

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE 2026

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE



www.ufs.ac.za

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



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

“At the University of the Free State, we are committed to **Responsible Societal Futures**, using our knowledge and resources to build a more just, sustainable, and humane society.”

– Prof Hester C. Klopper
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



Our vision

The UFS aspires to be an innovative research-led, student-centred, and regionally engaged university that contributes meaningfully to responsible societal futures.

Our mission

The university will generate and impart new knowledge that advances innovative and sustainable solutions to inform society's contemporary and future progress.

Our values

The UFS subscribes to the values of *Excellence*, *Impact*, *Accountability*, *Care*, *Social Justice*, and *Sustainability*, which are realised through the conduct of the wider university community that shapes and informs our culture and provides a framework for our actions and decisions.



EXCELLENCE



IMPACT



ACCOUNTABILITY



CARE



SOCIAL JUSTICE



SUSTAINABILITY



UFS IN NUMBERS

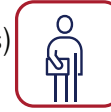


Established in
1904

 **3** campuses

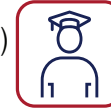
Students
(2026 registrations)

38 438



Students
(2025 graduates)

9 478



Staff
(permanent and temporary staff)

4 731



7 FACULTIES



Economic and
Management
Sciences



Education



Health
Sciences



The
Humanities



Law



Natural and
Agricultural
Sciences



Theology
and Religion

Registered
students



Contact
37 477
(97,5%)



Distance
961
(2,5%)

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS



9th
in Africa in the
THE World University
Rankings 2026



9th
place in the
QS World University
Rankings: Sub-Saharan
Africa 2026



SUSTAINABILITY

Solar power:

8 MW solar PV across campuses
(saving more than R94,3 million since 2017)

Water-wise campuses:

Indigenous plants, smart irrigation, greywater systems, rainwater harvesting



UFS IN NUMBERS

The UFS offers a wide range of qualifications, with selected standout programmes.



- CFA-accredited BCom in Finance, accredited Accounting programmes, and CHE-accredited UFS Business School in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
- Strong language offerings in the Faculty of The Humanities, including South African Sign Language
- Health Sciences: Surgical robot system, Clinical Simulation Unit, Nursing SPACE facility
- Innovative programmes in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, including Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering (2026) and Veterinary Science (2028)
- Law Clinic: Pro bono services, litigation, and hands-on student training

RESEARCH IMPACT



- 15+ sporting codes with top-class facilities
- Thriving arts and culture programmes





Our campuses

The University of the Free State brings learning to life through its campuses in central South Africa. In Bloemfontein, the Bloemfontein and South Campuses share space in the bustling heart of the Free State, while further east – surrounded by mountains – the Qwaqwa Campus offers a more scenic setting.



On the **Bloemfontein Campus**, students from diverse backgrounds come together to learn, grow, and build their future. It is a place where old buildings and modern design stand side by side, where unique artworks catch your eye, and where state-of-the-art research, learning, teaching, and sports facilities work hand in hand to shape the full student experience.



Embraced by the Maluti Mountains, the **Qwaqwa Campus** serves as a sanctuary of higher education for the region's youth. Understanding the rural heartbeat of the Eastern Free State, our programmes are grounded in research that seeks innovative strategies for job creation and economic vitality. This is where academic excellence meets real-world solutions, in an environment that inspires and empowers.



Located in the hills south of Bloemfontein, the **South Campus** is central to the university's blended learning approach. It is a second home to the Centre for Teaching and Learning and combines traditional learning with modern techniques to advance education. The campus also plays a key role in preparing South Africa's future educators through the BEd Foundation Phase programme.





Our faculties

The University of the Free State is home to seven faculties offering quality programmes, led by passionate and experienced staff members who are focused on making a real-world impact in their fields.





Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences equips students with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the workplace and contribute as active citizens. Whether you are aiming to build a career in finance, accounting, or management, this faculty offers programmes designed to prepare you for success.





Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education plays a key role in shaping future educators by preparing pre-service teachers with a strong academic foundation for the classroom. We also support in-service teachers through continuous learning and development.





Faculty of Health Sciences

We are proud of the highly skilled health professionals trained across our five schools: School of Clinical Medicine, School of Biomedical Sciences, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, School of Pathology, and School of Nursing.





Faculty of The Humanities

The Faculty of the Humanities is home to a rich mix of disciplines. Our graduates make a meaningful impact on society through knowledge, creativity, communication, and care – enriching communities through the arts, social services, and cultural understanding. The faculty also offers a variety of language programmes, including a highly regarded South African Sign Language programme.





Faculty of Law

The Faculty of Law is committed to academic excellence, social justice, and transformative legal education, and to producing graduates who are well equipped to shape the legal landscape of South Africa and abroad. The university excelled in the THE World University Rankings by Subject (Law), securing a position in the 301–400 band.





Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences embraces a multidisciplinary way of thinking about education and research. With 25 divisions covering natural, agricultural, and building sciences, the faculty allows students to explore a wide range of study fields.





Faculty of Theology and Religion

Rooted in Africa and engaged with the world, the Faculty of Theology and Religion offers programmes in both Theology and Religion Studies that prepare students for transformative leadership within faith communities and the broader society. Through responsible biblical interpretation, ethical and empathetic community engagement, and critical reflection on social issues, students are equipped to inspire hope and contribute to positive social change.



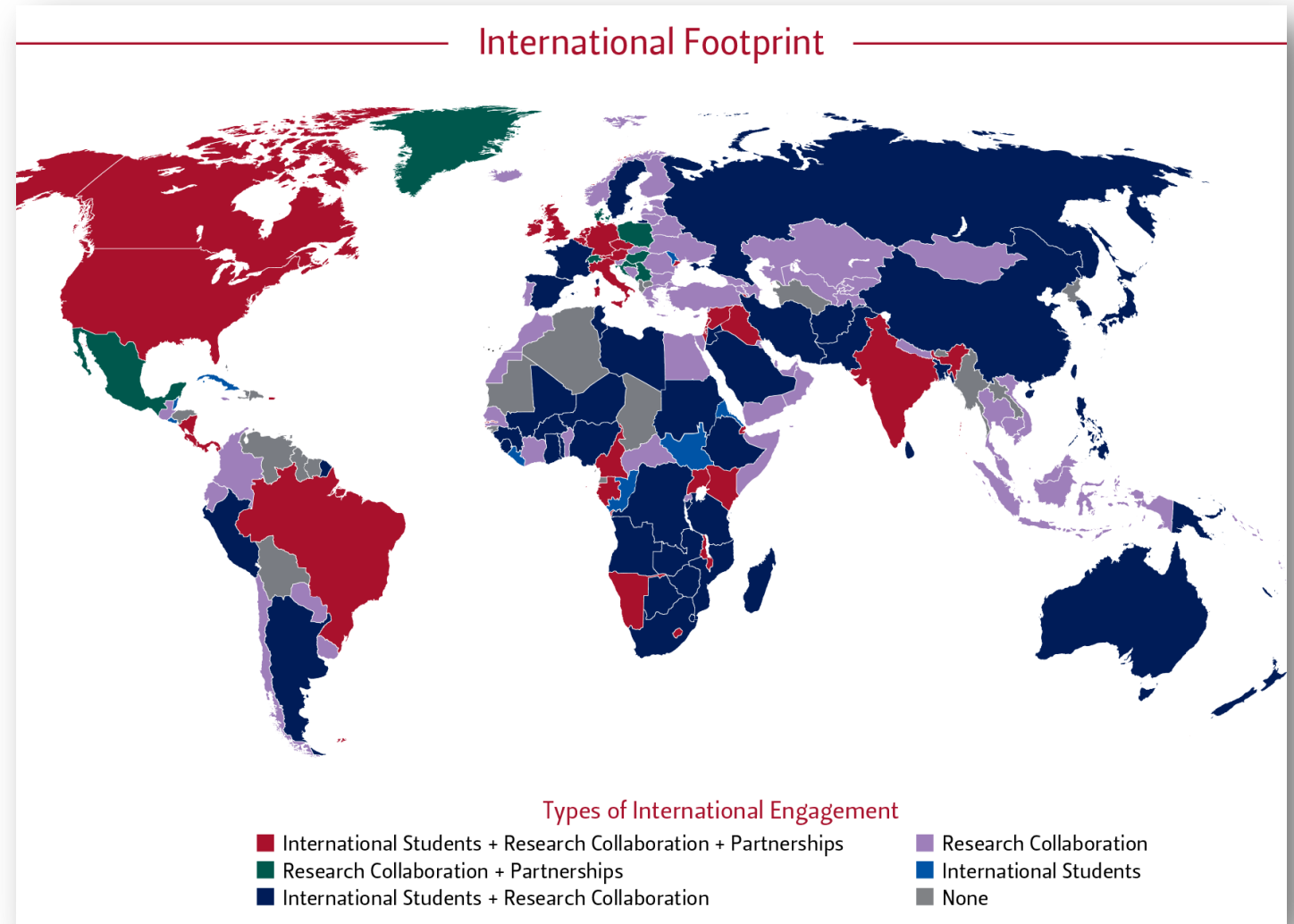
Learning and teaching

The UFS learning and teaching environment is constantly evolving, reshaping itself to meet the needs of a changing world and to equip students for impact in a global, digital, and diverse society. This plays a key role in positioning the university as a future-focused, high-performance institution with local relevance and international reach.



International Partnerships and Relations

As a university deeply rooted in its region, yet boldly connected to the world, the UFS shapes graduates and knowledge that thrive on the global stage. The University of the Free State follows a comprehensive internationalisation approach, making it a core institutional capability. By strategically aligning and integrating programmes and activities, the UFS ensures global relevance and engagement while remaining locally grounded.



Research that matters

Research at the University of the Free State is driven by a clear purpose: to generate knowledge that shapes sustainable, equitable, and socially just futures. Guided by national and global frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and South Africa's National Development Plan, the UFS directs its research energy towards solutions that matter.

← *Our research focus areas.*

Water and water quality:



Social justice and the removal of inequalities:



Health and well-being:



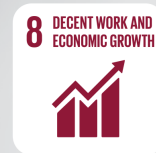
Food security and land reform:



New scientific and industrial challenges:



Local and regional socio-economic development:





Research chairs:



7 SARCHI¹
chairs



1 SANRAL² chair in
Mathematics, Natural Sciences
and Technology Education



1 ETD³-SETA³
chair in
Mathematics
Education



7 chairs under the Agricultural
Research Council (ARC), the
Department of Agriculture,
and the University of the Free
State (UFS) (ARC-DoA-UFS)
research chair initiative

¹South African Research Chairs Initiative ²South African National Roads Agency Limited
³Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority



250
NRF⁴-rated
researchers



479
master's
graduates



161
postdoctoral
fellows

494
research
fellows



135
doctoral
graduates



3 863
international
collaborating
institutions



⁴National Research Foundation

Our research ecosystem nurtures excellence, transformation, and the next generation of scholars, supported by strong partnerships, cutting-edge facilities, and a commitment to relevance. At the UFS, research is not an end point – it is a catalyst for meaningful societal change.





Innovation and industry impact

The University of the Free State is steadily expanding its innovation and intellectual property footprint through a growing ecosystem that connects high-quality research with industry collaboration and societal impact.

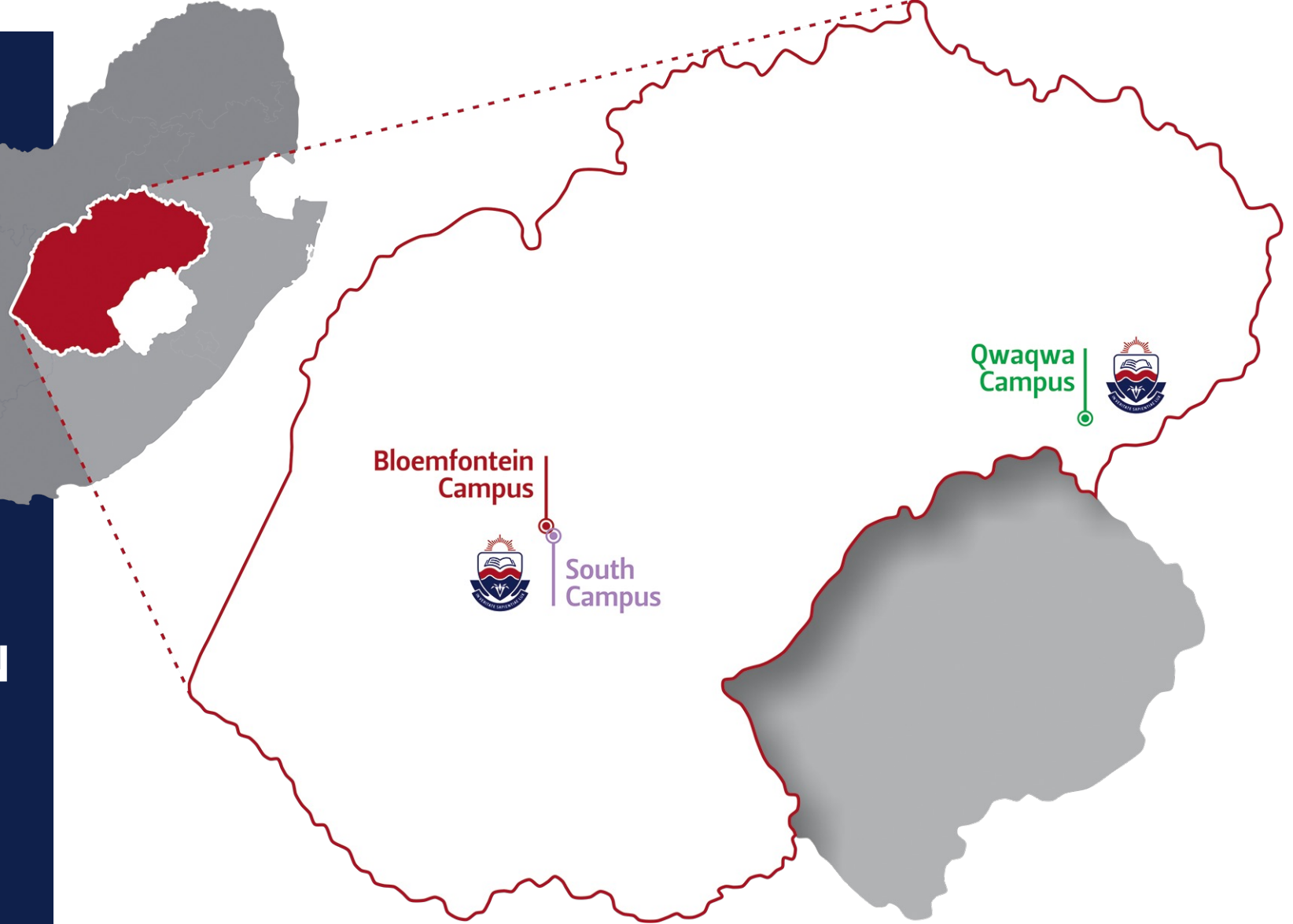


At the UFS, we believe that student life is about shaping well-rounded individuals. That is why we place holistic growth and the overall student experience at the heart of everything we do. Through strengthened support structures, leadership development initiatives, expanded wellness programmes, and inclusive engagement platforms, we ensure that every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Student life and success



**THE UFS ON
THE MAP**
One vision,
three
campuses





We strive to be a university with a consistent outward focus, delivering profound results – building on past achievements while constantly transforming ourselves to stay relevant in the dynamic and ever-changing international higher education sphere.

We lead through service with impact.

And we walk with purpose.

Welcome to the University of the Free State.



Thank you.

