



2025

Annual Report v05

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Activity rate (LMS: Blackboard)	User Activity Overview: Overall system and class activity for all users including average logins, and time spent on task, as well as statistics on user activity by class.
Academic support programmes	Programmes designed to help students successfully execute the tasks required to succeed in their academic programme.
Admission point score (APS)	A score calculated using matric results to determine whether prospective students meet admission requirements
Degree credit success rate	The number of degree credits passed relative to the degree credits enrolled. Degree credits are calculated as FTEs per course.
Disclosure	The divulgence of an invention for which a patent may be sought
Enrolment Plan	The Ministerial student enrolment plan targets as agreed upon between the Minister and the University Council.
Extended programme	An academic programme for which the curriculum is spread over an extended period
FTE enrolment	A numerical designator for the load of an enrolled student based on the weighting of their modules in the curriculum. It is the product of the number of students registered for a module at census date multiplied by the credit value of that module (within the curriculum).
First time entering	A person who (a) is effectively registered in the collection period for an undergraduate or pre-diploma course and (b) has not been effectively registered in any higher education course at the institution or any other higher education institution in the past.
FTE/headcount ratio	ratio/relationship used in student HEMIS analyses whereby the relationship of enrolled FTE loads to students registered for a qualification
FTE staff	Full-time-equivalent staff. The total number of full-time staff plus the full-time-equivalent of the part-time staff. This may be the actual calculation determined by the number of hours worked by all part-time staff divided by the average number of hours worked by a full-time employee (a numerical designator for an appointment based on 100% for full time)
Graduation rate	The proportion of total enrolments graduating in a given year.
Graduates	Students who have successfully completed all the educational requirements for a specified academic programme of study, based on the year in which the student completed.
Headcount student	The total, unduplicated number of students enrolled in a post-secondary education institution at a given census date, regardless of their course load.
Instruction/research staff	Academic staff who spend more than 50% of their official time on duty on instruction and research activities

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APP	Annual Performance Plan
APS	Admissions Point Score
ARC	Audit and Risk Committee of Council
AVE	Advertising Value Expenditure
CA	Corporate Affairs
CAD	Centre for Academic Development
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EXCO	Executive Committee of Council
FINCOM	Finance Committee of Council
FTE	Full Time Equivalent, either staff or student
FYE	First-Year Experience
GOVCOM	Governance Committee of Council
HEDA	Higher Education Data Analyser
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
HRC	Human Resources Committee of Council
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTGC	ICT Governance Committee of Council
IPMS	Integrated Performance Management System
IT	Information Technology
ITS	Integrated Tertiary Software
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LMS	Learner Management System
MANCOM	Management Committee
PG	Postgraduate
PM	Performance Management
PMS	Performance Management System
PQM	Programme Qualification Mix
REMCO	Remuneration Committee of Council
RICI	Research, Innovation, Commercialisation and Internationalisation
SASSE	South African Survey of Student Engagement
SET	Science Engineering and Technology
SETA	Sectorial Education and Training Authority

SLP	Short Learning Programme
SSF	Strategic Success Factor
STP	Science and Technology Park
TDG	Teaching Development Grant
TTI	Technology Transfer & Innovation
UG	Undergraduate
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
VC	Vice-Chancellor and Principal
VCR	Vaal Community Radio
VUT	Vaal University of Technology
VUTELA	Vaal University of Technology E-Learning Alive

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This Integrated Annual Report is submitted in line with the provisions of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended, and the Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions gazetted in 2014, which require the University to submit to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, the Integrated Annual Report detailing the activities, management and administration of the University for the period 1 January to 31 December 2023.

This Integrated Annual Report meets the requirements as set out in the Reporting Regulations. The report incorporates important information on strategy, risks and opportunities and correlates them to social, environmental, economic and financial issues with a view to enabling stakeholders to assess the University's performance and its ability to create, and add sustainable value over the short, medium and long term. The University executes its mandate within a regulated environment and is guided by the principles of good corporate governance as espoused through the King IV report. The University uses a Governance Framework within which governance, strategy, performance, talent, integrity, risk and culture are integrated and intertwined.

The year under review (2023) had some challenges for the university. The university lost (through death) the Vice Chancellor at the time, and there had to be acting Vice Chancellors who saw the university through the remainder of 2023. This happened whilst the university was still dealing with the remnant issues of Covid19 challenges, and the post administration syndrome, where the recommendations were still being implemented.

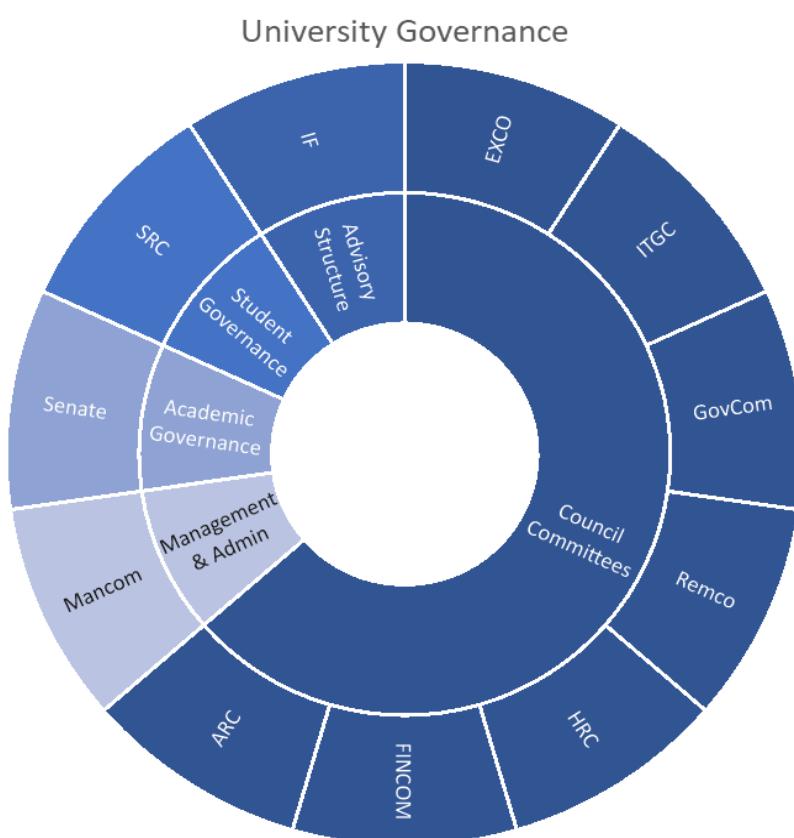
There were other noticeable challenges that the university had to deal on the governance side where Council did not have a full complement of membership, leading to some meetings have less people due to existed vacancies. These vacancies were later compounded by the sudden resignation of other two members who further crippled the functioning of some Council Committees where they served. These Committees struggled to quorate at some point until there was a new reallocation and assignment of members to these Committee, after which they continued operating optimally.

There were not much student disruptions in the year under review, as most issues were ably resolved through dialogue and engagements between management and students. This was the case with staff as well, most employee related issues were resolved were resolved through engagements, and in forums like MUF. This environment contributed in enabling the university to continue providing services in terms of its mandate.

SECTION 2: VUT GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

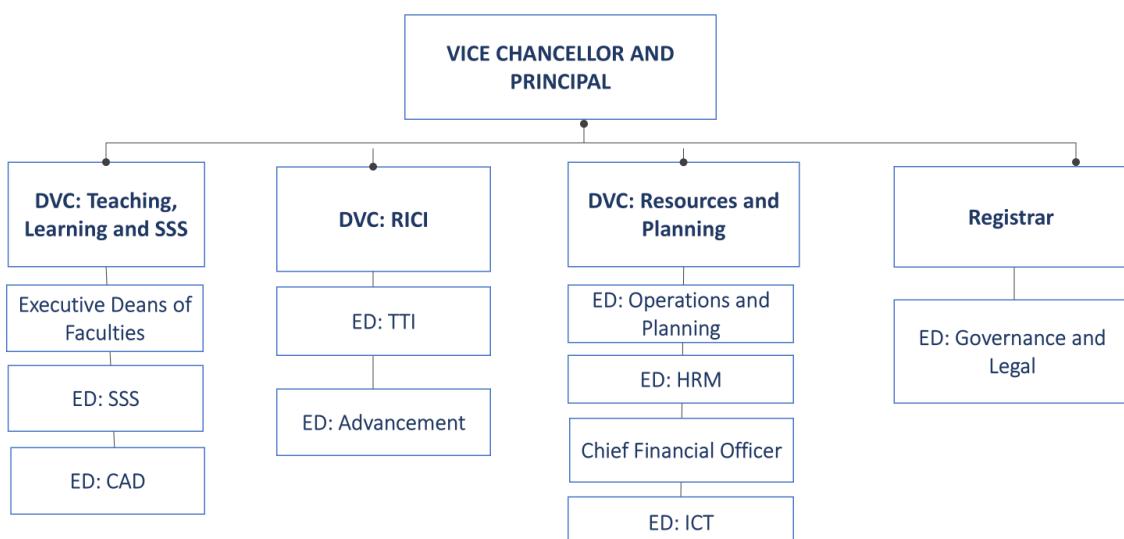
UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

The Vaal University of Technology is governed by the Council of the university through the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended) and the University Statute. Council has various structures and committees that it uses to ensure that it achieves its mission of governing the Vaal University of Technology. This it does through the Senate, which is the highest academic decision-making body, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal. Secondly, it relies on the Institutional Forum (IF), as per the prescripts of the Act, which serves as a useful advisory body to the Council with regards to key decisions that Council has to make. Thirdly, it works closely with the Student Representative Council (SRC) which champions the issues that are of importance to the student body. These governance structures and their relationships are shown in the following diagram.



MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The Management and Administration of the University is premised on the provisions of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended) and the King IV Report on Corporate Governance. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal exercises responsibility over the Management and Administration of the University. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal executes his/her responsibilities assisted by the University's Executive Management. In the exercise of this responsibility, the Vice Chancellor and Principal, together with the Executive Management, are expected to ensure careful separation of the University's Management and Council's Governance function. This separation and balancing of the two functions remain crucial for the continuous healthy and amicable relationship between Management and Council. In terms of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended), the triumvirate relationship of the Chairperson of Council, Vice-Chancellor and Principal and the Registrar is critically necessary for the university's governance operations. The University's Management function is facilitated through the following structure:




Professor Khehla Ndlovu
Vice Chancellor and Principal

SECTION 3: MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

The Chancellor was appointed through the dictates of section 26 (1) of the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997, read together with sections 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the VUT Statute. These make provision for the appointment of the Chancellor by a public higher education institution, as its titular head. These provisions also indicate the responsibilities of the Chancellor to including presiding over all congregations of the university, and conferring (in the name of the university) all the degrees and awarding all the diplomas and certificates.

The Chancellor was appointed in 2023, 11 September, through a rigorous process, and he will be in office for a term of five years ending in 2028. The university is looking forward to a fruitful and mutually beneficial relationship with the new Chancellor, Mr Zwelibanzi Mntambo, as he begins his journey as the university's Chancellor for the next five years. The university hopes the Chancellor will contribute positively to the well-being and the positive growth and advancement of the VUT over the term of his office in this role.

The university further hopes that your appointment as Chancellor (of Mr Mntambo) will help VUT to restore and maintain public confidence in the University and ensure stakeholder trust. The Chancellor will hopefully show personal commitment to good governance, ethics, integrity and upholding the recognized principles of public life and a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

SECTION 4: REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

As the Chairperson of the Council (and on behalf of Council) of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), I hereby present the 2023 Annual Report of the University.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The Council of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) is constituted and operates under the auspices of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended) and the University Statute. This Council has been in office since 2021 and continued to operate and execute its mandate and its responsibilities through oversight in the university.

Council functions with the help of a number of statutory structures, that are constituted in terms of both the Higher Education Act as well as the Institutional Statute. These governance structures assist Council in executing its statutory mandate. These structures include the Senate, the Institutional Forum and the Student Representative Council (SRC). The Senate of the University remains responsible for the academic governance of the University and is the top academic structure of the University. It is primarily responsible for teaching, learning, technology transfer and innovation, community engagement and research functions of the University. Senate reports to Council on these and other related matters. The Institutional Forum is responsible for advising Council on matters that are prescribed by the Act and the Statute. The SRC plays a role in the matters of the university and works closely with Council on these matters.

GOVERNANCE

The Council of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) governs the University in line with the Statute and the Act. Council is enjoined to subscribe to good governance principles and practices as stated and proclaimed in the King IV Code of good governance. Council has continuously reviewed policies to ensure that their continued relevance, as well as their fit-for-purpose. Council continues to be instrumental in ensuring that the compliance function of the University is comprehensively operative and ensures compliance with applicable legislation, policies and regulations.

Council has committed itself to efficient ESG (environmental, social and governance) standards. To this end, Council has insisted that proper frameworks be established to ensure that the university guarantees the existence of ESG practices within the institution. Council has further urged management set up a formal social and ethics framework, policy and practice guidelines for the University to which Council will hold management accountable. Council continues to advocate for green building and the exploration of alternative

environment-friendly energy sources for the University, an undertaking the university has committed to fulfil.

The Risk management function continued to improve during the period under review, where the function managed to reach the risk maturity rating of level 2. Council monitors this function to ensure that the necessary risk management tools and implementation are in place to ensure proper assurance reports to Council. There is an existing Risk Management Committee (RMC) which processes all risk management related issuers before they sent to Council. Management has also acceded to Council's insistence on ensuring that a Combined Assurance Model (CAM) exists for the University and is functional.

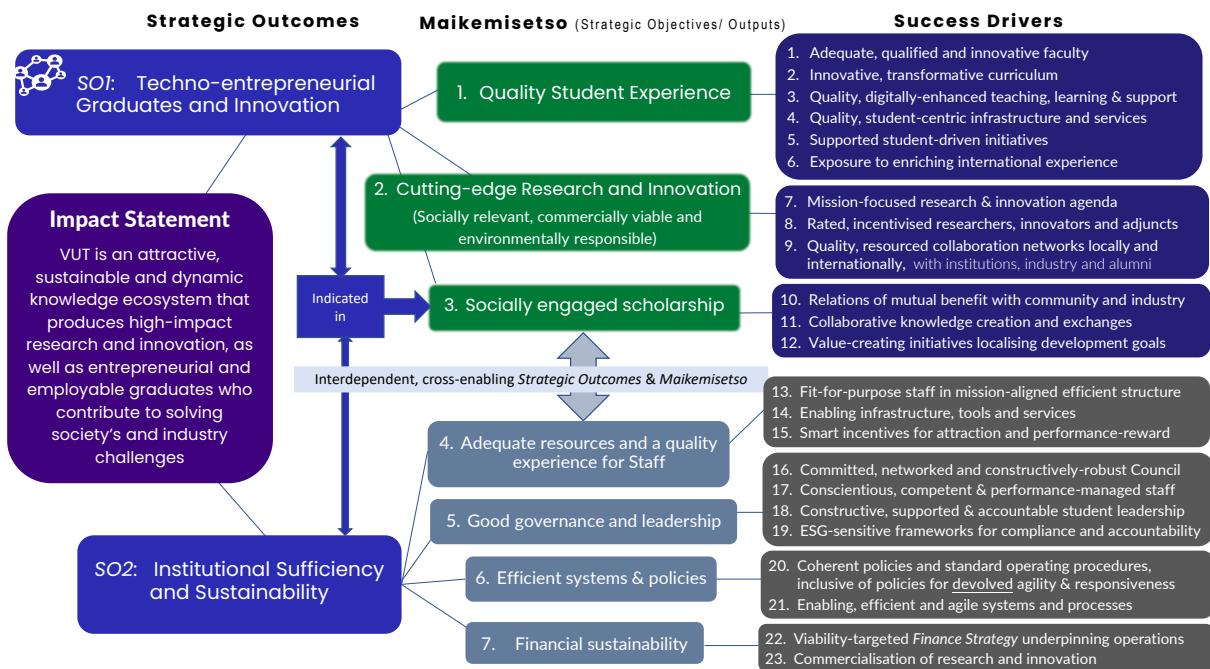
GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES IN 2023

Council experienced some stability challenges within management where the institution saw at least four different Vice Chancellors who assumed office at different levels. This was also precipitated by the untimely death of Professor Kgwadi, who had been appointed on a permanent basis. What then followed was the acting stints of three different Vice Chancellors who held the ropes until the end of 2023.

There were further challenges towards the end of 2023, where two Council members resigned from Council and its committees, whilst leaving some committees with challenges of quorum. This threatened the continued smooth functioning and operation of Council and its Committees, but it was swiftly dealt with through the reconstitution of Council committees, whereafter the governance structures continues with their functions and responsibilities.

UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

The university continues to implement the newly reviewed strategy, where Council and management are collaborating to ensure the success of this strategy. This strategy is referred to as VUT Strategy 2033+ with clear cut objectives and goals that are based on the core function of the university and the aspirations the university subscribes to in order to reach greater heights and achieve its targets and reach its expectations. This strategy is summarised in the following diagram:



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legal and regulatory framework continues to face challenges of stability within the broader sector, due to NSFAS related instability as well as timeous confirmation of funding to ensure proper planning on the part of the university. The conditions under which NSFAS operates and disburses funding has had an impact on the anxiety of students, institution as well as the surrounding landlords who accommodate a majority of these students. This has in turn affected the consistent performance of students, and leading to potential students disruptions and unrests. The environment is holding despite all the challenges and Council continues to provide support to management to resolve these and other related challenges so that provision of teaching and conducive learning continues unhindered.

CONCLUSION

Council continues with its support of management, students and other stakeholders to ensure that the university remains functional and operates within an environment that promotes the culture of teaching and learning. Council will ensure that there is adherence to legislative prescripts and broader compliance with policies so that the institution does not find itself at odds with the law, and other oversight bodies within the sector.

Council remains appreciative of the support from all VUT stakeholders during 2023 and in holding the turf whilst the university traversed some of the difficult times and situations it was

faced with. A promise to advance the institution to greater heights is what Council provides to ensure its commitment to a better and innovative VUT, that is efficient and properly run.



Professor Mandla Radebe
Chairperson of Council

SECTION 5: STATEMENT OF COUNCIL ON GOVERNANCE

The Council of the University is responsible for the overall governance of the University in accordance with the Act and the Statute. Council also employs principles of good governance as espoused in King VI in executing its responsibilities. At the heart of this mandate is ensuring that ethical and effective leadership is maintained at all material times. The broad functions of Council in accordance with the statute include adopting the University's vision, mission and values for the University and monitoring the realisation thereof, sustaining the University's reputation and financial health, the institutional climate, and the well-being of its employees and students and protecting the institutional autonomy of the University and the academic freedom of its employees while upholding public accountability, and deliberates on the nature and role of the University.

Council has established a Code of Conduct for its members that ensures that at all times members exercise their fiduciary duty. This is based on the concept of trust, trusteeship and stewardship, which requires members to act in good faith and in the University's best interest. Also, the Code enjoins members to exercise their duty to act within powers of authority (*intra vires*) which entails that members undertake to act on behalf of and commit the University only to the extent permitted by the powers and authority conferred upon them. Lastly, members are expected to exercise their duty of care and skill, which entails exhibiting the degree of care, diligence and skill that may reasonably be expected from members with their general knowledge, skill, and experience.

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Council experienced some challenges in 2023, emanating from the death of Vice Chancellor Professor Kgwadi, a situation which was followed by three acting Vice Chancellors, that saw VUT towards the ends of 2023. There was also another governance challenge posed by the resignation of two Council members. This was however arrested by the reconstitution of Council committees which provided much needed stability in the functioning of these committees and ensuring that Council continues with its oversight role and responsibilities.

Council continued to ensure that the assurance provision by management, corporate functions, internal and external auditors and professional bodies is effective and monitored consistently. In performing its role, Council ensured at all times that it takes into account compliance with relevant laws, regulations and the Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation's policies.

Council continues to strive for diversity in its ranks, and this it has done through the onboarding of a number of female members of Council who bring a wide range of experiences, whilst providing diversity at Council and in its committees. The working relationship between management and Council is continues to be satisfactory with role demarcation clearly defined.

COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

In accordance with the University Statute, Council has established Committees to assist it in the execution of its duties. All Committees are chaired by external members of Council. The functions of Committees are summarised below:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The Executive Committee of Council (EXCO) is constituted by the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson Council, chairpersons of Committees of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellors. The Committee deals with matters referred to it by the Council and reports back to Council in accordance with the Statute of the University. The specific functions of EXCO are as follows:

- To take decisions on behalf of Council that, by virtue of their urgency, cannot be delayed.
- Deliberates on any matter that, in the opinion of the Chairperson (which may be in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal) should serve at EXCO for consideration prior to serving at Council.
- Monitors the functionality of Council Committees on behalf of Council and assists Council to comply with its duties, in terms of the following seven cross-cutting fiduciary directives: policy, strategy, risks, performance, innovation, sustainability and transformation.
- Oversees VUT's performance with respect to the execution of good governance, strategy, performance, sourcing of external funding, transformation and sustainability.
- Approves the mandate for annual negotiations for staff below PL 1-4.
- May establish subcommittees/task teams as it deems fit.

In compliance with the Statute, the Committee may not make decisions relating to:

- Appointment or dismissal of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and Management;
- Sale of or other disposition of real estate or other assets;
- Approval of the annual budget;
- Use of the Institution's credit line;
- Review of the Institution's mission or purpose; and
- The amendment of the Statute.

THE FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The Finance and Infrastructure Committee of Council has the delegated function to provide oversight on financial matters and infrastructural projects of the University on behalf of the Council. The Committee assesses the performance of financial management of the University and reviews compliance with relevant regulations, statutes and accounting principles. On behalf of Council, the Committee also does the following:

- To oversee the University's reporting of financial information and the application of accounting policies.
- To oversee the borrowing and investment of University funds.
- To oversee the University's high-level infrastructure and asset management plans, including information technology (IT) infrastructure and assets.
- To consider and approve projects and purchases outside the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and Chief Financial Officer's delegations;
- To oversee the business cases and risk management relating to major University projects, commercial activities and infrastructure.
- To oversee significant procurements undertaken by the University.
- To oversee the University's insurance coverage and superannuation obligations.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (ARC)

The Audit and Risk Committee of Council provides an audit oversight role on behalf of Council. Specifically, the Committee considers the appointment of external auditors and their fees and discusses the nature and scope of audits for each audit cycle. The Committee also considers changes in auditing policies and practices, major judgmental financial areas, significant adjustments resulting from audits, the going concerns statement and the compliance with auditing standards. The Committee takes care of combined assurance for the University and plays an oversight role over risk management processes of the University. The VUT statement on internal control systems is also reviewed by the Committee prior to endorsement by Council. On behalf of Council, the Committee also does the following:

- The Committee considers the effectiveness of the VUT's system of internal control and risk management
- The Committee reports to Council on the extent to which Management has implemented an effective ongoing process to identify risk, measure its potential impact, and, proactively, manage it.
- Assess annually the internal audit function's compliance with its mandate as approved by the Committee.

- Consider and recommend to Council the appointment, resignation or dismissal of the External Auditors and the audit fee and any question of resignation or dismissal of the External Auditor.
- Ensure that VUT has effective ICT-governance structures and appropriate ICT governance frameworks in place.
- Obtain regular updates from Management (and VUT legal advisor) regarding compliance matters.
- Review the process for communicating the Code of Conduct to VUT personnel and for monitoring compliance therewith.
- Review any statements on ethical standards or requirements for the VUT and assist in developing such standards and requirements.

THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (HRC)

The scope of the Human Resources Committee of Council includes the approval and monitoring of implementation of human resources policies and monitoring of compliance with applicable labour legislation and regulations. The Committee also plays an oversight role over the development and implementation of the Institutional Transformation Plan. The Committee oversees HR frameworks in relation to talent management, policy, culture and continued strategic alignment. On behalf of Council, the Committee also does the following:

- Organisational culture;
- Review of the annual talent strategy and plan;
- Input into annual organisational workforce plan, goals and objectives, and progress report indicators and report to the Council on potential risks or gaps in resources;
- Annual review the Organisational Structure and Management Succession Plan;
- Review of the Labour Relations Strategy;
- Review and monitoring of employee health and wellness, including occupational health and decent working conditions as described by the International Labour Organization Protocol;
- Skills development progress;
- Employment Equity compliance and strategy;
- Oversight of the definition of critical skills, high potential and management.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (GOVCOM)

The Governance Committee's function is primarily to ensure that Council functions properly. On behalf of Council, the Committee deals with Council membership matters, Code of Conduct, Committees of Council and Institutional Rules. On behalf of Council, the Committee also does the following:

- To assist the Council in fulfilling its governance and oversight responsibilities for the University's process of monitoring compliance with relevant laws and regulations and Code of Conduct.
- To keep the Council informed of current best practices in corporate governance;
- To review corporate governance trends for their applicability to the VUT;
- To update the VUT's corporate governance principles and governance practices;
- To advise on the skills, qualities and professional or educational experiences necessary for effective Council members;
- To maintain effective working and communication relationships with student members, Council and Management.
- To report to Council on all matters relating to the Council and its Committees.
- To provide strategic guidance on retention and appointment of an actively engaged membership of Council with the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities, and values to fulfil the University's vision and mission.

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (REMCO)

The purpose of the Remuneration Committee is to provide the Council with assurance concerning the development of policy on executive remuneration and for fixing the remuneration packages of individual members of the remit group (Post Levels 1 to 4) as well as determining the remuneration philosophy and strategy for the Institution as a whole. Annual review in remunerations packages, systems and industry benchmarks to ensure the University maintain a competitive position in line with industry standards. On behalf of Council, the Committee also does the following:

- Determine the remuneration for members of Post Levels 1 to 4 in line with the University's Remuneration Policy.
- Determine the remuneration scales of employees on Post Levels 5 to 16 and provide the necessary mandates for salary increases for these post levels.
- If necessary, determine severance arrangements for members of the remit group.
- d. Set policy, establish arrangements and monitor implementation and trends in relation to all staff.
- Review issues of equality and diversity in relation to remuneration of the remit group and all other staff.
- Receive, consider and discuss the results of the University's Total Rewards Strategy and Gap Audits; receive both reports and a summary presentation, which covers all staff groups, and provide assurances to Council.
- Monitor diversity data related to remuneration overall at the University and make appropriate recommendations on remuneration policy.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict management is addressed through the declaration of Interest by Council Members and Members of Council Committees. These members are required to submit quarterly declarations of interest to ensure transparency and accountability. These declarations are submitted in accordance with Section 27 of the Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997.

The frequency of declarations is managed through the provision of quarterly declaration forms to Council and its Committees members to disclose any changes or updates to their interests. These declarations are submitted on a quarterly basis, covering the following periods: Q1: January to March, Q2: April to June, Q3: July to September, and Q4: October to December.

The main purpose of these declarations is to ensure that council members are aware of their obligations to disclose interests that may conflict with their duties, provide a mechanism for council members to declare any changes or updates to their interests on a regular basis, as well as to maintain transparency and accountability in the governance of the institution.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Vaal University of Technology's Ethics Policy is currently in draft form, awaiting review and finalization. A committee will be established in 2025 to oversee the policy's implementation and ensure adherence to the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

The key objectives of the Ethics Policy include the promotion of a culture of transparency, accountability, and respect for all stakeholders; the provision of guidelines for ethical conduct among council members, employees, and stakeholders; and ensuring compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and institutional policies.

The next steps will then include the establishment of the Ethics Committee in 2025, review and finalization of the Ethics Policy, the implementation and communication of the policy to all stakeholders. The update on these issues will be reported annually, with progress and developments noted on a quarterly basis.

COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

In the year 2023 Council was composed as per the following tables:

Name	Category of Membership as per Statute	Gender
External Members		
Prof MJ Radebe (Chairperson from 07 November 2022 and 2023)	Section 9 (A) vii	M
Ms JB Manche	Section 9 (A) vii	F
Prof NI Morgan	Section 9 (A) vii	M
Dr CM Kganakga	Section 9 (A) viii	F
Mr N Mahlako	Section 9 (A) ix	M
Mr S Khanyile	Section 9 (A) vii	M
Mr S Mahlalela	Section 9 (A) viii	M
Mr T Zororo	Section 9 (A) viii	M
Ms CE Simpson	Section 9 (A) viii	F
Ms P Mvana	Section 9 (A) viii	F
Mr N Nxasana	Section 9 (A) viii	M
Ms TS Sebela	Section 9 (A) ix	F
Vacant	Section 9 (A) vii	
Internal Members		
Prof ND Kgwadi and Dr TD Mokoena	Section 9 (A) i	M
Dr A Harmse	Section 9 (A) iii	F
Dr L Maleho	Section 9 (A) iii	M
Mr M Masendi	Section 9 (A) vi	M
Mr P Tjotjo	Section 9 (A) v	M
Mr T Mahlangu	Section 9 (A) vi	M
Mr T Bojabotsheha	Section 9 (A) iv	M

Prof M Linington	Section 9 (A) ii	F
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Attendance of Council members at ordinary meetings is summarised below:

Member	24/03/2023 Council Meeting	23/06/2023 Council Meeting	27/09/2023 Council Meeting	24/11/2023 Council Meeting
Kgwadi ND (Prof) Passed away in April 2023				
Mokoena, TD (Dr) Acting VC&P Feb to Mid Oct 2023	A	A	A	-
Nelana, S (Dr) Acting VC&P Nov to December 2023	-	-	-	A
Radebe, MJ (Prof)	A	A	A	A
Manche, J (Ms)	A	A	A	A
Sebela, T (Ms)	A	A	-	-
Zororo, T (Mr)	A	A	A	A
Morgan, N (Prof)	A	A	A	A
Mahlalela, S (Mr)	A	A	A	A
Khanyile, S (Mr)	A	A	A	A
Kganakga, C (Dr)	A	A	A	A
Mahlako, N (Adv)	A	A	-	-
Simpson, C (Ms)	A	A	A	-
Mvana, P (Ms)	-	-	A	A
Nselelo, N (Mr)	-	-	A	A
Linington, M (Prof)	A	A	A	A
Maleho, L (Dr)	A	A	-	-

Harmse, A (Dr)	A	N	A	N
Bojabotsheha,T (Mr)	A	A	-	-
Tjotjo, P (Mr)	A	A	-	-
Masendi, M (Mr)	A	A	A	-
Mahlangu, T (Mr)	A	A	A	-
Attendance %	100%	90%	100%	100%

Key: A=Attended; N = Absent, - Not active

In the execution of its functions, Council is assisted by its Committees. The following are Committees of Council and their composition:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (EXCO)	
Prof MJ Radebe	Chairperson of Council (Chairperson)
Ms J Manche	Deputy Chairperson of Council
Ms C Simpson	Chairperson of Audit and Risk
Mr S Mahlalela	Chairperson of Finance and Infrastructure Committee
Dr MC Kganakga	Chairperson of Human Resources Committee
Dr S. Nelana	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Ms N Mgobo	CFO
Prof M Linington	DVC: Teaching and Learning

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (GOVCOM)	
Prof MJ Radebe	Chairperson of Council (Chairperson)
Prof N Morgan	External Council Member
Ms T Sebela	External Council Member

Mr T Zororo	External Council Member
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Prof R Mabuza	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (ARC)

Ms C Simpson	External Council Member (Chairperson)
Prof N Morgan	Deputy Chairperson of Council
Mr T Zororo	External Council Member
Mr N Mahlako	External Council Member
Mr J Rockson	Co-opted member (Specialist)
Matabane, T (Mr)	Co-opted member (Specialist)
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice Chancellor and Principal
Prof R Mabuza	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning
Ms N Mgobo	The Chief Financial Officer
Internal and External Auditors	In attendance
Office of the Auditor General	In attendance

FINANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE (FINCOM)

Mr S Mahlalela	External Council Member (Chairperson)
Prof N Morgan	External Council Member
Ms C Simpson	Chairperson of the ARC
Mr S Khanyile	External Council Member

Mr P Moyo	Co-opted Member (Specialists)
Ms T Ngwenya	Co-opted Member (Specialists)
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Prof R Mabuza	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning
Ms N Mgobo	Chief Financial Officer

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE (HRC)

Dr MC Kganakga	External Council Member (Chairperson)
Mr S Mahlalela	The Chairperson of the FINCOM
Mr N Morgan	External Council Member
Mr M Fuzani	External Council Member
Ms B Ramabodu	ED: Human Resources
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Prof R Mabuza	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (REMCO)

Ms J Manche	Deputy Chairperson of Council
Prof N Morgan	External Council Member
Mr S Mahlalela	Chairperson of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (GOVCOM)

Mr T Zororo	ICTG Chairperson
Prof N Morgan	External Council Member
Mr Khanyile	External Council Member
Dr MC Kganakga	External Council Members
Dr TD Mokoena	Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Prof BR Mabuza	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning

SECTION 6: STATEMENT OF COUNCIL ON SUSTAINABILITY

Vaal University of Technology (VUT) places a strong emphasis on sustainability and stakeholder inclusivity in its operations, aligning with global principles and contributing positively to its community and environment. At Vaal University of Technology, sustainability is a core principle embedded in our strategic goals, educational approach, and institutional values. We recognize the importance of fostering an environment where economic, social, and environmental sustainability are prioritized for the benefit of future generations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The university is committed to minimizing the environmental footprint by implementing sustainable practices across our campuses. This includes reducing energy consumption, promoting waste management and recycling, conserving water, and fostering eco-friendly building and transport solutions. Through these efforts, we aim to create a green campus environment that sets a model for sustainability in the higher education sector.

The VUT's Occupational, Health, Safety and Environment department initiated the review process for the Safety Health and Environmental (SHE) Management Policy which is aimed for completion in the second quarter of 2024.

The environmental sustainability is a standing agenda item in the operations and logistics meetings to create awareness in faculties and divisions about the importance of protecting our environment. The University has a proactive approach to environmental management to meet legal and ethical obligations and comply with environmental legislation. The Occupational, Health, Safety and Environment (OHS & E or OSHE) Act and Regulations are strictly adhered to and duly implemented.

The OHS Office has implemented the projects on dealing with chemical waste, health product waste, fluorescent lights waste and pest control, to mention but a few. A Service Provider was appointed in 2023 to deal with the removal and disposal of all hazardous waste and certificates of disposal and compliance have been received in this regard.

VUT paved the way for teaching and learning and research by striving for a green campus operation in the following manner:

The Campus Infrastructure Master Plan (CIMP) has been commissioned and appointed Consultants have progressed very well with the planning and development of the Campus Master Plan. The Council also resolved in September 2023 to include the vacant land in Klerksdorp for the Agricultural Management Sciences. Under the CIMP, all considerations are

made for the smart campus that will address the environmental and sustainable issues ranging from the type of building material, systems, support infrastructure, water management systems, energy management system, building management systems, alternative energy systems, etc.

In addition to what the CIMP is addressing in its theme of the smart campus and green campus, VUT is implementing projects that started in 2023 and due for completion in 2024 under the alternative energy and water program. VUT appointed Consulting Electrical Engineers for the load testing on all VUT Building, design and sizing of the Student Residences and Campuses Standby Generators, R8.4m and R15.0m respectively.

There are buildings that have been installed with the Jojo Tanks and pumps as means to assist sustainability and business continuity. The first phase concentrated on highly populated building such as Library and the GW-Block (Lecture Halls) where huge numbers of students are found throughout the day. The second phase is planned to continue in third quarter of 20224.

A small project of Solar Photo-Voltic Pannel System has also been commissioned. An Electrical Engineer was appointed in 2023 to investigate the opportunities for installation of Solar PV System on critical buildings such as research laboratories, etc. A pilot project is being set for implementation in 2024 on the identified building, in line with the available funds. The second phase will cover the other identified buildings after the budgeting process in October 2024.

Operations has also started changing all the fluorescent lights in all lecture venues and around campuses with LED lights, which are less power demanding, this enhances the energy-efficient lighting and certified with recognized sustainability standards. This is so that energy cannot be wasted.

Continuous spending decisions of the university will based on sustainable choices by considering social, economic, and environmental impacts. Thus, the right products/ materials and complementary services are carefully selected to minimize waste, extend the lifecycle of products/ materials and to reduce any after-effects of waste disposal from products/ materials procured.

VUT considers the design, operation, and maintenance of the infrastructure as a significant opportunity to conserve energy, water and reduce waste. Water is critical to sustainable development of the university and there is recognition of the importance of continued water supply and conservation measures.

VUT is committed to protecting, managing, and enhancing biodiversity values through a few measures including planting trees species, sustainably managing pests, and working closely

with grounds staff to maintain the Campus, Residences, Quest, and Educity. The process of planting more trees/plants in the Main Campus has commenced and is planned to be rolled out to other spaces, especially covering the Science Park Campus which is barely protected with trees. The designs of the Landscaping including the trees and greenery will be contained in the Campus Infrastructure Masterplan that is currently under development, these will enhance the concepts of green and smart campus.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

VUT strives to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of its surrounding communities. We support inclusive educational programs, social outreach initiatives, and partnerships that empower local communities, promote diversity, and ensure equal opportunities for all. We aim to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to become responsible, ethical leaders who can drive change in society.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

As a public higher education institution, VUT is dedicated to ensuring that our resources are used efficiently. We engage in innovative research and collaborate with industry partners to contribute to the sustainable development of South Africa's economy. By promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, we seek to enhance the long-term economic impact of our educational programs.

STAKEHOLDER INCLUSIVITY AT VUT

VUT acknowledges that its success is rooted in the collaboration and engagement of diverse stakeholders. Our approach to stakeholder inclusivity is designed to foster open dialogue, encourage active participation, and ensure that the needs and concerns of all relevant groups are addressed in our decision-making processes.

Students: VUT prioritizes the well-being and success of its students, offering support services and opportunities for active participation in the academic, social, and cultural life of the university. We engage students in decision-making through student councils, feedback mechanisms, and involvement in sustainability projects.

Faculty and Staff: VUT recognizes the importance of creating an inclusive environment for its staff and faculty members. We encourage professional development, provide a platform for their voices to be heard, and ensure that their contributions are valued in shaping the university's strategic direction.

Local Communities: The local community plays a vital role in the university's sustainability strategy. VUT partners with community organizations and local businesses to promote socio-economic development, education, and skill-building. We aim to strengthen community engagement and ensure that our initiatives are inclusive and beneficial to all members of the community.

Government and Industry Partners: VUT works closely with governmental bodies, industry leaders, and professional organizations to align academic programs with market needs and regulatory frameworks. Through these partnerships, we contribute to advancing knowledge, research, and innovation in sectors that are critical to sustainable economic growth.

Alumni: Our alumni network is a vital stakeholder in the continued success of the university. VUT values the contributions and insights of its graduates, who serve as ambassadors of the university and contribute to its ongoing development. Through engagement initiatives, we maintain strong relationships with alumni and encourage their involvement in sustainability programs and projects.

Global Partners: In an interconnected world, VUT acknowledges the importance of global collaborations. We engage in partnerships with international institutions, ensuring that we learn from global best practices in sustainability and share knowledge in the areas of research, technology, and development.

Vaal University of Technology is committed to promoting sustainability and stakeholder inclusivity as foundational elements in achieving its vision of a responsible, resilient, and forward-thinking institution. Through continuous engagement with our stakeholders and a focus on long-term sustainability, we aim to be a leader in higher education and a positive force for change in society. This reflects the type of approach a university like VUT would adopt to ensure a balanced and sustainable future for its students, staff, and the broader community.

INNOVATION, FAIRNESS, AND COLLABORATION

At Vaal University of Technology (VUT), innovation, fairness, and collaboration are key pillars of the institution's approach to higher education, research, and community engagement. These values drive the university's mission to empower students and stakeholders while contributing to the socio-economic development of South Africa and the global community. VUT is committed to fostering a culture of innovation that encourages creativity, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial thinking.

This drive for innovation is evident in Research and Development, where VUT supports cutting-edge research across a variety of disciplines. Faculty and students are encouraged to engage in innovative projects that address real-world problems and contribute to sustainable

development. The university's research initiatives focus on solutions that benefit local communities and industries, promoting technological advances and novel approaches to complex issues.

VUT emphasizes the development of entrepreneurial skills among students, encouraging them to think beyond traditional career paths. Through incubators and innovation hubs, the university nurtures student and alumni startups, providing them with resources, mentorship, and access to networks to help bring innovative ideas to market. The university leverages the latest technology to enhance learning and research. From smart classrooms to digital tools, VUT ensures that innovation is embedded in every aspect of its educational programs and institutional processes. This approach not only helps students acquire relevant skills but also prepares them to thrive in rapidly evolving industries. VUT continues to promote interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration as a means to drive innovation. Through partnerships with industries, government, and other academic institutions, the university ensures that its research and projects are at the forefront of technological and scientific advancements.

FAIRNESS AT VUT

Fairness is central to VUT's ethos, ensuring that all members of the university community, regardless of background, have equal opportunities to succeed. The university's commitment to fairness. VUT provides access to quality education for a diverse student body. This includes efforts to ensure that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported through scholarships, financial aid, and programs designed to bridge educational gaps. The university is dedicated to offering equal opportunities for all, promoting diversity and inclusion across its student and staff populations.

VUT also fosters an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Policies and initiatives are in place to ensure that students and staff are free from discrimination based on race, gender, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. The university actively promotes a culture of mutual respect and equality. The university works to ensure that all students, especially those from underrepresented groups, have access to the resources and support services they need to succeed academically. This includes access to mentorship, career services, and academic assistance to help all students reach their full potential. VUT operates with transparency, ensuring that decisions regarding admissions, promotions, and policies are made fairly and based on clear criteria. This approach is central to building trust among all stakeholders, from students to faculty to external partners.

Collaboration at VUT

Our university recognizes that collaboration is essential for progress and for creating solutions to complex societal challenges. The university promotes collaboration at all levels, both within

and outside the institution. VUT encourages cross-departmental and interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty and students. By working together across fields of study, VUT fosters an environment where new ideas and solutions can emerge from diverse perspectives. Collaborative research, joint courses, and multi-disciplinary teams are common at the university.

Industry Partnerships:

The university has strong partnerships with industry leaders, both within South Africa and internationally. These collaborations allow students and staff to gain hands-on experience, work on real-world problems, and stay at the cutting edge of industry trends. VUT's focus on industry collaboration ensures that its programs are relevant and aligned with market needs, increasing the employability of its graduates.

Community Engagement:

VUT is deeply committed to working alongside local communities to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. Through community outreach programs and partnerships with NGOs, local governments, and other institutions, the university promotes collective action aimed at improving the quality of life in surrounding areas.

International Collaboration:

As a global player in the education sector, VUT actively seeks international partnerships with universities and research organizations. These collaborations provide students and staff with opportunities for exchange programs, joint research initiatives, and shared learning experiences, contributing to a global exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Student Engagement:

VUT encourages students to collaborate on projects, research, and extracurricular activities. This fosters teamwork and leadership skills, preparing them for the collaborative work environments they will encounter after graduation.

At VUT, innovation, fairness, and collaboration are interwoven into the fabric of the university's mission. These values guide the institution's commitment to providing high-quality education, advancing knowledge through research, and contributing to the development of sustainable, equitable communities. By promoting a culture of fairness and collaboration, VUT ensures that its students, staff, and stakeholders can thrive in a dynamic, innovative, and inclusive environment. Through continuous engagement and the pursuit of excellence, VUT strives to make a lasting impact on society and the global community.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Social transformation at Vaal University of Technology (VUT) remains a central focus of its strategic vision, reflecting the university's commitment to addressing societal challenges and promoting positive change within both the local and broader communities. VUT's approach to social transformation emphasizes inclusivity, equity, empowerment, and the development of responsible and ethical citizens. Below is an overview of how VUT is driving social transformation:

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

VUT actively promotes **diversity** and **inclusion** across its campus, ensuring that individuals from various backgrounds, including race, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability, have equal access to education and opportunities for success. This commitment is reflected in several initiatives including the following:

Access Programs: VUT offers programs aimed at improving access to higher education for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, such as financial aid, bursaries, and mentorship programs. These initiatives help bridge educational gaps and enable students from all backgrounds to thrive academically.

Inclusive Campus Environment: The university strives to create a campus that celebrates diversity. It fosters an environment where people of all cultures, ethnicities, and beliefs are respected and valued. This is achieved through various cultural, social, and educational activities designed to promote understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Gender Equality: VUT works towards gender equality by promoting opportunities for women and ensuring that policies, practices, and opportunities are equitable. Programs aimed at empowering women in leadership roles, particularly in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields, are an important part of VUT's social transformation agenda.

Empowering Local Communities

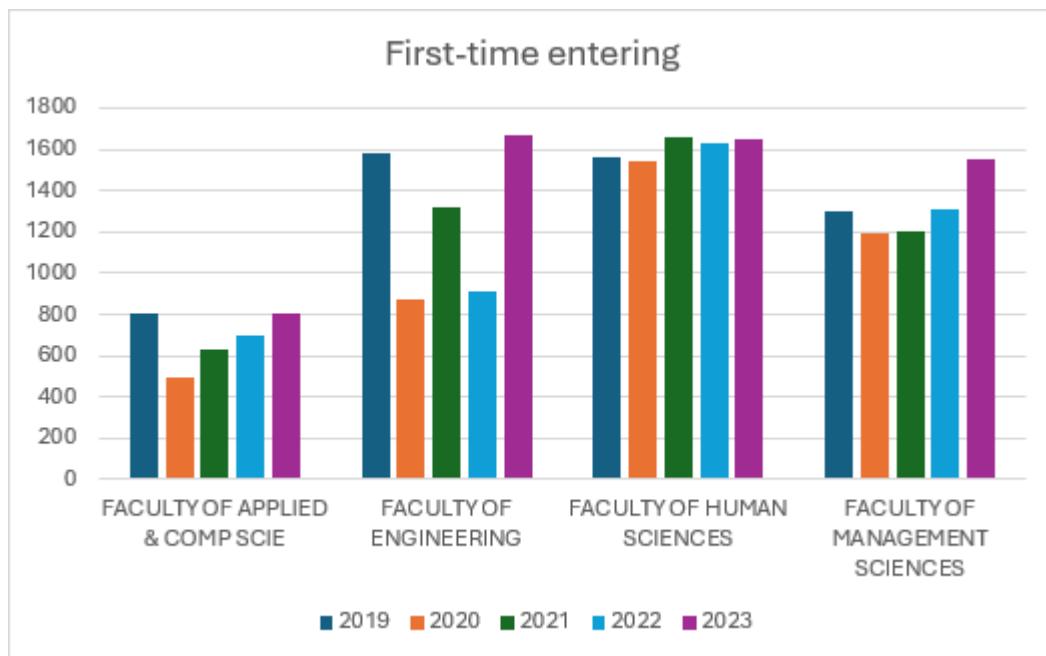
VUT is deeply committed to addressing the social and economic challenges faced by its local community. The university actively works to uplift surrounding areas through community engagement and social responsibility programs. **Community Outreach:** VUT's community outreach programs focus on education, healthcare, skills development, and poverty alleviation. These initiatives provide students and staff with opportunities to contribute to the

improvement of local living conditions, addressing issues such as unemployment, lack of access to education, and community health challenges.

HEADCOUNT ENROLMENTS

The below table compares VUT's first-time entering (FTEN) undergraduate headcount between 2019 to 2023. The table shows a decline in the FTEN headcount enrolments in 2020 with a recovery in 2023.

Faculty	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FACULTY OF APPLIED & COMP SCIE	803	490	629	696	804
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING	1583	870	1315	911	1666
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES	1558	1543	1657	1629	1645
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	1296	1198	1207	1308	1552
Total	5240	4101	4808	4544	5667

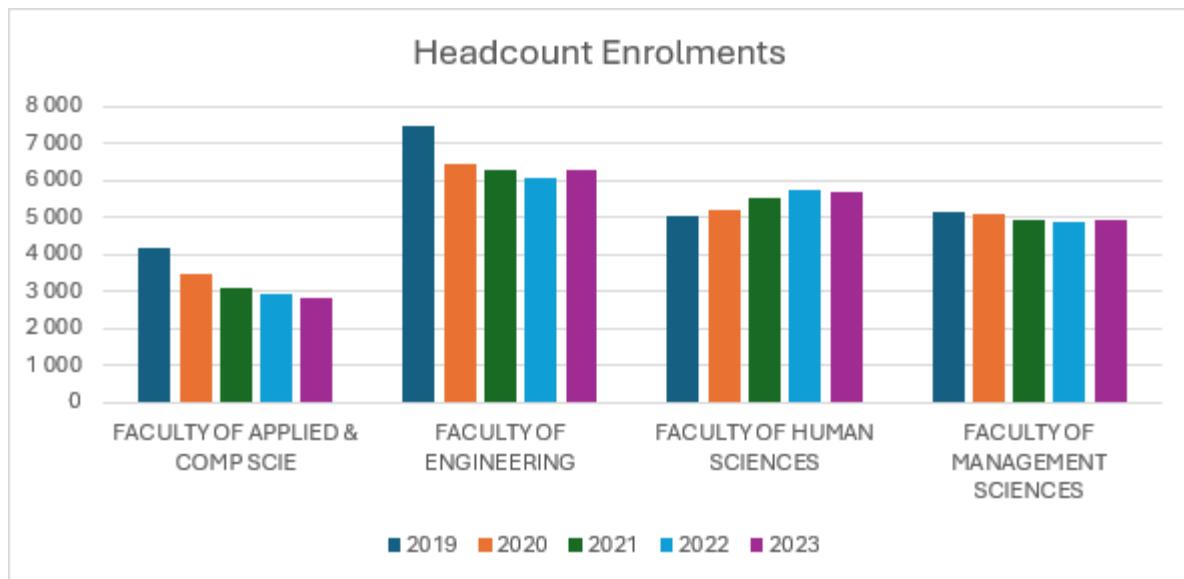


The sharp decline in students between 2020 to 2022 was due to the following reasons:

- There was under-enrolment in SET programmes. Due to the low pass rate in Mathematics in the 2019 Matric exams, most applicants did not meet the admission requirements. This sharp decline was not unique to VUT and this occurrence had impacted the Higher Education sector negatively.
- There was a low intake at VUT's sites of delivery: Ekhuruleni, Secunda and Upington. After DHET approval for closure of external sites of delivery 2020, the teach-out of programmes impacted student enrolments until closure
- The Faculty of Human Sciences and Management Sciences entry requirements were reviewed and benchmarked with other Universities of Technology on department level.
- The enrolments in the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences programmes achieved on the set target for the 2022 academic year.
- The science, engineering and technology faculties reviewed admission requirements for 2023. The entry requirements was a barrier to achievement of the target.
- The enrolment plan targets for the period 2023-2025 was reviewed. VUT achieved the first FTEN targets in 2023.

The table below shows total headcount enrolments by faculty for 2019-2023:

Faculty	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
FACULTY OF APPLIED & COMP SCIE	4 161	3 467	3 083	2 915	2 851
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING	7 465	6 478	6 300	6 056	6 273
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES	5 074	5 233	5 549	5 770	5 676
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	5 176	5 095	4 950	4 907	4 936
DVC: ACADEMIC & RESEARCH	51	20	17	8	0
Total	21 927	20 293	19 899	19 656	19 736



The sites of delivery closure as well as the under enrolment of first-time entering in SET impacted senior headcount enrolments of undergraduate programmes and pipeline students into the Advanced and Postgraduate Diplomas. The availability of funding to NSFAS funded students to progress Advanced diplomas (AD) and Postgraduate diplomas (PGD) exacerbated the enrolments challenges.

The following mitigation measures have been implemented to support the increase in enrolments:

- The SET faculties reviewed admission requirements for 2023 in line with other institutions.
- Focused marketing of AD and PGDs to mature potential students.
- Apply for SETA funding for AD and PGD students.
- Faculties are engaging with the Resource Mobilisation office to assist in fund raising.

Institutional Strategy Review

The Strategic Plan 2033+ was approved by Council in December 2022. The approved VUT Strategy 2033+ refocuses VUT's vision, strategic outcomes and objectives, and maps out strategic milestones along a ten-year development path for VUT. The revised institutional strategy is set to be implemented with full effect from 2024, with the year 2023 dedicated to important preparatory activity to integrate the existing Strategic Planning cycle (2020 -2024) with the new Strategy Plan (2033+). This process included a review and alignment of the APPs with the Strategy Plan focusing on reconciling objectives, timeframes, and resource allocation to make them consistent with the overarching strategic direction and core business of the university.

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING STREAMS

The generation of alternative funding streams at Vaal University of Technology (VUT) is regarded as crucial for ensuring the sustainability and growth of the institution, especially in light of the challenges faced by public universities in South Africa. VUT recognizes the need to diversify its funding sources beyond government grants and tuition fees, which can be volatile and insufficient to meet all institutional needs. Below is an overview of how VUT approaches the generation of alternative funding streams:

Generation of Alternative Funding Streams

The generation of alternative funding streams at Vaal University of Technology (VUT) is crucial for ensuring the sustainability and growth of the institution, especially in light of the challenges faced by public universities in South Africa. VUT recognizes the need to diversify its funding sources beyond government grants and tuition fees, which can be volatile and insufficient to meet all institutional needs. Below is an overview of how VUT approaches the generation of alternative funding streams.

Research Grants and Collaborative Research Funding

VUT actively seeks funding opportunities from both national and international research bodies, which can supplement its budget and support innovative research initiatives.

Government and Private Sector Research Grants: VUT applies for research grants from government departments such as the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), as well as from private sector partners and foundations that fund research in specific fields, including technology, engineering, and health.

International Research Partnerships: The university fosters international research collaborations, allowing it to access funding from global institutions, organizations, and international consortia. This includes participation in European Union (EU)-funded programs, African Union (AU) initiatives, and partnerships with global universities.

Industry Collaboration and Sponsored Research: Through partnerships with industries, VUT attracts research funding for applied and product-driven research. These collaborations often include joint research initiatives that address specific industry challenges and create mutual benefits for both the university and private sector partners.

Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement

VUT recognizes the importance of engaging with its alumni and the broader community to secure philanthropic funding.

Alumni Donations and Engagement: VUT taps into its alumni network for donations, mentorship, and partnership opportunities. Alumni who have benefited from the university's education and have achieved professional success are often encouraged to give back through financial contributions, creating scholarships, or sponsoring research projects.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Partnerships: Many corporations are eager to support education and social development through their CSR initiatives. VUT partners with corporate entities to secure sponsorships and donations aimed at supporting student development, research, infrastructure, and community outreach programs.

Income from Commercial Ventures

VUT seeks to establish income-generating ventures that align with its mission and values, turning certain university assets and capabilities into sustainable revenue streams.

Technology Transfer and Commercialization: VUT has established mechanisms for the commercialization of intellectual property (IP) and research outcomes. This includes licensing patented technologies and innovations developed by faculty and students to industry partners, as well as creating spin-off companies based on research findings.

University-Run Businesses and Services: The university may explore operating small businesses, such as bookstores, catering services, event hosting, or conference facilities, to generate additional revenue. These businesses can serve as practical learning environments for students while contributing to the financial health of the institution.

Campus Facilities Rental: VUT can leverage its physical assets, such as lecture halls, auditoriums, and sports facilities, by renting them out to external groups, organizations, or private companies for conferences, events, workshops, and training sessions.

Student-Driven Initiatives and Crowdfunding

VUT encourages student involvement in funding activities and creates opportunities for students to engage in self-sustaining projects.

Student Projects and Crowdfunding: VUT promotes entrepreneurial initiatives led by students, allowing them to secure funding through crowdfunding platforms or sponsorships for student-run businesses, tech startups, and social enterprises. The university may support these initiatives by providing resources, mentorship, and exposure to potential investors.

Microloans and Student Financing Initiatives: VUT may explore non-traditional student financing options, such as microloan schemes or student financing platforms, which allow students to access funds for educational purposes while also creating opportunities for the university to generate a revenue stream through interest or service fees.

SECTION 7: STATEMENT ON WORKER AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

WORKER PARTICIPATION

The University continues to honour its commitment towards the maintenance of good working relations between itself and the broader organized labour. There are always robust engagements with organized labour on a number of issues. These engagements ranged from salary negotiations, contract employees, policies as well as properly constituting the multi-union forum (MUF). The engagements went as there was a consensus and agreement reached with organized labour on salary negotiations. The university continues with the process of reviewing the disciplinary and grievance code to include alternative dispute resolution as a way of minimizing cases that are referred externally. The University remains committed to engaging organised labour to find financially sustainable solutions to the issue of contract appointments, and other ER matters. The union membership statistics indicate that NEHAWU enjoys majority status followed by NTEU.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The university continues to hold successful elections of the Student Representation Council, and this was no different in 2023. This paved a way for students to be represented in all statutory committees that include the University Council, the Senate, the Institutional Forum. The university acknowledged the role played by students and the importance of their participation in decision-making processes of the institution. The university ensures that this participation is not confined only to student leaders, but the voice of different students was taken into consideration through the application of student satisfaction surveys. The decisions pertaining to fee increases as well as modalities of dealing with student debts are some of the issues discussed with student leadership and these engagements remain ongoing.

SECTION 8: THE REPORT OF COUNCIL ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Management continues to support the Risk Management Committee (RMC), a committee that was formed to serve as an operational oversight committee advising and reporting to MANCOM on risk matters. The Committee consists of Risk Owners and Process Owners at Executive Management and Director levels representing all faculties and departments. It sits on a quarterly basis and holds discussions on key risks and other related matters affecting the University. The RMC generally oversees the risk management processes and ensures risk ownership across the university, by driving ERM implementation at portfolio levels.

At Vaal University of Technology (VUT), managing and controlling the consequences of risk is essential to maintaining institutional stability, protecting stakeholders, and ensuring the continuity of educational and research activities. The control of consequences of risk involves identifying, assessing, and mitigating various risks that could impact the university's operations, reputation, and overall objectives. VUT's approach to risk management follows best practices to safeguard its assets, operations, and people. Below is a detailed overview of how VUT addresses risk control.

RISK IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

VUT has a comprehensive framework for identifying and assessing risks that could affect the university. The process includes:

Risk Identification: The university conducts thorough risk assessments to identify both internal and external risks. This includes analyzing potential threats such as economic downturns, regulatory changes, technological disruptions, natural disasters, health crises (e.g., pandemics), and security threats.

Risk Assessment Framework: VUT uses a risk matrix or similar risk management tools to assess the likelihood and impact of identified risks. The severity and likelihood of each risk are rated, helping the university prioritize which risks need immediate attention and which can be monitored over time.

Stakeholder Input: Risk identification and assessment involve consulting stakeholders across various levels of the university, including faculty, staff, students, and management, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of potential risks.

RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES

VUT develops and implements strategies to mitigate or reduce the likelihood and consequences of risks. Key strategies include:

Crisis Management and Contingency Plans: VUT has established crisis management protocols and contingency plans to respond quickly and effectively to unexpected events. This includes detailed action plans for scenarios such as natural disasters, health crises, or cyber-attacks.

Emergency Response Plans: In the event of emergencies such as fires, accidents, or medical crises, VUT has clear emergency procedures, evacuation plans, and designated response teams to minimize harm and ensure the safety of everyone on campus.

Pandemic Response: During the COVID-19 pandemic, VUT implemented protocols to manage health risks, including remote learning, social distancing measures, and enhanced cleaning practices to protect students, faculty, and staff.

Insurance and Risk Transfer: To protect against financial loss from unforeseen events, VUT has appropriate insurance policies in place. These policies cover areas such as property damage, liability, medical coverage, and cybersecurity incidents. The university regularly reviews and updates these insurance policies to ensure they align with emerging risks.

Cybersecurity and Data Protection: With the increasing reliance on digital platforms, VUT has implemented strong cybersecurity measures to protect against data breaches, cyber-attacks, and other technology-related risks. This includes the use of firewalls, encryption, regular system audits, and training staff and students on safe online practices.

Health and Safety Protocols: VUT implements health and safety regulations, including compliance with national and international standards, to mitigate the risks associated with physical accidents, illness, and other hazards. This includes ensuring that laboratories, workshops, and campus facilities adhere to safety standards and that staff and students are trained in safety procedures.

RISK MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring and reporting on risk are ongoing processes at VUT, enabling the university to track the effectiveness of its risk management strategies and make adjustments when needed:

Risk Management Committees: VUT has a Risk Management Committee that is responsible for overseeing risk-related activities and ensuring that the university's risk policies are followed. The committee regularly evaluates emerging risks, reviews risk mitigation efforts, and provides recommendations to the university's leadership.

Regular Risk Audits: The university conducts regular risk audits to evaluate the status of identified risks and the effectiveness of control measures. These audits help identify areas for improvement and provide assurance to stakeholders that risks are being managed properly.

Internal and External Reporting: VUT maintains an internal reporting system for staff, students, and faculty to report risks or concerns. Additionally, it adheres to external reporting requirements for accountability, ensuring that risks are reported to relevant authorities, such as the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), as necessary.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): The university tracks key performance indicators related to risk management, such as the number of incidents, response times, and the financial impact of risks. These KPIs help measure the success of risk control efforts and identify areas that require more attention.

RISK CULTURE AND TRAINING

A critical aspect of risk control is creating a culture of awareness and preparedness throughout the university community. VUT focuses on embedding risk awareness at all levels:

Staff and Student Training: VUT provides ongoing training and awareness programs to students, staff, and faculty regarding various types of risks and how to mitigate them. This includes workshops on safety procedures, cybersecurity awareness, and emergency response actions.

Risk Management Education: The university integrates risk management principles into its curriculum for students studying business, management, and other related fields. This ensures that students are well-equipped with the skills to identify and manage risks in their future careers.

Promoting a Proactive Risk Mindset: VUT encourages staff and students to adopt a proactive approach to risk management. This includes reporting risks or vulnerabilities as soon as they are noticed, participating in drills, and adhering to the university's policies and procedures for risk prevention.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

Effective communication with all stakeholders is crucial in managing the consequences of risk. VUT ensures that there is clear and transparent communication regarding risks, their potential impacts, and the measures in place to control them. In times of crisis, VUT ensures clear and timely communication with students, staff, and external stakeholders. This includes

disseminating information about emergency protocols, changes to university operations, and safety measures.

Engagement with External Authorities: VUT collaborates with external stakeholders, such as local government, healthcare authorities, and law enforcement agencies, to manage risks that require a coordinated response. These partnerships help ensure that risks, especially those related to public health, safety, and security, are addressed effectively.

Feedback Mechanisms: VUT maintains feedback mechanisms that allow stakeholders to express concerns or suggestions related to risk management. This input is used to improve the university's response to risks and ensure that all perspectives are considered.

LONG-TERM RISK RESILIENCE

In order to ensure long-term stability and growth, VUT focuses on building resilience against future risks, particularly in the face of global changes and uncertainties:

Sustainability Initiatives: VUT works on embedding sustainability into its operations to reduce environmental risks and promote long-term environmental stewardship. This includes initiatives focused on reducing carbon emissions, minimizing waste, and ensuring energy efficiency across campus.

Strategic Planning for Future Risks: The university regularly reviews its strategic plan and adjusts it to account for emerging global risks, such as climate change, technological disruption, and shifts in the education sector. Long-term risk resilience is built into VUT's planning to ensure its ability to adapt to changing conditions.

Investment in Innovation: VUT encourages innovation in risk management strategies, leveraging emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and big data analytics, to predict and mitigate risks. By adopting advanced tools, VUT can anticipate future challenges and remain agile in responding to them.

The control of consequences of risk at VUT is a comprehensive, proactive approach that spans risk identification, mitigation, monitoring, communication, and training. Through robust risk management strategies, the university ensures the safety of its stakeholders, protects its assets, and maintains its reputation. By embedding a culture of risk awareness and preparedness across all levels, VUT is able to effectively manage and minimize the impact of potential risks, contributing to its long-term sustainability and growth.

RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE COMPOSITION IN 2023

	Title	Name	Status
1.	The Registrar	Dr Dan Mokoena	Chairperson
2.	DVC – Teaching and Learning, and Student Affairs	Professor Maggy Linington	Chairperson
3.	DVC – Resource and Planning	Professor Raymond Mabuza	Member
4.	Chief Financial Officer	Ms. Nontando Mgobo	Member
5.	Executive Dean: Faculty of Human Sciences	Professor Lazarus Maleho	Member
6.	Executive Dean: Faculty of Management Sciences	Professor Chengedzai Mafini	Member
7.	Executive Dean: Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences	Professor Christa Grobler	Member
8.	Executive Dean: Faculty of Engineering and Technology	Professor Khaled Abou-El-Hossein	Member
9.	Executive Director: Logistics and Operations	Mr Leonard Swana	Member
10.	Executive Director: Advancement and Internationalization	Ms Kedi Mokotsi	Member
11.	Executive Director: Human Resources	Ms Busisiwe Ramabodu	Member
12.	Executive Director: Student Support Services	Dr Sibusiso Mchunu	Member
13.	Executive Director: Centre for Academic Development	Dr Muntuwenkosi Chili	Member
14.	Executive Director: Information Technology Services	Mr David Ramasodi	Member
15.	Executive Director: Governance and Legal Services	Mr S'mangaliso Vilakazi	Member
16.	Director: Institutional Planning	Mr Sanjay Khoosal	Member
17.	Manager: Office of the Vice Chancellor	Ms Gapenyana Motswana	Member

POLICIES

Policies remain an important part of the internal control system and ensure appropriate Council oversight for risk and control processes and ensure appropriate risk management at all levels of the university.

In the year under review, the RMC operated with the policies indicated below which were approved by the university Council to ensure governance and management of risk at institutional and operational levels:

- Risk Management Policy
- Compliance Management Policy
- ERM Framework, encompassing the Compliance Management Framework encompassing the risk evaluation methodology
- Related processes and practice notes
- Risk Management Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Risk Capability Model and Assessment Framework
- Whistle blowing policy
- Fraud Management Policy

RISK CAPABILITY AND Maturity

Management has committed to the continuous improvement of the university's management of risk and risk management culture. The Risk Capability and Maturity Model and assessment tool approved are useful tools and measures that will drive the university risk maturity processes in the succeeding financial period. Identified gaps will be focused in a risk maturity improvement plan which will be implemented going forward.

The risk champion program continues to feed into the maturity processes and will facilitate risk awareness at department/ faculty/ process level. Increasing the requisite understanding and building risk management capacity at all levels of the institution remains a priority and a significant part of our transformation and maturity journey.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN

The implementation of the Risk Management Strategy and Plan effects the application of approved risk policies and frameworks. The Plan focused on the following areas for the 2023 financial year:

Status legend:



Targeted and
Completed



Ongoing activity,
continuous improvement



2024 targeted
implementation

	RM Priorities	Progress to-date	Progress status
1.	Refocusing risk governance	Risk related policies in place	
		Risk Management Committee established and operational	
		Directing the efforts of risk policies and ERM Framework through implementation of Risk Management Strategy and plan	
2.	Establishing the university risk profile	University risk profile in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic risk register - Operational (departmental risk registers) - Project risk registers 	
		Remaining departmental risk assessments	
		Update of risk profiles based on new strategy, annual performance plan, changing landscape, new processes and systems as and when changes arise or at least on an annual basis	
		Fraud and Reputation risk assessments	
		Implementation of Fraud Prevention Plan and Response Plan	
3.	Monitoring the implementation of committed risk strategies and mitigating actions	Quarterly reporting to risk governance structures on implementation of risk strategies.	
		Quarterly engagements with departments and ongoing support	
		Tracking of risk mitigation strategies and actions for all risks identified	
4.	Cultivating risk culture to drive risk maturity	Risk Capability and Maturity Model and Assessment tool developed and approved	
		Risk maturity assessment and implementation of maturity improvement plan in 2023	
		Integration of risk, strategy and planning	
5.	Fraud Management	Fraud Management Policies in place	
		Fraud Management Plans and implementation	
		Fraud risk assessment and implementation of related strategies	

	RM Priorities	Progress to-date	Progress status
		Whistle blowing facility	
6.	Ethics Management	Ethical leadership training for Risk Management Committee and MANCOM (risk owners)	
		Establishment of ethical program and plan	
7.	Risk training and awareness	Appointment of risk champions	
		Risk champion program roll-out	
		Departmental risk awareness sessions	
		Departmental pre-risk assessment workshops	
		Risk and compliance policies and frameworks workshops for staff	
		RMC and MANCOM risk and ethical leadership training	
8.	Risk communication	Continuous communication of decisions of the risk governance structures, Risk Management Policy and ERM framework application	
		Emerging risk tracking and communication across the university.	

REPORT ON RISK EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk assessments at strategic and operational levels have been conducted and are engaged by the RMC, risk and process owners at least on a quarterly basis. The university risk profile was first approved by University Council in quarter 2, 2022 and remains a live document which is updated on a quarterly basis for Council noting. Quarterly updates include emerging risks and alignment of existing risk information to environmental changes.

The mitigating strategies are already in place for risk registers and implementation of these actions commences as soon as risk registers are concluded and endorsed by the Risk Management Committee. Implementation of risk strategies is progressive and still needs some improvement.

Risk categories for strategic risks in 2023 included:

- Academic
- Governance and legal
- Financial
- Information, Communication and Technology
- Human resources
- Infrastructure management
- Business continuity, stability and reputational

VUT Risk evaluation methodology

Likelihood rating scales

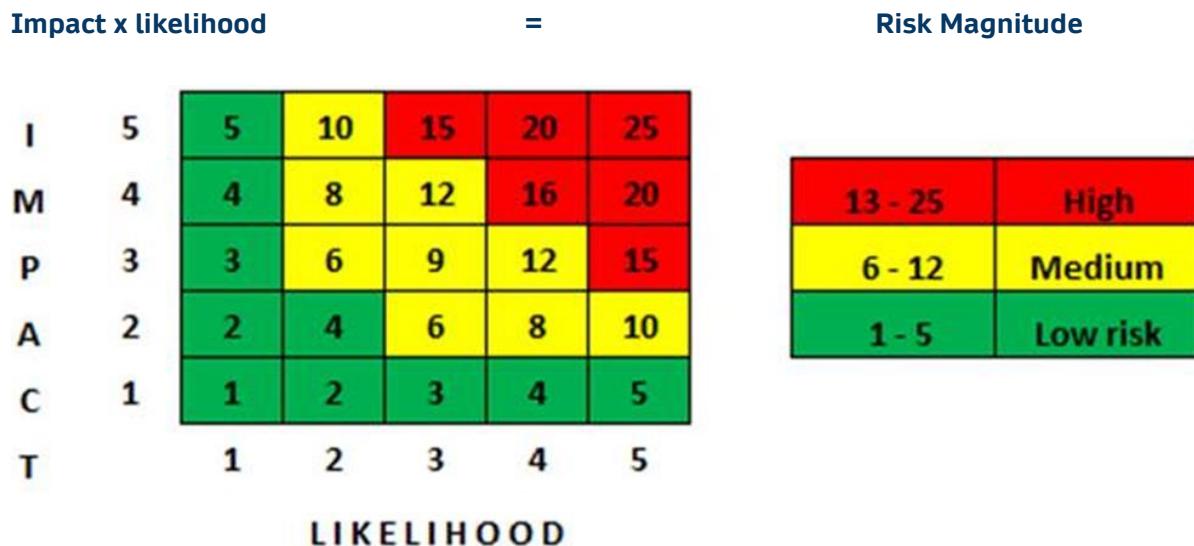
Scale	Likelihood	Description
1	Rare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The event is conceivable but is only likely to occur in extreme or exceptional circumstances (highly unlikely). The event has not occurred in the past 18 months. The event occurrence is rare
2	Unlikely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The event can possibly occur but it is unlikely The event has not occurred once within the 18 months. Management intervention was adequate The event is unlikely to occur within the next 18 months
3	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The event could easily occur The event has occurred at least once within the 18 months. Management intervention was partially adequate Risk or related event was reported more than once in prior Annual Reports or Audit Reports The event is likely to occur at least once within the next 18 months
4	Likely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The event is almost certain to occur (is likely to occur) The event has occurred twice or more within the 18 months. Management intervention was partially adequate or inadequate The event is likely to occur at least once within the next 6 months
5	Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The risk or event is already occurring The risk or event has occurred twice or more in the past 6 months Management intervention was inadequate Risk or related event was reported in the latest Annual Report or Audit Report The risk is likely to occur more than once within the next 6 months

Risk Evaluation Methodology

Consequence / Impact matrix

Key Risk Indicator Scale 	1: Minor	2: Moderate	3: Significant	4: Major	5: Catastrophic
Implementation of strategy/ Plan	No material impact on the achievement of business objectives or strategy	Disruption to normal operations, with limited effect on the achievement of business objectives or strategy	Significant impact on the achievement of business objectives or strategy	Disruption to normal operations, with limited effect on the achievement of business objectives or strategy	Fundamental impact on the achievement of business objectives or strategy requiring immediate management attention.
% objectives achieved	95 – 100% of the objectives will be achieved	85 – 94 % of the objectives will be achieved	70 – 84% of the objectives will be achieved	50 – 69% of the objectives will be achieved	1 – 49% of the objectives will be achieved
% Budget underspending	Budget underspending < 5% per department/ faculty	Budget underspending > 5% per department/ faculty	Budget underspending > 10% per division or unit	Budget underspending > 15%	Budget underspending > 30%
% Budget overruns	Budget overruns < 5%	Budget overruns > 5%	Budget overruns > 10%	Budget overruns > 15%	Budget overruns > 30%
Policy implementation	Business Processes, Policies and Procedures have been documented, approved and current, applied consistently throughout the institution	Business Processes, Policies and Procedures have been documented, approved but outdated and applied consistently throughout the institution	Business Processes, Policies and Procedures have been documented and approved; however, they are not applied consistently throughout the institution	Business Processes, Policies and Procedures have been documented but not approved (outdated and reviewed)	Business Processes, Policies and Procedures have not been documented

Calculating Risk Magnitude



Required actions by risk magnitude

Risk Magnitude	Risk magnitude description	Risk acceptability	Proposed actions
13 – 25	High risk	Unacceptable	Immediate implementation of corrective action plans
6 – 12	Medium risk	Acceptable with caution	Implementation of improvement opportunities and validation of controls
1 – 5	Low risk	Acceptable	Validation and Optimization of controls



Ms Priscilla Mvana

Chairperson: Audit and Risk Committee

SECTION 9: STATEMENT OF COUNCIL ON TRANSFORMATION

TRANSFORMATION AT VUT

Introduction

The transformation section of the report represents an overview of the transformation strides made by various departments and faculties during the reporting period. The report pivots around the three missions of the university, i.e. teaching and learning, research for social impact, and community engagement whilst also focusing on the procurement spend, staff and students demographics in terms of race, gender, rank and qualification. The next section starts with the four faculties followed by the relevant departments.

Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences

By the end of 2023, the Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences had 160 employees, 2 employees more in comparison to 2022 (158). There were resignations but there also were new additions to the faculty. The data presented here is based on the 160 employees hosted in the FACS. The data will be shared in tables based on Race and Gender.

Research Profile

Doing research in 2023 was challenging given the antagonistic nature of some policies and also the shutdown of the chemistry research laboratories motivated by the environmental health and safety status. Furthermore, the energy situation continues to present a complex challenge especially for those researchers that required cold chain to maintain the integrity of their research.

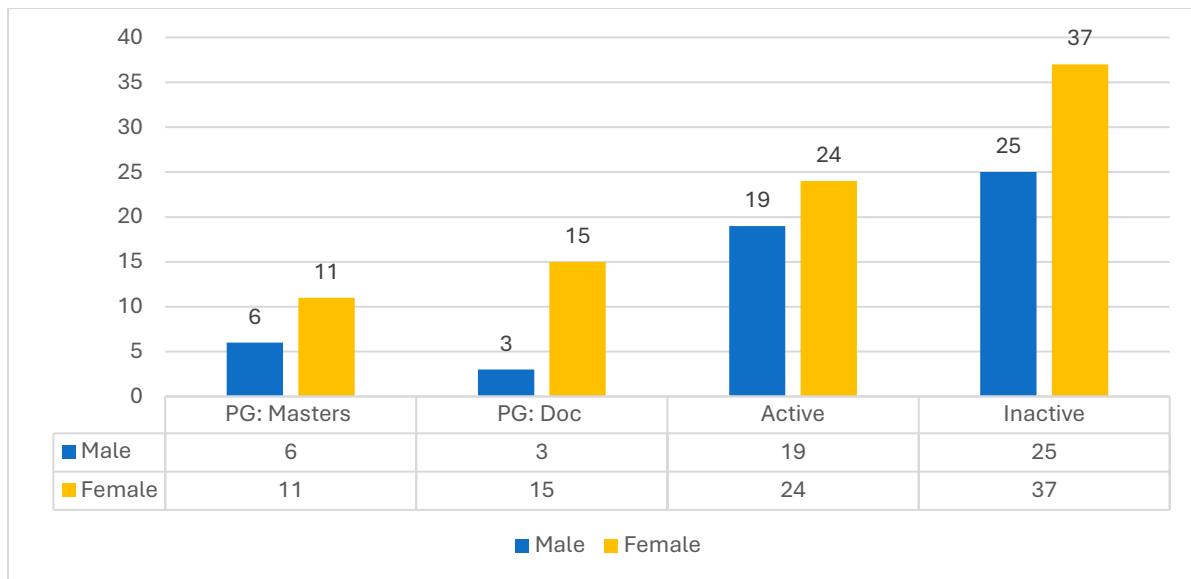


Figure 1: Distribution of faculty staff according to their research activity

Please note the following terms: Active means individuals currently engaged in research for non-degree purposes. PG Masters and PG Doc are individuals conducting research as part of a degree program. Inactive means individuals that are clearly not engaged in research.

In terms of research the FACS had 98 members that were research active (Figure 1). These included members (43) with a Doctoral qualification and were engaging in research for no personal qualification gain. Followed by those members of the faculty that were doing research as part of either a Doctoral (38) or Masters (17) qualification. There were 11 members of the faculty that did not engage in any research due to the nature of their job profiles. These were mainly administrators, janitors and tutors. The EE profile of members engaged in research is summarized in Table 1 and accounts for 88 individuals as per the criteria shared above.

Table 1 : Research Active staff profile

Race	Head Count		Total
	Female	Male	
African	44	44	88
Coloured	0	1	1
Indian	1	2	3
White	5	1	6
Total	50	48	98

Most researchers in the FACS are women at 51% (slight decrease of 2% compared to the previous year) compared to males at 49% (a slight increase of 2% compared to the previous year). The FACS remains committed to encouraging staff members to upgrade their qualifications. This is highlighted in the number of individuals pursuing a postgraduate qualification. There needs to be some commitment from the University management to resolve the challenges the researchers experience. Failure to do so may contribute to staff exit to sister institutions that offer a competitive conducive environment.

Staff and student profile

The FACS hosted 160 members of staff (73 males and 87 Females) by the end of 2022. This excludes employees that resigned, retired or contracts terminated during 2023. The data shared will be based on those that remained employed by the 31st of December 2023. Of the 160 members of staff 68 were on contract while 92 were permanently employed.

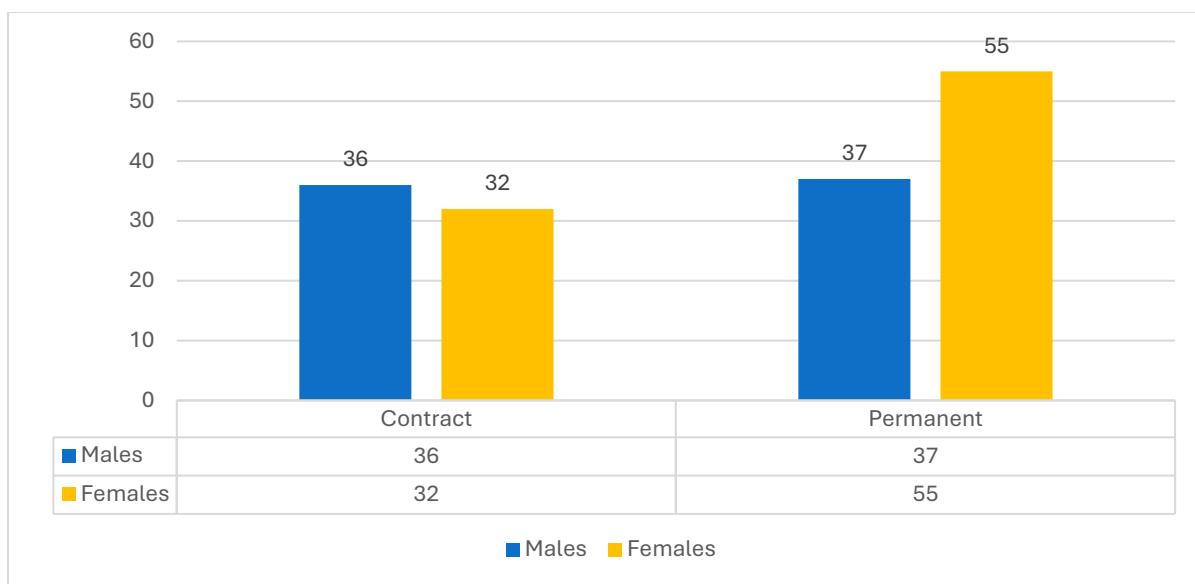


Figure 2 : Employment status of the members of staff in the FACS grouped according to contract or permanent

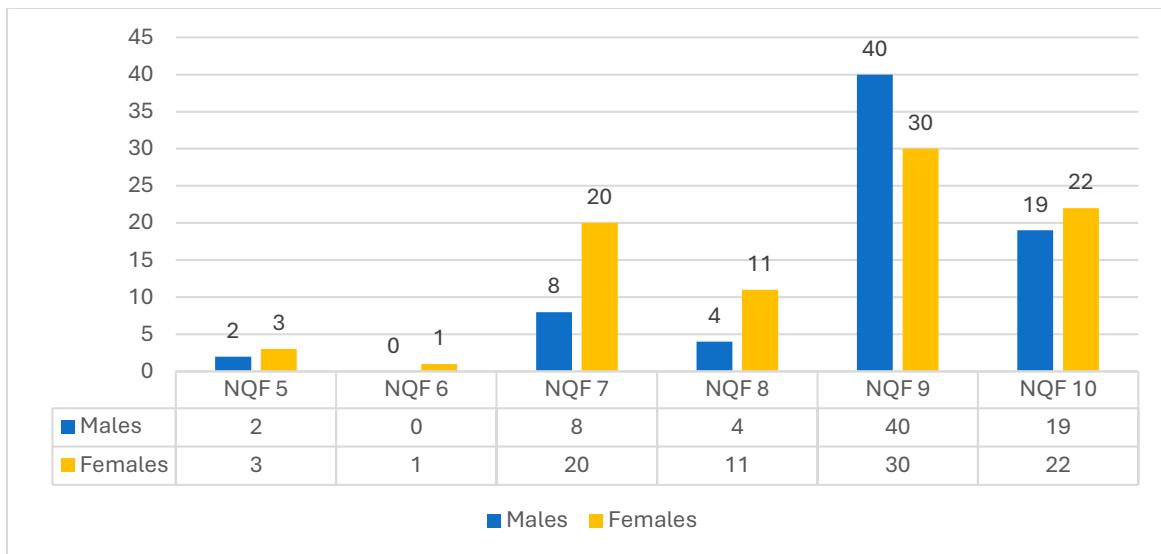


Figure 3 : Employment status of the members of staff in the FACS grouped according to NQF level and gender

The employees held qualifications ranging from NQF 5 to NQF 10 (Figure 3). With the majority holding an NQF 9 (70 this is 44% of the staff members; this is 8% more than the previous year which stood at 36%) qualification followed by NQF 10 (41 this is 26% of the staff members; remained the same compared to last year), NQF 7 (28 this is 18% of the staff members; this is 9% less than the previous year which stood at 27%; this is due to staff members graduating also new staff members having to meet the requirement of a Masters degree at the minimum), NQF 8 (15), NQF 5 (5) and NQF 6 (1).

These employees held different job titles with the highest number of them appointed as a Lecturer (72 this is 45% of the staff members; this is 6% more than the previous year which stood at 39%) (Figure 4). The FACS hosts 3 full Professors, 7 Associate Professors and 12 Senior Lecturers or Senior Technicians (this number has reduced by 2 due to resignations). There is need to promote staff members however the promotion criteria require one to have some form of research or community engagement aspect. These two functions of the institution are not yet robust enough to support most of the staff members promotion ambitions.

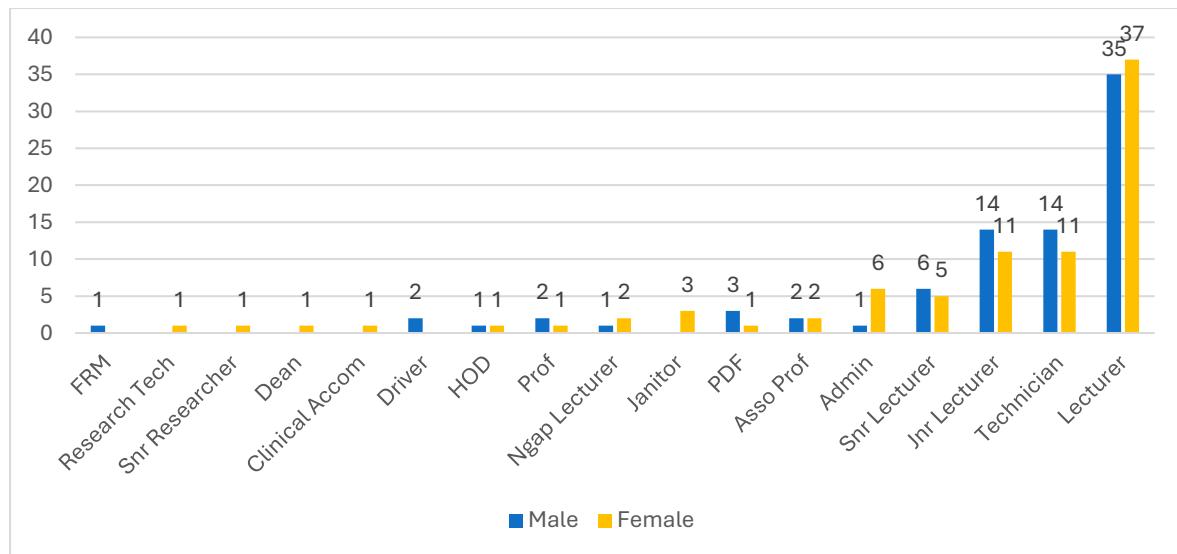


Figure 4 : Employment status of the members of staff in the FACS grouped according to job title and gender

There is a need to understand the demography of the employed staff members in terms of citizenship and designated groups. Majority of the members of staff were South African Citizens (142 this is 89% of the staff members; this is 4% more than the previous year which stood at 85%), followed by international staff (13 this is 8% of the staff members; this is 5% less than the previous year which stood at 13%) and permanent Residents (5 that is 3%) Figure 5.

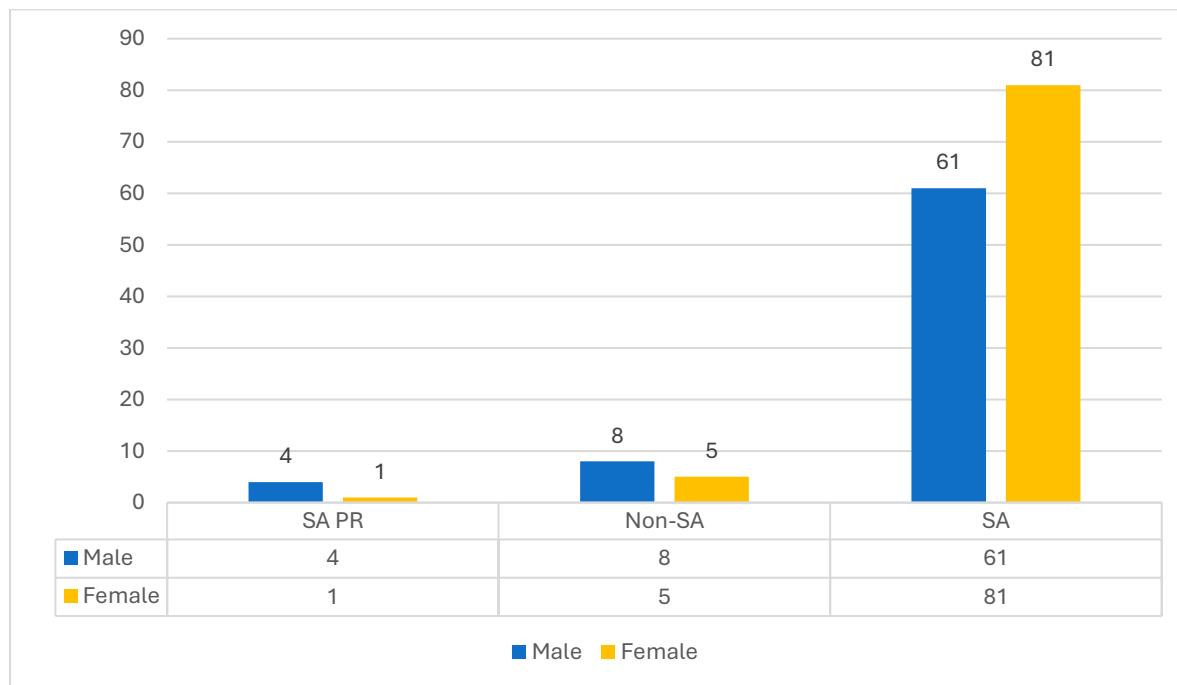


Figure 5: Employment status of the members of staff grouped according to citizenship and gender

The staff members were further categorised according to race. It is important to note that unless otherwise stated the grouping did not discriminate according to citizenship. As such

majority of the staff in the FACS is African (141 that is 88%) followed by white (14; 9%) followed by Indian (4; 2.5%) and then coloured (1; 0.6%) Figures 6 and 7.

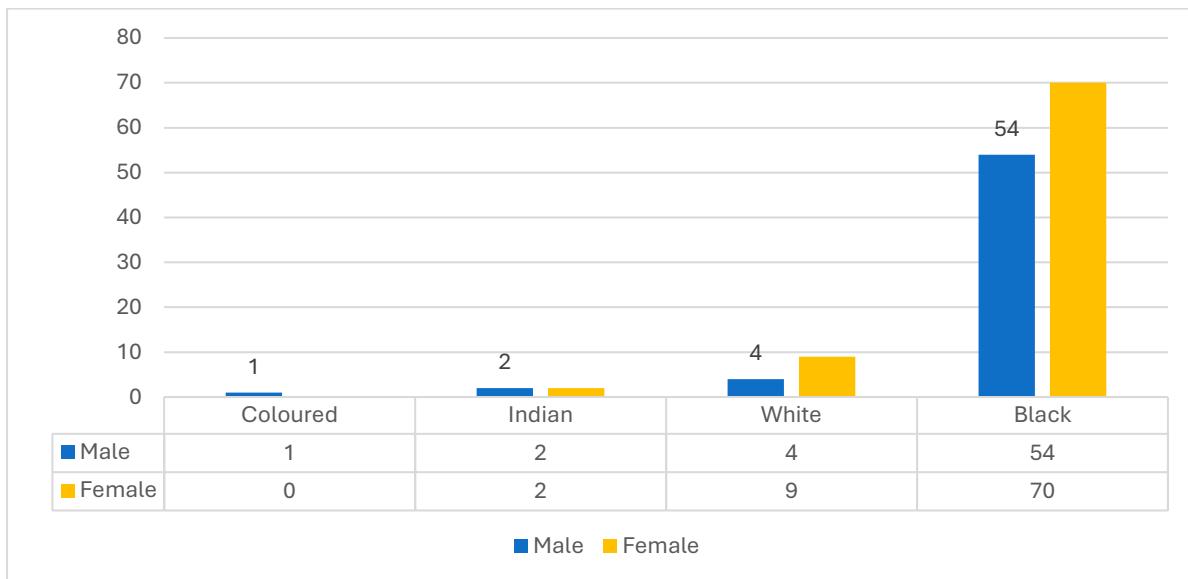


Figure 6: Employment status of the members of staff grouped according to race and gender

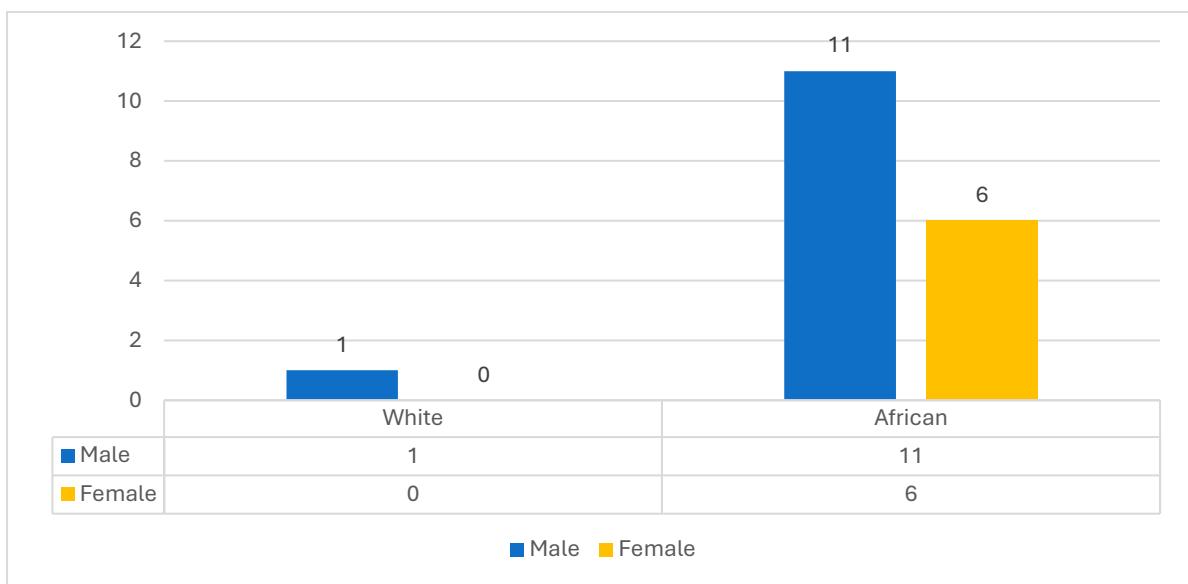


Figure 7: Non-designated groups employment status of the members of staff grouped according to race and gender

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The FACS consists of members of staff with a qualification ranging from NQF 5 to NQF 10. Specific details can be found in Figure 3 above. This section will provide tables for staff members with either a Masters (Table 3) or Doctorate degree (Table 4).

Table 3: Designated Group Staff members with a master's Qualification (NQF-9)

Race	Head Count		TOTAL
	Female	Male	
African	25	30	55
Coloured	0	0	0
Indian	0	2	2
White	2	3	5
Total	27	35	62

Table 4: Designated Group Staff members with a Doctorate Qualification (NQF-10)

+	Head Count		TOTAL
	Female	Male	
African	12	11	23
Coloured	0	1	1
Indian	2	0	2
White	5	0	5
Total	19	12	31

Tables 3 and 4 show that 39% and 19% of the designated Faculty staff have a Master's and or a Doctorate degree respectively. Collectively 58% of the designated faculty staff have a postgraduate qualification. There are plans to increase the numbers of staff members with a doctoral degree within the faculty. These plans have been supported through the Research Directorate.

APPOINTMENTS AT A FULL OR ASSOCIATE PROFESSORIAL LEVEL.

This section will provide tables for designated group staff members that have been appointed to either a full Professorship (Table 5) or associate Professorship (Table 6).

Table 5: Full Professors in the FACS

Race	Head Count		TOTAL
	Female	Male	
African	0	1	1
Coloured	0	0	0
Indian	1	0	1
White	0	0	0
Total	1	1	2

Table 6: Designated Group Associate Professors in the FACS

Race	Head Count		TOTAL
	Female	Male	
African	1	2	3
Coloured	0	1	1
Indian	0	0	0
White	2	0	2
Total	2	3	6

The numbers of designated group full Professors (2) and associate Professors (6) is low and does not match the ambitions of the FACS in terms of supervision of postgraduate studies or enhancement of research output. The current remedy is to use the Adjunct Professorship tool to edify the FACS's ability to carry out research and enable better postgraduate supervision.

STUDENT PROFILE

The faculty had 2911 students with an almost 50% split between males and females. Majority of the students are African in line with the regional demographics. Nonetheless there is a need to grow the numbers of students from other racial demographics.

Table 7: Student profile in the FACS

Race	Head Count		TOTAL
	Female	Male	
African	1469	1408	2877
Coloured	7	7	14
Indian	4	4	8
White	4	8	12
Total	1484	1427	2911

CONCLUSION

The FACS is committed to enable the achievement of the institutional transformation agenda. In terms of gender, there has been an increase in female participation in the different roles (in terms of job titles) as well as qualification held by the members of faculty. This would translate in an increase in the number of females promoted to positions of Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor. To achieve such progression, there is going to be a need from the University management to resolve challenges faced by staff members pursuing their postgraduate qualifications. Majority of staff in the FACS are South African citizens with the remaining being either permanent residents or international staff (Figure 5). The faculty hosts

2,911 students. Efforts are required to increase the number of students within the faculty at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES

The Faculty of Human Sciences endeavours to champion and monitor transformation across its four academic departments. In the Faculty, transformation is understood to be a continuum consisting of a deliberate and targeted processes with regard to equity of access, equity of opportunity, equity of outcomes for staff and students.

STAFF AND STUDENT PROFILE

The faculty has evolved over the years regarding staff and student profiles which represent the diverse population in the country and region. The table below provides a distribution of the faculty's teaching staff profile.

Table: Teaching staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	35	38
Coloured	0	1
Indian	2	2
White	36	14
Total	73	55

The permanent staff profile shows a constant growth towards African males and white female staff, with the number of both African males (38) and white female staff reflecting greater representation (36) respectively. This is an indication that the faculty does put emphasis on diversity during the recruitment process. The faculty believes that the picture will change as reflected in Faculty EE Plan. We are looking at gradually filling positions of those who are retiring with members from designated groups particularly African females. The nGap

positions also assist us to ensure that academic staff reflect demographics of the economically active population.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Table: Staff with a master's qualification

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	15	23
Coloured	1	0
Indian	3	0
White	18	6
Total	37	29

A substantial number (23) of African male staff have master's qualification. In the coming years this scenario will change as more African females engage with improvement of their vertical qualifications. Currently 7 staff members (4 African females and 2 African males, only one white female) are busy with their masters qualifications and 9 (nine) staff members are busy with their doctoral qualification (7 African males, 1 White female, and 1 Indian female).

Table: Staff with doctoral qualifications.

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	6	10
White	9	1
Total	15	11

Again, there is a slightly higher number of African staff in possession of a doctoral qualification (16) with African staff relatively low with (10). This was largely due to the faculty's efforts in providing various forms of incentives for staff to improve their qualifications (mentoring, induction, workload reduction, financial support for research, conference attendance and supervision). This scenario will change further as many staff are engaged with their doctoral qualifications and most have submitted for the examination.

Table: Senior academics

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	1	6
Coloured	0	0
White	9	0
Total	10	6

The table indicates that there is slightly higher number of White females in the senior positions. However, the picture shows that the faculty generally still has a long way to go. The picture will change as more academic staff obtain their doctoral qualifications.

Table: Professors and Associate professors

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	2	2
White	3	1
Total	5	3

Again, the table depict that there are not enough professors in the faculty as all eight professors are associate professors. The new promotion policy will assist with the promotion of senior academics to professorship in the faculty. Currently the faculty does not have full professors.

STUDENT PROFILE

Table: Student profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount enrolments	Headcount enrolments
African	3318	2428
Coloured	12	3

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount enrolments	Headcount enrolments
Indian	1	0
White	9	5
Total	3340	2436

Black students comprise the bulk of the student population (99%) with African females constituting the majority (3318). This is largely due to the regional population and the recruitment process. Targeted marketing strategy would be devised to target other racial groups. Faculty envisaged to adopt a white school particularly where subjects such as Tourism, Art and hospitality are offered.

RESEARCH PROFILE

Table: Research staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	1	7
Indian	0	0
White	4	2
Total	5	9

There is a slightly higher concentration of African staff engaged in research activities compared to their White counterparts (8 and 6 respectively). The faculty has appointed four post-doctoral fellows and three adjunct professors to increase research staff in the faculty.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The faculty is committed to social impact through community engagement programmes. The Law clinic remains the flagship of the faculty. The Law Clinic is involved in a number of community engagement programmes such as the Annual Land Rights event; the Annual Wills Week; Mandela Day (visits to orphanages and old age homes); Human Rights Day etc. The Law Clinic offers free legal services to the indigent members of the Emfuleni community with the focus being on Family Law matters such as Domestic Violence, Maintenance, Divorces and

Children Court matters. The means test is used to determine whether a person qualify for free legal services. Mapheo project (Hospitality staff) – started in November 2022 with monthly information sharing sessions about nutrition, vermiculture, composting, utilising leftovers, and recipes. On 7th November 2023, the community attended demonstrations on campus in the M block. Nutrition education posters were developed and will be shared during 2024 with the preschools. The AD in Photography students developed four documentary productions on aspects of Sharpeville heritage, in collaboration with the Sharpeville Tourism and Heritage Association and Kitso Centre. The department of Education worked closely with the DoBE in the deployment of our student teachers and weekend lessons. Some of B Ed students were working with the Education Districts in the Vaal for weekend lessons.

RESEARCH FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Unaudited results for 2023 show that the Faculty of Human Sciences accumulated about 26.038 units from journal outputs, 1.75 units from Conference Proceedings and 6.9416 units from book chapters. The faculty contributed about 34.73 units, a growth of 10 units from the previous year. This is a consequence of positive spin-offs from the faculty's intervention over the past years, which saw the recruitment and appointment of 4 Post-Doctoral fellows and 2 Adjunct Professor Appointments, who all contributed to the increase in research outputs. The faculty also benefitted from its efforts in targeted writing retreats and webinars aimed at the capacity-building of emerging researchers.

The faculty has three NRF-rated researchers, one in the Department of Education (C3), Tourism and Integrated Communication – 2 NRF-rated researchers (1- Y2 and one C2) who are expected to show up the research going forward. The faculty has, in the past year, also developed a Centre of Excellence, which was approved by SRIC and is waiting for funding to materialise. There are plans to continue with writing retreats and recruitment of post-doctoral fellows to ensure research output stability and growth. The faculty will seek to intensify to get outputs from Post Graduate Students. The success of research in the faculty lies in retaining and maintaining PhD holders and productive professors in the department

CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION & DECOLONISATION

In all education programmes (B Ed, Adv (TVT), PGDHE and M Ed there are components of curriculum transformation and decolonisation. The learning material for two of the subjects each offered in the Diploma Safety Management and Tourism management are being translated into the Sesotho language. The teaching methods employed enable students to learn about their own cultures, identities, and what is happening in their environment. A variety of teaching methods and assessment methods are being employed. Students are taught in a variety of ways that assist students to easily grasp concepts, graduate and become employable. Admission requirements have been revised to remove any artificial barriers and

broaden access to higher education. Annual advisory board meetings are conducted as a way of ensuring that the learning material is suitable, relevant, and transformed.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

STUDENT ENROLMENT

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology is committed to adhering to its approved enrolment plans, with 95 percent of enrolled students being from South Africa. Furthermore, a significant majority, exceeding 95 percent, are sourced from designated groups, affirming our commitment to diversity and inclusivity. The Faculty also focuses on the enrolment of students with disabilities, ensuring equal opportunities for all aspiring engineers and technologists.

STUDENTS AND STAFF LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

The faculty acknowledges the presence of students and staff members with disabilities and consistently updates its database to accommodate their needs in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Plans when necessary. The Faculty has specifically requested all departments to include their own version of a *Disability Statement* in the Learner Guides. An example of such a statement is as follows:

"The Department of Engineering, VUT is committed to embracing all students as individuals and recognise the complexity of diversity. If, as a student, in this class of....., you have a learning or physical disability, or if you learn best through a particular method, kindly and freely discuss this with me (the Lecturer) how I can best accommodate your learning needs. I am committed to creating an active learning environment for all learning styles. However, I can only achieve this successfully if you discuss your requirements with me in advance of the classes, practical, and all forms of assessment in this subject/module. I will maintain the confidentiality of your learning needs. If appropriate, you should contact the Social Justice and Transformation Unit, as well as the Student Support and Development Unit of the University for more information on accommodating disabilities in VUT".

MENTORING AND RETENTION OF HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

The faculty is engaged in national NESP and nGAP initiatives, focusing on recruiting top-performing students. The goal is to inspire them to pursue doctoral and postdoctoral programs, ultimately assisting them with their transition into academia. To promote inclusivity, the Faculty focuses on receiving applications from South African black and female candidates

for these positions. Additionally, through funding from the CDP for Tutor and Peer Assistant roles, the Faculty actively recruits high-achieving individuals from diverse backgrounds. This helps build a strong group of potential future academics within the institution.

CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

Since 2023, the Faculty has undertaken a comprehensive revision of the curriculum for all Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, and Postgraduate Diplomas. As a component of curriculum transformation, one of the building blocks of this curriculum is Teaching for Inclusion: Inclusive (Universal) Design – where the principle of accommodations for students with disabilities can be considered beneficial to any student. This promotes a method of designing course materials, content, and instruction to benefit all learners i.e., to promote equal access to learning to all students in the dedicated learning space.

The African Languages Development Unit is driving the implementation of the 2011 Language Policy to align with the 2020 DHET Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions. Working closely with the Faculty, the Unit facilitates compliance with the VUT Language Policy by providing ongoing support. This includes translating teaching and learning materials such as glossaries and learner guides, offering video-recorded lectures with subtitles in Sesotho and Sepedi, and conducting training sessions for tutors and mentors on translanguaging skills for tutorials and mentor sessions.

STAFF AND STUDENT PROFILE

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology is playing a leading role in fostering transformation at VUT. The Table below illustrates the staff demographics aligned with the national agenda on equity promotion. There has been a 23% decrease in the number of permanent African staff from 2022 to 2023, primarily attributed to staff departures from the university and positions consequently being frozen as a result of the org refinement process the University is undergoing.

Table 1: Teaching staff profile:

Race	
African	59
Indian	1
White	20
Total	80

Table 2 below indicates a significant gender disparity in the number of staff holding a Master's degree. Specifically, there are nine female staff members who possess a Master's degree compared to 28 male staff members. It is worth highlighting that the number of female staff with a Master's degree has doubled since 2022.

Table 2. Staff with Masters qualification

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	6	20
Coloured/Indian	0	0
White	3	8
Total	9	28

The Faculty aims to improve the number of female teaching staff by actively recruiting highly qualified women with degrees at Master's or PhD levels. From Table 3 it can be seen that there is a noticeable gap between staff with Doctoral and Master's qualifications, which the Faculty intends to address.

As a University of Technology, the Faculty is committed to addressing global technological challenges. To achieve this, there is a strategic focus on augmenting the number of teaching staff with PhD qualifications. These individuals will contribute to innovative research endeavors, enhancing the Faculty's research outputs, including commercialisation and patents.

Table 3: Staff with Doctoral qualification

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	2	14
Coloured	0	0
White	0	1
Total	2	15

The current academic staff composition lacks female professors, as indicated in Table 4 below. Consequently, more emphasis will be placed on the development of female staff members. This initiative is integral to increasing female representation in engineering, encompassing teaching, learning, and research practices.

Table 4: Staff with Associate Professor/ Full Professor

Race	Associate Professor		Full Professor	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
African	0	6	0	5
Coloured	0	0	0	0
White	0	1	0	0
Total	0	7	0	5

STUDENT PROFILE

Table 5 below presents the student demographics within the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, indicating a notable predominance of African students, constituting over 99% of the population. This demographic difference is largely attributed to the regional composition of the university's surrounding population, wherein Africans comprise the majority.

Table 5: Student profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount enrolments	Headcount enrolments
African	2 219	4 002
Coloured	3	8
Indian	2	6
No Information	1	3
White	4	23
Total	2 229	4 042

In the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, research involvement primarily emanates from the African demographic, as evident from Table 6 below. This is due to the substantial representation of Africans among the university's teaching and research staff. The Faculty's strategic initiative aims to enhance female engagement in research endeavors, currently standing at only 20% of the research staff.

Table 6: Research staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	7	35
Indian	0	0
White	3	4
Total	10	40

IMPACT OF RESEARCH ON THE COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY

The faculty has prioritised its focus towards advancing research in critical areas, such as manufacturing, renewable energy and green hydrogen technology, fostering collaborative partnerships with industry leaders in these fields. Furthermore, the Faculty has identified environmental engineering and water treatment as key focal points for research and development.

Along with its research endeavours, the faculty actively engaged with the local community through various initiatives. These projects entail collaborative ventures with local communities, municipal authorities, and corporate partners to facilitate infrastructure projects. Through such endeavours, the faculty aimed to foster a positive impact on the community while enhancing its own teaching and learning environment.

Furthermore, the Faculty has partnered with secondary schools in neighbouring areas. This collaboration served the dual purpose of identifying areas of community need where the Faculty could utilise its expertise and resources to make substantial contributions.

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES (FMS)

The FMS recognises the transformation agenda as integral to the execution of academic projects in South Africa. In its transformation strategy in 2022, the faculty concentrated on promoting diversity and inclusiveness and avoiding marginalisation and discrimination of

individuals and groups within the faculty. The core transformation principles, such as equity and social justice, were applied to provide access and opportunities to both staff and students. The curriculum offered in the four departments was aligned with current trends and adjusted to remove from it the elements of coloniality that seek to present the black African as an inferior species to other races.

Staff profile

The staff profiles within the FMS are anchored on the core transformation principles of inclusion and diversity inherent in the various demographic cohorts existing in South Africa. The table below presents the FMS staff profile by race.

Table 1: Teaching staff profile (77 permanent and 30 part-time)

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	37	49
Coloured	1	-
Indian	2	-
White	14	4
Total	55	52

The permanent staff profile shows that African Males (49) are the largest group, followed by African Females (37). Overall, with all racial groups combined, females are the majority within the faculty (54%). A need exists, however, to increase the number of Indian and coloured academics within the FMS.

Staff qualifications

The FMS aims to increase the number of staff with higher degrees, especially master's and doctoral qualifications. The staff profiles with master's qualifications are shown in the table below.

Table 2: Staff with a master's qualification (48)

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	26	17
Coloured	0	-
White	5	0
Total	31	17

FMS has 48 staff members who hold master's degrees. Most of these staff are Africans (89%), with African females comprising a significant proportion (54%). These statistics will likely change as more staff members complete their doctoral qualifications.

Table 3: Staff with doctoral qualifications (31)

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	7	15
Indian	2	-
Coloured	1	-
White	6	3
Total	15	16

In total, 31 staff members in the FMS hold doctoral degrees. Among these, Africans with doctoral qualifications are the largest (70%). A large percentage could be attributed to the efforts of the faculty to promote the attainment of doctoral qualifications by staff. The faculty provides this support through mentoring, postgraduate inductions, workload reductions, financial support for research, conference attendance, and internal staff supervision.

Table 4: Senior Staff Members (21)

Race	Female Senior Lecturers	Male Senior Lecturers
	Headcount	Headcount
African	4	5
Indian	2	0
Coloured	1	0
White	9	0
Total	16	5

The faculty has a complement of 21 senior lecturers, of which the majority (76%) are females. Efforts are in place to continue increasing the number of African female senior lecturers. Funding for doctoral studies, mentorship for research publications, and participation in community engagement programs are some of the support programs that can increase the number of black female senior lecturers in the faculty.

Table 5: Senior Staff with Professorships

Race	Female Full Professors	Male Full Professor	Female Associate Professors	Male Associate Professors
	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount
African	0	1	2	0
Indian	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	0	2
Total	0	1	2	2

The FMS has four Associate Professors and one Full Professor. Three female senior lecturers have been nominated to attend the Future Professors Programme to increase the number of professors in the faculty. The faculty provides internal mentorship and support to the current senior lecturers to enhance their eligibility for future promotion.

Student profile

The profile of students registered in the faculty is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Student profile (4936)

Race	Female	Male
	Qualification headcount enrolments	Qualification headcount enrolments
African	2 841	2058
Coloured	18	8
No Information	3	1
White	5	2
Total	2867	2069

Most of the students are from the African population group (99%), with females comprising the highest-represented group (58%). This distribution is attributed to the recruitment process and the regional population.

Curriculum transformation

Curriculum transformation has remained a top priority in the faculty to ensure it captures the prevailing situation nationally and globally. Conversations around decoloniality have continued, and changes have been made to ensure that the syllabi have been Africanised. The

transformation has also involved digitalising teaching and learning processes and content to ensure the curriculum is aligned with global technological changes.

Research profile

The year 2023 was relatively COVID-19-free, facilitating easier data collection processes for the faculty. It took much work to collect data from targeted respondents for most studies during the height of the pandemic. As a result, the number of staff members participating in research increased significantly in 2023 compared to the Covid-19 era. In addition, the studies conducted in the FMS have also shifted in line with these dynamics, such that they speak to the current context. Much research is now considering the interaction of various organisational factors in the post-COVID-19 era.

Table 7: Research staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	20	20
Indian	2	0
White	5	2
Total	27	22

More females are involved in research activities than their male counterparts (53% and 47%, respectively). This demonstrates an increased level of interest in research activities among females, which has increased progressively over the years, as this group responds positively to efforts by the faculty to increase opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups.

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

The Research Department is actively involved with creating an enabling research environment for staff and postgraduate students through a range of capacity enhancing programmes.

STAFF VERTICAL QUALIFICATIONS

In line with VUT strategic goal of increasing the number of staff with Masters and PhD qualifications, the Research Department supports both academic and administrative staff with funding to acquire their vertical qualifications at postgraduate level i.e., Masters and PhD study. A total of 44 staff received funding for postgraduate studies. Most of the recipients (33) were African males followed by 2 Whites male. There were females (35), 29 were Africans.

Qualification	Male				Female			
	A	C	I	W	A	C	I	W
Masters	5			1	10			3
PhD	18			1	10			2
Total Permanent	23			2	20			5
Masters	5				7			
PhD	5				2	1		
Total Contract	10				9	1		20
Grant total	33			2	29	1		5

Total assisted:

	Female	Male	Total
Masters	20	11	31
PhD	23	24	47
Total	43	35	78

Source: Research Department

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS

A total of 106 staff attended capacity building workshops. The majority of the participants were female (63.2%) compared to male (36.8%). The demographics indicate 89 of the participants were African, followed by 15 Whites, and 2 Coloureds respectively.

Table: Staff who attended workshops 2023

Race	Female	Male	Grand Total
Black African	53	36	89
Coloured	2		2
White	12	3	15
Grand Total	67	39	106

Source: Research Department

THUTHUKA GRANT FUNDING

The Vaal University of Technology has six staff who are recipients of the Thuthuka Grant Funding. From the eight recipients of there are African females (7) and one (1) male.

Table: Thuthuka Grant holders

Race	Female	Male	Grand Total
African	7	1	8

Source: Research Department

NRF RATED RESEARCHERS.

The Vaal University of Technology has a total of 15 NRF rated researchers. In line with the NRF equity criteria, the majority of the researchers in terms of race and gender are black i.e., 12 Africans and 1 Indian, followed by 2 White males. There is a dearth of women NRF rated researchers.

Table: NRF Rated researchers

Race	Female	Male	Grand Total
African	10	10	10
Indian	2	2	2
White	2	2	2

Grand Total	14	14
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Source: Research Department

POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS

As part of building increased research capacity, the Vaal University of Technology invests in offering opportunities for post-doctoral fellows. In 2023, a total of 23 post-doctoral fellows were based in the various faculties. The majority of the post-doctoral fellows were males (19) and only 4 females. All the post-doctoral fellows were Africans.

Race	Female	Male	Grand Total
Africans	4	19	23
Grand Total	4	19	23

Source: Research Department

Supply Chain Management

Procurement Spend

The Vaal University of Technology is committed to BBBEE which is at the heart of its procurement spend. During the 2023 financial year, a total of R298,903,729.12 in goods and services was procured from 333 business enterprises mostly located within the Gauteng province. The procurement spend is higher than the 2022 procurement spend of R 234 127 524.05 which benefited 322 suppliers.

Staff equity profile

WORKFORCE PROFILE

Table 1: VUT Staff as per Occupational Levels, January 2023 to December 2023

Occupational Levels	Male				Sub Total	Female				Sub Total	Foreign Nationals		Sub Total	Total
	A	C	I	W		A	C	I	W		Male	Female		
Top management (Peromnes 1-2)	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
EE Goal	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Current Gap	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-1	1	0	0	0	1
Senior management (Peromnes 3-4)	7	0	0	0	7	3	0	0	1	4	2	0	2	13
EE Goal	6	0	0	1	7	5	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	13
Current Gap	-1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	-2	0	0	3
Professionally qualified and mid-management (Peromnes 5-7) (incl. 8 -9)	143	1	8	34	186	99	3	9	64	175	42	24	66	427
Goal	197	5	9	27	238	158	6	6	20	190	0	0	0	428
Current Gap	54	4	1	-7	59	59	3	-3	-44	62	-42	-24	0	121
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management (Peromnes 8-11)	91	0	1	13	105	190	4	2	39	235	8	4	12	352
EE Goal	162	4	8	23	197	130	5	5	16	156	0	0	0	353
Current Gap	71	4	7	10	92	-60	1	3	-23	4	-8	-4	0	96
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making (Peromnes 12-15)	29	0	0	1	30	22	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	52
EE Goal	24	1	1	3	29	19	1	1	2	23	0	0	0	52

Current Gap	-5	1	1	2	4	-3	1	1	2	4	0	0	0	8
Unskilled and defined decision making (Peromnes 16-18)	39	0	0	0	39	103	0	0	1	104	0	0	0	143
EE Goal	66	2	3	9	80	53	2	2	6	63	0	0	0	143
Current Gap	27	2	3	9	41	-50	2	2	5	9	0	0	0	50
Total Permanent	310	1	9	48	368	417	7	11	106	541	52	28	80	989
Total Temporary	315	2	2	28	347	289	5	4	26	324	93	26	119	790
Grand Total	625	3	11	76	715	706	12	15	132	865	145	54	199	1779

source: ITS 13 February 2024

Legend: Grey surface = under-representation -Red numbers = over-representation

The Vaal University of Technology has a total staff complement of 1779 with the following breakdown: 989 permanent staff and 790 temporary staff. There were 919 females compared to 860 males. A total of 199 staff were international staff with 80 permanent and 119 employed on a temporary basis. Of the 13 senior management, 9 were males and 4 females whilst top management was evenly split between male and female.



Professor Khehla Ndlovu
Vice Chancellor and Principal



Professor Mandla Radebe
Chairperson of Council

SECTION 10: REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL ON MANAGEMENT FOR 2023

INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

The institutional management and leadership at the university encompasses to the structure, governance, and strategic direction provided by the university's leadership team. This management team is also responsible for overseeing the university's operations, ensuring academic quality, financial stability, sustainability and the advancement of institutional strategic goals and objectives.

The year under review (2023) saw the university losing the Vice Chancellor, through untimely death early in the year. The Vice Chancellor had been in office for less than two years. This tragedy resulted in the university having three Vice Chancellor's who acted in succession for the remainder of 2023. At the conclusion of 2023 the appointment of the new Vice Chancellor was finalized whereupon the new incumbent assumed office at the beginning of 2024. The occurrences of 2023 whilst the university was emerging from the railings of the lockdown, and the appointment of the new Vice Chancellor, having had an administration for about three years. The year 2023 had challenges of its own kind but the university managed to emerge from those with the recommendation to appoint the new Vice Chancellor.

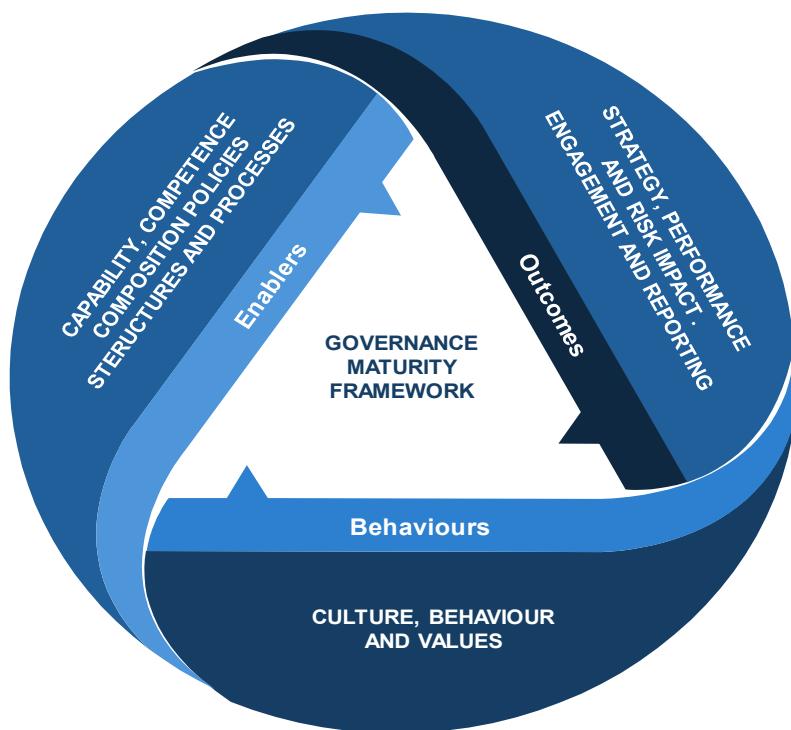
The university continues with the project of revising and refining the organizational structure, which started in 2023. The year 2023 also had some vacancies at senior management echelons of the institution where the Vice Chancellor position had three acting incumbents, whilst the two other Deputy Vice Chancellor positions were vacant with acting persons.

The Governing structures, Council and Senate (and other Committees) continue to provide overall governance and decision-making. They are typically responsible for approving major policies, budgets, and strategic plans. The Senate as a key academic body remains responsible for academic policies, curriculum development, and the academic standards of the university. It works alongside the university leadership to implement and monitor academic strategies. The other management structures comprise of senior administrators, deans, heads of departments, and various office bearers who are responsible for implementing strategic initiatives and managing day-to-day operations. This includes leadership in areas such as Finance and Budgeting, ensuring the university's financial health and resource allocation; Human Resources, managing staffing, policies, and professional development for faculty and staff; and Student Affairs, which is overseeing the student experience, including academic support, extracurricular activities, and wellbeing services.

Institutional Governance Framework

The university operates with an approved Institutional Governance Framework, which provides for the efficient management and oversight practices in the operations of the University. It describes the governance structures and decision-making processes applicable to the institution. The framework outlines the main responsibilities and accountabilities. These include briefly outlining the key responsibilities of the main University committees, setting out the high-level approach to academic governance, as well as noting where the specific authority derives (e.g. statute).

The Council Effectiveness Framework can be described in the following diagram.



Council self-assessment

Council once again undertook a self-assessment using the Governance Indicators Scorecard for Councils of South African Public Higher Education Institutions for 2023 supplied by the DHET. The information below represents the responses from Council members for the period (2023) under review, compared to the previous period of 2022.

Desired Performance	80%				
Threshold	>=80%	50% - 79%	50% - 79%	<=49%	<=49%

Broad Areas Assessed	2022	2023
1. Strategic leadership, vision, mission, context and transformation, and risk management and sustainability	78%	86%
2. Governance of core functions of teaching and learning, research and community engagement	65%	88%
3. Governance of resources: Financial, human, equipment and infrastructure	80%	83%
4. Governance of institutional accountability including public Reporting	68%	84%
5. Council and Committee meetings and conduct of business	84%	90%

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The university started a range of strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing its position as a leading institution in the South African higher education landscape. These initiatives focus on various aspects of the university's growth, including academic excellence, research, innovation, student support, and community engagement.

The university places a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. This includes developing flexible, relevant, and up-to-date curricula that meet the demands of industry and society. A significant focus further is placed on increasing the opportunities for students to gain practical experience through internships, apprenticeships, and projects with industry partners. This helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Research and Innovation

The institution aims to grow its research capabilities by increasing the amount of research funding and supporting faculty and students to engage in cutting-edge research. The university seeks to focus on applied research that addresses societal challenges and contributes to economic development. This it does through the establishment and expansion of innovation hubs that foster entrepreneurial thinking and the development of new technologies. The university has placed a focus on developing technology transfer initiatives to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into practical solutions and products. We continue to strengthen ties with local industries and international partners to promote collaborative research, knowledge exchange, and innovation in fields such as engineering, technology, and health sciences.

Institutional Transformation and Governance

The university continues to foster an inclusive environment that supports a diverse student body and staff. The institution has initiatives aimed at increasing the representation of women, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups in both academic and administrative roles. We continue to strengthen institutional leadership by investing in the professional development of staff and leadership teams. This helps ensure that VUT remains agile in adapting to the evolving higher education landscape. The improvement in governance, through strengthening the structures of governance and management to ensure effective decision-making, accountability, and transparency in university operations.

6. Internationalization

Our global partnerships continue to grow with the expansion of partnerships with international universities, research institutions, and industry leaders. VUT aims to build a global presence through student and staff exchanges, joint research initiatives, and collaborative academic programs. Studying abroad and exchange programs are providing opportunities for VUT students to study abroad and engage in cross-cultural experiences. This initiative aims to enhance the global perspective of graduates and prepare them for the international job market.

8. Financial Sustainability

Resource mobilization remains a challenge as VUT focuses on diversifying its funding sources through partnerships, donor funding, and research grants. It is also looking to improve internal efficiency to ensure that funds are used effectively to support academic and institutional goals. The Alumni engagement is helping to cultivate relationships with alumni and foster a strong alumni network to encourage donations, mentorship programs, and career support for graduates.

These strategic initiatives reflect VUT's commitment to enhancing its role as a top-tier institution that produces high-quality graduates, promotes research and innovation, and serves its community while maintaining financial sustainability.

10.3 FINANCE AND RESOURCING

10.3.1 General Financial Review

As of 31 December 2023, the net asset value of the university is R1.7 billion, while its total assets and liabilities were R4.0 billion and R2.3 billion, respectively. With funding invested,

VUT can meet its obligations in a timely manner, indicating that the university is financially stable for the next twelve months.

As of 31 December 2023, the total investment portfolio amounted to R1.882 billion. A portion of this amount, R311 million, consists of R45 million of Domicilia SS (Pty) Ltd and R266 million of VUT funds, including a bank balance of R211.1 million. The remaining R1.571 billion is earmarked for long-term employee benefits, DHET, NSFAS, and other funded activities.

During 2023, the University received R821.2 million from DHET since 01 April 2023. To meet its financial obligations. As of 31 December 2023, the University has a surplus of R279.5 million, compared to the budgeted deficit of R12.4 million. Total expenditure for the period is R1. 518 billion, and total income is R1.809 billion. Consequently, the net surplus is R279 million.

As of 31 December 2023, the student debt balance stands at R486.9 million, compared to R441.1 million on 31 December 2022. The University's Credit Management Office and Debt Collectors are actively involved in the recovery of student debt. Additionally, management will implement other strategies as part of the VUT Financial Strategy to better manage student debt.

10.3.2 Audit report matters

Internal auditors have performed a Cyber security, infrastructure projects review and external Audit follow up review.

10.4 MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

OVERVIEW

This report highlights the strategic role played by the Marketing and Communications Department within the university for the period under review. The focus has been on brand and reputation management, including enhancing the stakeholder liaison internally and externally.

2 BRAND VISIBILITY AND MARKETING

2.1 FTEN REGISTRATION

The department provided support to boost compliance with DHET first year (FTEN) enrolment quotas through the annual student recruitment programme. Despite the 200 000 applications

that we received for 2024, it became apparent that the institution was headed for massive shortfalls, especially in the Engineering and Applied and Computer Sciences faculties. To remedy the situation, the Marketing and Communications Department rolled out a focused targeted campaign limited through radio (SAFM, Lesedi FM, Capricorn FM and VUT FM) and print media (Sunday Times and Sowetan) to recruit prospective students to fill vacancies in specific programmes that still had spaces. The intervention proved to be a resounding success. We have dedicated web pages on the VUT website that publishes information regarding applications, registrations and orientations that support other efforts.

FIRST YEAR ORIENTATION

A professional collaboration between three core support departments, namely: Centre for Academic Development, Student Support Services and Marketing and Communications, led to a successful execution of the 2023 Orientation Programme. The event left a positive impression of the maVUTi brand in the minds of both first year and continuing students.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

The following engagements took place:

Schneider Electric paid an oversight visit to the VUT F'SASEC Centre and assured VUT of its continued support (1 Feb).

The MoU Signing Ceremony between the Vaal SEZ, VUT and North West University took place on 10 Feb at North West University (Vaal campus). This event generated much needed positive publicity.

Visit to Groenpunt Prison – senior Advancement staff accompanied the Visual Arts and Design (VAD) team from the Faculty of Human Sciences on a visit to Groenpunt prison to interact with prisoners, encourage and view their artworks. VUT seeks to formalize a community engagement partnership between the two parties. It is anticipated that an MoU between the parties will be signed by both partners. The aim is to offer short learning programmes to facilitators of the prison's Arts Training Centre and Fashion. Some of the inmates have shown interest in continuing their studies at VUT once they have completed matric.

Internal Stakeholder Events held include the Women in Research, New Employee onboarding, South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF) Satellite event.

Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) - VUT Representation in USAf Communities of Practice (CoP): In response to a key DHET directive to encourage universities to adopt an entrepreneurial focus into order to counteract the scourge of unemployment, a

workshop was held in February where USAf presented to a group of VUT staff on EDHE. This workshop led to VUT being represented in the following Cops: Entrepreneurial Universities, Entrepreneurship Learning and Teaching, Entrepreneurship Research, Student Entrepreneurship, Studentpreneurs and Entrepreneurial Alumni.

Dept of Science and Innovation and TOSACA Media Group Entrepreneurship Training Workshop (15-16 March): VUT Students and unemployed youth around Sedibeng had an opportunity to participate in this workshop. Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences encouraged students' participation in this workshop.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT:

During the reporting period, the team participated in career and skills exhibitions in most of the provinces (Gauteng, Free State and Northwest, KZN, Limpopo and Eastern Cape) for a wider reach. Career Exhibitions are supplemented with school visits to several local high schools. Due to financial constraints, the student recruitment team is unable to participate in bigger exhibitions or undertake overnight travels to distant provinces such as the Northern and Western Cape. This is a regrettable limitation which will always hamper our efforts to bring in high quality, diverse cohorts of FTENS.

Activities/initiatives which were implemented to improve student recruitment.

Introduced and improved student recruitment reports to include prospective students' contact details to improve communication and reminders with the already contacted prospective students. Student Recruitment Practitioners enrolled and completed training on digital marketing to improve digital student recruitment efforts. We introduced a separate information flyer for postgraduates for targeted student recruitment for postgraduates.

Challenges experienced.

Some prospective students do not have contact telephone numbers or do not want to share them. Data collection for digital marketing requires some effort and sometimes budget which is currently not that sufficiently aligned. No budget allocated to Student Recruitment for international students.

Corrective actions to be implemented.

Prospective students informed of their POPIA rights and undertaking that information gathered will be used only for purposes of student recruitment. General social media platforms are used with assistance from Corporate Communications to reach prospective students

through online platforms. Internationalisation office used limited marketing budget for limited international student recruitment.

2.5 MARKETING AND BRAND

2.5.1 Campus Signage (Visually bringing the new brand to life)

All signage at the main residences on campus has been changed to the new VUT branded signage. 600 Door signs of offices on campus were completed by mid-November 2023. Requests were received to convert the signage at Science Park and Quests Conference Estate, but unfortunately the Finance Committee is of the view that these two commodities generate their own income and should therefore pay their own signage. Therefore, the Marketing & Brand budget did not include them.

2.5.2 maVUTi SHOP

2.5.2.1 Purpose of the maVUTi Shop

The maVUTi Shop, a significant addition to our university's brand promotion efforts, officially opened its doors with new brand merchandise on 27 March 2023. This marked a crucial milestone in our journey, as the shop is primarily a brand store that promotes the VUT brand through its branded merchandise, improves the university's image, and positively influences the public perception of VUT through its exceptional quality merchandise and professional customer service. The shop is not a third-stream income entity as the profit on items is minimal; instead, it sells a brand to encourage brand loyalty and improve brand equity amongst internal and external stakeholders.

The maVUTi Shop managed to achieve its financial objective, as well as its objective to promote the VUT brand and enhance the image of the university.

2.5.2.3 maVUTi Shop Service Provider - XCO GROUP

The official opening of the maVUTi Shop was delayed by three months due to the incorrect corporate colours used twice for the sublimated clothing items. This delay placed immense pressure on the shop's management to meet the deadline of the end of September to refund the loan from the university.

Furthermore, a report on the service provider's performance was submitted to the Legal Services department, SCM, and line manager, highlighting several challenges. The Marketing and Brand Manager is waiting for a Letter of Demand from Legal Services and a date for Management Meeting with the service provider to discuss the business relationship and their performance for the duration of the tender until the end of 2025.

2.5.3.4 Financial Sustainability

When the shop opened in 2023, it operated on a university loan of R700,000. By the end of September 2023, the maVUTi Shop had achieved its financial objective by fully refunding the loan. Despite the outstanding tender amount from the previous year, the shop managed to pay the 2022 tender amount of R515 455,93 from the 2023 profit. Additionally, the shop secured a profit of R368 927,67, which was used to purchase merchandise for the first quarter of 2024.

105 Staff members ordered merchandise during the opportunity to have it deducted from their salaries over three months (July – September 2023). 140 Tracksuits were purchased for all the sporting codes, 65 tracksuits and bucket hats were purchased as part of the House Committee's uniform, and 325 bucket hats for students from the Faculty of Management Sciences. Furthermore, faculties and departments supported the shop throughout the year, especially when they hosted events and required gifts for speakers or vouchers for Award Winners. This indicates that the VUT branded merchandise has infiltrated the internal market and serves as advertising and promoting the VUT brand, primarily when the sporting codes compete with other universities.

Cash purchases proved very successful amongst walk-in customers like students and external stakeholders. The maVUTi Shop identified a need to offer a two-month LAY-BUY option for staff and students, and it was implemented, which also proved popular amongst students.

2.5.3.5 Human Resources

Current Situation:

The maVUTi Shop is managed by the Marketing and Brand Manager, who is supported by an Administrator. The shop has been a significant part of the Marketing and Brand Manager's role, accounting for 50% of her duties since 2023. Three postgraduate students are appointed annually on contract as Shop Assistants to assist in the shop's operations. This is part of VUT Graduate Programme.

Challenges:

The Marketing & Brand Manager is responsible for placing orders, manually capturing Income and Expenses, manually monthly stock capture, quality control of merchandise, market research of the latest trends, annual staff orders, brand application on merchandise, customer complaints, and managing the Administrator and three Shop Assistants. The three postgraduate students appointed on contract as Shop Assistants must be replaced annually.

Therefore, every year, new students need to be trained to assist in the shop, which sometimes takes up to three months before they are comfortable with the System Operating Procedure (SOP) and their duties, which means there is no continuity in managing the shop and getting to know the systems. The student Shop Assistants require constant micro-management and supervision to execute their tasks, which is not manageable with only two permanent staff members with other duties and responsibilities.

Solution:

As part of the Organizational Refinement, the shop requested a permanent Shop Assistant who can continuously train and supervise the three postgraduate students. A permanent Shop Assistant will oversee the three graduate students working as Shop Assistants to ensure operational efficiency, effective training, and high-quality customer service, all of which are crucial for a successful retail business.

2.5.3.6 Financial System

Current Situation:

The Marketing & Brand Manager does not have the necessary financial skills or received adequate financial training. The shop was handed over with no SOP or functional procedures. With her limited knowledge as the Marketing & Brand Manager, implemented a manual SOP. Excel spreadsheets with formulas were created to capture stock in and out manually, calculate supplier(s) expenses manually, and calculate shop income through internal requisitions and cash purchases with the Yoco card machine manually.

Challenges:

In 2023, the Marketing & Brand Manager used Excel spreadsheets to manage stock IN and OUT and captured INCOME and EXPENSES manually. However, Excel is time-consuming as everything needs to be captured by hand; it has a huge potential for human error and does not meet the needs to manage the shop effectively. It also time-consuming exercise to have to manually capture all the expenses, RY, XY, and invoices of all costs plus the income of

internal requisitions per department per requisition number, including the Yoco card cash purchases, which needs to be combined with the internal requisitions as a monthly income.

The entire operation of the shop is currently done manually. Furthermore, a quotation had to be created for internal faculties and departments to attach to their requisition forms, and we were recently informed that signatures of items collected on a quotation are not the correct financial procedure. Thus, from 2024, we must create an additional document that serves as a Delivery Note for staff to sign when collecting their items. Specifications for Store Management Software were requested in 2023, but only one supplier responded. On the day of the presentation, with members of Supply Chain Management present, it was clear that the software presented did not meet the specifications, and no further suppliers were sourced.

Solution:

The shop requires Store Management Software to control stock in and out per size and calculate income and expenses automatically. The use of Excel spreadsheets is no longer sufficient. Supply Chain Management is requested to assist urgently in sourcing a supplier that meets the specifications. Store Management Software will enable the Marketing & Brand Manager to manage the shop's finances and stock levels automatically, so we do not need to request an Accountant position. Training from the internal auditors to the Marketing & Brand Manager is required to ensure that the current SOP aligns with financial principles and will be sufficient for audit purposes.

2.5.3.7 Management of stock

Current Situation:

The three postgraduate students were trained several times to count stock, capture lay-buys for staff and students, and operate the Yoco card machine. The products are already loaded onto the card machine, making operating it easy. There is a system where the three students rotate three positions weekly to be able to multitask. The current procedure is that two students take stock together weekly on Fridays. One is to count, and the other is to verify and manually capture stock counts. Furthermore, they need to include the fitting range of the clothing items in the stock count because some staff or students are willing to purchase the fitting item when we run out of sizes. The Marketing & Brand Manager purchased the display items, and these items should not be included in stock-taking. Due to the one-year contract, the Shop Assistants does not take responsibility and accountability to follow procedures.

Challenges:

The students find it hard to learn stock taking, sales, customer service, and to keep to the SOP simultaneously. I find that, at times, they forget to include the fitting range and exclude the

display items. Therefore, the stock count never balances. Furthermore, they each have additional duties in their job description, which has been discussed several times. Apart from operating the shop, selling items, and rendering professional customer service from 09:00 daily, they have to 08:00 dust off the shelves and the items in the shop, put out the umbrellas and banners, water the pot plants at the entrances, sweep the floor at the entrances and wash their dishes, seeing that the cleaning lady only focuses on her cleaning responsibilities and cannot assist with any additional tasks.

Solution:

We need at least one permanent Shop Assistant to maintain continuity in the shop. This person will know the SOP by heart and can manage, train, and double-check stock taken in the shop by the three students. This person will be able to focus on everything the students are responsible for and to ensure and lead by example in rendering excellent customer service. This person can assist in capturing stock on the system, print reports to identify the stock levels and what needs to be ordered, conduct market research on trending merchandise, and conduct surveys to ensure the shop stays relevant to the merchandise it sells.

The maVUTi Shop has gained tremendous popularity over the past year. It is required to render a wider variety of merchandise as customers become demanding and particular in what they wish to purchase. As the Marketing & Brand Manager I am raising serious concerns due to the lack of retail software and a permanent Shop Assistant. As successful as the shop is currently, it has become impossible to manage it manually on Excel spreadsheets and without a permanent Shop Assistant.

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

127 Promotional items from faculties and departments have been replaced with the new brand. These items include pull-up banners, gazebos, wall banners, teardrops, lantern banners, etc.

In February 2024, there will be a final call for faculties and departments to replace their old branded items with the new brand. This should then conclude the project of converting all promotional items.

2.5.4 VUT SUPPLIERS DAY

The Marketing and Brand Manager was a speaker at the SUPPLIER DAY on 11 October 2023. Suppliers were taken through the essence of the new VUT Brand, informed about the processes to follow for approval to use the VUT brand marks, and taken through the Brand and Corporate Identity Policy.

2.5.5 PROJECTIONS FOR 2024

Submission and approval of a maVUTi Shop Operations Policy.
Online catalogue for the maVUTi Shop.
Implementation of Retail Management Software.
Expansion of the merchandise of the shop.
Evolution of the VUT Brand in terms of its visual application and the implementation of faculty brand marks over a broader scope.
Phase 2 of signage on the Vanderbijlpark campus.
Appointment of two permanent staff members as maVUTi Shop Assistants.
External Launch and Roll-Out of the new VUT Brand.

VUT STORY TELLING

During the period under review, we have published a total number of 309 articles on the VUT websites and shared some on social media. This was an increase of 190 in comparison to the previous year's 119. These can be accessed: <https://www.vut.ac.za/latest-news/>. This has had a significant impact on our footprint and features on the Daily Higher Education News (DHEN) because this is where the news stories get pulled by USAf.

By proactively sharing VUT success stories with the media, we are shifting the public perception about the institution and help position VUT favourably in the public eye. In the period under review, we have disseminated seven (08) media statements which can be accessed here: <https://www.vut.ac.za/for-the-media/>.

As part of our internal storytelling efforts, we have a newly revamped Weekly Newsletter now called *MaVUTi Bits & Bites* that comes out every Friday afternoon. The publication is a great balance of the week's institutional highlights, research related stories, upcoming events, etc.

Late Application Media Campaign

At the beginning of the year, there were concerns of unfilled spaces in certain programmes, particularly within the Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences. To support this process, we launched a late applications media campaign and ran adverts on the following radio stations and publications: SAfm; Lesedi; Capricorn; Sowetan; Sunday Times; VUT FM.

Special Publications

We also placed adverts on the following special publications to grow the brand visibility of VUT: IEASA and HERS-SA Programme.

Web Management:

Between 14 - 23 April 2023, maintenance was performed on our website's data center infrastructure and networking upgrades – this was done in order to improve connectivity and enhance security of our website.

We have introduced a new and exciting feature on our website called VUT BY NUMBERS which displays for instance the number of international students and the number of graduates for the 2022 Academic Year. The veracity of the figures is cross-checked against the dashboard that is used and managed by the Institutional Planning Department (<https://heda.vut.ac.za/powerheda>).

Social Media coverage

Over the course of last year, we came up with a unique social media content plan, from which we could tailor-make toolkits specific for each social media campaigns we undertook or events we supported by ensuring that our messaging carried our brand tone and that our captions are on brand. This has led to a significant social media footprint which ultimately led to an increased online traction.

By the end of the year, we were sitting on 88k followers on Facebook, 3800 on Instagram, almost 11k followers on Twitter. With only under a month of LinkedIn we already had close to 3k followers.

Social Media Policy

Following a rigorous consultative process with various VUT Stakeholders, including staff, as well as presentations at various University fora, on 23 June 2023 VUT Council approved the University's social media Policy – a first for VUT.

This is a standard policy which seeks to lay down the fundamental guidelines for maintaining a social media presence, promote and protect the image of VUT online. Additionally, the policy serves as one of VUT's reputation management tools.

Because of the nature of the policy and its scope of application, Corporate Communications rolled out a comprehensive internal awareness campaign to not only educate the VUT Community about the Policy, but also to promote the responsible use of social media across all levels of the University – from Council, Management, Faculties, as well as Staff and Students alike.

Visual communication

As custodians of visual communication and brand visibility, our Graphic Design Studio has partnered with the Brand Manager to roll out the rebranding of the whole university. Support includes designing of new faculty and departmental banners, office labels, campus signage, etc.

The team is also supporting the rebranding of the University's main entrance to include other languages, as well as sign language to align with the university's language policy.

Campaigns

In June, we undertook a Youth Month Campaign and partnered with IHAU to roll out a Pride Month social media campaign to convey a very important key institutional messaging of a university that embraces diversity, inclusivity, etc. This included measures that are in place at the University to protect the rights of the LGBTQI+ group. The fact that these are all underpinned by one of the goals outlined on the institution's Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) that places emphasis on social inclusion, safety, and cohesion. The draft VUT Gender Based Violence, LGBTQIA+, Unfair Discrimination and Harassment Policy in place and awaits approval.

During the month of August, we undertook a Women's Month campaign to pay special tribute to the Women of VUT – from academia, research, and support, acknowledging their varied contributions to the betterment of the University and the Higher Education Sector, broadly. Throughout the month, profiles of these remarkable women were featured on the Daily Billboard and shared across the University's digital and social media platforms.

To add the cherry on top, Ms Kediemetse Mokotsi, the acting Executive Director: Advancement was a Top 3 Finalist for the HERS-SA Higher Education Women Leaders AWARDS: Women in Academic Administration. The winners were announced on the 7th of September 2023 at the Gala & Dinner Awards at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Cape Town. She received an award at a finalist in this category. Besides this being her personal achievement, this also sends a strong message about how VUT embraces and is committed to gender transformation at all occupational levels.

4 VUT FM

4.1 MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY AGENCY (MDDA) R1.9M GRANT FUNDING.

The renovation of new studios was completed during the month of August 2023. The MDDA delegation visited the VUT FM for verification and final approval of the equipment. MDDA

advised that a formal launch of the new studios will take place during the course 2024 and will be fully sponsored by MDDA, and that the office of the Presidency will be in attendance.

4.2 GENERATOR DONATION BY HANTLE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND AQUA ELECTRONICS

Through the assistance of the Resource Mobilisation Unit, VUT FM Board secured sponsorship of a generator to assist the station to continue broadcasting even during power outages. Again, this will go a long way towards restoring the trust of advertisers and building towards self-sustainability of the station.

4.3 VUT FM BOARD

The Board is fully operational and in charge of the Governance of the station ensuring compliance with all the regulatory requirements. The Board meets quarterly (March, June, September) and closes the year with an AGM in November each year. The operations of the Board are supplemented by Sub-Committees which have been established to cover all legislative areas related to compliance. The Marketing Committee was granted ethical clearance by VUT to enable it to conduct a research study on how the public perceive the VUT FM brand. The results will assist the station in addressing areas of concern.

REFRESHER WORKSHOP

The Board and station management attended a refresher workshop led by CommTrain Media on Thursday, 20 July 2023. The workshop was informative as members were exposed to the day-to-day challenges faced by the station management. This provided participants with an opportunity to propose and discuss possible solutions and ideas that will advance the sustainability of the station.

5 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

One of the DHET key points is to encourage Universities to become Entrepreneurial Universities. Entrepreneurship is believed to be one of the greatest weapons to counteract the scourge of unemployment. The office of the Director: Stakeholder Engagement, Coordinated all Entrepreneurship projects at VUT during the year. She arranged a meeting on 9 February where USAf presented to VUT colleagues. EDHE (Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education) is a project under USAf funded by DHET. USAf reached out to VUT after it was discovered that VUT was not represented in all EDHE Communities of Practice. After this intervention we can now report that VUT is represented in all CoPs as follows:

5.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION (EDHE) INTERVARSITY STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETITION

5 VUT students were selected from the internal selection round and participated in the regional rounds which took place at NWU (Vaal Campus) on 10 and 11 October 2023. Winners of the regional round would be eligible to represent VUT at the National final round in December 2023. Coordinators organised training workshops to prepare participants to pitch their business ideas at various levels of the competition.

ANNUAL GREEN YOUTH INDABA

TOSACA Media group in collaboration with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) conducted a two-day training workshop for our students who were interested in entrepreneurship and unemployed youth around Sedibeng. The workshop was hosted at VUT, CAD Auditorium. Training focused mainly on unemployed youth and student entrepreneurs at Universities of Technology.

Over 72 young people from the Vaal and surrounding areas attended the workshop. Additionally, 9 of these young people managed to pitch their inspiring ideas which they intended to use to contribute to the green economy – 5 were VUT students. All 5 students attended the Green Youth Innovators Pre-Pitch Competition and Annual Green Youth Indaba that was hosted at the Durban International Convention Centre, Durban (KwaZulu-Natal) on the 28-30 June 2023.

AFRICA DAY CELEBRATION

VUT collaborated with Internationalisation Office, Research and Social Justice and Transformation to host a webinar focusing on Research work done by research Professors at VUT, Post – Doc from Kenya (Massai Mara University) and there were two external guests, namely: Dr Tozama Qwebani, Programme Officer: Africa and International Partnerships at ASSAf and Prof Ronnie Gao, a visiting Professor from Canada. The focus of the event was on celebrating and showcasing the role played by VUT in achieving Agenda 2063 through its research and scholarship. The theme was “Africa is the Future.”

STATE OF THE MUNICIPALITY ADDRESS (SOMA) AT MIDVAAL MUNICIPALITY ON 29 JUNE 2023.

The University was represented by the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal and the Director: Stakeholder Engagement. During his address the Executive Mayor highlighted the partnerships that the Municipality has with the VUT and a need to forge more collaborations.

STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION SHARING SESSIONS.

These sessions created an opportunity for representatives from different departments to share information about the role of their departments with the VUT staff. These sessions also assisted VUT community to ask questions, share suggestions and comments after each presentation.

PARTNERSHIPS

The team continues to explore and identify initiatives that assist to improve the public perceptions about VUT through the following:

6.1 ALUMNI RELATIONS

The Alumni Relations Unit constantly hosts networking and engagement sessions which serves as platform to sell the Ekhaya-Alumni brand communications. During this reporting period, the following activities/events took place:

Hosted Nelisiwe Nhlapo, Mrs South Africa finalist 2023 on August 10, 2023. She had a “meet and greet” session with the finalists for Mr and Miss VUT 2023, she visited her faculty (Engineering), and she also did a radio interview with VUT FM.

Women in Engineering networking seminar preparatory session for the “Women in Engineering” during the women's Month. The main event was held on Tuesday, 22nd of August 2023. Alumni and other successful women in the engineering field met with students to share their journeys and experiences as well as challenges that affects women in the industry.

Phakamisa Ikhaya Nutrition campaign

On Thursday, 27 July 2023 the Advancement Department collectively donated food packages to the NSFAS defunded students through the Victim Empowerment Centre at the Residences. In efforts to achieve ongoing support for the Phakamisa Ikhaya campaign, the Advancement team had reached out to internal departments to donate towards the project on an ongoing basis.

Contributions received and donated to the VEC:

100 bottles of water from the Roshnee community.

Advancement Department grocery donation.

Non-perishable groceries from President Hyper Vaal.

Grocery vouchers from Checkers Hyper.

17 Food voucher (R100 each) from the Entrepreneurship Unit.

Individual monthly pledge.

We also called on other members of Mancom to support the campaign. This will send a positive message that VUT support the ethics of care.

Seminars and Workshops

2023 student structure induction workshop (SSS) Alumnus Selepe Madisha. Facilitated the leadership session, hosted on 10 June 2023.

“Meet and greet” session. Hosted Nelisiwe Nhlapo, Mrs South Africa finalist on 10 August 2023. she visited her faculty (Engineering), and she also did a radio interview with VUT FM after addressing student.

Networking event for all engineering students’ structures, 29 Sept 2023.

Seventh Day Adventist Student Movement SDASM 30th Anniversary hosted on 4 November 2023.

Guest Lecturers

Applied and Computer Sciences: Business Analysis in IT hosted on 29 March 2023.

Human Resources Management: The Journey to becoming... (HR, PR, IT students) Alumni: Radio Presenter Lekoa FM Ms Gift Dlamini hosted on 26 April 2023.

Lunchtime networking with Alumni. Eve Rasimeni, an actress, motivational speaker, and model, she met with students are in the performing art space, to share her personal success and struggle in the industry and motivated students pursuing the same career hosted on 26 July 2023.

Social media updates and notices

Constantly share articles, communications, and university news on social media platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.).

Challenges:

Budget remains the biggest challenge that impacts on the operations of the Alumni Relations office.

7 EVENT MANAGEMENT

7.1 MEMORIAL SERVICES

The University lost two of its key staff members in a short space of time during 2023. Prof Dan Kgwadi, former Vice-Chancellor & Principal passed away in May followed by Prof Masemola, Executive Dean, Faculty of Human Sciences in August 2023. This was a sombre period for the University community.

This was preceded by the passing of Dr Tate Makgoe, MEC of Education in the Free State Province and the VUT alumnus in March 2023. Dr Makgoe graduated for his Diploma in Chemical Engineering in 1982 from the erstwhile Vaal Triangle Technikon. Again, at its Autumn Graduation ceremony in September 2018, VUT's Faculty of Management Sciences, awarded him an honorary doctorate in Business Administration for his passion to transform the schooling system in the Free State and by extension, the country largely. He was dedicated to capacitating of the educators in public education system to achieve their said target and by ensuring good corporate governance in schools.

7.2 SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Two special announcements for the appointment of:

Appointment of Mr Vincent Zwelibanzi Mntambo as the Chancellor of VUT for a period of 5 years effective 11 September 2023 until 10 September 2028.

The appointment of Prof Stephen Khehla Ndlovu, as the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of VUT for a period of 5 years effective 1 February 2024 to 31st January 2029.

These two announcements brought back hope and stability to the university's senior leadership and governance.

7.3 WOMEN'S DAY SEMINAR

VUT once again showed its dedication to, and also add its voice to the chorus calling for the advancement of women empowerment. This, by hosting a Women's Day Seminar themed: *"Digiz 4all: Innovation & technology for gender equality"* on 23 August with the purpose of shedding some light on the pressing issue of gender equality in the digital realm – a topic that has gained momentum considering today's technology-driven world.

7.4 COLLABORATION WITH FACULTIES

Ronnie Gao Webinar

The department of Marketing, Retail business and Sport Management hosted Associate Professor Ronnie Gao a marketing specialist from Canada to give an online lecture with the Theme: INTERNATIONAL AFRICA RESEARCH DAY - "Africa is the future."

Sage: Coffee on campus

The department of Marketing, Retail and Sport Management collaborated with Sage payroll and Tyme bank for a campus visit, titled Coffee on campus at the Desmond Tutu Great Hall at 10:00 on 26 May 2023.

Accountancy Department Career Day

500 Accountancy students were invited to attend the event across all the course offerings. They had an opportunity to learn more about their respective field and interact with role models in the finance field. The following companies exhibited on the day: ISACD, Nexis, SAIDA, Mazers and Macor Incorporate.

National Science week

A week dedicated to celebrating and promoting STEM education and research to local high school learners. 300 Learners from local schools participated in the event, which was hosted at the Desmond Tutu Great Hall / Science labs from 08:30 from Monday, 31st July to Friday, 4th August 2023.

Prof Pat Obi Public Lecture

An introspective view lecture on the value of education and financial planning by tenured finance professor Pat Obi from Purdue University North West, USA with the theme: Personal Financial Planning Amid High Inflation, Exchange Rate Risk, and Geopolitical Uncertainties. The Public Lecture was held at the CAD Auditorium at 09:30 on 03 August 2023.

Logistics Student Conference, Thursday

VUT's Department of Logistics and Supply Chain Management held a student conference themed: "SCM in the post-COVID era." The conference highlighted the profound impact of the pandemic on global business, particularly in the sphere of Supply Chain Management (SCM). It also highlighted the need for a comprehensive comprehension of how SCM has evolved in response to the crisis.

The conference featured insightful discussions, with speakers including distinguished VUT alumni such as Ms. Puleng Pitikoe from Shell, Mr. Sebata Sera from Sasol, Ms. Remoabetswe Mathobela from Ford SA, and Mr. Sizwe Khoza from Omnia Fertilizer.

Girls Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Seminar

The seminar is a collaboration between the Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences and the Marketing and Communications department hosted annually at VUT. the 2023 Seminar was hosted on 25 August in partnership with the MidVaal Local Municipality University's Desmond

Tutu Great Hall.

The primary objective of the seminar was to empower young school and University female learners and students within the fields of STEM to thrive in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

Esteemed guest speaker who offered attendees invaluable advice and perspectives, was Ms Refilwe Buthelezi, former VUT Chairperson of Council who is also a professional engineer and President of the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). She emphasized that in order for women to breakthrough the barriers of diversity and inclusivity, gender-bias, and stereotypes, they need to work with men, because on their own they would be preaching to the choir.

Ms. Buthelezi, who has built a reputation for operational excellence, digital technology, corporate governance, innovative strategic thinking working with the highest level of integrity, also shared her insights on overcoming challenges and biases in STEM fields. On the importance and application of research, Ms Buthelezi told learners that the depth of knowledge would help in paving a way to better version of understanding the world and its challenges.

Ms Itumeleng Phiri, the brilliant young Junior Mayor of Midvaal Local Municipality, also gave a talk at the seminar. The seminar encompassed exhibitions presented by participating firms who showcased groundbreaking innovations, prospects, and strides within the realm of STEM – these included Rand Water, MerSETA, SAASTA, Arcelor Mittal-Science Centre, and South African Blood Transfusion Services.

The 2023 Women in STEM Seminar was fully sponsored by the office of Ald. Peter Texeira, Executive Mayor: Midvaal Municipality.

Brand Seminar

The Marketing & Brand Manager was also a speaker at the BRAND SEMINAR hosted on 8 September 2023. The audience mainly consisted of Public Relations and Tourism Management students. This was an important information session to educate our students about the new VUT brand, its representation, and their role as Brand Ambassadors.

2023 Graduation Ceremonies

Hosting graduation ceremonies at VUT (April and September) annually continues to be a challenge due to large numbers of graduates and the small venue (Desmond Tutu Great Hall) with a capacity of 650 seats. The capacity of the hall limits the number of graduates and that are allowed per session and results in unhappy families and friends because not everyone can be accommodated in the hall. The Marketing & Communications Team are left with no choice but to extend the seating capacity by procuring overflow tents to accommodate everyone who cannot fit into the hall.

The above scenario can only change once the Quest Conference Estates has been rebranded and all defects attended to. The venue has a capacity to accommodate one faculty per session including families.

The University hosted for the first time, Summer Graduation Ceremonies on 11 December 2023 for master's and PhD graduates in the Desmond Tutu Great Hall. This session lacked the VUT graduation vibe because it excluded the undergraduates and post graduate diploma students who usually sing celebratory songs after graduations on campus.

Student life Achievement Awards

The Student Life Achievement Awards recognise and reward students who impacted the university student community positively. All students who are registered (1st year to PhD level) are eligible for nominations. The awards are aimed at recognising the achievements and stellar leadership qualities of students with purpose on encouraging other to do better. The event took place on 16 November 2023 at the VUT Science Park.

PR Student Symposium

The Faculty of Human Sciences hosted Public Relations Management Symposium on 21 November 2023, in the Desmond Tutu Great Hall. Through the symposium, the faculty aims to promote the PR profession to PR students. It brings them closer to the different industry aspects through interaction with the different PR professionals and help them to understand better what is required to become an excellent PR/Communications specialist.

PRINTING

7.1 OVERVIEW & RELATED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose and function of the Printing Department is to render an economically viable support service to all its VUT clients (internal) in support of the core business of VUT, in terms of the following functional areas:

Digital Printing Services
Lithographic Printing Services
Binding Services

7.2 INHERED RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure that all printed materials are produced and completed at the requested date, quality standards, quantities, material stock and cost effectiveness in compliance with the following:

Adherence to the new VUT Corporate Image Policy rules and regulations.

Adherence to the Copy Rights Act.

7.3 CHALLENGES

The Printing Department is experiencing serious challenges:

The equipment is very old and outdated and no longer sustainable. It makes it nearly impossible to meet customer requirements in terms of quality and turnaround times.

The current premises is not suitable the Printing Department. There is no space to stock paper and highly flammable liquids. VUT's insurance company have deemed the Printing Department as a high risk. Working space for staff is also a big concern, as it could lead to injuries.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Printing and binding equipment will have to be replaced with new technology, even if is done gradually. The current equipment is 40+ years old.

Acquire a suitable premises that will allow the staff to work in a safe informant, with adequate space to store paper and flammable chemicals.

The digital printing machines will go out on tender later this year, and to include some of the depleted / outdated equipment in this tender would be an option.

My vision will always to be a complete Printing Department that will ensure that funds rotate within VUT and less print / binding work are outsourced, and also generate a second stream income from external clients. This will also dramatically improve the morale of staff in the Printing Department.

7.5 PRIORITY PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES FOR 2024

The Printing Department is eagerly awaiting the return of full times students, as this will increase printing volumes, especially in terms of study guides.

Acquire new and better premises for the Printing department to improve service delivery and customer services to the VUT community. The Printing Department is still operating in the same premises with the same equipment since the inception of the university. All other key service delivery departments have expanded to meet the strategic objectives of the university.

EQUITY WITHIN THE INSTITUTION

Vaal University of Technology (VUT) places a strong emphasis on **equity** as part of its broader vision for social transformation, aiming to foster a fair and inclusive environment for students, staff, and the broader community. The university's **equity targets** are designed to address historical inequalities, promote diversity, and ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, or other factors.

Student Access and Success

One of VUT's key equity targets is to **increase access to higher education** for students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes measures to ensure that students who face barriers to education are given opportunities to succeed.

Financial Support: VUT aims to increase the number of bursaries and scholarships available to students from disadvantaged communities, ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent access to education. The university prioritizes support for students from low-income households, ensuring that they can complete their studies without being hindered by financial challenges.

Academic Support: VUT is committed to providing academic support services that help students from diverse backgrounds succeed. This includes tutoring programs, mentorship, study groups, and counselling services that support the academic journey of students, especially those who may struggle due to gaps in foundational knowledge.

Student Representation: VUT aims to promote student inclusivity by ensuring diverse representation in student governance, leadership roles, and decision-making bodies. This includes prioritizing student input from historically marginalized groups in shaping university policies and programs.

Skills Development and Bridging Programs: VUT offers bridging programs to help students who may not meet the full entry requirements for certain academic programs. These initiatives

are aimed at helping students from under-resourced schools bridge the gap and prepare for university-level work.

Gender Equity and Empowerment

VUT strives to ensure gender equity in both academic and non-academic spheres, addressing historical gender imbalances and promoting women's participation in areas traditionally dominated by men, such as engineering and technology.

Increasing Female enrolment in STEM: One of VUT's targets is to increase the enrolment of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs. The university has introduced specific initiatives aimed at encouraging young women to pursue careers in these fields, which have historically been male-dominated.

Gender Equality in Leadership: VUT aims to ensure that women are equally represented in leadership roles, both among staff and in student governance structures. This includes supporting women's participation in academic leadership, administrative roles, and as part of decision-making bodies within the university.

Support for Women in Academia and Industry: The university actively promotes gender equity in academia, providing mentorship and career development opportunities for female faculty members and researchers. Additionally, VUT encourages industry partnerships that offer internships, scholarships, and job placements specifically for women in underrepresented fields.

Awareness and Sensitization Campaigns: VUT promotes gender equality awareness through campaigns, workshops, and seminars that address issues such as gender-based violence, harassment, and empowerment.

Racial and Cultural Equity

VUT is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that reflects the country's diverse racial and cultural landscape. Its equity targets include.

Increasing enrolment of Black Students: In line with South Africa's national transformation agenda, VUT targets increasing the enrolment of Black students (African, Coloured, and Indian students) in undergraduate and postgraduate programs, ensuring that historically marginalized racial groups have access to higher education.

Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity: The university promotes **cultural inclusivity** by creating a campus environment where students and staff from all racial and ethnic backgrounds feel

valued and respected. This includes the celebration of cultural diversity through events, forums, and cultural exchange programs.

Reducing Racial Inequality in Graduation Rates: VUT has set targets to address disparities in graduation rates among different racial groups. The university aims to implement support programs that help underrepresented racial groups to succeed academically, reducing dropout rates and improving overall completion rates.

Access to Leadership and Governance: VUT ensures that leadership positions within the student body, faculty, and administration reflect the racial diversity of the student population. This inclusivity fosters a sense of belonging and ensures that policies are shaped by representatives from various racial backgrounds.

Disability and Accessibility

VUT is dedicated to improving **accessibility** for students and staff with disabilities, aiming to provide an environment where everyone has equal opportunities.

Support for Students with Disabilities: The university has set targets to increase academic support services and resources for students with disabilities, ensuring that they can fully participate in university life. This includes providing physical accommodations, such as wheelchair access, as well as academic accommodations like note-takers, assistive technology, and adapted learning materials.

Awareness and Inclusion Programs: VUT works to raise awareness about the needs and challenges faced by people with disabilities through campaigns and educational programs. The university also offers workshops to faculty and staff to better understand how to create inclusive classrooms and support students with disabilities.

Infrastructure and Facilities: VUT has made improvements to its campus infrastructure to ensure that it is fully accessible. This includes accessible transport, ramps, special seating arrangements in classrooms, and the availability of assistive technologies in libraries and study areas.

Socio-Economic Equity

VUT strives to provide opportunities for students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring that financial status does not limit access to education or success at the university:

Financial Aid for Low-Income Students: VUT has set targets to increase its financial aid programs, including the availability of bursaries, grants, and student loans for students from

low-income households. This support is crucial for students who otherwise may not afford tuition and other educational expenses.

Addressing Poverty and Inequality: The university is committed to reducing socio-economic inequality by offering programs and initiatives that support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes outreach programs that provide tutoring, mentorship, and skills development to students from under-resourced communities.

Community Engagement and Development: VUT has established programs that aim to address poverty alleviation and skills development in the surrounding communities. These programs help individuals from low-income areas gain access to skills training and educational opportunities that improve their economic standing.

Staff Diversity and Development

VUT is focused on improving staff diversity and ensuring that its workforce reflects the demographics of the country while promoting equal opportunities for all employees.

Inclusive Recruitment and Promotion Policies: VUT has implemented recruitment and promotion policies that prioritize equity, ensuring fair representation of historically marginalized groups, including women, Black people, and people with disabilities, in faculty and administrative roles.

Staff Training and Capacity Building: The university offers continuous training and development opportunities to ensure that all staff have the skills and support necessary to succeed in their roles. This includes leadership development programs for underrepresented groups and initiatives aimed at improving career advancement opportunities.

VUT's equity targets are central to its strategy of creating an inclusive and transformative educational environment. By focusing on improving access, gender equality, racial representation, disability support, and socio-economic equity, VUT strives to build a diverse and supportive community where all students and staff can thrive. These equity goals are aligned with broader national policies aimed at addressing inequality and promoting social justice, ensuring that VUT plays a key role in advancing transformation within higher education.



Professor Khehla Ndlovu
Vice Chancellor and Principal

SECTION 11: THE REPORT OF SENATE TO THE COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

The Senate of the Vaal University of Technology is responsible for academic governance of the University in accordance with the Statute and the Act. Academic governance is understood to comprise the structures, processes and regulatory frameworks through which academic matters are decided and overseen by academic staff, advised and supported by administrative colleagues and students. To this end, the Statute of the University provides that, subject to the Act, the Senate is accountable to the Council for all the academic and research functions within the University and all other functions delegated or assigned to it by the Council. In exercising this mandate, Senate is assisted by its various committees whose charters are reviewed on a regular basis.

- SENEX
- Higher degrees committee
- Deans' forum
- Academic quality standards committee (reviewed)
- Senate library information committee
- Central research ethics committee
- Senate research and innovation committee
- Senate enrolment, academic planning and development committee (replacing the academic planning and development committee)
- Student success committee (new)
- Short learning programme advisory committee (new)

In 2023, Senate had the following membership:

Table Senate composition during 2023

Name	Designation	Gender
Mr MN Fuzani	Council Member	M
Dr CM Kganakga	Council Member	F
Prof M Linington	DVC: TEACHING & LEARNING	F
Dr S Nelana	Acting DVC: RICI	M
Mr S Vilakazi	ED: Legal and Governance	M
Dr A Moletsane	Director	F
Prof J Kearney	Ass Prof	F

Prof HM DIEDERICKS	HOD	F
DR MM CHILI	Executive Director-CAD	M
Prof N Dlodlo	HOD	F
Prof G Ochieng	HOD: CIVIL ENGINEERING	M
Dr J Beneke	Research Prof	M
Prof C MAFINI	ED: Management Sciences	M
Ms V LABUSCHAGNE	Acting HOD	F
Dr M KOBE	ACTING ED: Science Park	M
Prof G MASEKO	HOD: Accountancy	M
Prof T SEODIGENG	CHEMICAL ENGINEERING	M
Ms K MOKOTSI	Director: Advancement	F
Prof P OSIFO	Professor	M
Ms T Maluleke	SNR: SEM	F
Prof K DUBE	Professor	M
Dr C CHITUMNWA	HOD: Education	M
Prof C NYAMUPANGEDENGU	HOD: Electrical	M
Dr A HARMSE	HOD:ICT	F
Dr S BURGER	RESEARCH DIRECTOR	F
Prof SL KIAMBI	HOD: CME	M
Prof ALFAYO Alugongo	Prof	M
Prof E CHINOMONA	Prof	F
Prof M Klink	Prof	M
Prof J MODISE	HOD	M
Prof P Kholopane	HOD	M
Prof I OTUNNIYI	Prof	M
Prof E NGOY	Prof	M
Prof L LEKAOTA	Prof	F
Prof T ZUVA	Prof	M
Prof Abou-El-Hossein	Executive Dean	M
Prof TP PADAYACHEE	Prof	F
Prof E DICKS	ASS Prof HOSPITALITY	F
Ms B TEMBE	MANAGER: LIBRARY	F
Prof T Tengen	HOD	M
H RUTTO	Prof	M
Ms T Naidoo	DIRECTOR QPU	F
Mr S Khoosal	Director: IP	M
Dr Q SIKAKANA	HOD	M
PROF L MALEHO	ED: FACULTY of HS	M
Prof C GROBLER	ED: FACS	F
Prof Cornelius Ssemakalu	Prof	M
Dr Josiah Masoka	HOD: Human Resources	M
Dr Nolutho Mthombeni	HOD: Health Sciences	F
Dr S Mchunu	Acting DVC: Resources and Planning	M

Table Senate matters considered during 2023

Date of the Meeting	Matters Considered
10 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post Graduate Applications and Registrations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission Requirements in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of Minutes held on the 11 November 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Safety Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Quality Assurance Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Student Accommodation Accreditation Policy (PSAAP)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECSA Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for Concessions for 2023 Admissions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Promotions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression rules for Diploma Environmental Sciences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes for Diploma in Biomedical Technology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty of Management Sciences Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences Faculty of Human Sciences Faculty of Engineering and Technology CAD and Cooperative Department Library Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratification of Minutes
09 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Report on Examination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Subsidy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of the minutes 10 March 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Sciences Module Change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPL Applications (Applied and Computer Sciences)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of the Admission Requirements for the Advanced Diploma in Cost & Management Programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression Rules across Faculty Diploma Programmes in Management Sciences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPL Management Sciences

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of Assessment Criteria – Accountancy Department
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission Requirements Extended Programme in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL Applications – Faculty of Human Sciences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHE Institutional Audit – Possible Lines of Enquiry and VUT Institutional Audit SER Final
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure of Satelite Campuses (Upington and Secunda) and transfer of their operations to Vanderbijlpark and Sebokeng /Science Park Campuses)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratification of Minutes
08 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic and Committee Calendar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion Letters for Masters & Doctorates
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of Minutes held on the 09 June 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Subsidy Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress and Update on the Plagiarism Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Renovation of Block C Labs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter Senate Enrolment Academic Planning and Development Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Foreign National Policy and Employment Equity and Diversity Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL Applications (Management Sciences)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VUT Research Ethics Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports: • Faculty of Human Sciences • Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences • Faculty of Engineering and Technology • Cooperative Education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratification of Minutes
10 November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Processes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes held on the 08 September 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FACS Blended Learning Strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMS Blended Learning Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FHS Blended Learning Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FET Blended Learning Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting Correction (FACS)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of Environmental Sciences (FACS)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renaming of Departments (FACS)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratification of minutes

VUT STUDENT PROFILE: TREND ANALYSIS

The following presents an analysis of student profiles in 2023, as compared with previous years.

Student registrations

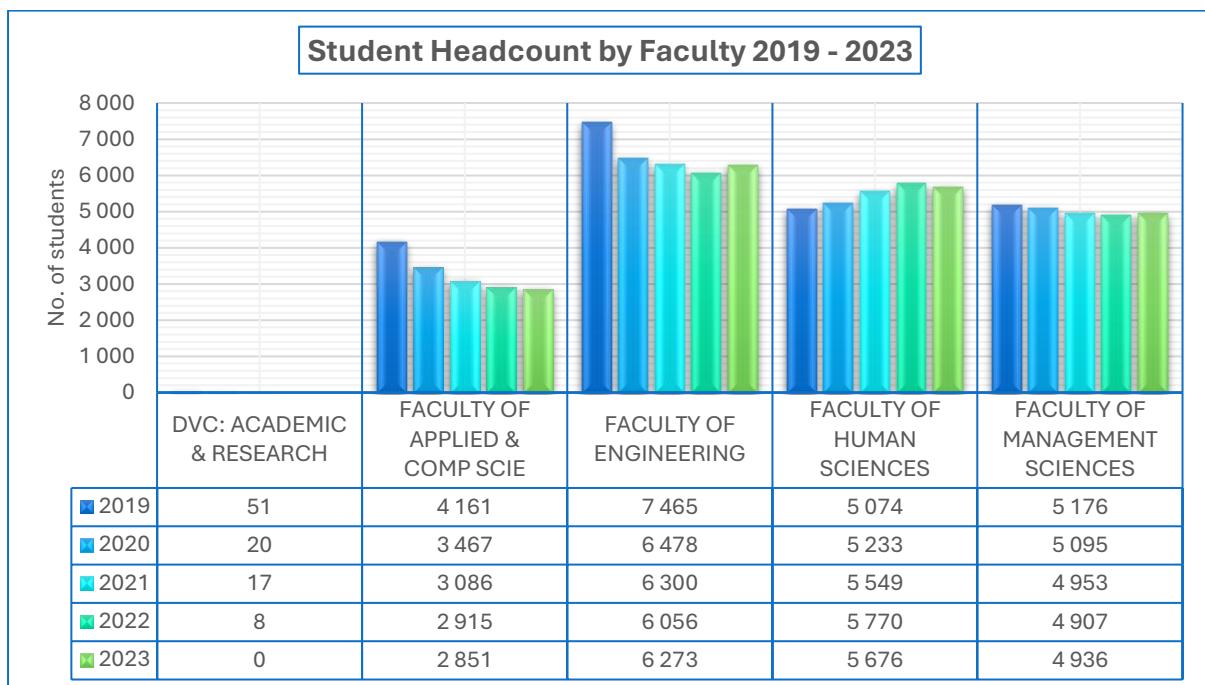
The following table shows student headcounts by campus for the years 2019-2023:

Campus	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EAST RAND DAVEYTON CAMPUS	787	258	0	0	0
SECUNDA	726	411	235	70	0
UPINGTON	92	64	30	6	0
VANDERBIJLPARK	20 010	19 189	19 120	18 992	19 173
EDUCITY Science Park	312	371	520	588	563
Total	21 927	20 293	19 905	19 656	19 736

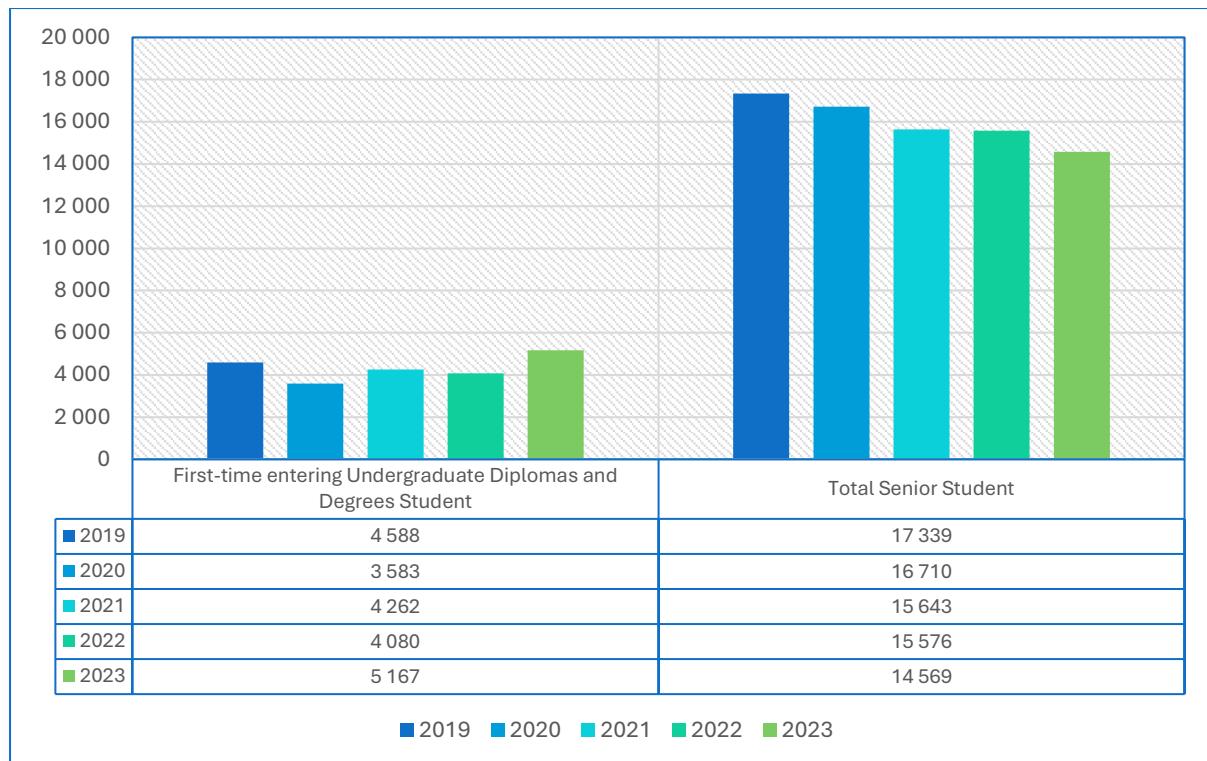
This table indicates that the Vanderbijlpark main campus grew by 1% while Educity (where education programmes are offered) was stable during 2023. As indicated earlier the other sites of delivery were closed at the end of 2022, and this is reflected in those enrolments. In total there was a slight increase in 2023 (19 736 enrolments) however this was still however down from the peak of around 22 000 in 2019. This is accounted for by firstly, lower FTEN registrations than had been targeted and secondly, the systematic closer of sites of delivery (for example the Daveyton site of delivery had closed at the end of 2021 the number of students enrolled at Secunda and Upington were low in 2021 as part of a planned closure of the campuses).

The graph below shows headcounts enrolments by faculty for 2019-2023: There has been a decline in SET registrations together with a slight increase in non-SET registrations from 2019

to 2021. The University's mission is to drive SET programmes and enrolments, and there is clearly a need to address this mission-drift. Non-SET registrations were slightly higher than SET registrations in 2021. The growth in education is in line with the VUT mission as the education programme focuses on STEM subject education, vital in ensuring that our secondary school system produces science, maths and technology school leavers.



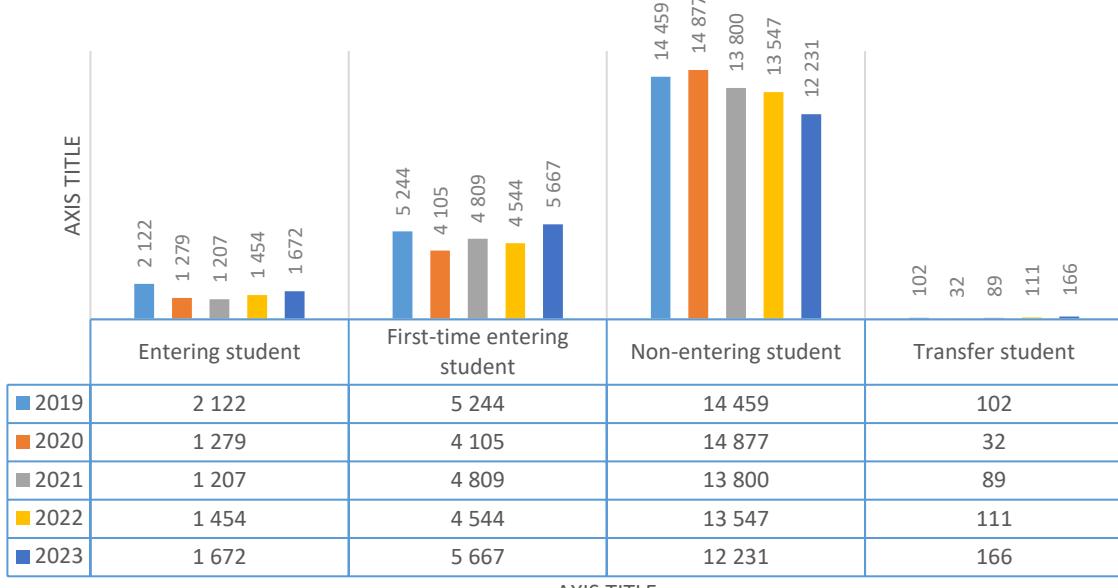
The Faculty of Human Sciences has grown over the period from 2019 to 2023, the growth until 2022 was mainly due to the introduction of Education programmes which has now stabilized, and which was reflected in the Science Park enrolments. The growth in education is in line with the VUT mission as the education programme focuses on STEM subject education, vital in ensuring that our secondary school system produces skilled science, mathematics and technology school leavers. The decline in enrolments within the Faculty of Applied Sciences up to 2022 is starting to show a reverse trend which will continue in the next few years due to the introduction of the agriculture management programme as well as the new nursing programme in the next couple of years. The decline in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology was mainly due to low FTEN headcounts, but with the introduction of the extended programmes numbers have improved.



The above figure compares FTEN undergraduate students to senior student headcounts. The figure shows an increase in 2023 for FTEN, but a decrease in returning students. Many factors accounted for this decline, specifically student funding due to the change from N+2 to N+1 for NSFAS funded students. These factors are externalities experienced by the sector and not only VUT. The University is working hard to address this deficit in headcount enrolments, specifically returning students.

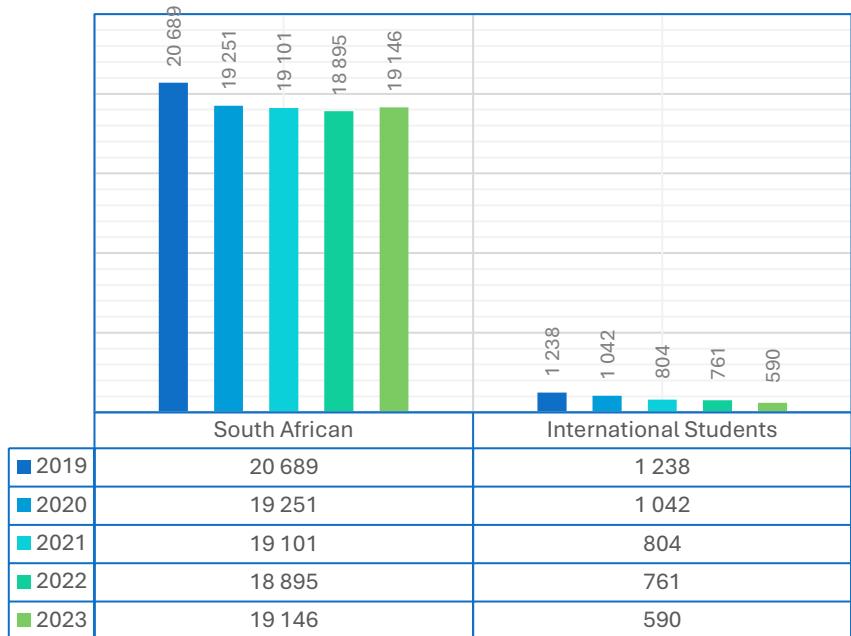
STUDEND HEADCOUNT BY ENTRANCE CATEGORY 2019 - 2023

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023



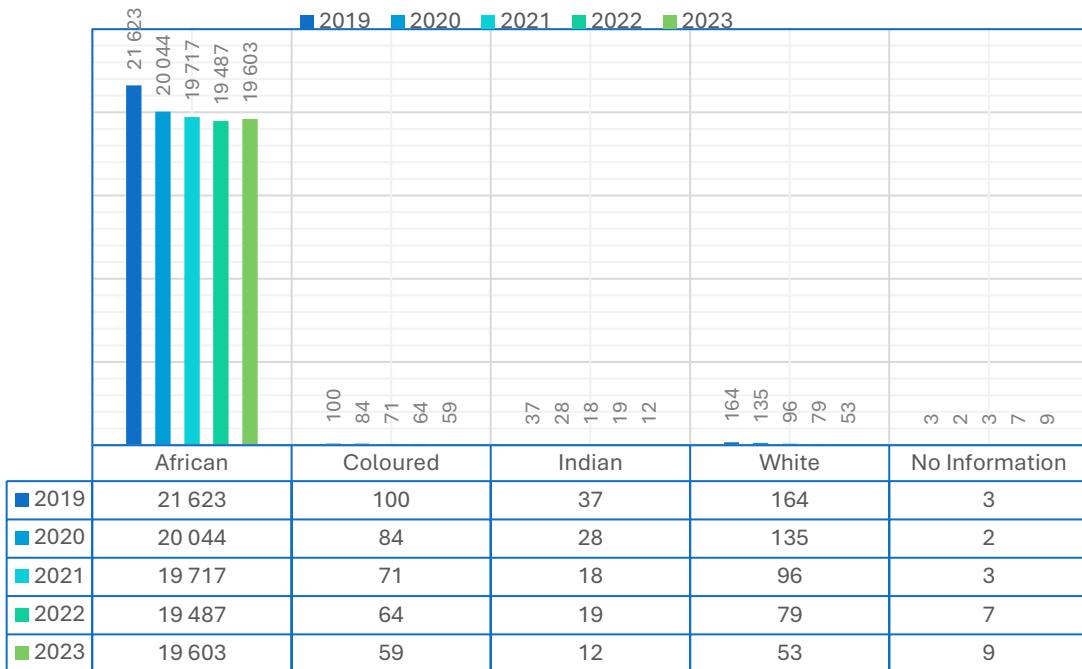
The table above shows the different headcounts per various entering categories: entering students, i.e. students who are switching qualifications, first time entering (FTEN) students, i.e. students who are enrolling at VUT for the first time, non-entering, i.e. senior or returning students, and transfer, i.e. students transferring from another institution. The table shows that all entering, and the transfer category experienced a growth from 2021, while the first time entering is showing good growth. The number of transferring students a slight growth in 2022 and 2023 due to the closure of sites of delivery.

STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY NATIONALITY 2019 - 2023

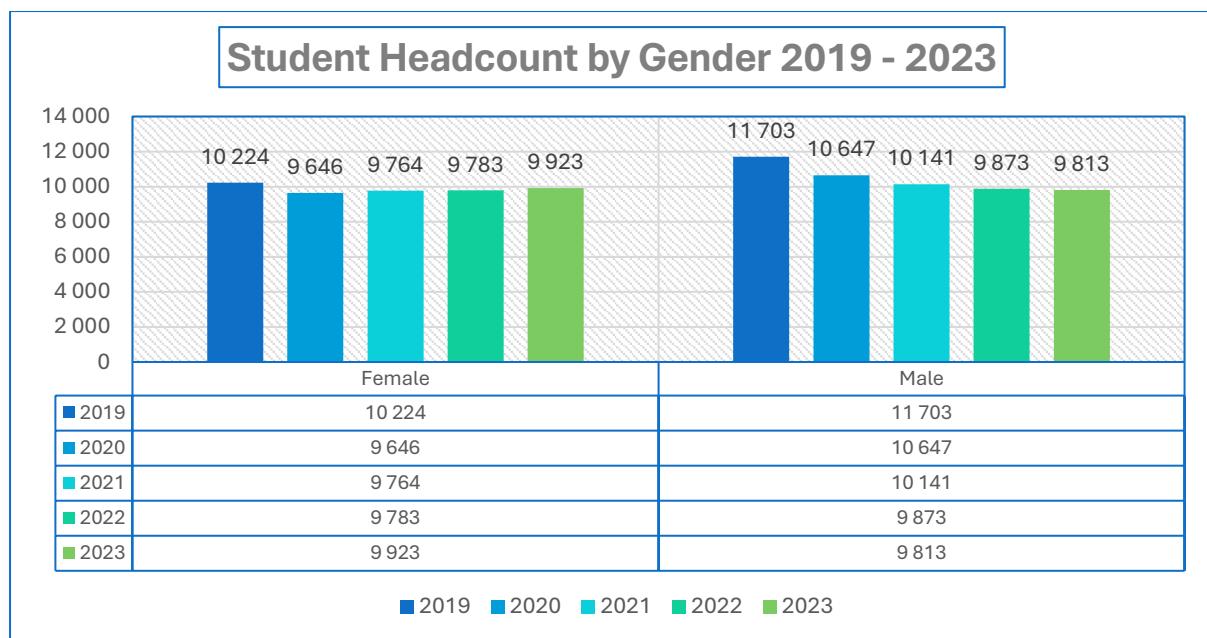


The number of international students has been declining since 2020 to 590 in 2023. This appears to be a result of many factors including COVID-19 as students seemed not to return post lock-down, as well as the current economic constraints globally. VUT has been ranked as the number 35 destination for international students in Africa. Engineering attracts the most international students, mainly at the undergraduate level. We are however attracting postgraduate students and there were 32 PhD international students registered in 2023.

STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY RACE 2019-2023



The table above indicates the demographic profile of the student body by Race and indicates the majority of students are African, and this component remains fairly stable, while there is a decline in students from other races. The following table indicates the ratio between male and female students which has remained fairly stable over the period, with female students slightly in the majority.



New Qualifications registered during 2023

The introduction of the HEQSF which introduced the articulation pathway of Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Postgraduate diploma is reflected in the registration of new programmes over the last few years, and will continue to impact our PQM for a few years ahead. In 2023 we noted the registration of the Advanced Diploma in Tourism and the Post Graduate diploma's in Policing, Food Service Management and Fashion at SAQA. The tables below also reflect our renewal of the PQM with the registration of the Bachelor of Communication Studies and Masters in Education

SAQA Registered Undergraduate qualifications

Programme name	SAQA registered
Advanced Diploma in Tourism Management	12 December 2023
Bachelor of Communication Studies	10 June 2023

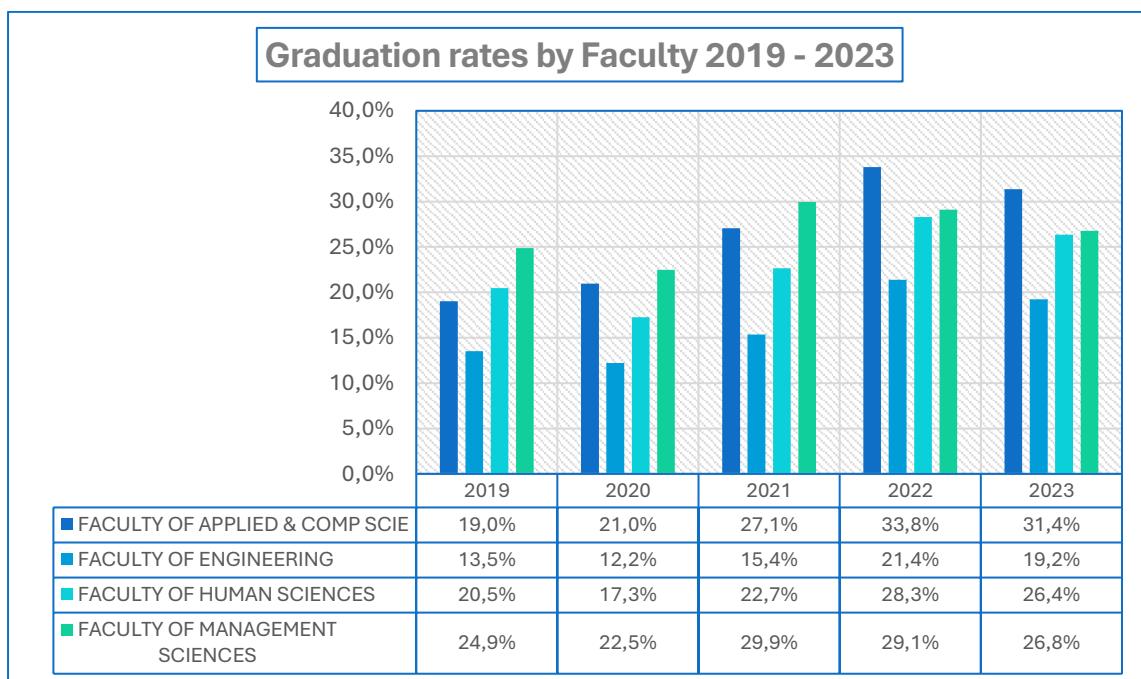
SAQA Registered Postgraduate qualifications

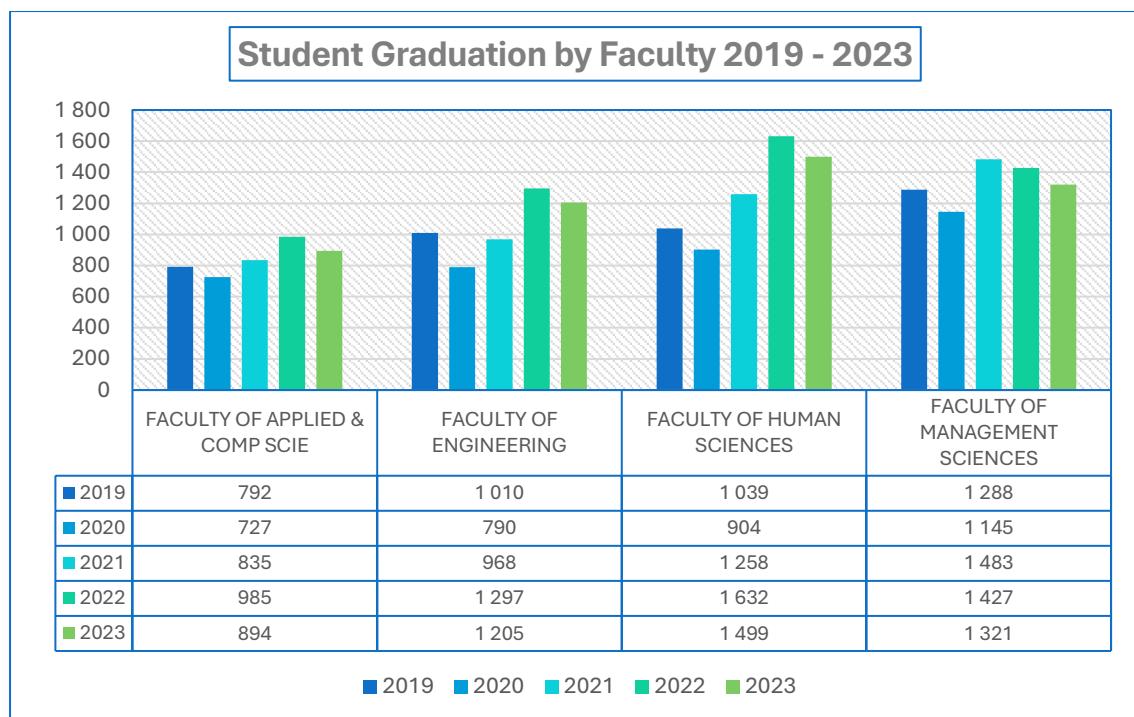
Programme name	SAQA registered
Postgraduate Diploma in Policing	30 March 2023
Postgraduate Diploma in Food Service Management	12 December 2023
Postgraduate Diploma in Fashion	12 December 2023
Master of Education in Higher Education	12 December 2023

Senate's role is to be accountable to the Council for all the academic and research functions within the University. The CHE concession for blended learning was extended and Senate considered the blended teaching and learning approach of faculty for 2024 based on lessons learnt during the lockdown period and continuously improving our T&L practices. Reflection on student success is core to Senate's function and the establishment of the Senate student success committee to drive student success across the university has played a key role in improving senate effectiveness. A major activity undertaken by VUT and supported by Senate was the Institutional Audit by the CHE, that was conducted in June 2023. Furthermore, Senate engaged on strategic matters including the implementation of the revised strategic plan, where the future vision for teaching, learning, research, innovation and community engagement were interrogated.

Graduations

This section shows graduation figures for the University over the period 2019 to 2023





The figures above show the graduation rates for the university was 24.7% with the numbers lightly decrease from 2022. The first figure shows that the Faculty of Management Sciences has consistently had the highest graduation rate over the period 2019 to 2021, whereas the graduation rates in the Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences were highest for 2022 and 2023. The second figure shows the actual graduation numbers per faculty, which declined during 2023. The establishment of the student success committee, as well as our involvement in the Siyaphumelela project are initiatives designed to improve student success and graduation rates into the future.

The graduation rates and numbers by qualification type over the period of 2019-2023 is tabulated below. The postgraduate diplomas are one-year qualifications and thus the graduation rate is far higher than for other qualifications. Diploma graduations provide the bulk of graduates. The graduation numbers for both the postgraduate diploma and Masters are increasing steadily.

Graduation rates by Qualification Type - Grouping - 2019 - 2023					
Qualification Type - Grouping	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Degrees	41.9%	47.3%	45.8%	39.3%	22.2%
Diplomas and Certificates	13.8%	14.8%	21.2%	25.6%	24.1%
Doctoral	7.8%	15.0%	10.6%	12.0%	8.1%
Masters	12.6%	8.9%	14.5%	20.8%	13.6%

Occasional	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other Postgraduate	85.1%	49.6%	57.6%	82.0%	69.3%
Grand Total	18.8%	17.6%	22.8%	27.2%	24.9%

Student Graduation Number by Qualification Type - Grouping 2019 - 2023					
Qualification Type - Grouping	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Degrees	1 431	748	400	325	190
Diplomas and Certificates	2 426	2 630	3 809	4 567	4 309
Doctoral	9	19	13	15	11
Masters	57	44	60	92	50
Occasional	0	0	0	0	0
Other Postgraduate	206	125	262	342	359
Grand Total	4 129	566	4 544	5 341	4 919

The graduation rate of females is greater than that of males (31% vs 24%) which is opposition to the enrolment figures, the trend of a higher female vs male student success rate is found across the higher education landscape. In 2023 VUT gradated 3025 females and 2316 males.

Student Success

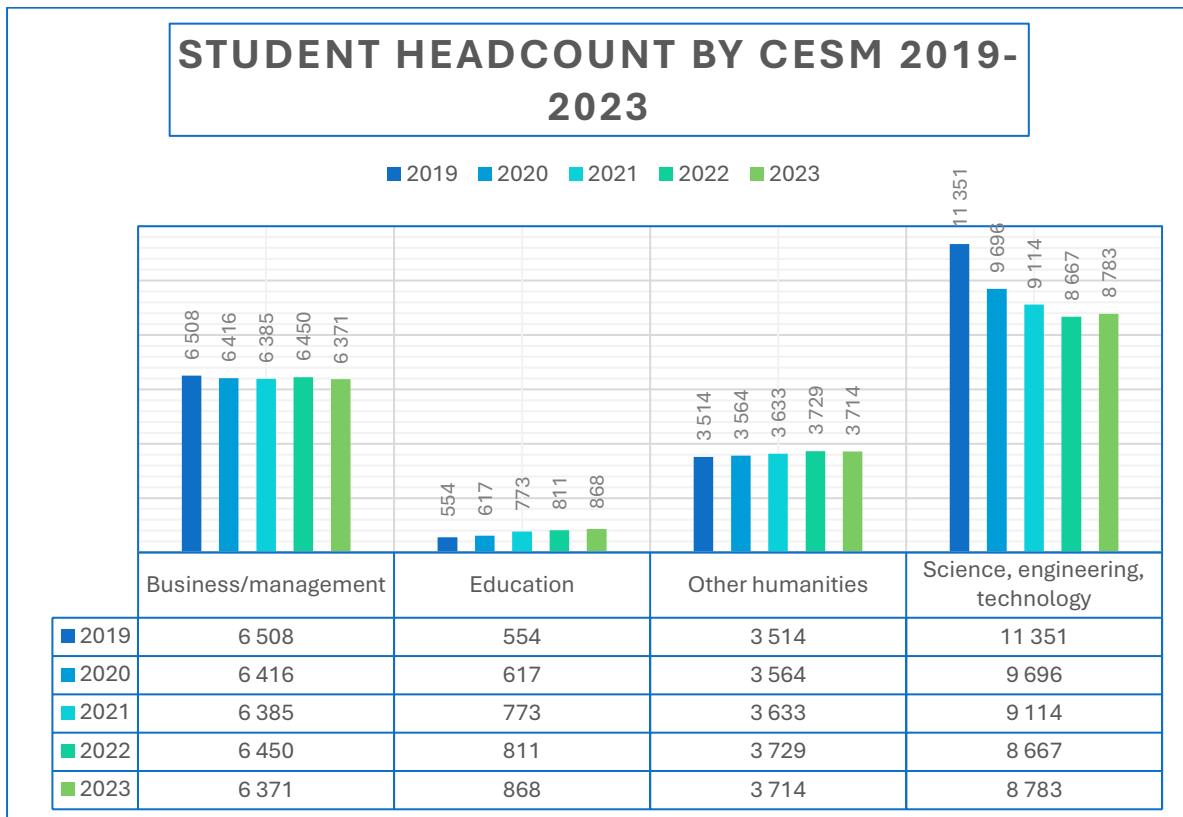
The following figures shows student success rates by race from 2019-2023. Student success rates seem to have stabilized, however the return to campus has had a slight dampening effect. There is no significant difference in success rates across race, However female students have a higher success rate than their male counterparts (89.4% vs. 80.8%). This is reflected in the graduation figures. VUT has established a senate student success committee during 2023, that looks at data to inform student success initiatives. Senate is looking forward to improvement in both student success, graduation and a reduced time to completion as a result.

Success rates by Race 2019 - 2023					
Race Description	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
African	74.0%	84.2%	85.2%	83.4%	82.4%
Coloured	79.7%	82.0%	78.6%	83.2%	77.0%
Indian	83.6%	95.5%	71.2%	79.4%	54.7%
No Information	9.2%	85.1%	100.0%	76.7%	72.1%
White	71.9%	74.9%	75.9%	78.1%	85.0%

Grand Total	74.1 %	84.1 %	85.2%	83.3 %	82.4 %
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Student Full Time Equivalents (FTE) Headcount and CESM category

The figure and table below show the total headcount by CESM category as well as the student FTE data for the period of 2019 to 2023.



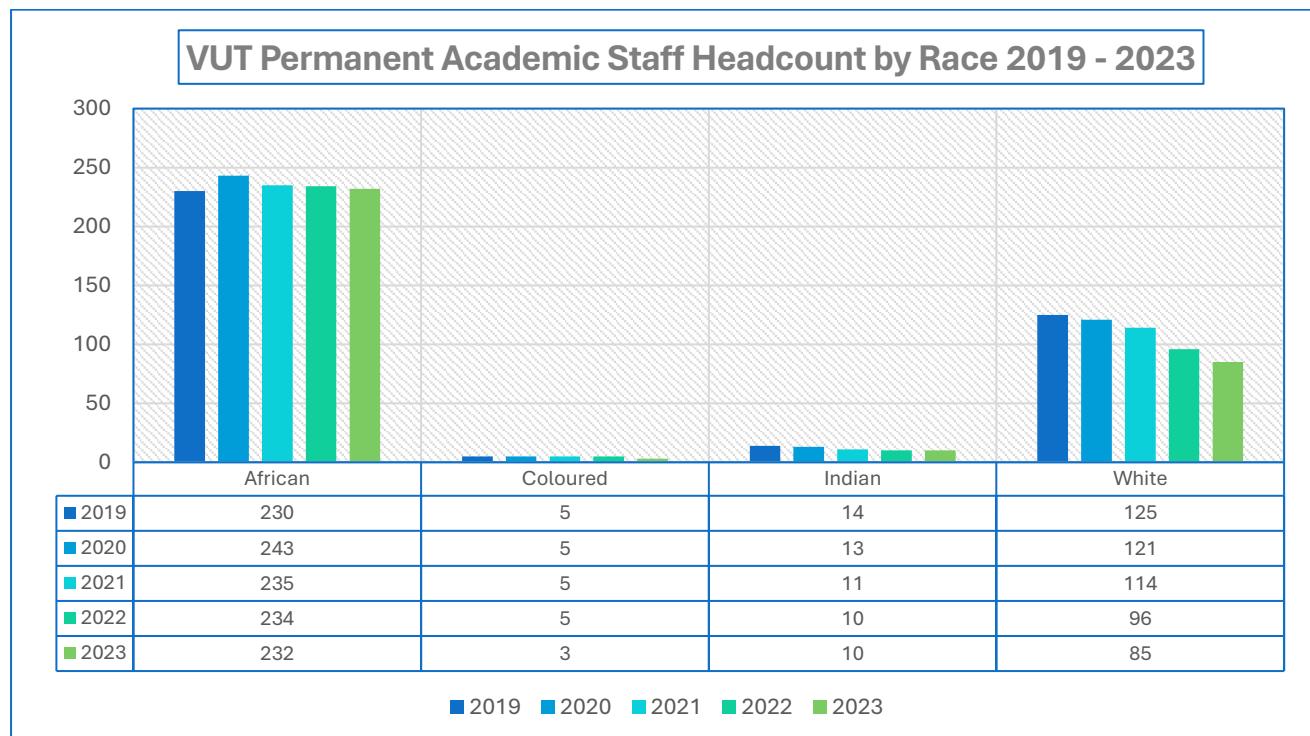
Student FTEs by CESM 2019 - 2023					
CESM category description -> Faculty	Calender Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Business/management	4534	4419	4485	4439	4316
Education	503	605	756	674	762
Other humanities	3738	3603	3625	3639	3797
Science, engineering, technology	6849	6558	6244	5620	6014
Total	15624	15185	15109	14372	14889

The student headcount in terms of both FTE and total number has been steadily increasing in all categories, while there was a decline in the Science Engineering and Technology category, which seems to be recovering. This reflects the national shortage of potential students with the requisite Science, Mathematics and English performance at NSC level as well as yhe lower

study load of SET students. The study load (a measure of the number of modules a student is taking) varies from 65% in Science, engineering, and technology to 97% in other humanities and averages at 73%. The introduction of the extended T&L programme in engineering qualifications has created access and we will monitor the success of these students over the years.

Academic Staff Analysis

VUT uses both permanent and temporary academic staff to fulfil its teaching and learning functions. The total permanent academic staff complement by race is shown in the figure below and has decreased slightly from 2019 to 2023 as depicted in the graph below. The tables below reflect the academic staff profile by race, gender and rank from 2019 to 2023. The total number of permanent lecturers has decreased by 44 and total lecturers by 65 over the period, mainly due to a decrease in temporary teaching staff, specifically at Junior lecture level. This reflects our intention to professionalize our academic staff. The demographics indicate that 71% of the teaching staff are African and 40% are female. This indicates that further attention needs to be given to gender equity issues. The number of professors and associate professors has increased 26 to 31 in the same period; however, the seniority of the instructional and research staff remains a matter that is receiving attention.



VUT Permanent and Temporary Academic Staff Headcount by Race, Gender and Rank 2019 - 2023					
Headcounts	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
African	685	647	572	588	664
Coloured	7	7	7	7	9
Indian	26	23	29	25	28
No Information		1	4	4	4
White	248	224	209	194	196
Headcounts	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Female	411	371	333	328	370
Male	555	531	488	490	531
Headcounts	Calendar Year				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Associate professor	21	19	20	21	26
Junior lecturer	219	188	93	102	100
Lecturer	605	573	592	592	686
Professor	6	6	13	10	9
Senior lecturer	115	116	103	93	80
Grand Total	966	902	821	818	901

Concluding Remarks on the 2023 Senate data analysis

The satisfactory degree credit success rate achieved and improved over the years reflect the work of senate and its subcommittees to improve our teaching and learning, our curriculum and our overall academic quality. The remaining area of concern is under-enrolment specifically in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. Much attention has been given to this in 2023 and it is hoped this will be reflected in our 2024 data. The work of Faculties, the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) and the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) drive the academic activities of the university and the reports reflect progress made during 2023.

FACULTY OF APPLIED & COMPUTER SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION

During the 2023 academic year, the Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences (FACS) continued with blended teaching and learning. All models were offered and completed, and quality assurance measures have been maintained. Research efforts and community engagement projects continued.

The request to officially change the names of three (3) Faculty Departments and transfer the Environmental Sciences program to the Department of Natural Sciences were approved and implemented in November 2023 after Senate approval. The four Departments in FACS now are: The Department of Applied Physical Sciences; The Department of Natural Sciences; The Department of Health Sciences and The Department of Computer Sciences.

Despite continuation of operational challenges staff and students of FACS managed to excel, numerous achievements will be reported as well as external funding attract.

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

During 2023 FACS met 89% of the enrolment targets. As per the approved academic continuity plan, Teaching and learning continued as blended learning. Technology-enabled teaching and learning methods were explored with a strong focus on student success.

The average pass rate for the 2023 academic year was 78% and the success rate was 74% with a Degree Credit Success Rate of 87.3%. Mathematics, Physics, and some Chemistry modules were identified as at-risk modules. Interventional strategies were planned for implementation in 2024.

Three (3) SLPs have been approved and are ready for implementation. Five (5) SLPs have been provisionally approved, and three (3) are awaiting approval from the institution's SLP Advisory Committee.

The Faculty Teaching, Learning and Quality Committee (FTLQC) was established. Each programme established a Programme Teaching, Learning and Quality Committee (community of practice) (PTLQC) to ensure that all curriculum, assessment, development, and quality are approved by PTLQC, reported to the Head of Department (HOD) that presents it to FTLQC for approval.

During 2023 FACS identified numerous Health and Safety risks, consequently all laboratories in the C-block were closed until required renovations are completed. Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) training was arranged for all Technicians in the Faculty. A total of 240 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed and approved.

The Department of Computer Sciences has formed an ICT students club to enable students to compete in Information Technology competitions nationally and internationally. The club accommodates students from all levels of study in the Department of Computer Sciences. Additionally, the Department established its Smart Lab. It has become a central hub for ICT students participating in competitions and staff members engaging in virtual collaborations with other universities.

Students that completed the coursework and are eligible of placement for WIL. All Departments held Advisory Board meetings to establish collaborative inputs from industry and to ensure that programmes are aligned with industry requirements.

The Diploma Agriculture Management was offered on the Vanderbijlpark campus for the first time.

RESEARCH

The FACS increased the research productivity as follows:

- 36 output units were generated during 2023, compared to the 40 output units generated in 2022.
- A total of R 2.452 million in external funding was raised.
- The FACS hosted seven (7) Post-Doctoral Research Fellows.
- Four (4) Adjunct Professors have been appointed to support Postgraduate supervision.
- One (1) female staff member graduated with PhD and two (2) female staff members graduated with Masters in 2023.
- A total of 95 Masters and 46 Doctoral students registered.
- Several research groups were established: Omics, Agriculture and Environmental, Medicinal plants; Cell Biology, Nanotechnology; Sorption; Polymer, ICT education; Mathematics modelling, Health and well-being, and organic Synthesis and Catalysis.
- Five (5) Faculty staff members received recognition awards for Scientific Innovation and Creative Innovation at the Fostering Research & Innovation Function held at the VUT Southern Gauteng Science Park on 8 November 2023. Prof CC Ssemakalu, Prof NA Feto, and Ms MG Nkhi received Scientific Innovation awards; Prof MJ Klink and Dr A Pholosi received Creative Innovation awards.
- A delegation of seven (7) representatives from FACS attended the International Faculty Development Program organised by Chandigarh University in July 2023. This engagement resulted in strengthened research capabilities and robust networking.
- Dr B Sibanda from the Department of Applied Physical Sciences at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) formed part of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on “Neoteric Advancements in Analysis and Applied Mathematics (NA3M)” 2023, which was held at Chandigarh University in India in December 2023. Dr Sibanda presented at the conference.
- The Department of Natural Sciences at VUT co-organised the Futuristic Materials for Sustainable Development Goals conference with the Department of Chemistry in 2023, held at the University of Chandigarh in India in January 2024.

The Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) was committed to ensuring all applications received were reviewed and all ethical standards were adhered to. Timely feedback and

instructions were communicated to applicants. Input and cooperation from all staff were noted, and the committee's smooth operation was ensured.

The two (2) Faculty Owned Entities, namely, VUT water and food testing laboratory (AMBIO) and the Institute for Chemical and Biotechnology (ICBT). The VUT water and food testing laboratory (AMBIO) generated a total income of R337 786,37 for 2023. The VUT water and food testing laboratory (AMBIO) launched the VUTAQUA prepared still water bottle initiative. ICBT secured R3 788 100 from the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment (GDARD) and procured laboratory instruments to R2 928 696,13 towards obtaining cannabis laboratory accreditation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CE)

During 2023 FACS once again focused on CE and engaged in numerous activities:

- Establishing a university-led Tutoring Program for High Schools in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Education- Sedibeng East District D7, within the Vaal, focusing on Mathematics and Physical Sciences.
- Prof SJ Modise and Dr ME Monapathi held workshops on the importance of wetlands in the community of Iketsetseng.
- The VUT water and food testing laboratory (AMBIO) sponsored the VUT soccer team with 48 bottles of water.
- Four (4) representatives from FACS joined a delegation to Rhodes University in Grahamstown as a benchmarking initiative. The insights gained from this exercise have expanded the delegation's understanding of effective CE practices.
- The Department of Natural Sciences and CAD have joined forces to amplify the learning opportunities available to Grade 12 learners at Rus-ter-Vaal High School in Vereeniging.
- Representatives from the Department of Natural Sciences attended the launch of the National Science Week (NSW) at University of Venda and subsequently, offered the Science Week at VUT
- The Department of Computer Sciences hosted thirty-five (35) Grade twelve (12) students from Suncrest High School by assisting them with university applications, with VUT being the first option.
- The Department of Health Sciences organised the Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Seminar with the help of the Advancement Department and other Departments within the FACS and the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. The event featured Ms Refilwe Buthelezi, a registered Professional Engineer (PrEng), as the keynote speaker. The Midvaal Municipality generously sponsored this year's event; the seminar is designed to empower young female students to take on STEM subjects in school. The event offered schoolgirls an opportunity to receive motivation from prominent women in STEM fields.

- The Institute of Chemical and Biotechnology and Chemistry Incubator (CHEMIN) trained (8) Small, Medium, and Micro enterprises (SMMEs) members from the Sebokeng Community on selected detergent manufacturing.

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Three (3) Senior Lecturers were promoted to Associate Professor positions, two (2) Lecturers were promoted to Senior Lecturer positions, and one (1) Technician was promoted to a Senior Technologist position.
- Top Achievers awards were given to ten (10) FACS students for their outstanding performance in the 2022 academic year at a ceremony held by CAD on 12 May 2023.
- New national and international collaborations were established, with the signing of five (5) Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and eight (8) Service Level Agreements (SLAs).
- The Faculty received R7 382 000 in external funding from the Clinical Training Grant (CTG).
- 10 IT professionals from the Department of Computer Sciences received professional certification from the Institute of Chartered IT Professionals (ICITP), confirming them as body members and Certified IT Professionals.
- Dr Z Nate, a Chemistry Lecturer and Researcher in the Department of Natural Sciences was listed in the Mail and Guardian's top 200 young South Africans 2023 under the education category.
- Two (2) Diploma in Information Technology students achieved third position in the prestigious Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) Future Skills Challenge.
- An Advanced Diploma student from the Department of Health Sciences secured second position at the IKO Nakamura Kyokushin Karate Tournament at the Vosloorus Civic Centre.

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID

Most of the students in the FACS were financially assisted by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). A small but significant number of students do receive bursaries from the private sector (ex. Ampath, Lancet, ESKOM). Three (3) NDT students received bursaries from SISA De-Tect unit Inspection, Gammatech NDT Supplies and Zwane Inspection. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Two Roads Trading and VUT on Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) collaboration was finalised and signed during a ceremony held on 11 December 2023. Two Roads Trading, with its subsidiary Integrity NDT, settled tuition fees for three students, which amounted to over R120 000.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED AND ADDRESSED

The faculty Safety, Health, and Environment (FSHE) committee continues to encounter challenges, particularly regarding the slow response from the Occupational Health and Safety office. Requests for signs have been delayed, and several safety issues, including a broken fire hose, empty fire extinguishers, and locked emergency exit doors, have not been addressed. Additionally, there is a need for more fire horns, first aid kit refills, and clear protocols for student insurance claims. The maintenance department's response has also been sluggish.

Research within our Faculty remains a challenge. The power outages compromise the consumables that require a cold chain to maintain their integrity despite the availability of a generator. The ordering of consumables has remained a challenge rooted in the application of policy and the lack of enough capacity at the SCM. Postgraduate students other than those in the Chemistry and Biotechnology program do not have any allocated sitting spaces. The intake of postgraduate students at both a Master's and Doctoral level remained low in 2023. Examiners are not paid on time, thus delaying the return of dissertations and theses.

To address the low enrolment in the NDT Diploma, a VUT NDT Showcase was held, and influential industry partners hosted it. They were exposed to the program's content, the available infrastructure, and the students' experiences with the program. Positive feedback and commitment to collaborate with VUT were received after the event.

In 2023, the VUT Water & Food Testing Laboratory encountered several hurdles. Firstly, procurement of essential items like labels and equipment proved sluggish and costly due to steep prices charged by suppliers. The lengthy process of obtaining quotes and making purchases disrupted the lab's operations, creating challenges in maintaining efficiency. Secondly, budgetary constraints prevented the lab from setting aside funds for supplies and equipment maintenance, forcing them to rely solely on their income to sustain operations. Lastly, the section faced difficulties accessing vehicles from the Motor Fleet Department for sample collection services. Issues such as unresolved fuel payments, flat batteries, and vehicle licensing complications hindered the lab's ability to serve its clients promptly and effectively. These obstacles posed significant challenges for the lab in fulfilling its mission and supporting its clientele.

LIMITATIONS ON ACCESS TO CERTAIN COURSES

There is a need for more postgraduate supervisors and promoters in the FACS. There is also a need for more research laboratories to conduct research and auditoriums to teach students. The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and South African Nursing Council (SANC) determine the intake of students for Bachelor of Health Science in Medical Laboratory Sciences and Bachelor of Nursing. Thus, the number of students in these programmes is lower

than in other programmes. Lack of funding for Advanced Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma students is impacting enrolments to these programmes negatively.

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The FACS plans to improve the operations of the faculty through:

- Inspiring change using the FACS strategic plan.
- Effectively manage and monitor the established faculty committees and incorporate the roles and responsibilities of each member into their performance contracts and workloads.
- Conducting various in-house faculty workshops for staff members.
- Implementing Good Laboratory Practise (GLP) in all laboratories and implement ISO standards.
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures for all activities within the faculty.
- Implementing the approved SLPs and identify and develop more to enhance third-stream income.
- All curricula will be reviewed during 2024 to ensure alignment to latest development in industry.

CONCLUSION

The FACS managed to ensure teaching, learning, research, and community engagement continue during 2023 at a satisfactory level. Despite challenges the faculty strived toward excellence and had an effective strategic planning session to align the faculty's operations with the 2033+ VUT strategy. Reflective review of 2023 informed FACS improvement plan going forward.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

BACKGROUND

The Faculty of Engineering & Technology (FE&T) is a large faculty in the university with a student population of 6 273 in 2023.

The Faculty comprises of four departments, namely:

- Department of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering (CME)
- Department of Civil Engineering (CE)
- Department of Electrical Engineering which consist of: Electronic Engineering, Power Engineering, Process Control and Computer Systems Engineering (EE)
- Department of Industrial Engineering & Operations Management and Mechanical Engineering (IEOMME)

Prof Khaled Abou-El-Hossein assumed the role of the Executive Dean of the Faculty, commencing from 1 June 2023. The Faculty went through a number of changes in its leadership:

- Prof A. Alugongo was appointed as Acting Research Professor responsible for FRIC.
- Dr K. Motsetse was appointed as Acting HoD of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering.
- Ms T van Wyk was appointed as Acting HoD of IEOMME.

ENROLMENT NUMBERS

The table below presents the Faculty's breakdown of 2023 student headcounts across all qualification levels. In total, the Faculty enrolled 6273 students, with 6057 being undergraduates and 216 postgraduates (including Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctorates).

Table: Registered qualification headcounts

QUALIFICATION	Chemical & Metallurgical Eng	Civil Engineering	Electrical Engineering	IEOMME	TOTAL
Diploma & NDip	1113	659	1715	1845	5332
AD & BTech	181	38	201	305	725
PGD	8	6	-	42	56
Masters	34	13	47	19	113
Doctorate	26	5	8	8	47
TOTAL	1362	721	1971	2219	6273

The Faculty's enrolment plan targets for first time qualification enrolments vs the actual headcount of the first time enrolments for a qualification is depicted in the table below.

Table: Headcount enrolment targets vs actuals

Qualification	Target First Intake	Actual First Intake
Diploma	1502 (FTEN)	1581 (FTEN)
Advanced Diploma	665	512
PGD	268	48
Masters	57	31
Doctorate	16	24

A total headcount of 1581 first years enrolled in January 2023, exceeding the targeted FTEN quota of **1 502** students. Notably, the target enrolment percentage for Advanced Diplomas (AD) rose to 79% in 2023, a significant increase from 64% in 2022, with the actual intake consisting of **512** AD students.

Postgraduate Diplomas (PGDs) were introduced in January 2022, with the actual intake for PGDs reaching 48 students in 2023, reflecting a target percentage of 18% compared to 13% in 2022. Moreover, the enrolment figures for Masters and Doctoral degrees within the Faculty have shown consistent growth. In 2023, a total headcount of **113** students were enrolled in Masters programs, while **47** students were enrolled in Doctoral programs.

The following table provides an overview of the total graduations for each level within the Faculty of Engineering & Technology (FE&T) in 2023. In total, 1189 students graduated in 2023.

Table: Total graduations in 2023

Qualification	Autumn Graduations	Spring Graduations	December Graduations	Total
National Diploma	98	68	-	166
Diploma	424	265	-	689
Baccalareus Technologiae	45	13	-	58
Advanced Diploma	170	44	-	214
Postgraduate Diploma	16	8	-	24
Masters in Technologiae	17	-	-	17
Masters	11	-	8	19
PhD	-	-	2	2
TOTAL	781	398	10	1 189

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In 2023, all teaching and learning activities followed a blended learning model, integrating both online and campus-based face-to-face tuition and assessment methodologies, including laboratory studies.

The FE&T has established a Teaching, Learning, and Quality Assurance Committee (TL&QAC), led by Dr. Motsetse. This committee oversees the adherence to established teaching, learning, and quality assurance standards, reports any deviations, and works towards enhancing the overall quality of education.

National Diploma programs had a final achievement deadline of 31 December 2023, aligning with SAQA requirements for the phase-out of non-aligned qualifications. Assistance was provided to National Diploma students to assist them with completion of remaining modules. In cases where applicable, special examinations were arranged to expedite the process; and special arrangements were made to include the student who submitted their P2 late in 2023. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has approved the offering of extended/foundation programs within the FE&T from the 2021 academic year onward. These extended programs aim to establish a solid foundation for first-year students, aiding them in managing their academic workload effectively. The curriculum comprises fully foundational modules, supplemented with a few augmented first-year regular modules. The first offering of these extended programs occurred in 2023, with a total enrolment of **257** students.

SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGHS

In November 2023, the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) notified the faculty that the below listed programs have been cleared of deficiencies and have been granted full accreditation until the next regular cycle. Consequently, they will not be included in the interim visit scheduled for 15 – 16 February 2024:

- Adv Diploma in Engineering in Civil Engineering
- Diploma in Engineering in Civil Engineering
- Adv Diploma in Engineering in Metallurgical Engineering
- Diploma in Engineering in Metallurgical Engineering

RESEARCH

The Faculty has prioritised its focus towards advancing research in critical areas, such as manufacturing, renewable energy and green hydrogen technology, fostering collaborative partnerships with industry leaders in these fields. Furthermore, the Faculty has identified environmental engineering and water treatment as key focal points for research and development.

The Faculty's research staff profile is depicted in the next table. The Faculty aims to enhance female engagement in research endeavours, currently standing at only 20% of the research staff.

Table: Research staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	7	35
Indian	0	0

White	3	4	
Total	10	40	

This table depicts the number of associate professors and full professors in the Faculty.

Table: Number of professors in the Faculty

Race	Associate Professor		Full Professor	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
African	0	6	0	5
Coloured	0	0	0	0
White	0	1	0	0
Total	0	7	0	5

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering Department embarked on an initiative to assist Grade 12 Science and Technology learners of Lekoa Shandu Secondary School in Sharpeville in applying for placement of study at VUT. The department elected Social and Outreach Committee (SOC) members whose mandate, amongst others, was to identify and facilitate projects involving the immediate community and mobilise the department in meeting the needs of the community. The SOC has thus facilitated outreach and community engagement events from 2017 to date, and the staff have participated in meaningful projects aimed at alleviating some of the social ills within our community. The following outreach and community engagements activities have been organised by the department: Gala Dinner 2023 (to serve as platform for further engagement with partners) and the Thuto Lore Secondary School and Lekoa Shandu Secondary School 2023 outreach projects.

The Civil Engineering department launched a pilot project in Sebokeng Township, Sedibeng District Municipality. The project involves a partnership with a consortium of companies in the Built Environment domain to use locally available resources to develop models and intellectual property (IPs) that can be used to uplift the community e.g. Alternative building materials, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in treatment of portable water etc.

Within the Department of Electrical Engineering, Prof Nyamupangedengu represented VUT in contributing to establishing the DHET Advanced Diploma for TVET lecturers. He wrote the module on “Method of teaching electrical engineering”. The programme was recently launched by the deputy minister of HET: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/templates/news-archive-item/campus-news/2023/october/a-brighter-future-for-south-africa-ufs-launches-advanced-diploma-in-technical-vocational-training>.

The IEOMME department requested lecturers to identify a community problem and develop a solution guide to assist learners from neighbouring schools. The lecturers will use the guide to demonstrate solutions of the problem to the identified community. A community engagement event took place at a high school in Limpopo where staff members assisted with the setup of their devices and computers and the use of technology in online learning and interaction.

RELATIONSHIP WITH INDUSTRY

The faculty relationship with industries has grown from strength to strength through well-organised Advisory Committee meetings where various candidates from the industry have been invited to serve as members of the board.

The Civil Engineering Department has strong collaborations with Lafarge South Africa, the Department of Water and Sanitation, CSIR, Stefanutti Stocks, Tekfalt Binders, Water Research Commission and Transnet.

Within the Electrical Engineering department, through the VUT Telkom Centre of Excellence and the Centre for Alternative Energy, strong collaboration is ongoing with Telkom and ATC (American Tower Company). The total research funding for these centres are sponsored by these companies.

The Chemical & Metallurgical Engineering Department conducted Plant visits at IngrainSA and Seriti New Vaal Colliery for S4 students.

The IEOMME Department has collaborated with two companies (CBI Electric/African Cables and Samancor) to upskill some of their production personnel by training them in the National Diploma in Operations Management. The Department has a MemMOU with TTI that is in the final stages of approval. Several Industrial Engineering students will receive intensive training in the processes involved in the manufacturing of shoes. This will follow three months practical training in the COFE (Centre of Footwear Entrepreneurship) at the Science Park, and after that, they will receive one (1) month hands-on training in a production shoe factory in Durban (Labora Shoes). Hereafter, they should be highly employable in the shoe industry in the fields of quality control, supervision, middle management, productivity managers and will be typically applying the following techniques: work study, facility layout and line balancing, costing, quality control, and quality assurance etcetera. The main objective of the COFE is to incorporate the program into Industrial Engineering allowing students to specialise. The department has ongoing relationships with companies who provide student internships and bursaries.

EXTERNAL COLLABORATIONS

The Civil Engineering department has a collaboration through a common MoU between VUT and Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology, Kenya (MMUST). Other collaborations in line with the corresponding MoUs include: MoU signed between VUT and the Somalia National University; Research partnership with the Sekhukhune District Municipality; and Research partnership with Lafarge South Africa.

Within the Chemical & Metallurgical Engineering department, the following external collaborations have been established: Masters project in Friction Stir Welding with UNISA (Prof Veeredhi Vasudeva - Mechanical Engineering Department); HYRAX Metal Printing Machine commissioned at the Technology station in May 2023 - NRF NEP funding recipient Prof W.R.Matizamhuka; ABU Zaria, Nigeria – Currently hosting one visiting researcher.

F'SASEC

The main activities undertaken by F'SASEC encompass the following:

- Offering of an Industrial Installation short course.
- Online training, “Teachers Mission”, was conducted with support from Schneider. The focus was the drafting of a resume and preparing for an interview for F'SASEC students.
- Youth summit held by the Midvaal Municipality: F'SASEC made an exhibition stand at Midvaal Community church with full participation by FSASEC as an exhibitor.
- Community engagement with Suncrest Highschool.
- 2024 Student recruitment for the F'SASEC one-year course.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the report highlights significant progress across student enrolment, teaching and learning and community engagement, underscoring our commitment to academic excellence and societal impact.

FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Human Sciences is diverse, wide and ideally placed for transdisciplinary disciplines. As such the Faculty seeks to position itself as a leader in research, teaching, and community engagement in a transformed manner. During the year under review, it contributed

significantly to the university's strategic mission and vision as contained in the 2033+ Strategy. It comprises of four departments that are: Education, Tourism and Integrated Communication, Legal Sciences and Visual Arts and Design. The four departments offer 18 qualifications.

REGISTRATION

Table: Registered qualification headcounts

Department	Undergraduate headcounts	Postgraduates		Total
		Masters	Doctoral	
Legal Sciences	2 508	0	0	2508
Tourism and Integrated Communication	1517	20	5	1542
Education	843	62	0	905
Visual Arts and Design	712	9	1	722
Total	5580	91	6	5677

Our aspiration to change the human condition is supported by an outstanding qualification offering that attracts students mostly from across the SADC region. The faculty had 5677 enrolments in total, 5580 of whom were undergraduate students including advanced and postgraduate diplomas. Our focus on improving postgraduate levels can be seen in the number of enrolments of 98 in 2023 of whom 91 were for master's studies, 6 for Doctoral studies.

In its endeavour to achieve its academic performance and excellence, students' pass and success rate is presented in the next table:

Table: Student Pass and Throughput Rates from 2021-2023

	2021		2022		2023	
	Pass Rate	Success Rate	Pass Rate	Success Rate	Pass Rate	Success Rate
EDUCATION						
Total all Campuses	95%	90%	95%	94%	96%	92%
TOURISM AND INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION						
Total all Campuses	93%	91%	100%	80%	94%	94%
LEGAL SCIENCES						
Total all Campuses	94%	89%	93%	89%	94%	90%
VISUAL ARTS AND DESIGN						
Total all Campuses	81%	81%	89%	82%	86%	82%
Total all Departments	91%	88%	94%	86%	93%	90%

The faculty achieved an average of 93% pass rate and 90% success rate which is relatively higher as compared to 2021. The faculty consistently continued to identify those modules that are at risk and plan intervention strategies to mitigate student challenges, hence gradual increase of success rate.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The faculty adopted its revised blended learning approach that the university suggested. It created access to more learner and blended learning provided opportunities to learn in a variety of different learning preferences. The lectures and students also embrace the contact classes where practical's took place in a face-to-face manner. Moreover, all exit modules were conducted face to face.

RESEARCH IN THE FACULTY

Although the picture looks promising, the Faculty of Human Sciences has a small pool of active researchers.

Table: Research and Development and Number of Articles per Department

Departments	Education	Tourism and Integrated Communication	Legal Sciences	Visual Arts and Design	Dean's office
Journal articles	15	43	0	0	6
Chapters in books	0	28	0	0	0
Conference presentations	0	2	3	0	0
Total	15	71	3	0	6

Unaudited results for 2023 show that the Faculty of Human Sciences accumulated about 26.038 units from journal outputs, 1.75 units from Conference Proceedings and 6.9416 units from book chapters. The faculty contributed about 34.73 units, a growth of 10 units from the previous year. This is a consequence of positive spin-offs from the faculty's intervention over the past years, which saw the recruitment and appointment of 4 Post-Doctoral fellows and 2 Adjunct Professor Appointments, who all contributed to the increase in research outputs. The faculty also benefitted from its efforts in targeted writing retreats and webinars aimed at the capacity-building of emerging researchers.

The faculty has three NRF-rated researchers, one in the Department of Education (C3), Tourism and Integrated Communication – 2 NRF-rated researchers (1- Y2 and one C2) who are expected to show up the research going forward. The faculty has, in the past year, also developed a Centre of Excellence, which was approved by SRIC and is waiting for funding to materialise.

There are plans to continue with writing retreats and recruitment of post-doctoral fellows to ensure research output stability and growth. The faculty will seek to intensify to get outputs from Post Graduate Students. The success of research in the faculty lies in retaining and maintaining PhD holders and productive professors in the department.

IMPROVING STAFF QUALIFICATION

The faculty has been making a determined effort to ensure that new staff members who are appointed have at least a doctoral qualification, and furthermore encourage existing staff to improve their qualifications to master's and doctoral level. In 2022, the faculty saw 13 staff members registered for their PhDs and 9 for master's degrees, and 4 staff members completed their Master's degree. The faculty will continue and is committed to support staff who want to improve their qualifications.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The faculty is committed to social impact through community engagement programmes. The Law clinic remains the flagship of the faculty. The Law Clinic is involved in a number of community engagement programmes such as the Annual Land Rights event; the Annual Wills Week; Mandela Day (visits to orphanages and old age homes); Human Rights Day etc. The Law Clinic offers free legal services to the indigent members of the Emfuleni community with the focus being on Family Law matters such as Domestic Violence, Maintenance, Divorces and Children Court matters. The means test is used to determine whether a person qualify for free legal services. Mapheo project (Hospitality staff) – started in November 2022 with monthly information sharing sessions about nutrition, vermiculture, composting, utilising leftovers, and recipes. On 7th November 2023, the community attended demonstrations on campus in the M block. Nutrition education posters were developed and will be shared during 2024 with the preschools. The AD in Photography students developed four documentary productions on aspects of Sharpeville heritage, in collaboration with the Sharpeville Tourism and Heritage Association and Kitso Centre. The department of Education worked closely with the DoBE in the deployment of our student teachers and weekend lessons. Some of B Ed students were working with the Education Districts in the Vaal for weekend lessons.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

The departmental of education was able to get over eighteen million rands from DoBE through the Funza Lushaka Bursaries. The new qualification, the Postgraduate Diploma in Safety Management was fully accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE). The Department of Legal Sciences publishes the Legal Beagle monthly on e-communications. The purpose of the Legal Beagle is to enlighten the university community on various legal, policing and safety

management topical issues. In July 2023 students successfully hosted an activation for campus TV downloads, the event was held at Amphitheatre. The second event was held at Quest Conference Estate, in partnership with Emfuleni Municipality. The aim was to facilitate an information sharing and networking opportunity for informal traders and SMMEs.

Fine Art hosted two webinars titled “Conversation with SADC curators: flagship project”. WEBINAR BRINGS TOGETHER SADC CURATORS TO FOSTER CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONS AND DEVELOP VISUAL ARTS FIELD IN SOUTHERN AFRICA and “Conversation with PhD holders: The notion of Doctorateness”. WEBINAR FOCUSES ON PHD JOURNEY AND THE CONCEPT OF DOCTORATENESS IN THE ARTS FIELD. Erasmus+ Grant awarded for the Metaverse Project for which VUT is the African university partner. The grant award announcement was made in December 2023. The project aims to develop awareness around the possibilities offered by XR technologies for various industries as well as develop a MOOC platform for courses on AR, VR and mixed reality applications, design, and development.

CONCLUSION

Despite infrastructural challenges, the faculty successfully implemented its blended learning strategy where we saw high number of students coming back to campus for face-to-face teaching. The faculty's future position looks solid with several staff having master's and PhD qualifications. Investment in postgraduate recruitment and supervision is expected to boost future research outputs. As the faculty grows the hosting of post-Doctoral, adjunct professors and other research fellows can leverage and catapult faculty research position to greater heights. The faculty is humbled by all staff members and students who always put in the time and contributed to the faculty success.

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

FACULTY OVERVIEW

The year 2023 saw the Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS) contributing significantly to the VUT's mission and vision by demonstrating the commitment to raising the standards in its broad spectrum of activities. Growth was registered in most academic areas and operational outcomes, owing to the dedication of the faculty's staff as well as the high demand for most of its programs. The faculty's student headcounts at all program levels are presented in the next Table.

Table: Registered qualification headcounts, 2023

Qualification	Accountancy	Human Resource Man	Logistics & Supply Chain Man	Marketing Retail Bus & Sport Man	Total
Diploma	1601	763	577	1174	4115
AD	160	144	91	122	517
PGD	82	37	19	38	176
Masters	10	39	24	9	82
PhD	0	42	0	4	46
TOTAL	1853	1025	711	1347	4936

The total number of students registered for diploma qualifications in 2023 totalled 4115 across the four departments in the FMS. The largest number of students were registered in the Department of Accountancy (1601), followed by Marketing, Retail Business and Sport Management (1174). The Department of Logistics and Supply Chain Management had the lowest number of diploma students (577).

At the AD level, the faculty noted a decline from a total of 684 (2022) to 517 in 2023 (including 6 BTech) students registered, with the highest number in the Accountancy Department (160). However, a notable increase from 154 in 2022 to 176 PGD students in 2023 was registered in the faculty, with the majority (81) studying within the Accountancy Department. The large number of AD and PGD students in the Accountancy Department could be attributed to the availability of funding provided by the BankSETA and the INSETA.

A total of 128 students were registered for various master's and doctoral degrees offered by the faculty. Most of these students (81) were registered in the HRM Department, which provides the generic Master of Management in Business Administration degree that attracts students from various disciplinary fields.

In sum, the faculty had a total of 4936 students registered from the undergraduate to postgraduate level, thereby contributing to the satisfaction of expected student enrolment targets at VUT.

The year 2023 was COVID-19-free, which facilitated the meeting of enrolment quotas set for the faculty and strengthened staff efforts to ensure students' success. A total of 11 students graduated with master's degrees in the autumn graduation, while eight graduated in the summer graduations. Of note are the five doctoral qualifications awarded during the autumn

graduations and two in the spring graduations. 18 master's degrees and three doctorates were awarded in the Autumn graduations. During the summer graduations, one master's and two doctoral qualifications were awarded, respectively, in 2023.

The total graduations per each level for the FMS in 2023 are indicated in the table below.

Table: Total Graduations in 2023

Qualification	Number Of Graduates
PhD: Business Administration	5
Masters	9
Postgraduate Diploma:	112
Baccalareus Technologiae:	11
Advanced Diploma	358
National Diploma	28
Diploma	798
Total number of graduates	1321

In total, 1321 students graduated in 2023, declining marginally from 1423 in 2022. This decrease in graduation numbers is attributed to the high failure rate of students in quantitative (numerate) modules that include mathematical calculations, as well as the introduction of face-to-face assessments in 2023.

TEACHING AND LEARNING MODE

In 2023, teaching, learning and assessments used the blended learning mode, comprising a combination of online and face-to-face (campus-based) tuition. The online model depended on using technologies to facilitate teaching, learning and assessments through virtual platforms, especially the university's official LMS (VUTELA) and other supporting platforms such as email, WhatsApp and Facebook. Face-to-face tuition was conducted in the lecture halls on campus, complemented by office-based consultations. The primary guiding document for teaching, learning and assessments was the faculty's Blended Learning Plan approved by the university's Senate in November 2022. After adopting blended learning, the overall examination success rate for 2023 was 81.48%, slightly higher than the 79.2% achieved in 2022. The faculty further used a combination of continuous assessment (CASS) and exam mode to assess different modules.

RESEARCH

The FMS performed well within the area of research productivity in 2023. Research Reports released in February 2024 show that total outputs for the faculty increased from 23.616 units in 2022 to 36.581 units in 2023. The increase is attributed to the introduction of adjunct researchers and postdoctoral research fellows in 2023, with both groups contributing significantly to research outputs. The summary of research outputs is presented in the next table.

Table: Summary of 2023 Research Outputs

Faculty	Journals	Conference Proceedings	Chapters in Books	Books	Total
Faculty of Management Sciences	23,665	12,916	0	0	36.581

The increase in research outputs was attributed to the dissipation of the COVID-19 pandemic, which ensured that staff members and students could conduct fieldwork to collect research data. Additionally, a large volume of the outputs was credited to the postdoctoral research fellows and adjuncts appointed in the faculty at the start of 2023. Despite the increase in overall research outputs, book chapters and actual books still need to be published by faculty staff members, and capacity development measures are being implemented to change this result.

A postgraduate induction program targeting first-year master's and doctoral students was run from April to September 2023. It supported them with the knowledge and skills required to develop research proposals for their studies. All these students were allocated supervisors (some internal and a few external) who guided them in all stages of their studies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2023, the faculty steadily managed and supported the VUT ENACTUS Team, which participated in and excelled in the National Competitions held in Gauteng in July. The results are as follows;

- i. The Enactus VUT team (presenting Fooddable) came out third at the 2023 Enactus South Africa National Exposition. The prize money was R5000.
- ii. The Enactus VUT team (presenting Fooddable) came out second in the 2023 Thematic Competition. The prize money was R1000.

- iii. MyTherapySpace came out second in the 2023 Enactus Refocus Accelerator Challenge sponsored by Harmony - Prize money: R5000.
- iv. Kiddo Learn came out as a finalist in the 2023 Enactus MTN Digital Innovation Challenge - Prize money: R25000 (to develop solution).

In addition, each department proceeded with its unique flagship CE program, which faculty management monitored throughout the year.

- Dr Molefi Olifant Project : The Department of Accountancy partnered with the Dr Molefi Olifant Secondary School in Bophelong for community engagement in the following areas:
 - Financial Accounting lecturers conducted accounting classes for Grade 10 -12 learners.
 - Statistics lecturers conducted Mathematics classes for Grade 10 -12 learners.
 - Career guidance
- An MOU was signed between the VUT and Gauteng Enterprise Propeller to develop SMEs in the local community. Four workshops were presented in 2023.
- The HRM Department continued its community engagement program involving the Tabita Care Centre for Mental Health. The program involved employee wellness activities targeted at the staff at the Centre.
- The MRS Department continued with the Tabita Care Centre for Mental Health. However, it focused on two key activities.
 - Facilitated various exercises to improve the physical mobility as well as mental well-being of the residents.
 - Provided recreational activities and an opportunity for students to engage with the residence.
- Facilitated the Suncrest High School visit on the 2nd of November, 2023. The school management highlighted that the VUT has primarily focused on ICT and engineering but neglected the Business Management section. The Department of ICT is catalyzing a MOU, and the FMS endeavours to be co-opted.
- The LSCM Department participated in a Career Guidance program in which they held career day events in two schools in Mpumalanga on the 15th of August, 2023.

SETA PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships with various SETAs yielded significant gains for the faculty in 2023. At least 77 students were funded to the tune of R5.5m by the W&RSETA in 2023. The INSETA also provided R3.6m, which benefited 70 students, while the BANKSETA provided R5.5m, benefiting 102 students.

Visiting Professors from International Universities

In 2023, three professors from International Universities visited the faculty. The details are as follows;

- i. The Department of Marketing, Retail Business, and Sport Management hosted Prof Ronnie Gao from Trinity Western University in Canada in May 2023. He networked with Marketing staff and students and conducted a public lecture entitled “Majority and Minority in Society: A Consumer-Centric Perspective”. He was also a guest speaker at the VUT International African Research Day on 29 May 2023.
- ii. The Department of Logistics and Supply Chain Management hosted Prof Joyendu Bhadury from Radford University in the USA in June 2023. He engaged with staff and postgraduate students, offering various workshops where best practices were shared.
- iii. Prof Pat Obie from Perdue University, USA, visited FMS in July - August 2023. He conducted various staff and student development workshops and presented a Public Lecture entitled “Personal Financial Planning Amid High Inflation, Exchange Rate Risk, and Geopolitical Uncertainties”.

Career Days

- Accountancy held career days throughout 2023, Sage partnered with ACCA and TymeBank for a VUT campus session themed “Coffee on Campus”. And focused on contemporary developments in the digital accountancy field. Additionally, the Southern African Institute of Government Auditors (SAIGA) hosted an interview skills training workshop along with various potential employers.
- Marketing, Retail Business, and Sport Management hosted a Retailing Career Day, and a visit from W&RSETA stakeholders, as well as a Career Day at Lekoa Shandu High School in Sharpeville on the 19th of May 2023.
- Logistics Students Conference was hosted in the Desmond Tutu Great Hall, with four industry speakers (VUT alumni).

Staff Development

Staff development workshops were organised to increase research capacity within the faculty. Postgraduate supervisor's workshops were held, enlisting the services of the faculty's visiting professors. These were Prof J Bhadury, who visited the faculty in June and Prof P Obi, who visited in August 2023. Three staff members graduated with master's degrees, and one graduated with a doctoral degree in 2023. The faculty's executive dean, Prof C Mafini, completed an Executive Development program with the University of the Free State. Prof N Dlodlo, the HoD of the Department of MRS, participated in the HELM Women in Leadership

Programme. Dr E Strydom, a senior lecturer in the MRS Department, completed Phase 1 of the Foundations of Leadership programme (HELM), while Dr S Tesnear, also a senior lecturer in the same department, participated in Phase 2 of the Foundations of Leadership programme (HELM). Staff drawn from the MRS Department attended and completed the Assessment for/of Learning workshop hosted by Rhodes University in September 2023. Dr Fathima Mahomed, a senior lecturer in the HRM Department, completed the prestigious Teaching Advancement and Universities (TAU) Fellowship program in September 2023. A total of 13 staff members also participated in the License to Teach program.

CONCLUSION

The achievements stated in this report were realised through the efforts of the faculty's staff. Staff should be commended as they had to face numerous institutional challenges, chiefly the lack of resources, dilapidated infrastructure, and instability at the top levels of the university. However, their unwavering dedication to the academic project ensured that the faculty continued to operate, albeit in such turbulent conditions. With the university geared towards re-establishing institutional stability in 2024, more significant achievements can be expected from the faculty going into the future. The faculty's students should also be commended for their devotion to their studies and cooperation throughout the 2023 academic year, which ensured the year was a major success.

CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

During the academic year 2023, the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) played a key role in realizing the academic project at the University. Our interventions, support programmes, initiatives and faculty partnerships are all intended to maximise the possibilities of student retention and success. Our ultimate focus is thus on contributing substantially to the reduction of dropouts, and the improvement in the module pass rate and the qualification throughput rate. The intellectual and professional development of our students is entrusted into our care, and it is our responsibility to provide cutting-edge interventions, including academic support initiatives to maximise the deployment of individual learning energies, initiatives to deepen and broaden the pervasive and sophisticated use of academic technologies, and opportunities for academic staff development in pursuit of profoundly effective teaching practice.

The strategic driver of CAD involved the widening and the deepening of the Centre's impact on student success, as well as establishing a network internal and external to VUT, i.e., being part of Siyaphumelela network. CAD also manages the implementation and evaluation of University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) resources and projects as well as the National Programmes such as Next Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP), Nurturing Emerging

Scholars Programme (NSEP), Future Professors Programme (FPP), Higher Education Leadership and Management Programme (HELMP), and Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU).

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Academic Staff Induction - The Academic Induction focuses on two themes - teaching at a University of Technology and promoting student success in cooperating presentations by units that contribute to the role of academics, research, and community engagement. During the 2023 academic year, 25 academic staff attended the Academic Induction Programme meant for the newly appointed academics.

Teaching Advancement at Universities - The Fellowship Programme seeks to build a cadre of teaching fellows in a wide range of disciplines over a 12-month long programme, involving block week contact sessions, individual projects in own teaching and learning settings, group projects, and reflective reports; participants are drawn from all South African universities. Dr Muntuwenkosi Chili, the Executive Director: Centre of Academic Development and Dr Fathima Mahomed, a Senior Lecturer within the Department of Human Resource Management are the latest from the University to be awarded recognition as the Teaching Advancements at Universities Fellows in 2023 from the TAU 4 cohort.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning - As part of SoTL at VUT, 15 academic members embarked on writing a book under the supervision of Dr. Pitso on Society 5.0. This event was embraced by international authors who have contributed strongly to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the past years.

Lunchtime Seminars - The first-semester lunchtime seminars were conducted successfully. Below are the topics that were covered during the lunchtime seminar: Using ChatGPT in higher education; Facilitation Skills; African spiritual and academic well-being; Managing workplace anxiety; Staff evaluation. On-line assessment of and for Student Learning in Higher Education Offered by CHERTL included Curriculum development, portfolio development, assessment in higher education.

License to Teach - this programme is aimed at providing VUT academic staff with support to enhance and improve the quality of teaching. LTT has six key themes, such as: Induction to VUT, Effective learning design for programmes/courses, learning from well-designed activity-based educational resources, Creating authentic assessment tasks, Application of knowledge and work-integrated learning (WIL); and Harnessing technology in teaching and learning.

VUT Teaching and Learning Conference and Excellence Awards - These two events were held successful last aimed at contributing to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices at VUT and in celebrating and acknowledging excellence.

The **African Languages Development Unit** had put in place strategic initiatives that focuses on the development of African languages in different forms within VUT. The activities range from development of glossaries, provision of translation and editing services, provision of Lecture Videos and other training.

STUDENT ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Student Academic Development and Support is a crucial facet of educational ecosystems, encompassing a spectrum of initiatives designed to enhance students' learning experiences and academic achievements.

Student Success Workshops - Academic Advising success workshops are facilitated by faculty advisors for a group of identified students. Topics are relevant to the student life cycle and are geared towards the holistic development of students by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and support needed to excel academically, personally, and professionally. Academic advisors were also available to offer one-on-one.

Tutor Development Programme - The purpose of the tutor development programme is to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of tutors at the Vaal University of Technology. The programme aims to provide professional development opportunities for tutors to improve their teaching abilities and support their students' learning needs effectively. A total of 38 tutors have been appointed in the four faculties from the UCDP funding.

First-Year Experience - *Award Ceremony for the 2022 first-year student top achievers* - The award ceremony for the 2022 first-year student top achievers took place on the 12th of May 2023 in the African Language's Building Auditorium. 41 Top achieving students were awarded across the faculties. In attendance, we had the parents and/or guardians. *Communities of practice workshops for staff teaching first-year students* were conducted during the year 2023.

National Student Engagement Surveys - Beginning University Survey of Student Engagement (BUSSE), VUT BUSSE was administered to first year students. Although the VUT student participation rate was low, and the study sample was not representative of the undergraduate student population, the feedback report provided a useful framework that can enable practitioners to enhance their practices toward increased student engagement and success.

Supplemental Instruction Training - Dr Jerry attended the above training at East Tennessee State University (USA) from 22 May to 02 June and was awarded a certificate for completing the course. He presented his lessons learned to CAD colleagues with the possibility of implementation.

Learning Communities / Mentorship - 101 senior students were recruited to serve as mentors for the 2023 academic year. 1539 First-year students were provided with psychosocial support through mentor-mentee sessions.

Writing Lab - through the writing lab, students have been offered student-centered interventions in academic writing and reading by the writing consultants.

Math's, Science, Engineering and Technology - through the MSET, a mathematics diagnostic instrument was developed to assess the competence and/or readiness of the 2023 first year students for the rigorous mathematical and quantitative modules or the requirements of many engineering and science courses. The instrument was developed in conjunction with academics from the Department of Mathematics, Non-destructive Testing and Physics. Tutors were then deployed to assist students on the gaps that were identified through this assessment. A total of three thousand five hundred and thirty-two (**3532**) students sat the assessment.

DIGITAL HUB FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

The function of the eLearning unit at VUT is to facilitate the integration of technology-enhanced teaching and learning frameworks to support student learning through the mediation of lecturers. The ultimate goal for the year 2023 was to: offer focus-based training for all students, train at least 80% of faculty members on the use of grade journey, implement educational technology and faculty blended learning plans including EON-AVR, PTC, and other software, recording of lectures for future use by students and graphic design services, deployment of all online modules to ULTRA version, train academics (90%) and students on Ultra, train at least 90% of academics and students on the use of online assessment proctoring tool.

VUTela Student Training and Support - This training is designed to provide students with essential skills to effectively comprehend and navigate the VUTela platform. The following were undertaken Introduction to blackboard, Blackboard navigation, Assessments, Class collaborates Ultra and collaboration tools, Base Navigation, Course Design & Communication, Grading & Gradebook.

Early Warning System - The primary aim of this project is to identify students who may be at risk and to provide sufficient time for academic staff to implement interventions as early as

possible. A workshop was conducted from 27 - 29 March 2023 to familiarize the team with the system.

The grade journey project - The configuration and testing process for extracting marks from VUTela to ITS has been successfully completed on both systems' testing environments.

SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND SKILLS PROVISION

Progress has been made in the establishment and approval of the SLP Advisory Committee. The SLP Advisory Committee plays an important role in ensuring the successful implementation of policies and oversight for overall compliance on the management of SLPs. About 16 SLPs were approved in 2023.

NEMISA Administration - during 2023 the following training and number were achieved: Digital Literacy-765, IBM Data Science-165, Digital Entrepreneurship-136, Cell Phone Repair-83, IBM Data Science. Other trainings and projects were done included Digital Literacy & Digital Entrepreneurship, CET College, Career Exhibition with Gauteng City Regional Academy (GCRA) in SEBOKENG, NEMISA/BANKSETA Cell Phone Repair Project, KZN CPR Certificate Ceremony.

Work integrated learning: Co-operative education facilitates a unique learning experience that delivers a specific type and level of knowledge, understanding, and skills development through learning by applying theory in practice. The University partners with Industry to facilitate this unique learning process, including: DHET – USAF Presidential Youth Employment Stimulus Initiative, Higher Education Network South Africa (THENSA) Online Entrepreneurship Programme, WACE Global Challenge, Intervarsity Brew Competition, Career fair, Employer Awards Function.

Funding - discretionary grant applications for bursaries and other needs have been submitted and received from various SETAs, i.e., FOODBEV SETA, EWSETA/ESKOM, BANKSETA, HWSETA, AgriSETA, SASSETA, SERVICES SETA, FoodBev SETA, MICTSETA, BEESA, SANBI, CHIETA, IMISEBENZI, PYES, GDARD, SASCE.

Development of MoA's and MoU's - Co-operative Education develops MoA's and MoU's in conjunction with its industry partners for WIL and Graduate placement. The Department also receives MoA's, MoU's and SLA's from various SETA's and other funders for different funding opportunities for students. The following agreements were developed: JHB City Parks, Midvaal Municipality, Zimco.

STAFFING MATTERS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED

Ms Tisetso Mohloai – Post Graduate Diploma in higher education for academic developers, Masters of ICT in Education.

Dr MM Chili – Executive Development Programme (UFS) and recognized as the TAU Fellow.

Dr A Moletsane - PhD: Public Management & Governance, World Association for Co-operative Education (WACE) Global Strategy Council member, Entrepreneurial Development Higher Education (EDHE) Deputy Chairperson.

Dr J Madzimure - Master's in Education and Curriculum Studies from UKZN.

Ms Carlen Dos Santos - 15-year long service award.

Mr Edwin Mabelane - Supplemental Instruction Supervisor Training, Certificate in Academic Advising Professional Development.

Mr Simon Mohlala - Post Graduate Diploma in Management, Certificate in Academic Advising Professional Development.

Ms Peggy Bojabotseha - National Diploma in Human Resource Management.

RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

- Mrs. Sylvia Mkhwanazi was transferred to Co-operative Education from the Secunda campus.
- Mr Matee, Mr Khoza and Mrs Dlamini resigned from VUT.
- Mrs Tisetso Mohloai – Appointed Manager E-Learning
- Mr Jacob Thamaga – Appointed Manager African Languages Development
- Mr Modise had passed on.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

The following conferences and workshops have been attended as part of the professional development:

- Academic Advising presented at the 8th Annual South African National Resource Centre FYE Conference at International Convention Centre, East London. Theme: Understanding and Embracing the Higher Education 'Journey.'
- ChatGPT Seminar
- CREST Brown Bag session online
- HELM SASS Programme
- HELM Engage #15: The state of transformation in South African universities.
- MUT Teaching and Learning Conference
- SAGEA QNE: 2023 Best Practice in Graduate Employment & Candidate Insights

- SAGEA Webinar - Mental Health: The Missing Ingredient for Graduate Success?
- SASSE (South African Survey of Student Engagement) Workshop
- Siyaphumelela Network Workshops
- Siyaphumelela Network Conference from the 28th-30th of June 2023 at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg.
- TAU Fellowship conference
- VUT Sexual Harassment, Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Policy Workshop

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

- Olivia Moitswadi Mahlare, Muntuwenkosi Chili, Jeremiah Madzimure, Investigating the difficulty of grade 11 learners to Solve general equations using identities in Trigonometry. International journal of sciences and research, vol. 79 | no. 12/1 | dec 2023.
- M. Chili & J. Madzimure, Using academic literacy level as a measure for academic preparedness: a university of technology case study, Vol. 79 | No. 2/1 | Feb 2023; DOI:10.21506/j.ponte.2023.2.5.
- Ekwujuru, E.U.; Olatunde, A.M.; Klink, M.J.; Ssemakalu, C.C.; Chili, M.M.; Peleyeju, M.G. Electrochemical and Photoelectrochemical Immunosensors for the Detection of Ovarian Cancer Biomarkers. Sensors 2023, 23, 4106. <https://doi.org/10.3390/s23084106>.
- Analysis of Online Teaching and Learning Strategies and Challenges in the COVID-19 Era: Lessons from South Africa, NETSOL Journal, May 2023, by Jeremiah Madzimure & Anton Pillay.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

University Capacity Development Grant

The University Capacity Development Programme is the Department of Higher Education and Training implementation programme that focuses on advancing the transformation agenda in higher education in three critical areas: student development, staff development and programme/curriculum development. The UCDP draws on multiple resources to enable its implementation. CAD is vested with managing and implementing most of the UCDP project. 2023 marks the last year of the 2021-2023 funding cycle. In May 2023, the final report together with audited report were submitted to DHET. A new plan for the 2024-2026 funding cycle has been developed and submitted to DHET for approval, and we are excited about the potential impact that UCDP funding continue to have on the strategic success of our institution. The projects, titled "Student Academic Development; Quality Teaching and Learning; Research Capacity Development; Digital Design and Collaborative Learning and Management of UCDP" are designed to address key areas crucial to academic excellence.

The next cycle of UCDP funding is due to commence in 2024. The following table details the projects planned for 2024 -2026 pending DHET for approval.

2024 Budget	Project	Planned Activities
R 8 199 630	Improving undergraduate and student success at VUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Year Experience. • Appointment of Tutors, • SI and Mentors (Physio support). • Academic advising. • STEM and Tutor Support. • Language support. • Student tracking, • Student Success Coordinator. • Writing Lab and Academic Literacies
R 3 370 959	Quality Teaching and Learning Towards Academic Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Development training for staff (Pedagogy and teaching skills development, license to teach), • SoTL research. • TL Conference and Excellence Awards. • Licence to Teach. • TAU Participation. • Siyaphumelela Network subscription fee. • Leadership training programmes for staff. • Soft Skills training.
R 3 826 494	Increase Research Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Capacity Development, Enrolment PG studies, • Lecturer replacement, • Focus area, • Developing emerging and women researcher's programme
R 1 554 367	Curriculum Review & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended Learning & Technology, • Purchase of software, • Capacity development, • Business simulation, • E-learning staff plan and run awareness campaigns
R 1 269 950	UCDP Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Grant Management staff • M & E, • Meeting Attendance, • Capacity Development

Implementation of the 2020 Language Policy Framework

VUT had submitted a proposal for funding support under the University Capacity Development Programme for the implementation of the Language Policy plans. This is a clear demonstration that our university is committed to upholding South Africa's rich linguistic diversity and ensuring equitable access to education for all students, regardless of their language background. We believe that language is a powerful tool for promoting inclusivity, enhancing educational outcomes, and fostering national unity.

Siyaphumelela Network – In 2022 VUT joined the Saide Siyaphumelela Network “We Succeed” initiative which seeks to broaden evidence-based postsecondary student success strategies across South Africa. The project aimed at encouraging the use of data analytics to enhance university students' success. Various initiatives are ongoing towards achieving the goals of the project. Through this initiative, in 2023 the Student Success Committee was established and approved. The committee will drive the student success initiatives and plan for the institution.

CONCLUSION

The 2023 academic year has given us an opportunity to plan to integrate the current strategy with the recently reviewed strategy with the aim of improving our services to staff and students. This could include, but is not limited to, relooking the Centre's operational model and structure to support the University's strategic goals more effectively, with emphasis on quality T&L. Likewise, there is a need to relook the operational models and structures of the Math's Centre, Writing Lab, Tutor Programme as well as Professional Development. This is to ensure that the work that the Centre does stays abreast in changing times as well as aligned to the national and institutional strategic priorities. There is a dire need for academic leaders in the faculties to encourage staff to participate in various staff development initiatives to ensure that we deliver research-informed teaching practices that promote a scholarly environment that is conducive and enabling effective learning and innovative teaching practice. Collaboration between CAD and faculties is key in order together identify their specific needs and create workshops that are tailor-made for various academic departments. Despite the many accomplishments and ongoing activities, there is also work going on in establishing collaborations within and outside of VUT to strengthen our services. The recently reviewed VUT strategy will also pave the way for improving our services.

QUALITY PROMOTIONS UNIT

BACKGROUND

The Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) is dedicated to maintaining a robust quality assurance system in alignment with national and CHE directives. Notable highlights from the QPU's

activities in 2023 include the submission of VUT's self-evaluation report (SER) to CHE, which underwent meticulous scrutiny and site visits. Additionally, active participation in the CHE Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) has been a focus, with efforts directed towards enhancing teaching and learning quality. Initiatives have been undertaken to address deficiencies identified in the Doctoral Review Improvement Plan, aiming for effective monitoring and improvement. Furthermore, the exploration of the CHE Student Engagement Guide seeks to enhance student participation in quality processes. Engagements with professional bodies, such as SANC and HPCSA, have been pivotal in ensuring program quality and compliance. The revision of the Quality Assurance System (QAS) reflects VUT's commitment to aligning with initial feedback from the CHE Audit, while the development of Quality Manuals reflects preparation for the CHE QAF. Finally, the implementation of "The Student Walk" organising framework underscores the QPU's commitment to ensuring a quality student experience throughout its operations.

THE COUNCIL ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHE) INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

The VUT submitted its self-evaluation report (SER) to the CHE by the 31 March 2023. The SER comprised an institutional profile and a portfolio of evidence, that underwent rigorous approval processes within the university's governance structures such as Management Committee (MANCOM), the Senate, the Institutional Forum (IF), the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), and ultimately, the Council.

Following submission, the CHE provided VUT with a list of external panel members for approval. After consultation, an additional panel member with a background from a university of technology (UoT) was included. Subsequently, in May 2023, VUT initiated an interview preparation process involving various stakeholders to ensure active, extensive participation and contribution, aiming to enhance the quality of the external audit process.

The CHE site visit occurred between 10-14 July 2023, during which the panel conducted interviews with internal and external stakeholders, a campus walkabout, including visits to each faculty, the library, the Science Park, the Isak Steyl stadium and VUT student accommodation. At the end of the site visit, the panel provided VUT management with preliminary feedback, highlighting both areas of strength and concerns.

Areas of strength identified included the administration period (2019) providing stability, cooperation between stakeholders, VUT Strategy Plan in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals, resilient staff, and continued regard by students as an institution of choice. Concerns raised encompassed the diversion of focus by the introduction of a new Strategy hindering growth, overreliance on government funding impacting financial stability, organizational structure issues, insufficient resources for teaching and learning, lack of leadership in the research portfolio, manual processes, infrastructure shortcomings, absence

of approved frameworks and coherent policy environment, culture of non-adherence to policies, lack of consequence management, silo culture, fragmented processes, and a need for greater alignment between support departments, faculties, and the Senate. VUT awaits feedback from the CHE following the site visit and external review process.

CHE QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK (QAF)

A workshop on the QAF was organised by the CHE in February 2023 and was attended by the QPU and the Programme Accreditation and Curriculum Development (PACD) team. The workshop aimed to explore practical implementation aspects of external quality assurance functions within the QAF framework. Discussions covered background, context, purpose, and outcomes, with participants delving into four key areas: the QAF ecosystem, standards and capacity development, accreditation, and quality reviews. The initial QAF implementation will prioritize enhancing teaching and learning quality while fostering ongoing transformation in South African higher education. The framework's flexibility allows institutions autonomy to address specific challenges, leverage strengths, and pursue continuous improvement. The shift to blended and online learning, necessitated by the pandemic, falls within QAF implementation. Concessions granted by the CHE allow accredited programmes to maintain accreditation despite mode changes. Institutions opting for continued blended or online learning must undergo a themed review, with VUT signalling participation of which the QPU will oversee this review's implementation.

The QPU has actively applied QAF principles and continues to align its internal quality assurance processes with the updated accreditation procedures. Collaboration with the PACD and consistent participation in QAF workshops demonstrate commitment to quality enhancement.

CHE DOCTORAL REVIEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In February 2023, VUT submitted a progress report on the Doctoral Improvement Plan to the CHE. However, the report lacked detail and supporting evidence, leading to its rejection by CHE impeding effective monitoring of the IP's progress. To address this issue, a meeting was convened between the HEQC and VUT stakeholders to identify shortcomings and develop a plan for improvement. A task team was established to tackle the deficiencies outlined in the progress report, with a resubmission deadline set for 31 October 2023. The completed progress report underwent approval processes at HDC, AQSC, and SENEX before being submitted to the CHE in November 2023.

CHE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

The CHE has issued a guideline document titled "The Good Practice Guide on Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education." This guide aims to enhance student participation in quality assurance and promotion processes. It approaches the matter from two perspectives: First, it emphasizes that higher education institutions hold the primary responsibility for assuring the quality of education, highlighting the importance of internal quality assurance processes aligned with the QAF. Second, it underscores that students are the main beneficiaries of higher education, and their experience reflects the effectiveness of their institutions.

For VUT to adopt this guide, its policies and processes must be evaluated to assess their alignment with student success and responsiveness to student input. The implementation of this guide will be managed as a project involving multiple stakeholders and processes. During the October 2023 AQSC meeting, the committee proposed the establishment of a task team dedicated to implementing the Guide through the Student Success Committee.

PROFESSIONAL BODIES

South African Nursing Council (SANC)

In late February 2023, SANC conducted a visit to evaluate the Bachelor of Nursing programmes at VUT. The evaluation visit was initially meant for the R174 curriculum, SANC decided to review the previous programme, R425, instead. Critical issues were identified within the R425 programme, including staffing challenges, inadequate documentation, and a gap between theory and practice. The Nursing Department promptly submitted an Improvement Plan (IP) to address these concerns, aiming to enhance both R425 and the new R174 programme. The QPU was involved in the evaluation processes to ensure compliance and smooth operation.

SANC suggested including a "Mental Health" component and revisiting Midwifery credit for the R174 curriculum, which the Nursing Department addressed. A task team from the Nursing department revised R174 based on the feedback from SANC, with active measures in progress to address concerns by November 2023. Additionally, a task team is revising R174 curriculum based on SANC feedback.

Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

The Health Sciences department has been engaging in preparatory activities in anticipation of the forth coming visit by the HPCSA, scheduled for March 2024. A task team was constituted

to compile the report and prepare the portfolio of evidence. This process serves as a vital opportunity for enhancement and refinement in line with the HPCSA's guidelines.

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (QAS)

The QPU revised its QAS process and received approval from the AQSC in October 2023. The implementation of this revised QAS is scheduled for implementation in 2024. This updated system incorporates approval processes conducted at the governance level. The revision is a strategic response to incorporating initial feedback derived from the CHE Audit, while simultaneously seeking alignment with the principles outlined in the QAF.

ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT REVIEWS

The Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences, Community Engagement (CE) department, and Short Learning Programme (SLP) review processes were halted due to the CHE Audit conducted in 2022-2023. Simultaneously, the CHE QAF was launched. An interrogation of this framework led to the decision that the aforementioned departments and faculty would be better served by an internal review of their processes and procedures, namely, the development of Quality Manuals. Quality Manuals will include clear guidelines and procedures to uphold and enhance the quality of academic programs, administrative operations, and support services. They will be crafted to guide faculty management or support departments in achieving and improving quality.

THE “STUDENT WALK”

The QPU has crafted an organising framework titled “The Student Walk”, with the objective of ensuring the quality of the student experience at VUT. This framework was designed to facilitate that quality assurance processes throughout VUT scrutinise each facet of their processes and procedures integral to the student journey. The planned introduction of extensive Quality Manuals in 2024 is envisaged to serve as a structured documentation mechanism, which will articulate the QA processes centred on the student experience.

CONCLUSION

The QPU has demonstrated a strong commitment to upholding and enhancing the quality assurance system at VUT. Through rigorous activities such as the submission of the self-evaluation report to CHE, active participation in the CHE Quality Assurance Framework, and targeted initiatives to address identified deficiencies, the QPU has strategically positioned VUT for continuous quality improvement. The development of Quality Manuals, coupled with proactive engagements with professional bodies and the implementation of "The Student

Walk" framework, underscore the QPU's dedication to securing excellence across all facets of the university's operations.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Student Support Services (SSS) strives to ensure that Vaal University of Technology (VUT) provides quality student experience in a collegiate and enabling environment. Support programmes are provided from the time when students join the University until they complete their studies. The division is made up of the following units/departments that work together with an intention of achieving common goals: VUT Sport, Student Accommodation, Student Counselling Services, HIV/AIDS Unit, Campus Clinic as well as Student Life and Governance. All these components collectively contribute towards serving a specific purpose, which is to prepare students for the world of work and life in general, through experiential education which often occurs in an out-of-classroom environment. SSS strives to provide an array of effective programmes and services that are meant to support students from post-matriculation to the time when they complete their degrees.

VUT Sport

The VUT Sport Department facilitates the engagement of students and staff in sporting activities. Sport and recreation activities makes an important contribution to the holistic development of students especially in an out of class learning and living experience. Equally, sport plays an important role in promoting institutional values and fostering students' well-being, inclusivity, and social cohesion. Sport services, range from club-based competitive sport and social participation activities within the 16 sporting codes on offer that participate in leagues and tournament hosted at the stadium facility, nationally and internationally. *VUT affiliated to the University Sport South Africa (USSA) the governing body of student sport to afford student athletes an opportunity to compete within the university sport environment.*

The institution competes in the USSA National tournaments which provide national competition, and to qualify for varsity competitions (*media rights agreement entered with University Sport Company*) to provide brand exposure, and it's leads to a total transformative student experience. Student athletes contribute immensely in uplifting the University name as a brand and they contribute towards a positive image and good reputation of the institution. VUT is perceived as a platform for aspirant youth from a diverse and dynamic backgrounds to change their lives. Thus, the VUT provides sporting opportunities to students that they may utilise to nurture and develop their talents. Sport performances are an epitome of the institutional sport historical culture of winning. Therefore, major VUT Sport accomplishments are summarised as follows:

The VUT Sport merit bursary gives an eligible student the opportunity to access to higher education. The Sport Merit bursary for the 2023 student intake allocated funding that allowed student athletes to register and that ensured that sporting success is balanced with academic excellence. In 2023, VUT allocated an amount of R2 600 000.00 to financially assist 200 eligible student athletes. Moreover, in 2023 the university allocated funds to contract 28 coaches and/or mentors to ensure that teaching, preparation, and student athletes conduct themselves professionally and make the institution proud through their excellence in sports.

The first-year sport orientation programme occurred in 2023 during the normal university orientation. VUT Sport ensured that its cohort of well-trained staff members do speak during the orientation activities in different faculties. Additionally, the information provided to students was designed to empower students with sports knowledge. The orientation is a platform for sport to capture walk in talent and potential to reinforce competitive teams for high level competitions.

VUT Stadium is a shining example of a well-maintained infrastructure and the only functional stadium in the region and in 2023 enjoyed a safe and incident free year. The fields and facilities are clean, well-maintained and a preferred facility to partner to host successful events and generates a monthly income of R50 000 to R90 000 by outsourcing facilities to the annual Rhino Week which is rugby development programme, local schools Astro Hockey hiring and football professional clubs. The stadium provides student athletes, general students, and staff with an enabling environment to prepare for competition and participate in residence league and recreational engagement.

Establishment of the VUT Sport Wellness and Athletes injury rehabilitation centre: in view of absence of medical cover for athletes, the VUT Sport department has established and allocated staff for an inhouse full time physiotherapy consultation, a major milestone for the well-being of students for now and the future.

VUT Sport Marketing and Sponsorships: in pursuit of increasing the digital footprint and hearing the student voice by creating an interactive platform to provide information and redirect queries to the relevant staff. VUT Sport has increased its following on social media platforms such as on Facebook it stands on 3 500 followers.

Rugby Club sponsorship: New Vaal motors, Mercedes Benz – the VUT Rugby Club received a sponsorship to the value of R200 000 for branding i.e., kits, tracksuits, warm tops and after match t-shirts etc. This demonstrates the potential of VUT clubs and the willingness of major brands to associate with the VUT brand.

2023 Competition achievements:

2023 USSA national champion: in 2023 VUT retained its honours and continue the 10-year dominance at the national competitions i.e. volleyball, basketball softball men and women annually win the title or ceded in the top 3.

National provincial championship: a total of 16 students from VUT competed in the championships, for example 8 representing USSA, 4 Gauteng and 4 Limpopo.

National, Provincial, and international achievements:

In an effort to achieve international stature, 4 softball student athletes and 2 officials were supported to travelled to the softball world cup in Argentina, the world cup was for the under 23.

FISU, is an international governing body for student sport. VUT Athletics students were supported to go to the world student games, in China. Most excitingly, a VUT student athlete was offered a full scholarship to study in the United States of America (USA) at Monroe College.

STUDENT LIFE AND GOVERNANCE

Background

Student Life and Governance (SLG) Department is one of the six subdivisions of Student Support Services. Student Life and Governance provides support to the student structures including but not limited to the SRC. The department facilitate leadership development programmes for positional and non-positional leaders. On an annual basis, the department support electoral, hand-over or leadership transitional processes, leadership development, and training post elections. Where necessary conducts policy review, administration, and management. The department is firmly committed to the development of visionary, ethical, and accountable student leadership.

Students are encouraged to participate in different student structures to keep them busy and prepare them to assume leadership roles apart from the academic space as they spend 70% of their varsity life outside the lecture halls. Student Life and Governance provides support to the SRC, its sub structures through training and development, elections, policy review, administration, and management.

In 2023, the department focused on various programmes for leadership development, capacity building and social cohesion.

First Year Orientation Welcome Day

Student Life and Governance Department hosted the First Year Experience (FYE) Orientation Welcome Day. A strategic purpose was to welcome all the first-year students to VUT. The programme is important to help students to transition from high school to tertiary education environment. Also, students were able to ask questions on matters of student life, residences, campus health and wellness amongst other things.

Students' Representative Council (SRC)

In conformity with the SRC constitution, SRC must grant recognition and permission to societies and councils to operate on the university campuses. In 2023, SRC processed the registration of student structures starting from the 4th of March 2023. Thereafter, SRC managed to approve functional rights to student structures in these categories: religious, social, cultural, political, and academic structures who met the eligibility criteria. Thereafter, which financial resources were made available to student societies. There were many other student life activities which took place in 2023 and were extremely successful. Here are some of the examples: first semester activation, extra financial support to societies was offered by the SRC to assist in campaigns such as sanitary towels, movie nights, and PASMA trip.

There are many other programmes which successfully took place in 2023. Heritage Day celebrations, and Social Cohesion workshop. Particularly, social cohesion workshops play an important role in promoting a culture of tolerance, and in instilling values of self-respect and ubuntu.

Above all, Student Life Awards were held in 2023. The awards recognised and rewarded students who impacted the university student community positively in different categories namely global citizenship award, mental health and wellness advocate award, and social entrepreneurship award. The prestigious ceremony took place on the 16th November 2023 at the Sebokeng Campus.

SRC Elections and Training Workshop

Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 stipulates that the term of office for institutional Students' Representative Council is one year. As such, VUT comply with the law by ensuring that an enabling environment for a free and fair elections do take place. Successful SRC elections were held in time and similar successes were achieved with other student societies electoral processes.

It is essential that a newly elected SRC attends a workshop which seeks to assist them when they are new in office. The training workshop happened between 08 - 10 December 2023 in

Magaliesburg. The workshop training programme covered the following areas on leadership development:

Amicable resolution of conflict

Strategy and SRC Programme of Action (P.O.A.) development.

The SRC Training was facilitated by different highly trained individuals in higher education including Executive Director: Student Support Services [Dr S Mchunu], former Director: Student Life and Governance [Mr V Nthakheni], SRC Administrator [Ms S Ndumo], and 14 SRC members. Dr M Ntuli was one of the external facilitators. Towards the end of the 2nd day of the programme the VUT Acting Vice-Chancellor: Dr Nelana attended and addressed the SRC on matters of ethical and accountable leadership.

HIV AND AIDS UNIT

Background

The Institutional HIV and AIDS Unit is responsible for the coordination, facilitation and implementation of health, and wellness mobilization and development programmes in alignment with the VUT Policies and Procedures, Post Schooling Education and Training sector (PSET).

Higher Health extended the University Direct Grant Fund to 2021/2023 financial Year. The main purpose of the Grant Fund was to continue to assist with their ongoing institutional-based student health, wellness, and psychosocial support programmes. Those included student Peer Education programme, HIV/TB/Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), Sexual Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence (GBV), Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Disability Sensitisation and other social ills that affect young people. The Unit also focused on the following:

It enhances student health and wellness to increase the proportion of students who complete their studies successfully and record time.

It supports the Institution's effectiveness and efficiency to reduce organisational costs and increase funding for health and wellness-related projects by applying for third stream income.

Accomplishments

On health, wellness promotion and social mobilisation, there were many successes achieved in helping students and encouraging them to live a healthy lifestyle. Here are some of the successes: awareness campaigns were hosted, develop promotion posters, identify areas that require signage and marketing material to improve the internal office visibility, advertise and update information on VUT Website page, SMS system and social media utilisation.

The department conducted peer education activities such as dialogues, workshops, online engagements etc. reaching students through peer education activities on HIV, TB, STIs, SRH, GBV, mental health, gender diversity, substance abuse and chemical dependency.

On the important matters of early health and wellness risk-screening, distribution of risk-screening tools on HIV, TB, STIs, SRH, GBV and mental health was conducted.

The provision of youth friendly health, wellness and psychosocial support services, the department hosted First Things First activations four times in 2023. HIV testing and screening was conducted on 4045 individuals, where possible provision for contraceptives were made. Likewise, the department offered onsite VMMC, initiation of PREP referral, initiation of HART referral and condom distribution.

An extra source of funding from external stakeholders was received, for example Higher Health grant to public higher education institutions for 2023/2025 award letter 2019-2021, and 2021 – 2023) grant cycle was signed. Currently an audit process is ongoing.

STUDENT COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT

Background

The Student Counselling and Support Department (SCS) offers professional psychosocial support and developmental services to the Vaal University student community. The Department comprises of various units, each of which specialises in a specific service to optimise students' success. Services offered include psychometric assessments, career development and orientation, social work services, pastoral counselling, and therapeutic services. The department is committed to ensuring that students receive care and support through addressing barriers that may prevent them from reaching their academic goals and life in general.

SCS offers psychosocial service to all registered students as well as prospective students. The department is also involved in community outreach programmes where they engage teachers

and school learners from surrounding communities just to address matters on psychosocial ills and give motivational talks.

Accomplishments

One of the Unit responsibilities is to assist in finding solutions through research so that the Unit can make a meaningful contribution to the everchanging socio-economic and psychosocial conditions of students. Thus, in 2023 the Unit colleagues presented at SAACDHE 43rd Conference between 11 - 13 September 2023, Stellenbosch). Title: *Developing pathways to mental wellbeing: Bronfenbrenner's P-P-C-T model (Dr T Soni)*. Title: *Enhancing university students utilisation of wellness services in a post COVID-19 world (Mr S Maseko)*. Followed by VUT Teaching and Learning Conference on the 27th – 29th September 2023, at Emerald Casino). Title: *Care and support for teaching and learning: Pathways to understanding learning experiences, student learning and learner diversity. (Dr Soni)*. Title: *The role of student counselling and support services in enabling institutions of higher learning to advance student success. (Dr Soni)*. Title: *An exploration of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) 21st century student (Mr Maseko)*.

Later, Ministers' Conference [6-8 March 2023]: participant: Ms. Mvundla, an Executive Director of Freedom of Religion South Africa, the objective of the presentation was to address issues such as hate speech in the sermons and how to handle matters relating to LGBTQI+ community in the church. Dr Eva Seobi.

Lastly, the Unit had many other successful campaigns and trainings which are key to student lives in the area of safety and security. One of them being Basic Counselling Training for Protection Services Management Team. Achievements includes deep insight on the works of protection services, the training greatly assisted in building a renewed relationships with Protection Services. Ultimately, inter-departmental collaboration gave great insight on operational matters relating to the Unit.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND CATERING

Background

The Department of Student accommodation & Catering consists of various units, which include Hospitality and Maintenance. The hospitality unit focuses mostly on daily cleaning in residences, passages, kitchens, bathrooms, toilets and deep cleaning of rooms twice a year. The Maintenance Unit in residences mainly focus on daily minor maintenance in residences where there is a team that collects waste in residences, the electrician team, plumbing team and carpentry team. The goal of this unit is to improve the environment of the students that

live in university residences. In essence, the department has other additional four sub departments namely:

Placement and administration
Victim and empowerment
Living and learning
Finance department.
Accomplishments

The department has managed to refurbish the student residences. The renovations are key to students' welfare, access and success. Therefore, Student Accommodation has managed to successfully refurbish Khomanani residence. It is worth noting that Ubuntu residence was renovated after it was burned down during #FeesMustFall protest.

Here are some of the updates:

Renovation of Khayalethu the contractor has resume with work.

Air conditioners were installed at some of the residences as other offices had been without air conditioners since #FeesMustFall protest.

100 microwaves were purchased and distributed to residences. These microwaves will be of great help as the winter is fast approaching.

Residence Life programmes

The Bantu Hub Exhibition

The Bantu Residence Hub hosted an art exhibition that showcased the incredible talent of seven curators and fine artists. The event was a resounding success, with students coming in to witness the beautiful artwork on display. Additionally, the exhibition featured a captivating performance by creative arts students, adding an extra layer of artistic expression to the event. The event took place on the 29th of September 2023, that was the best way to close off the heritage month.

Students were afforded an opportunity to socialise and discuss the artwork they had experienced. The turnout for the event was impressive, demonstrating the strong interest and support for the arts within the student community.

Impande Art Exhibitors:

Residence department also honoured the Impande Art Exhibitors who are operating at the Bantu hub in one of the residences. Their commitment and efforts were recognised and appreciated during the ceremony. honouring art exhibitors at a university is a way to recognise,

promote, and celebrate the artistic talents and contributions of students, while also enriching the campus experience for the entire community.

Green Campus Initiative:

The event also celebrated the green campus initiative, which aims to foster sustainability and environmentally friendly practices within the VUT Residence. The initiative promotes activities such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and recycling. The efforts of individuals and groups contributing to this important cause were acknowledged and applauded.

The 6th Annual VUT Residence Awards event was a resounding success, encompassing the recognition of top achievers, the contributions of house committees, art exhibitors and the green campus initiative. The dedication and hard work of the students and stakeholders involved were duly acknowledged and celebrated. Such events not only motivate and inspire students but also promote a sense of community and accomplishment within the VUT Residence.

encouraging individuals, communities, and businesses to turn off non-essential electric lights, for one hour from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. usually on the last Saturday of March, as a symbol of commitment to the planet

Earth Hour helps remind millions of people around the world of the importance of making environmentally conscious decisions in their daily lives, and it demonstrates how those millions of decisions can add up together to major change.

The 6th Annual VUT Residence Awards took place in Quest Conference Centre on the 21st of November 2023 to honour top achievers residing VUT residences. The event celebrated the academic achievements of students across all four faculties, recognised the contributions of house committees, acknowledged the green campus initiative and the Impande art exhibitors. This brief report outlines the key highlights and the overall success of the event.

Staff members attended ACUHO-I-student accommodation development programme in Bloemfontein and Pretoria.

Student Residence costs:

Residence fees for the 2023 academic year amounted to R38 112 175,48.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Background

VUT Campus Clinic like other department plays a key role in the wellbeing of students as well as health and awareness programmes. The clinic is well-equipped and supported by professional nurses, qualified in primary health care. In cases of emergency, there are six paramedics who provide emergency medical services during the day and after hours.

Services that are rendered include the following:

Primary Health Care;

Sexual Reproductive Health Services including the provision of contraceptives;

Medical risk assessment of VUT Sport students as well as those who are in the 3rd year of study registered for sports management for their practical to ensure fitness;

Monitoring of chronic (non-communicable) diseases such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, etc.;

Care and support for HIV positive patients;

Preventative Healthcare, e.g. vaccination programmes for students at risk.

The clinic works closely with academic faculties at operational level by handling matters affecting individual students in the following areas: absenteeism trend due to ill-health, decreased academic performance, drug abuse; emotional support on family issues and suicidal instances. Worth notably, students from the Faculty of Management Sciences who enrol for programmes in sports management come for physical assessment to ensure fitness in preparations for their practicals.

Accomplishments

Campus clinic effectively seen over 4500 students and staff inclusive of all services that are available at the campus clinic. Also, PReP was introduced, and a lot of students and staff have access to the programme. Campus clinic further serve as a collection point for ART as the clinic provides ARV's to both students and staff. These services play a pivotal role in ensuring that VUT students and staff live a healthy and vibrant lifestyle characterised by longevity.

When season change, notably during winter season, campus clinic offers flu vaccine. In addition to these key services the clinic also helps sports for medical assessments and fitness as well as SAFA assessment and accreditation. Campus clinic often hosts South African Blood Services where both students and staff are able to donate bloods. Campus clinic programmes are conducted in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) calendar.

SECTION 12: REPORT OF SENATE ON RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND INNOVATION

INTRODUCTION

Managing Research and developing it in universities, especially Universities of Technology, demands continuous reflection on the changing definition of knowledge and intelligence in a developing knowledge environment and ongoing democratisation of knowledge and the explosion of accessible information. The challenge is ensuring continuous relevance, effectiveness and efficiency in the Research enterprise. Considering the life span of ideas and the rapidly changing context, the demand for constant innovative approaches and practises to meet the need for time knowledge and interpretation now also demands the next phase in dealing with knowledge, namely to translate it into real solutions towards real innovation over and above invention or creativity.

The report highlights the milestones undertaken aligned to the different activities of the Research Directorate.

Applications and registration for postgraduate qualifications:

An online application process for Masters and Doctoral qualifications was introduced in 2023 via ITS. Applications for Masters and Doctoral qualifications commenced in 2023. A total of 784 applications was received for Masters qualifications and 244 for doctoral qualifications. Faculties provided the Research Directorate with a list of students who needed the R2 200 registration fee, Dr Ramdhani secured funding to pay the registration fees of these students. As such, the registration fee of 115 postgraduate students were paid for the 2023 academic year. Since the closing date of Masters and Doctoral registrations on 31 March 2023, two registration extensions were granted, one in April and the last extension for registration was granted from 8 to 12 May 2023.

Daily registration meetings were held with faculties during the second extension period to highlight progress and challenges. To date 339 (63.5%) students have been registered for Master's qualifications and 128 (92%) students have been registered for Doctoral qualifications. No students were registered for MTech and DTech qualifications due to its phasing out.

The Higher Degrees Unit continued with providing support to postgraduate students in uploading progress reports and conditions of grants onto the NRF-site. Several payments were made from student accounts to their personal accounts. The last payments of the VUT award for Masters students were paid to student accounts (the VUT award is phasing out).

Through the office of the Research Directorate, a total of 29 postdocs were appointed for the year 2023. Four postdocs were NRF-funded.

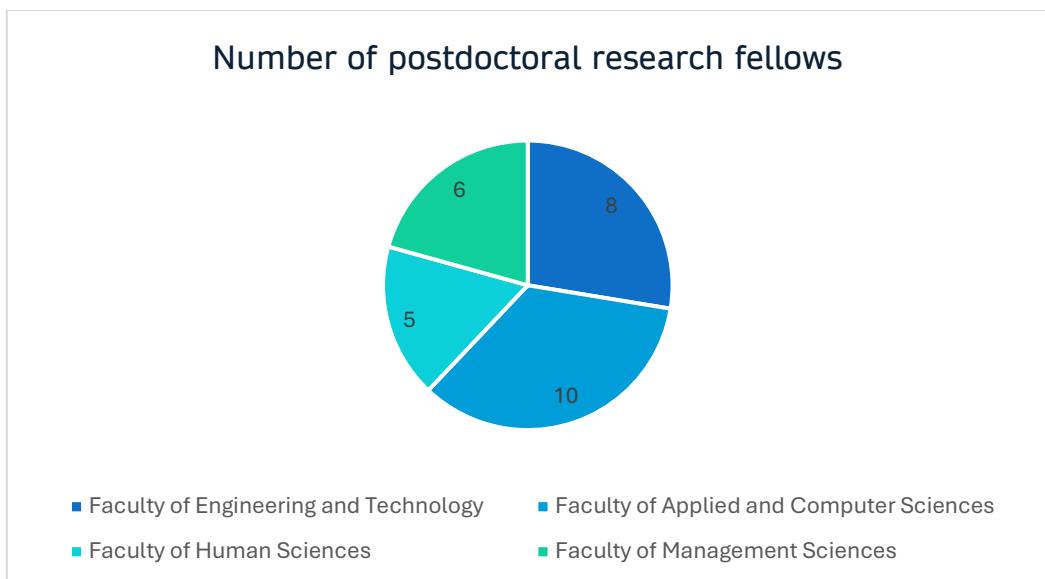


Figure 1: Number of postdocs per faculty in 2023

2023 Research outputs:

The number of Research Output Units submitted to DHET in 2023 was 199.159 units.

University Capacity Development Grant:

The office of the Research Directorate approved 30 applications for UCDP funding from January to May 2023. In addition, 41 applications were approved for internal funding from January to May 2023, including 12 new applications since the previous reporting period. UCDP and Internal funding is used to support staff studying towards a Masters or Doctoral qualification. Support is provided in terms of payment for tuition fees, meetings with supervisors, data collection and workload reduction and capacity development workshops. Six applications for UCDP seed funding were received for January to May 2023, including 1 new application since the previous reporting period. Seed funding is used to support academic staff members who recently obtained their PhDs with a research project. All the above-mentioned applications were screened, and applicants were informed of the outcome of their applications. The research directorate also procured capacity development workshops with the UCDP funds.

UCDP utilization of funding (2023)

Activity	Sub-activities	DHET APPROVED	VUT AWARDED	BALANCE
Activity 1	Support staff already registered for PhD	R1 160 269.47	R891 739.81	R268 529.66
Activity 2	Research support for academic staff who recently completed PhD studies	R1,110,000.00	R199 305.03	R910 694.97.00
Activity 3	Supplementary staff replacement programme	R1,500,000.00	R748 867.70	R751 132.30
Activity 4	Research Capacity Development support for staff at VUT	R260,000.00	R254 451.09	R5 548.91
	Total	R4,030,269.47	R2 094 363.63	R1 935 905.84

Research Funding policy:

The policy served at the first ordinary ManCom of 2023 and was perceived positively. A special SRIC meeting was convened on 23 March 2023 to discuss the recommendations from ManCom regarding the Research Funding Policy. The following resolution was taken by SRIC: The committee agreed on approving the 10% from the research directorate to be given to the University and depending on affordability it can be moved to 15% after the research office has done the calculations/analysis and share the outcomes with members

VUT NRF-rated researchers:

	Surname	Initials	Title	Race	Gender	Rating Category	Valid From	Valid Until
1	Akpotu	SO	Dr	Black	Male	Y2	01 Jan 2022	31 Dec 2027
2	Campbell	RI	Prof.	White	Male	C1	01 Jan 2019	31 Dec 2024
3	Dube	K	Dr	Black	Male	Y2	01 Jan 2021	31 Dec 2026
4	Masemola	KM	Prof.	Black	Male	B3	01 Jan 2022	31 Dec 2027

5	Nyamupangedengu	C	Prof	Black	Male	C2	01 Jan 2021	31 Dec 2026
6	Okosun	O	Prof.	Black	Male	C2	01 Jan 2018	31 Dec 2023
7	Osifo	PO	Prof.	Black	Male	C2	01 Jan 2017	31 Dec 2022
8	Otunniyi	IO	Prof.	Black	Male	C2	01 Jan 2022	31 Dec 2027
9	Pakade	VE	Prof.	Black	Male	Y2	01 Jan 2018	31 Dec 2023
10	Pillay	M	Prof.	Indian	Male	C3	01 Jan 2019	31 Dec 2024
11	Rutto	HL	Prof.	Black	Male	C3	01 Jan 2020	31 Dec 2025
12	Shooto	ND	Dr	Black	Male	Y2	01 Jan 2022	31 Dec 2027
13	Tengen	TB	Prof.	Black	Male	C3	01 Jan 2017	31 Dec 2022
14	Venter	D	Dr	White	Male	Y2	01 Jan 2022	31 Dec 2027
15	Lebelo	S	Dr	Black	Male	C2	01 Jan 2023	31 Dec 2028

Research focus areas:

The following progress regarding the research focus areas has been reported by faculties: some of the identified niche areas:

Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences

- Material Sciences
- Organic, Polymer Technologies & Environmental
- Agriculture, Environmental & Food Technology
- Medicinal plants / Cell biology

Faculty of Engineering and Technology

- Manufacturing Technology,
- Water,
- Energy Supply, and
- Sustainable beneficiation.

Faculty of Management Sciences

- Entrepreneurship

Faculty of Human Sciences

- Sustainable Development

Strategic projects:

The Research Directorate presented two strategic projects to align with the new VUT strategy: Faculty Research Entities and Research capacity development.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER & INNOVATION:

INTRODUCTION

The Technology Transfer and Innovation (TTI) department plays a pivotal role in driving innovation, research commercialization, and technology transfer at the university. Under the Research, Innovation, Commercialization, and Internationalization (RICI) portfolio, TTI is tasked with advancing impactful and socially relevant innovations, enhancing the university's intellectual property portfolio, and building strategic partnerships. Its focus areas include advanced manufacturing, applied research, skills development, and fostering industry-academia linkages.

In 2021/22, TTI faced an unprecedented challenge when severe flooding caused significant damage to its advanced manufacturing platforms and disrupted operations. Sensitive and specialised machines were rendered inoperative due to roof leaks and structural issues in the building. The aftermath saw TTI staff stepping up to relocate and commission the damaged equipment in safer building areas. This extraordinary effort, which extended well into 2023, involved extensive renovations and system reconfigurations to restore full functionality to TTI's operations.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Restoration of Advanced Manufacturing Platforms:

Machine Relocation and Repair:

One of the most notable achievements of the year was the monumental effort involved in the relocation of advanced manufacturing machinery that had been critically damaged by the devastating floods of 2021/22. This included the intricate transport and reinstallation of Fortus Fused Deposition Model Machines, Voxeljet Binder Jetting Machines, and EOS Selective Laser Sintering systems. The undertaking demanded extraordinary logistical planning and precision

handling, yet it was executed primarily by the dedicated TTI staff. Demonstrating unparalleled commitment and versatility, the team went far beyond their regular responsibilities, navigating technical complexities and physical challenges to ensure the successful relocation of these specialized machines to safer and operationally sound areas.

Following the relocation, substantial progress was made in restoring the functionality of these critical assets. Repairs on the Voxeljet Binder Jetting Machines were successfully completed, bringing them back into full operational status. Meanwhile, the complex restoration of the EOS Selective Laser Sintering systems saw continued progress through international collaboration with OEM technicians from Germany, reflecting the global partnerships TTI has cultivated. Locally, TTI staff showcased their technical expertise by independently repairing and recommissioning the Fortus machines, marking a significant milestone in the recovery of the department's advanced manufacturing capabilities.

New Acquisitions:

The acquisition of the state-of-the-art Hyrax metal 3D printer marked a transformative leap forward in TTI's advanced manufacturing capabilities. This cutting-edge technology not only enhances the department's ability to produce high-precision metal components but also positions TTI as a frontrunner in the field of additive manufacturing. The Hyrax printer's advanced features enable the production of complex geometries and intricate designs with unprecedented efficiency and accuracy, opening new horizons for research, industry collaboration, and innovation. Its addition to TTI's arsenal underscores the department's commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements and delivering world-class manufacturing solutions.

Infrastructure Enhancements:

Significant building renovations were undertaken as a critical step toward safeguarding advanced equipment and enhancing operational efficiency within TTI's facilities. These renovations included the meticulous installation of pneumatic systems, advanced electrical wiring, reinforced flooring, and custom enclosure framing. These improvements not only provided robust protection for the highly sensitive machinery but also created a safer and more efficient working environment for staff. By proactively addressing structural and functional requirements, TTI demonstrated a forward-thinking approach to ensuring the longevity and reliability of its operations while fostering a secure and productive workspace.

Research and Innovation Collaborations:

Following the operational downtime in 2021/22, 2023 marked a year of renewed vigor for the TTI as it reestablished and strengthened critical partnerships. The department revitalized its

collaboration with the prestigious Collaborative Program in Additive Manufacturing (CPAM), leveraging this alliance to drive cutting-edge advancements in the field. Internationally, TTI resumed impactful research collaborations with institutions such as the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany, focusing on groundbreaking studies in additive manufacturing and material sciences, further solidifying its global research footprint.

Domestically, TTI played a pivotal role in the Vaal Special Economic Zone (SEZ) initiative, contributing to efforts aimed at industrial reindustrialization and economic growth in the region. This initiative not only underscores the department's commitment to local economic development but also its strategic role in fostering innovation-driven industrial competitiveness.

In addition to these collaborations, TTI supported advanced research projects that pushed the boundaries of innovation. Key areas of focus included geartrain optimization for enhanced mechanical performance, the design and manufacture of aerospace components using state-of-the-art 3D printing technologies, and polymer analysis tailored for mining applications. These projects highlight TTI's ability to address complex industry challenges while advancing the frontiers of research and development.

Skills Development and Knowledge Transfer:

The TTI spearheaded the development of innovative curricula for Design for Additive Manufacturing and 3D Printing, aligning closely with the evolving demands of industry and cutting-edge technological advancements. These programs are meticulously designed to equip students and professionals with the skills and knowledge required to excel in the rapidly expanding field of additive manufacturing. Currently in the final stages of refinement, the curricula represent a strategic effort by TTI to bridge the gap between academia and industry, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to contribute to high-tech manufacturing environments and drive future innovation.

The TTI undertook a rigorous and dedicated effort to secure accreditation for its Shoe Manufacturing Program from the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO). This milestone not only reaffirms the program's high standards of quality and relevance but also positions TTI as a leader in vocational training. With the accreditation successfully granted, TTI's shoe manufacturing facilities now stand out as one of the very few, if not the only, QCTO-accredited centres for shoe manufacturing in South Africa. This recognition cements TTI's reputation as a hub for advanced skills development and innovation in this niche sector, contributing significantly to the country's footwear manufacturing and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The TTI successfully delivered a series of impactful training programs, with a particular focus on 3D printing skills transfer. These programs were designed to empower internal stakeholders and support small to medium enterprises (SMEs) by providing them with hands-on experience and technical expertise in cutting-edge manufacturing technologies. By bridging knowledge gaps and fostering innovation, these initiatives not only enhanced the skill sets of participants but also contributed to the broader development of the manufacturing ecosystem. The training programs underscore TTI's commitment to fostering growth, innovation, and industry readiness among its stakeholders.

Operational Efficiency:

The department initiated the rigorous ISO 9001 quality management certification process, underscoring its commitment to operational excellence and continuous improvement. This globally recognized certification process aims to establish robust systems and standards that ensure consistency, efficiency, and high-quality outputs. These initiatives collectively reflect TTI's dedication to advancing its mission of driving innovation, research, and commercialization with unmatched professionalism and effectiveness.

Third-Stream Income and Funding:

The TTI demonstrated resilience in 2023 by securing essential funding, despite the significant operational downtime experienced in 2021/22. The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) provided critical support to revitalize and advance TTI's cutting-edge manufacturing platforms, enabling the department to restore and enhance its service delivery and innovation capacity. Similarly, the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) awarded funding to bolster TTI's technology transfer activities, empowering the department to strengthen intellectual property management and drive impactful commercialization efforts. These achievements highlight TTI's strategic focus and ability to secure resources under challenging circumstances.

In addition to these funding accomplishments, the TTI successfully generated additional revenue through external projects, further diversifying its income streams. Significant contributions included support from the Gauteng Department of Agriculture's SMME development program, and strategic partnerships with the Commercial Aerospace Manufacturing Association of South Africa (CAMASA) to deliver specialized training and innovative solutions. Furthermore, additional income was secured from the Manufacturing, Engineering, and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (MerSETA) to support training initiatives, further enhancing TTI's role in skills development and industry collaboration. These financial successes underline TTI's ability to effectively manage resources and sustain growth while remaining a valuable contributor to both academic and industrial ecosystems.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement:

The TTI actively engaged with industry partners in 2023, hosting collaborative events that included site visits and technical showcases. These events provided a platform for demonstrating TTI's advanced manufacturing capabilities, fostering innovation, and strengthening relationships with key stakeholders. By showcasing its expertise and technology, TTI positioned itself as a valuable partner for industrial collaboration and innovation-driven initiatives.

In addition, the TTI played a crucial role in supporting regional innovation projects. A standout example was its contribution to the manufacturing of components for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). This project underscored TTI's ability to deliver high-precision solutions for cutting-edge applications, further enhancing its reputation as a leader in advanced manufacturing and regional economic development.

CONCLUSION

Despite encountering considerable challenges, 2023 was a defining year of resilience and accomplishment for the TTI department. The unwavering dedication of its staff, paired with the implementation of strategic initiatives, enabled the department to overcome past setbacks and deliver significant contributions to the university's mission of fostering innovation and advancing research. The year's achievements underscored TTI's pivotal role in revitalizing its operations, supporting regional and international collaborations, and driving impactful skills development programs.

Looking forward, TTI is committed to building on this momentum by further expanding its advanced manufacturing capabilities, enhancing its influence on innovation ecosystems, and increasing its contribution to third-stream income generation. By strengthening partnerships, pursuing excellence, and fostering collaboration, TTI is well-positioned to spearhead transformative progress in technology transfer, commercialization, and innovation.

SECTION 13: REPORT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FORUM TO THE COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

The Institutional Forum (IF) is an advisory body that, in terms of section 31(1) of the amended Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, advises the University Council on policy matters, including the implementation of provisions of the act and of national policies on higher education. IF activities consist of meetings to consider advice to Council, as well as opportunities for discussion between the IF executive committee, Mancom and Council. From time to time, the IF utilizes its forum and established committees on diversity and equity, institutional planning, and institutional culture respectively to finalize its activities more swiftly. Members volunteer to serve on the task team(s) of their choice. The task teams are mandated to properly investigate the matters assigned to them and report back to the IF, which then provides well-considered advice to Council.

The latest amendments to the Higher Education Act now compel the VUT Council to consider the aforementioned advice and, if it is not adopted, to furnish the IF with written reasons for such a decision. Composition of the Institutional Forum According to the Statute of the University, the IF consists of 21 members. Eight members are appointed as prescribed from each of the four sectors of governance and management, staff, students, and council representative. also, considering the national trend. Activities The IF is expected to advise the Council on policy documents and to comment on the University management's implementation of the Higher Education Act. To this end, the full IF and its executive committee each meet four times a year. Extraordinary meetings may also be convened on matters of urgency, and one such meeting to discuss the new policies and amendment to the statute.

At each executive committee meeting, the agenda of the following IF meeting is finalized. The executive committee also endeavours to meet with the Mancom prior to each IF meeting. Moreover, the IF continuously seeks to focus on specific matters in addition to its legally prescribed duties and responsibilities to provide the Council with proactive advice for its consideration and further investigation. The strategic priorities of the University are considered paramount throughout.

The IF remains committed to actively taking part in accelerated transformation to establish a culture of inclusivity on the University's campuses. In this regard, an IF representative serves on the Transformation Committee, which is chaired by the Director (Social Justice and Transformation) and reports to the Council.

Appointment of senior staff as provided for by the applicable rules and institutional guidelines, the IF took part in the processes for the appointment of various deans and executive management of the university. For this purpose, the IF in each instance sits only at the presentation as part of the interviews and doesn't have a voice or representation at the selection and recruitment committee which constitutes a red flag in as far as the processes are conducted. Challenges are also noted in the proposed University policies on which the IF should advise the Council by way of formal reports as prescribed in the statute. The Forum proposed technical and editorial amendments to some of the policies and emphasized the urgent need for training and empowerment to enable effective policy implementation. Considering the University's Vision 2030+, in terms of which the institution seeks to be welcoming and inclusive.

The IF will continue to recommend necessary amendments to policies and regulations in order to realize this vision. Closing remarks The IF feels very strongly that codes of conduct for staff and students should continue to receive attention to expedite the establishment of an inclusive culture on campus. In this respect, the pursuit of a listening, tolerant culture is particularly important. In addition, the IF is positive about the constructive discussions that took place regarding the university strategy document vision 2033+ but recommend some reviews on its strategic focus posture on areas such as community engagement to be on par with teaching learning and research. The IF will continue its normal, legally prescribed activities in 2024 and beyond, while also actively focusing on encouraging campus discussions on aspects of diversity promotion and transformation. Continuous Feedback will be provided to Council by way of formal reports.

The university is relatively stable both on leadership and governance except that more than half of the employees remain casualized and half of senior and executive management are on acting capacity for a period of more than three years.

IF Composition and Challenges 2023

The Institutional Forum is established in terms of the Higher Education Act (Section 31(1) of Act 101 of 1997. The institutional forum (IF) advice the university Council on policy matters, including the execution of the provision of the Act and National Policy on Higher Education. The HE Act and the University Statute sets out the following areas of focus for IF:

- The Implementation of the HE Act and the National Policy on Higher Education.
- Race and Gender Equity policies
- The Selection of Candidates for senior executive management posts.
- Codes of conduct, mediation and dispute resolution procedures, and the fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research, and learning.

- Performs such functions as determine by the Council
- Advice Council on the Appointment of senior managers

The Institutional Forum participated in the recruitment of the following:

- Vice Chancellor and Principal
- Dean of Human Sciences
- Dean of Engineering

The Composition of the Institutional Forum

<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Nehawu Representative	Mr. Joseph Radebe (Chairperson)
Women and Gender Representative	Ms. Kediemetsi Mokotsi (Deputy Chairperson)
Academic Representative	Mr Ricardo da Rocha
Senate Representative	Dr Johannes Gauda Maseko
Senate Representative	Professor T Padayachee
Nteu Representative	Mr. Treasure Mawele
Convocation Representative	Mr. Lucky Shashaoka
Council Representative	Mr. S Mahlalela
Council Representative	Mr. S Khanyile
Non-Academic Representative	Mr. Jimmy Mabasa
Non-Academic Representative	Mr. Moeketsi Maleke
Mancom Representative	Professor Ntate Dan Gwadi
Mancom Representative	Mr. Leonard Swana
HR Representative	Ms. Busisiwe Ramabodu
Student Support Representative	Mr. Sibusiso Mchunu
Disability Representative	Mr Sandile Moyo
Director Transformation Representative	Mr. George Mvalo
SRC Representative	Ms. Nonhlanhla Matlaleng

Committee Section

Registrar	Dr George Mofokeng (Acting)
Committee Secretariat	Mr. Vuyo Dokoza

Composition Institutional Executive Committee

Chairperson Joseph Radebe
 Deputy Kediemetsi Mokotsi
 Prof T Padayachee
 Doctor G Maseko

Registrar Dr George Mofokeng (Acting)

Vice-chancellor and Principal Dr S. Nelana (Acting)

The institutional Forum at VUT is fully functional and have attended all four ordinary meetings and two executive committee meetings, an induction of the Institutional Forum by DHET.

Institutional forum is currently consulting of the following policies.

Draft EE and diversity policy

Draft appointment of foreign nationals' policy

Draft reasonable accommodation guidelines.

Draft VUT Integrated Transformation Plan

Draft Transformation Policy

Supply Chain Management Policy

The mandate of the IF includes but not limited to restoring and maintaining of confidence in the university and ensuring stakeholder trust, support the council and the university towards promoting access, success, equity, policies, and strategies related to the transformation trajectory of the university and further determine any function bestowed by the university council.

In accordance with the higher education act (act 101 of 1997) as amended and observed in Chapter 7 of the Vaal University of Technology statute, it is the responsibility of the VUT Institutional Forum to advise the University Council on policy and governance matters We therefore wish to formally table the following recommendations before the governance committee for consideration and approval by the University Council:

The IF has recommended the review of the university statute, to include other critical stakeholders of the university to officially form part of the VUT Council. The council was implored to consider the participation of community / industry representation (Community Engagement) on the University Council as they constitute the third pillar of the mandate of universities alongside teaching, learning and research.

Activities of the Institutional Forum

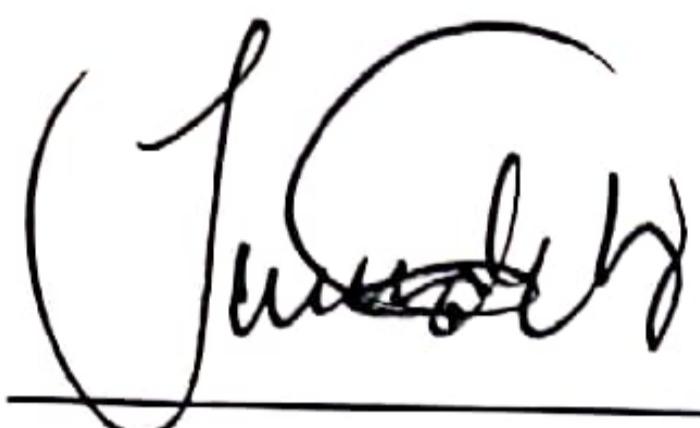
The following activities were conducted in the reporting period.

The IF was part of the task team responsible for the appointment of the University Chancellor The institutional Forum has concluded its Charter/ Terms of Reference that is referred to governance committee for approval. IF requested that it be accorded and granted its full participation and equal rights in the recruitment, selection, and appointment of senior

executive management position. The IF adopted the approved Council Code of conduct as their guiding document to guide its conduct.

Challenges

Institutional Forum (IF) at VUT was properly constituted and functional and the main challenge was its participation in the process of Selection, recruitment, and appointment of senior executive management.



Mr Joseph Norman Radebe
Chairperson Institutional Forum

SECTION 14: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Performance Report is compiled in compliance with the “Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions”, as published in Government Notice No. 10209, Government Gazette No 37726 of 9 June 2014 to be effective as from 2015. This report provides insight into the extent to which the university have achieved against the targets set for the 6 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress towards achieving the 5 Strategic Goals as outlined in the VUT Annual Performance Plan for 2023.

This report is outlined in four areas, namely:

1. Strategic Plan;
2. Planning and Reporting Framework;
3. Assessment of Key Performance Indicators; and
4. Council commitments and/or agreements made with the Minister

UPDATED SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Drawn from a recent assessment of the organisational environment with specific relevance to 2023 reporting, the following key significances are highlighted:

VUT Management

- Passing of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof. Ntate Daniel Kgwadi in April 2023;
- Appointed to act in the position of Vice-Chancellor and Principal by firstly Dr. Dan Mokoena, followed by Prof. Raymond Mabuza and lastly Dr. Speech Nelana;
- Passing of the Dean: Faculty of Human Sciences, Prof. Michael Kgomotso Masemola;
- Appointment of Prof. Khaled Abou-El-Hossein as Dean: Faculty of Engineering and Technology;
- Appointment of Prof. Christa Grobler as Dean: Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences; and
- Retirement of the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor Resources and Planning, Prof. Raymond Mabuza.

Academic activity

Continuing impact of Covid-19:

- Gradual transitioning from online to contact teaching and learning harnessing the positive impact of a multimodal approach; and
- Gradual reverting to traditional assessment practices, reducing reliance on continuous assessment to ensure credibility of assessment outcomes.

Institutional structure

- Due to the phasing out of Secunda and Upington sites of delivery at the end of 2022, students and staff from these two sites were relocated to Vanderbijlpark campus.

Institutional strategic plan

- 2023 was the last year of implementation of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. In December 2022 Council approved a new strategic plan for implementation from 2024 to allow the institution to develop an implementation strategy and align institutional plans to the new strategy.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the major elements defined in the Strategic Plan: vision, mission, values and strategic goals.



Figure 1: VUT Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives underpin each strategic goal. The strategic objectives state clearly what the University intends doing (or producing) to achieve the strategic goals. The critical success factors (CSF) are the essential areas of activity that must be performed well in order to achieve the objectives. The CSF guide the responsible parties in the areas of activity to achieve the objectives.

PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Strategic planning looks ahead toward desired goals; whereas performance evaluation and reporting looks back at achievements. Combined, strategic planning and reporting form a circle – a continuous process of performance-for-results.

The core elements of the Planning and Reporting Framework is indicated below:



Figure 2: Strategic planning and reporting framework

Performance Planning

The university follows a multi-layered approach to performance planning:

Strategy Implementation Plan

In order to operationalise the strategy plan, the Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP) translates the plan into clear measurable indicators and performance levels that define success for the duration of the Strategy Plan. The SIP measures and targets are reviewed annually contingent to significant policy shifts or changes in the institutional environment.

Annual Performance Plan

The Annual Performance Plan (APP) details KPI's together with targets the University aims to achieve in pursuit of the strategic goals for the budget year as set out in the Strategy Plan.

Institutional Implementation Plan

The Institutional Implementation Plan (IIP) is an annual plan, which defines University wide objectives that will have a significant impact on achieving the goals. The IIP is a well-defined plan that describes a rich set of measures and targets underpinning strategic success.

Performance Monitoring

Continuous performance monitoring and periodical reviews occurs at operational level to track progress. Measuring of performance indicators and targets is to determine whether future performance targets will be met, exceeded or not met.

Review meetings focus on:

- The review performance of key indicators;
- The monitoring of individual and team performance;
- Taking actions and adapt the plans when necessary;
- The review of progress to correct poor performance, to sustain good performance or to improve performance; and
- Escalation of issues that require Senior Management involvement.

Performance Evaluation

VUT applies a status rating of red, amber or green (RAG) to evaluate actual performance achieved against target tolerance levels. Performance evaluation analysis outlines the reasons for under-performance or what the factors were that allowed good performance in a particular area. Where targets have not been met, the reasons are examined and the corrective action recommended.

Performance Evaluation

The mid-year report evaluates progress of the University from a strategic level, making sure that the strategic goals remain on track and flags up any issues for management decision-making.

The annual performance report evaluates the extent to which the University succeeded in achieving the KPI's for the strategic goals and objectives set at the beginning of the year. To provide assurance to the University stakeholders, the University's external auditors audit the annual performance report.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLAN AND BUDGET

The integration of planning and resource allocation is central to the realisation of the University's strategic goals. This integration supports the prioritisation of the allocation of the University's limited resources to enhance performance and is a critical feature of the implementation of 2023 Annual Performance Plan. The pursuit of the University's Strategic Goals is predicated on the understanding that strategy, performance and resources are closely linked. The budget is therefore an important steering mechanism for implementing strategic goals.

The annual budget process is considered a significant event with vast implications on the continuity of business of the institution. VUT's Budget Committee's role is to oversee the appropriate allocation within the available resources subject to elements such as proper budget planning, applying budget parameters and the implementation of the Reporting Regulations for Public Higher Institutions (DHET, 2014) requirements. The budget process is a fair and robust exercise supporting the goals of the University and the objectives of each Faculty and Department.

2023 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

VUT has identified six Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor progress and success in the realisation of our Strategic Goals. Data provided in this report were audited by SNG Grant Thornton. The research output units indicated was audited by the external auditors SNG Grant Thornton, but not yet DHET approved, therefore the final research output report might have slightly different figures.

Status Ratings to track Performance

VUT has developed a performance evaluation scorecard to define the current desired levels of performance. Ranges on KPIs are set to monitor performance within defined target tolerances. The target tolerances of an indicator target provide the thresholds within which performance can be either above or below target (+/-). Each threshold is defined by one of three colour statuses: RED, AMBER and GREEN. The proximity to target is calculated on a 'variance' of performance achieved against an expected result previously set. The variance on all KPIs are normalised to 100%.

The defined threshold and status are indicated as per the table below:

% on Target	97% - 100%	94% - 96%	<=93%
Status	Green	Amber	Red
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target achieved; • An acceptable result; • Area performed to a good or higher standard; and • Good evidence available to measure performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be a problem; • Further investigation may be required; • Area requires support and improvement; and • Limited evidence available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An unacceptable result; • There is a problem that needs rectification; • Area of relative weakness will require significant support and improvement; and • Little or no evidence available regarding measure of performance.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

VUT's performance in achieving the targets set for the six pre-determined KPIs are as follows:

PERFORMANCE SCORECARD					
Key Performance Indicator	2021 Audited	2022 Audited	2023 Target	2023 Actual	% on Target
1. Degree credit success rate	85,1%	83,3%	79%	82,4%	100%
2. Publication units per permanent instructional/research staff	0,42	0,37	0,45	0,60	100%
3. Net profit ratio	15%	7,8%	-3%	16,1%	100%
4. % Staff with performance contracts	25% (P1-7)	16% (P1-9)	92% (P1-12)	16% (P1-12)	18%

5. Percentage positive responses on governance assessment by Council	n/a*	n/a*	80%	88,7%	100%
6. Aggregate staff performance score for post level 1-4 from staff performance management system (5 point index)	3,2	Not Measured	3,5	3,7	100%

*In 2022 KPI 5 was measured to determine the average score on the governance assessment by Council. The actual performance was 3,0 on a rating scale of 4. For 2023, the KPI was revised to measure the percentage positive responses.

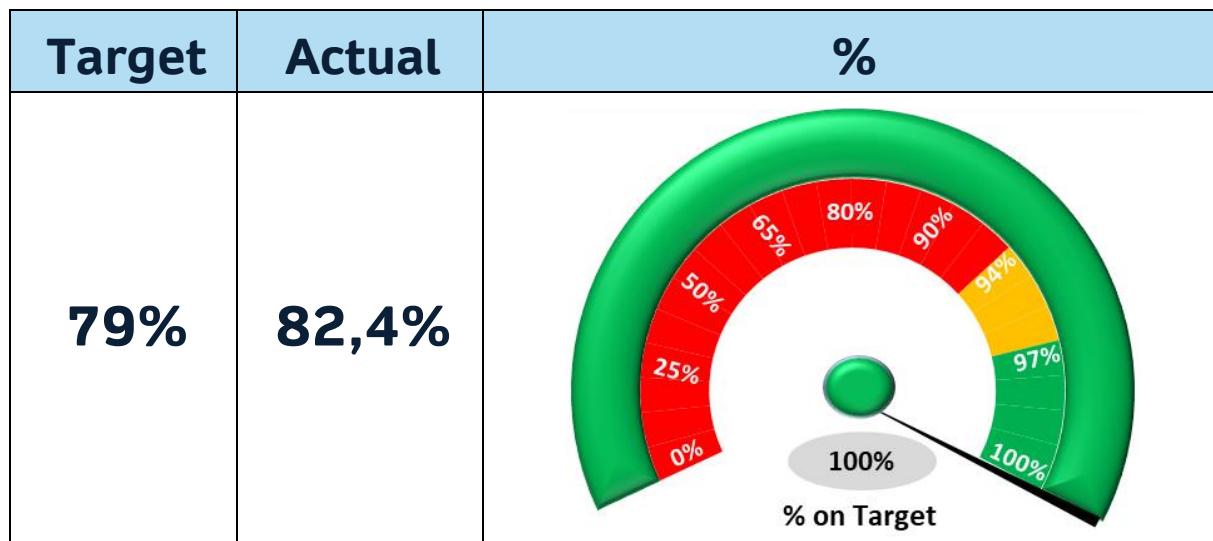
REPORT ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

Our strategic goals are committed to achieving academic excellence by strengthening the University's core functions relating to teaching and learning, research and engagement. The KPIs evaluate the achievement of the Strategic Objectives that are crucial in the realization of VUT's Goals.

Strategic Goal 1

Quality Teaching and Learning

KPI 1: Degree credit success rate



COMMENTS

Strategic actions

The institution took proactive steps to enhance the student experience, academic success, and access to higher education:

Student success

Interventions related to student support, academic development and work integrated learning (WIL) were implemented to drive the improvement of student success:

1. Enhanced learning opportunities by providing extra online evening classes & consultation, revision tutorials on Saturdays and recording of all online sessions for convenient review.
2. Appointed tutors for individualized support and conducted tutorial tests before formal assessments to gauge student understanding and readiness.
3. Implemented interventions such as supplemental instruction and special assessment sessions to support at-risk students.
4. Provided postgraduate student support such as laboratory practice workshops to enhance laboratory skills, assistance with research writing to improve the quality of student research papers and developed Standard Operating Protocols to streamline experimental procedures and ensure efficiency.
5. Collaborations with industry to established partnerships with various industries for WIL placements.
6. Coordinated efforts to secure funding for student stipends through eW-SETA and other sources.

COMMENTS

7. Implemented Student Work Readiness Programmes and employability improvement programmes and orientation sessions to prepare students for WIL and working life.
8. Implemented first-year student interventions including the orientation programme, the establishment of first year experience committees, provision of direct access to online platforms and targeted training session.
9. Utilized an effective tutorial and mentoring system to support student learning.
10. Implemented systems for academic advising, tracking and support.

Technology Enabled Learning

1. Hosted training and webinars on the use of VUTela and ICT skills using platforms SAM (Cengage).
2. Implemented Respondus proctoring tool and secure online platforms and assessment strategies.
3. To improve technology infrastructure Wi-Fi access points were increased, Wi-Fi controllers were upgraded, fiber optics were introduced and new authentication servers for student logins were purchased.

Academic Staff Development

1. Implemented training and development initiatives including mentoring programmes, License-to-Teach programme, scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) continuing education support and capacity development workshops.
2. Provided support to staff by conducting academic staff induction, hosting workshops on curriculum and portfolio development and provided opportunities to attend national seminar and workshop.
3. Assisted staff to pursue vertical qualifications by providing financial support for studies and workload reduction.

Enrolment Management

1. Revised the recruitment strategy in collaboration with the Recruitment Department leading to intensified targeted marketing to attract students.
2. Organised Science Week and Girls in STEM initiative to attract students to SET programmes.
3. Reviewed and evaluated minimum requirements for admission and progression rules.
4. Secured funding from SETAs for Advanced and Postgraduate Diplomas.
5. Utilized Recognition of Prior Learning, encouraged grant applications, and sought bursaries for Advanced Diplomas.

Quality Assurance and Curriculum

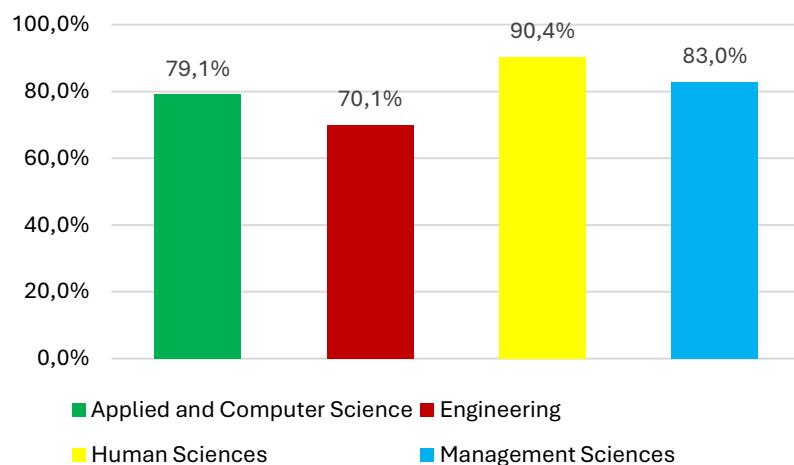
1. Implemented internal quality assurance through audits, reviews and the development of processes for new qualification development aligned to the integrated accreditation process. Non-active qualifications were cleared from the PQM.
2. Programme reviews were conducted to align the curriculum with industry and geographical requirements.
3. Conducted staff training and development on new quality assurance frameworks, updated policy frameworks and developed quality assurance manuals.

COMMENTS

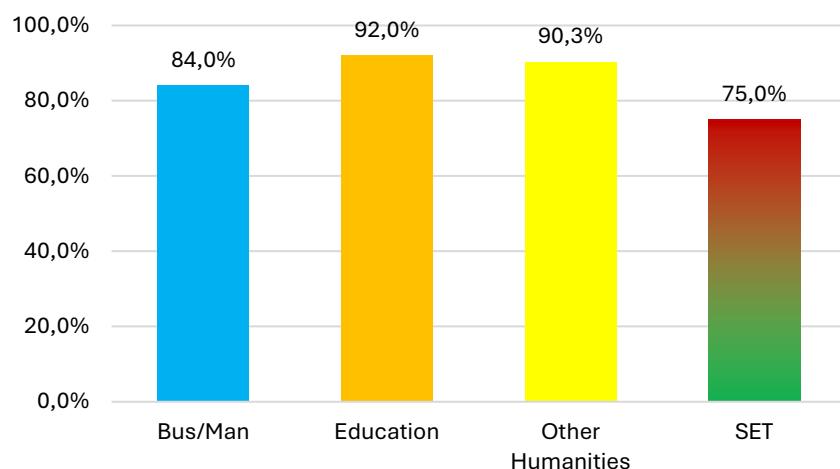
Branding, Marketing and Communication

1. Targeted special publications of articles showcasing institution's success stories and achievements to enhance brand visibility.
2. Improved the website's infrastructure and introduced new features like "VUT BY NUMBERS" to improve connectivity and provide accurate information.
3. Developed a unique social media content plan, tailored for different campaigns and events, leading to increased followers and online traction.
4. Engaged in alumni relations activities like seminars, workshops, and guest lectures.

Success Rate per Faculty



Success Rate per CESM Category

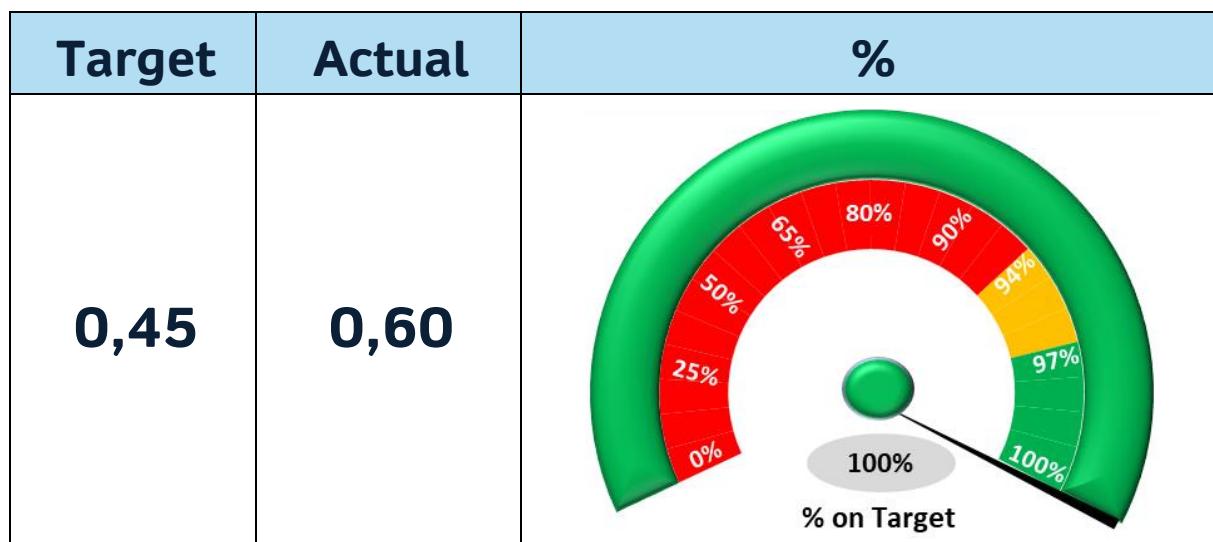


Strategic Goal 2

Increase Research Productivity

KPI 2:

Publication units per permanent instructional / research staff



COMMENTS	
<p>Strategic Actions</p> <p>The institution implemented strategic actions to increase and improve research, innovation, commercialisation and strategic engagement:</p>	
<p>Research</p> <p>The institution implemented strategic actions to improve research support and capacity and ultimately to increase research outputs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implemented writing for publication workshops and retreats to enhance research writing skills. 2. Alerted faculties of the support offered by the Research Directorate. 3. Provided UCDP funding for workshop attendance and seed funding for research projects. 4. Hosted capacity development workshops to bolster staff research capabilities. 5. Covered publication fees for accredited journal publications. 6. Supported staff attendance at national and international conferences. 7. Made various statistical and research-related software available through the Research Directorate. 8. Allowed researchers to use research incentives for expenditures related to their studies. 	

COMMENTS

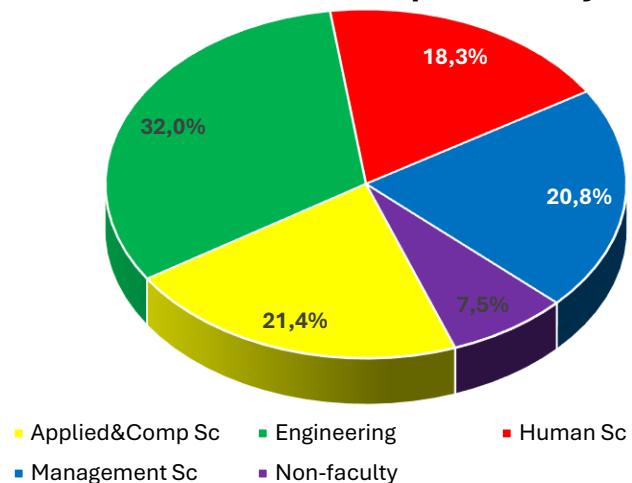
Innovation and Commercialization

1. Significant effort was dedicated to restoring technology means of innovation, including recommissioning various technologies like Electro-Optica-Systems (EOS), Voxeljet, and Fused Deposition Modelling (FDM), alongside connecting auxiliary support systems such as compressed air piping and electrical connections.
2. An applied research unit was established to stimulate potential prototype-generating applied research initiatives in collaboration with academia.
3. A consultant was appointed to support the implementation and certification of ISO 9001:2015 for international benchmarking.
4. Two prototypes, Plastic Shovel and GMS box, were successfully completed.
5. A memorandum of agreement (MOA) was signed with GDARDE to facilitate the training and development of 20 SMMEs in agro-processing.
6. Commercial activities generated revenue for TTI, despite challenges in infrastructure affecting client retention and acquisition.
7. SLP Development and Approval:
 - Three SLPs approved and ready for implementation.
 - Review and improvement of existing SLPs initiated.
 - Partnerships established with new clients, such as the UPRIVER Project.
 - SLP Advisory Committee established for governance and coordination.

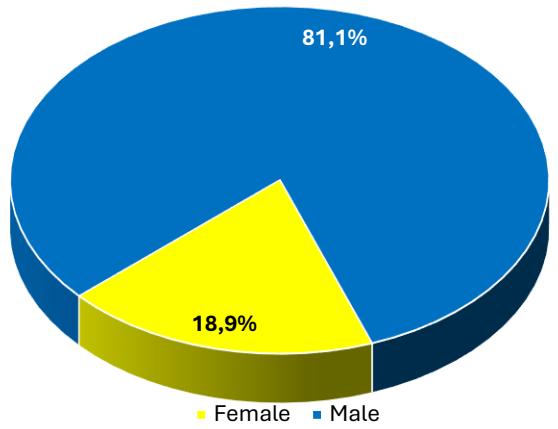
Strategic Engagement

1. Hosted events such as the VUT Socially Engaged Scholarship Indaba/Workshop and participated in activities like the Vaal Film and Media Festival and Indigenous Games Festival.
2. Forged strong working relationships with faculties, government, local communities, and African universities through collaboration agreements, joint research funding applications, and facilitation of inbound post-doc research fellows.
3. Facilitated student exchange programs, cultural boot camps, and participation in international faculty development and exchange programs to enhance student mobility.
4. Initiated various community engagement projects across faculties, including tutoring programs, community garden projects, establishment of student clubs and labs, and hosting seminars and science weeks.
5. Efforts to integrate scholarship into community engagement included workshops, participatory action research, capacity building, and concurrent data collection during projects.

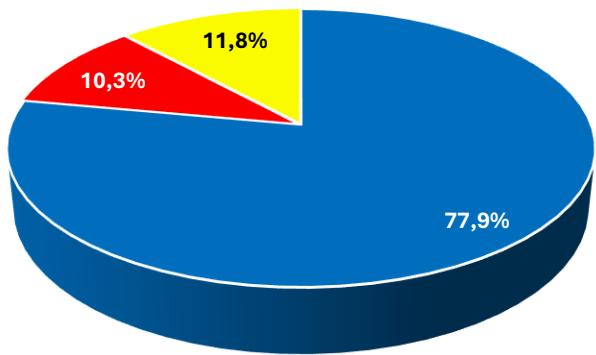
Publication Units per Faculty



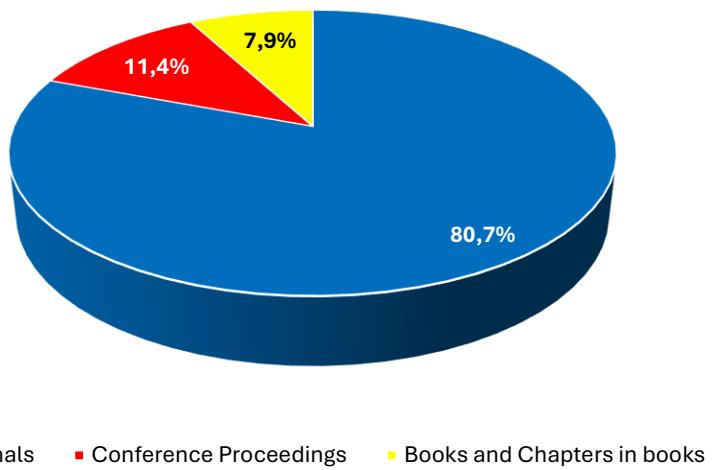
Publication Units by Gender



Research Outputs by Researcher Type



Research Output by Type

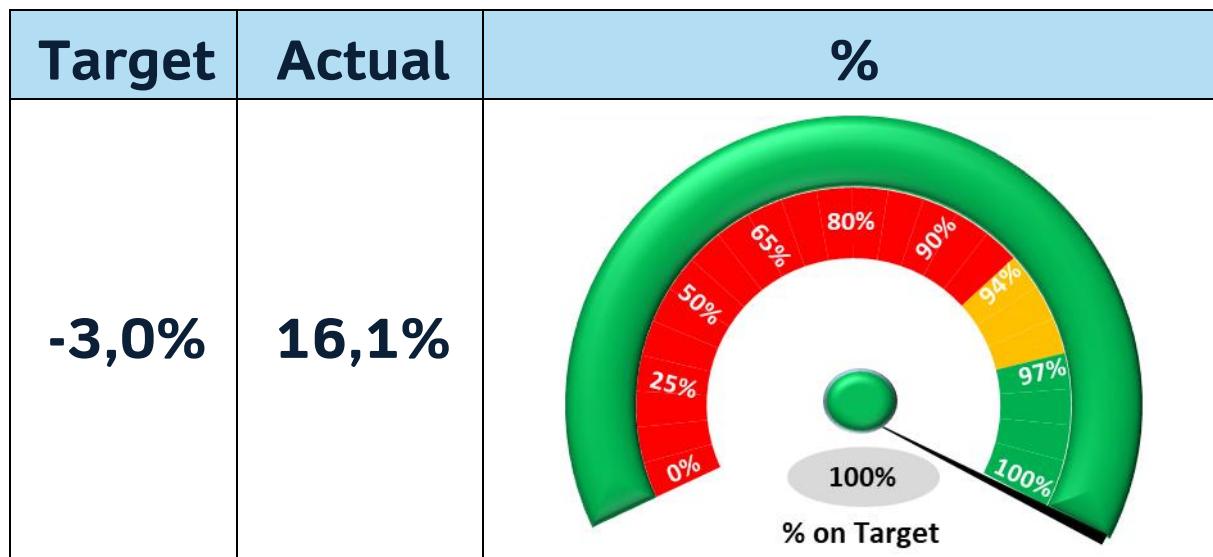


Strategic Goal 3

Improve Financial Sustainability

KPI 3:

Net profit ratio

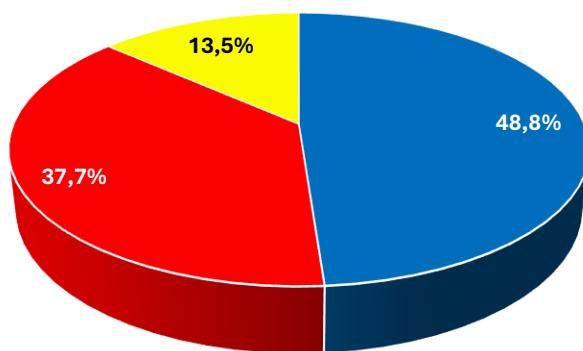


COMMENTS	
Strategic Actions	
The strategic actions taken to improve financial sustainability revolved around improving income, curbing expenditure and management procurement and cash flow:	
<i>Income</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a financial strategy enabling the implementation of projects aimed at increasing third stream income. Made payment agreements with indebted students and handed over accounts of non-registered students to debt collectors. Closely monitored and adjusted investments to ensure maximum return. The Technology Station generated additional income through the materials and processing technology and rendering skills development services to commercial entities to generate additional income.
<i>Expenditure</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Austerity measures were implemented to curb expenditure. Measures include the reduced budget allocations and exclusion of certain expenditure line items. Maintained strict budget control to ensure budgets were not exceeded.
<i>Procurement and cash management</i>	

COMMENTS

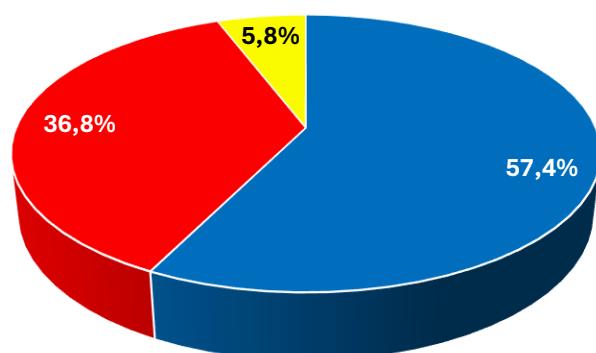
1. Contracted PURCO to assist with bid processes to project management.
2. Issued a service charter to enable managing of performance by the supply chain management department and identifying areas for improvement.
3. Aligned capital expenditure with the payment of subsidy to improve cash flow.

Sources of Income



- 1st Stream: Government Grants
- 2nd Stream: Fees and Student Accommodation
- 3rd Stream: Investments, Commercialisation & Donations

Expenditure



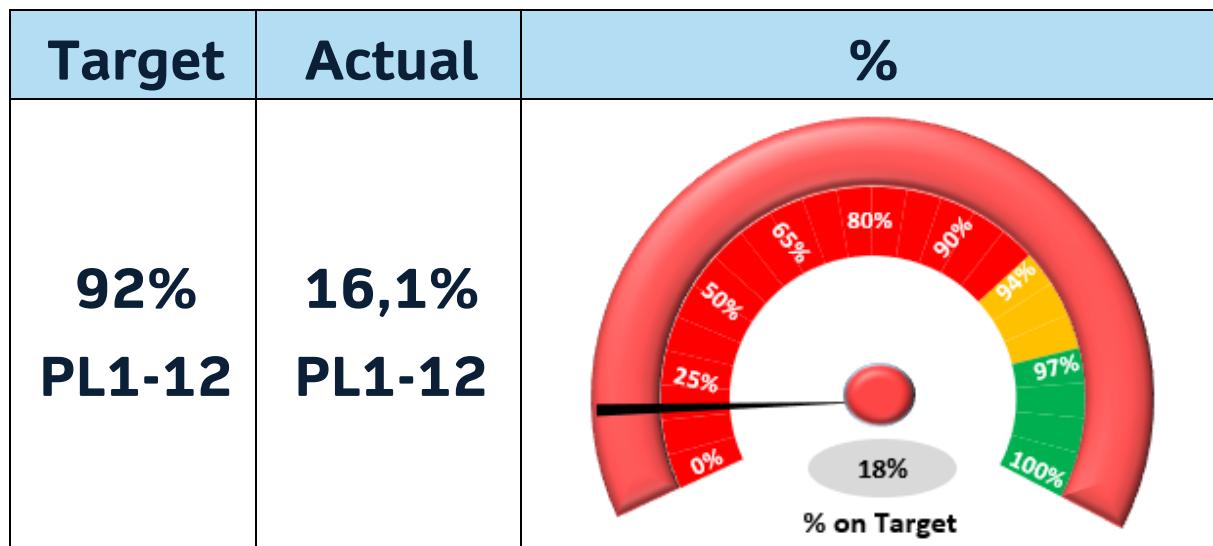
- Employee Cost
- Operating Cost
- Other (Depreciation and Finance)

Strategic Goal 4

Create a Performance Culture

KPI 4:

% Staff with performance contracts (Post level 1-9)



COMMENTS
Reason for negative variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational inefficiency for reporting performance due to the manual process and limited Human Resource Department capacity to manage collation.• Compliance challenges in respect of the Performance Management Policy.
Impact of non-achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The University has no indication of whether employees are performing or not, in line with Strategic Goals.
Corrective actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Portfolio leaders to drive compliance and ensure accountability.• Review of performance management policy to include performance-based incentives.

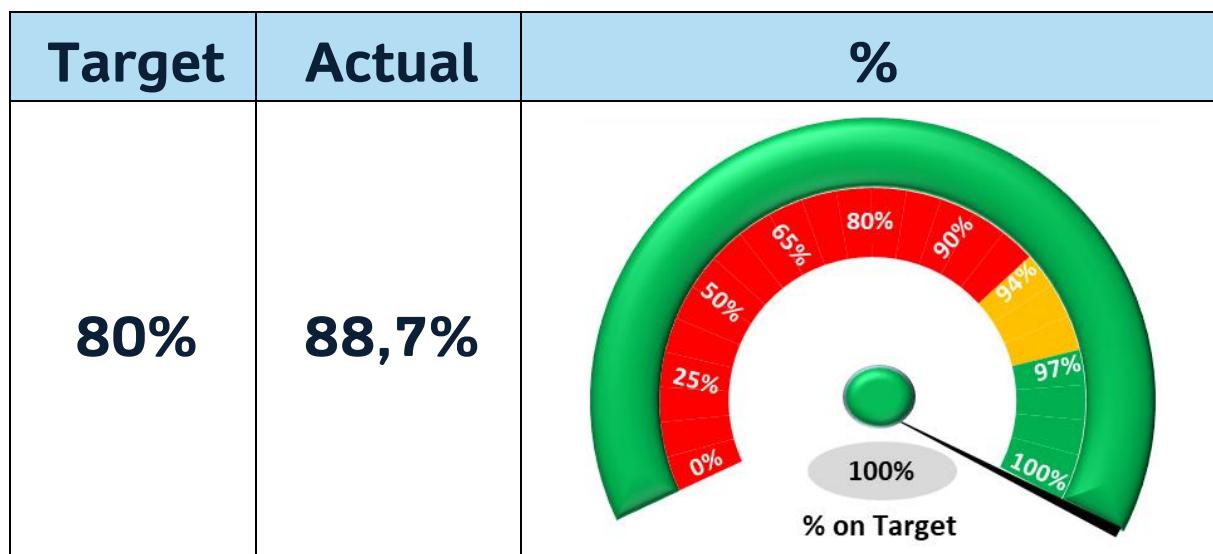
COMMENTS
Strategic Actions
Strategic actions implemented in 2023 were aimed at improving performance management, the staffing structure and transformation:
<p><i>Performance Contracting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management training and support for senior managers. • Procured an online Performance Management System to be launched in 2024. • Establishment of the Institutional Talent Management Committee for oversight on performance, development, progression, promotion, succession, and employment equity matters. <p><i>Organizational Refinement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated an Organizational Refinement Process, for completion by mid-2024. <p><i>Institutionalize Transformation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted a policy review on the appointment of foreign nationals to be finalized in 2024. • Consulted with stakeholders on the development and integration of the Institutional Transformation Plan and Transformation Policy.

Strategic Goal 5

Enhance Leadership and Governance

KPI 5:

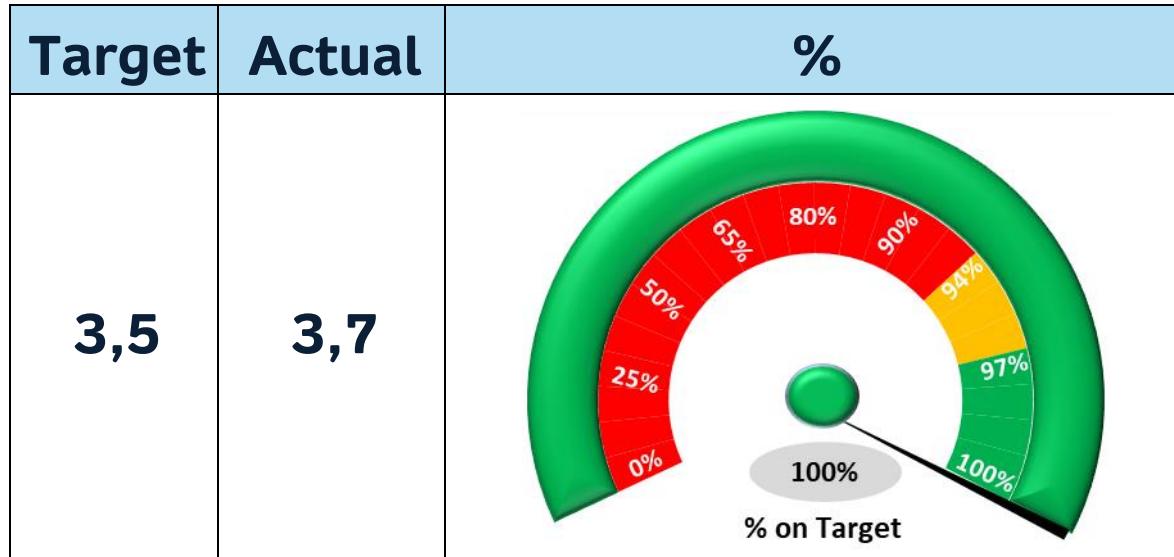
Percentage positive responses on governance assessment by Council



COMMENTS	
Strategic Actions	
<p><i>Governance, risk and compliance</i></p> <p>The strategic actions taken by the university that aimed to improve governance include strategies around risk and compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist members were appointed to serve on Council Committees. • Process initiated to establish an Ethics Committee. • Risk champions introduced in various departments. • Initiation of Ethics Management process to contribute to Risk Management. • Implemented an Ethics Hotline for whistleblowing. • Assisted departments in tracking internal controls. • Developed a Risk Maturity and Capability Improvement Plan (RMCIP). • Developed a Fraud Risk Register. • Established and implemented a Compliance Management Framework. 	

KPI 6: **Aggregate staff performance score** **for post level 1-4 from staff performance** **management system**

(5 point index)



COMMENTS	
Strategic Actions	
The following actions were implemented to improve strategic leadership in the university:	
• Implemented and Executive Development Programme in collaboration with University of the Free State.	• Developed a Talent Management Policy.
• Successfully recruited a new Vice-Chancellor commencing in February 2024.	

COUNCIL AGREEMENTS WITH THE MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Enrolment Targets

VUT set its 2020-2025 enrolment targets to support the achievement of the national goals. The enrolment projections are informed by institutional capacity, economies of scale and stronger institutional financial capacity.

The performance against the approved 2023 student enrolment targets are as follows:

Key Performance Indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	2023 Actual	Variance	Comments / Reasons for variance
A. Access					
First-time entering undergraduates	4 080	5 069	5 167	+0,02%	Comments: The demand for programmes on offer aided the achievement of the target. However, not all preferred applicants accepted for enrolment converted to registrations. Internal processes still need improvement to achieve ideal registrations.
Headcount enrolment	19 656	22 577	19 736	-12,58%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of places in programmes not aligned to the demand. Redistribution of programme targets to be revised. Number of returning students were negatively affected by the NFSAS challenges. Lack of funding at the AD, PGD, M&D levels. At risk modules not sufficiently identified and addressed.
FTE enrolment	14 372	17 150	14 888	-13,18%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late registrations result in timetable clashes. As a result, students register for reduced load. Lack of funding at the AD, PGD, M&D levels Students not taking full workload for various reasons.
Headcount enrolments (Foundation Provisioning)	0	300	255	-14,33%	Reason for negative variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First year of intake for Extended programmes into the Faculty of Engineering. APS requirements are the same for extended and main-stream programmes, student opt to enrol for latter. Target not met as quotas for first-time entering students into Engineering was already reached. To

Key Performance Indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	2023 Actual	Variance	Comments / Reasons for variance
					avoid penalties targets was not exceeded.
Headcount enrolments total UG	18 660	20 496	18 711	-8,71%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission Point Score requirements for some SET programmes higher than the students interested in studying at VUT achieve. SET students prefer other universities based on reputation. Students exceeding NSFAS funding period restrictions.
Headcount enrolments total PG	985	2 042	1 022	-50,00%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. Insufficient number of supervisors.
<i>Enrolments by major field of study</i>					
Science, Engineering, Technology	8 667	10 465	8 783	-16,07%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student debt prevent students from registering for WIL. However, with the help of Advisory Boards, companies started to offer to pay for students with outstanding fees so that they register WIL and can graduate. Funding challenges.
Business/Management	6 450	7 094	6 371	-10,19%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funding at the AD, PGD, M&D levels. Ineffective online application and registration system frustrated some potential students.
Education	811	1 236	868	-29,77%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient funding available for AD, PGD and Master's level.
Other Humanities	3 729	3 784	3 714	-1,85%	Comments: High demand for programmes offered.
B. Success					
Graduates UG	4 892	4 527	4 429	-2,16%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did not achieve success rate percentage for service subjects, mathematics & physics in SET programmes. High numbers of inactive students (drop-out rate).
Graduates PG	449	1 272	410	-67,77%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges with laboratory infrastructure affected experimental work of PG students negatively. Ineffective and delayed procurement processes delayed ordering of research consumables.

Key Performance Indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	2023 Actual	Variance	Comments / Reasons for variance
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approval of SOPs for ethical clearance had a negative effect on students. High staff turnover and lack of supervisory capacity. The lack of research funding support is a major factor. Lack of funding support for M&Ds lead to a higher number of dropouts.
Success rate	83,3%	79%	82,4%	+4,30%	Comments: Reassessment CASS opportunities given to students improved success. In addition, staff remained committed to students despite the challenges emanating from COVID.
<i>Graduate output by major field of study</i>					
Science, Engineering and Technology	2 219	2 422	2 023	-16,47%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did not achieve success rate percentage for service subjects, mathematics & physics. The Faculty resolved to appoint more tutors using UCDP funds. Early intervention plan and tracking system for at risk students not in place.
Business/Management	1 820	1 605	1 525	-4,98%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low success rates in numerate (quantitative) modules. High numbers of inactive students (drop-out rate).
Education	354	744	270	-63,71%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a
Other Humanities	948	1 028	1 021	-0,01%	Comment: Programmes less dependent on SET subjects leading to higher success. In addition, continuous assessment provided students with more opportunities to pass.
<i>Undergraduate output by scarce skill</i>					
Engineering	1 178	1 202	1 106	-7,99%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early intervention plan and tracking system for at risk students not in place.
Life and Physical Sciences	277	425	291	-31,53%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIL placement of students remains a challenge. Staff and students not sufficiently equipped to enhance the blended teaching and learning methods (VUTela Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, videos, ITS and other technologies).

Key Performance Indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	2023 Actual	Variance	Comments / Reasons for variance
Animal and Human Health	130	193	184	-4,67%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in the anticipated completion of the Bachelor's in Nursing.
Teacher Education	161	128	95	-25,78%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students struggling with the core components of the programme - Mathematics and Sciences.
C. Efficiency					
<i>Instructional/Research Professional Staff</i>					
Headcount of permanent instruction/research professional staff	345	378	331	-12,43%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff turnover due to workload and opportunities in more esteemed institutions. Retirement of senior academics. Permanent vacant positions not prioritised for recruitment.
FTE of instruction/research professional staff	554	553	541	-2,17%	Comments: Increased the number of contract staff while awaiting the appointment of permanent staff. Additionally, the staff from the sites of delivery that phased out by end of 2022 were absorbed into the faculties.
% Staff with doctoral degrees	22,6%	21%	23,9%	+13,8%	Comments: Despite achievement, the recruitment of staff with PhDs is critical to retain the ratio as the targeted number of permanent instruction/ research staff is pursued.
Ratio of FTE students to FTE instructional/research staff	26:1	31:1	27,5 : 1	-11,29%	Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes not achieving on the enrolment targets, both headcounts and especially FTEs, negatively impact the ratio. Lack of tutor system negatively impact student success and workload.
D. Research output					
Publication units	127,8	170	199,15	+17,14%	Comments:
Publication units per FTE staff	0,23	0,31	0,37	+19,35%	Capacity development programmes and research support funded through the UCDG
Publication units per staff headcount	0,37	0,45	0,60	+33,33%	improve researcher success.
Research Master's graduates	42	58	50	-14,29%	Reasons for variance:
Doctoral graduates (weighted)	45	69	33	-52,17%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of research Labs delayed research. Loadshedding affected research labs leading to a continuous loss of precious samples and kits.

Key Performance Indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	2023 Actual	Variance	Comments / Reasons for variance
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The turnover of very good staff members is high, which results in lower supervisory capacity and the number of students that can be attracted becomes less. The lack of funding for M&D students

EARMARKED GRANTS

University Capacity Development Grant

The University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) aims at “*Transforming teaching, learning, researching and leading towards enhanced quality, success and equity in universities*”, underpinned by principles of transformation. The expenditure in 2023 focused on student development and support as well as staff development and research support.

2023 Earmarked Allocation (R)	Budget (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Variance	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
19 674 537	552 816	550 149.80	-0,48%	1.1: First year Experience - First year orientation	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment of FYE Coordinator. Developed and presented Blended orientation for First year Students. Hosted award ceremony in collaboration with faculties.
	84 415	77 961.81	-7,65%	1.2: First year Experience - Training on and support for LMS (students)	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment of four Student Buddies. Hosted campaigns. Hosted training & support sessions. Provided staff with E-learning design support for material for students. Reasons for variance: Money was spent effectively, no challenges were experienced.
	77 000	78 885	+2,45%	1.3: First year Experience - Learning Communities (mentor programme)	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited mentors. Hosted two training workshop for mentors. Conducted career Development projects.
	1 836 030	1 402 658.41	-23,60%	2: Early Warning System	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed Instructional designer. Hosted Blackboard learning analytic data strategy workshop. Facilitated Software / Hardware hosting.

2023 Earmarked Allocation (R)	Budget (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Variance	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted capacity development of E-learning staff. E-learning staff trained lecturers to use Early Warning System. <p>Reasons for variance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main reason for underspending is due to the exchange rate being lower than budget. The appointment of the instructional designer services happened late in the year.
	520 816	0	-100%	3: Academic Literacy Development	<p>Reasons for variance:</p> <p>No appointment could be made for the Academic Literacy coordinator, and the funds of this project were made available during the budget-cut.</p>
	1 753 421	1 753 325	-0,01%	4: Academic Advising	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employed of Advisors. Hosted academic advising workshops.
	2 228 406	2 190 514	-1,70%	5: Mathematics, Science, Engineering and Technology Development and Support	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed MSET coordinator and Tutors. Conducted training workshops for tutors to equip them to provide academic support to students in mathematics and physical science modules. Coordinated one-on-one consultation and tutorial sessions for students in mathematics and physical sciences.
	1 398 660	1 006 856	-28,01%	6: Tutor Programme	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted generic training workshops and reflection sessions for tutors to capacitate them for tutoring duties and to enable them to reflect on and share their practices with a view to improving them. <p>Reasons for variance:</p>

2023 Earmarked Allocation (R)	Budget (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Variance	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resignations of appointed Tutor Programme Coordinators resulted in partial utilisation of funds allocated for tutor appointment by faculties.
	2 122 245	2 100 327	-1,03%	7: African Languages Development	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed four Language Practitioners. Developed Glossaries in African Languages. Made Video Recordings. Provided Mentor / Tutor training.
	335 500	325 965	-2,84%	8: Student Work Readiness Programme	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Workshop Material
	535 016	527 995	-1,31%	9: Training and support for LMS (staff)	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed staff trainer. Provided training.
	2 957 681	2 592 806	-12,34%	10. Professional Development	Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated professional Development. Appointment of Evaluation of Teaching. Awarded rewards for Teaching excellence. Scholarship of teaching and learning. Hosted CAD Conference. Employed Teaching and learning specialist. Created and implemented online module guidelines. Conducted Staff development for First year experience. Reasons for variance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planned writing retreat was only done in 2024 as the DHET extended the period until 31 March 2024. Teaching and Learning specialist resigned in the middle of year and

2023 Earmarked Allocation (R)	Budget (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Variance	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
					funds meant for the salary was never spent.
	4 038 930	2 424 084	-39,99%	11. Research Development	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported staff registered for PhD. Provided research support for academic staff who recently completed PhD Studies. Funded supplementary staff replacement programme. Provided Research Capacity development support for staff at VUT. <p>Reasons for variance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient uptake for SEED FUNDING. This can be directly attributed SCM difficulties and laboratories that are out of order. The supplementary staff activity appears underspent but the 10% decrease was taken into account.
	1 113 294	1 105 391	-0,71%	12: Management of UCDG/P	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of two Finance officers in CAD & Research; Training Workshops; Appointment of Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.
19 674 537	19 674 537	16 136 923	-17,99%		

CLINICAL TRAINING GRANT

The clinical training grant enabled the appointment of additional clinical training staff and funding of operational costs related to clinical training service delivery. The earmarked allocation for 2023/2024 was R7 382 000 but the allocation received in 2023 totalled R12 256 600.

Earmarked Allocation (R) 2023/2024	2023 Expenditure (R)	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
12 256 600	Nursing		
		Appointment of clinical training facilitators, technical and administrative support staff	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 clinical training facilitators (lecturers and clinical accompanists) for Nursing were appointed. <p>Reasons for variance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the course is phasing out, employment of more staff could not be justified until the replacement degree is accredited with SANC and CHE.
Biomedical			
		Appointment of clinical training facilitators	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 clinical training facilitators (lecturers, laboratory technicians) for Biomedical technology and Medical Laboratory Science were appointed. <p>Reasons for variance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the Diploma and National Diploma was phasing out, less Diploma/ National Diploma modules were running with the BHS, therefore, the appointment of more staff could not be justified.
		Appointment of academic and support staff	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two drivers appointed to ferry students and staff to clinical facilities using the bus. <p>Reasons for variance:</p> <p>There wasn't enough funding to appoint an additional staff member in this category.</p>
		Operational costs	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paying for fuel for student and staff transport to clinical facilities. Purchasing uniforms and lab coats for students and staff. Paying for repairs and services for the bus. <p>Reasons for variance:</p>

Earmarked Allocation (R) 2023/2024	2023 Expenditure (R)	Projects	Comments / Reasons for variance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The procurement processes take very long and receiving quotations can sometimes take months. Some orders were not completed by the end of 2023.
	8 769 217		

INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE GRANT

The purpose of the infrastructure and efficiency grant is to ensure (a) synergy between the availability of infrastructure within the university sector and the range of needs linked to the expansion of the system in terms of the enrolment planning processes; (b) equity in the quality of infrastructure at all universities; and (c) equity in the distribution of state funds amongst universities.

Earmarked Allocation (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Projects where activity occurred - including preparation, tenders etc.	Comments
2012-2015 Infrastructure and Efficiency Fund R295 635 000 Over the period Portion of 6 th Cycle IEG funding (R56 057 000)	0.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering Building Extension - Construction Started Teacher Education Building - Construction Started New Life and Physical Science Building - Finishing Contractor Appointed 	<p>Activities: Engineering Building Extension and Teacher Education Building, appointment of consultants completed and re-review of designs completed.</p> <p>Challenges: Scope reviewed due to budget challenges on the Teacher Education Building.</p> <p>New Life and Physical Science shortage of funds and claim dispute by the Insurance.</p> <p>Corrective actions:</p>

Earmarked Allocation (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Projects where activity occurred - including preparation, tenders etc.	Comments
			Additional funds from VUT and reprioritization of the funds from IEG to cover the finishing costs.
2015/2016 2nd Cycle Maintenance Allocation: R31 500 000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation of Ubuntu Residences Electrical Master Plan – Phase 1 Refurbishment of Khayalethu Residences Renovation of Main Campus Ablutions Renovation of Auditorium and Lecture Halls Refurbishment of Block C- Laboratories Removal of Asbestos Roof at Sebokeng Secucirty Palisade Fence Extenal Disability Facilities Internal Disability Facilities - Designs Electrical Master Plan 	<p>Activities: Completion of Residences and Renovations targeted for the end of Dec 2023. Significate progress made on residences, lecture halls and ablutions. Practical completion expected in the first and second quarter of 2024.</p> <p>Challenges: Block C -Laboratories Contractor delayed due to the Long-Lead Items.</p>
2016/2017 3rd Cycle Maintenance Allocation: R36 946 866	25 812 439.71		<p>Electrical Master Plan went out to tender for the second time and closed in Sept 2023, but no award done due to missing BID documents.</p> <p>Corrective actions: Tendering Process handed over to PURCO SA to expedite.</p>
2017/2018 4th Cycle Maintenance Allocation: R42 804 612			
2018/19 – 2020/21 5th Cycle IEG R326 515 702	17 041 386.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science and Research Laboratories (HS Building) - Consultants (Design Team) appointed and Designs Completed Student Study Centre - Consultants (Design Team) appointed and designs started. Centre for Sustainable Livelihood - Consultants (Design) Team appointed NDT WIL Simulation - Consultants (Designs Team) appointed. 	<p>Activities: Appointment of the Design Teams on all projects and commencement of designs and completion of Contractor Tender Documents.</p> <p>Challenges: Bids for Consultants closed in September 2023, and there were lost BID documents and tenders could not be</p>

Earmarked Allocation (R)	2023 Expenditure (R)	Projects where activity occurred - including preparation, tenders etc.	Comments
			<p>evaluated for BAC to award the contracts.</p> <p>Corrective actions:</p> <p>The tenders for the Design Consultants have been handed over to PURCO SA and re-advertised again.</p>



Professor Khehla Ndlovu
Vice Chancellor and Principal



Professor Mandla Radebe
Chairperson of Council

SECTION 15: REPORT OF THE FINANCE EXECUTIVE AND CHAIRPERSON OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

The Vaal University of Technology (VUT) believes that systematic sustainability is the responsibility of all stakeholders, including management, staff, and students. To achieve joint goals, VUT supports consultative engagements with staff, students, and external partners to promote inclusivity, representativeness, and transparency. Financial management is also a priority at VUT, with decisions measured in financial terms and various control mechanisms in place, including centralized control over assets, procurement, and the university's bank account, as well as quarterly reporting to the Management Committee and Council and compliance with approved policies and procedures.

Budgeting Process

The budget process at VUT aims to ensure equitable and transparent distribution of university resources to support core business strategies. It is viewed as a significant event that impacts the institution's business continuity. The process is interactive and involves different levels of management actively participating in compiling the budget for the next year, considering past trends and future goals. The Budget Committee oversees the process and recommends the budget to MANCOM, which further recommends it to the Finance Committee and Council for approval.

The MANCOM approved budget parameters before the budget process began. The Budget Committee ensured appropriate allocations within available resources and focused on improving the core business of teaching, learning, and research. Various parameters were considered during this process including the following:

- All contractual increases as per contract agreements;
- Departments were requested to use a zero-based budgeting approach so requests were detailed and fully motivated;
- Provision for new/replacement teaching and instructional equipment in the academic sector;
- Certain line items were not permitted due to austerity measures.
- Limited new furniture and equipment for new offices only, whilst a provision is made for the replacement of obsolete capital items of existing employees; and
- Staff cost as a percentage of income.

A rigorous process was followed with the participation of the various Departments and Faculties in the development of the final budget. The allocation of funds is guided by strict methodology which is premised on prioritizing the objectives set out in the Annual Performance Plan. The total budgeted expenses for 2023 exceeded the total budgeted income by R42.7 million. The deficit budget is not an enviable situation and Management is working on recovery strategies. MANCOM is mindful of the financial situation in the Sector and it is therefore aware that such interventions or recovery measures may take longer as the system improves.

Overview of financial results

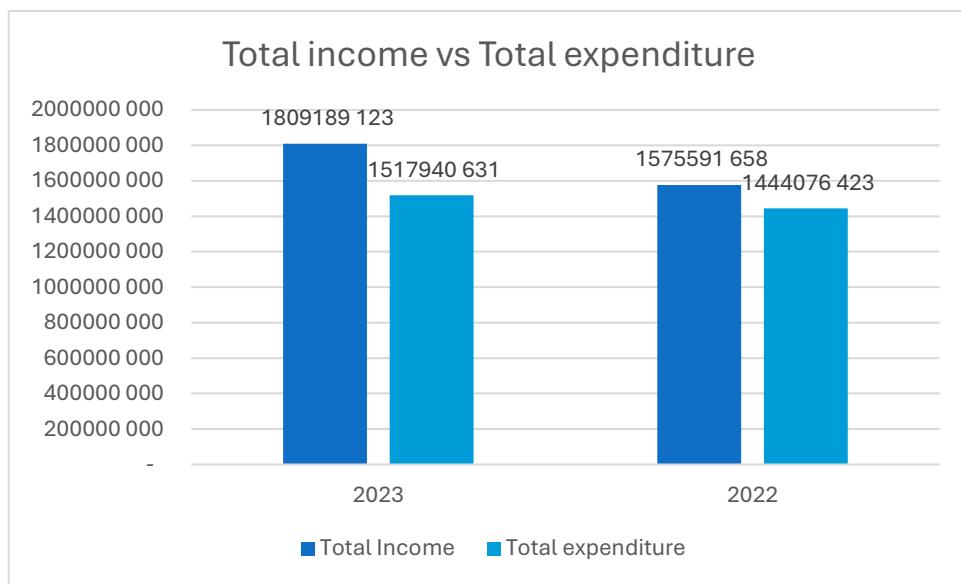
The 2023 VUT financial results are affected by significant economic challenges. The financial effects on the University resulted in an increase to financial risks faced by VUT due to the following challenges:

- Reduction in block grant and Infrastructure Grant;
- Increase in student debt
- Limited third-stream income
- Unfordable salary bill
- The uncertainty of first-time enrolments for 2024;

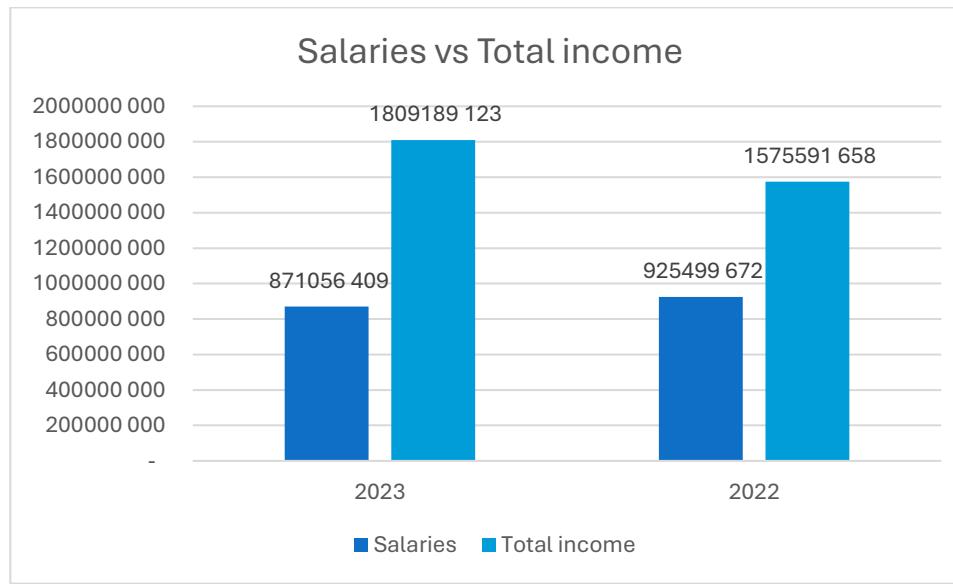
While there is a significant threat to total income, the university is still facing similar expenditure costs, especially personnel costs.

The total income of the University increased by 15% to R1 809.2 million (2022: R1 575,6 million) while the total expenses increased by 5% to R1,517.9 million for the financial year 2023 (2022: R1,441,6 million). The surplus after tax for the university's operations is R279.5 million for the current year (2022: R122.3 million).

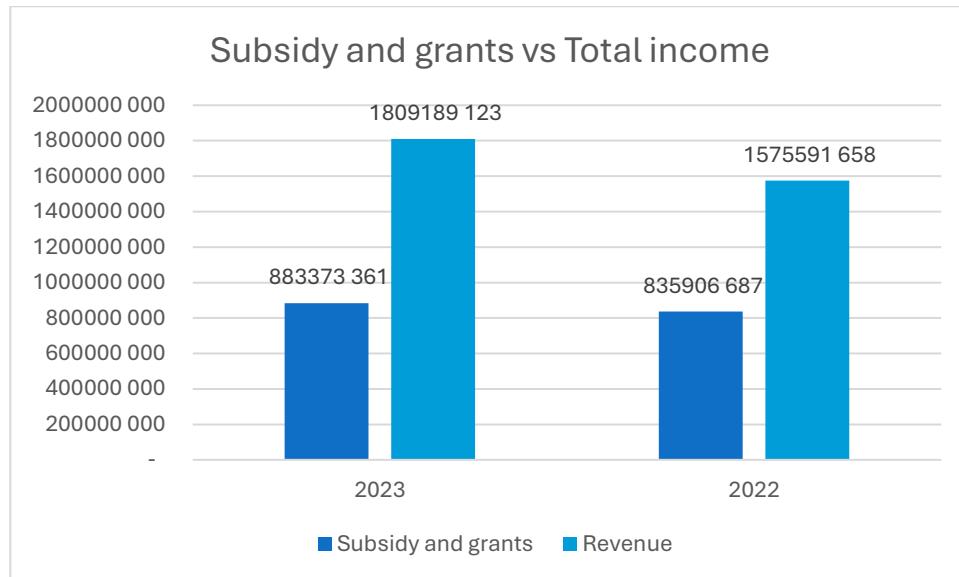
The substantial excess is a result of a realisation of a much higher investment income than budgeted and a decrease in personnel expenses due to delayed reappointments after staff retirements and resignations. Furthermore, the university achieved cost savings in operational expenses through effective budget control measures. The University needs to improve on third stream income initiatives.



Personnel costs is 56% (2022: 65%) of the 1st and 2nd stream income meaning that this category of expense is comfortably within the DHET recommended threshold. However, this cannot be recorded as an achievement because it is because of unfilled vacant posts including some that were identified as critical posts. The reorganization of the structure will assist in controlling this cost.

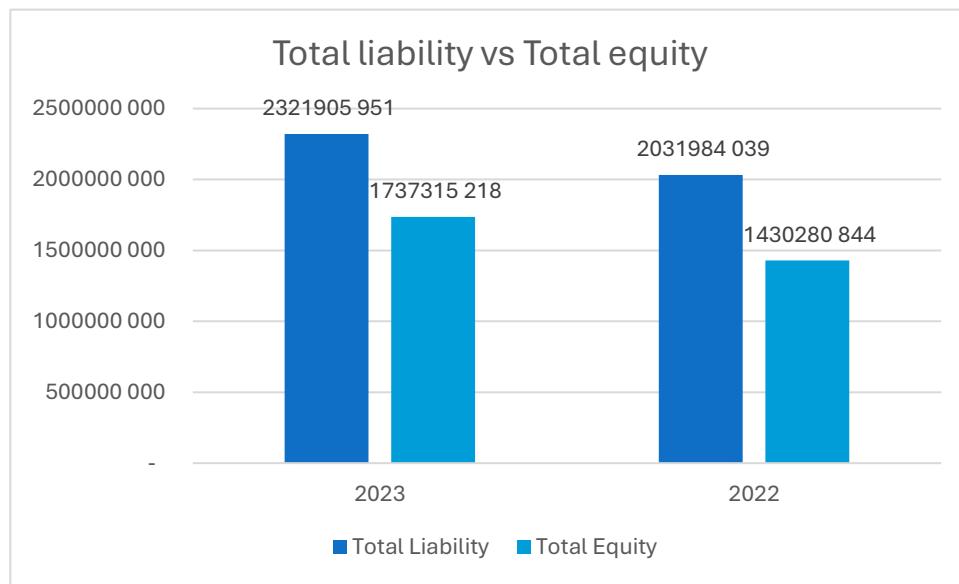


The total income of the university is still largely dependent on the government subsidy at 46% of total income (2022: 50%). The University generated 9.9% (2022: 5.7%) of the total income from other sources and activities other than government subsidies and tuition and accommodation fees.



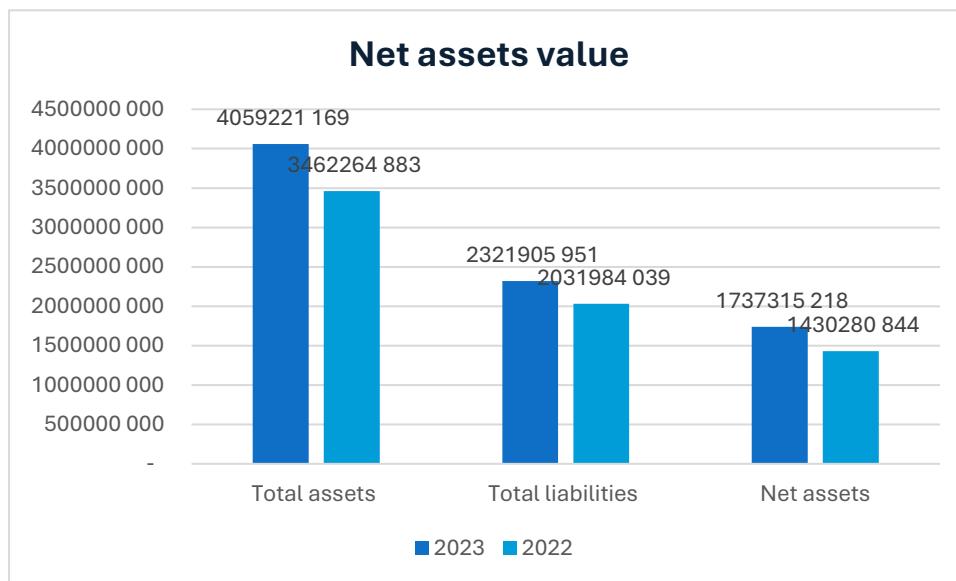
Solvency

This is a measure of the ability of the University to meet its long-term debts.



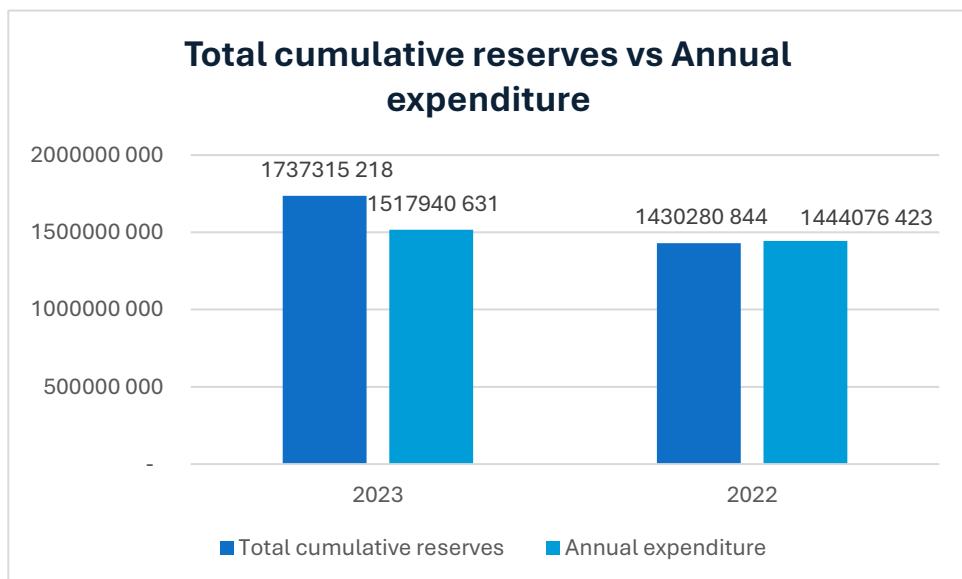
The total liabilities (R2,322 million) expressed over accumulated reserves (R1, 737 million) indicate the university's ratio of debt to equity as 1.34 (2022: 1.42). This ratio has slightly

improved compared to the previous year due to the increase in surplus for the year. However, VUT need to keep the same direction for it to normalise in few years.



Total assets increased by 17% while the total liabilities increased by 14% in the current year. The net asset value has increased by 21% due to good returns on long-term investment and a decrease in lease liabilities.

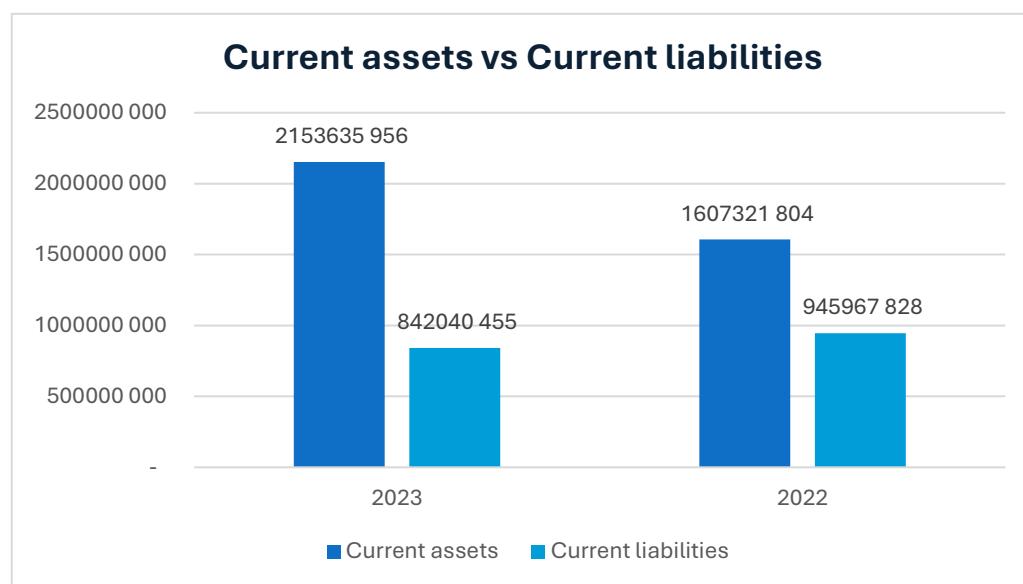
Sustainability



This ratio indicates the ability for an institution to continue in operation without new funding in the next financial year. A trend of a higher than 1 ratio signifies a viable institution while below 1 means may not cover the following year's expenses without new funding. The ratio of total cumulative reserves over annual expenditure is 1.14 in the current year (2022: -0.99). Compared to the previous year, there has been an improvement in the ratio, VUT has restored the situation to normal standard and aims to maintain and improve it by implementing a Financial Strategy that is set to be approved by Council by the end of 2024.

Liquidity

The current ratio determines the extent to which current liabilities are covered by current assets. This ratio indicates that the University's current liabilities are fully covered by current assets, the ratio is 2,56 times for 2023 (2022:1,70 times).

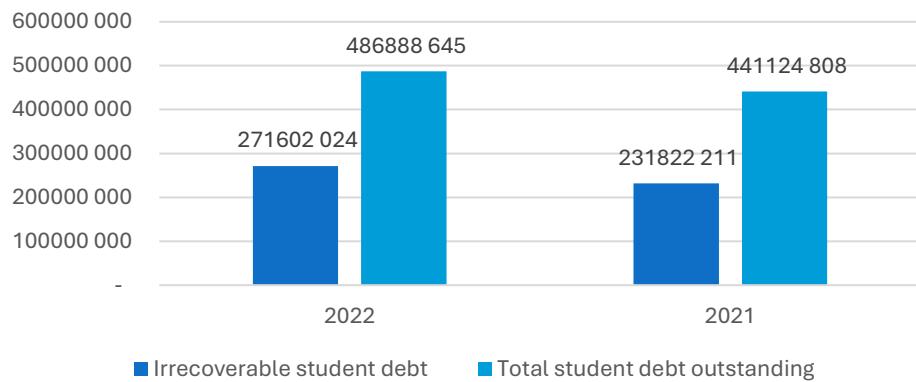


This ratio has increased because assets has increased while current liabilities have decreased.

Student Debt

Student debt remains one of the greatest financial concerns for the Institution as it has a significant impact on the financial sustainability and cash focus of the Institution in the long term. The student debt increased from R441.1 million to R486.9 million (10%) during the current year, compared to a decrease of 2% in the previous year. The university is working towards enhancing its debt recovery approach to mitigate losses. The percentage of fees owed to the University calculated as not recoverable is 56% (2022:53%).

Irrecoverable student debt vs Total student debt outstanding



The student debt that cannot be recovered has risen compared to the previous year, primarily due to the underperformance of self-funded students, as well as the adverse effects of increased unemployment rates and a weakened economy. VUT, like many other institutions, is not immune to these challenges, which have impacted the performance of student loans.

Access to Financial Aid

Most Vaal University of Technology students are from disadvantaged families and this situation has placed pressure on the financial resources of the University. The biggest source of funding for students is NSFAS. The University also provides various forms of financial assistance to deserving students. VUT is also actively involved with other private bursary providers to obtain more resources to assist students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) places a strong emphasis on sustainability and financial management as the responsibility of all stakeholders. VUT is facing increasing financial pressure due to the failure of the government subsidy and student fees to match inflationary cost increases, increase in student debt, limited third-stream income, and unaffordable salary increases, which have resulted in an increased financial risk. Personnel costs are a significant expense for VUT and need to be contained to ensure the sustainability of the institution. The solvency ratio is improving, sustainability and liquidity ratios have improved to acceptable levels compared to the previous year, and VUT aims to improve the situation through implementing a financial strategy within two years. Overall,

VUT acknowledges the financial challenges and is actively working on recovery strategies to ensure its long-term sustainability.



Mr Sthembiso Khanyile
Chairperson: FINCOM



Mr Luyanda Ndeya
Chief Financial Officer

SECTION 16: STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

VUT endeavours to establish and uphold internal control systems that offer a reasonable level of assurance to the University Council through the Management Committee (Mancom) and the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). The ARC has been operational throughout the entire 2023 financial year. These systems of control foster an operational environment that prioritizes the protection of university assets and the provision of dependable financial information.

Audit and Risk Committee Charter

The audit and Risk Committee has adopted a formal charter which was approved by Council in 2021 financial year. The overall objective of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter is to assist the University Council in fulfilling its governance and oversight responsibilities i.e.:

- Planning and reporting
- Risk Management
- Finance and resources; and
- Audit process.

The Audit and Risk Committee membership and meetings

The Audit and Risk Committee of Council, whose chairperson is an external member of Council was established in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (as amended). The constituencies of the external members include Ministerial appointee and appointees from Chamber of Commerce/Business, Donors and the Convocation, who are independent of the University's executive management.

The Charter specifies the Composition of the Committee as:

- Four external members of Council;
- The Vice-Chancellor and Principal;
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for finances;
- The Chief Financial Officer;
- The Secretary to the Committee is the Registrar;
- The Internal and External Auditors (on advisory and expert capacity); and
- Office of the Auditor-General (on advisory and expert capacity).

The ARC had three meetings, one special meeting and two joint meetings with FINCOM. All three meetings and two joint meetings were attended by all members. A member from

Chamber of Commerce's term of office expired at the end of August and is still to be replaced. The chairperson and one member of the committee resigned in October and were replaced by November.

Financial Management and Internal Controls

Organisational policies and procedures, structures and values are some of the controls implemented by Management. The initiatives taken by Management to improve the control environment are ongoing and will continue. Information systems and internal controls are audited by external and internal auditors on an annual basis.

Management is responsible for implementing internal and transparent financial management controls which include information systems on financial and operational matters, compliance, and sustainability issues. Financial management reports are compiled quarterly and discussed by a properly constituted Mancom that meet at least twice every month, FINCOM that meet per quarter and quarterly meetings of ARC to deliberate on the following:

- Risk management-related governance frameworks.
- Review/approval of external and internal audit plans, findings, reports and fees.
- Senate Reports and requests pertaining academic matters.
- Annual Report and quarterly reports.
- Information Technology Report.
- OHS Report.
- Compliance with the Code of Corporate Practises and Conduct, and
- Compliance with Higher Education Institution's Code of Ethics.

The ARC serves both Management and Council and evaluates the response on the abilities and duties of the external and internal auditors, by ensuring that all major findings reported on have been satisfactory resolved and that corrective measures are taken to address deficiencies. The auditors have unrestricted access to the financial records of the Institution and the ARC should ensure that their independence is not impaired.

Internal Audit Function

The role of the Internal Auditors is to provide independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control systems, as well as financial controls on an ongoing basis. The University makes use of an outsourced internal audit function (SekelaXabiso CA Incorporated) and they were appointed in 2021 for three (3) years. ARC approves the Internal Audit Plan on an annual basis. Internal auditors adjust its planning accordingly to ensure that the testing of controls is directed in areas where risk has been identified. ARC reviews audit reports as part of the oversight role in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of processes and

controls. Based on the work performed by Internal auditors, internal control systems and financial controls are effective.

External Audit Function

The role of the External Auditors (SizweNtsaluba Goboto Grant Thornton) is to provide an opinion on the financial statements prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa. The external audit opinion is based on executing an audit in accordance with the Public Audit Act of South Africa, the General Notice issued in terms thereof, and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs).

In accordance with the Public Audit Act of South Africa (PAA), and the General Notice issued in terms thereof, the External Auditors are required to report findings relevant to the reported performance against predetermined objectives, compliance with laws and regulations as well as internal control.

External Audit conducts its audits in terms of the risk-based External Audit Plan recommended by Management and approved by the Council for the year ending 31 December 2023.

The external auditors were appointed towards the end of April 2024 for 5 years' subject to annual concurrence from Auditor General.

Combined Assurance

Although there is no formal combined assurance model, all assurance providers have a healthy working relationship. This entails continuous sharing and collaboration with the aim of ensuring full coverage.

Financial Statements

The Financial Statements are compiled by Management in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and in the manner required by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997). An unqualified audit opinion for 2023 was issued by the external auditors.



Ms Priscilla Mvana

Chairperson: Audit and Risk Committee