



University of the Free State

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

to the Department of Higher Education and Training

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA  
FREISTATA



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## 1. PREAMBLE

### 1.1. Message from the Council Chairperson

Following the upsurge of the #student movements in 2015 and 2016, 2017 proved to be a much calmer year for the University of the Free State (UFS), as for much of the rest of the South African higher education sector. Instead, the University experienced some very significant internal changes with regards to its governance; not least of which being the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor and Rector.

Despite taking office only in April, Prof Francis Petersen already began participating in University planning processes in January 2017. Specifically, following a directive from Council to the UFS senior management, Prof Petersen took responsibility for guiding the development of an integrated transformation plan for the institution. This plan is the foundation of the new UFS Strategic Plan: 2018 – 2022, which Council approved during 2017.

Council also approved a number of other senior appointments during 2017, including the appointment of former Qwaqwa Campus Principal Prof Prakash Naidoo as Vice-Rector: Operations, Prof Loyiso Jita as Dean of the Faculty of Education, and Prof Joyce Tsoka-Gwegweni as Vice-Dean in the Faculty of Health Sciences. In addition, Council approved the extension of the term appointments of the Vice-Rector: Research and Internationalisation, Prof Corli Witthuhn, and the Senior Directors of Finance and Research Development, Chris Liebenberg and Dr Glen Taylor.

There were also some key governance changes within Council itself. 2017 was my first year as Chairperson of the UFS Council, a position that I accepted in January 2017, following the resignation of Judge Ian van der Merwe. At the same time Dr Ntabeleng Rammile was elected as the new Vice-chairperson of the Council. I am grateful to Council for the trust placed in me.

Council exercised its oversight role in relation to the implementation of the University's strategy during 2017 and, as it can be seen from the performance indicators, the progress in 2017 has been mixed. The UFS achieved its targets for its research output and in terms of improving staff equity. There was a significant increase in National Research Foundation (NRF) rated researchers during 2017, with a marked increase in NRF ratings of female academics. Former Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the UFS, Prof Jonathan Jansen, became the third A-rated researcher at the UFS. The UFS also gained a P-rated researcher for the first time in 23 years when Dr Daniel Spence from the Department of History received a P rating from the NRF. Council noted the lack of diversity in the cohort of NRF-rated researchers at the UFS and in response the UFS put in place various strategies to assist young black academics in obtaining doctorates and NRF ratings. These strategies included a mentorship programme, research grant support, and a development programme targeting mid-career academics.

The University was less successful when it comes to the success of its students. This may be attributed, as noted elsewhere in this report, to a number of factors including a knock-on effect from the 2016 student protests. Council understands the need for student participation in all aspects of university decision-making and therefore approved the adoption of a Student Services Committee during 2017, as an advisory structure to Council. This structure would be chaired by the Vice-Rector: Institutional Change and Student Affairs and effectively replaced the existing Student Services Forum. The Committee provides an opportunity for students to raise concerns and ensure that services provided to them are not only of a high quality, but also respond to the real needs of students.

Financial sustainability remained high on the Council agenda during 2017. Following a zero percent increase in tuition fees for 2016, Council, after consideration of all the factors, approved a general institutional baseline fee increase of 8%, in support of the Minister of Higher Education and Training's request not to increase fees above 8%. This decision was made with the understanding that the fee increase would be covered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) through the fee adjustment grant for qualifying students with a combined family income of not more than R600 000. In terms of government subsidy, the UFS is pleased to report that it achieved its teaching input unit targets for 2017, which secures the DHET grant for 2019.

However, Council is very aware of the fact that the financial sustainability of the UFS cannot be solely reliant upon tuition fees or state subsidy and that so-called third stream income must be pursued wherever possible. Therefore, when the opportunity presented itself, Council gave the UFS senior management a mandate to enter into negotiations with PAREXEL International, a multinational life sciences consulting firm and contract research organization, to acquire its Bloemfontein-based clinical research business, FARMOVS-PAREXEL.

The acquisition of this state-of-the-art clinical research asset will not only improve the University's third income stream; it will also improve the University's impact in the global pharmaceutical industry by enabling marketing of affordable generic drugs in South Africa and elsewhere in the world.

It was an honour and privilege to be involved with the UFS in this capacity during 2017. I started my first year as Chairperson knowing that the task of Council is both important and complex. The responsibility, although challenging, was always interesting and thought-provoking, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support of all of the members of Council, as well as the UFS senior management in the execution of my duties.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Louw', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Mr Willem Louw**  
Chairperson: UFS Council

## 1.2. Message from the Vice-Chancellor

In my inauguration address on 19 May 2017, I articulated my vision for the University of the Free State (UFS) as an institution that exemplifies diversity, inclusivity, and academic excellence. I committed myself to working with staff, students, and other stakeholders to widen and accelerate the scope of institutional transformation and to develop the UFS into an institution with an even greater impact than ever before. During my first eight months as Vice-Chancellor and Rector, I had the privilege of working with so many internal and external stakeholders who are in support of realising this commitment.

The UFS strategic direction for the coming five years was shaped by three very closely interrelated areas of institutional planning during 2017, i.e. the work of the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Projects, the development of the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP), and the finalisation of the UFS Strategic Plan: 2018-2022. All of these is the result of a systematic consultative process that included all of the University's internal stakeholders as well as its governance structures.

The Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Projects consists of six teams tasked to improve senior managements' understanding, including my own, of specific UFS areas of work, and to determine the extent to which we could effect change. The teams made significant progress during 2017 and completed tasks include a gap analysis on the UFS Library and Information Service function; an assessment of the executive portfolios in terms of synergy, effectiveness and representation; and the development of a process whereby provisional registration may be managed in a fair and responsible manner, so as to limit the risk of student instability. The remaining task teams will continue their work in 2018, focusing on improving the clinical and training platform of the UFS Faculty of Health Sciences; refining the appointment, workload, and promotions systems for academics to promote a high performance culture; and developing a 2025 size and shape plan for the University with a proposed demographic profile, a progressive admissions policy, an open and distance learning strategy, and a financial sustainability model.

The ITP is a key driver of my vision for the UFS over the next five years. The Plan defines areas requiring increased transformation in and across the core and support functions of the University. It is a road map for change management, distributed across twelve cross-functional task teams, and aimed at realising the strategic objectives of the University. Approved by Council on 8 September 2017, it will address transformation in the core functions (teaching and learning; research, internationalisation, and innovation; and engaged scholarship), the institutional culture (student experience; staff experience and composition; names, symbols, and spaces; and universal access) as well as structural issues (financial framework/size and shape; governance, systems, policy, and administration; and the multi-campus model).

In October 2017, the Council and senior management of the University convened to set objectives for the formulation of a new five-year strategic plan for the UFS. Seven strategic goals were synthesised from the twelve areas of work developed in the ITP, namely to improve student success and well-being; renew and transform the curriculum; increase the University's contribution to local, regional and global knowledge; support development and social justice through engaged scholarship; increase the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems; achieve financial sustainability; and to advance an institutional culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS. These, together with five identified institutional values, are the elements that constitute the UFS Strategy 2018-2022 and that will distinguish the UFS in the coming decade. The UFS Strategic Plan: 2018-2022 was approved by Council on 17 November 2017.

Finally, I wish to thank the entire UFS community for generously welcoming me to Kopsies. After a year filled with rewards and challenges, we know that we have much to be proud of, much to be grateful for, and of course, still much to do.









**Prof Francis Petersen**  
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

**Table 1: Key performance indicators 2017**
 Target met/exceeded

 Below target by 4% of target or less

 Below target by more than 4% of target

Strategic Objective	KPI Title	Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>1</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>2</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
Increase student success	1. Undergraduate throughput rate	59,5%	58,6%	58,8%	
Improve research outputs	2. Share of publication output units generated from articles published in internationally indexed journals <sup>3</sup>	58,3%	51,6%	73%	
	3. Share of DHET research output norm achieved <sup>4</sup>	122,3%	112,9%	100%	
Improve staff equity	4. Percentage of permanent academics (instruction/research staff) who are black	25,5%	27,1%	27%	
Improve student equity	5. Difference between black and white student module success rates	-10,6%	-11,4%	-7%	
Decrease dependence on tuition fees	6. Number of teaching input units	58 884	62 500	59 961	

<sup>1</sup> Audited data.

<sup>2</sup> All 2017 data in this table is provisional, as at 1 June 2018. Data must be extracted before 30 June due to the external auditing and Council approval schedule.

- In the case of research outputs, the UFS submits publication output data estimates for year n to the DHET in May of year n+1 and audited data for year n is released by the DHET in January of year n+2. Depending on the share of proceedings and books submitted by the UFS for the DHET audit, the number of publication output units allocated by the DHET may be significantly different from that which the UFS submits. This may result in a significant difference between the estimated values and the final (audited) values for indicators that include publication outputs.
- In the case of all other data (enrolments, graduates and staff numbers), the UFS submits internally audited data for year n to the DHET at the end of July of year n+1.
  - Enrolments and staff numbers for year n do not change significantly after March of year n+1.
  - However, due to the scheduling of graduation ceremonies, which affect the submission of marks by lecturers, reliable success rates and graduate numbers for year n are not available before June of year n+1.

<sup>3</sup> Publications in journals listed on the DHET-approved international indices, i.e. Thomson Reuters Institute of Science Information (ISI) Web of Science and the ProQuest International Bibliography of Social Science (IBSS).

<sup>4</sup> Norms are calculated as per Table 10 of the Ministerial Statement on University Funding: 2015/16 and 2016/17 (November 2014)

## 2. ABOUT THE UFS

### 2.1. Strategic plan

2017 was the third and final year of implementation for the UFS Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The plan was inspired by the vision and mission of the UFS, which was first articulated in the UFS Strategic Plan 2012-2016, and it is shaped by the academic project, the human project and the support services foundation as the axes for the UFS's development and institutional definition. While the 2012-2016 Strategy provided the UFS with a common purpose and project that set the institution into motion on a long-term path of development, the 2015-2020 Strategy takes a medium-term view focused on deepening certain aspects of the change already achieved, and on ensuring the sustainability of the Academic Project.

The operationalisation of the strategy is monitored through a performance plan, which is reviewed annually and submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for approval. The plan includes specific, measurable, time-bound key performance indicators that are linked to the stated strategic objectives of the UFS (see Table 1), as well as the enrolment plan targets, financial commitments and budget forecast of the University (Table 15). The plan serves as the basis for all statutory reporting, including this Annual Report.

During 2017, the UFS developed a new Strategic Plan 2018-2022 under the leadership of new Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Prof Francis Petersen. The new strategy aims to widen and accelerate the scope of transformation at the University and is supported by an Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP). This ITP will serve as the blueprint for all University activities, initiatives, strategies, and policies over the next five years.

### 2.2. Governance

#### 2.2.1. Council

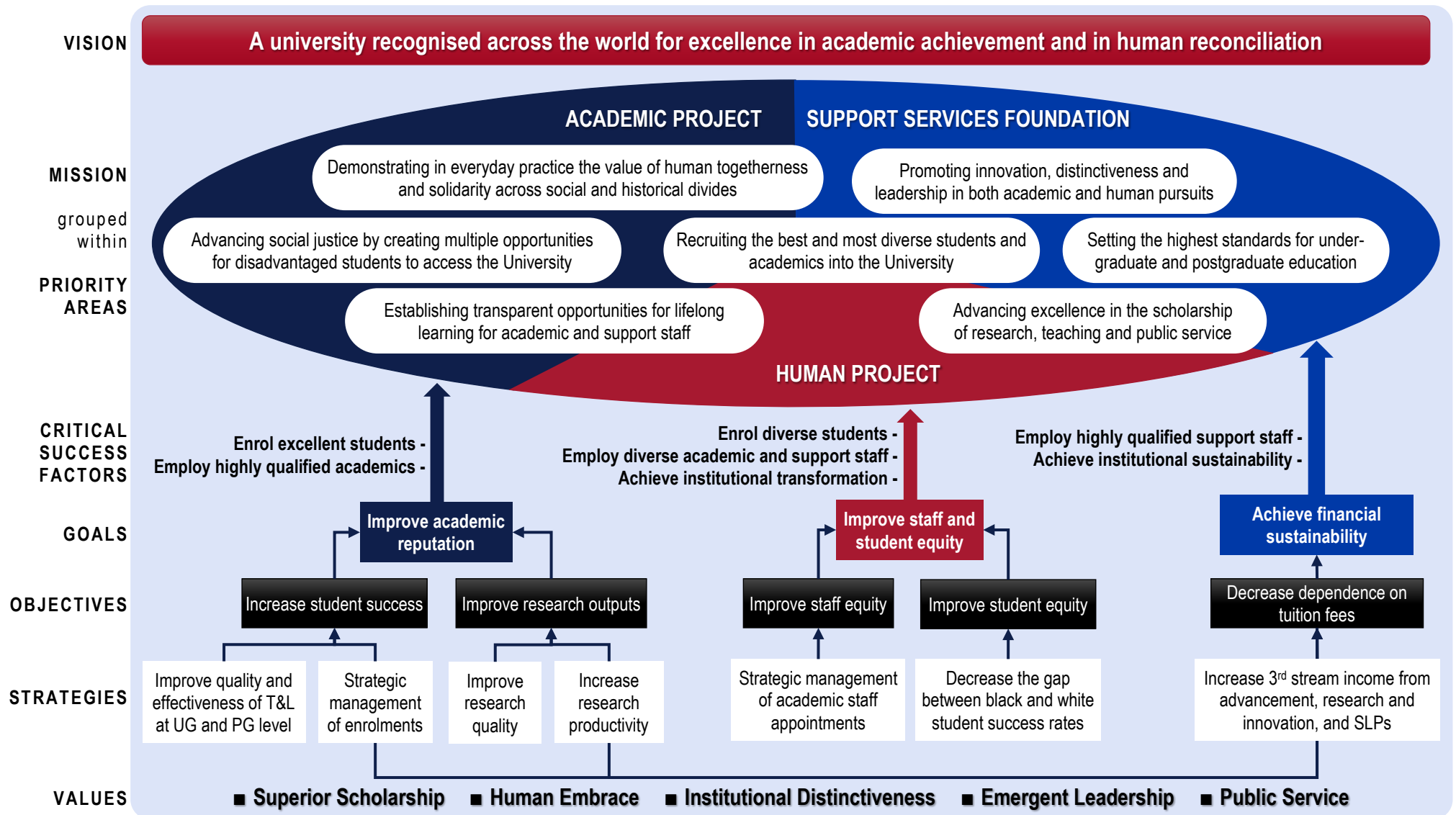
The UFS Council met five times during 2017 and exercised its powers conscientiously and with success. It fulfilled its fiduciary responsibilities with regard to governance, as provided for in the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) as amended.

In addition to responsibilities specified in the Act, the UFS Council is also accountable for strategic planning, policy-making and monitoring in general. Therefore, Council formulates guidelines for strategic management, the adoption of the University vision, mission and values, and performance monitoring; financial management, including the stipulation of tuition fees; student admissions; disciplinary matters concerning employees and students; general personnel matters; and enabling a positive academic climate.

Council's first task in 2017 was to elect its new Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Council approved amendments to the Remuneration Policy and Admissions Policy, as well as the appointment of several members of senior management. Council approved a redesigned Risk Management Structure, as well as the establishment of a new body to advise the Council on student services, i.e. the Student Services Committee. A new Strategic Plan was approved for 2018 to 2022 as well as the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP), which resulted from a 2016 Council directive to UFS senior management. Council resolved that the UFS could enter into negotiations to conclude the acquisition of FARMOVS-PAREXEL, a national, state-of-the-art clinical research business.

In 2017, Council endorsed and applied the Code of Conduct and Practice and the Code of Ethical Behaviour and Practice. These codes are appended to each agenda of the Council meetings to sensitise the members to the importance of ethical behaviour and practice. Monitoring compliance with the code forms part of the mandate of the Audit and Risk Management Committee of the Council.

In executing its governance mandate, the Council was duly assisted by its other committees including the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Remuneration Committee, Membership Committee, and the Naming Committee.



**Figure 1: UFS strategic plan 2015-2020**

### 2.2.1.1. Council members 2017

<b>Rector and Vice-Chancellor</b> 1. Prof Francis Petersen	<b>Elected by the non-academic staff (support services employees)</b> 14. Susan van Jaarsveld	<b>In advisory capacity</b> 27. Prof Daniella Coetzee (South Campus Principal)
<b>Vice-Rector</b> 2. Prof Lis Lange (Academic)	<b>Appointed by the Central Student Representative Council</b> 15. Njabulo Mwali/ Masopha Hlalele (Qwaqwa) 16. Sekese Rasephei/ Sikhululekile Luwaca/ Asive Dlanjwa (Bloemfontein)	28. Dr Karen Lazenby (Registrar: Systems and Administration) 29. Chris Liebenberg (Senior Director: Finance) 30. Lacea Loader (Director: Strategic Communication and Brand Management)
<b>Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training</b> 3. Sydney Kgara 4. Dan Mosia 5. Itumeleng Pooe	<b>Appointed by the South African Local Government Association Free State</b> 17. Dr Balekile Mzangwa/Zanoxolo Futwa	31. Prof Nicky Morgan (Vice-Rector: Operations/Acting Vice-Rector: Institutional change, Student Affairs and Community Engagement) 32. Teboho Manchhu (Acting Qwaqwa Campus Principal) 33. Pura Mgolombane (Dean: Student Affairs)
<b>Appointed by the Free State Premier</b> 6. Tate Makgoe	<b>Chairperson of the Institutional Forum</b> 18. Rantooa Moji	34. Prof Prakash Naidoo (Qwaqwa Campus Principal/ Vice-Rector: Operations) 35. Dr Gift Vinger (Registrar: Governance and Policy)
<b>Member of the religious community</b> 7. Dr Nthabeleng Rammile ( <i>Vice-Chairperson</i> )	<b>Appointed by the Council</b> 19. Ryland Fisher 20. Derek Foster 21. Dr Anchen Laubscher 22. Willem Louw ( <i>Chairperson</i> ) 23. Likeleli Monyamane 24. Ndaba Ntsele 25. Kgotso Schoeman 26. Dr Susan Vosloo	36. Prof Corli Witthuhn (Vice-Rector: Research)
<b>Elected by the Donors</b> 8. Rian Moolman		
<b>Elected by the Alumni</b> 9. Christo Dippenaar 10. Henry Madlala 11. Dr Marius Swart		
<b>Elected by the academic staff who are not members of the Senate</b> 12. Dr Henk Potgieter		
<b>Elected by the Convocation</b> 13. Prof Johan Grobbelaar		

#### Box 1: UFS Council members as at 15 June 2018

<b>Rector and Vice-Chancellor</b> 1. Prof Francis Petersen	<b>Elected by the Alumni</b> 9. Christo Dippenaar 10. Henry Madlala 11. Dr Marius Swart	<b>Appointed by the South African Local Government Association Free State</b> 17. Zanoxolo Futwa	<b>In advisory capacity</b> 27. Prof Daniella Coetzee (South Campus Principal) 28. Prof Hendri Kroukamp (Acting Vice-Rector: Academic)
<b>Vice-Rector</b> 2. Prof Prakash Naidoo (Operations)	<b>Elected by the academic staff who are not members of the Senate</b> 12. Dr Henk Potgieter	<b>Chairperson of the Institutional Forum</b> 18. Rantooa Moji	29. Dr Karen Lazenby (Registrar: Systems and Administration)
<b>Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education and Training</b> 3. Sydney Kgara 4. Dan Mosia 5. Itumeleng Pooe	<b>Elected by the Convocation</b> 13. Prof Johan Grobbelaar	<b>Appointed by the Council</b> 19. Ryland Fisher 20. Derek Foster 21. Dr Anchen Laubscher 22. Willem Louw ( <i>Chairperson</i> ) 23. David Abbey 24. Dan Kriek 25. Kgotso Schoeman 26. Dr Susan Vosloo	30. Chris Liebenberg (Senior Director: Finance) 31. Lacea Loader (Director: Strategic Communication and Brand Management) 32. Prof Phuleng LenkaBula (Vice-Rector: Institutional change, Student Affairs and Community Engagement)
<b>Appointed by the Free State Premier</b> 6. Tate Makgoe	<b>Elected by the non-academic staff (support services employees)</b> 14. Susan van Jaarsveld		33. Teboho Manchhu (Acting Qwaqwa Campus Principal)
<b>Member of the religious community</b> 7. Dr Nthabeleng Rammile ( <i>Vice-Chairperson</i> )	<b>Appointed by the Central Student Representative Council</b> 15. Masopha Hlalele (Qwaqwa) 16. Asive Dlanjwa (Bloemfontein)		34. Pura Mgolombane (Dean: Student Affairs)
<b>Elected by the Donors</b> 8. Rian Moolman			35. Dr Gift Vinger (Registrar: Governance and Policy) 36. Prof Corli Witthuhn (Vice-Rector: Research)



## Box 2: Statement on governance

The UFS is committed to the principles of discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility, fairness and social responsibility, as advocated in the King III Report. Accordingly, the Council endorses, and has applied during the period under review, the Code of Practices and Conduct and the Code of Ethical Behaviour and Practice as set out in the King III Report. In supporting this Code, the Council recognises the need to conduct the business of a public higher education institution with integrity and in accordance with generally accepted practices.

Further details about the UFS Council, its composition, its committees, and its activities in 2017 are provided in section 2.2.1. The Code of Ethical Conduct of the UFS Council is included as Appendix 1 of this report.

The UFS uses a variety of participating structures on issues that affect employees and students directly and materially, and which are designed to achieve good employer/employee and student relations through effective sharing of relevant information, consultation, and the identification and resolution of conflicts. To this end, the University has entered into formal recognition agreements with higher education trade unions UVPERSU and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU). Monthly meetings are held individually between the Labour Relations Divisions and the unions. Employee participation is encouraged throughout the infrastructure, systems, and committees by representation in various formal structures, i.e. the Institutional Forum (IF), Employment Equity Committee, Executive Committee of the Senate, and University Council. Two members of the Central Student Representative Council (CSRC) are full members of the Council. One CSRC member is a full member of the Senate. Students and trade unions are also represented on the Executive Committee of the Senate, the University Management Committee (UMC), and the IF.

The current report conforms to the 2014 Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions, which applies the principles of the King Code of Corporate Governance for South Africa 2009, i.e. King III Code. However, the Council is familiar with the King IV Code, which was introduced in 2016. Among others, the King IV includes the response of the King Committee to requests received from non-private sector organisations to amend the Code so that it is more easily applicable to all types of organisation, including public sector and non-profit institutions. While the Council currently functions cognisant of the new Code, it eagerly awaits the DHET's revision of the 2014 Regulations in order to align its monitoring and reporting systems to the King IV.



**Mr Willem Louw**  
Chairperson: UFS Council

### 2.2.2. Senate

During 2017, the Senate of the UFS met six times. These meetings included two special meetings which dealt with (i) arrangements for examinations to accommodate students who experienced trauma during student unrest, and (ii) senior management appointments which had to be approved by the Council.

Senate continued to exercise its mandate of providing strategic direction for the teaching and learning, research, and community engagement functions of the UFS and for the determination of policy and rules concerning academic matters, in line with the University's Statute and the Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) as amended.

In 2017, Senate supported the approval of the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP), the honorary awards, the amendment of the rules for honorary awards, the appointment of senior managers, the creation of the Department of Communication Science on the Qwaqwa Campus. It also supported the remits of the Senate Research Committee, Academic Timetable Committee, the Intellectual Property (IP) and Technology Transfer (TT) and Investment Committee (IPIC).

The Senate has five standing committees, i.e. the Academic Planning and Development Committee (AODC), the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Research Ethics Committee, the Library Committee, and the Honorary Degrees Committee, which is a joint committee of Senate and Council.

The 2017 Senate was constituted as follows: Rector and Vice-Chancellor (Chairperson); the Vice-Rectors and Registrars; all full professors; one member of the UFS Council; the academic faculty deans; two members of the Central SRC; and other academic employees as provided for by the Institutional Rules. Also included were



the Deputy Registrar: Governance; two staff union representatives; and the heads of Communication and Brand Management, Finance, Human Resources, Research Development, and the Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP).

### 2.2.3. University Management Committee

The University Management Committee (UMC) meets on a monthly basis. During 2017, it also convened several special meetings arising from urgent issues requiring attention.

The UMC is responsible for supporting Senate and Council with the strategic management of the UFS with regard to focus areas, key success factors, academic support services and portfolios. The UMC addresses managerial issues within the UFS in a collective and efficient manner, with executive powers besides its advisory role to the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, and also has defined and delegated executive authority. It reports and monitors all projects of the Council and those of the institution as a whole.

The UMC approved all appointments and promotions of permanent and full-time support staff members whose level of remuneration is equal to that of professor, associate professor or senior lecturer; and matters that could not be finalised within certain management lines by means of specific approved policies and procedures. It also made recommendations to the Council regarding the appointment of persons in support services posts with a remuneration level equal to or higher than that of a senior professor.

#### 2.2.3.1. University Management Committee members 2017

##### **Rector and Vice-Chancellor**

1. Prof Francis Petersen  
(*Chairperson*)

##### **Vice-Rectors**

2. Prof Lis Lange (Vice-Rector: Academic)
3. Prof Nicky Morgan (Vice-Rector: Operations; acting Vice-Rector: Institutional Change, Student Affairs, and Community Engagement)
4. Prof Prakash Naidoo (Vice-Rector: Operations)
5. Prof Corli Witthuhn (Vice-Rector: Research)

##### **Registrars**

6. Dr Karen Lazenby (Registrar: Systems and Administration)
7. Dr Gift Vinger (Registrar: Governance and Policy)

##### **Campus Principals**

8. Prof Daniella Coetzee (South Campus Principal)
9. Prof Prakash Naidoo (Qwaqwa Campus Principal)/ Teboho Manchu (acting Qwaqwa Campus Principal)

##### **President of the Students**

##### **Representative Council**

10. Njabulo Mwali/ Masopha Hlalele (Qwaqwa)
11. Sekese Rasephei/ Sikhululekile Luwaca/ Asive Dlanjwa (Bloemfontein)

##### **Department Heads**

12. Dr Vic Coetzee (Senior Director: Information and Communication Technology Service)
13. Nico Janse van Rensburg (Senior Director: University Estates)
14. Chris Liebenberg (Senior Director: Finance)
15. Dr Glen Taylor (Senior Director: Research Development)
16. Susan van Jaarsveld (Senior Director: Human Resources)
17. Keitumetse Eister (Director: Library and Information Services)
18. Cornelius Hagenmeier (Director: International Affairs)
19. Lise Kriel (acting Director: Institutional Research and Academic Planning)
20. Lacea Loader (Director: Strategic Communication and Brand Management)
21. Nomonde Mbadi (Director: UFS Marketing)
22. Prof Witness Mudzi (Director: Postgraduate School)
23. Bish Billyboy Ramahlele (Director: Community Engagement)
24. Prof Francois Strydom (Director: Centre for Teaching and Learning)
25. Annamia van den Heever (Director: Institutional Advancement)
26. JC van der Merwe (acting Director: Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice)

##### **Deans**

27. Prof Loyiso Jita (acting Dean: Education)
28. Prof Hendri Kroukamp (Dean: Economic and Management Sciences)
29. Pura Mgolombane (Dean: Student Affairs)
30. Prof Caroline Nicholson (Dean: Law)
31. Profs Milagros Rivera and Robert Peacock (acting Deans: Humanities)
32. Prof Gert van Zyl (Dean: Health Sciences)
33. Prof Danie Vermeulen (Natural and Agricultural Sciences)
34. Prof Fanie Snyman (Dean: Theology)

##### **In advisory capacity**

35. Letsolo Lekhesi (NEHAWU representative)
36. Anita Lombard (UVPERSU representative)
37. Anban Naidoo (Director: Academic Student Services)
38. Elna van Pletzen (Deputy Registrar)

### Box 3: Statement on risk management

The objective of the Audit and Risk Management Committee of Council is to assist the UFS Council with its responsibility to safeguard assets, maintain effective and efficient internal controls, review the financial information, and oversee the preparation of the annual financial statements. The Committee deals specifically with matters pertaining to:

- Compliance with applicable legislation, the code of business conduct of the University, and the requirements of regulatory authorities.
- Compliance with the Code of Corporate Practices and Conduct.
- Compliance with the institution's Code of Ethics.
- Compliance, as far as practically possible, with the recommendations of King III.
- Internal and external policies.
- Financial and internal control, accounting policies, reporting and disclosure.
- Activities, scope, adequacy and effectiveness of the internal audit function and audit plans.
- Review and approval of external audit plans, findings, problems, reports and fees.
- Review (at least annually) of the internal auditor's assessment of risks and approval of the internal audit plan to ensure that audits are conducted appropriately to mitigate the risks identified.
- Assessment of all areas of financial risk and the management thereof.
- Annual financial statements to the Finance Committee.
- Approval of financial policies and any changes thereto.
- Ensuring that all items raised in the annual audit management letter and interim internal audit reports have been addressed and that actions previously taken to address these issues are still in place and effective, including points raised in previous reports and previously deemed to have been resolved, to ensure that the problem has not recurred.
- Ensuring that policies are in place to protect the University's assets from loss or unauthorised use.

The Committee operates in accordance with terms of reference authorised by the Council, which are reviewed regularly. The internal and external auditors have unrestricted access to the committee members. The committee is also responsible for risk management. The committee ensures that identified risks (see Table 2) are monitored and appropriate measures are devised and implemented to manage such risks.

The committee met five times during 2017 (including one special meeting) and it focused, *inter alia*, on matters arising from the management of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and other funding for students; institutional compliance; disciplinary processes; transitioning from King III to King IV (King Report on Corporate Governance in South Africa); and the mitigation of risks associated with the Faculty of Health Sciences.



**Mr Derek Foster**

Chairperson: Audit and Risk Management Committee

**Table 2: Institutional risk register 2017**

(As at 27 April 2018)

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
1	Failure to attract excellent and diverse undergraduate students.	For the institution's academic and human projects to succeed, the UFS needs to attract a large number of good students from a variety of environments. Currently the UFS is losing undergraduate students due to a non-integrated response, disconnected planning, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic admission criteria.</li> <li>• Enrolment plan, size and shape strategy.</li> <li>• Student financial support systems.</li> <li>• Targeted Marketing strategy to recruit and retain excellent students</li> <li>• Streamlined procedure, communication on turnaround time of admission response to prospective students that have applied.</li> <li>• Improved merit bursaries</li> <li>• Functioning International Office.</li> <li>• Well-structured academic support programmes.</li> </ul>	High	High	High	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Admissions policy and setting of minimum admissions requirements for 2019.</li> <li>• Providing an alternative access point for students with potential, but insufficient points (deviation procedures in Faculties and other Campuses must be incorporated in the Faculty Rules, Prospectus and General Rules).</li> <li>• Differentiated marketing and recruitment plans for various target markets.</li> <li>• No application fees for prospective students.</li> <li>• Focused bursary and funding strategy.</li> <li>• Complete implementation of PRENG 2 and further refinement</li> <li>• Develop interpretive reporting functionality of data in collaboration with DIRAP (Institutional Information Systems)</li> </ul>	Registrar: Systems and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and Student Recruitment</li> <li>• DIRAP (Institutional Information Systems)</li> <li>• Housing and Residence affairs</li> <li>• International Office</li> <li>• Student Academic Services</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• CTL</li> </ul>
2	Failure to attract excellent and diverse postgraduate students.	The UFS has indicated its intention to become a top research led university. Currently, it is attracting higher numbers of postgraduate students. Specifically, doctoral students are researching maximum numbers for the available supervision capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic admission criteria.</li> <li>• Enrolment plan.</li> <li>• Student financial support systems.</li> <li>• Student financial incentive systems.</li> <li>• 5 NRF SARCHI Chairs.</li> <li>• 1 SANRAL Chair in Maths Education</li> <li>• Effective International Office and Postgraduate School.</li> <li>• Procedure on turnaround time of response to prospective students.</li> <li>• Implemented a strategy for recruitment of postgraduate students.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	High	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate School support for prospective and current post graduate students.</li> <li>• Tuition bursaries for research Masters and PhD-students.</li> <li>• Free registration for Honours students and UFS bursaries for Honours students.</li> <li>• NRF post graduate bursary application support.</li> <li>• Post graduate bursaries awarded to focus areas based on differentiated strategy.</li> <li>• Development of a marketing strategy for post graduate students.</li> <li>• Developing academics and researchers that will attract post graduates.</li> <li>• Researcher Development Programme aimed at post graduate students.</li> <li>• Review strategy for internationalisation and the Postgraduate School.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Research, Deans and Registrar: Systems and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and student recruitment (support)</li> <li>* Student Academic Services</li> <li>• Housing and Residence affairs</li> <li>• International Office</li> <li>• Postgraduate School</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>* Finance</li> <li>* DRD</li> <li>* Library Information Services</li> </ul>

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation and entrepreneurship development</li> </ul>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an institutional PG recruitment and marketing strategy for international and RSA students and faculty based strategies (requested at the Deans' meeting) to make the UFS the university of choice for Postgraduate students.</li> <li>• Strengthen services for international students.</li> <li>• Increasing the number of post graduate student enrolments and graduates.</li> </ul>		
3	Risk of not being able to increase the quality and quantity of research outputs.	The UFS is a research led university and its reputation is largely reliant on the quantity and quality of its research outputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased funding for postdocs.</li> <li>• Appointment of senior academic staff.</li> <li>• Differentiated strategy in developing focus areas.</li> <li>• Increase in research contracts and commercial activities.</li> <li>• Grant proposal writing.</li> <li>• National and International collaboration and networks</li> <li>• Integrity of management information on RIMS</li> </ul>	High	High	High	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Senior academic staff with PhD's/Research Professors.</li> <li>• Optimisation of current NRF rated researchers.</li> <li>• Support for centres of excellence and research chairs.</li> <li>• Monitoring and increase of research publications.</li> <li>• Increase productivity of research associates through structured incentives for publication and supervision.</li> <li>• Monitoring the number of postgraduate student enrolments and graduations.</li> <li>• Promotion policy focused on publications' visibility and impact.</li> <li>• Development of young academics through the Prestige Scholars Programme.</li> <li>• Retention of top academics.</li> <li>• Support for obtaining international funding for research.</li> <li>• Support for developing international partnerships and networks.</li> <li>• Increase the number of post-doctoral fellows.</li> <li>• Improve the research productivity of academic staff.</li> <li>• Developing the silent majority/"missing middle".</li> <li>• Improve current qualification of staff.</li> <li>• Start incentivising staff that secure research related contracts and grants that foster scholarship and research outputs.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorate for Research Development</li> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Postgraduate School</li> <li>• Library Information Services</li> <li>• International Office</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various policies that are not aligned with the promotion of innovative research must be revisited.</li> <li>• Strengthen article writing programmes with clear expected outcomes for such support.</li> <li>• Avail research money to staff and post graduate students linked to publication outputs.</li> <li>• Reviewing each research focus areas' progress against the agreed milestones.</li> <li>• Access to accurate and complete management information for various stakeholders to assess the quantity and quality of research outputs on a timely basis.</li> </ul>		
4	Failure to attract and retain highly qualified and diverse academic staff.	The profile of academic and support staff in terms of diversity and professional excellence is essential to the success of the academic and human projects of the UFS. Currently, the equity profile of academic staff is unsatisfactory. High-quality teaching and research staff are unequally distributed across programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a class of senior professors.</li> <li>• Benchmarking of salary packages.</li> <li>• Recruitment strategy.</li> <li>• Exit interviews.</li> <li>• Work environment indices.</li> <li>* "On-boarding" package.</li> <li>* Reviewed advertisement strategy.</li> </ul>	Very high	Very high	High	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further building of a class of senior professors.</li> <li>• Implementation of new criteria for staff promotion.</li> <li>* Workload model and staff differentiation.</li> <li>• N-Gap strategy funded by DHET.</li> <li>• Prioritising PhD appointments in vacancies.</li> <li>• Accelerating the time to PhD for current staff.</li> <li>• New procedure for the appointment of academic staff.</li> <li>• Systematic investment in the development of top young academics to become professors.</li> <li>• Review of succession planning strategy at faculty level.</li> <li>• Develop career planning strategy.</li> <li>• Analysis of internal obstacles to the attraction and retention of diverse staff.</li> <li>• Review strategy for internationalisation.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Operations and Vice-Rector: Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculties</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• International office</li> </ul>
5	Risk of not being able to increase the quality and quantity of teaching outputs.	In order to successfully compete for good students, all UFS undergraduate programmes must be recognised as operating at the cutting edge of disciplinary, professional and curriculum fields. Currently, the quality of undergraduate programmes is unevenly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality assurance processes</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning Strategy.</li> <li>• Academic Portfolio Plan.</li> <li>• CTL Programmes.</li> <li>• Module evaluations.</li> <li>• Using technology in teaching activities (e.g. Blackboard).</li> <li>• Inclusion of the</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence-based student success strategy</li> <li>• Student tracking and data analytics</li> <li>• Cycle of departmental reviews, improvement plan and accountability in implementation.</li> <li>• Review of curriculum structure in NAS and HUM</li> <li>• Curriculum transformation in deans and HoDs KPAs</li> <li>• Implementation of student feedback system</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centre for Teaching and Learning</li> <li>• Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning</li> <li>• Academic Planning</li> </ul>

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
		distributed across faculties and departments.	scholarship of teaching and learning in the new criteria for staff promotion.					at module level.  • Establishment of Teaching and Learning Committee • Develop system of student performance tracking and interventions. • Innovation in teaching and learning		Committee of Senate • Faculties • ICT • Facilities Planning
6	The depth of institutional transformation	Since 2009, the UFS has undergone rapid change. A large number of interventions were put in place to counter aspects of the institutional culture that acted as obstacles to the realisation of the academic and human projects. Much visible change has taken place since then; however, it is necessary to ensure that change is sufficiently rooted and widespread in the institution.	• Employment Equity Committee. * Equity and Competency Plan. • Establishment of Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice. • Centre for Human Rights *The Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) provides an integrated framework for transformation across all functions and at all levels.	High	Very High	Medium	Very High	ITP approved by Council includes the different strategies and organisational arrangements which involve a wide range of task groups under the leadership of Rectorate and set direction for • Levels of stakeholder participation in the transformation agenda. • Support for transformation efforts of the core functions of the University. • Develop tools/methodology to determine institutional culture and determine appropriate action plans (workplace environment surveys). * Achieve BBBEE ratings and avoid penalties/reputational costs * Development of an engaged scholarship strategy	Vice- Rector: Institutional change, Student affairs and community engagement	• Faculties •Support Units • Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice • Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning • Communication and Brand Management
7	Financial and operational sustainability.	The three main revenue streams of the University is the result of core activities of teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement. How we aim to do it is defined in the current vision and mission statement. How we deliver on the above in the short medium and long term provide a sense of the financial sustainability of the UFS.  The University is a public institution for higher learning. It is therefore funded on the cost sharing basis between	• Budget model. • New policies for managing third- stream income. • Salary negotiations model. • Managing the affordability of staff benefits and post-retirement benefits. * Management information dashboards. * Institutional benchmarks and performance indicators.	High	High	Medium	High	• Correct the fee baseline • Increase third-stream income and ensure full cost recoveries • Rollout of viability assessment for each academic department and faculty. • Review fit for purpose and fitness of purpose of support services foundation.	Vice-Rector : Operations	• Support Services • Faculties

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
		the DHET and revenue, mostly fees generated. Universities are underfunded by the DHET for a number of years which resulted in a dramatic change in the ratio if cost sharing. It is also challenged by much increased levels of activism against the payment of fees in favour of free education. This resulted in no fee increases in 2016 and only an 8% fee increase for 2017. This together with the decrease in student numbers and research output resulted in the base for the teaching input subsidy to be adjusted. The direct impact was a 0% increase in operational budget for 2016/2017 and much reduced budget allocations to the pillars and strategic imperatives. The low fee baseline of the UFS a and very limited, if any opportunity to correct this remains a serious threat to our financial sustainability.								
8	Failure to attract and retain highly qualified and diverse support staff.	Additional: Balance between skills of current staff profile and required skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking of salary packages.</li> <li>• Recruitment strategy.</li> <li>• Exit interviews.</li> <li>• Work environment indices.</li> <li>• "On-boarding" package.</li> <li>• Academy for support staff development.</li> <li>• Advertisement strategy.</li> </ul>	Medium	High	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New selection tools to support the appointment of support staff (competency tools, management assessment tools).</li> <li>• Matching of the fit between support staff competencies and the demands of the core business.</li> <li>• Systematic investment in the development of support services staff.</li> <li>• Review of succession planning strategy.</li> <li>• Develop career planning strategy.</li> <li>• Strategies to address internal obstacles to the attraction and retention of diverse staff.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Services departments</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> </ul>

Risk ranking	Risk	Risk Description	Internal Controls	Residual Risk 2017	Residual Risk 2016	Residual Risk 2015	Residual Risk 2014	Action Plans / Mitigation Strategies	Responsible member of Rectorate	Key role-players
9	Appropriate Infrastructure.	<p>The maintenance of strong and reliable financial, physical and ecological environments as the foundation of a healthy and sustainable university, and the required physical expansion of facilities to accommodate growth in student numbers, are challenged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient effective governance and management frameworks and systems</li> <li>• Maintenance of effective IT systems</li> <li>• Maintenance of infrastructure</li> <li>• Insufficient funding for maintenance and expansion of facilities</li> </ul> <p>Interruptions in the Academic Programme (lectures and research outputs) due to possible load shedding</p> <p>Mangaung water restrictions promulgated in the State Gazette of 14 March 2014 and provincial drought</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHET infrastructure grant.</li> <li>• Strategic funding of capital expenditure and maintenance.</li> <li>• Spatial management plan.</li> <li>* Designated spaces for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, learning and research.</li> <li>* A comprehensive infrastructure and spatial master plan to match the medium- and long-term strategies of the University.</li> <li>• Alignment of core and operational functions in relation to strategic goals</li> <li>• Data warehousing strategy.</li> </ul> <p>Generators have been provided to most lecture halls and labs.</p> <p>Emergency Storage now available on all three campuses. Bore Holes have been equipped with necessary infrastructure where possible to enable utilisation of groundwater.</p> <p>Bfn 48 hour capacity backup reservoir; Qwaqwa 24 hour capacity backup reservoir and groundwater supply; South campus 24 hour capacity reservoir and groundwater supply.</p>	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and implementation of a model of institutional sustainability.</li> <li>• Review of the ICT strategy.</li> <li>• Asset life-cycle management.</li> <li>• Develop integrated and standardised physical and technology teaching environment.</li> <li>• Create flexible and open learning spaces.</li> <li>• Develop extensive equipment strategy.</li> <li>• Implementation of Business Continuity Plan as approved by Rectorate.</li> <li>Emergency water supply and storage on all three Campuses implemented.</li> <li>• Grey water system installed at new South Campus Residence.</li> <li>• 20 x 20kl water storage tanks to be installed for rain water harvesting on Bfn Campus.</li> <li>QwaQwa Campus Rainwater harvesting at most buildings.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector : Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning</li> <li>• Facilities Management (Maintenance)</li> <li>• Facilities Planning (Capital Projects and Space Management)</li> <li>• Student Academic Services</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Information Technology &amp; Communication Services</li> </ul>



#### Box 4: Structures and systems of internal control

The UFS maintains systems of internal control over financial reporting and the safeguarding of assets against unauthorised acquisition, use, or disposal of such assets. Such systems are designed to provide reasonable assurance to the University and Council regarding an operational environment that promotes the safeguarding of a public higher education institution's assets, and the preparation and communication of reliable financial and other information.

The internal control systems include documented organisational structures setting out the division of responsibilities, as well as established policies and procedures, including a code of ethics that is communicated throughout the organisation to foster a strong ethical climate and the careful selection, training, and development of its people.

Information systems utilising information technology are in use throughout the University. All of these have been developed and implemented according to defined and documented standards to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, reliability, and security. Accepted standards are applied to protect privacy and ensure control over all data, including disaster recovery and back-up procedures. Password controls are strictly maintained, with users required to change passwords on a regular basis. Regular (monthly) reviews are conducted to ensure that there are no clashes of user-access rights, and that the basic internal control concept of division of duties is maintained. Where, for capacity reasons, an occasional clash does occur, sufficient manual controls are in place to ensure that these risks of clashes are mitigated. Systems are designed to promote ease of access for all users, and the systems are sufficiently integrated to minimise duplication of effort and ensure minimum manual intervention and reconciliation procedures. The development, maintenance, and operation of all systems are controlled by competent, sufficiently trained staff.

The utilisation of electronic technology to conduct transactions with staff and third parties ensures that control aspects are closely scrutinised and that procedures are designed and implemented to minimise the risk of fraud or error.

The Internal Auditor monitors the operation of internal control systems and reports findings and recommendations to the UFS senior management and Council through the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Corrective actions are taken to address control deficiencies and other opportunities for improving systems when identified. The Council, operating through its Audit and Risk Management Committee, provides oversight of the financial reporting process.

There are inherent limitations to the effectiveness of any system of internal control, including the possibility of human error and the circumvention or overriding of controls. Accordingly, even an effective internal control system can provide only reasonable assurance with respect to financial statement preparation and the safeguarding of assets. Furthermore, the effectiveness of an internal control system can change according to circumstances.

The University assessed its internal control systems as at 31 December 2017 in relation to the criteria for effective internal control over financial reporting described in its financial policy documents. Based on this assessment, the University believes that, on 31 December 2017, its systems of internal control over operational environment, financial and information reporting, and safeguarding of assets against the unauthorised acquisition, use or disposal of assets met these criteria.

The University conducted a review of its risk assessment document and, in conjunction with the internal auditors, developed a programme of internal audits to examine the systems, procedures and controls in those areas considered as high risk.

With regard to other matters on the agendas of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, there were no outstanding items that exposed the University to loss arising from undue material risk.



**Mr Gert van den Berg**  
Director: Internal Audit



**Mr Derek Foster**  
Chairperson: Audit and Risk Management Committee

## 2.2.4. Student Representative Council

While the UFS Qwaqwa Campus had a fully constituted and operational Student Representative Council (SRC) during 2017, the Bloemfontein Campus operated with a Transitional Student Council (TSC). This was a consequence of the postponement of the SRC elections in 2016, owing to the Fees Must Fall/Free Education protests. The postponement of the Bloemfontein elections meant that the campus had two elections in 2017 – in March and August – in order to ensure adherence with the SRC constitution for a 2016 SRC as well a 2017 SRC. Thus, three campus SRC elections took place in 2017: two in Bloemfontein and one in Qwaqwa.

The SRC embarked on a process to amend its Constitution in 2017, using the year for consultation with various student constituencies, with the Student Parliament being key among them. It is envisaged that the UFS Council will approve the amended Constitution in 2018. The Student Governance Office also hosted a Student Consultative Policy Summit, which was utilised as a platform for constituency-based consultation for the student community.

### 2.2.4.1. Student Representative Council members 2016/2017

#### Bloemfontein

1. Sikhululekile Luwaca\* (President)
2. Surprise Manyaiyi\* (Vice-President)
3. Nothando Hlophe\* (Secretary)
4. Ntombi Nhlapo (Treasurer)
5. Silindelokuhle Mthethwa (Student Development and Environmental Affairs)
6. Mathlodi Leteane (Transformation)
7. Joseph Ntebele (Arts and Culture)
8. Nombulelo Booï (Sport)
9. Refilwe Motsumi (Media and Marketing)
10. Donald Litsoane (Student Accessibility and Support)
11. John Modukanele (Legal and Constitutional Affairs)
12. Mohau Lesebo\* (First Generation Students)
13. Sekese Rasephei (Academic Student Council)
14. Gert van der Walt (RAG and Community Service)
15. Gontse Choane (Day Residences and Commuter Student Council)
16. Mpoi Makhetha (Postgraduate Student Council)
17. Takudzwa Nyamunda (International Student Council)
18. Natasha Kabaso (On-campus Residence Council)
19. Asive Dlanjwa (Dialogue and Associations Council)
20. Puseletso Mashego (Student Media Council)

#### Qwaqwa

1. Njabulo Mwali\* (President General)
2. Siyabonga Ngubo\* (Deputy President)
3. Joy Motloun\* (Secretary General)
4. Bongela Nyandeni (Treasurer General)
5. Mpumelelo Tshabalala\* (Politics and Transformation)
6. Nomcebo Mqushulu (Media and Publicity)
7. Ntokozo Masiteng (Student Development and Environmental Affairs)
8. Thulebona Khumalo (Off-campus students)
9. Khulani Mhlongo (Arts and Culture)
10. Polaki Mazibuko (Academic Affairs)
11. Ntokozo Thango (Sports Affairs)
12. Motlatsi Lebona (Religious Affairs)
13. Sandile Ntamane (Residence Affairs)
14. Itumeleng Chefter (RAG Committee and Dialogue)

\* Member of Central Student Representative Council

### 2.2.5. The Institutional Forum

The UFS Institutional Forum (IF) was properly constituted for the period under review and had meetings as scheduled in the University calendar. However, at times the lack of a quorum made it necessary to ratify some of decisions and solicit members' views through email communication.

The IF was consulted in the development of the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP), where it was afforded the opportunity to express its views on the document and on the process followed in the development of the Plan. Some of the issues raised by the Forum found expression in the final document approved by the Council. However, it was the view of the IF that the consultation process could have been improved.

The IF was also represented in the selection and appointment of senior UFS personnel, including the Vice-Rector: Operations; Vice-Rector: Institutional Change, Student Affairs, and Community Engagement; and the Dean of Law, where candidates from the designated groups were appointed. These appointments augur well for the equity profile and transformation agenda of the UFS. The willingness of members to participate in these selection processes was at times a challenge, but the Forum encouraged its members to avail themselves when requested so as not to overburden the Chairperson.



**Mr Rantooa Moji**  
IF Chairperson

#### 2.2.5.1. Institutional Forum members 2017

##### **Designated by the University Management Committee**

1. Keitumetse Eister
2. Pura Mgolombane (Deputy Chairperson)

##### **Designated by the Council**

3. Dr Anchen Laubscher
4. Henry Madlala

##### **Elected by the Senate**

5. Prof Philippe Burger
6. Prof Neil Roos

##### **Elected by the academic employees other than Senate members**

7. Dr Johan Bezuidenhout
8. Rantooa Moji (*Chairperson*)

##### **Elected by the administrative employees**

9. DB Prinsloo
10. Arista van der Westhuizen

##### **Elected by service employees**

11. Kehiloe Mtshali
12. Pauline Lebatsa

##### **Designated by the Student Representative Council**

13. Asive Dlanjwa
14. Masopha Hlalele

##### **Designated by the trade unions**

15. Anita Lombard (UVPERSU)
16. Dr Makeresemese Qhosola (NEHAWU)

### 3. THE ACADEMIC PROJECT: SENATE'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

#### 3.1. Performance report: Improving the academic reputation of the UFS

##### 3.1.1. Increasing student success

In the past year, the number of students graduating from the UFS increased by 17%, from 6 819 in 2016 to more than 7 970 in 2017. However, graduate headcounts are not a nuanced indicator of student success, which is why the UFS considers two indicators as measures of its progress in terms of increasing student success, namely:

- cohort-based undergraduate throughput rates (i.e. the share of a specified undergraduate student cohort that completes a three-year degree in five years or less); and
- degree credit-based success rates (i.e. total full-time equivalent degree credits divided by total full-time equivalent enrolments).

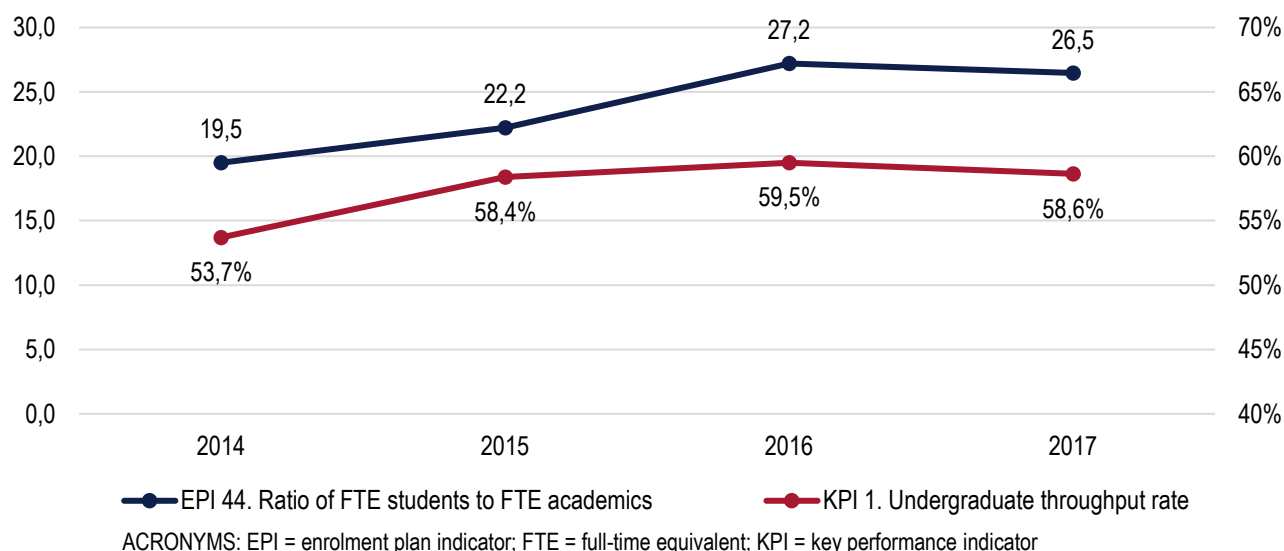
Figure 2 shows that undergraduate throughput rates improved from 2015 to 2016 – in spite of the disruptions to class and examination schedules caused by the #FeesMustFall movement. However, in 2017 this indicator of student success dropped slightly, from 59.5% to 58.6%. At the same time, the success rates for undergraduate students decreased from 83% in 2015 to 82% in 2016 to 78% in 2017. Success rates have declined at all course levels from 2016 to 2017 (see Table 15, indicator 32), except for doctoral degrees, which improved from 49% to 58%. This means that the UFS did not achieve its targets for 2017 in terms of student success.

Given that the initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning at the UFS did not change during 2017, the University believes that student success has declined for other reasons. These could include a knock-on effect from the 2016 protests, increased enrolments without a commensurate increase in academic staff, or the effects of the new English-only language policy.

It is possible that the reduction in contact teaching and classroom learning time, which resulted from the 2016 protests, have left knowledge and skills gaps that negatively affected students' success as they progressed to more advanced disciplinary/cognitive learning levels in 2017. The 2016 Rescue Plan, which utilised online/distance learning to prepare students for examinations during on-campus protests, may not have adequately accounted for the acquisition of practical and laboratory-based skills; conceptual, critical, and creative thinking skills; or theory-application and problem-solving.

Low morale among lecturing staff may also have played a role in lower student success. Some academics cite (i) increasing class sizes and (ii) a lack of support during the protests and its aftermath as factors contributing to low morale. The latter may well be, as remedial efforts during the protests focused on the needs of students rather than staff members. However, Figure 2 suggests that an increase in class size – or rather an increase in the ratio of students to full-time staff – has not contributed to decreased student success. In fact, the two variables seem to be positively correlated over the past four years: as the student:staff ratio increases, so does the throughput rate.

The 2017 implementation of the new language policy is discussed in section 4.2. The policy may have impacted on student success in two ways: (i) Afrikaans students who were accustomed to learning in their home language may have found it more difficult to adapt to English-only lectures and texts; (ii) Afrikaans lecturers may have found the requirement of English-only teaching challenging, which could have compromised the quality of teaching and learning. The fact that success rates have declined across language preference and racial groups, coupled with the fact that faculties reported inadequate English-language ability as implementation challenges (among others), suggests that a dramatic upscaling in English language development support for both staff and students will be required to remedy the current decline in student success.



**Figure 2: Undergraduate throughput rate versus student:staff ratio, 2014 to 2017**

### 3.1.2. Improving research outputs

The UFS strives to improve both the quality and quantity of its research outputs. Therefore, it monitors two key performance indicators in this regard, i.e. (i) the share of its total publication output units that is generated from articles published in internationally indexed journals, and (ii) the share of the normed DHET research output achieved.

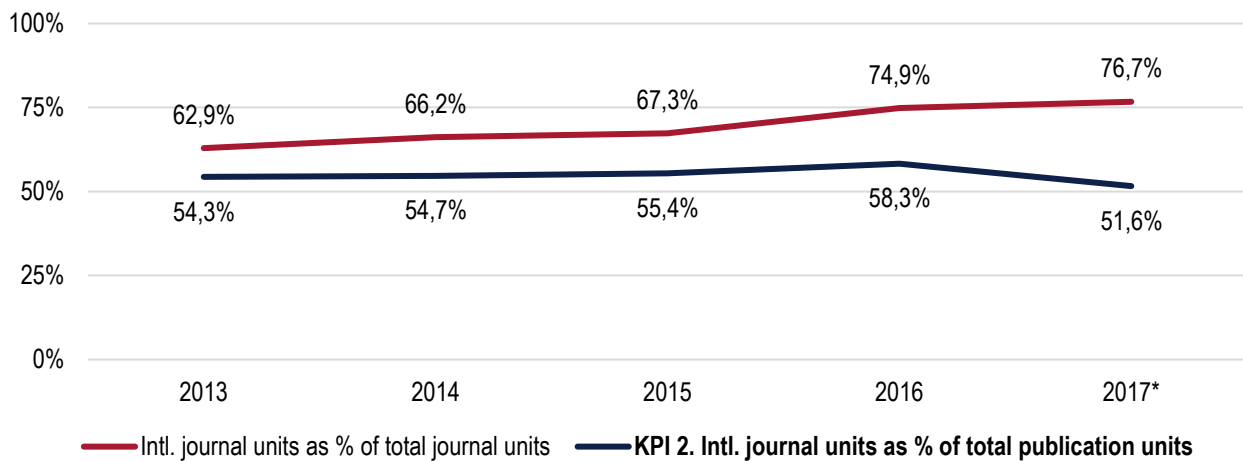
As can be seen in Figure 3, the share of total publication units generated from articles published in internationally indexed journals steadily increased from 2013 to 2016, but decreased by almost 7% from 2016 to 2017. However, this is not due to a decline in international journal publications (since these units increased by 10.5 from 2016), but rather due to a 15% increase in total publication units (from 927.3 in 2016 to 1 067.3 in 2017; see Figure 5). In fact, units generated from articles published in internationally indexed journals as a share of total journal units have increased from 75% in 2016 to 77% in 2017.

These results suggest that the current key performance indicator (KPI) intended to measure the quality of research outputs – KPI 2: the share of *publication* output units generated from articles published in internationally indexed journals (see Table 1) – is not a suitable measure and should therefore be amended. This amendment has been effected in the UFS Annual Performance Plan for 2018, as submitted to the DHET.

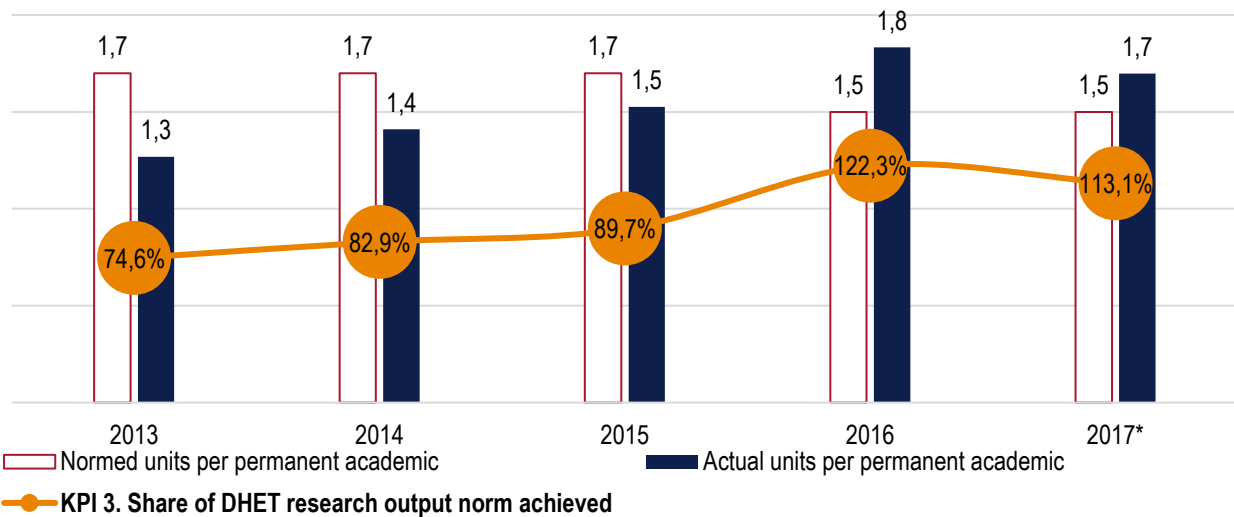
Figure 4 shows that the UFS has exceeded the DHET's output norm for a second year. Prior to 2016, the University failed to produce the expected 1.7 output units per permanent academic staff member, which prompted the DHET to lower the expectation to 1.5 units as from 2016. However, since 2016 the UFS not only exceeded the new norm, but also exceeded the previous norm by producing 1.8 and 1.7 units per permanent academic in 2016 and 2017, respectively.

The improved research productivity (quantity of outputs) may be attributed to increased publications and an increase in doctoral graduates (see Figure 5). However, the UFS is concerned about the 18% decrease in Master's graduates in 2017, which translates to a decrease of 52 units in research outputs. An equally concerning trend is the decline in the number of research output units generated per Master's graduate over the past five years – from 0.527 units in 2013 to 0.508 units in 2016/2017. This suggests that while the number of graduates have remained relatively stable, the share of research content in the programmes from which these students are graduating are on the decline.

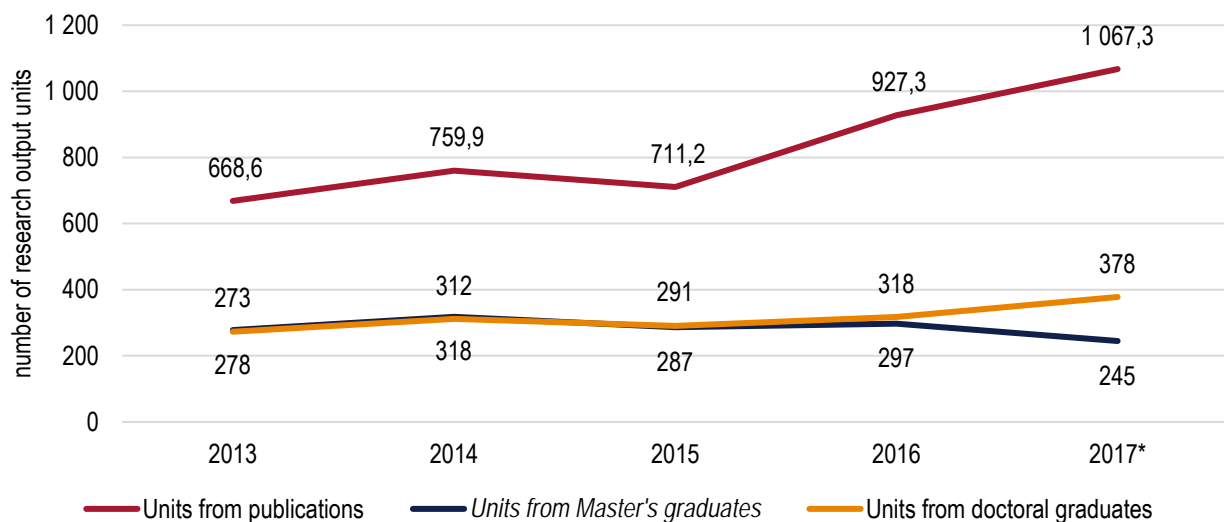
On a more positive note, the number of doctoral graduates has increased steadily and significantly over the past five years – by 9% on average year-on-year, and by an overall 38% from 2013 to 2017. Given that each doctoral graduate is weighted at three units, this translates into a significant increase in total output units.



**Figure 3: Share of publication output units published in internationally indexed journals, 2013 to 2017**



**Figure 4: UFS research productivity, 2013 to 2017**



**Figure 5: Research subsidy units by output category, 2013 to 2017**

## 3.2. Teaching and Learning

### 3.2.1. Message from the Vice-Rector: Academic

Education in South Africa faces unprecedented challenges. The decline of state capability to provide meaningful and relevant primary and secondary education can be viewed as one of the major disappointments in South Africa. The tension of rising demand at all levels in the midst of declining public resources allocated for education, and the prospect of unemployment even after graduating from a higher education institution, has left many people disillusioned by the education system. This also results in a loss of state legitimacy, and particularly of those responsible for managing the system. An increase is needed in the levels of knowledge and skills among the population at large. Furthermore, to bring about a favourable attitude towards technological change and behaviour, South Africa should enter the virtuous circle of education development. As for higher education in South Africa, this is recognised as a key force for modernisation and development, but it is increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to fulfil this promise. Not only is the demand for access nearly unstoppable, as seen in enrolment patterns (which is amazing in the context of Africa's traditionally low post-secondary attendance levels), but the system is also fettered by limited resources, stifling creativity through excessive state control and lack of vision.

The UFS has positioned itself to counter the afore-mentioned by making particular arrangements to ensure that high quality teaching and learning practices and student success, *inter alia*, are the main focus of all its academic programmes. This has already started with the founding of the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in 2012. Since then, the Centre has become a multi-faceted unit involved in a variety of aspects of teaching and learning, i.e. from tutorials for students to academic staff development; from assessment to curriculum design; from a generic university-wide first-year module to data analytics.

The UFS forms part of only five South African universities (the others being Nelson Mandela University, the University of Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the Durban University of Technology) to partake in the Siyaphumelela initiative. This initiative is funded by the Kresge Foundation, with the purpose of developing data analytics capacity to support student success. Data analytics is divided into two distinct types, namely learning analytics – focusing on the learner, the learning process, and learning contexts; and academic analytics – focusing on data analysis at institutional level. In 2017, the UFS received an additional bonus grant of \$100 000 for furthering its leading work in academic advising and to further develop data analytics capacity in the institution. Apart from CTL, the Directorate of Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP) – as the other key professional unit in the academic portfolio of the UFS – is involved in this project.

However, 2017 was a year in which South African higher education had to deal with the aftermath of the #FeesMustFall protests. Throughout the year, it became clear that a heavy price had to be paid in terms of the academic and psychological impact of these disruptions on students, especially students at risk, as well as staff. Faculties showed their commitment to students and academic quality by helping students make up some of the skills-development time they lost during 2016 as a result of the protests. CTL used the lessons learnt from the protests, as well as the significant shift to blended and online teaching and learning approaches, to support faculties and to drive innovation. Notwithstanding the afore-mentioned, the academic cost of the protests were unfortunately reflected in the decrease of overall student success rate from the 82% of the previous years to 77% in 2017. These institutional results were disappointing for CTL, Teaching and Learning Managers (TLMs), and support and academic staff alike, who have worked hard since 2013 to improve the success rates at the UFS. Despite this setback, all stakeholders came together in 2018 to analyse the challenges and to find new ways of getting back the hard-won gains for the institution.

2017 also saw the implementation of the new language policy on first-year level in three faculties, namely Law, Health Sciences, and the Humanities. Feedback on the implementation highlighted particular challenges, *inter alia*:

- Inadequate language ability necessitating the repetition of explanations;
- Inadequate lecture space and timetable clashes;
- Less interaction between lecturers and students due to class size;
- Unavailability of multilingual tutors; and
- Poor attendance of tutorials.

Suggestions on how these challenges can be addressed are, *inter alia*:

- Application of the continuous assessment approach;
- Making use of small group face-to-face facilitation and code-switching;
- Introduction of online tutorials;
- Encourage co-operation with other higher education institutions with respect to glossary exchange; and
- Promotion of multilingualism through the expansion of the UFS Unit for Language Development and publications.

In the area of academic planning and quality assurance, the Academic Planning and Development Committee of Senate (APDC) continues to provide guidance and oversight in relation to programme development and accreditation. Departmental reviews continued throughout the year, with positive feedback received on the current functioning of the reviewed departments, but also making constructive and meaningful suggestions for future operations. 2017 ended on a high note with the external review of the CTL providing valuable perspectives on how the Centre, but also the University, had developed and contributed to the core function of teaching and learning.

Submissions for the annual Vice-Chancellor's Teaching and Learning Awards increased substantially from previous years, with the quality of the submitted portfolios of extremely high quality. Innovative ideas were presented, which underlined the importance of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in the UFS context. Leadership from academic department heads in promoting the latter, as well as other challenges associated with the academe, was recognised by the UFS senior management, which led to the design of a special academic leadership development course by the CTL, in collaboration with the Human Resources and Finance divisions. The course was presented four times during 2017 and feedback from these participants were positive, ensuring the continuous presentation thereof.

However, areas that need continuous attention are the critical evaluation and understanding of transformational thinking about the curriculum in the context of the decolonisation debate, as well as changing the equity profile of academic staff. DHET initiatives regarding the latter, for example the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGap), were strongly supported and the UFS managed to secure eight successful applications in this regard.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of CTL, DIRAP, the TLMs, support and academic staff, and the deans for their leadership in introducing change in faculties, for their dedication and commitment to the SoTL, and for their enthusiasm under sometimes trying circumstances. Thanks to your efforts, we are able to operationalise the objectives of the academic portfolio and to bring the UFS closer to achieving its strategic objectives.



**Prof Hendri Kroukamp**  
Vice-Rector: Academic (acting)



### 3.2.2. Teaching and learning development

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is responsible for the advancement of academic excellence and innovation in the core function of teaching and learning. The CTL works in collaboration with faculties to develop interventions that benefit departments, individual staff, and students. Its work is guided by the UFS Teaching and Learning Strategy (TLS), which was approved by Senate in May 2014. The TLS has been aligned with the goals of the UFS Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (see section 2.1) and therefore support the key performance areas identified by Council. All projects of the CTL are aimed at realising the TLS objectives and include the following:

- Raising awareness of quality teaching and learning;
- Developing excellent teachers;
- Engaging students for success;
- Building an organisation for change and teaching and learning leadership;
- Aligning institutional policies to foster quality teaching and learning;
- Highlighting innovation as a driver for change;
- Evidence-based change through assessment; and
- Developing graduate attributes.

Although a review of the TLS was planned in 2017, this process was postponed to ensure that a new teaching and learning strategy would align with the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) as well as a new UFS strategic plan. The CTL also wanted to complete an external review (completed in November 2017) and ensure that findings from this review would be integrated into a new strategy.

Assessing the impact of institutional interventions in higher education is notoriously difficult and complex. Assessment of impact needs to focus on a specific question and must utilise multiple data sources as evidence. The following assessment therefore focuses on each TLS objective and makes use of quantitative and qualitative data to illustrate the development of quality teaching and learning. This assessment is not only focused on 2017, but rather provides an overview of how teaching and learning at the UFS has development over the past five years.

#### 3.2.2.1. Raising awareness of quality teaching and learning

To raise awareness of the importance of quality teaching and learning, CTL has led the development of the annual Teaching and Learning Report to highlight teaching and learning innovation and best practices in faculties and CTL. The UFS held its inaugural Teaching and Learning Conference in March 2017. To further the scholarship of teaching and learning, the Difficult Dialogues and Decoding the Discipline, and the Student Engagement projects helped CTL to produce 24% of the accredited publications related to teaching and learning at the UFS. The national SASSE<sup>5</sup> research project has grown to involve 15 public higher-education institutions, four private institutions, and one Southern African institution (i.e. from outside South Africa) to further the national conversation on the importance of quality teaching and learning in order to improve student success.

#### 3.2.2.2. Developing excellent teachers

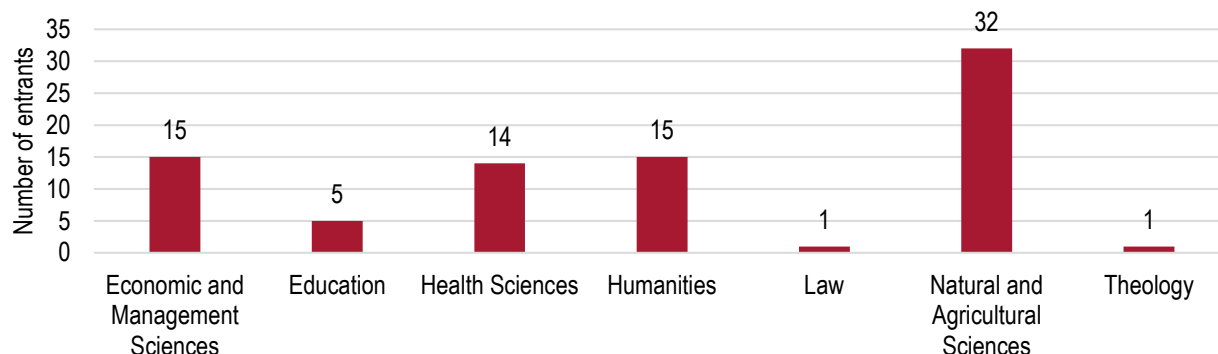
In 2012, CTL committed to developing four workshops: Design your course; Teaching your course; Assess your course; and Developing your career. In 2017, these four workshops have become four broad tracks used to offer various workshops linked to the original themes.

Within CTL, collaboration between the Evidence-Based Change and the Academic Staff and Leadership Development focus groups resulted in the alignment of the UFS Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards criteria with those of the national HELTASA<sup>6</sup> teaching and learning awards. In 2017, CTL received entries for the UFS awards from all the faculties, as shown in Figure 6. The CTL also supports the applications of potential Teaching Advancement at University (TAU) Fellows.

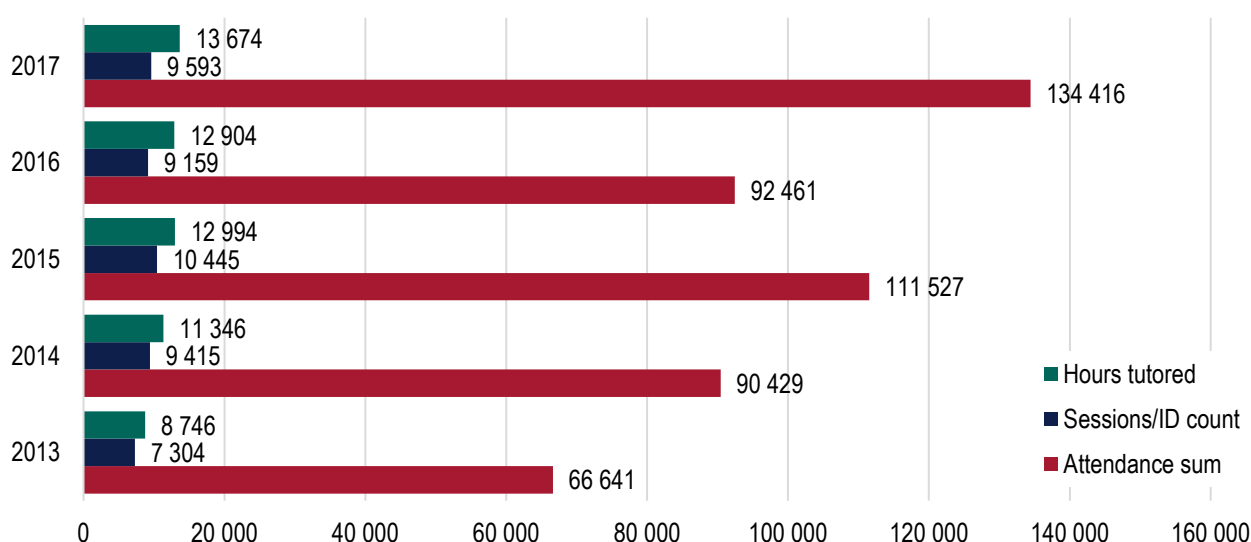
<sup>5</sup> South African Survey of Student Engagement

<sup>6</sup> Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa

Excellent teachers have to make effective use of technology in their courses (modules). Therefore, the Curriculum Delivery and Innovation focus area of the CTL trains an average of 1 000 staff members every year to use Blackboard and other technologies. In 2012, only 1 420 modules at the UFS utilised Blackboard. In 2016, 2 290 modules were registered on Blackboard, which is 64% of all modules presented on all campuses of the UFS in 2016. Of these, 1 480 were undergraduate modules (74% of all undergraduate modules at the UFS), while 810 were postgraduate modules (52% of all postgraduate modules at the UFS). In addition to broader training opportunities, academics had the opportunity to join the Module Makeover project voluntarily. To date, 115 models have engaged in either a minute, mini or major makeover.



**Figure 6: Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards, entrants per faculty, 2017**



**Figure 7: Tutorial attendance, 2013 to 2017**

### 3.2.2.3. Engaging students for success

The national SASSE research project has provided the UFS with student engagement data for a decade. The project provides a data-driven student voice and helps to identify the conditions and drivers of student success. Student engagement data is integrated in the monitoring framework of the UFS and has also helped the UFS and other institutions to better understand the financial stress of different student groups.

The Academic Student Tutorial Excellence Programme (A\_STEP) has longitudinal data showing the positive impact of tutorials over 10 years. The programme makes sophisticated use of data analytics and has grown from 55 tutors in two faculties in 2007 to 348 tutors in six faculties in 2017. Figure 7 provides an overview of impact in terms of tutorial attendance from 2013 to 2017.

Adapting academic advising to the UFS context was initiated in 2010 by the division Student Development and Success. The project started with a credit overload analysis, and today the UFS has an academic advising forum with 23 members across faculties. The UFS also leads a national collaborative initiative on academic advising. The academic advising team played a crucial role in the academic rescue strategy of 2016. From the

rescue strategy, it has developed an interactive advising magazine, Kovie Advice. The second edition of 2017 was downloaded 19 000 times.

#### 3.2.2.4. Building an organisation for change and teaching and learning leadership

One of the critical challenges facing the CTL in 2012 was to build a teaching and learning relationship between a centralised service such as CTL, Faculty Teaching and Learning Managers (TLMs), and other stakeholders. Part of building this relationship infrastructure was to appoint Teaching and Learning Coordinators to support TLMs with the monitoring and evaluation of tutorials, facilitating advising, and to provide general administrative support. The convening of a monthly meeting between TLMs, CTL, and other stakeholders helped to create a platform for faculties to share teaching and learning needs and to communicate challenges to the Vice-Rector: Academic. To build academic leadership capacity, CTL developed the Academic Leadership Programme (ALP) for academic department heads in collaboration with Human Resources. To date, 115 current and potential department heads have attended several workshops.

#### 3.2.2.5. Aligning institutional policies to foster quality teaching and learning

Progress on the development and alignment of policies has been comparatively slow. The CTL identified the development of a new assessment policy as critical to quality in teaching and learning at the UFS. A new institutional assessment policy was adopted in 2016; additional e-assessment guidelines were added in 2017 and a review of oral assessment guidelines was initialised. The CTL is developing a new tutorial policy and is playing an active role in the implementation of the new UFS Language Policy (see section 4.2.1). The enhancement of a professional development policy for academics will need attention in the light of the national conversation on improving teaching and learning.

#### 3.2.2.6. Highlighting innovation as a driver for change

To highlight the innovative work done by passionate academics, the CTL has aimed to publicise the Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards. The annual Teaching and Learning Report is used to showcase innovation and best practice inside and outside the UFS. The CTL has also embarked on various roadshow projects with UFS101, A\_STEP, and Academic Advising.

The CTL has actively promoted innovation in national initiatives and research projects. This includes the Siyaphumelela initiative, where many of the institutional projects have been shared as examples of taking student support to scale. National research projects have included the DHET research project with the University of Cape Town (UCT) on the use of technology in the classroom, as well as a project to evaluate the use of technology during the 2016 student protest in collaboration with the University of Pretoria.

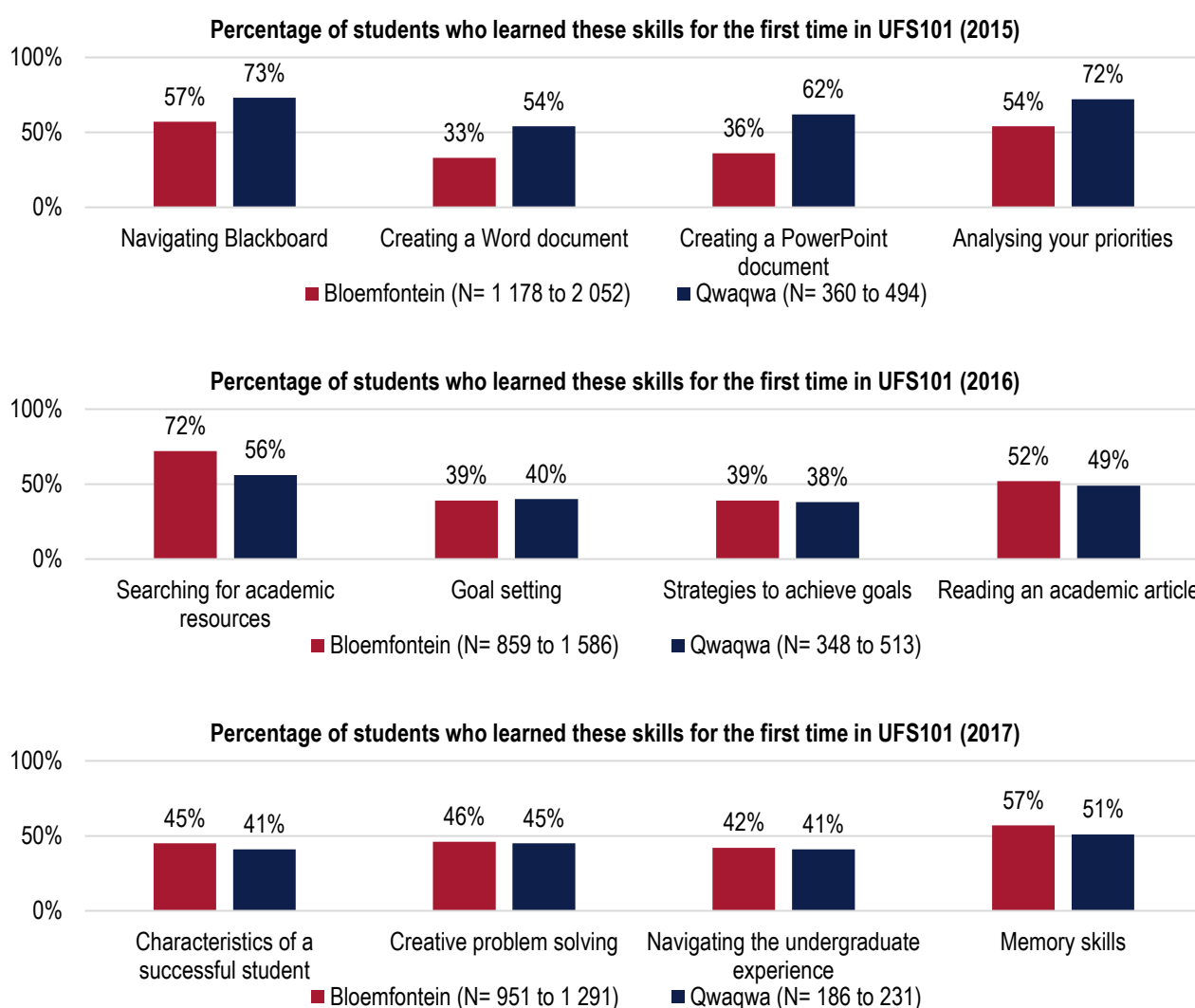
**Table 3: Student reflections on the value of UFS101**

Unit	Campus	Growth	Where will you apply the content that you learned in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester of UFS101?			
			<i>In my everyday life</i>	<i>Within my studies</i>	<i>In my community</i>	<i>In general conversation</i>
Anthropology	BFN (n = 820)	78.0%	19.7%	31.1%	14.8%	52.9%
	QQ (n = 383)	85.9%	21.6%	28.3%	33.7%	16.2%
Law	BFN (n = 932)	89.6%	72.5%	40.1%	41.9%	46.2%
	QQ (n = 200)	96.5%	73.0%	27.5%	33.5%	24.5%
Community Health	BFN (n = 760)	74.7%	29.1%	59.4%	6.5%	19.5%
	QQ (n = 863)	91.8%	17.7%	38.7%	36.1%	7.3%
Economics	BFN (n = 793)	87.3%	73.5%	49.7%	47.3%	34.1%
	QQ (n = 220)	95.9%	61.4%	8.1%	11.0%	2.2%
Agriculture	BFN (n = 877)	89.3%	82.7%	28.7%	54.7%	25.3%
	QQ (n = 372)	98.4%	60.3%	11.8%	15.9%	8.7%
History	BFN (n = 954)	74.0%	29.3%	39.1%	38.3%	45.0%
	QQ (n = 315)	90.4%	35.6%	47.3%	34.0%	34.9%
Social Psychology	BFN (n = 797)	89.3%	76.8%	44.9%	47.0%	55.2%
	QQ (n = 211)	96.7%	71.7%	46.1%	37.0%	45.2%

## UFS101

UFS 101 was CTL's response to the call for a compulsory core curriculum. This core curriculum module was piloted on the Bloemfontein Campus in 2011 (with 200 students) as a 'big questions' course similar to programmes of the same nature presented at Stanford University, the London School of Economics, and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The mode of delivery moved from blended learning in 2014 to include a flipped classroom approach for 5 080 students. In 2015, 5 800 students enrolled for UFS101, which had been re-curriculated to align with the aims of a first-year seminar. The first semester would focus on academic success skills and the second semester would provide 'big questions' to better align with faculty foci.

In 2017, more African resources were included in the curriculum and the history unit was rewritten to particularly reflect on precolonial Africa in order to explore the possibilities of decolonisation in curricula. To date, seven higher education institutions have visited UFS101 to inform the development of their own contextualised versions of this module. Figure 8 and **Error! Reference source not found.** provide evaluation data from 2015 and 2017 to show how students benefit from the different semesters in UFS101.



**Figure 8: What students learned for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in UFS101**

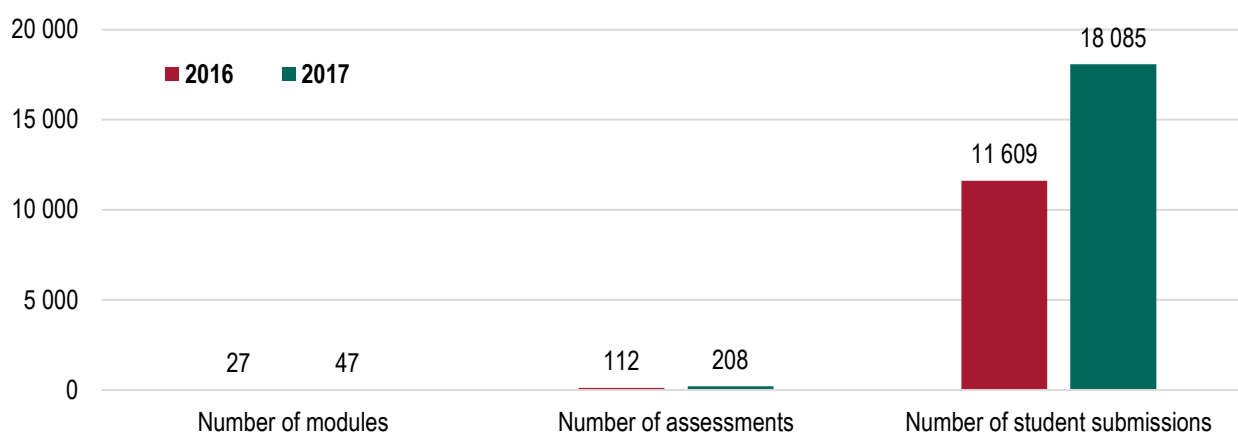
## Online assessment

In 2015, the CTL started investigating the possibility of online assessment and the potential it had for better developmental support for students. QuestionMark was selected as the best platform for both formative and summative assessment practices. Although online assessment does take place on the learning management system, faculties are encouraged to use QuestionMark for high-stake formative and summative assessment.

Figure 9 provides an overview of the number of assessments delivered in 2016 (exams excluded) and 2017 (up to 28 September 2017).

In addition to providing support to faculties in the use of QuestionMark, four different workshops have been developed to improve the quality of online assessment. These include:

- From paper to e-assessment: The basics
- Busting the MCQ myth
- Combination session (paper to e-assessment and MCQ training)
- Interpreting your assessment results (Item Analysis)
- QuestionMark and E-Examination information session



**Figure 9: Number of assessments delivered on QuestionMark, 2016 and 2017**

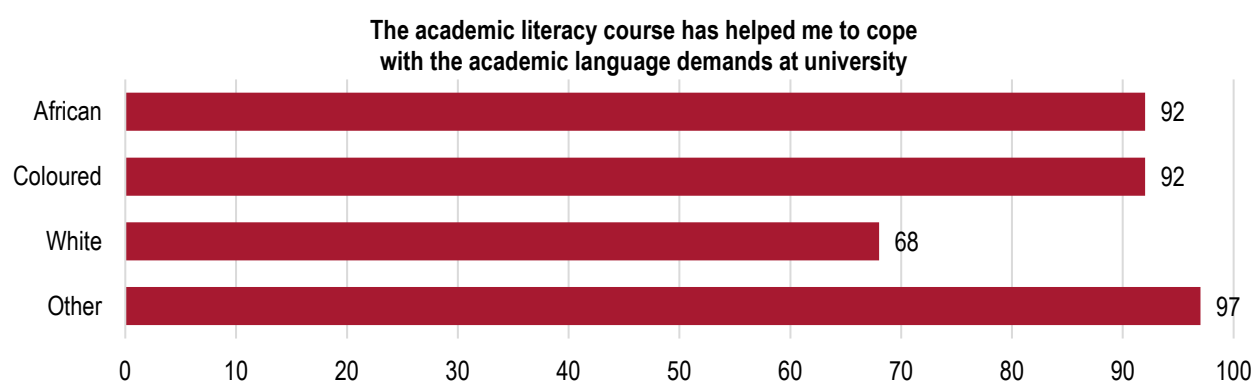
### Unit for Language Development

The academic literacy levels of students entering higher education is a systemic challenge. The National Benchmark Test (NBTs) shows that 75% of students entering university need support to meet the demands of academic texts. The UFS student profile mirrors the national figures. In addition, the UFS started the change from being a parallel medium (Afrikaans and English) to an English-medium university in 2017, which has resulted in an even greater percentage of students learning in their second language and requiring language development support.

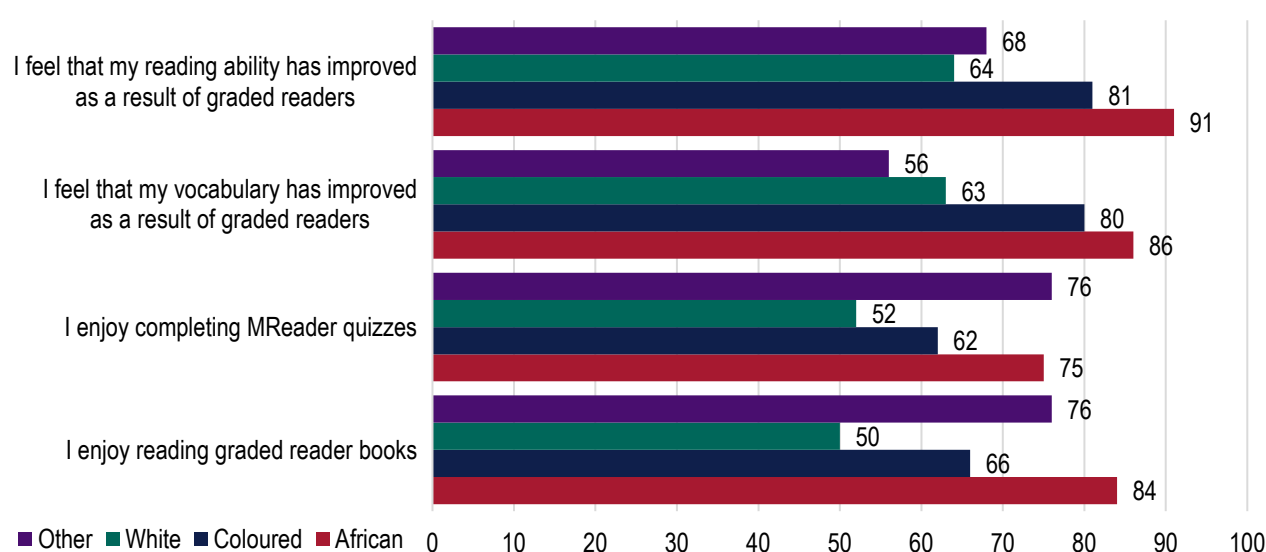
In 2012, 4 234 students were enrolled in academic literacy courses. This number has doubled to 8 954 in 2017 on all the campuses and regions, including mainstream, extended degrees, and the University Access Programme. The UFS approach to language development has changed to a content-based instruction approach over time, which allows for faculty-specific language development. The academic literacy courses make use of the MReader programme, an online resource developed in Japan, to promote reading in and outside the classroom. Student evaluation research in 2017 provided data on how students experience the MReader programme and how useful they find the academic literacy courses. The results of these evaluations are shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11.

In addition to these courses, the Write Site was piloted in 2012 with 36 students and four writing consultants. By the end of 2016, approximately 6 000 students had been assisted, and 4 320 students during the first semester of 2017. The Write Site has also integrated computer-assisted language learning and makes use of online workshops to support students in specific assessment writing tasks.

The increase in demand has resulted in a commensurate increase in staff and financial resources required. The high calibre of staff in the Unit for Language Development has resulted in the publication of an academic literacy development textbook for Law with Juta Publishers, among other publications; international conference presentations; and a collaborative initiative with the United States Embassy to offer a Master's qualification in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (MATESOL) in the UFS Humanities Faculty.



**Figure 10: Student evaluation of the value of academic literacy modules by race**



**Figure 11: Student evaluation of the MReader by race**

### 3.2.2.7. Evidence-based change through assessment

Since the merger of the different entities to form the CTL in 2012, there has been an intentional effort to make continuous monitoring and evaluation part of the CTL culture. This intentional focus has been supported by student engagement data and has enabled CTL to reflect on the implications of taking student support initiatives to scale. An evidence-based approach has enabled CTL to assess the impact of interventions, enabling it to consolidate its focus on high-impact interventions and changing some interventions to have a greater impact. One of the critical question facing the UFS in 2017 was how to sustain these high-impact interventions at a time of declining resources.

### 3.2.2.8. Developing graduate attributes

The development and assessment of graduate attributes (learning outcomes) is a critical area of study in higher education globally. Institutions across the world are grappling with the conceptualisation and implementation of these attributes across the curricular and co-curricular programmes at institutions. The TLS identified specific graduate attributes based on the contextualisation of Barrie's<sup>7</sup> work in Australian higher education. Table 4 provides an overview of these attributes.

Barrie's framework has two tiers: Tier 1 includes "complex interwoven aspects of human ability which are difficult to explicitly teach or assess in traditional university experiences." Tier 2 consists of more explicit clusters of personal skills and abilities that can be developed differently in different disciplines.

<sup>7</sup> Barrie, S. C. (2005). Rethinking Generic Graduate Attributes. HERDSA news, 27(1), 1–6.

The only project at institutional level aimed at directly supporting the development of graduate attributes, is the Student Success Portal. The portal was developed in collaboration with faculties and Student Affairs. The aim of the portal is to develop students' graduate attributes, which include skills that are critical for academic success, lifelong learning, and enhancing the employability of UFS graduates. The portal is designed to support students online so that they are able to access the portal any time of the day. The skills backed by the portal in support of the development of attributes, include time management, communication, academic writing, study skills, computer literacy, numeracy, teamwork, leadership, information literacy, and critical thinking and problem-solving.

In 2017, 27 699 students actively used this portal, with an average of 574 users per day. The portal is not only positioned within the parameters of the UFS, but the Skills Portal will be launched as an Open Education Resource (OER) initiative in 2018 to share the work with the sector.

**Table 4: Proposed UFS graduate attributes**

Tier 1: Complex interwoven aspects and abilities		Tier 2: More explicit clusters of personal skills	
i.	Scholarship;	iv.	Inquiry focused and critical;
ii.	Active <i>global</i> * citizens; and	v.	Academic and professional competence;
iii.	Lifelong learning.	vi.	Effective knowledge worker; and
		vii.	Leaders in communities.

\* Reflecting or characterized by both local and global considerations (Oxford Living Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/global>)

### 3.2.3. Faculty teaching and learning

#### 3.2.3.1. Economic and Management Sciences

Student success remained the central focus within teaching and learning in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), grounded in (i) the use of data analytics to inform teaching and learning decisions and (ii) moving towards an integrated, holistic approach to student support.

Data collected with regard to teaching and learning in EMS is based on the integration of data on learning/learner analytics, teaching/teacher analytics, and academic analytics. To support this evidence-based approach, ethical clearance was obtained for the project at the end of 2016 and implemented from the beginning of 2017. Data was collected in 22 undergraduate modules during 2017. Results indicated that students valued aspects such as:

- The blended learning environment, where students received additional support through electronic platforms such as the Blackboard learning management system.
- Academics linking their teaching to the world of work or practical examples.
- The passion of academics for their subject areas and the motivational learning conditions it creates for students.

However, even though EMS has a large tutorial system – both in collaboration with the CTL A\_STEP programme (see section 3.2.2.3) and through departmental tutorials – the student data collected further indicated that many students required even more support. The extension of the EMS tutorial system seems challenging, as the current A\_STEP tutorial system for EMS in 2017 already accounted for 7 378 attendances across 678 sessions hosted for only four modules in the faculty. Based on this data, EMS explored an alternative student support approach to address aspects such as sustainability (financially, human resource, and infrastructure-based) and a more holistic approach to student support (not only incorporating support on an academic level).

The modified approach deviated from the traditional tutorial system by making provision for programme-specific support, as opposed to module-specific support, as well as an integration of academic support (i.e. tutorials) and emotional support (i.e. mentorship), as opposed to mostly academic support. As these sessions were aimed at integrating academic support and mentorship, the sessions were facilitated by qualified professionals, who could thus act as a tutor, a mentor, an advisor, a role model, a motivational speaker, a facilitator, and a friend. Besides integrating all these roles and providing students with a holistic approach to student support, it creates a platform that is possibly more viable and sustainable since more students can be supported through such a programme-specific model than through the traditional module-specific tutorial



system. However, facilitators need to be carefully selected in order to achieve the goal of such an integrated system, which is fairly challenging.

The integrated, holistic student-support approach was piloted in EMS in collaboration with the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants in Southern Africa (ABASA) during 2017. Seven qualified accountants and chartered accountants, all members of ABASA, acted as facilitators in the programme, which included 35 BCom Honours (Accounting) students. Features of the programme included that academic support was provided in a group discussion format, based on 'burning issues' or challenges as identified by the students themselves; emphasis was largely placed on the emotional well-being of the students; and feedback-on-feedback was provided after each contact session to acknowledge the student voice in the roll-out of the programme. Results from this pilot intervention was positive, with a higher graduation rate for this group compared to the rest of the class. Results also indicated that a number of the graduating students from the pilot group would not have graduated without this support, based on a trend analysis of the rest of the class. These results supported the notion of the faculty to follow a more integrated and holistic approach to student support in future.

The faculty remains committed to the further improvement of student success by means of an evidence-based teaching and learning approach in initiatives as mentioned above. This is supported by the continuation of the academic support group within the faculty towards scholarly teaching and ultimately the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), through the use of teaching and learning data as collected on an annual basis in the Faculty. EMS's achievements in the 2017 UFS Excellence in Teaching and Learning awards serve as evidence of success within teaching and learning in the faculty. Cecile Duvenhage from the Department of Economics and Finance won the second prize in the category for Assessment Practices; and Elsie van Tonder from the Department of Business Management won the second prize in the category for Student Engagement and Learning.

Teaching and learning excellence remains a key priority for the faculty and will continuously be driven by an evidence-based approach towards student success, student support, academic development, and academic success as shown through leadership in the development of high-quality graduates.

### 3.2.3.2. Education

In 2017, ongoing promotion of high-quality teaching and learning through change initiatives remained the ultimate goal of the Teaching and Learning Unit. Government policy documents, notably the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF), and the 2015 Government Gazette (No. 38487), containing the revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (MRTEQ), provided external cues for change. Aligned to the drivers for change outlined in these documents, internal academic transformation was achieved by means of a variety of initiatives in the areas of student development, support and engagement, staff development and support, curriculum and programme renewal, and policy implementation.

In pursuit of the strategic goals and objectives related to these initiatives, the following activities were performed:

#### **Student development, support, and engagement**

At undergraduate level, 2017 was characterised by a flourishing A\_STEP tutor system. The number of participating modules increased from 48 to 55, and 5 295 students were enrolled in modules that participated in the tutorial programme. In terms of academic performance, 11 of 30 modules that were carried over from 2016 increased their average pass marks from 79% in 2016 to 89% in 2017. The remaining 19 modules that could not boast improved performance, still maintained an average pass mark of 83%. The 4 030 students who attended at least one tutorial session, obtained an average pass mark of 62% as opposed to an average mark of 55% obtained by the 1 265 students who never attended a tutorial session. Two of the Faculty's tutors, Leigh Meyer and Annetjie Olckers, received awards for submitting the best portfolios, and Ms Meyer was also crowned as best tutor on campus.

Interest towards the incorporation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles (and thus improved access to learning material) was built by staging a plenary introduction of UDL at Faculty Board level (12 May), followed by a full-day workshop in the School of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology on 10 September. Seven of the School's nine academic staff attended.



At both under- and postgraduate levels, staff members in the School of Education Studies made good use of services provided by the CTL Write Site to support and develop the writing skills of BEd and PGDip students:

- 1 200, 159, 893, and 19 students on the Bloemfontein, Qwaqwa, South, and Oudtshoorn campuses respectively, enrolled for three online workshops related to modules EDUB1613/1623;
- 118 South Campus students also benefited from two face-to-face contact sessions; and
- six PGDIP students enrolled for Module EDPC5808, attended two face-to-face workshops.

Initial steps were taken to establish and coordinate a democratically elected Student Academic Council, permitting future representation of the Faculty of Education student body at institutional level.

### **Staff development and support**

Thirty-two staff members availed themselves of development opportunities provided by the CTL. A series of in-house and plenary CTL sessions on topics such as large class teaching, and 'design your course' brought a heightened awareness of technological pedagogical tools, and therefore increased the use of blended and online methods of teaching, learning, and assessment. According to CTL data, 278 modules were registered on Blackboard in 2017, some of which showed above-average utilisation of content, collaboration, and assessment tools.

The submission of a reflective teaching portfolio for the purpose of academic staff promotion was phased in during 2017. Four academics who attended the workshop on teaching portfolios on the Qwaqwa Campus were promoted. Dr Cobus van Breda and his team (A Reynders, S de Jager, and M Erwee) were nominated in 2017 for a Most Valued Professional Award, based on their sterling work in the Family Math and Family Science training facility and a Physical Sciences ICT Laboratory to bridge the gap between theoretical training and school classroom efficiency, as well as their involvement in in-service teacher training and community engagement projects across the country.

### **Programme and curriculum renewal**

With the exception of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education, all qualifications offered by the faculty in 2017 were HEQSF-aligned, Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) accredited, and fully operational.

At the start of the ITP in 2017, the call for decolonised curricula elicited three exemplary modules from the School of Social Sciences and Language Education (EATF3604 and WILF/I/V3606), and three from the School of Education Studies (EGE112, EDUB1623, EDUB3724), showing how academics were embracing change through modes of delivery based on shared knowledge construction, the building of cultural and social capital, the creation of authentic, enabling learning environments, and alternative forms of assessment.

### **Policy implementation**

The Education Faculty Board drafted and approved a faculty-specific procedure for assessment during 2017, based on the 2016 UFS Assessment Policy. It also approved an in-house practice guideline document on the roles and responsibilities of moderators and module leaders/examiners.

#### **3.2.3.3. Health Sciences**

The core function of the Faculty of Health Sciences is to uphold the outstanding educational ethos of the UFS by employing and developing excellent teachers, which in turn will lead to improvement of student success. Dr Lucia Meko, affiliated to the Faculty, received the prestigious UFS Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in 2017.

Student success is central to the UFS Academic Project and the following highlights were noted in the different schools and divisions within the Faculty:

In the School of Clinical Medicine, the MB ChB programme continued to deliver excellent graduates. A total of 16 students (13%) obtained their degrees with distinction at the December 2017 graduation ceremony. External examiners specifically commented on students' professionalism and excellent patient communication skills. Pass rates for the MB ChB programme 2017 were as follows: V 98%; IV 94%; III 89%; II 71%; I 90%; and 69% for the Learning Development Programme.

The accreditation panel of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) visited the UFS in October 2017 as a follow-up of the full accreditation visit in 2015 to review clinical training in the undergraduate programme. The visit was a great success and led to the HPCSA suggesting an increase in student intake from 160 to 180. The panel were also impressed with the efforts in ensuring continued quality in the undergraduate programme. The Schools of Clinical Medicine, Pathology, and Biomedical Sciences (established in 2017 in the School of Medicine) continue to implement and address the recommendations of the HPCSA, including further implementation of primary-care exposure at decentralised sites (e.g. Trompsburg and Botshabelo). Accreditation was granted until the next full visit in 2020.

The MB ChB programme implemented the amended UFS Language Policy in 2017, with a single English class. The implementation ran smoothly, with additional tutorial sessions implemented by academic staff to address student academic support. Lecture venues were adapted to accommodate larger class groups, and the James Moroka Building was expanded to provide additional classroom space.

The undergraduate success rate in the School of Nursing improved from was 93.2% in 2016 to 95.9% in 2017. The post-basic programme success rate improved from 87.2% to 88.2%.

The School of Allied Health Professions successfully launched the new Bachelor of Biokinetics programme – 12 students enrolled for this programme and 100% succeeded. In the Department of Occupational Therapy, the A\_STEP tutorial session for Anatomy (an identified high-risk module in the programme) was introduced to assist students, and the support strategies contributed to a pass rate of 93% for 2017. The Department of Physiotherapy has always had an excellent student success rate but has encountered some challenges over the past couple of years with students having to repeat a year, or final-year students having to repeat six months. This is mainly due to poor clinical reasoning skills. The Department has an extensive remedial programme in place for students who fail or encounter problems.

The Division of Health Sciences Education sourced additional funding from the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) to assist students in their studies. Additional funding was approved for tuition from the Postgraduate School at the UFS, and students applied for additional funding from the National Research Foundation (NRF). Appropriate supervisors and promoters were allocated for students to improve success rates. Additional administrative support was provided to students during academic research training, and students were financially supported during special initiatives related to academic development and academic research training.

### 3.2.3.4. The Humanities

The teaching and learning endeavours of the Humanities Faculty remain essentially in the hands of the dedicated lecturing staff. The Humanities continues to show evidence of excellence in teaching and learning. Bloemfontein lecturers from Communication Science (Rentia Engelbrecht, Jamie Nortje, and Jolandi Bezuidenhout) walked away with the Vice-Chancellors Award for Team Teaching, and Rentia Engelbrecht also won first prize for Curriculum Design. Annette van Baalen – also from Communication Science – received second prize for her Community Engagement project. On the Qwaqwa Campus, Michaela Martin, a first-time lecturer in Political Science, received first prize for using video podcasts, which she posted on Blackboard to give students feedback on their test results. Students went back to these podcasts regularly to help them improve their performance. The Humanities Faculty on the Qwaqwa Campus also featured strongly in the awards for research output and improvement in research skills.

The Faculty continues to focus the majority of its teaching and learning momentum on the support of its first-year students in the form of facilitated tutorials. These tutorials aim to integrate developmental skills with subject content. Developmental skills are learned through specific courses attended by students in the extended programme. Mainstream students do not necessarily attend these courses, but even the most prepared students still require guidance on how to integrate their reading and writing abilities with the academic content. Thus, the programme now involves all first-year students in the faculty.

Feedback from students in the First-Year Success Programme (FYSP) suggests that this initiative is bearing fruit. 88% report that they are experiencing the development of their cognitive skill levels (analysis, application, evaluation) and 83% report the development of their academic literacy skills. The students also reported that these tutorials are supporting them with the 'softer skills' or capabilities<sup>8</sup> that enhance their integration into university life. 71% reported that they have become more interested and willing to work harder because of

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<sup>8</sup> Wilson-Strydom, M. (2015 ). *University Access and Success: capabilities, diversity and social justice*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

tutorials, and 70% report that they have learned to include diverse opinions and to form new ideas and understandings through their tutorial experience.

The survey results from which this feedback was derived also identified areas for improvement, which will be the focus of attention in 2018. During 2018, this feedback will be followed up with a more statistical analysis that seeks to establish the impact of these efforts on students' longer-term success. Funding of this programme remains a challenge and impact studies will give credence to fund-raising efforts.

The Humanities Teaching and Learning Committee not only looked at the first-year success of students. During 2017, the committee commissioned a report on the Community Engagement and Service Learning efforts in the faculty. There is continued concern that efforts of this nature support the developing vision of the UFS as it pertains to the decolonisation agenda and transformational learning outcomes. This report will be presented early in 2018 and will inform future Service Learning and Community Engagement initiatives.

The use of the Blackboard learning management system has increased consistently since the protests at the end of 2016 placed attention on the effectiveness of technological support for teaching and assessment. Lecturers are becoming more and more aware of the benefits of using Blackboard to support students. However, the fundamental principle of the UFS and the Faculty as a face-to-face institution has not and will not in the near future be diluted, and attendance of lectures remains the most important aspect of student life. Monitoring of attendance is still a challenge, given the large numbers of students in the Faculty, and attendance generally remains a concern.

The impact of the 2016 protests became evident in the 2017 academic year and the Faculty's overall success rate dropped by 3.5%. This was accompanied by an increase of 450 students in the Faculty. While this figure does not seem to be excessive, the knock-on effect of this number of students, who all take more than one subject in a year, is considerable and places pressure on the infrastructure of the University and the teaching and learning efforts of lecturers.

The introduction of the ITP has given specific direction to the teaching and learning efforts of the Faculty for 2018. The Teaching and Learning Manager is involved in all the ITP processes and has sitting on the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Planning and Development Committee of Senate. The Faculty acknowledges the role of the CTL in enabling its continued efforts to maintain and improve the teaching and learning endeavours of the Faculty.

### 3.2.3.5. Law

The UFS Bachelor of Laws (LLB) programme formed part of the national review of the LLB by the Council on Higher Education (CHE). The site visit by a panel of experts took place from 20 to 22 September 2016. During March 2017, the HEQC informed the Faculty of Law that the UFS LLB was placed on notice of withdrawal. The reason for the decision was based on the Faculty of Law's initial decision to review all current Law offerings and to re-categorise the LLB qualification to a Category C programme. The decision to re-categorise required a complete structural and curriculum redesign of the programme and a new application to offer the newly proposed LLB via the contact and distance modes of tuition.

Following the release of the HEQC report in March 2017, the Faculty of Law engaged in a number of strategic workshops to analyse the reports and to address the concerns raised in the report. The Faculty also considered feedback received from the various focus group discussions, the institutional review report, a comparative analysis of South African LLB curricula and international LLB curricula, and the HEQC Report, and developed a curriculum framework during a three-day workshop in 2017. The curriculum framework for the new LLB was approved at a special Faculty Board meeting in September 2017. Members of staff were satisfied that the new LLB curriculum framework is innovative, regionally responsive, and globally competitive, and that it would address the concerns raised in the HEQC report.

The discussions at strategic workshops also culminated in the Faculty of Law Strategic Plan 2017-2021, a Teaching and Learning Plan 2018-2021, and Faculty of Law Assessment Rules and Regulations that was approved by the Faculty Board in September 2017.

The 2017-2021 Faculty of Law Strategic Plan defines the vision of the Faculty to provide broad access to academically excellent, relevant, innovative, and research-led undergraduate and postgraduate legal programmes that place transformative constitutionalism and social justice at the core of a regionally and nationally relevant, and globally competitive and responsive curriculum. The Faculty of Law Teaching and

Learning Plan is aligned with the Strategic Plan and important UFS policies. It provides important directives for teaching and learning from 2018 to 2021. The plan focuses on the following:

- Supporting staff to develop into excellent teachers;
- engaging students for success in order to gain a student perspective on the state of teaching and learning in the Faculty;
- aligning policies to foster quality teaching and learning and assessment;
- evidence-based change through assessment;
- aligning teaching and learning with the stated outcomes of the modules and curriculum, the NQF Level Descriptors, module credits, and graduate attributes prescribed by the National Qualifications Standard for the LLB;
- aligning formative and summative assessment with the stated outcomes of the module and curriculum, the NQF Level Descriptors, module credits, and graduate attributes prescribed by the National Qualifications Standard for the LLB;
- providing equitable provision of teaching, learning, and assessment to students enrolled for the distance mode of tuition; and
- delivering a transformed and decolonised teaching and learning function that takes the regional and African context into consideration.

The Faculty of Law Assessment Rules and Regulations with regard to undergraduate assessment practices of coursework learning programmes applies to all Faculty of Law members of staff, whether appointed part time or permanently. It also applies to all students registered for undergraduate Law modules presented as service modules to other faculties. Assessment is informed by the guiding principles of the UFS Assessment Policy, Bloom's Taxonomy, the NQF Level Descriptors, module credits, and the LLB Qualification Standard.

On 5 October 2017, an LLB Improvement Plan was submitted to the HEQC in response to the decision of the HEQC to give notice of withdrawal of the current LLB. The Faculty of Law was informed on 14 November 2017 that the notice of withdrawal of accreditation was lifted and that the UFS LLB degree will be conditionally accredited, with a progress report required in October 2018. Following the approval of the proposed LLB curriculum framework, a workshop was held on the drafting of module outcomes. Specific lecturers have been assigned to each of the new LLB modules to proceed with the development of module outcomes for the new programme. The new programme will be submitted to HEQC in 2018 and it is envisaged that the programme will be implemented from 2020.

### 3.2.3.6. Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The UFS strategic goals include the enhancement of its academic reputation. Student success is central to this goal as well as for the UFS Academic Project. The contribution of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) to achieving this strategic goal focused on two main objectives in 2017, namely (i) access with success, and (ii) improving the quality of teaching and learning.

#### **Improving student equity and access**

As Table 5 indicates, the number of African students enrolled in the NAS Faculty increased by about 9% over the past five years. The Faculty also makes use of alternative pathways to improve student access, such as the University Preparation Programme (UPP) and the BSc extended programme. The steady growth in the number of students entering through these programmes has reached a maximum capacity of about 480 students in the past three years. Table 6 also reflects an increase in student equity in these programmes.

In 2015, the Faculty realised that additional support was needed to increase access and student equity. Thus, the 80-hour Mathematics bridging course was designed. This provides access to students who meet the required admission point (AP) score (3), but do not comply with the Mathematics admission requirements (level 5). The intake numbers have grown fivefold since 2015 (Table 7). The success of students moving from the Mathematics bridging course to formal programmes at the UFS is exceptional. About 80% of these students have passed 70% or more of their registered credits.

**Table 5: Enrolment numbers per equity group**

Race	Enrolments										% change over 5 years
	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
African	3674	61.17	3827	61.85	3879	62.53	321	63.79	4638	66.49	8.59
Asian	74	1.23	61	0.99	72	1.16	85	1.25	72	1.03	0.15
Coloured	134	2.23	161	2.60	162	2.61	167	2.47	184	2.64	0.50
White	2124	35.36	2139	34.57	2090	33.69	2199	32.46	2072	29.71	-9.11
Unknown		0.00		0.00		0.00	2	0.03	9	0.13	0.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>6016</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6188</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6203</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6774</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6975</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Table 6: Number of students in BSc extended programme and University Preparation Programme**

Race	Natural Science					Agricultural Science				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African	220	239	222	255	281	28	62	73	93	110
Asian	1	3	6	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
Coloured	7	9	12	13	11	1	3	0	0	4
White	33	39	55	74	33	33	37	47	37	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>159</b>
<i>Total for both programmes</i>						<i>323</i>	<i>3902</i>	<i>415</i>	<i>464</i>	<i>487</i>

**Table 7: Mathematics bridging course attendance**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Students attended	37	59	108	152
Successful completion and registered as students at UFS	33	53	104	142

**Table 8: Success rates of undergraduate modules, Bloemfontein Campus**

Academic Department	Pass rate 2015 (%)	Pass rate 2016 (%)	Pass rate 2017 (%)	Difference from 2015 to 2017 (%)	Difference from 2016 to 2017 (%)
Agricultural Economics	86.09	86.81	83.07	-3.02	-3.74
Animal and Wildlife & Grassland	86.94	88.61	85.69	-1.25	-2.92
Architecture	93.38	92.08	93.49	0.11	1.41
Chemistry	80.81	80.33	82.26	1.45	1.93
Computer Science & Informatics	82.37	81.93	75.32	-7.05	-3.29
Consumer Science	89.12	93.51	91.13	2.01	-2.38
Genetics	89.52	89.68	87.51	-2.02	-2.17
Geography	83.96	84.45	86.08	2.12	1.63
Geology	73.40	82.34	81.09	7.68	-1.25
Mathematical Statistics & Actuarial Science	85.12	79.16	72.33	-12.79	-5.99
Mathematics & Applied Mathematics	70.18	67.07	61.08	-9.10	-5.99
Microbial Biochemical & Food Biotechnology	80.78	82.85	80.80	0.03	-2.04
Physics	82.21	76.14	67.88	-14.33	-8.26
Plant Sciences	80.76	83.18	83.68	2.92	0.50
Quantity Surveying & Construction	83.42	85.25	84.10	0.68	-1.15
Soil- and Crop- & Climate Science	82.45	81.37	78.02	-4.43	-3.35
Urban & Regional Planning	88.51	84.26	81.33	-7.18	-2.92
Zoology & Entomology	78.47	79.43	76.14	-2.33	-3.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>82.16</b>	<b>81.93</b>	<b>79.46</b>	<b>-2.70</b>	<b>-3.29</b>

## Student success

The biggest challenge in 2017 was student success. The success rate decreased in 2017 by about 3.3%. Contributing factors for this decrease included student protests and low staff morale.

Academic gaps in students' knowledge and skills resulted from the #FeesMustFall disruptions and student protests of 2016. Although 2016 rescue plans attempted to rectify these academic gaps, the seven days of contact and teaching time lost in the first semester, and 20 days in the second semester still led to academic gaps in preceding (2016) modules that affected students' learning in the subsequent (2017) modules. Lost skills included practical and laboratory work, application and problem-solving, as well as critical and creative thinking. These gaps developed despite all the quality control mechanisms and initiatives the faculty included in its rescue plan. Departments presenting modules with a greater focus on skills assimilation that continuously build on each other, or with mathematical concepts as a content foundation, were more severely influenced by these disruptions. The impact of these academic gaps was clearly visible in the success rates, as indicated in Table 8.

Other underlying factors involved the morale of academic staff. They perceived that their voices were excluded and that they were not fully supported during the protests and its aftermath. Debates on staff promotion, career advancement, and development criteria were widespread and included perceptions that innovative teaching and the SoTL did not carry the same weight as discipline-specific research. Staff also experienced a lack of conducive learning spaces, including ineffective infrastructure and facility resources. Finally, over-enrolment must not be underestimated when success rates are analysed.

## Improving the quality of teaching and learning

A positive spin-off from the #FeesMustFall initiative was the review of teaching approaches and the introduction of new innovations in teaching. As indicated in the 2016 report, the rescue initiative in the faculty has contributed towards and created opportunities for lifelong learning for both academic and support staff. This was supported by the launch of a series of Curriculum Innovation and Transformation workshops in the faculty. These workshops had three purposes: (i) to contribute to decolonisation and the transformation of the curriculum in terms of design, development, and implementation; (ii) to create a platform for continuous professional development opportunities and lifelong learning for academics in the NAS Faculty; and (iii) to create an opportunity for debate and discourse on quality teaching and learning in relation to the ITP.

The theme of the first series was Transformed Students' Engagement, which was presented in six two-hour workshops. Each workshop was repeated three times to allow academics to fit it in between their classes. Not only will this series be repeated in 2018 to provide an opportunity for more young academics to attend the sessions, but a second follow-up series, Reflective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, will be conducted.

Another spin-off from the workshops was an increased interest in teaching and learning initiatives presented on the campus. NAS also counts five winners or runners-up of the UFS 2017 Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards among its academics: Innovative Assessment Practices (Prof Carlien Pohl-Albertyn), Curriculum Design and Innovation (Stuart Denoon-Stevens first place and Etienne Fourie second place), and Service Learning (Prof Gerhard Bosman was the winner and Dr Francois Deacon the runner-up). These positive results can be attributed to the motivational and conducive environment created through various teaching and learning initiatives in the faculty and at the UFS in general.

NAS is committed to future improvements in the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning and plans to not only continue the aforementioned endeavours, but also to implement new initiatives in 2018.

### 3.2.3.7. Theology and Religion

Civic and national events determine the moods in learning spaces. The #FeesMustFall of 2015 and 2016 set the pace for teaching and learning in South Africa. As is always the case, the affected learning determinants were teaching and learning modes, such as pedagogical approaches, didactical assessments, and curriculum delivery. The Faculty of Theology (then) geared itself to relevancy by adopting, enhancing, and implementing some initiatives:

After much deliberation and reflection, the Faculty adopted a new name with effect from 1 January 2017: Faculty of Theology and Religion. It was obvious that the student composition was making a colourful turn by



becoming more ecumenical, and therefore more inclusive of different races, denominations, graduate levels and so forth. An inclusive name covers all these tenets to communicate corporate intentions of doing Theology out of the box, beyond the borders, and above bigotries.

The decolonisation discourse continues to be a national debate, and the Theology and Religion Faculty embarked upon some uncompromising discussions in order to develop an understanding of this national disposition. There is consensus on the need to rethink theological education within the concrete context from which it operates. Engaging with the theme of decolonisation raises inevitable questions, such as “How do we deal with the meta-narratives?” and “What is your view on the canon while you are engaging this theme?” The bottom line is a historical reality that all South African universities have adopted Western models of academic organisation since their inception. This largely excluded and decimated the knowledges of colonised people (Indigenous Knowledge Systems). It is therefore legitimate to conclude that decolonisation involves fundamental rethinking and reframing of the curriculum to bring Africa to the centre of teaching and learning and research.

Recurriculation is the process whereby new formal learning programmes are changed to comply with both internal and external approval. Higher considerations are taken into account for capacity of the institution, the professional bodies, and the government. Recurriculation is the introduction of a new learning programme of which the purpose, outcomes, field of study, mode or site of delivery was considerably revolutionised. The expectation is that the learning content will be new, as the old is discarded or parked. The modularisation, such as the learning outcomes, purpose, and content necessitates changes in module prerequisite or core requisite. This might lead to changes in the title modules, credit value of a module, and assessment mode. Of course, this dictates the restructuring of the module, whether it be a term, semester or a year module. As academics engage in recurriculation processes, they consider the feasibility of the new module: academic and professional standing, coherence, access and articulation, sustainability, and site and seat for effective delivery of that module. As a way of decolonising theological education, recurriculation has become part and parcel of epistemological transformation that engages knowledge that seeks understanding of the context from which to draw lessons by comparisons in order to gain insight. This is what the Faculty of Theology and Religion did throughout 2017, with the focus on implementation of the new curriculum in 2018.

The student protests enlarged the necessary creativity of designing an academic rescue plan. The plan was an alternative for enhancing the existing online mode of assessment. The E-Exams is the best route for students to write wherever they may be. As a result, the faculty in some way or other resorted to the utilisation of QuestionMark and Blackboard. Extensive interactions with students through email, WhatsApp, SMS, and telephone calls enhanced teaching and learning by escalating the utilisation of technology in the faculty. As a result, most, if not all of our academics engage Blackboard more than ever before. In 2017, five of our staff attended Blackboard training organised by the CTL. The designated Learning Designers visited the Faculty to interact, orientate, and intervene with staff in order to enhance teaching Theology through technology.

The faculty improved both student and staff orientation in 2017. The Teaching and Learning Booklet is a product placed in the hands of new staff and students as a way of orientating them to the faculty. The booklet covers issues such as teaching, study guides, learning, students, assessments (procedures and practices), plagiarism, and grievance procedures. It has become a tool for orientation and introduction into the Theology learning space. With coordination by the Teaching and Learning Manager and facilitation by Library and CTL staff, first-year and new students were taken through library and blackboard orientations. Workshops were designed to provide students with a knowledge base regarding the utilisation of these teaching resources. During the first four weeks of the academic timetable, the Teaching and Learning Manager has taken students through basic academic rudiments such as writing and reading skills, essay construction, and reference techniques. With a huge number of Higher Certificate students in 2017, this became a necessary initiative, and it brought forth results as many of them articulated to Bachelor's degrees in different fields.

### **3.2.4. Academic planning**

Curriculum review and renewal at the UFS continue to be driven by the six principles of academic freedom, faculty leadership, accountability, student engagement, evidence, and impact. The Quality Enhancement Framework of the UFS intends departmental reviews to be formative where outcomes are evaluative, in order to initiate a series of recommendations and commendations. In addition to the Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP), the Directorate: Research Development (DRD), and the CTL, external departmental reviews that was conducted in 2017 included the Centre for Africa Studies and the Departments of History, Anthropology, Chemistry, Zoology and Entomology, Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, Mathematical Statistics and Actuarial Science, Public Administration and Management, and Business Management. The review reports and improvement plans will be presented for approval to the

Academic Planning and Development Committee of Senate (APDC) in 2018. External review reports create an opportunity for renewed consideration of the type of modules and programmes offered in a faculty or department. Some of the changes reported on here, stemmed from these reviews.

Full accreditation was given by the respective professional bodies, i.e.:

- The South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP)
- The South African Council for the Property Valuers Profession (SACPVP)
- The Health Professions Council of SA for the Bachelor of Surgery and Bachelor of Medicine (MB ChB)

Curriculum amendments focused on relevance and responsiveness of programmes in relation to the region and particular sector. Care was taken to enhance coherence and learning progression, while the programme purpose, outcomes, and HEQSF-alignment remained intact. These curriculum changes primarily correspond with the attributes and skills expected of the graduate in line with the exit-level outcomes of the programme.

Considerable changes were made to three of the departments in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. In Economics, the bachelor's, honours, and master's programmes were aligned with the three undergraduate sub-specialisations of Economics: Economics, Applied Econometrics, and Financial Economics and Investment Management. The national HEQSF-alignment resulted in two sub-specialisations in Business Management, namely Marketing and Entrepreneurship, which was introduced at both undergraduate and Honours levels. Specifically, specialisations in the BCom and BCom Honours programmes were changed from Entrepreneurship to Entrepreneurial Management in order to provide greater clarity in the sector. When moving into the work environment, Honours degree graduates or those with Postgraduate Diploma studies in Accounting specialise in one of four areas, namely Taxation, Management Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Accounting. These four specialisations were consequently extended to the MCom and PhD level, with specialisation in Accounting changing to Financial Accounting.

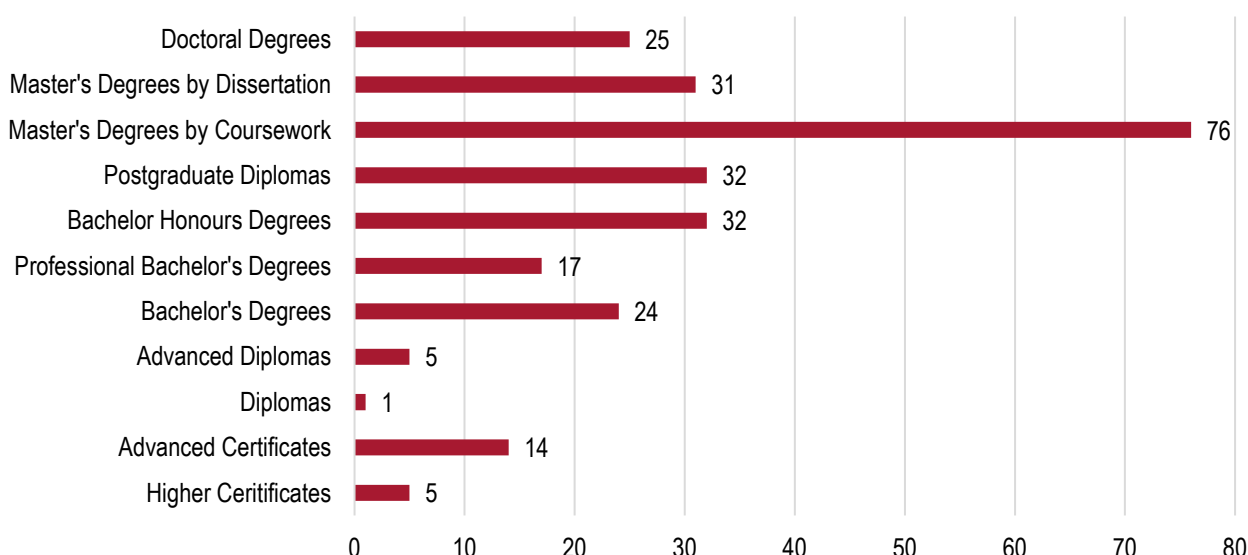
In the Faculty of the Humanities, the Bachelor of Community Development, primarily developed for the Qwaqwa Campus, was accredited by the CHE in 2015. However, curriculum changes were necessitated to align with the guidelines of the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP), and the National Department of Social Development (DSD). The latter were received in December 2016. Two principles underpinning the UFS multi-campus model is that the quality of both support service provision and academic offerings must be equal across campuses; and off-campus learning sites must be fully included in the University's identity. In support of this, the MA and PhD programmes with specialisation in Human Geography were extended to the Qwaqwa Campus, and Communication Science modules were introduced in the Bachelor of Social Sciences programme at Qwaqwa.

Since 2017, the South Campus of the UFS offers the Higher Certificate in Economic and Management Sciences and the Higher Certificate in the Humanities, primarily as access programmes. These HCerts were developed from the highly successful University Preparation Programme, and both were accredited in 2015 for the South Campus only. Responding to national priorities, applications for Programme and Qualifications Mix (PQM) approval of these two HCerts have been submitted to the DHET to expand it to the regional Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college campuses: Bloemfontein Campus of the Motheo TVET College, Sasolburg Campus of the Flavius Mareka TVET College, Welkom Campus of the Goldfields TVET College, and the Kwetlisong and Bethlehem Campuses of the Maluti TVET College. DHET approval is pending.

The UFS curriculum review is furthermore reflected by module changes in faculties. Faculties have removed, replaced, amended, and added modules, bearing in mind the total credit load. The net result for the UFS is a reduction in the number of modules with student enrolments from 3 614 in 2016, to 3 509 in 2017 (as opposed to 6 254 active in 2013). Undergraduate modules tally 1 918, professional Bachelor and Honours modules to 873, Master's modules 543, and doctoral modules 165.

The following majors or specialisations were approved by the APDC: Bachelor of Agriculture, the major Agricultural Extension for both the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses; Bachelor of Spatial Planning Honours with specialisation in Human Settlements; Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture with specialisation in Design, and Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Creative Writing.





**Figure 12: UFS Programme and Qualifications Mix (PQM) 2017**

An analysis was done of the physical contact time spent by students in class, indicating that some faculties did not meet the necessary requirements regarding contact time. The EMS Faculty added additional practical classes to some of their modules. The implementation of the new UFS language policy has led to the reorganisation of modules, which meant that more lecture hours could be added to modules. The Humanities will use its review process to also review the contact time hours. The faculties of Theology and Religion, and Law are currently recurriculating and specific emphasis will be placed on contact time.

The process flow for new programme applications and approvals were consolidated at the APDC. The latter approved two new programme applications: The Bachelor of Science in Construction Economics and Management to replace the current BSc (Construction Management) and BSc (Quantity Surveying), as recommended by the external departmental review; and the Doctor of Psychology in Child Psychology.

Ten new programmes were accredited by the CHE in 2017:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education in Senior Phase and Further Education and Training Teaching
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education in Further Education and Training Teaching
- Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies
- Bachelor of Arts in Journalism
- Bachelor of Arts in Integrated Organisational Communication
- Bachelor of Psychology Honours
- Bachelor of Education Honours
- Master of Arts in Bible Translation (coursework)
- Master of Health Systems Studies (dissertation)
- Master of Education (dissertation)

The UFS is in partnership with the universities of the Western Cape (UWC), Pretoria (UP), and North-West University (NWU) to offer the envisaged new Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management in collaboration with the National School of Government (NSG). The aim is to provide an equivalent qualification for the training of public-sector managers at these universities.

Since 2016, the UFS received an increasing flow of queries from alumni and employers in the financial-services sector about UFS qualifications that were not listed by the Financial Services Board (FSB). This situation posed potential reputational risk for the UFS. Since the perception exists that a financial-service provider (FSP) or its representative (employee) must have a relevant FSB-listed qualification to be employed or promoted in the sector, the UFS has embarked on a project to identify and apply for such qualifications with the FSB. To date, 54 qualifications have been approved by the FSB and the project should be completed in 2018.

Even though SAQA prescribes the minimum number of credits required for obtaining a specific qualification and the HEQSF-aligned PQM prescribes the total number of credits required for obtaining a qualification, the UFS reserves the right to prescribe the total minimum number of credits required for programmes leading to UFS qualifications. This means that there may be instances where the total minimum number of credits prescribed by the UFS for a specific programme leading to a UFS qualification may differ from the number of credits prescribed by either SAQA or the HEQSF-aligned PQM. In such event, the total minimum number of credits required by the UFS and specified by the UFS in the relevant UFS Faculty Rulebook will take precedence over the SAQA and the HEQSF-aligned PQM number of credits determined. All students wishing to qualify for a UFS qualification will thus have to attain the total prescribed minimum number of credits determined by the UFS and published in the relevant UFS Faculty Rulebook.

### **3.3. Next generation academics**

#### **3.3.1. Vice-Chancellor's Prestige Scholars Programme**

The Prestige Scholars' Programme (PSP) received two of five commendations from the UFS Directorate for Research Development's (DRD) December 2017 external review panel. Co-directors Profs Neil Roos and Jackie du Toit were commended for their "significant roles" in developing the programme fundamentally as an academic (not bureaucratic) enterprise and "as academics" providing leadership, excellence, and commitment in the DRD. Further, the programme was recognised for creating an enabling environment for the next generation professoriate at the UFS; for the alignments of "its interventions for emerging scholarship with the DRD strategies for research development at the University more broadly"; and, most importantly, that the PSP should be "promoted as a model of best practice for other South African universities." These commendations endorsed the findings of the programme's own 2017 external review, indicating that the PSP is a success and operates "more systematically, efficiently, and successfully than any other programme for early-career scholar development in the country."

To date, the PSP has worked with approximately 50% of UFS professional scholars within the age limits of an NRF Y-rating and with a doctorate qualification, irrespective of discipline, to enable systematic career development. Using the metric of the NRF rating as gateway to the professoriate, this programme is, after seven years, poised to deliver the next generation UFS professors. By 2017, 26 of 53 young scholars have received a rating and 22 promotions. This makes the PSP cohort active academic citizens with double the participation rate in NRF rating and funding initiatives than the average UFS scholar. As part of the process to accelerate the establishment of young South African scholars globally, the PSP advises impact rather than industry, inculcating modes of scholarly engagement that will propel and sustain South African scholarship on the world stage. Focused exposure to international mentors and their peers, as well as bi-annual writing retreats for emerging scholars, has led to a conducive environment for the establishment of a premier cohort of next generation scholars of which the achievement of a P-rating, the first for the UFS in 25 years, proved the culmination.

Not resting on its laurels, the PSP is reconceiving the programme to effectively scale up a development and career programme modelled on the PSP, but broader in both its catchment and conceptualisation. One of the challenges the programme set out to address in the external review was the question of whether massification or deep, individually-focused immersion is the most effective response to challenges of knowledge development, intellectual and curriculum transformation, and the advancement of research cultures. The PSP's 2017 audit suggests that the two can be combined, provided that it remains governed by intellectual commitment, and the ethos of deep scholarly engagement on the part of the research leaders, champions, and managers of the programme.

#### **3.3.2. New Generation of Academics Programme**

This New Generation of Academics Programme – or nGAP Project – is a DHET-funded initiative which funds a number of positions and which is housed by the institution for developmental purposes. These positions are ultimately absorbed by the institution after the incumbents have been successfully developed. The DHET assumes responsibility for all the developmental and training initiatives for the incumbents until they are absorbed by the institution. This initiative is in line with the UFS strategic plan and the ITP. The nGAP Project was implemented in three phases and nine appointments were made in areas of scarce skills that are particularly needed in the Free State and in the country.

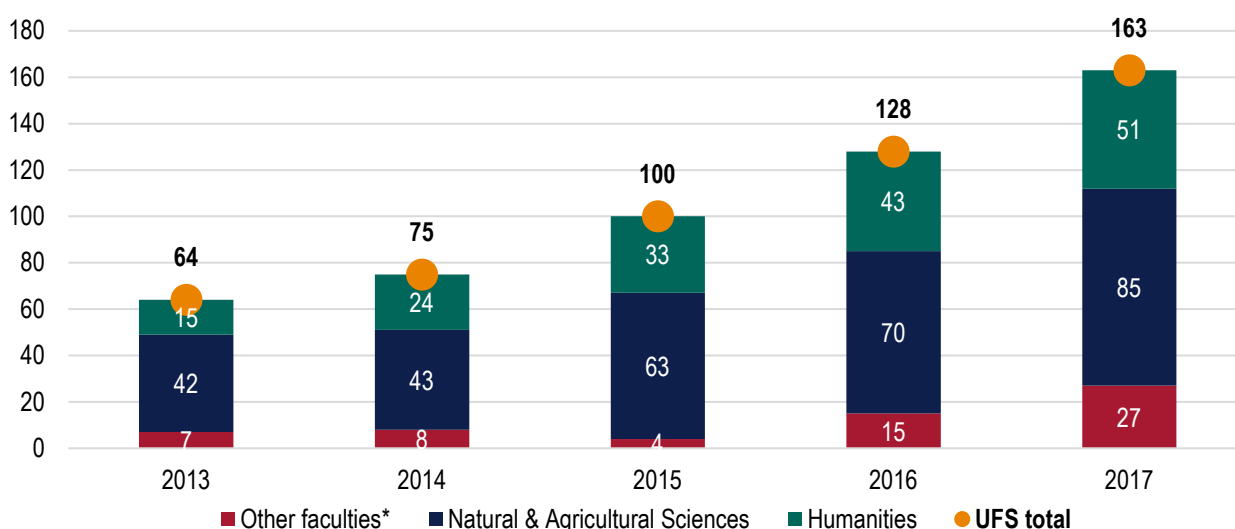
nGAP academics undertake a reduced teaching load and are assigned to a mentor for the duration of their participation in the programme. The duties of the mentors include the provision of assistance with the preparation of a personal professional development plan and opportunities for reflective discussions on teaching and research experiences, opportunities, and challenges.

### 3.3.3. Postdoctoral Fellowships

Postdoctoral scholars are emerging researchers dedicated to conducting research while also taking part in limited teaching and learning activities. These scholars bring with them different research and disciplinary cultures and networks, research and supervision capacity, and new research ideas that could help stimulate a vibrant research environment. Taking this into account, the UFS has implemented a postdoctoral fellowship strategy to support the development of a diverse and productive research culture at the UFS.

The aim of the strategy is to attract scholars from all over the world who can improve the intellectual diversity and research standing of the UFS over time. The strategy is also establishing a pool of next generation academics who have proven their research capability and have already been inducted into the University. The UFS can draw scholars from this pool to fill permanent positions within the University, thus mitigating the risk of employing unproductive staff and also filling the void left by retiring academics. The postdoctoral fellowship strategy was used to build critical mass in areas that require considered interventions and that are in line with the University's differentiated research strategy.

The number of postdoctoral fellowships awarded at the UFS have increased exponentially from 64 in 2013, to 100 in 2015, to 163 in 2017 (see Figure 13). In 2017, 112 postdoctoral fellows were from the African continent, with the remaining 51 fellows being predominantly from the European Union, the Americas, and the Middle East.



\* Economic & Management Sciences, Education, Health Sciences, Law, Theology & Religion

**Figure 13: Number of postdoctoral fellows at the UFS, 2013 to 2017**

### 3.3.4. Postgraduate School

The mandate of the UFS Postgraduate School (PGS) is to create an enabling environment for postgraduate students to excel in their academic pursuits. In addition to the support provided by faculties and academic departments, the PGS provides support in the form of workshops, courses, and presentations, equipping students with the requisite skills for the successful completion of their postgraduate education, improving research productivity, and enhancing the quality of research outputs.

These workshops are not only offered on the different UFS campuses, but also in various provinces and neighbouring countries where we have large numbers of postgraduate students. The aim is to reach as many

students as possible without the students having to incur further travel and accommodation costs. The expansion of workshops to neighbouring provinces and countries has been hailed by students as a welcome innovation and is definitely a unique offering for the UFS.

In 2017, the UFS continued funding Honours, research-based Master's and doctoral students. The majority of UFS Honours bursaries were awarded to women (69%) and black students (57%) in 2017. In similar fashion, 84% of NRF Honours bursaries were awarded to black students. The awarding of these bursaries will assist in meeting the University's goals of improving equity and student success.

The introduction of the UFS tuition fee bursary scheme in 2016 resulted in an initial increase in the numbers of both Master's and doctoral enrolments, followed by a slight dip in the numbers of Master's students in 2017. However, there was a net increase of postgraduate students compared to 2015 (before the introduction of the bursaries). The number of bursaries awarded in 2017 were surprisingly similar to the 2016 awards of 1 470, indicating a possible lack of growth in enrolment numbers. The PGS screened 2003 applications for the research-based Master's and PhD tuition fee bursaries and approved 1 500 bursaries comprising of 893 Master's and 607 PhD students in 2017, totalling R16 325 814 in bursaries.

Going forward, it is important to strengthen the focus on the expected outcomes associated with allocation of these bursaries. To this end, the UFS should monitor throughput in the cohort of bursary holders and review the bursary conditions to positively influence throughput.

In terms of research capacity development, the PGS presented a total of 100 generic workshops and a number of writing retreats or 'boot camps' from January to November 2017. These were attended by 2 865 participants of whom 79% were postgraduate students and 24% were staff members. However, we need to track the outcomes from these workshops, retreats, and boot camps to ensure a positive return on investment.

### **3.4. Research**

#### **3.4.1. Message from the Vice-Rector: Research**

The mission of the University of the Free State (UFS) in relation to its research activities, is to attract the best and most diverse students into postgraduate programmes that are of the highest standard, to advance excellence in the scholarship of research, and to attract and retain the best professors. These activities are in support of building the UFS into a research-led university situated in one of the poorer provinces in the centre of South Africa.

In 2017, we focused on our mission statement to direct our activities of planning and executing our research strategy. In this year and continuing into the following years, we are determined that the divisions at the UFS responsible for providing research support are integrated in all their activities. Our focus is to ensure that staff and students experience unlimited support in their research through the information management and institutional repository in the Library and the Archive for Contemporary Affairs, the support of postgraduates and their funding within the Postgraduate School, the research management and commercialisation in the Directorate for Research Development, and the building of national and international partnerships supported by the Office for International Affairs. These divisions collaborate closely to integrate the support service to students and staff and to develop central and integrated databases in order to report on and manage the institutional research information.

This year marked the second year in the implementation of the UFS Council-supported strategy of attracting postgraduate students to the UFS through tuition-fee bursaries for all registered research Master's and doctoral students. The strategy had a significant impact on the number of doctoral students registered at the UFS. The intake of even more students is now limited by the supervision capacity within the seven faculties. Not only does the UFS financially support research Master's and doctoral students, we have also allocated more than R4 million for Honours student bursaries.

During the past year, we have developed a differentiated research strategy in order to improve international research excellence, impact, and visibility. We are currently in the process of developing distinct research hubs that will be recognised nationally and internationally for their research excellence. These hubs will present a collection of interdisciplinary fields and academics who will focus their research activities within a central strategic theme, led by internationally and nationally recognised researchers. In support of our differentiated research strategy, we have been directed to extend our local and global partnerships. Our energy has been

channelled to develop partnerships in the rest of the continent and in the BRICS national developing economies.

We have also been fortunate to make significant strides in terms of the commercialisation of our intellectual property during the past year. The KopsieBrewery won a national competition, and as a result was awarded brewing equipment to further develop its commercialisation activities. In 2018, we will investigate a designated site for KopsieBrewery and develop the business for large-scale manufacturing, marketing, and commercialisation.



**Prof Corli Witthuhn**  
Vice-Rector: Research

### 3.4.2. Research and innovation development

Research forms one of the core drivers of the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) and plays a significant role in establishing the UFS as a research-led university. The implementation of a differentiated research strategy is a key activity of the ITP. This implies a differentiated funding model focused on the UFS research chairs in the NRF South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI) and the establishment of niche areas. Through a number of interventions, there continues to be a strong drive towards the transformation of research culture at the UFS. The Directorate for Research Development (DRD) is responsible for a large share of the work that will effect this transformation.

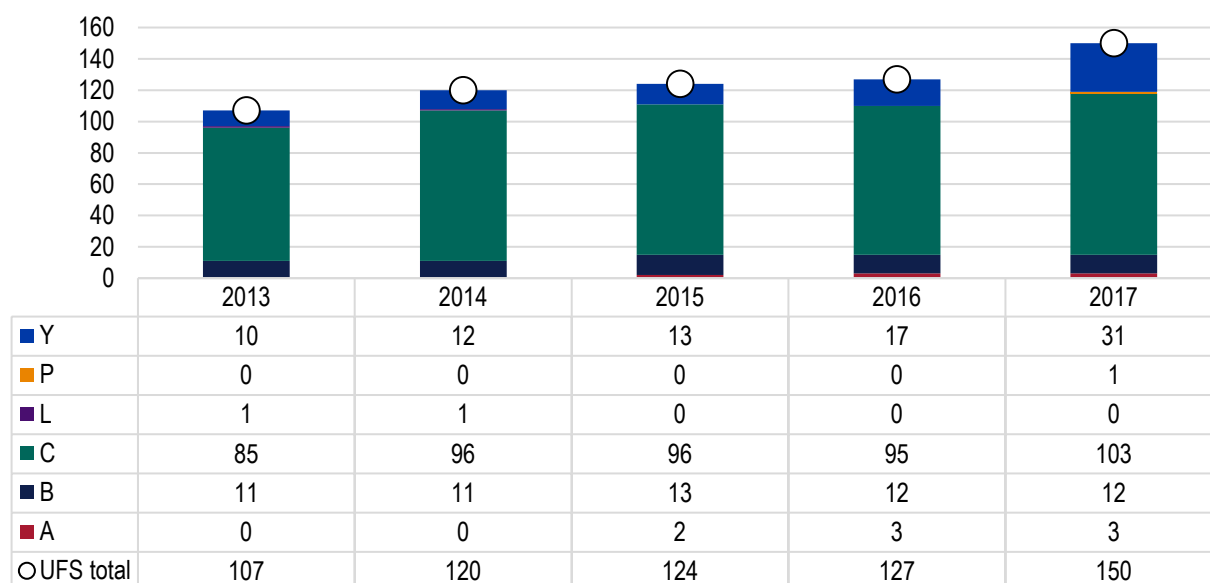
#### 3.4.2.1. Increasing research productivity

The strategic management of research outputs remains a priority, not only because of the subsidy that it generates but also because it serves as an indicator of research activity that takes place at individual, departmental, and campus level. The UFS is not simply concerned with increasing the number of publications; there is also a strong drive to improve the quality of these publications. The University has constantly increased both the number and quality of research outputs. The effect of this approach is especially evident in the fact that 76,7% of journal units claimed in 2017 are from international journals (compared to 74,9% in 2016) and book publication units have increased from 79.1 in 2015 to 178.2 in 2016 to 320.5 in 2017. Overall, the UFS claimed 1067.3 publication output units for 2017, up from 927.3 in 2016. The UFS's performance in terms of the quality and quantity of its research outputs are detailed in section 3.1.2.

#### 3.4.2.2. Improving research quality

The research chairs hosted by a South African university and the NRF rating of its researchers serves as an indication of the quality of the research it produces. During 2017, the UFS hosted four tier-one SARChI Chairs – Higher Education and Human Development; Disease Resistance in Field Crops; Solid State Luminescent and Advanced Materials; and Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Pathogens – as well as a flagship research chair funded by the Medical Research Council in the Department of Medical Physics.

The DRD supports UFS academics who aim for NRF rating through a number of initiatives, such as application workshops, incentives, and one-on-one assistance with the rating process. As a result, the number of rated researchers at the UFS has increased by 15% from 2016 to 2017, including three A-rated researchers (see Figure 14). Over the same period, the number of B-rated researchers remained constant, C-rated researchers increased from 97 to 102, and Y-rated researchers increased from 18 to 30. The Qwaqwa Campus increased its rated researchers from five to eight, predominantly in the Y category, which indicates that the UFS is successfully supporting young researchers to establish themselves as productive scholars.



**Figure 14: Number of NRF-rated researchers at the UFS by rating category, 2013 to 2017**

Traditionally, the UFS maintained two Ethics Committees that evaluated projects relating to human subjects and animal studies. These two committees predominantly served the Health Sciences. Given the critical importance of research ethics in ensuring research quality, the University re-assessed the ethical approval process and in 2016 implemented a more comprehensive and internationally benchmarked ethical approval processes. This was further refined in 2017 by introducing new structures that could accommodate all disciplines at the UFS and allow for a more systematic and transparent appeals process. This was made possible through the implementation of the ethics module of the Research and Information Management System (RIMS), which facilitates both the evaluation and recording processes of research-ethic approvals. Three main areas for ethics approval were identified, including human subjects, laboratory animals, and environment and bio-safety. Ethics committees were established for each area and these committees are represented in the Senate Research Ethics Committee, which develops institutional policy and ethical guidelines and serves as the appeals committee for the three sub-committees.

### 3.4.2.3. Achieving financial sustainability

The amount of funding received from the NRF has remained fairly constant from 2016 to 2017, which is in the region of R50 million per annum. This is also the case with SARChI funding, which has remained constant at R2.68 million per tier-one chair. However, the impact of SARChI funding in terms of research outputs and research income has been significant. These chairs were able to leverage funding for expensive equipment and grant funding from both national and international organisations. This excludes the UFS's contributions in terms of equipment, Master's and doctoral bursaries, as well as the funding of postdoctoral fellows (see section 3.3.3).

This type of funding *for* research is one important part of the contribution of research and innovation in the achievement of financial sustainability at the UFS. The other, which is becoming a main focus for the DRD and the UFS, is increasing third-stream funding generated *from* research and innovation activities.

All South African universities are attempting to rapidly increase their third-stream income in response to declining government subsidy and the financial demand derived from the #FeesMustFall movement. Although the UFS is not the leader in this field, significant progress is being made (see section 5.2) and, given a conducive environment, can gain more ground.

With the implementation of the grants and contracts module of RIMS in 2016/2017, the DRD Office for Innovation and Business Development could start to capture and record information pertaining to research contracts more comprehensively. This has improved management data significantly and enabled the University to improve governance and manage risk associated with research contracts. Innovation and Business Development also adds value to the core activities of the UFS through knowledge brokerage and the protection and leveraging of intellectual property for the benefit of the University as a whole.



### 3.4.2.4. Student innovation

How innovation can thrive on a campus is an aspect of the student life experience often overlooked at South African universities. Innovation has a long tradition at South African universities, but this is mostly at postgraduate and staff/researcher level. Little or no emphasis is placed on innovation at undergraduate level, because universities consider the amount of innovation at undergraduate level to be insignificant or, generally, have limited spare capacity to accommodate undergraduate students. However, many universities locally and internationally are seeking new ways to harness students' capacity to innovate.

Programmes that work outside traditional academic parameters, often called Innovation Centres, are proving successful. One contributor to their success is the spaces in which innovation teams operate. They are as organic as the process of innovation. With this background, the UFS established a student innovation office in 2013 with the aim to assist young entrepreneurs with business advice and funding opportunities. A number of students have been assisted by this unit by supplying space to grow and nurture their businesses and ideas. This student innovation office has not only been able to assist with a working environment but also leveraged significant funding for students from organisations such as the international Innovation in Large Organisations Institute and the South African Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). By 2017, more than R2 million had been raised to support these entrepreneurs of whom the majority are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### 3.4.3. Faculty research

#### 3.4.3.1. Economic and Management Sciences

The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) is aware of what became commonly known as the triple challenge of unemployment, poverty, and inequality faced by South Africa. The Faculty is also well aware that a low and stagnating economy aggravates the triple challenge. Being very conscious of the context that the triple challenge and low economic growth create, EMS academics strive to ensure that their research primarily addresses issues that will allow South Africa to overcome the triple challenge and low economic growth problems. Whether academics are researching what drives entrepreneurs, the wellbeing of mineworkers, integrated reporting by companies, or the savings behaviour of households, the common denominator of their research is relevance.

The faculty also established, as one of its flagship projects, a research group that focuses on the impact of mining on small towns. Under the guidance of Profs Lochner Marais (Centre for Development Support) and Philippe Burger (Department of Economics and Finance) and Dr Deidre van Rooyen (Centre for Development Support) as principal investigators, the research group produced a study that explored the impact of iron ore mining on Postmasburg in the Northern Cape. This study resulted in a book published by Routledge Publishers. In 2017, the group commenced with another study that explores the impact of coal mining on Emalahleni (Witbank). Dr Maléne Campbell and Stuart Denoon-Stevens from the Faculty of Agricultural and Natural Sciences joined Marais, Burger, and Van Rooyen as principal investigators on this project. Being South Africa's premier coal-producing area since early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, creating thousands of jobs on coal mines, power plants and other subsidiary industries, Emalahleni is unfortunately also known for the severely negative impact of coal mining on the environment. Air pollution, pollution of underground water, and raging underground fires that have been burning since the 1950s highlight the need to understand the impact of mining on small towns. Not only all departments in EMS are participating in the project, but also departments and individuals in other faculties and even other universities.

EMS academics are regularly presenting their findings at both national and international conferences. The Department of Business Management also hosted the 2017 annual conference of the Southern African Institute of Management Scientists (SAIMS). This is the largest academic business management conference in South Africa. Dr Jacques Nel from the Department of Business Management also served as editor of the 2017 SAIMS conference proceedings, a publication comprising 51 papers from 18 Southern African universities. Salomien Boshoff, also from Business Management, served on the SAIMS management.

The Faculty strives to continually improve not only the quantity of its research, but also the quality. It places emphasis on scholarly engagement and the development of young academics. As part of this effort, it introduced a programme in 2017 that allocates time and resources to academics busy with their PhDs. The purpose of the programme is to allow these academics the opportunity to finish their theses in a shorter period of time. The Faculty also introduced a mentorship programme for post-PhD academics who are working

towards a senior lectureship or associate professorship. These programmes were well received by academics and the Faculty believes that the programmes will capacitate more staff members and have a positive impact on future research outputs.

### 3.4.3.2. Education

Research and postgraduate studies in the Faculty of Education will never be the same again! This follows a series of very deliberate strategic and programmatic changes in the research portfolio of the Faculty.

For the first time in its history, the Faculty recruited a black woman, NRF-rated Associate Professor, Prof Matseliso Mokhele-Makgalwa, to lead the Directorate: Research and Postgraduate Studies. At the same time, another black woman scholar with an NRF-rating at the level of senior lecturer was recruited to lead the research interest group in Psychology of Education. This is in addition to the onboarding of four newly graduated black women scholars, all with PhDs, into the ranks of the Faculty. In 2017, the Faculty designed the Black Women Professoriate (BWP) programme to support the growth and development of particularly black women into the professoriate. The initiative received endorsement and support from the largest education association in the world, the 10 000-member American Educational Research Association (AERA), whose executive director provided partial support for four women researchers from the Faculty to participate in the AERA conference and developmental activities in San Antonio, Texas in 2017.

The Faculty's re-curriculation exercise of the postgraduate programmes was completed and all the Honours, Master's, and doctoral programmes became fully compliant with the new HEQF framework and have received full accreditation from the CHE. The approval of the revamped Honours programmes in 2017 – with four specialisations in Curriculum Studies, Education Management, Psychology of Education, and Policy Studies – completes the programmatic changes and alignment in the postgraduate offerings of the Faculty. The Faculty's inaugural annual Postgraduate Students' Research Conference was held in October 2017, with over 168 students participating and 60 conference papers presented. The conference, together with the public proposal defence seminars in the Faculty, add to the package of improved quality assurance mechanisms in postgraduate student development. While it is still early days, the impact of the programmatic changes is already being felt in the quality of students' work as assessed by external examiners and other reviewers of students' publications.

In order to increase research outputs, which include publications and postgraduate student success, the Faculty has increased the number and set targets for its Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The number of active SIGs in the Education Faculty has doubled from four in 2016 to eight in 2017 and covers the following research areas:

- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Sustainable Learning Environments (SULE)/Sustainable Rural Learning Ecologies (SURLE)
- Instructional Leadership and Curriculum Implementation Studies (ILCIS)
- Management, Leadership, Education Law and Policy (MLELP)
- Psycho-socialities of Teaching and Learning
- Mathematics, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (MTVET) Studies
- Critical Inquiry for Social and Ecojustice in Education (CISEJE)
- Higher Education Studies (HES)

In addition to enabling researchers to engage in structured critical discourse, collaboration, and collegiality in ways that have not been possible previously, the SIGs also provide a platform for collaborative research and supervision of postgraduate students in specialised cohorts. Staff members, who are busy with their Master's or doctoral studies, have also benefitted from the work of the SIGs, thereby improving the capacity of the Faculty to do research and supervise postgraduate students. Of the 13 staff members who were registered for Master's and PhD qualifications, one graduated with a PhD and three obtained Master's degrees. The SIGs are also a platform for increasing the faculty's publication rate. The preliminary count for journal publications in 2017 is 21.58. The SULE/SURLE and the ILCIS SIGS continue to be the flag-bearers for the Faculty in terms of both publications and postgraduate student graduations, with the rest of the newly formed SIGs in hot pursuit.

The Faculty's flagship internationally-accredited journal *Perspectives in Education*, under the co-editorship of Prof Mokhele-Makgalwa and Faculty Dean, Prof Loyiso Jita, continues to be the premier journal on educational research in South Africa and publishes quality articles from both local and international scholars.



Under the leadership of Prof Jita, the Faculty continues to host the only national research chair in South Africa focusing on Science Education. The South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) Chair in Science and Mathematics Education produced three PhDs and three Master's graduates in 2017, putting its total tally since 2014 at 14 PhDs and five Master's graduates.

The Faculty maintains strong research networks with a number of national and international colleges and universities, including the University of Fort Hare, the University of South Africa, Sol Plaatje University, the University of the West Indies-ROYTEC in Trinidad and Tobago, Northwestern University in the USA, Leiden University in the Netherlands, and the Lesotho College of Education. Nationally, the Faculty has been central to and hosted national dialogues in the field of pre-service science teacher education on behalf of the Mathematics and Science Standing Committee of the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC). Similarly, the Faculty is the lead institution and coordinator of the multi-institutional research project on TVET education and training under the leadership of Dr Nixon Teis, and in the European Union/DHET-funded research in ECCE, led by Dr Colwyn Martin.

### 3.4.3.3. Health Sciences

In 2017, the Faculty of Health Sciences celebrated a number of research achievements. This includes the extension and awarding of a B3 NRF rating to Prof Felicity Burt (Division of Virology, School of Pathology) and a C3 rating to Prof L van den Berg from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics in the School for Allied Health Professions. Prof SC Brown (Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, School of Clinical Medicine) and Prof D Franken (Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology) were both awarded a C2 rating, and Dr Martin Nyaga, Project Leader of the Next Generation Sequencing Project in the Office of the Dean, was awarded a Y2 rating.

The SARChI Chair in Vector-borne and Zoonotic Pathogens was awarded to Prof Burt for the period 2016 to 2020, and in 2017, seven postgraduate students received bursaries linked to the chair.

Some members of the Faculty, including postgraduate students, won prizes for best presentations at conferences and research meetings. Dr A Ogunbayo (Department of Medical Microbiology, School of Pathology) was the winner of the UFS Three-Minute Thesis Competition People's Choice 2017 for his presentation 'A better alternative to beat the formidable plague'. Together with two other colleagues from Medical Microbiology, Ms Bulane and Ms A van der Spoel van Dijk, Dr Ogunbayo won the prize for the best poster presentation at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Free State Provincial Health Research Day. Mr LJ Mogakwe from the School of Nursing won the prize for the best operational paper for 2017 in the category Upcoming Researcher, also at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Free State Provincial Health Research Day.

In terms of publication outputs, the academic staff members of the Department of Dietetics published nine research articles in peer-reviewed journals, providing substantial subsidy for the UFS. Research productivity also increased in the School of Nursing during 2017, with six peer-reviewed articles and ten chapters in scholarly books published. With the support of the medical editors, study leaders, and research module leaders, 16 undergraduate medical student projects were published in accredited journals.

The Division of Health Sciences Education provided article-writing workshops and academic research training for students in the Health Professions Education (HPE) Programme, as well as for staff members in the Faculty of Health Sciences. As part of staff development, staff are also allowed to formally take two modules of the Master's degree in the HPE Programme, at no cost. Staff are also encouraged to attend opportunities provided by the UFS PGS and CTL, and to engage in the Faculty Forum and in conference attendance and presentations.

The faculty also engaged with a number of research projects that resulted in multi-disciplinary and multi-country collaborations as well as attracting funding from various sources. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded project 2017-2020 is an initiative by the School of Biomedical Sciences. This is a six-country project involving Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique, coordinated by the Regional Agricultural and Environmental Innovations Network-Africa (RAEIN-Africa) as the 'Multi-Country Project to Strengthen Institutional Capacities on Living Modified Organism (LMO) Testing in Support of National Decision-Making'. The Head of the School of Biomedical Sciences and leader of the Genetically Modified Organism Unit, Prof CD Viljoen, was appointed as technical adviser on this project. As part of the project, Prof Viljoen made visits to LMO-detection laboratories in the collaborating countries of Angola (Central Laboratory of Agriculture), Malawi (Bunda College of Agriculture and Chitedze Research Laboratory), Mozambique (Biotechnology Centre at the Eduardo Mondlane University, and Agricultural Research Institute of Mozambique) and Lesotho (National University of

Lesotho) during November and December 2017. Prof Viljoen also attended the TRG IV Regional Coordinators Meeting on LMO Detection hosted by the European Commission Joint Research Centre in Varese, Italy during July 2017.

The Next Generation Sequencing Division made a successful application for an Equivalency Determination (ED) certificate to determine if the UFS is equivalent to a US public charity, allowing US-based funders that are members of NGO sources to fund projects or research at the UFS. The same group made oral presentations at the 11<sup>th</sup> African Rotavirus Symposium in Lilongwe, Malawi, during June 2017.

Ms A van Jaarsveldt from the Department of Occupational Therapy in the School for Allied Health Professions received the Discovery Health Clinical Excellence Awards 2017: South African Institute for Sensory Integration prize for research. She received the prize at the Regional International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR) and the South African Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (SAACAPAP) Congress held in Cape Town in September 2017. Prof C Walsh (Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, School for Allied Health Professions) received NRF funding for rated researchers (R40 000) and incentive funding for rated researchers from the UFS (R50 000). MSc student, Mr FP Venter from the Department of Basic Medical Sciences, was also awarded an NRF grant.

#### 3.4.3.4. Humanities

The research in the Faculty of the Humanities cohered around three pillars in 2017, namely the pursuit of research excellence, internationalisation, and postgraduate success.

One of the key factors is to develop a critical mass of researchers with both an international standing and a commitment to explore questions of local significance. In this regard, the Faculty had appointed five extraordinary professors, and out of a total of 81 affiliated research fellows, made 27 new appointments in 2017. The Faculty also managed to increase its NRF-rated researchers to 42, two of which were from the Qwaqwa Campus. Of the 41 postdoctoral fellows in the Faculty, more than 50% hailed from Africa.

The preliminary research count for 2017 includes 115 accredited articles, 11 books, and 39 chapters in books. A total of R275 393 was awarded to support research (conference attendance and other projects) in the Faculty.

Many researchers in the Faculty excelled during 2017, which speaks to at least two of the Faculty and UFS strategic objectives, namely research excellence and internationalisation. Some of the many recognitions and awards include the following: In the Department of Afrikaans and Dutch, German and French, the Free State Arts Festival prize for best artist went to Chris van Niekerk for Prof N Morgan's production of *Die Klein Prinsie*. In the same department, an online course for learning to speak Afrikaans was launched at the end of 2017, offering people from all around the world the opportunity to learn the language. Dr Oliver Nyambi (Department of English) was awarded an African Humanities Postdoctoral Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies in New York.

The Department of Drama and Theatre Arts also received numerous awards for work done at the Free State Arts Festival, and their students received a National Arts Council Block Bursary Award (R150 000). In the Odeion School of Music, Samson Diamond was invited as leader of the second violins of the Chineke! Orchestra during two international performances (in particular at the BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London). Sharon de Kock was invited to perform the Beethoven Violin Concerto with Prof Eduardo Carpintero conducting the BUAP Symphony Orchestra in Puebla, Mexico. The Odeion School of Music Camerata received the first prize in the 2017 International Ictus Music Competition, USA, as the winners of the category for Conservatory and University Orchestra. Dr Grethe Nöthling gave a solo recital and masterclasses at the University of Iowa as part of the University of Iowa Alumni Piano Festival.

The Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment attracted a number of grants, such as the NRF South Africa/Wallonia Joint Scientific and Technological Cooperation award, an NRF Blue Skies Research Programme award, a South African Heritage Foundation award for Digital Heritage Conservation, as well as an Interdisciplinary Research Grant from the UFS.

Other highlights during 2017 include the following: Prof Iri Manase of the Department of English was appointed as a member of the Brill Publishers' Cross/Cultures Series Advisory Board. Prof Robert Peacock from the Department of Criminology served on the scientific committees of two international conferences (Serbia and Hong Kong) and was invited to present guest lectures on two international postgraduate courses in Croatia and India. Anneli Botha from the Department of Political Studies and Governance received

international acclaim for her book *Terrorism in Kenya and Uganda: Radicalization from a Political Socialization Perspective* (Lexington Books, New York).

Collaboration and networking between colleagues from the Faculty and international partners was promoted by receiving international visitors. One such example was a lecture series presented by Prof Annie van den Oever (University of Groningen, Extraordinary Professor for Film and Visual Media) during May 2017. The Centre for Health Systems Research and Development (CHSR&D), in partnership with the University of Antwerp, continued their four-year collaborative research project on stigma among healthcare workers in the Free State. Several departments also collaborated in the hosting of international conferences: The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) awarded a grant of R120 000 to the Department of History for hosting the Free State History Colloquium. The Department of Linguistics and Language Practice hosted an international conference in collaboration with the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (June 2017). In February 2017, the Department of Political Studies and Governance hosted a conference in partnership with Jawaharlal Nehru University (India) and Osaka University (Japan).

Challenges that remain are to find ways of empowering emerging black South African scholars to obtain their PhDs, to mature as academics, and begin to contribute to research output in a substantive and consistent way. During 2017, five fellows within the Mellon Inclusive Professoriate Programme made steady progress in building a research profile, and plans are underway to expand the programme further with the inclusion of at least one black female professorial fellow in the following years. In 2017, 62 research Master's students graduated, while 23 PhD degrees were awarded. More consistent efforts need to be introduced to expand the number of doctoral candidates within the NIHSS scholarship programme. Lastly, since non-NRF funding remained generally low at the UFS, support in terms of the writing of international grants, among others, is envisaged.

#### 3.4.3.5. Law

Research and postgraduate education are critical components of the Faculty of Law's strategic plan 2017-2021. In 2017, the Faculty continued to build on the trend of consistently increasing research output. The Faculty's *Journal of Juridical Science*, an ISI-accredited journal, continued to publish high-quality, peer-reviewed and internationally accredited articles, and continued to underscore the research ethos in the Faculty. The Centre for Human Rights, established in the Law Faculty in 2016, hosted its first postdoctoral fellow in 2017, which contributed to the Faculty's research outputs for 2017 and will continue to do so in 2018. The research focus area of the Centre for Human Rights also added to the Faculty's overall objectives of transformation, internationalisation, Ubuntu, decolonisation, and inclusivity. The appointment of research fellows of national and international standing assisted in achieving the Law Faculty's aim of research-led teaching and strengthened national and international collaborations. The Faculty regards this as a particular opportunity to contribute to transformative, innovative, and high-impact research.

Postgraduate education is also an important strategic focus area for the Faculty of Law. In 2017, 101 students were enrolled for the Master's programme and 17 doctoral candidates were registered in the Faculty. Fifteen Master's students and one doctoral candidate completed their studies in 2017. More than 70% of these were from designated groups. We also believe that postgraduate students from outside South African borders add to the diversity of our cohort and we therefore encourage applications from and accommodate students from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and beyond. This contributes to the diversity and the Africanisation of research produced by postgraduate students.

As at the end of 2017, all academic staff in the Faculty of Law held at least a Master's degree. In 2017, one of the members of staff obtained a doctoral degree and eight members of staff were enrolled for doctoral studies. The UFS Postgraduate School supports seven doctoral candidates from the Faculty of Law as part of the fast-track programme. The Faculty's research and postgraduate education will particularly benefit from the current specialisations of doctoral candidates, as some of these fields offer new expertise in the Faculty and will open up new opportunities for research and teaching and learning. The Faculty is cognisant of the critical link between the scholarship of teaching and learning and research and have two members of staff who specifically focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning in legal science in their doctoral research. In 2017, a number of staff members delivered papers at national and international conferences. Through this, the Faculty strives to continuously build and expand knowledge, establish and expand on new and existing international ties, developing knowledge, and informing research.

### 3.4.3.6. Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) is known for its high research output and it strives to improve this on an annual basis by providing staff, postgraduate students, and postdoctoral fellows with opportunities to conduct their research. NAS currently has the highest number of NRF-rated researchers and postdoctoral fellows at the UFS, which also contributes to its high research outputs. Nine of its NRF-rated researchers were re-evaluated in 2017 and received either a higher or the same rating as in the past, and three researchers received a rating for the first time.

There are still some departments where research productivity is not as good as in other disciplines due to the uniqueness of the research and retirements of senior staff members, but the Faculty strives to keep such staff members involved in research by appointing them as either affiliated staff or research fellows. The Faculty started a process with the DRD in 2016 to assist staff to apply for grants to enable them to do their research. A system was also put in place where staff with the potential to apply for NRF rating are identified and supported where necessary.

Departments are also widely participating in workshops presented by either the Library, PGS or the DRD in order to improve their research capabilities. One of the challenges we still have is young academics who need to complete their PhDs, and as part of the Faculty's research strategy to support them, they are encouraged to apply for research leave, sabbatical grants, and other programmes that will assist in completing their degrees.

Since 2017, NAS also started to compile a strategy to determine the need for replacement of equipment and a strategy on maintaining equipment in order to keep up the high-quality research in the Faculty. This is still a challenging initiative, but we are striving to produce cutting-edge research initiatives and will continue to do so.

#### Box 5: Natural and Agricultural Science staff and student achievements 2017

##### Department of Physics

- Best student/postdoctoral oral prize: Edward Lee (MSc UFS) for oral 11 'Synthesis and characterisation of Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> phosphor co-doped with bismuth and ytterbium ions for application in solar cells'. This prize is accompanied by a Young Scientist Award from the International Association of Advanced Materials.
- Runner-up student/postdoctoral oral prize: Ashwini Kumar (Postdoc UFS) for oral 22 'Co-operative energy transfer in Yb<sup>3+</sup> -Tb<sup>3+</sup> co-doped SrGd<sub>4</sub>O<sub>7</sub> upconverting phosphor'.
- Best postdoctoral poster prize: Trilok Pathak for poster 34 (Postdoc UFS) 'Effect of annealing temperature on structural and luminescence properties of Eu doped NaYF<sub>4</sub> phosphor'. This prize is accompanied by a Young Scientist Award from the International Association of Advanced Materials.
- Second runner-up student poster prize: Zamaswazi Tshabalala (shared) (PhD –UFS/CSIR) for poster 74 'Structural transformation and enhanced gas sensing characteristics of TiO<sub>2</sub> nanostructures induced by annealing'.
- Prof Hendrik Swart received funding for the Research Chair in Solid State Luminescent and Advanced Materials from SARChI for another five years.
- A Publication prize was won by EHH Hasalbelidaim at the annual conference of the South African Institute of Physics during July 2017 for his MSc Publication.
- Postgraduate students of the Department of Physics attended the 'Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns Studentesimposium 2017', hosted by the University of Pretoria, 2–3 November 2017. Our students did an incredible job when presenting their respective research projects in Afrikaans. Dina Oosthuizen (PhD) and Lucas Erasmus (MSc) claimed first place in their respective sessions, and Hélène Szegedi (MSc) and Izak van der Westhuizen (PhD) were rewarded with the second place in their sessions.
- The papers of two PhD students in the Department of Physics were recently accepted in high impact-factor journals (Small IF = 8.643; Nano Energy IF = 12.343). The students are Prasant Mishra (currently in Sweden at the Linköping University – supervisors: Profs A Tiwari and HC Swart) and Cornelia van der Walt (who received her PhD during the last graduation ceremony – supervisors: Profs JJ Terblans and HC Swart).
- Profs HC Swart, JJ Terblans, and two MSc students, E Lee and L Erasmus, attended 'The 9th international conference on Advanced Materials', ROCAM 2017, Bucharest, Romania, 11–14 July 2017. Prof Swart gave an invited talk and the others presented their work at the conference. They visited the labs of Prof V Craciun at the Laser Department National Institute for Laser, Plasma and Radiation Physics, Magurele, Bucharest where they prepared thin films with Pulsed Laser Deposition. Photo 1 – Weekend visit to Sinaia – on a 2,5 km mountain with Profs V Craciun and D Craciun.

##### Department of Plant Sciences

- Sadie Geldenhuys and Cornél Bender both received a UFS Merit Award for outstanding research support 2017 during a function held by the Vice-Rector: Research, Prof Corli Witthuhn.
- Dr Angie van Biljon was elected as President of Cereal Science and Technology South Africa (CST-SA).
- Prof Maryke Labuschagne was re-elected as the South African representative to the American Association for Cereal Chemists.
- Lisa-Ann Rothmann (PhD student in Plant Pathology) participated in the 3-Minute Thesis competition on 25 August 2017 and was the winner in the PhD category.

#### Department of Urban and Regional Planning

- Dr Thulisile Mphambukeli was invited to form part of the South African delegation of experts to attend the 2017 BRICS Academic Forum in Fuzhou, China.

#### Department of Geology

- Received the Houghton Award for the year 2016 for the Honours thesis that was done under the leadership of Prof Wayne Colliston.

#### Centre of Environmental Management

- Tshiamo Legoale, a Master's student in the Centre for Environmental Management, was named the FameLab International Champion at the Cheltenham Science Festival in the UK on 8 July 2017. Her mini-dissertation research was on how to use wheat in the harvesting of leftover gold.
- Dr Falko Buschke (lecturer), Ms Ansuné Human, and Mr Senalo Malindi (Master's students in Environmental Management), and Joh Henschel (research associate) attended the 14th Annual Kimberley Biodiversity Research Symposium held at the Sol Plaatje University in Kimberley. Senalo presented a paper from his Master's research on the Feeding Ecology of Antelope. Ansuné and Falko hosted a workshop on Ecosystem guidelines for the Nama Karoo Biome.
- Richard Williamson and Surina Esterhuysen from the Centre for Environmental Management attended the Biennial Groundwater conference in Stellenbosch from 14 to 18 October 2017. Mr Williamson presented a paper on 'Possible wastewater volumes associated with unconventional oil and gas extraction in South Africa and the management thereof'.

#### Institute for Groundwater Studies

- Prof Abdon Atangana received the African Award of Applied Mathematics in Morocco during early November 2017.

#### Soil, Crop and Climate Sciences

- Comie van Huyssteen and his students (Anizka Stolk, Zikhona GK, and Khumo Jaola) attended the National Wetlands Indaba, where they presented three papers. The indaba was held from 16 to 19 October 2017 at the Wild Coast Sun, near Port Edward.

#### Animal, Wildlife and Grassland Sciences

- Dr Francois Deacon from the Department of Animal, Wildlife and Grassland Sciences at the University of the Free State (UFS) led a multi-specialist research group of more than 30 people from 10 different countries to collect information about giraffes during October 2017.

#### Microbial, Biochemical and Food Biotechnology

- The Department of Biotechnology hosted a prestigious postgraduate research day on 14 June 2017. Postdoctoral fellows from the department presented their research and progress on research projects. Several research projects were presented, with themes ranging from projects with commercialisation potential to cutting-edge fundamental research projects about disease control and bioremediation. The event was sponsored by a laboratory supplier company, Separations.
- A total of 16 presentations were delivered, including a presentation by the Directorate: Research Development about the commercialisation model of the University of the Free State.
- The department is currently hosting 11 postdoctoral fellows, of which five are international students.
- Saheed Sabiu, a PhD student in the Department of Biotechnology, received the prize as the First Runner-up in the Science category of the annual National three-minute thesis competition, after being the overall winner among 11 Kopsie students who took part in the regional competition. The theme of his three-minute thesis was 'From Waste to Health: Corn silk in the management of kidney disorders', which was a summary of his original thesis 'Biochemical and pharmacological potential of standardised fractions of Zea mays Linnaeus, Stigma maydis on acetaminophen-mediated oxidative nephropathy: in vitro and in vivo assessments'.
- Trudi O'Neill from the Department of Microbial, Biochemical and Food Biotechnology visited the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KCCR-KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana on 25 April 2017. The KCCR-KNUST hosts the secretariat for the African Research Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases (ARNTD), of which Dr O'Neill is the interim chair. The network's mission is to support evidence-based control and elimination of NTDs from Africa by empowering current and future generations of African researchers. As part of this mandate, a Small Grants Programme in collaboration with USAID was recently launched and the winners of the first round were announced during the meeting in Kumasi. From the left are: Louis Adu-Amoah (Research Officer, ARNTD), Joseph Shott (Public Health Advisor, USAID), John Amuasi (Executive Director, ARNTD), Trudi O'Neill, Richard Philips (Management Board member, ARNTD), Diana Barffo (Research Officer, ARNTD), and Isaac Osei (Scientific Officer, ARNTD). Drs Amuasi and O'Neill also represented ARNTD at the 2nd Global Partners Meeting on NTDs and NTD Summit held from 19 to 22 April in Geneva, Switzerland, where major funding commitments were made by especially the Department for International Development in the United Kingdom, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. These funds will be used for the eradication of NTDs in various countries, as well as the development of new drugs and diagnostic tests.

#### Agricultural Economics

- The Department of Agricultural Economics fully participated in ALFA 2017 held at the Afridome, Parys, 12-14 September 2017. Besides having a stall, the department was actively involved in the ALFA schools' competition, which included 13 agricultural schools (roughly 120 learners) from across the country. Two trophies were sponsored by the department and were awarded during the closing function.
- Frikkie Maré from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Dr Johan van Zyl from Economic and Management Sciences attended the 21st congress of the International Farm Management Association (IFMA) from 2 to 7 July 2017 in Edinburgh, Scotland. With them on the photo is David Human from Zoetis South Africa, who sponsored Frikkie to attend the conference, and Phillip Oosthuizen, a former MSc student from Agricultural Economics, who is currently working for Sernick. Frikkie, Johan, and Phillip each presented a paper at the congress.

#### Computer Science and Informatics

- The Department of Computer Science and Informatics and the Department of Information Technology at CUT co-presented the annual conference of the South African Institute of Computer Scientists and Information Technologists (SAICSIT). Prof Pieter Blignaut was elected as Vice-President of SAICSIT for the period 2017-2019.



#### Sustainable Agriculture

- The University of the Free State's Centre for Sustainable Agriculture was represented by JW Swanepoel at the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association's (IFAMA) Conference in Miami, Florida from 17 to 21 June 2017. JW, a PhD student in the centre, did his department proud by not only presenting results from his PhD in the academic track of the conference, but also by being part of an advanced case-study team representing South African universities, which won IFAMA's International Student Case Competition.

#### Quantity Surveying and Construction Management

- Two UFS Quantity Surveying students received awards for academic excellence from the Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS) at a prestigious gala event in Johannesburg. Miss G Bothma is the first recipient in the category called the ASAQS Future Leaders Award, which was introduced in 2017. Jhon Thatcher was a runner-up in the ASAQS Gold Medal Award for 2017, an award that was won by Kamogelo Leeuw of the UFS in 2016. Both awards consider academic excellence and leadership potential as crucial. The competition is open to all institutions in South Africa that offer Quantity Surveying programmes.

#### Faculty Events

- Dr Antonie Geyer hosted Prof Klaus Maas and Prof Stefan Wolf from the Hochschule Ostwestfalen-Lippe University of Applied Sciences in Germany from 30 October to 1 November 2017. They discussed possible collaboration on the development of a new agricultural programme at their university.
- During the recent June graduations, the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences conferred 238 Master's and 24 PhD degrees. It is quite an achievement when compared to the rest of the UFS, with a combined total of 213 Master's and 42 PhD degrees conferred in the other six faculties.

### 3.4.3.7. Theology and Religion

2017 was a good year for the Faculty of Theology and Religion in terms of research activities. Early in 2017, the second volume of the new series called 'University of the Free State Theological Explorations' (UFSTE), initiated by the Faculty in 2016, was published under the title *Making sense of Jesus – Experiences, interpretations and identities*, with Profs Tolmie and Venter as editors. Interesting new perspectives are discussed and categorised in two parts: part I deals with the New Testament and historical perspectives and part II reflects on contemporary and constructive perspectives. Twelve scholars contributed to this volume, five from abroad and 11 from the Faculty (either staff members or associated as extraordinary professors or research fellows).

In April, Faculty Dean Prof Fanie Snyman received the prestigious book prize awarded by the UFS for the best scientific book by an UFS academic published in the previous two years. The book is a commentary on the Old Testament prophetic book of Malachi and was published by Peeters in Louvain, Belgium, as part of the esteemed 'Historical Commentary of the Old Testament' (HCOT) series.

Two staff members in the Faculty received NRF ratings for the first time. In the Department of Practical and Missional Theology, the Head of Department, Prof Kobus Schoeman, obtained a C3 rating; Dr Juanita Meyer obtained a Y2 rating; and Prof Jan-Albert van den Berg improved his rating from a C3 to a C2. For the first time in the Faculty's history, Theology and Religion now also has two B-rated scholars. Both Prof Francois Tolmie, Head of the Department of Old and New Testament Studies, and Dean Snyman obtained B3 ratings from the NRF. The Faculty now has a total of six NRF-rated academic staff members.

Prof Jan van der Watt, Research Fellow in the Department of Old and New Testament Studies, and Prof Jaap Steyn (also from the UFS) shared the Jan H Marais Prize awarded by the South African Academy for Arts and Sciences, for their outstanding contribution to Afrikaans as a scientific language.

*Acta Theologica* remains an important journal of the Faculty. It is one of only two South African theological journals that is ISI-accredited.

The Faculty hosted a conference in August 2017 with the theme 'Apocalyptic literature and mysticism. Investigating a turn in recent apocalyptic research' together with Yale Divinity School. The conference focused on the relationship between apocalyptic literature and Merkavah Mysticism, mystical movements, and mystical texts. Prof Pieter de Villiers, Professor Extraordinaire in the Department Old and New Testament Studies, invited the speakers and chaired the conference. He also read the first paper in which he offered a detailed overview of the state of scholarship on this issue. Three renowned scholars from Yale University read papers at this conference: Greg Sterling (Dean of Yale Divinity School) on the theme 'Dancing with the stars: The vision of God in Philo of Alexandria'; John J Collins on the theme 'Is there evidence of mysticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls?'; and Adela Yarbro Collins on the theme 'Paul, Jewish mysticism and Spirit possession'. Prof Jörg Frey, Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Zurich and Research Fellow in the Department

Old and New Testament Studies at the UFS, read a paper on the throne vision of Revelations 4 within the context of Enochian and Later Merkavah texts. The papers will be published in the renowned Ekstasis series of De Gruyter, Berlin, Germany.

Another first for the Faculty in 2017 was the Tutu-Jonker Prestige Lecture delivered by Prof Eddy van den Borgh from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, where he currently holds the Tutu Chair in the Faculty of Theology and Religion.

Last, but not least, the Faculty managed to publish 61 articles in accredited journals, 65 chapters in books, and six books, totalling 132 research outputs for 2017. This impressive research output is not only a testimony to an increase in research productivity; it is also an important aid in helping the Faculty to decrease its dependence on tuition fees. The quality of research is ensured by the fact that the majority of published articles is indexed in the Thompson Web of Science Arts and Humanities Citation Index.

### 3.4.4. The Library

#### 3.4.4.1. Improving staff equity

The UFS Library and Information Services (LIS) staff complement reflects the demographics of the institution in terms of race, gender, and age. Every retirement and/or resignation opportunity was used to appoint qualified people from designated areas. These opportunities were also used to repurpose posts and appoint people with required competencies based on new trends in the profession, as was the case with deputy director posts. The funded vacancies were in some cases filled with people from outside, ensuring that empowering current equity appointees and employing new, vibrant staff members also address equity. In other cases, internal staff members from previously disadvantaged backgrounds were afforded opportunities to improve their qualifications. Colleagues who had degrees that were not recognised in LIS, and were thus being remunerated at a lower level, were supported to successfully complete a rigorous one-year University of Cape Town (UCT) programme that earned them librarian status, and were then allocated relevant tasks. Equity was also addressed through salary adjustments, which ensured that colleagues who are given the same responsibilities are remunerated accordingly. This goes a long way in retention of qualified staff, as these adjustments also looked at general packages in the profession.

#### 3.4.4.2. Increasing student success

LIS serves as a core academic partner in the achievement of the UFS's goals of teaching and learning, research, and community scholarship. The teaching and learning information services division concentrated on delivering library and information services to academics (teaching) and undergraduate students (learning). The ultimate goal is to build effective and efficient academic-librarian collaborations that will make it possible for librarians to be fully embedded into academics' and students' worlds. It is foreseen that this collaboration will enforce the development of UFS students into information-literate students who are life-long learners, thus increasing their academic success.

Our professional and competent librarians continued to reach out to academics to find ways of making this goal a reality. This resulted in library training conducted in lecture halls, more students trained on research methodology through orientation opportunities such as the Gateway Programme, and through improved UFS101 content. Evaluation of such training sessions present a clear picture about the value students place on these training sessions.

LIS firmly believes in the fundamental importance of reading in academic success. As a result, a love for reading was fostered through book launches that also presented opportunities for intellectual engagement on the country's topical issues. An example is LIS's celebration of Africa Day in collaboration with the Department of English and the Office for International Affairs, by launching a book titled *White narratives: the depiction of past 2000 land invasions in Zimbabwe* by UFS Prof Irikidzayi Manase. The discussions centred around land seizures and the effect on the economy, and on societal and spiritual issues.

As part of the 2017 Women's Day commemorations, LIS launched a book titled *Understanding Boko Haram* by Prof Hussein Solomon. Prof Solomon focused on the kidnapping of 200 young women in Nigeria and challenges faced by women in war-torn countries in Africa. The launch was followed by a panel discussion led by the Gender Office on problems and challenges affecting women, with specific reference and focus to 2017 attacks on women in South Africa. In total, the event was attended by 181 students and staff members, who engaged in lively discussions.

### 3.4.4.3. Increasing research productivity

Strategic priority three of LIS's strategic plan is the delivery of research and scholarly communication services that support researchers and postgraduate students. This is informed by the University's goal of becoming a research-led university with marked increase in quality research productivity. Research librarians supported researchers in a number of ways, such as providing access to information resources in research, conducting information searches, making use of interlibrary loans to access more information resources from other libraries, and so on.

LIS has two research librarians whose responsibility is to contribute towards the University's research output, using their expertise in information management. The service is delivered from the Research Unit, which is a designated one-stop area providing on-hand services to researchers and postgraduate students. It has a seating capacity of 87, with hot and cold water, wired and wireless access to internet, 30 computers, Interlibrary Loans office, kitchen, six discussion rooms, research methodology books, and dictionaries. LIS also has a designated website, making it possible for service beneficiaries to have access to virtual library research support. The website is used as a tool for providing information, marketing, and training. The Research News blog was used to market new LibGuides regarding Research Week, ORCID, and Research unit services.

The bulk of the service went into conducting information searches for service beneficiaries. This is aimed at saving service beneficiaries' time, ensuring that they get relevant information timeously. Research topics at hand made it possible for research librarians to proactively search for any new information published in researchers' fields, and proactively disseminating it to researchers. Value-adding alerts were also distributed periodically, depending on researchers' preferences. A total of 3 844 searches were conducted in 2017, compared to 1 000 searches conducted in 2016, resulting in 11 801 article downloads.

Building the capacity of service beneficiaries to search for information independently remains one of the most important objectives. This is in response to new technological developments that alter the management of information, providing remote access, and making collaborations possible. A total of 825 postgraduate students and researchers were trained, a marked increase compared to the 36 that were trained in 2016. LIS continued collaborating with the PGS and had a training slot during their regular workshops. The Research and Open Access Weeks remained flagship projects in building capacity in research-related topics such as referencing software tools, predatory publishing, proposal writing, ethical clearance, managing NRF grants, plagiarism, ORCID, Scopus, and H-indexes. The two projects attracted a total of 640 researchers, postgraduate students, and librarians from other institutions. Topics covered during the Open Access Week addressed the following:

- Sharing your research on KovskyScholar, including electronic theses and dissertations, self-archiving research articles, Creative Commons licensing and how to create an ORCID, presented by Cornelle Scheltema-Van Wyk from the UFS LIS.
- The Open Access perspective: trends and measurements, presented by Fiona Bester from Worldwide Information Services.
- Publishing in Open Access journals for authors: a personal experience, by Dr Abdon Atangana from the Institute for Groundwater Studies at the UFS.
- Predatory publishing and how LIS can assist you: a practical session on how to identify predatory journals before you publish, presented by Annamarie du Preez and Cornelle Scheltema-Van Wyk from the UFS LIS.
- Copyright for librarians: South African copyright law, the Copyright Amendment Bill, copyright and Open Access, and predatory publishing practices, presented by Denise Nicholson from the WITS Library.
- Copyright in higher education: the UFS context, presented by Gerard Verhoef from the DRD.
- Open Educational Resources (OERs), presented by Neil Butcher and Ronet Vrey.
- NRF-rated researchers and SARCHi research chairs, presented by Dr Rocky Skeef, Executive Director Reviews and Evaluation, NRF.

The LIS repository, KovskyScholar, remained key in improving impact assessments of UFS scholars, making it possible for research output to be visible and discoverable worldwide. A total of 1 251 additional research outputs was uploaded to KovskyScholar, bringing the total to 3 251. The repository is well used, with almost 3 million searches conducted in 2017, resulting in 1,2 million full-text items downloaded. The main achievement was the launch of the Open Journal System (OJS) during the Open Access Week (24-27 October 2017). The eight accredited UFS academic journals are now open-access journals, providing access to 3 153 journal articles dating back to 2010 on KovskyJournals (Acta Academica, Acta Structilia, Acta Theologica, Communitas, Journal for Contemporary History, Journal for Juridical Science, Perspectives in Education, and



Town and Regional Planning). This was achieved through the Online Journals System platform, which went live on 29 September 2017 and complies with website requirements for the continued accreditation of journals. The scope of the repository has been extended to also feature special collections, including the comprehensive digital Willem Boshoff Archive, and the plays of Prof Nico Luwes.

A panel discussion on data curation and management was held in October 2017, with a total of 32 attendees. The aim was to initiate discussions with the research community and create awareness on the NRF requirement of a research data plan. An investigation into suitable data curation platforms for the UFS research community was launched in collaboration with ICT Services and the DRD, aimed at addressing the way forward with regard to data management.

## 4. THE HUMAN PROJECT

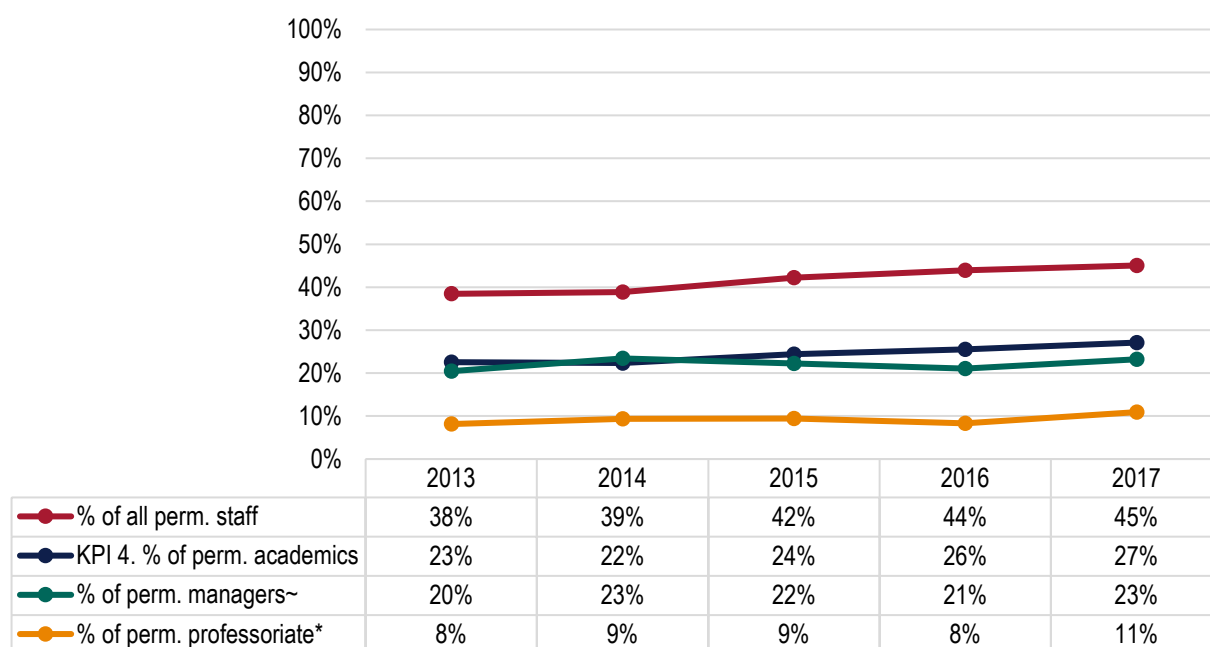
### 4.1. Performance report: Improving equity and diversity

#### 4.1.1. Improving staff equity

The majority (58%) of new appointments in 2017 were black (i.e. African, Coloured, and Indian/Asian) staff members. Compared to 2016, this represents an increase in African, Coloured, and Indian staff appointments – 4%, 1% and 2% respectively – and a 5% decrease in the appointment of white staff members. This trend is also evident in 2017 promotions compared to 2016, with an increase in designated group promotions and a decrease in the percentage of white staff members who were promoted. As illustrated in Figure 15, this has contributed to an increase in the share of all permanently employed staff members (academics and support staff), permanent academics, managers, as well as the professoriate who are black.

The UFS has made relatively good progress in terms of gender parity. Women represented 45% of the permanent academics in 2017, and 49% of the management staff (see Figure 16). However, only 29% of the professoriate were women, a decrease of 2.4% from 2016.

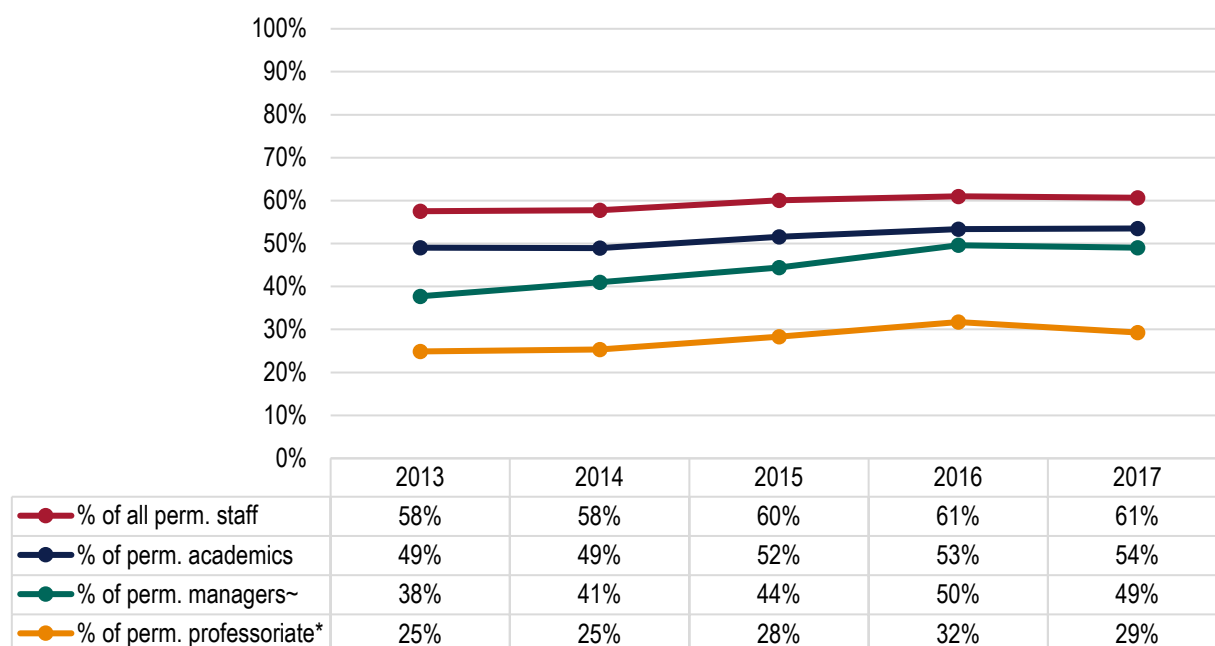
Despite encouraging improvements, the UFS remains deeply unequal in terms of the race and gender composition of its staff complement, especially in the higher academic and support service ranks. In 2017, 27% of all permanent academics were black, and only 12% were black women. Figure 17 confirms that black women are the single most underrepresented group of staff at the UFS, and this state of affairs has not changed significantly in the past five years. Black women constitute a quarter of all permanent staff; 12% of permanent academics; one in 10 (permanent) managers; and five out of 174 associate and full professors who were permanently employed at the UFS in 2017.



\* Associate and full professors, academic and support staff

~ Academic management and top (Rectorate), senior (Senior Directors/Deans), middle (Directors), and junior (Deputy/Assistant Directors) management

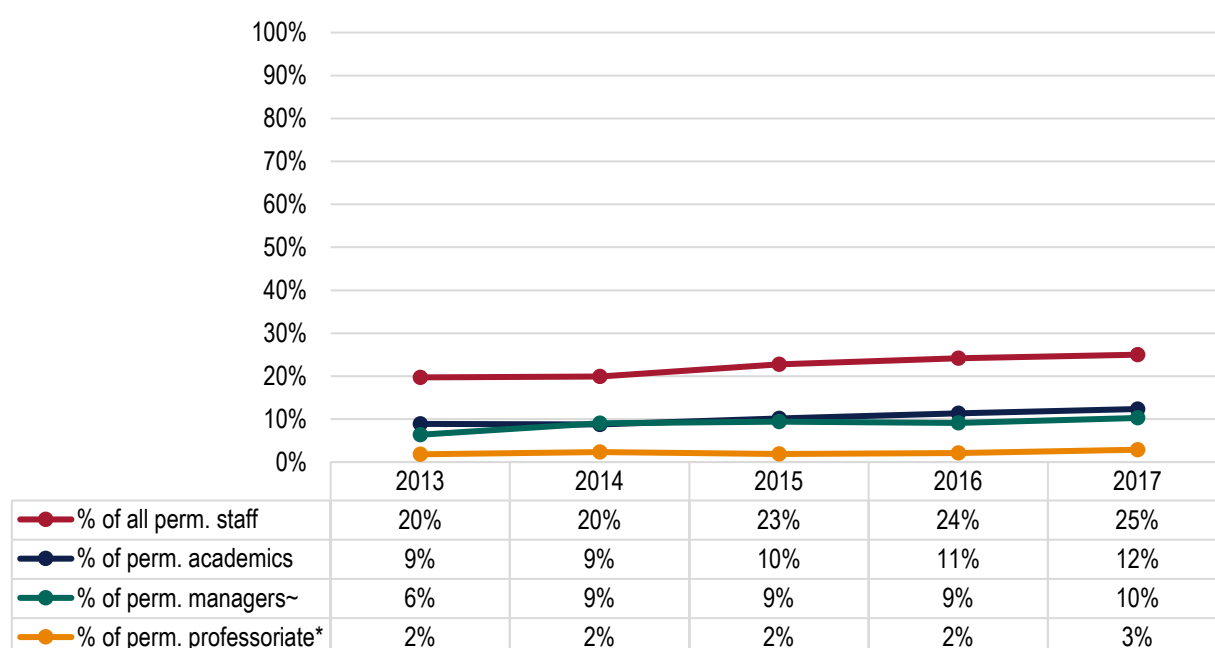
**Figure 15: Percentage of permanent staff members who are black, 2013 to 2017**



\* Associate and full professors, academic and support staff

~ Academic management and top (Rectorate), senior (Senior Directors/Deans), middle (Directors), and junior (Deputy/Assistant Directors) management

**Figure 16: Percentage of permanent staff members who are women, 2013 to 2017**



\* Associate and full professors, academic and support staff

~ Academic management and top (Rectorate), senior (Senior Directors/Deans), middle (Directors), and junior (Deputy/Assistant Directors) management

**Figure 17: Percentage of permanent staff members who are black women, 2013 to 2017**

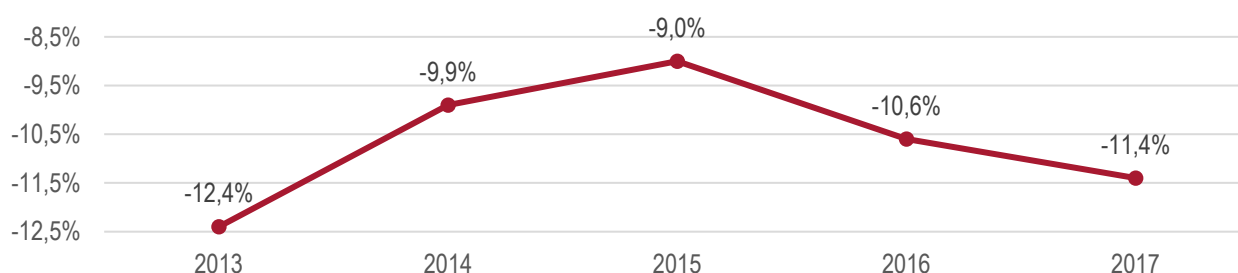
### 4.1.2. Improving student equity

The focus of student equity at the UFS has shifted from equity of *access* to equity of *outcomes*. Therefore, the UFS monitors difference between the average module success rates of its black undergraduate students and its white undergraduate students as an indicator of student equity at the institution.

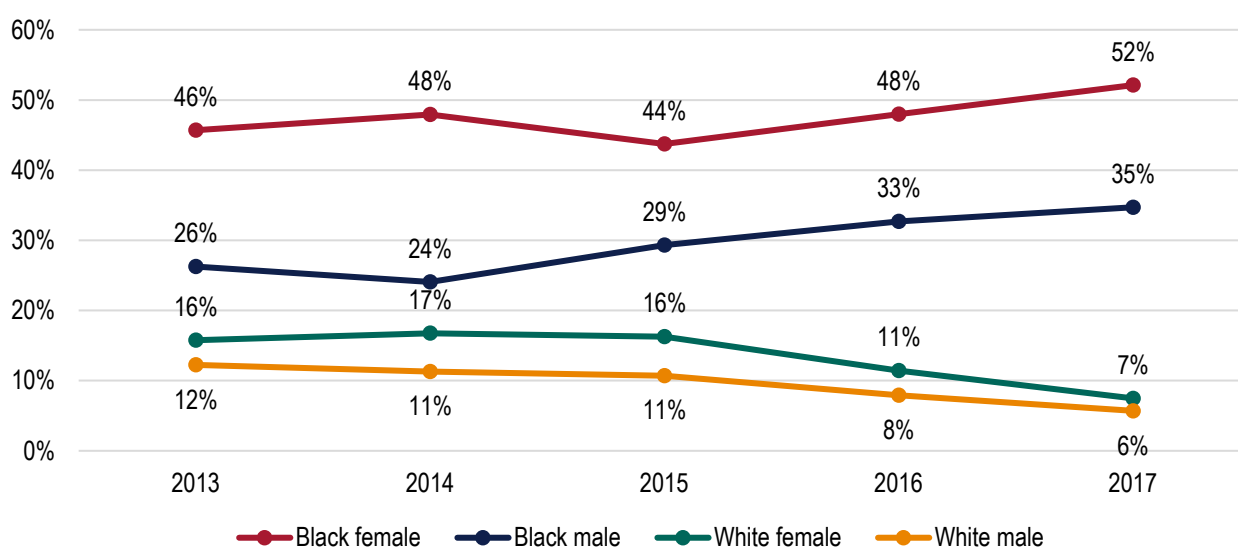
As can be seen in Figure 18, the UFS made steady progress in this regard from 2013 to 2015. In 2016, the gap widened by 1.6%, most probably as a result of the disruptions to classroom teaching and the examination schedule caused by the #FeesMustFall protests. The situation did not recover in 2017, with the gap widening by another 0.8% to 11.4% – only 1% from where the UFS started in 2013.

As discussed in section 3.1.1, student success rates declined from 2016 to 2017 across all race groups and with various possible factors. However, white students' success rates dropped by 1.7% while for black students this figure is 3.0%. The widening gap suggests that the factors contributing to declining success – the knock-on effect of the 2016 student protests, low staff morale, and the implementation of the new English-only language policy – may have a more pronounced impact on the University's black student population. The UFS will need to investigate the matter thoroughly in order to identify areas of inequity in its teaching and learning practices, and to devise interventions that will adequately address these.

Even though it is a less critical indicator, the University continues to monitor the race composition of its student body. Since 2014, there has been a marked decline in the number of white students enrolling at the UFS (see Figure 19). In 2014, 28% of the first-year cohort were white students. This share decreased to 19% in 2016, and only 13% in 2017. The introduction of the new language policy may be a contributing factor in this regard. However, the impact of the university's institutional culture, including the effect of student protests (in which black students participate more than white students), cannot be disregarded.



**Figure 18: KPI 5. Difference between black and white students module success rates, 2013 to 2017**



**Figure 19: Distribution of first-year students by race and gender, 2013 to 2017**

## **4.2. Transformation report**

### **4.2.1. Language policy**

The Constitutional Court ruled on 29 December 2017 in favour of the university's Language Policy. The judgement followed an appeal lodged by AfriForum against the judgement and order delivered by the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) on the implementation of the UFS Language Policy on 28 March 2017. In a majority ruling, Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng denied AfriForum's application for leave to appeal the SCA's ruling, stating that the UFS Council's approval of the Language Policy was lawful and constitutionally valid. The court found that the adoption of the Language Policy was neither inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution, nor did it violate the Constitutional rights of any students and/or staff members of the UFS. This landmark judgement not only paved the way for the UFS to continue with the implementation plan for its Language Policy as approved by the UFS Council on 11 March 2016. It was also a recognition of the value that inclusion, equity, and redress, which informed the University's decision to change its Language Policy to English as primary medium of instruction, has in higher education in South Africa.

The UFS will continue to develop Afrikaans as an academic language. A key feature of the UFS Language Policy is flexibility and the commitment to strive for a truly multilingual environment. The judgement allows the UFS to proceed with the implementation of its progressive approach to a language-rich environment that is committed to multilingualism. This includes contributing to the development of Sesotho and isiZulu as higher-education languages within the context of the different UFS campuses' needs. The UFS is the first university in South Africa to appear before the Constitutional Court regarding its Language Policy. During 2017, the Faculties of Health Sciences, the Humanities, and Law started with the implementation of the new Language Policy at first-year level. The remaining faculties will start implementing the policy as from 2018.

### **4.2.2. Protests**

Issues pertaining to students who were provisionally registered – especially those students who were provisionally registered and awaiting the outcome of their appeals to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) – led to some disruption of classes on the Bloemfontein Campus on Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 February 2017. However, academic and other activities continued. On 28 March 2017, violent protests and barricades on the Qwaqwa Campus spilled onto the provincial road to Phuthaditjhaba and several cars were damaged. Due to the imminent threat to the safety of staff and students on campus, the senior leadership decided on 28 March 2017 to evacuate residences and close the campus temporarily. Academic activities resumed on 18 April 2017.

During the week of 17 October 2017, protests erupted again on both campuses. The senior leadership of the university were made aware of alleged excessive use of force and assault of students by private security companies hired by the UFS on both the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa Campuses. These allegations were investigated, and the executive management condemned any misuse of force by private security in the strongest terms. Accordingly, the management engaged the services of Ashraf Mahomed and Nomfundo Walaza during November 2017, with the view to forming an independent panel to conduct an investigation into the handling of student protests at the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses by private security and police during October 2017. The Rector and the President of the Central SRC requested the investigation/review to focus on practical and policy consequences and recommendations relating to the series of events that took place during October 2017, including the circumstances leading up to and following these events. Students and staff were invited to make written and oral submissions to the panel. The fact-finding investigation took place on 13 and 15 November 2017 in Bloemfontein and on 14 November in Qwaqwa; 28 and 29 November 2017 in Qwaqwa and 30 November and 1 December 2017 in Bloemfontein; and in Cape Town on 9 December 2017 with the president of the SRC (Bloemfontein Campus). The panel would submit its final report to the Rector in February 2018 for consideration of remedial action, including legal steps, policy formulation, disciplinary proceedings, and administrative action, where appropriate.

### **4.2.3. The Integrated Transformation Plan**

The development of the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP) started in January 2017 when the rectorate, deans, directors, student leadership, union representatives, and members of Council met with the incumbent Rector and Vice-Chancellor to identify the areas of transformation that the UFS needed to focus on, as well as the process going forward. The consensus reached at the January workshop was translated into an ITP Framework. The framework, which was developed collaboratively by a representative team from the workshop,

identified the conceptual points of departure for the task of transformation, as well as a broad vision centred on the notion of social justice and inclusivity. The framework noted that transformation in South Africa means the dismantling of the legacy of apartheid and colonialism at political, social, economic, and intellectual levels in order to adopt new practices, modes of organisation, and values capable of delivering social justice. It was in this sense that social justice was identified as the key outcome of transformation. In turn, the framework document built on a number of previous reports, including the Soudien Report of 2008, the 2001 SAHRC Report, the 2016 Report on Transformation at Public Universities in South Africa, the UFS Transformation Report 2016, and the Shimla Park Report 2016. The ITP Framework was approved by Council at its March 2017 meeting. Work streams were identified, each of which had a convenor responsible for working consultatively with relevant stakeholders to produce the ITP. The current ITP represents the operationalisation of the framework document and has followed a long process of consultations in itself. The ITP, including specific deliverables, was approved by Council in September 2017 and the following 12 cross-functional task teams were tasked with the implementation of the plan:

- Teaching and Learning
- Research, Internationalisation, and Innovation
- Engaged Scholarship
- Student Experience
- Student Accommodation
- Staff experience and Composition
- Names, Symbols, and Spaces
- Universal Access
- Financial Framework (Size and Shape)
- Governance and Policy
- System and Administration
- Multi-campus Model

The convenors of each of the cross-functional task teams will form the Implementation Committee, which will meet monthly and will be chaired by the Vice-Rector: Institutional Change, Student Affairs and Community Engagement. The ITP Oversight Committee, that is the governance committee, will meet on a quarterly basis and will be chaired by the Rector, with representatives of Council, Rectorate, Deans, Senior Directors, Directors, the Central SRC, and Unions.

#### **4.2.4. New executive portfolio**

In order to strengthen the UFS's focus on social justice and human rights through scholarship, advocacy, and progressive interventions, a reconfigured executive portfolio of Institutional Change, Student Affairs and Community Engagement has been established. This portfolio will coordinate the efforts of the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice, the Free State Centre for Human Rights, the ITP, the Institutional Multi-stakeholder Group (IMG), and our Reflective Thinking and Practices of Otherness and Rights related to gender, sexual orientation, and harassment. The UFS adopted a zero-tolerance approach to any form of unfair discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, bullying, and any other behaviour that demeans people and disregard their rights.

#### **4.2.5. RAG**

After an external review and internal consultation process, the annual RAG was given a new name and format, namely KOVSIE ACT – Active, Civic, Teaching (also see section 4.3.2). In a collective effort, four exciting programmes will be introduced in 2018, namely the Schools Project for first-year students; Community Gardens; Eco-vehicle Project for senior students; and the hosting of an annual community celebration to foster good relationships between the UFS and the broader Mangaung community.

#### **4.2.6. Gender and sexual equity**

In 2017, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) selected the UFS as one of the institutions to be evaluated in terms of its progress in gender transformation. The University was asked to answer a detailed questionnaire for the CGE as well as host a stakeholder session in which members of the University could make submissions regarding their experiences of gender transformation at the UFS. The stakeholder engagement was hosted by

Helena Roodt from the provincial office and took place in the Equitas Auditorium on 22 September 2017. Submissions were requested from UFS members by the CGE, who asked the University to address matters such as race and gender components of various levels of staff, transformation policies, employment equity policies, recruitment policies, funding of inclusivity initiatives, gender and sexual equity, sexual harassment, misconduct and violence issues, and any other pressing concerns. The Rector was then invited to Johannesburg on 31 October 2017 to give a presentation before a panel from the CGE National Office on the progress, gaps, and challenges regarding gender transformation, disability matters, and broader equity initiatives on all three campuses. The CGE provided feedback on 4 December, to which the University was required to provide an immediate response, as well as acknowledge the receipt of recommendations that were scheduled for implementation during 2018. These recommendations are currently being worked on in the ITP work streams as well as in individual departments and offices throughout the UFS. The CGE commended the University on the open and transparent manner in which it engaged with the CGE's questions and investigation. The CGE intends to return to the UFS in June 2018 to evaluate the implementation of the recommendations and further advise on areas of concern in preparation for their full report.

### **4.3. Stakeholder relationships**

#### **4.3.1. Staffing**

##### **4.3.1.1. Insourcing of contract workers**

The UFS, like all universities in the country, witnessed historic student-led protests which have drawn on the energies of outsourced workers. Contract workers at various universities have been protesting since the middle of 2015, demanding permanent employment with benefits.

The UFS supports the quest for a living wage and improved working conditions and this resulted in the development of an insourcing plan. Since the end of 2015, discussions on possible insourcing at the UFS took place and continued until July 2017. These discussions involved the UFS Council Team, the Mutual Forum (NEHAWU and UVPERSU), and the Workers Forum (comprising representatives of employees of service providers at the UFS) and resulted in an agreement that workers of the cleaning, protection, and gardening services who are at present employed by companies providing a service to the University, will receive an ex-gratia payment in order to ensure that they all qualify for a minimum total remuneration package of R7 000 per month, effective from 1 July 2017. Outsourced workers were also again informed that they are exempted from the payment of tuition fees at the UFS as well as at the Central University of Technology (CUT), as is the case with current employees of the University.

At the last meeting held on 31 July 2017, the parties involved came to the following resolutions:

- A Code of Conduct (Management Protocols) was finalised and discussed with the service providers. All service providers signed the Code and agreed to adhere to all relevant labour legislation and collective agreements/sectoral determinations applicable to the respective sectors.
- An employer-employee committee/forum was established to assist with the monitoring of the Code of Conduct and its implementation.
- An agreement was reached on what the decent living wage will be at the UFS. The agreed decent living wage was implemented from 1 July 2017 and the amount of the decent living wage was substantially more than the minimum wage as determined by the different sectoral determinations.
- The current contracts with service providers will be rolled over until 2020.

##### **4.3.1.2. Remuneration management**

The UFS' remuneration data is benchmarked quarterly against Remchannel (which includes the data of all 23 higher-education institutions) to ensure that the institution remains competitive and remunerates staff according to the median.

Benchmarking of position is performed on the basis of Peromnes levels of a specific job and the job title/job code in respect of academic positions. Where scarce and critical skills are required, this will also be linked to the job title/job code. If a deviation is identified on a certain level, adjustments are negotiated during the annual salary negotiations. Structural adjustments are made once the comparative ratio is less than 95% of the median.

The starting point for the agreement between the Council and the Mutual Forum is to pass on the maximum benefit to staff members, without exceeding the limits of financial sustainability.

The Multiple-year, Income-related Remuneration Improvement model (53% of Income Model) was once again used as the frame of reference for negotiations, and the application of this model allowed for the salary increase to personnel to fall within the parameters negotiated with the unions. The improvement of benefits thus took place as follows:

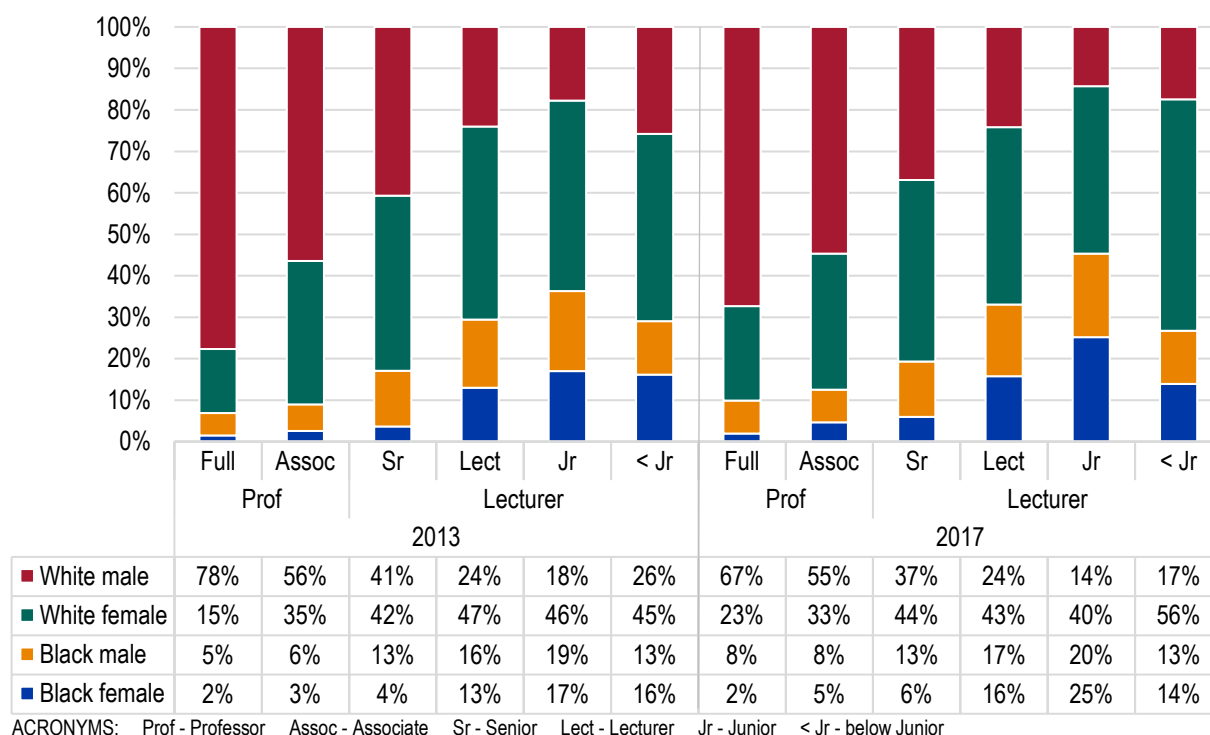
- A general salary adjustment of 7.5%;
- 0.5% for growth in capacity building (SLE's) to ensure that provision is made for the growth of the UFS which has taken place in the past year;
- An allocation of 0.89% for structural adjustments of certain levels.

#### 4.3.1.3. Careways

In July 2017, the UFS entered into an agreement with Careways, a product of Life Employee Health Solutions (EHS). Careways provides holistic outsourced employee wellness services through standardised quality systems and wellness interventions.

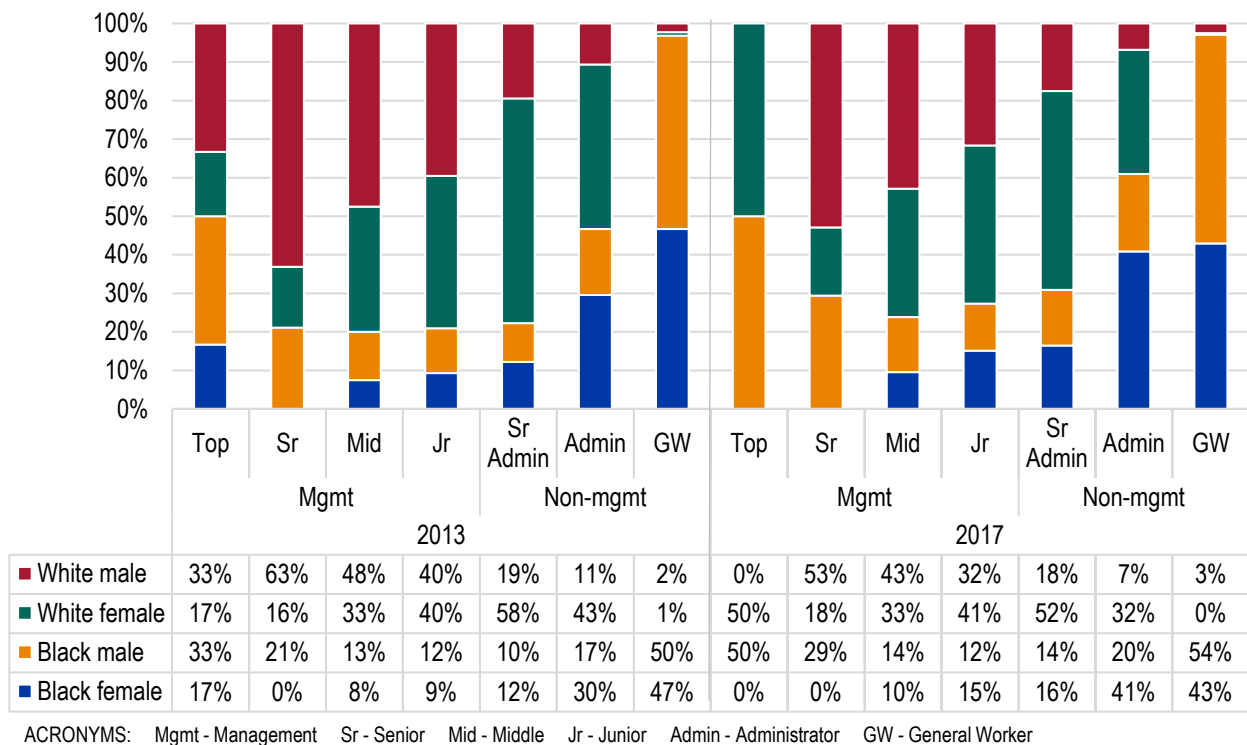
The annualised engagement rate was 53% in the third term, but the awareness sessions contributed largely to this percentage. The estimated annual engagement rate, based on data in the fourth term, shows that this has normalised to 12%, which is closer to the Careways benchmark of 8.34%. The difference can be ascribed to the Careways awareness sessions which were only held in the third term.

Engagement refers to a holistic approach on wellness within the workplace and includes statistics on cases opened, wellness group trauma participants, and wellness awareness.



**Figure 20: Distribution of permanent academics by rank, race and gender, 2013 and 2017**





**Figure 21: Distribution of permanent support staff by rank, race and gender, 2013 and 2017**

#### 4.3.1.4. Employment equity

The enhancement of the employment equity profile of the UFS is one of the University's strategic priorities and the University is committed to the establishment of a work environment that is characterised by equality in employment. Figure 20 illustrates the employment-equity profile of academic staff at the UFS.

Of the 465 new appointments in 2017 (including permanent and contract staff), 49% were African and 42% were white. The majority of promotions (73%) and terminations (62%) were white. Compared to 2016, there was an increase in the percentage of African (4%), coloured (1%), and Indian (2%) appointments, while there was a decrease (5%) in white appointments in 2017. This trend is also evident in promotions in 2017 compared to 2016, with an increase in designated groups and a decrease in the percentage of white staff members who were promoted. It should be mentioned, however, that there was also an increase in the percentage of terminations among black staff members in 2017 (6%) and a decrease in terminations of white staff members (6%).

Of the 1 700 staff members employed in the support services, 1 101 are female. It is encouraging that of the 342 senior positions (Peromnes 1–8), 59% are women. However, African, Coloured, and Indian women only hold 12% of these positions. There was a notable increase in the percentage of black and Coloured support-staff members who were promoted in 2017 compared to 2016. Figure 21 illustrates the employment-equity profile of support service staff at the UFS.

#### 4.3.1.5. Senior appointments

In terms of senior management, the UFS experienced changes in the positions of Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Vice-Rector: Operations, and Dean: Education. The positions of Vice-Rector: Institutional Change, Student Affairs and Community Engagement, and Dean: Humanities also became vacant during 2017 and will be filled during 2018.

#### 4.3.1.6. Talent management

During 2017, a succession planning strategy was developed as a deliberate and systematic effort to ensure continuity, to retain high-performing staff, and to develop an intellectually diverse human capital base for the

future, as well as to encourage individual advancement and performance. A pilot study was conducted to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of this succession-planning process in order to implement succession planning for the UFS based on adjustments after the pilot study. This strategy will be used for succession planning at the South Campus, Institutional Advancement, Sport Sciences, and DIRAP in 2018. The implementation of the Talent Management Strategy also included executive coaching and mentoring, competency-based interview questions to ensure a more systematic interview process, with each question targeting a specific skill or competency.

#### 4.3.1.7. Diversity and inclusion

Research was conducted to understand workforce perceptions about diversity and inclusion at the UFS. Quantitative data was gathered through the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment Survey; and qualitative data was gathered through focus groups with employees. The results of this research will be used in 2018 to promote diversity management and a university culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS and utilises employee contributions at all levels. Moreover, a number of new interventions will be rolled out during 2018.

In order to change and create a culture of inclusion, staff members need to have certain qualities and traits to effectively respond to challenges and opportunities in the University's diverse and inclusionary working environment (competency of inclusion, which is embedded in the UFS Competency Framework). To this end, the UFS Department of Human Resources (HR) is providing diversity and inclusion training for all staff members. The purpose of the training is to create a space for open, honest dialogue that encourages an awareness of unconscious bias and how it affects others, and that supports staff members to acquire relevant vocabulary, theory, and conceptual tools; develop their 'diversity literacy' and skills about addressing dynamics associated with power, privilege, and oppression; and to consider – at the levels of self, group, and organisation – issues around identity, citizenship, democracy, and transformation.

A total of 420 staff members attended this training from October to December 2017. The training will be rolled out to the remaining staff members over a two-year period.

#### 4.3.1.8. Training and learning

With the implementation of the UFS's competency framework, HR training and learning initiatives were aligned to the five competency categories. In addition, the Individual Development Plan (IDP) allowed staff members to identify specific training and learning needs based on their mid-year competency assessments and performance discussions.

To ensure continuous development of staff members, the HR department has collaborated with Lynda.com, an online training and learning platform. With Lynda.com, staff members are able to develop themselves professionally by using their IDP on a variety of skills anytime and anywhere. The Lynda.com online learning platform was launched on 1 September 2017. By December 2017, the number of active users of this platform has grown to 477 staff members.

#### 4.3.1.9. Workplace climate study

A workplace climate survey and individual interview questions were developed, based on research of organisations that have been successful in building workplace cultures that enhance effectiveness, individual performance, and the expectations of any of its stakeholders. The report solicits feedback on a broad range of topics focused around seven dimensions reflecting organisational and leadership competencies. The survey includes statements and questions about relationships and trust, diversity, job satisfaction, leadership management style, communication, change management, and rewards, recognition, and performance management.

The results indicated an average workplace engagement score of 67% for the UFS, across all three campuses. When disaggregated, the results indicated a workplace engagement score of 67% for the Bloemfontein Campus, 64% for the South Campus, and 69% for the Qwaqwa Campus. The percentage scores for each of the seven drivers of workplace engagement at the University indicated that the UFS has potential opportunities in the drivers Challenge, Growth, Voice, Freedom, Clarity, and Togetherness. The results further indicated that the University has potential vulnerabilities in the driver Recognition.

The following are the most noteworthy results arising from the 2017 Employee Engagement Report:

- Whilst many staff members indicated that their relationships are effective and that they are listened to, supported and valued (an increase of 4% in comparison with the 2016 Workplace Engagement results), 32% reported a lack of cooperation, trust, and support within the University.
- Many staff members indicated that they enjoy their work and find their roles/positions challenging and rewarding with clear goals, autonomy and flexibility (an increase of 1% in comparison with the 2016 Workplace Engagement results). However, there are inconsistencies across the University (no specific demographic group could be identified).
- Almost a quarter of the participating staff members (24%) indicated that their work is not engaging. Their role does not always match their strengths and talents, the purpose and objectives of their work are unclear, and they do not feel trusted to use their initiative and to make decisions.
- Whilst staff members indicated that they feel appreciated and valued with appropriate development opportunities (an increase of 2% in comparison with the 2016 Workplace Engagement results), there are inconsistencies across the University. A significant percentage of staff members (41%) indicated a lack of praise, recognition and honest feedback with limited opportunities to learn new things, develop and progress.

### 4.3.2. Students

The key strategic areas (KSAs) of the UFS Directorate for Student Affairs are:

- Professionalism, through which we value *developing professionals*;
- High-impact Practices, through which we value *nurturing graduate attributes*;
- Student Communities and Structures, through which we value *building embracing communities*;
- Intersectionality, Partnerships and Collaborations, through which we value constructing collaborative interconnections and *creating a socially just culture*.
- Institutional Transformation Plan: *Institutional Change, Social Justice-Social Cohesion-Critical Diversity*.

These KSAs assist Student Affairs to provide the necessary support to students, which is needed for their social integration, social cohesion, and academic success. The support is provided through the different units of Student Affairs, i.e. the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS), Student Affairs Qwaqwa Campus, Student Counselling and Development, and Student Life and Communities.

Highlights during 2017 were, among others, the fact that Student Affairs spearheaded the process of developing two institutional policies, i.e. the Anti-Discrimination Policy and the Sexual Harassment Policy. Student Affairs consulted with the broader UFS community and key constituency-based stakeholders on these policies throughout the year. The consultation process is ongoing and will culminate in the submission of the policies to the UFS Council for approval in 2018.

A second highlight is the re-imagining and reconfiguration of the 'Raise and Give' Community Services (RAG CS), which was the result of recommendations emanating from an external review process (also see section 4.2.5). The external RAG CS review was initiated in November 2016. Throughout 2017 Student Affairs collaborated with the SRC, House Committees, the CTL, the RAG Committee, Community Engagement, and Service Learning during various consultation sessions and a workshop in order to establish an intersectional delivery model or structure that is consistent with the letter and spirit of the UFS ITP. In the end, Kovsie Active Civic Teaching (ACT), also known as Kovsie ACT, was established. The Kovsie ACT has four significant and integrated projects: Schools Project, Eco-Vehicles, Community Gardens, and a Community Celebration Event. These projects are delivered through a collaboration between Student Affairs, Service Learning, and Community Engagement (Engaged Scholarship).

The Directorate piloted Student Affairs Week in 2017 to provide a platform for increasing the visibility of Student Affairs as a profession, as well as providing an opportunity for the UFS community to interact with Student Affairs departments and their staff. The following critical appointments were made in 2017: Assistant Director: Student Communities; Senior Assistant Officer in the Office of the Director: Student Life; and Officer: Gateway (First-Year Orientation Programme).

#### 4.3.2.1. Student Affairs Qwaqwa

Student Affairs continues to advocate for enriched student life activities on our Qwaqwa Campus. The challenge, given the nature of the Qwaqwa Campus, was the location of this function. Consequently, the Student Life function was incorporated into the portfolio of Career Development. As a culmination of this

intervention, the Kopsie Q League was launched to provide students with projects that enhance social cohesion, promote physical activities, and improve student health.

In 2017, the Qwaqwa Campus introduced a series of critical contemporary conversations to promote engaged scholarship and to create platforms for engaging students in intellectual discourse on matters of social justice. The series is held annually to sustain the momentum and ensure the strengthening of student engagement.

The Campus also hosted a successful orientation and first-year welcoming function, which provided first-year students with an opportunity to engage with the new space both academically and environmentally.

Cape Peninsula University of Technology visited the Qwaqwa Campus, where colleagues exchanged notes and students interacted at various levels.

#### 4.3.2.2. Access and disability support

CUADS, the UFS Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support, continued to advocate for the universal accessibility of services on our three campuses. In 2017, the Centre contributed immensely through two initiatives in particular, i.e. the Disability Support Programme, and the Accessible Transport Programme. 202 Students with Disability (SwD) were supported through our Disability Support Programme, which is a specialist and holistic coordinated approach to create more enabling environments for empowering SwD to participate equally, with 30 graduates taking part in the programme. Coordinated with one ad hoc driver, the Accessible Transport Programme assisted eight SwD with regular transport between the Bloemfontein and South campuses, and with the ad hoc requests of 15 students.

CUADS was involved with orientation and information sessions on all three campuses and held its first CUADS Formal to recognise the efforts of staff and students who assist SwD. On Casual Day, CUADS held a dialogue with the topic 'SwD during protests' through our Liaison, Awareness and Advocacy Programme. The Accessibility Programme interventions included monthly meetings with University Estates, which brought about the drafting of a Universal Access considerations document, the purchasing of two Smart Drive units for students using wheelchairs to move around with ease on campus, and the use of tactile blocks on pathways to assist with navigation of students with visual impairments.

CUADS obtained an office at South Campus to assist SwD. The Accessible Study Material Production Programme provided academic support to 20 students with visual impairments, who make use of Braille and E-text. The Communication Access Programme facilitated and coordinated academic support together with Interpreter Services to eight Deaf students and eight hard of hearing students.

The Alternative Assessment Programme, together with the UFS Exam Division, provided an accessible test and examination facility housed at CUADS, where an average of 135 students were accommodated. The programme facilitated and coordinated extra time for 107 students, amanuensis for 12 students, use of specialised equipment during tests and exams for 19 students, and accessible formatted papers for 16 students.

#### 4.3.2.3. Student counselling and development

The unit for Student Counselling and Development (SCD) continues to provide both academic and psychological support to UFS students. The students who make use of the service report higher satisfaction in terms of their psychological well-being, adjustment to university life, and the ability to cope with the demands of their respective courses.

From January to December 2017, SCD assisted 1 691 students. The main reasons for referral (self-identified by students) were anxiety, depression, stress-related issues, problems with eating/sleeping, poor self-esteem, and trauma-related events. SCD offered the following services to these students:

- Individual and group therapy
- Crisis management and after-hours on-call service
- Career counselling
- Developmental workshops and programmes
- Extra-time concession
- Administration of psychometric evaluations for the purpose of providing a recommendation for the admission of prospective students.

SCD continued collaborations with various faculties, departments, and residences for, among others, selection processes, the training and rotation of intern counselling psychologists, workshop presentations, and the holistic development of students. Highlights for 2017 include the Mental Health Awareness Day and the establishment of a Student Counselling and Development office on the South Campus.

#### 4.3.2.4. Student life

Cooperative initiatives were introduced at the Qwaqwa Campus, which saw the birth of partnerships between private residence owners and the University to improve the safety and quality of services offered to students.

During 2017, significant progress was made within the various portfolios of Student Life Communities (SLC) in all KSAs. The establishment of cross-functional KSA teams resulted in a professional developmental programme for staff, as well as a Student Affairs awards ceremony. In this vein, Student Life Communities also hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> Roelf Visser Student Housing Training Institute – an international training institute for housing officers in Southern Africa presented by the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International. A number of conversations and strategic meetings resulted in the reconfiguration of the social and civic responsibility portfolio (previously known as RAG; see section 4.3.3) and the Committee for the Academic Transformation of Student Life Colleges was established to enhance the integration between the social and academic contexts of the student experience. This integration was further facilitated through the prestige evenings of each of the respective Student Life Colleges.

A strong focus was also placed on the expansion of programmes and activities towards the greater incorporation of the commuter student population – a focus that will be built upon in future years. While Student Affairs continued to assist academically performing students through the No Student Hungry programme, substantial progress was also made in addressing food insecurity through the food bank of the Student Wellness and Social Worker's offices. In this regard, these offices liaised with various residence communities. The Career Services office offered five career fairs and published the second graduate career guide. This same office also presented three papers at international conferences. Within the student-media sphere, much progress was made through an institutional agreement that was reached with the Central Media group in order to enhance the trajectory of this portfolio. Programmes and activities within the leadership development portfolio revolved around four focus areas, i.e. (i) generic leadership training; (ii) student-governance forum training; (iii) ad hoc workshops; and (iv) specialised leadership-development training. Approval and planning for the 2018 Global Leadership Summit was initiated and a leadership camp for first-year students was successfully facilitated.

The strategic appointments in Student Affairs were very useful, especially for creating an edge for the Directorate. The Humanising Strategy 2017-2022 was reviewed at the end of 2017; worth noting was the inclusion of ethics as one of the critical drivers of social justice and a humanising institutional culture. However, in the main, the strategy remains grounded on two pedagogies, i.e. pedagogy of discomfort and humanising pedagogy, as well as the intersectionality framework, critical diversity literacies, and social justice. Student Affairs remains committed to the holistic development of UFS students, with the aim of producing a world-class graduate that is socially conscious, intellectually critical, and an active citizen.

#### 4.3.3. Campus safety

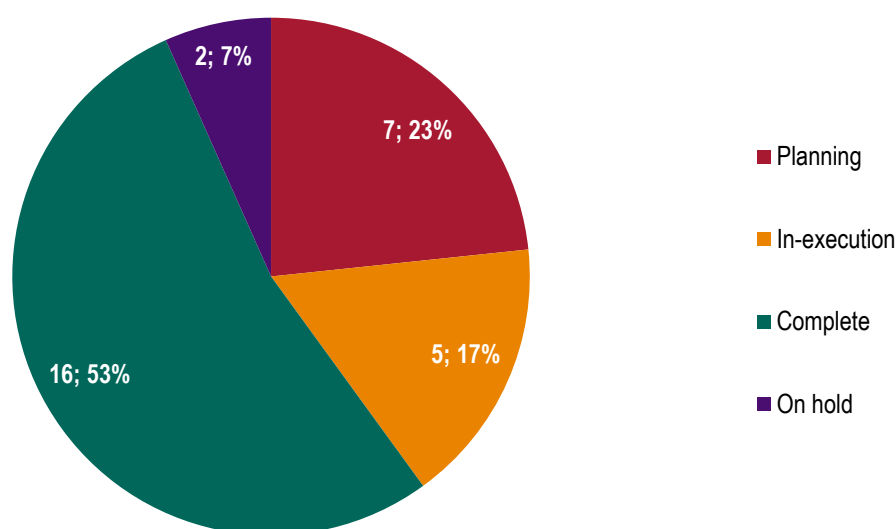
Providing and maintaining a safe environment on all three UFS campuses remains top priority for UFS Protection Services. The department achieves its goal by rendering, among others, the following services to the University:

- emergency and crisis management coordination;
- investigating reported cases and incidents involving students and staff;
- traffic policing;
- liaising with other safety and security functionaries such as the South African Police Services, State Security Agency, and the Community Policing Forum;
- conducting crime prevention operations;
- conducting safety and security awareness capacity building;
- advising management about the security implications of their decisions; and
- access and egress control.



Protection Services conducted Security Vulnerability Assessments on all three campuses during 2017. The purpose of the exercise was to evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the current security measures, and to ensure that identified security weaknesses were mitigated. The exercise revealed that about 107 security cameras on the Bloemfontein Campus were past their lifespan and therefore no longer provided quality footage, and that the 3M scanner at the Sasol Library was no longer effective since the machine was also past its lifespan. It identified some 'hotspots' which were not covered by cameras and which posed a risk to the UFS, especially at some of the buildings classified as high-risk buildings, and particularly during student protests. Some cameras were not properly positioned and needed to be re-positioned to ensure optimum functionality. It also came to light that, although some buildings were fitted with fire-detection systems, alarms, and cameras, these were not integrated with the Protection Services Operational Centre, which is manned 24/7. This rendered the systems ineffective since they did not provide early warning capacity during an emergency.

Although the department was able to address most of the above challenges with a DHET grant, some of the projects could not be completed in 2017 and will continue in 2018. Figure 22 shows a breakdown of the progress report on the security enhancement project, which clearly indicates the status of all identified projects.



**Figure 22: Security enhancement project progress, 2017**

Safety of students residing off campus remains a major challenge for the UFS. This can be attributed to the fact that students residing off campus are more vulnerable compared to those residing on campus, because some off-campus residences do not have basic security measures such as burglar doors, alarms, and access control. The fact that they also walk long distances between their residences and the campuses carrying valuables such as laptops and mobile phones, make them easy targets for opportunistic criminals.

Another big challenge concerning off-campus student safety is a lack of jurisdiction, as Protection Services are only allowed to render services on campus. The department continues to collaborate and cooperate with other external law enforcement functionaries such as members of Community Police Forums, Sector Policing, armed response security companies, and local police stations in an effort to ensure visibility around areas where students are residing off campus. In 2017, the department has also assisted students to organise a safety march to highlight their safety concerns to the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, Maluti-a-Phofung Municipality, as well as the Provincial Commissioner of SAPS.

The department also had to ensure that the University's buildings were effectively protected against protesting students, and that academic activities were not disrupted, especially during the final examinations. Students who committed criminal activities or contravened the Court Interdict during protests were subjected to the criminal justice system, with UFS Protection Services assisting in the investigation processes. The department also assisted by facilitating emergency evacuation plans to ensure that buildings comply with municipal by-laws.

The relationship established by UFS Protection Services with the leadership of the local police station (Park Road), as well as with the senior leadership of the Public Order Policing Unit (POPS), is of great benefit, especially during student protests and during the investigation of cases involving students and staff members.

#### **4.3.4. Health and wellness**

The services provided by the UFS Health and Wellness Centre attempts to decrease the difference between students who have higher levels of personal resources compared to those who have less. These services are extracurricular and includes workshops to teach students to take responsibility for their own health (preventative care); and assisting students during illness (diagnose, treatment, and support). Medical services are also provided to staff of the UFS. The focus of the medical services is to ensure that staff and students are back at work or in class as soon as possible.

Easily accessible and affordable health services are available on campus for staff and students. This includes the services of a sports physician and a physiotherapist. Primary Health Care (PHC) receives support via a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Health (DoH) to address the medical needs of students who do not have a medical aid plan. This arrangement enables students to gain access to consultations, medication, family planning, and HIV services (testing, counselling, and treatment). The doctors and physiotherapy services are an entrepreneurial initiative to generate third-stream income as a way of improving sustainability.

During 2017/2018, the UFS Health and Wellness Centre was chosen as one of only a few universities to provide PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to students. PrEP is currently provided to 22 students.

Together with clinical services provided in response to the HIV pandemic, behavioural interventions are coordinated through the HIV unit to improve prevention. To accomplish outcomes on prevention, different levels of teaching and promoting health-seeking behaviour is implemented. These initiatives range from awareness and testing campaigns to workshops and finally, to peer education. It is important for the centre to see students study and graduate healthy. Main focus topics include information on HIV, empowerment, health, alcohol- and drug-abuse prevention, as well as sexuality. A healthy individual is seen as a holistic being and wellness should be promoted from different angles. This holistic approach towards wellness also combats stigma about HIV.

#### **4.3.5. Sport**

The employment equity process over the next five years, aimed at maintaining excellence, started mid-2016 and is progressing according to plan. To implement this process properly, Koviesport is supported by Human Resources' succession planning. Three staff members are currently part of the programme. Koviesport is also continuously busy 'coaching coaches' in most of the sporting codes, where coaches from the designated group are being prepared. The repositioning of staff is a constant process whereby Koviesport is restructuring the historic staff component to level the playing field. The Rugby Residence Officer was relocated to another sporting code and a person from the designated group has been appointed.

In terms of student sport, Koviesport is constantly evaluating the relevance of current codes as well as potential new codes. Frisbee and Taekwondo are new codes on probation on the Bloemfontein Campus, and Aerobics and Chess on the Qwaqwa Campus. The different sporting codes involve students as trainee officials and trainee coaches. The inter-campus league sport was successfully completed in 2017.

The allocation of sports merit bursaries on the Qwaqwa Campus has been increased in 2017 due to the rapid improvement in the achievements of Qwaqwa students. Several students at the South Campus have already received sports bursaries. Facilities for the South Campus are in the planning phase. Table tennis and darts have been activated as recreational activities at the South Campus residence.

The University is constantly busy with new developments, as well as improving and restoring current facilities to enable Koviesport and the UFS to deliver sport activities to the best of its ability.

The KoviesFit gymnasium, which was established in 2016, is running smoothly. In 2017, membership ranged from 1 500 to 2 000. The soccer development project is also progressing well. The main field has been fenced and player dugouts have been erected. The basketball and volleyball centre has been completed in 2017 and is of great value to all UFS students. The cricket pitch on the Qwaqwa Campus is still in process. The development of new sporting facilities for the South Campus is still in the campus planning and development



phase. Resurfacing of the Astro hockey field has been approved – the work started in December 2017 and is to be completed in April 2018.

KovsieSport provides coaching to 24 sporting codes in inter-residence competitions. During 2017, the main emphasis was on soccer. An ongoing process is to ensure that soccer becomes a flagship sport at the UFS. A high-performance soccer initiative was approved by the Rectorate and will be implemented in 2018.

### **Box 6: KovsieSport international highlights 2017**

Kovsiesport is extremely proud of the following representation of the sport students of the UFS during 2017:

#### **Athletics**

- Wayde van Niekerk won the 400m at the Senior Athletics World Championships and silver in the 200m. He also took part in various meetings around the world: He won the 200m in a new SA record of 19.84 in Kingston Jamaica; the 300m in Ostrava, CZE in a new world record time of 30.8; and the 400m at the Diamond League meetings in Lausanne and Monaco with times of 43.62 and 43.73 respectively.
- Kesa Molotsane represented South Africa at the World Cross-country Championships in Kampala, Uganda on 26 March 2017. Kesa finished in the 36th place out of a field of 104 athletes with a time of 35:48. She was a member of the USSA team to the World Student Games in Taipei. She participated in the 5000m and took up the 9th place. Kesa also took part in the Spar 10km Ladies series, where she won three of the six races and was the all over winner of the series.
- Sefako Mokhosa represented South Africa in the long- and triple jump at the CAA Southern Region Senior Championships in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 10-11 June 2017. He finished 2nd in the long jump and 3rd in the triple jump.
- Rynardt van Rensburg progressed to the final of the 800m at World Student Games. He also took part in various international meetings in Europe.
- Hendrik Maartens was a member of the USSA team to the World Student Games where he progressed to the 200m semi-final. He took part in various meetings in Europe during June and July.
- Maryke Brits represented the USSA team in the 100m hurdles at the World Student Games.
- Louzanne Coetzee was a member of the South African Para-Athletics team to the Para-Athletics World Championships in London where she came fourth in the T11 1500m. She also participated in the Para-Athletics Grand Prix meeting in Nottwil, Switzerland from 2-5 June 2017. She smashed her own 5000m world record in the T11 category by winning in a time of 18:14.27.

#### **Hockey**

- During the season of 2017 the following players were selected for SA u21 squads: Antonet Louw, Shindre-Lee Simmons and Casey-Jean Botha were all selected for the SA u/21 women's squad; and Winray Christoffels has been included in the SA u/21 men's squad for 2017.

#### **Rugby**

- Kovsie Rugby had six U/20 players participating in the different training camps of the Junior Springboks, in preparation for the IRB U/20 World Championships, of 2017. Rewan Kruger and Kwenzo Bloose were in the final squad that represented South Africa at the Tournament in Georgia, in the cities of Tbilisi and Kutaisi, from 31st of May until 13 June 2017.

#### **Soccer**

- UFS Head Coach Godfrey Tenoff went to Chinese Taipei for the World Student games with the Men's USSA National Football Senior team as an assistant coach. USSA finished 10th overall in the competition.

#### **Netball**

- Lefebre Rademan, Khanyisa Chawane and Gertriana Retief were part of the final training squad that attended a training camp in Pretoria and Potchefstroom in preparation for the U/21 World Cup that took place in July in Botswana. Khanyisa and Lefebre were included in the final team with Khanyisa also named captain of the team. Unfortunately, Lefebre had to withdraw from the team due to a knee injury. Gertriana was included in the team after the withdrawal of another player due to injury. The team participated in the World Cup in Gaborone, Botswana from 8 – 16 July. The team lost in the quarter final against New Zealand and ended 6th during the play-offs.
- Karla Mostert played for the Australian outfit Sunshine Coast during the first five months of the year. She was the first South African to ever play her trade in the Australian league, which is ranked top in the world. Her team won the league and Karla was also named player of the match in the final.
- Rieze Strauveli played trials for the same club in Australia during the weekend of 11 November and was selected as part of the Top 10 players after the trials. She will be playing for the club, Sunshine Coast, during the first 6 months of 2018.

- Maryka Holtzhausen, Karla Mostert, Khanyisa Chawane and Tanya Mostert were invited to the Protea Training camp in Pretoria from 16 – 20 July. Maryka and Karla (Vice Captain) were included in the team. The team had one of the best Quad Series by losing with a small margin of goals against New Zealand and Australia and they beat England.
- Maryka was also part of the team that travelled to Fiji for two tests and they won both of the matches. During the weekend of 23 September Maryka played for the England club, Severn Stars, in the British Fast5 and the team ended 3rd in the tournament. She will play for them in the English League during the first 6 months of 2019. She was also part of the National Fast5 team that played in the Fast5 World Series in Australia on 28 -29 October where the team ended 5th. The team was also captained by an Old Kopsie, Lauren-Lee Christians.

#### 4.3.6. Community engagement

Community Engagement (CE) is one of the core functions of higher education (HE), in addition to research and teaching and learning. On its own, it also encompasses Community Service Learning (SL), Research, Citizenship/Volunteering, and Partnerships.

The fundamental and functional purpose of the UFS Community Engagement (CE) office is to support faculties and departments to execute their collective active citizenship role. Both administrative and operational activities are coordinated from the CE Directorate office on the Bloemfontein Campus. An expanded supportive function in our Qwaqwa Campus office is being managed by the CE Coordinator, Ms Moodi Matsoso.

Interaction and empowerment characterise partnerships in SL and CE. Institutional collaborations are established and sustained both within and outside of the University.

In 2017, representatives from the US Embassy presented an information session on the Mandela Washington Fellowship for UFS students, employees, and community members. The Princess Gabo Foundation and the CE office collaborated in support of the initiative to promote leadership among South Africans who are involved in public or community service, volunteering, and mentorship. The director of the flagship organisation, Princess Gabo Moroka-Motshabi, is the previous recipient of the fellowship programme.

The role of the UFS Community Engagement office is to support faculties and departments that are involved in annual celebration projects for Mandela Month in July. The Faculty of Health Sciences engaged in a myriad of fun, service, and enabling activities at the Eagle Foundation, Heidedal, and the Neo daycare centre in Mangaung, Phase 6. The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) contributed to the re-generative building of the Caleb Motshabi Centre.

Promotion through collection and distribution of toiletries was steered by UFS Community Engagement in collaboration with faculties and departments for awareness during August. Beneficiaries of the community partners were Tshepong Care Centre and Lorraine's Haven. Responsiveness campaigns on campus were marked by selfie-card photo sessions and signing of posters to advocate gender impartiality.

An empowerment initiative to make a difference in the lives of community members through a practical, personal, and professional development programme known as Global Lifelong Learning University (GULL), promoted personal confidence and entrepreneurship skills among residents of Bloemshelter, one of the UFS CE community partners. GULL president, Prof Richard Teare, communicated the origins and objectives of his international organisation during a workshop he conducted with community engagement champions.

The partnership between the UFS and the University of Virginia created an active network of communities that enables self-action through mutual communication between partners.

HiComm is a communication tool that integrates web and SMS interfaces. It assists organisations and communities to overcome logistical barriers and help them focus on performance and results.

The Wealth Creation Centre is a Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Support project operating from Thaba Nchu in the Mangaung Metro.

Community Engagement achieved five points for BBBEE on social support. The Directorate has now been tasked with the responsibility of managing and coordinating all UFS efforts and contributions towards socio-economic improvement programmes. A compiled BBBEE document from the CE Directorate is submitted to the Department of Finance for BBBEE rating.

SL is an academic part of Community Engagement. Its academic programmes promote social responsibility and awareness among students by engaging them in needs-driven service to enhance a holistic development of both students and the community they engage with. The SL experience provide insight and reality into the impending world of work.

Dr Pulane Pitso investigated Community Service Learning (CSL) as a transformative tool to infuse the UFS curriculum with graduate attributes for improved service delivery. Mr Patrick Kaars looked at how non-profit organisations (NPOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs) can transcend to social enterprise. For her PhD Sociology research, Ms Busisiwe Ntsele investigated SL as a scholarship of engagement.

CE and SL shared best practices with Mr Kudzaishe Mudzingwa from the Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo during his three-day visit. Prof Tsitso Monaheng, Associate Professor in the Development Studies Programme at the North-West University, developed a study which he conducted at four universities.

The theme for the 2017 Bloemshelter Learning Festival, presented by the UFS CE in collaboration with other community partners, was 'Roots for Change'. The outcomes-based target was to create sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable people.

Ielse Seale and Karen Venter co-presented a paper at the 7<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Service Learning (ISSL) in Ireland. The conference focused on engaging change by making an impact on student life, community empowerment-sustainability, and civic responsibility. The theme of the 6<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Service Learning (APRSLC) in Indonesia was 'Educating the Heart: Nurturing a Fruitful Life Through Service Learning. Dr Pulane Pitso and Ms Karen Venter co-presented a paper titled: 'Partnerships for development of service-oriented global citizens towards fostering sustainable environmental development'. The Best of Both Worlds (BOWB) Conference took place at the National Kruger Park in South Africa.

The CE Directorate developed a short learning programme called the Gateway to Global Citizenship. The partnership with Student Affairs, closely aligned to accommodation services, facilitated a smooth transcend for first-year student into the higher-education experience. Schools in the immediate community are the prime partners for the planned activities to enable learners to express themselves comfortably in their familiar environment.

#### 4.3.6.1. Community engagement in faculties

In the EMS, the Department of Economics offers the community-service learning module, EFET3724, that deals with Risk Management in Banking for third-year Economics students. This is a credit-bearing course. There are 179 students registered for the course, which is facilitated by Dr Arno van Niekerk. Twenty-one students are taking the EMIC6816 Micro-economics module at honours level in the Department of Economics. The Venture Creation module, coded EVEN6814, is facilitated by Dr Karen Booysen in the Department of Business Management. The learning module, EACE1508, is presented in the Department of Accounting.

In the Faculty of Education on the Qwaqwa Campus, primary school learners are afforded an opportunity to demonstrate their scientific research at the Eskom Expo for young learners.

Ms Elbie Lombaard is the coordinator of the module in the Department of Communication Science. Two third-year students from the department are assigned to one Grade 6 or 7 learner. Their task is to assist the learner in preparing for an oral or public-speaking event. The course in Language Practice has been designed for learners who wish to acquire an informed perspective on the relationship between language policy and language practice in South Africa. In the Department of Drama, the purpose of this module is to expose school learners to basic information on Drama and Theatre Arts, as well as various factors that could influence the career prospects of the individual. Learners and students are empowered with skills that will enable them to educate individuals and community groups on the principles and processes of working towards a career in Drama and Theatre Arts. With regard to the Crime Prevention Play, NICRO has identified a few schools in Bloemfontein and a few of those learners are then given the opportunity to be part of a Drama class. The module in the Department of Music aims to teach learners musical literacy and instrumental skills, in addition to the productive structuring of their social development. Students are exposed to a diverse cultural and musical environment and are also involved with the theoretical and instrumental training of learners in the Mangaung String Quartet. The aim of the module in the Department of Governance and Political Transformation is to expose students to the study of problems within governance and political transformation. The focus is on the explanation and analysis of good governance practices of ward councillors and communities in different local municipalities in the province. The Study Buddy Project in the Department of

Psychology empowers learners with skills. Therapeutic Horse Riding in the same department aims to equip students with the theoretical underpinnings and analytical skills surrounding communities in order to plan, conduct, and evaluate a psychosocial intervention regarding specific contemporary psychosocial issues.

In the Faculty of Health Sciences, first-year students in the School of Medicine visited health-service facilities. Students in the School for Allied Health Professions (Dietetics) were involved in education interventions at crèches, planning health interventions for adults, presenting nutritional promotion activities in health-care clinics, and working with the Department of Paediatrics during the diabetes camp in April 2017. Third- and fourth-year Optometry students' public compulsory residence would focus on the Phelophepa train and fourth-year students were serving in Trompsburg. Selected student groups in the School of Nursing would be placed on the Phelophepa train for clinical experience. The following Event Days were held in Occupational Therapy: Lebone Village Fun Run, addressing the need of the Lebone Green Building; Kopano Sheltered workshop Car Wash, addressing the need of being financially self-sustainable and learning new skills; and Bloemshelter Market, addressing the need of being financially self-sustainable. The students also engaged in six different areas: Ons Tuiste, Boitekong Old Age Home, Omega, Carel du Toit Centre, and Lerato Creche.

Mr Raubenheimer and Prof Bosman from the Department of Architecture in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences presented a CSL project called 'An earth-constructed dwelling in Mangaung'. Student involvement was facilitated within the existing CSL modules in the Department of Architecture. As part of their design (DESN6800) and construction (CONS6808) modules, small groups of students spent time with community builders and lecturers on site. The objective of CSL Consumer Studies in the Department of Consumer Science was to share skills with the participants and help them generate income for themselves. They worked on various tasks for a couple of months, such as making a colour wheel, flower brooches, painting canvases, and blankets. As part of the Master of Urban and Regional Planning Programme, a draft SDF for each town as well as combined SDF for the local municipality was presented to a CoGTA official on the UFS Bloemfontein Campus and will also be discussed with the Nketoana office-bearers. In the URRP7906 Applied Regional Project, planning enhances opportunities for people, strives towards justice of space, and addresses economic resilience. Dr Thulisile Mphambukeli and Mr Kgosi Mocwagae took the master's students on a field trip with the aim of determining the viability of a development axis along the N8 road between Bloemfontein and Maseru. In the Department of Computer Science and Informatics, module CSIS2642 (Information Technology Service Learning) includes a two-month computer skills training programme which encompassed advanced Microsoft Word features.

#### **4.3.7. Donors and alumni**

After tumultuous 2016 student protests for free higher education and decolonised curricula, 2017 largely settled down with only sporadic disruptions. There was better understanding about the issues on the UFS campuses and a realisation that little could be achieved without jointly working for positive government intervention in what was a very real joint set of problems for the country. This understanding culminated in an innovative joint fundraising campaign, described below. Donors also seemed to have a better understanding about the issues that students in higher education are facing.

Even before Prof Francis Petersen officially started his term of office as Rector and Vice-Chancellor in April 2017, he took time to consult with students and other internal stakeholders of the UFS. The process leading up to the new ITP and a new UFS Strategic Plan, created a context of renewal and optimism regarding a new vision for the future. Donations to the University increased by more than 13% to R91 million, excluding donations in kind (2016: R80 million). This increase was largely due to a 60% increase in funding for bursaries, mostly from Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), from R36.4 million to R58.5 million. Bursary funding made up almost 61% of the funds raised.

With Communication and Brand Management (CBM) and Institutional Advancement (IA), the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Petersen, focused on engaging internal stakeholders and the Bloemfontein community for the first six months of his term. This was also important in raising IA's internal profile and its engagement with Bloemfontein alumni and donors. The cooperation with CBM was excellent. IA also started working more closely with Marketing, Student Affairs, and Community Engagement to identify and work with the UFS's most important stakeholders, including alumni and donors.

The implementation of a new database and CRM system, DevMan, to replace Oracle's PeopleSoft Contributor Relations, dominated IA activities for 2017. This intervention affected every aspect of IA's work. The decision to purchase and implement DevMan was made in February, and the contract was signed in May after reviews in ICT Services and legal processes, including checking for compliance with the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) legislation. Training and data transfer started in July after intensive preparation. IA achieved

an ambitious early milestone by generating the Annual Survey of Philanthropy in Higher Education (ASPIHE) report on DevMan at the end of August. Essential to progress was the appointment of a Business Analyst in IA on contract in January.

All the demographic data and qualifications of 104 459 alumni were transferred to DevMan by the end of 2017. The communication modules of DevMan were implemented, and three critical communication messages from the Rector and an Alumni newsletter were distributed via DevMan. The UFS online Giving platform was finalised in December.

In theory, about 75 000 of UFS alumni are contactable. In practice, this proved not to be the case and IA will have an intensive ongoing updating campaign in 2018 to enhance data quality. The migration process revealed many deficiencies in the previous structure of the database as well as in the quality of data. Cleaning up has been a time-consuming, laborious process. Improving the management of IA data must be a priority in future.

The migration project has institution-wide implications and is being overseen by a team of representatives of all data owners: ICT Services, Finance, Human Resources, and Student Academic Services. The process has greatly enhanced the understanding of IA's role in the UFS and the importance of relationship building and management.

Even though the implementation of DevMan has taken an enormous amount of time, it has been worthwhile. The system is already proving its worth. This project may well be the most important – and the most beneficial to the UFS – that IA has undertaken.

Another significant 2017 project for IA was to support the launch and implementation of the Student Representative Council's Right 2 Learn campaign, which was raising funds to provide access to higher education. IA assisted the SRC in organising and completing a fundraising cycle tour from Bloemfontein to Paarl. IA has learnt a great deal about the true challenges that students face. The energy and commitment of the SRC, especially the new President, were inspiring. The project enabled IA to start testing new social-media platforms, crowd funding, and the generation of creative visual communications (including a video and a photographic record.)

Part of the 2017 bonus grant of US\$125 000 (ZAR1,65 million) from the Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative (KIAI) enabled four staff members from CBM and IA to attend the Case Europe conference in Birmingham, UK, in August. They came back refreshed and energised and reassured that much of what we do at the UFS is on track with what happens in the rest of the world. However, in terms of capacity, IA lags behind.

The highlight of the Director's year was the course sponsored by the KIAI at the IUPUI Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indianapolis, for grantees in October. It provided invaluable insights from excellent academics and an opportunity for directors of grantee institutions to learn from each other.

IA assisted the Kovesi Alumni Trust to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. The UFS has the highest participation rate of alumni supporting their alma mater in South Africa. For future sustainability, it is important that the number of individuals supporting the UFS be maintained, and even improved.

The Chancellor's Distinguished Alumni Award ceremony won a Gold Excellence Award from the national congress of MACE (Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education). The UFS submission described the rationale, initiation, and implementation of this project that is aimed at improving engagement with UFS alumni.

2017 was the final year of the five-year KIAI. If all milestones are met, the UFS will receive its final bonus grant of US\$150 000 in 2018. This initiative has made a positive difference in the UFS's institutional advancement programme and its engagement with alumni and donors. The IA team is immensely grateful for the professional framework, the development opportunities, inspiration, and discipline the KIAI has provided. This will leave a legacy that will bear fruit in many years to come.

#### **4.3.8. Internationalisation**

In the reporting period, the Office for International Affairs (OIA) strengthened its position as the office that enables comprehensive internationalisation at the UFS. Internationalisation is entrenched in both the ITP and the UFS Strategic Plan 2018-2022. Emphasis is placed on the development of globally competitive curricula

and growth and diversification of the international student body. Another strategic focus area is the growth of African research collaborations.

The UFS is a highly internationalised university and has a proud history of international engagements. In the period 2014 to 2017, UFS researchers co-authored 1 735 publications with 1 263 collaborating institutions in other countries. From 2016 to 2017, the UFS has increased the number of international collaborating institutions by 408 and increased its co-authored publications by 521. The University has more than 50 active institutional collaborations with universities and institutions around the world. Under this umbrella, research collaboration, staff and student mobility, as well as other projects are implemented. In the year under review, 1 849 international students studied at the UFS, constituting 4.8% of the student population. Almost half of the international students hailed from neighbouring Lesotho, more than 600 from other SADC countries (specifically from Zimbabwe and Namibia), more than 100 from Africa, excluding the SADC region, and more than 75 from other world regions.

The structure and reporting line of the OIA, which is a strategic office responsible for enabling internationalisation at the UFS, was aligned to the vision of the University to strengthen its position as a research-led university. In September 2017, the reporting line of the OIA moved from the Registrar: Systems and Administration to the Vice-Rector: Research. A new Director was appointed who coordinated the development of a new internationalisation strategy, which is anchored in the UFS Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and the ITP. The strategy was conceptualised through a consultative process for finalisation in 2018. It sets out seven goals to advance the process of internationalisation at the UFS, i.e.:

- Research internationalisation
- Internationalisation of teaching and learning
- Partnerships and collaborations
- A diverse international student body
- Internationalisation at home
- Institutional reporting and developing the OIA
- Achieve financial sustainability of internationalisation

In order to ensure that equal support is provided for internationalisation at all UFS campuses, the OIA established a satellite office on the Qwaqwa Campus. It ensured that excellent services are provided to international students on this campus, and that internationalisation of research as well as of teaching and learning can be enhanced. The OIA supported the establishment of an international student organisation on this campus, which will considerably enhance the international student experience.

Part of the mandate of the OIA is to facilitate international partnerships and to support other stakeholders in developing their international collaborations and linkages. In the 2017 academic year, the OIA facilitated the hosting of 10 international delegations from across the globe. They included institutional visitors from the Belarusian State University, the University of Regina in Canada, the Xi'an Jiaotong Medical University in China, East China University, and Radboud University in the Netherlands. Emphasis was placed on supporting the preparation of external funding applications, including two applications under the umbrella of the new US-South African Higher Education Network. The Office supported the formalisation of several new university partnerships, including collaborations with the University of Namibia and the Ostwestfalen-Lippe University of Applied Sciences (Germany). The OIA focused on developing collaborations in Africa and the Global South.

The UFS is mindful that it is not possible to create sufficient opportunities for all UFS students to participate in outgoing exchanges, and therefore strives to offer its student community international experiences on its three campuses. The UFS internationalisation process has been strengthened to include a focus on Internationalisation at Home (I@H), which refers to the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all UFS students within domestic learning environments. The activities aimed at I@H provide local students with international exposure without them having to leave their domestic environments.

The University strives to include South African students in the activities of international students studying at the UFS. It structures intersectional celebrations of cultural diversity. In 2017, this included a lunch session with international students themed 'Show Love we are Diverse'. Many international student activities were implemented in collaboration with the UFS International Student Council and in collaboration with the Student Affairs division.



The provision of dedicated international student services is a critical function of the OIA. The UFS is in the process of strengthening its international student services suite to ensure that the student experience is humanising, socially just, and inclusive. The OIA conducted various medical aid and immigration information sessions and strengthened existing fruitful collaborations and linkages with the Department of Home Affairs. As a university that is committed to delivering social justice, the OIA specifically supports asylum-seeking refugee students. In order to strengthen the support rendered to this vulnerable category of students, a staff member visited the office responsible for handling matters relating to asylum-seeking and refugee students.

The OIA supported the implementation of joint degree programmes. In 2017, the UFS awarded three joint postgraduate degrees with universities in Spain and Belgium. Furthermore, the University hosted 44 incoming exchange students from universities in Austria, the Czech Republic, Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the US. Eight UFS students were supported in preparing for their semester exchange studies at the University of Bremen in Germany and at the Appalachian State University in the US.

The UFS is a member of the International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA), a voluntary association of South African public universities promoting internationalisation. The UFS was represented at various IEASA engagements, which further strengthened the relationship between the two entities. The director of the OIA represents the UFS on the IEASA Directors Forum, which considers strategic matters relating to internationalisation.

### **4.3.9. The Kopsie brand**

#### **4.3.9.1. Communication**

In 2017, the Department of Communication and Brand Management (CBM) maintained constant and systematic interaction with internal and external stakeholders on daily events and news at the UFS. There were opportunities to engage via various communication platforms such as *Bult*, *Dumela*, a corporate profile and video, electronic newsletters, research supplements in national newspapers, the UFS website, and the social-media platforms to keep staff and students informed. The department also facilitated the staff and student engagement sessions of the Rector and Vice-Chancellor on the three campuses.

The 2017 UFS Communication Strategy continued to support the UFS Strategic Plan for 2015-2020. The strategy and the successful utilisation of the various communication platforms enabled CBM to achieve most of the desired outputs. The department played a key role in the welcoming ceremonies for Prof Francis Petersen as Rector and Vice-Chancellor on all the campuses, as well as in the formal inauguration ceremony and dinner in May 2017. The Right to Learn campaign and the BSafe campaign contributed to the successful implementation of the Communication Strategy. CBM supported Institutional Advancement in their publicity campaign, the Right to Learn campaign. It also supported the BSafe campaign and march when a contingent of staff and students marched to the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality offices in Bloemfontein (July 2017) to hand over a Memorandum of Understanding to the Mayor in this regard.

October 2017 saw the successful completion of the almost two-year-long Web Redesign Project. 53% more hits on the day of the launch compared to a previous week in that month, and a 64% increase in web users on the homepage for the day of the launch compared to a previous week illustrate the effectiveness of the campaign and redesigned website.

Another highlight in the digital space was the introduction of a first-time dedicated website for prospective students as part of the website launch. The staff Intranet was redesigned to improve user-friendliness; a fortnightly Student Newsletter linked on the KopsieLife website was launched; online maps for each of the three campuses were finalised; and approximately 16 000 pages were proofread and corrected as part of a Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) clean-up and proofreading project for the UFS website.

On social media, CBM continued its focus on targeted communication and engagement with the University's target audience. Refreshed and updated social media campaigns and next-level use of technology, such as drone photography and live streaming during events such as graduations, or Facebook/Instagram live streaming during student activities such as Stagedoor, improved the University's profile. With the rampant success of the #FaceOfFacebook digital brand-ambassador campaign, the department expanded the platforms on which ambassadors' videos were featured. This resulted in the rebranding of the campaign as the #KopsieCyberStas, in which two digital ambassadors are selected according to their audition videos and popular votes from students.



The CBM crisis communication team played a significant role in the prompt sharing of information with stakeholders in times of disruptions. This team's consistent monitoring of social media platforms, in particular, assisted greatly with the timeous identification of issues that could pose risks to the UFS.

The Visitors Centre on the Bloemfontein Campus continued to play a pivotal role in providing access control for the safety of staff and students. Between January and December 2017, 86 715 guests visited the campus. The centre operates from morning until midnight, seven days a week. Results from the 2017 service survey in the Centre indicated an 89% excellent-service rating from the public.

Due to the expansion of the stock variety and the increased popularity of branded merchandise, a KovieGear shop was opened on the Qwaqwa Campus in February 2017. This initiative increased the sense of unity among staff and students of the UFS, and over time significantly enhanced the image of the brand and pride among the different stakeholders. The financial and procurement systems of KovieGear, Bloemfontein Campus, were reorganised to accommodate administration and customer services in general.

The department received national and international acknowledgement for its work. The national organisation for Marketing, Advancement, and Communication in Education (MACE) rewarded the department with two gold awards for the UFS 2017 Winter Graduation Ceremonies Communication Strategy, and the Student Newsletter. An Excellence Award was received for the UFS Rector's inauguration and welcoming ceremonies. Seven Merit Awards were received for the *Dumela* Newsletter, the Visitors Centre guide, the Wayde van Niekerk campaign, the Qwaqwa Campus Open Day video, KovieGear Qwaqwa: Live the brand and set the trend, the Schools Marketing video, and for the UFS Corporate Profile and UFS Fingertips brochures. From the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the department received Gold Quill Merit Awards for the publication, *For such a time as this: A commemorative journey*, as well as for the communication process to prospective students through the Sound[Wright]: UFS student tone and voice project. The department also earned a third place in the African Excellence Awards for their video on the Internet Broadcast Project.

#### 4.3.9.2. Marketing

UFS Marketing and Student Recruitment reports to the Registrar: Systems and Administration. The department interacts with selected schools through school visits, career exhibitions, and parent evenings by using face-to-face interactions and various marketing tools. Quality is the driver for school selection, and therefore all marketers annually review the quality versus quantity of applications received from the schools they service.

The total number of applications received for 2017 was 37 427, compared to 31 187 received for 2016. This reflects an increase of 20% or 6 240 applications. Only 40% of applicants (approximately 15 182) met our admission requirements and were admitted. Of these, 46% registered, compared to 48% of admitted students who registered in 2016.

A strategy, Ring Fencing the Free State, was adopted to attract more qualifying students from the Free State. It is important that the UFS is the first-choice institution for students of the province. By understanding the environmental landscape and focusing on the uniqueness of the five different districts, the team managed to put a workable action plan together to attract more students from the Free State. As a result, the UFS received 17 079 applications from prospective students in the Free State for study in 2017, compared to 14 070 in 2016. The application percentage from learners in Gauteng increased from 6% in 2016 to 7% in 2017.

With qualifying applications on the rise from Limpopo and Mpumalanga, a strategy to capitalise on the recruitment opportunity in these emerging markets was developed.

The statistics for the Top Achievers (admission point 35 and higher) showed that 72 fewer top achievers registered in 2017, compared to 2016. This constituted a decline of 5%. To strengthen this project, and to align more with other universities' offerings, the UFS increased merit bursaries for Top Achievers. An extensive national campaign was launched to create awareness and to motivate prospective students to apply and make use of these bursaries. This incentive was promoted extensively during the Registration Recruitment (RR) project.

RR is an initiative championed by UFS Marketing to encourage admitted academically strong students to register at the UFS. This follows Targeted Recruitment, which gets underway once Student Academic Services has sent out correspondence to conditionally admitted learners who meet the requirements of the programmes for which they applied.

The year ended on a high note when the department received five Excellence Awards during the 2017 Excellence Awards presented by the National Association of Marketing, Advancement, and Communication in Education (MACE), which took place in Johannesburg on 30 November 2017. The department received the Chairperson's Award of Excellence for the Top Achievers Early Bird Registration entry. The award is for the highest-scoring entry across all divisions. Furthermore, the department received the Award of Excellence Gold for Registration Branding and Communication: the Lighthouse Campaign, the Award of Excellence Gold for the Kick-Start Your "I-Want-To-B" Grade 9 Subject Choice Booklet, the Award of Excellence Gold for the Top Achievers Early Bird Registration project, and an Award of Merit for the Star of Stars Competition entry.

UFS Marketing identified eighteen primary and secondary stakeholders. At the end of 2017, a strategic and operational plan was developed to enhance reactive, interactive, and proactive stakeholder engagement.

## **5. THE SUPPORT SERVICES FOUNDATION: VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT ON MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **5.1. Message from the Vice-Rector: Operations**

In 2017, the challenges that faced the higher education environment, and in particular the operations division, remained unchanged in comparison to 2016. With every new challenge, an opportunity has been created for new learning and new initiatives to deliver on the vision of the UFS. In this regard, the division continued to advance the goals articulated in the UFS strategic plan and to re-define itself with a greater sense of purpose in the quest for improvement in the quality of support and performance.

Despite a slight decrease in the teaching input unit category of the state subsidy income due to the impact of our inability to achieve enrolment targets in 2015, we continue to positively maintain the financial sustainability of the UFS.

Our income levels allowed the UFS to meet its commitments during a strained economic period. Given the poor national economic environment, we were privileged to offer continued and new employment. In comparison to the 4% salary increase in 2016, employees took great comfort when we were able to offer a 7% increase in 2017. In addition, we continue to provide approximately R200 million in bursaries to our students and service other increased costs which is reflected in the detailed financial statements contained in this report. The student fee protest and related issues had a marginally negative impact on our bad debt provision. In order to manage this risk, our Vice-Chancellor initiated an engaged process with the Student Representative Council to manage provisional registrations from 2018 onwards.

The demands from workers of outsourced suppliers were managed through a joint forum made up of our recognised unions and granting a voice to outsourced-worker representatives, resulting in stakeholders agreeing on the payment of a decent wage for the workers of outsourced suppliers.

In keeping with our Human Project and ensuring that staff received the required care and attention, we engaged the services of an external health solutions company to provide employees with a 24/7 support service. Our current employment equity profile is an historic one and is a key priority that we are accelerating through our talent management strategy, specialised search initiatives, NGap funding, and dedicated employment equity fund that will be provided from 2018. In addition, numerous staff training and development initiatives has provided employees with the required means to develop themselves professionally.

Council's provision, coupled with funds from the DHET, provided much-needed funds for our infrastructure development plan. These included academic buildings and laboratories as a result of the growth in student numbers. Our Qwaqwa and South campuses' infrastructure received a much-needed boost to address their expansion. Our historic maintenance backlog is being addressed through careful planning and financial support from DHET. We are hopeful that in the next few years the level of critical maintenance will be completely eradicated. Our solar project is already showing positive energy cost reductions and the new solar plants commissioned in 2017 is expected to be completed in 2018/19.

The #FeesMustFall movement, and in particular our provisional registration processes, placed the institution in a difficult position with respect to the need to protect property and people, and at the same time granting space for students to express themselves. Through these events, valuable lessons have been learnt for the development of a mature process of engagement for the future. Such lessons are now part of key discussions in the Institutional Transformation Plan and the Institutional Monitoring Group of the UFS.

UFS Protection Services continued to work towards a fine balance to keep abreast of all possible risks from protests, abuse, and criminal activities. One major ongoing concern is the level of safety and crime for our students living outside the University campus. Our close liaison with the Community Safety Forum, use of external security companies, constant appeals and marches to the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, as well as our awareness programmes, have had limited success. We are trying to find more creative ways of addressing this problem. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) is a vital component of studying or working at the UFS. We have strengthened the OHS team to support improvements in our OHS.

The inspiration of Wayde van Niekerk seems to have attracted talented sports persons to the UFS. We also saw the expansion of new sporting codes on the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses. With the development of residences and more students studying on the South Campus, our 2018 plans include the development of facilities for the more popular sporting codes. Our Astro hockey fields have been resurfaced to meet international standards. Given the volume of students wishing to participate in soccer, our soccer development programme is starting to reap early benefits.

The standard of service provided by our clinic and medical services continues to serve our students and staff well. The increasing student population has placed greater demands on all related services and plans are in place to see how we could address this on all campuses.

Our Information Communication Technology Services division continued to provide high-quality services in a rapidly-changing technology environment, as well as demands that emanate from the 4th Industrial Revolution. The high cost of ICT provision and increased technology demands from staff and students pose major challenges for satisfying all users. More specifically, the insatiable demand for unlimited free WiFi and the extension of free WiFi to areas where students reside in Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa, has been difficult to meet due to the sheer cost of providing such a service.

The increase in student enrolment, especially on the Qwaqwa Campus, has placed our provision of accommodation under strain. The great demand is also based on our affordable cost model. With the establishment of an office for the accreditation of external accommodation, students can get some comfort with respect to the standard of accommodation provided.



**Prof Prakash Naidoo**  
*Vice-Rector: Operations*

## 5.2. Performance report: Achieving financial sustainability

### 5.2.1. Financial review

The financial overview aims to provide insight into the financial position of the University as well as the results of its operation over a five-year period in terms of our objective to provide a sustainable funding platform.

The net results of the operations at the UFS are reported as those related to council-controlled unrestricted funds, specifically funded restricted funds, and staff and student accommodation. However, it is not possible to have the same level of separation in all areas of the financial position of the UFS, due to the activities being part of the same processes; for this reason, only a consolidated cash-flow statement of all activities is presented. Overall, the financial reporting focus on the activities that support the core objectives of teaching and learning, research and community service, and third-stream activities as articulated in the vision and mission, and more specifically the predetermined performance objectives of the University.

#### 5.2.1.1. Results for the year

The net operating surplus of the University should be appreciated in the context of the following:

- The effect of any non-recurring significant income or expenditure items included in the results.
- Sufficient surpluses required to perform asset life-cycle management practices and to address the need for improved infrastructure.
- Cash-flow requirements to service borrowings and other long-term obligations.
- Maintaining appropriate levels of reserves.

In financial terms the University has performed well, except for the level of surplus funding required to grow and maintain expected levels of infrastructure, as detailed in Table 9.

Capital expenditure is undertaken in terms of the strategic framework and is managed according to affordability as per available financial asset resources and borrowing capacity.

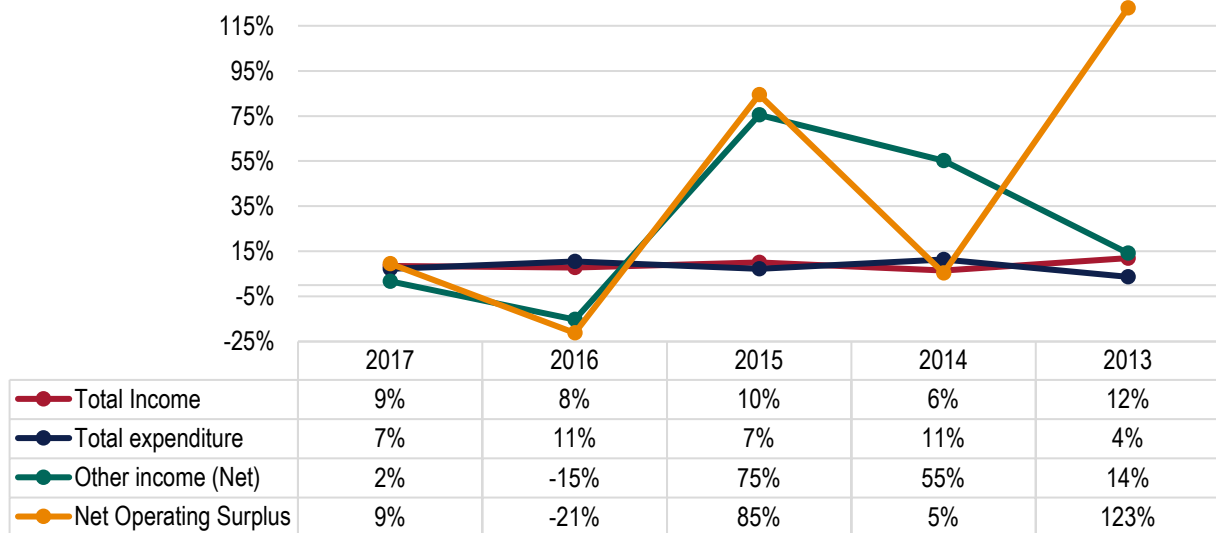
**Table 9: Summary of operating surpluses**

	2017 R'000	2016 R'000	2015 R'000	2014 R'000	2013 R'000	2012 R'000
Total income	2 612 711	2 407 409	2 232 949	2 029 122	1 905 774	1 701 991
Total expenditure	2 524 936	2 355 520	2 131 646	1 987 336	1 784 573	1 721 327
Other income (Net)	404 876	398 227	470 007	267 857	172 578	151 119
Net operating surplus	492 651	450 166	571 310	309 642	293 778	131 783
<i>Net operating surplus : total income</i>	<i>0.18:1</i>	<i>0.18:1</i>	<i>0.25:1</i>	<i>0.15:1</i>	<i>0.15:1</i>	<i>0.08:1</i>
EBITDA <sup>9</sup>	186 200	163 030	200 912	111 853	147 333	51 180
<i>EBITDA : total income</i>	<i>0.07:1</i>	<i>0.06:1</i>	<i>0.09:1</i>	<i>0.06:1</i>	<i>0.08:1</i>	<i>0.03:1</i>
Net change in Council Controlled Unrestricted Reserves	409 477	431 701	353 993	343 221	728 346	50 916

<sup>9</sup> EBITDA is the net earnings before interest, depreciation, tax and amortization and is some measure of the operating performance of the university.

**Table 10: Breakdown of 2017 and 2016 operating surpluses between restricted and unrestricted funds**

	2017			2016		
	Total	Council-controlled unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Council-controlled unrestricted funds	Restricted funds
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Total income	2 612 711	2 143 280	469 431	2 407 409	1 907 415	499 994
Total expenditure	2 524 936	2 064 857	460 079	2 355 520	1 897 690	457 830
Other income (net)	404 876	388 828	16 047	398 227	390 376	7 901
Net operating surplus	492 651	467 252	25 399	450 166	400 101	50 065
<i>Net operating surplus : total income</i>	<i>0.18:1</i>	<i>0.22:1</i>	<i>0.05:1</i>	<i>0.19:1</i>	<i>0.21:1</i>	<i>0.10:1</i>
EBITDA <sup>9</sup>	186 200	176 793	9 407	163 030	120 832	42 198
<i>EBITDA : total income</i>	<i>0.07:1</i>	<i>0.08:1</i>	<i>0.02:1</i>	<i>0.06:1</i>	<i>0.06:1</i>	<i>0.08:1</i>
Net change in reserves	567 049	409 477	157 571	320 478	431 701	-111 122

**Figure 23: Year-on-year changes in 2017 and 2016 operating surpluses**

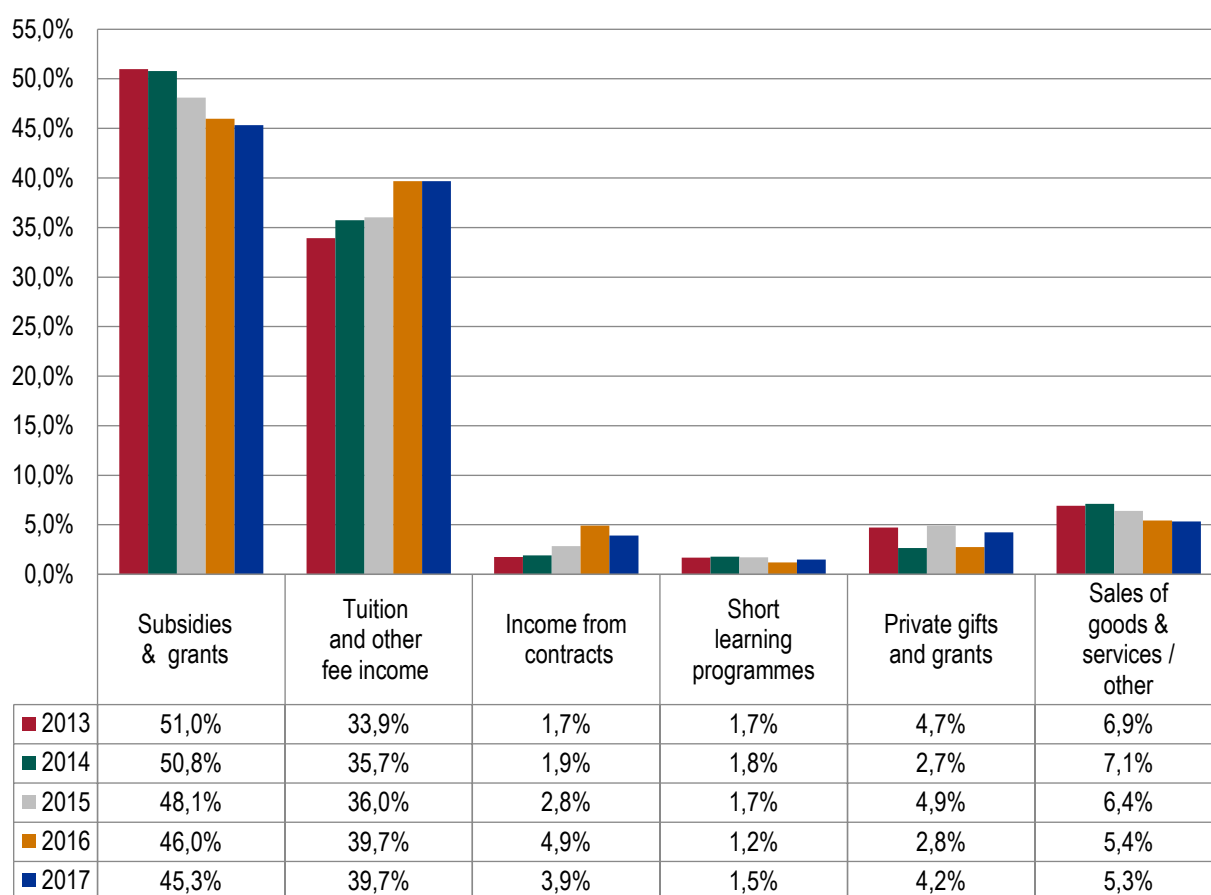
#### 5.2.1.2. Total income

Total income increased by 9% (2016: 8%) to R2.612 million (2016: R2.407 million).

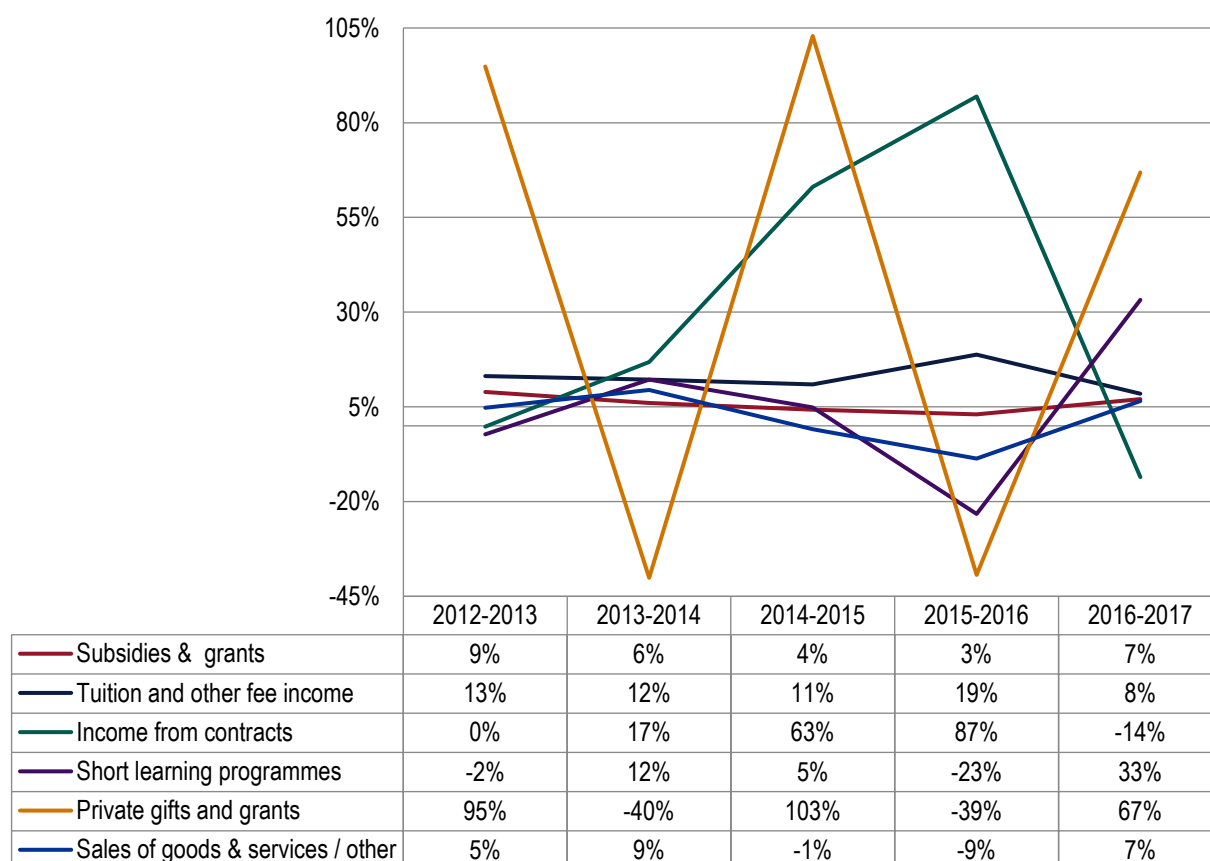
The largest source of income continued to be state subsidies and grants at 45% (2016: 46%) of total income. This figure includes both the block grant of the UFS and specific earmarked grants. Although state subsidies and grants increased by 7% year-on-year, the block grant only increased by 4.47%. This is mainly due to teaching-input units for 2015 (on which 2017 subsidy is calculated) being 52 644, which was below the DHET cap of 57 764. This resulted in a total deduction of R11.530 million from the teaching-input sub-block grant, due to a deviation of more than 2% below DHET-approved units.

Fee income increased by 8% to R1 036 368 million (2016: R955 million). This is mainly due to tuition-fee increases being capped at 8% by Government.

Income from contracts decreased by 14% to R102 million (2016: R118 million). The previous year's increase was mainly due to a sizable Fasset contract of R47 million.



**Figure 24: Income as a percentage of consolidated income, 2013 to 2017**



**Figure 25: Year-on-year change in income streams, 2013 to 2017**



Short learning programmes (SLPs) increased by 33% to R39 million (2016: R29 million). This was mainly due to a specific focus on growing income from SLPs.

Private gifts and grants increased by 67% to R110.9 million (2016: R66 million) from 2016. Private gifts and grants are by nature non-recurring and will vary from year to year. However, the goal is to increase private gifts and grants over time.

The sales of goods and services increased by 7% to R139.5 million (2016: R131 million). In 2016, the academic year was extended, resulting in an inability of the UFS to rent out hostels during the recess. This did not reoccur in 2017 and therefore the income, which decreased in the previous year by 9%, stabilised during 2017.

**Table 11: Total income streams (R'000)**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Subsidies and grants	971 508	1 030 276	1 074 394	1 106 933	<b>1 184 543</b>
Tuition and other fee income	646 343	725 035	804 241	955 399	<b>1 036 368</b>
Income from contracts	33 265	38 863	63 356	118 424	<b>102 420</b>
Short learning programmes	32 341	36 290	38 053	29 204	<b>38 910</b>
Private gifts and grants	90 184	54 020	109 592	66 519	<b>110 970</b>
Sales of goods & services /other	132 133	144 638	143 314	130 931	<b>139 501</b>

#### 5.2.1.3. Total expenditure

Total expenditure increased by 7% to R2 524.9 million (2016: R2 335.5 million). Operating expenditure increased proportionately less than income.

Staff costs increased by 7% to R1.398 million (2016: R1.311 million) and were equivalent to 55% of total expenditure (2016: 55%).

Postgraduate and undergraduate bursaries continue to be two of the biggest expenses for the UFS and amount to 19% (R194 million) of total operating expenditure. This is in line with our strategic objectives to provide opportunities for academically-deserving students to study.

Licence fees increased by 17% to R59.9 million (2016: R51 million). As these expenses are mainly dominated in foreign currency, they are influenced by the fluctuation in the Rand and the timing of payments as well as the mix of programmes used.

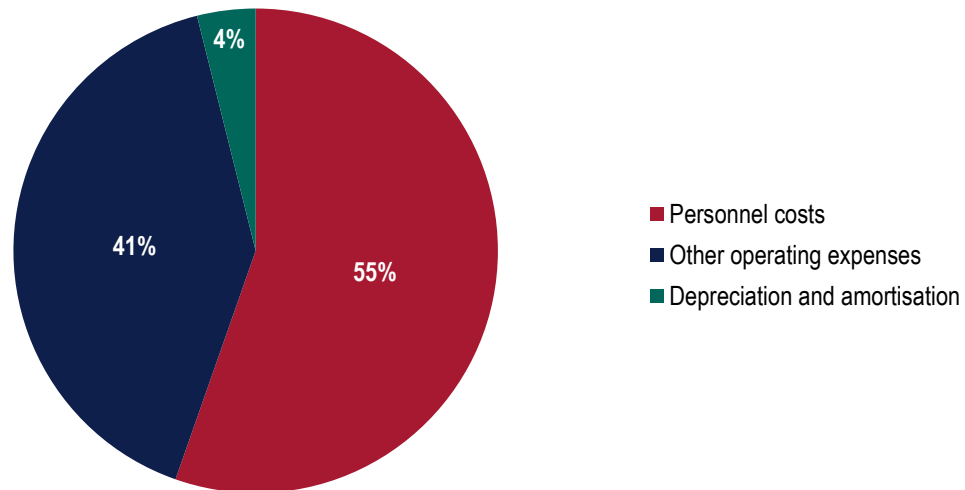
Credit losses relating to student fees increased by 132% to R59 million (2016: R25 million). Please refer to section 5.2.1.5 which provide further insights on accounts receivables and student fees.

Consultation fees increased by 49% to R32 million. This mainly relates to expert services contracted in on contract revenue and specific projects.

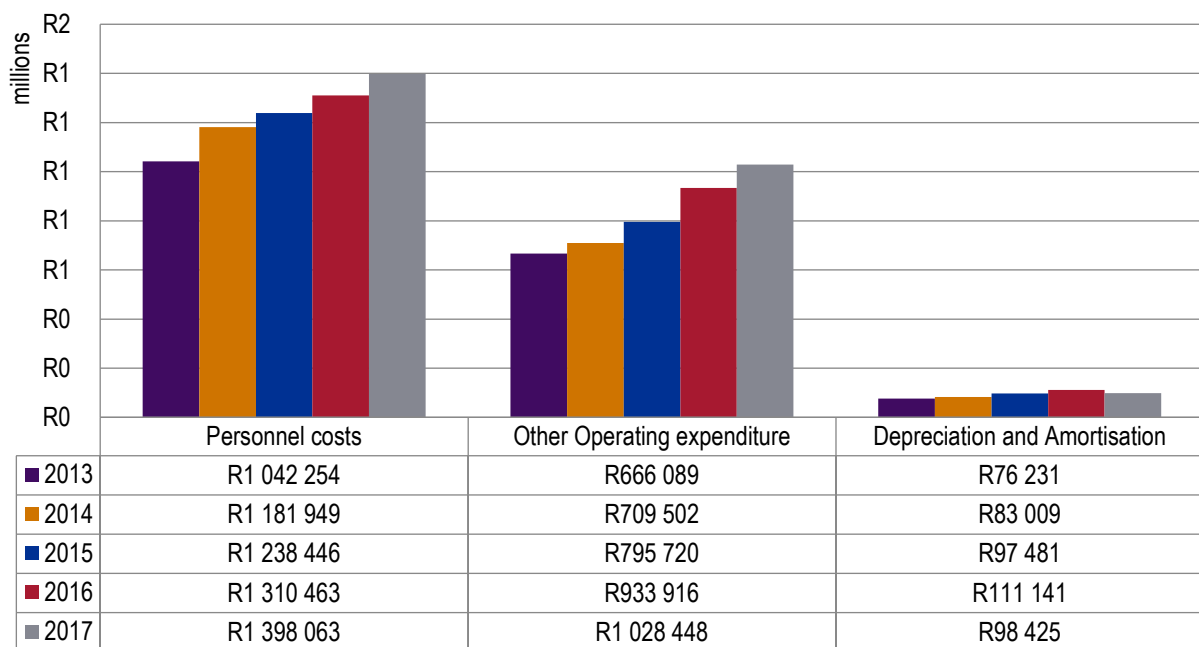
Protection Services decreased by 26% to R28 million (2016: R38 million). This is a direct result of the student unrest experienced during 2016, which did not reoccur on the same scale during 2017. Management took the decision in 2016 to invest in preventative measures to secure the safety of the campus community while on campus and to minimise possible damage to infrastructure.

**Table 12: Average number of staff**

	Permanent employed	Part time employed
2013	2 451	2 313
2014	2 489	2 168
2015	2 518	2 260
2016	2 655	2 416
2017	2 639	2 543



**Figure 26: Total expenditure, 2017**



**Figure 27: Total expenditure by main expense category, 2013 to 2017**

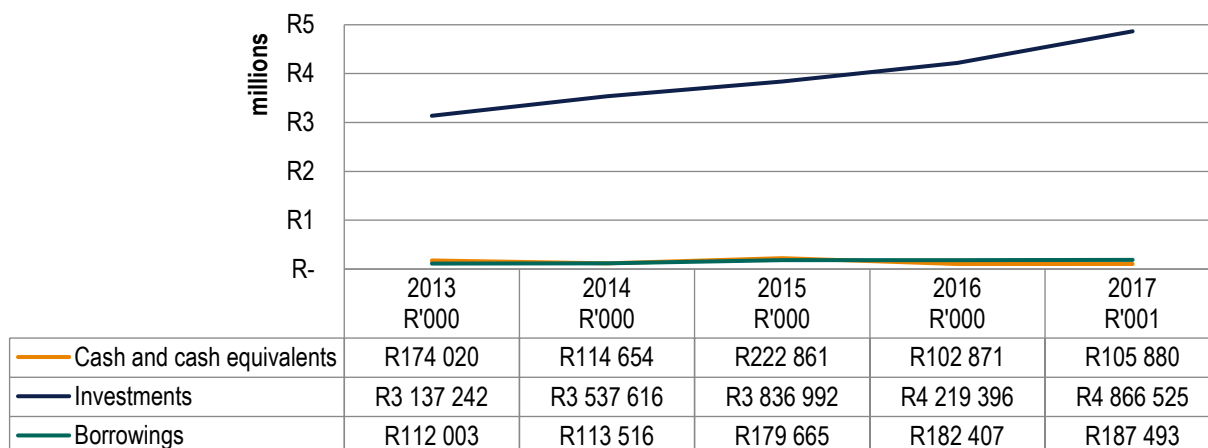
**Table 13: Top 10 operating expenditure**

2017	R'000	% of total expenditure	% change since prior year	2016	R'000	% of total expenditure
Postgraduate bursaries	115.009	11%	-2%	Postgraduate bursaries	117.739	13%
Electricity	89.493	9%	-5%	Electricity	94.526	10%
Undergraduate bursaries	79.439	8%	15%	Undergraduate bursaries	69.020	7%
Licence fees	59.979	6%	17%	Licence fees	51.264	5%
Bad debts: student	58.752	6%	132%	Cleaning outsourced	39.996	4%
Cleaning outsourced	42.864	4%	7%	Protection services	38.270	4%
Lab* and research equipment	35.142	3%	8%	Electronic books and journals	33.400	4%
Consultation fees	32.546	3%	49%	Lab* and research equipment	32.481	3%
Electronic books and journals	30.848	3%	-8%	Bad debts: student	25.345	3%
Protection services	28.358	3%	-26%	Small alterations	23.996	3%

\* Laboratory

#### 5.2.1.4. Cash and investments

Investments increased by R647.129 million to R4.866 million (2016: R4.219 million), while cash and cash equivalents decreased by R3.009 million. Investments are sufficient to provide for plan assets associated with post-employment benefits. Cash flow forecasts are produced on a monthly basis to maximize return on cash and short-term investments as per the approved investment principles.

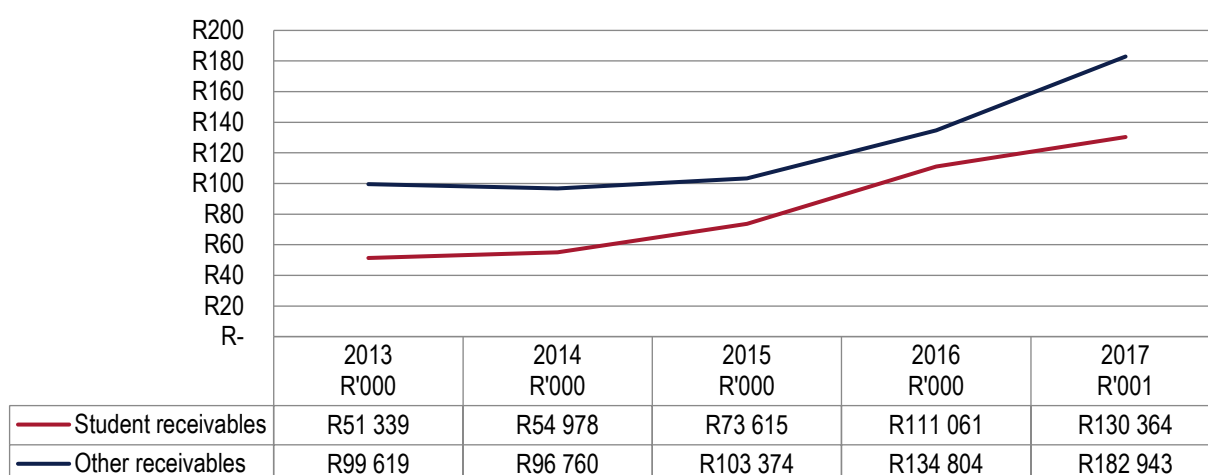


**Figure 28: Cash, cash equivalents and investments, 2013 to 2017**

#### 5.2.1.5. Trade and other receivables

Student receivables increased by 17% to R130.364 million (2016: R111.061 million). From 2016 to 2017 this remained constant as 12% of tuition and other fee income.

Allowance for credit losses as a percentage of student receivables increased from 32% to 50% (R64 million) in 2017. The change in the credit-risk profile of student debt is the result of a combination of the volatility emanating from, for example, student unrest, free-education movements, and announcements on free education by government.



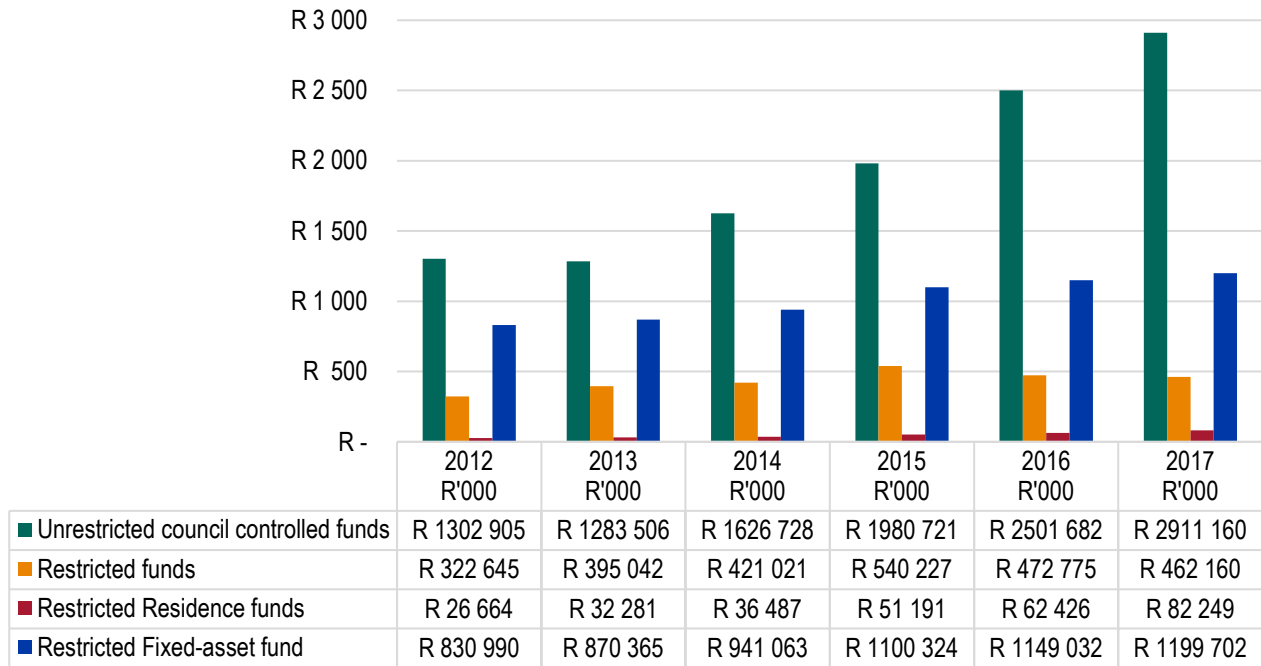
**Figure 29: Trade and other receivables versus allowance for credit losses, 2013 to 2017**

**Table 14: Student receivables, 2013 to 2017**

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Student receivables as a % of tuition and other fee income	12%	12%	9%	8%	8%
Allowance for credit losses on students as a % of student receivables	50%	32%	41%	44%	47%

### 5.2.1.6. Funds and reserves

Increases in unrestricted reserves since 2016 represents an increase of 16%. Unrestricted Council-controlled funds consists of undesignated (R798 million) as well as designated Council-controlled funds (R2 113 million). These funds, and more specifically undesignated Council-controlled funds, must provide satisfactory assurance on maintaining financial sustainability, funding to match post-employment benefit obligations and maintaining, growing, and upgrading all infrastructure. The insured replacement value of infrastructure is R8.1 billion.



**Figure 30: Funds and reserves, 2012 to 2017**

**Mr Chris Liebenberg**  
Senior Director: Finance

**Mr Derek Foster**  
Chairperson: Finance Committee

### Box 7: Statement on financial audit

The Public Audit Act of 2004 as amended (Act), prescribes the Auditor-General to be the external auditor of the University. The audit is currently performed by PricewaterhouseCoopers, who are also responsible for the external audit under the auspices of the Auditor-General in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Section 28(1) of the Act requires the external auditor to reflect such opinions and statements as may be required by any legislation applicable to the University, but this must reflect at least an opinion or conclusion on (i) whether the financial statements of the University fairly present, in all material respects, its operations and cash flow for the period which ended on 31 December of each year, in accordance with the applicable financial framework and legislation; (ii) the University's compliance with any applicable legislation relating to financial matters, financial management and other related matters; and (iii) the reported information relating to the performance of the University against predetermined objectives.

The governance and management of the UFS provides assurance for financial sustainability, and the UFS has received unqualified audit reports in all of the periods included in this report.



**Mr Chris Liebenberg**  
Senior Director: Finance

### Box 8: Statement on sustainability

As noted in section 5.2.2.1, the UFS improved its enrolment numbers by 8.1% from 2016 to 2017 – due to concerted efforts to improve marketing, applications, and admissions of students – and its teaching input units (TIUs) by an estimated 6.1%. This means that the UFS has exceeded its targets in terms of both enrolments and TIUs, which is critically important in terms of securing the projected teaching-input sub-block grant in 2019.

Effective enrolment management – specifically achieving the enrolment targets set by the DHET – is of critical importance to secure the government subsidy that the UFS requires to remain financially sustainable. At the same time, the UFS depends on student financial aid in terms of its financial sustainability, especially funds disbursed by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), and tuition fees paid by students. During 2017, the UFS was able to increase its tuition fees by the government-sanctioned 8%. However, tuition and other fee income increased by only 8.5%, despite the significant increase in student numbers.

Given the uncertainties around tuition fees and government funding, the UFS has made a concerted effort in the last few years to increase its income from third-stream sources – i.e. sources other than government and students. This has resulted in a positive change in the proportion of its income generated from third-stream sources, from 13% in 2014 to 15% in 2017. This is mainly due to an increase in income from contracts (164% from 2014 to 2017) and private gifts and grants (105% from 2014 to 2017).

The UFS is satisfied that its management information system provides the necessary data to manage sustainability appropriately. It is continuously working on ensuring the quality of its data and has identified improved integration of data and electronic systems to support both tactical and strategic decision-making as a key performance area in the next five-year period.

In terms of the impact of the UFS on its environment, it must be acknowledged that the UFS is one of the largest contributors of direct employment in Bloemfontein and also in and around its Qwaqwa Campus in Phuthaditjhaba (Eastern Free State). Moreover, the University uses a number of services from different contractors in the area of construction and maintenance, as well as professional services – e.g. lawyers, accountants, auditors, human resources consultants – the large majority of which are located in Bloemfontein, thus contributing to the generation of gross domestic product in the city and the province. The UFS is fully committed to help contractors develop their businesses and has developed a programme in the area of construction and maintenance for this purpose.

The UFS completed a number of infrastructure projects aimed at improving the environmental sustainability of all three campuses during 2017. The University reduced its electricity usage drastically by means of the Building Management System, solar initiatives, and LED lighting retrofit projects. Smaller-scale solar initiatives included solar trees and solar charging stations for students. However, it is the two large-scale solar plants commissioned in 2017 that has the greatest impact on environmental sustainability. These include the installation of 2 374 solar panels on the roofs of the Thakaneng Bridge and computer laboratory on the Bloemfontein Campus, and the commissioning of solar systems for the Mandela Hall and new computer laboratory on the Qwaqwa Campus. These two solar systems feed into the electrical grid of each campus, reducing the amount of energy required from local supply authorities. The UFS also completed foundational work for the compilation of Sewer and Water Master Plans to ensure the reduction of both the water and wastewater loads on the municipal system.

**Table 15: Enrolment plan indicators 2017**

✓ Target met/exceeded

✗ Below target by 4% of target or less

✗ Below target by more than 4% of target

Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
1. Total headcount (HC) enrolments by qualification groups	First-time entering undergraduates	7966	8142	8500	✗
	Total undergraduate	27565	31148	27500	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	4174	4134	4500	✗
	Master's	2422	2394	2550	✗
	Doctors	903	960	890	✓
	Total postgraduate	7499	7488	7940	✗
	Occasional students	1205	584	800	✗
	TOTAL	36269	39220	36240	✓
2. Enrolment HC ratios	FU as % of total undergrads	29%	26%	31%	✗
	Undergrads as % of total	76%	79%	76%	✓
	Postgrads as % of total	21%	19%	22%	✗
	Occasional as % of total	3%	1%	2%	✗
3. Contact HC enrolments by qualification type	Undergraduate diplomas & certificates	558	1164	1614	✗
	Advanced diploma	0	13	212	✗
	Undergraduate degrees	21075	24002	21674	✓
	Total undergraduate	21633	25179	23500	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	3090	3013	3350	✗
	Master's	2422	2394	2550	✗
	Doctors	903	960	890	✓
	Total postgraduate	6415	6367	6790	✗
	Occasional students	950	525	550	✗
	TOTAL	28998	32071	30840	✓
4. Distance HC enrolments by qualification type	Undergraduate diplomas & certificates	4805	5150	2500	✓
	Advanced diploma	79	71	100	✗
	Undergraduate degrees	1048	748	1400	✗
	Total undergraduate	5932	5969	4000	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	1084	1121	1150	✗
	Master's	0	0	0	N/A
	Doctors	0	0	0	N/A
	Total postgraduate	1084	1121	1150	✗
	Occasional students	255	59	250	✗
	TOTAL	7271	7149	5400	✓

<sup>10</sup> Audited data.<sup>11</sup> All 2017 data in this table is provisional, as at 1 June 2018. Data must be extracted before 30 June due to the external auditing and Council approval schedule.

- In the case of research outputs, the UFS submits publication output data estimates for year n to the DHET in May of year n+1 and audited data for year n is released by the DHET in January of year n+2. Depending on the share of proceedings and books submitted by the UFS for the DHET audit, the number of publication output units allocated by the DHET may be significantly different from that which the UFS submits. This may result in a significant difference between the estimated values and the final (audited) values for indicators that include publication outputs.
- In the case of all other data (enrolments, graduates and staff numbers), the UFS submits internally audited data for year n to the DHET at the end of July of year n+1.
  - Enrolments and staff numbers for year n do not change significantly after March of year n+1.
  - However, due to the scheduling of graduation ceremonies, which affect the submission of marks by lecturers, reliable success rates and graduate numbers for year n are not available before June of year n+1.

Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
5. Total HC enrolments by qualification type	Undergraduate diplomas & certificates	5363	6314	4114	✓
	Advanced diploma	79	84	312	✗
	Undergraduate degrees	22123	24750	23074	✓
	Total undergraduate	27565	31148	27500	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	4174	4134	4500	✗
	Master's	2422	2394	2550	✗
	Doctors	903	960	890	✓
	Total postgraduate	7499	7488	7940	✗
	Occasional students	1205	584	800	✗
	TOTAL	36269	39220	36240	✓
6. Contact full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments by course level	Total undergraduate	19241,93	23069,52	19505	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	2338,14	2233,24	2713,5	✗
	Master's	965,98	915,56	892,5	✓
	Doctors	447,23	453,28	385,00	✓
	Total postgraduate	3751,35	3602,08	3991,00	✗
	TOTAL	22993,28	26671,60	23496,00	✓
7. Distance FTE enrolments by course level	Total undergraduate	3398,53	3141,62	2720,00	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	786,77	854,25	816,00	✓
	Master's	0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
	Doctors	0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
	Total postgraduate	786,77	854,25	816,00	✓
	TOTAL	4185,29	3995,87	3536,00	✓
8. Total FTE enrolments by course level	Total undergraduate	22640,46	26211,14	22225,00	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	3124,91	3087,49	3529,50	✗
	Master's	965,98	915,56	892,50	✓
	Doctors	447,23	453,28	385,00	✓
	Total postgraduate	4538,11	4456,33	4807,00	✗
	TOTAL	27178,57	30667,47	27032,00	✓
9. FTE enrolments to enrolment HC ratios by course level	Total undergraduate	0,82	0,84	0,81	✓
	Postgraduate to Master's level	0,75	0,75	0,78	✗
	Master's	0,40	0,38	0,35	✓
	Doctors	0,50	0,47	0,43	✓
	Total postgraduate	0,61	0,60	0,61	✗
	TOTAL	0,75	0,78	0,75	✓
10. Contact HC enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	10247	10206	11260	✗
	Business/management	8462	5273	5336,5	✗
	Education	5016	5739	3423,5	✓
	Other humanities	5273	11255	10820	✓
	TOTAL	28998	32474	30840	✓
11. Distance HC enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	38	73	21	✓
	Business/management	1385	1188	1268	✗
	Education	4814	4919	3819	✓
	Other humanities	1034	958	292	✓
	TOTAL	7271	7138	5400	✓
12. Total HC enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	10285	10177	11281	✗
	Business/management	9847	6397	6605	✗
	Education	9830	10553	7243	✓
	Other humanities	6307	12093	11112	✓
	TOTAL	36269	39220	36240	✓



Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
13. Proportion of total HC enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	28%	26%	31%	✗
	Business/management	28%	16%	18%	✗
	Education	27%	27%	20%	✓
	Other humanities	17%	31%	31%	✓
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	N/A
14. Contact HC enrolments by race group	African	19350	22800	20663	✓
	Coloured	1783	1950	1850,5	✓
	Indian	348	346	308,5	✓
	White	7517	6975	8018	✗
	TOTAL	28998	32071	30840	✓
15. Distance HC enrolments by race group	African	5570	5653	3888	✓
	Coloured	225	199	270	✗
	Indian	415	352	162	✓
	White	1061	945	1080	✗
	TOTAL	7271	7149	5400	✓
16. Total HC enrolments by race group	African	24920	28453	24551	✓
	Coloured	2008	2149	2120,5	✓
	Indian	763	698	470,5	✓
	White	8578	7920	9098	✗
	TOTAL	36269	39220	36240	✓
17. Proportion of total HC enrolments by race group	African	68%	73%	68%	✓
	Coloured	6%	5%	6%	✗
	Indian	2%	2%	1%	✓
	White	24%	20%	25%	✗
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	✗
18. Contact HC enrolments by gender	Female	17334	19153	19074	✓
	Male	11664	12918	11766	✓
	TOTAL	28998	32071	30840	✓
19. Distance HC enrolments by gender	Female	5030	4900	3618	✓
	Male	2241	2249	1782	✓
	TOTAL	7271	7149	5400	✓
20. Total HC enrolments by gender	Female	22364	24053	22106	✓
	Male	13905	15167	14134	✓
	TOTAL	36269	39220	36240	✓
21. Proportion of total HC enrolments by gender	Female	62%	61%	61%	✓
	Male	38%	39%	39%	✗
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	N/A
22. Contact FTE enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	7505,48	8093,60	8224,000	✗
	Business/management	4073,68	4566,09	4699,000	✗
	Education	3261,81	4384,44	2584,500	✓
	Other humanities	8152,32	9627,46	7988,500	✓
	TOTAL	22993,28	26671,60	23496,000	✓
23. Distance FTE enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	6,66	11,59	141,000	✗
	Business/management	823,13	928,62	1167,000	✗
	Education	2249,45	2152,45	1733,000	✓
	Other humanities	1106,06	903,21	495,000	✓
	TOTAL	4185,29	3995,87	3536,000	✓

Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
24. Total FTE enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	7512,13	8105,20	8365,000	☒
	Business/management	4896,81	5494,71	5866,000	☒
	Education	5511,26	6536,90	4317,500	☑
	Other humanities	9258,38	10530,67	8483,500	☑
	TOTAL	27178,57	30667,47	27032,000	☑
25. Proportion of total FTE enrolments by major field of study	Science, engineering, technology	28%	26%	31%	☒
	Business/management	18%	18%	22%	☒
	Education	20%	21%	16%	☑
	Other humanities	34%	34%	31%	☑
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	N/A
26. Total success rates: Contact FTE degree credits by course level *	Total undergraduate	16004,32	18149,53	16269	☑
	Postgraduate to Master's level	1921,58	1860,34	2312	☒
	Master's	641,22	552,18	632	☒
	Doctors	220,00	262,89	289	☒
	Total postgraduate	2782,79	2675,41	3233	☒
	TOTAL	18787,11	20824,94	19502	☑
27. Total success rates: Contact FTE degree credits by field of study *	Science, engineering, technology	6436,95	6786,82	7158,00	☒
	Business/management	3128,90	3253,67	3521,00	☒
	Education	2703,51	3654,89	2222,00	☑
	Other humanities	6517,75	7129,56	6601,00	☑
	TOTAL	18787,11	20824,94	19502,00	☑
28. Total success rates: Distance FTE degree credits by course level *	Total undergraduate	2549,22	2402,76	1955,50	☑
	Postgraduate to Master's level	558,42	560,48	677,50	☒
	Master's	0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
	Doctors	0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
	Total postgraduate	558,42	560,48	677,50	☒
	TOTAL	3107,65	2963,24	2633,00	☑
29. Total success rates: Distance FTE degree credits by field of study *	Science, engineering, technology	5,719	9,86	112	☒
	Business/management	580,209	596,77	795	☒
	Education	1676,005	1703,39	1354	☑
	Other humanities	845,712	653,22	372	☑
	TOTAL	3107,646	2963,24	2633	☑
30. Total success rates: Total FTE degree credits by course level *	Total undergraduate	18553,54	20552,29	18224,50	☑
	Postgraduate to Master's level	2480,00	2420,82	2989,50	☒
	Master's	641,22	552,18	632,00	☒
	Doctors	220,00	262,89	289,00	☒
	Total postgraduate	3341,22	3235,89	3910,5	☒
	TOTAL	21894,76	23788,18	22135	☑
31. Total success rates: Total FTE degree credits by field of study *	Science, engineering, technology	6442,67	6796,68	7270,00	☒
	Business/management	3709,11	3850,44	4316,00	☒
	Education	4379,51	5358,28	3576,00	☑
	Other humanities	7363,47	7782,78	6973,00	☑
	TOTAL	21894,76	23788,18	22135	☑
32. Total success rates: Total FTE degree credits divided by total FTE enrolments by course level *	Total undergraduate	82%	78%	82%	☒
	Postgraduate to Master's level	79%	78%	85%	☒
	Master's	66%	60%	71%	☒
	Doctors	49%	58%	75%	☒
	Total postgraduate	74%	73%	81%	☒
	TOTAL	81%	78%	82%	☒

Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
33. Total success rates: Total FTE degree credits divided by total FTE enrolments by major field of study *	Science, engineering, technology	86%	84%	87%	☒
	Business/management	76%	70%	74%	☒
	Education	79%	82%	83%	☒
	Other humanities	80%	74%	82%	☒
	TOTAL	81%	78%	82%	☒
34. Total <b>graduate</b> HC by qualification type *	Undergraduate diplomas	603	1889	1029	☑
	Advanced diploma	31	28	94	☒
	Undergraduate degrees	3305	3230	4846	☒
	Total undergraduate	3939	5147	5968	☒
	Postgraduate to Master's level	2189	2213	1350	☑
	Master's	585	485	1148	☒
	Doctors	106	126	116	☑
	TOTAL	6819	7971	8581	☒
35. Total graduate HC by major field of study *	Science, engineering, technology	2290	2678	3089,5	☒
	Business/management	1786	2087	1948	☑
	Education	1421	1659	1793,5	☒
	Other humanities	1322	1547	1750	☒
	TOTAL	6819	7971	8581	☒
36. Total graduate HC as a % of total HC enrolments *	Total undergraduate	14%	17%	22%	☒
	Postgraduate to Master's level	52%	54%	30%	☑
	Master's	24%	20%	45%	☒
	Doctors	12%	13%	13%	☒
	TOTAL	19%	20%	24%	☒
37. Permanently appointed (perm.) <b>staff</b> HC by staff category	Instruction/research (IR) professionals	840	996	952	☑
	Executive/management professionals	103	108	96	☑
	Support professionals	111	109	104	☑
	Total professional staff	1054	1213	1152	☑
	Technical staff	48	51	44	☑
	Non-professional administrative staff	1107	1166	860	☑
	Crafts/trades staff	6	5	12	☒
	Service staff	243	237	330	☒
	Total non-professional staff	1404	1459	1246	☑
	TOTAL	2458	2672	2398	☑
38. All FTE staff by staff category	IR professionals	999,01	1158,95	1278	☒
	Executive/management professionals	124,16	118,01	103	☑
	Support professionals	125,66	121,91	177	☒
	Total professional staff	1248,83	1398,87	1558	☒
	Technical staff	193,77	181,65	204	☒
	Non-professional administrative staff	1286,23	1361,16	877,5	☑
	Crafts/trades staff	6,00	5,00	18,5	☒
	Service staff	263,83	245,65	414	☒
	Total non-professional staff	1749,83	1793,46	1514	☑
	TOTAL	2998,66	3192,33	3072	☑

Enrolment Plan Indicators		Actual values for year-end 2016 <sup>10</sup>	Estimated values for year-end 2017 <sup>11</sup>	Target year-end 2017	
39. Ratios of FTE staff to perm. staff HC by staff category	IR professionals	1,19	1,16	1,34	✗
	Executive/management professionals	1,21	1,09	1,07	✓
	Support professionals	1,13	1,12	1,70	✗
	Total professional staff	1,18	1,15	1,35	✗
	Technical staff	4,04	3,56	4,64	✗
	Non-professional administrative staff	1,16	1,17	1,02	✓
	Crafts/trades staff	1,00	1,00	1,54	✗
	Service staff	1,09	1,04	1,25	✗
	Total non-professional staff	1,25	1,23	1,22	✓
	TOTAL	1,22	1,19	1,28	✗
40. Perm. IR staff HC by highest qualification	Doctoral degree	396	433	410	✓
	Master's degree	343	434	439	✗
	Other	101	129	103	✓
	TOTAL	840	996	952	✓
41. Share of perm. IR staff HC by highest qualification	Doctoral degree	47%	43%	43%	✓
	Master's degree	41%	44%	46%	✗
	Other	12%	13%	11%	✓
	TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	NA
42. Research outputs by output source *	Publication units	927,29	1067,33	681	✓
	Research Master's graduates (units)	297	246	304	✗
	Doctoral graduates (unweighted)	106	126	116	✓
	WEIGHTED TOTAL	1542,29	1691,71	1333	✓
43. Ratios of research outputs to perm. IR staff HC by output source *	Publication units	1,10	1,07	0,72	✓
	Research Master's graduates (units)	0,35	0,25	0,32	✗
	Doctoral graduates (unweighted)	0,13	0,13	0,12	✓
	WEIGHTED TOTAL	1,84	1,70	1,40	✓
44. Ratio of FTE students to FTE IR staff		27,2	26,5	21,3	✗

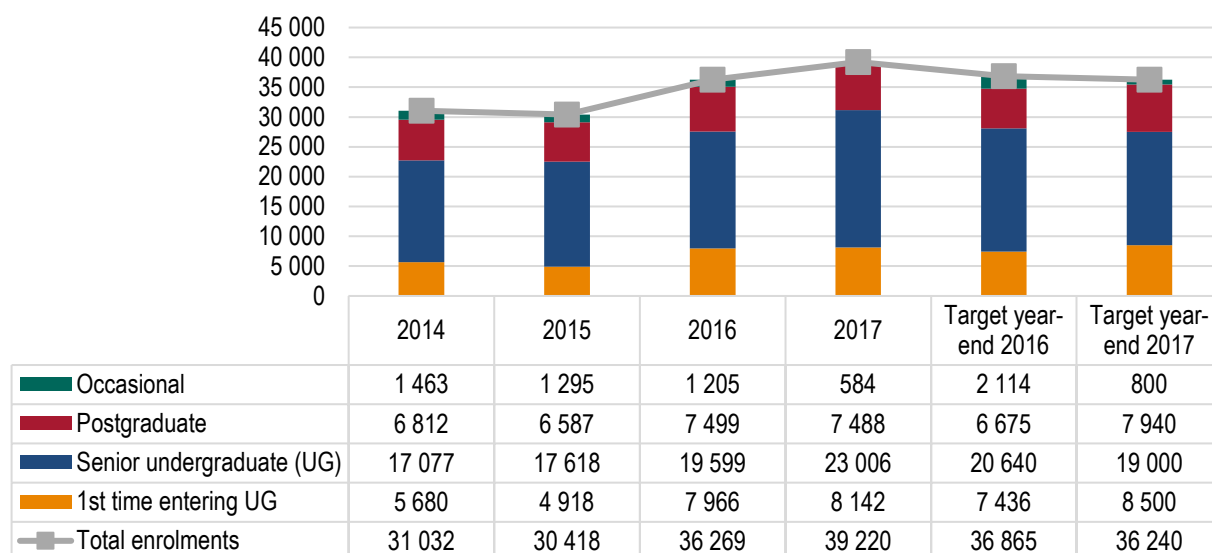
## 5.2.2. Decreasing dependence on tuition fees

### 5.2.2.1. Strategic management of enrolments

As noted in section 5.2.1.2, the UFS's largest revenue stream is state subsidies and grants at 45% of total income in 2017. This figure includes both the block grant of the UFS and specific earmarked grants. Although state subsidies and grants increased by 7% from 2016 to 2017, the block grant only increased by 4.5%. This is mainly due to the fact that the total teaching input units (TIUs) for 2015 – which determines the 2017 subsidy – was more than 2% below the DHET's target for the UFS, which resulted in a total deduction of R11.53 million from the teaching input sub-block grant.

Over the past two years, the UFS has successfully increased its enrolment numbers – by 19.2% from 2015 to 2016, and a further 8.1% from 2016 to 2017 (see Figure 31). In 2016, enrolment numbers fell just short of the target, despite the significant increase in numbers; in 2017, however, the UFS exceeded the target by 8.2%. The increases may be attributed to an improved student application and registration system (in terms of both client service and technology) as well as improved marketing.

The enrolment increases resulted in an increase in total TIUs to 58 884 in 2016 and an estimated 62 500 units in 2017. These values meet (and in 2017 exceed) the DHET targets, meaning that the UFS does not expect another deduction in its teaching input sub-block grants for 2018 and 2019.



**Figure 31: Headcount enrolments by qualification group, 2014 to 2017**

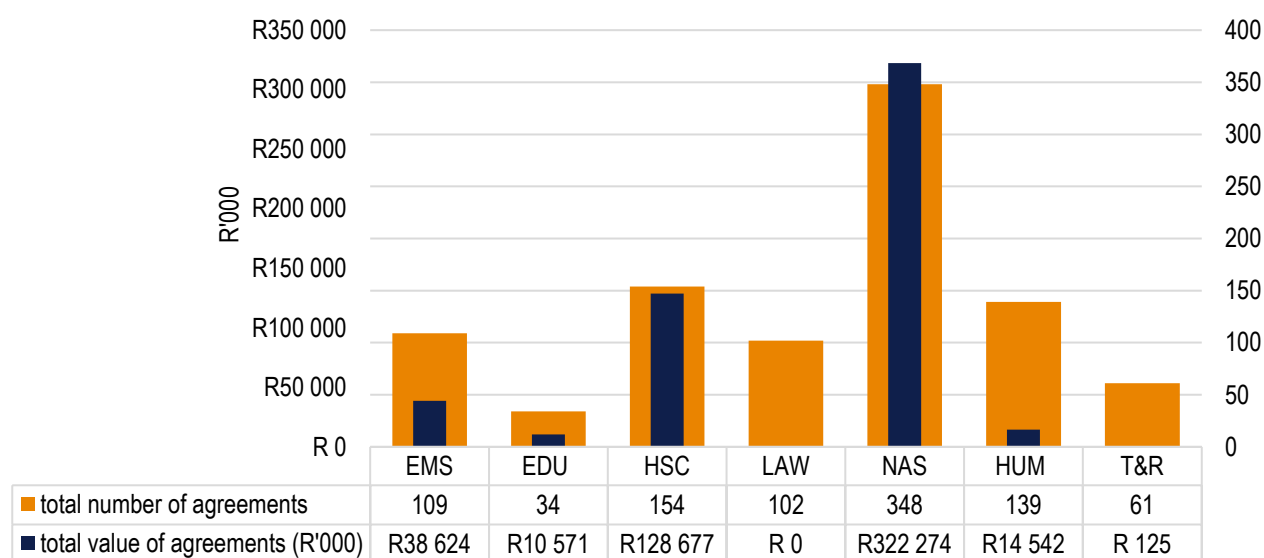
#### 5.2.2.2. Third-stream income from research and innovation

In addition to government subsidy generated through research outputs (graduates and publications) and government grants, research and innovation play a key role in generating third-stream income in the form of research contracts as well as the commercialisation of research products, processes, and services.

Research-related contracts increased from 229 in 2015 to more than 400 in 2017. However, the value of these contracts remained fairly consistent, with a slight increase from R36 million in 2016 to R41 million in 2017. The commercialisation of the UFS research enterprise, including the patent portfolio and venture capital, has improved in 2017. Venture capital investment went from a zero base in 2012 to more than R12 million in 2017.

Numerous technologies are in advanced stages of commercialisation by either spin-out companies or licence agreements. The UFS is also participating in the planning of a Free State innovation park/incubator with various stakeholders, which could provide a significant boost to venture creation at the UFS.

Figure 32 shows the most productive departments in terms of contracts signed.



**Figure 32: Most productive UFS faculties in terms of contracts, 2013 to 2017 totals**

### 5.2.2.3. Third-stream income from advancement activities

The Department of Institutional Advancement's remit is to ensure that platforms, systems, processes, and policies are in place to facilitate fundraising and alumni engagement across the UFS campuses. Its service to the campus community includes support during the entire fundraising cycle – from identifying, cultivating, and requesting donations to stewardship of donors. Most of the hard work involved in raising funds happens in the academic and support departments that initiate and implement the projects that donors support. IA maintains high standards in recording donations received across the university and reporting on how the funds were used.

Overall, private gifts and grants increased by 67%, from R66 million in 2016 to R110.9 million in 2017. As reported in section 4.3.7, philanthropic donations to the UFS increased by 13.6% to R91 million, excluding donations in kind (2016: R80 million). The total amount raised, including donations in kind, was R96.5 million. These are funds received in the University's donations account from 1 January to 31 December 2017. (Donation flows are accounted for differently in the financial statements of the University and take the timing of the spending of the funds into account.)

The corporate sector gave the largest amount: R40.8 million, or more than 42% of donations received. By far, the largest amount from all sectors consisted of donations for bursaries (61%). The Financial Aid office successfully targeted Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) for funding. SETAs gave more than R24 million, mostly towards bursaries. (This excludes SETA funds to the UFS, which cannot be classified as donations.)

**Table 16: UFS 2017 donations by purpose**

Purpose	Amount (R)	%
Bursaries	58 496 064	60.61%
Community	22 721 343	23.54%
Facilities	300 000	0.31%
Research	7 325 144	7.59%
Support	4 108 961	4.26%
Teaching	3 532 585	3.66%
Unspecified	35 081	0.04%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96 519 177</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 17: Donations by sector 2017**

Sector	Amount (R)	%
Bequests	864 552.66	0.90%
Civil Society	1 593 782.30	1.65%
Corporate	40 754 737.53	42.22%
Trusts and foundations	11 642 337.97	12.06%
Government	173 093.00	0.18%
International foundations	7 572 193.24	7.85%
International organisations	117 430.20	0.12%
SETAs	24 264 784.43	25.14%
Other	54 100.36	0.06%
Staff	51 360.00	0.05%
Individuals (including alumni)	3 893 496.35	4.03%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>90 981 868.04</i>	<i>94.26%</i>
Gifts in kind	5 537 309.05	5.74%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96 519 177.09</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

#### 5.2.2.4. Third-stream income from short learning programmes

In 2017, the UFS Academic Planning and Development Committee of Senate (APDC) approved 75 short learning programmes (SLPs), a decrease from 81 in 2016. These included 67 competency-based programmes and eight attendance-based programmes (see Table 18). The majority of these SLPs were aimed at enabling continuing professional development and addressing challenges in the workplace by improving competencies and actively reinforcing knowledge application. In 2017, 13 SLPs were removed from the catalogue on request by the relevant departments, and over 1 500 certificates were printed. Despite the slight decrease in the number of SLPs, income generated from these programmes increased by 33% from R29.2 million in 2016 to R38.9 million in 2017 (see Table 11).

An SLP stakeholder meeting was held in February 2017 to discuss and decide on the governance of SLPs – particularly on issues of applications and access processes for staff and students. Participants engaged around a revised workflow, proposed by DIRAP. They identified role players; reviewed operational problem areas; considered the rollover of a hard-copy system to an online system and the implications thereof; analysed the risks involved with granting access to the central software systems; and the possibility of training presenters on how to register students (Blackboard). The current system continues to evolve and adapt to a resource for increasing the University's third-stream income.

**Table 18: UFS short learning programmes approved in 2017**

Faculty/campus	Department/School/Unit/Centre	Competency-based	Attendance-based	Total
Economic & Management Sciences	Centre for Business Dynamics	18	-	18
		2	-	2
Health Sciences	School of Nursing	5	-	5
Humanities	Social Work	7	1	8
		2	-	2
	Odeion School of Music	5	-	5
Natural & Agricultural Sciences	Mathematical Statistics & Actuarial Sciences	2	-	2
	Centre for Environmental Management	-	2	2
	DiMTEC	4	-	4
	Animal, Wildlife & Grassland Sciences	11	-	11
Theology		-	4	4
South Campus		3	-	3
		1	-	1
		2	-	2
		5	-	5
	Directorate for Community Engagement	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>75</b>



## 5.3. Student services

### 5.3.1. Student administration

Student Academic Services (SAS) provides student administration support for the UFS. The Director: SAS reports to the Registrar: Systems and Administration. The department is responsible for applications, admissions, curriculum management administration, student records, examination administration, graduations, certification, and registration.

The reorganisation of SAS was completed by June 2017, with the divisional heads of Applications, Admissions, and Certification; Student Records, and Registration and Student Services Centre appointed. All staff members in SAS were assessed, matched, and placed in their posts as part of the reorganisation. In addition, 19 positions (of which eight were new positions) were advertised and filled.

As part of the ITP, a Systems and Administration gap analysis was conducted which forms the basis of a systems renewal project that will run until 2020.

The percentage of online applications increased from 13% for study in 2016 to 37% for study in 2017. To further increase the number of online submissions, the online application system was enhanced. The turn-around time between application and conditional admission improved slightly from 34 days on average in 2016 to 27 days in 2017. An automated admission system was implemented to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

In the Student Records area, there was a significant change in the reporting lines, with the administration of the postgraduate research area being separated from postgraduate structured programmes. This is to match the institution's long-term vision of increasing research output.

SAS initiated the deployment of automated academic progression in some faculties.

Student protests in the third quarter of 2017 presented a challenge to SAS. The exam timetable and administration had to be adjusted, with students given the option to apply for an ad hoc examination, which took place in an additional week of examinations. This increased the examination period from six to seven weeks. Staff across the SAS divisions worked together to assist with examination administration. Tracking of student attendance at examination sessions was implemented to prevent unauthorised persons from gaining access to the examination venues and disrupting examinations.

In September 2017, the Graduations Office was moved to SAS. The processes were reviewed, and more controls were put in place to improve the quality of the data and the service to students.

The Student Services Centre (SSC) was launched as part of the SAS reorganisation. It resulted in six dedicated student service agents to focus on student services across all SAS divisions. This includes services via email, calls, and walk-ins. The SSC is also responsible for coordinating the registration services provided to students by SAS, faculties, and other support departments across all campuses. This is an attempt to ensure a seamless registration process for students and is an area where a considerable amount of work needs to be done in the next cycle.

### 5.3.2. Student housing

The Department of Housing and Residence Affairs (HRA) focused on improving the availability, quality, and affordability of accommodation and catering offered to students on all three campuses. The UFS maintained an occupancy rate of 99% throughout 2017 on the Bloemfontein Campus, and for the second time in a row 99% on the Qwaqwa Campus. The high occupancy rates achieved is testimony to the urgent need for high-quality accommodation that is both safe and affordable in an environment conducive to learning. In 2017, funding was received from DHET to build another 250-bed residence on the South Campus, which will be completed in 2018. The South Campus maintained a 100% occupancy throughout 2017.

HRA also strives to achieve appropriately diverse residences: in 2017, 75% of residence space on the Bloemfontein Campus was occupied by black students, and through careful planning and random placement, individual residence communities also reflected the overall demography of the UFS.

The UFS continued to offer affordable accommodation to its students, which is largely subsidised by HRA's third-stream income generated through Kovsie Inn and conference accommodation during the UFS holidays. The decision of the UFS to grant students permission to stay in their respective residences during the March/April and September/October holidays, severely impacted the ability to host conferees, which led to a sharp decline in HRA's third-stream income and a consequent shortfall in the HRA budget.

Nevertheless, regardless of the severely crippled third-stream income, HRA succeeded in remaining financially viable through a policy of austerity and continued to render high-quality service to residences and through Kovsie Inn.

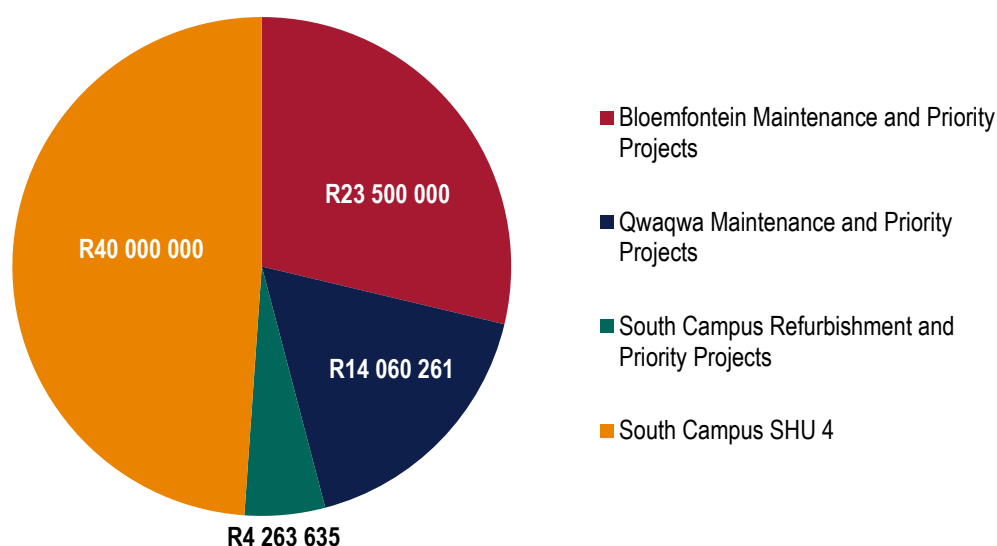
In adherence to the Policy on Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities (Government Gazette 39238), HRA established an office for the accreditation of off-campus accommodation on 1 July 2017. This office assisted the UFS to ensure that students stay in housing that is conducive to living and learning, and which adheres to the particular standards that are set. After long negotiations, the office conditionally accredited several major establishments by the end of December 2017.

## 5.4. Physical infrastructure

### 5.4.1. DHET projects

DHET-funded infrastructure projects form an important component of the UFS capital projects. The 2016/2017 DHET infrastructure funding (Figure 33) was received in March 2017 and included R35 million for maintenance needs, R6.8 million for priority projects, and R40 million for a second student housing unit on the South Campus. In addition, the UFS contributed R15.2 million from its own funds. 21 DHET-funded projects were successfully completed on all three campuses. The DHET cycle focused on deferred maintenance projects.

Reporting on DHET funding is for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and is due on 31 May 2018. In addition, quarterly reports on DHET projects were submitted to the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission. University Estates was audited during the annual external audit in 2017 as per an agreed-upon procedure required by DHET and was performed on all DHET transactions. No deviances were found or reported.



**Figure 33: 2016/2017 DHET funding by category**

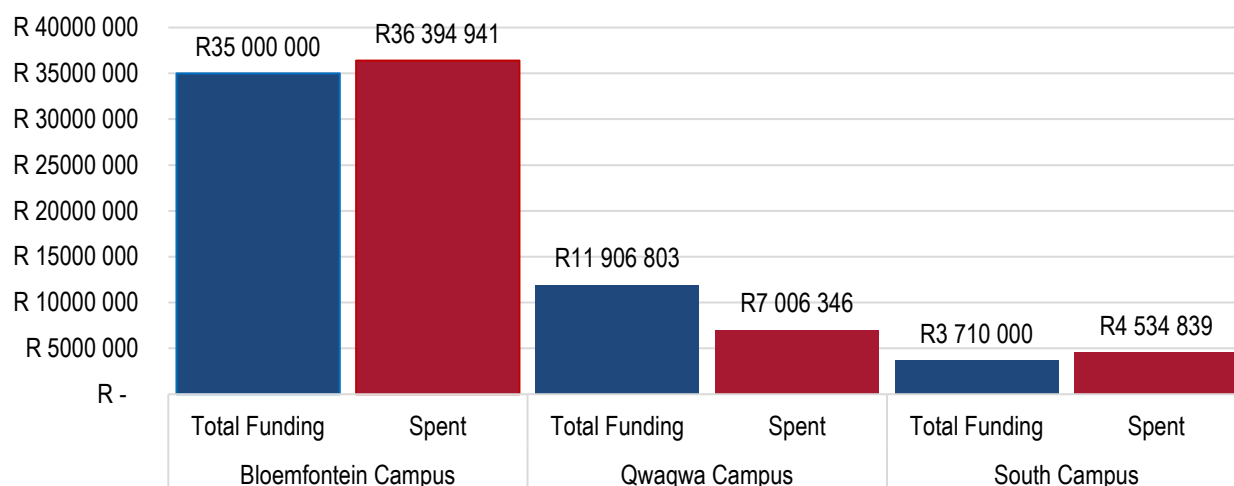
### 5.4.2. Capital projects

Included in the annual capital allocation for each campus is specific funding for Sport and Security projects. Minor capital work requests are handled separately and only ABE contractors are used for these projects.

Spending on capital projects per campus is reflected in Figure 34 and specific projects are detailed in Table 19.

**Table 19: Capital projects 2017 by campus**

Bloemfontein	South	All campuses
<p><b>Muller Potgieter extension:</b> New Health Sciences lecture-hall building consisting of a ground floor and the first floor with 250 seats each. The first-floor lecture hall can be converted into a multifunctional venue and can be divided into two separate venues.</p> <p><b>Resealing of roads and ancillary maintenance:</b> Seal with NCRT (new crumb rubber technology) and 13.2 mm stone: 49 600 m<sup>2</sup> or 8.26 km; slurry with 3% Latex rubber: 21 400 m<sup>2</sup>; fog spray with 30% bituminous emulsion: 28 300 m<sup>2</sup>; white, yellow, and red lines: 27.6 km; and white and yellow lettering and symbols: 2 114 m<sup>2</sup>. The total cost of the work was R3 347 309.</p> <p><b>The refurbishment of Agriculture laboratories:</b> The project was intended to relocate some existing labs to alternative spaces in the Agriculture Building in order for the Department to create a space for the construction of a new Sensory Laboratory as a later project. Entailed the clearing/demolition of two spaces and applying new floor and wall finishes and installation of new laboratory equipment and cupboards.</p> <p><b>Long/triple-jump facility:</b> Another flagship project that was completed in 2017, was the upgrading of the UFS long/triple-jump facility at Pellies Park, UFS Bloemfontein Campus. The existing single run-up was designed and upgraded to a four-lane IFFA-approved, standard synthetic run-up. The run-up now caters for long-jump as well as for triple-jump competitions. The total runway length has been extended to 65 m from end to end.</p> <p><b>Renovations to residence bathrooms and kitchens:</b> Upgrading and renovations were done on bathrooms and/or kitchens at Abrahams Fischer, Villa Bravado, Wag 'n Bietjie, and Beyer's Naude residences on the Bloemfontein Campus.</p>	<p><b>New entrance and security building:</b> Construction of a new Security and Visitor's Building at the main entrance to the South Campus. An overhead canopy over the two incoming- and outgoing vehicle lanes were also constructed. The design was done to complement all the other buildings on the South Campus and to establish an unmistakable identity for the campus experience. A lounge for students waiting for transport, ablution facilities, and accessibility for persons with disabilities were included in the design.</p>	<p><b>Maintenance to roofs:</b> The combined project value was R5 million for the maintenance of roofs with a total combined roof area of 17 298 m<sup>2</sup>, consisting of roofs on academic and residence buildings across all three campuses.</p> <p><b>Energy management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Higher Education Facility Management (HEFMA) presented University Estates with a Renewable Energy Initiative Award on 19 October 2017. This award was presented in recognition of the initiatives to install and operate photovoltaic and greywater systems on UFS campuses.</li> <li>• Savings of ± R2.4 million on the electricity bill were realised by means of the Building Management System, solar initiatives and LED lighting retrofit projects, including solar trees and solar charging stations for students.</li> <li>• The UFS commissioned their first two large-scale solar plants in 2017. A combined total of 2 374 solar panels were installed on the Bloemfontein Thakaneng Bridge and Computer Laboratory's roofs, which feeds directly into the University's electrical grid. The combined value of the BFN project is R12 147 757. On the Qwaqwa Campus, solar systems were commissioned for the Mandela Hall and new Computer Lab. The 170kWp solar system feeds into the electrical grid, reducing the amount of energy required from local supply authorities. The combined value of the Qwaqwa project is R3 107 852.</li> <li>• Central air-conditioning systems were installed for the Madiba Arena (South Campus) and H Van der Merwe Scholtz Hall (Bloemfontein Campus). Both venues are student facilities and the systems are connected to the Building Management System, whereby energy savings and venue control are realised.</li> </ul> <p><b>Water and sewage upgrade:</b> The project entailed the capturing of critical assets, recording of geographical information, and conducting condition assessments for all water and sewage infrastructure on the Bloemfontein, South, and Qwaqwa campuses. This laid the foundation for the compilation of sewage and water master plans to ensure the reduction of both water and wastewater loads on the municipal system, and ultimately on the environment.</p>
	<p><b>Qwaqwa</b></p> <p><b>New 200 x computer laboratory building:</b> The project addressed the urgent need for computers to be used by students for study and research purposes as well as for writing exams. 200 computers were accommodated in two equal-sized areas, with the administration support services housed in a central service core. The ablution facilities are accessible from outside the building for after-hour use. The building was designed with minimum maintenance finish to fit seamlessly into the established fabric and pedestrian routes of the Qwaqwa Campus.</p> <p><b>Afromontane Research Unit:</b> The proposed new research facility comprises specific research-driven spaces. Entrances to amenities, a study space, and the bulk of the functions are gained from the covered entrance 'courtyard'. The space comprises a postgraduate study space, seminar room, informal lounge, and kitchenette.</p> <p><b>Renovations at residences:</b> Internal renovations at OR Tambo and Chris Hani residences were successfully completed.</p>	



**Figure 34: University Estates capital spending per campus, 2017**

## 5.5. ICT and information management

### 5.5.1. Information and communication technology

The aim of ICT Services is to support the operations of the UFS digitally, and to plan, deploy, and maintain a stable digital platform and infrastructure for the organisation as a whole. Although careful planning of these digital services is performed on an annual and ongoing basis, the changing nature of the UFS operations influence the planned and projected deliverables/outcomes of ICT Services and redirects the ICT operations in many ways. As in previous years, this redirection of UFS operations was very relevant in ICT operations in 2017.

Furthermore, international developments in ICT deployment are starting to affect the strategic intent of the local (UFS internal) ICT operations, as vendors are adopting operating models that can easily be implemented in environments where aspects related to bandwidth provisioning (broadband), organisational maturity, computer literacy, and effective data management are no longer constraints in the use of cloud-based services, etc.

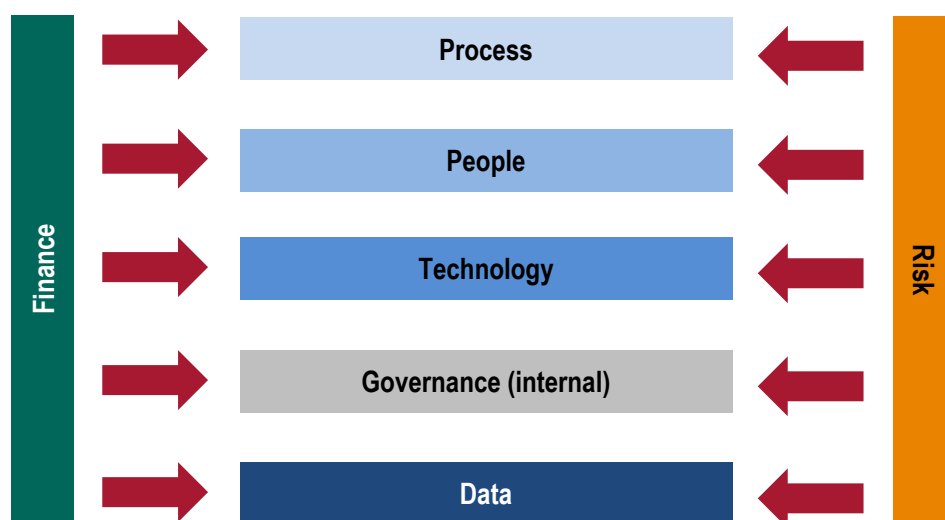
Lastly, the cost of ICT deployment, especially in South Africa, has escalated due to several factors: (i) diminishing returns in the Rand/Dollar exchange rate, (ii) the off-shore centralisation of vendor support infrastructures (service engineers, helpdesks, etc.) outside the borders of South Africa, and (iii) the incorporation of various technologies into a single product offering, making it difficult to procure a certain technology type/element without also investing in technologies not required by the UFS at that point.

Given the foregoing, 2017 was challenging for ICT, but also spurred a high level of operational resilience, since (i) the UFS survived several digital attacks, (ii) did not suffer any unscheduled system failures, (iii) did not lose any data through hacks, and (iv) provided sound and sustained digital services to both staff and students on a 24x7 basis, excluding maintenance periods.

Figure 35 provides a graphical representation of the key elements of the current (2017) ICT operations, but more importantly, indicates the governance 'backdrop' against which all operations are executed. Governance defines and determines the internal controls and associated checks and balances that govern ICT deployment and the ongoing operations management initiatives, especially in the areas of digital security, digital access management, and the management of data. The model also shows the main areas of ICT operations and the cross-cutting effect that financial management and risk management have on the various elements of the overall operations.

Two forms of governance are indicated in the model. Firstly, 'external governance' as defined and determined on the legislative and macro level of the UFS and ICT, and 'internal governance' as defined by what is commonly referred to as policies, procedure, standards, and guidelines (PPSGs). Both of these forms are relevant in ICT operations in many ways, aligning and integrating at multiple levels of the overall operational domain.

From an operational perspective, a higher level of visibility in terms of operational metrics is under development as to prevent the scenario of 'driving blind'. The UFS digital environment has become a very complex digital network of inter-dependencies and integrations at various levels of the operational domain. The fast-paced development in technologies supporting and enabling higher education is a material risk to the UFS due to the relatively slow-paced development and adoption of technologies to support the 'business' of the UFS. This manifests in a material technology risk to the institution for which tailored solutions must be determined and deployed. Technology normally fail for various reasons, *inter alia*, the effective adoption of a specific technology and data. The UFS has very specific challenges in both these areas for which formal, longer-term projects and programmes are being deployed and implemented.



**Figure 35: ICT governance model**

### 5.5.2. Management information

A dedicated Institutional Information Systems (IIS) unit within DIRAP is responsible for providing management information in support of evidence-based decision-making at the UFS. IIS aims to provide information that is relevant, accurate, accessible, and timeous to academics and management staff members and therefore maintains effective working relationships across all departments and divisions of the UFS.

The unit is responsible for fulfilling the UFS's statutory requirements in terms of the provision of information to the Department of Higher Education (DHET) for subsidy and statistical purposes, which is done through data submissions to the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS). Reporting is done on four reporting categories, namely students (three submissions per year), staff (two submission), postdoctoral fellows, and space (one submission each). The 2017 external audit of the reporting data was successfully completed, with no major areas of concern for the UFS. The data to DHET for mid-term reporting and reviews was well accepted.

As for the external reviews, we received very good feedback from the reviewers regarding the availability and ease of access to the review data and reports.

The new enrolment planning meetings with all faculties for the 2020 to 2025 cycle started in 2017 and must be completed in September 2018.

IIS makes data available to all UFS staff members via the PowerHEDA online management information dashboards. In 2017, the main emphasis was on making staff aware of information and the availability of data on these dashboards, as well as all other functionalities to help them manage and monitor their own data. IIS provided support to all its stakeholders, as well as training on the use and functionality of this platform.

Dedicated dashboards were developed to suit the needs of specific users or groups of users within the institution. For example, IIS developed a dedicated dashboard for each faculty. The users accepted this and were impressed with the ability to disseminate data on this platform. IIS improved the user-friendliness and

accessibility of dashboards in 2017 and applied the principle of one password for various platforms. The new platform also supports the protection of personal information through central allocation and control of password-secured roles that restrict access to specific information for specific users. In this year, 156 new users were registered on the dashboard and only two did not revisit the dashboard after the first attempt.

IIS strives to bridge the gap between the data and the user and to improve skills for turning data into more powerful information sets and broadening the engagement of all staff in all units.

IIS supports all stakeholders and where possible redirects queries and requests to the dashboards. However, the unit still spends about 30% of its time on ad hoc requests, which is managed on a personal level with user-specific details and requirements. Although this is an expectable percentage – especially in comparison to the situation before the dashboards – this still takes a lot of time due to the unique user specifications and detail.

IIS is also a partner in the flagship Siyaphumelela project, according to which the unit tracks student success in low-performing modules.

The major role of IIS is to ensure that all systems and requirements for reporting is met and that all reporting information is auditable. This is sometimes challenging when changes are implemented without cognisance of the full impact of these changes on reporting requirements and operational management information.

The creation and maintenance of all qualifications as well as the module catalogue workflow moved from the Academic Planning unit of DIRAP to IIS in 2017. Communication and meetings around this took place to keep all stakeholders informed of new developments and maintenance. The unit also supported the implementation of programme enrolment at the UFS for all new qualifications in all faculties.

## 6. SOUTH CAMPUS REPORT

### 6.1. Message from the Campus Principal

The year 2017 marked further improvements in equivalence of provision across the three campuses of the University. As the newly-built entrance signals, the South Campus reflects a proud Kopsie identity and culture. Not only was the first South Campus residence fully occupied during this year, but a second residence has been approved, with building to commence early in 2018.

A highlight was the launch of two new Higher Certificates to replace the University Preparation Programmes (UPP) in the Humanities and Economic and Management Sciences, enrolling 513 students of whom 495 successfully completed the certificate and will graduate in April 2018. A total of 560 UPP students (Education and Natural and Agricultural Sciences) and 868 students for the Extended Degree Programmes registered, totalling 1 941 South Campus University Access students. South Campus received approval for a grant of R1.5 million (spread over two years) from Investec for UAP student academic support, as well as AECI student bursaries in the sub-regions.

There was a slight decline in distance-education student numbers in 2017 due to the phasing out of some of the programmes. A total of 5 616 distance-education students registered for the blended model of delivery in 2017, while 222 students were enrolled in the online programmes. This extends the UFS footprint through access and distance students to the majority of the provinces in the country (see Figure 36).

The South Campus was privileged to host the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the National Association of Distance Education and Open Learning in South Africa (NADEOSA) during July 2017. The South Campus Principal, Prof Daniella Coetzee, was elected the new NADEOSA President for the term 2017-2019. UFS staff members from a number of departments and faculties presented papers at the conference.

The South Campus secured a new tender of R39 million to continue with the Internet Broadcast Project (IBP) in the Free State for the next three years. The IBP will continue to broadcast to 83 schools on a daily basis, reaching teachers and learners in scarce subjects, including Sesotho and isiXhosa. After the Free State received the best matriculation results in SA in 2016 and 2017, the FS MEC thanked the UFS IBP team for the critical role they played in this improvement. During a SchoolNet Conference, Mr Mohamed Surty (Deputy Minister of Basic Education) also acknowledged the significant impact of the IBP as a digital learning tool in education in the Free State. The UFS also embarked on utilising the IBP as a marketing tool, reaching 97 000 learners on a daily basis.



**Figure 36: UFS footprint in open distance learning in South Africa**



Apart from facilitating school transformation in South Africa, an initiative of the South Campus Schools Partnership Project is to create optimal opportunities for students from targeted schools to access university, and in 2017 a total of 190 SPP-recruited (and mentored) students graduated at the UFS, bringing the total of graduates between 2013 and 2017 to 426 students. One research article on the results of the SPP has been published, one conditionally accepted, and three submitted for publication in 2017. New funding for the project totalled R2.5 million in 2017, including R1 million as bursaries for SPP-recruited students.

As the first of a range of webinars planned by the South Campus to extend the outreach of the UFS, a webinar titled *Experiences of teacher development in open distance and flexible learning in post-schooling institutions in Africa*, was hosted by the South Campus and presented by Shafika Isaacs on 17 July 2017.

In keeping with the 2014 DHET policy on Distance Education, the South Campus has made distance-learning material available as Open Education Resources (OERs) and continues collaboration with the DHET (Open Learning) in the design of open-distance learning (ODL) material. Other activities to extend the UFS footprint are the following:

- Design of tools for PLC's workshops: Funded by the Flemish Association of Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB).
- CSIR project training in the use of digital mobile tools, funded by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.
- Manual writing workshops with a focus on integrating IBP videos.
- Design of ICT tools for subject adviser collaboration, funded by the FSDoE.
- Coding as a tool to learn language in the primary school, funded by Google South Africa.
- OER and materials-development workshops. Hosted by South Campus and presented by OER Africa and SAIDE in June 2017.
- Membership on the DBE to serve on the advisory team tasked to update the White Paper on E-Education and the Guidelines for Teacher Training and Professional Development.
- Peer evaluation for HEQC accreditation of higher-education programmes.
- DHET advising for the development of learning materials for TVET professional development programmes.
- Launch of the Second Chance Matric Support Programme.
- Media creation and video recordings completed for the South Campus Library. A total of 20 videos were filmed, edited, and transferred.
- Conducted a survey for the Flemish Association of Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB) among Free State teachers on the status quo regarding ICT integration in schools.
- A total of 1 130 videos created and 29 354 views on ACT Online: YouTube Channel.
- 72 facilitator training videos recorded and processed.
- South Campus Library showcase video created.
- 40 videos recorded for level 7 projects in Mathematics, Physical Science, Life Science, and English for gifted learners.
- 35 SA SAMS training videos recorded and processed.
- Documentary for the Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment (ULFE) and the division Community Engagement (CE) at the University of the Free State (UFS). Annual Philippolis Multilingual Public-Speaking Competition.
- Development of E-Learning video format showcase document. Guiding the digitisation process aimed at creating and selecting high-impact media options for ODL.

Staff training to function successfully in an open-distance learning environment was prioritised in 2017, with strong emphasis on developing skills in design and development of online and blended materials as well as related competences. The most important training activities that South Campus staff participated in, are depicted in the following list:

- Diversity and Inclusion awareness intervention (HR)
- Materials Development for Online Learning (SAIDE)
- OER materials development (OER Africa)
- South Campus Management strategic workshop with Joyce Ras (HR)

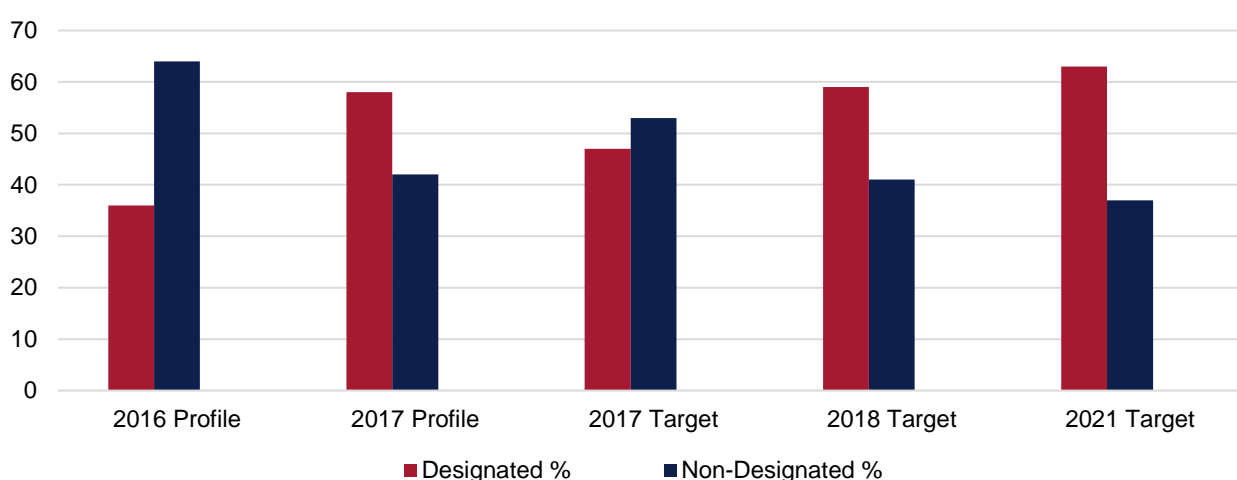
- Online materials design and development
- Blackboard assessment training
- Rapid Results project for a department at the South Campus
- Development of open-learning materials (DHET)
- Assessor training (HEQC)
- Staff participation in several MOOCs
- Quality In E-Learning programme
- Online Cinematic VR Course
- Women in Leadership (UFS HR)
- Gamification (Darryn Berg)
- Executive leadership mentoring (three staff members)
- Executive coaching (two staff members)
- The Four Ps of Professionalism (Igno van Niekerk)
- Microsoft Innovative Teacher Training
- Workshops on designing online courses (SAIDE)
- TU Delft Studio Presenter training (Delft: the Netherlands)
- Blended Learning Forum (SUN)
- Film and Media Expo
- Workshop: Basic Three-Act structure to storytelling
- Video on location shooting basics – DSLR Cameras
- Three-point lighting structure – In studio use
- Shutter speed vs frame rate – tips and tricks
- Encoding and transcoding basics for online video
- How to create GIFs online
- HERS leadership training (Stellenbosch – two staff members)
- Wireless microphone receiver – basics
- Good practice during online video compression
- Project Management courses
- Workshops on the development of distance-education materials
- Instructional Design: Working with SMEs: online course
- Anatomy of an online course workshop
- Quality Review workshops
- Brain-based E-Learning programmes
- Edu-Tech: Various presentations and design workshops
- A+ (Networks)
- Media-Tech workshops
- World Conference on Online Learning (Canada). Teaching in a Digital Age Rethinking Teaching and Learning
- Instructional Design workshops
- Cine Summit
- Universal design for learning workshop

In an attempt to extend the reach of open distance programmes throughout the UFS and beyond teacher education programmes, online short learning programmes are being designed in collaboration with Theology and the School of Nursing, and short online programmes were also developed for Librarianship in collaboration with South Campus Library staff. A module for UFS Financial Planning Law was also digitised and the final product of 400 branded DVDs was delivered, increasing the success rate of the students by 18%. Negotiations with the School of Medicine to develop ODL programmes are underway.

## 6.2. Improving staff equity

Motivated by its 2021 equity target and the transformation agenda of the UFS, the South Campus has made great strides towards improving its equity profile since 2016. As Figure 37 below indicates, the 2016 South Campus profile of 36% of permanent staff from designated groups, significantly improved in 2017 to 58%. The 2017 profile also exceeds the 47% target set for 2017. In fact, the Campus came close to its stated 2018 target of 59% of staff members from designated groups. Note that white female staff were not included in the designated groups but were regarded as from the non-designated groups. It is clear that the South Campus is well on its way of realising its 2021 projected equity target of 63%.

However, the representation of staff from designated groups in middle and top management has not improved and will be addressed when members of non-designated groups retire.



**Figure 37: Equity profile and targets for permanent South Campus staff, 2016 to 2021**

## 6.3. Improving student equity and success

Through its very nature of providing access and education to students who are not able to enter into traditional tertiary education, the South Campus operationalises a belief in equity of access as fairness and as justice. However, equity of access is balanced by equity of outcomes as the University Access Programmes bear testimony of a commitment to ensure equitable outcomes between its students and those in mainstream programmes. Because the needs of students differ, equity in education is likely to require unequal resources and services applied to different students to obtain expected outcomes. In line with this, the teaching methodology of the South Campus is resource-based, and student tutorial support is high on the agenda. Blended distance-education programmes offered by the South Campus are grounded in interactive materials, contact sessions at off-campus venues, and/or fully technology-based delivery. A variety of interventions to improve support to students at off-campus venues have been introduced, resulting in an overall improvement in student achievement.

Against the background of lower student success rates in blended distance programmes, special interventions have been introduced to support South Campus students throughout 2016 and 2017. As a result of the pilot programme for additional support in the form of increased peer involvement in 2016, analysis of success rates, as well as student and facilitator surveys, student support was elevated through a 'scaffolding' programme and intensified training of facilitators. Difficulties experienced with the implementation of quality-assurance instruments in the blended ODL programmes during 2016 have been rectified through the appointment of a staff member to lead academic planning and quality matters on the South Campus, and the restructuring of a quality office.

After the initial slow start in terms of success rates in the blended ODL programmes (in 2016 and the first modules in 2017), it appears that the increased efforts paid off, as the 2017 success rates showed an improvement on the 2016 figures. Table 20 gives an indication of the increase in success rates from 2016 to 2017, calculated across all modules (and programmes); while Table 21 is a random sample of a number of modules as an example of improved success rates.

The majority of students performed poorly in a variation of English language and teaching modules and a thorough investigation is underway to determine the causes. It seems that students who study and teach subjects other than language do not do well in the compulsory English modules. On the basis of quality-assurance results, a number of English modules have been revised, but have not resulted in significant improvement. Although success rates have improved in the vast majority of modules, some of the interventions have not shown a significant difference and will hopefully show more positive results when all interventions have been implemented in 2018.

Further interventions for future cohorts will include an improved system to identify at-risk students (an aspect of distance delivery that is extremely complex in a blended setting); and much-needed extended literacy support.

Previous reports on the success rates of former UAP students in mainstream programmes were based on the total (original) UAP intakes and caused an incorrect impression that not all UAP students proceed to degree studies. The challenge with this reporting approach was that it ignored the fact that many successful UAP students did not pursue further studies at the UFS, but at other higher education institutions, rendering the results dismal in comparison with Extended Degree Programme (EDP) student successes. When considering only UAP students who proceeded to UFS degree programmes, a comparison of the results of Extended Degree Programme (EDP) students and UAP students can be depicted as follows:

Overall, the performance of UAP students is not significantly lower than students in the Extended Degree Programmes (see Table 22), i.e. a 4.62% lower average across all faculties.

As previously mentioned, a total of 513 students enrolled for the first cohort of the Higher Certificate in 2017, and 96.5% of the students (495) successfully completed the certificate in the minimum time to graduate in April 2018.

**Table 20: Comparison of success rates across all ODL modules, 2016 to 2017**

	2016	2017
Percentage of modules with a success rate >70% +	56%	60%
Percentage of modules with a success rate between 60%-69%	18%	22%
Percentage of modules with a success rate between 50%-59%	17%	10%
Percentage of modules with a success rate <50%	9%	8%

**Table 21: Sample module success rates in blended ODL, 2016 and 2017**

Module	2016 success rate	2017 success rate	2017 status
Teaching Intermediate Phase English FAL I	36%	49%	↑ 13%
Teaching Intermediate Phase English FAL II	45%	52%	↑ 7%
Teaching Intermediate Phase Maths I	37%	64%	↑ 27%
Teaching Intermediate Phase Social Sciences I	67%	67%	– 0%
Education Studies II: Managing Diversity in the Learning Context	62%	82%	↑ 20%
Teaching Intermediate Phase Life Skills I	58%	84%	↑ 26%

**Table 22: Performance UAP and EDP students, all cohorts and faculties**

Programmes	Average
UAP	65.02%
EDP	69.64%
Gap between UAP and EDP	4.62%

## **6.4. Increasing research productivity and quality**

Against the background of the scarcity of research on ODL in South Africa, the South Campus has embarked on a purposeful research strategy to contribute to this field. To date, a full-time senior researcher is employed at the South Campus, as well as four research fellows. Support staff members who work on South Campus projects have enthusiastically joined the research team on a 'part-time' basis, mentored by existing senior staff, resulting in four articles published by South Campus support staff in 2016/2017. Outputs from the research team in 2017 include: two articles accepted for publication and five articles published in peer-refereed journals; two peer-refereed conference proceedings; two chapters in books accepted for publication in 2018; four papers delivered at international conferences; nine papers delivered at national conferences.

With the appointment of the new full-time senior researcher at the South Campus, supervision of postgraduate Education students increased substantially, with four staff members supervising PhD and Master's students. Three of these Master's students and one PhD student graduated in 2017, while another three MEd students are in the process of submitting their final theses.

Support staff members are encouraged to improve their qualifications, and apart from two Honours degrees, one staff member obtained an undergraduate degree. Currently, two support staff members are enrolled for PhDs, while two are registered for Master's degrees.

To improve the quality of research outputs, aspiring researchers are mentored by more experienced researchers such as the NRF C2-rated research fellow and the full-time researcher. Although the vast majority of staff are in support service posts, most have tertiary qualifications. Some have postgraduate degrees and are eager to become involved in researching best practice in ODL. A research group has also been established on campus, conducting colloquiums on best practice and project outcomes.

## **6.5. Decreasing dependence on tuition fees**

The South Campus is in the fortunate position to utilise short learning programmes (SLPs) and projects to generate third-stream income. Small profits on projects such as the IBP and SPP offer the possibility of utilising the expertise of project staff members in formal programmes, research, and the development of materials. The largest source of third-stream income is through short learning programmes, some in cooperation with faculties.

## 7. QWAQWA CAMPUS REPORT

### 7.1. Message from the Campus Principal

In 2017, the UFS Qwaqwa Campus witnessed increased undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers, as well as increased research outputs that was precipitated by a significant positive movement with regard to the initiatives of the recently established Afromontane Research Unit.

Staff qualification levels increased and student representation in campus governance structures was enhanced as compared to the previous years. Student representation was further broadened and equipped with an extensive class and faculty representative programme that is now in place, and the Directorate for Student Affairs received more staff capacity. The Career Development Office also contributed on the research front through practical application. The Career Fair was also a great success and highly appreciated by the student population.

The library continued to play a critical role in support of the Academic Project through successful book exhibitions and assisting staff and students by creating awareness campaigns on the latest and best publications, including the use of electronic resources such as online journals.

The Department of Housing and Residence Affairs enhanced its role in the accreditation process for private accommodation. Despite the rural nature of the surroundings in which the Qwaqwa Campus is located, a number of off-campus residences were accredited in keeping with the ministerial minimum norms and standards for housing in higher education.

Our Finance Section managed to deal with the overwhelming number of NSFAS allocations, including outstanding refunds, allocations, food allowances, and book and transport allowances for students under very trying and difficult circumstances that were compounded by lack of synergy between institutional processes and NSFAS operations. The Department of ICT Services was expanded to provide capacity and support for online applications in respect of NSFAS, Blackboard, and other services as a result of the increase of about 25% in the student population. We believe that these efforts and other academic initiatives will be further enhanced by the much needed 200-seat computer centre, which was completed in 2017.

In promoting engaged scholarship, Student Affairs hosted a critical contemporary lecture series wherein intellectual engagements unfolded through topical presentations by a number of acclaimed scholars. Our students participated constructively during these sessions.

### 7.2. Improving staff equity

The UFS institutional employment equity plan is indicative of the diversity we have at the Qwaqwa Campus. However, we are acutely aware that we have to address issues of gender parity in the higher levels of management and strengthen our attempts to attract people with disabilities. An additional key performance area, namely transformation, will form part of the performance plans of all managers.

**Table 23: Employment equity profile of academic staff on the Qwaqwa Campus**

Academic level	Male				Female				Foreign national		Total	%
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Female	Male		
Professor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.8
Associate Professor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1.6
Senior Lecturer	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	5	11	8.8
Lecturer	19	0	0	9	9	0	2	8	2	8	57	45.6
Junior Lecturer	4	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	1	12	9.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>83+5</b>	<b>88</b>

**Table 24: Employment equity profile of support staff on the Qwaqwa Campus**

Appointment level	Male				Female				Foreign national		Total	%
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Female	Male		
Top Mgmt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Mgmt	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0.95
Middle Mgmt	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1.42
Junior Mgmt	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.95
Senior Admin	9	1	0	0	15	0	0	1	0	0	26	12.3
Admin Staff	45	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	0	1	109	51.7
Assistant	15	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	28	13.3
General Worker	22	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	35	16.6

Mgmt Management    Admin Administrative

### 7.3. Improving student equity and success

Despite a limited budget, the Gender Forum initiated and was involved in a number of activities on campus in 2017. This was largely achieved by working together with other structures on campus, including the SRC and Student Affairs. Most of the 2017 activities of the Gender Forum were driven by students. Gender Forum activities/highlights in 2017 included:

- The establishment of an active Facebook site, which currently has 406 members. There are regular updates on Gender Forum and other/related events on campus, as well as regular posts for students regarding gender/equity issues;
- Active participant in the July 2017 March Against Crime, soliciting poster ideas from students and members, and featuring prominently in the march itself;
- On National Women's Day in August, the Gender Forum set up stalls with information on safe sex, LGBTQI issues, human rights issues, and more; forum members also took part in the soccer match organised by the SRC.
- In October, in conjunction with the Gender and Sexual Equity Office (Bloemfontein Campus), the forum organised SafeZone training. This training was well attended.
- The chairperson of the Gender Forum, Prof Aliza le Roux, also presented a talk at an event organised by the LGBT student structure on campus.

In the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS), at-risk students were identified, and their challenges were addressed by lecturers through discussions and academic interventions. EMS also provides extra classes twice a week for large classes, as well as extra classes for students enrolled in the FASSET project. The office of the Vice-Principal: Academic and Research initiated a tender to the Financial Services Seta, FASSET, in 2016, and the tender was awarded for 2017. This led to the provision of bursaries for 48 students in the BCom and BAdmin degree programmes. The soft skills and developmental programme, coupled with additional classes, has visibly benefited students in their growth towards professionalism and their employability is markedly better. A grant application for 2018 was submitted in 2017 and has been awarded by FASSET. A total of 44 BSc IT and BCom degree students are benefiting from this.

Apart from the fact that the number of undergraduate students enrolled in Education degrees increased in 2017, the Faculty was also able to increase the numbers of Master's and PhD enrolments. The Faculty of Education is using tutorial programmes to support success rates in large classes. Online assessments are also increasingly used in large undergraduate modules. In order to improve postgraduate supervision, the faculty has created a series of postgraduate 'cells', which meet regularly to promote ongoing interaction between postgraduate students and supervisors. Twice a year, the Qwaqwa Campus' 'cells' interact with similar groups of postgraduate students at the UFS Bloemfontein Campus and the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Undergraduate enrolment increased in the Faculty of the Humanities, with the Departments of English and Psychology having the largest intake. The faculty has expanded the number of postgraduate students at Honours and MA level. The Departments of English, History, and Sociology have Honours programmes and the Faculty intends on expanding its Honours offerings to other departments in the near future. Throughput rates remain consistent with previous years, although there is room for improvement.



While the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) has seen improved equity at postgraduate level in recent years, it remains a challenge to attract a more diverse student body at undergraduate level. The faculty is aware that those degree programmes which typically attract white students, such as Agricultural Sciences, Architecture, Hydrology, and Town/Regional Planning, are not offered at the Qwaqwa Campus. This will be considered during the discussions around the Integrated Transformation Plan of the university's programme qualification mix. The implementation of the BSc Extended Programme has to a large extent increased out first-year enrolment numbers in NAS.

Most departments collaborate with the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) tutorial programme to enhance students' learning abilities and improve knowledgeability that, in turn, translate into improved academic success rates. In a bid to enhance insight into student perspectives, the CTL invites the SRC member responsible for Academic Affairs to attend their quarterly meetings. All of the CTL's course offerings also have class representatives. A pedagogical technique called 'translanguaging' was piloted in 2017. This technique enables students to use their mother tongue to their advantage for the purpose of language learning and higher pedagogical access. The CTL's divisions continued to support student success through the following programmes:

- A\_STEP: The tutorial programme held 2 822 tutorial sessions with an accumulative attendance of 40 928 students over the course of the year.
- Academic Advising: The Academic Adviser had consultations with 252 students.
- UFS101: UFS101 had a total intake of 1 800 students.
- English Academic Literacy: Our EAL and GENL modules serviced 2 800 students.

The Education, Humanities, and NAS faculties made positive progress in growing their postgraduate student numbers. The Humanities established the first professional qualification offered at the Qwaqwa Campus with the Bachelor of Community Development degree. This Faculty also introduced the Bachelor of Social Sciences degree in 2017, adding to the Bachelor of Arts offerings.

#### **7.4. Improving research productivity and quality**

The CTL steered the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) programme to greater heights. In 2017, twenty-two staff members from across the four faculties participated in this programme, which resulted in 13 conference paper presentations and the acceptance of eight research articles for publication. CTL also organised an Academic Staff and Leadership Development conference which was attended by 55 staff members.

Members of the EMS Faculty participated in the SoTL programme and attended training activities offered by the programme, including research methodology workshops. The Faculty saw increased conference attendance and the presentation of scientific papers in 2017. Three staff members were registered for their PhDs, one staff member obtained her Master's degree in 2017, and two staff members are due to complete their Master's degrees in 2018.

Academic staff in the Faculty of Education were encouraged to participate in the SoTL programme in an effort to improve the quality of their research and with a view to improved publication outputs. Staff registered for studies were also encouraged to attend the Postgraduate School's events, such as writing retreats. The number of postdoctoral fellows in the Faculty has increased in recent years and this has had a positive impact on the number of publication outputs produced by the Faculty.

The Faculty of Education conducted teacher training workshops across the Free State, which was made possible by funding from the Free State Department of Basic Education. Staff in the Faculty networked with partners at UNIZULU and UNIVEN, co-supervising and making use of funding from the NRF. There are also collaborative projects with the UFS Bloemfontein Campus, DUT, and NWU.

Several staff members in the Faculty of the Humanities were also active participants in the SoTL programme, as evidenced in the Faculty's strong performance in the annual Qwaqwa Campus Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards, where Miss Michaela Martin (first place, Department of Political Science and Governance) and Dr Jared McDonald (third place, Department of History) won individual awards. The Departments of History and African Languages were joint winners of the Departmental Award. The Faculty has seen increased growth in its research outputs in recent years. This trend continued in 2017. The Department of Community Development opened in 2017 under the guidance of Mr Grey Magaiza. This exciting development will be followed by the opening of the new Department of Communication Science in 2018. Currently, eight staff

members have PhDs and there are three NRF-rated scholars in the Faculty: Dr Rodwell Makombe (Department of English); Dr Oliver Nyambi (Department of English); and Dr Diana Breshears (Department of Communication Science). Dr Jared McDonald completed a mock NRF-rating as part of the Prestige Scholars Programme and will be applying for NRF-rating within the next year. The Faculty continued to host its seminar series, PolHisSoc, co-organised by the Departments of Political Science and Governance, History and Sociology.

In NAS, academic staff members have active, ongoing research collaborations with some departments at the UFS Bloemfontein Campus and other national (UKZN, SANSA, WITS, ARC, CSIR, NWU, UWC, ARC, UCT, UFH) and international (Nigeria, UK, USA, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Egypt, Japan, and China) institutions. These collaborations allow our researchers and students to access research infrastructure and resources, and thus enhance research outputs. Academic staff members also apply for and receive internal and external (OWSD, NRF, and the Royal Society) research grants for research purposes. Due to the limited research infrastructure in the Faculty at the Qwaqwa Campus, these funds greatly assist in purchasing small equipment and consumables, and in some cases sending students to conferences. This Faculty appreciates the importance of improving the academic qualifications of its staff members as a driver for improved productivity. Currently, NAS has four staff members completing their doctoral studies. The Faculty also received improved NRF ratings because of improved research quality.

The appointment of postdoctoral fellows in the Faculties of Education and NAS had a positive impact on research outputs and publications. Rated researchers will soon replace publications per se as indications of excellence, and it is therefore very positive that three of the faculties already have rated researchers and staff who have applied. The most important development is the fact that Prof Dejene has received a C2 rating from the NRF, making him the highest-rated scholar on the Qwaqwa Campus.

Dr Vincent Clark was appointed as full-time Director of the Afromontane Research Unit (ARU). The ARU is responsible for most of the research support and larger research initiatives on campus, and the main driver for the longer-term planning towards an international centre of excellence for the university. This appointment is already enhancing the research capacity of the Qwaqwa Campus, because *inter alia*, the duties and responsibilities of the Director includes: the establishment of the Afromontane Research Unit as a flagship research unit at the Qwaqwa Campus of the University of the Free State; leading and mentoring a multidisciplinary team of young and experienced researchers, support staff, student assistants, and postdoctoral fellows; initiating new, especially large and long-term research and development projects in Afromontane research; establishing and strengthening collaborative networks with peer researchers and other research and development institutions; developing innovative ways to raise funds for planned and current research and development projects; supervision of postgraduate students and improving the quality and quantity of research.

## 7.5. Decreasing dependence on tuition fees

The aforementioned research-related activities in 2017 have contributed to our broader efforts of decreasing our dependence on tuition fees. These efforts were complemented by our partnerships with local municipalities and other funders in pursuit of engaged scholarship and excellence. Banks, such as ABSA, and some of our service providers partnered with the Qwaqwa Campus to contribute to the annual Student Excellence awards and other campus community-based sports and cultural activities. These sponsorships and donations included health-based activities and celebrations of important days. On the other hand, partnerships and collaborative efforts with the district and national Health Departments have improved drastically, and this eased the burden of health-care costs on campus resources in our quest to reduce disease among students.

Enrolment management is a key strategy in decreasing the UFS's dependence on tuition fees. A total of 11 089 study choices emanated from 2017 applications for study on the Qwaqwa Campus, exceeding the campus capacity almost three times. As a result of these large numbers, admissions had to be regulated and limited to space availability at qualification levels.

The operating-system overhaul, necessitated by among others, staff capacity in SAS, yielded automated admission processes as a strategy for regulating admission numbers, and expediting communication to applicants. Faculty admission requirements served as basis for electronic admissions. Added to that, constant data-sharing with faculties was mandatory. Data accessibility for faculty convenience was also made available. The operating system also supported automated admissions and registrations, with capping limits per qualification. All the measures introduced were aimed at improving admission transparency, including the decentralisation of decision-making at faculty level. 4 876 offers were eventually made for admission to the

Qwaqwa Campus, cognisant of campus capacity. Socio-economic factors in the campus's catchment areas in relation to its financial potential also contributed to these decisions.

However, the presidential announcement of 'free education' at the end of the academic year and planning phase changed the entire picture. The fact that almost all admitted applicants could now afford to study at the institution, became 'a spanner in the works'. Consequently, over-enrolment became a reality which the institution had to deal with in the interest of broadening access to deserving students, as well as for campus stability reasons.

## Appendix 1: Code of Ethical Conduct of the UFS Council

Approved by Council on 7 June 2013

The University of the Free State (UFS, also referred to as the University) adopts this Code of Ethical Conduct in order to:

- confirm core values to which it will adhere in the governance of the University;
- promote honest and ethical conduct by members of Council by establishing standards to which they should conform; and,
- guide Council members in carrying out their duties to the UFS.

The core values of the University are:

- Superior scholarship
- Human embrace
- Institutional distinctiveness
- Emergent leadership
- Public service (linked with the academic project and the human project)

No code or policy can anticipate every situation that may arise. Accordingly, this code is intended to serve as a source of guiding principles. Council members are encouraged to bring questions about particular circumstances that may implicate one or more of the provisions of this code to the attention of the Chairperson of Council or the Chairperson of the UFS Audit and Risk Management Committee, who may provide guidance on the provision in question.

This code applies to all members of Council of the UFS, regardless of the sector, constituency, office or entity to which they owe membership. Members of Council who are employees of the UFS are also subject to the conduct requirements and conditions of service of their appointments, which are separate requirements and are not part of this code. Student members of Council are also bound by the rules and codes governing students. All Council members shall adhere to the requirements set forth below in carrying out their duties to the UFS.

### Standard of Conduct

In discharging her or his duty to direct the governance of the UFS, a Council member shall at all times act in a manner he or she believes in good faith to be in the best interests of the University, and shall exercise the care which an ordinarily prudent person in such a position would exercise under similar circumstances. The Council represents the interests of the UFS and has responsibility for overseeing governance and management and should also manage adherence to the principles of good governance by the members of Council. The Council members' responsibilities in performing this oversight function include a *duty of care* and a *duty of loyalty*.

A Council member's *duty of care* refers to the responsibility to act reasonably and exercise appropriate diligence in overseeing the governance and management of the University, making decisions and taking other actions. In meeting the *duty of care*, members of Council are expected to:

1. Attend and participate personally in Council and related committee meetings. This entails ensuring that a member is not absent without leave from two consecutive ordinary meetings of the Council (See Section 15(7)(a) of the institutional statute.)
2. Remain properly informed about the business and affairs of the University. Council members will therefore devote appropriate time to review periodic updates provided by University management, as well as studying Council materials prior to each meeting.
3. Rely on others. In doing this, Council may have to rely on Council committees, UFS management and employees, and professional advisers.
4. Make inquiries during meetings. Members of Council will make inquiries about potential problems that come to their attention and follow up in subsequent meetings or in appropriate Council sub-committees until they are reasonably satisfied that management is addressing them appropriately. (This process must be seen in conjunction with the section on Compliance Procedures below.)

A Council member's *duty of loyalty* refers to the responsibility to act in good faith and in the University's best interests, not the interests of himself or herself, a family member or an organisation with which the Council member is affiliated, or any other sectional interest of the member. Council members shall not use their positions for personal gain. The *duty of loyalty* may be relevant in cases of conflict of interest.

### Conflicts of Interest

Members of Council have a duty to be free from the influence of any conflicting interest when they participate in Council meetings or related committee deliberations or voting, and to comply with the UFS *Council Conflict of Interest Policy* and the related annual declaration of any conflict of interest.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of Council will maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary, strategic and sensitive or valuable information of the University entrusted to them, except when disclosure is authorised or legally mandated.

### **Fair Dealing**

In carrying out their responsibilities to the UFS (including establishing the University's policies and procedures), members of Council shall seek to deal fairly with the University's employees, service providers, suppliers, competitors, partners and students, and shall avoid taking unfair advantage of anyone through manipulation, concealment, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts, or any other unfair dealing practice. Council members will refrain from making or supporting any statement, promotion, or advertisement that is deceptive or fraudulent, and from the use of implication or half-truths that could falsely represent a UFS programme or service.

### **Protection and Proper Use of University Assets**

In carrying out their responsibilities to the UFS (including establishing the University's policies and procedures), Council members will protect the assets of the University, ensure their efficient use and ensure that they are used for legitimate business purposes.

### **Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

In carrying out their responsibilities to the UFS, Council members will adhere, and cause the University to adhere, to all applicable international, national and local legislation and prerequisites. In particular, Council members will seek to comply with the requirements of both the Higher Education Act (No. 101) of 1997, as amended, and the Institutional Statute: University of the Free State (Government Gazette No. 33490, of 27 August 2010, as amended).

### **Encouraging the Reporting of Possible Illegal or Unethical Behaviour**

The Council will take steps to ensure that the University (a) promotes ethical behaviour; (b) encourages employees to talk to supervisors, managers and other appropriate personnel when in doubt about the best course of action in a particular situation; (c) encourages employees to report violations of laws, regulations or the University's own regulatory framework appropriate to its personnel and students; and (d) informs employees and students that the University will not allow retaliation or victimisation for reports made in good faith.

### **Compliance Procedures**

Any waiver of any provision of this code may only be made by the Executive Committee of Council (ECC) after due deliberation and a determination that appropriate controls to protect the UFS are in place. Any subsequent resulting amendment to this code will be put before Council by the ECC for consideration.

Members of Council will communicate any suspected violations of this code promptly to the Chairperson of Council or the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Management Committee as appropriate. Violations will be investigated by the ECC or by a person or persons designated by the Council, and appropriate action will be taken in the event of any violations of the code.

**Appendix 2: Minutes of UFS Council Meetings 2017**

PROVIDED SEPARATELY

**Appendix 3: UFS Consolidated Financial Statements 2017**

PROVIDED SEPARATELY