



ANNUAL REPORT

for

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY CONVOCAATION

2022

25 JUNE 2022

INTRODUCTION

1. In June 2019 the Executive Committee was elected in this very town. For me personally, my election as President of Convocation was a return to where my professional career began. No doubt, the same for every other member of the Convocation Executive who was elected.
2. It is therefore necessary, at the outset, to signify my gratitude for the responsibility given to me to lead the body that represents the interests of certificate holders, diploma holders, and degree holders of the collective institution referred to as Walter Sisulu University. The University is an outcome of a process of merger between institutions which offered technikon education and traditional university education. This process to create a single comprehensive institution has been complicated and fraught. It is currently in the middle.
3. A comprehensive program, referred to as rationalization and consolidation has been devised in order to complete the program. However, the rationalization and consolidation program faces

numerous challenges of a strategic, and tactical nature. On the one hand, there is a feeling that in relation to its content, the plan has not been carefully thought through. Some concerns arise for instance, pertaining to whether enough financial provision has been made for the project to succeed.

4. When the matter came before the Council, which I have also been privileged to serve as Chairperson in the last one and a half years, the final decision was that the entire project should be put to a hold until further consultations with affected stakeholders have been held. We have generally referred to this process of further consultations as a university wide indaba.

5. For Convocation, however, the report takes place when the Country is just emerging from two brutal years of devastation. There are many sources to this devastation. Firstly, the unprecedented pandemic. When the first signs of the Corona Virus Pandemic were identified in March 2020 few people thought that the consequences of the virus would be as life changing as they have been.

6. The University has also had to adapt and function under new conditions which have been externally imposed and not decided by the University itself. Yet at the same time, like any crisis, the Corona Virus Pandemic did represent a moment of profound revolutionary change. The most visible of those changes has been new methods of teaching which are infused with technology. For us as the Convocation this has had both disruptive and welcome effects.

7. The first Annual General Meeting should have been held in June 2020. However, the decision was to postpone that AGM indefinitely bearing in mind that at that stage we were at the height of the Corona Virus Pandemic. Although we did hold the second Annual General Meeting in the middle of 2021, the conditions under which it was held were themselves vastly different from those that obtained in June of 2019. In our third anniversary, today, the revolutionary change brought about by the technological advancement which itself was forced upon us by the Pandemic also means that the AGM consists of features of both the traditional Annual General Meeting and the technologically infused Annual General Meeting.

8. Some of these changes have included the introduction of mechanisms to access the deliberations at the AGM through online platforms, whether it is Microsoft Teams or Zoom. These new technologies bring about challenges. Yet, it would be churlish for us to deny the significance of these changes. We have to embrace the technology. But at the same time we should not be slaves to the new technology. The technology should not control us. Instead we must adapt the technology for human development.

9. The period under review has also experiences internal challenges. The previous Vice Chancellor, Professor Rob Midgley left the University because of the end of his term of office. The new Vice Chancellor Professor Rushiella Songca was appointed. In that transition, it would not be fair to deny the impact of Convocation. Of course, no structure worth its status can claim easy victories. Each person, each structure, each unit plays its role in the context of other stakeholders, often with complimentary and sometimes contradictory positions. How each structure or its unit navigates its role in a multi-stakeholder environment can be a guarantee to its success or failure.

10. One of the elements of which, I am proud is that our Convocation Executive remains as elected in June 2019. That of course does not mean we are without internal difference or division. No structure is perfect. Nor does it mean that we are without individual and collective criticism. None of us are beyond criticism. What it does mean, however, is that we try. We try to do our best in conditions of adversity. We try to give back to the University that gave us so much and empowered us to be useful citizens not just of South Africa but of the world.

11. Most of the work undertaken by Convocation has been public in nature. So it will be familiar to you. However, it is still necessary to put some of the activities in a narrative for record keeping and for posterity. I propose to divide these items according to the Agenda we set for ourselves three years ago. It is, however, important that these items are placed in the larger statutory role and mandate of Convocation.

STATUTORY MANDATE OF CONVOCATION

12. Convocation is one of the governance structures under the University Statute. Section 47 provides for its membership. It consists of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellors, the Registrar, Academic Employees and all persons who are or become Graduates, Diploma Holders or Certificate Holders of the University or its predecessors and such persons as the Council may determine. Although the Constituency of the Convocation is wide, the most active have tended to be Graduates, Diploma Holders and Certificate Holders. These are the Alumni of the University and it is this category that has become most active in the affair of the Convocation.

13. Another category of Convocation are Academic Staff. Although Academic Staff are expressly mentioned in the University Statute, it is to be noted that their participation in the affairs of Convocation has tended to be minimal and marginal. It is an area to which the Convocation to be elected by today must pay attention to. The third constituency of Convocation are Non-Academic Staff. This

constituency has also tended to be neglected in the affairs and activities of Convocation.

14. Although the practice of Convocation has been to assign the newly elected Executive the responsibility of nominating members to Council, it is worth noting that under section 47(5) of the Statute, the election of Convocation Representatives at Council is separate from the election of the Executive of Convocation itself.
15. Section 48 of the Statute provides for Office Bearers and Committees of Convocation. The President of Convocation is also its Chairperson and holds office for a period of three years. There are other Executive positions, namely the Deputy President and Treasurer elected by the Convocation. Four additional members who may not be employees or full-time students of the University may also be elected.
16. There is also a representative of Senate, elected by Senate to serve on the Convocation. There is also a member of Convocation elected by the Non-Academic Employees of the University. The Executive Committee is entitled to co-opt anyone to serve on the Executive in

its discretion. There is no express time limit although two additional members of the Executive may be co-opted. That takes the number of potential members of the Executive drawn directly from Convocation to nine.

17. Added to that is the Vice Chancellor, a representative of the Non-Academic Staff and a representative of the Academic Staff as nominated by Senate. Our Executive did not utilize the power to co-opt at least two other members to serve on the Executive. It is my recommendation that such power should be utilized by the incoming Executive.

18. Under Section 49 of the Statute, Convocation Meetings are chaired by its President, failing which the Vice Chancellor in the absence of the President. Any member who wishes to raise any matter at a meeting of Convocation must submit a written Motion with regards to the said matter to the Registrar of the University or to the President of Convocation at least two weeks before the date of the Meeting. Convocation quorum is fifty members. If quorum cannot be met the meeting must be postponed and at least seven days' notice ought to be given for the reconstituted meeting. If no quorum

is reached at the reconstituted meeting, such meeting may proceed regardless of whether there is a quorum or not.

19. The Statute also provides for Rules of Engagement. Importantly, a Member may not speak more than once on a Motion. The exception is the primary mover of a Motion, who is entitled to reply in the event of opposition to the Motion. Decisions are taken by the majority of Members present. These aspects are important to bear in mind as the Convocation is governed and regulated by its founding Statute.
20. I noted that this Report is in part based on the Mandate of Convocation as decided at the previous Annual General Meeting of 2019 and as determined by the Statute. It is now necessary to set out the five key priority items which the Convocation committed at the commencement of our Term of Office. First, we committed to the academic integrity of the programs offered by the University.
21. Second, we promised that we would raise the profile of the Institution through connecting with former Alumni and asking them to return to their University.

22. Thirdly, we undertook to do what we could to assist the University with fundraising. Fourthly, we promised to impact on good governance within the Institution by building strong ties with the University Management to enable us to criticize them when things go wrong but at the same time to support them to make the University a better place.
23. Lastly we committed to provide support to Student Leadership in general and to the institutional Student Representative Council.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

24. Walter Sisulu University has faced unique challenges with its Academic Integrity Program. One of the undeniable facts is our inability to play a leading role in research and development. Judged by research output, Walter Sisulu University has been ranked either at the lowest or slightly above the lowest ranked research output university.
25. A slightly promising Ranking published in March 2022 placed WSU at number sixteen out of twenty-four universities by research output. Notably, Walter Sisulu University registered a student satisfaction of

three point six out of five percentage points. Bearing in mind that higher ranked universities like Nelson Mandela University were registering student satisfaction of two point four out of five percentage points this may be read to be rather promising. However, the main point is that the research output of the University is low.

26. It is to be noted that the research output may itself not be a measure of impact. It depends on whether the outputs are related to the developmental needs of the Country or the Province where the University is located that one can provide a meaningful measure of impact. And here, when judged according to the developmental role that the University plays particularly in Health Sciences, Natural Sciences, the University's research output improves, even if marginally.
27. The University has a Directorate of Research Development and Innovation. It is the capacity building hub for research, post graduate studies and innovation. Its location is in the division of academic affairs and research. It is a University wide research Centre.

28. Its focus is to reposition the University as an innovation focused, research active institution whose work shape futures and changes lives. But, the problem remains one of chronic underfunding with research grants being specifically assigned to research intensive universities, such as Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town and University of the Witwatersrand. The challenge has been the funding formula.
29. The Government's formula for universities prioritizes research and the methodology accordingly favours universities with high research outputs. But here is the conundrum. Universities with high research outputs will obviously always get a bigger slice of the pie, but those universities with low research outputs will not receive sufficient funding.
30. What this creates is a system of permanent junior universities with no prospect of integration into the mainstream research- intensive universities. In the two engagements that we have had with the Department of Higher Education, as well as the Council for Higher Education as specific point of lobbying for the change of the funding formula has been made. But it is possible that the lobbying efforts

require intensification. A structure like Convocation stands in a unique position to influence the funding formula through external lobbying.

31. The low research output is a specific risk for the academic integrity of WSU. And so is the low academic standing of the research and teaching staff. Statistics provided to us by the University as part of its consultative process pertaining to rationalization and consolidation show that more than sixty percent of the teaching staff of the University do not hold Masters or PhD qualifications. In fact our PhD holders are in the low percentages. The impact of this phenomenon is manifest. This is why we have supported the underlying rationale and principle towards the improvement of the academic standing of the Staff of the University.

32. However, an aspect that has severely attacked the academic integrity of the University has been the issue of accreditation of programs and qualifications. In 2019 when we took office it is not an exaggeration to state that the University was facing a crisis of

credibility with some of its high-profile programs such as the LLB having lost accreditation.

33. We placed this item as utmost priority. Within a few months we convened the then Vice Chancellor for urgent Status Reports pertaining to the accreditation of the LLB Degree.

34. Later in October 2019, we convened the Minister of Justice, Minister Ronald Ramola, who undertook to place the item with the relevant Governmental Institutions. Ultimately pressure was brought to bear and the LLB qualification could be offered again, although still subject to stringent conditions. We continued to monitor the progress around the reinstatement of the LLB qualification. Indeed, in 2020 students were readmitted into the LLB Program, and so was the case in 2021. The subject of the LLB has also featured in the discussions around rationalization and accreditation. Primarily, the proposal of the University was to relocate the Law Faculty to East London.

35. There was massive opposition to this proposal primarily from the legal fraternity. We then took the decision that any decision as to the future of the Law Faculty should take into account the views of the

Legal Profession in Umtata, as well as take into consideration the presence of the Superior Court in this town. This introduced a different dimension.

36. This was because the consultative approach of the University had, up until that point, focused primarily on internal stakeholders. But this approach has its limitations. Although no doubt internal stakeholders must be consulted, the impact of the University cascades beyond internal interests. The impact of the Law Department in Umtata is even greater.

37. And this is not a matter of preserving legacy for its own sake. It is about access to Justice. If one looks at the Province of the Eastern Cape, holistically, some four million people reside in the former Transkei area. The relocation of the entire Law Faculty without a plan as to the offering of Law in Umtata would immediately have cut off from the teaching of law, thousands of potential students. Hence one of the proposals was to return to the night school model. Thankfully, as always the case, the consultation process produced an outcome of its own.

38. With or without the Rationalization and Consolidation Program, the Law Faculty shall remain in Umtata. But this is not the end of the debate. If the Law Faculty is to remain in Umtata it what form should it remain? How should it rationalize itself to make it relevant? How can it attract lecturers, some of whom are our own Alumni? What kind of students does it intend to take? How will it distinguish itself from other law faculties in the Eastern Cape and in South Africa in general? These questions have not been answered merely taking the decision not to relocate.
39. This takes me to the question of accreditation of certain programmes. Recently the newspapers report on the issue of non-accredited programmes offered by the University. The first report stated that 28 of our programmes are not accredited. A later report recorded that thousands of our programmes are not accredited.
40. Manifestly this was a matter of grave concern. Convocation was actively involved in this matter, as it directly affects graduates of the University. It turned out that there were five programmes that were impacted. At the time of the media storm, the facts surrounding the

accreditation of the programmes, as reported by management, were as follows.

a) **Advanced Diploma Internal Auditing:** the qualification is HEQSF-aligned and reclassified as HEQSF Category B. The qualification is thus accredited. WSU is subject to the completion of short-term conditions, which will be taken up with the faculty concerned to be completed and returned to the CHE. We, however, reiterate that the qualification is accredited, and no graduate (past or present) has been affected.

b) **Advanced Diploma Journalism:** the qualification was considered, and the HEQC- EXCO deemed it HEQSF-aligned and reclassified it as HEQSF category A. The qualification is thus accredited, and no graduate (past or present) has been affected. No short-term conditions are attached to this qualification.

c) **Bachelor of Science Honours Zoology:** the qualification is HEQSF-aligned and reclassified as HEQSF Category B. The qualification is thus accredited. WSU is subject to the completion of short-term conditions, which will be taken up with the faculty concerned to be completed and returned to the CHE. We,

however, reiterate that the qualification is accredited, and no graduate (past or present) has been affected.

d) **Postgraduate Diploma Chemical Pathology:** the qualification is HEQSF-aligned and reclassified as HEQSF Category B. The qualification is thus accredited. WSU is subject to the completion of short-term conditions, which will be taken up with the faculty concerned to be completed and returned to the CHE. We, however, reiterate that the qualification is accredited, and no graduate (past or present) has been affected.

e) **Master of Medicine Obstetrics and Gynecology:** the qualification was considered, and the HEQC-EXCO deemed it HEQSF-aligned and reclassified as HEQSF category A. The qualification is thus accredited, and no graduate (past or present) has been affected. No short-term conditions are attached to this qualification.

41. When addressing this, we adopted a multi-pronged strategy. First, the approach was to address the Convocants to assure that the matter was receiving attention. Second the approach was to address the management, to put pressure to bear towards the

solution, urgently. Thirdly, we decided to get our hands dirty and find a solution. In this regard, we deployed two members of convocation to assist management to engaged with external and internal stakeholders. These included the Minister of Higher Education; the Council for Higher Education; and the South African Qualifications Authority.

42. The outcome of those deliberations was that all the programmes received accreditation and we could graduate our students in 2022.
43. The response from the CHE, indicates as follows:
 - a) **Advanced Diploma Internal Auditing:** the qualification is HEQSF-aligned. The qualification is thus accredited, and no current enrolled student, those awaiting graduation or past graduate has been affected.
 - b) **Advanced Diploma Journalism:** the qualification is HEQSF-aligned. The qualification is thus accredited, and no currently enrolled student, those awaiting graduation or past graduate has been affected.

c) **Bachelor of Science Honours Zoology**: the qualification is HEQSF-aligned. The qualification is thus accredited, and no currently enrolled student, those awaiting graduation or past graduate has been affected.

d) **Postgraduate Diploma Chemical Pathology**: the qualification is HEQSF-aligned. The qualification is thus accredited, and no currently enrolled student, those awaiting graduation or past graduate has been affected.

e) **Master of Medicine Obstetrics and Gynecology**: the qualification is HEQSF-aligned. The qualification is thus accredited, and no currently enrolled student, those awaiting graduation or past graduate has been affected.

44. The CHE has, however, not fully accredited the programmes. Instead, they have been placed into category B. What this means is that although the University can accept, enroll the students, and graduate them, it must fulfil certain conditions, which mainly focus on the quality assurance side of the University.

45. There are certain lessons from this episode. First the University quality assurance division needs to be strengthened. Second the communications division needs to be more agile in communicating the actual facts on the ground. It is not enough to rely primarily on newspapers for updates on the status of programmes, as this tended to cause panic and uncertainty. Thirdly, convocation itself needs to monitor on a closer basis the actions and activities of management, on matters related to accreditation. This is not to be left entirely to the discretion of management.

ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH ALUMNI

46. The second area where Convocation has been active has been around the establishment of relationships with alumni. We took a multi-focus approach, which included: direct approaches with former students now holding positions of influence; advertising activities of the Convocation; arranging chapters for Convocation; and holding events targeted at specific faculties.

47. We launched the first Chapter in Gauteng shortly after our election in 2019. The launch itself brought along an impressive list of former WSU students; politicians; businesspeople; and the current convocants.

48. The Gauteng Chapter has been an active structure and a pillar of support in the activities of convocation. Not only has it delivered material support, through it, we have established relations to further alumni impact and our network. One of the stakeholders who attended the launch of the Gauteng Chapter was the Minister for Higher Education Dr Blade Nzimande, on whose support we have counted during the years in office. Yet two other persons who did attend included Mr Lungisa Fuzile, current Chief Executive Officer of Standard Bank, South Africa, Mr Luxolo September, who presently works for the Confederation of African Football and Dr Mtembeni Tebelele, who is a medical entrepreneur.

49. Out of these relations, we can now report that Mr Fuzile and Dr Tebelele agreed to serve on the university council, and will be making a contribution at that level. Minister Nzimande has always

been a supporting force of activities related to the University. Mr September is working with us to establish soccer related sponsorships under the auspices of CAF with focus on WSU.

50. We have also established a Chapter at the Eastern Cape. It is a vibrant Chapter under the astute leadership of Adv Apla Bodlani. An Eastern Cape Chapter is always an essential cog in the wheel of Convocation given that the physical space occupied by the University is in fact in Mthatha. However, the role of the Chapter has been proven to be valuable beyond its geographic location. Our experience has been that former students can influence the course of events within and outside the university campus.

51. In addition our alumni, Adv Bodlani has been involved in efforts to rebuild the WSU law clinic, which provides access to legal services to indigent people in the Eastern Cape in general and within the vicinity of Mthatha. Convocation continues to support the work of the WSU Law Clinic. We have also arranged three gala dinners dedicated to medicine, education and law.

52. The medical dinner was held in April 2021. It was a spectacular event. We were able to bring together the medical alumni from the period since the establishment of the medical school. Each generation of medical graduates were represented. We were able to reach out to Dr Xaba-Mokoena, the founding dean of the medical faculty, who gave us a short speech via video about the founding of the faculty. In addition to the graduates, new students were also given an opportunity to attend, which enabled them to form networks with graduates and leaders in the field. These networks have been a pillar of the work undertaken by Convocation. They have enabled students to form relations with established graduates who could be of assistance to them in the future. Through these relations, opportunities for employment could arise. Convocation raised an amount of R72 000 from this event, which is to be used as bursaries for medical students.

53. At the beginning of this year, we hosted a celebration for teachers in honour of their efforts in improving the matric pass rate in the Eastern Cape province. Education, of course, is one of our largest faculties, and teaching is a great employer in the Eastern Cape

province. The event was supported by the MEC for Education, Mr Fundile Gade. Convocation raised an amount to the tune of R20 000 from this event, which is to be used to support students in the education faculty.

54. Last night we held the last of these dinners with the law faculty. The dinner was in honour of Justice Chris Jafta to mark his retirement from the Constitutional Court. However, the dinner was intended to play a much greater role than merely celebrate the extraordinary achievements of Judge Jafta. The law faculty once lost its accreditation. It was a challenge to reinstate the faculty's accreditation status. Once the status was reinstated, this came with conditions. It was necessary to host an event to affirm the standing and reputation of the faculty.

55. In addition to this, given the decision to retain the faculty in Mthatha, it was important to reflect on the history of the faculty and its new mission. Since the faculty will remain in Mthatha, serious questions remain as to how it can continue to play an influential role in society, which must include some significant changes which must be made

to the faculty, its teaching staff, to make sure that we do not compromise the level and standard of education offered to law graduates.

56. We do not yet know the funds that were raised at the dinner, but we believe that the funds will be substantial.

57. The Walter Sisulu Memorial lecture, which was addressed by former president Thabo Mbeki also placed the university on a higher plane. The university has and continues to enjoy good relations with the Thabo Mbeki Foundation which has been facilitated by Convocation.

58. The approach of Convocation has been to raise the standing of Convocation across, regionally provincially and nationally. It is clear that Convocation is now an important stakeholder whose voice is taken seriously by the stakeholders within the University. It is also a key component of the public discourse in the province and nationally. Although this can lead to clashes with management, public visibility is a key aspect of any work that a structure such as Convocation must be engaged in. I believe that we have raised the

standing of the WSU Convocation and it is now widely regarded as one of the most active Convocations in the country.

FUNDRAISING

59. Raising funds for the benefit of the university has been one of the key strategic tasks of the Convocation. Most of the work of Convocation is geared towards this aim. It is necessary to state that most of the fundraising work of Convocation is indirect. We do not directly ask for money. Instead money is a spinoff of many of our activities.
60. Nevertheless, we have, however, been involved in direct fundraising activities. Let me list a few that should be stated:
- The medical faculty dinner raised some R72 000;
 - The education event raised some R20 000;
 - The law faculty dinner has also raised money;
 - Through the intervention of Mishack Mugabe, we raised some R5m, for use by students in our built environment programmes;

61. Substantial sums have been raised through our interactions with the provincial government, especially to assist students with registration particularly in 2020, 2021 and 2022. It is not easy to quantify these efforts, but it literally ranges in the millions.

62. During the peak of the Coronavirus pandemic in March-April 2020, the Convocation specifically raised funds for graduates who were unemployed and had no income. This enabled us to disburse amounts of R1000 per week per unemployed graduate. Admittedly the funds were insufficient, but for those who benefitted, they were of immense help. These funds were not raised for Convocation work as such, but were raised in order to be distributed.

63. The programme of fundraising is ongoing. We require a more structured approach to fundraising. This includes ensuring that we have a separate bank account to ensure that the actual financial benefit accruing as a result of Convocation work can be separately treated and accounted for. But that may require broader reforms on the institutional structure.

STUDENT MATTERS

64. Convocation identified student welfare as an area in which we could make specific input. As noted above, we have set up some of the gala dinners to create networks for students on campus and graduates.

65. However, we recognize that student experience is a holistic one. This is why we have been in discussions with management regarding the improvement of residences. Towards the end of 2021, we decided on campus visits to see for ourselves the conditions of students. Although we generally knew that the conditions were bad, it was heartbreaking to see for ourselves the extent to which the residences have been neglected. We took this issue up with management, and it ultimately landed at Council, which also made it its business. We are happy to note that the construction work at the University has also affected and benefitted residences.

66. Convocation has been concerned also about internet connectivity at the residences. While work in this regard is ongoing, some facts and figures are necessary to place this in context. According to

information provided to us from management, these are the facts and figures:

67.

- *Residences with Wi-Fi* During the first quarter of 2022 a well-functioning Wi-Fi was commissioned at the following NMD residences:

- Atlanta
- Chumani
- Silimela
- Ntinga

This was additional to the well-functioning Wi-Fi installed at Phulo residence as part of that residence's renovations.

- *Residences at which Wi-Fi is being currently installed*

There is installation of Wi-Fi at the following sites:

- Badgdad and Kuwait – Mthatha
 - Ibika – Butterworth
68. There is much more work to be undertaken at Ibika, BCC, Komani and our open spaces.
69. Students have also been concerned about bread and butter matters of access. A key issue affected recent graduates is access to their certificates which are also water-marked. This is an old debate. These certificates are necessary to enable students in search of employment. This is a matter which is now fortunately and finally before Council. Our view is that access to water-marked certificates are essential for graduates.
70. Access to NFSAS remains a key challenge. There are varied concerns about the manner in which the system is managed or administered. Often commitments are made and then not fulfilled. Or payments are short. Or certain programmes which were once funded suddenly become unfunded. The overall challenge is that there are too many students who cannot afford to pay. The NFSAS

funds are also insufficient. It is time to take free education seriously again. The case of Sibongile Mani is a specific case which must be a concern of Convocation. It seems to me that the finding of guilt for theft and the sentence of five years are egregious.

IMPACT ON GOOD GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY

71. A final aspect has been a deliberate strategy on our part to foster good governance within the University. This includes ensuring fair procurement processes which are incapable of corruption, and where there are signs of corruption uprooting these and addressing them directly.

72. At the end of 2020, Convocation also decided to field its own candidates to the governance structures of the University, including Council, the Institutional Forum and the sub-committees of Council. The result has been that I chair Council; Mr Sandile Puti chairs a council sub-committee; Dr Lunga Mantashe chairs the Institutional Forum.

73. The benefit for assuming these roles are obvious. Council is the highest decision-making structure at the University. The Institutional Forum is a key structure at the University. Access to these structures enables Convocation to play a more influential role in the affairs of the University. Yet it poses a risk as well. If Convocation becomes embroiled in the internal affairs of the University, there is a risk that it will be perceived as taking a side and lose the moral and ethical integrity which is necessary to sustain the work of convocation.
74. There have been positives achieved at this level. One of the main challenges of WSU has been financial integrity. In the last 2 years since we have been chairing council, we have received unqualified audits. I have been told by the Registrar that the opinion expressed by auditors for 2022 is that we will retain our unqualified audit. While this is a positive signal, we should probably attempt to achieve a clean audit in 2023.

CONCLUSION

75. It has been a pleasure to lead this Convocation in the last 3 years. It has given me unique insights into the operations of the University and the higher education sector as a whole. Very few things could have given me the satisfaction that the leadership of Convocation has done. I want to thank you kindly for the opportunity which you have given me.