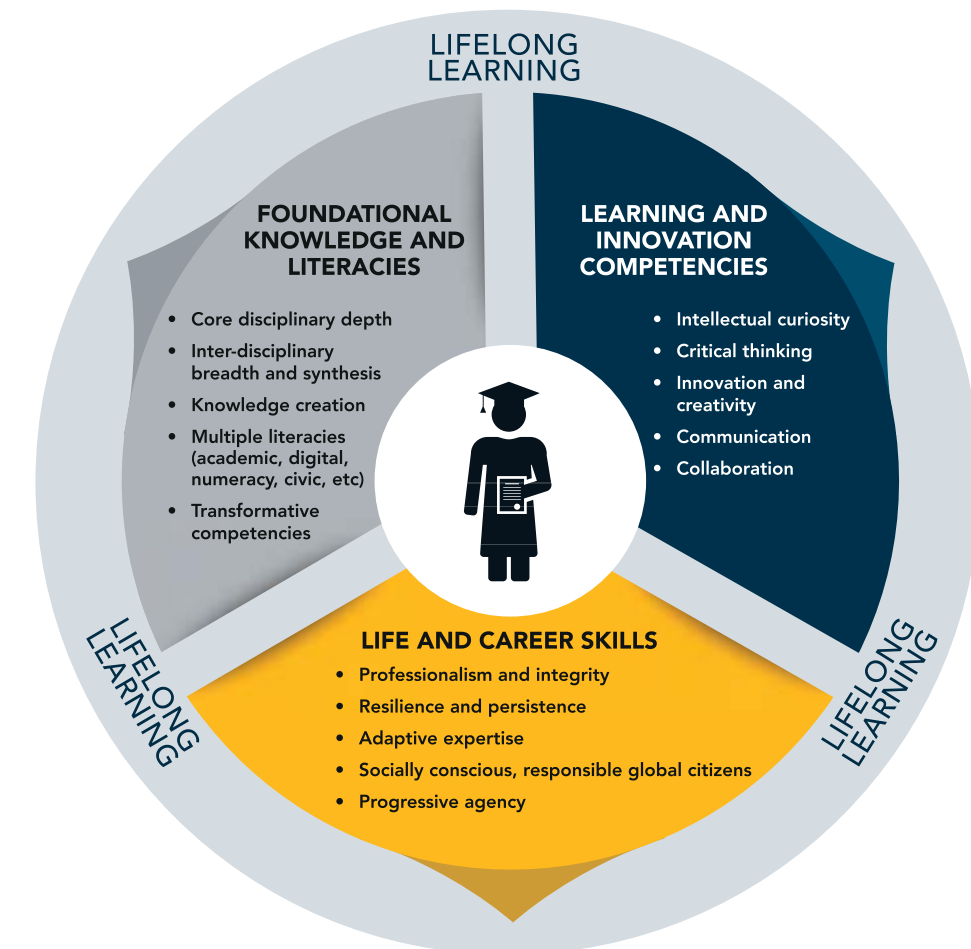


Figure 3: Graduate attributes

literacies such as scientific, linguistic, digital, financial, cultural, and civic literacy.

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, students also need to be equipped with transformative competencies to shape a better, more sustainable future. These include:

- Creating new value means innovating to shape better lives, such as developing new knowledge, insights, ideas, techniques, strategies, and solutions, and applying them to problems.
- Reconciling tensions implies the acquisition of a deeper understanding of opposing positions, developing arguments to support their position, and finding practical solutions to dilemmas and conflicts.
- Taking responsibility is connected to the ability to reflect upon and evaluate one's actions, experience, and education to achieve personal, ethical, and societal goals.

1.5.2 Learning and Innovation Competencies

Learning and innovation competencies are increasingly being recognised as the skills that distinguish graduates who are prepared for complex life and work environments. Such competencies include intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration.

1.5.3 Life and Career Skills

Life and career skills need rigorous attention to ensure graduates can confidently navigate life and work environments in the global knowledge economy. Such skills include professionalism and integrity, resilience and persistence, adaptive expertise, and exercising progressive agency to bring about constructive change.

The University acknowledges the importance of students exercising their agency in advancing their personal development and growth while they are studying at the University. As part of Vision 2030, the intention is to articulate a broad framework of generic graduate attributes, which can be customised and elaborated on by faculties and professional support divisions to address the specific learning and teaching requirements of various disciplines and professions.

1.6 Distinctive Knowledge Paradigm

The University adopts a distinctive knowledge paradigm guided by the following principles:

- The University as an open society of students and employees committed to generating knowledge that has a liberating effect on the world.
- Application of ethical knowledge to advance social justice, the public good and a sustainable future for the planet and all its inhabitants.
- Freedom of expression and thought in speech, writing and all art forms.



- Advancement of disciplinary depth while embracing collaborative inter- and transdisciplinary approaches to address complex and intractable challenges.

1.7 Educational Purpose and Philosophy

The University strives to be in the service of society through learning and teaching, research, innovation, and engagement. To achieve this, it:

- Commits to liberating the full human potential of employees and students in the pursuit of responsible, democratic global citizenship.
- Advances the frontiers of knowledge to contribute to a socially just and sustainable future in the service of society.
- Adopts innovative, humanising pedagogies and practices that affirm diverse knowledge paradigms and world views.
- Inspires stakeholders to be passionate about and respectful of an ecologically diverse and sustainable natural environment.
- Is known for a values-driven, inclusive institutional culture that encourages all members of the University community to contribute optimally to the vibrancy of intellectual discourse and the respectful contestation of ideas.
- Places students at the centre of all it does to enable them to deploy their agency during their studies and in their future lives as alumni.

- Seeks to address the grand challenges confronting society and the planet through the co-creation of sustainable solutions with its publics.

As an elaboration of the values, distinctive knowledge paradigm and educational purpose and philosophy, the University recognises that an inclusive institutional culture is a foundational enabler of excellence in all its manifestations.

1.8 Strategic Focus Areas

The cultivation of sought-after and highly valued graduates depends largely on the pursuit of excellence in the University's core academic missions. The University offers holistic curricular and co-curricular living and learning experiences that create an enabling, inclusive, and supportive environment for students to succeed in life and work. To this end, core academic missions are pursued in an integrated manner to ensure that humanising learning and teaching approaches are informed by impactful research, innovation, and internationalisation, as well as transformative engagement.

The four academic missions constitute the strategic focus areas of Vision 2030, as reflected in Figure 4, namely:

- Strategic Focus Area 1: Liberate human potential through humanising, innovative lifelong learning experiences that prepare graduates to be socially conscious, responsible global citizens who serve the public good.
- Strategic Focus Area 2: Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation, and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures.
- Strategic Focus Area 3: Engage with all publics in equalising partnerships to co-create transformative, contextually responsive solutions in pursuit of social justice and equality.
- Strategic Focus Area 4: Catalyse dynamic, student-centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom.

1.9 Strategic Enablers

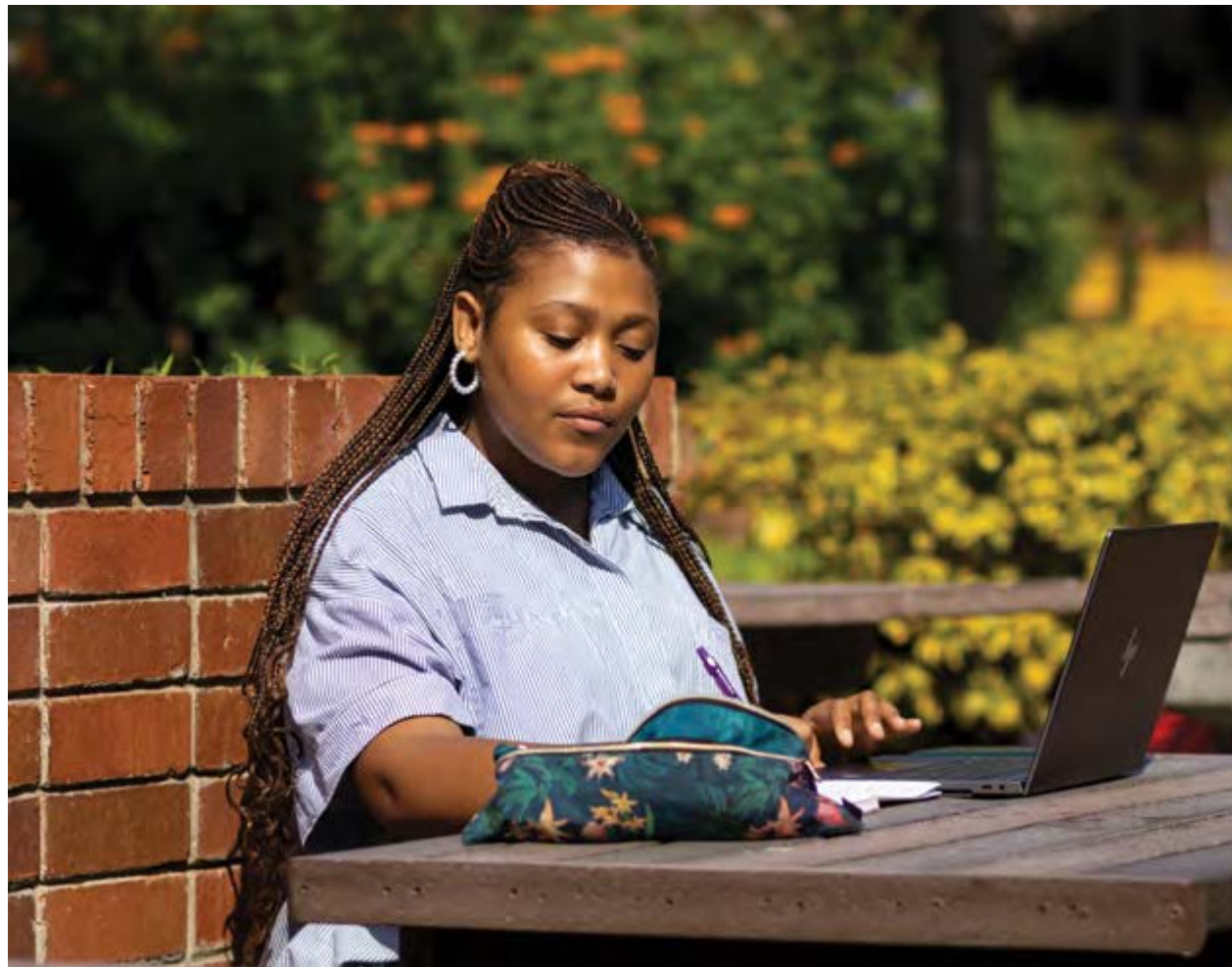
The following strategic enablers were identified as foundational priorities for the realisation of the strategic aspirations underpinning Vision 2030.

1.9.1 Ethical Governance and Leadership

The University aims to enhance organisational effectiveness through ethical governance and leadership. It strives to



Figure 4: Vision 2030 Strategic Focus Areas



nurture current and future leaders who consistently promote service before self for the greater good of the University and society. The University fosters an ethos of care as the cornerstone of academic and service excellence.

1.9.2 Values-Driven Institutional Culture and Empowered Employees

The University encourages students and employees to consistently live the values of excellence, ubuntu, integrity, social justice and equality, sustainable stewardship, and respect for diversity. It aims to attract, retain, and nurture talented, diverse, and high-performing employees by cultivating a values-driven, transformative institutional culture that promotes social inclusion, a sense of belonging, and holistic well-being. The University invests in continuing professional development and lifelong learning opportunities for employees to unlock talent and create pathways for development and growth.

1.9.3 Enabling Innovation

The University aspires to be a vibrant innovation hub that convenes diverse stakeholders to co-create transformative solutions to address perennial societal, economic and planetary challenges. In so doing, the University seeks to foster a culture of innovation where students, employees and partners can collaboratively

engage in scientific, technological, and creative discovery that advances the frontiers of knowledge and promotes the public good.

1.9.4 Digitalisation and Modernised Infrastructure

The University strives for efficient service delivery, sustained value creation and agile decision-making through the digitalisation of systems and processes, including investing in integrated information technology, networks, applications, and business intelligence platforms. Modernised physical infrastructure is flexibly designed and optimally utilised to foster a vibrant living, learning, and working experience for all students and employees across all campuses.

1.9.5 Sustainability and Responsible Resource Stewardship

Innovative resource mobilisation and diversification are especially crucial within a context of ever-increasing costs and a shrinking national fiscus. The University recognises the need for responsible resource stewardship and cost-effectiveness to promote long-term financial sustainability. Furthermore, the institution is reducing its carbon footprint through harnessing the potential of renewable energies, waste reduction and recycling, and guardianship of campus ecosystems and biodiversity.



Transversal Strategic Priorities

Vision 2030 is the framework within which the University seeks to offer a diverse range of life-changing educational experiences that liberate human potential for a better world. Eleven transversal strategic priorities give expression to this mission, running across the University's Strategic Focus Areas and Enablers to guide institution-wide implementation of Vision 2030. These priorities are cross-cutting institutional commitments that traverse the University's academic missions, institutional culture and operational service delivery.

The eleven priorities are: student access and success; transformation, decolonisation and institutional culture; research and innovation excellence, including internationalisation; repositioning equalising forms of engagement; ocean sciences; the Medical School; revitalising the humanities; transdisciplinarity and sustainability; digitalisation and the VA; student entrepreneurship and youth employability; and food sovereignty and security. Together, they position the University as a distinctive, socially embedded institution that draws its sense of purpose directly from the society it serves.

These transversal strategic priorities represent existing and emerging niches and areas of distinctive strategic differentiation for the University. This transcendent framing is broad and integrative since it foregrounds institution-wide implementation, cross-cutting alignment and societal responsiveness as the primary organising logic. The individual priorities that follow should therefore be read as interconnected dimensions of a single institutional direction, each reinforcing the others in pursuit of Vision 2030.

2.1 Student Access and Success

The University has steadily broadened access for academically deserving, financially disadvantaged students and draws

more than half (52%) of its students from the Eastern Cape, with more than two-thirds depending on NSFAS funding. The University invests extensively in various strategies to provide supportive living and learning environments conducive to improved academic performance. This involves coordinated initiatives to address diverse student needs beyond the classroom, focusing on their overall wellbeing and success.

Core components of holistic wraparound student support provided include financial support to address economic barriers; transition support (buddy systems, peer mentoring, first-year success programmes) to facilitate the transition into higher education; academic support (tutoring, mentoring, success coaching, learning development) to enhance academic success; wellbeing and psychosocial support (healthcare access, counselling, life coaching, mental health interventions) to foster physical and emotional well-being; and leadership and career development support (skills development, career guidance, entrepreneurial training) to prepare students for leadership and diverse employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Specialised support is also available for students living with disabilities from the Universal Accessibility and Disability Services, including reasonable accommodations, assistive devices, and inclusive learning strategies. This commitment extends to supporting academic employees through capacity development programmes offered by the Teaching Development (TD) unit within the LT Collab, such as the Teaching Enhancement Programme (TEP).

This is all underpinned by a humanising pedagogical approach as the philosophical underpinning for learning, teaching, curriculum development, and assessment, designed to liberate the full potential and agency of students and employees. Ultimately, these integrated efforts aim to promote not only academic achievement, but also



to cultivate graduates as socially conscious and responsible citizens.

2.2 Transformation, Decolonisation and Institutional Culture

Transformation at the University is understood as a complex, multifaceted and continuous process of institutional change, encompassing the demographic profile of the student body and employees, the content and orientation of the curriculum, the symbols and languages that define campus life, and the values that animate every aspect of the institution's work. The University guides progress across four interconnected priorities: advancing decolonisation and curriculum transformation; deepening a culture of open engagement; improving student and employee well-being; and promoting a vibrant campus life experience.

The Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) is implemented across all executive portfolios and faculties. Key themes feed into the conceptualisation and implementation of catalytic interventions to foster a transformative and affirming institutional culture at all levels of the University. This includes the critical role of arts, culture, symbols, rituals, naming, heritage, and language in fostering social inclusion.

Programmatic interventions grounded in Constitutional principles seek to devote focused attention to social inclusion, anti-discrimination, GBV awareness and prevention, and the advancement of designated groups through the University's Employment Equity Plan (EEP).

In 2025, the University's institutional culture conceptual framework was implemented across all faculties and divisions through six signature programmes. These six

signature programmes are set out in the Transformation Report appended to this Integrated Annual Report.

2.3 Research and Innovation Excellence, including Internationalisation

The University demonstrates robust capabilities in research, innovation, and international engagement, underpinning its commitment to advancing knowledge and societal good. The University's research agenda is organised around six institutional research themes, namely: ocean and coastal sciences; social justice and democracy; environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods; innovation and the digital economy; origins, culture, heritage and memory; and humanising pedagogies.

The University has increased income generation from external research grants, including international grants and industry research partnerships. However, insufficient PG bursary funding remains the primary barrier to growing PG enrolments.

The University actively implements structured programmes to enhance the equity and diversity of its academic staff with doctoral qualifications, simultaneously addressing critical challenges in research supervision and academic succession. Initiatives such as Thuthuka awards, Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) grants, the University Staff Doctoral Programme (USDPI), and the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) provide targeted support for academic advancement and doctoral completion, while the Mandela Imvuselelo Professors Project (MIPP) will bolster PG supervision and research output among mid-career researchers. These efforts are crucial given the anticipated retirement of approximately 90 academics by 2030, including

26 professors and 11 associate professors, which intensifies pressure on PG supervisory capacity. This is partially addressed through the contribution of the University's research entities and Research Chairs, who significantly bolster research outputs and PG training, alongside distinguished professors and NRF-rated researchers.

The University seeks to foster a culture of innovation where students, employees and partners can collaboratively engage in scientific, technological, and creative discovery that advances the frontiers of knowledge and promotes the public good. The Innovation Office actively cultivates a culture of scientific and creative discovery, facilitating the identification, protection, and commercialisation of intellectual property (IP). It supports researchers with grant and contract management; proposal and business plan development; prototype and proof of concept funding, as well as technology transfer through IP management and commercialisation. This includes executing programmes and services targeted at students and staff to encourage innovation and help to translate research outputs into products and services that have national or global societal benefits.

The University's portfolio of intellectual property (IP) emphasises areas such as renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, agro-processing, and industrial biotechnology and includes over 200 applications or granted rights. The University has actively supported more than 40 researchers and students in endeavours related to IP protection and the acquisition of seed funding for technology development aimed at IP commercialisation.

The Mandela University International Office supports the University's mandate to serve local and global communities, to promote educational diversity and sustainability. The University has boosted student recruitment efforts in underrepresented regions, which has led to increasing partnerships and collaborations with universities in BRICS countries and on the African, South American, and Asian continents. This integrated approach ensures the University's pivotal role in pioneering transformative scholarship and practical innovation for national and global benefit. The University maintains over 52 active institutional Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in Asia, North and South America, Europe, and the rest of the African continent. The University joined the BRICS+ Network University in 2025, committing to the themes of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security.

2.4 Repositioning Equalising Forms of Engagement

Engagement is integral to the University's identity as an outward-facing, socially embedded higher education institution. The Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) was established to reimagine, reposition and reframe a non-paternalistic model of engaged scholarship that co-creates African-purposed solutions to complex planetary and societal challenges with the communities and stakeholders it serves. The ETP spearheads a variety of



strategy-aligned activities and interventions to position the University as a locally responsive, regionally alive, nationally active, and globally aware higher education institution. The Institutional Stakeholder-Community Engagement Framework guides the initiatives of the Engagement Office in alignment with Vision 2030. The organising mechanism for the ETP's community engagement work is the HoCs, which are transdisciplinary spaces in which University entities and faculties co-construct programmes in collaboration with diverse stakeholder communities. The University recognises that socially engaged scholarship is best derived from an authentic process of learning with others in practice, supportive of multiple forms of knowledge production to drive social inclusion and cohesion.

The new Science Centre with its digital dome is a flagship engagement facility advancing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education, especially for those from marginalised communities. The Science Centre intends to expand its digital exhibitions while strengthening research partnerships with all faculties to broaden public access to science.

2.5 Ocean Sciences

With the first dedicated Ocean Sciences Campus in South Africa, the University is a hub for creative, pioneering transdisciplinary, ocean sciences learning and teaching, research, innovation and engagement. This is geared towards promoting sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities by tapping the economic potential of the oceans, while preserving marine biodiversity and ecological integrity for future generations.

As part of the ocean sciences strategy, the University is harnessing inter- and transdisciplinary research and innovation capabilities that contribute to addressing global sustainability challenges confronting the oceans. Cutting-edge PG qualifications accredited over the past five years include the Honours degree in Marine Engineering, and Master's programmes in Maritime Studies, Maritime Management, and Ocean Governance.

The Department of Atmospheric and Oceanographic Sciences has been reconstituted in the Faculty of Science, after years of operating as a virtual department. As part of a deliberate strategy to expand the University's programme offerings in ocean sciences, a Bachelor of Science Honours in Oceanography is being developed to address a long-standing pipeline gap between UG and Master's programmes.

Developing this ocean sciences niche leverages existing strategic advantages such as the University's five NRF-funded South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chairs in the domains of oceanography and marine food security, ocean governance and the law of the seas in Africa, marine spatial planning, shallow water ecosystems, and ocean cultures and heritage.

Various research entities promote pioneering research and innovation, including the Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR), the FishFORCE Academy, the South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), the African Centre for Coastal Paleoscience, and the Marine Robotics Unit. The University's engagement institute, eNtsa, hosts its new engagement and innovation facility at the Ocean Sciences Campus, which provides product and material testing to the automotive and marine manufacturing industries.

The University is also the headquarters of the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), which enhances the coordination of quality maritime education, training and research with partner institutions nationally and internationally. SAIMI is playing an instrumental role in developing the Ocean Economy Masterplan for South Africa and contributed to G20 ocean processes culminating in the Ocean20SA Summit, themed "Uniting for Ocean Sustainability: Advancing Cooperative Innovation and Partnerships". Beyond this milestone, SAIMI launched a Short Learning Programme (SLP), titled "An Introduction

to Ocean Matters", and its national Maritime Research Repository went live in 2025. In addition, SAIMI hosted a Women's Month event with the Minister for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, which called for practical steps to address the persistent inequalities women face in maritime industries.

The Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR) produced 61 publications during 2025, of which nearly a third directly addressed social equity, inclusion and policy imperatives. The Institute hosted its 2025 Research Symposium under the theme "Science to Impact", guided by the work of the SARChI Chair in Marine Spatial Planning, whose decade of research has expanded the reach and relevance of ocean sciences. CMR hosted a World Environment Day seminar on waste minimisation and management in collaboration with Helenvale Recyclers and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, and a further seminar in August, themed "Voices that Matter: A Perspective from Indigenous Women", which marked National Women's Month and World Indigenous Peoples Day.

In the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for 2025, the University submitted evidence for 11 of the 17 (UN) SDGs, its most ambitious submission since joining the rankings in 2021. It achieved second position in South Africa for SDG 14: Life Below Water, which attests to the University's impact and research pedigree in ocean sciences.

2.6 Medical School

Now in its fifth year, the Medical School is on track to graduate its inaugural cohort of "Mandela Doctors" by 2026. The School is intentionally anchored on the University's Missionvale Campus in Gqeberha to engender urban renewal and regeneration for the benefit of surrounding communities.

The Medical School differentiates itself by enrolling two-thirds of MBChB students from quintile 1-3 schools, thereby dismantling barriers to medical education for low-income communities. Concurrently, efforts focus on diversifying staff demographics and transforming the curriculum to integrate local realities. This comprehensive approach ensures the programme's academic excellence, societal impact, and commitment to accessible, contextually relevant medical training.

The Faculty of Health Sciences has received a letter of endorsement from the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) Clearance from the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to proceed with the MMed (Psychiatry) and MMed (Paediatrics) programmes. These programmes will contribute to the development of research-oriented medical practitioners and specialists in South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape. Curriculum development for a further five MMed programmes is proceeding.



The University's Medical School inaugurated its nine-member Community Advisory Board on Missionvale Campus in 2024. The board supports the Medical School by bringing together diverse insights and community voices as agents of change, ensuring the Medical School remains deeply connected and responsive to the needs of the wider community it serves.

As it approaches its sixth year, the Medical School is at a challenging growth stage. Key issues include limited student funding and bursaries, uncertain future government funding for infrastructure and staffing, Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH) staffing shortfalls, and concerns regarding the clinical training platform. In response to some of these challenges, the Medical School advanced collaboration in health sciences education and training by improving the functioning of the Joint Academic Governance Committee with the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH). Partnerships with the ECDoH and Walter Sisulu University support sustainable clinical education platforms grounded in ethical governance and responsible resource stewardship. Furthermore, the DHET has honoured the pledge to grant the University R100-million to continue with Phase 2 of the Medical School project.

2.7 Revitalising the Humanities

Revitalising the humanities as a transversal priority foregrounds the indispensable role of language, culture, critical inquiry and the arts in shaping a more just and inclusive society. Revitalising the humanities is a central component of the University's overall academic strategy to reimagine the transformative potential of all disciplines in the quest to awaken indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and promote transdisciplinarity. The Faculty of Humanities has undertaken activities towards the realisation of this vision to reposition its learning, teaching and curricula around key areas such as Africa-purposed curricula, digital humanities, entrepreneurship, and social justice.

The Faculty of Humanities intentionally views Africa as a source of knowledge production to diversify and deepen the arts, humanities and social sciences canon and scientific knowledge base, respectively. There is a deliberate focus on the scholarship of African Vernacular Archive and Heritage Studies, and Women's Digital Archive and Gendered Histories.

The Digital Humanities Hub continues to be one of the flagship programmes for the revitalisation of the humanities, engaging with IKS, social justice, and learning and teaching innovation in a digital era. It is conceptualising the intersections between the humanities and technology, critically examining Artificial Intelligence (AI), data, algorithmic bias and human interaction in digitised spaces, a conversation the Faculty is advancing with growing authority in national dialogues on the value of humanistic and ethical considerations in AI. The Faculty has also established the Creative Media Hub to advance digital innovation in the humanities and equip media and creative arts students with entrepreneurial skills. Together, these hubs extend the reach



of the humanities into the digital economy while keeping questions of justice, representation and African scholarship at their centre.

2.8 Transdisciplinarity and Sustainability

Transdisciplinarity and sustainability extend across the boundaries of disciplines and faculties, fostering collaboration and innovation in response to environmental, social and economic challenges. A range of transdisciplinary research projects illustrate the breadth and practical reach of this priority, spanning public health equity, community-owned renewable energy, sustainable housing and ocean sciences; these are reported on in more detail in the Report of the Chairperson of Senate and in the section on Sustainability.

The University has been intensifying the coordination of scholarly work in the broad area of sustainability science to assemble this into an identifiable, collaborative commons under the banner of the MISF. This will seek to synergise the activities of entities such as the CMR, the Sustainability Research Unit, Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Africa Earth Observation Network (AEON), as well as several Research Chairs. The MISF will focus on leveraging the University's pedigree in the following areas: reducing and mitigating climate risks, renewable energy and just energy transitions, and enhancing food security. The MISF hosted its inaugural webinar, "Framing Sustainability in Africa", in July 2025, challenging dominant global sustainability narratives and calling for context-specific frameworks centred on African epistemologies, indigenous innovation and community empowerment. Situated within a working

forestry landscape adjacent to the Garden Route biosphere, the George Campus Sustainability Research Unit is at the forefront of sustainability research, positioning the George Campus as an active innovation hub within MISF.

The University has developed a Social Consciousness and Sustainable Futures (SCSF) foundational module that foregrounds themes such as land, environment, food, economy, constitutional rights, ethics and entrepreneurship. The module aims to develop graduates who are socially conscious and equipped to contribute to sustainable development. The SCSF module was launched in the faculties of Humanities, Education and Law in 2025 and will be expanded to other faculties from 2027.

Several transdisciplinary research projects advanced substantially in 2025, demonstrating the University's capacity to connect transdisciplinary scholarship to pressing societal challenges. The C-Vive Cervical Cancer project, a partnership between the Faculty of EBET's Centre for Community Technologies (CCT), the Faculty of Health Sciences, government and community organisations, addresses long-term public health inequities in the Eastern Cape. Using low-cost technology adapted to resource-constrained settings, the project provides a practical model for how the University's research can generate health equity outcomes in communities with limited access to specialist care.

In the Faculty of EBET, researchers from the University and the University of Potsdam are collaborating on the Ndlambe EcoSUN Green Village project in Ekuphumleni Township. Led by Human Settlements Chair Professor Sijekula Mbanga, this project integrates green building design, grey-water purification and renewable energy systems into community housing. In addition, the Faculty's Photovoltaic Research Group conducts applied research aligned with the solar energy industry, and the uYilo Smart Microgrid combines solar energy with second-life electric vehicle batteries.

In addition to harnessing its academic excellence in sustainability sciences, the University is also intentionally driving the transition towards becoming an environmentally sustainable institution. There are increasing efforts to promote environmental sustainability through innovative solutions to water, energy and food insecurity across its campuses.

2.9 Digitalisation and the Virtual Academy

The University's Digital Transformation (Dx) Strategy frames digitalisation as a core institutional capability underpinning student success, operational resilience and public trust. The Dx strategy is multifaceted and strives to facilitate fully online and hybrid learning and teaching, efficient service delivery, sustained value creation, and agile decision-making through the digitalisation of systems and processes, including investing in integrated information technology, networks, applications, and business intelligence platforms. Substantial investments in Dx projects have been integral

to supporting excellence in academic core missions and support services. This is underpinned by humanising and inclusive approaches to ensure that no student or employee is left behind due to the digital divide.

Digital platforms are now the primary interface through which students, staff and external stakeholders engage with the University, making the quality, reliability and governance of digital services central to the institutional experience. Accordingly, ICT governance is embedded within the University's enterprise risk management framework, ensuring that digital and cybersecurity risks are managed as institutional matters with accountability at executive and Council level rather than as isolated technical concerns.

The Dx strategy includes a catalytic, high-impact project to establish a VA. The VA intends to develop into a large interconnected system for human-centred digital innovation, to advance knowledge and foster collaboration, efficiency, and digital inclusion. The VA will expand the academic reach and impact of the University by enhancing institutional capacity to address the demands of an increasingly digital world and advances in AI.

2.10 Student Entrepreneurship and Youth Employability

Against the backdrop of South Africa's persistently high youth unemployment rate, the University has deepened its investment in entrepreneurship and employability across formal curricula and co-curricular spaces. The University is developing graduates who are employment-ready, entrepreneurially minded and equipped to create economic opportunity rather than merely seek it.

Student entrepreneurship is a key focus area for the University, and the SEYE Working Group was established to coordinate efforts across all faculties and various support service divisions to foster entrepreneurship. The University is part of EDHE, a national platform to advance entrepreneurship at universities. The MUAH for Youth Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation is one of the University's strategic vehicles for addressing critical socio-economic challenges in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, and the broader continent. The MUAH won the inaugural EDHE Champion Award at the 7th annual Awards in November 2025. MUAH was recognised for its exceptional leadership in cultivating a vibrant, university-wide entrepreneurship ecosystem that supports student founders and innovators.

The Career Services Unit connects students with industry, organising sector-specific job fairs and matchmaking events, on-campus presentations and activations by employers. It also pursues global placement partnerships and publishes the annual graduate recruitment handbook. Furthermore, Working Wardrobe, part or full-time placement, a Virtual Career Fair, Work Integrated Learning placement, and volunteering form part of the employability initiatives offered by the University. These initiatives position graduates both for employability in diverse industries and entrepreneurship.



Student entrepreneur, Sinxolo Manengela, founder of NDIMBI Clothing

Through these interventions, the University is developing employability skills and an entrepreneurial mindset, while also giving students opportunities to expand their professional networks and learn from experienced peers through mentorship programmes.

2.11 Food Sovereignty and Security

Food security focuses on access to and the availability of food, whilst food sovereignty addresses empowerment and self-determination in food systems, both of which are crucial for achieving sustainable and equitable outcomes. Food insecurity remains one of the most immediate and consequential challenges facing South Africa's student population. Its effects extend well beyond hunger, undermining class attendance, emotional well-being and the prospect of academic success. The University approaches food sovereignty and security as both a student welfare imperative and a research-driven, community-embedded institutional commitment, recognising that durable solutions require engagement with the structural conditions

that produce food insecurity rather than managing only its symptoms.

The University has established a Student Nutrition Working Group, headed by the DVC Learning and Teaching, to coordinate and address student nutrition, and various efforts are also coordinated by the University's ETP. Student Health Services (SHS) manages the distribution of food parcels through a confidential online application system, and a dedicated Social Worker provides supplementary support to students seeking food assistance. Despite interventions, demand for nutritional packs continues to exceed supply, highlighting the urgency of a more sustainable system for nutritional support.

The University is creating a dynamic strategic framework that guides sustainable growth and continuous improvement while being responsive to societal needs, particularly within a deeply unequal society. Progress relating to the eleven transversal strategic priorities is addressed in greater detail in the remaining chapters of the Annual Report.

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The University Executive Management Committee (MANCO), in cooperation with Council and Senate, is responsible for the strategic management and administration of the University. MANCO members are listed below.

Governance and Leadership

3.1 Council Leadership



Chairperson of Council

Judge Nambitha Dambuza

Judge Nambitha Dambuza, a seasoned South African jurist with over 20 years of experience, was recently appointed as a justice of the Constitutional Court after years of serving in the Supreme Court of Appeal. She holds a BProc and LLB from the University of Natal, and an LLM from Tulane University in the United States (US). Judge Dambuza's judicial influence includes her role as a convenor of the newly appointed judges' induction programme under the South African Judicial Education Institute, and she chairs the Rules Board for South African courts.

Judge Dambuza's involvement in education is noteworthy. She is a visiting professor at Rhodes University's Faculty of Law and has a history of leadership in higher education governance. She has actively engaged in environmental law initiatives, chairing the African Judicial Network on Environmental Law and serving on the Global Judicial Institute on Environmental Law's board.

Deputy Chairperson of Council

Ms Michelle Mbaco

Ms Michelle Mbaco holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Master's Degree in Development Studies from Nelson Mandela University, and served as Vice-President of the Alumni Association until September 2022. An educator by profession, she taught before serving as an official in the Department of Education and later worked at the ANC Parliamentary Caucus as a Senior Manager in the Office of the Chief Whip. She currently works as a consultant in the Training and Development sector.

Ms Mbaco is a trustee on the board of the Raymond Uren Educational Trust and serves as a member of the Accreditation Committee of the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education, UMALUSI. She is currently serving her second term as a member of Council.



Vice-Chancellor (VC)

Professor Sibongile Muthwa

Professor Sibongile Muthwa holds a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, an MSc in Development Policy and Planning from London School of Economics and Political Science, a Bachelor of Arts Honours in Social Work (Wits), and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (Fort Hare).

She has a distinguished career in South Africa and the United Kingdom, where she has worked in both development and public sector institutions as well as in academia. Between 2010 and 2017, she was the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Support at the University, before being appointed to the Vice-Chancellor position on 1 January 2018.

Between 2004 and 2010, she served as Director General of the Eastern Cape Provincial Government. Before joining Government, she was Director of the University of Fort Hare Institute of Government.

Prof Muthwa is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities Council, and chairs its Higher Education Task Force's Working Group on Employability, Entrepreneurship and Skills. She is a South African representative on the BRICS Network University International Governing Board.

She previously served in the Presidential Human Resource Development Council of South Africa and as a Trustee of South African Women in Dialogue. She is a former Commissioner and Deputy Chairperson of the Financial and Fiscal Commission of South Africa. She was the Chairperson of Universities South Africa, a membership organisation representing South Africa's 26 public universities for two consecutive terms spanning January 2020 to December 2023.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation (DVC: E&T)

Professor André Keet

Professor André Keet is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation at the University and currently holds the Research Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation. He is a former Visiting Professor at the Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality in the Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom, and the 2018 Marsha Lilien Gladstein Visiting Professor of Human Rights at the University of Connecticut, United States (US).

He served as Director and Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) and on the Commission for Gender Equality before joining the university sector. Since entering the higher education field, Professor Keet has held professorial positions at the Universities of Pretoria, Fort Hare and Free State. He has served as a transformation advisor and practitioner in various capacities in the sector.

Professor Keet's research and PG supervision focuses on radical approaches to the study of higher education, such as critical and abolitionist university studies.



*Note: The full overview of all Council members is outlined on pages 36–37



Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching (DVC: L&T)

Professor Siphokazi Muki Moeng

Professor Muki Moeng is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching at the University. Formerly Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, a position she held since 2015, Prof Moeng became DVC: L&T in 2023. She completed her BA, Higher Diploma in Education, BEd Honours and DEd degrees at Nelson Mandela University and holds an MSc in Curriculum and Instruction from St Cloud State University in the US.

Prof Moeng was previously the chairperson of the national Education Deans Forum and a former member of the Council on Higher Education (CHE). She is currently the chairperson of the national DVC: Academic/Teaching and Learning Forum and served as a member of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) until December 2022. Her research interests include the scholarship of teaching and learning, democracy and education, humanising pedagogy, and social justice.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation (DVC: RII)

Professor Azwinndini Muronga

Professor Azwinndini Muronga is a theoretical physicist and senior academic leader dedicated to advancing scientific development in Africa. He holds a PhD in Physics from the University of Minnesota, an MSc and BSc Honours in Theoretical Physics from the University of Cape Town, and a BSc in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Venda. His research spans nuclear physics, particle physics, astrophysics and cosmology. Before his appointment as DVC: RII, he served as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science at the University and Director of the University of Johannesburg Soweto Science Centre. Professor Muronga is a committed science educator and plays a key role in the Southern Africa Physics Network (SAPhysNet). He has served on the boards of the South African National Space Agency, South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions and the National Institute for Theoretical and Computational Sciences. Prof Muronga has also held leadership roles in the South African Institute of Physics and the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations (DVC: P&O)

Mr Luthando Jack

Mr Luthando Jack holds a Master's degree in Commerce with a specialisation in Leadership Studies (University of KwaZulu-Natal), a Bachelor of Philosophy in Information and Knowledge Management (Stellenbosch University), a Bachelor of Technology degree in Public Management from the former Port Elizabeth Technikon, and a National Diploma in Public Management and Administration from Eastern Cape Technikon.

Before his appointment at the University, Mr Jack held various positions, including that of Chief Operations Officer for the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council, a public entity of the Office of the Premier responsible for Development Planning and Applied Policy Research.

Executive Director: Finance (ED: F)

Mr Michael Monaghan

Mr Michael Monaghan is a registered member of the South African Institute of Professional Accountants. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce Honours degree in Accounting from the University of South Africa and completed his UG Bachelor of Commerce degree at the former University of Port Elizabeth, now Nelson Mandela University.

After completing his articles, he spent a short while in the private sector before joining the University in 2000. He rose through the ranks of finance and took over the role of Executive Director: Finance, acting for a year in this position before being formally appointed in 2016.





Registrar

Mr Edgar De Koker

Mr Edgar De Koker holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration (University of Warwick, United Kingdom), a Bachelor of Arts Honours in Public Administration (UNISA), and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Administration (University of Cape Town). He has held various positions, which include Deputy Registrar: Secretariat and Policy Management at the University of the Western Cape and Control Committee Secretary at the Parliament of South Africa.

Dean of Students

Dr Sibusiso Mchunu

Dr Sibusiso Mchunu joined Nelson Mandela University in 2025 from the Vaal University of Technology, where he served as Executive Director: Student Support Services and Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Resources and Operations. He has more than 20 years of experience in student services, with positions that include being Dean of Students at Mangosuthu University of Technology and the University of Zululand. He has also served as the Director: Student Services at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and at Wits University.

Dr Mchunu holds a PhD in Leadership Studies and an MCom in Organisational and Management Systems from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as an MEd from the University of Newcastle (United Kingdom).

Dr Mchunu was appointed Dean of Students in September 2025. He took over from Dr Nosipho Delubom, who acted in this position in August, who in turn took over from Ms Vuyo Bongela, who was Acting Dean of Students until the end of July 2025.



Advisory or Co-opted Members of the Management Committee

The following members served in an advisory capacity on MANCO:

- Ms Nandipha Sishuba, Executive Director: Human Resources
- Professor Heather Nel, Senior Director: Institutional Strategy
- Dr Sizwe Nyenyiso, Senior Director: Internal Audit
- Dr Denver Webb, Senior Director: Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement (SRMA)
- Ms Sameera Patel, Director: Executive Support to the Vice-Chancellor

An overview of various committees reporting directly to MANCO is depicted below in Figure 5.

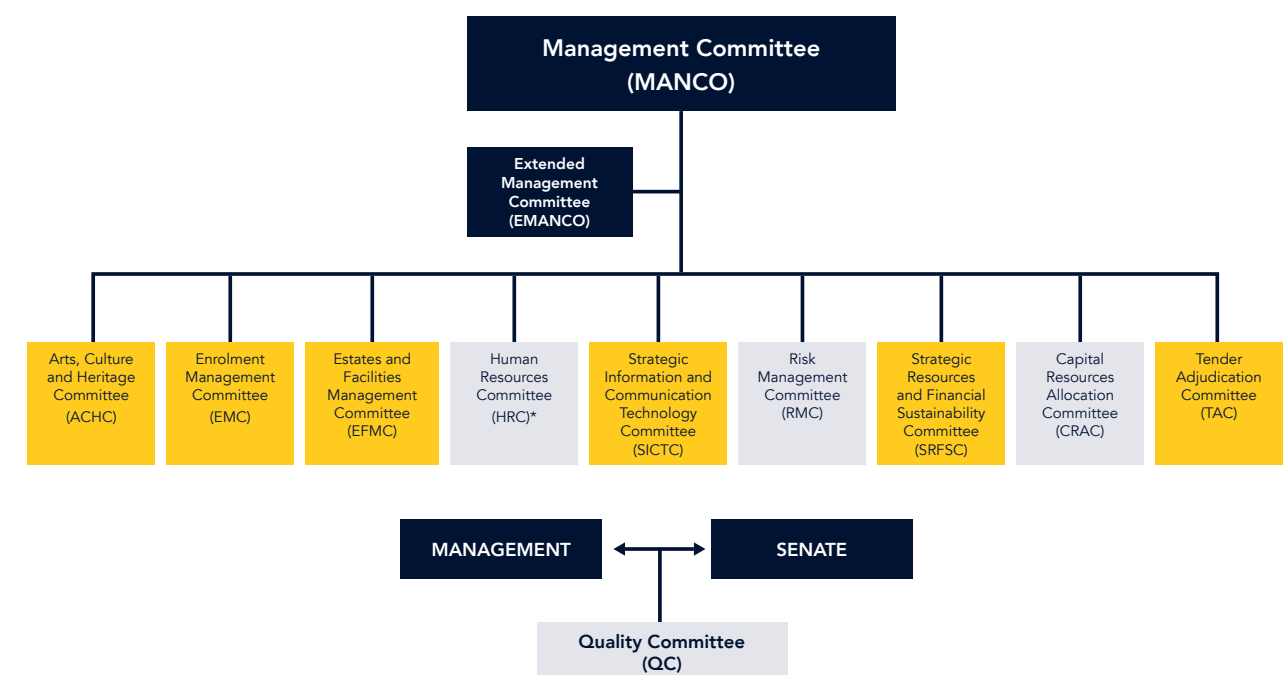


Figure 5: Management Committee and Management Committee Structure

Report of the Chairperson of Council

4.1 Role of Council

The Council, established in terms of Section 27(4) of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997) as amended, is the highest decision-making body of the University and is responsible for the good order and governance of the institution. In practical terms, the Council is responsible for, inter alia:

- Governing the University in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements and with due regard to generally accepted governance principles and practices
- Determining the overall strategic direction of the University
- Overseeing the proper management of the financial resources and assets of the University
- Adopting the vision, mission, and value statements of the University
- Approving and monitoring the implementation of institutional policies and structures
- Identifying and monitoring risks relevant to the University
- Monitoring the transformation process at the University
- Adopting its own rules, including the Code of Conduct for members of Council, in terms of which it conducts its activities.

Council has committed the University to sound principles of governance as outlined in the King IV Report on Corporate Governance (King IV). The University also subscribes to the King IV philosophy of leadership, sustainability and corporate citizenship. This subsumes issues of risk management, compliance, ethical business practice, avoiding conflicts of interest and accounting integrity and transparency. It also includes ensuring diversity in the members of Council, and other governing bodies, and maintaining financial and

accounting transparency. The Audit and Risk Committee assisted Council in the execution of its risk management responsibilities by, inter alia, reviewing the key institutional risks to the University, as well as considering and monitoring the institutional risk management process and plan.

4.2 Environmental, Social and Governance Reporting

The University has made significant strides in integrating sustainability and ESG reporting principles into its institutional fabric. In compliance with the reporting regulations of the DHET, the University is committed to integrated reporting that encompasses the economic, environmental, social, and governance aspects of its operations.

The University's sustainability conceptual framework comprehensively links all four pillars to enhance accountability and promote the public good:

- **Economic:** Integrates financial accountability and strategic resource allocation models to ensure the long-term viability of the institution.
- **Environmental:** Evaluates the extent to which university operations contribute to carbon reduction, campus greening, water and energy security, and waste management.
- **Social:** Emphasises the institution's commitment to socially just, humanising learning and teaching, impactful research, and transformative engagement in the service of society.
- **Governance:** Encompasses rigorous monitoring, evaluation, risk management, and oversight by internal governance structures to promote ethical governance and leadership.



Figure 6: Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting

This approach ensures transparency and accountability in the journey towards co-creating socially just and sustainable futures (see Figure 6).

To give effect to an evidence-informed approach to monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, the University is implementing an integrated institutional reporting system (IIRS) across all MANCO portfolios. As the University is on the cusp of the second five-year term of implementing its Vision 2030 decadal strategy (2026-2030), it is anticipated that the rollout of the IIRS with online performance dashboards tracking progress against strategy-aligned indicators, baselines and targets, will provide a platform for effective governance oversight.

These efforts underscore the University's role in shaping sustainable development pathways both within and beyond its academic missions. For a more detailed outline of the

University's commitment to sustainability, see the chapter on Sustainability later in this report.

In South Africa, the Council serves as the highest governance body within public higher education institutions and plays a fundamental role in setting performance objectives as mandated by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997(HEA) (Guidelines for Good Governance Practice and Governance Indicators for Councils of South African Public Higher Education Institutions, 2017). The Council is responsible for determining the mission, objectives, goals, strategies and policies for the progress of the institution, and must ensure an environment conducive to efficient, effective, economical and ethical attainment of these goals. In fulfilling this responsibility, the University Council embraces ethical and effective leadership towards the achievement of governance outcomes, as it aligns with King V to ensure that monitoring and evaluation produce ethical behaviour, sustainable value creation and prudent resource stewardship.



4.3 Council and Council Committees

The composition of Council, as contemplated in paragraph 5 of the Institutional Statute, provides for membership of external members, as well as employees and students of the University. The external members of the Council constitute more than 60% of its membership and are appointed for a four-year term. The majority of the external members are appointed on account of their competencies in fields such as governance, finance, law, human rights, business, and higher education and training. Unless appointed ex officio, internal members are appointed to Council for a three-year term, and students are appointed for one year.

This diverse composition of Council and Council Committees yields positive and constructive interactions at meetings. Council has established various committees to assist it in the execution of its functions. Figure 7 provides an overview of Council committees.

The following section provides information on Council members for 2025. Sadly, Dr Monde Mayekiso passed away in July, and Prof Lis Lange in October 2025. Dr Mayekiso was a Council member and member of the Audit and Risk Committee, and Prof Lange was a former member of Council before stepping down earlier in 2025.

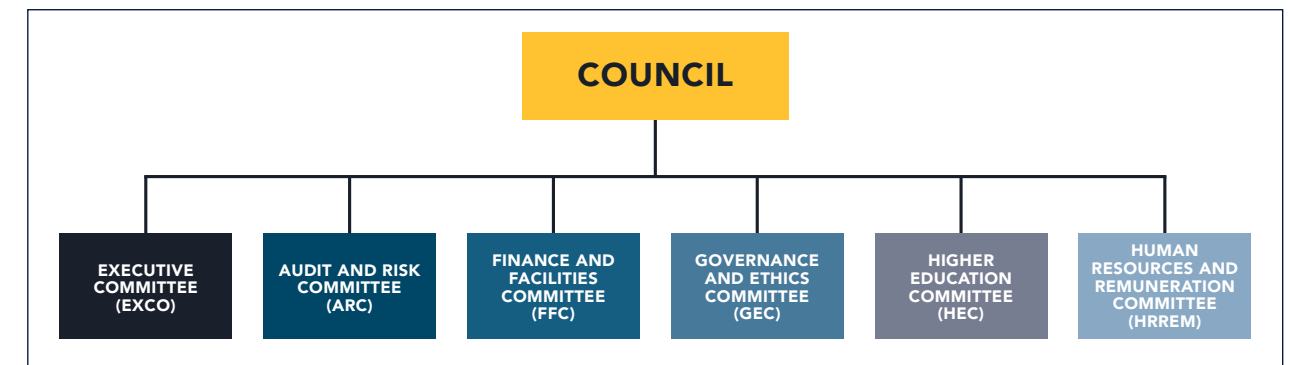


Figure 7: Council committees



2025 MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

The following section provides information on Council members for 2025.



Judge Nambitha Dambuza
Chairperson of Council
Law and Human Rights
and Inclusion, Civil Society
*Appointed in terms of
Par 5(3)(a) of the Statute*



Ms Michelle Mbaco
Vice-Chairperson
Public Sector Matters
*Appointed in terms of
Par 5(3)(b) of the Statute*



Mr Mziwabantu Dayimani
Law and Human Rights, Corporate
Governance, Human Resources,
Strategy Development
*Appointed in terms of Par 5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Dr Pumelele Gama
*Academic Employee elected
by such Employees*



Ms Lee-Ann Groener
*Employee, other than an
Academic Employee, elected
by such Employees*



Mr Siphile Hlwatika
Employment litigation and General
Employment Law across various sectors
*Appointed in terms of paragraph 5(3)(b)
of the Statute*



Mr Luthando Jack
*Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
People and Operations*



Ms Sibongile Jongile
Finance Management, Strategy
Development, People Development,
Public Administration, Governance,
Organisational Change
*Appointed in terms of Par5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Mr Ashley Latchu
IT Governance specialist
Ministerial Appointee



Adv Boitumelo Linchwe-Tlhakung
Law and Human Rights
*Appointed in terms of Par5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Ms Bontle Litheko
Law, Legal Advisory, Corporate
Governance and Strategic
Development
Ministerial Appointee



Dr Thandi Mabeba
Medicine, Law, Corporate
Governance
Ministerial Appointee



Mr Donald MacLean
Finance
*Appointed in terms of Par 5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Lathitha Mbuzwana
SRC Representative



Ms Buhle Mchunu
SRC Representative



Ms Nompandolo Mkatshwa
Public Sector Matters
Ministerial appointee



Prof Muki Moeng
*Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Learning
& Teaching*



Prof Sibongile Muthwa
Vice-Chancellor



Mr Vernon Naidoo
Corporate Communications,
Community Development, Project
Management
*Appointed in terms of paragraph
5(3)(a) of the Statute*



Prof Ronney Ncwadi
*Senate Member
appointed by Senate*



Ms Zanele Nyoka
IT Transformation, Strategic Vendor
Management, IT Enablement
*Appointed in terms of Par5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Mr Joseph Samuels
Educational Policy, Qualifications
Frameworks, Standards Setting,
Quality Assurance and Adult and
Community Education
*Appointed in terms of with Par5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Ms Elinor Sisulu
Leadership and Management, Partnership
Development, Strategic Advisor Leader In
Reading and Literacy Promotion and Award
Winning Author
*Appointed in terms of paragraph 5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Dr Zithulele Tshabalala
Institutional Forum Chairperson



Ms Rene van Wyk
Finance (Accounting, Auditing), Operations
and General Management
*Appointed in terms of Par5(3)(a) of
the Statute*



Dr Nolitha Vukuza
Private Sector, Public Institutions and
Bodies, Legislature, Higher Education
Diplomatic Relations, International
UN Agencies
Ministerial appointee



Prof Paul Watts
Senate Member appointed by Senate

4.3.1 Executive Committee

► Composition

The Executive Committee (EXCO) consists of:

- (a) The Chairperson of the Council, who is the chairperson: Judge N Dambuza
- (b) The Vice-Chairperson of the Council: Ms M Mbaco
- (c) The chairpersons of the other five Council committees contemplated below (with the exception of those chaired by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Council)
- (d) The Vice-Chancellor: Prof S Muthwa.

► Functions and powers

The Executive Committee may co-opt one or more members of the Management Committee in an advisory capacity without voting rights. The members contemplated in sub-paragraph (b) are the Executive Director: Finance and the Executive Director: Human Resources.

The Executive Committee makes recommendations to the Council on:

- (a) The Statute and the Rules of the University
- (b) The broad organisational structure of the University
- (c) Strategic matters, including medium- and long-term strategic plans of the University
- (d) Council's performance objectives on recommendation of the Governance and Ethics Committee
- (e) The delegation document of the University
- (f) The following matters related to Council's membership and functioning:
 - (i) Determines the knowledge and experience required of members to be appointed to Council in terms of paragraph 5(3)(a) and (b) of the Statute
 - (ii) Recommends to Council the appointment of the members contemplated in paragraph 5(3)(a) of the Statute in accordance with the procedure determined in paragraph 4
 - (iii) Annually reviews the size, demographics, knowledge and experience profile of the Council and recommends any amendments in this regard to the Council
- (g) Any matters falling outside the ambit of the other Council committees.

The Executive Committee:

- (h) May make decisions on behalf of Council on matters of an urgent nature, provided that any such decisions be ratified by Council at its next meeting
- (i) Has, in terms of its delegated authority, final decision-making powers in respect of matters determined in the delegation document of the University

- (j) May advise Council on any matter which it deems expedient for the effective and efficient management of the University and must, at the request of Council, advise on any matter within the mandate of the Executive Committee
- (k) Provides strategic coordination in between Council meetings
- (l) Deals with matters referred by other Council committees for its input
- (m) Convenes, if deemed necessary, joint sittings of Council committees
- (n) Approves the conditions of service of the Vice-Chancellor and matters related thereto as contemplated in the delegation document
- (o) Performs such other functions as the Council may determine.

4.3.2 Governance and Ethics Committee

► Composition

The Committee consists of:

- (a) One member of Council, elected by Council as the chairperson of the Committee: Mr J Samuels
- (b) At least three members elected by Council on account of their knowledge and experience in governance practices: Mr M Dayimani, Mr K Blose¹, Ms S Jongile, Ms M Mbaco
- (c) The Vice-Chancellor: Prof S Muthwa.

► Functions and powers

- (a) The Governance and Ethics Committee has final decision-making powers in respect of matters pertaining to the induction of newly appointed Council members and makes recommendations to Council on:
 - (i) The Rules of the Council, including the Code of Conduct for members of Council
 - (ii) The establishment of the committees of Council
 - (iii) The dissolution of the committees of Council after consultation with such committees
 - (iv) The training of members of Council, if required
 - (v) The annual setting and assessment of the achievement of the performance objectives of Council
 - (vi) The annual self-assessment of Council and the annual assessment of the achievement of the set performance objectives of Council.
- (b) The Governance and Ethics Committee makes recommendations to Council on matters of an ethical and social nature, in general, inclusive of:
 - (i) Any corporate governance and ethics policies, practices, processes and guidelines
 - (ii) Ongoing developments and best practices in corporate governance and ethical issues affecting the University

(iii) Oversight and reporting on:

- 1. Organisational ethics
- 2. Responsible corporate citizenship
- 3. Sustainable development
- 4. Stakeholder relationships.

(c) The Governance and Ethics Committee:

- (i) Recommends Council's performance objectives to the Executive Committee each year
- (ii) May advise Council on any governance and ethics matter which it deems expedient for the efficient and effective performance of Council
- (iii) Must, at the request of Council, advise Council on any matter within its mandate
- (iv) Performs such other functions as Council may determine.

4.3.3 Human Resources and Remuneration Committee

► Composition

The Committee consists of:

- (a) One member of Council, elected by Council as the chairperson of the Committee: Adv B Tlhakung
- (b) The Chairperson of the Finance and Facilities Committee of Council and at least two other members of such committee: Mr D MacLean, Mr M Odayar and Mr L Jack
- (c) At least three members elected by Council on account of their expertise and experience in human resource management and remuneration matters:
 - (i) Council members – Judge N Dambuza, Mr Dayimani, Ms S Jongile
 - (ii) External members (not on Council) – Mr SG Zamisa
- (d) The Vice-Chancellor: Prof S Muthwa
- (e) One or more members of the Management Committee on such conditions as determined in the Rules of Council: Ms N Sishuba.

► Functions and powers

- (a) The Human Resources and Remuneration Committee:
 - (i) Makes recommendations to the Council on human resource and remuneration policy matters and conditions of service applicable to employees in relation to senior management employees. This excludes the Vice-Chancellor, in particular, and employees other than senior management employees in general
 - (ii) Makes recommendations to the Executive Committee on annual salary increases for employees, including any performance-based increments or bonus payments, where applicable

- (iii) Makes recommendations to the Executive Committee on specific remuneration packages of members of senior management, excluding the Vice-Chancellor
- (iv) Addresses reviews of the salary structure of the University and makes the relevant recommendations to the Executive Committee.

(b) The Human Resources and Remuneration Committee:

- (i) May advise Council on any matter which it deems expedient for the effective and efficient management of human resources and remuneration matters
- (ii) Performs such other functions as Council may determine.

4.3.4 Finance and Facilities Committee

► Composition

The Committee consists of:

- (a) One member of Council, elected by Council as the chairperson of the Committee: Mr D MacLean
- (b) At least three members elected by Council on account of their knowledge and expertise in financial management and management of physical infrastructure: Mr K Blose¹, Ms Z Nyoka, Mr M Odayar, Mr S Somdya²
- (c) The Vice-Chancellor: Prof S Muthwa
- (d) One or more members of the Management Committee on such conditions as determined in the Rules of Council: Mr L Jack, Mr M Monaghan.

► Functions and powers

The Finance and Facilities Committee makes recommendations to the Council on matters relating to the financial and facilities management of the University, including but not limited to:

- (a) The three-year rolling plan of the University as it relates to financial matters:
 - (i) Financial policy matters
 - (ii) The annual budget of the University
 - (iii) The financial implications for the University in respect of a loan or overdraft agreement; the purchasing of immovable property; a long-term lease of immovable property; the construction of a permanent building or other immovable infrastructural development and maintenance of, and alterations to, infrastructure exceeding an amount as determined from time to time by Council
 - (iv) The tuition fees, residence fees and any other fees payable by students
 - (v) The accommodation fees payable by employees
 - (vi) Resource allocations
 - (vii) Writing off bad debts exceeding an amount as determined from time to time by the Council
 - (viii) The management accounts



- (ix) Ad hoc allocations outside the approved annual budget [not] exceeding amounts as may be determined by the Council
- (x) Annual assessment of budget surpluses for redistribution to the Endowment Fund of the Nelson Mandela University Trust.

(b) The Finance and Facilities Committee:

- (i) May advise Council on any matter which it deems expedient for the efficient and effective financial and facilities management of the University
- (ii) Must, at the request of Council, advise Council on any matter within the mandate of the Committee
- (iii) Performs such other functions as Council may determine.

4.3.5 Audit and Risk Committee

► Composition

The Committee consists of:

- (a) One member of Council elected by Council as chairperson, provided that the Chairperson of Council is not eligible for election as chairperson of the Committee: Ms R van Wyk
- (b) At least three other members elected by the Council on account of their knowledge and experience of the audit function: Adv B Tlhakung, Mr L Billings, Mr SG Zamisa,

Mrs N Dhevcharran, Mr T Ramawa³, Dr M Mayekiso⁴ Dr T Mabeba⁵, Mr L Tukani⁵

- (c) The Vice-Chancellor, the external auditor of the University, the heads of Internal Audit and Risk Management and those members of the Management Committee as determined in the ARC Charter may be invited to attend meetings of the Committee as non-voting members.

► Functions and powers

- (a) The Audit and Risk Committee is appointed by Council to assist it in discharging its oversight responsibilities. The Committee oversees the financial reporting process to ensure the balance, transparency and integrity of reports and published financial information. The Committee performs the functions and exercises the powers prescribed in the Charter of the Audit and Risk Committee.

- (b) The overall purpose and objectives of the Committee are to review:

- (i) The effectiveness of the University's internal financial control and risk management system(s)
- (ii) The effectiveness of the internal audit function
- (iii) The independent audit process including recommending the appointment and assessing the performance of the external auditor
- (iv) The University's process for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations affecting financial reporting

- (v) The process for monitoring compliance with the University's Code of Conduct applicable to staff members
- (vi) The oversight for the governance of information technology.

4.3.6 Higher Education Committee

► Composition

The Committee consists of:

- (a) One member of Council, elected by Council as chairperson of the Committee: Mr L Mosana²
- (b) The Vice-Chancellor: Prof S Muthwa
- (c) At least three members elected by Council on account of their knowledge and experience in higher education: Ms M Mbaco, Prof L Lange⁴, Dr N Vukuza
- (d) The Deputy Vice-Chancellors of Learning and Teaching, Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, and Engagement and Transformation: Prof M Moeng, Prof Azwinndini Muronga, Prof A Keet
- (e) The Senior Director: Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement to attend meetings in an advisory capacity, without voting rights: Dr D Webb.

► Functions and powers

The Higher Education Committee makes recommendations to Council on:

- (a) Higher education policy and related issues pertinent to the successful functioning of the University and achievement of its vision, mission and strategic goals
- (b) Other national policy issues pertinent to the successful functioning of the University and achievement of its vision, mission and strategic goals
- (c) Global trends in knowledge and production thereof that may have pertinence to the successful functioning of the University and achievement of its vision, mission and strategic goals
- (d) Any higher education-related policy and strategic innovations that may make a significant impact on improving the capacity of the University to fulfil its core mandate
- (e) Academic positioning and engagement matters related to the strategic intentions of the University, including international partnerships.

The Higher Education Committee performs such other functions as the Council may determine to champion the strategic priorities of the University.

All committees are formally constituted, with terms of reference and most of their membership comprising external members of Council. In terms of the Rules of Council, external members of Council with the appropriate skills and experience chaired all these committees.

During the period under review, all matters served at Council committees were implemented in accordance with the University's delegation of decision-making authority document. Council held four Ordinary Council meetings in 2025 and one Special Council meeting, with attendance at these meetings averaging 89.8%. Council minutes of the meetings are available as supplementary information.

Key:

- ¹ Member whose term of office came to an end on 14 April 2025 (Mr K Blose)
- ² Members whose term came to an end on 14 August 2025 (Mr L Mosana, Mr S Somdyala)
- ³ Member who resigned from ARC (Mr T Ramawa)
- ⁴ Members who passed away during the year in 2025 (Dr M Mayekiso, Prof L Lange)
- ⁵ Members who were appointed to ARC (Dr T Mabeba, Mr L Tukani)

4.4 Attendance of Council Committee Meetings by External Consultants

The following external consultants attended meetings of Council committees during 2025 to address specific items:

4.4.1 First Quarter

► ARC

- Ms A Nonkwali – SNG Grant Thornton
- Ms A Dire – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr L Nongogo – Auditor General South Africa (AGSA)
- Ms R Raga – PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC)

► HRREM

- Mr D Munton – Alexforbes

4.4.2 Second Quarter

► ARC

- Ms A Dire – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr L Madalane – AGSA
- Ms A Nonkwali – SNG Grant Thornton
- Ms R Raga – PWC
- Mr C Thomas – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr K Charandura – SNG Grant Thornton

► HRREM

- Mr D Munton – Alexforbes

► Special ARC Meeting June

- Ms A Dire – SNG Grant Thornton
- Ms A Nonkwali – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr T Mogano – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr L Nongogo – AGSA
- Ms R Raga – PWC
- Mr A Rathan – PWC



4.4.3 Third Quarter

► ARC

- Ms A Dire – SNG Grant Thornton
- Mr T Nomkopo – AGSA
- Ms A Nonkwali – SNG Grant Thornton

4.4.4 Fourth Quarter

► ARC

- Ms A Dire – SNG Grant Thornton
- Ms A Nonkwali – SNG Grant Thornton
- Ms R Raga – PWC
- Mr A Rathan – PWC

► HRREM

- Mr D Munton – Alexforbes

4.5 Remuneration of Councillors

External Council members received honoraria for attendance at meetings in accordance with University policies. The honoraria for 2025 were reviewed by Council and approved as follows:

- Chairperson of Council: R2 344
- Vice-Chairperson of Council and Chairpersons of Council Committees: R1 992

- External Members of Council and Council committees: R1 757

The honoraria are adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as determined by Statistics South Africa in the preceding year.

4.6 Substantive Matters Considered by Council

Below is a list of substantive matters that were considered by Council during 2025. Detailed resolutions are contained in the various minutes of Council meetings.

4.6.1 Appointment of Council members

- The following members were appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training: Mr A Latchu, Ms B Litheko, Dr T Mabeba and Ms N Mkatshwa
- Mr L Mbuzwana was appointed to Council as a Student Representative Council (SRC) member
- Ms B Mchunu was appointed to Council as Student Representative Council (SRC) member
- Dr P Gama was elected as an academic representative on Council (he takes over from Prof N Mkhize)
- Mr S Hlwatika was elected as an alumni representative on Council (he takes over from Mr K Blose)
- Prof P Watts was elected as a Senate representative on Council (he takes over from Prof D van Greunen)

4.6.2 Council members' expiry of terms during 2025

- Ms Z Nyoka's term expired on 30 June 2025. She was re-elected to serve in Council and on the Committee she previously served (FFC)
- Mr J Samuels, Ms S Jongile and Ms R van Wyk's first terms on Council expired on 30 June 2025 and they were re-elected to the committees they served in. Both Mr J Samuels and Ms R van Wyk were re-elected as chairpersons of the Committees in which they served (GEC and ARC, respectively)
- Mr K Blose's second term expired on 14 April 2025. Mr Blose was appointed to Council in terms of paragraph 5(3) (b) of the Statute
- Prof D van Greunen's term expired on 30 June 2025. Prof van Greunen was a member of the Senate, elected by the Senate to serve on Council
- Prof Mkhize's term expired on 30 June 2025. Prof Mkhize was an academic employee elected by academic employees to serve on Council

4.6.3 Appointment of Council Committee members

- Mr A Latchu was appointed to the FFC
- Mr B Litheko was appointed to GEC
- Dr T Mabeba was appointed to ARC
- Ms N Mkatshwa was appointed to the IF and HEC
- Ms E Sisulu was appointed to HEC
- Mr L Tukani was appointed to the ARC
- Mr S Hlwatika was appointed to the IF and Review Committee of Council

4.6.4 Integrated Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

- The narrative component of the Integrated Annual Report was approved
- The Consolidated Annual Financial Statements were approved
- The Transformation Report was approved as an annexure to the Integrated Annual Report
- The Annual ARC Report and Internal Control Environment Report for 2024 were approved as part of the Integrated Annual Report

4.6.5 Mid-Year Performance Report for 2025

The Mid-Year Performance Report for 2025 was approved.

4.6.6 Annual Performance Plan for 2026

The Annual Performance Plan for 2026 was approved.

4.6.7 Institutional Budget for 2026

The Institutional Budget for 2026 was approved.



An Honorary Doctorate in Music was conferred on distinguished jazz singer, Letta Mbulu

4.6.8 Enrolment and Efficiency Targets for 2026–2030

The amended Enrolment and Efficiency Targets for 2026–2030 were approved.

4.6.9 Department of Higher Education Governance Indicators Scorecard

The Governance Indicators Scorecard (Council's Performance Assessment for 2024) was approved.



Council elected Dr Grace Naledi Pandor as the University Chancellor with effect from 1 April 2026

4.6.10 Honorary Doctoral Degrees Conferred in 2025

Four Honorary Doctoral Degrees were conferred during the 2025 graduation season.

4.6.11 Senior Management appointments and re-appointments approved by Council

- The re-appointment of the Executive Dean: Humanities, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The re-appointment of the Executive Director: Finance, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The re-appointment of the Senior Director: Support Services, on a five-year, fixed-term contract, was approved
- The appointment of the Dean of Students, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The re-appointment of the Senior Director: Infrastructure Services and Space Optimisation, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The re-appointment of the Dean: Learning and Teaching, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The re-appointment of the Senior Director: Missionvale, 2nd Avenue and Bird Street, on a five-year, fixed-term contract
- The appointment of the Chief Information Officer, Mr Lubabalo Lokwe, on a five-year, fixed-term contract

4.6.12 Revisions to substantive policies approved by Council

- Debt Management Policy
- Banking Policy
- Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Council Committees
- Declaration of Conflict-of-Interest Policy
- Attraction and Retention of Scarce and Critical Skills Policy
- Policy on the Management of Formal Study
- Management of Excellence Awards for PASS Employees Policy
- Nelson Mandela University Language Policy
- Talent Acquisition and Selection Policy Post Levels 2–4 (IRC 601.30) (previously, Policy on Recruitment and Selection Post Levels 2–4)
- Policy on Declaration of Gifts in Cash or Kind

4.6.13 Reports from the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor provided an overview of strategic matters at every Council meeting.

4.6.14 Induction and Strategic Reflection Sessions

- The Council Induction was held on 28 October 2025, facilitated by the following University staff members: Prof S Muthwa, Prof H Nel and Mr E De Koker
- The Council Strategic Reflection Session was held on 26 November 2025 and was enriched by presentations from Prof PT Zeleza, Prof Nel and Mr E De Koker

4.6.15 Portfolio Committee on Higher Education

In March 2025, the University was invited to an engagement with the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education. The engagement with the Portfolio Committee emphasised the importance of good governance, with transparent, accountable leadership fostering academic excellence. The Director-General praised the University's governance, noting its high performance on the DHET governance scorecard and its role as a model institution for underperforming universities.

4.6.16 Inquiry Panel to investigate Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Harassment (SH) on all University Campuses

The Inquiry Panel investigated GBV and sexual harm across all University Campuses. The matter had been under the attention of the Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) since the release of the Commission for Gender Equality's research report on sexual harassment in higher education institutions in December 2024.

Most notably, the committee was unable to substantiate the allegations of abuse and sexual harassment, primarily due to a lack of response by the respondents, despite repeated assurances of confidentiality provided by the evidence leader. Other matters of concern highlighted in the report included safety and security in certain residences, non-compliance with norms and standards set by the DHET and the role and responsibilities of Residence Managers.

Subsequent visits to the residences by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Council, accompanied by the DVC: People and Operations and the DVC: Learning and Teaching, confirmed what was contained in the Investigation Report.

The following resolutions were taken by Council:

- That the Investigation Report into Sexual Harassment and GBV on University Campuses be accepted as recommended by the EXCO
- That the Report be published and made available on the University's website, with the names of specific individuals redacted
- That the Report be placed on the agendas of Senate and the Institutional Forum to solicit their input and responses, as well as on a platform that enabled meaningful student engagement, to promote transparency and inclusive dialogue, which would help dispel the prevailing culture of silence.

4.6.17 Election of Chancellor

Council elected Dr Grace Naledi Pandor as the University Chancellor with effect from 1 April 2026. Dr Pandor's appointment for a period of four years is in terms of the University Statute which gives effect to the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), as amended. Dr Pandor succeeds Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, whose term comes to an end on 31 March 2026. Dr Pandor's appointment reflects Council's confidence in her ability to provide principled leadership and serve as an inspiring ambassador for the institution.

4.7 Statements of Council

4.7.1 Statement on Code of Conduct

The Rules of Council, including a Code of Conduct for Council members, are primarily based on the Higher Education Act of 1997, the Institutional Statute and the principles outlined in the King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa, where applicable. The purpose of the Code of Conduct for Council members is to establish agreement on standards of morally acceptable behaviour within Council, to guide ethical decision-making, to strengthen commitment to the University and to enhance the reputation of Council among stakeholders of the University.

The Code regulates, *inter alia*, conflicts of interest, prohibited activities and transgressions of the Code. In addition, the University's core values commit all employees and students

to act with integrity, requiring ethical, professional behaviour and acting in an accountable and transparent manner.

4.7.2 Statement on Conflict Resolution

The employees and students of the University are guided by various policies to address and resolve any grievances relating to their working and/or learning experiences. These policies include:

- Employee disciplinary procedure and code
- Grievance procedure
- Picketing rules
- Student disciplinary code
- Conditions for holding student demonstrations or protest action within the University
- Students' academic grievance policy and procedure.

In addition to the above, labour disputes between management and organised labour are guided by the respective Collective Agreements between the University and the two recognised unions as well as the relevant legislation, including the Labour Relations Act (1995).

4.7.3 Statement on Worker and Student Participation

The University is a people-centred institution that supports the establishment of sound relationships with internal and external publics. The Council and management of the University are committed to cooperative governance. Employees and students serve on the official governance structures of the University, such as Council, Senate and the Institutional Forum, as well as Management and Senate committees. In accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy of the University, appointment committees included representatives of organised labour and students throughout 2025.

4.7.4 Statement on Effective Ethical Leadership and Corporate Citizenship, Governance of Risk, Governance of Information Technology, Compliance with Laws, Codes, Rules and Standards

The University is committed to ensuring effective ethical leadership and corporate citizenship, governance of risk, governance of information technology, and compliance with laws, codes, rules and standards. The Audit and Risk Committee, as well as the Governance and Ethics Committees, were established to deliver on these mandates.

► Governance and Ethics Committee

The Governance and Ethics Committee makes recommendations to Council on matters of an ethical and social nature, including any governance and ethics policies, practices, processes and guidelines, as well as ongoing developments and best practices in governance and ethical issues affecting the University. The Committee

provides oversight of and reports on organisational ethics, responsible corporate citizenship, sustainable development, and stakeholder relationships.

King IV Compliance, Ethics, Prevention of Corruption and Fraud

The King IV Report (Principle 8) requires that the governing body governs risk in a way that enables the organisation to sustain and optimise its strategy and objectives. In this regard, Council is responsible for ensuring that risk governance practices are integrated into strategic decisionmaking, support organisational resilience and promote the achievement of institutional goals within approved risk appetite and tolerance levels. The University's governance structures, including Council and its sub-committees, oversee the implementation of the King IV Report principles through quarterly submissions that ensure that governance outcomes support the institution's strategic objectives.

The application of the King IV Report is evident in the following implemented principles, among others:

- Council-approved governance instruments, including the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and the Ombuds Charter, establish a formal framework for managing and deterring unethical conduct in the University
- Oversight of ethics-related matters is strengthened through quarterly reporting by the Office of the Registrar and the Internal Audit Department to the relevant governance structures. This enables management and Council to identify trends, address emerging risks and implement corrective action where necessary
- The University applies a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, corruption and theft. Disciplinary policies and procedures

are consistently applied, reinforcing ethical standards and mitigating governance and reputational risks. Through these measures, the University supports effective risk management, sound governance and the achievement of its strategic objectives

- During the period under review, Council approved the Declaration of Conflict-of-Interest Policy, reaffirming its commitment to good governance and to cultivating an ethical culture across the institution. The University intends to adopt King V, which is effective from 1 Jan 2026.

Integrated Assurance

Council is required to ensure that assurance functions and services promote an effective internal control environment and safeguard the integrity of external reports issued by the University. Additionally, Principle 12 of the King IV Report recommends that the governing body exercises oversight to ensure that the integrated assurance model is appropriately designed to provide effective coverage of the organisation's significant risks. This is achieved through a suitably coordinated combination of assurance activities, tailored to the University's context and risk profile. It is against this background that the University has adopted five lines of defence as depicted in Table 1 below.

These lines have individual and collective roles in supporting the University's internal control environment:

- The first line of defence comprises business and process owners, who are primarily responsible for maintaining an effective system of internal controls and for executing risk and control procedures on a day-to-day basis. Business and process owners are also responsible for developing and implementing policies, procedures and other controls

5th Line			
- Council - Council Committees - Senate			
↕	↕	↕	↕
1st Line	2nd Line	3rd Line	4th Line
- Line Manager - MANCO - EMANCO - RMC - ICTC - Academic Programmes Committee - Management Committees	- Risk Advisory - Quality Advancement - Research Ethics - Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) - Legal Services - Safety, Health & Environment (SHE) - Protection Services - Employee Relations - Finance - Transformation - Deputy Information Officers	- Internal Audit - Fraud Investigations	- Ombud - External Audit - Council on Higher Education - South African Qualifications Authority - Department of Higher Education & Training - Department of Science, Technology & Innovation - Department of Employment & Labour - Department of Basic Education - Professional Bodies

Table 1: Integrated assurance



that are pertinent in ensuring that activities are consistent with the University's goals and objectives.

- The second line of defence comprises internal support functions that are established by management with a certain level of independence from operations, to ensure that the first line of defence is properly designed and operating as intended. The main responsibility of these functions is to assist management to design adequate and effective systems of risk management and internal controls by designing and implementing frameworks, policies, tools, and techniques to support risk and compliance management.
- The third line of defence provides an independent and objective assurance to senior management and the Council committees that the efforts of the first and second lines of defence effectively manage the risks towards the achievement of the University goals. The third line of defence is assigned to the Internal Audit (IA) Department, which uses a systematic approach to assess and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. The IA Department is also mandated to conduct preliminary investigations into the allegations of fraud and corruption.
- The fourth line of defence comprises external assurance providers that are responsible for expressing independent opinions in accordance with their respective legislative or regulatory powers and mandates.
- The fifth and final line of defence is responsible for risk oversight. The last line has overall accountability for the risk management and governance of the University. Thus,

through their individual and collective responsibility, the University Senate, Council Committees and Council represent the final lines of defence of the University.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) assists Council in carrying out its risk management responsibilities by reviewing the key risks to the University, as well as considering and monitoring the risk management process and plan.

The ARC assists the Council in discharging its mandated oversight responsibilities in respect of financial reporting, risk management, internal controls, ICT governance, compliance, integrated assurance, fraud management, and reviewing the annual report.

A comprehensive ARC Charter outlining its role and responsibilities constitutes an Annexure to the University's Rules of Council. This Charter is reviewed annually, and any required amendments are recommended to Council via the Governance and Ethics Committee.

Data Privacy and Cybersecurity

The University operates in a data-intensive environment. It is the custodian of significant volumes of personal, academic, research, financial and operational data relating to students, employees, alumni, research participants and external



stakeholders. As a result, data privacy and cybersecurity are critical governance, legal and ethical responsibilities.

Data privacy refers to the lawful, ethical and secure collection, processing, storage, sharing and destruction of personal information. Data privacy in the University is primarily regulated by the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), Act 4 of 2013. POPIA applies to all public and private higher education institutions, without exception, and governs how universities process personal information of identifiable natural and juristic persons. It gives effect to the constitutional right to privacy and establishes minimum conditions for the lawful processing of personal information.

- The University complies with the eight conditions for lawful processing, namely:
- Accountability
- Processing limitation
- Purpose specification
- Further processing limitation
- Information quality
- Openness
- Security safeguards

► Data subject participation

The Vice-Chancellor is the Information Officer of the University by virtue of her position and is supported by the Deputy Information Officers, that is, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, Chief Information Officer, and Registrar. They are all responsible for POPIA compliance. Their roles include the development and implementation of privacy policies, data classification standards, retention schedules and breach response procedures.

► Statement on Sustainability

King IV defines sustainability as: “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (2016: 26). This does not confine sustainability to the economic viability of the institution, preservation of the natural environment, or social responsibility. Rather, it refers to an integrated approach that includes these and other considerations.

The overarching focus of any sustainability imperative is to ensure that the University's decisions to support its academic offerings, research agenda, engagement and partnerships, resource mobilisation and deployment, and operations across all campuses are focused on ensuring a just, liveable and viable world for all.

Public universities in South Africa and globally continue to grapple with high levels of uncertainty amid concerns of constrained government budgets. Against this backdrop, the long-term sustainability of the University will continue to be a critical condition for success.

University management is cognisant of the importance of responsible resource stewardship and the fine balance between promoting the financial, social, and environmental sustainability of the University while also enhancing the well-being of employees, students, and external stakeholders.

Mandated by Council, executive management has established SIVTT to plan, coordinate, oversee, and report on various initiatives to promote long-term sustainability. This includes optimising the academic core missions, improving operational efficiencies and cost-effectiveness, and embracing strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting.

In support of technology-rich learning, teaching, and research, the University has embarked on a digital transformation trajectory as a critical dimension of advancing sustainability. As is the case annually, the 2025 budget directives, as approved by MANCO and FFC, informed the institution's strategic approach to financial planning and constructing the 2025 budget.

Universities also have a responsibility to be role models in terms of environmental and social sustainability. This is viewed as an integral part of the University's contribution to achieving the United Nations SDGs, Africa Agenda 2063, and the National Development Plan. Given the significance of promoting sustainability, the efforts of the University to promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability are explored in greater detail in the chapter on Sustainability.

4.7.5 Statement on Transformation

The University seeks to advance social justice, equality, and inclusion in pursuit of a better life for all. In keeping with the Constitution, the University aims to cultivate an affirming, enabling, and welcoming environment for employees, students, and stakeholder communities by recognising the human potential in everyone, irrespective of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, culture, or political ideology.

- The Council-approved Transformation Conceptual Framework conceptualises transformation as a fundamental precondition for sustainability, excellence, and continuous institutional renewal. The University pursues transformation holistically across the following dimensions:
- The core academic missions of learning, teaching, research, innovation, internationalisation, and engagement
- A values-driven and transformative institutional culture
- Diversified demographic profile of students and employees

Renewal of institutional systems and processes to improve efficiencies and sustainability.

This is depicted in Figure 8.

Senior management, led by the Vice-Chancellor, collectively assumes responsibility for leading transformation interventions designed to achieve the goals outlined in the ITP across all executive portfolios and faculties. Key themes of the revised ITP feed into the conceptualisation and implementation of catalytic programmatic interventions to foster a transformative and affirming institutional culture at all levels of the University and on all campuses. This includes the critical role of arts, culture, symbols, rituals, naming, heritage, and language in fostering social inclusion.

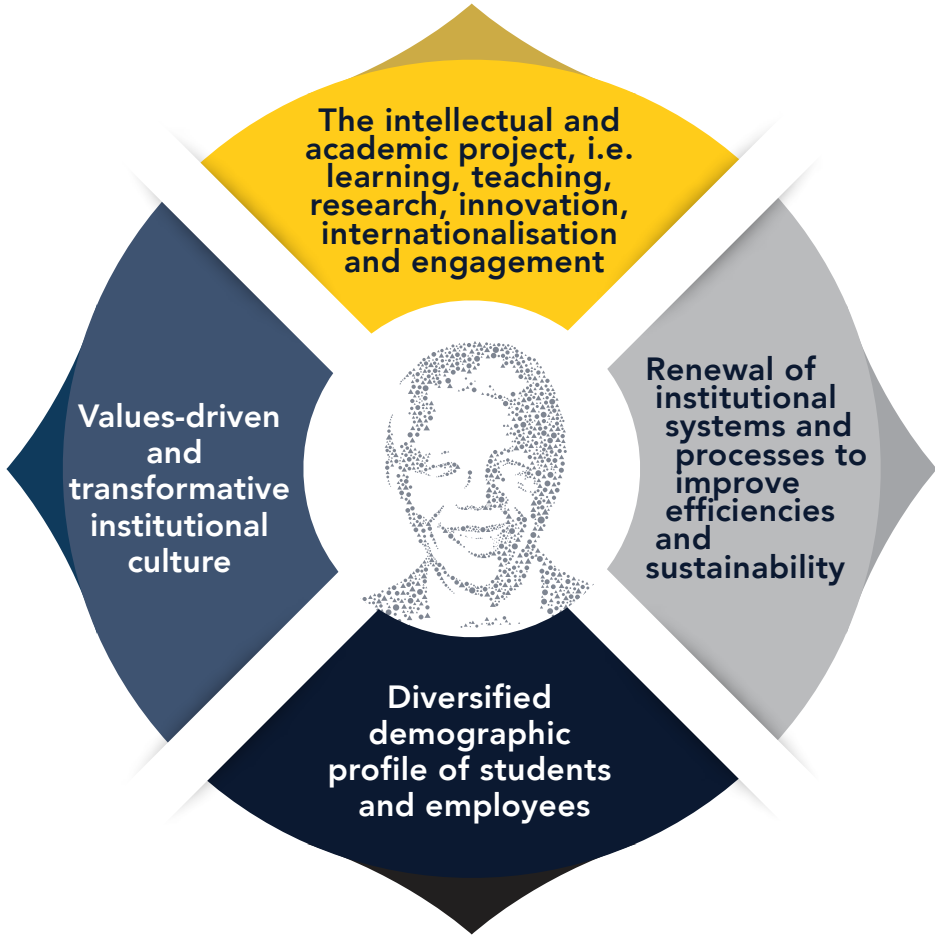


Figure 8: Dimensions of transformation at Nelson Mandela University

The wide-ranging efforts of the University in advancing transformation are elaborated on in the Transformation Report, included as an annexure of this report.

4.7.6 Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture

The University seeks to activate the Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture within the University as part of its institutional culture interventions. In so doing, the Engagement and Transformation Committee has institutionalised a Vision 2030 short learning journey to cascade the institutional strategy to all levels of the University and cultivate a values-driven ethos. The University has unequivocally signalled in policy, practice, and example that it places zero tolerance on all forms of discrimination, including GBV and harm. The promotion of gender equality and justice is an important part of the institutional culture of the University, particularly as GBV continues to be one of the most profound and intractable problems confronting South African society.

The University's EEP is a key strategic instrument aimed at increasing the representation and advancement of Black employees, women, and persons living with disabilities. Through this plan, the University seeks to create a more equitable and representative workforce, aligned with its broader transformation agenda.

The University's social media charter, launched in 2023, seeks to promote the responsible use of social media platforms. It guides social media users by explaining what is unacceptable as it relates to issues such as harmful expression, defamation, harassment and bullying, and cyberbullying. It further outlines the steps a person can take if their rights or the rights of others are violated.

4.8 Performance of Council

Council executed its oversight function in 2025 by considering reports from, among others, MANCO via the respective Council committees. In doing so, Council complied with the relevant laws and regulations, exercised responsible stewardship, and was committed to the principles of integrity, accountability, transparency, and equitable treatment.

In terms of established governance protocols, the roles and offices of the Chairperson of Council and the Vice-Chancellor are separated. The Chairperson of Council is elected from among the external members of Council and is eligible for re-election where the incumbent has served only one term. Administrative support for Council proceedings and its subordinate committees is provided by the Registrar, who functions as the designated Secretary.

Council formally assesses its performance each year to determine how effectively it met its responsibilities as the governing body of the University. The 2025 assessment of Council Performance was completed and approved by

Council. This review was based on the following objectives, as stipulated in the Governance Indicators Scorecard for Councils of South African higher education institutions:

- Strategic leadership, vision, mission, context and transformation, risk management, and sustainability
- Governance of the core functions of teaching and learning, research, and engagement
- Governance of resources: financial, human, equipment, and infrastructure
- Governance of institutional accountability, including public reporting.

In exercising its governance and oversight roles, Council examines the institution's progress towards achieving its mission and strategic aspirations. The outcome of Council's performance assessment for 2025 was positive and is available as supplementary information.

The Vice-Chancellor provides quarterly reports to Council, which outline the progress made by various portfolios of the University in achieving institutional strategic priorities outlined in Vision 2030. These include:

- Transversal strategic priorities towards implementing Vision 2030
- Distinctive educational purpose and philosophy that contributes to student access for success
- Engaged, innovative scholarship culture that generates knowledge recognised for its contribution to sustainability
- Enhancing student living and learning experiences
- Transformative institutional culture that promotes diversity and social cohesion
- Enabling systems and infrastructure that promote an exceptional experience for students, employees, and key stakeholders
- Enhancing long-term financial sustainability through effective resource mobilisation and responsible resource stewardship.

These narrative reports are accompanied by data-rich infographics aligned with the following quarterly themes:

- Quarter 1: Student access and enrolments
- Quarter 2: Student success and graduate outputs
- Quarter 3: Transformation
- Quarter 4: Sustainability and stewardship.

4.9 Vision 2030 Mid-Term Review

Council continuously evaluates the legislative frameworks and macro-environmental context within which the University operates, to assess the impact of national policy provisions on institutional strategy. As Vision 2030 reaches its midpoint, 2025 has prompted a review of progress to date to inform priorities for the years ahead. Senior management engaged in an initial high-level mid-term review of the extent to which the Vision 2030 transversal priority areas, strategic focus areas, and enablers had been successfully implemented from 2021 to 2025, which was subsequently discussed at



the Council strategic reflections session on 26 November 2025. This assessment laid the foundation for a broader mid-term review of Vision 2030, which will be undertaken in 2026 and will include students, employees, alumni, and external stakeholders. The Vision 2030 mid-term review will create a basis for MANCO to develop five-year strategic plans from 2026-2030 to inform institutional strategy, annual performance planning, strategy-aligned budgeting, and reporting.

4.10 Conclusion

Alongside the persistent challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality that impact the communities the University serves, the University grappled with a range of complex challenges during 2025. These included ongoing energy and water insecurity, a significant digital divide, student hunger and the negative impacts of climate change. Despite this, Council is satisfied that the University has

maintained stability and institutional integrity as it continues to fulfil its vision, mission and values.

The first five years of Vision 2030 have demonstrated that the University is advancing its distinctive institutional identity as the academic expression of Nelson Mandela. Significant progress has been made in co-creating a socially just, sustainable future for all through the University's transversal strategic priorities, strategic focus areas and enablers. These are not incidental achievements, but rather reflect ethical governance, leadership and stewardship by the Council and executive management in the ongoing quest to be in the service of society.

[Signature]

Judge Nambitha Dambuza
Chairperson: Council

Report of the Chairperson of Senate

Senate is the University's highest academic governance structure, constitutionally responsible for the advancement of the academic core missions and for safeguarding the scholarly integrity of the institution. Its work spans three interrelated portfolios: learning and teaching, research, innovation, and internationalisation, and engagement and transformation. Together, these portfolios give coherent academic expression to the University's Vision 2030 commitments and to its obligations as a socially embedded, outward-facing university.

The DHET Reporting Regulations of 2014, stipulate that the report of the Chairperson of Senate typically contains an overview of significant developments and achievements in learning, teaching, and research. However, this report will also provide an overview of the considerable progress being made in repositioning engagement and transformation as one of the University's core academic missions, given that it is fundamentally central to its institutional identity of giving academic expression to the social figure, Mandela.

5.1 Learning and Teaching

The Learning and Teaching portfolio fulfils a multifaceted role in advancing the University's academic mission, with a strong focus in 2025 on improving student success, embedding humanising pedagogies, and driving the curriculum renewal that underpins Vision 2030.

5.1.1 Learning and Teaching Collab

The Learning and Teaching (LT) Collab coordinates a range of academic and personal development initiatives that support learning and teaching across all seven faculties. In 2025, its work was oriented around two priorities: ensuring that the Council on Higher Education (CHE) institutional audit improvement plan, submitted in December 2024,

was implemented effectively; and deepening the reach of programmes designed to improve student success, retention and throughput.

To enhance their preparedness for university life, first-year students at the University were introduced to all the necessary facilities and resources to support their academic success during the Orientation programme. Key elements of the First Year Success (FYS) onboarding included the publication of a comprehensive first-year guide and campus tours. The FYS programme onboarded close to 3 700 students in 2025.

Emthonjeni Student Wellness (ESW) provided career guidance for prospective students requiring support in finalising their study choices. Group-based interventions were expanded, offering specialised programmes in career decision-making, psychoeducation, and peer-led support initiatives. Over 1 800 students participated in these group sessions.

Learning Development reached more than 11 440 students through various support initiatives in the first quarter alone, 70% of whom were first-year students, reflecting the deliberate early identification and support of academically vulnerable learners. Student Success Coaching is a unique support service available to all students who need help developing and executing an individualised academic strategy that promotes personal and career growth, well-being, and academic success. Student Success Coaches engaged with 593 students in the first quarter, and Supplemental Instruction extended out-of-class academic support to more than 3 000 students across all faculties.

The First Year Success Indaba, held in the third quarter, brought students, FYS Buddies, employees and SRC members together to reimagine the FYS programme with the student voice at its centre. The LT Collab is



transitioning its support model from one-on-one to group and peer-led coaching to improve reach and participation across campuses.

Senate at its ordinary meeting of 4 June 2024 had resolved that an investigation be conducted on the decline in the student success and throughput rate, as well as graduate output. The DVC: L&T was assigned to lead a team in conducting a qualitative study aimed at enabling Senate to gain deeper insight into the factors underlying the quantitative data.

In addition to these institution-wide support initiatives, during 2025, a comprehensive support framework was implemented in the Medical School, encompassing a digitised orientation programme, a peer mentoring initiative, and a nutrition support programme. Despite high pass rates within the school, an indicator of the academic strength of the programme, emerging challenges affecting student success and throughput include financial constraints, food insecurity and language barriers. In response, the Medical School appointed two full-time Student Success Coaches to support students experiencing academic, emotional, or social challenges, and to work with repeating students to develop individual academic success plans alongside ongoing monitoring.

5.1.2 Academic Integrity and Generative AI

Senate has approved an institutional position statement on the use of GenAI in learning, teaching and assessment, available to all students on the Funda Learning Management System (LMS) landing page. The statement establishes the ethical boundaries within which these tools may be used and provides a framework for consistent application across faculties.

The University is actively harnessing GenAI as an educational tool. The Digital Learning Experience Design and Innovation (LxD) cluster in the LT Collab has been integral to this work and won the PASS Team Excellence Award for its innovative application of AI in meeting diverse academic needs. Multilingual tutor bots trained on specific course content have been piloted in the classroom, allowing students to engage with course material in their first language. In the Faculty of EBET, AI tools deployed as tutors, marking assistants and simulation facilitators across three modules generated more than 28 000 student interactions, with the platform expanding to 15 modules in the second semester.

5.1.3 Teaching Development and Support

Within the LT Collab, Teaching Development took part in key national and institutional initiatives. The recently approved academic staff workload model is being piloted across all seven faculties following a Senate decision at its June meeting, with a progress report submitted to Senate towards the end of 2025.

The University's Learning and Teaching Week is an annual, institution-wide event dedicated to meaningful dialogue to explore how educators, students, and professional employees can approach decolonisation, curriculum renewal, and the future of higher education. In 2025, the Learning and Teaching Week, themed "Reimagining Learning: Transformation, Technology and Teaching for a New Era", featured discussions, conversations, and the showcasing of new ideas focused on technology, transformation, and teaching methods to shape the future of education and humanise the learning experience for students.

The University hosted the Africa International Teaching Week in October 2025 to celebrate the spirit of global collaboration and academic excellence. With participants from Germany, Malawi, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, the week-long event featured interactive sessions designed to encourage knowledge exchange and leadership development in curriculum innovation. The growing significance of integrating ethical leadership, sustainability, and social responsibility in the curriculum was explored as a precondition for nurturing graduates who are socially responsible, ethically grounded, and environmentally conscious.

In 2025, 91 newly appointed academics completed the Beginning Your Journey (BYJ) induction programme, the largest cohort in recent years. Twelve curriculum workshops reached 162 academics and focused on the re-registration and transformation of academic programmes across faculties. The Teaching Development Innovation Fund supported 25 projects advancing transformation through multilingualism, digital literacies and transdisciplinary methodologies. The Teaching Enhancement Programme (TEP) continued to promote inclusive and equitable learning and teaching practices, including through an SLP on the integration of indigenous knowledge systems in the curriculum.

Academic Planning and Quality Advancement, in conjunction with Teaching Development, co-facilitated numerous training sessions to support the faculties with curriculum transformation. The Africa International Teaching Week held in October brought together participants from Germany, Malawi, the United Kingdom (UK) and South Africa to explore curriculum innovation, sustainable leadership and social responsibility as shared academic priorities.

5.1.4 Language Policy

Following an extensive consultation process led by the Faculty of Humanities, Senate approved the revised University Language Policy in 2025, recognising English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans as the official languages of the University, with English as the primary language of instruction, complemented by isiXhosa and Afrikaans as languages of learning and teaching. The policy also promotes the use of South African Sign Language in all University communication, including public events and ceremonies.



A DHET University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) allocation of R2.5-million will fund the implementation of the policy in all faculties. The policy reflects the University's constitutional and statutory obligations to embrace multilingualism and is a concrete expression of its commitment to promoting epistemic access. The Faculty of Humanities convened its annual Curriculum Conversation Symposium under the theme "The Role of Multilingualism in the Diversification of the Academic Canon", providing a faculty-level forum for the practical application of the newly approved Language Policy across the curriculum.

The University hosted the 2025 Southern African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Society Conference from 25 to 27 June, examining how linguistic practices and policies can better reflect African realities. Dr Johannes Sibeko and Dr Paulette Coetzee were appointed to the Eastern Cape Provincial Language Committee, extending the University's influence in regional language policy and practice.

5.1.5 Curriculum Renewal

The Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) review progressed across all faculties in 2025 to assess whether all taught qualifications at UG and PG levels are responsive

to societal and global needs. The review aims to co-create a sustainable PQM that is contextually responsive by investigating the strategic alignment, academic effectiveness and resource sustainability of all programmes

The SCSF foundational course, launched as a credit-bearing, compulsory module in July 2025, is now embedded in the Faculties of Humanities, Law and Education, with extension to all faculties planned by 2027. It critically foregrounds themes of land, environment, food, economy, constitutional rights, ethics, and entrepreneurship, establishing a comprehensive educational framework for cultivating the University's graduate attributes.

The Faculty of Humanities advanced its Digital Humanities Hub as a flagship programme integrating technology, indigenous knowledge and social justice within the curriculum. It has also established the Creative Media Agency Development Hub to advance digital innovation in the humanities and equip creative arts and media students with entrepreneurial skills.

The Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences continued to build partnerships with the Faculty of Humanities in the new BA in Politics and Economics, introduced in 2025. New



modules introduced into the curriculum deepen access to indigenous knowledge and African scholarship, including African globalisation and the making of the modern world order, the history of technology and medical anthropology. There is a deliberate focus on the scholarship of African Vernacular Archive and Heritage Studies, and Women's Digital Archive and Gendered Histories, positioning Africa as a source of knowledge production rather than merely an object of study.

Academic development in the Faculty of Health Sciences continued in step with the Medical School's growth. The Faculty received a letter of endorsement from the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and PQM clearance from the CHE to proceed with Master of Medicine programmes in Psychiatry and Paediatrics, and curriculum development for five further MMed programmes is underway. The Faculty also offers MSc and PhD studies in Nano Medicine, applying nanotechnology to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease.

5.1.6 Technology-Rich Learning and the Virtual Academy

The successful migration of the LMS to Moodle 4, branded as "Funda", was a landmark achievement for the University at the start of 2025, with 2 545 courses migrated and nearly 777 900 total logins and more than 11-million interactions recorded across the year. LMS use is now firmly embedded

in learning and teaching across all campuses, reflecting a mature digital learning culture. The LT Collab procured a data analytics tool that integrates with Funda and leverages its enhanced reporting capabilities to improve academic planning and identify at-risk students early.

Significant progress was made in establishing the VA, with executive management approving a financial plan and sustainability case. The VA is developing four online qualifications and six online SLPs to broaden access and create new income streams. The Business School is developing five tailored online MBA programmes for anticipated commencement in 2027. Further details on the digital infrastructure and learning technology achievements that underpin this priority are provided in the Report of the Vice-Chancellor.

5.2 Research, Innovation and Internationalisation

5.2.1 Research Outputs and Research Support

The University continues to integrate sustainability principles into its research ecosystem by establishing transdisciplinary research themes that align with global sustainability goals, supporting research chairs and entities that produce high-impact, contextually relevant research outputs, and leveraging honorary title holders, associates, and international collaborations to enhance PG supervision,

publications, and external funding. Research productivity continues to demonstrate resilience and growth. The University's total weighted research outputs per permanent academic staff member increased from 1.3 in 2024 to 1.6 in 2025. Research publication units also increased to 564 in 2025, compared to 515 in 2024.

The University hosted its fourth annual Research Week in September 2025, themed "Transforming Knowledge for a Just, Sustainable and Innovative Africa". The programme bridged academic research with everyday community realities and featured groundbreaking research and scholarship centred on African agency, transdisciplinarity and inclusivity. The specific focal areas included spotlighting early-career researchers, transdisciplinary collaborations, and translating IP into market-ready, sustainable enterprises.

The Madiba Nexus project, led by Dr Palesa Mothapo of the Research Support and Management (RSM) Office, was awarded a £30 000 sterling grant in partnership with the University of Southampton, the University of Edinburgh and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology in Kenya. The project aims to strengthen global North-South research partnerships by equipping research managers with improved tools for administration and strategic alignment, and by enhancing doctoral supervision practices across partner institutions. RSM presented its institutional experience with the Research Support Office BOOST capacity project at the International Network of Research Management Societies Congress in Madrid in 2025,

showcasing advances in grant management and profiling the University's researchers internationally.

5.2.2 Academic Staff and Postgraduate Student Support

Talent continuity planning is an institutional imperative in light of the anticipated retirement of senior academics with doctoral qualifications, which places increasing pressure on PG supervisory capacity. To this end, the University has committed to targeted interventions to develop emerging and mid-career researchers from underrepresented groups. The University is actively leveraging programmes such as the Thuthuka grants, the Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) and the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) to develop the next generation of academic staff. There are 17 active Thuthuka grant holders (R1.4-million awarded), of whom 94% are Black and 47% are women. The BAAP currently funds 11 academics (R2.9-million awarded) and the University Staff Doctoral Programme saw four awards in 2025 to Black researchers, 50% of whom were women (R2.3-million awarded).

5.2.3 Mandela Imvuselelo Professors Programme

The Mandela Imvuselelo Professors Programme (MIPP), formally launched in June 2025, addresses the "missing middle" challenge of mid-career researchers who require targeted support to accelerate research productivity and build supervisory capacity. "Imvuselelo" means revival,



restoration and renewal, and the programme embodies this vision by cultivating thought leaders who will shape the future of scholarship in line with Vision 2030. Starting with an initial cohort of 30, the MIPP provides structured support in building research teams, accessing funding and developing supervisory capacity.

The programme is organised around six pillars: research excellence; grant writing and transdisciplinary proposal development; PG supervision and research team building; leadership and academic citizenship; mentoring by emeritus professors and peers; and research internationalisation. Several workshops and masterclasses were held following the launch, and the MIPP is already demonstrating its potential to accelerate the careers of academics who will sustain the University's research enterprise.

► Postgraduate Student Support

Council approved R59.7-million for PG student bursaries in 2025. Together with R34-million pledged from external funders, this represents a substantial institutional commitment to access and PG access. A total of 1 316 PG awards were made from Council and other external funders, comprising 277 Honours, 686 Master's and 353 Doctoral scholarships, with a total of 1 151 taken up or 87% of PG scholarships disbursed.

The Office of Research Development advanced PG student access and success by strengthening inclusive capacity development through scholarships, postdoctoral

and research fellowships, seed funding, and targeted training initiatives, ensuring equitable access to research opportunities. To this end, 74 research development workshops were offered during 2025, with 2 247 PG students and employees participating. A Master's and Doctoral Conference Travel Grant programme supported 20 awards for conference participation, and R910 000 in internal research grants was awarded to 29 early-career researchers.

5.2.4 Research Ethics

The recently appointed Research Ethics Manager has contributed significantly to improved services across all aspects of the ethics process. The human and animal research ethics committees (RECH and RECA) continue to meet their accreditation obligations, and the Office of Research Development presented a series of ethics and Mandela Ethics Online System training sessions to raise awareness and promote understanding of research ethics across the University community. Streamlining ethics clearance and approval processes for Master's and doctoral studies remains a priority, as turnaround times continue to be a bottleneck for PG completion.

5.2.5 Innovation

The Innovation Office (IO) facilitated a significant milestone in 2025 with the finalisation of licensing terms for the University's patented Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) technology, with the National Intellectual Property Management Office confirming the assignment. The patent portfolio includes filings in the European Union, United States, China, Japan and Australia, and exemplifies the University's capacity to translate PG research into commercially significant innovations.

The IO further contributed to fostering IP awareness, student entrepreneurship, green innovation and external partnerships. A Cleantech information session was held on 10 June 2025 in collaboration with Propella Business Incubator to guide researchers in accessing funding and incubation opportunities in sustainable technology sectors. Two further workshops were hosted in August 2025 as part of the Postgraduate Innovation Competition to assist students in developing and pitching business cases.

Two student-led innovations received Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) Pre-Seed Funding in 2025: R350 000 for a green hydrogen and ammonia pilot project, and R800 000 for a biodegradable cellulose water-saving mulch film, totalling R1.15-million. The fourth annual Postgraduate Innovation Competition was launched with a R100 000 seed funding prize for the grand winner.

5.2.6 Internationalisation

In 2025, the University enrolled international students from 45 nations and maintained 52 active institutional agreements in Asia, North and South America, Europe and the rest of the African continent. Students from Southern African



Development Community (SADC) countries constituted the majority of the international student cohort, with Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia among the primary source countries.

A rise in international PG applications for the 2025/26 intake was an encouraging counterpoint to an overall year-on-year decline in international student enrolments. However, visa processing delays, limited PG funding for African students and the absence of flexible hybrid pathways remain structural barriers. The Mandela International Office (MIO) has appointed recruitment agents in Kenya and Uganda to address the decline in enrolments from the African continent.

Internationalisation advanced on several fronts, and the University joined the BRICS+ Network University in 2025, committing to Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security as its thematic focus areas, further broadening its global academic networks. The MIO is developing hybrid and online SLPs, including a piloted German Language SLP, as part of a strategy to broaden the University's market reach and attract new student cohorts.

At the Education Collaborative's annual convening in Kigali in June 2025, the University played a leading role in shaping the Southern Africa Hub of this growing pan-African movement, with six institutions committing to deepened collaboration. The University's delegation facilitated a workshop on research entrepreneurship, contributing to a broader agenda of strengthening African higher education through innovation and student-centred approaches. The

Education Collaborative's emphasis on translating teaching and research into employment and entrepreneurship outcomes aligns directly with the University's drive to enhance student entrepreneurship and youth employability.

International collaboration in medical education advanced through the five-year cooperative roadmap with the University of Oldenburg, Germany. In August 2025, Professor Yulia Golub, Director of the University Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Psychosomatics and Psychotherapy at Oldenburg, visited the University for a programme of meetings and workshops, co-organised through the East and South African-German Centre of Excellence for Educational Research Methodologies and Management (CERM-ESA) project. These engagements reflect the value of the partnership between two developing medical schools, the South African school operating in a resource-constrained environment and the German school facing infrastructure and logistical constraints due to its rapid expansion as a young faculty, with a shared interest in building clinical training and research capacity.

A new international partnership with Utrecht University in the Netherlands, formalised through the MISF and Utrecht's Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development, advances transdisciplinary sustainability science through joint research, co-supervision and knowledge exchange. Visits in both directions during 2025 established working relationships spanning the CMR, the Department of Agricultural Sciences and the Department of Conservation Management.





5.2.7 Library and Information Services

Library and Information Services achieved a significant open access milestone in 2025, with 94.7% of University publications available on an open access basis, saving an estimated R3.1-million in article processing charges. The University's e-book collection expanded to more than 378 700 titles. The introduction of Single Sign-On via OpenAthens in July 2025 enables seamless off-campus access to 99% of library resources, removing a persistent barrier for students and researchers. A University-wide migration from the legacy Sierra system to the Alma Library Services Platform is on track for completion in early 2026, enhancing search capabilities and enabling integration with Funda. In addition, the library maintains 83 electronic databases, with three new databases added in 2025 to support emerging research areas.

5.3 Engagement and Transformation

The work of the ETP reflects the University's commitment to equalising partnerships and social responsiveness. Over 2025, it positioned the University as a catalyst for positive societal change through strategic collaboration, advocacy and community-embedded scholarship, giving practical expression to several of the University's transversal strategic priorities.

5.3.1 Engagement Office

The HoCs remain the primary vehicle for community-university co-creation, with thematic hubs operationalised across Gqeberha and the George Campus. A key highlight was the 2025 Mandela Day programme at Gelvandale High School, themed "Continuing towards Dignity and Growing Hope". Students and staff from across the University, together with community members, participated in restoring hostel dormitories and food gardens, hosting mobile legal clinics and wellbeing workshops for elders and persons with disabilities, and donating tablets and workbooks through the Govan Mbeki Mathematics Development Centre.

The NRF-funded Water Quality and Food Security Project, coordinated through the HoCs, integrates environmental science, indigenous knowledge and social justice in a community-centred research approach that produces both scholarly outputs and practical benefits for the communities involved.

The newly established Student Hubs of Convergence (SHoC) are broadening student participation in community engagement, including work to address student hunger in collaboration with the Mandela University Food Systems Programme. SHoC programmes such as *The Hope Revolution Vision* (THRV) contribute to student wellbeing and substance abuse awareness. SHoC fosters civic consciousness through SLP implementation while equipping students with skills for real-world social challenges.

The research partnership with Ubuntu Pathways in Zwile is documenting a community development model that offers insights into context-driven social entrepreneurship and governance. The Raymond Mhlaba Centre for Governance and Leadership is developing a Raymond Mhlaba Leadership Fellowship for Civic Organisations from this collaboration.

The Unit for Continuing Education registered 29 new SLPs in 2025, attracting 2 747 participants across disciplines. The Faculty of Science, in collaboration with the OR Tambo Coastal District Education Office, hosted a two-day National Science Week event in Lusikisiki in August, giving practical expression to the University's mandate to advance science for society in educationally underserved communities.

The George Campus advanced its community heritage engagement through the "Mandela: Our Living Heritage" project, funded by the National Heritage Council. This initiative facilitates dialogues among employees and students on heritage, transformation and decolonisation, and connects the George Campus to the broader institutional project of living out the Mandela legacy in contextually relevant ways.

5.3.2 Transformation Office

The mandate of the Transformation Office is to promote institutional transformation through programmatic interventions focused on the constitutional principles of human dignity,



Critical Sustainability Literacies Theory Workshop

equality, fairness, non-racism, non-sexism and redress. GBV and femicide remain a blight affecting campuses across the nation. The University has intensified its anti-GBV programmes, including first-responder training for all Residence Managers, the operationalisation of the Safe Haven facility, and the launch of the Anti-GBV Charter at the Inaugural Student Indaba on Masculinities in October 2025. A review of the policy framework governing GBV, sexual offences, harassment and equality-related complaints is underway to align University processes with sector best practices.

The Inaugural Dialogue on the State of Gender Affirming Health Care in the Eastern Cape, held in October as part of Pride Month celebrations, brought together more than 150 internal and external participants to examine access to gender-affirming services and the creation of safe institutional spaces for transgender people. The Policy for Inclusive Gender Identities, Expressions and Sexual Orientation served through governance structures in November 2025 for onward recommendation to Council.

The next five-year Institutional Transformation Plan (2028–2032) will be developed through broad stakeholder consultation commencing in 2026. The University's wide-ranging transformation initiatives and interventions are explored more fully in the Transformation Report appended to this report.

5.3.3 Centre for Women and Gender Studies and Chair for African Feminist Imaginations

The Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) and the DSTI-NRF SARCHI Chair for African Feminist Imaginations had a productive year in 2025, with the launch of the Master's in Gender Studies programme, which attracted students from South Africa and beyond. The University hosted the 6th Annual African Feminisms Conference, themed "A Conspiracy of Women: Institutions, Humour and Imagination", in July, foregrounding experimental and affective dimensions of feminist knowledge production.

The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship brought Professor SN Nyeck of the University of Colorado Boulder to the University for masterclasses on extreme responsibility and intersectionality, co-hosted with CriSHET and Rhodes University. The Centre also took part in a Summer School with Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, themed “Multi-Perspectivity in Gender Studies”. The CWGS also collaborated with the Zanele Mbeki Development Trust on the African Women in Dialogue event.

5.3.4 Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation

The Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) published a book titled “Emancipatory Imaginations: Advancing Critical University Studies”, edited by Professors André Keet and Dina Zoe Belluigi, with three further edited volumes in preparation. The Chair hosted an Advancing Critical University Studies Across Africa network retreat in the third quarter, which reflected on the network’s activities over the past six years. The retreat advanced plans for a 2026 Winter School for PG students and emerging academics. CriSHET organised the Critical Sustainability Literacies Theory Workshop in October and co-hosted a seminar with the CWGS on the politics of grief, rage and the afterlives of violence in postcolonial societies.

5.3.5 Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training

The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) pursued two work streams in 2025, namely: promoting articulation pathways from TVET colleges into higher education in the Eastern Cape, and exploring how education and training can support eco-conscious literacies for food sovereignty. CIPSET signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Public Servants Association to co-develop educational content on socio-political and ecological themes. The Centre is developing an archive of multilingual agroecological materials for community farmers and continues to support small-scale fishers in the Eastern Cape through digital platforms and direct engagement.

5.3.6 Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy

In 2025, CANRAD foregrounded the 2026 local government elections, in partnership with the Independent Electoral Commission and the Democracy Development Programme. CANRAD hosted a dialogue on the elections and published the co-edited book titled “Electoral Observation” in time for the anticipated election cycle. Land question dialogues and youth reflections on ten years since #FeesMustFall were also hosted in partnership with The Herald and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Masterclass lectures on liberation history and the decolonisation of knowledge, an Africa Month Indaba, and a Human Rights Day Youth Dialogue with Lovelife were among other highlights for CANRAD.

5.3.7 Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies

TIMS made significant progress in 2025 in advancing Mandela-related scholarship and institutionalising Mandela’s values across the University. The Mandela Indaba, themed “From Dalibhunga to Rolihlahla: Making Trouble with Mandela”, held in August in collaboration with CriSHET, reflected on the responsibility of carrying the Mandela legacy. The Izibongo Book Project, developed in collaboration with Nelson Mandela’s official praise poet Zolani Mkiva, is advancing.

TIMS hosted a series of Mandela Conversations under the Re/Directions programme throughout the year, and work continues on the “Embedding Mandela” living institutional resource. The TIMS website features a Mandela Observatory, which is a digital platform tracking Mandela-related work within the University and beyond. This resource will continue to grow and generate a range of outputs, ensuring that the Mandela identity remains central to the University’s research and transformation agenda.

5.3.8 Mandela University Press

The Mandela University Press (MUP), launched in July 2024, published its tenth title in 2025. The Press gives expression to the University’s commitment to African knowledge production and the public dissemination of scholarship rooted in the communities and contexts the University serves.

INKwazi is the community and literature imprint of the MUP, which was launched to broaden access beyond traditional academia, it focuses on publishing literature, poetry, and stories from communities, artists, and writers in the Eastern Cape and beyond. Following the launch of the INKwazi community imprint of the MUP in May, the Press launched the publication of two titles, namely “Origins: KhoiSan Heritage Sites and Sense of Belonging in the Eastern Cape, South Africa” by Professor Magda Minguzzi and “Pan-African Integration from Below: Language, Publics, Culture” by Mandela University research associates, Professor Finex Ndhlovu and Doctor Jesta Masuku. As part of the Faculty of Humanities Multilingualism Indaba, MUP launched “Animal Farm” translated into Sepedi by Dr Lenkwane Henry Mathunyane. INKwazi held two further book launches for John Samuel and Vulindlela Nyoni’s poetry book “Winged Words”, and Doreen Musson’s “Tested by Fire”, which is a biography of Neville Alexander.

5.3.9 Institutional Public Lectures

Senate approved revised Institutional Public Lecture (IPL) guidelines in 2025, establishing a thematic framework drawn from key University strategic imperatives and providing structural support to faculties and portfolios through a new IPL Working Group. In October, the University hosted its 2025 TEDx event under the theme “Redefining Creative Arts”, organised under the official TEDx licence. Full details



Science Centre

of the IPLs hosted in 2025 are provided in the Transformation Report appended to this Integrated Annual Report.

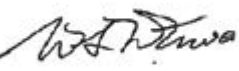
5.3.10 Science Centre

Cutting across knowledges to advance scientific and social innovation, the Science Centre (SC) seeks to bring the university, the private and public sectors, industry, community, science and technology together under the banner of ‘science for society’. With rotating exhibits, evolving content, and a commitment to inclusivity, the SC continues to evolve as a transversal, community-facing platform, which brings scientific concepts to life, making learning both accessible and engaging for all ages. The Centre embraces a comprehensive approach to science engagement to offer interactive learning experiences that spark curiosity and foster a culture of inquiry. In so doing, the SC actively inspires learners to pursue careers in science,

technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM), especially those from marginalised communities.

5.4 Conclusion

In 2025, the University advanced its academic mission through a range of strategic initiatives that reflect both its Vision 2030 aspirations and its responsibilities as a socially embedded public higher education institution. Across our core academic missions, the work of Senate demonstrates the University’s commitment to academic excellence, social responsiveness and sustainability in a manner that aligns with our identity as the academic expression of our iconic namesake.


Professor Sibongile Muthwa
Chairperson of Senate and Vice-Chancellor

Report of the Institutional Forum

The Institutional Forum (IF) at Nelson Mandela University continued its role as an advisory body to Council throughout 2025. In alignment with the Higher Education Act, the University statute and the constitution of the IF, members engaged in dialogues with key stakeholders to foster an institutional culture of social cohesion and transformation.

Below are the activities highlighting the work of the IF during the 2025 academic year.

6.1 Policy Proposals and Amendments

The IF considered several reports, as well as policy amendments and draft proposals, to enable more effective governance and processes within the University. The goal was to foster an institutional culture of transparency and alignment with broader practices across the higher education sector. The IF reviewed and deliberated on the following reports and policies:

6.1.1 Policies

- Declaration of Conflict-of-Interest Policy (IRC118.04)
- Language Policy (IRC112.01)
- Policy for Inclusive Gender Identities, Expressions and Sexual Orientation (Draft)
- Policy relating to Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Child Safeguarding (Draft)
- Talent Acquisition and Selection Policy (PL2-4) (IRC601.30)

6.1.2 Reports

- Quarterly Reports on Equality Promotion and Social Inclusion, including GBV
- Bi-annual Equality-related Complaints Reports
- ITP Coordination, Equality Promotion and Social Inclusion, including GBV Report

6.2 Language Policy

The IF welcomed the proposed amendments to the Language Policy, noting that these revisions had been under rigorous development for a considerable period. The IF further acknowledged and commended the efforts of the Language Policy Working Group in advancing this process under the leadership of the chairperson, Professor Pamela Maseko. The IF expressed its anticipation for the implementation of this significant transformational policy, recognising its importance in fostering greater inclusion for all students.

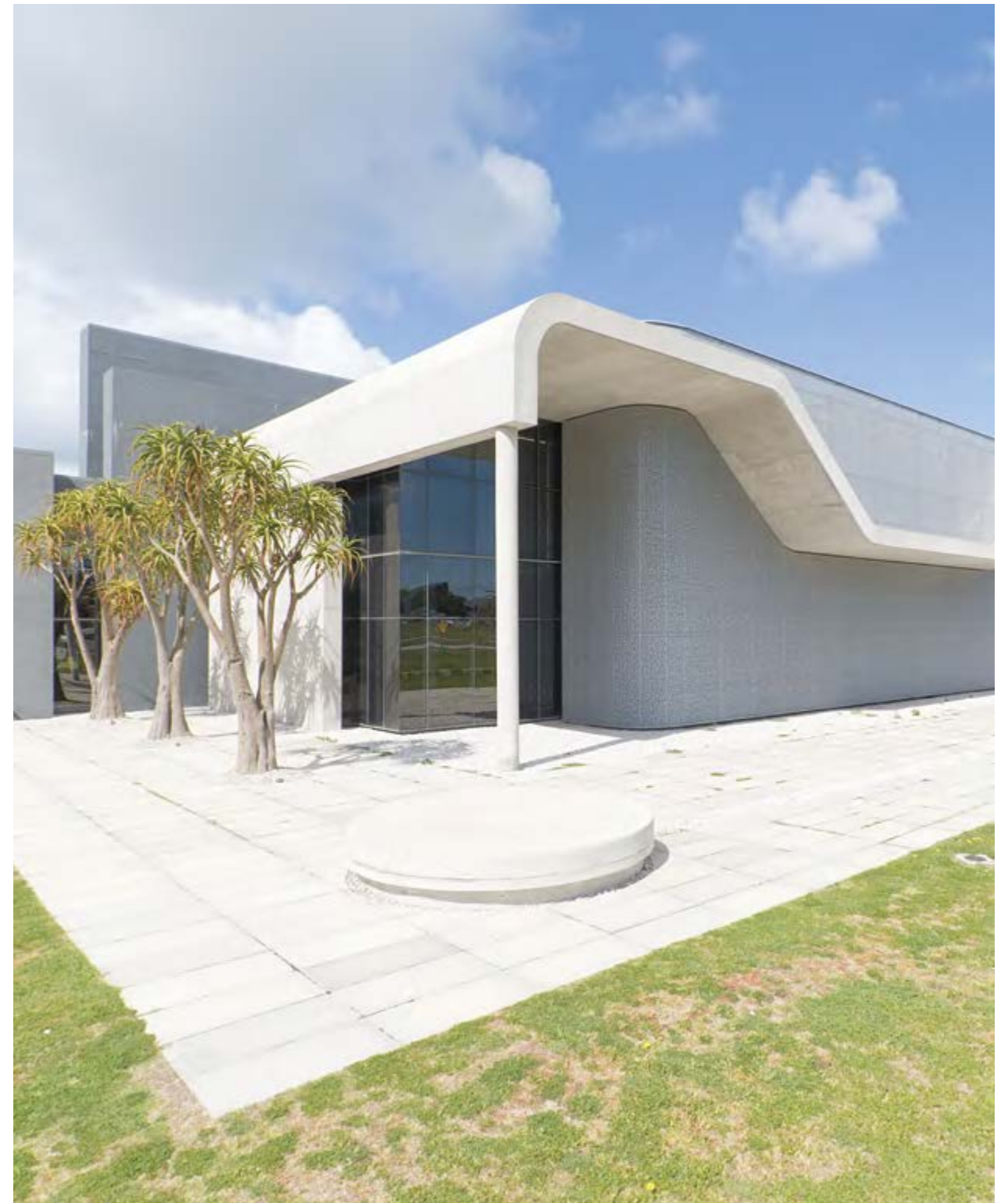
6.3 Senior Management Appointments

In its advisory capacity, the IF participated in the appointment process of senior management roles during 2025 to ensure leadership stability and excellence. The IF supported the following appointments:

- Chief Information Officer, Mr Lubabalo Lokwe
- Executive Dean: Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology (EBET), Prof Sudesh Rathilal
- Executive Dean: Faculty of Science, Prof Christa Grobler
- Dean of Students, Dr Sibusiso Mchunu
- Senior Director: Communications and Marketing, Dr Luzuko Jacobs
- Senior Director: Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement, Advocate Tshidi Mayimele-Hashatse

6.4 Nomination of University Chancellor

The IF took part in the process of recommending candidates to Council for the nomination of a new Chancellor for the University. The IF expressed its sincere gratitude to the outgoing Chancellor, Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, for



her dedicated contribution and leadership throughout her distinguished term.

6.5 Relations with University Committees

The Chairperson of the IF, Dr Zithulele Tshabalala, represented the IF on the University Council as an active participant in all Council processes. In accordance with the mandate of the IF, he also served as a voting member of the Senior Management Appointment Committee (SMAC), contributing to decisions on strategic leadership

appointments. This representation reflects the importance of the IF's advisory mandate in implementing the Higher Education Act and national policies on higher education through transformative dialogue.

Dr Zithulele Tshabalala
Chairperson: Institutional Forum

Institutional Performance

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Report of the Vice-Chancellor on Management and Administration

The Vice-Chancellor's Report on Management and Administration is compiled in compliance with the DHET Reporting Regulations of 2014, which stipulate that the Vice-Chancellor should address matters relating only to the management and administration of the institution. This includes *inter alia* the achievements of the administrative structures and resources, regarding both human resources and systems, the quality of information available to management and the administrative processes involved, and student services and extra-curricular activities.

Higher education globally is navigating profound disruption. The accelerating advancement of AI and technological innovation, global geopolitical tensions, the massification of higher education, and the persistently high rates of poverty, inequality and unemployment nationally and globally continue to impact on how universities pursue their core mandate to promote the public good.

Within South Africa, the most immediate pressure points of 2025 included NSFAS administrative dysfunctionalities, inadequate student funding, and a higher education sector whose funding base continues to fall behind the cost of providing wraparound student support. In navigating this complex macro-environment, the University remains accountable to society and entrusted with building the future of the nation alongside other post-school education and training institutions. Holistic student success and throughput must remain the central measure of inclusive excellence and transformation. To this end, the University will continue to invest in innovative student support frameworks, humanising learning and teaching praxes, and

the promotion of student and employee well-being and belonging.

The University records with sorrow several losses of life that touched the University in 2025. Professor Keo Motaung, the inaugural FALF-FREF Research Chair in Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion, passed away in November. Her scholarship, commitment to financial inclusion and faith in the transformative potential of entrepreneurship remain a living legacy. The University was also deeply saddened by the unprecedented and tragic loss of six students in separate circumstances in the final quarter of 2025. Each of these young lives was filled with promise, potential, and purpose. Recognising the emotional toll of these tragedies, ongoing psychosocial support was provided to all affected students and employees, and the families of the deceased were supported in various ways.

7.1 Student Access, Enrolment and Success

Online registration for the 2025 academic year opened on 13 January, with assisted registration taking place from 3 to 7 February and a late registration period extended to 28 February. The University implemented merit-based admission procedures for the first time in 2025, ranking applicants by Applicant Score (AS) and applying enrolment caps only at the point of final selection in January. This permitted a wider number of applicants to be considered for a place and enabled the University to select and admit applicants with the highest AS for each programme. The multi-stakeholder Enrolment Management Committee

(EMC) met weekly during the registration period to oversee the process and resolve bottlenecks.

The online application system for the 2025/26 academic year opened in April 2025 and the University attracted a record number of 297 000 UG and 20 305 PG applications for the 2026 academic year. This increase in applications reflects the University's growing reputation as a university of first choice. An AI-powered chatbot was deployed to assist applicants and relieve pressure on the Contact Centre. Student financial challenges remain a perennial concern. The defunding of students by NSFAS in April, delayed allowance payments and uncertainty over the management of off-campus accommodation funding compounded the socioeconomic pressures of students and contributed to student protests at more than ten universities, including Nelson Mandela University. The University engaged directly with NSFAS throughout the year to resolve these challenges and promote academic continuity.

The University maintained its concessions system to allow academically deserving, financially needy students with outstanding debt to register and Council budgeted R117-million in 2025 for UG and PG student bursaries to promote student access.

7.1.1 Student Life and Development

The University aims to offer a safe, vibrant and inclusive student learning environment, underpinned by a philosophy of student-centric care. In 2025, student welfare challenges such as GBV, food insecurity, mental health pressures, and student accommodation shortfalls placed significant

demands on the University's student life infrastructure and were addressed through coordinated, institution-wide interventions.

7.1.2 Student Governance and Development

The 2025/26 Student Representative Council (SRC) elections were conducted online, with 12 085 students (35% of the student body) casting votes. An independent audit confirmed the process was secure, accessible and transparent. The Democratic Alliance Student Organisation secured four of the nine central SRC seats, with the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command taking three, and the South African Students Congress and uMkhonto weSizwe Student Movement one seat each. The SRC Investiture was held on 25 March 2025, establishing a cordial but robust relationship between student governance and the University.

The Department of Student Governance and Development engaged in various student leadership development interventions, such as the Beyond the Classroom, LeadHer and Ebuhlanti programmes, which enrolled approximately 1 000 students in 2025. The Ebuhlanti and Singamadoda Programmes are transformative initiatives designed to foster a safe space for men to exchange ideas and challenge ways of thinking about masculinity, gender equality and inclusion through dialogue. The Mandela-Sobukwe Leadership Pop-Up Camp, led by the DHET in March 2025, was themed "Deepening a Culture of Social Justice and Human Rights". Designed to empower young leaders and peer educators from South Africa's universities and colleges, the camp focused on civic education, mental health, and combatting GBV.



Mandela University Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations Luthando Jack, left, Honourable Minister of Small Business Development Stella Tembisa Ndabeni and Centre Director Prof Thobekani Lose

7.1.3 Student Entrepreneurship and Graduate Employability

To advance entrepreneurship countrywide, the University established the Business Incubation Web Association (BIWA) as a vehicle for business incubation. BIWA creates a strong bridge between academia and industry to work together to shape entrepreneurship policy and action at a national level.

The newly launched MUAH for Youth Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation signifies that the University views student entrepreneurship as a key priority. The Hub houses initiatives, including the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI), Madibaz Youth Entrepreneurship Lab, Madibaz Youth Lab, BIWA and the Student Employability & Entrepreneurship Development (SEED) programme.

CfERI was officially launched by the Minister of Small Business Development in April 2025 as part of the MUAH. In its first year of operation, CfERI incubated 42 businesses, supported more than 200 clients, enrolled 49 Accelerator Programme trainees and helped on-campus student businesses generate more than R1-million in revenue in the first four months of the year, while creating 92 jobs and supporting 12 new micro, small and medium enterprises and cooperatives.

Student businesses include tutoring services, hydroponics, media services, website development, a driving school, tuckshops, food vendors, fashion and beauty stores, a

barbershop and tailoring, many of them run from shipping containers they rent from the university. Two University student entrepreneurs, Ayabulela Binase and Jazmyn Du Preez, were among the Top 20 finalists in the EDHE Absa Innovation Challenge 2025. Five University teams reached the finals of the SDSN Innovations Challenge, with Rhythmic Syndicates placing in the top three nationally.

MUAH's impact was recognised at the national level when it became the first-ever recipient of the EDHE Champion Award at the seventh annual EDHE Awards in November 2025, an accolade that affirms the University's position as a leader in embedding entrepreneurship and promoting research-to-innovation pathways. In September, MUAH partnered with Google.org to launch the Digital Ubuntu Cybersecurity/AI Seminars, a two-year initiative that will train 100 students in cybersecurity and AI skills, positioning graduates for careers in the digital economy.

BizYouth, the University's student entrepreneurship magazine produced in collaboration with Communication and Marketing, was launched on 7 November 2025, giving student entrepreneurs a platform for voice, profile and peer inspiration.

Career Services continued to connect students with employment opportunities through sector-specific job fairs, employer engagement days and work-readiness workshops. The annual Careers Fair in July attracted more than 1 500





students daily, and more than 750 senior students received training in transferable skills that enhance both employability and personal development. Other employability offerings include the Working Wardrobe, part-time/full-time placement, Virtual Career Fair, and Work Integrated Learning placement and volunteering opportunities. These interventions equip graduates for both employability in diverse industries and for entrepreneurship.

7.1.4 Student Housing and Transport

The national shortage of affordable, quality student accommodation continues to affect the University. On-campus accommodation of 5 238 beds showed a 98% occupation rate, while the 21 592 accredited off-campus beds were fully occupied. The University is working on improving the occupancy rates of on-campus residences through improved processes and systems.

NSFAS's delayed payments to private landlords led to student evictions that required the University to intervene, including the University Trust deploying R1.5-million to assist 33 students facing eviction in the third quarter. The indication by NSFAS that it may reassign the management of off-campus student accommodation back to universities is most welcome and is being followed closely.

A Student Transport Indaba was held in July to co-create a more sustainable transport funding model, with all key stakeholders participating. Shuttle numbers increased from 167 in 2024 to 182 in 2025, with bookings surging by 34% due to the growth in NSFAS-accredited off-campus residences.

7.1.5 Student Health and Wellbeing

As a student-centred institution, the health and wellbeing of students is a key priority. SHS managed primary health care across all seven campuses. SHS has expanded awareness efforts and has also intensified its HIV AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections, and Tuberculosis programme. In November 2025, there were 254 students on the antiretroviral therapy programme and 14 on tuberculosis treatment.

ESW has partnered with each faculty to provide a liaison counsellor, contributing to a more than 50% increase in residence-based mental health workshops. Over the year, ESW provided more than 4 000 counselling sessions to 1 409 students, with 62 crisis interventions ensuring timely support for students in severe distress.

Student food insecurity remains a serious and ongoing challenge across South Africa. The Giving Campaign, themed "Empower Futures: Nourish Minds, Fund Dreams", continued to mobilise private-sector support, and the partnership with Food Forward South Africa and the Professional Provident Society, established in the third quarter of 2025, now provides monthly food packs to at least 1 000 students, with distribution set to scale in 2026. Student-led food gardens established across campuses in

Gqeberha and George provide fresh produce and serve as living sites for education on sustainable food systems. The Student Nutrition Advocacy and Communication (SNAC) podcast and a pilot food garden on North Campus extend the University's food security work through student voice and peer education.

7.1.6 Madibaz Sport

Madibaz Sport awarded 271 sport bursaries in 2025, reflecting a deliberate emphasis on inclusivity: 41% were allocated to Black students, 36% to female students and 34% to first-year students. Almost a quarter of the sport bursaries were funded by NSFAS, reflecting the growing importance of this funding stream for sport at the University. Senate's approval in 2025 of admissions concessions for student-athletes addresses a long-standing gap in Madibaz Sport's recruitment competitiveness, enabling the University to attract and retain talented athletes on terms that are both academically sound and operationally timely.

The University's commitment to developing the whole student-athlete is underpinned by structured academic support. Madibaz Sport closely monitors academic performance, and minimum academic requirements need to be met to participate in certain tertiary sport tournaments. Academic reviews of all sport bursary recipients are conducted following examinations, with early intervention strategies initiated through the LT Collab where risks are identified. More than 50 Madibaz Sport students received their qualifications at the April graduation ceremonies, a tangible reflection of this commitment.

A sponsorship (R150 thousand) for 2025 towards the Madibaz Campus Sport League activities by Score Energy Drink represents a significant moment in the development of the University's recreation and social cohesion programme. The Sport League keeps students healthy and engaged while also strengthening social bonds and a sense of belonging. The Campus Sport League continued to grow in its third year, providing opportunities for more than 800 players across multiple codes in Gqeberha and George. The George Campus Forest Run in September attracted more than 600 participants, reinforcing Madibaz Sport's role as a vehicle for community-building and campus vitality.

Seven sport codes competed at University Sport South Africa (USSA) tournaments during the year, providing more than 180 students with the opportunity to represent the University at the highest level of tertiary sport in South Africa. A gold medal at the USSA Karate Championships was among the notable performances of the year.

7.1.7 Universal Accessibility and Disability Services

The University's Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS) unit continues to advance disability inclusion as a measure of institutional integrity. The University's proportion of students with disclosed disabilities in 2025 was 1% (369



students). At 4% (24 academic and 70 PASS staff), the percentage of staff with disclosed disabilities continues to exceed the 3% sectoral target, a reflection of the safe and supportive institutional environment that UADS and partner units have cultivated. The 2025 UADS Colloquium on Advancing University Access brought together practitioners, academics and students to deepen understanding of inclusive design and universal access within higher education.

Assistive technology rooms equipped with screen-reader software, Braille embossers and other specialist tools are operational at the Second Avenue and George Campus libraries, and short-term device loans are available at Missionvale, North and South Campus libraries. All library staff received training in 2025 to support students using assistive technologies.

7.2 People and Operations

The University's ability to fulfil its mission depends on the quality and commitment of its people, and on the reliability and sustainability of its infrastructure, systems and processes. In 2025, the People and Operations portfolio continued to advance the University's positioning as an employer of choice, drive digital transformation, advance environmental sustainability and promote the safety of the University community.

7.2.1 Human Resources

During 2025, 168 appointments, 48 *ad personam* promotions and 19 academic leadership appointments were concluded, including strategic senior leadership roles critical to institutional stability. The following senior management appointments were finalised:

- Chief Information Officer, Mr Lubabalo Lokwe
- Executive Dean: Faculty of EBET, Prof Sudesh Rathilal
- Executive Dean: Faculty of Science, Prof Christa Grobler
- Dean of Students, Dr Sibusiso Mchunu
- Senior Director: Communications and Marketing, Dr Luzuko Jacobs
- Senior Director: Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement, Advocate Tshidi Mayimele-Hashatse

SETA-funded programmes enabled training for more than 100 employees, and graduate internships, learnerships and leadership development interventions strengthened internal capability and succession pathways. In compliance with the Skills Development Act, the University submitted its Annual Training Report and Workplace Skills Plan, ensuring eligibility for a mandatory grant rebate of R3.6-million. The 2025 Wellness Day recorded unprecedented participation across campuses, reflecting the impact of the University's integrated, human-centred Employee Value Proposition.

Employees received a 5.3% salary increase for 2025, above the 2024 Consumer Price Index of 4.4%. Phase 1 of the Total Guaranteed Package implementation was completed

with the May 2025 payroll run, with Phase 2 applying to all new employees from 1 September 2025. Internal parity adjustments for PASS employees from Post Levels 5 to 16 seek to align salaries with the midpoint of their scale. A four-year phased implementation approach, subject to funding availability, has been recommended by MANCO to manage cost implications, with management mindful that the salary benchmark will need to be reduced to 65% of total recurrent income by 2027. The new EEP 2025–2030 was drafted in alignment with the gazetted five-year sectoral numerical targets and underwent internal stakeholder consultation and governance approval.

Six institutional culture signature programmes are being launched across all faculties and support services portfolios to foster a values-driven and transformative institutional culture. Ambassadors from each faculty and division were identified and equipped to partner with HR and Institutional Strategy throughout the implementation process.

The first of six institutional culture signature programmes, "Mandela In Us", was launched in July across all campuses. This intervention culminated in two exhibitions in Gqeberha of insightful artefacts, created by various faculties and divisions, displayed at the Science Centre. An exhibition was also successfully hosted at the George Campus in August. The Mandela in Us artefacts provided a rich mosaic of visual expressions of how employees and students interpret their roles in embedding the legacy, ethos and values of Nelson Mandela in all facets of our core academic missions, operations, and institutional culture.

7.2.2 Information and Communication Technology Services

- Reflecting a broader institutional shift, ICT and digitalisation are increasingly governed as strategic enablers of student success, operational resilience and public trust, rather than as a collection of technology projects. ICT governance is now embedded within the University's enterprise risk management framework, with digital and cyber risks managed as institutional risks and reported to executive and Council structures accordingly. This governance-led approach supports proactive assurance and defensible decision-making, ensuring that the University's growing dependence on digital platforms is matched by commensurate oversight and accountability.

The University supports a human-centred approach to digital transformation whereby the benefits of digitalisation are equitably shared across all students, employees and external stakeholders. ICT core infrastructure maintained 99.8% uptime throughout 2025, with significant advances across digital access, cybersecurity, e-assessment and business process improvement. The Student Device Initiative issued 2 650 laptops to NSFAS-funded first-time entering students, bringing the total issued since 2019 to nearly 22 650. Wi-Fi coverage was further expanded across indoor and outdoor spaces, and 142 computer laboratories provide 4 289 computers across all campuses.



Architectural render of the Heinz Betz Hall

The University's SANReN bandwidth was upgraded from 10 Gbps to 100 Gbps during the year, a ten-fold increase that substantially improves research data transfer capacity and supports the growing demands of digital learning platforms. The e-assessment and proctoring system Inspira was implemented, with an e-assessment centre on North Campus under construction. Cloud migration and business intelligence infrastructure are being developed to enable data-driven decision-making and reduce local infrastructure reliance. Cybersecurity continues to receive focused attention, with a Cybersecurity Enhancement Plan, continuous improvement of controls, and awareness training for the University community.

7.2.3 Infrastructure Services and Environmental Sustainability

Construction started in 2025 on a 4.4-megawatt photovoltaic solar installation across all campuses. Through the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber, the University signed a Power Purchase Agreement with Etana Energy to source approximately 55% of its electricity from renewable energy. Together, these two projects are expected to enable the University to source between 70% and 80% of its energy requirements from renewable sources. Consultants have been appointed to develop a load-shedding mitigation solution integrating centralised generators with the photovoltaic installations. The University has allocated R15-million as part of the five-year capital maintenance plan towards water security management.

Two infrastructure projects progressed significantly during the year. The Heinz Betz Hall on the North Campus underwent

refurbishment and alteration to transform it into a modern, purpose-built examination and e-assessment facility, with an intermediate floor slab increasing the usable floor area within the existing structure. Construction of a new cricket clubhouse, designed to serve multiple sporting codes and community use, also commenced.

A comprehensive condition assessment of university buildings was completed in 2025, categorising maintenance needs across all campuses. Buildings on South Campus face particular challenges from salt-laden coastal air and high humidity, and remedial work has been prioritised accordingly.

7.2.4 Safety and Security

The safety of students, employees and visitors across the University's seven campuses is a non-negotiable institutional responsibility. A five-year security technologies upgrade programme has started, with R20-million earmarked in 2025 for advanced surveillance technologies, access control systems, integrated alarm and panic systems and biometric-enabled access management. A 360-degree security risk assessment across all campuses has informed the phased implementation of the Closed Campus Project, with several components completed in 2025 and the remainder scheduled to follow. The Campus Community Safety Forum, bringing together internal stakeholders, the South African Police Services, private security providers and community structures, continues to facilitate intelligence sharing, joint patrols and safety campaigns.

There are now 1 250 high-resolution CCTV cameras, incorporating number plate and facial recognition capability,

across campuses and perimeter areas, with further installations planned on the basis of ongoing risk assessments. Access control upgrades, including gated entrances, turnstiles and automatic barriers, are at varying stages of completion across campuses, with the Strandfontein, Ocean Sciences and Second Avenue entrances already operational. A collaboration with SANRAL is extending digital surveillance coverage to key hotspots and national exit routes as part of a broader smart city approach to campus safety.

7.2.5 Communication and Marketing

The Communication and Marketing Division fulfils a pivotal role in positioning the University's institutional profile, student recruitment and stakeholder engagement through an integrated, multi-platform approach. In 2025, targeted recruitment campaigns reached learners in rural towns, including Bedford, Adelaide, Cookhouse, Somerset East and Lusikisiki, and a winter school hosted at the University extended access for learners from disadvantaged communities.



The University hosted a National Dialogue on 1 November 2025, themed "Reimagining and Co-creating the Eastern Cape Province We Want: A Higher Education Sectoral Contribution for a New Vision for South Africa". The gathering brought together participants from Eastern Cape universities, TVET colleges, government, business and civil society, with a keynote address by former President Thabo Mbeki.

7.2.6 Graduation

Qualifications were conferred on 6 708 graduates in 2025. Summer graduation ceremonies took place on 2 December at the Madibaz Indoor Sport Centre in Gqeberha. The autumn ceremonies were held at the George Campus on 4 April and at the Madibaz Indoor Sport Centre in Gqeberha from 11 to 25 April 2025. Media coverage through live streaming and professional video production generated more than 82 articles on University platforms and extensive social media engagement. At the April ceremonies, honorary doctorates were conferred on four individuals whose contributions align with the University's values of social justice, transformation, academic excellence and environmental stewardship, namely: Letta Mbulu, Doctor of Music; Ntombifuthi Mtoba, Doctor of Commerce (Accounting); Professor Amina Mama, Doctor of Philosophy; and Professor David Boyd, Doctor of Laws.

7.3 Responsible Resource Mobilisation and Resource Stewardship

The University faces significant economic pressures as it navigates declining state subsidy growth, constrained tuition fee income and rising operational costs. These pressures continue to propel the University's efforts to diversify income streams, intensify resource mobilisation and embed a culture of responsible stewardship at all levels.

The consolidated annual financial statements for 2024, prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the Regulations DHET for Annual Reporting by Higher Education Institutions, were audited by SizweNtsalubaGobodo Grant Thornton Inc., who were given unrestricted access to all financial records and related information. The University received an unqualified audit opinion, and the financial statements were approved by Council on 19 June 2025.

The SRMA Office surpassed its 2025 target for bursaries and scholarships with public sector donors, particularly SETAs, remaining the primary funding source.

MANCO approved the Budget Directives for the next planning cycle, which were noted by the Finance and Facilities Committee of Council. SIVTT continues to promote long-term financial sustainability by reviewing the University's PQM, improving operational efficiencies and advancing digitalisation, diversifying revenue streams, and progressively embracing strategy-aligned budgeting. The overarching intention is to establish a recurrent cost structure



financed from recurrent revenue, with reserves earmarked for capital maintenance and digital transformation.

The work of SIVTT is complemented by the Masonge Siphuhlise campaign, which constitutes one of the six institutional culture signature programmes. As part of this campaign, all students and employees are being encouraged to “count every cent and make every cent count”. The campaign aims to harness innovative suggestions from the bottom up to diversify revenue streams and advance cost-effectiveness.

7.3.1 Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment

The broad-based black economic empowerment (B-BBEE) verification for 2024 was concluded, and the University maintained its Level 4 recognition level with no discounting, meeting the target set out in the B-BBEE strategy approved by Council. A revised certificate was issued ahead of the expiry of the previous certificate on 10 November 2025. Looking ahead, the University is targeting a Level 3 for the 2025 financial year end, to be verified in 2026, reflecting a continued ambition to deepen its contribution to the socio-economic empowerment of historically marginalised groups.

Full details on the University's B-BBEE performance are provided in the Transformation Report, which is attached as an annexure to this report.

7.4 Conclusion

The University continues to navigate a complex and volatile macro-environment characterised by economic pressures, GBV and increasing crime levels, technology disruptions, climate change, and persistent poverty and socio-economic inequalities. Despite this, the University has remained focused on its core purpose to co-create a more socially just, sustainable future for all. In so doing, cultivating an affirming, inclusive and values-driven institutional culture that liberates the full potential of students, employees and stakeholder communities. Vision 2030 continues to provide a unifying sense of purpose as we continue on our journey to be a dynamic, African university in the service of society

Professor Sibongile Muthwa
Vice-Chancellor



Strategy-Aligned Institutional Performance Review

8.1 Vision 2030 Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning Framework

The University's Vision 2030 Strategy and the Annual Performance Plan 2025 (APP 2025) constitute the basis for monitoring and evaluating progress at the institutional level. The institutional monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL) framework informs the key performance indicators (KPIs) for the academic core missions used to report on progress in implementing institutional strategy.

The dimensions of the institutional Vision 2030 Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) Framework are diagrammatically depicted in Figure 9 (see page 78).

This framework is premised on a core philosophy that strives to promote student access for success through excellence in the core academic missions. These are referred to as the Vision 2030 Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), as indicated in the Strategic Overview and Figure 9. The SFAs include humanising learning and teaching, impactful research, innovation and internationalisation, transformative engagement, and student-centric, life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom to promote student access for success.

These core academic missions are underpinned and strengthened by transversal interventions to advance transformation and enable institutional sustainability. The MERL Framework focuses on monitoring indicators related to selected Strategic Enablers that have an impact on the sustainability of the University, namely an inclusive values-

driven institutional culture and empowered employees, improved efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure, and strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship.

Specific performance indicators in the MERL Framework are fully aligned with the broad policy goals that are articulated in higher education policy, as well as the strategic goals articulated in Vision 2030. Qualitative and quantitative data for each of the indicators are analysed and reported to Council each quarter, which in turn informs annual reporting to regulatory and statutory bodies such as the DHET.

This report, therefore, assesses institutional performance against the required DHET indicators for annual performance reporting (see Table 2, page 79), as well as an expanded set of key quantitative performance indicators aligned with the Vision 2030 Strategy.

8.2 Annual Performance Report: Performance Indicators

The University pursues a sustainable growth strategy in terms of student enrolments, staff capacity, financial resources and infrastructural facilities. As a comprehensive university, the balance between diploma and degree enrolments, as well as between UG and PG enrolments, is closely monitored. Enrolment targets are informed by various strategic considerations, such as the distinctive academic mandate and identity of a comprehensive university, the student intake profile, current and emerging research capabilities, the qualifications profile and research outputs of academic staff, and academic planning and curriculum renewal across all faculties.

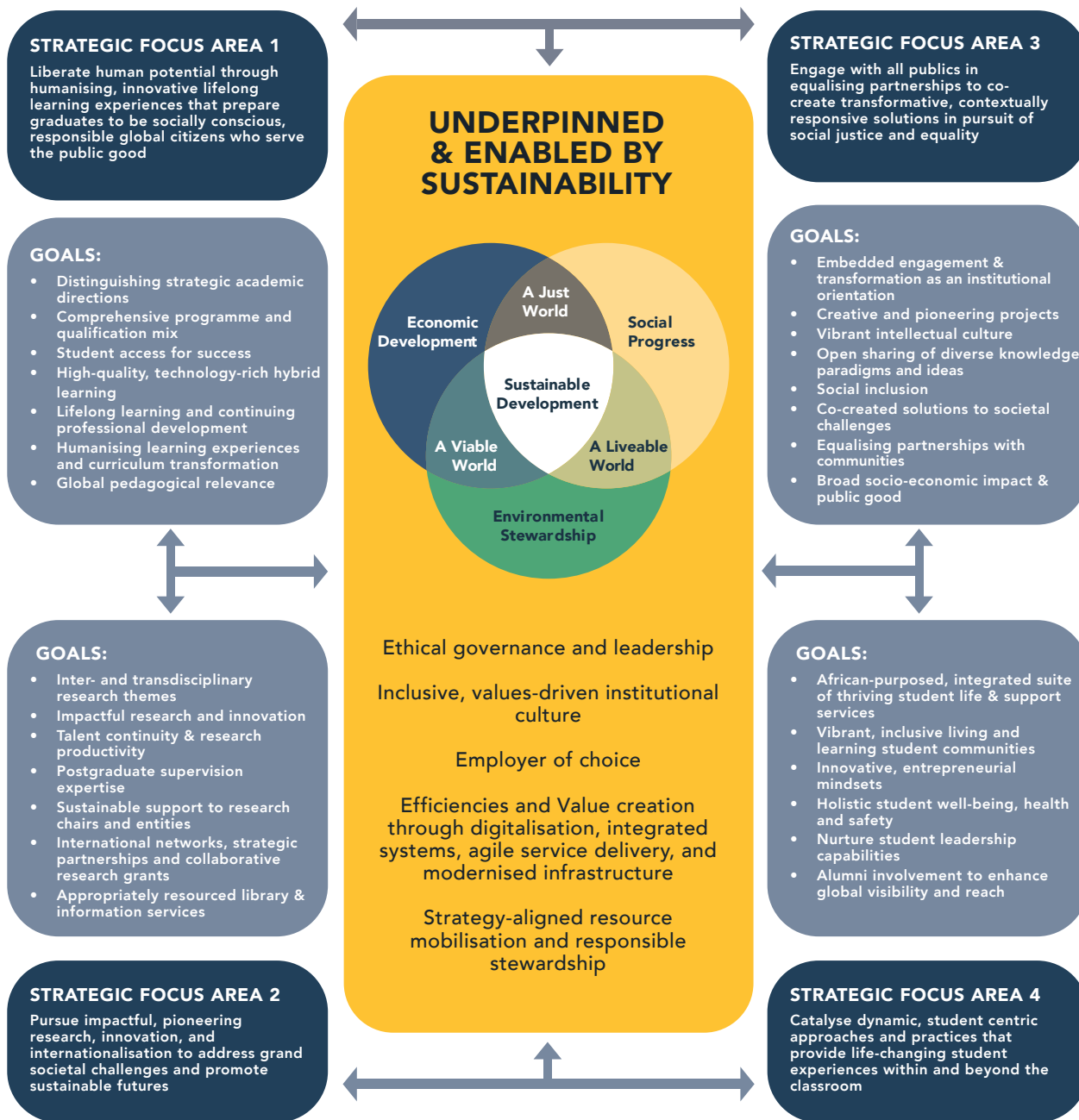


Figure 9: Nelson Mandela University Vision 2030 Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) Framework

8.2.1 DHET Performance Indicators

Table 2 provides an overview of the student access and success, staff profile and research output indicators that DHET requires all universities to report on, accompanied by

their associated targets for 2025. This will be complemented by a comprehensive analysis of additional quantitative indicators to monitor and evaluate progress in implementing the Vision 2030 SFAs, which can be assessed quantitatively.

2025 Annual Performance: Actual versus Targets

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	HEMIS 2023 AUDITED	HEMIS 2024 AUDITED	HEMIS 2025 2ND SUBMISSION	YEAR ON YEAR CHANGE	APP 2025 TARGET	ACTUAL VERSUS TARGET VARIANCE
A. Access						
Headcount totals						
First-time entering undergraduates	6 912	7 895	8 670	9.8%	8 556	1.3%
Headcount enrolments	31 362	32 954	34 564	4.9%	33 326	3.7%
Headcount enrolments (Foundation Provisioning)	3 693	3 917	4 325	10.4%	4 278	1.1%
Headcount enrolments total UG	28 060	29 562	30 894	4.5%	29 911	3.3%
Headcount enrolments total PG	3 133	3 236	3 516	8.7%	3 285	7.0%
Occasional Students	169	156	154	-1.3%	130	18.5%
Enrolments by major field of study						
Science and Engineering, Technology	10 441	11 087	11 393	2.8%	11 104	2.6%
Business/management	11 204	11 923	12 561	5.4%	12 100	3.8%
Education	2 242	2 382	2 414	1.3%	2 413	0.1%
Other humanities	7 475	7 562	8 196	8.4%	7 709	6.3%
Distance education enrolments	21	23	23	0.0%	22	4.5%
B. Success						
Graduates UG	4 712	5 518	6 221	12.7%	4 823	29.0%
Graduates PG	1 103	1 190	1 324	11.3%	1 226	8.0%
Success rate	74%	77%	80%	3.9%	78%	2.6%
Undergraduate output by scarce skills						
Engineering	200	229	279	21.7%	229	21.7%
Life and physical sciences	148	207	169	-18.5%	163	3.5%
Animal and human health	339	275	294	7.0%	365	-19.4%
Teacher education *	380	400	487	21.8%	426	14.3%
Scarce skills success rate	81%	83%	86%	3.6%	85%	1.2%
*Includes PGCE - See below for breakdown of teacher education outputs.						
Teacher Education						
B Ed	281	318	381	19.8%	323	18.0%
PGCE	99	82	106	29.3%	103	2.9%
Total	380	400	487	21.8%	426	14.3%
C: Staff profile						
Percentage of staff with doctoral degrees	47%	48%	46%	-4.2%	48%	-4.2%
Number of NGAP staff	17	17	19	11.8%	20	-5.0%
Ratio of FTE students to FTE instructional or research staff	28	29	31	6.9%	29	6.9%
D. Research output						
Publication units per FTE staff	0.61	0.56	**0.65	15.2%	0.71	-8.6%
Research Master's graduates	204	222	253	13.9%	197	28.3%
Doctoral graduates	93	66	106	60.6%	93	14.0%
Publication units	520	489	**564	15.4%	596	-5.4%

Table 2: Overview of KPIs required by the DHET

Key:	
	Target met or slightly exceeded
	Target exceeded but it is positive
	Trend needs to be monitored
	Target not met or far exceeded and corrective action required
	Data not final

** This data is preliminary. Final data will only be available by the end of 2026 once DHET has reviewed the publication output units for books, chapters in books and conference proceedings.

*** DHET requires that the HEMIS 2nd submission data be used when compiling the Annual Report, since it is near final and the HEMIS 3rd submission is only finalised at the end of July each year.

8.3 Performance Indicators for the Vision 2030 Strategic Focus Areas

The various indicators for the Vision 2030 SFAs, which can be assessed quantitatively, are outlined below with an indication of the data trends for each.

Strategic Focus Area 1: Liberate human potential through humanising, innovative lifelong learning experiences that prepare graduates to be socially conscious, responsible global citizens who serve the public good

8.3.1 Performance Indicator 1: Total Headcount Enrolments by Qualification Type and Qualification Level

As indicated in Table 3, UG enrolments grew at a rate of 2.5% on average per annum from 2022 to 2025. Institutional performance is monitored across a rolling three-year period to enable the evaluation of the trends over time for each indicator. Monitoring and evaluation over a three-year horizon provides an indication of whether strategic interventions and corrective actions are yielding the desired results.

The University experienced a decline in UG enrolments from 28 698 in 2022 to 28 060 in 2023, which was a decline of 638 or 2.2%. In 2023, the University experienced a decline of 1 643 in first-time entering (FTEnt) UG intake from 8 555 in 2022 to 6 912 in 2023 (19.2% decline), which led to a 2.2% decline in total UG enrolments. One of the reasons the UG enrolments increased by 1 502 from 28 060 in 2023 to 29 562 in 2024 was the decline in the success rate from 81% in 2022 to 73% in 2023. The decline in the number of graduates, by 1 588 from 2022 to 2023, led to large numbers of repeaters in the 2024 academic year. From 2023 to 2025, the UG enrolments increased sharply from 28 060 to 30 894.

In 2025, UG enrolments were 30 894 compared to the 2025 target of 29 911, which was 3.3% above the target.

Advanced diplomas were introduced to replace the former BTech degrees phased out in alignment with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework requirements. Although enrolments in the advanced diplomas grew sharply when they were first introduced, they started declining each year from 2023, and there were 1 577 enrolments in 2025 compared to 1 752 in 2022. The 2025 enrolment was 10.2% below the target of 1 756, with a decline of 3.4% on average per annum over the 2022 to 2025 period.

UG diplomas and certificates showed a low average annual growth rate of 0.7% on average per annum from 2022 to 2025. The enrolment of 12 551 in 2025 was the highest over the period 2022 to 2025 and was 6.8% (800 more enrolments) than the target of 11 751.

UG degree enrolments grew at an average annual rate of 4.6% over the 2022 to 2025 period. This was much higher than the growth in diploma programmes. The UG degree enrolment figure of 16 766 in 2025 was 2.2% higher than the target of 16 404.

Qualification Type	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025	% Deviation from 2025 Targets	Average annual growth rate 2022–2025
UG Diploma or Certificate	12 307	11 803	12 049	11 751	12 551	6.8%	0.7%
Advanced Diploma	1 752	1 723	1 635	1 756	1 577	-10.2%	-3.4%
UG Degree	14 639	14 534	15 878	16 404	16 766	2.2%	4.6%
Total UG	28 698	28 060	29 562	29 911	30 894	3.3%	2.5%
PG Diploma	527	427	528	568	564	-0.7%	2.3%
Honours	829	730	752	806	769	-4.6%	-2.5%
Master’s	1 486	1 420	1 388	1 362	1 553	14.0%	1.5%
Doctoral	568	556	568	549	630	14.8%	3.5%
Total PG	3 410	3 133	3 236	3 285	3 516	7.0%	1.0%
Occasional	212	169	156	130	154	18.5%	-10.1%
Grand total	32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564	3.7%	2.3%

Table 3: Total headcount enrolments by qualification type and qualification level, 2022–2025

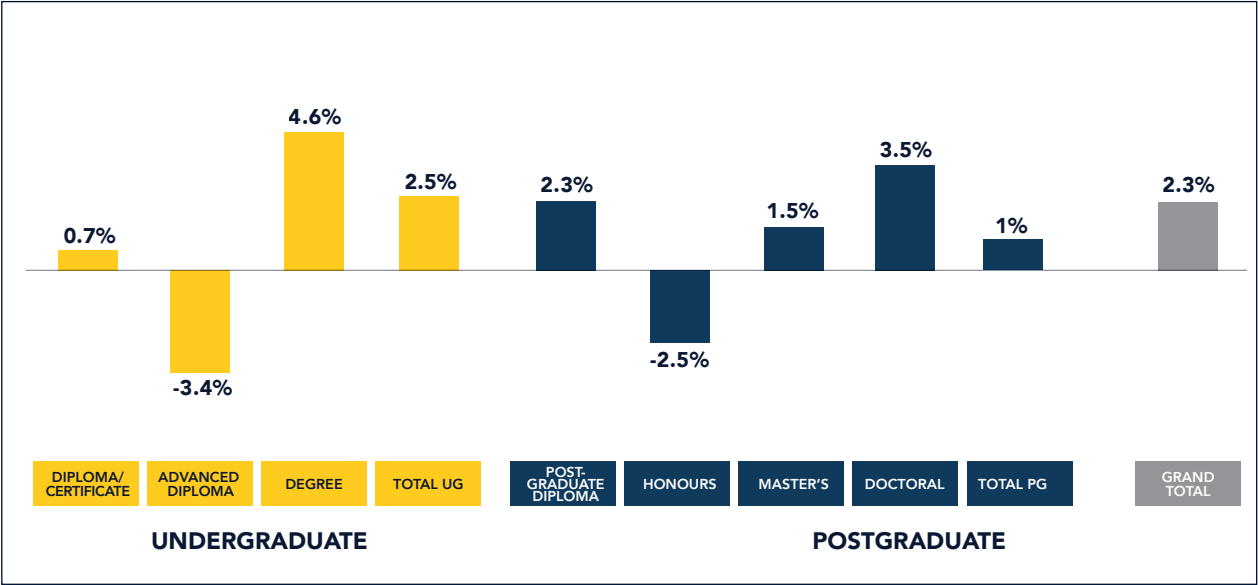


Figure 10: Average annual growth rate by qualification type, 2022–2025

Figure 10 illustrates the average annual growth rate by qualification type from 2022 to 2025.

The University has worked progressively towards more integrated, digitalised, and responsive enrolment management systems and processes, to ensure that the substantial number of offers made to applicants translates into actual enrolments. This has included implementing various cross-cutting interventions to enhance the efficiency of the student access and enrolment value chain. As a result, the targets for FTEnt, UG, and total headcount enrolments were exceeded in 2022, 2024 and 2025, as were enrolments in specific fields of study in recent years. However, the University plans to slow down the rapid growth in enrolments at the UG level to ensure a quality learning and teaching experience for students.

PG enrolments declined over the period 2022 to 2024 by 5.1%, from 3 410 to 3 236. In 2025, PG enrolments increased for the first time in recent years to 3 516, 7% higher than the target of 3 285 for 2025. The increases in PG enrolments improved the average annual growth rates to 2.3% for PG diplomas, 1.5% for Master’s degrees and 3.5% for doctoral degrees. However, Honours degree enrolments continued to decline over the 2022 to 2025 period at an average annual rate of 2.5%.

Impediments to increasing PG enrolments include limited funding for PG bursaries and scholarships, restricted supervisory capacity due to the resignation and retirement of senior academic staff with PhDs, challenges in filling

vacancies in faculties, particularly in scarce skills fields of study, and fewer international student enrolments. To stimulate PG enrolments, efforts are being made to secure external funding through fellowships offered by the National Research Foundation (NRF), but these opportunities are highly competitive. In the Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) fields, PG funding is further constrained due to laboratory and research running costs exceeding the external grants awarded by national funding agencies. This negatively affects the implementation of these research projects and the recruitment of PG students by grant holders. To mitigate this, the strategic resource mobilisation endeavours of the University are geared towards securing additional third-stream funding for PG scholarships and bursaries.

Evidence also shows that PG students are increasingly mobile and will often choose where to study based on the research focus area and the reputation of research professors. To address this, the University has enhanced the marketing of PG qualifications around defined institutional research themes, research “champions” (such as the research chairs, distinguished professors and NRF-rated researchers), and the niche areas of research and engagement entities. Furthermore, various programmes are in place to improve the PG qualifications’ profile of academic staff. Talent management strategies will seek to attract talented scholars with PhDs and PG supervision experience to the University. In addition, research associates, HEAVA professors and postdoctoral fellows will also be appointed to expand the PG supervisory pool.

8.3.2 Performance Indicator 2: Demographic Profile of Students

As can be seen from Table 4, the demographic profile of the student population is changing rapidly. Black (African, Coloured, Indian) students increased from 29 682 enrolments in 2022 to 32 742 enrolments in 2025, while White student enrolments continued to decline from 2 638 in 2022 to 1 822 in 2025. African and Indian student enrolments increased on average by 4.4% and 3% per annum respectively from 2022 to 2025. However, Coloured and White student enrolments declined by 7.8% and 11.6% on average per annum over the same period. Similar trends are observed at public universities at national level, with African students increasing on average by 3.6% per annum, while Coloured students declined by 2%, Indian students declined by 4.8% and White students declined by 7.7% on average per annum over the 2022 to 2024 period. The national data for 2025 is not yet available.

Population Group	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
African	26 592	26 538	28 515	29 024	30 220
Coloured	2 757	2 318	2 166	2 152	2 158
Indian	333	319	330	326	364
Black	29 682	29 175	31 011	31 502	32 742
White	2 638	2 187	1 943	1 824	1 822
Grand Total	32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564

Table 4: Total headcount enrolments by population group*, 2022–2025

* Black includes African, Coloured, and Indian (A, C, I)

* Throughout this report, population groups are reported on using the classifications prescribed in the Employment Equity Act

Figure 11 indicates that the percentage of African students increased from 82% in 2022 to 88% of total enrolments in 2025 (1% above the target), while White students decreased from 8% in 2022 to 5% in 2025 (in line with the target). The percentage of Coloured students decreased from 9% in 2022 to 6% in 2025 (1% below the target), while enrolments of Indian students remained stable at 1%.

Female enrolments continued to increase from 18 464 in 2022 to 20 878 in 2025, with male enrolments decreasing from 13 856 in 2022 to 13 686 in 2025 (see Table 5).

Gender	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Female	18 464	18 421	19 668	19 529	20 878
Male	13 856	12 941	13 286	13 797	13 686
Total	32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564

Table 5: Total headcount enrolments by gender¹, 2022–2025

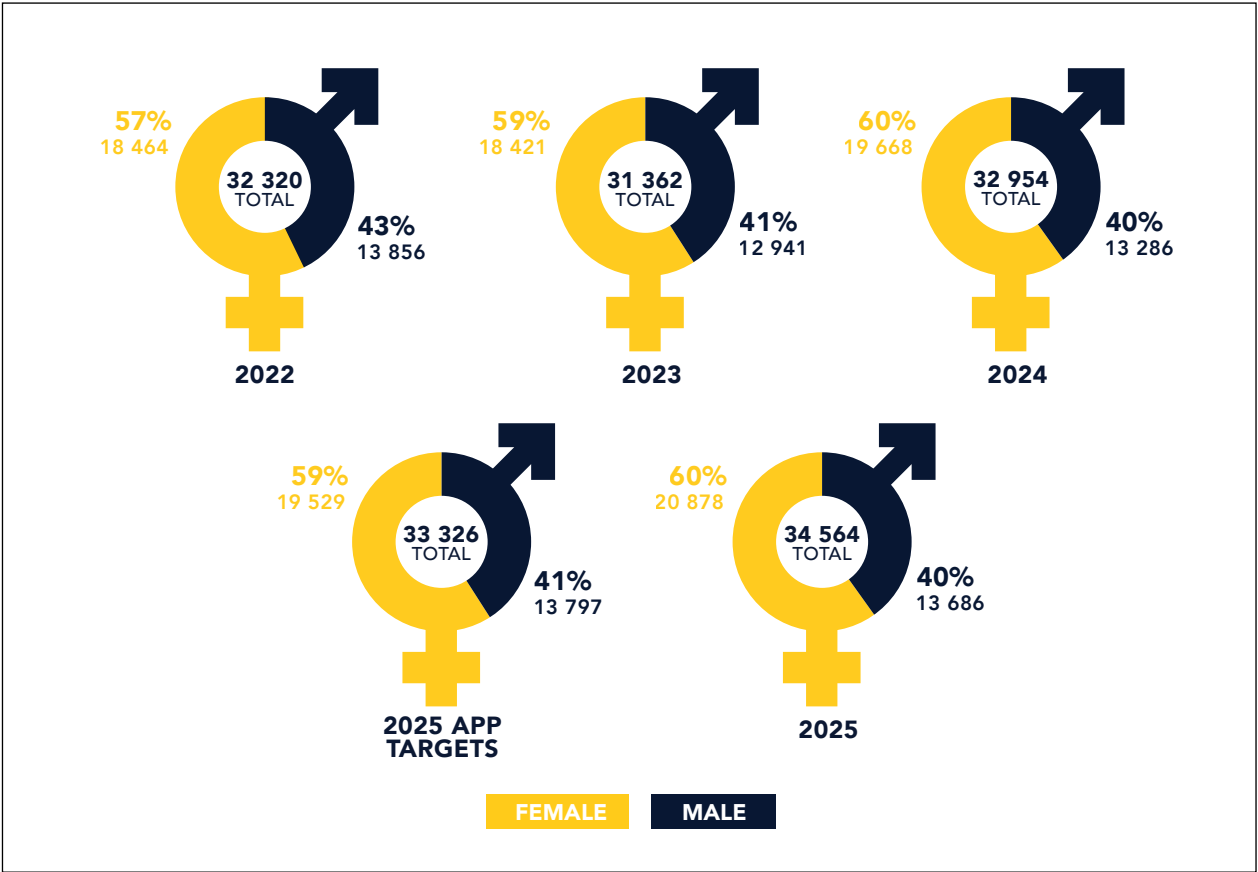


Figure 12: Percentage headcount enrolments by gender, 2022–2025

Figure 12 shows that female enrolments continued to increase as a proportion of total enrolments from 57% in 2022 to 60% in 2025, while male enrolments decreased from 43% to 40%, which was slightly below the target of 41%. At national level, female students increased from 62% of enrolments in 2022 to 64% in 2024, while male enrolments declined from 38% in 2022 to 36% in 2024. The decline in male participation in higher education is a national concern.

The profile of the student intake changed rapidly in the years leading up to 2022, particularly in terms of the proportion of incoming students from quintile 1 to 3 schools, which are the most resource-deprived. However, this proportion now appears to have stabilised at around 66% to 67%. Table 6

shows that the intake from quintile 1 to 3 schools increased slightly from 66% in 2022 to 67% in 2025.

The primary purpose of foundation provision is to improve the academic success of students who may be at risk because of their educational backgrounds. This is achieved through an extended curriculum designed to equip them with the academic foundations needed to complete their studies successfully. Foundation provision focuses particularly on FTent students, given that cohort throughput rates indicate a high dropout rate in the first year of study. The University experienced a rapid increase in foundation provisioning (extended programmes) enrolments, from 3 291 in 2022 to 4 325 in 2025 (an increase of 9.5% on average per annum).

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Private or Other	8%	8%	9%	5%	9%
Quintile 1	15%	15%	15%	16%	15%
Quintile 2	16%	16%	16%	17%	16%
Quintile 3	35%	35%	35%	38%	36%
Quintile 4	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%
Quintile 5	17%	17%	16%	15%	15%
	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Quintile 1 - 3	66%	66%	66%	71%	67%
Quintile 4-5	26%	26%	25%	24%	24%
Private or Other	8%	8%	9%	5%	9%

Table 6: School quintile profile of first-time entering students (matriculants), 2022–2025

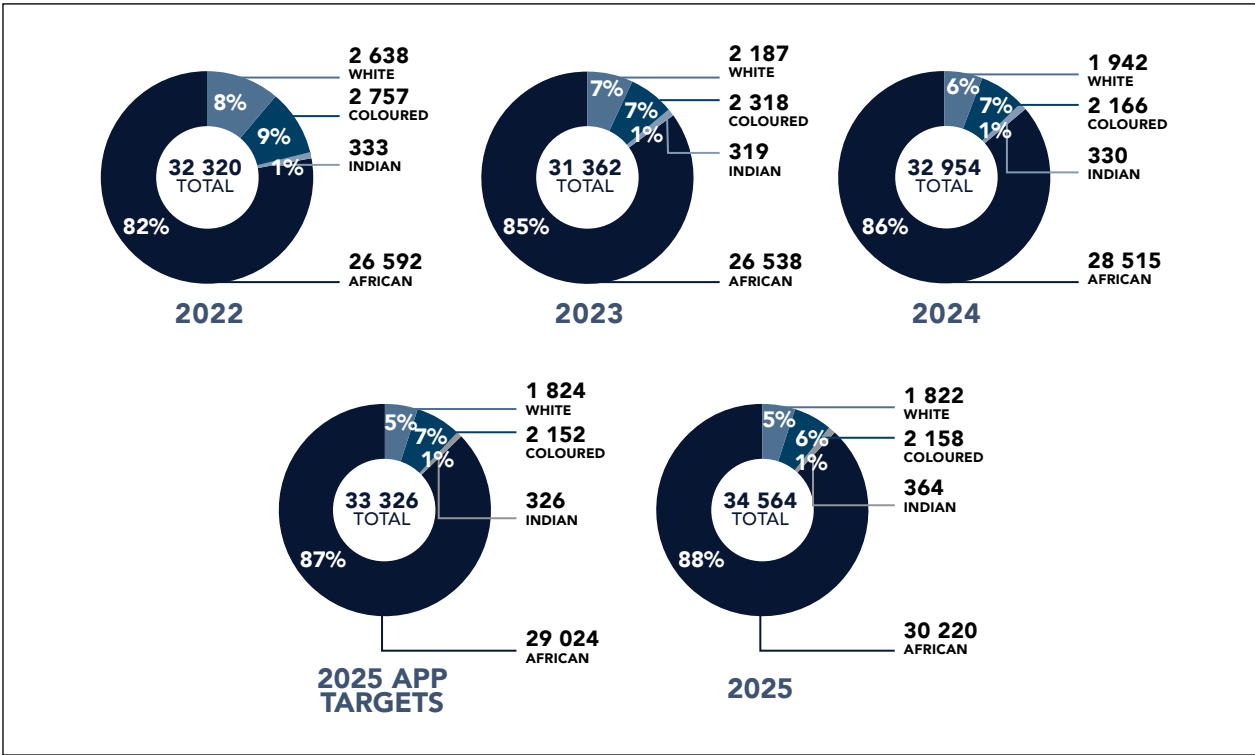


Figure 11: Percentage student enrolments by population group, 2022–2025

¹ While the HEMIS statistics refer to gender as including only male and female, the University subscribes to a transformative, non-binary framing of gender.

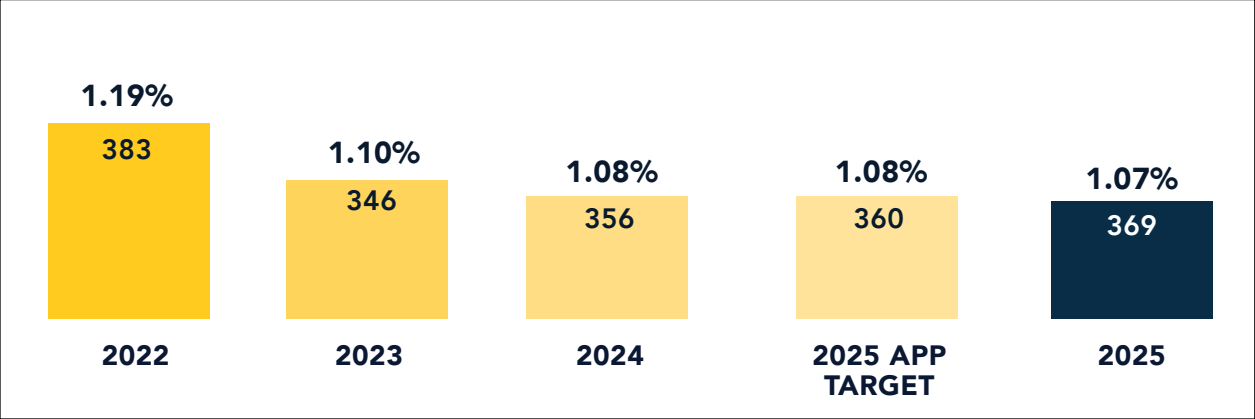


Figure 13: Percentage of students with disabilities, 2022–2025

Figure 13 indicates that the percentage of students with disabilities has declined from 1.19% in 2022 (383) to 1.07% in 2025 (369), slightly lower than the 2025 target of 1.08%.

Table 7 indicates that the 2025 foundation enrolments were 1.1% above the target of 4 278 in 2025. The consistent growth in these programmes is encouraging since research has shown that expanded foundation provisioning contributes to improved student success, retention and throughput.

The University strives to ensure that all campus facilities are accessible to students with disabilities and every reasonable attempt is made to provide students with assistive devices and technologies, and the accommodations they require.

8.3.3 Performance Indicator 3: Student Enrolments by Major Field of Study

In 2022, the University enrolled most students in SET (34%) and in business and commerce (34%). Other humanities programmes constituted 25% of enrolments and education 7%. By 2025, business and commerce represented 36% of enrolments, largely attributed to sharp enrolment increases in the UG diplomas and an average annual growth rate of 4.8% over the 2022 to 2025 period. Enrolments in other humanities declined from 25% in 2022 to 24% in 2025, which was a 0.2% decline on average per annum. Education enrolments remained at 7% of total enrolments from 2022 to 2025, with an average annual growth rate of 3.5%, which was higher than the total average annual growth rate of 2.3% per annum over this period, and SET enrolments declined from 34% in 2022 to 33% in 2025 (see Figure 14).

Table 8 shows that the University exceeded its 2025 targets in all major fields of study.

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target	2025	Average annual growth rate 2022–2025
Headcount enrolments (foundation provisioning)	3 291	3 693	3 917	4 278	4 325	9.5%

Table 7: Foundation programme headcount enrolments, 2022–2025

Major field of study	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Science, Engineering and Technology	10 976	10 441	11 087	11 104	11 393
Business and Commerce	10 917	11 204	11 923	12 100	12 561
Education	2 175	2 242	2 382	2 413	2 414
Other Humanities	8 252	7 475	7 562	7 709	8 196
Total	32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564

Table 8: Headcount enrolments by major field of study, 2022–2025

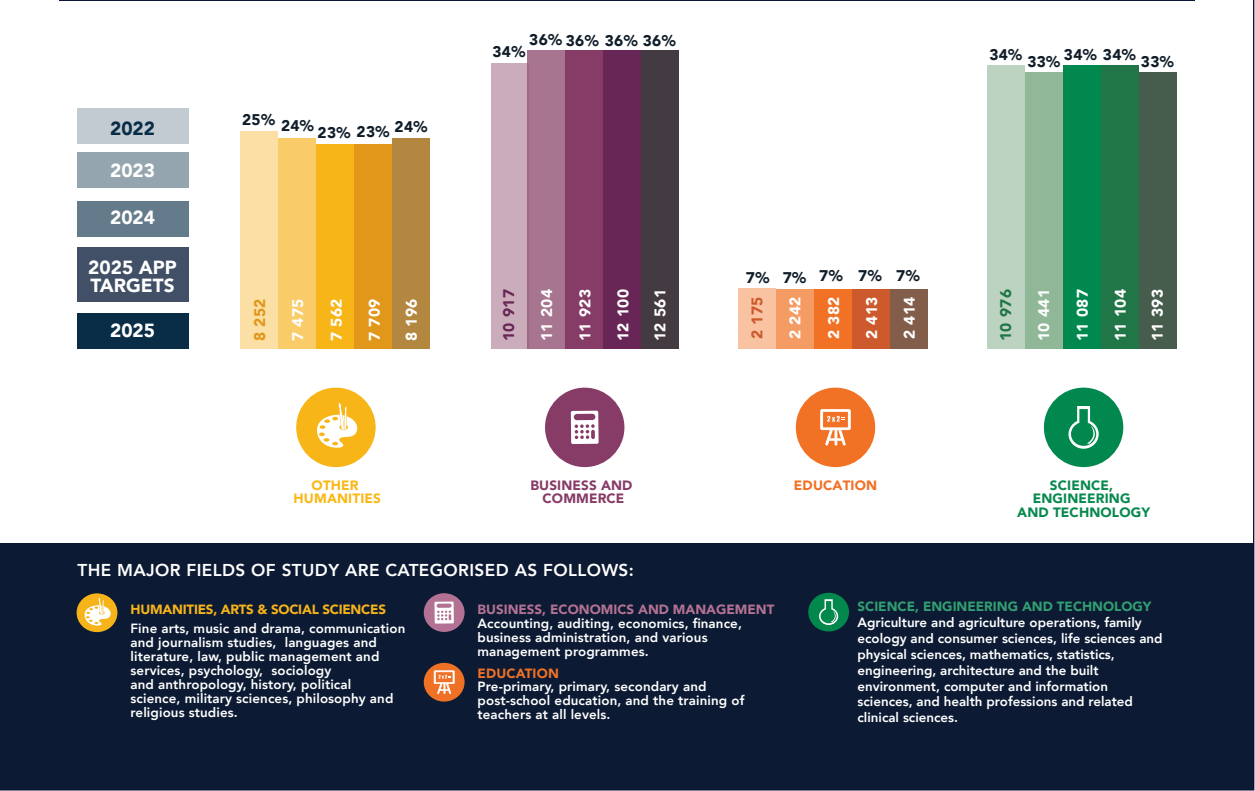


Figure 14: Percentage distribution of headcount enrolments by major field of study, 2022–2025

Figure 15 indicates that there was a substantial over-enrolment of 30% in FTEnt UG students in 2022. As a result, the University implemented stricter capping on FTEnt intakes in 2023 and enrolments were 3.8% below the target, with 6 912 enrolments compared to the target of 7 185. In

2024, there was an 8.6% over-enrolment, with 7 895 FTEnt UG students compared to the target of 7 270. In 2025, the FTEnt UG enrolments were 8 670, 1.3% higher than the target of 8 556, which was within a 2% range of the target, and in line with the DHET requirements.

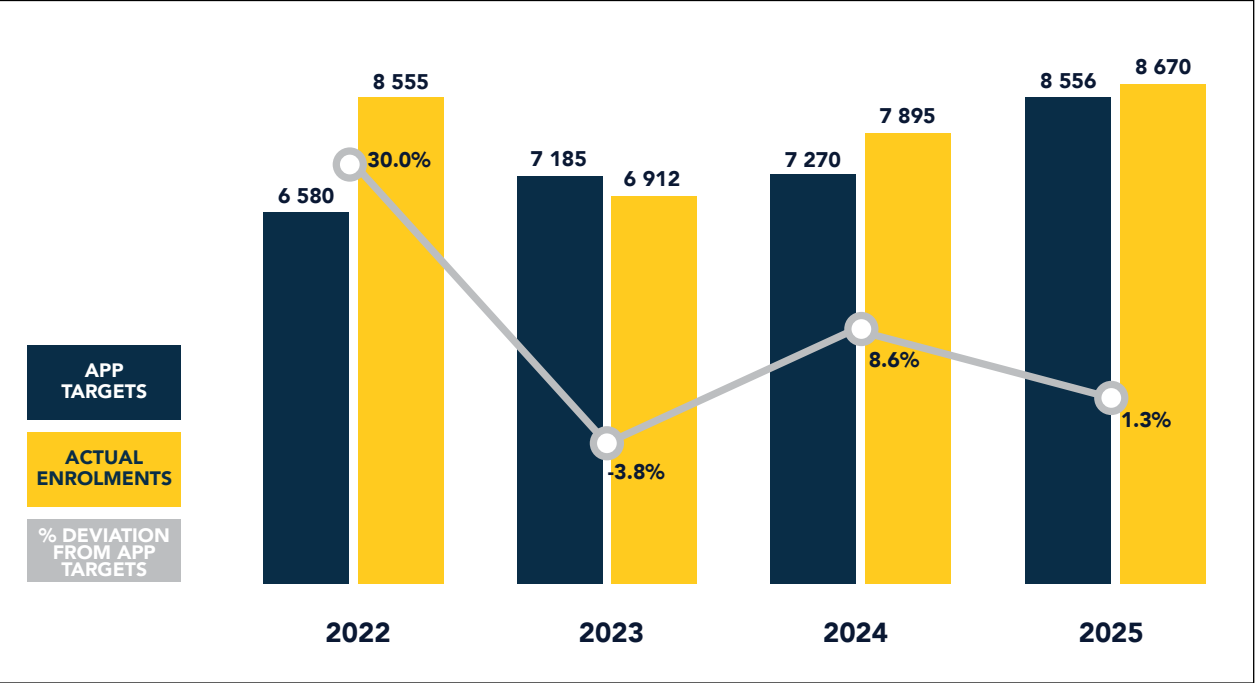


Figure 15: First-time entering student enrolments relative to targets, 2022–2025

8.3.4 Performance Indicator 4: Actual versus Approved Teaching Input Units

At an overarching level, the actual teaching input units (TIUs) of the University in 2022 stood at 51 088 compared to the approved funded TIUs of 56 717. This was 9.9% below the approved target, which falls outside the acceptable deviation range of 2%. This trend, depicted in Figure 16, had a negative impact on the teaching input subsidy allocation to the University and was mainly due to the non-achievement of PG enrolment targets. As indicated under Performance Indicator 1, the University is implementing various strategies to reverse this trend.

The shortfall in 2023 (3.9%) was much lower than in previous years and in 2024, the over-enrolment of 1.7% was slight, falling within the acceptable 2% range. The improvement in achieving the approved TIUs resulted from the lower targets set by the University during the mid-term enrolment planning review for the 2023–2025 period.

As a result, the TIU targets were also reduced, bringing the actual TIUs much closer to the approved funded TIUs in 2024 and 2025. In 2024, the University had 53 310 TIUs compared to the approved 52 394, which was 1.7% higher than the target. Preliminary data for 2025 indicates a 3.4% deviation from the target of 53 040, with the actual TIUs at 54 846. The final TIUs for 2025 will decrease with the finalisation of the 2025 HEMIS data once all the calculations have been completed and will bring the actual TIUs closer to the approved funded TIUs.

8.3.5 Performance Indicator 5: Student Success Rates in Coursework Modules

The student success rate is defined as the percentage of enrolled credits successfully completed. The focus on promoting holistic student access for success remains paramount, especially given that the University has been systematically increasing access to higher education for first-generation students, with 73% depending on NSFAS funding in 2025.

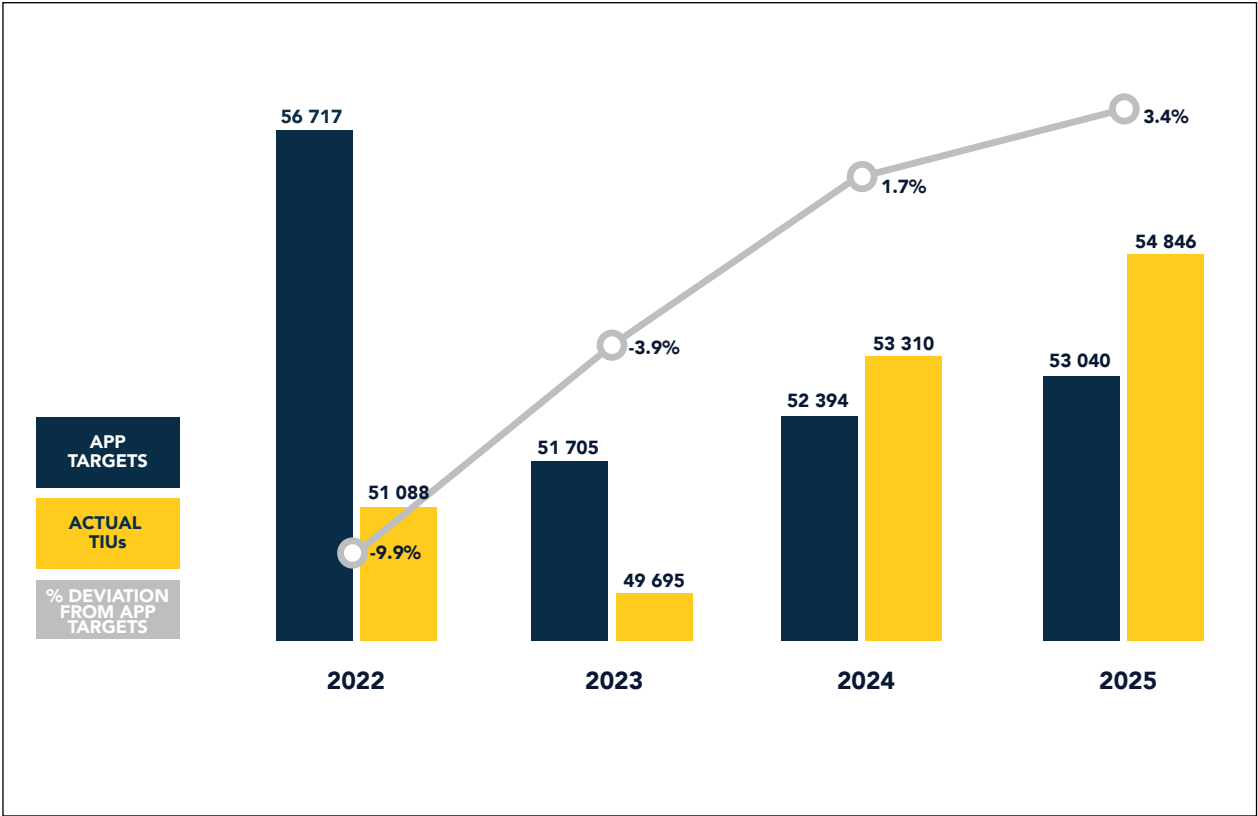


Figure 16: Achievement of the approved Teaching Input Unit (TIU) targets, 2022–2025

Population group	2022			2023			2024			2025 Targets			2025		
	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T
African	84%	75%	80%	76%	68%	72%	78%	71%	76%	82%	74%	78%	81%	74%	78%
Coloured	88%	82%	86%	84%	76%	81%	87%	80%	84%	86%	80%	80%	88%	82%	86%
Indian	90%	85%	88%	84%	84%	84%	89%	85%	87%	86%	86%	86%	90%	88%	89%
White	94%	88%	91%	93%	87%	90%	95%	88%	92%	95%	89%	92%	92%	89%	90%
Total	85%	77%	81%	77%	70%	74%	80%	73%	77%	82%	74%	78%	82%	76%	79%

Table 9: Success rate in coursework modules by population group and gender, 2022–2025

* F = Female; M = Male; T = Total

As depicted in Table 9, the University aimed to increase the success rate from 81% in 2022 to 82% in 2023. However, the success rate for all modules (coursework and research) declined to 74% in 2023, the lowest the University has experienced in many years. However, the success rate improved significantly in 2024 to 77% and further improved to 79% in 2025 for coursework modules and 80% for coursework and research modules.

The University consistently strives to enhance student success by making available a range of academic support and development opportunities that include first-year orientation, academic and digital literacy development, writing and language development, success coaching, career and employability development, and supportive living and learning environments. The University embraces a culture of peer-assisted learning, which provides students with small-group learning experiences. In addition, various online and other resources (for example, study guides and multilingual glossaries) are available to support learning and development. Student success initiatives are underpinned by data that provide a profile of students to inform learning enhancement and development activities.

Figure 17 indicates that the University has been steadily improving the success rate since 2023. It is encouraging to note that the 2025 target of 78% was exceeded and the University's success rate is now in line with the sector benchmark of 80%.

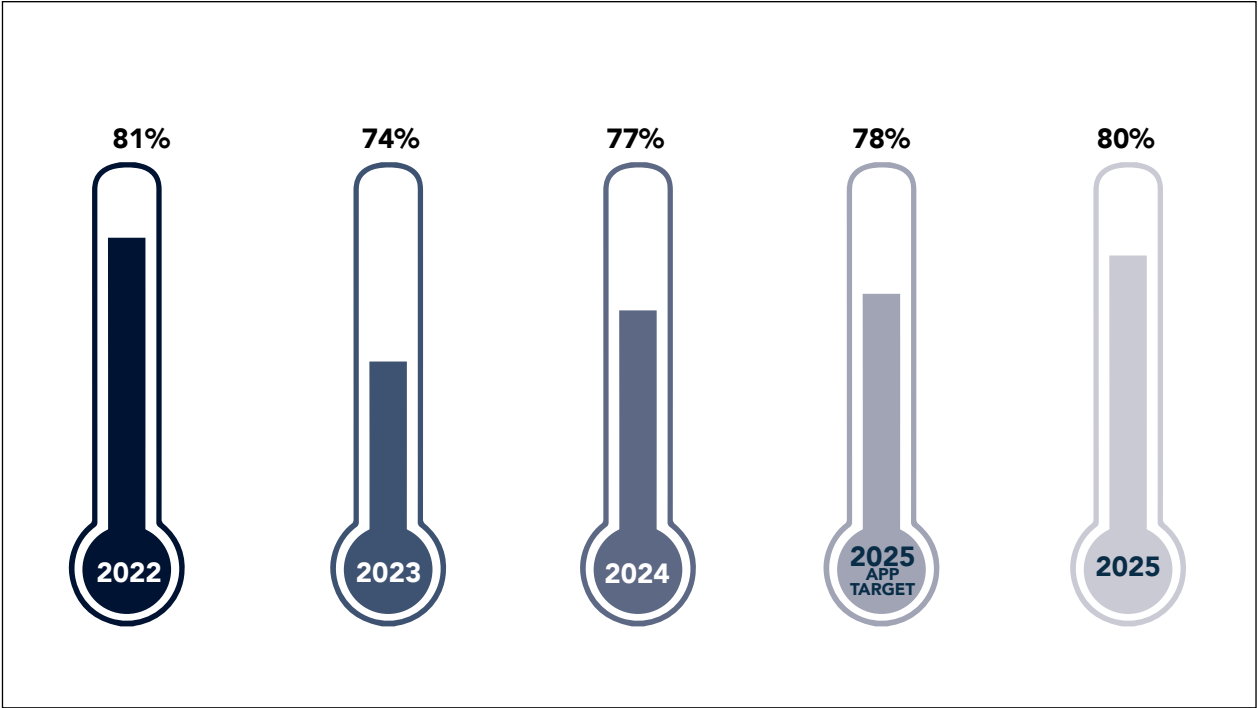


Figure 17: Success rate for all modules (coursework and research), 2022–2025

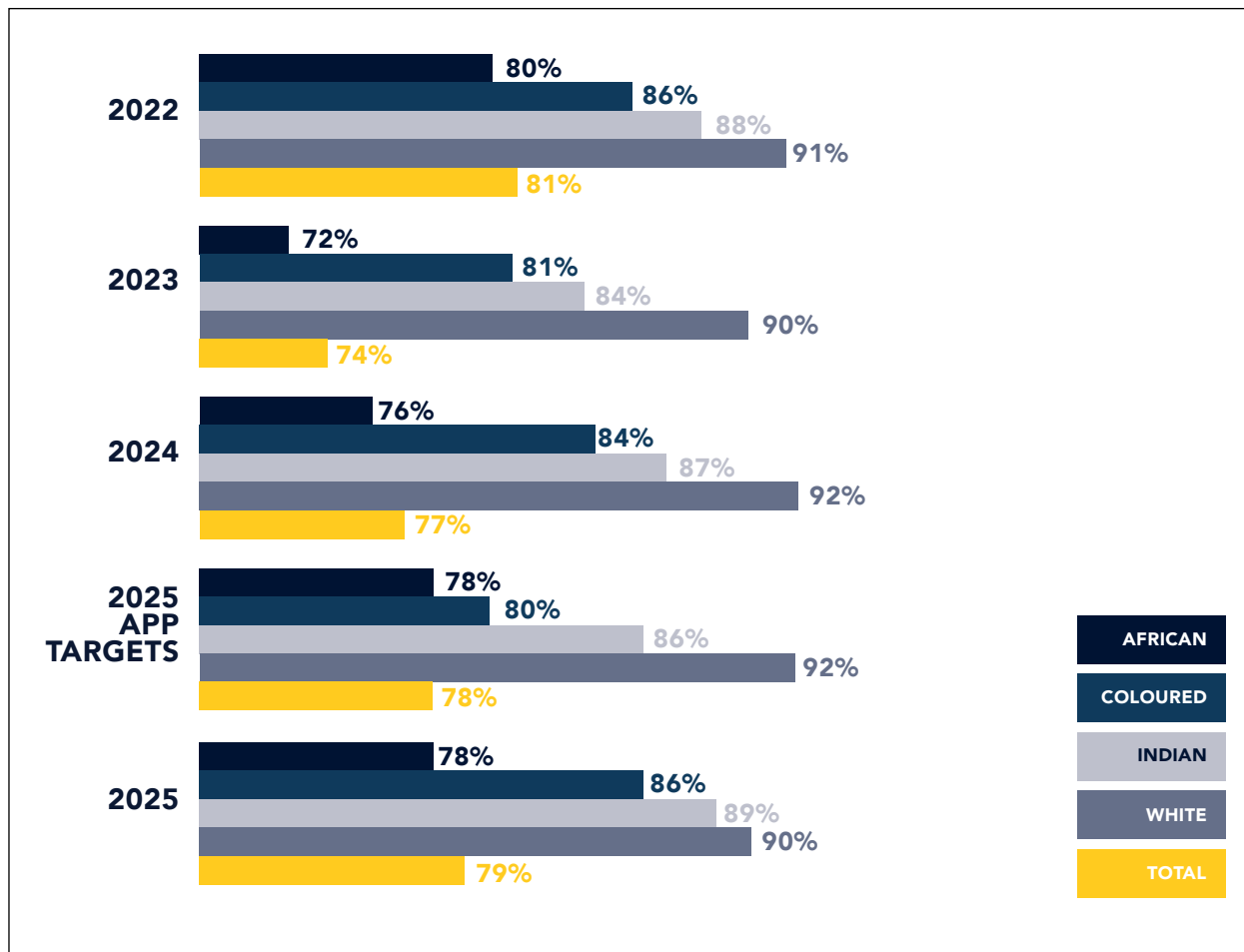


Figure 18: Student success rates in coursework modules by population group, 2022–2025

As indicated in both Table 9 and Figure 18, the difference in success rate between students of the various population groups remains a source of concern, with a 12% achievement gap between White (90%) and African students (78%) in 2025. Despite this, the success rate of African students was on target in 2025, while the success rate of White students was 2% below the target. The success rates of Coloured and Indian students were 6% and 3% above the targets, respectively.

The difference in success rates between the population groups is a national trend. The national average success rate was 81% in 2024, with African students obtaining a success rate of 80%, while Coloured, Indian and White students obtained success rates of 84%, 85% and 90%, respectively.

In terms of gender Figure 19, indicates that female students had a much higher success rate (82%) in 2025 compared to

male students (76%). This trend is consistent for all population groups and is in line with national trends. The performance gap between female and male students was 7% in 2024 and narrowed slightly to 6% in 2025. It is encouraging to note that the overall success rate of female students (82%) was on target, and the overall success rate of male students (76%) was 2% above the target of 74% for 2025. Over the period 2022 to 2024, female students at national level had success rates that were 5% to 6% higher than those of male students.

The achievement gap in success rates by population group and gender is being investigated more thoroughly through qualitative institutional research being conducted under the leadership of the DVC: Learning and Teaching. This research will ensure that interventions aimed at reversing these concerning trends are evidence-based, targeted and appropriately designed.

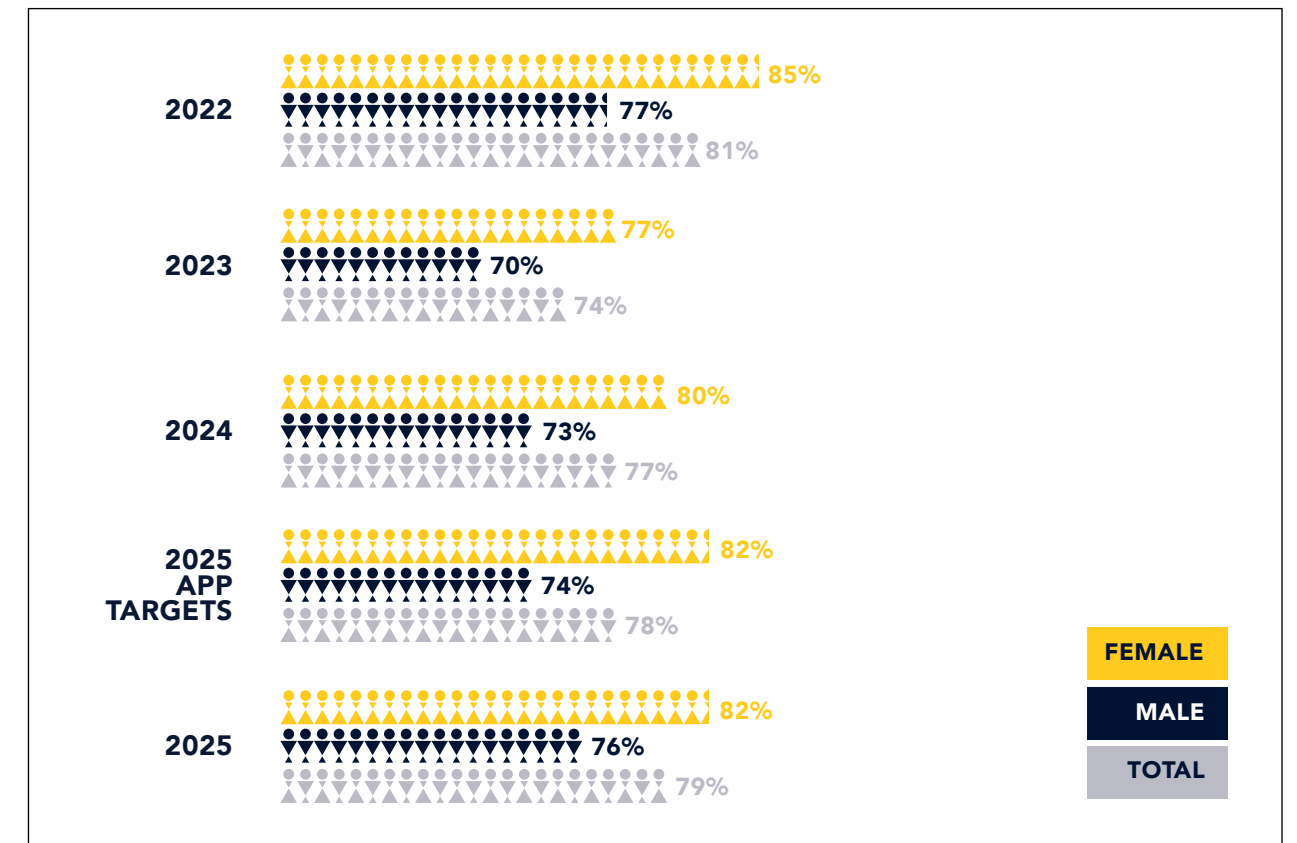


Figure 19: Student success rates in coursework modules by gender, 2022–2025

In 2022, FTEnt students had a success rate of 80%, 1% below the success rate of all students. With the high intake of FTEnt students (8 555) in 2022, the University significantly exceeded the target of 6 580 enrolments. This placed a strain on the student: staff ratio and student support services, which probably impacted negatively on the success rate. In 2023, the FTEnt students had a success rate of

71%, 3% lower than the 74% success rate for all students in coursework modules. In 2024, the FTEnt students had a success rate of 73%, which was 4% below the 77% success rate of all students. This trend continued in 2025 when the success rate of FTEnt students (75%) was 4% lower than the 79% success rate of all students (see Figure 20 below).

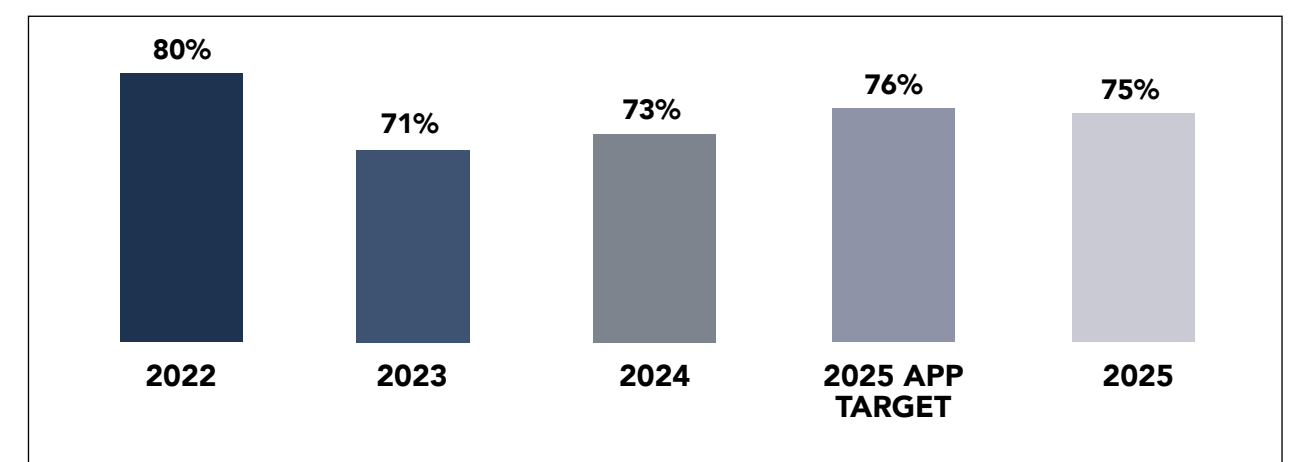


Figure 20: Success rate of first-time entering undergraduate students, 2022–2025

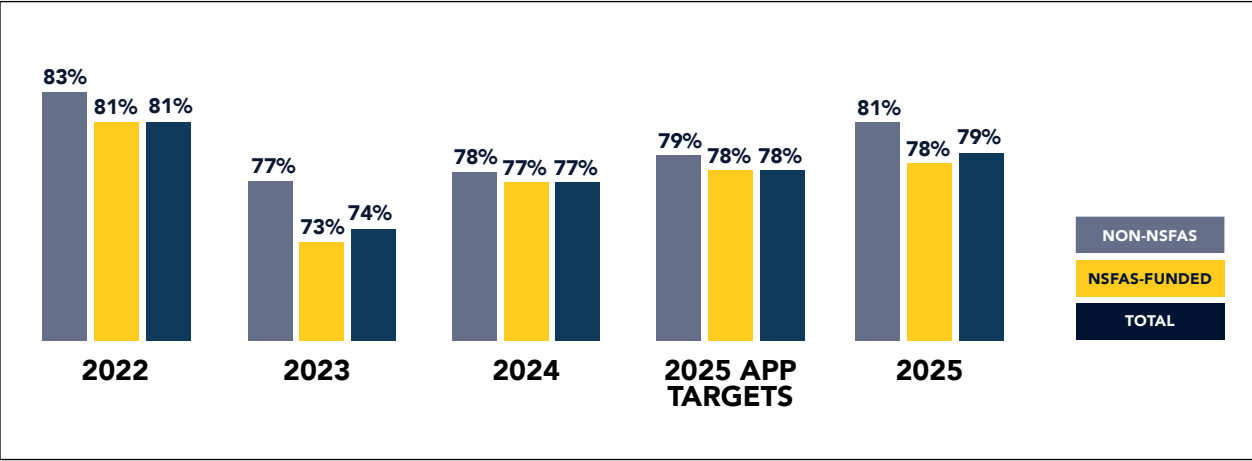


Figure 21: Success rate of NSFAS-funded students, 2022–2025

Figure 21 shows that the success rate of NSFAS-funded students was lower than that of students not funded by NSFAS for 2022 to 2025. In 2023, the success rate of NSFAS-funded students was 4% lower than that of students not funded by NSFAS. This improved in 2024, where the difference was only 1% (77% for NSFAS-funded students and 78% for students not funded by NSFAS). However, in 2025, the gap increased again, and the success rate of NSFAS-funded students was 78% compared to 81% for students not funded by NSFAS. This will need to be monitored carefully going forward, given the rule that students funded by NSFAS need to complete their studies in N+1, otherwise they become unfunded.

8.3.6 Performance Indicator 6: Student Retention Rates

Cohort analyses show that the highest percentage of dropouts occurs during, and at the end of, the first year of study. It is thus vital to track the retention of FTEnt students and intervene timeously to assist them to succeed academically. As indicated in Table 10, the percentage of 2022 FTEnt students who returned the following year was 90%, and 89.1% of the 2023 FTEnt students returned in 2024. This is likely due to the decline in the success rate in 2023. In 2024, this improved with the percentage of FTEnt students who returned at 90.6%, while it declined to 86.2% in 2025. This is a concerning trend that will need to be researched to design appropriate student retention strategies.

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target	2025
Percentage of first-time entering students who registered the following year	90.0%	89.1%	90.6%	91.1%	86.2%

Table 10: Retention of first-time entering undergraduate students, 2022–2025

*Note: Students enrolled for a Higher Certificate and who graduated at the end of the year were left out of the calculation, as well as all occasional students (who are not expected to return)

8.3.7 Performance Indicator 7: Student Graduation Rates

The number of graduates directly depends on student success and throughput rates. The University revised its graduate output targets in the Mid-Term Enrolment Plan for 2023–2025 to 7 636 in 2023, 7 796 in 2024 and 7 927 in 2025. Due to the low number of graduates in 2023, the 2025 targets were set at 6 049. However, the University performed much better in 2024 and 2025 than expected.

Although the University projected a lower number of graduates for 2023 to 2025, the actual number in 2023 was much lower than the targets, largely due to the lower success rate in 2023 and the non-achievement of the PG enrolment targets. Many students who should have graduated in 2023 were enrolled during the pandemic as FTEnt or senior students and may have experienced gaps in their learning during the pandemic, which could have led to them failing modules, as seen in the lower success rate, and therefore not graduating in the minimum time.

There was, however, a considerable improvement in 2024 with 6 708 graduates, an increase of 893 (15.4%) on the number in 2023. There was a further improvement in 2025 when 7 545 students graduated, 837 (12.4%) more than in 2024.

Qualification type	2022	2023	2024	2025 APP Target	2025	% Deviation from the 2025 APP Targets	Average annual growth rate 2022 to 2025
UG Cert/ Diploma	2 633	1 795	2 210	1 802	2 532	40.5%	-1.3%
Advanced Diploma	981	882	948	906	1 067	17.8%	2.8%
UG Degree	2 488	2 035	2 360	2 115	2 622	24.0%	1.8%
Total UG	6 102	4 712	5 518	4 823	6 221	29.0%	0.6%
PG Diploma	305	236	305	317	316	-0.3%	1.2%
Honours	577	465	494	517	538	4.1%	-2.3%
Master's	306	309	325	299	364	21.7%	6.0%
Doctoral	83	93	66	93	106	14.0%	8.5%
Total PG	1 271	1 103	1 190	1 226	1 324	8.0%	1.4%
Grand Total	7 373	5 815	6 708	6 049	7 545	24.7%	0.8%

Table 11: Number of graduates per annum, 2022–2025

As shown in Table 11, the University produced 6 221 UG graduates in 2025 compared to the APP 2025 target of 4 823, which was 29% (1 398) higher than the target. The 2025 target for graduates in PG programmes was 1 226, and the University produced 1 324 graduates, which exceeded the target by 8%, or 98 graduates.

As can be seen in Figure 22, graduate numbers for all qualification types, except for UG diplomas and certificates and honours degrees, increased between 2022 and 2025. In total, the number of graduates increased on average per annum by 0.8% between 2022 and 2025. Total graduates increased from 7 373 in 2022 to 7 545 in 2025.

The number of graduates in UG certificates and diplomas declined at an average annual rate of 1.3% over this period,

from 2 633 in 2022 to 2 532 in 2025. Graduate numbers in advanced diplomas increased on average by 2.8% per annum between 2022 and 2025, increasing from 981 in 2022 to 1 067 in 2025. Graduate numbers in degree programmes increased from 2 488 in 2022 to 2 622 in 2025, at an average rate of 1.8%.

The number of PG graduates increased on average by 1.4% per annum from 2022 to 2025. PG diploma graduates increased by 1.2% on average each year. Honours graduates declined by 2.3% on average per annum over the period 2022–2025, from 577 in 2022 to 538 in 2025. Master's graduates showed significant improvements, increasing at 6% on average per annum from 2022 to 2025, from 306 in 2022 to 364 in 2025, while doctoral graduates increased by 8.5% on average per annum from 83 in 2022 to 106 in 2025.

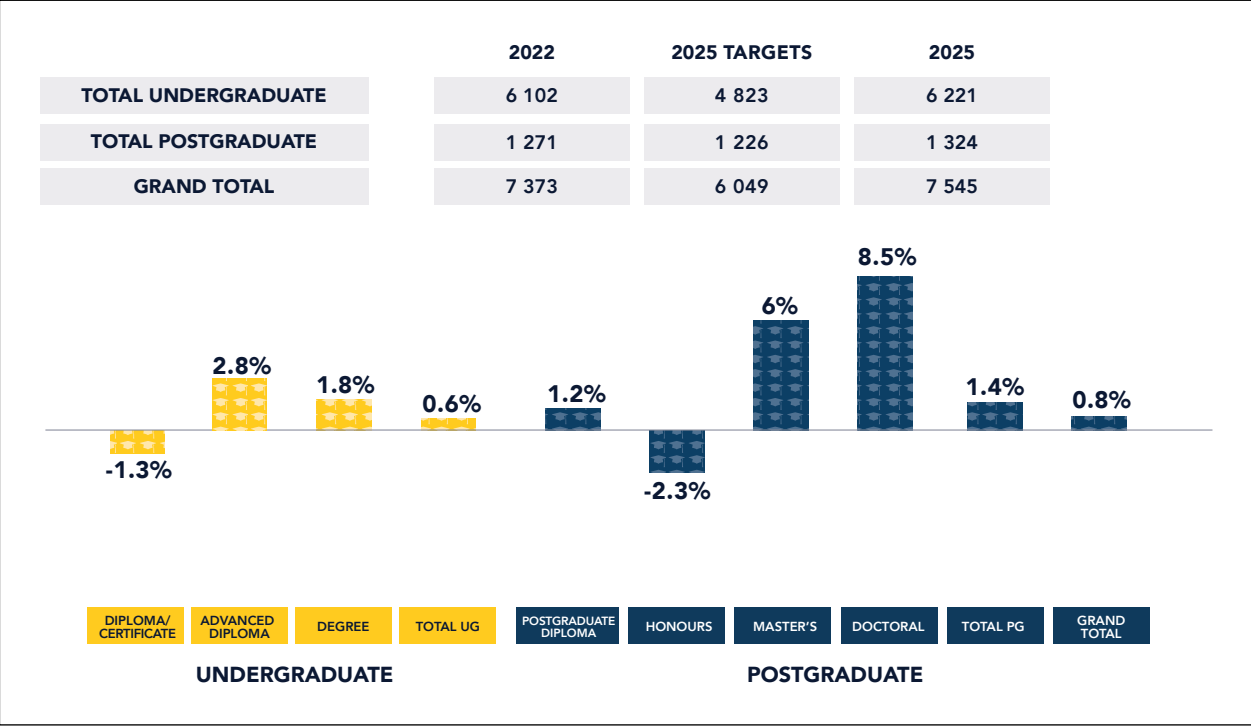


Figure 22: Average annual growth rate in graduates, 2022–2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025	% Deviation from targets	Average annual growth rate 2022 to 2025
Engineering	402	200	229	229	279	21.7%	-11.5%
Life and Physical Sciences	193	148	207	163	169	3.5%	-4.4%
Animal and Human Health Sciences	344	339	275	365	294	-19.4%	-5.1%
Teacher Education	390	380	400	426	487	14.3%	7.7%
BEd	273	281	318	323	381	18.0%	11.8%
PGCE	117	99	82	103	106	2.9%	-3.2%
Success rate in scarce skills	84%	81%	83%	85%	86%	1.2%	

Table 12: Number of graduates in scarce skills fields per annum, 2022–2025

The average annual growth rate in graduates for all the scarce skills fields of study except for Teacher Education was negative from 2022 to 2025.

Table 12 indicates that the number of engineering graduates increased from 229 in 2024 to 279 in 2025, which was 21.7% above the target of 229. This is largely due to a concerted effort in the Faculty of EBET to improve student success and to increase the number of students who complete their qualifications.

The number of graduates in life and physical sciences declined from 207 in 2024 to 169 in 2025, although this was 3.5% above the target of 163. Graduate numbers dropped in life and physical sciences at an average annual rate of 4.4% over the 2022 to 2025 period.

In recent years, the number of graduates in animal and human health sciences has been declining sharply. The number of graduates in animal and human health sciences declined on average at an annual rate of 5.1% from 2022 to 2025. In 2025, there were only 294 graduates compared to the target of 365, which was 19.4% below the target. The discontinuation of certain qualifications in pharmacy and nursing, due to professional accreditation challenges, which

have historically had high enrolments, led to a sharp decline in enrolments and graduates in the human health sciences. The new MBChB programme will improve the situation but will only produce the first graduates in 2026/27.

Teacher education graduates have grown at 7.7% on average per annum from 2022 to 2025, with the number of BEd graduates increasing on average by 11.8% per annum, while the PGCE graduates declined on average by 3.2% per annum. In 2025, there were 487 graduates in teacher education, which was 14.3% higher than the target of 426.

The success rate in the scarce skills fields was 86% in 2025, higher than the success rate of 80% for the University, and 1% higher than the 85% APP 2025 target. Students in the scarce skills fields generally achieve higher success rates than other students due to the higher admission criteria for these qualifications. This also points to the fact that the non-achievement of scarce skills targets is not necessarily due to lower student success rates, but rather due to the non-achievement of enrolment targets in these fields.

The University continues to find it difficult to substantially increase graduate outputs in the scarce skills fields due to school leavers achieving poor Mathematics and Physical

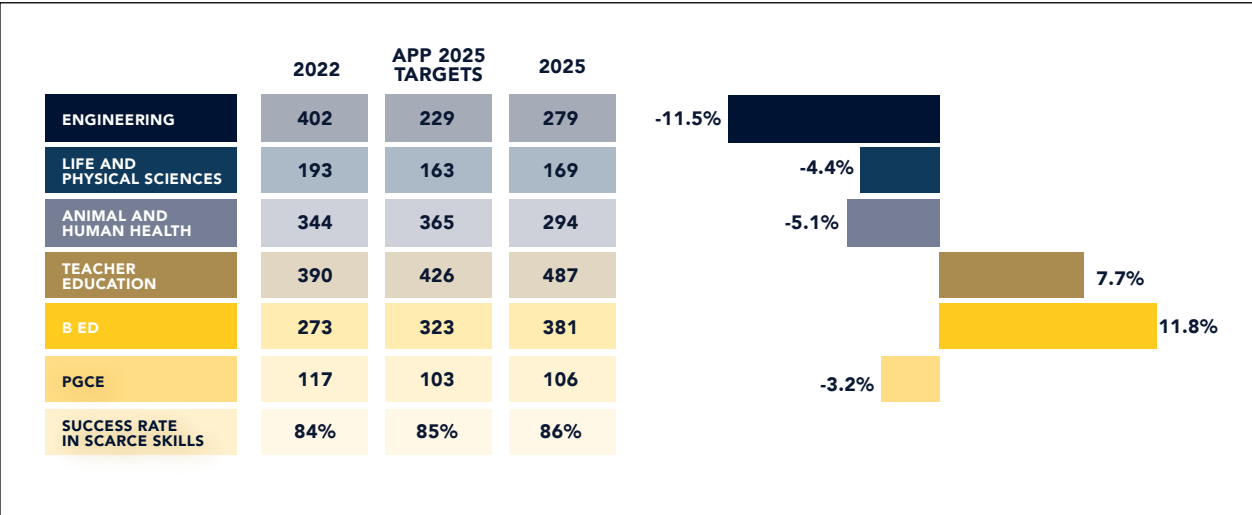


Figure 23: Average annual growth rate in graduates in scarce skills fields, 2022–2025

	Headcount enrolments		Graduates	
	Average annual growth rate 2023 to 2025	Target: Average annual growth rate 2023 to 2025	Average annual growth rate 2023 to 2025	Target: Average annual growth rate 2023 to 2025
Total UG	3.3%	3.2%	9.7%	1.2%
Total PG	3.9%	2.4%	6.3%	5.4%
Grand Total	3.3%	3.1%	9.1%	3.7%

Table 13: Average annual growth in enrolments relative to graduates, 2023-2025

*Headcount enrolments exclude occasional students because they cannot graduate

Science results. This points to the need for targeted and integrated student recruitment strategies to attract talented students to pursue qualifications in these fields at the University. Efforts to expand the national footprint of the University have started to bear fruit and need to be strengthened further, given the heightened competition for top-performing school leavers. Other endeavours to increase FTE enrolments in scarce skills fields include improving the student access and enrolment value chain to ensure that it is experienced as more integrated and user-friendly, as well as wide-ranging interventions to improve the quality of Mathematics and Science teaching and learner performance in schools.

Table 13 shows the average annual growth in enrolments relative to graduates, which indicates improved graduate efficiency. The average annual growth in graduates from 2023 to 2025 was much higher than the targets set.

Figure 24 shows that, at the UG level, the average annual growth rate of enrolments from 2023 to 2025 increased on average by 3.3% per annum, while UG graduates increased on average by 9.7% per annum. This was above the targets of 3.2% and 2.4%, respectively. This was mainly caused by the significant drop in graduates in 2023 and subsequent increases. At the PG level, enrolments increased on average by 3.9% per annum and graduates by 6.3% on average per annum compared to the targets of 2.4% and 5.4%, respectively.

Total enrolments grew on average at 3.3% per annum over the 2023 to 2025 period, compared to the target of 3.1%, while total graduates grew on average at 9.1% per annum, compared to the target of 3.7%. There was thus a significant improvement in graduate efficiency over this period due to substantial increases in the number of graduates in 2024 and 2025 compared to the low number in 2023.

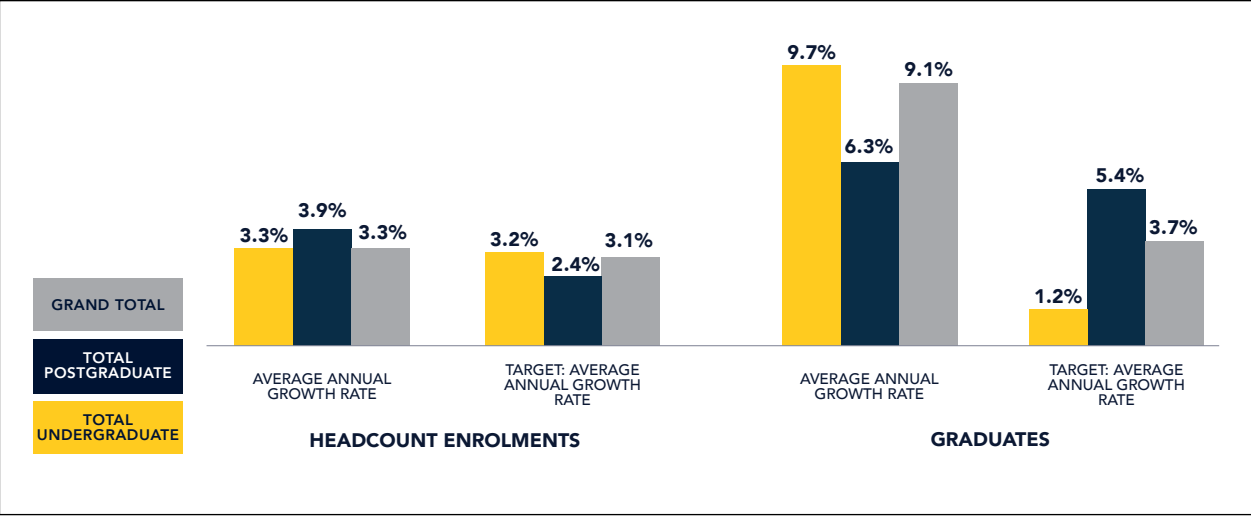


Figure 24: Average annual growth rates in enrolments relative to graduates, 2023-2025

8.3.8 Performance Indicator 8: Student Throughput Rates

Throughput rates are an important indicator of student success and can be defined as the percentage of students of an FTEnt cohort who graduate over a period of time. The University normally analyses the percentage who graduate within the minimum time (MT), which is the minimum number of years needed to complete the qualification. Historical data show that a large proportion of students also graduate within two years after the minimum time, and these analyses therefore also include minimum time plus one year (MT+1) and two years (MT+2).

Table 14 and Table 15 provide an overview of throughput rates for the 2017 and 2018 cohorts by qualification type compared to the national throughputs for the 2018 cohorts. UNISA is excluded from the national cohort analyses because its throughput is vastly different from that of contact universities.

The percentage of graduates is cumulative. Table 15 shows the throughput rates for the 2018 first-time entering cohorts by qualification type. This indicates that the University's

throughput rates for one-year UG certificates were above the national averages. The throughput rates for three-year diplomas (MT=28%; MT+2=56%) were below the national average for MT+2 (MT=28%; MT+2=64%), while the throughput rate for three-year degrees in MT+2 was 52% compared to the national average of 59%. The throughput rate for four-year degrees in MT+2 was 65% compared to the national average of 69%.

Studying the throughput rates of the 2018 cohort (see Table 15) shows that an additional 7% of three-year diploma students and an additional 9% of three-year degree students graduated in year MT+2. There was an additional 6% of four-year degree students who graduated in year MT+2 from the 2018 first-time entering cohort.

These trends could be because a high proportion of UG students at the University are NSFAS-funded, and these students have a lower success rate (78% in 2025) than those students who are not NSFAS-funded (81% in 2025). Given that the rule for NSFAS-funded students is to graduate in MT+1, it is important to monitor the difference between those who complete in MT+1 and MT+2.

Qualification Type	Nelson Mandela University				Targets: Nelson Mandela University			
	(2017 cohort)				(2018 cohort)			
	MT	MT+1	MT+2	MT+3	MT	MT+1	MT+2	MT+3
1-year UG certificates (MT=1)	58%	74%	78%		59%	75%	79%	
3-year diplomas (MT=3)	24%	44%	53%		25%	45%	54%	
3-year degrees (MT=3)	29%	46%	54%		30%	47%	55%	
4-year degrees (MT=4)	44%	60%	66%		45%	61%	67%	
PG Diplomas (MT=1)	61%	79%	82%		62%	80%	83%	
Honours (MT=1)	59%	81%	85%		60%	82%	86%	
Coursework Master's (MT=3)	55%			70%	56%			71%
Research Master's (MT=3)	40%			60%	41%			61%
PhDs (MT=3)	20%			54%	21%			55%

Table 14: Throughput rates for the 2017 first-time entering Nelson Mandela cohorts and 2018 targets

* Data Source: Council on Higher Education (CHE) Cohort Studies

Qualification Type	Nelson Mandela University				National Averages (excluding UNISA)			
	(2018 cohort)				(2018 cohort)			
	MT	MT+1	MT+2	MT+3	MT	MT+1	MT+2	MT+3
1-year UG certificates (MT=1)	54%	71%	75%		22%	40%	50%	
3-year diplomas (MT=3)	28%	49%	56%		28%	52%	64%	
3-year degrees (MT=3)	26%	43%	52%		30%	52%	59%	
4-year degrees (MT=4)	42%	59%	65%		46%	64%	69%	
PG Diplomas (MT=1)	63%	79%	82%		60%	79%	82%	
Honours (MT=1)	66%	83%	86%		63%	78%	82%	
Coursework Master's (MT=3)	48%			61%	44%			64%
Research Master's (MT=3)	41%			57%	36%			55%
PhDs (MT=3)	13%			49%	15%			50%

Table 15: Throughput rate targets for the 2018 first-time entering cohorts and national averages for the 2018 cohorts by qualification type

* Data Source: Council on Higher Education (CHE) Cohort Studies

At the PG level, Table 15 shows that PG diplomas had a throughput rate of 63% in MT, increasing to 82% in MT+2, which were higher than the national averages in MT, but the same as the national average in MT+2 (MT=60%; MT+2=82%). The throughput rate in MT+2 for Honours degrees was 86%, which was higher than the national average of 82%. The throughput rates for the coursework Master's (MT=48%, MT+3=61%) were higher than the national average in MT but lower than the national average in MT+3 (MT=44%, MT+3=64%). University throughput rates for research Master's students for the 2018 cohort were 41% in MT and 57% in MT+3 compared to the national averages of 36% and 55%, respectively. The throughput rate for PhDs was 13% in MT and 49% in MT+3, compared to the national averages of 15% and 50%, respectively.

Figure 25 provides an overview of the percentage of students who dropped out from one academic year to the next without completing their qualification for the period 2022 to 2025. The first observation is that the dropout rates at the PG level were much higher than those at the UG level. The PG dropout rates increased from 19% in 2022 to 21% in 2023 but declined to 19% in 2024 and 18% in 2025. The 2025 PG dropout rate was the same as the target (18%), which is positive

when compared to the higher percentages in previous years. However, the high dropout rates at the PG level remain a source of concern and will need to be addressed, given the impact this has on PG graduate efficiency.

The dropout rates were the highest in 2023, which was the year in which the success rate and number of graduates were at their lowest. In 2025, the UG dropout rate was 14%, which was higher than the dropout rate of 13% in 2024 and the 2025 target of 11%. In 2025, the dropout rate of both UG and PG levels was 14%, which was also 2% higher than the target of 12%.

A deeper analysis of the student success and throughput rates is being conducted to understand more fully the reasons for the declines and to align intervention and mitigation strategies accordingly. Furthermore, the University is developing a multi-pronged Framework for Student Success to guide the range of student learning development programmes and services provided. It will be scaffolded in its delivery to align with the students' academic and life circumstances. This framework will foreground self-management that extends beyond the classroom and will provide the basis on which learning support takes place.

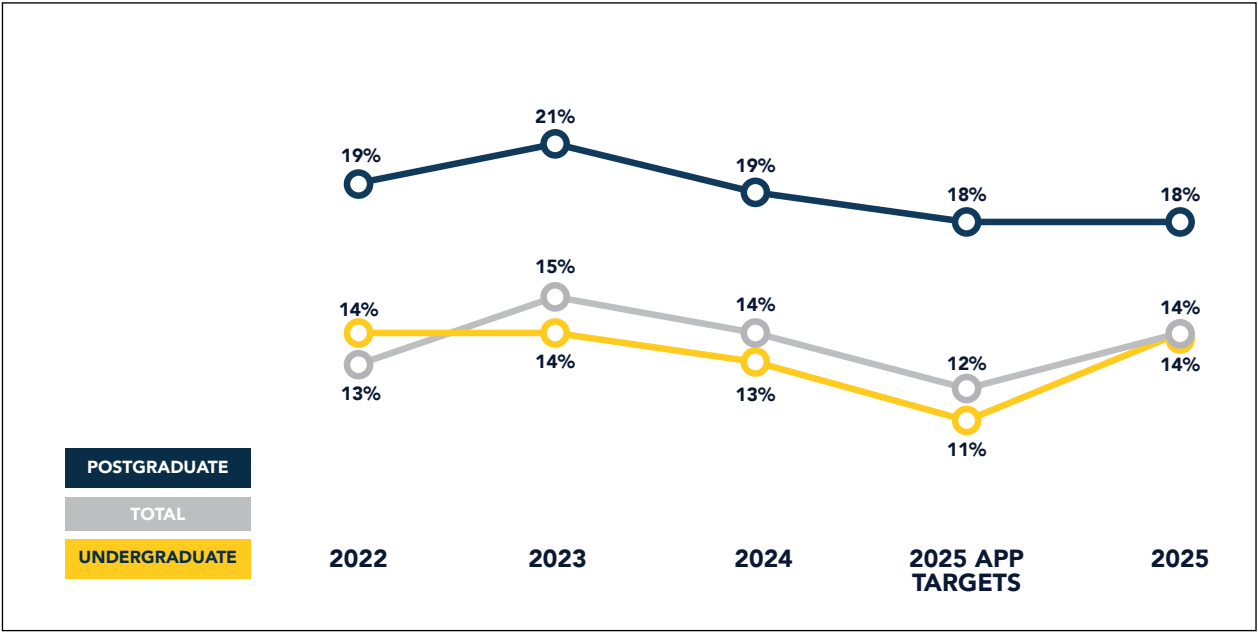


Figure 25: Undergraduate and postgraduate dropout rates, 2022–2025

8.3.9 Performance Indicator 9: Average Time to Completion for Coursework and Research Master’s and PhDs

A further indicator of student success for Master’s and doctoral (M&D) graduates is the average number of years graduates take to complete their degree. It is generally acceptable for a Master’s graduate to take three years to complete and for a doctoral graduate to take five years. Table 16 indicates the average number of years M&D graduates took to complete their degrees from 2022 to 2025.

	Year of Graduation				
	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Coursework Master’s	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.4
Research Master’s	3.4	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.0
Doctoral	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.9

Table 16: Average time to completion for coursework and research Master’s and PhDs, 2022–2025

As can be seen in Table 16 and Figure 26, the average number of years taken by coursework Master’s graduates at the University increased from 2.9 years in 2022 to 3.1 years in 2023 and 3.2 in 2024. It then increased further to 3.4 years in 2025, which is longer than the expected time to graduate. The average number of years taken by research Master’s

graduates at the University increased from 3.4 years in 2022 to 3.5 years in 2023, above the expected norm of three years. In 2024, it declined to 3.1 years and further declined to 3 years in 2025, which is in line with the expected time to graduate. The average number of years taken by doctoral graduates increased slightly from 4.9 years in 2022 to 5.1 years in 2023 and 2024, but declined to 4.9 years in 2025, less than the expected 5 years for completion.

The reasons for taking slightly longer than the average or expected time to graduate in certain faculties may include the following:

- PG students registered on a part-time basis usually take longer to graduate, especially those employed full-time while pursuing their studies
- In some faculties, limited PG supervisory capacity is exacerbated by retirements, resignations, and many more junior academic staff appointed who are still in the process of obtaining their PhDs. This leads to a heavier PG supervisory workload for the remaining senior academic staff who must take on more PG students, which may cause a delay in students completing their qualifications
- Ethics clearance and approval processes for Master’s and doctoral studies need to be streamlined to improve the turnaround times, as PG students often experience this as a bottleneck.

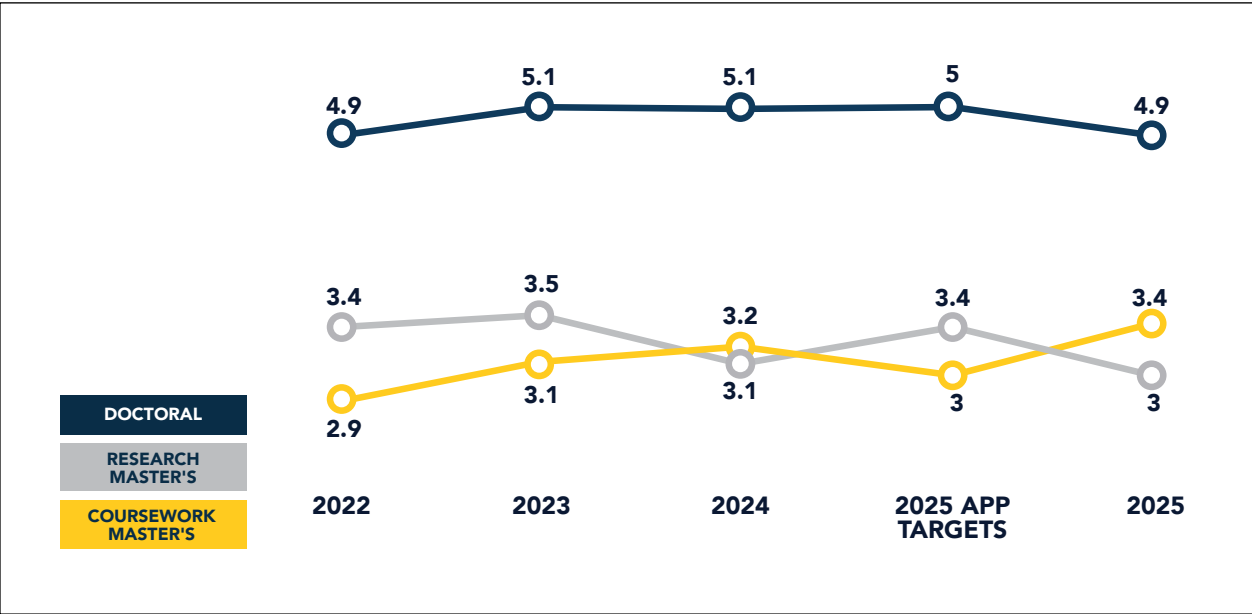


Figure 26: Average number of years to graduate for Master’s and doctoral students, 2022–2025

8.3.10 Performance Indicator 10: Weighted Teaching Outputs Per Permanent Academic Staff Member

Weighted teaching outputs are calculated by applying the relevant funding weight to each graduate in each qualification type, with the weight for the Higher Education Funding Framework used to calculate the teaching output subsidy. The funding weight for each qualification type is indicated in the second column of Table 17 below.

The weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member are calculated by dividing the weighted

teaching outputs by the number of permanent academic staff. This ratio provides a measure of the average graduate productivity per permanent academic staff member.

As indicated in Figure 27 (see page 98), the ratio declined sharply from 8.7 in 2022 to 6.7 in 2023 due to the significant decline in graduates in 2023. However, the ratio increased to 7.8 in 2024 and to 8.8 in 2025, which was higher than the target of 7 for 2025. The ratio of 8.8 in 2025 was the highest for the period 2022 to 2025. This output ratio has increased for 2024 and 2025 due to the increase in graduates compared to the low number of graduates in 2023.

Qualification Type	Funding Weight	2022		2023		2024		2025 Target		2025	
		Teaching Outputs	Weighted Teaching Outputs	Teaching Outputs	Weighted Teaching Outputs	Teaching Outputs	Weighted Teaching Outputs	Teaching Outputs	Weighted Teaching Outputs	Teaching Outputs	Weighted Teaching Outputs
UG Certificates and Diplomas (1 year)	0.5	735	368	377	189	471	236	378	189	580	290
UG Certificates and Diplomas (3 years)	1	1 898	1 898	1 418	1 418	1 739	1 739	1 424	1 424	1 952	1 952
UG Bachelor's Degrees (3 years)	1	1 501	1 501	1 273	1 273	1 530	1 530	1 659	1 659	1 725	1 725
UG Bachelor's Degrees (4 years or more) NQF 7/8	1.5	891	1 337	762	1 143	830	1 245	490	735	897	1 346
UG B Tech (1 Year)	1.5	96	144	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UG Advanced Diplomas (1 Year) NQF7	0.5	864	432	783	392	866	433	803	402	961	481
PG Certificate in Education (1 Year) NQF7	0.5	117	59	99	50	82	41	103	52	106	53
Honours Degrees/PG Diploma (1 Year)	0.5	882	441	701	351	799	400	834	417	854	427
Non-Research Master's Degrees and Diplomas	0.5	87	44	105	53	103	52	102	51	111	56
Total		7 071	6 222	5 518	4 867	6 420	5 675	5 793	4 928	7 186	6 329
Permanent Academic Staff			719		723		726		704		719
Weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member			8.7		6.7		7.8		7.0		8.8

Table 17: Weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member, 2022–2025

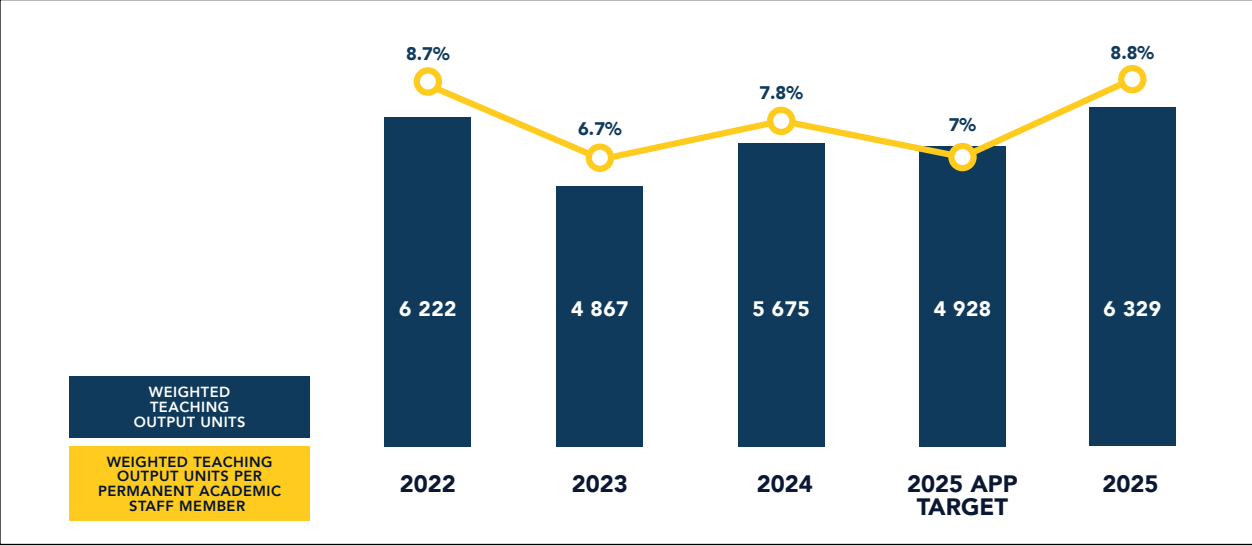


Figure 27: Weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member, 2022–2025

8.3.11 Performance Indicator 11: Weighted Research Outputs Per Permanent Academic Staff Member

The weight for research publications and Master's research outputs is one, while doctoral graduates are weighted by three to calculate the weighted research output units. The weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member provide a measure of average research productivity.

From Table 18 and Figure 28, it is clear that research publication units declined from 571 in 2022 to 564 in 2025, which was 32 units less than the target of 596. The Master's research output units increased from 222 in 2024 to 253 in 2025, higher than the 2025 target of 197. The doctoral weighted research output units increased from 198 in 2024 to 318 in 2025, which was a significant improvement. The Master's and doctoral research output units for 2025 were the highest for the period 2022 to 2025, which is a positive trend. This is the result of various interventions and strategies

to increase Master's and doctoral enrolments. The total weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member remained at 1.4 for 2022 and 2023, declined to 1.3 in 2024, but increased to 1.6 in 2025.

As can be seen in Table 18, the number of research Master's graduates at the University declined from 218 in 2022 to 204 in 2023, but then increased to 222 in 2024 and to 253 in 2025, which was 56 more output units than the target of 197. This constitutes an increase of 16% (35 more research Master's output units) from 2022 to 2025 at an average annual rate of 6%.

Doctoral weighted research output units increased by 13.4%, from 246 in 2022 to 279 in 2023. In 2024, these units declined further to 198, which was a 29% drop from 279 in 2023. It then increased to 318 in 2025. Over the period 2022 to 2025, the doctoral weighted research output units increased by 29.3%. The 2025 doctoral weighted research output units were 39 more than the target of 279.

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Research Publication Units	571	520	515	596	*564
Master's Research Units	218	204	222	197	253
Doctoral (Weighted)	246	279	198	279	318
Total Weighted Research Output Units	1 035	1 003	935	1 072	1 135
Permanent Academic Staff	719	723	726	704	719
Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.6
Publication units per permanent academic staff member	0.79	0.72	0.71	0.84	0.78
Full-time equivalent academic staff members	846.00	857.75	868.40	839.81	869.69
Publication units per FTE staff member	0.67	0.61	0.59	0.71	0.65

Table 18: Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member, 2022–2025

* This data is preliminary. Final data will only be available by the end of 2026 once DHET has reviewed the publication output units for books, chapters in books and conference proceedings

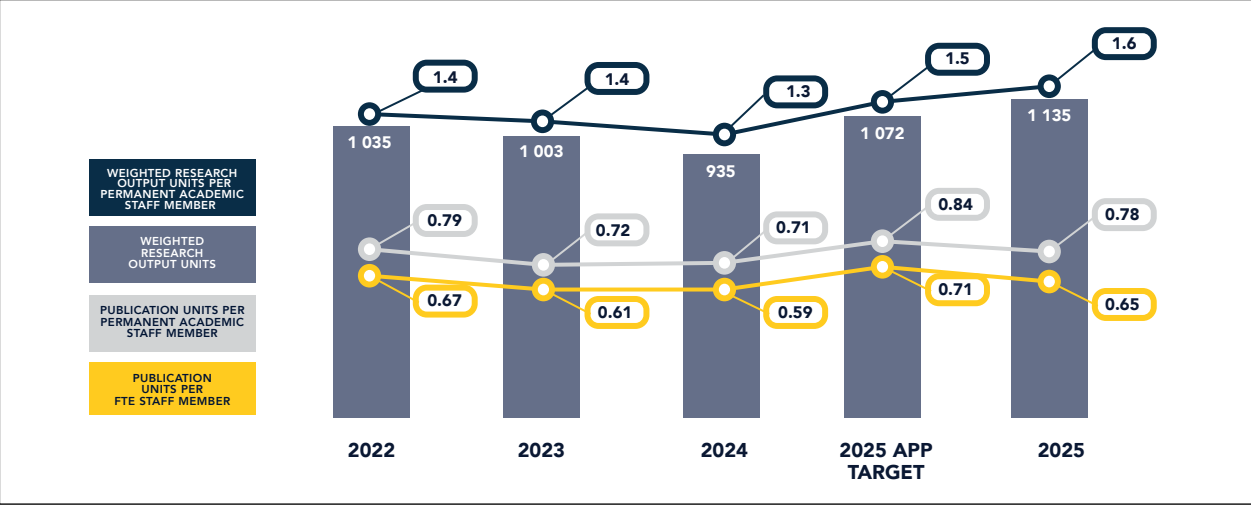


Figure 28: Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member, 2022–2025

8.3.12 Performance Indicator 12: Number and Percentage of Postgraduate Students by Population Group and Gender

Table 19 indicates that the number of Black (A, C, I) PG student enrolments increased by 9.5% from 2 816 in 2022 to 3 084 in 2025. Conversely, White PG student enrolments declined from 594 in 2022 to 432 in 2025, which represents a decline of 27.3%.

Table 20 shows that the percentage of Black PG student enrolments increased from 83% in 2022 to 88% in 2025. The

percentage of White PG student enrolments declined from 17% in 2022 to 12% in 2025.

As can be seen in Table 21, female PG enrolments increased from 1 921 in 2022 to 2 049 in 2025, a 6.7% increase. Over the same period, male PG enrolments declined by 1.5% from 1 489 in 2022 to 1 467 in 2025.

Table 22 (see page 100) indicates that the percentage of female PG enrolments increased from 56% in 2022 to 58% in 2025, while the percentage of male PG enrolments declined from 44% in 2022 to 42% in 2025.

Qualification Type	2022			2023			2024			2025 Targets			2025		
	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total	Black	White	Total
PG Diploma	472	55	527	383	44	427	494	34	528	534	34	568	537	27	564
Honours	683	146	829	604	126	730	656	96	752	709	97	806	690	79	769
Master's	1 214	272	1 486	1 157	263	1 420	1 152	236	1 388	1 144	218	1 362	1 333	220	1 553
Doctoral	447	121	568	444	112	556	466	102	568	456	93	549	524	106	630
PG Total	2 816	594	3 410	2 588	545	3 133	2 768	468	3 236	2 843	442	3 285	3 084	432	3 516

Table 19: Number of Black* postgraduate students, 2022–2025

* Black includes African, Coloured, and Indian (A, C, I)

Qualification Type	2022		2023		2024		2025 Targets		2025	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
PG Diploma	90%	10%	90%	10%	94%	6%	94%	6%	95%	5%
Honours	82%	18%	83%	17%	87%	13%	88%	12%	90%	10%
Master's	82%	18%	81%	19%	83%	17%	84%	16%	86%	14%
Doctoral	79%	21%	80%	20%	82%	18%	83%	17%	83%	17%
PG Total	83%	17%	83%	17%	86%	14%	87%	13%	88%	12%

Table 20: Percentage of Black* students by population group, 2022–2025

* Black includes African, Coloured, and Indian (A, C, I)

Qualification Type	2022			2023			2024			2025 Targets			2025		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
PG Diploma	285	242	527	248	179	427	305	223	528	324	244	568	340	224	564
Honours	539	290	829	436	294	730	460	292	752	484	322	806	487	282	769
Master's	815	671	1 486	793	627	1 420	780	608	1 388	749	613	1 362	894	659	1 553
Doctoral	282	286	568	269	287	556	284	284	568	275	275	550	328	302	630
PG Total	1 921	1 489	3 410	1 746	1 387	3 133	1 829	1 407	3 236	1 831	1 454	3 285	2 049	1 467	3 516

Table 21: Number of postgraduate students by gender, 2022–2025

Qualification Type	2022		2023		2024		2025 Targets		2025	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
PG Diploma	54%	46%	58%	42%	58%	42%	57%	43%	60%	40%
Honours	65%	35%	60%	40%	61%	39%	60%	40%	63%	37%
Master's	55%	45%	56%	44%	56%	44%	55%	45%	58%	42%
Doctoral	50%	50%	48%	52%	50%	50%	50%	50%	52%	48%
PG Total	56%	44%	56%	44%	57%	43%	56%	44%	58%	42%

Table 22: Percentage postgraduate students by gender, 2022–2025

8.3.13 Performance Indicator 13: International Student Enrolments

Internationalisation is an important vehicle through which the University delivers on its academic missions and transformation agenda. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an enduring negative effect on international student enrolments across the globe. At the University, this is compounded by national immigration bottlenecks, financial constraints faced by applicants, and limited postgraduate supervision capacity in faculties.

As indicated in Table 23, occasional international student enrolments stood at 129 in 2022 compared to 107 in 2025.

UG international student enrolments declined from 578 in 2022 to 474 in 2023, with a further drop to 403 in 2024 and then a further decline to 375 in 2025. At the PG level, international student enrolments declined from 331 in 2022 to 325 in 2023, with a further drop to 300 in 2024 and a slight increase to 307 in 2025. Total international student enrolments declined from 1 038 in 2022 to 789 in 2025, which represents a decrease of 24%. UG, PG and total international student enrolments were below the 2025 targets. The decline in international student enrolments is a trend that has been experienced across the higher education sector.

In 2025, the University had 2.3% international enrolments compared to the national average of 3.3% in 2024.

Level	Origin	Headcount enrolments				
		2022	2023	2024	2025 Target	2025
Occasional	Other African			1	2	1
	Other foreign	126	105	95	86	105
	SADC excl SA	3	2	2	3	1
	International	129	107	98	91	107
	South African	83	62	58	39	47
Occasional total		212	169	156	130	154
Undergraduate	Other African	60	39	39	53	42
	Other foreign	26	19	14	20	14
	SADC excl SA	492	416	350	363	319
	International	578	474	403	436	375
	South African	28 120	27 586	29 159	29 475	30 519
Undergraduate total		28 698	28 060	29 562	29 911	30 894
Postgraduate	Other African	101	94	90	98	99
	Other foreign	20	22	16	23	19
	SADC excl SA	210	209	194	194	189
	International	331	325	300	315	307
	South African	3 079	2 808	2 936	2 970	3 209
Postgraduate total		3 410	3 133	3 236	3 285	3 516
Total	Other African	161	133	130	153	142
	Other foreign	172	146	125	129	138
	SADC excl SA	705	627	546	560	509
	International	1038	906	801	842	789
	South African	31 282	30 456	32 153	32 484	33 775
Grand total		32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564

Table 23: Headcount enrolments by South African, SADC, African and international origins, 2022–2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Targets	2025
Other African	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%
Other foreign	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
SADC excluding SA	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%	1.7%	1.5%
South African	96.8%	97.1%	97.6%	97.5%	97.7%
% International UG students	2.4%	2.1%	1.7%	1.8%	1.6%
% International PG students	9.7%	10.4%	9.3%	9.6%	8.7%
% International UG & PG students	3.2%	2.9%	2.4%	2.5%	2.3%

Table 24: Percentage of UG and PG international enrolments (SADC, African and international origins), 2022–2025

International student enrolments at the University declined on average by 8.7% over the 2022 to 2025 period, while international student enrolments at national level declined by 11.5% on average per annum over the 2022 to 2024 period. National data for 2025 is not yet available.

In 2022, 2.2% of the total student enrolments were from SADC countries (excluding South Africa), and this declined to 1.5% in 2025. The percentage of students from other African countries was 0.5% of total student enrolments in 2022, which declined to 0.4% in 2025. Enrolments from other foreign countries made up 0.5% of total student enrolments in 2022, declining to 0.4% in 2024 and 2025 (see Table 24).

Given the sharp decline in international enrolments, the University has established a dedicated work stream under the auspices of the institutional EMC. This work stream is tasked with analysing the trends to develop strategies and pursue targeted initiatives to expand international enrolments. Some of these include the following:

- Providing clear, accessible information on programmes, admissions, and visa requirements to ease the application process.
- Offering personalised guidance throughout enrolment to support a smooth transition.
- Maintaining competitive tuition rates and targeted scholarships, supported by transparent fee structures that build trust and improve affordability.

In addition, the University has boosted student recruitment efforts in underrepresented regions, which has led to increasing partnerships and collaborations with universities in BRICS countries and on the African, South American, and Asian continents. The MIO has appointed recruitment agents to address the decline in international student enrolments from the African continent and plans to appoint further agents to broaden the University's reach and ensure that international applicants receive tailored support.

8.3.14 Performance Indicator 14: Number of On-Campus and Accredited Off-Campus Residence Beds and Occupancy Rates

Research has shown that students who live in student accommodation on campus, even for just one year, achieve better academic outcomes. Students who live on campus generally participate more in campus activities and use resources such as academic support services, including mentoring, advising, personal and academic counselling, and career workshops.

Furthermore, access to technology for learning purposes is important for students and, in general, high-speed connectivity (including WiFi), computer laboratories and similar services are more readily available, at a lower cost, to those living on campus. It is thus important that on-campus accommodation be made available to as many students as possible, with a specific focus on FTEnt students, to support academic success.

According to Table 25, in 2022, 12% of all students resided in on-campus student accommodation, with a further 39% in accredited off-campus student accommodation, adding up to 51% of enrolled students housed in student accommodation. The addition of new residences in Summerstrand enabled the University to increase the percentage of students living

on campus to 16% in 2023. The percentage of students living in accredited off-campus accommodation rose from 39% in 2022 to 48% in 2023. In total, the percentage of students in student accommodation increased from 51% in 2022 to 64% in 2023. The percentage of students living in student accommodation in 2024 declined to 61%, with 15% living in on-campus student accommodation and 46% in accredited off-campus student accommodation. The actual number of students in student accommodation increased from 20 164 to 20 250.

In 2025, 15% of students lived in on-campus accommodation and 63% lived in off-campus student accommodation, with a total of 78% of students living in student accommodation. The percentage of students living in on-campus accommodation declined in 2025 when compared to 2023, because the total enrolments of the University increased at a higher rate than the number of on-campus student accommodation places.

The occupancy rate is the number of residence registrations as a percentage of beds available and is summarised in Table 26. In 2022, the occupancy rate was 93% for on-campus beds and 89% for accredited off-campus beds. In 2025, the occupancy rate for on-campus beds increased to almost 100% and for accredited off-campus beds, it increased to 100%. The University is working on boosting on-campus residence occupancy rates through improved processes and systems.

Residences	2022		2023		2024		2025 Targets		2025	
	Total registered students	% Total student numbers in student accommodation	Total registered students	% Total student numbers in student accommodation	Total registered students	% Total student numbers in student accommodation	Total registered students	% Total student numbers in student accommodation	Total registered students	% Total student numbers in student accommodation
On-campus registrations	3 833	12%	5 063	16%	4 919	15%	5 350	16%	5 212	15%
Accredited off-campus registrations	12 882	39%	15 099	48%	15 331	46%	20 000	79%	21 592	63%
Total	16 715	51%	20 164	64%	20 250	61%	25 350	76%	26 804	78%

Table 25: Percentage of students living in on- and off-campus student residences in Gqeberha and George

Residences	Gqeberha/George	2022		2023		2024		2025 Targets		2025	
		Beds	% Occupancy rate	Beds	% Occupancy rate	Beds	% Occupancy rate	Beds	% Occupancy rate	Beds	% Occupancy rate
On-campus beds	Gqeberha	3 480	93%	4 437	100%	4 296	100%	4 724	100%	4 612	100%
	George	626		626		623		626		626	
	Total	4 106		5 063		4 919		5 350		5 238	
Accredited off-campus beds	Gqeberha	13 722	89%	14 505	100%	14 505	100%	18 800	100%	19 870	100%
	George	753		895		826		1 200		1 722	
	Total	14 475		15 400		15 331		20 000		21 592	
Total		18 581		20 463		20 250		25 350		26 830	

Table 26: Number of on- and accredited off-campus residence beds and occupancy rate

8.3.15 Performance Indicator 15: Total Permanent Academic and PASS Staff according to Gender, Population Group, Disability and Nationality

Table 27 shows that the permanent academic and Professional, Administrative and Support Services (PASS) staff declined from 2 577 in 2022 to 2 565 in 2023, then declined further to 2 542 in 2024 and to 2 494 in 2025. Permanent academic staff increased from 719 in 2022 to 726 in 2024, but then declined to 719 in 2025. As a result, the student: staff full-time equivalent ratio increased from 29: 1 to 31: 1 from 2022 to 2025, since the number of permanent academic staff has not kept pace with the increase in student enrolments. Stagnant subsidy income has made it difficult for the University to appoint more academic staff.

As depicted in Table 28, there were changes in the demographic profile of permanent academic staff from 2022 to 2025 as follows:

- The percentage of females decreased from 53% in 2022 to 51% in 2025, while that of males increased from 47% in 2022 to 49% in 2025. This is a balanced gender distribution and is representative of the national population demographics
- Black (African, Coloured, Indian) academic staff increased from 57% in 2022 to 62% in 2025, while the percentage of White academic staff declined from 43% to 38% over the same period
- The proportion of academic staff with a disability remained stable at 3% for the years 2022 to 2025
- The percentage of international academic staff increased from 6% in 2022 to 9% in 2025.

From the above, it is evident that considerable progress has been made in diversifying the demographic profile of permanent academic staff to become more representative of the economically active population.

Gender	2022	%	2023	%	2024	%	2025 Targets	%	2025	%
Female	1 525	59%	1 508	59%	1 490	59%	1 469	60%	1 441	58%
Male	1 052	41%	1 057	41%	1 052	41%	979	40%	1 053	42%
Total	2 577		2 565		2 542		2 448		2 494	
Population group		%		%		%		%		%
African	1 402	54%	1 425	56%	1 445	57%	1 444	59%	1 458	59%
Coloured	462	18%	463	18%	454	18%	417	17%	430	17%
Indian	89	3%	84	3%	78	3%	73	3%	76	3%
White	624	25%	593	23%	565	22%	514	21%	530	21%
Total	2 577		2 565		2 542		2 448		2 494	
Disability		%		%		%		%		%
	69	3%	79	3%	88	3%	80	4%	94	4%
Nationality		%		%		%		%		%
South African	2 521	98%	2 505	98%	2 479	98%	2 383	97%	2 422	97%
International	56	2%	60	2%	63	2%	65	3%	72	3%
Total	2 577		2 565		2 542		2 448		2 494	

Table 27: Total permanent academic and PASS staff according to gender, population group, disability and nationality, 2022–2025

Gender	2022	%	2023	%	2024	%	2025 Targets	%	2025	%
Female	380	53%	372	51%	373	51%	368	52%	366	51%
Male	339	47%	351	49%	353	49%	336	48%	353	49%
Total	719		723		726		704		719	
Population group		%		%		%		%		%
African	248	34%	265	37%	278	38%	268	38%	290	40%
Coloured	121	17%	126	17%	126	17%	126	18%	120	17%
Indian	39	6%	36	5%	34	5%	35	5%	33	5%
White	311	43%	296	41%	288	40%	275	39%	276	38%
Total	719		723		726		704		719	
Disability		%		%		%		%		%
	19	3%	23	3%	24	3%	24	3%	24	3%
Nationality		%		%		%		%		%
South African	676	94%	674	93%	672	93%	649	92%	654	91%
International	43	6%	49	7%	54	7%	55	8%	65	9%
Total	719		723		726		704		719	

Table 28: Permanent academic staff according to gender, population group and disability, 2022–2025

8.3.16 Performance Indicator 16: Highest Qualification of Academic Staff

The proportion of academic staff with doctoral degrees is of particular importance, as it correlates with PG supervisory capacity and the University's research outputs. The University continues to face challenges relating to a small pool of suitably qualified candidates with doctoral qualifications who wish to take up academic careers, especially in scarce skills disciplines. The current academic profile indicates that a substantial proportion of the academic workforce remains concentrated at Lecturer and Senior Lecturer levels, with comparatively fewer senior research-active academics with PhD qualifications available to absorb growing PG supervision demands.

Table 29 shows the highest qualification of academic staff by population group and gender from 2022 to 2025.

Highest Qualification	2022							
	Female	Male	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Doctoral degree	174	152	326	101	42	20	163	326
Master's degree	143	130	273	104	53	10	106	273
Other	63	57	120	43	26	9	42	120
Total	380	339	719	248	121	39	311	719
Highest Qualification	2023							
	Female	Male	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Doctoral degree	173	165	338	113	47	19	159	338
Master's degree	138	128	266	105	51	10	100	266
Other	61	58	119	47	28	7	37	119
Total	372	351	723	265	126	36	296	723
Highest Qualification	2024							
	Female	Male	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Doctoral degree	178	169	347	127	49	17	154	347
Master's degree	136	128	264	103	53	10	98	264
Other	59	56	115	48	24	7	36	115
Total	373	353	726	278	126	34	288	726
Highest Qualification	2025 Targets							
	Female	Male	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Doctoral degree	172	163	335	120	48	18	149	335
Master's degree	136	124	260	102	54	10	94	260
Other	60	49	109	46	24	7	32	109
Total	368	336	704	268	126	35	275	704
Highest Qualification	2025							
	Female	Male	Total	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Doctoral degree	168	162	330	127	45	15	143	330
Master's degree	140	139	279	114	55	12	98	279
Other	58	52	110	49	20	6	35	110
Total	366	353	719	290	120	33	276	719

Table 29: Highest qualification of academic staff by population group and gender, 2022–2025

The percentage of permanent academic staff with doctoral degrees was 45% in 2022 and 46% in 2025, which is below the national benchmark of 56% and two percentage points lower than the institutional target of 48% for 2025 (see Figure 29 on page 105).

As indicated previously in this report, wide-ranging capacity development and support interventions are in place to increase the proportion of permanent academic staff with doctoral qualifications.

8.3.17 Performance Indicator 17: Research Chairs and NRF-Rated Researchers

The University strives to increase the number of research chairs and NRF-rated researchers to enhance its academic stature and reputation, while also improving PG supervisory capacity and research productivity.

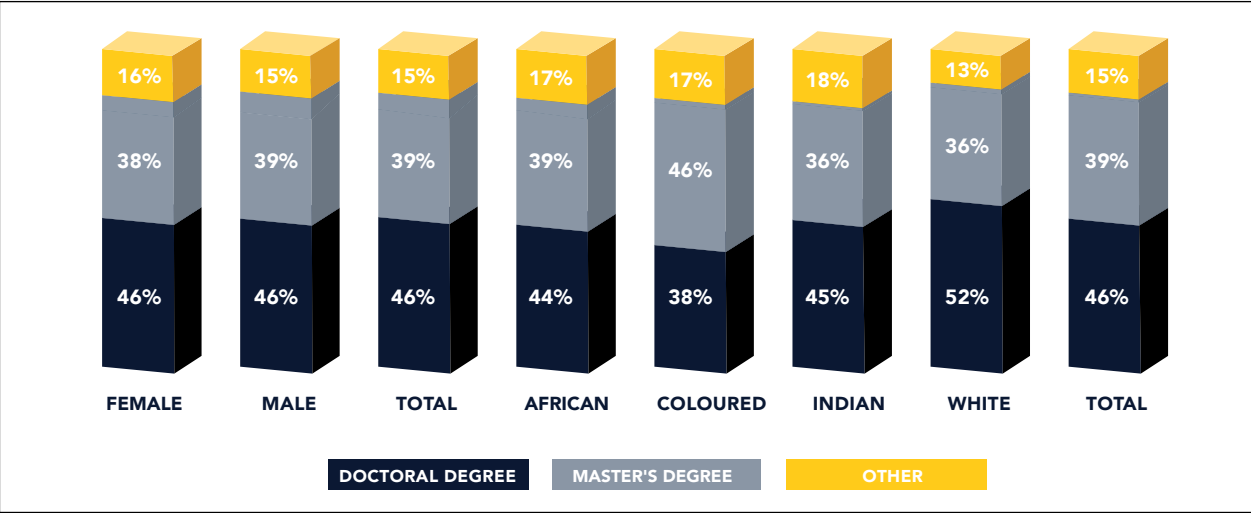


Figure 29: Percentage of highest qualification of academic staff, 2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025 targets	2025
Research Chairs	16	17	17	17	19
NRF Rated Researchers	92	91	91	93	91

Table 30: Number of research chairs and NRF-rated academic staff, 2022–2025

As Table 30 illustrates, in 2025, the University had 91 NRF-rated researchers compared to 92 in 2022, while it currently hosts 19 research chairs, which is three more than in 2022.

8.3.18 Performance Indicator 18: Staff Turnover by Population Group and Gender

A further important strategic enabler is the fostering of an inclusive, values-driven institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees. Staff turnover can be used as an indicator of the competitiveness of the University in attracting and retaining talent.

Academic staff turnover (excluding retirements) was 4.9% in 2022, rising to 7.2% in 2024, before declining to 4% in 2025 (see Table 31). It is important to continuously monitor the competitiveness of remuneration and conditions of service, career progression and development opportunities, and

academic staff workload and work pressures to enhance talent retention.

Table 31 summarises the turnover of academic staff by population group and gender for 2022 to 2025. It is of concern that Black (A, C, I) academic staff had the highest turnover rate at 3.5% in 2025, compared to a turnover rate of 0.5% for White academic staff. The turnover of Black African academic staff remains a major challenge for South African universities, especially in scarce skills fields. While demographic representation has improved, with Black African academics constituting 50% of the academic workforce nationally, higher education institutions struggle to retain these employees.

The turnover rate of female academic staff (2.7%) was higher than that of male academic staff (2.2%) in 2022, but this reversed in 2025, where the turnover rate for male academic staff was 2.5% compared to 1.5% for female academic staff.

Academic staff total	2022	719	2023	723	2024	726	2025	719
Academic staff exits	2022 Exits	Turnover %	2023 Exits	Turnover %	2024 Exits	Turnover %	2025 Exits	Turnover %
African	18	2.5%	14	1.9%	31	4.3%	19	2.6%
Coloured	5	0.7%	3	0.4%	7	0.9%	5	0.7%
Indian	3	0.4%	4	0.6%	2	0.3%	1	0.1%
Black (A,C,I)	26	3.6%	21	2.9%	40	5.5%	25	3.5%
White	9	1.3%	11	1.5%	12	1.7%	4	0.5%
Total exits	35	4.9%	32	4.4%	52	7.2%	54	4.0%
Female	19	2.7%	11	1.5%	24	3.3%	11	1.5%
Male	16	2.2%	21	2.9%	28	3.9%	18	2.5%

Table 31: Turnover of academic staff (excluding retirements) by population group and gender, 2022–2025

Table 32 summarises the turnover of PASS staff by population group and gender for the years 2022 to 2025. Black (African, Coloured, Indian) PASS staff had the highest turnover rate in all years. In 2022, their turnover rate was 3.5% compared to 1.5% for White PASS staff. By 2025, the turnover rate of Black PASS staff increased considerably to 5.1%, compared to the turnover rate of 1.1% for White PASS staff. The turnover rate of female and male PASS staff was the same at 2.5% in 2022. In 2025, the turnover rate of male PASS staff was higher than that of female PASS staff at 3.3% compared to 2.9%, respectively.

Table 33 shows academic staff retirements over the period 2022 to 2025 by population group and gender. In 2022, 0.4% of Black and 1.4% of White academic staff retired. In 2025, 1.7% of White academic staff retired compared

to 0.7% of Black academic staff. The percentage of male academic staff who retired was higher for all years. In 2025, 1.5% of male academic staff retired compared to 0.9% of female academic staff.

Over the period 2022 to 2025, higher percentages of Black PASS staff retired than White PASS staff. Table 34 shows that, in 2022, 0.9% of Black PASS staff retired compared to 0.6% of White staff. In 2025, 0.8% of Black PASS staff retired compared to 0.7% of White PASS staff.

In 2022, 0.9% of the female PASS staff retired compared to 0.6% of male PASS staff. In 2025, 1.1% of female PASS staff retired compared to 0.4% of male PASS staff. From 2022 to 2025, higher percentages of female PASS staff retired than male PASS staff.

PASS staff total	2022	1 858	2023	1 842	2024	1 816	2025	1 775
PASS staff exits	2022 Exits	Turnover %	2023 Exits	Turnover %	2024 Exits	Turnover %	2025 Exits	Turnover %
African	49	2.6%	55	3.0%	66	3.6%	72	4.1%
Coloured	15	0.8%	7	0.4%	20	1.1%	18	1.0%
Indian	2	0.1%	3	0.2%	3	0.2%	1	0.1%
Black (A,C,I)	66	3.5%	65	3.6%	89	4.9%	91	5.1%
White	27	1.5%	19	1.0%	23	1.3%	19	1.1%
Total exits	93	5.0%	84	4.6%	112	6.2%	110	6.2%
Female	46	2.5%	43	2.4%	64	3.5%	52	2.9%
Male	47	2.5%	41	2.2%	48	2.7%	58	3.3%

Table 32: Turnover of PASS staff (excluding retirements) by population group and gender, 2022–2025

Academic staff total	2022	719	2023	723	2024	726	2025	719
Academic retirements		As a % of total		As a % of total		As a % of total		As a % of total
African	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	1	0.1%	2	0.3%
Coloured	1	0.1%			2	0.3%	2	0.3%
Indian			1	0.2%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Black (A,C,I)	3	0.4%	3	0.5%	3	0.4%	5	0.7%
White	10	1.4%	9	1.2%	11	1.5%	12	1.7%
Total retirements	13	1.8%	12	1.7%	14	1.9%	17	2.4%
Female	6	0.8%	5	0.7%	6	0.8%	6	0.9%
Male	7	1.0%	7	1.0%	8	1.1%	11	1.5%

Table 33: Academic staff retirements by population group and gender, 2022–2025

PASS staff total	2022	1 858	2023	1 842	2024	1 816	2025	1 775
PASS retirements		As a % of total		As a % of total		As a % of total		As a % of total
African	10	0.5%	19	1.0%	12	0.7%	9	0.5%
Coloured	5	0.3%	6	0.4%	6	0.3%	4	0.2%
Indian	2	0.1%	2	0.1%			1	0.1%
Black (A,C,I)	17	0.9%	27	1.5%	18	1.0%	14	0.8%
White	11	0.6%	15	0.8%	14	0.8%	13	0.7%
Total retirements	28	1.5%	42	2.3%	32	1.8%	27	1.5%
Female	17	0.9%	28	1.5%	24	1.3%	19	1.1%
Male	11	0.6%	14	0.8%	8	0.5%	8	0.4%

Table 34: PASS staff retirements by population group and gender, 2022–2025

8.3.19 Performance Indicator 19: Support for Hybrid, Technology-rich and Fully Online Educational Delivery

The University has used Moodle as an LMS since 2008. The transition to flexible, hybrid modes of learning and teaching was significantly accelerated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. To compare the activity rates of students and academic staff on the LMS, the number of unique users logged into the Moodle system is calculated in March each year. This is assessed as a percentage of the total number of students and permanent academic staff (see Table 35).

As can be seen from Table 35 and Figure 30, the activity rate on the LMS declined from 2022 to 2023, from 96.9% to 84.9%, which might be explained by the return of the students to campus after the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024, the activity rate increased to 95.7% with a total of 32 217 unique users accessing the LMS. This figure represents an increase of 18.2% from 2023 (27 250 users) and surpasses the post-pandemic peak observed in 2022 (32 013 users).

The activity rate in 2025 declined slightly to 93.6%, although the number of users who logged in during March increased by 2.5% from 32 217 in 2024 to 33 028 in 2025.

These high activity rates reflect the percentage of the total number of students and permanent academic staff who logged into the Moodle system, indicating that the LMS has become integral to everyday learning and teaching, even in primarily on-campus contexts. The increased usage in 2024 and 2025 reflects a growing institutional reliance on the LMS for course management, digital resource access and flexible learning. The upward trend in engagement signals a sustained, strategic shift towards institutionalised digital practices that complement face-to-face delivery and enhance the overall academic experience.

Related to this, uneven access to and ownership of devices remains a challenge that the University has been addressing systematically. It has been increasing its investment in WiFi densification and student access to mobile devices.

Number of unique users logged into the Moodle system in March annually	2022	2023	2024	2025 Projected	2025
Users logged in during March each year	32 013	27 250	32 217	33 179	33 028
Student headcount enrolment	32 320	31 362	32 954	33 326	34 564
Permanent academic staff	719	723	726	704	719
Total students and permanent academic staff	33 039	32 085	33 680	34 030	35 283
Percentage of users logged in as a percentage of the total number of students and permanent academic staff	96.9%	84.9%	95.7%	97.5%	93.6%

Table 35: Activity rates of students and academic staff on the LMS 2022–2025

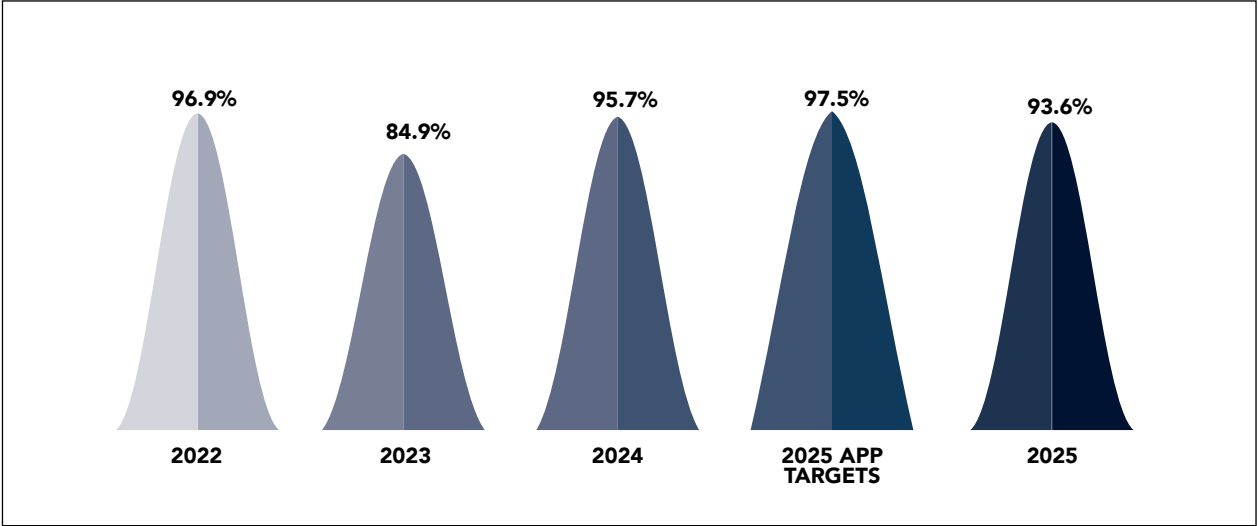


Figure 30: Percentage of users logged in as a percentage of total students and permanent academic staff, 2022–2025

8.4 Conclusion

An analysis of the University's academic size and shape indicates that it is important to monitor trends continually against strategy-aligned indicators to assess areas for improvement, and to devise evidence-based strategies to address these. In 2025, the University performed much better than in recent years in achieving the input targets and exceeded the output targets in most instances.

The FTEnt target set for 2025 of 8 556 was exceeded by only 1.3% with an FTEnt enrolment of 8 670, and the implementation of capping and other enrolment management strategies ensured that first-time entering intakes did not deviate by more than 2% from the target. The University plans to slow down the rapid growth in enrolments at UG level, while targeting higher growth in PG and international enrolments. The student: staff FTE ratio increased from 29:1 in 2024 to 31:1 in 2025, which is a concerning trend since it impacts the quality of teaching and learning. Stagnant subsidy income has made it difficult for the University to appoint more permanent academic staff, which would contribute to high-quality learning and teaching.

As a university located in one of the poorest provinces of South Africa, efforts to promote inclusive student access for success remain paramount, with a specific focus on strategies to improve success and throughput rates. The increased proportion of NSFAS-funded students highlights

that the University's drive to increase access to learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds is yielding the desired outcomes. Over the period from 2022 to 2025, NSFAS-funded students achieved lower success rates than students who are not NSFAS-funded, and throughput analyses indicate that they take longer to complete their qualifications. The University will therefore continue to provide extensive student support to academically vulnerable students to maximise their opportunities for success.

Graduates increased by 12.5% from 2024 to 2025, 7.2% above the target, which signals a significant improvement. The graduate outputs were above the targets for all scarce skills fields in 2025 except for animal and human health sciences, resulting in considerable improvements in graduate efficiency. A further positive trend is that the success rate increased to 80% for all modules and 79% for coursework modules compared to 77% in 2024. The University is making progress in digital transformation, reflected in rapid advances in the uptake of technology-rich approaches to learning and teaching. The LMS usage in 2024 and 2025 was higher than in previous years.

The University continues to invest in developing the next generation of socially diverse, early-career academic staff to obtain their doctoral qualifications. At 46% in 2025, the proportion of permanent academic staff with doctoral degrees remained well below the national average of 56%, and this needs to improve to provide sufficient capacity to increase PG enrolments and research outputs.



Sustainability

Within a volatile, uncertain and complex context globally and nationally, higher education institutions are being called upon to chart future directions that contribute to addressing societal, economic and planetary sustainability challenges, particularly within a context of persistent social inequalities, poverty and the adverse impacts of climate change and resource scarcity. Amidst a plethora of crises confronting humanity, there is an opportunity to accelerate the structural reforms needed to achieve an inclusive, accessible and prosperous future².

Drought cycles in the Eastern Cape, unreliable municipal electricity and water infrastructure, declining government subsidies in real terms, and mounting demands from students for holistic wraparound support have intensified in recent years. This calls for bold and innovative responses that draw on the collective contribution of all stakeholders to promote long-term sustainability, resilience and agility. For the University, operating across seven campuses in Gqeberha and George, sustainable stewardship is therefore critical as a core value of the institution.

The University's response to these pressures is grounded in a conviction that sustainable stewardship extends across environmental, social and economic dimensions. It is pursued in a balanced and integrated manner across every level of the University in pursuit of a world that is, in equal measure, socially just, liveable and viable, as depicted in Figure 31. By embedding these principles into its decision-making and operations, the University seeks to ensure that it can continue to serve generations to come while upholding its duty to contribute meaningfully to the well-being of society.

The King IV Report on Corporate Governance defines sustainability as:

² The Global Risk Report, World Economic Forum

'... conducting operations in a manner that meets existing needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability also refers to the ability of an organisation to consistently, continually and efficiently raise, manage and deploy funds with which to implement programmes and to achieve set goals that ultimately benefit the communities in which they operate.'

In pursuing Vision 2030 and the University's transversal strategic priorities, the University is committed to building a more democratic and inclusive society in which the pursuit of knowledge serves the public good and a more humane and sustainable future for all. It therefore aims to:

- Responsibly integrate all seven campuses within their social, economic and environmental locations
- Equalise resource distribution across all campuses
- Environmentally enhance all campuses through greening interventions
- Ensure buildings and spaces are purposeful, productive and stimulating environments that are optimally utilised by university stakeholders
- Enable the sustainable mobilisation, deployment, use and management of resources and campuses.

9.1 Environmental Sustainability

The University has become more deliberate in its approach to environmental sustainability, particularly through water and energy management. The region's recurring drought cycles, loadshedding and municipal infrastructure failures have underscored how critical resilience is for sustainable operations. The University remains committed to sustained investment in renewable energy, improved demand



Figure 31: Sustainable development at Nelson Mandela University

management, backup energy capacity and advanced water supply solutions across all campuses.

9.1.1 Responsible Energy Management

The University is implementing three approved energy management strategies: renewable energy, demand management and backup energy.

► Renewable Energy

A key milestone in 2025 was the formal signing of a ten-year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Etana Energy, an independent renewable energy supplier. The agreement makes the University one of 24 major energy users in Nelson Mandela Bay participating in the Business Chamber's collaborative energy cluster. Once operational, it will offset approximately 55% of the University's electricity consumption across all Gqeberha campuses.

The Etana solution combines 200 megawatts of wind power with 50 megawatts of solar energy, wheeled through existing Eskom and municipal grid infrastructure at no capital outlay to the University. Internal calculations project savings of

between R508 000 and over R2-million per year, and the agreement supports the institution's decarbonisation goals by contributing to a cleaner regional electricity grid.

Running in parallel, construction began in October 2025 on a photovoltaic solar rollout valued at R68-million across six of the University's seven campuses: the South, North, Missionvale, Second Avenue, George and Ocean Sciences Campuses. The project, expected to reach completion in late 2026, will generate 4.4-megawatts of solar power, supplying nearly a third of the University's electricity needs, and is projected to save between R8- to R10-million annually on an electricity bill of approximately R60-million. This is one of the largest photovoltaic undertakings by a South African university. The installation builds on the existing one-megawatt system on South Campus, which has been generating renewable energy since 2019. Together, the Etana PPA and the photovoltaic rollout will enable the University to source between 70% and 80% of its energy requirements from renewable sources. The figure below shows the funding for environmental sustainability projects, specifically for photovoltaic solar installations across all campuses, over 2025 and 2026.

PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR INSTALLATIONS ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES:



2025: R10 000 000
2026: R58 000 000

PV Solar installations on all campuses, + 4 Megawatt.

Figure 32: Photovoltaic solar installations across all campuses, 2025-2026

► Demand Management

It is essential to manage energy demand throughout the day, as municipal demand charges can account for up to 30% of the monthly energy account. To address this, funding is strategically used to expand the network of demand control switches. This infrastructure enhancement will allow for targeted load reduction during peak periods. Consultants have completed a comprehensive energy audit to assess energy use per campus and building. The final report with proposals has been received and the University is now compiling an implementation plan.

Practical interventions implemented in 2025 include the accelerated installation of LED lamps, occupancy sensors, automation and remote switching via the Building Management System, and heat pumps as energy-efficient

alternatives to conventional water heating. Revised legislation now requires energy performance certificates for buildings, and a contractor has been appointed to issue these across the University's estate. ICT Services continues to reduce data centre energy demand through server virtualisation at 88%, alongside phased cloud migration and advanced cooling technologies.

As indicated in Figure 33 below, the George and Second Avenue Campuses both showed increased consumption in 2025, whilst Missionvale Campus usage remained broadly stable. The trends on George and Second Avenue Campuses warrant closer attention as the energy management programme is extended across all campuses.

As indicated in Figure 34, energy consumption across all campus showed a slight increase in 2025.

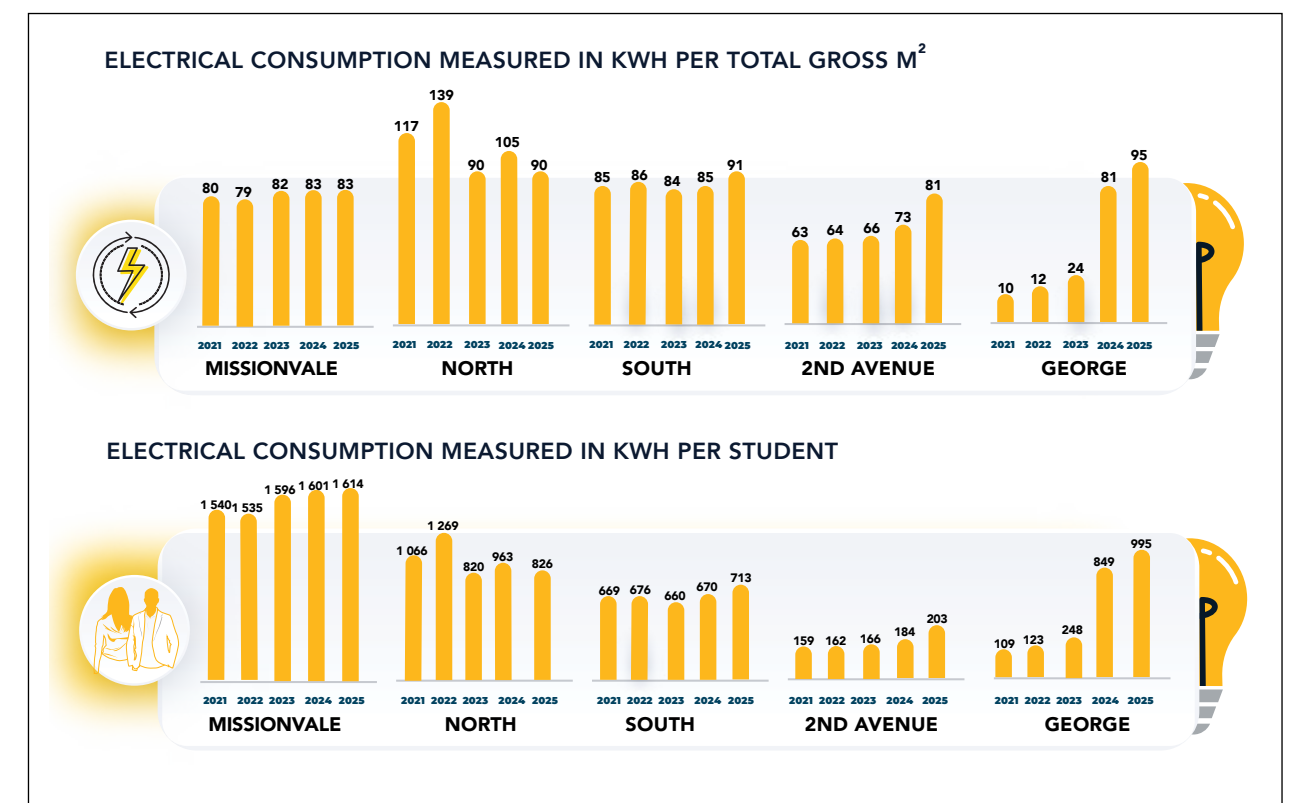


Figure 33: Electrical consumption, 2021-2025

Note: Historic data for both Bird Street and Ocean Sciences campuses have not been accurate and will be refined for inclusion in future statistics

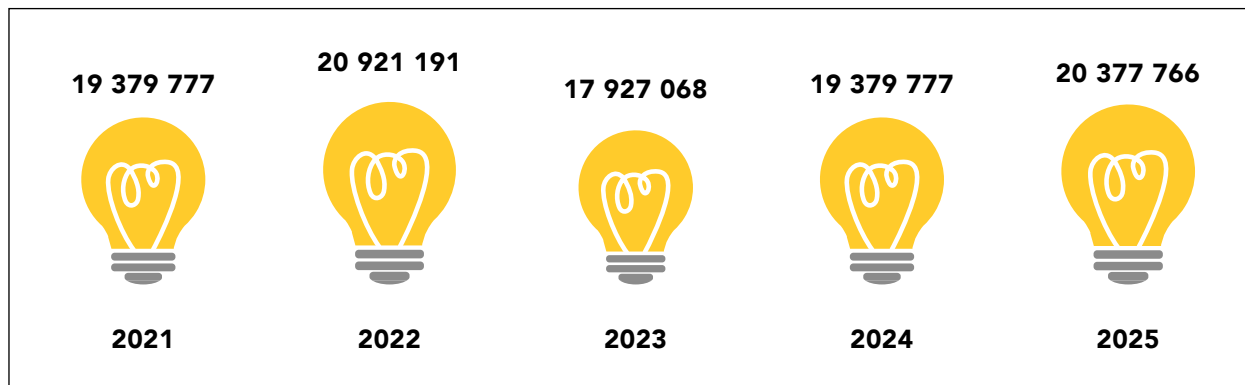


Figure 34: Energy consumed on all campuses, 2021-2025

► Backup Energy

The University has a backup energy strategy, approved by all relevant governance structures.

South Campus currently contributes 11% of its total electricity consumption from green energy generated by the existing one-megawatt photovoltaic system. The construction that began in October 2025 will, on completion, extend solar generation to five further campuses, realising the University's longstanding commitment to renewable energy at scale.

As reflected in Figure 35, energy consumption data for 2025 confirms South Campus as the University's primary energy user, with consumption rising from 9.2-million kWh in 2024 to almost 9.8-million kWh in 2025. North Campus recorded a welcome reduction from 6.65-million kWh to 5.7-million kWh, suggesting improvements in efficiency or a moderation in operational demand.

The photovoltaic rollout currently under construction is expected to materially change the energy profile of each

campus from 2027, with each campus projected to generate approximately a third of its electricity requirements from renewable sources.

9.1.2 Responsible Water Conservation

The University received significant national recognition in October 2025, being named the winner of the Sustainable Water Management Initiative Award at the Higher Education Facility Management Association Annual Conference. The award acknowledged the University's best-practice Water Sustainability Plan across all seven campuses. The plan carried the Gqeberha campuses through the severe drought and threat of Day Zero from 2021 to 2023, when the region's feeder dams reached as low as 12%.

The University's move from emergency response to a structured medium-term strategy has equipped it to manage municipal supply interruptions for periods ranging from two to five days, or indefinitely, where alternative sources are in place. A five-year Water Management Strategy guides the 2025–2029 period. Key objectives are to secure a sustainable water supply across all campuses, reduce

municipal water dependence through boreholes, improve water quality through technology-driven monitoring, and increase alternative water use to 30% by 2029.

Eight licensed boreholes on the Summerstrand North, South and Second Avenue Campuses supplement the municipal supply. During 2024, three reservoirs and pressure pump installations were completed and linked to three boreholes on South Campus. Test results indicate that the water is suitable for campus use with only minor treatment required for human consumption.

At the George Campus, a 600-kilolitre prefabricated steel reservoir was completed in December 2024, complementing the existing one-megalitre reservoir. A further one-megalitre reservoir is planned to enhance storage capacity and mitigate fire risk. A toilet cistern replacement programme is progressively introducing flush-valve systems that use up

to half the water of a conventional cistern, and water meters and electronic readers have been installed on all campuses to enable accurate demand monitoring.

At mid-December 2025, combined dam levels for the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro stood at 52%, requiring continued monitoring and contingency planning, and elevating water-related risk for the region and for the University. Dam levels in the broader Eastern Cape water-management area remain a strategic risk tracked through the University's medium-term planning. The University has received approval for all Water Use Licence Applications (WULA) from the Department of Water and Sanitation for the planned boreholes.

As shown in Figure 36, despite the significant increase in water use between 2023 and 2024, there was a welcome drop in water consumption in 2025, from 454 843 kilolitres in 2024 to 416 745 in 2025.

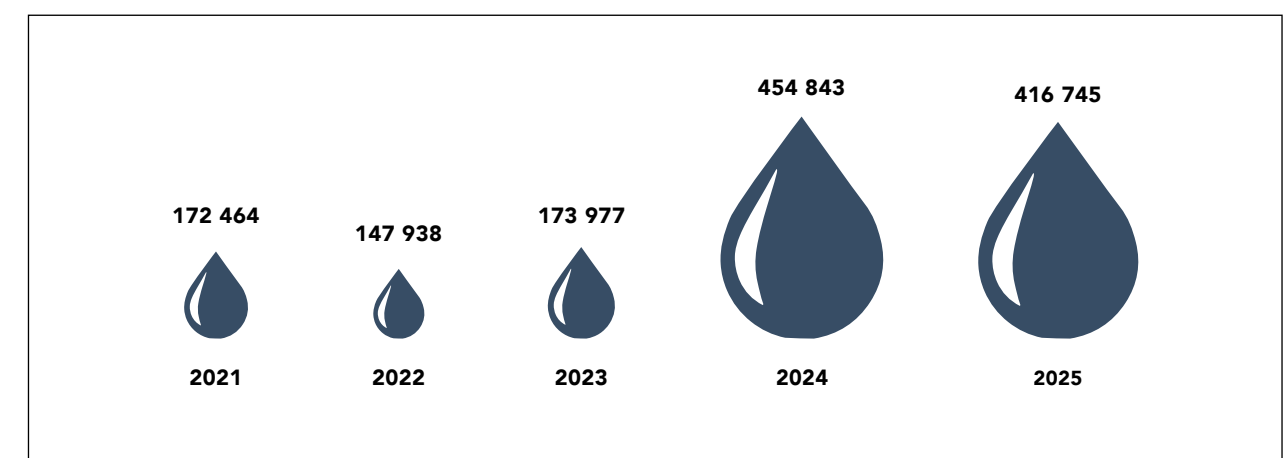


Figure 36: Kilolitres of water consumed on all campuses, 2021-2025

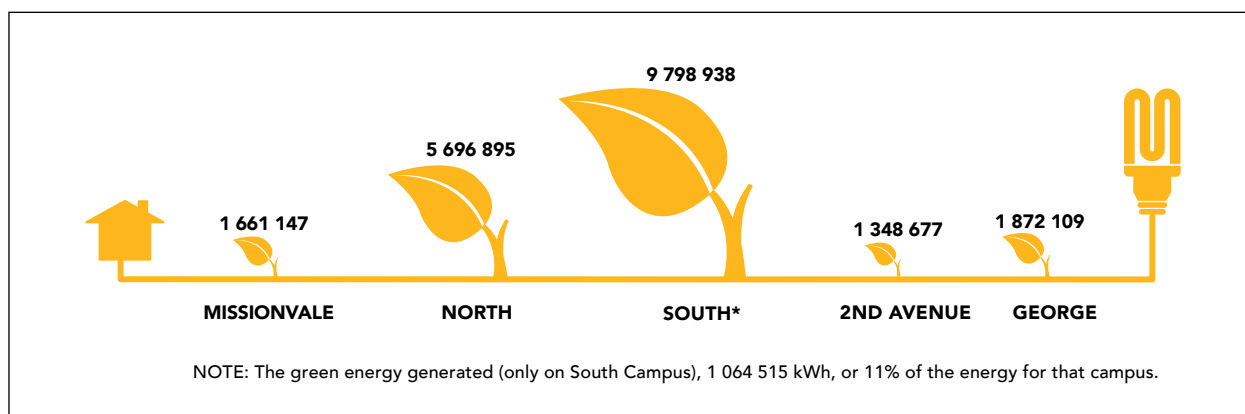


Figure 35: Energy consumption (kWh) per campus, 2025

For benchmarking purposes, in 2025, the University's average water use per full-time equivalent student stood at 16.1 kilolitres. The George Campus, however, remains a significant outlier, consistently recording water use of between 2.9 and 3.0 kilolitres per square metre and over 30 kilolitres per student, as shown in Figure 37. This pattern suggests systemic inefficiencies rooted in older infrastructure, high irrigation demand, or cooling-system losses. The campus has been prioritised for infrastructure upgrades and targeted behavioural interventions, including the isolation of ageing sections of the water reticulation system and their replacement with new pipework.

North Campus has shown the most concerning recent trend, with water use per student and per square metre more than doubling since 2023, making it a priority area for detailed audit and intervention. Although water usage spiked on

Second Avenue Campus in 2024, levels have since dropped to be more in line with the preceding years. Investigations have been initiated on North, South and Second Avenue Campuses, focusing on leak detection, sub-metering and the identification of high-consumption areas.

The University is committed to sustained investment in water literacy, both as a practical operational matter and as part of its broader responsibility to educate students and employees about the value and scarcity of water in the region and in South Africa more widely. Reinvigorating low-flow fittings, smart irrigation and full execution of the 2025–2029 Water Management Strategy are among the priorities for the coming period. Figure 38 reflects the financial investment planned for 2026–2029 to promote water security, with expenditure rising each year to make this a reality.

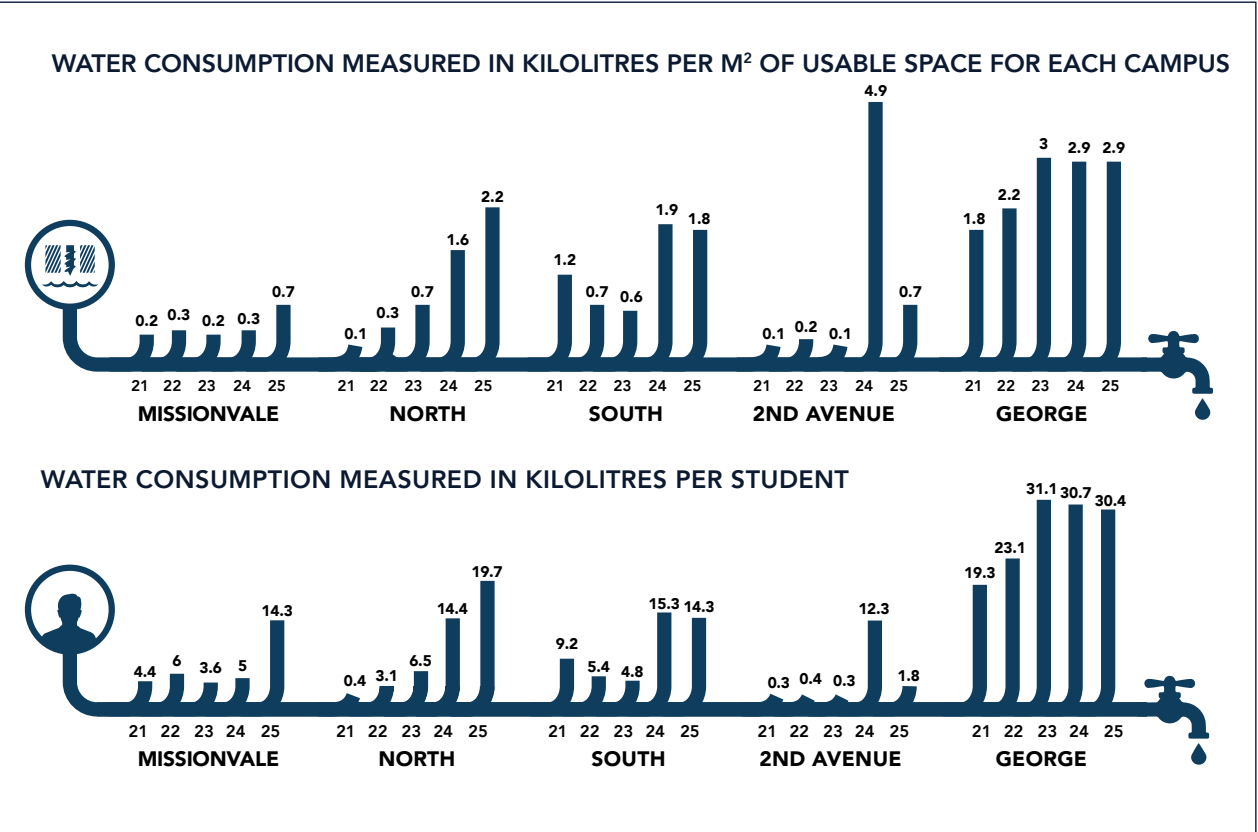


Figure 37: Water usage, 2021-2025
Note: Historic data for both Bird Street and Ocean Sciences campuses have not been accurate and will be refined for inclusion in future statistics



ONGOING SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION:

R14 620 000
PLANNED FOR 2026 - 2029

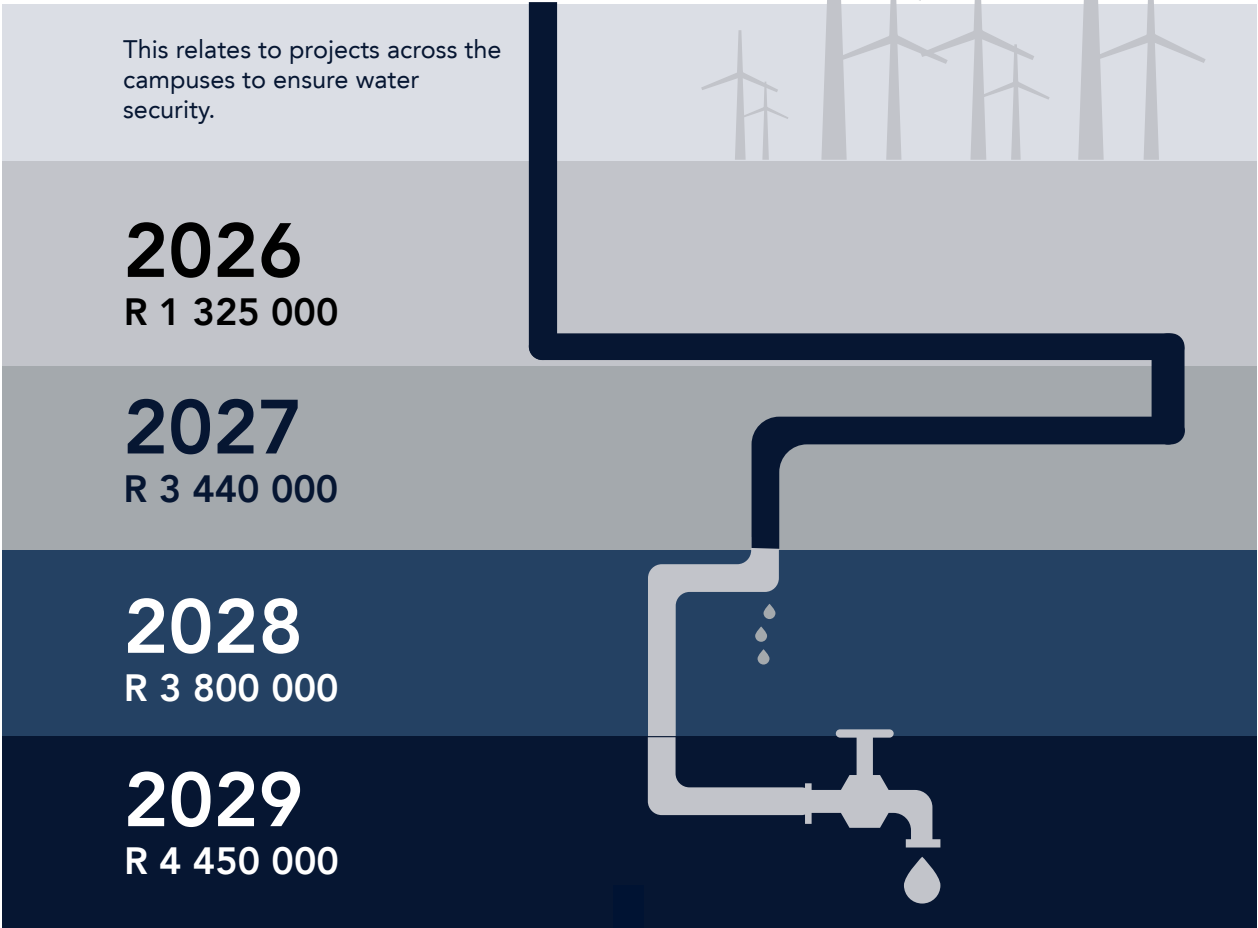


Figure 38: Ongoing sustainable water management strategy implementation

9.1.3 Carbon Footprint and Waste Management

The University's total reported greenhouse gas emissions for 2024 amounted to 81 441 metric tons per total gross metre squared (tCO₂e) (see Figure 39; data only confirmed until 2024). This is the highest recorded over the seven-year reporting period, largely attributable to an increase in Scope 3 emissions from travel, waste and supply-chain activities. Scope 2 (Category 2) emissions from purchased electricity have shown a gradual decline, from 27 148 tCO₂e in 2018 to 25 371 tCO₂e in 2024, reflecting improvements in energy efficiency.

While the University has made measurable progress in managing direct Scope 1 and purchased-electricity Scope 2 emissions, the overall carbon footprint is increasingly shaped by indirect activities, particularly transport, waste and supply-chain-related impacts. The renewable energy

programme underway, including the photovoltaic rollout and the Etana power purchase wheeling agreement, is expected to contribute to meaningful reductions in Scope 2 emissions from 2026 onwards.

Waste Management

The University is working to finalise and fund a comprehensive Waste Management Strategy that will set measurable targets, assign clear accountability and provide the institutional framework for waste diversion, recycling and reduction across all campuses. Waste to landfill per square metre of usable space has shown a steady increase since the return to full campus operations in 2022 following the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2024 figure represents more than a twofold increase on the pre-pandemic baseline of 0.093 cubic metres per square metre recorded in 2019, underscoring the growing importance of effective waste minimisation and diversion (see Figure 40). Verified waste

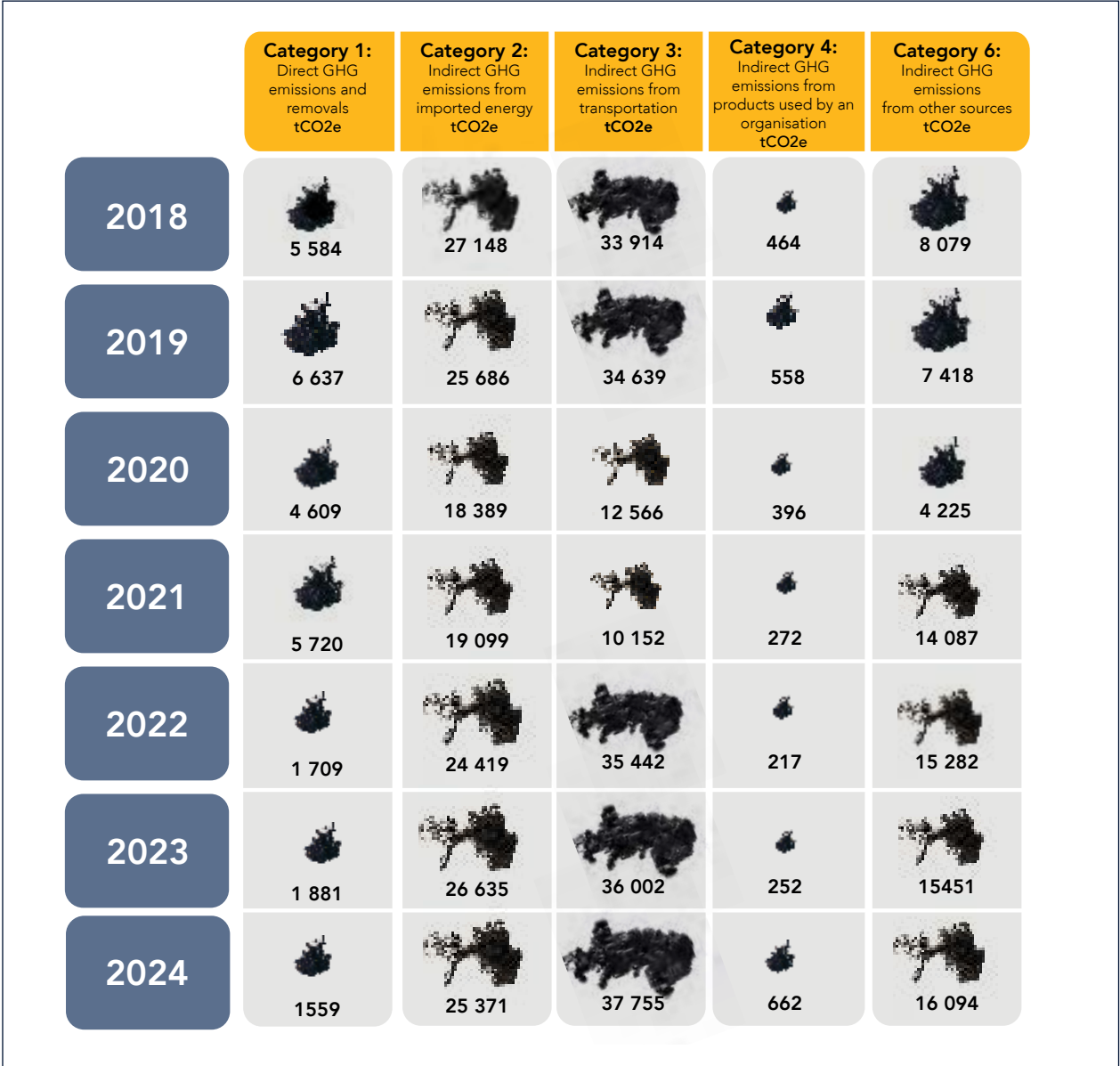


Figure 39: Carbon footprint measured in metric tonnes per total gross m², 2018–2024
Note: Data for 2025 was not available

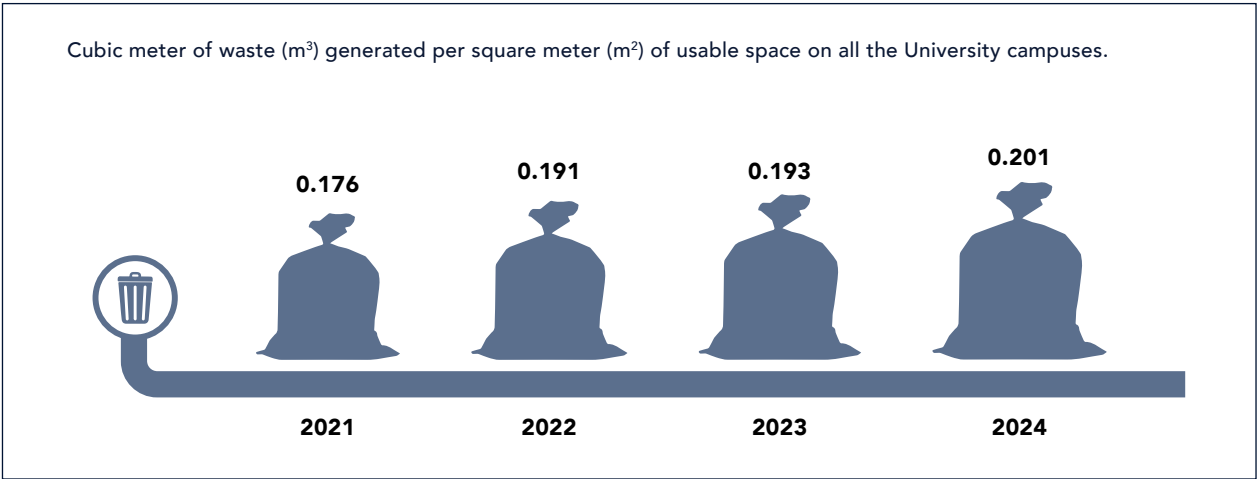


Figure 40: Cubic metres of waste to landfill per square metre of usable space for all University campuses, 2021-2024
Note: Updated figures for 2025 are not available

data for 2025 was not available at the time of publication owing to data reliability constraints.

In 2025, student-led recycling initiatives at the George Campus established a model that the University intends to scale progressively across all campuses. Clean-up campaigns across Gqeberha-based campuses complemented this work, fostering a broader culture of environmental stewardship.

9.1.4 Reprographics

Figure 41 indicates the total number of pages printed at the University, with a sharp decline observed from 2019 onwards due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to digital

platforms. Printing dropped from over 15.5-million pages in 2019 to 2.68-million pages in 2021. However, as academic activities and on-campus presence resumed post-pandemic, printing volumes nearly doubled in 2023 to 7.09-million pages, and figures for 2024 indicate a further increase to over 8-million pages.

Although 2025 shows a reduction to 7.7-million pages, annual printing remains significantly above the pandemic-era lows. This highlights the persistent need for the printing of academic materials, especially those required for accreditation and examination processes. The fact that 2024 and 2025 totals remain well below pre-pandemic levels demonstrates meaningful progress in digital transformation.

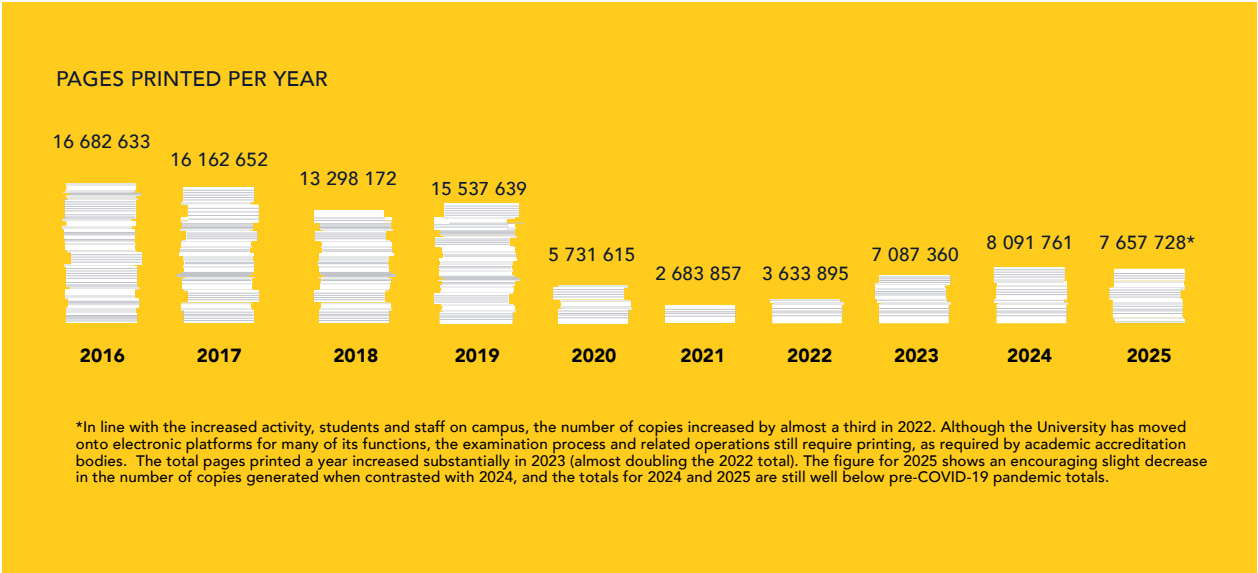


Figure 41: Reprographics from 2016-2025

9.1.5 Other Environmental Sustainability and Campus Greening Initiatives

The University's private nature reserve, at 640 hectares, is the largest of any tertiary institution in South Africa and is open to the public, contributing to environmental stewardship and social wellbeing. Maintenance Services partners with sustainable wildlife initiatives, while Horticulture Services promotes glass-free campuses and sustainable garden management, including the systematic clearance of invasive species.

The George Campus continues to serve as the University's catalyst for sustainability sciences and the green economy. Situated on 85 hectares of unfenced forestry plantations, it foregrounds sustainability practices including rainwater harvesting and organic waste recycling. Research undertaken through the George Campus Sustainability Research Unit, reported on more fully earlier in this report, contributes directly to the evidence base on which the University's own environmental strategies are developed.

The Photovoltaic Research Group in the Faculty of Science contributes to the evidence base for renewable energy decision-making, and the uYilo Smart Microgrid, combining solar energy with second-life electric vehicle batteries, has demonstrated a 38% reduction in operational costs. In a further expression of the University's commitment to the energy transition, the TIA awarded R350 000 in Pre-Seed Funding in 2025 to support the development of a small-scale pilot facility for green hydrogen and ammonia production using sustainable energy sources, contributing to the national agenda on green hydrogen as a future energy vector and export commodity.

Professors Syden Mishi and Janet Cherry were awarded a World Bank-funded project on Assessment for Developing Socially Owned Renewable Energy Initiatives, in partnership with European energy consultancy ECORYS. This project will assess the feasibility of community-owned renewable energy in Komati, Mpumalanga, as part of the Presidential Climate Commission's just energy transition programme. Professor Cherry is concurrently leading the NRF Global Change Social Sciences project, which will establish new models of community-owned energy and food production in urban townships and rural villages across the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, further extending the University's applied research in environmental sustainability and community resilience.

Continued focus on energy and water sustainability is essential to achieving the University's broader sustainability objectives. This includes active water emergency interventions and the rollout of PV solar installations across all campuses. Funding allocations for these key environmental initiatives are shown in the new infrastructure depicted in Figure 42 on page 119.

9.1.6 Student Housing

Sustainability and stewardship programmes in the University residences play an important role in developing environmentally conscious students, including water saving, tree planting, recycling and energy efficiency awareness. The recently completed residences on North Campus, providing approximately 800 beds, set a new benchmark for sustainable student accommodation, incorporating occupancy sensors, energy-efficient air conditioning and water-efficient fittings.

9.2 Social Sustainability

The University advances its transformative engagement mandate through a systemic, values-driven approach rooted in Strategic Focus Area 3 of Vision 2030, namely, to engage with all publics in equalising partnerships to co-create transformative, contextually responsive solutions in pursuit of social justice and equality. Social sustainability encompasses the equitable treatment of employees and students, the fostering of an inclusive institutional culture, and the University's contribution to the communities it serves.

9.2.1 The Role of Engagement and Transformation in Promoting Social Sustainability

The ETP plays a coordinating and enabling role in ensuring that engagement contributions are aligned, supported and expressed within a coherent institutional framework. As depicted in Figure 43 (see page 120), the quintuple helix model encompasses education, industry, government, civil society and the natural environment. This model guides the work of the ETP as it facilitates convergence between knowledge systems, sectors and communities. The Institutional Stakeholder-Community Engagement Framework, adopted at the end of 2023, also provides the guiding principles for partnerships rooted in reciprocity, social justice and contextual relevance. In 2025, the HoCs deepened reciprocal partnerships across all eight thematic areas, marking a deliberate shift from distributed activity towards programmatic coherence and catalytic impact.

Hub 1: Individual and Collective Wellness

The Hope Revolution Vision continued throughout 2025 as one of the hub's flagship programmes, engaging students in community wellness and substance abuse awareness through a registered SLP. The activation of 'third spaces' and the Home of Hope provided community-based settings outside formal counselling structures. The Epilepsy Awareness Walk encouraged student-led volunteerism, connecting health awareness with community-facing action. Students from the SHoC played a central role in delivering these programmes.

SOUTH/NORTH CAMPUS

Some refinement of existing systems took place to reallocate existing borehole storage, pumps and distribution systems into safe containers where they are protected from weather and criminal activity.



GEORGE CAMPUS

These projects entailed the construction of a brand new 600 kL reservoir, various dedicated water connections to buildings and new water reticulation for dedicated areas which would benefit from the borehole water on campus (sports and swimming pool).



Figure 42: New infrastructure to promote sustainable water use

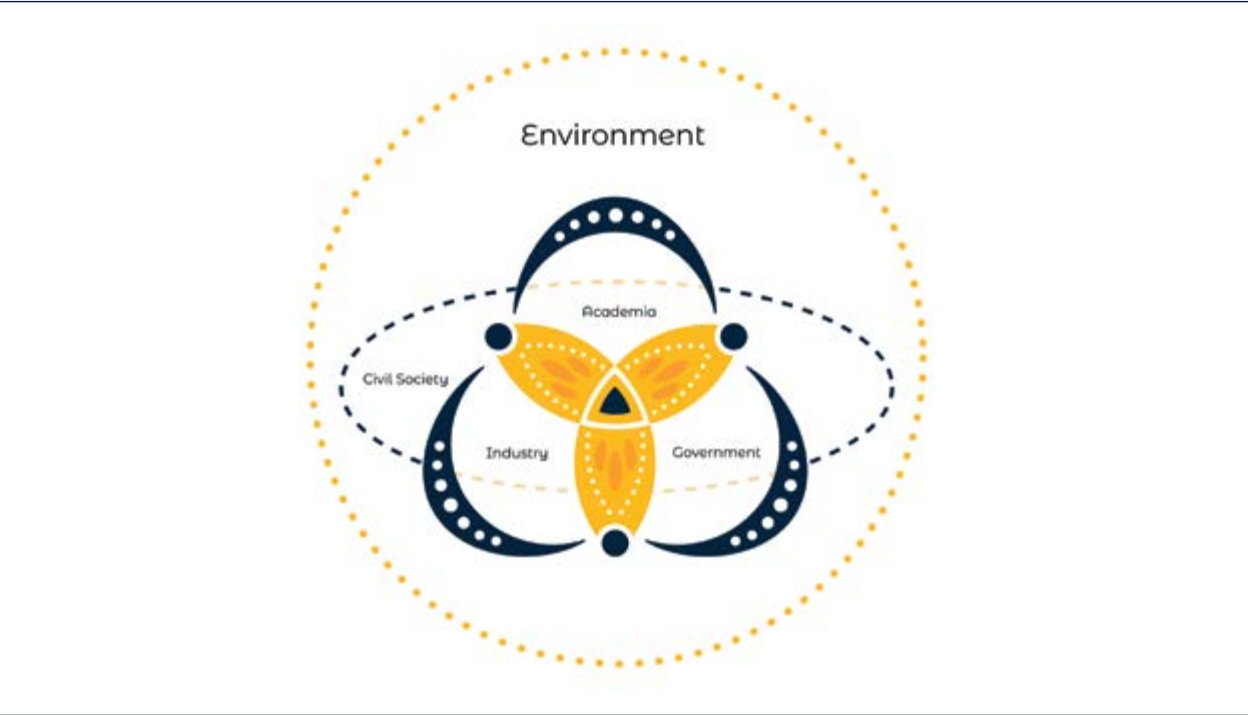


Figure 43: The quintuple helix model

► **Hub 2: Food Sovereignty and Climate Resilience**

The Seeds of Change: Coega–Mandela University Food Systems Dialogue brought together community food producers and academic researchers in a co-design process, while the NRF-funded Water Quality and Food Security Project integrated environmental science, indigenous knowledge and social justice into collaborative research. CIPSET’s emerging collaboration with the provincial Department of Agriculture and the Green Technologies Engineering Cooperative further extended the hub’s reach. Climate dialogue work within the hub contributed to the Gqeberha Declaration, a community-university commitment to climate resilience.

► **Hub 3: Gender, Safety and Justice**

The Mina Cup menstrual hygiene initiative continued to advance menstrual justice through community distribution and school-based advocacy. The Queer 101 campaign launched hybrid dialogues on gender identity and inclusion across campuses in the second quarter of 2025. These projects illustrate the hub’s commitment to gender justice as a lived and relational practice.

► **Hub 4: Community-Driven Initiatives**

Community-driven engagement was highlighted in 2025 by the Mandela Day programme at Gelvandale High School, which brought students, staff and community members together in a day of practical contribution to the school and its broader community; fuller detail is provided in the Report

of the Chairperson of Senate. Further projects included business proposals for the Zwide goat-farming project, an Autism Awareness Conference with the Umphanda Autism Foundation, and a self-defence SLP co-designed with I Protect Me.

► **Hub 5: Knowledge Communication and Application**

The hub deepened engagement with global knowledge networks through participation in the UNESCO Knowledge for Change programme at the University of Limerick, followed by a reciprocal visit to the University. The initiation of the Engagement Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (E-MERL) system signals a transition from activity-based reporting towards a more rigorous understanding of engagement impact and value creation.

► **Hub 6: Education Ecosystem**

The Learner Incubation Programme continued to extend educational ecosystem engagement, providing learners from historically marginalised schools with direct University exposure and academic support. By September 2025, 29 SLPs had been registered through the Hubs and associated platforms, attracting 2 747 participants across disciplines.

► **Hub 7: Indigenous Knowledge Systems**

The hub continued affirming indigenous knowledge as a legitimate and essential dimension of the University’s academic and engagement identity. CIPSET’s development of multilingual agroecological materials for community

farmers, and its engagement with communities around seaweed harvesting and climate adaptation at Kwelera in partnership with the South African National Biodiversity Institute, illustrated how indigenous ecological knowledge is being integrated into practical sustainability work.

► **Hub 8: Sports, Arts and Culture**

The Outeniqua Chair Challenge engaged students in endurance-based volunteerism that built community spirit and civic participation. International partnerships with the University of Grand-Bassam in Côte d’Ivoire and Botho University in Botswana extended the hub’s collaborative reach. The Vice-Chancellor’s Cultural Evening, “Echoes and Imprints”, celebrated heritage through diverse musical performances and town-and-gown engagement.

The Science Centre, which engaged with more than 2 000 visitors during 2025, continued to catalyse sustainability and stewardship through leadership and maritime symposia and immersive technologies for environmental science.

9.2.2 The Role of Human Resources in Promoting Social Sustainability

The University’s commitment to employee wellbeing, engagement and sound labour relations underpins the social dimension of its ESG principles. The Human Resources division plays a pivotal role in embedding these principles into daily operations, culture and long-term strategy. Figure 44 reflects the amount spent on human resource development, adding up to a total spend of more than R26-million for the year 2025.

► **Employee Wellbeing and Experience**

Employee wellbeing was advanced through an integrated Employee Value Proposition focused on physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing. The 2025 Wellness Day recorded unprecedented participation across campuses. Institutional culture continued to be shaped through the institutional culture signature programmes, notably “The Mandela in Us” and “Masongse Siphuhlise” campaigns, strengthening a sense of purpose, belonging and shared values. In pursuit of remuneration equity, the PASS employee harmonisation project received governance approval for implementation.

► **Employee Relations and Labour Stability**

The University sustained constructive labour relations through structured engagement with organised labour. Reductions in grievances and CCMA referrals reflect stronger line management capability and improved policy enforcement. Salary, wage and benefits negotiations were concluded successfully for 2025/26.

9.2.3 Student Entrepreneurship and Youth Employability

The University established the SEYE working group to promote coherence across institutional responses to this transversal strategic priority. The work of the MUAH and the CfERI, including the national recognition they attracted in 2025, is reported in detail earlier in this report.



Figure 44: Human Resources Development Spend

9.2.4 Transformative Institutional Culture

Universities are complex social institutions with distinctive institutional cultures, which safeguard values such as academic freedom, critical thinking, and autonomy, while also being influenced by changes in the external environment. The University has adopted an institutional culture strategy that seeks to cultivate culture change by inspiring robust innovation by all students and employees through the implementation of six signature programmes as depicted in Figure 45 below.

As the ideas emerging from employees and students through these six signature programmes start to be analysed, the University will make sense of their lived experiences and shape the desired institutional culture by applying the principles of complexity science.

In addition to the above, the launch of the Anti-GBV Charter in October 2025 and the Inaugural Dialogue on the State of Gender-Affirming Health Care in the Eastern Cape marked significant institutional milestones in the year. A

comprehensive review of the policy framework is underway, with fuller detail on transformation performance and the University's GBV response provided in the reports of the Chairpersons of Council and of Senate.

Full details of the University's performance in implementing the ITP are set out in the Transformation Report appended to this report.

9.3 Economic Sustainability

Vision 2030 foregrounds the need to enhance the University's long-term financial sustainability. The University's Resource Mobilisation Strategy sets out integrated, multi-pronged interventions organised around four pillars: innovative resource generation, maximising government funding and fees, responsible resource stewardship, and expanding commercial ventures. In 2025, the University invested 3% of its total budget, amounting to R73.5-million, towards implementing the Council-endorsed transversal strategic priorities.



Figure 45: Six institutional culture signature programmes

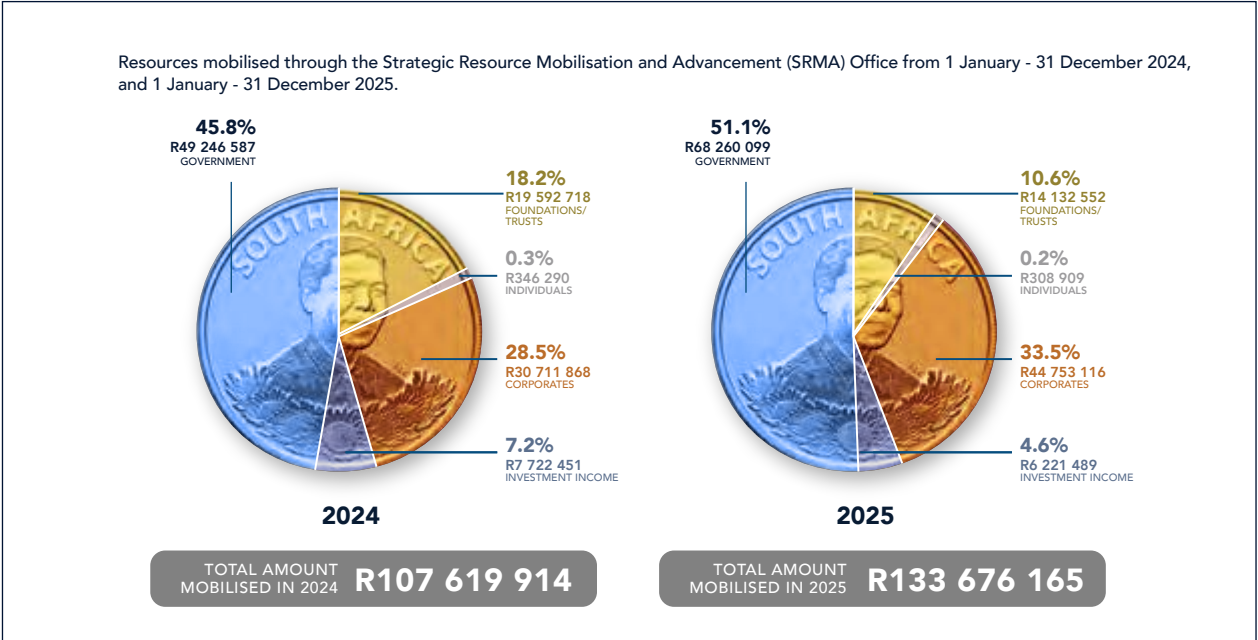


Figure 46: Funding mobilised through the Nelson Mandela University Trust, 2024-2025

9.3.1 Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement

In 2025, the total amount mobilised through the University Trust exceeded R133.6-million, ahead of the R107-million raised in 2024, as reflected in Figure 46 above. Of this, R88-million, constituting 92.8% of the R95-million annual bursary target, was received by the end of October. Engagement project income reached R15.8-million against a target of R20-million, with an additional R3-million secured but awaiting payment.

9.3.2 Bursaries and Scholarships

There were 1 114 Trust bursary recipients in 2025, of whom more than 94% were Black students (as defined in the B-BBEE codes) and the majority were female, with approximately

15% of funds allocated to PG students. A further R1.6-million was reprioritised from within the Trust cost centres to assist another 43 students with bursaries, bringing the total assisted to 1 157 students. The University committed R59.7-million in 2025 from Council funds, supported further by R34-million from external funders. R15-million was allocated through the Eastern Cape Office of the Premier to support students with historical debt in engineering and related fields.

Figure 47 reflects alumni donations, which amounted to R197 498 in 2025. Of this amount, R152 498 was received as cash donations, and R45 000 was the total sponsorship for an alumni event hosted in Uganda. Commercial companies partly or fully owned by the University, such as Innovolve, Propella, and the Nelson Mandela University Investment Company (Pty) Limited, also create value that supports the mission of the University.

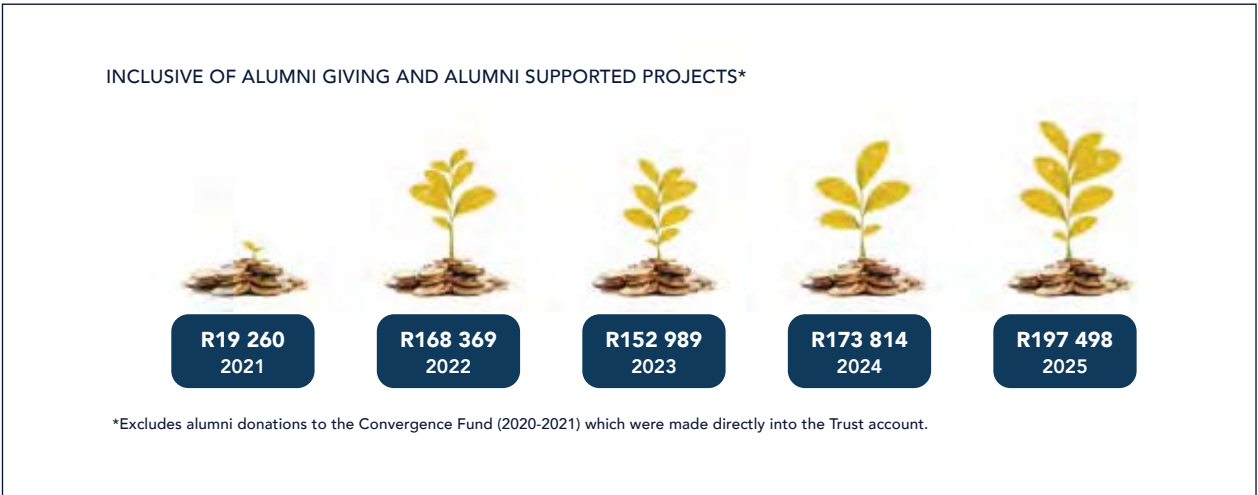


Figure 47: Alumni donations, 2021-2025



9.3.3 Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team

SIVTT guides resourcing and investment priorities through three workstreams, namely: academic optimisation, improved operational efficiencies and digitalisation, and strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting.

► Academic optimisation and strategic differentiation

Academic optimisation encompasses academic programme and curriculum renewal to embrace decolonisation and embed our Vision 2030 educational philosophy, graduate attributes, and humanising pedagogies. To this end, a comprehensive review of the University's current and desired PQM is being undertaken to provide an objective analysis of the strategic, academic and financial viability of the University's academic offerings and modes of delivery.

As part of digital transformation, a further dimension of academic optimisation comprises actively exploring what proportion of the University's academic programme offerings can be offered through fully online or blended and flexible modes of delivery to cater for various markets such as school leavers, as well as employed adults and professionals seeking opportunities for upskilling and lifelong learning.

► Improving operational efficiencies and digitalisation

The University is continuously exploring strategies to transition progressively towards sustainable operating models and improved operational efficiencies. This requires a wide-ranging review of all University projects, systems and processes designed to improve operational efficiencies and reduce costs through smarter ways of working. This includes identifying opportunities for driving process re-engineering and efficiency improvements, as well as an analysis of salary expenditure trends as the most significant cost driver.

The University has approved an integrated digital transformation strategy to inform the key systems developments, platforms and technologies required to promote a quality educational and working experience for all students and employees. Importantly, digitalisation will require change leadership and capacity development interventions to ensure that students and employees are equipped for the future world of work.

The University has 284 buildings in use with a footprint of approximately 364 000 m², spread across seven campuses in Gqeberha and George. The Archibus Integrated Workplace Management System enables integrated management of space, energy and maintenance, and is being progressively

integrated with the Integrated Tertiary Software system to promote the optimal utilisation of facilities across all campuses.

Sustainability in campus operations encompasses the ongoing assessment of energy and water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, waste reduction and management, catering, transport, landscaping, transformative procurement and green purchasing, enterprise development, accessibility for people with disabilities, and campus safety and security. All these domains offer opportunities for cost reduction and improved efficiencies.

► Strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting

Sustainability encompasses every aspect of the University's ecosystem, and in an environment of increasing budgetary constraints, all resources must be used as efficiently as possible. Identifying opportunities to diversify revenue streams, including subsidy, fees and third-stream income are an essential dimension of the wide-ranging sustainability initiatives. Attention also needs to be devoted to innovative measures to generate additional income through commercialisation, innovation and technology transfer, the delivery of SLPs, enterprise development, and infrastructure optimisation.

In response to the prevailing economic challenges, the University is progressively transitioning to strategy-aligned budgeting and resource allocation. In so doing, the University is reimagining pioneering approaches to resource stewardship that support the sustainability of the core academic missions, support services and operations.

9.4 Digitalisation

The University's digital transformation strategy shifts institutional technology from basic information technology support to a strategic, "digital-first" approach aimed at elevating the student experience, modernising academic

operations, and fostering inclusive digital innovation. Key pillars of this strategy include:

- **Student-Centric Digitisation:** Upgrading digital platforms, including a modernised, mobile-friendly web presence, to provide seamless, anytime-anywhere access to administrative, financial, and educational services across multiple campuses
- **Inclusive Digital Transformation:** Embracing concepts like "Digital Ubuntu" and inclusive e-governance to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that the surrounding Eastern Cape communities and regional businesses benefit from technological advancements
- **Research and Innovation:** Fostering academic research into the digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) to advance applied research and youth-centred digital problem-solving
- **Operational Leadership:** Elevating digital and ICT leadership into core strategic roles that shape long-term institutional decision-making and performance management.

9.5 Conclusion

Against the backdrop of ever-increasing complexity and uncertainty, universities must become more focused on promoting sustainability through responsive academic offerings, efficient campus operations, progressive and inclusive digital transformation, and strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting. This requires visionary leadership and a collective commitment to invest courageously in innovations that will generate improved efficiencies and savings over time. This foregrounds the need for strategic coherence and clarity to provide a justifiable and consistent basis for making difficult investment choices and assessing opportunities for enhancing cost effectiveness. The University's sustainability agenda is characterised by the deliberate integration of environmental, social, economic and digital imperatives across all dimensions of the institution.

Celebrating Excellence

The University strives to promote excellence as one of its core values by cultivating a learning and working environment that liberates the full potential and agency of students and employees. This aligns with its ongoing commitment to promote, recognise and reward excellence across all spheres of the institution. This section showcases some of the achievements of the University's students and employees during 2025 to celebrate excellence in learning, teaching, research, innovation, engagement and service delivery.

10.1 Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards

The Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards recognise the contribution of high-performing academic and PASS employees each year, as well as that of students. Awards are presented annually in the categories of research, learning and teaching, creative outputs, engagement, innovation and institutional support. The annual event combines the Academic Achievers Awards with the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards.

10.1.1 Employee Overall Winners

The following overall winners were honoured at the 2025 Excellence Awards ceremony:

- Distinguished Teacher of the Year: Professor Gerrit Crafford, Quantity Surveying
- Researcher of the Year: Professor Andrew Phiri, Economics
- Teacher of the Year: Associate Professor Cina Mosito, Education
- Emerging Researcher of the Year: Dr Gavin Rishworth, Zoology
- Emerging Teacher of the Year: Makhosi Madimabe, Education

► Research Excellence Awards

- Associate Professor Benita Barton, Chemistry, whose research focuses on developing cleaner, more efficient methods to separate chemical mixtures without relying on the energy-intensive distillation processes that depend on fossil fuels, with wide application in the food, pharmaceutical and manufacturing sectors.
- Professor John Smallwood, Construction Management, whose research and PG supervision addresses health and safety in the construction sector – a field beset by high rates of fatalities, injuries and occupational disease in South Africa.

► Faculty Researchers of the Year

- Business and Economic Sciences:
 - Associate Professor Andrew Phiri, Economics
 - Professor Adèle Potgieter, Marketing Management (Integrative Researcher of the Year and Sustainable/Green Researcher of the Year)
 - Professor Stephen Mago, Development Studies
- Education: Associate Professor Mathabo Khau
- EBET: Professor John Smallwood, Construction Management
- Health Sciences: Associate Professor Wilma ten Ham-Baloyi, Nursing Science
- Humanities: Dr Johannes Sibeko, Digital Humanities
- Law: Associate Professor Leah Ndimurwimo
- Science: Associate Professor Benita Barton, Chemistry



► Faculty Emerging Researcher Awards

- Business and Economic Sciences: Dr Muzi Shoba, Development Studies
- Education: Dr Walters Doh Nubia, Postgraduate Studies in Education
- EBET: Dr Jean-Pierre Basson, Architecture
- Health Sciences: Dr Simo Zulu, Human Physiology
- Humanities: Dr Andiswa Mvanyashe, Language and Literature
- Law: Dr Esther Gumboh, Criminal and Procedural Law
- Science: Dr Gavin Rishworth, Zoology

► Teaching and Learning Excellence Awards

- Learning and Teaching Excellence Team Award: The Team from Linguistics and Applied Linguistics — Chanel van der Merwe, Thoko Batyi, Allan Murdoch and Nobuntu Ntantiso — for their culturally informed, humanising approach to training medical students in multilingual communication and redefining the doctor-patient relationship in a deeply unequal society.
- Learning and Teaching Excellence in Innovation: Dr Badroen Ismael, Secondary School Education, for his faculty-wide rollout of multilingual Moodle widgets enabling translanguaging, supporting equity, inclusion and student agency in initial teacher education.

► Faculty Excellent Teachers of the Year Awards

- Education: Associate Professor Cina Mosito
- Health Sciences: Dr Riaan van de Venter, Radiography
- Humanities: Nobuntu Ntantiso, Linguistics and Applied Linguistics
- Law: Dr Tina Hokwana, Mercantile Law
- Science: Gideon Brunsdon, Geosciences

► Faculty Emerging Excellent Teacher Awards

- Education: Dr Makhosi Madimabe, Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy Education
- EBET: Damian Fredericks, Software Engineering
- Health Sciences: Ayabonga Moolman, Nursing Science
- Law: Mahlubandile Ntontela, Criminal and Procedural Law
- Science: Dr Sasha-Lee Dorfling, Chemistry

► Nelson Mandela University Distinguished Teacher Award

- Professor Gerrit Crafford, Quantity Surveying, was honoured with the Nelson Mandela University Distinguished Teacher Award for his sustained commitment to humanising pedagogy in a discipline grounded in technical rigour. He creates inclusive, supportive spaces that affirm student dignity, agency and diversity, and designs authentic



learning tasks that connect theory to professional practice, nurturing critical self-awareness and an ethic of care in future built-environment professionals.

► Innovation Excellence Awards

- Innovation Excellence Award: Professor Farouk Smith, Mechatronics, for developing radiation-resilient electronic systems for satellites, spacecraft and critical technologies, ensuring Africa contributes to the global space and advanced technology sectors
- Emerging Innovation Excellence Award: Dr Zikhona Tywabi-Ngeva, Chemistry, for developing a biodegradable sheet made from pineapple leaf waste that controls weeds, retains soil moisture, regulates temperature and enriches the soil as it breaks down
- Innovation Excellence Project Award: The eNtsa Automation Team — Akshay Lakhani, Elbert Liebenberg, Garion Momberg, Hendrik Nel and Riaan Opperman — for developing and implementing an automated seam tracking system for a friction stir welding machine at GRW in Worcester, significantly improving the efficiency of road tanker manufacturing and supporting South Africa's export competitiveness.

► Engagement Excellence Awards

- Emerging Engagement Excellence Award (STEM): Dr William Zivanayi and the virtual lab initiative to improve science teaching in under-resourced schools, providing digital simulations of practical experiments in titration and Newton's second law for rural and township learners

- Engagement Excellence Award (STEM): Shawn Gouws for 21 years of industry engagement in Chemical Process Technology, including advancing green hydrogen manufacturing and securing seed funding from the TIA and NRF
- Engagement Excellence Award (Social Sciences and Humanities): Professor Adèle Potgieter for her community-driven initiatives in the Garden Route that promote entrepreneurship, skills development and economic growth through engagement with local government, industry and students
- Engagement Excellence Project Award (STEM): Ian Wedderburn and the eNtsa team of Donnie Erasmus, Hubert van der Merwe, Dreyer Bernard, Chanee Louis, Keegan Kroutz, David Thomas, Garion Momberg, Riaan Opperman, Hendrik Nel and Akshay Lakhani for developing a specialised Friction Stir Welding platform for GRW, completed within 16 months and now in continuous production
- Engagement Excellence Project Award (STEM): John Andrews and the STUDIO MAKE project for designing and building a 144m² early childhood development classroom at Charles Duna Primary School in New Brighton in collaboration with the NPO Masinyusane and the school's educators
- Engagement Excellence Project Award (Social Sciences and Humanities): Jonathan van der Walt and the land/lines project, a major exhibition on the National Arts Festival 2024 Main Curated Programme exploring land, history and identity through Eastern Cape socio-political and cultural narratives

- Engagement Excellence Team Award (STEM): Richard Betz and the team shaping first-year students' experience – Kina Muller, Anita Noah and Dr Zikhona Tywabi-Ngeva – for peer-to-peer mentoring and multilingual content creation that supports first-year Chemistry students' academic and social transition, grounded in an Ubuntu philosophy
- Engagement Excellence Team Award (Social Sciences and Humanities): Associate Professor Cina Mosito and the Teaching for All (T4A) Team – Sanet Deyssel, Obakeng Kagola, Georgey Rex and Jackie Smith – for implementing Inclusive Education training across Nelson Mandela Bay, Buffalo City, Mthatha and Komani through a partnership with the British Council and the Eastern Cape Department of Education.

► Creative Output Awards

- Visual Arts: Muziwandile Gigaba, for "iNgqikithi yokuPhica/Weaving Meanings: Telephone Wire Art from South Africa", a body of work in ceramics and other media that archives and reframes cultural knowledge through indigenous perspectives, and for his work as a cultural curator building cross-cultural partnerships for a more inclusive museum model
- Visual Arts: Jonathan van der Walt, for "From the Woods to the Soil", an interdisciplinary work incorporating bronze and resin casting, digital modelling and 3D printing that critically interrogates Heritage Day and explores white African heritage and ancestral ties as a contemporary cultural practice of self-discovery.

► Excellence in Professional, Administrative and Support Services

The following PASS staff members were acknowledged for service excellence:

- Vincent Mzamo Qasha, Support Services Assistant, Horticulture
- Dedré Erasmus, Secretary, Department of Economics
- Pamela Roach, Programme Administrator, Secondary School Education
- Rekha Neglur, Laboratory Technician, Chemistry
- Anne-Mart Olsen, Senior Academic Developer
- The Digital Learning Experience Design and Innovation Studio (LXD Studio) received the PASS Team Excellence Award. The team of Elmien Waring, Jack Bailey, Taryn Geswint, Zipho Mayibuthe, Lenard Mazibe, Bendre Meyer, Emma Ngumbela, Zamabhodi Nkata and Kristina Ramos exceeded their output targets by over 400% in 2024 and are on track to repeat this achievement in 2025. As early adopters of AI tools, they have enhanced productivity and developed custom systems to improve service to academic clients across the institution.

10.1.2 Student Academic Achievers Awards

The Vice-Chancellor Awards for Academic Excellence are presented to the best graduates and diplomates of the year, selected from the winners already honoured in the various award categories. They recognise the best first diploma student, best first degree student, and the best PG students





Nelson Mandela University Choir performs at the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards

in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and in Social Sciences and Humanities, respectively.

► First-Year Undergraduate Awards

- First-Year Undergraduate Diploma Award: Neo Douw, National Diploma in Building, Faculty of EBET
- First-Year Undergraduate Degree Award: Mbaso Ncapayi, Bachelor of Pharmacy, Faculty of Health Sciences

► First Diploma Awards

- Business and Economic Sciences: Aphiwe Hilda, Diploma in Management
- EBET: Keanu Kapank, Diploma in IT Software Development
- Health Sciences: Miekyle Alvan, Diploma in Sport Management
- Humanities: Zimasa Mbovane, Diploma in Public Relations Management
- Law: Yonela Mdingane, Diploma in Law Enforcement
- Science: Julian Johnson-Barker, Diploma in Nature Conservation

► First Degree Awards

- Business and Economic Sciences: Megan Bodley, BCom Computer Science and Information Systems
- Education: Elzaan Grobler, BEd Foundation Phase
- EBET: Zanele Mndaweni, Bachelor of Information Technology
- Health Sciences: Teagan Muller, Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science
- Law: Eugenia Makova, LLB
- Science: Hayley Britz, BSc

► Honours Degree Awards

- Social Sciences and Humanities: Amanda Dhladhla, Honours in Psychology, whose research explores indigenous psychedelic practices and their potential for culturally sensitive, holistic approaches to modern psychotherapy and mental health care.
- SET: Belinda Taljaard, Computer Science and Information Systems, whose honours project developed an interactive game, teaching programming skills and critical thinking to children.

► Master's Degree Awards

- Master's by Coursework: Social Sciences and Humanities: Lynn Jonas, Maritime Studies, whose research examined how maritime piracy in Africa affects cruise tourism, and the potential to reposition the continent as a desirable cruise destination.
- Master's by Coursework: SET: Bradley Wiehahn, Architecture, whose research explored how architectural design can restore degraded coastal ecosystems, expressed through a design for an African penguin interpretation and rehabilitation centre at Stony Point.
- Master's by Dissertation: Social Sciences and Humanities: Mari Sharp, Creative Media Production, whose research addressed the disconnect between academic film theory and the practical realities of lighting design in film and TV production.
- Master's by Dissertation: SET: Locadia Dzingwena, Nature Conservation, whose research on how chacma baboons adapt behaviour and reproduction to environmental pressures has been internationally recognised, including through a submission to Scientific Reports and an award from the International Primatological Society.

10.1.3 Madibaz Sport Awards

The annual Madibaz Sport Awards ceremony recognised the following outstanding contributions to sport at the University in 2025:

- Sportsman of the Year: Chinonso Dave (Men's Netball)
- Sportswoman of the Year: Juanita van Tonder (Netball)
- Student Sport Administrator of the Year: Thimna Doyi (Netball and Aquatics)
- Sport Administrator of the Year: Cheryl Kotze (Swimming)
- Student Sport Technical Official of the Year: Njabulo Magadu (Rugby)
- Sport Technical Official of the Year: Euleen Grobbelaar (Netball)
- Student Sport Coach of the Year: Sinazo Kunene (Karate)
- Sport Coach of the Year: Jason le Roux (Squash)
- Director of Sport Award: Hanniska van Vuuren (Netball)
- Community Engagement Award: Madibaz Netball club
- Campus Sport Residence of the Year Award: Phase 3
- Most Improved Club of the Year: Madibaz Squash club
- Sport Team of the Year: Madibaz Premier men's hockey team
- Sport Performance of the Year: Zeenat Lee (Karate)
- Club of the Year: Madibaz Netball club
- Student Sport Influencer of the Year: Luchay Weideman (Karate and Rugby)
- Junior Sportswoman of the Year: Zeenat Lee (Karate)
- Junior Sportsman of the Year: Lemuel Kramer (Karate)
- Student Sportswoman of the Year: Juanita van Tonder (Netball)
- Student Sportsman of the Year: Nigel Tsapi (Karate)

10.2 Student and Employee Achievements

Over and above the Excellence Awards noted above, the University has reason to be proud of student and employee achievements not only at the national level but also beyond the borders of South Africa.

10.2.1 International accolades

Dr Nehemiah Latolla, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Human Physiology, was awarded an Australia-Africa Universities Network (AAUN) Partnership Research and Development Fund grant for 2025/26, one of only eight projects selected globally. Serving as Principal Investigator, Dr Latolla leads a cross-continental collaboration between Nelson Mandela University, the University of New South Wales, Curtin University and the University of Ghana to develop environmentally sound approaches to cancer and environmental health challenges.

Research associate Dr Linda Harris was selected by The Pew Charitable Trusts as a 2025 Pew Fellow in Marine Conservation, one of six international recipients. Over three years, Dr Harris will receive \$150 000 to investigate ways of strengthening sandy beach conservation in the Western Indian Ocean.

PhD student in Mathematics Fundile Nyaweni received first prize in the Global Challenges University Alliance award for doctoral students. His submission, on mathematical modelling to optimise tumour treatment with chemotherapy,



Madibaz Sport Awards



The Nelson Mandela University team at the EDHE Awards. From left: Nelisiwe Sishange, Zubenathi Daka, Dr Mapula Razwinani, Thabile Ndaba, Karen Snyman, Professor Thobekani Lose and Dr Palesa Natasha Mothapo.

was recognised as high-quality research with direct real-world relevance to cancer care.

Management Practice student and Paris Olympian Collins Saliboko was elected to the World Aquatics Athletes Committee as Africa's swimming representative. The committee gives athletes a direct voice in the decision-making structures of World Aquatics, with input on event organisation, rules and policy.

BSc Quantity Surveying (Honours) graduate Avuyisiwe Kovu and her supervisor, Professor Gerrit Crafford, received the Best Paper Award in the Sustainable Cities category at the International Sustainable Ecological Engineering Design for Society (SEEDS) Conference, hosted by Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. The achievement followed a similar recognition at the 2024 SEEDS Conference, establishing back-to-back wins for the University's Quantity Surveying programme.

Dr Adeniyi Ogunlaja, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, was selected as a Fulbright Research Scholar at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, starting in January 2026. With a global success rate of approximately 20%, the Fulbright award is among the most competitive research fellowships available.

Physics researcher Madeleine Badenhorst won the Best Student Flash Talk Award at the Microscience Microscopy Congress 2025 in Manchester, one of four awards she has received since December 2024. Her research contributes to

the global search for cleaner energy, exploring alternatives to coal, including nuclear power. Her attendance at the Manchester congress was supported by the Most Promising Microscopist award, sponsored by JEOL/Angstrom Scientific, which she received at the Microscopy Society of Southern Africa conference in 2024, where she also took the Best Student Oral Presentation award.

10.2.2 National Accolades

Professor Thobekani Lose, Director of the Mandela University Africa Hub for Entrepreneurship (MUAH), was appointed Chairperson of the Foundation and Alliances Task Force within the Startup20 South Africa Policy Task Force, aligned with the G20's global entrepreneurship agenda. He was also named the winner of the Hult Prize South Africa 2024/25 University Entrepreneurship Coordinators Award, recognising his leadership in one of the world's largest student pitch competitions, with approximately 1 324 universities and more than 187 000 participants competing globally. MUAH became the first recipient of the EDHE Champion Award at the EDHE Awards in November 2025.

The CCT, led by Distinguished Professor Darelle van Greunen, received the National Science and Technology Forum Science Diplomacy Award for Africa, part of what is widely regarded as South Africa's "Science Oscars". The award recognised the CCT's work in fostering cross-border scientific collaboration and using digital innovation to address critical societal needs in health, education and community development across the continent.

Professor Zukiswa Zingela, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, was named joint winner of the Health Excellence Category at the 2025 SA Health Excellence Awards. The awards are a partnership between the Clinix Health Group and the South African Clinician Scientists Society, celebrating leaders in medicine who have contributed to research, teaching and the advancement of healthcare in South Africa.

Emeritus Professor André Calitz of Computing Sciences received the 2025 AISSAC Life Achievement Award from the Association of Information Systems, Southern Africa Chapter, in recognition of his contribution to the Information Systems community throughout his academic career.

Lumka Cube, Administrative Assistant in Nursing Science, received the 2025 Fabulous Woman Humanitarian Award from the Fabulous Girls Foundation for her work as founder and Managing Director of the Grab and Go Foundation, which provides food, hygiene products, clothing and other essentials to vulnerable communities.

Professor Lynn Futcher, Head of the Department of Information Management and Governance in the School of Information Technology, was honoured with the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa Fellowship Award, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the ICT profession over several decades. A C1-rated NRF scholar, Professor Futcher is widely recognised for her work in cybersecurity education and the human dimensions of cybersecurity.

Ruby Davies, studying for her MSc in Nature Conservation at the George Campus, with an international research component at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, was one of only seven master's students nationally to receive the South African Women in Science Awards DSTI-Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri Fellowship. Her research supports South Africa's sustainability and climate resilience goals through evidence-based conservation.

Juandré van Eck, an Honours student in ceramic art, was named overall winner of the 2025 Sasol New Signatures Visual Arts Competition. His winning work, "Cycles of the Mind", comprising two connected gourd-shaped clay vessels with embedded clay whistles, earned him a prize of R100 000 towards a solo exhibition at the Pretoria Art Museum.

10.3 Research Chairs

The University hosts 19 Research Chairs, which include a SARCHI Community of Practice. These Chairs attracted significant funding in 2025, including NRF and other external

research grants and contracts. The University will focus on growing the number of research chairs, with an emphasis on tapping into external and industry funding for this purpose. The Chairs are:

- SARCHI Chair in Law of the Sea (Prof Patrick Vrancken)
- SARCHI Chair in Marine Spatial Planning (Prof Amanda Lombard)
- SARCHI Chair in Shallow Water Ecosystems (Prof Janine Adams)
- SARCHI Chair in Ocean Cultures and Heritage (Prof Rose Boswell)
- SA-UK Bilateral Chair in Food Security (Prof Mike Roberts), joint appointment with Southampton University, UK
- SARCHI Chair in Microfluidic Bio-Chemical Processing (Prof Paul Watts)
- SARCHI Chair in Identities and Social Cohesion in Africa (Prof Andrea Hurst)
- DHET/DST SARCHI Chair in Community, Adult and Worker Education (Prof Salim Vally, hosted at the University of Johannesburg)
- Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (Prof André Keet)
- Chair for Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment (currently vacant)
- Chair in African Feminist Imaginations (Prof Pumla Dineo Gqola)
- merSETA Chair in Engineering Development (Karl du Preez)
- UNESCO Chair in Physical Activity and Health in Educational Settings, co-hosted with the University of Basel, Switzerland (Prof Cheryl Walter)
- AIDC-Mandela Chair in Automotive Engineering (Martin Sanne)
- Chair in Human Settlements (Prof Sijekula Mbanga)
- ISUZU Chair in Mechatronics (Prof Igor Gorlach)
- DSTI-Mandela Chair in Nanomedicine (Prof Saartjie Roux)
- SARCHI Community of Practice (Prof Patrick Vrancken)
- FALF-FREF Research Chair in Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion (held by Prof Keo Motaung before her death in November 2025)

The Chairs contribute to the strategic research themes of the University and enhance the reputation of the institution locally and internationally through collaborations and partnerships. They also contribute to the development of PG students and emerging researchers.

10.4 Distinguished Professors

- Professor Darelle van Greunen, Information Technology
- Professor Paul Watts, Microfluidic Bio-Chemical Processing
- Professor Ilse Truter, Pharmacy
- Professor Janine Adams, Botany

A – Leading international researchers	B – Internationally acclaimed researchers	C – Established researchers	P – Prestigious Awards	Y – Promising young researchers
A1: 1	B1: 2	C1: 14	P: 0	Y1: 1
A2: 1	B2: 6	C2: 38		Y2: 14
	B3: 5	C3: 9		
Total: 2	Total: 13	Total: 61	Total: 0	Total: 15

Table 36: NRF-rated researchers per category at Nelson Mandela University

10.5 National Research Foundation-Rated Researchers

The NRF rating system, which benchmarks the quality of researchers in South Africa against the best in the world, is part of the drive to build a globally competitive science system. In 2025, the University had 91 NRF-rated

researchers, of whom 37 were female and 54 were male. Of these, 27 were Black (African, Coloured, and Indian) and 64 were White. The University is prioritising initiatives to diversify the demographic profile of the established and rated researchers. Table 36 above shows the number in each rating category.



Report on Internal Administrative Structures and Internal Control Environment

The University maintains a system of internal controls to mitigate risks and exposures in pursuit of its strategic goals and objectives. The University's management is responsible for the design, adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system. The Internal Audit Department provides independent and objective assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system, thereby assisting management in sustaining institutional performance and resilience.

The University Council oversees the internal control environment to ensure that it supports the University's goals and objectives. Council has delegated this responsibility to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), which relies on assurance provided by management, internal support functions established to advise on risk management, as well as internal and external auditors.

The University has adopted and implemented the Control Self-Assessment model. A baseline self-assessment conducted in 2023 identified several deficiencies in the internal control system. During the reporting period, the ARC continued to monitor the implementation of action plans developed to address these deficiencies. Significant progress was achieved, with 90% of the improvement actions implemented by management. The ARC will

continue to monitor the completion of the outstanding action plans.

Both internal and external auditors apply a risk-based auditing approach, aligned with the University's mandate, objectives and risk profile. Through their audits, independent assurance is provided on the effectiveness of controls to mitigate key risks. Audit reports presented to the ARC highlighted areas where internal controls were effective and other areas requiring further improvement. Where gaps were identified, management developed and implemented audit improvement plans, the status of which was tracked quarterly by the ARC. While the majority of actions were fully implemented, further strengthening the internal control environment, some remained outstanding. Management is encouraged to resolve audit findings promptly to ensure effective support for institutional objectives and to minimise exposure to internal control risks.

Overall, the University's system of internal controls continues to improve. However, the movement of residual strategic risks was marginal, signifying the need to improve internal controls for their effectiveness in mitigating risks. The ARC will continue to work with management to ensure that effective controls are implemented and risks are managed within the acceptable levels.

Ms Rene Van Wyk
Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee

Dr Sizwe Nyenyiso
Senior Director: Internal Audit

Report on Risk Exposure Management and Assessment

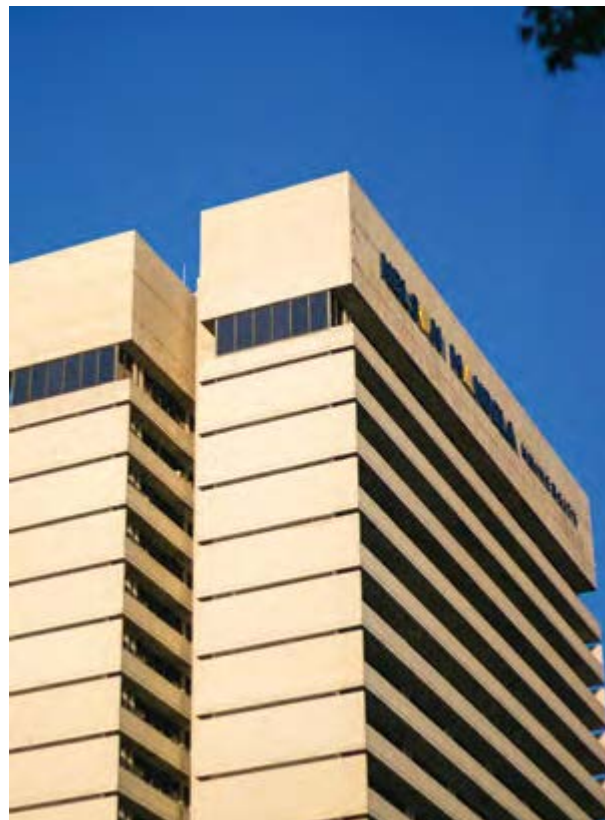
12.1 Risk Governance Structures

In line with the King IV Report on Corporate Governance, Principle 8, Council governs risk in a manner that supports the achievement, sustainability and optimisation of the University's strategic objectives. Council provides clear strategic direction for risk management and assumes accountability for the effectiveness of an institution-wide risk management system that is integrated into institutional strategy, planning, decision-making and performance management.

Accordingly, Council exercises oversight of risk through an approved Risk Management Framework, informed by the ISO 31000, and ensures that material risks are systematically identified, assessed, managed, monitored and reported. This approach enables informed decision-making, promotes resilience and enhances the University's ability to respond proactively to emerging and evolving risks while safeguarding value creation over the short, medium and long term.

12.1.1 Institutional Risk Approach

The University's approach to risk management is based on the ISO 31000 Risk Management Framework and risk management activities are guided by the Risk Management Plan included in the University's Risk Management Policy and Procedures. In managing risks, the University continuously monitors the Key Risk Indicators (KRIs), including the risk treatment and mitigation plans, to ensure adequate risk management practices are achieved.



Management and Risk Champions played a key role in quarterly institutional risk reporting, ensuring regular updates of risk registers and submission of key institutional risks and mitigation strategies to Council for approval.

12.1.2 Emerging Risks

Emerging risks may occur and progress swiftly, suddenly, or both. An emerging risk may have financial loss potential at a macro level for the University and may negatively impact the achievement of the University's core purpose and outcomes directly or indirectly. An emerging risk was identified during the 2025 annual risk assessment, as reflected in Table 37.

12.1.3 Key Institutional Risks associated with Strategic Objectives

The Institutional Risk Register on controlled risk exposure after considering the existing control measures is presented in Table 38 (see page 138).

Risk Event	Cause(s)	Inherent Risk Exposure	Effect(s)/Impact
STRATEGIC ENABLER 4			
Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery and modernised infrastructure			
Compromised service delivery	- Geopolitical tensions - Unsatisfactory quality of services - Poor planning	High	- Disruptions to SCM processes - Increased operational and Capex costs - Pathways to academic collaborations reduced - Litigation - Reputational damage to the University - Student dissatisfaction

Table 37: Emerging Risks



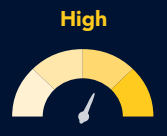
Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1 Liberate human potential through humanising, innovative lifelong learning experiences that prepare graduates to be socially conscious, responsible global citizens who serve the public good PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: DVC: RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION			
Declining postgraduate and international student enrolment	- Internationalisation Strategy - Research and Innovation Strategy - Enrolment Management Committee - PG Task Team - Postgraduate Research Scholarships (PGRS) - Enrolment Plan - Ongoing mechanisms for improving staff qualifications	Moderate 	- Development of the Enrolment Strategy by the office of the Registrar - Office of the DVC: PO to improve Infrastructure support - Office of the ED: Finance to improve Finance support
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2 Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION			
Declining research output	- Research strategy - All policies related to research and internationalisation (too many to list) - Many of these policies are outdated, to review, as advised by the Registrar	High 	- Develop new research strategy - Develop Innovation Strategy - Develop Internationalisation Strategy
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 3 Engage with all publics in equalising partnerships to co-create transformative, contextually responsive solutions in pursuit of social justice and equality PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: FINANCE			
Partnerships and/or engagements with organisations not aligned with the University's and/or societal values	- Implementation of the Contract Management Policy - Financial and Supply Chain Management (SCM) due diligence - Constant engagements with responsible stakeholders such as MANCO, NSFAS, Emergency Task Team and so on - Geo-political due diligence and MANCO sub-committee	Moderate 	- Update of SCM policy - Project Back Office to add capacity to process third stream income projects - Geo-political due diligence and MANCO sub-committee - SCM logistics and contracts manager to support due diligence and performance of suppliers
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 4 Catalyse dynamic, student centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom. PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: LEARNING AND TEACHING			
Decline in holistic student success and wellbeing	- Learning and Development Programmes such as Academic Literacies and Student Success Coaching in support of student learning - Established advisory boards and student feedback - Emthonjeni Student Wellness - Student Health Services	High 	- Expand counselling services by appointing more social workers and psychologists - Introduce AI Avatar for the extended hours

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register

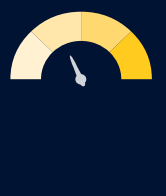
Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
STRATEGIC ENABLER 1 Embrace ethical governance and leadership approaches and practices that embody the values of the University and seek to promote service before self. PRIMARY RISK OWNERS: DVC: PEOPLE AND OPERATIONS, REGISTRAR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: FINANCE			
Fraud and corruption or unethical conduct	- Implementation of Institutional Code of Ethical Behaviour - Implementation of Whistleblowing Policy - Implementation of Prevention of Fraud and Corruption Policy - Implementation of Declaration of Interest Policy - Implementation of Ombud Charter - Ongoing awareness and training on ethics related policies - Tracking of the number of concluded fraud and corruption cases - Approval of requisitions in ITS by the cost centre owners declaring the validity and compliance of expenditure before approval - Insurance cover and sector-wide risk assessment or approach through sector benchmark process - Financial policies and practice notices - Ongoing monthly financial reporting and variance analysis	Moderate 	To appoint a person on contract to assist with awareness and training
STRATEGIC ENABLER 2 Foster an inclusive, values-driven institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees. PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: PEOPLE AND OPERATIONS			
Compromised employee health and wellbeing	- Medical aid benefits - Ensure compliance by conducting annual membership audit - Financial and mental wellness support through external service providers - Lifestyle disease management programme through our primary health care offering - Health Care Committee established to oversee all aspects of health and wellbeing at the university - Hosting and conducting employee health-related wellness campaigns through webinars, infographics and in-person events - Reporting cases to Transformation Office - Referral to external wellness service provider - Referrals to hospital or GP for sexual harassment: external referrals to the Rape Crisis Centres at Greenacres and Dora Nginza hospitals - Emergency response and medical treatment on-site and hospital referrals (IOD process followed) - Data analytics and insights from clinical and case management to inform health and wellness interventions - Sessions done at Missionvale and 2nd Avenue campus to facilitate access to service	High 	- Conduct wellness risk assessment - Introduce a decentralised model to ensure health and wellbeing service delivery on every campus - Develop and implement an incapacity and disability policy - Workplace audit for reasonable accommodation for employees who are differently abled - To develop a Substance Abuse Policy. Implement detection controls (employee engagement and pulse surveys) - Develop a wellness policy

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register (continued)

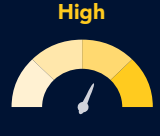
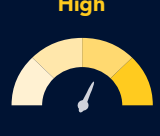
Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
STRATEGIC ENABLER 3 Create and sustain an enabling innovation ecosystem where students and employees can collaboratively engage with external partners to co-create pioneering discoveries that advance the frontiers of knowledge and promote the public good PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION			
Inability to effectively manage collaborative projects with external partners	- Implement the IP Policy - Contract approval framework - Internal financial controls	High 	- Develop Innovation Strategy - Review and align Innovation Policies
STRATEGIC ENABLER 4 Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery and modernised infrastructure. PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: PEOPLE AND OPERATIONS			
Cybersecurity threats	- Foundational security architecture includes enterprise firewalls, endpoint protection, patch management, anti-malware, encryption and secure backups - Implementation of the approved Information Security Annual Plan, Cyber Security Enhancement Plan, Cyber Security Roadmap - Strategic oversight through the Cyber Security Task Team - Technical risk mitigation includes ransomware defences, vulnerability remediation, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) security audits, and continuous monitoring of systems and networks - Awareness and compliance driven by university-wide cybersecurity and POPIA training, targeted staff awareness campaigns and ICT team capability development - Continuous improvement through regular updates to security software, review of configurations, and enhancement of institutional security controls	High 	- Development of the Business Continuity Management (BCM) Strategy and plan - Third-party Data Security Evaluations via a Third-Party Vendor Risk Management Framework - Installation of a system to review key administrator activity on core systems (Manage Engine Log 360) - To procure Security Operation Centre (SOC), a 24-hour Cybersecurity monitoring service with vulnerability assessments - Develop the Incident Response plan - Develop the Crisis Management plan - Complete the Cyber Security Audit (Part of IT Control Environment statutory audit)
Compromised safety and security	- Safety and Security Strategy - Standard Operating Procedures - Safety and Security Forums - Safety and Security Systems (cameras, CCTV rooms, Online Intelligence System) - Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) registration - Conduct Security Risk Assessments annually - External Stakeholder Engagement (SAPS, Metro Police Private Security Companies and so on) - Security Risk Assessment Implementation Plan, in principle due to resources - Formal Safety and Security Governance Structure - Deploy armed response - Prepare Safety and Security Infrastructure Multi-Year Maintenance Plan - External stakeholders such as SAPS, Metro Police, private security companies included as part of the Safety and Security Forum - Implement the multi-year Safety and Security infrastructure plan - Implement the Safety and Security Hybridisation Plan	High 	Continue to upgrade our Safety and Security technology

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register (continued)

Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
Adverse outcomes of technologies	- University-issued statement on generative AI for learning and teaching and research - Implementation of AI detection tools via anti-plagiarism tools - AI included in the Business Intelligence Committee Terms of Reference - Digital Transformation Strategy highlights importance of leveraging AI initiatives - ICT AI Policy	Moderate 	- Investigate the benefits of implementing and instructing a Large Language Model (LLM) in corporate information for information retrieval purposes - Development of the AI Strategy - Investigate use of Co-Pilot within the University - Assistance with the AI Bot for Academic Administration
Energy insecurity	- Energy Management Strategy - Generators	Moderate 	- Monitoring of generators via Building Management System (BMS) - Proposed New Generator Installation Plan that will provide seamless electricity during loadshedding along with the photovoltaic (PV sun energy) system - Installation of PV system - Buy cheaper electricity from alternate suppliers, other than Metro/ESKOM. Done and activated with ETANA - ETANA proposal approved. Contract being signed - Outcome of the Energy Audit will implement solutions toward energy efficiencies

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register (continued)

Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
STRATEGIC ENABLER 5 Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship. PRIMARY RISK OWNER: DVC: LEARNING AND TEACHING			
Inability to sustain and scale up the Medical School's academic projects and health systems platforms	- Engagement with national Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), national Department of Health (DoH), the Office of the Premier of the Eastern Cape and Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH) (at multiple levels which include Executive Dean, DVC Learning and Teaching and Office of the Vice-Chancellor) - Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement (SRMA) in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor will facilitate planning, resource allocation, budgeting and review - Strategy and Plan for research opportunities including grant funding. These research opportunities (Office of the DVC: RII) include those within the Faculty of Health Sciences, inter-university faculties, and research opportunities with other universities and institutions - Engagements with internal accreditation structures and external accrediting bodies, including Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), Council on Higher Education (CHE), South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	Extreme 	- Facilitate the signing of an agreement between DHET and Nelson Mandela University for the capital projects (funding R100m) by end January 2026 - Continued engagement with the national departments of Health and Higher Education and Training in respect of the Conditional Grants (CTG, HPTDGT) - Renewal of bilateral agreement with ECDoH by end of December 2026. Validity of current agreement extended to 31 December 2026 - Continued engagement with the ECDoH to ensure appointment of FTE medical specialists core joint staff on the ECDoH academic clinical platform. Appointment of core staff by the ECDoH by end of April 2026 - Facilitate signing an agreement between DHET and Mandela University for the funding of R337m related the DHET's commitment to provide funding for continued staffing and operational costs – agreement to be concluded by 31 December 2026 - Ongoing submission of postgraduate accreditation and registration forms for remaining eligible MMeds to internal structures and submission to the external accrediting bodies for their approval - Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for engagements with: departments of Higher Education Training and Health, and ECDoH, as well as donors, sponsors and partners
Potential non-accreditation of Learning and Teaching Programmes by the Regulatory and Professional Bodies	- Ensure that academic staff have fair and equitable workload by implementing the revised workload policy and model - Retain staff by ensuring that all faculties are able to make Ad Personam promotions using the improved and newly approved policy on Ad Personam promotions - Review academic programme-related policies to strengthen monitoring and evaluation	Moderate 	- Review academic programme-related policies to strengthen monitoring and evaluation - Invest in the maintenance of learning and teaching infrastructure in faculties and units that support learning and teaching - Prioritise capital equipment acquisition for learning and teaching purposes

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register (continued)

Risk Event	Current Controls	Residual Risk Exposure	Future Controls
PRIMARY RISK OWNERS: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: FINANCE			
Financial sustainability of the University	- Implementation of the Postgraduate Research Scholarships (PGRS) Policy - Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement Office sources funding for students - Increase drive to attract external grants - Increased budgetary allocation for Council-funded postgraduate bursaries - Sourcing of bursaries for academically deserving students - Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) oversight - Implementation of Resource Mobilisation Strategy (SRMA) - Budget Directives application and implementation - Implementation of Debtors Management Policy - Implementation of B-BBEE Improvement Strategy - Annual viability or sustainability review of debt concessions - Monthly reconciliations (NSFAS analysis and similar) - Change in admission policy linked to academic policy	Moderate 	- Engage with scholarship funders to match the new PGRS funding values - Collaboration with ICT Colleagues to develop efficient integrated ICT systems for scholarship management - Implementation of the Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) 2025 Process Plan - Roll-out and funding of the B-BBEE Improvement Strategy - USAf engagement with the Minister on the fee framework - Review student debt concessions eligibility criteria
Resource allocation not adequately aligned to university strategies	- Strategic Resource and Financial Sustainability Committee oversight - Annual budgeting process and budget directives - Governance and oversight structures - Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) oversight	Moderate 	- Implementation of the Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) 2025 Process Plan - Roll-out and funding of the B-BBEE Improvement Strategy

Table 38: Institutional Risk Register (continued)


Ms Rene Van Wyk
 Chairperson: Audit and Risk Committee


Professor Sibongile Muthwa
 Vice-Chancellor

Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) of the University is established in terms of Section 9(7) of the Rules of Council as an independent committee of Council. The ARC operates in accordance with the approved ARC Charter (the Charter) which sets out its mandate, authority and responsibilities.

13.1 Composition and Meeting Attendance

The ARC comprises seven independent, non-executive members who collectively bring expertise in internal and external auditing, internal controls, financial and performance management, information and communications technology (ICT) governance, corporate governance, risk management and law. Standing invitees to ARC meetings include the University senior management, the Office of the Auditor-

General South Africa, the external auditors, the Senior Director: Internal Audit and the Deputy Director: Ethics and Risk Advisory. Additional attendees are invited to attend when necessary.

During the reporting period, the term of office of one member was extended, the membership of two members was terminated (one through resignation and the other through death) and two new members were appointed, as reflected in Table 39.

In line with the Charter, the ARC is required to meet at least four times annually, in alignment with the University's reporting cycle. During the period under review, five meetings were held. Members' attendance is summarised in Table 39 below.

Committee member	Term of appointment	Changes	Expected Changes to Member Terms	Meetings attended
Ms R van Wyk (Chairperson)	Jul 2021 – Jun 2029	Term extended		5/5
Mr L Billings	Jul 2022 – Jun 2026	None	Ending in June 2026	5/5
Ms N Dhevcharan	Jan 2023 – Dec 2026	None	First term ending in December 2026	3/5
Dr M Mayekiso	Mar 2023 – Jun 2025	Terminated (deceased) in June 2025		3/3
Adv B Tlhakung	Apr 2022 – Mar 2026	None	Ended after year end	5/5
Mr G Zamisa	Jul 2022 – Jun 2026	None	Ending in June 2026	5/5
Mr T Ramawa	Sep 2024 – Sep 2028	Terminated (resigned) in April 2025		1/1
Mr L Tukani	Sep 2025 – Sep 2029	Appointed		0/1
Dr T Mabeba	Nov 2025 – Sep 2029	Appointed		0/0

Table 39: ARC meeting attendance in 2025

The membership of several ARC members will come to an end during the 2026 financial year. In this regard, the process of nominating members to serve on ARC has already begun, so as to ensure that the Committee continues to function effectively.

13.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the ARC are defined in Section 7 of its charter. The ARC supports Council in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities by overseeing the University's institutional reporting, risk management, internal controls, ICT governance, compliance management, integrity and ethics management, and assurance processes (both internal and external). In executing its duties, the ARC has unrestricted access to records and information and receives the necessary support from management and independent assurance providers. The ARC remains accountable to Council and engages, where necessary, with other Council Committees.

The ARC is satisfied that it has effectively executed its mandate and diligently discharged its responsibilities independently and objectively, as outlined below:

13.2.1 Internal Control Framework

The ARC reviewed reports from management and assurance providers on the design and effectiveness of the internal control environment. This included monitoring the implementation of improvement plans addressing gaps identified through internal and external audits. Notable progress was reported in the execution of audit action

plans. In addition, several policies were reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with the evolving business environment, thereby strengthening the overall internal control environment.

Overall, the system of internal controls continues to improve and remains responsive to audit findings. The ARC will continue to monitor areas for further improvement and work with management to ensure the timely resolution of outstanding matters.

13.2.2 Assessment of the Quality of Reporting

The ARC reviewed and assessed the mid-year and annual financial and performance reports submitted to the DHET through Council and is satisfied with the quality and integrity of these reports.

13.2.3 Information Technology Governance

The ICT Department operates in accordance with the University's information technology and digitalisation strategies. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for implementing these strategies under the guidance of the Strategic Information, Communication and Technology Committee.

The ARC considered quarterly ICT governance reports, including reports on the implementation of ICT plans, ICT-related risk plans and the results of assessments by assurance providers. The ARC also monitored the execution of the audit actions aimed at addressing gaps within the ICT environment.



During the period under review, significant opportunities for improvement in the system development lifecycle were identified. The ARC is satisfied that management has developed appropriate remedial plans to address these gaps, and will continue to monitor implementation of these plans.

13.2.4 Risk Management

The University's risk management process is guided by its risk management policy. The Deputy Director: Risk and Ethics Advisory, supported by risk champions, assists management in implementing an effective risk management system. The Risk Management Committee (RMC), established in terms of the policy, reviews risk governance documents, monitors institutional risks and supports the Management Committee in enhancing risk management practices.

An institution-wide risk register covering both strategic and operational risks, is maintained and managed by the RMC. The ARC receives quarterly reports on risk management, including emerging risks with potential impact on the University.

The ARC is satisfied that management has effectively responded to the risks facing the University. However, there is a need to ensure that the resourcing of the risk management function continues to receive the necessary attention. Further details on risk management are provided in the Report on the Risk Exposure Assessment and Management in this Annual Report.

13.2.5 Business Continuity Management

Previous audits identified significant gaps in the University's business continuity management process. In response, the ARC prioritised this area and advised management to develop a business continuity maturity plan, which the Committee tracked on a quarterly basis.

During the reporting period, governance of business continuity management was strengthened through the development of policies, strategies and plans informed by a systematic business impact assessment. These enhancements aim to build institutional resilience and improve responsiveness to potential disruptions.

The ARC will continue to oversee the implementation of the business continuity plans to ensure that the intended objectives are achieved.

13.2.6 Combined Assurance

The University's combined assurance process remains under development. During the reporting period, implementation of the Integrated Assurance Framework commenced. The terms of reference for the Integrated Assurance Forum were developed and approved, and the development of integrated assurance tools commenced, with completion

anticipated in the upcoming year. The ARC will continue to monitor implementation of the combined assurance until full implementation is achieved.

The University's combined assurance process remains under development. During the reporting period, implementation of the Integrated Assurance Framework commenced. The terms of reference for the Integrated Assurance Forum were developed and approved, and the development of integrated assurance tools commenced, with completion anticipated in the upcoming year. The ARC will continue to monitor the implementation of the combined assurance until full implementation is achieved.

13.2.7 Compliance with Laws, Regulations and Code of Conduct

The Legal Services Department is responsible for the University's compliance management function. The Acting Senior Director: Legal Services presented quarterly compliance management reports to the ARC. No material non-compliance was reported, although the compliance management process is still maturing.

There is a need to implement a comprehensive compliance management mechanism covering the full compliance universe of the University, including a systematic assessment process and the identification of new legislative changes.

13.2.8 Fraud Risk Management

The University maintains a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, corruption, maladministration and related misconduct. The fraud risk management programme encompasses fraud governance, prevention, detection and response mechanisms. Relevant policies, including those on fraud, corruption and whistleblowing are in place, with the Risk and Ethics Advisory Unit acting as a custodian of fraud risk management.

An anonymous anti-fraud reporting mechanism enables members of the University community to report suspected fraud without fear of retaliation. Allegations are assessed by a multidisciplinary fraud response group and investigated by the relevant departments. The Internal Audit Department investigates the allegations of fraud, corruption or maladministration, and reports quarterly to the ARC on the results of investigations. The ARC also tracks the status of the implementation of the corrective actions.

13.2.9 Internal Audit

The Internal Audit Department, established in terms of the Internal Audit Charter (IA Charter), functions as an independent assurance and advisory unit. Operating in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS), it reports functionally to the ARC and administratively to the Vice-Chancellor. During the reporting period, the Internal Audit Strategy, risk-based plan and operational plan were



reviewed and approved by the ARC: The Internal Audit Methodology, IA Charter and ARC Charter were updated to align with the GIAS requirements.

The Senior Director: Internal Audit reported quarterly to the ARC on performance against the approved plans. Resource constraints in the internal audit department continued to impact delivery against approved plans, and a co-sourcing model was utilised to mitigate this. Additional resources have since been allocated to ensure improved audit coverage in line with its oversight responsibilities, and recruitment processes are currently underway.

The ARC met with the Senior Director: Internal Audit separately, without management present, to confirm the department's independence and to explore opportunities to enhance ARC support.

Overall, the ARC is satisfied that the Internal Audit Department operated independently and effectively delivered on its mandate. Based on the results of the 2025 internal quality assessment, the Internal Audit Department has received an overall satisfaction rating of 97% from its stakeholders, confirming its effectiveness and conformance with the GIAS.

13.2.10 External Audit

The University's external auditors attended the ARC meetings in accordance with the ARC Charter. The external audit strategy, engagement letter and audit fees were presented, considered and approved by the ARC. Separate meetings were also held with the external auditors, without management present, to confirm their independence. The ARC satisfied itself that no non-audit services were rendered that may impair the independence of the external auditors.

13.2.11 Quality of Audited Annual Financial Statements

The annual financial statements were prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and in compliance with DHET reporting requirements. The ARC reviewed and recommended the annual financial statements to Council for approval. The ARC concurs with the audit outcomes as reported in the auditor's report and notes with satisfaction that the University once again received an unqualified audit opinion.

13.3 Annual Evaluation

During the year under review, the ARC conducted an annual evaluation of performance against its mandate, roles and responsibilities. The evaluation results reflected achievement levels exceeding 90% across all assessed areas, confirming that the ARC effectively fulfilled its mandate and executed its responsibilities.

13.4 Conclusion

The ARC extends its appreciation to Council, the Vice-Chancellor, senior management and the broader University community for their continued support. The ARC also acknowledges and thanks the assurance providers, including the internal and external auditors, for their professional contributions.



Ms Rene Van Wyk
Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee

Annual Financial Overview

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Council's Statement of Responsibility for the Consolidated Financial Statements

The Council is responsible for the preparation, integrity, and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements of the University. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with IFRS® Accounting Standards and as required by the Minister of Higher Education in terms of section 41 of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997), as amended. The financial statements include amounts based on judgements and estimates made by executive management.

Council is also responsible for the accuracy of the other information in the Integrated Annual Report and its accuracy and consistency with the financial statements.

The going-concern basis has been adopted in preparing the financial statements. Council has no reason to believe that the University will not be a going concern based on forecasts, reasonable assumptions and available cash resources. The current viability of the University is supported by the financial statements.



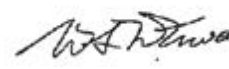
Judge Nambitha Dambuza
Chairperson of Council

The financial statements have been audited by the independent audit firm, SizweNtsalubaGobodo Grant Thornton Inc, who were given unrestricted access to all financial records and related information, including minutes of meetings of Council and relevant sub-committees.

Council believes that all representations made to the independent auditors during their audit were valid and appropriate.

14.1 Approval of the Consolidated Financial Statements

The consolidated financial statements on pages 158-163 were approved by the Council of the University on 18 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by Judge N Dambuza, Chair of Council, and Prof S Muthwa, Vice Chancellor.



Professor Sibongile Muthwa
Vice-Chancellor

Financial Overview of the 2025 Financial Year

15.1 Governance and Controls

The University is committed to the highest standards of governance, integrity, and accountability. Our governance framework supports the effective and ethical management of the institution, ensuring it achieves its strategic objectives while meeting its statutory and regulatory obligations. Sound financial management and resource stewardship are central to this commitment.

The consolidated annual financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025 were prepared in accordance with the Regulations for Annual Reporting by Higher Education Institutions. In terms of section 41(2) of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended up to and including the Regulations for Annual Reporting by Higher Education Institutions dated 9 June 2014), universities are required to submit annual financial statements to the DHET that comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The consolidated annual financial statements for 2025 cover all activities of the University, which include audited results of the Nelson Mandela University Trust, companies and other partnerships where the University exercises control. The activities of the Trust are governed by the provisions of the Trust Deed and an independent board of trustees. These consolidated financial statements provide a comprehensive overview of the operations and financial position of the University.

15.1.1 Budgeting Process

South African public universities construct their integrated budgets with the same revenue streams, although in different proportions. The revenue side of such an integrated budget comprises the following primary income streams: government subsidy/block grant, student fees, and third income streams.

Through the annual and three-year rolling budget directives, the University strives to optimally resource the academic project, operations, infrastructure and support services at appropriate levels while driving strategic initiatives and growth areas in a sustainable manner. A surplus from Council-controlled recurrent operations, before finance income, is budgeted. Finance income is used to grow reserves and to seed new initiatives and strategy. The University's budget is based on an institutional Resource Allocation Model that allocates high-level block allocations of resources per funding category and activity, that is, strategic allocations, academic staffing allocations, capital expenditure, bursaries, and other expenses that are further distributed via budgetary processes and allocation models. Various committees, drawn from across the University's directorates, carry out these processes to ensure broad stakeholder representation.

These committees allocate funds, informed by Vision 2030, strategic plans and Council's performance objectives. A three-year Annual Performance Plan (APP), cash flow and reserves accumulation contribute to the strategic approach to financial planning and resource stewardship.

15.1.2 Higher Education and Training Environment

The higher education landscape is in flux, driven by converging pressures on finances, policy, technology and student expectations. Institutions worldwide are adapting to tightening budgets, shifting enrolment patterns, regulatory shifts and the rise of generative AI.

In South Africa, higher education and training as a national priority receives a significant portion of the country's annual budget. University subsidies are projected to increase at an average annual rate of approximately 3.6% over the medium term. NSFAS manages the bursary scheme which covers tuition, accommodation, transport and living expenses to

students from families earning less than R350 000 per year. These transfers are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3.8% over the medium term. NSFAS also provides loan funding for qualifying “missing middle” students from households with an annual income between R350 000 and R600 000. This has assisted universities in providing access to academically able students in financial need. The block grant allocation, however, has fallen behind inflation for several years, with a decline in absolute terms and it is well below the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). The decline, relative to inflation and growth, of the block grant subsidy to universities has meant that second-stream income has become an ever more important source of funding to ensure financial sustainability.

The capping of fee increases, providing debt relief concessions to academically deserving students in financial need, stagnant block grant subsidies for operational costs and changing cost structures, together with the effect of a constrained economy, have all had an impact on the financial sustainability of institutions

As the University is still heavily reliant on fees and subsidy, it has established a Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) to address these structural financial pressures. The future of the higher education funding framework in South Africa has a significant impact on financial planning within the sector.

15.1.3 Overview of 2025 Financial Position

The University was able to end the 2025 year successfully against the 2025 budget approved by Council on 28 November 2024, once again posting a positive set of financial results for the year under review. The consolidated statement of comprehensive income reflects a consolidated surplus of R803-million (2024: R520-million) before other comprehensive income and tax, of which Council controlled operations amounted to R636-million (2024: R461-million) or 18% reserve accumulation (11% excluding non-recurrent income), achieving Councils’ performance indicator of 5% to 10%. Council controlled operations encompass the main recurrent operating activities that provide and support learning and teaching.

Student accommodation surplus amounted to R61-million (2024: R30-million) and the Trust surplus was R159-million (2024: R124-million). Specifically funded activities (restricted) realised a net deficit of R53-million (2024: R95-million deficit).

The consolidated surplus before other comprehensive income and finance income amounts to R330-million (2024: R24-million), of which Council controlled operations amounted to a deficit of R188-million (2024: R6-million deficit).

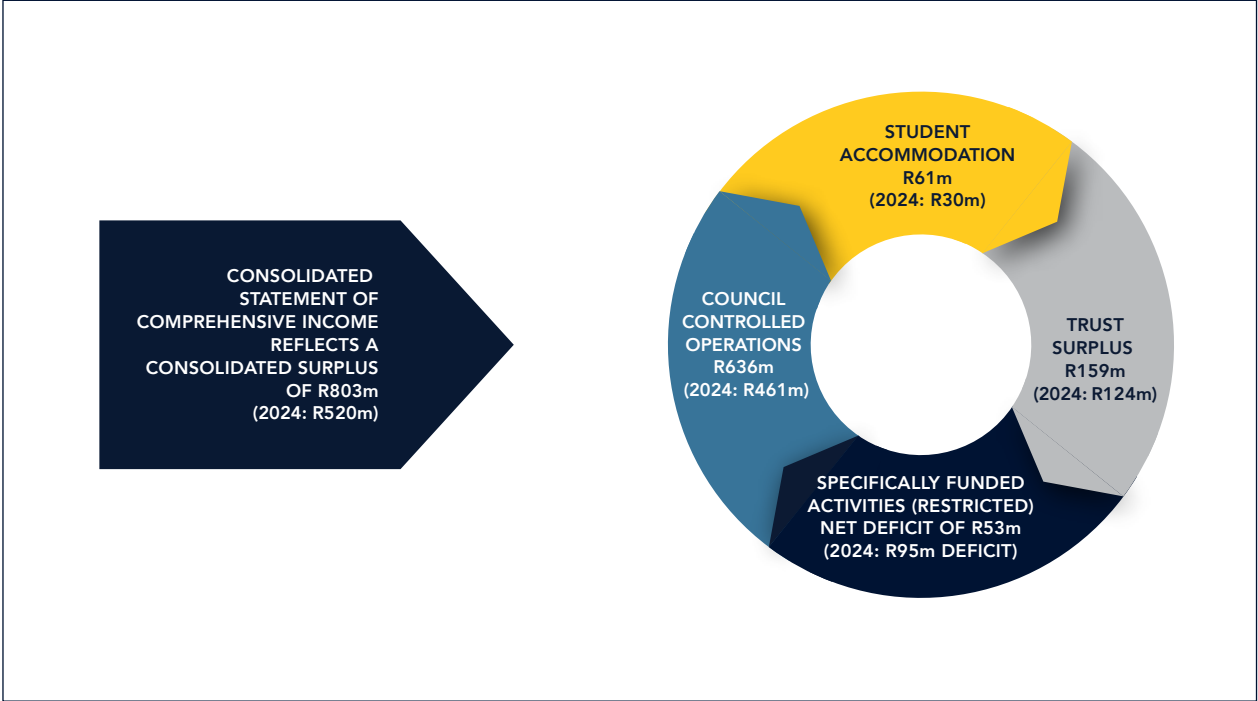


Figure 48: Consolidated statement of income

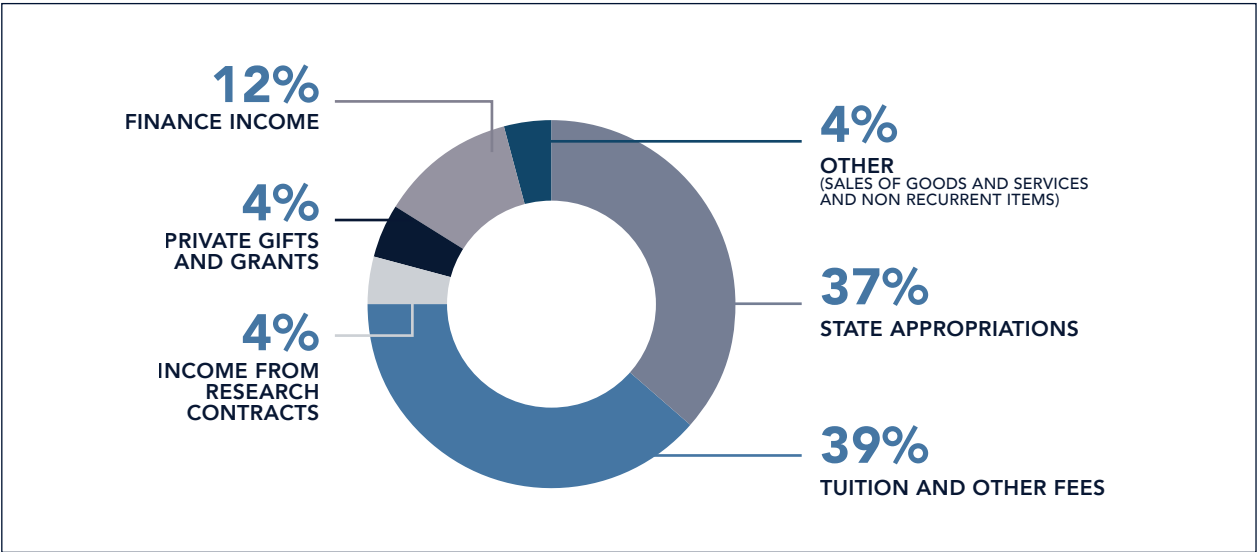


Figure 49: Income streams

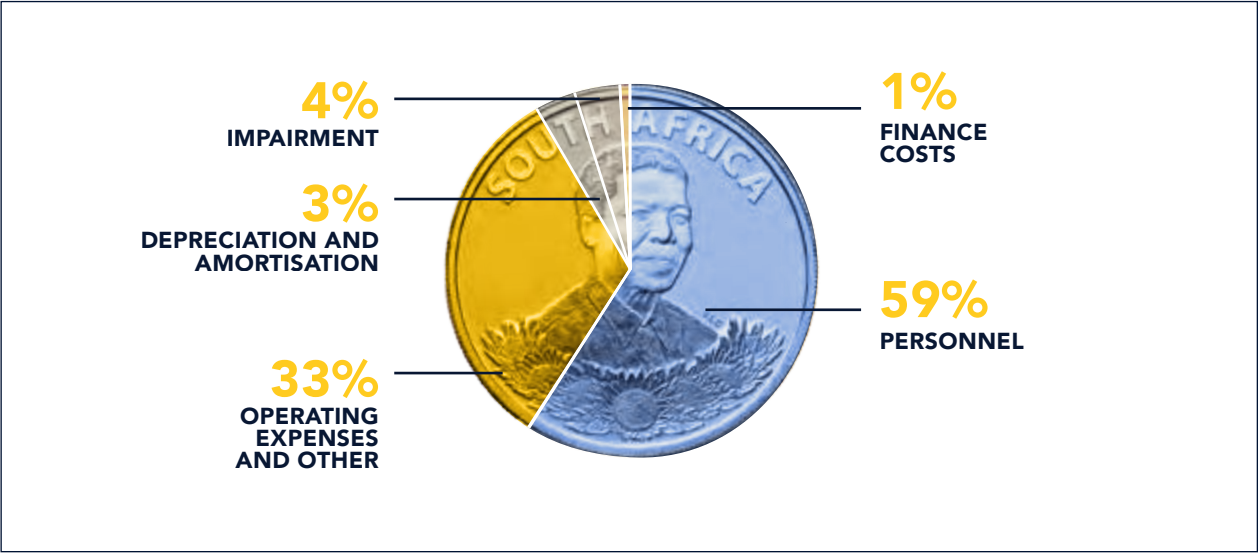


Figure 50: Expenditure categories

Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income	% Variance 2025/2024
Total Recurrent Income	4%
State Appropriations	3%
Tuition and other fees	11%
Finance Income	-4%
Private Gifts and Grants	-35%
Contract Research	-14%
Sales of goods and services & other	-1%
Total Recurrent Expenditure	1%
Personnel Costs	5%
Other Current Operating Expenses	-8%
Impairment losses	-28%
Depreciation	7%
Amortisation	-14%
Finance Costs	-1%

Table 40: Consolidated variance year on year

Total recurrent income increased by 4%. The University's major consolidated income sources were tuition and other fee income, and state appropriations, which totalled 76% of total recurrent income. State appropriations increased by 3% at both a consolidated level and for Council-controlled operations. Tuition and other fees increased by 11% as a result of growth and fee adjustment as per the sector fee compact. Third-stream and other income decreased by 12% in total, including finance income decreasing by 4%, private gifts and grants decreasing by 35%, contract research decreasing by 14% and sales of goods and services and other decreasing by 1%.

Total recurrent expenditure increased by 1%. Personnel costs continued to be the largest cost driver which, together with operational expenditure, made up 92% of expenditure. Personnel costs increased by 5%. Other current operating expenditure decreased by 8%. Impairment losses increased

by 28%, depreciation increased by 7% while amortisation costs decreased by 14%. Finance costs decreased by 1%.

The re-measurements of post-retirement obligations disclosed under other comprehensive income has increased Total Comprehensive Income for the year by R30-million (2024: R25-million).

The consolidated statement of financial position reflects an increase in total assets of R602-million with equity funds increasing by R847-million and total liabilities decreasing by R245-million. Retirement benefit obligations increased by R7-million and now amounts to R 95-million. The liquidity position is sound as indicated by the liquidity ratio.

The consolidated statement of changes in funds indicates that Restricted Use funds amounts to R1 338-million (2024: R1 289-million), Residence funds amount to R221-million (2024: R162-million), while Council unrestricted funds amount to R3 093-million (2024: R2 377-million) of which the General Reserve amounts to R2 658-million (2024: R1 980-million). It is important to note that restricted funds are encumbered according to their mandates, and are therefore not available for use at Council’s discretion.

The consolidated statement of cash flows reflects a positive cash flow from operations with an increase in cash and cash equivalents of R286-million (2024: R215-million).

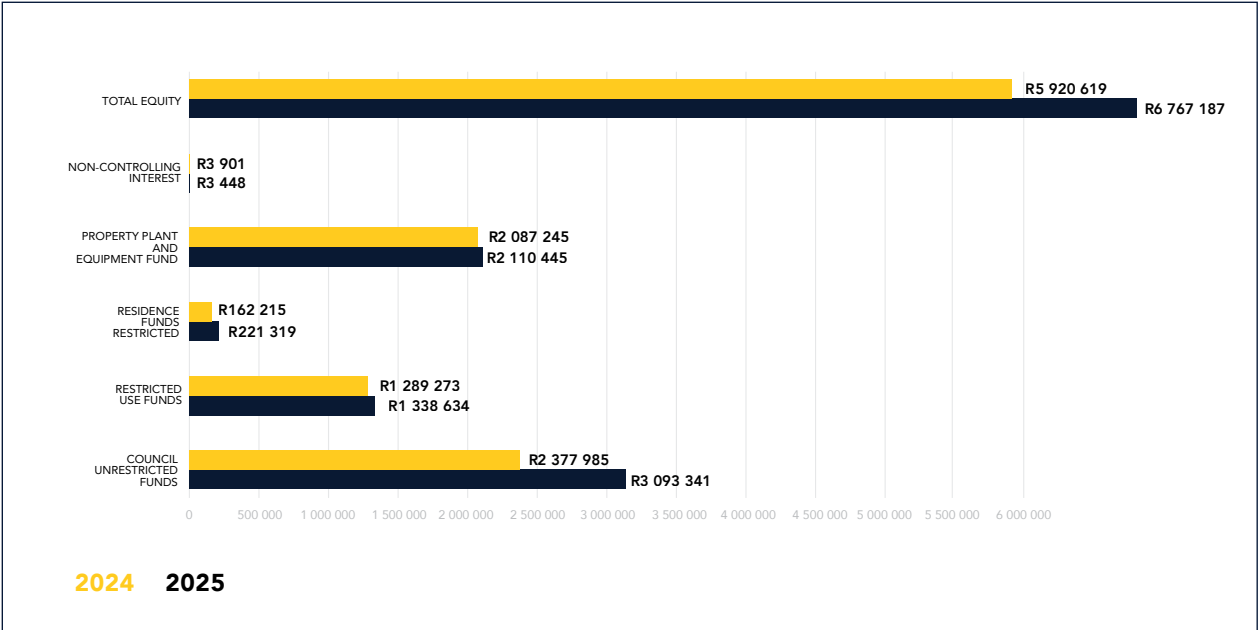


Figure 51: Statement of changes in funds

Financial Indicators	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Council-controlled: – State support income (State appropriations /total recurrent income)	42.18%	42.21%	43.89%	48.16%	52.33%	52.28%
Council-controlled: – Own funding as % income (other income/total recurrent income)	57.82%	57.70%	56.11%	51.84%	47.66%	47.71%
Council-controlled: – Staff cost as % total recurrent expenses – Total staff costs (Council-controlled – AFS)/ recurrent expenditure (Council-controlled)	64.26%	62.46%	59.87%	66.00%	65.15%	61.56%
Council-controlled: – Staff cost as % total recurrent income – Total Staff costs (Council-controlled – AFS)/recurrent income (Council-controlled). The expected normal standard for total personnel cost as a percentage of total revenue is between 58% and 63%	56.95%	53.63%	54.84%	57.69%	56.77%	57.71%
Council-controlled: – Staff cost (Academic incl. Foundation Programme and Professional Administrative and Support Staff and as a % of net tuition fees and operational subsidy). Council benchmark 65 %	61.55%	63.68%	63.94%	58.03%	57.79%	59.82%
Council-controlled: – Net surplus as % including finance income. The DHET expected normal standard is a surplus. Council benchmark of between 5% and 10 % from council-controlled operations.	18.03%	14.14%	8.42%	12.59%	12.87%	6.25%
Council-controlled: – Net surplus as % excluding finance income	6.10%	–0.23%	–3.52%	4.21%	7.56%	0.11%
Student debt ratio: – Student debtors before provision for doubtful debt/Total Tuition & Other Fees.	42.90%	36.13%	28.87%	28.92%	33.02%	42.22%
Short term liquidity ratio (current assets/current liabilities). Expected normal standard is > 2:1	6.38	4.29	3.51	4.12	5.13	6.91
Sustainability ratio (Council-controlled reserves only) (Council-controlled reserves / annual recurrent expenditure on Council-controlled expenditure) Council has in 2020 set this target at 1.00 as for reserves to equal the annual cost of recurrent expenditure	1.07	0.85	0.69	0.68	0.63	0.55
Sustainability ratio (total reserves) Total reserve /annual recurrent expenditure	2.34	2.12	1.9	2.00	1.91	1.61
Post-retirement liabilities (balance sheet)	R95m	R87m	R 67m	R72m	R75m	R62m

Table 41: Institutional Financial Indicators, 2020–2025

The institutional financial indicators show that the University has maintained a relatively healthy financial position.

Financial sustainability however remains a challenge for the higher education sector, which is striving to contribute to national objectives in difficult economic trading conditions with new cost drivers such as to the impact of load shedding and water scarcity. It also remains a key strategic objective of Nelson Mandela University. The sector, as with the broader national and international economy, will be under significant pressure in the foreseeable future, with many unknown levels of uncertainty. Careful consideration will need to be given when considering approval of recurrent resourcing projects or programmes.

SIVTT will focus on three key areas, namely academic optimisation, improved efficiencies and strategy aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting, to contribute to Vision 2030 and the financial sustainability of the University. In the medium to long term, recurrent revenue streams excluding finance income will finance recurrent cost structures. It is important to maintain earmarked reserves for funding five-year capital maintenance, replacement of teaching and research equipment, and IT infrastructure plans, while enhancing digital transformation.

The University will confront these challenges through its strategic approach to financial planning and management.

Management is satisfied that the financial measures taken to date are adequate to ensure financial sustainability over the next 12 months, and that the impact of the events disclosed in this report do not affect the going concern of the University.

We would like to thank the Council, Finance and Facilities Committee, and Audit and Risk Committee for their guidance and their commitment to the financial sustainability of the University.

Mr Donald MacLean
Chairperson: Finance and Facilities Committee

Mr Michael Monaghan
Executive Director: Finance



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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

To the Minister of Higher Education and the Council of the Nelson Mandela University

Opinion

The summary consolidated financial statements, set out on pages 159 to 163 of the Integrated Annual Report 2025, which comprise the summary consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025, the summary consolidated statement of comprehensive income, summary consolidated statement of changes in funds and summary consolidated cash flow statement for the year then ended, are derived from the audited consolidated financial statements of Nelson Mandela University and its subsidiaries (the group) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary consolidated financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited consolidated financial statements, in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no. 101 of 1997 as applicable to summary consolidated financial statements.

Summary Consolidated Financial Statements

The summary consolidated financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by International Financial Reporting Standards and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no. 101 of 1997 as applicable to Financial Statements. Reading the summary consolidated financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited consolidated financial statements and the auditor's report thereon.

The Audited Consolidated Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited consolidated financial statements in our report dated 29 June 2026.

Council's Responsibilities for the Summary Consolidated Financial Statements

The Council are responsible for the preparation of the summary consolidated financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no. 101 of 1997 as applicable to summary consolidated financial statements.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary consolidated financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited consolidated financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 810 (Revised), *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

SizweNtsalubaGobodo Grant Thornton Inc.

Asithandile Ngxabi
SizweNtsalubaGobodo Grant Thornton Inc.
Director
Registered Auditor
29 June 2026

SizweNtsalubaGobodo Grant Thornton
Chestnut House, Palm Square Business Park
Bonza Bay, East London, 5241

Victor Sekese [Chief Executive]
A comprehensive list of all Directors is available at the company offices or registered office

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Consolidated Annual Financial Statements

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION at 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 R'000	2024 R'000
ASSETS			
Non-current assets		4 752 219	4 383 254
Property, plant and equipment	2	2 174 418	2 182 242
Intangible assets	3	927	1 207
Long term investments	4	286 496	256 659
Other financial assets	6.1	2 289 544	1 942 756
Deferred tax		834	390
Current assets		4 456 065	4 223 529
Inventories	5	3 590	4 136
Trade and other receivables	7	517 432	474 868
Other financial assets	6.1	3 299 447	3 395 478
Cash and cash equivalents	6.2	635 597	349 038
Current tax receivable		-	9
Total assets		9 208 284	8 606 782
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity funds		6 767 187	5 920 619
Equity funds attributable to owners of the parent			
Property, plant and equipment fund		2 110 445	2 087 245
Restricted use funds		1 559 953	1 451 488
Residence restricted funds		221 319	162 215
Other restricted funds		1 338 634	1 289 273
Council unrestricted funds		3 093 340	2 377 985
Non-controlling interest		3 448	3 901
Non-current liabilities		1 742 578	1 701 778
Deferred income	8	1 285 772	1 197 908
Interest-bearing borrowings	9	265 775	288 602
Retirement benefit obligations	10	54 251	87 211
Accumulated leave liability	11	129 929	124 569
Long service award accrual	13	6 850	3 487
Current liabilities		698 519	984 385
Deferred income	8	14 040	13 826
Current portion of borrowings	9	27 487	24 736
Retirement benefit obligations	10	40 773	-
Accumulated leave liability	11	2 456	3 550
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	12	612 174	941 271
Long service award accrual	13	1 587	1 002
Current tax payable		2	-
Total equity and liabilities		9 208 284	8 606 782

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025				2024	
		Council controlled unrestricted	Specifically funded activities restricted	NMU Trust restricted	SUB-TOTAL	Residence Restricted	TOTAL
		R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
TOTAL INCOME		3 524 298	230 908	166 116	3 921 321	279 669	3 879 405
RECURRENT ITEMS		3 259 260	231 179	166 116	3 656 554	279 669	3 879 158
14 State appropriations		1 374 607	71 293	-	1 445 900	-	1 404 851
25 Tuition and other fee income		1 254 182	-	-	1 254 182	-	1 387 659
25 Income from contracts for research		24 693	131 303	-	155 996	279 652	181 844
25 Sales of goods and services		95 166	9 266	-	104 432	-	114 500
15,25 Private gifts and grants		50 487	1 079	-	179 020	17	274 085
TOTAL REVENUE		2 799 135	212 940	127 455	3 139 530	279 669	3 362 939
16 Finance income		447 896	18 239	6 221	472 356	-	495 673
4 Revaluation of investments at year end		-	-	32 440	32 440	-	17 535
Other – recurrent*		12 229	-	-	12 229	-	3 010
NON-RECURRENT ITEMS		265 038	(271)	-	264 767	-	247
Profit/(Loss) on disposal of PPE		10	(271)	-	(261)	-	247
Other non-recurrent**		265 028	-	-	265 028	-	-

TOTAL EXPENDITURE		2 888 642	283 578	6 852	3 179 071	219 138	3 359 207
17 Personnel costs		1 856 152	86 642	-	1 942 794	65 739	1 910 557
Academic professional		882 214	46 567	-	928 780	-	880 908
Other personnel		965 724	40 075	-	1 005 800	65 739	1 035 481
Accumulated leave		4 266	-	-	4 266	-	(3 260)
Long service award		3 948	-	-	3 948	-	(2 573)
Other operating expenses (Exclude compensation, depreciation, amortisation & debt service)		797 115	196 936	6 852	1 000 903	109 381	1 202 792
18 Expected credit loss		136 252	-	-	136 252	-	106 843
Depreciation		97 650	-	-	97 650	16 456	109 610
2 Amortisation		280	-	-	280	-	327
26 Finance costs		1 193	-	-	1 193	27 563	29 078

NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION		635 655	(52 670)	159 264	742 250	60 531	520 198
24 Taxation		(138)	-	-	(138)	(136)	(383)
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		635 517	(52 670)	159 264	742 111	60 395	519 815
Net surplus/(Deficit) for the year attributable to:							
Non-controlling interest		454	-	-	454	-	574
Owners of the parent		635 064	(52 670)	159 264	741 658	60 395	519 241
		635 517	(52 670)	159 264	742 111	60 395	519 815

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (continued)
for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025				2024	
		Council controlled unrestricted	Specifically funded activities restricted	NMU Trust restricted	SUB-TOTAL	Residence Restricted	TOTAL
		R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME							
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to surplus or deficit:							
Remeasurements – Retirement healthcare obligation		22 484	-	-	22 484	-	15 615
Remeasurements – pension fund obligation		7 935	-	-	7 935	-	9 949
		30 419	-	-	30 419	-	25 563
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/(LOSS) FOR THE YEAR		665 937	(52 670)	159 264	772 531	60 395	545 378
Comprehensive income for the year attributable to:							
Non-controlling interest		454	-	-	454	-	574
Owners of the parent		665 483	(52 670)	159 264	772 077	60 395	544 804
		665 937	(52 670)	159 264	772 531	60 395	545 378

*other recurrent includes professional membership fees, bad debts recovered and settlement discounts.
**other non-recurrent relates to Nelson Mandela University's share of royalty income of Innovolve (Pty) Ltd, a rebate from the Purchasing Consortium Of South Africa (Pty) Ltd and the impact of the NSFAS close out process.

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS
For the year ended 31 December 2025

Description	Unrestricted		Restricted				Restricted Funds Sub-total	Residence Funds Restricted	Property, Plant and Equipment Fund	Total Attributable to Parent Company	Non-Controlling Interest	Total
	General Reserve Fund	Accumulated Fund	Council Funds Subtotal	Contract/Private Funds	NMU Trust/Restricted Funds	Other Restricted Funds						
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Balance at 1 January 2025	1 980 691	397 294	2 377 985	73 679	264 794	950 800	1 289 273	162 215	2 087 245	5 916 718	3 901	5 920 619
Non-Controlling Interest-share of profits	-	454	454	-	-	-	-	-	-	454	(454)	-
Net surplus	705 299	(69 782)	635 517	(52 670)	159 264	-	106 594	60 395	-	802 506	-	802 506
Other comprehensive income	-	30 419	30 419	-	-	-	-	-	-	30 419	-	30 419
Other additions	11 210	41 408	52 618	-	-	-	-	4 994	3 464	61 076	-	61 076
Funds utilised	-	(559)	(559)	(21 835)	(25 000)	-	(46 835)	(39)	-	(47 434)	-	(47 434)
Net transfers (to)/from other funds	(38 361)	35 268	(3 093)	48 390	(126 017)	67 229	(10 398)	(6 246)	19 737	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2025	2 658 838	434 502	3 093 340	47 564	273 041	1 018 029	1 338 634	221 319	2 110 445	6 763 739	3 448	6 767 187
Balance at 1 January 2024	1 551 678	390 433	1 942 111	76 280	245 938	878 718	1 200 937	134 392	2 085 070	5 362 510	4 475	5 366 985
Non-Controlling Interest-share of profits	-	574	574	-	-	-	-	-	-	574	(574)	-
Net surplus	495 060	(34 215)	460 846	(94 632)	124 173	-	29 541	29 428	-	519 815	-	519 815
Other comprehensive income	-	25 563	25 563	-	-	-	-	-	-	25 563	-	25 563
Other additions	19 629	31 286	50 915	151 953	-	-	151 953	4 572	21 730	229 171	-	229 171
Funds utilised	(55 889)	(27 034)	(82 924)	(118 759)	(786)	-	(119 545)	(18 446)	-	(220 915)	-	(220 915)
Net transfers (to)/from other funds	(29 787)	10 686	(19 101)	58 837	(104 532)	72 082	26 387	12 269	(19 555)	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2024	1 980 691	397 294	2 377 985	73 679	264 794	950 800	1 289 273	162 215	2 087 245	5 916 718	3 901	5 920 619

Refer Note 28 Statement of Equity movements.

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 R'000	2024 R'000
Cash flow from operating activities			
Cash generated by operations	23.1	243 590	36 047
Interest income - short term		486 296	399 527
Taxation paid	24	(707)	(686)
Net cash inflow from operating activities		<u>729 179</u>	<u>434 889</u>
Cash flow from investing activities			
Interest income		3 411	4 965
Dividend income	16	2 932	2 891
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	23.2	(120 708)	(103 887)
Interest paid capitalised to property, plant and equipment	23.2	-	(4 267)
Proceeds on disposal of property, plant and equipment		125	507
Purchase of other financial assets	6.1	(3 266 009)	(3 400 700)
Redemption of other financial assets		3 000 000	3 331 460
Purchase of long-term investments	4	(31 960)	(20 287)
Proceeds on long term investments	4	18 417	16 712
Net cash outflow from investing activities		<u>(393 792)</u>	<u>(172 606)</u>
Cash flow from financing activities			
Interest paid on borrowings and lease liabilities	26	(28 755)	(29 078)
Repayment of borrowings and lease liabilities	23.3	(20 075)	(17 290)
Net cash outflow from financing activities		<u>(48 830)</u>	<u>(46 368)</u>
Increase in cash and cash equivalents		286 559	215 916
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		<u>349 038</u>	<u>133 122</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	6.2	<u>635 597</u>	<u>349 038</u>

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACUSAfrica.....	Advancing Critical University Studies Across Africa
AFEMI.....	African Feminist Imaginations
AI.....	Artificial Intelligence
APP.....	Annual Performance Plan
ARC.....	Audit and Risk Committee
B-BBEE.....	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
BAAP.....	Black Academics Advancement Programme
BES.....	Business and Economic Sciences
BtC.....	Beyond the Classroom
BYJ.....	Begin Your Journey
CANRAD.....	Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy
CCT.....	Centre for Community Technologies
CHE.....	Council on Higher Education
CIPSET.....	Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training
CMR.....	Institute for Coastal and Marine Research
COVID-19.....	Coronavirus disease 2019
CriSHET.....	Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation
CWGS.....	Centre for Women and Gender Studies
DHET.....	Department of Higher Education and Training
DSTI.....	Department of Science, Technology and Innovation
DVC.....	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EBET.....	Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology
EMC.....	Enrolment Management Committee
EMANCO.....	Extended Management Committee
EO.....	Engagement Office
ESW.....	Emthonjeni Student Wellness
ETP.....	Engagement and Transformation Portfolio
EXCO.....	Executive Committee of Council
FFC.....	Finance and Facilities Committee
FTE.....	Full-Time Equivalent
FTEnt.....	First Time Entering
FYS.....	First Year Success
GBV.....	Gender-Based Violence
HAU.....	HIV and AIDS Research Unit
HEAVA.....	Honorary, Emeritus, Ad Personam, Visiting and Adjunct
HEMIS.....	Higher Education Management Information System
HEPI.....	Higher Education Price Index
HoC.....	Hubs of Convergence
HPCSA.....	Health Professions Council of South Africa
ICT.....	Information and Communication Technology
IF.....	Institutional Forum
IFRS.....	International Financial Reporting Standards
IO.....	Innovation Office
IP.....	Intellectual Property
ISSO.....	Infrastructure Services and Space Optimisation
LMS.....	Learning Management System
LT.....	Learning and Teaching
LxD.....	Digital Learning Experience Design and Innovation
MANCO.....	Management Committee
MISF.....	Mandela Institute for Sustainable Futures
MUAH.....	Mandela University Africa Hub
nGAP.....	New Generation of Academics Programme
NMBM.....	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
NRF.....	National Research Foundation
NSFAS.....	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
PASS.....	Professional, Administrative and Support Services
PG.....	Postgraduate

PO People and Operations
PPA Power Purchase Agreement
PQM Programme and Qualification Mix
RII..... Research, Innovation and Internationalisation
RSM Research Support and Management
SARChI South African Research Chairs Initiative
SDG Sustainable Development Goal
SETA Sector Education and Training Authority
SIVTT Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team
SLP Short Learning Programme
SNAC..... Student Nutrition Advocacy and Communication
SRC..... Student Representative Council
SRMA..... Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement
STEAM..... Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics
TD..... Teaching Development
TIA Technology Innovation Agency
TIMS Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies
UADS..... Universal Accessibility and Disability Services
UCDG University Capacity Development Grant
UG Undergraduate
VC..... Vice-Chancellor
USSA University Sport South Africa

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