NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL

# Performance Plan

## 2025

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# FOREWORD BY CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

Globally, geo-political shifts and broadening active conflicts, coupled with socio-economic and climate change challenges and an emerging dominance of techno-rationality are changing every aspect of life and work. Higher education institutions (HEIs) therefore need to adapt and reconfigure, while contributing to addressing the numerous complex and interrelated development challenges.

Coupled with these global challenges, the national economy remains constrained by high debt levels, increased economic pressures, high interest rates, load shedding, water shortages, infrastructure bottlenecks, a broad-based decline in public service delivery, growing social challenges, corruption, and a high crime rate. After the national elections, a Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed in June 2024, led by President Cyril Ramaphosa. The GNU brings together 11 political parties in a power-sharing agreement and aims to rebuild South Africa's economy through key reforms for faster growth, better service delivery, and job creation, marking a new direction for economic policy and implementation.

The higher education (HE) sector is under sustained fiscal pressure, and it remains imperative to develop, and maintain, appropriate strategic and operational responses over a period that is likely to remain volatile and uncertain. This includes constantly appraising the impact of the prevailing HE macro-environmental context and the legislative framework on the University's institutional strategy and core academic missions.

In 2021, Council approved the University's Vision 2030 Strategy as a roadmap for strategic planning and decision-making for the current decade. Through Vision 2030, Nelson Mandela University reaffirms its commitment to change the world through life-changing educational opportunities, innovative research and transformative engagement that contribute to a better world. The process of formulating the Vision 2030 Strategy allowed for broad-based stakeholder engagement at all levels to promote ownership and agency in deploying our strategic focus areas, 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.

Nelson Mandela University embraces its identity as a comprehensive university with an inherent commitment to social embeddedness, transformative engagement, and sustainable stewardship. We carry a significant responsibility to embody the legacy and ethos of the late Nelson Mandela and his lifelong struggle for a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic society where all citizens are treated with respect and dignity.

As a university located in one of the poorest provinces of South Africa, our efforts to promote student access for success remain paramount, with a specific focus on strategies to improve success and throughput rates. Strategic resource mobilisation interventions geared towards expanding access for academically deserving so-called "missing middle" and postgraduate students who do not qualify for the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) are also vital.

Our core academic missions are supported through strategic enablers which create the conditions conducive to achieving our strategic intentions and aspirations. These Vision 2030 enablers include ethical governance and leadership, fostering a values-driven institutional culture that empowers employees, creating an enabling environment for innovation, accelerating our digital transformation trajectory, optimising the use of modernised and flexibly designed infrastructure, and advancing long-term financial sustainability and responsible resource stewardship.

As we ready the University to navigate an uncertain future, observation and reflection are required to make sense of the leadership implications of the prevailing environment. The literature available places great importance on leadership and governance as it relates to the success and stability of massive, complex organisations. Yet, we need to think of complexity as evolving and demanding more leadership innovations, not only concerning organisational efficiencies and sustainability but also linked to the convergence of the academic and social projects of the University.

Transversal Vision 2030 priority areas that will guide strategy implementation from 2025 to 2030 include the following:

- Further advancing social embeddedness and equalising forms of engagement that facilitate the co-creation of sustainable solutions to complex societal challenges.
- Strengthening excellence in our strategic trajectories, including the medical school, ocean sciences, revitalising the humanities, transdisciplinarity and sustainability sciences, and repositioning transformative engagement in the service of society.
- Reviewing our academic programme portfolio, size and shape, modes of delivery, curriculum, and pedagogical approaches to promote relevance and responsiveness.
- Pursuing inclusive student access for success, including cultivating vibrant student life and development experiences that liberate the full potential of our graduates.
- Addressing rising youth unemployment by implementing wide-ranging interventions to enhance youth employability and student entrepreneurship.
- Deepening a values-driven, transformative institutional culture characterised by a well-developed institutional self-understanding of what it means to embrace an African identity.
- Positioning Nelson Mandela University globally, by strengthening collaboration with partners in Africa and the global South, while sustaining existing mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Accelerating digital transformation in pursuit of improved efficiencies, innovation, and continuous improvement that leverage the opportunities of rapid technological advancements.
- Promoting the long-term sustainability of the University through innovative resource mobilisation, strategy-aligned budgeting, and responsible resource stewardship.

The situational analysis outlined in this Annual Performance Plan (APP), reflects on the broader contextual challenges confronting the HE sector, as well as the applicable legislative frameworks and national policy provisions. The SWOT analysis that follows provides a realistic assessment of the University's internal and external context as it relates to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The APP will outline strategies to consolidate institutional strengths and seize new opportunities while simultaneously addressing weaknesses and threats.

The APP sets out the Vision 2030-aligned strategic goals, indicators and targets that will inform strategy implementation in 2025 to achieve the University's vision to be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

## OFFICIAL SIGN-OFF

It is hereby certified that the Nelson Mandela University Annual Performance Plan for 2025:

- Was developed by the senior management of the Nelson Mandela University under the guidance of the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor André Keet.
- Was prepared in alignment with Nelson Mandela University's Vision 2030 Strategic Plan and Vision 2030 Institutional Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) Framework.
- Accurately reflects the performance targets which Nelson Mandela University will endeavour to achieve within the resource envelope provided for in the budget for 2025.

**JUDGE NAMBITHA DAMBUZA**
**CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL**

**PROFESSOR ANDRÉ KEET**
**ACTING VICE-CHANCELLOR**

# SECTION A: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## 1. Performance delivery environment

In a year set apart by an unprecedented number of national and regional elections in various countries, the international context continues to be characterised by an unstable global order with ongoing active conflicts and polarising narratives eroding trust. Economic uncertainty prevails, with persistently elevated inflation, interest rates, and continued cost-of-living pressures. Against this backdrop of precarity, societal discontent is notable in many countries, characterised by violent protests, riots, and strikes. Rapid technological advancements, including the pervasive impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the world of work, as well as the impact of climate change further contribute to a volatile macro-environmental context for HE globally.

According to the recent World Economic Forum Global Risks Report 2024, the most severe global risk anticipated over the next two years is widening societal and political divides resulting from mis- and disinformation. Other notable risks include extreme weather events; societal polarisation; cyber insecurity; interstate armed conflict; lack of economic opportunity; inflation; involuntary migration; economic downturn; and pollution.

The rapid pace of change nationally and globally drives universities to revisit their core purpose, academic missions, and operating models to promote responsiveness to contemporary intractable challenges. This calls for universities to engage with key stakeholders to anticipate future trends, serve as catalysts for sustainable development, and contribute to promoting the public good. Furthermore, universities in South Africa are increasingly called upon to participate more actively in addressing the developmental needs of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union Agenda 2063, and South Africa's National Development Plan.

### *Poverty, inequality, and economic recovery*

Poverty is not only financial deprivation, but also encompasses a range of socio-economic factors, including access to services (such as health care, education, housing, water, and electricity), social protection, dignified employment, and equitable opportunities. Across the world, the number of people living in extreme poverty and facing acute food insecurity has risen. Inflation remains stubbornly high, and public debt

levels globally are at record levels. At the present pace of progress, almost 600 million people (or around 7% of the world's population) will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030.

South Africa's economy remains crippled by multiple structural constraints, which have been weighing heavily on economic activity, depressing the credit appetite of businesses and the spending of households. Reforms to address these constraints are advancing at a slow pace due to declining state implementation capacity and a lack of political consensus.

Economic growth is weak, and the unemployment rate remains above 30%, amid limited labour demand. Social indicators remain dismal, with high levels of poverty and inequality. Vulnerability to hunger has increased and socio-economic challenges have been further exacerbated by high fuel and food prices, which disproportionately affect the poor. These trends have prompted growing social demands for government support, which could put the sustainability of public finances at risk if they are to be met (World Bank, 2024).

Amid growing discontent with economic prospects and dismal public service delivery, the African National Congress (ANC) faced highly contested general elections on 29 May 2024, and the party lost its outright majority for the first time since the advent of democracy. Following the elections, the Government of National Unity (GNU) comprised of the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, and nine other parties was established in a power-sharing agreement. The GNU aims to rebuild South Africa's economy through key reforms for faster growth, better service delivery, and job creation. During the opening of parliament on 18 July 2024, President Ramaphosa indicated that the top priorities of the government would be driving inclusive economic growth, tackling inequality, and developing a capable state.

The fiscus is under enormous pressure with the National Treasury faced with multiple, competing additional funding needs. Public universities are confronted with stagnant government subsidies and nationally regulated tuition fee increases, accompanied by escalating costs and ever-increasing demands for access to fee-free higher education for the poor. Within this context, the financial sustainability of the South African HE sector remains a critical priority.

As poverty increases so does vulnerability, particularly for women and girls. Income inequality within countries often leads to financial and social discrimination. While there has been some progress, inequality has remained almost stagnant in the most unequal countries. Material deprivations are worsened by the unequal distribution of opportunities, which further erodes social cohesion and calcifies social barriers and exclusion.

South Africa is, by most contemporary measures, the most unequal country in the world. A recent report by the World Bank (2022), based on Gini coefficients of consumption (or income) per capita, ranked South Africa first among 164 countries in the World Bank's global poverty database with a Gini coefficient of 0.67. For the past 20 years, the Gini coefficient has remained above 0.50 in South Africa. High levels of income polarisation are manifested in very high levels of chronic poverty – estimated at 62.7% in 2023 when using the upper-middle-income poverty line. Among those who are employed, many earn low wages or subsist in the informal economy. Intergenerational mobility is low, meaning inequalities are passed down from generation to generation with little change over time.

According to the Sustainable Development Goals Country Report, South Africa (2023), Black African-headed households recorded the highest level of within-group inequality with 43.5% of children (0–17 years), 38.4% of 18–24-year-olds, and 28.9% of 25–34-year-olds living below 50% of the median income per capita. This illustrates the greater disadvantage that young people also face in South Africa. The data reported also revealed that there continued to be a gender bias between males and females, with more females living below 50% of the median income per capita. Unemployment has remained intractable and stubborn, largely affecting youth aged 15 to 24, and women the most.

The South African Science, Technology, and Innovation Indicators Report (2024) notes that South Africa's score on the Social Progress Index (SPI) declined in 2024. The SPI measures the extent to which countries provide for their citizens' social and environmental needs. It ranks countries based on 60 indicators. After a decade of increases in the SPI, South Africa experienced a decline in all dimensions in 2024 and is now ranked 82 out of 172 countries.

According to the same report, the lower-bound food poverty line increased to R760 per person per month (R25 per day) in 2023. This is also commonly referred to as the "extreme" poverty line and refers to how much money an individual will need to buy the minimum required daily energy intake. . Recent estimates are that a total of 13.8 million people (25%) are experiencing food poverty.

Social grants remain a vital safety net, particularly in the poorest provinces. The total number of grants beneficiaries in 2024 was 19 261 286. According to the General Household Survey (GHS), 2023, the percentage of individuals who benefitted from social grants increased to 39.4%, while households with at least one individual receiving a grant increased to 50.0%. Social grants were the second most important source of income (50.5%) for households after salaries (62.2%), and the main source of income for more than one-fifth (23%) of households nationally.

The Eastern Cape is in a particularly perilous position as it is one of the poorest provinces, with weak economic growth and high levels of unemployment. Social grants are particularly important as a main source of income for households in the Eastern Cape, with approximately 40.4% of the provincial population depending on grants (South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), 2024). The Eastern Cape economy contracted for the third consecutive quarter, entering a technical recession in the first quarter of 2024, according to the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC).

More than a quarter of the Eastern Cape's 1.8-million households are still experiencing dire poverty, 30 years into South Africa's democracy. An in-depth investigation into the prevalence of severe acute malnutrition by the South African Human Rights Commission revealed that child hunger should be declared a disaster in the province to ensure a more coordinated response to the crisis by the provincial government.

Efforts to reduce inequality in South Africa have focused on higher social spending, targeted government transfers, and affirmative action to diversify wealth ownership and promote entrepreneurship among the previously marginalised. Trends suggest that the provision of the basket of social grants is positively impacting poverty levels, and social spending has mitigated hardship. However, despite these efforts, the SDG Country Report, South Africa (2023) notes that the adverse economic environment, high unemployment, and the negative impact of load-shedding have hampered progress in reducing poverty.

Gross social, class, racial and gender disparities contradict the ideals of social justice, access and equity. It is against this background that Zeleza argues for inclusion which he defines as the *"… intentional and continuous processes and outcomes in which all members of the community as individuals and groups are welcomed and feel a sense of belonging and are provided with equal opportunities to participate in institutional life and flourish"*. To achieve this, inclusive excellence needs to be intentionally operationalised across all structures, functions, policies, and decision-making processes.

### *Unemployment and youth disillusionment*

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the second quarter of 2024 revealed that the official unemployment rate in South Africa increased to 33.5% compared to the first quarter. Compared to the same period last year, the expanded unemployment rate increased to 42.6%. Youth aged 15-24 recorded the highest unemployment rates of all age groups at 60.8%. Those with less than matric remain vulnerable with an unemployment rates of 39.3%, while the graduate unemployment rate decreased to 9.7%. This is 23.8 percentage points lower than the national official unemployment rate.

The Eastern Cape continues to have the highest official unemployment rate of South Africa's nine provinces, at 41%. This trend has persisted for over a decade. In the second quarter of 2024, the largest increase in the expanded unemployment rate was recorded in Eastern Cape (49.7%). This burden is disproportionately felt by youth (15-34 years), Black Africans, women, and people with disabilities. According to the Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC), the Eastern Cape youth (15-34) unemployment rate increased to 53.3% in the first quarter of 2024. However, the unemployment rate for those with tertiary education was 20%, which underscores the importance of higher education in unlocking barriers to employment.

A dire economic outlook, economic hardship, persisting intergenerational inequality, failure in governance and rampant corruption have led to a marked deterioration in the holistic wellbeing of young people. Investment is needed to improve education and upskill the youth to equip them with the skills and tools they need to thrive. To this end, the UN General Assembly adopted the Pact for the Future in September 2024, as a recommitment to efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

With the number of young Africans projected to increase to 42% of the world's youth by 2030 – and the current numbers of African youth to double by 2055 — African countries must invest in youth economic opportunities. Enhancing youth employability and entrepreneurship initiatives in the short term will reduce poverty, foster social inclusion, and harness Africa's demographic dividend. However, improvements in education in Africa, and in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), are progressing slower than elsewhere in the world, in both level and quality. Africa's educational funnel is leaking, with few students completing the full educational journey to graduate from upper secondary school and enter post-school education.

A robust higher education system will help the continent to meet its growing need for skilled professionals in vital sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and technology. This will also help address youth unemployment and foster more inclusive economic growth. With 48 countries and a population of more than 1 billion, SSA is one of the largest regions in the world. However, the current gross tertiary education enrolment ratio is 9%, which is well below the global average of 42%.

While South Africa has a tertiary gross enrolment rate of more than 20%, some young people have disengaged from the labour market and they are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). Nationally, approximately 3.6 million (35.2%) out of 10.3 million young people aged 15-24 years are NEET.to provide work opportunities and experience. Launched in October 2020, the Presidential Employment Stimulus programme has created over 1.7 million employment opportunities for unemployed youth and graduates (State of the Nation Address, 2024). The National Youth Service Programme (NYSP) is a further government initiative aimed at engaging South African youth in community service

activities to strengthen service delivery, build patriotism, promote nation-building, foster social cohesion, and help acquire occupational skills to access sustainable livelihood opportunities. The 2023/24 NYDA Annual Performance Plan reported that 56 000 young people have been recruited to date. The government has also introduced the Social Employment Fund to create a further 50 000 work opportunities by accessing the capability of non-governmental organisations in areas such as urban agriculture, early childhood development, public art and tackling gender-based violence.

An ECSECC report indicates that the Eastern Cape has the highest rate in the country of young people moving out of the province due to lack of economic opportunities, high levels of youth unemployment, and the predominance of rural areas. This declining youth population could deprive the province from reaping a demographic dividend thus necessitating a multi-pronged policy approach, focused on raising labour market participation and productivity while addressing fiscal challenges.

### *Online learning and the digital divide*

Digital technologies are transforming economies, creating jobs, and improving lives. Unprecedented growth in data and analytical capabilities, including cloud and AI, is propelling digitalisation to a new era. As noted in the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2024, the increasing prevalence of remote work, non-traditional employment arrangements and technology and skills transfers present an opportunity to mitigate global inequalities in access to economic opportunities.

Embracing digitalisation is no longer a choice but a necessity as it holds the potential to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable world for generations to come. However, the progress and distributional impact of digitalisation have been highly uneven within and across countries. The inherent characteristics of digital technologies also generate new risks such as accelerated automation and displacement of workers, the use of social media to spread misinformation and extremism, and new privacy and cybersecurity vulnerabilities.

Higher education is in the era of digital transformation (Dx) whereby learning technologies and digital platforms are critical for teaching and learning in preparing learners for the digital workplace. Emerging technologies such as AI, extended reality (XR), augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), analytics and other emerging technologies can enable more innovative and engaging teaching methods and learning experiences. Since the launch of ChatGPT (Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer) in late 2022, generative AI has been challenging and transforming higher education.

Universities are engaging with the rapid evolution of GenAI and what it means for learning, teaching, assessment and accreditation, research and publishing, internationalisation, university administration, and student services. The opportunities of GenAI are being evaluated alongside the perceived threats and the ethical and equity challenges. Currently, it is estimated that there are more than 1 000 generative AI tools, some for various specialised fields of study, many of which are tools for educators. Universities must adopt a thoughtful and inclusive approach to the adoption of generative AI focused on providing equitable access to digital experiences that will benefit all students and staff.

In September 2024, the Global Digital Compact was adopted as part of the Pact for the Future by the UN General Assembly. This marks the first truly worldwide agreement on the international regulation of AI and is founded on the idea that technology should benefit everyone. These developments will assist universities seeking to scale up flexible, technology-rich approaches to learning and help to provide students with inclusive learning environments and experiences that enable them to succeed in academic and co-curricular pursuits. This includes providing quality online or in-person wellness, inclusion and student life initiatives that will equip them to become conscientious global citizens who drive positive societal change.

Yet the digital divide remains stark with billions of people around the world still without online access, The number of internet users reached 5.3 billion in 2022, representing two-thirds of the global population. Only one out of four individuals in low-income countries used the internet in 2022. The "digital divide" refers to uneven access to information and communication technologies (ICT) in societies. However, it extends far beyond mere accessibility to mobile devices and the Internet. The digital divide is also characterised by differences in motivation and attitudes towards technology, disparities in the acquisition of digital skills, levels of engagement in online activities, and inequalities in the outcomes achieved by individuals.

The "digital divide" is particularly pronounced on the African continent where internet access rates are low compared to the rest of the world. In South Africa, household access to the Internet is low across all nine provinces, with just 13% of the population having access to fixed internet at home, and 12.6% at work. While 21.4% of households in metropolitan areas had access to the internet at home, the figure drops to only 1.6% of rural households.

According to a report on the mobile economy by the mobile operators' trade body GSMA Intelligence (GMSA 2024), by the end of 2023, 5.6 billion people (69% of the global population) subscribed to a mobile service, representing an increase of 1.6 billion people since 2015. At the end of 2023, 58% of the world's population used mobile internet, equating to 4.7 billion users. 5G commercialisation continues to gather pace around the world. Telecoms networks have driven voice and data connectivity to current levels, supported by the wide area coverage

of wireless networks and the mass production and adoption of mobile devices. Satellites and other non-terrestrial networks (NTNs) have the potential to provide ubiquitous coverage all over the globe, and this is leading to a growing trend of partnerships between telecommunication networks and satellite and NTN providers.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, GSMA Intelligence indicates that 43% of the adult population are mobile users with 25% connected to mobile internet services. Key barriers to mobile internet adoption in SSA include affordability and digital skills. By 2030, it is expected that 50% of the region's population will be subscribed to mobile services, while smartphones will account for 88% of total connections, compared to the global average of 92%. 5G-related activities are also beginning to pick up across this region. However, in emerging 5G markets, the pace of growth in connections and coverage will be slower due to challenges such as device affordability and spectrum availability.

In South Africa, internet access using mobile devices (69.6%) was the most common form of access to the internet, and in the Eastern Cape, the figure is 63.6%. Access to affordable digital infrastructure has become indispensable as the cornerstone of the digital economy. According to the South African Science, Technology, and Innovation Indicators Report (2024), digital infrastructure comprises the physical resources necessary to enable the use of data, computerised devices, methods, systems and processes. Since 2017, the World Digital Competitiveness Ranking has been ranking the digital competitiveness of 64 economies, measuring the capacity and readiness to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation. It is concerning that South Africa's ranking has declined sharply from 48th in 2019, to 58th in 2023.

South Africa's overall mobile network coverage is almost 100% for both 3G and 4G networks and is one of the highest among the BRICS countries. Internet use in South Africa increased from 54% in 2016 to 73% in 2021 and is the third highest (tied with China) among the BRICS countries. However, ICT prices in South Africa are very high compared to other BRICS countries. Furthermore, South Africa's Census 2022 indicated the provincial variations in households with no access to the internet. About one-third (34.3%) of households in the Eastern Cape and 31.9% in Limpopo reported having no access to the internet in 2022 compared to Gauteng, where only 13.6% had no internet access. Households that did not have access to the internet decreased significantly between 2011 and 2022 in all provinces, with only 21.1% of households reporting that they had no access to the internet compared to 64.8% in 2011.

Against this backdrop, it is pertinent that the UN Human Rights Council declared in 2016 that access to the internet is a basic human right. The adoption of the African Union Digital Transformation Strategy (2020-2030) was another step towards narrowing the digital divide by ensuring that access to digital technologies and the internet is regarded as a basic right. HE institutions should ensure an expanded roll-out

of quality and affordable ICT infrastructure, to provide students with the hardware, software, and internet access they need to participate in equitable learning opportunities.

### *The future world of work and lifelong learning*

Complex forces are shaping the workforce of the future with technological advances, automation and AI amplifying the importance of uniquely human attributes such as creativity, imagination, and critical thinking. Against a backdrop of global change and volatility, university graduates will need to be adaptable lifelong learners with transferable knowledge, skills and competencies that can be applied in various contexts.

The World Economic Forum has estimated that 50% of all employees will need significant reskilling or upskilling by 2025. The SSA and Latin America regions could see over 7% additional GDP by 2030 if they invest in upskilling to propel the transition to an economy where human labour is increasingly complemented and augmented by technology. Universities must play a central role in any comprehensive upskilling agenda by providing a wide range of self-directed, "just-in-time" learning opportunities and credentialing systems. Successful reskilling starts with knowing what skills are needed and offering tailored learning opportunities to address these needs through a culture of lifelong learning.

Attracting and retaining pivotal talent will be a significant challenge in the future and organisations will need to devote careful attention to the employee value proposition. Since the pandemic, there has been a structural shift towards hybrid and flexible ways of working, especially in highly skilled jobs. This transition implies that universities will have to make key decisions on investment in digitalisation compared to physical infrastructure development. They also will need strategies to refurbish, modernise and optimally use existing infrastructure to facilitate hybrid or fully online learning and flexible work arrangements.

More attention will need to be devoted to infrastructure in the form of IT hardware as well as cybersecurity measures and software to enhance collaboration and measure employee performance and effectiveness. A further challenge will be to prepare the workforce for a future world of work characterised by automation, digitalisation, and other technological advancements.

### *Gender-based discrimination and violence*

The economic empowerment of women remains a key priority on the global development agenda and is crucial for achieving gender equality. Approximately 51% (32,13 million) of the population of South Africa is female many of whom continue to face challenges in accessing economic opportunities, despite policies designed to promote inclusion. Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) reports that women in South Africa are more likely to face unemployment and are less likely to participate in the workforce compared to men.
According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for the second quarter of 2024, the labour force participation rate for women in South Africa stood at 55.8% compared to 65.6% for men. Despite progress in narrowing the gender gap over the past ten years, women still struggle with unemployment and workforce inequality compared to their male counterparts, irrespective of their age and level of education. This is evident from the 10.7% unemployment rate of female graduates compared to the 8.3% unemployment rate of male graduates. Furthermore, in Q2 of 2024, the trends show persistently higher "not in education, employment, or training" (NEET) unemployment rates for women, and a higher share of women in community and social services, trade, finance, and private households, and in clerical, technical and domestic work occupations compared to men.

Worldwide, when women are employed, they are more likely to work in low-paying jobs in vulnerable conditions, and there is a slow improvement forecast for the future (ILO, 2017). In South Africa, many women engage in informal economic activities, such as small-scale agriculture or craft production. This informal sector is often characterised by a lack of social protection, limited access to credit, and vulnerability to economic shocks. Equality in the job market still eludes women in South Africa and the feminisation of poverty remains an intractable challenge with women disproportionately affected by limited access to safe places of work, education, skills, resources, and technology.

Violence against women is a major human rights violation and it has serious social and economic consequences. Physical and sexual intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence remain pervasive in the lives of women and adolescent girls across the globe, with nearly one in three women having experienced one or both.

The rate of femicide in South Africa is five times higher than the global average, with women from low-income households and those aged between 18 to 24 years being most likely to experience physical violence. The crime statistics of the first quarter of 2023/2024 revealed that, despite a decrease in crimes against women and children, 19% of the people killed during this period were women and children. According to the report titled Child Series Volume III, Reported Crime Against Children 2022/23 released by Statistics South Africa, a significant number

of reported crimes against children in South Africa involve sexual offences, with girls being victimised more frequently than boys. Rape was the most reported crime against children in most provinces, accounting for 38.3% of all cases involving minors.

The Policy Framework to Address Gender-Based Violence in the Post-School Education and Training System has an appropriate focus on challenging social norms that perpetuate gender inequality, while also improving survivor support services. While awareness of the issue of GBV at HEIs in South Africa has grown, no national data are available that quantify the extent of gendered violence experienced by staff and students. Further, the under-reporting of this type of violence, particularly sexual violence, makes it difficult to determine the true prevalence of the different forms of GBV at HEIs.

The National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) is the government's comprehensive strategy for tackling all forms of violence and abuse against women and children. Since the launch of the strategic plan, several new interventions have been implemented, including extensive legal reform, support for survivors through the provision of evidence kits at police stations, psychological and social services, and the establishment of a GBVF Response Fund. Approximately R21 billion has been dedicated over the medium term to facilitate the implementation of the plan.

The report of the Ministerial Task Team appointed to advise the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation on matters of sexual harassment and gender-based violence and harm in the South African public higher education system was released in February 2024. The report provides a critical reflection on where the South African higher education system is positioned concerning sexual harassment (SH) and gender-based violence and harm (GBVH). The recommendations are designed as a framework to guide action to propel universities into a transformed future, free of GBV. These recommendations include implementing training and educational awareness programmes, fast-tracking case management processes, investing resources into GBVH/SH work, providing leadership accountability, and shifting gender power relations that perpetuate GBVH/SH.

### *Urbanisation and human settlements*

More than half of the people in the world (55%) live in urban areas and the percentage of city dwellers is projected to increase to 68% and reach a total of 6.3 billion people by 2050. This will add 2.3 billion more people to urban areas. Most of this increase (about 90%) is likely to occur in the two poorest regions of the world, namely South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where the urban population is likely to double in

the next 20 years. Urbanisation is largely unplanned and fuels the growth of informal or slum settlements which gives rise to challenges such as unemployment, urban poverty, criminality, urban congestion, and increases in the cost of living.

In South Africa, 63% of the population lives in urban areas and this is projected to rise to 71% by 2030. This will also make it more difficult to deliver on the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) to foster a shared understanding across government and society about how best to manage urbanisation, including addressing backlogs in housing, schools, hospitals, clinics, student accommodation, and access to reliable water supply and electricity.

Cities account for 60 to 80% of energy consumption and generate as much as 70% of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. Rapid urbanisation therefore constitutes a key challenge to achieving the intention of the Paris Agreement to hold the increase in the global average temperature to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels. Urgent action is required to transform urban systems well before 2030 to withstand climatic extremes.

Despite the challenges, however, urbanisation is also an opportunity to drive sustainable social and cultural change, environmental protection, and economic growth by embracing principles of the circular economy. Contributing about 80% of global GDP, cities are catalysts to drive innovation, consumption, and investment worldwide, making them a force to address poverty, social exclusion, and spatial inequality. The World Cities Report 2022 stresses that building resilience must be at the heart of the cities of the future. The success of cities, towns and urban areas will largely depend on policies that protect and sustain all, leaving no one behind. To ensure that the benefits of urbanisation are fully shared and inclusive, policies to manage urban growth need to ensure access to infrastructure and social services for all. There should be a focus on the needs of the urban poor and other vulnerable groups for housing, education, health care, decent work, and a safe environment.

### *Climate action and environmental stewardship*

The Global Risks Report (2024) ranks critical change to earth systems as one of the most severe risks over the next decade, with intensifying impacts on food, water and health security (WEF, 2024). The threat of climate change is already destroying lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems, especially in poorer regions that contribute the least to global warming.

Many living in poverty are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events such as floods, cyclones, or droughts, which are growing in frequency and intensity. A Just Green Transition towards more sustainable practices in the economy and society ensure that the decarbonisation of economies takes place efficiently and equitably without exacerbating social inequalities.

Recent research by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suggests that the threshold for triggering long-term, potentially irreversible and self-perpetuating changes to select planetary systems is likely to be passed at or before 1.5°C of global warming, which is currently anticipated to be reached by the early 2030s. The collective ability of societies to adapt could be overwhelmed, considering the sheer scale of potential impacts and infrastructure investment requirements, leaving some communities and countries unable to absorb both the acute and chronic effects of rapid climate change.

These environmental and planetary changes could radically impact economic growth over the next decade, driving food, water, and health insecurity. Immediate impacts could reduce agricultural productivity and cause simultaneous harvest failures in key regions. As the fragility of highly exposed, low-resilience states rises, internal conflicts and border clashes over resources could become more common and many countries could increasingly be seen as too high risk to operate or invest in, eroding adaptive capacities further.

According to the SDG Country Report 2023, southern Africa is now considered a climate change "hot spot" and significant climate changes have been observed in South Africa. Consequently, climate zones across the region are shifting, and ecosystems and landscapes are degrading due to fires, droughts, and heat waves. Climate change projections for the SADC region show that the greatest impact will be on water availability, which could severely affect food production and energy generation. Annual rainfall is expected to decrease by 20% by 2080, which will worsen water and food insecurity.

South Africa is among the pioneers in adopting green economy strategies to fulfil the commitments contained in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Currently, renewable energy in South Africa makes up just 6.6% of the total energy supply but there are programmes in place to promote energy efficiency, green transport, sustainable housing, and climate-resilient agriculture.

As knowledge institutions, universities have a responsibility to lead climate research, mitigation and adaptation efforts, through engaging key stakeholders and modelling sustainable environmental stewardship. To this end, the University is intentionally driving the transition towards greening campuses, reducing its carbon footprint, promoting renewable energies, and conserving water.

### *Access to quality healthcare*

Global efforts are underway to develop robust health systems, strengthen primary healthcare capacity, build public health preparedness and response capability, and advance equity in the delivery of essential health services. In South Africa, access to health care services is a basic human right guaranteed by Section 27 of the Constitution. However, according to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), South Africa remains an unequal society, where the quality and type of services people receive tend to be influenced significantly by their socio-economic status and ability to access services, regardless of the level of need for care. Most people in South Africa depend on public healthcare facilities since private medical care is unaffordable.

Research conducted by the South Arican Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), has found that high demand for the public health care system impacts timeliness, and the range and quality of services provided to users. Public health care services are largely under-resourced in terms of staff, availability of suitable medication, and infrastructure, which adversely affects the ability to deliver adequate care to poor people, especially those in rural areas. The reports noted serious shortages of emergency transport, long waiting times, overcrowding, compromised cleanliness, outdated technology, understaffing, and discriminatory attitudes towards vulnerable groups as major concerns.

The National Health Insurance (NHI) Act (2023) was signed by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 10 May 2024. Broadly, the Bill will allow services from all health professionals to be secured and delivered through public and private facilities. The government believes this is a decisive step to improve equity in the distribution of health care services and providers.

The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) released a study which explores critical governance issues impacting the health sector, including leadership instability, lack of transparency, insufficient accountability mechanisms and pervasive corruption. The view of the panel is that the recent signing of the NHI Act highlights the risks of implementing an NHI system within the current context of weak governance in both the private and public sectors.

The retention of skilled, senior health professionals in the public sector is a further challenge, with many leaving the country. To counter this, the Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) for health professionals was introduced in the South African public sector. In addition, the 2030 Human Resources for Health Strategy sets out the overall vision, goals and actions required to address healthcare staffing needs, and persistent inequity and inefficiencies in the health workforce.

Tackling the interlinked challenges of poverty and health starts with recognising that treating patients medically needs to be accompanied by integrated approaches that address underlying social determinants of health. Against this backdrop, the principles of primary health care, such as equity, community participation, and social and economic development, form the basis of South Africa's health policy and service delivery.

### *Looking ahead*

Faced with the preceding array of complex global megatrends and poly-crises outlined, Nelson Mandela University is called on to design forward-looking strategies that enhance its strategic positioning as a socially embedded, responsive institution in the service of society. Despite multiple, concurrent uncertainties within the higher education sector, the University can apply a social justice lens to planning, decision-making and resource allocation to ensure that it does not perpetuate or amplify existing inequalities or precarities through its decisions or strategy implementation. This should be informed by a comprehensive analysis of the legislative mandate of public universities in South Africa.

## 2. Legislative mandate

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strive to address global challenges such as poverty, inequality, global unemployment, climate change and environmental degradation. Goal 4 aims to "*ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*" with one of the targets seeking to *"ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university"* by 2030. This positions higher education as pivotal in promoting democracy and human rights, enhancing responsible global citizenship and civic engagement, facilitating intercultural dialogue, and fostering respect for diversity. In addition to developing the skills required by the labour market, universities stimulate critical and creative thinking and generate knowledge for social, cultural, ecological, and economic development.

This is reinforced in the African Union Agenda 2063, which also emphasises the critical role of higher education in developing the human capabilities and skills required to enhance innovation, employability and entrepreneurship on the African continent, especially among youth and women. The African Union Commission developed a comprehensive ten-year Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25). This calls for national governments to honour their commitment to spend 1% of gross domestic product on research and creating conducive environments for innovation and nurturing young academics.

Similarly, South Africa's National Development Plan 2030 outlines the main functions of universities in society as addressing shortages of indispensable high-level skills, serving as the dominant producers of new knowledge, and strengthening equity, social justice, and democracy. Challenges such as food security, quality health and education for all, secure and clean water, green and efficient energy sources, climate change, and inclusive communities need the response of universities at global and local levels as catalysts for development.

Key legislation and policy frameworks guiding the purpose and mandate of public universities in South Africa are outlined below in chronological sequence.

The Higher Education Act, Act No. 101 of 1997 (HE Act) aims to establish a single co-ordinated higher education system and the statutory Council on Higher Education (CHE). It intends to: regulate higher education; provide for the establishment, composition and functions of a Council on Higher Education; provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public higher education institutions; provide for the appointment and functions of an independent assessor; provide for the registration of private higher education institutions; provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education; provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation (WPHET, 1997) calls for a higher education system based on equity of access and fair chances of success for all. It further asks that higher education contributes to skills development and the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, generating innovative solutions to diverse challenges confronting the nation and the African continent. The WPHET also urges HEIs to support a democratic ethos and a culture of human rights through educational programmes and practices.

The National Qualifications Framework Act, as amended, Act No. 67 of 2008 (NQF Act, 2008) provides for the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), and the Quality Councils (the CHE, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, and Umalusi), for qualifications, and the quality assurance of qualifications required on the sub-frameworks of the NQF. The 2019 NQF Amendment Act was promulgated on 13 October 2023 (GG 49501) and provides mainly for misrepresented or fraudulent qualifications.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPSET, 2013) sets out a vision of a differentiated post-school education and training (PSET) system that supports citizens in accessing diverse opportunities for further study and advancement, enriches lives, promotes social justice, and overcomes historical inequalities.

The White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation (2019) provides the long-term policy direction to ensure a growing role for science, technology, and innovation (STI) in improving economic competitiveness and creating a more prosperous and inclusive society. It introduces policy approaches to adopting an open science paradigm, supporting a diversity of knowledge fields, advancing a greater focus on inter- and transdisciplinary research, and acknowledging the contribution of the humanities and social sciences to addressing complex societal problems. Furthermore, it introduces a systematic approach to expanding the internationalisation of STI and science diplomacy with a strong focus on the African continent to support a pan-African agenda.

The Decadal Plan for Science, Technology and Innovation released in February 2022aims to improve coherence and coordination of scientific and technological innovation in priority areas, and assess how to align and pool resources to fund these areas. The following are priority areas: climate change and the circular economy; education for the future; future of society; ICTs and smart systems; high-technology industrialisation; nutrition security; water security; health innovation; and sustainable energy.

The DHET released the Draft Policy for the Recognition of South African Higher Education Institutional Types in August 2022 for public comment. This provides for the classification of all South African institutions of higher learning into one of three types, namely, higher education colleges, university colleges, and universities. The draft policy sets out the criteria for quality learning and teaching, research, and community engagement at universities. The second draft of the amended policy was released for public comment on 26 April 2024.

The National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (NPPSET, 2023) is a roadmap to develop and reinvigorate post-school education and training from 2018 to 2030. The NPPSET aims to ensure the delivery of a diverse range of quality post-school qualifications that are responsive to the needs of students, society, and the world of work.

The Comprehensive Student Funding Model for higher education, particularly for "missing middle" students who fall outside current NSFAS criteria, has been finalised in 2023. The Plan is classified into two phases over the next decade. The first phase was executed in January 2024. The government has committed to an initial capitalisation fund totalling R3.8 billion in the 2024 academic year. For the next phase commencing in 2025 to 2034, funding will be increased to approximately R4.2 billion annually.

Against this national legislative and policy backdrop, Nelson Mandela University strives to distinguish itself through student-centric approaches to learning and teaching that facilitate student access for success, comprehensive academic programme offerings, impactful research, innovation and internationalisation, and transformative engagement that contribute to socially just and sustainable futures.

## 3. State of the University

As part of this planning process, the University conducted a situational (SWOT) analysis to complement the broader overview of macro-environmental trends outlined in the previous section, to identify strengths and opportunities that can be optimised in pursuit of Vision 2030, while addressing challenges and threats that may impact negatively on students, staff, and external stakeholders. This analysis is illustrated in the graphic below to provide a visual summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the APP 2025 has considered.

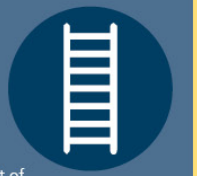
## STRENGTHS

- Largest comprehensive higher education institution in the Eastern Cape
- Wide range of programmes and qualifications from certificate to doctoral level
- Humanising pedagogies and proactive student support interventions (academic, psychosocial, and financial) that enhance student access for success
- Growing contribution to public intellectual discourse
- Extensive engagement and collaboration with communities, business, industry, government, and civil society in the service of society
- Leader in transdisciplinary sustainability sciences
- Socially responsive and impactful science, innovation, and technology to promote the public good
- University with the only dedicated ocean sciences campus in South Africa
- Innovative, interprofessional approach to medical and health education
- Wide-ranging efforts to promote social justice, equality, and non-discrimination
- Expanding support for student entrepreneurship and youth employability
- A growing alumni network nationally and internationally
- Investment in technologically enabled learning and teaching spaces and modernised infrastructure
- Multi-campus university with distinct niches for each campus
- New state-of-the-art Science Centre launched at the Ocean Sciences Campus
- Stable, ethical governance and management
- Dedicated, highly skilled employees
- Growing pool of research associates, postdoctoral fellows, and honorary, emeritus, ad personam, visiting, and adjunct (HEAVA) professors
- Innovative solutions to sustainability challenges (e.g., energy and water scarcity)
- Establishment of Virtual Academy

## WEAKNESSES

- Cumbersome administrative and lifelong learning processes and procedures
- Insufficient flexible educational opportunities for the adult market
- Inadequate, affordable on-campus student accommodation
- Need to review programme and qualifications mix, academic size and shape, modes of delivery, and pedagogical approaches
- Limited financial assistance for "missing middle" and postgraduate students
- Declining postgraduate and international student enrolments
- Inadequate career pathing and promotion opportunities for employees
- Proportion of academic staff with doctoral qualifications below the national average
- High student: staff ratios and limited postgraduate supervisory capacity in certain academic disciplines/fields of study
- Declining research outputs of permanent academic staff
- Retention of talented, diverse employees, especially in scarce and critical skills
- Holistic student and employee wellness
- Constrained financial resources and relatively high dependence on government funding
- Inadequate unencumbered third-stream income to fund strategic imperatives and aspirations
- Cost of rising demands for wraparound student support (e.g., accommodation, transportation, catering, etc.)
- Declining student success rates, and graduate outputs
- Rising student debt levels

## OPPORTUNITIES



- Africa's demographic dividend – burgeoning youth population
- Increased collaborations with industry and employers to enhance curriculum responsiveness and graduate employability
- Stackable credentials and fully online offerings in support of lifelong learning
- Digitalisation – leverage innovative technologies, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, machine learning, 5G and edge computing
- Expanded international partnership footprint, particularly in Africa and the global South
- Flexible/hybrid ways of working to enhance the employee value proposition
- Strengthened engagement and partnerships with TVET and community colleges to facilitate integrated post-school education and training
- Partnerships with schools to improve quality of basic education
- Education and skills for the future world of work
- High-technology industrialisation, automotive sector and e-mobility
- Nano- and biotechnologies
- Oceans economy
- Agricultural production and agri-processing
- Healthy nutrition
- Improving access to quality healthcare
- Just energy transition - renewable energy sources & technologies
- Localisation and SMME development
- Presidential PhD Initiative
- The Comprehensive Student Funding Model
- Implementation of a new streamlined work visa application system to attract skilled immigrants
- Opportunities presented through BRICS & its expansion to 10 member countries

## THREATS

- Weakening national and global economy
- Rising global geo-political tensions, conflicts and nationalism
- Persistently high levels of unemployment, poverty, and inequality
- Increasing number of unemployed graduates
- High interest rates, inflation and households under pressure due to cost-of-living crisis
- Pervasive food insecurity and hunger
- Rising social unrest
- Rapid urbanisation and uneven access to quality human settlements
- Constrained national and provincial fiscus and impact of Government austerity measures
- Financial sustainability within the higher education sector – rising costs, declining state subsidies, and NSFAS administration challenges
- Study loan burden for the "missing middle"
- Environmental risks - water and energy insecurity, as well as the impacts of climate change, natural disasters, pollution, and loadshedding
- Quality of basic education and schooling, especially poor performance in mathematics and science
- Increased national and global competition for talent
- Crime, violence, and substance abuse
- Gender-based violence and gender inequality
- Digital divide and unequal access to mobile devices, data connectivity and high data costs
- Rising cybersecurity and privacy concerns
- Outbreaks of new infectious diseases/pandemics
- Instability caused by coalitions in provincial and local government, governance failures within municipalities and poor public service delivery
- Poor local maintenance of city infrastructure

This diagrammatic overview focuses on selected strengths, strategic opportunities, and differentiating trajectories that inform Vision 2030 strategy implementation. Given that many of the threats were discussed as part of the situational analysis and the challenges will be indicated in the institutional performance review of the APP, these will not be further explored in this section. Rather, the focus will be on the strengths and opportunities that the University seeks to leverage in pursuit of its strategic aspirations and goals.

## *Strengths and Opportunities*

The University's Vision 2030 strategic aspirations have been crafted against the backdrop of the global, continental, and national development goals articulated in the UN 2030 SDGs, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the South African 2030 National Development Plan (NDP) respectively and take cognisance of the national legislative mandates and post-school education and training priorities and realities.

As the University charts its future in alignment with its Vision 2030 Strategy, it is consolidating excellence across its distinctive intellectual niches and key strategic trajectories. This is differentiating the University within the diverse higher education landscape as a socially embedded institution in service to society.

Game-changing differentiators and niches ensure that the University is poised to change the world through generating cutting-edge knowledge that contributes to a sustainable future include the following areas of strength and opportunity.

### *Embracing the Mandela Identity*

Nelson Mandela University remains committed to giving intellectual and programmatic expression to the Mandela name and identity. The Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) and the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) constitute a key intellectual differentiator for the University. Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the primary custodian of the Mandela legacy, significantly catalysed this scholarly endeavour. TIMS is driving the University's pursuit of becoming the pre-eminent academic expression of Mandela, hosting workshops and events to foster a vibrant intellectual culture.

### *Student Access for Success and Humanising Pedagogies*

The focus on promoting holistic student access for success remains paramount, especially given that Nelson Mandela University draws more than two-thirds of its incoming students from the Eastern Cape. The University has been systematically increasing access to higher education for first-generation students from quintile one to three schools, almost two-thirds (63.4%) of whom depend on NSFAS funding. In embracing this core mandate, the University invests extensively in various strategies to provide supportive living and learning environments conducive to improved academic performance.

In facilitating holistic student access for success, the University has adopted a humanising pedagogical approach as the philosophical underpinning for learning, teaching, curriculum development, and assessment. This is largely based on the education philosophy and work of Paulo Freire, which liberates human agency. In conceptualising student success broadly, the University also implements student life and development interventions aimed at cultivating socially conscious, responsible citizens.

### *Values-driven Transformative Institutional Culture and Empowered Employees*

Cascading the *Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture* is a further critical enabler for realising Vision 2030. Good progress has been made in implementing forward-looking institutional culture interventions that advance decolonisation and curriculum transformation; tap into the contribution of the arts, culture, and heritage in promoting social cohesion; deepen a culture of open engagement; improve student and employee wellbeing; and promote a vibrant campus life experience.

During 2024, the University Executive Management approved an institutional culture conceptual framework and strategy which includes six signature programmes to cultivate a transformative, values-driven institutional culture. These institutional culture interventions were recently presented to the Middle Management Forum and Senate for input and are being launched in a phased manner from September to December.

# 4. Key strategic trajectories

## *Repositioning Equalising Forms of Engagement*

The University is widely recognised for its engaged scholarship which seeks to co-create pioneering, African-purposed solutions to complex planetary and societal challenges. This is part of a broader strategy to reconfigure the University in alignment with a reimagined and non-paternalistic paradigm of engagement that can more meaningfully contribute to alleviating human precarity.

As part of the Nelson Mandela University organisational redesign process, a new executive management portfolio was established, rooted in the interplay between engagement and transformation to provide intellectual and strategic leadership in support of the vision, strategic objectives and core academic missions of the University. In so doing, the University has responded to a key dilemma facing the higher education sector, namely, engaging authentically and purposefully with the current socio-economic, environmental, cultural, and political challenges of our time and place through social embeddedness.

The establishment of the Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) confirms the University's commitment to reimagine, reposition and reframe its character as an engaged, responsive university. The ETP continues to spearhead 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 that serves the public good. The entities, projects and programmes constituting the ETP have flourished through new and revitalised affiliations with faculties, entities, and other support service units across the institution and beyond to become more impactful.

The Institutional Stakeholder-Community Engagement Framework (ISCEF), adopted in November 2023, guides the initiatives of the Engagement Office (EO) in alignment with Vision 2030. Conceptually, the University has reorganised various transdisciplinary projects into thematic hubs. These eight Hubs of Convergence (HoCs) are spaces in which University entities and faculties co-construct programmes in collaboration with stakeholder communities across civil society at large. 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 output to drive social inclusion and cohesion. Key areas of focus for the eight HoCs include individual and organisational wellness, food sovereignty, addressing GBV, developing local economies, and providing support to community-based organisations.

### *Transdisciplinary Sustainability Sciences*

Building on our strengths in natural sciences, engineering, health, and transformative engagement, Nelson Mandela 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 Mandela Institute for Sustainable Futures (MISF). This will seek to synergise the activities of entities such as the Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR), Marine Spatial Planning, the Sustainability Research Unit, Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Africa Earth Observation Network (AEON), as well as many Research Chairs. Currently only virtual, 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 University has been awarded two major externally funded grants to realise the potential of a sustainable green hydrogen economy for South Africa. One grant of R8.7 million will fund the development of the Eastern Cape's green hydrogen strategy while another, of R24 million, will fund a feasibility study to be undertaken by a consortium led by Nelson Mandela University and the Ikigai Group, comprising several industry leaders from the United Kingdom, Europe, and Japan. A further transdisciplinary sustainability initiative will contribute to a just transition from fossil fuels to more sustainable development pathways. To this end, the Presidential Climate Commission has adopted the report Social Ownership Models in the Energy Transition compiled by a team of researchers at the University.

The University has confirmed its position as an emerging leader in sustainability sciences on the African continent with exceptional ratings in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, which assess the performance of universities in contributing to the UN SDGs. In 2024, Nelson Mandela University was ranked among the top six universities in South Africa. For the fourth year since the University started participating in these rankings, Life Below Water (SDG 14) continued to be a flagship, with Nelson Mandela University one of only two universities in South Africa to rank in the top 100 for the SDG Life Below Water (SDG 14).

As part of the University's drive to cultivate graduates who are responsible citizens, the University's Social Consciousness and Sustainable Futures (SCSF) module was offered for the first time to all first-year students in 2024. This module aims to provide students with a better understanding of their social responsibility, challenging them to use their skills and qualifications in striving for a more sustainable and humane society. Since its launch in March 2024, the University's Science Centre has worked to establish itself as a cornerstone of transdisciplinary science education, communication, and engagement. With more than 2 500 visitors in its first four months of operation, the

Centre has attracted diverse audiences and catered to multiple stakeholders across the University and beyond by hosting numerous events and exhibitions.

The Nelson Mandela University Research Week took place from 9-13 September 2024 with the theme *"Advancing the International Decade of Science for Sustainable Development"*. This event focused on the evolving role of research in shaping South Africa's future by responding to grand societal challenges, including climate change, food security, and health disparities. To this end, the University's research agenda and themes are aligned with the global SDGs while also addressing the unique challenges faced by the African continent.

In addition to harnessing its excellence in sustainability sciences, the University is also intentionally driving the transition towards becoming an environmentally sustainable institution. It is increasing efforts to promote environmental sustainability through innovative solutions to water, energy, and food insecurity across its campuses. As part of these efforts, the University launched a 1-megawatt solar photovoltaic installation, which can generate 17% of South Campus's energy usage. This will be scaled up as the renewable energy roll-out unfolds on all campuses. Within an environment of ongoing water scarcity, the University is also implementing innovative strategies to increase the use of secondary water sources such as return effluent (RE), borehole water, rain harvesting, and grey water to reduce its reliance on the municipal supply.

### *Ocean Sciences*

The UN proclaimed 2021-2030 as the International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development to mobilise stakeholders worldwide behind a common framework to protect the world's oceans. With the launch of the first dedicated Ocean Sciences Campus in South Africa in September 2017, Nelson Mandela University began an exciting journey towards becoming the destination of choice for Ocean Sciences. The Ocean Sciences Campus is a hub for creative, pioneering transdisciplinary, postgraduate ocean sciences research, innovation and engagement. This is geared towards building and maintaining critical mass in key niches, namely, 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. Examples of cutting-edge postgraduate qualifications that have been accredited over the past five years include the Honours degree in Marine Engineering, and Masters' programmes in Maritime

Studies, Maritime Management, and Ocean Governance. In addition, Nelson Mandela University is leading a collaboration with eight other South African universities to develop the South African Masters in Ocean Science (SAMOS) programme with funding from the European Union.

Developing our ocean sciences niche leverages existing strategic advantages such as our five NRF-funded South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chairs in the domains of marine ecology; oceanography and marine food security; climate change; oceans governance and the law of the seas in Africa; marine spatial planning; and ocean cultures and heritage. Various research entities promote pioneering research and innovation in support of global, continental, and national endeavours to unlock the economic potential of the oceans to promote sustainable livelihoods for marginalised coastal communities. These entities include the Institute for Coastal and Marine Research, the FishFORCE Academy, the South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), the African Centre for Coastal Paleoscience, and the Marine Robotics Unit. Nelson Mandela University's engagement institute, eNtsa, also marked a significant milestone with the launch of its new engagement and innovation facility on 15 March 2024 at the Ocean Sciences Campus. This new facility is set to provide product and material testing to the automotive and marine manufacturing industries.

Partnerships with other educational institutions, government, civil society, and key industry players are in place to enhance our scientific and policy impact in relevant domains, and to ensure a collective drive towards sustainably embracing the potential of the oceans economy. To this end, the University serves as the headquarters of the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), established in 2014 to enhance the coordination of quality maritime education, training and research with partner institutions. Infrastructure developments funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) have contributed to investments in modernised laboratories, facilities, and equipment on the Ocean Sciences Campus. The University has won five national and international awards for the new triple-story E Block extension, which has several dedicated research spaces, specialised laboratories, meeting areas and an eight-metre-deep diving tank.

Under the leadership of the interim head of Ocean Sciences, excellent progress is being made with institutionalising this important strategic trajectory. This includes the establishment of a transversal, multi-stakeholder Ocean Sciences Stakeholder Forum with the mandate of fostering inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration to position Mandela University as the destination of choice in addressing the challenges confronting our oceans.

## *Medical School*

Developing a functional, high-quality medical programme, supported by a thriving Faculty of Health Sciences, has been an ongoing strategic priority for the University. Now in its fourth year, the Medical School is making a tangible contribution to enhancing the delivery of pro-poor and accessible healthcare in South Africa. The Medical 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 University is actively pursuing partnerships with local government, business, other educational institutions, and public and private health service providers to promote access to comprehensive health services as part of an integrated health and education innovation precinct.

As one of only two medical schools in the region offering a full undergraduate medical degree (MBChB), the Medical School is evolving towards offering medical specialist training. Two-thirds of the student enrolment in the MBChB programme is drawn from quintile 1-3 schools. This is a crucial dimension of strategic differentiation since it removes the structural barriers that prevent learners from low-income communities from qualifying as medical doctors.

Beyond training medical and healthcare workers, the University is also deploying its full range of research and innovation capabilities in the search for new diagnostic, therapeutic and vaccine technologies. These will be directed towards the fight against pandemics, legacy communicable diseases such as TB and HIV/AIDS, public health risks such as infectious diseases, malnutrition and food safety, lifestyle diseases, environmental pollution, and climate-related health risks of the future.

The use of big data analytics, AI, machine and deep learning tools, together with the University's long-standing capabilities in mobile, remote sensing and robotic technologies, are being leveraged as further crucial assets. As an example, an exciting addition to the Medical School was the launch of the research chair in nanomedicine in 2021, which has developed a transdisciplinary platform for postgraduate students pursuing ground-breaking research.

Guided by the University's humanising pedagogical philosophy, the learning and teaching approach of the medical programme makes extensive use of digital infrastructure and technologies that facilitate connectivity with neighbouring hospitals, clinics, and other educational institutions. The University collaborates with all partner institutions in producing fit-for-purpose, service-oriented and civic-minded medical professionals committed to making a difference in the lives of the disadvantaged. In so doing, while the human and capital investments for the medical school are significant, the returns for public health education and research will be even greater.

Two Masters' of Medicine in Psychiatry and Paediatrics, as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Mental Health, have recently been submitted to the DHET for clearance. 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 positively contribute to providing research-oriented medical practitioners and specialists in South Africa, especially for the Eastern Cape. Curriculum development for a further five MMed programmes is proceeding.

The first cohort of Mandela doctors is set to complete their sixth year of study at the end of 2026. The programme continues to achieve excellent pass rates of between 98% and 100%, and the initial intake of medical students in 2021 have now started their clinical rotations on the training platform at Dora Nginza and Livingstone Hospitals.

The University's Medical School Community Advisory Board (CAB) was inaugurated on Missionvale Campus in May 2024. The nine-member board includes academics, civil society representatives, and seasoned medical practitioners. The CAB will support the Medical School by bringing together diverse insights and community voices as agents of change.

The Faculty of Health Sciences has received requests to share its experience of starting a medical school with other universities, as the Medical School has been held up as a beacon for benchmarking by other universities wishing to follow suit.

### *Revitalising the Humanities*

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). 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, transdisciplinarity, digital humanities, entrepreneurship, and social justice.

The Faculty 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. New modules introduced into the curriculum to provide access to indigenous knowledge include 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, which all point to the value of memorialisation of Africa, its people, and experiences. Nelson Mandela University, in partnership with the University of Fort Hare, Rhodes University and Walter Sisulu University, hosted the inaugural IKS Conference in August 2024, with support from the Eastern Cape Provincial Health Department, a significant acknowledgment of the importance of this area of scholarship.

The Faculty of Humanities has launched the first Digital Humanities hub in the country focused on innovation and exploration of IKS, with flagship projects. This hub aims to contribute to the revitalisation and Africanisation of the humanities by creating transdisciplinary, collaborative digital spaces that facilitate critical and diverse digital humanities-related activities and engagements. These include virtual African language learning, the intellectual histories of Black South Africans, and a self-sustaining, community-embedded, micro-certificate in IKS and Agricultural Science being developed in partnership with learners and youth from Gqeberha's Northern areas. The hosting of the Digital Humanities Association of South Africa Conference and DHIgnite Symposium in late 2023, are indicative of the inroads being made nationally in this area. The Faculty is also emerging strongly in national dialogues and scholarship on the value of humanistic and ethical considerations in Artificial Intelligence (AI) interventions.

### *Gender and Women Studies*

The Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) was launch in October 2019 and has been making a significant contribution to advancing intersectional and inter-disciplinary approaches to promoting gender equality and transformation. As part of its educational and advocacy mandate, the Centre is championing sectoral efforts to promote gender equity, including conducting anti-GBV training.

Through its programmatic work and intellectual leadership, the Centre has made impressive strides in establishing an Eastern Cape "gender corridor" by linking universities and scholars who address gender questions and profile African women's biographical intellectual histories. This research aims to contribute to reducing gender-based inequalities and violence by showcasing the roles of women in political advancement and transformation through history.

This drive has been significantly bolstered by the launch of the DSI-NRF SARChI Chair in African Feminist Imagination (AFEMI). The Chair studies the creative arts, popular culture, and other expressions of African feminist energies, while expanding African feminist theory and scholarship, and training future generations of scholars.

Ongoing projects to advance gender equality undertaken by the CWGS and AFEMI Chair include developing a Gender Transformation Framework, finalising the Gender Curriculum Mapping Project, as well as designing two new postgraduate degree programmes in gender studies. The CWGS and the AFEMI Chair have also been awarded the prestigious Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Programme (CADFP) to develop a programme on African Queer Vocabularies and Womanist Approaches, as well as an online global module for gender studies.

### *Student Entrepreneurship and Youth Employability*

Nelson Mandela University is seized with the challenge of rising youth unemployment and seeks to nurture graduates as adaptable lifelong learners who are set apart through attributes such as intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, integrity, social awareness and progressive agency.

A convening group has been established to coordinate various initiatives promoting student entrepreneurship and youth employability. Opportunities for developing employability skills and capabilities, and other services, such as career fairs and networking opportunities, are provided through various academic support units such as the University's Learning & Teaching Collab, Emthonjeni Wellness and Career Services, as well as student societies or other and extracurricular activities. The Career Services Unit (CSU) connects students with industry opportunities and facilitates career fairs and matchmaking events to improve job prospects for graduates.

Student entrepreneurship is a key focus area for the University, with the dedicated Madibaz Youth Entrepreneurship Lab established to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem within the institution. The University is part of Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE), a national platform to advance entrepreneurship at universities. Through these initiatives, the University is implementing various programmatic initiatives such as Student Employability and Entrepreneurship Development (SEED) to develop employability skills and an entrepreneurial mindset, while also giving students opportunities to expand their professional networks and learn from experienced peers through a mentorship programme.

Building on the successes of the SEED programme and the dedicated Madibaz Youth Entrepreneurship Lab, the University has established the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI). CfERI aims to stimulate the establishment and growth of youth start-up companies and other compatible student businesses, promoting student entrepreneurship and organisation partnerships. By providing student entrepreneurs and youth-owned enterprises access to mentors, advisors, training, capital, and university resources, CfERI encourages development, commercialisation and entrepreneurship that advances the economy of Nelson Mandela Bay.

As part of building an ecosystem of youth entrepreneurs in the province, a chapter of the community of practice (CoP) for Youth Entrepreneurship Incubators has been established in Nelson Mandela Bay convened by the University. The University is further scaling up its contribution to student employability and harnessing Africa's youth demographic dividend by integrating and aligning its work into a Mandela Africa Hub for Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation. The Mandela Africa Hub will be an integrated platform for collaborative partnerships and co-learning that facilitate the co-shaping of Afrocentric entrepreneurs and social innovators in critical sectors.

### *Digitalisation and Virtual Academy*

Progress has been made on the University's Digital Transformation (Dx) Strategy, including a catalytic, high-impact project to establish a Virtual Academy. The website, Virtual Academy, provides an overview of the purpose of the Virtual Academy and its progress. The intention of the Virtual Academy is to develop into a large interconnected system for human-centred digital innovation, to advance knowledge and foster collaboration, efficiency, and digital inclusion. Bringing this work to life will take centre stage, along with greater digitalisation of systems.

Designing the Virtual Academy within a resource-constrained environment has been embraced as a defining feature in its development and can serve as a model for other such initiatives. It is being designed to align with emerging concepts in post-pandemic higher education, Society 5.0, Industry 5.0, and Education 5.0. The Virtual Academy will assist in enhancing institutional capacity to address the demands of an increasingly digital world and advancements in AI.

Investment in lecturers' professional development, pedagogical preparation, and curriculum alignment is recognised as crucial alongside the development of online qualifications and short learning programmes to enhance lifelong learning opportunities. The Virtual Academy will accommodate a maker space where those working on digital innovations can experiment with advanced digital technologies and brainstorm solutions.

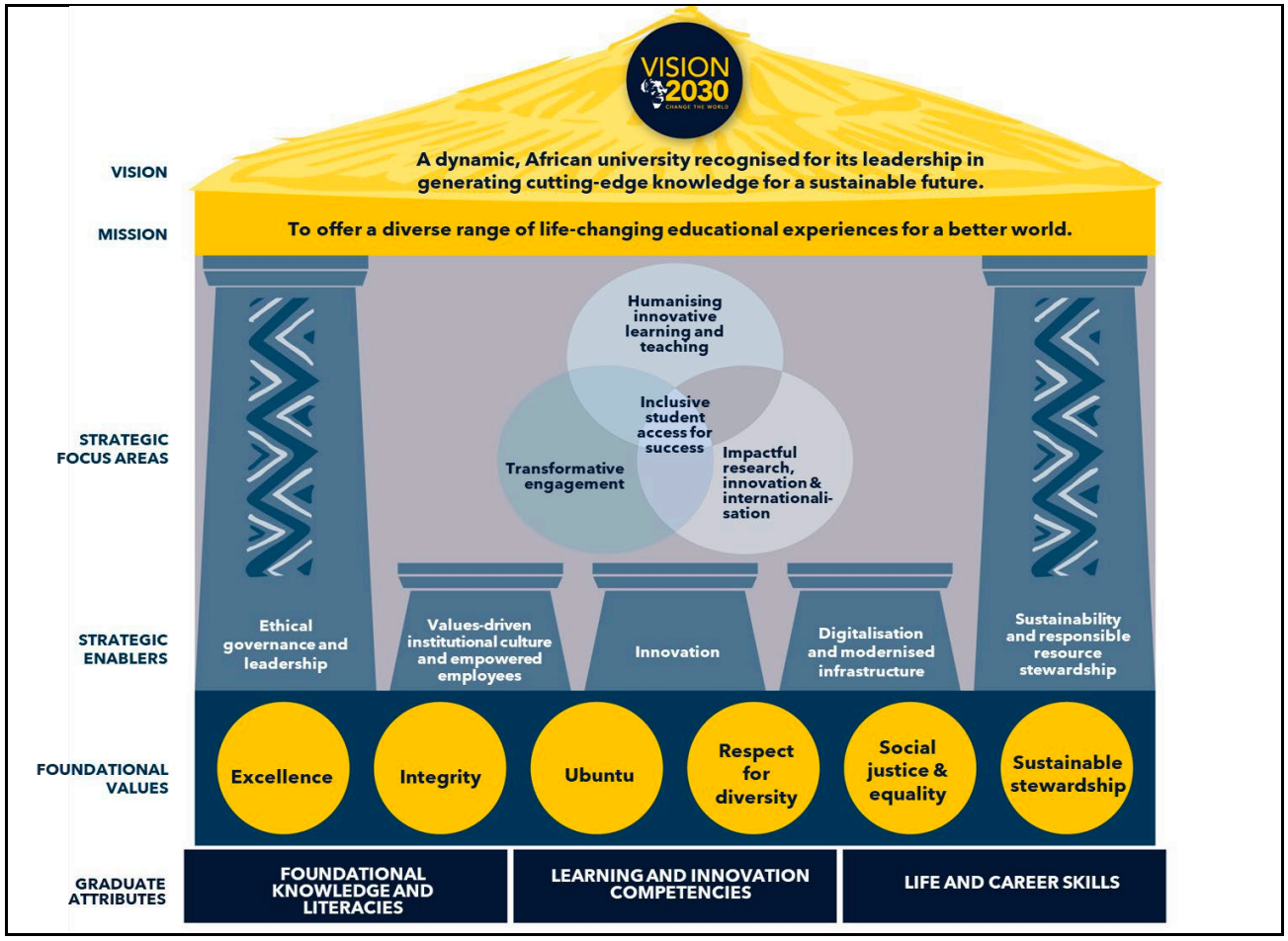
The University is deliberate in ensuring that digitalisation advances digital inclusion and strives to equip staff and students with appropriate tools for learning, teaching, research, and engagement. The Student Devices Initiative (SDI) project has distributed 19 500 laptops over a five-year period from 2019 to 2023. Coupled with Wi-Fi densification on all campuses and a project that links accredited off-campus residences to the University Wi-Fi network, the University has made excellent progress in promoting digital access.

In conclusion, various dynamic forces are influencing higher education, challenging Nelson Mandela University to take stock of where it comes from and chart future directions informed by a rapidly evolving context and responsiveness to societal needs, particularly within a deeply unequal society. This underscores the importance of the role of higher education in contributing to building a more democratic, inclusive society in which the pursuit of knowledge is not for narrow elitist ends but contributes to improving the quality of life of all communities and citizens.

Against the backdrop of the situational analysis and a careful assessment of institutional strengths and strategic opportunities, the University has crafted the Vision 2030 Strategy, which is outlined as a precursor to the institutional performance review.

## SECTION B: STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The Vision 2030 Strategic Plan outlines the University's vision, mission, values, educational purpose and philosophy, distinctive knowledge paradigm, desired graduate attributes, strategic focus areas and enablers, which are visually depicted below.



## 1. Vision

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

## 2. Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing educational experiences for a better world. To achieve our vision and mission, we will ensure that:

- Our values inform and define our institutional ethos and distinctive educational purpose and philosophy.
- We are 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.
- We provide a vibrant, stimulating and richly diverse environment that enables employees and students to reach their full potential.
- We develop graduates and diplomates to be responsible global citizens capable of critical reasoning, innovation, and adaptability.
- We create and sustain an environment that encourages and supports a vibrant research, scholarship and innovation culture.
- We engage in mutually beneficial partnerships locally, nationally and globally to enhance social, economic and ecological sustainability.

## 3. Values

The Vision 2030 stakeholder engagement processes re-affirmed the importance of all students, employees and alumni living the University's core values. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to embodying our values as we execute our vision and mission, design of our academic programmes and curricula, engage in our academic core missions, deliver our professional, administrative and support services, and engage with our stakeholders.

### *Respect for diversity*

- We reflect and serve diverse regional, national, and global communities.
- We promote an open society where critical scholarship and the expression of a multiplicity of opinions and ideas are actively encouraged.
- We foster an environment in which diversity is appreciated, respected, and celebrated.
- We foster a culture that welcomes and respects diverse identities, heritages, and life experiences.

### *Excellence*

- We encourage the pursuit of the highest levels of academic, civic, and personal achievement.
- We provide a supportive and affirming environment that enables our students, employees, and publics to reach their full potential.
- We pursue inclusive excellence by embedding equality of access and opportunity in our policies, processes, systems, and practices.
- We seek to foster a culture of intellectual and personal growth, and lifelong learning.
- We promote, recognise and reward excellence in our teaching, learning, research, innovation, creative outputs, engagement, and service delivery.

### *Social justice and equality*

- We are 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.
- We encourage mutually beneficial, equalising partnerships and engagement with our core publics to co-create sustainable, innovative solutions to persistent societal and planetary challenges.
- We cultivate living, learning and work environments that enable students and employees to realise their full potential, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence.
- We develop our graduates as global citizens capable of developing and applying knowledge across multiple contexts to make meaningful contributions to advancing a socially just, equal society.

### *Ubuntu*

- We are a people-centred, values-driven university that seeks to foster a compassionate and caring institutional culture.
- We respect the dignity of others and strive to be human-centred and relational.
- We recognise our mutual interdependence.
- We promote socially conscious and responsible citizenship.

### *Integrity*

- We commit ourselves to the highest standards of personal honesty and exemplary moral character.
- We are dedicated to cultivating an atmosphere of trust.
- We take responsibility for our decisions, behaviours and actions, and their consequences.
- We ensure the integrity of our policies, information, systems, and processes.

### *Sustainable stewardship*

- We are committed to environmental sustainability and recognise our responsibility to conserve, protect and sustainably manage natural resources for current and future generations.
- We promote the integration of sustainability into our governance, leadership, academic core missions and operations, as well as the design and maintenance of physical and digital infrastructure.
- We inspire students and employees to embrace responsible stewardship of all financial, human, infrastructural and environmental resources entrusted to them.

## 4. Distinctive Knowledge Paradigm

Nelson Mandela 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 our world.
- Application of ethical knowledge to advance social justice, the public good and a sustainable future for our 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.

## 5. Educational Purpose and Philosophy

We strive to be in the service of society through our learning and teaching, research, innovation, and engagement activities. To achieve this:

- We are committed to liberating the full human potential of our employees and students in the pursuit of responsible, democratic global citizenship.
- We advance the frontiers of knowledge to contribute to a socially just and sustainable future in the service of society.
- We adopt innovative, humanising pedagogies and practices that affirm diverse knowledge paradigms and world views.
- We inspire our stakeholders to be passionate about and respectful of an ecologically diverse and sustainable natural environment.
- We are known for our 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.
- We place students at the centre of all we do to enable them to deploy their agency during their studies and in their future lives as alumni.
- We seek to address the grand challenges confronting society and the planet through the co-creation of sustainable solutions with all our publics.

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

## 6. Desired Graduate Attributes

Graduate attributes are the high-level knowledge, skills, qualities, and understandings that a student acquires through their learning and experiences at university. These attributes equip graduates for lifelong personal development, to be successful in society, and to shape the contribution they can 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, and not only acquire a fixed set of skills that prepare them narrowly for the world of work.

The Vision 2030 Strategy makes provision for generic, cross-cutting graduate attributes that can be developed in various ways within and beyond the curriculum. These attributes outline the highly valued 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 or profession, while also embracing inter- and transdisciplinary thinking to solve complex problems and challenges.

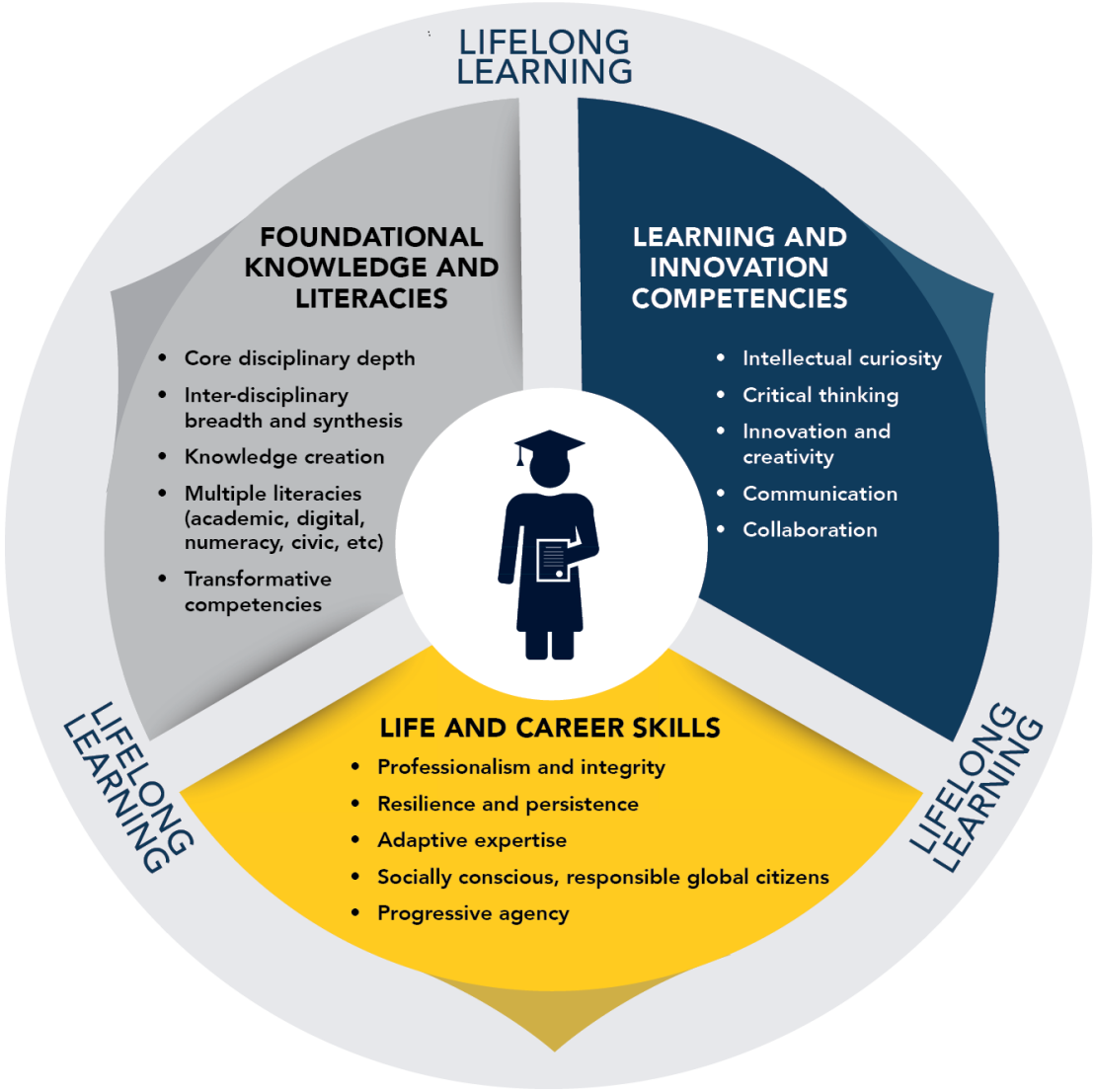
Through benefitting from a life-changing educational experience at Nelson Mandela University, our graduates will develop the knowledge, skills, and attributes required for success in life and work in a complex and rapidly changing world. The key categories within which our generic graduate attributes have been identified and conceptualised include the following:

- 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 literacies such as scientific, linguistic, digital, financial, cultural and civic literacy. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, students need 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 own position, and finding practical solutions to dilemmas and conflicts.
    - Taking responsibility is connected to the ability to reflect upon and evaluate one's own actions, experience and education to achieve personal, ethical and societal goals.

- Learning and innovation competencies are increasingly recognised as the skills that distinguish graduates who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century. Such competencies include intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
- Life and career skills need rigorous attention to ensure that graduates are equipped to navigate life and work environments confidently in the globally competitive information age. Such skills include professionalism and integrity, resilience, and persistence, adaptive expertise, and exercising progressive agency to bring about constructive change as socially conscious, responsible global citizens.

The University acknowledges the importance of students exercising their agency in advancing their personal development and growth during their studies. As part of Vision 2030, the University has outlined a broad framework of generic graduate attributes, which can be customised by faculties and professional support divisions to address the specific learning and teaching requirements of various disciplines and professions. These attributes are visually depicted in the diagram below.

**Through benefitting from a life-changing educational experience, Nelson Mandela University graduates will be known for demonstrating the following attributes:**



## 7. Strategic focus areas, enablers, and goals

The cultivation of sought-after and highly valued graduates depends on the pursuit of excellence in the University's core academic missions. Nelson Mandela University seeks to offer holistic curricular and co-curricular living and learning experiences that are student-centric and create an enabling, inclusive, and supportive environment for students to succeed in life and work. To this end, our core academic missions are not pursued as independent silos but are integrated to ensure that humanising learning and teaching are informed by impactful research, innovation, and internationalisation, as well as transformative engagement. This integrated approach to our academic core missions is at the heart of what makes the University distinctive.

Each of these Vision 2030 strategic focus areas is unpacked further below, to indicate the University's Vision 2030 strategic goals.

| Vision 2030 strategic focus areas | Goals |
|---|---|
| **SFA 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** | • Scale up distinguishing strategic academic directions that differentiate Mandela University within a diverse higher education landscape nationally and globally<br>• Embrace the distinctive features of a comprehensive programme and qualification mix that provide a range of access routes and learning pathways for multi-generational learners from diverse educational backgrounds<br>• Design and implement strategies to support the progressive migration towards high-quality, technology-rich hybrid learning within and beyond the classroom<br>• Design and offer hybrid and fully online short learning programmes and stackable credentials in support of lifelong learning and continuing professional development<br>• Advance humanising learning experiences and curriculum transformation interventions that seek to prepare graduates for success at work, entrepreneurship and in life<br>• Promote University-wide internationalisation initiatives aimed at enhancing global pedagogical relevance. |
| **SFA 2: Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures** | • Establish nationally and internationally renowned, inter- and transdisciplinary research themes that address key issues facing society and the planet<br>• Review recognition, rewards, resourcing and workload models to provide an enabling environment to generate impactful research and innovation outputs that are locally relevant and globally significant<br>• Invest in the attraction, development and retention of socially diverse, research-active postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows and early career academics to promote talent continuity, research productivity and academic excellence<br>• Leverage the expertise of the HEAVA appointees and research associates for postgraduate student supervision, co-authoring publications and joint applications for external grant funding |

| Vision 2030 strategic focus areas | Goals |
|---|---|
| | • Provide sustainable support to research chairs and entities as institutionalised mechanisms to promote synergies, enhance research and innovation productivity, and leverage external funding<br>• Enhance the global reach and visibility of the University through expanded international networks, strategic partnerships and collaborative international research grants, particularly on the African continent and in the global South<br>• Ensure that the physical and electronic library and information services collections are appropriately resourced to maintain currency with trends in scholarship across all knowledge domains. |
| **SFA 3: Engage with all publics in equalising partnerships to co-create transformative, contextually responsive solutions in pursuit of social justice and equality** | • Conceptually and programmatically anchor the strategic goals of engagement and transformation within and beyond the University<br>• Position engagement and transformation as an institutional orientation that supports the aspiration of excellence in learning, teaching and research<br>• Lead creative and pioneering engagement and transformation projects that differentiate Mandela University within the national and global higher education sector<br>• Cultivate a vibrant intellectual culture that promotes critical consciousness and creates spaces for the open sharing of diverse knowledge paradigms and ideas<br>• Develop and implement institutional policies, systems and processes to promote social inclusion and decisively eliminate all forms of discrimination, micro-aggressions and gender-based violence<br>• Embed engagement and transformation across all University portfolios for broad socio-economic impact and in the interest of the public good<br>• Cultivate a culture of scholarship as an intellectual resource base that buttresses the engagement and transformation approaches, praxes and programmes of the University<br>• Develop platforms for co-creating sustainable, innovative solutions to societal challenges through equalising partnerships with diverse publics. |

| Vision 2030 strategic focus areas | Goals |
|---|---|
| **SFA 4: Catalyse dynamic, student-centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom** | • Conceptualise, develop and co-create an African-purposed, integrated suite of thriving student life and support services that deliver evidence-based interventions to support student success<br>• Stimulate vibrant, inclusive living and learning student communities on- and off-campus through diverse intellectual, cultural, sport and recreational activities and programmes<br>• Provide curricular and co-curricular experiential learning opportunities that cultivate innovative, entrepreneurial mindsets and enhance the readiness of graduates for life and work<br>• Enact institutional communities of practice, collaborative programmes and campaigns to promote holistic student well-being, health and safety<br>• Transform the culture of dialogue and student engagement to nurture the leadership capabilities of young African leaders and intellectuals who contribute meaningfully to society<br>• Facilitate the continued involvement of alumni in the activities and initiatives of the University to enhance global visibility and reach through value-adding collaborative networks. |

The success of Nelson Mandela University in pursuing our core academic missions is dependent upon various strategic enablers that create the conditions for excellence. As a result, institutional strategies, systems, processes, and practices need to adapt continuously to ensure that strategic continuity and change are held in delicate balance. Such an enabling environment will also ensure that the University is a destination of choice for students, employees, alumni, funders and partners.

The following strategic enablers were identified as foundational pillars for the realisation of the strategic aspirations underpinning the University's Vision 2030 Strategy.

### *Ethical governance and leadership*

The University embraces the leadership ethos of its namesake, Nelson Mandela, and aims to enhance organisational effectiveness through ethical governance and leadership. We strive to 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.

### *Values-driven institutional culture and empowered employees*

In embracing the legacy of our iconic namesake, Nelson Mandela University encourages students and employees to consistently live the values of excellence, ubuntu, integrity, social justice and equality, environmental and resource stewardship, and respect for diversity. We aim 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.

### *Enabling innovation*

The University aspires to be a vibrant innovation hub that convenes diverse stakeholders to co-create transformative solutions to address perennial societal and planetary challenges. In so doing, the University seeks to foster a culture of innovation where our students, employees, and partners can collaboratively engage in scientific, technological, and creative discovery that advances the frontiers of knowledge and promotes the public good.

### *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 used to foster a vibrant living, learning, and working experience for all students and employees across all campuses.

### *Sustainability and responsible resource stewardship*

Innovative resource mobilisation and diversification is especially crucial in 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. We furthermore strive to deepen our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint through harnessing the potential of renewable energies, waste reduction and recycling, and guardianship of our unique campus ecosystems and biodiversity.

The Vision 2030 goals associated with each of these strategic enablers are outlined below.

| Vision 2030 strategic enablers | Goals |
|---|---|
| **SE 1: Embrace ethical governance and leadership approaches and practices that embody the values of the University and seek to promote service before self** | • Uphold ethical governance and leadership practices at all levels of the University to promote trust and maintain the highest standards of integrity<br>• Develop and implement leadership enhancement and capacity development programmes to sustain a pipeline of future leaders and trailblazers across all domains of the University<br>• Nurture constructive and mutually respectful engagement with key internal and external stakeholders to inform policies, strategies and decisions<br>• Embed a culture of transparency and accountability to ensure that leaders, employees and students align their conduct with the values of the University<br>• Design and implement integrated, strategy-aligned institutional performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems to enhance the accountability of the University to its multiple publics. |
| **SE 2: Foster an inclusive, values-driven institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees** | • Foster a values-driven, affirming institutional culture that promotes inclusion, holistic employee well-being and a sense of belonging<br>• Position the University as an employer of first choice for talented, high-performing employees through an enabling work environment and progressive remuneration, recognition and reward systems<br>• Accelerate the diversification of the demographic profile of employees in all occupational categories through the attraction, retention and promotion of employees from under-represented groups |

| Vision 2030 strategic enablers | Goals |
|---|---|
| | • Develop and implement integrated, dynamic talent management strategies that empower employees with the self-learning skills and flexible, adaptive mindsets required to thrive within the changing world of work. |
| **SE 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** | • Establish hubs of innovation to facilitate the convergence of students, employees and relevant external partners, in spaces conducive to co-creating and leveraging innovations to drive the inclusive economic growth and transformation<br>• Raise the profile of the University and extend our influence, both nationally and internationally, through targeted innovation forums for key stakeholders in government, industry, the non-profit sector and broader society<br>• Embed innovation within undergraduate and taught postgraduate curricula wherever appropriate, and develop channels for student participation in innovation projects<br>• Provide support at all stages of the innovation journey along with access to networks of accelerators, investors, incubation space and an enterprise development educational programme to encourage students, academics and PASS employees to translate innovative ideas into scalable solutions and sustainable enterprises<br>• Support knowledge exchange and commercialisation activities that ensure innovations are readily translated for the economic, cultural and social benefit of users worldwide. |
| **SE 4: Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery and modernised infrastructure** | • Integrate and digitalise institutional systems and processes to promote responsive decision-making, agile service delivery and improved efficiencies in support of academic excellence<br>• Progressively invest in upgraded ICT infrastructure and technologies, Wi-Fi densification and cybersecurity enhancements to facilitate migration towards digital transformation and cloud computing |

| Vision 2030 strategic enablers | Goals |
|---|---|
| | • Strengthen the University's capacity to support hybrid and fully online educational delivery through widening access to mobile devices and data connectivity for students and employees<br>• Repurpose and modernise flexibly designed physical and virtual spaces in support of learning, research, engagement and creativity in a multi-campus context<br>• Transform campuses into centres of excellence through distinctive academic programme offerings and research niches, efficient service delivery, modernised infrastructure and vibrant campus life. |
| **SE 5: Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship** | • Develop and implement a multi-year resourcing plan informed by financial modelling to fund the progressive, future-focused strategic aspirations of the University<br>• Optimise the academic programme and qualification portfolio, graduate and research outputs of each faculty to promote financial viability and maximise subsidy yield<br>• Increase and diversify revenue streams through integrated resource mobilisation, enterprise development, commercialisation and investment strategies<br>• Mobilise funding for bursaries and scholarships to widen access for academically deserving and financially needy under- and postgraduate students<br>• Develop and implement budgeting and resource allocation models that advance strategic alignment, transversal collaboration and sustainable growth<br>• Pursue responsible resource stewardship and greening strategies to enhance long-term financial and environmental sustainability<br>• Promote collective ownership of transformative procurement and supply chain management to improve the University's contribution to broad-based Black economic empowerment (B-BBEE). |

The Vision 2030 Strategy charts the future strategic trajectory of Nelson Mandela University. In cascading and operationalising institutional strategy, it is imperative that there is an institutional monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning (MERL) framework to inform the key performance indicators (KPIs) used to monitor, evaluate, and report on progress in implementing Vision 2030.

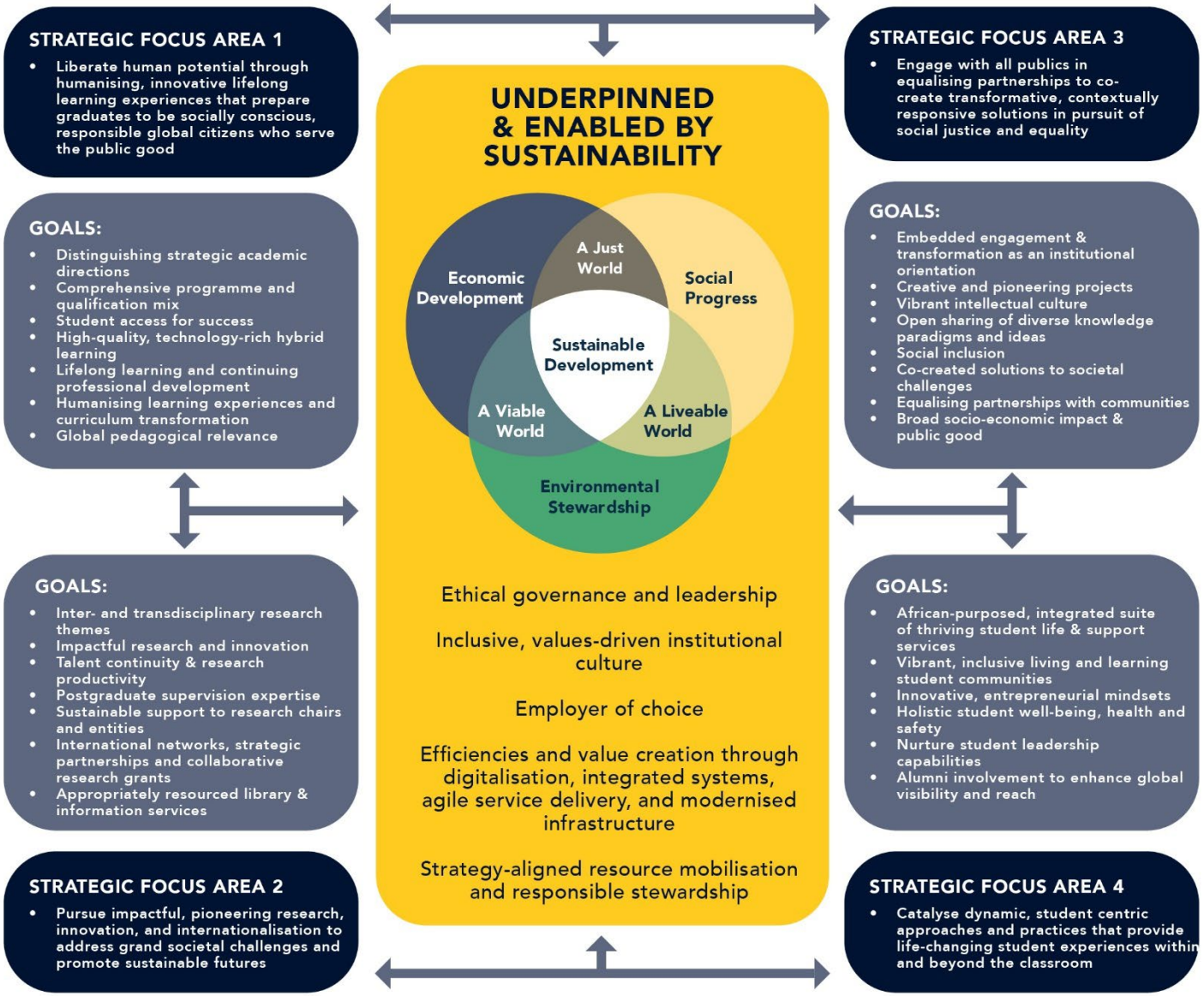
The Vision 2030 institutional MERL framework was approved by Council in September 2023. The main purpose and strategic intent of this Framework is to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of the University in monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of Vision 2030. To this end, the framework aims to address the following specific objectives:

- Monitoring progress in aligning with, and implementing, Vision 2030 strategic focus areas, enablers, and goals.
- Facilitating integrated institutional reporting systems to enhance the overall quality of institutional planning, implementation, resource allocation, and decision-making processes.
- Enhancing institutional effectiveness and efficiency through evidence-based performance reporting to Council and Executive Management (MANCO) regarding the attainment of Vision 2030 strategic goals.
- Evaluating the demonstrated results and impact of various strategic interventions against the intended goals, targets, and key deliverables.
- Enriching organisational learning through informative reporting to support strategic review, innovation, risk management, integrated assurance, and continuous improvement.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will be undertaken to assess if progress is being made in achieving expected results, to spot bottlenecks in strategy implementation, and to determine whether there are any unintended impacts. M&E systems will only add value to strategy implementation through interpretation and analysis to address the “why” and "so what" questions. This forms the basis for accountability and learning. Formulating responses to identified constraints and challenges and implementing these in real time will optimise impact.

The Vision 2030 institutional MERL framework is premised on student-centric approaches that promote student access for success through excellence in the core academic missions of learning, teaching, research, innovation, internationalisation, and transformative engagement. These core missions are supported by transversal interventions to advance transformation and promote institutional sustainability. The Office for Institutional Strategy collaborates with various other institutional entities to source both qualitative and quantitative data to monitor, evaluate, and report on progress in respect of Vision 2030 strategy implementation. Council-approved indicators for each of the strategic focus areas and selected enablers are used for this purpose.

Based on the trends observed through the Vision 2030 MERL framework, executive management and Council are provided with the information required to promote organisational learning and continuous improvement. The dimensions of the MERL framework are visually depicted in the diagram below.


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
GOALS:
• Distinguishing strategic academic directions
• Comprehensive programme and qualification mix
• Student access for success
• High-quality, technology-rich hybrid learning
• Lifelong learning and continuing professional development
• Humanising learning experiences and curriculum transformation
• Global pedagogical relevance
GOALS:
• Inter- and transdisciplinary research themes
• Impactful research and innovation
• Talent continuity & research productivity
• Postgraduate supervision expertise
• Sustainable support to research chairs and entities
• International networks, strategic partnerships and collaborative research grants
• Appropriately resourced library & information services
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2
• Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation, and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures
UNDERPINNED & ENABLED BY SUSTAINABILITY
Economic Development
A Just World
Social Progress
Sustainable Development
A Viable World
A Liveable World
Environmental Stewardship
Ethical governance and leadership
Inclusive, values-driven institutional culture
Employer of choice
Efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure
Strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship
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
GOALS:
• Embedded engagement & transformation as an institutional orientation
• Creative and pioneering projects
• Vibrant intellectual culture
• Open sharing of diverse knowledge paradigms and ideas
• Social inclusion
• Co-created solutions to societal challenges
• Equalising partnerships with communities
• Broad socio-economic impact & public good
GOALS:
• African-purposed, integrated suite of thriving student life & support services
• Vibrant, inclusive living and learning student communities
• Innovative, entrepreneurial mindsets
• Holistic student well-being, health and safety
• Nurture student leadership capabilities
• Alumni involvement to enhance global visibility and reach
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 4
• Catalyse dynamic, student centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom

The Annual Performance Plan (APP) 2025 focuses on a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the Vision 2030 MERL indicators and targets for the Strategic Focus Areas 1 to 3). These were selected to assess the performance of the University in its core academic missions of learning and teaching, research, innovation and internationalisation, and transformative engagement. Given the importance of long-term sustainability, selected indicators relating to the social, environmental, and financial sustainability of the University have also been focused on.

The next section provides an overview of the historical data trends with an accompanying narrative to elaborate on the contextual factors underpinning the trends and informing the setting of targets.

# SECTION C: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2025 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Nelson Mandela University's academic size and shape targets constitute the basis for monitoring and evaluating progress at institutional level in relation to key performance indicators (KPIs) such as student enrolments, student success, instructional staff headcounts and qualification profile, and research outputs. Although the University strives to achieve the goals in the DHET-approved 2023 to 2025 Mid-Term Enrolment Plan, some of the goals have been adjusted. Where trends have shown that the enrolment plan target might not be achievable, a revised target has been set for the APP 2025. In Table 1, which provides an overview of the DHET-required KPIs, both the enrolment plan, as well as the revised APP 2025 targets, are shown. Targets for indicators not included in the enrolment plan have been based on historical data trends and anticipated future developments. In a few selected cases, projections are indicated where it would not be meaningful or feasible to set targets for certain indicators (for example, staff turnover).

## *Annual Performance Plan 2025: Performance Indicators and Targets*

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 undergraduate diploma and degree enrolments, as well as between under- and postgraduate enrolments is closely monitored. Furthermore, enrolment targets are informed by various strategic considerations such as: the distinctive academic mandate and identity of the university; the student intake profile; current and emerging research strengths and capabilities; the qualifications profile and research outputs of academic staff; and academic planning and curriculum renewal across all faculties.

### *DHET Performance Indicators*

Table 1 provides an overview of the DHET-prescribed student access and success, staff profile, and research output indicators that all universities are required to report on, accompanied by their associated targets for 2025. In addition, this section will complement this with a comprehensive analysis of additional quantitative indicators to monitor and evaluate progress in respect of our core academic missions of student access for success, learning and teaching, research and postgraduate studies, and institutional sustainability (financial and environmental).

## *Vision 2030 Quantitative Performance Indicators*

### Table 1: Overview of the DHET-required key performance indicators

| KEY PERFORMANCE AREA | TARGET YEAR N-3 | TARGET YEAR N-2 | TARGET YEAR N-1 2024 | TARGET YEAR N 2025 | TARGET YEAR N 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HEMIS 2022 AUDITED | HEMIS 2023 AUDITED | BASED ON PRELIMINARY 2024 DATA FOR A AND C AS WELL AS APP 2024 TARGETS FOR B & D | * ORIGINAL ENROLMENT PLAN TARGETS | REVIEWED TARGETS BASED ON THE LATEST DATA TRENDS |
| **A. Access** | | | | | |
| **Headcount totals** | | | | | |
| First-time entering undergraduates | 8 555 | 6 811 | 8 036 | 7 350 | 8 556 |
| Headcount enrolments | 32 320 | 31 362 | 33 162 | 32 325 | 33 326 |
| Headcount enrolments (Foundation Provisioning) | 3 291 | 3 687 | 4 055 | | 4 278 |
| Headcount enrolments total UG | 28 698 | 28 060 | 29 775 | 27 900 | 29 911 |
| Headcount enrolments total PG | 3 410 | 3 133 | 3 230 | 4 145 | 3 285 |
| Occasional Students | 212 | 169 | 157 | 280 | 130 |
| **Enrolments by major field of study** | | | | | |
| Science and Engineering, Technology | 10 976 | 10 441 | 11 054 | 11 298 | 11 104 |
| Business/management | 10 917 | 11 204 | 12 040 | 10 364 | 12 100 |
| Education | 2 175 | 2 241 | 2 402 | 2 541 | 2 413 |
| Other humanities | 8 252 | 7 475 | 7 666 | 7 897 | 7 709 |
| Distance education enrolments | 20 | 21 | 22 | 225 | 22 |
| **B. Success (APP 2024 targets for 2024)** | | | | | |
| Graduates UG | 6 102 | 4 712 | 6 225 | 6 282 | 4 823 |
| Graduates PG | 1 271 | 1 103 | 1 570 | 1 645 | 1 226 |
| Success rate | 81% | 74% | 83% | 83% | 78% |
| **Undergraduate output by scarce skills** | | | | | |
| Engineering | 402 | 200 | 415 | 412 | 229 |
| Life and physical sciences | 193 | 148 | 230 | 265 | 163 |
| Animal and human health | 344 | 339 | 410 | 490 | 365 |
| Teacher education * | 390 | 380 | 479 | 560 | 426 |
| Scarce skills success rate | 84% | 81% | 86% | | 85% |
| *Includes PGCE - See below for breakdown of teacher education outputs. | | | | | |

*Where there is no target for the original enrolment plan it is not a required target for the enrolment plan of the DHET.

| KEY PERFORMANCE AREA | TARGET YEAR N-3 | TARGET YEAR N-2 | TARGET YEAR N-1 2024 | TARGET YEAR N 2025 | TARGET YEAR N 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HEMIS 2022 AUDITED | HEMIS 2023 AUDITED | BASED ON PRELIMINARY 2024 DATA FOR A AND C AS WELL AS APP 2024 TARGETS FOR B & D | * ORIGINAL ENROLMENT PLAN TARGETS | REVIEWED TARGETS BASED ON THE LATEST DATA TRENDS |
| **Teacher Education** | | | | | |
| B Ed | 273 | 281 | 335 | 414 | 323 |
| PGCE | 117 | 99 | 144 | 146 | 103 |
| Total | 390 | 380 | 479 | 560 | 426 |
| **C: Staff profile** | | | | | |
| % Academic staff with doctoral degrees | 45% | 47% | 47% | 49% | 48% |
| Number of NGAP staff | 16 | 18 | 19 | | 20 |
| Ratio of FTE students to FTE instructional or research staff | 29 | 28 | 29 | 29 | 29 |
| **D. Research output (APP 2024 targets for 2024)** | | | | | |
| Publication units per FTE staff | 0.66 | **0.67 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 0.71 |
| Research Master's graduates | 219 | 204 | 224 | 280 | 197 |
| Doctoral graduates | 83 | 93 | 91 | 93 | 93 |
| Publication units | 556 | **573 | 573 | 575 | 596 |

*Where there is no target for the original enrolment plan it is not a required target for the enrolment plan of the DHET.

**This data is preliminary. Final data will only be available by the end of 2024 once DHET has reviewed the publication output units for books, chapters in books and conference proceedings.

As noted in Table 1 above, the target for distance enrolments in the Enrolment Plan was considerably higher than the actual enrolments due to the planned introduction of online programmes which did not materialise as anticipated. As a result, the target for distance enrolments in the APP for 2025 has been adjusted to 22 given that the Master's in Nanoscience is the only distance programme currently offered by the University.

The various Vision 2030 Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), which can be assessed quantitatively, are outlined below with an indication of the data trends for each of the relevant performance indicators, as well as targets (or projections where appropriate).

***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***

**Performance Indicator 1: Total headcount enrolments by qualification type and level**

As indicated in Table 2, undergraduate enrolments grew rapidly at an average rate of 4.4% per annum from 2021 to 2024. Undergraduate degrees had the highest average annual growth rate of 5.0% over this period. The second highest average annual growth rate over the 2021 to 2024 period was for undergraduate diplomas and certificates with an average annual growth rate of 4.6%. Advanced diplomas were introduced to replace the former BTech degrees, which were being phased out. Advanced diplomas grew quite steeply in the first few years of being introduced, then declined over the period 2021 to 2024 at an average rate of 2.3%. Advanced diploma enrolments are expected to increase slightly and a target of 1 756 has been set for 2025. Postgraduate diplomas experienced an average annual growth of 2.2% over the period 2021 to 2024, increasing from 500 in 2021 to 533 in 2024.

During the period 2021 to 2024, the University experienced a sharp decline in postgraduate enrolments, which were 25.7% below the enrolment plan targets (2024 actual of 3 179 compared to the target of 3 995). The biggest decline over the period 2021 to 2024 was in Master's degree enrolments, which declined at 4.8% on average per annum with a total decline of 13.8%. Doctoral enrolments also declined at a high rate at 4.4% on average per annum with a total decline of 12.5% over this period. Honours degree enrolments declined slightly from 770 in 2021 to 766 in 2023 at an average annual rate of 0.2%. The target for postgraduate diplomas has been set at 568 for 2025 and a target of 806 for honours enrolments. The University aims to increase Master's enrolments to 1 362 and doctoral enrolments to 549 in 2025.

In 2022, the University experienced an unprecedented growth in enrolments from 29 735 to 32 320 (8.9% increase), because of a first-time entering undergraduate intake of 8 555, which was 22.2% above the enrolment plan target of 7 000. The sharp increase in the number of first-time entering students placed strain on the available resources of the University, such as lecturing venues and the student transport system. In addition, the overall student: staff FTE ratio increased from 27: 1 in 2021 to 29: 1 in 2022.

**Table 2: Total headcount enrolments by qualification type and level, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2024 | 2025 Target | Average annual growth rate 2021-2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UG Diploma or Certificate | 10 650 | 12 307 | 11 803 | 12 185 | 4.6% | 11 751 | 2.5% |
| Advanced Diploma | 1 751 | 1 752 | 1 723 | 1 632 | -2.3% | 1 756 | 0.1% |
| UG Degree | 13 733 | 14 639 | 14 534 | 15 888 | 5.0% | 16 404 | 4.5% |
| **Total UG** | **26 134** | **28 698** | **28 060** | **29 705** | **4.4%** | **29 911** | **3.4%** |
| PG Diploma | 500 | 527 | 427 | 533 | 2.2% | 568 | 3.2% |
| Honours | 770 | 829 | 730 | 766 | -0.2% | 806 | 1.1% |
| Master's | 1 556 | 1 486 | 1 420 | 1 342 | -4.8% | 1 362 | -3.3% |
| Doctoral | 615 | 568 | 556 | 538 | -4.4% | 549 | -2.8% |
| **Total PG** | **3 441** | **3 410** | **3 133** | **3 179** | **-2.6%** | **3 285** | **-1.2%** |
| Occasional | 160 | 212 | 169 | 157 | -0.6% | 130 | -5.1% |
| **Grand total** | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **3.6%** | **33 326** | **2.9%** |

To ensure that the quality of learning and teaching was not adversely affected by enrolment growth, the University set lower first-time entering undergraduate enrolment targets in the revised Mid-Term Review Enrolment Plan for 2023 to 2025. Undergraduate enrolments have been growing at a much higher rate than originally anticipated and the University has decided that such growth needs to slow down from 2025 in line with available physical, human and fiscal resources.

A target of 11 751 has been set for undergraduate diplomas and certificates (lower than the actual enrolments in 2024 of 12 185), while undergraduate degrees are targeted to grow to 16 404 in 2025 from 15 888 enrolments in 2024. It is projected that undergraduate enrolments will continue to grow at 3.4% on average per annum for the period 2021 to 2025 with the highest growth rate of 4.5% on average per annum for undergraduate degrees.

Postgraduate enrolments have been declining at 2.6% on average per annum over the 2021 to 2024 period. Reasons for this trend include:

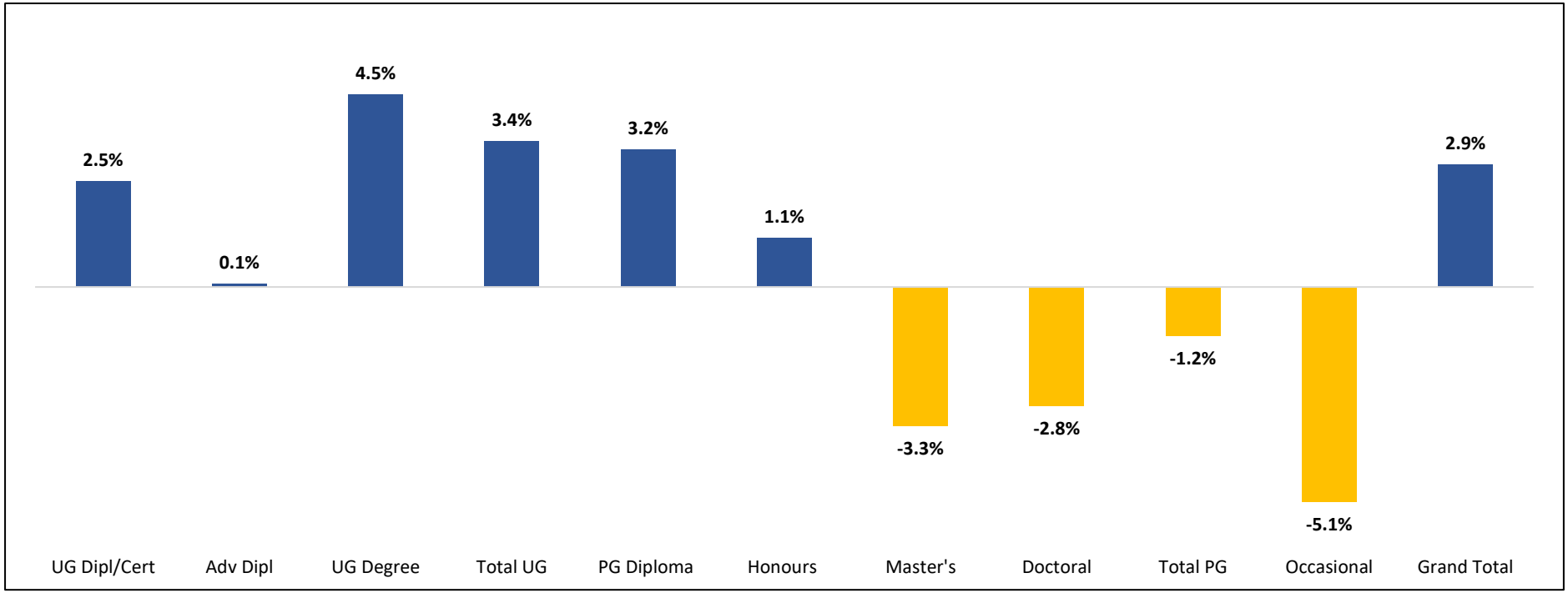
- The financial support available to postgraduate students does not cater for the number of academically eligible, financially needy students wishing to pursue postgraduate studies, especially those who received NSFAS funding at the undergraduate level.
- Restricted supervisory capacity remains an impediment to increasing postgraduate enrolments in certain fields of study. This is caused largely by the retirement of senior academics with Doctoral qualifications.
- Declines in international student enrolments, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) fields, postgraduate 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 research projects, as well as the recruitment of postgraduate students by grant holders.

The University has developed strategies to stimulate postgraduate enrolment growth. Among these, efforts are being made to secure external funding for postgraduate students through fellowships offered by the National Research Foundation (NRF), but these opportunities are highly competitive. To mitigate this, the strategic resource mobilisation endeavours of the University are geared towards securing additional third-stream funding for postgraduate scholarships and bursaries. Evidence also shows that postgraduate students are increasingly mobile and will often make the choice of where to study based on the research focus area and the reputation of a research professor. To address this, the University has enhanced the marketing of postgraduate qualifications around our defined institutional research themes, our research "champions" (such as the SARChI Chairs and NRF-rated researchers), and the niche areas of our research and engagement entities. Furthermore, various programmes are in place to improve the postgraduate qualifications profile of academic staff and to attract talented scholars with PhDs and postgraduate supervision experience to the University. Appointing research associates, HEAVA professors, and postdoctoral fellows will also contribute to expanding the postgraduate supervisory pool.

The target of 3 285 for 2025 represents a 3.3% increase from the 2024 postgraduate enrolment of 3 179.

As depicted in Figure 1, total undergraduate enrolments are expected to increase at an average annual growth rate of 3.4%, with total postgraduate enrolments declining at an average annual rate of 1.2%. Total enrolments are expected to increase at an average annual growth rate of 2.9% over the period of 2021 to 2025.
The 2025 target for total enrolments is 33 326 which will constitute a slight increase of 0.9% from 33 041 enrolments in 2024.

**Figure 1: Average annual growth rate by qualification type, 2021-2025**




## Performance Indicator 2: Demographic profile of students

As can be seen from Table 3, the demographic profile of the Nelson Mandela University student population is changing rapidly. Black (African, Coloured, and Indian) students increased from 26 590 enrolments in 2021 to 31 125 in 2024 (17.1% increase), while White students continued to decline from 3 145 in 2021 to 1 916 in 2024 (39.1% decrease). These trends are expected to continue.

**Table 3: Total headcount enrolments by population group, 2021-2024, and 2025 targets**

| Population Group | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| African | 23 217 | 26 592 | 26 538 | 28 620 | 29 024 |
| Coloured | 3 055 | 2 757 | 2 318 | 2 177 | 2 152 |
| Indian | 318 | 333 | 319 | 328 | 326 |
| White | 3 145 | 2 638 | 2 187 | 1 916 | 1 824 |
| **Grand Total** | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **33 326** |

Figure 2 indicates that African students are expected to increase from 78% in 2021 to 87% of enrolments in 2025, while White students will decrease from 11% in 2021 to 5% in 2025. Coloured students decreased from 10% of enrolments in 2021 to 7% in 2024 and they are expected to remain at 7% of enrolments in 2025. Indian student enrolments are expected to remain at 1%.

**Figure 2: Percentage headcount enrolments by population group, 2021-2024, and 2025 targets**

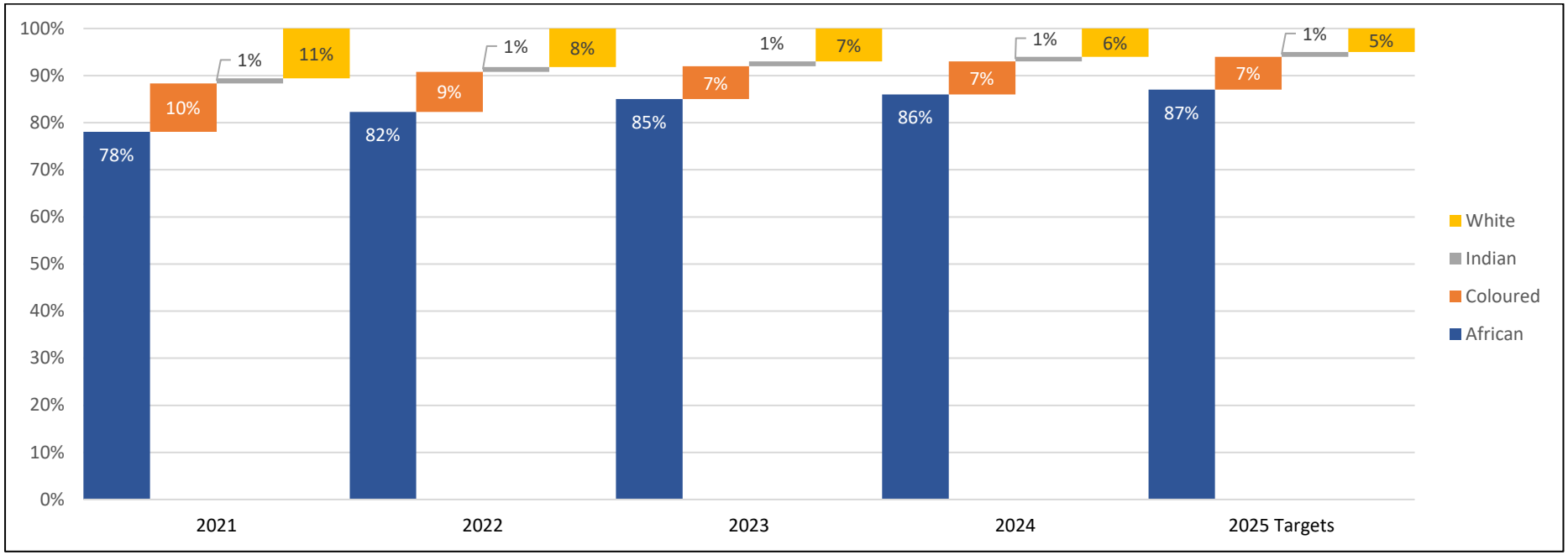



**Table 4: Total headcount enrolments by gender, 2021-2024, and 2025 targets**

| Gender | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 16 431 | 18 464 | 18 421 | 19 690 | 19 529 |
| Male | 13 304 | 13 856 | 12 941 | 13 351 | 13 797 |
| **Total** | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **33 326** |

Female enrolments continued to increase from 16 431 in 2021 to 19 690 in 2024, while male enrolments decreased from 13 304 in 2021 to 13 351 in 2024 (see Table 4). Female enrolments as a proportion of total enrolments continued to increase from 55% in 2021 to 60% in 2024, while male enrolments decreased from 45% to 40%. The University aims to put strategies in place to increase male enrolments to reverse this trend. The projected distribution for 2025 is 41% male enrolments and 59% female enrolments.

**Figure 3: Percentage headcount enrolments by gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

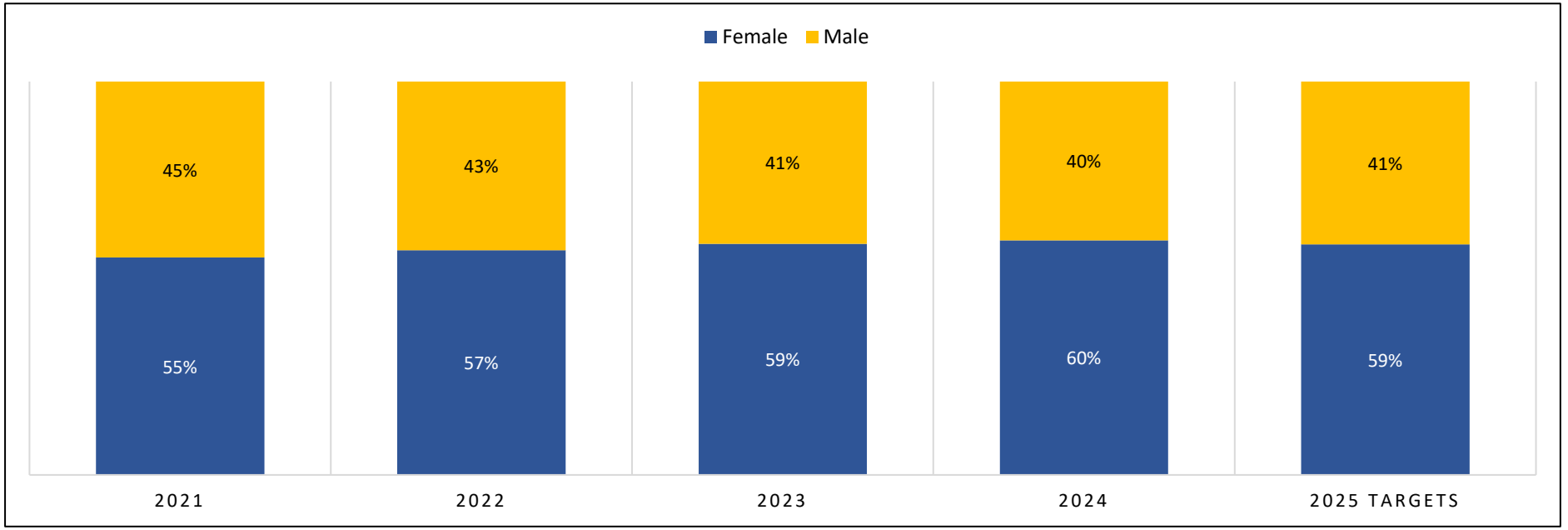


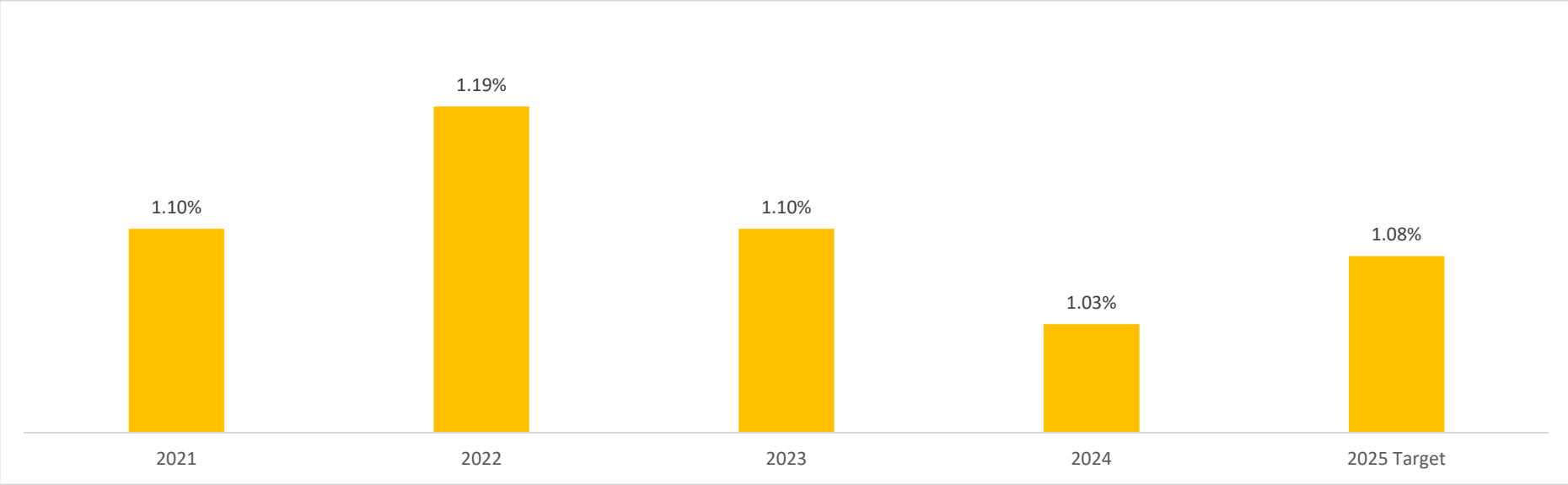

Figure 4 indicates that the percentage of differently abled students has varied between 1.03% and 1.10% of total enrolments over the period 2021 to 2024 with the lowest percentage of 1.03% in 2024. A target of 1.08% has been set for 2025. The University strives to ensure that all campus facilities are accessible to differently abled students, and every reasonable attempt is made to provide these students with the reasonable accommodations they require.

To create an inclusive and enabling environment for differently abled students, the Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS) offers the following services:

- Reasonable accommodation by providing concessions for tests and examinations, examination venues for differently abled students, scribes, accessible transport and student housing, adaptive technologies, referrals to available student funding, and universal design and accessible infrastructure.
- Awareness and sensitisation by arranging orientation and mobility for visually impaired and partially sighted students, awareness campaigns, advocacy and counselling.

- Braille Transcription Services for tests and examinations, and adaptive text arrangements and other accessible formats.

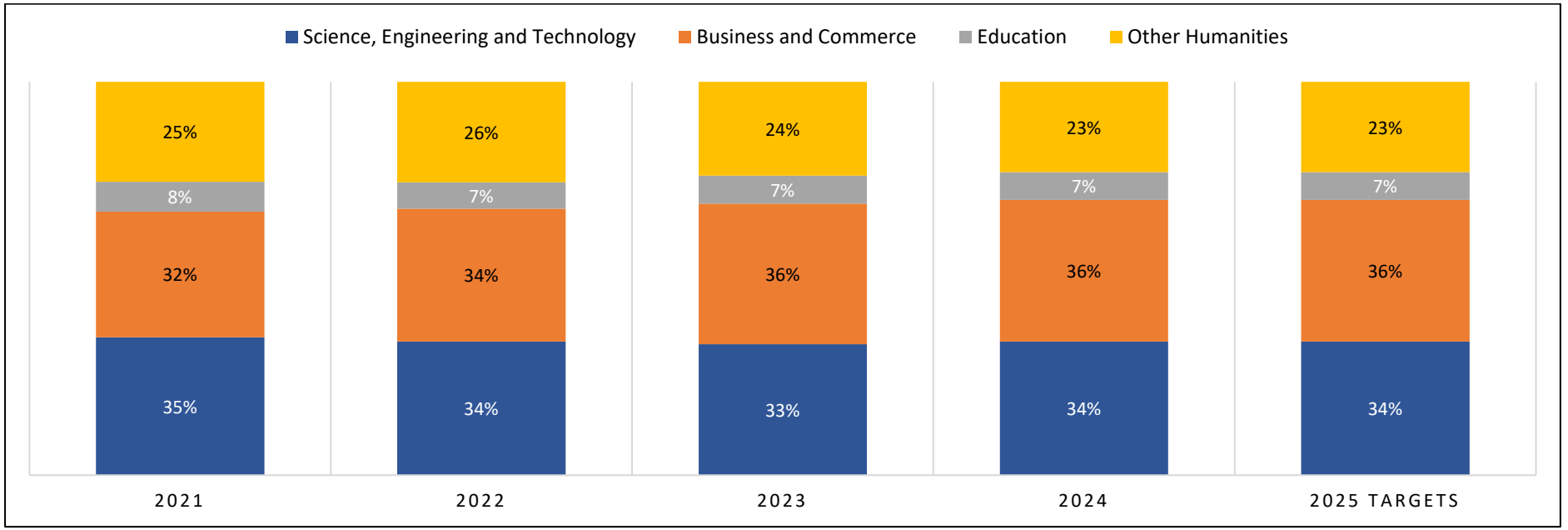
**Figure 4: Percentage of differently abled students, 2021-2024 and 2025 target**




## Performance Indicator 3: Student enrolments by major field of study

In 2021, most students at the University were enrolled in Science, Engineering, and Technology (35%) followed by Business and Commerce (32%). Other Humanities constituted 25% of enrolments and Education 7%. By 2024, Business and Commerce represented 36% of enrolments, which can largely be attributed to significant increases in enrolments in the undergraduate diplomas in this field. Enrolments in Other Humanities declined from 25% in 2021 to 23% in 2024, with a decline in Education enrolments from 8% in 2021 to 7% in 2024. Similarly, enrolments in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) declined from 35% in 2021 to 34% in 2024 (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Percentage distribution of headcount enrolments by major field of study, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**




Current enrolments in Business and Management Sciences are 12 040, which exceeded the target of 11 432 for 2024 by 608 (or 5.3%). The high growth can be attributed to a 10.5% increase in first-time entering undergraduate enrolments from 2023 to 2024 in the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences (BES). The University currently has 11 054 enrolments in SET, compared to 10 441 in 2023, which is an increase of 613 enrolments. The 2024 enrolments in SET are 325 more (3% above) the target of 10 729.
The increase in SET enrolments can mainly be attributed to a 22.4% increase in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Technology (EBET); a 35.3% increase in the Faculty of Health Sciences; and a 25% increase in the Faculty of Sciences in first-time entering undergraduate enrolments from 2023 to 2024. There is intense competition within the higher education sector for the small pool of school leavers with the requisite Grade 12 performance in Mathematics and Physical Science, especially in the Eastern Cape. This led to a decline in enrolments in the Faculty of EBET over recent years, although this has now been turned around.

In the Faculty of Education, the University had 161 or 7.2% enrolments more than the target of 2 273 for 2024. This is a positive development in view of the decline in initial teaching training enrolments over recent years. The Faculty of Education experienced an increase of 18.1% in

first-time entering enrolments from 2023 to 2024. The enrolments of the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Law are both reflected in the Other Humanities field of study. In 2024, there were 7 666 enrolments which were 76 enrolments above the target of 7 590. This is only 1% above the target. The growth from 2023 to 2024 was in the Faculty of Humanities which experienced an increase of 11.3% in first-time entering undergraduate students compared to 1.3% in the Faculty of Law.

As depicted in Table 5, the following targets have been set for 2025:

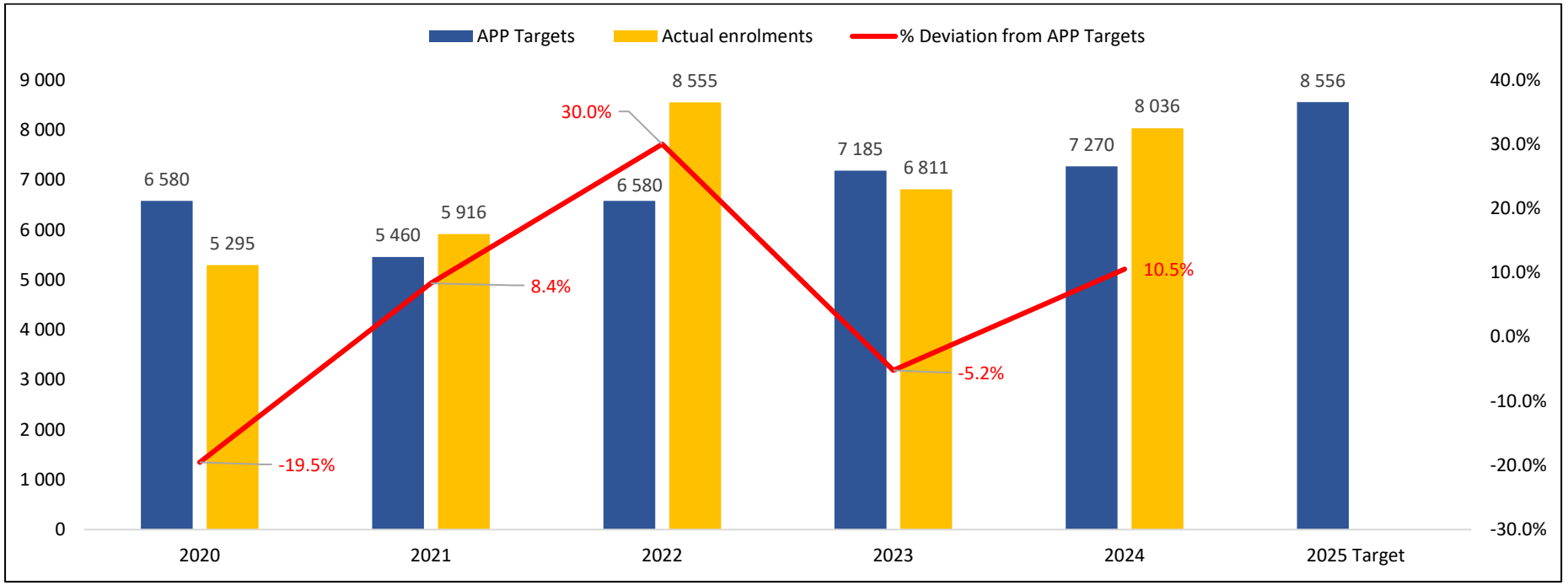
- Science, Engineering, and Technology: 11 104 (34%)
- Business and Commerce: 12 100 (36%)
- Education: 2 413 (7%)
- Other Humanities: 7 709 (23%).

**Table 5: Headcount enrolments by major field of study, 2021-2024, and 2025 targets**

| Major field of study | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Science, Engineering and Technology | 10 421 | 10 976 | 10 441 | 11 009 | 11 104 |
| Business and Commerce | 9 501 | 10 917 | 11 204 | 11 997 | 12 100 |
| Education | 2 254 | 2 175 | 2 242 | 2 392 | 2 413 |
| Other Humanities | 7 559 | 8 252 | 7 475 | 7 643 | 7 709 |
| **Total** | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **33 326** |

Since 2020, Nelson Mandela University has been admitting students via the Applicant Score (AS) admissions criteria. There were concerns that this might lead to fewer applicants accepted by the University, but this proved to be unfounded with continued high numbers of applications resulting in high numbers of acceptances. The University, however, found that translating these acceptances into registrations proved to be a challenge. To this end, an Enrolment Management Committee was established in 2021 to recommend strategies to address this trend, with a view to implementing solutions for the 2022 intake. Five transversal workstreams were established that addressed a range of issues affecting the intake, including the admissions process, financial and accommodation issues, IT support and integration, communication and marketing, and the orientation programme for the new intake. The 2024 registration numbers (8 036) indicate that many of these challenges have been addressed.

**Figure 6: First-time entering student enrolments relative to targets, 2020-2024 and 2025 target**




As can be seen from Figure 6, the uptake rates in 2022 were much higher than envisaged (8 555 first-time entering students enrolled which was 30% higher than the target of 6 580 for 2022). As indicated earlier, this sharp increase placed a strain on resources and the student: staff FTE ratio. Consequently, the University set lower first-time entering undergraduate enrolment targets in the revised Mid-Term Review Enrolment Plan for 2023 to 2025 to ensure that the quality of learning and teaching was not adversely affected by enrolment growth. The first-time entering intake was capped at 7 185 for 2023, 7 270 in 2024, and 8 556 in 2025 based on the latest enrolment plans for the faculties. In 2023, the actual enrolment of 6 811 was 5.2% below the target of 7 185. This was much closer to the target than in 2022. A first-time entering undergraduate enrolment target of 7 270 was set for 2024, but the actual enrolment was 8 036 which was 10.5% above the target. In view of the 2024 enrolments, the target for 2025 has been set at 8 556, which was calculated from the latest faculty enrolment plans for the period 2025 to 2030.

The profile of the student intake has been changing rapidly over recent years with a significantly higher percentage of students coming from quintile 1 to 3 schools, which are the most resource deprived. The intake from quintile 1 to 3 schools increased from 61% in 2021 to 69% in 2024. It is projected that this percentage will increase to 71% in 2025. The high increase in students from quintile 1 to 3 schools means that student support programmes must be expanded to ensure that all students achieve their full academic potential.

**Table 6: School quintile profile of first-time entering students (Matrics), 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Private or Other | 8% | 8% | 6% | 6% | 5% |
| Quintile 1 | 15% | 15% | 15% | 16% | 16% |
| Quintile 2 | 15% | 16% | 17% | 16% | 17% |
| Quintile 3 | 31% | 35% | 36% | 37% | 38% |
| Quintile 4 | 10% | 9% | 9% | 9% | 9% |
| Quintile 5 | 21% | 17% | 17% | 16% | 15% |

Drawing a higher percentage of students from more disadvantaged backgrounds has resulted in a rapid increase in foundation provisioning (extended programmes) enrolments, from 2 388 in 2021 to 4 055 in 2024. Table 7 shows that enrolments in foundation provisioning are expected to increase further to 4 278 in 2025, with an average annual growth rate of 16% over the 2021 to 2025 period. The consistent growth in foundation programmes is encouraging given that research has shown that foundation provisioning contributes significantly to promoting student access for success.

**Table 7: Foundation programme headcount enrolments, 2021-2024, and 2025 target**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Target | Average annual growth rate 2021-2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Headcount enrolments (foundation provisioning) | 2 388 | 3 291 | 3 687 | 4 055 | 4 278 | 16% |

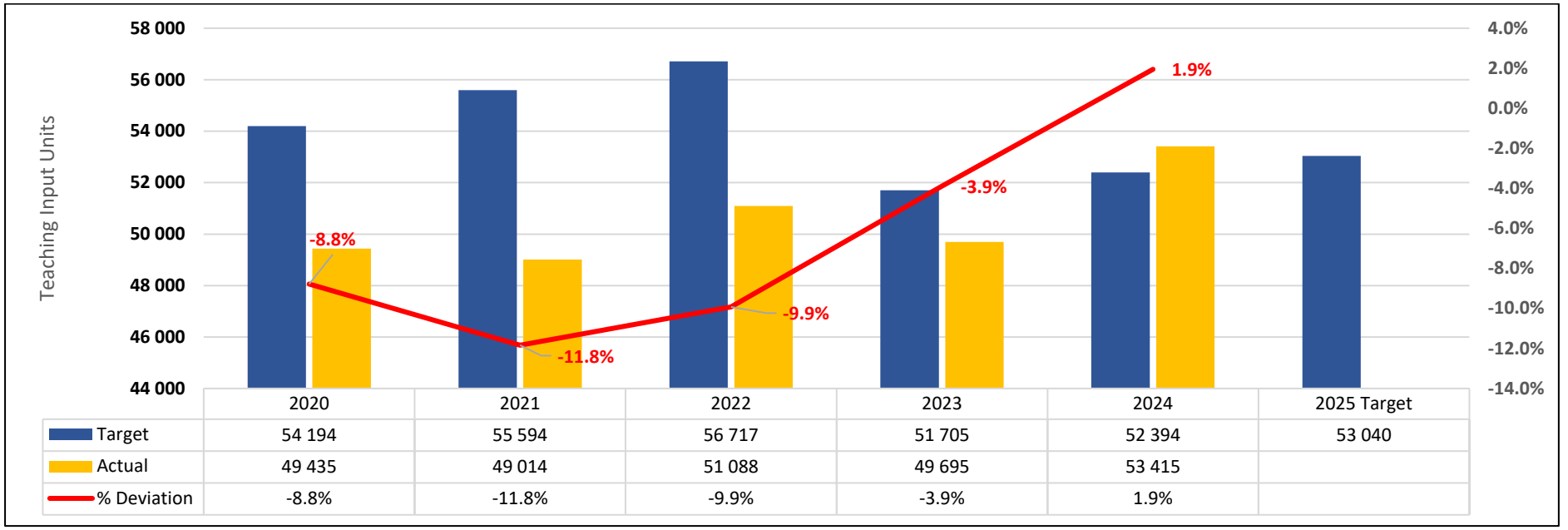
## Performance Indicator 4: Actual versus approved teaching input units

At an overarching level, the actual teaching input units (TIUs) of the University in 2020 were 49 435 compared to the approved target of 54 194. This was 8.8% below the target, which falls outside the acceptable deviation range of 2%. In 2021 and 2022 the deviations worsened, with the 2021 actual teaching inputs (49 014) falling 11.8% below the target of 55 594, and the 2022 actual teaching inputs (51 088) falling 9.9% short of the approved funding units of 56 717.

In view of the declining postgraduate enrolments, the approved funded TIUs for the period 2023 to 2025 were revised and set at much lower levels. This led to the University achieving TIUs that were much closer to the approved funded TIUs. In 2023, the actual TIUs were 49 695 (3.9% below the target), while preliminary data for 2024 shows that the University was only 1.9% above the approved funded units of 52 394 with 53 415 actual TIUs.

The trends between 2020 and 2022 had a negative impact on the teaching input subsidy allocation to the University and were mainly due to the non-achievement of postgraduate enrolment targets. The Mid-Year Enrolment Review set more realistic targets, although the postgraduate enrolment targets are still not being achieved. The adjustments made in the 2023 to 2025 Mid-Term Enrolment Plan brought the actual TIUs much closer to the approved funded units. A slight subsidy penalty is expected for 2025 based on the 2023 data and no subsidy penalty is expected for 2026 based on the 2024 data.

**Figure 7: Achievement of the approved Teaching Input Unit (TIU) targets, 2020-2024 and 2025 target**




| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Target | 54 194 | 55 594 | 56 717 | 51 705 | 52 394 | 53 040 |
| Actual | 49 435 | 49 014 | 51 088 | 49 695 | 53 415 | |
| % Deviation | -8.8% | -11.8% | -9.9% | -3.9% | 1.9% | |

## Performance Indicator 5: Student success rates in coursework modules

The student success rate in coursework modules was 84% in 2021. The high success rates in 2020 and 2021 were a national trend. This can potentially be attributed to the fact that continuous assessment was widely implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, and students were given multiple opportunities for assessment due to the difficulties emerging from the transition to emergency remote learning. In 2022, when students returned to campus, the success rate dropped to 81%, as a result of assessment practices returning to normal without special concessions and arrangements. In many instances, students did not complete the full curriculum in 2020 and the academic year rolled over to 2021, shortening the 2021 academic year, which probably impacted on the success rates in subsequent years.

The University aimed to increase the success rate from 81% in 2022 to 83% in 2023. However, the success rate for all modules (coursework and research) declined to 74%, the lowest at the University in many years. This will be investigated more thoroughly, but possible factors contributing to this low success rate are:

- A sizeable increase in students from resource-deprived quintile 1 to 3 schools enrolling at the University. Many of these learners have received inadequate career counselling at their schools and enrol for qualifications that are not necessarily their first choice. This impacts on their motivation levels and academic performance, especially in the first year of study.
- The impact of incomplete learning and curriculum coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic on all learners and students.
- With the shift back to face-to-face learning and teaching, students were expected to attend classes, yet many did not so since they had become accustomed to learning online.
- The transition from continuous assessment during the pandemic to formal summative examinations. Assessment practices returning to normal, without special concessions and arrangements, has had a significant impact on most students.

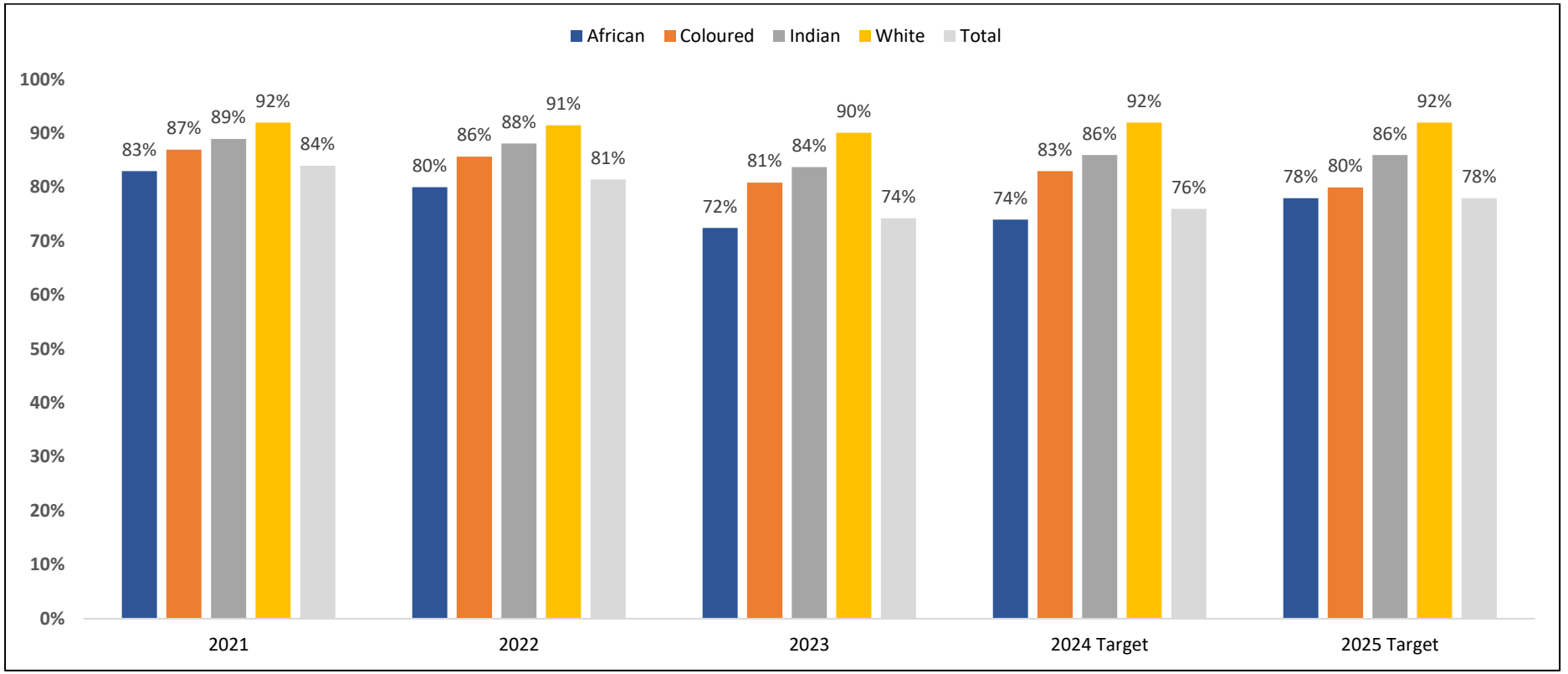
The University aims to improve the success rate and has set a revised target for 2024 of 76%, and 78% for 2025.

As can be seen in Table 8 and Figure 8, the difference in success rate between students of the various population groups remains a concern. In 2021, White students had a 9% higher success rate (92%) than African students (83%), a 5% higher success rate than Coloured students (87%), and a 2% higher success rate than Indian students (89%). These differences in success rates increased, and by 2023, the success rate of White students (90%) was 18% higher than the success rate of African students (72%), 9% higher than the success rate of Coloured students, and 6% higher than the success rate of Indian students. It is foreseen that it will still take a few years to narrow these achievement gaps, but the University continues to provide holistic wraparound student support to academically vulnerable students to maximise their opportunities for success.

**Table 8: Success rate in coursework modules by population group and gender, 2021-2023, and 2024 and 2025 targets**

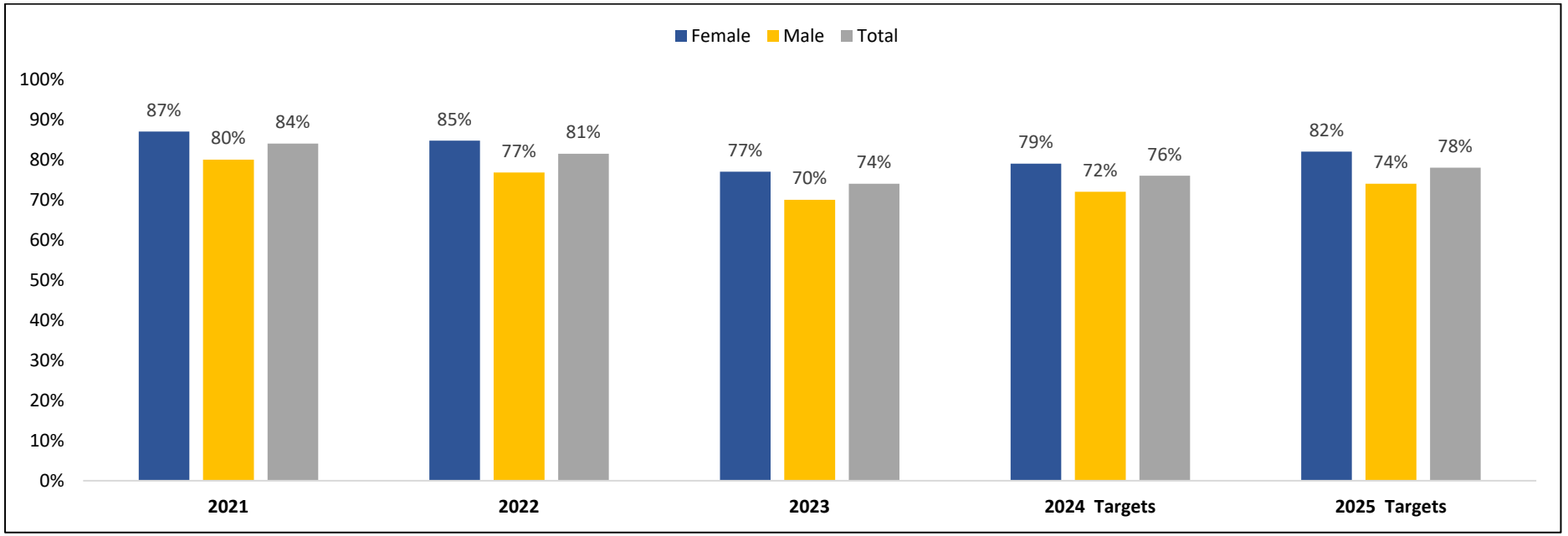
| Population group | 2021 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | | 2024 Target | | | 2025 Target | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | M | Total | F | M | Total | F | M | Total | F | M | Total | F | M | Total |
| African | 86% | 78% | 83% | 84% | 75% | 80% | 76% | 68% | 72% | 78% | 70% | 74% | 82% | 74% | 78% |
| Coloured | 89% | 84% | 87% | 88% | 82% | 86% | 84% | 76% | 81% | 86% | 78% | 83% | 86% | 80% | 80% |
| Indian | 91% | 86% | 89% | 90% | 85% | 88% | 84% | 84% | 84% | 86% | 86% | 86% | 86% | 86% | 86% |
| White | 95% | 89% | 92% | 94% | 88% | 91% | 93% | 87% | 90% | 95% | 89% | 92% | 95% | 89% | 92% |
| **Total** | **87%** | **80%** | **84%** | **85%** | **77%** | **81%** | **77%** | **70%** | **74%** | **79%** | **72%** | **76%** | **82%** | **74%** | **78%** |

**Figure 8: Student success rates in coursework modules by population group, 2021-2023 and 2024 -2025 targets**




In terms of gender, Figure 9 indicates that female students had a much higher success rate (77%) in 2023 compared to male students (70%) and this trend is consistent for all population groups. The University is planning to undertake an institutional research study to identify the factors that contribute to these differences with a view to devising strategies to improve the success rates of male students.

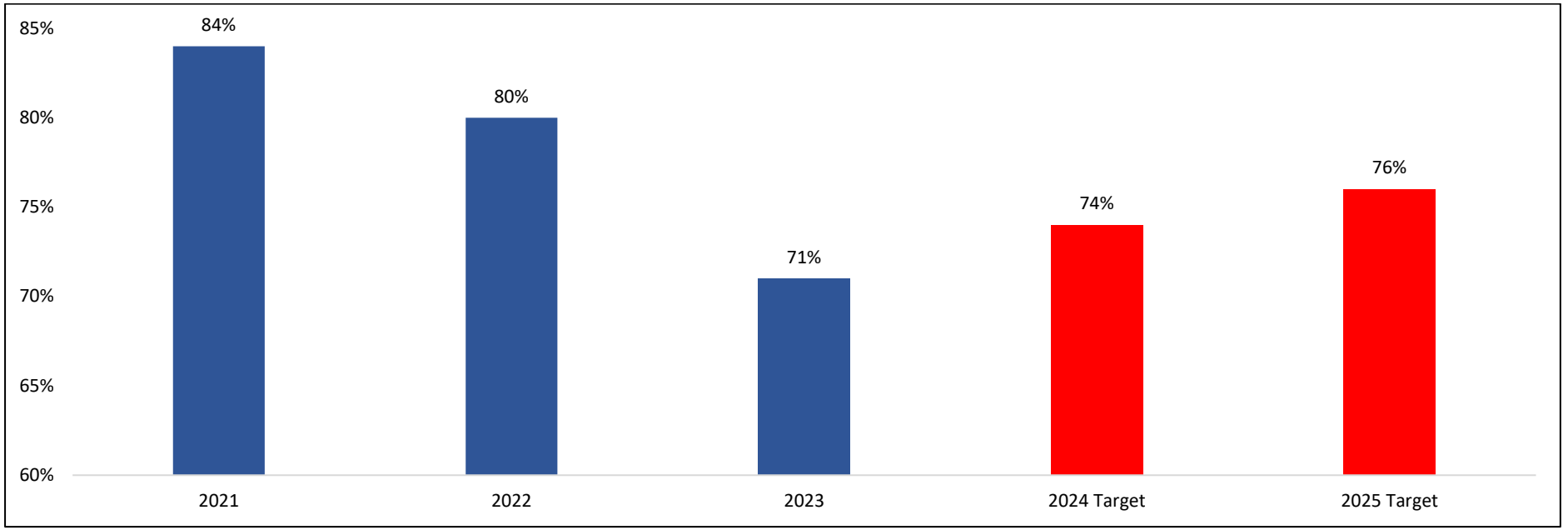
**Figure 9: Student success rates in coursework modules by gender, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




Interestingly, Figure 10 shows that, in 2021, first-time entering (FTEnt) students had the same success rate of 84% as the average success rate for all students in that year. This can possibly be attributed to the improved support provided, based on the lessons learnt from transitioning to emergency remote learning in 2020. In 2022, there was a 1% gap in performance, with FTEnt students achieving a success rate of 80% compared to the 81% average success rate of the University.

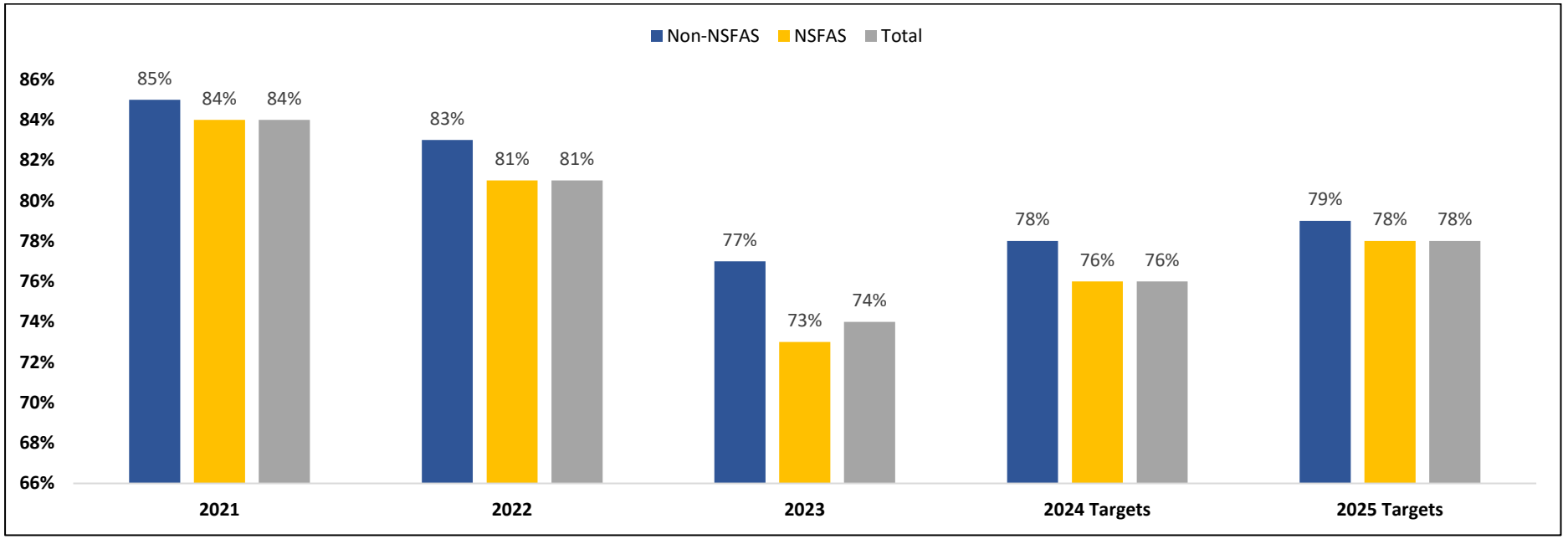
As indicated previously, the high intake of FTEnt students (8 555) in 2022 significantly exceeded the target of 6 580 enrolments and this placed a strain on the student: staff ratio and student support services. This probably had a negative impact on the success rate of FTEnt students. In 2023, the FTEnt students had a success rate of 71% which was 3% lower than the success rate for all students in coursework modules (74%). The University has various academic support programmes in place to assist FTEnt students with the transition to higher education which will assist in improving their success rate. The projected success rates of FTEnt students for 2024 and 2025 are 74% and 76% respectively.

**Figure 10: Success rate of first-time entering UG students, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




For 2021 and 2022, the success rate of NSFAS-funded students was lower than the success rate for students not funded by NSFAS (see Figure 11 below). In 2023, the success rate of NSFAS-funded students was 4% lower than the success rate for students not funded by NSFAS, and 10% below the target of 83%. This difference may be due to the impact of the socio-economically deprived backgrounds of many NSFAS students, which often has a negative impact on academic performance, as well as challenges experienced in the sector with the administration of NSFAS funding. The University is working towards narrowing the difference in the performance of NSFAS- and self-funded students. The revised targets for 2024 are a success rate of 76% for NSFAS-funded students and 78% for self-funded students. The success rate targets for 2025 are 78% for NSFAS-funded students and 79% for self-funded students.

**Figure 11: Success rate of NSFAS-funded students, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




## Performance Indicator 6: Student retention rates

Cohort analyses show that the highest percentage of dropouts are experienced 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 and prevent dropouts. As indicated in Table 9, 91.1% of 2021 FTEnt students returned the following year to continue with their studies and did not drop out. This declined to 90% for 2022. This decline can be attributed to the large FTEnt student intake in 2022 which resulted in very large classes and increased failure rates in the first year. In 2023, the percentage of FTEnt students who returned the following year declined further to 89.1%. The targets for 2024 (90.1%) and 2025 (91.1%) are aimed at improving the retention of FTEnt students.

**Table 9: Retention of first-time entering undergraduate students, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets***

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 Target | 2025 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentage of first-time entering students who registered the following year | 91.1% | 90.0% | 89.1% | 90.1% | 91.1% |

*Students enrolled for a Higher Certificate were omitted from the calculation since they would have graduated at the end of the year

The University has a wide range of programmes to support student success and retention, coordinated under the umbrella of the Learning and Teaching Collab (LT Collab). These academic support programmes provide opportunities to enhance student success through initiatives such as teaching academic life skills management, developing academic literacies (writing), tutoring and mentoring, Supplemental Instruction (SI) and Student Success Coaching (SSC). There are also multiple services, such as educational, career and psychological counselling, offered by Emthonjeni Wellness and Student Health Services. Data indicates that SI is one of the most successful interventions to support students in high-risk modules and courses with continued low pass rates (55% or below) for a minimum period of three years. Student Success Coaching (SSC) supports the transition of school-leavers into the university. The success coaches develop a one-on-one relationship with vulnerable students to co-create individualised academic success plans. As the academic journey unfolds, the student and coach review progress and adjust the plan as needed.

These interventions are informed by an integrated data tracking and early warning system, Risk Analysis and Detection to Assist and Retain (RADAR) students. The University developed RADAR to monitor student academic performance and to optimise early intervention strategies to enhance student success. Academics also monitor student engagement in learning through analysing activity on the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) module site.

Increasing emphasis is also being placed on the critical role of writing and reading development and multilingualism in enhancing student learning and academic success. Language and writing support currently provided to students include multilingual glossaries and tutorials, writing respondents and consultants, academic writing support interventions, as well as an app (Refer Easy) for academic writing and referencing.

Academic staff are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their teaching practice as part of efforts to actively engage students in learning. For example, the University has reimagined the induction programme for new lecturers, now known as Beginning Your Journey (BYJ) @ Mandela University. Lecturing staff also benefit from the Teaching Enhancement Programme, which provides ongoing workshops

and consultations on topical issues such as curriculum development, academic literacies and multilingualism, assessment of student learning, blended learning, teaching large classes, and developing a teaching portfolio.

The Teaching Development (TD) cluster's primary focus is to improve the available resources on online and hybrid teaching and assessment to enhance the pedagogical repertoire of academic staff. Staff capacity development and upskilling initiatives on techniques relating to hybrid learning and teaching are now in place and include "How-2" videos and documents, discussions and webinars.

## Performance Indicator 7: Student graduation rates

The number of graduates directly depends on student graduation and throughput rates. In the 2020 to 2025 Enrolment Plan, the University estimated 8 002 graduates. In retrospect, this was too high given that the University did not achieve the headcount enrolments projected in the previous enrolment plan. The University thus revised its graduate output targets in the Mid-Term Enrolment Plan for 2023 to 2025.

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

**Table 10: Number of graduates per annum, 2021-2023, and 2024-2025 targets**

| Qualification type | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Average annual growth rate 2021-2023 | Revised 2024 targets | Revised 2025 targets | Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UG Diploma or Cert | 2 265 | 2 633 | 1 795 | -11.0% | 1 861 | 1 802 | -5.6% |
| Advanced Diploma | 1 069 | 981 | 882 | -9.2% | 839 | 906 | -4.1% |
| UG Degree | 2 691 | 2 488 | 2 035 | -13.0% | 2 033 | 2 115 | -5.8% |
| **Total UG** | **6 025** | **6 102** | **4 712** | **-11.6%** | **4 732** | **4 823** | **-5.4%** |

| Qualification type | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Average annual growth rate 2021-2023 | Revised 2024 targets | Revised 2025 targets | Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PG Diploma | 267 | 305 | 236 | -6.0% | 296 | 317 | 4.4% |
| Honours | 540 | 577 | 465 | -7.2% | 490 | 517 | -1.1% |
| Master's | 339 | 306 | 309 | -4.5% | 293 | 299 | -3.1% |
| Doctoral | 96 | 83 | 93 | -1.6% | 90 | 93 | -0.8% |
| **Total PG** | **1 242** | **1 271** | **1 103** | **-5.8%** | **1 169** | **1 226** | **-0.3%** |
| **Grand Total** | **7 267** | **7 373** | **5 815** | **-10.5%** | **5 901** | **6 049** | **-4.5%** |

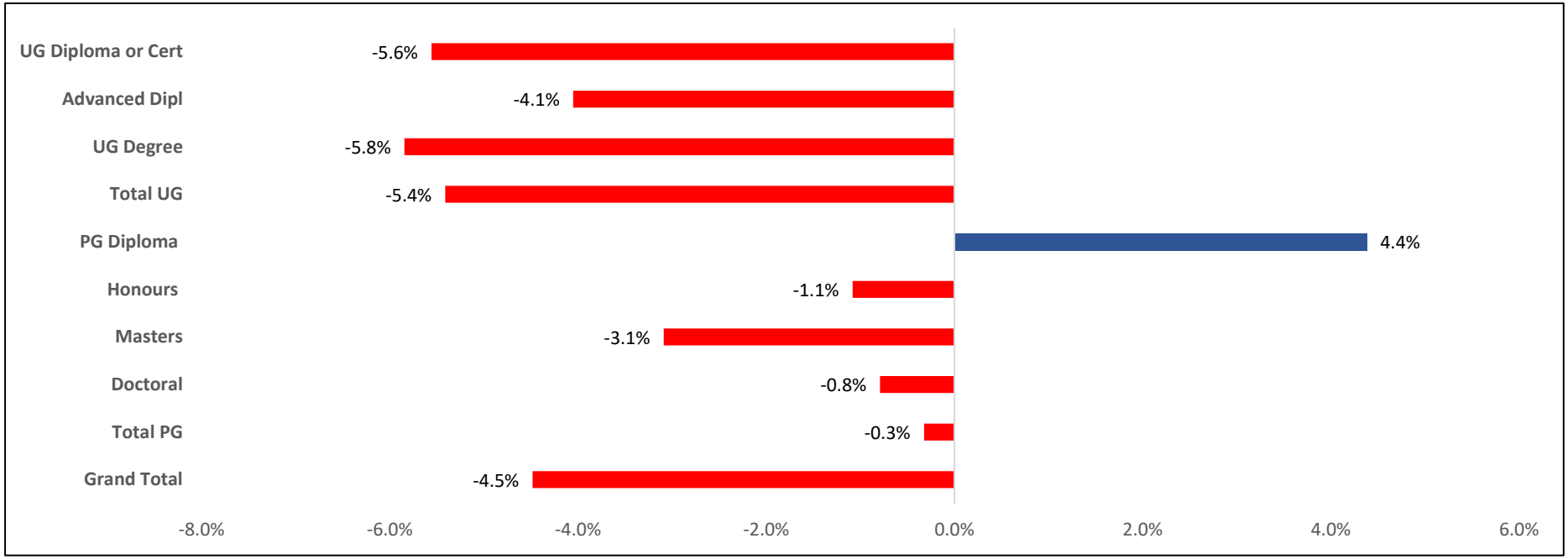
As illustrated in Table 10, in 2023, the University had 4 712 undergraduate graduates compared to the APP 2023 target of 6 135. This was 23.2% (1 423 graduates) below the target. The 2023 target for graduates in postgraduate programmes was 1 501, but the University only produced 1 103 graduates, which was 26.5% (398 graduates) below the target. The significant drop in graduates in 2023 resulted in negative growth rates for graduates in all qualification types over the period 2021 to 2023.

Over the period 2021 to 2023, the number of undergraduate graduates decreased on average by 11.6%. The highest average annual decline was in degree programmes with an average annual decline of 13%, and in diploma and certificate programmes with an average annual decline of 11%. The phasing out of BTech degrees, which were replaced by advanced diplomas, also contributed to the decline in graduates in undergraduate degrees. Although graduates in advanced diplomas increased by 6.8% on average per annum for the period 2020 to 2022, growing from 860 in 2020 to 981 in 2022, they declined to 882 in 2023. Now that these qualifications have been established, the high growth in graduates has stabilised.
Given the decline in graduates in 2023, the targets for 2024 and 2025 have been revised. An undergraduate graduate target of 4 732 for 2023 and 4 823 for 2025 have been set compared to the 4 712 actual graduates in 2023. The target annual growth rate in undergraduate graduates for the period 2021 to 2025 is -5.4%, because of the 2023 decline in undergraduate graduates.

Due to the decline in postgraduate enrolments, postgraduate graduates declined by 5.8% on average per annum from 2021 to 2023, with the highest average annual declines in honours (7.2%) and postgraduate diploma graduates (6%). The University is targeting an increase in

postgraduate graduates from 1 103 in 2023 to 1 169 in 2024 and 1 226 in 2025, with an average annual decline of 0.3% over the period 2021 to 2025. Graduates are expected to increase from 5 815 in 2023 to 6 049 in 2025. Due to the decline in 2023, the projected average annual decline rate for all graduates over the period 2021 to 2025 is expected to be -4.5%. The average annual growth rates for all qualification types are shown in Figure 12 below.

**Figure 12: Average annual growth rate in graduates, 2021-2025**




As indicated in Table 11 below, the number of engineering graduates dropped to 200 in 2023, from 381 in 2021. Engineering graduates declined at a rate of 27.5% from 2021 to 2023. The University continues to find it difficult to substantially increase enrolments and graduate outputs in engineering due to the poor Mathematics and Physical Science results of applicants. There is a concerted effort in the scarce skills fields to improve student success and increase the number of students who complete their qualifications. Similarly, the number of graduates in life and physical sciences declined from 256 in 2021 to 148 in 2023 (-24% decline from 2021 to 2023).

**Table 11: Number of graduates in scarce skills fields per annum, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| Scarce skills field | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Average Annual Growth Rate 2021-2023 | Revised 2024 Targets | Revised 2025 Targets | Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engineering | 381 | 402 | 200 | -27.5% | 225 | 229 | -12.0% |
| Life and Physical Sciences | 256 | 193 | 148 | -24.0% | 160 | 163 | -10.7% |
| Animal and Human Health Sciences | 406 | 344 | 339 | -8.6% | 350 | 365 | -2.6% |
| Teacher Education | 493 | 390 | 380 | -12.2% | 412 | 426 | -3.6% |
| BEd | 395 | 273 | 281 | -15.7% | 310 | 323 | -4.9% |
| PGCE | 98 | 117 | 99 | 0.5% | 102 | 103 | 1.3% |
| **Success rate in scarce skills** | **88%** | **84%** | **81%** | **-4.1%** | **83%** | **85%** | |

The Faculty of Health Sciences has historically produced more graduates than the targets. However, in recent years, the number of graduates in animal and human health sciences has been declining sharply. There were only 339 graduates in 2023, down from 406 in 2021 (average annual decline of 2.6% from 2021 to 2023). The discontinuation of certain qualifications in pharmacy and nursing, which have had historically high enrolments, due to professional accreditation challenges has led to a sharp decline in enrolments, and graduates, in the human health sciences. The MBChB programme will improve the situation but will only produce the first graduates in 2026.

Teacher education graduates declined on average by 12.2% per annum over the 2021 to 2023 period with the number of BEd graduates declining on average by 15.7% per annum. The PGCE graduates increased from 98 to 99. In 2023, there were 380 graduates in total in initial teacher education.
Based on the trends, the target for 2024 for engineering graduates has been set at 225 and 229 for 2025. The 2024 target for graduates in life and physical sciences is 160 for 2024 and 163 for 2025. Graduates in animal and health sciences are expected to be 350 in 2024 and 365 in 2025. The graduate targets for initial teacher education have been set at 412 in 2024 and 426 in 2025.

The success rate in the scarce skills fields was 81% in 2023, which was significantly higher than the success rate of 74% for the University. Students in the scarce skills fields generally achieve higher success rates than students in other fields of study due to the higher admission

criteria for these qualifications. This also points to the fact that the non-achievement of the scarce fields targets is not necessarily due to lower student success rates, but rather due to the non-achievement of enrolment targets in these fields.

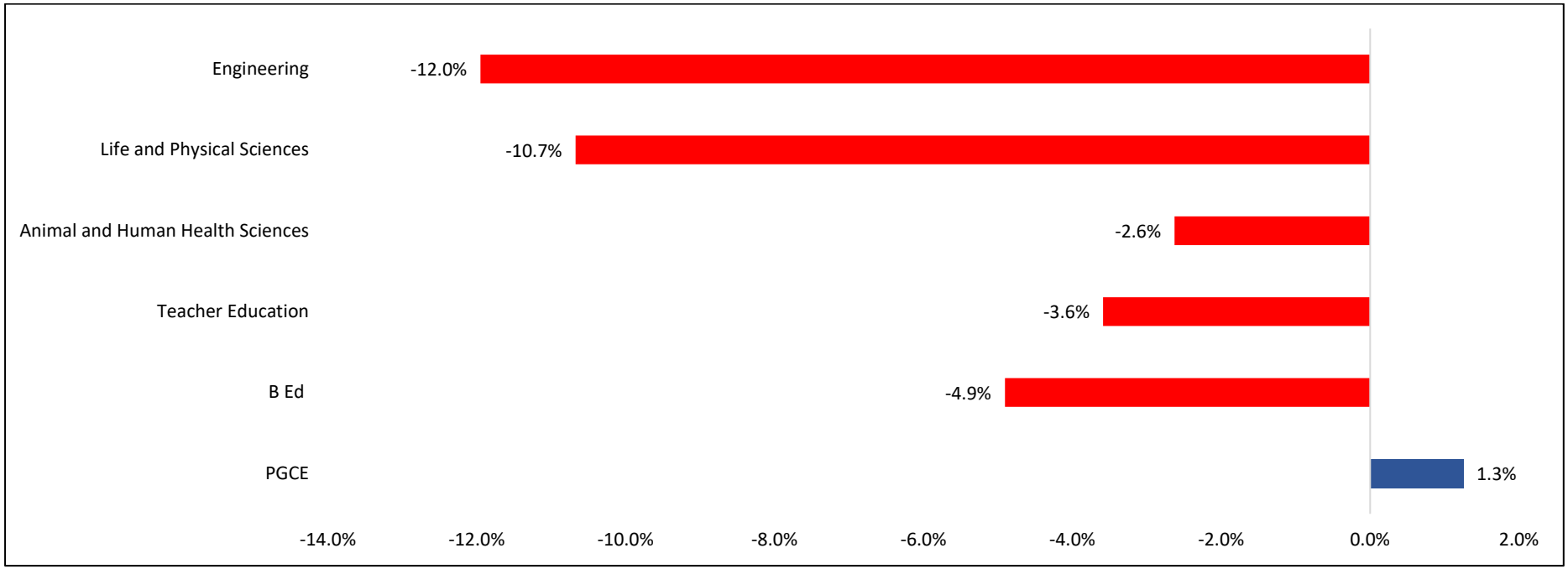
The undergraduate enrolment trends point to the need for targeted and integrated student recruitment strategies to attract talented students to pursue qualifications in scarce skills fields at the University. Efforts to expand the national footprint of the University have been starting to bear fruit and need to be strengthened further given the heightened competition for top-performing school leavers. There are other endeavours aimed at increasing first-time entering enrolments. These include digitalising the student access and enrolment value chain to ensure that it is experienced as more integrated and user-friendly, and wide-ranging interventions to improve the quality of Mathematics and Science teaching and learner performance in schools.

The average annual growth rate in graduates for all the scarce skills fields of study was negative from 2021 to 2023 except for the graduates in the PGCE which increased by 1.3% on average per annum (see Figure 13). Given actual enrolment trends, the University has had to constantly lower the targets set in the original 2020 to 2025 Enrolment Plan for undergraduate outputs in the scarce skills fields.

The University aims to increase graduates in all the scarce skills fields for 2024 and 2025. However, as illustrated in Figure 13, an analysis of trends for the period 2021 to 2025, point to projected declines in the average annual growth rates, due to the decline in graduates in 2023.

It is projected that engineering graduates will decline at 12% on average per annum, and graduates in life and physical sciences will decline at 10.7% on average per annum from 2021 to 2025. The graduates in animal and human sciences are projected to decline on average by 2.6% per annum and graduates in initial teacher education by 3.6% on average per annum. The projected average annual decline for BEd graduates over the period 2021 to 2025 is 4.9% and for the PGCE graduates an increase in graduates is projected over the same period at an average annual rate of 1.3%. The expected success rate for 2024 and 2025 for the scarce skills enrolled students is 83% and 85% respectively, which are gradual improvements on the 81% success rate in 2023.

**Figure 13: Average and target annual growth rates in enrolments relative to graduates, 2021-2025**



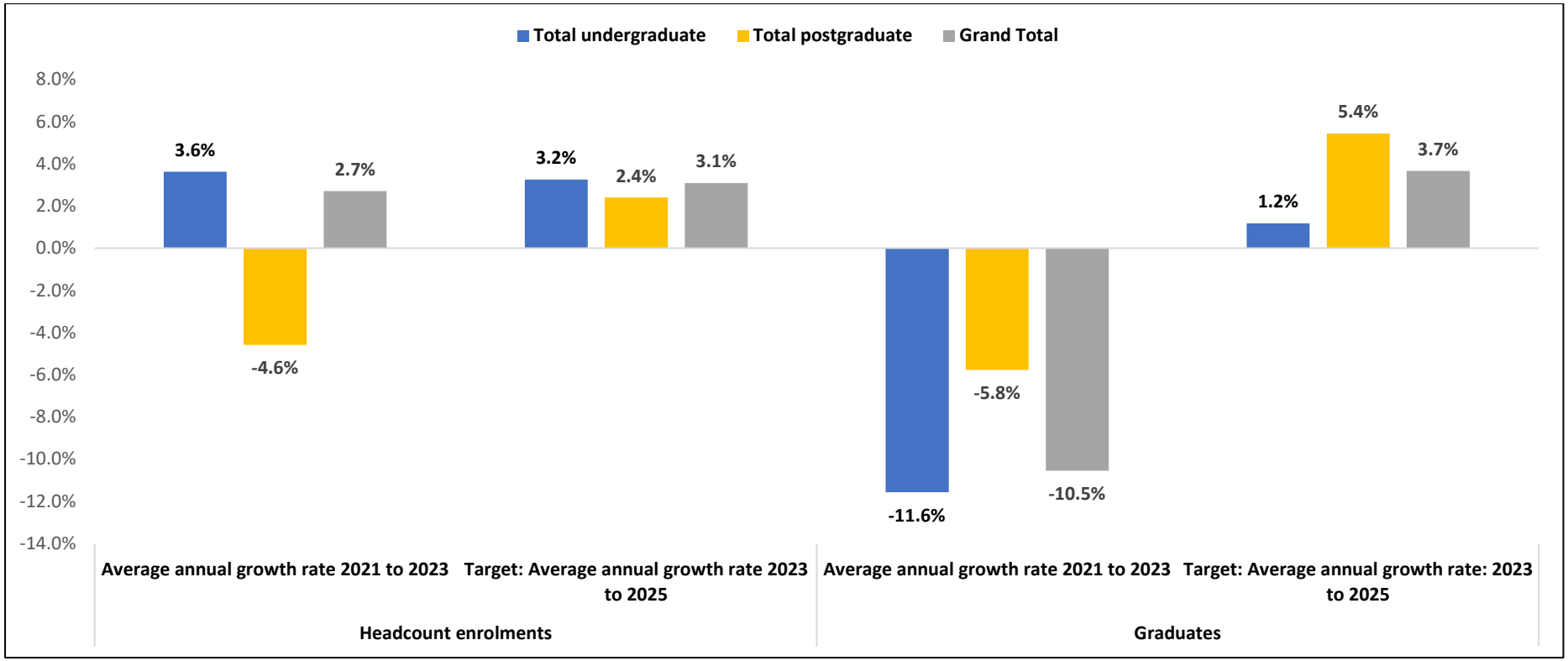

The average annual growth rate in enrolments compared to graduates is an indicator of graduate efficiency (see Table 12). If the number of graduates grows at a higher rate than the number of enrolments over the same period, it indicates that graduate efficiency is improving.

**Table 12: Average annual growth rates in enrolments relative to graduates, 2021-2023, and 2023-2025 targets**

| | Headcount enrolments | | Graduates | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2023** | **Target: Average annual growth rate 2023 to 2025** | **Average annual growth rate 2021 to 2023** | **Target: Average annual growth rate: 2023 to 2025** |
| Total undergraduate | 3.6% | 3.2% | -11.6% | 1.2% |
| Total postgraduate | -4.6% | 2.4% | -5.8% | 5.4% |
| **Grand Total** | **2.7%** | **3.1%** | **-10.5%** | **3.7%** |

Figure 14 shows that, at the undergraduate level, the average annual growth rates of enrolments versus graduates over the 2021 to 2023 period grew on average by 3.6% per annum while graduates declined by 11.6% on average per annum. This points to a sharp decline in undergraduate graduate efficiency although the higher intakes at the undergraduate level will eventually increase the growth rates of graduates. At the postgraduate level, enrolments declined on average by 4.6% per annum over the 2021 to 2023 period, while graduates declined by 5.8% on average per annum. Graduates declined at a higher rate than enrolments. Recent declines in enrolments led to higher decreases in postgraduate graduates.

**Figure 14: Average and target annual growth rates in enrolments relative to graduates**



With reference to targets for the average annual growth rates for 2023 to 2025 in enrolments versus graduates, the University seeks to improve graduate efficiency, especially at the postgraduate level. The graduates at the undergraduate level are targeted to increase at 1.2% over the 2023 to 2025 period, which is lower than the targeted average annual growth rate in enrolments (3.2%). It will take some time for recent increases in undergraduate enrolments to result in higher increases in undergraduate graduates.

At the postgraduate level, the average annual growth rate target for graduates from 2023 to 2025 is 5.4% compared to the 2.4% average annual increase in enrolments. In total, the targeted average annual growth rate in graduates for the 2023 to 2025 period is 3.7% compared to the targeted average annual growth rate in enrolments of 3.1%. This reflects the intention of the University to improve graduate efficiency.

### 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 analyses the percentage who graduate within minimum time (MT), or 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. The throughput analyses thus also include minimum time plus one year (MT+1) and two years (MT+2).

Tables 13 and 14 provide an overview of throughput rates for the 2017 and 2018 cohorts by qualification type compared to the national throughputs for the 2017 cohort (UNISA is excluded for the national cohorts because its throughputs are vastly different to contact universities).

**Table 13: Throughput rates for 2017 first-time entering cohorts and the national averages (excluding UNISA)**

| Qualification Type | Mandela University (2017cohort) | | | | National average excluding UNISA (2017 cohorts) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | MT | MT+1 | MT+2 | MT+3 | MT | MT+1 | MT+2 | MT+3 |
| 1-year UG certificates (MT=1) | 58% | 74% | 78% | | 26% | 46% | 58% | |
| 3-year diplomas (MT=3) | 24% | 44% | 53% | | 24% | 42% | 53% | |
| 3-year degrees (MT=3) | 29% | 46% | 54% | | 30% | 51% | 59% | |
| 4-year degrees (MT=4) | 44% | 60% | 66% | | 46% | 64% | 70% | |
| PG Diplomas (MT=1) | 61% | 79% | 82% | | 61% | 79% | 82% | |
| Honours (MT=1) | 59% | 81% | 85% | | 65% | 79% | 83% | |
| Coursework Master's (MT=3) | 55% | | | 70% | 45% | | | 64% |
| Research Master's (MT=3) | 40% | | | 60% | 40% | | | 58% |
| PhDs (MT=3) | 20% | | | 54% | 14% | | | 51% |

Given that 67% of our undergraduate students who were enrolled in first undergraduate programmes in 2023 were NSFAS-funded, it is important to note the difference between those who complete in MT+1 and MT+2. This is because these students will be without financial support from NSFAS if they complete their qualification after MT+1. An additional 9% of three-year diploma students and an additional 8% of three-year degree students graduated in year M+2. There was an additional 6% of four-year degree students who graduated in year M+2 from the 2017 first-time entering cohort.

The percentage of graduates is cumulative. The throughput rates for the 2017 first-time entering cohorts by qualification type are shown in Table 13 above. This shows that our throughput rates for one-year undergraduate certificates are above the national averages, with a throughput rate of 58% in MT and 78% in MT+2 (compared to the national average of 26% in MT and 58% in MT+2). The throughput rates of the 3-year diplomas were the same as the national averages. The throughput rates were below the national averages for the three- and four-year degrees. This could be because 67% of our undergraduate degree students are NSFAS-funded (2023) and these students have a lower success rate (73% in 2023) than non-NSFAS students (77% in 2023).

At the postgraduate level, Master's and doctoral candidates take much longer to complete, and the University considers a minimum time of three years as acceptable for these qualifications, although analyses also include those who completed in six years. The University performed slightly better with research Master's and PhDs than the national averages. University throughput rates for the 2017 cohort for research Master's students were 55% in MT and 70% in MT+3 compared to the national averages of 40% and 58% respectively. The throughput rates for the University's Coursework Master's (MT=55%, MT+3=70%) were also higher than the national averages (MT=45%, MT+3=64%). The throughput rate for PhDs was 20% in MT and 54% in MT+3, compared to the national averages of 14% and 51% respectively.

Postgraduate diplomas had a throughput rate of 61% in MT, increasing to 82% in MT+2, which was the same as the national averages. The throughput rate in MT for Honours degrees was 59% and 85% in MT+2, which was higher than the national average of 83% in MT+2.

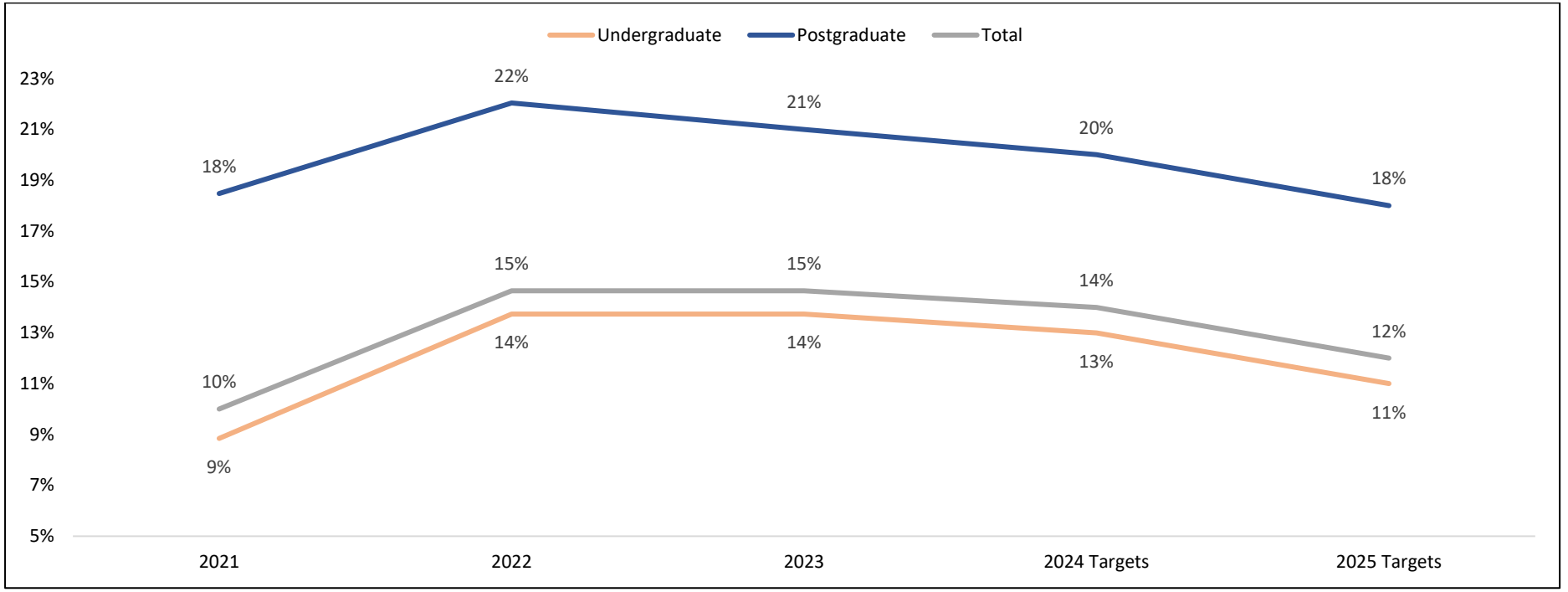
**Table 14: Throughput rate targets for the 2018 first-time entering cohorts**

| Qualification Type | Targets: Mandela University (2018 cohort) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | MT | MT+1 | MT+2 | MT+3 |
| 1-year UG certificates (MT=1) | 59% | 75% | 79% | |
| 3-year diplomas (MT=3) | 25% | 45% | 54% | |
| 3-year degrees (MT=3) | 30% | 47% | 55% | |
| 4-year degrees (MT=4) | 45% | 61% | 67% | |
| **Qualification Type** | **Targets: Mandela University (2018 cohort)** | | | |
| | **MT** | **MT+1** | **MT+2** | **MT+3** |
| PG Diplomas (MT=1) | 62% | 80% | 83% | |
| Honours (MT=1) | 60% | 82% | 86% | |
| Coursework Master's (MT=3) | 56% | | | 71% |
| Research Master's (MT=3) | 41% | | | 61% |
| PhDs (MT=3) | 21% | | | 55% |

As shown in Table 14 above, the targets set for the 2018 first-time entering cohorts have been set at an improvement of 1% in MT and MT+2 for all qualifications.

Figure 15 below, provides an overview of the percentage of students who dropped out from one academic year to the next without completing their qualification for 2021 to 2023, as well as the targets for 2024 and 2025.

**Figure 15: Undergraduate and postgraduate dropout rates, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




From the above, it is observed that the dropout rates at the postgraduate level are much higher than those at the undergraduate level, which is concerning, since this contributes to the decline in postgraduate graduate efficiency. While the onset of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent economic decline could have contributed to this trend, the University needs to investigate this phenomenon and develop strategies to retain postgraduate students. There was a slight decline in the dropout rate at the postgraduate level from 22% in 2022 to 21% in 2023. The total dropout rate increased sharply from 10% in 2021 to 15% in 2022, which can probably be attributed to the impact of the high first-time entering intake in 2022.

The targets set for 2024 and 2025 dropouts for under- and postgraduate students are set at lower levels than in 2023. The target for the dropout rate at the undergraduate level for 2024 is set at 13% and for 2025 at 11%. The target for the dropout rate at the postgraduate level for 2024 is 20%, and for 2025 it is 18%, compared to the 21% dropout rate in 2023. The total dropout rate target for 2023 is set at 14% and for 2025 at 12%, compared to 15% in 2023.

***Strategic Focus Area 2: Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures***

## 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 graduates is the average number of years that candidates take to complete their degree. Table 15 indicates the average number of years taken by M&D candidates from 2021 to 2023 to complete their degrees. It is generally acceptable for a Master's and doctoral candidates to take three and five years respectively to complete their qualifications.

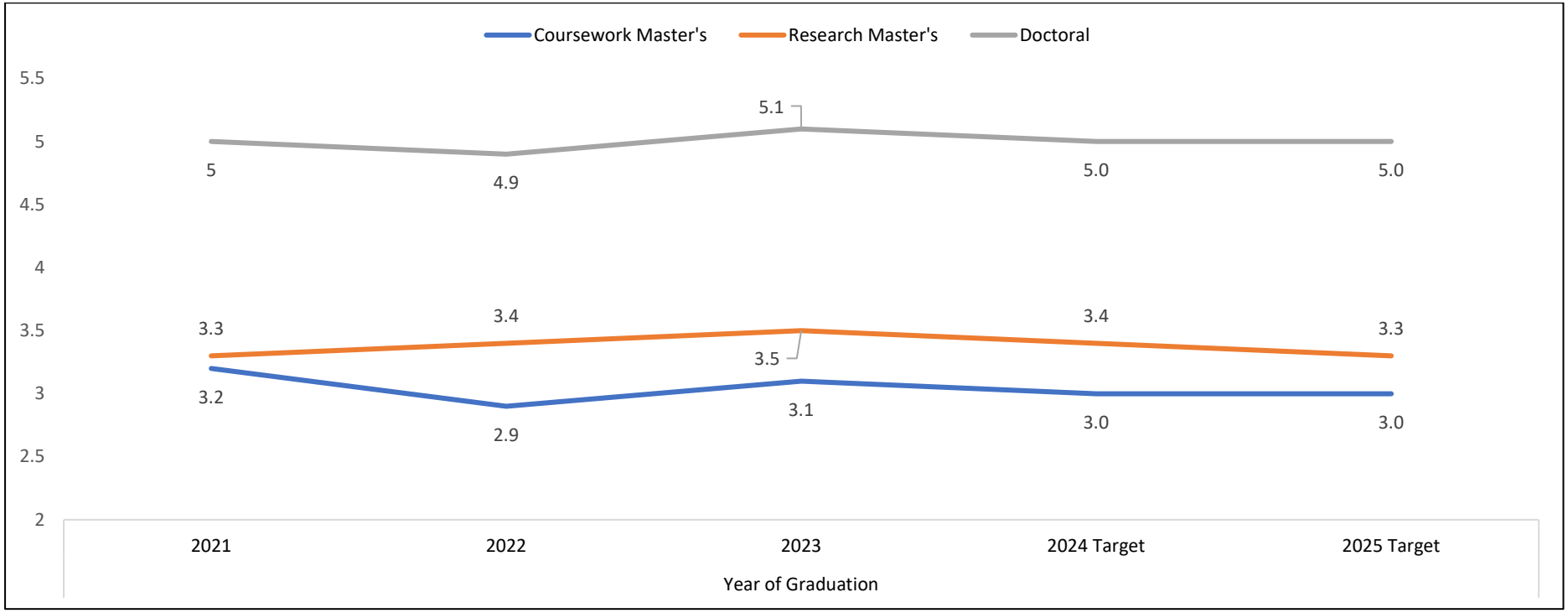
**Table 15: Average time to completion for coursework and research Master's and PhDs, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| | Year of Graduation | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 Target | 2025 Target |
| Coursework Master's | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Research Master's | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 |
| Doctoral | 5 | 4.9 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 5.0 |

As can be seen in Table 15 and Figure 16, the average number of years taken by coursework Master's graduates at the University declined from 3.2 years in 2021 to 2.9 years in 2022 which signals improved throughput rates. However, it increased to 3.1 in 2023. The targets for 2024 and 2025 have been set at 3 years which is the expected average time for completion for Master's graduates. The average number of years taken by research Master's graduates at the University increased from 3.3 years for the graduates of 2021 to 3.5 years for the graduates of 2023. This signals a decline in throughput rates and the university aims to improve this to 3.4 years for the 2024 graduates and 3.3 years for the 2025 graduates. The ideal target would be 3 years.

The average number of years taken by the Doctoral graduates of 2021 was 5 years which increased to 5.1 in 2023. The targets for 2024 and 2025 have been set at 5 years. Overall, the students who do complete their degrees do so within an acceptable time, except for research Master's where improvement is required.

**Figure 16: Average time to completion for coursework and research Master's and PhDs, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




Reasons for research Master's students taking longer than the average or expected time to graduate in certain faculties may include the following:

- Postgraduate students registered on a part-time basis usually take longer to graduate, especially those who are employed full-time while pursuing their studies.

- Limited postgraduate supervisory capacity in some faculties is exacerbated by retirements, resignations and many more junior academic staff being appointed who are still in the process of obtaining their PhDs. This results in a heavier postgraduate supervisory workload for the remaining senior academic staff who must take on more postgraduate students. This may have a knock-on effect in respect of postgraduate students taking longer than expected to complete their qualifications.
- Ethics clearance and approval processes for Master's and doctoral studies need to be streamlined to improve the turnaround times since postgraduate students often experience this as a bottleneck.

## Performance Indicator 10: Weighted teaching outputs per permanent academic staff member

The 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 that is used to calculate the teaching output subsidy. The funding weight for each qualification type is indicated in the second column of Table 16.

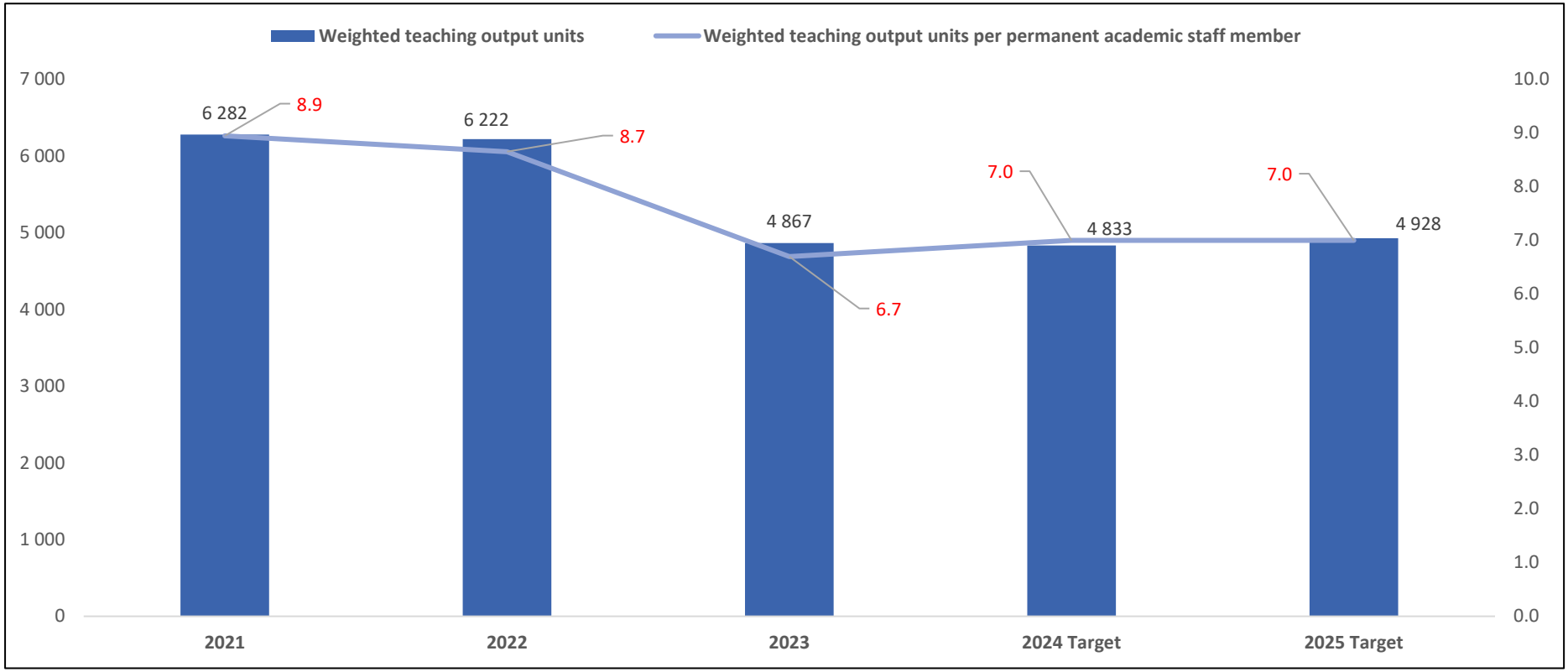
**Table 16: Weighted graduate output units per permanent academic staff member, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | Funding Weight | 2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 Target | | 2025 Target | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 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 | 478 | 239 | 735 | 368 | 377 | 189 | 391 | 196 | 378 | 189 |
| UG Certificates and Diplomas (3 years) | 1 | 1 787 | 1 787 | 1 898 | 1 898 | 1 418 | 1 418 | 1 470 | 1 470 | 1 424 | 1 424 |
| UG Bachelor's Degrees (3 years) | 1 | 1 549 | 1 549 | 1 501 | 1 501 | 1 273 | 1 273 | 1 590 | 1 590 | 1 659 | 1 659 |
| UG Bachelor's Degrees (4 years or more) NQF 7/8 | 1.5 | 999 | 1 499 | 891 | 1 337 | 258 | 387 | 476 | 714 | 490 | 735 |
| UG BTech (1 Year) | 1.5 | 142 | 213 | 96 | 144 | 504 | 756 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| UG Advanced Diplomas (1 Year) NQF7 | 0.5 | 971 | 486 | 864 | 432 | 783 | 392 | 737 | 369 | 803 | 402 |

| Qualification Type | Funding Weight | 2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 Target | | 2025 Target | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 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 |
| PG Certificate in Education (1 Year) NQF7 | 0.5 | 98 | 49 | 117 | 59 | 99 | 50 | 102 | 51 | 103 | 52 |
| Honours Degrees/PG Diploma (1 Year) | 0.5 | 807 | 404 | 882 | 441 | 701 | 351 | 786 | 393 | 834 | 417 |
| Non-Research Master's degrees and Diplomas | 0.5 | 115 | 58 | 87 | 44 | 105 | 53 | 101 | 51 | 102 | 51 |
| **Total** | | **6 946** | **6 282** | **7 071** | **6 222** | **5 518** | **4 867** | **5 653** | **4 833** | **5 793** | **4 928** |
| Permanent Academic Staff | | | 702 | | 719 | | 723 | | 694 | | 708 |
| **Weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member** | | | **8.9** | | **8.7** | | **6.7** | | **7** | | **7** |

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. The ratio declined substantially from 8.9 in 2021 to 6.7 in 2023. A target of 7 has been set for 2024 and 2025 (see Figure 17). The funding framework rewards universities for graduates produced, and improving graduate outputs would increase the teaching output subsidy of the University.

**Figure 17: Weighted teaching output units per permanent academic staff member, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**




## Performance Indicator 11: Weighted research output units 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. Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member measure the average research productivity of permanent academic staff members. Two other important indicators are the publication units per permanent academic staff member and the publication units per FTE academic staff member.

The ratio of weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member declined from 1.6 in 2021 to 1.5 in 2023. A target of 1.5 has been set for 2024 and 2025 (see Table 17). The target is the same as for 2023 since an analysis of the data shows that the Masters' research output units are not expected to improve soon. The ratio of publication units per permanent academic staff member declined from 0.83 in 2021 to 0.79 in 2023. The targets for 2024 and 2025 have been set at 0.84. Similarly, the ratio of publication units per FTE academic staff member declined from 0.68 in 2021 to 0.67 in 2023. The targets for 2024 and 2025 have been set at 0.71.

**Table 17: Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 Targets | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Publication Units | 581 | 571 | 573 | 584 | 596 |
| Master's Research Units | 224 | 218 | 204 | 194 | 197 |
| Doctoral (Weighted) | 288 | 246 | 279 | 270 | 279 |
| **Total Weighted Research Output Units** | **1 093** | **1 035** | **1 056** | **1 048** | **1 072** |
| Permanent Academic Staff | 702 | 719 | 723 | 694 | 708 |
| **Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member** | **1.6** | **1.4** | **1.5** | **1.5** | **1.5** |
| Publication units per permanent academic staff member | 0.83 | 0.79 | 0.79 | 0.84 | 0.84 |
| Full-time equivalent academic staff members | 854.32 | 846.00 | 857.60 | 823.20 | 839.81 |
| **Publication units per FTE staff member** | **0.68** | **0.67** | **0.67** | **0.71** | **0.71** |

It is of concern that the number of research Master's graduates at Nelson Mandela University has been declining over several years due to the decline in enrolments since 2017. Declines in international PG enrolments have also contributed to fewer Master's graduates. As indicated in Table 17, the number of research Master's graduates at the University declined from 224 in 2021 to 218 in 2022 and declined further to 204 in 2023. This constitutes a decline of 8.9% (20 fewer research Master's units) from 2021 to 2023.

Over the period 2020 to 2023, international PG Master's enrolments declined by 10.1% on average per annum, from 135 in 2020 to 98 in 2023. South African Master's enrolments declined on average by 6% per annum over this period, from 1 606 in 2020 to 1 331 in 2023. The decline in international enrolments was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with successive lockdowns triggering a sharp decline in economic activity in South Africa, leading to a widespread reduction in household incomes. This could have negatively impacted on the ability of students to continue with PG studies.

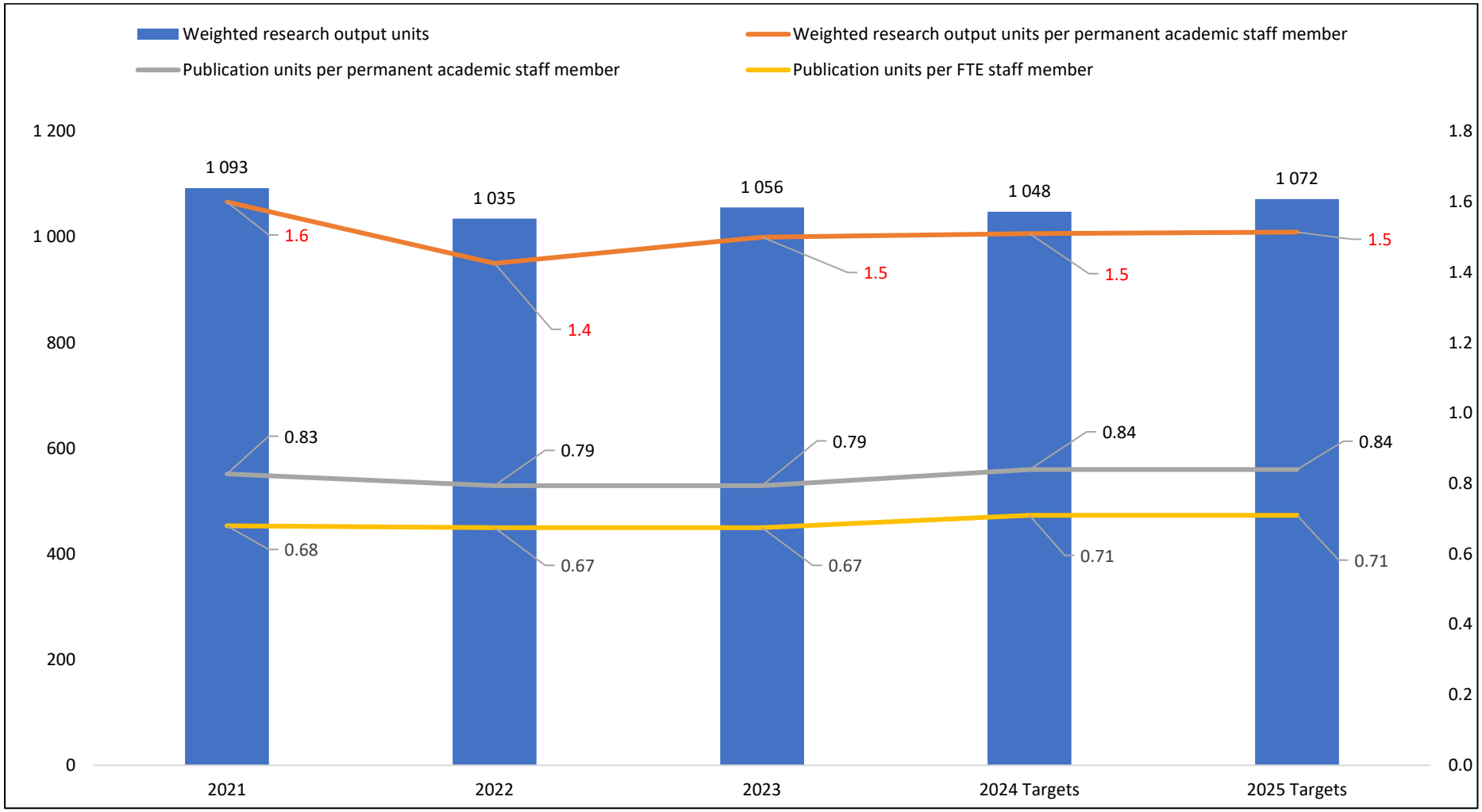
Figure 18 shows that the PhD weighted research output units declined by 14.6%, from 288 to 246, from 2020 to 2021, but then increased to 279 in 2023. Doctoral graduates at the University increased from 80 in 2020 to 96 in 2021 (20% increase) but then declined to 83 in 2022. Doctoral graduates increased to 93 in 2023. Doctoral enrolments declined at an average annual rate of 1.4% from 582 in 2020 to 557 in 2023. The number of international doctoral graduates increased from 29 in 2020 to 33 in 2023, at an average rate of 2.9% per annum.

A large proportion of UG students at Nelson Mandela University depend on NSFAS funding, which is not available at the PG level. This is a significant barrier for these students when they want to pursue PG studies. Furthermore, many of "missing middle" students qualify for bursaries and scholarships to register for PG studies, which they cannot take up due to historical debt.

A further challenge is that the percentage of academic staff with doctoral qualifications was 47% in 2023, which is below the national average. Many academic staff appointed in recent years are still pursuing their doctoral qualifications and require training, development and mentoring by experienced PG supervisors before they take up these responsibilities. Furthermore, there is often a mismatch between the fields in which prospective PG students want to pursue their studies and the available supervisory capacity in these fields.

The University needs to work on strategies to increase enrolments in Master's and doctoral degrees such as mobilising additional third-stream funding for postgraduate bursaries and scholarships and increasing the proportion of academic staff with PhD qualifications to bolster postgraduate supervisory capacity across all faculties.

**Figure 18: Weighted research output units per permanent academic staff member, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**



## Performance Indicator 12: Number and percentage of postgraduate students by population group and gender

Table 18 indicates that the number of Black (African, Coloured, Indian) postgraduate student enrolments declined from 2 779 in 2021 to 2 722 in 2024, a decline of 2.1% in total. White postgraduate student enrolments declined from 662 in 2021 to 457 in 2024, which represents a decline of 31%. The University aims to increase postgraduate enrolments from 3 179 in 2024 to 3 285 in 2025, with a target of 2 843 Black student enrolments and 442 White student enrolments.

**Table 18: Number of Black* postgraduate students, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | 2021 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | | 2024 | | | 2025 Targets | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total |
| PG Diploma | 428 | 72 | 500 | 472 | 55 | 527 | 383 | 44 | 427 | 498 | 35 | 533 | 534 | 34 | 568 |
| Honours | 612 | 158 | 770 | 683 | 146 | 829 | 604 | 126 | 730 | 670 | 96 | 766 | 709 | 97 | 806 |
| Master's | 1 271 | 285 | 1 556 | 1 214 | 272 | 1 486 | 1 157 | 263 | 1 420 | 1 114 | 228 | 1 342 | 1 144 | 218 | 1 362 |
| Doctoral | 468 | 147 | 615 | 447 | 121 | 568 | 444 | 112 | 556 | 440 | 98 | 538 | 456 | 93 | 549 |
| **PG Total** | **2 779** | **662** | **3 441** | **2 816** | **594** | **3 410** | **2 588** | **545** | **3 133** | **2 722** | **457** | **3 179** | **2 843** | **442** | **3 285** |

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

The percentage of Black postgraduate student enrolments increased from 81% in 2021 to 86% in 2024. The percentage of White student enrolments declined from 19% in 2021 to 14% in 2024. The 2025 target is to achieve an 87% Black postgraduate student enrolment and a 13% White postgraduate student enrolment (see Table 19).

**Table 19: Percentage of Black* postgraduate students, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | 2021 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | | 2024 | | | 2025 Targets | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total | Black | White | Total |
| PG Diploma | 86% | 14% | 100% | 90% | 10% | 100% | 90% | 10% | 100% | 93% | 7% | 100% | 94% | 6% | 100% |
| Honours | 79% | 21% | 100% | 82% | 18% | 100% | 83% | 17% | 100% | 87% | 13% | 100% | 88% | 12% | 100% |
| Master's | 82% | 18% | 100% | 82% | 18% | 100% | 81% | 19% | 100% | 83% | 17% | 100% | 84% | 16% | 100% |
| Doctoral | 76% | 24% | 100% | 79% | 21% | 100% | 80% | 20% | 100% | 82% | 18% | 100% | 83% | 17% | 100% |
| **PG Total** | **81%** | **19%** | **100%** | **83%** | **17%** | **100%** | **83%** | **17%** | **100%** | **86%** | **14%** | **100%** | **87%** | **13%** | **100%** |

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

Female students constitute a higher percentage of postgraduate enrolments than males. Female postgraduate enrolments declined from 1 896 in 2021 to 1 804 in 2024, which is a 4.9% decline, while male postgraduate enrolments declined from 1 545 in 2021 to 1 375 in 2024, representing a decline of 11%. As indicated in Table 20, the University aims to increase female postgraduate enrolments to 1 831, and male enrolments to 1 454, in 2025.

**Table 20: Number of female postgraduate students, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | 2021 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | | 2024 | | | 2025 Targets | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total |
| PG Diploma | 260 | 240 | 500 | 285 | 242 | 527 | 248 | 179 | 427 | 307 | 226 | 533 | 324 | 244 | 568 |
| Honours | 504 | 266 | 770 | 539 | 290 | 829 | 436 | 294 | 730 | 468 | 298 | 766 | 484 | 322 | 806 |
| Master's | 836 | 720 | 1 556 | 815 | 671 | 1 486 | 793 | 627 | 1 420 | 757 | 585 | 1 342 | 749 | 613 | 1 362 |
| Doctoral | 296 | 319 | 615 | 282 | 286 | 568 | 269 | 287 | 556 | 272 | 266 | 538 | 275 | 275 | 549 |
| **PG Total** | **1 896** | **1 545** | **3 441** | **1 921** | **1489** | **3 410** | **1 746** | **1387** | **3 133** | **1 804** | **1375** | **3 179** | **1 831** | **1 454** | **3 285** |

Table 21 shows that the percentage of female postgraduate enrolments increased from 55% in 2021 to 57% in 2024, while the percentage of male postgraduate enrolments declined from 45% in 2021 to 43% in 2024. The University aims to achieve a more balanced postgraduate enrolment profile with regards to gender. In 2025, the aim is to decrease the percentage of female postgraduate enrolments to 56%, and to increase the percentage of male postgraduate enrolments to 44%.

**Table 21: Percentage of female postgraduate students, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Qualification Type | 2021 | | | 2022 | | | 2023 | | | 2024 | | | 2025 Targets | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male | Total |
| PG Diploma | 52% | 48% | 100% | 54% | 46% | 100% | 58% | 42% | 100% | 58% | 42% | 100% | 57% | 43% | 100% |
| Honours | 65% | 35% | 100% | 65% | 35% | 100% | 60% | 40% | 100% | 61% | 39% | 100% | 60% | 40% | 100% |
| Master's | 54% | 46% | 100% | 55% | 45% | 100% | 56% | 44% | 100% | 56% | 44% | 100% | 55% | 45% | 100% |
| Doctoral | 48% | 52% | 100% | 50% | 50% | 100% | 48% | 52% | 100% | 51% | 49% | 100% | 50% | 50% | 100% |
| **PG Total** | **55%** | **45%** | **100%** | **56%** | **44%** | **100%** | **56%** | **44%** | **100%** | **57%** | **43%** | **100%** | **56%** | **44%** | **100%** |

## 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 pandemic has seen a significant decline in international student enrolments across the globe.

As indicated in Table 22 below, occasional international student enrolments increased from 63 in 2021 to 85 in 2024. A target of 91 has been set for 2025. Undergraduate international student enrolments declined from 647 in 2021 to 391 in 2024. A target of 436 has been set for 2025. At the postgraduate level, international student enrolments declined from 353 in 2021 to 290 in 2024. The University aims to increase this to 315 in 2025. Total international student enrolments declined from 1 063 in 2021 to 766 in 2024. The University has set a target of 842 in 2025.

**Table 22: Headcount enrolments by South African, SADC, African and international origins, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Level | Origin | Headcount enrolments | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
| Occasional | Other African | 1 | | | 1 | 2 |
| | Other foreign | 60 | 126 | 105 | 82 | 86 |
| | SADC excl SA | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| | *International* | *63* | *129* | *107* | *85* | *91* |
| | South African | 97 | 83 | 62 | 72 | 39 |
| **Occasional total** | | **160** | **212** | **169** | **157** | **130** |
| Undergraduate | Other African | 79 | 60 | 39 | 36 | 53 |
| | Other foreign | 30 | 26 | 19 | 15 | 20 |
| | SADC excl SA | 538 | 492 | 416 | 340 | 363 |
| | *International* | *647* | *578* | *474* | *391* | *436* |
| | South African | 25 378 | 28 120 | 27 586 | 29 314 | 29 475 |
| **Undergraduate total** | | **26 025** | **28 698** | **28 060** | **29 705** | **29 911** |
| Postgraduate | Other African | 110 | 101 | 94 | 83 | 98 |
| | Other foreign | 26 | 20 | 22 | 15 | 23 |
| | SADC excl SA | 217 | 210 | 209 | 192 | 194 |
| | *International* | *353* | *331* | *325* | *290* | *315* |
| | South African | 3 197 | 3 079 | 2 808 | 2 889 | 2 970 |
| **Postgraduate total** | | **3 550** | **3 079** | **3 133** | **3 179** | **3 285** |
| Total | Other African | 190 | 161 | 133 | 120 | 153 |
| | Other foreign | 116 | 172 | 146 | 112 | 129 |
| | SADC excl SA | 757 | 705 | 627 | 534 | 560 |
| | *International* | *1063* | *1038* | *906* | *766* | *842* |
| | South African | 28 672 | 31 282 | 30 456 | 32 275 | 32 484 |
| **Grand total** | | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **33 326** |

In 2021, 2.5% of the total student enrolments were from SADC countries (excluding South Africa), which declined to 1.6% in 2024. The target for 2025 is 1.7%. The percentage of students from other African countries was 0.6% of total student enrolments in 2021, which declined to 0.4% in 2024. The target for 2025 is 0.5%. Enrolments from other foreign countries were 0.4% of total student enrolments in 2021 which declined to 0.3% in 2024, and this is projected to increase again to 0.4% in 2025. The University plans to increase the total international student enrolments from 2.3% in 2024 to 2.6% of total student enrolments in 2025 (see Table 23).

**Table 23: Percentage of international student enrolments according to origins, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

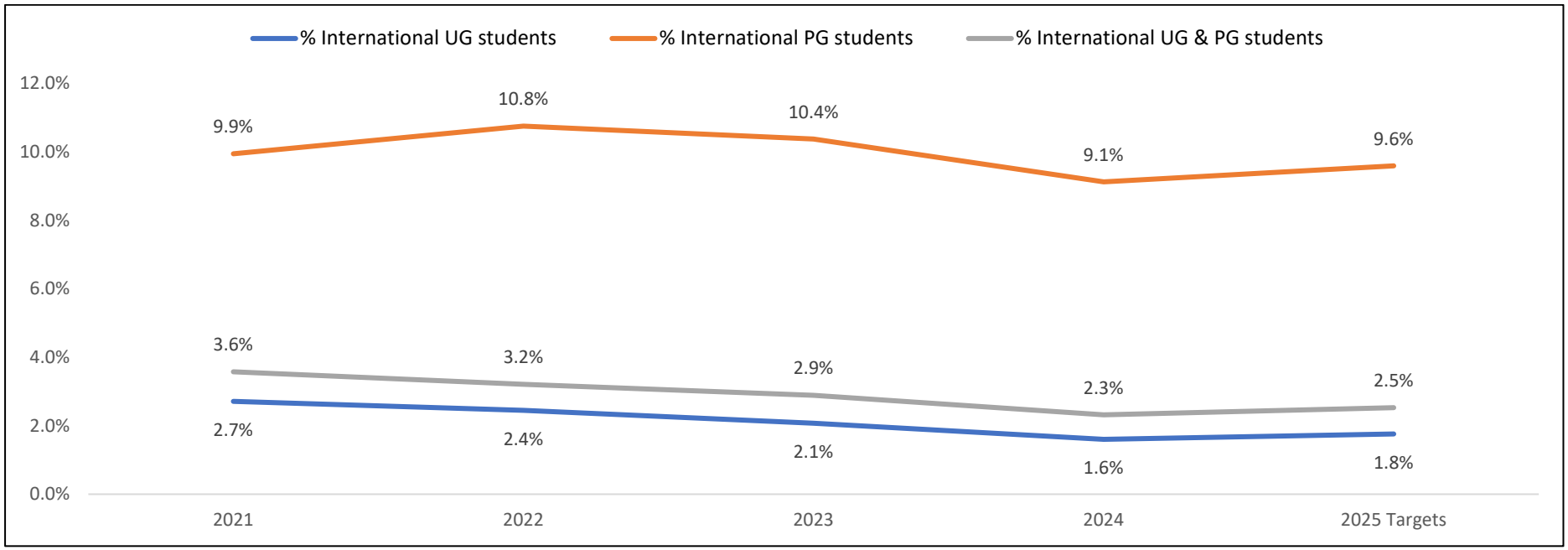
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other African | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| Other foreign | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.3% | 0.4% |
| SADC excluding SA | 2.5% | 2.2% | 2.0% | 1.6% | 1.7% |
| South African | 96.4% | 96.8% | 97.1% | 97.7% | 97.5% |

Table 24 and Figure 19 below, show that the percentage of undergraduate international students declined from 2.7% in 2021 to 1.6% in 2024. The target for 2025 is to increase this to 1.8% of total enrolments. International postgraduate enrolments declined from 9.9% of total enrolments in 2021 to 9.1% in 2024. The University aims to increase this percentage to 9.6% of total enrolments in 2025. In total, international student enrolments constituted 3.6% of total enrolments in 2021 but declined to 2.3% of total enrolments in 2024. The target is to increase this to 2.5% of total enrolments in 2025.

**Table 24: Percentage undergraduate and postgraduate international enrolments (SADC, African and international origins), 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % International UG students | 2.7% | 2.4% | 2.1% | 1.6% | 1.8% |
| % International PG students | 9.9% | 10.8% | 10.4% | 9.1% | 9.6% |
| % International UG & PG students | 3.6% | 3.2% | 2.9% | 2.3% | 2.5% |

**Figure 19: Percentage undergraduate and postgraduate international enrolments (SADC, African and international origins), 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**




Due to a variety of challenges linked to the pandemic, the international study abroad and exchange students who travel to South Africa and spend a semester at the University have declined significantly over the last four years. A programme for reviving the Semester Study Abroad and short learning programmes as important sources of the University's third-stream revenue base is currently being developed. This is being supported by vigorous international marketing, profiling, and visibility initiatives.

In view of the decline in postgraduate enrolments and graduate outputs, as well as the sharp decline in international enrolments, the University has established a dedicated postgraduate and internationalisation task team under the auspices of the institutional EMC. This task team is analysing trends across the spectrum of postgraduate and international enrolments and factors affecting these, with a view to developing strategies and interventions to reverse these trends. Despite the decline in international student numbers over the last four years, important lessons have been learned, and various strategies identified to improve international student enrolment figures.

The Vice-Chancellor has initiated a project to advance the recruitment of students from those parts of the African continent previously uncharted by the University, while also revitalising our relationships with countries and regions where we have traditionally drawn the bulk of our international students. This will also serve to encourage intra-Africa student and staff mobility initiatives that are key for the international exposure of our postgraduate students and emerging researchers.

***Strategic Focus Area 4: Catalyse dynamic, student-centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom***

## Performance Indicator 14: Number of on- and accredited off-campus residence beds and occupancy rate

Research has shown that students who live in on-campus student accommodation, even for just one year, achieve better academic outcomes during their degree. On-campus housing effectively integrates living and learning by providing students with the opportunity to form an identity or a sense of community within the institution.

Students who live on campus generally participate in more campus activities and take advantage of campus resources such as academic support services including mentoring, advising, personal and academic counselling, career workshops, faculty mentors, and the like. It has also been found that students living on campus are more involved in leadership experiences. Access to technology, high-speed connectivity (including Wi-Fi), computer laboratories, the library, and similar services are crucial for today's students, and these are more readily available, at a lower cost, to those living on campus. This points to the importance of providing on-campus accommodation to as many students as possible, with a specific focus on first-time entering students to promote student success.

As can be seen in Table 25 below, in 2022, 12% of all students were staying in on-campus student accommodation and 39% were in accredited off-campus student accommodation, with 51% of enrolled students housed in student accommodation. With the additional residences that became available in 2023, 16% of all students resided in on-campus accommodation, and a further 48% in accredited off-campus student accommodation. In 2024, there was a decline in accredited off-campus beds resulting in fewer enrolled students living in accredited off-campus accommodation, dropping from 48% in 2023 to 44%. The percentage of enrolled students living in on-campus student accommodation also declined in 2024, from 64% in 2023 to 59%. The University plans to increase the number of available accredited off-campus beds to 20 000 in 2025 from the current 14 528. This will increase the percentage of students in student accommodation from 59% in 2024 to 76% in 2025.

**Table 25: Percentage of students living in on- and off-campus student residences in Gqeberha and George, 2022-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Residences | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 | | Target 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 |
| On-campus beds | 3 833 | 12% | 5 063 | 16% | 5 015 | 15% | 5 350 | 16% |
| Accredited off-campus beds | 12 882 | 39% | 15 099 | 48% | 14 528 | 44% | 20 000 | 79% |
| **Total** | **16 715** | **51%** | **20 164** | **64%** | **19 543** | **59%** | **25 350** | **76%** |

The occupancy rate is the number of residence registrations as a percentage of the available beds. As indicated in Table 26 above, the occupancy rate in 2024 was 100% for both on-campus and accredited off-campus beds, and the target will remain 100% in 2025.

**Table 26: Number of on- and accredited off-campus residence beds and occupancy rate, 2022-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Residences | Gqeberha/George | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 | | Target 2025 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beds | % Occupancy rate | Beds | % Occupancy rate | Beds | % Occupancy rate | Beds | % Occupancy rate |
| On-campus beds | Gqeberha | 3 480 | 98% | 4 437 | 97% | 4 389 | 100% | 4 724 | 100% |
| | George | 626 | | 626 | | 626 | | 626 | |
| | Total | 4 106 | | 5 063 | | 5 015 | | 5 350 | |
| Accredited off-campus beds | Gqeberha | 13 722 | 99% | 14 505 | 97% | 13 631 | 100% | 18 800 | 100% |
| | George | 753 | | 895 | | 897 | | 1 200 | |
| | Total | 14 475 | | 15 400 | | 14 528 | | 20 000 | |
| **Total** | | **18 581** | | **20 463** | | **19 543** | | **25 350** | |

***Strategic Enabler 2: Foster an inclusive, values-driven institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees***

## Performance indicator 15: Total permanent academic and PASS staff according to gender, population group, disability and nationality

As depicted in Table 27, the permanent academic and PASS staff complement declined from 2 542 in 2021 to 2 421 in 2024, a total decline of 4.8%. A target of 2 448 has been set for 2025, which constitutes an increase of 1.1%. The lack of any real-term increase in the subsidy allocation may preclude the University from appointing new staff.

**Table 27: Total permanent academic and PASS staff according to gender, population group, disability, and nationality, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Gender | 2021 | % | 2022 | % | 2023 | % | 2024 | % | 2025 Targets | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 1 494 | 59% | 1 525 | 59% | 1 508 | 59% | 1 432 | 59% | 1 469 | 60% |
| Male | 1 048 | 41% | 1 052 | 41% | 1 057 | 41% | 989 | 41% | 979 | 40% |
| Total | 2 542 | | 2 577 | | 2 565 | | 2 421 | | 2 448 | |
| **Population group** | **2021** | **%** | **2022** | **%** | **2023** | **%** | **2024** | **%** | **2025 Targets** | **%** |
| African | 1 352 | 53% | 1 402 | 54% | 1 425 | 56% | 1 368 | 57% | 1 444 | 60% |
| Coloured | 457 | 18% | 462 | 18% | 463 | 18% | 431 | 18% | 417 | 17% |
| Indian | 87 | 3% | 89 | 3% | 84 | 3% | 77 | 3% | 73 | 3% |
| White | 646 | 26% | 624 | 25% | 593 | 23% | 545 | 23% | 514 | 21% |
| Total | 2 542 | | 2 577 | | 2 565 | | 2 421 | | 2 448 | |
| **Disability** | **2021** | **%** | **2022** | **%** | **2023** | **%** | **2024** | **%** | **2025 Targets** | **%** |
| | 66 | 3% | 69 | 3% | 79 | 3% | 79 | 3% | 80 | 3% |

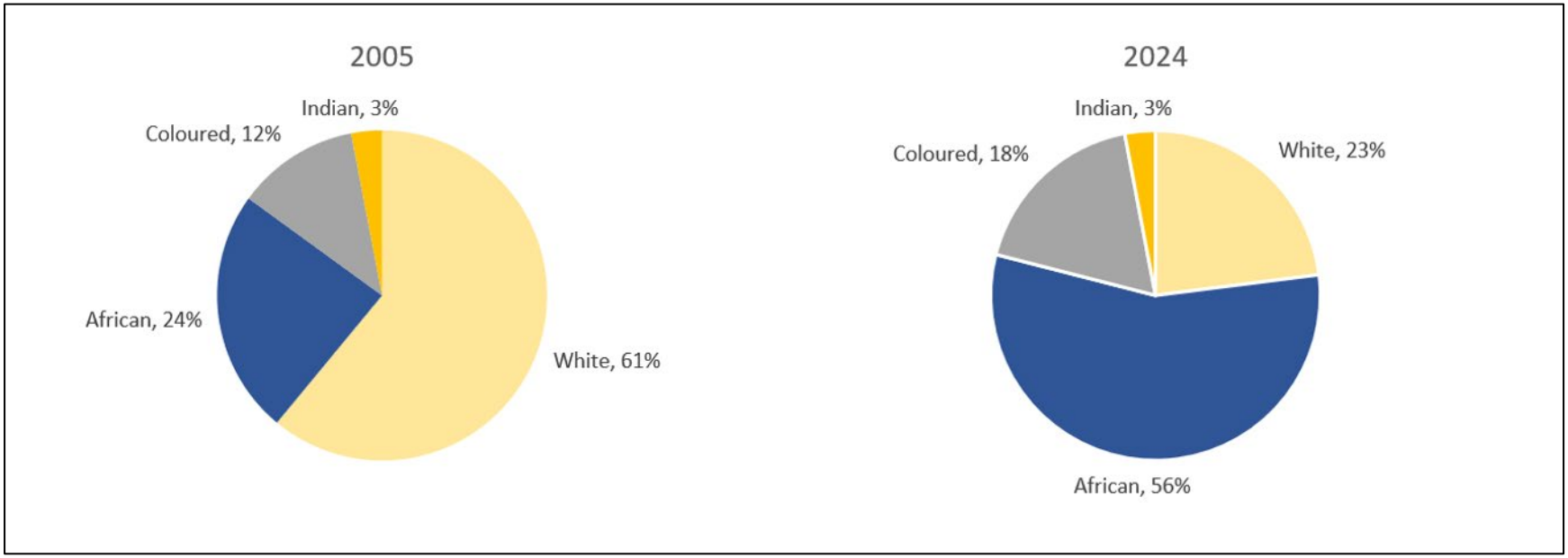
| Nationality | 2021 | % | 2022 | % | 2023 | % | 2024 | % | 2025 Targets | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South African | 2 489 | 98% | 2 521 | 98% | 2 505 | 98% | 2 359 | 97% | 2 383 | 97% |
| International | 53 | 2% | 56 | 2% | 60 | 2% | 62 | 3% | 65 | 3% |
| **Total** | **2 542** | | **2 577** | | **2 565** | | **2 421** | | **2 448** | |

The demographic profile of permanent academic and PASS staff from 2021 to 2024 was as follows:

- Females remained at 59% and males at 41%. It is projected that the female: male ratio for 2025 will remain the same at 59: 41%.
- Black (African, Coloured, Indian) academic and PASS staff increased from 74% in 2021 to 77% in 2024 while the percentage of White academic and PASS staff declined from 26% in 2021 to 23% in 2024. The targets for 2025 are set at 79% Black and 21% White.
- 3% of academic and PASS staff for the years 2021 to 2024 reported a disability and the same percentage is targeted for 2025.
- International academic and PASS staff increased from 2% in 2021 to 3% in 2024, and the target for 2025 has been set to remain at 3%.

Since the establishment of the merged University in 2005, major changes can be observed in the population profile of the staff as shown in Figure 20. The percentage of African permanent academic and PASS staff increased from 24% in 2005 to 56% in 2024. Coloured staff increased from 12% in 2005 to 18% in 2024. Indian staff remained at 3%, while White staff declined from 61% of total academic and PASS staff to 23%. Female permanent academic and PASS staff increased from 50% to 59% and male staff declined from 50% to 41% over the same period.

**Figure 20: Changes in the population group profile of permanent academic and PASS staff from 2005 to 2024**




As can be seen in Table 28, permanent academic staff decreased from 702 in 2021 to 694 in 2024. The target is to increase academic staff by 1.5% from 694 in 2024 to 704 in 2025. Additional appointments will be limited due to the current financial constraints.

**Table 28: Permanent academic staff according to gender, population group, disability, and nationality, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Gender | 2021 | % | 2022 | % | 2023 | % | 2024 | % | 2025 Targets | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 366 | 52% | 380 | 53% | 372 | 51% | 360 | 52% | 368 | 52% |
| Male | 336 | 48% | 339 | 47% | 351 | 49% | 334 | 48% | 336 | 48% |
| **Total** | **702** | | **719** | | **723** | | **694** | | **704** | |

| Population group | 2021 | % | 2022 | % | 2023 | % | 2024 | % | 2025 Targets | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| African | 224 | 32% | 248 | 34% | 265 | 37% | 256 | 37% | 268 | 38% |
| Coloured | 120 | 17% | 121 | 17% | 126 | 17% | 121 | 17% | 126 | 18% |
| Indian | 37 | 5% | 39 | 6% | 36 | 5% | 34 | 5% | 35 | 5% |
| White | 321 | 46% | 311 | 43% | 296 | 41% | 283 | 41% | 275 | 39% |
| **Total** | **702** | | **719** | | **723** | | **694** | | **704** | |
| **Disability** | **2021** | **%** | **2022** | **%** | **2023** | **%** | **2024** | | **2025 Targets** | |
| | 19 | 3% | 19 | 3% | 23 | 3% | 22 | 3% | 24 | 3% |
| **Nationality** | **2021** | **%** | **2022** | **%** | **2023** | **%** | **2024** | | **2025 Targets** | |
| South African | 659 | 94% | 676 | 94% | 674 | 93% | 641 | 92% | 649 | 92% |
| International | 43 | 6% | 43 | 6% | 49 | 7% | 53 | 8% | 55 | 8% |
| **Total** | **702** | | **719** | | **723** | | **694** | | **704** | |

As depicted in Table 28 above, the demographic profile of permanent academic staff from 2021 to 2024 was as follows:

- Females increased from 52% in 2021 to 53% in 2022 but then declined again to 52% in 2024. Males declined from 48% in 2021 to 47% in 2022 but reverted to 48% in 2024. The female: male target for 2025 remains at 52: 48%.
- Black (African, Coloured, Indian) academic staff increased from 54% in 2021 to 59% in 2024 while the percentage of White academic staff declined from 46% in 2021 to 41% in 2024. Targets of 61% Black and 39% White academic staff have been set for 2025.
- 3% of academic staff reported a disability and the same percentage is targeted for 2025.
- International academic staff increased consistently from 6% in 2021 to 8% in 2024. The target for 2025 remains at 8%.

As illustrated in Figure 21, changes in the gender profile according to academic rank indicate a significant increase in the percentage of female professors and associate professors over the 2005 to 2024 period. The percentage of female professors increased from 23.3% in 2005 to 48.4% in 2024. The percentage of female associate professors increased from 24.4% in 2005 to 50% in 2024.

**Figure 21: Changes in the profile of permanent professors and associate professors by gender, 2005 to 2024**

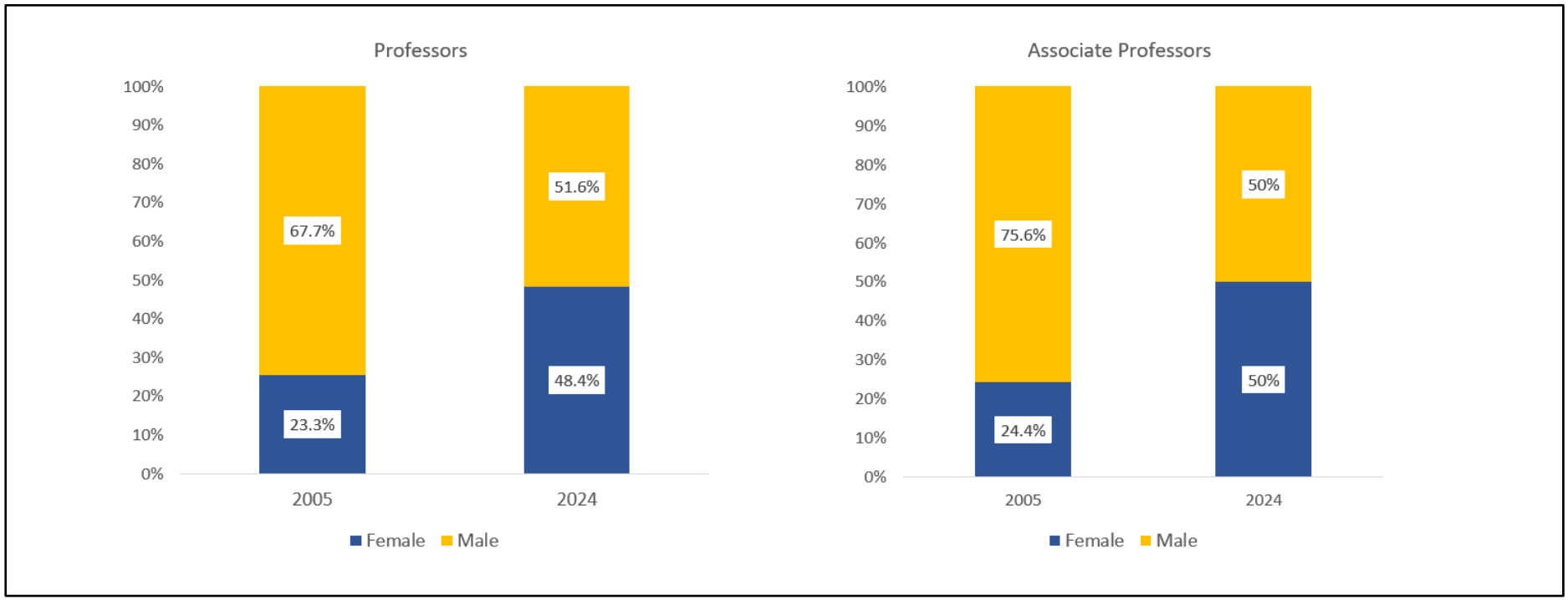
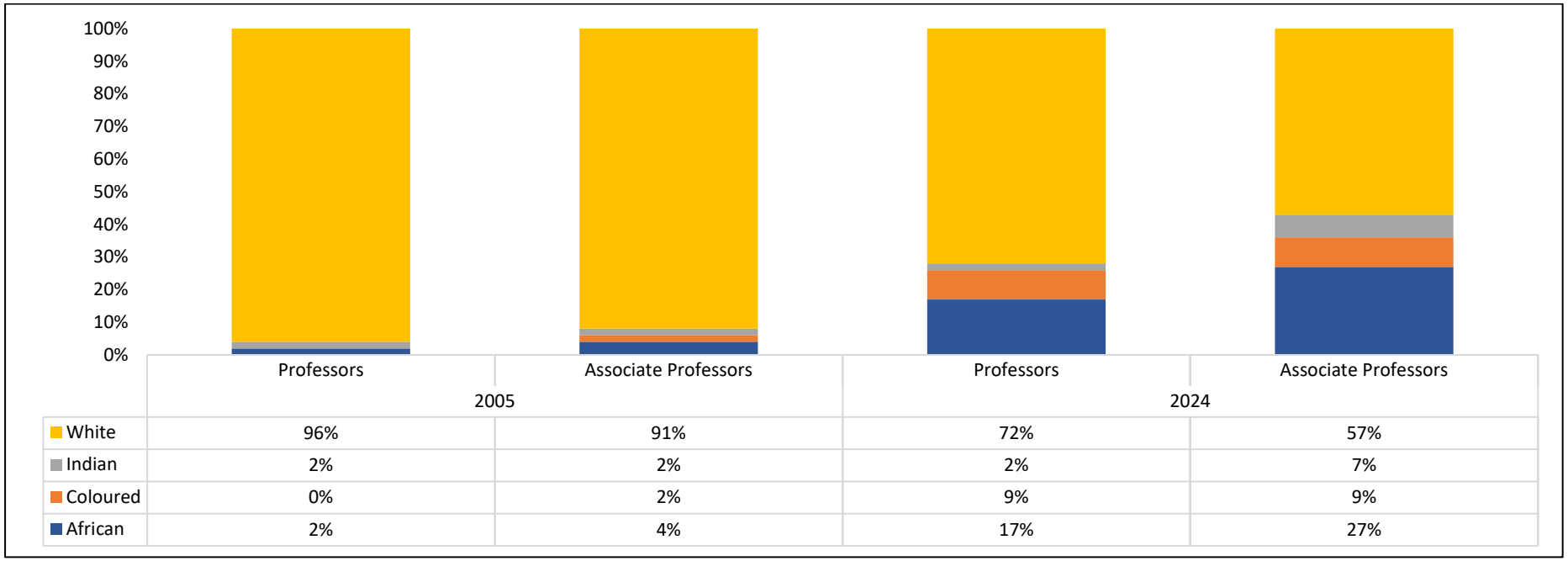



Figure 22 shows how the profile of professors and associate professors by population group has changed over the period 2005 to 2024. The percentage of White professors declined from 96% in 2005 to 72% in 2024, while the percentage of African professors increased from 2% in 2005 to 17% in 2024. Coloured professors increased from 0% in 2005 to 9% in 2024. Similar changes occurred in the profile of associate professors. White associate professors declined from 91% in 2005 to 57% in 2024, while African associate professors increased from 4% in 2005 to 27% in 2024.

**Figure 22: Changes in the profile of permanent professors and associate professors by population group, 2005 to 2024**




| | 2005 Professors | 2005 Associate Professors | 2024 Professors | 2024 Associate Professors |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| White | 96% | 91% | 72% | 57% |
| Indian | 2% | 2% | 2% | 7% |
| Coloured | 0% | 2% | 9% | 9% |
| African | 2% | 4% | 17% | 27% |

## Performance indicator 16: Highest qualification of academic staff

The highest qualification of staff with doctoral degrees is of particular importance since it correlates with postgraduate supervisory capacity, as well as the research outputs of the University. The University continues to face challenges relating to a small pool of candidates in scarce skills disciplines. Affected faculties have a growing group of early career academics (ECAs) who need to be nurtured and developed to become the next generation of academic leaders.

As part of efforts to promote long-term sustainability, the University has leveraged funding from the NRF and DHET to ensure that academic employees receive the support and training needed to attain higher qualifications. As indicated previously, there are severe constraints in terms of postgraduate supervisory capacity. To mitigate this risk, all academics with at least a Master's qualification should receive mentoring

to equip them to take on supervision. Regular writing retreats are arranged across all faculties to encourage academic writing and boost research outputs.

Targeted funding to support emerging academics is also offered through the DHET-funded University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), and a new cohort of grant recipients was approved in 2024. The New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) cohort at Mandela University numbers 17 Black academics, 10 of whom are women. Active recruitment is underway to fill four nGAP vacancies which will increase the cohort to 21. In addition, there are 14 active Thuthuka grant holders and the Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) currently funds three academics.

**Table 29: Highest qualification of academic staff by population group and gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Highest Qualification | 2021 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | Male | Total | African | Coloured | Indian | White | Total |
| Doctoral degree | 175 | 153 | **328** | 95 | 43 | 20 | 170 | **328** |
| Master's degree | 132 | 127 | **259** | 91 | 53 | 9 | 106 | **259** |
| Other | 59 | 56 | **115** | 38 | 24 | 8 | 45 | **115** |
| **Total** | **366** | **336** | **702** | **224** | **120** | **37** | **321** | **702** |
| **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 | 165 | 159 | **324** | 113 | 44 | 17 | 150 | **324** |
| Master's degree | 131 | 121 | **252** | 95 | 51 | 10 | 96 | **252** |
| Other | 64 | 54 | **118** | 48 | 26 | 7 | 37 | **118** |
| **Total** | **360** | **334** | **694** | **256** | **121** | **34** | **283** | **694** |
| **Highest Qualification** | **2025 Targets** | | | | | | | |
| | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** | **African** | **Coloured** | **Indian** | **White** | **Total** |
| Doctoral degree | 174 | 165 | **339** | 120 | 48 | 18 | 149 | **335** |
| Master's degree | 137 | 124 | **261** | 102 | 54 | 10 | 94 | **260** |
| Other | 57 | 47 | **104** | 46 | 24 | 7 | 32 | **109** |
| **Total** | **368** | **336** | **704** | **268** | **126** | **35** | **275** | **704** |

Table 30 below, details the changes in academic staff with doctoral degrees by population group from 2021 to 2024.

**Table 30: Highest qualification of academic staff by population group and gender (%), 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| Highest Qualification | 2021 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | Male | Total | African | Coloured | Indian | White | Total |
| Doctoral degree | 48% | 45% | 47% | 42% | 36% | 54% | 53% | 47% |
| Master's degree | 36% | 38% | 37% | 41% | 44% | 24% | 33% | 37% |
| Other | 16% | 17% | 16% | 17% | 20% | 22% | 14% | 16% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

| Highest Qualification | 2022 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female | Male | Total | African | Coloured | Indian | White | Total |
| Doctoral degree | 46% | 45% | 45% | 41% | 35% | 51% | 52% | 45% |
| Master's degree | 38% | 38% | 38% | 42% | 44% | 26% | 34% | 38% |
| Other | 16% | 17% | 17% | 17% | 21% | 23% | 14% | 17% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| **Highest Qualification** | **2023** | | | | | | | |
| | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** | **African** | **Coloured** | **Indian** | **White** | **Total** |
| Doctoral degree | 47% | 47% | 47% | 43% | 37% | 53% | 54% | 47% |
| Master's degree | 37% | 36% | 37% | 40% | 41% | 28% | 34% | 37% |
| Other | 16% | 17% | 16% | 18% | 22% | 19% | 13% | 16% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| **Highest Qualification** | **2024** | | | | | | | |
| | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** | **African** | **Coloured** | **Indian** | **White** | **Total** |
| Doctoral degree | 46% | 48% | 47% | 44% | 36% | 50% | 53% | 47% |
| Master's degree | 36% | 36% | 36% | 37% | 42% | 29% | 34% | 36% |
| Other | 18% | 16% | 17% | 19% | 22% | 21% | 13% | 17% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |
| **Highest Qualification** | **2025 Targets** | | | | | | | |
| | **Female** | **Male** | **Total** | **African** | **Coloured** | **Indian** | **White** | **Total** |
| Doctoral degree | 47% | 49% | 48% | 45% | 38% | 51% | 54% | 48% |
| Master's degree | 37% | 37% | 37% | 38% | 43% | 29% | 34% | 37% |
| Other | 16% | 14% | 15% | 17% | 19% | 20% | 12% | 15% |
| **Total** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** | **100%** |

As can be seen in Table 30 and Figure 23 below, the changes in academic staff with doctoral degrees by population group from 2021 to 2024 were as follows:

- African staff with a doctoral degree increased from 42% in 2021 to 44% in 2024. A target of 45% has been set for 2025.

- Coloured staff with a doctoral degree increased from 36% in 2021 to 37% in 2023, but declined back to 36% in 2024. A target of 38% has been set for 2025.
- Indian staff with a doctoral degree declined from 54% in 2021 to 50% in 2024 and an increase to 51% has been set as a target for 2025.
- White staff with doctoral degrees increased from 53% in 2021 to 54% in 2023, but reverted to 53% in 2024. The 2024 target for White academic staff has been set at 54%, which is a 1% increase.
- The overall percentage of academic staff with doctoral degrees is expected to increase from 47% in 2024 to 48% in 2025.

**Figure 23: Percentage of highest qualification of academic staff, 2025 targets**

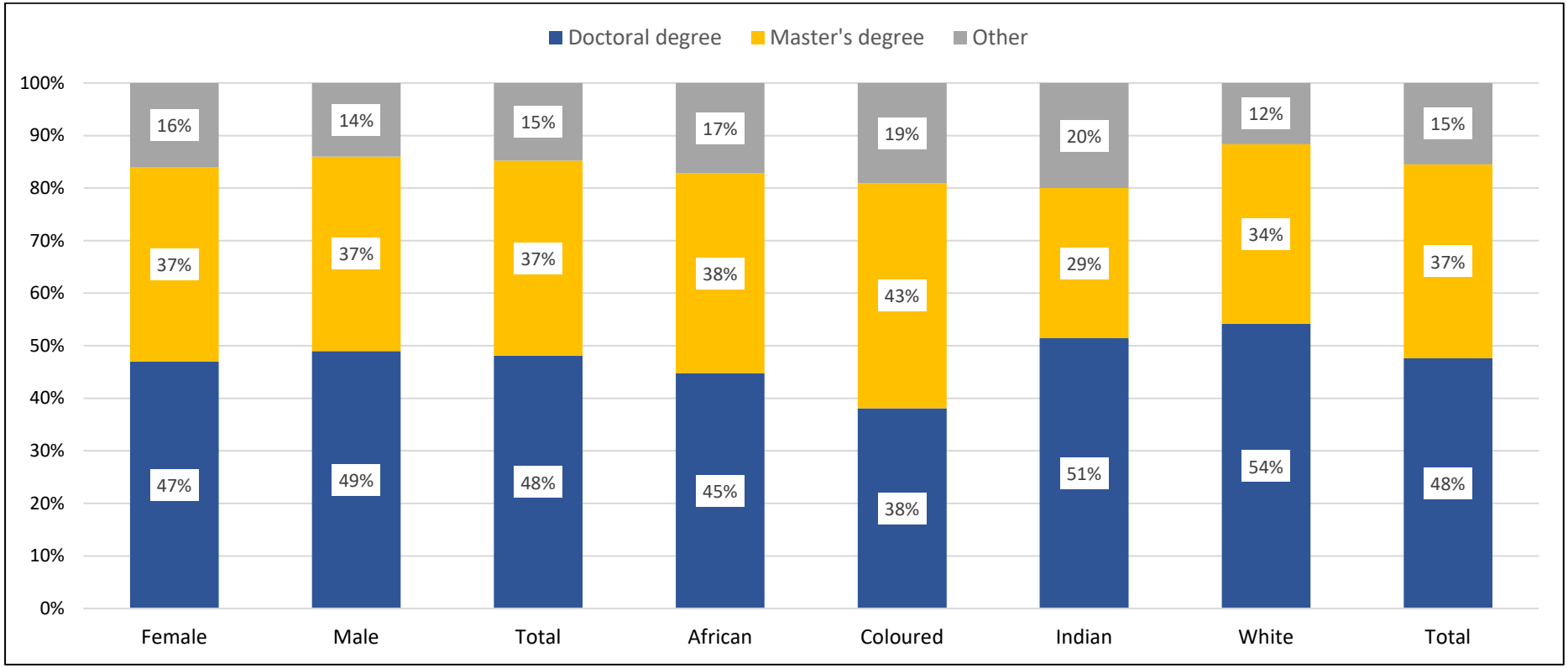
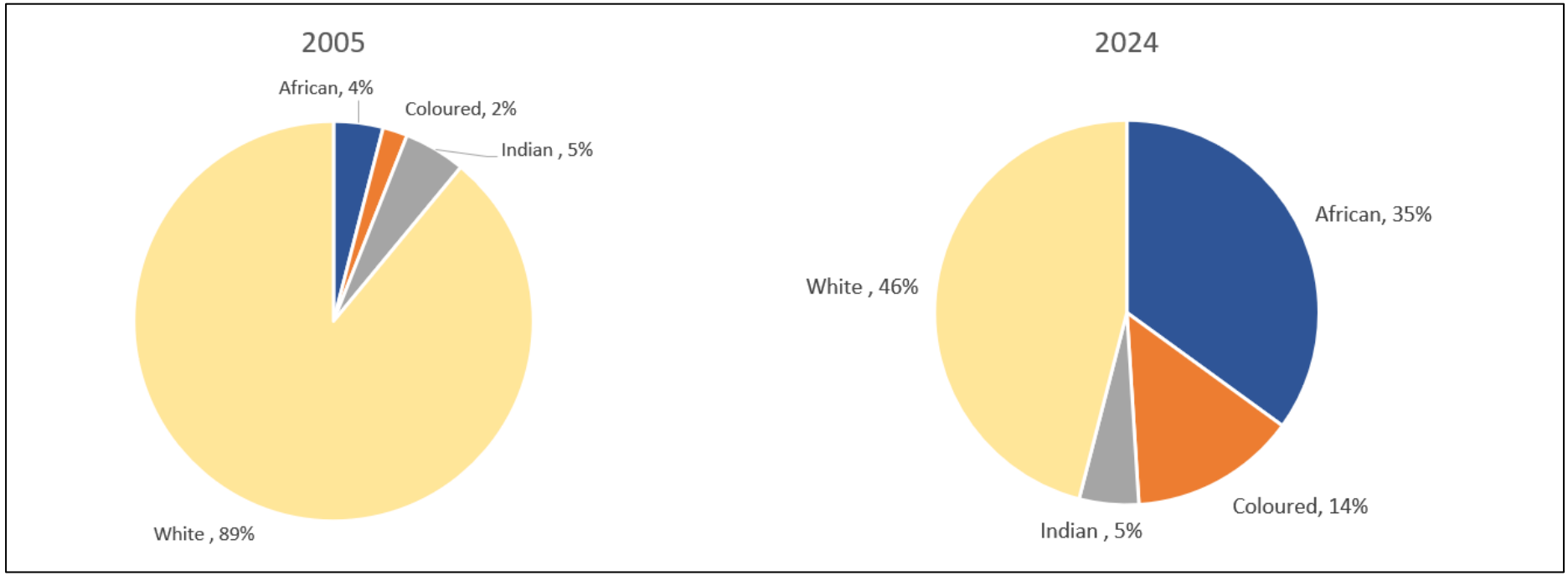


Figure 24 shows changes in the percentage distribution of permanent academic staff with doctoral degrees, according to population group from 2005 to 2024. It shows that, of all the staff with doctoral degrees in 2005, 89% were White, 4% were African, 2% were Coloured and 5% were Indian. By 2024, this had shifted dramatically to 46% White, 35% African, 14% Coloured, and 5% Indian.

**Figure 24: Percentage distribution of staff with doctoral degrees according to population group, 2005 and 2024**




## Performance indicator 17: Research chairs and NRF-rated researchers

As a comprehensive institution, the University seeks to promote the convergence of inter- and transdisciplinary "blue sky" and applied research. This includes concerted efforts to revitalise the humanities while consolidating our strengths in science, engineering, and technology to foreground the scholarly contributions of all disciplines and fields of study.

The number of research chairs increased from 13 in 2020 to 17 in 2024 and this is estimated to remain at 17 in 2025. Three of the most recently appointed chairs have been Black, with two contributing to the revitalisation of the humanities, and the third linked to the Medical School. Future endeavours will focus on growing the pool of research chairs, especially those which are funded externally or by industry.

**Table 31: Number of research chairs and NRF-rated academic staff, 2021-2024 and 2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 Targets |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Chairs | 16 | 16 | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| NRF Rated Researchers | 85 | 92 | 91 | 91 | 93 |

The demographic profile of the 17 research chairs is disaggregated in Table 32 below.

**Table 32: Demographic profile of research chairs, 2022-2023 and 2024 targets**

| Demographic profile of research chairs | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 | | 2025 Targets | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Black (A, C, I) female | 4 | 25% | 3 | 18% | 3 | 18% | 3 | 18% |
| Black (A, C, I) male | 4 | 25% | 4 | 23% | 4 | 23% | 4 | 23% |
| White female | 3 | 19% | 3 | 18% | 3 | 18% | 3 | 18% |
| White male | 5 | 31% | 7 | 41% | 7 | 41% | 7 | 41% |
| **Total** | **16** | **100%** | **17** | **100%** | **17** | **100%** | **17** | **100%** |

The NRF rating system remains one of the key indicators of research stature in the South African higher education sector. The University currently has 95 NRF-rated researchers, of which 35 are female and 60 are male. There are 71 White and 24 Black NRF-rated researchers, which indicates the need to diversify this cohort.

There are 22 research entities, comprising three institutional entities, two faculty-based institutes, 12 faculty-based centres, and six faculty-based research units. These entities attract external research income, which contributes significantly to the University's research outputs, postgraduate training, and financial sustainability.

## Performance indicator 18: Staff turnover by population group and gender

A further important strategic enabler is fostering 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 as an employer of choice. The 2024 turnover numbers are reported as of 4 September 2024 and may still increase before the end of 2024.

**Table 33: Turnover of academic staff (excluding retirements) by population group, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| **Academic staff total** | **2021** | 702 | **2022** | 719 | **2023** | 723 | **2024** | 694 | **2025** | 704 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic staff exits** | **2021 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2022 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2023 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2024 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **Projected 2025 Exits** | **Turnover %** |
| African | 10 | 1.4% | 18 | 2.5% | 14 | 1.9% | 17 | 2.4% | 19 | 2.7% |
| Coloured | 4 | 0.6% | 5 | 0.7% | 3 | 0.4% | 6 | 0.9% | 7 | 1.0% |
| Indian | | | 3 | 0.4% | 4 | 0.6% | 3 | 0.4% | 4 | 0.6% |
| White | 9 | 1.3% | 9 | 1.3% | 11 | 1.5% | 9 | 1.3% | 10 | 1.4% |
| **Total exits** | **23** | **3.3%** | **35** | **4.9%** | **32** | **4.4%** | **35** | **5.0%** | **40** | **5.7%** |

**Note: Data for 2024 exits as of 4 September 2024*

Academic staff turnover (excluding retirements) increased from 3.3% in 2021 to 5% in 2024. It is projected that it will increase to 5.7% in 2025. Exit interviews are conducted to assess the reasons why employees exit the University and to inform talent retention strategies. The primary reasons include the pursuit of career development and growth opportunities, as well as more competitive remuneration and benefits. It is therefore important to monitor remuneration and conditions of service regularly in comparison with other universities, to ensure that the University is regarded as an employer of choice.

The stagnation of government subsidy has placed the University under strain and staff salary increases in recent years have been much lower than before to ensure that the University remains financially sustainable. The turnover of Black (African, Coloured, Indian) academic staff increased from 2% in 2021 to 3.7% in 2024, which is a concern as it impacts negatively on efforts to diversify the demographic profile of academic staff. The 2024 turnover rate is concerning because the University has the lowest number of academic staff (694) over the years 2021 to 2024 and it is often difficult to fill academic vacancies, especially in scarce skills fields.

The turnover rate for PASS staff increased from 4.7% in 2021 to 5% in 2022, with a decline to 4.6% in 2023. It increased further to 5.3% in 2024, which was the highest over this period. The projected turnover rate for PASS staff for 2025 is 5.5% since the trends show that it is increasing consistently. The percentage turnover for Black PASS staff was 3% in 2021 compared to the White PASS staff turnover of 1.5%. This increased to 3.6% for Black PASS staff in 2022, while the turnover of White PASS staff declined to 1.5%. In 2023, the Black PASS staff turnover rate was 3.5% compared to 1% for White PASS staff. Thus far for 2024, the Black PASS staff turnover rate is 4% and the White PASS staff turnover rate is 1.3%. Again, this trend is important to monitor since it influences the attainment of employment equity targets.

As indicated in Table 34 below, the projected turnover rate is 4.1% and 1.4% for Black and White PASS staff respectively in 2025.

**Table 34: Turnover of PASS staff (excluding retirements) by population group, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| **PASS staff total** | **2021** | 1 840 | **2022** | 1 858 | **2023** | 1 842 | **2024** | 1 727 | **2025** | 1 744 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PASS staff exits | 2021 Exits | Turnover % | 2022 Exits | Turnover % | 2023 Exits | Turnover % | 2024 Exits | Turnover % | 2025 Projected Exits | Turnover % |
| African | 35 | 1.9% | 49 | 2.6% | 55 | 3.0% | 49 | 2.8% | 53 | 3.0% |
| Coloured | 13 | 0.7% | 15 | 0.8% | 7 | 0.4% | 18 | 1.0% | 16 | 0.9% |
| Indian | 7 | 0.4% | 2 | 0.1% | 3 | 0.2% | 2 | 0.1% | 3 | 0.2% |
| White | 32 | 1.7% | 27 | 1.5% | 19 | 1.0% | 22 | 1.3% | 24 | 1.4% |
| **Total exits** | **87** | **4.7%** | **93** | **5.0%** | **84** | **4.6%** | **91** | **5.3%** | **96** | **5.5%** |

**Note: Data for 2024 exits as of 4 September 2024*

Analysing the percentage of academic staff turnover by gender, as depicted in Table 35, shows that in 2021 and 2022 female academic staff had a higher turnover (2% and 2.7% respectively) than males (1.3% and 2.2% respectively). In 2023, more males (2.9%) than females (1.5%) left the University. This trend increased even more in 2024, with the turnover rate of female academic staff increasing to 2.0% and that of male academic staff to 3%. Over the period 2021 to 2024, the turnover rate for academic staff increased from 3.3% in 2021 to 5% in 2024. The projected turnover rate for 2025 are 2.4% and 3.3% respectively for female and male academic staff, with a total projected turnover rate of 5.7% for 2025.

**Table 35: Turnover of academic staff (excluding retirements) by gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| Academic staff total | 2021 | 702 | 2022 | 719 | 2023 | 723 | 2024 | 694 | 2025 | 704 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic staff exits** | **2021 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2022 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2023 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2024 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2025 Projected Exits** | **Turnover %** |
| Female | 14 | 2.0% | 19 | 2.7% | 11 | 1.5% | 14 | 2.0% | 17 | 2.4% |
| Male | 9 | 1.3% | 16 | 2.2% | 21 | 2.9% | 21 | 3.0% | 23 | 3.3% |
| **Total exits** | **23** | **3.3%** | **35** | **4.9%** | **32** | **4.4%** | **35** | **5.0%** | **40** | **5.7%** |

**Note: Data for 2024 exits as at 4 September 2024*

As depicted in Table 36, the percentage turnover for female PASS staff was 2.2% in 2021, increasing to 2.5% in 2022, with the current 2024 turnover rate at 3%. The percentage turnover of male PASS staff was 2.5% in 2021 and 2022 but declined to 2.2% in 2023 and 2.3% in 2024. The projected percentage turnover rates are 3.2% and 2.4% respectively for female and male PASS staff for 2025, with a projected turnover rate of 5.6% for all PASS staff.

**Table 36: Turnover of PASS staff (excluding retirements) by gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| PASS staff total | 2021 | 1 840 | 2022 | 1 858 | 2023 | 1 842 | 2024 | 1 727 | 2025 | 1 727 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PASS staff exits** | **2021** | **Turnover %** | **2022 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2023 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2024 Exits** | **Turnover %** | **2025 Projected Exits** | **Turnover %** |
| Female | 41 | 2.2% | 46 | 2.5% | 43 | 2.4% | 52 | 3.0% | 54 | 3.2% |
| Male | 46 | 2.5% | 47 | 2.5% | 41 | 2.2% | 39 | 2.3% | 42 | 2.4% |
| **Total exits** | **87** | **4.7%** | **93** | **5%** | **84** | **4.6%** | **91** | **5.3%** | **96** | **5.6%** |

**Note: Data for 2024 exits as at 4 September 2024*

It is important to monitor and project retirements (based on staff records) to ensure vacancies are filled timeously. Staff who retire, particularly highly qualified academic staff, leave an impact on faculty supervisory capacity in their fields of study. In 2021, 1% of Black academic staff members retired with the same percentage for White academic staff members. In 2022, 0.4% of Black academic staff and 1.4% of White

academic staff retired. The percentage of Black academic staff who retired in 2023, was 0.5% and the percentage of White academic staff who retired was 1.2%. Based on staff records, 0.3% of Black academic staff will retire in 2024 and 1% of White academic staff. The projections for 2025 are based on the retirement dates of current employees. It is projected that 0.5% of Black academic staff members will retire in 2025, and 1.6% of White academic staff members. The projected retirement rate will increase from 1.3% in 2024 to 2.1% in 2025.

**Table 37: Academic staff retirements by population group, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| **Academic staff total** | **2021** | 702 | **2022** | 719 | **2023** | 723 | **2024** | 694 | **2025** | 704 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic retirements** | **2021** | **As a % of total** | **2022** | **As a % of total** | **2023** | **As a % of total** | **2024** | **As a % of total** | **Projected 2025** | **As a % of total** |
| African | 3 | 0.4% | 2 | 0.3% | 2 | 0.3% | | | 1 | 0.1% |
| Coloured | 4 | 0.6% | 1 | 0.1% | | | 2 | 0.3% | 1 | 0.1% |
| Indian | | | | | 1 | 0.2% | | | 2 | 0.3% |
| White | 7 | 1% | 10 | 1.4% | 9 | 1.2% | 7 | 1.0% | 11 | 1.6% |
| **Total retirements** | **14** | **2.0%** | **13** | **1.8%** | **12** | **1.7%** | **9** | **1.3%** | **15** | **2.1%** |

**Table 38: PASS staff retirements by population group, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| **PASS staff total** | **2021** | 1 840 | **2022** | 1 858 | **2023** | 1 842 | **2024** | 1 727 | **2025** | 1 744 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PASS retirements** | **2021** | **As a % of total** | **2022** | **As a % of total** | **2023** | **As a % of total** | **2024** | **As a % of total** | **2025 Projected** | **As a % of total** |
| African | 10 | 0.6% | 10 | 0.5% | 19 | 1% | 8 | 0.4% | 6 | 0.4% |
| Coloured | 2 | 0.1% | 5 | 0.3% | 6 | 0.4% | 5 | 0.3% | 3 | 0.2% |
| Indian | | | 2 | 0.1% | 2 | 0.1% | | | | |
| White | 8 | 0.4% | 11 | 0.6% | 15 | 0.8% | 10 | 0.6% | 6 | 0.3% |
| **Total retirements** | **20** | **1.1%** | **28** | **1.5%** | **42** | **2.3%** | **23** | **1.3%** | **15** | **0.9%** |

In 2021, 0.7% of Black PASS staff members and 0.4% of White PASS staff members retired. In 2022, the retirement rate for Black PASS staff members was 0.9% and for White PASS staff members 0.6%. This retirement rate increased to 1.5% for Black PASS staff and 0.8% for White

PASS staff in 2023. Based on staff records, 0.7% of Black PASS staff will retire in 2024, and 0.6% in 2025. In 2024, 0.6% of White PASS staff will retire and in 2025 the projected retirement rate of White PASS staff will be 0.3%. The total retirement rate will decline from 1.3% in 2024 to 0.9% in 2025.

**Table 39: Academic staff retirements by gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 projections**

| **Academic staff total** | **2021** | 702 | **2022** | 719 | **2023** | 723 | **2024** | 694 | **2025** | 704 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic retirements** | **2021** | **As a % of total** | **2022** | **As a % of total** | **2023** | **As a % of total** | **2024** | **As a % of total** | **2025** | **As a % of total** |
| Female | 4 | 0.6% | 6 | 0.8% | 5 | 0.7% | 4 | 0.6% | 5 | 0.7% |
| Male | 10 | 1.4% | 7 | 1% | 7 | 1% | 5 | 0.7% | 10 | 1.4% |
| **Grand total** | **14** | **2%** | **13** | **1.8%** | **12** | **1.7%** | **9** | **1.3%** | **15** | **2.1%** |

The actual and projected retirements of academic staff show that higher percentages of male staff members have retired or will retire over this period. The total retirement rate for academic staff declined from 2% in 2021 to 1.3% in 2024 but is projected to increase to 2.1% in 2025. The projected retirement rate of female academic staff in 2025 is 0.7% and 1.4% for male academic staff.

**Table 40: PASS staff retirements by gender, 2021-2024 and 2025 projected**

| **PASS staff total** | **2021** | 1 840 | **2022** | 1 858 | **2023** | 1 842 | **2024** | 1 727 | **2025** | 1 744 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PASS retirements** | **2021** | **As a % of total** | **2022** | **As a % of total** | **2023** | **As a % of total** | **2024** | **As a % of total** | **Projected 2025** | **As a % of total** |
| Female | 4 | 0.2% | 17 | 0.9% | 28 | 1.5% | 18 | 1% | 10 | 0.6% |
| Male | 16 | 0.9% | 11 | 0.6% | 14 | 0.8% | 5 | 0.3% | 5 | 0.3% |
| **Grand total** | **20** | **1.1%** | **28** | **1.5%** | **42** | **2.3%** | **23** | **1.3%** | **15** | **0.9%** |

In 2021, 0.2% and 0.9% of female and male PASS staff members respectively retired. In 2022, female PASS staff had a higher retirement rate (0.9%) than male PASS staff (0.6%). The percentage of female PASS staff members retiring increased to 1.5% in 2023, while 0.8% of male PASS staff members retired in that year. The expected retirement rate for female PASS staff in 2024 is 1% and 0.3% for male PASS staff. The female PASS staff retirement rate is expected to decline to 0.6% in 2025 and, for male PASS staff, it is expected to remain at 0.3% for 2025.

***Strategic Enabler 4: Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalisation, integrated systems, agile service delivery and modernised infrastructure***

## Performance Indicator 19: Support for hybrid, technology-rich and fully online educational delivery

The advent of the pandemic in 2020 fundamentally shifted the higher education landscape through the rapid transition to emergency remote learning and ways of working. Higher education institutions were called upon to critically reflect on the effectiveness of current operating models, systems and processes and to explore innovative practices that promoted organisational resilience and agility.

In so doing, the University ramped up its digital transformation trajectory to move to improved efficiencies, responsive decision-making and value-creating service delivery in support of academic excellence and flexible, technology-rich approaches to learning. The University's Digital Transformation (Dx) strategy development process, co-convened by the DVCs for Learning and Teaching, and People and Operations, was concluded in October 2021.

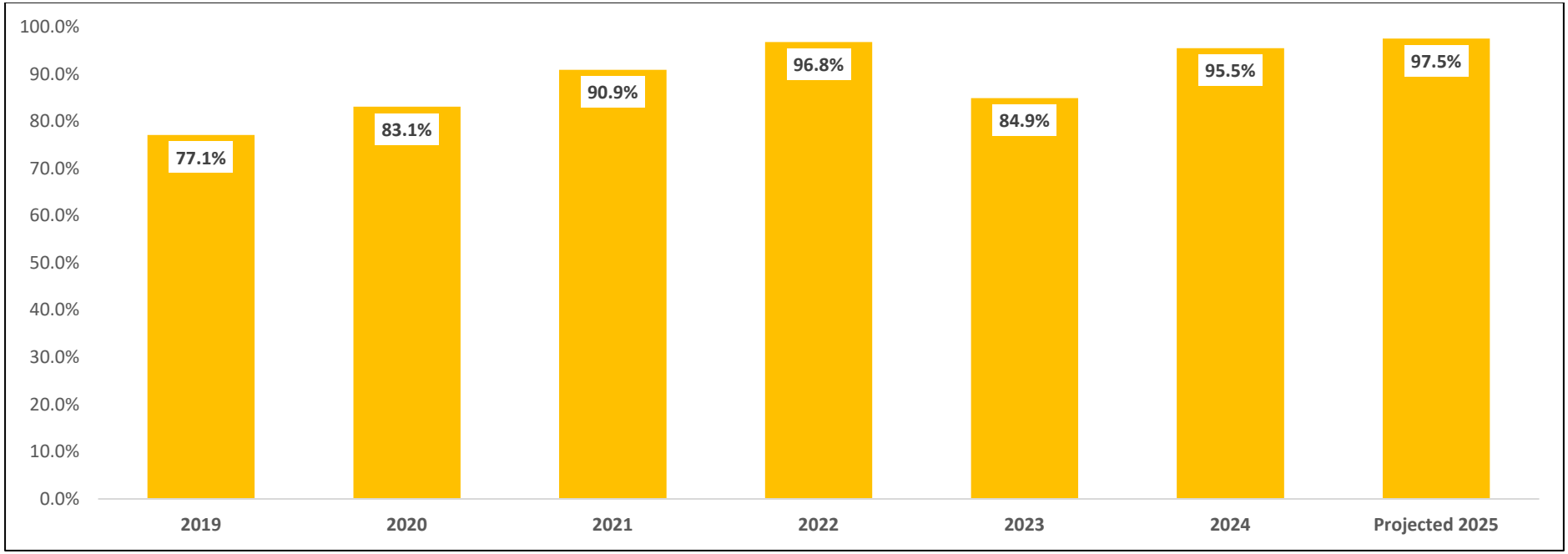
Nelson Mandela University has been using a Learning Management System (LMS) since 2008. In many courses, the University already had a hybrid approach to learning and teaching, but this was accelerated with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Given the need to keep students and staff safe during the pandemic, 65% of University programmes were delivered using flexible, technology-rich modes of delivery over this period. To equip students for an online learning, teaching and assessment environment, the University continues to support the LMS and the student laptop initiative. It also has been scaling up Wi-Fi densification on all campuses and surrounding accredited off-campus residences, as well as modernising lecture venues to enable hybrid and hyflex learning as part of its digitalisation strategy. In addition, the LT Collab has developed multiple online resources that students can access at any time, including multilingual support resources.

To compare the activity rates of students and academic staff on the LMS, the activity rate was calculated of unique users logged into the Moodle system in March of each year. This was assessed as a percentage of the total number of students and permanent academic staff (see Table 41). As can be seen from Table 41 below, the activity rate increased steeply from 77.1% in 2019 to 96.8% in 2022, because of the rapid migration to emergency remote learning during the pandemic. It declined in 2023 to 84.9% because students returned to campus and there was a lower demand for online learning and teaching. However, LMS activity was still high as a percentage of enrolled students and permanent academic staff. It increased considerably to 95.5% in 2024, and it is projected that the activity rate will increase to 97.5% in 2025.

**Table 41: Activity rates of students and academic staff on learning management system, 2019-2024 and 2025 projected**

| Number of unique users logged into the Moodle system in March annually | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Users logged in during March each year | 23 262 | 24 914 | 27 668 | 32 013 | 27 250 | 32 217 | 33 179 |
| Student headcount enrolment | 29 490 | 29 286 | 29 735 | 32 320 | 31 362 | 33 041 | 33 326 |
| Permanent academic staff | 678 | 683 | 702 | 719 | 723 | 694 | 704 |
| Total students and permanent academic staff | 30 168 | 29 969 | 30 437 | 33 039 | 32 085 | 33 735 | 34 030 |
| Percentage of users logged in as a percentage of total number of students and permanent academic staff | 77.1% | 83.1% | 90.9% | 96.8% | 84.9% | 95.5% | 97.5% |

**Figure 25: Percentage of users logged in as percentage of total students and permanent academic staff, 2019-2024 and projected 2025**



The steep increase in the use of the LMS is illustrated by the following data that compares interactions in March of each year. Interactions are online learning activities on the LMS, such as submitting a quiz or an assignment or responding to a discussion forum. The interactions are projected to increase to 22.6 million in 2025 from 21.1 million in 2024 in line with the increase in the activity rate.

| | |
|---|---|
| Mar-19 | 5 734 712 |
| Mar-20 | 5 294 206 |
| Mar-21 | 7 253 286 |
| Mar-22 | 24 655 028 |
| Mar-23 | 22 645 033 |
| Mar-24 | 21 106 180 |
| Projected Mar-25 | 22 633 835 |

## Performance Indicator 20: Headcount enrolments per campus

The headcount enrolment trends per campus are an important dimension to monitor since this has a significant impact on the vibrancy of campus life for students and employees. Table 42 shows that, for the years 2021 to 2025 (projected), the highest expected average annual growth rates will be on Missionvale Campus (12.9%) and George Campus (7.8%), followed by Second Avenue Campus (3.2%). The plan is to scale down growth over time at the George campus because the available facilities cannot accommodate further rapid growth. A growth of only 0.84% is planned from 2024 to 2025 for the George campus.

Enrolments on Summerstrand South Campus are projected to grow at rate of 3.1% on average per annum, while enrolments on Summerstrand North Campus are expected to decline by 1.1% on average per annum over the 2021 to 2025 period. These projections were made based on the average annual growth rates over the 2020 to 2025 period, as well as expected total enrolments in 2025.

**Table 42: Headcount enrolments by campus, 2021-2024 and 2025 projected**

| Campus Name | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Average annual growth rate 2021-2024 | 2025 Target | Average annual growth rate 2021-2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Summerstrand Campus South | 13 633 | 14 617 | 14 258 | 15 264 | 3.8% | 15 377 | 3.1% |
| Summerstrand Campus North | 6 742 | 6 925 | 6 262 | 6 422 | -1.6% | 6 443 | -1.1% |
| George Campus | 1 862 | 2 211 | 2 363 | 2 493 | 10.2% | 2 514 | 7.8% |
| Second Avenue Campus | 6 530 | 7 303 | 7 152 | 7 346 | 4.0% | 7 417 | 3.2% |
| Missionvale Campus | 968 | 1 264 | 1 327 | 1 516 | 16.1% | 1 575 | 12.9% |
| **Grand Total** | **29 735** | **32 320** | **31 362** | **33 041** | **3.6%** | **33 326** | **2.9%** |

***Strategic Enabler 5: Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship***

South African HEIs continue to function within a disruptive and volatile context where funding remains constrained while societal expectations continue to increase. In this context, public universities need to exercise judicious resource stewardship. The University established the Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) in 2021 to oversee interventions to enhance long-term financial sustainability through innovative resource mobilisation and responsible resource stewardship. The University is gearing itself towards ensuring that recurrent cost structures are financed from recurrent revenue streams excluding finance income, in the medium- to long-term.

## Performance Indicator 21: Expenditure trends

It is apparent from the latest Ministerial Statement on University Funding, as well as the National Assembly DHET Budget Vote Presentation 2024 by the Minister, that the already constrained budget has been reprioritised to cater for additional NSFAS funding for first-time entering students. Together with the capping of fees, this implies that the most significant streams of funding will be limited, which requires careful consideration of institutional resource allocation.

The block grant subsidy's growth, however, has fallen behind inflation for several years, with a decline in absolute terms. It is important to note that the decline in block grant subsidy is primarily due to the DHET increasing the NSFAS budget within the total post-school education

and training budget. The decline (relative to inflation) of the block grant subsidy to universities has meant that the second income stream has become an ever-more important source of funding, increasing the cost of accessing university education. Capping 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 impacted the financial sustainability of higher education institutions.

As indicated in Table 43, the cost of personnel as a percentage of Council-controlled recurrent income declined from 56.77% in 2021 to 54.84% in 2023. According to DHET guidelines, the expected benchmark for total personnel costs as a percentage of total revenue is between 58% and 63%. The 2023 staff cost is below the DHET benchmark, but it is projected to increase to 57% in 2024 and 58% in 2025. This is mainly because of the expected below-inflation increases, or the real possibility of no increase in subsidy due to the current state of the economy.

**Table 43: Total cost of personnel (academic and PASS) as a percentage of Council-controlled recurrent income, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total cost of personnel (academic and PASS) as a percentage of Council-controlled recurrent income. | 56.77% | 57.69% | 54.84% | 57.00% | 58.00% |

A higher percentage of salary expenditure (51% for 2021-2022) was spent on PASS staff, as shown in Table 44 below. The percentage of the salary expenditure on academic staff was 49% from 2021 to 2022. The University is exploring ways to increase academic salary expenditure without negatively impacting the overall financial sustainability of the institution. Before insourcing service employees, the academic: PASS ratio was 52: 48 in favour of the academic staff, but the ratio has shifted in favour of PASS staff since 2017 when the University started to reintegrate previously outsourced employees. In 2023, the percentage of the expenditure on PASS staff declined to 50%. The projected expenditure on PASS staff for 2024 is 49% and the University intends to maintain a balance between the percentage expenditure on PASS and academic staff at 50% each in 2025.

**Table 44: Academic: PASS ratio of salary expenditure, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic: PASS ratio of salary expenditure (per Management Accounts) | 49:51 | 49:51 | 50:50 | 49:51 | 50:50 |

Table 45 below indicates that the student: staff FTE ratio for 2021 was 27: 1 but increased to 29:1 in 2022, due to the large intake of first-time entering students (8 555 compared to a target of 6 580) in 2022. In 2023, the ratio declined to 28:1 due to a decline in enrolments because of a lower intake of first-time entering students. The University set aside additional funding in the academic resource allocation model (RAM) to fill academic vacancies across all faculties. This assisted somewhat in increasing the numbers of academic staff and alleviated the high student: staff ratios. Subsequently, the University has built a factor into the RAM, which allocates more funding to faculties with unacceptably high student: staff ratios.

**Table 45: Academic full-time equivalent (FTE) student: staff ratios, 2020-2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 Target | 2025 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FTE student: staff ratio | 27:1 | 29:1 | 28:1 | 29:1 | 29:1 |

To ensure a more equitable allocation of funding, a percentage of budgets for academic posts allocated to faculties is now based on their variances from national averages for student: staff FTE ratios for contact universities. The rest of the budget is based on the subsidy and fee income generated by faculties and, where necessary, cross-subsidisation is implemented to assist strategically viable faculties which are not breaking even. Preliminary data for 2024 indicates a ratio of 29: 1 and is projected to remain the same in 2025 due to budget constraints. This is based on the current indications of a zero, or a very slight increase in subsidy in 2025, which will make it difficult to appoint additional academic staff.

The University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) allocated by the DHET has made it possible for the University to appoint additional peer mentors, tutors, and SI leaders to provide students with small group learning opportunities in modules with large class sizes, which enhances student success.

## Performance Indicator 22: Sources of revenue

While the financial management of Nelson Mandela University remains responsible, the higher education sector is confronted with shrinking government funding and will need to be innovative in mobilising, allocating and using resources. There has been a significant increase in funding for higher education since the implementation of fee-free higher education for the poor in 2018, mainly in contributions to NSFAS funding. This has assisted universities in widening access to academically deserving, financially needy students. However, the capping of tuition fee increases, the provision of debt relief concessions to academically deserving "missing middle" students, reintegrating service employees, and the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on the financial position of the University.

Through the annual and three-year rolling budget directives, the University strives to optimally resource the academic project, operations, infrastructure, and support services while driving strategic initiatives and growth areas in a sustainable manner. A surplus from Council-controlled recurrent operations, before finance income, is budgeted to grow reserves and seed new strategic initiatives. 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.

The University once again posted a positive set of financial results during 2023. The consolidated statement of comprehensive income reflects a consolidated surplus of R413m in 2023 (R425m in 2022), before other comprehensive income, of which Council-controlled operations amounted to R259m (R349m in 2022) or 8% reserve accumulation, achieving Council's performance indicator of 5-10%. Management is satisfied that the financial measures taken at Nelson Mandela University are adequate to ensure financial sustainability over the next 12 months.

The University's first stream of income, state subsidy, has not increased significantly in recent years and the trend is expected to continue as DHET experiences budgetary constraints. As indicated in Table 46, it declined substantially from 52.33% in 2021 to 43.89% in 2023. The projections for 2024 and 2025 are that state subsidy as % of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue is expected to continue declining due to the stagnant government subsidy.

**Table 46: Government subsidy as a percentage of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue, 2021–2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Government subsidy as % of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue | 52.33% | 48.16% | 43.89% | 42.00% | 41.00% |

The increase in tuition fees, by the percentage determined or proposed by DHET, is also a factor of enrolment growth. As depicted in Table 47 below, tuition fees as a percentage of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue increased from 35.38% in 2021 to 37% in 2022 while there was a decline to 33.92% in 2023 due to enrolment declines. It is projected that tuition fee income will increase to 35% in 2024 and 36% in 2025 since fees increase at a higher rate than the current government subsidy.

**Table 47: Tuition fees as a percentage of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition fees as % of total recurrent Council-controlled revenue | 35.38% | 37% | 33.92% | 35% | 36% |

The mobilisation of third-stream income remains a challenge within the context of national economic decline. Despite this, Table 48 highlights the increase in third-stream income as a percentage of total recurrent revenue, from 14.42% in 2021 to 19.02% in 2022, with a further increase to 27.21% in 2023.

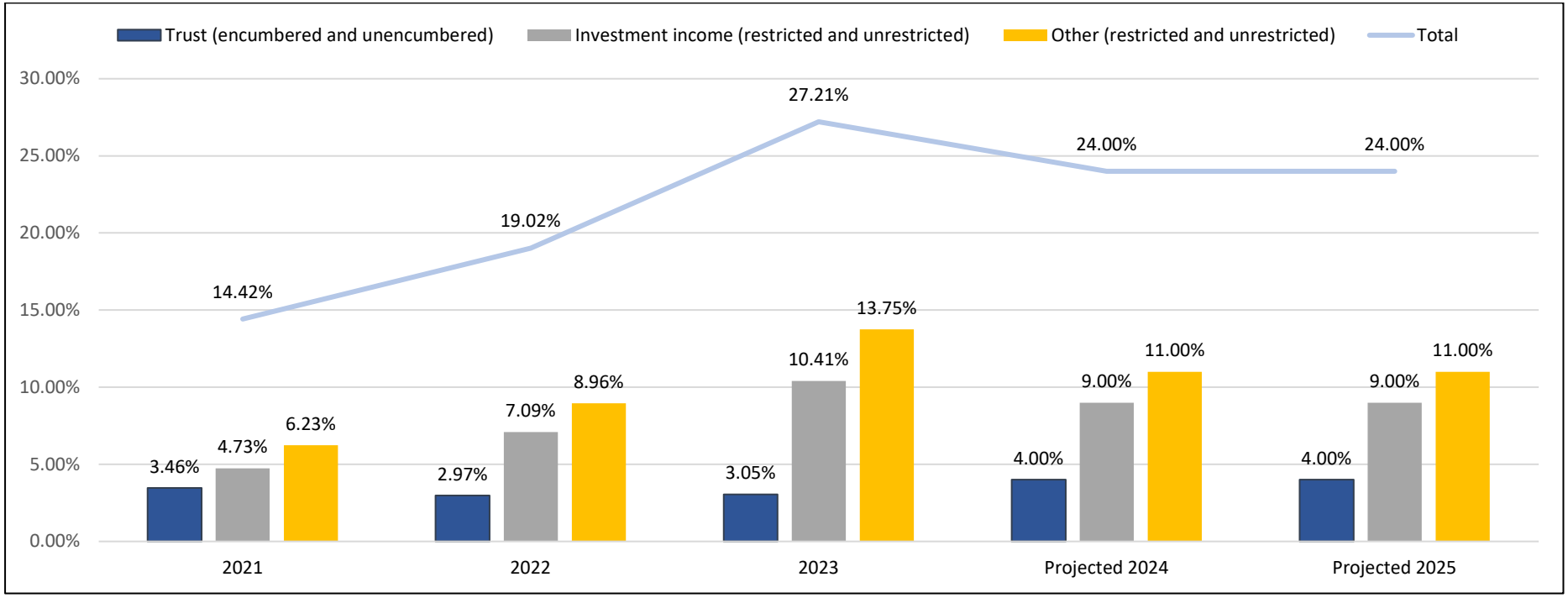
**Table 48: Third-stream revenue as a percentage of total recurrent revenue, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Third stream revenue as a percentage of total recurrent revenue by: | | | | | |
| - Trust (encumbered and unencumbered) | 3.46% | 2.97% | 3.05% | 4% | 4% |
| - Investment income (restricted and unrestricted) | 4.73% | 7.09% | 10.41% | 9% | 9% |
| - Other (restricted and unrestricted) | 6.23% | 8.96% | 13.75% | 11% | 11% |

It must be borne in mind that a portion of these increases is the result of a decline in the percentages of first- and second-income streams. It is projected that third-stream income will decline to 24% in 2024 and 2025. The Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement (SRMA)

office has reviewed the institutional Resource Mobilisation Strategy and is implementing measures to mobilise additional income for strategic priority areas, including the Nelson Mandela University Trust and alumni donations.

**Figure 26: Third-stream revenue as a percentage of total recurrent revenue, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**




## Performance Indicator 23: Financial aid

The number of students funded by NSFAS continues to grow, which the University views positively as the revenue from tuition fees is guaranteed to be recovered from NSFAS. The percentage of NSFAS-funded students is expressed as a percentage of enrolments in higher certificates, undergraduate diplomas, and undergraduate degrees. Advanced diplomas are omitted from the calculation since these students do not qualify for NSFAS funding.

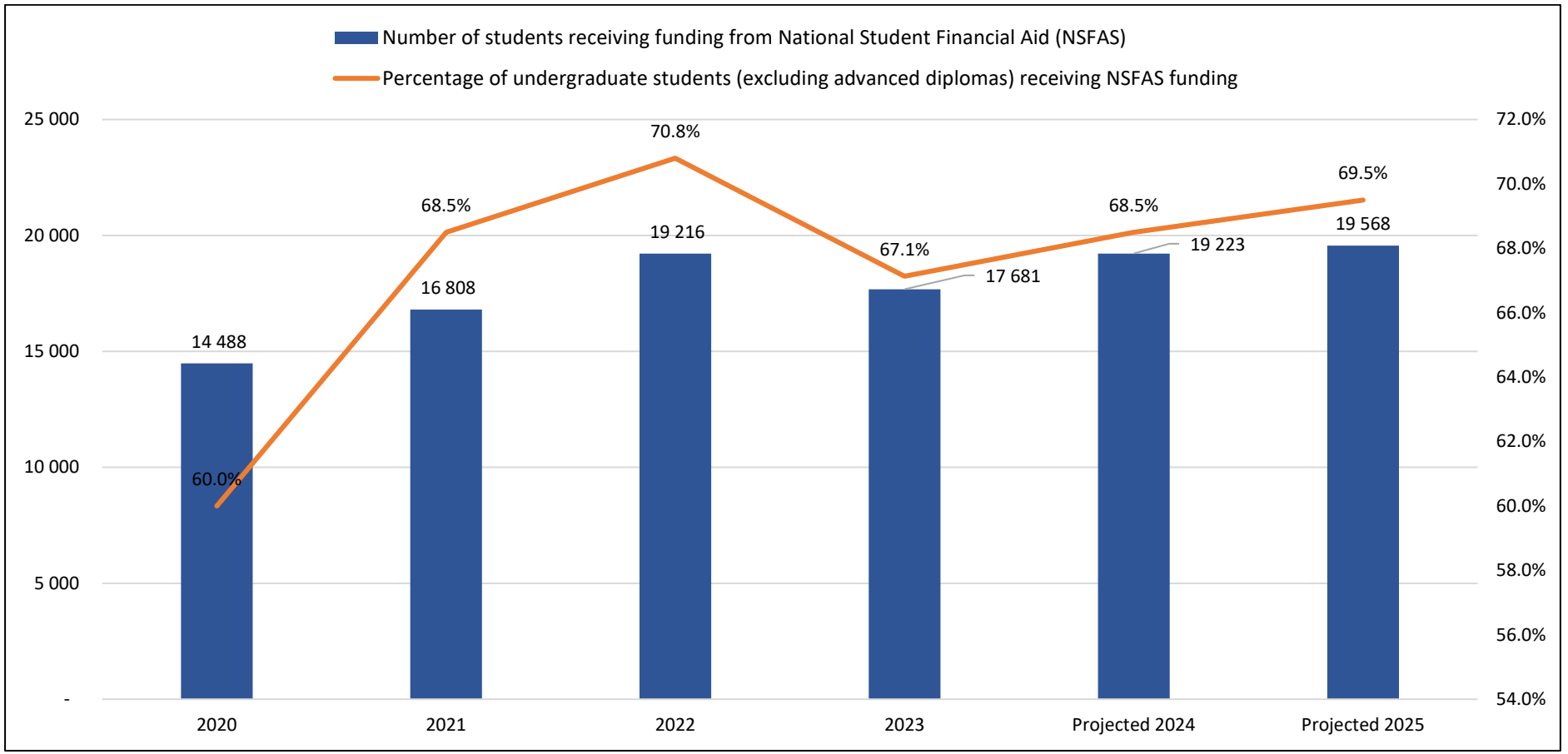
It is to be expected that the percentage of students receiving NSFAS funding will increase since the number of students from quintile 1 to 3 schools continues to grow (see Table 49 and Figure 27). In 2021, 68.5% of enrolled students received NSFAS funding, increasing to 70.8% in 2022. In 2022, the University had a large intake of first-time entering undergraduate students (8 555) especially from quintile 1 to 3 schools, which led to a significant increase in NSFAS-funded students. Many of these students dropped out in 2023 and the number of NSFAS-funded students declined to 17 681.

Combined with the much lower intake of first-time entering students in 2023 (6 811), the percentage of NSFAS-funded students in 2023 declined to 67.1%. Since the University's first-time entering student intake has now been capped and is expected to stabilise, a more gradual increase in NSFAS-funded students is expected with a preliminary 68.5% of students funded by NSFAS in 2024. The projected percentage of NSFAS-funded students in undergraduate programmes (excluding advanced diplomas) for 2025 is 69.5%.

**Table 49: Number and percentage of undergraduate students (excluding advanced diplomas) receiving NSFAS funding, 2021-2024 and projected 2025**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of students receiving funding from National Student Financial Aid (NSFAS) | 16 808 | 19 216 | 17 681 | 19 223 | 19 568 |
| Percentage of undergraduate students (excluding advanced diplomas) receiving NSFAS funding | 68.5% | 70.8% | 67.1% | 68.5% | 69.5% |

**Figure 27: Number and percentage of undergraduate students (excluding advanced diplomas) receiving funding from NSFAS, 2021-2024 and projected 2025**




A total of 1 266 students received bursaries from the income mobilised through the Trust in 2023 and more than 93% of the beneficiaries were Black students as defined in the B-BBEE codes. Of the bursary funding mobilised by the SRMA in 2023, 15% (just over R12.4m) was allocated to postgraduate bursaries, supporting 216 students.

Bursary funding has been a major focus of alumni donations, but the focus of these efforts has shifted since the introduction of the pro-poor NSFAS funding criteria. The emphasis is now on mobilising funding for "missing middle" and postgraduate student bursaries. Access and success for postgraduate students has been enhanced through funding for scholarships and research capacity development interventions.

Overall, 372 Honours, 540 Master's and 286 doctoral scholarships were awarded to date for 2024 with funding from Council, the National Research Foundation (NRF) and other external funders. This represented 1 198 awards comprising 86% Black (African, Coloured, Indian, and Asian), 66% women and 88% South African citizens and permanent residents. Uptake of the awards is ongoing with 1 031 (86%) of the 1 198 scholarships taken up. Of the 1 031 students who have taken up the awards, 84% are Black, 70% are women, and 87% are South African citizens and permanent residents. The number of awards is expected to increase in the fourth quarter, following the implementation of a closed call process which will allow more scholarships to be awarded.

The new institutional Giving to Mandela online fundraising platform allows donors to choose to support approved institutional fundraising projects through once-off or recurring donations and tax certificates are issued to qualifying donors. As can be seen from Table 50 below, alumni donations increased from a mere R28 288 in 2021 to R235 510 in 2022 and then declined to R152 989 in 2023. The projected alumni donations for 2024 and 2025 are R200 000 and R250 000 respectively.

**Table 50: Alumni donations 2021 to 2023 and 2024-2025 targets**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 Target | 2025 Target |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alumni donations | R28 288 | R235 510 | R152 989 | R200 000 | R250 000 |

## Performance Indicator 24: Student debt ratio

The student debt ratio for the University was 42.2% in 2020, which was extraordinarily high probably due to the impact of the pandemic. While it declined to 33% in 2021 and to 28.9% in 2022 and 2023, it is still above the norm (see Table 51 below). Measures have been put in place to address this concerning trend but, with the current economic conditions, it is projected to increase to 30% in 2024 and 32% in 2025.

**Table 51: Student debt ratio to student debt before impairment/total tuition and other fees, 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student debt ratio to student debt before impairment/total tuition and other fees (expected norm < 20%) | 33.0% | 28.9% | 28.9% | 30.0% | 32.0% |

## Performance Indicator 25: Liquidity and sustainability ratios

Table 52 indicates that the liquidity ratio declined from 5.13 in 2021, to 4.12 and 3.51 in 2022 and 2023 respectively. This is sound, as it far exceeds the norm of 2:1, which means the University can pay its short-term liabilities as they become due. Since subsidy allocations to universities are currently not increasing in real terms, it is projected that the liquidity ratio will stabilise at 3.5 for both 2024 and 2025.

**Table 52: Total current assets excluding inventories and receivables/total current liabilities (liquidity ratio), 2020-2022 and 2023-2024 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total current assets excluding inventories and receivables/total current liabilities (liquidity ratio). Expected norm is > 2:1. | 5.13 | 4.12 | 3.51 | 3.5 | 3.5 |

As can be seen in Table 53, the sustainability ratio for Nelson Mandela University showed a positive increase from 0.63 in 2021 to 0.69 in 2023. It is projected that the ratio for 2024 and 2025 will only increase slightly to 0.7 in 2024 and 2025 due to the stagnant subsidy income foreseen for these years. This ratio has been increasing but is still below the target set by the Council (=>1).

**Table 53: Total Council-controlled reserves/total Council-controlled annual recurrent expenditure (sustainability ratio), 2021-2023 and 2024-2025 projected**

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Projected 2024 | Projected 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Council-controlled reserves/total Council-controlled annual recurrent expenditure (sustainability ratio). Expected norm is >= 1 (Council target) | 0.63 | 0.68 | 0.69 | 0.7 | 0.7 |

## Performance Indicator 26: Environmental sustainability

As Nelson Mandela University moves closer to 2030, the drive for sustainability is imperative as the planet is increasingly confronted with climate change, pollution, as well as severe shortages of life-supporting natural resources such as water and energy. In advancing environmental sustainability, the University works with students, staff, and neighbouring communities to:

- Responsibly integrate campuses within their social, economic, and environmental location.
- Equalise resource distribution across all campuses.
- Environmentally enhance all campuses.
- Ensure buildings and spaces are purposeful, productive, and stimulating environments.
- Enable sustainable deployment, use, and management of resources and campuses.

The University faces unprecedented challenges with the provision of basic services like water and electricity. The University has faced water restrictions in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro and the areas surrounding George. The recent good rains have alleviated the crisis, but the responsible use of water resources remains a high priority.

The severity of load shedding and municipal infrastructure failures have also affected operational and academic activities, especially for students living in on- and off-campus residences. This requires ongoing expenditure on backup power generation and investments in renewable energy. There is an ongoing communication campaign in place, aimed at encouraging staff and students to reduce the consumption of water and energy on campus.

Nelson Mandela University is committed to responsible energy management to meet its commitment to reducing $CO_2$ emissions, increasing energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable energy supply. Following the adoption of the renewable energy strategy, the University has approved the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on all seven campuses over and above the existing 1 megawatt (MW) solar plant on South Campus. An investment proposal is under consideration to support the installation of solar plants at a total cost of R65m with a potential saving of R583.2m over 25 years. High-quality imported Tier 1/A-grade panels are used, which are durable for 20 to 25 years.

**Table 54: Green energy generated as percentage of total energy consumption, 2022-2024 and projected 2025**

| Campus | 2022 Consumption kWh | 2022 Green energy kWh | % Green Energy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 15 790 325 | | |
| North | 8 755 398 | | |
| South | 9 278 773 | 1 544 235 | 17% |
| 2nd Avenue | 1 076 694 | | |
| George | 231 001 | | |
| **Total** | **35 132 191** | **1 544 235** | **4%** |
| **Campus** | **2023 Consumption kWh** | **2023 Green energy kWh** | **% Green Energy** |
| Missionvale | 1 641 802 | | |
| North | 5 660 702 | | |
| South | 9 058 906 | 1 561 276 | 17% |
| 2nd Avenue | 1 098 904 | | |
| George | 466 754 | | |
| **Total** | **17 927 068** | | |
| **Campus** | **2024 Consumption kWh** | ***2024 Green energy kWh** | **% Green Energy** |
| Missionvale | 1 646 915 | | |
| North | 6 645 724 | | |
| South | 9 204 805 | 912 250 | 10% |
| 2nd Avenue | 1 223 187 | | |
| George | 1 598 707 | | |
| **Total** | **20 319 338** | | |

| Campus | Projected 2025 Consumption kWh | Projected 2025 Green energy kWh | % Green Energy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 1 644 359 | | |
| North | 6 153 213 | | |
| South | 9 131 856 | 1 236 763 | 14% |
| 2nd Avenue | 1 161 046 | | |
| George | 1 032 731 | | |
| **Total** | **19 123 203** | | |

** Preliminary for 2024*

As reflected in Table 54, South Campus is the only campus actively generating green energy, contributing between 10% and 17% of its total consumption over the period 2022 to 2025. In 2022, the solar plant generated 1 544 235 kWh of green energy, representing 17% of total consumption, with a slight increase to 1 561 276 kWh in 2023. There was a considerable decline in 2024 to 912 250 kWh, dropping the share of green energy to 10%. This is expected to increase again to 1 236 763 kWh in 2025. Missionvale, North, Second Avenue, and George Campuses are not generating any green energy, although plans are underway to change this, with a tender out for PV systems to cover all campuses and supply close to 30% of the energy. The overall goal is to increase the percentage of green energy across all campuses to improve sustainability and reduce carbon emissions.

In addition, the University has stepped up its energy-saving initiatives considerably, keeping pace with technology changes such as LED lighting, which is 60% more energy efficient, and replacing geysers with heat pumps in 90% of the residences, contributing an energy saving of 66%. The institution aims to manage energy responsibly, increase energy efficiency and supply, and conserve energy.

**Table 55: Electrical consumption measured in kWh per total gross m2, 2019 to 2024 and projected 2025**

| Campus | 2019 kWh/m² | 2020 kWh/m² | 2021 kWh/m² | 2022 kWh/m² | 2023 kWh/m² | *2024 kWh/m² | Projected 2025 kWh/m² |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 86.7 | 80.9 | 79.5 | 79.3 | 82.4 | 82.6 | 81.0 |
| North | 146.8 | 113.2 | 116.6 | 138.8 | 89.7 | 105.4 | 110.0 |
| South | 124.8 | 98.0 | 84.9 | 85.8 | 83.8 | 85.1 | 83.0 |
| 2nd Ave | 93.3 | 75.2 | 62.9 | 64.2 | 65.6 | 73.0 | 70.0 |
| George | 39.5 | 29.2 | 10.4 | 11.7 | 23.6 | 80.8 | 60.0 |
| **Total** | **117.8** | **93.1** | **85.1** | **91.9** | **78.7** | **89.2** | **76.1** |

** Preliminary for 2024*

Table 55 above shows the electrical consumption per gross m² per campus over the period 2019 to 2024 with the projected values for 2025. Missionvale Campus had a slight decrease from 86.7 kWh/m² in 2019 to 79.3 kWh/m² in 2022, with a small rise to 82.4 kWh/m² in 2023. The projected consumption for 2025 is 81 kWh/m². North Campus experienced a significant reduction from 146.8 kWh/m² in 2019 to 89.7 kWh/m² in 2023, with the largest drop in 2020. The consumption for 2025 is projected to increase again to 110 kWh/m². South Campus showed a steady decline from 124.8 kWh/m² in 2019 to 83.8 kWh/m² in 2023. Consumption is expected to stabilise at 83 kWh/m² in 2025, showing a continued trend of lower energy use. Second Avenue Campus had a significant decrease in consumption from 93.3 kWh/m² in 2019 to 64.2 kWh/m² in 2022, followed by a slight increase in 2023 to 65.6 kWh/m². The consumption is projected to be 70 kWh/m² in 2025, suggesting a slight increase in energy consumption. George Campus experienced a huge drop from 39.5 kWh/m² in 2019 to 10.4 kWh/m² in 2021, followed by increases to 23.6 kWh/m² in 2023 and 80.8kWh/m² in 2024. Projections indicate a consumption of 60 kWh/m² for 2025.

The data indicates mixed trends across campuses. Missionvale shows relatively stable energy consumption per gross m², with minor fluctuations, which may indicate stable building use and energy efficiency efforts. North Campus experienced the biggest decline in energy usage per m², particularly during 2020. However, the gradually higher values reflect resumed operations post-pandemic and energy use in residence buildings. South Campus continues to reduce its energy usage per m², reflecting ongoing energy-saving measures and improved efficiency. Second Avenue Campus also shows a significant drop in energy consumption but is expected to see a slight increase in the coming years. George Campus demonstrates extreme fluctuations in energy consumption per m². The reasons for the significant fluctuations in

energy consumption on the George Campus need to be examined and strategies need to be implemented to stabilise energy consumption on this campus.

**Table 56: Electrical consumption measured in kWh per student per campus, 2019 – 2024 and 2025 projected**

| Campus | 2019 kWh/ student | 2020 kWh/ student | 2021kWh/ student | 2022 kWh/ student | 2023 kWh/ student | *2024 kWh/ student | Projected 2025 kWh/ student |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 1 680 | 1 568 | 1 540 | 1 535 | 1 596 | 1 601 | 1 600 |
| North | 1 342 | 1 035 | 1 066 | 1 269 | 820 | 963 | 930 |
| South | 983 | 772 | 669 | 676 | 660 | 670 | 650 |
| Second Avenue | 236 | 190 | 159 | 162 | 166 | 184 | 170 |
| George | 415 | 307 | 109 | 123 | 248 | 849 | 300 |
| **Total** | **910** | **724** | **652** | **647** | **572** | **615** | **600** |

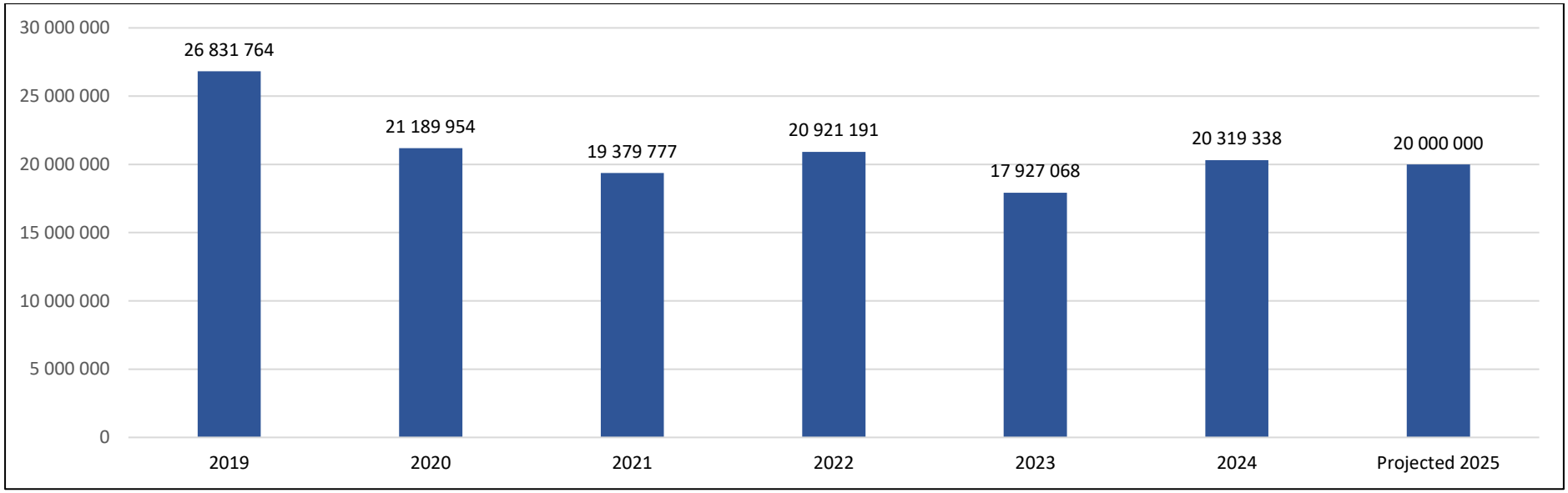
** Preliminary for 2024*

The kWh usage per student per campus will depend on the programme offerings on the various campuses. Programmes that involve workshops and laboratories can be expected to have a higher need for electricity consumption. On the Missionvale Campus, there was a steady but slight decline in kWh per student from 1 680 kWh in 2019 to 1 535 kWh in 2022. It is expected to stabilise at around 1 600 kWh in 2025. On the North Campus, there was a sharp decline from 1 342 kWh in 2019 to 820 kWh in 2023. Projections suggest a slight increase, reaching 930 kWh per student in 2025. This is mainly due to increased residence numbers. South Campus has shown a continuous decline from 983 kWh in 2019 to 660 kWh in 2023, with minimal expected fluctuation. The projected 2025 consumption is 650 kWh per student. Second Avenue Campus experienced a decline from 236 kWh per student in 2019 to 162 kWh in 2022, with a slight increase in 2023 to 166 kWh. The projected 2025 consumption is 170 kWh per student. The George Campus experienced a considerable decrease from 415 kWh in 2019 to 109 kWh in 2021. It then had a steep increase in 2023 to 248 kWh, with a projection of 300 kWh per student in 2025.

The data shows a mixed trend in electrical consumption per student across campuses. Missionvale remains relatively stable with only minor fluctuations in consumption. This suggests that its energy usage per student is consistent, with little impact from broader factors such as student numbers or operational changes (for example, the addition of the medical school). North and South Campuses show significant reductions in energy use per student over the period, although North Campus experienced a slight increase in 2022-2023 due to the

introduction of new on-campus residences. Second Avenue Campus consistently reports the lowest energy usage per student, indicating high energy efficiency. George Campus saw extreme fluctuations, particularly a large decrease in 2021, followed by a notable increase in 2023. The projected 2025 values indicate some stabilisation at 300 kWh, although this remains lower than the level in 2019. Missionvale may need further intervention for energy reduction as its per-student usage remains relatively high. The University needs to investigate the cause of fluctuations in George and identify whether the increase reflects operational changes, infrastructure inefficiencies, or municipal account/metering issues.

**Figure 28: kWh consumed on all campuses, 2019-2024 and 2025 projected**




** Preliminary for 2024*

The University completes a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Study, and the latest available data is for 2022. This study considers the various greenhouse gas emission categories per the SANS 14064-1. These categories relate to direct and indirect emissions (imported energy, transport, products, and other sources). The results from the latest study are outlined below in Table 57.

**Table 57: Carbon footprint measured in metric tons per total gross m² of usable space**

| GHG Emissions Summary | Tonnes of $CO_2$ Equivalent | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | 2022 | | | | | |
| **GHG Inventory according to SAS14064-1:2021** | **Unit** | **FY18** | **FY19** | **FY20** | **FY21** | **FY22** | **Staff** | **Students** | **m2 Gross Usable Space** | **$tCO_2e$ per Staff member** | **tCO2e per Student** | **$tCO_2e$ per m2 usable space** |
| Category 1: Direct GHG emissions and removals | $tCO_2e$ | 5 590 | 6 644 | 4 614 | 5 726 | 1 709 | 5 904 | 32 766 | 250 279 | 0.29 | 0.05 | 0.01 |
| Category 2: Indirect GHG emissions from imported energy | $tCO_2e$ | 27 148 | 25 686 | 18 389 | 19 099 | 24 419 | 5 904 | 32 766 | 250 279 | 4.14 | 0.75 | 0.10 |
| Category 3: Indirect GHG emissions from transportation | $tCO_2e$ | 33 914 | 34 639 | 12 566 | 10 152 | 35 442 | 5 904 | 32 766 | 250 279 | 6.00 | 1.08 | 0.14 |
| Category 4: Indirect GHG emissions from products used by an organisation | $tCO_2e$ | 464 | 558 | 396 | 272 | 217 | 5 904 | 32 766 | 250 279 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 0.00 |

| GHG Emissions Summary | Tonnes of $CO_2$ Equivalent | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | 2022 | | | | | |
| **GHG Inventory according to SAS14064-1:2021** | **Unit** | **FY18** | **FY19** | **FY20** | **FY21** | **FY22** | **Staff** | **Students** | **m2 Gross Usable Space** | **$tCO_2e$ per Staff member** | **tCO2e per Student** | **$tCO_2e$ per m2 usable space** |
| Category 5: Indirect GHG emissions associated with the use of products from the organisation | $tCO_2e$ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Category 6: Indirect GHG emissions from other sources | $tCO_2e$ | 8 079 | 7 418 | 4 225 | 14 087 | 15 282 | 5 904 | 32 766 | 250 279 | 2.59 | 0.47 | 0.06 |
| **Percentage change from the previous year** | | | **-0.30%** | **-46%** | **23%** | **56%** | | | | | | |

The 2022 data indicates the following carbon footprint of the University:

- Category 1: Direct GHG emissions and removals decreased significantly from 5 726 $tCO_2e$ in 2021 to 1 709 $tCO_2e$ in 2022, reflecting a substantial reduction in direct emissions.
- Category 2: Indirect GHG emissions from imported energy increased from 19 099 $tCO_2e$ in 2021 to 24 419 $tCO_2e$ in 2022, reversing the previous downward trend.
- Category 3: Indirect GHG emissions from transportation showed a sharp increase from 10 152 $tCO_2e$ in 2021 to 35 442 $tCO_2e$ in 2022, the highest across all categories.
- Category 4: Indirect GHG emissions from products used by the organisation continued to decrease from 272 $tCO_2d$ in 2021 to 217 $tCO_2e$ in 2022.
- Category 6: Indirect GHG emissions from other sources increased from 14 087 $tCO_2e$ in 2021 to 15 282 $tCO_2e$ in 2022.

Overall, there was a 56% increase in overall emissions from the previous year (2021) when the data were compiled for 2022.

The data showed significant fluctuations across categories. Direct GHG emissions (Category 1) saw a notable reduction, potentially reflecting improved sustainability practices or reduced on-campus activities. However, indirect emissions (Categories 2 and 3) related to imported energy and transportation surged. The sharp increase in transportation-related emissions could indicate increased travel or commuting post-pandemic, undoing prior gains in emission reductions. Category 6 emissions from other sources continued to rise and combined with energy-related emissions, suggest an increasing reliance on external resources or insufficient energy efficiency measures. The 56% increase in emissions is concerning, pointing to areas for targeted intervention, particularly in energy use and transportation.

The University is doing everything it can to ensure that students and staff continue to enjoy a sustainable water supply, and alternative water sources are being sought to ensure campuses are water-secure to the greatest extent possible. Plans to maintain ongoing minimum levels of water supply for drinking, cleaning ablution blocks, and showering in student residences include several interventions. These include installing more than 168 water tanks, 152 water meters, 150 flush valves, six boreholes producing approximately 630 000 litres per day, and a Return Effluent water management system that helps to reduce the use of potable municipal water for the gardens.

**Table 58: Annual water usage measured in kilolitres per square metre of assignable space, 2019-2024 and projected 2025**

| Campus | 2019 KL/m² | 2020 KL/m² | 2021 KL/m² | 2022 KL/m² | 2023 KL/m² | *2024 KL/m² | Projected 2025 KL/m² |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 0.7 | 1.8 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| North | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 1.6 | 1.2 |
| South | 2.7 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| 2nd Ave | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 4.9 | 1.0 |
| George | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.5 |
| **Total** | **1.7** | **1.2** | **0.7** | **0.6** | **0.7** | **1.7** | **1.5** |

** Preliminary for 2024*

Table 58 shows the annual water usage per square metre of assignable space for 2019 to 2025. On the Missionvale Campus, the water consumption rose significantly to 1.8 KL/m², possibly due to increased demand or errors/estimates in municipal metering. From 2021 to 2025, the usage remained low and stable, fluctuating between 0.2-0.3 KL/m². On the North Campus, the usage is expected to decrease slightly to 1.2 KL/m² in 2025. In 2019, the highest consumption on the South Campus was recorded at 2.7 KL/m². Over the next few years, usage declined steadily to 0.6 KL/m² in 2023, but it is projected to increase to 1.7 KL/m² in 2025. On the Second Avenue Campus, there was

low water consumption from 2019 to 2023 (between 0.1-0.2 KL/m²), but there was a spike in 2024 to 4.9 KL/m². It is projected that the water consumption will decrease in 2025 to 1 KL/m². On the George Campus, there was a gradual increase in water consumption over the years, from 1.9 KL/m² in 2019 to a peak of 3 KL/m² in 2023. The 2025 projection is that there will be a slight decrease to 2.5 KL/m².

Missionvale and North Campuses saw fluctuations in water usage, with Missionvale peaking in 2020 before stabilising at lower levels. The variations might be influenced by demand changes, operational adjustments, or potential inaccuracies in municipal metering and estimations in municipal accounts. South Campus experienced the largest initial water consumption, but effective measures led to a consistent reduction in usage until 2023, after which there was an increase again in 2024. The Second Avenue Campus has seen a substantial increase in water usage in 2024, suggesting either infrastructure failure or metering discrepancies, but we are projecting a return to moderate levels in 2025. George Campus consistently consumed more water per square metre than other campuses. Projections show a slight decrease in 2025, indicating ongoing water management efforts. The University needs to review the municipal water accounts and metering systems to ensure accurate water consumption reporting.

**Table 59: Yearly water usage measured in kilolitres per FTE student, 2019-2024 and projected 2025**

| Campus | 2019 KL/student | 2020 KL/student | 2021 KL/student | 2022 KL/student | 2023 KL/student | *2024 KL/student | Projected 2025 KL/student |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Missionvale | 12.7 | 35.2 | 4.4 | 6.0 | 3.6 | 5.0 | 4.5 |
| North | 6.7 | 6.9 | 0.4 | 3.1 | 6.5 | 14.4 | 10 |
| South | 20.8 | 11.9 | 9.2 | 5.4 | 4.8 | 15.3 | 14 |
| 2nd Ave | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 12.3 | 5 |
| George | 19.7 | 17.7 | 19.3 | 23.1 | 31.1 | 30.7 | 25 |
| **Total** | **17.2** | **12.5** | **7.6** | **6.0** | **7.2** | **17.3** | **14.7** |

** Preliminary for 2024*

Table 59 above, shows water consumption per full-time equivalent (FTE) student across various campuses from 2019 to 2024, along with projections for 2025. On the Missionvale Campus, the water consumption per student was the highest in 2020 at 35.2 KL/student, decreasing to 6 KL/student by 2022 and it is projected to stabilise at 4.5 KL/student by 2025. The North Campus experienced fluctuations in water consumption, with a significant drop in 2021 (0.4 KL/student) which then increased to 6.5 KL/student in 2023. By 2025, it is projected to reach 10 KL/student. The South Campus experienced a steady decline from 20.8 KL/student in 2019 to 5.4 KL/student in 2022. A significant increase

to 15.3 KL/student was experienced in 2024, with the projected value for 2025 being 14 KL/student. The Second Avenue Campus has a very low water consumption per student, peaking at 0.4 KL/student in 2022, but this increased to 12.3 KL/student in 2024. This will hopefully decrease and stabilise at 5 KL/student in 2025. The George Campus had the highest water usage among campuses with significant fluctuations, reaching 31.1 KL/student in 2023 and expected to be 25 KL/student in 2025.

A major reduction in water usage per student was observed between 2019 and 2021 across most campuses, probably due to the impact of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, from 2022 onwards, water consumption increased again in some locations, likely due to the return to on-campus activities. George Campus shows a relatively high level of water consumption per student, especially in 2023 (31.1 KL/student). Missionvale saw a sharp peak in 2020, but gradually reduced by 2022. The projected consumption values show continued efforts at water management and efficiency improvements, though these efforts appear inconsistent across campuses.

The University aims to stabilise or slightly reduce water usage per student for 2025, which aligns with sustainability measures. However, campuses like North and South show expected increases in water consumption by 2025, indicating areas where more focused conservation efforts may be needed. As mentioned previously, some variables in the water consumption data might be influenced by municipal metering inaccuracies or estimation methods, as the municipal accounts could rely on assumptions rather than precise readings. This may affect the data reliability and should be factored into future planning and reporting.

**Figure 29: Kilolitres used on all campuses, 2019-2024 and projected for 2025**

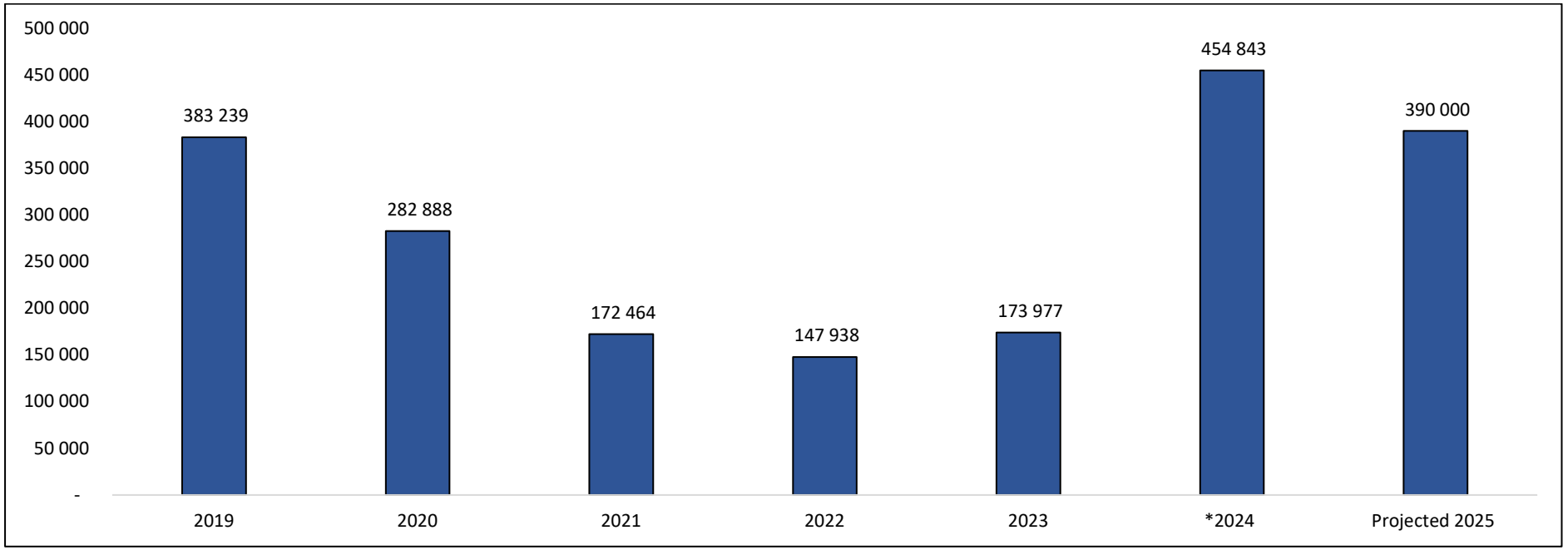



Figure 29 above shows the overall trend of a steady decline from 2019 to 2022 with a slight increase in 2023. The sharp increase in 2024 suggests a substantial rise in water demand and normal face-to-face activities increasing across campuses. The projection for 2025 suggests stabilisation after the 2024 spike.

Table 60 shows a steep increase in the number of reprographics copies generated annually. There is an especially significant increase from 2022 to 2023, with the number of copies almost doubling in a single year (an increase of 95%). This can be attributed to the move from online lecturing and assessments during the pandemic to face-to-face lectures. The preliminary data for 2024 suggests a continued increase, which may reflect increased academic demand for printed materials, although it raises concerns regarding environmental impact, particularly in terms of paper and resource consumption. The slight reduction projected for 2025 could indicate efforts to stabilise or reduce usage through more sustainable practices or digitalisation initiatives.

**Table 60: Number of copies of reprographics generated per annum, 2021-2024 and 2025 projection**

| Year | Number of copies |
|---|---|
| 2021 | 2 683 857 |
| 2022 | 3 633 895 |
| 2023 | 7 087 360 |
| Preliminary for 2024* | 8 091 761 |
| Projected 2025 | 7 500 000 |

** Preliminary for 2024*

The intentional drive towards greening our campuses has led to various interventions to reduce our carbon footprint and promote resource sustainability. The University makes a significant contribution to environmental sustainability through its management of the nature reserve and the University's extensive grounds. This includes the Nelson Mandela University Private Nature Reserve which wraps around Summerstrand Campus and extends to the first row of dunes above the ocean's high-water mark. At 640ha, it is the largest nature reserve of all the tertiary institutions in South Africa. The reserve is open to the public, which further contributes to social sustainability and wellness. As part of its open space management, the University's Maintenance Services partners with various sustainable wildlife initiatives.

While there has been significant progress in driving environmental sustainability efforts, this commitment needs to continue and be aligned with the desired outcomes articulated in Vision 2030.

# FINANCE

## 1. Earmarked grants: 2025/26

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| **Clinical Training Grant** | **R 15 572 000** | R4 490 964.80 | Pharmacy | Project plan already submitted to DHET - History shows 100% performance on projects. | 40% of budget received to date – 100% expenditure<br>Remaining 60% once received to be spent by 31 March 2025 |
| | | R6 588 513.20 | Nursing Sciences | | |
| | | R1 255 103.20 | Biomedical technology | | |
| | | R977 921.60 | Emergency Medical Care | | |
| | | R1 245 760.00 | Radiography | | |
| | | R583 950.00 | Dietetics | | |
| | | R429 787.20 | Biokinetics | | |
| **Infrastructure & Efficiency Grants** | **R14 000 000**<br>*Efficiency 10* | R14 000 000 | eAssessment Centres (North Campus) | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 40% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| **(6TH IEG CYCLE ALLOCATION)** | | | | | |
| **Infrastructure & Efficiency Grants (6TH IEG CYCLE ALLOCATION – Interest Utilised)** | **R106 154 830**<br>*Interest Utilised* | R9 500 000 | Customer Relationship Management | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R18 500 000 | Cloud Migration Strategy | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 80% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R15 000 000 | E-Assessment & Proctoring | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 50% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R6 650 000 | Software Packages | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | Complete |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | R8 700 000 | Connectivity WIFI Expansion | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R2 300 000 | Building & Space Opt Aud | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R11 000 000 | Integrated Workspace Man | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R26 000 000 | E-Assessment Centre N/C | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 40% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R3 504 830 | Cyber Security Initiatives | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R5 000 000 | Apprenticeships, Internships & Work Integrated | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 100% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | | Learning | | |
| **Infrastructure & Efficiency Grants**<br>**(6TH IEG CYCLE ALLOCATION – DHET savings)** | **R11 495 170**<br>*DHET savings* | R11 495 170 | Cybersecurity | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 90% of budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| **Infrastructure & Efficiency Grants**<br>**(NMU Medical School)** | **R100 000 000** | R100 000 000 | Medical School Infrastructure | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 10% of the budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| **Infrastructure & Efficiency Grants**<br>**(Sustainable Energy Plan)** | **R15 000 000** | R15 000 000 | Sustainable Energy Plan | Increased / upgraded university infrastructure | 50% of the budget spend by 30 June 2025 |
| **University Capacity Development Grant** | **R22 339 000** | R4 186 987 | Project 1: Learning Development to enhance Student Success | To improve students' academic performance | 50% by June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | R1 101 758 | Project 2: Student Employability and Entrepreneurship Development (SEED) | To equip Nelson Mandela University students with the skills to develop an entrepreneurial mindset. | 50% by June 2025 |
| | | R1 643 783.40 | Project 3: Enhancing Postgraduate Student Research Development | To increase postgraduate students' research skills | 50% by June 2025 |
| | | R2 659 837.65 | Project 4: Enabling reflective and transformative teaching practices and lifelong learning experiences through | To enhance the quality of teaching and learning and advance reflective teaching practice | 50% by June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | | professional development | | |
| | | R4 233 805.00 | Project 5: Digital transformation of Learning and Teaching | To capacitate staff and students to effectively utilize online technology platforms | 50% by June 2025 |
| | | R4 507 826.90 | Project 6: Supporting and Strengthening Staff Research Development | To improve the effectiveness of research endeavours of currently employed staff | 50% by June 2025 |
| | | R1 771 081.10 | Project 7: Curriculum as an educational vehicle | To ensure that the teaching programmes of the University are of high quality and meet the needs and expectations of students | 50% by June 2025 |
| | | R1 270 558.92 | Project 8: KHATHALA NGOBUNTU – CARE WITH | To catalyse a transformative shift in pedagogical practices, aligning them with the | 50% by June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | | HUMANITY: Transformative Pedagogies for Humanising Education and Advancing a Pedagogy of Care at Nelson Mandela University | principles of Humanising Pedagogy and a Pedagogy of Care | |
| | | R963 358.34 | Project 9: Programme management, monitoring and evaluation | To efficiently and effectively implement, monitor and evaluate the University UCDG plan | 50% by June 2025 |
| **Foundation Provision Grant** | **R26 256 000** | R2 054 423 | Humanities | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| | | R10 497 917 | Business & Economic Sciences | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R1 090 444 | Engineering, Built Environment & IT | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R1 638 445 | Law | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R8 625 885 | Science | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |
| | | R2 348 886 | Learning & Teaching (academic life skills) | 75% success rate | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |

| | | Breakdown of allocation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Grant** | **Earmarked allocation** | **Budget** | **Projects** | **Linkage to performance indicators** | **Mid-year performance indicator** |
| **Medical School** | **R37 000 000** | R37 000 000 | Operational costs for the Medical School | Operational costs for the Medical School | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |
| **South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI)** | **R20 000 000** | R20 000 000 | Operational costs for the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI) | Operational costs for the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI) | 50% of budget spent by 30 June 2025 |

## 2. Long-term capital expenditure plan and proposed long-term borrowings

| Description | Project value | Source of funds | | | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | DHET | Own funding | Borrowings | | | |
| Capital maintenance and infrastructure projects as per the 5-year plan: | | | | | | | |
| Residences | R45.76 m | | R45.76 m | | R16.82 m | R14.87 m | R14.07 m |
| Education and General | R232.59 m | | R232.59 m | | R39.99 m | R87.43 m | R105.17 m |
| Generator Installation project | R46 m | | R46 m | | R46 m | | |
| Photovoltaic Project | R65.7 m | | R 65. 7m | | R65.7 m | | |
| Refurbishment of the Animal Labs in the Zoology department | R18.61 m | | R18.61 m | | R18.61 m | | |
| Refurbishment of Chemistry Labs | R7 m | | R7 m | | R7m | | |
| Rebuilding of the Cricket Clubhouse | R11 m | | R11 m | | R11m | | |

## 3. 2025 Budget and three-year financial projections (2025-2027)

### *Budget Process and Overview*

Nelson Mandela University's Vision 2030 Strategy is an articulation of our strategic intentions and aspirations as we seek to embody the soul of Mandela through life-changing, student-centric educational opportunities, pioneering and impactful research and innovation, and transformative engagement that contribute to a better world. As a centrepiece of Vision 2030, the University strives to reposition engagement to foster a more equal, inclusive, and socially just society by activating equalising partnerships with societal stakeholders that advance the co-creation of African-purposed solutions. In so doing, the University strives to promote the public good through the expansion of human understanding, pushing forward the frontiers of knowledge, and cultivating socially conscious graduates who make a positive impact on society as responsible global citizens and leaders.

The core academic missions are supported and enabled through a values-driven, inclusive institutional culture that liberates the full potential of students, employees, and communities. Further critical strategic enablers that support our intentions include ethical governance and leadership, empowering employees and embracing the future world of work, creating an enabling environment for innovation, accelerating digitalisation, ensuring the optimal utilisation of modernised and flexibly designed infrastructure, and deepening our commitment to long-term sustainability and responsible resource stewardship.

Nationally and globally, universities are increasingly being called upon to respond to the complex and intractable challenges of our time, such as climate change, hunger, poverty, inequality, and the burden of disease. Economic recovery largely depends on enabling regulatory frameworks, skilled workforces, and measures to stimulate job creation, self-employment, and entrepreneurship.

While the national government fiscus remains under pressure, universities are confronted with the challenge of declining government subsidy and tuition fee income, coupled with escalating costs and ever-increasing demands for access to fee-free higher education for the poor. Within this context, the financial sustainability of the South African higher education sector remains a critical priority. This calls for bold responses that draw on the collective creativity of all stakeholders to design forward-looking strategies that promote long-term sustainability.

The University's Vision 2030 Strategy acknowledges the significance of transversal endeavours to advance strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and stewardship as critical enablers of excellence. To this end, executive management established the Sustainability and

Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) to critically reflect on the viability of our core academic missions, while also exploring strategies to improve efficiencies and cost-effectiveness in our institutional operating models, systems, processes, and service delivery.

Under the auspices of SIVTT, the University is embarking on various sustainability interventions to guide resourcing and investment priorities at institutional level as we implement our Vision 2030 Strategy. However, the work of SIVTT is still in process and has not yet reached a stage where its outcomes could fully inform the formulation of the 2024 budget directives. However, through the process of cascading Vision 2030, members of executive management are developing strategic plans which will inform the annual budgeting process and provide the parameters for sustainable and strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting at institutional level from 2025 onwards.

Through the budget directives, the University strives to optimally resource the Academic Project while driving strategic initiatives and growth areas in a sustainable manner, driving down cost structures through efficiencies and freeing up capital in non-core assets. A surplus from Council controlled recurrent operations, before finance income, is budgeted. Finance income is utilised to grow reserves, 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 to the Academic Project, Professional and Administrative Support Services, Strategic Projects, CAPEX, Bursaries, Overheads and Earmarked Accounts and Other Expenses that are further distributed via budgetary processes and allocation models.
These budgeting processes are performed by various committees that are representative of faculties and directorates within the University to ensure stakeholder inclusivity. These committees allocate funds based on models and processes informed by institutional strategy and Council's performance objectives. The Annual Performance Plan (APP), which includes a three-year cash flow and reserve accumulation plan, supports the annual budget and guides the monitoring of financial sustainability.

As the resourcing envelope is largely dependent on subsidy and fees, any material variances on the current assumptions will have a significant impact on the financial projections. The university was required to implement significant interventions as to balance the 2025 budget, reprioritising and re-setting baseline budgets while prioritising the academic project.

An institutional **Resource Allocation Model (RAM)** informs the total budget and allocation of funding. Within this framework more definitive funding models and processes are employed to distribute block funds across the University.

The institutional RAM process is summarised as follows:

- Estimate revenue resources.
- Top-slice for institutional overheads and strategic allocations.
- Allocate earmarked income (all earmarked income identified is allocated according to the applicable business plan, contract or agreement i.e. student accommodation, earmarked funding, facilities etc.).
- Allocate salary block funding.

    - The salary budget (Council Funded) benchmark was revised during the 2022 budget cycle, considering the organisational redesign, remuneration harmonisation process, revised baseline of the academic block allocation and change in operational subsidy funding in the medium term.
    - The resource allocation model and budget directives will determine the block amount available for the salary budget allocation.

        - Academic staff budget
            - An Academic RAM is utilized to allocate funding to faculties.
        - Professional Administrative Support Staff (PASS) budget
            - Management Committee of Council (MANCO) members are given a block allocation based on the budget directives.
        - Provision is made for a remuneration contingency to fund adjustments of the staffing costs including statutory and condition of services. Any provision made for cost-of-living adjustments will affordability and sustainability indicators into account.

- Allocate operating block funding.
    - Operating block allocations are split between Academic block funding and Professional Administrative Support Staff (PASS) block funding.
        - The Academic Block allocation is determined based on the current budget allocation as the baseline adjusted with the inflationary increase and growth in student FTE's prescribed in the budget directives.
        - The Academic RAM model is then applied and allocated to faculties who are required to distribute their allocations per school & department.

- The Professional Administrative Support Staff (PASS) operating block allocations are informed by the budget directives for the applicable budgeting cycle. MANCO members will receive operating budget for their core business in two block allocations where applicable:
    - Corporate Overheads/ earmarked allocations as per budget directive and allocated from a zero base.
    - MANCO member's operational allocation as per budget directive.

MANCO members will be requested to distribute operating budget within their directorates.

### *Assumptions used in Preparing the Budget (2025 - 2027)*

- Inflation rate used in estimates: 2025(4.5%), 2026(4.25%) and 2027(4%)

**1.** Subsidy

- The latest MTEF, Medium Term Budget Policy Statement and correspondence from DHET was used as a basis to inform the calculations.

- The Net Block Grant Subsidy for operations in 2025 is estimated as a worse-case scenario of a cut of 3% due to decline in the block grant in real terms, further impacted by the decline in teaching outputs and inputs based on the funding formula. In 2026, the baseline will revert to the 2024 baseline (adjusted upward by the same 3%), and in 2027, we project an increase in CPI (4%).

- Other subsidy sources that are earmarked allocations from the DHET, reflected in the central budget are for Foundation Programmes and Medical School. Other DHET earmarked grants i.e. Clinical Training Grant and University Capacity Development Grant are managed as ring-fenced funds. Budgets are based on the latest MTEF.

**2.** Fees

- Tuition
    - 2 % growth in 2025 according to adjusted estimate; 0.5% for 2026 to 2027.
    - 4.5% fee increase projection for 2025, 4.25% for 2026 and 4% for 2027.

- Bad debt provision of 8% provided for 2025 – 2027.

- Residences
  - Fee increase projection of 6.5% for 2025, 6.25% for 2026 and 6% for 2027.
  - Bad debt provision of 3% provided for 2025 – 2027.
  - The effect of phased-in new student accommodation is included in the assumptions.
  - Off Campus – agency fund therefore only commissions receivable is budgeted for. Net position reflected.

**3.** Other Income

The following activities fall under other income which have their own assumptions.

- International Office
  - 2024 budget assumptions on an adjusted baseline + growth of 0.5 % applied for 2026 & 2027.
  - Levy increase in line with a tuition fee increase of 4.5% for 2025, 4.25% for 2026 and 4% for 2027.

- Facilities
  - Revenue estimated on all facilities for 2024 increasing by projected CPI (4.5% for 2025, 4.25% for 2026 and 4% for 2027).

- Sundry Income
  - Forecasts use the 2024 adjusted budget as the baseline.
  - Average CPI increase of 4.5% for 2025, 4.25% for 2026 and 4% for 2027.

- Trust / Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement Office (SRMA)
  - Bursaries received from Trust – no allocations for 2025 - 2027.
  - SRMA & Project Office operational expenses recouped – the corresponding salary & operating budgets are reflected under the expenditure line items.

**4.** Strategic Allocations

- 2024 baseline used for 2025. 4.25% increase for 2026 and 4% for 2027. This is non-recurrent key institutional projects.

**5.** Salaries

- The academic salary block is calculated using the 2024 salary Block allocation (adjusted with approved additions and the discontinued posts – new baseline), adjusted with the effect of the 2024 general salary increase and the factoring the 2025 planned enrolment target (2%). 2025 salary budget of Academic and PASS limited to Council benchmark of 66.5%. This is increased by average CPI % for 2026 and 2027.

- The PASS salary budget including the International Office is calculated using the 2024 salary budget as a baseline, adjusted with 2024 MANCO approved recurrent additions and or defunding of posts, adjusted with the effect of the 2024 general salary increase. A budget adjustment of average CPI% (2025 & 2026) is applied to the baseline taking the Council benchmark into account and business model interventions.

- The Medical School, Residences, Foundation Programme, SRMA, and Facilities budget within their applicable business models and applying the agreed salary increases as resolved. The impact of re-integration of approved previously outsourced service workers has increased the Residences and Facilities baselines. The full earmarked grant for the Foundation Programme is ring fenced and applied. The effect of phased in new student accommodation is included in the assumptions.

- Council has approved staffing structures through the Organisational Redesign process. The implementation of these structures is dependent on affordability within the 65% benchmark of Council (salaries as a percentage of fees and block grant), increased to 66.5% in the medium term (2024 -2026) as to fund mission critical posts and advance Vision 2030.

**6.** Supplies & Services

The following activities fall under supplies & services which have their own assumptions:

- SRMA – 2025 budget zero based on inflation adjustments for 2026 & 2027.
- Operations & Overheads – Controllable Operating costs were considered within the context of developing a new operating model. MANCO members had the flexibility to nuance the impact between cost line items to achieve the overall required resources for their portfolio. The 2024 budget was used as a baseline (overheads – zero base, academic project (increased by inflation + enrolment growth adjustment, operations – baselines remained at 2024 levels to support cost abandonment and reprioritisation of support costs. Average increase of inflation for 2026 & 2027 on adjusted baseline.

- Building Capital Maintenance and Infrastructure Projects –funded from earmarked reserves.
- International Office – same directives as central budget.
- Facilities – 2025 zero-based budget used as baseline increasing by CPI thereon for 2026 and 2026.
- Residences – zero-based budget 2025 increase by CPI +2% % for 2026 to 2027.
- Foundation Programme – total earmarked allocation (DHET earmarked grant) + central allocation (Council) minus salary budget.
- Bursaries and financial aid allocation baseline of 2025 and increased in 2026 – 2027 at the same rate as tuition fee increase plus growth of 0.5%.

**7.** Provisions
- Depreciation – 2025 to 2027 budget based on current fixed asset register adjusted for CAPEX movement.
- Accumulated leave – 2025 to 2027 budget based on leave balance estimates per staff adjusted by the estimated salary adjustments.

**8.** Finance Costs
- Forecasts made according to existing and forecast amortisation tables considering new student accommodation loan funding.

**9.** Other operations
- Post-retirement benefits – 2025 budget based on latest actuary evaluations. 2026 & 2027 adjusted by CPI.

**10.** Investment Income
- Investment income based on cash flow/investment forecasts and estimates.

**11.** Specific Provisions
- Efficiency funding escalation provision – based on the latest estimates available.
- Transfer to reserves is budgeted to build up earmarked reserve funds.

**12.** Non-recurrent income & expenditure represent earmarked funding for capital projects. This budget is based on approved allocations by the DHET (revenue) and the cash flow projections on how the funds will be spent during 2025 and the following years (expenditure). As funds will not necessarily be spent in the year received/ funded/ budgeted, there needs to be transfers from previous years. This

budget also includes other non-recurrent project expenditures on deferred maintenance and new capital projects funded from reserves.

**13.** Transfer from reserves reflects the funding of projects from reserves.

**14.** Non-council-funded income and expenditure represent activities that include research, engagement, projects etc. that are controlled via funds. It is assumed that all revenue generated is expensed.

**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY**
**CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT**

| | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Forecasted Budget | Forecasted Budget | Forecasted Budget | Forecasted Budget |
| **INCOME** | **2 670 044 699** | **2 787 611 835** | **2 922 003 679** | **3 065 202 997** |
| **SUBSIDY** | 1 335 960 839 | 1 333 836 828 | 1 390 546 132 | 1 457 022 061 |
| **FEES** | 1 252 296 044 | 1 348 967 643 | 1 422 195 870 | 1 494 548 792 |
| Teaching | 1 027 114 004 | 1 108 208 476 | 1 166 563 285 | 1 223 624 122 |
| Residences | 225 182 040 | 240 759 168 | 255 632 585 | 270 924 670 |
| **OTHER INCOME** | 81 787 816 | 104 807 364 | 109 261 677 | 113 632 144 |
| **EXPENDITURE** | **2 656 117 621** | **2 787 274 681** | **2 903 210 244** | **3 017 785 970** |
| **STRATEGIC ALLOCATIONS** | 73 120 781 | 70 901 030 | 73 914 324 | 76 870 897 |
| **SALARIES** | 1 671 864 471 | 1 798 165 570 | 1 877 405 589 | 1 954 178 195 |
| **SUPPLIES AND SERVICES** | 716 629 506 | 721 543 646 | 754 451 899 | 788 597 237 |
| **PROVISIONS** | 124 962 574 | 128 546 247 | 129 030 618 | 129 505 872 |
| Depreciation | 112 259 079 | 117 149 280 | 117 149 280 | 117 149 280 |
| Accumulative Leave | 12 703 495 | 11 396 967 | 11 881 339 | 12 356 592 |
| **FINANCE COSTS** | 51 882 681 | 50 596 920 | 50 141 892 | 49 637 210 |
| **OTHER OPERATIONS** | 17 657 608 | 17 521 268 | 18 265 922 | 18 996 559 |
| Post-retirement benefits | 17 657 608 | 17 521 268 | 18 265 922 | 18 996 559 |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) from OPERATIONS** | **13 927 078** | **337 154** | **18 793 435** | **47 417 027** |

**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY**
**CONSOLIDATED INCOME STATEMENT**

| | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Forecasted Budget** | **Budget** | **Forecasted Budget** | **Forecasted Budget** |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) from OPERATIONS C/F** | 13 927 078 | 337 154 | 18 793 435 | 47 417 027 |
| **INVESTMENT INCOME** | 217 296 348 | 248 039 730 | 210 139 323 | 193 230 808 |
| **LESS : SPECIFIC PROVISIONS** | 120 491 966 | 145 334 989 | 141 113 370 | 141 538 826 |
| Escalation - Efficiency Funded Projects | 10 491 966 | 10 334 989 | 6 113 370 | 6 538 826 |
| Transfer to reserves | 110 000 000 | 135 000 000 | 135 000 000 | 135 000 000 |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) from OPERATIONS & INVESTMENT INCOME** | 110 731 460 | 103 041 896 | 87 819 388 | 99 109 009 |
| **NON RECURRENT INCOME** | 10 503 000 | 115 000 000 | - | - |
| DHET / Donor Grants - Efficiency funding | 10 503 000 | 115 000 000 | - | - |
| **NON RECURRENT EXPENDITURE** | 373 612 085 | 435 745 194 | 350 539 434 | 358 095 012 |
| Deferred maintenance / projects funded from reserves | 227 065 206 | 204 050 121 | 118 844 361 | 126 399 939 |
| Efficiency Funding | 146 546 879 | 231 695 073 | 231 695 073 | 231 695 073 |
| **TRANSFER FROM EFFICIENCY FUNDED RESERVES** | 136 043 879 | 116 695 073 | 231 695 073 | 231 695 073 |
| **TRANSFER FROM RESERVES** | 227 065 206 | 204 050 121 | 118 844 361 | 126 399 939 |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) (COUNCIL FUNDS)** | 110 731 460 | 103 041 896 | 87 819 388 | 99 109 009 |
| **NON COUNCIL FUNDED SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)** | - | - | - | - |
| Income | 732 641 711 | 552 769 817 | 580 408 308 | 609 428 723 |
| Expenditure | 732 641 711 | 552 769 817 | 580 408 308 | 609 428 723 |
| | | - | | |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) (ALL FUNDS)** | 110 731 460 | 103 041 896 | 87 819 388 | 99 109 009 |

## 4. Cash flow projections of revenue and expenditure for 2025 – 2027

| | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Opening Bank balance** | **90 653 376** | **100 000 000** | **100 000 000** |
| **Income (A)** | **4 442 877 371** | **4 573 580 252** | **4 742 080 665** |
| Subsidy | 1 307 580 828 | 1 359 502 452 | 1 424 896 634 |
| Tuition & residence fees | 1 718 477 691 | 1 803 542 336 | 1 893 719 453 |
| Investment Income | 235 541 217 | 210 139 323 | 193 230 808 |
| Other Income | 1 181 277 636 | 1 200 396 140 | 1 230 233 770 |
| **Expenses (B)** | **4 424 324 644** | **4 502 142 729** | **4 682 690 597** |
| Staff Costs | 1 766 233 125 | 1 801 557 787 | 1 849 678 344 |
| Other Expenses (operational & capital) | 2 658 091 519 | 2 700 584 942 | 2 833 012 253 |
| **Inflow/(Outflow) (A-B)** | **18 552 727** | **71 437 523** | **59 390 069** |
| **Bank Balance before transfer from earmarked investments** | **109 206 103** | **171 437 523** | **159 390 069** |
| **Transfer from/(to) earmarked investments** | **-9 206 103** | **-71 437 523** | **-59 390 069** |
| **Closing Bank balance** | **100 000 000** | **100 000 000** | **100 000 000** |

# REPORT ON RISK EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

## 1. Risk Management Maturity

The University's approach to risk management is based on the ISO 31000 Risk Management Framework and the risk management activities are guided by the Risk Management Plan as reflected in the University's Risk Management Policy and Procedures.

In preparation for the 2024 Annual Risk Assessment Workshop, a Bottom-Up Risk Assessment Approach was adopted to ensure a comprehensive identification and assessment of risks at the portfolio level, aligning them with institutional objectives and enhancing the overall risk management framework of the institution.

Following the formal Risk Assessment Workshop, informed by the Vision 2030 Strategic Framework, conducted in Quarter Four (Q4) of 2024, an updated institutional risk register was developed including the emerging risks as detailed below. Senior Management and Risk Champions were and/ are primarily responsible for identifying, managing, and reporting on strategic and operational risks in relation to University objectives.

## 2. Institutional Risk Approach

### *Emerging Risks*

Emerging risks may occur and progress swiftly, suddenly, or both. The emerging risk may not occur at all. Emerging risks 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.

The emerging risks will find expression in the institutional risk register and will be monitored going forward.

These new/emerging risks as summarised in the table below include:

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Cause(s) | Effect(s) / Impact | Uncontrolled Risk Exposure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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. | Uneven and reactive innovation ecosystem. | • Lack of awareness on the University's innovation structures.<br>• Missed opportunities to collaborate with other external innovation structures.<br>• Inadequate and/or lack of commercialisation/innovation policy framework.<br>• Lack of and/or inadequate integrated institutional innovation strategy. | • Lack of awareness on the University's innovation structures.<br>• Missed opportunities to collaborate with other external innovation structures.<br>• Inadequate policy framework.<br>• Lack of and/or inadequate integrated institutional innovation strategy. | Extreme |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Cause(s) | Effect(s) / Impact | Uncontrolled Risk Exposure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pursue impactful, pioneering research, innovation and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures. | Declining research output | • Insufficient capacity building for mid-career to established researchers.<br>• Inability to attract research active staff.<br>• Workload of staff. | • Loss of revenue.<br>• Perceived negative impact on the reputation and attractiveness of the University.<br>• Limited contribution to society. | Extreme |
| Liberate human potential through humanising, innovative lifelong learning experiences that prepare graduates to be socially conscious, responsible global citizens who serve the public good. | Potential non-accreditation of Learning and Teaching Programmes by the Regulatory Bodies. | • Prioritisation of capital projects in the capital maintenance plan.<br>• High Staff Turnover.<br>• Poor/lack infrastructure required by the Regulatory Bodies.<br>• Outdated policies. | • Loss of funding i.e., decrease in funding or sponsorships lost.<br>• Negative impact on the university value proposition. | High |
| Engage with all publics in equalising partnerships to co-create transformative, contextually responsive | Potential reputational damage to the University. | • Partnerships/ engagements/ third parties with organisations not | • Loss of critical employees.<br>• Loss of revenue. | High |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Cause(s) | Effect(s) / Impact | Uncontrolled Risk Exposure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| solutions in pursuit of social justice and equality. | | aligned with the University's/Societal values.<br><br>• Inadequate vetting processes for partnerships/ engagements/ third parties.<br><br>• Economic factors beyond the partner's control.<br><br>• Negative complaints related to:<br>- Safety and security controls on and off campus.<br><br>- University infrastructure.<br><br>- Shuttle and accommodation services.<br><br>- Unresolved student complaints. | • Poor and decreased enrolment. | |

### *Institutional Risk Register*

Senior Management and the Risk Champions further contributed towards the quarterly institutional risk reporting requirements by ensuring that the quarterly update of risk registers had been conducted, and recommended key institutional risks to Council for approval.

The Institutional Risk Register on controlled risk exposure after considering the existing control measures, is presented in the table below:

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: Learning and Teaching | Inability to maintain and expand Medical School beyond planned capacity. | • Engagement with National Departments of Higher Education and Training, DSi and Health (led by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor).<br><br>• Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement (SRMA) in the Office of the Vice Chancellor facilitate planning, resource allocation, budgeting, and review.<br><br>• Strategy and Plan for research opportunities including grant funding. These research opportunities (Office of the DVC: RII) include intra Faculty of Health Sciences, inter university Faculties, as well as research | Extreme | • Facilitate the signing of an agreement between DHET and Mandela Uni (for funding of R250m) - salaries (15 December 2022 meeting).<br><br>• Facilitate the signing of an agreement between DHET and Mandela Uni (for funding of R395m) - infrastructure (MANCO approved - November 2023).<br><br>• Submission of postgraduate accreditation and |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | opportunities with other Universities and institutions.<br><br>• Engagements with internal accreditation structures and external accrediting bodies, including HPCSA, CHE, SAQA. | | registration forms to internal structures and submit to the external accrediting bodies for their approval.<br><br>• Develop a Monitoring and evaluation framework for engagements with:<br>1) Departments of Higher Education, DSi and Training (DHET) and Health<br>2) Donors sponsors and partners. |
| Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalization, integrated systems, agile service delivery, | Safety and security compromise. | • Safety and Security Strategy.<br><br>• Standard Operating Procedures.<br><br>• Safety and Security Forums.<br><br>• Safety and Security Systems (i.e. Cameras, CCTV rooms, Online Intelligence System). | Extreme | • Preparation of a Safety & Security Infrastructure Multi-Year Maintenance Plan and submit application to CRAC for funding.<br><br>• External Stakeholders such as SAPS, Metro |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| and modernised infrastructure.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | | • PSIRA registration.<br>1.5 Conduct Security Risk Assessments annually.<br>1.6 External Stakeholder Engagement (SAPS, Metro Police Private Security Companies etc.).<br><br>• Security Risk Assessment Implementation Plan in principle due to resources.<br>1.8 Formal Safety and Security Governance Structure.<br><br>• Deployment of armed response. | | Police Private Security Companies etc. will be included as part of the Safety & Security Forum.<br><br>• Review of the Safety and Security Strategy. |
| Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalization, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure. | Cybersecurity threats | • Firewall, Patch management, Anti-virus, End-point protection.<br><br>• Information Security Annual Operations Plan approved by ICTC and continuously updated.<br><br>• Including Ransomware mitigation and Vulnerability assessment remediations.<br><br>• Cyber Security Enhancement Plan. | High | • Development of the BCM Strategy and Plan.<br><br>• Third party Data Security Evaluations.<br><br>• From the ERP security audit, Oracle DB Vault, Audit Vault and advanced security are being investigated. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | | • Conduct an ICT Cyber security review with the assistance of external auditors and implement recommendations.<br>• Continuous awareness for University Community on Information Security related items.<br>• Continuous improvements of information/cyber security controls, which will help us stay abreast of new threats.<br>• Cyber Security task team to monitor and manage cyber security matters/risks.<br>• Implemented a Cyber Security Roadmap.<br>• Continuous update of security software.<br>• Training of ICT response and development team.<br>• Conduct general cybersecurity awareness training to users. | | |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | • Conduct POPIA awareness sessions.<br>• ERP security audit completed.<br>• Reviewing of security settings and monitoring.<br>• Conduct encryption and data backup.<br>• Staff training and awareness. | | |
| Catalyse dynamic, student centric approaches and practices that provide life-changing student experiences within and beyond the classroom.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: Learning and Teaching | Decline in holistic student success. | • Learning and Development Programmes such as Academic Literacies and Student Success Coaching in support of student learning.<br>• Established advisory boards and student feedback.<br>• Student Counselling Services (Emthonjeni).<br>• Student Health Services.<br>• Extend working hours into weekends. | High | • Expand the counselling services i.e., appointment of Social Workers, Psychologists and extend working hours unto weekends. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Foster an inclusive, values-driven Institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | Compromised employee health and wellbeing. | • Primary Health Care<br><br>• Financial and mental wellness support.<br><br>• Health Care Committee established to oversee all aspects of Health and Wellbeing at the University<br><br>• Raising awareness campaigns & Annual Wellness Events<br><br>• Reporting cases to Transformation Office.<br><br>• Referral to External Wellness Service Provider.<br><br>• Referrals to hospital/GP for sexual harassment: external referrals to the Rape Crisis Centres at Greenacres / Dora Nginza Hospital.<br><br>• Limited facilities for substance abuse. | High | • Development of the integrated employee health and wellness strategy.<br><br>• Conduct wellness risk assessment.<br>- Introducing a decentralised model to ensure Health and Wellbeing service delivery on every campus.<br><br>• Creation of safe spaces (Physical, psychological and psycho-social) for affected employees to report incidents.<br><br>• Establish partnerships with Eastern Cape Department of Health. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | • Emergency response and medical treatment on-site and hospital referrals.<br>• IOD process followed. | | • Maintenance interventions to solve lift problems and continuous emergency services on-site.<br>• Disability application processes for incapacity to be diligently followed.<br>• Workplace reasonable accommodation for employees who are differently abled.<br>• To develop a Substance Abuse Policy. |
| Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship. | Financial sustainability of the University. | • Implementation of Postgraduate Research Scholarships (PGRS) Policy.<br>• Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement Office sources funding for students.<br>• Increase drive to attract external grants. | High | • Engage with scholarship funders to match the new PGRS funding values.<br>• Collaboration with ICT colleagues to develop |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation | | • Increased budgetary allocation for Council – funded postgraduate bursaries.<br><br>• Sourcing of bursaries for academically deserving students. | | efficient integrated ICT systems for management of scholarships. |
| Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalization, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | Energy insecurity. | • Energy Management Strategy.<br><br>• Generators. | Moderate | • Remote monitoring of generators via Building Management System (BMS).<br><br>• Propose a New Generator Installation Plan that will provide seamless electricity during loadshedding.<br><br>• Installation of Photovoltaic (PV sun energy) system.<br><br>• Consider buying cheaper electricity from alternate suppliers, other than Metro/ |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | ESKOM. ETANA proposal under approval.<br><br>• Outcome of the Energy Audit will implement solutions toward energy efficiencies. |
| Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalization, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | Inability to seize the opportunities and respond to the challenges presented by the rapid change in technologies such as AI in the 4IR. | • University issued statement on generative AI for Learning and Teaching and research.<br><br>• Implementation of AI detection tools via anti-plagiarism tools.<br><br>• AI included in the Business Intelligence Committee Terms of Reference.<br>• Digital Transformation Strategy highlights importance of leveraging AI in initiatives.<br><br>• Implementation of Institutional Code of Ethical Behaviour. | Moderate | • Investigate the benefits of implementing and instructing a Language Learning Model (LLM) in corporate information for information retrieval purposes.<br><br>• Develop an AI Policy.<br><br>• To conduct awareness and training on ethics related policies. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Embrace ethical governance and leadership approaches and practices that embody the values of the University and seek to promote service before self.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owners:** DVC: People and Operations,<br><br>Registrar,<br><br>&<br><br>Executive Director: Finance Management | Fraud and corruption/unethical conduct. | • Implementation of Whistleblowing Policy.<br><br>• Implementation of Prevention of Fraud and Corruption Policy.<br>• Implementation of Declaration of Interest Policy.<br><br>• Implementation of Ombud Charter. | Moderate | • To conduct Ethics Risk Assessment.<br><br>• To conduct Fraud Risk Assessment.<br><br>• To review the Declaration of Interest Policy.<br><br>• Tracking of the number of concluded fraud and corruption cases. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Foster an inclusive, values-driven Institutional culture to position the University as an employer of choice for talented and empowered employees.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | Inability to attract and retain scarce and critical skilled employees. | • Employee induction and onboarding.<br><br>• Remuneration benchmarking.<br><br>• Implementation of the Integrated Talent Management Strategy.<br><br>• Implementation of Scarce and Critical Skills Policy.<br><br>• Implementation of the Academic lag intervention to move remuneration to midpoint of scale for all academics. | Moderate | • Review the Scarce and Critical Skills Policy.<br><br>• Conversion to total guaranteed package (Academics) is a further intervention that allows offers flexibility that improves candidates take home.<br><br>• Remuneration philosophy of midpoint by 2024.<br><br>• Improvement on the philosophy to 60th - Percentile is subject to funding and governance approval however can be achieved in 2 years 2025-2026.<br><br>• Conversion to TGP envisaged to be |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | completed and implemented in 2024 for academics.<br><br>• Draft Employee Value Proposition (EVP) currently under consultation with the stakeholders. |
| Liberate human potential through humanising, innovative lifelong learning experiences that prepare graduates to be socially conscious, responsible global citizens who serve the public good.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: Research, | Declining enrolment for postgraduate and international students. | • Internationalisation Strategy.<br><br>• Research and Innovation Strategy.<br><br>• Enrolment Management Committee.<br><br>• PG Task Team.<br><br>• Postgraduate Research Scholarships (PGRS).<br>• Enrolment Plan.<br><br>• Ongoing mechanisms for improving staff qualifications. | Moderate | • Development of the Enrolment Strategy by the Office of the Registrar.<br><br>• Office of the DVC: PO to improve Infrastructure support.<br><br>• Office of the ED: Finance to improve Finance support. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Innovation and Internationalisation | | | | |
| Improve efficiencies and value creation through digitalization, integrated systems, agile service delivery, and modernised infrastructure.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owner:** DVC: People and Operations | Possible suboptimal governance of enterprise IT. | • Project management/change control processes, standards and process documents.<br><br>• Adoption of an ICT Project Management Framework.<br><br>• Conduct awareness of ICT governance procedures and processes to ensure the effective and efficient use of IT to achieve strategic priorities and goals.<br><br>• Implement and monitor Enterprise Architecture.<br><br>• Monitor application of the General ICT Policy.<br>• Implementation of IT Governance Framework. | Moderate | • Implementation of the Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) 2024 Process Plan.<br><br>• Set up of Change Advisory Board to monitor new project requests and progress on existing projects. |
| Embrace ethical governance and leadership approaches and | Inability to foster a positive institutional culture. | • Implementation of the Values and Code of ethical Behaviour.<br><br>• Humanising mindset. | Moderate | • Develop and Implement the Institutional Culture Strategy. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| practices that embody the values of the University and seek to promote service before self.<br><br>**Primary Risk Owners:** DVC: People and Operations<br><br>&<br><br>DVC: Engagement and Transformation | | • Institutional awareness about the ISSC and provision of the IC Short Learning Programme and staff participation in the training programme.<br><br>• Implementation of the Institutional Culture Statement of Commitment (ICSC).<br><br>• Institutional Culture and Equality Working Group oversight.<br><br>• Implementation of the Integrated Quality related policies. | | • Strengthen and advance the implementation of the quality related policies.<br><br>• Increase awareness of the ICSC. |
| Promote long-term sustainability through strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and responsible stewardship. | Resource allocation not adequately aligned to University strategies. | • Strategic Resource and Financial Sustainability Committee oversight.<br><br>• Annual budgeting process and budget directives.<br><br>• Governance and oversight structures. | Moderate | • Implementation of the Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) 2024 Process Plan. |

| Strategic Focus Area / Enabler | Risk Event | Current / Existing Controls | Controlled Risk Exposure | Future Controls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary Risk Owner:** Executive Director: Finance Management | | • Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) oversight. | | • Roll-out and funding of the BBBEE Improvement Strategy. |

# CONCLUSION

The uncertain global and national higher education context calls for a judicious institutional response. Amid a constrained national and global economy and various other challenges impacting the higher education sector, Nelson Mandela University remains committed to achieving its Vision 2030 strategic aspirations to be a socially embedded institution in the service of society.

As the University nears the end of the first five-year cycle of its institutional strategy, it has a clear line of sight towards the measures required to grow its reputation as a dynamic, socially embedded, and responsive African university. In deploying its strategic focus areas and trajectories, supported through its strategic enablers, the University will continue its efforts to advance the pursuit of excellence in enhancing inclusive student access for success, humanising learning and teaching, impactful research, innovation and internationalisation, and transformative engagement. In so doing, the University will be poised to contribute to promoting socially just and sustainable futures despite the complex challenges confronting society and the planet.

The 2023 to 2025 Mid-Term Enrolment Plan, Vision 2030 institutional monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning (MERL) Framework, and recent data trends have been carefully considered in setting targets for the 2025 academic year. Although the University strives to achieve the goals in the DHET-approved 2023 to 2025 Mid-Term Enrolment Plan, some of the targets have been adjusted in instances where trends have shown that these targets might not be achievable. Targets for indicators not included in the enrolment plan have been based on historical data trends and anticipated future developments.

Nelson Mandela University pursues a sustainable growth strategy in terms of student enrolments, staff capacity, financial resources, infrastructure, and facilities. As a comprehensive university, it closely monitors the balance between undergraduate diploma and degree enrolments, as well as between under- and postgraduate enrolments. Furthermore, enrolment targets have been informed by various strategic considerations such as the distinctive academic mandate and identity of the university; the student intake profile; current and emerging research capabilities; the qualifications profile and research outputs of academic staff; and curriculum renewal across all faculties.

In line with its vision, mission, and strategic aspirations, the University will continue to promote inclusive student access for success. To this end, strategic resource mobilisation interventions geared towards expanding access for academically deserving “missing middle” and postgraduate students who do not qualify for the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) are vital.

Concerning trends that will be closely monitored over the coming year include the declines in the student success rate and graduate outputs, and the non-achievement of targets in postgraduate and international enrolments. There will be a specific focus on various strategies to improve student retention by reducing dropout rates and improving throughput. Furthermore, the University will sustain its investment in strategies to improve the qualification profile of academic staff to boost postgraduate supervisory capacity and research productivity.

Financial indicators show that the University has maintained a relatively healthy financial position, although rising student debt needs to be monitored at institutional and sectoral levels. A transversal task team has been established by executive management to develop strategies to promote the future sustainability of the University. The aim is to ensure that, in the medium- to long-term, recurrent cost structures are financed from revenue streams excluding finance income. Added to this, the University pursues responsible resource stewardship and greening strategies to enhance environmental sustainability. Various interventions are underway to reduce our carbon footprint, such as the implementation of a renewable energy strategy through solar-photovoltaic installations on campuses, and strategies to reduce electricity, water usage, and reprographics.

Nelson Mandela University seeks to meaningfully contribute towards co-creating a more socially just and sustainable future for all.