

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, OCTOBER 2008

INTRODUCTION

Already during the UFS Institutional Review the institution declared that it sees the HEQC quality assurance and improvement process as an important opportunity to learn and gain insight into the institution's own quality management of the core functions of the institution (teaching & learning, research and community service/engagement). The view was already then expressed that the institution would use these insights to wisely and optimally design/redesign existing quality assurance systems and processes to continuously develop the University's institutional quality. The UFS Institutional Improvement Plan therefore forms part of the institution's integrated planning process and as such is embedded in the UFS Strategic Plan: 2006 - 2008 and especially UFS Transformation Plan: 2007 – 2010 (UFS TP). The latter is an extension and further specification of the former.

For purposes of this plan it is important to note that the Draft Transformation Plan, at the disposal of the Audit team during the Institutional Audit visit, has since been finalised as the UFS Transformation Plan: 2007 - 2010 (UFS TP). This Transformation Plan (not including the Transformation Projects) is attached as Annexure 1. Most of the issues mentioned, and recommendations made by the Audit Panel are encapsulated within these projects of the UFS TP indicating UFS's planning to address the relevant issues identified by the institution during its Institutional Review. **These transformation projects are contained in section B of this Improvement Plan.**

This Improvement Plan therefore contains the HEQC recommendations and issues/areas indicated by the HEQC needing attention and are presented in this Plan in the same sequence as in the HEQC Audit Report. Associated issues/areas identified by the UFS in its 2006 Institutional Review (*University of the Free State Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity*) are also indicated. The above are categorised in the following improvement issue clusters, which is also in accordance with the divisions/categorisations contained in the HEQC report:

- Issue cluster 1:** Institutional Mission, incorporating transformation with reference to equity, redress and institutional culture (See Section 2 of HEQC Audit Report as well as Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4);
- Issue cluster 2:** Institutional Planning, Resource allocation and Quality Management (See Section 3 of HEQC Report as well as Recommendation 5 and Commendations 1 and 2);
- Issue cluster 3:** General arrangements for Teaching and Learning Quality (See Section 4 of HEQC Report as well as Recommendations 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and Commendations 3 and 4);

Issue cluster 4: Management of Research Quality (See Section 5 of HEQC Report as well as Recommendations 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and Commendations 5, 6, and 7);

Issue cluster 5: Management of Quality of Community Engagement (See Section 6 of HEQC Report as well as Commendation 8).

The institutional process for the compilation of the UFS Improvement Plan consisted of the following processes:

- The identification by the Planning Unit of those areas in need of improvement, followed by the individual planning of the various improvement activities by the different institutional line structures.
- An institutional participative process (line structures, faculties, services, committees, staff, etc.) to verify the contents and the feasibility of the planning, as well as to assure the necessary buy-in.
- Official discussion and approval by the Executive Management, followed by presentation to the Council for noting.
- Official signing-off by the Vice-Rector: Academic Planning.

LEGEND:

GREEN = COMPLETED

ORANGE = IN PROCESS

RED = NEEDS ATTENTION AND/OR FURTHER PLANNING

SECTION A: RESPONSE TO HEQC RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENDATIONS

1. ISSUE CLUSTER 1: INSTITUTIONAL MISSION:TRANSFORMATION (Equity, redress and institutional culture)

1.1 STAFF EQUITY

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 1

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State consider conducting an investigation into the nature and extent of the internal obstacles which might be preventing speedier change in the University's staff profile and its capacity to recruit and retain black staff. The findings of such an investigation should be used to develop and implement the necessary strategies to ensure that equity targets are met. (HEQC: UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 9 & 38.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

"The Panel would like to encourage the institution to investigate the impact of the language policy on staff equity and to develop the necessary measures to counteract those aspects which undermine UFS's efforts in other areas such as employment equity. The Panel urges UFS to analyse both the nature and extent of the internal obstacles to speedier change in the institution's staff profile as well as its capacity to retain black staff." (HEQC: UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 8 – 9. Also see p. 38.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

"The UFS has only had limited success in recruiting and retaining significant numbers of Black staff. Staff equity was highlighted by all faculties and many support services divisions as a major challenge". (UFS Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 238.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 1.3.1 Operationalising sufficient staff diversity

Project 1.3.2 Finalisation of revised EE

Project 2.5 Employment practices

(See also Appendix 2 for Employment Equity Three Year Rolling Plan.)

NOTE

Since the Audit of 2006 a number of action steps were taken to improve the University's equity profile. Amongst others, the following need to be highlighted:

- The UFS conducted a review of its employment policies, practices, procedures and working environment to identify employment barriers that adversely affect people from designated groups and to remove discriminatory contents.
- Acknowledging that barriers still exist, the UFS has progressively taken steps to eliminate barriers and implement policies to address these identified barriers. (See Section B: Project 2.5.)

Regular policy audits are conducted by the Employment Equity Committee and HRD and reported to the Executive Committee.

- Regarding the statistical analysis of the workforce profile, the UFS conducted an *internal analysis* of its workforce by considering the UFS employment equity categorisation, as well as HEMIS categories, over a period of 3 years.
- Two external comparisons using Higher Education data were also conducted using Department of Labour Employment Equity Reports (form EEA2) and Higher Education Management Information System data.
- The institution has allocated almost R10 million for 2009 to employ additional staff in both academic and administrative positions from equity groupings and has allocated money (R4, 8 million for 2009) for the continuation of the Grow Our Own Timber Project (GOOT).
- Apart from measures taken by the Central EE Committee progress is also made with the continuous growing number of Thuthuka Bursary holders for post-doctoral studies (aimed at black and female students). The number of bursaries increased from 11 in 2004 to a remarkable 60 in 2008.

1.2 DIVERSITY

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 2

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State consider the need to investigate the extent to which the transformation strategy and the language policy chosen by the institution support each other, and explore the most adequate means to overcome practices which undermine the University's goal of becoming a non-racial, non-sexist, multilingual and multicultural higher education institution, especially in the area of employment equity. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 9 & 40.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The Panel was particularly concerned about the gaps between the institution's goals and its current practices in the areas of multilingualism and multiculturalism. While the Panel was pleased to learn that the language policy was adopted in order to enable UFS to become multilingual and racially integrated, the Panel was concerned that an unintended consequence of the policy might be that it is dividing the student population along racial lines, as white students predominantly attend programmes that are offered in Afrikaans, while black students predominantly attend programmes offered in English. The Panel would like to encourage the institution to investigate this matter so as to address both the reality and the perception of an issue which has the potential to undermine seriously the institution's ability to achieve its goal of becoming a 'true South African university'. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 9. Also see p. 39.)
- (b) The Panel was encouraged to hear during its interview with the Language Committee that this body is aware of the need to conduct an investigation into the implementation of the language policy to determine the extent of these problems and their associated risks. The Transformation Task Team is responsible for identifying solutions to implementation problems. The Panel suggests that that the Team consider developing and implementing the necessary support mechanisms for Afrikaans mother tongue lecturers to be able to lecture in English competently and for English-speaking lecturers to acquire a level of acceptable proficiency in Afrikaans. Furthermore, the Panel is of the view that, while the Draft Transformation Plan addresses the language policy as an academic matter, the planned strategies should reflect an understanding of the language policy as also affecting the social aspects of student life. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 9. Also see p. 39.)
- (c) In terms of the multicultural dimension of UFS's understanding of transformation, the University considers itself as having played a leadership and pioneering role in addressing past divisions, prejudices and stereotypes through the steps that it took in the late 1980s to open up the institution to all races. The Panel acknowledges that the University has put initiatives in place to support its goal of becoming a non-racial, non-sexist, multilingual and multicultural university, but is concerned that the objectives of these policies might be undermined by some attitudes and practices among staff and students. The Panel encourages the institution to monitor carefully the impact of these initiatives to ensure that they fully support the achievement of their stated goals. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 9 - 10. Also see p. 40.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

Notable success was achieved in forging a new campus culture of inclusiveness, tolerance and respect. In a society emerging from a fractured history and engaged in a tortuous struggle to overcome racial, cultural and linguistic divisions, the UFS have demonstrated the possibility of creating a campus and an institution of higher learning, where diversity (and especially multiculturalism and multilingualism) is not only managed well, but is cherished and seen as a resource to enrich the life experiences of students, staff, management and stakeholders in creating a new post-apartheid society. Nevertheless, diversity problems still exist and needs attention (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 222.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 1.2.3 Inclusive and ongoing diversity and multicultural sensitisation programme

Project 1.4 Language (Policy) and diversity

NOTE

- The UFS will revisit the impact of the language policy with regard to parallel-medium instruction on diversity issues and the segregation of students in the teaching and learning environment.
- Multicultural group tasks and authentic learning events that address the issues of diversity experienced by students in the teaching-learning environment will also be considered. In addition, consideration is given to include a compulsory module on diversity and social responsibility (University 101) into all qualifications.

Project 2.4 Language Empowerment and Transformation

NOTE

- Interpreting Services are provided for all institutional meetings as well as in student residences (an amount of R1.5m was approved for 2009).
- All interpreters are professionally trained.
- The Centre for Training of Professional Interpreters was upgraded to one of the best facilities of its kind at a higher education institution in South Africa in January 2008 to the amount of R1 million. The Centre can accommodate interpreting to and from 11 languages.
- The UFS Language Committee, with an advisory function to Executive Management, Senate and Council, has been allocated an ombudsman function in order to monitor language complaints and the resolving thereof. In 2007 advice regarding the quality assurance of translation and interpreting practices across the university was provided and implemented.

Project 3.1.1 Innovative teaching models

Project 3.4.2 Staff development

(See also Appendix 2 for Employment Equity Three Year Rolling Plan and Appendix 5 for Teaching and Learning Policy/Plan.)

NOTE

The issue of developing academic staff's language proficiency skills is discussed under recommendation 12.

1.3 RESIDENCE PLACEMENT

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 3

The HEQC recommends that, as a matter of urgency, the University of the Free State review all policies related to student residences. Such a review should include an examination of the current placement policy in order to make it more transparent, the publication of University approved criteria for selection into residences, a review of decision-making structures, more intensive diversity training in the department of student accommodation, new types of training for wardens, and a more systematic monitoring of student satisfaction issues in the residences. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 10 & 41 - 42.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) An investigation commissioned by the Executive Committee in 2005 to determine the status of a number of aspects of student life, revealed that residences seem to be where racial integration is most resisted and that this resistance is particularly strong among white male students. An investigation commissioned by the institution found that both campus and day-residences are divided along racial lines. The report identifies the residence placement policy as playing a key role in creating mono-racial residences. The Panel is concerned about a number of aspects of the process and structures that regulate placement and conditions in UFS residences, but of special concern is the lack of transparency about the criteria used to decide the placement of students in residences and the way this system seems to be perpetuating racial segregation, racism and sexism at the institution. Senior management is aware that integration in residences has not been effective and that the placement policy and practice has not supported transformation. The Panel concurs with Executive Management regarding the urgency of taking a far more decisive and proactive stand in relation to this issue, which constitutes a fundamental risk for the achievement of transformation. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 10. Also see p. 41.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

- (a) The current residence placement policy, though not intended in that way, has resulted, through the free choice of students, in a situation where the majority of students in a residence are either Black or White. This poses a major risk for transformation and needs to be addressed urgently. Therefore the UFS recognizes the current residence placement policy and practice as a stumbling block in achieving full integration of the student body and in advancing the ideals of multiculturalism and diversity. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, pp. 204 – 205.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 1.1.1: Residence Placement Policy (See also Appendix 4 for Residence Policy.)

NOTE

Due to problems experienced during the implementation phase of the approved residence policy during 2008, external capacity was contracted to assist the UFS with the implementation of the policy. The targets set for integration were reached in most of the female residences but not in male residences. Interpreters were allocated to residences for meetings, wardens were appointed and trained and student leaders, SRC members and residence committees were trained to implement the integration policy. With the assistance of the external agency much more dialogue regarding diversity issues occur now on campus.

1.4 INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 4

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State develop appropriate mechanisms to monitor the impact that tensions among, and between, staff and students about various aspects of its institutional culture are having on the core functions of the University and the extent to which the interventions already put in place by management are effective in the face of resistance to change on the part of some students, staff and parents. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 11 & 42.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) As for the aspects of multiculturalism which involve student life outside the residences, senior management indicated that in their view integration is taking place and that different groups had opportunities to interact through academic life and community service, even if the language of choice separated their interaction in the teaching and learning process. The Panel would like to encourage the institution to think of the concrete forms that a process of re-socialisation could take; how these could be more effective and bolder than other initiatives already in place; how these activities would involve the SRC; and how they would relate conceptually and practically to the existing social contract project. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 10 and p. 42.)
- (b) Social life is a crucial aspect of the total student experience at a university and it defines the quality of education as much as curricular experiences do. The Panel is concerned that some of the academic staff who were interviewed did not see a connection between the curricular and non-curricular aspects of education, such as institutional culture, and therefore did not consider the current state of affairs a serious risk to the University's core activities. However, the Panel is satisfied that Executive Management understands the complexity of the educational experience and is aware that attitudes towards race and gender and issues of safety and health all form part of students' learning environment and need to be managed to ensure successful learning. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 10 – 11 and p. 42.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

- Project 1.1.2 Enhancement of social and academic interaction of students
- Project 1.2.1 Determinants of and Plan for creating and maintaining a sense of belonging
- Project 1.2.2 Monitoring of Plan for sense of belonging
- Project 1.2.3 Inclusive ongoing diversity and multicultural sensitisation programme
- Project 2.1 Extra curricular activities
- Project 2.3 Frontline support services
- Project 2.7 Institutional charter

Project 3.4.2 Staff development

(See also Appendix 3 for Draft Institutional Charter.)

2. ISSUE CLUSTER 2: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT

2.1 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 5

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State consider the need to assess critically the achievements and weaknesses of its integrated management system particularly in relation to the management's ability to deal with the quality and academic risks posed by the potential failure of its transformation agenda, and develop a strategy to sharpen the functions and responsibilities of, and between, Council, Management and Senate. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 11 & 46.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The Panel is of the view that, since the institution has to give effect to its commitment to its mission and understanding of transformation in an environment of growing competition for scarce funding and human resources, the spaces in which to negotiate with, and between, various institutional stakeholders and interest groups could become critical to the development of consensus about policy implementation in the three core functions and the operationalisation of the institution's strategic goals. The Panel would like to suggest that, taking the achievements of the integrated management system as a point of departure, the institution review the way this system creates spaces for accountability and debate about the institution's identity as an 'engaged, research intensive, multicultural and multilingual university'. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 11. Also see p. 45.)
- (b) "The HEQC acknowledges the development and implementation of an integrated system for planning, resource allocation and quality management at UFS. The Panel is concerned, however, that there are instances in which planning and quality management do not seem to be working in a coordinated manner. In terms of the financial and non-financial costs of academic decisions, the Panel also explored UFS's degree of awareness of the long-term financial viability of providing an extensive range of modules in two languages, and the unexpected consequences of this for academic culture. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 11. Also see p. 47.)
- (c) The Panel learned that the functioning of the Portfolio Committee for Education and Research (PCER), which has a sizable agenda, results in long delays before strategic education and research decisions are finally ratified by Senate, partly because research issues have to be tabled at the University Research Committee (URC) as well. The Panel noted that the timing of the URC meetings seemed erratic, and found that a number of matters did not seem to have been considered by the URC, among them large research contracts and the research outputs of faculties and departments. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 9. Also see p. 39.)

Associated areas identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

- (a) The Portfolio Committee and sub-committee structure has over time developed into a somewhat inconsistent and not always coherent and logical configuration. While some Portfolio Committees function well, others have ceased to exist or function. Vital committees, such as the Central Community Service Committee operate outside the formal Portfolio Committee structure, whereas the Information Technology Committee (as a Portfolio Committee) is arguably not logically positioned, although it functions effectively. A variety of so-called “operational” committees for co-ordination of operational activities, are formed spontaneously, with the intent to improve effectiveness and efficiency and co-operation among operational sections, and in general also to enhance the quality of outcomes. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 234.)
- (b) The shift from a exclusively traditional collegial management approach to a more managerial approach, which sees the University’s Executive Management act with delegated powers from Council as well as Senate, created a feeling among some Senate members and management that the role of Senate had become diluted and that it only acted as a rubber stamp for decisions taken by management. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity pp. 83 – 84.)
- (c) The optimal functioning and role of the Institutional Forum, given the high degree of democratization and diverse representation of stakeholders on Council as well as the functional democratization of management structures of the UFS, is a challenge which has to be addressed (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 233.)
- (d) The diversity in faculty management systems, structures, processes, role and responsibilities, leads to a lack of congruence in some instances between institutional and faculty committees and their functions, and a lack of clearly spelt out roles and responsibilities of some faculty committees with regard to crucial quality management and assurance functions. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 234.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.6 Governance and management

NOTE

This project on the revision of current governance and management structures has reached the stage where a first draft discussion document was tabled. The role of the Institutional Forum was also evaluated and will also integrate perspectives from an investigation launched by Higher Education South Africa (HESA) into the functioning of institutional forums at higher education institutions. The UFS has also participated in August 2008 in the ACU Benchmark project and one of the focus areas for this year’s programme was Governance and Management. The report from the [international] assessor will be tabled at a Council Meeting in the 4th term of 2008 and actions plan considered to improve the current model.

HEQC COMMENDATION 1

The HEQC commends the UFS on the innovative approach it has taken to optimise the use and viability of its campuses through a partnership model with other regional and national institutions which takes into account regional and national needs while simultaneously responding to the restructuring imperatives of public higher education and can therefore be regarded as good practice for the national level.

NOTE

Unfortunately the Central University of Technology withdrew from the initiative while plans submitted to the Department of Education to bring this initiative to fruition have not resulted in any response. The UFS will however continue with the initiative.

HEQC COMMENDATION 2

The HEQC commends the UFS for using the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) University Management Benchmarking Programme in a systematic and regular way to improve the quality of management and academic processes at the institution.

NOTE

The UFS has again participated in the ACU Benchmark project in August 2008 and one of the focus areas for this year's programme was Governance and Management. The report from the [international] assessor will be tabled at a Council Meeting in the 4th term of 2008 and actions plan considered to improve the current model.

3. ISSUE CLUSTER 3: GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY

3.1 THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 6

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State continues to make the improvement of teaching and learning a fundamental and urgent priority at the institution. This should include the development of mechanisms to monitor the influence that language competence, class size and prior high school experience have on students' learning and how these issues affect the quality of teaching. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 13 – 14 & 54.)

- a) Among the main problems faced by the institution in the area of teaching and learning are the low success rates of all students and the gap between the success rates of white and black students. Taking into account 2004 HEMIS figures, UFS success rates are below the national norm at all qualification levels, and particularly low at the postgraduate level below the master's degree. The Panel found that the reasons for this are fairly well known among academic staff and the University's senior management: they include student under-preparedness, students' poor language competence, financial constraints, staff workloads and class sizes. Despite the fact that the UFS seems to be putting mechanisms in place to support students academically, the Panel is not persuaded that the institution has an equally critical and proactive approach to the need to improve the quality of the teaching. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 53-54.)
- (b) Interviews with staff from various layers of the institution who are responsible for various aspects of teaching and learning suggested to the Panel that the senior management's view of teaching and learning is not necessarily known or shared by the academic staff. The Panel is of the view that the delay in finalising the Education Policy might be partly responsible for the lack of a more consistent understanding of teaching and learning at the institution. The HEQC would like to urge the institution to finalise the Education Policy and to ensure that sufficient discussion at departmental level takes place for academics to develop a shared understanding of teaching and learning at the institution". (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 54.)

Associated areas identified in UFS Audit Portfolio

- (a) Quality management of teaching and learning activities is put under pressure by the rapid growth in student numbers, leading to large classes and high student to staff ratio's in some faculties. The steady decline in student success rates points to the possibility of gaps in quality as far as teaching and learning activities are concerned. There is therefore a need to improve the institutional success and throughput rates to at least the levels before the incorporations and the rapid growth phase. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 235).
- (b) There is a need for institutional student surveys (Main and Qwaqwa Campuses separately) in order to systematically gather information on student perceptions and needs. (Institutional Review 2006. Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 124.)
- (c) Currently the effectiveness and the relevance of the academic programmes in terms of employability of graduates have not been measured systematically. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 236.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

- Project 1.5.1: Equity in access**
- Project 1.5.2: Equity in success and throughput**
- Projects 2.2.1 (a) (b) (c): Interpreting arrangements**
- Project 2.4: Language empowerment**
- Project 3.1.1 Innovative teaching models**
- Project 3.1.3 Determine and maintaining student satisfaction**
- Project 3.4.2: Staff development (related to language issues)**

(See also Appendix 5 for Teaching and Learning Policy/Plan.)

NOTE

Apart from the proposed actions in the above related transformation projects as indicated in Section B, the following are some highlights of actions already taken:

- The Teaching and Learning Policy was approved and a Head: Teaching and Learning was appointed and a number of institutional policy and guidelines approved related to teaching and learning **(see Appendix 6: Assessment Policy; Appendix 7: Oral Assessment and Appendix 8: RPL Policy)**. In addition, teaching and learning managers were appointed in each of the 6 faculties and accredited courses for assessor training introduced. The UFS has received a substantial amount from the Department of Education for improving its current infrastructure for teaching venues whilst another application is prepared. These new buildings and the renewing of existing ones will eliminate the pressure on lecturing venues which resulted from the growth in student numbers.
- In order to address the academic language proficiency needs of students, additional capacity will be created for faculties to assist students in this regard. Discussions started to expand the tutor system into residences to assist students that are enrolled for the so-called “difficult” subject or subjects with high failure rates.

School of Nursing

- Staff use structured questionnaire for students to assess the quality of teaching, contents of module, clinical experience, etc. Regular meetings are conducted with a student forum where representatives from the different study years in the Undergraduate Programme present the issues and concerns of their fellow students.

School of Medicine

- It is expected of all lecturers to get feedback from students regarding perceptions and needs on a regular basis. The Division: Health Sciences Education provides support for such actions. This division has a programme that collects such input from students.

Economic and Management Sciences

- The Faculty did a student satisfactory survey in 2006/7 where graduates were contacted and asked about their satisfaction with all the undergraduate programmes offered as well as questions that focused on the employability of the graduates.
- Class sizes are monitored by the Teaching and Learning Manager of the Faculty. Information is given through to the Dean who discusses this with top management. However, no satisfactory solutions have been found for dealing with large classes. Hopefully the multipurpose lecture venue which is currently designed will assist in this regard.

Theology

- During the second semester 2007 the faculty undertook a scientific investigation into the perceptions about the faculty with various stakeholders, inter alia the students. A 64 page report was drafted for follow-up actions.

Law

- The Faculty strived to make the improvement of teaching and learning a fundamental and urgent priority in particular by appointing a Manager: T/L to improve teaching and learning strategies and to expand the tutor programmes.

Humanities

- Appointed a Manager for Teaching and learning responsible for teaching skills/educational development and student satisfaction surveys and interviews with students form part of Faculty Quality Assurance actions.

3.2 THE ORGANISATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 7 (See also Recommendation 10)

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State consider undertaking a review of the role and effectiveness of the structures responsible for the organization and quality of teaching and learning, and in the light of the review develop structures that support the consistent application of institutional policies, the dissemination of good practices and the development of a quality management system that integrates accountability and academic integrity. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 14 & 56.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention

- (a) "The Panel suggests that the institution revisit its programme development practices and if need be put mechanisms in place to strengthen the role of the Programme Committee so that it fills both its quality assurance responsibilities and its role as custodian of the standard of programmes offered at the institution". (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 55.)
- (b) "The Panel concluded that the large number of committees focused on teaching and learning, on which the Deans and their representatives serve, means that the Deans have to integrate all the information and decisions emanating from the committees and communicate these findings to the academic staff. The Panel suggests that the UFS consider ways to streamline the committee structure for teaching and learning". (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 55-56.)
- (c) "While the Panel understands the need for autonomy and the need to adjust policy where required by a specific context, the Panel encourages faculty management structures to be more consistent in the implementation of policy at the institution. The Panel is of the view that the delay in the approval of the institution's Education Policy may be partly responsible for the lack of consistency in the teaching and learning practices observed by the Panel across faculties. The Panel is aware that some faculties have introduced what can be considered good practices, but these are too recent to make any substantive comment on their effectiveness". (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p.56.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS(SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.6 Governance and management

NOTE:

Also see notes to Recommendation 6 above.

3.3 MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

HEQC COMMENDATION 3

The HEQC commends the UFS for its sustained commitment to providing support programmes for underprepared students as a way of guaranteeing access with success to disadvantaged students.

Associated remark(s) by the HEQC Panel

- (a) The Panel would like to encourage the institution to explore the necessary mechanisms to generalise the good practices developed in the context of this initiative (support for underprepared students] to a larger number of students. In terms of developing the culture of learning which, according to UFS's mission, constitutes the basis of scholarship, the institution considers it imperative to ensure that such a culture is strengthened in the student residences. For this purpose, a system of peer helpers/tutors was established in the residences; in which senior students help first-year students adjust to the learning environment at the University. In 2005, 90 such tutors were appointed on the main campus, 20 on the Qwaqwa Campus, and ten on the Vista Campus. The Panel is not clear as to how this initiative works in a residence environment which is often difficult to negotiate owing to racial tensions in hostels. The Panel found that the available evidence was not sufficient to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the tutor system and would like to encourage the institution to monitor the impact the system is having not only on student performance but also on changing the residence culture. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 14 - 15. Also see pp. 57 - 58.)
- (b) The development of a framework for student academic development is one of the elements included in the University's Strategic Plan. The Panel understood that the newly established Department for Student Development and Success, which aims at extending the tutor system to undergraduate non-residence students, is an important part of such development. The Panel learned that a pilot tutoring project will be launched in four faculties in 2007. The Panel would like to encourage the institution to look at the issue of student academic development in context and include in the future framework the curricular as well as non-curricular aspects of student life which may support or hinder students' progress in their programmes. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 15. Also see p. 58.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

Impediments to academic success of different groups of students: The diversity of the student population, particularly in terms of preparedness for Higher learning (demonstrated by the differences in the success rates of students coming from different school background) poses particular challenges to programme planning, teaching/learning and assessment. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 235.)

NOTE

Highlights of innovative actions relating to the above that were implemented after the 2006 Audit are:

- A New Academic Tutorial Programme (NATP), pilot tutoring project, was launched in four faculties and involved 55 tutors in the second semester of 2007. The first semester of 2007 was used to appoint faculty tutorial coordinators and to ensure that the appropriate implementation infrastructure was put in place for the programme. The 2007 pilot was successful in providing evidence of the positive impact of tutorials, with the exception of one module.
- In 2008 the NATP has been extended to five faculties and by the end of the year will involve 133 tutors indicating significant growth from the 55 original tutors.
- Within the NATP innovation around on-line tutorial support for large undergraduate classes is also being explored. As was the case in 2007 the NATP is monitored and evaluated by collecting data on student attendance, student evaluations of tutors, and evaluation of general coordination

and management.

- In addition to the NATP an evaluation of the UFS Induction Programme, the university orientation programme was undertaken. The evaluation highlighted the need for a better quality orientation programme that was better aligned with international best practice. An orientation Task Team developed and implemented a new Orientation Programme in 2008 and ensured independent evaluation and monitoring of the 2008 programme. The new programme solved the majority of the problems identified in 2007.
- The UFS launched a Student Portal, The portal restructured all student life information and provided a platform through which the information about academic success could be communicated to all students. In the first couple of months after the launch in February, 4300 student per day visited the website. At the end of 2007 this number increased to about 5500 per day making it the one of the most used websites at the UFS.
- The SDS of the UFS has a research driven approach to change and enhancing student success. In this regard the department has been collaborating with the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute at Indiana University, Bloomington. Over the last 18 months the South African Survey of Student Engagement (SASSE) that will allow the UFS and other South African higher education institutions to diagnose areas of improvement in relation to student success as well as enable institutions to benchmark their practices with other institutions, was developed.
- A research project was initiated to investigate the impact of the NSC on admission requirements.
- The UFS has initiated the implementation of a student tracking system with the overarching objectives to reduce the dropout rate of students both from individual programmes and from the institution as a whole. This system is also intended as an early warning system to identify possible interventions to mitigate the risk of students dropping out early, as well as steering students away from enrolling prematurely in modules and/or courses that their results suggest they will not be equipped to complete successfully. It will furthermore assist the institution to determine those factors (in terms of input, process, and output) that place students at risk in an effort to implement long-term preventative measures to reduce dropout; track actual and potential high performers within the institution; enable students to track their own academic progress in real time through the UFS student portal.
- The CHESD at the UFS has regularly discussions with the Deans in which faculties extended curriculum programmes were introduced. The need to monitor the success in the extended programmes is obvious – subsequently a researcher was contracted to monitor the achievements of students in all extended curriculum programmes at the UFS in a longitudinal study.
- At modular level, especially modules providing for foundational provision as such, student performance is monitored on an annual basis and remedial work is initiated and implemented. In all cases the development/upgrading of modular content is implemented to contribute towards student success.

Areas identified in the HEQC Audit Portfolio regarding student support, needing attention:

- (a) The function of social workers: The Panel would like to encourage the University to consider strengthening this service on the campuses in order to deal with a variety of non-academic issues faced by UFS students. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 58.)
- (b) Unit for Students with Disabilities: The Panel recognises the valuable work being done by this unit and encourages the UFS to sustain and increase its support for students with disabilities. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p.58.)
- (c) HIV and AIDS Centre: In terms of providing conditions conducive to learning, students' health is a critical factor. The UFS has committed itself to playing an active role in combating HIV and AIDS and the Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing (VCCT) programme offered by the Kopsie HIV and AIDS Centre established in 2000 that provides free HIV/AIDS testing to students and staff. During the audit visit the Panel established that the VCCT programme is available and used by 10 to 20 students and staff each week. Although the real need is probably much higher; the stigma associated with the condition probably prevents greater numbers coming forward.

The Panel was concerned that despite the activities of the Kovsie HIV and AIDS Centre there is no visible campaign on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention on the main campus. The Panel strongly encourages the institution to sustain and expand its efforts in relation to voluntary counseling and testing and to increase the visibility of the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 15 - 16. Also see p. 59.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) THAT ADDRESS THE HIV AND AIDS ISSUE:

Project 3.3.2 HIV and aids

NOTE

Some actions relating to the above after the 2006 Audit are:

- A formalised institutional response and the development of a strategic framework to provide a road map for the way forward. This led to an institutional strategic framework for an integrated comprehensive university-wide HIV/AIDS program. The proposed framework was discussed on the Executive Committee meeting of 2 October 2007 and a possible action decided upon.
- During the 2008 budget retreat it was decided as a matter of urgency to co-ordinate these activities and to budget for all HIV/AIDS projects and interventions in a co-coordinated manner.

HEQC COMMENDATION 4

The HEQC commends the UFS on the valuable contribution that the Library and Information Services (LIS) are making to the development of both undergraduate and postgraduate students and to the support of research at the institution.

3.4 MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF SHORT COURSES

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 8

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State ensure that tighter controls are applied to the quality assurance and certification of all types of short courses and that mechanisms be developed and implemented to ensure integrity of these awards. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 17 & 64 - 65.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

(a) The Panel is concerned that records of course participation and certification based on performance or attendance is not managed centrally and that there does not appear to be a process in place to ensure the integrity of records and certification. The faculty representatives interviewed claimed to have independent databases for tracking the certification of these courses. The Panel noted that in some cases duplicate certificates are retained as proof of certification, while other faculties used appropriate numbering systems to differentiate and identify certificates. Since short courses are one of the areas of delegation, the Panel suggests that UFS should ensure that there is rigorous oversight of certification of all the types of short courses it offers. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 16 - 17. Also see p. 64.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new draft Policy on Short Learning Programmes was developed and will be taken through institutional approval processes in 2009. A new online system for the development and approval of all programmes (including all Short Learning Programme) is in the process of development. The same company that developed the HEQC's online system has been contracted to develop the in-house system for the UFS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final approval and implementation of the new Policy on Short Learning Programmes towards middle 2009. Development of an on-line in-house system for the development, approval and recordkeeping of Short Learning Programmes and certificates awarded. 	Cost for on-line system for the development, approval and centralised recording of awards of certificates for Short Learning Programmes: R100 000.	Coordinator: Programme Planning.	Implementation of the mentioned actions to be concluded by July 2009.

3.5 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 9

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State review the effectiveness of the existing guidelines for programme design and consider developing more substantive policies to assist staff in designing new programmes. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 17 & 65.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention

"Despite the Existence of a document entitled *Guidelines for the approval, accreditation, registration, recording and termination of formal and non-formal academic programmes* the panel found that there was little understanding of the processes involved in programme design. The institution does not seem to have a clear policy for programme management that can be applied consistently across faculties. The Panel noted that programme design was identified as the main reason for the Programme Committee to turn down new programmes. In the Panel's view the paper 'What is a good programme?' is not providing sufficient support for staff in improving programme design. The institution might want to think about the need for developing more effective policies, guidelines and support mechanisms for those staff involved in programme design". (UFS Audit Report p. 65.)

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 10

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State ensure that the structures responsible for programme review and approval focus their attention more clearly on the interrogation of curriculum in terms of content, the alignment between the curriculum and the purpose of the programme, the correspondence between exit level outcomes and assessment criteria, and the inclusion of generic skills as specified outcomes of the programme. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 17 & 66.) (See also Recommendation 7.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) A number of planning and support structures are responsible for the quality assurance and support of teaching and learning at UFS, but the operationalisation of teaching and learning at the institution depends on a number of other committees and structures. The Panel suggests that the institution revisit its programme development practices and if need be put mechanisms in place to strengthen the role of the Programme Committee so that it fills both its quality assurance responsibilities and its role as custodian of the standard of programmes offered at the institution. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 14. Also see p. 54.)
- (b) From interviews with the responsible committee the Panel found that there was little understanding of the processes involved in programme design. The institution does not seem to have a clear policy for programme management that can be applied consistently across faculties. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 17. Also see p. 65.)
- (c) "The Panel noted that the Planning Unit and the Programmes Committee performed a crucial role in the approval and review of programmes. However, the Panel is of the view that the processes run by both structures need to include a far greater interrogation of the programme curriculum in terms of content, alignment between the curriculum and the purpose of the programme, exit level outcomes and assessment criteria, and the inclusion of generic skills as specified outcomes of the programme." (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 17. Also see p. 66.)

Associated area identified in UFS Audit Portfolio:

The sustainability of having a client-centered, but perhaps an unmanageable large variety of curriculum options, of having a modular approach, or even of having a semester system, has to be considered. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 236.)

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 11 (See also Recommendation 6)

The HEQC recommends that, in developing and implementing various types of blended learning, the University of the Free State ensure that it monitors the effect it has on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and, particularly, on the development of the multicultural campus that it aspires to be. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 18 & 66.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) UFS developed its strategic plan in a context marked by the mixed effects of student expansion and the introduction of the dual medium of instruction. The strategic plan identifies two main strategies for achieving its goal of providing student-centered education. In the Panel's view, this strategy requires those responsible for programme design and approval at UFS to consider the financial, infrastructural, socio-cultural and academic implications of the delivery of a programme. The links between a programme's design, the best blend of teaching methods to ensure student success and integration, and the planning implications for its delivery should be taken into consideration when approving new programmes. Since most of the academic staff were still using traditional lectures as the preferred approach to teaching, existing programmes will have to be reviewed to determine how blended learning could best be rolled out to the benefit of both the students and the University. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 17. Also see p. 66.)
- (b) Overall, the Panel is of the impression that the incorporation of IT into teaching and learning is in its infancy and, while acknowledging some instances of good practice, the Panel believes the institution will have to keep monitoring the quality of programme and materials design, the quality of outcomes and assessment, the provision of adequate IT infrastructure, and staff and student preparedness to use this technology productively. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 16. Also see p. 62.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

Promotion of integration in academic situations (e.g. classes): Even though parallel-medium instruction has opened up access to the UFS for many Black students, the same policy has in effect to keep a large extent Black (English-medium) and White (Afrikaans-medium) students in separate classes – an unintended consequence in most parallel-medium systems. Promotion of integration of these academic situations seems necessary (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 240.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.1.1 Innovative teaching models

Project 3.1.2 Relevant Academic Programmes

(See also Appendix 5 for Teaching and Learning Policy/Plan.)

NOTE

Since the 2006 Audit the institution strengthened the institution's programme development practices by inter alia:

- Approving and implementing an institutional Teaching and Learning Policy which will contribute to and facilitate an institution-wide understanding of better programme design.
- Strengthening the Programmes Committee by the expanding its membership to include the Head: Teaching, Learning and Assessment, as well as all Managers: Teaching and Learning of the Faculties.
- Establishing more focused programme approval structures via the appointment of Managers: Teaching and Learning in all Faculties, and the inclusion of these staff and the Head: Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the enlarged UFS Programmes Committee.
- Involving a multidisciplinary team consisting of the Coordinator: Programme Planning, the Head: Teaching, Learning and Assessment, the Head: E-learning, a specialist in assessment and a discipline specialist at the initiation stage of a new programme.
- The initiation of an all-encompassing Programme Development Policy including clear guidelines based on the Teaching and Learning Policy and including aspects of the existing *What is a good programme* and *Guidelines for the approval, accreditation, registration, recording and termination of formal and non-formal academic programmes*.

3.6 STAFFING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 12

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State consider the most appropriate strategy to enhance its academic staff language competence, both in Afrikaans and English, but especially in English, in order to improve the quality of staff-student interactions in the classroom and the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the relevant modules. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 18 & 69.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The Panel found evidence of the need to improve staff proficiency in English in order for students to receive equivalent provision in Afrikaans-medium and English-medium courses. Neither the documented nor verbal evidence from interviews with academic and support staff provided any indication that the University is acting on this issue. Besides the language competence of the teaching staff, the Panel is concerned about the way the language policy creates a much greater workload for permanent staff. The Panel would like to encourage the institution to monitor its permanent staff's workload so as to ensure the quality of teaching and learning in all programmes. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 18. Also see p. 68.)

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 1.4: Language (Policy) and diversity

Project 2.4 Language empowerment

Project 3.4.1 Staff Development

NOTE:

Some highlights of innovative actions relating to the above that were implemented after the 2006 Audit are:

- (a) Establishment of a centre to assist academics and students with language and writing skills (Unit for the Development of Rhetorical and Academic Writing) inter alia presenting academic writing. Presentation of academic writing courses/seminars with themes such as:
- Positioning the academic argument.
 - Controlling the academic discussion.
 - Structuring the academic document.
 - Deepening the academic argument.
 - Argumentation.
- (b) Short courses to enhance staff language competence are in the process of development by CHESD to address this need.

3.7 MANAGEMENT OF ASSESSMENT

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 13

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State should take the necessary steps to ensure that the policy and practice of assessment are strengthened across all faculties. This should take a variety of forms. First, the institution would need to align assessment practices so they are consistent with the new teaching methodologies introduced at the institution. Second, UFS would need to consider the introduction of external moderation for all exit level courses. Third, UFS should ensure that adequate mechanisms of quality control are in place to implement the institution's language policy in the area of assessment in order to ensure consistency, fairness and comparability of the assessments set in English and Afrikaans for the same module. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 19 & 70.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

Overall there are four areas of concern for the Panel in relation to the conceptualisation and implementation of assessment at UFS. The first is the inconsistent implementation of the assessment policy and the lack of appropriately trained assessors. The second is the need to establish assessment practices which are consistent with the new teaching methodologies introduced by the institution to deal with some of the problems resulting from oversubscription of modules, without these being perceived as less rigorous than more traditional practices. The third is the internal moderation of exit level assessment that has dominated recent practice. The Panel strongly supports the introduction of external moderation, but is concerned that this external moderation still needs to be strengthened in policy and practice. The fourth, an issue of greater concern pointed out by external examiners, is the deficient translation of examination papers that makes the meaning of papers of the same module different in English and Afrikaans.

The Panel wishes to point out that such discrepancies could have far-reaching consequences in an environment where black students already perceive Afrikaans students as being favoured by class schedules. The Panel urges the institution to take the necessary steps to rectify this matter. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 19. Also see p. 70.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

The survey of teaching/learning and assessment done in 2004 has revealed a preponderance of traditional teaching and assessment methods, despite numerous efforts to introduce new methods including open learning and blended learning methods. This is mainly the result of the institutional assessment policy that is still quite new and has not been fully implemented in standardize format in all departments. Furthermore, assessment training as an important quality improvement mechanism still has to be accepted by a large component of academic staff. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, pp. 235 – 236.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
The institution has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • already embarked on a gradual 	(a) The inconsistent implementation of the assessment policy	(a) Human resources	• Vice-Rector: Academic	These initiatives have already

<p>process of complying with assessment policy and training/qualifying assessors to include all academic staff members. Staff members also attend workshops held by CHESD and other external agents on a voluntary basis. (209 staff members already completed the assessor training during 2006 – 2007 while 85 are currently registered.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explored assessment practices which are consistent with the new teaching methodologies implemented policy and procedures for external moderation of all exit level modules. (External moderation forms part of Faculty procedures, but the current examination system (2nd opportunity) makes it difficult to always carry this through). put in place strict guidelines for moderators of each examination paper to ensure the high quality of the English and Afrikaans translations of examination papers. 	<p>The institution intends to take the necessary steps to rectify five areas in relation to the conceptualisation and implementation of assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accelerate consistent implementation of the assessment policy and appropriate training of assessors; establish assessment practices which are consistent with the new teaching methodologies introduced by the institution to deal with some of the problems resulting from oversubscription of modules; strengthen external moderation policy and practice; prevent deficient translation of examination papers; encourage more lecturers to undergo training. <p>This will be done by means of comprehensive workshops on the writing of learning outcomes in different faculties to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of the assessment policy. Revisiting good assessment practices. The different learning strategies proposed by the Teaching-learning Policy. The Transformation Plan on teaching innovations. Quality assurance processes/procedures on assessment tasks at module level. <p>(b) Training of assessors To address this need, the institution plans to insistently motivate all academic staff members to complete SPALHE, the follow-up workshops and moderator training.</p>	<p>Human capacity needs (heads of departments and teaching-learning managers) for the development of processes.</p> <p>(b) Financial resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding for external moderation. Funding to address the additional workload of teaching-learning managers in faculties. <p>(c) Other resources None</p>	<p>Planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deans of faculties. Head: Teaching, Learning and Assessment, CHESD. Head: E-learning, CHESD. Director: Student Development and Success. Faculty teaching-learning managers. 	<p>started in the second semester of 2008.</p>
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RPL as issue identified by HEQC Panel

UFS sees RPL as a mechanism for facilitating access and promoting mobility and progression along education, training and career paths. No evidence

was forthcoming regarding the monitoring and evaluation of RPL. The Panel encourages the institution to develop and implement appropriate monitoring and review systems with respect to its various forms of RPL. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 19. Also see p. 70.)

Actions and progress since 2006

The UFS's RPL Policy (after a long and thorough consultation process) was approved in August this year. (See **Appendix 8 for RPL Policy.**)

Intended actions for the future will primarily be to implement the RPL Policy and will include the following actions:

- Recognition of formal accredited learning (subject recognition) need to be done as specified in the UFS RPL Policy and the regulations for first qualifications and post graduate qualifications.
- The respective departments and schools will be informed of the proper procedures by Academic Student Services through the office of the Registrar Academic Student Services.
- The documentation (subject exemption form) on which the recommendation regarding recognition of formal accredited learning is made in the departments, will be revised by Academic Student Services to indicate the:
 - NQF level of the learning acquired (recognition should be granted for learning acquired in higher education).
 - Accreditation status of the institution where the learning has been acquired.
 - Whether the syllabi of the modules of the awarding Higher Education Institute have been compared with the UFS modules and that the regulations guiding this recognition has been adhered to.
- The RPL procedure manual will be drafted by the RPL Centre with input from the respective committees whose responsibility it is to monitor assessment and access (Education Committee; Access with Success Committee) in 2009 (starting March 2009).
- An action research approach will be followed to enhance the review of RPL on the level of the departments. The RPL process in the advanced post-graduate diploma in further education at the Centre for Higher Education Studies will service as a starting point.

4. ISSUE CLUSTER: MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH QUALITY

4.1 UFS APPROACH TO RESEARCH

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 14

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State revise its strategy for the development of research, focusing particularly on the prioritisation of goals and objectives, the position of research in the management structure of the institution, and the time frames for decision making. This will ensure that the intention to become a research intensive university is appropriately supported at the operational level. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 20 & 74.)

Associated area(s) identified by HEQC for attention

- (a) The Panel suggests that the UFS reflect upon the different types of research activities and in the light of such deliberations develop a more focused approach to research, which relates to the University's strategic focus. (Audit Report, 2008, p.73.)
- (b) The Panel is of the view that a slow process of strategic decision making and the lack of an efficient and operational management information system that could produce the necessary data to underpin planning in the research core function are undermining the implementation of UFS strategic goals in the area of research. (Audit Report, 2008, p.73.)

HEQC COMMENDATION 5

The HEQC commends the UFS for the development of five strategic clusters which respond to the national, regional and community priorities and which are conceptualised to include the development of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECTS (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.2.1 Relevant and engaged research

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>(a) Research strategy A process to revise the current (2004-2008) research strategy was initiated during 2007. Dr Zenda Ofir (lead consultant) is currently in the process of evaluating the strategy of the previous 5 years and developing a framework for a new strategy to guide research during the next 5 years (2008-2013).</p>	<p>(a) Research strategy A survey of all UFS academic staff is currently underway to verify and enrich her initial findings. It is envisaged that the first draft report will be shared with top management and the University Research Committee during early August 2008. An implementation plan to address the recommendations contained in this review report and strategic development according to an existing schedule will subsequently be developed.</p>	<p>(a) Research strategy None at this stage. This will only be known once a new strategy has been approved.</p>	<p>(a) Research strategy Directorate of Research Development</p>	<p>(a) Research strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review report to be presented and discussed: early August 2008. Consultative process to discuss new draft strategy with Faculties:
<p>The consultant has completed information and data gathering (wide individual and group interviews on campus; extensive document review and specific research information analyses).</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 2008 – March 2009. New research strategy (2008 – 2013) to be approved: April 2009.
<p>(b) Research line management None</p>	<p>(b) Research line management Management restructuring is currently being considered with the implementation thereof being phased in over an 18 months period. A proposal in this regard will be tabled to the Executive Management once prepared.</p>	<p>(b) Research line management Not yet calculated.</p>	<p>(b) Research line management Vice Chancellor and Registrar: General</p>	<p>(b) Research line management Planning should be completed by June 2009 for implementation before the end of 2009.</p>
<p>(c) Faculty research management The management of the quality of research is a decentralised function to the faculties. The following</p>	<p>(c) Faculty research management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty colloquium to reach consensus on guidelines and procedures for faculties for the evaluation of research proposals. The 	<p>(c) Faculty research management Not yet calculated.</p>	<p>(c) Faculty research management Deans (or Vice</p>	<p>(c) Faculty research management 2008/2009 ongoing</p>

<p>actions took place in the various faculties since 2006 to ensure greater consistency across faculties for closer alignment of these functions:</p> <p>Faculty of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes to align certain procedures in the three schools in the faculty. • Process to align disciplinary specific criteria, guidelines and procedures used by the different evaluation committees. <p>Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the decentralisation of this function, the programmes are responsible for the quality arrangements of research. <p>Faculty of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The faculty has taken responsibility for the quality arrangements for research through its Research Committee, Faculty Committee and Performance Management System. • By contributing in the Institutional Cluster Planning the faculty attempts to align its strategic planning to the institutional strategies. <p>Faculty of Theology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices are already closely aligned with the UFS research strategies. <p>Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system of managing research involves the development of research proposals, and is 	<p>drafting and acceptance of faculty guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of research proposals. Requests to Faculty Research Committees to propose a plan for structured activities regarding the management of research proposals in accordance with institutional policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer alignment of faculty strategic plans to the institutional research strategies, through the research directorate. • Investigation/development of an institutional database for the registration of all research projects (including postgraduate studies). • Refocus staff on the requirements of the research policy and ensure alignment, variation in approach. <p>The postgraduate project on postgraduate and postdoctoral education at the UFS discussed in Issue Cluster 4 will lead to the alignment of research practices on faculty and institutional level.</p>		<p>Deans) of Faculties, Faculty Research Committees & Research Development Office.</p>	
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<p>standard practice in the faculty, although academic units may differ in their approach.</p>				
<p>(d) Research information During 2006 the University implemented the <i>University Office Research Information Management System</i> (RIMS). However, the system proved to be problematic in terms of user-friendliness and technical support from the service (software) provider. The UFS therefore joined the national SARIMA-led RIMS project in middle 2007. This project is supported by the DoE, DST and the NRF and it is envisaged by Government that all HEIs and Science Councils will form part of this national RIMS.</p>	<p>(d) Research information The RIMS project identified <i>InfoEd</i> as the preferred service provider. This software system has been adapted by a consortium of SA HEIs in consultation with the NRF to suit the specific SA research environment needs. Implementation of the system is in process at UFS, driven by a project team representing the DRD, Computer Services. An expert consultant has also been recruited to speed the process and to serve as official link between UFS and the national project implementation process. It is envisaged that the software will be implemented from October 2008. Training of administrative staff and researchers will take place during the last quarter of the year.</p>	<p>(d) Research information (i) Human resources Project team on board. (ii) Financial resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominal membership fee (license fees for national use of <i>InfoEd</i> is paid for by the DST/NRF). • Depending on progress, an extension of the consultant's contract may be required for 2009. An approximate amount of R300 000 should be budgeted for. • Computer Services may have need for additional funding for hardware acquisition etc. <p>(iii) Other resources None at this stage.</p>	<p>(d) Research information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director: Directorate Research Development: familiarisation and training of UFS administrative staff and researchers. • Director: Computer Services: hardware and online system implementation 	<p>(d) Research information Implementation of system (including training of staff) will be completed by end 2008. Fully functional system 2009.</p>

4.2 FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUPPORT OF RESEARCH

HEQC COMMENDATION 6

The HEQC commends the UFS on the systematic way it is focusing on the development of research capacity and its promotion of the development of black and women staff in particular.

HEQC COMMENDATION 7

The HEQC commends the UFS on the continued financial, material and human investment it is making in order to promote and develop research at the institution.

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>The Directorate Research Development (DRD) actively recruits young academics, specifically targeting women and black researchers, to participate in capacity building programmes.</p> <p>Funding from the Strategic Research Funds is applied to organise workshops aimed at capacitating young or emerging academics to actively contribute towards mainstream research.</p> <p>The following progress and successes can be mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of participants are women. • There are currently 50 young or emerging academics participating. • The programme has received support of more than R8 million 	<p>(a) Promotion of the programme: Capacity building activities is marketed extensively on all the University campuses, with support from the Faculty Research Committees. It is planned to support this process even further.</p> <p>(b) Support and client service: Potential candidates (planning to join the programme) are invited to attend proposal writing and development workshops. Applications are internally reviewed prior to submission for funding.</p> <p>The office of the DRD provides an excellent, efficient and professional service to young or emerging academics (grant holders) with regards to all matters arising.</p> <p>(c) Capacitating young academics: Continue to organise workshops focusing on areas of research project management,</p>	<p>(a) Human resources None at this stage.</p> <p>(b) Financial resources NRF and institutional funding.</p> <p>(c) Other resources None at this stage</p>	<p>Directorate Research Development</p>	<p>Ongoing, and to be informed by the revised research strategy (2009 and beyond)</p>

over the past 18 months (mainly through the NRF Thuthuka programme and the Strategic Research Funds.)	leadership, and mentoring and student supervision. The DRD also assists young or emerging academics in mapping their growth plans for development.			
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4.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF RESEARCH AND RESEARCH ETHICS

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 15

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State review the relationship between the University Research Committee (URC) and the PCER (Portfolio Committee for Education and Research) with a view to facilitating speedier and more focused consideration of strategic research matters. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 21 & 77.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The UFS aspires to be a research intensive institution. The Panel is of the view that the University's core of NRF rated scientists, a growing number of postgraduate students, the existence of specific areas of strength in plant biology and clinical medicine, and a general enthusiasm and determination to intensify research activity across faculties are good points of departure in this regard. However, the Panel noted that the position of research in the management structure of the institution as a report to two Vice-rectors neither of whom has research in their portfolio, does not support the vision of a research intensive institution. This is compounded by the existence of a decentralised system of research management that introduces some serious inconsistencies in practices across faculties. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 19. Also see p. 72.)
- (b) Management of the quality of research is a decentralised function at UFS, with faculties taking responsibility for the quality arrangements for research. The Panel observed that the initial evaluations of research proposals according to departmental and disciplinary criteria are not guided by institutional policy, so that this process varies considerably across faculties. The Panel is of the view that UFS should consider measures to ensure greater consistency across faculties in the implementation of the research policy and closer alignment of faculty strategic plans to the institutional research strategies. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 21. Also see pp. 76 - 77.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
	<p>Research management Management restructuring is currently being considered with the implementation thereof being phased in over an 18 months period. A proposal in this regard will be tabled to the Executive Management once prepared.</p>	Not yet calculated.	Vice Chancellor and Registrar: General	Planning should be completed by June 2009 for implementation before the end of 2009.
<p>Faculty research management The management of the quality of research is a decentralised function to the faculties. The following actions took place in the faculties since 2006 to ensure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty colloquium to reach consensus on guidelines and procedures for faculties for the evaluation of research proposals. The drafting and acceptance of faculty guidelines and procedures for the evaluation of research proposals. Requests to Faculty 	(i) Human resources Research Committee members/staff to be allocated to the	Deans (or Vice Deans) of Faculties, Faculty Research Committees & Research	2008/2009 ongoing

<p>greater consistency across faculties for closer alignment of these functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes to align certain procedures, disciplinary specific criteria, guidelines and procedures used by the different evaluation committees in the schools and faculties. • Decentralisation of the responsibility of quality arrangements of research in programmes to the programme management in collaboration with the research coordinator for the faculty. • In some faculties, e.g. Law the faculty has taken responsibility for the quality arrangements for research through its Research Committee, Faculty Committee and Performance Management System. • By contributing in the Institutional Cluster Planning the faculties attempts to align its strategic planning to the institutional strategies. • Participation in the newly established Institutional Research Unit. • The system of managing research involves the development of research proposals that is standard practice in the faculties, although academic units may differ in their approach. 	<p>Research Committees to propose a plan for structured activities regarding the management of research proposals in accordance with institutional policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer alignment of faculty strategic plans to the institutional research strategies (through the research directorate) to ensure greater consistency across faculties in the implementation of the research policy. • Investigation/development of an institutional database for the registration of all research projects (including postgraduate studies). • Refocus staff on the requirements of the research policy and ensure alignment, variation in approach. <p>The postgraduate project on postgraduate and postdoctoral education at the UFS discussed in Issue Cluster 4 will lead to the alignment of research practices on faculty and institutional level.</p>	<p>development of processes.</p> <p>(ii) Financial resources</p> <p>Additional funding to ease the burden of additional work load of staff and members of the Research Committee.</p>	<p>Development Office</p>	
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RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.6 Governance and management

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 16

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State establish an Ethics Committee at institutional level with comprehensive supervision of research ethics and all aspects of academic ethics, including fraud, in all disciplines. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 21 & 77.)

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

Of greater concern to the Panel is that the Ethics Committee, which is situated in the Faculty of Health Sciences, and which reports annually to the Dean, has no direct reporting route to Council. The Panel found neither documented evidence of the autonomy, jurisdiction and responsibilities of this Committee, nor any reference to the potential risks for this Committee. The Panel could not establish whether the Ethics Committee confined its function to research ethics or dealt with wider academic ethics issues, such as academic fraud and contestation of authorship. The Panel is of the opinion that a clearer and better formalised approach to ethics clearance is urgently needed to avoid reputation and financial risks in relation to specific research projects. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 21. Also see p. 77.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

The absence of an Institutional Ethics Committee could be regarded as a quality gap. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 237.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>The introduction of an institution-wide Ethics Committee forms part of the Research strategy review.</p> <p>An information management system specifically to manage human and animal ethics within research and experimentation at UFS is also included in the new RIMS (<i>InfoEd</i>) which has been in progress since 2007.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional deliberation of the viability of an institutional ethics committee as outcome of the expected first draft of the research strategy review (August 2008). • Drafting of an implementation plan to address the recommendations, i.e. with respect to research ethics processes at UFS, contained in this review report will subsequently be developed. • The institution has to finalise decision on whether a specific policy is needed for plagiarism in research in addition to disciplinary provisions in the UFS statute. However, the definition of serious "misconduct" in the University 	<p>(a) Human resources None at this stage.</p> <p>(b) Financial resources None at this stage.</p> <p>(c) Other resources None at this stage.</p>	<p>Directorate of Research Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research strategy review report to be presented and discussed: early August 2008. • Consultative process to discuss new draft strategy with Faculties: September 2008 – March 2009. • New research strategy (2008 – 2013) to be approved: April 2009.

	<p>Statute covers plagiarism in research and provides sufficient disciplinary muscle to deal efficiently with such cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific actions institutionally and on faculty level to communicate a warning in regard to this serious misconduct. • Obtain necessary computer software that will enable staff to easily determine whether research plagiarism was committed. • The university decided in August 2008 to use Blackboard/WebCT as LMS. Part of the license is a software package to detect plagiarism. 			
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RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 3.2.1 Relevant and engaged research

Project 3.6 Governance and management

4.4 RESEARCH OUTPUTS AND IMPACT

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 17

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State take the necessary steps, with due regard to discipline specific issues, to reverse the predominance of staff publishing in institutional and local journals, and develop the necessary mechanisms of support and incentive for UFS researchers to publish in international journals. This should be part of a deliberate and proactive strategy to give greater content to the institution's stated aim of becoming a research intensive university. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 22 & 79.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) In terms of monitoring as an aspect of quality management, the Panel saw no evidence of how the institution is systematically monitoring the requirement that staff allocate at least ten percent of their time to research. The Panel noted that faculties are expected to benchmark their research activities and output against comparable faculties. The Panel, however, saw no evidence of any extra-faculty mechanism for monitoring progress and performance against agreed benchmarks. The Panel is of the view that delegated responsibility for research implies that faculties should take a more active role in monitoring and measuring their research performance against benchmarks which they have identified and agreed upon. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 22. Also see p. 78.)
- (b) With the exception of the Faculty of Law, the output of publication units has increased, with the most significant increases occurring in the Faculties of Humanities and Natural and Agricultural Sciences. The Faculties of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Health Sciences publish mostly in ISI accredited journals. The largest faculty, Humanities, is the second most productive faculty, but almost all of its publications are non-ISI indexed. The second largest faculty, Economic and Management Sciences, is the least productive, with the majority of publications in non-ISI indexed journals. Most authors at UFS publish not only in local journals but also in institutional ones. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 22. Also see pp. 78 & 79.)
- (c) The Panel found that, apart from the requirement that ten percent of academics' time be allocated to research, no other research output criteria or benchmarks are evident, which does not enable the institution to monitor or evaluate the success of its research strategies. In view of UFS's intention to become a research-intensive university, the Panel is concerned that no requirements regarding peer reviewed publication, or measurement of progress relevant to research goals, form part of either individual performance evaluation or faculty reviews. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 22. Also see p. 79.)

Associated areas identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

- (a) Certain data with regard to research outputs, capacity and funding in the institution are obtained and captured by the DRD on a continuous basis and made available to the researchers within the university from time to time. The purpose is to extend the scope of this information and make it available on a regular basis to act as a central node for use as a management tool (e.g. for benchmarking and financial allocation purposes) within the faculties and departments. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 153.)
- (b) Most of the Faculties cited that, although there is a lack of a pervasive culture of research, outputs in the overall institution and in some Faculties have increased. It seems as if the same established researchers are producing more research and there is still a significant staff component that produces very little research. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 236.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>Publishing in institutional and local journals <u>Institutional</u> A discussion document on the revision of the current incentive system has been prepared and submitted to the two responsible line managers.</p> <p>The editors of the mentioned journals have already started to address this problem and e.g. Acta Theologic has already evidence of attracting more international authors.</p> <p><u>Faculties</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved outputs as well as publication in ISI accredited journals (leading to radical increased outputs). Organised a research day where colleagues shared information and practices with regard to accredited publications. PhD colloquium with outside experts giving advice as to how to improve writing. Establishment of an 'article group' in 2007 where those unfamiliar with the writing of articles in accredited journals were assisted in the writing of 	<p><u>Institutional</u> The named discussion document that makes provision for differentiated incentives in favour of ISI publications. This document will be facilitated for finalisation for improvement by the end of 2008. Yet cognisant the research strategy review report recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader "marketing" of IST journals by the editors. Quarterly meetings by the Vice Rector: Academic Planning with the editors of these journals where they are expected to provide feedback on progress made. <p><u>Faculties</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop in 2009 where editors of ISI accredited journals are invited to explain prerequisite/tips as to how to publish in such a publication. Enabling faculty members to attend national and international conferences where papers can be delivered to be revamped into article format in ISI accredited journals. Motivating and supporting to publish faculty members. Assist in time management between teaching and learning, research and community service learner activities. Link those who have not published with senior researcher, thus a mentorship. 	<p>Financial resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional incentives for reviewing of articles. Funding to acquire research fellows to undertake empirical research to enable up of a database for further research. Should the institutional revised incentive system be approved, approximately R1 million will be required per annum in addition to the existing incentive fund to be paid to the ISI publishing researchers. 	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning; Director: Research Development and Faculty Research Committees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research strategy review report discussed: early August 2008. Consultative process to discuss new draft strategy with Faculties: September 2008 – March 2009. New research strategy (2008 – 2013) to be approved: April 2009 Faculty actions: continuous.

<p>such articles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One in-house journal (<i>Acta Theologica</i>) has achieved ISI status. • Monitoring the requirement that staff each publish at least one accredited output. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage application for Thuthuka funds. • Presentation of an annual research day/workshop for all academic staff presenting written reports dealing with their academic research and planning and with deliberate guidelines to increase publication in IST indexed journals. • At least one workshop on research proposals will be compulsory for all junior staff. Similar training should be obtained by tutors and promoters in order to assist them in guiding their students. • Sharing of information to staff regarding ISI-indexed journals. • Annual workshop on publication (especially in ISI-indexed journals) to coincide with Faculty Research Presentation day. 			
<p>Measurement of progress relevant to research goals. The following actions and progress took place in the faculties since 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some departments had set their own output criteria. The success will be re-evaluated in November 2008. • Annual performance objectives were introduced in the Faculty Economic and Management Sciences for each member to address outputs. • All articles published in accredited journals are peer reviewed. • No research funds are made 		<p>(a) Human resources Additional research assistants.</p> <p>(b) Financial resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to award prizes at a research presentation day. • Increased funding to drive more stimulating incentives scheme. • Increased funding to faculties to assist upcoming researchers. 	Deans and Faculty Research Committees	2008 onwards.

<p>available in the Faculty of Theology to a researcher without a formal research project having been approved by the faculty research committee. All these projects are listed and evaluated by the research committee on a regular basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Faculty of Law has instituted specific research output criteria or benchmarks which are evident from its research strategies and performance management system. • In most faculties the requirements regarding peer reviewed publications forms part of the performance appraisal system managed by line head. <p>Research culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Research Deliberate resulting in increased number of publications annually. • Substantial progress in some departments has lead to internal guidelines to assist staff to do research. • Specific goals for departments to increase research. • Increase of the number of NRF rated researchers. • Monitoring of the requirement that staff allocate at least ten percent of their time to research as part of its performance management system and individual work arrangements. • Annual research presentation day. 	<p>Research culture: Specific planning for faculties to address the need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage research related to programme development. • Benchmarks to be established for each department. • Funding for research assistance been made available. • Identification of innovative ways to address challenges in teaching and learning and research. • Increase the annual expected output per lecturer and increase the annual departmental output. • To identify 4 research foci in the faculty, in so doing creating an additional synergistic research context for the faculty. 			
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require annual research reports. • Support of junior staff through mentoring programme. • Research and research outputs are managed by heads via work arrangements of staff. • Expansion of research capacity base. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create common areas of interest where individual research could converge for the greater good of current context. • Monitoring and measuring research performance against benchmarks which have been identified and agreed upon (1 qualifying research output per year per person). • Changing the annual Faculty Research Presentation day to a more prestigious occasion; investigating allocation of prizes for best presentations, best junior researcher, etc., inviting well-known researchers to address the Faculty Research Day meeting. 			
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4.5. QUALITY RELATED ARRANGEMENTS FOR POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 18

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State review its current policy for the examination of postgraduate degrees to ensure that the same quality standards are applied across faculties and departments in order to protect the quality of the postgraduate degrees conferred by the institution. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 23 & 81.)

HEQC RECOMMENDATION 19

The HEQC recommends that the University of the Free State urgently review the way it balances institutional monitoring and faculty autonomy in the interest of greater consistency across faculties in implementing key policies relevant to the research core function. This should include reviewing policies regulating the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students, and regulations and guidelines for the assessment and examination of postgraduate work. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 23 & 81-82.)

Associated areas identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The Panel urges UFS to ensure that the implementation of the draft Policy on Master's and Doctoral Studies is carefully managed and monitored (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 22.)
- (b) Faculties were generally not able to provide documented assessment criteria during the site visit, even though it is a requirement that these be provided to examiners. The documentation of the role and responsibility of supervisors also varies across departments, with some departments providing excellent guidelines and others very poor ones. The University does not have a general policy on the examination of postgraduate work. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 23. Also see pp. 80 - 81.)
- (c) In relation to graduation rates, postgraduate graduation rates at the UFS are below the national benchmarks in all categories. The Panel is of the view that UFS should explore the factors that affect postgraduate success, with the aim of improving its postgraduate graduation rates, particularly at master's and doctoral levels. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 23. Also see p. 81.)
- (d) In the Panel's view, the lack of an overarching policy framework for postgraduate studies presents some risk to the University. For instance, the Panel found no evidence of institutional policies or regulations for postgraduate publications, which means that the ethical dimension of publications may not be appropriately monitored. The Panel is also concerned that the lack of consistency across departments and faculties in the approval of postgraduate proposals at the master's and doctoral levels will ultimately compromise the quality of postgraduate studies. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 23. Also see p. 81.)
- (e) The implementation and impact of the language policy on postgraduate education varies across faculties. The Panel was concerned that as the Medical School was operating on a dual-medium basis the quality of the student learning experience may be compromised. The Panel found significant differences in the way departments reported on student progress and concluded that overall consistency in the way research policies are implemented was a major need at UFS. The Panel would also like to encourage the institution to assess the extent to which the language policy supports UFS's dual objective of expansion of the postgraduate student enrolment and internationalisation. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 23. Also see p. 82.)

Associated area identified in the UFS Audit Portfolio for attention:

- (a) Different investigations have identified that not all postgraduate students receive the quality supervision and support they require. Support for post-

graduate students seems to be a quality gap that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 237.)

- (b) The UFS has identified internationalisation as part of its strategic priorities and has recognised the need to integrate appropriate internationalisation actions (including funding) to strengthen the focus and use of these opportunities optimally (Institutional Review 2006: Towards Excellence and Equity, p. 159).

RELATED UFS TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROJECT (SECTION B) APPLICABLE TO THESE ISSUES:

Project 2.6: Postgraduate and international students

5. ISSUE CLUSTER: MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HEQC COMMENDATION 8

The HEQC commends the UFS on its continued commitment and initiatives to establish community engagement as a credible core function and the significant contribution that it makes to social development through viable partnerships such as the Mangaung–University of the Free State Community Partnership Programme (MUCPP) and the Free State Rural Development Partnership Programme (FSRDPP).

Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

- (a) The Panel noted that there are different conceptualisations of community engagement (CE) at the institution and that their ability to give expression to a variety of curricular and non-curricular activities is unevenly distributed across faculties and departments. The Panel also noted that not all senior academic staff members are convinced of the value of community engagement. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, pp. 23 - 24. Also see p. 83.)
- (b) The Panel noted that there is no dedicated department at institutional level which takes responsibility for the coordination and administrative support of CE. There is no portfolio committee for CE at institutional level, but there is a Community Services Management Committee, which operates outside the formal portfolio committee structure. While this arrangement may have been sufficient in the initial stages of CS, the Panel is of the view that the envisaged transformation from CS to community service-learning (CSL) across programmes will require more dedicated monitoring of policy implementation and staff and student performance as part of the quality management of CE, with appropriate monitoring at institutional level. This is particularly important in view of the UFS view of CE as a form of scholarship. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 24. Also see p. 84.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>(a) Community Service Simultaneous with the preparation for the Institutional Audit, the institution finalised a revised Policy for Community Service and Community Service Learning (CS&CSL). In this revised Policy (September 2006), a section is devoted to Definitions and Terms. An attempt is being made to provide conceptual clarity on the following</p>	<p>(a) Community Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the different structures, for example the Faculty Committees for Community Service that exists, a dedicated process will be launched to enhance the awareness of the CS Policy. • An annual strategic discussion / workshop / workseminar will be arranged which will create a suitable platform for staff to participate. It would also imply visitations to CS sites and to enhance the partnerships between the different 	<p>(a) Human resources The current organisational structure for the management of CS and CSL is in the process of being restructured. This process should be completed by November 2008.</p>	<p>(a) Community Service The CDCS with the necessary support staff in the Faculties and support services.</p> <p>(b) Service Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deans of 	<p>(a) Community Service The CDCS will attempt to infuse the above-mentioned issues to align with the 3 year Strategic Plan of the UFS.</p> <p>(b) Service Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained

<p>issues: a) Community Service; b) Community; c) Service sector; d) Service; e) Developmental Engagement; f) Community Engagement; g) Community Service Learning.</p> <p>(See Appendix 9 for a copy of the Policy.)</p> <p>(b) Service Learning The dedicated 24-credit Service Learning module (HOS717) that is offered within the Master's Programme in Higher Education Studies contributes significantly to capacity-building for staff members who offer SL modules for their students or are developing new SL modules.</p> <p>For the 2008-period 42 Service Learning modules received funding from the central UFS budget while 52 module coordinators (academic staff members) have applied for either development or implementation funding for 2009.</p> <p>Within the various faculties, CS Coordinators have been appointed on a three-year contract basis.</p>	<p>stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts will also be made by the UFS to create more public forums to allow broader society to take part in discussions around the contribution that the UFS is or would be making, in the form of CS conferences, symposia and workshops. <p>(b) Service Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation of adequate funding and enabling mechanisms for SL implementation will serve as an effective strategy to convince all staff members (and external partners) of the UFS's commitment. In addition, and due to financial constraints experienced by the institution, all efforts should be made to convince the DoE and the CHE/HEQC of the importance to subsidise service learning modules. Professional enrichment opportunities for staff members will be offered on a regular basis, in collaboration with the Staff Development Division of CHESD, as has been the case in the recent past. Future workshops will specifically include a focus on clarifying conceptualisation of the various forms of CE. <p>Additional actions needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multidisciplinary involvement, i.e. involving academic staff from various disciplines for example Agricultural, Architecture, Law, Economics in projects. Adequate quality management actions to ensure policy implementation, student and staff performance, integration of service learning to core functions of teaching, learning and research. 	<p>(b) Financial resources The current financial provision will also be scrutinised together with the revised HR and CS and CSL implementation strategy. Ongoing financial support was approved in August 2008 for Service Learning modules.</p>	<p>faculties and the Vice-Rector: Academic Planning are ultimately responsible for ensuring that adequate funding is made available for the implementation of SL modules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminding deans of the importance of SL as an invaluable engaged pedagogy within their faculties is a responsibility of the Vice-Rector: Academic Planning, who is the line manager of CHESD, and thus indirectly also of SL. Chair persons of the CS portfolio committees in the faculties share this responsibility. The Division: 	<p>allocation of adequate funding for SL implementation is a matter of institutional, as well as national priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convincing senior staff members of the value of SL will be an ongoing task that will require dedication and commitment over a long period of time.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit sustainability of service learning modules on a yearly basis. • The allocation of funding from the central UFS budget for the implementation of SL in 2009 and the following years. • A generic CSL module will be launched in 2009. 		SL will provide support, capacity-building and encouragement as required.	
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Associated area identified by the HEQC Panel for attention:

The Panel observed that CS engagement and the implementation of CSL is highly varied across faculties and programmes. The Panel urges UFS to develop a quality management system for community engagement which could help the institution give more effective expression to its conceptualisation of CSL as integrated into the core functions of teaching and learning and research. (UFS Audit Report, 2008, p. 24. Also see p. 84.)

ACTIONS AND PROGRESS SINCE 2006 AUDIT	PLANNING AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATION(S)	RESOURCES NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE STAFF FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE TO INDICATE PRIORITY
<p>Service Learning The main action that has been taken towards creating an institutional quality management system for SL was the development and recent introduction of a comprehensive web-based Service Learning Database. The various SL reports that can be created through the online database system will eventually be available for perusal at the module, programme, faculty and institutional levels. The first two data-capturing sessions were presented during the first semester of 2008.</p> <p>The purpose of the service learning database is the following:</p>	<p>(a) Community Service The following additional activities will be addressed in the next 3 – 5 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of contributions of the communities and service sector, as well as their assessment and evaluation of the impact of community service in the CS quality management system. • Staff members will be empowered in order to understand the content of the quality management requirements of community service as far as good practice indicators for self-evaluation, recording of evidence and documentation management are concerned. • Promotion of programme evaluation and impact studies pertaining to the ongoing implementation of community service. • Benchmarking of CSL as a tool for self-evaluation and quality assessment, but also as an instrument of motivation, 	<p>(a) Human resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the strategies are unpacked, the needed HR will be aligned and recruited as the need arises. It will preferably be phased into the system as the UFS budget can afford it. <p>(b) Financial resources As the strategies are unpacked, the needed financial resources will be aligned. It will preferably be</p>	<p>(a) Community Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CDCS with the necessary support staff in the Faculties and support services. <p>(b) Service Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members of the Division: SL, with assistance from Computer Services (data-capturing). • CS Portfolio Committee and CS Coordinators in 	<p>(a) Community Service The Chief Director: Community Service will attempt to infuse the above-mentioned issues to align with the 3 year Strategic Plan of the UFS.</p> <p>(b) Service Learning All the named actions should receive focused attention during the second half of 2008 in order to have the system up and running by the end of the year. Data-collection will be an</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting management information regarding service learning (also for reporting purposes) per programme, school, faculty and the institution. This includes general module information; information of lecturers and other staff; partners involved; student numbers, composition and success rates; and budget information. • Compiling a module portfolio with evidence for purposes of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance management - Application for promotion - Recognition for excellence in service learning - Quality management. 	<p style="text-align: center;">learning and information-exchange.</p> <p>These actions will be integrated into the normal management activities of the Chief Director: Community Service.</p> <p>(b) Service Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the SL database information to gauge the quality management of modules by means of the evidence displayed on the system. This will allow all interested parties to establish what the levels of integration with both academic work and CS partnership formations are. • Provision of dedicated assistance with the collection of the quality-related data required for the system. • Group sessions will be held on a regular basis in order to guide staff through the process of capturing information in the system. • Ongoing data-collection from staff, students and external partners engaged in SL (e.g. through survey questionnaires, personal interviews, and focus group discussions). • Data-capturing sessions with staff members for purposes of assisting them with the capturing of management information and quality-related data in the database, will be presented. 	<p>phased into the system as the UFS budget can afford it.</p> <p>(c) Other resources</p> <p>An additional computer for the Division: SL for use by staff members in capturing information for their SL portfolios on the SL database, while guided by staff members of the Division.</p>	<p>the faculties.</p>	<p>ongoing task that will have to receive continuous priority.</p>
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SECTION B: TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

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

TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS: 2007 - 2010

1. BACKGROUND

The Council of the University of the Free State, at its meeting of 11 March 2005, took cognisance that the Executive Management of the UFS had constituted a transformation plan task team (TPTT). The TPTT was constituted on a representative basis.¹ The process, planning and brief, as recommended by the Executive Management (31 January 2005 and 14 February 2005) and Senate (22 February 2005), were approved.

Towards the end of 2006 the Transformation Plan Task Team (TPTT) submitted their Report and Draft Transformation Plan to the UFS Executive Management (23 October 2006), Senate (31 October 2006) and Council (24 November 2006), which noted these documents with appreciation, while also acknowledging them as important aids and direction indicators for the further planning and implementation of the transformation process. Subsequently (10 November 2006) the TPTT Report and Plan were made available on the UFS intranet). In addition to the comments received from Senate and Council, further comments were invited from staff and other stakeholders.

At the Exco summit held from 26-28 November 2006, the following documents, in addition to the TPTT Report and Plan were considered and discussed:

- Extracts from international and national literature
- Comments from individuals departments, Senate and Council
- An abridged second draft report on the 'Social Contract' process compiled by Johan Fleischmann and Willem Ellis
- The Draft "Institutional Charter" prepared by the Office of the Rector and the Office of Diversity.

Exco then requested the Planning Unit to prepare a framework document, with due consideration of the above, providing a platform for discussion at the Executive Management Summit in January 2007, in order to take the transformation process forward. Following this summit an executive management response to the Transformation Plan of TPTT was compiled and discussed leading to this Transformation Plan: 2007-2010, containing:

- a conceptualisation of transformation, providing a generally accepted point of departure for transformation at the UFS and for this plan (Section 2);

¹ The University's Executive Management Committee appointed the following members of staff (in alphabetical order) to serve as the Transformation Plan Task Team: Dr Ezekiel Moraka (Co-Chairperson); Prof. Teuns Verschoor (Co-Chairperson); Prof. Lucius Botes; Prof. Phillippe Burger, Dr Mabel Erasmus; Prof. Magda Fourie; Prof. Neil Heideman; Mr Zane Koeberg (Secretary, later replaced by Ms Barbara Gaudin); Dr Choice Makhetha; Mr Teboho Manchu; Mr Olehile Moeng; Mr Paseka Mokoena; Prof. Rita Niemann; Mr Billyboy Ramahlele; Prof. Tuwani Rasengane; Adv. Mariëtte Reyneke; and Prof. Piet Strauss.

- transformation challenges, goals and actions (Section3); as well as
- further operationalisation of these strategies and actions into prioritised projects in Section 4.

Section 3 has cross-references to the TPTT draft plan and to Section 4, and Section 4 refers back to Section 3.

It is important to also read and interpret this plan within the context of, and in conjunction with the overarching UFS Strategic Plan (strategic priorities, strategies and actions) to ensure alignment.

2. TRANSFORMATION CONCEPTUALISED

2.1 Transformational change model

When conceptualising transformation or change, three change models can be distinguished:

- a developmental model of improving existing conditions that do not measure up to current or future needs (improvements within the box of what is already known or established practice); or
- a transitional change model that does not improve what is, but replaces what is with something entirely different – a process of dismantling the “old” and creating a clearly designed new state; or
- transformational change that demands a fundamental shift in the organisation’s culture and people’s behaviour and mindset, and has the primary motivation of survival (change or die) or thrival (a breakthrough is needed to pursue new opportunities).

Elements of all three of the above change models are present in institutional transformation at the UFS; yet, taking into account the challenges facing the institution from its internal and external environments, it is suggested that this fourth phase of transformation of the UFS be embedded primarily in a transformational change model. This has, *inter alia*, the following implications:

Transformational change implies that a relatively large gap exists between the environmental needs and the operations of the UFS. Outcomes of transformational change are not initially known in all respects, but they emerge or are created through continuous course correction; it therefore is an emergent process.

It has a process orientation and occurs through conscious process design and facilitation.

It has a high impact on the mindset (institutional culture) of the UFS implying a shift from the old to a new mindset.

It implies an overhaul of strategy, structure, systems, processes, technology, work, culture and behaviour.

It requires high levels of personal development, high levels of involvement and is likely to be accompanied with high levels of institutional discomfort.

2.2 Transformation defined

In the context of a transformational change model, it is agreed that the following characteristics, specified in a working (operational) definition of transformation by Eckel, Hill *et al.* (1998), typify transformation at the UFS:

Without changing the core values of being an excellent university, the entire institution is affected by transformation as a deep and pervasive, intentional (planned) and gradual (phased) process. Transformation alters the institutional culture* by changing underlying assumptions and institutional behaviours and processes.

*Institutional culture includes:

artefacts which are the concrete representations of culture, such as typical institutional language and terminology, published mission statements, observable rituals and ceremonies, reward systems and communication channels and procedures (the products, activities, and processes that form the landscape of the UFS's culture);

espoused values which are what we as institution say and what we promote, but not always what we do, i.e. the articulated beliefs about what is "good", what is "right", what "works", etc.;

underlying assumptions which, as the innermost core of culture, encompass deeply ingrained beliefs that are usually difficult to identify and therefore rarely questioned. These assumption are usually taken for granted and are as such the most difficult to change (and if changed, they take a long time to change).

The UFS is therefore committed to **transformation** as **defined** above, implying **a phased process of continuous and persistent:**

- becoming a world-class, engaged university of excellence and innovation and place of scholarship for South Africa and Africa;
- becoming an equitable, diverse, non-racial, non-sexist, multicultural, multilingual university where everyone will experience a sense of belonging and achieving;
- becoming a learning organisation where institutional culture, structures and processes are continuously and fundamentally scrutinised, and redesigned to remain optimally fit for purpose;
- becoming an institution that treasures diversity as source of strength and quality.

3. TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

In order to enable manageable execution of the 44 strategies and actions listed in Section 3, they have been clustered, sequenced and prioritised within the following four categories of projects, each being allocated to an Exco member as project co-ordinator (the Exco member listed first in each case) assuming primary responsibility for completing each project within an allocated timeframe.

Category 1: Diversity-related urgent and important projects (highest priority)

Category 2: Diversity-related projects for immediate attention and implementation

Category 3: Core function related projects (Medium- to long-term projects to be planned in more detail as part of the UFS Quality Improvement Plan during the second semester of 2007)

It is important to take cognisance of the fact that these projects also form part of, and entails, a further exposition of transformation projects envisioned in Section 4 of the UFS Strategic Plan 2006-2008 which was approved by Council in 2006.

CATEGORY 1: DIVERSITY RELATED URGENT AND IMPORTANT PROJECTS (HIGHEST PRIORITY)

TRANSFORMATION PROJECT	PLANNING TO ADDRESS RECOMMENDATION(S): ACTIONS AND TIME LINE	PROJECT RESPONSIBILITY
<p>1.1 Diversity in student life Project 1.1.1 RESIDENCE PLACEMENT POLICY Aim: To revisit (the residence placement policy of the UFS and plan and implement a plan to optimise diversity in University residences) (the previous hostel placement policy, based on the principle of freedom of choice gave students freedom of choice in which hostel they want to live, resulting in segregation). See also HEQC Recommendation 3</p>	<p>Action 1: Conclude consultation process on draft residence placement policy and strategy Action 2: Finalise and propose draft residence placement policy and strategies Action 3: Approve proposed residence placement policy and strategies Action 4: Implement residence placement strategies Action 5: Monitor and report on implementation of residence placement policy and plan Action 6: Appointment of external transformation agency</p> <p>Stemming from Action 5 above Council decided to appoint iGUBU as an external expert transformation agency to assist the university in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding and identifying the current challenges relating to the implementation of the integration policy supporting the university management and making recommendations on how to enhance the process of implementation. <p>iGUBU intervention and assistance:</p> <p>Phase A: Research and trust:Target date: 31 Aug 2008</p> <p>Action 1: Research design Action 2: Data capturing Action 3: Data analysis Action 4: Reporting</p> <p>Phase B: Programme design:Target date :End: 31 Aug 2009</p> <p>Phase C: Implementation:Target date End: 31 Dec 2010</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Student Affairs</p>

<p>Project 1.1.2: ENHANCEMENT OF SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC INTERACTION OF STUDENTS</p> <p>Aim: To use diversity as a source of enrichment of students' educational and personal development (forming of the total student)</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendations 2 and 4</p>	<p>Action 1: Investigate various methods by means of which social and academic interaction among a diverse student body can be enhanced</p> <p>Performance indicator A report based on an investigation of various methods by which social and academic interaction among a diverse student body can be enhanced. Target date: Conclude investigation by end of June 2008.</p> <p>Action 2: Select and propose strategies and actions to implement the most appropriate options to optimally enhance social interaction among a diverse student body at the UFS.</p> <p>Performance indicator A plan with strategies and actions of the most appropriate options to optimally enhance social interaction among a diverse student body at the UFS.</p> <p>Target date Submit proposals for strategies and actions to EM by end of July 2008.</p> <p>Action 3: Approve strategies.</p> <p>Performance indicator Approval of Strategies by EM:</p> <p>Target date EM: Aug 2008</p> <p>Action 4: Implement strategies.</p>	<p>Vice-Rectors: Student Affairs and Academic Operations</p>
<p>1.2 Sense of Belonging</p> <p>Project 1.2.1: DETERMINANTS OF AND PLAN FOR CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SENSE OF BELONGING</p> <p>Aim: To determine which cultural, physical, sociological, organisational and other determinants, including frustrations and aspirations of different groups caused by change and transformation (e.g. fears of</p>	<p>Action 1: Conduct a scientific investigation to identify the cultural, physical, sociological, organisational and other determinants, including frustrations and aspirations of different groups caused by change and transformation (e.g. fears of young white staff, middle-aged and older white people, as well as those of young black staff) that would foster a sense of belonging among staff and students at a diverse HEI.</p> <p>Performance indicator Approved research protocol, including the development of applicable instruments to identify strategically important determinants relevant to the UFS of sense of belonging.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning; Planning Unit and Diversity Office</p>

<p>young white staff, middle-aged and older white people, as well as those of young black staff) foster or mitigate against a sense of belonging among staff and students at a diverse HEI and to devise and implement a plan to realise an optimum sense of belonging.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>Target date End Aug 2007</p> <p>NOTE A first phase of this project was well underway during 2007 but due to student unrest and the Reitz incident which created an unfavourable climate for this project, it was temporarily discontinued and will be resumed in 2009.</p> <p>Action 2: Identify those strategically important determinants relevant to the UFS which will have optimum effect on creating and maintaining a sense of belonging for staff and students (the Pareto principle).</p> <p>Performance indicator A concluded investigation resulting in a research report on above investigation, including recommendations on relevant cultural, physical, sociological, organisational and other determinants, that would foster a sense of belonging among staff and students at a diverse HEI.</p> <p>Target date To be determined</p> <p>Action 3: Prepare and submit a holistic plan with practical and implementable strategies and actions, derived from the above scientific investigation, to optimally change the UFS culture from an Afrikaans-dominant culture to a non-dominating and diverse institutional culture that fosters a sense of belonging on the part of all staff and students of the UFS, by also including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those elements of the Botho initiative that would promote a sense of belonging; • those elements of the Institutional Charter that would promote a sense of belonging; • recommendations on statues, symbols, names and artefacts that sufficiently reflect diversity on campus (e.g. using names of streets, public spaces and buildings to constructively influence the sense of belonging, including the possible establishment of, for example, a “diversity park/square”). <p>Performance indicator An holistic draft plan submitted to EM with practical strategies and actions,</p>	
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	<p>derived from the above scientific investigation, that can be implemented (including recommendations on statues, symbols, names and artefacts that sufficiently reflect diversity on campus (e.g. using names of streets, public spaces and buildings to constructively influence the sense of belonging.)</p> <p>Target date To be determined</p> <p>Action 4: Finalise and approve plan.</p> <p>Performance indicator A Plan Approved by EM and Council</p> <p>Target date To be determined</p> <p>Action 5: Implement plan</p> <p>Performance indicator Implementation in accordance with approved implementation plan and timelines.</p> <p>Target date: To be determined</p>	
<p>Project 1.2.2: MONITORING OF PLAN FOR SENSE OF BELONGING Aim: To undertake regular institutional climate surveys; also to serve as monitoring instruments to determine the effect of strategies implemented to create a sense of belonging. See also HEQC Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>Action 1: Develop and submit instruments to conduct staff satisfaction surveys, as well as institutional climate surveys (Strategy 5.1); also to serve as monitoring instruments to determine the effect of strategies implemented to create a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Performance indicator Submitted and approved survey instruments and implementation plan for regular use to appropriate institutional structures for approval. (Strategy 5.2).</p> <p>Target date To be determined</p> <p>Action 2: Implement plan for regular staff satisfaction and institutional climate surveys.</p> <p>Performance indicator Administered instruments and continuous feedback to EM on results of</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning</p>

	<p>surveys.</p> <p>Target date: To be determined</p> <p>Action 3: EM to use information from surveys to identify issues that hinder the establishment and maintenance of a sense of belonging and make recommendations for change to enable the necessary adjustments.</p> <p>Target date: To be determined</p> <p>See note at Project 1.2.1 above.</p>	
<p>Project 1.2.3: INCLUSIVE ONGOING DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL SENSITISATION PROGRAMME</p> <p>Aim: To develop a plan for the implementation of an inclusive ongoing diversity and multicultural sensitisation programme for Council members, staff and students.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendations 2 and 4</p>	<p>Action 1: Develop a plan for the implementation of an inclusive ongoing diversity and multicultural sensitisation programme for (Council members, staff and) students by inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - incorporating the relevant sections of the Botho Project and Institutional Charter; - developing and introducing guidelines on the use of inclusive and non-offensive language; - exploring the possibilities of a compulsory module “Diversity 101” for all new first-year students. <p>Performance indicator Submit draft implementation plans and proposed contents of sensitisation programme for different stakeholders to Exco of EM.</p> <p>Action 2: Take proposals through institutional approval processes i.e. EM, Institutional forum, Council, etc.</p> <p>Performance indicator Implementation plan and programme content approved by EM, Institutional forum, Council etc.</p> <p>Action 3: Implement and monitor effect of plan and programme(s).</p>	<p>Director: Diversity</p>

<p>1.3 Employment Equity and Redress Project 1.3.1 OPERATIONALISING SUFFICIENT STAFF DIVERSITY Aim: To accelerate the operationalisation of the guiding principles, institutional framework and strategies set out in the approved EE policy of the UFS to guide the equity programme of the University. See also HEQC Recommendation 1.</p>	<p>Action 1: Make proposals for a process to be adopted to discuss and reach agreement on the meaning of sufficient diversity in the composition of staff by, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - obtaining information about and selecting applicable and relevant benchmarks for the University for defining and attaining sufficient diversity (attaining a desired staff profile derived from IC); - debating and reaching sufficient consensus on the practical meaning of “sufficient diversity” to enable operationalisation thereof in the Employment Equity Plan; - proposing short-, medium- and long-term (end of redress) equity targets. <p>Action 2: Approve process proposal and implement.</p> <p>Action 3: Complete discussions according to approved process plan and make proposals for end of redress equity targets.</p> <p>Action 4: Feed approved proposals into Project 1.3.2.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Operations</p>
<p>Project 1.3.2 FINALISATION OF REVISED EE PLAN Aim: To institutionalise enabling systems and procedures and mechanisms to support the implementation of the EE Policy and Plan. See also HEQC Recommendation 1.</p>	<p>Action 1: Finalise revised EE Plan by also applying the operational definition of sufficient diversity in the composition of staff on macro-level.</p> <p>Action 2: Institutionalise enabling systems and procedures and mechanisms to support the implementation of the EE Policy and Plan, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing increased incentives and resources for faculties and departments to accelerate redress in respect of underrepresented groups, in line with the EE Act for example by providing for headhunting and retaining of promising black postgraduate students; - ensuring that the necessary support and mentoring mechanisms are in place to empower people in the very practical sense of enabling them to do the job for which they were appointed (by first identifying what is necessary and then making provision to address the need); - holding managers responsible for the implementation of Employment Equity within their departments during performance appraisal. <p>Action 3: Approve EE plan. Take EE plan through institutional process to be submitted at first Council meeting of 2008.</p>	<p>Chief Director: Operations</p>

	<p>Action 4: Implement and monitor implementation of EE Plan. Continuously from 2008</p> <p>NOTE See Appendix 2 for Employment Equity Three Year Rolling Plan.</p>	
<p>Project 1.4: LANGUAGE (Policy) AND DIVERSITY</p> <p>Challenge: To establish substantive and sufficient multilingualism in a way that balances imperatives of multilingualism and aspects of transformation.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendations 2 and 12.</p>	<p>Action 1: Plan and make proposals for a process to investigate, identify, discuss and reach agreement on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - substantive and sufficient multilingualism in academic and support activities; - possible conflicts between Language Policy (including PMO) multilingualism and employment equity/staff diversity. <p>Target date: Completed and submitted process plan to EM by end of May 2007.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a first action this project did the planning and proposed a process to investigate, identify, discuss and reach agreement on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - substantive and sufficient multilingualism in academic and support activities; - possible conflicts between Language Policy (including PMO) multilingualism and employment equity/staff diversity. <p>Action 2: Approve and implement process proposal.</p> <p>Performance indicator: Approved process plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exco approved the process proposal on 30 May 2007. • EM approved the process proposals for implementation from the second semester 2007. <p>Target date: EM to approve process proposals for implementation from second semester 2007.</p> <p>Action 3: Develop and propose a plan (strategies and actions) to address aspects of non-alignment between Language solutions, given that multilingualism is an important source of diversity, but is also seen as an impediment to further staff diversity.</p> <p>Performance indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan (strategies and actions) to address the aspects of non-alignment between the Language Policy (including PMO)/ multilingualism and employment 	<p>Registrar: General Vice-Rector: Academic Operations Chief Director: Operations Director: Diversity</p>

	<p>equity/staff diversity. (Propose innovative trade-offs and solutions, given that multilingualism is an important source of diversity, but is also seen as an impediment to further staff diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A progress report was forwarded to Exco and feedback has been reported to the UFS Language Committee as a standing item on the agenda. • A revised report was submitted to the Acting Rector, Vice-Rectors Academic and the Director: Diversity in September 2008. <p>Action 4: Approve relevant proposals</p> <p>Target date: First term 2009</p> <p>Action 5: Implement proposals and develop and implement monitoring mechanisms to evaluate effect of implemented strategies</p> <p>Performance indicator: Regular report to EM on effects of strategies</p> <p>Target date: Continuous from 2010</p>	
<p>1.5 Equity in access, throughput and success</p> <p>Project 1.5.1: EQUITY IN ACCESS</p> <p>Aim: To develop and implement an integrated and systematically focused plan (UFS Enrolment plan: 2006-2010), aligned with DoE approved enrolments, to ensure equity in access, with maintenance of the present diversity balance in total student population while addressing redress in programmes in which designated groups are still underrepresented.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendation 6.</p>	<p>Action 1: Revisit/review UFS Enrolment plan: 2006-2010 to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintenance of the diversity balance in total student population; • redress in programmes in which designated groups are still underrepresented; • alignment with DoE approved enrolments. <p>Action 2: Consult with faculties in order to align UFS enrolment plan with faculties' enrolment plans and finalise draft UFS enrolment plan.</p> <p>Action 3: Adopt and approve enrolment plan for implementation.</p> <p>Action 4: Propose strategies to align marketing, recruitment and enrolment practices with enrolment plan, i.e. to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintain the diversity balance in total student population; - enhance diversity in selected underrepresented programmes by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Finalising strategically focussed bursary and loan scheme. ii) Devising an integrated marketing and recruitment strategy for 2009. iii) Planning for handling of applications to ensure alignment of enrolments with enrolment plan. iv) Developing and implementing a strategy to ensure alignment of enrolments with enrolment plan up to 2010. 	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning</p> <p>Vice-Rector: Academic Operations</p> <p>Chief Director: Operations</p>

	<p>Action 5: Improvement of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Marketing and recruitment strategy for 2009. ii) Strategy for handling of applications to ensure alignment of enrolments in 2008 with enrolment plan. iii) Strategy to ensure alignment of enrolments in 2008 with enrolment plan. <p>Action 6: Implement strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Implementation of marketing strategy from Oct 2007 for 2009 enrolments. ii) Implementation of application strategy from Oct 2007 for 2008 enrolments. iii) Enrolment strategy to be implemented at beginning 2009. 	
<p>Project 1.5.2 EQUITY IN SUCCESS AND THROUGHPUT</p> <p>Aim: To develop and implement an integrated and systematically focused plan to ensure improvement of equity in throughput and success of students.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendation 6.</p>	<p>Action 1: Investigating causative factors for poor student performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head: Teaching, Learning, and Assessment conducted an investigation on the phenomenon and domains of under preparedness and developed a framework which is intended to create an awareness and understanding of teaching and learning strategies that have the potential to support the under prepared student as well as the prepared but at-risk student. These findings were disseminated by means of various workshops on campus as well as included in the formal higher education studies at postgraduate level. <p>Action 2: Devising and implementing student performance tracking system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop on the development of a Student Tracking System was run and produced a report on what the Student Tracking System should be and what steps would be needed for its development. The development of a tracking system is underway. <p>Action 3: Introducing tutor system for all students through academic lines (based on experience with residence tutor system):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first semester of 2007 was used to appoint faculty tutorial coordinators and to ensure that the appropriate implementation infrastructure was put in place for the programme. • The New Academic Tutorial Programme (NATP) which started as a pilot project, was launched in four faculties and involved 55 tutors in the second semester of 2007. The 2007 pilot was successful in providing evidence of the positive impact of tutorials. • In 2008 the NATP has been extended to five faculties and by the end of the year will involve 133 tutors indicating significant growth 	<p>Vice-Rector: Student Affairs Vice-Rector: Academic Planning</p>

	<p>from the 55 original tutors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the NATP innovation around on-line tutorial support for large undergraduate classes is also being explored. • As was the case in 2007 the NATP is monitored and evaluated by collecting data on student attendance, student evaluations of tutors, and evaluation of general coordination and management. <p>Action 4: Establishing service for language proficiency development for students.</p> <p>Action 5: Ensuring that all admission and re-admission policies and criteria of the UFS are free from unfair discrimination and aligned to its commitment to equity and redress regarding access to the University.</p> <p>Action 6: Submit draft plan to EM.</p> <p>Phase 3: Implement plan.</p>	
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CATEGORY 2: DIVERSITY-RELATED PROJECTS FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECT	PLANNING TO ADDRESS RECOMMENDATION(S): ACTIONS AND TIMELINE	PROJECT RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Project 2.1: EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES Aim: To change, where necessary, policies and selection processes for sporting codes and cultural events to ensure fair access and participation for all interested students. See also HEQC Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>Action 1: Review policies and selection processes to ensure fair access and participation for all interested students, in respect of, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sporting codes; • intervarsity; • Rag and Rag queen contest; • Kovsie culture; • university choirs; • Irawa; • Kovscom; • SIFE <p>Action 2: Submit a report to EM containing motivated proposals for either maintaining or changing policies and selection processes to ensure fair access and participation in respect of each of the listed codes and activities.</p> <p>Action 3: EM to approve relevant proposals for implementation. To be approved by EM by end 2008 for implementation beginning 2009.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Student Affairs Vice-Rector: Academic Operations</p>
<p>Project 2.2.1 (A) INTERPRETING SERVICES AT DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT LEVELS Aim: To ensure that interpreting services for management meetings at departmental and divisional level are available when required.</p>	<p>Action 1: Establish extent of need to use interpreting services for management meetings at departmental and divisional level.</p> <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions to address the need for interpreting services for management meetings at departmental and divisional level.</p> <p>Action 3: Approve and implement. Implementation as from 16 August 2007</p>	<p>Registrar: General Vice Rector: Academic Operations</p>

<p>Project 2.2 1 (B) THIRD LANGUAGE INTERPRETING SERVICES</p> <p>Aim: To investigate and propose alternatives to optimise the use of a third language in simultaneous interpretation in selected meetings (given real needs and supply considerations).</p>	<p>Action 1: Investigate need.</p> <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions to address the need.</p> <p>Action 3: Approve and implement proposals. Implementation as from Oct 2007</p>	
<p>Project 2.2.1 (C) USE OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING SERVICES IN LECTURES</p> <p>Aim: To expand the use of simultaneous interpreting services in lectures to cater for those lecturers who are not fluent in both mediums of instruction of the UFS. See also HEQC Recommendation 6.</p>	<p>Action 1: Determine success of pilot project and Identify the need for further implementation.</p> <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions to address the need. <i>Report containing proposed strategies and actions submitted and approved by Exco and EM.</i></p> <p>Action 3: Approve and implement proposals. Implementation continuous as need arises.</p>	
<p>Project 2.3: FRONTLINE SUPPORT SERVICES</p> <p>Aim: To identify front-line support services where a three-language interface with public and students (English, Afrikaans and Sesotho) is necessary and to establish three language interface at identified support services. See also HEQC Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>Action 1: Identify Services.</p> <p>Action 2: Propose a plan to establish three language interface at identified support services.</p> <p>Action 3: Approve and implement plan. Implementation as from June 2007</p>	<p>Chief Director: Operations Vice-Rector: Academic Operations Vice-Rector: Academic Planning</p>
<p>Project 2.4: LANGUAGE EMPOWERMENT (See also project 3.4.2 below)</p> <p>Aim: To make provision for all new</p>	<p>Action 1: GOOT determine the extent of the need for empowerment of new and existing staff (including Mellon fellows) in multilingualism.</p> <p>Challenging issues were identified by the University's Language Departments during an open discussion on language proficiency and</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning Director: Diversity</p>

<p>and existing staff (including Mellon fellows) to be empowered in multi-lingualism. See also HEQC Recommendations 6 and 12.</p>	<p>academic literacy of UFS students and language empowerment of staff in July 2007.</p> <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions to address the need. The following was proposed to support academic staff in offering programmes and to improve their writing skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop 1: A practical session on reading and writing strategies (in English) to promote student learning in content areas • Workshop 2: Embedding language support devices in module design and delivery (in English) • Reading and listening strategies to enhance student learning (in Afr.) • The effective use of language in an academic environment (in Afr.) • Short course: Writing skills <p>Action 3: Approve and implement strategies and actions Implementing of the above initiatives have been postponed due to staff capacity and over burdening of academic staff thus hindering its implementation.</p> <p>Action 4: Establish service for language proficiency development for students.</p>	
<p>Project 2.5 EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES Aim: To address (adapt / rectify) recruitment, remuneration and appointment practices that pose hindrances to redress. See also HEQC Recommendation 1</p>	<p>Action 1: Determine which/review recruitment, remuneration and appointment practices pose hindrances to redress, and /or are discriminatory, inter alia the pattern/ practice (including benefits) of contract appointments.</p> <p>Action 2: Make proposals to eliminate these.</p> <p>Action 3: Implement proposals.</p>	<p>Chief Director: Operations</p>
<p>Project 2.6: POSTGRADUATE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS Aim: To finalise establishment of a service for postgraduate student support. See also HEQC Recommendations 18 and 19</p>	<p>Service for postgraduate student support and supervision To reply to the institutional need to address and improve postgraduate supervision and practices, the institution initiated a project in this regard during 2008.</p> <p>The objectives of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess the current status of postgraduate and postdoctoral education at UFS. • To benchmark this against local and international best practice. • To develop recommendations aimed at the improvement of the management of postgraduate and postdoctoral education at UFS. 	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning Vice-Rector: Operations</p>

	<p>The project will be done in three phases and the following methodology were accepted:</p> <p>Phase 1: Current status of postgraduate and postdoctoral education at UFS: Phase 1: Target date: May – September 2008</p> <p>Phase 2: Research and report on best practice with regard to postgraduate and postdoctoral education: Phase 2: Target date: October 2008</p> <p>Phase 3: Recommendations on the improvement of the management of postgraduate and postdoctoral education at UFS: Phase 3: Target date: November 2008</p> <p>Based on the findings of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project, a set of consolidated recommendations will be compiled which are aimed at the improvement of the management of postgraduate and postdoctoral education at UFS.</p> <p>A draft report will be compiled for the consideration of the Vice-Rector: Academic Planning for consideration, after which it will be finalised. The final report will be formally presented to the university management for implementation (policies, guidelines, etc.) and form part of faculties' improvement plans.</p> <p>Internationalisation (See Appendix 10 for Internationalisation Policy) The first Head of Internationalisation was appointed on 1 January 2007 and establishment has moved into next phase including the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed an Internationalisation Strategy which was accepted by the Executive Management on 28 July 2008. • Approve additional financial resources to expand the International Office. • A decentralised management structure, with part-time support from the Faculties, has been approved by deans and is currently being implemented. • Co-funding mechanisms have been approved to further support the internationalisation of research, and includes funds reserved for research collaboration and international partnership formation. • A comprehensive international marketing strategy is currently being compiled, in close cooperation with Strategic Communication and Deans. In this context, the number of international students have increased from 1 500 to 2 100 in two years. • An official welcome and orientation programme for international students has been implemented, and a comprehensive visitors' policy is in the final stages of development, to be implemented at the beginning of 2009. • Systems and process with regard to internationalisation has been revised for a 	
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	<p>more effective service delivery function.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessors of the Association for Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Benchmarking exercise have commended the UFS during August 2008 for its progress with internationalisation. • A number of new agreements, in line with a pronounced focus on research development, have been concluded during the past three years, with a marked increase in international research funding. • A staff development strategy for the improvement of international qualifications of junior staff has been developed. 	
<p>Project 2.7 INSTITUTIONAL CHARTER Aim: Prepare and implement process plan to finalise draft Institutional Charter (IC) as an outcome of the Social Contract process and institutionalise Charter. See also HEQC Recommendation 4.</p>	<p>Action 1: Prepare a process plan to finalise draft Institutional Charter (IC) as an outcome of the Social Contract process.</p> <p>Action 2: Prepare a process plan to stimulate debate on campus about issues regarding transformation, diversity and its interrelated dimensions. Process plan approved and implemented from Feb 2007: Charter discussed at numerous forums followed by questionnaire. Questionnaire results submitted in report to Rector.</p> <p>Action 3: Institutionalise (establish ownership) and finalise Institutional Charter.</p> <p>Action 4: Take Institutional Charter through institutional approval processes.</p>	<p>Rector; Director: Diversity; Registrar: Strategic Planning</p>

CATEGORY 3: CORE FUNCTION-RELATED PROJECTS (Medium- to long-term projects: 2007 and onwards)

PROJECT	PLANNING TO ADDRESS RECOMMENDATION(S): ACTIONS AND TIME LINE	PROJECT RESPONSIBILITY
<p>3.1 Teaching and Learning Project 3.1.1 INNOVATIVE TEACHING MODEL(S)</p> <p>Aim: To revise, existing teaching model(s) and/or devise new innovative ones where necessary, that will enhance performance of a diverse student body (their study needs and learning styles) See also HEQC Recommendations 6, 9, 10 and 11.</p>	<p>Action 1: Revisit and, where necessary, revise existing and/or devise new innovative teaching model(s) that will enhance performance of a diverse student body (their study needs and learning styles) by, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating the implementation of open-learning plan for on- and off-campus offerings to make provision for a broader range of students (make use of new modes of learning, new teaching/learning technologies, flexible learning opportunities). • Promoting culturally sensitive learning facilitation, and assessment. Blended learning initiatives as a form of engaged learning is addressed by the UFS's assessment policy (See Appendix 6) and teaching-learning policy (See Appendix 5) which were approved by the Senate in February 2008. <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions to further roll out existing model or implement new and/or complementary models.</p> <p>To establish this the institution plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively roll out a blended learning model. • Ensure the provision of an appropriate infrastructure that supports a blended approach. • Expand <i>e-learn</i> capacity (human, financial and physical resources). • Create/design teaching-learning interventions that serve as proactive measures to foster diversity and to create a multicultural climate. • Provide student access – on and off campus – to state-of-the-art technology. • Expand opportunities for teaching beyond the traditional classroom setting through the development of more flexible course structures and delivery options. • Deploy regular staff induction and staff development interventions (e-learning). <p>To encourage the use and effectiveness of blended learning, the UFS plan to:</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD</p>

- Develop a short learning programme (SLP) for academics to develop as blended learning instructors.
- Share best practices among blended learning instructors on the UFS's iteach portal or web site.
- Reward and recognise excellence in teaching and learning performance with blended learning as an indicator or criteria.
- Conduct a process of reviewing programmes to encourage the use of blended learning.
- Provide formal training opportunities to enable academic staff to excel in scholarly teaching based on the devised a blended approach.
- Intensify the dissemination and sharing of good practice.

To monitor the effect that blended learning has on the effectiveness of teaching and learning the UFS plan to evaluate teaching by means of data collected from students as well as other stakeholders and role-players through the use innovative data collection methods (not only questionnaires).

The following actions are needed:

- Negotiations with all relevant team members who could strengthen programme development, and then planning for successful implementation. It may prove in practice that one multi-disciplinary programme development session per term will be scheduled, to which all developers are invited. This is relevant to new programmes.

In terms of existing programmes, programme directors and developers are contacting the Division: E-learning on a continuous basis.

Action 3: Approve and implement strategy as soon as possible in 2009.

<p>Project 3.1.2 RELEVANT ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES</p> <p>Aim: To develop strategies and actions, including monitoring mechanisms for ensuring that new and existing academic programmes and curricula are relevant for and responsive to the South African and African context.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendations 9, 10 and 11.</p>	<p>Action 1: Review existing academic programmes and curricula to ensure inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsiveness and relevance as part of the scheduled programme review process of faculties; • culturally sensitive programme planning by giving a clear Africa orientation to curricula (teaching content, study material, prescribed handbooks, and also Including Indigenous Knowledge Systems in curricula as far as possible, where relevant); • increasing service learning modules in academic programmes. <p>Action 2: Propose strategies and actions, for continuous quality improvement of programmes and programme offerings (modules).</p> <p>Action 3: Take proposals through institutional-, and where necessary national approval processes.</p> <p>Action 4: Implement plan within context of quality “loop”.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD</p>
<p>Project 3.1.3 DETERMINE AND MAINTAINING STUDENT SATISFACTION</p> <p>Aim: To develop instruments (student satisfaction surveys) for purposes of continuous quality improvement.</p> <p>See also HEQC Recommendation 6.</p>	<p>Action 1: Develop instruments to conduct student satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Action 2: Submit and approve student satisfaction survey instruments and implementation plan for regular use of instruments.</p> <p>Action 3: Implement plan for regular student satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Action 4: Use survey feedback for continuous quality improvement of teaching, learning and programme offerings (close the quality loop). The faculties are using various methods to obtain feedback from the students in order to review their programmes and teaching. The following actions have been taken in this regard since 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff provides structured questionnaires to students to assess the quality of teaching, contents of the module, educational experience, etc. • Regular meetings of a student forum where representatives from the different study years in the Undergraduate Programme present the issues and concerns of their fellow students. • Interviews with students. • Student satisfaction survey – graduates were contacted and asked to indicate their satisfaction with all the undergraduate programmes offered; the survey also included questions that focused on the employability of the graduates. 	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class sizes are monitored by the Teaching and Learning managers of the faculties. Information is passed on to the Dean, who discusses this with top management. However, no satisfactory solutions have been found. • Scientific investigation into the perceptions regarding the faculty among various stakeholders, <i>inter alia</i> the student's, with a view to improving teaching and learning strategies and expanding the tutor programmes. 	
<p>3.2 Research Project 3.2.1 RELEVANT AND ENGAGED RESEARCH</p> <p>Aim: To develop a research strategy for the UFS. See also HEQC Recommendations 14 and 16</p>	<p>Action 1: Incorporate and encourage (stimulate, recognise, incentivise) the following within the research strategy and/or the research cluster strategy of the UFS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Millennium Development Goals of the UN, the objectives of NEPAD and ASGISA. • Local national priorities as set out in the presidential imperatives (HIV/Aids, poverty reduction, food security, rural development, good governance). • Contributions of Indigenous Knowledge Systems to research and, in a wider sense, material peculiar to Africa. • Refocusing of research topics and methods to contribute to development of local communities, region, country and continent. • Other relevant and engaged research (i.e. research relevant to community, South African and African needs and challenges). <p>A process to revise the current (2004 -2008) research strategy was initiated during 2007. Dr Zenda Ofir (lead consultant) is currently in the process of evaluating the strategy of the previous 5 years and developing a framework for a new strategy to guide research during the next 5 years (2009 - 2013). The consultant has completed information and data gathering (wide individual and group interviews on campus; extensive document review and specific research information analyses).</p> <p>Action 2: Approve and implement viable strategies The final report is expected by November 2008. An implementation plan to address the recommendations contained in this review report and strategic development according to an existing schedule will subsequently be developed.</p> <p>Action 3: Devise and propose monitoring mechanisms to ensure effectiveness of strategies. The University implemented the University Office Research Information</p>	<p>Vice-Rectors: Academic and Directorate Research Development</p>

	<p>Management System (RIMS) during 2006. However, the system proved to be problematic in terms of user-friendliness and technical support from the service (software) provider. The UFS therefore joined the national SARIMA-led RIMS project in the middle of 2007. This project is supported by the DoE, the DST and the NRF, and Government envisages that all HEIs and Science Councils will form part of this national RIMS. It is envisaged that the software will be implemented from October 2008.</p> <p>Training of administrative staff and researchers will take place during the last quarter of 2008.</p>	
<p>3.3 Community Services Project 3.3.1 CS FLAGSHIPS Aim: To continuously develop existing community service to serve as models for community service and community service learning amongst Higher Education institutions.</p>	<p>Action 1: Strengthen development of existing community service flagships (MUCPP, FSRDPP and Qwaqwa).</p> <p>Action 2: Investigate and make proposals for the establishment of further community-service flagships.</p>	<p>Chief Director: Community Service</p>
<p>Project 3.3.2 HIV AND AIDS Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further develop, strengthen and implement a coordinated HIV/AIDS programme at the University of the Free State. • To raise awareness and knowledge about HIV/AIDS at the University of the Free State and to mitigate its impact on those affected and infected by the disease. 	<p>Action 1: Prevention, treatment, care and support The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the range and quality of interventions providing prevention, treatment, care and support to students and staff of the University of the Free State. • To ensure that HIV/AIDS is treated as a long-term institutional commitment by the University management. • To develop and transform the internal culture of the University so as to ensure that affected and infected people are supporting in an environment that is free from stigma and discrimination. <p>Action 2: Infusion into curricula The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To initiate the infusion of HIV/AIDS issues into the teaching offerings of the University of the Free State. • To initiate the development of a formal policy for infusing HIV/AIDS issues into curricula at the University of the Free State. <p>Action 3: Implementation of Management Information System (MIS) The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To integrate and consolidate key information about all initiatives, 	<p>Chief Director: Community Service</p>

	<p>activities and/or actions in relation to HIV and AIDS within the institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expose critical performance indices for the purpose of review and efficacy management. • To promote activity results through appropriate means in order to stimulate interest, buy-in and commitment from all stakeholders. • To provide a standardised means of information dissemination which could be made available to all interested information consumers. (It is envisaged that cross institutional co-operation could give rise to a nation-wide information sharing standard, albeit sometime in the future). <p>Additional to the above mentioned project the following actions are planned for the AIDS Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking of outside funding to promote services because HE AIDS funding do not provide for these needs. • Negotiations to gain the services of the coordinator VCCT for at least 25 hours per week. • Upgrading of the physical space of the Centre (ventilation and soundproofing of the counseling rooms, upgrading of waiting area, training venues, etc.) 	
<p>Project 3.3.3 SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAMME Aim: To develop an institutional support programme for schools to assist in promoting teaching and learning in disadvantaged schools.</p>	<p>Develop an institutional support programme for schools.</p>	<p>Chief Director: Community Service</p>
<p>3.4 Staff Development and Wellness Project 3.4.1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Aim: To ensure further roll out of the performance management system of the UFS in order to align staff functioning with vision, mission and strategic priorities of the University. See also HEQC</p>	<p>Action 1: Conclude performance management agreements with all managers at all levels of management.</p> <p>Action 2: Develop management capacity, for the implementation of transformation objectives as set out in Institutional Charter, <i>inter alia</i> by sending managers on management training programmes.</p> <p>Action 3: Enable management to access individual performance.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD; Chief Director: Operations and Human Resources Dept</p>

Recommendation 2		
<p>Project 3.4.2: STAFF DEVELOPMENT (See also Project 2.4 above) Aim: Ensure systematic and regular training of all lecturers in teaching and learning methodologies, and language skills, especially in the context of multiculturalism See also Recommendations 2, 4, 6 and 12.</p>	<p>Action 1: Ensure staff development opportunities are aligned to core business of the University.</p> <p>Action 2: Develop management capacity, for the implementation of transformation objectives as set out in Institutional Charter, <i>inter alia</i> by sending managers on management training programmes.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD; Chief Director: Operations and Human Resources Dept</p>
<p>Project 3.4.3 STAFF WELLNESS Aim: Make proposals on how to manage change and transformation with minimum stress to and optimum wellness of staff</p>	<p>Action 1: Present a holistic preventative programme to make staff more resilient in the face of change and transformation.</p> <p>Action 2: Provide a remedial service to staff-in-need.</p> <p>Action 3: Develop and build capacity in the domain of personal and people skills to enhance general functioning, coping and stress resistance.</p>	<p>Vice-Rector: Academic Planning and CHESD; Chief Director: Operations and Human Resources Dept</p>
<p>Project 3.5 Positioning of UFS</p> <p>Project 3.5.1 REVIEW VISION</p>	<p>Action 1: Revisit vision, mission and values to achieve alignment with Institutional Charter.</p> <p>Action 2: Make proposals on alignment/realignment of the vision, mission and value statement of the UFS by recommending:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) what (if anything) must be changed; ii) the process to be followed to change/realign the vision. 	<p>Rector Vice-Rector: Operations</p>
<p>Project 3.5.2 PROFILE BUILDING</p>	<p>Action 1: Plan a differentiated positioning and profile-building exercise for the UFS to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) promote extensive networking; ii) rectify undesirable stereotyping of the UFS by, <i>inter alia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying stakeholder groups, - identifying negative stereotypes of the UFS among these stakeholder groups, - proposing strategies to address these stereotypes. <p>Action 2: Propose a communication strategy to affirm and communicate explicitly and continuously the UFS's commitment to transformation, diversity and engagement).</p>	<p>Rector Vice-Rector: Operations</p>

	Action 3: Approve and implement viable strategies.	
Project 3.5.3 PRESENCE IN AFRICA	Propose strategies and actions to expand the UFS presence in Africa via faculties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating strategies to liaise with African institutions of higher education; and • encouraging exchange programmes from and to Africa 	Vice Rectors Academic and Deans
Project 3.5.4 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS	Action 1: Develop instruments and propose a strategy to institutionalise conducting of customer satisfaction surveys among graduates and employers. Action 2: Approve instruments and implement plan to conduct regular graduate and employee satisfaction surveys. Action 3: Use survey feedback in planning for quality improvement purposes (programme development, recruitment and marketing).	Vice Rectors: Academic, Planning Unit and Deans
Project 3.6: GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT Aim: To revisit current governance and management model, (committees, policies, procedures, and decision-making processes, etc) for efficiency. See also HEQC Recommendations 5,7,15 and 16.	Action 1: Revisit and evaluate current governance and management model/structures, (committees, policies, procedures, practices and decision-making processes, etc) for effectiveness and efficiency and alignment with Institutional Charter. Action 2: Make proposals for change where necessary, <i>inter alia</i> , by evaluating the terms of reference, and composition to: (i) ensure substantive presence with regard to diversity (race, gender etc.), (ii) ensure transparency and inclusiveness in governance and management; and (iii) address negative perceptions by means of a proper communication strategy, (iv) Relevant units of the IC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UFS has again participated in the ACU Benchmark project in August 2008 and one of the focus areas for this year's programme was Governance and Management. The report from the [international] assessor will be tabled at a Council Meeting in the 4th term of 2008 and actions plan considered to improve the current model. • A proposal for a new UFS Governance and Management model was drafted by the Registrar: General and Acting Vice-Rector: Academic Operations for implementation during the first half of 2009. Specific attention is given to the involvement of Senate in the discussion of strategic matters – providing and/or participating direction for 	Registrar: General Vice-Rector: Academic Operations

	<p>decision-making on academic matters. The Reglement of Senate provides for such advice to Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The draft report was tabled at the Deans Forum and further input will be made at the Exco summit in November 2008. A process proposal will be discussed at the summit. <p>Action 3: Consider and approve proposals</p>	
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