ANNUAL REPORT 2023



WSU
Walter Sisulu University
In pursuit of excellence

2023 Annual Report of the Walter Sisulu University

Pursuant to Section 42 of the Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997, as amended, Walter Sisulu University (WSU) is pleased to present to the Minister of Education a comprehensive report on its operational and governance undertakings for the year concluding on 31 December 2023. This report adheres to the mandates outlined in Chapter 3 of the Implementation Manual for Annual Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions and the Institutional Statute of WSU, as detailed in the Government Gazette No. 37235 of 17 January 2014. WSU fully recognises and upholds the governance principles recommended in the King Report on Governance and the King IV Code of Corporate Governance, as per Government Gazette 37726, dated 9 June 2014.

The report offers a succinct overview of WSU's core activities over the past year, prepared in strict accordance with:

- The Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions.
- The WSU Strategic Plan Vision 2030 and its predefined objectives, as sanctioned by the University Council.

Organised according to WSU's institutional structure, this report also addresses pivotal themes such as risk management, sustainability and transformation, alongside the University's nine strategic goals and their associated objectives. Through this report, the University aims to illustrate its dedication to excellence, innovation and the comprehensive development of the University community.

CHAIR OF COUNCIL, CHANCELLOR, VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL

Chairperson of the Council

Adv. Tembeka Ngcukaitobi

Chancellor

Dr Nonkululeko Gobodo

Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Professor Rushiella Nolundi Songca

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ABOUT WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Walter Sisulu University (WSU), named in honour of one of South Africa's most revered figures in the fight for democracy, was officially formed on 1 July 2005. The Institution operates across four main campuses located in Mthatha, Butterworth, Komani, and Buffalo City, with a total of 13 delivery sites spanning approximately 840 km. WSU's extensive geographical distribution across the Eastern Cape province establishes its position as a preeminent higher education Institution in the region.

WSU's strategic positioning and its comprehensive academic offerings allow for a significant degree of student mobility, with clear pathways for progression from foundational certificates to advanced degrees. Moreover, this academic structure not only facilitates academic and vocational education but also serves the broader community through targeted programmes, research initiatives and lifelong learning opportunities. The University's commitment to community service, innovative research and engagement with local and regional development partners aligns with its Strategic Vision 2030. This vision serves as a strategic blueprint that emphasises contextual relevance and the formulation of strategies to amplify WSU's multidimensional impact as a locally entrenched and globally engaged Institution.

As a comprehensive university, WSU is dedicated to fostering an engaged and responsive educational environment. The Institution's substantial contributions to the local economy, through employment opportunities and stimulating demand for goods and services, accentuate its indispensable role in driving socio-economic development within the Eastern Cape province. Furthermore, WSU's dedication to producing highly skilled and competent graduates is intended to directly augment the sustainability and prosperity of the region it serves. This multifaceted approach solidifies the University's status as an indispensable hub for higher education and community advancement in South Africa.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

An impactful, technology-infused African University.

Mission

Through its core business, WSU responds to societal needs in ethical, scholarly, sustainable and entrepreneurial ways and delivers future-ready graduates.

Core Values

Walter Sisulu University's core values are:

- Honesty and Integrity
- Quality and Excellence
- Respect
- Ubuntu

Purpose

In pursuit of excellence, Walter Sisulu University addresses societal challenges by:

- Producing relevant, innovative and impactful research,
- Championing sustainable and just development, and
- Graduating versatile individuals.

Slogan

- In pursuit of excellence

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

As the University commenced with the 2023 academic year, Walter Sisulu University's inspiring Strategic Plan ,also known as Vision 2030, remained firmly in focus. With this ten-year (2020-2030) roadmap, WSU set out to realise the University's aspiration of becoming an impactful, technology-infused African University driving positive transformation across the Eastern Cape region and beyond. Four years into implementation, the University continues making strides in this bold pursuit of academic excellence.

At its core, Vision 2030 calls for a revitalised academic culture infused with innovation, robust community engagement, and a recentering of African intellectual and epistemological traditions too often marginalised. WSU remains guided by the mission of responding to society's pressing challenges through ethical, scholarly, sustainable and entrepreneurial approaches.

Vision 2030 also calls for the production of relevant, impactful research that champions sustainable and just development while graduating versatile, future-ready individuals, transcending limitations of race, class, geography and gender. During the year under review, the University has advanced interdisciplinary research programmes producing relevant, impactful studies that champion sustainable development models and inclusive growth. Our graduates are increasingly versatile, future-ready catalysts unencumbered by antiquated limitations. We are making progress in positioning WSU students as empowered co-creators of scientific and professional excellence.

Realising this vision has required proactive Institutional changes. Underpinning these efforts is our continuing work to unify WSU's academic and administrative cores through our rationalisation of faculties and our consolidation of campuses strategy into an integrated, efficient and effective Institutional engine. While much remains to be done, a solid foundation has been laid for propelling WSU toward our Vision 2030 aspirations of pioneering, impactful excellence. The following nine strategic goals provide our guideposts and an overview of our intended trajectory.

WSU'S STRATEGIC GOALS

Figure 1: WSU Strategic Goals



Strategic Goal 1: Quality, Impactful Teaching & Learning

WSU continues to be committed to the provision of a quality educational experience cognisant of its value-driven vision of being an impactful, technology-infused African University. As such, this underlying goal drives excellence in teaching and learning facilitated by an enabling environment that fosters innovative pedagogical approaches.

Strategic Goal 2: Enriching Student Experience

To enrich student experience, WSU is dedicated to fostering a comprehensive environment that nurtures student success both academically and personally.

Strategic Goal 3: Relevant and Impactful Research & Innovation

The University is dedicated to significantly enhance its research and innovation capacities, essential to its mission of driving societal change.

Strategic Goal 4: Transformative Community Engagement, Internationalisation & Partnerships

The University continues to actively pursue transformative community engagement, internationalisation and partnerships to deepen its positive societal impact, facilitate global knowledge exchange, unlock collaborative opportunities and amplify African knowledge systems on local and global stages.

Strategic Goal 5: Empowered Staff

WSU remains focused on enhancing the qualifications of its academic staff and ensuring that support staff are equipped with the necessary skills and expertise for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. To achieve this, the University has been allocating resources towards training and professional development opportunities for employees across all levels.

Strategic Goal 6: Financial Sustainability

The financial sustainability of WSU finances remains stable.

Strategic Goal 7: Cutting-edge ICT

The University continues to make significant strides in advancing this goal with the introduction of enhanced technological infrastructure, bolstering WiFi capabilities and the implementation of robust ICT systems to support its core operations.

Strategic Goal 8: Modern Infrastructure

The University has focused on building and renovating its infrastructure to optimise its facilities to meet the 21st-century standards and support a sustainable, secure and conducive learning and working environment.

Strategic Goal 9: Effective and Efficient Governance and Administration

WSU has made significant strides in achieving this goal by providing high-level strategic oversight, while also ensuring efficient execution of the Institutional and academic strategies through optimised day-to-day management of the Institution.



Section 1

Institutional Governance

Part A

1.1 CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL REPORT



Adv. T Ngcukaitobi
Chairperson

Introduction

It is a singular honour to submit this annual report on behalf of the Council of Walter Sisulu University (WSU). The period covered is the 2023 Academic Year. During this period, WSU has continued to demonstrate stability, from a financial, governance and academic perspective. Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan and the Rationalisation and Consolidation document, which informs all decisions taken in the fulfilment of the academic mission of WSU.

Despite its own internal radical reforms, anchored and spearheaded by management and overseen by Council, WSU continue to face external existential challenges. These include the ever-shrinking financial resources from the state, the inconsistent performance of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and the uncertain employment landscape, post university. Against these challenges, which impact the sector as a whole, WSU continues to demonstrate signs of resilience, which lay the foundations for excellence.

In the year under review, not only did WSU adopt the major policy planks for its future, it also ensured the appointment of an executive management, and academic leadership to guide the university through the uncharted waters of change. We are now confident that WSU is in a strong financial and academic position to deliver on its mission which is articulated in its vision as the "pursuit of excellence". In saying this, WSU appreciates that excellence is not a destination, but an everyday endeavour, something that we should continue striving for, even as we ensure that our students and academics live by it, and exhibit it. This annual report tabulates all areas of university performance, but in this foreword, I shall encapsulate the gist of the activities covered in the 2023 academic year.

Governance

WSU demonstrated robust and effective governance under the oversight of the Council and its committees. The Council maintained close scrutiny over all activities, ensuring that decisions at the Council level were thoroughly vetted and approved by its committees. All standing ordinary meetings were held punctually, consistently exceeding the statutory quorum requirements. The same applies to all special meetings. As far as it can be noted, no single meeting of Council had to be postponed for reasons of not meeting the quorum.

Major Highlights of the Year:

1. Appointment of Dr Nonkululeko Gobodo as Chancellor:

Dr Nonkululeko Gobodo was appointed as the Chancellor of WSU without opposition. Her installation ceremony was a significant event, attended by high-ranking officials from both the private and government sectors.

2. Approval and Implementation of the Rationalisation of Faculties and Campus Consolidation (R&C) Strategy:

The Council approved the full implementation of the R&C Strategy, which had been in development for over two years. This strategy involved extensive engagement with internal and external stakeholders and became effective

on 1 June 2023.

3. Implementation of the R&C Strategy:

To ensure solid implementation of the R&C Strategy, the Council mandated the following actions:

- Complete the integration of the R&C Strategy into the ITS Administrative System by the end of December 2023. This integration aims to enable comprehensive implementation from 1 January 2024.
- Convene the first sittings of the consolidated University Senate and Faculty Boards in 2023.
- Accelerate the pace of amending the University Statute.

These directives required the Council to reinforce its oversight role to support management in achieving the desired outcomes.

4. Financial Governance:

The Council continued to drive financial health at WSU, emphasizing the achievement of unqualified or clean audit opinions and accountability for wasteful expenditures. This was facilitated by the active oversight of the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee and the Finance Committee of the Council. The unqualified audit opinion for the 2023 financial year, declared by external auditors, is a testament to the good governance led by the Council. This achievement is a commendation of the management team's efforts to uphold financial internal controls and policies.

5. Governance Workshop:

To bolster the Council's capabilities in fulfilling its statutory obligations, a Governance Workshop for Council and Management was held on 4 October 2023. The workshop focused on "managing the principle of co-creation between the Council and Management and strengthening good governance practices at WSU". These workshops, now institutionalized to occur twice a year, are crucial in enhancing the Council's oversight role.

6. Policy Approvals:

In the 2023 academic year, the Council approved several new and reviewed policies, including:

- Undergraduate Bursary and Scholarship Policy
- Student Fees Policy
- Collection of Student Fees Policy
- Work Integrated Learning Policy
- Academic Staff Qualifications Improvement Policy
- Performance Management Policy (P5-P16)
- Succession Planning Policy
- ICT Change Management Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- ICT Service Desk Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Institutional Management Policy

Conclusion:

WSU is firmly grounded in effective governance and management, driving an excellent academic agenda for the benefit of its community. The 2023 academic year stands as a testament to this trajectory, reflecting the university's commitment to upholding high standards of governance and academic excellence.



Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi SC
Chairperson of Council



1.2 COUNCIL COMPOSITION

The Council of Walter Sisulu University (WSU) operates within the governance framework established by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 and the WSU Statute. It is responsible for the overall governance of the University, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and overseeing strategic direction. The Council is composed of 21 members, with 13 external members contributing diverse skills and viewpoints from beyond the University, and 8 internal members representing the University's staff and students. With this Council structure, the University ensures a comprehensive governance approach that integrates both internal and external insights.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

#	TITLE, INITIAL(S) & SURNAME	NATURE OF APPOINTMENT	PROFILE
EXTERNAL COUNCIL MEMBERS			
01	Adv T Ngcukaitobi SC (Chairperson) 	Convocation Representative Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 17 July 2019 - 16 July 2022 07 July 2022 - 06 July 2026	Specialist in Public Law, Labour Law, Competition Law, Land Law Qualifications: BProc; LLB (Unitra, now Walter Sisulu University) LLM (Rhodes); Thesis: Judicial enforcement of socio-economic rights under the 1996 constitution: realising the vision of social justice, 2002. Rhodes Thesis, supervised by Professor Clive Plasket, now Judge of the High Court, Eastern Cape. LLM (London School of Economics and Political Science)
02	Mrs FL Lamola (Deputy Chairperson) 	Council Appointee – Expertise Required: Commerce and Industry Term of office: Three years: Section 9 (1) (c) 01 June 2020 - 31 May 2023 01 June 2023 - 30 June 2026	Chief Operations Officer at The South Africa Institute of Charted Accountants (SAICA) Qualifications: BCom (Accounting) – Unisa BCom (Hon Accounting) – Unisa CA (SA) - SAICA
03	Mr L Fuzile 	Council Appointee – Expertise Required: Commerce and Industry Term of office: Three years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022 - 30 April 2025	Current Chief Executive of the Standard Bank of South Africa Joined the Public Service in what was to become a 20-year career in the public service, culminating in his role as Director-General at the National Treasury from May 2011 until 15 May 2017. Qualifications: Bachelor of Commerce (Higher Diploma in Education), University of Transkei, 1989 Honours Bachelor of Commerce (Economics), University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1992 Master of Commerce (Economics), University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1996 Advanced Management Programme, Harvard, 2009.

04	Mr V Jarana 	Council Appointee – Expertise Required: Finance and Investment Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 June 2021 - 30 May 2025	Businessman Chairperson of Councillor V Jarana on his appointment as the Chairperson of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Former CEO – South African Airways Former CEO – Vodacom Group LTD Qualifications : Master's in Business Administration - Stellenbosch Honors in Business Administration – Unitra (now WSU) Bachelor of Commerce – Technical College
05	Ms NY Tyamzashe 	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2018 - 30 April 2022 01 May 2022 - 30 April 2026	General Manager, HR Corporate Centre (Transnet SOC Ltd) and has been in the Human Resource profession for the past 21 years. In her current role as an HR business partner, she provides an effective and efficient HR generalist support to senior executive management. Qualifications: Bachelor of Social Science Honours degree from the University of Natal; Executive Development Programme at Graduate Institute of Business Science
06	Judge SM Mbenenge 	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 July 2020 - 30 June 2024	Eastern Cape Judge President since 2017, appointed as ADJP in 2017 and was appointed as Judge of High Court in 2015 Qualifications: Junior Degree: BJuris - 1984 LLB – Unitra - 1987 Admission as Advocate – 1989 Pupillage – 1992 Practice as Advocate – 1993
07	Dr MM Tebelele 	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026	Medical doctor with an MBA in Leadership from the University of Liverpool Qualifications: MBA (LEADERSHIP) With merit, University of Liverpool, 2016 MB CHB, University of Transkei (UNITRA), 1997
08	Mr T Bonakele 	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026	Chairperson of the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) Member of the National Lottery Board Former Commissioner and CEO of the Competition Commission, appointed in 2013. Qualifications: Phd Candidate, University College of London Faculty of Laws MBA (2011), Gordon Institute of Business Science (Gibs), University of Pretoria Practical Legal Training (2000), Law Society of South Africa, Port Elizabeth LLB (1999), University of Fort Hare Buris (1997), University of Fort Hare

09	Mr S Kou 	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026	Managing Director of Isao Consulting (Pty) Ltd Qualifications: MEng Project Management - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2018. BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering – University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2007.
10	Mr T Klaas 	Donor representative, designated by Advancement Office Term of office: Three years: Section 8 (1) (l) 13 Aug 2018 - 13 Aug 2021 14 Aug. 2021 - 13 Aug. 2024	Provincial Manager: Public Sector – Eastern Cape and Southern Cape at ABSA Retail and Business Banking, Easter Cape Qualifications: BCom (Honours) – Regent Business School Management Development Programe -NMU BCom (Business Management) – Vista University
11	Mr MTG Matyobeni 	Donor representative, designated by Advancement Office Term of office: Three years: Section 8 (1) (l) 16 Oct. 2018 - 16 Oct.2021 17 Oct. 2021 - 17 Oct. 2024	Regional Manager: The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA), Eastern Cape Qualifications: BCom (Business Economics, Economics & Auditing) – Vista University PG – BCom Honours (Business Management - NMU
12	Dr LX Mantashe 	Convocation Representative Term of office: Three years: Section 9 (1) 07 July 2022 to 06 July 2026	Lecturer at: University of Fort Hare – from 2017 to date Cape Peninsular University of Technology – 2017 Walter Sisulu University – from 2015 to 2016 Qualifications: Doctor of Philosophy in Education, University of Fort Hare (2022) Master of Education, University of Fort Hare (2015) Honour's degree in Education Policy and Management, Walter Sisulu University (2014) – graduated Cum Laude
INTERNAL COUNCIL MEMBERS			
13	Prof RN Songca 	Vice-Chancellor and Principal	BA Law (National University of Lesotho LLB LLM (University of Natal) LLM (Georgetown Law Centre; USA) LLD (University of Pretoria)

14	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele 	Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research	Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research Qualifications: BCur (Unisa), BCur Hons (Unisa), MCur (Unisa), D Phil (UJ) Fellowship (UCLA) Postgraduate Dip in Health Research Ethics (UCT), R/N, R/M
15	Prof B Nguza-Mduba 	Senate Representative	Executive Dean: Faculty of Management, Public Administration Sciences Qualifications: Doctor of Business Administration – UKZN, master's in business leadership 98– UNISA, Master of Education – UFS, Bachelor of Commerce (Hon) – UNISA, Batchelor of Education - UNISA
16	Dr MR Krexe 	Senate Representative	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education Qualifications: BSc Agric (Fort Hare), BBA (Unisa), HDE, ACE (Maths) (Unisa), BEd (Unisa), MEd (UOFS), DEd (WSU)
17	Dr A Mngeni 	Non-Senate Academic Employee	Lecturer at WSU Qualifications: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Environmental Sciences UNISA Master of Science in Geography - Walter Sisulu University Honours in Geography Walter Sisulu University BSc Environmental Studies Walter Sisulu University
18	Mr ME Nongadlela 	Non-Senate Non-Academic Employee	Lab Technician at WSU Qualification: BTech: Information Technology (SD) ND: Information Technology

19	Mr M Mabhongo 	ISRC President	Student
20	Mr M Sinethemba 	ISRC SG	Student
SECRETARY TO COUNCIL			
01	Dr L Ntonzima 	Secretary to Council / Registrar	Doctor Technologiae in Public Management – CPUT Magister Technologiae in Public Management – CPUT Baccalaureus Technologiae in Public Management – CPUT National Diploma in Public Management and Administration – WSU

NOMINATION GUIDELINES FOR THE ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

According to the WSU Institutional Statute, as published in the Government Gazette of 17 January 2014, members of the Council are elected in the manner determined by the Council to ensure representation of both internal and external members. To facilitate this process, Nomination Guidelines have been developed to ensure the effective nomination and election of councillors of WSU.

The following established and legislatively approved guidelines served as the basis for the nomination and election of council members in 2021:

1. **Secretary of Council**

1.1 The Secretary to Council is the Registrar as contemplated in section 26(4)(b) of the Higher Education Act.

1.2 The Secretary acts as an electoral officer.

1.3 The Secretary attends all meetings and keeps all relevant documents of the Council.

2. **Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of Council**

2.1 The members of Council, at its first meeting and thereafter, when it becomes necessary, elects from among their members who are not employees or students of the Institution a Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of Council who hold office for a period of four (4) years or for such shorter period as he or she is a member of Council.

2.2 Nominations for the position of Chairperson and/or Vice-chairperson must be given in writing to the Secretary/electoral officer on a date determined by him/her.

2.3 Each nomination must be signed by at least three (3) members of Council and counter signed by the nominee to indicate his/her acceptance of the nomination.

2.4 The Vice-Chancellor and Principal acts for the duration of the election of a chairperson as acting chairperson.

2.5 If more than one (1) candidate is nominated for one (1) of the offices, voting is conducted by a secret ballot.

2.6 A candidate may only be elected to the office of Chairperson or Vice-chairperson by a majority of members present.

2.7 If no candidate receives a majority of votes, a successive round of voting is held.

2.8 In each successive round of voting the candidate receiving fewest votes is eliminated.

2.9 If a vacancy occurs in the office of the Chairperson or Vice-chairperson for any reason, paragraph 6.2 to 6.8 apply with the necessary changes to the filling of such a vacancy.

2.10 The person elected in terms of paragraph 6.9 holds office for the unexpired period of office of his or her predecessor.

2.11 The Chairperson or Vice-chairperson are eligible for re-election for one (1) further term of office.

2.12 The Chairperson or Vice-chairperson cease to hold their respective offices when they are removed from office by a majority decision of Council or when they cease to be members of Council.

3. **Election of Representatives of Senate to Council**

3.1 A Senate representative(s) is/are elected by a secret ballot through a majority vote by senators present at an ordinary meeting of Senate.

3.2 The nomination must be submitted in writing by two (2) members and the nominee must confirm acceptance of the nomination.

3.3 A signed nomination form, as contemplated in subparagraph 3.2, must reach the Secretary of Senate at least two (2) days before the date of the meeting.

4. **Election of Employee Representatives to Council**

4.1 Whenever it becomes necessary for employees to elect persons as members of Council, the Secretary to Council, by written notice, invites each of the recognised employee organisations as well as employees who are not members of such organisations, to nominate in writing candidates to be elected as members of the Council.

4.2 A nomination contemplated in subparagraph 4.1 must be lodged with the Secretary of Council on a date determined by him or her.

4.3 Each nomination contemplated in subparagraph 4.1 must be signed by the nominee to denote his/her acceptance of the nomination.

4.4 If only one (1) candidate is nominated, the Secretary of Council declares such candidate as duly elected.

4.5 If more than one (1) candidate is nominated in accordance with subparagraph 4.1, the Secretary of Council determines a date for the election and arranges for an ICT electronic voting process.

4.6 Each employee is entitled to one (1) vote.

4.7 Employees are issued with passwords to access electronic ballots and technicians are made available to assist on the voting day.

4.8 The electronic system counts the votes and results are handed over to the Secretary.

4.9 The Secretary of Council declares the person who obtained the highest number of votes to have been duly elected and in the event of an equal number of votes, a further election must be held in accordance with subparagraphs 4.5 to 4.8.

5. **Election of Students Representatives to Council**

5.1 When new SRC is elected to office, the Secretary of Council notifies the President about the vacancy in Council.

5.2 The SRC elects two (2) of its members to Council.

5.3 The President of the SRC submits names of the members elected to the Secretary of Council.

As the governing body, the Council exercises general oversight over the Institution and its affairs, guided by

appropriate legislation, national policies for higher education, the Institutional statute and internal policies, rules and regulations. All members are expected to act in the interests of the University rather than representing any specific constituency in line with the Code of Ethics for Council Members of WSU.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS OF WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

The Council of WSU holds multifaceted responsibilities, including governance, policy formulation and monitoring. They establish guidelines for strategic and financial governance as the custodians of the University's corporate governance.

Corporate governance is a structured system of rules, practices and processes that guide and control an organisation. Recognising the importance of this function, the Council has developed a code of ethics. This code, which must be signed by all new Council members, serves as a vital tool in maintaining integrity and professionalism in the governance of the University. It ensures that council members act in a manner that upholds the values and objectives of the University. Importantly, this code of ethics also ensures a clear distinction of governance and managerial roles, preventing any potential conflicts of interest to further strengthen the effectiveness of the University's corporate governance. The WSU code of ethics is as follows:

I recognise that the Walter Sisulu University exists and functions in accordance with relevant legislation, its Statute, external policies and regulations, and that as a member of the Council of Walter Sisulu University I therefore:

(a) Occupy a fiduciary position relative to the Walter Sisulu University, requiring me to always, and in all respects, participate in activities involving the Council in the best interests of the University, including, during and between meetings of the Council, its committees, or when representing the Council at other University structures, as well as at internal or external functions and occasions;

(b) Must be a person with attributes, knowledge and experience relevant to the objectives of the Walter Sisulu University and I must be willing and able at all times to accept advice and further develop skills and apply such in the best interests of the Walter Sisulu University; and

(c) Must give fair consideration to the interests of the external and other internal stakeholders of the Walter Sisulu University meant in paragraph 3(1) of the Statute, always subject to the best interests of the Walter Sisulu University.

As a member of the Council of the Walter Sisulu University I will, therefore, in addition to these general prescriptions, specifically submit to and act in accordance with the following precepts:

i. To apply my knowledge and skills and perform my functions with the greatest vigilance, honesty, reasonable care and diligence and, specifically, to prepare for, attend fully unless my prior formal apology is accepted by the Council, and participate constructively in all meetings of the Council, committees or other activities in which I am expected to participate;
ii. To strive together with my fellow-council members and relevant other structures to govern the Walter Sisulu University in a fair and balanced way, respectfully, truthfully and transparently;
iii. To maintain due confidentiality with respect to any information I may receive with respect to the University, any of its affairs, graduates, staff or students and to only impart such information to anyone in the best interests of the Walter Sisulu University;
iv. To refrain from speaking about Council matters for or on behalf of the Council to anyone without being explicitly mandated by the Council to do so, and immediately to refer any questions put to me or information given to me about such matters to the Chairperson or person appointed by the Council to deal with such matters;
v. To develop a sound understanding of the characteristics, implementation and functioning of the divisional management system of the Walter Sisulu University, specifically with regard to the processes followed to manage the various campuses, develop the Institutional plan, the budget and various reports, policies and Rules to be proposed to the Council by the management of the University;
vi. To consistently avoid getting involved in, or interfere with, the management authority or any management function at the Walter Sisulu University and to rather treat managers at all levels with due respect and use good governance practices to obtain relevant reports to enable the Council to execute its essential governance functions properly, while protecting the legitimate reputation of the University, its employees and the Council as far as possible, even when exposing any possible malpractice or mismanagement that may be identified;
vii. To protect and enhance the interests and reputation of the Walter Sisulu University at all times and not ever by my conduct or lack thereof, whether personally or as a member of Council, bring the University into disrepute;
viii. To avoid and not allow any conflict of my personal or any other interests, whether professional, commercial,

political, cultural, social, familial or howsoever, with the legitimate interests of the Walter Sisulu University. I will immediately make any such possibility known to the Council and accept their decision with regard to my continuing participation in, or membership of, the Council;

ix. To notify the chairperson of Council of my immediate resignation if at any time I should stop being a member of the stakeholder group that elected me to Council, or if I should for any other reason no longer qualify to be a member in my current category of membership;

x. To confidentially bring any conduct that may contravene the letter or spirit of this code, that comes to my attention by whatever method and whether it happened within the University or not, to the attention of the Chairperson of Council or to any other person designated for that purpose by the Council. I will participate fully in any appropriate steps taken to rectify any wrong that may or could have happened;

xi. To understand that the Council must at least annually evaluate the performance of the Council itself, every committee thereof, every individual member including myself, as well as the infrastructure and support available to the Council and make necessary changes to rectify possible issues and improve the functioning of the Council. I undertake to participate fully in such performance enhancement interventions and will accept any outcomes and changes that may even affect my own functioning as a member;

xii. To accept that the Council has statutory, disciplinary powers over members and that any contravention by me of the spirit or letter of this Code will lead to disciplinary steps being taken against me in accordance with the Rules. I will participate fully in any fair process; and,

xiii. I further accept that my conduct as a member may be censured by the Council or any person or group of persons designated by the Council to do so and that my membership may be terminated by the Council in accordance with its disciplinary powers.

WSU Walter Sisulu University
In pursuit of excellence

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY FRAUD HOTLINE

Cultivate Honesty and Integrity

Report any incidents of Fraud, Theft, Corruption, Misconduct, Bribery to:

KPMG FairCall - 0800 212 582

All calls are confidential

KPMG



1.3 COUNCIL MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

ORDINARY MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

Ordinary meeting	Date	Attendance (%)
First ordinary meeting	14 April 2023	95%
Second ordinary meeting (special)	26 May 2023	90%
Third ordinary meeting	28 July 2023	95%
Fourth ordinary meeting	27 October 2023	100%

GOVERNANCE WORKSHOPS

Date	Attendance (%)
04 August 2023	75%

ATTENDANCE OF COUNCIL

WSU COUNCIL – 2023							
#	Name	14 April 2023	26 May 2023 (special)	28 July 2023	04 August 2023 Governance w/shop	27 October 2023	Percentage
External Council members							
01	Adv T Ngcukaitobi	P	P	P	AP	P	80%
02	Ms FL Lamola	P	P	P	P	P	100%
03	Ms NY Tyamzashe	P	P	P	AP	P	80%
04	Judge SM Mbenenge	P	P	P	P	P	100%
05	Dr MM Tebelele	P	P	P	P	P	100%
06	Mr T Bonakele	AP	AP	AP	P	P	40%
07	Mr S Kou	P	P	P	P	P	100%
08	Mr T Klaas	P	P	P	AP	P	80%
09	Mr MTG Matyobeni	P	P	P	P	P	100%
10	Mr V Jarana	P	P	P	P	P	100%
11	Mr L Fuzile	P	P	P	P	P	100%
12	Dr LX Mantashe	P	P	P	P	P	100%
	Vacant	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Council members							
13	Prof RN Songca	P	P	P	P	P	100%
14	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	P	P	100%
15	Dr MR Krexe	P	AP	P	P	P	80%

16	Ms B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	P	100%
17	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	P	P	P	P	100%
18	Dr A Mngeni	P	P	P	AP	P	80%
19	Mr M Mabhongo	P	P	P	AP	P	80%
20	Mr S Matshoba	P	P	P	P	P	100%
Secretary to Council							
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	P	100%
Key Word / RAG		P= Present AP= Apology					



1.4 SIGNIFICANT COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS FOR 2023

In carrying out its mandate of governing and providing strategic oversight, the University Council adopted various resolutions during the year under review to drive progress and chart the strategic direction of the Institution. These resolutions encompassed key aspects such as approving crucial appointments to strengthen leadership capabilities, adopting new policies and endorsing a comprehensive strategy for rationalising faculties and consolidating campuses to optimise resource utilisation and to ensure the continuous provision of quality programmes, support, services and facilities. The Council also approved budgets that upheld the University's financial stability and long-term sustainability. Below is an overview of these significant Council resolutions:

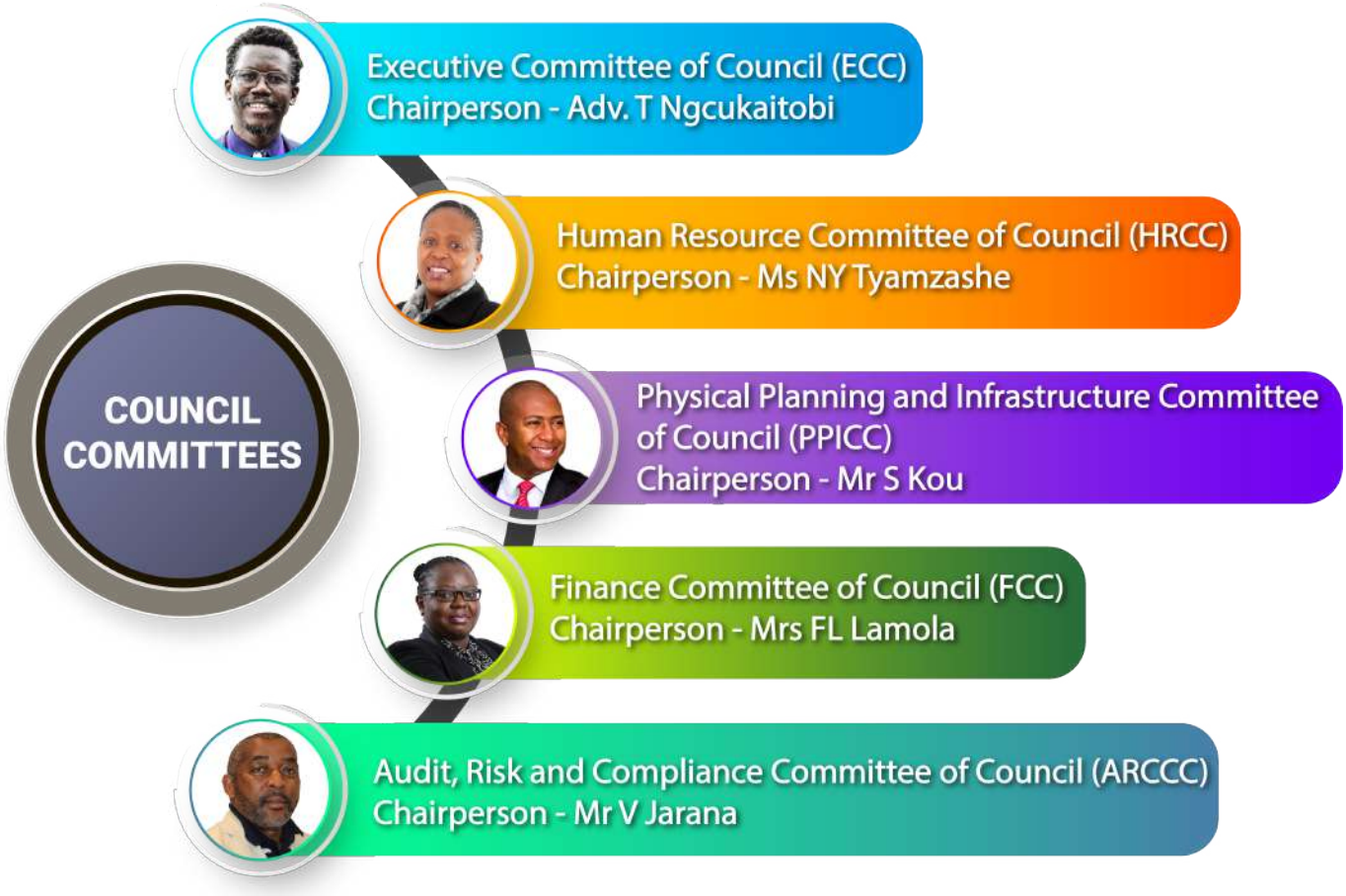
RESOLUTION	DETAILS
Council Member Reappointment	Council Member • ***Ms FL Lamola*** re-appointed for a second term on the WSU Council. Deputy chairperson • ***Ms FL Lamola*** re-elected as Deputy Chairperson of Council for the term from 1 December 2023 – 31 December 2025
Chancellor Appointment	***Ms Nonkululeko Gobodo*** appointed as the Chancellor of WSU for a term from 1 May 2023 - 30 April 2027.
Senior Leadership Positions Appointments:	Executive Director: Institutional Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation • Council ratified appointment of ***Ms O Mokgatle*** on a five-year contract. Executive Deans • Faculty of Natural Sciences ***Professor AT Modi*** was ratified as the appointable candidate on a five-year term contract. • Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences ***Dr WW Chitha*** was ratified as the appointable candidate on a five-year term contract. Senior Director: Library and Information Services • ***Dr T Mabunda*** was ratified as the appointable candidate on a five-year term contract.

Approved Policies	• Undergraduate Bursary and Scholarship Policy • Student Fees Policy • Collection of Student Fees Policy • Work Integrated Learning Policy • Performance Management Policy (P5-16) • Succession Planning Policy • Academic Staff Qualification Improvement Policy • ICT Change Management Policy • ICT Security Policy • ICT Service Desk Policy • Risk Management Policy • Institutional Compliance Policy
Approved University Strategies and Plans	• Reviewed WSU Strategic Plan 2020 – 2030 • Rationalisation and Consolidation Strategy (R&C) • Academic Strategy 2023 – 2025 • Cloud Strategy • ICT Disaster and Recovery Plan • Consolidation of Property Assets
Financial Management and Auditing	• Council ratified the unqualified audit opinion for the University's 2022 financial statements, indicating sound financial reporting and compliance with accounting standards. • Council reaffirmed its commitment to fiscal accountability by confirming a revised budget and underscoring the vital necessity of adopting a robust financial strategy.

Part B

1.5 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Figure 2: WSU Council Committees



COUNCIL COMMITTEES' MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	Name	WSU ECC - 2023										Percent
		09 Jan spl	17 Feb	24 March spl	19 May	23 Jun spl	13 July spl	18 Aug	06 Oct	24 Nov spl	13 Dec spl	
	External Council Members											
01	Adv T Ngcukaitobi (Chairperson)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Ms FL Lamola (FCC Chair)	P	AP	P	P	AP	P	P	P	AP	P	73%

03	Ms NY Tyamzashe (HRCC Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	AP	P	P	P	P	90%
04	Mr V Jarana (ARCCC Chair)	P	P	P	P	AP	P	AP	P	P	P	81%
05	Mr S Kou (PPICC Chair)	P	P	AP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	90%
	Internal Council Members											
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
07	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele (Acting DVC)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	AP	P	90%
	Secretary to Council											
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
KEY WORDS		P= Present AP= Apology spl = special										

HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

WSU HRCC - 2023						
#	Name	24 March	07 July	18 October	20 October Joint with FCC	Percentage
External Council Members						
01	Ms NY Tyamzashe (Chairperson)	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr T Bonakele	P	P	AP	P	75%
03	Dr LX Mantashe	P	AP	P	P	75%
Internal Council Members						
05	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	P	P	100%
06	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	P	100%
07	Dr PS Jaca	P	P	N/A	N/A	50%
08	Dr A Mngeni	P	P	P	P	100%
09	Mr S Matshoba	P	P	P	P	100%
Secretary to Council						
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	100%
KEY WORDS		P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member				

PHYSICAL PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

WSU PPICC - 2023					
#	Name	17 March	30 June	15 September	Percentage
External Council Members					
01	Mr S Kou (Chairperson)	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr MTG Matyobeni	AP	AP	P	33%
03	Mr T Bonakele	P	P	P	100%
04	Dr LX Mantashe	AP	P	AP	33%
05	Mr R Gilfillan	P	AP	P	66%
Internal Council Members					
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	P	100%
07	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	100%
08	Dr PS Jaca	P	P	N/A	66%
09	Dr A Mngeni	P	P	P	100%
10	Dr MR Krexe	P	P	P	100%
11	Mr S Matshoba	P	P	P	100%
Secretary to Council					
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	100%
KEY WORDS		P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member			

FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

WSU FCC - 2023									
#	Name	03 March	12 June	20 June Joint with ARCC	13 October	20 October Joint with HRCC	20-21 October Sustainability W/Shop	28 Nov Special	Percentage
External members									
01	Ms FL Lamola (Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr T Klaas	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
03	Mr V Jarana	AP	P	P	AP	P	P	P	71%
04	Mr S Kou	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
05	Ms T Cumming (Co-Opted)	P	P	AP	AP	AP	AP	P	42%
06	Mr T de Beer (Co-Opted)	P	P	AP	AP	AP	AP	P	42%
Internal Members									
07	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	AP	P	P	P	P	P	85%
08	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
09	Dr PS Jaca	P	P	P	P	N/A	N/A	N/A	71%

10	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	P	AP	P	P	AP	P	71%
11	Dr B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
12	Mr M Mabhongo	AP	AP	AP	AP	P	AP	AP	14%
Secretary to Council									
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P		P	AP	85%
KEY WORDS			P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member						

AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

WSU ARCCC - 2023						
#	Name	10 March	15 June	20 June (Joint with FCC)	08 Sept	Percentage
External members						
01	Mr V Jarana (Chairperson)	P	AP	P	P	75%
02	Mr T Klaas	P	P	P	AP	75%
03	Dr MM Tebelele	P	P	P	P	100%
04	Mr L Fuzile	P	AP	P	P	75%
05	Mr S Ngqwala	P	P	P	P	100%
Internal members						
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	AP	P	P	P	75%
07	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	P	100%
08	Dr PS Jaca	P	P	P	N/A	75%
09	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	AP	AP	AP	25%
10	Dr B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	100%
11	Mr M Mabhongo	AP	AP	AP	AP	0%
Secretary to Council						
01	Dr L Ntonzima	AP	P	P	P	75%
KEY WORDS			P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member			

1.6 REPORT OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The Walter Sisulu University's Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee of Council (ARCCC), a sub-committee constituted by the University Council, sustained its existence and operated efficaciously throughout 2023. The ARCCC exercised oversight over the Institution's governance frameworks, compliance mechanisms and risk management strategies to foster sustainability and facilitate growth. It accomplished this mandate by, *inter alia*, receiving and evaluating reports on identified and mitigated risks to ensure the integrity, sufficiency and efficacy of the University's financial control systems through which its objectives are attained

In discharging its mandate, the ARCCC adhered to and promoted the guidelines set out in the King IV Report on Governance 2016. As per its Terms of Reference, the ARCCC comprises a diverse membership, including:

- Four external members of Council
- Two independent, external specialists in financial matters
- The Vice-Chancellor & Principal (ex-officio)
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellors, i.e. DVC: Academic Affairs & Research and DVC: Institutional Support - (ex-officio)

The four external members and two external specialists are independent and not employed by the University. Both internal and external auditors had unrestricted access to the ARCCC, safeguarding their independence against threats.

During the 2023 financial year, three meetings were convened, attended by external and internal auditors, appropriate members of the executive management serving as Resource Persons, including the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), four Campus Rectors, Director: Audit Services, External Auditors, and other individuals attending upon request. Notably, 62.5% of the eight ARCCC members constituted external members, while 37.5% were internal members serving ex-officio, ensuring a balanced representation and oversight.

The specific roles, responsibilities and operational parameters of the ARCCC are outlined in its comprehensive Terms of Reference, which remained unchanged during the period under review.

Terms of Reference of the Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee of Council

AUDIT

- To ensure that the management implements an effective compliance framework and process with respect to applicable legislation, external policies and procedures, accounting and reporting protocols, the University Statute, its Rules and codes of conduct, and cultivates a culture of compliance by applying key performance indicators;
- To maintain a close relationship and open communication with the strategically placed, independent and effective, risk-based internal audit function of the University, to assist the Committee in the performance of its duties;
- To monitor the University's compliance with, and the effectiveness of, internal controls, policies, systems, Rules and procedures in the management of all identified risks and sustainability issues, based on written assessments submitted to the Committee by the internal audit function of the University;
- To consider and approve procedures and rules that are intended to guarantee independence of findings and that provide for management comments on those findings;
- To ensure that the level of expertise, planning, infrastructure, expenditure, safeguarding, capacity for disaster recovery and continuity of services and management of the ICT functions of the University are sustainable and consistently aligned with the objectives of the University;
- To ensure the reliability and integrity of management information which includes resources (ICT, finance, infrastructure, human resources and goods and services) applied and various outputs;
- To consider and approve the Annual Audit Plan and any other special audits;

- To monitor the implementation of the Audit Plan during the financial year;
- To appoint annually the external auditors, in consultation with the Auditor General and to report to Council on the terms of reference, including the nature, scope and objectives of such audit;
- To maintain oversight of the annual end of year Financial Audit by the external auditors;
- To maintain oversight with preparations and progress towards the Institutional audits;
- To evaluate management comments and any proposed corrective action with respect to audit findings (internal and external); and
- To satisfy itself that the annual financial reports reflect the financial position of the University accurately and then recommend the Annual Financial Statements to Council for approval.

RISK

- To consider and approve the formal policies for the identification and management of risks and sustainability issues to the University;
- To review the University's risks universe and evaluate appropriateness and effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies;
- To ensure that the University's Risk Register is kept up to date;
- To consider and recommend risk mitigation, assurance policies and strategies of the University;
- To monitor implementation of approved risk and sustainability identification and mitigation policies;
- To review the appropriateness of policies and procedures to facilitate whistleblowing and the follow-up of information obtained from whistleblowing;
- To monitor performance of management against key risk and sustainability issues;
- To monitor trends and emerging risks and best practice guidelines to risk and sustainability issues and to recommend proposed strategic interventions to the Council; and
- To satisfy itself that the financial, procurement and investment risks of the University are adequately adhered to.



1.7 STATEMENT ON INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE / OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTROLS

For the year ended 31 DECEMBER 2023

Walter Sisulu University (the University) has a well-defined risk management framework through which the Council identifies the University's risk universe, constantly reviews it and ensures that strategies to mitigate such risks are adequate, effective and are in accordance with the University's risk tolerance levels. To ensure ongoing effectiveness of risk mitigating strategies and initiatives, the University maintains systems of internal control over its business processes, including, but not limited to, financial management and reporting as well as asset management, covering areas such as safeguarding of assets against unauthorised acquisitions and the use or disposal of such assets. The risk management frameworks and systems of internal control as well as the associated reporting frameworks are designed to provide reasonable assurance to management and Council regarding the preparation and reliability of its financial statements. Council, operating through its Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, provides oversight on the financial reporting process.

Internal Auditors independently monitor the effectiveness of the systems of internal control in accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing through an Internal Audit Operational Plan approved by the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee of Council (ARCCC) and report findings and recommendations to management and the ARCCC.

During the year, the University has seen a significant improvement in addressing most of the identified control deficiencies and the implementation of improvement plans in pursuit of good governance and effective administration remains the focus of management and the University Council.

Great progress has been made by ICT in addressing the identified control deficiencies and the following Policies have been approved by the Council:

- ICT Governance Framework
- ICT Change Management
- ICT Security
- ICT Disaster Recovery Plan

Although most Policies have been approved, the threat of Cyber attacks is one of the areas that requires the University's focused attention as this could result in the loss of critical University data.

Whereas the University Council is single-mindedly focused on reducing the University's risks through, amongst other means, aggressively implementing systems of internal control, the Council is acutely aware of the inherent limitations in the effectiveness of any system of internal control, including, but not limited to, the possibility of human error and the overriding of internal controls. Accordingly, even an effective system of internal control can provide only reasonable assurance with respect to financial statement preparation and the safeguarding of assets. As an attestation of the continued independence of the Internal Audit function in the University, the Director: Audit Services has a direct functional reporting line to the ARCCC with the Vice-Chancellor & Principal providing administrative supervision.

Internal Audit develops a three-year Rolling Plan, as well as an Annual Operational Plan focusing on priority areas of the University's control environment. Based on the results of the reviews conducted, Internal Audit issues reports to the ARCCC, providing details on any errors or weaknesses identified in the internal control environment.

Whereas Internal Audit, as a second line of defence in the University's combined assurance framework develops Annual Operational Plans to detect any weaknesses in the internal control environment, considering the scope, coverage and rotational nature of the Annual Internal Audit Operational Plans, it is not always possible nor is it a reasonable expectation that Internal Audit detects all irregularities and fraud which may have occurred during the year under review. Management, as a first line of defense, is expected to implement policies and business

processes designed to proactively detect and prevent occurrence of irregularities and fraud. Risk management will always remain management's responsibility.

Internal Audit reports are issued on the basis that they are for the sole use of the University and exclusively for the purposes set out therein. No party other than those to whom the reports are addressed may rely upon them for any purpose, whatsoever. The reports may not be made available or copied in whole or in part to any other party without the Director: Audit Service's prior written consent, (in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor & Principal) which consent may be provided or withheld at the Vice- Chancellor & Principal's absolute discretion



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DIRECTOR: AUDIT SERVICES



.....

CHAIRPERSON: AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL



1.8 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

Introduction

Walter Sisulu University has established an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process which is reviewed continuously by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) with the oversight of Council and the Audit Risk Compliance Committee of Council (ARCCC).

The University's risk management process requires members of the EMC to formally consider and evaluate the risks in their portfolios, the risk ratings and mitigating controls on a regular basis. Once reviewed by EMC, the updated risk register is presented to ARCCC for approval.

Institutional risks identified

Potential risks are identified, rated in terms of impact and likelihood, and implementation of mitigating actions monitored. The following institutional risks were listed as being a priority on the Risk Register during the course of 2023:

Institutional Objectives	Risk Event / Description	Root Cause for the Risk	Residual Risk
1. Financial Sustainability.	1.1 Inadequate funding of the University affecting its ability to deliver its programmes.	1. Shrinking block grant, 2. Students' inability to pay, 3. Inadequate fundraising abilities, 4. Low Ratio of Academic staff with Doctoral Qualifications, 5.Inadequate number of Postgraduate Programmes, 6. Low Throughput rate, and 7.Lack of diversity and optimisation of the PQM.	High
2. Impactful Research, Teaching & Learning Environment.	2.1 Disruption of Research, Teaching and Learning.	1. Students unrest, and 2. Civil unrest affecting the University.	High
	2.2 High failure Rate.	1 Lack of monitoring and evaluation of Teaching and Learning, and 2. Lack of competent Lecturers (Staff).	High
3. Sustainable university with great Teaching and Learning outcomes.	3.1 Non-viable PQM.	1. Lack of compliance with Regulatory Requirements - DHET, CHE, SAQA and Professional Bodies, 2. Lack of Curriculum Reform Strategy, 3. Poor implementation of SOTL, and 4. Poor community engagement.	Maximum

Institutional Objectives	Risk Event / Description	Root Cause for the Risk	Residual Risk
4. Best infrastructure to carry the demands of modern day Research, Teaching and Learning.	4.1 Inadequate infrastructure funding.	1. Decreasing Government Funding, 2. Inadequate Fund-raising, and 3. Inadequate partnerships and collaboration.	High
	4.2 Critical University decisions made at non-authorised levels.		
5. Technology enabled Research, Teaching and Learning environment.	5.1 Vulnerable Digital Infrastructure.	1. Failure of the grid, and 2. Cyber security attack including ransomware.	High

CONCLUSION

The University is committed to improving its risk management processes continuously in pursuit of its objectives, with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of its core business – the academic project.

Recognition for the need of a proactive risk management process is an essential for good corporate Governance. To this end, risk management is understood as an integral component of all processes and that it is not identified as an add-on to the core business activities.



1.9 INSTITUTIONAL FORUM REPORT

The Institutional Forum (IF) is a statutory body, legally responsible for advising Council about the Act and Institutional matters – It receives secretarial services from the Registrar of the University. Its composition stands thus:

- Council external members (2)
- Senate (2)
- Student Services Council (1)
- Labour Unions (2)
- Student Representative Council (1)
- Employment Equity Committee (1)
- Executive Management Committee (2)
- Convocation (1)
- Academic Employee Representatives (4) at one per campus and Non-Academic Employee Representatives (4) one per campus

The structure is led by its Chairperson, Mr. Sandiso Mbongo, with the Deputy Chairperson being Mr. L Mnapu. The IF for the year of 2023 continued to carry its mandatory role of advising Council on the governance and policy issues, equity and equality, code of conduct, mediation, and conflict resolution and on the Institutional culture.

Relations with Council

IF convened its statutory and special meetings in relation to Council meetings to prepare for advice reports to Council. Advice submitted to the Council was well received and responded to in writing. This indicates a good improvement in the relationship between Council and IF as compared to the previous years where a feedback report was not received from Council.

Nomination of the University Chancellor

IF supported the nomination and appointment of Dr Nonkululeko Gobodo for Chancellorship.

Policies

Code of Conduct Policy, Induction and Orientation Policy, Scarce Skills and Retention Policy, Succession Policy, Redeployment and Transfer Policy, Appointment of Foreign Nationals, Performance Management Policy and the Academic Staff Qualifications Improvement Policy were all presented before the IF which participated actively and positively in the making of these policies. Some policies were approved by the Council, and some were rejected for further consideration. These policies were encouraged by IF to be more aligned with the new University dispensation of Rationalisation and Consolidation to be relevant to the new context and demands of the University.

Rationalisation and Consolidation

The IF was consulted and supported the Rationalisation and Consolidation process. It further advised on the necessary Human Resources, Infrastructure, Financial and Academic implications embedded in the process for consideration. The advice from IF was further derived from the Institutional Audit Report which was explicit on how best the University can achieve its desired outcomes of a successful Rationalisation and Consolidation process. The process was approved by the Council and is in the process of implementation.

Institutional organogram

The IF participated in the consultation process of the University structure and advised on three points; that the University must not exceed the required DHET threshold of personnel costs, workers of the University must not lose their jobs following a process of change management and that the organisational design process must be in line with the University strategy following a change of structural design from the divisional model to a unitary model. A final organogram was approved by the Council during the current year of 2023.

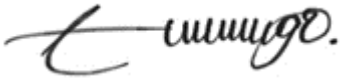
Selection of University Senior Leadership

IF participated in the process of recruiting Executive Deans for seven new Faculties. However, IF did raise a concern regarding employment equity with regards to gender representation selected for the said positions. Six males

were appointed with one female Executive Dean. The recommendation was to consider more female candidates for the positions of Deputy Executive Deans to readdress the issue of gender imbalances. The IF further advised Council to fill in vacant Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions to bring more stability in the university leadership.

Appointment of WSU Graduates
IF had advised that the University needs to prioritise WSU graduates for employment and business opportunities to alleviate the high rate of unemployment, especially of its own Graduates. The advice received a positive attitude from the Council as it speaks to the transformation of the university.

Conclusion
The synergy established between IF and Council has greatly impacted on the good governance systems of the University, its leadership and accountability. All stakeholders of the University find expression in IF and are actively involved and participate in the functions of the IF as mandated by the Statute and Higher Education Act of 101 of 1997.



Mr Sandiso Mbongo
IF Chairperson

Part C

1.10 REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SENATE



Prof RN Songca
Chairperson of Senate

The 2023 academic year proved to be a transformative period for the University, marked by remarkable progress. In alignment with the University's overarching goals of establishing a robust academic foundation and maintaining consistently high-quality programmes, the University embarked on an ambitious Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) Project, which received the Council's approval on 26 May 2023. This R&C project has resulted in a strategic consolidation of faculties, reducing the number from 12 to seven, while also facilitating the amalgamation of departments and the reassignment of programmes to different campuses. These programme relocations have been carefully aligned with the new faculty structure, ensuring a cohesive and streamlined academic structure as follows:

Figure 3: WSU's Faculties



Throughout 2023, the Senate was at the forefront, steering and endorsing these substantial transformations. Through its Resolution of 11 October, Senate approved the merger of the Institutional Quality Assurance (IQAC) and Academic Planning (SAC) Committees, forming the Senate Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Committee (SQAAC) to enhance the efficiency and coordination of WSU's quality assurance and academic planning processes. Furthermore, in its Resolution of 13 September 2023, Senate approved the alignment of faculty boards in line with the approved faculty structure and dissolved campus Senates, instituting a unified, Institutional Senate to also streamline governance structures.

Beyond these structural changes, Senate approved various academic matters central to the University's core business of teaching and learning, including the approval of new strategic programmes. Recognising the importance of effective leadership, Executive Deans were appointed to lead the seven rationalised faculties, ensuring a seamless transition and continued academic excellence.

The Senate's resolutions and guidance during this transformative period have been crucial and instrumental in facilitating a smooth transition and upholding academic rigor. The University's overarching mission remained unwavering; to position itself as a well-functioning Institution with a unitary identity and with the capacity to effectively and efficiently serve its students and stakeholders, particularly through the delivery of unquestionably high-quality programmes and qualifications.



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Professor RN Songca
Chairperson of Senate



1.11 SENATE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

In accordance with Section 28 of the Higher Education Act of 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) and the National Qualifications Act, Act No. 67 of 2008, as outlined in Section 19 of the WSU Statutes published in Government Gazette No. 37235 on 17 January 2014, the Senate serves as the governing body responsible to the Council for overseeing all aspects of teaching, learning, research, community engagement, and academic functions at Walter Sisulu University. This responsibility includes the early identification and proper management of any risks associated with these areas, along with any other duties delegated or assigned by the Council.

Expanding on the overarching responsibilities mentioned, the Senate's roles include:

a) Making or amending any Rule relating to the curriculum for any degree, diploma, certificate, or other qualification, or to the obtaining of any degree, diploma, certificate, or other qualification, but may do so only after consulting the relevant campus senate committee and faculty board.

b) Making or amending any Rule relating to the manner in which students are to be examined.

c) Determining what standard of proficiency is required to be attained in any mode of assessment that may be used in order to satisfy the requirements for the obtaining of each degree, diploma, certificate, or other qualification.

d) Advising the Council on disciplinary measures and Rules concerning students.

e) Making recommendations to the Council regarding the faculty to which each academic department or other academic structure belongs.

f) Making recommendations to the Council regarding the establishment and disestablishment of faculties, academic departments and other academic structures.

g) Determining, in accordance with any relevant deed or gift, and after consultation with the vice-chancellor, the conditions applicable to any scholarships and other academic prizes.

h) Determining the persons to whom scholarships and academic prizes are awarded.

i) Establishing committees, including a campus senate committee for each campus tasked to perform any of the functions that the Senate may delegate to such committee or campus senate committee. Senate may appoint persons who are not members of the Senate as members of such committees and for this purpose may deem a single person to be a committee, and may make Rules to regulate the membership, functions and office-bearers of any committee or campus senate committee.

j) Determining the functions of its committees, provided that the vice-chancellor is an official member of all senate committees.

k) Making standing orders on procedures and the delegation of powers to improve the carrying out of its functions.

l) Delegating its functions, but remaining accountable for the performance of all its functions.

m) Taking note of any action taken by a committee in exercising its delegated powers or functions when such committee reports its actions to the next meeting of the Senate.

The Senate is responsible for providing the Council with reports on its activities, including addressing risks associated with the university's core academic operations, as requested by the Council.



1.12 SENATE COMPOSITION

As the preeminent academic governing body of the university, the Senate is instrumental in steering WSU's core functions. To successfully execute its mandate, the Senate, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, is composed of a diverse team from various university directorates. This team includes Executive Management, Council Representatives, Senior Directors, Directors, Executive Deans, Department Heads, Non-Academic Employees and Student Representative Council (SRC) members. Each member has contributed their unique expertise and perspective, to enhance the Senate's collective wisdom and decision-making capabilities to guide the university towards its strategic goals under the reporting period.

SENATE MEMBERS

SENATE MEMBERSHIP
Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Chairperson)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research
Registrar
Executive Director: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Executive Director: Student Affairs
Council Representative
Senior Director and Directors
Senior Director: Library & Information Services
Director: Postgraduate Studies
Director: Research and Innovation
Director: Directorate for Learning and Teaching
Director: Community Engagement
Director: Academic Planning
Director: Institutional Research and Planning
Director: Transformation ad languages
Academic Advisor: Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Executive Deans and Heads of Departments
Faculty Professors
Non-Professorial Academic employees
Non-Academic Employee
SRC members



1.13 SENATE MEETINGS

ORDINARY AND SPECIAL MEETINGS OF SENATE

The following meetings of the Senate were held during the 2023 Academic Year:

Meeting	Date
Special meeting	25 January 2023
Ordinary meeting	03 April 2023
Special meeting	23 May 2023
Ordinary meeting	28 June 2023
Special meeting	10 August 2023
Special meeting	13 September 2023
Special meeting	20 September 2023
Special meeting	27 September 2023
Ordinary meeting	11 October 2023
Special meeting	07 December 2023

SENATE MEETINGS ATTENDANCE BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

WSU SENATE - 2023										
#	Name	03 April	23 May special	28 June	10 August special	13 Sept Special	27 Sept special	11 October	07 Dec	Percentage
Council Representative to Senate										
01	Dr MM Tebelele	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
Secretary to Senate										
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
KEY WORDS					P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member					

1.14 SIGNIFICANT SENATE RESOLUTIONS FOR 2023

The Senate convened several meetings throughout the 2023 academic year to deliberate and make decisions pertaining to its mandate. The outcomes of these meetings were several approvals and recommendations, each aimed at enhancing teaching and learning, advancing research, fostering community service and promptly identifying and managing related risks. Below is an overview of significant Senate approvals and recommendations:

▪ APPROVALS	DETAILS
Module name change	**03 April** • FRM40M8 (Forensic Medicine II) name changed to Forensic Medicine and Medical Law, Bioethics & Human Rights.
New programmes	**10 August** • Post-graduate Diploma in Accountancy (PGDA) • Post-graduate Diploma in Account Sciences • Honours in Financial Accounting **11 October** • Introduction of a Postgraduate Diploma in Management Accounting in the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences **07 December** • Offering of the proposed Diploma in Agricultural Technology and Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Technology programmes and Senate also approved its submission to DHET for processing.
Reviewed programmes	**07 December** • Noted the report on the review of the Bachelor of Sciences in Health Promotion
2024 Enrolment Quotas	**11 October** Senate approved for the following faculties: • Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences • Faculty of Education • Faculty of Law, Humanities & Social Sciences • Faculty of Natural Sciences • Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences **07 December** • For Postgraduate and First Time Entering Students in the Faculty Medicine and Health Sciences

Alignment with the R&C Project	**10 August** • Consolidated departmental structures • Establishment of the Faculty Management Office **13 September** • Faculty boards aligned with the seven faculties • Campus Senates de-established to form one Institutional Senate
Institutional Audit Improvement Plan	**27 September** • Institutional Audit Improvement Plan approved and recommended its submission to the CHE
University Calendar	**11 October** • 2024 final University calendar



1.15 SENATE SUB-COMMITTEES

All Senate subcommittees operate with formally approved terms of reference and carry out their responsibilities according to the University Statutes and within the framework of authority delegated to them by the Senate. The operational Senate Committees include:

Figure 4: Senate Sub-Committees





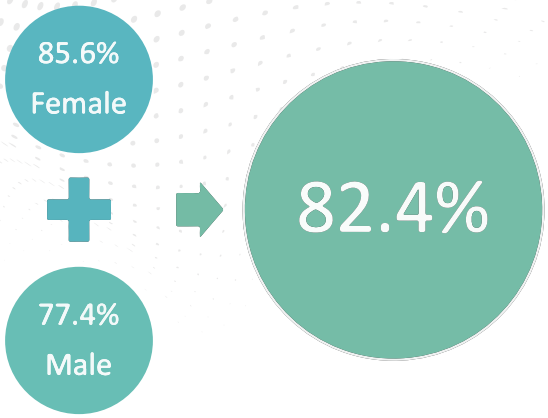
1.16 PERFORMANCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING, RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The University's performance report highlights remarkable achievements in its fundamental pillars of operation. The advancements in teaching and learning are evidenced by the implementation of innovative pedagogical strategies and the integration of technology to enrich the educational experience. Research initiatives have flourished, with an increase in research outputs and National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings, reflecting the Institution's enhanced research productivity. Community engagement has seen a strengthened partnership with local and global communities, leading to impactful projects that address societal needs. The Senate's strategic direction has been instrumental in these developments, ensuring that the University not only maintains but also elevates its standards of academic excellence. The following section provides insights into the University's performance across these vital areas during the 2023 reporting period.

PERFORMANCE IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING DOMAIN

WSU has demonstrated commendable performance in the teaching and learning domain for the 2023 academic year, underscored by the overall undergraduate success rate of 82.4% as shown in Figure 5. Notably, female students outperformed their male counterparts by a significant margin of 8.2%.

Figure 5: Overall Undergraduate Success Rates by Gender for 2023



Students benefiting from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) recorded a slightly higher success rate than the Institutional average, at 83.6%. Similarly, students enrolled in Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP) matched the Institutional success rate closely, with an 82.3% success rate. A standout statistic is the First-year First-time Entering Success Rates, which reached an impressive 84%.

A faculty-specific breakdown of success rates reveals a consistency with the overall trends, highlighting the effectiveness of WSU's academic strategies across all disciplines. This consistency is indicative of a strong academic foundation and effective student support mechanisms that contribute to a cohesive and resilient educational environment.

Key Observations and Trends in Student Success Rates and Retention:

- **High Retention Rates Across Faculties**: WSU has successfully maintained high retention rates across all faculties, evidencing the University's commitment to student support and academic success. This achievement suggests that most students are likely to complete their programmes within the designated time frames.
- **Lower Dropout Rates**: The University boasts commendably overall low dropout rates at under 14%, reflecting the determination of WSU students and the supportive academic environment fostered by the Institution.

While these accomplishments are noteworthy, the University acknowledges areas that require improvement:

Targeted Interventions for Higher Dropout Rates: Even though the overall University drop-out rates are low, there are certain faculties, including Natural Sciences, Engineering, Built Environment and IT and Economics and Financial Sciences that have relatively higher dropout rates. To address this challenge, the University has, and continues to develop, targeted intervention strategies. These include Student Tracking and At-Risk Subjects Analysis, as well as comprehensive programme reviews with the aim of equipping students within these faculties with the necessary support to navigate academic hurdles successfully.

Central to these initiatives has been the Directorate for Learning and Teaching, which has been instrumental in enhancing the quality and impact of the teaching and learning experience, working in collaboration with various other directorates and faculties within the University. The next section of this report looks into the specific activities undertaken by this directorate.

1.16.1 DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (DLT)

Under the reporting period of 2023, the Directorate for Learning and Teaching at WSU demonstrated its critical role in the University's educational landscape. The Directorate, serving as a central pillar of support within the Institution, has been instrumental in elevating the quality and efficacy of the academic experience.

Through its extensive collaborations with diverse directorates and faculties, the Directorate has significantly strengthened academic support and pedagogical development. Furthermore, it has been a driving force in integrating Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the teaching and learning process. This integration has modernised and enhanced the educational experience, facilitating epistemological access for all students through technology-enhanced, learner-centred educational support, thereby ensuring equitable opportunities for academic success.

Throughout the year, the Directorate undertook activities focusing on key areas that include student academic support, academic staff development and learning and teaching with technology.

- **Student Development and Academic Support**: The DLT Directorate has implemented a range of programmes designed to provide students with the resources, skills and support necessary to navigate their academic journeys successfully. Initiatives include tutoring, peer-assisted learning, writing centre activities and access to digital learning resources, aiming to enhance student engagement, comprehension and overall academic performance.

- **Academic Staff Development**: Acknowledging the essential role that academic staff play in the learning process, the Directorate places a strong emphasis on enhancing teaching methodologies. Faculty members have benefited from a series of workshops, seminars and training sessions that have introduced them to cutting-edge educational strategies and technologica tools, all aimed at nurturing a commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning and encouraging ongoing professional development.

- **Learning and Teaching with Technology**: In keeping with the Directorate's strategy to include technology within the learning experience, substantial progress has been made in incorporating ICTs into the curriculum. This encompassed the deployment of learning management systems, the creation of digital content and the utilisation of interactive platforms to create a vibrant, engaging learning atmosphere with the overall aim of leveraging technology, not only as a tool for delivering content, but also as a means of enhancing student engagement, collaboration and feedback.

1.16.1.1 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

FIRST-YEAR ORIENTATION

The University's First-Year Entry (FYE) orientation programme has been a crucial initiative for acclimatising new students to campus life. It is designed to lay a solid foundation for students, equipping them with knowledge about the available resources and support systems to facilitate a smooth transition to University life. The programme offers a comprehensive introduction to various services provided by the University's directorates and faculties. Among these services are psycho-social support, health services, adherence to University regulations and academic support services.

In a collaborative effort, the DLT in 2023 worked in conjunction with faculties and other directorates to tailor specific programmes aimed at addressing the distinct needs of the student body. These specialised programmes were designed to work in tandem with the broader Institutional orientation activities, providing a holistic induction experience for all incoming first-year students and ensuring the orientation's effectiveness and relevance.

The orientation programme conducted during the reporting year was a success, marking a significant milestone in the Institution's efforts to welcome and integrate new students into the University community. The orientation, which was held across all campuses, achieved a remarkable 75% attendance rate among FYE students as illustrated in Table 1.1. This attendance rate exceeds participation rates from previous years.

Table 1.1: Attendance of First-Year orientation across all campuses

	MTHATHA	BUTTERWORTH	BUFFALO CITY	KOMANI	GRAND TOTAL
DATE	15 February	23 February	23 February	21-23 February	
TOTAL	2 850	950	1 608	1 826	**7 234**

Reflections on the FYE orientation

The high level of engagement during the orientation highlights its importance as a critical first step in a student's academic journey, significantly influencing their persistence, retention, and overall success at the University.

Orientation dates and schedules varied across campuses due to their unique complexities. Nevertheless, as a unitary Institution, it was essential to ensure that all students received a consistent learning experience during the orientation process.

Impact of the FYE orientation

The orientation has significantly enhanced academic performance among students. By familiarising participants with academic resources, support services and effective study strategies, the programme has equipped students with the tools necessary for success in their studies. This enhanced preparation for University life has directly contributed to improved academic outcomes.

The orientation has also shown promise in boosting retention and graduation rates. Early exposure to campus resources and support systems has likely increased students' confidence in handling academic challenges. As students feel better prepared and more supported, they are more likely to persist in their studies, potentially leading to higher, overall graduation rates.

Furthermore, the orientation has had a substantial impact on students' psychosocial well-being. The programme has played a crucial role in reducing anxiety among new students by providing them with comprehensive information about University life. Therefore, in ensuring that students are aware of and can access various support services, the orientation has contributed to a more supportive and nurturing campus environment for first-year students.

PEER-ASSISTED LEARNING PROGRAMME

The Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) Programme continued to play a vital role in enhancing student academic success and retention, particularly in historically challenging courses. In 2023, the Institution appointed 270 students to various support roles, including peer-assisted learning leaders, writing centre assistants, academic advising buddies, residence mentors, library assistants, peer educators and student assistants for students living with disabilities. This diverse team of students provided comprehensive support to the student body.

However, it is crucial to highlight that the 2023 reporting period saw a significant reduction in peer-to-peer leaders funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training's University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG). This decrease was a direct result of reduced funding. Consequently, compared to the 700 students appointed in the 2022 academic year, the University could only appoint 270 students in 2023.

KEY FEATURES OF THE PAL PROGRAMME

- **Targeted Support**: The PAL Programme continued its targeted support approach. The PAL Programme was utilised to identify subjects with historically low pass rates through an annual analysis of exam results, thereby directing support where it was most needed.
- **Role of PAL Leaders**: The role of PAL leaders is to serve as exemplary models of academic success, demonstrating effective study strategies and approaches to learning. These PAL leaders remained crucial to the programme's success in 2023. Despite budget constraints that limited the number of appointed PAL leaders, these students continued to excel in their roles. They attended classes with new students and led regular PAL sessions, providing both academic and motivational support.
- **Learning How to Learn**: The emphasis on meta-cognitive skills remained a distinctive aspect of PAL sessions, teaching students not just subject content, but also how to engage with material effectively, manage their time and employ various study techniques. This holistic approach equipped students with the skills of autonomous learning, enabling them to navigate the demands of University studies.
- **Development of Good Study Habits**: Through regular interaction with PAL leaders students learned to cultivate productive study routines and strategies, fostering a culture of independent learning. This not only aided in the immediate understanding of course material but also contributed to the students' long-term academic and professional growth.

Impact of the PAL Programme

The PAL Programme has been instrumental in creating a supportive learning environment that encourages collaboration, peer learning and academic excellence. By bridging the gap between faculty instruction and student understanding, the programme has helped to demystify complex subjects, enhance student confidence and improve overall academic performance.

Furthermore, the programme has provided significant benefits to the PAL leaders themselves, who gained valuable experience in leadership, communication and teaching, thus further enriching their University experience and preparing them for future career opportunities.

The PAL Programme also contributed to the University's resource efficiency. By targeting high-risk courses and utilising peer leaders, the Institution has been able to provide additional academic support in a cost-effective manner, complementing traditional teaching methods.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

The Academic Advising programme at WSU played an important role in supporting students throughout their academic journey, addressing a broad spectrum of needs that extend beyond the classroom. The academic advisors continued to provide support to students through ongoing inductions for first years, career expos and individual monitoring. As soon as the 2023 academic year began, academic advising buddies were recruited and appointed across all WSU campuses.

Services offered by the Academic Advisors

The Academic Advising programme offered a range of services designed to support students in various aspects of their University life.

The programme maintained its focus on providing ongoing inductions for first-year students, ensuring they received necessary orientation to University life, academic expectations and available support resources.

Career expos remained a key feature of the services, offering students valuable insights into potential career paths, networking opportunities with professionals and a deeper understanding of how their academic pursuits relate to the broader job market.

The programme also emphasised individual monitoring, with academic advisors providing tailored support to meet the specific needs of each student. This personalised approach included academic performance monitoring, goal setting and customised advice to help students navigate academic challenges.

In the reporting year, the Academic Advising Programme successfully expanded its reach, engaging with students across the Komani, Buffalo City, Butterworth and Mthatha campuses.

Table 1.2: Academic Advising consultations across all campuses

Consultations	Komani	BCC	Butterworth	Mthatha	TOTAL
Individual & Group	192	230	198	979	1 599
School visits	-	-	-	4 451	4 451
GRAND TOTAL					**6 050**

The academic advisors also provided services to students living with disabilities who were facing academic challenges as per the Table below.

Table 1.3: Academic Advising for students living with disabilities

Campus	Academic Advising Activities	Attendees
Mthatha	- Concessions for all levels	15
Mthatha	- Examination assistance all level - Scribe workshop, - Institutional workshop all levels	94
GRAND TOTAL		**109**

In the 2023 June examination period, the academic advisors provided comprehensive support to students with disabilities, particularly on the Mthatha campus to ensure equal access and opportunity for all students during this critical assessment period.

The academic advisors assisted in the facilitation of concessions for students across all academic levels. A total of 15 students living with disabilities benefitted from these concessions, which were designed to accommodate various disability-related needs. Furthermore, 94 students received examination assistance, which included the provision of scribes, readers, special laptops and accessible venues. This assistance was available to students at all academic levels, ensuring that disability status did not hinder their ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills during examinations.

Following the examination period, a scribe workshop was conducted. This initiative served a dual purpose: to review the challenges encountered during the June examinations and to prepare for the December 2023 summative assessments. The workshop was part of a broader Institutional effort to continually improve support services for students with disabilities.

In total, these academic advising activities on the Mthatha campus reached 109 students with disabilities, reflecting a significant effort to ensure their full participation in the academic process.

Impact of the Academic Advising Programme

The Academic Advising has demonstrated a comprehensive and positive impact across various stakeholders within the University.

For students, the programme has been instrumental in facilitating a smoother transition into University life, particularly for first-year students through various activities such as inductions, expos and individual mentoring as already discussed.

The programme has also benefited academic advisors themselves, offering opportunities for professional development and deeper engagement with the student body. This has not only enhanced the quality of support provided but also contributed to a more dynamic and responsive advising system.

The programme has had an impact on students living with disabilities as well. By ensuring equitable access to support services, the programme has boosted the confidence and engagement of these students. This targeted approach has led to improved academic outcomes for students living with disabilities and contributed to a more positive and inclusive University experience overall.

At the Institutional level, the University has observed tangible benefits from the programme. Improved student retention and success rates have been observed, likely as a result of the comprehensive support system in place. Moreover, the programme has become a valuable source of data, enabling the University to make informed, data-driven decisions to continually enhance student support services.

WRITING CENTRE

The Writing Centre at WSU continued to serve as a crucial component of student support services, offering a wide range of resources and programmes designed to enhance students' writing skills across all disciplines. Through one-on-one consultations, workshops and collaborative initiatives with other University departments, the Centre provided tailored assistance to meet diverse student needs. Its services extended beyond mere proofreading, focusing on developing students' overall writing proficiency, research capabilities and academic literacy.

Recognising the importance of making students aware of the resources available to them, the Writing Centre employed innovative marketing strategies, such as roadshows, to promote their services. These efforts were aimed at demystifying the services offered by the Writing Centres and encouraging a broader segment of the student population to take advantage of the support available.

In response to these marketing efforts, there was a significant increase in student engagement across all University campuses in the reporting period of 2023.

Table 1.4: Writing Centre consultations across all WSU Campuses

Consultations	Komani	BCC	Butterworth	Mthatha	Totals
Individual	42	68	93	517	720
Group	120	154	47	2 895	3 216
Senior Students	65	11	164	265	505
GRAND TOTAL					**4 441**

Table 1.4 shows that the Writing Centre conducted a total of 4 441 consultations across all campuses, demonstrating a significant level of engagement with the student body. These consultations were categorised into three types; individual, group and senior student sessions. Group consultations emerged as the most prevalent form of engagement, accounting for 3 216 sessions across all campuses.

The Mthatha campus exhibited exceptionally high participation, particularly in group consultations. The senior student consultations were also significant, with 505 sessions across all campuses, indicating the Writing Centre's

relevance for advanced academic writing support.

Engagement levels varied significantly among campuses, with Mthatha showing the highest participation and Komani the lowest. This variation may be attributed to factors such as campus size, awareness of services, or specific academic programme requirements.

The data indicates widespread utilisation of the Writing Centre's services across WSU, with a clear emphasis on group sessions. This high level of engagement aligns with the increased student participation reported following enhanced marketing efforts for the Centre's services.

Capacity development and activities

In order to maintain the high standard of support provided to WSU students, the Writing Centre prioritised the ongoing professional development of its assistants. These assistants, typically senior students or postgraduates with a robust command of writing and specialized knowledge in their respective fields, underwent training. This training equipped them with the necessary skills to provide constructive guidance and feedback. It ensured that they were well-prepared to effectively cater to the varied writing needs of their fellow students.





Photo 1 (Left): Mthatha Writing Centre Student Assistants: Siphilisiwe Msindwana, Samkelo Khumalo and Aluncedo Zikhali during a Writing Centre Roadshow.

Photo 2 (Right): Students being assisted with assignments at the ZMK Writing Centre.

Impact on student success

The impact of the Writing Centres has been substantial and multifaceted, as evidenced by the high level of engagement and the diversity of services provided. The high number of consultations, particularly group sessions, proves that a significant portion of the student body has received support in improving their writing skills, translating to better academic performance across various disciplines.

The considerable number of senior student consultations indicates that the Writing Centre is successfully addressing the needs of students engaged in more complex academic writing tasks, such as research papers or theses. The total number of consultations across all campuses demonstrates that students are actively seeking out and utilising the Writing Centre's services, indicating increased engagement with academic support resources.

Despite variations in engagement levels, the Writing Centre has managed to extend its services across all WSU campuses, contributing to a more uniform standard of writing support throughout the University. The widespread use of the Writing Centre services likely contributes to improved assignment quality, better grades and, potentially, higher retention and graduation rates.

STUDENT ENROLMENT

Our 2023 enrolment is summarized in the table below:

OVERALL ENROLMENT

Gender	Academic Year 2022	2023
Male	13 167	12 219
Female	17 442	17 132
Grand Total	**30 609**	**29 351**

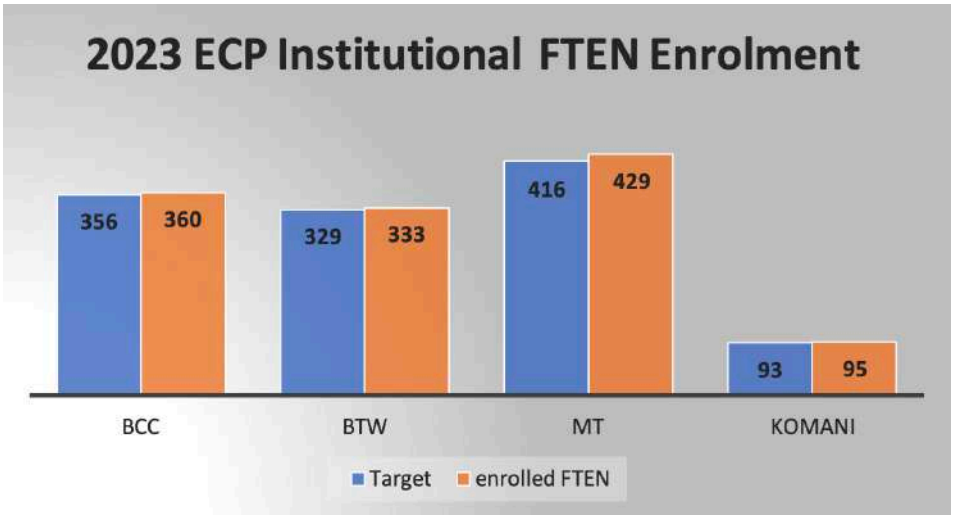
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Gender	Academic Year 2 022	2 023
Female	58	71
Male	39	119
Grand Total	**97**	**190**

EXTENDED CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

In 2023, WSU successfully met the targeted quota for FTEN enrolment in all Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP) as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: ECP Institutional FTEN Enrolment 2023



As part of the University's commitment to student success, the ECP continues to be implemented with various targeted initiatives to enhance learning outcomes and student engagement. One of the key components of this support structure is a specialised tutorship programme, known as the Foundation Academic and Career Enhancement Programme (FACES) that addresses the unique needs of students in foundation courses. This initiative begins with a comprehensive ECP Orientation, designed to introduce new students to the extended learning pathway and prepare them for academic success.

ECP Provision Orientation

- Masithethe Kaloku Drive

The Masithethe Kaloku Drive was held across all University campuses. This event, strategically scheduled immediately following the general orientation, provided a platform for students to share their initial University experiences and seek clarification on various aspects of campus life.

Table 1.5: Foundation Students attendance of Masithethe Kalokhu Drive across all WSU campuses

Campus	Number of Attendees
Buffalo City	301
Butterworth	361
Komani	131
Mthatha	168
TOTAL	**961**

The Table shows that the event attracted a total of 961 foundation students across all four WSU campuses, indicating a significant level of engagement with this initiative. Butterworth and Buffalo City campuses together accounted for about 69% of the total attendance, suggesting particularly strong engagement at these campuses, while the Mthatha and Komani campuses had lower attendance figures, due to student protest disruptions. Hence the ECP orientation continued in the second term for the campuses that did not finish due to student disruptions.

A significant number of students had expressed challenges in navigating the campus environment effectively. In response to this identified need, the University promptly organised a foundation provision navigation exercise. This targeted intervention aimed to enhance students' spatial awareness and familiarity with campus facilities, thereby improving their overall University experience.

Moreover, the event served as an opportunity to elucidate critical University policies and regulations. Students were inducted on rule G7, the University Code of Conduct, difference between mainstream and ECP as well as NSFAS and University rules and regulations. The induction adopted an activity- based approach where students engaged in debates on the University Code of Conduct, an open discussion about NSFAS and University rules and regulations.

The 'Masithethe Kaloku Drive' also played a crucial role in introducing students to the Extended Curriculum Programme (ECP). Through interactive discussions and information sessions, students gained comprehensive insights into the benefits and implications of the ECP, fostering a better understanding of this academic support structure.



Photo 3 (Left): Schedule of the ECP orientation per campus.
Photo 4 (Right): Student presentation on developed structures that respond to social needs

Overall, this multifaceted event proved to be an effective mechanism for enhancing student orientation, addressing navigational challenges, clarifying Institutional policies and promoting awareness of academic support

programmes.

FOUNDATION ACADEMIC AND CAREER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (FACES)

For this reporting period, the FACE programme maintained its core strategy of assigning tutors to all first-year foundation courses across the University's four campuses. The University successfully recruited 114 tutors across the four University campuses to provide comprehensive academic support to ECP students.

Reflection and self-evaluation by FACEs coordinators

Reflection sessions on the programme and its procurement procedures initially planned online-faced network issues, prompting a shift to a face-to-face meeting format. Self-evaluation by FACEs highlighted a growing interest in academia and satisfaction with the induction's content, despite logistical challenges and a low response rate for feedback.

Student evaluation of the FACEs Programme

Student evaluation of the FACEs Programme yielded 476 responses. This evaluation has provided valuable insights into the programme's effectiveness and impact. The positive response from students regarding improved understanding and clarification of course material emphasises the programme's importance in supporting academic success. Moving forward, the focus will be on enhancing attendance, implementing targeted interventions and continuing to refine the programme based on student feedback.

ECP'S AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS

On May 25, 2023, the ECP office organised an Institutional Africa Day celebration at the Butterworth campus of the University. This event served as a significant platform for student engagement, aligning with the University's vision of becoming an "impactful, technology-infused *African University*."

The celebration provided a unique opportunity for students to voice their perspectives on the characteristics of an African University, contributing to their orientation and understanding of WSU's evolving identity. Approximately 632 students participated in the event, engaging with presentations and activities that showcased ten diverse African cultures, thereby enhancing their cultural awareness and appreciation.

The Africa Day celebration was a collaborative effort, involving key stakeholders such as the Student Development and Support Services (SDSS) at the Butterworth campus, the WSU choir, drama club, and debate society. Both the choir and drama club delivered performances, enriching the event with artistic and cultural expressions.

In an effort to foster student involvement in extracurricular activities, first-year students were encouraged to register and join the choir and drama clubs. This initiative aimed to promote holistic student development and enhance campus life engagement.



Photo 5: Student presentations on ECP Celebrating Africa Day. (Source: Taken by Extended Curricula Programme team.)

OTHER WSU STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Walter Sisulu University is committed to providing a holistic and enriching student experience that extends beyond the traditional academic sphere. While the University has established robust programmes such as the FYE, PAL, Academic Advising, ECP and the Writing Centre to support academic success, WSU recognises the importance of extracurricular activities in fostering personal growth, leadership skills and a sense of community among students. To this end, the University implemented a diverse array of impactful student activities and

initiatives during this reporting period. These additional programmes complemented the academic support structures, contributing to a well-rounded University experience that prepared students not only for academic achievement but also for personal development and future career success. The following section of the report outlines these initiatives and their significant contributions to student life at WSU during the reporting year.

Siyaphumelela Network Initiatives

In 2023, the Student Success Unit made significant strides in advancing student success initiatives. A key highlight was the hosting of University Siyaphumelela Coach, Prof. Bala Pillay, for a workshop that facilitated crucial discussions on student success strategies. This event set the stage for WSU's participation in the subsequent Siyaphumelela Conference held in Johannesburg, where Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) for Teaching and Learning engaged in sharing best practices for improving throughput, success and access in higher education.

A notable outcome of these engagements was the establishment of the Student Success Committee (SSC), a new subcommittee of the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC). This development represents a strategic move to Institutionalise student success efforts at WSU. The University demonstrated its commitment to this initiative by ensuring that the Terms of Reference for the SSC were drafted, reviewed and ultimately approved by the Senate in its final session of 2023

Brand Ambassador's Programmes

The Brand Ambassadors Programme, launched in 2021 by the Vice Chancellor's office, aims to strengthen the WSU brand among students. In 2023, ten ambassadors were appointed, distributed across the four campuses:

Table 1.6: Number of Brand Ambassadors appointed across all WSU campuses

Appointed	Komani	BCC	Butterworth	Mthatha	Totals
Ambassadors	2	3	2	3	10

These ambassadors focus on enhancing the University's brand reputation by producing promotional content, facilitating internal student communication, marketing student success initiatives, managing conflicts and leading discussions on important issues like gender-based violence, human rights and student entrepreneurship. The following sections detail the activities led by these ambassadors.

Educational Seminar (Mthatha Campus)

The Brand Ambassadors undertook a significant initiative in 2023 to foster dialogue and enhance student engagement in academic affairs. The Ambassadors organised a strategic educational seminar at the Mthatha campus that brought together class representatives and first-year students to address critical issues in learning and teaching at WSU.

The seminar proved highly popular, attracting more participants than initially anticipated, which highlighted the students' keen interest in contributing to the University's academic discourse. During the session, Brand Ambassadors facilitated robust and productive discussions that yielded three key insights:

- Participants identified a pressing need for a more comprehensive induction process for class representatives, aimed at better preparing them for their roles.
- The discussions underscored the importance of maintaining ongoing, open dialogues on teaching and learning matters between students and faculty.
- Students recognised the critical need for continuous leadership development programmes, particularly for those involved in University political structures.

This initiative by the WSU Brand Ambassadors not only provided a platform for meaningful student engagement but also generated valuable feedback for the University administration.

Human Rights Dialogue (Butterworth Campus)

The brand ambassadors at the Butterworth campus organised a noteworthy event, a 'Human Rights Dialogue,' which involved students in an in-depth analysis of South Africa's historical trajectory since its independence. The focus was on the sacrifices made to surmount the challenges of apartheid and colonialism.

Moreover, the event offered students an opportunity to reflect on the post-independence challenges they face, including gender-based violence, youth unemployment and issues related to student funding.

The dialogue witnessed substantial student involvement, indicating their eagerness to comprehend the nation's complex history and current challenges. The Brand Ambassadors led discussions throughout the event that resulted in:

- An increased awareness of history among the participants, especially about the struggles against apartheid and colonialism.
- The stimulation of critical thinking about the development of human rights in South Africa post-independence and crucial societal issues.
- The emphasis on the role of historical knowledge in forming informed and conscientious citizens.

Men and Women's Indaba (Komani Campus)

Addressing gender-based violence, discrimination and other social issues, the Men and Women's Indaba at Komani Campus provided a safe space for open discussions on these critical topics. The event's success, marked by high attendance and engaging discussions led by Dr Tebelele and Mr. Kekana, reflects WSU's commitment to fostering a campus environment that is aware, inclusive and responsive to the social challenges facing its community.

All the activities undertaken by the Student Ambassadors in various campuses collectively contributed to a holistic educational environment at WSU in 2023.

To capture the full extent of such student engagement and success, it is essential to track the participation and progress of students in both academic and extracurricular activities. This tracking not only reflects the immediate impact of the University's comprehensive programmes but also provides valuable data to enhance future student experiences. The forthcoming section focuses on the 2023 methodologies and findings of the Student Tracking Unit at WSU, highlighting the integral role it plays in the continuous improvement of student life and learning outcomes.

STUDENT TRACKING

BEGINNING UNIVERSITY SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (BUSSE)

In collaboration with the University of the Free State (UFS), The Student Tracking Unit (STU) at WSU has embarked on a strategic initiative to enhance the quality of student experience and success through the implementation of various surveys. One key survey in this initiative is the Beginning University Survey of Student Engagement (BUSSE), which is crucial for assessing the pre-University experiences and expectations of first-year students as they transition into their University studies.

Objectives of BUSSE:

- Benchmarking and Comparison: BUSSE allows for the national administration of surveys, enabling WSU to benchmark and compare its results with other universities. This comparative analysis is vital for identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.
- Gathering Comprehensive Biographical Data: Unlike the information typically collected during admission and registration, BUSSE provides insights into aspects such as students' generational status, offering a deeper understanding of the student body's composition.
- Aligning University Efforts with Student Expectations: The data collected from BUSSE enables WSU to tailor its support and engagement strategies more effectively to meet student expectations, enhancing their academic and social integration.
- Data-Driven Decision-Making: By analysing BUSSE data, WSU can assess the effectiveness of its engagement efforts, conduct data-driven analyses and guide the Institution in implementing goal-directed changes to improve student success.
- Facilitating Goal-Directed Change Management: The insights gained from BUSSE are instrumental for faculties in understanding their students' backgrounds and expectations, enabling them to implement measures that support student success.

Implementation and Results:

The first administration of BUSSE at WSU took place in 2021, with subsequent discussions and workshops held in 2022 to review the results and inform necessary changes in practice. In 2023, WSU conducted the survey again in the first semester, *albeit* with a delayed start that impacted upon the development and execution of a comprehensive marketing strategy to encourage participation. To incentivise student participation, prizes such as airtime vouchers were offered, promoted through Facebook and bulk SMSs.

Figure 7: Number of students who participated in the 2023 BUSSE Survey

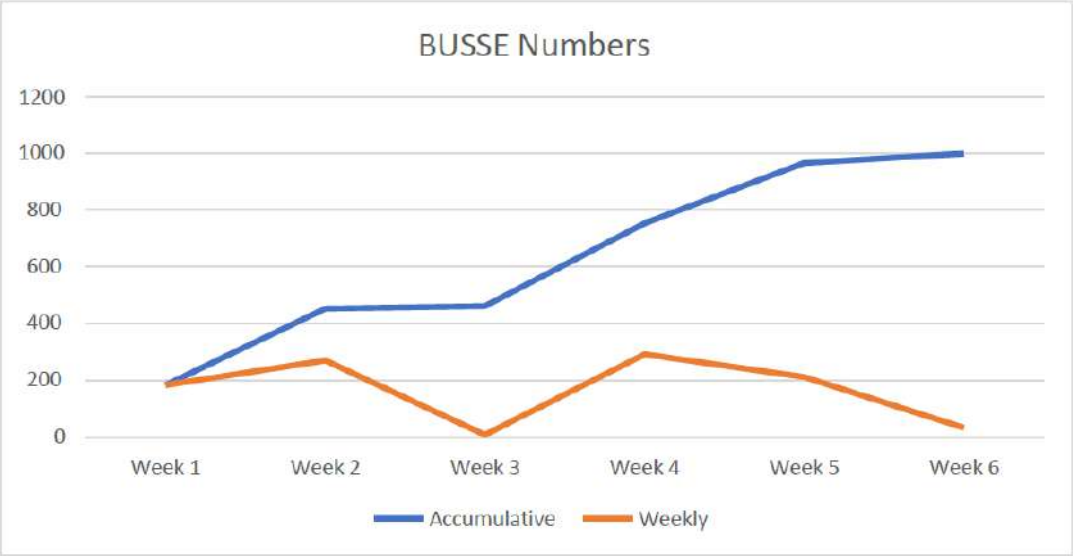


Figure 7 shows that the cumulative number of participants increased steadily over the six weeks, reaching just over 1000 by the end of the period. Weekly participation of students shows some fluctuations, with a peak in Week 3 and a general decline towards Week 6. The overall weekly data indicates a strong, initial interest which tapers off in the subsequent weeks, while the overall trend of cumulative participation reflects a growing total engagement over time. The WSU dashboard link for the results is available on request.

Upon the release of the 2023 BUSSE Survey response report, the UFS organised a workshop to present and discuss the survey results. Unlike previous years, when workshops were arranged for individual participating universities, this year Walter Sisulu University (WSU) was grouped with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Durban University of Technology (DUT) and North-West University (NWU). This change facilitated an inter-Institutional sharing of practices and ideas, enriching the discourse on student engagement and success. Conducted online in the second semester, this workshop provided a platform for collaborative learning and exchange, underscoring the importance of collective efforts in addressing common challenges in higher education.

FTEN STUDENTS' PROFILING

The Student Tracking Unit (STU) initiated the First Time Entering (FTEN) student profiling in 2021 when BUSSE was also introduced, initially utilising biographical and enrollment data from the Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS) system, complemented by information from the Beginning University Survey of Student Engagement (BUSSE) and financial data pertaining to student funding. In the 2022 academic year, the scope of FTEN profiling was expanded to encompass residence allocation for new students and their expectations.

In preparation for the 2023 report, the STU developed a structured methodological approach, identified relevant data sources and delegated responsibilities for data acquisition and analysis. The data collection and analytical processes were conducted between two workshop sessions. These workshops, convened at the Mthatha campus, served to deliberate on various aspects of the 2023 student profiling report and to ensure a more comprehensive scope of FTEN profiling by comparing report results from the 2021 to 2023 academic years and incorporating additional variables. During the concluding session in November 2023, the team conducted a review of the narratives and refined the report's content. The publication of the report is scheduled for early 2024.

Building on the insights gained from BUSSE, the University has expanded its proactive approach to student success. While BUSSE provides valuable data on incoming students' expectations and backgrounds, the University also recognised the need for ongoing monitoring of students' academic performance throughout the academic year. Hence the development and implementation of an Early Warning System, designed to identify students and modules at risk.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (EWS)

In 2023, the University took significant steps towards improving student success through the development of an early warning system. The Student Success Unit spearheaded this initiative, designing a system to alert Executive Deans (EDs), Heads of Department (HODs) and lecturers about students and modules at risk.

The system's effectiveness hinges on timely mark submissions into the ITS system. To address potential data gaps,

departments were requested to submit their first assessment dates, though response was limited to one faculty and one department. Despite the best-laid plans and intentions, the process of tracking and intervening faced disruptions due to the re-mapping of departments to new faculties, a byproduct of the R&C project and this project may have contributed to the limited participation of some faculties and departments within the University.

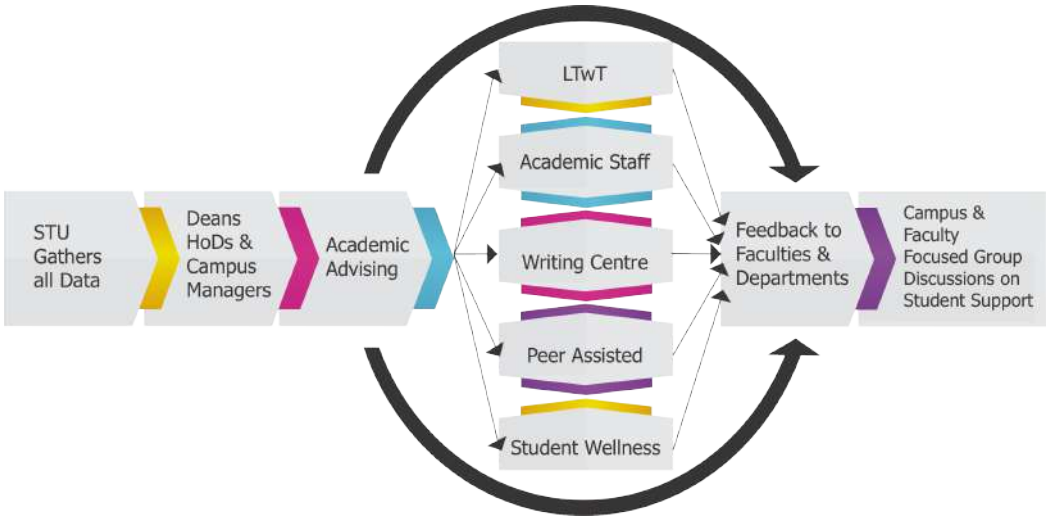
Throughout the year, the STU distributed at-risk student reports to EDs and HODs, providing valuable data-driven insights. These reports were based on the students' performance in the initial assessments of the year. These assessments, encompassing tests, assignments, or projects, conducted in the first quarter, served as a primary indicator of students who might be facing challenges in their academic journey. Students who scored 40% and below were flagged as at risk, a criterion set to trigger early intervention measures. Table 1.7 summarises the number of students at risk identified in 2023 across the University campuses.

Table 1.7: Students at risk across all WSU campuses

Campus	Department	Students
MTHATHA CAMPUS		
Mthatha	Accounting Science	318
Mthatha	Biological & Environ. Sciences	25
Mthatha	Economic and Business Sciences	8
Mthatha	Humanities & Creative Arts Edu	65
Mthatha	Legal Studies	35
BUTTERWORTH CAMPUS		
Butterworth	Built Environment	44
Butterworth	Management	21
Butterworth	Tourism and Hospitality Mgt	31
KOMANI CAMPUS		
Komani	Management Studies	149
Komani	Economic and Finance	115
Komani	Curriculum Studies	59
BUFFALO CITY CAMPUS		
Buffalo City	Accounting and Finance	27
Buffalo City	Applied Info & Math Sciences	27
Buffalo City	Applied Sciences	10
Buffalo City	Built Environment	4
Total		**938**

Complementing the Early Warning System is the information and report flow utilised from the data collection stage to the interventions and feedback stages. This structured pathway has been important for addressing the needs of at-risk students identified through the EWS. The University's current referral process flow is shown in the figure below:

Figure 8: Referral Process Flow



Furthermore, to build capacity and understanding, the unit organised a workshop on early warning systems and dashboards, bringing together faculty members, academic advisers, student development personnel and finance staff. This assisted in identifying key metrics for inclusion in the tracking system. Building on this momentum, the STU conducted a series of additional workshops and training sessions throughout the year, focusing on PowerHeda for monitoring and evaluation purposes and PowerBI used for managing student data, as briefly reported on below.

TRAINING/WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED BY STUDENT TRACKING UNIT

STU Planning Workshop

The STU, through the office of the Senior Director, held a strategic planning workshop during the year. The aim was to develop a three-year strategic plan that aligns STU activities with the WSU Vision 2030. This was facilitated by an external management consultancy firm.

Through deliberations, breakaway sessions and presentations, inputs were made that the consultants can then use to help draft the strategic plan. A draft strategic plan was produced.

PowerHeda Training

The PowerHeda platform is a useful tool that interfaces with ITS, granting partial access to ITS data. This platform is also utilised by STU for tracking and monitoring purposes. Proficiency in using PowerHeda for data extraction is essential for STU staff. To address this need, Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) facilitated a virtual training session on 7 April 2023, to help STU members develop skills in accessing and extracting data from PowerHeda. However, several challenges and concerns arose during the training:

- The need for regular training was identified.
- Creation of new data sets relevant to STU was critical.
- The need for development of STU dashboards was identified.

Power BI Training

Training sessions were also organised in-house for academic staff of the Komani campus, specifically for those involved with student data, including STU staff and interns, totalling eight participants. The purpose was to familiariSe them with the platform used for managing student data. This training took place over four days in the first semester of the 2023 academic year at the Health Resource Centre.

In the second semester of 2023, SDSS staff received training on Power BI at the Phyllis Ntantala Collaborative Library. This session was attended by 13 participants; nine from SDSS, along with STU staff and a facilitator.

EWS PILOT IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE PLANS

As of 2024, the Accounting and IT departments have been selected for piloting the EWS. Feedback from this pilot will be crucial for refining the system before a broader roll-out. Following the pilot, training sessions will be conducted for faculties and support units, ensuring widespread understanding and effective use of the EWS.

EWS IMPACT

Timely interventions are a key benefit, as the system will enable faculty and support staff to address student issues promptly, potentially preventing academic failures or dropouts. This will lead to more targeted support, with the system pinpointing specific areas where students are struggling.

Resource optimisation will be another crucial outcome. By highlighting modules with high rates of at-risk students, the University can allocate resources more effectively to areas of greatest need. This data-driven approach will extend to decision-making, providing valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and curriculum adjustments at both departmental and Institutional levels.

Improved retention rates are also a likely result of the early interventions facilitated by the EWS. As students receive timely support, they are more likely to improve their academic performance, potentially leading to higher graduation rates.

The system will also enhance faculty awareness of student performance trends, enabling more proactive teaching and support strategies.

Another key component of the EWS project is the establishment of a data warehouse, serving as a centralised repository for all student tracking and monitoring data. This ‘single point of truth’ will integrate various data sources within the University and necessitate the digitisation of manual records and data cleansing.

The Early Warning System represents a strategic investment in data-driven decision-making and proactive student support at WSU. Through targeted alerts, comprehensive data integration and collaborative stakeholder engagement, the EWS is poised to make a significant impact on enhancing student retention and success. This initiative underscores WSU's commitment to leveraging technology and innovation in fostering an environment conducive to academic achievement.

1.16.1.2 ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT

This section of the report presents a comprehensive overview of the academic staff development activities conducted at WSU from January to December 2023. It outlines the initiatives, partnerships and strategic alignments undertaken to enhance the pedagogical capabilities of academic staff across all faculties and disciplines.

The Academic Staff Development (ASD) unit at WSU has implemented a multifaceted approach to capacity building and support for academics. This approach encompasses internal initiatives such as the Student Module Guide (SMG) and Assessment workshops, as well as the establishment of partnerships with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) at local, regional and international levels.

In alignment with the newly implemented WSU Academic Strategy, the ASD unit has formulated its own strategic plan and Annual Operational Plan (APP), ensuring coherence with the broader Institutional APP and strategies. Furthermore, the unit has undertaken a revision of three Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) that constitute the Professional Excellence Programme (PEP):

- Teaching and Learning in Higher Education,

- Curriculum Development and Design in Higher Education, and

- Assessment of Students in Higher Education.

These revised SLPs are scheduled for submission to the SLP Directorate in January 2024, marking a significant step towards enhancing the professional development offerings at WSU.

ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES, WORKSHOPS AND OUTCOMES

Student Module Guide (SMG) Workshops per Campus

SMG workshops were conducted across various campuses to educate academics on the preparation and importance of SMGs, which serve as a roadmap for students on the curriculum and module offerings. The table below shows the number of academics who attended the SMG workshops as per faculty requests.

Table 1.8: SMG workshop attendance per gender, campus and seniority

CAMPUS	Gender		Seniority
	Females	**Males**	
BCC	69	48	3 HoDs, 2 Senior lecturers,
Butterworth	38	30	2 HoDs, 2 Senior lecturers
Komani	38	20	3 HoDs, 1 Senior Lecturer,
Mthatha	170	107	4 HoDs, 3 Senior lecturers
Total	**315**	**165**	

Table 1.8 presents attendance data for SMG workshops conducted across different campuses of the Institution. In terms of campus participation, the Mthatha campus had the highest attendance with 277 participants (170 females and 107 males). Regarding gender distribution, across all campuses, female attendance was higher than male attendance. The total female attendance was 315, while male attendance was 165. Each campus had representation from senior academic staff. In total, there were 12 Heads of Departments (HoDs) and 8 Senior Lecturers across all campuses.

It's worth noting that despite some initial reluctance from academics regarding certain aspects of SMGs, the workshops were generally appreciated for clarifying the concept of constructive alignment in teaching and assessment methods.

Programme Reviews Departmental Workshops

Programme reviews serve as a critical mechanism for maintaining Quality Management standards within the Institution. The Academic Development Unit played an integral role in this process, particularly in the conceptualisation and structuring of the WSU 101 module. Following extensive deliberation and refinement, the module forms for WSU 101 were finalised and received formal Senate approval.

In addition to module development, the unit provided substantial support to departments engaged in submissions to professional bodies, ensuring adherence to prescribed criteria. This support was crucial in maintaining the Institution's academic integrity and professional standing.

To facilitate these processes, a series of departmental workshops were conducted as part of the comprehensive programme review initiative. The following table delineates the attendance data for these workshops, offering insights into the breadth and depth of engagement across the Institution:

Table 1.9: Attendance Data for Programme Review Departmental Workshops

CAMPUS	No OF ATTENDEES
BCC	64
BUTTERWORTH	14
KOMANI	40
MTHATHA	38
GRAND TOTAL	**156**

In terms of the table data, it shows a total of 156 attendees participated in the departmental workshops across various campuses. The BCC campus had the highest attendance with 64 participants, while the Butterworth campus had 14 workshop attendees. The variation in attendance numbers reflect differences in campus sizes, the number of departments involved in programme reviews, and/or varying levels of engagement with the review process across campuses.

Rubric Development Workshop

A pilot, interdisciplinary workshop was conducted within the Directorate of Learning and Teaching at the BCC campus, marking a significant collaborative effort between Academic Staff Development, Learning and Teaching with Technology and the Writing Centre. This initiative aimed to integrate various aspects of pedagogical support and technological implementation in higher education.

The workshop was attended by 15 participants with a primary focus of introducing Rubrics as multifaceted instruments for both learning and assessment. The Academic Development team elucidated the dual functionality of rubrics in enhancing teaching methodologies and facilitating student learning outcomes. Concurrently, the Instructional Designer demonstrated the practical application of these concepts by showcasing the rubric creation process within the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS).

Furthermore, the Writing Centre Coordinator articulated the centre's role in supporting student academic writing and emphasised how the implementation of rubrics could potentially streamline and enhance their assistance efforts. This multifaceted approach highlighted the potential for synergy between different support units within the Institution.

As a pilot initiative, this workshop served as a proof of concept for interdepartmental collaboration within the Directorate. The success of this inaugural session has prompted plans for refinement and expansion of the workshop's scope, with the intention of involving additional departments in future iterations.

Curriculum Transformation Workshop

The agenda of curriculum transformation was collaboratively coordinated by the Directorate of Transformation and Languages in conjunction with the Directorate of Learning and Teaching. This initiative, spearheaded by the Director of the Transformation Directorate, encompassed a comprehensive approach to curriculum reform across the Institution.

A key aspect of this transformation process involved empowering faculties to develop their own bespoke transformation plans. This faculty-specific approach allowed for tailored strategies that address the unique needs and contexts of each academic discipline.

One significant component of the transformation agenda is the translation of key terms and glossaries into isiXhosa for selected modules. This effort aims to enhance linguistic inclusivity and accessibility in the curriculum. To ensure accuracy and relevance, the initiative utilised the expertise of external translators specialising in the respective academic disciplines.

To support and facilitate these transformation efforts, a series of workshops were organised and conducted across all campuses of the Institution. These workshops served as platforms for knowledge dissemination, collaborative planning and capacity building among faculty members and relevant stakeholders. The table below provides an overview of the attendance at workshops conducted as part of this curriculum transformation initiative.

Table 1.10: Curriculum Transformation workshops attendance

CAMPUS	No OF ATTENDEES
BCC	14
BUTTERWORTH	8
KOMANI	65
MTHATHA	37
GRAND TOTAL	**124**

A total of 124 staff members attended the organised curriculum transformation workshops across all four campuses, with the Komani campus having the highess attendance with 65 participants.

New Staff Induction

Annual induction sessions for new academic staff were conducted to introduce the new staff to WSU's culture, philosophy and academic structure. The sessions, featuring welcomes from senior management and overviews from various managers of the various University directorates, emphasised the resources and support available to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Table 1.11: New Staff Induction Attendance

CAMPUS	No OF ATTENDEES
BCC	15
BUTTERWORTH	24
KOMANI	7
MTHATHA	25
GRAND TOTAL	**71**

SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (SOTL)

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiatives represent the Institution's highest level of commitment to teaching excellence. While previous sections of this report outlined foundational workshops, training sessions, and capacity-building efforts, this segment focuses on advanced programmes that elevate WSU's academic staff to become active contributors to pedagogical research and innovation.

The SoTL programme has offered a platform for staff members to transcend basic skill acquisition, enabling them to engage in rigorous research, refine advanced teaching methodologies and contribute significantly to the broader discourse on higher education pedagogy. This part of the report thus outlines the achievements of Short Learning Programme cohorts, WSU's involvement in national projects and the growing body of academic publications and conference presentations produced by the University's staff.

Short Learning Programme Cohort 2022/2023

In 2023, the University continued its commitment to enhancing pedagogical excellence through its Short Learning Programme (SLP) focused on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. This initiative aligns with the Institution's

core philosophy of continuous improvement in academic practices.

The 2021/2022 SoTL SLP cohort formally concluded their sessions on 22 February 2023. Following this, participants entered a mentorship phase aimed at manuscript preparation, outcomes of which included:

- Two participants submitting manuscripts to DHET-accredited journals, pending publication.
- Three participants initiating the final stages of manuscript preparation, with their work taken through proofreading and editing.
- Several cohort members presented papers at the WSU 2023 Multi-Inter-Transdisciplinary Conference (MITC), demonstrating the practical application of their learning.

Building on this success, the 2022/2023 SoTL SLP cohort commenced on March 17, 2023. This cohort comprises twenty (20) academic staff members and two (2) academic support personnel, reflecting a diverse representation across the University's departments. The composition of this cohort is detailed in Table 1.12 below:

Table 1.12: SoTL Short Learning Programme: cohort 2022/2023

	Title	Initial(s)	Gender	Faculty	Highest Qual
1	Ms	N	F	FEDS	Masters
2	Ms	YM	F	FEDS	Masters
3	Mr	AB	M	FHSSL	Masters
4	Ms	SD	F	FHSSL	BSc Hons
5	Dr	MC	M	FNS	PhD
6	Ms	NC	F	DLT	Masters
7	Ms	ZM	F	FCA	Masters
8	Ms	JM	F	FED	Masters
9	Mr	MM	M	FET	Masters
10	Dr.	LA	F	FET	PhD
11	Dr	GC	F	FMS	PhD
12	Ms	NM	F	FED	Masters
13	Mr	MQ	M	FESD	Hons
14	Mr	ST	M	FSET	Masters
15	Mr	AS	M	FSET	
16	Mr	XN	M	FBS	Masters
17	Ms	KN	F	FBS	Masters
18	Ms	NM	F	FMS	BEd. Hons
19	Dr	MK	M	FHS	PhD
20	Mr	LM	M	FHS	
21	Dr	SM	M	DLT	PhD
22	Dr	SM	M	DLT	D Ed.

The 2022/2023 cohort started in March 2023 hence no publications are recorded for this reporting period. The progamme continued with its implementation with four (4) plenary meetings organised between 17 March and 14 October 2023 with an average of 18 in attendance.

Teaching Advancement at University (TAU) Project

The University has actively participated in the Teaching Advancement at Universities (TAU) 4 project, nominating two academics in 2022 who completed the programme in July 2023. Details of the two fellows are outlined in Table 1.13

Table 1.13: TAU 4 Fellowship Programme 2022/2023 Participants

Initials	Section	Project status	Project Coverage	No of Team Members	Completion time
Dr TT (Male)	FEDS	Ongoing (data collection) – Phase 3	All four WSU Campuses	12	June 2023

Dr BA (Male)	DLT	Implementation of Phase 2 (Implementing the Enacted curriculum)	Pilot stage in Butterworth with identified at-risk students in level 2	6 (2 per Faculty)	June 2023

These participants effectively coordinated an Institutional webinar to present their respective projects to the WSU community. The project, titled "Dynamics of Multifaceted Socio-Community Challenges Impacting on Student Learning," sparked extensive and insightful discussions, attracting a total of 66 attendees.

Publications and Conferences

The SoTL directorate has made significant contributions to academic discourse, publishing 10 SoTL articles in DHET accredited journals. Representatives from the SoTL unit presented papers at the WSU MIT conference (19 April – 21 April 2023) and played a pivotal role in the planning committee of the Multi-Intra- Transdisciplinary (MIT) conference. Furthermore, the unit showcased its research at the HELTASA conference (hosted by NWU) and the SoTL for the South conference (hosted by UFS).

These activities not only highlight the directorate's commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning but also positions WSU as a key contributor to academic research and discourse in this field.

IMPACT OF ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

The ASD interventions have significantly contributed to the professional development of WSU lecturers, enhancing their teaching methodologies, research productivity and alignment with educational outcomes. The focus on developing SMGs and storing them in a central repository ensures continuity and supports the onboarding of new faculty members. The SoTL programme has encouraged lecturers to engage in research on teaching and learning, contributing to the broader academic discourse, as evidenced by the publications and conference presentations emerging from the SoTL cohorts. Furthermore, these initiatives align academic programmes with WSU's vision and mission for 2030, ultimately benefiting students through clearer guidance and enhanced teaching quality.

1.16.1.3 LEARNING AND TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING INITIATIVES AND DIGITAL COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

In the reporting period of 2023, WSU made significant strides in advancing its technology-enhanced learning environment and fostering digital competencies among students and staff. These initiatives reflect the Institution's commitment to embracing modern educational technologies and preparing its community for the digital age in line with the University's vision of being an impactful, technology-infused African University.

The following sections briefly reports on a comprehensive array of activities undertaken throughout the year, ranging from the enhancement of learning management system usage to the implementation of specialised digital literacy programmes.

WiSeUp Usage

There has been a notable improvement in the number of students accessing and using the WiSeUp learning management system. Table 1.14 illustrates this usage data, showing a marked increase in active WiSeUp modules across all campuses throughout the academic year.

Table 1.14: WiseUp usage across all campuses

CAMPUS	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3	TERM 4
BCC	213	290	353	367
BUTTERWORTH	152	222	302	310
KOMANI	160	190	281	312
MTHATHA	295	352	558	581
GRAND TOTAL	**820**	**1 054**	**1 494**	**1 570**

The table indicates that there are modules that were previously not taught online and which are now active

with significant increases on all campuses from Term 2 and 3. Komani and Mthatha campus making the highest contributions of 31 and 21 modules, respectively in Term 4.

Students/FTENs across campuses were also trained on WiSeUp. This training included the WiSeUp system, setting up the mobile application, uploading assignments, completing assessments, and using Turnitin and Respondus LockDown Browser. Table 1.15 shows first year student training sessions that took place across WSU campuses

Table 1.15: FTENS trained across all campuses

CAMPUS	No OF FTENS TRAINED	CONTINUING STUDENTS	No OF WORKSHOPS
BCC	779	9	9
BUTTERWORTH	327	215	12
KOMANI	459	102	6
MTHATHA	820	250	15
GRAND TOTAL	**2 385**	**576**	**42**

The training data across WSU campuses reveals significant insights into the University's efforts to enhance digital literacy through the WiSeUp platform. The Mthatha campus leads in both the number of first-year students (FTENs) and continuing students trained, as well as the number of workshops conducted, indicating a robust training programme. In contrast, the Butterworth campus, despite having fewer FTENs trained, focused significantly on ongoing student support, training 215 continuing students. The BCC campus trained a substantial number of FTENs (779) but showed minimal engagement with continuing students. The Komani campus balanced its efforts, training 459 FTENs and 102 continuing students, although it conducted the fewest workshops.

FYE Digital Literacy Skills Programme 2023

Continuing the University's commitment to enhancing student support and engagement, the FYE programme included an Introduction to Digital Literacy course for all FTENs during the first term of 2023. This initiative, conducted in collaboration with the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA), is part of the broader effort to equip students with essential digital skills. The course, delivered entirely online and self-paced, culminated in a Digital Literacy Certificate endorsed by both WSU and NEMISA. The programme was implemented in two distinct phases:

Phase 1: Students were introduced to digital literacies through a series of presentations and activities, followed by a survey to assess their initial skills. The survey revealed that over 60% of participating FTENs rated themselves as having limited knowledge of digital literacies. Specifically:

Table 1.16: Self-Ratings of FTENs on Their Digital Literacy Knowledge

Not Knowledgeable	Slightly Knowledgeable	Moderately Knowledgeable	Very Knowledgeable	Extremely Knowledgeable
1 350	1 645	1 168	235	65

Phase 2: Following the survey, students were registered on the NEMISA website and guided through the digital literacy programme. They received ongoing monitoring and support to ensure they could complete the programme. Despite these efforts, a significant challenge was observed in the completion rates, as detailed in Table 1.17.

Table 1.17: Student performance per campus

FYE			Continuing Students	
Digital Literacies Skills Programmes	**Number Reached**	**Completions**	**Completions in Data Science/Data Science Tools (Python/R)**	**Digital Weeks**
CAMPUS				
Mthatha	1 566	300	-	595
Butterworth	1 205	309	42	518
BCC	802	25	70	35
Komani	878	161	-	394
Total	**4 451**	**795**	**112**	**1 542**

The table shows that digital literacy programmes reached a substantial number of students across all campuses, with varying levels of completion. Mthatha and Butterworth campuses demonstrated the highest engagement among first-year students. Despite high engagement, completion rates for the digital literacy programmes were lower, particularly at the BCC campus.

APPOINTMENT AND TRAINING OF ELEARNING ASSISTANTS

The Learning and Teaching with Technology unit engages in projects that seek to expose and support lecturers and students in effective use of technology for enhanced student learning experience. The directorate employs services of student assistants to assist among other things with: (1) managing eLearning centres, IT Hubs and Laboratories and keeping them open; (2) assisting and supporting students in these centres; (3) assisting and providing support for Educational Technologists during workshops and training sessions, (4) assisting in monitoring usage; minimising vandalism and maintaining discipline in eLearning centres, IT Hubs and Laboratories; (5) providing individualised support to WSU students in relation to digital literacies and other related queries.

The categories of students appointed include postgraduate students to provide support across various activities, including orientation, WiSeUp Wednesdays, digital weeks and examinations. A summary of the appointed eLearning assistants is provided in Table 1.18.

Table 1.18: Approved eLearning Assistants per campus:

Campus	Number of eLearning Assistants
Mthatha	24
Butterworth	15
BCC	15
Komani	12
Total	**66**

ACADEMIC STAFF ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS UNDERTAKEN

Institutional engagement on generative artificial intelligence and its impact

The discussion was initiated due to concerns about how Artificial Intelligence (AI) will affect teaching, learning, research and community engagement. This conversation aimed to begin the process of creating a guiding document for WSU. To facilitate this discussion, an external speaker was invited: Prof. Stumke from Northwest University (Guest Speaker). Additionally, three internal speakers contributed: Ms K. Ngodwana – Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Business Sciences; Mr T. Rabotapi – Instructional Designer and Mr L. Mdanyana – Library Information Services. The topics covered included the impact of AI on teaching and learning, assessment and research. The event was well-attended, with more than 190 academic staff participating.

Departmental engagement - development of an online course on WiSeUp

The Department of Tourism and Hospitality (Butterworth) held a face-to-face session to develop an online course on WiSeUp and course structure for the Advanced Diploma in Tourism (new programme). These sessions were held for all levels of the Tourism and Hospitality department, as well as other departments at the Butterworth campus.

Developing Open Educational Resources (OERs)

A workshop was conducted for the Department of Tourism and Hospitality and Department of Management and Human Resources Management on Open Education Resources and Interactive tools for teaching and learning. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the E-Access Manager from the Library and Information Services directorate. A total of 22 Academic staff members were trained as shown in the table below.

Table 1.19: Details of attendance of the OERs workshop

Faculty	Department	Date	No of Attendees
FMS	Tourism and Hospitality	19 April 2023	11
	Management and HRM	20 April 2023	11
Total			**22**

This total number of attendees is inclusive of two (2) HoDs, two (2) senior lecturers and twelve (12) female lecturers.

Online Pedagogies Workshop - University of Groningen, Netherlands

A workshop on online pedagogies was conducted in collaboration with the University of Groningen. The workshop sought to assist lecturers on the design and development of teaching content in an online environment and development of good assessment tasks to improve the quality of assessments. The content of the workshops sought to improve the capacity of lecturers to design online learning materials using blended learning approaches, to increase knowledge and understanding of the blended learning mode and to administer and manage assessment in an online environment. Data shown in the table below represents attendance per campus.

Table 1.20: Workshop participants across all campuses

Campus	No of Participants
Mthatha	34
Butterworth	44
BCC	30
Komani	12
Total	**120**

Coding and Robotics Workshop

In the second semester of 2023, the Faculty of Education at WSU conducted a specialised workshop aimed at enhancing the skills of lecturers in the areas of Coding and Robotics. This initiative was crucial for building capacity among educators teaching STEM subjects. The workshop, held in East London in September 2023, was attended by 26 lecturers and facilitated by experts from the University of Johannesburg as part of a Short Learning Programme.

The workshop concentrated on practical skills development using tools such as Scratch and Spike for coding and robotics education.



Photo 6: reflects a hands-on programme with lecturers actively engaged in assembling and coding of robots. (Date: September 2023 – East London)

Participants engaged in hands-on activities, including assembling and programmeming robots, as depicted in the accompanying photos (Photo 6). This practical approach ensured that lecturers could directly apply the skills learned to their teaching practices.

Significant outcomes of the workshop included:

- The establishment of a Coding and Robotics Centre at WSU to support ongoing development in this field.
- A comprehensive training rollout plan was developed to extend the training to B.Ed students, thereby broadening the impact of this initiative and preparing future educators to incorporate coding and robotics into their teaching.

Digital competencies workshop - Blended learning pedagogies and tools

A series of online workshops were conducted for the Faculty of Health Sciences, focusing on blended learning pedagogies and tools. The workshops aimed to equip academic staff with digital skills and competencies, clarifying and unpacking the concept of 'Blended Learning for Student-Centeredness' as outlined in the WSU Blended Learning Statement of March 2021.

Mr A. Mabovana, a lecturer in the Faculty of Engineering, Information and Technology Sciences (FEITS), along with other guest speakers, was invited to participate and they shared their experiences in some of these sessions. All sessions were recorded and uploaded on Microsoft Teams, allowing lecturers to access them at their convenience.

The workshops were conducted every Wednesday, with each session lasting one hour. The table below shows the schedule of the training sessions.

Table 1.21: Schedule of workshops conducted

FACULTY	DATE	No of ATTENDEES	TOPIC
FHS	13/09/23	40	- Blended Learning for enhanced student learning experience: Blended Learning for Student Centredness (BL4SC) - Designing for Blended learning @ Programme and Module levels – Tools (Mentimeter; Ms Tems; Powerpoint)

FHS	20/09/23	03	How to use Ms Teams to: – Set up a class/team – Set up and use breakout room – Whiteboard on Teams – Mindmaps
FHS	27/09/23	04	How to use Ms Teams: – Student Tracking on Ms Teams – Viva engaged – Flipgrid on Teams – Polls on Teams

BLENDED LEARNING DESIGN FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS

From 12 September to 12 October 2023, instructional designers and educational technologists attended a Short Learning Programme (SLP) titled "Supporting Blended Learning Design for Instructional Designers" at Rhodes University. The course was specifically designed to enhance the ability of instructional designers to support blended learning design for WSU lecturers.

A total of 11 instructional designers and educational technologists participated in the programme. By the end of the course, all participants were proficient in developing digital artifacts using blended learning and instructional design models and principles.

INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER DRIVING LICENSE (ICDL)

The International Computer Driving License (ICDL) is a Short Learning Programme (SLP) comprising a range of modules, including Base, Base Plus and Advanced Modules. Each module offers a practical curriculum that imparts up-to-date skills and knowledge, validated by an examination. All campuses are ICDL accredited for both training and online examinations.

For the 2023 cohort, a call for participation was issued via News Desk, inviting all academic and support staff interested in pursuing the ICDL. Approximately 40 applications were received. Four facilitators were appointed per campus to conduct the training sessions, which commenced in March 2023. The overall campus enrolment of staff members is as follows:

Table 1.22: Enrolment of staff members across all campuses

Campus	Number of lecturers enrolled for ICDL	Number of non-academic staff enrolled for ICDL	Total
Mthatha	64	17	81
Butterworth	13	4	17
BCC	9	11	20
Komani	7	8	15
Total	**93**	**40**	**133**

Overall, 133 staff members across the University have been trained in the ICDL programme.

LAPTOP DISTRIBUTION – STUDENTS

Table 1.23 provides data on the distribution of laptops to WSU students across all campuses (Mthatha, Butterworth, BCC, and Komani) in 2023. The table includes information on the number of laptops in stock, received in 2023, distributed, and remaining across different laptop brands and models.

Table 1.23: Laptops distributed to students across all campuses

	Mthatha		Butterworth		BCC		Komani	
No in Stock	**Number distributed**	**Number remain**	**Number distributed**	**Number remain**	**Number distributed**	**Number remain**	**Number distributed**	**Number remain**
Rec in 2023 (700 Lenovo)	220	18	78	72	53	46	153	14
Asus	159	0	58	0	47	0	14	0
Proline	4	0	1	0	0	2	2	0
Auction Laptops	217	174	17	0	102	0	14	0
Total	**600**	**192**	**154**	**72**	**202**	**48**	**183**	**14**

Across all campuses, a total of 1 465 laptops were received in 2023. Out of these, 1 139 laptops were distributed to students, leaving a remaining stock of 326 laptops.

1.16.2 INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Institutional Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (IPME) has been instrumental in ensuring the alignment of the University's academic programmes with the standards set by various higher education bodies. Following a comprehensive review, we have updated our programmes to meet the rigorous requirements of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

Under this reporting period, the University successfully navigated an important CHE Audit in January 2023, which was crucial in evaluating and fortifying the Institutions internal processes to prevent issues related to programme standards. In response to the CHE Audit findings, the University implemented a comprehensive improvement plan. WSU now stands in full compliance with all requisite higher education regulatory bodies, ensuring the quality and integrity of the University's academic offerings.

The subsequent section of this reports provides a brief discussion on the key activities and achievements of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, specifically focusing on Quality Management and Academic Planning, which form the foundation of WSU's commitment to academic excellence and regulatory compliance.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

The Quality Management Directorate (QMD) plays a key role in ensuring that the Institution maintains high standards of excellence across all its operations. With a clear vision to enhance quality and excellence in all aspects of Institutional pursuits, the directorates mission revolves around assuring and promoting quality through the sustainable use of technologies, integrated systems and processes.

Throughout the reporting period, the QMD has been actively involved in various significant activities. Notably, the directorate spearheaded the Institutional audit improvement plan, conducted mock reviews of programmes, and engaged in student literacy projects, showcasing its commitment to upholding and enhancing the quality of education and administrative processes within the University.

A major highlight of the QMD's achievements was the accreditation of twenty Master of Medicine (MMed) programmes, along with three subspecialties within the Faculty of Health Sciences. This marks a significant milestone, underscoring the directorate's effectiveness in ensuring that WSU's programmes meet and exceed the required standards of quality and excellence.

DHET REPORTING AND SUBMISSION OF HEMIS INFORMATION

The IRP Directorate is required to submit HEMIS information to CHE at scheduled times during the academic year. The information submitted covers student information, staff details and space information. All of the information was submitted according to the expected timelines.

- Enrolment quotas

Enrolment planning and meeting the planned targets are a key variable into the input revenue received annually from DHET. WSU managed to meet these targets in the current year by remaining within the 2% allowed variance. Table 1.24 below presents the enrolments as per the old twelve (12) Faculties and Campuses.

Table 1.24: Enrolments of FTENS

Campus Name	Faculty Name	Quota	FTENS
Buffalo City Campus	Business Sciences	802	841
	Science, Engineering & Technology	776	710
Buffalo City Campus Total		**1578**	**1551**
Butterworth Campus	Education Butterworth	360	360
	Engineering And Technology	510	499
	Management Sciences	535	564
Butterworth Campus Total		**1405**	**1423**
Mthatha Campus	Commerce And Administration	845	869
	Educational Sciences	1110	1134
	Health Sciences	384	362
	Humanities, Soc. Sci And Law	509	550
	Natural Sciences	399	396
Mthatha Campus Total		**3247**	**3311**
Queenstown Campus	Economics & Info Technology Sys	576	583
	Education And School Devel	368	401
Queenstown Campus Total		**944**	**984**
Grand Total		**7174**	**7269**

CONTINUOUS AND REFLEXIVE QUALITY ASSURANCE

To further its agenda of continuous and reflexive quality assurance, the QMD organised two workshops aimed at capacitating staff on the development of self-evaluation reports in preparation for accreditation site visits for programmes in Built Environment and Human Resources, scheduled for September 2023. Additionally, a workshop with campus quality assurance chairpersons was held to delineate the quality assurance responsibilities of faculty quality assurance committees.

EXTERNAL REVIEWS

External reviews were conducted for a selection of programmes, including Engineering, Built Environment, Social Work, Psychology, Human Resources Management, and MMeds, reinforcing the Institution's commitment to maintaining exemplary standards in its academic offerings.

PLANNED REVIEWS

Looking ahead, the QMD has prepared a list of programmes slated for review in 2024, aligning with the University's academic strategy. A target has been set to review a minimum of twenty-one programmes, distributing the review process across all faculties to ensure comprehensive coverage.

INSTITUTIONALISED CULTURE OF QUALITY

In its effort to foster an Institutionalised culture of quality, the QMD initiated activities to promote quality awareness among the student body. The Student Quality Literacy project involved campus SRC members, student societies and class representatives. This provided a platform for students to voice their concerns and contribute to the continuous improvement of quality assurance practices at WSU. This project led to the development of a student Quality Assurance Guide, offering guidance on student involvement in quality assurance practices and further embedding a culture of quality within the University fabric.

The activities and achievements of the QMD throughout the reporting period exemplify WSU's dedication to upholding and advancing quality and excellence in all its endeavours, ensuring that the Institution remains a beacon of educational excellence.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

The Academic Planning Unit plays a vital role in supporting and guiding Walter Sisulu University's academic planning processes. It is instrumental in the preparation and oversight of the University's academic planning activities, ensuring they align with both internal quality standards and external regulatory requirements. This unit offers crucial support to the Senate Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Committee, while also providing expert advice to the wider University community on complex academic planning matters.

In its role, Academic Planning engages with various external regulatory bodies that are key to the approval and accreditation of new qualifications. These include the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET), the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The unit's interactions with these agencies ensure that all new qualifications proposed by WSU meet the necessary educational standards and regulatory requirements, facilitating a seamless approval process.

In a deliberate move to streamline its focus and ensure adherence to the highest academic standards, WSU resolved in 2023 to halt the introduction of new programmes, except for those previously identified. This decision was made to accommodate a comprehensive audit by the CHE, aimed at evaluating and enhancing the quality and relevance of WSU's programme offerings. With the successful completion of this audit, WSU is now poised to proceed with its planned academic development initiatives. Below is a list of programmes in different stages of accreditation and registration:

No	Name	CHE REF	Submission	Notes
1	Doctor of Philosophy in Education	H/H19/ E031CAN	2019	Conditionally Accredited - Prior to commencement conditions submitted. Waiting on CHE response
2	Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching	H/H19/ E034CAN	2020	Conditionally Accredited - Prior to commencement conditions submitted. Waiting on CHE response
3	Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management Education	H/H19/ E023CAN	2020	Accredited. Waiting on SAQA Letter
4	Master of Medicine in Anaesthesiology	H/H19/ AR041CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
5	Master of Medicine in Dermatology	H/H19/ AR042CAN	2022	Accredited. Waiting on SAQA ID
6	Master of Medicine in Cardiothoracic Surgery	H/H19/ AR043CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
7	Master of Medicine in Chemical Pathology	H/H19/ AR044CAN	2022	Accredited. Waiting on SAQA ID
8	Master of Medicine in Otorhinolaryngology	H/H19/ AR045CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
9	Master of Medicine in Neurosurgery	H/H19/ AR046CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
10	Master of Medicine in Ophthalmology	H/H19/ AR047CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
11	Master of Medicine in Public Health Medicine	H/H19/ AR048CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
12	Master of Medicine in Internal Medicine	H/H19/ AR049CAN	2022	Conditional Accreditation. Waiting on approval of corrections and SAQA ID
13	Master of Medicine in Urology	H/H19/ AR050CAN	2022	Waiting on CHE response
14	Master of Nursing Science	H/H19/ AR052CAN	2023	Accredited, Waiting on SAQA ID
15	Master of Medicine in Emergency Medicine	H/H19/ AR053CAN	2023	Waiting on CHE response
16	Bachelor of Accounting Honours	N/A	2024	Will submit to CHE by 15 April 2024

18	Post Graduate Diploma in Accounting	N/A	2024	Will submit to CHE by 15 April 2024

By liaising between WSU and these external agencies, Academic Planning ensures that the University's academic offerings are not only of high quality but also relevant and responsive to the needs of both students and the broader socio-economic environment. This coordination is crucial for maintaining the University's reputation for excellence in higher education, ensuring its programmes are recognised and valued both nationally and internationally.

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION



1.16.3 DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION (DRI)

In 2023, WSU made significant strides in advancing its research, innovation and internationalisation agenda. Throughout the year, WSU intensified its efforts to create a productive research environment and enhance the capacity of its staff members through various initiatives, which included targeted workshops, mentorship programmes, and collaborative research projects designed to bolster the research skills and output of faculty across disciplines. These efforts were complemented by strategic investments in research infrastructure and technology, providing researchers with the tools necessary to conduct cutting-edge studies.

Despite these advancements, WSU continued to navigate challenges such as limited postgraduate programme offerings and the under-commercialisation of research findings. Recognising these areas for improvement, the University implemented strategic measures to address these issues, including the development of new postgraduate programmes, enhanced support for postgraduate students and increased emphasis on translating research into commercial applications.

The following section of the report provides an account of WSU's research activities, innovations and international collaborations in 2023, highlighting key achievements, ongoing initiatives and future directions, in line with the University's commitment to academic excellence and societal impact.

1.16.3.1 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The Directorate of Research Development and Innovation serves as the central capacity-building hub for research, postgraduate studies, and innovation at WSU. It plays a pivotal role in providing policy, strategic and operational support across the University's core mandates in these areas. Coordinating closely with faculties and research entities, DRI is instrumental in fostering a culture of research and innovation excellence, relevance, and impact.

Programme Philosophy and Objectives

DRI's philosophy emphasises the excellence, relevance and impact of research and innovation, steering the University towards becoming an innovation-centric and research-active Institution. Its initiatives are designed to:

- Shape Futures and Change Lives: Aligning with WSU's motto, DRI's efforts reach from local communities in the Eastern Cape to global commercial and industrial centres, demonstrating the wide-reaching impact of its initiatives.
- Source New Funding Streams: Efforts are underway to secure additional funding to support Applied Research Niche Area (RNA) development, thereby enhancing the research landscape at WSU.
- Empower Emerging Academics: Through targeted support, emerging scholars are guided towards achieving published status, marking a significant step in their academic careers.
- Orient Postgraduate Students: Master's and Doctoral students are imbued with social justice leadership qualities and entrepreneurial values, preparing them for impactful careers.
- Develop Postgraduate Pipelines: Initiatives aim to increase the enrolment of honours students into master's programmes and subsequently encourage Master's candidates to pursue doctoral degrees.

2023 Initiatives and Achievements

This report outlines significant achievements and ongoing initiatives within WSU's research, postgraduate and innovation spheres, structured around four sub-goals tied to the Institutional Strategic Goal 3 - "Relevant and Impactful Research":

1. To develop Individual and Institutional Capacity: Enhancing the skills and capabilities of researchers and Institutional frameworks to conduct impactful research.
2. To accelerate Research Output Growth: Increasing the quantity and quality of research outputs to strengthen WSU's research profile.
3. To enhance Postgraduate Development: Focusing on the comprehensive development of postgraduate students to ensure their success and contribution to research.
4. To expand Innovation and IP Commercialisation: Growing WSU's footprint in innovation and intellectual property commercialisation to translate research into societal and economic benefits.

The report also includes a progress update on initiatives funded through the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), providing insight into the strategic deployment of resources towards achieving these goals.

The Directorate of Research Development and Innovation is at the forefront of WSU's efforts to elevate its research and innovation landscape. Through strategic initiatives, targeted support and collaborative efforts, DRI is repositioning WSU as a leader in research and innovation. Its activities not only enhance the University's academic stature but also contribute to societal development, embodying WSU's commitment to shaping futures and changing lives through research and innovation.

ENHANCED CAPACITY FOR IMPACTFUL & RELEVANT RESEARCH

The Research Directorate is deeply committed to fostering a robust environment for impactful and relevant research. A key component of this commitment is the mentorship programme overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research (DVC: AAR), designed to enhance the research capabilities of WSU faculty and increase the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) rated researchers within the University.

NRF Rating Mentorship Programme

Funding and Administration: The mentorship programme is funded through the University's Council-approved budget, demonstrating WSU's investment in research excellence.

2022/2023 Application Cycle: A mentorship call was issued with a deadline of 21 September 2022, attracting 27 applicants who were subsequently paired with 12 mentors. Prof Susan Scott from UNISA, a C2 NRF-rated researcher, was appointed as an external assessor to provide additional expertise and guidance.

Submissions and Outcomes: Of the 27 mentees, 18 submitted their applications to the NRF for rating, including 3 applicants seeking re-rating. The cycle resulted in 2 positive outcomes, increasing WSU's total of NRF-rated researchers to 31.

Table 1.25: NRF-rated Researchers -2023

No	Name	Rating Category
1.	Prof B Nkeh-Chungag	C3
2.	Prof E Sone	C2
3.	Prof RN Songca	C3
4.	Prof SS Babalola	C2
5.	Prof F Dejene	C2
6.	Prof SV Motloung	Y2
7.	Dr ZA Mbulawa	Y2
8.	Dr R Taziwa	Y2
9.	Prof F Ganda	Y2
10.	Prof NR Jere	Y2
11.	Dr OO Oladimeji	Y2
12.	Prof AO Oyedeji	C2
13.	Prof TN Ndlovu	C2
14.	Prof AS Niba	C3
15.	Prof LN Katende-Kyenda	C3
16.	Dr M Douglas	C3
17.	Dr AO Oki	Y2
18.	Dr PN Acha-Anyi	C2
19.	Dr R Garidzirai	Y2
20.	Dr K Sibanda	Y2
21.	Dr RS Shukla	Y2
22	Dr MC Manganyi	Y2
23	Dr BI Omodan	Y2
24	Dr OV Adeniyi	C2
25	Prof EJ Ndebia	C3
26	Prof SM Kang'ethe	C2
27	Dr HM Kabiti	Y2
28	Prof MS Enongene	C2
29	Prof WD Thwala	C2
30	Prof JO Akande	C2
31	Dr W Mwatwara	C3

2023/2024 Cycle: The call for the next application cycle is open until 23 March 2024. To prepare researchers for their applications, the Directorate hosted 3 workshops attended by 44 potential applicants, leading to 20 applications being submitted for the current cycle.

Workshop Impact

The workshops are a critical part of the mentorship programme, offering potential NRF applicants' valuable

insights into the application process, criteria for success and strategies for presenting their research portfolios effectively. By providing these preparatory sessions, WSU aims not only to increase the number of NRF-rated researchers but also to enhance the overall quality and impact of research conducted within the University.

The mentorship programme for NRF rating at WSU repesents a strategic effort to build research capacity and achieve excellence in academic inquiry. Through careful guidance, funding and structured support, the Research Directorate is successfully contributing to the growth of WSU's research profile, aligning with the sub-goal of enhancing the capacity for impactful and relevant research. As the programme continues to evolve and expand, it promises to further elevate WSU's standing in the national and international research communities, in line with the University's vision of shaping futures and changing lives through research and innovation.

ACADEMIC POSTGRADUATE ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMME (APGAP)

The University has long upheld the philosophy of 'grow your own timber' in relation to the professional development of its staff. In alignment with this approach and as part of its strategic objective to empower staff, WSU actively invests in the advancement of its academic staff's qualifications. The year 2023 has seen significant efforts and resources dedicated to this cause, notably through the Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APgAP).

Funding for Doctoral and Masters Pursuits

In a subst6ntial financial commitment, WSU allocated R750,000 in 2023 to assist 15 academic staff members in pursuing their Doctoral qualifications. This investment underscores the University's dedication to fostering high-level academic expertise within its faculty.

Table 1.26: Doctoral Studies Funding Allocation for WSU Academic Staff - 2023

No	Name	Field of Study	Male/ Female	Institution	Amount Approved
1	Mrs Kimrochey Goliath-Ludic	PhD in Tourism and Sport	Female	UJ	50,000.00
2	Mr Mvuyisi Mabungela	PhD in Development Studies	Male	UNIZULU	50,000.00
3	Mr Vikela Liso Sithole	PhD in Economics	Male	NMU	50,000.00
4	Mrs Yondela Noxolo Mzileni	PhD in Philosophy in Management Sciences	Female	DUT	50,000.00
5	Ms Cebile Ntuli	PhD in Human Resources	Female	UKZN	50,000.00
6	Mr Nyingo Ngobeni	PhD in Humanities (Music)	Male	RU	50,000.00
7	Mr Takentsi Siyakudumisa	PhD in Economics and Management Sciences	Male	NWU	50,000.00
8	Mr Lonwabo Nettie	PhD in Science	Male	RU	50,000.00
9	Mr Lusanda Gwebelele	PhD in Administration	Male	UNIZULU	50,000.00
10	Mrs Konwaba Klish	PhD in Education	Female	RU	50,000.00
11	Mr Thamsanqa Sihele	PhD in Science Education	Female	UKZN	50,000.00
12	Mr Asanda Boboyi	PhD in Social Work	Male	NWU	50,000.00
13	Mr Mvuyisi Mbabane	PhD in Physics	Male	WSU	50,000.00
14	Ms Zukiswa Mbande	PhD in Chemistry	Female	Wits	50,000.00
15	Mr Nelson Lebogo	PhD in Nursing Sciences	Male	TUT	50,000.00
TOTAL					**750,000.00**

Additionally, the APgAP extended support to staff members aiming to complete their Master's qualifications. Seven staff benefited from this segment of the programme, with a total of R280,000 allocated to aid their studies. This financial support is a testament to WSU's commitment to enhancing the qualifications and capabilities of its academic staff across various levels of postgraduate study.

Table 1.27: Masters Studies Funding Allocation for WSU Academic Staff - 2023

No	Name	Field of Study	Gender	Amount Approved
1	Ms Nyasha Rebecca Dlamini	Masters in Accounting	Female	40, 000.00
2	Ms Nomvula Bianca Mnguni	Masters in Physics	Female	40, 000.00
3	Mr Mziyanda Ngcizela	Masters in Library Science (MLIS)	Male	40, 000.00
4	Mr Motsi Qoyi	Masters in Education	Male	40, 000.00
5	Mr Ndileko Zizo Mzaza	Masters in Public Administration	Male	40, 000.00
6	Ms Andiswa Lihle Mafunda	Masters in Commerce	Female	40, 000.00
7	Mr Luvo Samuel Mavula	Masters in Public Ddministration	Male	40, 000.00
Total				**280,000.00**

SUPPORT FOR FINALISING THESIS

Recognising the importance of focused time and effort in the completion phase of Doctoral and Master's research, WSU provides an innovative form of support: the option for academic staff nearing the end of their Doctoral or Master's studies to apply for six months of leave to dedicate to finalising their thesis. In 2023, this opportunity was availed by seven Doctoral candidates and one Master's candidate, facilitating their progression towards the completion of their qualifications.

SUCCESSES AND GRADUATIONS

The impact of the APgAP and related support mechanisms was notably evident in the graduation outcomes of the programme's beneficiaries. In 2023, five staff members from the 2022 cohort of APgAP beneficiaries successfully completed their studies and graduated, contributing to the continuous enhancement of WSU's academic profile.

The Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APgAP) is a cornerstone of WSU's strategy to empower its staff, aligning with Strategic Objective 5, "Empowered Staff." Through substantial financial support, dedicated time for thesis completion and a commitment to developing academic qualifications from within, WSU demonstrates its dedication to the recruitment, development and retention of highly qualified academic staff. These efforts not only contribute to the personal and professional growth of individual staff members but also enhance the overall academic stature and capability of the University, reinforcing its mission to deliver quality education and research that shape futures and change lives.

POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION TRAINING

WSU has undertaken a robust initiative to enhance the capabilities of its academic staff through the Advanced Postgraduate Supervision Training programme. This initiative is a key component of WSU's broader Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme and aligns with the Institution's commitment to the professional development of its academics. As WSU witnesses an increasing number of its staff attaining higher degrees, the need for structured and advanced supervision training has become more pronounced, ensuring that the University's academic staff are well-equipped to guide postgraduate students effectively.

ACADEMICS TRAINING OVERVIEW

In 2023, WSU supported 50 academics to participate in the Advanced Postgraduate Supervision Training, underscoring the University's investment in academic excellence and postgraduate mentorship. This training is critical for academics involved in postgraduate supervision, providing them with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complexities of mentorship, enhance the postgraduate experience and contribute to the attainment of high-quality research outputs.

Of the academics who participated in the training, 60% have successfully completed the programme, with the remainder expected to conclude their training in the current academic year. This phased approach ensures that all participating academics receive comprehensive training that is tailored to their schedules and professional commitments.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND IMPACT

The Postgraduate Supervision Training programme is directly linked to WSU's Strategic Objective Goal 3: "Relevant and Impactful Research & Innovation". By enhancing the supervision capabilities of its academic staff, WSU aims to:

- **Attract and Retain High-CaPibre Postgraduate Students**: Equipping academics with advanced supervision skills is pivotal in attracting and retaining top-tier postgraduate students, fostering an environment conducive to high-level research and innovation.
- **Promote Postgraduate Recruitment**: The training programme also plays a vital role in promoting postgraduate recruitment, particularly in alignment with the University's Research Niche Areas (RNAs). By developing a cadre of well-trained supervisors, WSU strengthens its capacity to support research that is both relevant and impactful, contributing to the University's research objectives and societal advancement.
- **Enhance Research and Innovation**: Skilled postgraduate supervision directly contributes to the quality and impact of the University's research outputs. Through this training, WSU empowers its academic staff to provide effective mentorship, thereby elevating the research and innovation landscape within the Institution.

The Advanced Postgraduate Supervision Training at WSU represents a strategic investment in the University's academic and research excellence. By developing the supervision skills of its academic staff, WSU not only enhances the postgraduate experience but also strengthens its research capacity, aligning with its vision of fostering relevant and impactful research and innovation. This initiative reflects WSU's commitment to cultivating a vibrant academic community that actively contributes to knowledge creation and societal development.

ROLLOUT OF RESEARCH NICHE AREAS (RNAS)

The University has strategically developed ten Research Niche Areas (RNAs) spanning its seven faculties and four campuses. These RNAs have been carefully designed to align with WSU's geographical context, the demands of its region concerning research and development, and broader national and global frameworks such as the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This initiative is a testament to WSU's commitment, as outlined in its Strategic Plan Vision 2030, to foster well-rounded citizens and empower the youth through research and innovation that meets societal needs through sustainable and impactful research.

THEMES OF THE RNAS:

Figure 9: Research Niche Areas



- **African Medicinal Flora and Fauna**: Explores the rich biodiversity of the African continent for medicinal purposes and this RNA aims to harness traditional knowledge for modern health solutions.
- **Small-scale Agribusiness and Rural Non-farm Enterprise Research**: is focused on bolstering the economic resilience of rural communities through innovative agribusiness and non-farm enterprises.
- **ICT for Sustainable Development** Leverages information and communication technologies to drive sustainable development across various sectors.
- **Sustainable Marine & Freshwater Economic Development**: Promotes the sustainable use of marine and freshwater resources for economic development, addressing critical areas like fisheries, aquaculture, and water management.
- **Process Technologies and Material Science in Engineering**: Advances research in material science and process technologies to innovate engineering solutions for sustainable development.
- **Sustainable Development and Contemporary Issues in Society and Education**: Examines the intersections of sustainable development with societal and educational challenges to inform policy and practice.
- **Renewable Energy Technologies**: Develops sustainable and renewable energy sources to meet the growing energy needs while addressing environmental concerns.
- **Creative and Cultural Technology and Industries**: Explores the potential of creative and cultural industries, supported by technology, to contribute to economic development and cultural preservation.
- **Cardio-Metabolic Health Research**: Addresses the growing challenges of cardio-metabolic diseases through comprehensive research aimed at improving health outcomes.
- **Human Rights and Development**: Focuses on the critical relationship between human rights and development to ensure equitable and inclusive progress for all.

COMMITMENT TO RNAS VIA FUNDING:

WSU has committed seed funding to these RNAs, demonstrating the Institution's dedication to jumpstarting these crucial areas of research. Project leaders have been appointed for each RNA, tasked with guiding their respective areas towards achieving meaningful impact and fostering positive societal change.

ACCELERATED GROWTH IN RESEARCH OUTPUT

In 2023, WSU has once again demonstrated its strong commitment to research excellence, significantly exceeding its publication targets and contributing to academic discourse at both national and international levels. The 2023 achievements are a clear indication of the University's dedication to advancing knowledge and its strategic goal of conducting relevant and impactful research.

EXEMPLARY INCREASE IN RESEARCH OUTPUT

WSU's research output in 2023 witnessed an exponential increase, with provisional figures showcasing the University's vibrant research activity:

- **Journal Articles (Units):** A remarkable total of 251.13 units were published in peer-reviewed journals, indicating WSU's robust engagement with and contribution to the academic community.
- **Conference Proceedings (Units):** WSU scholars actively participated in academic conferences, resulting in 26.11 units of conference proceedings, which reflects the University's commitment to sharing research findings and engaging with the global research community.
- **Book Chapters**: The publication of 11 book chapters by WSU academics further illustrates the depth of research conducted across various disciplines and its contribution to scholarly books.
- **Total Research Output:** The combined total research output for 2023 reached an impressive 323.4 units, showcasing the University's continuous growth in research productivity and its impact on academia and society.
- **Contributions by First-Time Authors**: Notably, 6.88 units of the total output were contributed by first-time authors, highlighting WSU's effective nurturing of emerging researchers and its success in expanding the research capacity among its academic staff.

The remarkable achievements in research output for 2023 are a testament to WSU's strategic focus on developing its research capabilities and fostering an environment that supports academic excellence. By exceeding its publication targets, WSU not only enhances its academic reputation but also plays an imperative role in addressing societal challenges through research that aligns with the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WSU's commitment to growing its Research Niche Areas (RNAs) and supporting academic staff through initiatives like the Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APgAP) and postgraduate supervision training, further strengthens its research ecosystem. This holistic approach ensures the production of well-rounded citizens and

empowers the youth through research and innovation that directly impacts upon society.

ACADEMIC EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

In 2023, WSU showcased its commitment to global academic engagement and research collaboration through the active participation of its staff researchers in various prestigious Academic Exchange programmes. These exchanges, supported by a combination of grants and personal publications, facilitated WSU researchers in contributing to and benefiting from international research initiatives, highlighting the University's dedication to advancing knowledge and fostering international research partnerships.

Table 1.28: WSU Staff Participation in International Academic Exchange Programmes - 2023

Name	Funder	Place	Details of Research Visit
Dr Z Roboji	National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) Grant	Botswana	Digital African Pathways Programme (App)/Brics Teaching and Research Mobility
Prof Dejene	Eskom Grant	Kenya	Southeastern Kenya University
Prof P Acha-Anyi	Personal publications	Rwanda/Kenya/ Tanzania	Data collection; to conduct research
Dr T Taziwa	Europe-Africa Research and Innovation call on Renewable Energy LEAP-RE Grant	Newcastle, United Kingdom	Research exchange/ knowledge sharing
Prof Bn Nkeh-Chungag	Endo-Covid Grant	Inland University of Norway	Endo Covid Research Close-out meeting
Prof F Hyera	Endo-Covid Grant	Inland University of Norway	EndoCovid Research Close-out meeting
Dr T Taziwa	Europe-Africa Research and Innovation Call on Renewable Energy LEAP-RE Grant	Kigali, Rwanda	Leap-RE Second Stakeholder Forum in Kigali
Dr X Nqoro	Europe-Africa Research and Innovation Call on Renewable Energy LEAP-RE Grant	Kigali, Rwanda	Leap-RE Second Stakeholder Forum in Kigali

The active involvement of WSU staff in the 2023 Academic Exchange programmes demonstrates the University's robust commitment to international research collaboration and knowledge exchange. By participating in these exchanges, WSU not only enhances its academic and research profile but also contributes to addressing global challenges through impactful research. These activities align with WSU's strategic objectives of advancing knowledge, fostering international partnerships, and promoting sustainable and impactful research, thereby reinforcing its status as a leading Institution in research and innovation.

INNOVATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY COMMERCIALISATION

In a significant stride towards fostering innovation and product development, the University allocated the Innovation Product Development Seed Fund to support pioneering projects within its academic community.

INNOVATION PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SEED FUND

This initiative aims to ensure that the Institution's academic research translates into tangible products and solutions that address societal needs and challenges. In the recent round of funding, several noteworthy projects across various departments were awarded seed funding to develop their prototypes, totalling an amount of R79,250 for each project.

Table 1.29: Innovation Product Development Seed Fund Recipients and Projects - 2023

Beneficiary	Prototype
Dr Rose Mbugua Senior Lecturer Civil Engineering Department	Concrete Admixture from Pineapple Waste
Dr Samuel Abejide Lecturer Civil Engineering Department: Transportation	Asphalt Plastic Pavement as Alternative Material for Road Pavement
Dr Bunmi Omodan Faculty Of Education	Developing a Modern Conflict Management Application as Means to Decolonise Students-Authority Dichotomy in Universities
Prof Adebola Oyedeji	Anti-hyperglycaemic Activity of Bitter Leaf Vegetable and its Development as a Blood Glucose-Lowering Herbal Supplement

By supporting these diverse projects, WSU not only contributes to academic knowledge but also plays a crucial role in addressing environmental, infrastructural and health-related challenges. This initiative further solidifies WSU's position as a leader in innovation and product development, driving societal progress through research and development.

INNOVATION CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

In 2023, the University also conducted a series of innovation capacity-building activities, underlining the Institution's commitment to fostering an environment conducive to innovation and intellectual property (IP) development. These activities, organised in collaboration with various partners, aimed to enhance the innovation capabilities of WSU's staff, particularly those within the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) and the Directorate of Research Innovation (DRI), as well as engaging the broader academic and research community at WSU.

Table 1.30: Key Events and Workshops:

Event	Partners
THENSA Mentoring Shadowing and Coaching Workshop 1	THENSA and DSI
TIA – WSU Funding instruments for researchers and Executive management meeting	TIA and WSU OTT
Patlib IP courses for WSU Researchers On-going	European Patent Office (EPO);NIPMO
Innovation Canvas Workshop	WSU Internal event
THENSA- CPUT Adapted Venture Builder Programme Workshop 1	THENSA- CPUT
THENSA Mentoring Shadowing and Coaching Workshop 2	THENSA and DSI
THENSA Mentoring Shadowing and Coaching Workshop 3	THENSA and DSI
World IP Day. Awareness and information sharing session	NIPMO, TIA, CIPC
In-house Innovation canvas workshop	WSU internal event
THENSA Mentoring Shadowing and Coaching, Shadowing week at Technological University of Dublin	THENSA and DSI
Postgraduate Orientation Nelson Mandela Campus	WSU internal event

These innovation capacity-building activities represent a concerted effort to embed an innovation-oriented mindset across the Institution. By partnering with esteemed organisations and utilising internal resources, WSU has successfully engaged its community in meaningful discussions and training sessions on innovation, IP management, and research commercialisation. These initiatives not only enhance the innovation capabilities of WSU staff and researchers but also align with the University's strategic objectives of advancing relevant and impactful research and innovation, further establishing WSU as a leading Institution in innovation and intellectual property development.

INNOVATION-FOCUSED RESEARCH FACILITATED BY THE OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER (OTT)

Walter Sisulu University's Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) has successfully facilitated several significant innovation-focused research projects in 2023, securing substantial grants from the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC).

Table 1.31: Innovation Research Projects Funded through OTT-Facilitated Grants - 2023

Grant	Status
1. TIA Seed Fund application for the prosthetic limb – Ms S Mgwili	R485 000 awarded
2. TIA Seed Fund application for the adjustable telescopic pylon – Mr Mduzana c/o Mr Z Godlimpi	R485 000 awarded
3. TIA Seed Fund application for BlueLab: Water quality monitoring kit – Mr S Bekwa	R546 350 awarded
4. Health innovation support grant from SAMRC	
a. Effects of 'Manisaplaie' on cellular and molecular mechanisms of the diabetic foot ulcer healing – Prof T Apalata	R500 000
b. Customised Web-Based Patient Record with Big Data Analytics Application forSustainable Health Decision Making. - Ms N Mavuso	R496 000

The innovation-focused research projects facilitated by WSU's OTT in 2023, supported by significant grants, highlight the University's proactive role in driving research with real-world applications and societal impact. By securing funding for projects in health and technology, WSU not only contributes to the body of knowledge but also ensures that its research endeavours lead to practical, innovative solutions that address key societal challenges. These projects align with WSU's strategic goals of fostering relevant and impactful research and innovation, further establishing its reputation as an Institution committed to excellence in research and societal development.

PROMOTION OF IP COMMERCIALISATION

The Institution has been actively engaging in various activities aimed at promoting the commercialisation of intellectual property (IP), marking significant strides toward transforming innovative research outcomes into market-ready products and services. These efforts show the University's commitment to fostering an environment where academic innovation can thrive and contribute to economic development and societal welfare.

Table 1.32: Intellectual Property Commercialisation Initiatives at WSU - 2023

Activity	Status
Incubation of Inventor for Prosthetics Pylon	Ms S Mgwili, the inventor behind the prosthetic pylon project, has been enrolled as an incubatee at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI). The objective is to develop a compelling business case for the project, with plans to license the patent that protects this invention, pending approval by the commercialisation committee.
Business Plan Development for Creations Herbal Teas	A business plan for Creations Herbal Teas has been successfully completed and submitted to the CfERI for incubation support. This initiative is poised to progress towards the establishment of a start-up company, contingent on the green light from the commercialisation committee.
Oesophageal Cancer Screening Application	Efforts are currently focused on identifying a market partner and formulating an entry strategy for the Oesophageal Cancer Screening Application. This strategic approach aims to bridge the gap between this innovative health solution and its potential impact on public health.

Formation of an Adapted Venture Builder (aVB)	WSU, in collaboration with eight other THENSA member Institutions, has made significant progress in establishing an adapted Venture Builder (aVB). While the framework and modalities have been set, further refinement based on funders and investors' input is anticipated. The aVB is expected to become operational in the first quarter of 2024, providing a novel platform for nurturing and scaling University-based startups.

The promotion of IP commercialisation activities at WSU reflects a strategic effort to leverage research and innovation for economic and social advancement. By supporting inventors and entrepreneurs through incubation, business plan development, and strategic market entry initiatives, WSU is paving the way for academic innovations to make a tangible impact beyond the confines of the University. Furthermore, the collaborative formation of the aVB signifies WSU's foresight in creating synergies that amplify the commercial potential of research outcomes. These activities not only enhance WSU's reputation as an innovation hub but also contribute significantly to regional and national development agendas.

INTERNATIONALISATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

In the current reporting period, the University continued to advance its internationalisation and partnership initiatives, focusing on both local community engagement and global collaborations.

WSU strengthened its ties with community stakeholders, including local businesses, non-profit organisations and government agencies. These partnerships aimed to address community needs and challenges, ensuring that the University's academic and research efforts contributed directly to societal development.

The University also expanded its international partnerships with universities, research Institutions and global entities. These collaborations facilitated academic exchanges, joint research initiatives and cultural understanding. WSU's global presence was enhanced, providing students and faculty with opportunities for cross-cultural learning, research and professional development.

Through these efforts, WSU reinforced its role as a key Institution in both local community development and global academic networks. The University's commitment to internationalisation and partnerships continued to create an inclusive, innovative and impactful educational environment, preparing students for a globalised world while contributing to societal betterment.

The following section provides an account of the partnerships WSU entered into during 2023, as well as other activities and projects aimed at enhancing collaborations, partnerships and exchange programmes nationally and internationally.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS ESTABLISHED IN 2023

During the reporting period, the University successfully established and finalised a variety of strategic partnerships, reflecting a commitment to enhancing research, community engagement, training and development across multiple sectors. These partnerships are poised to significantly contribute to the University's mission of fostering educational excellence, research innovation and meaningful societal impact. The collaborations span different durations, ranging from one to five years, and involve both governmental and sectoral bodies, ensuring a broad spectrum of benefits and opportunities for the WSU community and its stakeholders and they include:

- **Department of Human Settlements (Eastern Cape)**: A five-year collaboration that focuses on research and community engagement, aiming to address housing and urban development challenges in the region.
- **The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)**: A five-year research collaboration to advance the study and conservation of biodiversity, contributing to sustainable environmental management.
- **Chemical Industries Education & Training Authority (CHIETA)**: A one-year research partnership, focusing on innovations and advancements in the chemical industries.
- **Agribusiness Centre-ACC-Carnivore Agrifund**: A three-year agreement focusing on training, development, and research in agribusiness, aiming to boost agricultural productivity and innovation.
- **merSETA Project Partnership:** which contributed significantly to the development of specialised skills training for SMEs and unemployed graduates, staff qualification development and the enhancement of teaching and research capacities.

With these strategic University partnerships, the Institution was able to focus on leveraging collaborative efforts to enhance educational offerings, research outputs and community engagement initiatives, thus contributing to the University's overall vision of making a positive impact both locally and globally.

OTHER PROJECTS

The University has also been actively participating in international collaborations and exchange programmes, significantly enhancing its academic and research portfolio and they include:

Erasmus – PPH Augustinum Graz Project

One notable initiative is the partnership with Pädagogische Hochschule (PH) Augustinum Graz, Austria, facilitated by the European Union's Erasmus+ funding. This partnership enabled two WSU students from the Faculty of Educational Sciences to partake in a student exchange programme in Graz. Their experience was celebrated and marked by a formal send-off, reflecting the University's support for international exposure and learning opportunities. The exchange was not only beneficial for the students but also laid the groundwork for future collaborations between WSU and PH Graz and the expansion of the WSU footprint.

WSU/Medical University of Graz (MUG) Partnership

Additionally, the partnership with the Medical University of Graz (MUG), Austria, under the Erasmus+ programme, exemplifies WSU's commitment to enhancing its Health Sciences faculty through international collaborations. This partnership facilitated both student and staff exchanges, offering clinical rotations for students and research collaboration opportunities for faculty members. These exchanges contributed to the global experience and perspective of participants, enriching the academic and professional development at WSU.

South Africa-Sweden Universities Forum (SASUF)

The South Africa-Sweden Universities Forum (SASUF) project has yielded significant benefits for Walter Sisulu University. Through this initiative, WSU has strengthened its international collaborations, particularly with Swedish universities, resulting in successful joint research projects and secured funding.

This engagement has provided WSU researchers with valuable exposure to global research methodologies and perspectives, enhancing the University's capacity to address worldwide challenges through innovative research. The forum has facilitated knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices between South African and Swedish Institutions, contributing to WSU's research output through joint publications and presentations.

Moreover, SASUF has played a crucial role in raising WSU's international profile within the academic community and provided opportunities for staff and student development through international research experiences. Overall, the project has significantly contributed to WSU's mission of fostering impactful research and global academic partnerships.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIRECTORATE







1.16.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (CED)

Walter Sisulu University places a significant emphasis on community engagement and ensures that the Institution's activities in teaching, learning, research and community development not only serve the local community but also embody the University's strategic commitment to transformative community engagement. This commitment is articulated in WSU's strategic objectives, highlighting the University's dedication to effecting positive change within South Africa.

The CED aspires to position WSU as a frontrunner in integrating community engagement into programmes that are responsive to the immediate needs of the communities it serves. Its mission is to elevate WSU's community engagement initiatives, ensuring they enhance the University's educational, research and community development efforts. This approach is rooted in a belief that impactful community engagement is crucial for the University's

contribution to societal progress.

At the heart of WSU's commitment to community engagement is the goal of establishing a strong presence that resonates with diverse communities locally.

Throughout 2023, the University's Community Engagement Directorate played a pivotal role in facilitating Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) activities. This period also marked a transition for WIL coordination to be handed over to the Learning and Teaching Directorate (LTD) and the faculties. The faculties of Engineering Science & Technology and Business Sciences have incorporated WIL components into their programmes, with 6 and 13 programmes respectively, engaging students in practical learning environments.

FUNDED PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

WSU successfully implemented several Work Integrated Learning (WIL) projects in collaboration with various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and partners, significantly enhancing professional exposure and practical learning for students across multiple disciplines:

- SASSETA Internship Project: In partnership with SASSETA, WSU funded internships for 50 students, with 41 graduates successfully completing the programme.
- MICTSETA Project: Collaborating with media companies, 45 WSU students received funding from MICTSETA for WIL, concluding in September 2023.
- W&RSETA Project: Supported 25 WIL students and 20 graduates, focusing on providing professional exposure within their respective fields.
- LGSETA Project: Benefitted 117 students across various academic programmes, offering them a monthly stipend beginning in July 2023.
- CBE and OTP (EC) Project: A collaboration with the Council for the Built Environment and the Office of the Premier, placing WIL students in government projects throughout the Eastern Cape.
- CSIR and SASCE Partnership: This partnership placed 17 engineering students in significant roles, enhancing their practical learning experiences.

These partnerships between WSU and SETAs have been crucial for facilitating skills development by aligning University curricula with industry needs, while providing essential funding for training programmes, research initiatives, and student bursaries. Furthermore, these partnerships have ensured that WSU students gain practical industry experience, consequently improving their employment prospects upon graduation.

WORK PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOPS

The CEID hosted work-preparedness workshops covering various essential topics, from WIL guidelines to soft skills and COVID-19 protocols. Leveraging technology, these workshops were delivered across multiple campuses efficiently, though challenges in interaction and network issues were noted.

WIL VISITATIONS

A key component of the WIL programmeme is the visitation and evaluation of students by academic WIL coordinators. In the second semester of 2023, coordinators conducted visits across several programmes including Hospitality Management, Tourism Management, Consumer Sciences and Engineering, amongst others, to ensure the quality and relevance of the WIL experience.

This section of the report underscores the significant efforts made by Walter Sisulu University in enhancing and supporting Work-Integrated Learning through various initiatives, funded projects and partnerships. These activities not only provide students with valuable real-world experience but also align with WSU's commitment to practical, hands-on learning. The transition of WIL coordination signifies a strategic move towards integrating these experiences more deeply into the academic fabric of the University, ensuring that WSU students are well-prepared for the professional world.

SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMMES

During the reporting period, WSU actively engaged in the implementation of several service-learning modules across various departments, integrating practical community service with academic instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities.

- **Community-Oriented Care Module in the Department of Nursing:** which focuses on providing care within community settings, successfully completed its community site visits in May 2023, after beginning its engagements in April 2023. The module aims to instil a sense of community-oriented care among

nursing students, preparing them for holistic and empathetic healthcare delivery.

- **Community Based Education & Service (COBES) in the Faculty of Health Sciences:** Started in February 2023 and concluded in October 2023. The COBES module is a crucial component of the curriculum for third year MBChB students. Throughout the module, 123 students were placed in ten Health Care Centres, working in groups of 12-13 to deliver health services and learn from real-world healthcare settings. This hands-on experience is designed to immerse students in community health environments, fostering a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities in healthcare delivery.
- **Psychology Practicum:** This service-learning module was rolled out to four communities around the Mthatha Campus, offering psychology students the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in practical settings. Through engagement with these communities, students gain invaluable insights into psychological services and community mental health needs.
- **Street Law:** The Street Law module was also successfully implemented during the reporting period. This initiative allows students to engage with legal concepts in practical, community-oriented settings, providing legal education and assistance to community members. It exemplifies the integration of legal theory with public service, enhancing students' understanding of law in societal contexts.

These service-learning modules reflect WSU's commitment to experiential learning and community engagement, highlighting the University's dedication to preparing students for professional practice that is informed by real-world experiences and societal needs. Through these initiatives, WSU continues to strengthen its role in community development while enhancing the educational journey of its students.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS IN FACULTIES

Walter Sisulu University has embarked on several faculty-driven community engagement projects that not only contribute to societal development but also enhance the learning experiences of students across various disciplines. These initiatives, ranging from health screenings to agricultural innovations, demonstrate the University's commitment to integrating community service with academic rigor.

1. FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

- **Esophageal Cancer Screening App (ECAS):** Targeting Mbekweni and Mhlakulo Villages, this project developed a mobile application for early diagnostic screening of esophageal cancer, aiming to improve early detection rates. The initiative saw positive community response and secured permissions for population screenings, which are ongoing.
- **COVID-19 Antibodies Profile Using Saliva Samples:** Exploring saliva as a less invasive alternative to blood samples for COVID-19 antibody testing, this project aims to enhance participation in vaccine trials and mass screenings for asymptomatic conditions. The ongoing study evaluates antibody levels in both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

2. FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES

- **Medicinal Plants Research Projects:** These projects investigate the potential of various plants, including the cypress plant for anti-aging agents and cannabis for medicinal purposes. Community workshops in Middledrift have engaged local farmers and stakeholders, underscoring the interdisciplinary nature of these studies.

3. FACULTY OF EDUCATION

- **WSU-UFS-DBE Family Maths-Science Project:** In collaboration with the University of Free State, WSU rolled out community projects to promote Mathematics and Science education in primary schools around Umtata. The projects include Family Maths programmes and Key Concepts in Science Training, with activities ongoing into 2024.
- **Department of Road and Transport Project:** This collaborative effort with the Department of Transport and Department of Basic Education focuses on enhancing Mathematics and Science teaching in schools. Training sessions have been provided for teachers and WSU student teachers.

4. FACULTY OF LAW, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

- **Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu Science Centre:** Funded by the Department of Science and Innovation, this initiative aims to integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems with scientific research and education. The exhibition stand at the centre showcases a blend of traditional and scientific knowledge, attracting attention from community members and dignitaries.

5. FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- **Eastern Cape e-Skills CoLab:** Through a partnership with NEMISA, the e-Skills CoLab focuses on improving digital literacy and specialist ICT skills in the Eastern Cape. The CoLab's activities include training sessions on basic mobile literacy, data science specialist courses and cellphone repair programmes, reaching a wide range of participants.

These projects highlight Walter Sisulu University's dedication to service-learning and community engagement across various disciplines. By addressing local health issues, enhancing educational resources and promoting digital literacy, WSU continues to make a significant impact on the communities it serves while providing valuable experiential learning opportunities for its students.

EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

WSU has actively engaged in a variety of community and international projects, supported by external funders, to enhance the academic and practical experience of its students while contributing significantly to community development. These projects span across multiple disciplines, including digital skills development, science and engineering research, health screenings, and education initiatives, reflecting the University's commitment to addressing societal challenges through research and innovation.

- **Eastern Cape e-Skills CoLab:** Funded by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies to promote digital skills development, led by Ms. Sibukele Gumbo.
- **Risk and Vulnerability Science Centre (RVSC):** A DSI through NRF-funded project aimed at addressing risks and vulnerabilities, with Dr Motebang Nakin as the project leader.
- **Rural Livelihood and Food Security Lab – Joint Marine Labs Programmeme:** Supported by DSI/NRF SAIAB to enhance food security, under the leadership of Dr Thembinkosi Dlaza.
- **WSU-UFS SANRAL Family Maths Project & Key Concepts in Science Project:** Both projects are funded by SANRAL to promote Maths and Science education, led by Prof. Jogy Alex.
- **Maths, Science and English Project:** A Department of Transport (EC)-funded initiative aimed at enhancing education in these key areas, with Prof. Jogy Alex at the helm.
- **Digital Technology for Non-Invasive Esophageal Cancer Screening:** Funded by NRF and MRC to develop a low-cost screening method, led by a multidisciplinary team including Prof. Eugene Ndebia.
- **Big Data Analytical Tool on COVID-19 Impact on Girl Child Education:** Supported by the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, with Prof. Nobert Jere and Dr Nelly Vuyokazi Sharpley leading the project.
- **Non-Communicable Diseases and HIV/AIDS Project:** A SAMRC-funded project aimed at addressing these health concerns, under Prof. Teke Apalata's leadership.
- **EndoAfrica under ERA AFRICA Project:** EU and DSI-funded project focusing on endocrinology in Africa, led by Prof. Benedicta Nkeh-Chungag.
- **Collaborative Medicinal Plants Research Projects:** Including studies on diabetic bandages and insecticidal potential, funded by NRF, and led by Prof. Adebola Oyedeji.
- **Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator and Samsung Project:** Aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and innovation, led by Dr Thobekani Lose.
- **Innovation Champions for Local Economic Development:** A DSI-funded project enhancing local economic development, with Dr Thobekani Lose as the project leader.
- **Agricultural Insurance Assessment Programmeme (AIAP):** Funded by the Land Bank to assess agricultural insurance, led by Prof. Benedicta Nkeh-Chungag.
- **Intervarsity Student Entrepreneurship Project and Women Rise Project:** These initiatives aim at promoting entrepreneurship and women's empowerment, led by Dr Thobekani Lose and Prof. Thabisani Ndlovu, respectively.
- **Cofimvaba IKS Project:** DSI-funded initiative focusing on Indigenous Knowledge Systems, under Dr Kholekile Ngqila's leadership.
- **STEM Centre Project:** A collaboration between WSU, NEMISA, and STEMpower Inc., aimed at promoting STEM education, coordinated by Ms. S. Gumbo, Dr Msimeleo Siswana, and Mr. M. Payi.
- **EU-Funded Erasmus+ Project with the Medical University of Graz:** Focused on medical education, managed by Mr. M. Payi.
- **Capacity Building for Africa-Centred Internationalisation:** A DHET – UCDP-funded project in collaboration with ten South African universities, also led by Mr. M. Payi.
- **ICT Skills Development Initiative for Grade 12 Learners:** Supported by Bank SETA to enhance ICT skills among learners, with Dr Jose Lukose as the project leader.

These projects illustrate WSU's extensive engagement in research and community service initiatives, aimed at addressing a wide range of societal needs from health to education and economic development. Through these

externally funded projects, WSU continues to make significant contributions to community development and the internationalisation of higher education in South Africa.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEARNING SYMPOSIUM

The Community Engagement and Internationalisation Directorate (CEID) facilitated participation in a Community Engagement Learning Symposium at Rhodes University, where WSU staff members gained insights into engaged citizenship, partnerships, research, teaching, learning, social innovation and entrepreneurship. This participation underscores WSU's commitment to fostering engaged scholarship and practical community solutions.

STEM CENTRE

A highlight of the reporting period was the establishment of the first STEM Centre in South Africa at WSU, funded by STEMpower and NEMISA. This centre has become a beacon for training programmes targeting youth, schools and communities, including the popular Cellphone Repair Project. The STEM Centre exemplifies WSU's dedication to promoting science, technology, engineering, mathematics education and skills development.

Overall, the reporting period showcased WSU's dynamic engagement in community development, professional enhancement and academic excellence. Through strategic partnerships, innovative projects, and dedicated efforts, WSU continues to make significant strides in fulfilling its mission of serving and uplifting the community, both locally and beyond.

LIBRARY DIRECTORATE



1.16.5 LIBRARY

The WSU Library plays a significant role in supporting the diverse information needs of the University's academic community, encompassing undergraduate to postgraduate studies. The collection is a rich amalgamation of print materials, online books, journals and access to a vast array of electronic scholarly databases and peer-reviewed journals. These resources are instrumental in enhancing the teaching, learning, and research experience at WSU.

In collaboration with academic libraries from Fort Hare, Nelson Mandela University (NMU), and Rhodes University, WSU's library extends its resources through the South-East Academic Library System (SEALS). This consortium allows for shared access to library holdings via the SIERRA database system, broadening the scope of materials available to our learners.

The Institution's library network includes 12 sites across WSU's four campuses in Butterworth, Buffalo City, Komani,

and Mthatha. The Buffalo City campus hosts four libraries, including the Phyllis Ntantala Collaborative Library, a central Institutional facility that shares a building with libraries from the University of Fort Hare and UNISA. The Mthatha campus is home to three libraries, Komani campus has two, and the Butterworth campus houses one library.

WSU libraries maintain a collaborative relationship with Health Resource Centres in various locations, sharing resources and the SIERRA library system for streamlined access. This partnership facilitates the borrowing and returning of books across any WSU library, irrespective of the home library of the student.

Library membership is complimentary for all students. Registration is simple and requires only a student card, after which students gain full access to all library services, including on- and off-campus access to electronic resources. Our librarians provide essential training on accessing these resources and navigating 'my-library account' for off-campus e-resource access.

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT

In line with WSU's strategic goals, the library has been dedicated to enhancing the quality and effectiveness of its services. A key focus has been on promoting information literacy, which is a critical, lifelong learning skill. This skill has empowered WSU students to identify when information is needed and has equipped them with the abilities to locate, evaluate and efficiently utilise the necessary information.

Collaborations between the library and various University faculties have also been instrumental in ensuring students receive comprehensive information literacy training, reinforcing the library's role in supporting learning and teaching.

Building on these foundational efforts, the library has placed particular emphasis on two crucial areas, these being the orientation of first-year students and the provision of advanced information skills training.

The following sections provide a brief report of these initiatives, highlighting their implementation, impact and contribution to the overall academic success of WSU students.

ORIENTATION FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

During the 2023 academic year, the University's library services implemented a comprehensive orientation programmeme for first-year students across all four campus libraries. This initiative was executed in collaboration with the Department of Learning and Teaching (DLT), ensuring a coordinated and holistic approach to student induction.

The orientation process was structured in three phases:

- General orientation which had Library staff actively participating in the general orientation sessions organised by the DLT, providing an overview of library services and resources.
- Formal welcome of first-year students to the library through an informative address, introducing them to the role of the library in their academic journey.
- Facility guided tours of library facilities were conducted, familiarising students with the physical layout and relevant collections pertinent to their fields of study.

The orientation programmeme saw significant participation across all campuses. Figure 10 presents a comprehensive summary of student attendance at these orientation sessions.

Figure 10: FTENs attendance of the library orientation sessions across all WSU campuses

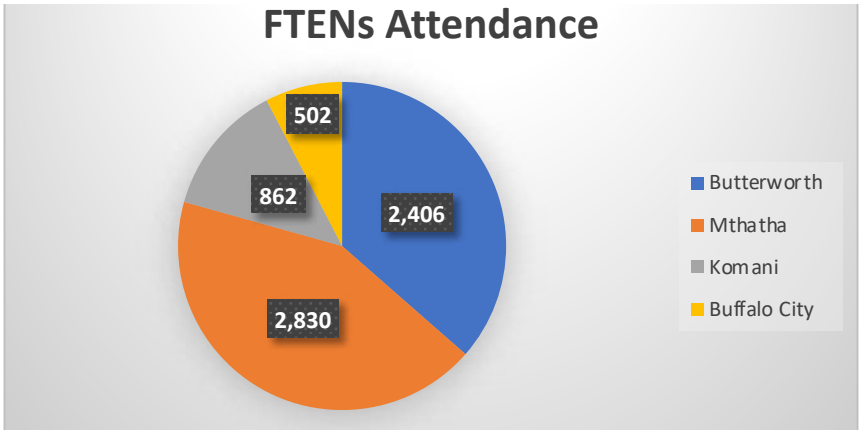


Figure 10 shows that the orientation sessions reached a total of 6,600 first-year students across all campuses. The Mthatha campus had the highest attendance with 2,830 students, while the Buffalo City campus attendance was the lowest with the attendance of 502 students.

INFORMATION SKILLS TRAINING

In 2023, at the initiative of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research (DVC: AAR), Faculty Librarians prepared semester training plans in collaboration with academic staff. The library was tasked with providing statistics on these planned workshops. Additionally, the library engaged with deans to encourage lecturers to promote student attendance at these library workshops. Tables 1.33 and 1.34 below present data on the number of undergraduate students who received information literacy training in 2023 across all WSU campuses and Health Resource Centres.

Table 1.33: Training of undergraduate students per campus and faculties

Campus	Faculty	Students Attended
Mthatha	Economic & Financial Sciences	667
	Education	357
	Law, Humanities & Social Sciences	283
	Medicine & Health Sciences	207
	Natural Sciences	234
	Total	1 748
Butterworth	Education	382
	Management Sciences	547
	Engineering Technology	612
	Total	1541
Buffalo City	Science, Engineering & Technology	227
	Management Sciences	239
	Total	466
Komani	Education	666
	Economics, Information & Communication Technology	106
	Total	772
Grand Total		**4 527**

Based on the data presented in Tables 1.33 a total of 4 527 undergraduate students received information literacy training across all WSU campuses. The training covered a wide range of disciplines across all campuses, indicating a comprehensive approach to information literacy.

Table 1.34: Training of undergraduate students at Health Resource Centres

Library/Resource Centre	Training	Total
Dora Nginza Medical Library	Databases, LibGuides, ClinicalKey, Off-Campus Access	20
Livingston Hospital Medical Library	Databases, LibGuides, ClinicalKey, Off-Campus Access	28
Queenstown Health Resource Centre	ClinicalKey and LibGuides	68
East London Health Resource Centre	ClinicalKey and LibGuides	47
PE Provincial Resource Centre	Databases, LibGuides, ClinicalKey, Off-Campus Access	30
Total		**193**

A total of 193 undergraduate students received training across all Health Resource Centres. All centres provided training on LibGuides and ClinicalKey, indicating a consistent core curriculum, while three centres (Dora Nginza, Livingstone Hospital, and PE Provincial) also included training on Databases and Off-Campus Access, suggesting a more comprehensive programmeme. Furthermore, the focus on medical databases and resources (ClinicalKey) indicates tailored training for health science students.

RESEARCH SUPPORT

In 2023, the library collaborated with the Directorate of Research and Innovation to enhance research support services within the University. This collaboration involved consultations with database vendors, including Elsevier, WWIS, and ProQuest, to organise a series of targeted workshops for researchers throughout the year.

WORKSHOPS ORGANISED BY THE LIBRARY DIRECTORATE

Workshops in collaboration with database vendors

A major event in this initiative took place on 13 April 2023, when the DRI and Mthatha Campus Library jointly conducted a comprehensive training session. This workshop, which focused on electronic databases and EndNote reference management software, was designed for postgraduate students and researchers across all WSU campuses. The session demonstrated significant engagement, with over 500 participants in attendance.

Table 1.35 presents an overview of the workshops facilitated by librarians during the 2023 academic year. These data provide insights into the scope and frequency of research support activities undertaken by the library in collaboration with the DRI.

Table 1.35: workshops facilitated by the librarians in 2023

Training Intervention	Number of Attendees
Library E-Resources: OPAC, Off-Campus Access and Databases	15
PAC, Off-Campus Access and Databases	17
HR Induction Workshop on library services	40
How to use Endnote and access electronic databases	551
EBSCO Faculty Select Resource platform	10
Turnitin, e-Resources, LibGuides	99
E-Resources, Turnitin, literature searches	35
E-Resources	9
Total	**776**

Based on the information provided in Table 1.35, 9 different training interventions focused on various library and research resources. The most well-attended workshop was "How to use Endnote and access electronic databases" with 551 attendees. Other popular sessions included "Turnitin, e-Resources, LibGuides" with 99 attendees and the "HR Induction Workshop on library services" with 40 attendees. The total number of attendees across all workshops was 794, indicating a significant reach for these research support activities.

In as far as collaborations are concerned with database vendors, 1,340 postgraduate students, academic staff and researchers were trained in 2023. Other Webinars that supported teaching, learning and research facilitated by the vendors included the following:

Table 1.36: Webinars conducted to support teaching and learning - 2023

MAY	Advance your research process with Scopus
	Wiley: Maximising your success in publishing open success
	Discovering the interconnectivity of research using ScienceDirect
JUNE	Meeting Science Direct eBooks
	Getting a scientific journal indexed – a Scopus perspective
	Diversity and inclusion in science
JULY	Use eBooks to improve your academic experience - WSU
	Finding resources to enhance your academic research - WSU
	World University rankings – the significance of publications
	Understanding the importance of foundational content

AUGUST	The subtle art of searching - WSU
	The art of academic honesty: plagiarism unpacked
	ProQuest scholarly authoring: Where to start your research journey
	EndNote essentials training - WSU
	Pillars of open science
	Comprehensive literature review using Scopus
SEPTEMBER	Getting started with web of science: searching and navigating
	Tips and advice for preparation of your manuscript
	Preparing my manuscript for visibility
OCTOBER	How to increase visibility of my published work
	Avoiding predatory journals
NOVEMBER	Peer review workshop
	The research cycle

Workshop on access to newspapers and discipline-based magazines

The Library, in collaboration with a PressReader representative, conducted a comprehensive workshop aimed at enhancing the digital literacy skills of Walter Sisulu University (WSU) staff and students. The primary objective of this session was to provide instruction on remote access to the Institution's online newspaper platform, PressReader, with particular emphasis on mobile device utilisation via the dedicated application.

A key focus of the workshop was the exploration of discipline-specific periodicals relevant to various academic departments. Participants were guided on strategies to integrate these resources into curriculum development, specifically in the creation of learning activities. This approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical practices that emphasise the incorporation of current, real-world content into academic instruction.

To maximise the reach and impact of this initiative, the workshop proceedings were recorded and subsequently disseminated through the Library's YouTube channel and various social media platforms. This strategy of digital distribution ensures continued access to the instructional content, supporting asynchronous learning and wider engagement within the University community.

The workshop garnered significant interest across the University, with a total attendance of 69 participants.



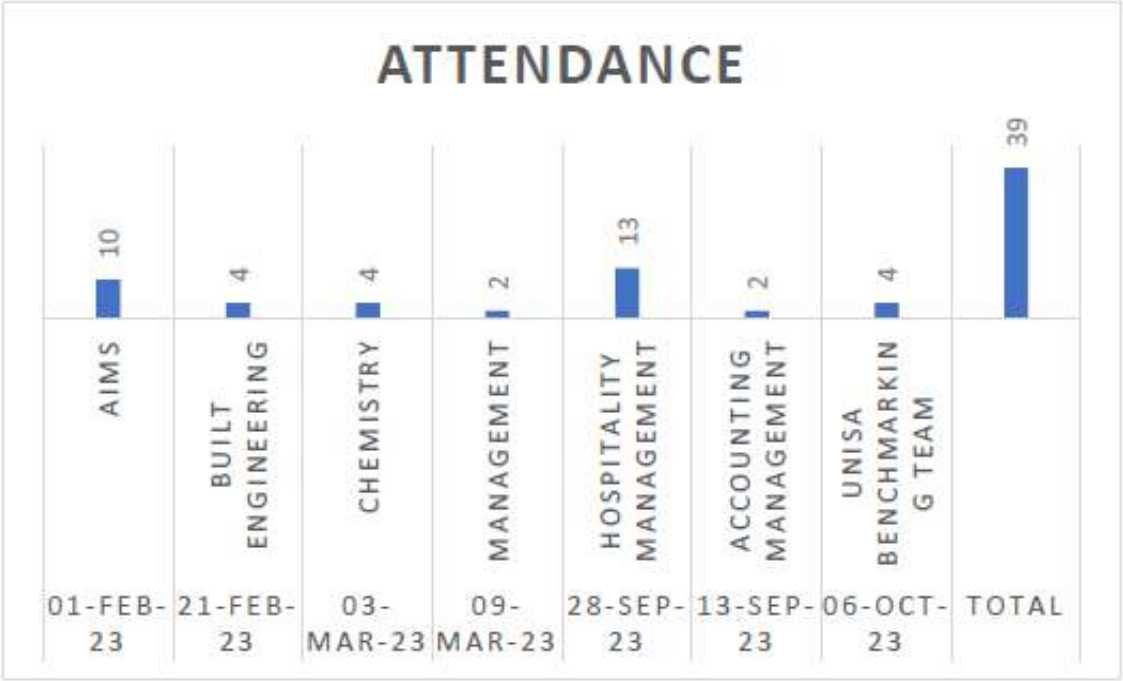
Photo 7: Staff training at Komani Campus

Digital script writing training for lecturers

In 2023, the Digital Script Writing training initiative focused on the Butterworth and Buffalo City campuses. The Butterworth campus hosted the training session, which attracted 39 lecturers. Figure 5 illustrates the attendance and scope of this training. Additionally, during a benchmarking visit to PNCL, colleagues from UNISA participated in a live demonstration of Digital Script Writing, extending the impact of this educational initiative beyond WSU's

immediate community.

Figure 11: Breakdown of attendance of the digital script writing training



Open Educational Resources Promotion Workshops

The Library, in conjunction with the Directorate of Learning and Teaching (DLT), has initiated a strategic effort to promote Open Educational Resources (OERs) within the University. This initiative aims to enhance the quality and accessibility of teaching and learning materials across the Institution.

A key component of this strategy involves the establishment of a dedicated OER structure within the University. This structure will be tasked with several critical responsibilities:

- Developing comprehensive guidelines for the implementation and utilisation of OERs within the Institutional context.
- Formulating strategies to effectively integrate OERs into existing curricula and pedagogical practices.
- Spearheading promotional activities to increase awareness and adoption of OERs among faculty and students.

In the meantime, the library organised OER-related activities. Table 1.37 provides a breakdown of attendance figures for OER-related activities, categorised by academic department. This data offers insights into the current level of engagement with OERs across different disciplines within the University.

Table 1.37: Attendance of OER-Related Activities by Academic Departments

GROUP	DATE (2023)	TOTAL ATTENDANCE
Computer Science	9 February	1 (one-on-one)
DLT LTwT	2 March	15
Management and Governance	07 March	21
Hospitality	29 March	11
Tourism	30 March	11
TOTAL		**59**

INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES USAGE

Walter Sisulu University maintains two digital repositories, Vital and Figshare, which serve as platforms for the collection, preservation and dissemination of the Institution's scholarly, intellectual, and research output in digital format. Figure 13 presents data on Figshare's usage metrics for the year 2023:

Figure 12: Usage of Figshare in 2023



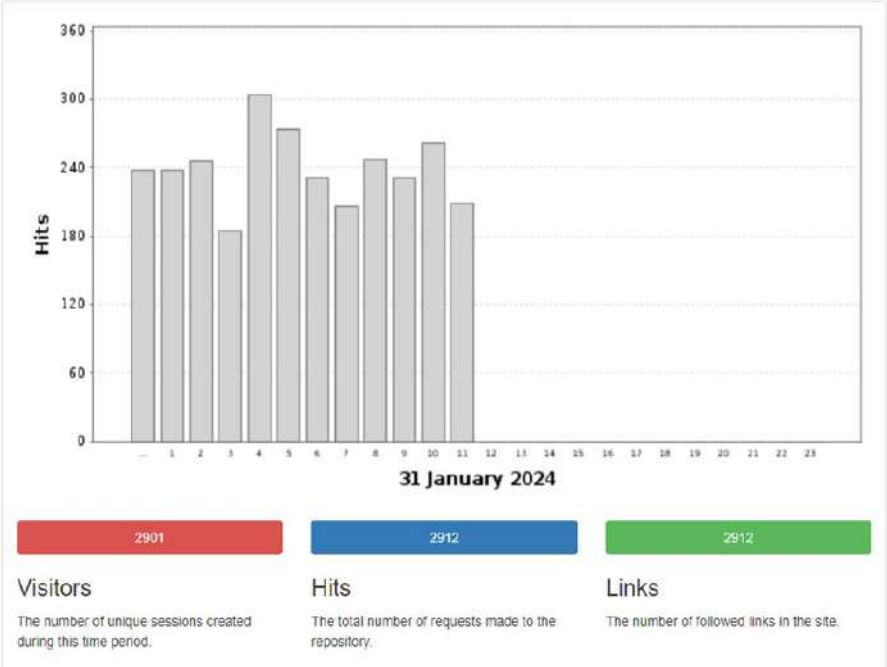
The report of the data shown in Figure 12 reflects total views of 27,412 and total downloads of 11,528. The geographical distribution of repository activity was as follows:

- United States: 50% of total activity
- South Africa: 18% of total activity, and
- United Kingdom: 15% of total activity

These statistics demonstrate the global reach and impact of the University's research output, with significant engagement from both domestic and international audiences. The predominance of activity from the United States suggests a strong international interest in the Institution's scholarly contributions, while the substantial engagement from within South Africa indicates the repository's relevance to the local academic community.

On the other hand, Vital had 2,901 visits and 2,912 requests made, as illustrated in Figure 13 which provides the types and number of items uploaded on Vital.

Figure 13: usage of Vital Repository in 2023

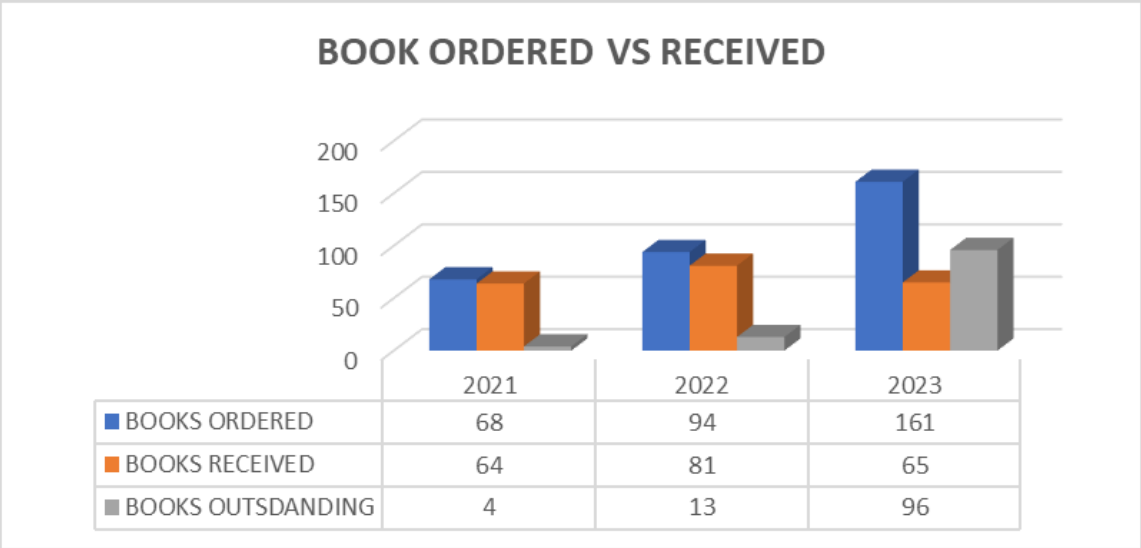


AFRICANA AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (ASC):

ASC's efforts in acquiring research resources and supporting significant research projects, like the narrative on the former University of Transkei (UNITRA), highlight the library's contribution to preserving and exploring African heritage and history.

The WSU Library's research support activities in 2023 have significantly enhanced the research environment at WSU. Africana collections reflect the complexities of African societies and the efforts to understand and express this knowledge in many forms. The Africana section of the library acquires books in all disciplines limited to Africa south of the Sahara. Figure 14. below highlights an increase in the number of books received in 2023, compared to the previous years.

Figure 14: Books acquired for Africana



	2021	2022	2023
BOOKS ORDERED	68	94	161
BOOKS RECEIVED	64	81	65
BOOKS OUTSDANDING	4	13	96

ACQUISITION AND USAGE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES

2023 Book Budget Allocation and Expenditure

In 2023, the WSU Library allocated a total budget of R2 217 323 for the acquisition of new titles across its four campus libraries. This budget facilitated the purchase of 712 new titles. This investment underscores the library's commitment to continuously updating and expanding its collection to meet the diverse needs of its academic community.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Renewal and Payment of Databases

The WSU Library successfully renewed all existing database subscriptions for 2023, ensuring uninterrupted access to crucial electronic resources for teaching, learning and research. Subscription invoice processing and payments were efficiently managed through the office of the Senior Director, ensuring the timely renewal of these vital academic resources.

Transformative Agreements

WSU Library has entered into transformative agreements with key publishers to facilitate Read and Publish models, promoting open access to research:

- Wiley (2022-2025)
- Emerald (2022-2024)
- Science Direct (2023-2025)
- Springer (2023-2025)

These agreements have enabled six WSU authors to publish their works in open access formats, enhancing the visibility and impact of their research. Specifically, five publications were through Springer and one through Wiley, demonstrating the library's efforts to support open access publishing and to disseminate knowledge widely.

Activation of Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML)

To improve user access to electronic resources, the WSU Library activated the Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML). This open federation standard enables single sign-on access for library users, both on and off-campus, to SAML-compliant databases. While SAML has been activated for most databases, the Web Access Management (WAM) system remains active for those few databases not yet SAML compliant, ensuring continued access to all electronic resources.

The acquisition and management of information resources at Walter Sisulu University Library in 2023 highlight the Institution's dedication to providing comprehensive support for its academic community. Through strategic budget allocations, transformative agreements for open access publishing and the implementation of advanced access technologies like SAML, the WSU Library continues to enhance its offerings and services. These efforts not only ensure the availability of up-to-date resources but also promote wider access and visibility of WSU's scholarly output, aligning with the library's mission to support teaching, learning and research excellence.

UPDATE ON LIBRARY SYSTEMS

The South-East Academic Library System (SEALS) Consortium, of which Walter Sisulu University (WSU) is a member, embarked on an initiative in 2023 to explore a new Library Management System (LMS) that would replace the existing Sierra system. After evaluating demonstrations from two service providers, EBSCO with their Folio LMS and Clarivate with ALMA LMS, WSU recommended the adoption of ALMA for several compelling reasons:

- **Comprehensive Functionalities**: ALMA offers a full suite of library management modules catering to WSU's specific requirements.
- **Integrated Discovery Tool and Knowledge Base**: Enhancing the user experience with seamless access to resources.
- **Widespread Adoption**: ALMA is already in use by South African academic libraries, providing a proven and familiar platform.
- **Financial System Integration**: ALMA's compatibility with Institutional financial systems like ITS ensures streamlined operations.
- **Cloud-Based Service**: The system is hosted in a cloud or Software-As-A-Service (SaaS) environment by the vendor, offering reliability and scalability.
- **Advanced Data Analytics**: ALMA includes data analytics functions for comprehensive insights across all library modules.

LIBRARY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Photos 8: Librarian during a reading session at Khulile JSS

In 2023, the Butterworth Library undertook a community engagement project aimed at assisting Grade 12 learners with WSU admissions and library resource access for their academic projects. Collaborating with the Student Affairs and Marketing, Communication and Advancement (MCA) departments, the library visited six local high schools. Additionally, Butterworth Campus Library staff conducted reading programmememes at Khulile Junior Secondary School and Zazulwana Senior Secondary School, further demonstrating WSU Library's commitment to community service and educational support.

The library's initiatives in system updates, resource optimisation and community engagement reflect Walter Sisulu University's commitment to enhancing library services and support for both its academic community and the wider society. By adopting advanced library management solutions like ALMA, refining its collection through rationalisation and consolidation, and engaging with local schools, WSU Library continues to play a pivotal role in supporting academic excellence and community development.



Section 2

Annual Performance Report 2023

2.1 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The WSU Annual Performance Plan 2023 has been prepared in the context of four parameters: the University's approved Strategic Plan 2020-2030, the current approved Enrolment Plan 2020-2025, the 2023 to 2025 midterm review of the 2020 to 2025 enrolment plan, and the regulatory requirements for reporting published by DHET as per Government Gazette No, 377126 of 9 June 2014.

This section of the report focuses on the SMART key performance indicators and performance targets against the 2023 Annual Performance Plan. The Targets were derived from the 2023 to 2025 midterm review of the Enrolment Plan in relation to the current levels of enrolments.

The output indicators refer to year (n-1) achievement and not the reporting year (n), the reason being that success rates and graduate output data for year n are not available until the conclusion of the academic year following the finalisation of examinations, including supplementary examinations and the identification of graduates.

2.1.1. ACCESS

Key Performance Indicator	2022		2023		
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Notes
Headcount					
Total Headcount	**30169**	**30455**	**32050**	**29305**	**A1**
First-time Entering UG	7 200	7 092	7 175	7 188	A2
FTEN Foundation Provisioning	2 492	2 164	1 550	2 124	A3
Headcount UG	27 569	28 783	30 254	27 399	A4
Headcount PG	2 600	1 672	1 796	1 906	
Enrolments major field of study					A5
Science, Engineering & Technology	8 990	9 224	9 294	8 955	
Business & Commerce	9 112	7 442	8 173	6 582	
Education	5 732	7 699	7 532	8 035	
Other Humanities	6335	6090	7051	5733	

ANALYSIS AND NOTES FOR THE ACCESS TABLE: A1 – A5

The following presents the achievement level and reasons for deviation against the KPIs:

A1: Despite consistently meeting and surpassing **Total Headcount** enrolment targets in the past, the Institution has encountered a 9% shortfall against the 2023 target. This discrepancy primarily stems from challenges related to retaining undergraduate students. To address this issue, the Institution has introduced two key initiatives: a tutorship programme and an academic advising system. The tutorship programmeme aims to assist undergraduate students in overcoming challenges related to course content by offering them additional academic guidance and support. The academic advising system is designed to provide students with personalised guidance and support, catering specifically to their individual needs.

A2: The Institution successfully met its target for **First-time Entering Undergraduate** (FTEN) students, with an objective of 7,175 and an actual achievement of 7,188. This accomplishment is attributed to the Institution's efforts in automating and optimising the processes related to student applications and admissions, which facilitated the achievement of the set FTEN target.

A3: The University has successfully achieved and surpassed its **First-time Entering (FTEN) Foundation** Provisioning target by a significant 37% margin. Foundation Provisioning remains a strategic priority for WSU, serving as a vital mechanism to enhance access and success for students who have historically been excluded from quality

higher education. This approach is particularly pertinent given WSU's specific context and the demographics of the student population it serves.

A4: In the 2023 academic year, the Institution faced a 10% deficit in achieving its undergraduate headcount goal. Conversely, it surpassed its postgraduate headcount target by a margin of 5%.

A5: Regarding enrolment by **major field of study**, the Institution has reported the following variations against its targets: Science, Engineering & Technology experienced a decrease of 4%, Business & Commerce saw a significant reduction of 19%, Education achieved a 6% increase, and Other Humanities faced a 19% decline. These figures provide a detailed perspective on the overall shortfall in undergraduate headcount. The Institution has initiated measures to address these shortfalls in specific areas.

2.1.2. SUCCESS

The Success section of this report delves into the academic achievements and effectiveness of the Institution's educational programmemes, as demonstrated through various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These indicators include the degree credit success rates, which measure the efficiency of students in earning credits towards their degrees; success rates by major fields of study, offering a detailed look at academic performance across different disciplines; and graduate output, quantifying the number of students who successfully complete their programmemes. Together, these KPIs provide a holistic view of student success, highlighting areas of strength and identifying opportunities for improvement. By analysing these metrics, the Institution is committed to better understanding its impact on student achievement and refining its strategies to enhance educational outcomes and support student progression at all levels.

Key Performance Indicator	2022		2023		Notes
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Overall, Degree Credit Success Rate	80%	84%	80%	82%	S1
Degree Credit Success UG	82%	87%	81%	83%	S2
Degree Credit Success PG	65%	60%	74%	53%	S3
Success rate by major field of study					
SET	78%	79%	78%	75%	S4
Business & Commerce	78%	82%	76%	77%	
Education	85%	90%	85%	92%	
Other Humanities	81%	85%	82%	83%	
Total Graduates	7 046	6382	9108	6037	
Graduates UG	6 433	6 239	8 434	5567	S5
Graduates PG	613	143	126	470	
UG output by scarce skills	1 787	1 781	2 116	1182	
Engineering	268	316	336	451	S6
Life and Physical sciences	152	161	144	222	
Human Health	262	262	298	200	
Initial Teacher Education	1 105	1042	1 338	309	

ANALYSIS AND NOTES FOR THE SUCCESS TABLE: S1 – S5

S1: For the academic year 2023, the Institution set a target for the **Overall Degree Credit Success Rate** at 80%. Impressively, the Institution not only met but also exceeded this goal, achieving an 82% success rate, thus surpassing the target by a 2% margin. This achievement underscores the Institution's commitment to academic excellence and its capability to foster an environment conducive to student success. The slight margin by which the target was exceeded reflects positively on the strategies and educational support mechanisms implemented by the Institution to enhance student performance and academic outcomes.

S2: Similarly, the Institution managed to surpass its target for the **Degree Credit Success Rate among undergraduate** students by 2% for the 2023 academic year. Initially set at 82%, the Institution impressively achieved an 83% success rate. This overachievement highlights the Institution's effective strategies and supportive educational environment, further demonstrating its commitment to enhancing undergraduate students' academic

achievements and overall success.

S3: The **Postgraduate Degree Credit Success Rate** at WSU was 53% in the reporting period.

S4: Regarding the **success rate by major field of study** for the 2023 academic year, the Institution reported the following outcomes compared to their respective targets:

- Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) had a target success rate of 78% but achieved a slightly lower rate of 75%, indicating a need for targeted improvements in this area.
- Business and Commerce exceeded its success rate target of 77% by 1%, reflecting alignment with the Institution's expectations for this field.
- Education notably exceeded its target, with an ambitious goal of 85% surpassed by an actual success rate of 92%, showcasing exceptional performance and efficacy in educational outcomes.
- Other Humanities also surpassed its target, achieving an 83% success rate against an 82% target, indicating a positive outcome and slight overachievement in this discipline.

These results provide a comprehensive overview of the Institution's performance across various fields of study, highlighting areas of both success and opportunity for further development.

S5: Walter Sisulu University awarded degrees to a total of 6 037 **graduates**, with 5 567 undergraduate students and 470 postgraduate students completing their studies.

S6: Walter Sisulu University produced 1 182 graduates in **scarce skills** areas, including 451 in Engineering, 222 in Life and Physical Sciences, 200 in Human Health and 309 in Initial Teacher Education

2.1.3. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

In this performance area, the Institution assesses its capacity and effectiveness in delivering quality teaching and learning experiences. Key indicators include the size of the academic staff, the academic qualifications of the faculty members and the student-to-staff ratios. These metrics collectively provide insights into the Institution's "fitness for purpose" regarding its educational offerings. The size of the academic staff indicates the Institution's ability to cover a broad range of subjects and courses. The levels of qualification among staff members reflect the quality and depth of knowledge available to students. Finally, student-to-staff ratios offer a measure of how personalised and attentive the teaching and learning experience can be for each student which is crucial for fostering an environment conducive to student success and satisfaction.

Key Performance Indicator	2022		2023		Notes
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Headcount permanent Instr/Res staff	598	906	920	902	E1
FTEs Instr/Res staff	761	898	890	878	E2
% Instr/Res staff with Doctoral degrees	17%	27%	28%	28%	E3
% Instr/Res staff with Master's degrees	44%	43%	44%	44%	E4
Number of nGap staff	4	4	7	3	E5
FTE ratio of student to staff	33,2	26,6	30,3	27,2	E6

E1: The University has achieved a 98% fulfilment rate in the category of **Headcount for permanent Instructional/ Research staff**. The 1% shortfall is primarily attributed to natural attrition, indicating that most vacancies or changes in staff numbers arise from expected and routine departures, such as retirements or career moves, rather than unexpected factors. This level of achievement reflects the University's stability and attractiveness as an employer but also highlights the ongoing challenge of maintaining a full complement of qualified personnel to ensure the Institution's educational objectives are met.

E2: The University set a target of 890 **Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) for Instructional/Research staff**. WSU has reported an achievement of 878 staff. This is 1.3% below the target and indicates an area of improvement for the 2024 academic year. It is critical that these targets are met as adequate FTE's for Instructional/Research staff are a critical component for the achievement and maintenance of the set academic goals and strategies.

E3: The University set a target for 28% of **Instructional/Research staff with Doctoral degrees** and has met this target. It is important to recognise that the percentage of staff with Doctoral degrees has been consistently increasing over time, both in terms of yearly targets and actual achievements. This trend underscores the University's commitment to enhancing the academic qualifications and profile of its staff, which is a positive indicator of its dedication to academic excellence and research capacity.

E4: The University aimed for 44% of its **Instructional/Research staff with Master's degrees** and this was achieved. This slight deviation from the target indicates the Institution's ongoing efforts to elevate the educational qualifications of its faculty, reflecting its commitment to providing high-quality education and research opportunities.

E5: The number of **nGAP (New Generation of Academics Programmeme) staff** at WSU was three (3).

E6: The University achieved a **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student-to-staff ratio** of 27.2, surpassing the target of 30.3. Despite experiencing a shortfall in overall headcount enrolment, this consistent improvement in the student-to-staff ratio is a clear indication of the Institution's effectiveness in attracting and retaining high-quality staff. This achievement also reflects the University's strong commitment to academic excellence, ensuring that students receive more personalised attention and support from academics.

2.1.4. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Key Performance Indicator	2022		2023		Notes
	Target	Actual	Target	Actuals	
Publication units	140	251.8	184	323.4	R1
Publication units per Instructional /Res staff	0.23	0.23	0.20	0.36	R2
Research Master's graduates	45	19	20	68	R3
Doctoral graduates	20	6	16	11	R4

The Research and Innovation section is crafted to highlight the Institution's achievements and impact in research activities, as reflected through specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs include the total scholarly publications, the average publications per instructional and research staff, and the output of research-oriented master's and doctoral graduates. Together, they offer insights into the Institution's scholarly productivity, its academics' research engagement, and its role in advancing academic and professional excellence through graduate education. This section encapsulates the Institution's dedication to fostering a vibrant research culture and its contribution to knowledge creation and innovation.

R1 The University significantly exceeded its target for **publication units**, achieving 323.4 against a target of 184, marking a 75.8% exceedance and a 28% increase from the previous year.

R2 The **publication units per instructional or research staff** also saw notable improvement, with an actual of 0.36 compared to the targeted 0.20, surpassing both the previous year's actual of 0.23 and the target.

R3 In postgraduate achievements, **research master's graduates** surpassed the target of 20, with 68 graduates, indicating strong performance in postgraduate research output.

R4 the number of **doctoral graduates** did not meet the target, achieving 11 against a goal of 16, though this was an improvement over previous results.



Section 3

Institutional Management and Administration

3.1 VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL REPORT



Prof RN Songca
Vice-Chancellor & Principal

The 2023 academic year was a year of determination, change, successes and challenges. Regardless, to address the challenges, the University relied on its vision of becoming an "Impactful, Technology Infused African University". This vision is premised on hope, courage, and the determination to move forward despite resistance and contestations. It is for this reason that we were able to face our challenges head on whether in as far as the academic project is concerned or the implementation of the Council approved Rationalisation and Consolidation Strategy. Central to our vision, is the restoration agenda, based on two pillars. First, the academic project requires us to pay particular attention to the quality of the programmes we offer, capacitation of staff members and the creation of an enabling environment for research and partnerships to thrive. The second pillar of the restoration agenda comprises an ambitious project of infrastructure renewal; it entails the renovation and construction of buildings across our four campuses. In addition, we restore the dignity of both students and staff through the provision of decent technology infused living, teaching and learning spaces which by implication required management to accelerate its infrastructure and ICT endeavours.

To operationalise and strengthen the vision of the two pillars, the University undertook several key initiatives and infrastructural advancements during the reporting period. Key appointments were made at senior management levels to drive the implementation of the Institutional vision. And the University organised its very first international Multi-Inter-Transdisciplinary Conference (MITC) to enhance research activity, productivity and culture within the University. For the second pillar, significant infrastructure developments across all campuses were realized. To name a few, they included the construction of the Ibika building at the Butterworth Campus; refurbishment of the Grey Street Office at the Komani Campus, establishment of smart classrooms at Ibika and renovation of existing facilities at Zamukulungisa (ZMK) at the Mthatha Campus and the construction of an IT Hub at ZMK. Technological infrastructure was also substantially enhanced, with the installation of Wi-Fi networks across all residential facilities and the majority of classrooms. Additionally, security camera systems were deployed to ensure the safety and well-being of the University community. All these developments align with the University's strategic trajectory towards a technology-infused educational environment, as elaborated upon in subsequent sections of this report.

The University continues to execute its mandate premised on hope, courage and determination.



Professor RN Songca
Vice Chancellor & Principal of Walter Sisulu University

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE



3.1.1 GOVERNANCE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Walter Sisulu University made significant progress in the 2023 academic year, with a number of important success indicators. The past year has seen significant developments in appointments of council members, policy formulation, compliance measures and administrative streamlining, all aimed at reinforcing the University's commitment to transparent, accountable and robust Institutional governance.

The following section of the report outlines an overview of the University's Institutional governance structures, administrative processes and key initiatives undertaken to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness across WSU's multi-campus environment.

APPOINTMENTS

Appointment of New Chancellor

In 2023, Dr Nonkululeko Gobodo was appointed unopposed as the Chancellor of WSU for a four-year term. Dr Gobodo, an esteemed alumna of WSU, has made substantial contributions to the financial sector in South Africa and beyond. Her investiture and inauguration took place on 5 August 2023, attracting numerous leaders from the private sector.

Reappointments and New Appointments at Council

Promoting continuity and impact, Councillor Fanisa Lamola was reappointed as a WSU Council member for another three years and as the Deputy Chairperson of the Council for a second term. This decision followed a performance evaluation that highlighted her significant contributions. Additionally, Professor E.N. Cishe succeeded Councillor Dr. M. Krexe as the Senate representative in the Council after he completed his second term as Senate representative at the Council.

COUNCIL MEETINGS AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

In accordance with the University statute, the Council successfully convened all its scheduled meetings in 2023,

held on 14 April, 28 July and 27 October. Other governance structures, including the Senate, Institutional Forum, Convocation and Student Support Services Committee, also maintained their schedules, demonstrating robust governance and making crucial decisions for the benefit of WSU.

GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP

To enhance the Council's capacity to fulfil its mandate, a Governance and Management Workshop was held on 4 August 2023. Professor Themba Mosia, a former Chairperson of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), led the workshop, which had the theme: "Strengthening Good Governance and Management at WSU."

GRADUATE DEBT CLEARANCE FUNDRAISING

The Convocation Executive Committee launched a Graduate Debt Clearance fundraising programmeme in 2023, securing over 70 million rands to date. This initiative has benefited thousands of graduates, enabling them to receive their certificates. The campaign remains ongoing.

RATIONALISATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF FACULTIES

The Council enacted the full implementation of the Rationalisation of Faculties and Consolidation of Campus (R&C) initiative, effective 1 June 2023. The Registrar's Office led the implementation on the Integrated Tertiary System (ITS) Administration System, covering student support, finance, human resources, and HEMIS. The reconfiguration was completed on 31 December 2023, on schedule and within budget, for full implementation on 1 January 2024. The implementation itself involved nine notable milestones:

Table 1.38: ITS Integrator Implementation Milestones

Milestone No	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
01	*Dedicated Test Environment*	Provision of hardware and installation of ITS Integrator for test data import.
02	*New Faculty and Department Structures*	Preparation and review of templates, technical scripts and testing plans for new structures.
03	*New Cost Centre Structure*	Completion and review of templates, technical scripts and testing plans for new cost centres.
04	*Local Software Development*	Development and testing of local copies of trial balances and general ledger reports.
05	*New Qualification Structure*	Preparation, review and implementation of new qualification templates and technical scripts.
06	*New Subjects or Module Structure*	Preparation, review and implementation of new templates of subjects, curriculums and technical scripts.
07	*Local Software Development for HEMIS*	Development of routines for HEMIS normalisation and synchronisation of credit values.
08	*Human Resources Information*	Strategy and implementation of updated personnel and post records in the new structure.
09	*Production Environment Implementation*	Review and implementation of all updates in the production environment, including finance and academic structures.

3.1.2 ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION EFFICIENCY

IT GOVERNANCE

The University recognises the critical role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the modern educational landscape. WSU as an Institution of higher learning navigates an increasingly digitised world, with the implementation of robust IT Governance Frameworks and associated business processes that have become paramount.

The University acknowledges that ICT has evolved beyond its traditional role as a mere enabler of teaching, learning and administrative efficiency. It now stands at the core of curriculum delivery across our campuses. In response to this shift, WSU is prioritising the development and implementation of comprehensive IT Governance strategies via the Registrar's Office.

The Registrar's Office has enhanced the ITS Administration system to improve efficiency and effectiveness across various academic processes as outlined in the table below.

Table 1.39: Core WSU systems and their functions

System Category	SYSTEM NAME	FUNCTION
Academic Management	*CELCAT Timetabling System*	Optimised resource allocation and scheduling.
	Auto Promotion and Progression System	Automated student progression based on predefined criteria.
	Identification of Academic Exclusions System	Improved tracking of excluded students.
	Identification of Graduates System	Verified qualifications and credentials to prevent academic fraud.
Student Services	*Application Management System (AMS)*	Enhanced application processes with real-time eligibility checks and ranking.
	Student Communications (IComms)	Utilised multiple channels to communicate important information to students.
	I-Enabler System	Streamlined academic administration for both staff and students, covering registration, timetabling, examination and fee management.

These ICT systems enhancements significantly improved operational efficiency and student satisfaction during the 2023 academic year.

CONCLUSION

The achievements of 2023 reflect WSU's ongoing commitment to excellence in governance and academic administration. These initiatives not only strengthen the University's operational capabilities but also ensure a high-quality educational experience for all students and staff.



3.1.3 OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

3.1.3.1 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Directorate at Walter Sisulu University plays a critical role in advancing the Institution's mission of becoming an impactful, technology-infused African University. In the 2023 academic year, the ICT initiatives focused on enhancing digital infrastructure, improving service delivery and supporting the University's teaching, learning, and research activities across all campuses.

This section of the report outlines key developments and achievements and future strategies in the University's ongoing efforts to leverage technology for Institutional excellence and innovation in higher education.

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT

In as far as the ICT Infrastructure Development is concerned, throughout 2023, WSU made substantial investments in its ICT infrastructure to support the University's core activities. Significant projects undertaken include projects listed in the table below.

Table 1.40: Key ICT Infrastructure Projects at WSU in 2023

Project	Description
Campus-Wide WiFi Installation	To ensure universal high-speed internet access across all WSU campuses
CCTV Installation	For enhanced security in critical areas such as examination venues and campus entrances
Datacentre Upgrade	Modernised data handling capabilities and improved security
Cybersecurity Enhancements	Strengthened defences to safeguard University data against cyber threats
Smart Classroom Technologies	Implemented cutting-edge technologies in classrooms to facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences.

In addition to the key infrastructure projects, the University further enhanced its ICT capabilities through targeted initiatives aimed at empowering academic staff and students and digitising core business processes for teaching and learning and research initiatives.

For instance, the University launched a comprehensive programme to supply all academic staff with laptops, ensuring they have the necessary tools to execute and excel in their professional activities and leverage the Institution's enhanced digital environment. In parallel with these hardware provisions, the ICT directorate also focused on developing and implementing critical software systems to streamline the University's operations and improve service delivery. This ICT Systems Development initiative encompassed several key projects that have been implemented successfully as outlined in Table 1.41 below:

Table 1.41: ICT Systems Development

Project	Description
Moodle LMS Upgrade	Enhanced the Learning Management System to support a robust online teaching and learning environment.
MySafe Space System	Introduced a reporting platform for GBV incidents in the University to foster a safer campus community for both staff and students. To be launched in 2024.
MITC Conference System	Streamlined the submission and management of research proceedings and abstracts.

These system developments have markedly improved the efficiency of the teaching, learning, research and support services.

ICT SERVICES MANAGEMENT

In the reporting period, the ICT Directorate also significantly enhanced its ICT support services for students. A dedicated ICT unit for student technical support was established, ensuring timeous assistance for technology-related issues. The key achievements of the ICT Services Management unit include:

- Provision of continuous technical support to students.
- Management and distribution of mobile data to all students.
- Rapid response to technology-related queries and issues.

The provision of mobile data to students has been particularly impactful, facilitating access to online learning resources and supporting remote study activities. This initiative has played a crucial role in bridging the digital divide and ensuring equitable access to educational resources for all students.

By centralising these services, the ICT Directorate has streamlined support processes, leading to improved efficiency and student satisfaction.

2024 STRATEGIC FOCUS

The ICT department is poised to continue its focus on digital strategy implementation in 2024. Key initiatives will include the deployment of a research management system, e-tutoring system, examination question paper submission system, WSU mobile app and transport management system, all aiming to enhance the effectiveness of WSU's core business processes.

The expansion of WiFi services to ensure comprehensive coverage across all campuses is also a priority.

WSU's ICT department is driving forward with innovative initiatives to boost the University's operational effectiveness and align with its strategic vision. Through deliberate infrastructure enhancement, system development and service management, the ICT Directorate is laying a solid technological foundation for WSU's future as a leading, technology-infused African University.

3.1.3.2 ICT INTEGRATION IN SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES

In the 2023 reporting year, the University's commitment to technological advancement extended to its Short Learning Programmemes, a key initiative for expanding third-stream income and enhancing stakeholder collaborations. These programmemes are crucial for the University in forging and revitalising partnerships with various stakeholders, including government departments, private sector entities and community-based organisations. The goal is to ensure that current relationships contribute to the Institution's third-stream income and development objectives while the University pursues new strategic partnerships.

OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND EFFICIENCY

The University adopted the ITS: Short Courses module developed by AdaptIT. This Short Course Module system has significantly simplified administrative processes, providing a seamless experience from student applications through to graduation. The implementation of this module is a major step forward in the University's digital transformation efforts, enhancing both efficiency and user experience.

The University also prioritised training and development to ensure the effective utilisation of these new systems. In October 2023, comprehensive training was provided to Faculty Officers on the ITS: Short Course Module, equipping them with the necessary skills to navigate and optimise the new system. This was followed by academic staff training on SLP design and development in November 2023, fostering a holistic approach to programmeme improvement.

Further technological advancements are underway, with efforts focused on reducing reliance on printed certificates through the introduction of a Digital Certificates system. This initiative aligns with global trends towards digitisation and will provide a more secure and accessible method for credential verification.

Additionally, the development of the DSLP website has been coordinated to coincide with the launch of new SLP offerings, ensuring a cohesive and user-friendly platform for prospective students.

LEVERAGING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

The University made significant strides in leveraging its strategic partnerships to enhance its Short Learning Programmemes and expand its impact. The University focused on utilising existing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with key stakeholders, particularly the Eastern Cape Department of Education and the Office of the Premier. These partnerships proved fruitful, leading to the implementation of several significant projects in the first three quarters of the 2023 year.

Active efforts are underway to finalise MOUs and project proposals with various governmental and local entities, aiming to unlock significant revenue potential and foster impactful community engagement through Short Learning Programmemes.

2024 STRATEGIC FOCUS:

- **New SLPs and Partnerships**: The plan is to approve new SLPs starting April 2024 and to solidify partnerships with WSU's Institutional Advancement and Community Engagement and Internationalisation divisions.
- **From Engagements to Revenue**: Efforts will focus on transforming stakeholder engagements into formal MOUs and then into revenue-generating activities.
- **Block Grant Applications**: There will be a targeted approach to secure block grants to support these initiatives.

MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE



3.1.4 DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE

The University made significant progress in enhancing its physical infrastructure to support its academic mission and improve the learning and living environment for students and working environments for staff members. The University's infrastructure development strategy focused on three key areas, which included; refurbishing existing structures, repurposing facilities to meet evolving needs and constructing new buildings. This comprehensive approach has allowed WSU to maximise the utility of its current assets while also expanding its capacity to meet future demands and those that stemmed from the implementation of the R&C Project.



Photo 9: shows some buildings that have been refurbished, repurposed and newly constructed.

The following section of this report details progress in each of the three categories, highlighting the University's progress in meeting its goals of developing the state-of-the-art facilities for teaching, learning, living and research.

REFURBISHED WSU BUILDINGS

The following information provides a list of completed refurbished buildings in 2023.

COMPLETED REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS					
ITEM	**CAMPUS**	**SITE**	**PROJECTS**	**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**	**AVAILABLE**
1	Mthatha	NMD	NMD Teaching Facilities - East Teaching Mall	Lecture Venues	2023
2			Faculty Consolidation	Offices & Labs	2023
3			KGB & KTC Student Residence Refurbishment	Student Residences	2023
4	Butterworth	Ibika		Student Residences	2023
5	Komani	Grey Street	Grey Street Offices	Addition of Offices	2023

Refurbished students' residences

The project refurbished 314 student beds with modern finishes, ensuring higher standards of comfort and security. Enhancements included upgraded common spaces, security features, wi-fi and improved accessibility for people with disabilities. It was completed in March 2023.

The following pictures show the refurbished buildings that have been completed in 2023.



Photo 10: Refurbishment of KGB and KTC Student Residences Mthatha Campus

KGB & KTC STUDENT RESIDENCES



Photo 11: Refurbishment of KGB and KTC student residences

Refurbished office spaces

The project scope entailed the refurbishment of offices, lecture venues, auditorium, boardrooms, installation of audio-visual equipment and fixed seating at Zamukulungisa at the Mthatha campus. The practical completion was achieved in July 2023.

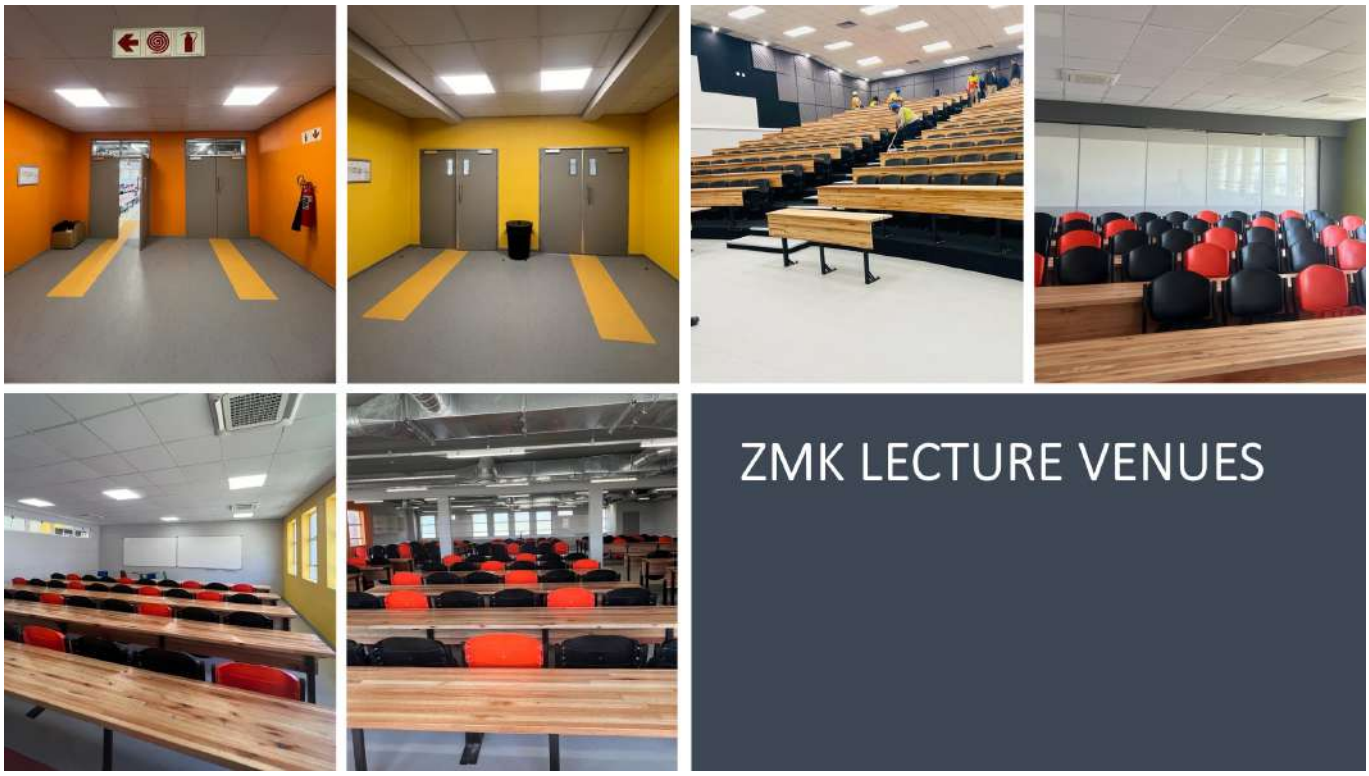


Photo 12: Refurbished Offices, Lecture Venues, Auditorium & Boardrooms at Zamukulungisa Mthatha Campus

REPURPOSED WSU BUILDINGS

Marine Biology Lab

Completion achieved in 2023 for the National Pollutions Block and Marine Biology Lab.



Photos 13: Repurposed Maine Biology Lab

NEW WSU BUILDINGS

Construction of new lecture and teaching spaces

A new two-storey building was completed in November 2023, comprising offices, lecture venues, boardrooms, an auditorium, meeting and discussion areas and a computer lab. This building is equipped with modern audio-visual equipment and finishes, enhancing the teaching and learning environment.



Photos 14: Ibika FMS Building

Construction of an IT Hub

The construction of the IT Hub at Zamukulungisa (Mthatha campus) was completed in 2023



Photo 15: IT Hub at ZMK Mthatha campus

Office space increments

At Grey Street Offices at the Komani campus the project scope entailed the construction of additional office space and boardroom at the existing building that comprises of classes and offices. It was completed successfully in August 2023.

GREY STREET
OFFICE SPACE



Photo 16: Figure 1 Grey Street Office Space Komani Campus

CURRENT PROJECTS

- Construction of Technopark Engineering building at Potsdam.
- The refurbishment of the Mthatha student residences including Ntinga residence, renovations to Baghdad and Kuwait residences.
- Completion of student residences at Dr Malizo Mpehle Memorial Hospital.
- Construction of student accommodation at Butterworth Hospital and St Barnabas Hospital.

UPCOMING PROJECTS IN 2024

- Construction of IT Hubs in NMD (Mthatha), Butterworth and Potsdam.
- The Student Housing Infrastructure Programmeme (SHIP) in collaboration with the DBSA's SHIP Management Office will see the University adding 3200 beds across its campuses.
- The refurbishment of student life at KGB and KTC.
- Construction of Engineering workshops at Potsdam.
- Refurbishment of learning spaces at Chiselhurst.
- Upgrade of Faculty of Hospitality at Ibika.
- Upgrade of Research Stations at Dwesa (Willowvale) and Lwandile (Ngqeleni).
- Construction of new admin offices at NMD.
- Construction of specialised laboratories for the FHSSL at ZMK.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY/ENHANCED ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE TO ACHIEVE A GREEN STAR RATING

Walter Sisulu University is proactively addressing its environmental impact through significant investments in sustainable energy solutions. A notable initiative is the pilot solar energy project at the Potsdam Campus in Buffalo City, which features 486 solar panels distributed across farmland, rooftops and parking sheds, as shown in the pictures.

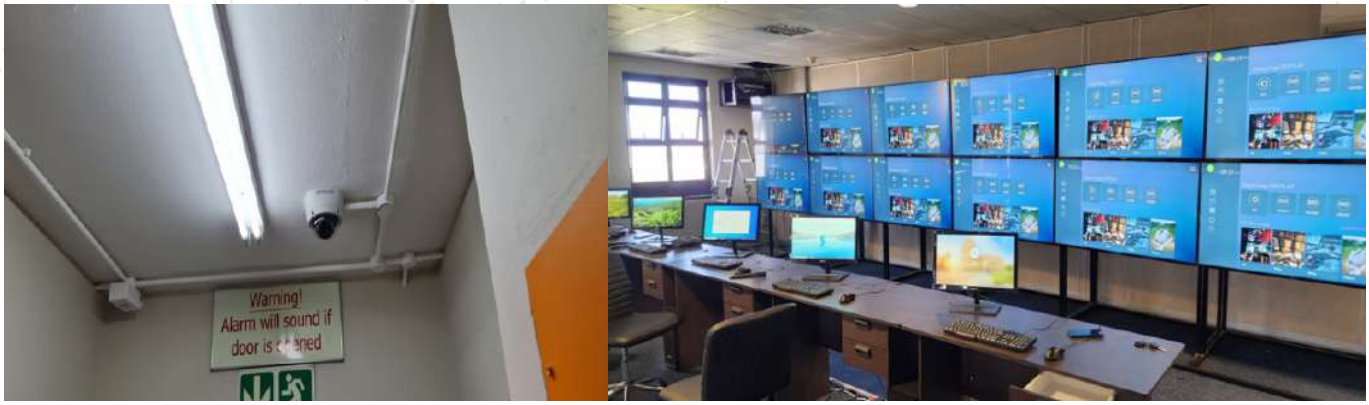


Photo 17: Solar energy project

This grid-tied system is capable of generating 250 kW of power, significantly reducing the campus's reliance on traditional energy sources, lowering carbon emissions and cutting energy costs. The insights gained from this pilot project will guide the expansion of solar energy across other University campuses to enhance overall energy efficiency and ensure energy security.

A SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

To enhance safety and health on campus, the University has implemented comprehensive security measures including the installation of CCTV cameras across all buildings and campuses as shown in the pictures.



Photos 18: CCTV cameras

These cameras are monitored continuously from a central off-campus control room that also manages access controls, ensuring rapid response to security incidents. Entrance and exit points are manned 24/7 by security personnel, reinforcing campus security. Collaborative safety forums with local police, community groups and internal stakeholders further bolster the safety of the University community. Moreover, the University adheres strictly to the Occupational Health and Safety Act by maintaining fire safety equipment, conducting regular drills, and ensuring clean, health-conducive environments in line with the National Environmental Management Waste Act as shown in the picture.



Photos 19: University Campus Grounds

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PROVISION OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The University prioritises the strategic maintenance of its infrastructure and assets to support uninterrupted academic activities and preserve asset integrity. An ongoing project involves upgrading and implementing Archibus, an advanced maintenance management system. This system facilitates both on-demand and preventive maintenance, aiming to extend the lifespan of assets, minimise downtime, enhance performance and improve financial outcomes. These efforts are essential for maintaining facilities in optimal condition, ensuring they are safe, reliable and effective for educational and research purposes.



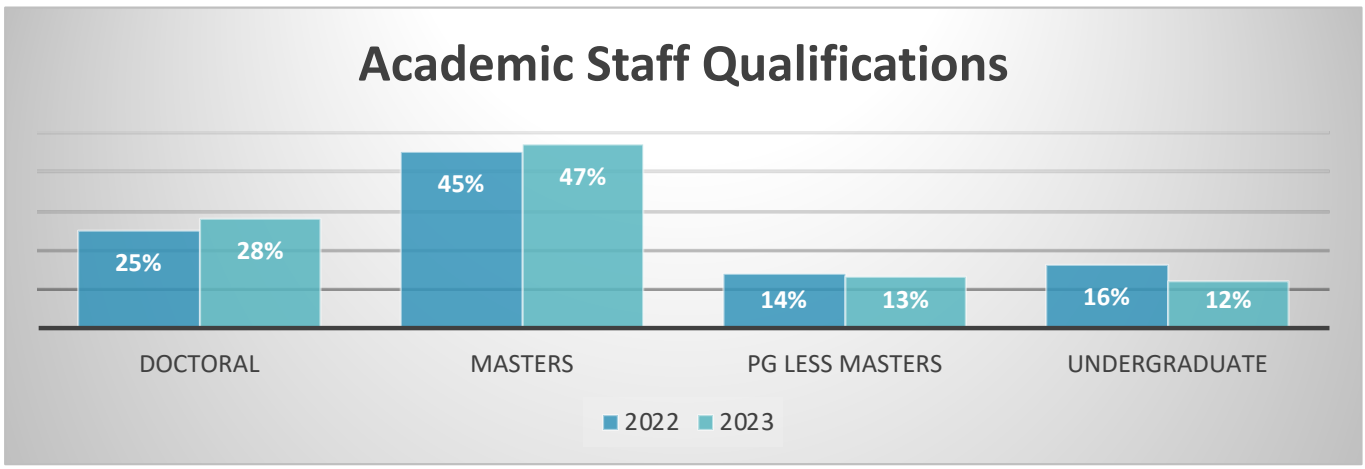
3.1.5 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

In alignment with Strategic Goal 5: "Empowered Staff", Walter Sisulu University has implemented several key initiatives to support and enhance the Institutional staff's professional development and qualifications. This section of the report provides an overview of the key activities and statistics for the 2023 reporting period.

STAFF COMPLEMENT

As of 2023, WSU maintained a steady workforce with a total of 1 946 full-time employees, comprising 799 academic staff and 1 147 support staff. The ratio of academic to support staff remains below the optimal target of 1:1.4.

Figure 15: Academic Staff Qualifications



STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

There has been a notable improvement in the qualifications of the University's academic staff.

Table 1.42: Academic Staff Qualification Profile: 2022-2023 Comparison

Qualification type level	2022	2023
Doctoral	200	228
Masters	352	374
PG less Masters	111	103
Undergraduate	124	100
Grand Total	**787**	**805**

In terms of Table 1.42 Doctoral Degrees increased to 28% in 2023 from 25% in 2022. Master's Degrees rose to 47% in 2023 from 45% in 2022. Overall, 75% of academic staff met or exceeded the minimum qualification requirements by the end of 2023.

Efforts to further enhance staff qualifications include 100% study subsidies for master's and doctoral studies, research leave, and study leave, with a significant number of staff currently pursuing higher degrees.

HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) PROJECTS

- HR Policy Review: Ongoing efforts to ensure all HR policies comply with governance requirements.
- Skills Audit: Launched in February 2023 and projected to be completed by February 2024, this audit will inform future training and development strategies.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- A total of 194 staff members are actively enrolled in programmes ranging from diplomas to doctoral degrees, demonstrating the University's commitment to continuous professional growth.
- In 2023 alone, 38 staff members successfully completed their master's or doctoral degrees.

STAFF MOVEMENT AND RECRUITMENT

- Employee Turnover: Walter Sisulu University (WSU) maintains a low employee turnover rate, under 4%, indicating stable workforce conditions.
- Executive Recruitment: Key positions filled in 2023 include:

- Executive Director: Institutional Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (Started June 1, 2023)
- Director: Budgeting, Expenditure and Reporting (Started July 1, 2023)

2023 Appointment Summary: Efforts to diversify staff composition have continued, with a total of 112 new personel hired across various levels, including top and senior management, professional qualified specialists and skilled technical positions.

WORKFORCE AGE ANALYSIS

Age Distribution: 64% of WSU staff are below the age of 50, with 32% between 50 and 65 years, and 2% above retirement age, notably in specialised academic roles like Medicine.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY STATUS

Gender and Racial Composition

WSU continues to address gender disparity, especially in top and senior management levels. Employment equity efforts are reflected in the detailed demographic breakdown across various occupational levels.

	BLACK		BLACK Total	COL		COL Total	INDIAN		INDIAN Total	WHITE		WHITE Total	FOREIGN NAT		FOREIGN NAT Total	GRAND TOTAL
OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS	F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M		
Top Management	6	4	10					1	1					4	4	15
Senior Management	18	29	47	1	1	2							1		1	50
Prof Qualified Exp Specialist	406	414	820	8	3	11	9	18	27	12	20	32	27	109	136	1026
Skilled Tech Acad Qual WRKS	271	203	474	5	2	7	3		3	1	2	3		2	2	489
Semi-Skilled Decision Making	169	152	321			1	1		1	2		2	1		1	326
Unskilled Defined Decs Making	34	24	58		1	1										59
Grand Total	**904**	**826**	**1730**	**14**	**7**	**22**	**13**	**19**	**32**	**15**	**22**	**37**	**29**	**115**	**144**	**1965**

STAFF LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

The total number of staff living with disabilities has remained constant at 7 over the three-year period from 2021 to 2023.

Table 1.43: WSU staff living with disabilities

Staff with Disability	Calendar Year		
Gender	2021	2022	2023
F	2	2	2
M	5	5	5
Grand Total	**7**	**7**	**7**

PERSONNEL COSTS

Budget and Expenditure: Personnel costs for 2023 were 101% of the budgeted amount, representing 66% of unrestricted income, which is above the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) norm for personnel costs.

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

Work Environment: The University maintains a cordial relationship with its staff, facilitated by regular meetings through the Joint Bargaining Forum and management-labour interactions where strategic priorities and achievements are discussed.

CRITICAL HR INITIATIVES

- Rationalisation and Consolidation Project: Approved by the Council on May 26, 2023, with initial implementation in January 2024 leading to significant staff relocations and transfers. The next phase is planned for January 2025.
- Organisational Restructure: In December 2023, WSU approved a new organisational structure for both academic and support functions to enhance operational efficiency and support strategic objectives.

These initiatives and data points reflect WSU's commitment to strategic human resource management, fostering a supportive and efficient work environment while ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and enhancing Institutional governance.

TRANSFORMATION



3.1.6 TRANSFORMATION

At Walter Sisulu University, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Support (DVC-IS) is important in advancing the University's commitment to transformation, multilingualism, inclusivity, equity and diversity. These principles are comprehensively integrated across various facets of the University, including Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, Community Engagement and Governance. The Institution actively monitors, evaluates, and reports on the progress of implementing the Institutional Transformation Plan and the Language Policy Implementation Plan. The 2023 Annual Report on Transformation underscores Walter Sisulu University's alignment with its vision of being "The African University in Pursuit of Excellence," embodying its mission and core values through strategic initiatives. This approach ensures that the University not only embraces change but also leads in creating a transformative, educational environment. The details of the structure that supports these efforts will be outlined in the subsequent sections, highlighting the continuous strides being made toward realising a transformative academic landscape.

3.1.6.1 TRANSFORMATION AT WSU

At Walter Sisulu University, the focus on transformation involves nurturing an affirming and transformative Institutional culture that champions diversity, multilingualism and social inclusion. This effort aligns with the WSU Transformation Plan and the WSU Strategic Planning document, which guide significant contributions to change and renewal across the Institution.

The main functions associated with transformation include:

- Coordinating all transformation activities across the Institution to ensure comprehensive and cohesive action.
- Conducting student Institutional culture surveys and formulating improvement plans based on feedback, aimed at enhancing the Institutional culture.
- Organising dialogues, awareness campaigns, seminars and workshops that address critical transformational issues such as language, gender, disability and decolonisation.

- Enhancing student support in teaching and learning through advisory roles that contribute to the development of a transformative curriculum focused on student-centered approaches and success.
- Collaborating with various departments to ensure a stable, safe and secure environment for all, with a particular focus on student well-being.

These functions collectively emphasise WSU's commitment to leading and embodying transformation in the higher education sector.

Significant Activities of 2023 Academic Year

In 2023, WSU actively pursued a series of transformation initiatives designed to foster a culture of inclusivity and change across its campuses:

- **WSU Transformation Policy Rollout:** Following its development in 2022 and approval by the Council, the Transformation Policy was disseminated through roadshows at various campuses to clarify its goals and promote collaborative implementation.
- **WSU Transformation Indaba:** Held in East London with the theme "Contested Meaning of Transformation in Higher Education," this event aimed to define WSU's transformation vision and foundational pillars. Discussions from this indaba directly informed the development of the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP).
- **Institutional Culture Survey:** Launched in collaboration with Human Resources and Student Affairs to align the University community with WSU's core values and Vision 2030, although it faced challenges with initial low participation.
- **Development of the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP):** The ITP outlines a strategic roadmap for implementing transformation across the University, emphasising equity, inclusion and curriculum transformation among other areas.
- **"UMXHOLO" Seminar Series:** Initiated to foster academic discourse on transformation, with the first webinar focusing on decolonising the curriculum and marking the start of a series aimed at discussing transformation-related topics.
- **Proposal for an Institutional Transformation Committee:** To ensure effective oversight of transformation projects and programmes, a proposal for forming this committee is under review, with its Terms of Reference being finalised.

These efforts demonstrate WSU's commitment to transforming its educational environment into one that is inclusive and responsive to the needs of its community, aligning with global and local initiatives for sustainable development.

3.1.6.2 INCLUSIVITY, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

The Institution is committed to advancing inclusivity, equity and diversity within its academic and working environments. This commitment is demonstrated through the efforts to support students and staff with disabilities, ensuring their successful integration and participation in University life.

WSU has been actively involved in advocating for the rights of students with disabilities. Collaborations with academic advisors and social workers across all campuses aim to provide a supportive academic and social environment. This initiative has led to significant improvements in universal access and the promotion of a universally designed learning environment.

In 2023, the University welcomed a diverse group of students with disabilities, including 32 partially sighted students, 5 blind students, 22 students with physical disabilities, 3 with hearing impairments and 5 with psychosocial disabilities. Additionally, approximately 7 staff members with disabilities are also part of the University community. These figures highlight WSU's dedication to creating an accessible and inclusive educational landscape, with expectations of increasing numbers in 2024.

Operations based at the Zamukulungisa site on the Mthatha Campus, with facilities also on the Komani and Buffalo City campuses, are supported by a Council-approved budget. This structure underscores the University's adherence to the Employment Equity Act, which emphasises the integration and support of individuals with disabilities within the workforce.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) has forged a significant partnership with the South African National Deaf Society (SANDA) to bolster support for the deaf community. This collaboration focuses on providing technological support, assistive devices and training in South African Sign Language for both staff and students, reinforcing WSU's commitment to an inclusive educational environment.

In addition to this partnership, WSU has worked in cooperation with its Human Resources department to develop four key policies tailored to meet the diverse needs of the University community:

- Reasonable Accommodations Policy
- Institutional Disability Policy
- Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Policy
- Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy

These policies are designed to ensure a supportive, equitable and safe environment for all members of the WSU community, especially those with disabilities.

INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

WSU has also undertaken a range of activities to promote inclusivity and diversity:

- **Student Development:** An Institutional Disability Induction Workshop was held on 27 September 2023.
- **Staff Development:** The University has hosted and participated in several events, including the Advancing Universal Access Colloquium, the 2nd Annual Africa Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit, AFRiNEAD, and the HEDSA Biennial Conference. Additionally, workshops on ICT Solutions and Exam Preparations have been instrumental in advancing accessible education.

Looking ahead to the first term of 2024, WSU plans to continue its efforts to foster inclusivity and equity. Planned activities include Orientation and Mobility Training and the Eastern Cape Regional Collaboration Workshop, which will further WSU's goal of creating a supportive and inclusive community.

3.1.6.3 LANGUAGES AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) has demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting linguistic diversity and preserving indigenous knowledge, reflected in its strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing the role of African languages within the academic community and beyond.

2023 Activities in Language Policy and Collaboration

In 2023, WSU developed a comprehensive Language Policy and Implementation Plan, which has been endorsed by the Fourth Senate Language Committee and is awaiting final approval from the Executive Management Committee, Senate, and Council in June 2024. The collaboration with the Pan South African Languages Board (PanSALB) has provided valuable feedback and recommendations, ensuring alignment with national and provincial language policies.

Advocacy, Conferences, and Celebrations

A Language Audit conducted on June 19, 2023, highlighted the need for continued advocacy for linguistic inclusivity at WSU. The hosting of the Southern African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Society (SALALS) conference in July and the celebration of Mother-Tongue Day in February 2024 further emphasised WSU's role as a center for multilingualism and the intellectualisation of African languages.

Technological Efforts and Collaborations

The SWiP Project, which focuses on the digital preservation of African languages, has positioned WSU as a leader in protecting linguistic heritage through technology. This project, along with the development of Faculty Language Implementation Plans, showcases WSU's commitment to a strategic and multilingual educational approach.

Curriculum Transformation and Digitisation

Curriculum transformation and digitisation are integral to WSU's mission to evolve its educational offerings. Despite budgetary constraints, the University has guided faculties through transformative processes, resulting in the development of Faculty Curriculum Transformation Frameworks. These frameworks, established during

workshops in mid-2023, are set to be implemented across all teaching and learning domains, demonstrating WSU's dedication to a dynamic and responsive educational environment.

These initiatives collectively highlight WSU's commitment to fostering an educational environment that values cultural and linguistic diversity, supporting a broader understanding and appreciation of indigenous knowledge systems.



3.1.7 SUSTAINABILITY

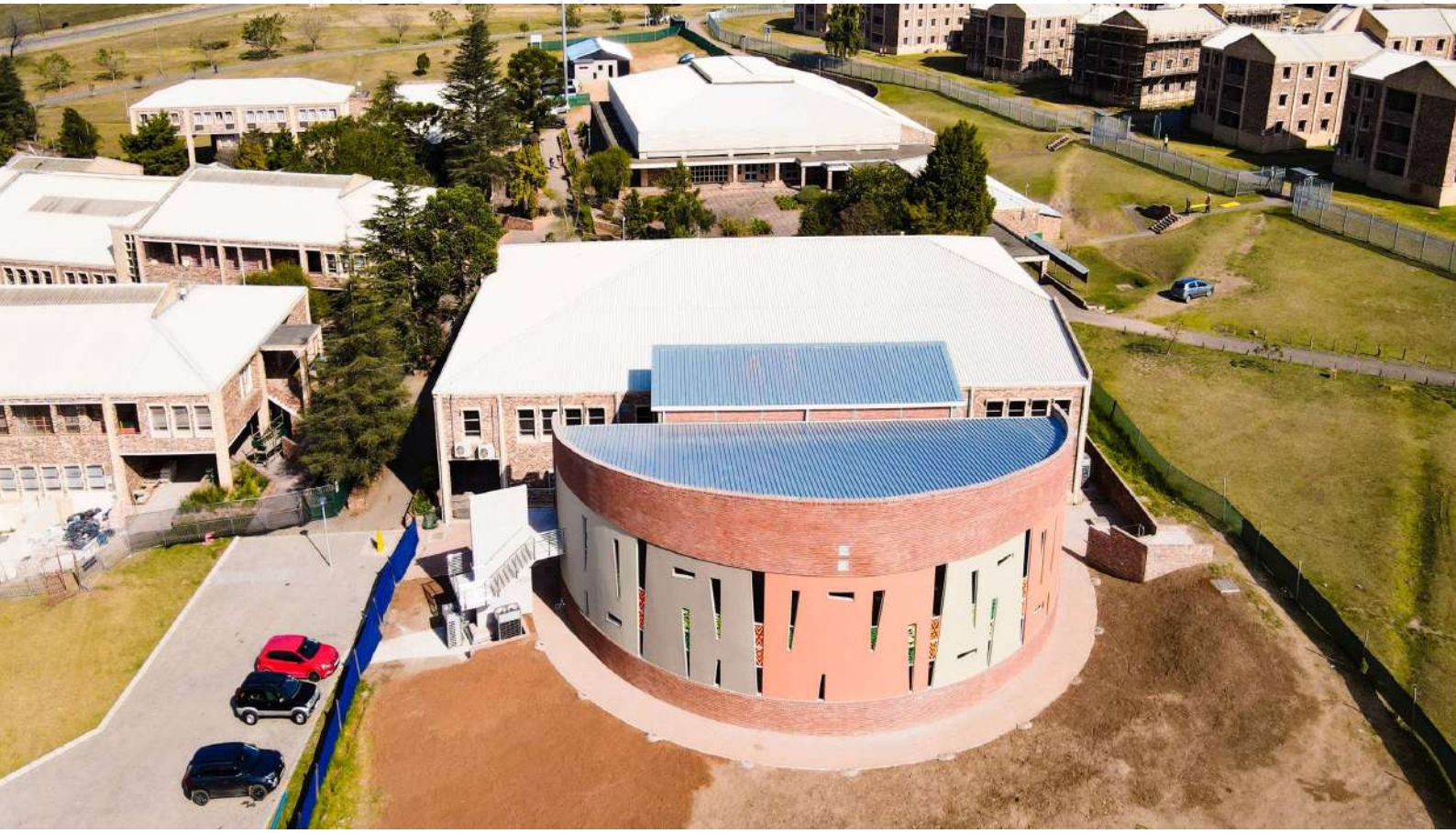
Through the leadership of Council and Management Walter Sisulu University (WSU) is committed to contributing in building a sustainable society, and into being a sustainable institution. We locate our overall vision within the global, continental, and national objectives. Under the now adopted Vision of Impactful, Technology-infused African University, and the WSU transformation goals as guided by the approved Transformation Policy we are re-imagining our operations towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a noticeable foothold surfacing around green energy, reducing carbon footprint, and reduction of use of paper using technology advancement.

The University is unequivocal in pursuit of excellence and aims to enhance its contribution to the sustainable social and economic development of the Eastern Cape region and South Africa. In this pursuit, WSU has adopted a Strategic Plan: 2020-2030. One of the key objectives is the now approved Rationalization of Faculties and Consolidation of Campuses for the academic and financial sustainability of the University itself. Operationally, WSU has committed itself to improve sustainability practices. On the side of energy transformation WSU has installed Solar Photovoltaics on its Buffalo City Campus this will increase reliance on clean energy by converting light into electricity. This energy transformation project will be extended to Mthatha Campus, Butterworth Campus and Komani Campus over the next few years.

WSU has significantly reduced reliance on papers as it has automated a number of its business process within Finance, Human Resources, Infrastructure, Academic Administration etc. This has seen reduction in the use of printers as staff are continuously trained on how to use technological devices to conduct their businesses. More than 50 – 60% of WSU meetings are now conducted virtually and that contributes towards reducing the carbon footprint.

As outlined in the previous reports that WSU pays attention on improving water security, especially in Butterworth and Mthatha. It can be confirmed that Butterworth Campus water reservoir has now been commissioned and is full operational. The new and refurbished buildings have built into their specifications the sustainability factor in that some afford the use of natural light during the day.

Our research priorities continue to be responsive to social needs, particularly from the area in which we are situated. Researchers are encouraged to advance research into sustainability issues. The core of our accredited research activity is in the health and natural sciences fields. In addition, we are proud to host national facilities such as the National Pollution Laboratory and the Risk and Vulnerability Centre which focuses on climate change issues, and the Nedbank Chair in Rural Development which researches food security and land reform and rural enterprise development issues.



3.1.8 STUDENT LIFE

WSU has embarked on a multifaceted approach to deepen and broaden the quality of student life. This initiative, grounded in the belief that enriched student experiences foster a more inclusive and fulfilling University journey, emphasises meeting students' diverse needs, enhancing their learning beyond traditional classroom settings and fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. The Student Affairs Division has spearheaded various strategies to achieve these ends, focusing on several key areas in 2023:

- **Policy Reviews and Committee Formations:** By revisiting existing policies and establishing new committees, WSU aims to ensure that governance structures and Institutional policies are responsive to the evolving needs and aspirations of its student body. These efforts are intended to create more supportive and enabling environments for all students.
- **Online Solutions for Administrative Effectiveness:** Recognising the importance of efficiency in administration, the University has introduced online solutions designed to streamline administrative processes. This move not only improves service delivery but also makes it easier for students to access the services and support they need, when they need it.
- **Psycho-social Support and Primary Health Care:** Understanding the critical role of mental and physical health in student success, WSU has enhanced its psycho-social support services and primary health care offerings. These services are crucial for ensuring that students can navigate the challenges of University life with adequate support and resources.
- **Student Governance and Leadership Development Programmes:** Leadership skills and active participation in governance are invaluable for personal development and career readiness. To this end, WSU has implemented programmes specifically designed to cultivate leadership qualities among students and engage them meaningfully in student governance structures.
- **Collaborations with Internal and External Stakeholders:** By forging partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders, WSU aims to enrich the student experience through a variety of programmes and initiatives. These collaborations are geared towards expanding opportunities for students and enhancing the quality of student affairs services.

In 2023, these targeted strategies have not only contributed to the personal and academic growth of WSU students but have also laid the groundwork for a more inclusive, supportive and enriching University environment. Through these concerted efforts, WSU is steadfast in its commitment to creating a University experience that is both rewarding and transformative for all its students.

3.1.8.1 EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

In an effort to streamline and enhance its administrative functions, the Student Affairs Division of Walter Sisulu University engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning session aimed at crafting a forward-looking 2024 Annual Performance Plan. This plan was carefully aligned with both the overarching WSU 2030 Strategy and the Academic Strategy, marking a significant step towards achieving the University's long-term objectives.

As part of the broader Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) Project Plan, the division embarked on a meticulous process to ensure that Student Affairs Policies were in harmony with the project's goals. A critical component of this alignment was the development of Guidelines for the establishment of Interim Campus and Institutional Structures. These guidelines underwent a thorough consultation process with both Campus and Institutional Student Parliaments, reflecting the University's commitment to inclusive governance and stakeholder engagement. Upon receiving positive feedback, these guidelines were subsequently recommended for endorsement by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the University Council, showcasing a collaborative approach to Institutional reform.

In addition, the division conducted three Health and Wellness Policy Workshops focused on reviewing and aligning critical policies to the R&C Project Plan. These included the Infection Control Policy, policies concerning people with disabilities, the Student Pregnancy Policy, the Student Counselling and Special Needs Policy and the Alcohol and Drugs Policy. The review process was comprehensive, involving consultations with the Eastern Cape Commission for Gender Equality, constitutional experts, medical practitioners and pharmacists to ensure that the policies were not only effective but also equitable and inclusive. The refined Health and Wellness Policies received a recommendation for approval by the EMC, signalling a significant stride towards enhancing student well-being at WSU.

To further bolster the R&C initiative, a Risk Plan along with corresponding mitigation strategies was developed. Additionally, Terms of References for the R&C Student Support Committee and the Institutional Health and Wellness Steering Committee were crafted and approved by the EMC. These measures underscore WSU's dedication to creating a supportive and efficient administrative framework that prioritises student welfare and aligns with the University's strategic vision.

PROVIDING PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT THAT PROMOTES STUDENTS' HOLISTIC WELL-BEING

WSU places a strong emphasis on the holistic well-being of its students through comprehensive psycho-social support systems. These efforts are aimed at assisting students in adjusting to University life, addressing healthcare needs, and providing support for both physical and mental health challenges.

Orientation for First-Year Students

To ease the transition into University life for First-Time Entering Students (FTENS), WSU campuses conducted comprehensive orientation programmes with collaboration between the Department of Learning and Teaching (DLT) and Student Affairs. These programmes were complemented by awareness campaigns like First Things First (FTF), in partnership with Higher Health and Social Health and Empowerment (SHE), focusing on health and well-being.

Campus Clinic Accreditation

Several WSU campus clinics received accreditation from the National Department of Health to provide Primary Health Care Services, while others await accreditation outcomes. These clinics offer a wide range of health services by a multidisciplinary team, including family planning, HIV testing and referrals, ensuring students have access to essential health care.

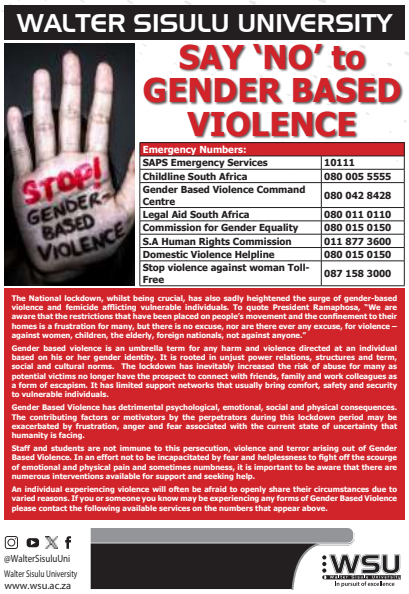
Health Programmes and Psychosocial Support

WSU initiated health programmes targeting male and female students, including the Inter-Institutional Men's Well-Being Conference and a sisterhood programme focusing on sexual reproductive health. Moreover, psychosocial support services are available to students, provided by Clinical Psychologists, Registered Student Counsellors and Social Workers. Peer educators and Gender Based Violence Ambassadors play a vital role in raising awareness

and providing support on issues such as GBV, substance abuse and mental health.







Training and Career Support

Staff members and students received training to manage GBV incidents effectively and to provide career guidance through exhibitions, further enhancing the supportive environment at WSU. Additionally, the Caring for the Carer Project was launched to support Student Affairs staff members, emphasising the importance of a conducive working environment and team cohesion.



Through these initiatives, WSU demonstrates its commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive University environment that fosters academic excellence and personal growth, ensuring students are well-equipped to face both academic and life challenges.

3.1.8.2 CREATING CONDUCIVE LIVING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

WSU established the Residence Life and Co-Curricular Unit in 2023, aiming to provide welfare support and enhance academic excellence for students through co-curricular activities, aligning with the 2015 Policy on

minimum norms and standards for student housing at public universities. This initiative underscores WSU's commitment to creating conducive living and learning environments, thereby facilitating a comprehensive and supportive University experience.

Key programmes introduced include:

- **Ongoing Orientation for First-Year Students**: Collaborating with the Department of Learning and Teaching (DLT), the unit has implemented virtual and contact orientation programmes across all campuses. These programmes are designed to assist first-year students with their transition into University life, covering essential topics such as academic support services, diversity, inclusivity and cultural exchange programmes.
- **Makhuza Residence Mentorship Project**: In collaboration with DLT, a mentorship project was established across all campuses to foster conducive living and learning environments. Seventy-two mentors were recruited, trained and assigned mentees to guide them through their University journey, focusing on academic excellence and exam preparation.
- **Residence Writing Centre Assistance**: To support academic success, residence writing centre assistants were recruited and trained to help students with assignments, presentations and study groups. This initiative also included basic computer skills training for first-year students.
- **Co-Curricular Programmes**: A variety of co-curricular programmes were implemented in residences to promote diversity, awareness on GBV, wellness and inclusivity, including the launch of LGBTQI+ projects and the organising of sports tournaments.



- **House Committees and Joint Residence Committees (JRCs)**: House Committee Elections were conducted to establish Joint Residence Committees, ensuring student representation in residence management. Training was provided to JRCs on their roles and responsibilities, including how to effectively address challenges and complaints in residences.

Through these initiatives, WSU strives to enrich the student experience beyond the classroom, providing a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes both personal growth and academic achievement. These

efforts highlight the University's dedication to fostering a vibrant and dynamic campus life that contributes to the holistic development of its students.

3.1.8.3 STUDENT GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (SGLD)

The Walter Sisulu University places a high priority on student governance and leadership development, as detailed in the activities and achievements of the Student Governance and Leadership Development (SGLD) Unit. This commitment is reflected through various initiatives designed to support the Student Representative Council (SRC), develop leadership skills, address special cases of financial need among students and recognise student structures. Below is a brief overview of these endeavours:

Support to the SRC

WSU's SGLD Unit provided comprehensive support to both the Institutional SRC (ISRC) and Campus SRC (CSRCs), including tuition, residence support, uniforms and communication devices. This support facilitated the SRC's ability to fulfil their student governance mandate while excelling academically, with 25 members graduating in the Autumn and Spring Graduation Ceremonies.

Training and Development

The CSRCs participated in leadership training and exchange programmes at the Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria. Additionally, the ISRCs and CSRCs received Institutional leadership training focusing on reading and writing. The SGLD Unit contributed to the WSU 101 module, emphasising student governance.

Special Cases Project

The CSRCs implemented the Special Cases Project, assisting unfunded students with registration fees. Notably, the Campus Rector in Komani contributed to this project, highlighting the community's support for financially disadvantaged students.

Student Leadership Engagements

The ISRC and CSRCs played a crucial role in the registration process and student leadership engagements, proposing solutions to challenges encountered by students. These engagements facilitated discussions between student leadership, the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and other stakeholders, thereby enhancing the strategic alignment and addressing student concerns.

SRC Policy Workshops

The SGLD Unit facilitated Policy Workshops for Campus Management Committees (CMC) with specific focus on the SRC Constitution and SRC Standard Operating Procedures.

Recognition of Student Structures and Student Parliament

WSU recognised student structures that complied with the SRC Constitution, and Campus Student Parliaments (CSPs) and Institutional Student Parliaments (ISPs) were convened, focusing on a range of important issues, including funding, policy reviews and SRC elections.

SRC Elections and Interim Structure

The 2023 SRC elections were deferred to March 2024 due to Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) implications. Therefore, Interim Structures for the Campus and Institutional SRCs were established for January to March 2024.

Entrepreneurship Development

The University engaged in several entrepreneurship development initiatives, including the ENACTUS, Student Women Economic Empowerment Programme (SWEEP) and participation in the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) events, demonstrating WSU's dedication to nurturing young entrepreneurs and community development.

Arts and Culture Achievements

WSU students excelled in the Higher Institutions Performing Arts Festival (HEIPAFEST), showcasing their talents in various artistic categories, and emphasising the importance of arts in addressing societal issues like gender-based violence.



Addressing Student Protests and NSFAS Challenges

Efforts were made to prevent student protests and address NSFAS funding challenges through dialogue and strategic meetings, ensuring the stability of campus environments and the continuity of the academic project.

These activities and achievements underscore WSU's holistic approach to student governance, leadership development, and support, contributing to an enriched academic and social environment for its students.

3.1.8.4 COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Student Affairs Division at WSU has engaged in significant collaborative efforts with various stakeholders to enhance the support provided to students. These collaborations are particularly focused on health and wellness programmes and on addressing students' financial concerns. Below is a summary of key partnerships and their outcomes:

Higher Health Collaboration

WSU successfully secured a grant from Higher Health for Student Health and Wellness Programmes, amounting to R450,000 for the period 2023-2026. This funding is a testament to the University's commitment to fostering a healthy and supportive environment for its students. A requirement of this grant was the establishment of an Institutional Health and Wellness Steering Committee, for which Terms of References were compiled and subsequently approved by the Executive Management Committee (EMC).

Partnership with the Motsepe Foundation

The Motsepe Foundation's engagement with WSU highlights the University's proactive measures in securing additional funding to alleviate student concerns. In a meeting held on 16 February 2023, the Motsepe Foundation allocated R1,100,000 to the WSU SRC to assist with registration fees, historical debt, food security and feminine hygiene for needy students. This allocation was judiciously planned and utilised as per an approved project plan developed by the Institutional SRC (ISRC), underlining the strategic approach taken by Student Affairs in addressing students' immediate needs. An audit of the grant usage is planned to ensure transparency and accountability.



Partnership with Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)

In 2023, the Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) provided funding for 236 students, each receiving R65,500. This financial support encompassed tuition fees, accommodation costs, meal allowances and prescribed books, or provided a one-time provision of a laptop for their entire period of study.

These collaborations underscore WSU's strategic efforts in enhancing student well-being and academic success. By establishing meaningful partnerships and securing necessary funding, WSU's Student Affairs Division is able to provide comprehensive support to students, addressing both their health and financial needs.



Section 4

Financial Statements



4.1 THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

4.1.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The Finance Committee of Council (FCC) is one of Council's sub-committees and it functioned effectively throughout 2023. The purpose of the committee is to provide oversight and advise Council on Institutional financial and investment matters, particularly towards reinforcing Council's governance function with regard to sound, responsible and effective investments, financial planning, financial administration, financial governance and proper financial reporting.

The FCC consists of the following members as per its terms of reference:

- Four external members of Council.
- Two co-opted external financial experts.
- Two internal Council members.
- The Vice-Chancellor (ex officio).
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor(s) (ex officio).

The Attendance at University FCC meetings during the 2023 financial year is set out in the table below:

FCC ORDINARY AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

No.	Name	03 March	12 June	13 October	28 Nov Special	Percentage
01	Ms FL Lamola (Chair)	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr T Klaas	P	P	P	P	100%
03	Mr V Jarana	AP	P	AP	P	50%
04	Mr S Kou	P	P	P	P	100%
05	Ms T Cumming (Co-Opted)	P	P	AP	P	75%
06	Mr T de Beer (Co-Opted)	P	P	AP	P	75%
07	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	AP	P	P	75%
08	Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	P	P	P	P	100%
09	Dr PS Jaca	P	P	N/A	N/A	100%
10	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	P	P	P	100%
11	Dr B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	100%
12	Mr M Mabhongo	AP	AP	AP	AP	0%
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	AP	75%
KEY WORDS		P= Present AP= Apology N/A = NO longer a member/NOT yet a member				

4.1.2 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

4.1.2.1 INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to report on the financial performance of the University for the year ended 31 December 2023.

This has been a difficult year for the University as reflected by the operating deficit reported on the consolidated statement of comprehensive income. The continued decline in government funding coupled with the regulation of tuition fee increases has exerted immense pressure on the operating budget of the University. For this reason, the financial sustainability of the University is high on the agenda of the Finance Committee of Council and Executive Management with a number of projects and initiatives having been identified to increase third stream income contribution to the bottom line.

The 2023 financial year is also the year that Council approved the Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) project which is meant to eliminate and reduce the duplication of programme offerings and the resultant operational inefficiencies. The project required the University to spend resources to move and relocate staff, move equipment and repurpose and configure teaching and learning spaces. Over time, the R&C project will contribute towards improving the financial sustainability of the University through improved operational efficiencies and increased post graduate output.

4.1.2.2 FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND CONTROL

The Finance Department continues to make strides in implementing reporting tools, technology and platforms as enablers to improve efficiency and customer service. Some of projects implemented in the year include:

- New payment channels for student fees (debit orders and card payments)
- Automation of manual processes
- Introduction of web forms for the signing of acknowledgement of debt forms

4.1.2.3 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (OVERALL INCLUDING SPECIFICALLY FUNDED AND RESIDENCES)

Revenue R3,247 bn



Up R208m (7%) to R3,247bn from R3,039bn PY.

Expenditure R3,458 bn



up 12% to R3,458bn, from R3,085bn PY.

Deficit R132 mn



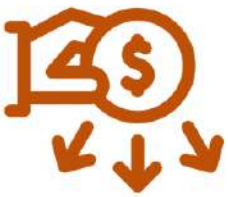
Loss of R132m from surplus of R3m PY.

Assets R4,016 bn



Up R288m (8%) from R3,728bn PY

Liabilities R3,603 bn



Up R420m (13%) from R3,183bn PY

Equity R413 mn



Down R132m from R545m PY

- Revenue increased by R208m (7%) to R3,247 billion in the current year, from R3,039 billion of the prior year.
- Expenditure increased in the current year by R373m (12%) to R3,458 billion, from R3,085 billion of the prior year.
- Operating deficit of R132m was incurred in the current year, from a surplus of R2.5m in the prior year.

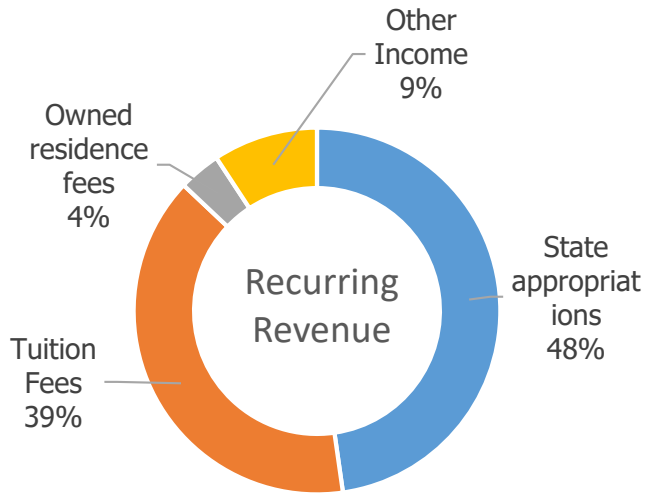
4.1.2.4 REVENUE

Total revenue increased by R208m (7%) to R3,247 billion from R3,039 billion of the prior year, while total recurrent revenue increased by R150m (6%) to R2,608 billion from R2,458 billion in the prior year. The table below shows the breakdown:

Table 1.44: Revenue Summary

Revenue	2023	2022	% Var
	Rm	Rm	%
State appropriations	1 159	1 147	1%
Tuition Fees	1 025	968	6%
Owned residence fees	97	85	14%
Finance and other income	90	76	18%
Subtotal	**2 371**	**2 276**	**4%**
Specifically funded grants	237	182	30%
Recurring revenue	**2 608**	**2 458**	**6%**
Leased residence fees	718	630	14%
Total revenue	**3 326**	**3 088**	**8%**

REVENUE COMPOSITION



- *Subsidies and grants account* for 48% of total recurrent revenue and increased by only 1% from the prior year. The limited increase in state appropriations has put immense pressure on the operating budget of the University.
- *Tuition fee* revenue accounts for 39% of total recurrent revenue and increased by 6% from the prior year, which is in line with the general annual fee increase.
- *Owned residence fees* account for 4% of total recurrent revenue and increased by 14% compared the prior year. The higher than CPI increase was due to improved occupancy of University-owned residences.
-
- *Other income includes income-based grants and finance income and accounts for 9% of total recurrent revenue. The increasing contribution of other income to the recurrent revenue of the university is critical for the financial sustainability of the University given the constrained government funding.*

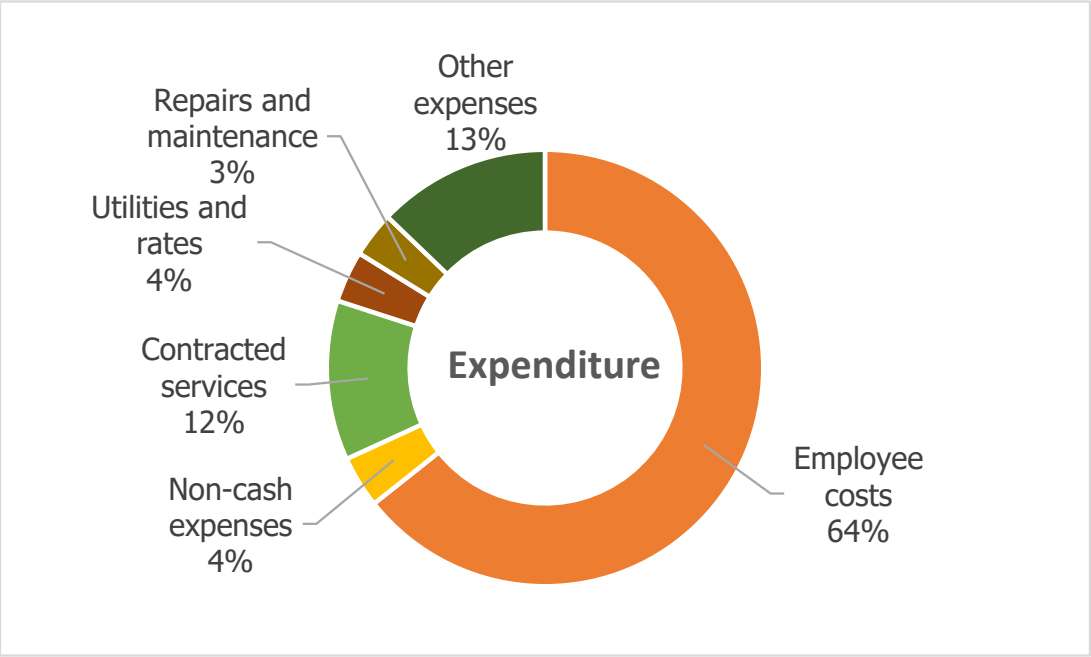
4.1.2.5 EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure increased by 12% to R3,458 billion, from R3,085 billion in the prior year. The major expenditure line items can be summarised as follows:

Table 1.45: Expenditure Summary

Description	2023 R'm	2022 R'm	Mov %
Council controlled			
Employee costs	1 561 385	1 419 768	10%
Depreciation	39 505	36 630	8%
Doubtful debts provision	53 586	91 607	-42%
Comms and licensing expenses	115 127	120 583	-5%
Contracted services	172 153	177 134	-3%
Utilities and rates	92 462	109 682	-16%
Repairs and maintenance	81 899	33 836	142%
Other expenses	311 231	179 776	73%
Subtotal Council controlled	**2 427 348**	**2 169 016**	**12%**
Specifically funded expenses	267 280	182 691	46%
Residences expenses	763 280	733 020	4%
Total expenditure	**3 457 908**	**3 084 727**	**12%**

EXPENDITURE COMPOSITION:



EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

With the exception of the impact of R&C, expenditure composition and spending patterns are consistent with the prior year.

- *Personnel costs* account for 64% (2022:65%) of total recurrent expenditure and increased by 10% from the prior year. The increase was due to the annual salary increase linked to CPI as well as payment of

relocation expenses (related to R&C).

- *Provision for doubtful debts* declined by 42% compared to the prior year, even though there was an increase in the level of outstanding student debt. The increase in student debt was mainly due to NSFAS outstanding payments for which provision for impairment is negligible. The decrease in the provision for impairment was due to an improvement in collections.
- *Contracted services* account for 4% of total recurrent expenditure and decreased by 3% compared to the prior year.
- *Utilities and rates* account for 3% of total recurrent expenditure and decreased by 16% compared to prior year. The prior year expenditure was higher due to additional assessments made by the local authorities which we did not have in the current year.
- Repairs and maintenance expenses comprise 3% of recurrent expenditure and increased by 142% compared to the prior year. The significant increase in repairs and maintenance expenses was due to R&C expenses incurred on refurbishment and repurposing of teaching and office spaces.
- Other expenses comprise 13% of recurrent expenditure and increased by 73% compared to the prior year. The significant increase in other expenses was mainly due to year-end write-offs (impairment of assets) as well increase increased travel due to the R&C project.

4.1.2.6 FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

The University has made significant progress in infrastructure development as reflected by the investment of R258 million made in property, plant and equipment during the year as disclosed in Note 4 to the Annual Financial Statements. We have continued with our accelerated efforts to refurbish teaching spaces and residences, as well as building new facilities using the Infrastructure funds from the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Gross student debtors were R1.912 billion (2022: R1.383 billion) and increased by R580m from the prior year. The significant increase in outstanding debt was due to NSFAS payments to the tune of R600m for the 2023 academic year which were only received at the beginning of the 2024 academic year. Like other Universities, we grapple with the problem of increasing student debt which is a threat to the financial sustainability of the University. The University has to strike a difficult balance between minimising financial exclusion for many of our students who do not have access to funding and having sufficient cash to run operations and provide the quality and excellent learning and teaching services to our students.

LIABILITIES

Total current liabilities increased by 7% to R1.590 billion from R1.477 billion the prior year. The University repaid the balance of R40m (2022: R70m) of the project funds which had been used for operational purposes in the years the University was under administration. The remaining DHET unspent funds relates to the missing middle grant.

4.1.2.7 RESTRICTED FUNDS AND GRANTS

Grants and subsidies for specific purposes are ring-fenced and invested in separate bank and call accounts. At year-end, the unspent restricted funds amounted to R955 million (2022: R1.019 billion). A substantial portion of the restricted funds are from the DHET and specifically earmarked for defined purposes relating to either capital projects or operational costs outside of the University's normal operating expenditures. The University secured two important funding approvals from DHET in 2023 during the year: the Sibusiso Bhengu Development Grant with an approved amount of R 293 million and the Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant Cycle 6 with an approved amount of R140 million. This funding is for future years.

The Siboniso Bhengu Development Grant provides funding for ICT, Digitisation, Rationalisation and Consolidation, as well as the Research Niche Areas.

The university classifies grants as:

- Asset based – grants for the purchase or construction of assets
- Income based – grants to fund operational expenditure.

The University received R523m (2022: R311m) in new project funding during the year and incurred expenditure of R239m (2022: R182m) against the approved projects as disclosed in Note 10 to the Financial Statements.

4.1.2.8 GOING CONCERN

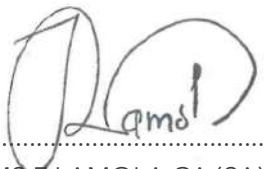
The Financial Statements reflect that the University is both liquid and solvent as its current assets exceed its current liabilities with a current ratio of 1.5:1 (2022: 1.6:1), while total assets exceeded total liabilities by R413m (2022: R R545m). The University has sufficient working capital reserves to meet its obligations as they fall due. Like all public higher education Institutions, the University's ability to continue as a going concern is dependent on continued funding from the DHET in the form of subsidies and NSFAS support.

4.1.2.9 OUTLOOK

The economic outlook is not positive which means that there will be continued strain on the finances of the University in the next few years. In the short term, the University will continue to implement cost control programmes and focus on fundraising initiatives to close the budget deficit. In the medium term, the University expects to realise efficiencies from the R&C project as well as get increased government funding from increased postgraduate output. The University has also embarked on identifying commercial activities to increase the third-stream income contribution to the bottom line.

4.1.2.10 CONCLUSION

Th University has come a long way in improving its financial administration and processes and the Finance Department along with other support functions plays an important role in enabling the University to achieve its objectives and "In pursuit of excellence". We extend our appreciation and gratitude to many of our dedicated and committed staff members who continually go beyond the call of duty to attend to a student, respond to a supplier or assist a fellow staff member and, as has become the norm, step out of the comfort zone to learn a new process or a new skill and embrace change. We value the collaboration and support of students, staff and stakeholders in our collective and joint responsibility to steward the present and future finances of the University.



.....

MS F LAMOLA CA (SA)

CHAIRPERSON

FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

DATE: 28 June 2023



.....

MR M NHIWATIWA CA (SA)

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 28 June 2023

4.2 STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated Annual Financial Statements for Walter Sisulu University, comprising of the consolidated statement of financial position at 31 December 2023, the consolidated statements of comprehensive income, consolidated statement of changes in funds and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended and the notes to the consolidated annual financial statements which include a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes in accordance with IFRS® and in the manner required by the Minister of Education in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No 101 of 1997), as amended. In addition, the Council is also responsible for the preparation of the Report of the Chairperson of Council, Council's Statement on Governance, Report on Risk Exposure Assessment and the Management thereof, Statement of Transformation, Statement of Internal Administrative/Operational Structure and Controls, Senate Report, Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and the Financial Review, and for which Council is responsible for its accuracy and consistency with the consolidated Annual Financial Statements.

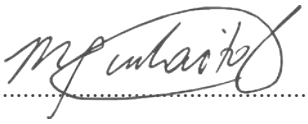
The Council is also responsible for such internal control as the Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and for maintaining adequate accounting records and an effective system of risk management.

The Council is responsible for the controls over, and the security of the website and, where applicable, for establishing and controlling the process for electronically distributing annual reports and other financial information to stakeholders.

The Council has made an assessment on the ability of the University to continue as a going concern and believes that the University will be a going concern in the year ahead.

The auditors are responsible for reporting on whether the consolidated annual financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
The consolidated annual financial statements, as identified in the first paragraph, were approved by the Council on 28 June 2024 and are signed on its behalf by:



.....

Advocate T Ngcukaitobi SC
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL



.....

Professor RN Songca
VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL



Independent auditor's report to the Council and the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation on Walter Sisulu University

Report on the audit of the consolidated financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Walter Sisulu University and its subsidiaries (the group) set out on pages 151 to 195, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2023, the consolidated statement of comprehensive income, consolidated statement of changes in equity and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, as well as notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the group as at 31 December 2023 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards and the requirements of the Higher Education Act and the Regulations for reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions, 2014, issued in terms of the Higher Education Act of South Africa,1997.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the consolidated financial statements section of our report.

We are independent of the group in accordance with the *Code of professional conduct for auditors* of the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in South Africa. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IRBA code and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits in South Africa. The IRBA code is consistent with the corresponding sections of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *International code of ethics for professional accountants (including International Independence Standards)*.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Council for the consolidated financial statements

The Council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa,1997 and the Regulations for reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions,2014, issued in terms of the Higher Education Act of South Africa,1997, and for such internal control as the Council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, the Council is responsible for assessing the group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the accounting authority either intends to liquidate the group or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the consolidated financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the consolidated financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

In accordance with the Public Audit Act 25 of 2004 (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, we must audit and report on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance against predetermined objectives for selected key performance areas presented in the annual performance report. The Council is responsible for the preparation of the annual performance report.

We selected the following key performance indicators presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 31 December 2023 for auditing. We selected key performance indicators that measure the university's performance on its primary mandated functions and that are of significant national, community or public interest.

Key performance area	Pages in the annual performance report	Purpose
Access	100-101	This section of the report focuses on the effectiveness of the enrolment plan in comparing current enrolments against targets
Success	101-102	This section of the report delves into the academic achievements and effectiveness of the institution's educational programmes, as demonstrated through various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
Research and Innovation	103	The Research and Innovation section is crafted to highlight the Institution's achievements and impact in research activities, as reflected through specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

We evaluated the reported performance information for the selected key performance areas against the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting framework, as defined in the general notice. When an annual performance report is prepared using these criteria, it provides useful and reliable information and insights to users on the university's planning and delivery on its mandate and objectives.

We performed procedures to test whether:

- the indicators used for planning and reporting on performance can be linked directly to the university's mandate and the achievement of its planned objectives;
- the indicators are well defined and verifiable to ensure that they are easy to understand and apply consistently and that a user can confirm the methods and processes to be used for measuring achievements;
- the targets can be linked directly to the achievement of the indicators and are specific, time bound and measurable to ensure that it is easy to understand what should be delivered and by when, the required level of performance as well as how performance will be evaluated;
- the indicators and targets reported on in the annual performance report are the same as what was committed to in the approved initial or revised planning documents;
- the reported performance information is presented in the annual performance report in the prescribed manner; and

- there is adequate supporting evidence for the achievements reported and for the reasons provided for any over- or underachievement of targets.

We performed the procedures for the purpose of reporting material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion.

We did not identify any material findings on the reported performance information of Walter Sisulu University's key performance areas.

Other matters

We draw attention to the matter below.

Achievement of planned targets

The annual performance report includes information on reported achievements against planned targets.

The university plays a key role in delivering services to South Africans. The annual performance report includes the following service delivery achievements against planned targets:

Key service delivery indicators not achieved	**Planned Target**	**Reported Achievement**
Access *Targets achieved: 44%*		
Total Headcount	32,050	29,305
Headcount UG	30,254	27,399
Success *Targets achieved: 53%*		
Degree Credit Success PG	74%	53%
Total Graduates	9,108	6,037
Graduates UG	8,434	5,567
Research and Innovation *Targets achieved: 75%*		
Doctoral graduates	16	11

Report on compliance with legislation

In accordance with the PAA and the general notice issued in terms thereof, we must audit and report on compliance with applicable legislation relating to financial matters, financial management and other related matters. The Council is responsible for the university's compliance with legislation.

We performed procedures to test compliance with selected requirements in key legislation in accordance with the AGSA findings engagement methodology. This engagement is not an assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express an assurance opinion or conclusion.

Through an established AGSA process, we selected requirements in key legislation for compliance testing that are relevant to the financial and performance management of the university, clear to allow consistent measurement and evaluation, while also sufficiently detailed and readily available to report in an understandable manner. The selected legislative requirements are included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

The material findings on compliance with the selected legislative requirements, presented per compliance theme, are as follows:

Annual Financial Statements

The financial statements initially submitted for auditing were not prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, as required by reg 7(4)(b)(xii) of the regulations for reporting by public higher education institutions. Material adjustments of current assets and other disclosure items identified by the auditors were required to ensure compliance with the applicable accounting framework, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

Annual Performance Report and Strategic Planning

The annual performance plan did not include the long-term capital expenditure and the financing thereof for n+3 as per the annual budget as required by section 5(2)(g) of the regulations for reporting by public higher institutions.

The annual performance plan was not approved by Council as required by section 5(2)(m) of the regulations for reporting by public higher institutions.

The mid-year performance report was not submitted in accordance with the prescribed time frame to the department as required by section 6(2) of the regulations for reporting by public higher institutions.

Procedures for mid-year reporting and assessment were not established to facilitate effective performance monitoring, evaluation and corrective action, as required by section 6(3) of the regulations for reporting by public higher institutions.

Procurement and contract management

Employees conducted business directly or indirectly with the university at which he or she is employed that entailed or may have entailed a conflict of interest with the university in contravention of section 34(5)(a)-(c) of the Higher Education Act.

Other information in the annual report

The Council is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the "Walter Sisulu University Annual Report 2023". The other information does not include the consolidated financial statements, the auditor's report and those selected key performance areas presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported in this auditor's report.

Our opinion on the financial statements and our findings on the reported performance information and the report on compliance with legislation do not cover the other information and we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion on it.

In connection with our audit, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the consolidated financial statements and the selected key performance areas presented in the annual performance report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Internal control deficiencies

We considered internal control relevant to our audit of the consolidated financial statements, annual performance report and compliance with applicable legislation; however, our objective was not to express any form of assurance on it.

The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the material findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.

Management did not implement adequate internal controls to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. This resulted in the compliance findings disclosed above.

Other reports

We draw attention to the following engagements conducted by various parties which had, or could have, an impact on the matters reported in the university's consolidated financial statements, reported performance information, compliance with applicable legislation and other related matters. These reports did not form part of our opinion on the financial statements or our findings on the reported performance information or compliance with legislation.

Audit-related services and special audits

Agreed-upon procedures on certificates were performed for grants, other funding and similar items. Below is the list of Agreed-upon procedures engagements performed or are in the process of being performed in relation to 2023. These services were rendered by other service providers and not the external auditors.

Project Name	Financial Year-End	Description	Completion Date
New Generation of Academics (NGAP)	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/05/2024
Institute of Advanced Tooling (IAT)	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	30/06/2024
National Research Foundation (NRF)	31/12/2023	Agreed Upon Procedures	22/03/2024
Foundation Extended Programmes Grant	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/05/2024
E-Skills Grant	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	30/06/2024
Clinical Training Grant (CTG)	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/05/2024
Clinical Training Enrolments Grant	31/12/2023	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/07/2024
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Grant (DFFE)	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	30/06/2024
Student, Staff and Academic Programme Data (HEMIS)	31/12/2023	Agreed Upon Procedures	Not started
University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG)	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/05/2024
WSU Clinical Training Grant for SA medical students returning from Cuba	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	31/05/2024
SA Medical Research Council Grants	31/03/2024	Agreed Upon Procedures	Not started
Research Output	31/12/2023	Agreed Upon Procedures	30/04/2024

Project Name	Financial Year-End	Description	Completion Date
University Staff Doctoral Programme (USDP)	*31/03/2024*	*Agreed Upon Procedures*	*31/05/2024*
DHET Infrastructure Grants (R24.5M, R182M, R202M, R301.95M, R404M & R441M)	*31/12/2023*	*Agreed Upon Procedures*	*29/02/2024*
Historically Disadvantaged Institutions Grant (HDI-DG)	*31/03/2024*	*Agreed Upon Procedures*	*31/05/2024*

Auditor tenure

In terms of the IRBA rule published in Government Gazette No. 39475 dated 4 December 2015, we report that PwC has been the auditor of Walter Sisulu University for 7 years.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc.
Director: A Rathan
Registered Auditor
East London, South Africa
28 June 2024

Annexure – Auditor's responsibility for the audit

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout our audit of the consolidated financial statements and the procedures performed on reported performance information for selected key performance areas and on the university's compliance with selected requirements in key legislation.

Consolidated financial statements

In addition to our responsibility for the audit of the consolidated financial statements as described in this auditor's report, we also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the university's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements. We also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the university and its subsidiaries to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements about the material uncertainty or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion on the consolidated financial statements. Our conclusions are based on the information available to us at the date of this auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the university to cease operating as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and determine whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial

statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

Communication with those charged with governance

We communicate with the accounting authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the accounting authority with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to have a bearing on our independence and, where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

Compliance with legislation – selected legislative requirements

The selected legislative requirements are as follows:

Legislation	Sections or regulations
Public Audit Act 25 of 2004	• 14(2)(b)
Higher Education Act 101 of 1997	• 41(1)(b)(ii); • 20(5); • 40(3)(a)(i-iii); • 34(4)(a)(b); • 34(5)-(6); • 27(7)(c); • 27(7)(e); • 27(7)(A)-(C)
The Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, Act 12 of 2004	• 34(1)
Regulations for the Registration of Private Higher Education Institutions	• 4(1); • 4(2); • 5(1); • 5(2)(a)(d)(g)(m); • 6(2)(d); • 6(3)

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

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WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

Figures in R `000	Notes	2023	2022
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	4	1,544,254	1,362,565
Right-of-use assets	5	2,833	5,306
Unlisted investments	6	18,296	17,884
Total non-current assets		**1,565,383**	**1,385,755**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	7	905,232	480,010
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,545,490	1,861,998
Total current assets		**2,450,722**	**2,342,008**
Total assets		**4,016,105**	**3,727,763**
Reserves and liabilities			
Reserves			
Capital Reserves		380,255	380,255
Accumulated surplus		32,974	164,946
Total reserves		**413,229**	**545,201**
Liabilities			
Non-current liabilities			
Lease obligation	5	1,835	4,359
Deferred income	10	2,010,056	1,700,829
Total non-current liabilities		**2,011,891**	**1,705,188**
Current liabilities			
Accrual for employment obligations	11	309,688	290,074
Trade and other payables	12	736,755	658,871
DHET unspent funds	13	27,379	67,379
Lease obligation	5	570	22
Deferred income	10	516,593	461,028
Total current liabilities		**1,590,985**	**1,477,374**
Total liabilities		**3,602,876**	**3,182,562**
Total equity and liabilities		**4,016,105**	**3,727,763**

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Figures in R `000	Notes	Council controlled unrestricted	Specifically funded activities restricted	Residences and accommodation	Total
Subsidies and Grants		1,159,471	237,902	-	1,397,373
State appropriations	14.2	1,159,471	114,157	-	1,273,628
Institutional grants	14.2	-	123,745	-	123,745
Tuition and residence fee revenue	14.1	1,025,003	-	814,752	1,839,755
Sundry Income	14.3	9,870	-	-	9,870
Fair value gain on Investments	6.2	412	-	-	412
		2,194,756	237,902	814,752	3,247,410
Operating expenditure					
Personnel costs	15	(1,561,385)	(25,013)	(74,386)	(1,660,784)
Academic		(916,998)	(25,013)	-	(942,011)
Other personnel		(644,387)	-	(74,386)	(718,773)
Other operating costs	16	(771,872)	(208,830)	(663,213)	(1,643,915)
Doubtful debt provision	7	(54,586)	-	(25,681)	(80,267)
Depreciation and impairment	17	(39,505)	(33,437)	-	(72,942)
Total operating expenditure		(2,427,348)	(267,280)	(763,280)	(3,457,908)
Finance income	18	78,837	-	-	78,837
Finance cost	19	(723)	-	-	(723)
Sub total		(2,349,234)	(267,280)	(763,280)	(3,379,794)
Surplus/(Deficit)	17	(154,478)	(29,378)	51,472	(132,384)
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive (net deficit) / net income		(154,478)	(29,378)	51,472	(132,384)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Figures in R `000	Notes	Council controlled unrestricted	Specifically funded activities restricted	Residences and accommodation	Total
Subsidies and Grants		1,147,077	182,489	-	1,329,566
State appropriations	14.2	1,147,077	89,951	-	1,237,028
Institutional grants	14.2	-	92,538	-	92,538
Tuition and residence fee revenue	14.1	968,195	-	715,174	1,683,369
Sundry Income	14.4	25,618	-	-	25,618
		2,140,890	182,489	715,174	3,038,553
Operating expenditure					
Personnel costs	15	(1,419,768)	(78,347)	(27,343)	(1,525,458)
Academic		(816,726)	(58,189)	-	(874,915)
Other personnel		(603,042)	(20,158)	(27,343)	(650,543)
Other operating costs	16	(620,311)	(75,173)	(637,963)	(1,333,447)
Fair value loss on investments		(700)	-	-	(700)
Doubtful debt provision	8	(91,607)	-	(67,714)	(159,321)
Depreciation and impairment	17	(36,630)	(29,171)	-	(65,801)
Total operating expenditure		(2,169,016)	(182,691)	(733,020)	(3,084,727)
Finance income	18	49,844	-	-	49,844
Finance cost	19	(1,138)	-	-	(1,138)
Sub total		(2,120,310)	(182,691)	(733,020)	(3,036,021)
Surplus/(Deficit)	17	20,580	(202)	(17,846)	2,532
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income / (net deficit)		20,580	(202)	(17,846)	2,532

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

Figures in R `000	Capital Reserves	Accumulated surplus	Total
Balance at 1 January 2022	**380,255**	**162,414**	542,669
Surplus for the year	-	2,532	2,532
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income	**-**	**2,532**	**2,532**
Balance at 31 December 2022	**380,255**	**164,946**	**545,201**
Deficit for the year	-	(131,972)	(131,972)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income	**-**	**(131,972)**	**(131,972)**
Balance at 31 December 2023	**380,255**	**32,974**	**413,229**

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Figures in R `000	Notes	2023	2022
Cash flows from operating activities			
(Deficit) / surplus for the year		**(131,972)**	**2,532**
Adjusted for:			
Depreciation and amortisation expense	17	72,942	65,801
Income recognised on asset-based grants		(79,633)	(112,451)
Impairment of assets / Gain on recognition of assets	4	19,913	(12,326)
Fair value loss/ (gains) on financial assets		(412)	700
Finance income	18	(78,837)	(49,844)
Finance costs	5.3	723	1,138
Changes in:			
Adjustments for decrease/(increase) in trade receivables		(529,548)	36,714
Adjustments for (decrease)/increase in other operating payables		77,884	(261,385)
Adjustments for (decrease)/increase in DHET unspent funds		(40,000)	(6,593)
Adjustments for increase in accrual for employment obligations		19,614	37,389
Adjustments for increase/(decrease) in deferred income - Income Based		55,564	30,573
Adjustments for decrease/(increase) in other operating receivables		24,059	(59,709)
Adjustments for increases in impairment losses		80,267	156,061
Cash flows (used in) / from operating activities		**(509,436)**	**(171,400)**
Interest received		99,409	61,312
Net cash flows (used in) / from operating activities		**(410,027)**	**(110,088)**
Cash flows from / (used in) investing activities			
Interest received		58,957	45,557
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		422	2,371
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	4	(258,291)	(377,095)
Grants received - asset based grants		293,702	152,352
Net cash flows from / (used in) investing activities		**94,790**	**(176,815)**
Cash flows used in financing activities			
Interest paid	6.3	(723)	(1,138)
Movements on lease liabilities	6.4	(548)	455
Cash flows used in financing activities		**(1,271)**	**(683)**
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		**(316,508)**	**(287,586)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of year		1,861,998	2,149,584
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of year	8	**1,545,490**	**1,861,998**

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. General information

Walter Sisulu University ("WSU") is a Higher Education Institution incorporated in South Africa and governed by the Higher Education Act 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) as amended. The principal activities of WSU relate to education, research, community partnership programmes and providing residential accommodation to students. The University's consolidated annual financial statements are presented in South African Rand and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand (R'000) except where otherwise stated.

2. Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies

The University's consolidated annual financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with IFRS® and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa. These consolidated annual financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for investments measured at fair value through profit and loss.

The preparation of consolidated annual financial statements in conformity with IFRS accounting standards requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the University's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the consolidated annual financial statements are disclosed in note 3.

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these consolidated annual financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented.

2.1 Going concern

The going concern basis has been adopted in preparing the consolidated annual financial statements on the basis of the continued support from the Department of Higher Education, as set out in the Ministerial Statement on University Funding for 2023/24.

Walter Sisulu University generated a net deficit of R132 million during the year ended 31 December 2023 (2022: R3m net surplus) and, as of that date the University's net assets were R413 million (2022: R545m). The cash flow position of the University has continued to be stable despite the constrained government funding. Cash flow projections indicate that the University will have sufficient operating cash flows for the next 12 months.

The University had unrestricted cash balances of R780 million as of June 2024. With no contractual debt and no committed borrowings, Council believes that the University has sufficient operating cash reserves to maintain operations and meet obligations as they fall due for the next 12 months.

2.2 Property, plant and equipment

Definition

Property, plant and equipment are tangible items that:

- are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes; and
- are expected to be used during more than one period.

Recognition

Property, plant and equipment is recognised as an asset when:

- it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the asset will flow to the entity; and
- the cost of the asset can be measured reliably.

Initial measurement

An item of property, plant and equipment that qualifies for recognition as an asset is initially measured at its cost.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

The cost of an item of property, plant and equipment includes:

- its purchase price, including import duties and non-refundable purchase taxes, after deducting trade discounts and rebates.
- any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by Management.
- the initial estimate of the costs of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located, the obligation for which an entity incurs either when the item is acquired or as a consequence of having used the item during a particular period for purposes other than to produce inventories during that period.

Subsequent measurement - Cost model

After initial recognition, property, plant and equipment is measured at cost less any accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Subsequent expenditure

Subsequent expenditure incurred on items of property, plant and equipment is capitalised only to the extent that such expenditure enhances the value or previous capacity of those assets. Repairs and maintenance not deemed to enhance the economic benefit or service potential of items of property, plant and equipment are expensed as incurred.

Where the entity replaces parts of an asset, it derecognises the part of the asset being replaced and capitalises the new component.

Depreciation

Depreciation of an asset commences when it is available for use, and ceases at the earlier of the date that the asset is classified as held for sale or the date that the asset is derecognised.

Each part of an item of property, plant and equipment with a cost that is significant in relation to the total cost of the item is depreciated separately.

The depreciation charge for each period is recognised in surplus or deficit unless it is included in the carrying amount of another asset. The depreciable amount of an asset shall be allocated on a systematic basis over its useful life. The depreciable amount of an asset is determined after deducting its residual value.

Residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed at each financial year end. Where there are significant changes in the expected pattern of economic consumption of the benefits embodied in the asset, the relevant changes will be made to the residual values and depreciation rates, and the change will be accounted for as a change in accounting estimate.

The measurement base, useful life or depreciation rate as well as the depreciation method for all major classes of assets are as follows:

Asset class	Measurement base	Useful life / depreciation rate	Depreciation method
Buildings	Cost	Buildings only up 50 years	Straight Line
Leasehold improvements	Cost	Lease period	Straight Line
Motor vehicles	Cost	5 years	Straight Line
Fixtures and fittings	Cost	5 to 10 years	Straight Line
Computer equipment	Cost	5 to 10 years	Straight Line
Construction in progress	Cost	Not depreciated until transferred to respective asset class and items brought into use	
Land	Cost	Not depreciated	

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Impairments

The University tests for impairment where there is an indication that an asset may be impaired. An assessment of whether there is an indication of possible impairment is done at each reporting date. Where the carrying amount of an item of property, plant and equipment is greater than the estimated recoverable amount, it is written down immediately to its recoverable amount. The resulting impairment loss is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit, except where the decrease reverses a previously recognised revaluation increase for the same asset the decrease is recognised in other comprehensive income to that extent and reduces the amount accumulated in equity under revaluation surplus, and future depreciation charges are adjusted in future periods to allocate the revised carrying amount, less its residual value, on a systematic basis over its remaining useful life.

Where the estimated impairment loss exceeds the carrying amount of the asset to which it relates, the resulting liability is only recognised if it is required by another standard.

Compensation from third parties for items of property, plant and equipment that were impaired, lost or given up are included in surplus or deficit when the compensation becomes receivable.

Derecognition

The carrying amount of an item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised when the asset is disposed of or when no future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal. The gain or loss arising from the derecognition of an item of property, plant and equipment is included in surplus or deficit when the item is derecognised. Gains are classified as other gains on the face of the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income.

2.3 Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs are interest and other costs that an entity incurs in connection with the borrowing of funds.

A qualifying asset is an asset that necessarily takes a substantial period of time to get ready for its intended use or sale.

Borrowing costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of a qualifying asset are capitalised as part of the cost of that asset. Other borrowing costs are recognised as an expense in the period in which it occurred.

Where funds are borrowed specifically for the purpose of purchasing a qualifying asset, the amount of borrowing costs eligible for capitalisation is the actual borrowing costs incurred on that borrowing during the period less any investment income on the temporary investment of those borrowings.

Where funds are borrowed generally and the entity uses the funds for the purpose of purchasing a qualifying asset, the amount of borrowing costs eligible for capitalisation will be calculated by applying a capitalisation rate to the costs incurred on the qualifying asset. The capitalisation rate is based on the weighted average of the borrowing rate applicable to all borrowings outstanding during the period, apart from borrowings made specifically for the purpose of obtaining a qualifying asset.

Capitalised borrowing costs are limited to actual borrowing costs incurred during any period.

The capitalising of borrowing costs as part of the cost of a qualifying asset will begin on the commencement date. The commencement date for capitalisation is the date when all of the following conditions are met:

- expenditures for the asset are incurred;
- borrowing costs are incurred; and
- activities that are necessary to prepare the asset for its intended use or sale have commenced.

Capitalisation of borrowing costs is suspended during extended periods in which active development of a qualifying asset is suspended.

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Capitalising borrowing costs is ceased when substantially all the activities necessary to prepare the qualifying asset for its intended use or sale are complete.

When construction of a qualifying asset is completed in parts and each part is capable of being used while construction continues on other parts, capitalising borrowing costs ceases when all the activities necessary to prepare that part for its intended use or sale has been substantially completed.

2.4 Financial instruments

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

A financial asset is any asset that is:

- cash;
- an equity instrument of another entity;
- a contractual right to receive cash or another financial asset from another entity or to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially favourable to the entity.
- a contract that will or may be settled in the entity's own equity instruments and is a non-derivative for which the entity is or may be obliged to receive a variable number of the entity's own equity instruments; or

A financial liability is any liability that is:

- a contractual obligation to deliver cash or another financial asset to another entity to exchange financial assets or financial liabilities with another entity under conditions that are potentially unfavourable to the entity.

An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of an entity after deducting all of its liabilities.

Classification and recognition

Classification of a financial instrument, or its component parts takes place on initial recognition. Each instrument is classified as a financial liability, a financial asset or an equity instrument in accordance with the substance of the contractual arrangement and the definitions of a financial liability, a financial asset and an equity instrument.

Financial assets classification

The University classifies financial assets into the following categories:

- Unlisted investments subsequently measured at fair value through profit and loss.
- Financial assets subsequently measured at fair value through other comprehensive income (OCI).
- Financial assets subsequently measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on the entity's business model for managing the financial assets and the contractual terms of the cash flows.

For assets measured at fair value, gains and losses are either recorded in profit or loss or in OCI. For investments in equity instruments that are not held for trading, this will depend on whether the company has made an irrevocable election at the time of initial recognition to account for the equity investment at fair value through other comprehensive income.

Financial liabilities classification

The University classifies financial liabilities into the following category:

- Financial liabilities subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Financial liabilities are classified, at initial recognition as loans and borrowings and payables as appropriate.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Recognition

Financial instruments are recognised initially when the University becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instruments.

Regular way purchases and sales of financial assets are recognised on trade-date, the date on which the University commits to purchase or sell the asset.

Initial measurement

Financial assets

When a financial asset is recognised initially, it is measured at its fair value plus, in the case of a financial asset not at fair value through profit or loss, transaction costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition or issue of the financial asset.

Financial assets with embedded derivatives are considered in their entirety when determining whether their cash flows are solely payment of principal and interest.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised initially at fair value and, in the case of loans and borrowings and payables, net of directly attributable transaction costs.

The University's financial liabilities include trade and other payables, loans and borrowings including bank overdrafts, and derivative financial instruments.

Subsequent measurement

Financial assets

Debt instruments

Subsequent measurement of debt instruments depends on the University's business model for managing the asset and cash flow characteristics of the asset. Debt instruments are subsequently measured at:

- Amortised cost: assets held only for collection of principal and interest payments
    - Interest income is included in finance income using the effective interest rate method.
    - Any gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss and presented in other gains/(losses) together with foreign exchange gains and losses.
    - Impairment losses are presented as a separate line item in the statement of profit or loss.
    - The University's financial assets at amortised cost includes trade receivables.
- Unlisted investments
    - A gain or loss on a debt investment that is subsequently measured at fair value through profit or loss is recognised in profit or loss and presented net within other gains/(losses) in the period in which it arises.
    - The University may make an irrevocable election at initial recognition for particular investments in equity instruments that would otherwise be measured at fair value through profit or loss to present subsequent changes in fair value in OCI.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Financial liabilities

- Amortised cost: Loans and borrowings
    - After initial recognition, interest-bearing loans and borrowings are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.
    - Gains and losses are recognised in profit or loss when the liabilities are derecognised as well as through the effective interest rate amortisation process.
    - Amortised cost is calculated by taking into account any discount or premium on acquisition and fees or costs that are an integral part of the effective interest rate.
    - The effective interest rate amortisation is included as finance costs in the statement of profit or loss.
    - This category generally applies to interest-bearing loans and borrowings.

Offsetting financial instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are offset and the net amount reported in the consolidated statement of financial position when there is a legally enforceable right to offset the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously. The legally enforceable right must not be contingent on future events and must be enforceable in the normal course of business and in the event of default, insolvency or bankruptcy of the university or the counterparty.

Derecognition

Financial assets are derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or when it is transferred, and the transfer qualifies for derecognition.

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged or cancelled or expires. When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as the derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised in the statement of profit or loss.

Impairment of financial assets

A forward-looking allowance for expected credit losses is recognised for all debt instruments not held at fair value through profit or loss. Expected credit losses are based on the difference between contractual cash flows due in accordance with the contract and all the cash flows that the University expects to receive, discounted at an approximation of the original effective interest rate. The expected cash flows include cash flows from the sale of collateral held or other credit enhancements that are integral to the contractual terms.

The impairment methodology applied depends on whether there has been a significant increase in credit risk:

- For credit exposures with no significant increase in credit risk since initial recognition, expected credit losses are provided for credit losses that result from default events that are possible within the next 12-months (a 12-month expected credit loss).
- For credit exposures with significant increase in credit risk since initial recognition, a loss allowance is required for credit losses expected over the remaining life of the exposure, irrespective of the timing of the default (a lifetime expected credit loss).

For trade receivables and contract assets, a simplified approach is applied in calculating expected credit losses. Instead of tracking changes in credit risk, a loss allowance is recognised based on lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. A provision matrix was established that is based on the University's historical credit loss experience, adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

The University considers a financial asset in default when fees charged for an academic year are not settled within the academic year. A financial asset is written off when there is no reasonable expectation of recovering the contractual cash flows.

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are measured at initial recognition at fair value plus transaction costs. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, less allowance for expected credit losses. For trade receivables and contract assets, a simplified approach is applied in calculating expected credit losses. Instead of tracking changes in credit risk, a loss allowance is recognised based on lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. A provision matrix was established that is based on the University's historical credit loss experience, adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment.

Trade and other receivables are classified as debt instruments and loan commitments at amortised cost.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and demand deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. These are initially recorded at fair value and subsequently carried at amortised cost.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are initially measured at fair value plus direct transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

2.5 Leases as lessee

Definition

A lease is a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

Identification of a lease

At inception of a contract, it is assessed to determine whether the contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. If the terms and conditions of a contract are changed, it is reassessed to once again determine if the contract is still or now contains a lease.

Where a contract contains a lease, each lease component with the contract is accounted for separately from the non-lease components. The consideration is then allocated to each lease component on the basis of the relative stand-alone price of the lease component and the aggregate stand-alone price of the non-lease components. The relative stand-alone price of lease and non-lease components are determined on the basis of the price the lessor, or a similar supplier, would charge an entity for that component, or a similar component, separately. If an observable stand-alone price is not readily available, an estimate of the stand-alone price is made, maximising the use of observable information in each case. All non-lease components are accounted for in accordance with whatever other policy is applicable to them.

Lease term

The lease term of a lease is determined as the non-cancellable period of the lease, together with the periods covered by an option to extend the lease where there is reasonable certainty that the option will be exercised, and periods covered by an option to terminate the lease if there is reasonable certainty that the option will not be exercised.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

The assessment of the reasonable certainty of the exercising of options to extend the lease or not exercising of options to terminate the lease is reassessed upon the occurrence of either a significant event or a significant change in circumstances that is within the university's control and it affects the reasonable certainty assumptions.

The assessment of the lease term is revised if there is a change in the non-cancellable lease period.

Recognition

At inception, a right-of-use asset and a lease liability is recognised. Right-of-use assets are included in the statement of financial performance within a classification relevant to the underlying asset, and not as a separate line item.

Measurement

Right-of-use assets are initially measured at cost, comprising the following:

- the amount of the initial measurement of the lease liability;
- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date, less any lease incentives received;
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to be incurred in dismantling and removing the underlying asset, restoring the site on which it is located or restoring the underlying asset to the condition required by the terms and conditions of the lease, unless those costs are incurred to produce inventories. The obligation for those costs are incurred either at the commencement date or as a consequence of having used the underlying asset during a particular period.

Subsequently, right-of-use assets are measured using the cost model.

Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset by the end of the lease term or if the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects a purchase option will be exercised, the right-of-use asset is depreciated from the commencement date to the end of the useful life of the underlying asset. Otherwise, the right-of-use asset is depreciated from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term.

The University tests for impairment where there is an indication that a right-of-use asset may be impaired. An assessment of whether there is an indication of possible impairment is done at each reporting date. Where the carrying amount of a right- of-use asset is greater than the estimated recoverable amount, it is written down immediately to its recoverable amount. The resulting impairment loss is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit, except where the decrease reverses a previously recognised revaluation increase for the same asset the decrease is recognised in other comprehensive income to that extent and reduces the amount accumulated in equity under revaluation surplus, and future depreciation charges are adjusted in future periods to allocate the revised carrying amount, less its residual value, on a systematic basis over its remaining useful life.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not yet paid at the commencement date. Lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if the rate can be readily determined, else it is based on the university's incremental borrowing rate. The following lease payments are included where they are not paid at the commencement date:

- fixed payments, less any lease incentives receivable;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of a purchase option if there is reasonably certainty that the option will be exercised; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the exercising an option to terminate the lease.

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Subsequently, the lease liability is measured by:

- increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest on the lease liability;
- reducing the carrying amount to reflect the lease payments made; and
- remeasuring the carrying amount to reflect any reassessment or lease modifications or to reflect revised in-substance fixed lease payments.

Interest on the lease liability in each period during the lease term is the amount that produces a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the lease liability. The periodic rate of interest is the discount rate described above, or if applicable the revised discount rate described below.

Surplus or deficit for the year will include the interest expense on the lease liability, and the variable costs not included in the measurement of the lease liability are included in the year in which the event of condition that triggers the payment of the variable costs occurs.

2.6 Provisions and contingencies

A provision is a liability of uncertain timing or amount. A liability is a present obligation of the entity arising from past events, the settlement of which is expected to result in an outflow from the entity of resources embodying economic benefits.

A contingent liability is:

- a possible obligation that arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity; or
- a present obligation that arises from past events but is not recognised because it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

A contingent asset is a possible asset that arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity.

A provision is recognised when:

- there is a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event;
- it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; and
- a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the end of the reporting period. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount of a provision is the present value of the expenditures expected to be required to settle the obligation.

Where some or all of the expenditure required to settle a provision is expected to be reimbursed by another party, the reimbursement is recognised when it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received when the obligation is settled. The reimbursement is treated as a separate asset. The amount recognised for the reimbursement will not exceed the amount of the provision.

Provisions are reviewed at the end of each reporting period and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate. If it is no longer probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, the provision is reversed.

A provision is used only for expenditures for which the provision was originally recognised.

Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Onerous contracts

Present obligations arising under onerous contracts are recognised and measured as provisions. An onerous contract is considered to exist where the University has a contract under which the unavoidable costs of meeting the obligations under the contract exceed the economic benefits expected to be received under it.

The present obligation under an onerous contract is recognised and measured as a provision.

A constructive obligation to restructure arises only when:

- there is a detailed formal plan for the restructuring identifying at least the business or part of a business concerned, the principal locations affected, the location, function, and approximate number of employees who will be compensated for terminating their services, the expenditures that will be undertaken and when the plan will be implemented; and
- there has been raised a valid expectation in those affected that the restructuring will be carried out by starting to implement that plan or announcing its main features to those affected by it.

After initial recognition and until the liability is settled, cancelled or expires, a contingent liability is recognised in a business combination at the higher of the amount that would be recognised as a provision, and the amount initially recognised less cumulative amortisation.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised, but details are disclosed in the notes to the consolidated annual financial statements.

2.7 Revenue from contracts with customers (Tuition and Residence fees)

Tuition, registration and residence fee revenue are recognised as income in the academic year to which it relates. Fees charged are due by 31 December of each year. The University has assessed that the students simultaneously receive and consume the benefits provided within the year, as such revenue is recognised over time.

The University is in the business of providing teaching and learning, research, community partnership programmes and providing residential accommodation to students.

A contract with a customer is recognised when all of the following criteria are met:

- the contract has been approved and all parties to the contract are committed to performing their respective obligations;
- each party's rights regarding the goods or services to be transferred are identifiable;
- payment terms for the goods or services to be transferred are identifiable;
- the contract has commercial substance; and
- it is probable that the consideration in exchange for the goods or services that will be transferred will be collected.

At the inception of a contract, the goods or services promised in the contract are assessed and a performance obligation is identified for each promise to transfer to the customer either:

- a good or service that is distinct; or
- a series of distinct goods or services that are substantially the same and that have the same pattern of transfer.

Revenue is recognised when or as the performance obligation is satisfied by transferring a promised good or service to a customer. Assets are transferred when or as the customer obtains control of that asset.

Measurement

When a performance obligation is satisfied, revenue is recognised as the amount of the transaction price that is allocated to the performance obligation, but excluding estimates of variable consideration that are constrained and any amounts collected on behalf of third parties. The transaction price may include fixed amounts, variable amounts, or both.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

The University allocates the transaction price to each performance obligation (or distinct good or service) in an amount that depicts the amount of consideration to which the University expects to be entitled in exchange for transferring the promised goods or services to the customer.

The University recognises as an asset the incremental costs of obtaining a contract with a customer if the University expects to recover those costs.

If the costs incurred in fulfilling a contract with a customer are not within the scope of another Standard (for example, IAS 2 Inventories, IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment or IAS 38 Intangible Assets), the University recognises an asset from the costs incurred to fulfil a contract only if those costs meet all of the following criteria:

- the costs relate directly to a contract or to an anticipated contract that the University can specifically identify (for example, costs relating to services to be provided under renewal of an existing contract or costs of designing an asset to be transferred under a specific contract that has not yet been approved);
- the costs generate or enhance resources of the University that will be used in satisfying (or in continuing to satisfy) performance obligations in the future; and
- the costs are expected to be recovered.

When either party to a contract has performed, the University presents the contract in the statement of financial position as a contract asset or a contract liability, depending on the relationship between the University's performance and the customer's payment. The University presents any unconditional rights to consideration separately as a receivable.

Other income - Rental

Where the University retains the significant risks and benefits of ownership of an item under a lease agreement, it is classified as an operating lease. Receipts in respect of the operating lease are recognised on a straight-line basis in the statement of profit or loss and comprehensive income over the period of the lease.

Other income - Rendering of services

Revenue from rendering services and is recognised over the life of the plan in the accounting period in which the services are rendered. Sales of services are already accounted for on an accrual basis over time and does not have multiple element arrangements included in it.

Other income - Private gifts and donations

Private gifts and donations, whether of cash or assets, are recognised as revenue in the period they are received or receivable only when the University obtains control of these funds, the right to receive it or it is probable that the economic benefits comprising these funds will flow to the University and the amount of the private gifts and donations can be measured reliably.

Donations with no restrictions attached to them are recognised at that point in time, or otherwise deferred in line with the performance conditions.

Significant financing component

Generally, the university receives short-term advances from its customers. Using the practical expedient in IFRS 15, the university does not adjust the promised amount of consideration for the effects of a significant financing component if it expects, at contract inception, that the period between the transfer of the promised good or service to the customer and when the customer pays for that good or service will be one year or less.

2.8 Employee benefits

Employee benefits are all forms of consideration given by an entity in exchange for services rendered by employees or for the termination of employment.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Short-term employee benefits are employee benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before twelve months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service.

Post-employment benefits are employee benefits (other than termination benefits and short-term employee benefits) that are payable after the completion of employment.

Other long-term employee benefits are all employee benefits other than short-term employee benefits, post-employment benefits and termination benefits.

Defined contribution plans

Defined contribution plans are post-employment benefit plans under which an entity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity (a fund) and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

When an employee has rendered service to an entity during a period, the contribution payable to a defined contribution plan in exchange for that service is recognised:

- as a liability, after deducting any contribution already paid. Where the contribution already paid exceeds the contribution due for service before the end of the reporting period, the excess is recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.
- as an expense, except where the amount is allowed as an inclusion in the cost of an asset.

2.9 Government grants

Government grants are assistance by government in the form of transfers of resources to an entity in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the operating activities of the university. They exclude those forms of government assistance which cannot reasonably have a value placed upon them and transactions with government which cannot be distinguished from the normal trading transactions of the university.

Government grants, including non-monetary grants at fair value, are not recognised until there is reasonable assurance that:

- the entity will comply with the conditions attaching to them; and
- the grants will be received.

Government grants are recognised in surplus or deficit on a systematic basis over the periods in which the related costs for which the grants are intended to compensate are expensed.

A government grant that becomes receivable as compensation for expenses or losses already incurred or for the purpose of giving immediate financial support to the university with no future related costs are recognised in surplus or deficit of the period in which it becomes receivable.

Non-monetary grants are measured at fair value of the non-monetary asset and both the grant and asset are recognised at that fair value. An alternative course that is sometimes followed is to record both asset and grant at a nominal amount.

Government grants related to assets, including non-monetary grants at fair value are presented in the statement of financial position either by setting up the grant as deferred income.

Repayment of a grant related to income is applied first against any unamortised deferred credit recognised in respect of the grant. To the extent that the repayment exceeds any such deferred credit, or when no deferred credit exists, the repayment is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit.

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Repayment of a grant related to an asset is recognised by increasing the carrying amount of the asset or reducing the deferred income balance by the amount repayable. The cumulative additional depreciation that would have been recognised in surplus or deficit to date in the absence of the grant is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit.

Where a loan is received from government at below market interest rate, the difference between the fair value of the loan and the amount received is recognised as a government grant.

Government grants are excluded from the scope of IFRS 15 and accounted for in terms of IAS 20. Research grants are accounted over the term of the research period.

2.10 DHET Unspent Funds

The amount represents funding received from DHET for specific purposes where the University has not yet met the conditions attached to the funding.

2.11 Income tax exemption

The University is exempt from income tax in terms of Section 10(1)(cN) of the Income Tax Act No. 58 of 1962.

3. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The University makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are addressed below.

3.1 Impairment of financial assets

The loss allowances for financial assets are based on assumptions about risk of default, expected loss rates and repayment period. The University uses judgement in making these assumptions and selecting the inputs to the impairment calculation, based on the University's past history, existing market conditions as well as forward-looking estimates at the end of each reporting period. Details of the key assumptions and inputs used are disclosed in the tables included in note 7.

3.2 Accounts payable (rental provision)

The University has accrued for rental payable on certain leases where the lease agreement has not been signed. In the absence of signed lease agreement between the parties, the University has not capitalised any right-of-use assets and the related liabilities. Refer to Note 12.2 for further details.

3.3 Determining the lease term

In determining the lease term, management considers all facts and circumstances that create an economic incentive to exercise an extension option, or not exercise a termination option. Extension options (or periods after termination options) are only included in the lease term if the lease is reasonably certain to be extended (or not terminated). Managements assessments in the absence of contracts in relation to property leases are disclosed in Note 12.

The assessment is reviewed if a significant event or a significant change in circumstances occurs which affects this assessment and that is within the control of the lessee.

3.4 Asset-Based and Income-Based deferred income

The unspent portion of grants relating to operating expenditure is classified as Income-Based deferred income and is presented as current liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position. The movement in Income Based deferred income is presented as operating activities on the cash flow statement.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Critical accounting estimates and judgements continued...

The unspent portion of grants relating to the purchase or construction of assets is classified as Asset-Based deferred income. Asset-Based deferred income less the portion of the liability that is expected to be realised within 12 months from of the financial year is presented as non-current liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position. The movement in Asset-Based deferred income is presented as investing activities on the cash flow statement.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

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4. Property, plant and equipment

4.1 Balances at year end and movements for the year ended 31 December 2023

Balance at 1 January 2023	Land and buildings	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Construction in progress	Total
At cost	1,082,232	46,093	36,933	166,525	126,707	336,810	**1,795,300**
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(231,551)	(6,549)	(26,961)	(87,761)	(79,913)	-	**(432,735)**
Net book value	**850,681**	**39,544**	**9,972**	**78,764**	**46,794**	**336,810**	**1,362,565**
Movements for the year ended 31 December 2023							
Additions	-	481	4,311	41,291	4,335	207,873	**258,291**
Newly identified assets	-	-	-	8,507	6,637	-	**15,144**
Depreciation	(24,767)	(1,854)	(930)	(30,633)	(14,758)	-	**(72,942)**
Current year charge	(24,767)	(1,854)	(5,577)	(45,240)	(18,696)	-	(96,134)
Change in estimate	-	-	4,647	14,607	3,938	-	23,192
Write-off	(12,730)	-	-	(5,635)	(95)	-	**(18,460)**
Increase/(decrease) through transfers from construction in progress	332,744	-	-	-	-	(332,666)	**78**
Disposals	-	-		(44)	(378)	-	**(422)**
	1,145,928	**38,171**	**13,353**	**92,250**	**42,535**	**212,017**	**1,544,254**
Closing balance at 31 December 2023							
At cost	1,406,002	45,864	40,603	216,516	131,677	212,017	**2,052,679**
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(260,074)	(7,693)	(27,250)	(124,266)	(89,142)	-	**(508,425)**
Net book value	**1,145,928**	**38,171**	**13,353**	**92,250**	**42,535**	**212,017**	**1,544,254**

The following entities ("the Trusts") are controlled by the University.

- The Border Technikon Trust
- University of Transkei Foundation
- T T Trust

The Trusts were established in support of former Transkei and Ciskei tertiary institutions which were absorbed into the structures of Walter Sisulu University after 1994.

Property, plant and equipment continued...

Change in estimate

The University reassesses the useful life and residual value items of Property, Plant and Equipment annually as per its accounting policy. In the 2023 financial year, this exercise resulted in adjustments being made to the carrying amount of certain assets as well as the depreciation charge as disclosed in the note.

Land and buildings

Certain properties are still registered in the names of institutions that were merged into Walter Sisulu University. The University however maintains full control over these properties. Transfer of these properties into the University's name is regarded as an administrative matter. These properties have therefore been recognised within the financial records of the University. Please refer to the detail below.

Name of former institution	Number	Carrying value
Transkei Trust (TT Trust)	2	3,500
University of Transkei	6	10,887
	8	**14,387**

Leasehold improvements

As disclosed in note 9 Investment in Joint Operations, the University has an interest in the Cooperative Joint Library in East London. The University's contribution to the construction of the library has been classified as leasehold improvements.

	Land and buildings	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Construction in progress	Total
Reconciliation for the year ended 31 December 2022							
Balance at 1 January 2022							
At cost	990,364	46,093	30,352	135,344	100,004	122,688	1,424,845
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(211,024)	(5,405)	(18,741)	(70,434)	(65,330)	-	(370,934)
Net book value	**779,340**	**40,688**	**11,611**	**64,910**	**34,674**	**122,688**	**1,053,911**

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Property, plant and equipment continued...

Movements for the year ended 31 December 2022							
Additions	-	-	6,581	32,239	28,016	305,990	372,826
Reclassification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accumulated depreciation	91,868	-	-	-	-	-	91,868
Depreciation	(20,527)	(1,144)	(8,220)	(17,327)	(14,583)	-	**(61,801)**
Disposals			-	(1,058)	(1,313)	-	**(2,371)**
Increase/(decrease) through transfers from construction in progress	91,868	-	-	-	-	(91,868)	-
	850,681	**39,544**	**9,972**	**78,764**	**46,794**	**336,810**	**1,362,565**
Closing balance at 31 December 2022							
At cost	1,082,232	46,093	36,933	166,525	126,707	336,810	**1,795,300**
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(231,551)	(6,549)	(26,961)	(87,761)	(79,913)	-	**(432,735)**
Net book value	**850,681**	**39,544**	**9,972**	**78,764**	**46,794**	**336,810**	**1,362,565**

Land and buildings

Certain properties are still registered in the names of institutions that were merged into Walter Sisulu University. The University however maintains full control over these properties. Transfer of these properties into the University's name is regarded as an administrative matter. These properties have therefore been recognised within the financial records of the University. Please refer to the detail below.

Name of former institution	Number	Carrying value
Border Technikon	2	5,842
Transkei Trust (TT Trust)	2	3,500
University of Transkei	29	6,145
	33	**15,487**

Leasehold improvements

As disclosed in note 9 Investment in Joint Operations, the University has an interest in the Cooperative Joint Library in East London. The University's contribution to the construction of the library has been classified as leasehold improvements.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**
Property, plant and equipment continued...		
4.2 Depreciation and impairment losses		
Depreciation and impairment losses have been included under the following expenditures:		
Other expenses		
Buildings	24,767	21,043
Motor vehicles	930	8,243
Fixtures and fittings	30,633	18,702
Computer equipment	14,758	14,487
Computer software	1,854	2,726
	72,942	**65,201**
5. Lease liabilities		
5.1 Lease liabilities are analysed as follows:		
Buildings	2,405	3,761
Vehicles	-	620
	2,405	**4,381**
Non-current liabilities	1,835	4,359
Current liabilities	570	22
	2,405	**4,381**
5.2 Amounts recognised in the consolidated statement of financial position		
Right-of-use assets		
Buildings	3,453	5,306
Motor vehicles	(620)	-
Total	**2,833**	**5,306**
Reconciliation of cost and accumulated depreciation		
Buildings - Cost		
At the beginning of the year	17,922	13,670
Additions	-	4,252
At the end of the year	**17,922**	**17,922**
Buildings - Accum. depreciation		
At the beginning of the year	(12,615)	(9,890)
Depreciation	(1,854)	(2,725)
At the end of the year	**(14,469)**	**(12,615)**
Carrying amount at the beginning of the year	**5,306**	**3,780**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022
Lease liabilities continued...		
Carrying amount at the end of the year	**3,453**	**5,306**
Vehicles - Cost		
At the beginning of the year	3,183	3,183
Additions	-	-
At the end of the year	**3,183**	**3,183**
Vehicles - Accum. depreciation		
At the beginning of the year	(3,183)	(3,183)
Depreciation	-	-
At the end of the year	**(3,183)**	**(3,183)**
Carrying amount at the beginning of the year	**-**	**-**
Carrying amount at the end of the year	**-**	**-**
Lease liabilities		
Current portion	(570)	(22)
Non-current portion	(1,835)	(4,359)
	(2,405)	**(4,381)**
5.3 Amounts recognised in the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income		
Depreciation		
Buildings	1,854	2,726
Motor vehicles	-	600
Total	**1,854**	**3,326**
Other expenses		
Interest expense	723	1,138
5.4 Amounts recognised in the consoilidated statement of cash flows		
Total cash outflow for leases	1,271	1,820

5.5 Other information related to leases

Leasing activities and accounting for leases

The university leases various properties, and vehicles. Rental contracts are typically made for fixed periods of 2 to 3 years. Lease terms are negotiated on an individual basis and contain a wide range of different terms and conditions. The lease agreements do not impose any covenants, but leased assets may not be used as security for borrowing purposes.

Lease liabilities continued...

Leases are recognised as a right-of-use asset and a corresponding liability at the date at which the leased asset is available for use by the University. Each lease payment is allocated between the liability and finance cost. The finance cost is charged to profit or loss over the lease period so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability for each period. The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the shorter of the asset's useful life and the lease term on a straight-line basis.

Assets and liabilities arising from a lease are initially measured on a present value basis. Lease liabilities include the net present value of the following lease payments:

- fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), less any lease incentives receivable

The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate can be determined, or the University's incremental borrowing rate.

Right-of-use assets are measured at cost comprising the following:

- the amount of the initial measurement of lease liability;
- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received;
- any initial direct costs; and
- restoration costs.

Payments associated with short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in profit or loss. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise IT-equipment and small items of office furniture.

Extension and termination options

Extension and termination options are included in a number of property and equipment leases. These terms are used to maximise operational flexibility in terms of managing contracts. The majority of extension and termination options held are exercisable only by the university and not by the respective lessor.

Short-term and low value lease commitments

Lease commitments for short-term leases for which recognition exemption has been used. The amount below represent expenditure within the financial year which is indicative of the contractual arrangements that will be entered into after the reporting date.

The University has accounted for operating leases with a remaining lease term of less than 12 months as at 1 January 2023 as short-term leases as per practical expedient allowed by IFRS 16.

Student Residences - The University leases student accommodation from private landlords. The contracts had a termination date of 31 December 2023 and have therefore not been capitalised in terms of IFRS 16. The University enters into new contracts every year following an accreditation and a procurement process.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**

Lease liabilities continued...

Administration buildings - The University leases a number of buildings for office space. The rental agreements had come to an end at the of December 2020 and the contracts are being renewed on a month to month basis.

Student Residences	639,442	599,062
Administration Buildings	9,859	8,202
Printers	9,932	10,850
	659,233	618,114

6. Unlisted investments

6.1 Unlisted investments comprise of the following balances

Guard Risk Insurance	412	412
Sanlam Multi Investment (Listed unit trusts)	17,884	17,472
	18,296	**17,884**

6.2 Fair value gains/(losses) of investments

Fair value gains /(losses)	412	(700)

The carrying of the investments best represents the maximum exposure to credit risk as these are listed unit trusts.

7. Trade and other receivables

7.1 Trade and other receivables comprise:

Trade receivables	1,912,815	1,383,267
Trade receivables impairment	(1,100,747)	(1,020,480)
Trade receivables - net	**812,068**	**362,787**
Sundry debtors	9,913	12,056
Eastern Cape Department of Health receivable	64,752	94,067
Prepaid expenses	13,533	6,003
Value added tax	4,966	5,097
Total current receivables	**905,232**	**480,010**

Due to the nature of the University's business, there will be receipts from debtors and funders not allocated to individual accounts at year end due to timing reasons or insufficient information or incorrect references used by depositors. Unallocated receipts amounting to R183m (2022: R148m) were set off against the outstanding receivables at year end.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**
Trade and other receivables continued...		
7.2 Trade and other receivables classification		
Prepaid expenses	13,533	6,003
Value added tax	4,966	5,097
Total non-financial instruments included in trade and other receivables	18,499	11,100
Total trade and other receivables excluding non-financial assets included in trade and other receivables	886,733	468,910
Total trade and other receivables	**905,232**	**480,010**
7.3 Movements in impairment of trade and other receivables are as follows:		
At the start of the year	1,020,480	864,419
Impairment provision raised	80,267	159,321
Written off during the year	-	(3,260)
At the end of the year	**1,100,747**	**1,020,480**

As at 31 December 2023, student debtors of R 1.913 billion (2022: R1.357 billion) were past due (fees are due and payable in the year of study). Based on an analysis of outstanding payments and a historical payment patterns, student debtors to the value of R1.1 billion (2022: R1.02 billion) were provided for. The amount that best represents the maximum exposure to credit risk at the end of the reporting period was R1.913 billion (2022: R1.357 billion).

The University prepared an ageing of its trade receivables and calculated lifetime Expected Credit Losses as follows:

31 December 2023

Ageing / Category	**Balance outstanding**	**Expected loss rate**	**Expected period of collection**	**Discount rate**	**ECL Allowance**
Registered students - NSFAS	636,039	5%	0.9	1.35%	38,462
Registered students - Bursaries	8,399	10%	1.0	3.56%	986
Registered students - self and partly funded	356,535	79%	3.3	3.49%	141,474
Unregistered students - handed over	783,702	95%	5.0	4.63%	792,491
Unregistered students - not handed over	128,140	95%	5.0	4.63%	127,334
Total	**1,912,815**				**1,100,747**

Trade and other receivables continued...

31 December 2022

Ageing / Category	Balance outstanding	Expected loss rate	Expected period of collection	Discount factor	ECL Allowance
Registered students - NSFAS	17,836	5%	0.9	1.35%	1,687
NSFAS prior year debt	-	5%	-	0.00%	-
Registered students - Bursaries	8,053	10%	1.0	3.56%	939
Registered students - self and partly funded	518,906	76%	3.0	3.49%	291,683
Unregistered students - handover over	595,332	83%	5.2	4.63%	532,186
Unregistered students - not handed over	217,000	83%	5.2	4.63%	193,985
Total	**1,357,127**				**1,020,480**

Expected credit losses on amounts due from NSFAS are minimal to low, while expected credit losses on amounts due from registered students are expected to be low to medium. Expected credit losses on amounts due from registered students have been calculated from collection history.

The University has handed over debt due from unregistered students to debt collection firms. Expected credit losses from unregistered students have been calculated from the success rates in securing repayment arrangements from unregistered students.

Expected credit losses are relatively high as payments secured from unregistered students are relatively low compared to level of outstanding debt. Within the current deteriorating economic climate, expected credit losses are not expected to decline.

The carrying amount of receivables approximates fair value.

Other significant inputs and assumptions

Other significant inputs in determining expected credit losses are:

- Whether a student is registered or not
- Whether a student is funded or not
- Repayment period

The registration and funded status is obtained from the ERP system while the repayment period is calculated based on historical payment profiles.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022

8. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise:		
Cash on hand	66	**105**
Short-term investments	239,599	159,753
Balances with banks	1,305,825	1,702,140
Total bank balances	**1,545,424**	**1,861,893**
Total cash and bank balances	**1,545,490**	**1,861,998**
Details of balances with banks		
Council controlled	590,302	842,530
Restricted	955,188	1,019,468
Total bank balances	**1,545,490**	**1,861,998**

Restricted cash represents funds held by the University that have been specifically earmarked for defined purposes relating to either capital projects or operational costs outside of the University's normal operating expenditures.

As disclosed in Note 13 to the financial statements, there were DHET Unspent Funds amounting to R27.4 million (2022: R67.4 million) at the end of the year.

Cash and cash equivalents have been assessed for impairment in terms of IFRS 9 and expected credit losses are considered to be immaterial.

Cash held on behalf of third parties

As at year end R101 259 (2022: R101 259) in respect of Group Life pay-outs were included in Cash and cash equivalents.

Cash at bank earns interest at floating rates based on daily bank deposit rates.

Bank overdrafts		
Overdraft facility	22,500	30,000
Lodge cards	7,500	-
Total undrawn facilities at year end	30,000	30,000

Overdraft facilities are available with First National Bank to the value of R30m (2022: R 30m). A guarantee in favour of the Municipality of the City of East London to the value of R50 000 and a guarantee in favour of the MTN SP (Pty) Ltd to the value of R100 000 was in place at year end. Cash at bank and on hand includes restricted funds.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022

9. Investments in joint operations

Interests in joint operations

- ECDOH's share of employment costs of the joint staff establishment
- ECDOH's agreed share of employment costs for employees in the four Health Resource Centres in the Eastern Cape Province
- ECDOH's agreed share of the operational expenses of the aforementioned Health Resource Centres, including library resources.
- ECDOH's agreed share of goods and services disbursements in respect of Health Sciences Training including the joint staff establishment

The University recognises its 40% portion of the salary expenses incurred on the joint staff establishment (HPTD JSE) as well as the amount receivable from ECDOH at year end. The above has been incorporated in the consolidated annual financial statements under the appropriate headings:

The parties jointly manage and fund operations: proportional ownership is not applicable.

Statement of comprehensive income		
Personnel costs	19,138	16,048
Statement of financial position		
Trade and other receivables - Note 8	64,752	94,067

Co-operative joint library

WSU, University of Fort Hare (UFH) and University of South Africa (UNISA) entered into a collaboration agreement to build and maintain a library facility in East London. The library was financed as follows:

- A contribution of R20 million from WSU. This was paid by DHET.
- A contribution of R80 million from UFH and UNISA
- A contribution of R100 million from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

The library was constructed on immoveable property held by UFH and hence ownership of the library vests with UFH. The interest of WSU and UNISA were secured through the registration of servitudes of use, 50 years in duration.

The above has been incorporated in the consolidated annual financial statements under the appropriate headings:

Statement of comprehensive income		
General expenses	2,324	2,324
Depreciation	800	800

WSU contributes 10% of the running costs of the library

Statement of financial position		
Property, plant and equipment (Leasehold improvements)	35,000	35,800
Deferred income	(17,000)	(17,800)

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**
10. Deferred income		
10.1 Deferred income is analysed as follows:		
Balance at the beginning of the year	**2,161,857**	**1,976,282**
Add Grant received	523,958	311,242
Interest received	80,114	57,025
	2,765,929	2,344,549
Less Expenditure	(239,280)	(182,692)
Balance at the end of the year	**2,526,649**	**2,161,857**
Made up as follows:		
Cash at bank	955,188	1,019,468
Net book value of assets	1,488,305	1,059,233
Utilised in operations	83,156	83,156
	2,526,649	2,161,857
10.2 The balance can be analysed as follows:		
Asset Based Deferred Income	2,010,056	1,700,829
Income Based Deferred Income	516,593	461,028
	2,526,649	**2,161,857**
Non-current liabilities	2,010,056	1,700,829
Current liabilities	516,593	461,028
	2,526,649	**2,161,857**
11. Accrual for employment obligations		
Leave pay accrual	275,261	258,198
13th cheque accrual	34,427	31,876
	309,688	**290,074**

11.1 Movement in the employee benefit obligations were as follows:

	Leave pay accrual	**13th cheque accrual**	**Total**
Balance at 1 January 2023	**258,198**	**31,876**	**290,074**
Increase in current year	17,063	2,551	19,614
Balance at 31 December 2023	**275,261**	**34,427**	**309,688**
Balance at 1 January 2022	225,209	27,476	252,685
Increase in current year	32,989	4,400	37,389
Balance at 31 December 2022	**258,198**	**31,876**	**290,074**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022

Accrual for employment obligations continued...

11.2 Details of employee obligations

Leave pay accrual

Employee entitlements to annual accumulated leave are recognised when they accrue to employees. An accrual is made for the estimated liability for annual and accumulated leave as a result of services rendered by employees up to the reporting period. Employees older than 55 years who did not participate in the leave buy out are provided for in full, while the provision for the rest of the employees is capped at 60 days. The present obligation at the end of the reporting period is calculated as the cost to company remuneration applied to the accumulated leave days taking into account the capped days.

13th cheque accrual

Employee entitlements to a 13th cheque are recognised when they accrue to employees. An obligation is made for the estimated liability for the 13th cheque as stipulated in employment contracts. Employees who have structured their remuneration to have a 13th cheque receive the 13th cheque in their respective birthday months. The present obligation at the end of the reporting period is calculated as the cost to company remuneration applied to the number of months accrued at the end of the reporting period.

12. Trade and other payables

12.1 Trade and other payables are made up as follows:

Payables and accruals	86,140	101,058
Other payables	41,840	35,884
Debtors with credit balances	255,549	218,927
NSFAS payable	296,135	301,086
Payroll liabilities	57,091	1,915
Total trade and other payables	**736,755**	**658,870**

The carrying amount of payables approximates fair value.

12.2 Rental provision included in Payables and Accruals

The University has accrued for the rental payable of R46m in respect of the use of the former Masibulele College (Whittlesea) since 2009 and Enkululekweni Ministerial Complex in Mthatha for the period 2011 to 2019. In the absence of signed rental agreements for the properties, the University has not capitalised any right-of-use asset and related liability for these two contracts as per IFRS 16. The University believes, however, there is an obligation to the other parties as the use of the properties was not a donation to the University.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**

13. DHET unspent funds

DHET unspent funds are analysed as follows:

Missing Middle Grant	26,131	26,131
Funds used for operation purposes	1,248	41,248
	27,379	**67,379**
Non-current portion of DHET unspent funds	-	-
Current portion of DHET unspent funds	27,379	67,379
	27,379	**67,379**

Missing middle grant

The University receives an allocation from the DHET each year to subsidise fee increases for a qualifying group of students. The liability represents the unspent funds accumulated from the 2018 financial year.

Ear-marked funds utilised for operational expenses

The amount represents funding received for Infrastructure projects that were used for salaries and creditors in 2009/10 and 2011/12. This spending was approved by the Minister of Higher Education and Training on 1 December 2011 with the instruction that the earmarked funds must be repaid to ensure that the infrastructure projects approved will be realised.

The University has since paid these funds except for the small balance of R1.2m which will be settled in the 2024 financial year.

14. Revenue

14.1 Tuition and other fee revenue

Tuition fees	1,000,277	950,002
Student levies and other charges	24,726	18,193
Subtotal	1,025,003	968,195
Residence fees	814,752	715,174
Total	**1,839,755**	**1,683,369**

Student levies and charges include copyright fees, sports fees and the ambulance levy charged to students. It also comprises other fees charged to students or prospective students for administrative costs incurred in processing of applications or appeals.

The above figures are already included in the gross revenues disclosed in Note 14.1.

14.2 Subsidies and government grants

Subsidies and grants	1,159,471	1,147,077
Specifically funded Institutional Based	114,157	89,951
State approved	123,745	92,538
Total subsidies and grants	**1,397,373**	**1,329,566**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022
Revenue continued...		
14.3 Other income is analysed as follows:		
Donations and other receipts	4,637	18,461
Management fees received	3,577	5,857
Rent received	1,225	1,282
Gain on recognition of assets	431	18
Total other income	**9,870**	**25,618**
14.4 Sources of revenue		
Contracts with customers (Tuition and other fee revenue)	1,839,755	1,683,369
Non-monetary exchanges between entities (Government Grants)	1,397,373	1,329,566
Other non-contract revenue (Other income)	9,870	25,618
	3,246,998	**3,038,553**
Sundry income is analysed as follows is analysed as follows:		
Sundry income	4,637	18,461
Management fees received	3,577	5,857
Rent received	1,225	1,282
Profit on disposal of assets	431	18
Total other income	**9,870**	**25,618**
15. Personnel costs		
Salaries and wages	1,537,544	1,414,849
Defined contribution plans	123,240	110,609
	1,660,784	1,525,458

Employees of the University contribute a portion of their earnings to several defined contribution plans through the University. The contributions are recognised as an expense as the related service is rendered.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022
16. Other operating expenses		
Other expenses include:		
Short-term and low value leases expenses	659,233	618,114
• Building rentals	9,859	8,202
• Equipment rentals	9,932	10,850
• Hire: Leased residences	639,442	599,062
Contracted services	144,876	148,594
Data and communication costs	57,364	69,542
Impairment and write-offs	19,913	-
Insurance	-	203
Insurance expenses	9,031	9,161
Licenses	61,274	49,250
Rates, water and electricity	92,462	109,662
Repairs and maintenance	81,899	33,836
Student development expenses	37,235	22,266
Travel and accommodation expenses	58,061	31,799
17. Surplus from operating activities		
Surplus from operating activities includes the following separately disclosable items		
Depreciation		
- Property Plant and Equipment	71,088	62,475
- right-of-use assets	1,854	3,326
	72,942	65,801
Audit fees		
Auditors' remuneration	2,983	2,583
Internal and other audit fees	1,085	2,938
	4,068	5,521
18. Finance income		
Interest received - cash and short-term investments	78,837	49,844
19. Finance costs		
Lease obligations	723	1,138
Total finance costs	**723**	**1,138**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	**2023**	**2022**

20. Commitments

Capital Expenditure

For the acquisition of Property, Plant and Equipment

Approved but not contracted for	987,461	266,074
Approved and contracted for at reporting period but not recognised	568,678	369,879
	1,556,139	**635,953**

The capital expenditure is to be financed by means of Infrastructure Grants from DHET.

21. Financial Instruments by Category

	Note	**Fair value through profit and loss**	
Financial Assets at fair value (designated)			
Investments	6	18,296	17,884
		18,296	**17,884**
		Amortised cost	
Financial Assets at amortised cost (designated)			
Trade and other receivables	7	812,068	362,787
Sundry debtors	7	74,665	106,123
Cash and cash equivalents (unrestricted)	9	590,302	842,530
Cash and cash equivalents (restricted)	9	955,188	1,019,468
		2,432,223	**2,330,908**
		Amortised cost	
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost (designated)			
Trade payables and other payables	13	736,755	658,870
Lease liabilities	6.1	2,405	4,381
		739,160	**663,251**

Fair value hierarchy

The table below analyses financial instruments carried at fair value by valuation method. The different levels have been defined as follows:
Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.
Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability either directly (i.e. prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices).
Level 3: Inputs for the assets or liabilities that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

Level 2: At fair value through profit and loss	18,296	17,884

The prices are obtained from a report published by the financial institution.

22. Financial Assets and Liabilities Maturity Analysis

31 December 2023	Total	Receivables / Payable within 30 days	Receivables / Payable within 90 days	Receivables / Payable after more than 90 days
Financial assets				
Financial assets at fair value				
Investments	18,296	-	-	18,296
Financial assets at amortised cost				
Sundry debtors	74,665	74,665	-	-
Student receivables net of impairment	812,068	812,068	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (unrestricted)	590,302	590,302	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (restricted)	955,188	955,188		
Total	2,450,519	2,432,223	-	18,296
Financial liabilities at amortised cost				
Lease liabilities	2,405	-	-	2,405
Trade and other payables	679,664	679,664	-	-
Total	682,069	679,664	-	2,405
Net liquidity	**1,768,450**	**1,752,559**	**-**	**15,891**

31 December 2022	Total	Receivables / Payable within 30 days	Receivables / Payable within 90 days	Receivables / Payable after more than 90 days
Financial assets				
Financial assets at fair value				
Investments	17,884	-	-	17,884
Financial assets at amortised cost				
Sundry debtors	106,123	106,123	-	-
Student receivables net of impairment	362,787	362,787	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (unrestricted)	842,530	842,530	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (restricted)	1,019,468	1,019,468		
Total	2,348,792	2,330,908	-	17,884
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost (designated)				
Lease liabilities	4,381	-	-	4,381
Trade and other payables	656,955	656,955	-	-
Total	661,336	656,955	-	4,381
Net liquidity	**1,687,456**	**1,673,953**	**-**	**13,503**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2023	2022

23. Financial risk management

The University's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks: market risk (including interest rate risk and price risk), credit risk and liquidity risk. The University's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise the potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the University.

The University is exposed to the following risks arising from financial instruments
- credit risk; and
- liquidity risk and fair value of financial instruments risk.

The Institutional Management Committee identifies, evaluates and co-ordinates the management of strategic risk faced by the University. Risk management processes were developed to ensure continuing relevance and effectiveness.

23.1 Market risk

23.1.1 Cash flow and fair value interest rate risk

Exposure

The University's main interest rate risk arises from cash and short-term investments which earn interest at variable rates, and expose the University to cash flow interest rate risk. The University investments in short-term investments are at fixed rates for the duration of the investment and this limits the risk to the University in the event that interest rates go down.

Sensitivity

Surplus or deficit is sensitive to higher/lower interest income from cash and short-term investments - unrestricted as a result of changes in interest rates.

	Impact on surplus or deficit	
Interest rates – increase by 200 basis points	11,806	16,851
Interest rates – Decrease by 200 basis points	(11,806)	(16,851)
* Holding all other variables constant		

Financial assets exposed to interest risk

Council controlled - cash and short-term investments	590,302	842,530

23.1.2 Price risk

Exposure

The University's exposure to securities price risk arises from unit trust investments held by the university and classified in the statement of financial position at fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) (note 6). The exposure to price risk is not significant as the investment held in unit trust is relatively small.

Financial risk management continued...

Sensitivity

The table below summarises the impact of increases/decreases of the unit trust prices on the university's surplus for the period. The analysis is based on the assumption that the unit trust prices increased by 5% or decreased by 5%.

	Impact on surplus	
	2023	**2022**
Sanlam Multi Investment (Listed unit trusts)	915	894

23.2 Credit risk

Credit risk arises from cash and cash equivalents, short-term investments and trade and other receivables.

Potential concentrations of credit risk consist mainly of short-term cash, cash equivalent and student receivable and arises from default of the counter party. The maximum exposure for the University is equal to the carrying amount of these instruments. The University places cash only with major financial institutions with good credit ratings.

Trade and other receivables comprise of outstanding student fees from students. The risk is mitigated by requiring students to pay an initial instalment in respect of tuition and accommodation fees at registration, the regular monitoring of outstanding fees and the institution of debt collection action in cases of long outstanding amounts.

Most of the students are funded by the National Student Financial Aid (NSFAS) which reduces credit risk.

23.3 Liquidity risk

Prudent liquidity risk management requires that the University maintains sufficient cash and short-term investments to meet obligations when due. At the end of the reporting period the University held cash and short-term investments of R590 million (2022: R842 million) that are available for managing liquidity risk. Management monitors rolling forecasts of the University's cash and cash equivalents (note 8) on the basis of expected cash flows.

The University faces a liquidity risk which is minimised by the annual grant it receives from DHET.

24. Interests in other entities

The following entities ("the Trusts") are consolidated structured entities of the University

- The Border Technikon Trust
- University of Transkei Foundation
- T T Trust

The Trusts were established in support of former Transkei and Ciskei tertiary institutions which were absorbed into the structures of Walter Sisulu University after 1994.

Land and buildings with a carrying value of R15.5 million from former institutions were never transferred into the respective trusts and the land is still registered in the names of the former institutions.

25. Related parties

25.1 Group entities

There are no other transactions or balances between the University and the trusts, except for the land buildings as disclosed in note 24 above.

25.2 Other related parties

During the 2018 year, the University in partnership with a community based company (Aluzabyte Pty Ltd), established and registered a company called Cangobrite (Pty) Ltd which is then responsible for driving an e-Waste project that is located at Potsdam Site.

There are no transactions or balances between the University and Cangobrite (Pty) Ltd.

Sisulu foundation for African Pandemic Disease Response NPC. This entity is responsible for providing key management personnel service to the reporting entity or to the parent of the reporting entity.

There are no transactions or balances between the University and Sisulu foundation for African Pandemic Disease Response NPC.

25.3 Department of Higher Education and Training

The University is ultimately accountable to the Department of Higher Education and Training in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997). Transactions with the Department of Higher Education and Training are as follows:

State Subsidies and Grants	**1,397,373**	**1,329,566**

Balances with the Department of Higher Education and Training were as follows:

DHET payable	**-**	**-**

Related parties continued...

State subsidies and grants received from the Department of Higher Education and Training relate to subsidies and grants received for the financial year for operational expenditure and for specific purposes. Operational grants include the block grant and historically disadvantaged institution grant. There are no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attaching to the operating grants. Each subsidy and grant have specific terms and conditions which need to be adhered to.

Grants received for specific purposes include the clinical training grant, teaching development grant, research development grant, foundation grant and the infrastructure grant. Grants received for specific purposes that are unspent are included in note 10 on deferred income. Capital commitments relating to the infrastructure grant are disclosed in note 20.

26.4 Joint operations

Joint Operation with ECDOH

The University contributes 40% of the operating expenses on the clinical training platfom which is jointly funded by the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDOH). The related party transactions and balances with ECDOH are disclosed in Note 9 to the financial statements.

Joint Library

WSU, University of Fort Hare (UFH) and University of South Africa (UNISA) entered into a collaboration agreement to build and maintain a library facility in East London. The related party transactions and balances relating the library facility are disclosed in Note 9 to the financial statements.

25.4 Compensation paid to key management personnel

Short-term employee benefits	45,840	42,205

Key management personnel are those people having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of the University.

Related parties continued...

25.5 Compensation paid to members of council and prescribed officers

Amounts related to services rendered as a member of council of the University

Name	Fees paid	Reimbursement of expenses	2023 Total	2022 Total
Chair of Council				
Adv. T Ngcukaitobi	-	-	-	-
Chairs of Committees				
Ms F Lamola (FCC & Deputy Chair of Council) - from 1 May 2022	33	1	34	37
Mr S Kou (PICC) - from 1 May 2022	89	4	93	13
Ms N Y Tyamzashe (HRCC)	82	2	84	34
Mr V Jarana (ARCCC) - from 1 Jan 2022	63	1	64	49
Members of Council				
Mr TA Klaas	60	1	61	38
Mr GTM Matyobeni	44	1	45	-
Dr M M Tebelele (From 07 July 2022)	82	5	87	16
Mr L Fuzile (From 01 May 2022)	19	1	20	13
† Dr X Mantashe (from 7 Jul 2022)	69	3	72	-
Mr S Puti (up to 16 July 2022)	3	0	3	61
Members of Committees				
Mr S Ngqwala	19	1	20	3
Mr R Gilfan	12	1	13	-
Mr MN De Beer	13	1	14	13
Total	**588**	**22**	**610**	**300**

† The member receives no compensation from the University as he/she is employed in the public service or elected not to receive compensation from the University

Related parties continued...

Name	Salaries and related payments	Other remuneration	2023 Total remuneration	2022 Total remuneration
Executive members of staff				
Prof R Songca:	**4,128**	29	4,157	4,019
Prof M.S. Binza: DVC AAR	2,489	-	2,489	2,674
Dr PS Jaca: DVC: Institutional Support (up to Aug 23)	1,999	201	2,200	2,620
Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	**4,005**	78	4,083	3,375
• Rector Mthatha (until 08 Feb 2022)	-	-	-	220
• Acting DVC:AAR (from Feb 22 to Dec 23)	4,005	78	4,083	3,155
Mr F Kwahene : Acting Rector Campus (until Nov 22)	-	-	-	2,079
Prof EN Cishe: Acting Rector: Mthatha Campus	2,391	4	2,395	336
Dr B Nguza-Mduba: A/Rect. B/worth Camp.	1,923	-	1,923	2,324
Dr CS Novukela: A/Rect.: Buffalo City Campus	1,775	-	1,775	1,781
Dr PT Mpiti Act. Rect. Komani Campus	1,844	20	1,864	1,797
Dr L Ntonzima: (Registrar)	2,006	-	2,006	1,903
Mr M Nhiwatiwa: Chief Financial Officer	2,360	23	2,382	2,256
Mr S Mpambane: Executive Director: Ops. & ICT	2,374	37	2,412	2,329
Mr SA Mnyaiza: Executive Director Human Resources	1,949	87	2,036	1,938
Dr IP Mohasoa: Executive Director: SDSS	3,203	36	3,239	3,035
Prof MG Karels: Acting SD IP	-	-	-	1,274
Prof W Akpan: Senior Director: Research & Innovation	1,985	216	2,201	2,124
Prof NP Dastile Acting Senior Director: Research & Innovation	1,760	16	1,776	364
Prof C Ndebele: Senior Director: LTD	2,252	179	2,431	2,179
Ms YG Tukwayo: Senior Director: MCA	1,945	39	1,984	1,848
Mrs Q N C Ndzingani: Acting ED LIS	1,382	-	1,382	1,949
Prof T Ncanywa: Act. SD Reasearch and Innovation	1,762	16	1,778	-
Ms O Mokgatle: ED Institutional Planning	1,325	-	1,325	-
	44,858	**982**	**45,840**	**42,205**

26. Contingent liabilities

Legal Matters

At year end there were 27 (2022: 24 cases) legal cases pending, where a final outcome had not been determined. The total claims against the University amount to R73.5 million (2022: R244 million). Based on legal advice, in 27 cases with claims amounting to R73.5 million the applicants chances of success were not probable.

27. Subsequent events

The University has evaluated subsequent events from the financial year end to the date of issue of these financial statements and has determined that there are no material subsequent events to disclose.