



VISION **130**
Renew and Reimagine
for 2034

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE 2025

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*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives
through quality, impact, and care.*

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



UFS
COMMUNICATION
AND MARKETING



For over 120 years, the UFS has grown into a multi-campus university that contributes to local, national, and international knowledge production, remaining relevant in the rapidly changing global higher education landscape.





Our values of excellence, innovation and impact, accountability, care, social justice and sustainability shape and inform the UFS culture and provide a framework for our actions and decisions.

Our vision

The UFS is a research-led, student-centred, and regionally engaged university that contributes to development and social justice through the production of globally competitive graduates and knowledge.

Our mission

To impart and generate new knowledge that impactfully supports societal development.



Established in
1904



128
international
postdoctoral
fellows



3 184
permanent staff

40 160

total number of students

33 029

total undergraduate students



6 840

total postgraduate students

291

occasional students



417

students
in distance
qualifications
(on South Campus)



188

postdoctoral
fellows



Students per campus

30 457

Bloemfontein Campus

7 241

Qwaqwa Campus



2 462

South Campus



741

postgraduate
diplomas

6 547

undergraduate
students



617

master's degrees

1 047

honours degrees



189

doctoral degrees

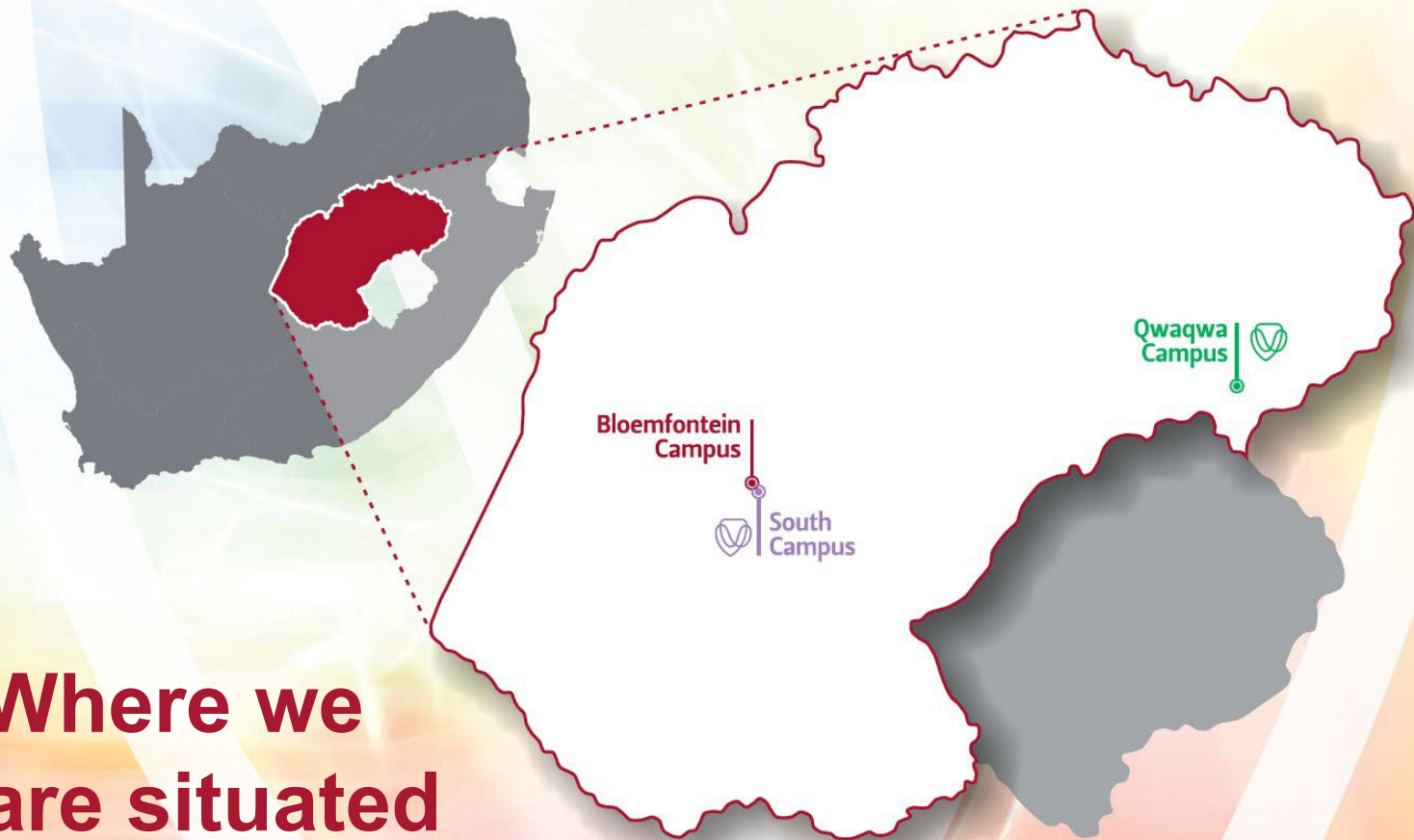


Data as on 17 September 2024.

*Graduated in 2023.

“With unwavering dedication, we will continue to transform lives and make a lasting impact on society.”

**Where we
are situated**



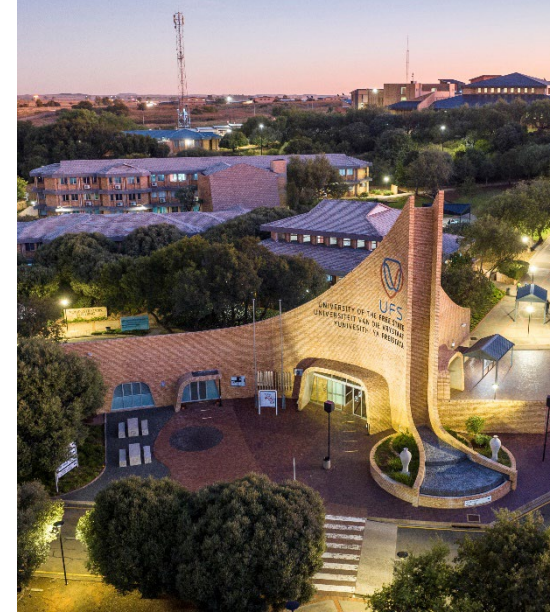
The UFS **multi-campus management model** offers an integrated higher education experience across central South Africa. Our Bloemfontein and South Campuses are situated in the capital of the Free State while the Qwaqwa Campus is based in the picturesque Eastern Free State.



Bloemfontein Campus



Qwaqwa Campus



South Campus

The UFS aspires to be a **research-led institution**, emphasising the parity between research, teaching, and learning for impact, with the express intention of significantly increasing our research capacity and capability.

Research in numbers



229

**NRF-rated
researchers**

**As on 18 September 2024.*



5%

**increase in
research outputs**

(articles, books, and
conference contributions)
from 2021 to 2023



188

**postdoctoral
fellowships**

We are steadily increasing the number, quality, diversity, and output of our research scholars, making significant contributions to global knowledge in various fields.

The UFS has seven faculties delivering top-quality programmes, driven by dedicated and highly qualified staff committed to making a real-world impact in their fields.





Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Students are prepared for the world of work and beyond, becoming successful professionals and active citizens.

Faculty of Education

Pre-service and in-service teachers receive training for their work in schools, ensuring a strong disciplinary foundation.



Faculty of The Humanities

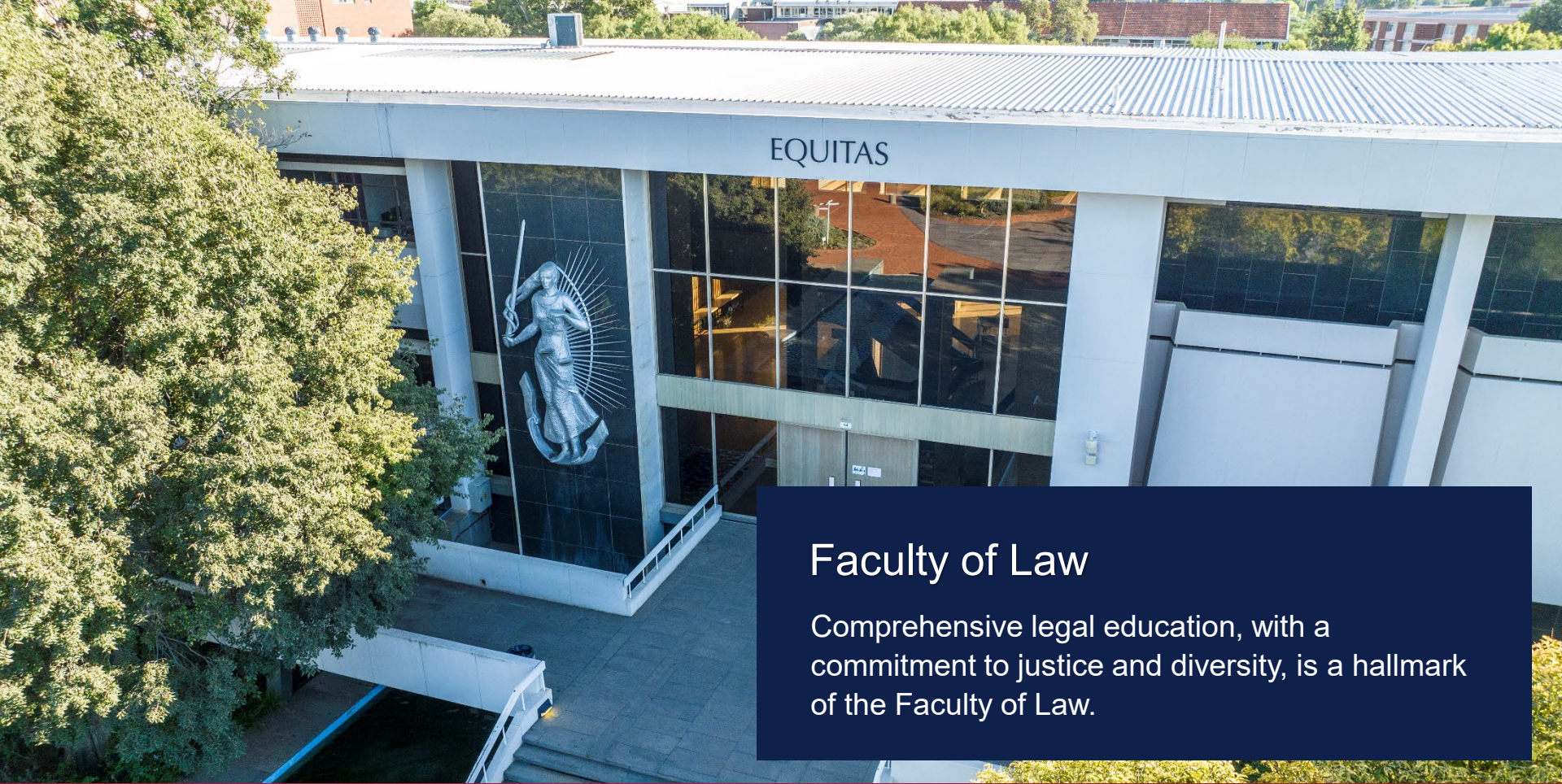
This diverse faculty offers multidisciplinary programmes, producing graduates who contribute to community well-being and humanitarian leadership.





Faculty of Health Sciences

The Faculty of Health Sciences is widely regarded as one of the top institutions in the country, noted for its production of high-calibre health professionals across its five schools.



EQUITAS

Faculty of Law

Comprehensive legal education, with a commitment to justice and diversity, is a hallmark of the Faculty of Law.



Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

A multidisciplinary approach to education and research is embraced, offering a diverse range of disciplines across 25 divisions within the natural, agricultural, and building sciences.





Faculty of Theology and Religion

Students are empowered to become dynamic church leaders, impacting communities with hope, love, and peace through responsible Bible interpretation, ethical and empathetic community involvement, and critical discernment in addressing complex societal issues.



The university follows a comprehensive internationalisation approach, strategically aligning and integrating programmes and activities to be globally relevant and competitive while being locally grounded.

Research collaboration, staff and student mobility, digital internationalisation, and other projects are implemented comprehensively.

Caring for our fellow humans

We are committed to caring for ourselves, our fellow humans, and the natural environment. We seek a new citizenship and new ways of belonging to the UFS that are premised on respect, inclusivity, listening, and empathy.



Outstanding student experience

The UFS is dedicated to ensuring an outstanding student experience, with the holistic development of our students among our main priorities.



Sport

The UFS develops well-rounded graduates and boasts several successes and achievements on the sports field.



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Inclusive and accessible

We are committed to providing inclusive and accessible living, teaching, and learning spaces.

Supporting our students

A team of professionals **supports our students holistically**, working hard to ensure their physical safety and improve their mental health.

The UFS, a secure campus environment, is committed to the safety of its staff, students and visitors.





What we are good at

- We are working towards **improving food security in Africa** through the genetic enhancement of staple crops in our Agriculture to Agro-Processing programme.
- Through **innovative research into cancer detection and treatment**, we instil new hope in cancer patients.
- Understanding Africa – its people, politics, culture, relations, and knowledge systems – our **Centre for Gender and Africa Studies** provides an inter-faculty approach to gender studies.
- The Institute for Groundwater Studies is **the leading groundwater research group in Africa** dedicated to the sustainable management of groundwater resources.
- High-calibre postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows from all over the world benefit from expert mentorship and peer review in our **International Studies Group**, enabling them to publish manuscripts and access prestigious international research opportunities.

- The **Next Generation Sequencing Unit** is a cutting-edge research facility focusing on genomics sequencing.
- The **Department of Pharmacology** is developing one of the most advanced pharmacology Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)-accredited research and development laboratories in the country, which will be a centre of excellence for the government, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the African Union's (AU) Commission for Social Development.
- The **Robert WM Frater Cardiovascular Research Centre** is a leading cardiovascular research institution in sub-Saharan Africa, providing an interdisciplinary training and research platform for scientists and clinicians.
- **Boyden Observatory** and **Naval Hill Planetarium** are two unique facilities that form vital components in the display and communication of South Africa's astronomical heritage.
- The **Centre for Microscopy** boasts cutting-edge electron microscopy equipment, providing the infrastructure for exceptional and globally competitive research.



- The **National Control Laboratory for Biological Products (NCL)** is one of only 12 laboratories worldwide contracted to perform vaccine testing for the World Health Organisation.
- The UFS is also home to the **South African Doping Control Laboratory (SADoCoL)**. The laboratory is tasked with researching and analysing samples from elite athletes and boasts the international accreditation of ISO/IEC17025.
- The UFS has ties with **FARMOVS**, a **world-class clinical research facility** with more than 3 000 clinical trials since 1974.
- The Interdisciplinary Centre for Digital Futures (ICDF) is a collaborative, co-creative, synergistic space where scientists and engineers collaborate with different roleplayers to provide **a unique intellectual ecosystem that drives the digital future** responsibly and critically for the benefit of society.
- The **Fromontane Research Unit** actively engages in and promotes research on Southern African mountains.
- Teacher professional development, learner support, and parent-empowering initiatives are at the core of the activities offered at the Sci-Ed Science Education Centre.



Love Africa Marketing | MDT/FCA - Images courtesy of Boundless Southern Africa.

- Our Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting and Bachelor of Accounting have **accreditation from several professional bodies**, namely the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, South African Institute of Professional Accountants, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, and South African Institute of Taxation.
- The **SANRAL Chair in Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology Education**, based in our Faculty of Education, helps to train teachers, support student-teacher interns, and incentivise education results so that participating schools become centres of excellence.
- **Simulation training** provided by the Clinical Simulation and Skills Unit in our School of Clinical Medicine offers hands-on training and learning opportunities, allowing for deliberate practice and mastery of skills. Human patient simulators enhance the education and training of medical students by expanding the teaching platform. Our School of Nursing also boasts state-of-the-art simulation laboratories known as the SPACE.

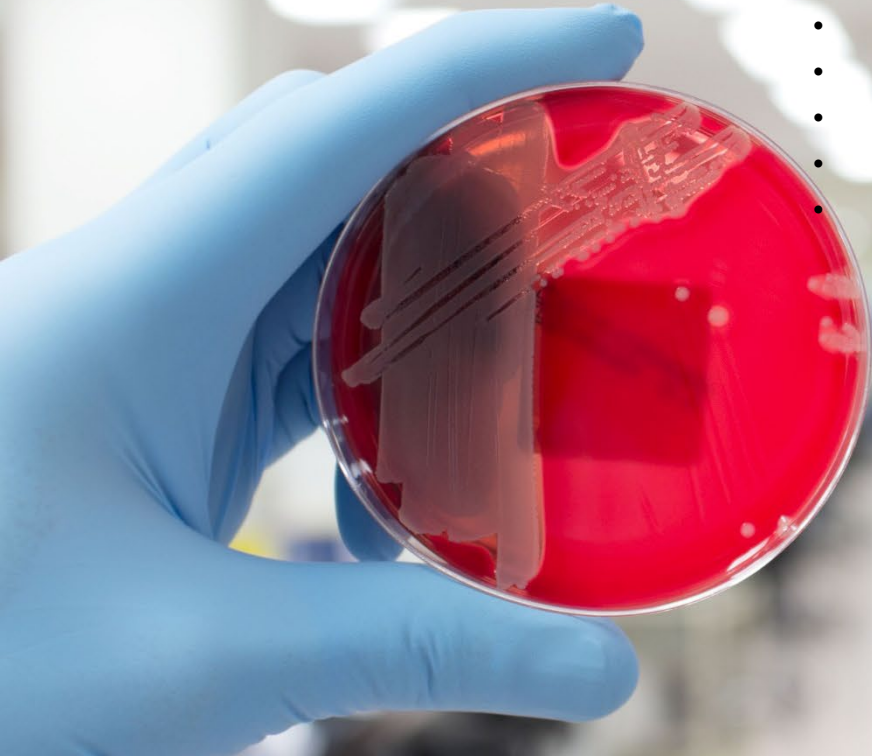




- The **Merensky Group for Aerial Geological Image Classification (MAGIC) Lab** develops drone-based geological imaging in South Africa, with specific attention to mineral and groundwater exploration.
- The **School of Financial Planning Law** is well-known for the Postgraduate Diploma in Financial Planning, which is a cornerstone qualification in becoming a Certified Financial Planner.
- The Free State Centre for Human Rights is a **hub of excellence for human rights studies**, drawing together academics from various disciplines, practitioners, and activists.
- The UFS Law Clinic is **one of a handful of university law clinics in South Africa** with reportable and legally significant judgements.
- The **Academy for Multilingualism** was born from the UFS' commitment to multilingualism and is linked to our pursuit of social justice.

We are also leading research in:

- Disease Resistance and Quality in Field Crops
- Solid-State Luminescent and Advanced Materials
- Higher Education and Human Development
- City-Region Economies
- Pathogenic Yeasts
- Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Pathogens



Building up to 130 years of existence, the UFS developed *Vision 130*, which seeks to position the institution as globally recognised, known for its academic excellence, quality, and impact. Located in the heart of South Africa, we strive for maximum societal impact and sustainable relationships, and we are committed to being a diverse, inclusive, and equitable university.

