WSU
Walter Sisulu University
In pursuit of excellence

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

WSU
Walter Sisulu University
STUDY CENTRE

2024 Annual Report of the Walter Sisulu University

Pursuant to Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) as amended, and in compliance with the Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions (Government Notice No. R. 464 of 9 June 2014), Walter Sisulu University is pleased to present this Annual Report to the Minister of Higher Education and Training for the year ended 31 December 2024.

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

• Manual for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions, Department of Higher Education and Training, 2014 (Annexure A to Government Notice No. R. 464 of 9 June 2014)
• The WSU Strategic Plan Vision 2030 and its predefined objectives, as sanctioned by the University Council.

The University has also conducted its operations and governance in full accordance with the Walter Sisulu University Institutional Statute, 2024 published in Government Gazette No. 51352 of 4 October 2024. The university 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.

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.

Chairperson of the Council
Prof Tembeka Ngcukaitobi

Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Prof Rushiella Nolundi Songca

page CONTENTS

page CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

POSTAL ADDRESS

Walter Sisulu University
Private Bag X1
MTHATHA
5117

BUSINESS ADDRESS

Nelson Mandela Drive
MTHATHA
5100

WEBSITE

www.wsu.ac.za

BANKERS

First National Bank
4 First Place
Johannesburg
2001

Investec Bank Limited
100 Grayston Drive
Sandown
Sandton
2196

The Standard Bank of South Africa Ltd
5 Simmonds Street
Standard Bank Centre
Johannesburg
2107

Absa Limited
ABSA Business Banking
Barclays Towers West
15 Troye Street
Johannesburg
2001

AUDITORS

External Auditors

Nexia SAB&T
99 Cape Road
Port Elizabeth
6001
Tel: 012 682 8995

Internal Auditors

Shumba Inc.
Regus Business Centre
14 Stewart Drive
East London

Agreed upon procedures

Marais & Smith
2 Scherwitz Road
Berea
East London
Tel: 043-7260010

ATTORNEYS

Drake, Flemmer & Orsmond
Tewkesbury House
22 St James Road
Southernwood
East London
Tel: 043-7224210

Adams & Adams
P O Box 1014
Pretoria
0001
Tel: 012-4326000

Kirchmanns Inc.
Global House
3 Pearce Street
Berea
East London
Tel: 043-7210963

M Zilani Attorneys
Sanlam Building
50 Madeira Street
Mthatha
Tel: 047-5311358

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

Throughout the 2024 academic year, Walter Sisulu University's operations were significantly guided by its comprehensive Strategic Plan 2020-2030, known as Vision 2030. This strategic framework encompasses outcome-orientated goals and objectives that WSU aims to achieve over the ten-year implementation period. For this reporting period, the Strategic Plan's nine interconnected goals fostered an integrated approach to institutional transformation, ensuring academic excellence, student success, research impact, and operational effectiveness. As a result, the institution has experienced a revitalised academic culture characterised by innovation, meaningful community engagement, and the promotion of African intellectual traditions.

As the 2024 academic year drew to a close, the university initiated preparations for the strategy's mid-term review. This critical evaluation is imperative to assess institutional performance since the strategic plan's adoption and ensure that WSU remains aligned with its strategic objectives. Additionally, Vision 2030 operates as a "living" document that continuously informs institutional decisions while charting WSU's future trajectory towards excellence and student success.

With a clear vision and strategic direction, the university maintains confidence in navigating the challenges of an evolving higher education landscape. It is this strategic framework that enables WSU to remain agile and responsive to emerging challenges while steadfastly pursuing its core aspirations of producing relevant and impactful research, championing sustainable development, and graduating versatile, future-ready individuals capable of driving positive change.

The university continues to systematically measure its progress against Vision 2030 objectives and this annual report serves as a key platform for sharing institutional progress and performance for the 2024 academic year to ensure accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement as the university advances toward its Vision 2030 aspirations.

Below are the nine strategic goals that serve as WSU's guideposts and framework for achieving institutional excellence:

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

Institutional Governance

It is an honour to present the 2024 Annual Report on behalf of Walter Sisulu University (WSU). In 2024, WSU continued to affirm its role as a university that guarantees access to university education for the most underprivileged students coming from the poorest region in the country. Not only does WSU guarantee access, it commits to making a significant impact on its students, enabling them to play a meaningful role in the economy of South Africa. Allied to this role is the commitment to South Africa by ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are not left behind. This commitment comes with its own challenges – financial, infrastructure, and research capabilities. In 2024, we have sought to complete the merger process and convert the challenges we face into opportunities.

The governance of WSU through the Council has been stable. Only one position has been filled with Judge Luleka Flatela of the High Court of South Africa in the Gauteng Division. The stability of the Council enables it to continue providing support to the university management to achieve our goals as contained in the Strategic Plan 2020-2030, commonly known as "Vision 2030". For the 2024 academic year, the Council continued to discharge its responsibilities and has the following highlights to report:

Sustainability

I am happy to report that WSU is a going concern. This picture exists despite the decline in funding for universities. We have also begun to make strides in obtaining funds from public and private sources. While this is in an infancy stage, it is notable that a strong foundation is being laid for the future. It is important to stress that WSU attracts students who heavily depend on the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding. While this is a great opportunity and aligns with our vision, such exposure to a single source creates risks of its own kind, where that source is itself unstable, its policies and decisions unpredictable, and its funding not guaranteed. For the sustainability of the higher education sector, it is imperative that we have a well-functioning NSFAS. This is why the priority for 2024 has been to set up measures for the future sustainability efforts for the university. We approved the establishment of two entities, namely the Business Enterprise with a focus on improving third-stream income business efforts and the WSU Legacy Fund, which is established to attract donors to fund targeted projects.

Governance and Human Resources Matters

WSU demonstrated robust and effective governance under the oversight of the Council and its committees. The Council maintained scrutiny over all activities, ensuring that all decisions at the Council level were thoroughly vetted and approved by its committees. Standing ordinary meetings were held punctually, consistently, exceeding the statutory requirements. In the 2024 academic year, the Council approved several new and reviewed policies as listed below:
a) Amended WSU Statute of 2024
b) Travel Management Policy

c)	Appointment of Executive Management Policy,
d)	Research Higher Degrees Policy
e)	Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship Policy
f)	Research and Innovation Policy
g)	Research Ethics Policy
h)	Institutional Repository Policy
i)	Plagiarism And Academic Integrity Policy
j)	Circulation Policy
k)	Research Data Management Policy
l)	Campus Health Services Policy
m)	Infection Control Policy
n)	Pharmaceutical Policy
o)	Student Pregnancy Policy
p)	Policy on Students with Disabilities
q)	Substance Abuse Policy
r)	Students' Disciplinary Code Policy

To continue to enhance the Council's capabilities in fulfilling its statutory obligations, a Governance workshop for Council and Management was held on 20 April 2024. These workshops are now institutionalised and are planned to occur twice a year.

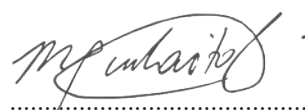**Major highlights of the year include the following:**
1.	Approved revised organisational structure
2.	Approved Guidelines for the Relocation of Staff to fulfil R&C implementation.
3.	Executive and Senior Leadership appointments for a term of five years:
a)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning
b)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation
c)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support and Development
d)	Executive Dean: Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences
e)	Executive Dean: Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences
f)	Executive Dean: Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences
g)	Executive Dean: Faculty of Education
h)	Deputy Executive Dean: Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences
i)	Deputy Executive Dean: Faculty of Education
j)	Deputy Executive Dean: Faculty of Natural Sciences
k)	Senior Director: Legal Services

Finance
Council continued to drive financial health at WSU, emphasizing the goal to achieve a clean audit opinion and accountability for wasteful expenditure. This was facilitated by the active oversight of the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee of Council. The unqualified report opinion for the 2024 financial year, declared by the 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.

Conclusion
WSU is firmly grounded in effective governance and management, driving an excellent academic agenda for the benefit of the global community. The 2024 academic year stands as a testament to this trajectory, reflecting the university's commitment to upholding high standards of governance and academic excellence. While there are ongoing challenges, what we can be proud of is that the Council remains able at all times to respond with decisiveness to internal and external factors impacting the university. We remain committed to the vision of creating a truly pan-African university driven by the desire to foster change locally with a global reach.

....
Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi SC
Chairperson of Council

1.2 COUNCIL COMPOSITION

In the 2024 academic year, the university had a new statute promulgated in Government Gazette No. 51352 of 4 October 2024, establishing the Walter Sisulu University Institutional Statute, 2024. This change had implications for the university's governance structures and operational frameworks, requiring alignment with updated statutory provisions while maintaining compliance with the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended).

The university is pleased to report that with the new Statute, the Council maintained responsibility for the overall governance of the University, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and providing strategic oversight. The composition of the Council remains fully compliant with the Higher Education Act, which requires that at least 60% of council members be individuals who are not employees or students of the university. The Council comprises 20 members, with 12 external members (60%) contributing diverse skills and perspectives from beyond the University, and 8 internal members (40%) representing the University's staff and students.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

#	TITLE, INITIAL(S) & SURNAME	NATURE OF APPOINTMENT	
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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Specialist in Public Law, Labour Law, Competition Law, Land Law Qualifications: • LLM: Rhodes • BProc; LLB: Unitra, now Walter Sisulu University
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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Specialisr in Financial and Risk Managment Qualifications: • CA (SA) - SAICA • BCom (Hon Accounting) – Unisa • BCom (Accounting) – Unisa

03	Mr V Jarana	Council Appointee – Expertise in: Finance and Investment matters Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 June 2021 - 30 May 2025 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Businessman 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
04	Mr L Fuzile	Council Appointee – Expertise in: Commerce and Industry Term of office: Three years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022 - 30 April 2025 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Chief Executive Africa Regions and Offshore, Stnadard Bank Group. 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: • Advanced Management Programme: Harvard. • Master of Commerce (Economics): University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg • Honours Bachelor of Commerce (Economics): University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg • Bachelor of Commerce (Higher Diploma in Education): University of Transkei
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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Eastern Cape Judge President since 2017, appointed as ADJP in 2017 and was appointed as Judge of High Court in 2015 Qualifications: • Practise as Advocate • Pupillage • Admission as Advocate • LLB: Unitra • BJuris: Unitra
07	Dr MM Tebelele	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Medical doctor with an MBA in Leadership from the University of Liverpool Qualifications: • MBA (LEADERSHIP) With merit, University of Liverpool • MB CHB, University of Transkei (UNITRA)

08	Mr T Bonakele	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	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, Gordon Institute of Business Science (Gibs): University of Pretoria • Practical Legal Training (2000): Law Society of South Africa, Port Elizabeth • LLB: University of Fort Hare • BJuris: University of Fort Hare
09	Mr S Kou	Ministerial Appointee Term of office: Four years: Section 9 (1) 01 May 2022-30 April 2026 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	Managing Director of Isao Consulting (Pty) Ltd Qualifications: • MEng Project Management - University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa • BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering – University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	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 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 - 04 Oct. 2029	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 • 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	• LLD: University of Pretoria • LLM: Georgetown Law Centre; USA • LLB LLM: University of Natal • BA Law: National University of Lesotho
14	Prof E Cishe	Acting DVC: Academic Affairs and Research	Qualifications: • - EdD (Nottingham University), • - MEd, BEd, BA (Ed), JSTC (UNITRA)
15	Prof B Nguza-Mduba	Senate Representative Two years: Section 9 (1) (b) 04 Nov. 2020 to 04 Nov. 2022 05 Nov. 2022 to 05 Nov. 2024 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 – 04 Oct. 202	Executive Dean: Faculty of Management, Public Administration Sciences Qualifications: • Doctor of Business Administration: UKZN, • Master of Business Leadership 98: UNISA, • Master of Education: UFS, • Bachelor of Commerce (Hon): UNISA, • Bachelor of Education: UNISA
16	Vacant	Senate Representative	
17	Dr A Mngeni	Non-Senate Academic Employee Two years: Section 9 (1) (b) 14 Nov 2022 – 14 Nov. 2024 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 – 04 Oct. 2029	Lecturer at WSU Qualifications: • Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Environmental Sciences UNISA • Master of Science in Geography - Walter Sisulu Honours in Geography Walter Sisulu University • BSc Environmental Studies Walter Sisulu University
18	Mr ME Nongadlela	Non-Senate Non-Academic Employee Two years: Section 9 (1) (b) 14 Nov 2022 – 14 Nov. 2024 New Statute Five years: Section 9 (2) 04 Oct. 2024 – 04 Oct. 2029	Lab Technician at WSU Qualification: • BTech: Information Technology (SD) • ND: Information Technology

19	Ms B Madikizela	Councillor/ISRC President One Year	Student
20	Mr S Mdingi	Councillor/ISRC SG	Student
SECRETARY TO COUNCIL			
21	Dr L Ntonzima	Secretary to Council / Registrar	• D-Tech Public Mngt - CPUT • M-Tech PublicMngt – CPUT • Btech Public Mngt – CPUT • ND-Public Mngt & Admin – WSU

NOMINATION GUIDELINES FOR THE ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

In accordance with the Walter Sisulu University Institutional Statute, 2024, council members are elected through procedures determined by the Statute and institutional Rules to ensure appropriate representation of both internal and external constituencies. To facilitate the nomination process, comprehensive Nomination Guidelines have been established for the effective nomination and election of WSU councillors in compliance with statutory requirements.

The following established and legislatively approved guidelines served as the basis for the nomination and election of council members in 2021 and are in the process of being aligned with the new Statute. Since the Statute was gazetted in October 2024, in instances where any provisions of the existing guidelines conflict with the new Statute, the statutory provisions take precedence and govern council nomination and election processes. This approach is undertaken to maintain the integrity of council governance structures throughout the transition period.

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 & 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 Whistleblowing Hotline

- Toll-free number: 0800 212 582
- Hotfax number: 0800 200 796
- Email: hotline@kpmg.co.za
- URL: www.thornhill.co.za/kpmgfaircallreport

1.3 COUNCIL MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

ORDINARY MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

Ordinary / Special meeting(s)	Date	Attendance (%)
First ordinary meeting	19 April 2024	89%
Special Meeting	13 June 2024	84%
Second ordinary meeting	02 August 2024	100%
Special Meeting	30 October 2024	89%
Third ordinary meeting	29 November 2024	Did not have quorum

GOVERNANCE WORKSHOPS OF COUNCIL

Workshop(s)	Date	Attendance (%)
Council Governance Workshop	20 April 2024	84%

ATTENDANCE OF MEETINGS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

WSU COUNCIL – 2024								
#		19 April	20 April Gov./shop	13 June (Special)	02 August	30 October (Special)	29 Nov No Quorum	Percentage
External Council members								
01	Adv T Ngcukaitobi	P	P	P	P	P		83%
02	Ms FL Lamola	P	P	P	P	P		83%
03	Ms NY Tyamzashe	P	P	AP	P	P		67%
04	Judge SM Mbenenge	AP	AP	P	P	P		50%
05	Dr MM Tebelele	P	P	P	P	P		83%
06	Mr T Bonakele	P	P	AP	P	P		67%
07	Mr S Kou	P	P	P	P	P		83%
08	Mr T Klaas	P	AP	P	P	N/A		50%
09	Mr MTG Matyobeni	P	P	P	P	P		83%
10	Mr V Jarana	P	AP	P	P	P		67%
11	Mr L Fuzile	P	P	P	P	P		83%
12	Dr LX Mantashe	P	P	AP	P	AP		50%
	Vacant	-	-	-	-	-		-
Internal Council members								
13	Prof RN Songca	P	P	P	P	P		83%
14	Prof EN Cishe	AP	AP	P	P	P		50%
16	Ms B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	P		83%
16	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	P	P	P	P		83%

17	Dr A Mngeni	P	P	P	AP	P		83%
18	Ms B Madikizela	P	P	P	AP	P		83%
10	Mr S Mdingi	P	P	P	P	P		83
Secretary to Council								
20	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	P		83%
Key Word / RAG		P= Present AP= Apology N/A = No longer a member						

1.4 SIGNIFICANT COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS FOR 2024

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	• Cllr. Mbenenge assumed his inaugural term as a Ministerial Council Appointee on 23 June 2020. His term ended on 31 July 2024. • The Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation confirmed Cllr Mbenenge's appointment to WSU Council for a five-year term, effective from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028.
	Appointment of Council member: One person with expertise in law. • In accordance with Section 8(1)(i) of the WSU Statute of 2024, Judge Luleka Flatela was appointed effective from 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2029.
Senior Leadership Positions Appointments: Deputy Vice Chancellor	Appointment of Acting DVC: AAR Council ratified the ECC resolution to appoint **Professor EN Cishe** as the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, until the position is filled. Appointment of the DVC: T&L The Council appointed Professor **M Linnington** as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning for a term of five years. Appointment of the DVC:R&I Council appointed **Professor NN Feza** to the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation on a five-year contract. Appointment of the DVC:IS&D Council appointed of **Mr S Mpambane** to the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Institutional Support and Development on a five-year contract term.

Senior Leadership Positions Appointments: Faculty Executive Deans	Council ratified the ECC resolution of the appointment of the following Executive Deans: <u>Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences</u> **Professor B Nguza-Mduba** on a five-year term contract. <u>Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences</u> **Professor MS Panicker** on a five-year term contract. <u>Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences</u> **Professor T Ndlovu** on a five-year term contract. <u>Faculty of Education</u> **Professor BD Bantwini** on a five-year term contract
Senior Leadership Positions Appointments: Faculty Deputy Executive Deans	Council ratified the ECC resolution of the appointment of the following Deputy Executive Deans: <u>Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences</u> **Professor S Balkaran** on a five-year contract term. <u>Faculty of Education</u> **Professor PT Mpiti** on a five-year contract term. <u>Faculty of Natural Science</u> **Dr PS Sekhejane** on a five-year contract term. <u>Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment, and Information Technology</u> **Dr N Ngcobo** on a five-year contract term.
Senior Leadership Positions Appointments: Senior Director	Council ratified the ECC c resolution to appoint **Advocate AW Bodlani SC** to the position of Senior Director: Legal Services on a five-year contract term.
Approved Policies	**Amended Institutional Statute** The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Gazetted the amended Walter Sisulu University Institutional Statute, 2024 on 4 October 2024 in Government Gazette No. 51352, replacing the previous Walter Sisulu University Institutional Statute published in Government Gazette No. 37235 of 17 January 2014. Council considered the policies aligned, reviewed, and/or developed to effectively support the Rationalisation and Consolidation project and WSU Vision 2030. 1. Travel Management Policy 2. Approve an addendum to the SRC Constitution 3. Research & Innovation Policies • Research and Innovation ◊ Research Higher Degrees Policy ◊ Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship Policy ◊ Research and Innovation Policy ◊ Research Ethics Policy • Library and Information Services ◊ Institutional Repository Policy ◊ Plagiarism And Academic Integrity Policy ◊ Circulation Policy ◊ Research Data Management Policy 4. Convocation Constitution and Code of Conduct ◊ WSU Convocation Constitution and Code of Conduct for the WSU Convocation 5. Health and Wellness Policies ◊ Campus Health Services Policy ◊ Infection Control Policy ◊ Pharmaceutical Policy ◊ Student Pregnancy Policy ◊ Policy on Students with Disabilities ◊ Substance Abuse Policy 6. Revision of the Policy on Appointment of Executive Management

Part B

1.5 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The WSU Council operates through strategically established committees that provide focused oversight and specialised expertise across critical areas of university management. This structure ensures comprehensive governance whilst enabling thorough consideration of complex institutional matters through independent and objective evaluation.

In accordance with the WSU Institutional Statute, 2024 and governance best practices, each committee is chaired by experienced external individuals who contribute relevant expertise and independent perspectives to their roles. This external leadership arrangement is fundamental to effective university governance as it ensures independence and objectivity free from internal institutional pressures, whilst bringing diverse expertise from various sectors including business, law, and finance. In addition, the external majority composition enhances accountability and transparency, providing essential checks and balances that build stakeholder confidence and ensure decisions are made in the best interests of the institution.

The 2024 academic year Council Committee structure comprises:

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- Executive Committee of Council (ECC)
Chairperson - Adv. T Ngcukaitobi

- Human Resource Committee of Council (HRCC)
Chairperson - Ms NY Tyamzashe

- Physical Planning and Infrastructure Committee of Council (PPICC)
Chairperson - Mr S Kou

- Finance Committee of Council (FCC)
Chairperson - Mrs FL Lamola

- Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee of Council (ARCCC)
Chairperson - Mr V Jarana

- Governance & Council Membership Committee of Council (GCMCC)
Chairperson - Adv. T Ngcukaitobi

- Remuneration Committee of Council (REMCO)
Chairperson - Mrs FL Lamola

COUNCIL COMMITTEES' MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	ECC - 2024 Dates	24 Jan spl	08 Feb spl	22 Feb	12 April spl	24 May	27 Jun spl	06 Sept	16 Oct spl	04 Dec spl	Percentage
External Council Members											
01	Adv. T Ngcukaitobi (Chairperson)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Ms FL Lamola (FCC Chair)	AP	AP	AP	P	AP	P	AP	AP	AP	22%
03	Ms NY Tyamzashe (HRCC Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
04	Mr V Jarana (ARCCC Chair)	AP	AP	P	AP	P	P	P	AP	P	44%
05	Mr S Kou (PPICC Chair)	P	P	P	AP	P	P	P	P	P	89%
Internal Council Members											
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%
07	Prof EN Cishe (Acting DVC: AAR)	P	P	P	AP	P	P	P	P	P	89%
Secretary to Council											
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100%

KEY WORDS:
P= Present ; AP=Apology

HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	HRCC - 2024 Dates	05 April	12 July	05 November	Percentage
External Council Members					
01	Ms NY Tyamzashe (Chairperson)	P	P	p	100%
02	Mr T Bonakele	P	P	P	100%
03	Dr LX Mantashe	AP	P	P	67%
Internal Council Members					
04	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	P	100%
05	Prof EN Cishe Acting DVC: AAR	AP	P	P	67%
06	Dr A Mngeni	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

PHYSICAL PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	PPICC - 2024				
	Dates	**15 March**	**05 July**	**25 October**	**Percentage**
External Council Members					
01	Mr S Kou (Chairperson)	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr MTG Matyobeni	P	P	P	100%
03	Mr T Bonakele	AP	P	P	67%
04	Dr LX Mantashe	P	P	P	100%
05	Mr R Gilfillan External Expert co-opted	AP	AP	P	33%
Internal Council Members					
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	AP	67%
07	Prof EN Cishe	AP	P	P	67%
08	Dr A Mngeni	P	AP	AP	33%
09	Ms B Madikizela	P	P	P	100%
Secretary to Council					
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P	P	P	100%
KEY WORDS: P= Present ; AP= Apology					

FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	FCC - 2024					
	Dates	**06 March**	**21 June**	**23 October**	**20 Nov (special)**	**Percentage**
External Council Members						
01	Ms FL Lamola (Chair)	P	P	P	P	100%
02	Mr T Klaas	P	P	N/A	N/A	50%
03	Mr V Jarana	P	AP	P	P	75%
04	Mr S Kou	P	P	P	P	100%
05	Ms T Cumming (Co-Opted)	AP	AP	P	P	50%
06	Mr T de Beer (Co-Opted)	AP	P	P	P	75%
Internal Council Members						
07	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	P	AP	P	75%
08	Prof EN Cishe	AP	P	P	P	75%
09	Prof B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	P	P	100%
10	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	AP	AP	P	25%
11	Mr S Mdingi	N/A	AP	AP	AP	0%
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						

AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	ARCCC - 2024					
	Name	08 March	24 June Joint with FCC	11 July	12 November	Percentage
External members						
01	Mr V Jarana (Chairperson)	P	P	AP	P	75%
02	Mr T Klaas	P	P	AP	N/A	50%
03	Dr MM Tebelele	P	AP	P	P	75%
04	Mr L Fuzile	P	P	AP	P	75%
05	Mr S Ngqwala Co-Opted	P	P	P	P	
Internal members						
06	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P	AP	P	P	75%
07	Prof EN Cishe	AP	P	P	P	75%
08	Mr ME Nongadlela	P	P	AP	P	75%
09	Dr B Nguza-Mduba	P	P	AP	P	75%
10	Mr S Mdingi	N/A	P	AP	AP	25%
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						

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

#	REMCO - 2024	15 April	15 November Did not convene	Percentage
	Dates			
External Council Members				
01	Ms FL Lamola (Chairperson)	P		50%
02	Ms NY Tyamzashe	P		50%
03	Mr V Jarana	P		50%
Internal Council Members				
04	Prof RN Songca (VC)	P		50%
Secretary to Council				
01	Dr L Ntonzima	P		50%
KEY WORDS: P= Present ; AP= Apology				

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) was established by the University Council as one of its sub-committees, and it continued to exist and function effectively throughout 2024. The ARCCC oversees governance, compliance, and management of risks for the sustainability and growth of the University. It does this by, inter alia, receiving and evaluating reports on identified and managed risks in order to ensure the integrity, adequacy and effectiveness of the University's financial controls through which its goals are achieved.

In discharging its work, the ARCCC aims to adhere to and promote the guidelines set out in the King IV Report on Governance 2016. According to its Terms of Reference, the ARCCC consists of the following members:

- Four external members of Council;

- Two independent, external specialists in financial matters;

- The Vice - Chancellor & Principal (ex-officio); and

- The Deputy Vice - Chancellor(s) (ex-officio)

The four external members and two external specialists are independent and not employed by the University.

In order to demonstrate the expertise of the external members of the ARCCC, their academic qualifications are in the table below:

Name & Surname	Designation	Academic qualifications	Period served
Mr V Jarana	External Council Member	Masters in Business Administration (University of Stellenbosch), Honours in Business Administration (University of Stellenbosch), Bachelor of Commerce: Economics, Business Management & Commercial Law (University of Transkei), Vodafone Global Leadership Programme (IMD (Switzerland) & London Business School), Vodacom Advanced Executive Programme (UNISA School of Business Leadership), National Technical Diploma: Telecommunications (Olifantsfontein Technical College).	36 Months
Mr T Klaas	External Council Member	Management Development Programme (MDP) (Nelson Mandela University), B. Com Honours (Regent Business School). B. Com: Business Management (Vista University, Port Elizabeth).	66 months
Dr MM Tebelele	External Council Member	MBA: Leadership (University of Liverpool), MBChB (University of Transkei), Advanced Management Certificate (Manchester Business School), Diploma: Life Coaching (SA Blackford institute), DIP HIV Management (CMSA), Facilitator Course (NMU).	31 months

Mr L Fuzile	External Council Member	Advanced Management Programme (Harvard), Master of Commerce: Economics (University of Natal), Bachelor of Commerce Honours: Economics (University of Natal), Bachelor of Commerce: Higher Diploma in Education (University of Transkei).	31 months
Mr S Ngqwala	Independent Finance Specialist	B. Com Accounting (UNISA), B. Com (UFH), Junior Secondary Teachers Certificate (Lovedale Teachers College)	128 Months

Both the internal and external auditors have unrestricted access to the ARCCC, which ensures that their independence is safeguarded against threats. During the 2024 financial year, four (4) meetings were held and were attended by the external and internal auditors and appropriate members of the executive management who serve as Resource Persons. The resource persons include the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Director: Audit Services, External Auditors and other individuals who attend on request.

Of the eight (8) ARCCC members, 62,5% constitutes external members and 37,5% constitutes internal members (Ex-officio).

Mr V Jarana, who is an external Council member, and, as such, has direct access to all Council matters, chairs the ARCCC.

The Attendance at University ARCCC meetings during the 2024 financial year is set out in the table below:

Name & Surname	Designation	08 Mar 2024	24 Jun 2024 (Joint with FCC)	11 Jul 2024	12 Nov 2024	%
Mr V Jarana	External Council Member	P	P	LoA	P	75%
Mr T Klaas	External Council Member	P	P	LoA	N/A	66,7%
Dr MM Tebelele	External Council Member	P	LoA	P	P	75%
Mr L Fuzile	External Council Member	P	P	LoA	P	75%
Mr S Ngqwala	Independent Finance Specialist	P	P	P	P	100%
Prof. R Songca	Ex-officio Member (Vice- Chancellor & Principal)	P	LoA	P	P	75%
Prof. EN Cishe	Ex-officio Member (DVC: AAR)	LoA	P	P	P	75%
Prof M Linington	Ex-officio Member (DVC: T&L)	N/A	LoA	P	P	66,7&

P = Present; LoA = Leave of Absence; N/A = Not Applicable

The ARCCC Terms of Reference as confirmed by the Council remained the same in 2024. They are:

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 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.

IT GOVERNANCE

In an increasingly digitising world where digital technologies are impacting all aspects of human life, the need for the implementation of proactive IT Governance Frameworks and associated business processes has never been this great. ICT has shifted from being an enabler of teaching and learning and a provider of efficient administration to the centre of curriculum delivering in schools and universities. IT Governance is an element of corporate governance, aimed at improving the overall management of IT and deriving improved value from investment in information and technology. IT Governance Frameworks enable organisations to manage their IT risks effectively and ensure that the activities associated with information communications technologies are aligned with their overall business objectives.

Governance exists to inform and align decision making for information technology planning, policy and operations in order to meet business objectives, ascertain that risks are managed appropriately and verify that resources

are being used responsibly and strategically. IT Governance consists of organisational structures, processes and procedures that ensure that ICT sustains and extends the organisation's strategies and objectives according to internal cliental needs. It is used to assess all technology investment made by the university and is applied to strategic initiatives as well as incremental change, the delivery of change and the operation of existing technology services. The purpose of IT governance is to ensure that ICT:

• Is aligned with the university's strategy in order to meet defined university goals and objectives,

• Enables the organisation to exploit opportunities and maximise benefits, particularly to enhance efficiency and effectiveness;

• Resources are acquired, managed and utilised responsibly; and

• Risks are identified, documented and mitigation measures implemented to improve the university's risk exposure.

The IT governance structure establishes the strategic, operational and technical decision-making processes to ensure that the ICT Services Division enables the university to fulfill its vision and mission statements. The ICT Services governance structures provide strategic leadership at Institutional level that is cascaded to campuses. Campus leadership ensures that ICT priorities are determined and addressed within existing policies, principles and frameworks.

1.7 STATEMENT ON INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE / OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTROLS

For the year ended 31 DECEMBER 2024

Walter Sisulu 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 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 remains the University's priority to focus its attention on as this could result in the loss of critical University data.

Application controls audits were also conducted during the 2024 financial year on the systems that support the operations of the University. The controls in place provided reasonable assurance that the University's risks have been managed effectively and that the organization's goals and objectives will be achieved efficiently and economically.

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 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 defense 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.

....
DIRECTOR: AUDIT SERVICES

....
CHAIRPERSON: AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

1.8 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) continues to uphold robust risk management practices as an integral component of its governance framework. The University recognises that effective risk management is essential to achieving its strategic objectives, maintaining stakeholder confidence, and ensuring sustainable institutional performance.

Governance and Oversight

The Council remains ultimately responsible for risk governance and is supported by the ARCCC, which exercises oversight into the University's risk management processes. The Risk Management Committee, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor or his delegate, provides executive leadership on risk-related matters and ensures that risk management is embedded across all levels of the institution.

The Risk Management Unit continues to facilitate risk identification, assessment, mitigation, and monitoring across all operational and strategic areas.

Risk Management Process

WSU's risk management process remains aligned with the best practice frameworks, including ISO 31000 and the King IV Report on Corporate Governance. Risk registers are reviewed periodically and are updated to reflect the changing internal and external environment. Management continuously monitors risk mitigation plans to ensure that emerging risks are identified and addressed proactively.

During the year under review, the University maintained its focus on fostering a risk-aware culture through capacity-building initiatives, awareness campaigns, and ongoing engagement with faculties, directorates, and support units.

Key Risk Areas

The University's key risks remain broadly consistent with those identified in the prior year, with minor fluctuations in their prioritisation and impact ratings. Core risks include:

- Financial sustainability and resource constraints
- Compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements
- Information and cybersecurity risks
- Infrastructure maintenance and asset management
- Student unrest and stakeholder relations
- Academic quality assurance and programme accreditation
- Safety of students and staff on campus

Management continues to implement control measures and mitigation strategies to address these risks effectively. No significant new risks have materialised during the reporting period that would materially impact the University's risk profile.

Focus Areas for the Year Ahead

In the coming year, WSU will continue to strengthen its risk management capability by:

- Establishing a fully-fledged Risk and Compliance Unit to coordinate and enhance the University's enterprise risk, compliance, and governance functions
- Enhancing monitoring tools and reporting dashboards to improve risk visibility and decision-making
- Conducting targeted training for staff and management to reinforce accountability for risk management
- Reviewing and updating key risk policies and frameworks to remain compliant with evolving governance standards
- Deepening integration of risk management into strategic planning and performance management processes

The Council and management remain committed to maintaining a sound system of risk management and internal control to safeguard the University's assets, reputation, and sustainability.

Institutional Risks Overview

The table below summarises the University's key institutional risks, aligned to strategic objectives, with the associated root causes and residual risk ratings.

Institutional Objective	Risk Event / Description	Root Cause	Residual Risk
Financial Sustainability	Inability to secure sufficient funding to cover operational and strategic needs.	Declining state subsidies and limited alternative revenue streams.	High
Regulatory Compliance	Non-compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.	Complex and evolving regulatory environment; capacity constraints.	Moderate
Information Security	Cybersecurity breaches or data loss incidents.	Outdated IT infrastructure and insufficient security awareness.	High
Infrastructure Maintenance	Degradation of key physical assets affecting operations.	Aging facilities and limited maintenance budget.	High
Stakeholder Relations	Disruptions due to student protests and industrial actions.	Socioeconomic pressures and communication gaps.	Moderate
Academic Quality	Failure to meet accreditation standards.	Resource constraints and high staff turnover.	Moderate
Campus Safety	Threats to the safety and security of students and staff on campus.	Inadequate security infrastructure, no security strategy / plan.	High

1.9 INSTITUTIONAL FORUM REPORT

Mr Sandiso Mbonga
IF Chairperson

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 Dr Nomxolisi Mtsi.

The IF for the year of 2024 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.

Election of Deputy Chairperson - Institutional Forum

We are pleased to announce that after a successful election and deployment of new members into the Institutional Forum (IF) structure, which comprises representatives from the Senate, Campus Academic Staff, Campus Non-Academic Staff, and the Institutional Student Representative Council (ISRC). The IF convened its statutory meeting on 16 April 2024, during which the Forum was officially fully constituted in line with its governance mandate. As part of the proceedings, the Forum elected Dr Nomxolisi Mtsi unopposed as the Deputy Chairperson of the Institutional Forum. This appointment reflects shared confidence in Dr Mtsi's leadership, experience, and commitment to the Forum's objectives.

Institutional Forum recommendation on Campus Operational Structure

At its statutory meeting held on 16 April 2024, the Institutional Forum (IF) deliberated on key challenges currently affecting the effective functioning of campus operations across the University. In response to persistent issues – including poor communication among university stakeholders, lack of accountability during unrests in Campuses, and the increasing operational burden on Executive Deans and Heads of Departments (HoDs) – the IF formally advises the University Council to consider the inclusion of Campus Heads in the university organogram. This recommendation aims to:

- Strengthen operational oversight at campus level,
- Improve communication and coordination across institutional structures, and
- Allow academic leaders such as Deans and HoDs to refocus on their core academic and strategic responsibilities, rather than being overextended with operational duties.

The Institutional Forum believes that the establishment of clearly designated Campus Heads will enhance accountability, operational efficiency, and ultimately contribute to a more stable and responsive academic environment.

Institutional Forum recommendations on employment, Enterprise development and post graduate support for WSU Graduates

At its statutory meeting held on 16 April 2024, the Institutional Forum (IF) considered measures to enhance graduate employability, entrepreneurial development, and the academic advancement of Walter Sisulu University (WSU) alumni. The Forum resolved to put forward the following recommendations for consideration by University Management and Council:

1. **Graduate Employment Priority**-The IF recommends that first preference in recruitment processes be given to WSU graduates, where applicable, as a strategic intervention to reduce the growing number of unemployed graduates from the institution.
2. **Business Opportunities for Alumni**-The IF further recommends that a minimum of 20% of institutional business opportunities be allocated to WSU graduates, provided they meet all university procurement policies and compliance requirements. This initiative is intended to promote entrepreneurship and economic participation among alumni.
3. **Postgraduate Advancement and Employment (Grow Your Own Timber Strategy)-**The IF supports a "Grow Your Own Timber" approach, recommending that bursaries be provided to qualifying postgraduate alumni to further their studies at WSU. In addition, the university should actively absorb high-performing postgraduates into its employment pipeline, helping to build internal capacity while supporting local talent.
4. **Convocation House** – The IF recommended a facility that would enhance alumni engagement, institutional pride, and provide a centralized hub for convocation-related activities and services. The facility would serve as a dedicated space where all WSU graduates can purchase official university regalia, access alumni-related services, and strengthen their ongoing connection with the University community.

The Institutional Forum believes that these initiatives will not only benefit WSU graduates directly but also contribute to the broader transformation and development agenda of the University and the region it serves.

Outcome of special Institutional Forum Meeting- 11 June 2024

The Institutional Forum (IF) convened a special meeting on 11 June 2024 to fulfill its advisory mandate on the Draft University Statute. In line with its statutory responsibilities, the IF has formally advised the University Council on the Draft Statute, providing input to ensure alignment with the institutional vision, governance principles, and operational needs of Walter Sisulu University (WSU). Further to this, the IF recommends that Council considers the development and adoption of University Rules, aligned with the new Statute, within 90 days of the statute's approval. These rules will serve as a practical framework for the day-to-day operations of the University, ensuring clarity, consistency, and ease of reference for all university stakeholders.

Institutional Forum First Strategic session at Mphekweni Resort

The Institutional Forum (IF) proudly convened its first-ever strategic session on 26–27 October 2024 at Mphekweni Resort. This historic gathering brought together IF members representing various university stakeholders, united by a shared vision of co-creation, the development of a life-long leadership infrastructure, and the adoption of a systems thinking approach to governance. The session provided a reflective and collaborative platform for members to engage deeply on how to:

• Harness diversity in ideas and practices for institutional growth,
• Align with and institutionalize the values of Tata uWalter Sisulu (Xhamela),
• Build a culture of transformative leadership, and
• Foster a liberating institutional ethos rooted in the principle of "Doing things the Xhamela way."

This strategic session marks a significant step in the IF's journey toward driving meaningful change and promoting a unified, values-driven, and forward-thinking governance culture at Walter Sisulu University (WSU). Major highlights of the Mphekweni Mandate also included the following.

Institutional Forum to establish and institutionalise statutory committees

The Institutional Forum (IF) is pleased to announce the formal establishment of the IFOREX Committee, following the approval of its new Terms of Reference by the IF and subsequent endorsement by the University Council. The IFOREX Committee has been constituted as a key strategic arm of the Institutional Forum, aimed at driving institutional reflection, inclusive engagement, transformation, and cultural renewal across Walter Sisulu University. As part of its operationalization, the following Committee Chairs have been appointed:

- Chairperson: [Mr Sandiso Mbongo] – Overall Lead for IFOREX
- Chair: Institutional Governance and Policy Committee – [Dr Irene Mohasoa]
- Chair: Institutional Forum Code of conduct, Mediation and Dispute Resolution Committee – [Ms Thabang Kalake]
- Chair: Institutional Forum Equity Committee – [Ms Thuleka Brekafast]
- Chair: Institutional Forum Institutional Culture Committee – [Prof Thabisani Ndlovu]

Committees were also established with the following members.

Institutional Forum Governance and Policy Committee (IFGPC) Chairperson –Dr I Mohasoa
Members;
- Mr L Majova (Butterworth Campus: Academic Representative)
- Mr S Mtshawulana (Buffalo City Campus: Non-Academic Representative)
- Dr M Tebelele (Council Representative)
- Miss B Madikizela (Institutional Student Representative Council; ISRC)

Institutional Forum Code of Conduct, Mediation and Dispute Resolution Committee (IFCCMDRC) Chairperson – Miss T Kalake
Members;
Mrs N Mpondwana (Mthatha Campus: Academic Representative)
Mr Y Tshazibana (Buffalo City Campus: Academic Representative)
Mr MTG Matyobeni (Council Representative)
Mr S Cekiso (Convocation Representative)

Institutional Forum Equity Committee (IFEC) Chairperson -Miss T Breakfast
Members;
- Mr X Buqa (Komani Campus: Non-Academic Representative)
- Prof T Ncanywa (Senate Representative)
- Mr S Mpambane (Management Representative)
- Employment Equity Committee Representative

Institutional Forum Institutional Culture Committee (IFICC) Chairperson -Prof T Ndlovu
Members;
- Mr L Mbongo (Transformation Manager)
- Dr TP Mpiti (Management Representative)
- Dr N Mtsi (Komani Campus: Academic Representative)
- Mr F Mantiyane (Mthatha Campus: Non-Academic Representative)

The establishment of the IFOREX Committee and its subcommittees marks a strategic milestone in enhancing the Institutional Forum's (IF) operational and governance effectiveness. These committees are designed to strengthen the work of the IF at both Campus and Institutional levels, enabling deeper engagement and stronger collaboration with all university stakeholders—including staff, students, management, alumni, and external partners. By institutionalizing these committees, the IF is committed to creating an enabling environment where all voices are heard and where the governance of the university reflects the principles of transformation, unity, and co-creation.

Institutional Forum Participation in Senior Leadership Recruitment- 2024
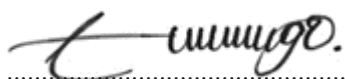
The Institutional Forum (IF) actively participated in the 2024 recruitment process for senior leadership positions at Walter Sisulu University. As part of its governance and advisory role, the IF observed and contributed to ensuring that the recruitment process was conducted in alignment with the principles of employment equity, fair representation, and institutional transformation. The Forum is pleased to report that:
- Employment equity was a guiding principle in all appointments, with a strong focus on redressing past imbalances.
- Fair and inclusive representation was prioritized, particularly in areas previously identified as lacking demographic or gender balance.
- All senior leadership positions have now been successfully filled, with the exception of one position: Deputy Executive Dean in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The IF will also participate in the recruitment process for this remaining position, continuing its commitment to supporting transparent, merit-based, and equity-driven leadership appointment.

Conclusion

As much as the mandate of the Institutional Forum as contained in the Act is broadly relevant but its implementation requires collective leadership and thought leadership. The success of the Institutional Forum depends on how it takes advantage of the confluence of Leadership that it draws its membership from and the quality in them on exercising their agency as collective agent for transformative change and also to herald massive and irreversible strides towards the fundamental institutional change.

....

Mr Sandiso Mbongo
IF Chairperson

Part C

1.10 REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SENATE

Prof RN Songca
Chairperson of Senate

The 2024 academic year commenced with considerable optimism and momentum, as the implementation of the Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) Project continued to drive institutional transformation. The ongoing R&C implementation necessitated critical legislative alignment, requiring that the WSU Statute of 2014 be amended to accommodate the structural changes brought about by the project. Consequently, during this reporting period, a new statute was published in Government Gazette No. 51352 dated 4 October 2024, under the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (as amended), introducing significant governance modifications essential for institutional coherence.

The new statute brought forth several substantive changes, most notably the amendment of Senate composition to reflect the University's transformed structure. In alignment with the unitary institutional identity achieved through the R&C Project, Campus Senate Committees were abolished, thereby consolidating academic governance under a single, unified framework. This restructuring necessitated corresponding amendments to Senate membership composition to ensure effective representation across the reconstituted faculty structure. Despite these significant governance changes, Senate continued under this reporting period to diligently fulfil its mandate as the primary academic governing body responsible to Council. Throughout this transition period, Senate also maintained strict compliance with Section 28 of the Higher Education Act of 1997, the National Qualifications Framework Act of 2008, and Section 19 of the 2024 WSU Statute, ensuring continuity in academic oversight and institutional accountability. Beyond the aforementioned changes, Senate approved various academic proposals central to the university's core business of teaching and learning, including the approval of new strategic programs. The Senate as the primary conduit for academic expertise and strategic guidance to Council, ensured that all major institutional decisions are informed by rigorous academic oversight and scholarly judgment.

The University maintains an annual obligation to report to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) on institutional performance, a responsibility that has positioned Senate at the centre of ensuring that our academic and research endeavours not only meet but exceed national higher education standards while aligning with the University's Vision 2030 and academic strategic framework. This accountability imperative has fundamentally shaped Senate's approach to academic governance throughout the reporting period. Consequently, this section of the report delineates the strategic direction provided by Senate across all dimensions of the University's core mandate: teaching and learning, research, community engagement, and broader academic functions. This overview is complemented by the comprehensive Senate report submitted to Council, which provides detailed analysis of specific academic initiatives and outcomes.

Prof 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, and as outlined in Section 19 of the WSU Statutes published in Government Gazette No. 51352 dated 4 October 2024, 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. providing academic leadership and debates matters of academic principle;
b. promoting an institutional culture of high academic and ethical standards;
c. ensuring the quality of academic programmes, research and community engagement activities; and
d. co-determining with the council the language policy of the University.
e. 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 faculty board and sub-committee;
f. making or amending any Rule relating to the manner in which students are to be examined;
g. 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;
h. advise the council on disciplinary measures and Rules concerning students;
i. make recommendations to the council regarding the faculty to which each academic department or other academic structure belongs;
j. may make recommendations to the council regarding the establishment and disestablishment of faculties, academic departments, and other academic structures;
k. 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;
l. determining the persons to whom scholarships and academic prizes are awarded;
m. determining the functions of its committees;
n. making standing orders on procedures and delegation of powers to improve the carrying out of its functions;
o. delegating its functions, provided that it may not delegate or assign a function delegated to it by the council without the council's agreement and remains accountable for the performance of all its functions; and
p. 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.

In fulfilling its advisory mandate to the Council, the Senate submits comprehensive guidance across multiple critical areas of institutional governance. This includes providing expert counsel on the University's language policy implementation, entrance requirements and student admission protocols for specific programmes, and the broader institutional admission policy framework. The Senate advisory scope extends to risk management strategies related to the University's academic core business, recommendations on senior management and academic staff appointments, and responses to specific matters referred to by the Council. Additionally, the Senate proactively submits recommendations on any matters it deems beneficial to the University's academic mission and institutional advancement.

1.12 SENATE COMPOSITION

As the preeminent academic governing body of the university, the Senate remains instrumental in steering WSU's core functions. Following the promulgation of the Institutional Statute, 2024, the Senate, functioned under the precisely defined membership structure as stipulated in the new statute.

The reconstituted Senate comprises core membership including, the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor(s), Registrar, Executive Deans, and Executive Deputy Deans, alongside all full and associate professors (including those on fixed-term contracts of at least three years) and heads of academic departments. The composition extends to specialized academic leadership roles including heads of academic centres, academic planning, quality assurance, research and innovation, library and information services, and student affairs. Representative participation is ensured through not more than two SRC members elected by the Student Representative Council, not more than two non-academic permanent full-time employees elected by their constituency, and not more than one external Council member designated by Council.

A fundamental provision of the 2024 statute mandates that the majority of Senate and Senate committee members must be senior academic employees, to strengthen academic authority within the governance structure.

SENATE MEMBERSHIP as of 2024
Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Chairperson)
Deputy Vice-Chancellors
Registrar
Other members of the executive management committee, on the invitation of senate;
Executive Deans
Executive Deputy Deans
All full and associate professors (including those appointed on a fixed term contract for a period of at least three (3) years);
All heads of academic departments
Heads of academic centres that are not otherwise members of the senate
Head of academic planning
Head of quality assurance
Head of research and innovation
Head of library and information services
Head of student affairs
Not more than two (2) members of the SRC, elected by the SRC, in accordance with the Rules
Not more than two (2) non-academic permanent full-time employees, elected by the permanent non-academic employees, in accordance with the Rules
Not more than one (1) member of the council who is not an employee or student of the University, designated by the council from time to time
Such additional members, without voting rights, as are approved by the senate from time to time, on the recommendation of the executive committee of senate

1.13 SENATE MEETINGS

ORDINARY AND SPECIAL MEETINGS OF SENATE

For this reporting period, the Senate convened seven times to fulfill its statutory mandate as the university's principal academic authority. This included three ordinary meetings, along with four special meetings scheduled to address urgent matters requiring Senate consideration. All meetings were conducted in accordance with the university's governance framework and Senate regulations.

Meeting	Date
First Ordinary meeting	27 March 2024
Special Senate meeting	03 May 2024
Second Ordinary meeting	10 July 2024
Special meeting	28 May 2024
Special meeting	10 June 2024
Special meeting	11 October 2024
Last Ordinary meeting	13 November 2024
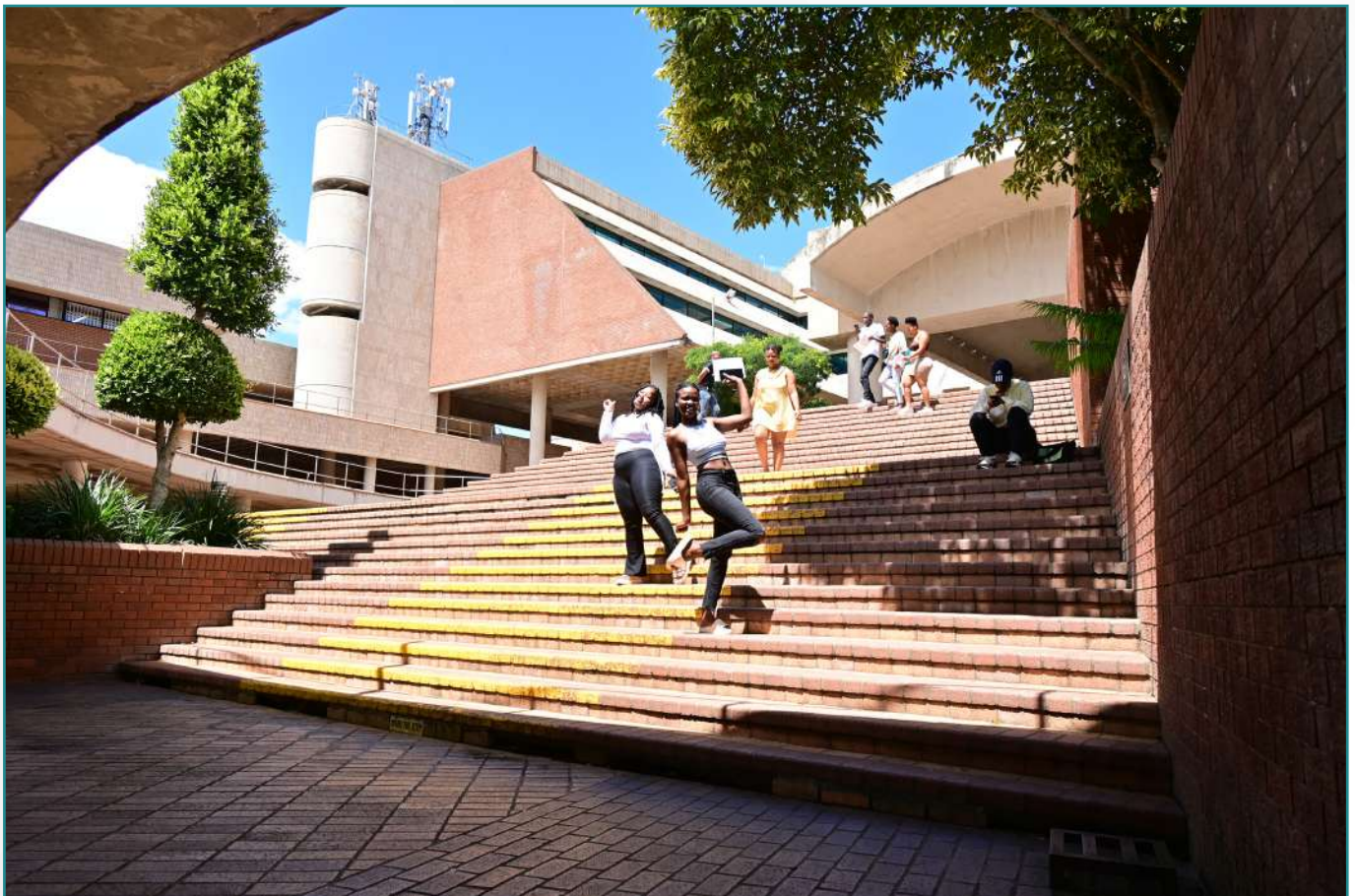
1.14 SIGNIFICANT SENATE RESOLUTIONS FOR 2024

The Senate convened several meetings throughout the 2024 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
Academic Calendar	03 May Revised academic calendar
Academic Strategy	10 July Academic Strategy 2023 - 2025
New programmes	10 July ▪ Introduction of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDipHE) in the Faculty of Education. ▪ Introduction of new Master's and PhD programs in the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences ▪ Department of Public Management and Governance's application to introduce a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (PhD).
Reviewed programmes	10 July ▪ revisions of undergraduate programmes in the Department of Mathematical Sciences and Computing: BSc Applied Statistical Science; BSc in Applied Mathematics; BSc in Computer Science and BSc in Mathematics
Workload Model	10 July ▪ interim workload model for the 2024 academic year
Module Developments	10 July ▪ Masters and Doctoral research proposal module development guide for all faculties ▪ Guidelines for a mentorship program of postgraduate research students ▪ Updated ethics application form of non-degree research at WSU 13 November ▪ Faculty of Education: implementation of the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) guidelines and procedures for the 2025 academic year

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:

Senate Sub-Committees

- Senate Executive Committee (Senex)
- Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC)
- Senate Assessment Committee (SAC)
- Senate Engagement and Partnership Committee (SEPC)
- Senate Library Committee (SLC)
- Senate Research and Higher Degrees Committee (SRHDC)
- Senate Research Ethics Committee (SREC)
- Senate Language Committee (SLC)
- Senate Short-Learning Programmes Committee (SSLPC)
- Senate Institutional Quality Assurance Committee (SIQAC)
- Faculty Boards

1.16 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2024

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The WSU Annual Performance Plan 2024 has been prepared considering four parameters: the University's approved Strategic Plan 2020-2030, the currently approved Enrolment Plan 2020-2025, the midterm review of the 2020 to 2025 enrolment plan from 2023 to 2025, 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 in relation to the 2024 Annual Performance Plan. The targets, corresponding to the current levels of enrolments, were derived from the midterm review of the Enrolment Plan from 2023 to 2025.

1. ACCESS

Key Performance Indicator	2023		2024		
	Target	**Actual**	**Target**	**Actual**	**Notes**
Headcount					
Total Headcount	**32 050**	**29 305**	**32 660**	**29 868**	**A1**
First-time Entering Undergraduates	7 175	7 188	7 240	7 490	A2

Headcount enrolments total UG	**30 254**	**27 399**	**30 752**	**27 900**	A3
Undergraduate diplomas & certificates	15526	13383	15 788	13209	
Advanced diploma/PGCE	2632	1617	2 691	1356	
Undergraduate degrees	12096	12399	12 273	13335	
Headcount enrolments total PG	**1 796**	**1 906**	**1 908**	**1 968**	
Postgraduate to masters level	1095	1122	1 173	1095	
Masters	591	655	621	717	
Doctors	110	129	115	156	
Enrolments major field of study					A4
Science, Engineering & Technology (SET)	8 174	8955	9 471	8449	
Business/ Management	7 585	6582	8 328	7770	
Education	8 339	8035	7 675	8612	
Other Humanities	5 254	5733	7 185	5037	
Enrolments major field of study %					A4
Science, Engineering & Technology (SET)	29%	31%	29%	28%	
Business/ Management	26%	22%	26%	26%	
Education	24%	27%	23%	29%	
Other Humanities	22%	20%	22%	17%	

ANALYSIS AND NOTES FOR THE ACCESS TABLE: A1 – A4

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

A1: Despite consistently meeting and exceeding Total Headcount enrolment targets in the past, the Institution is facing a 9% shortfall in its target for 2024. This shortfall primarily arises from challenges in retaining undergraduate students and the absence of funding for Advanced Diploma and PGCE students. To tackle this issue, the Institution has implemented two key initiatives: a tutorship program and an academic advising system. The tutorship program is designed to help undergraduate students overcome difficulties related to course content by providing additional academic guidance and support. Meanwhile, the academic advising system aims to offer personalised assistance, addressing the specific needs of each student. From a funding perspective, WSU is seeking avenues to support students financially as lack of funding support and the absence of NSFAS funding at Advanced Diploma and PGCE level also contributed to the missed target.

A2: The Institution successfully achieved its target for First-time Entering Undergraduate (FTEN) students. The target was set at 7,240, and the actual number of students admitted was 7,490, which is a 3% increase and remains within an acceptable range of deviation. This success can be attributed to the Institution's efforts to automate and optimise the processes related to student applications and admissions, which helped facilitate the achievement of the FTEN goal.

A3: In the 2024 academic year, the institution experienced a 9% shortfall in reaching its undergraduate headcount goal, although this represented an improvement compared to the 2023 academic year. The Advanced Diploma and PGCE category of the undergraduate students contributed significantly to the deviation. Interventions are being put in place to address this for future years. In contrast, WSU exceeded its postgraduate headcount target by 3%. This is encouraging and is testament to the deliberate efforts being made to advance and improve postgraduate studies at WSU.

A4: In terms of **enrolment by major field of study**, the Institution has reported variations relative to its targets as follows:
- Science, Engineering, and Technology nearly met its target, showing a slight shortfall of 3%, which is an improvement from the 2023 academic year.
- Business and Commerce achieved 93% of its target, representing a significant improvement from 2023.
- Education exceeded its target by 12%.
- Other Humanities experienced a shortfall of 30%.

These figures provide a clear perspective on the overall dynamics of undergraduate headcount. The Institution has initiated measures to address challenges and maintain success in specific areas.

2.   SUCCESS

The Success section of this report explores the academic achievements and effectiveness of the Institution's educational programs, using various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These indicators include degree credit success rates, which assess how efficiently students earn credits toward their degrees; success rates by major field of study, providing a detailed analysis of academic performance across different disciplines; and graduate output, which measures the number of students who successfully complete their programs. Together, these KPIs give a comprehensive view of student success, highlighting strengths and identifying areas for improvement. By analysing these metrics, the Institution aims to better understand its impact on student achievement and to refine its strategies for enhancing educational outcomes and supporting student progression at all levels.

Key Performance Indicator	2023		2024		Notes
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Total	**80%**	**82%**	**80%**	**84%**	S1
Total Under Graduate	81%	83%	81%	87%	S2
Success rates by major field of study					
SET	78%	75%	78%	79%	S3
Business & Commerce	76%	77%	76%	78%	
Education	85%	92%	85%	91%	
Other Humanities	82%	83%	82%	84%	
Total Graduates	**9108**	**6037**	**9301**	**5981**	
Total Undergraduate	8 434	5567	8582	5351	S4
Total Postgraduate	126	470	719	630	
Success rates by level of study					
Diplomas and Certificates	62%	61%	62%	52%	
Degrees	30%	31%	30%	37%	
Postgraduate to Masters level	6%	6%	6%	8%	
Masters	1%	2%	1%	2%	
Doctoral	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%	
Undergraduate Total	92%	92%	92%	89%	
Postgraduate Total	8%	8%	8%	11%	
Graduates by major field of study					
Science, Engineering & Technology	2458	1553	2470	1234	
Business & Commerce	2390	1569	2430	1717	
Education	2410	1392	2461	1827	
Other Humanities	1849	1523	1940	1203	

Analysis and notes for the success table: S1 - S5
S1: For the academic year 2024, the Institution set a target for the **Overall Degree Credit Success Rate** at 80%. Remarkably, the Institution not only met this goal but also exceeded it, achieving a success rate of 84%–a 4% increase beyond the target, consistent with previous years. This accomplishment highlights the Institution's commitment to academic excellence and its ability to create an environment that supports student success. The slight margin by which the target was surpassed reflects positively on the strategies and educational support mechanisms implemented by the Institution to enhance student performance and academic outcomes.

S2: The Institution successfully exceeded its target for the Degree Credit Success Rate among undergraduate students in the 2024 academic year, achieving a rate of 87%, which is 6% higher than the initial goal of 81%.

This accomplishment underscores the effectiveness of the Institution's strategies and supportive educational environment, further emphasising its commitment to improving the academic success and overall achievements of its undergraduate students.

S3: In terms of the **success rate by major field of study** for the 2024 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% and exceeded it by 1%. This represents a 4% improvement from 2023, indicating that targeted interventions are producing positive results.
- Business and Commerce exceeded its target success rate of 76% by 2%, which aligns well with the Institution's expectations for this field.
- Education notably surpassed its ambitious target of 85%, achieving an actual success rate of 91%. This demonstrates exceptional performance and effectiveness in educational outcomes.
- Other Humanities also exceeded its target, achieving an 84% success rate against an 82% goal. This reflects 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 both successes and opportunities for further development.

S4: Walter Sisulu University awarded degrees to 5,981 **graduates**, including 5,351 undergraduate students and 630 postgraduate students who completed their studies.

S5: Walter Sisulu University produced 2269 graduates in **scarce skills** areas, including 104 in Engineering, 343 in Life and Physical Sciences, 287 in Human Health and 1535 in Initial Teacher Education.

<u>Effectiveness and efficiency</u>
In this performance area, the Institution evaluates its capacity and effectiveness in providing quality teaching and learning experiences. Key indicators include the size of the academic staff, the qualifications of faculty members, and the student-to-staff ratios. Together, these metrics offer insights into the Institution's overall capability in delivering educational offerings.

The size of the academic staff reflects the Institution's ability to cover a wide range of subjects and courses. Staff members' qualifications indicate the level of expertise and depth of knowledge available to students. Finally, student-to-staff ratios measure how personalised and attentive the teaching and learning experience can be for each student, which is essential for creating an environment that promotes student success and satisfaction.

Key Performance Indicator	2023		2024		
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Notes
Headcount permanent Instr/Res staff	920	902	920	962	E1
FTEs Instr/Res staff	890	878	895	967	E2
% Instr/Res staff with Doctoral degrees	28%	28%	29%	33%	E3
% Instr/Res staff with Master's degrees	44%	44%	45%	44%	E4
Number of nGap staff	7	3	5	0	E5
FTE ratio of student to staff	30.3	27.2	30.9	27.7	E6

E1: The university has surpassed the 5% target for the **headcount of permanent instructional and research staff**. This significant improvement indicates that the university is effectively addressing the challenges identified in the previous report, specifically regarding retention and vacancy rates. This achievement demonstrates the university's stability and reinforces its appeal as an employer of choice.

E2: The university has set a target of 895 **Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)** for instructional and research staff. However, WSU has reported a total of 967 staff members, which is 8% above the target. This indicates that the university is on the right track to meet its goals. Having adequate FTEs for instructional and research staff is critical for achieving and maintaining the established academic goals and strategies.

E3: The University has set a target of having 29% of its **instructional and research staff hold doctoral degrees**, and this goal has been successfully achieved. It is important to note that the percentage of staff with doctoral degrees has steadily increased over time, reflecting both yearly goals and actual accomplishments. This trend

highlights the University's commitment to improving the academic qualifications and profile of its staff, serving as a positive indicator of its dedication to academic excellence and research capacity.

E4: The University aimed for 45% of its **Instructional/Research staff to hold Master's degrees** and maintained a rate of 44% for the 2023 academic year. The fact that the University has exceeded its target for doctoral degrees demonstrates its ongoing efforts to enhance the educational qualifications of its faculty. This reflects the institution's commitment to providing high-quality education and research opportunities.

E5: The number of new staff in the **New Generation of Academics Programme** at WSU was zero as the were no allocations to WSU in the 2024 academic year. This programme continues to assist WSU as it builds its young core base of future professors.

E6: In the 2024 academic year, the University achieved a **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student-to-staff ratio** of 27.7, exceeding the target of 30.9. Although there was a shortfall in overall enrolment numbers, this strong student-to-staff ratio demonstrates the University's effectiveness in attracting and retaining high-quality staff. This accomplishment reflects the institution's commitment to academic excellence, ensuring that students receive personalised attention and support from their instructors.

3. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Key Performance Indicator	2023		2024		Notes
	Target	Actual	Target	Actuals	
Publication units	184	323.4	320	519.95	R1
Publication units per Instructional /Res staff	0.20	0.36	0.34	0.61	R2
Research Master's graduates	20	68	40	75	R3
Doctoral graduates	16	11	17	17	R4

The Research and Innovation section showcases the Institution's achievements and impact in research activities, as demonstrated by specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs include the total number of scholarly publications, the average number of publications per instructional and research staff, and the output of research-oriented master's and doctoral graduates. Together, these indicators provide valuable insights into the Institution's scholarly productivity, the research engagement of its faculty, and its commitment to advancing academic and professional excellence through graduate education. This section highlights the Institution's dedication to fostering a vibrant research culture and its significant contributions to knowledge creation and innovation.

R1 The University surpassed its **publication unit** target, achieving 519.95 compared to a goal of 320. This marks a 62% exceedance and a 61% increase from the previous year.

R2 The **publication of units per instructional or research staff** improved significantly, achieving an actual rate of 0.61 compared to the target of 0.34. This outcome exceeded both the previous year's result of 0.36 and the initial target of 0.20.

R3 In postgraduate achievements, there were 75 research master's graduates, which far exceeds the target of 40 by 87% and improving from the previous year by 10%.

R4 The University has met the target for doctoral graduates, achieving its goal of 17; marking a considerable improvement over previous result.

....
Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi SC   Professor Rushiella Nolundi Songca
Chairperson of Council   **Vice Chancellor and Principal**

1.17 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 exceptional student success rates that surpassed institutional targets. Support systems such as tutorship, among others, for students continued in 2024 and are believed to have enhanced student outcomes and will continue to do so. Research initiatives have flourished significantly, with publication units substantially exceeding targets and demonstrating the institution's enhanced research productivity and scholarly impact. Community engagement has also been strengthened through substantial graduate output in scarce skills areas, including engineering, life and physical sciences, human health, and initial teacher education, directly addressing national development priorities and societal needs.

The Senate's strategic direction has been instrumental in these developments, particularly in advancing staff qualifications with a notable increase in instructional and research staff holding doctoral degrees, 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 fundamental pillars of operation during the 2024 reporting period. The reporting of performance is at both faculty and institutional levels, demonstrating how the seven faculties, supported by key directorates as shown in the structural diagram, have collectively contributed to the success of the academic project. This performance reporting is structured in alignment with the university's Vision 2030.
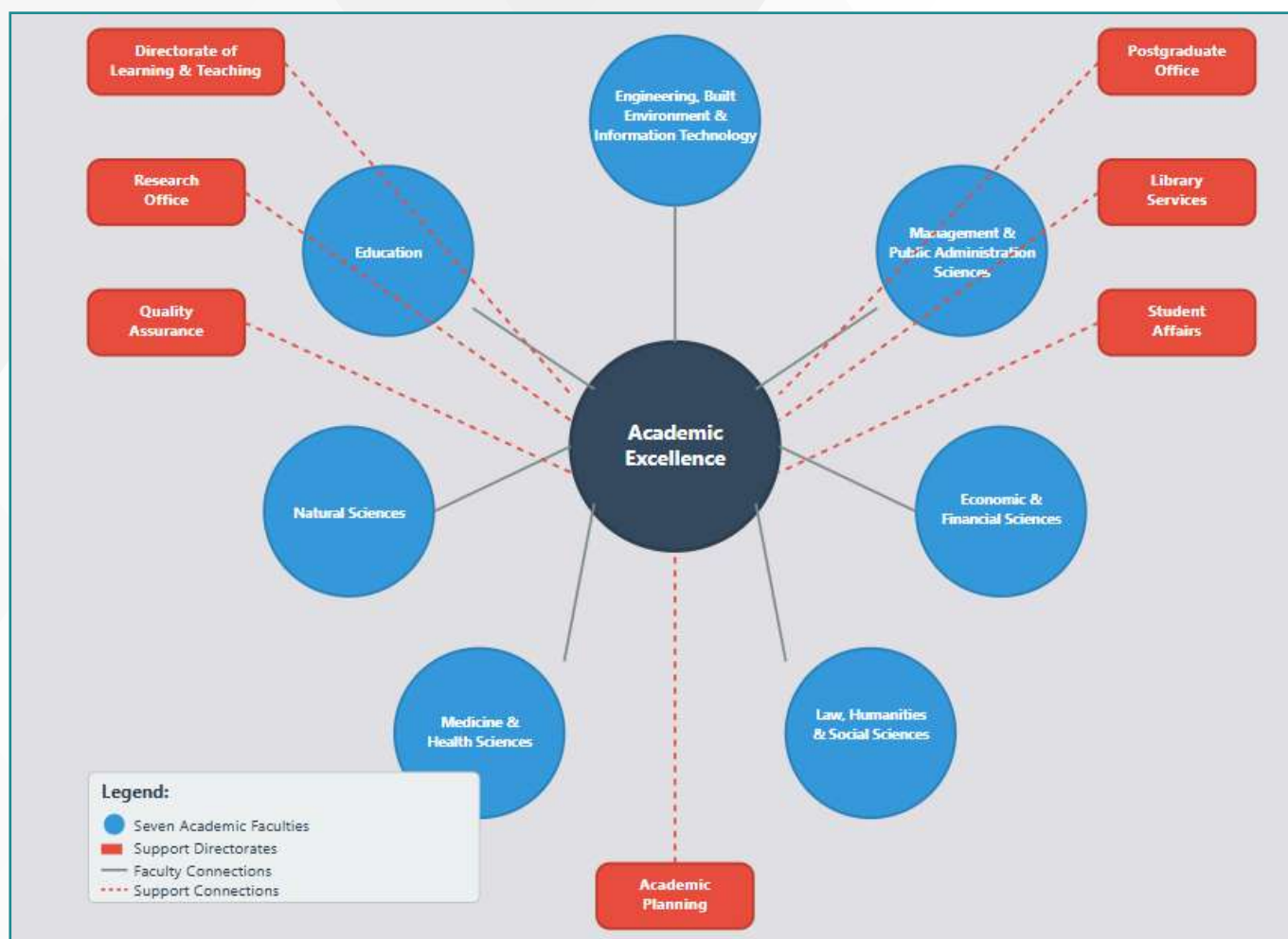
1.17.1 QUALITY, IMPACTFUL TEACHING & LEARNING

The university's commitment to quality and impactful teaching and learning is demonstrated through comprehensive performance metrics across all seven faculties. What follows are key indicators that reflect the institution's effectiveness in attracting, retaining, and graduating students while maintaining high academic standards.

1.17.1.1 ACCESS - FIRST-TIME ENTERING STUDENT ENROLMENTS (FTEN)

Headcount Enrolments

Faculty	Postgraduate	Undergraduate	Overall
Education	810 (41%)	7801 (28%)	8611 (29%)
Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	140 (7%)	6508 (23%)	6648 (22%)
Engineering; Built Env and IT	-	4161 (15%)	4161 (14%)
Economics and Fin Sciences	153 (8%)	3435 (12%)	3588 (12%)
Law; Humanities and Social Sci	267 (14%)	2444 (9%)	2711 (9%)
Natural Sciences	172 (9%)	2036 (7%)	2208 (7%)
Medicine and Health Sciences	427 (22%)	1515 (5%)	1942 (7%)
Grand Total	**1969**	**27900**	**29868**

The Faculty of Education leads institutional enrolments with 29% of the total student body (8,611 students), followed by Management and Public Administration Sciences at 22% (6,648 students), and Engineering, Built Environment and IT at 14% (4,161 students). These three faculties collectively account for 65% of all enrolments, reflecting their significance in addressing national skills priorities.

In postgraduate studies, the Faculty of Education maintains leadership with 41% of postgraduate enrolments (810 students), followed by Medicine and Health Sciences at 22% (427 students), and Law, Humanities and Social Sciences at 14% (267 students). These three faculties collectively account for 77% of postgraduate enrolments, demonstrating the university's strength in professional and research-oriented programmes.

Overall, for the 2024 academic year the University saw 29868 overall normal enrolments in formal programmes falling short by 9% from the target of 32660 in line with the performance data provided.

1.17.1.2   SUCCESS RATES

Overall Success Rates per Faculty (2024)

Natural Sciences	Economics and Fin Sciences	Engineering; Built Env and IT	Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	Law; Humanities and Social Sci	Education	Medicine and Health Sciences	Institution
73%	75%	79%	81%	82%	84%	91%	84%
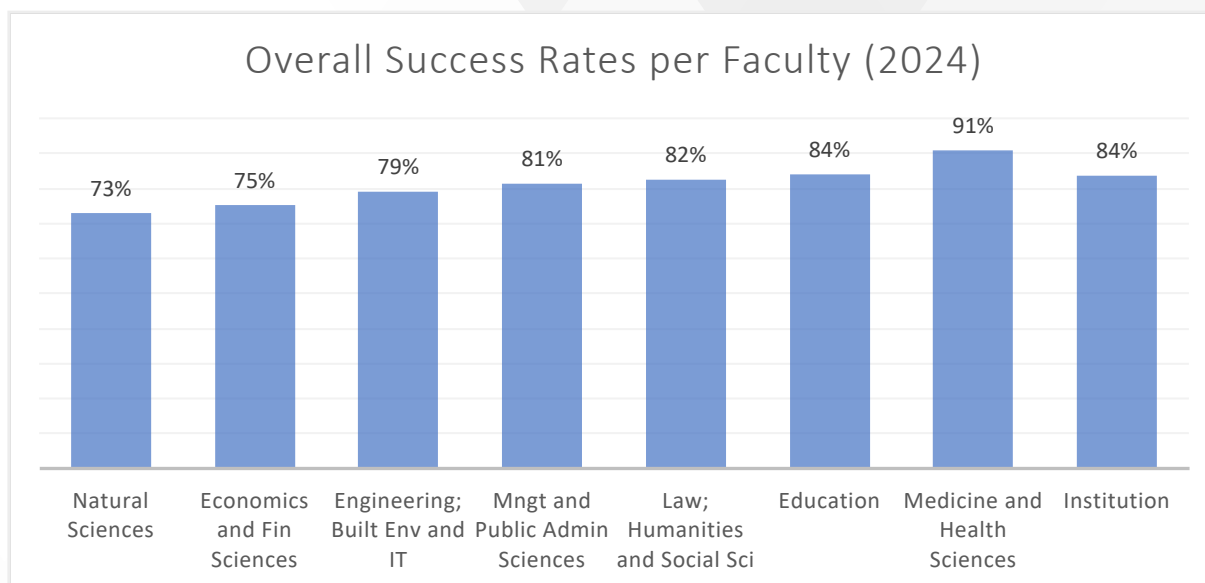
Faculty performance in success rates reveals both institutional strengths and areas for targeted improvement. Four faculties exceeded the institutional target, with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences achieving the highest success rate at 91%, followed by Education at 84%. Three faculties fell slightly below the 80% target, with the lowest achieving 73%, indicating opportunities for enhanced academic support in these areas. Overall, the university achieved an outstanding overall success rate of 84%, exceeding the institutional target of 80%.

1.17.1.3   GRADUATION RATES

Overall Graduation Rates per Faculty (2024)

Engineering; Built Env and IT	Natural Sciences	Medicine and Health Sciences	Law; Humanities and Social Sci	Economics and Fin Sciences	Education	Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	Institution
12%	15%	19%	20%	20%	21%	25%	20%
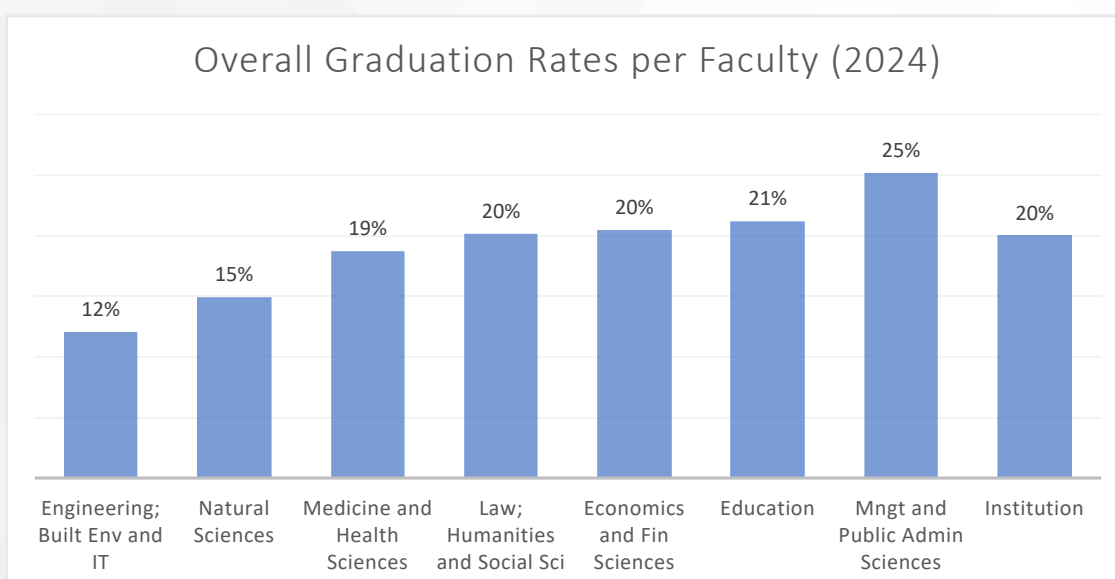
The University recorded a 20% graduation rate for the 2024 academic year, with notable variation across faculties reflecting the diverse nature of academic programmes. The Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences led institutional performance at 25%, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted support strategies. Engineering, Built Environment and IT, and Natural Sciences recorded graduation rates of 12% and 15% respectively, which aligns with typical patterns in these disciplines due to their technical complexity and programme duration. Other faculties were on par with the institutional average of 20% with 1% lower or higher in some cases.

1.17.1.4   RETENTION RATES

Overall Retention Rates per Faculty (2024)
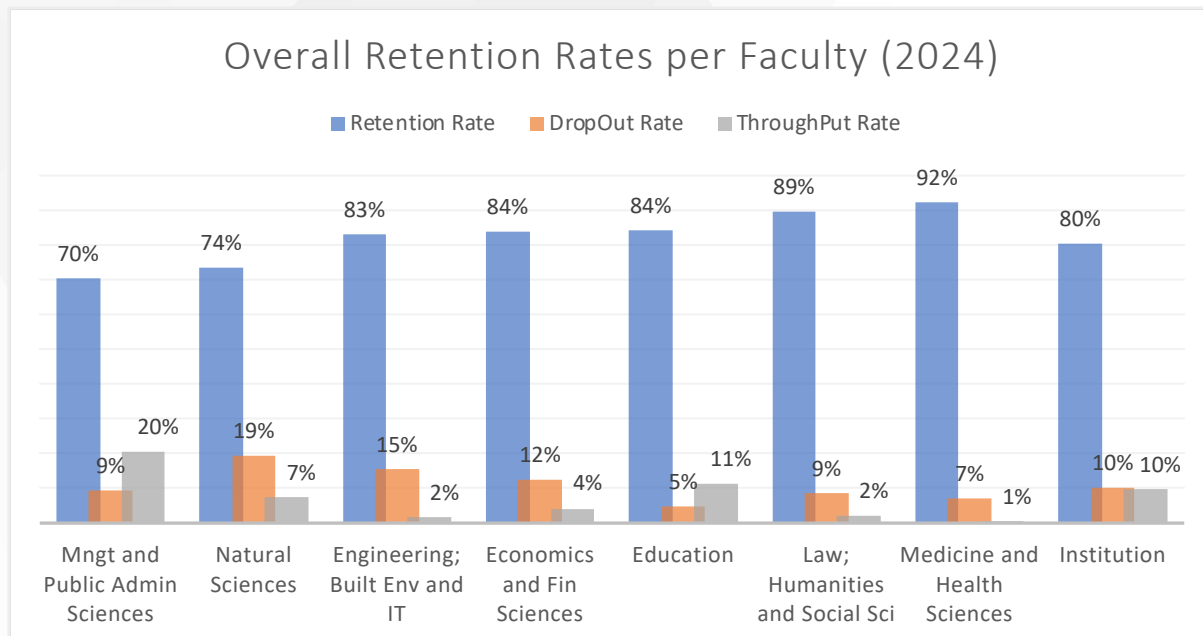
The university demonstrates strong student retention across its academic programmes, achieving an overall retention rate of 80% in 2024.

The Faculties of Medicine and Health Sciences (92%), Law, Humanities and Social Sciences (89%), Education (84%), Economics and Financial Sciences (84%), and Engineering, Built Environment and IT (83%) all demonstrate exceptional retention performance, indicating the effectiveness of targeted student support interventions and faculty-specific academic guidance systems that respond to the diverse needs of students across different disciplines.

The Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences presents an interesting dynamic with 70% retention coupled with the highest throughput rate at 20%, demonstrating that the faculty effectively guides students toward timely programme completion while maintaining academic standards. The Faculty of Natural Sciences maintains 74% retention, reflecting the challenging nature of foundational scientific programmes that require rigorous academic preparation. To address this challenge of low retention, the University has and continues to develop, targeted intervention strategies. These include Student Tracking and At-Risk Subjects Analysis as well as various student support programmes aimed at equipping students within these faculties with the necessary support to navigate academic hurdles successfully.

1.17.1.5   STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

2023	Male		Female		Total
Post Graduate	821		1 094		1915
Under Graduate	11 805	41%	16 982	59%	28 787
Total	**12 626**		**18 076**		**30 702**

2024	Male		Female		Total
Post Graduate	878		1 209		2 087
Under Graduate	11 244	41%	16 537	59%	27 781
Total	**12 122**		**17 746**		**29 868**

2023	Black		Coloured		International		Asian		White		Total
Post Graduate	1 818		9		25		6		57		1 915
Under Graduate	28 559	99%	82	0.3%	98	0.4%	10	0.1%	38	0.3%	28 787
Total	**30 377**		**91**		**123**		**16**		**95**		**30 702**

2024	Black		Coloured		International		Asian		White		Total
Post Graduate	1 989		9		25		7		56		2 086
Under Graduate	27 545	99	77	0.3%	98	0.4%	21	0.1%	41	0.3%	27 782
Total	**29 534**		**86**		**123**		**28**		**97**		**29 868**

1.17.2 QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE

The functions of Quality Management at Walter Sisulu University are critical in ensuring that the institution stays relevant by providing quality programmes that meet standards required by various sectors and industries, and the needs of society. To this end, WSU implements various projects that allow faculties and departments to reflect, evaluate and continuously improve their offering. This process includes reviews of programmes, modules, departments and themes. For continuous improvement and the creation of a culture of quality, projects for enhancement and quality promotion are implemented regularly. The quality promotion projects include staff and student activities are meant to enhance their participation in the WSU drive of creating a quality culture.

Throughout the reporting period, the Quality Management Directorate has been actively involved in various significant activities such as reviews, improvement plans development, preparation of departments for external site visits, etc. Below is the summary of the activities.

1.17.2.1 QUALITY PROGRAMME REVIEWS

As part of its strategy to enhance quality and impactful teaching, Walter Sisulu University conducted comprehensive reviews of 15 academic programmes during 2024. These systematic programme evaluations examined curriculum relevance, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and overall programme effectiveness to ensure alignment with industry needs and academic standards.

All reviewed programmes have developed detailed improvement plans that are currently being implemented across relevant faculties and departments. The improvement plans address identified gaps and enhancement opportunities while strengthening programme quality and graduate outcomes.

Monitoring reports on the implementation progress of these improvement plans will be available in 2025, enabling the university to track the effectiveness of quality enhancement interventions and ensure sustained programme improvement.

1.17.2.2 EXTERNAL REVIEWS

In the year under review, four programmes from three of WSU's seven faculties were reviewed by external quality bodies and were all accredited. The Quality Management Directorate is working with the faculty to address recommendations made.

1.17.2.3 QUALITY PROMOTION

As part of its quality promotion initiatives, the university hosted an Eastern Cape Quality Assurance Mini Conference in November 2024 under the theme "Strengthened and Enhanced Higher Education Quality Assurance." The conference attracted participation from all Eastern Cape public and private higher education institutions, with presentations covering various quality assurance topics and best practices. The event included participation from Universities South Africa and Cape Peninsula University of Technology, demonstrating broad institutional collaboration in quality enhancement efforts. The conference was strategically aligned with the annual World Quality Celebration, emphasizing the global significance of quality assurance in higher education.

1.17.2.4   INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

Following the receipt of the institutional audit panel report in 2023, the university submitted a comprehensive improvement plan to the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in September 2023. The university subsequently submitted a progress report on 30 September 2024.

The CHE provided formal feedback on the university's progress report on 28 November 2024, identifying six specific areas requiring further improvement. The university has initiated systematic interventions to address these identified gaps, reflecting its ongoing commitment to institutional quality assurance and adherence to national higher education standards.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE
DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (DLT) REPORT

The remarkable performance across all seven faculties in teaching and learning outcomes is underpinned by comprehensive institutional support provided by key directorates that work collaboratively to enhance the academic project. These support structures have been instrumental in enabling faculties to achieve and exceed their targets in student success, retention, and graduation rates.

1.17.3 ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Under the reporting period of 2024, the Directorate for Learning and Teaching at WSU demonstrated its critical role in the University's educational landscape through strategic initiatives designed to enhance student success. The DLT implemented comprehensive strategic initiatives structured around three foundational pillars:

- Student success programmes, which include the writing centres, academic advisors and Tutors,
- First year student experience programme,
- Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP) and
- Learning with technology

Through these initiatives, the Directorate managed to create a supportive academic environment that addresses the diverse needs of students at different stages of their academic journey. Moreover, the DLT's extensive

collaborations with diverse directorates and faculties, has significantly strengthened academic support and pedagogical development while focusing specifically on student success outcomes.

i.   STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMMES

Writing Centre Activities

The Writing centre conducts workshops and one on one consultations to enhance academic writing skills of students from the entrance to exit level. Writing centre assistants were appointed to provide peer to peer assistance to both junior and senior students. A total number of 29 writing centre assistants were appointed across the 4 campuses. Students were assisted in how to structure assignments and use different styles of referencing through writing workshops and one on one consultations. A total of 850 students attended writing centre workshops. The table indicates student attendance per campus and faculty.

Campus	Faculty	Number of students
Komani	Education	356
Butterworth	Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	43
	Management and Public Administration Science	345
Buffalo City	Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	60
	Management and Public Administration Science	32
Mthatha	Economic and Financial Sciences	01
	Education	11
	Natural Sciences	02

In addition to workshops, 696 students visited the writing centre for individual consultations on constructing an assignment, deciphering a question and referencing as show below.

Campus	Faculty	Number of students
Butterworth	Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	16
	Management and Public Administration Science	321
Mthatha	Economic and Financial Sciences	275
	Education	54
	Natural Sciences	23
	Medicine and Health Sciences	07

Tutor Development Programme

The Tutorship Development Programme is part of the university strategic direction to contextualise student support for each Faculty at WSU. This is consistent with WSU Goal 2: Enriching Student Experience. The programme comes as a response to the developing educational landscape of the university, where personalized assistance can significantly impact student learning outcomes. While there has been tutorial support in the university, this has not been consistent across faculties with pockets of excellence in the former Faculty of Commerce and Administration. The Tutorship Programme is designed to support students in their academic journey with modules that have been classified as particularly challenging and thus, high-risk. The programme appoints senior students, preferably postgraduate students as tutors that will assist students with navigating the challenging and high-risk modules. Tutorship involves providing personalised guidance and support to students through one-on-one mentoring sessions, group discussions, and constructive feedback on tasks. This includes tailoring facilitation methods to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs, ensuring that each participant receives the necessary assistance to excel academically.

Surveys Conducted for Conceptualising Tutorship Development Programme

To pilot the tutorship programme, surveys were conducted to obtain stakeholder inputs from the following stakeholders in the Faculty of Education:

- A survey targeting academics support staff to create a common understanding of the tutorship programme
- A survey targeting Faculty of Education staff to advise on contextual content to include in our trainings going forward.
- A survey targeting prospective tutors to share ideas of how the Unit can implement the programme.

- A survey targeting Faculty of education former PAL Leaders & Tutors to add their voice in the conceptualisation of the programme.
- Face-to-face session with all the students with disabilities in the faculty to add their voice as well to the conceptualisation of the programme

Tutorship Development Materials Workshop for staff

A two-day Workshop on materials development was held in 2024, and included presentations on:
- Strategic intent for the Tutorship programme
- WSU Tutorship Strategy /Framework
- Draft Concept Document on Tutorship Development
- Claiming and Administrative Process: Tutor Development
- Draft Standard Operating procedure (SOP): Tutor Development Programme

Tutor appointments

Executive Deans across WSU unanimously agreed to pay tutors a stipend of R1500 for the academic year, a total of 659 tutors were appointed. In some faculties, where there are no post graduate students, external tutors were appointed.

Breakdown per faculty	Number of Tutors Appointed
FLHSS	71
Education	170
FMPAS	178
FEFS	122
Medicine and Health Sciences	0
FEBEIT	74
Natural Sciences	44
Total	**659**

WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED ON THE TUTORIAL PROGRAMME

Session type	Topic	Date	Attendees
All Tutors Training (Faculty of Education)	Interactive and Collaborative Tutoring: Towards Infusing Technology in Tutorship	20 May 2024	106
Module Lecturers Training (Faculty of Education)	Overview of the programme and Lecturer/Tutor Relationship Using Moodle for Impactful sessions	21 May 2024	30
Tutor training & Orientation Faculty of Management Public Administration Science (FMPAS)	Roles of a tutor, facilitating tutorials, and common tutorial challenges. Academic writing overview and plagiarism Using technology for tutoring online pedagogies. Academic advisors and support services Student employment policy	21 May 2024	158
Tutor Training & Orientation Faculty of Economic & Financial Sciences	Roles and responsibilities of tutors How to conduct the tutorial programme Tutor management Academic writing (writing centre) Student employment policy Learning and Teaching with technology	03 May 2024	115
Tutor Training and Induction to Tutorship Programme (FEBEIT)	Overview of Tutorship Programme Peer Collaborative Learning Role of Tutors Tutorial Session Management-Diverse Personalities Facilitation Strategies Planning and Preparation for Tutorial Typical tutorial session- scenarios, group activities and discussions	22 May 2024	50

Tutor Training and Induction to Tutorship Programme (FEBEIT)	Overview of Tutorship Programme Peer Collaborative Learning Role of Tutors Tutorial Session Management-Diverse Personalities Facilitation Strategies Planning and Preparation for Tutorial Typical tutorial session- scenarios, group activities and discussions	24 May 2024	25
Tutor Training on Running Tutorial Session Online (FEBEIT)	Creating a quiz/activity online Reviewing live responses for engagement Booking Online Sessions Monitoring Attendance and Creating Registers Online	03 June 2024	10

<u>Session with students with disabilities for an inclusive tutorship development programme</u>
Students with disabilities (SWD) often face unique challenges in their learning experience. Workshops were conducted to capacitate tutors to assist SWD. The workshops focused on disability types i.e. physical impairments, visual and mental challenges, and diabetes, as well as the support required in terms assistive devices and individualised tutorship support of below provides a concise summary of the key points related to supporting students with disabilities through tutorship.

Academic Advisors Programme
Academic Advising is a continuing/ongoing process, of shared responsibility between an Advisor and Advisee where both parties work collaboratively with the aim of promoting academic success and also to improve retention rate of students and the throughput of the institution. Its onset is from high school whereby students are assisted with subject grouping, exposed to various careers offered by the institutions of higher learning, to university entry where the students are assisted during registration and during their entire stay in the university until they attain the qualification. The aim is to integrate students into the institution of higher learning, by empowering them with adjustment skills, assisting them with clear understanding of their career goals. Academic advising targets all registered students with the intention of assisting them to utilize the resources found within the institution. Academic advising is high-impact practice directed at connecting, empowering, and supporting students to achieve academic success.

The year 2024 demonstrated a continued commitment to providing high-quality academic advising within the faculties. Despite persistent challenges, efforts to support student success, enhance resource accessibility, and foster career readiness remained paramount. Moving forward, the university will continue to adapt and innovate its advising practices to meet the evolving needs of our diverse student body. The following academic advising activities were conducted during the year (FTENs).

<u>Career Readiness Initiatives</u>
As part of Key Performance Areas for Academic Advising, the Academic Advisors conducted school visits to local high schools to promote university programmes and encourage prospective students to pursue careers in the various fields on offer: one held in Mzamba on the 16th of March 2024, where 329 learners from various high schools were assisted in subject grouping. The second Career Exhibition was held in Gobizizwe Agricultural High School, one of the rural high schools in Mthatha where 206 grade eleven and grade twelve students were exposed to careers offered at WSU.

<u>Individual Advising Sessions</u>
• Conducted personalized advising sessions with undergraduate and post graduate students to discuss academic progress, career aspirations, and any challenges they encountered.
• Offered tailored guidance to students facing academic difficulties, including creating action plans for improvement.

<u>Group Advising Workshops</u>
• Organised and facilitated group advising workshops covering various topics such as study skills, time management, internship opportunities, and career development.
• Encouraged active participation and peer-to-peer support among students.

<u>Course Planning and Registration Assistance</u>
• Assisted students in understanding degree requirements and developing academic plans aligned with their goals.
• Provided support during course registration periods, ensuring students selected appropriate courses for their academic trajectory.

Referrals and Collaborations
- Collaborated with faculty members, academic support services, and career counsellors to address students' academic and personal needs effectively.
- Facilitated referrals to specialised services for students requiring additional support.
- Emphasized the importance of promoting equity and inclusion in academic advising practices, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for success regardless of background or circumstances.

Peer Assisted Learning Programme

As part of the student success programmes pillar, the Directorate for Learning and Teaching implemented a comprehensive Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) initiative across faculties during 2024. This programme represents a strategic intervention designed to enhance student academic support through peer mentorship and collaborative learning approaches. The PAL programme recruited and trained student leaders who provide academic assistance to their peers, creating a supportive learning community that contributes to improved student retention and success rates. The following table illustrates the distribution of PAL leaders recruited across the university's seven faculties:

Breakdown per faculty	Number of PAL Leaders recruited
Education	20
FLHSS	10
FMPAS	20
FEFS	0
Medicine	0
FEBEIT	20
Natural Sciences	16
Total	**86**

Institutional PAL Induction programme
The purpose of the induction programme, titled 'Advancing social justice through student active participation' was to build best practices on student development activities and to establish communities of practice. It was also to establish a common identity across all campuses to improve collaborations and to improve student experiences. The outstanding aspect of the PAL induction programme was its focus on collaborative learning and leadership development. It provided practical training on how to facilitate peer-assisted study sessions effectively, encouraging active engagement and independent learning among students. Additionally, the programme offered valuable insights on communication strategies, helping leaders build confidence in guiding their peers academically.

Supplementary training for second semester PAL Leaders
The purpose was to train PAL Leaders who were going to be assisting in second semester high-risk courses, specifically to:
- Create standardised common practice
- To create a conceptual understanding of the PAL Programme and the Academic development field.
- To build knowledge-based techniques of conducting PAL Sessions Creating fit for purpose PAL Leaders that are contributing towards the university vision.

PAL Stakeholder Engagement Day
The purpose of the stakeholder engagement was to share information among PAL Coordinators and stakeholders on how best to integrate the different portfolio activities to improve student experiences at WSU and how best to close the information gap between these offices and students as primary stakeholders. Further, to hear the students voice on the efficacy of student development programmes at WSU.
Stakeholders invited included residence officers, judiciary office, registration and admissions, faculty officers, examinations department, health promoters, counsellors, e-Learning instructors, PAL Leaders, residence mentors and wellness peers. The PAL leaders held monthly meetings to reflect and improve on the project.

ii.   FIRST YEAR STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

The main activity during the first quarter of 2024 was the first-year orientation programme which was conducted per campus as shown in the sections that follow.

FIRST- YEAR ORIENTATION

Mthatha Campus Orientation
The orientation of first entering students for 2024 was held successfully from 7-9 February 2024 at both Zamukulungisa and NMD Sites. The Vice Chancellor made her welcome address from the NMD Site. The programme was structured as shown below:

ORIENTATION	ACTIVITY
Day 1-7 February 2024	• VC's Address • Know your Campus • Know your Technology
Day 2-8 February 2024	Student Life
Day 3-9 February 2024	Faculty Days

In line with the Rationalisation and Consolidation project, two faculties, Economic and Financial Sciences and Law Humanities and Social Sciences had their orientation at the Zamukulungisa (ZMK) site, while Medicine and Health Sciences, Natural Sciences and the Faculty of Education students had their orientation at the Nelson Mandela Drive (NMD) site.

The NMD attendance is shown as below:

Day 1: 7 February 2023	Day 2: February 2023	Day 3 February 2023	Total
2080	1319	1309	4708

A total of 1542 students attended the Know your Campus & Technology days. On the first day it was only the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences that attended the orientation as the FLH&SS attended at NMD site for the student life and Know your Campus days. The majority 84% of students at ZMK who completed a survey indicated that the experience was positive.

NMD Site orientation 7 February 2024

Butterworth Campus Orientation
The orientation of first-time entering students for 2024 was held successfully on Butterworth Campus, during the allocated three days. The attendance is reflected on the table below:

Butterworth Campus Orientation Programme Statistics of participants.

ORIENTATION	FACULTY	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL
Day 1-7 February 2024	FMPAS	355	497
	FEBEIT	142	
Day 2-8 February 2024	FMPAS	395	528
	FEBEIT	133	

Day 3-9 February 2024	FMPAS	425	631
	FEBEIT	206	

Butterworth Campus Orientation

Komani Campus Orientation
Day 1 Orientation: Know your campus day:
The orientation programme at the Komani Campus, also spanned three in-person days, running from the 7th to 9th February 2024. Day 1 proceeded smoothly, with a total of 774 students present as recorded on the attendance registers. The attendance increased on day 2, with 908 students, and on day 3 with 859 students. Throughout these days, students actively engaged in various activities, including receiving positive messages and familiarizing themselves with the campus layout through guided tours, which included visits to the library, FAB, administrative building, and lecture halls, among other areas.

Virtual Roundtable
The culmination of the orientation programme was the Virtual Roundtable, held via Teams on the 14th February 2024 and comprised of both the Komani campus and Mthatha campus Faculty of Education students. A substantial turnout was observed, with 495 students and 26 staff members participating. This session was characterized by its high level of interactivity, as students had the opportunity to pose questions, share opinions, and express concerns directly to the attending staff members.

During the Virtual students received guidance on various matters and were directed towards additional resources for further information. Overall, the orientation programme successfully equipped students with essential knowledge and resources to navigate their academic journey at Walter Sisulu University, Komani Campus. Distribution of the student by gender is shown in the table below.

Komani Orientation attendance statistics

Department	7 February 2024	8 February 2024	9 February 2024
Education	231	261	240
Business Management Education	34	42	39
Humanities and Creative Arts Education	82	90	83
Initial Primary Teacher Ed	85	89	82
Maths; Science and Technology Ed	30	40	36
Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	138	171	158
Admin and Info Management	50	61	48
Human Resources Management	41	54	55
Public Management & Governance	47	56	55
Gender not declared	36	44	63
Total	**774**	**908**	**859**

BCC Campus Orientation

The orientation programme was planned and carried out with inputs from all BCC stakeholders. Each stakeholder's needs were taken into consideration when designing the orientation programmes. The orientation was funded by funds from the University Capacity Development Grant. The coordination of the campus orientation programme involved all relevant stakeholders. All 2024 new university students were invited to the orientation.

Numbers per day for Orientation

Days	Venue	Attendance
Day 1: 7 February 2024	Potsdam	96
Day 2: 8 February 2024	Potsdam	271
Day 3: 7 February 2024	College Street	420
Total	**Combined**	**787**

BCC Orientation Day

iii.   EXTENDED CURRICULUM PROGRAMMES (ECP)

Extended Curricula Programme conducts orientation for foundation students on all campuses to guide them on Higher Education Learning through social and academic engagements. Part of the navigation activities includes team building activities, debates about university rules and policies (rule G7, code of conduct and social media), explanation of differences between mainstream and ECP, rules of combination and progression rules. Part of the social and academic engagements is the Navigation run.

The navigation run

The navigation run further assists students to set goals and reflect on their university experience thus far and introduces students into a language development programme (My English Lab).

Komani campus held its ECP navigation run on the 19th and 20th of February 2024. On day 1, 34 students attended and on day 2 46 students attended. Students appreciated the effort of ECP team for facilitating an engaging orientation. They now gained confidence on the ECP as they were doubting themselves when hearing negative comments about the programme.

All the students who attended the navigation run interacted with each other and gained better understanding of the difference between ECP and mainstream as well as the support available for them to succeed in their studies. Training on My English Lab enabled students to utilize their devices to do online practice language development activities, which improve their digital skills.

iv.   LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY

The integration of technology into teaching and learning processes represents a cornerstone of the Directorate for Learning and Teaching's strategic approach to enhancing educational delivery and student success. Recognizing the evolving digital landscape and the need to prepare students for technology-enhanced learning environments, the DLT implemented comprehensive technology-focused initiatives during 2024. These programmes were designed to ensure that both students and academic staff are equipped with the necessary digital skills and competencies to excel in contemporary educational settings while maintaining academic integrity and promoting

responsible technology use.

Student Training on Learning with Technology
For the students, two initial training sessions were conducted. The first session had 1,000 participants, while the second session saw up to 1,500 students attending. After these general sessions, faculty-based training for students was conducted, covering how to access their examinations, activate the invigilator app during their examinations, and how to submit their completed work. Some students indicated that they did not have laptops, but they were informed that they could use their mobile devices to access the system, provided they reach out to the WhatsApp support number for guidance. In total 2423 FTENS were trained in the following areas:
• Overview of the Invigilator App: Introduction to how the app works and its purpose in maintaining a fair examination process.
• Installation & Setup: Guidance on how to download, install, and set up the app on personal devices.
• Examination Day Procedures: Instructions on what to expect on the day of the examination, including how to log in, start the examination, and the role of the app in monitoring their activity.
• Technical Support: What to do if students experience technical difficulties, such as connectivity issues or app malfunctions, and how to reach out for assistance.
• Best Practices: Encouraging students to familiarize themselves with the app prior to examination day and follow all instructions to avoid disruptions during the examination.

The training focused on ensuring both lecturers and students were comfortable with the app's functionality and prepared for its use in upcoming examinations.

Student Support: Digital Week
The aim of the digital week workshops was to train first-year students in critical thinking skills when using emerging technological tools like Generative AI, social media, and WSU-specific ICT tools. This was in response to some academics complaining about students mindlessly relying on AI for assessments, a lot of students having ICT-related issues like passwords and stolen data, and observance of educational technologists on the use of social media by students in ways that may not benefit them. The events were highly attended across campuses as shown in the table below.

Digital Week 2024 Student Participation by Campus

Campus	Number of Students
Mthatha	719
Komani	550
Butterworth	830
East London	648
Total	**2,423**

The events were highly attended across all campuses and this demonstrates a strong student engagement with digital literacy initiatives. The 'digital weeks 2024' initiative had a profound impact across the institution's campuses, successfully achieving its objectives of enhancing digital literacy, promoting awareness, and engaging students in meaningful activities. The campaign's multifaceted approach, combining education, engagement, and recognition, has laid a strong foundation for continued efforts in digital literacy and innovation.

Orientation on WiSeUp
Students were introduced to a variety of technological tools used for learning at WSU including WiSeUp/Moodle and Microsoft 365 package and completing an application for a university laptop. The Learning and Teaching with Technology (LTwT) team also assisted in password resets, merging of courses, data integration to the Student Tracking and Monitoring System and generation of Evaluation of Teaching.

Honours students WiSeUp Training
Following a request from the Faculty of Education, 58 honours students were trained on:
• Navigating through the WiSeUp interface.
• Access course materials, assignments, and resources on WiSeUp.
• Participate in online discussions and forums.
• Submit assignments and quizzes through WiSeUp.

FTEN WiSeUp training
Training FTENS online and face to face on usage of WiSeUp:
• Navigating through the WiSeUp interface.
• Access course materials, assignments, and resources on WiSeUp
• Participate in online discussions and forums.
• Submit assignments and quizzes through WiSeUp.

Computer hardware training
This training was in recognition that most FTENS come with no computer skills to university, and touches on the following:
• Identifying basic computer components and their functions.
• Navigate the desktop environment.
• Perform basic operations such as opening and closing programmes, creating and saving files.
• Understand the importance of computer literacy at WSU.

The Moodle and office 365 programmes training per campus is captured below:

Campus	Faculty	No of students
Mthatha Campus	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Faculty of Education Faculty of Natural Science Faculty of Law Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences	940
Butterworth	Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences Faculty of Engineering, Built environment and IT	820
Buffalo City Campus	Faculty of Engineering Built Environment and Information Technology Faculty of Natural Sciences Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences	402
Komani Campus	Faculty of Education Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences	1094

Training was also conducted on the Butterworth and BCC campuses on a variety of technological tools used for learning at WSU including WiSeUp/Moodle and Microsoft 365 package.

v.   OVERALL IMPACT OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

The comprehensive academic support initiatives implemented by the Directorate for Learning and Teaching in 2024 created a robust student success ecosystem that directly contributed to the university's exceptional academic performance outcomes. Through strategic interventions across four key pillars, student success programmes, first-year experience, Extended Curriculum Programmes, and learning with technology, the DLT reached a number of students across multiple support mechanisms.

These coordinated efforts established multiple layers of academic assistance, from peer-to-peer support through PAL leaders and tutors, to specialised writing support and digital literacy training. The programmes successfully facilitated smooth academic transitions for new students, provided targeted interventions for high-risk modules, and equipped students with essential technological competencies required for contemporary learning environments.

The integrated approach to student support has created a comprehensive framework that addresses diverse learning needs from entry to graduation, fostering collaborative learning communities and enhancing academic preparedness. This strategic investment in student success initiatives has been instrumental in achieving the university's strong retention rates, 84% overall success rate, and advancement of the institutional teaching and learning excellence agenda.

1.17.4 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF

Building on the comprehensive student support initiatives, the DLT recognises that academic excellence is fundamentally dependent on the continuous professional development of academic staff. During 2024, the DLT expanded its focus to encompass strategic capacity development programmes designed to enhance the pedagogical competencies and technological proficiency of faculty members across all seven faculties.

The staff development initiatives were strategically structured around three core areas:
• curriculum development,
• teaching development, and
• teaching with technology.

These programmes are designed to ensure that academic staff remain at the forefront of contemporary educational practices while developing the necessary skills to deliver innovative, student-centered learning experiences that align with the university's commitment to academic excellence.

Through systematic capacity building interventions, the DLT created a framework for continuous professional growth that empowers academic staff to adapt to evolving educational landscapes, integrate emerging technologies effectively, and implement evidence-based teaching methodologies. These initiatives complement the student support programmes by ensuring that faculty members are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to facilitate optimal learning outcomes and contribute to the university's strategic goals in teaching and learning in pursuit of excellence.

The foundation of staff capacity development begins with comprehensive orientation programmes that integrate new academic staff into the university's educational culture and operational frameworks. Every semester, new academics are oriented and welcomed into WSU through organised induction workshop series. Its purpose is to orientate and induct new academics into WSU culture and policies. A total of 43 female new staff and 26 male new staff members attended the new staff induction in 2024. The first day consisted of the welcome of staff by the Vice Chancellor followed by presentations by the Deputy Vice Chancellors and executive managers from the human resources department, the registrar's division, finance, operations and ICT, marketing and communication and the student affairs deteriorates. In addition, to the general induction, the Extended Curriculum (ECP) office conducted induction of new Academic Development Coordinators (ADCs) and budget workshops. The workshops covered the role of ECP, and participants were taken through the process of calculating weighted FTEs that are used to distribute funds to each department.

With new staff members successfully integrated into the university community and equipped with essential institutional knowledge, the DLT's capacity development efforts extend into more specialised areas of academic practice. The first core area of focus involves comprehensive curriculum development initiatives designed to enhance the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of academic programmes across all faculties.

i.   CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Intshayelelo Facilitators Induction Programme
The Intshayelelo 101 module at WSU aims to prepare students for lifelong learning and the development of essential graduate attributes. Delivered by the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences, the module relies heavily on facilitators to provide a seamless learning experience. To enhance the delivery of the module and align it with modern educational practices, educational technologists played a pivotal role in equipping facilitators with the necessary digital literacy skills at the induction programme held in 2024.

Student Module Guide (SMG) Workshops
The DLT capacitated and supported academics on a variety of Student Module Guide (SMG) development and assessment workshops. SMG training is assisting in quality learning & teaching because lecturers provide students with module outcomes and assessment criteria that assists students to study and keep updated on how the module will be offered and assessed. These SMGs were then given to students at beginning of each semester to guide them on what the module entails and how the module will be taught.

Programme Development and Reviews
Several activities were undertaken by the Academic Staff Development (ASD) Unit to promote quality impactful teaching and learning during the period under review. The WSU101 programme whose development was initially driven by DLT was handed over to the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences. The directorate also participated on invitation by Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) directorate in workshops on how to develop a concept document for new programmes, internal programme reviews, development of an improvement plan following a site visit for the Bachelor of Social programme and development of short learning programmes (SLPs). Teaching Development Specialists and Senior Curriculum Development Specialist worked with the academics to guide and support them in compiling the required documents (Concept Notes, Form A, CHE form) before their submission to faculty boards. The table below provides a summary of activities conducted to empower staff to deliver quality impactful teaching and learning.

Date	Activity	Campus	Department	Attendance
12 January 2024	WSU 101 handover to Faculty	Butterworth	Management & Public Admin	26
22 – 24 January 2024	Programme Review	Buffalo City	Fashion	16
26-27 January 2024	Siyaphumelela Concept Document	Buffalo City	Directorate of Learning and Teaching, Student Affairs, Faculty of Engineering Built Environment and Information Technology	23
30 January 2024 21-23 February 2024	Development of concept document for new programmes	Butterworth	Office Management and Administration Management	10 15
12-14 February 2024	Short Learning Programme : Blended Pedagogies	Institutional	• Learning and Teaching with Technology • Academic Staff Development	4
February – March 2024 August 2024	Student Module Guide Review Workshop (2 days per workshop)	Various locations	• Tourism, Hospitality, & Sports Management • Psychology • Maths & Science Technology- • Adult & Educational Foundation-Komani • Networking & IT Support • Journalism	110
15-17 February 2024	Programme Improvement Plans	Mthatha	Bachelor of Social Work	8
28-29 February 2024 25-27 March 2024	Internal reviews by Quality Management Directorate	Mthatha	Bachelor of Commerce Bachelor of Orthotics	12 14
1-6 April 2024 10-12 April 2024 12 – 14 June 2024 8-11 Jul 2024 1-2 July 2024 24-26 July 2024 05-07 Aug 2024 3-4 Oct 2024 2-3 Sept 2024 4-6 Sept 2024 11-12 Sept 2024 27 Nov 2024	Development of new programmes	Various Campuses	• Advanced Diploma in Adult Continuing Education &Training • BEd Hons(English, Mathemics, Science, History and Technical Education, MEd (Inclusive Education), • BEd(Intermediate Phase) • PhD Social Work • Postgraduate Diploma in Public Relations Management • Diploma in Building Science • BEng Technology . Honours (Mechanical) • Masters of Engineering Degree (Mechanical) • Adv Diploma in Visual Arts • Post graduate Diploma in HRM concept note • Diploma in Networking & IT Support • Post Graduate Diploma in HE	22 12 13 10 28 6 22 14 14 8 12 5 10 10

Date	Activity	Campus	Department	Attendance
26-28 June 2024	Accreditation Workshop	East London	Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	65
7-9 Oct 2024	Writing benchmarking report	Mthatha	Law, Humanities and Social Sciences	14

Enrolment Planning: Faculty Engagements

The Academic Planner held a series of faculty engagements regarding the new enrolment plan 2026-2030. The directorate participated in these engagements, which involved the following persons: DVC Teaching & Learning, Executive Deans, HODs, Deputy HODs, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate, DLT and Senior Curriculum Development Specialists The purpose of these engagements was to engage faculties on the draft 2025-2030 enrolment plan in terms of numbers as well as academic programmes to be offered and quotas.

ii. TEACHING DEVELOPMENT

Extended Curricula Programme (ECP)

During the year, the Extended Curricula Programme unit conducted teaching and learning conversations with lecturers teaching in foundation provision on all campuses. The conversations are communities of practice that seek to establish successes and challenges that affect progress in foundation provision. A total of 83 academics attended.

The focus area of the conversations was Foundation Academic and Career Enhancement programme, Budget, staff development, curriculum development and monitoring. Staff learnt a lot from the conversations and reflections uncovered various challenges that need to be addressed by individual lecturers. Staff learnt different models of ECPs, how the foundational component can be infused and gained better understanding of Foundation Academic and Career Enhancement programme and its roles. The staff also gained better understanding of how the foundation provision grant is allocated and utilized. The blended approach for ECP teaching and learning conversations benefited staff from other campuses that did not attend physically on their respective campuses.

Staff development in the ECP Unit
Four ECP staff members attended the South African Association for Institutional Research conference hosted by the Directorate of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to learn more about data-driven decision-making strategies as part of benchmarking systems and approaches used by other institutions. The staff members grabbed the opportunity to learn how to gather, interpret, and apply data effectively for decision-making; different data collection techniques; differentiating between various data types. The 6 Vs (Volume: The sheer amount of data; Value: The worth of the data; Variety: The different types of data; Veracity: The trustworthiness of the data; Valence: The interconnectedness of data; Velocity: The speed at which data is generated framework has been learned and will be used to conceptualize data-driven foundation provision interventions.

Academic Planning & Registration in the ECP Programme
Walter Sisulu University has 26 DHET ministerially approved programmes. All the 26 programmes met the targeted quota. A proposal for Bachelor of Social Sciences (ECP) specialisations under 7 disciplines was submitted to DHET and approved.

Appointment of Departmental Academic Development Coordinators (ADCs) and Faculty Academic Career Enhancers (FACEs)
The Heads of Departments 23 ADCs were appointed to coordinate ECPs at departmental level. In addition, approximately 107 FACES were appointed across the ECO programmes.

FACEs were capacitated on using online learning tools for designing and facilitating quizzes. All the FACEs attended the online training of Quizzes and obtained certificates and all of them are google certified Game Changers. In addition, FACEs were enrolled for the National Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) Digital literacy short learning programme and 30% have since completed the programme.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) -Faculty Writing Retreats

The university is committed to all facets of its academic obligations, especially providing quality education to students through research-informed transformative scholarly learning and teaching. Integration of SoTL initiatives and dissemination of best practices by academics are essential. However, academics face numerous commitments and challenges, which prevent them from embarking on uninterrupted opportunities, such as writing retreats to conceptualise their practices and write manuscripts. A writing retreat thus provides an environment and

atmosphere to focus and collaborate with like-minded colleagues to reflect, transform and analyse data into publications. Available funds from the UCDG were targeted to accommodate 70 academics from the 7 faculties (10 participants per faculty) and 2 facilitators (support personnel) to assist in the smooth running of the retreats. The three-day quiet space allowed colleagues to complete or refine their SoTL manuscripts for forwarding to identified accredited journals or conferences. The SoTL retreats were held for all faculties except Medicine and health sciences between September and October, 2024.

Reflections on the Retreats
The writing retreat initiative has been an eye-opener to some academics, especially those from the Natural Sciences and Engineering faculties. The total of 67 manuscripts is expected from the retreat. During the retreat, 21 manuscripts were completed and submitted to accredited journals for review, whilst 31 were completed by the end of the year.

iii. TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Invigilator app training for lecturers & students
Training sessions for lecturers and students were conducted on the use of the invigilator app. This app is designed to monitor and ensure academic integrity during online examinations. A total of 290 lecturers attended the training.

Online Examination System Training
The university introduced an online examination system, in 2024 which was piloted during the July examination period. The Learning and Teaching with Technology (LTwT) office was tasked with training both lecturers and students on how to use the system, a total of 797 lecturers participated. The training provided an overview of the system and how it operates. After the general session, faculty-based training sessions were conducted, where lecturers received more specific instruction. The following were the main training features:
- Introduction to the Invigilator App: An overview of the app's features and its role in supporting exam integrity.
- Setting Up Examinations: Step-by-step guidance on how to create and upload examination papers to the app.
- Monitoring Examinations: Training on how to monitor students during examinations, including accessing data such as video, audio, and other activity logs captured by the app.
- Dealing with Multiple Lecturers: Addressing issues related to courses with multiple lecturers, ensuring that all instructors have appropriate access and permissions.
- Student Access Management: Ensuring students are correctly added to the system and have access to the correct examination papers.
- Troubleshooting Common Issues: Resolving common challenges, such as students not being able to access examinations or technical issues during the examination.

Moodle & Smart Classroom Training
The training on the use of in-classroom technologies, such as Smartboards, has significantly transformed teaching and learning dynamics by enhancing interactivity and engagement in the classroom. This training equipped lecturers with the necessary skills to leverage these technologies, fostering an enriched, student-cantered learning environment that aligns with modern pedagogical approaches.

Microsoft Bookings System
Training on using Microsoft Bookings was conducted in 2024 to empower lecturers to streamline their administrative tasks, enhancing efficiency and student engagement. By learning how to create an MS Booking page, lecturers can provide a centralized platform for managing appointments, office hours, or consultations. Assigning responsibility for managing bookings has helped establish accountability and streamlined communication within departments.

The table below shows a summary of staff training on other learning and teaching with technology:

Activity	Campus	Department	Number of Attendees
Blended Learning & Moodle Training	Mthatha	• African Languages • Mathematics, Science & Technology • Adult & Educational Foundations and • Continuous Professional Teacher Development • Humanities • IT Business applications • IT Networking • Built Environment • Mechanical Engineering • Civil Engineering • Mechanical • Applied Information, Math and Science • Tourism and Hospitality	4 15 23 23 10 11 9 12 5 5 9 21 34
Exam Paper Encryption Code Protection	Mthatha	FLHSS HoD's, & Business Management and Econ	12
Online assessments	Mthatha	Faculty of Economics and Financial Sciences	15
Smartboard Training	Mthatha	Mathematics, Science & Technology	9
Invigilator App and Moodle Training	Mthatha	Business Management Education	3

Workshops attended by Instructional Designers and Educational Technologists

Instructional designers attended a Workshop for Online Tutoring System to collaborate with tutor development coordinators on piloting an innovative online tutoring system. This initiative aims to enhance the quality of academic support provided to students through digital platforms, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, and effectiveness. In collaboration with ICT and Tutor Development Coordinators, the role and responsibilities, and rights on the system are being finalised and should be ready for use in 2025.

Summary of Staff development in DLT

Tables below show a summary of DLT staff who attended various trainings:

Name of Staff Member	Title /Current job title	Workshop/training attended	Skills gained
Mr Sikelela Jodwana Ms Zikona Macibela Mr Lulama Cwala Ms Lizeka Stuma-Qumba Ms Minentle Nkebane Mr Sikelela Jodwana Ms Hezeline Nxenye Ms Thandokazi Mfikoyi Mr Sanele Mpisi Mr Tshepo Rabotapi	Acting Instructional Designer Educational Technologist Instructional designer Instructional Designer Educational Technologist Acting Instructional Designer Instructional Designer Acting Manager Educational Technologist Educational Technologist	Blended Learning Pedagogies	Understanding different blended learning models
Ms Zikona Macibela Mr Sikelela Jodwana	Educational Technologist Acting Instructional Designer	Blended Learning Pedagogies	Designing courses that integrate online and face-to-face components effectively.
Mr Fezile Mlungu	Instructional Designer	Workshop on Boosting Academic Support for Digital Age Students	Creating and Managing Bookings Pages Automating Appointment Scheduling Using Microsoft Bookings for Student Support Creating and Managing Yammer Communities Integrating Yammer with Microsoft Teams and Other Tools

Dr Samson Matope	Lecturer	UCT Programme Management: A Monitoring and Evaluation Approach online short course UCT Change Management	Project Management skills How to manage change in organisations
Mr Fezile Mlungu	Instructional Designer	Digital Transformation	Project Management Change Management
Zwelijongile Baleni	Senior Curriculum Specialist	Southern African Association for Institutional Research	-using AI in curriculum Development
Kewana Sisonke Zamanci Socikwa Zikhona Zenani	Acting Senior Administrator Administrative Assistant Admin Assistant	Electronic Record Management Training	Online record keeping

iv.   OVERALL IMPACT

The comprehensive staff capacity development initiatives implemented by the DLT in 2024 significantly enhanced institutional teaching capabilities across all three strategic areas. Through curriculum development, teaching development, and teaching with technology programmes, the DLT successfully equipped several academic staff with contemporary pedagogical skills and technological competencies essential for delivering quality education.

Building on the strong foundation established through teaching and learning excellence, the university's commitment to holistic student development extends beyond academic achievement to encompass comprehensive student experience initiatives that foster personal growth, leadership development, and community engagement. The Student Affairs Directorate plays a critical role in creating an enabling environment that supports students' holistic development through various campus life dimensions, providing essential services that address wellness, residential life, financial support, and extracurricular engagement that collectively contribute to student success and institutional excellence.

1.17.5 ENRICHING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Student Affairs Directorate's commitment to enhancing student experiences encompasses diverse initiatives that address the multifaceted needs of the students' university life through strategic interventions across five key areas:
- Policy Development and Regulatory Alignment
- Faculty Collaboration and Integration
- Student Health and Wellness Programmes
- Residence Life and Co-Curricular Activities and
- Student Governance and Leadership Development

These initiatives recognise that student success is influenced by numerous factors including regulatory compliance, institutional partnerships, personal well-being, community engagement, and leadership opportunities. The

directorate's work during 2024 reflects an understanding that effective student support requires coordinated efforts across multiple domains to create an environment where students can flourish both academically and personally.

The following sections detail the specific achievements and impact of these strategic initiatives.

i.   POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY ALIGNMENT IN STUDENT AFFAIRS SERVICES

The Student Affairs Directorate has undertaken a comprehensive policy review and development initiative to ensure alignment with contemporary legislative frameworks and institutional governance requirements. This strategic review process has been conducted in full compliance with the WSU Statute (2024) and supports the objectives of the Rationalisation and Consolidation Project, demonstrating the university's commitment to robust institutional governance and regulatory adherence.

Through systematic policy development and review processes, the directorate has established frameworks that address the diverse and evolving needs of the university's student population while maintaining strict adherence to regulatory standards. These initiatives prioritise inclusivity, accessibility, and student-centered approaches that enhance the overall educational experience and create supportive environments conducive to academic success and personal development.

The policy development work encompasses three critical areas: Student Health and Wellness, Residence Life and Co-Curricular Services, and Student Governance and Leadership, each addressing specific regulatory requirements and institutional needs.

Student Health and Wellness
The Directorate completed comprehensive assessments and secured Council approval for critical health and wellness policies, including the Campus Health Services Policy, Infection Control Policy, Pharmaceutical Policy, Student Pregnancy Policy, Policy for Students with Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Policy. This thorough review process, formally sanctioned by the University Council on 5 August 2024, is aimed at fostering supportive and healthy living and learning environments for all students.

The review of the Terms of Reference for Emergency Medical Services was initiated in the 2024 academic year and is scheduled for completion by March 2025. Additionally, consultation processes for the draft Policy for Personal Assistance to Students with Disabilities was also initiated, with finalization anticipated by March 2025.

Residence Life and Co-Curricular Services
Draft policies concerning Residence Life an
d Co-Curricular Services, Student Bereavement Policy, and Missing Persons Policy were consulted with a strategic plan to submit to the University Council in April 2025. This initiative will ensure that critical support systems are in place for the welfare support of students in residences.

Student Governance and Leadership
The Directorate has completed comprehensive reviews of the Student Representative Council (SRC) Constitution and Student Parliament Constitution. These revised governance frameworks will be formally presented to the University Council in April 2025, to ensure the strengthening of student governance structures and expand leadership development opportunities within the institution.

ii.   IMPROVING STUDENT EXPERIENCE THROUGH COLLABORATIONS WITH FACULTIES

From February to April 2024, Student Affairs convened a series of critical meetings with all Executive Faculty Deans and Heads of Departments to bolster the integration of Student Affairs Services within the University's academic framework. These discussions were driven by two primary objectives: to inform faculty leaders about the extensive range of services offered by Student Affairs and collect insightful feedback on the specific needs and expectations of each Faculty.

Through these collaborative sessions, the university established a robust partnership between Student Affairs and the diverse Faculties. Importantly, the institution identified key experts who will be pivotal in effectively implementing these services to enhance the overall student experience by ensuring that the services align closely with the educational goals and objectives of each Faculty.

The outcomes of these meetings have led to the creation of a comprehensive support system that addresses the varied needs of the university's students, fostering both academic achievement and personal growth. Moreover,

the insights gained have underpinned the development of targeted strategies to promote student engagement, well-being, and success across all disciplines.

iii.   STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMES

Awareness about the Student Counselling Services
Efforts were undertaken to promote awareness of Student Counselling Services across all campuses. Strategies included leveraging the residence system to reach all students, distributing informative materials on notice boards, and utilising online platforms and social media for broader engagement.

Student Counselling Peer Helping Programme
To enhance its services and support more students, the Student Counselling Unit launched a Peer Helping Programme. This initiative trains senior students in essential psychosocial support skills across all campuses. As vital extensions of the Student Counselling Unit, these peer helpers provide crucial peer-to-peer support and effectively refer students to appropriate resources to foster a resilient student community that prioritises mental health and well-being.

Mental health and well-being
Awareness campaigns that focused on mental health and well-being were organised across campuses, utilising both face-to-face and online sessions. These initiatives aimed to enhance understanding and promote discussions about mental health challenges to foster a supportive environment for students and staff alike. By combining in-person engagement with digital accessibility, the campaigns effectively reached a diverse audience, encouraging participation and raising awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing in an academic setting.

Empowering FTENS to navigate their transition to a university setting

Building on the comprehensive first-year support initiatives implemented by the DLT, Student Affairs complemented these academic interventions with holistic transition support workshops during the first semester. While the DLT provided academic foundation through orientation programmes, tutorship systems, and technology training of first-time entering students across all campuses, Student Affairs focused on the personal and social adjustment aspects of university life.

These targeted Student Affairs workshops addressed critical areas including time management strategies, effective study methodologies, and stress management techniques, equipping students with essential life skills that complement their academic preparation.

Workshops for managing academic stress and preparing for exams

These workshops focused on reducing academic stress by offering practical strategies. Key topics included time management techniques to help students prioritise tasks and create balanced schedules, as well as study skills tailored to different learning styles. Additionally, the workshops addressed exam-related stress, providing tools for confident assessment preparation. Through interactive discussions and activities, participants identified their stress triggers and learned effective coping mechanisms for their academic journey.

Substance abuse prevention programmes

To address alcohol and substance abuse among students, comprehensive campaigns have been initiated. A key initiative is the Liquor Board Ambassador programme, developed by the Wellness Cluster in collaboration with the Eastern Cape Liquor Board. This programme aims to educate students about responsible drinking and the risks of substance misuse, fostering a safer and healthier campus environment.

Additionally, the Health Services Unit spearheaded a comprehensive two-day wellness campaign themed "First Things First" in partnership with Higher Health, TB/HIV CARE, Social Health & Empowerment (SHE), and the Liquor Board. This collaborative initiative focused on sexual health awareness, HIV/AIDS testing, men's health, and disability support through a student-centered approach that utilised trained peer helpers to destigmatise health conversations. The campaign created a supportive environment where students felt comfortable seeking information and assistance.

Understanding gender as a spectrum

In collaboration with WSU Ambassadors and Student Affairs, the Student Health and Wellness Cluster successfully hosted a thought-provoking workshop on "Understanding Gender as a Spectrum." This impactful event unpacked the complexities of gender diversity, challenged harmful stereotypes, and fostered greater inclusivity within the university community.

Bullying and GBV Awareness Programme

The Butterworth Campus Student Governance, Leadership, and Development Unit, in collaboration with WSU Brand Ambassadors, hosted a comprehensive awareness programme addressing bullying and gender-based violence (GBV). The event fostered a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusivity while ensuring that all campus community members felt valued and safe. The programme empowered students to speak out against various forms of bullying and GBV, including physical, verbal, emotional, and cyberbullying. Through interactive sessions and awareness activities, participants gained enhanced recognition skills and developed proactive prevention strategies to address these critical social issues within the university environment.

Women's Gala Dinner

In celebration of National Women's Month, WSU's Brand Ambassadors hosted an elegant and inspiring Women's Gala Dinner on 17 August 2024, at the Lunika Business Park in Selborne. The event, themed *Unleashing the Power of Women: Leadership, Innovation, and Excellence,* paid tribute to the outstanding female students of the BCC Campus.

Men's Conference, University of Free State

Men in Action student representatives on various campuses participated in a significant Men's Conference at the University of the Free State. This event brought together influential voices and stakeholders to engage in critical discussions surrounding masculinity, gender equality, and the role of men in fostering positive change within society. Participation of WSU's Men in Action underscores the importance of student leadership in addressing pressing social issues.

Graduate Employability Programme Launch

Walter Sisulu University launched its Graduate Employability Programme on 3 October 2024, marking a strategic institutional initiative to address graduate unemployment and bridge the skills gap between higher education outcomes and industry requirements. The programme represents the university's commitment to contributing meaningfully to South Africa's employment challenges by ensuring graduates are market-ready and equipped with relevant competencies.

The launch event, hosted through a business breakfast at Buffalo Park Drive, brought together distinguished stakeholders from government departments and private sector organizations to establish collaborative frameworks for graduate development and employment. The initiative served as a critical platform for multi-sector dialogue, facilitating discussions on industry needs, graduate competencies, and collaborative opportunities that benefit both students and employers while addressing national unemployment concerns.

This initiative represents WSU's proactive approach to ensuring that graduates contribute effectively to economic growth while addressing the country's unemployment challenges through strategic industry partnerships and skills-aligned education.

iv.   RESIDENCE LIFE AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

My Right, My Responsibility in Pursuit of Excellence

The Residence Life and Co-curricular Unit commemorated Human Rights Day through innovative edutainment sessions conducted at the university residences. These interactive talk shows, themed "My Right, My Responsibility in Pursuit of Excellence," engaged students in meaningful dialogue about constitutional rights, civic responsibilities, and academic excellence.

The programme utilised residence-based platforms to create accessible spaces for students to explore the intersection between human rights awareness and personal accountability in their academic and social development. This initiative fostered critical thinking about citizenship, personal responsibility, and the pursuit of excellence within the context of South Africa's constitutional democracy, while strengthening community bonds within student residential environments.

WSU Has Talent

The Residence Life and Co-Curricular Unit also hosted its first annual Talent Show Finale, featuring the Top 12 contestants selected from various campuses. This event showcased a diverse range of talents, highlighting the vibrant and creative spirit of the student communities.

Spirituality and Cultural Diversity Workshop

Recognising the diverse spiritual and cultural needs of its student population, Walter Sisulu University hosted a significant workshop on spirituality and spiritual callings in higher education, particularly addressing the experiences of African students. The event, themed *Itshoba Nesidanga*, was facilitated by the Residence Life and Co-Curricular Unit and created a supportive platform for students to explore the intersection between academic pursuits and spiritual awareness.

The workshop addressed the unique challenges faced by students who experience spiritual callings during their academic journey, providing guidance on balancing spiritual responsibilities with educational commitments. This initiative ensures that WSU's student development that honours cultural traditions and spiritual diversity while maintaining academic excellence, reinforcing WSU's identity as an African university that values indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices.

Campus Pride March and LGBTQIA+ Awareness Day

The Student Life and Co-curricular Unit proudly hosted its inaugural Campus Pride March and LGBTQIA+ Awareness Day, themed "Pride is Equality, Pride is Excellence." The atmosphere during the march was filled with unity, acceptance, and empowering conversations. The event featured impactful presentations and a powerful keynote address by esteemed guest Lubabalo Mashiqana, a passionate advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights. He emphasized the importance of embracing diversity, promoting inclusion, and striving for excellence in all aspects of life. This day was not only a celebration of identity and self-expression but also a call to action to uphold the values of equality and dignity for all.

v. STUDENT GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (SGLD)

Registration Support

Registration Preparatory Meetings
The SGLD Unit organised comprehensive meetings with key university departments, including registration, finance, academics, and Residence Administration and Student Accommodation (RASA), establishing a cohesive and inclusive student registration process. These registration support initiatives ensured that students could navigate their academic journey without experiencing conflicts due to financial or academic exclusions. Through enhanced communication and collaboration among these departments, the SGLD streamlined the registration experience, creating efficient and fair processes.

The initiative successfully prevented potential frustrations that could lead to student unrest while fostering a positive academic environment. The coordinated approach between departments resulted in improved registration procedures that addressed both academic and financial concerns, demonstrating the university's commitment to inclusive and accessible higher education. This collaborative framework established sustainable processes that support student success from enrolment through academic progression.

Special Cases Project
The University Council and Campus Student Representative Councils (CSRC) implemented a collaborative funding project to support students facing economic hardships. This initiative provided financial assistance to students whose economic circumstances threatened their ability to register and continue their academic studies. The project addressed the unique challenges faced by financially disadvantaged students, ensuring that financial constraints did not prevent access to higher education opportunities.

Through combined contributions from the CSRC and University Council, the initiative successfully assisted students with registration for the 2024 academic year. The SRC's advocacy for equitable access to educational resources supported a diverse and inclusive academic environment that benefited the entire student body. The financial support provided through this collaborative effort demonstrated the university's commitment to addressing socio-economic barriers to education, as detailed in the campus-specific assistance figures presented in the Table below.

Table 1: Number of students assisted through the Council Allocation and SRC Contribution per Campus.

Campus	Number of students assisted	
Buffalo City Campus	Council Allocation	254
	CSRC Contribution	254
IBIKA	Council Allocation	289
	CSRC Contribution	342

Komani	Council Allocation	195
	CSRC Assistance	225
Mthatha	Council Allocation	666
	CSRC Assistance	666

SRC elections and House Committee Elections

In alignment with the WSU SRC Constitution, the university appointed KDBS Consulting as the Elections Agency (EA) for the 2024/2025 SRC elections, demonstrating commitment to transparency and professionalism in the electoral process. Shumba INC., a reputable audit firm, was engaged to provide essential advisory services, ensuring that elections were conducted in accordance with best practices and regulatory standards.

The SRC elections were successfully conducted on 25 and 26 March 2024, representing a significant milestone in democratic student engagement across all campuses. The transparent and fair conduct of the elections fostered trust in democratic processes within the institution while enriching the electoral experience for students and reinforcing active participation in student representation.

Voter turnout statistics revealed varying levels of engagement across campuses, with Komani Campus achieving the highest turnout at 71%, followed by Butterworth Campus at 68%. Buffalo City Campus and Mthatha Campus recorded turnout figures of 66% and 57% respectively. These variations reflected different factors influencing student participation, including campus culture, access to electoral information, and perceived importance of the democratic process. The elections successfully established legitimate student leadership structures across all campuses while providing valuable insights into student engagement patterns.

House Committee Elections

The collaborative efforts between the Residence Life and Co-Curricular Unit, Student Governance and Leadership Development (SGLD), and the Student Representative Council (SRC) established a comprehensive framework for student engagement within university residences. The House Committee Elections successfully empowered students to actively contribute to the development of their living and learning environments through democratic participation.

Through the election of house committees, students gained effective platforms to voice concerns and preferences, fostering ownership and accountability within their residential communities. These committees facilitated ongoing dialogue between residents and university administration, addressing pressing issues and advocating for improvements that enhanced the overall living experience for all students.

The house committees enriched the social fabric of residential life while providing essential feedback to the SRC and university officials regarding student challenges and needs. This democratic structure created sustainable mechanisms for student participation in residence governance, resulting in improved communication channels and more responsive residential services that directly addressed student concerns and enhanced campus life quality.

SRC Oath-taking and Induction

The newly elected WSU Institutional Student Representative Council (ISRC) and CSRCs were officially inaugurated on 17 April 2024 at the Enkululekweni site, Mthatha Campus. The oath-taking ceremony marked a significant milestone in student governance, formally installing 42 student leaders who had completed their induction process in Port Alfred.

The ceremony was attended by distinguished guests including WSU Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Rushiella Nolundi Songca and O.R. Tambo Municipal Speaker Ntandokazi Capa. These institutional and municipal leaders delivered addresses that emphasized the importance of student leadership roles within the university community and broader society. The formal inauguration established the legitimacy of the new student leadership structures while providing guidance and institutional support for the emerging leaders' responsibilities in representing student interests and contributing to university governance.

Elections of the Campus Student Parliament (CSP) and Institutional Student Parliament (ISP)
Following the oath-taking and inauguration of the Campus Student Representative Councils (CSRCs) and the Institutional Student Representative Council (ISRC), each campus conducted elections for their Campus Student Parliament Executives. This process established the foundation for the subsequent Institutional Student Parliament (ISP) meeting held at Devereux Lodge.

The ISRC President, in collaboration with the Student Governance and Leadership Development (SGLD) unit, convened an extraordinary ISP meeting to elect the ISP Executive. During this session, campus representatives presented comprehensive reports on their respective campus activities and challenges. Critical recommendations were formulated and submitted to the SGLD for institutional consideration and implementation. The elections successfully established both campus-level and institutional parliamentary structures, creating formal mechanisms for student representation and participation in university governance processes.

Student Parliament Training
WSU Butterworth and Mthatha student leadership participated in a joint Campus Student Parliament Induction and Leadership Training Session at Mpekweni in Port Alfred. The induction programme successfully welcomed and oriented parliamentary members, ensuring comprehensive understanding of parliament structure, rules, and procedures.

The training session established clear expectations by outlining members' roles, responsibilities, and codes of conduct while building essential teamwork skills. The programme emphasized collaboration, communication, and mutual respect, particularly significant given the joint participation of two campus delegations. The training equipped student parliamentary members with necessary governance skills and established frameworks for

effective inter-campus collaboration in student leadership activities. This capacity-building initiative strengthened the foundation for effective student parliamentary operations and enhanced the quality of student representation within university governance structures.

Institutional Student Parliament Training Programme at Robben Island, Cape Town
The Student Governance and Leadership Development (SGLD) unit, together with student leaders and representatives from the Institutional Student Parliament (ISP), participated in a Leadership Development and Training programme at Robben Island organised by Robben Island Museum officials.

During this educational journey, the delegation followed the paths once walked by prominent South African political leaders who were imprisoned during the anti-apartheid struggle. The tour was conducted by a former political prisoner who provided firsthand accounts of the island's profound and harrowing history, highlighting the brutal realities and sacrifices of the liberation movement.

The student leaders explored prison cells that had housed activists including Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, and Govan Mbeki, and visited Robert Sobukwe's House, a site of significant historical importance. The guides shared detailed narratives that revealed the harsh conditions and tragic losses experienced within the prison walls, illustrating the extent of sacrifices made for justice and equality.

The programme included experiential learning activities that simulated the challenging circumstances faced by political prisoners, providing student leaders with deeper appreciation of this historical legacy. The visit reinforced understanding of South Africa's liberation history and its continuing relevance to contemporary leadership and social justice. This immersive educational experience enhanced student leaders' appreciation of democratic values and their responsibilities as emerging leaders in post-apartheid South Africa.

Vice Chancellor's engagement with the ISRC and ISP
The Office of the Vice Chancellor conducted formal engagement sessions with the Institutional Student Representative Council (ISRC) and Institutional Student Parliament (ISP) to promote open dialogue and strengthen institutional governance structures. This collaboration fostered transparency and inclusivity while ensuring that student voices were effectively incorporated into university decision-making processes.

The engagement sessions successfully empowered the ISRC and ISP to align their activities with the university's strategic objectives while providing platforms for addressing evolving student needs. Through these structured interactions, the Vice Chancellor reaffirmed the university's commitment to responsive student governance and participatory decision-making processes.

The formal engagement established sustainable communication channels between executive leadership and student governance structures, enhancing the university's capacity to address student concerns proactively. This initiative strengthened institutional governance while demonstrating the university's commitment to inclusive leadership and student-centered approaches to institutional management.

vi.   XHAMELA CULTURAL FESTIVAL

The SGLD Unit successfully hosted the inaugural Xhamela Cultural Festival in honour of Tatu Walter Sisulu at the Potsdam Campus on 23-24 September 2024, during Heritage Month celebrations. The festival provided a comprehensive platform for all campuses to celebrate cultural diversity and traditions through various artistic expressions, including choral music and traditional dance performances that showcased diverse cultural identities.

The two-day festival featured multicultural performances that demonstrated the rich heritage of the university's student body while honouring the legacy of Walter Sisulu. Mr. Mlibo Qhoboshiyane, a member of the Eastern Cape Legislature, delivered the keynote address, providing institutional support and emphasizing the importance of cultural preservation and celebration in higher education.

The festival successfully achieved its objectives of promoting cultural awareness, fostering unity through diversity, and creating sustainable platforms for cultural expression within the university community. This inaugural event

established a significant annual tradition that celebrates both institutional heritage and the diverse cultural backgrounds of the WSU student population.

vii.   THE MTHATHA CHOIR PARTICIPATED IN THE TIRO MPANE COMPETITION

The Mthatha Campus Choir achieved outstanding success at the Tiro Mpane Competition held on 21 September 2024 in Makanda, securing the overall winner position in the Standard Category. The choir demonstrated exceptional musicality, harmony, and stage presence, earning an impressive score of 83% that distinguished them from competing institutions.

This achievement showcased the high calibre of musical talent within the university while promoting South African choral music traditions and cultural diversity. The choir's victory highlighted the university's commitment to excellence in co-curricular activities and demonstrated the quality of artistic development programmes available to students. The competition success reinforced the importance of cultural expression and musical excellence as integral components of holistic student development at WSU.

viii.   STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMMES

Recognizing the critical importance of entrepreneurship education in addressing South Africa's unemployment challenges and preparing graduates for economic participation, the university implemented comprehensive entrepreneurship development initiatives during 2024. These programmes respond to the pressing need for innovative solutions to youth unemployment while equipping students with essential business skills and entrepreneurial mindsets required in today's competitive economy.

The university's entrepreneurship initiatives bridge the gap between academic learning and practical business application, enabling students to develop sustainable enterprises that contribute to economic growth and job creation. By fostering entrepreneurial thinking and providing practical business development opportunities, these programmes prepare students to become job creators rather than job seekers, directly addressing national economic priorities and industry demands for innovation and self-reliance.

Enactus Training
Representatives from all campuses participated in Enactus training sessions held at Butterworth Campus. The training introduced first-time entering students to various entrepreneurship unit programmes while encouraging active engagement and participation in social entrepreneurship initiatives that address community challenges through sustainable business solutions.

Hult Price Summit in Nairobi

Two WSU teams, comprising six students, achieved success in the On-campus Hult Prize competition held in February 2024, earning the opportunity to represent the university at Strathmore University in Nairobi. The teams participated in this prestigious international social entrepreneurship competition, which challenges university students globally to develop innovative solutions addressing critical social issues including food security, water access, energy, and education.

The Hult Prize, named in honour of Bertil Hult and recognised as the Nobel Prize for students, provided a platform for WSU teams VeriDate and Àsàké to showcase their innovative solutions. Team Àsàké developed reusable period underwear addressing menstrual hygiene challenges, while VeriDate created an online scanner system to detect original expiry dates on household goods, addressing food safety and waste reduction.

The teams' participation in this international competition demonstrated the university's capacity to develop globally competitive social entrepreneurs while addressing pressing societal challenges through innovative business solutions. This achievement positioned WSU among leading institutions in social entrepreneurship development and highlighted the potential of South African students to contribute meaningfully to global social innovation initiatives.

Student Entrepreneurship Week

The Student Governance Leadership Development Entrepreneurship Development Programme successfully hosted the Student Entrepreneurship Week from 30 September to 4 October 2024, under the theme "Igniting Entrepreneurial Spirit." This comprehensive five-day initiative was conducted across all university campuses, providing students with intensive exposure to entrepreneurship development through structured programming that combined theoretical knowledge with practical application.

The week-long programme featured daily activities including internal pitch deck competitions, market days where student entrepreneurs showcased and sold products, and community engagement initiatives that promoted entrepreneurship awareness. Each campus participated in specialized programming, with activities ranging from auditorium presentations to external pitch competitions, culminating in the selection of top entrepreneurial ideas and ventures.

This Student Entrepreneurship Week created sustainable opportunities for Fifty-five student aspiring entrepreneurs to develop their ventures, receive feedback from peers and industry experts, and contribute to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem within the university and surrounding communities.

ix.   WSU VICE CHANCELLORS' INSTITUTIONAL DEBATE COMPETITION

The WSU Vice Chancellor's Institutional Debate Competition was successfully conducted as part of the student development initiatives driven by the WSU Brand Ambassadors, housed within the Office of the Vice Chancellor. The competition demonstrated the university's commitment to intellectual development and academic excellence while providing students with a platform to engage in critical discourse and develop essential communication and analytical skills.

The event featured institutional leadership participation, with the Vice Chancellor providing guidance on the importance and effectiveness of communication and academic writing skills. The WSU Brand Ambassadors, operating under the direct oversight of the Vice Chancellor's Office, successfully coordinated and implemented this initiative as part of their mandate to advance student intellectual development and engagement.

The debate competition achieved its objectives of fostering intellectual growth among participating students while promoting academic integrity and critical thinking capabilities.

x. VICE CHANCELLOR'S FAMELAB COMPETITION

The Office of the Vice Chancellor made a strategic decision to enter Walter Sisulu University into the FameLab competition for the first time in 2024. This national science communication competition encourages staff and students in STEM programmes to engage with the public through effective science communication, expanding student opportunities beyond conventional academic boundaries while developing critical communication skills essential for modern STEM professionals.
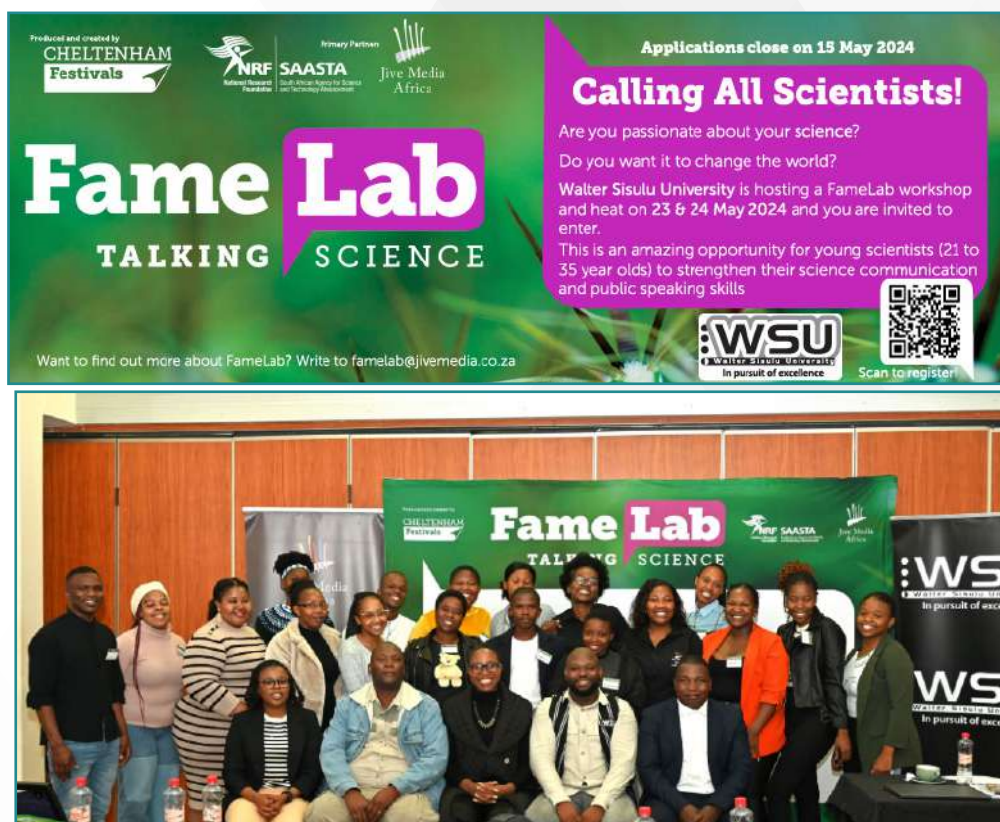
The university's inaugural participation in FameLab yielded exceptional results that exceeded institutional expectations. Two WSU students qualified for the national competition, surpassing the typical single participant allocation, demonstrating the high calibre of science communication talent within the university's STEM programmes.

One WSU student, Ms Mgwili achieved first runner-up position in the national competition and won the overall public vote, showcasing exceptional ability to connect with diverse audiences through effective science communication. This outstanding performance significantly raised the university's profile in national science communication circles and established new pathways for student recognition at the national level.

The success of this initiative has positioned WSU as a competitive force in science communication nationally while providing STEM students with valuable platforms for public engagement and professional development. Internal training sessions for the 2025 competition are scheduled for July 2025, building on the foundation established through this successful inaugural participation.

xi.   VICE CHANCELLORS AMBASSADORS

The WSU Brand Ambassadors, an initiative established within the Office of the Vice Chancellor to enhance student engagement and institutional communication, successfully launched the "MySafeSpace" web application in January 2024. This innovative platform provides students with a secure digital voice to express concerns within the WSU community through a collaborative effort between the Brand Ambassadors and the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) department.

The web application establishes a protected environment where students can address various social challenges including gender-based violence, bullying, harassment, and mental health concerns. Accessible through any device, this user-friendly platform guarantees user confidentiality and anonymity, enabling students to engage comfortably with stakeholders about challenges they face while actively contributing to the general well-being and unity of the WSU community. This initiative reflects the strategic role of the Brand Ambassadors in facilitating meaningful dialogue between students and institutional leadership while addressing critical social issues affecting campus life.

xii   STUDENT LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Southern African Universities Debate Championship (SADC), University of Botswana
The WSU Debate Council, comprising teams from Buffalo City Campus, Mthatha, and Komani campuses, participated in the Southern African Universities Debate Championship hosted by the University of Botswana in Gaborone. The university achieved significant recognition at this regional competition, demonstrating excellence in debate and public speaking development.

Mr. Khanyisani Chiliza, a WSU debate coach, was elected Secretary of the South African Universities Debating Championship (SAUDC), a position representing all Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and over 50 public universities. This appointment positioned WSU in a leadership role within regional university debate networks while establishing stronger inter-institutional relationships across the SADC region.

The achievement enhanced the university's profile in regional academic competitions while contributing to the development of public speaking and critical thinking skills among participating students. This recognition demonstrated WSU's capacity to compete effectively at regional levels and contribute meaningfully to higher education collaboration within the Southern African region. The leadership role assumed by WSU coaching staff strengthened the university's influence in regional debate development and inter-university partnerships.

Student Leadership Exchange Programme, National University of Lesotho
The CSRCs and the ISRC participated in a Student Leadership Exchange Programme at the National University of Lesotho.

RELEVANT AND IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION REPORT

The university's commitment to academic excellence extends beyond teaching and learning to encompass a robust research and innovation agenda that drives knowledge creation, scholarly productivity, and technological advancement. Building on the strong foundation of student success and faculty support systems, the institution has strategically positioned research and innovation as critical pillars for institutional growth and national development contribution.

During 2024, the university demonstrated exceptional performance in research outputs, postgraduate supervision, and innovation initiatives that significantly exceeded institutional targets. The research achievements reflect the collaborative efforts of faculty members, research support directorates, and strategic partnerships that create an

enabling environment for scholarly excellence and knowledge production.

The following section of the report showcases the university's research and innovation performance across key indicators, highlighting the substantial progress made in publication outputs, postgraduate completions, and research capacity development.

1.17.6 RELEVANT AND IMPACTFUL RESEARCH & INNOVATION

The university's research and innovation strategy focus on developing a comprehensive ecosystem that supports knowledge creation, scholarly excellence, and technological advancement. This strategic approach encompasses four critical priorities that collectively enhance the institution's research profile while contributing meaningfully to national development objectives and global knowledge production and those critical priorities are:

Developing individual and institutional capacity for relevant and impactful research
Accelerating research output growth
Attracting and retaining high-calibre postgraduate students
Growing the University's innovation and intellectual property commercialisation footprint

These interconnected priorities reflect the university's commitment to building sustainable research capacity while ensuring that scholarly activities address societal challenges and contribute to economic development.

1.17.6.1 ENHANCE CAPACITY OF ACADEMIC STAFF TO DELIVER QUALITY AND IMPACTFUL RESEARCH

i. NRF-RATING

The Directorate of Research and Innovation (DR&I) administers an NRF-rating mentorship programme funded through the university's Council-approved budget. DR&I appointed mentors to support the staff in preparing for application narratives and appointed Prof Susan Scott from UNISA, a C2 NRF rated as an external assessor. The impact of the support given to Colleagues resulted in the university obtaining sixteen successful NRF-rating outcomes, increasing the number of NRF-rated researchers to 44. The updated list of NRF-rated researchers is presented in Table 1. The challenges are on the side of NRF, where the process takes a long time to receive rating outcomes.

Table 1: List of NRF-Rated Researchers-WSU

No	Name	Rating Category
1.	Prof RN Songca	C3
2.	Prof SS Babalola	C2
3.	Prof F Dejene	C2
4.	Dr R Taziwa	Y2
5.	Prof F Ganda	Y2
6.	Prof NR Jere	Y2
7.	Dr OO Oladimeji	Y2
8.	Professor WD Thwala	C2
9.	Prof B Bantwini	C2
10.	Prof AT Modi	C2
Academics who received NRF Rating/re-rating in the 2020/2021 cycle		
11.	Prof AO Oyedeji	C2
12.	Prof TN Ndlovu	C2
13.	Prof AS Niba	C3
14.	Prof LN Katende-Kyenda	C3
15.	Dr M Douglas	C3
16.	Dr AO Oki	Y2
17.	Dr PN Acha-Anyi	C2

Academics who received NRF Rating in the 2021/2022 cycle		
18.	Dr R Garidzirai	Y2
19.	Dr K Sibanda	Y2
20.	Dr RS Shukla	Y2
21.	Dr BI Omodan	Y2
22.	Dr OV Adeniyi	C2
23.	Prof EJ Ndebia	C3
24.	Prof SM Kang'ethe	C2
25.	Dr HM Kabiti	Y2
26.	Prof MS Enongene	C2
27.	Dr J Gumede	Y2
Academics who received NRF Rating in the 2022/2023 cycle		
28.	Prof JO Akande	C2
29.	Dr W Mwatwara	C3
30.	Dr O Matarirano	C2
31.	Prof N Marongwe	C2
32.	Dr OJ Adeyemi	Y2
33.	Dr A Oriola	Y2
34.	Prof NP Dastile	C2
35.	Dr Z Mbulawa	C2
36.	Prof. Nkeh-Chungag, BN	C2
37.	Prof. O Oguntona	Y2
38.	Dr. O Odularu-Olatoye	Y2
39.	Dr S Hosu	C3
40.	Prof Setumo Victor Motloung	C3
41.	Prof Dejen	C2
42.	Prof SO Atiku,	C2
43.	Prof K Strydom,	C2
44.	Prof AG Velthuizen	C2

ii.   RESEARCH NICHE AREAS (RNA)

The strengthening RNA project has two activities namely, seed grants to stimulate research in the approved 10 RNAs and engagement of PDRFs to stimulate research in RNAs. Each RNA is allocated a R140 000 seed fund dedicated to research running expenses and small equipment. The 10 RNAs are presented in 2.

Table 2: RNA Leaders and working titles

Prof A Oyedeji	African Medicinal Flora and Fauna
Dr YS Hosu	Small-scale Agribusiness and Rural Non-farm Enterprise Research
Dr J Lukose	ICT for Sustainable Development
Prof G Okuthe	Sustainable Marine & Freshwater Economic Development
Prof KV Mjali	Process Technologies and Material Science in Engineering
Prof Nkeh-Chungag	Cardio-Metabolic Health Research
Prof T Ncanywa	Sustainable Development and Contemporary Issues in Society and Education
Dr R Taziwa	Renewable Energy Technologies

| Mr R Letsatsi | Creative and Cultural Technology and Industries |
| Prof N Katende-Kyenda | Human Rights and Development |

The RNAs are in their fourth year of being active in 2024. The University witnessed growth in research activities due to collaborations among WSU researchers, partly facilitated by the presence of the 10 RNAs. Given the observed growth in research productivity, the RNAs are working towards establishing Centres of Excellence (CoE) or forming clusters of multidisciplinary scientific research in efforts to mitigate working in silos. It is acknowledged that the growth of the RNAs varies. The Directorate of Research and Innovation devised a series of capacity development programmes to equip RNA members with the necessary skills to develop the RNAs into CoEs. The conducted workshops are RNA strategic planning, SWOT analysis, and Benchmarking of CoEs.

RNA conducted workshops

RNA strategic planning
The strategic planning was held in July 2023 to reflect on the progress made and discuss strategies to develop the RNAs into centres of excellence. This was the first platform for all the RNA leaders to be in one place. All RNA leaders and invited resource personnel benefited from the strategic planning. The total cost of the training was R57 701. The impact of this exercise was to share experiences that may encourage the less performing to associate with and learn from those performing better. The reporting process and progress report template were also revised to reflect highlights and challenges better. It was targeted that the university will support two RNAs annually. In 2024, two RNAs, such as African Medicinal Flora and Fauna (Prof Oyedeji) and Renewable Energy Technologies (Dr Taziwa), will be supported in the CoE.

SWOT Analysis and Business Profiling Training
The strategic planning revealed that some RNA members lack the skills to acquire funding to supplement the seed grant provided by the Research Office. Hence, it was crucial to capacitate the RNA Leaders and Project Leaders on the necessary skills to establish self-sustainable research entities. The first step in fundraising for research is to profile the research entity as a business with clear objectives and plans to achieve them. The total cost of the training was R234,908.79. The SWOT analysis shed light on RNAs that have the potential to be launched as CoEs and those that need more work. The training impacted all RNA Leaders and Project Leaders. The training clarifies the roles of Project Leaders. It was found that the administration of RNAs is not clear which office is responsible for monitoring and workload for RNA Leaders.

Benchmarking of centres of excellence in Gauteng
Efforts to grow the university's Research Niche Areas revealed the need to benchmark with other institutions, particularly on governance and sustainability. It has become apparent that WSU needs to benchmark Centres of Excellence to adopt or adapt best practices regarding structure, governance and financing. To that end, the Institutional RNA Coordinator, Manager, and Administrator embarked on a benchmarking exercise with three universities in the Gauteng province.

The exercise cost R28,503.08. Accordingly, the following Centres of Excellence were identified and engaged:
• University of Johannesburg's Centre for Social Change, directed by Prof Patrick Bond,
• University of Pretoria's Centre of New Energy Systems, directed by Prof Raj Naidoo and
• Wits University's Centre for Diversity Studies, directed by Prof Melissa Steyn.

Additionally, The Wits DVC for Research and Innovation, Dr Robin Drenan, and the University of Johannesburg's Prof Pragna Rugunanan, a member of the Task Team responsible for funding models of UJ's Centres of Excellence, were engaged. The impact of the benchmarking was learning best practices that WSU can adopt or adapt to grow its RNAs and CoEs. For instance, setting realistic goals alongside improved processes should enhance innovation and output while improving risk management. The importance of fundraising skills was echoed.

Another effort to strengthen the research productivity of RNAs is the recruitment of postdoctoral research fellows (PDRFs) whose responsibilities are purely focused on research outputs. To date, 13 PDRFs have been appointed for RNAs.

1.17.6.2   ACCELERATE RESEARCH OUTPUT GROWTH

In 2024, the DRI implemented research capacity-building and training programmes to enhance the skills and productivity of developing, emerging, and senior researchers for impactful research. These initiatives were strategically designed to increase the proportion of WSU researchers actively engaged in research activities and ultimately contribute to the growth of the University's research outputs. The various training programmes were

instrumental in increasing the university's research outputs.

i.   FIRST-TIME AUTHOR

The table 4 summarises the progress attained by first-time authors supported for this retreat. The data presented above shows modesty and a promising productivity trajectory amongst first-time authors. This is a positive step toward realising the University's goal of increasing the pool of academics actively engaged in research and publication. Figure 1 shows one of the mentors and facilitator (Prof Oyedeji) equipping first-time authors with skills on how to identify a suitable journal. The impact of the First-time Author Programme is the productivity data of novice researchers who have participated in this programme since its inception is summarized in table 4.

Table 4: Productivity data of First-time authors

Manuscript Status	Research Outputs by First-time Authours				
	2020	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024 Jan- Nov**
Published	8,8	13,83 units	9,03	10,43 units	9,33 units
Total	8,8 units	13,83 units	9,03 units	10,43 units	9,33 units

The DRI organised a writing retreat for first-time authors from the 3rd-5th of December 2024. The programme is funded through the UCDG. This flagship programme was introduced in 2020 and aimed at increasing the number of academics who are actively involved in research and ultimately growing the research outputs of the University. The programme equips novice and unpublished researchers with skills that will enable them to write and publish within a given timeframe. It comprises the mentee (novice academic) and mentor (WSU Senior Researcher responsible for mentoring the mentee).

This year, 22 first-time authors, each with approximately 75% complete draft manuscripts, were supported alongside their 13 mentors to attend a dedicated writing retreat to finalise their manuscripts. The retreat incorporated a series of 30-minute refresher training sessions designed to equip participants with essential skills and knowledge for completing their work. The sessions covered key topics such as:
• Structuring academic papers, including both empirical and conceptual formats.
• Utilising EndNote for effective reference management.
• Addressing and preventing plagiarism.
• Selecting appropriate journals for publication.

Figure 1: First Author Writing Retreat

ii.   ACADEMIC ASSOCIATES

The University has identified the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme and Academic Associates as key drivers of research productivity, instrumental in achieving its research output targets and revenue projections for 2024 and beyond. To support this objective, the Directorate of Research and Innovation (DRI) onboarded thirty-eight (38) new postdoctoral research fellows (PDRFs) between 1 July and December 2024. Currently, the University has 65 active PDRFs, with a few additional fellows who recently received their visas and are expected to commence their duties early next year. Tables 6 and 7 summarise the productivity of the academic associates and PDRFs, respectively.

Research output by Academic Associates
2022 - 18,84
2023 - 47,44
2024 - 19,85

Postdoctoral Research Fellows and Productivity
2022 - 21,79
2023 - 24,68
2024 - 53,54

Research Output Units at WSU over the last years
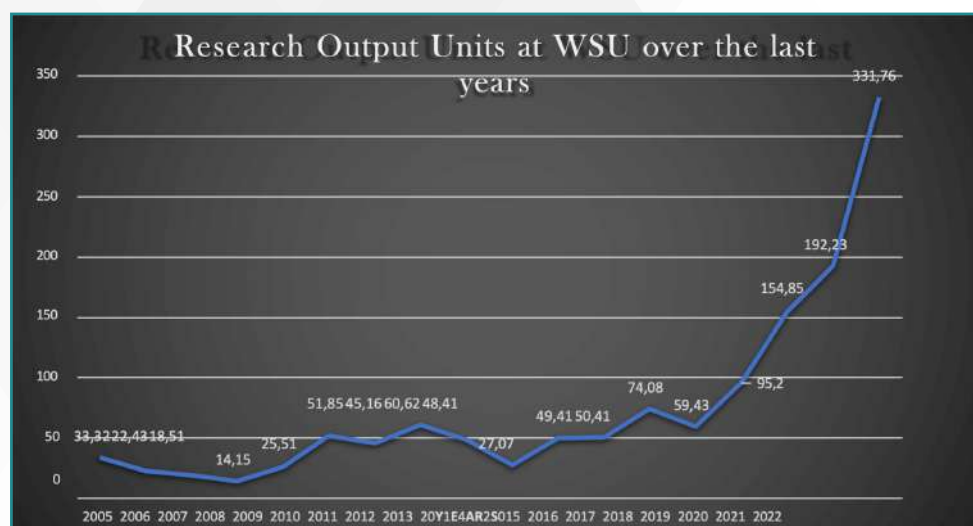
1.17.6.3   HIGH-CALIBRE POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

This document seeks to report on the University's postgraduate capacity development activities and achievements of mid-year 2024. The report highlights Postgraduate Directorate priorities in line with WSU strategic goal 3 - "Relevant and Impactful Research" Under sub-goal 3.3, "Attract and retain high-caliber postgraduate students."

i.   ACADEMIC POSTGRADUATE ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMME (APGAP)

An Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APGAP) for academic and research staff in higher education institutions is designed to support and enhance the professional development of these individuals. It aims to equip staff with the skills, resources, and support needed to excel in their roles, enhance their research output, and advance their careers within higher education institutions. For academic staff members who want to go on study leave, the initiative relieves APGAP beneficiaries from their teaching and learning duties so that they can complete their master's and doctoral studies by recruiting temporary Lecturers as replacements who are paid R11 989, 57. R42 000. In addition, this programme is funded through the UCDG fund, and an amount of R1 740 000.00 was allocated. A call was issued via a postgraduate studies support email for applicants to apply. The impact of the APGAP is to increase the number of staff members with higher degrees.

The directorate has issued an online Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APGAP) funding application for staff members to apply. The eligible applicants were informed of the outcome of their funding application, and letters were sent to them to sign. The Directorate assisted 37 applicants with funding.

Table 6 displays academic staff Members whose APGAP beneficiaries' leave applications were approved in 2024.

Table 6: APGAP Beneficiaries Approved Leave Applications 2024

No	Name	Faculty	Department	Institution of Registration	Qualification Registered for	Update on APgAP Leave	Substitute Lecturer Identified
1	Mr S Takentsi	Economics and Fin Sciences	Business Management and Econ	NWU	PhD in Economics	Ms A Nodo Master of Commerce	Yes

| 2 | Mr V Sithole | Economics and Fin Sciences | Business Management and Econ | NMU | PhD in Economics | The Executive Dean will decide who will be the acting HOD during his absence | Not yet |
| 3 | MV Mazwi | Faculty of Natural Sciences | Depart of Tourism and Hospitality | WSU | PhD in Natural Sciences | Waiting for the name | Yes |

Table 7: Academic Postgraduate Advancement Programme (APGAP), PhD beneficiaries graduated in 2024.

No	Name	Faculty	Depart	Institution of Registration	Qualification Registered for	Awarded	Amount Awarded	Progress Report
1	Mvuyisi Mabungela	Mngt & Public Admin Sciences	Human Resources Management	UNIZULU	PhD in Developmental Studies	Yes	50, 000.00	Graduated in May 2024

ii. GROW-YOUR-OWN-TIMBER (GYOT)

The Grow-Your-Own-Timber (GYOT) initiative aims to foster academic excellence and career development among South African postgraduate students at Walter Sisulu University (WSU). By providing financial support and mentorship, GYOT encourages students pursuing Honours, Master's, and doctoral degrees to engage in academic careers.

The programme allocated R864,000 for six months through UCDG and Sibusiso Bhengu Funding, with 24 students selected for support, 12 funded by UCDG and 12 by Sibusiso Bhengu Funding following a call for applications via Postgraduate support email in May 2024. This initiative's impact is enhancing the academic prospects of individual students and contributing to the broader educational community in South Africa by nurturing future scholars and educators. In addition, there were 12 GYOT beneficiaries previously, and the number has now increased to 24 due to the additional funding from Sibusiso Bhengu.

iii. POSTGRADUATE BURSARIES AWARDED IN 2024

The postgraduate bursaries are part of the University Council-approved budget designed to assist postgraduate students facing financial challenges. This support aims to help these students meet their academic expenses while pursuing their postgraduate studies. For Honours studies, the bursary targets academically high-achieving students who do not have the financial means to cover the cost of tuition fees. The bursary only covers a portion of the applicant's tuition fees.

The research bursaries for Master's and Doctoral students, on the other hand, cater to a portion of research running costs, such as fieldwork, data analysis, and thesis processing expenses. R 1,970,000.00 has been allocated and transferred to the Office of the CFO to credit students' accounts. A call was issued via PG Support email for PG students to apply. The support provided by this bursary aims to relieve the financial pressure on students pursuing postgraduate studies. Table 12 provides the amount awarded to PG Bursary holders – 2024.

Table 8: Postgraduate Bursaries Awarded in 2024

Programme	Number of Awarded PG Students	Amount per Programme
Doctorates	6	180 000,00
Masters	41	815 000,00
Honours	64	975 000,00
Total	**107**	1970 **000,00**

iv. POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISOR REFRESHER WORKSHOP

A Postgraduate Supervisor Refresher is a programme designed to update and enhance the skills of postgraduate supervisors. It includes familiarizing supervisors with changes in institutional policies and sharing effective supervision strategies and feedback methods. The programme updates supervisors on new research methodologies and tools, reinforces the importance of ethical conduct in research, and offers workshops on leadership, mentoring,

and communication. In addition, the primary objective is to ensure that both postgraduate students and supervisors understand the processes and procedures outlined in existing postgraduate study policies.

The impact of this programme will be measured by determining the number of supervisors who have taken the course and successfully taken their students through the proposal stage. A total of 39 students attended supervisor refresher training.

Figure 2: Supervisor refresher workshop

v. PG STUDENT ORIENTATION ALL CAMPUSES

A Postgraduate Student Orientation is an introductory programme aimed at welcoming and helping new and old postgraduate students adapt to the university setting. This programme offers crucial information about the university's mission and vision, academic expectations, and standards for postgraduate studies. It also familiarises students with various support services, campus facilities, and key policies and procedures.

These institutional efforts are essential in all higher education institutions, especially at WSU, to achieve goal 3 of the WSU Strategic Plan - Vision 2030, which focuses on relevant and impactful research and innovation. The budget for the activity was funded through the Council budget. A communication was issued via Research Vital email and WSU Vital email. The primary goal of these activities is to ensure that both postgraduate students and supervisors understand the processes and procedures outlined in the current postgraduate study policies. The impact is seen in the turnover of active postgraduate students when assessing AI tools such as Grammarly and applying advertised opportunities like bursaries and workshops.

Figure 3: PG Students on different campuses

Mthatha Campus   Komani Campus

Butterworth Campus

vi. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT WRITING WORKSHOP

A Postgraduate Proposal Development workshop is a programme to guide postgraduate students through writing their research proposals. Additionally, it offers sessions for students to present their draft proposals and receive feedback. Twenty Master and Doctoral students in the proposal stage and registered in 2024 were selected to attend the workshop in East London, along with experienced supervisors from different faculties.

This workshop was funded through the Sibusiso Bengu Grant, with a total of R 167,000.00, and spanned three days. As a result of the workshop, the students returned with draft proposals ready to be submitted to their supervisors for feedback. About 75% of the students who attended have presented their proposals; some are challenged by getting ethical clearance from their faculties. Figure 4 indicates students who participated in the workshop on the proposal development module.

Figure 4: PG Students attending the workshop

Honours standard procedures and processes

Honours Standard Procedures and Processes encompass the guidelines and protocols that regulate the Honours programme at a university. They cover admission requirements, programme structure, and the research component, including the project. These procedures also detail assessment and evaluation methods, ethical considerations for research, and administrative tasks such as registration and document submission. The approval of these procedures by the Senate has opened many doors, resulting in a total of 222 honours students graduating in May graduation. Table 9 displays the statistics for May 2024 and 2023 graduation, where Honours increased by 60 students.

Table 9: Postgraduate enrolments and graduation

Qualification Name	Headcount	2023 Graduation	2024 Graduation
Doctorates	144	10	28
Masters	697	82	70
Honours	1012	161	349
Total	**1 853**	**253**	**447**

vii. SUPPORTED THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCIAL SCIENCES

The Directorate assisted the Faculty of Economics and Financial Sciences' writing retreat workshop to facilitate completing research projects for postgraduate students. Twenty-three master's students nearing the completion of their dissertations, guided by their supervisors, were supported to finalize their work. The retreat took place in April 2024.

It was designed to provide a conducive environment for intensive dissertation work, free from everyday distractions. The Directorate incurred a cost of R141,327.00 through the Sibusiso Bhengu Grant, while the department covered R29,700.00. The writing retreat supported master's students in completing their dissertations to a high standard, ensuring their readiness for a September graduation. The approval of the appointment of external examiners by the Senate Research and Higher Degrees Committee illustrates the impact. This initiative aligned with the university's strategic goals of increasing graduate throughput and enhancing the institution's academic profile.

viii. HEDA TRAINING- NWU

HEDA is primarily used for strategic reports on academic research, publications, and postgraduate administration (applications, admissions, registrations, assessments, and graduations). Every staff member in these directorates

must be proficient in generating reports from the HEDA system. The HEDA training was financed through the Research Council budget. Investing in the training was a strategic decision that significantly benefited the proper administration of research and postgraduate and the broader university community. It empowers staff, improves reporting capabilities, and ultimately contributes to achieving our institutional goals. The table below provides the list of the attendees.

Table 10: List of staff members who attended HEDA Training

No	Title	Surname & Initial	Department	Designation
1	Prof	T Ncanywa	Postgraduate Studies	Acting Director
2	Prof	N Mxunyelwa	Research & Innovation	Acting Director
3	Mr	L Gwebelele	Postgraduate Studies	Manager
4	Dr	C Dapira	Research & Innovation	Manager
5	Dr	N Dyantyi	Research & Innovation	Manager
6	Dr	M Nkomo	Research & Innovation	Manager
7	Mr	D Makwela	Postgraduate Studies	Tracking and Monitoring Officer
8	Ms	A Kenene	Research & Innovation	IP Scout
9	Ms	B Tofile	Research & Innovation	Senior Administrator
10	Mr	S Faku	Postgraduate Studies	Senior Administrator
11	Mr	S Madiba	Postgraduate Studies	Postgraduate Student Officer
12	Mr	Z Pato	Postgraduate Studies	Senior Administrator
13	Mr	S Lwandle	Postgraduate Studies	Postgraduate Lab Technician
14	Mrs	N Sigodi	Research & Innovation	Senior Admin Research Office
15	Mr	Y Mzingeli	Research & Innovation	Finance Officer

ix. PG LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

The Postgraduate Student Leadership Development Training offers a comprehensive curriculum to cultivate essential leadership competencies such as effective communication, strategic thinking, conflict resolution, and innovative problem- solving. These skills are crucial not only for academic success but also for future career advancement in any field. The Directorate of Postgraduate Studies is required by the current approved UCDG proposal to provide training on Leadership Development for Masters and Doctorate students, aiming to improve their leadership skills essential for attaining their academic and professional objectives.

All faculties offering Masters and Doctoral degrees were engaged in this vital training for PG students and fully supported the initiative. A call was issued via PG Support email for M&D's students to apply, and 20 were selected to attend the workshop. The impact: The Postgraduate Student Leadership Development Training has significantly impacted the participating students by equipping them with crucial leadership skills. The comprehensive curriculum, covering effective communication, strategic thinking, conflict resolution, and innovative problem-solving, has enhanced their academic performance and prepared them for future career advancement across various fields.

x. NURTURING EMERGING SCHOLARS PROGRAMME (NESP)

The Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP) is a DHET programme that supports high-achieving South African Honours students in master's degree studies to enroll them in doctoral degree programmes. In 2020, the Research Directorate responded to a DHET Call to host NESP scholars/interns. The programme is implemented in two phases. Phase 1 entails awarding a two-year Master's scholarship, tenable at any selected university. Phase 2 is an internship, whereby an NESP scholar embarks on a year-long structured academic internship at the recruiting university immediately upon completing his/her master's degree. NESP is a feeder programme for the n-GAP. DHET paid the scholarship funds. The University was awarded five positions during the NESP Phase 1 and two more positions in Phase 2 Cohort 2.1 in the following areas of specialisation:
• Computer Science (French-DHET Scholarship)
• Medical Microbiology
• Geography
• Zoology (2 positions)

- Statistics
- Physics

The Table summarises the NESP positions awarded to WSU and the value of the Scholarship/Internship.

Table 11: NESP Positions Awarded to WSU

Number of Allocated positions	Discipline	Value of Scholarship (ZAR)	Internship Amount	Total award per position	Total paid to WSU
5x NESP Phase 1 Positions fully funded by DHET	Zoology	335 000	325 000	660 000	
	Zoology	335 000	325 000	660 000	
	Medical Biology	335 000	325 000	660 000	
	Geography	335 000	325 000	660 000	
	Medical Physics	335 000	325 000	660 000	R3 950 000.00
2x NESP scholarship position partly funded by DHET and the French Embassy in RSA	Statistics		325 000		
	Computer Science		325 000		

The NESP position in Statistics is still vacant. The nominated candidate did not meet the minimum requirements of the NESP bursary. The University looks forward to filling one outstanding position in Statistics in 2023 and envisages a successful candidate enrolling for master's studies in 2024. Table 12 summarises the details of NESP candidates at WSU.

Table 12: Details of NESP candidates at WSU

Student Name	Department	Faculty	Supervisor Name	Institution where enrolled	Year of First Reg	Progress attained to date
Ms AA Tiya	Biological and Environmental Sciences	Natural Sciences	Dr M Soviti	WSU	2021	All reports are back from external examiners, and she will be starting the internship on the 1st of August.
Ms Ls Venn	Medical Microbiology	Health Sciences	Prof T Apalata	WSU	2021	On 27 October 2022, the candidate withdrew from the Programme due to illness.
Ms V Badetwsana	Computer Security	N/A	Prof Stephanie Chatelet	EPITA School of Engineering and Computer Science, France.	2020	Completed her master's degree in France as well as her one-year internship. Currently employed by the University as a Lecturer.
Ms N Mduzulwana	Zoology	Natural Sciences	Dr Nakin	WSU	2023	Submitted for ethical clearance.
Mr B Gumede	Zoology	Natural Sciences	Dr Kuria	WSU	2023	Data analysis
Ms Z Nguqu	Physics	Natural Sciences	Prof F Dejene	WSU	2023	The Scholar is currently in the Data analysis stage.

NESP Phase 2 Call for Applications

DHET recently released the NESP phase 2 Call for applications. The Research Office responded to the call and submitted applications to DHET to host NESP scholars/interns in the following areas of specialisations:

- **Engineering** – No applications were received for this position, prompting the faculty to request a field change

to **Transportation Engineering** and a re-advertisement. DHET has sanctioned the request. This adjustment will be implemented within the DHET Management Information System (MIS).

- **Mathematics** – Mageza Yonela: The candidate has been approved and awarded the scholarship. The application outcome was notified to her, the Head of Department (HOD), and the supervisor. The candidate has signed the contractual agreement. An induction session with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has been scheduled for the candidate, supervisor, and NESP Manager.
- **Accounting** – Sphelele Fortune Ngeleka: The candidate has been approved and awarded the scholarship. The application outcome was notified to her, the Head of Department (HOD), and the supervisor. The candidate has yet to return the signed contractual agreement. An induction session with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has been scheduled for the candidate, supervisor, and NESP Manager.
- **Statistics** – No applications were received for this position, prompting the faculty to request a field change to **Computer Sciences** and a re-advertisement. DHET has sanctioned the request. This adjustment will be implemented within the DHET Management Information System (MIS).

NESP Phase 2 Cohort 2.3_2024

The Department of Higher Education and Training has finalised the call to submit proposals for Phase 2, Cohort 2.3 of the Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP). WSU, through the PG Unit, has submitted applications for the positions to be supported during this Phase, and we are still waiting for the application outcomes from DHET. The announcement for this opportunity has been posted on WSU HELPDESK, including Research Vital Mail and Postgraduate communication channels, inviting relevant faculties to submit applications for these positions. The deadline for applications was May 17th, 2024. We are still waiting for the outcome of the DHET application.

xi.   MASTERS AND DOCTORAL SUPPORT

The Postgraduate unit together with HR

1.17.6.4   FACULTIES AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATES DAY

The Directorates of Research and Innovation and Postgraduate Unit organised the Annual Institutional Research and Innovation Day from 28-29 2024. The event theme was "Innovating for a Sustainable Future: Leveraging Emerging Technologies and Multidisciplinary Research". This event provided a valuable platform for researchers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and postgraduate students to exchange and exhibit their diverse research discoveries, innovative projects, and creative achievements aimed at addressing a wide range of development issues affecting local communities and the broader African continent. The day also provided an opportunity for the University to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding achievements of top-performing academic and postgraduate students who have advanced the frontiers of research and innovation in the past year. This year, the Institutional Research and Postgraduate Day was a two-day event dedicated to promoting research excellence and providing essential resources and networking opportunities for academic and postgraduate students.

This day was dedicated to postgraduate students who made insightful presentations. Presenters were drawn from the Honours, Masters and Doctoral level. A panel of senior researchers served as adjudicators, and each category's top three winners were recognised at the award ceremony.

Figure 5: The pictures show some postgraduate students presenting their research projects.

The details of the postgraduate winners are summarised in the tables below:

Table 13: PhD Category Table 19: Master's Category

NAMES	PERCENTAGE	POSITION
CE Sibangile	76%	1
W Mere	64%	2
N Dyantyi	60%	3

Table 14: Honours Category

NAMES	PERCENTAGE	POSITION
Gumede	91%	1
S. Mdolota	81%	2
A. Selani	80%	3

Table 15: Poster Presentation

NAMES	PERCENTAGE	POSITION
S. Ximbi	73%	1
SJC Masuku	70%	2
ABA Ncinitwa	65%	3

Figure 6. The pictures show Prof Ncanywa, (Acting Director of research and Innovation) and Dr Maketha (guest speaker) posing with postgraduate winners

Day 2 (29 November 2024): Academics

The second day was dedicated to staff presentations based on three categories: Innovative mentor-mentee research, technological mentor-mentee research and community-engaged mentor-mentee research.

Figure 7. Researchers at the Research and Innovation Day

2024 Research and Innovation Awards Ceremony

Fourteen researchers were acknowledged and celebrated for their outstanding achievements in advancing the frontiers of research and innovation in the past year. The tables below summarize the details of the awardees.

A. INSTITUTIONAL-SENIOR CATEGORY

MOST PRODUCTIVE RESEARCHERS - (PUBLICATIONS)
CRITERIA: All researchers who achieved above 4 total accredited publication units in terms of the latest audited WSU research output results

No	Name	Publications	Recognition	Wording
1	Dr Bunmi Isaiah Omodan	12,35	In recognition of commendable productivity	Most Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)
2	Prof Bulelwa Makena	5,17	In recognition of commendable productivity	Most Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)
3	Dr Rahul Shukla	5,00	In recognition of commendable productivity	Most Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)

| 4 | Dr Raymond Tichaona Taziwa | 4,03 | In recognition of commendable productivity | Most Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS) |

PRODUCTIVE RESEARCHERS (PUBLICATIONS)
CRITERIA: All researchers who achieved above 3 total accredited publication units in terms of the latest audited WSU research output results

No	Name	Publications	Recognition	Wording
1	Prof Simon Murote Kang'ethe	3,50	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)
2	Dr Paul Nkemngu Acha-Anyi	3,33	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)
3	Prof Sunday Babalola	3,10	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Researcher (PUBLICATIONS)

ESTABLISHED IN THE UNIVERSITY-SENIOR CATEGORY (PUBLICATIONS AND SUPERVISION)
CRITERIA: Researcher with the highest research output units (i.e. units for accredited publications in terms of the latest audited WSU research output results plus units for research doctoral output achieved during the September graduation of the previous year and May graduation of the award), provided that accredited publication output is above 4 units.

No	Name	Publications	Supervision	Total	Recognition	Wording
1	Dr Bunmi Isaiah Omodan	12,35	1,50	13,85	In recognition of commendable productivity	Established Researcher in the university (PUBLICATIONS AND SUPERVISION)

C: INSTITUTIONAL-CREATIVE OUTPUTS

PRODUCTIVE RESEARCHER - CREATIVE OUTPUTS
CRITERIA: Persons with evidenced success in non-traditional research output in the literary and/or creative arts, including artefacts, works of fiction and poetry.

No	Name	Publications	Recognition	Wording
1	Dr Monwabisi Macabela	3,50	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Researcher - Creative Outputs

D: INSTITUTIONAL: POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

PRODUCTIVE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
CRITERIA: Honorary Professors, Emeritus Professors, Adjunct Professors, Professors Extraordinaire and Research Fellows who have achieved 1.5 research output units or more in the 12 months prior to the award

No	Name	Publications	Recognition	Wording
1	Mr Adedeji Daniel Gbadebo	16,01	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Research Associate
2	Dr Ahemed Oluwatobi Adekunle	14,53	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Research Associate
3	Dr Adewale Isaac Olutumise	3,68	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Research Associate

PRODUCTIVE POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS
CRITERIA: All Postdoctoral Research Fellows who have achieved more than 2 accredited research output units in the 12 months prior to the award

No	Name	Publications	Recognition	Wording
1	Dr Oyewumi Olatoye Agunibiade	3,00	In recognition of commendable productivity	Productive Postdoctoral Research Fellow

E: RECOGNITIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS IN SUPPORT ENTITIES

MOST PRODUCTIVE RESEARCHERS IN SUPPORT ENTITIES (PUBLICATIONS)				
CRITERIA: All researchers in entities who contributed 1.5 units or above to the university's accredited publication output in terms of latest available audited WSU research output results.				
No	Faculty	Publications Score (units)	Recognition	Wording
1	Prof Clever Ndebele	1,68	In recognition of commendable productivity	Most Published Researcher in the University – SUPPORT ENTITIES

Figure 8. The picture shows some of the researchers recognised at the Research and Innovation Day.

1.17.6.5   2024 PROFESSORIAL INAUGURAL LECTURES

In pursuit of academic excellence, the DRI spearheads the organisation of the esteemed Inaugural Lectures. These lectures provide a platform for newly appointed and promoted Full Professors and those yet to be inaugurated to share their expertise with the academic community. Through this platform, professors present the essence of their disciplines and showcase their innovative contributions to advancing knowledge in their respective fields. This year, the DRI successfully organised three inaugural lectures.

Table 14: Professorial Inaugural Lectures

Initials & Surname	Title	Gender	Department	Faculty	Status
T Ncanywa	Prof	F	Business Management Education	Education	Completed 04/04/2024
SD Vasaikar	Prof	M	Lab Medicine & Pathology	Medicine & Health Sciences	Completed 07/08/2024
SS Babalola	Prof	M	Management	Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	31/10/2024

1.17.6.6   WSU WOMEN IN RESEARCH AND ESTABLISHMENT OF EWIRA

In 2024, the DRI introduced a new Women in Research programme funded through the UCDG. At the heart of this initiative is promoting equity by growing the proportion of women actively involved in research and producing accredited research outputs and innovation. To strengthen the potential of this programme, the University established the Empower Women in Research Affiliation (EWIRA), an organization created by women for women, dedicated to promoting female researchers at WSU. The overarching goals of EWIRA are to:
• Increase the number of women in research.
• Boost the university's research outputs, leading to increased DHET subsidy
• Improve postgraduate throughput rates.
• Increase the number of women researchers securing external research funding.

EWIRA was officially launched on 04 December 2024 at the Health Resource Centre, Mthatha by the Vice Chancellor (see pictures below). The EWIRA constitution and strategic plan were developed and awaiting approval.

Figure 9. EWIRA launch

In 2025, the Women in Research will now be implemented under the umbrella of EWIRA. The progress attained by 28 participants nominated by Deans from the seven faculties and mentored under the Women in Research Program is summarised in the table below.

Table 15: Progress attained by Mentees Participating in the Women in Research

Stage of Manuscript Development	Number
Submitted to a Journal	2
Finalising Draft Manuscript	6
Still working on the manuscript	20

1.17.6.7   CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION SUPPORT 2024

The DRI is an important gateway for researchers, postdoctoral research fellows, and postgraduate students seeking funding and logistical support to attend local and international conferences and academic exchanges. It offers vital support to researchers by providing administrative and logistical assistance when travelling for conference and academic exchange.

Participation in international conferences enhances the University's reputation as a cutting-edge research and innovation hub. It also fosters international collaborations and partnerships, which are crucial for the University's global standing. Table 16 below summarizes the number of WSU researchers who have been supported in attending local and international conferences.

Table 16: Number of Researchers supported to attend Conference by DRI in 2024

Conference Category	Physical	Virtual	Total
Local	78	03	81
International	43	02	45

1.17.6.8   ACADEMIC EXCHANGE

This year, the DRI supported researchers for academic exchange using the funding instruments, namely UCDG, personal research publications funds and the Institutional Research Grant. Through this programme, the DRI supported researchers and postgraduate students visiting other institutions to gain access to cutting-edge research facilities and laboratories and acquire new knowledge and skills that elevated the quality of their work. Table 17 summarises the details of academics supported for exchange visits.

Table 17: Approved Academic Exchange 2024

Name	Year	Duration	Funder	Place	Details of research visit
Prof S Enongene	17th March-04th April 2024	21 days	NRF Rating, Personal publications & Council budget	Douala, Cameroon	Academic Collaboration Research Field Work for Data Collection
Dr AO Daramola	07-08th May 2024	2 days	Department of Physical & Chemical Sciences	Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria, South Africa	Biomedical applications of smart nanoparticles or quantum dots as sensors and fluorescence imaging.
Prof N Marongwe	25th April-01st May	6 days	Personal Publications Grant	Washington DC, United States of America	Research & Innovation Community Engagement Exchange 2024
Prof N Jere	9-10th May 2024	2 days	Personal Publications Grant	Jönköping University, Sweden	SASUF-NRF Seed Grants for Collaborative Research - SASUF23040288915
Prof N Jere	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Dr Y Madolo	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Dr OA Oguntona	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Mr P Maseti	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Prof T Apalata	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Prof T Ncanywa	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Mr S Nokutywa	13-17th May 2024	5 days	Council budget	Lund City, Sweden	6th South Africa Sweden University Forum Research (SASUF) and Innovation Week in Sweden
Prof Dejene	17-22 June 2024	6 days	ESKOM Special Project	Nairobi, Kenya	2nd Annual Research and Innovation Week 2024.
Prof Dejene	17-29 Nov 2024	13 Days	ESKOM Special Project	Nairobi, Kenya	MU & Physics Department, SEKU

Table 18: Approved Academic Exchange UCDG 2024.

Name	Year	Duration	Funder	Place	Details of research visit	Comments
Dr G Miya	6-9 June 2024	4 Days	UCDG 2024	Kenya	Research Visit	Research Exchange
Prof Sone Enongene	29 June -31 July 2024	35 Days	UCDG 2024	China	Research Visit	Research Exchange
Mr Sinoyolo Nokutywa	01 Oct to 14 Oct 2024	14 Days	UCDG 2024	Zimbabwe, Harare and Tanzania	Research Visit	Research Exchange
Mr Sinoyolo Nokutywa	13 Oct to 18 Oct 2024	6 days	UCDG 2024	Zimbabwe, Harare and Tanzania	Research Visit	Research Exchange
Prof Tseki	19 Oct to 22 Oct 2024	4 Days	UCDG 2024	Stellenbosch South Africa	Research Visit	Research Exchange

1.17.6.9 OFFICE OF THE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER REPORT

Part of the Responsibilities of the OTT in WSU is to Increase research and innovation (R&I) projects leading towards commercialisation and awareness on the significance of intellectual property rights and their impact on research. Below are the activities that were implemented in the 2024 academic year

Activity	Date	Campus/ Place	No. of Attendees	Purpose of Activity
NIPMO-WIPO DL Courses information sharing session (First Semester)	12 February 2024	Online	30	To provide more information to the WS community on the offerings the WIPO DL platform provides.
Department of Mechanical Engineering IP Awareness Session	10 April 2024	Online	45	To educate WSU community about the importance of IP and how it impacts on their Research initiatives
Post Doctoral Research Fellows Orientation	24 April 2024	Online	50	DRI Information Sharing Webinar
Indigenous Knowledge Bio- Trade Indaba	24-25 April 2024	NMU	8	To facilitate the exchange of indigenous knowledge and ideas, promote sustainable practices, and build and encourage partnerships that contribute to the conservation and responsible usage of indigenous knowledge and bio-trade resources. The focus was on medicinal plants, cannabis, nutraceuticals, African traditional medicine, herbal infusions, and cosmeceuticals
IP Awareness session for First-Time Author DRI project		Online	100	To show the importance of shaping research to include innovative aspects of the work along with the use of IP resources and patent databases when conducting literature reviews and prior art searches

Figure 10. Research and Innovation projects

TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, INTERNATIONALISATION & PARTNERSHIPS
DIRECTORATE OF INTERNATIONALISATION AND PARTNERSHIPS REPORT

1.17.1 TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, INTERNATIONALISATION & PARTNERSHIPS

During 2024, Walter Sisulu University played its transformative role as a catalyst for community development, international collaboration, and strategic partnerships while strengthening connections with diverse communities and driving positive change. The university successfully expanded its engagement activities beyond traditional academic boundaries, creating collaborative relationships that advanced both institutional excellence and societal development.

The university's engagement efforts during the reporting period achieved significant progress in building partnerships with community stakeholders, delivering professional services that addressed industry and societal needs, implementing innovative teaching practices that promoted community participation, conducting research that tackled real-world challenges, and establishing meaningful international collaborations with universities and global institutions.
These achievements positioned the university as an effective transformative force that bridged academic expertise with community needs while establishing its identity as a globally connected African institution.

The following section of the report highlights the university's internationalisation and partnership accomplishments for the reporting period, highlighting how these strategic relationships contributed to institutional growth while fulfilling the university's mandate to serve as an engine for transformation and development in the Eastern Cape and beyond.

1.17.7.1 PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BETTERMENT OF COMMUNITIES

i.   STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY - CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE & SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

During the reporting period, WSU entered into a partnership with Stellenbosch University's Centre for Renewable & Sustainable Energy based on exchanging relevant information, expertise, and viewpoints to realize potential synergies, enhance public dialogue, and strive to implement common positions on renewable and sustainable energy.

ii.   NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY, CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Walter Sisulu University, Nelson Mandela University and CPUT signed an MoU in 2023 to collaborate on a number of academic areas. During the reporting period, the three partners hosted jointly the Inaugural International BIWA (Business Innovation Web Association) Conference at Nelson Mandela University (Gqeberha) between 2- 4 October 2024. The BIWA Conference which focused on Business Innovation and Incubation, is a collaborative event which serves as a pivotal platform for advancing entrepreneurial research cooperation, fostering innovation, and driving economic development. The conference, which was attended by key stakeholders in the entrepreneurship space, was a huge success.

iii.   WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY AND IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY (US)

The university's Centre for Global Change (CGC) successfully completed a strategic institutional visit to Iowa State University (ISU) that resulted in significant progress toward establishing formal international partnerships and collaborative frameworks. The visit, led by the WSU Risk & Vulnerability Science Centre achieved concrete outcomes in exploring academic linkages between the institutions.

The week-long engagement produced tangible results in several key areas, including preliminary agreements for student and staff exchange programmes, joint supervision of postgraduate students, collaborative project development, and visiting lectureships. Both institutions identified specific collaboration opportunities in research initiatives, innovation and entrepreneurship, visiting professorships, and global networking for consortium-based projects. The visit yielded valuable insights into ISU's community engagement model, particularly their curriculum infusion approach delivered through Extension Personnel who possess doctoral qualifications. This knowledge transfer opportunity positioned WSU to benefit from lessons learned in interdisciplinary research that responds to community needs through partnerships with businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

1.17.7.2 PROVISION OF PROFESSIONAL AND DISCIPLINE-BASED SERVICES TO ADDRESS INDUSTRY AND SOCIETAL NEEDS

i.   W&R SETA PROJECT

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&R SETA) successfully awarded the university two strategic projects valued at R1,449,000 that enhanced student and graduate employability through practical experience opportunities. These projects achieved their primary objective of providing WSU students and graduates with valuable exposure and hands-on experience within their respective disciplines and professions.

The initiatives successfully benefited 45 participants, comprising 25 Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) students and 20 graduates who gained essential industry experience in the wholesale and retail sector. The projects equipped participants with practical skills and professional competencies that enhanced their employability prospects while addressing critical skills development needs within the sector.

Both projects were successfully completed within the reporting period, concluding on 31 March 2024.

ii.   LGSETA PROJECT

The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) Work-Integrated Learning project successfully provided valuable experiential learning opportunities to students across five strategic disciplines during 2024. This comprehensive initiative supported students in Public Management, Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Analytical Chemistry through a structured 12-month programme that combined practical work experience with financial support.

The project achieved substantial impact with a total budget allocation of R7,675,000 supporting 125 students through R4,000 monthly stipends. The initiative maintained strong participation rates with 103 active beneficiaries successfully engaged in work-integrated learning placements that enhanced their practical skills and industry readiness. The programme effectively bridged the gap between academic learning and professional practice while providing essential financial support to students in critical skills areas.

iii.   BANKSETA PROJECT

The Banking Sector Education and Training Authority (BANKSETA) awarded the university a Digital Literacy Programme valued at R1,260,000 that successfully enhanced digital skills development and career guidance for Grade 12 learners. The Internationalization and Partnerships Directorate facilitated this strategic funding opportunity, which was implemented through the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment & Information Technology (FEBEIT) and coordinated by the IT department.

The programme achieved significant community impact by reaching 80 Grade 12 learners across two schools: Enoch Sontonga Senior Secondary School in Ndevana, East London, and KT Mchasa Senior Secondary School in Mhlakulo, Tsolo. Each participating school benefited from comprehensive training for 40 learners who received both digital skills development and career guidance preparation for employment opportunities.
The project successfully equipped participants with essential learning devices, including laptops and tablets, while providing practical digital literacy training that enhanced their readiness for higher education and employment in the digital economy.

During the reporting period, WSU visited Enoch Sontonga SSS to administer learner contracts.

Project Manager: Dr J Lukose, during the signing of the learner contracts.

Deputy Principal addressing the learners and parents. Some learners are less than 18 years old; therefore their parents or guardians must sign the Contact on their behalf.

iv.   CBE AND OTP (EC) PROJECT

The university successfully established a strategic partnership with the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that created significant opportunities for student development and industry collaboration. This partnership achieved concrete outcomes during the reporting period, including the establishment of frameworks for professional development activities and student placement opportunities.

The collaboration resulted in the development of comprehensive plans for a joint conference on the built environment scheduled for August 2025, with WSU and CBE executives successfully completing preliminary planning sessions. Additionally, the partnership facilitated the organization of industry workshops involving external built environment professionals to address pertinent industry matters and enhance professional discourse.

WSU delegation led by the VC, Prof R Songca and the CBE delegation led by CEO, Dr M Myeza during the WSU/CBE MoU signing ceremony at WSU (Buffalo City Campus) in January 2024.

A significant achievement of this partnership was the successful engagement with the Office of the Premier (Eastern Cape) regarding Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) student placements. This strategic intervention resulted in a landmark agreement ensuring that all Eastern Cape Government projects will now incorporate WSU WIL students, providing extensive practical experience opportunities for students while contributing to provincial development initiatives.

v. CSIR IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASCE AND WSU

The Council for Scientific, Industrial Research (CSIR), in partnership with the Southern African Society for Co-operative Education (SASCE) and WSU, successfully implemented a strategic student placement programme that enhanced experiential learning opportunities for engineering students. This tri-partite collaboration leveraged SASCE's expertise in integrating academic learning with quality in-service training across the African continent.

During the reporting period, the partnership achieved significant success by placing 17 engineering students from civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering disciplines in CSIR facilities. These strategic placements provided students with valuable exposure to cutting-edge scientific and industrial research environments while contributing to their professional development and technical competency building.

vi. DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & AGRARIAN REFORM

The Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) Eastern Cape successfully renewed its strategic partnership with Walter Sisulu University, extending collaboration until 20 March 2029. This partnership renewal demonstrates sustained institutional commitment to addressing rural development challenges through academic-government collaboration and research-informed policy development.

During the reporting period, DRDAR actively participated in a comprehensive two-day stakeholder workshop that brought together diverse cannabis industry participants, including DRDAR officials, South African Police representatives, cannabis farmers, community leaders, consumers, and retailers. The workshop successfully achieved its objective of mapping the cannabis value chain from community perspectives while establishing linkages between community insights and ongoing chemical and biological research studies.

vii. WSU-MERSETA PROJECT CLOSE-OUT MEETING

Walter Sisulu University successfully concluded its comprehensive three-year partnership with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) through a formal close-out meeting that evaluated the substantial impact of this R39 million investment. The partnership, spanning 2020-2023, encompassed 22 strategic projects that significantly enhanced institutional capacity across multiple development areas.

The merSETA delegation, led by Dr. Helen Brown, expressed satisfaction with the project implementation and acknowledged the substantial impact achieved in three critical areas: skills and staff development, academic

programme development, and research development. This positive evaluation reflects the university's effective project management and successful delivery of outcomes aligned with sector education and training priorities.

The WSU delegation, led by the Chief Financial Officer, acknowledged the transformative impact of merSETA's sustained investment in the university's development. The close-out meeting recognised the broader partnership history, including the previous 2017-2019 WSU-merSETA project worth R26 million and the 2022-2023 merSETA funding of R17 million for students' historical debt relief.

During the reporting period, the 2020/23 WSU-merSETA Closeout meeting was held at the Potsdam Site (Buffalo City Campus). The WSU delegation was led by the CFO (Mr Morgan Nhiwatiwa), and the merSETA delegation was led Dr. Helen Brown.

In the close-out meeting, it was noted that new project proposals worth more than R60 million have been submitted to merSETA for funding consideration over the next three years, indicating continued partnership expansion and institutional growth opportunities.

viii.   WSU AND NEMISA PARTNERSHIP

During the reporting period, and through this partnership WSU hosted a three-day long NEMISA 2024 Digital Skills Summit which took place in East London from 21 to 23 February 2024. The summit, spearheaded by NEMISA in collaboration with WSU and UNISA was aimed at establishing an innovative and collaborative research network for government, academia, industry, education and civil society. The 2024 summit was attended by more than 250 delegates with representatives from universities in South Africa, TVETs, Government and Industry. Other leaders of the industry that graced the summit included: Deputy Director-General: Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, Mr. Mlindi Mashologu; Mr. Phillip Thigo, representative of the United Nations Advisory Board on Artificial Intelligence; NEMISA Board Chairperson Ms Molebogeng Leshabane. The WSU's team was ably led by Prof Elphina Cishe, Acting DVC – AAR.

Delegates at the three-day NEMISA 2024 Digital Skills Summit which took place in East London from 21 to 23 February 2024.

ix.   ENGAGEMENTS WITH MERCEDES BENZ SOUTH AFRICA (MBSA)

The university successfully engaged with Mercedes Benz South Africa (MBSA) to explore strategic partnership opportunities that could enhance institutional capacity and student development. The WSU delegation, led by the Chief Financial Officer and comprising the Director of Internationalization and Partnerships and the former Director of Institutional Advancement, conducted productive discussions with the MBSA team to identify areas of mutual collaboration.

The engagement sessions explored several potential partnership areas that align with both organizations' strategic objectives. Key opportunities identified included staff training programmes within MBSA facilities, development of cooperative and collaborative activities serving common interests, and establishment of education, research and development initiatives benefiting both organizations.

Specific collaboration areas discussed encompassed funding support for engineering laboratories, equipment donations including robotics technology, and Corporate Social Investment (CSI) funding for sports facilities and student bursaries. The MBSA Maintenance Division indicated readiness to donate robotics equipment, demonstrating concrete commitment to supporting the university's engineering programmes.

x.   ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE CHINESE DELEGATION

Walter Sisulu University participated in strategic engagement sessions with a Chinese delegation led by the Executive President of the China Electricity Council and CEOs of supporting companies. The engagement, held at the Sandton Radisson Blue Hotel on 9 May 2024, was attended by the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology and the Director of Internationalization and Partnerships.

The engagement successfully achieved its objectives of sharing insights, expertise, and best practices while exploring collaboration and partnership opportunities in power generation and distribution fields. Discussions focused on establishing and enhancing partnerships between South African universities and Chinese institutions, with particular emphasis on educational advancement opportunities and mutual benefits.

The sessions explored potential partnership benefits including faculty and student exchange programmes, joint research initiatives, and enhanced access to global resources and expertise. These discussions positioned the university to benefit from international collaboration in critical engineering disciplines while expanding its global research and educational networks.

The engagement yielded concrete outcomes, with agreements reached for a sponsored delegation visit to China by selected TVET institutions and universities. This visit, tentatively scheduled for July 2025, will facilitate direct engagement with Chinese counterparts to develop joint programmes and projects including research collaboration and exchange programmes.

Summary of partnerships concluded during the reporting period

#	Strategic Partner	Focus of the MoU
01	Council for the Built Environment	Academics, students and industry leaders to develop solutions to current challenges in the South African Built Environment. skills development, job creation and corporate social responsibility
02	Eastern Cape Department of Transport (ECDOT)	Capacity development in research, planning, policy and evaluations
03	Department of Rural Development and Agrarian (DRDAR)	Joint research extension, professional and rural development activities
04	BANKSETA	Project funding targeting Grade 12 learners
05	Stellenbosch University	Capacity development, Collaborative projects joint venture
06	AgriSETA	Collaboration on skills development, placement of HEI learners to workplaces, research and skills planning, Supporting lecturers' development
07	Department of Science and Innovation	Funding for a research project (Chemistry)
08	United Nations OPS Grant Management Services	Funding for a community engagement projects (Co-ops)

09	Copperbelt University, Zambia	Joint academic and scientific activities, exchange of research and teaching, exchange of students
10	University of Limpopo (UL), University of Fort Hare (UFH), Walter Sisulu University (WSU), Sol Plaatjie University (SPU), University of Free State (UFS)	Joint research, community engagement and Joint academic activities
11	University of Free State	Mathematics, Science Teaching and Learning
12	CHIETA	Funding for a research project in Health Sciences
13	UCT, WSU, SAICA	Collaboration in teaching and learning (Accounting)
14	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China	Research and international study opportunities for students, scholars and professionals
15	Bowen University, Nigeria	Research collaboration, staff and student exchange; other academic collaborative activities
16	The National School of Government	To assist the NSG in the comprehensive delivery of the Emerging management development Programme.
17	Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania	Exchange of information and shared knowledge; Students and scholars/ staff exchange; Collaborative Research.
18	Benue State University (BSU), Nigeria	Staff and student exchanges; Academic conferences; Research Collaboration; Joint Consortium; Technical support; and Postdoctoral fellowship.

1.17.7.3   INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS, AND OTHER GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS

i.   AFRICAN PARTNERSHIPS UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCE PROJECT (APUA)

The university as an active member of the African Partnerships Universities Alliance (APUA), successfully implemented several strategic activities during the reporting period that contributed to advancing continental higher education collaboration and development objectives.

Through active involvement in APUA programming, WSU contributed to advancing the alliance's mission of fostering meaningful partnerships among African universities while benefiting from shared resources, expertise, and collaborative platforms.

The following activities undertaken as part of the APUA project highlight the university's role in continental higher education development while showcasing the tangible benefits of inter-African university collaboration in advancing teaching, research, and community engagement across the continent.

a. Capacity building for Africa-centred internationalisation of higher education in South Africa 2023-2025
During the reporting period, WSU together with 10 other SA universities secured funding to roll-out the above-mentioned project.

Through this project, a consortium of South African universities will work collaboratively towards Africa-centred internationalisation. The project will build capacity of staff at the institutions for critical, pluralistic, decolonial and Africa-centred internationalisation that is relevant for post-apartheid South Africa and that directly contributes to transformation and decolonisation of higher education. Staff development is a critical element of institutional and curriculum transformation, as well as the transformation of institutional cultures. The project will support staff to develop and expand their international academic and professional links on the African continent and to strategically and collaboratively work with their counterparts in other African institutions on developing new knowledge and decolonising and Africanising the curriculum. This will be done through strategic visits to numerous African countries by university leaders, academics, researchers and internationalisation practitioners from participating institutions.

The consortium has been strategically selected and includes different types of universities, from research intensive universities, universities of technology, comprehensive universities and rural universities in South Africa.

The consortium includes the following:

- Durban University of Technology
- University of the Western Cape
- University of Limpopo
- University of Johannesburg
- University of Zululand
- Rhodes University
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Walter Sisulu University
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- University of KwaZulu-Natal

b. Hosting of the Webinar on Empowering South African Institutions for Cross Border Qualifications

As part of the APUA initiatives on Africa-Centred Internationalization, WSU successfully hosted a webinar on Cross-Border Qualifications. The webinar, which was held on 4 September 2024 and attended by more than 120 people, was a huge success. The following is a flyer that was used to invite people to attend the webinar.

c. Facilitation of the APAU Workshop on the ANIE Conference Workshop in Ghana on the 9-11 October 2024

As one of its key strategic activities in 2024, APUA successfully facilitated a workshop on Africa-centred partnerships during the ANIE pre-conference workshop in Ghana on 09-11 October 2024. The workshop was attended by the following countries: Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Guinea and the USA.

Participants were grouped and asked to examine real-world examples from different partner universities, focusing on various models, including thematic partnerships, mobility programmes, COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning), and research initiatives such as ARUA.
The exercise yielded rich feedback from seven distinct groups, each approaching the challenge from unique perspectives while building a comprehensive framework for future collaboration.

Moving Forward We Captured: A Progressive Framework for African Higher Education Partnerships

The rich dialogue and diverse perspectives shared during the contextualisation exercise illuminate a critical pathway forward for addressing the persistent challenge of limited intra-African collaboration in higher education. Rather than simply identifying barriers, the collective insights from participating groups paint a picture of how Africa-centred internationalisation can be reimagined.

The findings suggest that successful continental partnerships flourish when built upon three interconnected pillars:

Foundation Building

At its core, effective partnership development requires a deep understanding of what works and why. The exercise reveals that successful collaborations are not merely transactional arrangements, but transformative relationships grounded in:

• Shared philosophical frameworks and aligned institutional identities
• Clear power dynamics recognition and management
• Sustainable operational models that survive beyond individual champions
• Measurable impact frameworks that demonstrate value creation

Breaking Barriers

Understanding what undermines partnership success is equally crucial. Key inhibitors identified include:

• Over-reliance on individual academic relationships
• Resource constraints and funding dependencies
• Qualification barriers and curriculum misalignment
• Limited institutional capacity for sustained engagement

This knowledge positions Africa-centred internationalisation initiatives to proactively address these challenges through intentional programme design and implementation.

Catalysing Change

Moving forward, the focus should shift toward:

• Building partnerships that directly address continental challenges while fostering academic excellence
• Leveraging technology and innovative approaches to overcome resource constraints
• Developing sustainable funding models and institutional support structures
• Creating platforms for knowledge exchange and capacity building that benefit all partners equally

This progressive framework suggests that successful intra-African collaboration requires more than good intentions - it demands intentional design, sustained commitment, and a systematic approach to partnership development. The task ahead for Africa-centred internationalisation initiatives is to translate these insights into actionable strategies that can create lasting, meaningful impact across the continent's higher education landscape.

APU Delegates at the ANIE Conference in Ghana

1.17.7.4 SOUTH AFRICA-SWEDEN UNIVERSITIES FORUM (SASUF)

Walter Sisulu University successfully participated in the South Africa-Sweden Universities Forum (SASUF), a strategic collaboration between 26 South African universities and 14 Swedish universities with research activities funded by STINT (Sweden) and the National Research Foundation (South Africa). The university's engagement in this international partnership contributed to advancing bilateral research collaboration and academic exchange between the two countries.

During 2024, WSU participated in the culminating activities of the current three-year funding cycle (2021-2024), attending the Research and Innovation Week held in Sweden from 13-17 May 2024. This significant event brought together researchers, teachers, students, and university management representatives from all 40 SASUF partner universities to celebrate achievements and strengthen collaborative networks.

The university's delegation participated in both components of the programme: satellite events across Sweden and the Sustainability Forum hosted by three Swedish SASUF partner universities - Malmö University, Lund University, and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences at Alnarp Campus. This participation provided valuable exposure to diverse academic environments and competencies while facilitating networking opportunities with leading Swedish institutions.

Through active participation in SASUF activities, WSU strengthened its international research collaboration capacity while contributing to the broader objectives of South Africa-Sweden academic cooperation.

SASUF's 6 sub-themes

Theme 1: Climate change, natural resources and sustainability
Theme 2: Education for a sustainable society
Theme 3: Social transformation through change: Knowledge and social development strategies
Theme 4: Health - Understanding the burden of disease in Sweden and South Africa
Theme 5: Sustainable urbanisation, travel and tourism in the 21st Century
Theme 6: Digital technologies, big data and cybersecurity

Delegates at the 2024 SASUF Research and Innovation Week – Malmo (Sweden)

Summary - SASUF Research & Innovation Week 2024

SASUF Research & Innovation Week 2024	
Satellite events 13 – 14 May 2024	Sustainability Forum 15 – 17 May 2024
601 Registered Participants	445 Attendees
37 Satellite Events	45 Workshops
15 Cities	

The table below lists 2023/24 approved SASUF funded collaborative projects. The list also include the projects topics, Swedish Universities and academics that the WSU's academics are collaborating with.

Name of proposal	Name of PI in Sweden	University of PI in Sweden	Name of PI in South Africa	University of PI in South Africa	Name of Co-applicant in Sweden	University of Co-applicant in Sweden	Name of Co-applicant in South Africa	University of Co-applicant in South Africa	further co-applicants here (include name, email and university for each co-	The SASUF-NRF Seed Grant template proposal form	Additional: Co-applicant in Sweden	Additional: University of the Co-applicant in Sweden	Additional Co-applicant in South Africa	Additional: University of the Co-applicant in South Africa
education across disciplines for Agenda 2030: Towards a pedagogical framework to	Karin Steen	Lund University	Liezel Frick	Stellenbosch University	Martin Stigmar	Malmö University	Yolisa Madolo	Walter Sisulu University	Eva Brodin, eva.br	https://doit.medfar	Eva Brodin, eva.brodin@ahu.lu.se	Lund University	Sinoyolo Nokutywa, snokutywa@wsu.ac.za	Walter Sisulu University
User Experience for Open Digital Platforms as Tools for Research Collaboration	Bruce Ferwerda	Jönköping University	Judy van Biljon	University of South Africa	Alan Said	University of Gothenburg	Nobert Jere	Walter Sisulu University	Jabulisiwe Mabila (https://doit.medfarm.uu.se/bin/kurt3/storage/questionnaire				Jabulisiwe Mabila, Mabiljp@unisa.ac.za	University of South Africa
research network towards rural resilience through health of smallholder farming communities and	Heather Mackay	Lund University	Helen McIlleron	University of Cape Town	Klara Fischer	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Teke Apalata	Walter Sisulu University	University of Lund, magnus.jirstrom@keg.lu.se Prof. Johan Höglund, Swedish University of	https://doit.medfarm	Magnus Jirström, magnus.jirstrom@keg.lu.se, Johan Höglund, johan.hoglund@sl	Lund University, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	rw1@sun.ac.za, Michele Miller, miller@sun.ac.za, Eltion Chivandi, elton.chivandi@w its.ac.za, Michael Schomaker,	Town, Stellenbosch University, University of Witwatersrand, University of Fort Hare,
Sustainable Community Development and Real Estate of Local Communities: Knowledge transfer from Röstånga,	Magnus Andersson	Malmö University	Omokolade Akinsomi	University of the Witwatersrand	Andreas Lundin	Karolinska institute	Olusegun Oguntona	Walter Sisulu University						

WSU delegation, led by the VC, that participated in the SASUF Sustainability Forum in Malmo (Sweden) in May 2024 as mentioned in section above

During the research and innovation week in May 2024, the Vice-Chancellors / management representatives discussed the Working Paper for SASUF 2025-2030, a proposal for a continuation phase of SASUF. In relation to this, a working group was created to capture the comments and suggestions from the discussions, to work further on the proposal for SASUF's continuation. This working group consists of four universities from each country, where both coordinators and management representatives are represented. All institutions were given the opportunity to register their interest and share their desire to participate in the working group. The universities that drive the work in the working group are as follows:

- University of Venda
- Durban University of Technology
- University of Johannesburg
- University of the Western Cape
- Lund University
- Stockholm University

- Malmö University
- Uppsala University

Together, these universities have the responsibility to discuss and formulate a proposal for a plan for SASUF's continuation, to then present to all partner universities within SASUF and then welcome comments, thoughts, wishes and support for the working group's further work.

On **November 14 at 16:00-17:30 (South African time**, all the SASUF partners, including management representatives, have invited to a meeting, where the working group will present updates from their work and a proposal for a plan for SASUF 2025-2030.

It is important to mention that, during the reporting period, a follow-up meeting of the SASUF coordinators was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel (OR Tambo) on Monday, 19 August 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to reflect on the 2024 Research and Innovation Week that was held in May 2024 in Sweden and remind the SASUF coordinators of the follow-up that will be held in November, as mentioned above.

1.17.7.5   WSU JOINING THE SOUTHERN AFRICA – NORDIC CENTRE (SANORD)

The Internationalization and Partnerships Directorate (in line with Academic strategy) engaged with the SANORD team (based at UWC) to negotiate joining SANORD. WSU's membership has been welcomed. Processes are underway to finalize the paperwork. SANORD is a network that brings together Nordic and Southern African institutions of higher education for research, dialogue and joint endeavours, based on shared fundamental values of democracy, social equity and academic engagement.

During the reporting period, WSU participated in SANORD meeting which was held at Malmo (Sweden) during the SASUF Sustainability Forum mentioned above

The SANORD network provides WSU with valuable opportunities for student mobility and staff exchanges that enhance research and educational collaboration while addressing contemporary local and global challenges of innovation and development. The network's focus on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through joint research, education, and collaborative activities aligns with the university's commitment to addressing societal challenges through academic engagement.

SANORD's foundation on academic quality, academic freedom, and fundamental values of democracy, human rights, equity, and diversity resonates with WSU's institutional values and strategic objectives. This alignment positions the university to contribute meaningfully to network activities while benefiting from collaborative opportunities that advance both academic excellence and social impact.
The university participated in a follow-up SANORD meeting held at the Radisson Blue Hotel on 19 August 2024, which brought together current and prospective network members. The meeting successfully provided updates on the planned SANORD Conference scheduled for Cape Town from 4-6 December 2024, with all members encouraged to participate in this significant academic gathering.

1.17.7.6   WSU/MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ (MUG) PARTNERSHIP

Walter Sisulu University successfully secured European Union funding through the Erasmus+ Programme in partnership with the Medical University of Graz (MUG), Austria, establishing a comprehensive 2024-2026 collaboration framework that facilitates bilateral staff and student mobility.

In 2024, WSU successfully hosted eight medical students from MUG for clinical rotations, providing valuable international exposure while enhancing the clinical training environment for both visiting and local students. This student exchange component demonstrates the practical implementation of the partnership while contributing to the internationalization of medical education at WSU.

The partnership has established a foundation for expanded collaboration, with plans developed for a delegation led by the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences to visit the Medical University of Graz in October 2025. This reciprocal engagement will explore additional areas of collaboration while strengthening the institutional relationship between the two medical schools.

1.17.7.7   REPORT ON ICEF STUDY IN AFRICA PAVILION IN KIGALI, RWANDA

The Internationalisation and Partnerships Directorate participated in the ICEF Study in Africa Pavillion in Kigali, Rwanda. The ICEF Study in Africa Pavilion held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 02 July-04 July 2024 brought together a diverse array of stakeholders from the education sector to promote African higher education on a global scale. This report provides an overview of the event, focusing on its objectives, participants, activities, and outcomes.

a) Objectives
Promotion of African Education: The primary objective was to showcase the quality, diversity, and opportunities available in African higher education institutions to international students, educators, and recruitment agents.
Facilitate Networking and Partnerships: Create a platform for African universities to network with international counterparts, establish partnerships for academic collaboration, and enhance student mobility.

b) Participants
African Institutions: Universities and colleges from across Africa, representing a wide range of disciplines and academic programmes.
International Participants: Educational agents, recruiters, and representatives from universities worldwide interested in exploring partnerships with African institutions.

c) Activities
• Exhibition: Booths and displays showcasing academic programmes, research initiatives, and cultural aspects of participating African institutions.

• Workshops and Seminars: Sessions covering topics such as trends in African education, best practices in student recruitment, and strategies for internationalization.
• Networking Events: Opportunities for one-on-one meetings, informal networking, and structured matchmaking sessions aimed at fostering collaborations.

d) Outcomes
- **Increased Awareness**: Raised awareness about the quality and potential of African higher education among international participants.
- **Partnerships Established**: Several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and partnership agreements were initiated between African universities and international counterparts, paving the way for joint research projects, student exchanges, and faculty collaborations.
- **Student Recruitment**: Improved recruitment prospects for African universities seeking to attract international students through enhanced visibility and direct engagement with recruitment agents.

e) Conclusion
The ICEF Study in Africa Pavilion in Kigali successfully showcased African higher education, facilitated partnerships, and enhanced international collaboration in education.

1.17.7.8   FACULTY ENGAGEMENTS ON INTERNATIONALIZATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Internationalization and Partnerships Directorate successfully engaged all seven faculties on internationalization and partnership matters through structured presentations during April and May Faculty Board meetings. This comprehensive engagement strategy ensured institutional-wide participation in internationalization planning while facilitating meaningful dialogue between the directorate and academic faculties.

The presentations and engagements received positive reception from faculties, with productive discussions leading to the establishment of a collaborative approach for implementing internationalization and partnership activities. These engagements demonstrated effective institutional communication and faculty buy-in for internationalization initiatives.

Strategic Outcomes and Implementation Plan
The faculty engagements resulted in the development of a comprehensive implementation framework encompassing several key initiatives: university-wide conversations on internationalization, internationalization strategy review, development of faculty-specific internationalization and partnership strategies through faculty committees, academic strategy revision and implementation, draft internationalization policy review, and establishment of continuous engagement mechanisms.

Partnership Review Initiative
During the reporting period, the directorate initiated a systematic partnership evaluation process by distributing WSU's comprehensive partnerships list to all faculties. The Executive Deans were tasked with reviewing existing Memoranda of Understanding, Memoranda of Agreement, and partnerships to assess their effectiveness and provide feedback on necessary updates or revisions. This strategic review process aimed to enhance international collaboration quality, expand global reach, and enrich academic experiences for students and faculty members.

1.17.7.9   INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS APPLICATIONS - 2025

a) Overview of 2025 International Students Application Process
Applications for the 2025 academic year opened on 1st June 2024 and closed on 30 September 2024. 1321 online applications from international students were received.

b) Registration
The international student registration process experienced delays primarily due to study visa processing timeframes, with many students awaiting visa approvals before completing registration procedures. The university

accommodated these circumstances by implementing space reservation mechanisms for students pending visa processing, demonstrating institutional flexibility in supporting international student needs.

The International Students team maintained proactive communication strategies, conducting regular follow-up calls to confirm student intentions and provide ongoing updates about registration processes. This approach ensured continuous engagement with prospective students while managing enrollment planning despite visa processing uncertainties.

c) Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The registration process for refugee and asylum-seeker students presented ongoing challenges that require specialized institutional attention. Registration fees continued to constitute a significant barrier to successful enrollment for this vulnerable student population, creating accessibility concerns that impact institutional diversity and inclusion objectives.

These financial challenges highlight the need for targeted support mechanisms and alternative funding solutions to facilitate access for refugee and asylum-seeker students. The university recognises the importance of addressing these barriers to ensure equitable access to higher education opportunities for all qualifying students regardless of their legal status or financial circumstances.

See below for statistics

FACULTY_SCHOOL_NAME	QUALIFICATION_NAME	Total
Economics and Fin Sciences	Bachelor of Accounting	7
	Bachelor of Accounting Science	12
	Bachelor of Commerce	21
	Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Economic	2
	Bachelor of Commerce Hons in Bus. Mgnt	3
	Bachelor of Commerce in Business Managem	17
	Bachelor of Commerce in Economics	14
	Dip in Accountancy	10
	Dip in Financial Information Systems	4
	Dip in Internal Auditing	4
	Master of Commerce	8
Economics and Fin Sciences Total		**102**
Education	B.Ed (Foundation Phase Teaching)	36
	B.Ed in SP & FET (Economic & Man Scienc)	13
	B.Ed in SP & FET (Humanities)	15
	B.Ed in SP & FET (Languages)	32
	B.Ed in SP & FET (Maths, Science & Tech)	12
	B.Ed in SP & FET Teach (Creat Arts Eng)	19
	B.Ed in SP & FET Teach (Creat Arts Hist)	3
	B.Ed in SP & FET Teach (Tech Voc Edu)	5
	B.Ed in SP & FET(Consumer & Man Science)	8
	Bachelor of Education Honours	1
	Dip in Adult & Comm Education & Training	6
	Doctor of Education	3
	Master of Education	4
	PG Dip in Inclusive Education	4
	PGCE in SP and FET (Humanities)	3

	PGCE in SP and FET (Languages)	3
	PGCE in SP and FET (Sciences)	5
Education Total		**172**
Engineering; Built Env and IT	Adv Dip in Civil Engineering	5
	Adv Dip in Electrical Engineering	1
	Adv Dip in ICT in Applications Developme	2
	Adv Dip in ICT in Communication Networks	1
	Adv Dip in Mechanical Engineering	1
	Dip in Civil Engineering (ECP)	3
	Dip in ICT in Applications Development	20
	Dip in ICT in Business Analysis	10
	Dip in ICT in Communication Networks	16
	Dip in ICT in Support Services	9
	Diploma in Building Technology	9
	Diploma in Civil Engineering	32
	Diploma in Electrical Engineering	17
	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	21
Engineering; Built Env and IT Total		**147**
Law; Humanities and Social Sci	B Soc Sci (Anthropology)	1
	B Soc Sci (Criminology)	10
	B Soc Sci (Philosophy)	2
	B Soc Sci (Political Studies)	7
	B Soc Sci (Psychology)	5
	B Soc Sci (Sociology)	4
	Bachelor of Arts	17
	Bachelor of Laws	42
	Bachelor of Psychology	14
	Bachelor of Social Sciences Honours	3
	Bachelor of Social Work	29
	Diploma in Fashion	4
	Diploma in Fine Art	12
	Master of Arts	2
	Master of Laws	3
	Master of Social Work	2
	NDP - LAW	1
Law; Humanities and Social Sci Total		**158**
Medicine and Health Sciences	Bachelor of Medical Sciences	61
	Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surge	96
	Bachelor of Medicine in Clinical Practic	48
	Bachelor of Nursing	75
	BHSc Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics	28
	BMed Sc Hons in Medical Microbiology	1
	BSc Hons in Physiological Sciences	1

	M Med in Diagnostic Radiology	3
	M Med in Obstetrics and Gynaecology	1
	M Med in Orthopaedic Surgery	1
	M Med in Paediatrics and Child Health	1
	M Med in Radiation Oncology	1
	M Med in Surgery	1
	Master of Public Health	2
	Master of Science in Health Promotion	1
	Master of Science in Medical Microbiolog	2
	NDP - MED	1
	PG Dip in Health Promotion	1
Medicine and Health Sciences **Total**		**325**
Mngt and Public Admin Sciences	Adv Dip in Business Administration	2
	Adv Dip in Human Resources Management	2
	Adv Dip in Management	2
	Adv Dip in Marketing	1
	Adv Dip in Public Management	1
	Adv Dip in Public Relations Management	2
	Adv Dip in Tourism Management	2
	Bachelor of Administration	23
	Bachelor of Administration Honours	2
	Dip in Administrative Management	8
	Dip in Hospitality Management	13
	Dip in Human Resources Management	37
	Dip in Local Government Finance	13
	Dip in Management	12
	Dip in Marketing Management	13
	Dip in Office Management & Tech.	13
	Dip in Policing	30
	Dip in Public Management	46
	Dip in Public Relations Management	26
	Dip in Small Business Management	5
	Dip in Sport Management	17
	Dip in Tourism Management	10
	Diploma in Journalism	22
	Higher Cert in Versatile Broadcasting	9
	Master of Public Administration	7
Mngt and Public Admin Sciences **Total**		**318**
Natural Sciences	Adv Dip in Chemistry	1
	BSc Hons in Geography	2
	BSc in Applied Mathematics	4
	BSc in Applied Statistical Sciences	5
	BSc in Biological Sciences	18

	BSc in Chemistry		7
	BSc in Computer Science		26
	BSc in Environmental Studies		8
	BSc in Mathematics		3
	BSc in Pest Management		1
	BSc in Physics		4
	Dip in Analytical Chemistry		10
	Dip in Consumer Sci in Food & Nutrition		5
	Diploma in Pest Management		2
	Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Sciences		1
	Master of Science in Mathematics		1
	Master of Science in Physics		1
Natural Sciences Total			**99**
Grand Total			1321

POST_GRADUATE	Total
Post Graduate	65
Under Graduate	1256
Grand Total	**1321**
CAMPUS_NAME	Total
Buffalo City Campus	215
Butterworth Campus	241
Mthatha Campus	770
Queenstown Campus	95
Grand Total	**1321**
COUNTRY_NAME	Total
AFGHANISTAN	50
ALBANIA	33
ALGERIA	46
ANDORA	23
ANGOLA	135
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	3
ARGENTINA	5
AUSTRALIA	5
BANGLADESH	6
BELGIUM	1
BOTSWANA	53
BURUNDI	9
CAMEROON	11
CANADA	1
CAPE VERDE	3
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	12

CHINA	1
CONGO	3
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	48
ETHIOPIA	5
GERMANY	3
GHANA	20
INDIA	4
KUWAIT	3
LESOTHO	183
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA	1
MALAWI	11
MOZAMBIQUE	26
NAMIBIA	10
NIGERIA	45
PAKISTAN	3
RWANDA	2
SAMOA	3
SOMALIA	2
SPAIN	3
SUDAN	3
SWAZILAND	61
TAIWAN	3
TRANSKEI	1
UGANDA	8
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	6
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	2
ZAMBIA	6
ZIMBABWE	459
Grand Total	**1321**

d) Other Internationalization Administrative Assistance

The Internationalization and Partnerships Directorate successfully facilitated the Student Representative Council (SRC) benchmarking exercise at the University of Lesotho. This strategic initiative promoted outbound student leadership mobility while enabling SRC members to engage with regional higher education governance practices and student leadership models.

The benchmarking exercise achieved significant success in providing WSU student leaders with valuable exposure to international student governance systems and best practices. Through this regional engagement, SRC members gained insights into comparative student leadership approaches while building networks with counterparts in neighbouring countries.

e) Support provided to the Postdoctoral Fellows

The Internationalization and Partnerships Directorate provided comprehensive administrative support to postdoctoral fellows, ensuring efficient processing of immigration requirements for the international fellows and institutional integration. This support included strategic engagement with the Department of Home Affairs to facilitate timely visa processing for international postdoctoral researchers.

DIRECTORATE OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES REPORT
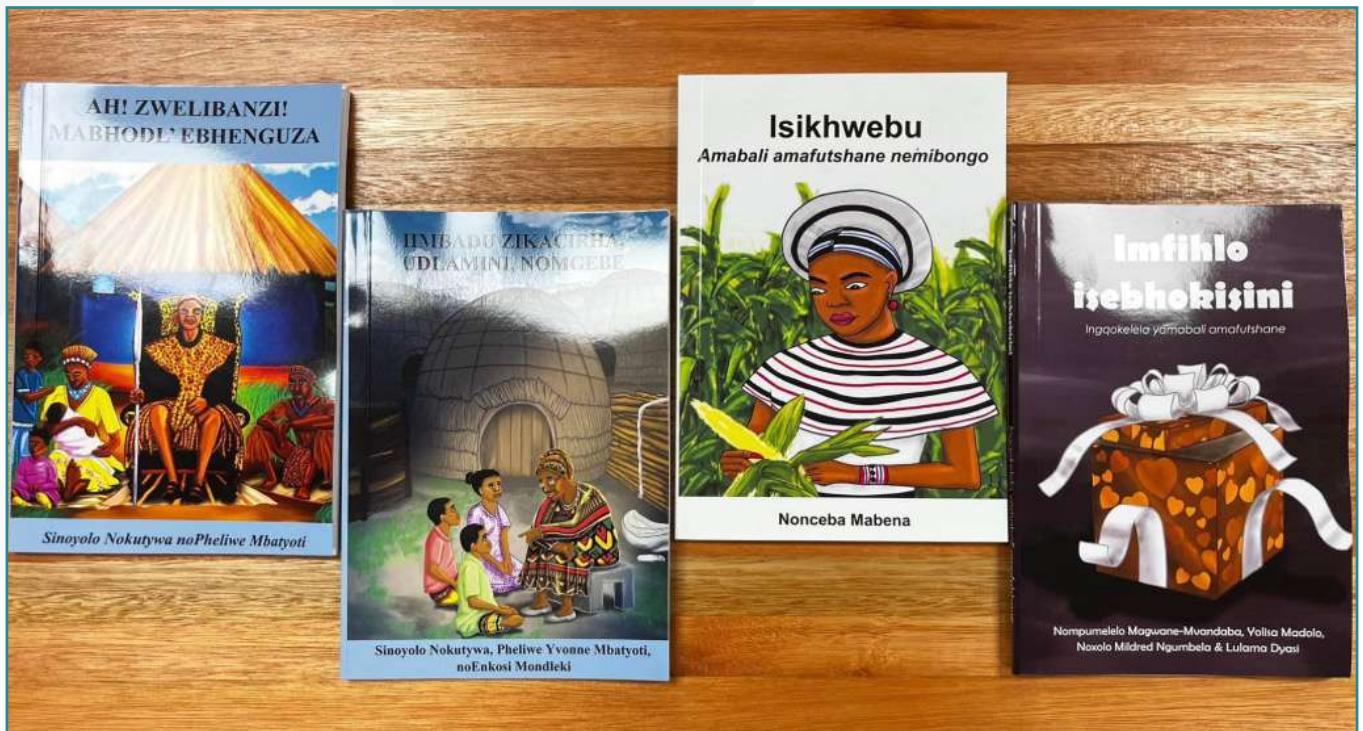
The Library and Information Services (LIS) plays a critical role in supporting the university's academic excellence through comprehensive information resources, research support, and capacity building initiatives that enhance teaching, learning, and research activities across all faculties. During 2024, LIS implemented strategic interventions designed to strengthen its foundational role in the academic project while expanding its capacity to serve as an integral component of student success and scholarly productivity.

These interventions focused on enhancing service delivery capabilities, expanding access to information resources, and building the capacity of students, academics, and library staff to effectively utilize library services as essential tools for academic achievement and research excellence. The library's support to the academic project encompasses both infrastructure development and human capacity building that directly contributes to the university's teaching and learning outcomes.

1.17.8 SUPPORTING IMPACTFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING

In support of the University's strategic goal number one, *Quality, Impactful Teaching and Learning*, this section responds to the LIS strategic priority one, *Access and Discovery*, by ensuring and maximising equitable access to information resources. The role of the LIS is to provide discovery and access tools and expert consultation to help students and staff find, evaluate and use scholarly resources.

1.17.8.1   BOOK BUDGET ALLOCATION AND EXPENDITURE

The four campus libraries were allocated **R3 135 967.75** for book budgets. The breakdown of the allocations and expenditures per campus is provided in Figure 1 below. This book budget has been further allocated per campus faculties and departments.

BOOK BUDGET ALLOCATION & EXPENDITURE

■ Allocation ■ Expenditure ■ Commitment ■ Balance

	Buffalo City	Butterworth	Komani	Mthatha	Total
■ Allocation	R339 035,66	R206 000,00	R843 209,88	R1 747 722,21	R3 135 967,75
■ Expenditure	R268 794,79	R241 167,25	R843 209,88	R1 556 848,53	R2 641 225,66
■ Commitment	R49 528,37	R100 941,07	R0,00	R190 873,68	R341 343,12
■ Balance	R20 712,50	(R136 108,32)	R0,00	R0,00	(R115 395,82)

Figure 1: 2024 Budget allocation and expenditure per campus

Out of the total allocation indicated above, 812 titles (1,723 copies) have been ordered during this reporting period. R2 641,225.66 has been spent on 515 titles (1,122 copies) that have been received up to December 2024, and R341,343.12 is committed to 297 titles (601 copies) which are still outstanding, as illustrated in Figure below 2.

BOOKS ORDERED, RECEIVED & OUTSTANDING

■ Buffalo City ■ Butterworth ■ Komani ■ Mthatha ■ Total
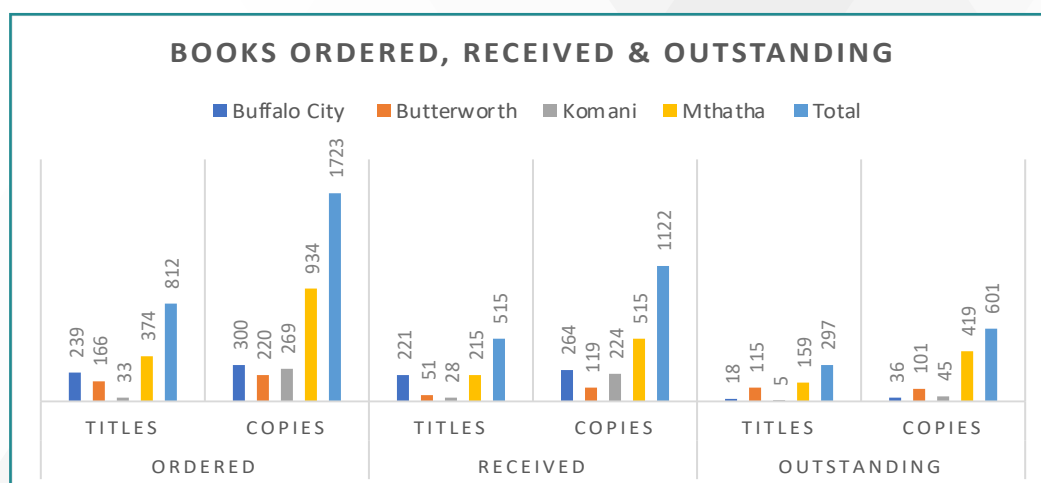
Figure 2: Books ordered and received in 2024

A comparison of 2023 and 2024 performance has been made in Figure 3 below. Although there was more budget allocation in 2023, the LIS purchased more titles in 2024 compared to 2023. This is an effort to diversify the collections rather than purchasing more copies of the same title, avoiding duplication.

2024 VS 2023

■ 2023 ■ 2024

	Allocation	Expenditure	Commitment	Balance	Number of Titles
■ 2023	R4 594 952,00	R5 027 302,56	R825 325,16	(R257 675,72)	1 407
■ 2024	R3 135 967,75	R2 641 225,66	R341 343,12	(R115 395,82)	2 004
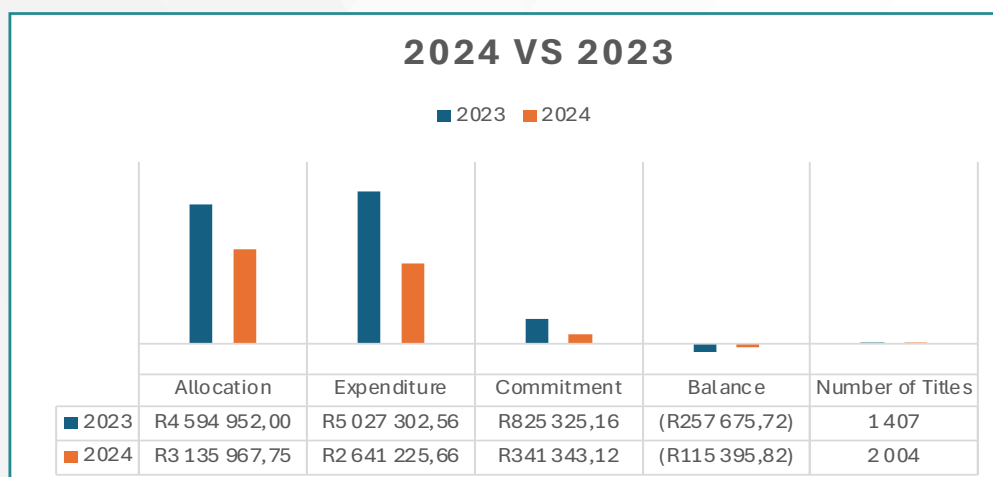
Figure 3: 2023 & 2024 budget allocation & expenditure comparison

Buffalo City Campus Book Exhibition

On 22 to 25 April, WSU LIS held its first instalment of book exhibitions in Buffalo City Campus from the series of planned exhibitions across WSU Libraries. The exhibition was a great success as academics worked closely with the librarians to select books for their academic programmes.

Credit 9: Book exhibition at Buffalo City Campus, photos taken by N Nonkotamo on 22/04/2024

Usage of Print Collections

Figure 4 below provides the usage of the book collections across all campus libraries. Compared to the previous years, 2022 and 2023, the statistics show an increase in the usage of book collections. One can see the impact of Rationalisation and Consolidation's (R&C) impact in using different libraries. Libraries where collections were less used previously, such as Zamukulungisa, are heavily used. This is due to the movement of the Faculties of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Economic and Financial Sciences into Zamukulungisa.

CIRCULATION STATISTICS: 2022, 2023 & 2024

	2022	2023	2024
■ Butterworth	4 602	5 348	6 973
■ Cambridge	124	205	400
■ Chiselhurst	269	473	377
■ College	353	314	305
■ Potsdam	1 706	2 961	3 138
■ Grey Street	746	862	694
■ Masibulele	658	1 311	969
■ Health Sciences	572	966	555
■ Sasol	8 507	9 230	4 555
■ Zamukulungisa	1 614	2 874	8 705
■ Total	19 151	24 544	26 671
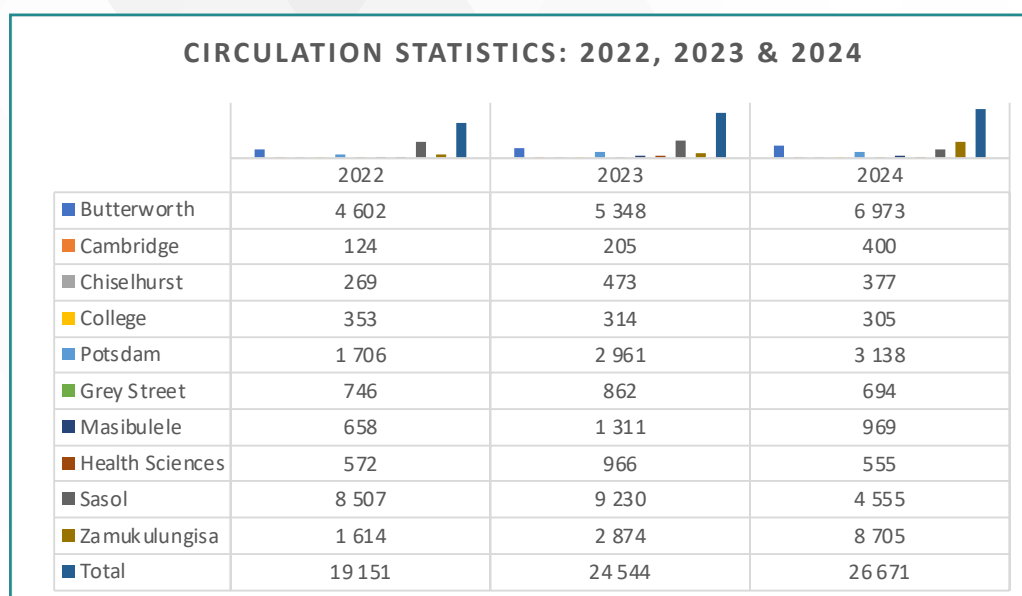
Figure 4: Circulation statistics for 2022, 2023 & 2024

1.17.8.2   ELECTRONIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (ERM)

To ensure and improve equitable access, LIS employ new tools and strategies to increase the discoverability, accessibility, and visibility of information resources and research support services.

i.   NEW ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ACQUIRED FOR 2024

LIS acquires new resources each year according to the university community's needs. Nine new e-resources were acquired in 2024. Most resources are acquired through SANLIC agreements: Training has been provided for librarians for each new resource. The new resources are listed in Figure 5 below.
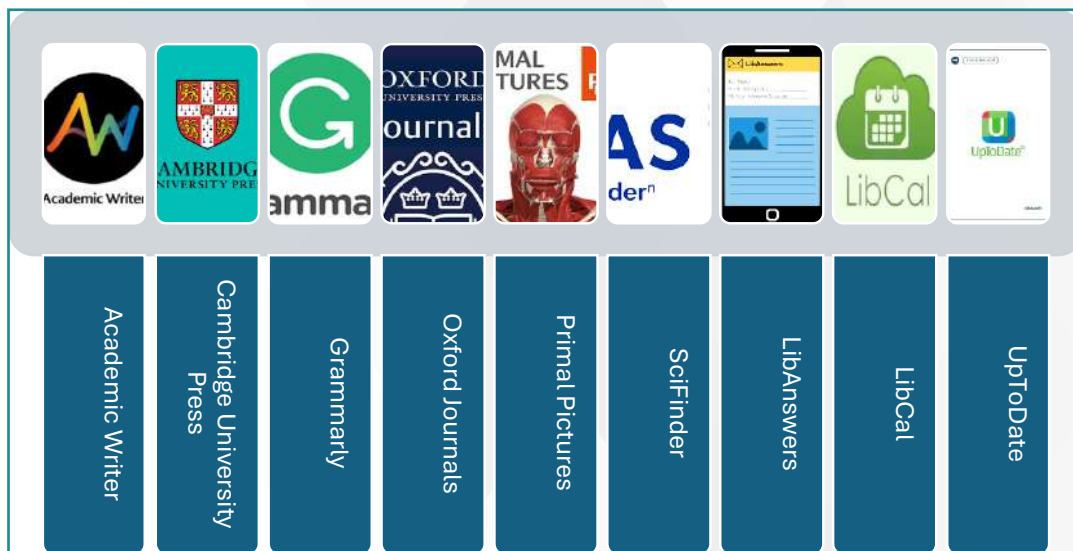
Figure 5: Electronic resources acquired in 2024

ii. TRIALLED DATABASES AND RESOURCES IN 2024

The LIS requests 30-day trials for databases that interest students and academics. Usage statistics from the trials determine whether it is necessary to subscribe to a new resource. The following databases were placed on trial in 2024.

- Springshare LibInsight
- UpToDate
- Acland Anatomy
- Amboss

iii. DATABASE USAGE STATISTICS

The statistics indicate that multidisciplinary databases are more popular with library users, with EBSCOhost being the most used, followed by PressReader. There has also been an improvement in the usage of PressReader compared to previous years. Figure 6 below provides the ranking in terms of highly used databases. Figure 7 provides the 2023 and 2024 comparisons of the top ten databases.
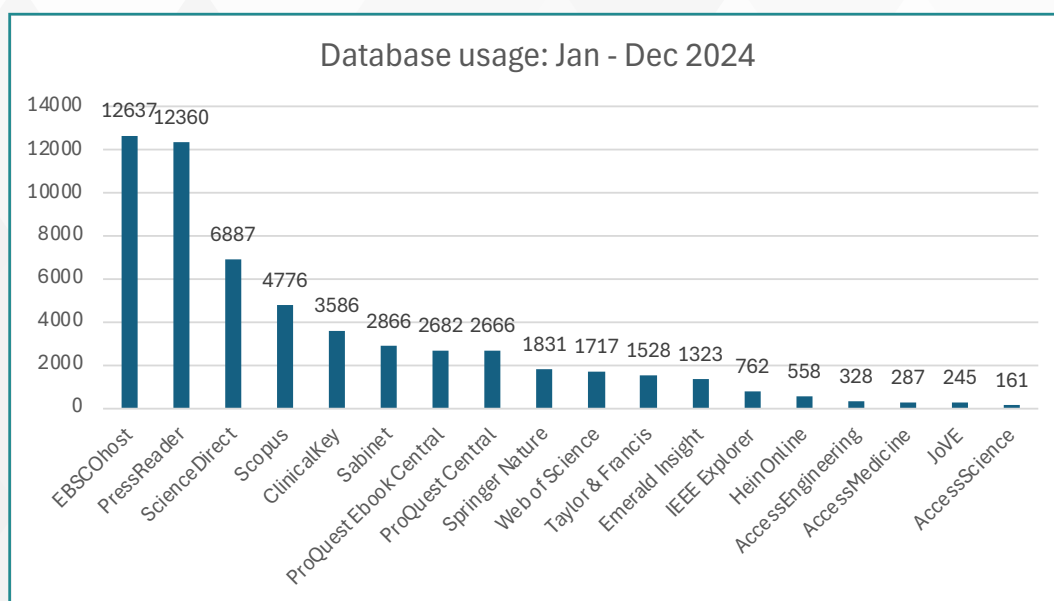
Figure 6: Database usage
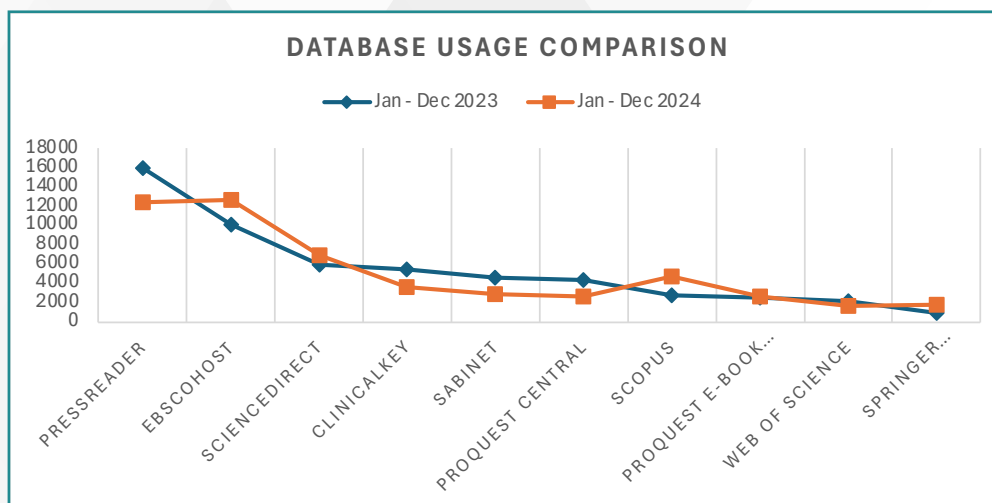
Figure 7: 2023/2024 top 10 database usage comparison

1.17.8.4   ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The LIS mandate is to provide education and training programmes on effectively using information for lifelong learning. Moreover, based on accepted practices and standards, it renders relevant, dynamic, and up-to-date information services to the WSU clientele. Enhance the teaching and research capacity of staff and students by providing information pertinent to the academic aspirations of the University.

i.   ORIENTATION OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

This section relates to LIS strategic priority three, *Student Success*. The LIS creates a user experience that promotes and encourages collaboration, exploration, and intellectual curiosity through direct user engagement, exemplary service and support, and welcoming learning spaces. The 2024 General Orientation was scheduled for 07 to 09 February 2024. The departments arranged tours of library facilities. All four campus libraries conducted orientation for first-year students. The summary of students who attended the campus orientations in 2023 and 2024 shows that attendance in 2024 was lower compared to 2023. Figure 7 shows 4 794 students attended in 2024 compared to 6 600 students in 2023.
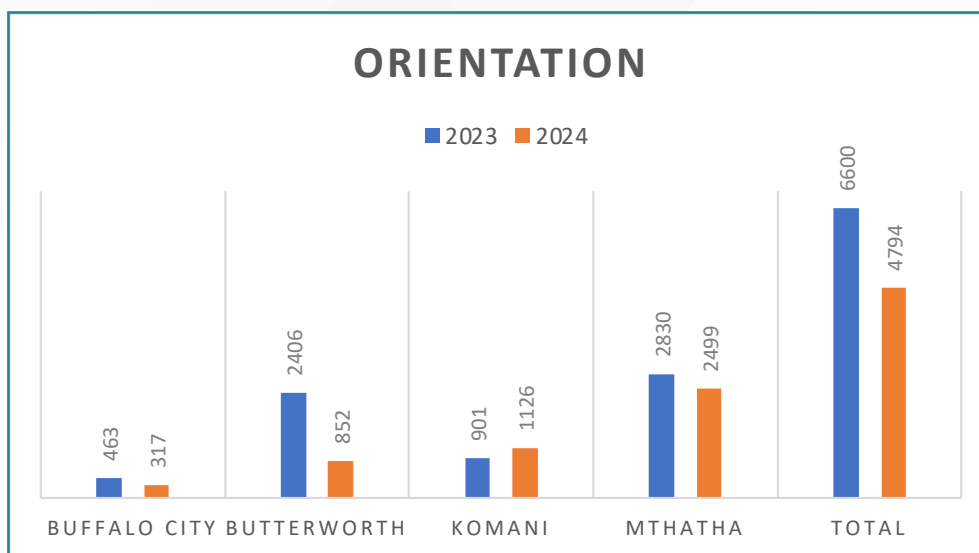
Figure 8: Campus Orientations: 2023 & 2024

Credit 1: Orientation at Butterworth Campus, image taken by N Booi

Credit 2: Orientation at Mthatha Campus, image taken by L Macingwane

ii. INFORMATION SKILLS TRAINING

In alignment with the University's strategic goals and objectives, the library had strived to enhance and align its services for excellence and effectiveness by offering information literacy. This lifelong learning skill enables WSU students to recognise when information is needed, allowing them to locate, evaluate, and use the required information effectively. Activities supporting teaching and learning included orientation and training undergraduate students on accessing and using information resources and facilities. Figure 8 below provides the number of undergraduate students trained in 2024 across all campuses. There is an improvement in the number of undergraduate students trained in 2024, especially in the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TRAINING: 2023 & 2024

	FEFS	FE	FEBEIT	FLHSS	FMPAS	FMHS	FNS	TOTAL
2023	906	1 405	839	283	653	207	234	4 527
2024	1 172	1 854	510	783	2 303	355	785	7 762
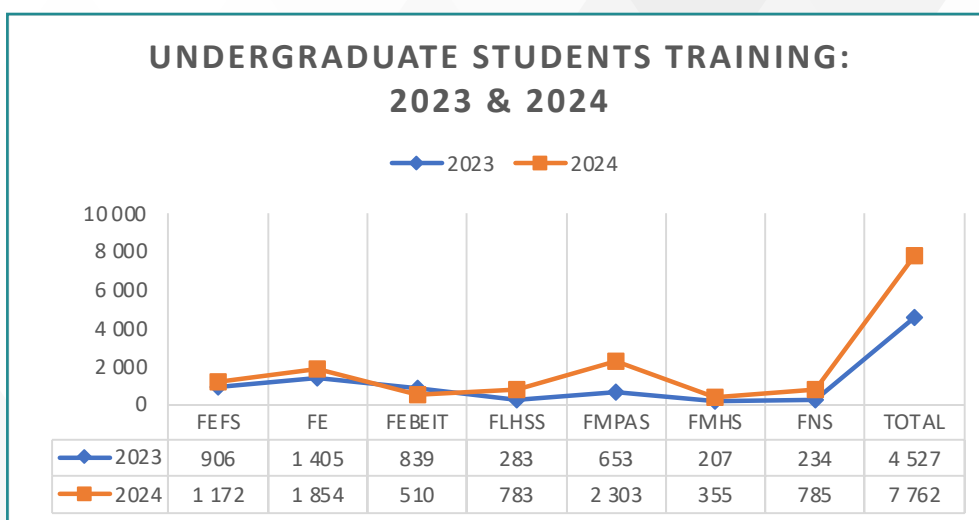
Figure 9: Training of undergraduate students per faculty

III. LIBRARY AND WRITING CENTRE COLLABORATION

Credit 3: Image taken at ZMK Auditorium by N Dukada on 23 August 2024

Under the UCDG Project 1, Activity 6, the LIS and the Writing Centre hosted workshops to assist students with their academic reading, writing, and information-searching skills. Specific departments were selected for the workshop based on their thinking and intensive writing. The workshop's theme was: "Unblock your writing potential with expert tips from the Library and Writing Centre team."

- The first day's sub-theme focused on the *Building blocks towards attaining Academic Integrity*, where the Writing Centre covered Plagiarism-based content and LIS covered Information Searching skills.
- On the second day, the workshop's sub-theme was *Teach Me, and I Will Learn*. The Writing Centre covered a broad spectrum of intext referencing and reference lists, while LIS covered the EndNote referencing tool.
- The third day's sub-theme was Becoming a Technology-infused Student: Catch Me or Teach Me. The LIS and LTwT covered the Introduction to Turnitin, while the Writing Centre covered Turnitin reports to improve writing efficiency.

Credit 4: Image taken at Komani Campus by P Mosoang on 03 September 2024

Credit 5: Image taken at NMD Auditorium by B Bingwa on 21 August 2024

The workshops were held as follows:
- 16, 22 & 23 August at Butterworth Campus
- 21 to 23 August at the Zamukulungisa Auditorium
- 26 to 28 August at the NMD Auditorium
- 23, 27 & 29 August at Potsdam, BCC
- 03 September at Komani Campus

The workshops were attended by 3,460 students and 46 staff members across campuses, as shown in Figure 9 below.
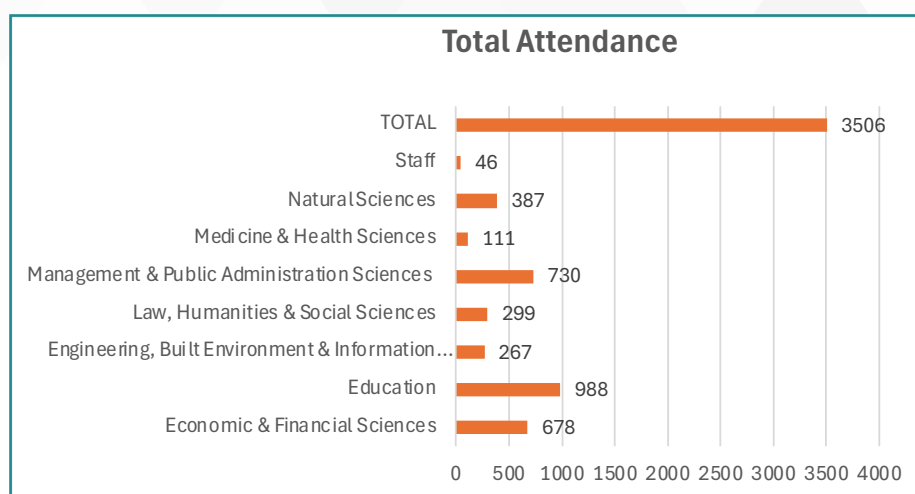
Figure 10: Attendance per faculty

1.17.8.5 USAGE OF FACILITIES AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

This section provides statistics on the usage of library facilities such as the reading areas, computer labs, seminar rooms and study centres for the reporting period January to August 2024. Furthermore, the section provides

statistics on the usage of book collections across the four campuses. The 2024 statistics are further compared to the previous years to see whether there is an improvement in the usage of information resources and facilities.

Library Visits
The usage of the library facilities has increased compared to 2023, as illustrated in Figure 10. The statistics show an increase in some campus libraries, such as Masibulele and Zamukulungisa. This can be attributed to more contact teaching sessions compared to previous years.

LIBRARY WALK-INS/VISITS: 2023 & 2024

	Cambridge	College	Chislehurst	PNCL	Potsdam	BTW	Grey	Masibulele	MHS	Sasol	ZMK	TOTAL
2023	6 800	12 500	12 855	12 998	19 768	52 959	1 523	2 764	31 166	133 240	28 141	314 714
2024	428	3 218	2 569	36 977	20 309	50 113	5 332	12 948	24 610	148 221	51 392	356 117
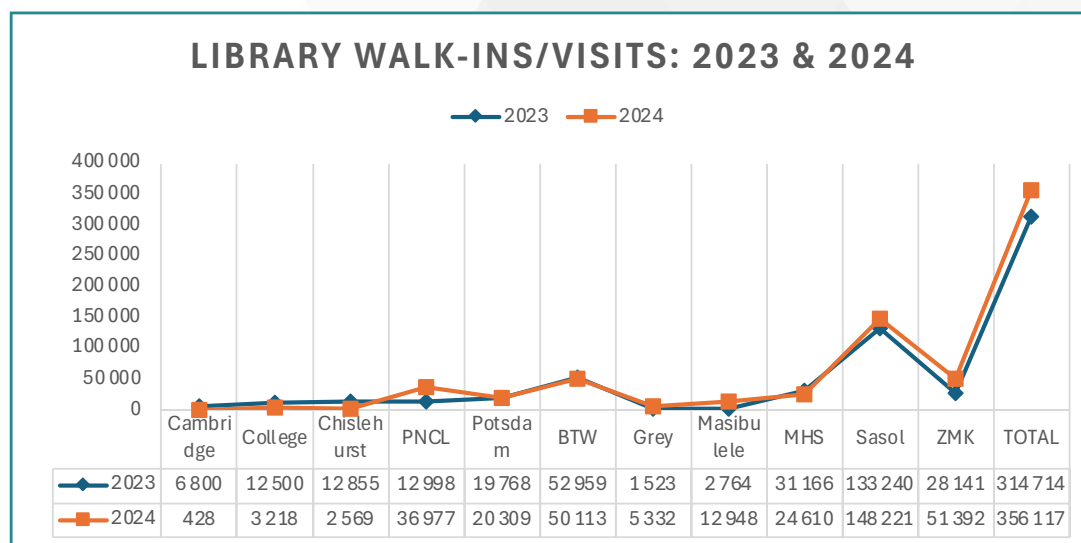
Figure 11: Library visits in 2024 and 2023

1.17.8.6   IMPACTFUL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

This section relates to LIS strategic priority two, *Research and Open Scholarship*, by providing an update on activities undertaken by the LIS to support the core business of the University in line with strategic goal number three, which is *Relevant and Impactful Research and Innovation*. The LIS actively supports the traditional and emerging modes of research, scholarly production and publishing and works to ensure accessible and equitable access to scholarly information resources.

i.   WORKSHOPS – CAPACITATING RESEARCHERS

The LIS strategic goal 2.2 aims to drive research capacity development training programmes. Therefore, training sessions have been offered to researchers to ensure that quality is infused into the University's research output. This has been done by training postgraduate students and academic and support staff on access to electronic databases and reference management tools. Some workshops focused on supervisors training them on plagiarism and Turnitin. Furthermore, subject-specific seminars have been conducted with academic departments focusing on postgraduate students and academic staff. Monthly virtual workshops have been conducted in collaboration with the Directorate of Research and Innovation (DRI), also focusing on electronic databases, submission of electronic theses and dissertations, and research visibility tools such as ORCIDs, copyright and Open Access. Researchers have been informed of the available publishing opportunities, such as Open Access Transformative Agreements, discussed in Sub-section 5.3.2 of this report.

In pursuit of excellence in relevant and impactful research and innovation, as summarised in Figure 1 below, 2,266 researchers and postgraduate students were trained in 2024, showing FE, FMHS and FMPAS leading in terms of the number of postgraduate students and staff trained compared to the previous years.

PG & STAFF TRAINING: 2024

Category	Value
FE	420
FEBEIT	231
FEFS	99
FLHSS	183
FMHS	403
FMPAS	325
FNS	137
OTHER	468
TOTAL	2266
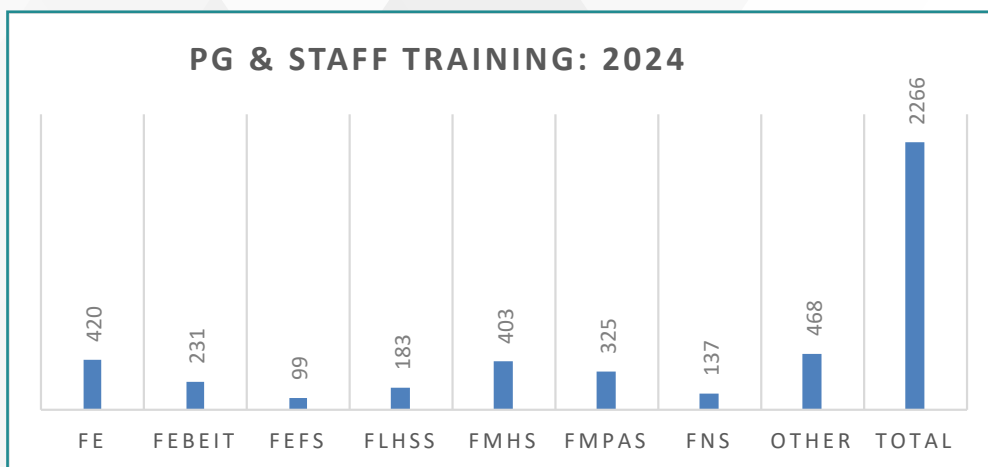
Figure 12: Postgraduate students and staff trained

Credit 3: PG orientation at Mthatha Campus, photo taken by A Tole on 22/04/2024

The LIS further collaborated with Postgraduate Studies in an orientation series to showcase programmes and services to support our postgraduate students. This was across the four WSU campuses. Five Mthatha campus faculties were all represented with an attendance 207, Butterworth with 117 and Komani with 43 postgraduate students.

ii. SHOWCASING THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH OUTPUT THROUGH INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES

This section relates to LIS strategic priority two, *Research and Open Scholarship*, by providing an update on activities undertaken by the LIS to support the core business of the University in line with strategic goal number three, which is *Relevant and Impactful Research and Innovation*. The LIS actively supports the traditional and emerging modes of research, scholarly production and publishing and works to ensure accessible and equitable access to scholarly information resources.

iii. SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC THESES & DISSERTATIONs

The LIS undertook an Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) audit project to ensure the repository's quality and showcase the institution's research output. The audit team, led by the IR Manager, used the graduation booklets from 2021 up to 2023 to determine the number of students who graduated with master's and doctoral degrees and compared the number of ETDs received and uploaded into the IR. The University has produced 181 ETDs from the M&Ds in these three years. Only 11 electronic copies have been received by the LIS, just above 6%. This compromises access to the University's intellectual output and its usage.

After communicating with DRI, the LIS has approached faculty coordinators to submit the outstanding ETDs. This project is ongoing as LIS has received few ETDs (73) since June 2024, as illustrated in Figure 13.

ETD Submissions - 2024

Faculty	Submissions
FEBEIT	0
FEd	22
FEFS	17
FLHSS	20
FMHS	10
FMPAS	0
FNS	4
Total	73
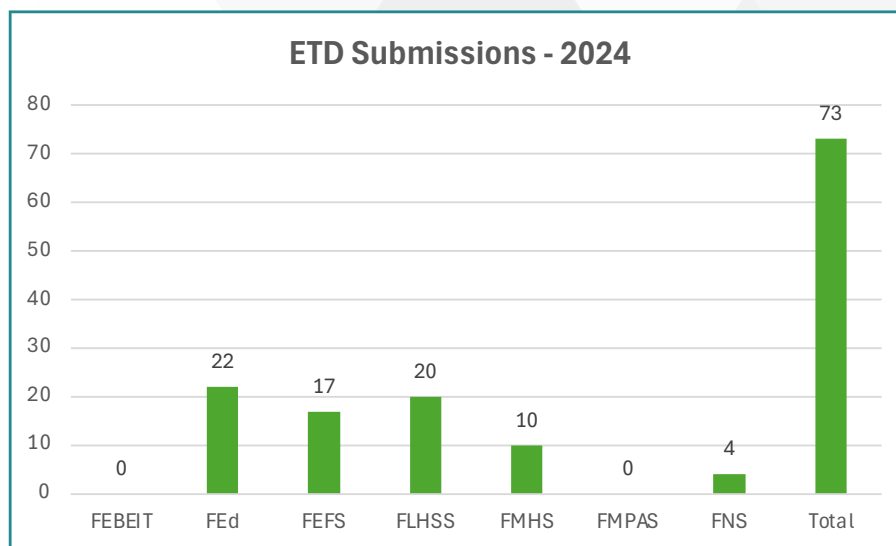
Figure 13: Submission of Electronic Theses & Dissertations

iv.   SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

The LIS advocates for Open Access publishing, as articulated in its strategic goal 2.1, by increasing the opportunities for the University to expand the public's access to scholarly outputs. The LIS provides further avenues for stimulating the University's research output by through the Transformative Agreements, allowing authors to publish without paying article processing charges (APCs).

1.17.8.8   INTERNATIONAL OPEN ACCESS WEEK 2024 CELEBRATIONS

International Open Access Week is held annually to inspire global momentum toward the open sharing of knowledge to address critical social issues. The 2024 theme continued the call to put "Community over Commercialization" and prioritize approaches to open scholarship that serve the best interests of the public and the academic community. The 2024 event was celebrated from 21 to 27 October 2024.

In celebrating this international event, WSU LIS organised a series of webinars throughout the week, which was attended by 321 researchers. The topics of the webinars are indicated below.

- "Navigating Copyright and Open Access in the Digital Age", facilitated by Ms Denise Nicholson from Scholarly Horizons.

- "OERs in support of students' success" facilitated by Dr Glenda Cox from UCT.
- International Open Access Week Hybrid Colloquium was held in collaboration with UFH and UNISA.
- "Transformative Agreements: Publish Open Access Without Paying APCs"

1.17.8.9 TRANSFORMATIVE AGREEMENTS

Through SANLiC, WSU has negotiated agreements with publishers in which former subscription expenditures are repurposed to support open-access publishing of the WSU authors, thus transforming the business model underlying scholarly journal publishing, gradually and definitively shifting from one based on toll access (subscription) to one in which publishers have remunerated a fair price for their open access publishing services. There are now seven agreements with the following publishers.

1. Wiley (2022-2025): Read and Publish
2. Emerald (2022-2024): Read and Publish
3. Science Direct (2023-2025) Read and Publish
4. Springer (2023. 2025) Read and Publish
5. Cambridge University Press Read and Publish
6. Oxford Journals R&P agreement Read and Publish
7. Taylor & Francis (2024 -2026) Read and Publish

Summary of approved articles for publication
The University has Transformative Agreements through SANLiC with seven publishers. Fifty-one articles written by thirty-three WSU authors have been submitted and approved for publishing. Table 1 below provides the summarised details for the publications and discounts on APCs. The required amount for APCs to publish these thirty articles was **R2 000,974.18,** but through discounts, the University saved **R1 614,381.25** by only paying **R386,592.93**.

Table 1: Summary of approved articles for publication and APC discounts

Publisher	# of Articles	# of Authors	Currency	Total APCs	Total Discount Amount
Taylor & Francis	15	14	USD	31,565.00	36,651.50
Springer Nature	8	5	EUR	15,429.00	15,429.00
Science Direct	9	6	USD	20,589.00	20,589.00
Emerald	4	3	GBP	11,125.00	11,125.00
Wiley	15	5	USD	25,870.00	0.00
TOTAL	51	33	ZAR	2 000,974.18	1 614,381.25

Researchers are encouraged to visit and browse the LibGuide via the link below for more information on the University's Transformative Agreements with the above publishers through SANLiC.
Accessible via this link is: https://wsu-ac.libguides.com/transformativeagreements

1.17.8.10 RESEARCH SUPPORT TOOLS

In collaboration with DRI and ICT, LIS

Grammarly
LIS has subscribed to Grammarly Premium and has access to 3000 licenses. **3000** seats were assigned to postgraduate students and academics, 1278 users joined and were active platform users, and **1666** users did not yet join. Available seats are **56**. There are planned upcoming training sessions for postgraduate students.

Turnitin
Turnitin was renewed with 7000 licences for both students and staff. Some users used the stand-alone platform, while others used the integrated version with LMS.

	EndNote 21 Endnote V 21 installation file and keys have been received and added to the WSU software portal and LibGuides under the software downloads. Our labs are being upgraded to Endnote V 21. The vendor has trained the librarians to be able to train WSU researchers.
	The DMP Tool The Data Management Plan (DPM) tool has been configured successfully and is up and running; the final step left is the Single-sign-on (SSO) configuration.
	Open Journal Systems (OJS) The OJS implementation project is currently in progress and expected to go live by the end of September 2024. Working on the requirements document.

1.17.8.11   AFRICANA AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

i.   THE UNITRA BOOK WRITING PROJECT

A group of researchers led by Prof Somadoda Fikeni used the Africana and Special Collections section, seeking background information about the former University of Transkei as they were writing a book about the formation of the University and certain events that took place in the early 1980s. Librarians continued to provide them with the required information.

ii.   ENHANCING VISIBILITY AND ACCESS TO THE WSU BEADWORK COLLECTION

Miss June Horsford's visit to the Beadwork Collection: A Practical Training Workshop (PTW) took place at the Sasol Library from July 29th to August 2nd. The library organised the workshop facilitated by Ms June Hosford, a preservation expert. It focused on conserving and managing the declared Beadwork Collection under the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) supervision. Miss Nolitha Ngcai was the representative from SAHRA, and Miss Bingwa, Miss Holomisa, and Mr. Madyibi represented WSU. The East London Museum was not represented per the signed MOU.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES: ENHANCING RESEARCH, PEDAGOGY, AND MANUSCRIPT DIGITISATION

The Faculty of Law, Humanities and Social Sciences invited the South African Centre for Digital Languages Resources (SADiLaR) to facilitate a Digital Humanities (DH) workshop from 10 to 11 September 2024. 40 postgraduate students and 10 researchers attended the workshop.

1.17.8.12   EMPOWERED STAFF

i.   STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Strides have been made to develop and empower LIS staff members through workshops and visits to other university libraries. These include the following:

- For quality enhancement of the LIS systems, Mrs Mosoang and Ms Booi visited Nelson Mandela University to benchmark and get training.
- The SEALS Systems Manager, Ms Saunders, provided training on managing and administrating the University's institutional repository, VITAL. The following staff members were trained: Mr Menye, Mr Madyibi, Mr Mjatya and Mr Mbatha.
- On 29 and 30 May, the LIS hosted a visit by SEALS Office. The visit aimed to train and update the WSU Library staff on cataloguing, circulation and institutional repositories. Twenty-seven librarians across campuses attended the 2-day workshop.
- From 04 to 06 June, LIS managers and section heads attended a Conflict and Diversity Management workshop facilitated by M28 Consulting and Training.

Staff have always been encouraged to further their studies. Table 2 below provides the number of staff currently enrolled at different institutions in South Africa. Nine staff members are enrolled in master's programmes.

Table 2: LIS staff enrolled in 2024 for further studies

Campus	Programme	Institution	Number of staff enrolled
Mthatha	Master of Library & Information Studies	UCT	5
	Masters in Library & Information Studies	UWC	1
	Master of Information Technology	NMU	1
	Master of Arts in Heritage Studies	Wits	1
	Master of Information Science	UNISA	1
	Adv Dip: Info Resource Management	UNISA	1
Butterworth	Masters in Library & Information Studies	UWC	1
Komani	Masters in Library & Information Studies	UWC	2
	Masters in Education	WSU	1
	Bachelor in Information Science	UNISA	1
Buffalo City	Master of Library & Information Studies	UCT	1
Total			16

ii. STAFF GRADUATIONS

Three LIS staff members graduated in 2024, as described below.

Dr SS Ncoyini graduated with a PhD in Information Systems from the University of Fort Hare.

Mr L Mdanyana graduated with a Masters in Educational Technology from the University of Cape Town.

Mr N Lolo graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Public Management from Walter Sisulu University.

iii. RECRUITMENT

The following seven appointments have been made in 2024 across the WSU campuses.

1.16.7.13 CONFERENCE AND EVENT PRESENTATIONS

- **Dr Ncoyini** presented a paper at the WSU Multi-Inter-Transdisciplinary Conference held at the Mthatha

Campus on 17 April 2024. Title of the paper: *Incorporation of user requirements into the development of an electronic health record system in a South African public hospital*.
- **Mr Mdanyana and Dr Ncoyini** presented a paper at the University of Johannesburg Library's International Conference on Unpacking AI for Teaching, Learning, and Research on 11 June 2024. Title of the paper: *Exploring research trends on Artificial Intelligence in Libraries: A bibliometric analysis.*
- **Dr Mabunda** delivered a lecture at UNISA about *Research Data Management* on 12 June 2024.
- **Mrs Cingo-Mapisa, Mrs Ngwendu and Mr Mnengi** presented a paper at the LIASA Annual Conference in Durban on 01 October 2024. Title of the paper: *WSU Libraries responding to rationalisation and consolidation of faculties in the democratic era.*
- **Mr Mndwana and Mr Nomkonwana** presented a paper at the LIASA Annual Conference in Durban on 03 October 2024. Title of the paper: *Enhancing library services and experiences through emerging technologies: A case study of Walter Sisulu University*

1.17.8.14   NOMINATION TO SERVE ON NATIONAL COMMITTEES

The WSU Libraries proudly report that the **Senior Director of LIS, Dr Mabunda**, has been nominated and selected to serve in the CHELSA Executive Committee to oversee and lead the Marketing Portfolio. The Executive Committee manages the affairs of CHELSA in accordance with resolutions of General Meetings and in accordance with the Powers of CHELSA. A minimum of 6 persons serve on the Executive Committee.

1.17.8.15   MARKETING

The LIS celebrated several national and international events, as summarised below.

2024 South African Library Week was celebrated under the theme "Libraries Foster Social Cohesion."

Librarians also attended the launch organised by LIASA, hosted by the SA Library for the Blind in Grahamstown.

Credit 10: South African Library Week celebrations across all campuses, photos taken by LIS staff on 20/03/2024

On 23rd April, LIS celebrated the International World Book Day. This initiative aims to promote the reading culture and is observed as such.
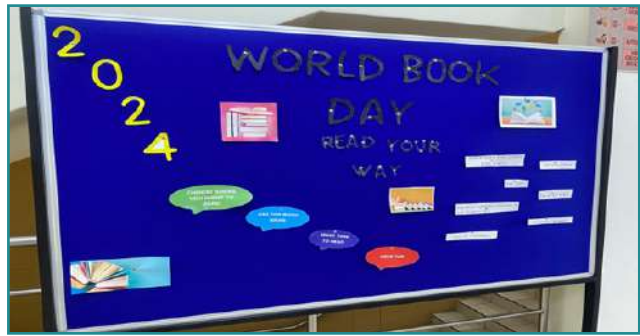
Credit 11: World Book Day exhibition at Mthatha Campus, photo taken by A Holomisa on 23/04/2024

On 25 May, the Butterworth Campus Library celebrated Africa Day.

This is a cultural and historical day celebrated in many countries on the African continent as well as around the world.

Credit 12: Africa Day celebrations at Butterworth Campus, photos taken by N Booi on 24/05/2024

Youth Day, 16 June

Credit 13: Youth Day exhibitions across all campuses, photos taken by LIS staff on 14/06/2024

The Library Marketing Team further showcased the library services through an exhibition during the Multi-Inter-Transdisciplinary Conference (MITC) held at the Mthatha Campus from 17 to 19 April. The exhibition was also empowered by the presence of our vendors, Worldwide Information Services (WWIS) and Springer Nature.

Credit 14: Library exhibition at MITC, all photos taken by B Bingwa on 18/04/2024

Highlights of the Year

2.1 Dr TT Mabunda was appointed on 01 February 2024 as the Senior Director for WSU Library and Information Services.

2.2 On 15 and 16 May 2024, the LIS held its first Strategic Planning workshop at the Blue Lagoon Hotel in East London.

2.3 The University signed seven Transformative Agreements with publishers to support scholarly publishing.

2.4 Capacitating Researchers and Postgraduate Students. Improvement in the number of workshops conducted and in attendance. 29 workshops with a total attendance of 2 266 PG students and staff.

2.5 Successfully enriched student experience by purchasing 1,824 titles of print and 47 electronic single-title textbooks.

2.6 Improved Undergraduate training as 7,762 students were trained across all faculties.

2.7 Successful Collaboration with the Writing Centre and trained 3,460 undergraduate students.

Section 2
Institutional Management and Administration

2.1 VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL REPORT

Prof RN Songca
Vice-Chancellor & Principal

The 2024 academic year marked a defining chapter in Walter Sisulu University as it pursued operational excellence and digital transformation. Building on our resolute commitment to becoming an "Impactful, Technology Infused African University", this year witnessed unprecedented progress in modernising our institutional infrastructure while strengthening the human capital that drives our mission forward.

At the heart of our operational transformation was the complete digitisation of university systems and processes. We achieved a technological milestone with the completion of campus-wide Wi-Fi installation and the successful deployment of innovative systems, including the Graduate and Research Management System.

Our security infrastructure was strategically expanded through extensive CCTV coverage and centralised monitoring capabilities. Major construction and refurbishment projects delivered tangible improvements to student living conditions across all campuses, providing dignified spaces that support academic success.

A major turnaround in institutional leadership was achieved with the strategic appointment of a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor for teaching and learning and Executive Deans across all faculties, strengthening our academic governance and strategic direction.

The University successfully continued the implementation of the Rationalisation and Consolidation Strategy, with staff and student relocations proceeding smoothly as faculties consolidated at their designated campuses. Our continued investment in human capital development saw remarkable progress in staff qualifications and comprehensive training programs that enhanced capabilities across the institution.

Environmental sustainability emerged as a key focus with the successful installation of our pilot solar energy system at Potsdam Campus, advancing our environmental stewardship and energy security goals. The integration of smart classroom technologies transformed the educational experience, enabling interactive learning and preparing students for a digitally driven future.

The achievements of 2024 show that through strategic planning and focused commitment to our vision, Walter Sisulu University continues to transform challenges into opportunities for growth and advancement in our journey toward becoming a premier technology-infused African university.

…………………………....................

Professor RN Songca
Vice Chancellor & Principal of Walter Sisulu University

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

2.2. OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

2.2.1. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department at Walter Sisulu University plays a vital role in advancing the Institution's mission of becoming an impactful, technology-infused African University. In the 2024 academic year, the ICT initiatives focused on enhancing ICT infrastructure, digital footprint, improving service delivery and supporting the University's Core business and associated activities.

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

With regard to ICT infrastructure development, the primary focus throughout 2024 was on expanding and strengthening the university's digital foundation. Walter Sisulu University made substantial investments in its ICT infrastructure to support its core academic and administrative functions. Key projects undertaken during this period are outlined in the table 1 below.

Table 1 Key ICT Infrastructure Projects at WSU in 2024

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	DELIVERABLES
Campus-Wide Wi-Fi Installation	To ensure universal high-speed internet access and high coverage across all WSU campuses	The ICT directorate has successfully completed the installation of Wi-Fi services across all university campuses. Status of wi-fi installation across WSU facilities: • 100% in students' residents • 100% in the offices • 100% in classrooms • and 90% in common areas. The provision of this services has ensured that all students that are residing within the university internal resident have access to high-speed network connection. The ICT directorate is currently busy with the installation of Wi-Fi services at health resources centres mainly at hospital and this project is set to be concluded by end of July 2025. The ICT directorate has also improved the Wi-Fi speed where each student has access to 150Mbps to 800 Mbps.
Expansion of CCTV coverage across all campuses	For enhanced security in critical areas such as examination venues and high risk zones at all campuses.	This project was divided into two phases and both phases has been completed. The first phase was completed in 2023, and more than 630 cameras were instated during this phase. This phase also included the establishment of central control room where the cameras are being viewed. The second phase was completed in December 2024, and 513 cameras were installed during this phase. The completion of both these phases has ensured that 85% of critical university facilities have been equipped with CCTV.
Physical Access Control	Enhancement of mechanisms for managing access control to university premises.	This project is divided into two phases, namely, vehicle scanning system and access control technology for both main gates and student residents access gates. The first phase has been completed and the access to all WSU main gates is managed through the use of vehicle scanning system. The second phase is set to commence in August 2025, and it will be completed in mid-2026.
Implementation of IT security operational centre (SOC) Mimecast implementation	To proactively manage cyber security threats, safeguard sensitive data, and ensure compliance with national regulations. As universities increasingly digitize operations and expand online services, a SOC is a cornerstone of institutional cyber resilience. Protection of university email system.	With the implementation of the SOC services enabled the ICT department to identify and respond to Cyber security threats timeously. The implementation of this project was initiated at the beginning of 2024 and completed in December 2024. The SOC services also enable us to identify and implement robust Cybersecurity measures in order to improve university data security. This project is still at the implementation stage however the significant amount of work has been completed, and the university system has been protected with the Mimecast.

Extension of Smart classroom Technologies	Implemented cutting-edge technologies in classrooms to facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences and to support interactive and multimedia content delivery, enabling lecturers to use videos, simulations and digital white boards.	Above 30% of WSU classrooms has been equipped with smart classrooms technologies and this has improved the teaching and learning experience for both students and academics. The ICT directorate is also planning to expand the smart classroom technology implementation across all campuses and this implementation will commence in August 2025. Once this implementation is finalised the WSU will have more than 60% of classrooms that are equipped with smart classroom technologies.
Installation of power backup facilities for all NMD CCTV network cabinets	The installation of power backup facilities for all NMD CCTV network cabinets.	100% of CCTV network cabinets has been equipped with power backup and all our CCTV cameras at NMD are able to function even during power outage. These systems play a critical role in maintaining campus safety, asset protection, and incident accountability.

The ICT directorate has also focused on digitizing some of the university`s critical business processes by developing and deploying systems to streamline University operations and improve service delivery. This ICT Systems Development initiative encompassed several key projects that have been implemented successfully as outlined in Table 2 below:

Table 2 ICT Systems Development

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	
Deployment of Graduate and Research management system (Converis)	This system enables WSU research department to manage and record all research outputs and assist with graduate administration services.	The deployment of converis was completed in 2024 and 5 faculties has been enrolled to the system for them to use this system. About 240 researchers has started to use the converis system. The research department is currently busy with the enrolment of other two remaining faculties which is. Natural science and Education.
Development and deployment of online examination question paper submission system	Establishment of modernised academic processes, strengthening of exam security, and improved efficiency in handling sensitive materials such as examination question papers.	The implementation of online examination system was successfully completed in 2024, and it has been used successfully for postgraduate online examinations. The university has initiated the process of training all university students on how to use the online examination system with the intension of expanding the use of this system to all academic levels.
Deployment of student debt management system (EXCALIBAR)	This system has been recently deployed and will enable WSU to track and manage student debt.	the implementation of EXCALIBAR was initiated in 2024 and it was completed at the beginning of 2025. This system is going to be used by finance department to track students' historical debts.
Deployment of AI powered invigilation tool (Invigilator App)	This system is used for proctoring online examinations.	To guarantee the integrity of online examinations the ICT directorate has implemented the invigilator APP which enables the examination department to conduct online invigilation during online examination. The system has been adopted and used for all online examinations.

| Development and deployment of online procurement system. | Modernize procurement processes, improve transparency, and ensure compliance with financial regulations. | This system is used by finance department for publication and submission of Request for Quotation (RFQ) and all university RFQs are submitted through this system.

The implementation of this system has improved the procurement process whereby bidders can easily submit their bids on time and since the system forces the bidders to submit all the required RFQ documents it is now easy for procurement department to conduct RFQ evaluations. |

The development and deployment of these systems has enhanced the efficiency of conducting research, teaching, learning and provision of support services.

2.2.2 STRATEGIC FUTURE FOCUS

The ICT Department remains committed to advancing WSU's digital strategy, with key initiatives focused on enhancing the institution's core business processes. Notable projects include the rollout of the **WSU Mobile App** and the implementation of a **Secure Graduation Certificate Management System** and **Clinical Care System** all these systems are meant to improve operational efficiency and service delivery.

The implementation of the university Mobile Application will ensure that the university community has easy access to all university systems and applications, and it will enable the university to communicate with both students and staff member through the Mobile App.

The Secure Graduation certificate management system is required to provide the protection mechanism for all university graduation certificates. This project is expected to start at the beginning of November 2025, and it will be completed in May 2026.

Clinical care system is part of projects that are funded by the department of higher education, under Sibusiso Bhengu Development Grant (SBDG) and it will be used for making appointments between students and healthcare services. The deployment of this system will be finalised in May 2026.

The ICT Directorate is also preparing to implement the following strategic projects:
• **Expansion of access control technologies** across all campuses to strengthen security within university premises.
  ◊ This project will be implemented over a period of 12 months, and it set to commence in September 2025, and it will be completed in August 2026.

• **Deployment of smart classroom technologies** to enhance teaching and learning environments. The expansion of these technologies will mainly focus in Komani campus and buffalo city campus.
  ◊ This project will be implemented over a period of 6 months, and it set to commence in September 2025, and it will be completed in February 2026.

- **Implementation of additional cyber security measures** to protect institutional systems and data.
  - ◊ The ICT directorate has initiated the implementation of additional cyber security measures such:
    - * Implementation of Mimecast for university email system protection and it will be completed in September 2025.
    - * Implementation of Cibex for endpoint device encryption and it will be completed by August 2025**.**

The implementation of both Mimecast and Cibex will assist to improve the university cybersecurity posture.

- In addition, the ICT Directorate is driving the establishment and growth of a **Cyber Savvy Community**, a university-wide initiative aimed at promoting digital security awareness. This program will engage key stakeholders—including academics, students, and administrative staff—to foster a culture of shared responsibility in safeguarding the university's digital assets.

WSU's ICT department is driving forward with innovative initiatives to support 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.

MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE

2.3 DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE
In 2024 the University completed the following infrastructure projects;

2.3.1 CONSTRUCTION OF TVE WORKSHOPS AT NMD DELIVERY SITE

This project entailed the construction of Technical and Vocational Education workshops which became necessary with the movement of the Faculty of Education to Mthatha as part of the University`s Rationalisation and Consolidation project (R&C). The project was completed in April 2024.

2.3.2   NTINGA RESIDENCES AT NMD DELIVERY SITE

The project entailed the refurbishment of student residences comprising 240 beds with modern finishes, hot water supply, fire equipment and electrical appliances for better standards, comfort and security of students. Common spaces, security and wi-fi were upgraded and access to people with disabilities was improved. The project was completed successfully in December 2024.

2.3.3   REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS TO BAGHDAD & KUWAIT RESIDENCES, NMD SITE

Repairs and renovations to 62 units comprising 466 beds. The practical completion was achieved in December 2025.

2.3.4   MOP PROJECT

The project entailed the repurposing of the existing space to accommodate a medical orthotics and prosthetic workshop for the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. It was completed in April 2024.
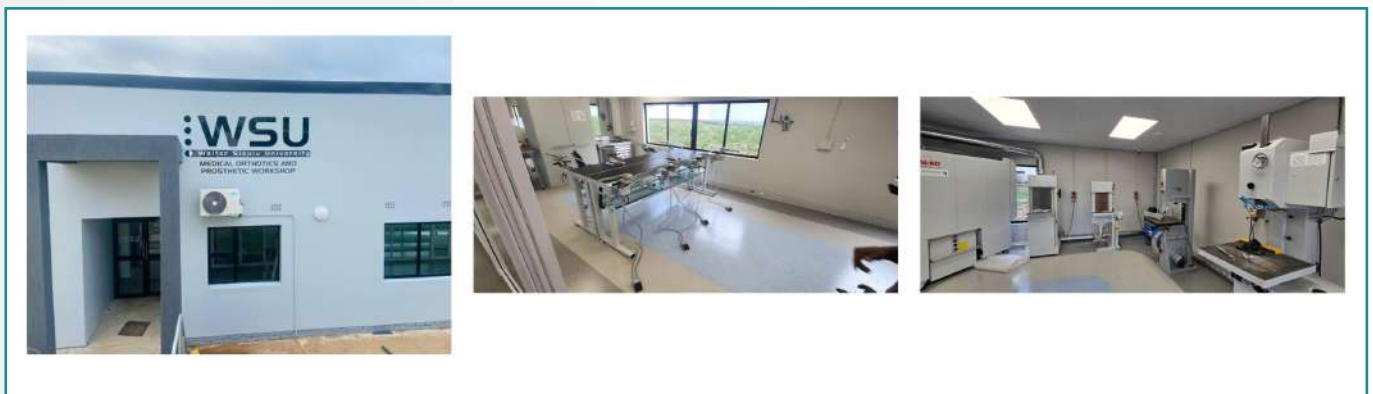
2.3.5 CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENT RESIDENCES AT DR MALIZO MPEHLE HOSPITAL

The project entailed the construction of a student residence with 12 beds, modern finishes, and electrical appliances for better standards, comfort and security of students. Project completion was achieved in August 2024

2.3.6 CONSTRUCTION OF STUDENT RESIDENCES AT ST BARNABAS HOSPITAL

The project entailed the construction of 6 units with 30 beds comprising of modern finishes, electrical appliances, fencing for safety and security of students. The project was completed in November 2024.
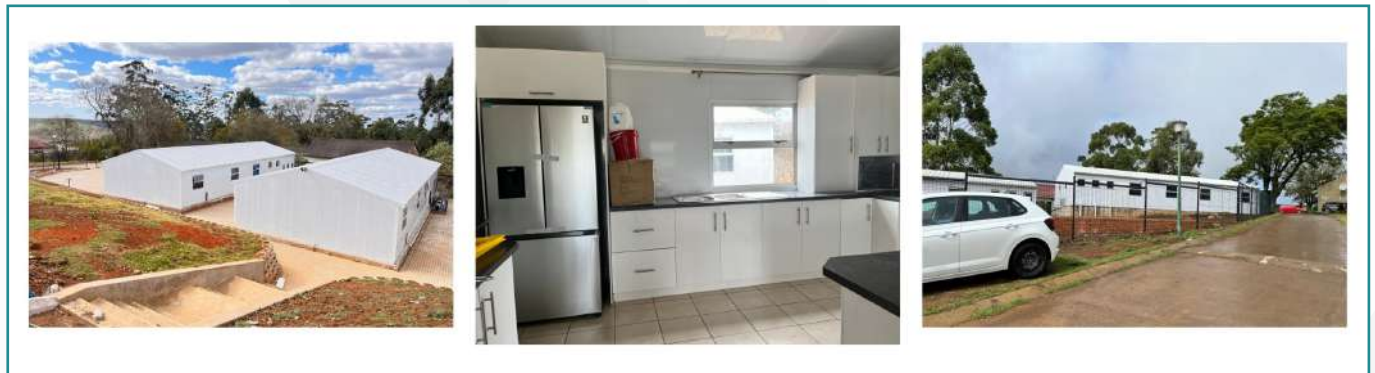
2.3.7 CURRENT PROJECTS UNDERWAY AND FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS STARTING IN 2025

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

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

To mitigate its environmental impact and manage its carbon footprint, the University is not only focused on the present management of its energy usage but also on the adoption and use of alternative sources of energy

to drive down consumption, reduce carbon emissions and cut back on energy consumption costs whilst guaranteeing energy security and enhancing business continuity. The University has made an investment in solar photovoltaic energy to augment demand. A pilot, grid-tied, solar energy installation comprising 486 solar panels erected on farmland, roof-tops and vehicular parking sheds respectively, with a generation capacity of 274 kW, has been installed at the University`s Potsdam Campus in Buffalo City.   Lessons learnt from the project will inform future development of solar energy projects across the University`s campuses to enhance energy efficiency and guarantee energy security.

Figure 1 Solar Photovoltaic Energy Installation at Potsdam Campus

2.3.9   A SAFE & HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

CCTV cameras were deployed across University buildings and campuses wide and are monitored around the clock to provide video footage to alert security personnel of any breaches and associated risks to enable immediate intervention. A centralised off-campus control room that integrates CCTV surveillance and monitoring of access control provides the necessary support to enhance campus safety and security. Ingress and Egress at University entrance points is controlled by security personnel on a 24-hour basis across University campuses. The University has established campus community safety forums across its campuses, in liaison with the South African Police Services, Community Policing Forums, students and other stakeholders to enhance the safety and security of students and staff across University campuses and off-site privately owned student accommodation. The University has established Occupational Health and Safety Committees, consistently ensures the maintenance of fire safety equipment and conducts fire safety drills across all its campuses in keeping with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993. The University provides waste collection services across all its campuses and ensures a clean and healthy environment that is not detrimental to the health and wellbeing of staff and students in keeping with the requirements of the National Environmental Management Waste Act 59 of 2008.

Figure 2 University Grounds At Potsdam Campus

2.3.10 EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE PROVISION OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The strategic maintenance of university infrastructure and assets is critical in ensuring seamless teaching, learning and research and ensures that infrastructure and assets are kept in an optimum condition, reasonable state of repair and service respectively to guarantee their availability, reliability and safety in use. The University has undertaken an upgrade and roll-out of Archibus, a maintenance management system, to enable on- demand and preventative maintenance of infrastructure and assets to extend asset life, reduce down time, ensure infrastructure and asset performance, improve productivity and financial performance respectively.

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

2.4 INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources (HR) Directorate is proud to present its annual report for the 2024 academic year. This report outlines the strategic achievements, operational activities, challenges, and forward-looking priorities that shaped HR service delivery at Walter Sisulu University (WSU). The HR Directorate remains a critical enabler in the university's mission to become a people-centred and technology-driven institution aligned with Vision 2030.

In 2024, the HR Directorate focused on strengthening organisational capacity, improving operational efficiencies, advancing employment equity, and supporting staff development to enhance institutional sustainability and transformation. The first phase of the Rationalisation and Consolidation was implemented. This saw a number of staff moving to campuses where their faculties were now located.

2. 4.1 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Alignment with Vision 2030 and Strategic Plan

The HR Directorate supported the implementation of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan through key interventions under the following focus areas:

- **Human Capital Development:** Enhanced academic and administrative competencies through upskilling and succession planning.
- **Equity and Inclusivity:** Implemented employment equity interventions, targeting increased representation of designated groups.
- **Institutional Culture Transformation:** Embedded people-centred values in leadership and performance systems.

2.4.2. WORKFORCE PROFILE AND EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

i. Workforce Headcount (as of 31 December 2024)

Staff Category	
Academic	- 821
Professional/Support	- 1181
Total	- 2002

ii.   Employment Equity Performance

The University made progress in diversifying its workforce, with emphasis on race and gender. Not much success was achieving on improving disability targets.

Equity Category	Representation (%)
Black (African)	87%
Women	49%

Employment Equity Report 2024

	BLACK		Total	COL		Total	IND		Total	WHITE		Total	FGN NAT		Total	GRAND TOTAL
OCCUPATION LEVELS	F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M		
Top Management	5	8	13					1	1	1		1		2	2	17
Senior Management	14	27	41										1	1	2		43
Prof Qualified Exp Specialist	412	415	827	7	4	11	8	17	25	24	24	48	29	101	130	1041
Skilled Tech Acad Qual WRKS	285	209	494	5	2	7	3		3	4	2	6	1	3	4	514
Semi-Skilled Decision Making	160	142	302					1	1	5	1	6	2		2	311
Unskilled Defined Decs Making	38	32	70		1	1				2	3	5				76
Grand Total	**913**	**833**	**1747**	**12**	**7**	**19**	**12**	**18**	**30**	**36**	**30**	**67**	**31**	**106**	**140**	**2002**

iii.   Academic Staff Qualifications

As of October 2024, the number of academic staff with doctoral degrees has improved slightly, compared to the first semester of 2024, to 30%

Academic staff with master's degrees has remained constant compared to the first semester of 2024, at 47% Academic staff not meeting the minimum qualification requirement has reduced slightly to 23%

Summary Table

	2022		2023		2024	
Qualification type level	Full Time	%	Full Time	%	Full time	%
Doctoral	200	25%	228	28%	245	30%
Masters	352	45%	374	47%	388	47%
PG less Masters	111	14%	103	13%	110	13%
Undergraduate	124	16%	100	12%	78	10%
Grand Total	**786**		**803**		**821**	

iv.   Workforce Age Analysis

The age analysis summary is as follows:
- that 67% of our staff can be categorised as young and middle age (20 yrs. to 49 yrs.).
- that 31% of our staff are in the retirement age category (50 yrs. – 65 yrs.).
- .that 2% of our staff are in post-retirement (65 yrs. and above).

OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS	BETWEEN 20 AND 49	BETWEEN 50 AND 65	OLDER THAN 65	GRAND TO-TAL
Top Management	6	11		17
Senior Management	19	23	1	43

Prof Qualified Exp Specialist	620	393	28	1041
Skilled Tech - Academic Qual WRKS	423	86	5	514
Semi-Skilled - Decision Making	221	88	2	311
Unskilled - Defined Decision Making	48	28		76
GRAND TOTAL	**1337**	**629**	**36**	**2002**
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION	**67%**	**31%**	**2%**	

2.4.3   RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENTS

i.   Staffing Movements
- **New Appointments**: 124 (including 71 academic and 51 support staff)
- **Internal Promotions**: 74
- **Exits**: 72 (resignations, retirements, contract expirations)

ii   Strategic Recruitment Initiatives
Prioritised recruitment in **critical disciplines** including Engineering, Health Sciences, and Accounting.
The filling of executive and senior management positions was also made a priority. TThe following senior appointments were made::

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning	Prof M Linington
Senior Director: Library and Information Services	Dr Mabunda

iii   Faculty Executive Deans
Exec Dean: Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology PROF WD THWALA
Exec Dean: Management and Public Administrative Sciences DR B NGUZA-MDUBA
Exec Dean: Education PROF BD BANTWINI
Exec Dean: Economics and Financial Sciences PROF M.S. PANICKER
Exec Dean: Natural Siences PROF AT MODI
Exec Dean: Medicine and Health Sciences PROF WW CHITHA
Exec Dean: Law, Humanities and Social Sciences PROF T NDLOVU

2.4.4   STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

i.   Academic Staff Development
- Continued implementation of the **Staff Qualifications Improvement Project**, with 160 staff enrolled in Master's or Doctoral programmes.
- 21 staff successfully graduated PhDs and 29 staff graduated their masters.
- Ongoing mentoring and peer coaching frameworks facilitated by internal and external academic leaders were done.

ii.   Administrative and Professional Staff Development
- 55 support staff attended accredited training in Digital Transformation and Competency Traininig.
- 7 Executive Deans completed the Leadership Development Programme
- Training conducted on new university systems including **ERP, Records Management**, and **Data Protection**.

iii.   Organisational Learning and Transformation
- Rolled out **Leadership Development Programmes** targeting mid- and senior-level managers.
- Delivered workshops on emotional intelligence, team cohesion, and performance management.

2.4.5   EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND LABOUR STABILITY

Collective Bargaining and Union Engagement
- Management maintained constructive relationships with recognised unions, **NEHAWU** and **APSA**.

2.4.6   HEALTH, WELLNESS, AND EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

- Delivered **Mental Health, GBV and Resilience Workshops** across campuses in response to post-pandemic burnout indicators.

- Participated with ICT on the launch of MysafeSpace App training to afford staff a unanimous was of reporting incidents of sexual harassment, Gender based Violence, mental health, bullying.
- Hosted **Wellness Days** across all four campuses and these were well attended by staff.

2.4.7   HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE

i.   New and Revised Policies
Finalised the following policies for Council approval:
Policy on Appointment of Executive Management
ii.   Institutional Compliance
- Ensured compliance with **Labour Relations Act**, **Basic Conditions of Employment Act**, and **Employment Equity Act** through annual audits.
- Conducted training on **Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)** implications for HR processes.

2.4.8   PERSONNEL COSTS

Personnel expenditure analysis for end of December 2024
- Personnel expenditure as at the end of December 2024 amounted to 101% of the personnel budget.
- Ratio of Academic Staff Salaries: Support Staff Salary expenditure was recorded at (58:42)
- 2024 Personnel Expenditure amounts to 66% of unrestricted income which is greater than the DHET Norm for personnel costs.

.
2.4.9   PRIORITIES FOR 2025

- Finalise the **2025–2030 Human Capital Strategy** in alignment with Vision 2030.
- Expand the **Succession Planning and Talent Development Framework**.
- Roll out a new **HR Analytics Dashboard** to support evidence-based planning.
- Enhance **capacity-building programmes** for academic staff development and research output.

2.4.10 CONCLUSION

The HR Directorate remains committed to delivering efficient, ethical, and transformative HR services that support Walter Sisulu University's strategic direction. The progress made in 2024 lays a solid foundation for the continued growth and success of the University's human capital.

Section 3
Financial Statements

3.1 THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

A. FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

The Finance Committee of Council (FCC) is one of Council's sub-committees and it functioned effectively throughout 2024. The purpose of the committee is to provide oversight and advise Council on institutional finance and investment matters, particularly towards supporting Council's governance responsibilities relating to sound investment, financial planning, administration, and 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 FCC met four times during the year. Attendance and participation at meetings was found to be satisfactory.

B. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

1. Introduction
We are pleased to report on the financial performance of the University for the year ended 31 December 2024.

2. Context
Government funding remains a critical source of funding for public universities—particularly for Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) like our university. However, between 2022 and 2024, the growth in state funding did not keep pace with rising operational costs. In some instances, block grants were marginally reduced to cover NSFAS shortfalls. Since 2016, universities have been required to adhere to a social compact that limits annual tuition fee increases to levels advised by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), typically in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). In the context of escalating costs—driven by imported services, declining exchange rates, and rising expenditures on outsourced services and utilities—universities have experienced a widening gap between revenue and expenditure. This has placed the sector, and particularly HDIs, on an increasingly unsustainable financial trajectory.

We recorded an operating deficit of R159m, an increase of R27m from the prior year deficit of R132m. Factors which have resulted in the deficit include:
*   Declining block grants
*   Increased impairment of student debt
*   Significant cost pressures arising from utilities and imported services

With most of our students coming from rural Eastern Cape, we have a huge dependency on NSFAS. We need to find the correct balance between the imperative of financial sustainability—which requires unfunded students to pay their fees timeously—and the need to provide access to students from poor and rural backgrounds.

3. People, Processes and Technology

We have continued to advance our digital transformation agenda within the Finance Department, with a deliberate focus on integrating people, processes, and technology. Central to this journey is our investment in people—our greatest asset. It has been both encouraging and rewarding to see teams across all levels initiate and lead projects which optimise the use of existing systems.

A key success factor has been our commitment to capacity building through structured training, continuous reinforcement, and an intentional approach to change management. These efforts have enabled rapid adoption and implementation across diverse teams, fostering agility and responsiveness.

What sets our approach apart is the empowerment of staff closest to the operations to drive change. This bottom-up model has resulted in solutions that are both relevant and sustainable, grounded in real operational needs.

Our digital transformation efforts are underpinned by three strategic priorities:
- Enhancing customer experience for both internal and external customers
- Empowering staff by shifting focus from manual, repetitive tasks to value-adding activities such as analysis and decision support
- Improving financial controls, and reducing inefficiencies, delays, and waste

The pace of technological change continues to accelerate, and staying ahead requires both adaptability and intentional investment in skills development. We have taken a deliberate approach to encourage and support our staff in learning new processes, tools, and digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI). Encouragingly, our teams have embraced this journey with enthusiasm and openness. They recognise that while technology may render some tasks obsolete, it also creates new opportunities for growth, innovation, and improved ways of working.

4.   Financial highlights

- Operating deficit was R159m, an increase R27m from the prior year deficit of R132m.
- The operating deficit, which has been increasing, is mainly due to the stagnation of block grant funding in an environment where expenses are increasing by at least CPI.
- Increased impairment due to inability of students to service current and prior year debt also contributed to the increasing deficit.
- Revenue increased by R180m to R3,505 billion in the current year. This is a 5% increase from R3,325 billion of the prior year.
- Expenditure increased by R209m (6%) to R3,667billion in the current year, from R3,458 billion of the prior year.
- We have invested R238m in the construction of new buildings and refurbishment of existing buildings as part of our infrastructure renewal programme. These projects are funded by the Infrastructure Efficiency Grants from the Department of Higher education and training.
- Although we still have a long way to go, it is pleasing to report that an increasing number of our students now have access state of the art living and teaching spaces.

These highlights can be depicted as follows:

Revenue R3.505bn
↑ 5% (R180mil)
PY: R3.325bn PY

Expenditure R3.667bn
↑ 6% (R209mil)
PY: R3.457bn PY

Deficit R159mil
↑ 20% (R26.8 mil)
PY: R132mil

Assets R3.827bn
↓ 3% (R189mil)
PY: R4.016 bn

Liabilities R3.573bn
↓ 1% (R30m)
PY R3.603 bn

Equity R246mil
↓ 38% (R159mil)
PY R413m
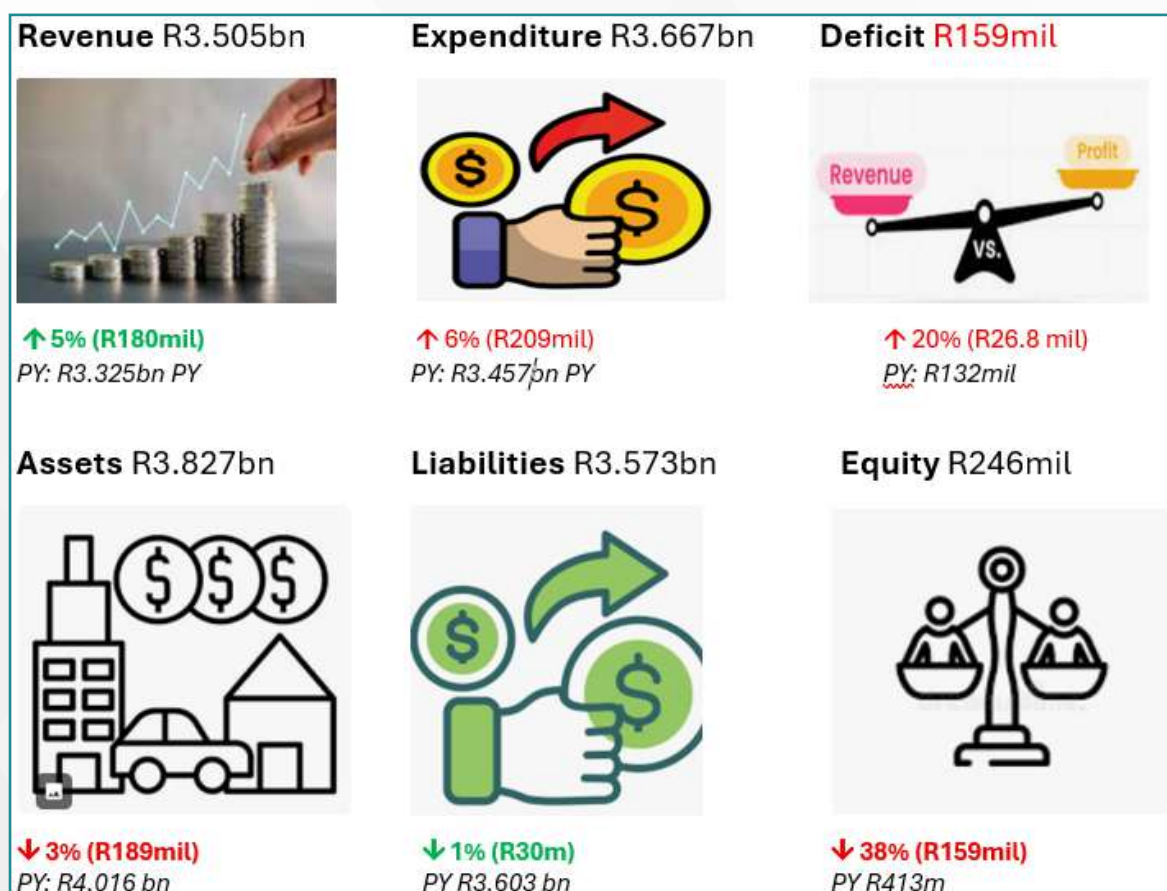
5.   Revenue

Total revenue increased by 5% to R3.5 billion from R3.3 billion in the prior year, as summarised in the table below:

Revenue	2024		2023		Movement	
	Rm	% of Rec. Rev	Rm	% of Rec. Rev	%	Rm
State appropriations	1 202	42%	1 159	44%	4%	43
Tuition fees	1 224	43%	1 025	39%	19%	199
Owned residence fees	85	3%	97	4%	(12%)	(12)
Finance and other income	163	6%	89	3%	83%	74
Subtotal	**2 674**		**2 370**		**13%**	**304**
Specifically funded grants	200	7%	237	9%	(16%)	(37)
Recurring Revenue	**2 874**	**100%**	**2 607**	**100%**	**10%**	**267**
Leased residence fees	631		718		(12%)	(87)
Total revenue	**3 505**		**3 325**		**5%**	**180**

Revenue analysis:
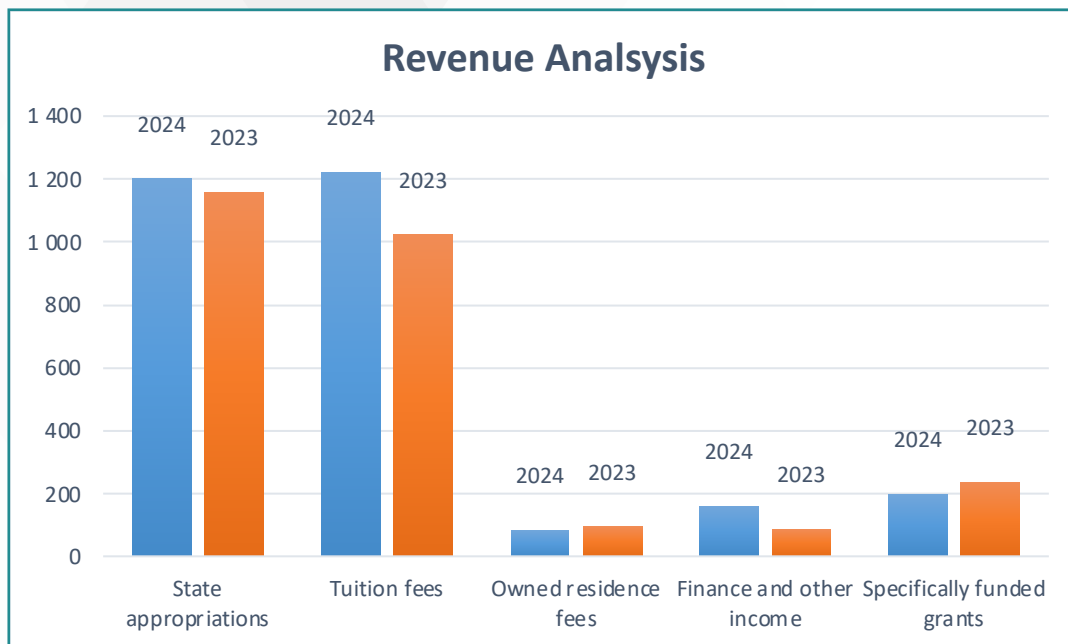
- *Subsidies and grants* account for 42% (2023: 44%) of total recurrent revenue. Although grants revenue has increased by 4% from the prior year, government grants contribution to total revenue has decreased by 2%. The falling contribution of government grants to total revenue is putting immense pressure on the finances of the University.
- *Tuition fee* revenue accounts for 43% of total recurrent revenue and increased by 19% from the prior year. Tuition fees were increased by CPI from the prior year. The higher increase is due to realignment fees following the rationalization and consolidation of programme offerings.
- *Owned residence fees* account for 3% of total recurrent revenue and decreased by 12% compared the prior year. Some of the university residences were under refurbishment, in line with the infrastructure development plans of 2024, which resulted in a lower placement of students in residences.
- *Other income* includes finance income and accounts for 6% of total recurrent revenue and increased by 83% when compared to the prior year. During the year, the University started charging interest on outstanding debtors and this accounts for significant increase in other income.

6.   Expenditure

Total recurrent expenditure increased by 6% to R3.667 billion from R3.457 billion in the prior year and the details

are set out below:

Expenditure	2024 Rm	% of Rec. Exp.	2023 Rm	% of Rec. Exp.	Movement % of Rec. Exp.	Rm
Employee costs	1 688	57%	1 561	58%	8%	127
Depreciation	42	1%	40	1%	5%	2
Doubtful debts provision	113	4%	54	2%	109%	59
Comms and licensing expenses	161	5%	118	4%	36%	43
Contracted services	164	6%	144	5%	14%	20
Utilities and rates	126	4%	92	3%	37%	34
Repairs and maintenance	52	2%	82	3%	(37%)	(30)
Other expenses	410	14%	336	12%	22%	74
Specifically funded expenses	203	7%	267	10%	(24%)	(64)
Subtotal recurrent expenditure	**2 959**	**100%**	**2 694**	**100%**	**10%**	**265**
Residences expenses	708		763		(7%)	(55)
Total expenditure	**3 667**		**3 457**		**6%**	**210**

Expenditure Analysis

- *Personnel costs* account for 57% (2023:58%) of total recurrent expenditure and increased by 8% from the prior year. The increase was due to the annual salary increase linked to CPI, expenses incurred on staff relocation as per the Rationalisation and Consolidation (R&C) programme as well as recruitment of senior academic staff.
- *Provision for doubtful debts* increased by 109% compared to the prior year. A reassessment of expected credit losses taking into account declining collections resulted in increased impairment losses.
- *Communication and licensing expenses* account for 5% of total recurrent expenditure and increased by 36% compared to the prior year. The above inflation increase was due to additional investments made in connectivity, including CCTV, and licenses to support connectivity and security of the IT infrastructure.
- *Contracted services* account for 6% (2023: 5%) of total recurrent expenditure and increased by 14% compared to the prior year.
- *Utilities and rates* account for 4% (2023: 3%) of total recurrent expenditure and increased by 37% compared to prior year. The current year expenditure was higher due to additional assessments made by the local authorities which we did not have in the prior year.
- *Repairs and maintenance expenses* comprise 2% of recurrent expenditure and decreased by 36% compared to prior year. The was a significant reduction in general repairs and maintenance as the University focused on construction of new facilities in support of the R&C programme.

7. Financial position

Assets
The University has continued to make significant strides in its infrastructure development programme as reflected by the investment of R353 million made in property, plant and equipment during the year as disclosed in note 5 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 R1.465 billion (2023: R1.912 billion) and decreased by R447m from the prior year. The decrease in outstanding debt was mainly due to settlement of amounts by NSFAS for the 2023 academic year, in the 2024 financial year. To accommodate students who do not qualify for NSFAS funding but are not able to pay their fees, the University has made a number of registration concessions particularly for our post graduate students. Unfortunately, this this increases the risk of bad debt impairments, posing a threat to long-term financial sustainability.

Liabilities
Total current liabilities decreased by 4% to R1.519 billion from R1.591 billion in the prior year.

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 R714 million (2023: R955 million). A substantial portion of the restricted funds are from the DHET and specifically earmarked for defined capital or special operational projects outside the University's normal operating budget.

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 R310m (2023: R523m) in new project funding during the year and incurred expenditure of R203m (2023: R239m) against the approved projects as disclosed in note 11 to the financial statements.

9.   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 1.3:1 (2023: 1.5:1), while total assets exceeded total liabilities by R253m (2023: R413m). 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.

10.   Outlook

The University has been incurring deficits for the last years and the deficits have been increasing which is cause of great concern.

There are indications that government funding to universities will start improving from the 2025/26 financial year and this would go a long way to alleviate the current funding pressure. Other initiatives which will contribute to improved financial performance going forward include:
- A new enrolment plan comes to effect from the 2026 financial year
- An increase in the number of post graduate programmes and research output
- A renewed focus on fundraising activities
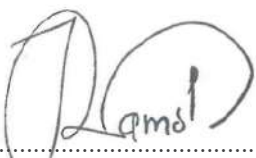
In the short term, we will continue to put our focus on cost control and improving operating efficiency. The implementation of the rationalisation and consolidation project gives us a a solid base from which to operate more efficiently and sustainably in the years ahead.

11.   Conclusion

We extend our appreciation and gratitude to many of our dedicated staff members who have been consistent and disciplined in following processes and procedures, which is important for our financial reporting processes. We extend a special word of appreciation to those who go beyond the call of duty to improve customer services and improve our processes.

We also extend our appreciation to Council, the Audit and Risk Compliance Committee of Council, the Finance Committee of Council, Executive Management for their guidance and support. 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)   MR M NHIWATIWA CA (SA)
CHAIRPERSON   **CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

3.2 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 2024, 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 2025 and are signed on its behalf by:

....
Advocate T Ngcukaitobi SC   Professor RN Songca
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL   **VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL**

Independent auditor's report to Council and the Minister of Higher Education, 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 178 to 226, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2024, 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 material accounting policy information.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the group as at 31 December 2024 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board, 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 Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors' *Code of Professional Conduct for Registered Auditors* (IRBA Code) 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 Institution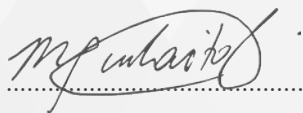s,2014, issued in terms of the Higher Education Act of South Africa,1997, and for such internal control as the Council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, the Council is responsible for assessing the 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. This description, which is located at pages 176 to 177, forms part of our 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 objectives presented in the annual performance report. The Council is responsible for the preparation of the annual performance report.

We selected the following objectives presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 31 December 2024 for auditing. We selected objectives that measure the university's performance on its primary mandated functions and that are of significant national, community or public interest.

Objective	Page numbers	Purpose
Quality, Impactful Teaching and Learning	48-52	Access This section of the report focuses on the effectiveness of the enrolment plan in comparing current enrolments against targets as demonstrated through various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Success 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).
Relevant and Impactful Research and Innovation	52	The Research and Innovation section is crafted to highlight the achievements and impact of research activities, as reflected through specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

We evaluated the reported performance information for the selected objectives 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 achievement of its planned objectives;

- the indicators are well defined and verifiable to ensure that they are easy to understand and can be applied consistently, as well as verifiable so that we can confirm the methods and processes to be used for measuring achievements;

Nexia SAB&T

- 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 those 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 is comparable and understandable; and

- there is adequate supporting evidence for the achievements u

We performed the procedures for the purpose of reporting material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion.

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 and provides explanations for over- and under achievements

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 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 the 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, current liabilities 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 all key performance indicators and targets as required by section 5(2)(d) 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 for approval by council], as required by section 6(2)(d) 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.

Other information in the annual report

The Council is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report. The other information does not include performance areas presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported in the audit 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 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 were performed for grants, other funding and similar items.

These services were rendered by other service providers.

Auditor tenure

In terms of the IRBA rule published in Government Gazette No. 39475 dated 4 December 2015, we report that Nexia SAB&T has been the auditor of Walter Sisulu University for 1 year.

Nexia SAB&T Inc
Director: TM Mayet
Registered Auditor
Gqeberha, South Africa
30 June 2025

Annexure to the auditor's report

The annexure includes the following:

- the auditor's responsibility for the audit

- the selected legislative requirements for compliance testing.

Auditor's responsibility for the audit

Professional judgement and professional scepticism

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 objectives and on the university's compliance with selected requirements in key legislation.

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 group 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 group 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 and separate 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 council 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 council 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
Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no 101 of 1997	Section 34(4)(a) Section 34(4)(b) Section 34(5) Section 34(6) Section 27(7)(c) Section 27(7)(e) & s27(7)(A)-(C) Section 20(5) Section 40(3)(a)(i) Section 40(3)(a)(ii) Section 40(3)(a)(iii)
Regulations for Reporting by Higher Education Institutions	Section 7(4)(b)(xii) Section 4(1)-(2) Section 5(1) Section 5(2)(a)(d)(g)(m) Section 6(2) Section 6(2)(d) Section 6(2)(3)
Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act	Section 34(1)

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2024

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

INDEX

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

Figures in R `000	Notes	2024	2023
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,803,130	1,544,254
Right-of-use assets	6	6,601	2,833
Unlisted investments	7	21,856	18,296
Total non-current assets		**1,831,587**	**1,565,383**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	8	524,331	905,232
Cash and cash equivalents	9	1,471,887	1,545,490
Total current assets		**1,996,218**	**2,450,722**
Total assets		**3,827,805**	**4,016,105**
Reserves and liabilities			
Reserves			
Capital Reserves		380,255	380,255
(Accumulated deficit) / accumulated surplus		(126,366)	32,973
Total reserves		**253,889**	**413,228**
Liabilities			
Non-current liabilities			
Lease obligation	6	7,440	1,835
Deferred income	11	2,046,692	2,010,056
Total non-current liabilities		**2,054,132**	**2,011,891**
Current liabilities			
Accrual for employment obligations	12	339,993	309,688
Trade and other payables	13	519,708	736,756
DHET unspent funds	14	26,131	27,379
Lease obligation	6	570	570
Deferred income	11	633,382	516,593
Total current liabilities		**1,519,784**	**1,590,986**
Total liabilities		**3,573,916**	**3,602,877**
Total equity and liabilities		**3,827,805**	**4,016,105**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Figures in R '000	Notes	Council controlled unrestricted	Specifically funded activities restricted	Residences and accommodation	Total 2024	Total 2023
Subsidies and Grants	15.2	1,201,938	200,252	-	1,402,190	1,397,373
Tuition and residence fee revenue	15.1	1,223,878	-	716,424	1,940,302	1,839,755
Other Income	15.3	50,023	-	-	50,023	9,870
Total operating revenue		2,475,839	200,252	716,424	3,392,515	3,246,998
Operating expenditure						
Personnel costs	16	(1,687,637)	(60,125)	(59,735)	(1,807,497)	(1,660,784)
Academic		(933,665)	(60,125)	-	(993,790)	(942,011)
Other personnel		(753,972)	-	(59,735)	(813,707)	(718,773)
Other operating costs		(913,694)	(98,403)	(626,138)	(1,638,235)	(1,643,915)
Doubtful debt provision	8	(112,627)	-	(14,719)	(127,346)	(80,267)
Depreciation and impairment	17	(41,847)	(44,258)	(7,865)	(93,970)	(72,942)
Total operating expenditure		(2,755,805)	(202,786)	(708,457)	(3,667,048)	(3,457,908)
Finance income	18	113,109	-	-	113,109	78,837
Fair value gain on Investments	7.2	3,972	-	-	3,972	412
Finance cost	19	(1,887)	-	-	(1,887)	(723)
Sub total		(2,640,611)	(202,786)	(708,457)	(3,551,854)	(3,379,382)
Surplus/(Deficit)	17	(164,772)	(2,534)	7,967	(159,339)	(132,384)
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive (net deficit) / net income		(164,772)	(2,534)	7,967	(159,339)	(132,384)

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

Figures in R `000	Capital Reserves	(Accumulated deficit) / accumulated surplus	Total
Balance at 1 January 2023	**380,255**	**165,357**	545,612
Deficit for the year	-	(132,384)	(132,384)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income	**-**	**(132,384)**	**(132,384)**
Balance at 31 December 2023	**380,255**	**32,973**	**413,228**
Deficit for the year	-	(159,339)	(159,339)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income	**-**	**(159,339)**	**(159,339)**
Balance at 31 December 2024	**380,255**	**(126,366)**	**253,889**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Figures in R `000	Notes	2024	2023
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash flows (used in) / from operating activities	23	**72,284**	**(509,435)**
Interest paid		(1,887)	(723)
Interest received	18	71,776	99,409
Net cash flows (used in) / from operating activities		**142,173**	**(410,749)**
Cash flows (used in) / from investing activities			
Interest received	11.4	27,961	58,957
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		-	422
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	5	(353,748)	(258,291)
Grants received - asset based grants	11.3	113,305	293,701
Net cash flows (used in) / from investing activities		**(212,482)**	**94,789**
Cash flows used in financing activities			
Movements on lease liabilities	6.4	(3,294)	(548)
Cash flows used in financing activities		**(3,294)**	**(548)**
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		**(73,603)**	**(316,508)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of year		1,545,490	1,861,998
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of year	9	**1,471,887**	**1,545,490**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

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 consolidated financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis in accordance with, and in compliance with, International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS® Accounting Standards" ") and International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee ("IFRIC") interpretations issued and effective at the time of preparing these consolidated financial statements and section 41 of the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997) of South Africa, as amended. They are presented in South African Rand, which is the university's functional and presentation currency.

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 R160 million during the year ended 31 December 2024 (2023: R132m net deficit) and, as of that date the University's net assets were R253 million (2023: R413m). 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 R757 million as of June 2025. 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 Comparative information

Amounts due / from NSFAS have been consolidated amounts payable. We have restated comparative amounts to ensure presentation consistency.

2.3 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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Initial measurement

An item of property, plant and equipment that qualifies for recognition as an asset is initially measured at its cost.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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	

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.

2.4 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

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

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.

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.

2.10 Research grants
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.

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.

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.

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

2.12 Capital Reserves

These represents transfers from accumulated surpluses.

3. Key sources of estimation uncertainty

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 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). Management has not identified any leases where the extension of the lease is reasonably certain.

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.

4. Standards and Interpretations effective and adopted in the current year

In the current year, the University has adopted all new and revised IFRSs that are relevant to its operations and effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. Their adoption has not had any material impact on the disclosures or on the amounts reported in these financial statements.
-Supplier Finance Arrangements - Amendments to IAS 7 and IFRS
-Non-current liabilities with covenants - amendments to IAS 1

The adoption of the new standards and interpretations did not have have any impact on the accounting policies and the measuremnent and recognition of amountsb disclosed in the financial statrements.

Standards and Interpretations not yet effective

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Standards and Interpretations effective and adopted in the current year continued...

Amendments to IFRS 10 and IAS 28: Sale or Contribution of Assets between an Investor and its Associate or Joint Venture

If a parent loses control of a subsidiary which does not contain a business, as a result of a transaction with an associate or joint venture, then the gain or loss on the loss of control is recognised in the parents' surplus or deficit only to the extent of the unrelated investors' interest in the associate or joint venture. The remaining gain or loss is eliminated against the carrying amount of the investment in the associate or joint venture. The same treatment is followed for the measurement to fair value of any remaining investment which is itself an associate or joint venture. If the remaining investment is accounted for in terms of IFRS 9, then the measurement to fair value of that interest is recognised in full in the parents' surplus or deficit.

The effective date of the amendment is to be determined by the IASB.

The university does not envisage the adoption of the amendment until such time as it becomes applicable to the university's operations and an effective date has been determined by the IASB.

It is unlikely that the amendment will have a material impact on the university's consolidated financial statements.

IFRS 19 Subsidiaries without Public Accountability: Disclosures

This is a new standard which may be applied by subsidiaries which do not have public accountability. It is a disclosure only standard and provides for reduced disclosures for qualifying subsidiaries to apply, while still remaining compliant with the recognition, measurement and presentation requirements of IFRS accounting standards. The reduced disclosures provided in IFRS 19 may be applied by the subsidiary in their consolidated, separate or individual financial statements, provided that the ultimate or any intermediate parent produces consolidated financial statements available for public use that comply with IFRS accounting standards. A subsidiary has public accountability, and may not apply IFRS 19, if its debt or equity instruments are traded in a public market or it is in the process of issuing such instruments for trading in a public market, or if it holds assets in a fiduciary capacity for a broad group of outsiders as one of its primary businesses.

The effective date of the amendment is for years beginning on or after 01 January 2027.

The university does not envisage the adoption of the amendment until such time as it becomes applicable to the university's operations.

It is unlikely that the amendment will have a material impact on the university's consolidated financial statements.

IFRS 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements

This is a new standard which replaces IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements and introduces several new presentation requirements. The first relates to categories and subtotals in the statement of financial performance. Income and expenses will be categorised into operating, investing, financing, income taxes and discontinued operations categories, with two new subtotals, namely "operating profit" and "profit before financing and income taxes" also being required. These categories and sub totals are defined in IFRS 18 for comparability and consistency across entities. The next set of changes requires disclosures about management-defined performance measures in a single note to the financial statements. These include reconciliations of the performance measures to the IFRS defined subtotals, as well as a description of how they are calculated, their purpose and any changes. The third set of requirements enhance the guidance on grouping of information (aggregation and disaggregation) to prevent the obscuring of information.

The effective date of the amendment is for years beginning on or after 01 January 2027.

The university expects to adopt the amendment for the first time in the 2027 consolidated financial statements.

The adoption of this amendment is not expected to impact on the results of the university, but may result in more disclosure than is currently provided in the consolidated financial statements.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Standards and Interpretations effective and adopted in the current year continued...

Amendments to IFRS 9 and IFRS 7: Amendments to the Classification and Measurement of Financial Instruments.

The amendments clarify the classification of financial assets with environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) and similar features, as such features could affect whether the assets are measured at amortised cost or fair value. The amendment also clarifies the date on which a financial asset or financial liability is derecognised in cases where liabilities are settled through electronic payment systems.

The effective date of the amendment is for years beginning on or after 01 January 2026.

The university does not envisage the adoption of the amendment until such time as it becomes applicable to the university's operations.

It is unlikely that the amendment will have a material impact on the university's consolidated financial statements.

Lack of exchangeability - amendments to IAS 21

The amendments apply to currencies which are not exchangeable. The definition of exchangeable is provided as being when an entity is able to obtain the other currency within a time frame that allows for a normal administrative delay and through a market or exchange mechanism in which an exchange transaction would create enforceable rights and obligations. The amendments require an entity to estimate the spot exchange rate at measurement date when a currency is not exchangeable into another currency. Additional disclosures are also required to enable users of financial statements to understand the impact of the non-exchangeability on financial performance, financial position and cash flow.

The effective date of the amendment is for years beginning on or after 01 January 2025.

The university does not envisage the adoption of the amendment until such time as it becomes applicable to the university's operations

It is unlikely that the amendment will have a material impact on the university's consolidated financial statements.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Figures in R `000

5. Property, plant and equipment

5.1 Balances at year end and movements for the year ended 31 December 2023

Balance at 1 January 2024	Land and buildings	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Construction in progress	Total
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
Movements for the year ended 31 December 2024							
Additions	-	-	11,793	75,537	27,951	238,466	353,748
Newly identified assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	(28,648)	(1,144)	(6,465)	(36,619)	(19,911)	-	(92,786)
Current year charge	(28,648)	(1,144)	(6,465)	(36,619)	(19,911)	-	(92,786)
Change in estimate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increase/(decrease) through transfers from construction in progress	81,233	-	-	-	-	(81,233)	-
Disposals	-	-	(424)	(353)	(1,307)	-	(2,085)
	1,198,513	37,027	18,257	130,815	49,268	369,250	1,803,130
Closing balance at 31 December 2024							
At cost	1,487,235	45,864	52,396	292,053	159,628	369,250	2,406,426
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(288,722)	(8,837)	(34,139)	(161,238)	(110,359)	-	(603,296)
Net book value	1,198,513	37,027	18,257	130,815	49,268	369,250	1,803,130

The following entities ("the Trusts") are controlled by the University.

- The Border Technikon Trust
- University of Transkei Foundation
- T T Trust

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R '000

Property, plant and equipment continued...

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

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.

Work in Progress

Work in Progress consists of buildings in progress

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Figures in R `000

Property, plant and equipment continued...

	Land and buildings	Leasehold improvements	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings	Computer equipment	Construction in progress	Total
Reconciliation for the year ended 31 December 2023							
Balance at 1 January 2023							
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
Write-offs	(12,730)		-	(5,635)	(95)	-	**(18,460)**
Depreciation	(24,767)	(1,854)	(930)	(30,633)	(14,758)	-	**(72,942)**
Disposals				(44)	(378)	-	**(422)**
Increase/(decrease) through transfers from construction in progress	332,744			-	-	(332,666)	**78**
Closing balance at 31 December 2023	**1,145,928**	**38,171**	**13,353**	**92,250**	**42,535**	**212,017** -	**1,547,492**
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**

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.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000

Property, plant and equipment continued...

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.

Newly identified assets

In the prior year, the University identified assets that had not been accounted for on the fixed asset register following a physical verification exercise. These assets include computer equipment, furniture and fittings, and equipment. The amount at which the assets were recognised was determined with reference to the condition of the assets and value of similar assets and condition.

Work in Progress

Work in Progress consists of buildings in progress

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Property, plant and equipment continued...

5.2 Depreciation and impairment losses

Depreciation and impairment losses have been included under the following expenditures:

	2024	2023
Other expenses		
Buildings	29,792	24,767
Leasehold improvements	1,429	-
Motor vehicles	6,465	930
Fixtures and fittings	34,599	30,633
Office equipment	-	-
Computer equipment	21,117	14,758
Computer software	568	1,854
	93,970	**72,942**

6. Lease liabilities

6.1 Lease liabilities are analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
Buildings	4,588	2,405
Printers	3,422	-
Additional details		
	8,010	**2,405**
Non-current liabilities	7,440	1,835
Current liabilities	570	570
	8,010	**2,405**

6.2 Amounts recognised in the consolidated statement of financial position

	2024	2023
Right-of-use assets		
Buildings	2,885	2,833
Printers	3,716	-
Total	**6,601**	**2,833**

Reconciliation of cost and accumulated depreciation

Buildings - Cost	2024	2023
At the beginning of the year	17,922	17,922
Additions	-	-
At the end of the year	**17,922**	**17,922**

Buildings - Accum. depreciation	2024	2023
At the beginning of the year	(14,469)	(12,615)
Depreciation	(568)	(1,854)
At the end of the year	**(15,037)**	**(14,469)**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
Lease liabilities continued...		
Carrying amount at the beginning of the year	**3,452**	**5,307**
Carrying amount at the end of the year	**2,885**	**3,452**
Vehicles - Cost		
At the beginning of the year	-	3,183
Additions	-	-
At the end of the year	**-**	**3,183**
Vehicles - Accum. depreciation		
At the beginning of the year	-	(3,183)
Depreciation		
At the end of the year	**-**	**(3,183)**
Carrying amount at the beginning of the year	-	-
Carrying amount at the end of the year	**-**	**-**
Printers - Cost		
At the beginning of the year	-	-
Additions	5,145	
At the end of the year	**5,145**	**-**
Printers - Accum. depreciation		
At the beginning of the year	-	-
Depreciation	(1,429)	
At the end of the year	**(1,429)**	**-**
Carrying amount at the beginning of the year	-	-
Carrying amount at the end of the year	**3,716**	**-**
Lease liabilities		
Current portion	(570)	(570)
Non-current portion	(7,440)	(1,835)
	(8,010)	**(2,405)**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Lease liabilities continued...

6.3 Amounts recognised in the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income

Depreciation

	2024	2023
Buildings	568	1,854
Printers	-	-
Total	**568**	**1,854**
Other expenses		
Interest expense	1,887	723

6.4 Amounts recognised in the consoilidated statement of cash flows

	2024	2023
Total cash outflow for leases	3,294	548

6.5 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.

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.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Lease liabilities continued...

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 are assets with a value lower than R10 000, such assets usually 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.

The University does not expect the leases to be extended after expiry.

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.

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.

	2024	2023
Student Residences	513,887	639,442
Administration Buildings	15,556	9,859
Printers	8,894	9,932
	538,337	659,233

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
7. Unlisted investments		
7.1 Unlisted investments comprise of the following balances		
Guard Risk Insurance	-	412
Sanlam Multi Investment (Listed unit trusts)	21,856	17,884
	21,856	**18,296**
7.2 Fair value gains/(losses) of investments		
Fair value gains /(losses)	3,972	412

Fair values

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).

	2024	2023
Level 1: At fair value through profit and loss	21,856	18,296

The prices are obtained from a report published by the financial institution.

The carrying of the investments best represents the maximum exposure to credit risk as these are listed unit trusts.

8. Trade and other receivables

8.1 Trade and other receivables comprise:

	2024	2023
Trade receivables	1,465,629	1,912,815
Trade receivables impairment	(1,122,973)	(1,100,747)
Trade receivables - net	**342,656**	**812,068**
Sundry debtors	22,744	9,913
Eastern Cape Department of Health receivable	146,106	64,752
Prepaid expenses	11,447	13,533
Value added tax	1,378	4,966
Total current receivables	**524,331**	**905,232**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Trade and other receivables continued...

8.2 Trade and other receivables classification

	2024	2023
Prepaid expenses	11,447	13,533
Value added tax	1,378	4,966
Total non-financial instruments included in trade and other receivables	12,825	18,499
Total trade and other receivables excluding non-financial assets included in trade and other receivables	511,506	886,733
Total trade and other receivables	**524,331**	**905,232**

8.3 Movements in impairment of trade and other receivables are as follows:

	2024	2023
At the start of the year	1,100,747	1,020,480
Impairment provision raised	127,346	80,267
Written off during the year	(105,120)	-
At the end of the year	**1,122,973**	**1,100,747**

As at 31 December 2024, student debtors of R1.465 billion (2023: R 1.913 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 R1.122 billion (2023: R1.100 billion) were provided for. The amount that best represents the maximum exposure to credit risk at the end of the reporting period was R1.465 billion (2023: R1.913 billion).

The University prepared an ageing of its trade receivables and calculated lifetime Expected Credit Losses as follows:

31 December 2024

Ageing / Category	Balance outstanding	Expected loss rate	ECL Allowance
Registered students - NSFAS	65,988	4%	3,299
Registered students - Bursaries	63,820	4%	6,382
Registered students - self and partly funded	348,867	70%	244,206
Unregistered students	986,955	88%	869,085
Total	**1,465,629**		**1,122,972**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Figures in R `000

Trade and other receivables continued...

31 December 2023

Ageing / Category	Balance outstanding	Expected loss rate	ECL Allowance
Registered students - NSFAS	636,039	6%	38,462
NSFAS prior year debt	-		
Registered students - Bursaries	8,399	12%	986
Registered students - self and partly funded	356,535	40%	141,474
Unregistered students - handover over	783,702	101%	792,491
Unregistered students - not handed over	128,140	99%	127,334
Total	**1,912,815**		**1,100,747**

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. There were no changes to the key assumptions used in detertemining the expected credit loss from the prior period.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
9. Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents comprise:		
Cash on hand	94	**66**
Short-term investments	234,426	239,599
Balances with banks	1,237,367	1,305,825
Total bank balances	**1,471,793**	**1,545,424**
Total cash and bank balances	**1,471,887**	**1,545,490**
Details of balances with banks		
Council controlled	757,574	590,302
Restricted	714,313	955,188
Total bank balances	**1,471,887**	**1,545,490**

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 R26.1 million (2023: R27.3 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 (2023: 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

	2024	2023
Overdraft facility	22,500	22,500
Lodge cards	7,500	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 (2023: 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	2024	2023

10. 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

	2024	2023
Personnel costs	19,138	16,048

Statement of financial position

	2024	2023
Trade and other receivables - Note 8	146,106	64,752

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

	2024	2023
General expenses	2,324	2,324
Depreciation	800	800

WSU contributes 10% of the running costs of the library

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
Investments in joint operations continued...		
Statement of financial position		
Property, plant and equipment (Leasehold improvements)	34,200	35,000
Deferred income	(16,200)	(17,000)

11. Deferred income

11.1 Deferred income is analysed as follows:

		2024	2023
Balance at the beginning of the year		**2,526,649**	**2,161,857**
Add	Grant received	310,325	523,958
	Interest received	46,622	80,114
		2,883,596	2,765,929
Less	Expenditure	(203,522)	(239,280)
Balance at the end of the year		**2,680,074**	**2,526,649**

Made up as follows:	2024	2023
Cash at bank	714,313	955,188
Net book value of assets	1,882,605	1,488,305
Utilised in operations	83,156	83,156
	2,680,074	2,526,649

11.2 The balance can be analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
Asset Based Deferred Income	2,082,829	2,010,056
Income Based Deferred Income	597,245	516,593
	2,680,074	**2,526,649**
Non-current liabilities	2,046,692	2,010,056
Current liabilities	633,382	516,593
	2,680,074	**2,526,649**

11.3 Grants received can be analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
Asset Based Deferred Income	**113,305**	**293,702**
Income Based Deferred Income	**197,020**	**230,256**
	310,325	**523,958**

11.4 Interest received can be analyses as follows:

	2024	2023
Asset Based Deferred Income	**27,961**	**58,957**
Income Based Deferred Income	**18,661**	**21,157**
	46,622	**80,114**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
12. Accrual for employment obligations		
Leave pay accrual	302,226	275,261
13th cheque accrual	37,767	34,427
	339,993	**309,688**

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.

13. Trade and other payables

	2024	2023
Trade and other payables are made up as follows:		
Financial liabilities	**515,432**	**667,887**
Payables and accruals	65,540	92,665
Other payables	181,801	35,315
Debtors with credit balances	262,649	243,772
NSFAS payable	5,442	296,135
Payroll liabilities	**4,276**	**68,868**
Total trade and other payables	**519,708**	**736,755**

The carrying amount of payables approximates fair value.

14. DHET unspent funds

	2024	2023
DHET unspent funds are analysed as follows:		
Missing Middle Grant	26,131	26,131
Funds used for operation purposes	-	1,248
	26,131	**27,379**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
DHET unspent funds continued...		
Non-current portion of DHET unspent funds	-	-
Current portion of DHET unspent funds	26,131	27,379
	26,131	**27,379**

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 repaid these funds.

15. Revenue

15.1 Tuition and other fee revenue

	2024	2023
Tuition fees	1,193,158	1,000,277
Student levies and other charges	30,720	24,726
Subtotal	1,223,878	1,025,003
Residence fees	716,424	814,752
Total	**1,940,302**	**1,839,755**

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.

15.2 Subsidies and government grants

	2024	2023
Subsidies and grants	1,201,938	1,159,471
Specifically funded	200,252	237,902
Specifically funded Institutional Based	109,924	114,157
State approved	90,328	123,745
Total subsidies and grants	**1,402,190**	**1,397,373**

15.3 Other income is analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
Donations and other receipts	48,588	4,637
Management fees received	50	3,577
Rent received	1,192	1,225
Gain on recognition of assets	193	431
Total other income	**50,023**	**9,870**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023
Revenue continued...		
15.4 Sources of revenue		
Contracts with customers (Tuition and other fee revenue)	1,940,302	1,839,755
Non-monetary exchanges between entities (Government Grants)	1,402,190	1,397,373
Other non-contract revenue (Other income)	50,023	9,870
	3,392,515	**3,246,998**
Sundry income is analysed as follows is analysed as follows:		
Sundry income	48,588	4,637
Management fees received	50	3,577
Rent received	1,192	1,225
Profit on disposal of assets	193	431
Total other income	**50,023**	**9,870**
16. Personnel costs		
Salaries and wages	1,688,454	1,537,544
Defined contribution plans	119,043	123,240
	1,807,497	1,660,784

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.

17. Surplus/(Deficit) from operating activities

Surplus/(Deficit) from operating activities includes the following separately disclosable items

	2024	2023
Depreciation		
- Property Plant and Equipment	93,402	71,088
- right-of-use assets	568	1,854
	93,970	72,942
Audit fees		
Auditors' remuneration	3,175	2,983
Internal and other audit fees	1,258	1,085
	4,433	4,068

18. Finance income

	2024	2023
Interest received - cash and short-term investments	71,776	78,837
Interest on student debtors	41,333	-
Total finance income	**113,109**	**78,837**

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Finance income continued...

During the year, the University started charging interest on overdue accounts as per the revised collections policy.

19. Finance costs

	2024	2023
Lease obligations	1,887	723
Total finance costs	**1,887**	**723**

20. Commitments

20.1 Lease commitments

The future minimum rental payments under Operating Lease Agreements are as follows:

	2024	2023
Not later than 1 year	3,821	1,162
Later than 1 year but not later than 5 years	9,033	7,156
Later than 5 years	-	137
	12,854	**8,455**

The University had the following lease arrangements at the end of the reporting period:
- agreements for the lease of buildings with a remaining period of 5 years
- agreements for the lease of printers with a remaining period of 2 years

Operating lease commitments exclude the lease of residences as the agreements have a duration of 1 year and less

20.2 Capital Expenditure

For the acquisition of Property, Plant and Equipment

	2024	2023
Approved but not contracted for	489,208	987,461
Approved and contracted for at reporting period	159,154	568,678
	648,362	**1,556,139**

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	7	21,856	18,296
		21,856	**18,296**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000		2024	2023

Financial Instruments by Category continued...

		Amortised cost	
Financial Assets at amortised cost (designated)			
Trade and other receivables	8	342,656	812,068
Sundry debtors	8	168,850	74,665
Cash and cash equivalents (unrestricted)	9.	757,574	590,302
Cash and cash equivalents (restricted)	9.	714,313	955,188
		1,983,393	**2,432,223**

		Amortised cost	
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost (designated)			
Trade payables and other payables	13.	515,432	667,887
		515,432	**667,887**

22. Financial Assets and Liabilities Maturity Analysis

31 December 2024	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	21,856	-	-	21,856
Financial assets at amortised cost				
Sundry debtors	168,850	168,850	-	-
Student receivables net of impairment	342,656	342,656	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (unrestricted)	757,574	757,574	-	-
Cash and cash equivalents (restricted)	714,313	714,313		
Total	2,005,249	1,983,393	-	21,856
Financial liabilities at amortised cost				
Lease liabilities	8,010	304	608	7,098
Trade and other payables	515,432	515,432	-	-
Total	523,442	515,736	608	7,098
Net liquidity	**1,481,807**	**1,467,657**	**(608)**	**14,758**

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

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000

Financial Assets and Liabilities Maturity Analysis continued...

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 (designated)				
Lease liabilities	2,405	185	370	1,850
Trade and other payables	679,664	679,664	-	-
Total	682,069	679,849	370	1,850
Net liquidity	**1,768,450**	**1,752,374**	**(370)**	**16,446**

Student receivables are subject to impairment in terms of IFRS 9. The impairment is
disclosed in Note 8 to the financial statements.

23. Cash flows from operating activities

	2024	2023
Deficit for the year	**(159,339)**	**(132,384)**
Adjustments for:		
Finance income	(113,552)	(78,837)
Finance costs	1,887	723
Depreciation and amortisation expense	92,786	72,942
Impairment of assets	412	19,913
Income recognised on asset-based grants	(68,436)	(79,633)
Fair value gains and losses	(3,972)	(412)
Adjustments for increases in impairment losses	127,346	80,267
Other adjustments for non-cash items	10,715	-
Loss on diposal of assets	2,085	-
Change in operating assets and liabilities:		
Adjustments for decrease / (increase) in trade accounts receivable	342,066	(529,548)
Adjustments for (increase) / decrease in other operating receivables	(88,511)	24,059
Adjustments for increase in accrual for employment obligations	30,305	19,614
Adjustments for (decrease) / increase in other operating payables	(217,049)	77,884
Adjustments for increase/(decrease) in deferred income - Income Based	116,789	55,564
Adjustments for (decrease)/increase in DHET unspent funds	(1,248)	(40,000)
Net cash flows from operations	**72,284**	**(509,848)**

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

24. 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.

24.1 Market risk

24.1.1 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	15,151	11,806
Interest rates – Decrease by 200 basis points	(15,151)	(11,806)
* Holding all other variables constant		
Financial assets exposed to interest risk		
Council controlled - cash and short-term investments	757,574	590,302

24.1.2 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 profit and loss (note 7). The exposure to price risk is not significant as the investment held in unit trust is relatively small.

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%.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Financial risk management continued...

	Impact on surplus	
Sanlam Multi Investment (Listed unit trusts)	1,093	915

24.2 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.

24.3 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 R814 million (2023: R590 million) that are available for managing liquidity risk. Management monitors rolling forecasts of the University's cash and cash equivalents (note 9) on the basis of expected cash flows.

The University faces a liquidity risk which is minimised by the annual grant it receives from DHET.

25. 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.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000

26. Related parties

26.1 Relationships

Regulatory authority providing significant funding to the University	Department of Higher Education and Training
Institution in the national sphere of government providing financial aid to undergraduate students	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
Institution in the national sphere of government providing funding to the University	National Research Foundation

26.2 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.

26.3 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.

26.4 Related party transactions

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	1,402,190	1,397,373

Balances with the Department of Higher Education and Training were as follows:

DHET payable	-	-

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.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000	2024	2023

Related parties continued...

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.

National Student Financial Schme

NSFAS provides funding to eligible students to cover the cost of student as per the DHET funding policy. The funds received are credited to student accounts to reduce debt incurred.

	2024	2023
Funding	2,548,896	1,592,676

National Research Foundation

The National Research Foundation provides funding to eligible students, mostlypost gradute students to cover the cost of study and research running expenses.

	2024	2023
Funding	24,373	22,769

26.5 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.

26.6 Compensation paid to key management personnel

	2024	2023
Short-term employee benefits	50,359	45,840
Post-employment benefits	-	-
Other long-term benefits	-	-
Termination benefits	-	-
	50,359	**45,840**

Key management personnel are those people having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of the University.

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

Consolidated Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Figures in R `000

Related parties continued...

26.7 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	2024 Total	2023 Total
Chair of Council				
Adv. T Ngcukaitobi	-	-	-	-
Chairs of Committees				
Ms F Lamola (FCC & Deputy Chair of Council) - from 1 May 2022	36	1	37	34
Mr S Kou (PICC) - from 1 May 2022	49	1	49	93
Ms N Y Tyamzashe (HRCC)	39	1	40	84
Mr V Jarana (ARCCC) - from 1 Jan 2022	35	1	36	64
Members of Council				
Mr TA Klaas	22	1	23	61
Mr GTM Matyobeni	25	1	26	45
Dr M M Tebelele (From 07 July 2022)	44	2	46	87
Mr L Fuzile (From 01 May 2022)	-	-	-	20
† Dr X Mantashe (from 7 Jul 2022)	22	1	23	72
Mr S Puti (up to 16 July 2022)	-	-	-	3
			-	
Members of Committees			-	
Mr S Ngqwala	13	0	14	20
Mr R Gilfan	-	-	-	13
Mr MN De Beer	6	0	7	14
			-	
Total	**292**	**9**	**300**	**610**

† 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

:WSU

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Figures in R `000			2024	2023

Related parties continued...

Name	Salaries and related payments	Other remun eration	2024 Total remuneration	2023 Total remuneration
Executive members of staff				
Prof R Songca: Vice-Chancellor and Principal	**4,387**	76	4,464	4,157
Dr PS Jaca: DVC: Institutional Support (up to Aug 23)	-	-	-	2,200
Prof M Linington: DVC Teaching and Learning (From 01 July 2024)	1,502	22	1,524	2,489
Prof M Davhana-Maselesele	-	-	-	4,083
Prof EN Cishe: Acting DVC Research and Innovation	3,558	3	3,562	-
Prof EN Cishe: Acting Rector: Mthatha Campus	-	-	-	2,396
Dr B Nguza-Mduba: A/Rect. B/worth Camp.	-	-	-	1,924
Dr B Nguza-Mduba: Executive Dean	3,148	29	3,177	-
Dr CS Novukela: A/Rect.: Buffalo City Campus	-	-	-	1,775
Dr PT Mpiti Act. Rect. Komani Campus	-	-	-	1,864
Dr L Ntonzima: (Registrar)	2,132	10	2,142	2,006
Mr M Nhiwatiwa: Chief Financial Officer	3,247	51	3,298	2,382
Mr S Mpambane: Executive Director: Ops. & ICT	3,207	48	3,255	2,412
Mr SA Mnyaiza: Executive Director Human Resources	2,156	9	2,165	2,036
Dr IP Mohasoa: Executive Director: SDSS	3,270	204	3,473	3,239
Prof W Akpan: Senior Director: Research & Innovation	-	-	-	2,201
Prof NP Dastile Acting Senior Director: Research & Innovation	-	-	-	1,776
Prof C Ndebele: Senior Director: LTD	-	-	-	2,431
Ms YG Tukwayo: Senior Director: MCA	2,172	3	2,175	1,984
Dr TI Mabunda: Senior Director LIS (from 1 Feb 2024)	1,789	-	1,789	-
Mrs Q N C Ndzingani: Acting ED LIS (until 31 Jan 2024)	388	-	388	1,382
Prof T Ncanywa: Act. SD Reasearch and Innovation	-	-	-	1,778
Prof O Mokgatle: ED Institutional Planning	2,429	12	2,441	1,325
Prof BD Bantwini: Executive Dean	1,734	10	1,745	-
Prof MS Panicker: Executive Dean	2,892	2	2,894	-
Prof T Ndlovu: Executive Dean	3,087	5	3,092	-
Prof WW Chita: Executive Dean	3,273	-	3,273	-
Prof AT Modi: Executive Dean	2,110	5	2,115	-
Prof WD Thwala: Executive Dean	3,321	66	3,387	-
	49,803	**555**	**50,359**	**45,840**

Contingent liabilities

Legal Matters

At year end there were 23 (2023: 27 cases) legal cases pending, where a final outcome had not been determined. The total claims against the University amounts to R28.6 million (2023: R73.5 million). Based on legal advice, in 23 cases with claims amounting to R28.6 million the applicants chances of success were not probable.

The above cases can be analysed as follows:

Nature of Liability

Staff

	2024	202
These are legal claims against WSU instituted by staff. These do not include Disciplinary Actions as they have no financial impact.	3,877	24,2:

The total costs expended thus far which would be reasonably expected to be settled upon are R175 463

Although the institution and its legal representatives believe there is a good defense and thus possibility of dismissal, the cases are not at a mature stage and it is prudent to estimate potential loss. There are four open cases.

Third party

	2024	202
These are legal claims against WSU initiated by suppliers and/or potential suppliers.	24,745	49,3:

Although the institution and its legal representatives believe there is a good defense and thus possibility of dismissal, the cases are not at a mature stage and it is prudent to estimate potential loss. Only two of the ten pending cases are expected to have a cost order in the short term.

The total costs expended thus far which would be reasonably expected to be settled upon are R308 172

	2024	202
Total	**28,622**	**73,5**

Subsequent events

The University has evaluated subsequent events from the financial year end to the date of issue of these financial stateme and has determined that there are no material subsequent events to disclose.