

INTEGRATED ANNUAL REPORT
2021

GREATER THAN



Front page image

The image on the front page – an arrowhead pointing forward – symbolises our theme: to become **greater than before**.

For us, this greater-than sign also symbolises movement, growth and development. It encourages us to keep moving because every moment has the capacity for growth and progress.

Greatness is not limited to the NWU, however – we believe that it is meant for all our stakeholders. We wish to inspire all of them to recognise and celebrate their greatness and the opportunities we offer them to help them **become even greater**.

Video

In this video we challenge our students to push their boundaries, test their limits and be greater today than yesterday.

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Annexures

This is a more concise version of the integrated annual report which the NWU Council approved on 23 June 2022 and was submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) at the end of June.

The **full report** is available on the NWU website. We welcome feedback on our reporting approach – please send your comments or suggestions to our registrar, **Prof Marlene Verhoef**.

Throughout this concise version of the report, you will find links to related information. Some of this is in other sections in this report and some is hosted on our NWU website or posted elsewhere on the internet. Certain links will also take you to the relevant information included in the full integrated report that was submitted to the DHET. Look out for these bold, turquoise links: **link**.

The NWU is a place where everyone should feel at home. The languages used have a lot to do with that sense of belonging.

In line with our functional multilingual language policy, you will be able to click on “language choice buttons” that will enable you to read certain sections or topics in this integrated report in Setswana, Sesotho or Afrikaans.

AFR

SES

SET

About this report

LANGUAGE BUTTONS
[AFR](#) [SES](#) [SET](#)

Becoming greater than before

With the Covid-19 pandemic still raging in 2021, we continued to pull out all the stops to ensure that the NWU's business of teaching-learning, research and community engagement continued successfully.

Early in the year, we realised the need to be **greater than before** and build on what we had accomplished during 2020, when we first faced the pandemic. We understood that the NWU and its community have the potential to push the boundaries of **greatness** if we stand and work together.

As a result, **Greater than** became the theme running through all our activities in 2021 and is now also the golden thread weaving the story we tell in this integrated report.



In our **Greater than story**, we show how we mobilised and affected our resources, skills and relationships, known as our "capitals", for the greater good.

There are six capitals: intellectual, human, social and relationship, manufactured, natural and financial. (Read more about our capitals on the next page.)

Although we aim to increase value in all instances, our capitals can also undergo either a net decrease or experience no net change. In such cases, value is eroded or preserved.

Despite our aim to **become greater** as an institution and empower our stakeholders to **become greater**, we realise that changing circumstances in our internal and external environment may hamper our efforts to increase value at all times.

We include these instances – where value is maintained or even eroded – in our integrated report, as we aim to tell our value creation story in a balanced way.

Our story is for you

The story of how we as a university **became greater** and also empowered others to **become greater than before**, is intended for you, our stakeholders.

We see our stakeholders as those individuals or groups whom we affect through our activities and services, and whose actions can also affect our ability to successfully implement our strategy and achieve our goals.

This integrated report talks mainly to our primary stakeholders. They are our students, alumni, Council, staff, the Department of Higher Education and Training, our peers, our collaboration partners and our business communities (as future employers of our students.)

However, we believe that our story will also be of value to the **other stakeholders**.

It is important to mention to you that Dr Bismark Tyobeka had been appointed by the NWU Council as principal and vice-chancellor of the university on 1 June 2022.

How we tell our story

At the beginning of our story, we give an **overview** of the NWU and explain how we interacted with **our external environment** and specifically how we experienced and reacted to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also in this report you will find a graphic of **our business model**, followed by the **risks and opportunities** that affect us, and how we are dealing with these. The section on **our strategy** tells you where we want to go to and how we intend to get there, while the section on **how we performed against our capitals** tells the story of what we did to achieve our strategic objectives.

How to navigate our story

We use different icons to show the connectivity between the various sections in our integrated report.

Our capitals



Intellectual

These include our processes, procedures, policies, strategies, and knowledge-based intangibles emanating from our teaching and learning and research and innovation activities



Human

Staff and students (internal stakeholders)



Social and Relationship

Relationships with external stakeholders



Manufacturing

Manufactured/manufacturing Tangible infrastructure and assets



Natural

Environmental/natural resources



Financial

Funds that we obtain and spend according to budget

Our strategic goals



Goal 1: Promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions



Goal 2: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation



Goal 3: Integrate and align community engagement with teaching-learning and research to develop a culture of active citizenship



Goal 4: Develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition with a focus on creating an inclusive environment aimed at developing students holistically through structured and unstructured co-curricular programmes which are relevant, desirable and meet students' needs



Goal 5: Attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile



Goal 6: Develop and implement a digital business strategy to create a competitive advantage for the university and ultimately unlock alternative revenue streams

Our enablers

The following enablers support our goals and our intention to be **greater** than before:



Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment



Cultivate and deliver stakeholder-focused platforms to create and grow intentional experiences and brand equity



Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future



Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation

Materiality of the report content

We use the concept of “materiality” to decide what information to include in this report. As set out in the International Integrated Reporting Council’s (IIRC) Integrated Reporting Framework, we see material matters as issues that:

- > substantively affect the university’s ability to create value over the short, medium and long term; and
- > are important to any stakeholder wishing to make an informed assessment of the NWU’s ability to generate value.

How we identify relevant matters

In this report, we discuss the factors with the greatest potential to impact our ability to create value. Identifying these material factors was the work of our integrated reporting task team, led by the NWU’s registrar and including the deputy vice-chancellor for planning and the chief strategy officer in the office of the vice-chancellor. The team identified those matters with the highest potential to impact our ability to create value.

In the process, we took the following frameworks into account:

- > The NWU’s *Annual Performance Plan (APP) that puts the strategic plan into action;

- > The common strategic assumptions that underpin our strategy;
- > The **institution-wide risk register;
- > The IIRC’s Integrated Reporting Framework; and
- > The Department of Higher Education and Training’s (DHET’s) reporting regulations.

* The goals, enablers and strategic assumptions, as included in the APP, resulted from the process the University Management Committee members use to identify material matters to be included when drawing up or revising the APP.

** Our key risks and opportunities are the result of an institution-wide identification and prioritising process, as described on page 35.

We also considered any factors in our **external environment** that substantially affect our ability to create value.

In addition, materiality was informed by the issues our stakeholders raise during their interaction with the university. These are described in the section on how we engage with **our stakeholders**, in the table under the subheading: Issues raised.

Reporting period and scope, and suite of reports

Our integrated report reflects the performance of the NWU across our three campuses for the period 1 January to 31 December 2021.

Information about our performance is both financial and non-financial. This includes facts about our non-financial performance, risks and opportunities and the internal and external factors that substantially influence our business. Where material, we discuss the real and potential impact of these matters on our ability to create value.

Reporting cycle	Annually in December
Contact point for questions	marlene.verhoef@nwu.ac.za
Suite of reports	Our integrated report is the primary vehicle for reporting to our stakeholders. It is supplemented by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Annual financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2021, which can be found here. > Documents for various stakeholders, which can be accessed here.
Our reporting framework	This integrated report has been prepared in accordance with the IIRC’s International Integrated Reporting Framework and the DHET’s Regulations for Annual Reporting by Higher Education Institutions (published in June 2014 and incorporating principles from the King IV Report).

Assurance

Internal and external assurance providers give us assurance about the effectiveness of the internal controls at the NWU. Their input has been incorporated into this report.

We have also made sure that our reporting is accurate by taking the following steps:

- > After compiling the integrated report, we submitted it to the University Management Committee. The committee considered the completeness and accuracy of the content and provided feedback where necessary, which was then incorporated into the integrated report. Only then did we submit the report first to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee and then to Council for approval.
- > The student and staff data in this report was obtained from our Institutional Planning and Strategic Intelligence Department, which is also responsible for submitting NWU data to the Higher Education Information Management System (HEMIS).

The summarised, audited consolidated financial statements we link to in this report are part of the audited consolidated financial statements, prepared in accordance with the IFRS and independently audited by our external auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Our auditors also independently audited the information in our **performance assessment report**. The financial statements, including the auditors’ report, can be obtained from the NWU website [here](#).

More information about combined assurance can be found in the **governance section** of this report.

Council approval

Council and its subcommittees are responsible for overseeing the integrity and completeness of this integrated report.

Council confirms that it has reviewed the contents of the report and applied its collective mind to the preparation and presentation of this report.

Furthermore, Council believes that it has appropriately considered the accuracy and completeness of the material matters, as well as the reliability of the information presented in this report.

Council has sufficiently considered and materially presented these matters in accordance with the Integrated Reporting Framework of the IIRC.

Council approved the 2021 integrated report on 23 June 2022.



MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL



MR THABO MOKATLHA
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Overview of the NWU

Performance highlights

In 2021 we continued to create value for the NWU and for our stakeholders.

The following achievements – and in many instances also improvements – are noteworthy:

14 484

qualifications awarded in 2021
(2020: 15 454)

215

postdoctoral fellows in *2020
(2019: 231)



R2,69 billion

financial aid administered by the offices on the three campuses
(2020: R1 565 million)



89,2%

undergraduate success rate in 2021
(2020: 92,3%)

264

PhDs awarded in 2021
(2020: 251)

263

NRF-rated researchers in *2020
(2019: 248)

9 830

distance students enrolled
(2020: 11 640)



R163 million

spent on infrastructure and facilities
(2020: R273 million)



Ranked **96th**

out of 698 universities globally



Nationally: 5th Emerging Economies University Ranking of Times Higher Education (THE)
(2020: ranked 97th out of 606 universities)

1 536,59

article equivalents approved in *2020
(2019: 1 541,14)

5

NWU centres of excellence (2020: 5)

7

hosted research entities (centres, platforms, institutes) (2019: 7)

* Please note that the research figures lag two years behind

Who we are

The North-West University is one of the 26 public higher education institutions in South Africa. We have three campuses: two in the North West province and another in Gauteng.

We have a single set of policies, systems and standards, and are driven by a set of constitutionally based values, a core value being ethics in all our endeavours.

We wish to foster engaged and caring staff and students, ensuring a suitable environment in which we can reach our purpose and realise our dream.



To excel in innovative learning and teaching and cutting-edge research, thereby benefiting society through knowledge.



To be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care.



To transform and position the NWU as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence, with a commitment to social justice.

What we do

Our core business is teaching-learning and research, with community engagement and innovation intertwined in these activities.

Ultimately, though, our core business is about creating value in the form of outputs and outcomes, while pursuing an ethic of care.

Where we operate

We operate in South Africa but collaborate extensively with institutions and people all over the world. In 2021, the NWU had approximately 2 147 active collaboration agreements.

What sets us apart

- The NWU ranks in the top 4,7% of universities worldwide.
- Students have ranked the NWU as the safest university in South Africa.
- We had more than 1 600 international students from over 60 countries in 2021.



Harnessing the Covid-19 storm

The Covid-19 pandemic had a far-reaching social and economic impact on how institutions conduct their business and people live their lives. It also had a huge transformative impact on the higher education sector, triggering new innovations and what might be described as a revolution in how universities teach and students learn.

The NWU was no exception. Although not discussed below as a separate influencing factor in our external environment, the impact of the pandemic has been extensive.

Like a golden thread running through this integrated report, you will see how addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic was intertwined with all our activities, influencing our value-creation story and taking us on a journey to **become greater than before**.



Our external environment

Various factors in our external environment affect our capitals and consequently our ability to create value for ourselves and our stakeholders. The event that took the world by storm during 2020 and 2021 and severely influenced life as we knew it, was undoubtedly the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the text below, we discuss other material factors in our external environment that affect us directly or indirectly. We also indicate how these are linked to our strategic goals and risks, and how these impact our value-creation ability.

Rapidly changing societal roles/ views/perceptions

The university environment is a microcosm of the larger South African and global society, where evolving views on gender, cultural, sexual and religious diversity are mirrored within student communities.

We have been seeing increasing support among students for social movements focused on the eradication of racism and gender-based violence, the reconceptualisation of gender roles and norms, improved engagement and service delivery, sustainable transformation and cultural reforms.

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed inequalities in students' access to technology and the basic infrastructure needed to effectively engage in university business and services. This added an additional layer of complexity to the management of student matters and we are only now starting to better understand the true impact of inequality on student access and success.

Strategic matter affected: development of a clearly differentiated student value proposition (goal no 4)
Capitals affected: human, social and relationship, financial
Risks involved: 2 and 5 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation
 The inability to timeously and effectively address changing societal perspectives and needs poses a risk in that inaction can be seen as further excluding and marginalising the people impacted by such changes. This could erode the relevance of the student value proposition that we promote. Therefore, we have to ensure that our value proposition is sufficiently agile to enable the university to respond appropriately and timeously.

Our strategic response
 Our strategic response consists of purpose-driven engagements and structured feedback mechanisms, which ultimately inform our decision-making and policy development processes.

This approach allows us to respond to projected changes proactively, which helps us to maintain a relevant and valuable student experience.

Possible social instability in the higher education sector

Social instability within the higher education sector could influence the way our students receive and respond to university messages. If there is scepticism and resistance, this could be compounded by a lack of understanding of how the higher education sphere functions at a national and institutional level.

Strategic matter affected: development of a clearly differentiated student value proposition (goal no 4)
Capitals affected: human, social and relationship, financial
Risks involved: 2 and 5 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation
 When stakeholders resist NWU messages, this could delay and frustrate the development and eventual implementation of sustainable resolutions that advance the business of the university.

Our strategic response
 Our communication and consultation strategy is inclusive, involving staff, students and community stakeholders. One of our aims is to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the university. With this in mind, we emphasise the development of the key elements of the student value proposition. This goes beyond co-curricular offerings and includes efficient and interactive service delivery across the NWU's service-orientated spheres.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution

No longer futuristic concept, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is under way. In addition to new 4IR skills that universities should be teaching students, the impact of technological advances is also being felt in academic administration and student support.

In the race to adapt, universities will increasingly compete for scarce ICT innovation skills, which will play an increasingly important role in facilitating the provision of teaching and learning and support throughout the student life cycle.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1), financial sustainability (enabler 4)
Capitals affected: All capitals
Risks involved: 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation
 The NWU is focused on implementing ICT innovation to support our core business, broadening access to tertiary studies through online teaching and learning and being part of global trends such as the multiversity, the unbundled university and the blockchain university.

Our strategic response
 The development of an NWU digital business strategy for the 4IR was already well under way when the Covid-19 pandemic changed the world as we knew it. The ensuing lockdown and accompanying shift to online learning saw us accelerating our digital journey in teaching and learning, student support and workplace practices.

Some of the milestones in the NWU's digital transformation so far, include the planned implementation of a leading-edge student information system and an automated system for managing students' work-integrated and service-learning placements.

We have also introduced a new digital workplace environment to improve workplace efficiencies and mobilised a team of education technologists to assist staff with the integration of technology into their teaching strategies.

Academic staff shortages

The pool of academic staff in South Africa is limited, especially from designated groups at senior levels and in the scarce and critical skills.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1)
Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, financial
Risks involved: 2 and 3 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation
 Failing to attract sufficient staff with the requisite demographic diversity, skills and experience may detract from our reputation for excellence and, amongst others, limit our capacity to implement functional multilingualism. Recruitment challenges also cause an overreliance on temporary staff, which is far from ideal for our core business capacity.

Another staff-related constraint is that the Covid-19 pandemic has necessitated special cost-containment measures such as placing a moratorium on positions. Careful consideration is being given to academic positions so that the academic service offerings are not compromised.

Our strategic response
 Our line managers have been tasked with identifying and fast-tracking professionally qualified academics from designated groups.
 Our talent-management strategy provides incentives and professional development to attract and retain scarce skills, particularly with regard to black academics.
 Despite uncertainties associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, we resumed the individual remuneration review process in 2021 to ensure fair, market-related pay, demonstrating the importance we attach to staff remuneration.

Fee-free higher education affects financing model

The number of NSFAS-qualifying students has increased by approximately 396% since 2015, placing pressure on all our internal business processes dealing with financial aid. Where there were 4 837 approved NSFAS students in 2015, the number climbed to 23 996 in 2021.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1), financial sustainability (enabler 4)

Capitals affected: financial, human, intellectual
Risks involved: 1, 3, 5 and 8 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

The greatest risk to value creation remains the potential unsustainability of the NSFAS model and the proposed Fee Regulation Model, and the financial impact it could have on the NWU and our students.

Our strategic response

In 2021, in managing the challenges posed by the increased number of students qualifying for NSFAS and the associated administrative demands, we harnessed effective administrative processes and kept staff and students informed of developments around financial aid. We also continued to build our long-standing relationship with NSFAS and the DHET as valued stakeholders.

Fee regulation by the DHET

The DHET is in the process of formulating a Fee Regulation Framework for the public higher education system. In the meantime, the Minister has recommended CPI-related increases in fees since fee-free education was announced and that also has a significant influence on our funding model. A tuition-fee increase of 4,7% was implemented in 2021 in line with the recommendation from the Minister.

Strategic matter affected: financial sustainability (enabler no 4)

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human
Risks involved: 1 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

Fee regulation could put our financial stability at risk if the permitted increases do not reflect our cost structure and internal inflation rate. This may ultimately affect the quality of the services we provide and may erode the autonomy of universities.

Our strategic response

We have a multifaceted strategy to manage the complex task of maintaining financial stability and the quality of our services. This includes making a positive contribution to the consultation process on the proposed Fee Regulation Framework, identifying opportunities to increase our income, managing our budget process and improving operating cost efficiency.

State funding

The Rand value of the block allocated to the university increased by 3,5% and the value of the earmarked grants allocated to universities decreased by 19,5% from 2020 to 2021. This was after adjustments were made in order to assist NSFAS in partially funding the shortfall for 2021. This will not fully cover higher-education inflation in the long run, and in fact represents a decline in state funding in real terms.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1), research and innovation (goal 2), student value proposition (goal 4) staff profile (goal no 5), financial sustainability (enabler 4)

Capitals affected: human, financial, intellectual
Risks involved: 1, 3 and 8 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

If we were to experience funding shortfalls, we would have to respond with budget cuts and would not then be able to fund all operational and strategic activities. In the short and medium term, however, the funding provided by the state does contribute to financial stability, bearing in mind that the impact of Covid-19 on future state funding is still unknown.

Our strategic response

We prioritise wisely when allocating the funds available while continuously investing in opportunities to improve cost effectiveness, build reserves, practise disciplined cost management, evaluate the viability of academic programmes and focus on supporting cost reduction. As a longer-term strategy, the NWU's focus is to become less dependent on state funding by diversifying income generation.

External research funding declines

Owing to the pandemic, most government and industry funding agencies reduced or even discontinued research funding and support.

Postgraduate funding declined following funding cuts and the implementation of the new NRF funding instrument, which saw fewer students being funded, although the amount per student increased.

Strategic matter affected: research and innovation (goal no 2)

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human, social and relationship
Risks involved: 3 and 7 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

Less external research funding may adversely affect our research productivity and the standing of the university in national and international rankings. At this point, research journal outputs have not been negatively affected, but due to international travel bans in 2021, international conference proceedings outputs declined.

Our strategic response

We provided support in the form of mobility grants (R1 507 505) and research mentorship (R708 700), including assistance with NRF-rating applications. We also contributed R1 168 760 to the salary component of the research chairs.

Demand for Intellectual Property (IP) reduced

Amid economic constraints, there was less private sector interest in licensing our intellectual property (IP) and technology, and a reduction in the flow of early-stage, seed and venture capital funding for NWU start-ups.

Strategic matter affected: research and innovation (goal no 2)

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human, social and relationship
Risks involved: 3 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

Some of the possible consequences of low uptake of our IP and technologies are lost income and reduced licensing and spin-off activities.

Our strategic response

Vulnerability to funding fluctuations across economic cycles can be mitigated by taking a long-term view of funding and taking steps to develop and maintain good relationships with funders. By engaging with industry, we gain a deeper understanding of their needs and challenges and can respond with relevant solutions and innovations.

(For more information, see [Becoming greater through innovation and technology](#).)

Challenges in recruiting international students

Stricter visa requirements for international students, the DHET requirement that the universities should prioritise South African students for postgraduate studies and the travel restrictions during the pandemic resulted in a decline in the number of international students registered with the NWU.

Strategic matter affected: research and innovation (goal no 2)

Capitals affected: financial, human, social and relationships
Risks involved: 3 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

The number of international students enrolled at the NWU decreased from 6% of the total cohort of postgraduate students in 2016 to about 3% in 2021, which may lead to lower global rankings.

Our strategic response

The NWU now has global engagement offices on all three campuses, enabling us to offer higher levels of administrative assistance to international students and making it easier for them to study with the NWU.

NWU BUSINESS MODEL

National call for greater access to universities

It remains a priority for the NWU to widen access to as many qualifying students as possible.

The Faculty of Health Sciences' planned Higher Certificate in Health Promotion will open access to the envisaged four-year professional bachelor's degree in Public Health, while the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences is in the process of re-curriculating 14 extended curriculum programmes for improved student success.

These two alternative admission pathways will allow students who do not meet admission requirements an opportunity they would otherwise not have had to access higher education.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1)
Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, financial

Risks involved: 2, 3 and 5 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

In 2021, through entry-level access qualifications, we continued our pursuit of higher education for the public good. The prospective students we target are persons already active in their respective fields, meaning that value is added immediately to the communities. These qualifications will progress to further qualifications in higher education, resulting in additional benefits for the students and the community.

We are also expanding our academic and counselling support services and programmes for students, creating an opportunity to generate even more value and increase our intellectual and human capital.

Our strategic response

Still on the subject of wider access, the NWU continues to offer extended curriculum programmes in the BSc, BCom and BAdmin areas, as well as an extended LLB programme. We are looking forward to reviewing the similar programmes in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences in 2022.

National call for curriculum change and transformation

The need to decolonise the curriculum in higher education, the Covid-19 pandemic that changed the way we teach and the way students learn, and the advent of the 4IR are driving curricular innovation.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1)
Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, manufactured, financial

Risks involved: 2 and 3 – refer to page 35

Effect on value creation

Lockdown levels fluctuating between levels 4 and 1 throughout 2021 posed challenges for teaching and learning at the university.

Our strategic response

In response to the shifts occurring on multiple fronts, the NWU has deliberately embraced internal and external scrutiny of our modules and programmes to expand on teaching and learning opportunities and enhance the relevance, responsiveness and transformational potential of our academic offering.

In some cases, we have introduced new programmes while in others, we have adapted existing ones. New programmes that have received clearance or been registered in the past two years include five new postgraduate diplomas in nursing, three higher certificates in health, palliative care and theology and several qualifications in early childhood care and education, agriculture, and theology.

Regarding the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the NWU used a hybrid modality for teaching and learning throughout the year and was able to continue its core activities without interruption and complete the 2021 academic year.



In this section, you can read how we use and transform our capitals to create value for ourselves and our stakeholders through the input, activities, outputs and outcomes in our value chain – all regulated by Senate.

The functions of the NWU Senate are related to our core academic business, which in turn comprises important aspects of our value chain. That is why we present the Senate report in the format of our business model diagram, followed by a discussion of our value chain.

(Click [here](#) to learn more about the composition of Senate.)

INPUT

784

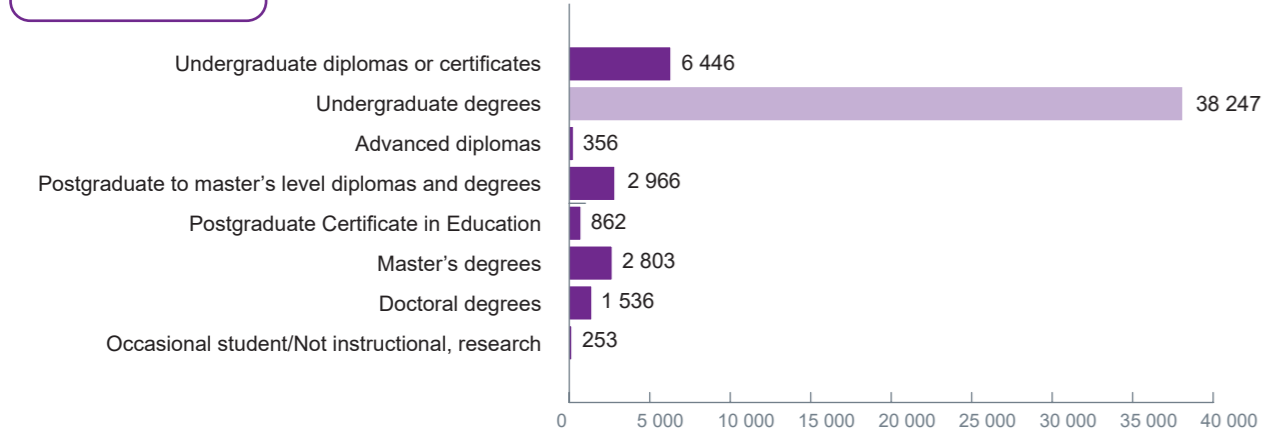
Schools reached by our student recruiters through direct marketing campaigns and activities. (social and relationship capital)

9 708

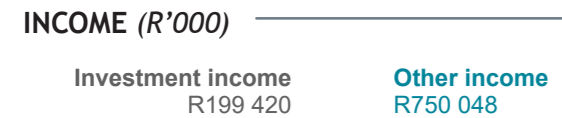
First-time entering undergraduate students (human capital)

Total number of students per qualification type (human capital)

Total: 53 469



Budget (financial capital)



R481 million Spent on infrastructure (manufactured capital)

14,9% Increase in total assets

476 599 square metres The total usable floor area of the NWU

1 110 hectares The total area occupied by the university's campuses (natural capital)

Academic and support staff (human capital)

Personnel category	Permanent	Temporary	2019	2020	2021
Crafts/trades	23	26	23	26	26
Executive/administration/management professional	90	83	90	83	85
Instructional/Research professional	1 575	1 632	1 575	1 632	1 648
Non-professional administration	1 289	1 285	1 289	1 285	1 321
Service	327	323	327	323	304
Specialised/support professional	522	492	522	492	510
Technical	251	245	251	245	246
Grand total	8 606	8 078	8 606	8 078	9 399

ACTIVITIES

Spending according to the APP (financial capital)

- Goal
- Goal 1 (teaching and learning)
 - Goal 2 (research and innovation)
 - Goal 3 (community engagement and sustainability)
 - Goal 4 (student value proposition)
 - Goal 5 (staff and student equity)
 - Goal 6 (digital business strategy)

Student support activities: (intellectual and human capital) (Read more on pages 18, 25, 51)

Staff development activities: (intellectual and human capital) (Read more on pages 18, 57, 58)

Conducting research: (intellectual capital) (Read more on pages 22 and 54)

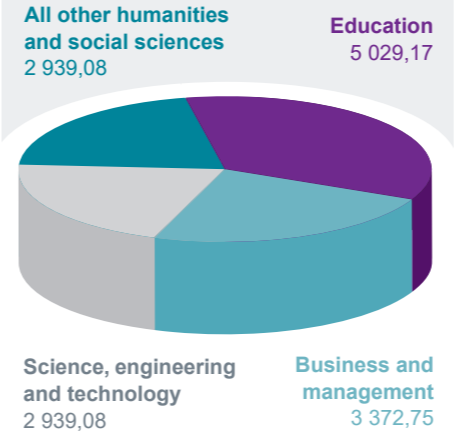
Community engagement: (social and relationship capital) (Read more on page 61)

Presenting over 975 academic programmes (intellectual capital)

OUTPUT

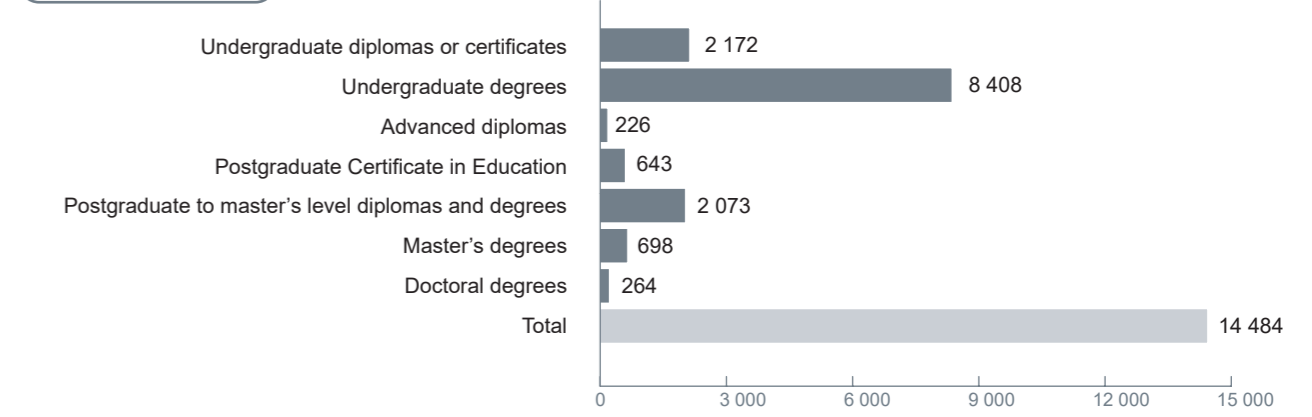
Graduates: educational subject matter distribution (human capital)

Total: 14 484



Total number of graduates per qualification type (human capital)

Total: 14 484



62,64% Number of graduates who completed their studies in minimum time

R238,8 million The university, from its own resources, contributed R238,8 million or 8,9% of the total funds allocated for financial aid.

97% Success rate of the NWU merit bursary holders

R67,6 million (28%) of the funds allocated to financial aid used to award students for academic performances

Collaboration (Social and relationship capital)

We had in access of 2 147 active agreements and memoranda of understanding

Research output 2020 (intellectual capital)

Journal articles	1 264,2
Conference proceedings	38,84
Books and chapters	233,43
Total article equivalents published	1 536,59
Master's degrees conferred	722
Research master's	521,605
Research master's weighted	521,605
Doctoral degrees conferred	251
Doctoral degrees weighted	753
Total weighted research output	2 811,1914
Postdoctoral fellows	215
Publication units per permanent academic staff member	0,93

Financial sustainability (financial capital)

R1 422,6 million Net surplus for 2021 as reflected in the consolidated statement of comprehensive income

OUTCOME

The Times Higher Education (THE) World Rankings announced on 13 October 2021 indicated that we excelled in the field of law and education and was placed globally in the 201+ and 401 to 500 categories respectively. It also shone in social sciences and business and economics, where it was ranked in the 501 to 600 category.

The external environment sets the context in which we use our business model to create value.

NWU value chain

LANGUAGE BUTTONS
 AFR SES SET

Creating value to become greater than before

In 2021, our value-creation story was about empowering people and taking them along on a challenging but exciting journey to discover their strengths and harness their skills to **become even greater than they were before**.

We invested in our students because we believed in their potential (our input), we created value for them by exploring new possibilities and expanding our vision so that they could continue to grow and flourish (our activities), enabling them to become critical thinkers (our output) and eventually enter the labour market and society as value creators themselves (our outcome).

Throughout our value chain, we access, use and transform our capitals. For instance, as part of our input, we use our sources of income (financial capital), our skilled staff members (human capital), buildings and equipment (manufactured capital) and our academic programmes (intellectual capital) to create value for our students (human capital).

During our daily activities, for example our community engagement initiatives, we reach out to communities, thereby strengthening our social and relationship capital. Our research results (intellectual capital) are part of our output. As a result, we build good relationships with the outside world, thereby increasing our social and relationship capital.

We apply these results to find solutions to problems in society and in our country, thereby changing lives and creating a better future for people, which is part of our outcomes.

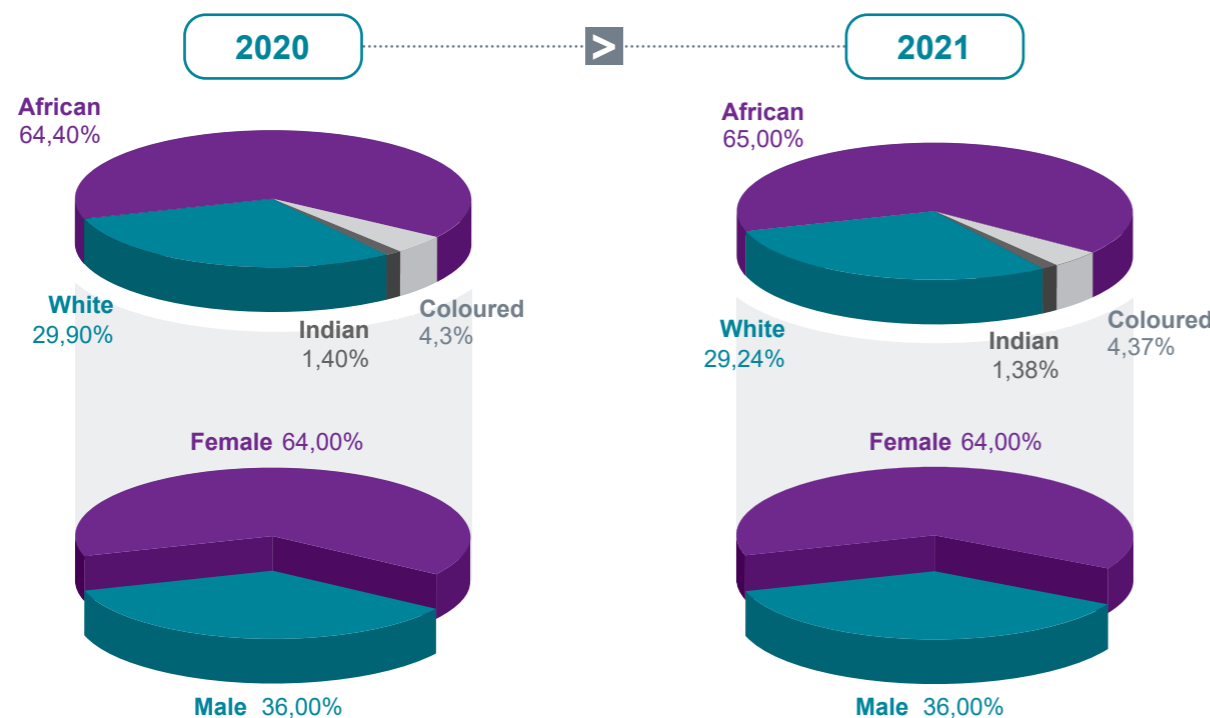
Our value chain also depends on the responsible use of our natural capital. In fact, all our capitals are based on the availability of natural resources. We need water, for instance, to sustain the lives of our staff and students (human capital) and land to build on (manufactured capital).

In the following discussion of our value chain, you will see how we draw on our various capitals as inputs and, through our activities, convert them to outputs and outcomes.

Input: Invest in people's potential

Our students

Our student body is an invaluable input into our value chain. The table below shows the composition and size of the student body in 2021 as compared to 2020:



- Investing in our students

We follow a holistic and multidisciplinary approach towards caring for our students, offering them financial, psychosocial and academic support.

In 2021, the NWU's financial aid offices administered R2,69 billion in financial aid for students. The bulk (R2,19 billion) of this was government funding and a substantial amount (R238,8 million) came from the NWU's own funds. A limited amount of other external funding accounted for the rest.

In addition, we offer non-academic support such as psychosocial, health, sport and arts and cultural services aimed at developing our students holistically.

We also enable our students to achieve academic success through ongoing and focused academic support.

*For more information about our academic support activities for students, turn to the section **Increase student access and success**.*

Our staff

A significant input into our value chain is our staff complement.

The following table shows how our number of permanent academic staff compares with those of other South African higher education institutions (Please note that this is based on 2020 audited HEMIS data):

Institution	Total
University of South Africa (Unisa)	1 830
North-West University	1 632
University of KwaZulu-Natal	1 257
University of Johannesburg	1 309
University of Cape Town (UCT)	1 176
University of Pretoria	1 241
University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)	1 220

In 2021, we had a total of 4 140 permanent staff members, comprising 1 648 academics and 2 492 support employees.

Investing in our staff

The NWU has a comprehensive employee health and wellness programme that consists of psychosocial support, health awareness as well as organisational wellness interventions.

The NWU Wellness Unit provided various training opportunities focused on overall workplace well-being, supervisory training, stress management, resilience,

gender-based violence, substance abuse and interpersonal relationships. The primary focus for 2021 was to create a nurturing environment for staff at the NWU to flourish within the workplace. This focus will continue in 2022.

We also have an annual academic promotions process, which is a recognition programme for our academics, underpinning the importance of building mutual value for both the academics and the NWU.

For 2021, there were 137 promotions approved which is 35 more than 2020. Although the percentage of black academics' share of promotions decreased by 0,6% overall from 2020 to 2021, the actual number of promotions increased in 2021 (46) when compared to 2020 (35).

Funding as input

- Research funding

NRF funding of R116,5 million was received in 2021 for research and innovation. The table below shows different funding pots from NRF:

Grant programme	Number of awards	Total amount R'000
Thuthuka	21	1 865 960.86
MRC funding	8	2 647 967.14
Other grant holder awards	145	40 043 553.71
Grant holder linked bursaries	47	5 306 666.67
Block grants	4	1 590 000.00
Freestanding bursaries	346	44 159 174.64
Freestanding postdoctoral bursaries	11	2 491 667.00
Freestanding postdoctoral funding	10	490 000.00
SKA student bursaries	5	769 570.00
SKA student equipment	5	40 487.88
SKA student travel grants	1	70 000.00
2021 grant deposit		17 000 000.00

Researchers in some of the NRF programmes were given the opportunity to move their 2021 funds to 2022 or any future year, which meant this funding was not lost to the researchers concerned.

In a significant funding change, the grant-holder linked and block-grant bursaries are being phased out. Students will only receive freestanding bursaries in future.

- Funding for technology transfer and innovation

Four grants of up to R500 000 each were made available from the pre-seed fund of the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department. This fund is for qualifying early-stage technology development projects and complements the seed fund programme of the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). Seed funding from the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) remains at a low level due to budget restrictions.

Many of the traditional sources of funding for technology transfer have either been frozen or reallocated since the outbreak of the pandemic. The Technology Transfer and Innovation Support team has therefore been concentrating on building new funding relationships. The university again made a special allocation of strategic funds available for key Covid-19-related projects.

*More information about our efforts to increase research funding can be found under **Six goals to realise our strategy**.*

- International funding

The table below shows the international funding each faculty received during 2021. The total amount, R28,8 million, was twice the amount received in the previous year.

International funding for research	Actual as confirmed from faculties R'000
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences	1 334 758
Faculty of Education	290 082
Faculty of Humanities	855 287
Faculty of Engineering	360 170
Faculty of Health Sciences	13 343 911
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences	12 623 339
Grand total	28 807 547

Teaching-learning activities

In striving to keep our academic offering relevant, we are focusing on incorporating skills such as analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, complex problem-solving, critical thinking and analysis, and creativity, originality and initiative. These are the top five skills that will be in demand by 2025, according to our environmental scanning.

For more information, refer to the section on **how we performed against our strategy** and increased our intellectual capital.

- Greater student access and success

The NWU has a consistently high student retention rate. This indicates the effectiveness of the mechanisms our Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) uses to enable student access and success, especially among first-time entering students who, without sufficient support, may be most at risk of dropping out. These mechanisms include peer mentoring, reading development and supplemental instruction.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, these different forms of support to students were provided online and were also extended to our distance learning students.

- Promoting continuing education

The demand for online learning escalated over the pandemic period of 2020 and 2021. The 14 self-paced online short courses that our Unit for Continuing Education (UCE) has developed are popular and have so far attracted 298 participants in 20 intakes. The aim is to continue harnessing technology innovatively to provide short learning programmes that address the evolving needs of the labour market.

During 2021, both the UCE and NWU Business School presented short courses, reaching 4 567 learners participating in 162 short course events. These numbers are expected to increase over the next year as new tailor-made short learning programmes are being developed.

- Improving graduate employability

Our Career Centre serves as a dependable link in producing well-rounded and resourceful graduates who are ready to enter the workforce, either as employees or as self-employed individuals.

In 2021, the centre hosted virtual career fairs using cutting-edge international technology that only three universities in the country were using. A total of 91 companies participated in these virtual career fairs (57 in 2018), and more than 3 000 students were reached. This was a significantly greater number than the 1 300 participants in 2020.

According to our records, 6 056 students attended our entrepreneurship and work-readiness training sessions in 2021, an increase of 43% on the 4 222 in the year before.

Confirming the Career Centre's success in supporting its graduates, it was runner-up in the Best Employer Liaison category of the South African Graduate Employers Association (SAGEA) Awards.

*A breakdown of entrepreneurship and work-readiness training on each campus can be found under **Career-related support**.*

- Focusing on academic and professional development

The professional development of our academics is enormously important as excellent university teachers are fundamental to student success. Some of our professional development initiatives are the induction programme for new academics and the **University Teaching Excellence Awards**. Others are the annual Teaching and Learning Conference and activities related to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Research activities

Our research activities were conducted predominantly in our 61 research entities, consisting of 10 research chairs, seven hosted entities, one commercial research unit and 43 NWU research entities.

These 43 entities comprised five centres of excellence, 12 research units, 15 research focus areas and 11 research niche areas. We also supported researchers and research programmes outside the research entities model.

Through regular external and internal evaluations of our research entities, we ensure that these continue to create maximum value for our stakeholders. Although the external evaluations were postponed in 2021, the internal evaluations went ahead, focusing on quality, productivity, sustainability and good management practices.

We took our PhD review online, resulting in a self-evaluation report and improvement plan.

In striving to improve our research standing, the university provides focused support to researchers at all levels.

The Library and Information Services (LIS) took this further in February 2021, by appointing a director responsible for research and open scholarship. One of the new director's first priorities was to organise group and one-on-one sessions to improve the research skills of both postgraduate students and early-career researchers.

Our journey to greatness

Study explores potential for large-scale storage of renewable hydrogen

Power fluctuations sometimes associated with renewable energy resources could become a thing of the past through research underway at the NWU on new and better ways to store hydrogen.

The HySA Centre of Competence (CoC) at the NWU has embarked on various research projects to seek alternative hydrogen storage methods.

One of these uses Liquid Organic Hydrogen Carrier (LOHC) technology, where hydrogen is stored in the form of a heat transfer oil traded as Marlotherm-SH.

This oil is a mixture of dibenzyltoluene isomers, which have been used in many industrial applications such as an insulating oil in electrical transformers, and indirect heating of reactors, among others.

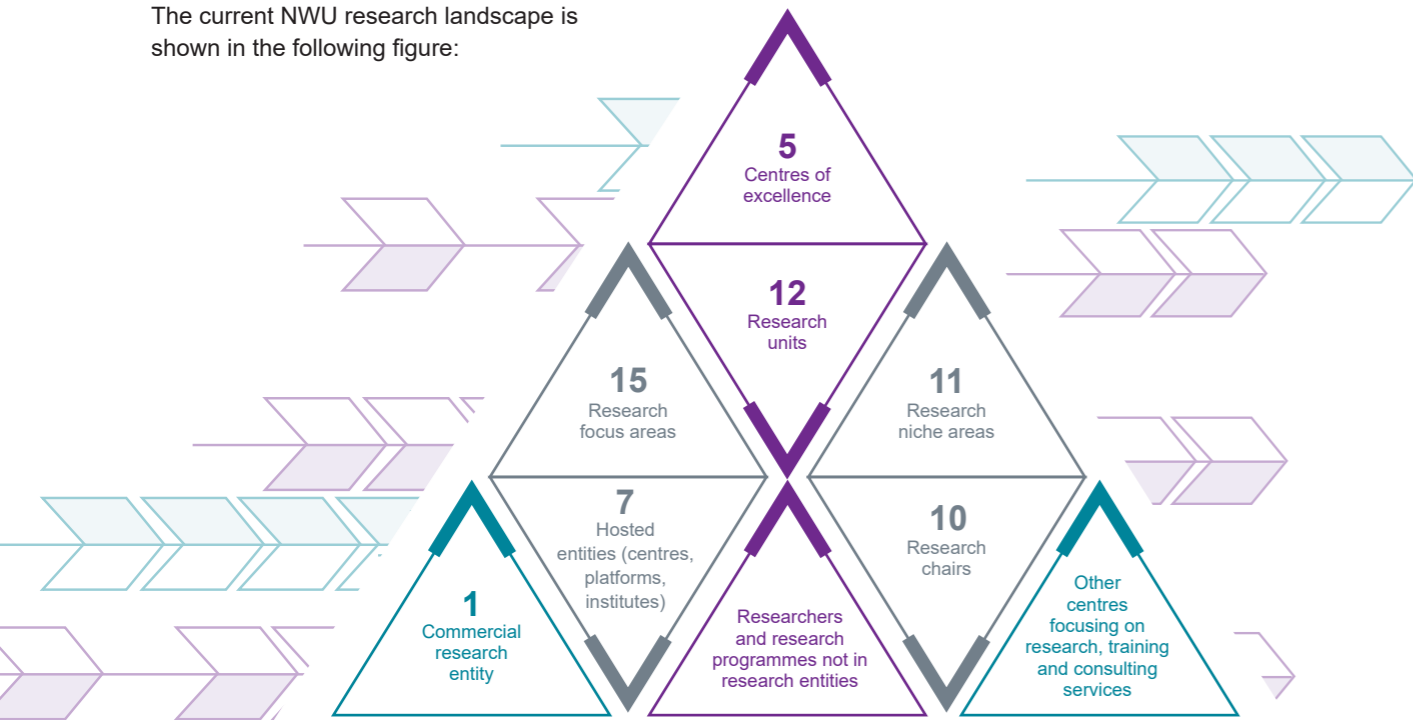
HySA believes that resolving fluctuations through better hydrogen storage methods could open up a host of possibilities for the application of renewable hydrogen. For example, it can be used as a feedstock in many industrial processes, including for steel manufacturing, floating glass production and margarine production through hydrogenation of vegetable oils.

[\(Read more\)](#)



The pre-commercial hydrogenation plant procured in collaboration with Framatome GmbH.

The current NWU research landscape is shown in the following figure:



Output: Becoming critical thinkers

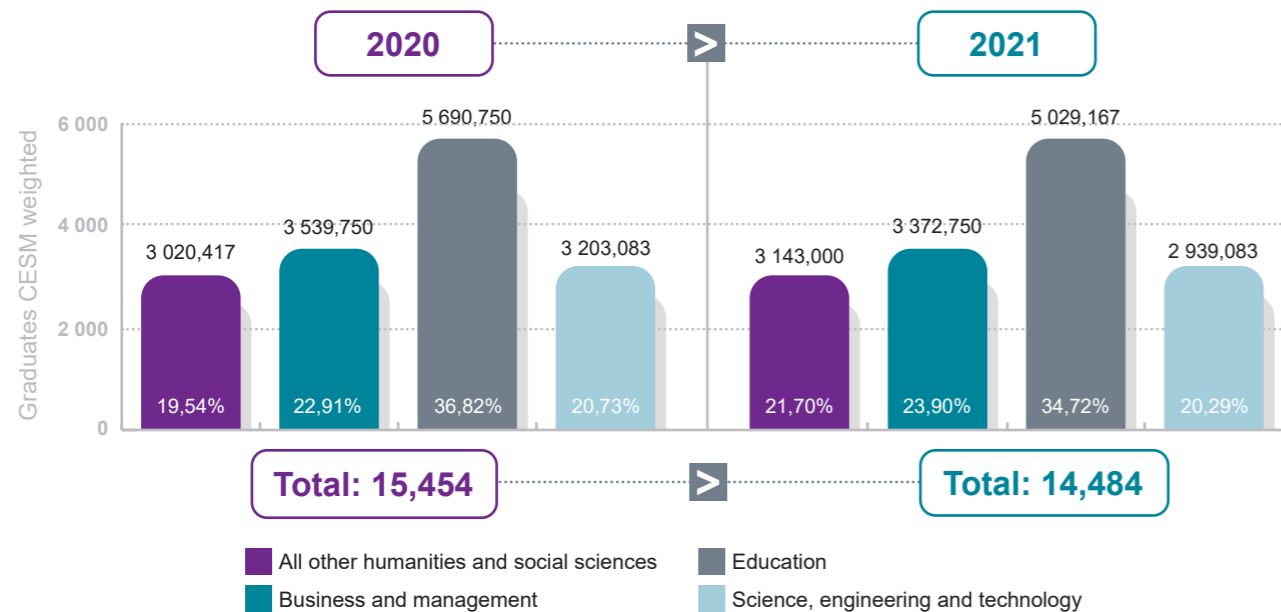
Teaching and learning output

We are proud of our student success rates, which can be ascribed to the high level of teaching excellence, and academic and student support available at the university.

Our contact success rate has stayed over 85% for the past three years. The contact undergraduate degree graduation duration factor stood at 1,09 in 2021. This is lower than in 2020, indicating that most students complete their degrees in the minimum time. The calculation of the graduation duration factor takes the duration that a student studies (in years), divided by the minimum duration of the qualification. Thus, the closer this indicator is to 1, the better.

In the case of the first-time entrants, the dropout rate for contact degrees decreased from 11,48% in 2020 to 8,96% in 2021, and remains low in comparison to sector norms.

The following graph shows the number of graduates per field of study for 2020 and 2021:



The following table shows how our number of graduates compare with those of other South African higher education institutions (based on 2020 audited HEMIS data):

Institution	Total
University of South Africa	64 423
North-West University	15 454
Tshwane University of Technology	14 897
University of Pretoria	12 852
University of Johannesburg	13 035



Two University Teaching Excellence awards were awarded. They went to Ms Veruschka Pelser-Carstens (left) from the Faculty of Economic Management and Science and Dr Sune van der Linde (right) from the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

Teaching and learning awards

The NWU Excellence Awards are held annually to acknowledge and celebrate the exceptional output of our academic staff in teaching and learning practices and innovation.

Research output

The following table shows the quality and quantity of research at the NWU:

	2019	2020
Journal articles	1 233,18	1 264,32
Conference proceedings	118,75	38,84
Books and chapters	189,22	233,43
Total article equivalents published	1 541,1503	1 536,59
Master's degrees conferred	798	722
Research master's	574,872	521,605
Research master's weighted	574,872	521,605
Doctoral degrees conferred	314	251
Doctoral degrees weighted	942	753
Total weighted research output	3 058,0223	2 811,1914
Postdoctoral fellows	231	215
Publication units per permanent academic staff member	0,98	0,93

Read more about our research output in the section **How we create value against our strategy.**

- NWU Excellence Awards

We celebrate our researchers' hard work and exceptional output at the annual NWU Excellence Awards, held towards the end of each academic year.

As with the 2020 celebration, the 2021 awards were held virtually owing to the pandemic. We presented 43 awards in 2021, consisting of 34 awards for NRF ratings, eight Research Excellence Awards and one International Scholar Award.



Prof Marius Nel from the Faculty of Theology (left) was named the most productive senior researcher of 2020, while Dr Jess Auerbach from the Faculty of Humanities (right) was named the most productive emerging researcher.

Outcomes: Enter society as great value creators

The first links in our value chain are our inputs and activities, as discussed in previous sections of this report. The next stage of the value chain consists of our outcomes, which are intended to create longer-term value.

This future focus means that sustainability is an integral element of our outcomes. After we have taken care of immediate and medium-term needs, there must be sufficient capitals left to use for future value creation.

Financial stability is a good example of an outcome that supports our sustainability. When the NWU is financially stable, we are in a position to generate other outcomes, such as delivering skilled graduates to enhance the knowledge economy of the country. Sustainable financial stability is a factor of our external environment and risk cluster 1, as it is influenced by **uncertainties in the higher education environment**.

Our research output is also an outcome. It strengthens our reputation (another outcome) so that we can attract high-quality scientists, further building our human capital and ensuring our future sustainability. This leads to another outcome in the form of solutions to real-life problems that leverage our research and innovation results.

In addition, the third leg of our core business, namely community engagement, creates outcomes by empowering people to **become greater** and improve their lives in a sustainable way.



DR BISMARK TYOBKA
CHAIRPERSON OF SENATE

Our journey to greatness

Chancellor welcomes 13 119 graduates to the virtual stage

In April, May and June 2021, no fewer than 13 119 graduates and diplomates “walked” the virtual stage during their online graduation ceremonies. Of these, 136 students received PhD degrees. NWU chancellor Dr Anna Mokgokong officiated.

*Dr Anna Mokgokong,
NWU Chancellor.*



Our vice-chancellor's review

Introduction: Looking at 2021

Teaching and learning had to be managed in 2020 and 2021 through contingency planning based on our experiences of past disruptions and emergencies.

As time passed, Senate and the faculty governing bodies and committees developed a routine of refining and adjusting the faculty assessment plans in such a way that our responsiveness to changing lockdown levels, and the associated Covid-19 “waves”, has become more normalised.

(This in no way downplays the gravity of our situation as a nation, or the loss and pain experienced as a result of the impact that Covid-19 has had on lives, families, communities and workplaces.)

- Reflection, rather than reaction

This normalisation has made reflection (rather than reaction) possible and has improved our ability to learn from and act on past experience.

In the case of 2021 and 2020, past experience is available to us in the form of shared institutional, sectoral and international experience, whether in the form of teaching and learning activities or through seminars, webinars, colloquia or scholarship. Our academics and leadership have drawn visibly from these experiences.

The pandemic has also necessitated a relook of our student value proposition in relation to teaching and learning, which may be described as follows: the NWU offers a contact teaching and learning experience, with students in contact with academics for both the contact and distance modalities.

- A new, hybrid approach

What has changed is that face-to-face teaching-learning now takes place in small groups, as does online (synchronous) teaching and learning. This is in anticipation of the continued threat of Covid-19 and the need for physical distancing. There is a possibility of a lasting shift towards the “flipped” classroom, whereby large-group lectures are available online and purposeful smaller-group teaching and learning takes place in a face-to-face setting.

Within this hybrid approach, technology is used to enable better self-pacing, self-direction and collaborative learning (asynchronous and synchronous) in online and face-to-face contact teaching and learning. These dimensions also allow for adjustment in relation to further fluctuations in lockdown levels.

Our managerial and administrative activities

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the commencement of the national lockdown at the middle of March 2020, we have proven ourselves to be an agile institution, ready to embrace change.

Our new approach to teaching and learning has been supported with an investment in technology infrastructure. It also provides us with an opportunity to reconsider our staff value proposition and to implement a more flexible work environment. We have now moved from an emergency remote teaching and learning strategy to a more personalised student experience.

Adequacy of staffing levels, particularly in critical areas

Talented, energised staff who are innovative and highly skilled are key to our aspirations as an internationally recognised university.

As such employees are in demand in the higher education sector, we are responding by using talent management mechanisms such as strategic workforce planning, talent attraction and management, recruitment, optimal remuneration management, training and development and performance management, as well as succession planning to attract and retain staff.

We broadened the scope of our scarce and critical skills programme. Having already implemented this programme in the academic environment, we attended to the roll-out in the support environment in 2021.

The total staff headcount stood at 9 399 in 2021, up from 8 078 in 2020.

Since we have had to reprioritise our budget and optimise out staff-cost budget, only mission-critical positions were filled in 2021.

Total staff headcount – 2020 vs 2021

Classification	Permanent		Temporary		Total	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Academic	1 632	1 648	373	1 414	2 005	3 062
Support	2 454	2 492	3 619	3 845	6 073	6 337
Grand total	4 086	4 140	3 992	5 259	8 078	9 399

The overall attrition rate is 6,0%, well within our projected attrition rate of under 10%.

Realising equity targets in the workplace

Employment equity targets continued to be closely monitored by Council's People and Culture, Employment Equity Committee and its Transformation Oversight Committee.

Our current employment equity plan runs from January 2021 to December 2023. The targets and outcomes for 2021, based on the three-year plan approved by Council on 10 September 2020, are shown in the following table.

Race	2021 Target		% Total	31 Dec 2021 Actuals		31 Dec 2021 % Total	Difference	Target Achieved Y/N
	Male	Female		Male	Female			
African	21,02%	19,58%	40,60%	19,61%	18,68%	38,29%	2,31%	N
Coloured	3,09%	3,89%	6,98%	2,96%	3,97%	6,93%	0,05%	N
Indian	0,82%	1,05%	1,88%	0,73%	0,83%	1,56%	0,32%	N
White	18,71%	30,71%	49,42%	19,38%	32,09%	51,47%	-2,05%	N
Foreign nationals	0,9%	0,23%	1,12%	1,38%	0,38%	1,76%	-0,64%	N
	44,54%	55,46%	100,00%	44,06%	55,94%	100,00%	0,00%	

For the second year, the moratorium on staff vacancies to contain costs in response to the Covid-19 challenges negatively affected our ability to reach the employment equity targets.

The new employment equity plan for 2021 to 2023 has proportional targets for blacks, women and people living with disabilities. The new plan, which Council has approved, focuses on the following four main strategies:

- > Removing barriers for attracting people from the designated groups and people living with disabilities
- > Succession planning for key positions
- > Retention strategies
- > Establishing an enabling organisational culture

The quality of information available to management

In 2021, we undertook initiatives aimed at enabling data-driven management decisions. We introduced a new platform to make integrated institutional data sets available to our different stakeholders, and developed and launched PowerBI dashboards, with training for end-users. (PowerBI is Microsoft's interactive data visualisation and analytics tool for business intelligence, or BI.)

These developments enhanced our ability to use learning analytics and conduct scenario planning. The integrated information from PowerBI was invaluable during the budget-planning process, especially in identifying priorities and ensuring equity of provision, and we used this to inform our risk mitigation strategy.

High-quality, reliable information is essential for decision-making that secures the long-term financial sustainability of the NWU and manages the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our financial position. Consequently, we are focusing strongly on financial viability modelling and scenario planning.

Student services and co-curricular activities

The Student Life portfolio managed to retain the most critical and valuable segments of support and opportunity available to our students during the 2021 academic year.

The immediate impact of the pandemic resulted in a reduction of face-to-face interactions between our students and the university. Offsetting this as best we could, we migrated contact-based activities and -services to the online environment.

Although many of our students embraced the virtual space and platforms, such interaction could not replace the entire **co-curricular and student-services** offerings. However, this necessary migration still created valuable platforms for student engagement and continued student service delivery.

Notable improvements included the successful execution of the **student-leadership electoral processes** by means of digital and online resources, resulting in increased access and participation by eligible student voters and candidates. Similarly, arts, culture and social-cohesion activities continued through smaller virtual engagements.

Counselling support services and **psychosocial crisis interventions** were accessible to all students through eFundi and telecommunications and video-conferencing platforms. Our campus health care centres resumed primary health care services as students gradually returned to campuses throughout the various national alert levels.

We also used virtual platforms to continue offering students and student leaders opportunities to **obtain valuable skills** in project management, fundraising, teamwork, social responsibility and cultural integration.

Concurrently, we **identified critical shortcomings** in student-service delivery and put mitigating measures

in place to provide interim solutions while planning and developing long-term solutions. These had to do with the DIY service platform and systems, administration of student finances and academic matters and the development of applications to engage students on transformation and diversity.

*For more information about our academic support activities for students, turn to the section **Increase student access and success**.*

Changing patterns in the provision of academic courses

We are making steady progress in executing our strategy of enrolling more students in the fields of science, engineering, technology and commerce.

In total, 53 469 students were enrolled at our three campuses in 2021. Female enrolments decreased from 35 915 to 33 665, while male enrolments, at 19 804, decreased from 20 150 as in 2020.

Since receiving ministerial approval for the NWU qualification and programme offering in August 2020, our faculties have been hard at work developing or establishing qualifications.

All eight faculties amended programmes, most of which were in education, health sciences and natural and agricultural sciences. Two **new pioneering qualifications** have been accredited and registered.

The BEdHons (Language Education) affords students the opportunity of specialising in any of seven South African languages and supports the NWU multilingualism policy. The Bachelor of Human Resource Development Honours is the first honours degree in South Africa solely in the field of human resource development, emphasising the shift from management towards development.

Academic programmes that **extend our niche-area offering** are the addition of e-science to the MA (Development and Management), which will be offered from 2022. Work is progressing on the MSc equivalent in e-science for 2023 implementation. Both programmes will be joint degrees offered in collaboration with the University of the Witwatersrand under the auspices of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

The new Master of Commerce in Information Systems is **aligned with current international trends**. Similarly, we have added Social Inclusion and Development to the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Sciences. The Bachelor of Health Sciences Honours in Sport Science is intended to contribute to the scarce skills field of human science.

Self-assessment of our achievements

In hindsight, it is clear that we were more prepared for the disruption that Covid-19 caused than we had thought at the time of the outbreak in 2020. The university already had several strategies and mechanisms in place that had

an effect on our readiness and made it possible for us to switch to an emergency remote modality within a month.

The NWU's **distance education capabilities**: two years before the pandemic, the university decided to expand the use of distance delivery by making more off-campus offerings available. This gave students and staff the experience to work in an offline-online space. As a result, the NWU's structures, management, staff and students were reasonably well prepared for the Covid-19 disruptions. For example, lecturers were already equipped to teach on the eFundi learning management system and were able to implement emergency remote teaching and learning fairly quickly.

Responsiveness in addressing inequities: the university provided learning materials, devices and data to students experiencing digital inequalities.

Visionary thinking: the proactiveness of the Innovative Teaching and Learning with Technology Community of Practice helped the NWU community to adopt and adapt to the emergency remote approach. (A community of practice is a group of people sharing an interest and learning to do it better by working together).

Future proofing: the 21 Futures Task Team, a relatively small team of experts from across the TL environment and key support units, strategised and initiated a variety of initiatives for 2021 amid the challenges experienced in 2020. This has put the NWU in a better position to face further possible disruptions.

The results of all our efforts are visible in the improvement in our dropout rate from 11,48% in 2020 to 8,96% in 2021. This is an indication of the success of our efforts to reach all our students and to continue and successfully complete the academic year.

Looking to the future

The pandemic has also brought significant changes and constraints in the research sphere at the NWU, which nevertheless remains in the top seven institutions in South Africa in terms of research outputs.

It is interesting to note that African scientists' share of the world's publications has been increasing over the past 20 years, rising from 1,5% to 3,85% of the total contribution to the world's research publications.

The top seven institutions in South Africa published about four times more than the contributions from all other institutions combined in Africa, showing that the NWU is indeed fulfilling its dream to be an internationally recognised university in Africa.

Finally, we envisage embracing the 4IR and supporting our staff members to become involved in national and international research collaboration.



DR BISMARK TYOBKA
VICE-CHANCELLOR

Meet our 2021 University Management Committee members



Prof Dan Kgwadi
Principal and vice-chancellor



Prof Daryl Balia
Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Information Technology and
Potchefstroom Campus
Operations



Prof Marlene Verhoef
Registrar



Ms Elmarie de Beer
Executive Director:
Finance and Facilities



Prof Linda du Plessis
Vice-Principal and
Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Integrated Planning and
Vanderbijlpark Campus
Operations



Prof Mala Singh
Executive Director:
People and Culture



Prof Robert Balfour
Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Teaching and Learning



Mr Clement Manoko
Executive Director:
Corporate Relations and
Marketing



Prof Jeffrey Mphahlele
Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Research and Innovation



Dr Sibusiso Chalufu
Executive director:
Student Affairs



Prof Sonia Swanepoel
Acting Deputy Vice-
Chancellor: Community
Engagement and Mahikeng
Campus Operations

How we engage with our stakeholders

Creating value for ourselves and our stakeholders

Our core business of teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement requires that we involve our stakeholders, as far as possible, in our planning and implementation of programmes and activities.

We do this because we recognise that our long-term sustainability depends on the mutually beneficial relationships between us and our stakeholders. Diversity and inclusiveness are the cornerstone of our stakeholder engagement approaches and activities.

Using the feedback we received from our stakeholders during the course of the year under review, we continued to engage and support our stakeholders in various ways. The interactions and engagements with our stakeholders contributed to a successful academic year.

How we react to our stakeholders' interest and expectations

The manner in which we respond to our stakeholders' needs determines value creation for us and our stakeholders.

The following tables show how we responded to key stakeholders, including prospective students, current students, employees, alumni, donors and the business community.

Stakeholder group Prospective students

How we engage

- > Visits to schools
- > One-on-one and group career advice sessions
- > Marketing (direct and indirect)
- > Open days
- > Sports events sponsorships

Issues raised (material matters)

- > Career choice
- > Connectivity (devices and data)
- > Equity of student experience
- > Health and safety
- > Application for admission

Our response

We continued with our hybrid interventions to reach prospective students.

These interventions include open days, virtual tours and webinars, as well as interactive electronic material. Interventions for the year included six virtual open days, digital media campaigns, videos, interactive electronic brochures, events and promotions, collectively reaching an audience of approximately 8 765 450 people. Expanding our way of doing things has proved to be successful, as prospective students have generally responded positively to these online interventions.

These are some of the responses from our prospective students, their parents and schools:

- "Yesterday was a great day for us at school. Thanks for the support. We are really humbled." – School
- "It's my pleasure to have worked with Jason Beukes; he did a wonderful job in marketing the university (NWU). I have even registered my son for the first year of a BCom degree with the Vaal campus. Most learners from my school developed an interest in your university because of Jason and myself and I am optimistic to bring more. I love the campus and the special Res, Kumba. Thanks." – Teacher
- "Last year you were also leading with all these technical advances for prospective learners. You are the absolute best when it comes to these digital innovations." – Teacher
- "Thank you for arranging our tour of NWU. Never have I been so impressed with a learning institution and with you, you are an asset and ambassador!" – Parent
- "Your willingness to go the extra mile for your university is noted and your ability to put the best interests of its students first, is a testimony of the integrity you maintain in performing your duties." – School



Stakeholder group

Current students

How we engage

- > Webinars
- > Website
- > Social media
- > Meetings
- > Communiques
- > SMS

Issues raised (material matters)

- > Connectivity and data
- > Financial assistance/NSFAS
- > Equity of experience
- > Health and safety

Our response

eFundi remained a crucial source of information for our students in terms of teaching and learning, particularly because contact classes could not take place for much of the year. The teaching-learning material, as well as general Covid-19-related information on e-Fundi, played a crucial role in ensuring the successful completion of the academic year.

Owing to issues raised about **connectivity and data**, the university requested all students to return to campuses. Free WiFi had been available on campuses to enable students to access their learning material and interact with each other, lecturers and academic support staff.

During 2021, there was an increase in **health-related** problems among students. The campus health centres remained crucial in offering relevant **services and support** to students.

Owing to NSFAS payment delays, the university made **advance payments** to all NSFAS-qualifying students. **Bursaries** were facilitated or offered to academically qualifying students who did not qualify for NSFAS payments.

New buildings, such as residences and administration facilities, were opened across the NWU in line with our commitment to ensure **equity of experience** for our students and staff.

In order to ensure **effective communication** with students, an internal communication survey was conducted again in 2021. The survey focused on students' channel preferences, as well as their preferred topics for updates and other kinds of communication. Respondents were particularly satisfied with communication from the vice-chancellor.

These are some of the responses from our students and their parents:

- "Milena is now successfully registered for the BCom Financial Accounting programme. Many thanks for all your guidance and assistance. Your quick response, support and kindness is greatly appreciated." – Parent
- "I had to wait for financial clearance, which resulted in me being conditionally registered; but because of the NWU app that I downloaded during the Reception and Orientation period, I was able to attend a few sessions from some of my modules. The NWU app was a reminder of what is going to happen in the registration processes, and it also included the dates for various faculties. The orientation made things simple for me." – Student

Ga gona kgomo ya boroko - Idiom

"This means: 'You snooze, you lose.' We acknowledge the need to proactively engage with our stakeholders and to ensure that our systems and processes are agile, responsive, and serve as a catalyst towards enhanced intentional experiences."



Stakeholder group

Industry and business community

How we engage

- > Integrated report
- > Webinars
- > Publications and videos
- > One-on-one and group engagements

Issues raised (material matters)

- > Assurance on stability and sustainability
- > Partnerships and collaboration
- > Graduate attributes
- > Research

Our response

Our researchers worked with partners and collaborators in the private and public sectors to respond to industry and societal needs. We implemented three targeted engagements with business role players located around our campuses. These engagements helped us to appreciate the issues raised and intervene accordingly.

Here is one of the responses we received from businesses and alumni:

- Gender-based violence awareness campaign feedback: "Loving that a university is actually talking about this and not trying to avoid the subject. It gives me hope that if everyone can develop this sense of equality and wanting to better society, then we will completely beat what's trying to get us down." – Participant



Stakeholder group

Alumni

How we engage

- > Webinars
- > SMS
- > Events
- > Newsletters
- > One-on-one and group engagements
- > Website
- > Social media

Issues raised (material matters)

- > Stability
- > Sustainability
- > Partnerships
- > Reputation

Our response

Alumni play a crucial role in building the NWU brand and reputation. Although we could not engage face-to-face with our alumni, we hosted alumni engagements via our online platforms and shared information about developments at the NWU.

More than 160 alumni joined the Convocation in 2021 and approximately 75 alumni gave their time and expertise to support different activities of the NWU. The alumni committees at our three campuses played a key role in advising our Alumni Office about issues affecting NWU alumni.

Some feedback from winners of the alumni awards:

- "Thank you, again, for a wonderful evening in Sandton! It was so great to be again in the company of my NWU family and to see the diverse group of alumni and all the great things they are doing in the world. NWU is a special place."
- "Thank you for all the arrangements you have made for me. It goes a long way. Your communication skills and dynamics are magnificent."



Stakeholder group

Employees

How we engage

- > Intranet
- > Email
- > Website
- > Webinars
- > Publications and newsletters



Issues raised (material matters)

- > Health and safety
- > Conducive work environment
- > Employee equity
- > Remuneration and compensation
- > Skills development and empowerment
- > Ethics and transparency



Our response



The Covid-19 Response Team continued to **guide the university on regulations and protocols**. The Faculty of Health Sciences, the campus health care centres and other departments played a key role in the roll-out of the vaccination programme for NWU staff, students and members of the community.

We partnered with stakeholders such as the SAPS, South African Banking Risk Information Centre (SABRIC), the North West Province Traffic Department, Disaster Management, Gauteng Province Social Development Department and the National Prosecuting Authority to host **crime summits**. The summits sought to share information that would assist in fighting crime across the NWU and in the vicinity of our campuses. We continued engaging with staff representatives on remuneration and reached agreements on key aspects of **employees' benefits**.

We organised webinars focusing on **health support programmes** to empower our staff on how to deal with health-related issues, especially during the pandemic.

Recognising the different circumstances affecting our employees, we introduced a **staggered return of staff** to their campuses and offices. This was to ensure their health, safety and well-being.

We used our Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Project to inform employees which behaviours are encouraged and would make the NWU a better place for all. In addition, we launched the NWU Culture Celebration Project to reinforce and **celebrate values-driven behaviours**; and cultivate a shared interpretation of **an ethic of care**.

We continue to prioritise the appointment of staff in line with our commitment to staff equity, diversity and inclusivity. As ethical conduct is crucial and remains a priority within our university, we continued with the interventions and awareness programmes that address some of the issues raised in the **ethics survey** conducted previously.

An **internal communication survey** was conducted during 2021 to understand the effectiveness of our communication and interactions with staff. The feedback received showed high levels of satisfaction among staff about the information shared with them, particularly communication from the vice-chancellor.

**BECOME GREATER
TODAY THAN YOU
WERE YESTERDAY!**




Stakeholder group

Donors

How we engage

- > Integrated report
- > One-on-one and group interactions
- > Publications
- > Website
- > Meetings



Issues raised (material matters)

- > Stability and performance of the higher education sector in general and the NWU in particular
- > Long-term sustainability of the Government's funding model
- > Student access and success



Our response



We shared information about the university's performance, including our financial position, with our Board of Donors. We also shared our Covid-19 response plans with our donors to assure them about the university's ability to respond to the potential threats and challenges.

Donors continued to support the NWU during 2021. To demonstrate their commitment to student access and success, the Board of Donors began discussions about better ways of managing the distribution of bursary funds to students.

We conducted a campaign to acknowledge the contribution of our donors in supporting our students and programmes.



Stakeholder group

Government and regulatory bodies

How we engage

- > Publications
- > One-on-one and group engagements
- > Conferences
- > Workshops



Issues raised (material matters)

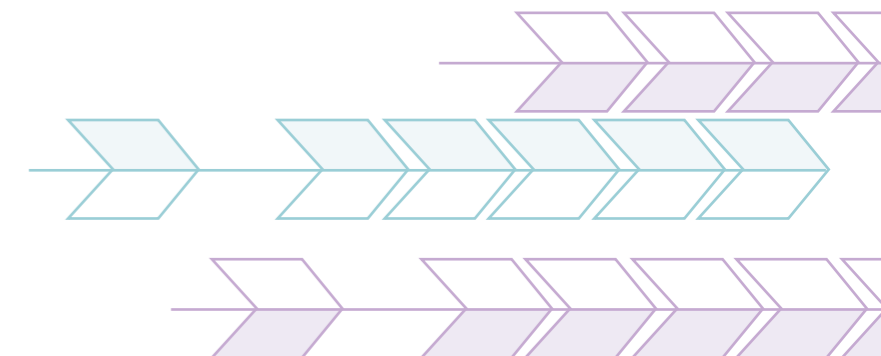
- > Compliance with legislation
- > Financial accountability and reporting
- > Quality and standards



Our response



We continued to share our performance information through prescribed progress reports, the integrated report and course-specific reports. Compliance with legislation such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act was a priority



Our transformation journey

LANGUAGE BUTTONS

AFR SES SET

The NWU transformation journey continues to be an arduous yet exciting and fulfilling endeavour, resulting in several changes that relate to policies, demographics, systems and structures.

These changes cut across many of the 10 key transformation pillars that we have identified as critical in the successful achievement of our goals. The transformation pillars are Diversity, Access, Alignment, Redress, Equity, Resource Allocation, Increased Unity, Student Experience, Success and Quality.

The journey with Covid-19, the academe and students

Issues around access, redress and equity have come to the fore amid the Covid-19 pandemic, which has exposed inequalities in students' access to and competencies on technology and its functions.

In response, we have adjusted and continued to refine our internal platforms for teaching, learning and research to make the online environment more accessible to our students.

These online platforms were zero-rated and devices and data were provided to students who needed these, ensuring that our students had the opportunity to complete the academic programme online and remotely, and to participate in university life on an equal footing.

Monitoring transformation

Our ability to monitor the progress of transformation across the NWU has become more and more sophisticated, thanks to mechanisms such as our transformation dashboard, which we have been constantly refining.

Procurement was an ongoing focus in 2021 and has resulted in achievements such as the development of a preferential procurement strategy involving SMMEs.

Within the student leadership and governance environment, the critical role of student leaders in driving sustainable transformation at grassroots level was strengthened in 2021. Specific student-leadership portfolios were established, tasked with the development of transformation and diversity within the student domain.

We can safely say that at the NWU, reporting on transformation has become more comprehensive and coherent, in line with the broader institutional goals and objectives.

Overseeing transformation

Several structures reporting to Council play an oversight role in ensuring that the university remains on track with its transformation targets and goals. The Council subcommittees concerned are the Transformation Oversight Committee, the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee and the Student Life Oversight Committee.

The Institutional Forum (IF) fulfils an important advisory role on transformation matters. In 2021, the IF was chaired by the executive director for student life, Dr Sibusiso Chalufu, whose assigned function at the NWU is transformation.

In addition to these formal governance structures, transformation is considered a primary objective for staff and students who are encouraged to seek innovative and practical mechanisms to create a diverse student population and student leadership cohort.

Adding value

We stepped up efforts to remove barriers for students living with disabilities. Standardised assistance and opportunities for these students were further enabled by the review and approval of guiding policy documentation during 2021.

Council approved the Policy on Students Living with Disabilities, Gender-Based Violence Policy and the Transformation Charter. We also improved several guiding documents and processes that further enable the transformation of the student environment.

Student Life and People and Culture collaborated in the successful review of the guiding values of the university and contributed further to the understanding of both staff and students on these values and associated values-driven behaviours.

In 2021, our staff participated in various sectoral transformation initiatives. These included the 2nd Higher Education Conference themed: "The Engaged University." Participation in such events helps ensure that the NWU's senior management are attuned to transformation trends across the higher education sector.

Pursuing and enabling equity

We regard transformation synonymous with justice, culture, performance indicators, communal well-being, excellence and relevance.

Transformation is also about being responsive to environmental and political changes, and being relevant to the needs of the communities we serve.

Approved by Council in September 2020, the 2021-2023 Employment Equity Plan gives expression to the Employment Equity Policy, which ensures that the

university creates equal opportunities for all employees and prospective employees.

Council resolved that, in order to accelerate the pace of transformation, the following targets will be incorporated into the new Employment Equity Plan:

- > Appointment of black employees: 70% (at least)
- > Appointment of people living with disabilities: 2%

Targets have been incorporated into the university's APP and cascaded to individual performance agreements.

All individual performance agreements for line managers have been redesigned to incorporate the people management key-performance area (KPA) for managing employment equity, diversity and promoting the preferred NWU culture.

Academic transformation

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to stimulate new responses in the transformation of teaching-learning.

Although we continued to rely on online teaching and learning in 2021, students began returning to our campuses. Contact teaching resumed in phases, starting with programmes where contact delivery was necessary for laboratory, workshop or internship work or to comply with the requirements of regulatory bodies.

By the end of the year, all students had been invited to return to our campuses.

We also commenced the language audit and survey process associated with the review of our **Language Policy**. The Language Directorate provided support by translating materials and offering online assistance with interpreting. The latter was introduced to meet pandemic conditions and we look forward to a more normalised offering as the pandemic recedes.

In another positive step for academic transformation, we finalised the content areas for the Short Learning Programme in Sesotho.

STATEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

"The NWU believes that value-adding transformation should be deeply embedded in all our activities, from the transformation of the curriculum to transformation of the institutional culture. All our members are required to further the transformation objectives of the university and to be change champions of transformation initiatives. We are committed to making meaningful changes that will impact positively on the lives of our staff and students."

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Aspects of transformation were highlighted during the three major **cross-curricular themed weeks** that we hosted during the year on topical issues in society and university.

Race Awareness Week was held in April 2021 and attracted record numbers of participants. Gender Awareness Week took place in August, focusing on women and science. Finally, Language Awareness Week was held in September and dealt with language diversity and celebrated the multilingual and creative contributions of students and staff.

Recognising the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on teaching-learning, the university approved an **internal quality review of assessment** (known as Cov-ARC). All faculties participated across a range of postgraduate and undergraduate programmes, and staff and students were invited.

Looking ahead

Although we continue to make significant progress in our transformation trajectory, there is a lot more to be done.

We believe we are up to the challenge. Our primary motivation for continuing and accelerating our transformation journey, is that it is the right thing to do and it accords with our values.

We stay committed to further building our unitary institution, establishing an institutional culture and a unique NWU way of life that supports our strategy and speaks of care, equality and fairness for all. That is why transformation will stay high on our future agenda.



MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL



DR BISMARK TYOBEKA
VICE-CHANCELLOR

Transformation remains our collective objective and responsibility through which we aim to create a university that cherishes inclusivity, celebrates diversity, upholds social justice, and works tirelessly towards the realisation of the goal of creating an internationally recognised institution known for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care.

Material risks and opportunities impacting value

LANGUAGE BUTTONS
AFR SES SET

Overview: our risk governance and management processes

On our journey to **become greater** and to empower our stakeholders on their path **towards greatness** too, it is inevitable that we would encounter risks – especially those associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time, we also come across opportunities to mitigate the risks and to grow and develop, pushing our boundaries to **be greater today than yesterday**.

At the NWU we use a strategic approach to risk and opportunity management. We identify and prioritise risks and opportunities that could influence our ability to implement the university's strategy, and we adopt appropriate risk mitigation strategies and initiatives.

In doing so, we take into account the demands of and uncertainties in the **external environment** and we align our risk management processes with the King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa. This approach ensures streamlined processes and procedures in accordance with the prescripts of the code.

Risk clusters



How we prioritise our risks and opportunities

The point of reference for prioritising, defining and assessing our risks is the NWU's strategic goals.

For risk identification and risk definition, we use a template, coupled with a comprehensive process of implementing internal controls, setting future controls and agreeing on action plans to address the relevant risk reasons towards managing the risks to an acceptable level. All risks above appetite are prioritised and highlighted for focused management actions and reporting purposes.

For the past few years, we have been using a risk-cluster categorisation approach to identify the material risk clusters that are important for the university's strategy, governance and management, performance and future planning.

These clusters are listed in the following table where we describe the risks related to each cluster and give a short summary of the associated mitigation strategies. (For more information, refer to our [risk register](#).)

Risk ranking

1 Uncertainties in the higher education sector, largely related to uncertainties about financial matters and the funding model for universities

Related material matter providing the opportunity: *Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation (2021 APP, Goal 6, Enabler 4).*

Capital affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

Risks that may put our financial stability under pressure include the financial and related impacts of Covid-19, the lack of clarity about the proposed fee regulation model, declining external financial support for postgraduate students, reservations about the sustainability of the government's funding model for higher education, and rising student debt.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation measures included the internal development of a financial impact model that is updated constantly and accounts for all variables that might impact on the financial performance of the NWU. The mitigation strategies include focusing on fundraising and endowment initiatives to provide new and sustainable sources of income, building available reserves to cover one year of operational expenses, engaging in optimal relationships with funders and facilitating start-up capital through the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department.

Risk ranking

2 The demand for organisational change and ongoing transformation

Related material matter providing the opportunity: *Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment (2021 APP, Enabler 1).*

Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

Risks in this cluster included insufficient levels of diversity (staff and students), vacuums created when key people leave, the lack of competitive salaries (academics), the perceived non-implementation of retention strategies, a change in stakeholder behaviour due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and uncertainties around the language plan implementation.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation measures included the implementation of a student recruitment and admission process** in line with the enrolment plan and diversity targets. Others were faculty language plans to implement the NWU Language Policy, a scarce-skill allowance, building employment equity targets into the performance agreements of managers, and developing and implementing retention strategies and clear position profiles for senior management indicating roles and responsibilities.

**Despite these measures, the first-time enrolments for 2021 were more than 800 heads below target.

CAPITALS



Risk ranking >>>>>>

3

Risks related to academic matters (teaching and learning, research and innovation and academic administration)

Related material matters providing the opportunity: Promote excellent learning and teaching; also reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by market direction decisions (2021 APP, Goal 1).

Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation (2021 APP, Goal 2).



Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

Risks receiving attention in this cluster were a decline in research funding and research, inadequate infrastructure planning for teaching, an inadequate global engagement/internationalisation effort, and a gap in standards between basic and tertiary education.

Other risks were the university's apparent unpreparedness for a blended learning environment, slow external processes for approval of qualifications/programmes, over and under enrolment and the perceived inability to meet marketplace expectations if graduates do not find employment quickly enough.

We also focused on risks such as the possibility that undergraduate and postgraduate academic offerings and related services may not be sufficiently responsive, and a decline in student throughput and student success.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation measures were developing the enrolment plan (2020-2025), including infrastructure planning in budget planning, and establishing a space management project.

Other measures included Council approving our Internationalisation Policy, commercialisation and investment opportunities being explored in international markets and efforts to target international alumni for donations. With regard to throughput, quality admission and placement tests were performed for admission to students' second and third choice qualifications. Measuring tools to track student success were put in place.

Risk ranking >>>>>>

4

Ensuring compliance

Related material matter providing the opportunity: Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment (2021 APP, Enabler 1).



Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

In this cluster, we focused on risks such as inadequacies in environmental management and information governance, fraudulent activities in some business processes, the inconsistent application of the Policy on Academic Integrity, non-compliance with health and safety laws and regulations, as well as with other statutory requirements, licences and legal requirements.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation strategies at play here were a focus on business continuity planning amid the Covid-19 situation, contingency planning for mission-critical processes such as registration and the implementation of our digital business strategy. Other measures included a compliance management process, compulsory training for all staff on the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), positioning environmental management strategically, appointing departmental health and safety representatives, continually conducting occupational health and safety training and monitoring, and reviewing the Policy on Academic Integrity.

CAPITALS



Risk ranking >>>>>>

5

Risks related to student life, both in the academic and non-academic environments

Related material matter providing the opportunity: Develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition with a focus on creating an inclusive environment aimed at developing students holistically through structured and unstructured co-curricular programmes that are relevant, desirable and meet students' needs (2021 APP, Goal 4).

Promoting excellent learning and teaching and repositioning the NWU to attain the size and shape required by market direction decisions (2021 APP, Goal 1).



Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

In this cluster, the risks receiving attention were varying student experiences across campuses, the perception that the university is not living up to its promise of social justice, inadequate measures to create a welcoming student environment, inadequacies in student leadership skills, and challenges with student safety on and off-campus.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation strategies included training programmes on LGBTQ+ and other human rights matters, leadership training and continually measuring attitudes towards the student offering.

The NWU has a policy and rules on gatherings and demonstrations, supported by emergency contingency plans for student unrest.

Risk ranking >>>>>>

6

IT risks (including cyber security) and university systems

Related material matter providing the opportunity: Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future (2021 APP, Enabler 2).

Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment (2021 APP, Enabler 1).



Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals

Worldwide, cyber security risk is regarded as the number one IT issue, necessitating more stringent cyber security measures at the NWU. The risk of a cyber-security attack is heightened in a period of digital transformation, which the NWU is currently undergoing.

Other risks receiving attention were inadequate IT provisioning for certain functions due to inadequate human resourcing of the IT department, and uncertainties about the digital business strategy, disaster-recovery planning and the possibility that core business systems could result in loss of students and income.

Mitigating actions

Mitigation measures included implementing a comprehensive cyber-incident and execution management system, developing a cyber-security strategy and deploying a security information and event management plan. A single centralised platform enables abnormalities in the NWU's IT environment to be identified and escalated to the cyber-incident response team.

CAPITALS



Focus on the management of risks related to the Covid-19 situation

A number of risks pertinent to the mitigation of the short, medium and long-term risks pertaining to the Covid-19 pandemic continued to receive priority attention in 2021.

- > A risk was added to the strategic risk register to account for possible inadequacies around a focused approach on the management of the pandemic as this might impact directly on the NWU's governance and management. The risk impact was categorised as severe and the likelihood as certain, resulting in an inherent risk rating of 25.
- > We considered all relevant controls that had been established. These included a financial impact model with the mitigation plans approved by Council, and the functioning of a Covid-19 response team whose mandate it was to advise the vice-chancellor and the university management committee.

These controls were rated as adequate, resulting in the residual risk rating coming down to 12, which is still above the NWU's risk appetite.

- > On completing the first level of assurance during the latter part of 2021, we concluded that the provisioning of an adequate governance and management environment to deal with matters related to Covid-19 in the short and medium term was regarded as fair assurance.

The challenge is to continue gleaning insights over the medium to longer term from the lessons learned about business continuity during the pandemic.

Using our opportunities

Our risk-cluster approach ensures focus in our ongoing risk management project. As part of this approach, we continually identify opportunities to adapt to our changing environment.

In accordance with the definition and refinement of goals and enablers in our APPs over time, the following threads remain visible as strategic opportunities that:

- > continually safeguard the financial sustainability of the university;
- > enable us to implement our new strategy, structure and operating model;
- > promote excellence in teaching and learning and research and innovation;
- > establish a clearly differentiated student value proposition;
- > develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile;
- > enable the deployment of best-in-class information technology to support the core business; and
- > provide an effective financial model, policies and structure for continuing education offerings and increased commercialisation opportunities.

Steps taken in 2021

The focus on the monitoring of risk management continued in 2021 by means of bi-annual engagements with risk owners, followed by reports to management and governance structures. Council committees, in particular the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, have a defined role to fulfil in the ongoing monitoring of risk management. To this end, all Council committees, as well as Senate, continued to handle status reports on risk management on the relevant areas of interest at their May and October meetings.

The following graph indicates the status in 2021 of residual risks in the NWU strategic risk register, after consultation with risk owners:

**The number indicates the residual risk rating and the # indicates the number of risks at that particular rating on the NWU risk register.*

21 #0	22 #0	23 #0	24 #0	25 #0
16 #1	17 #0	18 #0	19 #0	20 #0
11 #0	12 #1	13 #3	14 #1	15 #0
6 #9	7 #5	8 #2	9 #0	10 #1
1 #1	2 #7	3 #6	4 #8	5 #0

Key to risk indicators

	Number of risks	Description
High	25	The risk is potentially disastrous and will hinder the achievement of objectives and/or lead to the collapse of business and/or project.
Medium	15	The risk could have a serious impact on operations. A risk that can be managed with some additional resources, budget and maintenance effort.
Low	10	A risk that is unlikely to occur, but if it does occur it can be managed under normal operating conditions.
Minor	4	A risk event that holds no significant threat to the organisation, employees or other stakeholders.

Risk ranking

Commercialisation

7

Related material matter providing the opportunity: Promote excellent learning and teaching, and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by market-direction decisions (2021 APP, Goal 1).

Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation (2021 APP, Goal 2).

Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals	Mitigating actions
Commercialisation risks included missing out on commercialisation opportunities, the failure of licensees or spin-out ventures to commercialise, resulting in wasted resources, and offering non-compliant short learning programmes that deflect income away from the NWU.	Mitigation measures included a proper governance and management environment to ensure accountability and optimal functioning of the commercialisation space. Provision has been made for an effective financial and operating model for commercialised entities. The management structure of the Centre for Continuous Education has been renewed to enable more commercialisation opportunities.

Risk ranking

Operational risks

8

Related material matters providing the opportunity: Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment (APP, Enabler 1).

Ensuring financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation (APP, Enabler 4).

Capitals affected:



Risks and the impact on value creation and capitals	Mitigating actions
An operational risk was inefficiencies in support functions, possibly leading to loss of income and potential growth, loss of staff and a negative impact on the reputation and ranking of the NWU. Other risks were absenteeism and loss of valuable staff owing to low staff morale.	Mitigation measures included a productivity and human resource allocation model, a process to reengineer business processes in preparation for the implementation of a new student information system, and a project to optimise space management and implement an electronic space-booking system. We also received a grant from the DHET to optimise our infrastructure development.

CAPITALS



Top 10 residual risks

Rank	Risk	Description of risk	Residual risk
1	Cyber security	The risk exists that cyber security is not adequately addressed at the NWU, even though it is the number one IT issue worldwide. An attack on the NWU is likely. Digital transformation will increase the cyber security risk.	20
2	Business model	The lockdown forced a change in stakeholder behaviour and habits, as well as in the way universities function and people interact. In adapting to these changes, the university had to ensure adequate alignment of quality teaching and learning in relation to student access and success and fit-for-purpose workforce utilisation.	16
3	Funding	The government funding model is not sustainable and this is exacerbated by universities' over-dependence on a single source of income (government subsidies and sustainability of NSFAS). The higher education sector also receives insufficient information about funding from the DHET.	13
4	Environmental management	The lack of focus and clarity in regard to the placement, functioning and monitoring of environmental management at the NWU poses a risk to sustainability and compliance.	13
5	Covid-19 Impact	An inadequate focus on the management of Covid-19 could impact directly on the NWU's governance and management, and hamper the NWU's sustainability on the short, medium and long term.	12
6	Fee regulation	Uncertainty around the proposed fee regulation model could affect the university's sustainability.	12
7	Postgraduate students	Insufficient financial support to postgraduate students results in loss of student income and discontinuity from between undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Furthermore, the NWU's postgraduate numbers are highly dependent on bursaries.	12
8	Digital Business Strategy	Digital transformation will have a severe impact on operational models, structures, people, processes and roles.	12
9	IT support and innovation	IT provisioning for certain administrative and academic functions is not optimal and there are indications that individual IT staff are overburdened due to inadequate human resources in IT. Furthermore, uncertainties are evident about the direction of the digital business strategy leading to delays in new system design and implementation.	12
10	Business processes	Inadequacies in the processes and systems that drive the core business could lead to loss of students and student income.	10

STATEMENT ON RISK MANAGEMENT

The NWU Council, as the final decision-making body of the university, affirms that it is endowed with the responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness and efficiency of the risk-management process. It is continually apprised of developments by means of management and audit reports on the management and risk coverage processes; and had been provided sufficient assurance over the past year from all relevant assurance providers.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.



PROF MARLENE VERHOEF
REGISTRAR DESIGNATED WITH RISK RESPONSIBILITY

Our strategy to create value

Introduction

Here, we describe how our strategy and APP keep us moving forward with purpose, thus creating value for our shareholders.

Our strategy stretches over a 10-year period, currently 2015 to 2025, while our APP is for 12 months, in this case 1 January to 31 December 2021.

Explaining our strategy

In the following diagram, we depict how our identity (purpose, dream and brand promise) drives our strategy, which informs our long-term goals and enablers. Each year, we review and agree on our annual objectives that we capture in our APP. These objectives anchor the broad direction in concrete actions through which we create value.



Our strategy

Transform and position the NWU as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence, with a commitment to social justice.

Annual Performance Plan

DREAM

DREAM

Internationally recognised
Engaged scholarship
Social responsiveness
Ethic of care

PURPOSE

Innovative learning and teaching
Cutting-edge research
Benefitting society through knowledge

BRAND PROMISE

Dynamic
Values-driven
Excellent

Realised through

GOALS (CORE PERFORMANCE)

1. Promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions.
2. Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation.
3. Integrate and align community engagement with teaching-learning and research to develop a culture of active citizenship.
4. Develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition with a focus on creating an inclusive environment aimed at developing students holistically through structured and unstructured co-curricular programmes which are relevant, desirable and meet students' needs.
5. Attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile.
6. Develop and implement a digital business strategy to create a competitive advantage for the university and ultimately unlock alternative revenue streams.

RISK REGISTER

Linked to

ENABLERS

1. Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment.
2. Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future.
3. Cultivate and deliver stakeholder-focused platforms to create and grow intentional experiences and brand equity.
4. Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macroeconomic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation.

FINANCIAL PLAN

Measured by

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- > Contact student success rate
- > International student enrolment
- > First-time entrant dropout rate for contact degrees

- > Publications per permanent academic staff member
- > Student: academic staff FTE ratio
- > Permanent academic staff with PhDs

- > Contact undergraduate graduation duration factor
- > Weighted research output
- > Student mix: contact and distance

Revision

Six goals to realise our strategy

How we get there

We are taking a multipronged approach towards promoting excellent teaching and learning:

The Centre for Teaching and Learning is enhancing its support to the faculties, using research to inform best practices.

Our proven student academic support initiatives continue to advance student retention and success.

We are renewing the curriculum to equip graduates for 21st century challenges and through work-integrated learning (WiL) and service learning, we enhance their employability.

While providing professional services to the community, we also generate third-stream income through continuing education offerings.

Where we want to go

We want to promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions.

How we get there

We aim to achieve this goal through a myriad of activities that are intended to enhance the visibility, impact and footprint of our research.

These activities include increasing publications in Scopus/ISI journals, sustaining, strengthening research integrity, improving the NRF ratings of our researchers and expanding our partnerships with reputable international institutions so that more joint degrees and co-publications can be achieved.

Furthermore, we managed the research activities of our 61 research entities and successfully concluded the evaluations for research funding applications to the NRF, South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and other local funders.

Training sessions on funding and ethics for researchers and students were conducted and we also provided publishing literacy awareness material to the NWU community to reduce the possibility of predatory publishing.

Where we want to go

It is our goal to strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation.

How we get there

During the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, we emphasised engaged scholarship that furthered academic citizenship and an ethic of care. A total of 490 activities were reported compared to the 175 in 2020.

We are also working towards promoting sustainability principles that are linked to regional and international imperatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063 for Africa.

Access to communities was still limited to online and mobile interactions in 2021, which had an impact on student volunteering and opportunities for work-integrated learning and service learning. NWU staff have responded by investigating and applying e-service-learning options.

We held our first virtual community engagement symposium, and at the NWU's annual community engagement awards ceremony, 22 recipients were recognised for their contributions.

Where we want to go

We want our community engagement to be integrated and aligned with our teaching and learning and research, and to develop a culture of active citizenship.



How we get there

In 2021, despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic, we were able to organise and present a number of programmes to enhance our student value proposition, using multi-modal approaches, including innovative digital platforms.

Where we want to go

It is important to develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition, including an inclusive environment where our students can develop holistically.

An outstanding example of the effectiveness of these programmes was the NWU S&R Competition that had 19 000 people watching on the YouTube livestream. Numerous other virtual and face-to-face events and activities also contributed to the dynamism of Student Life.

How we get there

Striving for staff and student equity is an important aspect of promoting social justice and diversity on all campuses. In the case of student equity, steps taken include:

- > introducing an online application process for residences on all three campuses
- > requiring all our residences to base their enrolments on the NWU's enrolment targets for 2025
- > standardising Career Centre offerings, such as virtual career fairs, across the three campuses.

In respect of staff equity, our targets are set out in the Employment Equity Plan that Council approved in September 2020 and that complies with all the Department of Employment and Labour's requirements.

The plan was implemented from 1 January 2021 and focuses on removing barriers to the recruitment of persons from the designated groups and persons living with disabilities. It also addresses succession planning for key positions, retention strategies and the establishment of an enabling organisational culture.

Where we want to go

We want to attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile.

How we get there

The NWU Digital Business Strategy (DBS) was approved by Council and published in the second half of 2021. It incorporates the digital experience gained and lessons throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, and is a signal that technology/digital transformation is a core component of the NWU strategy, preparing the university for the future educational landscape.

The digital initiatives envisaged in the DBS focus on maximising business agility, delivering exceptional customer experience and establishing an IT operating model that combines flexibility, competent people, best practices and a culture of innovation.

Implementing the DBS will ultimately bring about new competitive advantages for the NWU at a time when higher education is becoming increasingly commoditised and institutions that stand out are institutions that differentiate themselves on customer experience and service quality.

Where we want to go

It is our goal to develop and implement a digital business strategy to create a competitive advantage for the university and ultimately unlock alternative revenue streams

Four enablers to help us realise our strategy



How we get there

We have an integrated and holistic approach to ensure the realisation of the 2015 – 2025 NWU Strategy and our management model promotes accountability across divisions to achieve organisational outcomes.

Where we want to go

Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment.

The outcomes of the 2020 external review had been accounted for in an improvement plan, which has been implemented by the end of 2021.

The implementation of our Digital Business Strategy has been fast-tracked due to the Covid-19 pandemic and will have a vital influence on the way in which we govern, manage and lead in future.

How we get there

We incorporate the digital experience gained during the Covid-19 pandemic into the future proofing of our operations and align our IT goals to the NWU's positioning as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence with an ethic of care.



Where we want to go

Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future.

As a future-proofed institution, our backbone is the Next Generation Digital Environment (NGDE). This modern integration platform supports the delivery of various digital initiatives intended to optimise and automate processes, create quality stakeholder experiences, enable new offerings and provide integrated reporting and analytics.

Our high-quality IT capabilities proved equal to the challenges of keeping the NWU running throughout the pandemic and the lessons learnt will inform our ongoing digital transformation.

How we get there

A positive stakeholder experience presents opportunities for beneficial stakeholder engagements, retention and loyalty. To this end, the development and implementation of targeted communication platforms/channels remained crucial for the year under review.



Where we want to go

Cultivate and deliver stakeholder-focused platforms to create and grow intentional experiences and brand equity.

The interactions with our stakeholders via appropriate channels that lead to intentional experiences play a key role towards the achievement of an enhanced NWU brand equity.

How we get there

The financial impact model and mitigation plan that were developed in response to the possible impact of Covid-19, together with a three- year rolling budget for 2021 to 2023 continued to receive primary attention during 2021.



Where we want to go

Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation.

The NWU continued with this model, updating it for 2022 to 2024. The intention is to ensure medium- and long-term sustainability, with a focus on cash-flow management for the shorter term.

The Continuing Education Strategic Project is expected to expand our continuing education income and includes developing and implementing a financial model.

The Integrated Work Management System implementation was completed at the end of July 2021. Its purpose is to increase the effective and efficient use of buildings and facilities.

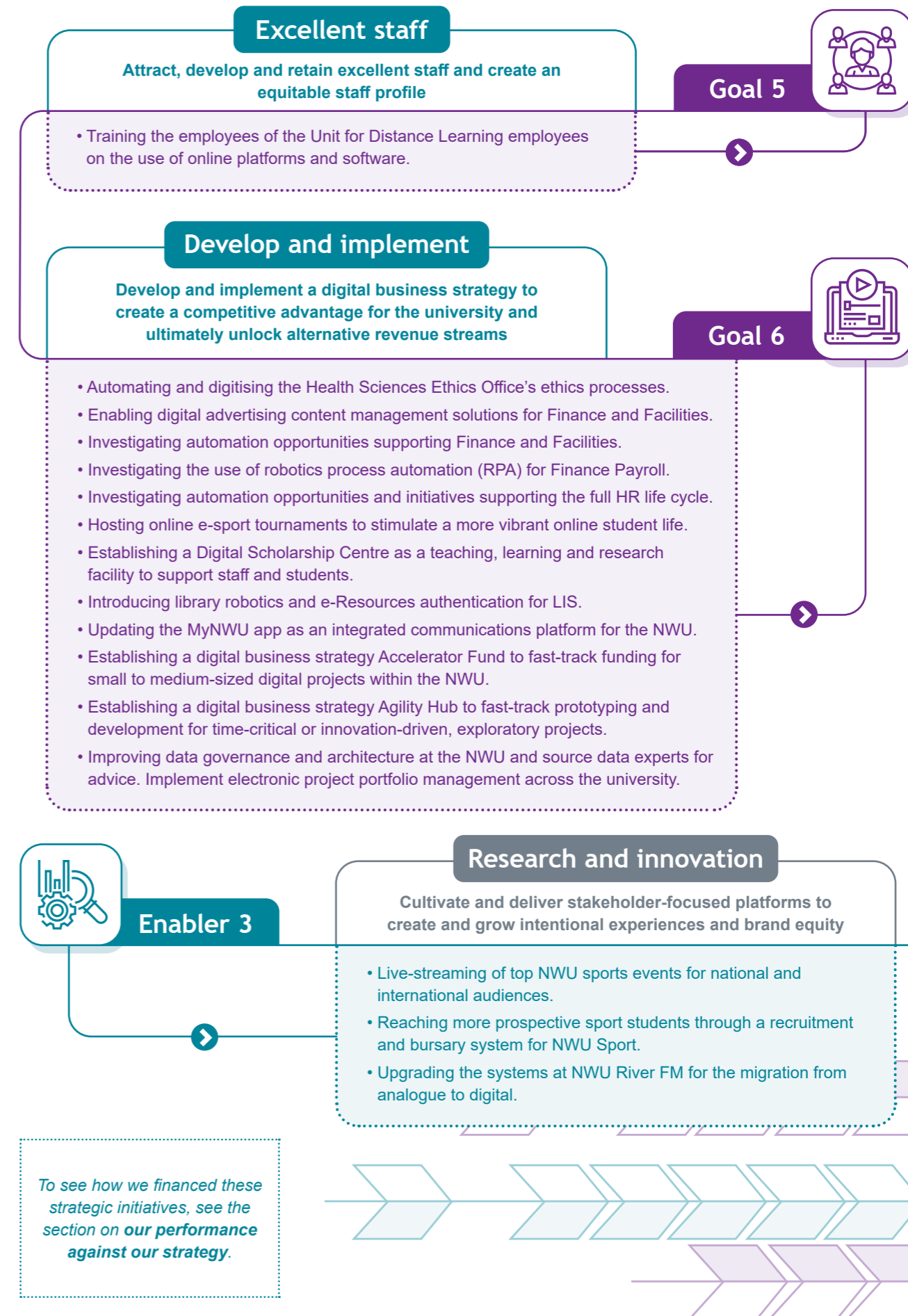
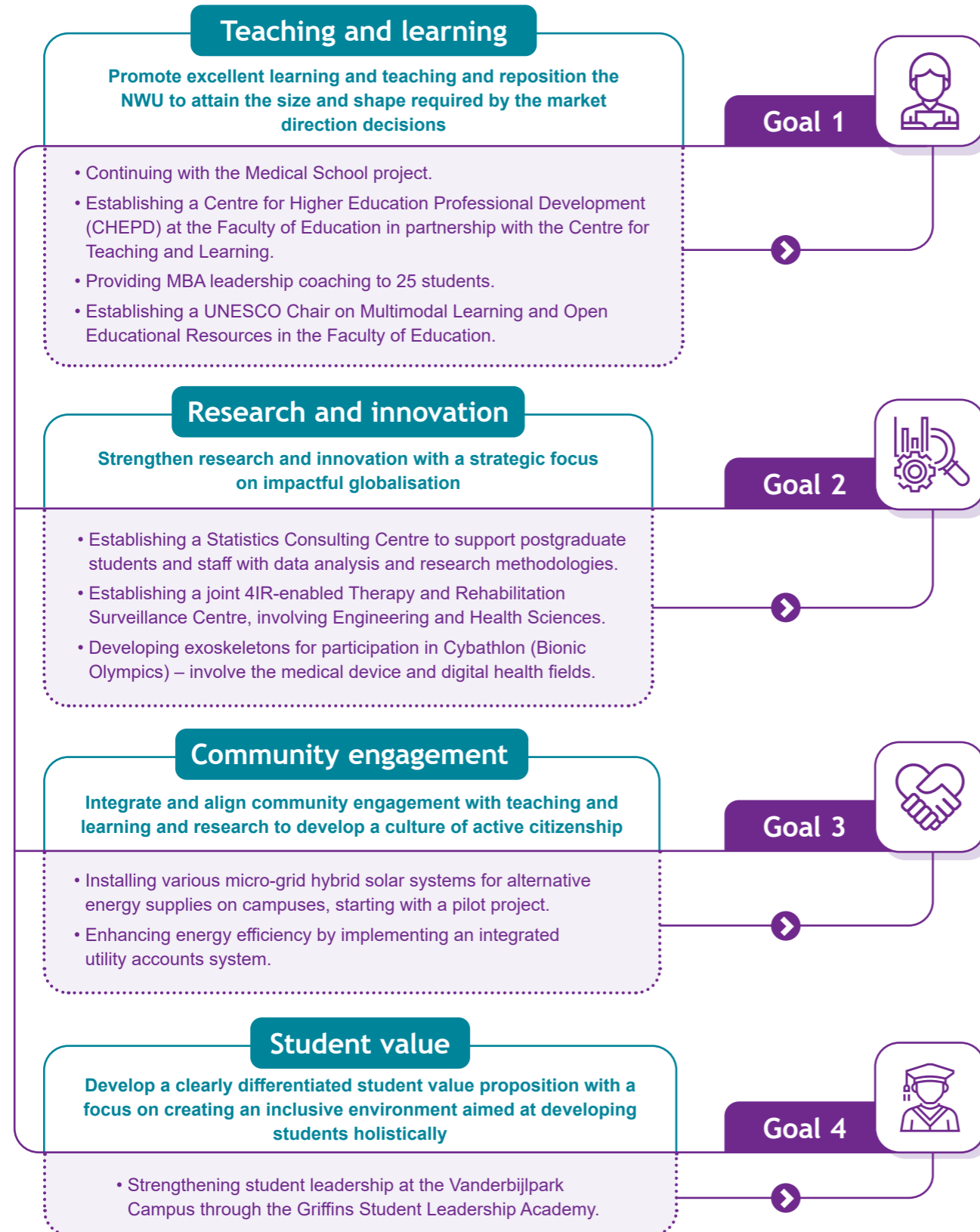
Strategic projects per goal/enabler

The APP serves as an important instrument to realise the NWU strategy and to implement strategic projects.

Strategic projects are those projects that impact significantly on the achievement of our goals and the realisation of our strategy.

These also play a significant role in determining the university's overall direction.

The following summary provides an overview of the implementation of strategic projects in the relevant APP goals and enablers.



Annual Performance Plan

How the APP fits in with our strategy

The APP sets out what we must do in a particular year to implement our strategy so that we deliver value to all our stakeholders and ensure that we support national priorities.

In drafting our APP, the starting point is to understand the external and internal operating environment. With this in mind, the senior management team held a strategic planning session where we performed a SWOT analysis to identify the NWU's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The aim was to identify favourable (opportunities) or unfavourable (threats) circumstances, which need proactive management to either pursue or ward off.

How the APP was revised in 2021

The APP is aligned with our 2015-2025 strategy and our 2020-2025 enrolment plan.

The purpose of the enrolment plan is to ensure that our budget is linked to national planning on student enrolment and funding (state subsidy) of public universities.

Our annual revision of the common strategic assumptions and performance planning for the next year considers the national imperatives as outlined in the *National Development Plan (2011)*, *The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training (2013)*, *Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-school System (2014)*, and the African Union's *Agenda 2063: The Africa we want*.

Future outlook

An important assumption that informs our planning is that Covid-19 will not disappear in the near future, and that we will continue to function with health-related caution.

Covid-19 has also accelerated the implementation of our Digital Business Strategy. Our future digital platform will integrate students, partners, employees and things, in order to connect people to contextualised information and services.

This connected environment will feature modern digital delivery channels and a resilient integration platform. This will support our business and operating models, provide analytics-driven insights and enable exceptional customer experience, all aimed at differentiating this university from others.

Our performance against our strategy

Creating value through the capitals

This part of the annual report is about the NWU's value-creation processes. As we subscribe to the idea that **greatness is meant for all** of us and not reserved for a chosen few, the value we create is also aimed at empowering all our stakeholders to **become greater** than they were before.

In this section we would like to show you how we respond to our stakeholders' needs through our business activities, and how these activities lead to outputs and outcomes, thereby transforming the value of our six capitals.

These capitals represent the value we create for ourselves and our stakeholders; our performance against these shows how we are faring in achieving our strategic goals.

The image below illustrates the relationship between the value creation process and our capitals:



Our journey to greatness

NWU Business School and traditional leaders take hands

On 16 November 2021, delegates from the NWU Business School and the North West House of Traditional Leaders concluded an important Memorandum of Understanding.

This agreement paves the way for support to the House of Traditional Leaders in bridging the capacity challenges associated with skills development.

As a key point of collaboration, the Business School will make practical and impactful contributions towards the cultivation of entrepreneurship within these rural communities.

(Read more)

Kgosi Mabe, Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders in the North West Province, and Prof Jan van Romburgh, Chief Director of the NWU Business School, sign the Memorandum of Understanding.



Our intellectual capital

Our intellectual capital is all about our knowledge-based intangibles that result from our core business activities.

This refers to the way we use our knowledge resources to create more knowledge, as well as the activities, policies, strategies and procedures in place to support our business activities, to the benefit of stakeholders.

Stakeholders who will benefit from our intellectual capital

If we increase our intellectual capital, all our stakeholders who are interested in the knowledge that we create through our research or our teaching and community engagement activities will benefit.

The stakeholders include our staff, current and prospective students and their parents, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), communities, donors, alumni, employers, business and industry, and professional bodies.

Material matters (goals or enablers) involved

(Click [here](#) to see what the icons used in this section stands for.)



Risks involved

The risks include the demand for organisational change and ongoing transformation (for instance concerning the decolonising of the curriculum), risks related to academic matters (teaching-learning, research and innovation and academic administration), the risk of non-compliance (for instance with the standards and regulations of professional bodies), risks related to IT, university systems and commercialisation of our innovation and research results.

Click [here](#) to see how we mitigate these risks.

Our journey to greatness

NWU among the best in engineering studies

The NWU is one of the top institutions in South Africa in engineering studies. This is according to the latest rankings by subject by Times Higher Education (THE). The NWU is listed third (the same position as last year) among nine local higher education institutions in the field of engineering.

THE placed the NWU in the 401-to-500 category globally — the same category as in last year's ranking. The NWU was measured against 1 188 universities worldwide.

The rankings were announced on 6 October and highlight the universities that are leading across the engineering disciplines, which include general engineering, electrical and electronic engineering, mechanical and aerospace engineering, civil engineering and chemical engineering.



Material matter: Teaching and learning

Every day, every moment we have the potential to **be greater** than we currently are. That is why we invest in staff and student development and in strengthening the quality and diversity of teaching and learning activities. We also align our academic programmes across the university, ensure these are evaluated regularly and use ICT and multimedia resources to expand the reach of our distance-learning offerings.

Below is a summary of our teaching and learning activities. Should you wish to read more about our activities, [click here](#) for more detail in the full integrated report that was submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Academic literacy tests and modules

All first-year students take a compulsory academic literacy test. If necessary, they may then be required to register for specific academic literacy modules in academic writing, reading, computer and information literacy and study skills.

Expand distance learning

We continued to expand our academic offering via distance learning in 2021, as it increases access to education and therefore has strategic importance.

Increase student access and success

Extensive, value-adding academic support is offered to students:

- > In several academic programmes, students can complete their studies over an extended period of time. The value of these **extended curriculum programmes** is evident from their overall student success rate of approximately 90%.

- > Our one-year **University Preparatory Programmes** (UnivPrep) in the Faculty of Humanities, Theology and Economics and Management Sciences provides access to prospective students who do not meet the admission requirements for specific formal degrees.

Each year, above 50% of successful UnivPrep participants become eligible to apply for formal studies at the aforementioned faculties.

- > **Tutorial support** is an important pedagogic tool for lecturers to use in small group settings. Supplemental instruction (SI) and tutoring are two of the main forms of tutorial support provided.

Between SI and tutoring, approximately 50% of modules identified as at-risk were served by academic peer support. Online tutoring via eFundi, Zoom and social media platforms continued during the first and second semesters of 2021 to support remote online teaching and learning.

Taking the contact offering into the online environment during the Covid-19 pandemic

In 2021, we adapted our TL strategies, moving from the emergency remote TL used in 2020 to a hybrid TL model. This included asynchronous and synchronous online offers, limited face-to-face interaction in small groups and personal consultation with students.

After scrutinising the exceptionally good results for the 2020 academic year, we flagged matters related to the possible integrity of online assessment as a concern. Faculties were encouraged to schedule time assessments



and to offer a limited number of opportunities to complete online tests and quizzes. An online proctoring tool was tested and acquired for use.

We continued providing data to students in need and running the call centres established in 2020 to support students. The Centre for Teaching and Learning again offered virtual support to staff and students on the intricacies of teaching and learning in an online environment. Library and Information Services ensured students had access to resources and information services.

Our journey to greatness

NWU's cutting-edge innovations

One of the NWU's cutting-edge innovations is the Backchat software that was developed to mark tests and assignments by giving personal feedback directly to students.

Backchat allows lecturers to record and distribute audio feedback on a large scale. These voice notes are individualised as feedback to every student.

(Read more)

Using Backchat software, lecturers can combine commentary with pre-recorded comments for generally repeated mistakes.



Student success rate

As indicated earlier, we maintained a good contact success rate of 87%.

Our 2021 contact undergraduate graduation duration factor was 1,09, improving from the 1,12 of 2020. This can be attributed to enhanced strategies for student support, early identification of at-risk students and NSFAS funding with provision for books and accommodation.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Academic performance	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Contact student success rate	86%	85%	85%	90%	87%
Contact undergraduate, graduation duration factor	1,15	1,13	1,13	1,12	1,09
Graduation rate*	25,6%	25,1%	23,5%	27%	27%

** It is expected that approximately a third of any cohort should graduate from an education institution where the education offering consists mostly, but not exclusively, of three-year programmes. The NWU figure is reassuring given that, in any given year there will be a small percentage of academic failure and dropouts or stop-outs.*

How much value we created, compared to our targets:

Academic performance	Target	Definition	Actual
Contact student success rate	87%	Based on HEMIS data. Completed FTEs divided by enrolled FTEs on a module level	87%
Contact undergraduate, graduation duration factor	1,2	Based on HEMIS data. This time (in years) it takes a student to graduate divided by the minimum time to complete the qualification	1,09

Other teaching and learning activities during 2021

(For more detail about these, click [here](#).)

- > Aligning our academic programmes to ensure that students across our campuses have access to equivalent resources and benefit from comparable high-quality teaching and learning.
- > Ensuring high-quality academic programmes that enhances the likelihood of student success through internal and external programme evaluation (EPE).
- > Redesigning modules and study materials while migrating to the online environment and later a hybrid environment.
- > Taking steps to enhance our digital teaching and learning environment. These include upgrading the infrastructure of the university's learning management system, eFundi to support the explosion in digital traffic associated with the move to online and hybrid learning environments. We also introduced an on-screen PDF marking system
- > Finalising the development of a centralised system for WIL and service learning (WISL) in 2021 and establishing a centralised office for WISL.

Our output: graduates

The number of graduates is lower than planned due to the drop in distance enrolments. We experienced a drop in our distance numbers due to the Advanced Certificate in Education, the NPDE and the BEd Honours phasing out faster than anticipated and the approval of our new distance offering taking longer than expected.

The impact of Covid-19 on new programme development, at the NWU and in the sector, cannot be underestimated. That said, planning for new programmes has proceeded apace with 16 new programmes receiving internal/external approval for the period 2020 and 2021.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Graduates	2018	2019	2020	2021
Overall	15 350	14 961	15 454	14 484
Contact	10 650	11 191	11 697	11 191
Distance	4 700	3 770	3 757	3 293

How much value we created, compared to our targets:

Output	Target	Definition	Actual
Graduates	15 044	Based on HEMIS data; number of graduates in reporting year.	14 484

Challenges in teaching and learning

In addition to dealing with the impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning, we had to continue addressing other important priorities. These included the further decolonisation of the curriculum and the Africanisation of appropriate sections of our offerings and explore opportunities to promote multilingualism in teaching and learning spaces.

Our experience in responding to the pandemic has sharpened our ability to act swiftly and systematically when dealing with change. We have also seen the value of teamwork in overcoming challenges and **becoming greater together**.

Future outlook

In 2022, our teaching and learning priorities will include finalising the revised Language Policy and the revised Policy on Continuing Education. We will also develop a framework for micro-credentials to link our curriculum offering more closely with the world of work.

We also plan to equip more venues with teaching and learning technology to supplement those venues already equipped in 2021.

We will remain diligent and vigilant in observing Covid-19-related regulations as applicable to teaching-learning spaces and activities. Our commitment to imbuing all teaching and learning activities with an ethic of care will carry us through any challenges we encounter along the way.

This is how our graduation rates (for undergraduate students) compare to other South African higher education institutions:

NWU graduation rate for students in 2021: 27%

(The national average for 2020 was 21,7%.)



Material matter:

Research



By finding affordable, workable solutions to real-life problems, our researchers and inventors increase our intellectual capital and create value for ourselves and our stakeholders.

Research output

We again recorded an increase in NRF ratings, from 232 in 2018 to 263 in 2020. This is important as NRF-ratings are a key indicator of the calibre of a university's researchers.

The following table shows the numbers of researchers in the different rating categories.

NRF	2018	2019	2020
A	2	0	0
B	25	27	26
C	150	161	181
P	1	2	1
Y	54	58	55
TOTAL	232	248	263

** Please note that the research figures lag two years behind*

Rating categories

A	Leading international scholars
B	Internationally recognised researchers
C	Established researchers
P	Young researchers (normally under 35)
Y	Young researchers (40 years or younger)

For more information about the different NRF rating categories, [click here](#).

Publications

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Research	2018	2019	2020
Publications per academic staff member	0,94	0,98	0,93
Weighted research output	2 708,941	3,058,0223	2 811,1914

Increase our global standing and visibility

Our existing international partnerships remained intact. Some of the prestigious institutions with which we have partnerships are the Corporación Universidad de la Costa in Colombia, the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom and the University of Hong Kong in Asia.

Research collaborations range from joint degrees and co-chairs to collaborative research and innovation programmes, skills development and international student recruitment and exchange.

The NWU also belongs to several strategic inter-institutional collaborations. One is the Southern African Regional Universities Association which has a memorandum of understanding with the OBREAL Global Observatory. Another is our membership of the Southern African-Nordic Centre, which advances academic collaboration between institutions in the Southern African and Nordic regions.

The NWU is an active partner in BRICS research collaborations and has knowledge and skills-sharing agreements with several BRICS universities.

Becoming greater through innovation and technology

The university embarked on several new international collaborative initiatives in health research. These initiatives will build capacity in exciting areas of health research, such as vaccine development, and serve as a platform to stimulate and produce new innovations and technologies.

In one such initiative, the NWU and Walter Sisulu University established the Sisulu Foundation for African and Pandemic Disease Response in May 2021. The foundation brings together a group of leading African scientists and institutions, as well as researchers from Germany and Slovenia, to work on vaccine development and pandemic response in public health systems on the continent.

The NWU founded the Grace Onyango Foundation for Digital Health in Africa in collaboration with three Kenyan universities, namely Great Lakes University of Kisumu, Jomo Kenyatta University and Masena University, and two other South African institutions, Walter Sisulu University and Sefako Makgatho University.

The foundation aims to deploy industry 4.0 solutions in public health systems in order to bring universal access to health services in Africa.

“The university is evolving its approach to innovation. Instead of focusing on intellectual property (IP) curation, we are shifting to the transfer or monetisation of our IP portfolio. This includes trimming the low-value or mature patents, and taking more relevant technologies to the marketplace.”

Challenges with research output

The global health crisis of 2020 and 2021 has exacerbated existing research funding constraints, which has implications for our ability to continue increasing our research output.

What we have in our favour is the sophistication of our research infrastructure, our relationships with funders and our ingenuity in finding and tapping into new sources of funding.

This opportunity will be pivotal in addressing the lack of sufficient incentives for our most productive researchers. Currently, only 20% of our academics deliver almost 80% of our research output, a situation that must be addressed in the interests of research sustainability.

Future outlook

It is imperative that we succeed in expanding our pool of productive researchers in all disciplines, from law and education to the natural and social sciences and the economic and management sciences.

It is envisaged that those not yet participating actively in research and innovation activities will begin to do so as this is in their professional best interests. The requirement to contribute to research has been formalised through the setting of research output targets in the faculties, in consultation with the relevant academics.

The NWU provides support mechanisms such as research leave, relief from teaching at selected times, dedicated research time for each academic and the integration of research into teaching and learning activities.

We continue to consider additional strategies to encourage and guide academics who do not deliver research output, and to retain those who are active researchers.

Our journey to greatness

Space debris: What is out there?

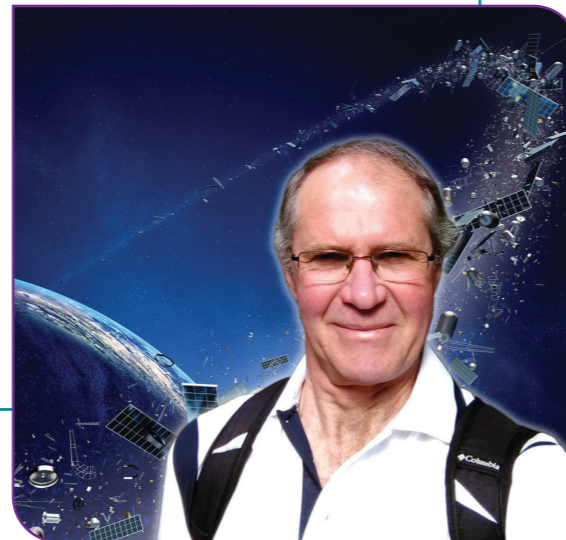
There are approximately 900 000 pieces of debris from one to 10 cm in space.

Collisions with debris larger than 1 cm could disable an operational spacecraft and may cause the explosion of a decommissioned spacecraft or rocket body, says Dr Pieter Kotzé of the Centre for Space Research.

That is why the development of clean-up technologies has been under way for years.

[\(Read more\)](#)

Dr Pieter Kotzé says technological fixes include removing space debris from orbit with nets, harpoons or lasers.



Material matter:

Information and communications technology

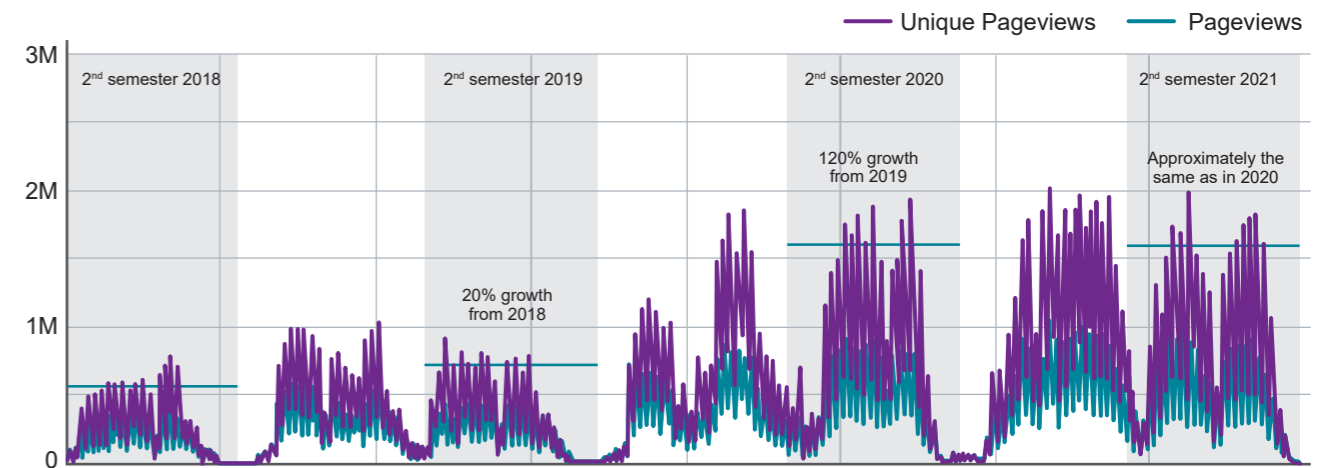


Information and communications technology (ICT) and digital resources underpin all elements of the NWU's core business and support services.

ICT has a bearing on two of our capital, intellectual capital and manufactured capital. Intellectual capital includes software programmes, IT support services and the e-learning system eFundi, while manufactured capital is our physical ICT infrastructure, such as networks and hardware.

Most of the university's technological capabilities were within the ambit of the Information Technology (IT) department, which has a comprehensive product-, project- and services-portfolios.

Demand for IT products and services is high across the university community. eFundi, our primary learning platform, is one of the most widely used services, as shown in the image below.



Between 2018 and 2020, when online learning started, the daily use of eFundi by students more than doubled. The high usage levels were sustained in 2021, when the Covid-19 pandemic continued to affect learning and teaching.

On average, approximately 45 terabytes of traffic have been flowing to and from eFundi each month and lecturers have loaded about 25 terabytes of content on the system since 2020.

As in 2020, we again experienced huge demand for online meeting services in 2021, mainly through Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

The Covid-19 pre-screening app we developed for staff to gain access to the campuses has been used nearly 3 million times since it went into production. IT also developed an application to upload vaccination certificates.

As the university moves ever deeper into the digital era, we anticipate strong continued growth in IT-products and IT-services.

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

"Council affirms, as the final decision-making body of the university, that it is endowed with the responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness and efficiency of information technology processes, including the IT governance framework, alignment with NWU objectives, significant IT investment, risk management, assets, policies and strategies, and compliance with statutory requirements. Council is continually apprised of developments, by means of management and audit reports to the Technology and Information Governance Committee, and received sufficient assurance over the past year from all relevant assurance providers."

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Material matter:

Govern, lead and manage



Our governance structures and approach to ethics, as well as our strategy, values, success model and APP, guide us to create optimal value through good governance and management.

These, together with the systems, processes, procedures and policies that support governance and management, are part of our intellectual capital.

For more information about how our management activities increase our intellectual capital, refer to the [report of the vice-chancellor](#) and for information about governance, turn to the section on [governance supporting and protecting value](#).

Our human capital

Of all our capitals, human capital is one of the most expansive in that it influences and is influenced by all our other capitals. The two major stakeholder groups that make up the university's human capital are staff and students, for whom we create value through our activities, outputs and outcomes.

Using the infrastructure and support we offer them, our staff undertake research and teaching activities that increase the value of our intellectual and social and relationship capital. In much the same way, students use the various forms of support and high-quality study and residence facilities (manufactured capital) to succeed academically and in other avenues of student life, creating value for the university and strengthening our other capitals.

When students pay tuition fees, they increase our financial capital; and in turn, students increase our social and relationship capital when they graduate and contribute to society.

The prominent role our staff and students play in the NWU value chain comes across in this section.

Stakeholders who will benefit from human capital activities

Our human capital activities mainly affect our staff and students, although their families are also indirectly affected by our activities.

Material matters/goals involved

Almost all material matters affect our staff and students.

(Click [here](#) to see what the icons used in this section stands for.)



Risks involved

Our main risks are uncertainties in the higher education sector, the demand for organisational change, risks related to academic matters, compliance matters, risks relating to student life, IT risks and operational risks. Almost all of these risks have a bearing on our staff and students.

Material matter:

Teaching and learning, research, community engagement



Caring for our students

When entering the labour market our graduates must have the skills to adapt to the changing world of work and contribute as responsible global citizens. That is why we are committed to empowering our students to **become greater** than they were before.

After the outbreak of the pandemic, we moved some of the social, cultural, arts and sport activities activities we offer our students to online platforms, along with psychological health and well-being services.

More information is available in the [vice-chancellor's report](#).

Academic support

Information on how we assist prospective students to gain access to the university and, once enrolled, to complete their studies successfully, can be found in the section on [our value chain](#), and in the section on [our intellectual capital](#).

Career-related support

The NWU Career Centre remained functional and productive throughout 2021. Students attended CV writing and interviewing workshops, used our career service management portal, attended our virtual career fairs and responded to the Universum survey.

We again expanded the content on our Career Zone portal, which gained 28 new materials, including 24 video presentations. The Career Centre website was also enhanced and now has 76 items, including articles, publications, web links and a how-to guide.

Caring for our staff

Building staff capacity

The NWU wishes to inspire our stakeholders to recognise and **celebrate their greatness** and the opportunities the NWU offers to help them **become even greater**.

These opportunities include internal and external skills development interventions, as well as formal training to build our employees' capacity and support their career development, which in turn increases our human capital.

About 20% of our training spend was used for in-house training, mainly in people skills, leadership and diversity management skills, and business etiquette.

We also presented an employee learnership programme to staff with a Grade 12 certificate as their highest qualification and hosted a SETA graduate internship programme for participants who included people living with disabilities.

In 2021, we spent over R26,8 million on study discount benefits, a form of financial aid that allows our staff and their dependants to study at the NWU.

Empowering our researchers

We want our researchers to push their boundaries, test their limits and **become greater** researchers today than yesterday.

Capacity-building workshops are therefore available to researchers at all levels, ensuring they have the research skills and acumen to contribute to the university's research outputs.

In addition, we leverage external development opportunities. In 2021, these included research training/workshops and webinars covering topics such as research ethics and integrity, article writing, grant writing, mentorship and postgraduate supervision. All training costs (R2 836 442) were covered through the Informal Research Development project grant under the Universities Capacity Development Grant.

Emerging researchers received study funding support of over R1,192 million from our own University Capacity Development Programme. In addition, NWU staff busy with their master's and doctoral studies received support worth R2 442 000 through the NWU Staff Discount Scheme.

Material matter:

Student value proposition



Our students are our primary stakeholders, and we want to empower and support them to keep moving forward, as every moment has the capacity for growth and **becoming greater than before**.

Our campus health care centres, together with counselling and social welfare services, support our students' overall physical and psychosocial well-being. Social welfare projects such as the Meal-a-Day programme support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The campus disability rights units see to it that the needs of students living with disabilities are addressed.

We also have crisis intervention programmes such as Thuso, through which registered psychologists provide services that promote the psychological well-being of students. When the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, we used online, telephonic and SMS platforms to provide psychosocial support.

The student value proposition is further strengthened by the arts, sport and student media-related platforms that expose our students to related activities at university, regional, national and international levels.

Dropout rates

Our student to staff ratio decreased from 29,17 to 2841 in 2021. Our first-time entrant dropout rate has decreased from 10,48% in 2020 to 8,96% in 2021.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Dropout rate	2018	2019	2020	2021
First-time entrant dropout rate for contact degrees	9%	10,78%	10,48%	8,96%

How much value we created, compared to our target:

	Target	Definition	Actual
Academic staff full-time equivalent ratio: students	26,3	Based on HEMIS data and refers to the enrolled student full-time equivalent divided by the permanent instruction/research professionals full-time equivalent.	28,41
First-time entrant dropout rate for contact degrees	Below 13%	First-time entering students in contact degree qualifications who register in the reporting year but do not return in the next year.	8,96%

Material matter:



Develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile

Our employees matter

Our wellness offices support the all-round well-being of our staff through services that encompass biopsychosocial and spiritual facets.

Our comprehensive employee wellness assistance programme, CareWays, provides NWU employees and their immediate families access to experienced counselling professionals who assist with personal, family and work-related problems. This free service is available 24 hours a day.

Our Campus Health Care Centres offer health services to staff, while our campus offices for people living with disabilities provide support for staff living with disabilities, in line with our Disability Policy. We also host an HIV and AIDS workplace programme and a toll-free emergency number that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Campus Protection Services and the Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Department contribute towards a safe and secure working environment.



Our journey to greatness

NWU MOVES for wellness

On 7 June 2021, for the fourth consecutive year, the NWU kicked off its annual MOVE for Wellness challenge.

This 12-week physical activity programme was hosted by the NWU across its three campuses, with teams up and running, accumulating and logging steps on a weekly basis.

The aim of this initiative was to promote the importance of healthy living, team building and overall well-being among NWU employees.

"Leading an active lifestyle has numerous advantages. Our vision is to have healthy and well-balanced employees at the NWU," says Kehumile Katametsi from NWU Wellness.

(Read more)

For this project, staff members recorded their daily number of steps or kilometres – monitored by a pedometer or an app on a cell phone. The weekly totals were then submitted to the team captain, who logged them.



Staff profile

In striving to create an equitable staff profile, we are guided by our employment equity plan that is running from January 2021 to December 2023. The freezing of vacancies necessitated by the staff- cost risk mitigation plan due to the Covid-19 challenges had an adverse impact on our ability to reach the employment equity targets.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
African (%)	34,5%	35,9%	37,5%	38,3%	43,4%
Coloured (%)	5,7%	6,3%	6,5%	6,6%	5,1%
Indian (%)	1,3%	1,3%	1,5%	1,6%	1,8%
White (%)	58,5%	56,5%	54,5%	53,4%	49,7%

How much value we created, compared to our equity targets:

	2021 target	Actual
African (%)	40,60%	43,4%
Coloured (%)	6,98%	5,1%
Indian (%)	1,88%	1,8%
White (%)	49,42%	49,7%

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The university is committed to principles of collective bargaining, progressive discipline, restorative justice and alternative dispute resolution as far as possible, in order to address conflict situations.

"During 2021, the NWU successfully dealt with potential conflicts that could possibly harm the institution's reputation at the lowest level. This includes, among others, bargaining forums with recognised trade union(s), internal disciplinary procedures, grievance procedures, mediation processes, etc.

The main focus is always to act in the best interest of the institution, while creating a 'win-win situation' for all, as far as possible.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON WORKER AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The Recognition Agreement between the NWU and SAPTU was revised in August 2019. In terms of this agreement, all employee issues of mutual interest are addressed through the University Bargaining Forum, either by means of negotiation or consultative processes. In order to be a recognised trade union at the NWU, a trade union must meet the membership threshold of 30% across the university.

"An Organisational Agreement between the NWU and NEHAWU regulates the relationship between the parties in terms of the Labour Relations Act. We have ongoing management and trade union consultative forum meetings.

An organisational agreement was entered into between Solidarity and NWU after they attained a 11% membership which is slightly above the mandatory 10% which is required for recognition of organisational rights.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Material matter:

Govern, lead and manage; information and communication technology; and financial sustainability



Good governance is an important way of supporting and protecting our human capital. This is part of the responsibilities of the Council and some of its committees, such as the Remuneration Committee, the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee and the Student Life Oversight Committee.

We also have several policies that provide guidelines for the fair and just people management.

These include policies on conflict of interest, governance oversight and management control, human rights, remuneration, performance management, staff learning and development, employment equity and disabilities, to name just a few.

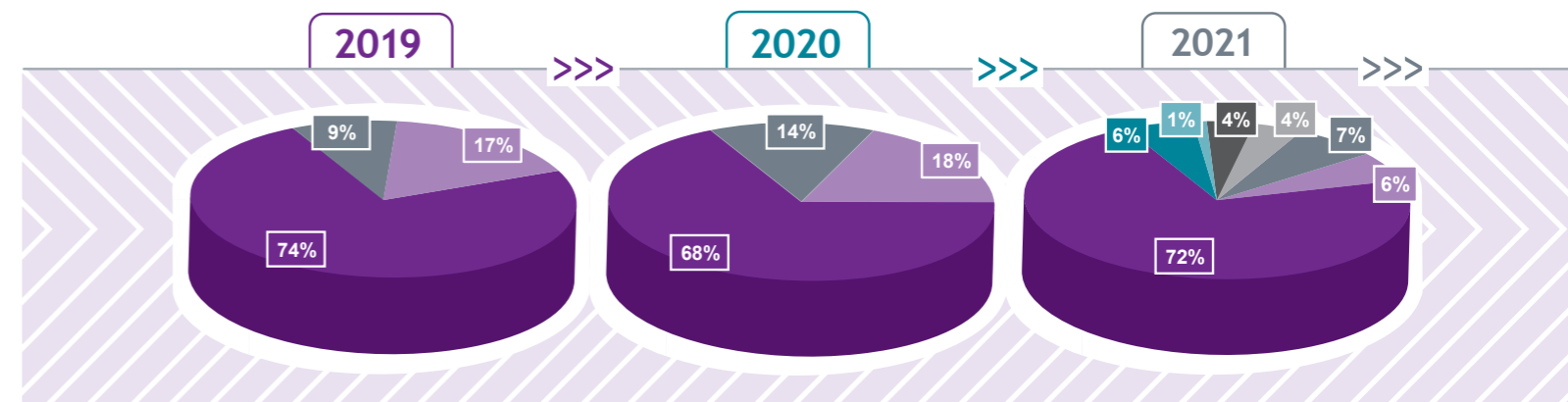
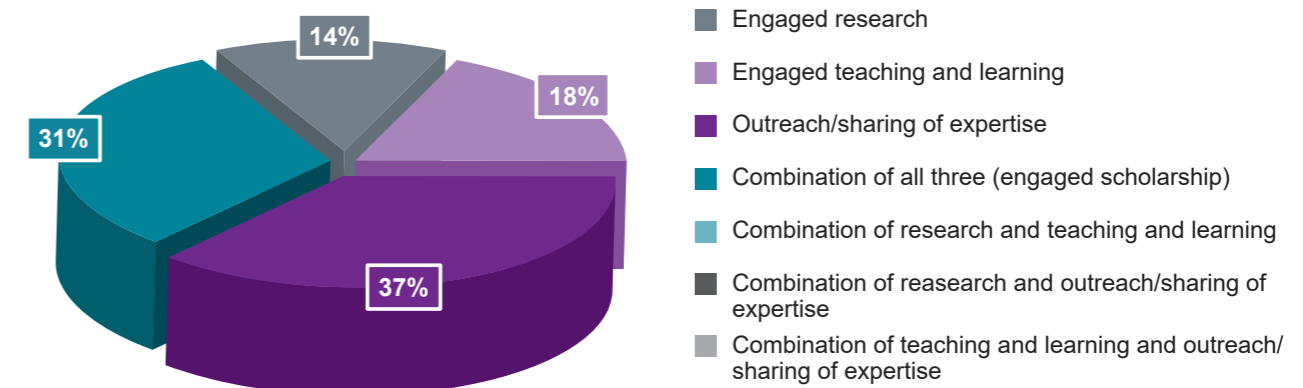
ICT is a key enabler of student success and staff effectiveness, necessitating equitable access to IT resources and services. We have adopted a centralised approach to system delivery and a decentralised model for service delivery, thus ensuring that our systems are well maintained across all three campuses and that staff and students have the necessary hardware, software and help desk support.

Lastly, it is our responsibility to make sure that our university stays financially sustainable. This ensures that our current staff and students, as well as future generations, will have a financially stable institution to work and study at. More information about how we do this is in the section on our **financial capital**.

Greater together

Together, we and our partners have the potential to push the boundaries of greatness, such as through training and community-based partnerships in community research.

Growth in engaged scholarship at the NWU and the various combinations of engagement forms that are emerging.



Service learning (SL) for students is an important part of our community engagement work. We have started to update our list of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public benefit organisations (PBOs) and religious organisations with a view to update our database of legitimate SL partners for student placements.

This remains an ongoing process and creating trust with partners in this ever-changing environment remains challenging due to the pandemic.

Material matter:

Teaching and learning; research and community engagement



Many of our teaching and learning activities incorporate community engagement, often through opportunities for work-integrated learning (WIL) and service learning (SL) for students. Even student outreach can contribute to the acquisition of planning, negotiation and collaboration skills and staff are encouraged to include SL assignments into the curriculum where possible.

We have improved our ability to track student placements for WIL and SL by using an integrated reporting system called the Work Integrated Service Learning (WISL) database.

Many of our faculties continued with their efforts to alleviate challenges in communities in 2021.

Examples of these activities include making WhatsApp videos to support grade 12 learners, compiling a communication strategy and plan for NGOs, conducting patient training on how to recognise stroke symptoms, providing legal services, and distributing food and clothing to vulnerable people.



Our social and relationship capital

As a university we appreciate that a substantial part of our success in creating value depends on the relationships we have with individuals, groups and communities outside the NWU – locally, nationally and internationally. These relationships constitute our social and relationship capital.

Our involvement with communities often entails interactive, two-way engagement with and in communities, resulting in all parties **becoming greater than before**.

When our stakeholder relationships are sound, these contribute to our social licence to operate, meaning that our stakeholders broadly approve of what we do.

Effective engagement with our external stakeholders increases the value of our social and relationship capital.

Stakeholders who will benefit from effective engagement with the NWU

External stakeholders who need to benefit from our engagement with them include the parents of our current and prospective students, communities surrounding our campuses, donors, alumni, employers, business and industry, professional bodies and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Material matters (goals or enablers) involved

Our relationships with external stakeholders directly or indirectly influence all our goals as a university that strives to benefit society through knowledge.

In increasing the value of our social and relationship capital, our communication, marketing and stakeholder engagement activities also fulfil an important role.



Risks involved

Communities surrounding our campuses may withdraw their support for WIL or service-learning opportunities, on which the NWU and our students are reliant, or may decline to participate in research initiatives involving community engagement.

Parents of students may be affected by the uncertainties in the higher education sector, the demand for organisational change and risks relating to student life. (Matters that may concern them include state funding, tuition fees and the safety of our campuses in the event of unrest.)

Other risks that affect our external stakeholders include risks related to academic matters, compliance and commercialisation of intellectual property.

Material matter:

Research, community engagement



By conducting research with, in and about communities and the real-life problems they face, we contribute to community empowerment and quality-of-life improvements, while increasing our social and relationship capital.

Engaged research activities ranged from providing information about trees and water quality to high altitude ballooning. In many cases, these activities combined engaged teaching and learning or outreach and research.

Some examples are advising municipalities and schools about the tree species most suited for their environmental conditions, the High-altitude Radiation Monitor project, community roadshows during Water Week, the Nguni cattle development project, and a campaign on a low-emission, semi-continuous stove to improve air quality in low-income households. [Click here](#) to read more about these activities.

Research study on local communities completed

The Sustainability and Community Impact Unit completed its 2021 research study on the needs, assets and well-being of the local communities of the NWU. Conducted between March and August 2021, this research project measured various domains of community well-being.

According to the findings, there is a significant need among a substantially large group of community members for interventions aimed at increasing their quality of life. The communities' greatest challenges are safety and security, followed by political conditions, lack of employment and then environmental conditions and recreational challenges.

The NWU's current areas of impact, namely in the areas of education, health, financial, social, neighbourhood and leisure, appear to be misaligned with community priorities around safety, political considerations, employment and so on. We have therefore recommended that the NWU focus at least some of its community-engaged activities on the needs identified in this study.

> Our journey to greatness

Science is a ball(oon) of a time!

Science is a window to unimaginable wonders. Dr Godfrey Mosotho knows this more than most and he is not keeping the secret to himself.

Dr Godfrey Mosotho, a postdoctoral researcher, runs an experiment that entails launching meteorological balloons to measure radiation in the atmosphere up to several kilometres.

The project also serves as an outreach programme. One of his balloon launches in 2021 had learners from Saints Christian (primary) School in Potchefstroom participating in the scientific fun.

[\(Read more\)](#)

Up, up and away! As the meteorological balloon rises, so does the excitement of the pupils from Saints Christian School.



Material matter:

Student value proposition; develop and retain excellent staff



Social justice, social responsiveness and an ethic of care are embedded in our strategy and dream and form the crux of our annual CE performance plans.

We encourage our staff and students to contribute to society through volunteering. Many of our student outreach projects provide assistance with basic necessities such as food, clothing and housing. This included providing food for first-year students who had not yet received their NSFAS bursaries.

In 2021, our students undertook a total of 138 community engagement activities:

> The Student Campus Council of the Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses collected food, clothing and toys and distributed these at early childhood development centres.

> The Sedibeng House Committee in Vanderbijlpark donated clothing and non-perishable food to community partners, while our Mahikeng students assisted learners with school studies, sport coaching and mentorship. Soccer Institute players donated a soccer kit to the Amatariana Football Club of Pimville in Soweto.

> The deputy vice-chancellor's office for community engagement supported the feeding scheme programme in primary schools around Mahikeng by assisting with vegetable gardens.

> Through the Phelophepa train project, pharmacy students provided primary healthcare services to community members and gained exposure to interdisciplinary patient care.

> The Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management in Potchefstroom teamed up with the Ikageng police station, Ministers Fraternal and Promosa Community Policing Forum (CPF) to undertake weekly youth outreaches in the Promosa area during February and March 2021. They addressed topics such as crime, bullying, domestic violence and violence against women and children.

Challenges and future outlook

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated poverty, inequality and unemployment in many of the communities around our campuses, and amplified our obligation to contribute to poverty alleviation and community capacity-building.

Technology development and online education have the ability to make the university and our services more accessible to communities. However, as a result of the digital divide, not all external partners are equally equipped in terms of connectivity, hampering efforts to advance social justice.

The communities we work with are also accustomed to face-to-face interaction and it will require a "cultural reset" to use online tools to build new relationships and maintain existing ones. We are in the process of negotiating partnerships that contribute to socio-economic solutions that are sustainable and can stimulate development in all of our communities.

Entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility and digital literacy are key areas of focus in our efforts to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Agenda 2063, which will be a direct indicator of how we are sharing our expertise to contribute to development.



Our natural capital

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how vital it is for our society to safeguard natural resources such as water, soil and clean air. These are fundamental to the sustainable operations of the university and our ability to add value to our other capitals.

Without a healthy supply of water, the university would literally not be able to function. We use land and resources such as soil and water to construct buildings and strengthen our manufactured capital. However, by building on the land and using natural resources and creating waste during the construction process, we decrease the value of our natural capital.

As part of our student awareness campaigns for 2022, the focus will be on water as a resource.

Stakeholders who will benefit from strong natural capital

All our stakeholders need natural capital to exist and flourish.

Material matters (goals or enablers) involved

We will not be able to realise any of our goals or implement our enablers without natural resources as input.

The material matter “to promote sustainability” (part of goal three in our APP) is particularly relevant here.



Risks involved

Risks include those related to academic and operational matters, student life, compliance (for instance with environmental regulations) and IT (infrastructure needs an energy source).

Our commitment to reducing the environmental footprint of our activities entails using natural resources responsibly, decreasing our energy use and complying with environmental regulations. These are part of the draft strategy and policy we have compiled and which we will share with our stakeholders in 2022.

Our use of resources such as energy and water was considerably lower than in previous years, which likely would have a positive effect on our environmental footprint. Depending on how universities resume operations in 2022, this could be a temporary or more lasting scenario. Water and energy consumption are being taken into account in our environmental impact strategy and measurement processes.

Material matter:

Promoting sustainability



This section focuses on the environment as an important element of sustainability.

(For information about general sustainability at the NWU, see the [Council statement on sustainability](#).)

Environmental audit

For the past six years, since conducting an institution-wide environmental audit, we have been systematically correcting the non-compliance issues found. We expect that compliance-related work, which was interrupted as a result of the pandemic, will resume in 2022.

The different role players identified in the initial environmental compliance audit are still responsible for finalising outstanding compliance issues. Where applicable, responsibility for achieving these targets will be included in task agreements.

Material matter:

Student value proposition



As indicated, the Covid-19 pandemic affected the various green campus initiatives to save energy and water, and raise awareness of environmental sustainability. With less-than-normal students living in the residences or only partially active on campus during the recent periods, the annual energy-saving competition was again postponed.

Although a waste-management training initiative was rolled out, limits were placed on how many students could participate. However, there was no lack of enthusiasm among students on the Vanderbijlpark Campus students with their green activities in and around the campus.

Students from our faculties had many opportunities to participate in engaged scholarship around the environment:

> The South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability (CLES) is seeking opportunities for its postdoctoral fellows and postgraduate students to conduct engaged research on law and governance in relation to urban development and environmental sustainability, such as basic service delivery failures at local municipalities. CLES has continued to incorporate environmental sustainability issues into the curriculum.

> Current offerings include modules on Environmental Philosophy and Marine Spatial Planning, which cover issues such as marine pollution, microplastics and fishing pollution. Third-year tourism management students continued to undertake eco-tourism recycling projects.

> The e-Agro-Tourism CoLab funds e-agriculture skills within communities in the North West Province and runs a food-security project at various schools. The CoLab is funded by the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) and assists schools to start their own vegetable gardens and gain environmental insights.

> All final-year engineering students take a course with significant environmental content. Tools such as MiniSASS are well suited to school groups involved in environmental monitoring, in this case, the health of rivers. MiniSASS was developed by our Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management.

Challenges and future outlook

In late 2021, we began taking steps to **address our limited operational expertise** in environmental remediation and sustainability. We prepared a draft strategy and policy on environmental responsibility and intend to finalise it in 2022.

The Sustainability and Community Impact Office will continue **raising awareness** about different aspects of sustainability such as littering, water and electricity usage. As students and staff return to our campuses, we will be able to resume activities such as the Flip-the-Switch campaign to highlight energy consumption and the impact it has on the environment.

Additionally, we plan to place more bins on our campuses to separate waste. The “**cradle-to-death**” **disposal process** in some of our municipalities remains a challenge that we are trying to resolve with the various stakeholders.

The cradle-to-death process encompasses the environmentally responsible design, manufacturing and application of products and the disposal of used or redundant products.

Unfortunately, it is not easy for us to track the products we use and how these are disposed. Even if we separate our waste products for recycling or upcycling purposes, these sometimes end up as mixed waste on municipal dumps – outcomes that we cannot always control or track.

We are encouraging our campuses to celebrate important days such as **Arbor Day** during the first week of September and have planted some indigenous trees at two of the three campuses in 2021.

Generally, universities and related higher education institutions are lagging behind in localising the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs). Identifying champions within and across disciplines and institutions can be invaluable in this regard.

The NWU is part of the **Higher Education Sustainability Community of Practice**, which aims to reorientate universities’ SDG strategies by convincing them to review all strategic documents, starting with their visions and missions.

Our director of Sustainability and Community Impact is the current chair of HESCoP’s localising subcommittee, whose role it is to create awareness and advocacy within local South African universities.

>

Our journey to greatness

LANGUAGE BUTTONS
AFR
SES
SET

Informal reclaimers make a huge contribution to recycling

Informal waste reclaimers in South Africa play a key but often unrecognised role in the recycling value chain. Ways should be found to enable them to participate in decisions around waste management practices and community recycling programmes, says Prof Derick Blaauw from the School of Economics.

For the past 10 years, he has been part of a countrywide study on informal reclaimers' contribution to recycling in South Africa.

(Read more)

Landfill reclaimers sorting waste. Various studies estimate that South Africa has between 60 000 and 90 000 informal street waste reclaimers, landfill reclaimers, neighbourhood reclaimers and bakkie collectors.

Prof Blaauw, one of the principal researchers on the project, says informal waste reclaimers are an important bridge between the municipal service chain and the formal private sector value chain, as they effectively move "waste" from curbside and landfill into the recycling economy.



G-R

Our financial capital

The sources of our financial capital are state funding, debt and grants, as well as revenue generated through our operations and investments. We use this capital to provide services and maintain and improve our infrastructure so that we can create value for the NWU and our stakeholders.

Managing our income and spending, as expressed in our annual budget, is the key to the health and stability our financial environment, which is a prerequisite for achieving our strategic objectives as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence.

Stakeholders who will benefit

All our stakeholders benefit when the NWU's financial capital is strong. Financial stability enables us to keep our tuition fees within reach of our current and future students and their families, while offering them high quality education. It also means we are able to afford fair remuneration for our staff and reassure our donors and the DHET that we spend their donations and funding wisely, serving the national priorities for higher education.

Material matters (goals or enablers) involved

Although Enabler 4 (financial stability) is the main focus, all our goals and other enablers are also implicated, as we need money to achieve and implement these.

Risks involved

The main risks are uncertainties in the higher education sector (for instance the drive towards fee regulation), and the demand for organisational change (for instance, free education resulting in higher dependency on state funding).

The other top risks in our risk register are also implicated, as we need money for all the activities linked to them. (These are the risks related to academic matters, compliance – for instance with financial laws and regulations – risks relating to student life, IT risks, commercialisation and operational risks.)

Material matter

G-R

Ensure the financial sustainability of the NWU

By distributing our resources in a way that supports our core business strategies, we secure the university's long-term financial sustainability.

In the interest of improved medium-term planning, we compiled a detailed **three-year rolling budget** for 2021-2023. As it is important to incorporate the unknown financial impact of Covid-19, we compiled a base budget against which to measure the financial impact of the pandemic. This was done before taking into account any possible financial impact that the pandemic will have in future years.

In seeking to evaluate the possible financial impact, we built different scenarios based on a set of general and financial assumptions and risk factors (the so-called Financial Impact Model).

For the short- and medium-term (2021 to 2024), our focus was on assessing the sensitivity of the NWU's **income sources** for the assumptions and risk factors. The base income budget, adjusted with the financial impact of the most probable scenario, was used during the budget process as the high-level budget framework for 2021 – 2024. This Financial Impact Model was accepted as best practice by Universities South Africa (USAf).

We are continuously updating our **Financial Impact Model** and mitigation plan as and when more information becomes available, using the model as the baseline to guide decision-making, which can be scaled up or down. The main focus is on cash flow management and on including the financial impact forecast in revising the 2021-2023 budget.

The three-year rolling budget was compiled according to a set of approved principles and shaped by the realistic prediction of income, which was then translated into expenses that would be "affordable" for the university.

The calculation of the key sources of income received in-depth attention, taking into account all the latest relevant information available. The 2020 budgeted **cash-flow expense ratios**, as listed below, were used as the basis for calculating the high-level expense budget.

- > Staff cost as a percentage of income
- > Operating cost as a percentage of income
- > Capital cost as a percentage of income

In the following sections, we explain how we financed our strategic initiatives in 2021 and allocated our funds to achieve our goals and implement our enablers.

Financing our strategic initiatives

We use our strategic fund to invest in specific strategic projects in addition to aligning all activities and allocating resources (by means of the normal operating budget) with the strategy and success model of the university.

Read more about these strategic projects in the section on our strategy.

The university management committee approved the allocation of strategic funds.

Strategic funds allocated per goal/enabler

APP Link	Rand value of allocation R'000	% of allocation
Enabler 3	1 148 000	2%
Goal 1	2 995 931	6%
Goal 2	5 000 000	10%
Goal 3	3 349 060	7%
Goal 4	900 000	2%
Goal 5	201 800	0%
Goal 6	36 405 209	73%
Grand Total	50 000 000	100%

In the near future: opportunities and challenges in executing our strategy

The annual across-the-board tuition fee increase that the DHET has recommended since 2016, has been based on the consumer price index (CPI). The CPI rate does not adequately capture the costs associate with running a university and we regard the so-called Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) as a better yardstick.

The historical subsidy increase for universities has resulted in a deficit in real terms – a deficit that is widening because higher education inflation is outpacing the subsidy increases.

What universities have to do

Universities would need to adjust their expenditure in line with price changes as (calculated by the HEPI) to maintain the same level of quality and real output. However, when estimating total budgetary requirements, universities also need to take cognisance of volume changes based on the so-called Higher Education Volume Index (HEVI), giving rise to a Higher Education Budget Index (HEBI).

The short and medium-term financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic can be added to our challenges for the foreseeable future.

Our mitigation plan

As part of the mitigation plan to ensure our future sustainability, we have drawn from our Financial Impact Model and included various risk factors into our 2021-2023 rolling budget.

These include the possible impact of a lower block grant subsidy stemming from decreased 2021 outputs and lower block grant and earmarked funding available to universities due to the financial difficulties that government is experiencing, among other things.

The said, there is a limit to what universities can achieve without a sustainable national funding model. Our view is that the NSFAS model is not sustainable and that, owing to the considerable increase in the number of NSFAS-qualifying students, the model poses a sustainability risk for the higher education sector.

We also see certain opportunities to improve our utilisation of resources, especially as we expedite our digital business strategy and blended-learning model.

Future outlook: how to maintain financial sustainability

In striving to maintain our healthy financial position, we will be closely monitoring developments around the funding of higher education and the as-yet unknown impact of the pandemic. Internally, our focus will continue to be on diversifying and optimising our income streams, improving operating cost efficiency and effectiveness, optimising the use of infrastructure and managing our mitigation plan and cash with the utmost care.

We cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that the higher education and NSFAS funding model support the financial sustainability of public higher education institutions. If not, the financial position of these institutions may be jeopardised to such an extent that some may lose their competitive edge in the market and the ability to contribute to the skills and knowledge economy of South Africa.

The NWU will continue to participate actively in the modelling of the future funding design. We remain committed to working with the DHET to ensure a well-functioning and sustainable NWU and, more broadly, the stability and sustainability of the South African higher education sector.



Financial review

This is the report of the chairperson of the Finance Committee of Council and the Executive Director: Finance and Facilities.

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of our financial results for 2021 and to provide information about the budgeting and budgetary control processes, as well as to give an overview of financial achievements.

Budgeting and budgetary control processes

During the budget process, we used a high-level budget as the budget framework. It took into account the approved Annual Performance Plan, the viability and sustainability indicators, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the NWU mitigation plan and other financial information available.

Budget discussions took place on various management levels focusing on the following matters:

- > a financial overview of each income stream;
- > the impact of the pandemic on 2020 outputs and enrolment planning for 2021-2023;
- > redirection of operating and capital budgets towards the new way of working and post-Covid-19 demand;
- > staff planning including staff cost mitigation plan for the medium term; and
- > possible risks and concerns and the link with the strategy and APP.

Financial overview

Please [click here](#) for the full financial overview and [here](#) for a summary of how we added value to the economy and reached our financial goals.

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON BORROWINGS

The university entered into a new long-term borrowing agreement with the Development Bank of South Africa in 2021 as per the Annual Financial Statements.

Statement approved by the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.



Our manufactured capital

Our manufactured capital is the physical infrastructure that supports our core business activities and helps us to provide services to our stakeholders. It consists of buildings and infrastructure, including lecture halls and laboratories, as well as teaching technology, research equipment, IT systems and infrastructure that enable our staff to teach our students and do research and community engagement. When we put our facilities and infrastructure to work, we increase our intellectual, human and social and relationship capital and support the execution of our strategy.

Stakeholders who will benefit from our manufactured capital

Our staff and students are the main beneficiaries. However, we also use our building and maintenance projects to create business and jobs for people outside the university community. Furthermore, our donors and the DHET have stakes in our manufactured capital as they fund many of our projects.

Material matters (goals or enablers) involved

(Click [here](#) to see what the icons used in this section stands for.)



Risks involved

Uncertainties in the higher education sector (for instance state funding), demand for organisational change (equity of resources), risks related to academic matters, compliance (for instance with building regulations), IT and operational risks.

How we continued to weather the Covid-19 storm

Students in our residences

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact on student accommodation in university residences.

All residence students were allowed to return to campuses and residences, subject to high levels of compliance to residence protocols. Through the implementation of strict compliance rules, we managed to contain the spread of the virus to the bare minimum.

The residence protocols were adjusted throughout the year to keep up with the changes in the national regulations.

Safety on our campuses

During 2021, a safety and community summit was presented on all three campuses of the NWU to ensure the safety of students and staff and improve the overall student experience.

We reviewed the university disaster recovery plan during 2021 to optimise the university's ability to continue operating after a major natural catastrophe and to reduce the risk of disasters caused by human error, deliberate destruction or equipment failures.

Relatively low levels of crime on and around our campuses were reported in 2021. This can be attributed to the Covid-19 lockdown levels that were in force, the university's online learning approach, which meant there less-than-normal numbers of students and staff at or in the vicinity of our campuses who could be targeted by criminal elements.

At and around our campuses, NWU Protection Services officers, the South African Police Service and the South African National Defence Force carried out regular patrols, serving as a deterrent to potential offenders. Covid-19 safety protocols were applied at all our sites and were mandatory for all contractors and suppliers.

Infrastructure development

We spent a total of R481 million for capital works, macro maintenance and minor works across the university in 2021. This funding was from the DHET and our own funds. The following table provides a spending breakdown.

		Potchefstroom Campus	Mahikeng Campus	Vanderbijlpark Campus	Project Across Campuses	Total
R'000						
DHET	Student Housing 2016-2017	-	277,608,164	-	-	277,608,164
	Student Housing 2017-2018	-	2,815	-	-	2,815
	Funding 2017-2018	-	-	-	303,761	303,761
	Funding 2018-2021	1,193,972	34,460,794	24,953,919	18,727,756	79,336,262
Capital Works	New	31,230,003	7,375,808	47,218,992	269,585	86,094,388
	Upgrade	1,966,295	7,124,520	10,752,922	1,092,391	20,936,128
Macro Maintenance		7,455,661	1,384,413	715,144	6,967,342	16,522,560
Minor works		284,193	267,927	100,456	-	652,577

DHET grant funding

The total amount spent in 2021 from DHET grant funding from various funding cycles amounted to R357 251 001. This excludes R107 030 516 from NWU capital funding and R17 175 137 in maintenance expenditure.

Accommodation for our students

Collectively, student housing on and in close proximity to the three campuses has the capacity to accommodate 11 066 students. This housing consists of 41 university-owned residences and four leased accommodation facilities being operated as formal residences.

Through a joint initiative by the NWU, the Development Bank of Southern Africa and the DHET, we are building additional residences on the Mahikeng Campus to accommodate 1 728 more students.

When our students have access to safe accommodation on or around our campuses, we strengthen our student value proposition by providing for their safety and security and spaces conducive for studying. In turn, this helps to build our human capital.

Apart from aligning residences and the associated fees, we ensure all residences comply with the national policy on norms and standards for public universities in South Africa. These deal with residence staffing levels, location, health and safety, governance, professional development of residence staff, policies and procedures and student discipline.

Complying with norms and standards

New student residences are developed in line with approved minimum norms and standards for student housing as prescribed by the DHET. When residences are upgraded, we ensure that the changes and improvements comply with these standards.

The standards for student housing are currently under review and the NWU is actively participating in the development of the future standards.

All suppliers of private student accommodation must be accredited and we have made good progress with this process, in line with the DHET's expectations.

As it is not feasible to have one set of guidelines for all public universities in South Africa, the DHET has allowed universities to develop their own accreditation criteria based on their unique circumstances. The NWU's guidelines are used to identify the accommodation needs and available spaces on each campus. The accreditation department is funded from the proceeds of the accreditation process.

Construction and refurbishment

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on construction activities remained apparent during 2021.

We are still catching up on the construction backlog caused by the 111 calendar days lost in 2020. World-wide supply chain issues also resulted in delays in construction programmes.

Large capital projects completed during 2021

The completion of the new Administration Building at the Vanderbijlpark Campus was a highlight for 2021; another was the first phase of consolidating the space of the School for Biokinetics, Sport and Recreation at the Potchefstroom Campus. A third highlight was starting the construction of a new 1 728-bed housing complex at the Mahikeng Campus.

Some projects are nearing completion or are in the final phase and will be completed during the course of 2022. The focus has been on investing in teaching and learning spaces.

Click here to read more about our macro maintenance and smaller projects completed during 2021, as well as the projects carried over to 2022.

IT infrastructure and developments

IT is pervasive across the university's operations and few, if any, aspects of its business have not benefited from the advent of technology. It is ubiquitous across teaching and learning, research, the student life cycle, staff development and the continuous professional development of our graduates and others.

In 2021, our intellectual and human capital was strengthened through the application of technology in the following settings:

Emergency remote learning, as well as work from home: almost all services, including students' PC lab applications, could be accessed from anywhere.

Security, one of our greatest priorities: we performed a thorough security landscape exercise in preparation for a coordinated cyber security programme.

The initiation or completion of many major teaching and learning and support projects. These involved various new workplace systems, 80 new Hyflex classrooms, an eAssessment platform and disaster recovery and cyber security plans, among others. (Click here to read more about these projects.)

New strategies were introduced, examples being composable infrastructure and Cloud Smart. IT resolved 44 200 incidents and dealt with 154 329 incoming and outgoing calls.

Staff and students continued to receive uncapped, unshaped internet services at a speed not matched by most universities in South Africa.

Facilities strategic optimisation project

In an effort to optimise the facilities environment, a strategic project was implemented to improve the business processes of the facilities and related departments. The aim was to bring about optimal integration and alignment of role players, systems and processes to support the NWU's unitary strategy. The project was completed at the end July 2021.

Plans for the future

The coming year will see further renewal of the buildings and infrastructure on the three campuses.

The continuation of the project to convert lecture venues into HyFlex learning environments will be aligned with the university's infrastructure planning over the next few years.

At the Vanderbijlpark Campus, we are on track to commence with the conversion of the old administration building into a new multi-purpose hall. A pilot project for energy efficiency has also been planned for the campus.

New student life facilities will be constructed in phases to ensure that the student experience of students is aligned across the NWU.

New laboratory spaces for the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences will be completed in phases to ensure it has the required spaces to grow its academic programmes.

A highlight at the Mahikeng Campus will be the completion of the final phase of the new student residences. The first two clusters, consisting of 594 additional beds, are already in operation. Other plans are to finalise sustainable water provision for the campus and to start constructing additional lecture venues at the campus, which will support the new HyFlex way of teaching and learning.

At the Potchefstroom Campus, additional computer laboratories for undergraduate programs in the School of Computer Science and Information System in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science are planned in support of the growth in enrolments.

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

All additional investments in infrastructure at the NWU during 2021 were duly authorised.

Statement approved by the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Governance

Supporting and preserving value

LANGUAGE BUTTONS

AFR SES SET

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON GOVERNANCE

“The NWU is committed to the principles of discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility, fairness and social responsibility, as advocated in the King IV Report.

Accordingly, Council endorses the Code of Practices and Conduct and the Code of Ethical Behaviour and Practice as set out in King IV, and has applied these in a rigorous way during the period under review. In supporting these codes, Council recognises the need to conduct the business of the NWU with integrity and in accordance with generally accepted good practices.

The monitoring of the NWU’s compliance with these codes forms part of the mandate of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee.

A distinct difference exists in the roles and responsibilities of the chairperson of Council and that of the vice-chancellor.”

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

The role and function of Council and its committees

As the overall custodian of good corporate governance, the NWU Council takes its oversight and guidance role seriously.

We carry out this responsibility by setting strategy, ensuring proper governance, driving compliance and risk management and monitoring the material activities of the university. The intention is to provide a sound foundation for the creation of value, long-term growth and sustainability.

We act in strict accordance with the stipulations of the Higher Education Act and the NWU Statute, which was reviewed and published on 8 May 2020.

For the period under review, under Council’s leadership the NWU continued to adhere to high governance standards while creating a value-driven governance landscape.

The composition of our Council is in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Higher Education Act and the university’s Statute.

Of the 30 Council members, 60% are external and 40% internal, ensuring independence in the governance environment.

Council members externally elected or designated		Council members internally elected or designated	
Ministerial appointees	5	Management: vice-chancellor and vice-principal	2
Donors	3	Senate	3
Convocation	4	Academic staff	2
Community leaders	3	Support staff	2
Specific expertise	3	Student Representative Council	3
Total	18		12

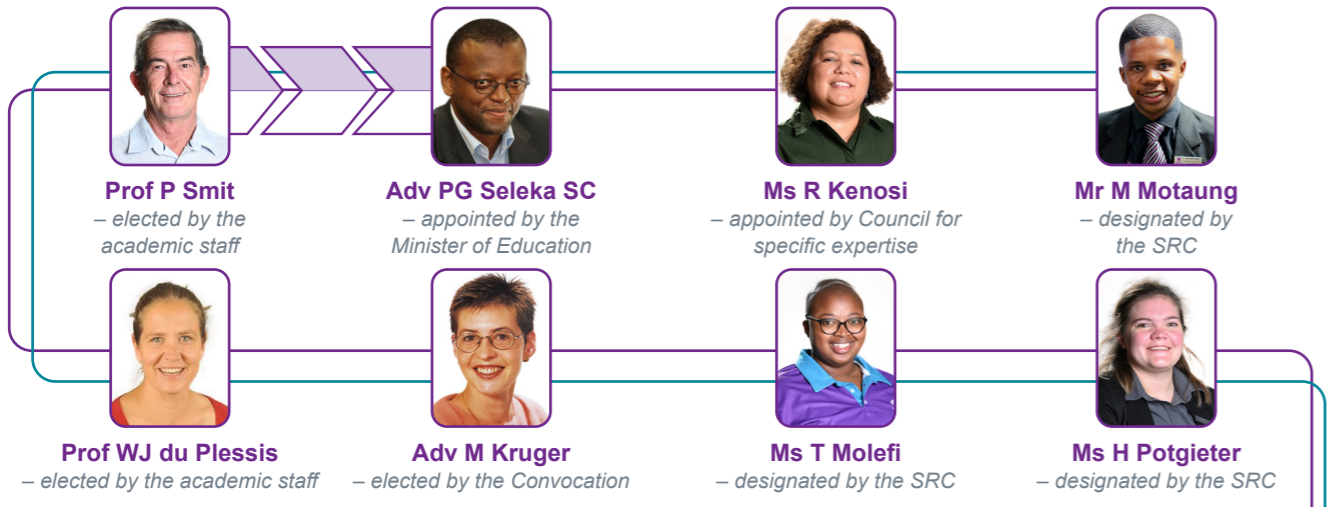
In the interest of proper oversight and accountability, Council has a number of committees to advise it on all the relevant governance matters.

Council Executive Committee

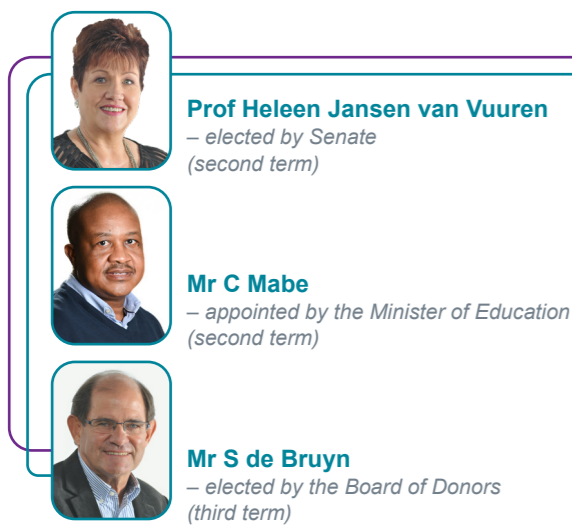
Council

- Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee
- Finance Committee
* Assets Committee
* Investments Committee
- Remuneration Committee
- People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee
- Transformation Oversight Committee
- Student Life Oversight Committee
* Student Housing Committee
- Technology and Information Governance Committee
- Honorary Awards Committee
- Social and Ethics Committee
- Extended Executive Committee of Council

The following new members joined the Council during the year under review:



The following members re-joined the Council for subsequent terms:



Code of Conduct and declarations of interest

All Council members are required to adhere to a Council Code of Conduct, which is revised as and when needed, most recently in March 2018. At the beginning of 2021, the members of Council pledged their commitment to the Code by taking part in the annual signing process.

All new Council members are also required to sign the Code of Conduct at the time of their appointment.

The Higher Education Act prescribes annual declarations of directorships and interests by members of Council and Council committees. We consider this requirement to be of the utmost importance to ensure integrity in our behaviour at governance level.

Council Exco also scrutinises the transactions between the NWU and companies in which council and Council committee members held a direct or indirect interest.

At the November meeting of Council, it was noted that the registrar had contacted members who defaulted on their declaration of interest obligations, requesting them to check and update the information on their declarations.

Highlighting the importance of declarations of interest by Council and Council committee members, Council noted on 17 June 2021 that sanctions would be imposed on members who did not comply with the legal requirements for declarations of interest.

During 2021, Exco also continued with the practice of regularly noting and discussing all declarations made by members of the UMC and referring any inquiries to the vice-chancellor.

Council training

Induction programme

On 18 March 2021, Council approved a revised induction programme for newly appointed Council members, along with an ongoing capacity-building programme for members of Council and Council committees.

Council workshop

All Council members attended a workshop on 17 March 2021. The workshop covered these three topics:

- > The NWU during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.
- > Recommendations from the external peer review panel of Council and in the internal self-evaluation report, and the implementation of these.
- > Ethics opportunity and risk assessment.

[Click here to read more about the revised induction programme and the Council workshop.](#)

Meet our Council members (Council membership as at 31 December 2021)



1. PROF ND KGWADI (53)
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Qualifications: BScEd (University of North West), MSc (Physics) (Ball State University, USA), MPhil (Environmental Law and Management) (North-West University), PhD (Physics Education) (Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE)), PhD (Management – honoris causa) (Hanseu University, South Korea)

Membership of Council Committees:
All Council committees (except Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee – not a full member)

Term on Council:
Appointed for a four-year term from 2020 to 2024. Currently two years and seven months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
83 meetings | 75% attendance

Directorships: USAf



2. PROF L DU PLESSIS (52)
Vice-Principal

Qualifications: PhD (Education), MSc (Computer Science), BScHons, BSc (PU for CHE), Certificate for Environmental Educators (Unisa), Leadership in Higher Education (Institute for Educational Management, Harvard), Certificate in ICT in Education for Policy Implementers (Wits, Oracle University)

Membership of Council Committees:
Council Exco

Term on Council:
Appointed in 2020 for a three- year term coinciding with her term as deputy vice-chancellor: Assigned functions and Vanderbijlpark Campus Operations. Currently one year and five months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
44 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



3. PROF HH JANSE VAN VUUREN (57)
Elected by Senate

Qualifications: MCom (Accountancy), BComHons – CTA, BComHons (Cost and Management Accounting), BCom (Accounting) (NWU)

Membership of Council Committees:
Student Oversight Committee | Honorary Awards Committee | Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently nine months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
16 meetings | 94% attendance

Directorships: Vektor Electrical Services PTY LTD



4. PROF AF KOTZÉ
(56)
Elected by Senate

Qualifications: BPharm, MSc, PhD (NWU)
Membership of Council Committees: Honorary Awards Committee | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Medical School Task Team (as Executive Dean)
Term on Council: Appointed for a three three-year term from 2019 to 2022. Currently two years, 11 months into first term
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: 13 meetings | 100% attendance
Directorships: Innovation Highway Enterprises | Hanks TB Diagnostics



8. MR FM NKOANA
(59)
Elected by support staff members

Qualifications: BA in Administration
Membership of Council Committees: People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee
Term on Council: Appointed for a three-year term from 2019 to 2022. Currently two years and nine months into first term.
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: 7 meetings | 100% attendance
Directorships: None



5. VACANT
Elected by Senate



6. PROF PA SMIT
(60)
Elected by academic staff members

Qualifications: PhD (Labour Relations Management)
Membership of Council Committees: Not yet allocated at the end of 2021
Term on Council: Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently three months into first term.
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: 1 meeting | 100% attendance
Directorships: None



7. PROF WJ DU PLESSIS
(42)
Elected by academic staff members

Qualifications: BA in International Relations, LLB, LLD
Membership of Council Committees: Transformation Oversight Committee | Social and Ethics Committee
Term on Council: Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently nine months into first term
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: 6 meetings | 83% attendance
Directorships: None



10. MS T MOLEFI
(26)
Designated by the Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Honours in International Relations. Enrolled for Bachelor of Social Science
Membership of Council Committees: Student Life Oversight Committee
Term on Council: One month into one-year term.
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: No meetings were held after appointment in 2021.
Directorships: None



11. MR M MOTAUNG
(21)
Designated by the Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Enrolled for BEd Physical Science for Education
Membership of Council Committees: Student Life Oversight Committee
Term on Council: One month into one-year term.
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: No meetings were held after appointment in 2021.
Directorships: None



12. MS H POTGIETER
(22)
Designated by the Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Enrolled for LLB
Membership of Council Committees: Student Life Oversight Committee
Term on Council: One month into one-year term.
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance: No meetings were held after appointment in 2021.
Directorships: None





13. MR OE MONGALE
(50)

Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Qualifications: Studying towards a Master's of Philosophy in Conflict Transformation, (Nelson Mandela University), PGDip in Management, Master's in Industrial Psychology (NWU), Honours in Industrial Psychology, Bachelor's in Administration (UniBo)

Membership of Council Committees:

Executive Committee | Tender Committee | Medical School Task Team | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023. Currently one year, three months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

32 meetings | 88% attendance

Directorships: The Hub Farming Enterprise | Sego Programme and Project Managers | The Hub People Development Institute | Mochwa Investments | Bachen | Kehu Projects | Teki Project and Programme managers



14. ADV PG SELEKA
(47)

Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Qualifications: LLB

Membership of Council Committees:

Transformation Oversight Committee | Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently four months into first term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

7 meetings | 71% attendance

Directorships: None



15. MR C MABE
(43)

Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Qualifications: BCom (University of North West), Dip AIBM (Finances), Diploma in Financial Management (Business Management Training College of Southern Africa), Certificate in Managing the Employment process (Unisa), MBA (NWU)

Membership of Council Committees:

Finance Committee | Remuneration Committee | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently four months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

19 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: JEPA 321 (Pty) Ltd | JEPA Resources Trading Enterprise (Pty) Ltd | CM2510 (Pty) Ltd | Tapologo HIV and Aids Programme | NH2606 (Pty) Ltd | K2017228855 (South Africa) | Thapo Vision Group



16. MR TC KGOMO
(54)

Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Qualifications: BCom (University of North West)

Membership of Council Committees:

Tender Committee | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Transformation Oversight Committee | Advisory Board for Innovation Highway Enterprises | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023. Currently one year, three months into third term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

18 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: Henjen Petroleum (Pty) Ltd | Tlhabanelo Trading Enterprises (Pty) Ltd | RR Travel (Pty) Ltd | Sky Chrome Mining (Pty) Ltd



17. MR MSJ THABETHE
(47)

Appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Qualifications: National Diploma in Information Technology, BTech in Information Technology (TWR), MCom in Information Systems (University of the Witwatersrand)

Membership of Council Committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Technology and Information Governance Committee | Social and Ethics Committee | Advisory Board for Innovation Highway Enterprises | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023. Currently one year, three months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

20 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None, only shareholding



18. MR JDS DE BRUYN
(70)

Elected by the Board of Donors

Qualifications: BCom (Accounting Science), Bluris, LLB (PU for CHE)

Membership of Council Committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Tender Committee | Senate

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently six months into third term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

17 meetings | 82% attendance

Directorships: None



19. VACANT

Elected by the Board of Donors





20. MS UAD BARRAVALLE
(38)
Elected by the Board of Donors

Qualifications: BSc (Chemistry and Biochemistry), BSc (Chemistry), (Hons) (RAU), LLB (Unisa)

Membership of Council Committees:
Executive Committee | Assets Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2019 to 2022.
Currently two years and one month into first term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
10 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: DM Kisch Inc | Kisch Africa | Kisch Investments Limited



21. MR A SORGDRAGER
(62)
Elected by the Convocation

Qualifications: Bluris and LLB (PU for CHE), International Executive Programme (INSEAD Business School)

Membership of Council Committees:
Executive Committee | Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Investments Committee | Student Life Oversight Committee | Honorary Awards Committee | Remuneration Committee | Student Electoral Commission | Medical School Task Team | Extended Exco

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023.
Currently one year, five months into second term

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
49 meetings | 94% attendance

Directorships: Vaalrivier Steiltes Aandeleblok (Edms) Bpk | Florida Buitemuurs



22. VACANT
Elected by the Convocation



23. VACANT
Elected by the Convocation



24. ADV M KRUGER
(56)
Elected by the Convocation

Qualifications: B.Iuris, LLB

Membership of Council Committees:
Student Life Oversight Committee | Technology and Information Governance Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.
Currently four months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
3 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



25. REV CANON DP DINKEBOGILE
(67)
From among the community leaders

Qualifications: Diploma in Theology (St Peter's College), Master's in Christian education (MACE) (USA-Virginia Theological Seminary)

Membership of Council Committees:
Executive Committee of Council (alternate member) | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Student Life Oversight Committee | Remuneration Committee | Extended Exco

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2019 to 2022.
Currently two years and six months into second term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
21 meetings | 95% attendance

Directorships: Sharpeville Care of the Aged | Sharpeville Tshwaranang Trust



26. PASTOR PM TLHABANYANE
(58)
From among the community leaders

Qualifications: Dip PA, BPA, BAHons (Theology)

Membership of Council Committees:
Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023.
Currently one year and nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
9 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



27. MS S BRITZ
(60)
From among the community leaders

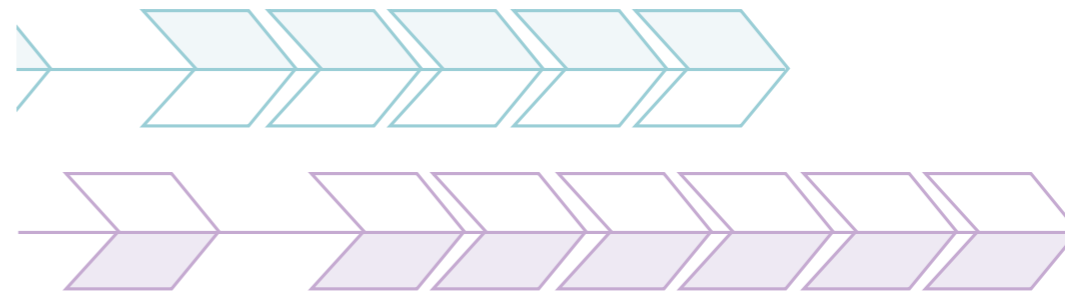
Qualifications: Matric, NQF5 Real Estate

Membership of Council Committees:
Executive Committee (alternate member) | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023.
Currently one year and nine months into first term.

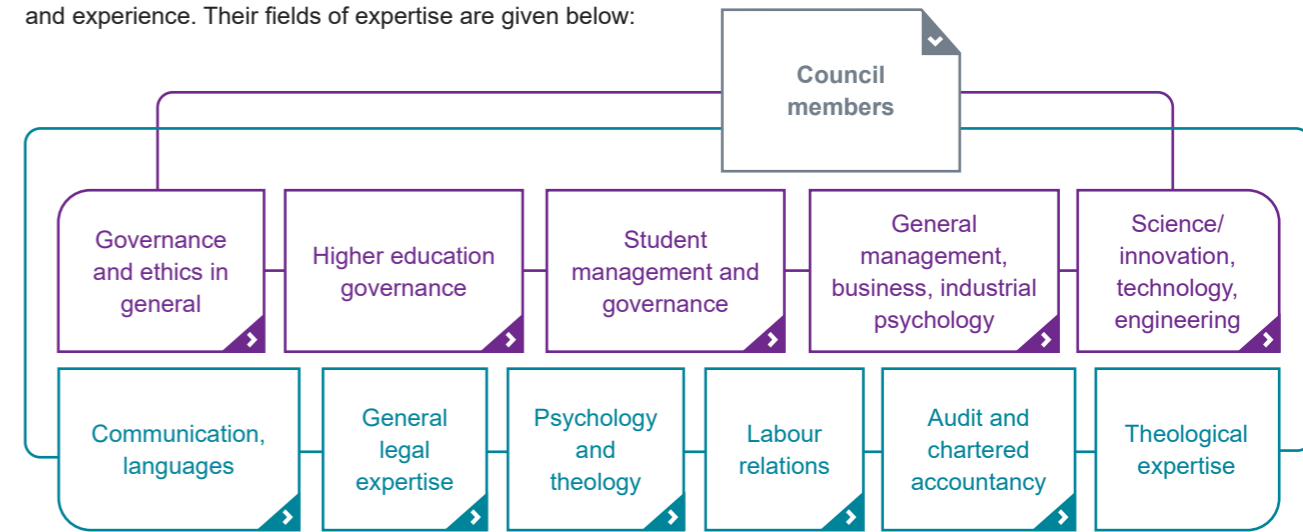
Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:
7 meetings | 86% attendance

Directorships: iDUC NPC | Tlokwe Crisis Centre



Diversity of skills and experience

Our Council members boast a variety of valuable skills and experience. Their fields of expertise are given below:

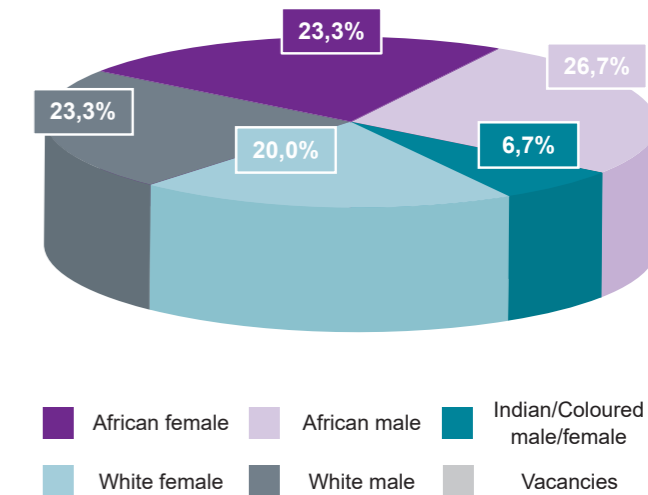


Having resolved in November 2018 to pursue the establishment of a particular skills set, the NWU Council took these skills into account in 2021 when seeking to fill vacancies in membership. The purple text in the diagram below represent the skills that are given emphasis.

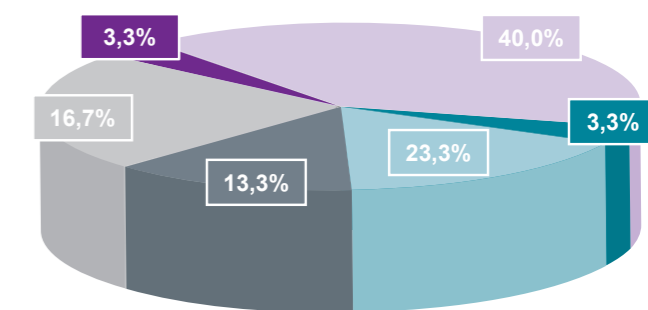
- 1 General legal expertise
- 2 Environment, land and indigenous law
- 3 **Global engagement expertise**
- 4 Data analytics expertise
- 5 Audit and accounting expertise
- 6 **Investment expertise**
- 7 **Fundraising expertise**
- 8 Finances and business expertise (medium to macro enterprises)
- 9 Business administration and/or strategy expertise
- 10 **Governance and ethics expertise**
- 11 Corporate communication expertise
- 12 Information technology expertise
- 13 **Technology transfer expertise**
- 14 **High positive public profile – science**
- 15 **High positive public profile – community engagement**
- 16 Arts/people management

Council transformation

Council continued to focus on transformation targets for its membership and approved the following equity targets for Council to achieve by January 2025:



As at 31 December 2021, the equity profile of Council was as follows:



28. MS RA KENOSI (50)

Appointed by Council for specific expertise

Qualifications: BComp Accounting, BComp Accounting (Hons), CA(SA)

Membership of Council Committees:

Executive committee (alternate member) | Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Finance Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024. Currently nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

10 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: Anova Health Institute NPC | Bridging Concepts Financial Services (Pty) Ltd | Fraudsmiths (Pty) Ltd | Onderstepoort Biological Products (SOC) Ltd | K20132299696 SA (Pty) Ltd



29. DR MB TYOBEKA (47)

Appointed by Council for specific expertise

Qualifications: BScEd and MSc (Applied Radiation Science and Technology) (University of North West), MSc and PhD (Nuclear Engineering) (Penn State University, USA), MSc (Management) (Colorado Technical University)

Membership of Council Committees:

Executive Committee | Finance Committee | Honorary Awards Committee | Remuneration Committee | Medical School Task Team | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2020 to 2023. Currently one year and one month into third term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

52 meetings | 98% attendance

Directorships: None



30. MR TV MOKGATLHA (47)

Appointed by Council for specific expertise

Qualifications: BCom (Accounting) (NWU), HonsBComp/Certificate of Theory in Accounting (CTA) (Unisa)

Membership of Council Committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Finance Committee | Assets Committee | Remuneration Committee | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2019 to 2022. Currently two years, six months into first term.

Number of committee meetings as council member and average attendance:

14 meetings | 86% attendance

Directorships: Yebo Yethu | Yebo Yethu Investment Company (RF) (Pty) Limited | Baphlane Siyanda Chrome Company | MTBG Investments | South African Blood Services NPC (SANBS) | Philasini | Baphalane Ba Mantserre Investment Holdings | Atonatic Trading | Stokfella | Baphalane Property Holdings | His Crown Apostolic Ministries | BBMIH Food | Hyprop Investment LTD | BBMIH Textile | BBMIH Manufacturing

Council decisions impacting value creation

Management highlighted several value-creation issues during 2021 and Council responded by taking key decisions on the following:

- > Augmenting the NWU strategy
- > Approval of the updated financial impact model

The following table gives a summary of Council's value-creating decisions and their possible effect on future value creation.

Strategy and structure

- > Council approved the removal of the following functional areas from the portfolio of the deputy-vice chancellor for teaching and learning, re-allocating them as follows: The Career Centre moves to Corporate Relations and Marketing, Library and Information Systems move to the deputy vice-chancellor for research and innovation, and the Business School and Unit for Continuing Education move to the vice-principal.
- > Council also approved the shift in reporting lines for the director of the Unit for Continuing Education from the deputy vice-chancellor for teaching and learning to the chief director of the Business School.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

As Council we are confident that the ongoing implementation of the strategy, structure and brand is shaping the NWU's operations and efficiency.

We remain confident that the realisation of the strategic agenda of the NWU adds to the improved positioning of the university in the South African higher education landscape.

Policies and rules

The Policy Refinement Committee continued with its activities in the drafting and review of policies.

In ensuring compliance with national directives and mitigating possible risks facing the university, we approved 23 policies (either revised or new) in 2021.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

The NWU's success model indicates that the university is committed to the continued adoption of responsible risk-embracing strategies and transformational practices.

In line with this undertaking, and in adhering to the prescripts of the Statute, the university continually drafts and revises policies and rules.

Financial matters

Council approved the audited financial statements for 2021 and the financial overview for 2021.

Other financial approvals included the following:

- > The revision of the 2021-2023 three-year rolling budget, the consolidated statements of financial position and comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2020, the financial overview for 2020, the rolling budget 2022-2024, and the 2022 infrastructure project list.
- > The 2022 tuition fee and the 2022 residence fee inflation adjustment on all campuses, and the procurement of the services of Anthology as a vendor of a new student information system.
- > That the NWU advance the cash for the pay-out of allowances to NSFAS students, retain PricewaterhouseCoopers as external auditors for the next financial year, and make a donation to the Rapport Onderwysfonds for the period January 2022 to December 2024 and source a similar fund that espouses one of the other two languages, Setswana or Sesotho.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

We are confident that the right decisions were taken in the short term to enable the university to realise the goals in the APP and to continue pursuing its strategic agenda.

However, Council is on record that it expressed concerns on the medium to long-term effects of the national uncertainties around the sustainability of South African higher education. These uncertainties relate predominantly to the funding of public higher education.

Tender matters

Council approved several matters regarding tender matters, including:

- > Approval or conditional approval of the awarding of tenders for, among others, protection services and student accommodation on the Vanderbijlpark Campus, and the distribution of study material to distance students.
- > Approval that for all future tenders where suppliers did not meet the required BBBEE levels 1-3, local participation of 30% would be mandatory.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

As Council we ensure that the university procures services by means of a process that is fair, equitable, transparent and cost-effective, while also ensuring the realisation of transformation objectives.

We are confident that the tenders that were awarded adhered to the principles laid down in relevant legislation.

Appointment of office bearers

We oversaw the process of appointing senior office bearers and approved the following:

- > To appoint Prof Jeffrey Mphahlele as deputy vice-chancellor for research and innovation and Prof Sonia Swanepoel as deputy vice-chancellor for assigned functions and Mahikeng Campus operations.
- > That the contracts of Mr Clement Manoko (executive director for corporate relations and marketing), Prof Robert Balfour (deputy vice-chancellor for teaching and learning) and Dr Mala Singh (executive director for people and culture) be extended.
- > Council also noted that the vice-chancellor had resigned and that, in accordance with the Statute, the vice-principal, Prof Linda du Plessis, will take up the position as acting vice-chancellor and principal.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

We made sure that the appointment of these office bearers was informed by the Statute and relevant rules.

The calibre of those who are appointed is key to achieving the NWU's strategic objectives.

Governance matters

Key resolutions related to governance included the following:

- > Approval of the 2020 Integrated Annual Report, the NWU's mid-year performance report, and the Annual Performance Plan.
- > Approval of revised and new terms of reference for several Council committees, amendments to the NWU Statute in relation to various paragraphs, and various requirements for the streamlining of the nomination process for Council Members.
- > Approval of the amendment of the clauses of the existing Organisational Agreement with NEHAWU and that an Organisational Rights Agreement be entered into with Solidarity trade union.
- > Approval of the candidates for the NWU Biennial Alumni Excellence Awards 2021, the revised Conditions of Service for NWU employees, and to continue with the search for a unifying symbol for the NWU.
- > Approval of the revised Transformation Charter, the NWU Statement of Strategic Ethical Intent and the NWU Ethics Strategy.
- > Approval of various significant academic matters as recommended by Senate.

How these governance decision affect future value creation:

Through sound governance principles and practices, we create an ethical environment in which the NWU can realise its strategy.

Our journey to greatness

Council chair has his job on campus

During the NWU's vaccination drives on all three campuses, more than 20 000 people were vaccinated, including staff, students and members of the public.

Dr Bismark Tyobeka, our Council chairperson during 2021, also visited the Potchefstroom Campus on 24 July 2021 to be vaccinated.

Dr Bismark Tyobeka prepares to be vaccinated by Gao Sibeko, a fourth-year nursing student.



Council and Covid-19 in 2021

During 2021, Council received update reports on the NWU's continued handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The focus had been on the launching of the new academic year for returning students, as well as preparation for the Registration and Orientation programme for first-year entrants.

Particular reference was made to the manner in which NWU was dealing with the challenges regarding NSFAS and the resultant uncertainties, as well as some demands received from the SCCs at the Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses respectively.

The chairperson of Council commended management for all their efforts to keep life on campus as normal as possible and asked student leaders to continue cooperating with measures to combat the spread of Covid-19 as this would save lives.

Council also noted and discussed a "back to campus" approach and discussed mandatory vaccinations.

A risk assessment was being conducted with the assistance of experts, for finalisation by 22 November 2021.

Remuneration of externally elected Council members

Since 2009, following a Council resolution to this effect, the university has paid an honorarium to external members of Council and of Council committees.

The honorarium – as a token of the NWU's gratitude for members' time and effort – is linked to the university's annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) process, and is paid twice a year, in August and December.

In 2021, the Council approved changes to the honorarium paid to external experts on Council committees, the chairperson of a Council committee that fulfilled a statutory role, as well as the deputy chairperson of Council.

The following table shows the honoraria paid for each meeting attended.

Chairperson of Council	R6 929
Deputy chairperson of Council	R5 197
Council-appointed external expert in a structure, but not a Council member	R5 197
Chairperson of a Council committee that fulfills a statutory role	R5 197
Chairperson of a Council committee	R4 364
Council member	R3 467

King IV as the guiding framework for value creation through governance

After King IV came into effect on 1 April 2017, the NWU initiated an internal process to ensure compliance by aligning structures, policies and procedures with the necessary requirements. The connections between King IV and the corresponding internal structure or responsibility are shown below:

KING IV requirement	<Integrated Report> content element	Relevant governance structure
Leadership and ethics	Stakeholder engagement and relationships; governance	> Council > Social and Ethics Committee
Performance and reporting	Strategy and resource allocation; performance; outlook	> Council Executive Committee > Finance Committee > Senate > Council
Governance structure and delegation	Governance and remuneration	> Council > Council Executive Committee > Remuneration Committee
Risks and opportunities	Stakeholder engagement and relationships; risk and opportunity	> Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (as primary committee for oversight purposes) > Other committees of Council (for risks and opportunities relevant in the said area of oversight) > Senate > Council
Technology and information	Governance, risk and opportunity; strategy and resource allocation	> TI Governance Committee > Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee > Executive Committee > Council
Compliance	Governance	> Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee > Other committees of Council (for compliance matters relevant in the said area of oversight) > Council
Remuneration	Stakeholder engagement and relationships; remuneration	> Remuneration Committee > Council
Assurance	Governance; basis of preparation and presentation	> Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee > Finance Committee > Senate > Council
Stakeholder relationships	Stakeholder engagement and relationships	> Social and Ethics Committee > People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee > Transformation Oversight Committee > Student Life Oversight Committee > Institutional Forum > Student Representative Council > Convocation > Board of Donors > Council

Governance structures of the NWU

Council

The Council governs the NWU through the adoption of purpose and value statements, strategic plans and policies, as well as the Statute, the rules, processes and delegations of authority. Furthermore, Council monitors the operational performance of management and establishes committees and, together with Senate, joint committees, to ensure that the NWU achieves its purpose and values.

Extended Executive Committee

The Extended Executive Committee discusses high-level issues, monitors the relevance and responsiveness of the NWU Quality Manual, monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of Council action plans formulated in response to internal and external evaluations, and serves as monitoring and evaluation platform for implementation of Council resolutions.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee deals with important governance matters between meetings of the NWU Council and also acts as a Council membership committee.

P&CEE

The People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee (P&CEE) advises Council on all matters relating to people and culture (human resources) and employment equity.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee assists Council in carrying out its responsibilities regarding a fair and responsible remuneration philosophy and its implementation.

Transformation Oversight Committee

The Transformation Oversight Committee advises Council on the implementation of the transformational aspects of the Annual Performance Plan.

Student Oversight Committee

The Student Oversight Committee advises Council on all relevant student matters.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee advises Council on financial and investment matters and on long-term infrastructure development at the NWU (also through obtaining specialist advice from the Assets, Tender and Investment subcommittees).

Tender Committee

The Tender Committee advises the Council on matters related to governance and oversight as these pertain to the NWU's procurement processes and ensures that these are fair, equitable, transparent, cost-effective and compliant to all relevant regulations and rules.

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

The Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee advises Council on the safeguarding of the NWU's assets, the maintenance of adequate accounting records, the development and maintenance of an effective system of internal control, overseeing management's role in creating and maintaining a proper risk management process, and authorising the annual audit fee of the external auditors. It also provides a channel of communication between Council, management, the internal audit function and the external auditors.

Student Representative Council

The Student Representative Council is the duly elected body within Student Life that oversees the management of organised student life and represents students on various governance structures.

Social and Ethics Committee

The Social and Ethics Committee provides oversight and guidance in assisting Council to develop an understanding of management and oversight with regard to the positioning of the NWU as an integral part of the society in which it functions.

Senate

The Senate is responsible for regulating all teaching-learning, research and academic support functions, as well as for determining academic policies and rules.

Student Housing Committee

The Student Housing Committee provides strategic direction in regard to the NWU's pursuit towards a clearly differentiating student-value proposition as contained in the NWU Strategy 2015 to 2025 in regard to matters related to the provisioning of student housing.

Convocation

The Convocation is the body of alumni that is constituted with the aim of creating a link between the university and its corps of alumni. It also designates four members to serve on Council.

TI Governance Committee

The Technology and Information Governance Committee assists Council with the governance of all information technology aspects at the NWU.

Institutional Forum

The Institutional Forum advises Council on the implementation of the Higher Education Act and national higher education policies, as well as on the fostering of a university culture that promotes tolerance, respect for human rights and an environment conducive to learning, teaching and research.

Committees supporting Council

As indicated earlier, the Council committees assist us with our performance as Council.

All these committees are formally constituted, have terms of reference and consist of a majority of Council members who are neither employees nor students of a public higher education institution. They are chaired by external independent members with the necessary expertise and skills.

Determining the effectiveness of Council activities

A Council Quality Manual, based on the norms prescribed by the DHET Governance Scorecard, provided the monitoring mechanisms to determine the effectiveness of the activities of Council and identified risks relevant to the functioning of Council.

An external review of Council took place in 2020 resulted in an improvement plan for Council and its committees. [Click here to read more about the key findings regarding improvement and what has already been implemented as at the end of 2021.](#)

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY AS VALUE ADD

At the NWU we define sustainability as the ability of the university to create value in the short-, medium- and long-term by promoting a stakeholder-inclusive approach to developing a strategic response to the risks and opportunities faced. We consider material matters, whether financial or non-financial in nature.

Refer to our materiality determination process.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY AS VALUE ADD

Material matters of a social and environmental nature are as important as financial and economic issues in determining the overall value created by the NWU.

The five-year strategic plan and the business plan for implementing the strategy are integral to the value-creation process and to ensuring our sustainability. The six long-term goals and the four enablers of the NWU Strategy 2015 to 2025 underpin the commitment of the university in this regard.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Ethics in action

COUNCIL STATEMENT ON ETHICS AND VALUES

“The NWU Code of Ethics commits the university to the highest standards of integrity, behaviour and ethics in dealing with all its stakeholders and society at large.

We expect Council members and staff to observe the NWU’s ethical obligations in order to conduct its business through the use of fair and commercially competitive practices.

The values statement in the NWU Strategy 2015 to 2025 determines that the NWU will foster engaged and caring staff and students and will embed the following foundational values that are based on the constitutional values of human dignity, equality and freedom:

- > Ethics in all endeavours
- > Academic integrity
- > Academic freedom and freedom of scientific research
- > Responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency
- > Embracing diversity.”

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 23 June 2022.

Ethical leadership and corporate citizenship

In line with our values statement, the university’s leadership at all levels of governance and management is based on integrity.

The Social and Ethics Committee of Council advises Council on all matters relevant to ethical leadership and corporate citizenship. This approach positions the NWU to fulfil its responsibility in terms of the environmental impact of its behaviour and supports value creation to its stakeholder communities.

The outcome of the Ethics Opportunity and Risk Assessment conducted in 2020 indicated the following salient matters:

With regard to ethics culture maturity, the NWU has demonstrated an underdeveloped ethical culture.

What it means

Employees may not always perceive ethics to be a primary value that underpins the organisational culture.

The university might be at risk of ethical inadequacies, may have a contingent of demotivated or disillusioned employees and may be at risk of alienating its stakeholders over the long term if the ethical culture is not improved.

Our reaction

We need to do substantial work to develop our ethics culture maturity and ensure that a fully aligned ethical culture is embedded across the institution, our employees and all our stakeholders.

In short, the recommendation is that the NWU would need to prioritise ethics.

In terms of ethics behaviour risks (and as benchmarked nationally), the NWU scores indicate moderate levels of risk behaviour.

What it means

Moderate-risk areas indicated were the (i) apparent “abuse of university resources” and (ii) “employee relations”.

At the level of ethics risk management, participants in the survey indicated a lack of knowledge about the following issues:

- > mechanisms for reporting unethical behaviour
- > training of employees on ethics
- > advice on ethics
- > communication on ethics.

Our reaction

From May to September 2021, feedback was provided to stakeholder groups on the outcome of the ethics opportunity and risk assessment, facilitated by the Ethics Institute.

A brochure on ethics management was published and the Ethics Institute hosted a series of workshops on the development of an NWU Statement of Strategic Ethical Intent, as well as an Ethics Strategy and an Ethics Management Plan.

On 17 November 2021, the NWU Council approved the NWU Statement of Strategic Ethical Intent, the Ethics Strategy and noted the Ethics Management Plan.

Behavioural manual for staff

Consistent standards of behaviour are a prerequisite for harmonious workplace relations, fair labour practices, mutual respect, fairness and effective operations. For this purpose, the NWU has a behavioural manual that is governed by the Behavioural Policy.

Matters dealt with during 2021

Disciplinary action was taken against 32 employees across the NWU in 2021. Of these cases, 23 were of such a serious nature that university hearings were held where dismissals could be the appropriate sanction.

Seven employees had their services summarily terminated while a mutual separation agreement was reached with one employee, who resigned. In the rest of the cases, written warnings were imposed. Eight CCMA cases were dealt with successfully.

Dealing with sexual harassment

The NWU is committed to creating a safe working environment free from the fear of sexual harassment.

Matters dealt with during 2021

One sexual harassment case was reported for the period under review. The individual responsible for the harassment was dismissed.

Matters reported by employees or the public

In line with the Policy on the Reporting of Maladministration and Irregularities and the Protection of Disclosure, reports are received via reporting boxes placed on the campuses. As of 2021, an email address (REPORT-FRAUD@nwu.ac.za) has also been created where members of the public and/or employees can report matters.

Matters dealt with during 2021

No reports were received via the reporting boxes for 2021. This compares to five cases opened in 2020 after reports of alleged irregularities. The other investigations were received via internal requests and/or referral.

Ombud office for language

The approach of the Language Directorate is to resolve language matters directly or as close as possible to the point where these originate and not to allow these to escalate.

Reporting can be done to the Ombudsman in the Language Directorate via any of the NWU reporting channels or directly via email to the Ombud. Reported matters are investigated, resolved and reported on.

Ongoing investigations

Internal Audit plays an important role in the ongoing investigation of suspected irregularities.

Matters dealt with during 2021

Of the investigations reported in 2020, a total of 21 investigations were completed while 10 are still currently being investigated. In 2021 a total of five investigations were completed while nine were in progress.

Fighting fraud

After verifying the facts of the reported irregularities, Internal Audit handed several investigations over to prosecuting authorities.

Matters dealt with during 2021

We have handed over cases mainly in regard to forgery and uttering. It is difficult to allocate a value to these in relation to the approximately R51 000 handed over in 2020 as the NWU did not suffer any financial losses in this regard. We are continually striving to strengthen our relationship with the authorities.

In line with the university's Anti-Fraud Strategy, two online anti-fraud awareness sessions were held in 2021.

Internal Audit proactively monitors transactions related to procurement and payroll. Various tests are continually run and are reported to operational managers regularly.

Compliance with laws, codes and standards

The Compliance Committee, which is a subcommittee of the University Management Committee (UMC), coordinates and reports on all compliance activities. The UMC then submits reports to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee who, in turn, reports all compliance issues to Council.

Matters dealt with during 2021

During 2021, compliance with the following pieces of legislation was self-assessed: Competition Act, Pharmacy Act, Safety at Sports and Recreational Events Act, Rental Housing Act and the Disaster Management Act.

The risk and compliance coordinator monitors compliance on an ongoing basis. Monitoring was done on the following legislation: Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, Employment Equity Act, Labour Relations Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Promotion of Access to Information Act, Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, Prevention of Organised Crime Act, Skills Development Levies Act, Value-Added Tax Act, Trade Marks Act.

Promotion of Access to Information Act requests

The NWU subscribes fully to the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), 2 of 2000.

Matters dealt with during 2021

In 2021, the information manual was updated and copies were sent to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). As per PAIA, the manual is available in three languages (English, Afrikaans and Setswana) and published on an NWU web page.

The compulsory section 32 report was also delivered to the SAHRC. This report covered the period from April 2020 to March 2021, during which 14 requests were received and six granted in full. Six requests were refused in full and two partially refused.

Providing integrated assurance

A Combined Assurance Forum (CAF) has existed at the university since 2012 and has aligned its functioning with King IV. The intention of the committee is to manage and limit the risk exposure of the university, and to provide assurance.

Matters dealt with during 2021

The mandate of the NWU CAF is to provide an adequate and effective control environment and to ensure the integrity of reports for better decision-making, while also establishing an assurance model.

A risk assurance map was tabled during 2020 and, although still in a draft format in 2021, was developing into a mature document.

The forum provided assurance that the university's risk management, risk control and governance processes are fairly adequately addressed. CAF also provided a platform for discussions on optimising risk management at the NWU and addressing management concerns about the processes for managing risks.

Council statements

The following Council statements can be accessed [here](#):

- > Council statement on going concern
- > Council statement on financial controls outside financial statements
- > Council statement on financial health and viability
- > Council statement on tenders
- > Council statement on contract management, SLAs and monitoring of suppliers' performance
- > Statement on penalties, sanctions and fines

The Institutional Forum's full report is available [here](#).

Human rights matters

In 2021, the Human Rights Committee considered six complaints. Of these complaints, five were found to be administrative in nature and were subsequently referred to the departments involved.

The Human Rights Committee was unable to resolve the remaining complaint as it was retracted by the complainant; the statements made by the witnesses were also retracted.

The Human Rights Committee expressed its disapproval of any conduct that could be perceived as hate speech and supported disciplinary action in such cases due to the serious nature thereof. The committee also indicated its support for residence programmes aimed at raising awareness among students as a preventative measure.

Our journey to greatness

MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL


There are two new (honorary) doctors in the NWU house

The NWU has awarded honorary doctorates to Justice Bess Nkabinde and Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

(Read more)

Dr Fraser-Moleketi was honoured for her lifelong work in society and in the South African political landscape. She received her degree on 19 November 2021.

Justice Nkabinde, who received her honorary doctorate on 21 October 2021, has made an exceptional contribution to the legal profession and to social justice in South Africa.



Incentivising for achievement

As part of our strategy to encourage high performance and harness the productive energies of our staff, we offer performance incentives that are attractive and sustainable and are applied fairly and consistently.

We use integrated performance management to recognise superior organisational, team and individual performance.

Remuneration mix aligned to strategy

Market-related remuneration is essential for recruiting and retaining the best staff. By aligning our remuneration strategy to the overall NWU strategy, business drivers and values, we ensure a good skills and culture fit.

Our remuneration mix has variable and fixed elements and includes monetary and non-monetary rewards. Variable pay includes performance bonuses and various value-adding allowances and is paid according to the results of individual remuneration reviews.

Annually, we do benchmarking to ensure continued competitiveness of guaranteed pay. Employees contribute 7,5% to the pension fund and can choose an employer contribution of 12%, 15%, 17,5% or 20%.

Remuneration governance and management

Through its Remuneration Committee, the NWU Council fulfils its oversight function for remuneration.

This committee understands how the income differentials between the higher and lower salary bands affect fair and responsible remuneration and contribute to the positioning of the NWU as a value-adding institution for employees and other stakeholders.

It is important to close the income differentials and to address the enhancement of salaries of academic staff. The salary increases agreed on through the collective bargaining process for 2021 supported this by building on the differentiated increase that was introduced in 2019 to cater for academic staff and staff at the lower income bands.

Executive contracts

Council oversees and approves the appointment of senior officer bearers, in line with our Statute and the Council's rules on these appointments. The Council process applies to the appointment of the vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellors, the registrar, executive directors and deputy vice-chancellors for assignable functions and campus operations.

Current year incentives: University Management Committee

Name	Basic salary	Employee benefits	Other allowance payments	Total cost to NWU 2021
R'000				
Prof RJ Balfour	2 153 185.80	205 660.75	317 872.99	2 676 719.54
Prof DM Balia	1 983 671.90	349 365.32	239 734.63	2 572 771.85
Dr JS Chalufu	1 770 654.91	149 144.28	149 505.04	2 069 304.23
Ms E de Beer	2 398 472.74	221 028.13	735 026.92	3 354 527.79
Prof LA du Plessis	2 176 499.41	233 269.78	233 269.78	3 264 567.68
Prof ND Kgwadi	3 841 364.90	310 506.76	1 562 023.73	5 713 895.39
Mr C Manoko	1 880 858.59	183 961.40	223 857.03	2 288 677.02
Prof MJ Mphahlele*	1 091 401.81	95 604.94	59 585.54	1 246 592.29
Prof BMP Setlalentoa*	876 499.37	65 966.41	1 158 287.03	2 100 752.81
Dr M Singh	2 030 149.07	170 077.68	265 434.08	2 465 660.83
Prof S Swanepoel*	839 413.67	164 578.90	643 311.38	1 647 303.95
Prof MM Verhoef	2 405 883.91	231 304.09	700 372.49	3 337 560.49
Prof FB Waanders*	875 000.00	-	143 787.98	1 018 787.98
Grand total	24 323 056.08	2 380 468.44	7 053 597.33	33 757 121.85

***Prof MJ Mphahlele**
appointed from July 2021

***Prof S Swanepoel**
acting as deputy vice-chancellor May 2021 until December 2021

***Prof BMP Setlalentoa**
until May 2021 (Leave pay-out in October 2021)

***Prof FB Waanders**
acting until July 2021

External members' fees

The remuneration of members of Council and Council committees comprises an honorarium paid as a token of our gratitude for their time and effort. The honorarium, paid in August and December, is linked to our annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) process and approved by Council's Executive Committee.

Honoraria payments (gross remuneration to Council members) in 2021:

Council member	R'000
Ms UA Davey Baravalle	31 203
Ms S Britz	20 802
Prof AL Combrink	65 873
Mr JDS de Bruyn	51 165
Rev PD Dinkebogile	71 134
Mr XV Hadebe	8 728
Ms RA Kenosi	32 100

Council member	R'000
Mr TC Kgomo	67 788
Adv Mr Kruger	13 868
Dr D Laufs	6 934
Mr CS Mabe	68 621
Mr SM Mohapi	29 516
Mr TV Mokgatla	54 689
Mr OE Mongale	97 133
Mr CP Mulder	38 137
Adv PG Seleka	10 401
Mr LE Seliane	19 955
Ms T Semane	45 071
Mr AM Sorgdrager	272 599
MS E Stander	19 122
Mr MSJ Thabethe	79 079
Mr PM Tlhabanyane	27 736
Mr MB Tyobeka	319 430
Mr WA Van Rooy	24 269
Ms M Van Zyl	19 122
Grand total	1 494 475

Our journey to greatness

New Mahikeng deputy vice-chancellor appointed

The NWU Council appointed Prof Sonia Swanepoel as new deputy vice-chancellor for community engagement and Mahikeng Campus operations.

"I would like to create a conducive environment for students and staff on campus," says Prof Swanepoel. She adds that building a sustainable relationship with the Mahikeng Student Campus Council is one of her top priorities.

She will also devote much time to building the NWU's community engagement portfolio – a platform through which both the university and its communities create a win-win situation.

Prof Swanepoel, who has a DCom degree in human resources management, is a registered industrial psychologist. In her previous leadership role at the NWU she was the executive dean of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

Prof Sonia Swanepoel is the new deputy vice-chancellor for community engagement and Mahikeng Campus operations.



Organisational culture

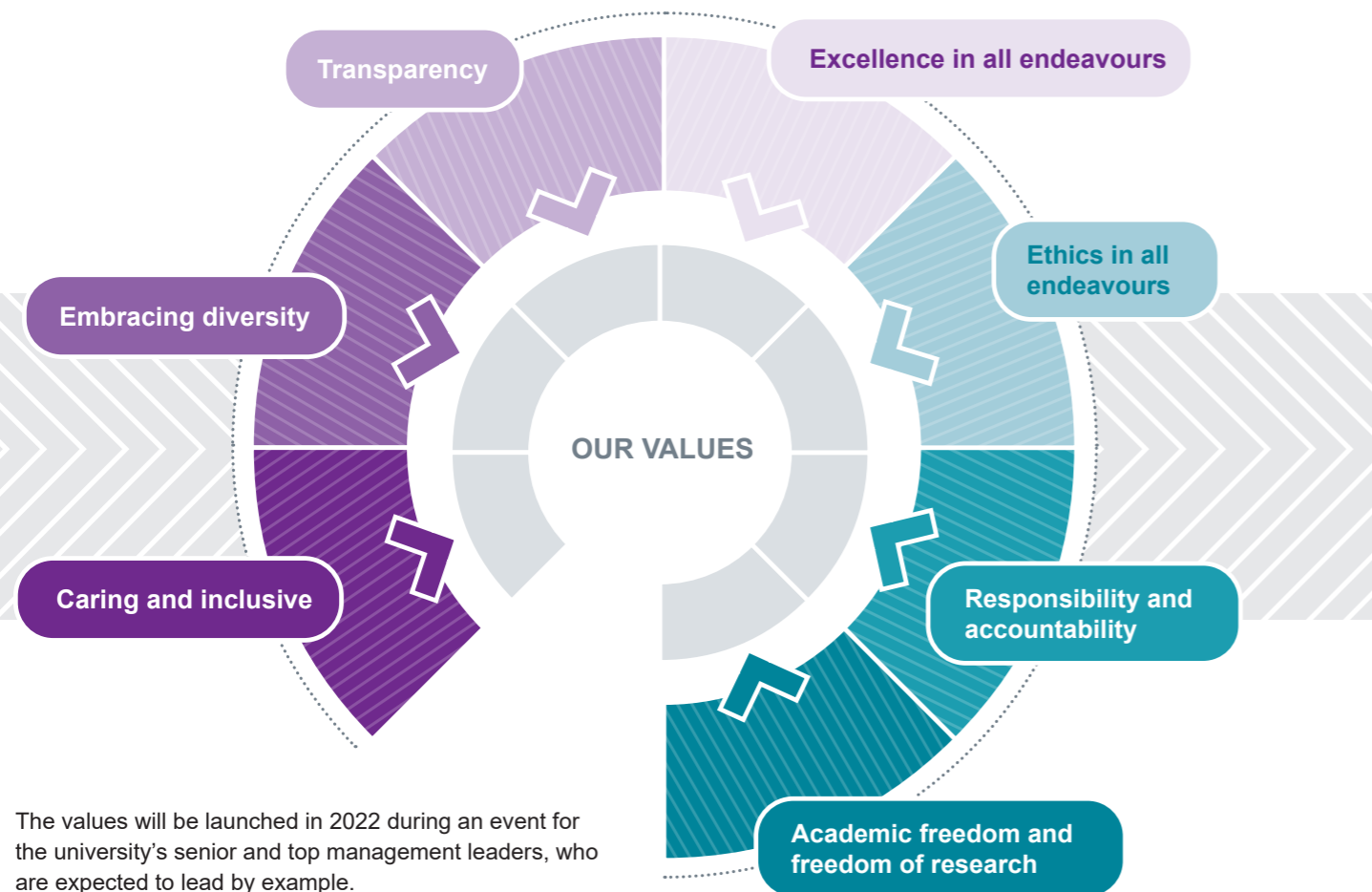
For the past three years, the NWU has been focusing on building an inclusive, enabling and welcoming environment and organisational culture.

Two of the milestones in this journey, known as *The NWU Way*, was reached in February 2020, when the NWU Culture Baseline Report was finalised, and in July 2020, when the Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Project (OCBP) was launched.

The latter project gauged how staff and students understand the values of the university and experience them in their everyday lives.

Celebrating values-driven behaviour is a crucial part of building a unifying organisational culture and, with this in mind, we launched the NWU Culture Celebration project. Its aims are to celebrate the culture journey completed so far, to identify examples of exemplary values-driven behaviour and to measure stakeholders' current perceptions of values-based behaviours.

In a key success for the Culture Celebration project, the NWU values were revised and approved. The revised values are:



The values will be launched in 2022 during an event for the university's senior and top management leaders, who are expected to lead by example.



In distinguishing the NWU from other institutions competing for talent, our comprehensive talent management strategy is critical.

Components of this strategy are an employee value proposition that increases engagement and belonging, competitive compensation and a programme for the recruitment and retention of scarce and critical skills.



Future outlook for the NWU

LANGUAGE BUTTONS

AFR SES SET

We have invited all students to return to our campuses. This will be managed in accordance with the relevant government regulations and lockdown levels as the pandemic ensues.

The teaching-learning presentation at the NWU as a contact university will take place in any of the three following modalities:

- > face-to-face teaching-learning for small groups (in anticipation of the continued threat of Covid-19 and the need for physical distancing);
- > an on-line modality for small groups to allow for optimal participation; and
- > lectures being broadcast to large groups, with lecturers who are available online during the broadcasts, facilitating contact where needed.

This combination would ensure that the university provides sufficient opportunities for students to perform as well as possible, while remaining true to our identity as a contact and distance education institution.

An unstable environment

Short-term expectations

We have learned important lessons during tCovid-19 and have now reached a point of maturity in our ability to respond to the uncertainties of the pandemic.

Regarding the university's finances, we are guided by a financial risk mitigation plan that was approved in 2021.

Medium-term expectations

Our focus will be on smaller group teaching and learning in a student-centred approach. This enables teacher-facilitation and learning-support intervention, and learning that is self-directed, self-paced and collaborative and cooperative in nature.

Student-centred teaching demonstrates curriculum design that enables facilitation and demonstration more than instruction and transmission, and that can be monitored to identify learning challenges and interventions to support and enhance performance.

Another trend likely to affect teaching and learning at the university is the increasing emphasis in higher education globally on modalities of engagement, as opposed to presence.

Presence entails evidence of being present (signed-on or visibly present, in-person) and may be a requirement for engagement to occur but is not evidence of engagement. This could influence university business in ways which are still opaque.

Long-term expectations

We expect that teaching and learning in the future will be self-paced, self-directed and cooperative, incorporating service learning, work-integrated learning and community engagement.

Using opportunities and addressing challenges and uncertainties

The Covid-19 pandemic represented an educational watershed that has compelled higher education systems to sift the proverbial "wheat from the chaff" in terms of what did and did not work well before, and what has been proven to work better in terms of presence and engagement.

Importantly, these insights are founded in decades of education scholarship but have been foregrounded as a result of the pandemic. Synchronous online (in person in real-time), asynchronous online and offline (for example, activities like reading and self-study), hybrid (the combination of in-person and real-time learning online) and HyFlex are concepts that have come to prominence to further nuance an already long-established scholarship concerning blended or multimodal education.

(HyFlex combines the terms "hybrid" and "flexible", and refers to learning that integrates complementary face-to-face [synchronous] and online learning [asynchronous] experiences. HyFlex allows students to participate in classes online or in-person.)

Considering the substantial challenges experienced in the 2020 and 2021 academic years, which impacted on the university's ability to engage with existing and prospective students, a series of proactive strategies and support programmes have been set in motion to ensure the student experience in 2022 remains valuable and meaningful.

We have made university-wide intervention plans to support the NWU's 2022 enrolment targets and are introducing cross-disciplinary stakeholder portfolios. (These portfolios will ensure activities and events address the holistic student experience and also take cognisance of the fact that students still attend a lot of classes online and need to be supported in different ways.)

Our most important targets and plans for the future

In the short- to medium-term

These are our most important objectives in the short- to medium-term:

- > Advance student academic access and improve student academic retention and success through excellent student academic support initiatives.
 - > Engage in a systematic process of curriculum transformation and renewal to equip graduates to address the challenges of 21st century society.
 - > Establish an enabling teaching and learning environment aligned with the Centre for Teaching and Learning's and the faculty's plans.
 - > Sustain and provide professional services to the community while seeking opportunities to create third-stream income for the university.
 - > Ensure an NWU qualification mix that is responsive, viable and continuously relevant.
 - > Enhance the employability of graduates by way of appropriate work-integrated learning and service-learning opportunities.
- > Create and maintain a conducive, sustainable environment to advance research, commercialisation and innovation with a strategic focus on internationalisation.

In the long-term

In the long-term, we would like to accomplish the following:

- > improve research productivity through research excellence and global leadership,
- > create and maintain a conducive, sustainable and supportive environment to advance research excellence, build a pipeline of commercialisable technologies and increase the rate of commercialisation, and strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on internationalisation.

In summary

The limitations we experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic made us aware of the inequalities in the availability of resources to which our students had access to. This led to a renewed focus on the university's student value proposition we offer to our students.

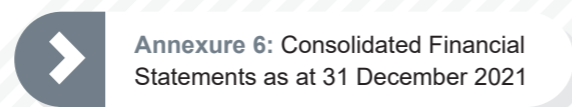
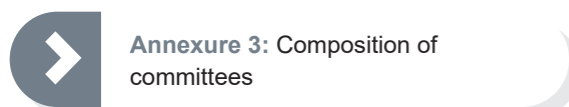
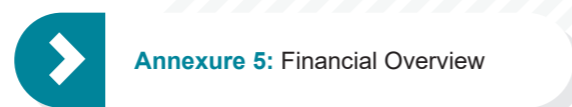
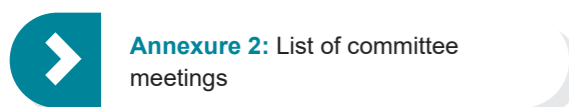
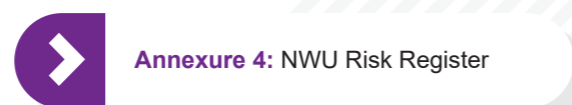
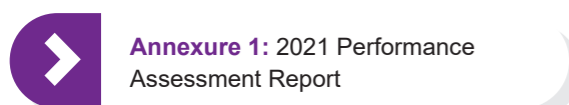
We devoted a substantial amount of time and energy to developing the governance environment within the Student Life portfolio. We created and improved a number of policies, frameworks and rules that enable the university to offer a student experience that is equitable across campuses and comparable to that of other leading universities.

As far as the development and effect of the Covid-19 pandemic is concerned, we are confident that we will be able to move to a more normalised situation in 2022.

We are optimistic that the national vaccination programme and the continued observance of measures to contain the spread of the virus and will allow us to implement an optimally normalised situation as soon as possible.

However, we remain mindful of what might still play out with regard to the pandemic in future, and will ensure our contingency plans are ready to implement, should the pandemic flare up and preventative regulations be enforced again.

Click on the links below to access several annexures to this report.



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