

GREATNESS WITHOUT **BOUNDARIES**

INTEGRATED
ANNUAL REPORT
2023

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NWU INTEGRATED ANNUAL REPORT 2023

1 About this report

1.1 Unleash your greatness

When thinking about the nature of greatness, astronomy and particle physics come to mind.

In astronomy, greatness is measured in light years, the speed of light or the cosmic cycles of birth and death of stars. In particle physics, on the other hand, the greatness constituting life can be found in infinitely small phenomena, such as leptones and quarks, the latter being the building blocks of protons and neutrons.

The range of greatness at the NWU is just as infinite, permeating space and time.

In our work environments it ranges from colleagues implementing our ethic of care by supporting each other and our students, to making an impactful, global difference by implementing our expertise to solve problems experienced by people all over the world.

Traversing time, our strive towards **greatness without boundaries** spans our past and our future – it is both part of the NWU's DNA and heritage, and a proud legacy we want to leave for future generations.

As a result, **Greatness without boundaries** became the theme interlacing all our activities in 2023 and, by extension, the story we tell in this integrated report.

Our first intention with our story is to show you how we as a university offer people numerous opportunities to guide and empower them on their own journeys towards greatness. Our second aim is to invite you, our readers, to witness how we create value for ourselves and our stakeholders while continuing to pursue ever-expanding greatness.

We aim to show you 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.

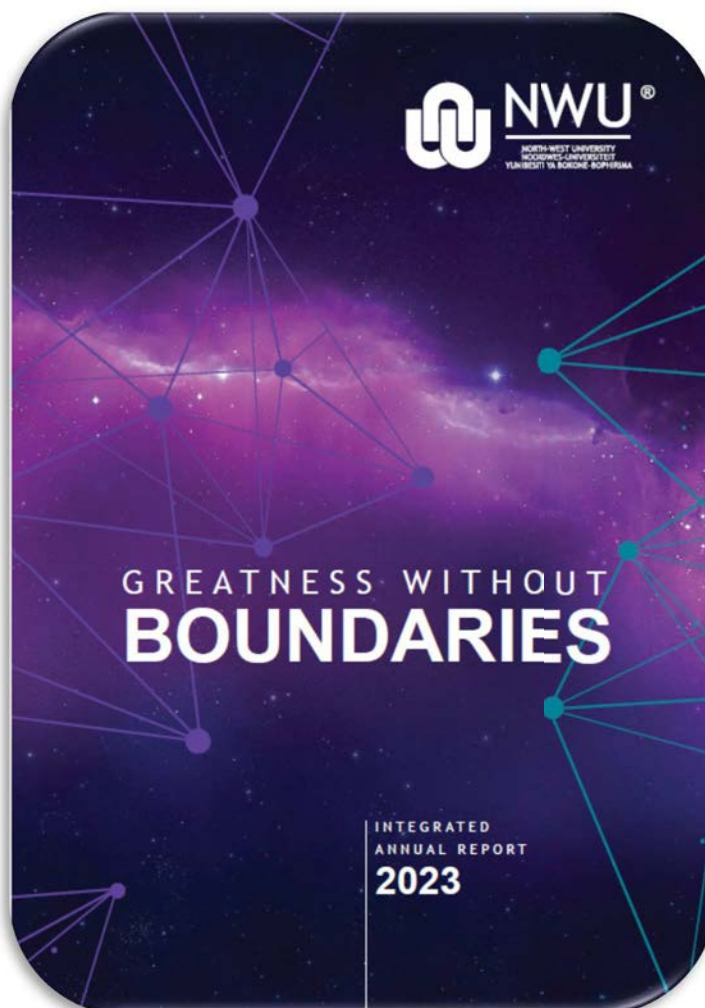
Although we strive to always increase value for the university and our stakeholders, we realise that changing circumstances in our internal and external environment may hamper our efforts to accomplish this.

We apply and use our capitals while executing our strategy through our daily activities.

This means that our capitals can also undergo either a net decrease, or no net change. In such cases, value is eroded or preserved.

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

Front page image



*The image on the front page – the night sky in all its magnificence – symbolises our theme, **Greatness without boundaries**.*

For us, the expanding Universe symbolises greatness that knows no boundaries; greatness that overcomes obstacles and finds new and exciting pathways.

Just as our known Universe has no edge or border, our pursuit of greatness has no limit. It is an ongoing journey with milestones along the path but no final terminal to indicate that we have arrived.

This greatness is meant for the NWU as a university, and for every person connected to this institution. As fellow travellers, we exchange knowledge and skills, we inspire each other and – joining hands – we seek to go where no one has gone before.

Together we explore new frontiers, always curious to see beyond the visible, to unveil the mysteries of our times. The small steps we take in doing this ultimately add up to solutions and answers that could benefit humankind.

As a knowledge-seeking institution striving for greatness, we invite you, our stakeholders, along on this endless adventure.

Join us to learn more about our quest to unlock infinite greatness for ourselves and for our stakeholders.

Video

In this [video](#) we tell the story of the NWU's never-ending journey to unlimited greatness, and how the university empowers others to carve out their own paths to greatness.

1.2 Our story is for you

The **Greatness without boundaries** story in this report is intended for you, our stakeholders.

Our stakeholders are 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 refers mainly to our primary stakeholders. They are our students, alumni, Council, staff, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), our peers, our collaboration partners and our business communities (as future employers of our students), as well as our communities in surrounding areas.

However, we believe that our story will also be of value to the other stakeholders with whom we engage, as shown in [section 5](#).

1.3 How we tell our story

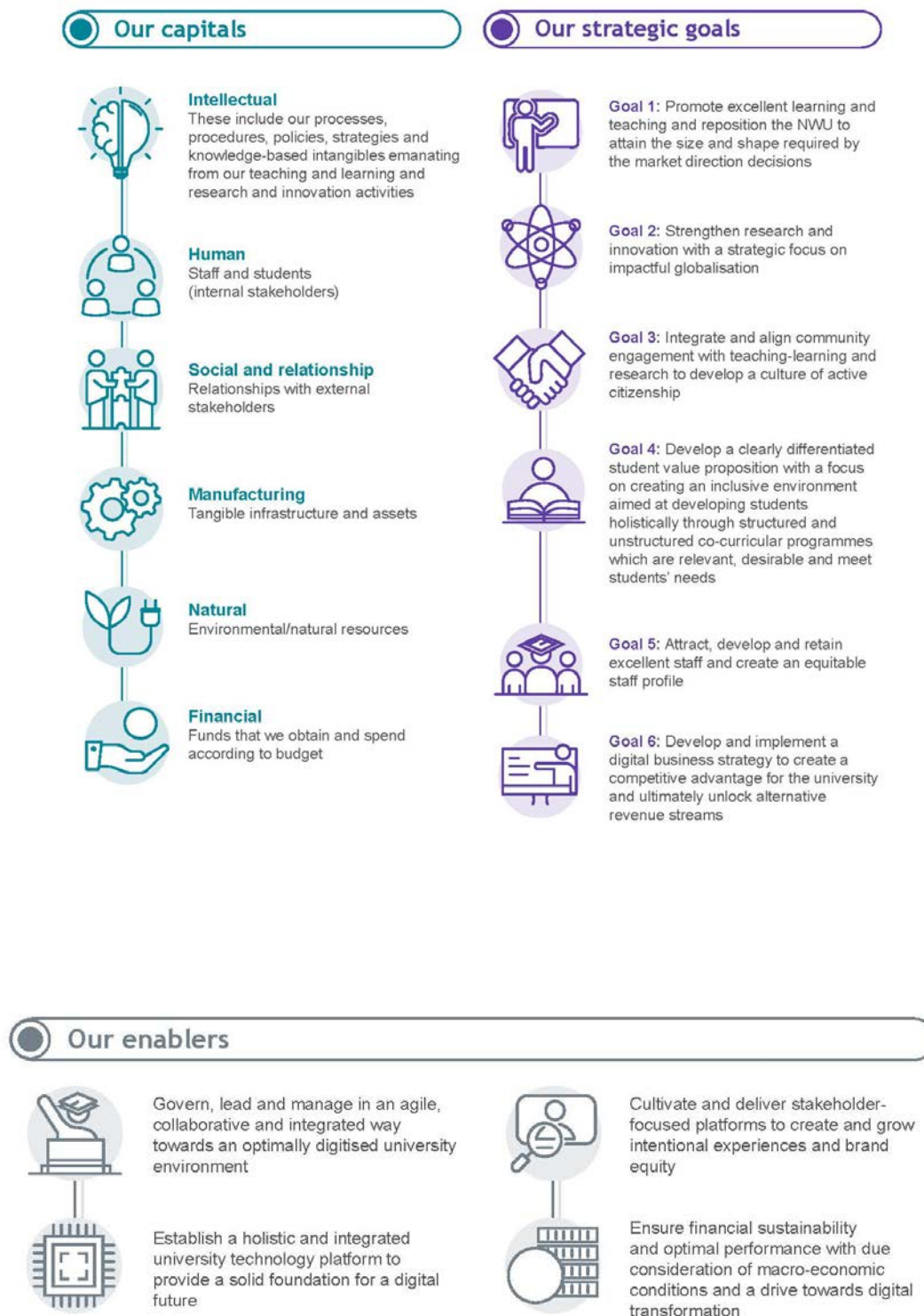
At the beginning of our story, we give an overview of the NWU and explain how we interacted with our operating environment.

You will find a graphic image 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](#) aims to inform you about where we want to go to and how we intend to get there, while the section on [how we performed against our capitals](#) describes what we did to achieve our strategic objectives.



1.4 How to navigate our story

We use different icons to show the connections between the various sections in our integrated report and enhance your journey of discovery.



1.5 Materiality of the report content

The University Management Committee (UMC) members, together with their directors, provide the content that appears in the integrated report, while taking into account the principle of materiality.

As set out in the International Integrated Reporting Council's (IIRC) Integrated Reporting Framework, material matters are those issues that substantively affect our university's ability to create value for itself and its stakeholders.

Our integrated reporting task team also contributes towards identifying matters with the biggest impact on our ability to create value. This team is led by the NWU's registrar and includes the deputy vice-chancellor for planning and the chief strategy officer in the office of the vice-chancellor.

1.6 Reporting frameworks and documents guiding us

Our integrated reporting is guided by the principles and requirements of the Integrated Reporting Framework, King IV and the DHET's reporting regulations.

We also consider documents such as the NWU's Annual Performance Plan (APP) that puts the strategic plan into action, and the institution's risk register. Both these documents are compiled with various role players across the university providing input.

In addition, materiality was informed by the matters 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*.

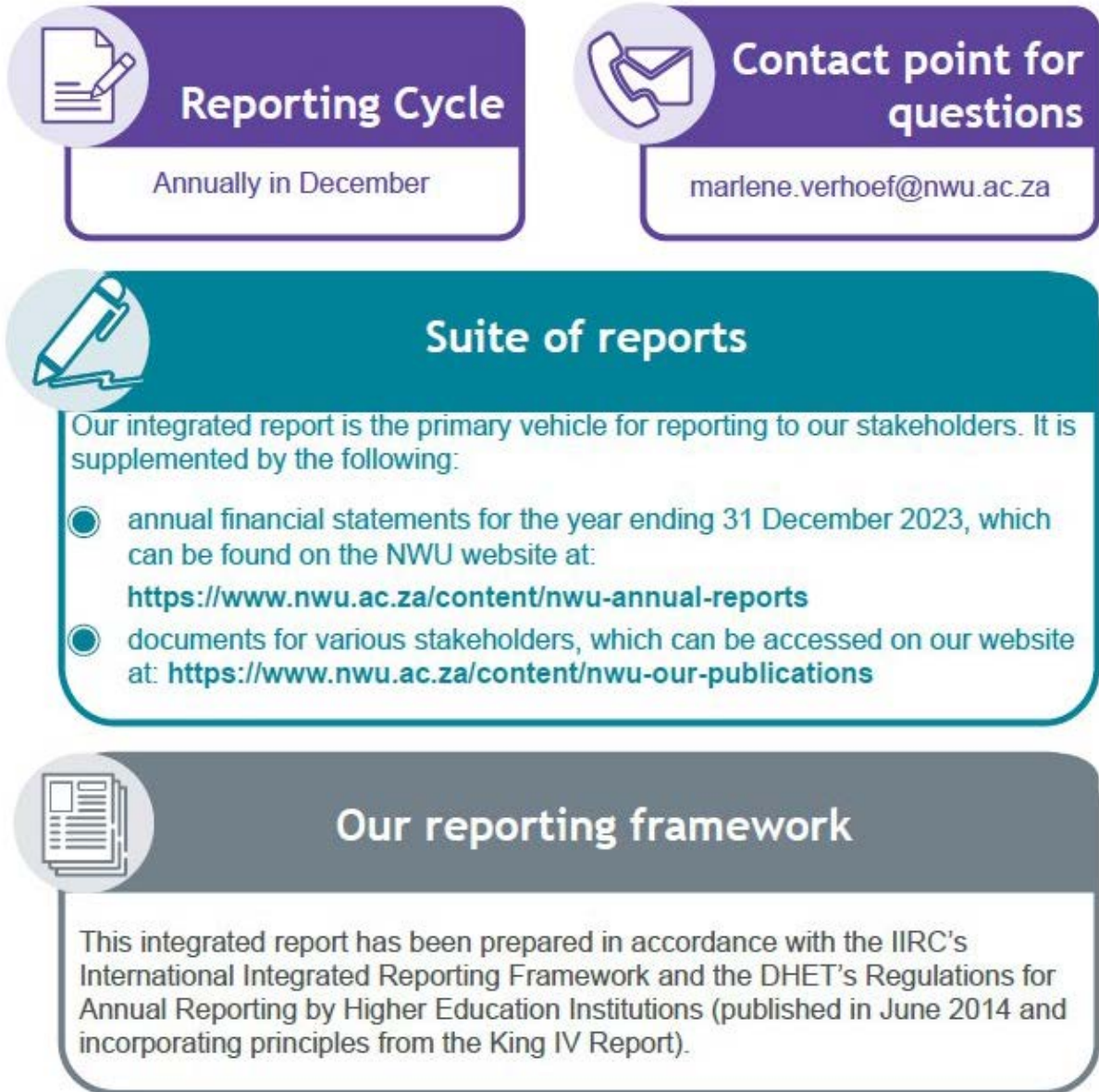
** The goals, enablers and strategic assumptions, as included in the APP, resulted from the process the University Management Committee members used to identify material matters to include when developing or revising the APP.*

*** Our key risks and opportunities are the result of an institution-wide risk analysis process.*

1.7 Reporting period 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 2023.

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.



1.8 How we ensure the integrity of the report

Various measures are in place to ensure the integrity of both our financial and non-financial information reported in the Integrated Annual Report. These measures include a combination of monitoring and oversight by our management and governance structures, as well as the use of internal audit and external assurance providers.

- We obtain reliable student and staff data from our Institutional Planning and Strategic Intelligence Department, which is also responsible for submitting NWU data to the Higher Education Information Management System (HEMIS) for approval.
- Internal assurance providers give us assurance about the effectiveness of the internal controls at the NWU. Their input is incorporated into our report.
- The summarised, audited consolidated financial statements in our report are extracted from the audited consolidated financial statements, prepared in accordance with the IFRS and independently audited by our external auditors, Nexia SAB&T.
- Our auditors independently audited the information in our [performance assessment report](#).
- The financial statements, including the auditors' report, are in [Annexure 6](#).
- More information about combined assurance can be found in the [risk section](#) of this report.
- To further ensure the accuracy of our content, we submit our integrated report to various NWU structures for their consideration and approval. These structures include the University Management Committee, the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (among other Council committees), and finally the NWU Council.



1.9 Council approval

Upon advice from its Audit Risk and Compliance Committee, Council believes that the integrated report addresses all material matters and offers a balanced view of the NWU 's strategy and the organisation's ability to create value.

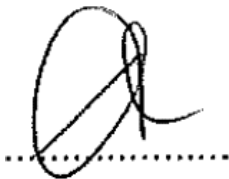
The NWU Council confirms that it has:

- reviewed the contents of the report and applied its collective mind to the preparation and presentation of this document,
- appropriately considered the accuracy and completeness of the material matters, as well as the reliability of the information presented in the report, and
- sufficiently considered and materially presented these matters in accordance with the Integrated Reporting Framework of the IIRC.

The NWU Council approved the 2023 Integrated Annual Report on 13 June 2024.



MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

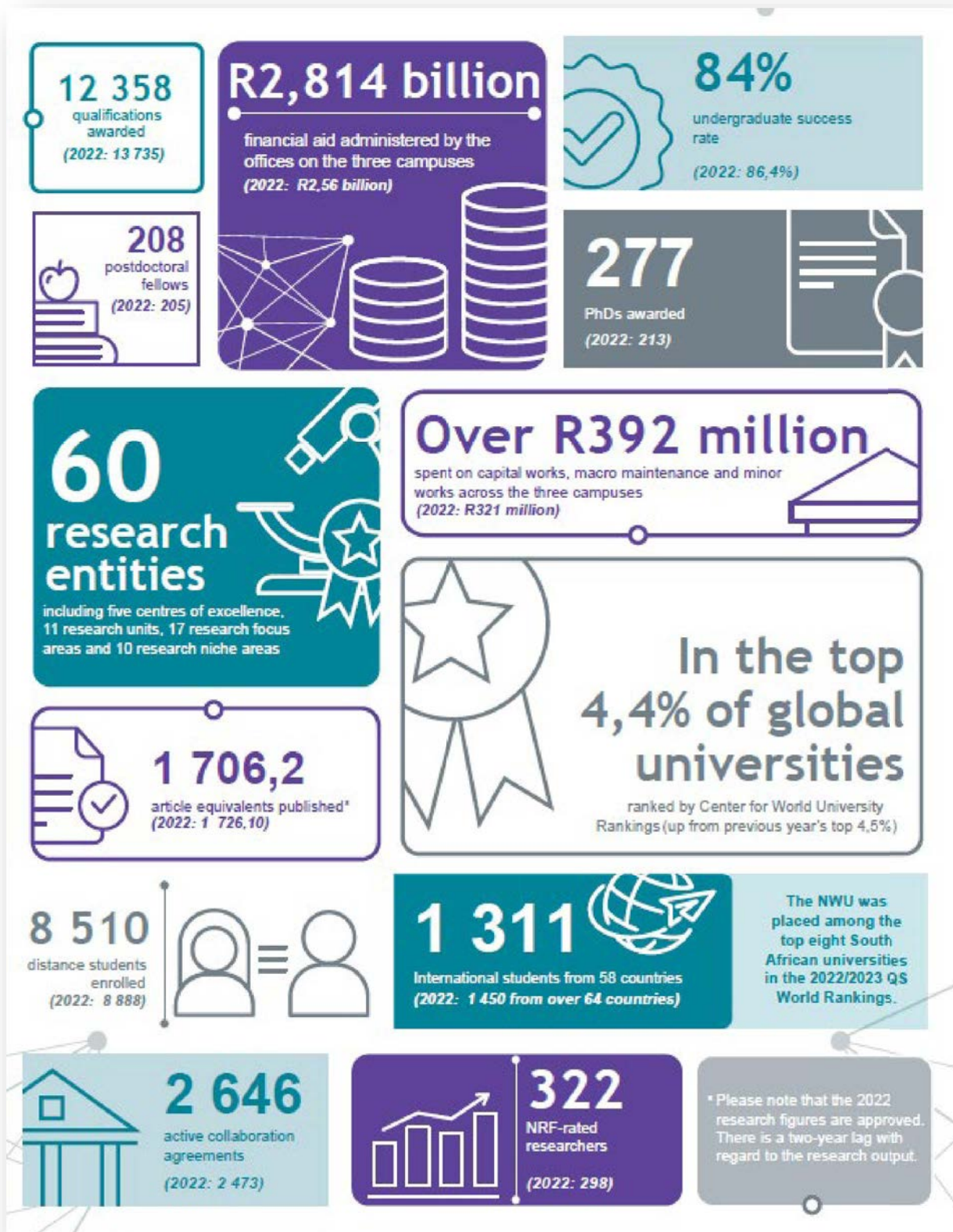


MR THABO MOKGATLHA
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

2 Overview of the NWU – performance highlights

In 2023 we continued to create value for the NWU and for our stakeholders.

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



2.1 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 to reach our purpose and realise our dream.



Our vision

To discover new frontiers and opportunities that benefit society, advancing our relevance and impact.



Our mission

To benefit society through the provision of knowledge, excelling in innovative teaching, cutting-edge research and focused engagement with the community.

2.2 What we do

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

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

2.3 Where we operate

We operate in South Africa but collaborate extensively with institutions and people all over the world. In 2023, the NWU had approximately 2 646 (2022: 2 473) active collaboration agreements.

2.4 What sets us apart



2.5 Our external environment

Various factors in our external environment affect our capitals and our ability to create value for ourselves and our stakeholders.

In the text below, we discuss the material factors that affect us directly or indirectly and are often linked to dynamics beyond our control.

We also indicate how the factors in our external environment are linked to our strategic goals, how they impact our value-creation ability, and how we responded to these challenges in 2023.

2.5.1 Responding to a transforming society

The student transformation agenda has been a large-scale strategic change programme operating across the NWU, with the primary objective of placing students at the heart of everything we do. As part of a knowledge-seeking institution, students acquire the skills and knowledge to overcome obstacles and find new and exciting pathways to greatness.

There have been some significant changes in the student environment with a conscious focus on student access and success; reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities; multilingualism and development of African languages; transformation in the student governance environment, emphasising sustainable diversity and inclusivity; gender rights, identity and sexual orientation awareness and activism; among others.

Increasingly, our students are discovering that they have the power to think and act beyond traditional boundaries, by voicing support for social movements advocating for the eradication of all forms of prejudice and discriminatory practices, particularly racism and gender-based violence. Our students are contributing to the reconceptualisation of gender roles and norms, improved engagement and service delivery, sustainable transformation and cultural reforms.

Furthermore, our understanding of multiculturalism and integration continues to grow as previously marginalised groups and minorities express their voice within the larger university community.

The journey towards equity, inclusion and diversity is, however, far from over. The NWU comprises people from diverse socio-economic, cultural, religious, racial and other backgrounds, all of whom are part of the drive towards achieving the broader sustainable transformation of the university.

Societal inequalities are echoed in the student community and further inform our approaches to equality, equity, social justice and redress. Although we continue to learn and adjust to the dynamic setting in which our students find themselves, understanding the true impact of inequality on student access and success remains an ongoing objective requiring multifaceted support.

Strategic matter affected: development of a clearly differentiated student value proposition (goal no 4)

Capitals affected: human, social and relationship, financial

Effect on value creation

The most effective way to deal with instances of inequality and inequity that spill over from the external environment is to recognise them early, address them proactively and manage them effectively. The inability to do so creates risk as inaction can be seen to be further excluding and marginalising affected students.

Furthermore, we pursue a balanced approach aimed at satisfying the diverse interests and abilities of a broader student community. Failure to take timely and appropriate action could erode the relevance of the student value proposition that we promote, which centres on inclusivity and belonging.

Our strategic response

We proactively develop and implement measures that seek to build social capital, awareness and partnership within the student community. A challenge is that the university is frequently expected to account for societal inequalities; we respond to these expectations by continuing to identify and support initiatives and programmes contributing towards enabling access and success.

Social change remains a collective responsibility of all members of society and, within it, the university community – and so we integrate interventions and platforms facilitating social change into existing curricular and co-curricular programmes. Further, we embed collective responsibility into university functions and structures by continuously refining our governance model and policy directives on social change.

We acknowledge the importance of ensuring purpose-driven engagement and effective multifaceted communication channels that inform our decision-making and policy development processes.

In maintaining a relevant and valuable student experience, we strive to engage and respond to projected changes proactively and with agility. This remains framed by our focus on creating a sustainable co-curricular programme that is agile, financially sustainable and delivers impactful student support.

2.5.2 Instability in the higher education sector

Broader events in the higher education sector influence the way our students receive and respond to university programmes and messages. A lack of understanding of how the higher education sphere functions nationally and institutionally can lead to scepticism and resistance. Similarly, the ineffective functioning of sectoral bodies that support universities' business can adversely impact on the university, necessitating proactive and meaningful responses and interventions to safeguard business continuity and manage risk.

Strategic matter affected: development of a clearly differentiated student value proposition (goal no 4)

Capitals affected: human, social and relationship, financial

Effect on value creation

If students and external stakeholders resist university responses and offerings, this could delay and frustrate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions that advance the business of the university and contribute towards student access and success.

Our strategic response

A community of practice has evolved over time where, by harnessing departmental interdependencies, a culture of problem-solving has been established. We have an inclusive communication and consultation strategy that involves staff, students and community stakeholders. This communication goes beyond co-curricular offerings and includes efficient and interactive service delivery across the NWU, strengthening the university's value proposition and helping to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the functions, roles and responsibilities of the university.

2.5.3 The Fourth Industrial Revolution

Marking an important shift from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), the impact of the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) is extensive and diverse. The 5IR highlights the combination of the digital, biological and physical domains, integrating human thinking with artificial intelligence (AI) to drive innovations focused on sustainability and human well-being.

Universities are essential in developing the skills required for this era, not just by providing relevant knowledge and abilities for 5IR, but also by adapting their operations, academic structures and support systems to align with the changing demands of this revolution.

This transition requires changes in teaching methods, administrative processes and the educational environment in order to cultivate individuals who can efficiently leverage technological advancements for sustainable growth. The key components are advanced interconnected systems that provide tailored learning experiences, digital channels that enhance educational access and integrated multidisciplinary studies that reflect the characteristics of 5IR.

In this setting, it is imperative for the NWU to attract and develop scarce ICT innovation skills to enhance teaching practices, learning experiences and student support services, bearing in mind that there is intense competition for such skills.

Strategic matter affected: All goals and enablers

Capitals affected: All capitals

Effect on value creation

The 5IR offers the NWU a transformative opportunity to enhance our value proposition through innovation, accessibility and sustainable development. By integrating cutting-edge technologies such as AI and the internet of things (IoT) into education and research, we can provide more personalised and effective learning experiences, driving NWU's reputation as a leader in innovative education.

Operational efficiency is significantly boosted by 5IR technologies, leading to cost savings and improved campus experiences. Expanding digital and online learning platforms increases educational access, particularly for remote or financially constrained students, promoting social equity and inclusion.

Our strategic response

Cybersecurity has become a top priority in the global higher education IT landscape and the NWU is acutely aware of the importance of safeguarding our intellectual and infrastructure assets. We have adjusted our strategies to reflect the latest industry trends and are focusing on advancing our Data and Analytics Strategy and Operating Model (DASOM) to prioritise data as a strategic asset for data-driven decision-making to improve organisational effectiveness.

When considering strategic technology investments, we have been influenced by authoritative reports. Gartner, for instance, emphasises a notable shift among top leaders towards enhancing digital capabilities and IT budgets. At the NWU, data analytics and cybersecurity have been identified as crucial areas for investment growth, and we are ensuring optimal resource utilisation by implementing effective portfolio and project management methodologies.

IT also plays a crucial role in driving the NWU's digital transformation initiatives as we strive for academic excellence. Our initiatives are in line with our APP and include five main components: a strong technology ecosystem, stringent security measures, a flexible integration platform, an adaptable operating model and a modular infrastructure.

The NWU's Learning Management System (LMS), eFundi, has experienced significant growth, with daily logins increasing from 4 100 in 2016 to 52 000 in 2023. This demonstrates its scalability and reliability in supporting our educational endeavours.

Enhancing operational efficiency and managing risks remain top priorities. Some of the major projects of 2023 entailed preparing to replace the Student Information System (SIS) and conducting vulnerability assessments for the Quali Financial System. We also updated the Human Resources and Payroll Systems and introduced a Digital Workplace environment, encouraging collaboration.

Hyper-automation architecture is being established to support the Digital Business Strategy (DBS). Guardrails and Project Portfolio Demand Threshold (PPDT) mechanisms have been implemented for the Power Platform to manage its use effectively.

Recognising our increasing reliance on technology, we are strengthening our IT team by, among other things, recruiting student interns and nurturing talent through “grow your own timber” initiatives, which have community engagement and workforce development at their core.

We continue to manage the rising costs of cloud storage by engaging strategically with vendors, practising financial prudence and ensuring dependable cloud storage solutions.

Upgrading the audiovisual systems with GlobalViewer software and TEAMS® appliances and inverters was part of our efforts to support the hybrid Teaching and Learning Strategy, to counter load-shedding disruptions, to modernise classrooms and to improve system reliability.

In promoting a culture of digital fluency and adaptability, IT has initiated an awareness campaign and training programme, centred on the Integrated Modern Workplace ecosystem, to provide employees with the tools and knowledge they need in this new environment.

2.5.4 Academic staff shortages

The shortage of academic staff in South Africa has become even more constrained given the many opportunities available for highly qualified people in business and industry, locally and abroad. Staff from designated groups at senior levels and in the scarce and critical skills areas are in great demand. The university must take these limitations into account in its human-capital planning, policies, procedures and processes.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1), research and innovation (goal no 2) and community engagement (goal no 3)

Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, financial

Effect on value creation

By recruiting and retaining high-calibre academic staff with the required demographic, diversity, skills and experience, we are able to maintain our reputation for excellent teaching and learning, innovative research and community engagement with impact.

Our reputation may suffer and our capacity to implement functional multilingualism be constrained if we are unable to attract such staff in sufficient numbers. Recruitment challenges may also lead to an overreliance on temporary staff, with adverse implications for our core business capacity.

At the same time, the university is under pressure to optimise employment costs, especially as subsidy income is decreasing and student fees are capped. This has necessitated special cost-containment measures, such as a moratorium on filling positions, transferring the savings to the central budget and reducing costs in line with the Staff Cost Risk Mitigation Plan. We apply our minds carefully when making any decisions affecting academic positions.

Our strategic response

We have implemented various retention initiatives to address the risks associated with recruiting and retaining skills and ensure that we continue to build an establishment of talented staff. Initiatives such as coaching interventions for senior managers, the Leadership Academy for Academics and succession planning for management and leadership roles were established to manage potential risks.

Various interventions were directed at ensuring that we have talented academic staff from designated groups and within the scarce and critical skills areas:

- Differentiated cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) are paid to academics and lower-level employees. Academics are in scarce and critical skills areas, while lower-level employees are more adversely affected by high living costs, and should therefore receive a higher percentage increase.
- We conduct individual remuneration reviews for high performers.
- Scarce skills allowances are available to mitigate retention challenges.
- Medical aid insurance is available only to lower-level employees.

Our talent management strategy is a key mechanism for attracting and retaining scarce and critical skills and improving the representation of employees from designated groups, especially black academics. This strategy provides incentives and professional development pathways to sought-after staff, along with fast-tracking opportunities.

In enhancing our overall value proposition for staff, we continued to focus on offering fair, market-related pay and conducive working conditions in 2023. In addition to conducting individual remuneration reviews, and despite external financial uncertainties, we continued with the staff optimisation process to determine where cost savings from better efficiencies and technology adoption could be redirected to staff remuneration.

2.5.5 Fee-free higher education affects financing model

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) plays a crucial role in providing financial support to students who may not have the means to afford higher education on their own.

There have been significant changes in the way we administer financial aid since government announced fee-free higher education for households whose income is below a minimum threshold of R350 000.

The changes are due to the sizeable increase in the number of students qualifying for funding from NSFAS. Since 2015, the number of NSFAS-qualifying students has increased by approximately 473%, placing pressure on all our internal business processes.

Where there were 4 837 approved NSFAS students in 2015, the number climbed to 27 693 in 2023.

Furthermore, the Council took the decision to advance allowances, paid during February and March and totalling R295 million, to these students in order to give them a fair opportunity to continue with the academic year and also safeguard the stability at the university. However, NSFAS has made an upfront payment of only R184 million to facilitate the advance payment of allowances.

We remain aware of the significant potential risk to the NWU and our students of the evolving administrative system associated with NSFAS and any potential that it might not be sustainable in its current form.

Delays in approving NSFAS applications and appeals caused significant complications for teaching and learning during the first semester in 2023.

Potential NSFAS students were allowed to register “provisionally” and participate online. However, some students’ provisional registration status had to be revoked when NSFAS failed to approve their applications by the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) census date.

Furthermore, as of July 2023, NSFAS assumed responsibility for disbursing allowances to students through a system of service providers.

This transition has proven to be problematic, as NSFAS lacks the capacity and appropriate systems and processes to facilitate the seamless transition to direct payments through the designated service providers to students. This resulted in significant delays in the payment of allowances during the second half of 2023.

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

Capitals affected: financial, human, intellectual

Effect on value creation

In its current form, the higher education financing model has two major implications for the university. On the one hand, the model has the potential to disrupt our systems; on the other, it might hold financial value for the NWU and our students.

Large numbers of students were still awaiting the outcome of their NSFAS applications when the activities of the university commenced, which led to the disruption of our scheduled processes.

For instance, we had to offer our registration and orientation programme in a hybrid format and repeat it after hours to accommodate all first-year students. Delays caused by NSFAS also had a detrimental impact on the academic programme, as academics had to take special measures to assist provisionally registered students to catch up when their funding statuses were confirmed several weeks after the academic year commenced.

In addition, assessments had to be postponed (or repeated) during the first semester of 2023 to accommodate those students, all of which put more strain on the university resources.

Despite concerted efforts to provide additional support, the academic performance of students joining the academic programme some four to six weeks after commencement, was negatively affected.

Realising that such students are being set up for failure, we decided that for 2024, the cut-off date for delayed registrations should be earlier rather than later in the year.

The other side of the coin is that students who would previously not have been able to afford to go to university were able to do so because of fee-free higher education, which has also brought temporary financial stability to the sector.

Understandably the fee-free model has led to changes in our enrolment patterns. It has become more complex to manage enrolment targets and to administer registrations. That said, the greatest risk to value creation is still the potential unsustainability of the NSFAS model and the proposed Fee Regulation Model. Both could have a substantial financial impact on the NWU and our students.

Our strategic response

An internal working group was set up to manage the impact and minimise disruptions caused by possible late approvals in 2023.

Some of these measures included a special orientation opportunity arranged for all late-arriving first-year students and allowing potential NSFAS students to register “provisionally” and participate online.

We also harnessed effective administrative processes to manage the challenges posed by the increased number of students qualifying for NSFAS and the associated administrative and cash flow demands, and kept staff and students informed of financial aid developments.

We provided partial advancements of allowances to students and continued to build our long-standing relationship with NSFAS and the DHET as valued stakeholders.

2.5.6 Fee regulation by the DHET

Another aspect of the DHET's new approach to public higher education financing is the Fee Regulation Framework it is formulating. This has the potential to significantly influence the financing model of the NWU.

The DHET's new model has not yet been announced and, in the meantime, the Minister has once again recommended consumer price index- (CPI) related fee increases. This has been the norm since fee-free education was announced and has had a substantial influence on the funding model of the university.

A tuition-fee increase of 5,1% was implemented in 2023 in line with the recommendation from the Minister. This was below the CPI of 6,9% of 2022 and 6,0 of 2023.

Strategic matter affected: financial sustainability (enabler no 4)

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human

Effect on value creation

If the increases permitted under the fee regulation regime do not reflect our cost structure and internal inflation rate, our financial stability could be at risk. This may ultimately affect the quality of the services we provide.

Another concern is that the regulations as they stand, have the potential to erode the autonomy of universities.

Our strategic response

We are implementing a multifaceted strategy to address the complexities of maintaining financial stability and the quality of our services. A key element is our active and constructive participation in the consultations on the proposed Fee Regulation Framework. We are also diversifying our income streams and identifying opportunities to increase our income through fund-raising and by extending our continuing education offering. Furthermore, we are managing our budget process and improving operating cost efficiency.

2.5.7 State funding

In real terms, state funding of higher education has declined.

From 2022 to 2023, the Rand value of the block grant allocated to the NWU decreased by 0,7% and the value of the earmarked grants allocated to universities by 53,4%. This was after the budget of the DHET had been reduced by R2,951 billion to assist in addressing government's fiscal challenges.

With no increase in the block grant, the lower-than-required increase in tuition fees and the anticipated growth in funded units, universities face a dilemma. In simple terms, the available funding will not fully cover higher education inflation.

The practical effect of this can for instance be seen in our employee value proposition, as budget cuts in subsidies negatively impact our ability to attract and retain excellent staff.

Our staff cost funding focus is on affordability and the sustainability of the university. Staff mitigation plans were implemented for support positions, which resulted in some vacancies being deferred in order to manage the staff costs due to the decline in subsidy.

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

Effect on value creation

In the short and medium term, the funding provided by the state contributes to financial stability (although it is not yet clear how the economic downturn will affect future state funding). If funding shortfalls continue, however, we would be forced to implement budget cuts, meaning we would not be able to fund all operational and strategic activities.

When it comes to our staff value proposition, our ability to create value for them is hampered by uncertainties about the sustainability of government funding.

Our strategic response

Given the current economic and funding uncertainties, financial prudence remains the most appropriate response. In practical terms, this means prioritising wisely when allocating the funds available while reviewing current activities and investing continually 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 seeks to become less dependent on state funding by diversifying income generation.

2.5.8 External research funding declines

Most government and industry funding agencies have experienced budget cuts in recent years, leading to the reduction or even discontinuation of research funding and support. Likewise, there have been constraints in the availability of pre-commercialisation, seed and venture capital funding for innovative and new technology development.

This has meant that research and postgraduate funding, which was already limited, continues to decline further, and the implementation of the new National Research Foundation (NRF) funding instrument has meant that fewer students are being funded, even though the amount per student has increased.

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

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human, social and relationship

Effect on value creation

Dwindling external research funding may adversely affect our research productivity and the standing of the university in national and international rankings.

Our strategic response

Using the limited resources available, we set out to alleviate the impact of external funding cuts. We awarded mobility grants totalling R1 499 455 to our researchers and provided R716 815 for research mentorship, including assistance with NRF-rating applications. We also contributed R626 664 to the salary component of the research chairs.

The Research Grant Writing Programme, initiated in 2022, invests R2,4 million per annum across eight faculties to equip researchers with grant-writing skills so they can apply for external funding and do not have to rely on the NWU or statutory funding from science councils.

It is possible to mitigate vulnerability to funding fluctuations across economic cycles by taking a long-term view of funding and developing and maintaining good relationships with funders. The most important relational building blocks are a sound understanding of industry's needs and challenges, and the ability to respond with relevant solutions and innovations.

2.5.9 Demand for intellectual property (IP) reduced

The reduction in demand for IP was less pronounced in 2023 than in previous years. However, the reduction in early-stage, seed and venture capital funding remained a problem.

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

Capitals affected: financial, intellectual, human, social and relationship

Effect on value creation

The low uptake of our IP and technologies could result in lost income and reduced licensing and spin-off activities.

Our strategic response

We strive to back up our inventions with trialled and tested prototypes, as this greatly enhances the successful licensing of patents. Prototype development and demonstration is expensive, however, requiring us to be innovative in seeking out research funding, which can be challenging in economic downturns.

We are also improving the way we market NWU IP, technologies and innovative research to boost our prospects of continuing to attract funding, collaborators, commercialisation partners and licensees.

(For [more information](#), see *Create value through innovation and technology*)

2.5.10 National call for curriculum change and transformation

Curriculum change and transformation are imperatives in South Africa, where decolonisation of the curriculum is considered a priority in higher education.

The NWU is committed to transforming its curriculum and aligning its student experience in step with one of the objectives of Goal 1 of our APP, that requires “a systematic continuous process of curriculum transformation and renewal ...to equip graduates to address contextualised challenges of twenty-first century society, inclusive of calls to decolonise and Africanise the curriculum”.

Strategic matter affected: teaching and learning (goal no 1)

Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, manufactured, financial

Effect on value creation

Curricula must provide an orientation to various paradigms of thought and explanatory systems, including indigenous knowledge systems, so that NWU students and graduates are introduced to different intellectual traditions and can substantiate their worldview and the principles that inform their professional conduct.

If we fail to decolonise the curriculum, we would not be able to reach the above goals and equip graduates to address the contextualised challenges of 21st century society.

Our strategic response

During 2023, the NWU continued to ensure that academic programmes are coherently designed, intellectually credible, and consistently relevant.

The following strategies were pursued to attain this goal:

- In-depth orientation of students to their fields of study and methodologies therein, as well as a broader understanding of contemporary societal challenges. Work-integrated learning (WIL) and service learning (SL) fostered an ethic of care and social responsibility.
- We conducted a comprehensive thematic review of the current Understanding the World Modules that are included in all curricula, with an external review panel due to visit the NWU in 2024.
- Programmes are designed to support the learning needs of a diverse student body, by involving students in a range of individual and collaborative learning and assessment activities, so that they can engage as learners who progressively assume responsibility for their own learning.
- Curricula are designed to help students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to lead purposeful lives as responsible citizens in the service of the science collegiate, their profession and civil society.
- We continued with the installation of technology in classroom to establish a HyFlex learning environment.
- Each faculty annually reports on measures taken to attain these goals. In addition, the NWU hosted three awareness weeks: Facing Race Week, Gender Awareness Week and Language Awareness Week. Staff and students on all three campuses participated and contributed.

Some of the innovations we are currently using were initially introduced during the Covid-19 period. There was, for example, a marked increase in team teaching across our campuses, as well as technology-facilitated engagement of and interaction among students across campuses, through online platforms such as Zoom and MS Teams.

In some cases, we have introduced new programmes, while in others we have adapted existing ones, as discussed in [section 9.1.4](#).

2.5.11 Disruptions in the provision of basic services

Municipalities and utility suppliers cannot guarantee a reliable water and electricity supply.

Loadshedding and the shutting down of water at critical times pose severe risks for the university. This means that the university must ensure a reliable supply of emergency power and clean water to the campuses.

Strategic matter affected: All goals and enablers.

Capitals affected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, manufactured, natural and financial capital

Effect on value creation

Running the emergency power-generating plants on our campuses during load-shedding periods places a financial burden on an already constrained utilities budget (and financial capital).

A related challenge is that the central emergency power generating plants cannot supply the total demand for the respective campuses during normal business hours. This results in emergency power being supplied according to a distribution priority list, focusing on the continuation of our core business activities.

It is anticipated that the availability of electricity and water from municipal connections may be further exacerbated in future, which will negatively impact our daily activities and therefore our ability to create value for ourselves and our stakeholders.

Our strategic response

Through contingency planning, continuous monitoring and evaluation, business continuity was maintained in 2023.

Various efforts were made to reduce water and electricity use and find greener energy solutions. An example of such a solution was the installation of large solar plants on the campuses. This process commenced in the latter part of 2023 and will continue in 2024.

When it comes to the availability of water, the strategy is to install water reservoirs on all campuses to have spare water capacity in the event of a water outage.

Using boreholes to supply emergency water has already been implemented at the Mahikeng Campus. Water treatment plants on campuses are also being installed to enable the university to use grey water and clean it to be useable for irrigation and possibly human consumption. Treatment plants for sewerage are also being investigated.

2.5.12 A growing need for sustainable, impactful community engagement and knowledge exchange

There is a growing need – especially in developing countries – for community engagement that is sustainable and impactful and involves the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

The NWU acknowledges its responsibility to use campus-generated knowledge for community benefit and, in turn, to welcome the contribution community support makes in shaping us into a diverse, innovative institution. Embracing knowledge exchange, we engage with communities to learn and share.

Strategic matter affected: Integrate and align community engagement with teaching-learning and research to develop a culture of active citizenship. (Goal 3)

Capitals effected: intellectual, human, social and relationship, financial

Effect on value creation

When we build sound relationships with our external partners, we see the results in the quality of those relationships and their positive impact on our strategy of engaged teaching and learning.

Sustainable, impactful community engagement results in addressing community needs, facilitating student placements for work-integrated learning and service-learning, as well as fostering ongoing, sustainable development in communities.

Our strategic response

We continue to build partnerships and also to formalise and record our agreements within our community engagement (CE) endeavours.

Our interfaces with communities are via service learning, the science shop, engaged research and innovation and engagement platforms such as the NWU Community Engagement Stakeholders forum. In 2023, three inception meetings were held to consult with 72 local stakeholders per NWU campus.

In addition to this formal platform, some relationships are informal but no less vital for addressing community needs, facilitating student placements for work-integrated learning and service learning, and fostering community engagement. Our community activities are monitored, incorporated into the CE database, evaluated and reported on.

3 Our business model and value chain

NWU

Business Model

● 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 the NWU 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.

[Refer to the composition of the NWU Senate](#)

Input

834

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

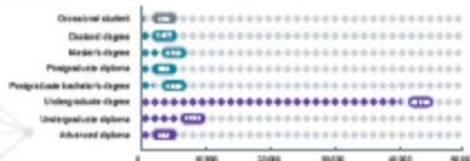
13 138

First-time entering undergraduate students (human capital)

Total number of enrolments per qualification type (human capital)

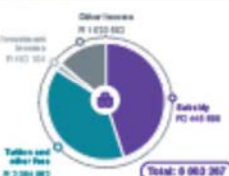
Total: 55 098

On-campus student Postgraduate Undergraduate



Budget (financial capital)

INCOME (R100)



EXPENDITURE (R100)



R392 million

Spent on capital works, research, maintenance and other work across the university (intellectual capital)

8'8

23% increase in total assets

476 599

square metres

The total usable floor area of the NWU (physical and capital)

57%

Expenditure per student on research (R1000) (intellectual capital)

1 110

hectares

The surface occupied by the university's campuses (physical capital)

Academic and support staff (human capital)

Functional category	Postgraduate	Undergraduate	2022	2023
Administrative	124	117		
Research/teaching/management/professional	91	91		
Professional/Research professional	1 000	1 000		
Non-professional administration	1 000	1 000		
Service	8 125	4 000		
Specialist support professional	267	268		
Technical	12	8		
Graduate support professional	628	622		
Technical	261	254		
Technical	264	261		
Technical	103	117		
Total	11 715	11 825		

Activities

Presenting WU academic programmes (intellectual capital)

Student support activities: academic support, health care, and cultural and support activities (intellectual and human capital)

Staff development activities (intellectual and human capital)

Research and innovation activities (social and relationship capital)

Community engagement activities (social and relationship capital)

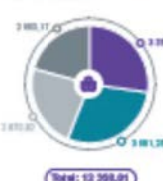
Activities generating third-stream income (financial capital)

Activities strengthening our financial capital

	(R1000)
Income from contracts	101
Sales of goods and services and other income	221
Investment and related income	492
Private gifts and grants	34
Investment income	892
Consolidated income from subsidiaries	18
Total	1 728

Output

2023 Graduates: educational subject matter distribution (human capital)

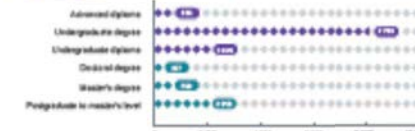


Business and management
Education
Health, engineering and technology

Total number of graduates per qualification type (human capital)

Total: 12 398

Undergraduate Postgraduate



Research output 2022 (intellectual capital)

Journal articles	1 342,30
Conference proceedings	81,6
Books and chapters	272,6
Total articles/essays/published	1 706,5
Master's degrees conferred	885
Research-master's	518,078
Research-master's weighted	518,078
Doctoral degrees conferred	213
Doctoral degrees weighted	528
Total weighted research output	2 854,276
Postdoctoral fellows	265
Postdoctoral units per permanent academic staff member	1,82

R46,8 million (19%)

of the funds allocated to research and used to award doctorate for research in postgraduate

96,7%

Success rate of the NWU merit-based

Collaboration

(Social and relationship capital)

We had 2 888 active agreements and memoranda of understanding

Financial sustainability

(financial capital)

R1 062,5 million

Total surplus (including other comprehensive income) of R59,8 million for 2023, as reflected in the consolidated statement of comprehensive income

62,86%

Number of graduates who completed their studies in research time

R249 million

The university has its own resources, contributed R249 million or 5,37% of the total funds allocated for financial aid

Outcome

Our continued climb in global rankings has taken us to the top 4,4% of global universities. This is according to the 2023 edition of the Global 2000 list of rankings published by the Center for World University Rankings (CWUR). It is an improvement from being in the top 4,7% for 2022/2023 and in the top 4,7% in the 2021/2022 edition of the rankings. The external environment sets the context in which we use our business models to create value.

Student support activities:

Academic support, health care, and cultural and sport activities [Read more](#)

Caring for our students; Academic support, career-related support

Material matter: student value proposition [Read more](#)

Staff development activities

(human capital) [Read more](#)

Caring for our staff – building staff capacity [Read more](#)

[Read more](#) about *Develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile*

Conducting research

(intellectual capital) [Read more](#)

[Read more](#) about *Empowering our researchers*

Community engagement

(social and relationship capital) [Read more](#)

3.1 NWU value chain

In 2023, our value-creation story was about empowering our stakeholders and taking them along on a challenging but exciting journey to find **greatness without boundaries**.

Along the way, we went through the four stages of our business model and value chain: our input, our activities, our output and our outcomes.

During each stage, we accessed, utilised and transformed our capitals. For instance, as part of our input, we used our sources of income (financial capital), skilled staff members (human capital), buildings and equipment (manufactured capital) and academic programmes (intellectual capital) to create value for our students (human capital).

Our students, as our most important stakeholders, play a vital role in this process.

They are our fellow travellers on the quest to **unlock infinite greatness** for ourselves and for our stakeholders. We give them many opportunities to develop and harness their skills, and we invest in them (our input) because we believe in their potential **greatness**.

While they participate in the numerous activities we offer, we guide them to believe in themselves and understand that **greatness knows no boundaries**. They can then discover great new frontiers and limitless possibilities.

By making them an integral part of our value chain, we assist our students to become critical thinkers and change makers (our output) who eventually enter the labour market and society as value creators themselves (our outcome).

Other stakeholders also benefit from our pursuit of **greatness**. Through community engagement and research, we touch lives and change the world for the better.

In this way, we build good relationships with the world around us, increasing our social and relationship capital.

We apply our research results (our output) to find solutions to real-life problems – locally, nationally and globally. Using our expertise to strengthen the knowledge economy, we empower people to change lives and create a better future for mankind, which is part of our outcomes.

In the following discussion of our value chain, we depict how we employ our various capitals such as inputs and, through our activities, convert them to outputs and outcomes.

3.2 Input: Invest in people's potential greatness

3.2.1 Our students

Our student body is an invaluable input into our value chain. The table below reflects the composition and size of the student body in 2023 as compared to 2022:

	2022	2023
African (%)	68,53%	71,36%
Coloured (%)	4,29%	4,08%
Indian (%)	1,24%	1,07%
White (%)	25,94%	23,34%
Female (%)	62,85%	63,49%
Male (%)	37,15%	36,49%

3.2.2 Student recruitment

The NWU remains committed to facilitating student access and success to quality higher education.

A range of interventions and measures were put in place to ensure the achievement of the enrolment plan and the targets in the APP. These interventions included school visits, career fairs, career guidance events, campus visits, open days, and activations and sponsorships to recruit prospective students.

The hybrid events and activities that had proved so successful during the previous few years again provided broader contact and reach of targeted schools and prospective students. In addition, we hosted 88 athletics and sports meetings as part of our student recruitment activities. The Young Eagles Recruitment programme, focusing on top-performing and diversity students, also proved very successful.

Together, these activities made a substantial contribution towards the university receiving more than 181 000 applications (with 43 000 applicants having a 30+ APS), achieving the enrolment plan and boosting the NWU's ability to attract top-performing prospective students.

3.2.3 Broadening access to studies for students of the NWU

We provide ample opportunities for prospective students to overcome barriers hampering their academic aspirations. A common barrier many young people face after matriculating is that they do not meet the admission requirements for specific formal degrees. They can surmount this boundary by enrolling for our one-year University Preparatory (UnivPrep) programmes.

These Senate-approved programmes potentially offer access to formal studies in the faculties of Humanities, Theology and Economics and Management Sciences at the NWU. Each year, above 50% of successful UnivPrep participants become eligible to apply for formal studies in these faculties.

Similarly, Bridging the Mathematical Gap modules (BTMG511 and 521) are aimed at students whose National Senior Certificate (NSC) results in mathematics do not meet the requirements for admission into BCom/BSc studies and who are enrolled for formal BA degree studies at the NWU. By enrolling for the bridging modules, these students have a pathway towards achieving the required standard.

These students may, after successfully completing the first year of a BA degree and the BTMG modules, apply for admission to the relevant BCom/BSc IT degree.

3.2.4 Financial aid

A growing number of students rely on financial aid to fund their university studies. In 2023, the NWU's financial aid offices administered R2,814 billion. Government funding accounted for the majority of this, and a substantial amount derived from the NWU's own funds. A limited amount of other external funding accounted for the rest.

In 2023, government funding for bursaries amounted to R2,239 billion (80% of the total amount allocated for bursaries, including Funza Lushaka bursaries administered by NSFAS). NSFAS owed the university R374 million for the year ended 2023, of which R364 million was paid at the end of January 2024.

We contributed R250 million for student bursaries, which is 9% of the total funds allocated for financial aid. This contribution helps to increase our throughput rate and demonstrates our commitment to social justice and an ethic of care.

3.2.5 Student development and support

Through ongoing and focused academic support, we enable our students to achieve academic success. ([Read more](#) about how we increase student success.)

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

3.2.6 Our staff

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

The following table reflects how the number of permanent academic staff compares with those of other South African higher education institutions (*Please note that this is based on 2022 audited HEMIS data*):

Institution	Total
University of KwaZulu-Natal	1 176
University of Cape Town	1 192
University of Witwatersrand	1 211
University of Pretoria	1 269
University of Stellenbosch	1 295
University of Johannesburg	1 328
North-West University	1 678
University of South Africa	1 823

In 2023, we had a total of 4 236 permanent staff members, comprising 1 678 academics and 2 544 support employees.

Offering cutting-edge training and development is another important part of our staff value proposition. Currently, many staff development interventions focus on building the competencies required to give effect to the NWU's Digital Transformation Strategy.

The modern workplace is increasingly associated with high stress levels and the risk of burnout. We have responded by intensifying the support available through our Employee Assistance Programmes and increasing the reach of these programmes through online support. For more details about this aspect of staff development, refer to the section on how we perform against our strategy.

Academic promotions and awards programmes

We build mutual value for our academics and the NWU through the annual academic promotions process, which is a recognition programme for academics. The principle underpinning academic promotions is the importance of creating mutual value both for the academic and the NWU.

Academic promotions and awards programmes

The annual academic promotions process is our flagship recognition programme for academics. The principle underpinning academic promotions is the creation of mutual value both for the academics and the NWU.

Academic promotions 2021 to 2023										
Promoted from:	Promoted to:	Black			White			Total		
		2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Junior lecturer	Lecturer	13	5	8	10	7	16	23	12	24
Lecturer	Senior lecturer	20	5	30	27	18	30	47	23	60
Senior lecturer	Associate Professor	7	19	16	36	36	35	43	55	51
Associate professor	Professor	6	7	10	18	18	16	24	25	26
Grand total		46	36	64	91	79	97	137	115	161
Percentages		33,7%	31,3%	40,0%	66,3%	68,7%	60,0%	100%	100%	100%

For 2023, a total of 161 academic promotions were approved, which is 46 more than in 2022. This was the highest number of academic promotions at all levels compared to previous years. The increase reflects the success of our efforts to prepare academic staff for higher levels of responsibility.

We are also excited about the progress being made in enhancing the seniority of our academic staff and sharpening the focus on building a representative professoriate.

Across academic levels, although progress toward equity in terms of race and gender is modest and gradual, signs of improvement are emerging.

It is evident that black females have experienced the lowest rate of promotions over the past four years. We are intensifying our efforts so that there is a pipeline for the promotion of black females.

For lecturer-level promotions, the number of successful applicants doubled in 2023 and almost trebled for senior lecturer level. This indicates the extent to which we have created value through all our investments in developing our academics.

Caring for our staff

South African universities compete for academic talent, and this competition is one of the greatest challenges we face in recruiting and retaining staff. In response to this challenge, which relates to risk cluster 3 (academic matters), we strive to keep our employees engaged by creating an environment underpinned by an ethic of care. The well-being of staff is cardinal, and this principle has been foregrounded further post the Covid-19 pandemic, which disrupted workplace practices and gave rise to biopsychosocial challenges.

The NWU's holistic employee health and wellness programme consists of psychosocial support, physical well-being activities and organisational effectiveness and employee well-being interventions. Psychosocial services, which include legal and financial advice, are rendered through counselling services on a 24/7/365 basis. In addition, we conduct team workplace well-being assessments and interventions, as well as workplace well-being training. These organisational effectiveness and employee well-being interventions are aimed at creating enabling and efficient working environments.

Knowing that employees' well-being is key to success, the Wellness Unit takes a holistic approach, offering interventions on stress management, managerial consultancy, establishing enabling working environments, effective communication, sensitive topics such as gender-based violence, and even support for personal challenges such as substance abuse and relationships.

Creating a nurturing and supportive working environment for staff at the NWU to flourish was the primary focus of 2023, based on a shared-responsibility approach. For example, we initiated an integrated health and wellness reporting

strategy that entails combined reporting by the NWU wellness service providers, Employee Wellness, group life insurance and medical aids. Combined reporting is an effective way to analyse trends to support decision making, as well as to design targeted interventions.

Throughout 2023, the NWU prioritised the strategic advancement of its workplace well-being framework, which recognises the inherent link between individual and organisational responsibility in ensuring workplace well-being.

Key to this strategy is fostering an engaged and well-informed workforce. We facilitated a series of webinars specifically designed to equip employees and managers with the knowledge and resources necessary to create workspaces that actively promote and reflect overall well-being. This investment in our most valuable asset – our people – has laid a strong foundation for enhanced individual well-being, organisational resilience and sustainable success in the years to come.

3.2.7 Funding

- **Research funding**

Research funding of around R103 million was received in 2023 from the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and the National Research Foundation (NRF). The table below lists the number and value of external grants awarded to the NWU in 2022 and 2023.

Grant programme	2022 number of awards	2022 total amount	2023 number of awards	2023 total amount
SAMRC funding	6	3 021 613	26	2 082 501
Thuthuka	24	2 687 136	22	1 916 295
Other grant-holder awards	186	34 225 887	222	38 962 439
Grant-holder linked bursaries	21	2 348 333	16	2 620 000
Block grants	2	360 000	-	-
Freestanding bursaries	351	49 270 027	343	53 714 262
Freestanding postdoctoral bursaries	12	2 950 000	12	2 896 250
Freestanding postdoctoral funding	12	590 000	12	674 998
SKA student bursaries	1	144 700	2	365 354
SKA student equipment	-	-	-	-
SKA student travel grants	-	-	-	-
Total	615	110 497 696	655	103 232 099

Researchers in some of the NRF programmes were given the opportunity to defer their 2022 funds to 2023 or any future year, which meant this funding was not lost to them.

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

- **Funding for technology transfer and innovation**

The funding landscape remained constrained in 2023. Only three innovation projects were supported, one pre-seed project and two Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) Seed Fund projects.

[\(Read more about our efforts to increase research funding under Six goals to realise our strategy\)](#)

- **International funding**

The table below shows the international funding each faculty received during 2023. The total amount, R38,9 million, was a significant improvement compared with previous years.

International funding for research	2021 Actual as confirmed by faculties R	2022 Actual as confirmed by faculties R	2023 Actual as confirmed by faculties R
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences	1 334 758	703 261	-
Faculty of Education	290 082	-	434 228
Faculty of Humanities	3 657 783	3 418 090	3 490 006
Faculty of Engineering	360 170	2 220 050	-
Faculty of Health Sciences	13 343 911	10 798 764	21 674 775
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences	12 623 339	9 985 580	12 844 763
Total	28 808 147	23 707 655	38 893 772

3.3 Activities: Guide people to unlock their own unlimited greatness

3.3.1 Teaching-learning activities

Transferable skills and flexible mindsets are prerequisites in the 21st century world of work. Both the university and our students must be agile enough to adapt to the new skills demands.

For the university, this means striving to keep our academic offering relevant by incorporating sought-after skills such as analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, complex problem-solving, critical thinking and analysis, and creativity, originality and initiative.

After adopting an innovative Teaching and Learning (TL) Model at the end of 2022, we revised the NWU TL Strategy (2021-2025) in 2023. Council approved the updated iteration in November 2023.

The new TL Model takes the HyFlex concept a step further by elevating it from a module-specific perspective to an institutional level. The result is a more holistic perspective on the transformation of teaching and learning. It embraces the imperative of aligning NWU's strategic partners with the overarching objective of advancing the vision of a forward-thinking higher education institution.

The student is the focal point of the NWU HyFlex TL Model, which extends the conventional boundaries of the HyFlex concept beyond instructional design and student choice, encompassing the broader institutional framework. This shift in pedagogical focus aligns with the UMC's resolution at the end of 2022 to prioritise student-centricity, consistent with the university's ethic of care. This endeavour, aptly known as "Reimagining student-centricity at NWU", will require a reconsideration of institutional rules and practices within the academic environment. The introduction of SIS is part of this.

Block teaching, where students spend time on a selected module for a set period, offer the opportunity to focus on group projects and skills development that may be difficult to attain during regular time-tabled periods. This approach was followed in selected programmes in three faculties (Economic and Management Sciences, Engineering and Health Sciences), with positive outcomes.

In 2023, we continued our efforts to rethink academic scheduling to make provision for new ways of learning and teaching. The new timetabling system, CelCat, opens the possibility of alternative and new ways of scheduling academic activities that will be explored in 2024.

We are continuing with academic programme alignment to offer comparable academic programmes and experiences across our campuses and meet external quality standards. For more information, refer to the [section](#) on how we performed against our strategy and increased our intellectual capital.

- **Greater student access and success**

Our consistently high student retention rate indicates the effectiveness of the mechanisms we use to enable student access and success. Our Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) spearheads our efforts to support students, particularly 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. In 2023, the online tool “The First Year Navigator” provided first-year students with just-in-time, essential academic information, such as academic pointers, at the start of and at key moments during the academic year. In August 2023, we started a systematic process to translate information from FYN (the First-Year Experience site on eFundi) into Setswana and Afrikaans, aiming to enhance inclusivity for all students. Translations are being provided monthly and should be completed by July 2024. In 2023, a total of 10 070 first-year students has collectively paid 83 406 voluntary visits to the FYN.

These different forms of support to students were provided online or in person and were also extended to our distance learning students.

- **Promoting continuing education**

Owing to the high adoption of technology during and since the Covid period, there is increasing market demand for the online delivery of courses, either through virtual synchronous delivery or fully online learning. The benefit for private and public organisations is cost and productivity savings as participants need not travel to contact venues.

The NWU's Unit for Continuing Education (UCE) offers a comprehensive range of short courses for those needing just-in-time learning opportunities. Many of the UCE's courses combine contact sessions, virtual classrooms and online content. The hybrid approach also reduces the time lecturers spend away from the office and allows for more course intakes during the year.

The fully automated short course administration system was launched in April 2023, giving participants a single secure portal to manage their process from application to certification. This includes online payments and integrated external credit providers that reduce the risk of the NWU incurring bad debt. It also allows more participants access to short courses with flexible payment options.

- **Focusing on academic and professional development**

Our academics' professional development is of great importance as excellent university teachers are fundamental to the success of our students and their ability to achieve greatness. One of our professional development initiatives is 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.

In 2023, we presented the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) Programme to enhance teaching quality, reflective practice and the skills of NWU academics and professional staff. The programme targeted individuals across career stages, with a particular emphasis on black African South Africans and female staff.

Various opportunities were identified to further develop the knowledge, skills and confidence of staff in professional roles. In 2023, 1,865 academics from all eight faculties and professional staff participated in webinars, workshops, and online training. Notably, staff benefited from platforms such as Coursera, OLC (Online Learning Consortium), Quality Matters and GetSmarter courses.

Faculty-specific workshops covered assessment, eFundi and EdTech. Fifteen female academics engaged in Women in Leadership courses, including the Women in Leadership symposium organised in collaboration with People and Culture.

Feedback from participants will inform future CPL initiatives.

During the year, the Centre for Higher Education Professional Development in the Faculty of Education commenced its activities to address the quality of university teaching. The Centre aims to:

- oversee and manage the development and offering of formal and structured academic professional development qualifications and programmes to professionalise post-school educators as tertiary education teachers;
- promote knowledge production and knowledge sharing;
- establish and build on current networks of higher education expertise at faculty, institutional, national and international levels;
- utilise expertise in higher education across faculties and the CTL to fulfil its mandate to enhance the skills of post-school educators as tertiary education teachers;
- develop a range of credit-bearing short learning programmes (SLPs) that may articulate to a PGDip in Higher Education (HE); and,

- develop related higher education programmes that form part of the programme planning of the Centre.

3.3.2 Research activities including Library and Information Services

In striving to improve our research standing, the university provides focused support to researchers at all levels. For 2023, our research and innovation activities continued to be conducted predominantly but not exclusively in a total of 60 research entities, consisting of eight Research Chairs, eight hosted research entities, including a Centre of Competence, five Centres of Excellence, 11 Research Units, 17 Research Focus Areas, 10 Research Niche Areas and one Commercial research entity. As in the past, researchers and research programmes outside the research entities were supported.

Through regular external and internal evaluations of research entities, we ensure that these continue to create maximum value for our stakeholders. In 2023, 12 research entities were scheduled for external evaluations. Ten out of 12 research entities were successfully evaluated externally, and two evaluations were postponed for 2024.

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

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



The university revived NWU Research and Innovation Week, which took place from 18 to 22 September 2023, under the theme “Research and innovation for sustainable impact”. This is a biennial flagship series of research and innovation events organised by Research Support Department in collaboration with faculties to showcase our researchers’ and postgraduate research programmes, thereby enhancing excellence and visibility, and encouraging networking and collaboration across entities and Faculties.

The Library and Information Service (LIS) extended this support 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. The LIS remains a key player in research and innovation (along with teaching-learning and community engagement), enhancing university research dissemination and access. The LIS continues to provide research support services to researchers and students, leveraging information and communication technologies (ICTs) to accelerate visibility of NWU research output.

One of the interesting projects in the LIS domain was the establishment of the Digital Scholarship Centre, which will continue to grow in 2024 to support the creation of digital data sets by mining online resources, digitising paper materials and growing expertise in research methods and practices. The latter entails using technologies to provide academic staff and students with a single, easily accessible point of entry to the many digital resources available at the NWU. The digitisation activities have focused on theses and dissertations, and to giving students, researchers and members of the public expanded access to knowledge. The digitised items are preserved, protected and made accessible, ensuring the long-term availability and discoverability of the NWU collection. Easy access to high-quality content is both a public good and a necessity for good research.

3.4 Output: Deliver great critical thinkers with vision and foresight

3.4.1 Teaching learning output

The undergraduate degree graduation duration factor stood at 1,11 in 2023, higher than in 2022, and indicates that fewer 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.

The student-to-academic staff full-time equivalent (FTE) ratio is 28,59:1 (28,45:1 for 2022), meaning that one academic staff member is available for every 28,59 full-time equivalent students.

Among first-time entrants, the dropout rate for contact degrees decreased from 10% in 2022 to 9% in 2023 and remains low in comparison to sector norms.

The following graph shows the number of graduates per field of study for 2022 and 2023:

Field of study	2022		2023	
	Graduates CESM weighted	% of total	Graduates CESM weighted	% of total
All other humanities and social sciences	2 962	22%	2 871	23%
Business and management	3 341	24%	3 353	27%
Education	4 761	35%	3 581	29%
Science, engineering and technology	2 672	19%	2 553	21%
Total	13 736	100%	12 358	100%

The following table effects the NWU comparison of the number of graduates compared to those of other South African higher education institutions (based on 2022 audited HEMIS data):

Institution	Total
North-West University	13 735
Tshwane University of Technology	15 271
University of Johannesburg	12 128
University of Pretoria	13 553
University of South Africa	54 273

Teaching and learning awards

Throughout February and March 2023, a series of information sessions were held to introduce the NWU Teaching Awards to university educators interested in participating. These sessions were followed by three writing retreats for constructive writing, sharing experiences and engaging with peers involved in the Teaching Awards process.

Evaluation panels, including both virtual and face-to-face meetings, assessed submissions for the various awards, with faculties overseeing the process for the Faculty Teaching Awards. The cycle witnessed a significant increase in participation, particularly in the Faculty Teaching Awards, with 114 academics taking part, representing all eight faculties. As some awards had fewer participants than others, we will strive towards greater diversity in future cycles.

In all, 161 participants from all three campuses used the support initiatives that were put in place, including the writing retreats and individual consultations. We used discussions with deputy deans, infographics and university communication channels to publicise the awards among the teaching community.

Feedback from 46 participants emphasised the enriching nature of the Awards, highlighting the opportunities for reflection, skills development and peer feedback. An appeal process was introduced for the Faculty Teaching Award to ensure fairness in evaluation.

The inaugural Team-Teaching Award received excellent submissions, indicating its success as a new category. However, lessons learnt from the 2023 cycle include the need for more streamlined processes, better communication

and increased stakeholder engagement. Strategies will be explored to address low participation rates and enhance mentorship opportunities to further enrich the Teaching Awards experience.

CTL will provide ongoing support and motivation to participants, especially black academics, in the award process. This will encourage participants to complete the process, which will also link into the other staff development projects such as teaching mobility.

3.4.2 Research output*

Wherever possible, our research output is uploaded onto Boloka, the university's institutional repository, enabling wider access to the output concerned. This is in line with the funding mandates of the NRF and other funders of publicly funded research output. The LIS, which manages the repository, ensures that theses and dissertations, and to some extent journal articles, are uploaded onto Boloka.

The best judges of the quality of our research and innovation output are our peers in the scholarly community, who review our journal articles and invite our academics and postgraduate students to give presentations at accredited conferences. The number of master's and PhD students graduated is another important yardstick of quality.

The following table confirms that the quality and quantity of research at the NWU continue to improve:

	2020	2021	2022
Journal articles	1 264,32	1 366,3	1342,10
Conference proceedings	38,84	66,9	91,5
Books and chapters	233,43	222,90	272,6
Total article equivalents published	1 536,59	1 656,1	1706,2
Master's degrees conferred	722	698	695
Research master's	521,605	509,962	519,076
Research master's weighted	521,605	509,962	519,076
Doctoral degrees conferred	251	264	213
Doctoral degrees weighted	753	792	639
Total weighted research output	2 811,1914	2 958,062	2 864,276
Postdoctoral fellows	215	212	205
Publication units per permanent academic staff member	0,93	0,99	1,02

***Please note that there is a two-year lag with regard to the research output.*

• NWU Research and Innovation Excellence Awards

At the end of each academic year, we celebrate our academics' hard work and exceptional research and innovation output at the annual NWU Excellence Awards. The awards, which were held in-person for the second time on 23 November 2023, were presented in various categories, including National and International Recognition and Memberships Award, Acknowledgement of New and Upgraded NRF Ratings, Acknowledgement of Research Chairs, Most Productive Senior Researcher Award, Most Productive Emerging Researcher Award, Creative Outputs Award, Top Inventor Award, Innovation Impact Award, S2A3 Award for the best Master dissertation and the Vice Chancellor's Award.

Prof Ruan Kruger from the Faculty of Health Sciences was named the Most Productive Senior Researcher.

3.5 Outcomes: Enrich society through our pursuit of infinite greatness

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 able 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 improve their lives in a sustainable way.



PROF BISMARK TYOBEKA
CHAIRPERSON OF SENATE



4 Our vice-chancellor's review

4.1 Introduction: Looking at 2023

2023 marked the year that the university started exploring possibilities beyond its traditional boundaries. The strategic plan that had been propelling the NWU's efforts had taken us this far (2015-2025) and it was now time to review it. The new strategy – termed *Taking the NWU Forward 2024 and Beyond* – was approved by Council in September 2023.

The strategy development process was an iterative one, involving extensive stakeholder engagements to ensure that we all move in the same direction in 2024 and beyond.

An external situation analysis was done to provide greater understanding of the structure and competitive nature of the higher education landscape. This scrutiny of the macro-environment equipped the university with a broad overview of issues that will impact the implementation of the NWU strategy and its budget priorities. These external evaluation processes focus on social and demographic trends, future expectations of technological advancement and economic and environmental factors, as well as political developments.

4.2 Our managerial and administrative activities

Having revised the strategy in 2023, we started the conversation about how “structure follows strategy”.

The broad set of skills needed by tomorrow's workforce is what informs our approach to the educational structure. The core offering of the university remains its research and innovation, teaching and learning, and community engagement. Therefore, our managerial and administrative arrangements are geared to ensure that this core is sustained and supported. The success of the academic programme remains central to all our efforts.

Phase one of the staff optimisation project implemented was implemented in 2023 and we began implementing phase two. Through the collective efforts of NWU people, we have seen some appreciable progress towards enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of the university. Key achievements include the streamlining of various processes and identifying opportunities to improve our efficiencies. This project has yielded positive outcomes, allowing us to allocate resources more effectively.

As part of phase one of the staff optimisation project, we were able to implement the Vice-Chancellor's Special Dispensation Award. The intention of this award was to contribute to our dream of promoting an environment with job satisfaction and enhanced overall morale.

The finalisation of phase two of the project is under way. This encompasses the optimisation of administrative positions, which entails some detailed work study analysis and a thorough examination of longstanding vacancies. In 2024, the third phase of staff optimisation will be implemented.

4.3 Adequacy of staffing levels, particularly in critical areas

Attracting and retaining employees who are innovative and highly skilled is a priority for the NWU. With this in mind, we use integrated talent management mechanisms such as strategic workforce planning, talent attraction and management, targeted recruitment, optimal remuneration management, training and development and performance management, as well as succession planning.

The staff optimisation project continued to unfold in 2023, resulting in some long-standing vacant positions being abolished.

We finalised the scoping process for the second phase of the project in the last quarter of 2023.

The staff optimisation project will ensure we have the optimal staffing levels and mechanisms to increase productivity. The rationale is to have optimal staffing levels with enhanced remuneration and benefits.

In 2023, the total staff headcount stood at 11 523, up from 10 762 in 2022.

As the following table illustrates, staff numbers increased in both the support and academic environments. Our support cohort decreased with 285 employees – from 8 301 in 2022, to 8 016 in 2023. There was an increase of 1 046 in our academic staff, which grew from 2 461 in 2022 to 3 507 in 2023.

The subsidy allocation was reduced in 2023, which adversely affected the functioning of the higher education sector, impacting the availability of funding. Given this trend, we are aware that budget cuts are on the horizon for the sector, which is sure to affect future staffing levels.

Mitigating the impact of the sectoral budget cuts, protecting our core business and ensuring the university remains academically and financially viable are the chief aims of the cost-mitigation plan we have developed. This plan is part of the consultation processes undertaken with support divisions and faculties of the NWU.

Since we have had to reprioritise our budget and optimise our staff-cost budget, only mission-critical positions were filled in 2023.

Total staff headcount – 2022 vs 2023						
Classification	Permanent		Temporary		Total	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Academic	1 678	1 692	783	1815	2 461	3 507
Support	2 550	2544	5 751	5472	8 301	8 016
Grand total	4 228	4 236	6 534	7 287	10 762	11 523

The overall attrition rate is 7,96%, well within our target to contain the attrition rate at under 10%.

Realising equity targets in the workplace

Employment equity targets are closely monitored. Two committees of Council oversee our progress against these targets, namely the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee and the Transformation Oversight Committee.

Our current employment equity plan spans the period January 2021 to December 2023. The targets and outcomes for 2023 are shown in the following table.

Race	2023 Target		% Total	31 Dec 2023 Actuals		31 Dec 2023 % Total	Difference	Target achieved Y/N
	Male	Female		Male	Female			
African	21,41%	20,15%	41,56%	21,34%	21,76%	43,10%	-1,54%	Y
Coloured	3,27%	4,10%	7,37%	3,08%	4,13%	7,21%	0,16%	N
Indian	0,85%	1,10%	1,95%	0,78%	0,88%	1,65%	0,29%	N
White	18,04%	29,97%	48,02%	17,41%	28,32%	45,73%	2,29%	Y
Foreign nationals	0,89%	0,21%	1,10%	1,83%	0,48%	2,30%	-1,20%	N
	44,47%	55,53%	100%	44,43%	55,57%	100%	0,00%	

Our Employment Equity plan is based on achieving representivity through the vacancies filled. The moratorium on staff vacancies to contain costs in response to the reduced subsidy and cap on student fees meant that we had fewer vacancies to fill, and this negatively affected our ability to reach the employment equity targets.

As the table shows, we achieved the 2023 employment equity targets for Africans, which can be attributed to the mechanism put in place to manage the non-designated appointment process. In such cases, appointments must be approved by the vice-chancellor.

An inhibiting factor in our pursuit of the employment equity targets, however, was the moratorium on most new appointments, which limited our ability to make more appointments that would support our employment equity efforts.

The main focus of our efforts to meet the employment equity targets, therefore, was to use the following four strategies spelt out in the employment equity plan for 2021 to 2023:

- removing barriers in attracting people from the designated groups and people living with disabilities
- succession planning for key positions
- retention strategies

- establishing an enabling organisational culture

As 2023 was the last year of the employment equity plan for 2021-2023, we developed the Successive Employment Equity Plan for 2024-2026 which was approved by the Council in November 2023.

4.4 The quality of information available to management

The role of integrated planning and strategic intelligence is to support the NWU's strategic imperatives by translating data into actionable strategic intelligence, facilitating growth and enhancing our competitive advantage.

Data analytics and synthesis has become mainstream in all industries including higher education, and the NWU has been leading in this regard. Our mission is to empower stakeholders with information, analytics and knowledge to anticipate future challenges and opportunities, promoting a culture of strategic agility and innovation.

High-quality business intelligence can be invaluable in discovering options and possibilities that might otherwise not have come to light, pointing decision-makers in directions that could bring the university closer to successfully implementing our strategy and achieving our goals.

The Strategic Intelligence department at NWU has consciously shifted from generating static data reports to creating dynamic information tools. This strategic move is designed to empower stakeholders with interactive data experiences, enabling them to delve into the nuances of the data and extract the insights most relevant to their needs.

The emphasis on interactive tool development goes beyond mere presentation of data; it ensures the information provided is current, accurate and actionable. These tools facilitate real-time data exploration and analysis, fostering an environment where data quality is paramount. Incorporating automated data flows and advanced data modelling techniques significantly enhances the reliability and timeliness of the information.

Our short-term goal is to design and execute a revamped data warehouse architecture that provides the flexibility needed to incorporate varying business rules arising from new enterprise resource planning systems. These include the updated SIS and the upcoming LMS.

Our longer-term goal is to expand our data architecture to include additional data sources, such as the new SIS and to investigate the possibility of including an external data source such as LinkedIn.

4.5 Student services and co-curricular activities

The co-curricular programme continues to grow on the three campuses of the university, with an increased uptake in demand for participation in arts and culture, sports, community engagement and student leadership initiatives. Post-pandemic, technology has remained an integral part of our co-curricular programme and services rendered to students. However, the preference to engage and interact in-person remains the primary choice, augmented by technology.

Thus, we note new ways in which student services and co-curricular programmes are presented through mixed modalities. This approach is flexible and allows for increased student engagement, as well as greater availability of information, programmes and services to students.

4.5.1 Psycho-social and primary healthcare services

Campus Health Care Centres (CHCCs) continued to render primary healthcare services to students. Social welfare programmes such as the Meal-a-Day programme remained under pressure as socio-economic circumstances were constrained at a national level. Smaller initiatives have emerged at campus level to assist pockets of students within specific environments. However, the need for a longer-term sustainable programme of social welfare support remains pressing.

The university achieved an important milestone in the support rendered to pregnant students through the development and approval of the Rules and Guidelines on the Support and Accommodation of Pregnant Students. Through the adoption of these rules, the NWU has enabled a student-centric approach towards ensuring that pregnant students continue to receive reasonable support during the pregnancy, with the overall objective of ensuring that they successfully complete their academic programme.

In further strengthening the reach of psycho-social services within the student community, the networks of peer helpers (volunteer student lay counsellors) were expanded to include 250 peer helpers situated in university residences, faculties and the general student community. The focus of peer helpers is to strengthen the awareness and educational campaigns on anxiety, depression, adapting to change, mental health, etc.

Notably, the network of peer helpers remains a core driver of psycho-social referrals to professional counselling, ensuring that students have access to mental health services. To further augment the work that we do to support our students, a Mental Health and Wellness Empowerment project was developed and implemented during the 2023 academic year.

The NWU entered into a two-year grant agreement with Higher Health, operating in partnership with the DHET and USAf and other funding organisations. The purpose of the grant is to support the primary healthcare, psycho-social and social welfare projects offered by the institution.

On 13 November 2023, the NWU hosted the Higher Health Gender-based Violence and Femicide Assembly where Mr Buti Manamela, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, gave a keynote address. A panel made up of representatives from the National Prosecuting Authority, Thuthuzela Care Centres, Community Leaders and NWU Student Leaders engaged in robust discussions with the audience in tackling issues related to gender-based violence and femicide in our society.

The deputy vice-chancellor for IT and Potchefstroom Campus operations, Prof Daryl Balia, the Potchefstroom Student Campus Council chairperson, Ms Nomvula Chasakara, the executive director for student life, Prof Sibusiso Chalufu, NWU Council member Ms Santi Britz, and the Potchefstroom Campus director for student life, Dr Corrie Rheeder, also participated in the event.

4.5.2 Co-curricular programmes

Co-curricular arts, sports and social engagement programmes were active at campus level throughout 2023, drawing keen interest from the student community and further contributing to the vibrant student life the NWU is renowned for.

Adding to this experience, the choir of the Potchefstroom Campus successfully completed their European tour, "This is Why We Sing", in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and France. Closer to home, the Kasteel ladies' residence on the Potchefstroom Campus won the national championships of the Acapella Enkelsêr competition.

Within the sporting environment, notable national achievements included the NWU Eagles senior and junior rugby teams being crowned Varsity Cup and Young Guns champions respectively.

Other achievements included our bodybuilding team winning the University Sport South Africa (USSA) championship; both our NWU Eagles teams winning their respective tennis divisions at the 2023 USSA Tournament, and four NWU students being selected for the final South African under-21 team that participated in the FIH Junior World Cup that took place in Chile.

In addition, one of our students was selected to represent the NWU as part of the South African women's hockey team that participated in the African Cup of Nations, while another formed part of the under-21 hockey team that participated in the FIH Junior World Cup in Malaysia; to name but a few.

Our students also continued to participate at a national and international level, with strong representation at USSA leagues throughout the year.

University residence-based leagues were extremely popular among residents, providing sport platforms for rugby, soccer, hockey, netball, table tennis and e-sports.

4.5.3 The value of student leadership and governance

Our student leadership and governance model ensure that students' interests are represented in university governance structures. The model accounts for the statutory bodies of the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the student campus councils (SCCs), as well as the subordinate student leadership structures of the house committees, student academic chapters and student society chapters.

During the 2022/23 student leadership term, a network of approximately 1 100 student leaders were active within the university, including 15 SRC members, 45 SCC members, house committees for 51 university residences and seven day houses, and 22 students academic chapters for each faculty per campus. This was further supported by a large community of student societies, averaging 45 per campus, as well as portfolio committees that assist the SCC in performing their tasks.

Student representation is further embedded in the university's business through student leaders' participation in Council, Senate, Faculty and support services committees and forums.

We recognise the contribution of student leadership towards achieving the NWU's strategy through their coordination of co-curricular activities and in representing students' interests. The Student Leadership Benefits Programme is a

reward and support mechanism that monitors the performance and development of student leaders, enabling them to fulfil their functions and roles.

The Student Leadership Academy was officially launched during the inaugural annual NWU Student Leadership Summit on 6 October 2023, hosted at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre, with the theme “Navigating your journey.” The summit provided a unique platform for thought-provoking discussions, networking opportunities and collaborative initiatives that contributed towards shaping the future of the Higher Education Sector.

4.5.4 Orientation of first-year students

As an institution, we recognise the importance of enabling student success both within the curricular and co-curricular environments. Consequently, the NWU annually refines and improves the orientation programme and related interventions presented to first-year students. Post-pandemic, the 2023 programme was again presented in a face-to-face modality for registered first-year students.

It remains the objective of the programme to ensure that all first-year students have access to orientation information that would ensure their successful onboarding at the NWU. Focus areas of the programme included an introduction to university life, orientation on faculty stakeholders and processes, the NWU’s vibrant student experience, student leadership structures, support services for student academic support, eFundi, psycho-social and primary healthcare services.

[Read more](#) about our academic support activities for students, turn to the section on how we create value through our performance.

4.6 Changing patterns in the provision of academic courses

Our strategy is to enrol more students in the fields of science, engineering, technology and commerce, and we are making steady progress in delivering on this.

In total, 55 486 students were enrolled at our three campuses in 2023. Female enrolments increased from 34 051 to 35 033, while male enrolments, at 20 153, depicted a slight increase from 20 124 in 2022.

The number of students enrolled in the distance programmes stabilised (8 888 in 2022 and 8 900 in 2023).

Following the decision taken in the previous year to continue providing distance education offerings, subject to reconsideration of the operational model, we formed a task team in 2023 to investigate various options. The task team’s mandate is to prepare a comprehensive plan on the future of distance education at the NWU. This will be submitted to university management structures in 2024.

The following new qualifications/programmes were activated or approved in 2023 for inclusion in the 2024 yearbooks. (These programmes did not require external approval):

- Bachelor of Arts Honours in creative writing
- Postgraduate Diploma in industrial engineering with sustainability
- Postgraduate Diploma in industrial engineering with sustainable mining
- Master of Education with language education
- Doctor of Philosophy in education with language education
- Master of Science in agriculture with soil science
- Master of Science in agriculture with agronomy
- Master of Science in agriculture with agricultural economics
- Master of Science in nutrition with therapeutic nutrition
- Master of Science in nutrition with public health nutrition
- Master of Science in nutrition with nutrition science
- Master of Science in nutrition with nuclear techniques

The Council for Higher Education (CHE) and/or South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) accredited or registered the following new qualifications and programmes in 2023:

- Bachelor of Education in early childhood care and education – SAQA registration 120966
- Diploma in early childhood care and education – SAQA registration 121178
- Postgraduate Diploma in health services management – Accreditation
- Postgraduate Diploma in nursing education – Accreditation

The following new qualifications and programmes were developed and internally approved in 2023 and are still being externally approved:

- Bachelor of Science in dietetics and nutrition
- Master of Social Work with school social work
- Master of Commerce in accountancy (coursework) – distance modality
- Master of Commerce in taxation (coursework) – distance modality
- Master of Commerce in accountancy – distance modality
- Bachelor of Science Honours in applied mathematics and statistics
- Bachelor of Health Sciences in sports science
- Bachelor of Social Work

These recently developed programmes demonstrate the NWU's commitment to providing relevant programmes in a changing world.

We continued with the Programme and Qualifications (PQM) Review Project. The purpose of the project, which commenced in 2022, is to critically re-examine the programme offering at the NWU to ensure that it remains relevant, viable and meets the demands of the 21st century world of work. An interactive workshop was hosted from the Mahikeng Campus, with online engagements from the Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark campuses.

Data analysis was conducted to determine where credit overloads and programme overlaps required urgent attention. Multiple sub-goals in the project led to a decision at the end of 2023 that its goals and outcomes should be recalibrated. This will be done in 2024 to identify objectives and goals for the short, medium and long term. The NWU also applied for University Capacity Development Grant funding to complete the project.

4.7 Statement on the self-assessment of our achievements

Our intention to work through partnerships was realised in 2023, when we collaborated closely with various of our stakeholders. Some of the notable local/provincial government collaborations include:

- The 100 graduates programme with the North West Provincial Government where 100 of the NWU unemployed graduates were posted to various municipalities for mutual benefit – that is, to capacitate the municipalities while also providing jobs for our graduates.
- The NWU hosted its inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Science Day on 31 July 2023 at Mabeskraal near Rustenburg as part of National Science Week. This landmark event served as a platform for fostering partnerships and collaboration among educational institutions, government departments, private companies, communities and other stakeholders in the North West Province. Approximately 2 000 learners from the area and nearby villages attended the Science Day, themed "Transforming Lives Through Evidence-Based Science".

Other notable achievements:

- The School of Accounting Sciences at the NWU is an indisputable leader in its field. The NWU is one of only two universities in South Africa to have received accreditation in 2023 from the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) for two of its accounting programmes: the BCom in Financial Accountancy and the Extended BCom in Financial Accountancy.
- The NWU has added another top placement to its impressive showing in international rankings. In the 2023 rankings of the ShanghaiRanking Consultancy, released in August, the NWU was ranked in the category for the top five to seven South African universities.

As far back as 2019, the NWU took the position that a prudent strategic posture would be for the NWU to be seen as "pioneers and innovators in the area of enabling technologies". We continued to acknowledge the lessons Covid-19 had taught us, including the value of taking advantage of opportunities to accelerate digitisation, which is fast becoming a competitive advantage in most sectors, including higher education. For this reason, the Digital Business Strategy (DBS) gained substantial momentum, picking up in earnest in 2023 (following the lull caused by the Covid19 shutdowns).

The impetus that started in 2022 continued in 2023. Several digital programmes continued and were incorporated into the new strategy review process. These will be ready for implementation in 2024.

A few such programmes worth a mention are as follows:

- The SIS, which will see full implementation in February 2024. The SIS is an enabling mechanism demonstrating and implementing the strategic use of 4IR technologies to transform the NWU institutional culture towards a future-fit organisation. Its strength lies in its specific core processes towards realising effective and efficient business functions and client centrality.
- Through the Teaching and Learning Strategy, the NWU is committed to providing students with a more responsive, accessible and supportive learning experience that will empower them to progressively assume greater responsibility for their own learning. This will be done by means of a revamped LMS.

In 2023, we also had to deal with challenges in Government funding, including funding challenges with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). Within our context, this includes a 5,3% decline in the NSFAS budget allocation for 2024 and a 0,9% reduction in the subsidy block grant budget allocation. The NWU is responding to this income reduction by putting measures in place to strengthen our third and fifth stream income.

Lastly, 2023 saw the NWU graduation season producing successful graduations for 12 358 students, comprising 9 321 undergraduates, 750 master's graduates, 277 PhDs and 2 183 distance learning graduates.

4.8 Looking to the future

Key strategic projects were initiated in 2023, some of which will impact on managerial and administrative activities of the university. The projects are in progress and expected to gain momentum in 2024 and will be fully reported on in due course. These include:

- **NWU Enterprises**

Leading research universities often have significant third-stream funded research enterprises that augment the standard public funding streams. In this strategy cycle, the NWU seized the opportunity to set up NWU Enterprises as a wholly owned subsidiary with the capacity to deliver a substantial, growing portfolio of directed research and consultancy and derivative commercial activity, among other things.

- **Sustainable Mining Engineering**

The opportunities presented before us in the North West Province come in the form of a substantial footprint of mining activity. One of the NWU's strategic priorities is that of growth which has propelled us to position the NWU as a future hub for short learning programmes in small-scale and artisanal mining, while also offering sustainable mining solutions. This initiative is in its nascent stages, with benchmarking being conducted and various engagements with stakeholders to ascertain its viability undertaken and/or planned.

- **Medical School**

The quest to establish a medical school started some time ago. It is our pleasure to announce that at the close of the year 2023, the NWU received the stamp of approval from the Government to proceed with our plans to establish the NWU Medical School.

This will give the university a further competitive edge, adding to the already successful flagships such as our School of Accounting, the Faculty of Engineering and the Pharmaceutical programme, among others. Together with the Provincial Government, the Faculty of Health Sciences and relevant stakeholders are working in earnest to make the NWU Medical School a reality, ready to open our doors to the first intake of students in the foreseeable future.



PROF BISMARK TYOBEKA
VICE-CHANCELLOR

4.9 Meet our 2023 University Committee members

Meet our 2023 University Management Committee members



Prof Bismark Tyobeka
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
Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Planning and Vanderbijlpark
Campus Operations



Dr 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



Prof Sibusiso Chalufu
Executive Director:
Student Life



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

5 How we engage with our stakeholders

5.1 Creating value for ourselves and our stakeholders

We pride ourselves on being a university that vigorously promotes diversity, inclusiveness and an ethic of care.

In our quest for greatness without boundaries, we strive for continuous improvement. Our stakeholders make an invaluable contribution as their perspectives inform the programmes and services we introduce and implement.

Through the participation and input of our stakeholders, we discover new ways to apply knowledge to benefit society, excel in innovative teaching and conduct cutting-edge research.

Through community engagement initiatives, we liaised with non-profit organisations (NPOs) and non-profit companies (NPCs) in the district of Sedibeng, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, Ngaka Modiri Molema, Dr Ruth Mompati and Bojanala. Notably, we were involved in 500 [community engagement activities](#) in 2023.

The North West Provincial Government continues to be a key stakeholder of the university. In 2023 we strengthened our connections with the departments of Arts, Culture and Recreation, Statistics, Education, Health, Economic Development, and Conservation and Tourism, as well as the Film and Production Board and the Independent Electoral Commission.

We also rolled out a project with local government to build capacity through the placements of interns and unemployed graduates to assist with service delivery challenges in these local municipalities, with the help of the Faculty of Humanities' School of Governance.

Vice-chancellor science day

The NWU hosted its inaugural Vice-chancellor's Science Day on 31 July 2023 at Mabeskraal near Rustenburg as part of National Science Week.

This landmark event was a platform for fostering partnerships and collaboration among educational institutions, government departments, private companies, communities and other stakeholders in the North West Province.

Its primary focus was to stimulate a passion for science in high school learners and to encourage them to pursue careers in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.



5.2 How we react to our stakeholders' interest and expectations

As a public higher education institution, we are responsible and accountable for engaging and responding to stakeholders and the public about how and why we implement our programmes and how this contributes towards achieving our mandate.

The issues that our stakeholders raise during our engagements are their lived experiences and expectations and have direct impact on their short to long-term plans and aspirations. Our responses address these issues in a manner that promotes prudent financial management and sustainability.

Stakeholder group: Prospective students	
How we engage	Issues raised (material matters)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to schools • Career fairs • Career guidance sessions • One-on-one and group career advice sessions • Marketing (direct and indirect) • Open days and activations • Sports, arts and other sponsorships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and subject choices • Equity of student experience • Health and safety • Applications for admission • Economic circumstances • Programme and Qualification Mix
Our response	
<p>The many different activities and channels we use to engage prospective and current students enable us to reach diverse target audiences in inclusive and interactive ways. Using a combination of in-person and virtual communication modes gives us the flexibility to reach these stakeholders in ways that are most convenient and meaningful for them, while also ensuring optimal use of the NWU's resources. This approach produces excellent results as was evident from the approximately 181 000 applications we received from prospective students wishing to study at the NWU in 2024.</p> <p><i>These are some of the responses received from our prospective students/their parents/schools during our engagements with these stakeholders:</i></p> <p>"I just wanted to say thank you so much for everything you did for me and my child, I was panicking and didn't even know what to do. Sincerely so I thank God for the day I met you at Midrand. I approached you and you responded with so much respect and you were so patient with us.</p> <p>"Today my daughter is at school and you took time in every step when we were confused and I will call and you will pick up your phone and email where there was a need to. As I am writing, tears fill my eyes; we concluded as a family, you are a God send and we now consider you a brother my kids needed. Remember, she is the first one to go to varsity and we did not know anything and here we are at peace." (Gauteng Top Performer Bursary Function Student)</p> <p>"With this, I just want to thank you for all your help with Marli and Dian's big move to Potchefstroom. These last three weeks have been busy for both my children and as first years everything has been confused, uncertain and strange. Thank you very much for being willing to go out of your way to make them feel at home with you and for being there yourself to receive them upon arrival in Potchefstroom. Many thanks also for your help with accommodation arrangements, books, transport and registrations which were completed quickly. Paarl is not close and as parents we leave our children in NWU's hands with peace of mind, knowing that you will keep an eye and that your door is open for them and for us as parents." (Paarl Gimnasium, parents of prospective students)</p> <p>"Good day, I am an official NWU student and a proud Laureus resident. I just want to say thank you very much ... I would not be here without your help. I appreciate it very much." (Walvis Bay, international prospective student)</p> <p>"Lebo let me know that she had been awarded funds for her PhD. And just in case you don't hear it often enough, this literally changes a whole family's life. She will be the first person in her family ever to pursue a PhD. Thanks again!" (NWU Vanderbijlpark, lecturer)</p> <p>"Wow! Thank you so much for your visit today. Your presentation was exciting and gained a lot of attention from my students. I hope we can maintain and grow this relationship." (Livingstone Kolobeng College, teacher)</p>	

"...our sincere gratitude to the North-West University for its unwavering support and valuable contributions. Your continued support and contributions have played a vital role in enabling Athletics South Africa to bring the love and passion for sports to numerous schools, learners and aspiring sport stars." (Athletics SA, Acting CEO)

"Once again, we express our gratitude for your support and willingness to accommodate Prestige Secondary School at the Open Day. We eagerly look forward to this valuable opportunity for our learners to engage with the university's offerings and explore the possibilities it holds for their future education." (Prestige School, teacher)

Stakeholder group: Current students	
How we engage	Issues raised (material matters)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eFundi learning management system Webinars NWU website Social media Meetings Communiques SMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assistance/NSFAS Equity of experience
Our response	
<p>We used a hybrid teaching system (HyFlex system) to continue with face-to-face classes, as well as online teaching. Daily operational communication, for instance between students and lecturers, took place during classes, as well as on the eFundi learning platform and through other channels such as text and WhatsApp groups.</p> <p>Our students used eFundi both for teaching-learning purposes and to access general information on NWU-related issues, thus helping to ensure the successful completion of the 2023 academic year.</p> <p>We also kept our students informed about psycho-social and well-being services, such as campus healthcare centres, disability support and counselling and social welfare services.</p> <p>During 2023, we communicated with students about financial assistance, NSFAS payments and bursaries.</p> <p>We also shared information about i student elections, load-shedding, assessment periods, possible interruptions in the academic programme and action taken to deal with problem situations such as the hacking of the NWU Facebook pages.</p> <p><i>The response below is from a parent who used the university's Covid-19 response line:</i></p> <p>"I cannot thank you enough for the advice you gave us from day one for our daughter who is attending the Vanderbijlpark Campus. Every time I phoned for assistance you were always eager to help. I thank you so much for your help. My daughter cannot stop talking about NWU; she is really eager to learn and make her dreams come true. She is truly happy to be there. Thank you." (parent, Gauteng)</p> <p>Career Centre – Improving graduate employability</p> <p>The Career Centre's work readiness services are intended to produce well-rounded, resourceful and work-ready graduates.</p> <p>In 2023, the Career Centre hosted three face-to-face career fairs on each campus, and one virtual career fair. Some 6 406 students attended these fairs and 130 companies participated.</p> <p>Our entrepreneurship and work-readiness training sessions reached 12 576 students. The services included CV and interview training, group training, work-readiness webinars.</p> <p>Career-related support for our students</p> <p>The Career Centre accelerated the drive to automate career services, facilitate interaction between employers and students and use online platforms to host virtual career fairs and conduct entrepreneurship and work-readiness training.</p> <p>In 2023, there was a 48% increase in the number of students attending the entrepreneurship and work-readiness training sessions. A total of 1 677 students attended the career fairs on the Mahikeng Campus, 3 393 on the Potchefstroom Campus</p>	

and 1 336 on the Vanderbijlpark Campus. The CV and interview training accommodated 3 487 students on the Mahikeng Campus, 6 672 on the Potchefstroom Campus and 2 417 on the Vanderbijlpark Campus.

The Career Zone platform recorded 19 452 logins. Its Facebook pages had 20 791 followers and received 19 220 likes.

The work-readiness short learning programme was launched in June 2023, with a student uptake of 485, against a target of 200.

The 2023 Universum survey, which assists companies to attract and retain graduate and professional talent, had 10 209 student respondents, as well as 3 472 graduate respondents from the NWU. (Universum is an international employer branding company.)

eFundi usage grew and 6 263 students subscribed for training in 2023, compared to 5 022 in 2022. The Career Centre has employed a career coaching specialist for the career advisory portfolio and an information officer to support the centre's visibility on all online NWU platforms.

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

We had ongoing engagement with industry partners, predominantly enterprises that employ our graduates. The aim was to understand their skills needs and obtain feedback on how our graduates are performing in the market. Our faculties use this feedback to update their academic programmes.

Our researchers collaborated with the business community and the public sector, using their skills and knowledge to respond to societal needs.

Other engagements were held with the business community close to our campuses to inform them about NWU procurement processes and how they can respond to calls for tenders and take advantage of business opportunities. These engagements strengthen relations with our communities and address issues linked to high unemployment.

Stakeholder group: Employees

How we engage

- Intranet
- Email
- Website
- Webinars
- Publications and newsletters
- SMS
- IT
- People and Culture/Wellness

Issues raised (material matters)

- Conducive work environment
- Employee equity
- Remuneration and compensation
- Skills development and empowerment
- Ethics and transparency
- Personal wellbeing
- Strategic issues, including the new NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond

Our response

During the vice-chancellor's interactions with staff, he took note of their concerns about remuneration, empowerment and the working environment. They were informed that measures would be put in place to address their concerns.

Besides the daily operational communication within the faculties, Corporate Communication sent out more than 1 000 messages about important matters impacting staff members in 2023. This included information about IT developments, the results of an ergonomic survey, working-from-home arrangements, academic promotions and senior management appointments.

We also shared information about the 2023 COLA, a once-off salary enhancement payment, training opportunities and webinars on mental health and well-being.

We also shared information on the NWU values, the consultation process in the development of a NWU new strategy and details about the new strategic direction.

The consultation process about the new strategy included a questionnaire, interviews with individual and groups of staff members, discussions with NWU structures, information sessions and walkabouts on the campuses.

We improved our communication channels by implementing the results of an internal communication survey.

Here is one of the responses we received from employees regarding a message about the preliminary CHE Institutional Review Report:

"Thank you for this positive update. We are ready to continue participating in our improvement plan." (staff member, Library Information Services)

We also received suggestions from staff members after communication about the NWU's reduce-the-use campaign. Here are two of them:

"Sensors in bathroom showers would be a great idea."

"I would suggest that all lighting in university buildings be motion sensed."

Stakeholder group: Alumni	
How we engage	Issues raised (material matters)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars • SMS • Emails • Events • Newsletters and alumni magazine • One-on-one and group engagements • Website • Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability • Sustainability • Partnerships • Reputation
Our response	
<p>A total of 364 alumni signed up to become members of the NWU Convocation in 2023. The Convocation also held a successful public lecture on the Potchefstroom Campus and the eighth Alumni Excellence Awards took place.</p> <p>Three campus committees were established and operate in collaboration with the NWU Alumni Association. Each committee held four meetings in 2023. The Alumni Association also held four meetings and is assisting the campus committees to succeed by providing mentorship and oversight.</p> <p>Eighty alumni volunteered their time and expertise in 2023. An overall 80% satisfaction feedback rate from alumni was received after all events in 2023.</p> <p>The Alumni Relations Office conducted mentorship programmes to help prepare students and young alumni for work and hosted various workshops to assist unemployed graduates and postgraduate students with CV writing interview skills and introductions to potential employers.</p> <p>Five editions of the alumni magazine, <i>NWU&U</i>, were distributed online to alumni, featuring articles on issues raised by and affecting alumni. Communication to alumni is regulated to avoid over-communication and ensure compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA).</p>	

In ensuring we keep in touch with alumni all over the world, we engaged in various international events in Botswana, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. On home soil, one roadshow was held in the Free State and various regional events in Gauteng.

Here are some of the responses we received from alumni:

"Thank you once more for having us there at the NWU. It was really great to be recognised, and for the hospitality we enjoyed. We travelled safely back to our mother city; I hope you and other colleagues had a good trip safely to their respective homes. And I hope you had time to rest after such a great work you have done! well done.: (Dr Dumisane Jantjies)

"Dear alumni team. Once again, a massive thank you to you and just about everyone who was involved in making all the arrangements. I've never been one for reunions, but I just knew I had to and WANT to attend this one! Thank you very much for the reminder of the Convocation membership; I quickly filled in the form and made the payment (and also signed up for the newsletter!). I am very much looking forward to being part of the NWU Alumni family in Europe, and to keeping my eyes and ears open for opportunities that I can share with others. Until next time :) Greetings from the Netherlands (Benize Bester)

"I graduated with my BSc in Nutrition and Physiology at the NWU's Potchefstroom campus in 2015, cum laude. I was then accepted into the MBChB programme at Wits University – fulfilling my dream to be a doctor. I am currently working at Platinum Health Medical Scheme as a general practitioner in primary care in Rustenburg. I am very proud of the North-West University as it was the university that gave me my wings. I was supported academically and personally, and some of the subject matter I learned is even supplementing my medical degree to the point that I know it has made me a better doctor. I always vowed that if the NWU starts a Medical School I want to be a part of it to make it the best – because I truly believe it can be. So, I would like to become a part of what you are doing. It would be an honour and privilege for me." (Dr SC Fourie-Nel)

Stakeholder group: Donors	
How we engage	Issues raised (material matters)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated report • One-on-one and group interactions • Newsletters and digital communications • Website • Meetings • Campus visits and tours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability and performance of the higher education sector in general and the NWU in particular • Long-term sustainability of the Government's funding model • Diversity of third-stream income sources • Students' access and success
Our response	
<p>Donors play an important role in enabling the NWU to implement its core mandate.</p> <p>The Development and Fundraising office raised R48 116 384 in 2023, which represented growth of 12,6% from 2022. We have prioritised the further enhancement of our development and fundraising capacity.</p> <p>One of the highlights of the year was a donors' luncheon hosted by the vice-chancellor to thank donors for their support.</p> <p>Here is one of the responses we have received from members of the donors community:</p> <p><i>"When you donate to the NWU, you pave the way to a brighter future for many students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. You can rest assured that the Board of Donors is fulfilling its oversight role by ensuring that your investments will yield the intended results (sic)."</i></p> <p><i>(Ms Percy Moleke, chairperson of the NWU's Board of Donors)</i></p>	

Stakeholder group: Government and regulatory bodies	
How we engage	Issues raised (material matters)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications • One-on-one and group engagements • Conferences • Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with legislation • Financial accountability and reporting • Quality and standards
Our response	
<p>We continued to share our performance information through prescribed progress reports to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, DHET, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and sectoral regulatory bodies.</p> <p>Compliance with legislation such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Higher Education Act was and is a priority.</p>	

Motho ke motho ka batho
We are who we are because of you



6 Greatness beyond boundaries in the transformation sphere

The student community and social landscape are changing rapidly. In keeping abreast, we have explored new ways to support student diversity and transformation.

6.1 Monitoring transformation

As we open up new frontiers in our transformation journey, we have become better and better at reporting on transformation. Using tools such as the transformation dashboard, we monitor transformation initiatives and milestones across the university, comprehensively and coherently.

6.2 Overseeing transformation

We have an array of transformation oversight structures that, working together, ensure the university remains on track with its transformation targets and goals. These Council subcommittees are the Transformation Oversight Committee, the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee and the Student Life Oversight Committee.

In addition, we have two transformation advisory bodies. The Institutional Forum is a statutory committee that advises Council on transformation matters, while the Student Diversity and Transformation Committee (SDTC) focuses on the transformation in the student environment. Established in 2022, the SDTC advises the UMC on building a unified, diverse and integrated student culture and population at the NWU.

Over and above these formal governance structures, staff and students are encouraged to seek innovative and practical mechanisms to create a diverse student population and student leadership cohort. Within the student leadership and governance environment, these efforts are guided by the transformation directives of the Council. This has included programmes focused on multilingualism, gender, sexuality, cultural intelligence and disability.

6.3 Adding value

In the digital domain, with which many students are comfortable, the NWU Language Portrait App has become a valuable tool to enhance the overall student experience. Among other things, the app enables interactive and meaningful reflection and engagement on language diversity and capacity within the student community environment and is a critical enabler in realising the multilingual dimension of our NWU Language Policy. The app is relevant in both the academic and co-curricular environment.

Through joint campaigns and programmes, Student Life continued to collaborate with People and Culture in the implementation of the NWU values. The NWU Media and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Recognition Awards launched in 2023 exemplify this collaboration. The awards acknowledge the contributions of employees and students in embodying the NWU values and acting as change agents. Award categories for 2023 included Social Responsibility and Awareness Advocate, Diversity and Transformation Advocate, NWU Silver Wings Award, and the Vice-Chancellor's Award.

You can read more about these awards in the [section on our value chain](#). During 2023, our senior management participated in various sectoral transformation initiatives. Our executive director for student life and assigned function: transformation, Prof Sibusiso Chalufu, continued to contribute at the national level through membership of the Universities South Africa (USAf) Transformation Strategy Group and the Transformation Managers' Forum.

In 2023 he was invited to be part of the Reference Group for the Student Affairs and Student Success (SASS) Programme, aimed at professionalising and capacitating academic and student support staff.

6.4 Pursuing and enabling equity

For the NWU, transformation has multiple dimensions. It calls for equity and diversity in respect of demographic representation, inclusiveness concerning organisational culture and communal well-being, and social justice, excellence, high performance, relevance and care as unifying principles.

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

All these interlinked dimensions are encapsulated in the NWU's transformation journey.

In respect of employment equity, a notable development of 2023 was the completion of the Employment Equity Plan (EEP) for 2021 to 2023 and the development and approval of the new three-year plan, spanning 2024 to 2026.

The EEP for 2021 to 2023 gives expression to the university's Employment Equity Policy, which is about creating equal opportunities for all current and prospective employees, while addressing all barriers to access and equity and accelerating the pace of transformation.

According to the targets set in the current EEP, black people must account for at least 70% of appointees and people living with disabilities must account for 2% of the workforce.

The targets were incorporated into the university's APP for 2023 and cascaded to individual performance agreements. All such agreements for line managers incorporate the people management key performance area (KPA) for managing employment equity and diversity and promoting the preferred NWU culture. A KPA for ethics was also added to the performance agreements of senior managers.

A six-year view of employment equity at the NWU shows that the representativeness of the workforce profile of the NWU has been on a positive trajectory since the restructuring in 2017. As shown in the table below, we have made progress towards achieving fair representation of people in the designated groups.

Race	2017	2023	Progress	
African	32,50%	43,10%	10,60%	Increase
Coloured	5,62%	7,21%	1,59%	Increase
Foreign national	1,90%	2,30%	0,40%	Increase
Indian	1,10%	1,65%	0,55%	Increase
White	58,80%	45,73%	-13,07%	Decrease
Grand total	100%	100%	0	

The core mechanisms used to pursue equity under the 2021 to 2023 employment equity plan were enhancing the seniority of academic staff, keeping a low staff attrition rate, implementing retention strategies, succession planning and offering competitive academic remuneration.

Now that this plan has run its course, we are preparing to implement the Successive EEP for 2024 to 2026.

Other transformation pillars are also emerging, notably the DBS, which will have the effect of impacting everything in the NWU ecosystem. As such, several training workshops were held in 2023 on digital transformation and this is a major thrust going forward.

In 2023, we developed a comprehensive Transformation Journey Report, which culminated in two workshops facilitated by Professor Crain Soudien, the former deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town and chair of the Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation. These workshops were attended by members of Senior Management, Council members who form part of the Transformation Oversight Committee, and student leaders.

One of the key suggestions arising from the second workshop, held on 29 August 2023, was the necessity of compiling a publication that narrates the transformational journey of the NWU. This publication, to be released as part of the 20th-anniversary celebrations, would serve as a valuable resource for tracking the transformation trajectory of the NWU and celebrating our experiences and achievements in transformation over the past two decades.

6.5 Academic transformation

The NWU is pursuing well-thought-out strategies to transform its curriculum and align its student experience in line with Goal 1's objective. This objective requires "a systematic continuous process of curriculum transformation and renewal to equip graduates to address contextualised challenges of 21st century society, inclusive of calls to decolonise and Africanise the curriculum".

Our curriculum transformation strategies include giving students an in-depth orientation to their fields of study and associated methodologies, as well as a broader understanding of contemporary societal challenges. Work-integrated learning (WIL) and service learning (SL) opportunities foster an ethic of care and social responsibility.

Our curricula are designed to help students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to lead purposeful lives as responsible citizens in the service of their professions and civil society. All NWU curricula provide an orientation to various paradigms of thought and explanatory systems, including, where appropriate, indigenous knowledge systems.

The NWU's programmes are also designed to support the learning needs of a diverse student body. For this purpose, we involve students in a range of individual and collaborative learning and assessment activities so that they can engage as learners who progressively assume responsibility for their own learning.

• Multilingualism

During 2023, all faculties revised their language plans to align with the revised NWU Language Policy, which Council approved in June 2022. The amended version of the policy is intended "to provide for deepening engagement with multilingualism at the NWU by seeking to ensure the development of the university's languages of choice in a manner that is functionally multilingual and inclusive".

Two major improvements were made across all language plans. First, attendance of short learning programmes to promote multilingualism and translanguaging was included in staff members' performance agreements; second, we recognised that increased resource provision, especially in the African languages, needs to be prioritised.

In 2023, the Language Directorate formally and informally promoted multilingualism through:

- providing for growth in Interpreting Services (IS) activities on the Vanderbijlpark and Mahikeng campuses;
- multilingual training for the various university communities;
- providing IS outside NWU;
- providing extended translation services;
- reviewing the Faculty Language Plans;
- continuing the monitoring and evaluation processes;
- participating in the Language Audit of USAf;
- presenting Language Awareness Week; and
- finalising the BAQONDE project, which stands for "Boosting the Use of African Languages in Education; A Qualified Organised Nationwide Development Strategy for South Africa".

The directorate worked with the CTL to provide training to 372 academic advisors, supplemental instructors and tutors. The training covered multilingual approaches to teaching and learning, the NWU Language Policy and other related topics. Training was rolled out on all campuses.

In addition, we worked with Student Life to provide multilingualism awareness training to first-year students during orientation week. This training ensured that students have the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a multilingual environment.

The CTL has also extended its multilingual academic advising offerings and has updated its website to indicate the languages in which advisers feel comfortable conducting advising sessions. Students book advisers according to the language in which they would like to be served. Information on language preference is repeated on the booking form which students use to book appointments with academic advisers.

Preliminary results obtained from the session evaluation feedback indicate that advice sessions take place in English (43%), English and Setswana (22%), Afrikaans (11%), English and isiZulu (11%), Setswana (4%), English and isiXhosa (4%), and English and Afrikaans (2%).

- **New century curriculum**

The New Century Curriculum project was developed to conceptualise access and exit studies at the NWU. It was initiated in 2023 to address the need for recurriculation through a renewed focus on the first and final year of undergraduate studies.

The project aims to investigate how initial curricular choices and teaching methods in the first year equip students with essential skills and knowledge for success throughout their undergraduate studies, and subsequently how strategies employed in mainstream curricula ensure a seamless transition for students from entry-level access programmes to advanced undergraduate studies.

In addition, the project aims to examine how access programmes and exit-level studies integrate with each other to provide a coherent educational experience for undergraduate students, as well as how undergraduate programmes prepare students to become self-directed, collaborative, and lifelong learners, emphasising values such as diversity and teamwork. According to the NWU Teaching and Learning Strategy, the project should identify and support opportunities for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary learning, particularly in the final year of undergraduate studies.

Extra-curricular activities are offered to support the transformation of the NWU, and our three awareness weeks received enthusiastic support.

- **Gender Awareness Week**

In 2023, the Faculty of Education (Edu-HRight) took the lead in hosting the Gender Awareness Week from 7 to 11 August, themed "Gender Galaxy" and aimed at promoting awareness and understanding of gender diversity. Activities encompassed various online discussions, movie screenings and presentations by diverse academics and students. These events were held across the three campuses. To facilitate broader participation, a single link was provided for each event, allowing staff, students and other interested parties to join in person at one of the venues or individually via Teams.

Initiatives included a visit from the Colombian ambassador later in August, focusing on celebrating women in leadership roles, facilitating discussions on women's achievements and challenges, and imparting advice to aspiring women leaders within the NWU community.

The extended awareness campaign concluded with a colour run on 6 September 2023, supported by the vice-chancellor, who completed the run with colleagues and students.



- **Facing Race Week**

The theme for 2023 was "Expand your vision, appreciate diversity/race in South Africa through different eyes". The week was highlighted by vibrant student participation in a number of activities across the three campuses.

Speakers from the University of Venda, South African Human Rights Commission and the Cultural Religious and Language Rights Commission shared their insights and stimulated debates. The event held on the Mahikeng campus was highlighted by traditional dance and song.

The hosting faculty, the Faculty of Health, posed an intriguing question: How do vision defects and eye diseases intersect with our perceptions of race? Medically, myopia (nearsightedness) and hyperopia (farsightedness) alter eye shape, affecting vision and requiring corrective lenses. Metaphorically, myopia questions our focus on immediate surroundings, while hyperopia prompts consideration of distant communities.



Pressure-induced eye damage from glaucoma reflects societal conflicts potentially clouding our judgment, akin to the gradual impairment of vision by cataracts from biased opinions. Similarly, unquestioning acceptance of information can be likened to conjunctivitis irritating the eyes, emphasising the need for critical verification. The theme was explored through exhibitions and face-painting across campuses, fostering engagement among 4 500 participants, including staff and students.

- **Language Awareness Week**

The Language Awareness Week, hosted from 28 August to 1 September 2023, celebrated the linguistic diversity of the NWU and included a Language Awareness Drive campaign across all campuses.

Interactive activities included a 60 Seconds Language Challenge. The Literary Day at Vanderbijlpark Campus featured an exhibition of publications on language and multilingualism, authored by NWU staff, and the launch of a language booklet called Mpuiseng (“make me talk” in English). The Language Portraits activity challenged students to reflect on their own use of languages.

A colloquium themed “Decolonising multilingual resources in higher learning institutions, was well-attended by NWU staff members and members of the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB).

Recordings and video clips of most of the activities were made available on the special web page created for the week and some of the events (including the colloquium) were streamed live, ensuring wider access.



6.6 Transformation of the procurement space

We continue to transform the procurement space by involving local small, medium and microEnterprises (SMMEs) in the procurement of the NWU:

- Council approved the amended Preferential Procurement Strategy at its November 2022 meeting.
- Preferential procurement is high on the agenda of the relevant sections.
- Provision was made for contractors on large construction projects to appoint community liaison officers to liaise with communities about appointing local SMMEs as subcontractors and using local labour on construction projects.
- Tender requirements for local SMME participation are a standard inclusion in all tenders where such participation is possible. This is especially applicable to construction tenders and service contracts.
- We have implemented tender requirements for the subcontracting to local contractors of a portion of construction projects/service contracts.
- A database for SMME registration has been developed and is currently functional. Workshops and additional communication will be conducted to educate SMMEs and local suppliers on how to register their businesses.
- Community liaison officers (CLOs) have been appointed on each campus to assist with the implementation of the Preferential Procurement Strategy.
- Two companies have been awarded a one-year contract each to carry out the responsibilities of social facilitators.
- A programme that supports SMMEs and local suppliers has been developed. This consists of formal programmes and workshops for supplier development. Such programmes will be implemented on all three campuses once an assessment has been done to identify the development needs of SMMEs and local suppliers.
- A specialist supplier development position was created, and a person appointed in November 2023 to carry out the duties associated with supplier development and local participation.
- An administrator has been appointed to assist within the supplier development portfolio.
- A relationship has been established between the supplier development portfolio and CLOs to assist with the labour reporting aspect.
- We have formed a task team with representatives from Facilities, Finance, Community Engagement, Stakeholder Relations and the Vice-Chancellor's Office to implement the framework for local participation and community engagement. The task team has fulfilled its mandate in terms of the strategic objectives and establishment of the supplier development section.
- Communication through the local media has been undertaken to inform communities and contractors of the positive steps and developments that have been achieved so far.

6.7 Looking ahead

The NWU is firmly committed to establishing a unitary institutional culture and a unique NWU way of life that supports our strategy and speaks of care, equality and fairness for all. Transformation will remain a priority for the NWU for many years to come.

Transformation is being driven from a top-down approach, with members of Council and Senior Management visibly throwing their weight behind our transformation strategies, policies and initiatives. In 2023, the Transformation Oversight Committee and student leaders participated in two high-level workshops that culminated in a comprehensive Transformation Journey Report. The workshops were facilitated by Professor Crain Soudien, the former Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town and chair of the Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation, Social Cohesion, and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions.

One of the major recommendations emanating from the second workshop of 29 August 2023 was that a publication be compiled to tell the story of transformation at the NWU and, in this way, share our experience with other institutions. 2024 would be an opportune time for this as it marks the university's 20th year since the merger that brought three previously separate – and disparate – institutions together to create the NWU as a unitary university with a unique personality and way of life.

6.8 Council statement on transformation



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON 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 13 June 2024.

MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

PROF BISMARK TYOBEKA
VICE-CHANCELLOR

7 Material risks and opportunities impacting value

7.1 Risk governance and management processes – an overview of the activities of 2023

The university's ability to achieve greater heights for itself and its stakeholders depends to a large extent on how well governed and sustainable it is, which is in turn significantly influenced by the depth and quality of risk management.

We use a strategic top-down approach to risk and opportunity management. This entails identifying and prioritising risks and opportunities that could influence our ability to implement the university's strategy and adopting appropriate risk mitigation strategies and initiatives. With this in mind, we consider the demands of and uncertainties in the [external environment](#) and align our risk management processes with the King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa. This ensures streamlined processes and procedures in accordance with the prescripts of the code.

During 2023, the NWU gave specific further attention to risk assurance, as well as risk tolerance and risk appetite. For this purpose, we introduced some refinements to risk management. Having already strengthened first-level assurance and the internal control environment, we then consolidated these two aspects with the addition of second-level assurance provisioning.

Second-level assurance was provided for all risks with a risk rating of 8 and above. During the risk assurance discussions on the first and second levels of assurance, internal controls were reviewed and based on the control assessment and the determination of the resultant control efficiency, the risk rating of certain risks was adjusted. We have since initiated a third-level assurance process, aimed at determining the top 10 risks on the NWU Strategic Risk Register.

The background to this was the comprehensive report on assurance provisioning that the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC) considered at its August meeting in 2022. After discussing the report, the ARCC resolved to utilise the outcome of the first and second-level assurance provisioning process by introducing third-level assurance inform the subsequent risk management and assurance provisioning processes around the top 10 risks.

In 2023, we introduced the provisioning of third-level assurance with the first risk audits that were undertaken. These audits were outsourced to external audit companies and, although the outcome of the audit process did not produce the assurance that we had envisaged, it did provide valuable lessons for future third-level assurance provisioning to be undertaken in 2024.

The initial outcome of all these processes was that at the end of 2023, the strategic risks of the NWU had been updated, resulting in an adjusted top 10 risk list for the university.

Also in 2023, we expanded our risk-tolerance and risk-appetite reporting. This followed the work done in 2022 when, with the guidance of PwC, we set risk-tolerance levels for the six NWU goals contained in the APP for 2022. Through the expanded process in 2023, we included the four enablers in the 2023 APP and updated the risk-appetite and risk-tolerance levels for the goals contained in the 2023 APP.

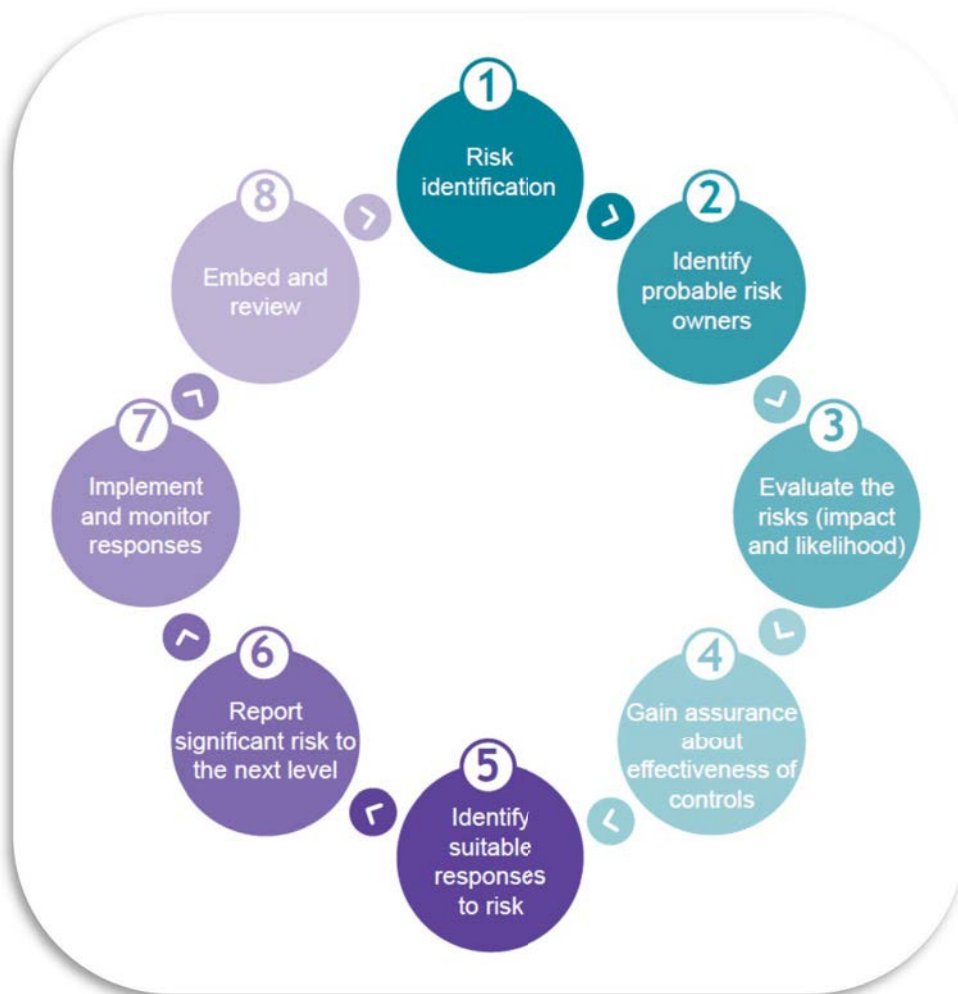
The integration of risk tolerance and risk appetite into the APP goals and enablers will gain further traction during 2024.

Meanwhile, we are ensuring that risk management remains an integral part of the strategy development and documentation process. In November 2023, the NWU Council approved the new NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond, which explicitly acknowledges that the university subscribes to the COSO 2017 risk management framework.

Immediately after the approval of the NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond, engagements commenced with the office of the university's chief strategy officer to identify risks and opportunities for the following aspects of the newly approved strategy:

- the NWU's competitive advantage
- strategic projects
- the NWU's goals and enablers (already commenced in previous years, but to be further refined).

Our risk management methodology includes the following stages:



All identified risks and opportunities are linked to the strategic goals and objectives of the university and are accounted for in the APP. Over time, we have continuously improved the visibility of our ongoing risk management plan and its alignment with the university strategy, all the way down to operational plans.

7.2 Risk identification process in general at the NWU

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

We do not focus only on strategic risks related to the NWU APP, but also have a risk management process to ensure risks are captured at faculty and departmental levels, and, where appropriate, linked to the risks in the NWU Strategic Risk Register. The faculties and support departments present their respective risk registers to the Combined Assurance Forum. With this approach, we ensure that risk management is part of all management levels and processes at the NWU.

Risk reports are tabled in May and October at all Council committee meetings, in order for Council committees to provide oversight regarding the risks in their area of governance. This approach enables the committees of Council to identify possible emerging risks for further exploration by management. An example is the Tender Committee identifying three possible emerging risks in regard to tender management. These risks were subsequently defined and are managed within the relevant line function.

7.3 Using our opportunities

We continually identify and update our risks, as well as 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 thematic threads remain visible as strategic opportunities that:

- continually safeguard the financial sustainability of the university;
- enable us to implement our 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.

7.1 Incorporating risk appetite and risk tolerance into the 2023 NWU APP

The DHET Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions (GG 37726, 9 June 2014) prescribe that APP goals must be drafted in so-called SMART terms. These are shown in the SMART diagram:



As mentioned earlier, we have been conducting a project to embed the notions “risk appetite” and “risk tolerance” as per COSO 2017 into our approach to risk management. This started as a consultative process in early 2022 under the guidance of PwC professionals (after the ARCC approved the procurement of non-financial services from the firm). We workshopped the extent to which 2022 APP goals adhered to SMART principles and, where necessary, redrafted the goals to adhere to the SMART principles.

The University Management Committee (UMC) then resolved that the Risk and Compliance Department would engage in a round of discussions with UMC members to find practical ways to embed the concepts of risk appetite and risk tolerance into the 2023 APP. At its meeting in March 2023, the ARCC advised that the project be extended to include the enablers in the 2023 NWU APP.

The launching of this project is an opportunity to ensure that risk and opportunity management is integrated into the complete value chain, from strategy-setting to planning of operations to the measuring of performance.

As in COSO-2017¹, the NWU defines risk appetite and risk tolerance as follows:

- Risk appetite is “the amount of risk an entity (in this case the NWU) is willing to accept in the pursuit of its strategy and business objectives.” (COSO, 2017:18)
- **Risk appetite** is defined when strategy and performance objectives are set and must overtly incorporate any challenges and opportunities associated with strategy and objectives. **Risk tolerance** speaks to the amount of risk that is acceptable in the context of achieving a particular goal and/or objective.
- Accounting for risk tolerance assists in determining the **acceptability levels of performance**, thus ensuring that performance levels remain within relevant parameters.

¹ COSO Enterprise Risk Management – Aligning Risk with Strategy and Performance. Public Exposure – FAQs (URL: <https://www.coso.org/Shared%20Documents/COSO-ERM-FAQ.pdf>)

The following risk-tolerance paradigm was implemented in instances where it was possible to quantitatively measure the realisation of APP goals.

Impact	Catastrophic	5					
	Critical	4					
	Major	3					
	Significant	2					
	Negligible	1					
			0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%
			1	2	3	4	5
	Likelihood						

In instances where the APP goals and enablers had been set in qualitative rather than quantitative terms, the risk tolerance was described by means of a narrative.

What follows is a summary of how we have embedded risk appetite and tolerance into the goals and enablers of the university's 2023 APP. The top 10 risks that relate to these goals and enablers are described in the paragraph on these risks and their influence on value creation.

Goal/Enabler	Risk appetite	Levels of risk tolerance
Goal 1: Promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by market direction decisions.	The risk appetite levels are generally moderate to low in respect of Goal 1, because of demands relevant adherence to standards and the importance to establish a TL support environment conducive to realising excellence and innovation. However, in the pursuit to attracting and retaining academic staff, the appetite is regarded moderate to high.	Quantitative measures are indicated in regard to the risk-tolerance levels.
<i>Goal 1, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is regarded sufficient.</i>		
Goal/Enabler	Risk appetite	Levels of risk tolerance
Goal 2: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation.	The risk appetite levels are moderate to low in respect of Goal 2, because of the possible reputational risk if the competitive advantage of the NWU as a research institution and traditional university would be at stake. Another factor is the importance of producing a pipeline of commercialisable technologies.	Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels.
<i>Goal 2, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is regarded as sufficient.</i>		

Goal/Enabler	Risk appetite	Levels of risk tolerance
<p>Goal 3: Integrate and align community engagement (CE) with teaching and learning and research to develop a culture of active citizenship.</p>	<p>The risk appetite levels are moderate to low in respect of Goal 3 – primarily because of the importance of environmental compliance and the establishment of structures to ensure adherence to the newly approved CE policy</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels.</p>
<p><i>Goal 3, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is not regarded as sufficient, save for coverage in respect of environmental compliance and management.</i></p>		
<p>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 that are relevant, desirable and meet students' needs.</p>	<p><i>The risk appetite levels are generally indicated to be moderate to high in the pursuit of Goal 4, owing to the fact that students remain the main recipients of the services provided by the NWU and they are the focus of the university's functions and business processes.</i></p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels.</p>
<p><i>Goal 4, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is generally regarded as sufficient, save for the lack of risks/opportunities in respect to community engagement.</i></p>		
<p>Goal 5: Attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile.</p>	<p>While risk appetite levels are indicated as moderate to high in instances where excellent staff are recruited and employed, as well as in respect of the implementation of the Digital Business Strategy, appetite levels are indicated to be moderate to low in instances such as employment equity, personnel-cost efficiency and the drive towards establishing the NWU as a value-based institution.</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels.</p>
<p><i>Goal 5, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is regarded as sufficient.</i></p>		
<p>Goal 6: Develop and implement a Digital Business Strategy to create a competitive advantage for the NWU, ultimately unlocking a revenue stream.</p>	<p>Digital transformation is key for remaining competitive and sustainable. Our risk appetite is moderate to high.</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels – if below the threshold of 40% of the realisation of the APP goals, it would be catastrophic.</p>
<p><i>Goal 6, risk coverage: The risk and opportunity coverage when comparing the APP objectives and the coverage in regard to the NWU Risk Register is regarded as sufficient.</i></p>		

Goal/Enabler	Risk appetite	Levels of risk tolerance
<p>Enabler 1: <i>Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment.</i> <i>(Also see Goal 6)</i></p>	<p>It is imperative for the NWU to be able to tangibly demonstrate an integrated governance, management and leadership capability. This is vital for the proper functioning of the NWU, for market differentiation and for ensuring sustainability and competition. The margin of error in the realisation of Enabler 1 is slim.</p> <p>Risk appetite: moderate to low</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels – if below the threshold of 40% of the realisation of the APP goals, it would be catastrophic.</p>
<p><i>Enabler 1 risk coverage: The risk coverage is regarded as sufficient.</i></p>		
<p>Enabler 2: <i>Establish a holistic and integrated university IT platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future.</i> <i>(Also see Goal 6)</i></p>	<p>The establishment of a holistic and integrated university technology platform is essential for all facets of university business and for securing the market positioning and competitive advantage of the NWU. (Also see the risk appetite statement in respect of Goal 6.)</p> <p>Our risk appetite to ensure fitness-of and for-purpose in ensuring the establishment of a holistic and integrated IT platform should be moderate to high.</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels – if below the threshold of 40% of the realisation of the APP goals, it would be catastrophic.</p>
<p><i>Enabler 2 risk coverage: The risk coverage is regarded as sufficient.</i></p>		
<p>Enabler 3: Cultivate and deliver stakeholder-focused platforms to create and grow intentional experiences and brand equity.</p>	<p>Stakeholder engagement is an important part of the manner in which the university ensures value creation in the environment in which it functions. Owing to this expectation, our risk appetite is moderate when it comes to fulfilling this role.</p> <p>To be able to meet the relevant needs, our risk appetite is moderate to high.</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels – if below the threshold of 40% of the realisation of the APP goals, it would be catastrophic.</p>
<p><i>Enabler 3 risk coverage: The risk coverage is regarded as sufficient.</i></p>		

Goal/Enabler	Risk appetite	Levels of risk tolerance
Enabler 4: Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and a drive towards digital transformation.	<p>The quest towards financial sustainability and optimal performance in a digital business environment is of the utmost strategic importance, taking into account the complexities and potential volatility in the external environment.</p> <p>The NWU has a low to moderate risk appetite in ensuring the realisation of Enabler 4.</p>	<p>Quantitative measures are indicated for the risk-tolerance levels – if below the threshold of 40% of the realisation of the APP goals, it would be catastrophic.</p>
<i>Enabler 4 risk coverage: The risk coverage is regarded as sufficient.</i>		

7.4 Assurance provisioning

There is a clear link between the first and second levels of assurance provisioning at the NWU, as shown in the following table. The intention is to provide assurance on the effectiveness and efficiency of the NWU's effort to optimise its response to key-risk exposures and clarify any instances where risks could prevent the university from realising its key strategies.

The table describes the expectations for the role-fulfilment by the first and second-level assurance providers, as well as the foci included in assurance provisioning in the end-to-end assurance provisioning process.

Assurance measures, methodologies and activities that differentiate the following focal aspects:	<u>First line of assurance</u> <i>Risk owner and line of management</i> <i>(i.e. where <u>P</u>lanning, <u>O</u>rganising, <u>L</u>eading and <u>C</u>ontrol take place)²</i>	<u>Second line of assurance</u> <i>Specialist functions³</i>
End-to-end description: Focus 1 Linking the risk/opportunity to university strategy .		
End-to-end description: Focus 2 Determining whether an appropriate directive governance environment exists (i.e. whether the policy framework at institutional level is in place and whether training and awareness are practised).		
End-to-end description: Focus 3 Checking whether the assurance instruments/operations in terms of people, process, technology and systems are in place.		
End-to-end description: Focus 4 Determining the appropriateness of the reporting to all relevant structures and forums to ensure sufficient management and governance oversight .		
End-to-end description: Focus 5 Checking whether there is sufficient tracking of evidence to substantiate the claims made with regard to levels 1 to 4.		

For the first round of second-level assurance, the focus is twofold: exploring the extent to which a coordinated effort would be needed to address a particular risk and checking whether the controls implemented over time are considered adequate to address the relevant risk.

² Management oversight means a focus on the manner in which the implementation of the organisation's strategy, its performance management, risk management, all relevant types of control and relevant systems are in place "to identify and control risks up to acceptable levels".

³ Second-level assurance involves checking the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall risk-management framework, accounting for the end-to-end risk-management process.

As mentioned earlier, 2023 saw the introduction of a process of providing third-level assurance with the procurement of services of an external audit company. The outcome of the audit process was not satisfactory and, as a result, the Council's ARCC advised that the commissions given to external auditors be clearly described and defined.

As part of the ongoing process of assurance provisioning, we have established the basis for a central control library. The control library is extensive and allows for a holistic and integrated linking of each control to (i) a process group, (ii) process, (iii) type of control and (iv) the nature of control, complemented with (v) a complete control description. At the last ARCC meeting of 2023, the ARCC indicated that the control library of the NWU had to receive priority attention, which is a KPA for the Risk and Compliance Department in 2024.

7.5 Top 10 residual risks and their influence on value creation

1	<p>Cyber security <i>Inherent risk rating: 25,00</i> <i>Residual risk rating: 20,00</i></p>
	<p>Related material matter providing the opportunity: Develop and implement the Digital Business Strategy to create a competitive advantage for the NWU, ultimately unlocking a revenue stream. <i>(2023 APP, Goal 6).</i></p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals Cyber security is not adequately addressed at the NWU and is the number one IT issue worldwide. An attack on the NWU is likely. Digital transformation will increase the cyber security risk. Mitigating actions The drive to ensure that the NWU's fitness of- and for-purpose and its transformation in accordance with the demands of the 4IR is a strategic priority for the NWU. Mitigation measures have 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.</p>
2	<p>Environmental management <i>Inherent risk rating: 20,00</i> <i>Residual risk rating: 16,00</i></p>
	<p>Related material matter providing the opportunity: Integrate and align community engagement with teaching-learning and research to develop a culture of active citizenship. <i>(2023 APP, Goal 3)</i></p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals The lack of focus and clarity on the placement, functioning and monitoring of environmental management at the NWU poses a risk to sustainability and compliance. Mitigating actions Environmental sustainability is a global key risk. The active promotion of environmental sustainability is entrenched in all our activities. Mitigating actions included an Environmental Gap Analysis with an action plan to close gaps (June 2022 to September 2022). Other mitigation steps are the appointment of an internal and external SHE project team and introduction of a SHE system for benchmarking, development and implementation. Another prerequisite for environmental sustainability is a SHE system to facilitate management of SHE requirements at the NWU and ensure all required faculties and departments can manage and monitor their SHE risks/impacts.</p>

3	<p align="center">Business model adequacy after Covid-19</p> <p align="center"><i>Inherent risk rating: 20,00</i></p> <p align="center"><i>Residual risk rating: 16,00</i></p>
	<p>Related material matters providing the opportunity: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation (2023 APP, Goal 2) and promote excellent learning and teaching; also reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by market direction decisions.</p> <p><i>(2023 APP, Goal 1)</i></p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals</p> <p>The Covid lockdown forced a change in stakeholder behaviour and habits. The approach to being a university and how people interact has fundamentally changed. The organisation has had to adapt to a significant change in stakeholder behaviour while ensuring adequate alignment of quality teaching and learning in relation to student access and success and fit-for-purpose workforce utilisation. Universities have had to re-invent their business models to ensure that they could compete in these shifting circumstances and, in some cases, ensure that they take advantage of unprecedented demand for tertiary study. Inadequacies around a focused approach on the management of the post-COVID-19 situation as this impact directly on the NWU's governance and management, could hamper the NWU's sustainability on the short-, medium- and long-term.</p> <p>Mitigating actions</p> <p>The NWU understands that enabling teaching-learning delivery must be facilitated by a support environment conducive to realising excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. This is challenging within the changing context of a post-pandemic situation. However, the imperative to ensure this is clearly prescribed in the NWU's purpose statement, our brand promise and in the 2015-2025 Strategy:</p> <p>Therefore, our 2023 objectives were aimed at preparing the NWU to move towards embracing the new world of work and study and the gains that the implementation of the Digital Business Strategy would bring and to address the imminent risks associated with the move towards the digital future.</p> <p>Mitigation plans include strategic projects facilitated by IT and the Centre for Teaching and Learning, along with space management to position the NWU for the future (through an integrated facilities project, SIS renewal project, the work-integrated learning and service learning (WISL) system, e-assessment and proctoring platforms/software, further development of the NWU LMS with additional online functionalities), as overseen by the Senate and UMC. The IT Committee advises the UMC on the optimisation of IT infrastructure to meet current and future business needs.</p>



	<p style="text-align: center;">The implications and demand for digital transformation on the NWU's business</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inherent risk rating: 20,00</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Residual risk rating: 16,00</i></p>
4	<p>Related material matter providing the opportunity: Develop and implement the Digital Business Strategy to create a competitive advantage for the NWU and ultimately unlock a revenue stream.</p> <p>Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future. (2023 APP, Goal 6, Enabler 2)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals</p> <p>IT provisioning for certain administrative and academic functions is not optimal; there are indications that individual IT staff are overloaded due to inadequate human resources in IT. Further; uncertainties are evident about the direction of the Digital Business Strategy, leading to delays in new system design and implementation. Digital transformation will have a severe impact on operational models, structures, people, processes and roles.</p> <p>Mitigating actions</p> <p>The drive to ensure that the NWU's fitness-of and for-purpose is a strategic priority for the NWU, as is its transformation in accordance with the demands of the 4IR.</p> <p>Mitigation plans include strengthening the foundation for the digital future by ensuring stable, scalable, hybrid, manageable and responsive infrastructure. Composable infrastructure makes data centre resources as readily available as cloud services and foundations for private and hybrid cloud solutions. Establishing the long-term integration platform will ensure business agility through rapid deployment of standardised shared services. Related priorities are to ensure a secure digital environment and start building the technology ecosystem that integrates students, partners, employees and "things" to deliver an exceptional customer experience. It is also necessary to establish a responsive operating model in IT, known for agility, competent people, best practices, innovative culture and well-looked-after staff.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Information Governance</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Inherent risk rating: 16,00</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Residual risk rating: 12,80</i></p>
5	<p>Related material matter providing the opportunity: The development and implementation of the Digital Business Strategy to create a competitive advantage for the university, ultimately unlock alternative revenue streams and govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment. (2023 APP, Goal 6 and Enabler 1)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals</p> <p>Inadequacies around a focused approach to information governance implementation could hamper the NWU's operations and expose the NWU to compliance risks.</p> <p>Mitigating actions</p> <p>Mitigation strategies include focusing on business continuity planning, contingency planning for mission-critical processes and the implementation of our Digital Business Strategy. Other measures include a compliance management process, compulsory training for all staff on the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), and reviewing the Policy on Academic Integrity. Further actions included appointing an Information Governance Coordinator to focus on the implementation of the Information Governance Framework.</p>

6	<p>Business continuity plans and disaster recovery plans</p> <p><i>Inherent risk rating: 16,00</i></p> <p><i>Residual risk rating: 12,80</i></p>
	<p>Related material matter providing the opportunity: Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future (2023 APP, Enabler 2), as well as govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment. (2023 APP, Enabler 1)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals</p> <p>Inadequacies around disaster recovery and business continuity management could hamper the NWU's operations and lead to compliance risks, financial losses and reputational damage.</p> <p>Mitigating actions</p> <p>Mitigating actions included business continuity planning and contingency planning at the execution of key processes, such as registration. The implementation of the Business Continuity Planning Policy should be approved by Council and business processes should be refined in order to remove redundancies. Furthermore, the Cybersecurity Strategy has been approved by the Technology and Information Governance Committee, while targets have been set and achieved for improving the NWU's cybersecurity capabilities). These targets are aimed at improving detection capabilities and identifying capabilities.</p>

7	<p>Funding and fee regulation</p> <p><i>Inherent risk rating: 16,00</i></p> <p><i>Residual risk rating: 12,80</i></p>
	<p>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. (2023 APP, Enabler 4)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals</p> <p>The government funding model is not sustainable, and the higher education sector requires more information on this model from the DHET. Also, the impact of the funding model is not known. This uncertainty is exacerbated by the sector's overdependence on a single source of income (government subsidies and questions over the sustainability of NSFAS). Adding to the uncertainty around overall sustainability is the unofficial regulation of fee increases since 2016 and a lack of clarity on process the DHET has already commenced to regulate fees.</p> <p>Mitigating actions</p> <p>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.</p>

8	<p>Poor financial support to postgraduate students <i>Inherent risk rating: 15,00</i> <i>Residual risk rating: 12,00</i></p>
	<p>Related material matters providing the opportunity: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation. (2023 APP, Goal 2)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals Poor financial support to postgraduate students results in loss of student income and insufficient continuity from undergraduate to postgraduate level. Furthermore, postgraduate numbers are dependent on bursaries.</p> <p>Mitigating actions Mitigation measures included a postgraduate funding model where merit bursaries are availed for qualifying students who received NSFAS funding during their undergraduate studies. Strategic funds are made available to a limited number of potential candidates. A special fund is being established to provide funding as per the A-Rule, linked to a maximum study duration.</p>
9	<p>Research quality <i>Inherent risk rating: 15,00</i> <i>Residual risk rating: 12,00</i></p>
	<p>Related material matters providing the opportunity: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation. (2023 APP, Goal 2)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals Poor quality of research products could lead to a decline or inadequate resources for research and research chairs.</p> <p>Mitigating actions The NWU budgetary process focuses on sustaining and enhancing the research function. Control sheets are used to monitor the spending of research funds. Processes to detect and manage instances of academic misconduct are in place, with Internal Audit executing ongoing compliance audits on the Academic Integrity Policy. Webinars and awareness on academic integrity are also in place. The SCIMAGO tool is in place to independently determine the quality of research products before any research paper is sent to journals.</p>
10	<p>Diversity <i>Inherent risk rating: 12,00</i> <i>Residual risk rating: 9,60</i></p>
	<p>Related material matters providing the opportunity: Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation. (2023 APP, Goal 4 and 5)</p>
	<p>Risk and the impact on value creation and capitals Insufficient levels of diversity in staff and student environment could undermine the university strategy.</p> <p>Mitigating actions Mitigation measures included building employment equity targets into the performance agreements of Senior Management Committee members, whose performance against these targets is measured as part of the performance evaluation process. An Employment Equity Policy is in place to ensure that the university creates equal opportunities for all its employees and to remove all barriers. Succession planning has also been finalised, starting with the UMC and mission-critical positions. A control mechanism to monitor and approve non-designated appointments has been implemented.</p>

The top 10 risk movements for 2023 were as follows:

Risk no.	Risk name	Risk Initial risk rating	Previous risk rating	Current risk rating
42	Cyber security	16	20	20
40	Environmental management	12	16	16
233	Business model adequacy after Covid-19	16	16	16
234	The implications and demand for digital transformation on the NWU's business	16	16	16
20	Information governance	12	12	12
231	BCP and DRP	12	12	12
232	Funding and fee regulation	12	12	12
3	Postgraduate students	7	12	12
9	Research quality	12	12	12
6	Diversity	6	9	9

The risk heat map for the NWU is as follows:

* The number in the top left-hand corner of each block indicates the residual risk rating and the # indicates the number of risks at that rating on the NWU risk register.



Key to the risk indicators

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

7.6 Conclusion

Risk management has been firmly embedded into the strategic mindset of the university and we continue to refine our understanding and management of risk.

We are intensifying ways to make risk management part of the day-to-day operations of the NWU and to ensure that opportunity management remains an inherent part of risk management.

At operational level, The NWU continues to make use of electronic risk management software that integrates risk management, compliance management and audit matters.

Risk reporting takes place at various levels: at the UMC, the ARCC, Combined Assurance Forum, Faculty Management Committees and at all the Council committee meetings in May and October. The reports submitted to Council committees in 2023 focused on integrating risk appetite and risk tolerance into the 2023 APP. Reporting also emphasised pertinent aspects of the Strategic Risk Register, particularly where risk is linked to the relevant area of expertise and oversight of a particular committee. Each council committee is required to identify emerging risks on an ongoing basis.

7.7 Council statement on risk management



COUNCIL 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 13 June 2024.

PROF MARLENE VERHOEF
REGISTRAR DESIGNATED WITH RISK RESPONSIBILITY

7.8 Report on internal/administrative structures and controls

The North-West University (NWU) maintains a system of internal control to provide reasonable assurance regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, the accuracy of financial reporting, risk management, and overall compliance with relevant laws and regulations. This ensures that the university's objectives are achieved, prevents loss of resources and assets, and reduces legal liability.

The university displays and maintains a commitment to integrity and honesty and believes that a strong foundation of policies and rules is essential to fostering an accountable, transparent and effective university community.

NWU has officially documented and implemented guiding documents, policies, and procedures for its internal control practices. The University Management Committee and specialised support departments monitor these practices.

The university coordinates policy updates, following a regular schedule that includes consultation with all relevant structures. The Council approves new and reviewed policies, which are communicated to employees and available online for all university employees and stakeholders.

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control systems. To fulfil that responsibility, Management understands and supports the role of Internal Audit. Management is also responsible for appropriately addressing audit reports and recommendations.

NWU has a comprehensive risk management programme, which includes a business continuity plan, risk management plans, and budgetary and resource plans. The University Management Committee and operational managers on various levels regularly identify, report, review, and manage related risks. The risk registers are updated and maintained regularly with feedback requested from risk owners, executive managers, the Combined Assurance Forum members and various operational managers.

The four levels of assurance provide assurance, one of which is the internal audit function. This level includes audits according to the risk-based internal audit plan, as approved annually by the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee, and provides for the evaluation of relevant systems, procedures, and controls.

Performance management ensures individual accountability and alignment with university objectives, with adequate job descriptions and key performance indicators.

The internal and external audit functions, the relevant financial divisions, and employees assigned with the responsibility continuously monitor compliance with all applicable standards, policies, guidelines, and procedures related to financial reporting.

The internal audit function is responsible for identifying control deficiencies and reporting these to the relevant responsible managers, the University Management Committee, and significant matters to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee.

The NWU maintains its cyber-security maturity through information security awareness, training, business continuity and risk management plans. The action plans include budgetary and resource plans for regulatory incidents to reduce legal- and compliance-related risks, classify information, compile an information-asset list management programme, and regularly update its cyber-threat profile and cyber-strategy performance targets. A comprehensive disaster recovery strategy was developed and implemented years back and is updated regularly.

The information strategy and framework for information governance are regularly reviewed, and clear guidelines on roles and responsibilities, governance structures, and the development of several policies and rules are set out.

The NWU prepares budgeting and resource plans for its overall cybersecurity defence programme that are aligned with business objectives and risk profiles. Not all the university's IT systems are centralised, which means differing levels of control exist at the various management levels, including those of the respective faculties. The NWU strengthened its cyber detection capabilities by implementing a Security Information and Event Management system. Our restore and recovery capabilities are well established.

Modern information technology (automated systems) improves efficiency, effectiveness, reliability, and security. Password controls are strictly maintained, access rights are checked, and the basic internal control concept of

division of duties is maintained. Regular reviews ensure the systems function correctly and are integrated to minimise manual intervention.

In addition, the systems are integrated to minimise duplication of effort and ensure minimum manual intervention and reconciliation procedures. Competently trained staff control all systems' development, maintenance, and operation.

Accepted standards are applied to protect privacy and ensure control over data. Password controls are strictly maintained, with users required to change passwords regularly, except where otherwise approved.

The internal audit function follows up regularly to ensure that recommendations and action plans are implemented as agreed upon by Management to improve the control environment. During the year, the internal audit function also performs follow-ups on the previous year's findings related to the annual external audit to prevent the recurrence of these findings in future. The progress with tracking unresolved findings is reported to the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee, which requires discussions and feedback from University Management members on improving controls and risk mitigation in these areas.

Significant matters that were brought to the attention of Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee meetings during 2023 included the following:

- Despite a concerted effort and a firm management stance on the obligation of all employees to submit annual declarations of interest, non-compliance in some instances remained evident.
- The phased-in implementation of the business continuity process gained some traction and momentum after a senior staff member was appointed in mid-2023. However, some risks identified during the business-impact assessment phase of the process would only be addressed as part of the planned large-scale SIS implementation.
- Owing to internal resource-capacity constraints, the university's cyber security capabilities and resources for identification, protection, and detection would continue to require improvement.
- Due to a bottom-up approach, a community of practice had been established across all faculties to drive the implementation of the NWU Policy and Rules on Academic Integrity. This initiative has led to the establishment of academic integrity committees in all faculties and a defined process for the detection and reporting of instances of academic integrity that is managed by means of a senate-approved standard operating procedure and a system-based workflow process, after weaknesses were raised in this area.

Against the background of the preceding, it is evident that the university is aware that there are inherent limitations to the effectiveness of any internal control system and the management of all risks, including the possibility of human error and the circumvention or overriding of controls. Accordingly, even an effective control system can only provide reasonable assurance concerning financial statement preparation and the safeguarding of assets.

Conclusion

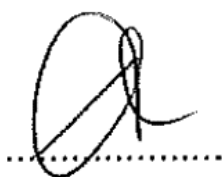
NWU has demonstrated a robust framework of internal and administrative structures and controls that underpin efficient and effective operations, asset safeguarding, accurate financial reporting, and compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

The university has established internal control objectives and practices, leveraging modern information technology to ensure a robust ethical climate.

The university's risk management and compliance programme are comprehensive, with a robust oversight function via the ARCC.

The Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee oversees NWU's internal control system on behalf of the university council and believes that the university's internal control system as of 31 December 2023 had met the criteria for effective internal control over financial reporting.

This report was approved at its meeting of 10 June 2024, which was quorate, and confirms that the documentation for approval by the Committee was circulated through the meeting agenda that reached members in advance and with due notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'M' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line at the end.

MR THABO MOKGATLHA
CHAIRPERSON: AUDIT, RISK AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized 'M' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line at the end.

MS MADELEIN VAN DER MERWE
DIRECTOR: INTERNAL AUDIT

8 Our strategy to create value

8.1 Introduction

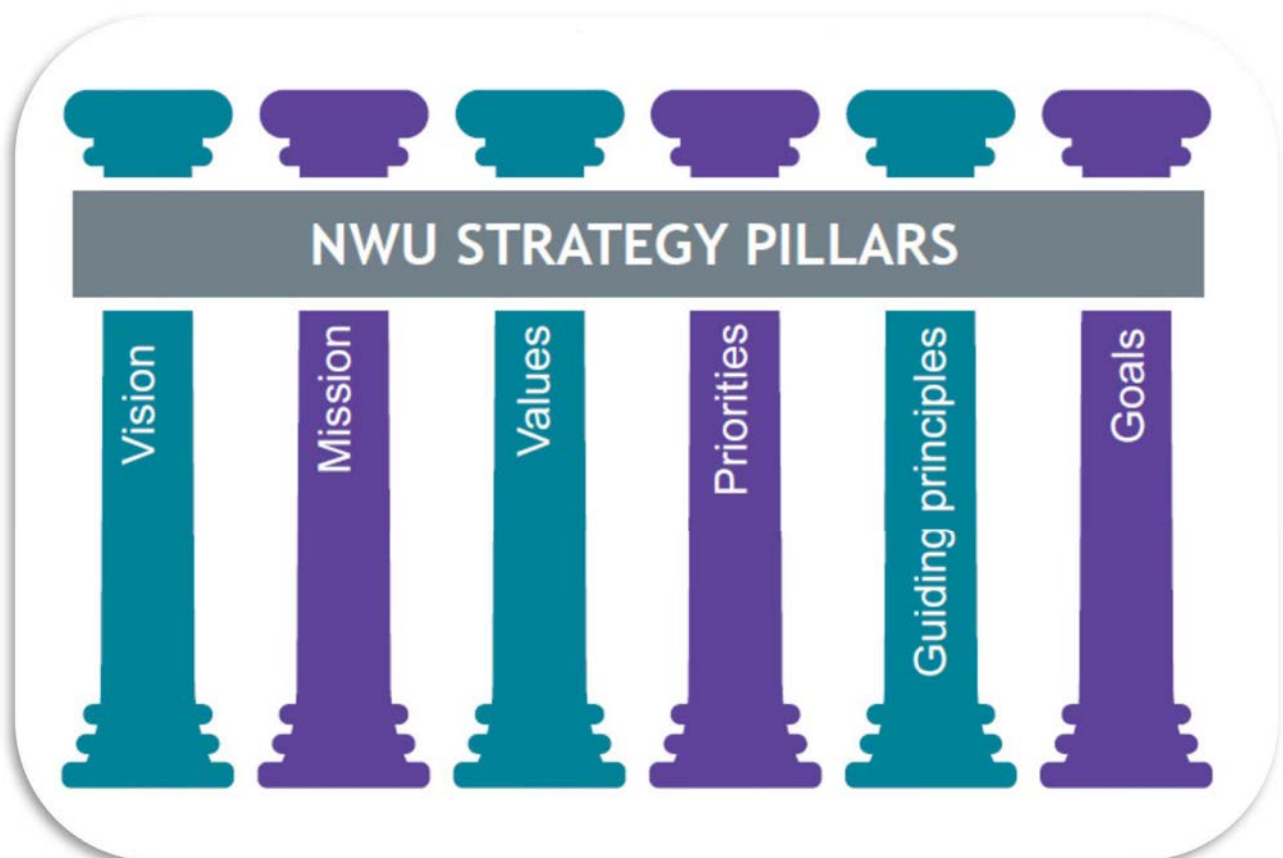
In moving forward with purpose and creating value for our shareholders as we do so, our strategy and APP keep us orientated and progressing in the right direction.

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 2023.

8.2 Explaining our strategy

In September 2023, Council approved the new NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond, which formed the basis for the 2024 APP.

The NWU has defined the key strategy pillars for the new strategy cycle. These pillars demonstrate that while focusing on the university's interests, we are also outward-looking, attending to stakeholder and community interests.



Our guiding principles are sustainability, transformation, digitisation, student centricity and valuing our people.

The NWU strategy and APP for 2023/24 were aligned with the strategy and plans of the DHET. In particular, our APP has a direct link with the DHET's Programme 3: University Education. The purpose of Programme 3 is to develop and coordinate policy and regulatory frameworks for an effective and efficient university education system.

We started compiling the 2024 APP right after Council approved the new strategy in September 2023. This APP was approved by Council in November 2023.

THE PILLARS SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGY

OUR VISION

To discover new frontiers and opportunities that benefit society, advancing our relevance and impact



OUR MISSION

To benefit society through the provision of knowledge, excelling in innovative teaching, cutting-edge research and focused engagement with the community.

OUR VALUES

- Caring and inclusive
- Embracing diversity
- Transparency
- Excellence in all our endeavours
- Ethics in all endeavours
- Responsibility and accountability
- Academic freedom and freedom of research

OUR PRIORITIES

- Impact
- Growth
- Diversity
- Partnerships
- Internationalisation
- Operational excellence

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Sustainability
- Transformation
- Digitisation
- Student centricity
- Valuing our people

OUR GOALS

For our goals and enablers, please see section 9.

8.3 Six goals to realise our strategy

Goal	How we get there
We want to promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions.	<p>In promoting excellent teaching and learning, we are taking a multipronged approach. The CTL is enhancing its support to the faculties, using research to inform best practices.</p> <p>Our proven student academic development and support initiatives continue to advance student retention and success.</p> <p>We are systemically transforming and renewing the curriculum to equip graduates for 21st century challenges.</p> <p>We have aligned the teaching and learning environment with the CTL's operational plans and the teaching and learning plans of the faculties.</p> <p>While providing professional services to the community, we explore opportunities to generate third-stream income through continuing education offerings.</p> <p>We ensure that the PQM is responsive, viable and relevant.</p> <p>Through well-managed and appropriate work-integrated learning and service learning, we enhance the employability of our graduates.</p>
It is our goal to strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation.	<p>We have a multipronged programme of activities to enhance the visibility, impact and footprint of our research. These activities include increasing publications in Scopus/ISI journals, strengthening research integrity, improving the NRF ratings of our researchers and offering joint degrees and co-publishing with researchers from reputable international institutions.</p> <p>Furthermore, we manage the research activities of our 60 research entities, including those falling under the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI).</p> <p>We successfully concluded the evaluations for research funding applications to the NRF,</p>

Goal	How we get there
	<p>SAMRC and other local funders. The NRF grants that were concluded included grant-holder linked bursaries, block grants, freestanding travel grants and bursaries, freestanding postdoctoral research grants and bursaries, SKA student travel grants and bursaries and Thuthuka. In addition, SAMRC, DTI/THRIP and NWU postdoctoral grants were concluded.</p> <p>Research funding opportunities were widely publicised on NWU online platforms as they were received.</p> <p>Training sessions on funding and ethics for researchers and students were conducted as part of an annual programme to advance research excellence.</p> <p>Library and Information Service (LIS) arranged workshops and webinars on open access and research data management. LIS also initiated a project to digitise pre-1990 print theses and dissertations, thus enriching the online content available.</p> <p>We disseminated publishing literacy awareness material to the NWU community, to reduce the possibility of predatory publishing.</p>
<p>Community engagement that deepens relevance, impact, reputation and sustainability to develop a culture of active citizenship.</p>	<p>Participation in community engagement (CE) opportunities allows our staff and students to take an active role in society in ways that have meaning to them personally and professionally. Through their involvement in CE, they can directly experience the significance of their scholarship, the caring that can be fostered by mutually beneficial partnerships and the results of their collaborative efforts with external stakeholders.</p> <p>Although still limited in 2023, access to communities increased as the year went on and 72 new partners joined our campus-based CE forums. This will have a positive impact on student volunteering and opportunities for work-integrated learning and service learning in these organisations.</p> <p>In total of 16 different organisational units registered on 500 community engagement activities in 2023.</p> <p>All three campuses of the NWU reported on CE activities. Most registered activities were attributed to the Potchefstroom Campus, which comprised 57.4% of the total. The Mahikeng Campus followed with 24,8%, while the Vanderbijlpark Campus constituted 9,4%. Additionally, 8,4% of the activities were collaborative endeavours spanning two or even three campuses, and others were implemented by units functioning across campuses. A total of 39.2% activities fell into the category of Engaged-Teaching and Learning (E-T&L). Of 196 E-T&L activities registered, 70 (36%) were related to an existing module and 126 (64%) activities were new or implemented for the first time. This data suggests that there is room to strengthen our efforts to incorporate planned experiential learning into teaching and learning.</p> <p>In this reporting cycle 43,6% of all activities were reported as outreach or volunteerism, while 112 activities related to discipline-based outreach and 106 non-discipline-based activities. The percentage of outreach/volunteerism activities decreased from 49% to 43%; however, this may be attributed to under reporting from certain entities.</p> <p>Out of 500 registered activities, 483 were categorised under the four defined types of engagement, namely engaged teaching and learning, engaged research, engaged scholarship and outreach/volunteerism. However, 17 activities only partially completed registration surveys and were not classified into any engagement category (15 from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (FEMS), one from the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), and one from the Business School). These cases will be further analysed so that they can be classified.</p> <p>Engaged research comprised 11,6% of registered activities, and 2,2% were recorded as engaged scholarship.</p> <p>These results show that our efforts to align and integrate CE with teaching and learning and research are bearing fruit, and we are seeing a growing shift towards the scholarship of engagement.</p> <p>Ten CE champions were recognised in November 2023 when the annual CE awards were held:</p>

Goal	How we get there
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Sithandiwe Mazibuko-Mbeje, affiliated with the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, was honoured with the Sharing of Expertise Award, designated for seasoned academic staff. • Awards for engaged teaching and learning went to Prof Elma Marais and Prof Carolina Botha, both associated with the Faculty of Education; and Dr Lerato E Mdaka from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. • The Outreach Award went to Dr Vicki Koen's outreach team from the Faculty of Health Sciences, comprising Prof Johan Potgieter, Mianda Erasmus and Dr Christiaan Bekker. • The Scholarship of Engagement Award was presented to the Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR), consisting of Dr Christii Niesing and Prof Petra Bester. <p>In the sphere of environmental responsibility, all three campuses celebrated Arbour Day by planting the tree of the year, the Olive Sagewood, as well as fruit trees.</p>
<p>We continue to 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.</p>	<p>Improving our service delivery to students is a key component of developing a clearly differentiated student value proposition. We continue to focus strongly on the systems and processes that support student service delivery in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psycho-social and primary health care services • student financial support • student accommodation • student academic development and support • social welfare programmes. <p>We pay close attention to student information management, ensuring that we accurately record and manage the activities of students at both curricular and co-curricular levels, in line with applicable legislation.</p> <p>We are working towards standardised planning and coordination of an aligned Student Life programme. This gained momentum in 2023, when staff and student leaders presented proposed measures for this effort, which will continue during 2024. The aim is to engage student leaders and students constructively and systematically, allowing them to take ownership of co-curricular programmes.</p> <p>The NWU has an extensive student leadership model that is functioning effectively. In 2023, we worked on further refining how student representation is understood and executed at the university. In pursuing this, we established transparency, assurance and stability within the student domain, promoting continued student support and involvement in the achievement of the strategy.</p> <p>In sport and the arts, our students participate regionally, nationally and internationally, delivering results that confirm the high quality and standard of student talent and skill.</p> <p>Student safety was a top priority in 2023, when we strengthened our partnerships with local municipalities, law enforcement agencies and community members. These partnerships enable the university to secure the on-campus safety of students and also to contribute to the safety and security of the areas immediately surrounding our campuses.</p>
<p>We want to attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile.</p>	<p>Promote and enhance employment equity</p> <p>The staff equity targets are outlined in the Employment Equity Plan for 2021 to 2023, in compliance with the Department of Employment and Labour's requirements.</p> <p>The plan 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.</p>

Goal	How we get there
	<p>There has been progress towards achieving the targets set in the EE Plan for 2021 to 2023. As the year under review was the final year of this plan, a Successive EE plan was drafted, consulted on, and approved by Council.</p> <p>Manage personnel cost-efficiency to increase institutional operational effectiveness</p> <p>The staff cost optimisation project for Phase 1 yielded savings to fund a 1% salary increase across the board. A Functional Allowance Rules document was developed and approved.</p> <p>Attract and retain excellent staff</p> <p>A resourcing plan was developed, and vacancies are maintained at under 10%.</p> <p>Cultivate and enhance an ethical, inclusive, welcoming and values-driven culture</p> <p>Culture interventions were implemented at decentralised levels. A feedback culture was entrenched as a norm and common practice for enabling and encouraging continuous, constructive two-way dialogue on performance management.</p> <p>Training on engagement and inclusivity has been provided to senior and middle managers, and the institution continues to promote a transparent and values-driven leadership culture. The NWU multigenerational plan was defined and approved by Council in March 2023 to promote mutual understanding and to ensure that our workplace practices accommodate different generations of staff. Training sessions were conducted on conscious inclusivity, along with courageous conversations sessions to enhance cross-generational understanding and collaboration.</p> <p>The team-building interventions from different environments continued in 2023. Their purpose is to create buy-in for the new values, to identify values champions and to exemplify preferred behaviour and how to live the NWU Way.</p> <p>Create an enabling and values-driven, transparent and engaged leadership culture</p> <p>The NWU leadership team continued with the Strategic Leadership Development programmes, intended to continuously promote cohesion in the execution of university goals and objectives, as well as to encourage the behaviour required to achieve these. Members of the University Management Committee (UMC) and Senior Management Committee (SMC) attended the Emotional Intelligence, Digital Transformation, and Managing Remotely programmes, which had a 69% attendance rate. Newly appointed SMC members are being supported through individual mentoring and coaching programmes.</p> <p>The leadership interventions were cascaded to school directors and support services directors. The school directors programme is focused on helping to advance their careers, increase their self-awareness, improve their skill set and enable them to reach their full potential. Through this learning opportunity, school directors stand to gain an in-depth understanding of the range of challenges they face in the higher education sector.</p> <p>Support directors were capacitated on digital transformation. The programme is intended to develop the directors to improve business processes and develop new business models and capabilities.</p> <p>The Leadership Academy of the NWU is designed to support the next generation of academic leaders. The academy's emphasis is on future leadership and reinforces the belief that leadership can be demonstrated at any level and is value-driven and not hierarchical. We had a favourable participation rate in our leadership interventions.</p> <p>Equipped with these competencies, the leadership team will be better placed to lead</p>

Goal	How we get there
	<p>with ownership and purpose and to thrive in the ever-changing environment in which the NWU finds itself.</p> <p>Implement the People and Culture Digital Transformation Strategy through effective automation and digitisation</p> <p>In 2023, we enhanced the People and Culture Digital Transformation Strategy through effective automation and digitisation of the performance management system, digital onboarding, probation management system, hybrid work process, as well as the commencement of the recruitment and functional allowance automation process.</p> <p>Enhance stakeholder relationships</p> <p>Two People and Culture roadshows were held in 2023. Campus management meetings were held to share reports highlighting important People and Culture activities. The University Consultative Forum was established to deal with activities that were previously in the ambit of the University Bargaining Forum.</p> <p>Information-sharing sessions were held with the three unions organised within the NWU, being the South African Parastatal and Tertiary Institutions Union (SAPTU), National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) and Solidarity.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The NWU has ensured that the lessons learnt and experience gained from the Covid-19 pandemic are not lost. Following institution-wide consultation, the University Management Committee (UMC) approved the Digital Business Strategy, which Council approved in June 2023, reaffirming the NWU's position as a future-ready institution. The DBS is underpinned by six business goals aimed at driving digital transformation and enhancing stakeholder experience while committing to closing the digital divide within the institution. Key to the adoption of the DBS has been the establishment of an Agility Hub to promote innovation and fast-track the adoption of cutting-edge technologies through piloting and rapid deployment with the assistance of strategic partners.</p> <p>A DBS Core Team steering committee was established to ensure a coordinated approach to digital transformation within the NWU. It has representation from key stakeholder departments across the institution and has helped identify opportunities for quick benefit and departmental use cases for piloting in pain point areas. Strategic initiatives stemming from the DBS are currently under way, including the renewal of the SIS and reviewing the People and Culture (HR) and Payroll systems. Implementing these new systems will improve process efficiencies and stakeholder experience and bring about cost savings through automation.</p> <p>The NWU has articulated its commitment to using AI in areas where it makes business sense and will continue to investigate the piloting and adoption of such opportunities as part of its digital transformation. We have entered into a strategic partnership with local and international vendors to provide capacity end expertise to drive implementation of AI-enabled functionality.</p>

8.4 Four enablers to help us realise our strategy

Where we want to go (our enabler)	How we get there
<p>Govern, lead and manage in an agile, collaborative and integrated way towards an optimally digitised university environment.</p>	<p>Effective governance is a competitive advantage for the university. We leverage strategies, practices and processes to help us realise the benefits of this competitive advantage.</p> <p>We have established measures to ensure the functioning of the NWU as a unitary, integrated, multi-campus university, and test the effectiveness of these measures.</p> <p>This includes making sure that support services across all sites of delivery function in an integrated and mature way and that the support-staff provisioning is optimised.</p> <p>In accordance with the 2017 NWU Statute, we draft and review all policies and rules.</p> <p>Our integrated risk and compliance management model focuses on business continuity and disaster recovery strategies.</p>
<p>Establish a holistic and integrated university technology platform to provide a solid foundation for a digital future.</p>	<p>The transition to cloud computing and software-as-a-service (SaaS) models has phased out traditional hardware solutions, marking a significant shift towards greater scalability, flexibility and cost efficiency. This transition is characterised by several strategic shifts: from building to buying, customising to standardising, transitioning from on-premises to cloud-based solutions, evolving from traditional office spaces to digital workplaces, and transforming IT from a mere cost centre to a driver of digital transformation.</p> <p>However, realising the full potential of these new approaches will take time. We are moving from merely enabling digital transformation to leveraging it as a strategic advantage, shifting our focus from basic business operations to a blend of IT and innovation, and transitioning from a model where IT controls all technology decisions to a more democratised approach to technology. At the same time, we are evolving our project portfolio management (PPM) to encompass enterprise project portfolio management (EPPM) methodologies and aiming to optimise or replace all critical systems within the next five years. Additionally, we are working towards a more integrated approach to cybersecurity and transitioning from a fragmented data infrastructure to a unified analytics strategy and methodology.</p>
<p>Cultivate and deliver stakeholder-focused platforms to create and grow intentional experiences and brand equity.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Ensure financial sustainability and optimal performance with due consideration of macro-economic conditions and the drive towards digital transformation.</p>	<p>During 2023 our focus was on the mitigation plan we had developed to address the financial and economic impact of Covid-19, and on compiling a three-year rolling budget for 2024 to 2026. This approach is intended to ensure medium and long-term sustainability, with an emphasis on cash-flow management for the shorter term.</p> <p>We continued implementing the infrastructure policy that focuses on optimal space management. This policy links requests to strategic initiatives and financial viability analysis, as well as space norms. The Spatial Development Plan was reviewed as well.</p> <p>The preferential procurement strategy was reviewed. This included creating a supplier database and community engagement structure to assist with local participation in infrastructure projects.</p> <p>We developed an energy efficiency strategy and implemented projects for energy management, the aim being to measure the impact and efficiency of alternative energy</p>

Where we want to go (our enabler)	How we get there
	<p>sources towards a reduction of electricity consumption.</p> <p>In pursuing compliance with the NWU's Environmental Policy, we developed an Environmental Sustainability Management strategy and guidelines, along with environmental initiatives.</p> <p>Several automation projects continued in support of the Digital Business Strategy.</p>

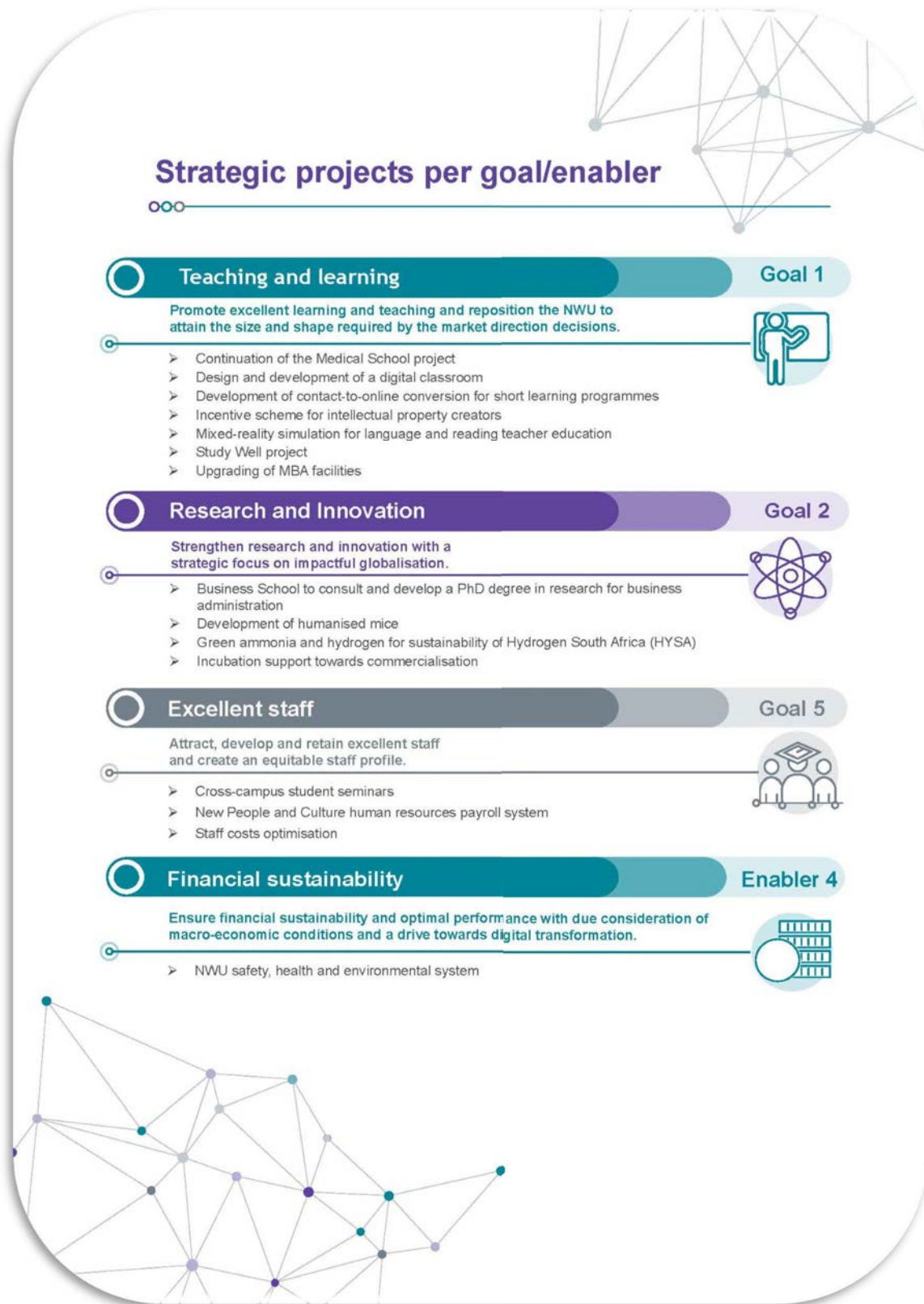


In December 2023, the NWU received the official support from the Minister of Health, Dr MJ Phaahla, for the university's plan to establish the NWU Medical School

8.5 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.



To see how we financed these strategic initiatives, turn to the [section](#) on our performance against our strategy.

8.6 Annual Performance Plan

8.6.1 How the APP fits in with our strategy

When we do integrated planning, we focus on aligning our plans both vertically and horizontally across our operations. Vertical alignment starts with the NWU's strategic mission and drills down to its operational efficiency, while horizontal alignment cuts across both academic faculties and support departments.

Through this approach to integrated planning, we are able to allocate resources optimally and sustainably, and measure the progress of our efforts to enhance quality management and assurance. Integrated planning is therefore embedded in the NWU quality management and assurance culture, as opposed to being a once-off annual event.

Enhancing opportunities for student success is the ultimate purpose of quality management. The outcomes of quality assuring teaching and learning, research and community engagement are high-quality qualifications, acceptance in local, national and international research networks and increased opportunities for constructive, credible community engagement.

Responsibility for quality assurance is embedded in the university's governance, management, and academic leadership structures, all of which contribute to strategic planning and quality management.

We entrench quality assurance in the core business of the university by cascading the NWU's strategic goals into our APPs (which are a DHET requirement). Turning to execution, we then prepare a detailed implementation plan consisting of relevant projects and initiatives and produce evidence of progress towards the realisation of our goals.

Each activity in the APP is linked to the Institutional Risk Register that is reported on at the Audit Risk and Compliance Committee.

8.6.2 How the APP was revised in 2023

In the ever-evolving higher education landscape, public universities are challenged to adapt, innovate and excel. The NWU's 2024 APP was prepared with an eye to the fluidity of the higher education environment and an awareness of the value of agility and flexibility in responding to future developments.

The situational analysis presented in the plan, for example, reveals several key factors that guide our strategies, particularly the increasing demand for lifelong learning, calls for flexibility in higher education, emerging technologies and the shift towards "skills over degrees".

The NWU is committed to not just adapting to these changes but also harnessing them to offer our students the best possible education. Further, the 2024 APP underscores our commitment to complying with the regulatory framework governing higher education in South Africa, and our intention to contribute to societal progress through knowledge dissemination, innovative teaching, cutting-edge research and community engagement.

This plan introduces six primary goals and four enablers that encompass our 2024 agenda.

These goals reflect our commitment to providing excellent student-centric learning, fostering research and innovation, strengthening community engagement, creating a unique student value proposition, and attracting and retaining excellent staff. Moreover, the plan acknowledges the importance of advancing and implementing a digital business strategy.

The four enablers underscore the importance of governing, leading, managing and cultivating stakeholder-focused platforms while ensuring financial sustainability.

In formulating the APP, we drew on a comprehensive range of sources. On a macro level, we were guided by the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the South African National Development Goals. On a sectoral level, we took cognisance of the regulatory and legislative framework governing higher education in South Africa, notably the Higher Education Act, 1997, the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training and the numerous acts that affect the daily operations of public universities.

Then, institutionally, we ensured our APP was aligned with the newly approved [NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond](#) and rooted in our [vision and mission](#) as a university.

8.6.3 Quality enhancement

In addition to providing clear directives for managing and embedding quality in the university's core functions, the NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond sets out prescripts for dealing with major quality events such as the institutional audit by the Council on Higher Education (CHE).

The audit cycle is a series of engagements for the institutional audit from inception to completion. This starts with initiation of the audit and continues through preparing the self-evaluation report, conducting the site visit and compiling the final audit report, which includes developing and reporting on an improvement plan and

submitting a final close-out report for acceptance by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and the NWU Council.

The audit started with an induction meeting led by CHE staff members on 4 July 2022. The self-evaluation Report (SER) and the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) were then shared with the panel. The site visit was conducted from 22 to 26 August 2022.

The NWU received the final audit report on 28 November 2023, confirming that our quality management systems consistently meet or exceed established standards.

In this report we received eight commendations and various recommendations for improvements. No aspect of our operations was reported as being below a given functional level or requiring significant improvement.

Here are the commendations we received:

- The panel commends the university for the adoption and ongoing implementation of the Transformation Charter and the Language Policy, both of which signal a commitment to efforts to realise the institution's dream and to make a significant contribution towards the decolonisation of education.
- The panel commends the approach taken by the university to elevate the significance of community engagement as one of its core functions, the appointment of deputy deans for community engagement in selected faculties and the appointment of a deputy vice-chancellor for community engagement.
- The university is commended for the quality of its library facilities across all campuses. This demonstrates management's commitment towards ensuring the equitable quality of provisioning and support services across the three campuses.
- The university is commended for establishing the structures for the governance and management of university information to safeguard data integrity and improve operational efficiency and effectiveness, given the institution's multi-campus context.
- The panel commends the NWU for taking a rehabilitative rather than a retributive route for students guilty of academic and non-academic misconduct or misdemeanours.
- The involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including students, in the institutional system for designing, developing, and evaluating programmes is commended by the panel.
- The thematic review of assessment during 2020-2021 is commendable from the perspective of the engagement and collaboration of all faculties and support units in a research-based and evidence-informed investigation which led to a book publication.
- The panel commends the institution for establishing, valuing and nurturing their relationships and partnerships with the alumni for mutual benefit by preparing students for the transition from university to the world of work, offering students a responsive curriculum and programmes, and attracting alumni back to the NWU for further studies.

8.7 Future outlook

Having drafted our new strategy in 2023 and agreed on the way forward for the NWU, we will be entering the strategy implementation phase in 2024. It will require focus, agility and pragmatism to implement this roadmap in earnest and ensure that our shared vision and mission are realised.

Fortunately, we will have our 2024 APP to guide us to harness our strengths, discover new frontiers and seize all opportunities to position ourselves in an increasingly competitive higher education landscape and – most importantly – benefit society.

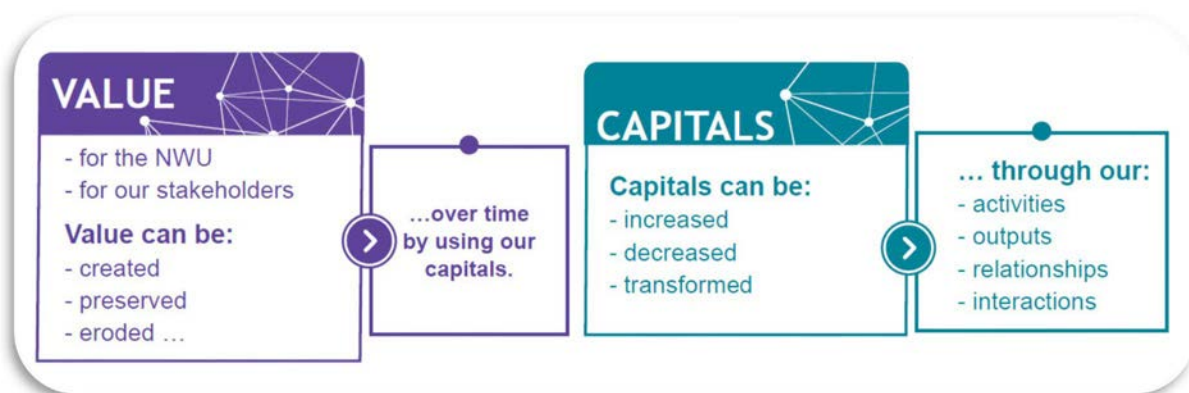
Armed with our new strategy and APP, we will continue to strengthen and build the NWU while enhancing the university's impact in our delivery and engagements.

9 Our performance against our strategy: Creating value through the capitals

This part of the annual report is about the value-creation processes at the NWU.

Here 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.



9.1 Our intellectual capital

Our core business activities result in knowledge-based intangibles, which we refer to as our intellectual capital.

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 operations, to the benefit of stakeholders.

Stakeholders who will benefit from our intellectual capital	<p>If we increase our intellectual capital, the benefit will flow through to all stakeholders who are interested in the knowledge that we create through our research or teaching and community engagement activities.</p> <p>These 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.</p>
Material matters (goals or enablers) involved	Material matters are teaching and learning, research, community development, ability to govern, lead and manage, information and communication technology.
Risks involved	<p>The risks include the imperative for organisational change and ongoing transformation (such as the decolonising of the curriculum), risks related to academic matters (teaching and learning, research and innovation and academic administration), the risk of non-compliance (such as the standards and regulations of professional bodies), and risks related to IT, university systems and commercialisation of our innovation and research results.</p> <p>Read more about the mitigation of these risks.</p>

9.1.1 How we created, preserved or eroded value

This section is about how we created value for ourselves and our stakeholders through our teaching and learning, research and community engagement activities.

We will also show you how we created value through our support activities. This is for instance how we govern and manage the university through our structures, policies, processes and systems, and how we support our core business by maintaining and further developing our information and communication technology. We also consider areas of our operations where value may have been lost.

9.1.2 Academic literacy tests and modules

An academic literacy test is compulsory for all first-year students. They may then be required to register for specific academic literacy modules in academic writing, reading, computer and information literacy and study skills. We have redesigned these modules to incorporate discipline-specific content wherever possible, allow contact and multimodal offerings to be seamlessly integrated and focus more on self-directed learning.

A concern is that students struggle with self-directed learning, particularly online, underlining the importance of in-person support for at-risk students.

9.1.3 Rethink distance learning

Distance learning increases access to education and training by eliminating barriers posed by time, place and pace of learning. However, owing to declining enrolment figures and advances in technology, we realised we needed to reconsider the distance learning delivery model. During 2023, we developed a student value proposition for distance education and will present a comprehensive plan to the university management in 2024. This plan will outline the proposed future offering, teaching-learning delivery and student support services in the distance education environment.

The number of learning support centres is being reduced to 18 for 2024 and we are reconsidering the services rendered at the five learning hubs (Rustenburg, Pretoria, Durban, Empangeni and Windhoek).

The reason is that the new SIS, the first phase of which will be implemented in April 2024, will offer automated and centralised administrative and financial support.

This will be available through mobile devices, online access to the student portal, chatbots for assistance and helpdesk assistance and support. Students will be served online, regardless of where they may be situated.

Strategic direction from university management in 2023 was that the distance programme offering should focus on the postgraduate market and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. For this reason, except in STEM fields, no further higher certificates will be developed.

9.1.4 Material matter: Teaching and learning

In fostering academic success, 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.

9.1.4.1 Increase student access and success

We offer extensive, value-adding academic support to students, as discussed in the following section.

9.1.4.2 Extended curriculum programmes

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

9.1.4.3 University Preparatory Programme (UnivPrep)

UnivPrep consists of one-year preparatory programmes that provide access opportunities to prospective students who do not meet the admission requirements for specific formal degrees. By participating in UnivPrep, students can qualify for formal studies in the faculties of Humanities, Theology and Economics and Management Sciences at the NWU. Each year, over 50% of successful UnivPrep participants become eligible to apply for formal studies in these faculties.

9.1.4.4 Higher certificates

In addition to UnivPrep, a number of higher certificates provide access to students who would otherwise not qualify for university studies.

9.1.4.5 Tutorial programmes 2023

Tutorial support is an important pedagogic tool for lecturers to use with small groups. The main forms of tutorial support at the NWU are supplemental instruction (SI) and tutoring.

During the first and second semesters of 2023, tutors conducted a total of 1 743 tutorials. These tutorials covered 55 modules in the first semester, 46 modules in the second semester and 13 year modules across all campuses. The tutorials reached 8 585 students.

We collected and analysed the tutorial attendance data for each module to determine whether attendance contributed positively to students' academic results. Focusing on marks for participation and, examinations, as well as module marks, we concluded that there is indeed a correlation. Using statistical analysis, we found that the mean average examination mark, module mark and pass rates for students who attended tutorials were higher than for those who did not, while the difference in mean average examination marks tended towards a significant difference.

9.1.4.6 Mathematics and statistics support

Mathematics and statistics support is now a regular feature in the academic student support programmes and services of the CTL. This support is offered through the Mathematics and Statistics Centre (MSC) to help students who are struggling with mathematical and statistical concepts and problems, in addition to their regular programme of lecturing and academic peer support. The MSC provides a supportive and interactive environment where students can obtain help with coursework, assignments and exam preparation.

The service is conducted in-person and online by trained tutors who are knowledgeable in mathematics and statistics. They work with students individually or in small groups, across faculties and all levels of mathematical and statistical proficiency. The goal of the MSC is to help students develop confidence and independence in their mathematical and statistical abilities.

In 2023, we had 40 tutors conducting approximately 1 880 tutorials and individual consultations per semester, a significant increase from 2022.

9.1.4.7 Supplemental instruction (SI)

The SI programme targets students' academic needs in at-risk modules in all faculties across the three delivery sites of the NWU, as well as distance students. It focuses primarily on undergraduate students and seeks to improve student grades, throughput and retention in at-risk modules.

For the year, 794 SI leaders completed the SI leader training course; however, only 689 submitted remuneration claims for sessions facilitated during the year.

SI sessions were held in 505 modules across the three campuses during the year; 156 at-risk modules received facilitation – representing coverage of 31%. In total, 12 066 SI sessions were facilitated, and 28 351 students were supported by SI across the NWU campuses in the various modules.

The SI programme has received positive feedback from students and SI leaders. The qualitative feedback indicates an important level of satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of the programme.

For the year, 94% of participants found the SI sessions effective in helping them master the content, complete assignments and prepare for tests and exams. In total, 96% of participants would attend SI sessions again and would recommend them to their peers. Additionally, feedback from SI leaders showed that 92% of them felt that the support they provided in the SI sessions was valuable to students.

While the qualitative feedback provides valuable insights into the perceived positive impact of the SI programme, quantitative impact studies are not yet available to compare the performance of students who attended SI sessions versus those who did not.

9.1.4.8 Academic peer mentors

In the academic peer-mentoring programme, high-performing senior students support first-year students to adapt to university life. Although WhatsApp was still being used for mentorship in 2023, there was a definite increase in the number of face-to-face meetings between mentors and mentees.

As this peer support initiative is funded by the University Capacity Development Grant, we were able to increase the number of academic peer mentors (APMs) from 77 in the first semester of 2023 to 138 in the second semester.

Throughout the first and second semesters, academic peer mentors participated in various activities, including induction training workshops, orientation sessions for APM training, debriefing sessions integrating psychosocial support and individual mentor reflections, guidance on referral procedures, feedback sessions conducted in small groups or one-on-one settings, and focus group discussions gathering mentors' feedback on programme components.

The APMs also engaged in valuable online sessions across campuses, promoting the exchange of experiences and best practices, thereby ensuring consistent training and capacity-building efforts. However, face-to-face sessions also remained significant, especially in facilitating mentor-mentee interactions and aligning with the programme's objectives of directing students to institutional services, modelling academic skills and enhancing their sense of belonging within the NWU community.

The programme was promoted on the NWU website, eFundi, at various campus events such as open days, registration and orientation, and Mandela Day, alongside the distribution of promotional materials. The APM website was regularly updated, featuring APM banners on the NWU homepage and eFundi landing page. Information for student access, success and retention was consistently uploaded and updated, catering to the needs of both mentors and mentees.

Additionally, an event titled "Take control of your exams" was held across all three campuses to provide students with support, access to information, services and resources for exam preparation. The event featured

presentations tailored to student needs and was organised by NWU Library Information Services (LIS) in collaboration with CTL.

Results from the Mentee Satisfaction Survey indicated high confidence levels among respondents regarding completion of their qualifications within the stipulated timeframe, with satisfaction expressed about their interactions with APMs.

Mentees reported consulting APMs primarily for academic support, with notable referrals to university support services. A significant proportion of mentees felt enabled to overcome academic and social challenges, expressing confidence in successfully completing the academic year. Mentors were credited with aiding in various kinds of skills development, including self-directed learning, module content understanding, time management and schedule planning. Overall, mentees expressed satisfaction with mentor feedback and reported a strengthened sense of belonging, though some experienced feelings of isolation within the higher education environment. The vast majority of mentees expressed the intention to consult with mentors in the future.

9.1.4.9 Academic advising

Academic advising serves as an ongoing, intentional and collaborative practice within teaching and learning, aiming to empower, guide, develop and support students in achieving their academic goals. This involves utilising a comprehensive range of student academic development and support (SADS) services and other institutional resources. Students may seek assistance from academic advisers independently or be referred by campus stakeholders, addressing various aspects such as learning strategies, time management and exam preparation.

The adoption of a self-help booking platform has significantly impacted the volume of advising sessions conducted by academic advisers. This platform also facilitates automatic sharing of feedback forms, providing valuable insights into adviser performance and areas for improvement. During 2023, 11 academic advisers conducted a total of 564 advising sessions, representing a notable increase compared to previous years, with the majority of sessions being with contact students. Additionally, a substantial portion of sessions were with first-year students.

In response to data indicating greater attendance at group sessions compared to general webinars, the focus shifted in 2023 to presenting workshops and webinars upon request. This approach has resulted in increased attendance while reducing the number of events, demonstrating positive outcomes in terms of reach and efficiency.

Furthermore, the NWU Academic Advising team participated in a collaborative grant project aimed at enhancing institutional approaches to student advising. This initiative, initiated in late 2022 and extended to 2024, focuses on goals such as enhancing collaboration among advising and student support departments, training and professional development of advisers, and developing a data-driven approach to advising. While some objectives may require adjustment due to unforeseen challenges, efforts are ongoing to achieve impactful outcomes by the project's conclusion.

• HyFlex teaching-learning in 2023

In 2023, we continued with our hybrid teaching and learning model, HyFlex, albeit on a smaller scale than during the Covid-19 pandemic. This included asynchronous and synchronous online offerings, limited face-to-face interaction in small groups and personal consultation with students.

Additional venues were fitted with equipment that enables simultaneous streaming and recording of contact sessions, and similar fitting of equipment will be included in the routine upgrade cycle.

The formal Covid-19 assessment review indicated that assessment and modes of assessment should receive attention. The Community of Practice in Academic Integrity, an inter-faculty and inter-departmental forum, has continued its work and a full-time academic integrity officer has been appointed.

The NWU has extended the development of academics in this regard. We identified four international teaching mobility opportunities for 2023, resulting in the participation of 18 academic staff members and three senior academic developers in mobility activities during November and December. In collaboration with Inholland University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands), eight academics from the faculties of Education, Law, and Health Sciences engaged in collaborative activities across different Inholland campuses. They participated in class activities and identified collaborative research pursuits for 2024.

Similarly, four academics visited Lincoln University (United Kingdom) for collaborative research opportunities.

Accompanied by a senior academic developer, both groups explored further collaboration possibilities. Additionally, two groups participated in international teaching weeks.

Ongoing collaborations yielded several outcomes:

- a letter of intent for continued collaboration with Inholland University;

- approval of an Erasmus+ funding application, offering exchange opportunities;
- hosting of Inholland staff members at the NWU;
- a NWU mobility candidate supported curriculum development at Inholland;
- continuation of two international projects, leading to a memorandum of understanding with the University College Leuven Limburg, in Belgium;
- presentation of research results by NWU academics at the International Scholarship for Teaching and Learning Conference;
- identification of potential projects and collaboration activities during mobility visits; and
- promotion of two mobility candidates to associate professors as a result of their participation.

9.1.4.9 Student success rate

In 2023 our contact student success rate (for undergraduate and postgraduate students combined) was 84,14%, while our distance student success rate (also undergraduate and postgraduate combined) was 85,08%.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Academic performance	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Contact student success rate (undergraduate and postgraduate students combined)	85%	85%	90%	87%	84,7%	84.14%
Undergraduate degree graduation duration factor	1,13	1,13	1,2	1,09	1,08	1,11
Graduation rate*	25,1%	23,5%	27%	27%	25,4%	22,43%

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

How much value we created, compared to our targets:

Academic performance	Target	Definition	Actual
Contact student success rate (undergraduate and postgraduate students combined)	87%	Based on HEMIS data. Completed FTEs divided by enrolled FTEs on a module level	84,14%
Undergraduate degree graduation duration factor	1,2	Based on HEMIS data. The time (in years) it takes a student to graduate divided by the minimum time to complete the qualification	1,11

9.1.4.10 Align academic programmes

The NWU is a unitary institution. As such, we are committed to ensuring that students across our campuses have access to equivalent resources and benefit from comparable high-quality teaching and learning. In aligned programmes and modules, we have noted an increase in team-teaching across campuses, with academics making use of the technology and equipment that has been made available in lecture venues.

It is also important that academic programmes are sustainable and always relevant, so that graduates have an equal opportunity to find work or to develop into entrepreneurs who create jobs for others.

9.1.4.11 Ensure high-quality academic programmes

The NWU is expected to provide good-quality higher education that enhances the prospects of student success. We therefore undertake systematic and continuous quality assurance and enhancement processes, using a reflexive approach of self-reporting and evidence-based practices.

These processes consist of internal programme evaluations (IPEs) and external programme evaluations (EPEs). During 2023, four faculties participated in various forms of internal and external reviews.

In the Faculty of Education, an IPE was completed for the Postgraduate Certificate in education (PGCE), while EPEs were conducted for the BEd Foundation Phase, BEd Senior and FET Phase, BEd Intermediate Phase and Postgraduate Certificate in education (PGCE).

The Faculty of Health Sciences completed IPEs in the Bachelor of Health Sciences with physiology and biochemistry, Bachelor of Health Sciences with physiology and psychology and the Bachelor of Consumer Studies. An EPE of the Master's in Social Work in forensic practice was conducted based on set criteria and standards from the CHE.

Besides the thematic internal review of all Understanding the World (UTW) modules offered by the School of Philosophy the Faculty of Humanities conducted IPEs in the BSoc Sciences with Population Studies, the BSoc Sciences Honours in population studies and the BMus. The internal evaluation of language modules within the BAHons in English, BAHons in English language and literature, BAHons in English literature and linguistics and BAHons in language practice was also completed.

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences conducted internal evaluations in five subject groups: Biological Sciences, Physics and Electronics, Geology, Geography and Botany. An external evaluation of Computer Science as a subject in various programmes was conducted, based on set criteria and standards from the CHE.

All outcomes received so far confirm that programmes, modules and subjects in programmes, and subject groups comply with minimum industry standards. The rigorous self-evaluation process includes the drafting of improvement plans that are implemented under guidance and with support of the Quality Enhancement Office.

In 2023, the NWU was visited by several professional bodies with positive outcomes for all accreditation visits.

At the end of 2023, we received feedback from the CHE on the Institutional Audit conducted during 2022. The panel rated the NWU's quality management system as "mature" in relation to four of the 16 standards set, and "functional" in respect of the remaining eight. The latter rating signifies that the NWU meets the expected thresholds for the identified standards, with only minor areas requiring further improvement. The NWU will submit its Improvement Plan to the CHE in 2024.

9.1.4.12 Learning design in a digital teaching and learning environment

The newly adopted teaching-learning model allows for an approach to infrastructure development that enables HyFlex and hybrid modalities, in line with the NWU 's Digital Business Strategy.

In the physical environment, resource assistants and venue monitors collaborated to support the physical learning environment, particularly with the venue monitoring service initiated as a pilot in 2022. This service aimed to assist lecturers in utilising classroom technology effectively. The focus in 2023 shifted towards contact teaching and learning, leading to increased demand for in-classroom support. Services provided by research assistants and venue monitors included staff and student training, venue monitoring and live-streaming of events. Additionally, the use of observation booths increased, with plans for further expansion.

Support for the digital environment was provided by educational technologists, who engaged in various activities such as learning experience design projects, contributions to the CPL Programme and participation in conferences and workshops. A journal club was initiated to enhance skills and knowledge in educational technology.

The teaching and learning technologies helpdesk and call centre provided support for various teaching and learning systems, handling a significant number of phone calls and assistance requests. Efforts were made to reduce waiting times and improve service efficiency, resulting in a considerable decrease in abandoned calls and satisfactory resolution of assistance requests.

Overall, these initiatives contribute to the enhancement of the teaching and learning environment at the NWU, ensuring effective utilisation of both physical and digital resources to support digital teaching and learning excellence.

The university's LMS, eFundi, remained the single most-used teaching and learning technology at the NWU, with around 20 000 concurrent students logged in at any given time. Little downtime was experienced (98%+ uptime was recorded). Most of the downtime experienced was due to planned maintenance and upgrades.

The use of Panopto as the video repository of the NWU is still growing, with 40 914 recordings uploaded during 2023. The total number of minutes viewed was 34 154 353, compared to 2 840 022 in 2022.

A review of the LMS environment was initiated in 2022, which culminated in the recommendation that the NWU should investigate an alternative LMS. The project team has identified four possible LMS solutions to be investigated further. Vendors were given the opportunity to demonstrate their solutions to the NWU community and the project will continue during 2024.

After the initial phases of selecting a new digital assessment system (Cirrus) and training staff to use the system, implementation of the system was piloted during 2023. In 2024, a phased implementation will be initiated.

A project to develop a prototype of a digital classroom received a strategic fund allocation in 2023. Various benchmarking visits were conducted to determine the scope of the technology to be provided within the digital classroom. Venues to develop the prototypes were identified on both the Potchefstroom Campus and the Mahikeng Campus. In 2024, the team will procure the necessary technology for installation in the prototype.

2023, the PDF Marker tool had a major update and now boasts a range of new features enhancing its useability by lecturers Training sessions were conducted to upskill staff and its large-scale use in the distance environment will be explored in 2024.

In support of the envisaged transformation of spaces and places from a curricular perspective, the CTL has developed a Curriculum Renewal programme aimed at engaging in a systematic process of curriculum transformation and renewal to equip graduates to address the challenges of the 21st century. The programme includes:

- curriculum conversations with students and staff based on grounded data generation tools;
- continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for staff and students for renewing and designing inclusive curricula;
- facilitating curriculum renewal workshops within faculties, using a learning design methodology that is flexible but fit for purpose and includes students as partners; and
- identifying risk indicators in first-year modules and developing interventions to address these.

9.1.4.13 Work-integrated and service-learning system

The NWU Teaching and Learning Strategy (2021–2025) prioritises enhancing graduates' work readiness and engagement through work-integrated and service learning. This focus led to the establishment of the Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) and Service Learning (SL) system (WISL) with objectives to expand WIL and SL, centralise reporting and accommodate faculty-specific needs.

Initially piloted in Education and Nursing, the WISL system received UCDG funding for a three-year period (concluding in December 2023) to support faculty onboarding and system design. The aim was to create a standardised model for WIL and SL, ensuring uniform benefits across disciplines and preparing graduates for professional challenges. Onboarding in all faculties will proceed in 2024.

The NWU organised a WISL colloquium in 2023, promoting collaboration among higher education institutions.

9.1.4.14 Framework for micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are a new development, situated between conventional programmes and short learning programmes. A micro-credential refers to a part-module, or part of a module that the university recognises as credit bearing, and which is clearly defined as a discrete area of learning associated with the module contents. It should be stackable and portable, enabling greater flexibility in learning.

The NWU has taken the lead in this area by creating a framework for the development and recognition of micro-credentials, approved by Senate in 2023. After a successful workshop featuring international experts, we formed an internal working group on implementation and operationalisation of the concept in the NWU.

9.1.4.15 Policy on Open Education Resources

In 2023, the NWU adopted its Policy on Open Education Resources (OER). The policy confirms that the NWU is committed to moving towards an OER agenda and wishes to contribute to the development of society and academia through contributions that are freely available. The NWU is proud of its UNESCO Research Chair for OER and Multimodal Learning.

During the course of 2023, faculty staff were identified as OER champions and facilitated the development of their capacity to create OERs through participation in the national open-textbook initiative, while the CTL Creative Studios assisted lecturers with the creation of OER artefacts. We continued our participation in the international Open Educational Resources University (OERu).

The NWU participated in the national Siyaphumelela OER workstream with the development and presentation of a service-learning workshop that focuses on best practice guidelines for OER creation, adoption, adaptation and integration.

9.1.4.16 Our output: graduates

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

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Graduates	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Overall	14 961	15 454	14 484	13 735	12 358
Contact	11 191	11 697	11 191	10 323	10 175
Distance	3 770	3 757	3 293	3 412	2 183

How much value we created, compared to our targets:

Output	Target	Definition	Actual
Graduates	13 576	Based on HEMIS data; number of graduates in the reporting year	12 358

Our graduation rates in comparison with other institutions:

This is how our graduation rates (for undergraduate students) compare with other South African higher education institutions: NWU graduation rate for students in 2023: 22,43%

9.1.4.17 Challenges in teaching and learning

A major focus was on ensuring that all our offerings were nationally and internationally comparable, appropriately designed and incorporating accessible ICTs to address teaching and learning challenges such as those associated with the pandemic.

In addition to dealing with the aftermath of the pandemic and its impact on teaching and learning, we continued addressing priorities such as the further decolonisation of the curriculum, the Africanisation of appropriate sections of our offerings and opportunities to promote multilingualism in teaching and learning spaces.

Teamwork will become ever more important as the NWU moves forward with the Digital Business Strategy which, in the teaching and learning context, calls for the development of appropriate learning analytics to deliver information needed for decisions on student access and success. Our ability to generate and apply such information will play a pivotal role in differentiating the university and its offerings in the increasingly competitive higher education sector.

9.1.4.18 Future outlook

The adapted Language Policy, implemented in 2023, requires that all faculties draft and submit their language plans to align with the revised policy. Continued efforts to promote multilingualism, by educating and creating awareness amongst staff and students alike, will be required.

The increasing prominence of artificially intelligent large language models (such as Chat GPT) and the impact on academic work and integrity require us to focus on authentic assessment and evidence of skills development rather than content synthesis. A draft Policy on the use of AI at the NWU is expected in 2024, and guidelines for staff and students to use AI ethically and responsibly in teaching and learning will be published in 2024. Inevitably, this will affect curriculum design, with a knock-on effect on module and programme outcomes.

The recalibration of the PQM Review Project will indicate what the emphasis and focus should be in 2024 and subsequent years to ensure that the NWU PQM remains agile and relevant, while also ensuring that the NWU retains its classification as traditional university. The possible merger of the PQM Review Project and the New Century Curriculum Project will be considered.

The NWU focus on student-centricity underscores the importance of continued delivery of student support and development initiatives, in line with our StudyWell project.

We are looking forward to the implementation and operationalisation of the teaching and learning model that will allow variations in modalities and offer options from low to high tech, remote to on-campus, synchronous to asynchronous, independent and guided. At the end of 2023, all faculties submitted their Faculty Integrated Teaching-Learning Plans for the period 2024-2027 in which they have outlined their plans in this regard, as well as new programme and module developments.

A comprehensive proposal on the future of distance learning at the NWU will be presented to the university management in 2024.

The new LMS service provider will be appointed in 2024. Training will be conducted to enable lecturers to use the new LMS for first-year modules in 2026, with appropriate design, development and data transfer support. It is foreseen that all modules will be transferred to the new LMS by the end of 2027.

9.1.5 Material matter: Research

Our researchers and inventors increase our intellectual capital by finding affordable and workable solutions to real-life problems. This creates value for us and our stakeholders.

9.1.5.1 Research output

In recent years, we have steadily increased the number of NRF-rated researchers, rising from 232 in 2018 to 298 in 2022. 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	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
A	0	0	1	1	0
B	27	26	32	36	36
C	161	181	188	196	218
P	2	1	1	2	1
Y	58	55	58	63	67
TOTAL	248	263	280	298	322

A – Leading international scholars

B – Internationally recognised researchers

C – Established researchers

P – Young researchers (normally under 35)

Y – Young researchers (40 years or younger)

9.1.5.2 Publications

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Research	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Publications per academic staff member	0,94	0,98	0,93	0,99	1,02
Weighted research output	2 708,941	3 058,0223	2 811,1914	2 958,062	2864,276

*** Please note that there is a two-year lag with regards the research output.*

9.1.5.3 Increase our global standing and visibility

Through our research collaborations with various partners, we co-chair collaborative research and innovation programmes and offer collaborative degrees, skills development opportunities and conduct international student recruitment and exchange. We have partnerships with prestigious institutions such as the Corporación Universidad de la Costa in Colombia, the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom and the University of Hong Kong in Asia, among others.

In addition to bilateral partnerships, the NWU belongs to strategic inter-institutional collaborations such as the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), which has a memorandum of understanding with the OBREAL Global Observatory. The NWU is also a member of the Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD), which advances strategic, multilateral academic collaboration between institutions in the Southern African and Nordic regions.

We are an active partner in research collaborations within the Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) bloc, and have knowledge and skills-sharing agreements with several BRICS universities.

The NWU adopted an Open Access Policy in 2022, promoting publication in open access journals and other platforms. This was followed by the signing of transformative agreements with large publishers through the South African Library and information Consortium (SANLiC). To date, through increased publication on open access platforms, we have saved more than R21 million in article processing charges (APC).

9.1.5.4 Create value through innovation and technology

Inventions, new technologies and the underlying IP only truly become innovations once they are transferred into the hands of end-users and implemented to address the problems for which they were designed. Any financial return to the university and the creators eventually filters back to the NWU. In this regard, 2023 was a good year in this regard. Commercialisation revenues from running royalties, licence fees and once-off or ad hoc transactions (such as the sale of IP or of shares and dividends), reached an impressive R6 million.

The Technology Transfer and Innovation Support (TTIS) Department continues to replenish the pipeline of commercially viable ideas and to support the NWU in bringing those ideas to fruition. The Department of Science and Innovation and the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association

(SARIMA) presented an award to TTIS for organisational excellence in innovation management. This award recognises the significant impact of the TTIS in building, encouraging and championing innovation within NWU over many years.

In support of NWU research innovations locally and globally, the TTIS office continued to facilitate relationships between industry partners, investors, government agencies and other institutions. The office also supported the development of innovation management professionals in the Southern African region.

TTIS staff regularly participates in global programmes such as Oxford University's Strengthening Commercialisation Skills workshop to encourage the commercialisation of research outputs from the humanities, arts and social sciences.

In 2023, we implemented new incentives through the NWU Innovation Fellowship Programme and the Patent Incentive Scheme to encourage early-stage researchers to enhance their innovation skills and commercialise their academic research.

An important launching pad for young innovators is the Leopards Lair® student entrepreneurship competition.

This event was hosted by the TTIS office and received support from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, the NWU Business School, the Small Business Advisory Bureau, and the Bongi Enterprise Development Centre, with funding from DSI/NIPMO, the IDC and the Bongi Foundation.

Throughout 2023, aspiring entrepreneurs had the opportunity to participate in entrepreneurial boot camps across all three campuses. At the final event, contestants had five minutes to pitch their business ideas to the panel of judges.

Alternative leather company FLeather, which uses mushroom roots as feedstock, won the Leopards Lair® postgraduate category, as well as the inaugural Bongi Foundation Prize for sustainability. They used mushroom roots as feedstock. The FLeather team comprises Madelein de Jager, Le Roux Bernard and PJ Prinsloo, all honours students in business management sciences.

Zander van der Watt, an engineering student, won the undergraduate category with his Positech Vending Machine, which incorporates cutting-edge technologies to enhance reliability and aesthetics.

9.1.5.5 Challenges with research output

Funding constraints are affecting the availability of incentives for our most productive researchers. Fortunately, we have sophisticated research infrastructure and good relationships with funders and are innovative in discovering and drawing on new sources of funding.

A pilot Innovation Fellowship programme was run in 2023 to encourage researchers to engage in innovation. This programme is an opportunity for early-career researchers and academics to enhance their innovation skills and business acumen whilst enhancing the commercialisation readiness on their own inventions.

We also launched a new IP incentive scheme that acknowledges the effort our inventors expend on the patent prosecution process. These researchers provide many hours of invaluable input to the patent attorneys drafting and defending our patent claims. These contributions often go unrecognised as productive activities, and the incentive scheme goes some way towards changing this thinking.

9.1.5.6 Future outlook

While innovation activity has traditionally been the terrain of researchers in the natural and mathematical sciences, we look forward to growth in the number of IP disclosures from the humanities and social sciences. This is important as we strive to enlarge our pool of productive researchers and innovators across disciplines.

Apart from embracing research and innovation contributions from researchers in all our faculties, we consider it imperative that all academics view research and innovation as part of their responsibilities. A number of academic staff are not yet participating in such activities, and we have explained to them that participating is in their professional best interests. In consultation with these academics, the faculties have set research output targets that require them to contribute.

NWU researchers will continue to have access to research support mechanisms such as research leave, relief from teaching to allow for dedicated research time, and the integration of research into teaching and learning activities.

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

"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."

9.1.6 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.

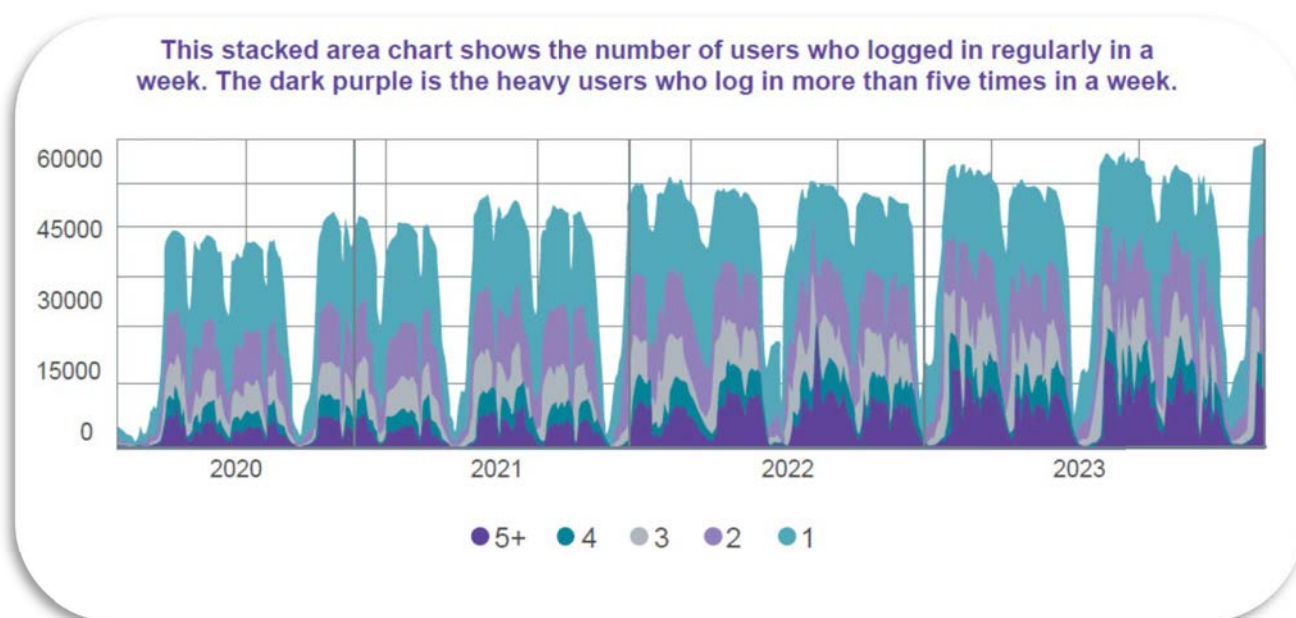
For more information about how our management activities increase our intellectual capital, refer to the [report of the vice-chancellor](#) and, for information about governance, read more in the [section on governance](#) supporting and protecting value.

9.1.7 Material matter: Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

ICTs and digital resources underpin the core operations and support services at NWU, impacting our intellectual and manufactured capital.

Intellectual capital includes software, IT support services and the e-learning platform eFundi, whereas manufactured capital refers to our physical ICT infrastructure, including networks and hardware.

The IT department is responsible for the NWU's technological capabilities, managing a portfolio of products, projects and services. There is a high demand for IT services across the university, with eFundi being one of the most utilised platforms, as illustrated below:



Since 2018, eFundi has seen a significant increase in student engagement. Usage more than doubled from 2018 to 2020 as education moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

While average use stabilised in 2021, peak usage rose in 2022.

In 2023, user numbers increased by 11%, adding 5 000 new users, with peaks of over 18 000 students accessing eFundi simultaneously and 15 000 hourly logins. The platform handles approximately 45 terabytes of traffic monthly, with lecturers uploading around 15 terabytes of content throughout 2023.

In 2023, the demand for online meeting platforms such as Microsoft Teams remained substantial, echoing the trends of the previous years. As the NWU progresses into the digital era, we expect a significant and sustained increase in the utilisation of IT products and 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 13 June 2024.

9.2 Our human capital

Human capital is a critical factor in influencing the other capitals at the NWU. Skilled and knowledgeable employees can drive productivity, innovation and growth, leading to increased financial, physical, intellectual and social and relationship capital.

Our human capital includes faculty and staff who teach, conduct research and provide administrative support, as well as students who engage in learning and research. Human capital drives curriculum development and change, student engagement and support, the building of partnerships and collaborations, conditions for fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, and the administration and governance of the university. At the NWU, we are proud of individuals who are not only experts in their fields but also creative thinkers and problem solvers.

Other capitals influenced by our human capital are social and relationship capital, which includes the relationships and networks we have with stakeholders such as customers, suppliers and partners. Skilled employees can build and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders, leading to increased trust, collaboration and opportunities for the NWU. Additionally, human capital can enhance our reputation and brand, which can further strengthen our social and relationship capital.

Human capital is also closely related to intellectual capital, which includes the knowledge, expertise and intellectual property of the NWU. Skilled employees contribute to the creation and development of intellectual capital through their research, innovation and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, human capital can help protect and leverage intellectual capital by ensuring that employees understand the value of intellectual property and how to manage and utilise it effectively.

Our staff and students play a prominent role in the NWU value chain, as outlined in this table.

Stakeholders who will benefit from human capital activities	Our human capital activities mainly affect our staff and students; whilst their families are also indirectly affected.
Material matters/goals involved	Almost all material matters affect our staff and students. These matters are teaching and learning, research, community engagement, student value proposition, staff and student profile, ability to govern, lead and manage, information and communication technology, and financial sustainability.
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 these risks have a bearing on our staff and students.

9.2.1 How we created value

Staff and students are the two major stakeholder groups that make up the university's human capital, which influences and is influenced by all our other capitals. We create value for our staff and students through our activities, outputs and outcomes.

Students increase our financial capital when they pay tuition fees and, when they graduate, increase our social and relationship capital by contributing to society.

In addition, they contribute their time, resources and skills when participating in the co-curricular programme. This further adds to the capital of the university and contributes to the strategic objective of creating a clearly differentiated student value proposition.

9.2.2 Material matter: Teaching and learning, research, community engagement

9.2.2.1 Caring for our students

Graduates entering the labour market require a combination of technical, professional and life skills to adapt to the future world of work and contribute as responsible global citizens. We promote the holistic and all-round development of our students by offering them opportunities to participate in social, cultural, arts and sport activities.

Our strong emphasis on peer-to-peer development through student leadership and peer helper programmes further contributes towards our agile ability to creating a caring and inclusive environment for a diverse student community.

More information on how we care for our students is available in the [vice-chancellor's report](#).

9.2.2.2 Academic and career-related support

Faculties continued to assist students to prepare for assessments and to provide appropriate guidance prior to sit-down assessments.

Student Counselling and Development (SCD) continued to provide support services and programmes, including emotional support (therapy/counselling), career and course counselling, HIV testing and counselling, various social support initiatives, psychometric assessments, leadership and personal development, concessions and extended writing time, as well as the Disability Rights Unit. All students, in contact or distance programmes can access these services via the SCD website or the 24/7 psychological crisis line.

9.2.2.3 Caring for our staff – building staff capacity

The new world of work, post-Covid 19, has accelerated the need to capacitate our employees through upskilling and reskilling programmes. In 2023, staff continued to have access to internal and external skills development opportunities, as well as formal training. About 54% of our training spend was used for various in-house training programmes on digital transformation, emotional intelligence, report writing skills, courageous conversations, diversity training and the launch of the Women Leadership programme.

We capacitated NWU's semi-skilled employees through learnerships on end-user computing, a learnership programme on basic computer and digital skills.

In partnership with Universities South Africa (USAf), the NWU continued to participate in the Presidential Youth Stimulus (PYES) Programme. We hosted 181 interns, of whom only four resigned and some were subsequently offered permanent and fixed-term employment opportunities within the NWU or external companies.

In 2023, we spent over R29,7 million on study discount benefits, a form of financial aid that allows our staff and their dependants to study at the NWU and Unisa. A total of 869 people benefited, consisting of 425 staff and 444 dependants.

Development programmes such as these support the strategic assumptions from our new strategy for 2024 and beyond which stipulates that "upskilling is part of the future".

9.2.2.4 Empowering our researchers

Through internal and external capacity-development opportunities, we equip our researchers at all levels with the research skills and acumen to contribute to the university's research outputs.

Internally, we run capacity-building workshops and, as part of the larger research community in South Africa, we leverage external development opportunities such as research training/workshops and webinars on research ethics and integrity, article writing, postgraduate supervision, supervision for student article writing, an academic mentoring programme and briefing sessions and consultations on preparing for NRF rating applications.

In 2023, the LIS contributed to research and innovation skills development in various ways:

- It offered advanced data and research skills to postgraduate students and researchers at all levels. Some of the areas covered were understanding open research practices and policies, navigating the publishing landscape, and mastering research data management.
- LIS established and managed the Digital Scholarship Centre, a dynamic hub that enhances collaboration, innovation and knowledge sharing.
- The department actively promoted open-access initiatives, including open-access publishing, which saw 302 papers being published and saving the university US\$239 000 in article processing charges.
- LIS also hosted the International Open Access Week Colloquium 2023, which brought together notable scholars, researchers and open access advocates from around the world. The theme was “Community over Commercialisation”, which emphasised the importance of a publishing ecosystem that places community benefits ahead of financial gains.

During 2023, training costs were covered through the Informal Research Development project grant, amounting to R1 860 312,80 and the Enhancement of Researcher Profile project grant, totalling R716 815,00. Both grants were awarded under the Universities Capacity Development Grant.

Emerging researchers were encouraged to further their studies. During 2023, 38 staff members received funding of R1 394 659 to complete their master's or doctoral studies from our University Capacity Development Grant. In addition, a UCDG contribution of R2 000 000 to the NWU Staff Discount Scheme were made to support 97 staff members enrolled for their master's or doctoral studies.

A total of 260 researchers attended 15 research capacity-building workshops on supervision and article writing.

Our outstanding researchers were recognised at the Research and Innovation Excellence Awards held in November 2022 and in November 2023.

More details about these awards in the [section](#) on our value chain.

9.2.3 Material matter: Student value proposition

All our students have access to relevant, inclusive programmes ranging from academic support and career advice to wellness support services and skills development.

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 socio-economic backgrounds. The campus disability rights units see to it that the needs of students with disabilities are addressed. In addition, the support available to pregnant students has been improved. Its case-by-case approach aims to enable a student to manage their pregnancy and its impact on their participation in university programmes.

We also provide crisis interventions to identify and support at-risk students through the Thuso (Help) Crisis Line, through which registered psychologists provide services that promote the psychological well-being of students. Flexible options for either face-to-face or online counselling and therapy are available to students.

Co-curricular programmes in the arts, sport and student media platforms further strengthen our student value proposition. The achievements of our student sportsmen and sportswomen, artists and media ambassadors confirm the vital role of these activities in broad and holistic student development.

9.2.3.1 Dropout rates

Our student to staff ratio increased from 28,45 to 28,59 in 2023. Our first-time entrant dropout rate has dropped from 9,79% in 2022 to 8,86% in 2023.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

Dropout rate	2020	2021	2022	2023
First-time entrant dropout rate for contact degrees	10,48%	8,96%	9,79%	8,86%

How much value we created, compared to our target:

	Target	Definition	Actual
Academic staff full-time equivalent ratio: students	27,5	Based on HEMIS data and refers to the enrolled student full-time equivalent divided by the permanent instruction/research professionals full-time equivalent.	28,59
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.	8,86%

9.2.4 Material matter: Develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile

9.2.4.1 Our employees matter

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

We have a holistic employee wellness assistance programme, managed through a well-equipped wellness team and an outsourced service provider, Life Health Solutions, which renders counselling services for NWU employees and their dependents. Staff have access to experienced, registered counselling professionals who assist with personal, family, work-related, legal and financial problems. This service is available 24 hours a day at no cost to staff members. The wellness team also provides onsite counselling services.

Recognising the shared responsibility for well-being, NWU's 2024 interventions will equip both employees and the university with resources to optimise their overall workplace well-being through various assessments and interventions.

Employee wellness also works closely with the Campus Health Care Centres to offer health services to staff. People and Culture has also established a health forum which offers incapacity guidance and support.

Campus Protection Services and the Occupational Health and Safety Department contribute to a healthy and safe working environment.

• Staff profile

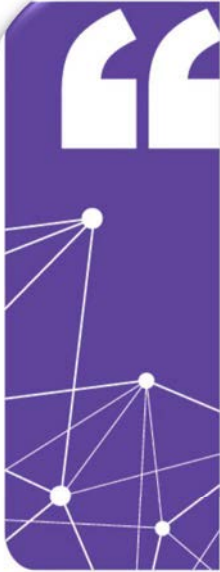
We strive to create an equitable staff profile. In this, we have been guided by our employment equity plan for 2021 to 2023. Our ability to reach some of the employment equity targets was impeded by reduced funding levels and the freezing of vacancies as a result of the Staff Cost Risk Mitigation Plan.

How much value we created, compared to previous years:

	2021	2022	2023
African (%)	39,7%	41,74%	44,66%
Coloured (%)	6,9%	7,39%	7,38%
Indian (%)	1,6%	1,62%	1,77%
White (%)	51,7%	49,25%	46,19%

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

	2023 target	Actual
African (%)	41,56%	44,66%
Coloured (%)	7,37%	7,38%
Indian (%)	1,95%	1,77%
White (%)	48,02%	46,19%
Foreign nationals (%)	1,10%	4,2%



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The NWU is committed to principle of fairness which encompasses both substantive and procedural fairness. We strive for proactive resolution of potential disputes and our approach to discipline is of a progressive nature and not punitive. Our grievance procedure stipulates that grievances should be resolved at the lowest point of origin and as speedily as possible.

It is worth mentioning that there were no major disputes between the university and unions organised within the NWU.

As there is currently no union that enjoys recognition, engagements with all the three unions are through the Management-Employee Consultative Forum. The engagement meeting with these unions is arranged separately for each union and relevant information is shared with them.



Statement approval obtained from
the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.





COUNCIL STATEMENT ON WORKER AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION

On worker participation: There is currently still no union with recognition within the NWU, and an interim structure, called the University Consultative Forum, was established to deal with matters that were previously dealt with by the University Bargaining Forum (UBF).

The current situation is that the three unions (NEHAWU, SAPTU and Solidarity), organised within the NWU, enjoy organisational rights. It seems this situation is likely to persist for some time as none of the three unions is close to attaining the mandatory 30% threshold for them to enjoy recognition rights.

On the other hand, the University Management Committee on Cost-of-Living Adjustment (UMC-COLA) was established after the de-recognition of SAPTU, which used to have a Recognition Agreement with the NWU. The Recognition Agreement entitled SAPTU to be part of the University Bargaining Forum on Cost-of-Living Adjustment (UBF-COLA), which was the forum where the annual negotiation on salary increases took place.

The committee comprises University Management Committee members and co-opted members from the People and Culture and Finance portfolios, owing to their relevant expertise.

On student participation: The NWU Statute forms the basis for ensuring student participation in statutory structures, with student representation further guided by the Institutional Rules on Student Governance and the Constitution of the Student Representative Council (SRC).

In accordance with these rules, the SRC President, after consultation with the SRC, designates members of the SRC and SCCs to become, among others, full members of the NWU Council, some subcommittees of Council (such as the Student Housing Committee, the Student Life Oversight Committee and the Human Rights Committee), as well as the Senate, the Institutional Forum and the Committee for Student Support Services.

The NWU enjoys an extensive student leadership and governance model, with approximately 1 100 student leaders elected annually to various student leadership structures that further ensure student participation throughout all levels of the university, including faculties, university residences, sport and art.

Statement approval obtained from
the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.

9.2.5 Material matter: Govern, lead and manage; information and communication technology; and financial sustainability

Good governance supports and protects our human capital and is an important part of the responsibilities of the Council and Council 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 of the university, thereby protecting and increasing our human capital.

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.

The principle of equity in provisioning underpins the NWU's commitment to fostering an inclusive and diverse learning and working environment. Since ICT is a key enabler of student success and staff effectiveness, equitable access to IT resources and services is essential. Our ICT systems are well maintained across the three campuses and all staff and students have the necessary hardware, software and help desk support.

Given the diverse range of technological needs across faculties, campuses and administrative units, an equitable approach ensures that each segment of the university community benefits from tailored IT solutions and resources. Such an approach addresses the unique needs of individual departments and provides optimal use of resources, promoting efficiency and effectiveness. By embracing equity in provisioning, the IT Department upholds the broader values of the NWU and demonstrates its commitment to serving the entire community with fairness and precision.

Lastly, it is our responsibility to guarantee 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. [Read more](#) about how we do this is in the section on our financial capital.

9.3 Our social and relationship capital

The new NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond that was approved in 2023, Taking the NWU forward - 2024 and beyond, places strong emphasis on advancing societal progress through the dissemination of knowledge, innovative teaching methods, cutting-edge research and active community engagement. Central to this vision is the university's contribution to sustainable development.

The integration and alignment of CE with teaching, learning and research efforts foster a culture of active citizenship, nurturing intentional relationships between the university and its local, national and international stakeholders, including community organisations, businesses and governmental bodies. Such collaborations facilitate the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources, ultimately contributing to the creation of more sustainable, just and healthy communities.

A key element in effective community engagement lies in a comprehensive understanding of contemporary issues, allowing for the allocation of resources towards addressing societal needs. Strong stakeholder relationships enhance the university's standing in the eyes of stakeholders, thereby augmenting the institution's social and relationship capital.

Stakeholders who will benefit from effective engagement with the NWU	External stakeholders who should benefit from our engagement with them include the parents of current and prospective students, communities around 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	The relationships we cultivate with external stakeholders have a profound impact on all our university goals, as we endeavour to contribute positively to society through the dissemination of knowledge. Enhancing the value of our social and relational capital is vital, and our communication, marketing and stakeholder engagement activities play a crucial role in achieving this objective.
Risks involved	<p>Managing partnerships can be challenging due to their inherent complexity, especially as the power dynamics among our partners may be affected by external factors beyond our control, such as economic disparities, institutional hierarchies or societal influences. These dynamics may impede our access to community partners or influence their willingness to sustain their relationship with the university over time.</p> <p>If the visible benefits of community engagement accrue primarily to the university and students, rather than directly benefiting our external partners, communities may perceive the volunteerism and service contributions from NWU as inadequate. Consequently, communities surrounding our campuses might choose to withdraw their support for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) or service-learning opportunities. Additionally, they may opt out of participating in research initiatives that involve community engagement.</p> <p>Many of our stakeholders are facing significant challenges affecting their livelihoods and overall well-being. As a result, community partners may start to anticipate compensation for assisting the university with its core operations. It is important to note that community engagement is a mandate from the DHET but is not financially supported as such. Therefore, it becomes crucial to demonstrate the tangible value that community engagement brings to our partnerships with communities, emphasising the practical benefits it offers beyond financial compensation. Moreover, carefully crafted, extensively deliberated and formally established agreements can mitigate confusion and effectively manage expectations of all parties involved.</p>

	<p>Instability within community settings presents a potential obstacle to placing students and staff in positions to assist with engaged research and student experiential training. This can be overcome to some extent through collaborative creation of knowledge involving a focus on participatory activities and the establishment of trust relationships, together with robust risk management strategies. Risks associated with community engagement initiatives must be managed through regular assessment, monitoring and implementing mitigation measures. In addition to having clear and open communication channels, it is important to provide regular updates on project progress, outcomes and any changes that may affect stakeholders, and to encourage feedback and input from community members.</p> <p>Not all external partners are accustomed to applying scientific processes, and these methods may not always be valued to the same extent as they are within the university context. Negotiating positive impacts among stakeholders while managing unintended consequences is an ongoing process that can strain financial and human resources.</p> <p>Parents of students may also be affected by uncertainties within the higher education sector, including concerns regarding state funding, tuition fees and campus safety in times of unrest.</p> <p>Furthermore, external stakeholders face additional risks related to academic matters, regulatory compliance and the commercialisation of intellectual property over which they may not have control.</p>
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9.3.1 How we created value

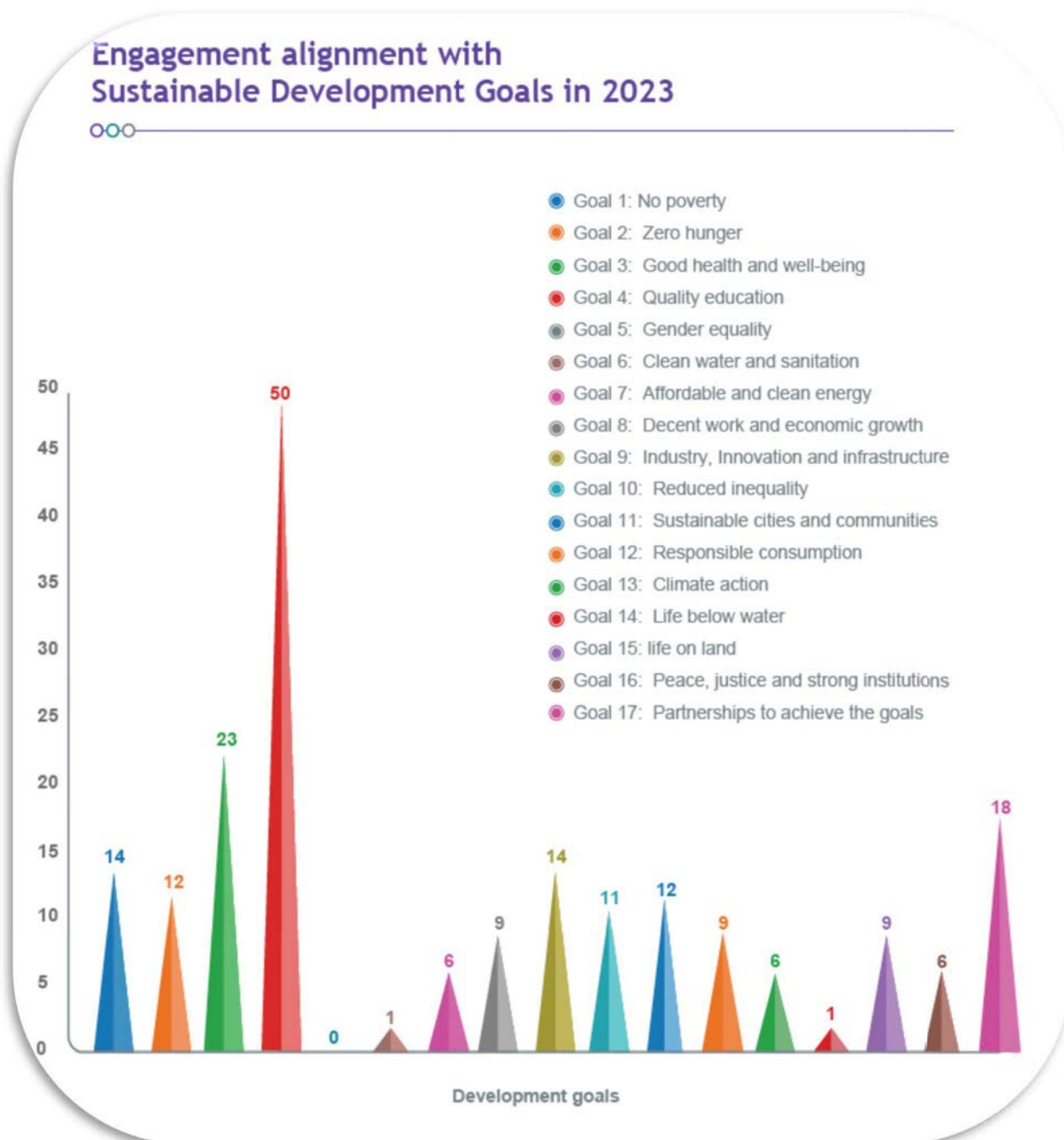
Through our community engagement activities, we created value for various stakeholders, for instance our students who benefit through work-integrated learning, and for communities through knowledge sharing. We also added more value to our efforts by aligning them with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Adding value through the Sustainable Development Goals**

Our community engagement activities are intentionally aligned with the SDGs and we aim to measure our progress towards them through community engagement channels and methods. Using specialised software, for example, we will assess the perceived impacts on all stakeholders, ensuring ongoing evaluation and understanding of the value created for ourselves and our stakeholders.



The figure below shows how our community engagement activities are aligned with the SDGs.



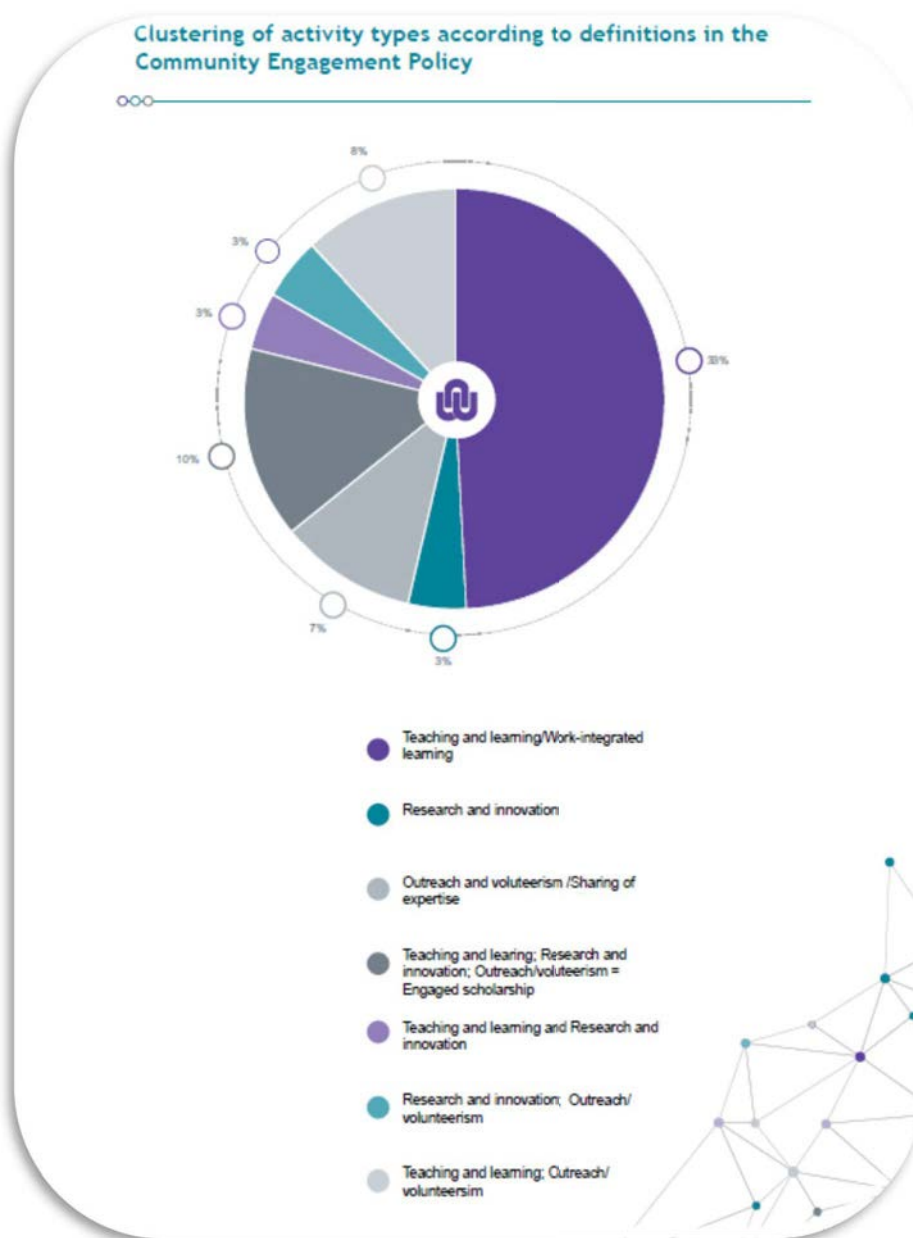
- As the figure shows, the highest number of community engagement activities are linked to Quality Education (SDG 4). This link is consistently maintained from project registration through to the monitoring phases, which indicates a strong institutional commitment to educational initiatives and aligns with our mandate.
- There has been a discernible greater alignment with certain SDGs from previous years, such as SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 17 (Partnerships to Achieve the Goals), from the registration phase to the evaluation phase. This suggests that activities may evolve over time to better meet these goals or reporting may be refined to show the link more clearly between the activities and the SDGs.
- Across all community engagement project phases – from registration and monitoring to evaluation – certain SDGs such as Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6) consistently show lower alignment between the activities and the SDGs concerned. This indicates potential areas for increased focus or improved activity initiation to address these global priorities.

The percentages on the figure indicate that the monitoring and evaluation phases can affect the perceived alignment with SDGs. This impact highlights the importance of these phases in not only tracking activity progress, but also in potentially reshaping activity goals to align more closely with the SDGs as an activity develops.

- **Adding value through engaged scholarship**

Integrating community engagement activities with teaching, learning and research presents an opportunity to generate greater value for our external stakeholders. Our analysis from 2022 and 2023, as documented in our [annual CE report](#), highlights the potential for increased integration and a stronger emphasis on engaged scholarship, consisting of engaged research, engaged teaching and learning, and outreach and the sharing of expertise.

The figure below shows the growth in engaged scholarship at the NWU and the various combinations of engagement forms that are emerging. (Please note that the figure excludes the 17 reported activities not categorised into the four CE categories and therefore the percentages given add up to 96,6%.)



Service learning (SL) for students is an important part of our community engagement work and we are constantly updating our database of legitimate, trusted SL partners for service placements. This has entailed integrating information about modules that use SL into our data collection process. A total of 39,2% activities fell into the category of Engaged Teaching and Learning. Of the 196 activities registered, 70 (36%) were related to an existing module.

We continue to update our list of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public benefit organisations (PBOs) and religious organisations that could assist with student placements. The intention is to work together to set targeted objectives that address our partners' needs and identify opportunities to engage with NWU experts who can assist with any challenges identified.

9.3.2 Material matter: Teaching and learning; research; community engagement

Community engagement has been seamlessly integrated into numerous teaching and learning activities, primarily through WIL and SL opportunities for students. These initiatives not only contribute to their academic growth but also foster the development of essential skills such as planning, negotiation and collaboration. Faculty members are encouraged to incorporate SL assignments into the curriculum whenever feasible.

To document the learning outcomes derived from interactions with our partners, a portfolio of evidence is maintained, capturing student reflections on the engagement experiences. This portfolio serves as a valuable resource for informing future curricular content and research directions.

However, the implementation of SL elements in the curriculum remains somewhat limited and occasionally overlaps with a strong WIL approach, where the emphasis is placed more on the learning benefits rather than the service provided to community partners. Notably, these partners extend beyond grassroots organisations to encompass communities of practice and industry partners.

For the purposes of tracking student placements, we have implemented an integrated reporting system known as the Work Integrated Service Learning (WISL) database. Efforts to onboard academic staff onto this platform are ongoing, ensuring comprehensive documentation of these activities.

- **Establishing a science shop**

Funding from the NRF/DSI has enabled the establishment of a virtual science shop that acts as a hub for community members to access scientific knowledge and research, and to seek assistance with various issues, such as gender-based violence or food security. Upon visiting the science shop, which is run from the Sustainability and Community Impact department, individuals are matched with university units or experts who collaborate with them to address their concerns and take action toward solutions.

- **Hosting a Youth Learning Festival**

Teaching youth community-based research and transversal skills is an investment in their future and the well-being of their communities. During 2023, the NWU hosted its inaugural Youth Learning Festival to provide a platform for young people, particularly those not in employment or further training, to acquire practical skills and knowledge. The festival, which aimed to develop the assets of unemployed youth from Khuma and Mandawana communities, saw 17 stallholders offering workshops on digital coding, entrepreneurship, career guidance and environmental preservation, among other things.

- **NWU Business School**

Between 2013 and 2023, over 100 NPOs have benefited from SL projects within the MBA Operations Management module offered by the Business School. Each year, syndicate groups of students select a community NPO and collaborate with them to identify their most pressing management needs. The projects cover a wide range of organisations, including old-age homes, animal shelters, second-hand clothing banks at schools, AIDS shelters, and welfare organisations, each with unique and diverse needs.

- **Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences**

This faculty has been the most prolific in recording their CE activities on the database with 158 activities registered for 2023. It also supports a variety of SL and WIL projects, which vary from women entrepreneurship training and outreaches to training of governmental organisations and NPOs on disability inclusion. Staff at Tourism Research in Economics, Environments and Society (TREES) are also exposing students to a GeoHeritage site, namely the Vredefort Dome, so that they can explore tour guiding as a viable career option.

- **Faculty of Education**

The Faculty of Education at the NWU's Mahikeng Campus launched a community project to equip learners in disadvantaged schools with skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

Key objectives of the project include equipping pre-service and in-service teachers with technological expertise, bridging the digital divide in schools, and enhancing teaching and learning practices through the integration of ICTs. The project is designed to achieve various outcomes, including the acquisition of practical teaching strategies, the development of innovative lesson plans incorporating ICTs, and the ability to effectively integrate technology into classroom instruction.

In another Faculty of Education project, LEGO® bricks are being incorporated into classroom settings as part of pre-service teacher training programmes, blending hands-on experiential learning with traditional theoretical education. The project, involves a partnership with the non-profit organisation Care for Education.

• Faculty of Engineering

The Faculty of Engineering is collaborating with SunFarming, a German renewable energy company, to provide instant maize porridge to schools in the North West Province. This project supports around 14,000 children and distributes 80 tons of porridge monthly.

Additionally, another collaborative effort involves a partnership with the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences to reduce household air pollution by introducing low-emission, semi-continuous coal stoves in Zamdela and Oranjeville in the Free State. (Refer to the section on community engagement in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences for more details.)

• Faculty of Health Sciences

This faculty registered 71 activities on the CE data base, including:

- the Phelopepa train which, in partnership with Transnet, provides healthcare services in optometry, nursing, psychology, pharmacy and dentistry. Five pharmacy schools from different universities participate, each sending two fourth-year pharmacy students per week to work in the registered pharmacies on the trains under the supervision of a registered pharmacist.
- The North-West University and Walter Sisulu University have joined forces in the Strep A Vaccine Global Consortium (SAVAC) project, aimed at revolutionising the fight against tuberculosis.
- Mamello Maema, an NWU staff member, was chosen as one of the 100 Brightest Young Minds by the World Food Programme (WFP) for Southern Africa. Mamello, a senior laboratory technician, applied for the programme due to its alignment with her master's research on plant-based protein consumption in South Africa.
- The NWU Mafikeng Campus, in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Health, continued to conduct community-focused research on non-communicable diseases associated with modern living. The project is based at the village of Lokaleng and has been running since August 2015
- The Faculty of Health Sciences has been conducting a project on antibiotic utilisation in public sector healthcare systems of Limpopo Province. The project has been used to describe antibiotic prescription and consumption, pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes and practices on antimicrobial stewardships in rural settings, and the prevalence of antimicrobial resistance. The faculty continues to support health-related and sustainability challenges in North West Province communities through a formal collaboration with the Western Cape Department of Health.
- Researchers from the Occupational Hygiene and Health Research Initiative (OHHRI) are exploring the association between pesticide use patterns and exposure of subsistence and smallholder farmers within the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme (VHIS). The aim is to assist the farmers in this area with control measures to manage their pesticide exposure..
- The Sports Science team from the Centre for Health and Human Performance (CHHP) at the NWU conducted talent identification tests on wheelchair basketball players at Tlamelang Special School near Mahikeng, in collaboration with the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC). The tests assessed various physical abilities such as body composition, strength, speed, agility and aerobic endurance, providing insights into the children's overall health and fitness levels. The team identified talented young athletes and praised their dedication and determination.

• Faculty of Law

Through its legal clinics in Mahikeng and Potchefstroom, the Faculty of Law offers quality legal assistance primarily to indigent individuals who qualify for free legal aid. Moreover, they serve as practical training grounds for law students, allowing them to apply their legal skills in real-world scenarios. With 273 registered law students offering legal aid as part of their Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), the faculty ensures a significant impact on communities in need.

• Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The North West Nguni Cattle Development Project has been running for over 15 years and benefitted. The initiative aims to empower identified small-scale farmers, which receive a foundational herd of 23 cows and a bull. Through annual visits for monitoring and evaluation, it has become apparent that this project has markedly improved livelihoods across four major districts in the North West Province.

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the Faculty of Engineering are collaborating in a project to reduce indoor air pollution in two Free State towns, Zamdela and Oranjeville. After initially introducing six low-emission, semi-continuous coal stoves in Zamdela, the team expanded the project in the 2023 winter season by installing 50 stoves in Oranjeville. The team gained community access by collaborating with municipal officials, local authorities ward councillors and residents. Surveys will be conducted to evaluate household quality of life and energy usage patterns.

Lifting Dreams is an organisation dedicated to developing communities through education, with the active involvement of NWU academics and students. Founded in February 2022, Lifting Dreams runs weekly tutoring sessions at underprivileged schools, including Ourief Primary in Potchefstroom and Ebenezer Creche in Ikageng. In addition to academic support, the organisation addresses nutritional needs by establishing food gardens at schools like Ourief Primary. These gardens not only provide nutrition but also create opportunities for income generation, skills development, and community building.

9.3.3 Material matter: Research

In 2023, NWU researchers and inventors continued to bolster our intellectual capital by devising affordable and practical solutions to real-life challenges, thereby generating value for the university and our stakeholders. Engaged research activities remained diverse, encompassing topics such as load-shedding, alternative heat sources and water quality management. Many of these initiatives integrated engaged teaching and learning or outreach and research components, contributing to community empowerment and enhancing quality of life. Several noteworthy observations emerged from our monitoring and evaluation reports:

- Student-led research activities, especially among postgraduate students, underscored the university's commitment to nurturing a vibrant research culture. To amplify our impact, it is recommended that postgraduate research endeavours explicitly align with relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Incorporating SDGs into dissertations, theses and publications can elevate the visibility of our contributions to global objectives and promote purpose-driven research.
 - Applied research demonstrated a practical approach, finding solutions for real-life problems.
 - While commercialisation initiatives, policy analysis and consulting were present in community-engaged research, their frequency was relatively low, suggesting potential areas for growth and focus.
 - Funding our engagement efforts remains a challenge. Corporate and government-funded engaged research were notably absent from our data, indicating untapped opportunities for collaboration and funding. Actively pursuing these avenues with the assistance of NWU's fundraising team and targeted stakeholder engagement could unlock new funding sources, diversify our portfolio and amplify the impact of our research.
- **Faculty of Humanities**

Through a collaboration with Emile Coetzee, a NWU historian, South African company Value Apps Pty Ltd developed the Road Trip SA app to help travellers uncover places of interest across southern Africa. The app already features approximately 3 000 listings, with and photographs, unbiased historical explanations and precise locations for easy navigation. It serves as an invaluable resource for students studying history, tourism and heritage management, as well as for high school students seeking educational content. Furthermore, it promotes domestic tourism.

9.3.4 Material matter: Student value proposition; develop and retain excellent staff

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

The GoAllOut Organisation student chapter at the NWU has initiated a community service project called Pad the Way. The goals of the Pad the Way project are to increase awareness of the importance of personal hygiene for women, combat period poverty and to encourage government leaders to make it mandatory for all schools and communities to provide free sanitary products to girls. To date, the student chapter of GoAllOut has collected 100 000 individual sanitary pads for distribution at schools in and around Mahikeng.

In 2023, students and support staff undertook a total of 74 community engagement activities in and around Potchefstroom. These included community gardens as a practical response to widespread food insecurity. An example was the backyard garden launched at Bert's Bricks Primary School as a partnership involving the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the NWU's Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management, the Social Anthropology subject group, Assupol, Sanlam, the North West Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, and the North West Department of Education.

The Vanderbijlpark Campus's Student Campus Council (SCC) organised a "Hang a Hug" event to commemorate the 2023 Nelson Mandela Day. Students and staff donated jackets that were hung on trees around the campus for those in need during winter. Over 150 jackets were collected.

The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Office of the SCC at the Potchefstroom Campus held its annual Barefoot Day event, resulting in 16 966 kilograms of clothing and shoes being collected for donation to schools, children's homes and non-profit organisations. Students participate by going barefoot for the day.

9.3.5 Challenges and future outlook

Three meetings with partners are planned for the coming year. The intention is to work together to set targeted objectives that address our partners' needs and identify opportunities to engage with NWU experts who can assist with any challenges identified.

The economic fallout from the pandemic and load-shedding has worsened poverty, inequality and unemployment in communities near our campuses, heightening our responsibility to aid poverty alleviation and community empowerment. While technology and online education offer avenues for greater accessibility, the digital divide impedes progress, hindering social justice efforts. Nonetheless, the university is actively addressing this issue by donating 156 redundant computers to deserving community partners.

Entrepreneurship, environmental responsibility and digital literacy are central to our focus on advancing the SDGs and the African Agenda 2063. Our commitment to these areas serves as a direct measure of our contribution to development and sharing expertise for societal progress.

9.4 Our natural capital

The necessity to safeguard natural resources such as water, soil and clean air has been amplified by phenomena such as climate change and load-shedding. These natural resources are fundamental to the sustainable operations of the university and our ability to add value to our other capitals.

The NWU needs a healthy water supply to function and uses land and other resources to construct buildings and strengthen our manufactured capital. However, the value of our natural capital decreases when we build on land and use natural resources and create waste during the construction process.

In 2023, the NWU continued phasing out paper-based programmes in the Unit for Distance Education, in favour of using the eFundi LMS to provide study guidance and interaction with lecturers and fellow students. Assignments will also be submitted online. As from 2024, new distance students will not be provided with printed textbooks. In the distance education space, the NWU is significantly reducing paper waste and the environmental impact of transporting paper-based material to and from students.

Stakeholders who will benefit from our 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 inputs. 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).

9.4.1 How we created, reduced and maintained value – background on environmental sustainability at the NWU

The NWU has for many years had a fragmented approach towards environmental sustainability. This gave rise to pockets of excellence focusing on ensuring compliance with environmental legislation and reducing water and electricity use. This piecemeal approach has begun shifting since the environmental management portfolio was assigned to the Occupational Health and Safety Department (OHS) in 2022.

Since then, the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) department has had two main goals: addressing and actioning environmental legal compliance at the NWU and formalising and recordings its environmental sustainability efforts as a responsible university with a duty of care. This work is premised on the NWU Environmental Sustainability Policy and the Environmental Sustainability Guidelines that were introduced in 2022.

In 2023, the NWU Environmental Policy and Guidelines were used to refine the NWU Environmental Strategy, which focuses on key drivers of environmental sustainability at the NWU. The strategy outlines five pillars that support the NWU's values, as shown in the figure below:

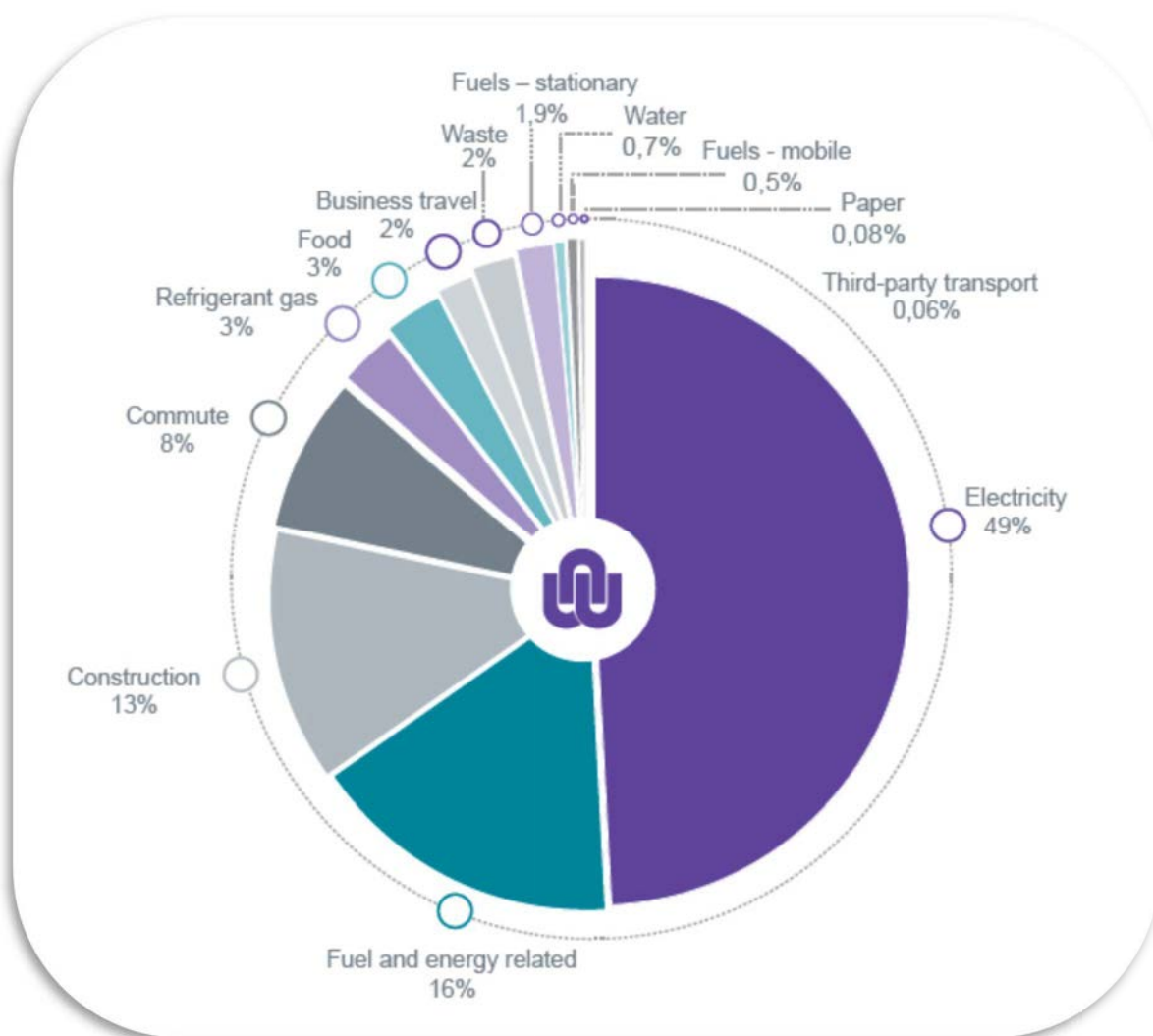


9.4.2 Material matter: Promoting and enhancing environmental sustainability at the NWU

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](#))

In 2023, the NWU embarked on the first formal carbon footprint calculation, focusing on carbon emissions for 2022. Although most data required was gathered with an acceptable degree of accuracy, some of the data was estimated. A summary of the NWU 2022 carbon footprint is displayed in the picture below.



The 2022 carbon footprint calculation provided the NWU with insightful information on the importance of improving data accuracy and clarifying the scope of emissions on which the NWU should be focusing.

In 2023, the NWU conducted various sustainability assessments and planned key projects intended to improve its environmental sustainability: Templates were compiled and implemented to accurately capture data required to conduct the NWU carbon footprint calculation. The NWU 2023 carbon footprint calculation was done with great accuracy.

A fully automated energy management system was put into operation at the NWU.

We conducted water quality, water treatment process gap assessments and water usage assessments. These highlighted a significant need to address water saving and water quality supplied by local authorities. Water treatment plants for each campus are anticipated to be installed between 2024 and 2026.

The largest contributor to the NWU carbon footprint was found to be grid-supplied electricity, after which a needs assessment on how to rapidly decrease brown energy to green energy was done. Large solar plant installations commenced in late 2023 and will continue to be installed in 2024. Three solar plants with 1000 kilowatt peak (kWP) and one plant with 385 kWP will be installed at the campuses in 2024/25.

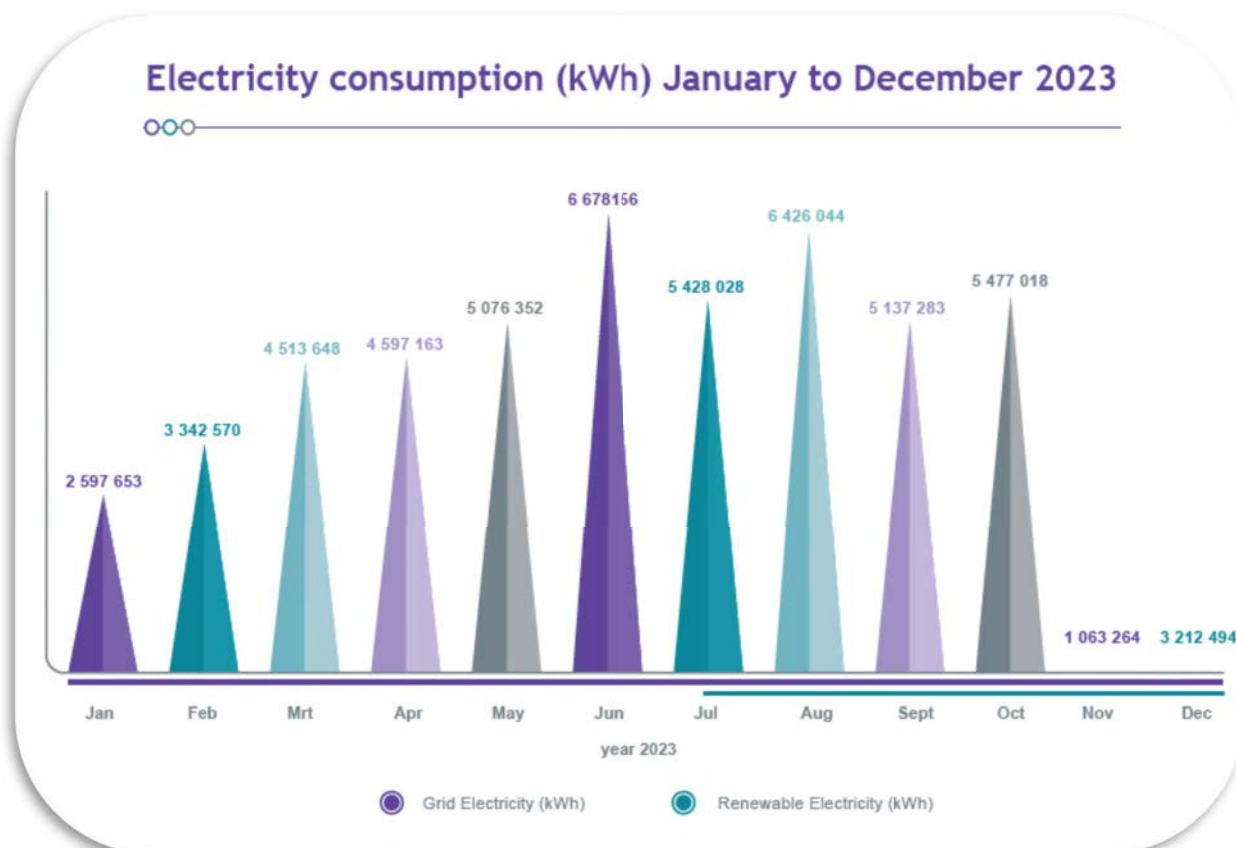
Awareness campaigns on plastic pollution and energy-wise behaviour were rolled out, encouraging students and staff to stop using and buying plastic water bottles (#Beat Plastic Pollution) and to switch off electrical devices when not in use or during load-shedding (# Reduce the use).

Students again organised the Green Initiative Week on Environmental Sustainability and Management. They devised solutions to various environmental impacts the NWU faced and held clean-ups in various urban areas.

The NWU waste-to-landfill reduction options were tested in 2023 and service providers appointed to establish an off-campus waste recycling facility for each campus.

Hazardous waste of the NWU is disposed of through a thermal desorption process and the aim is to achieve a zero-to-landfill operation.

The graph below shows that renewable energy sources installed in 2023 have started to decrease of the university's dependence on grid electricity.



By the end of 2023, the NWU had addressed 70% of the 41 findings raised during the in-depth environmental legal compliance audit conducted in 2019.

In another important milestone in our environmental compliance efforts, an environmental specialist was appointed in 2023 and started developing a documented environmental management system for the NWU, to be rolled out in 2024. From 2023 to 2026, we will focus on biodiversity management, permissible water uses and storage of hazardous chemicals.

The NWU Environmental System comprises the following policies, procedures and plans:

- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Guidelines for the North-West University
- North-West University Environmental Screening Document
- North-West University Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure
- NWU Environmental Incident Management Procedure
- NWU Spill Assessment Table
- North-West University Waste Management Plan
- NWU Environmental Requirements for Tender Template
- NWU Environmental Contractor Audit Protocol
- NWU Insulating Oil Management Procedure

- North West University Water Use, Borehole Sinking & Authorizations Procedure
- North West University Heritage Resource Management Plan
- North West University Biodiversity and Protected Trees Procedure
- North West University Procedure Hazardous Chemical Agents
- North West University Energy and Water Strategy
- North West University Alien and invasive inventory
- NWU Environmental Requirements for Tender
- North West University Grazing Procedure

9.4.3 Challenges and future outlook

Despite improvements in reporting quality within the CE database, there is a need for further enhancement. To address this, we aim to foster a shared understanding of CE policy terminologies among stakeholders through an inclusive policy review process and workshop involving deputy deans in 2024. Additionally, we have observed a prevalent top-down approach in which academics engage with communities without involving them in the planning phase of projects or formalising the activity using written agreements. Both of these issues are about awareness and standard operating procedures, which we shall address by writing a quality manual in the Sustainability and Community Impact (SCI) department and compiling a self-evaluation report for a quality review in 2025.

For instance, as addressed in our annual CE report, we found that out of 414 responses to the question of “who your community partner is”, only 205 activities (41%) mentioned community collaborators, a requirement ideally met prior to initiating any community involvement initiative to ascertain community needs.

Ethically and sustainably executed CE activities with tangible impacts depend on the ability and willingness to embrace a comprehensive project development approach anchored in engaged scholarship, emphasizing mutual benefit and resource sharing. While training opportunities for academics and students on conducting needs assessments have been identified, it is crucial to recognise that this process is ongoing and necessitates continual improvement.

Similarly, continuous monitoring is essential to evaluate the impact of CE activities, assess the university's contribution to societal development, foster co-creation of new knowledge, and manage unintended consequences, as stipulated in the CE Policy (2021). Despite efforts by the SCI Department to support this through multiple reminders and deadline extensions for activity leaders, the response rate has been disappointing.

Further underlining our commitment to community engagement with impact, the workshops and roadshows that the department conducted with various entities in 2023 will continue in 2024. These will include training sessions on the utilisation and implementation of sensemaking software for impact measurement.

9.5 Our financial capital

Our financial capital comes from state funding, debt and revenue generated through our operations and investments. We use this capital to provide services and maintain and improve our infrastructure to create value for the NWU and our stakeholders.

The key to maintaining financial health and stability is to manage our income and spending, as set out in our three-year rolling budget.

Stakeholders who will benefit	All our stakeholders benefit when our financial capital is strong. Financial stability allows us to keep our tuition fees within the reach of our current and future students and their families, while offering them high-quality education. It also means we can 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	The main focus is Enabler 4 (financial stability), but all our goals and other enablers contribute as we need money to achieve and implement them.
Risks involved	Uncertainties in the higher education sector and pressures for sectoral change are the main risks. There are uncertainties around fee regulation and the NSFAS funding model, and concerns that free education makes us more dependent on state funding. The other top risks in our risk register are also implicated, as we need money for all the activities needed to mitigate them. (These risks pertain to academic matters, compliance with financial laws and regulations and risks relating to student life, IT, commercialisation and operational matters.)

9.5.1 How we created value

Financial discipline in planning, managing and investing our financial capital ensures we have access to adequate funding for operational requirements, as well as enough sufficient capital expenditure to meet these needs and ensure a sustainable balance sheet.

9.5.2 Material matter: Ensure the financial sustainability of the NWU

Effective planning and resource distribution that supports our core business strategies is crucial in securing the university's long-term financial sustainability.

We have improved medium-term planning since 2020 by compiling a detailed three-year rolling budget.

In addition, we have improved our financial risk management. As and when relevant information becomes available, we update the financial risk factors of our Financial Impact Model and mitigation plan, using these risk factors as the baseline to guide decision-making, as it can be scaled up or down.

When compiling the rolling budget, we take care to make realistic income predictions and budget for affordable expenses, using approved principles.

In calculating the key sources of income for the three-year rolling budget (2023-2025,) we took all the latest relevant information into account. The basis for calculating the high-level expense budget was the NWU's 2023 budgeted cash-flow expense ratios, as listed below, as well as the financial health indicators provided by the DHET.

The cash-flow expense ratios used were:

- 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 2023 and allocated our funds to achieve our goals and implement our enablers.

9.5.2.1 Financing our strategic initiatives

We use our dedicated strategic fund to invest in specific strategic projects. The University Management Committee approves the allocation of strategic funds.

Strategic projects funded from this dedicated fund are carried out over and above the activities and resources allocated through the normal operating budget. Both strategic and other activities are required to be aligned with the strategy and success model of the university.

([Read more](#) about these strategic projects in the section on our strategy.)

Strategic funds allocated per goal/enabler		
APP link	Rand value of allocation R'000	% of allocation
Goal 1	19 115	32,5%
Goal 2	17 104	29,1%
Goal 5	19 400	33,0%
Enabler 4	3 200	5,4%
Grand total	58 819	100%

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

In the interests of maintaining our healthy financial position, we are vigilant in monitoring developments around the funding of higher education. Internally, we will continue to diversify and optimise our income streams, improve operating cost efficiency and effectiveness, optimise the use of infrastructure, and manage our mitigation plan and cash with great care.

It is of the greatest importance that the higher education and NSFAS funding model should 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 the ability to contribute to the skills and knowledge economy of South Africa.

We reiterate our commitment 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. The NWU has been participating actively in the modelling of the future funding design and will continue to do so.

9.5.2.3 Future outlook: how to maintain financial sustainability

Maintaining our healthy financial position is paramount and we will be closely monitoring developments around the funding of higher education. 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 great care.

It is of the utmost importance that the higher education and NSFAS funding model should 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 with it, the ability to contribute to the skills and knowledge economy of South Africa.

The NWU has been participating actively in the modelling of the future funding design and will continue to do so. We reiterate our commitment 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.

9.5.2.4 Council statement on borrowings



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON BORROWINGS

The NWU did not enter into any new long-term borrowing agreements in 2023.

 Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.

9.5.3 Financial review

This financial review is a joint report by the chairperson of the Finance Committee of Council and the Executive Director: Finance and Facilities.

It presents a summary of our financial results for 2023, provides information about the budgeting and budgetary control processes followed, and gives an overview of financial achievements.

9.5.3.1 Budgeting and budgetary control processes

These processes were based on a high-level budget framework that took into account the approved APP, the viability and sustainability indicators and the NWU mitigation plan responding to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as other available financial information.

In parallel with the budgeting process, we ran several other planning processes that informed the budget, ensuring more integrated planning. Apart from revising the APP, we did workforce planning and infrastructure and macro maintenance planning.

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

- a financial overview of each income stream
- enrolment planning for the next three years
- staff planning, including the staff cost mitigation plan for the medium term
- possible risks and concerns and the link between the budget and the strategy and APP.

9.5.3.2 Financial overview

Please see [Annexure 5](#) for the full financial overview.

9.6 Our manufactured capital

Our manufactured capital is the physical infrastructure that supports our core business activities and enables us to provide services to our stakeholders. This capital consists of buildings and infrastructure, such as lecture halls and laboratories, as well as teaching technology, research equipment, IT systems and infrastructure for teaching, research and community engagement.

By putting 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	The main beneficiaries are our staff and students. However, we also use our building and maintenance projects to create business and jobs for people and communities outside the direct footprint of the university. Similarly, communities around our campuses also benefit from our facilities. Examples include schools and professional athletes using our sports facilities, and members of the surrounding community using the animal health facilities at our Mahikeng Campus. Other stakeholders are donors and the DHET, who fund many of our infrastructure projects.
Material matters (goals or enablers) involved	Our manufactured capital has a bearing on material matters such as teaching and learning, research, student value proposition, our ability to govern, lead and manage, information and communication technology, communication, marketing and stakeholder engagement, financial sustainability.
Risks involved	The main risks are uncertainties in the higher education sector (state funding and new ways of working post-Covid-19), demand for organisational change (equity of resources), risks related to academic matters, compliance (such as with building regulations), IT and operational risks.

9.6.1 How we created value

Through various building and maintenance programmes and IT infrastructure projects, we created value for our stakeholders and increased our manufactured capital.

• Safety on and around our campuses

Crime and security are major concerns for all our stakeholders, making safety on and off campus a top priority in 2023.

Both the Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses implemented the “Purple Route” Safety and Security project in 2023 to ensure the safety of students, staff and visitors.

At the Vanderbijlpark Campus, the project commenced on 1 June 2023, covering two routes, both of which are NWU branded. Two security officers per route have been deployed to enhance visibility.

The Mahikeng Campus opened its “Purple Route” on 16 October 2023, also with two routes and two security officers for each route.

For both campuses, an inhibiting factor was the lack of follow-through on the part of the Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark municipalities, which had committed to supporting the Purple Route projects.

9.6.2 Infrastructure development

We spent a total of R393 million for capital works, macro maintenance and minor works across the university in 2023. This funding was from the DHET and our own funds. The following table provides a spending breakdown:

Infrastructure Development	Mahikeng Campus	Potchefstroom Campus	Vanderbijlpark Campus	Projects across campuses	Grand total
DHET student housing 2016/17	R8 891 741				R8 891 741
DHET student housing 2017/18	R2 319 419				R2 319 419
DHET 2018 - 2021		R61 031 535	R44 673 171	R3 970 456	R109 675 161
DHET 2023			R19 995	R2 077 682	R2 097 677
Capital projects (2017-2022)	R29 587 743	R86 205 159	R41 362 669	R35 990 543	R193 146 114
Capital projects (new)	R6 120 603	R3 351 761	R1 922 976		R11 395 340
Capital projects (renewals)	R450 725	R11 853, 70	R147 ,853		R12 451 848
Investigations	R502 272	R103 278	R206 230		R811 781
Minor building works	R1 459 838	R3 246 007	R555 511	R85 700	R5 347 057
Planned maintenance (macro)	R18 463 542	R15 530 607	R232 811	R12 087 831	R46 314 791
Grand total	R67 795 885	R181 321 617	R89 121 216	R54 212 213	R392 450 930

9.6.3 DHET grant funding

The overall expenditure for 2023 on DHET Infrastructure Efficiency Grant (IEG) funding cycles was R122 983 999. A large portion of the expenditure (R109 675 161) was from the fifth cycle.

Some of the highlights included the completion of additional lecture spaces on the Vanderbijlpark Campus and the refurbishment of the previous Administration building into a multi-purpose hall facility.

On the Mahikeng Campus, the new Psychosocial Health building was completed. Major projects completed on the Potchefstroom Campus were the new laboratory spaces for education and the refurbished spaces for the schools of Biological and Geospacial Sciences.

The NWU completed its largest student accommodation project to date in 2023, consisting of six clusters with a total of 1 728 beds on the Mahikeng Campus. This was a joint initiative of the NWU, the DHET and the Development Bank of Southern Africa. Its successful completion aligns with the university's goal of providing safe accommodation on and around its campuses and strengthens our student value proposition and human capital.

9.6.4 Accommodation for our students

Student housing on and near the three campuses had the capacity to accommodate 12 743 students in 2023. This accommodation consisted of 48 university-owned residences and four leased accommodation facilities operated as formal residences.

We ensure that residence fees are appropriate and affordable, and that all residences comply with the national policy on minimum norms and standards for public universities in South Africa. These standards deal with the physical infrastructure specifications, prescribed equipment per student, residence staffing levels, location, health and safety, governance, professional development of residence staff, policies and procedures and student discipline.

9.6.5 Complying with norms and standards

The DHET standards for student housing were reviewed and the NWU actively participated in the development of the future standards. However, no new standards have been published yet.

In the meantime, we ensure that all new student residences meet the existing minimum norms and standards for student accommodation. Similarly, when residences are upgraded, we make sure that the changes and improvements comply with these standards.

All suppliers of private student accommodation must be accredited, and we continue to make good progress with this process, in line with the DHET's expectations.

As it is not feasible to have one set of guidelines for accommodation at all public universities in South Africa, the DHET has allowed universities to develop their own accreditation criteria for their unique circumstances. The NWU's accreditation department, which is funded from the proceeds of the accreditation process, accredited approximately 24 563 beds at 1 412 facilities in 2023.

NSFAS has confirmed its commitment to take over the accreditation function at all public universities and TVET colleges. It has initiated a pilot project for the accreditation of private student accommodation providers and identified a number of universities that would participate. NWU was not identified for the pilot project and hence the NWU accreditation department continued fulfilling this important function.

9.6.6 Construction and refurbishment

The progress of infrastructure projects previously affected by various external and unforeseen factors gained momentum during 2023, and the backlog of projects from 2020/21 was cleared. Even better progress is expected during 2024.

9.6.7 Large capital projects and macro maintenance projects completed during 2023

On the Mahikeng Campus, the new building for the community law centre was completed, as were Buildings A2 and A3, where the Faculty of Humanities, Education and Economic Management Sciences will be relocated.

On the Potchefstroom Campus, Building C6 was completed, creating additional space at the educational sciences library. Phase one of the refurbishment of spaces for the Schools of Biological and Geospatial Sciences was completed. Construction of the solar photovoltaic plant commenced and is progressing well.

At the Vanderbillpark Campus, the additional lecture spaces and conversion of the old administration building into a multi-purpose hall were completed.

9.6.8 Macro maintenance and smaller projects completed during 2023

When it comes to macro maintenance, residence upgrades are continuing on all campuses to ensure these meet the minimum norms and standards of the DHET.

Smaller projects with a combined value of R5 473 448.00 were completed as part of the minor building works across the NWU.

9.6.9 Smaller projects completed during 2023

Smaller projects with a combined value of R875 440 were completed as part of the minor building works across the NWU.

9.6.10 Projects carried over to 2024

The focus for 2024 will continue to be on upgrading infrastructure services and accelerating the shift towards more sustainable power and water resources. R139 million was provided in the infrastructure plan for this purpose. The objective of the project implementation team is to complete the planned infrastructure projects that have been approved for implementation since 2020.

The Mahikeng Campus can look forward to an investment of R144 million in infrastructure projects with strategic priorities relating to addressing compliance risks in teaching-learning spaces and upgrading student life recreation areas.

On the Potchefstroom Campus, residence and property upgrades continue with a specific focus on addressing compliance risks in teaching-learning spaces.

At the Vanderbijlpark Campus, a high priority is investment in infrastructure services related to water sustainability.

9.6.11 Council statement on additional investment in infrastructure



9.6.12 Plans for the future

The Spatial Development Framework of the NWU was reviewed and approved by Council. Future infrastructure planning will be aligned with this strategic document. Council also adopted the infrastructure approval toolkit, which will be implemented to ensure the business viability and strategic alignment of infrastructure projects.

Further renewal of the buildings and infrastructure on the three campuses is planned for the coming year.

The projects to convert lecture venues into HyFlex learning environments continues in the Capital Renewal of Buildings program. Special provision has been made to provide back-up power in lecture venues for the Audiovisual Equipment during loadshedding to bridge the gap between the suspension of the electrical supply and the switch over to emergency power.

9.6.13 IT infrastructure and developments

In 2023, we accomplished significant milestones in various areas, enhancing the NWU's IT capabilities and aligning with strategic goals. We have been systematic in updating infrastructure, improving integration, enhancing security and creating a dynamic technology ecosystem with a flexible IT operating model.

Infrastructure: We implemented "data protection" capabilities and enhanced our toolkit with cutting-edge backup and snapshot technologies for information protection. Embracing a philosophy of composable infrastructure, we integrated software and Application Programming Interface-driven solutions across our network acquisitions. Introducing the Next Generation Digital Environment (NGDE) Container Platform signifies a significant move towards containerisation, opening doors to a more flexible and expandable infrastructure. Furthermore, we significantly enhanced our Wi-Fi and campus backbone to ensure our infrastructure could handle current and future requirements.

Integration platform: At the heart of our strategy was the integration platform, facilitating seamless communication between various applications and systems. This project was based on a dedication to enterprise architecture principles and a gradual implementation of the NDGE platform. Our advancements in this field involved setting up a robust data architecture, revamping crucial organisational systems and advocating for a Next Generation Digital Learning Environment to boost operational efficiency and encourage a culture of continuous enhancement.

Operating model: Our agile and adaptive operating model allowed us to quickly address changing business needs, technological advancements and market shifts. Our strategic approach ensured that our IT initiatives aligned with our broader goals, enabling us to tackle new challenges effectively.

Security: This was a top priority. We created a comprehensive NWU enterprise security architecture to tackle vulnerabilities proactively. Emphasising our innovative approach, we established a hybrid security team and delved into automation for our patching processes. We contributed to national collaborative initiatives, demonstrating our commitment to enhancing cybersecurity and supporting the broader community.

Technology ecosystem: Our technology landscape has expanded substantially, developing into a comprehensive framework that bolsters our IT infrastructure and digital operations. This ecosystem serves as the cornerstone of our operational efficiency and strategic initiatives, highlighting the dynamic interaction of technology within our organisation.

The progress made in 2023 has established a strong base for future expansion, guiding us towards a more adaptable, safe and effective organisational environment.

9.7 Future outlook

IT will concentrate on improving workforce diversity and service delivery efficiency, strengthening cybersecurity and overseeing strategic projects with a focus on alignment and governance.

We are emphasising innovation through AI strategies and advanced technology integration that bridge the gap between IT and business, enabling improved communication, stakeholder engagement and digital dexterity. We will prioritise core IT functions such as eResearch and high-performance computing, while also focusing on optimising service delivery and aligning IT practices with sustainability goals to create a resilient, future-ready and socially responsible IT landscape.

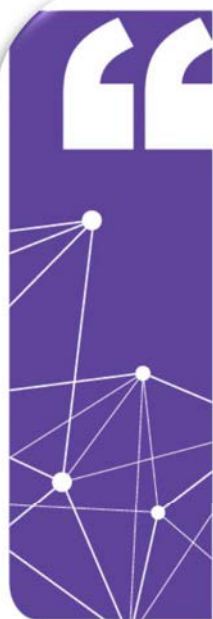
We aim to elevate our LMS, eFundi, and other IT services by leveraging the DBS to foster a more interactive, personalised and efficient learning environment.

IT's goals and strategies lay the foundation for a resilient, innovative and sustainable future, ensuring that the NWU remains at the forefront of technological advancement and educational excellence.



10 Governance: supporting and preserving value

10.1 Council statement on governance



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 13 June 2024.

10.2 The role and function of Council and its committees

The NWU Council is the overall custodian of good corporate governance at the institution and takes its oversight and guidance role seriously.

With a view to providing a sound foundation for the creation of value, long-term growth and sustainability, the Council sets strategy, ensures proper governance, drives compliance and risk management and monitors the material activities of the university.

We act in strict accordance with the stipulations of the Higher Education Act and the NWU Statute, which was reviewed and published on 24 June 2022.

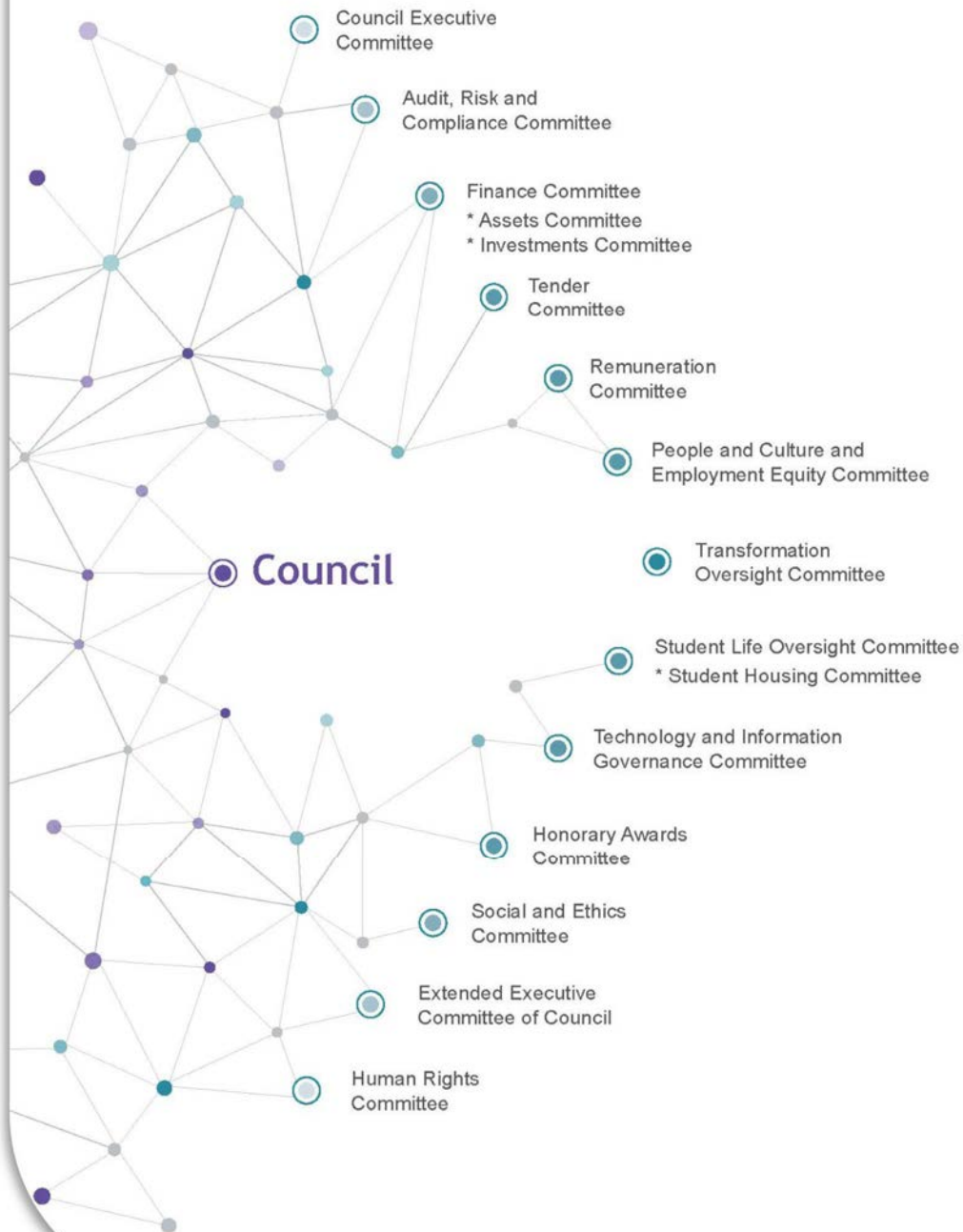
In 2023, under Council's leadership, the NWU continued to adhere to high governance standards while creating a value-driven governance landscape.

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 employees	2
Community leaders	3	Support employees	2
Specific expertise	3	Student Representative Council	3
	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.



The Council has a number of committees to advise it on all the relevant governance matters necessary for proper oversight and accountability.

The Finance Committee and the Assets Committee, meet twice a year and report to Council twice a year. The remaining committees that meet more often are the Executive Committee of Council, Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee, Remuneration Committee, Transformation Oversight Committee, Tender Committee, Investments Committee, Technology and Information Governance Committee, Student Life Oversight Committee, Student Housing Committee, Human Rights Committee and Social and Ethics Committee.

In November 2023, the Council approved an additional meeting per year, respectively for the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee and the Honorary Awards Committee.

10.3 Council training

In 2023, we continued implementing the revised induction programme for newly appointed Council members. This followed Council's approval on 18 March 2021 of the revised programme, along with an ongoing capacity-building programme for members of Council and Council committees.

Feedback from Council members was that the induction programme was insightful and enabled new members to begin contributing quickly and effectively with governance oversight at both Council and Council committee levels.

Annual Council workshop

All Council members attended a workshop on 15 March 2023.

The workshop was chaired by the chairperson of Council, Mr A Sorgdrager, and covered the following three topics.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plenary session 1: | The NWU Strategy under construction to take the university forward; |
| Plenary session 2: | An introduction to the importance of IT governance in higher education institutions; and |
| Plenary session 3: | The digital future of universities. |

Each of these is briefly discussed below.

Plenary session 1:

The NWU Strategy under construction to take the university forward

• Bosberaad overview

Ms Ntsikie Kote, the Chief Strategy Officer in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, outlined the process that Management followed in drafting proposals to advance the university. In her presentation, she explained that strategic considerations and operational issues were merged to form 20 strategic solutions that would be addressed:

1. Review of the unitary operating model
2. NWU status as a traditional university
3. Future of distance learning
4. Positioning of the NWU Business School
5. Reimagining student centricity at the NWU
6. Employer of choice: implementation of a multi-generational strategy
7. NWU Enterprises
8. The NWU's stance on sustainability
9. Energy and green strategy
10. Community engagement
11. Industry 4.0
12. New strategy reporting framework
13. Veterinary school
14. Integration of colleges of agriculture
15. Medical school
16. Centre for sustainable mining
17. Increasing the capacity of municipal and provincial government
18. Internationalisation
19. Postgraduate and missing-middle funding
20. Staff cost optimisation

Each of the matters was also discussed at the end of the year 2022 at the University Management Committee Strategic Bosberaad (with a view to implementation in 2023). Each item was expanded on with an increased focus on the following:

1. Position statement
2. Culture shifts required
3. Required approaches for workforce shifts
4. Technological shifts required
5. Implications for transformation
6. Timeframes for implementation of various projects
7. Budget estimate

- **Review of the unitary operating model**

The Council workshop noted a presentation made by Prof Yvonne du Plessis entitled “Taking the NWU forward (Phase 1)”. It was explained that the purpose of the project was to assess the implementation of the unitary model and determine its operational effectiveness and efficiency.

- **NWU Enterprises (Pty) Ltd**

The Council workshop took note of a presentation by Prof Raj Siriram regarding the establishment of NWU Enterprises (Pty) Ltd. He clarified the Enterprises concept, noting that the aim is to create a platform to generate additional revenue from available market funding.

Benchmarking was conducted with leading South African universities on various aspects of their respective enterprise divisions, including ownership, board composition, value proposition, tax status, service structuring, relationship with the Technology Transfer Office, and relationship model of these enterprise divisions.

This information was used to inform the development of the business model for NWU Enterprises, which would offer services and solutions to create additional revenue by leveraging the extensive knowledge and expertise of NWU staff while mitigating the financial risks associated with such endeavours.

- **The case for a multi-generational strategy**

The Council workshop noted a presentation by the Chief Director: People and Culture, Mr Milton Nyamadzawo, on the importance of establishing a multi-generational strategy for the NWU. The presentation pointed out that a significant portion of new hires and resignations fell within the 26 to 40-year-old age group, creating a need to address attrition as the NWU was losing staff from the same demographic from which it was actively recruiting. To better understand this phenomenon, NWU initiated onboarding interviews in addition to exit interviews. Considering that approximately 6% of all staff would retire in the next five years, there was a further need to transfer knowledge to younger staff.

- **Veterinary school**

The Council workshop discussed a presentation by the Executive Dean: Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Prof David Modise, proposing the establishment of a veterinary school at Mahikeng. The presentation highlighted the need for more veterinarians in South Africa, especially in rural areas, and outlined Mahikeng's suitability for hosting the school.

Despite the NWU's efforts, it was not shortlisted by the Department of Higher Education and Training during its call for veterinary school proposals. However, the NWU remains committed to engaging stakeholders and lobbying the relevant authorities. Council members suggested aligning efforts to secure both a medical school and a veterinary school to share solutions for common obstacles.

- **Toward sustainable energy practices**

The Council workshop discussed a presentation by the Executive Director: Finance and Facilities, Ms Elmarie de Beer, on the NWU's strategy for achieving sustainable energy practices. The NWU has already implemented several initiatives across all campuses to enhance the sustainable use of energy and water, including managing and expanding systems, maintaining electrical and mechanical equipment, constructing water reservoirs and implementing energy-saving initiatives and renewable power sources.

Key pillars being implemented concurrently to improve sustainable energy and water usage included measurement, verification and reporting; advocating for behavioural changes; optimisation of current installations; implementation of new installations; and exploration of alternative energy sources and water-wise solutions. The installation of energy and water meters has allowed for monitoring and informed load control where necessary.

According to the presentation, efforts were also under way in 2023 to optimise current installations, such as retrofitting high energy-consuming equipment and installing motion sensors to control hallway lights. A dedicated task team was exploring alternative energy sources, and multiple pilot projects were launched to assess their feasibility on a larger scale. Additionally, it was recognised that behavioural changes among staff and students could significantly impact the NWU's energy usage; therefore, various information campaigns were being planned to promote such changes.

Plenary session 2:

An introduction to the importance of IT governance in higher education institutions

The Council workshop on technology was facilitated by Mr Marlon Moodley of the Institute of Directors of Southern Africa (IoDSA). The session commenced with a brief video illustrating the benefits of embracing newly developed technology and highlighting its potential to improve various aspects of life and address significant challenges.

IT governance encompasses a comprehensive approach to how organisations handle technology-related activities. With increasing global reliance on technology, it is crucial for organisations to stay abreast of fast-evolving technological developments and ensure timely communication of relevant information at the appropriate level. Technology should serve two main purposes: facilitating organisational operations and fostering organisational change to create value.

The presenter noted that cutting costs on technology could disrupt the organisation's rhythm, impacting behaviour and consequently increasing risk. He emphasised cyber resilience over mere cybersecurity, mentioning that IT governance requires precise execution and deployment of technology to mitigate cybercrime risks. Compliance with standards such as King IV and COSO is important, but adherence on paper alone can lead to governance failures. Sustainable governance relies on a culture of principled behaviour that prioritises stakeholders' interests. While legislative frameworks lay the groundwork for governance and compliance, true organisational resilience depends on appropriate behaviour from governing bodies.

Plenary session 3:

The digital future of universities

Dr Raj Mruthunjayappa, Chief Digital Officer of Anthology and President of Anthology in India, gave a presentation on the changing face of education. He discussed globalisation, population growth and the future of work impacting education, among other things. Dr Mruthunjayappa emphasised the re-imagining of higher education through smart and sustainable approaches, technology integration and data management, and highlighted emerging trends such as outcome-focused education, internationalisation and lifelong learning.

Key growth trends for institutions included blended learning, online degrees, campus digitisation and quality assurance. Data analytics were presented as crucial for decision-making and differentiation among institutions.

Mr Andile Swartbooi, Digital Strategy Officer of the NWU, discussed projecting into the digital future, emphasising global access, digital natives, agility, automation and data centrality. The future vision for the NWU emphasised innovation, technology integration and equal access. Governance structures for the Digital Business Strategy included steering committees and implementation teams.

Overall, the presentation highlighted the digital transformation of education and strategies for institutions to adapt to the evolving landscape.

10.4 Code of Conduct and declarations of interest

The NWU Council Code of Conduct is binding on all members of Council. It is revised as and when needed, the last review having been in March 2018. At the beginning of 2023, 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 interest by members of Council and Council committees. We consider this requirement to be of the utmost importance in ensuring integrity in our behaviour at governance level, and thus expect members of Council and Council committees to make such declarations regularly and timeously.

In its capacity as Council membership committee, the Council Executive Committee (Council Exco) receives and discusses quarterly declaration of interest audit reports for Council and Council committee members. These audit reports:

- deal with the payments made to entities in which members of Council and Council committees have an interest;
- determine whether interests declared by members are confirmed through a check with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC);
- compare the available information with payment records on the university's financial system to determine whether, during the period of review, the NWU did business with entities in which members had an interest;
- determine whether any member had possibly been involved in the approval of transactions between the NWU and the relevant entity.

These reports also serve as a standing item on the Council's agendas.

Council and Council committee members' declarations of interest are of such high importance that, as Council noted on 17 June 2021, sanctions can be imposed on members who do not comply with the legal requirements for declarations of interest. No such sanctions needed to be undertaken for 2023.

During 2023, Exco continued regularly noting and discussing all declarations made by members of the UMC and referring any enquiries to the vice-chancellor.

10.5 Meet our Council members (Council membership as at 31 December 2023)

- **New Council members in 2023**

The following new members joined the Council during the year under review:

- Ms EP Ramatswana – External member elected by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation
- The following members re-joined the Council for subsequent terms:
 - Mr A Sorgdrager – elected by the Convocation (third term) (Council chairperson)
 - Ms S Britz – elected by the community leaders (second term)
 - Pastor P Tlhabanyane – elected by the community leaders (second term)
 - Mr MSJ Thabethe – external member appointed by the Minister of Education, Science and Innovation (third term)

- **Vacancies:**

- External member elected by the Board of Donors
- External member appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation



Meet our Council members



(Council membership as at 31 December 2023)



1. PROF MB TYOBEKA (48)
Vice-Chancellor

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, USA)

Membership of Council committees:

All Council committees (except Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee – not a full member)

Term on Council:

Appointed for a five-year term from 2022 to 2027.

One year, nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

61 meetings | 85% attendance

Directorships: USAf



2. PROF L DU PLESSIS (54)
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 three years which was contractually extended to 2027.

Three years and four months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

42 meetings | 89% attendance

Directorships: None



3. PROF DM MODISE (63)
Elected by Senate

Qualifications: BSc (horticultural science) (University of Bath), MSc (horticulture) (West Virginia University), PhD (plant sciences) (Nottingham University)

Membership of Council committees:

Student Life Oversight Committee | Honorary Awards Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, eight months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

18 meetings | 90% attendance

Directorships: Mylab Pty Ltd.



4. PROF AF KOTZÉ (55)
Elected by Senate

Qualifications: BPharm, MSc, PhD (PU for CHE)

Membership of Council committees:

Student Housing Committee | Honorary Awards Committee |

Council representation on the Senate Executive Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year eight months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

19 meetings | 95% attendance

Directorships: Innovation Highway Enterprises



5. PROF AH VERHOEF (50)
Elected by Senate

Qualifications: BA (US), BD Theology (US), BAHons Philosophy (US), MTh (US), DTh (US), PhD (Free University Amsterdam)

Membership of Council committees:
People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Honorary Awards Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.
Two years, one month into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

12 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



6. PROF PA SMIT (62)
Elected by academic staff members

Qualifications: BA, (HED) (postgraduate), BAHons, MA, PhD (labour relations management)

Membership of Council committees:
People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Student Life Oversight Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.
Two years, three months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

11 meetings | 85% attendance

Directorships: None



7. PROF WJ DU PLESSIS (44)
Elected by academic staff members

Qualifications: BA (international relations), LLB, LLD (University of Stellenbosch)

Membership of Council committees:
Transformation Oversight Committee | Social and Ethics Committee | Human Rights Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.
Two years, nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

11 meetings | 69% attendance

Directorships: None



8. DR AA LE ROUX (57)
Elected by support staff members

Qualifications: BScHons (biokinetics) (PU for CHE), PhD (relationship marketing)

Membership of Council committees:
Transformation Oversight Committee

Term on Council:
Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.
Two years, one month into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

14 meetings | 93% attendance

Directorships: None



9. MS MH LEKALAKALA (46)
Elected by support staff members

Qualifications: BCom (accounting) (University of Limpopo), BComHons (business management) (University of Limpopo)

Membership of Council committees:
Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

10 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



10. MS KE MOGOSHOA (25)
Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Enrolled for a BSc (agriculture)

Membership of Council committees:
Student Oversight Committee

Term on Council:

One year and three months into term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

14 meetings | 78% attendance

Directorships: None



11. MR A YIKUMBA (23)
Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Enrolled for a BCom (economic sciences)

Membership of Council committees:
Student Life Oversight Committee

Term on Council:

One year, three months into term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

19 meetings | 90% attendance

Directorships: None



12. MS K MATUME (21)
Student Representative Council

Qualifications: Enrolled for a BCom (law)

Membership of Council committees:
Student Oversight Committee

Term on Council:

Four months into term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

3 meetings | 75% attendance

Directorships: None



13. MS EP RAMANTSWANA (48)
Appointed by the Minister of
Higher Education, Science and
Innovation

Qualifications: BCom (University of KwaZulu-Natal), BComHons (business management) (University of KwaZulu-Natal), MBA (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

Membership of Council committees:

None.

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Two months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

One meeting | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



14. ADV PG SELEKA SC (49)
Appointed by the Minister of
Higher Education, Science and
Innovation

Qualifications: BA Law and LLB (PU for CHE)

Membership of Council committees:

Transformation Oversight Committee | Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.

Two years, four months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

Nine meetings | 56% attendance

Directorships: None



15. MR C MABE (45)
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.

Two years, three months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

27 meetings | 96% attendance

Directorships: K2017228855 (South Africa) | Thapo Vision Group CM2510 (Pty) Ltd | NH2606 (Pty) Ltd | Tapologo HIV and AIDS programme | Jepa 321 (Pty) Ltd



16. MR MSJ THABETHE (49)
Appointed by the Minister of
Higher Education, Science and
Innovation

Qualifications: National diploma (information technology), BTech (information technology) (TWR), MCom (information systems) (University of the Witwatersrand)

Membership of Council committees:

Technology and Information Governance Committee | Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Social and Ethics Committee | Executive Committee of Council (alternate) | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Two months into third term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

17 meetings | 94% attendance

Directorships: Sihlasi Technologies CC

17. VACANT

Appointed by the Minister of
Higher Education,
Science and Innovation



18. MR JDS DE BRUYN (72)
*Elected by the Board of
Donors*

Qualifications: BCom (accounting science), BJuris, 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.

Two years, six months into third term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

21 meetings | 95% attendance

Directorships: None



19. MS PS MOLEKE (56)
*Elected by the Board of
Donors*

Qualifications: Honours (economics) (University of Witwatersrand), master's degree (economics) (Georgia State University), BA (education) (Vista University)

Membership of Council Committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Finance Committee | Investments Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, two months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

17 meetings | 94% attendance

Directorships: None

20. VACANT

Elected by the Board of Donors



21. MR A SORGDRAGER (64)
*Elected by the Convocation
Chairperson of the Council*

Qualifications: BJuris and LLB (PU for CHE), international executive programme (INSEAD Business School)

Membership of Council Committees:

Executive Committee of Council | Remuneration Committee | Finance Committee | Honorary Awards Committee | Student Life Oversight Committee | Senate | Medical School Task Team | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Five months into third term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

54 meetings | 96% attendance

Directorships: Vaalrivier Steiltes Aandeleblok | Florida Buitemuurs | Nedbank Zimbabwe



22. PROF TP VENTER (68)
Elected by the Convocation

Qualifications: Master's degree (political science) (PU for CHE), master's degree (comparative politics) (State University of New York)

Membership of Council committees:

Technology and information Governance Committee | Medical School Task Team

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, eight months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

18 meetings | 86% attendance

Directorships: None



23. PROF AL COMBRINK (79)
Elected by the Convocation

Qualifications: BA, BAHons, MA, DLitt (english) (PU for CHE), higher education diploma (Unisa)

Membership of Council committees:

Social and Ethics Committee | Medical School Task Team

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.

Two years into third term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

19 meetings | 90% attendance

Directorships: None



24. ADV M KRUGER (58)
Elected by the Convocation

Qualifications: BLuris, LLB (PU for CHE)

Membership of Council committees:

Student Life Oversight Committee | Technology and Information Governance Committee | Human Rights Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.

Two years, four months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

16 meetings | 94% attendance

Directorships: None



25. PASTOR PM TLHABANYANE (60)
Appointed from the community leaders

Qualifications: Dip PA, BPA, BAHons (theology)

Membership of Council committees:

Executive Committee (alternate member) | Student Life Oversight Committee | Student Housing Committee | Social and Ethics Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Nine months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

48 meetings | 77% attendance

Directorships: None



26. MS S BRITZ (62)

Appointed from the community leaders

Qualifications: Matric, NQF5 Real Estate

Membership of Council committees:

Executive Committee (alternate member) | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Assets Committee | Transformation Oversight Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Nine months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

21 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: iDUC NPC | Tlokwe Crisis Centre



27. MS PP THEBE (36)

Appointed from the community leaders

Qualifications: BCom, PGCE

Membership of Council committees:

Student Life Oversight Committee | Human Rights Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, six months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

14 meetings | 100% attendance

Directorships: None



28. MR N OMAR (36)

Appointed by Council for specific expertise

Qualifications: CA(SA) (Unisa)

Membership of Council committees:

Investments Committee

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2022 to 2025.

One year, six months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

7 meetings | 70% attendance

Directorships: Snap Consulting



29. MS RA KENOSI (52)
*Appointed by Council for
 specific expertise
 Deputy Chairperson of
 Council*

Qualifications: BComp Accounting, BComp Accounting (Hons), CA(SA) (Unisa)

Membership of Council committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Executive Committee | People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee | Remuneration Committee | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2021 to 2024.

Two years and nine months into first term.

Number of committee meetings attended as council member and average attendance:

35 meetings | 85% attendance

Directorships: Fraudsmiths (Pty) Ltd | Bridging Concepts Financial Services (Pty) Ltd | Anova Health Institute NPC



30. MR TV MOKGATLHA (48)
*Appointed by Council
 for specific expertise*

Qualifications: BCom (accounting) (University of North West), HonsBcompt/ Certificate of theory in accounting (CTA) (Unisa)

Membership of Council committees:

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee | Assets Committee | Remuneration Committee | Extended Exco

Term on Council:

Appointed for a three-year term from 2012 to 2025.

One year, six months into second term.

Number of committee meetings attended as Council member and average attendance:

21 meetings | 95% attendance

Directorships: Yebo Yethu (RF) Limited | Yebo Yethu Investment Company (RF) (Pty) Limited | Baphlane Siyanda Chrome Company | MTBG Investments | South African Blood Services NPC (SANBS) | Stokfella | Philasini | Baphalane Ba Mantserre Investment Holdings | Atomatic Trading | Baphalane Property Holdings | His Crown Apostolic Ministries | BBMIH Food | Hyprop Investment Ltd | BBMIH Textile | BBMIH Manufacturing

Diversity of skills and experience

Our Council members contribute a variety of valuable skills and experience. Their fields of expertise are given below:

- governance and ethics in general
- higher education governance
- student management and governance
- general management, business and industrial psychology
- science/innovation, technology and engineering
- communication and languages
- general legal expertise
- psychology and theology
- labour relations
- risk management, audit and chartered accountancy
- theological expertise.

When filling vacancies on the NWU Council, we seek particular skills that match the skills set decided on in November 2018. The Council took these skills into account in 2023 when seeking to fill vacancies in membership. The coloured blocks in the diagram below represent the skills that are emphasised.

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

10.6 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:

African female	African male	Indian/Coloured male/female	White female	White male	Vacancies	Total
7	8	2	6	7	0	30
23,3%	26,66%	6,66%	20%	23,3%	0%	100%
<p><i>Specific membership requirement: Council should include two members with disabilities (Council resolution of 8.9.2022).</i></p> <p><i>Currently none.</i></p>						

As of 31 December 2023, the equity profile of Council was as follows:

African female	African male	Indian/Coloured/Chinese male/female	White female	White male	Vacancies*	Total
6	8	2	5	7	2	30
20%	26,66%	6,66%	16,7%	23,3%	6,66%	100%
<i>Members with disabilities: None</i> <i>* External member appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation</i> <i>* External member elected by the Board of Donors</i>						

10.7 Council decisions impacting value creation

10.7.1 Key decisions taken by Council in 2023

The following table gives a summary of Council's value-creating decisions and the possible effect of these on future value creation.

Strategy and structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council approved the NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond. Rewording the mission statement as follows: To benefit society through the provision of knowledge, excelling in innovative teaching, cutting-edge research and focused engagement with the community. <p><i>How this governance decision could affect future value creation:</i></p> <p><i>As Council we are confident that the ongoing implementation of the strategy, structure and brand is shaping the NWU's operations and efficiency.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>

Policies and rules
<p>The Policy Refinement Committee continued with its activities in the drafting and review of policies.</p> <p>In ensuring compliance with national directives and mitigating possible risks facing the university, we approved 11 policies and one strategy (either revised or new) in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy Open Educational Resources Policy NWU Student Recruitment Policy NWU Internationalisation Strategy 2023-2027 Policy on Honorary Naming, Naming and Renaming of NWU Entities Rules for the Appointment of Office Bearers NWU Policy on the Prevention of Bribery, Corruption and Fraud, and on Whistleblowing NWU revised Conditions of Service for Fixed Term (with benefits) and Permanent Academic and Support Staff NWU Institutional Rules on Student Governance NWU General Academic Rules Human Rights Policy Policy on the Generation, Review and Approval of Policies, Constitutions, Rules and Procedures <p>The following policies were rescinded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWU Policy and Rules for Honorary Naming Awarding of the S2A3 Medal Awarding of the Vice-Chancellor's Medal for Master's Students Rules for the Innovation Awards for Researchers and Staff Members at the NWU Policy for Reporting Irregularities and Maladministration Research Infrastructure Policy

How these governance decisions could 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 and infrastructure matters

We, as Council, approved the audited financial statements (consolidated statements of financial position and comprehensive income) for the year ended 31 December 2022.

In addition, the following financial approvals were among the highlights of 2023:

- Confirmation of the response provided to the Department of Higher Education regarding the proposed Fee Regulatory Framework for the Public Higher Education System.
- Purchase of a property as interim accommodation for the Vice-Chancellor. The position of the interim property will be revisited in 12 months' time.
- Revised capital programme budget of R148 195 580.
- The 2024-2026 budget, subject to the principle that the budget would need to be adjusted when new information is received from the Minister (specifically with regards to the subsidy allocation and fee increase adjustment recommendation, as well as actual enrolments for 2024).
- The 2024 tuition fee inflation adjustment on all campuses to be linked to the projected CPI for 2024 for contact students (worked into the budget at 4,6%) and 5,1% for distance students (2023 tuition fee inflation adjustment, aligned with the one-year lag principle as approved).
- The 2024 Postgraduate Diploma fees in the Faculty of Engineering:
 - An increase of 97,4% in the Industrial Engineering Postgraduate Diploma module fees.
 - An increase of 101,3% in the Nuclear Engineering Postgraduate Diploma module fees.
 - The increase would be phased in; current students would be subject to the expected CPI fee increase and students starting their studies in 2024 would be subject to the higher percentage increase.
- The 2024 residence fee inflation adjustment to be in line with the projected CPI for 2024 plus 2% (worked into the budget at 6,6%), and a 10% adjustment on meal fees, which is in line with food inflation.
- The 2024 amounts payable at registration to be based on the previous year's amounts, adjusted with the projected CPI for 2024 (tuition fee related) or CPI plus 2% (residence related) or food inflation (10% in the case of meals).
- After due consultation with the Department of Higher Education and Training and NSFAS, we agreed on a feasible scenario that would, if necessary, see the NWU advance the cash to pay out allowances to NSFAS students to support the start of the academic year, as was the established practice in previous years.
- A residence report as of 31 March 2023 to be submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training, Science and Innovation.
- An infrastructure project list to be compiled, indicating funds allocated for macro-maintenance projects.
- The NWU Spatial Development Framework.
- The NWU Infrastructure Plan 2024-2026.
- The appointment of Nexia SAB&T as external audit firm for the 2023 and 2024 financial years, and recommending accordingly to the Auditor-General.

How these governance decisions could affect future value creation:

We are confident that the right decisions have been taken in the short term to enable the university to realise the goals in the Annual Performance Plan and to continue pursuing its strategic agenda.

However, Council is on record that it expressed concerns on the medium and 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

The following tenders were approved:

- Tender NWUTR003/2023VC – Proposed construction of additional space for Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and re-organisation of Buildings 3 and 4 on the Vanderbijlpark Campus, to CivMaq Projects (Pty) Ltd for R60 709 564.
- Tender NWUTR007/2023VC – Proposed construction of new laboratory spaces for Geospatial Sciences on the Vanderbijlpark Campus to Thaw Construction (Pty) Ltd for R59 703 352.
- Tender NWUTR096/2023PC – Solar Photo-Voltaic (PV) Plant on the Potchefstroom Campus.
- Tender NWUTR101/2023VC – Supply of student accommodation for the Vanderbijlpark Campus.
- Tender TR103/2021NW – Provision of mass secure printing services for an additional amount of R50 150 972 to cover the transportation costs as originally included in the tender documentation, and budgeted for, but which had not been accounted for in the value of the contract.

How these governance decisions could 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:

- The contractual extension of the second term of Prof Linda du Plessis as vice-principal to 31 August 2027 to coincide with the ending of her second term as Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Vanderbijlpark Campus Operations.
- Re-appointment of Prof Daryl Balia as Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Potchefstroom Campus Operations for a further period of two years, ending 31 December 2025.
- Extension of the term in office of Dr Mala Singh to 31 December 2024 with the proviso that a successor be appointed in the latter part of the extended period when Dr Singh's function would change to specific projects, and day-to-day operations would, in the main, be the responsibility of the successor.
- Retainment of Prof Marlene Verhoef's term in office as registrar until 31 December 2025, taking into consideration fair labour practice and stability in the portfolio, with the proviso that proper succession planning would have to commence with clear timelines.
- Extension of the term of Prof Sonia Swanepoel as Deputy-Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Mahikeng Operations with one year from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.
- One-year extension of the term of Prof S Chalufu as Executive Director: Student Life from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

How these governance decisions could 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 have been appointed was and is key to achieving the NWU's strategic objectives.

Governance matters

Key resolutions related to governance included the following:

- Approval of the following revised and new terms of reference for Council committees:
 - Executive Committee of Council
 - Remuneration Committee
 - Social and Ethics Committee
 - Student Life Oversight Committee
 - Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee
 - Tender Committee
 - Technology and Information Governance Committee
 - Human Rights Committee
 - Honorary Awards Committee
 - Student Housing Committee
 - People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee
 - Transformation Oversight Committee
 - Extended Executive Committee.
- Approval of the reviewed rules of the Board of Donors and the Institutional Forum.
- Re-election of Mr A Sorgdrager as chairperson of Council from 23 June 2022 to 22 June 2025.
- Election of Ms R Kenosi as deputy chairperson of Council.
- Confirmation of the approval by the Executive Committee of Council that the following persons be appointed as members/external experts of the NWU Council and Council committees in the categories stated:
 - Ms S Britz re-elected for a second term in the community leaders category for a period of three years.
 - Pastor P Tlhabanyane re-elected for a second term in the community leaders category for a period of three years.
 - Ms P Ramatswana elected by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology for a period of three years.
 - Mr M Thabethe re-elected for a third term by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology for a period of three years.
 - Ms M van Zyl appointed for a second term as external expert of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee for a period of three years.
 - Ms M Chenia elected as chairperson of the Human Rights Committee.
 - Prof H Pienaar elected as external expert for labour relations on the Human Rights Committee.
 - Adv I Mwanawina elected as external expert for diversity and equity on the Human Rights Committee.
- Confirmation of the selection panel for the position of Executive Director: People and Culture.
- Approval of the 2022 DHET Governance Scorecard for submission to the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- Approval of the 2022 Integrated Annual Report as recommended by the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee for submission to the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- Approval of the reviewed NWU Council Quality Manual.
- Approval of the Successive Employment Equity Plan.
- Approval of the revised Employment Equity Goals for the Successive Employment Equity Plan.
- Approval of the Employment Equity Annual Submission Reports EEA2 and EEA4 for the period 2022/23.
- Recording of the list of recognised donors as approved by the Council Exco on 23 August 2023.
- Approval of the programme for the 2024 Council workshop.
- Approval of the Digital Business Strategy 2020-2025.
- The introduction of the practice of observing a moment of silent reflection at the beginning of meetings of Council and Council Committees. Further, that at least two minutes be allocated to allow for a significant reflection.

Governance matters

- Significant matters as recommended by the Senate:
 - Approval of the Framework for the 2024 Academic Calendar.
 - Awarding of honorary degrees of Philosophiae Doctor (honoris cause) to:
 1. Prof Herman Hubert van der Spuy
 2. Mr Masego Ezekiel Matjila
 3. Mr Johannes Jannie Oosthuizen
 4. Mr Johan “Rassie” Erasmus.
 - Naming of Mahikeng campus residences as follows:
 1. Cluster 8: Harmony Heights
 2. Cluster 9: Lesedi (meaning: Light)
 3. Cluster 10: Khayaletu (meaning: Our Home)
 4. Cluster 11: Thutong (meaning: Place of Learning)
 5. Cluster 12: Protea (South Africa’s National Flower)
 6. Cluster 13: Lethabong (meaning: Place of Happiness)
 - Restructuring of the School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences.
 - Organisational Entity (OE) name change for Centre for Research and Continuous Development to the NWU Centre for Sustainable Mining.
- Approval of the Mid-Year Performance Report ending 30 June 2023 for submission to the Department of Higher Education and Training, as recommended by the University Management Committee and the Senate.
- Approval of the Annual Performance Plan 2023 for submission to the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- Confirmation of the amendments to the 2023-2025 Academic Period of the Enrolment and Efficiency Targets (2020-2025) as approved by the Minister of Higher Education, Sciences and Innovation.
- Minimum Service Agreement (MSA) in respect of Security Services, Maintenance Services and Clinic Services as Essential Services as recommended by the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee with the proviso that the Essential Services Committee, if necessary, be approached to clarify the scope of “emergency maintenance”.

How these governance decisions could affect future value creation:

Through sound governance principles and practices, we create an ethical environment in which the NWU can realise its strategy.

10.7.2 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 is considered a token of the NWU's appreciation for members' time and effort. The honorarium fee is paid twice a year, in August and December. The fee is linked to the university's annual COLA process, which the Remuneration Committee approves before implementation.

The following table shows the honoraria paid for each meeting attended:

Position	Honorarium 2022	Honorarium 2023
Council chairperson	R7 310	R7 310
Council-appointed external expert, but not a Council member	R5 483	R5 483
Chairperson of a Council committee that fulfils a statutory role (Reporting Regulations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Committee Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee Remuneration Committee Tender Committee Technology and Information Governance Committee 	R5 483	R5 483
Chairperson of a Council committee	R4 604	R4 604
Deputy chairperson of Council for each Council meeting	R5 483	R5 483
Council chairperson or deputy chairperson as an ordinary member of a structure	R3 658	R3 658
Council member	R3 658	R3 658

10.7.3 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Social and Ethics Committee
Performance and reporting	Strategy and resource allocation; performance; outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exco Finance Committee Senate Council
Governance structure and delegation	Governance and remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Exco Remuneration Committee
Risks and opportunities	Stakeholder engagement and relationships; risk and opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC) (as primary committee for oversight purposes) Other committees of Council (for risks and opportunities relevant in the identified area of oversight) Senate Council

KING IV requirement	<Integrated Report> content element	Relevant governance structure
Technology and information	Governance, risk and opportunity; strategy and resource allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and Information Governance Committee • ARCC • Exco • Council
Compliance	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARCC • Other committees of Council (for compliance – matters relevant in the said area of oversight) • Council
Remuneration	Stakeholder engagement and relationships; remuneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remuneration Committee • Council
Assurance	Governance; basis of preparation and presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARCC • Finance Committee • Senate • Council
Stakeholder relationships	Stakeholder engagement and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Human Rights Committee

10.7.4 Governance structures of the NWU



10.7.5 Value creation through Council committee work

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 our public higher education institution. The Council and its committees are chaired by external independent members with the necessary expertise and skills.

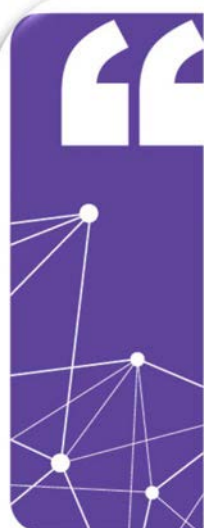
- **Quality Manual**

The Council Quality Manual was revised and approved by the Council on 22 June 2023. The NWU manual is based on the norms prescribed by the DHET Governance Scorecard.

The Council Quality Manual documents all aspects of achieving, sustaining, monitoring and quality-enhancing all levels of activity of the NWU Council, and aims to assist with governing the following matters:

- ascertaining the desired norm against which processes and procedures of Council are benchmarked;
- putting forward the monitoring mechanisms to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities of Council;
- identifying risks relevant to the functioning of Council; and
- applying the relevant measurements to ensure consistent achievement of good results in all areas of operation.

10.8 Council statement on sustainability as value add



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 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.

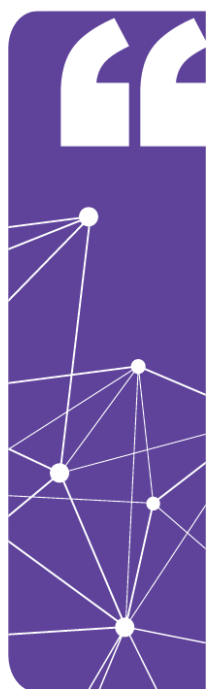
Material matters of a social and environmental nature are as important as financial and economic issues in determining the overall value created by the NWU.

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 13 June 2024.

10.9 Ethics in action at NWU

10.9.1 Council statement on ethics and values



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.

In accordance with our ethics strategy, we aspire to lead in ethical behaviour towards all our stakeholders, while advocating the principles of respect, honesty, transparency and accountability and conducting our business through the use of fair and commercially competitive practices.

The values statement in the NWU Strategy 2015 to 2025 determines that the NWU fosters engaged and caring staff and students and embeds the following foundational values that are based on the constitutional values of human dignity, equality and freedom in our practices:

- 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 13 June 2024.

10.9.2 Ethical leadership and corporate citizenship

Integrity is the basis of the university's leadership at all levels of governance and management, in line with our values statement.

In the past few years, we have invested building on important concepts contained in King IV on the governance and management of ethics. This has borne fruit by ensuring the NWU is on track in setting its strategy, establishing the requisite governance measures and clarifying performance indicators.

We seek to mainstream operations relevant for ethical leadership and corporate citizenship across the university, in line with the statement of strategic ethical intent that Council approved in late 2021.

Ongoing oversight is essential in creating an environment conducive to detecting and countering possible negative outputs resulting from financial, societal and environmental practices. In 2023, the Social and Ethics Committee and the ARCC fulfilled this ongoing oversight role.

At policy level, the following Council-approved policies instil an ethical leadership culture and strengthen the NWU's position as corporate citizen:

- Policy and Rules on Conflict of Interest and of Declaration of Interest and of Gifts
- Policy on Employment Equity
- Policy on Employee Wellness
- Policy on Sexual Harassment
- Policy on Employees living with Disability
- Policy on Environmental Sustainability.

Council's approval of the reviewed NWU Code of Ethics in November 2022 was important in that the Code aims to provide a foundation for the implementation of the university's ethics strategy. This strategy guides our members on the expected ethical behaviour against the background of the university's values statement.

In advising Council on ethical leadership and corporate citizenship, the Social and Ethics Committee of Council emphasises matters that relate to the interdependencies between the university and the society in which it functions. This approach positions the NWU to fulfil its responsibility in terms of the environmental impact of its behaviour and supports value creation for its stakeholder communities.

The university's commitment to establish a management environment conducive to instilling ethics across the institution was strengthened with the approval of the ethics management plan. The main tenets of the ethics management plan are summarised as follows:

<p><u>Strategic focal area 1:</u> Governance and management commitment to ethics</p>	<p>At both management and governance levels, we ensure ethics risks receive attention through regular discussion of the risks and reporting. We focus on the extent to which Council and all levels of management are visibly committed to good ethical conduct; support employees to make better ethical decisions; fairly and consistently enforce policies, rules and procedures; and visibly serve as role models of ethical behaviour.</p>
<p><u>Strategic focal area 2:</u> Ethics accountability</p>	<p>We put the right structures and reporting in place to facilitate the governance and management of ethics. Further, we develop clear, enforceable policies and ensure ethical risks receive attention at both management and governance levels through regular discussion and reporting of such risks. All persons (internal and external) are required to be aligned with the university's ethical standards and are held fairly and consistently accountable for any actions and decisions that do not meet these ethical standards.</p> <p>Employees at every level are expected to adhere to policies, procedures and frameworks. We see to it that employees and students are protected from victimisation when reporting on ethics matters.</p>
<p><u>Strategic focal area 3:</u> Ethics talk and awareness</p>	<p>Employees receive ethics training to familiarise them with ethics and ethical conduct and ethics policies (i.e. the code of conduct) so that they know what is expected of them regarding ethical behaviour.</p> <p>Employees are guided to speak openly about ethics, ethical dilemmas and challenges, test decision-making and actions for ethical outcomes and feel comfortable addressing ethical concerns with peers and leadership.</p>

As reported elsewhere, 2023 saw a concerted effort driving the NWU's institutional culture towards ensuring that students and staff buy into the NWU values and live these, with the purpose of ensuring that the values become engrained in the university's demonstrated and fostered culture.

10.9.3 Behavioural manual for staff

The NWU Behavioural Manual, which is in line with the provisions of the Labour Relations Act, is used to regulate employee conduct. The manual was updated in 2023 to incorporate the latest developments in law and has been approved by Council. It becomes effective on 1 January 2024.

Disciplinary action was taken against 44 employees across the NWU in 2023, who were charged with misconduct. Some of these employees faced more than one allegation, resulting in a total of 89 transgressions for 2023.

The services of seven employees were summarily terminated after going through a disciplinary process. One employee went on early retirement before the finalisation of the case. Six employees resigned with immediate effect before the finalisation of the disciplinary process, one employee was found not guilty and written warnings were imposed in the remainder of the cases. A total of 18 matters were referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). Of these, 12 matters were finalised, one matter was withdrawn by the applicant and the remainder are still ongoing.

10.9.4 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 Ombudsperson 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.

The ombudsperson was actively involved throughout 2023, with a noticeable increase in language-related inquiries and complaints. All of these were investigated, and effectively resolved, and clear guidance was provided with a focus on inclusivity, diversity and a commitment to ethical principles. Moreover, the ombudsperson served as an easily accessible point of contact for all university employees and students regarding language-related queries, complaints and issues.

10.9.5 Dealing with sexual harassment

The NWU is committed to creating a safe working environment free from the fear of sexual harassment.

A total of six sexual harassment cases were reported for the year under review. In two of these cases, the perpetrators resigned, while in one matter the perpetrator went on early retirement before the finalisation of the case and in another matter, the case was withdrawn by the complainant. In a further matter, the complainant withdrew the case after both parties agreed that there had been a misunderstanding between them; and in the final case, the employee was dismissed from the employment of the NWU.

10.9.6 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 all three campuses.

An email address (REPORT-FRAUD@nwu.ac.za) also has been available since 2021 for members of the public and/or employees to report matters.

Three reports were received via the reporting boxes for 2022 and seven were reported for 2023. The other investigations were received via internal requests and/or referrals.

A Fraud Website with an electronic reporting form was launched in November 2023.

10.9.7 Ongoing investigations – cases dealt with during 2023

Internal Audit plays an important role in the ongoing investigation of suspected irregularities.

Of the investigations reported in 2022, a total of 55 investigations were reported of which 54 has been completed, while 1 is still in progress.

For the year 2023, 53 cases were reported, of which 26 investigations were completed and 27 investigations are still ongoing. The figures also include items that were received via internal requests and/or referrals.

Of the investigations reported in 2023, 7 were received via the reporting boxes on the different campuses, and the rest were referred by internal members/employees. The nature of investigations that are reported to Internal Audit by both internal members and external stakeholders/public, include but are not limited to fraud-related amendments on documentation such as invoices, favouritism due to possible conflict of interests, tender irregularities, admission irregularities and general misuse of NWU resources.

10.9.8 Fighting fraud

After verifying the facts of the reported irregularities, Internal Audit handed several investigations over to the prosecuting authorities. In order to ensure sufficient awareness on this important topic, Internal Audit continued to annually present fraud awareness sessions during the annual *International Fraud Awareness week* for the years 2022 and 2023.

In line with the university's Anti-Fraud Strategy, anti-fraud awareness sessions were held in 2022 to 2023 on each campus. These were conducted in person, moving away from the online presentation method used in 2021 when the Covid-19 regulations were in place.

The NWU's Anti-Fraud Strategy calls for a specific focus on Internal Audit's proactive and continuous audit monitoring of transactions related to procurement and payroll. Various tests are continually run and are regularly reported to operational managers for follow-up purposes and to identify any cases that needs to be investigated further.

• South African Police Service (SAPS) cases dealt with during 2023

There has been a slight improvement in the working relationship with and assistance of the authorities regarding reporting of cases. We have handed over eight cases relating to *inter alia* forgery and uttering and misappropriation of resources. Two of these cases has been closed. It is difficult to allocate an exact value to these cases, but preliminary calculations indicate the amount to be approximately over R1,7 million, of which an amount of over R530 000 has been recovered from two employees. These two employees are currently repaying their outstanding balances monthly. We are continually striving to strengthen our relationship with the authorities and regular follow up on cases reported to the SAPS offices.

10.9.9 Compliance with laws, codes and standards

The NWU's regulatory universe currently consists of 137 pieces of legislation. Compliance self-assessments and monitoring are scheduled according to a three-year rolling plan, making use of the risk-based compliance method.

In 2023 the Compliance Department concluded the work from the first three-year rolling plan (2021-2023). A new three-year rolling plan for the period 2024-2026 was approved. The plan was drafted after review and consideration of the previous three-year risk and compliance rolling plan for 2021 – 2023. The new rolling plan

will include all low-risk legislation that wasn't self-assessed previously as well as a follow up and re-evaluation plan for all previously assessed high risk legislation.

From the first three year rolling plan, the following learning curves can be highlighted:

- Legislation on the regulatory universe can only be risk rated once in-depth assessments have been conducted. Determining the risk rating using an overview approach only provides a preliminary rating. It does happen that previously high risk rated legislation was not as high risk as per the initial overview assessment.
- Legislation that seemed to be applicable looking at it from an overview approach, was determined not to be applicable when doing in-depth assessment, or the legislation was found not to have compliance requirements for the NWU.
- The first 3 year rolling plan assisted to a great extent in refining the NWU regulatory universe, and the next three year rolling plan will now include all other legislation that was not previously assessed and determine their risk rating on the regulatory universe more in depth.
- The risk-based compliance approach proved to be very successful in ensuring that the most important legislative requirements for the NWU always receive priority.
- The monitoring phase of compliance becomes a redundant phase if the controls are written according to predefined standards and provided as a control library from which the controls can be chosen during self-assessments. The effectiveness of the controls is then also measured at the time of assessment. Therefore, controls can be predefined or, if the control is not yet listed in the predefined library, written correctly during the assessment phase and added to the library. The assessment and controls are then ready for the audit phase, without the compliance office having to undertake a monitoring exercise as intermediate phase. Self-assessments will be undertaken in more detail (and there might be more time-consuming) but will however then include the measurement of the effectiveness and adequacy of the controls.
- Regular compliance reporting to Council committees (in May and October) commenced during the roll-out of the three-year compliance plan. The oversight provided and feedback received from the Council Committees on the pieces of legislation related to the committees' specific areas of expertise are valuable in ensuring the rolling plan is adequate and updated as required. The Compliance department in conjunction with the Secretariat is putting processes in place to ensure proper follow-up of all matters raised at Council committees regarding compliance.

Compliance with the following 25 pieces of legislation were self-assessed in 2023:

- Agricultural Pests Act, No. 36 of 1983
- Animal Identification Act, No. 6 of 2002
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, No. 130 of 1993
- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, No. 43 of 1983
- Environmental Conservation Act, No 73 of 1998
- Fertiliser, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, No. 36 of 1947
- Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act No.54 of 1972
- Hazardous Substances Act, No. 15 of 1973
- Health Professions Act, No. 56 of 1974
- Meat Safety Act, No. 40 of 2000
- National Credit Act, No. 34 of 2005 (only incidental credit applicable on the NWU)
- National Environmental Management - Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004
- National Environmental Management - Waste Act 59 of 2008
- National Environmental Management Act, No. 107 of 1998
- National Environmental Management – Protected Areas Act, No. 57 of 2003
- National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999
- National Land Transport Act, No. 5 of 2009 – Commercial
- National Nuclear Regulator Act, No. 47 of 1999
- National Qualifications Framework Act, No 67 of 2008
- National Water Act, No 36 of 1998
- Nursing Act, No. 33 of 2005
- Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorist and Related Activities Act, No. 33 of 2004
- Tax Administration Act, No 28 of 2011
- Tobacco Products Control Act, No. 83 of 1993
- Unemployment Insurance Act, No. 63 of 2001

The Head: Risk and Compliance (appointed October 2023) monitors the compliance on an ongoing basis. Exclaim! compliance software is used for compliance assessment and reporting.

A Risk and Compliance Policy was finalised and approved by Council on 19 March 2020 and subsequently followed by Risk and Compliance Management Rules by the UMC in April 2021. The Policy and Rules continued to be strictly implemented during 2023.

In May 2023 the Combined Assurance Forum and the UMC received a legal advice that the NWU Compliance Committee had been established more than a decade ago and had been in existence in the same format since then. The establishment of the committee was therefore before the introduction of King IV and even before the introduction of the DHET Reporting Regulations for Higher Education Institution. Since 2013, the establishment of the Compliance Committee had therefore been overridden by the regulatory framework that changed significantly since 2014. The compliance work done by the Compliance Department is reported to the Combined Assurance Forum and the ARCC and at the various council committees. The need for a Compliance Committee therefore no longer existed and the UMC approved the dissolution of the Compliance Committee as other committees for reporting and oversight existed.

Council receives quarterly reports on changes to legislation relevant to the higher education environment.

10.9.10 Compliance with the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) and Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)

The NWU is committed to complying with the PAIA of 2000 and the POPIA of 2013.

The NWU Information Manual is updated regularly as part of the compulsory annual section 32 reporting requirement. The section 32 report was submitted to the Information Regulator on its website in June 2023, together with the PAIA manual of the NWU in three official languages. The three versions of the PAIA manual were reviewed and approved by the University Management Council on 24 May 2023, and published on the NWU webpage.

In 2022/23, the NWU received 31 PAIA requests. Of these, 22 were granted in full, seven were refused in full and two were partially refused.

To ensure compliance with PAIA and POPIA, the Information Governance Coordinator reports on a regular basis to the Information Management Committee and in turn to the UMC and the TI Governance Committee of Council.

The work undertaken by the coordinator includes ensuring a fully functional online system to deal with all PAIA requests and POPIA complaints. The coordinator also undertakes confidentiality, integrity and availability assessments for all systems in the cloud, assesses POPIA-related risks and implements mitigation measures.

POPIA training has been developed and implemented online, and an attendance monitoring system is in place.

Implementation of the Information Governance Framework was monitored by the coordinator, who assists staff and departments to comply with the framework and related policies.

10.9.11 Providing integrated assurance

The CAF has existed at the university since 2012, with its functions aligned with King IV. The intention of the committee is to manage and limit the risk exposure of the university and to provide assurance.

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.

In 2023, the NWU implemented a number of processes that were initiated in 2022 in terms of risk management. CAF noted the establishment of working definitions on risk appetite and risk tolerance for the NWU, and the overt linking of these to the goals in the APP. Risk assurance mapping and second-level risk assurance was undertaken on all risks on the Strategic Risk Register with a risk rating of 8 and above. Further, a third-level risk assurance audit was undertaken on the top 10 strategic risks.

Reviewing of the operational risk registers for faculties and several support departments is an ongoing process. Going forward, the faculties are required to prioritise risk management by including it as a standing item on the agendas of faculty meetings. The faculties must then provide feedback to Risk and Compliance regarding their operational risk register, along with feedback to the CAF on their updated operational risk registers.

The forum also assisted the ARCC to fulfil its responsibility in giving assurance to Council.

Specifically, it provided assurance that the university's risk management, risk control and governance processes are 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.

The CAF met on 2 May 2023 and 9 October 2023.

More information on risk management can be found in [section 7](#).

10.9.12 Human rights matters

The constituting meeting of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) took place on 1 June 2023. Council approved the reviewed terms of reference of the HRC on 22 June 2023. The revised Human Rights Policy was approved by the Council on 16 November 2023.

The HRC confirmed that all alleged human rights violations that were reported were presented to the committee without any filtering. The committee established an email address for reporting infringements, monitored by People and Culture staff, with all reports documented for trend analysis. The staff and student environment witnessed concerted efforts through awareness campaigns and training aimed at sensitising them effectively.

10.10 Council statements

10.10.1 Council statement on going concern



**COUNCIL STATEMENT ON
GOING CONCERN**

We can confirm that the NWU is considered a going concern now, and in the foreseeable future.

 Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.

10.10.2 Council statement on financial controls outside financial statements



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON FINANCIAL CONTROLS OUTSIDE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Internal controls and administrative systems, which have been designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the integrity of the financial statements and that assets have been protected and transactions carried out in terms of the university's policies and procedures, are in place and are properly maintained on a cost-effective basis.

Statement approval obtained from
NWU Council on 13 June 2024.

10.10.3 Council statement on tenders



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON TENDERS

The NWU requests tenders from the market for all purchases of goods and services with a total contract value exceeding R250 000. Tenders are evaluated and approved strictly in line with tender policies and procedures and within approved authorisation mandates, with a focus on fairness and transparency. The tender document forms the basis of the envisaged supply agreement, and the standard template was therefore checked and approved by the Legal Services Department of the NWU.

The evaluation criteria as specified in the tender document is:

- For tenders with a total contract value of less than R1,5 million, 80% is awarded for price and 20% for the level of BBBEE.
- For tenders with a total contract value exceeding R1,5 million, 90% is awarded for price and 10% for the level of BBBEE.

Council has mandated the Tender Committee to evaluate and approve tenders with a total contract value of between R15 million and R50 million. For tenders with a total contract value exceeding R50 million, the Tender Committee will evaluate the tenders received and make a recommendation to Council for approval

Statement approval obtained from
the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON FINANCIAL HEALTH AND VIABILITY

As a tertiary institution with the core business of teaching-learning, research and community engagement, the NWU again added material value to the economy and was able to achieve its financial goals. In this regard, the following can be highlighted:

- The NWU still provides affordable higher education.
- 12 358 students received degrees and diplomas during 2023.
- The university, from its own resources, contributed R249,0 million or 8,85% of the total funds allocated for financial aid.
- R46,8 million (19%) of the funds allocated to financial aid was used for awards to students who performed well academically.
- A total of R392,4 million was spent on capital works, macro maintenance and minor works across the university in 2023.
- The total amount spent in 2023 from DHET grant funding from various funding cycles amounted to
- R122 983 999. This excludes R216 993 302 from NWU capital funding and R52 473 630 in maintenance expenditure.
- The total expenditure for deferred maintenance projects amounted to R46 314 792 in 2023, while smaller projects with a combined value of R5 347 057 were completed. The backlog of 2020/2021 projects has been absorbed and even better progress is expected during 2024, with investigation expenditure totalling R811 781.
- The NWU completed its largest student housing project to date. The project on the Mahikeng Campus consists of six clusters with a total of 1 728 beds. Its successful completion aligns with the university's goal of providing safe accommodation on and around our campuses. By investing in safe and secure spaces that are conducive to studying, the NWU has strengthened its student value proposition and human capital.
- We maintained a sound solvency position and optimal liquidity levels during the 2023 financial year to ensure that the NWU remains a going concern.
- Council and management are jointly committed to managing the NWU in such a way that the sound financial position will be sustained in 2024, as well as in the medium and long term. It is important to point out that our two largest sources of income, namely state subsidy and tuition fee-related income, together total 71,1% of turnover (2022: 76,2% and 2021: 77,1%). This again emphasises our dependence on these income stream one funds.
- A total surplus of R1 062,5 million (excluding other comprehensive income (OCI) of R59,6 million) for 2023 is reflected in the consolidated statement of comprehensive income.

Statement approval obtained from the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON SANCTIONS AND FINES

The NWU has no material regulatory penalties, sanctions or fines for contraventions or non-compliance with statutory obligations to disclose.



Statement approval obtained from
the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.



10.10.6 Council statement on contract management, Service Level Agreements and monitoring of suppliers' performance



COUNCIL STATEMENT ON CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, SERVICE-LEVEL AGREEMENTS AND MONITORING OF SUPPLIERS' PERFORMANCE

The NWU has a centralised procurement management structure that provides control and coordination without inhibiting evaluation, recommendation and authorisation powers in respect of procurement needs on a decentralised divisional level.

This authority is regulated by the Policy on Delegations and the Schedule of Financial and Contractual Authorisation Levels as approved by Council.

We continually strive to obtain the best value for money on each procurement transaction while not compromising the requirements of fair and transparent trade ethics. We also strive to adhere to the standards as required by the Public Procurement Act, and our tender processes are strictly controlled and monitored by the internal and external audit functions.

We place a high value on obtaining the university's requirements from BBBEE-qualified suppliers with a qualified BBBEE contribution exceeding 70%. The Preferential Procurement Strategy was approved during 2020 which enables a much more focused approach to preferential procurement.

Contract management and service level agreements are decentralised to a divisional level, while problems with contracts and service delivery are escalated to the centralised procurement department for action.

Statement approval obtained from
the NWU Council on 13 June 2024.

MR BERT SORGDRAGER
CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

10.11 Report of the Institutional Forum

As a statutory structure, falling under the ambit of the Higher Education Act, the Institutional Forum of the NWU advises the Council on matters affecting the university.

These matters include advising the Council on the execution of the Higher Education Act and national higher education policy, as well as assisting in the development of an institutional culture of tolerance and respect for human rights, as well as the creation of an environment conducive to teaching and learning, and research.

We typically advise the Council on senior management appointments, policies on race and gender equity, codes of conduct, cultural diversity management and policies on mediation and conflict resolution procedures.

The following issues received attention in 2023:

10.11.1 NWU Strategy: Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond

The IF noted the revised NWU strategy that was the culmination of a rigorous and extensive process involving robust discussions and input by the IF. It was noted that the new strategy addressed current strategic issues encompassing teaching and learning, research and innovation, community engagement, student life, people and culture, digital transformation, finance, governance, stakeholder engagement and technology platforms.

10.11.2 Policy matters related to equity with respect to race, gender and disability

- **Gender-based violence in the employee environment**

The IF acknowledged notable interventions such as awareness sessions for employees, focusing particularly on sexual harassment awareness. Additionally, a webinar on substance abuse was conducted on 16 November 2023.

- **Gender-based violence (GBV) in a student environment**

The IF noted that during 2023, the Student Judicial Services department undertook various events, including community engagements, projects and collaborations with other stakeholders related to GBV. These collaborations involved the Student Counselling Department across all campuses to address GBV through awareness campaigns and advocacy projects.

The IF emphasised the importance of considering additional interventions to prevent incidents of GBV. The importance of preventive measures was further emphasised as the NWU must ensure compliance with the higher education protocols issued in June 2022. It was essential to review these protocols and assess the NWU's adherence, particularly concerning our accredited residences and internal residence security. The level of safety within the NWU's residences must be assessed to safeguard students effectively.

- **Persons living with a disability: students**

The IF noted comprehensive reports on the support and services provided to NWU students with disabilities, including details about the concessions and support they receive. It was acknowledged to indeed be a societal issue that necessitated collaboration among all stakeholders, from basic education through to university studies and beyond.

The IF recognised the importance of ensuring accessibility to venues and facilities, particularly noting that some were inaccessible to students with disabilities. The university would report to the IF on intervention plans aimed at enhancing accessibility for these students.

- **Persons living with a disability: employees**

The IF noted that as at 31 December 2023, 66 staff members, both permanent and temporary, had declared having a disability. The budget for reasonable accommodations was used to purchase software (Dragon), computer screens, laptops and three sets of hearing aids. The IF further noted that in collaboration with the Occupational Health and Safety (SHE) department, the People and Culture team initiated a project in 2023. A request was sent to all staff members registered as living with a disability across all campuses, inviting them to undergo an ergonomic assessment provided by an external service provider, Ergomax. The IF emphasised that the NWU should ensure equal opportunities and equitable distribution of resources to foster an inclusive environment.

- **Employment equity**

The IF reviewed employment equity reports in accordance with the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, considering designated groups and occupational levels. These reports provided insights into the university's workforce profile and highlighted apparent remuneration disparities, including those between the highest- and lowest-paid employees, as well as disparities based on race and gender across various occupational levels.

The IF acknowledged the university's obligation to report annually to the Department of Employment and Labour for compliance purposes. The positive acknowledgment of the NWU's submission for the 2022 to 2023 period indicated the university's commitment to complying with regulatory requirements.

- **NWU Behavioural Manual**

The IF acknowledged the importance of the NWU Behavioural Manual in regulating labour practices to ensure procedural and substantive fairness. The last review and approval of the Behavioural Manual took place in 2011, and since then, changes in the labour environment have necessitated proposed amendments. The IF was asked to provide input on the proposed amendments in the NWU Behavioural Manual.

- **Amendments to the basic conditions of employment**

The IF noted that in 2023, the NWU conditions of employment for permanent and fixed-term staff underwent revision to incorporate changes reflecting legal implications and/or organisational needs. Several changes were made, including the expansion of the definition of a medical certificate to encompass pharmacists and traditional healers.

Additionally, clarification was provided on the definition of third-stream income.

The current study leave policy for support employees with academic responsibilities did not include employees on P1 to P4 grades, and all leave obligations were to the estate of any deceased employee. Notably, all employees were subject to a retirement age of 65 years, with a newly introduced clause allowing for an extension of the retirement age to 70 years for those employees approved by Management.

- **Remuneration levels and staff retention**

The IF acknowledged the NWU's efforts in addressing remuneration levels while striving to retain employees and meet industry standards. A benchmarking exercise conducted in 2022 revealed that the NWU was falling behind regarding *market-related remuneration*. The IF emphasised the importance of developing strategies for competitive compensation. By the end of 2023, the first phase of the Scarce Skills Strategy – which addresses this matter – was concluded. The second phase will resume in 2024, with the third phase of the three-year cycle ending in 2026.

10.11.3 Codes of conduct

- **Code of Conduct on Student and Staff Relationships**

The IF noted that at the beginning of 2023, the UMC identified the necessity for a rule or code to govern relationships between staff and/or students. This requirement was conveyed to the UMC, which subsequently authorised a benchmarking exercise with other universities. The benchmarking exercise was completed successfully, leading to the formation of a task team tasked with drafting the NWU Code of Conduct on Staff and Student Relationships. The IF was requested to provide input into this matter.

10.11.4 Dispute resolution and procedures

The IF noted that employees submit their grievances to the Employee Relations department, utilising the Grievance Procedure as a platform to address workplace issues and seek constructive resolution. This is a continuous process. Furthermore, workplace factors such as equipment, occupational health and safety and potential employee rights violations were considered.

10.11.5 The management of cultural diversity across the NWU

- **NWU Culture Change Project and Organisational Citizenship Behaviours Project (OCBP) awards**

The IF noted various culture projects at the NWU, including team-building activities across different faculties and divisions, corporate relations, marketing and the Wayawayaya Master KG dance challenge.

- **NWU Purple Race**

The IF took note that the NWU leadership team participated in a coaching programme to enhance leadership identity, teamwork, collaboration and competency. UMC and other Senior Management members were divided into seven value teams, each demonstrating and embodying the university's principles through various activities. The NWU was considering extending the Purple Race concept to student leaders in bodies such as Student Representative Councils, Student Campus Councils and Faculty Committees.

- **Onboarding survey**

The IF acknowledged the ongoing challenge of attracting and retaining key talent at the NWU. The People and Culture division explored various interventions to enhance the employer value proposition. While the exit interview remains valuable, it has limitations occurring after the fact. It was noted that an onboarding survey was introduced to address this by gathering insights from newly recruited employees, thereby aiming to improve onboarding processes and the employee value proposition. The report from the onboarding survey, which is

intended to complement and not replace the exit interview system, provides valuable information and insights to guide interventions.

10.11.6 Fostering a university culture promoting tolerance and respect for human rights matters and conducive to teaching learning and research

- **Human Rights Policy**

The IF considered the proposed amendments to the NWU Human Rights Policy and provided input.

- **Human rights matters**

The IF acknowledged the constituting meeting of the Human Rights Committee (HRC) held on 1 June 2023. At this meeting, roles and responsibilities concerning human rights were clearly defined, among other matters.

Additionally, the IF noted that the NWU human rights complaints line was accessible at HumanRights@nwu.ac.za, and overseen by the senior specialist for employee relations.

10.11.7 Transformation journey

The IF noted that the Transformation Oversight Committee requested the executive directors for Student Life and People and People and Culture to develop a plan for advancing the NWU's transformation journey. This transformation journey was led by UMC members responsible for various aspects such as digital transformation, teaching and learning space, research and innovation, community engagement and procurement.

A joint workshop of senior management and student leaders, facilitated by Prof Crain Soudien, took place on 2 March 2023 to assess the university's understanding of institutional transformation and the relevance of its transformation objectives. A follow-up workshop was held in August 2023.

10.11.8 Transformation in the curriculum

During 2023, the IF took note of the trends and progress in transforming the university curriculum and aligning its student experience with Strategic Goal 1. This strategic goal focuses on continuous curriculum transformation and renewal at NWU.

10.11.9 IF workshop

The IF held a workshop on 25 August 2023 entitled "Experiences of the Institutional Forum role in higher education institutions". The facilitator was Mr George Mvalo, Director of Social Justice and Transformation at the Vaal University of Technology and the previous Chairperson of the Transformation Managers Forum at USAf.

The agenda of the workshop focused on the following and the presentations on the following topics were well received:

- cooperative governance in South African higher education
- legislative and statutory responsibilities of the IF
- governance models
- vital role of IF in institutional transformation
- transformation at the NWU
- a major higher education transformation challenge
- democratisation
- operationalising transformation indicators
- impact dimension
- Key take-away lessons.

10.11.10 Composition of the IF and Rules and Procedure of the IF

- **Composition of the IF**

The following table lists the constituencies of the IF as at 31 December 2023:

Constituency	Members: December 2023
Member of Council	Prof TP Venter
University Management Committee	Mr NC Manoko
Senate	Prof V Leendertz
	Prof W Dudu (<i>Chairperson</i>)
	Prof O Ruzvidzo
Academic staff	Dr C Banda
	Ms E Kilian
	Mr MC Stoffels
Recognised union	Vacant
	Vacant
	Vacant
	Vacant
Support staff	Mr N Tom
	Vacant
	Vacant
Campus Student Representative Councils (CSRCs)	Ms C Baloyi
	Ms K Mogoshoa
	Ms C De Klerk
	Ms A Du Preez
	Mr T Tshabalala
	Ms H Mdladla
NWU Convocation	Mr B Mahlangu
	Ms K Brits
Special Expertise	Prof J Rothman
	Adv R Koraan

- **Rules of Procedure for the Institutional Forum**

The Rules of Procedure were revised by the IF and were approved by the NWU Council on 16 March 2023.

- **Functioning of the IF**

The IF's functions were prescribed in paragraph 24 of the NWU Statute, being, to advise the Council on matters affecting the university. The IF performed these functions at each meeting, and the agenda of the IF was structured to address all these matters as per the IF Rules. The IF reported to the Council after each meeting, and the IF Chairperson was a permanent attendee at Council meetings. Although he held no voting rights, he was invited to take part in discussions.

In accordance with the prescripts of the NWU Statute, the IF may have up to 25 members representing a broad range of stakeholder constituencies.

Regarding budget provision, the IF had the same standing as other statutory structures, such as the Board of

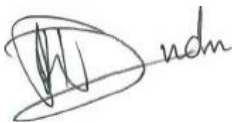
Donors and the Convocation, and therefore budget and administrative support were provided by the Registrar and the Secretariat. The IF Chairperson, through the IF secretariat, took responsibility for engaging IF members on the need for workshops and training, and for providing feedback to the Registrar.

The IF acknowledged that the matter of trade union representation needed careful consideration. This was because the unions within the NWU lack recognition and only hold organisational rights. Acting upon the recommendations on the filling of trade union vacancies could potentially impact other structures where unions are involved as partners. The issue of union representation within the IF stems from the fact that no union meets the mandated threshold of 30% membership. This was discussed in 2023 but remained unresolved.

The IF acknowledged the insufficient involvement and reporting of students in its activities, giving rise to thorough discussions at Council level. The executive director for student life committed to addressing these concerns by ensuring students' active participation and proper reporting within the IF.

10.11.11 Meeting dates in 2023

The IF convened on 3 March, 5 June, 25 August (workshop) and 13 October.



PROF WASHINGTON DUDU
CHAIRPERSON OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FORUM



11 Incentivising for achievement

We have a strategy to encourage high performance and productivity. It includes offering 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.

11.1 Remuneration mix aligned to strategy

Market-related remuneration is essential for recruiting and retaining the best staff. 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.

We conduct annual benchmark exercises 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%.

Employees are also members of the group life scheme where they are afforded the opportunity to flex their benefits between one time to five times of their pensionable earnings over and above the pension benefit.

Our remuneration strategy is aligned with the overall NWU strategy, business drivers and values, ensuring a good skills and culture fit.

11.2 Remuneration governance and management

Through the Remuneration Committee, the NWU carries out its oversight role for remuneration at the university. This committee has been paying close attention to the income differentials between the higher and lower salary bands and how these affect fair and responsible remuneration and the perceptions of employees and other stakeholders of the NWU as a value-adding institution.

Closing the income differentials and addressing the enhancement of salaries of academic staff are important objectives. The salary increases agreed on through the collective bargaining process for 2023 supported this by building on the differentiated increases that have been introduced from 2019 onwards to cater for academic staff and staff on the lower income bands.

11.3 Executive contracts

Council oversees and approves the appointment of the vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellors, the registrar, executive directors and deputy vice-chancellors for assignable functions and campus operations. These appointments are made in line with the NWU Statute and the Council's Rules.

Name	Basic salary	Employee benefits	Other allowance payment	Grand total
Prof MB Tyobeka **	3 281 727	389 928	366 924	4 038 579
Prof LA Du Plessis	2 559 082	35 014	731 407	3 325 503
Prof DM Balia	2 373 711	173 436	269 485	2 816 632
Prof S Swanepoel	2 280 736	35 014	257 473	2 573 223
Prof MM Verhoef	2 663 042		343 889	3 006 931
Prof RJ Balfour	2 564 648		319 820	2 884 468
Prof MJ Mphahlele	2 560 246		266 496	2 826 742
Ms E De Beer	2 780 664	48 634	243 060	3 072 359
Dr M Singh	2 352 598	36 206	269 887	2 658 690
Mr NC Manoko	2 095 848	145 944	287 733	2 529 525
Prof JS Chalufu	1 936 854	137 735	167 771	2 242 359
Total	27 449 156	1 001 910	3 523 944	31 975 010

**** Management member not in service for a full year – 2022. Remuneration annualised. These include annual remuneration, levies, bonuses and in the case of the vice-chancellor, housing benefits (refer to note 32 in the annual financial statements – relate-party transactions).**

- *Dr M Singh will retire on 31 December 2024.*
- *All members of management were in service for the full year – 2023. No annualising of remuneration.*

11.4 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 COLA process and approved by Council's Exco.

[\(More information](#) about the honoraria that members received for each meeting attended.)

Honoraria payments (gross remuneration to Council members) in 2023:

Name	R value	Name	R value
Mrs UAD Baravalle	87 792	Mr LE Seilane	21 932
Mrs S Britz	62 186	Mr AM Sorgdrager	361 953
Prof AL Combrink	25 606	Ms E Stander	37 809
Mr JDS de Bruyn	95 092	MR MSJ Thabethe	86 077
Rev PD Dinkebogile	41 184	Mrs PP Thebe	10 974
Mr XV Hadebe	32 326	Mr PM Tlhabanyane	70 448
Mrs RA Kenosi	165 556	Prof MB Tyobeka	62 361
Mr TC Kgomo	84 252	Mrs M van Zyl	43 292
Adv M Kruger	60 132	Mr TP Venter	21 948
Mr CS Mabe	80 452	Ms PS Moleke	3 658
Ms S Mlambo	18 290	Mr OE Mongale	117 040
Mr SM Mohapi	43 864	Mrs MJ Mwase	27 415
Mr TV Mokgatlha	80 519	Adv PG Seleka	43 896
Grand total: 1 786 054			

11.5 Organisational culture

Goal 5.4 of the APP is to *Cultivate and enhance an ethical, inclusive, welcoming and values-driven culture.*

For the past three years, the NWU has been focusing on building an inclusive, enabling and welcoming environment and organisational culture.

By celebrating the NWU values and conducting culture-based activities, we aim to foster a sense of ownership among students and staff, encouraging them to embrace these values as their own. In this way, the values become an essential part of the university's identity and the culture we strive to cultivate and promote.

The institution also promotes a transparent and values-driven leadership culture.

Interventions conducted in 2023 to entrench the NWU values and desired culture included team-building sessions in faculties and divisions and, under the auspices of the Leadership Academy, training on engagement and leading through inclusivity.

We also identified values champions who, by example, demonstrated culturally desirable behaviour and how to live the NWU Way.

In addition, we promoted a culture of feedback, where constructive two-way dialogue takes place on performance management. Senior and middle managers have received training on engagement and inclusivity.

As part of the Organisational Citizenship Behaviours Project (OCBP), we established the NWU Media and Organisational Citizenship Recognition Awards to celebrate, recognise and award staff and students who live and demonstrate the NWU values.

In 2023, the awards were presented in eight categories:

- 1 Social Media Personality
- 2 Traditional Media Personality
- 3 Exceptional Media Coverage
- 4 Social Responsibility and Awareness Advocate
- 5 Diversity and Transformation Advocate
- 6 NWU Silver Wings Award
- 7 NWU Ambassador of the Year
- 8 Vice-Chancellor's Award

Each of the top five category winners, comprising students and staff, were eligible for a trophy and R10 000. In 2023, six Silver award winners each received a trophy and R5 000. An ambassador award was awarded to one student and one staff member, each of whom received a trophy and R5 000. The Vice Chancellor's award was awarded to one person, who received a trophy and R15 000.

During Women's Month in August, we launched the Organisational Citizenship Behaviours Women's Month Award and presented the inaugural Women in Leadership Programme, which aligns with the vice-chancellor's strategic initiatives and the NWU's multigenerational strategy.

A culture survey will be conducted in 2024 to measure the impact of the culture initiatives.

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.

12 Future outlook for the NWU

In setting out to navigate the challenges that lie ahead for the higher education sector generally and the NWU in particular, it will be critical for us to focus unrelentingly on clearly defined priorities and to use our resources wisely to realise these.

The priorities of the NWU are to focus on:

Impact – Realising academic and social impact through innovative and forward-looking approaches and programmes.

Growth – Growing the NWU's trajectory and footprint in the scope, quality, reach and relevance of our products and offerings, with a specific focus on growing the number of postgraduate students.

Diversity – Embracing the diversity of NWU stakeholders through the application of inclusive practices.

Partnerships – Delivery through value-adding partnerships.

Internationalisation – Grow the NWU's international profile through collaborations with international counterparts at various levels.

Operational excellence – Continuously enable strategy execution through excellent operations.

In the teaching and learning space, we aim to promote excellent student-centric teaching and learning that is relevant to our market and knowledge generation.

In this regard, our objectives are to increase international engagement on open, distance, online and flexible learning through benchmarking, while contributing to and supporting the digital transformation of teaching and learning. We also want to strengthen support for teaching and learning through the provision of multilingual language services.

Our research focus for the future is on conducting research and innovation with a strategic focus on global impact, inspiring and nurturing the next generation of researchers and improving our international stature and the visibility of scholars and research outputs. In developing a culture of active citizenship, we continue to focus on integrating and aligning community engagement with teaching-learning and research.

In the medium term, our focus is to proceed with the establishment of a medical school and to further explore the growth of sustainable mining. Our efforts as a university will be strengthened by forming a strong collaboration with the provincial government and strengthening our relationships and partnerships with industry role players nationally and internationally.

In summary

In 2023, we continued positioning the NWU as an institution of superior academic excellence with a commitment to social justice. Excellence and social justice will remain the anchors of the university's ethos, along with an increased focus on impact and relevance to benefit staff and students as we implement the new strategy, Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond.

We made headway in harnessing new technologies to improve our processes and value proposition and look forward to the implementation of the SIS in the coming year.

Conducting novel research and sharing new knowledge to benefit society has enabled us to continue attracting high-quality researchers and postgraduate students. It has also enabled us to offer even greater value to the communities we serve through our expertise.

It is important to be part of robust intellectual networks and collaborations of scholars and researchers. During 2023, we strengthened our networks by nurturing old relationships and forging new ones on the national and international stage through our various events. A new generation of NWU graduates went out into the world to make a difference.

While acknowledging that load-shedding and higher education funding are critical areas of concern in the ensuing years, we remain steadfast and optimistic about the future.

13 Annexures

13.1 Annexure 1: 2023 Performance Assessment Report

Performance vs Targets

The following performance indicators link to the relevant goals in the Annual Performance Plan.

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

	Relevant performance indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	Actual 2023
1	Contact student success rate	84,7%	87%	84,1%
The transition from continuous to summative assessment in the Faculty of Humanities, following the COVID-19 period, accounts for the observed decline in the student success rate. Although the target was not achieved, the current success rate of 84.1% remains robust. This reflects a well-maintained balance between high-quality teaching, effective student support, and the rigor of academic standards.				
2	Contact undergraduate, graduation duration factor	1,08	1,20 ⁴	1,11
"The successful achievement of the graduation duration factor target, which improved to 1.11 from the set goal of 1.20, can be attributed to enhanced student support strategies.				
3	International student enrolment	2,68%	2,8% ⁵	2,38%
The majority of our international students are enrolled in distance diploma programs. Consequently, the decrease in distance enrolments has adversely affected the proportion of foreign student registrations.				
4	Headcount Enrolments	54 176	55 945	55 096
The North-West University missed its enrolment target for 2023 by 849, with a final count of 55,096 against a target of 55,945. The shortfall is primarily attributed to lower-than-anticipated enrolments in distance education diploma programs, which have a compounding effect on numbers in subsequent years. However, there is potential for growth in postgraduate enrolments, where NWU can recruit more students more quickly due to those programmes' shorter duration.				
5	First-Time Entering Enrolments	12 625	12 726	13 138
The North-West University met its First-Time Entering Enrolments target for 2023.				
6	Graduates	13 735	13 576	12 358
We have not reached our graduates target due to a lower number of distance enrolments and thus also graduates.				

⁴ A deviation of 0.05 is allowed on either side of target for achievement of the KPI

⁵ A deviation of 1% is allowed on either side of target for achievement of the KPI

7	Graduation Rate	25,4%	24%	22,43%
We achieved slightly below our targeted graduation rate, primarily due to a reduction in total distance enrolment over the past few years, which has consequently led to fewer annual graduates.				

Goal 2: Intensify research and innovation

	Relevant performance indicator	Actual 2021	Target 2022	Actual 2022 ⁶
8	Publications per permanent academic staff member	0,99	0,99 ²	1,02
Most NWU faculties have enhanced their research outputs despite the number of permanent academic staff remaining constant. This growth is particularly notable as our focus has shifted from merely increasing quantity to prioritizing quality and publishing in high-impact journals.				
9	Weighted research output	2958.062	2921 ¹	2864.276
In 2022, the university recorded a weighted research output of 2864.276. This achievement was primarily driven by an increase in staff publication output and a steady number of research master's graduates. However, a decrease in the number of doctoral graduates prevented us from meeting the overall weighted output target.				

***Please note that there is a two-year lag with regard to the research output.*

Goal 4: Develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition

	Relevant performance indicator	Actual 2022	Target 2023	Actual 2023
10	Student: Academic Staff FTE ratio	28,45 : 1	27,5 : 1 ⁷	28,59:1
Over the past few years, the academic staff component at NWU has not seen significant growth. The calculation of our Student to Academic Staff FTE ratio, which includes both contact and distance students, is influenced by the continued increase in contact undergraduate student enrolments. This factor has contributed to our ratio remaining slightly above the target at 28.59:1 for 2023. Despite this, we are still well within the acceptable target range.				
11	First time entrant dropout rate for contact degrees (as on 1 May 2024)	9,79%	Below 13%	8,86%
Learning support services and structures targeting first-time entering students continues to assist them in performing.				

⁶ 2021 final approved research publication units are reported as the approved 2022 publications are only received from the DHET later in in this year

⁷ A deviation of 3 is allowed on either side of target for achievement of the KPI

Goal 5: Develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile

	Relevant performance indicator	Actual 2022				Target 2023				Actual 2023	
12	Student mix: NWU Contact & Distance; All Campuses	African (%)	68,51%			African		68,96%		African (%)	71,36%
		Coloured (%)	4,28%			Coloured		3,87%		Coloured (%)	4,08%
		Indian (%)	1,23%			Indian		1,17%		Indian (%)	1,07%
		White (%)	25,93%			White		26,00%		White (%)	23,34%
		Female (%)	62,85%			Female		63,63%		Female (%)	63,49%
		Male	37,15%			Male		36,37%		Male	36,49
Due to the increase in NSFAS funding as well as better funding for accommodation and the accreditation of private accommodation, our student profile differs from the original submitted and approved enrolment plan but is still seen as a positive student mix.											
13	Staff mix	African (%)	41,74%			African		41,56%		African (%)	44,66%
		Coloured (%)	7,39%			Coloured		7,37%		Coloured (%)	7,38%
		Indian (%)	1,62%			Indian		1,95%		Indian (%)	1,77%
		White (%)	49,25%			White		48,02%		White (%)	46,19%
						Foreign National		1,10%			
Our recruitment strategy paid off and we made positive progress in attracting professional and academic staff from designated groups											
14	Permanent academic staff with PhDs	56%				56% ¹				57%	
The university has exceeded its target. This is indicative of its commitment to the development of its academic staff.											

13.2 Annexure 2: List of Council committee meetings and attendance

Committee	List of meetings	% Attendance 2021	% Attendance 2022	% Attendance 2023	Self-evaluation undertaken
Council	16 March 2023 22 June 2023 14 September 2023 16 November 2023	94%	94%	94%	✓
Council Executive Committee (Exco) (also fulfilling the role of Council membership committee)	26 January 2023 2 February 2023 7 March 2023 10 May 2023 12 June 2023 7 September 2023 10 October 2023 6 November 2023	95%	95%	96%	✓
Council Extended Exco	29 May 2023 25 October 2023	This committee was established in 2022.	79%	96%	✓
Finance Committee	24 May 2023 27 October 2023	83%	100%	88%	✓
Transformation Oversight Committee	17 February 2023 22 May 2023 29 August 2023 3 November 2023	84%	92%	86%	✓
Student Life Oversight Committee	23 February 2023 23 May 2023 15 August 2023 16 October 2023 31 October 2023	83%	88%	90%	✓
Student Housing Committee	3 May 2023 7 August 2023	This committee was established in 2022.	91%	90%	✓

Committee	List of meetings	% Attendance 2021	% Attendance 2022	% Attendance 2023	Self-evaluation undertaken
People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee	17 May 2023 9 October 2023	83%	75%	82%	✓
Tender Committee	27 February 2023 11 May 2023 17 July 2023 28 August 2023 16 October 2023	93%	100%	89%	✓
Honorary Awards Committee	17 April 2023 7 September 2023 10 November 2023	92%	100%	90%	✓
Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC)	1 March 2023 8 June 2023 23 August 2023 24 October 2023	88%	96%	91%	✓
Remuneration Committee	6 March 2023 3 May 2023 7 June 2023 21 June 2023 28 August 2023 17 October 2023	100%	94%	81%	✓
Assets Committee	3 May 2023 13 October 2023	100%	100%	100%	✓
Investments Committee	9 March 2023 26 April 2023 18 August 2023 28 September 2023	71%	100%	94%	✓
TI Governance Committee	28 February 2023 6 June 2023 21 August 2023 31 October 2023	93%	93%	91%	✓

Committee	List of meetings	% Attendance 2021	% Attendance 2022	% Attendance 2023	Self-evaluation undertaken
Social and Ethics Committee	27 February 2023 6 June 2023 17 August 2023 30 October 2023	77%	82%	82%	✓
Human Rights Committee	27 May 2023 1 June 2023 11 October 2023	This committee was established in 2023.		82%	✓

13.3 Annexure 3: Composition of committees as of 31 December 2023

13.3.1 Composition of the NWU Senate

	Reference to Statute	Description	Member name / Vacancy	Ex officio Senate member	Campus
Vice-chancellor					
1	14(1)(a)	Vice-chancellor (Chairperson)	Tyobeka MB, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
Vice-Principal					
2	14(1)(b)	Vice-principal	Du Plessis, L, Prof	Ex officio member	Vanderbijlpark Campus
Deputy vice-chancellors					
3	14(1)(c)	Deputy vice-chancellor: Teaching-Learning	Balfour, RJ, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
4	14(1)(c)	Deputy vice-chancellor: Research and Innovation	Mphahlele, J, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
5	14(1)(c)	Deputy vice-chancellor: IT and Campus Operations (Potchefstroom)	Balia, D, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
6	14(1)(c)	Deputy vice-chancellor: Community Engagement and Campus Operations (Mahikeng)	Swanepoel, S, Prof	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
-	14(1)(c)	Deputy vice-chancellor: Strategic Planning and Campus Operations (Vaal Triangle)	Du Plessis, L, Prof (see no 2)		
Registrar					
7	14(1)(d)	Registrar	Verhoef, M, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
Executive Directors					
8	14(1)(e)	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities	De Beer, E, Ms	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
9	14(1)(e)	Executive Director: Corporate Relations and Marketing	Manoko, NC Mr	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
10	14(1)(e)	Executive Director: People and Culture	Singh, M, Dr	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
11	14(1)(e)	Executive Director: Student Life	Chalufu, S, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
Executive Deans					
12	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Law	Morei, N, Dr	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
13	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Modise, D, Prof	Ex officio member	Vanderbijlpark Campus
14	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Engineering	Van Dyk, L, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
15	14(1) (f)	Executive Dean: Health Sciences	Kotzé, AF, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
16	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Theology	Goede, H, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
17	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Education	Conley, L, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus

	Reference to Statute	Description	Member name / Vacancy	Ex officio Senate member	Campus
18	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Humanities	Moyo, D, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
19	14(1)(f)	Executive Dean: Economic and Management Sciences	Surujlal, B, Prof	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
Deputy Deans					
20	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Humanities (Research and Innovation)	Nel, M, Prof	Ex officio member	Vanderbijlpark Campus
21	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Humanities (Teaching and Learning)	Chaka, M, Prof	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
22	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Education (Teaching-Learning)	Reyneke, M, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
23	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Education (Research and Innovation)	Dudu, W, Prof	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
24	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Teaching-Learning)	Medupe, TR, Prof	Ex officio member	Mahikeng Campus
25	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Research and Innovation)	Van der Westhuizen, F, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
26	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Economic and Management Sciences (Teaching-Learning)	Van der Merwe, HJ, Prof	Ex officio member	Vanderbijlpark Campus
27	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Economic and Management Sciences (Research and Innovation)	Leendertz, V, Prof	Ex officio member	Vanderbijlpark Campus
28	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Health Sciences (Research and Innovation)	Du Plessis, J, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
29	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Health Sciences (Teaching and Learning)	Herbst, A, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
30	14(1)(g)	Deputy Dean: Law (Quality Assurance and Stakeholder Relations)	Barnard, M, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
Deputy Registrar					
31	14(1)(h)	Deputy Registrar	Temane, QM, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus
Chief Director of the NWU Business School					
32	14(1)(i)	Chief Director of the NWU Business School	Sekhampu, J, Prof	Ex officio member	Potchefstroom Campus

32 Academic staff members elected by academic staff in the faculties								
Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences								
	Reference to Statute	Description	Member name/ Vacancy	Category	Term starts	Term ends	Term notes	Campus
33	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Viljoen-Bezuidenhout, D, Prof	Associate Professor	3-Feb-2023	2-Feb-2026	1 st term	Vanderbijlpark Campus
34	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Moroke, ND, Prof	Professor	3-Feb-2023	2-Feb-2023	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus
35	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Moncho, IB, Ms	Senior Lecturer	19-Nov-22	19-Nov-25	1 st term	Vanderbijlpark Campus
36	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Els, C, Prof	NRF rated researcher	29-Mar-21	29-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
Faculty of Education								
37	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Geduld, BW, Prof	Associate Professor	23-Feb-22	23-Feb-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
38	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Mgqwashu, EM, Prof	Professor	6-Sep-2023	5-Sep-2026	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
39	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Marais, LM, Dr	Senior Lecturer	29-Mar-20	29-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
	Reference to Statute	Description	Member name/ Vacancy	Category	Term starts	Term ends	Term notes	Campus
40	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Meyer, S, Prof	NRF rated researcher	6-Sep-23	5-Sep-26	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
Faculty of Engineering								
41	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Helberg, ASJ, Prof	Professor	14-Oct-21	14-Oct-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
42	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Eloka-Eboka, AC, Prof	Associate Professor	23-Feb-22	23-Feb-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
43	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Nzo, AB, Mr	Senior Lecturer	23-Feb-22	23-Feb-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
44	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Vacant	NRF rated researcher				
Faculty of Health Sciences								
45	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Useh, U, Prof	Professor	31-Oct-22	30-Oct-25	2 nd term	Mahikeng Campus
46	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Moss, SJ, Prof	NRF rated researcher	12-Jul-21	12-Jul-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
47	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Sparks, M, Prof	Associate Professor	4-Mar-22	4 Mar-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
48	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Eksteen, E, Dr	Senior Lecturer	6-Sep-23	5-Sep-26	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
Faculty of Humanities								
49	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Holtzhausen, L, Prof	Associate Professor	21-Apr-20	21-Apr-23	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
50	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Hofisi, C, Prof	NRF rated researcher	3-Oct-22	3-Oct-25	1 st term	Vanderbijlpark Campus
51	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Verhoef, AH, Prof	Professor	16-Mar-21	16-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
52	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Botha, YV, Dr	Senior Lecturer	17-Mar-21	17-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
Faculty of Law								
53	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Carnelley, M, Prof	Professor	16-Mar-21	16-Mar-24	2 nd term	Potchefstroom Campus
54	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Raboshakga, NI, Prof	Associate Professor	21-Apr-20	21-Apr-23	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus

55	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Geduld, AJN, Dr	Senior Lecturer	16-Mar-21	16-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
56	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Phooko, PR, Prof	NRF rated researcher	3-Apr-22	2-Apr-25	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus
Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences								
57	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Moloto, KD, Dr	Senior Lecturer	12-Jun-23	11-Jun-26	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
58	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Ruzvidzo, O, Prof	Professor	15-Aug-22	15-Aug-25	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus
59	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Nemakonde, LD, Prof	Associate Professor	19-Nov-22	19-Nov-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
60	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Louw, R, Prof	NRF rated researcher	23-Mar-21	24-Mar-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
Faculty of Theology								
61	14(1)(j)	(1) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Magezi, C, Dr	Senior Lecturer	15-Aug-22	15-Aug-25	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus
62	14(1)(j)	(2) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Viljoen, FP, Prof	Professor	16-Mar-21	16-Mar-24	2 nd term	Potchefstroom Campus
63	14(1)(j)	(3) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Freeks, FE, Prof	Associate Professor	15-Aug-22	15-Aug-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
64	14(1)(j)	(4) Academic staff elected by academic staff in the Faculties	Du Toit, PLG, Dr	NRF rated researcher	16-Mar-21	16-Mar-24	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus

Non-academic staff elected by non-academic staff (support staff)							
	Reference to Statute	Description	Name	Term starts	Term ends	Term notes	Campus
65	14(1)(k)	(1) Non-academic staff elected by non-academic staff (support staff)	Fourie, M, Dr	12-Nov-21	12-Nov-24	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
66	12(1)(k)	(2) Non-academic staff elected by non-academic staff (support staff)	Msi, A, Ms	26-Jul-23	25-Jul-26	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus

SRC members						
	Reference to Statute	Description	Name	Term starts	Term ends	Campus
67	14(1)(l)	SRC President (SRC chairperson)	Andreas, Y, Mr	Sep-2022	Dec-2023	Mahikeng Campus
68	14(1)(l)	Students designated by the SRC: Arts and Cultural Officer	Baloyi, C, Mr	Sep-2022	Dec-2023	Mahikeng Campus
69	14(1)(l)	Students designated by the SRC: Academics	Du Preez, A, Ms	Sep-2022	Dec-2023	Potchefstroom Campus
70	14(1)(l)	Students designated by the SRC: Fundraising and Projects	Makhothi, RBK, Mr	Sep-2022	Dec-2023	Vanderbijlpark Campus

Chairperson of Council or delegate and one other council member							
	Reference to Statute	Description	Name	Term starts	Terms ends	Term notes	Campus
71	14(1)(m)	Chairperson of Council	Sorgdrager, B, Mr	28 Jul-20	27-Jul-23	Term on Council	External
72	14(1)(m)	Delegate Council member elected by Council	De Bruyn S Mr	22-Jun-21	21-Jun-24	Term on Council	External

Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committee (Faculty Board)							
	Reference to Statute	Description	Name	Term starts	Term ends	Term notes	Campus
73	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-EMS)	Lodewyk, R, Ms	4-Apr-22	4-Apr-25	2 nd term	Potchefstroom Campus
74	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-EDU)	Matos, ME, Mr	12-Jun-23	11-Jun-26	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
75	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-ENG)	Roopa, M, Mr	15-Aug-22	15-Aug-23	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
76	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-HUM)	Ramolai, P, Ms	12-Apr-21	12-Apr-24	1 st term	Vanderbijlpark Campus
77	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-HEALTH)	Abrahams, C, Ms	4-Mar-22	4-Mar-25	1 st term	Potchefstroom Campus
78	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-LAW)	Vacant				
79	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-NAS)	Serake, MO, Mr	15-Aug-22	15-Aug-25	1 st term	Vanderbijlpark Campus
80	14(1)(n)	Academic staff members co-opted by the Senate upon the advice of the Senate Standing Committees (F-THEO)	Davis-Esterhuisen, SV, Ms	12-Oct-21	12-Oct-24	1 st term	Mahikeng Campus

13.3.2 Composition of the Finance Committee

The table shows the composition of the committee at the time of the October 2023 meeting:

Name	Designation
Chairperson	
Mr C Mabe*	External member of Council
Standing members	
Ms PS Moleke	External member of Council and chairperson of the Assets Committee
Mr A Sorgdrager	External member of Council and chairperson of Council
Mr S Mohapi	Chairperson: Investment Committee
Prof MB Tyobeka	Vice-Chancellor
Prof M Verhoef	Registrar (ex officio secretary)
In attendance	
Ms E de Beer	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities
Ms T Sekopane	Chief Director: Finance

** All Council committees are chaired by external independent members with the required skills and expertise.*

13.3.3 Composition of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

The table shows the composition of the committee at the time of the October 2023 meeting:

Name	Designation
Chairperson	
Mr TV Mokgatla*	External member of Council
Standing members	
Mr JDS de Bruyn	External member of Council
Ms P Moleke	External member of Council
Vacant	External member of Council
Ms M van Zyl	External expert
Ms R Kenosi	External member of Council
Prof M Verhoef (ex officio)	Registrar
In attendance	
Prof MB Tyobeka	Vice-Chancellor
Ms E de Beer	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities
Ms M van der Merwe	Director: Internal Audit
Mr A Dale Ms F Bootha Ms S Bootha	External Auditors: PwC
Mr PB van Zyl	Representative: Auditor-General

** All Council committees are chaired by external independent members with the required skills and expertise.*

13.3.4 Composition of the Remuneration Committee

The table lists the members of the Remuneration Committee at the time of the December 2023 meeting:

Name	Designation
Chairperson	
Mr C Mabe*	External member and chairperson of the Finance Committee
Standing members	
Mr A Sorgdrager	External member and chairperson of Council
Ms R Kenosi	External member and chairperson of the People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee
Mr TV Mokgatlha	External member and chairperson of the ARCC
Vacant	External member of Council
Prof MB Tyobeka	Vice-Chancellor
Prof M Verhoef	Registrar (ex-officio secretary)
In attendance	
Dr M Singh	Executive Director: People and Culture
Ms E de Beer	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities

* All Council committees are chaired by external independent members with the required skills and expertise.

13.3.5 Composition of the Tender Committee

Note: The Reporting Regulations for Public Higher Education Institutions stipulate that certain details of the Tender Committee's work must be disclosed annually. These include significant tenders adjudicated in the year under review, along with details of the Tender Committee's terms of reference, activities and membership.

The membership of the Tender Committee at the time of the October 2023 meeting is listed below:

Name	Designation
Chairperson	
Vacant	External member of Council
Standing members	
Mr S de Bruyn*	External member of Council and acting chairperson
Vacant	External Member of Council
Ms MJ Mwase	External tender expert
Prof MB Tyobeka	Vice-Chancellor
Prof M Verhoef	Registrar (ex officio secretary)
In attendance	
Ms E de Beer	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities
Mr N Kunene	Chief Director: Physical Infrastructure and Planning
Mr E Mostert	Director: Purchases and Payments

* All Council committees are chaired by external independent members with the required skills and expertise.

13.3.6 Composition of the Technology and Information Governance Committee

The membership of the TI Governance Committee at the time of the October 2023 meeting was as follows:

Name	Designation
Chairperson	
Vacant	External Council member
Standing members	
Adv M Kruger	External Council member
Prof TP Venter*	External Council member and acting chairperson
Dr AA le Roux	Internal Council member
Mr XV Hadebe	Independent external IT expert
Ms E Stander	Independent external information expert
Prof MB Tyobeka	Vice-Chancellor
Prof M Verhoef	Registrar (ex officio secretary)
In attendance	
Prof D Balia	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Information Technology
Mr CE Pretorius	Chief Director: Information Technology

* All Council committees are chaired by external independent members, with the required skills and expertise.

13.3.7 Council committee reports

13.3.7.1 Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC)

The overall purpose of the ARCC is to provide independent oversight in assisting Council in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities in determining the effectiveness of the university's risk and compliance management, assurance functions and related services.

There is a particular focus on combined assurance arrangements (including External Audit, Internal Audit, risk-management oversight and the finance function). Other key focus areas are the integrity of the annual financial statements, the financial reporting process, the system of internal control, the risk management process and the internal and external audit processes, as well as the university's process of monitoring compliance with laws and regulations and codes of conduct.

The ARCC has scrutinised the financial activities at the NWU as reported in this integrated report, as well as in the audited consolidated financial statements prepared in accordance with the IFRS and independently audited by our external auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Based on these, the ARCC's mandate is to declare whether it is satisfied or not with the following:

- the expertise, resources and experience of the institutional finance function;
- the independence of the external auditor, the adequacy of the financial statements and the accounting practices; and
- the effectiveness of the internal controls and the internal audit function.

Reports to Council

For the period under review, the ARCC continued to report to Council on its statutory duties, on activities performed and on major findings of the internal audit functions and the external auditors.

The committee also continued to report on its communication and engagement with the external auditors, the risks reported to the Council and the importance of certain compliance matters.

The ARCC streamlined its activities to allow for reporting on specific topics at each meeting throughout the year:

- March 2023: General update – a brief overview of matters;
- June 2023: Annual report and financial statements, as well as progress made by Internal Audit against the

audit plan;

- August 2023: Focus on risk and compliance, as well as a brief update by Internal Audit; and
- October 2023: Detailed planning of Internal Audit, performance evaluations or self-evaluations, and a brief mention of the other matters (risk and compliance); external audit planning.

Paragraphs [13.2](#) and [13.3.3](#) include the composition and meeting attendance information.

Key decisions in 2023: recommendations to Council for approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NWU Policy and Rules of Interest and of Declarations and Gifts.• Financial overview and consolidated financial statements 2022.• 2022 integrated annual report.• NWU Policy on Anti-corruption Anti-fraud and Whistleblowing.• Recommending to Council the re-appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as external auditors of the NWU for another term of five years, followed by feedback from the Auditor-General that the re-appointment had not been confirmed• Administering a process for the appointment of a new external audit firm and recommending the appointment of Nexia SAB&T to Council.
Key decisions in 2023: approvals and resolutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated sections of the NWU Council Quality Manual relevant to the ARCC.• Final engagement letter from the external auditors to be signed by the vice-chancellor.• A formal report regarding the commission to BDO (an external firm whose services had been procured) not performing according to the contractual agreement and how the matter progressed.• Interim audit plan 2022-2023.• Risk-based Internal Audit plan.• Internal Audit charter.
Key discussions in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit report for the period ending September 2022.• Risk appetite and risk tolerance.• Conflict of interest and the S34(5) approval register.• Three-year rolling plans on compliance management which focused on policy implementation, management of oversight in regard to compliance, assurance provisioning and appropriate reporting.• Risk-based regulatory universe.• Business continuity matters.• Internal performance appraisal as per the university processes.• Outcome of the 2022 self-evaluation of the ARCC.• Performance and finalisation of BDO audits.• Progress with internal audit assignments and activities.• Progress with special investigations.• Progress with continuous monitoring.• Progress with IT audits.• Progress with outsourced audits conducted by Nexia and RAIN Chartered Accountants.• Appointment of the external auditors.• Internal Audit workshop on 23 August 2023.

13.3.2.1 Finance Committee

The purpose of the Finance Committee and its subcommittees (Assets Committee and Investment Committee) is to advise Council in general on financial and investment matters and the long-term development of the university's infrastructure.

The committee reinforces the governance function of the Council regarding sound, responsible and effective financial planning, financial administration, financial governance and financial reporting.

Paragraphs [13.2](#) and [13.3.2](#) include the composition and meeting attendance information.

Reports to Council

The Finance Committee continued to report to Council on its statutory duties, the budget process and activities performed.

Key decisions in 2023: recommendations to Council for approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Financial overview of 2022 to the NWU Council.Request to investigate the suitability of acquiring property across from the main entrance gate at the Mahikeng Campus.The 2024-2026 budget.Infrastructure project list and funds allocated for macro maintenance projects.Tuition fee inflation adjustment for 2024.Residence and meal fees inflation adjustment for 2024.Amounts payable at registration for 2024.Advance of NSFAS allowances to students in order to support the start of the 2024 academic year.
Key decisions in 2023: approvals and resolutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated sections of the NWU Council Quality Manual relevant to the Finance Committee.Purchasing of portions of land leased from Transnet at an estimated cost of R1,420 million.Legal Office to make a market-related offer to purchase 10 University Street which is located within the boundary of the Potchefstroom Campus.
Key discussions in 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">List of donations made in 2022.Management statements.Variance reports.Student finances reports.Sundry debtors.Residence reports.Infrastructure projects and revised project budgets for 2023.NWU property portfolio.Calderbank property and interim arrangements.Investment matters i.e. portfolio correlation and diversification, NWU long-term portfolio, money market portfolio.Integrated annual report 2022.Risk and compliance relating to Finance matters.Council Quality Manual review.Outcome of the 2022 self-evaluation of the Finance Committee.

13.3.2.2 Tender

The purpose of the Tender Committee is to advise the Council on matters related to governance and oversight as these pertain to the NWU's procurement processes. The aim is to ensure that these processes are fair, equitable, transparent, cost-effective and compliant with all relevant regulations and rules.

Reports to Council

The Tender Committee reported to Council on tenders considered for specific contracts within its mandate and the Schedule of Financial and Contractual Authorisation Levels.

Key decisions in 2023: recommendations to Council for approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tender NWUTR003/2023VC – Proposed construction of additional space for Faculty of Economic and Management Science and reorganising of buildings 3 and 4 on the Vanderbijlpark Campus: tender awarded to CivMaq Projects (Pty) Ltd, which scored the highest number of points, for the amount of R60 709 564.• Tender NWUTR007/2023VC – Proposed construction of new laboratory spaces for Geospatial Sciences on the Vanderbijlpark Campus to Thaw Construction (Pty) Ltd for R59 703 352.• Tender NWU TR103/2021PC – Provision of mass secure printing services: an amount of R50 150 972 awarded up to 31 December 2024, when the contract would expire, as additional cost to Lebone Litho Printers (Pty) Ltd.
Key decisions in 2023: approvals and resolutions
<p>The Tender Committee approved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updating of sections of the NWU Council Quality Manual relevant to the Tender Committee.• Tender NWUTR002/2023VC – Construction work for the upgrade of Faranani residence blocks D, E and F on the Vanderbijlpark Campus: the tender was awarded to Preservation Trading Enterprise CC for the amount of R18 138 324.• Tender NWUTR007/2023VC – Proposed construction of new laboratory spaces for Geospatial Sciences on the Vanderbijlpark Campus: The tender was awarded to Thaw Construction (Pty) Ltd, which scored the second highest number of points, for the amount of R59 703 35.• Tender NWUTR097/2022PC – Plumbing maintenance contract for Potchefstroom Campus: the tender was awarded to JJW Loodgieters CC, who scored the third highest number of points, for the amount of R18 818 974, based on the rates table, including VAT, but excluding escalation.• Tender NWUTR029/2023NW – Maintenance and installation of IT cables and equipment on all three NWU campuses: the tender was awarded to Barulaganyi Technologies Pty Ltd for the amount of R36 911 895 for two years, including VAT, but excluding escalation.• Tender NWUTR093/2020PC – Supply and distribution of study materials to students nationally and internationally: this entailed extending the tender to Takealot Online (RF) Pty Ltd until 31 December 2026. The balance of the current contract of R53 807 019 should be sufficient to cover the expenses until 31 December 2026. This is an extension of time and not of value.• Tender NWUTR060/2023NW – Renewal of Microsoft licences for the NWU: the tender was awarded to First Technology National (Pty) Ltd for R40 108 718 for three years, including VAT but excluding escalation and exchange rate differences.• Tender NWUTR039/2023PC – Proposed construction work for the relocation of clubhouses and refurbishment of the vacated spaces into offices – buildings A5 and F10 on the Potchefstroom Campus: the tender was awarded to Dingatana Supplies and Services cc, which scored the highest number of points, for the amount of R15 322 96.• Tender NWUTR066/2023NW – Supply and delivery of supermicro VSAN servers for the NWU: the tender was awarded to Blue Computer Technologies (Pty) Ltd, which scored the highest number of points, for the amount of R18 781 042 including VAT.• Tender NWUTR081/2023NW – Supply and delivery of supermicro CEPH servers for the NWU: the tender was awarded to NW IT Investments Co (Pty) Ltd, which scored the highest number of points, for the amount of R18 998 991 including VAT.• Tender NWUTR096/2023PC – Solar photo-voltaic (PV) plant on the Potchefstroom Campus: the tender was awarded to Adenco Construction (Pty) Ltd, which scored the highest number of points, for the amount of R19 004 138.

- Tender NWUTR101/2023VC – Supply of student accommodation for the NWU Vanderbijlpark Campus: the tender was awarded to Amorispan (Pty) Ltd for the amount of R36 439 258 for three years including 7% escalation. Management should engage with the service provider to submit a report on anticipated local participation.

Key discussions in 2023

- Risk and compliance matters regarding tenders.
- Council Quality Manual review.
- Outcome of the 2022 self-evaluation of the Tender Committee.

13.3.2.3 Remuneration Committee

The mandate of the Remuneration Committee is to assist Council in carrying out its responsibilities for the conceptualisation and implementation of a fair and responsible remuneration philosophy that is evident in remuneration policies and strategies.

Reports to Council

For the period under review, the committee continued to report to Council on its statutory duties.

Paragraphs [13.2](#) and [13.3.4](#) include the composition and meeting attendance information.

Key decisions in 2023: approvals and resolutions

- Amendments of the Conditions of Employment for Permanent and Fixed Term Staff with benefits recommended to Council for approval.
- Principles for the provision of benefits to a Vice-Chancellor when assuming duty at the NWU.
- NWU's principled position on the honoraria paid to members of the NWU Council and Council committees, and the retention of the 2022 honorarium tariff.
- Note 24 of the annual statements that reflect the executive remuneration.
- Management bonuses budget allocation for 2023 with a percentage increase of 2.5%.
- Performance management process in 2024.
- Cash pay-out for academic staff levels A5-A9 and support staff levels 5-18 to be paid in February 2024.
- Moderated scores of UMC members.
- Special dispensation: cash pay-out in February 2024 for levels 1-4.

Key discussions 2023

- Retention bonuses.
- Code of Conduct for staff and student relationships.
- Succession planning progress and the succession planning for 2023.
- Terms of office of UMC members and Executive Deans.
- Risk and compliance matters relating to remuneration matters.
- Directors and officers liability insurance.
- Performance management process for 2023.
- Inclusion of internal Council members in the selection of interviewees without deviating from the directives given by Council.
- Risks from the Strategic Risk Register of the NWU related to remuneration matters.
- Compliance with legislation as per the regulatory universe of the NWU as it relates to remuneration matters.

13.3.2.4 Technology and Information (TI) Governance Committee

The TI Governance Committee is responsible for information technology governance and ensuring that Council fulfils its role as the overall governing body for information technology. Its mandate is to:

- oversee the implementation of a TI governance framework that sets the direction for technology and information at the NWU;
- recommend policy to Council that articulates and gives effect to the direction set;
- hold university management accountable for the implementation and execution of effective technology and information management; and

- exercise ongoing oversight of technology and information management, including IT risk management, prevention of cyber-attacks and ensuring legal compliance.

Reports to Council

For the period under review, the committee continued to report to Council on its statutory duties.

Paragraphs [13.2](#) and [13.3.6](#) include the composition and meeting attendance information. For the Council Statement on IT, see paragraph [9.1.15](#).

Key decisions in 2023: recommendations to Council
No matters were recommended to Council for approval.
Key decisions in 2023: resolutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating of sections of the NWU Council Quality Manual relevant to the committee. • A session on IT governance to be included in the Council workshop of March 2023.
Key discussions 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future focus matters (information and technology) and key foci needed in the short and medium term. • Student Information System. • IT Strategic and Major Project roadmap. • IT investment and expenditure. • Security architecture landscape. • Mitigation strategies regarding third-party providers' risks. • Business continuity and disaster management. • Information security breaches. • Training for TI Governance Committee members through the Institute of Directors of Southern Africa on 15 May 2023. • Self-evaluation report feedback from 2022. • Digital Business Strategy (DBS) • Progress made with the implementation of the Digital Business Strategy (DBS). • Information management, including the management of compliance with POPIA and PAIA at the NWU. • Risks related to technology and information governance as contained in the NWU Strategic Risk Register. • Compliance with technology and information-related legislation. • Implementation of a new SIS. • Institutional readiness for digital transformation. • IT strategy. • OpenCollab - Requesting the TI Governance Committee to note the follow-up report providing additional information on the increased expense in supporting development for teaching and learning. • Short-term and long-term mitigation plans to address the identified vulnerabilities in the security architecture landscape. • Strategic intent elements and execution of the IT strategy through the top 10 priorities for 2023. • Development of a business capability model. • Implementation of the Information Governance Framework of the NWU. • Data Storage and Storage Devices Policy in the process of development.

13.3.2.5 Council Membership Committee

The NWU Council resolved in 2015 to add to the mandate of the Council Exco that of Council Membership Committee.

In this regard, Council fulfils the role of a Council Membership Committee (*as per R464, 9 June 2014, GG37726* (refer to paragraph 2.5 of the Exco terms of reference):

- considering nominations for vacancies related to Council and Council committee membership in terms of the Statute;

- overseeing nomination and election processes for vacancies and noting the outcomes of election audit reports;
- dealing with all other membership matters as contained in the Code of Conduct for Council members and taking the necessary steps to empower Council to deal with membership matters on a higher level, including matters related to declarations of interest made by Council members and members of Council Committees;
- having the mandate to form and delegate authority to subcommittees as deemed necessary;
- overseeing the attendance of Council members at Council and Council committee meetings and taking corrective action;
- overseeing the self-evaluation results (appraisals) of the performance of the Council and its committees and taking corrective action where necessary; and
- in accordance with the Statute, recommending the establishment of committees necessary for the performance of the functions of the Council, including joint committees with the Senate where appropriate.

During 2023, Exco at each ordinary meeting noted and considered the vacancies and imminent vacancies on Council and the processes for filling and scrutinising these vacancies.

Exco continued to follow the prescribed process for the filling of vacancies as approved by Council in June 2021, these being to:

- continue with the setting of the skills and diversity matrix (as approved by the Council in November 2018) to guide the nominations and elections; this process should take place formally at three-year intervals.
- proactively manage the process of filling vacancies, in ongoing communication with the stakeholder constituencies from which members would be nominated and elected.
- proactively consider the diversity and skills set profile of the Council; this should be done six months before the expiry of a Council member's term, obviating the need for the diversity and skills profile to be included in the call to the constituency for nominations.
- publicise the identified skills and diversity needs when the call for nominations is made.
- ensure that Exco is informed of the outcome of the nomination process before the commencement of the election process; this will enable Exco to determine the extent to which the requirements have been met.
- request one further round of nominations in instances where the relevant skill set and diversity criteria were not displayed during the nomination process, after which the election process would continue.

Exco also continued to receive a list of all vacancies in Council committees and made recommendations for the filling of these vacancies to Council for approval at each meeting.

13.4 Annexure 4: NWU Combined Risk Register as of 31 December 2023



Combined Risk Register



Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
42	DVC IT	Strategic	Cyber Security	Cyber security is not adequately addressed at the NWU and is the number one IT issue worldwide. An attack on the NWU is likely. Digital transformation will increase the cyber security risk.	5	5	R0	25	0	0	0,20	20	R0	2021/07/19	Risk Appetite	Cyber crime is increasing. There are inadequate measures in place to adequately protect against this crime. Measures include with cyber security intelligence as to identify positions, security strategy, security environment. (Also abnormalities software etc.; * Lack of awareness under staff	The University has successfully deployed a SIEM. The SIEM works by collecting log and event data generated by host systems, Firewall and bringing it together into a single centralized platform. Measures include with dashboarding and artificial intelligence as to identify abnormalities in the NWU's IT environment. (Also abnormalities Cybersecurity). This dashboard is currently monitored by IT-OI-Systems and escalates of any major cybersecurity abnormalities to Cyber incident response team. ; * The Cybersecurity Strategy has been approved by TI Governance committee. Targets in terms of NIST targeted NWU profile improvements (to, Cybersecurity capabilities) have been achieved. The targets were improving Detection capabilities and identifying capabilities. ; * PaloAlto Firewall solution, rated by Gardner in leader quadrant, subscription All feed (wildfire) identifies threats proactively world wide, updated hourly doing continuous checks. All threats identified are monitored by IT-OI- infrastructure. Only report on exceptions to Cyber Incident Response(CIR) Team.; * Institution-wide use of network access control system, all clients registered and authenticated when logging in to prevent unauthorized access and identify vulnerabilities on the device of the user. When vulnerabilities are detected the user will automatically manually be forced into isolation. Incident identified in service manager, user put in isolation and IT service desk ensures safe computer environment before allowed on network again. ; * The use of external vulnerabilities scanning facilities such as	Goal 6		Guidelines for staff when downloading unsupported IT programs. *Budget inadequate to support comprehensive digital strategy * Possible outdated Business Strategy

																	SecurityScorecard, Shodan and Shadowserver are monitored to complement Internal vulnerabilities scanning. SecurityScorecard is a subscription service that provides monthly reports and interactive dashboard (it scans the environment on daily basis). The report and access to the dashboard is distributed to the relevant IT-directors. SecurityScorecard is a major dashboard and used in reporting nwu's security posture to relevant internal stakeholders. ; " Auditing the network environment through network access control. ; " Asset management process in place to determine the age of critical equipment. Contractual end-of-			
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Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name	
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood											
																	life agreements are also being monitored.; * 3 Monthly Nessus scans on the operating systems and some software.				
234	DVC IT	Strategic	The implications and demand for digital transformation on the NWU's business	IT provisioning for certain admin and academic functions not optimal; indications exist that individual IT staff are overburdened due to inadequate human resources in IT; Uncertainties evident about the direction in regard to digital business strategy leading to delays in new system design and implementation. Digital transformation will have a severe impact on operational models, structures, people, processes and roles.	4	5	R0	20	0	0	0,20	16	R0	2022/10/26	Risk Appetite	Current use of technology is not strategic and innovative.; * 1) There is a structural dis-incentive for researchers to advance their inventions after publication and patenting. It typically requires more work and dedication to get it market ready for sale or licensing. 2) Our inventions are seldom caused by "industry pull" forces, often leaving it irrelevant or of little interest to industry		Goal 6; Enabler 2			
40	UMC	Strategic	Environmental Management	Role clarification regarding placement was unpacked. Operations of Environmental Management is placed in Dept Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) and awareness in collaboration with Sustainable, Community Impact dept (SCI).	4	5	R10 000 000	20	0	0	0,20	16	R8 000 000	2022/07/22	Risk Appetite	Environmental operation are placed in Dept Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) and awareness in collaboration with CE activities.CHAR(13) + CHAR(10)	Awareness campaigns are driven by Sustainability and Community impact unit. ; * SHE Charter with NWU Sustainability policy and Environment (SHE) Policy approved by Council; * Hazardous Waste Management - All waste collect by approved specialist service provider and in accordance with applicable Environmental Legislation. ; * General Waste - Service providers appointed to collect and dispose of waste for each campus at local municipal licensed dumping site.; * Facilities Dept: 2017 to current: Install water meters to measure water use and monitor excessive use and possible wastage.; * Maintenance 2016 to current: Upgrading of water networks (bulk supply and one-line supply to buildings); * SHE Dept launched a new SHE webpage and use as platform to share environmental sustainability information. ; * The NWU conducted their first Carbon footprint calculation and this information has been shared with NWU to create awareness. ; * NWU environmental sustainability policy and guidelines approved by Council. ; * Water and energy saving strategy compiled and implemented. CHAR(13) + CHAR(10)	Goal 3	Environmental Gap Analysis with action plan to close-gaps (June 2022 to September 2022) Internal and external SHE (project team). Environmental impacts will ranked and action assigned to close / management the impacts as per legislative requirements.; * SHE system: Bench-marking, development and implementation. (2022/2023). Internal and external SHE (project team). SHE system to facilitate management of SHE requirements at the NWU will be acquired, implemented and developed. SHE system will ensure all required faculties and departments can manage and monitor their SHE risks/impacts; * Action from Carbon footprint report.		

Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
233	UMC members	Strategic	Business model adequacy after COVID-19	The lockdown forced a change in stakeholder behavior and habits. The approach to being a university and how people interact has fundamentally changed. The organisation has had to adapt to a significant change in stakeholder behavior whilst ensuring adequate alignment of quality teaching and learning in relation to student access and success and fit-for-purpose workforce utilisation. Universities have had to re-invent their business models to ensure that they could compete in these shifting circumstances and, in some cases, ensure that they take advantage of unprecedented demand. Inadequacies around a focused approach on the management of the COVID-19 situation as this impact directly on the NWU's governance and management, could hamper the NWU's sustainability on the short-, medium- and long-term	4	5	R0	20	0	0	0,20	16	R0	2022/10/26	Risk Appetite	Covid-19 pandemic; * It is not clear any more what the competitive advantage of the NWU would be in a post-COVID era.; * The impact of the global pandemic has an effect on the realisation of the NWU's 2015-2025 strategy. *The five-year strategic plan, the realisation of the 2020 APP and the 2021 APP are all impacted by the COVID situation *Every established internal business process/business operation is impacted by the		Goal 1; * Goal 2; * Goal 3; * Goal 4; * Goal 5; * Goal 6; * Enabler 1; * Enabler 2; * Enabler 3; * Enabler 4		

Strategic Risk Register

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					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
232	Executive Director Finance and Facilities	Strategic	Funding and fee regulation	<p>Government funding model is not sustainable, the HE sector is not sufficiently informed by the DHET, also the impact is not known, exacerbated by an over-dependence on a single source of income (government subsidies and sustainability of NSFAS) which is further exacerbated by uncertainty of overall sustainability due to unofficial regulation of fee increases since 2016 and the uncertainties brought about by the process already commenced to regulate fees by DHET.</p> <p>The continued capping of increases in residence fees, far below the inflation rate of specific cost items in the residence environment (such as electricity and back up power costs of generator power with diesel), is increasing the risk of the environment becoming more unsustainable and will lead to unsatisfactory service delivery and in turn could lead to student unrest on the campuses.</p>	4	4	R0	16	0	0	0,20	13	R0	2022/10/26	Risk Appetite	<p>Inadequate funding to sustain growth and sustainability; * NWU is overdependent on government and NSFAS grants with limited income from other sources; * Sustainability of fee increases since 2016 and the uncertainties brought about by the process already commenced to regulate fees by DHET.</p> <p>Free education in an ever declining State income environment for main cause. 0% fee sustainability increase announcement Oct 2020 and the expectation created by the previous President that free education is possible in future</p>	<p>NWU is part of the Fee Regulation Task Team (USAF); NWU representative part of fee-regulation task and technical team in DHET for the HE sector, Financial strategy task team input in the development of Financial Model for the sector. Keeping HE fee inflation above CPI. ; * DHET initiatives in regard to fundraising and endowment to ensure new sustainable source of income; * Preserving available and growing reserves by ExDir FF and financial team to cover at least one year's operational expenses for sustainability purpose. Capitalising on reserves by creating a sustainable source of investment income - Money Market.; * Building optimal relationships with funders; facilitating start-up capital by free education is possible in future</p> <p>advisory group with members that are well known in the business world sitting twice a year to oversee projects that require funding in SA and Internationally, Director Stakeholder Relations are responsible for Fundraising since 2019. Fundraisers are appointed and responsible to drive these initiatives. Targets set in the Directors performance agreement. ; * Targeted initiatives focusing on alumni and potential international sources ; * Comprehensive, regularly updating and reported on 3-year rolling Financial Plan to various committees (UBC, UMC, Fin Asset Committee, Council, etc.) linked to specific goals/targets as performance measurement. E.g. Initiatives - Staff Cost Mitigation - Finance and P&C involved.; * Focus on increasing throughput in the academic environment to</p>	Enabler 4	UCE strategic project to generate a 3rd stream income	

																	effectively utilise subsidy. Targets and approaches followed to support and follow-up on student's academic progress?; * UCE - Strategic project to ensure a sustainable source of income through continued education - UCE and executive studies/training at the PBS - focus on building 3rd stream income; * Growing of research income from international/national/government research funders/institutions. Income generation (2nd Stream); * Informal discussions to release NSFAS funding. Part of decision making regarding receiving of, and making NSFAS money available to students.			
231	Registrar and DVC IT	Strategic	BCP and DRP	Inadequacies around disaster recovery and business continuity management could hamper the NWU's operations and	4	4	R0	16	0	0	0,20	13	R0	2022/10/26	Risk Appetite	Inadequate planning; * Lack of institution-wide	BCP and Contingency planning in place at execution of key processes e.g. registration etc.	Enabler 2; * Enabler 1		

Strategic Risk Register

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					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
				lead to compliance risks and financial losses and reputational damage.												<p>approach to DR/BCP contributes to duplication of effort and inefficiencies; * Refining of business processes in NWU's business continuity governance and management environment sufficiently established to have ensured appropriate response</p> <p>BCP Policy approved by Council; * Development of new Student Information System underway.; * order to remove redundancies.; * UMC approved a 2 year plan to implement a BCP governance and management process. Process is underway.; * Council approval of BCP policy; * Rules for Business Continuity approved by UMCCHAR(13) + CHAR(10); * The University has successfully deployed a SIEM. The SIEM works by collecting log and event data generated by host systems, Firewall and bringing it together into a single centralized platform, with dashboarding and artificial intelligence as to identify abnormalities in the NWU's IT environment. (Also abnormalities to Cybersecurity). This dashboard is currently monitored by IT-OI-Systems and escalates of any major cybersecurity abnormalities to Cyber incident response team.; * The Cybersecurity Strategy has been approved by TI Governance committee. Targets in terms of NIST targeted NWU profile improvements (to Cybersecurity capabilities) have been achieved. The targets were improving Detection capabilities and identifying capabilities.; * PaloAlto Firewall solution, rated by Gardner in leader quadrant, subscription All feed (wildfire) identifies threats proactively world wide, updated hourly doing continuous checks. All threats identified are monitored by IT-OI- infrastructure. Only report on exceptions to Cyber Incident Response(CIR) Team.; * Institution-wide use of network access control system, all clients registered and authenticated when logging in to prevent unauthorized access and identify</p>				

																	vulnerabilities on the device of the user. When vulnerabilities are detected the user will automatically/ manually be forced into isolation. Incident identified in service manager, user put in isolation and IT service desk ensures safe computer environment before allowed on network again. ; * Auditing the network environment through network access control.; * The use of external vulnerabilities scanning facilities such as SecurityScorecard, Shodan and Shadowserver are monitored to complement internal vulnerabilities scanning. SecurityScorecard is a			
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Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
																	subscription service that provides monthly reports and interactive dashboard (it scans the environment on daily basis). The report and access to the dashboard is distributed to the relevant IT-directors. SecurityScorecard is a major dashboard and used in reporting nwu's security posture to relevant internal stakeholders. ; * 3 Monthly Nessus scans on the operating systems and some software. ; * Asset management process in place to determine the age of critical equipment. Contractual end-of-life agreements are also being monitored.			

Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
230	Registrar	Strategic	Information Governance	Inadequacies around a focused approach to information governance implementation could hamper the NWU's operations and expose the NWU to compliance risks	4	4	R0	16	0	0	0,20	13	R0	2022/10/26	Risk Appetite	Current use of technology is not oversight on information strategic and governance matters. ; * POPIA innovative.; * Cyber task team appointed in the sphere of crime is increasing of the Registrar to consult on at There are information related investigations. ; * Privacy Impact Assessments on measures in place to projects are done by the POPIA adequately protect task team, when requested.; * against this crime. Employees have access to the Measures include NWU IGF and know what the cyber security framework entails; Structures and positions, security projects have been established strategy, security from the IGF to ensure software etc.; implementation of IGF; * A POPIA inadequate project is documented and measures to ensure implemented in accordance with integrity of project deadlines to ensure information due to compliance to key aspects as poor input control.; * Identified by Information Regulator Ineffective and by 1 July 2021. ; * Structured inefficient programme for training and administrative awareness implemented and processes and overseen by IMCom. POPIA systems.; training compulsory for all NWU Unauthorised access staff and to be repeated every 4 might be possible to years. ; * Training in records NWU information management compulsory in due to improper accordance with new RAM policy access control and and RAM rules - this includes information stored on training on POPIA CHAR(13) + computers and not CHAR(10); Records according to records management rules approved by management UMC in August 2022 as part of procedures.; * RAM policy approved by Council Reports might be in June 2022 CHAR(13) + based on incorrect CHAR(10); * Electronic storage information or data areas to be managed by a set of that is possibly not rules (provided for in the reviewed trustworthy; * RM policy) - Rules to be provided Destruction of by RAM after approval of the records procedure policy.; * Systematic annual review not followed. ; * Lack process implemented involving all of data security owners of legislation with the aim measures ; * The to complete compliance integrity of student checklists, draft improvement records might be plans that are, in turn, monitored compromised and by management and governance not be trustworthy structures; * Information because of multitude Management Committee as a sub- of users of VSS who committee of the UMC might not have been implemented to advise the UMC properly trained; * on the implementation of policies Non-compliance to relevant to information important pieces of management and the monitoring legislation regulating of information management information management matters at the university.; * Information Governance Coordinator appointed to oversee all information management matters. (POPIA, GDPR, PAIA)	Enabler 1; * Goal 6			

Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
3	DVC R&I, ExDir FF	Strategic	PG Students	Poor financial support to PG students resulting in loss of student income and continuity from UG to PG. Furthermore postgraduate numbers dependency on bursaries.	3	5	R0	15	0	0	0,20	12	R0	2022/04/25	Risk Appetite	Inadequate funding to sustain growth and sustainability; Declining bursaries for PG students; * NRF reduced bursaries for PG students (Masters and PhD - 20% cut) CHAR(13) + CHAR(10)	Post-graduate special funding model is sustained where merit bursaries are availed for qualifying students who received NSFAS funding during UG studies; * NRF reduced Masters and doctoral students receive an additional bursary for one year to support completion.	Goal 2		
9	DVC RI	Strategic	Research Quality	Poor quality of research products due to decline or inadequate resources for research and research chairs.	3	5	R200 000 000	15	0	0	0,20	12	R160 000 000	2022/06/09	Exposure, Single Transaction, Risk Appetite	NRF reduced bursaries for PG studies (Masters and PhD - 20% cut) CHAR(13) + CHAR(10); NRF compliance audits on funding not available; SCIMAGO any more (only R30 000 one-off payment to NRF-rated staff member); no further paper is send to journals. ; * RISC payments made to NRF-rated researchers.; Inadequate incentives to staff for publishing. Improvement of IREA funds had been put on hold, plagiarism check, the Research integrity challenges	NWU budgetary process to focus on sustaining and enhancing the research function; * Processes to detect and manage instances of academic misconduct in place.; * Internal audit executing ongoing Policy on Academic Integrity; * SCIMAGO tool in place to independently determine the quality of research products before the research paper is send to journals. ; * RISC webinars and awareness on academic integrity in place. ; * System in place (control sheets) to monitor spending of research funds in the office of the DVC R&I, to avoid money being returned to the funders. ; * Turn it in system to submit research work for plagiarism check, the responsibility of DVC RI, and monitored by the Library.	Goal 2		

Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
208	Chief Director IT	Operational	Unsustainable Staffing Levels	The understaffed IT department will lead to: 1) Unplanned and sustained outages in operational IT systems (eFund, Student Admin System, Financial System, Internet connectivity) will cause the core business to come to a halt (as demonstrated). It is becoming impossible for the few staff members we have to cope with maintaining the explosive growth in IT systems. 2) Several strategic objectives may not be reached (any strategic objectives that depend on an IT system is at risk) 3) Existing risks will not be mitigated (i.e. Disaster Recovery)	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,20	10	R0	2023/10/26	Risk Appetite	Loss of staff to competitors in public sector, private sector and universities. Loss of high caliber staff and an inability to design specific career paths for existing support staff. Dependencies on key staff leads to loss of key skills when such staff members resign.; * Absence of promotion/progress policy for support staff; * Inadequate support to staff suffering from burn-out and stress; Retention of staff and delay in appointing new staff.; * Theas operating remuneration policy should not be a fit for all, as the remuneration of NWU IT staff is substantially below the industry average. The below-average of IT salaries prevents the appointment and recruitment of valuable and suitable candidates.	Provision for a scarce-skill allowance; * Differentiated COLA adjustments for IT Staff; * The IT Workforce Plan (2021) will form part of the investigation into support staff cost optimisation (and in collaboration with the IT Staff structure to a more optimised and extended model. ; * Scarce Skills Policy and Strategy developed, consulted, and approved.; * Develop an IT HR Strategy to be presented at the first IT Committee of 2024.	Goal 5; * Goal 1; * Goal 2; * Goal 3; * Goal 4; * Goal 6	Communication of a clear employee value proposition; * The recommendation from P&C's investigation into support staff cost optimisation (and in collaboration with the IT Workforce plan) will direct the IT Staff structure to a more optimised and extended model. ; * Scarce Skills Policy and Strategy developed, consulted, and approved.; * Develop an IT HR Strategy to be presented at the first IT Committee of 2024.	

41	ExDir P&C;	Strategic	Staff	Lack of competitive salaries in the academic environment might lead to exodus of talent leading to possible loss of accreditation.	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,20	10	R0	2022/06/10	Risk Appetite	Moratorium on re-evaluation of positions; * Limited funds and resources available for staff costs.; * External influence of HE institutions; * Unrealistic salary increases in the higher education sector; * Allowances are paid in some instances but it does not increase take-home pay-out.	IRR guidelines strictly applied for the purpose of addressing disparities, the guidelines provide the details within parameters.; * Clear position profiles for senior management indicating roles and responsibilities; * Private Work Policy; * Scarce skills allowance for academic and IT, differentiated COLA, Differentiated IRR.; * Succession Planning Guidelines has been finalised starting with mission critical positions and UMC positions.; * Succession Planning has been cascaded to other levels focusing on scarce positions and scarce persons.CHAR(13) + CHAR(10)	Goal 5	Next phase of differentiated COLA - 5 year implementation; * Position evaluations for new and mission critical positions.; * Staff cost optimisation process	
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Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
26	DVC Integrated Planning; Registrar; DVC IT; DVC TL; Deans; DVC R&I; ExDir FF	Strategic	Business Processes	Loss of students and student income due to the processes and systems that drive the core business being inadequate.	3	4	R100 000 000	12	0	0	0,20	10	R64 000 000	2021/07/11	Risk Appetite	Current use of technology is not innovative.; Challenges are experienced in the conversion to an electronic learning environment; Inability to deliver VWL; VSS architecture is outdated; securities not watertight; reporting not sufficient; Space management is not optimal; Business processes not sufficiently lean, flat, effective, and efficient; many redundancies; VSS not adequately positioned to cater to HD students.	BCP and Contingency planning in place at execution of key processes e.g. registration etc. BCP Policy approved by Council.	Goal 6	SIS development and stakeholder engagement towards implementation to account for HD needs.	
6	ExDir P&C; All line managers; ExDir CRM; ExDeans	Strategic	Diversity	Insufficient levels of diversity in staff and student environment undermining the university strategy	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,20	10	R0	2022/06/10	Risk Appetite	Market related salaries not paid and employee value proposition not understood.; * Lack of proper recruitment strategy; * Lack of talent pool in the academic environment.	EE targets built into the performance agreements of SMOs; * Goal 5; * Goal 6 of the performance evaluation process.; * Clear position profiles for senior management indicating roles and responsibilities; * Staff cost mitigation plan; * The purposes of this policy are to ensure that the university creates equal opportunities for all its employees and prospective employees and to remove all barriers.; * Headhunting process for senior management staff, the responsibility of Client Services.; * Succession Planning Guidelines has been finalised starting with mission critical positions and UMC positions.; * Succession Planning has been cascaded down for other critical and scarce persons and positions. CHAR(13) + CHAR(10); * Control mechanisms have been implemented to monitor the appointment of non-designated candidates.	Goal 4; * Goal 5; * Goal 6	Better communications of recruitment process to line managers and create and communicate an EVP. * Successive EE Plan for 2024-2026 has been drafted with the below strategies.; * Identify and address barriers for attracting people from the designated groups and people living with disabilities.; * Acceleration of women in leadership positions.; * Succession Planning for critical and scarce positions.; * Retention strategies; * Embedding an inclusive organisational culture.	

Strategic Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Owner	Risk Type	Risk Name	Risk Description	Inherent			IR	Residual		CE	RR	Residual Exposure	Last Assessed	Reasons For Above Appetite	Risk Cause Description	Current Controls	Strategic Objective	Planned Controls	Task Name
					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
28	Registrar; Ex.Dir P&C; DVC R&I	Strategic	Business processes	The NWU academic project could be in jeopardy because of ineffectiveness and inefficiencies of support functions, possibly leading to loss of income and potential growth, loss of staff, and negative impact on the reputation of the NWU.	4	4	R0	16	0	0	0,50	8	R0	2022/04/23	Risk Appetite	Ineffective and inefficient administrative processes and systems; Moratorium on evaluation of environments, the structure, and positions; * Different brown/yellow lines of operation.; * cultures across campuses.; * Inadequate understanding of performance appraisal process roles and responsibilities.; * Silo functioning hampering optimisation of environment is clearly defined.; * service delivery.; * Predominant manual guide the implementation of the processes in the admin environment result in duplication of effort, lack of effective and efficient service delivery.	Productivity and Human Resource Allocation Model (P&C); * A controlled environment is established in SALA in which each of the sections understands the university policies relevant to their environments, the structure, and positions; * The job descriptions of support staff in the Registrar's portfolio are up to date and the annual performance appraisal process contains personal development plans to assist with knowledge enhancement.; * The assignment of authority within the SALA responsibility matrix.; * A quality manual has been developed, approved, and is implemented.; * Scheduled meetings between Deputy Registrar and ExDeans.; * The NWU values were launched.; * Team buildings are being held in various faculties and divisions.; * The NWU Organisational Citizenship Recognition Awards have been established to commend, acknowledge, and honor staff and students who actively embody and demonstrate the NWU values.	Goal 6: * Goal 5; * Goal 4; * Goal 2; * Goal 1	SIS development and stakeholder engagement towards implementation to account for HD needs.; * Control procedure for 2021-Internal review, improvement plan process for 2021.	
30	ExDir FF	Strategic	Infrastructure	Loss of opportunity income, subsidy and loss of return, loss of students and staff and compromise in teaching quality due to limited and inadequate infrastructure planning for teaching. Availability of facilities and infrastructure	3	5	R0	15	0	0	0,50	8	R0	2021/08/13		Inadequate information pertaining to facilities and capacity utilisation.; * Absence of tracking physical infrastructure, a new system is required to track utilisation of spaces and non-teaching spaces) infrastructure.; * IWMS; * IWMS system implemented to manage facilities-related processes. The second phase of IWMS is underway to digitize all spaces (AutoCAD project) to link spaces with space bookings in order to draw utilization reports.; * Project Steering committee establishment.; * All spaces linked to OU codes to enable utilisation reporting for each department.CHAR(13) + CHAR(10); * Spatial Development Framework for Infrastructure Planning in place and reviewed in 2023.; * Toolkit developed to support applicants in infrastructure requests.	Enrolment plan (2020-2025) developed and approved; Institutional Budget Committee makes provision for infrastructure planning in budgeting planning.; * Space management project established to optimise governance and management of space across NWU (teaching spaces and non-teaching spaces) IWMS; * IWMS system implemented to manage facilities-related processes. The second phase of IWMS is underway to digitize all spaces (AutoCAD project) to link spaces with space bookings in order to draw utilization reports.; * Project Steering committee establishment.; * All spaces linked to OU codes to enable utilisation reporting for each department.CHAR(13) + CHAR(10); * Spatial Development Framework for Infrastructure Planning in place and reviewed in 2023.; * Toolkit developed to support applicants in infrastructure requests.	Goal 6: * Goal 5; * Goal 4; * Goal 1	Utilization report will be compiled to input infrastructure planning.; * Project Steering committee establishment.; * Implementation of Asset Management System (17 Elements)	

Strategic Risk Register

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39	Vice-Chancellor	Strategic	Staff	Key person dependencies leading to loss of institutional knowledge and create vacuums in key functional areas	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,20	7	R0	2021/07/16	Risk Appetite	Market related salaries not paid and employee value proposition not understood.; * The NWU does not have shadow posting opportunities.	Leadership coaching and mentoring programme implemented in order to ensure capacity building and meeting position profile requirements.; * Differentiated COLA for academic staff	Goal 5	Better communications of recruitment process to line managers and create and communicate an EVP.; * Employment Value Proposition to be implemented.; * Succession planning built into the performance agreements of senior functionaries.	
5	Ex. Dir. P&C	Strategic	Staff	Difficulty to recruit and retain qualified and talented staff due to challenges in staff morale due to change and uncertainties and perceived non-implementation of retention strategies.	2	4	R0	8	0	0	0,20	6	R0	2021/07/16	Risk Appetite	Market related salaries not paid and employee value proposition not understood.; * Loss of staff to competitors in public sector and private sector and better resourced universities. Loss of high caliber staff and an inability to design specific career paths for existing support staff.; * Employee value proposition not clearly understood and communicated across the institution.; * The lack of quality teachers and researchers impacts on the throughput rates and thus impacts on the DHET subsidy.; * Inadequate implementation of the Scarce Skills Guidelines resulting in challenges with the attraction and retention of scarce skills.; * Dependencies on key staff leads to loss of key skills when such staff members resign.; * Lack of a proper recruitment	Provision for a scarce-skill allowance.; * Succession Planning Framework in place.; * Communication of a clear employee value proposition; * Well-defined recruitment and admission process in place; * Scarce Skills Policy and Strategy developed, consulted, and approved.; * Differentiated COLA for academic staff	Goal 6; * Goal 5	Establishment of a talent management programme.; * Better communications of recruitment process to line managers and create and communicate an EVP	

																strategy for international students and internal processes for welcoming international students not optimal.				
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33	Chief Director TTIS, Directors of Companies, Shareholder Representative	Strategic	Commercialisation	<p>Failure of licensee or spin-out to commercialise due to conflicting bureaucratic university processes.</p> <p>(Recommend removal of this risk from the Strategic Risk Register. Proper controls are in place as follows: TTIS participates in the annual stakeholder board meetings of the University Technology Fund (UTF) in addition to informal engagements. With regards to the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), the main funder in the innovation space, interactions have increased. Examples (1) site visit by TIA advanced manufacturing portfolio on 24 Aug 2023 with follow up in Sep/Oct. (2) site visit by TIA energy portfolio 3-4 Oct. (3) roadshow by TIA bio-economy portfolio for Oct (4) TIA Seed Fund meeting take place on quarterly basis.</p> <p>Through TTIS NWU start-ups can access the University Technology Fund for startup capital.</p> <p>The Luvuvi report was presented to UMC.</p> <p>In 2021, TTIS underwent a peer evaluation by an external panel of experienced local and international technology transfer professionals. Amongst the panel's general conclusions with respect to TTIS quality manual and processes are as follows: "the processes and systems of the TTIA have been written down very thoroughly, and it is assumed they are working in the way they are set out. This is an important part of the smooth functioning of the office". Following the panel's recommendations an improvement plan was implemented in 2022.</p> <p>UMC approves the appointment of NWU nominated directors and shareholder representative and TTIS sources appropriate training for these appointees.)</p>	2	4	R0	8	0	0	0,20	6	R0	2021/04/29		Follow through of processes not optimal governance sufficiently in place. * Final Levuvi report unclear on some core aspects.; * Too much bureaucracy in processes.	Building optimal relationships with funders; facilitating start-up capital and by TTIS; * Establish and maintain proper governance and management environment to ensure accountability and optimal functioning.	Goal 2		Determine the effect thereof on the continuation of Innovation Highway Enterprises

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16	Registrar; ExDir FF	Strategic	Fraud	The risk that fraudulent activities could be prevalent in some business process environments and could impact negatively on the reputation of the NWU.	4	3	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2021/07/19		NWU members standing in a conflict of interest relationship with the NWU that is not disclosed and which is regarded non-compliant by Internal Audit by means of the stipulations of HEA regular annual programme across NWU Policy on Interest; also on NWU Policy and Rules possibly contributing to a declaration of interest and of gifts that leads to possible misappropriation of funds/processes; Leaking of exam papers; Forging of degree certificates and transcripts; Possible lack of sufficient internal controls giving rise to internal misappropriation of university funds; NWU employees academic dishonesty is failing to report unethical behavior.	KFS process established and implemented by Finances to detect and prevent transactions between NWU and staff; * Reporting to UMC and to ARCC which covers the risk.; * Awareness campaigns are driven by Internal Audit by means of the regular annual programme across NWU.; * NWU Policy and Rules on Conflict of Interest and on the declaration of interest and of gifts approved and implemented.; * Internal Audit reporting to UMC and to ARCC the details of incidents.; * Antifraud Policy, incl antifraud strategy in place to guide the correct understanding of the subject matter and the prevention thereof.; * Training programme rolled out across NWU to create awareness around fraudulent activities.; * Zero tolerance approach in dealing with disciplinary cases where academic dishonesty is displayed.; * SCC Rules, Student Discipline Rules, and Residence Rules; * Secure process implemented for the drafting, printing and transport of examination papers.; * Policy and Manual on Student Discipline approved, implemented and monitored.	Goal 6	Antifraud Policy, incl antifraud strategy under development to guide the correct understanding of the subject matter and the prevention thereof.; * Installation of software to check graduation status, transcript, and degree certificate.	

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20	ExDir SL Campus DVCs	Strategic	Standardising	Varied student experiences across campuses might lead to dissatisfaction because of the possible negative effect of 'standardising' student life across campuses and the management of student life in new structure.	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2021/07/16		Inadequate funding to sustain growth and sustainability; * The centres, wifi) equally shared and student profile at the aligned on all 3 campuses.; * NWU is constantly evolving and becoming widespread in terms of academic capacity, socio-economic profile and demographic trends; after Covid started ; * CTL call " Student life differs between the three campuses, and with al SL Directors Forum aimed measures must be in alignment. ; * COSSS operating place to prevent as a reporting forum of campus resentment among groups of students; * Introduced to ensure business Electricity and water supply not similar to other campuses. Still a problem. Will impact our strategic goals. Lack of maintenance on generators a problem (2 generators, 1 broken); * Wifi not equally available on IMC. Some accommodations do not have wifi in their bedrooms' but only in living room. ; * Loadshedding can impact academic activities.	Student satisfaction survey done annually. ; * IT service (Call centres, wifi) equally shared and aligned on all 3 campuses.; * Facilitated an e-learning environment during lockdown, by ensuring that students in need received a laptop and data are provided to students to participate optimally in the TL environments); * 0 rated website facilitated by IT after Covid started ; * CTL call " Student life differs between the three campuses, and with al SL Directors Forum aimed measures must be in alignment. ; * COSSS operating place to prevent as a reporting forum of campus resentment among groups of students; * Introduced to ensure business Electricity and water supply not similar to other campuses. Still a problem. Will impact our strategic goals. Lack of maintenance on generators a problem (2 generators, 1 broken); * Wifi not equally available on IMC. Some accommodations do not have wifi in their bedrooms' but only in living room. ; * Loadshedding can impact academic activities.	Goal 4; * Goal 6	SL Policy out for consultation, the policy is aimed towards student experience and that it is equitable across all campuses.	
35	ExDir: Student Life, Campus Operations	Strategic	Sexual and gender-based violence	Presence and escalation in sexual and gender-based violence on the campuses	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2021/07/16		Incidents of sexual assault and gender-based violence against students on campus	Protection services at all campuses operating in accordance with pre-determined SOPs; * All campuses are access controlled; * Well-described process to deal with any instances of crime as establishment of Joint Operating Teams including SAPS, liaison with Public Order Policing and Intelligence Services; ; * Protection services together with SAPS visits residences during R&O to conduct crime awareness by distributing pamphlets and discuss the abuse of alcohol and drugs. ; * GBV campaigns are conducted to increase awareness. CHAR(13) + CHAR(10)	Goal 4	Three priority crime investigators have been appointed to investigate GBV cases at all three campuses.; * Disciplinary steps will be instituted when students make false charges regarding GBV.	
23	DVC IT	Strategic	DRP	Possible inadequate Disaster Recovery Plan within IT could halt the operations of the NWU	4	3	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2021/04/29	Risk Appetite	Inadequate planning; * Cyber attacks; * Lack of environmental control (redundant chiller plant)	BCM Monitoring of machine rooms; Disaster Recovery Plan; * Replicated site on campus	Goal 6	Addressing cooling risk in Datacentre 2 in 2021	

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8	DVC RI. ExDir CRM	Strategic	Internationalisation	Global engagement/internationalisation effort not sufficient with the effect that the NWU has little international exposure in terms of attracting international staff, students, investment and sponsoring of research. Financial constraints hampering Internationalisation	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2021/07/12	Risk Appetite	Lack of a proper recruitment strategy for international students and internal processes for welcoming international students not optimal. Global engagement office not sufficiently positioned. Concerns exist on the lack of international funders of cooperative agreements and lack of partnerships with international funders. Also, there is inadequate budgeting and planning to launch a strategic drive; also to steer a process by relevant functionaries to collect and visit philanthropists; * Covid-19 pandemic; * Lack of sufficient funding opportunities nationally, necessitating an international drive for fundraising and international investment opportunities, while this is market remains untapped.; * Lost opportunities possible in regard to commercialisation of research products in TEH.	Internationalisation Policy approved by Council (Sept 2019).; * Business process established to ensure a well-organised process in place in regard to cooperative agreements by the DVC R&I; * GE office' footprint established on MC and Vdb C; * Commercialisation and investment opportunities explored in international markets; * Campaigns targeting alumni living abroad for donations.	Goal 2	Development and implementation of an integrated student recruitment strategy focusing on international students.; * Developing new initiatives with regard to fundraising, investment raising and endowment to ensure new sustainable source of income	Newly approved Internationalisation Policy

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180	Ex Dir SL and Ex Dir FF	Strategic	Campus Safety	Student safety on and off-campus at risk due to escalation in criminal activities on and around campus including an increase in gender-based violence.	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,50	6	R0	2022/05/23		Incidents of sexual assault and gender-based violence against students on campus; * Protection services have limited jurisdiction when incidents happened off campus; * Inadequate residence on campus (MC and VTC); * Poor access management to by distributing pamphlets and campus grounds; * Discuss the abuse of alcohol and Private accredited accommodation not complying to campus accommodation safety standards	Protection services at all campuses operating in accordance with pre-determined SOPs; * All campuses are access controlled; * Well-described process to deal with any instances of crime as establishment of Joint Operating Teams including SAPS, liaison with Public Order Policing and Intelligence Services; * Protection services together with SAPS visits residences during R&O to conduct crime awareness by distributing pamphlets and discuss the abuse of alcohol and drugs; * Cachet Park City Improvement District Non Profit Company (Cachet Park CID NPC) and rolling out of initiative to other campuses; * To gain from the outcomes of the USAF-SAPS Task Team on Campus Safety, GBV and the Protection of Vulnerable People dealing with safety and security on and off campuses of PSET institutions; instances of GBV, interrelationships between private security, SAPS and institutions of higher learning, as well as matters related to student transport and student accommodation as these pertain to safety.; * GBV Policy approved by Council in June 2021.; * Higher Health telephone number to report any criminal activities.	Goal 4	Investigate emergency app for students and staff.; * Assessment of strategic placement of additional cameras on campuses. Roll out of purple routes on MC.	
29	ExDir P&C	Strategic	Staff	Absenteeism leading to loss of productivity and optimal functioning.	3	4	R25 331 618	12	0	0	0,50	6	R10 132 648	2021/03/18		Moratorium on re-evaluation of positions; * Absence of promotion/progress policy for support staff; * Limited funds and resources available for staff costs.; * Leave conditions not implemented strictly enough by line managers - line managers not vigilant enough	Positions on P7 and below advertised internally first to provide growth opportunities for staff within the NWU; * Line managers have access to the P&C Dashboard reflecting absenteeism trends in their respective environments	Goal 6; * Goal 5; * Goal 4; * Goal 1	Return to work interview by line manager after each absence for sick leave; * Line management to be trained on courageous conversations.	

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2	ExDir FF	Strategic	Student Debt	Increase in student debt as a result of non-paying culture, exacerbated by uncertainties on the sustainability of the NSFAS model	3	3	R500 000 000	9	0	0	0,50	4	R150 000 000	2021/03/23	Exposure, Single Transaction	Inadequate funding to sustain growth and sustainability; * NWU is overdependent on government and NSFAS grants with limited income from other sources; * Students allowed to register with outstanding debt it is a significant financial risk and contributes to negative cash flow; * Students only pay the minimum payable amount to register and no further payments are made, or do not keep to arrangements made; * Students who were previously funded by NSFAS and did not meet requirements to proceed with funding, made arrangements to; * Process in place by Student register but failed to keep to it. Senior NSFAS students qualifying for NSFAS for the first time with outstanding debt in the years they were not funded by NSFAS are allowed to register, but their debt of the previous years are not covered.	Careful implementation of Financial Rules guidelines; Consistent information-sharing and communication on NSFAS processes by Student Finance Department to NWU student population; * Preserving available and growing reserves by ExDir FF and financial team to cover at least one year's operational expenses for sustainability purpose. Capitalising on reserves by creating a sustainable source of investment income - Money Market; * Building optimal relationships with funders, facilitating start-up capital by TTIS; * NWU Fundraising advisory group with members that are well known in the business world sitting twice a year to oversee projects that require funding in SA and Internationally. Director Stakeholder Relations are responsible for Fundraising since 2019. Fundraisers are appointed and responsible to drive these initiatives. Targets set in the Directors performance agreement, to; * Finance dept. to follow-up on student debt matters, such as ongoing communication with students; pre-registration finance committee structures at respective campuses, various options to pre-agree on settlement of debt.	Goal 6: * Goal 5; * Goal 4; * Goal 3; * Goal 1; * Goal 2		

38	DVC: TL	Strategic	Business Model	Uncertainties in regard to the language plan implementation in the unitary model could lead to disruption	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,50	4	R0	2021/01/23			Faculty language plans, CRM language plan and SL plans approved; * Leadership coaching and mentoring programme implemented in order to ensure capacity building and meeting position profile requirements. ; * Monitoring and evaluation of implementation in place by Senate Committee.; * SLPs on multi-lingual pedagogies developed for offering to academic staff.	Goal 6		
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27	ExDir: Student Life	Strategic	Student experience	Inadequate measures to create a welcoming student environment at the NWU	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,50	4	R0	2021/07/11		Inculcate a welcoming environment during the programme; * Uncertainties of roles and responsibilities appoint and train house parents; * No mandate of SCCs and residences to exercise disciplinary measures; * Ineffective training to make student leaders aware of positive values.	Thoughts and complaints line inclusive planning process takes place with all the stakeholders. R&O Planning includes feedback from the Thoughts and Complaints line process.; * Defined process to and train house parents; * Aligned R&O programme across all 3 campuses	Goal 4; * Goal 6		
21	DVC TL; DVC R&I; DVC Integrated Planning; ExDir FF; Registrar	Strategic	Programme Offering	Possibility that UG and PG academic offering and services related to offering are not responsive, price appropriate and that the quality is not of the required standard.	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,50	4	R0	2021/03/23		Insufficient representation on new committee level for development; * Rigorous planning academic offerings; * process in place for new academic offerings, after the completion of students decreases the HEQSF process.; * Roll players not having input in the academic planning.	IPExecuting a situational analysis for new products before development.; * Rigorous planning academic offerings; * process in place for new academic offerings, after the completion of the HEQSF process.; * Productivity measurement tool has been implemented in all faculties. * Planned roll-out of IPEs and EPEs in faculties and support departments.; * Productivity and quality model designed for departments to give objective insight. ; * Scheduled IPEs and EPEs evaluation in facilities and support department.	Goal 1		
17	Registrar	Strategic	Academic Integrity	Inconsistent application of the NWU Policy on Academic Integrity resulting in negative impact on the reputation of the University, the issuing of penalties, revoking of qualifications and loss of income from subsidised publications.	3	3	R3 000 000	9	0	0	0,50	4	R900 000	2021/07/19		Students and staff not sufficiently made aware and trained in ethical academic practices; * Policy are to be interpreted and process managed; * In student environment, the Writing inculcated in faculty Laboratories across campuses practices to create and nurture an environment related to academic integrity; * Teaching-learning delivery during COVID situation gave rise to higher incidents	Policy and Rules on Academic Integrity approved by Council and implemented, incl clear rules on the manner in which alleged cases are to be interpreted and managed; * In student environment, the Writing inculcated in faculty Laboratories across campuses and the Student Judicial Office and collaborate in regard of all cases related to transgressions pertaining academic integrity; * Ongoing refinement of capabilities to execute technical investigations in order to produce credible and trustworthy reports.; * Capability in regard to similarity of software expanded by the	Goal 6; * Goal 1; * Goal 2		

																academic dishonesty.; Internal Audit report of 2020 pointed to a number of instances where the policy is not implemented by roleplayers.; Faculty reports into 2020 indicated an escalated instance of transgressions on academic matters.	implementation of homework application that focus on style and register of writing.; * DVC R&I hosted webinars on academic integrity to enhance general awareness thereof in the research environment.; * Faculties embarked on awareness campaigns to enhance awareness of academic integrity amongst students.; * Policy and Rules on Academic Integrity were revised and approved by Council in June 2021.			
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181	DVC TL and DVC RI	Strategic	Programme Offering	Possibility that UG and PG academic offering and services related to offering are not responsive, price appropriate and that the quality is not of the required standard. Slow external approval process of qualifications/programmes leading to loss-of opportunities and possible irrelevance of NWU programme offering.	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,50	4	R0	2021/09/13		Qualification approval process (Q&APP) workshops hosted to ensure a proper understanding of relevant regulatory frameworks.; * programme approval process leads to loss-of opportunities and academic programme development, sufficient curriculum design, and clarity on internal and external approval processes in place.; * NWU TL Strategy, representation on Teaching-Learning and committee level for Assessment Policy and Rules academic offerings; * clarifies the purpose and scope of inherent demand for academic programme students decreases development at macro, meso, and micro levels.; * Regular having input in the review of internal and external academic programmes.; * Productivity measurement tool has been implemented in all faculties.; * Productivity and quality model designed for departments to give objective insight.; * Rigorous planning process in place for new academic offerings, after the completion of the HEQSF process.; * Planned roll-out of IPES and EPEs in faculties and support departments.; * Scheduled IPES and EPEs evaluation in faculties and support department.	External (HEQC) and internal (Q&APP) workshops hosted to ensure a proper understanding of relevant regulatory frameworks.; * Clear internal and external business processes to ensure opportunities and academic programme development, sufficient curriculum design, and clarity on internal and external approval processes in place.; * NWU TL Strategy, representation on Teaching-Learning and committee level for Assessment Policy and Rules academic offerings; * clarifies the purpose and scope of inherent demand for academic programme students decreases development at macro, meso, and micro levels.; * Regular having input in the review of internal and external academic programmes.; * Productivity measurement tool has been implemented in all faculties.; * Productivity and quality model designed for departments to give objective insight.; * Rigorous planning process in place for new academic offerings, after the completion of the HEQSF process.; * Planned roll-out of IPES and EPEs in faculties and support departments.; * Scheduled IPES and EPEs evaluation in faculties and support department.	Goal 1; * Goal 2		
31	VC, ExDir UMC	Strategic	OHS Compliance	Loss of lives, financial losses and closure of business due to non compliance to health and safety laws.	4	2	R100 000	8	0	0	0,50	4	R20 000	2022/07/22		Inadequate management of health and safety requirements; * Lack of awareness of appointments such as 16(2)s.; * compliance NWU OHS management system implemented; * Compliance to the absence of OHS national legislative consequences to environment; * NWU OHS Policy non compliance approved, supported by the some inefficiencies relevant rules and standard in the operating procedures.; * Regular implementation of self-assessment compliance the process and audits; also compliance audits by compliance Internal Audit; * OHS gadget launched via IWMS to report OHS hazards.; * Master faculty/dept sheet developed to assess unit compliance.; * Health, Hygiene and ergonomics assessment	Continuous OHS training and monitoring per schedule and budget. Departmental Health and Safety reps. Health and safety appointments such as 16(2)s.; * NWU OHS management system implemented; * Compliance to the absence of OHS national legislative consequences to environment; * NWU OHS Policy approved, supported by the some inefficiencies relevant rules and standard in the operating procedures.; * Regular implementation of self-assessment compliance the process and audits; also compliance audits by compliance Internal Audit; * OHS gadget launched via IWMS to report OHS hazards.; * Master faculty/dept sheet developed to assess unit compliance.; * Health, Hygiene and ergonomics assessment	Goal 6	NWU SHE system in place.	

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13	DVC TL and ExeDeans	Strategic	Student Throughput	Decline in student throughput and student success due to external factors such as NSFAS rules, lack of focus of student-support services and other factors	3	5	R0	15	0	0	0,75	4	R0	2021/07/12		NSFAS rule to pay cash to students tests are performed to guide possibly contributing admission into qualifications and to students not allocation of students to second attending sufficiently and third choices if admission to an academic requirements to preferred choice project.; * have not been met; * Measuring Throughput rate of tools in place to trace and track students in UG and student success; * Faculty plans in PG programmes not place to enhance and manage managed sufficiently, student throughput.; * Offering of resulting in pressure supplemental instruction (SI) on enrollment plan interventions, group, and and strain on individual tutorial interventions, resources.; * The and one-on-one student support services in regard to and walk-in services. Each faculty academic support to has student advisors (usually distance students honours or master's students) who are not optimised.; * mentor junior students.; * NWU Academic and other 2015-2025, as well as subsequent support to FTENS APPs, determine the thresholds for student success.; * NSFAS rules set clear boundary conditions for eligibility in regard to NSFAS funding.; * Facilitated an e-learning environment during lockdown, by ensuring that students in need received a laptop and data are provided to students to participate optimally in the TL environments).; * Keep on Teaching and Learning - Website of CTL	Admission tests and placement tests are performed to guide possibly contributing admission into qualifications and to students not allocation of students to second attending sufficiently and third choices if admission to an academic requirements to preferred choice project.; * have not been met; * Measuring Throughput rate of tools in place to trace and track students in UG and student success; * Faculty plans in PG programmes not place to enhance and manage managed sufficiently, student throughput.; * Offering of resulting in pressure supplemental instruction (SI) on enrollment plan interventions, group, and and strain on individual tutorial interventions, resources.; * The and one-on-one student support services in regard to and walk-in services. Each faculty academic support to has student advisors (usually distance students honours or master's students) who are not optimised.; * mentor junior students.; * NWU Academic and other 2015-2025, as well as subsequent support to FTENS APPs, determine the thresholds for student success.; * NSFAS rules set clear boundary conditions for eligibility in regard to NSFAS funding.; * Facilitated an e-learning environment during lockdown, by ensuring that students in need received a laptop and data are provided to students to participate optimally in the TL environments).; * Keep on Teaching and Learning - Website of CTL	Goal 1	SIS - students at-risk system within SIS. 2-3 years into the future. CTL is working on this endeavor.	Regular reporting to Senate and Council on student throughput (2x p.a.)

Strategic Risk Register

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11	DVC TL	Strategic	Technology Based Learning	Apparent unpreparedness for functioning in blended-learning environment, exacerbated by the perception that technology does not support the Teaching-Learning effort in an optimal way, leading to missed opportunities for blended learning.	4	3	R0	12	0	0	0,75	3	R0	2021/08/11		Current use of technology is not teaching offered by CTL even strategic and within the online context.; * NWU innovative.; * 1) Teaching-Learning and There is a structural Assessment policy guides the dis-incentive for implementation of a blended researchers to model aimed at enhancing access advance their and success; * Bi-annual/Annual inventions after report on TL support activities to publication and provide an update on the scope patenting. It typically and extent of technology uptake in requires more work TL environment.; * Vigorous and dedication to get training programme for staff and it market ready for students in the online and face-to-sale or licensing. 2) Face context is continuous and Our inventions are often on a daily/weekly basis by seldom caused by the CTL staff.; * TL Strategy 2021-2025 has been approved after often leaving it wide buy-in was sought from all irrelevant or of little the faculties and support interest to industry departments and approved by all the relevant structures up to the level of Council - the blended inefficient approach and increased use of administrative appropriate technologies during processes and teaching and learning thus have wide support. All procedures are being updated that give operational effect to the TL strategy.; * Video platform Panopto: UCDG funding has been received to pilot its use through licensing. Lecture capturing hardware and software download, (more enabling environment for what is available in the CTL space). One button studios on campuses - technology for lecturers to capture the class and upload for students to watch repeatedly. Voice-over powerpoints have become common and effective in the online environment.; * LMS functionalities have been well enhanced.	Goal 1; * Goal 6	E-assessment platform - pilot phase. Agreement with proctoring software company - will assist with assessments from home (security issues being addressed).		
32	DVC RI; Chief Director: TTIS	Strategic	Commercialisation	Missing out on commercialisation opportunities (Recommend removal of this risk from the Strategic Risk Register. Proper controls are in place as follows: TTIS participates in the annual stakeholder board meetings of the University Technology Fund (UTF) in addition to informal engagements. With regards to the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), the main funder in the innovation space, interactions have increased Examples (1) site visit by TIA advanced manufacturing portfolio on 24 Aug 2023 with follow up in Sep/Oct. (2) site visit by TIA energy	2	3	R0	6	0	0	0,50	3	R0	2021/07/19		Follow through of processes not optimal governance not sufficiently in place. Too much bureaucracy in processes.	Continuous engage with potential funders to understand funding and criteria; * Recruit additional senior not commercialisation specialists; * Governance Project completed and signatories defined.	Goal 2		

				portfolio 3-4 Oct. (3) roadshow by TIA bio-economy portfolio for Oct (4) TIA Seed Fund meeting take place on quarterly basis. TTIS have recruited additional team members and currently has 1 commercialisation manager, 2 senior commercialisation specialists (as of 1 Dec 2022 and 1 May 2023), with an additional 1 seconded to FENG until Dec 2023; 1 fixed term technology transfer specialist; 1 fixed term technology marketing specialist.)															
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Strategic Risk Register

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34	ExDir: Student Life	Strategic	Student Leadership	Inadequacies in student leadership skills leading to possible human rights and other values infringements presenting a student offering no longer desired by students	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,75	3	R0	2021/07/11		Inefficient incorporation of the programmes on LGBTQ+ and other human rights issues - core values into the structures established in Societies student-driven Portfolios and also in Race student life offering; * Language Awareness * Failure to recognise programmes; * Leadership and react to the coaching and mentoring changing student programme implemented in order needs/dynamics - to ensure capacity building and campus and meeting position profile institutional level; * Continuous Lack of process of review and understanding as to measurement to gage the student the importance of offering and its acceptance among social cohesion and the student body; * Template for the promotion of the dealing with concerns and giving values of human proposals, by Student leaders for dignity, equality and UMC members to respond, equity; * Poor Regular meetings with SCC and training and student leaders to share preparation with information and provides a regards to project reciprocal communication and financial channel. This leads to improved communication with student leaders and regular meetings with key UMC members.	Awareness and training programmes on LGBTQ+ and other human rights issues - core values into the structures established in Societies student-driven Portfolios and also in Race student life offering; * Language Awareness * Failure to recognise programmes; * Leadership and react to the coaching and mentoring changing student programme implemented in order needs/dynamics - to ensure capacity building and campus and meeting position profile institutional level; * Continuous Lack of process of review and understanding as to measurement to gage the student the importance of offering and its acceptance among social cohesion and the student body; * Template for the promotion of the dealing with concerns and giving values of human proposals, by Student leaders for dignity, equality and UMC members to respond, equity; * Poor Regular meetings with SCC and training and student leaders to share preparation with information and provides a regards to project reciprocal communication and financial channel. This leads to improved communication with student leaders and regular meetings with key UMC members.	Goal 4	Review of the UMC-SRC forum terms of reference; * Implementing of a Stakeholder Forum at strategic level with the VC and Campus DVCs; * Reviewing of the SRC Constitution by the SRC.	
25	Registrar: DVC TL	Strategic	Commercialisation	Commercialisation risks - offering of non-compliant SLPs; income not coming to NWU	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,75	3	R0	2021/08/11		No process in place for the governance Committee for TL-related and quality control of agreements - established in 2014 SLAs in regard to guide the approval process; * commercialisation/third-stream income in faculties.	Oversight body - Registrar's Committee for TL-related agreements - established in 2014 SLAs in regard to guide the approval process; * Establishment of UCE with a clear mandate to work proactively with faculties towards income stream 3 to add value; * Faculties implemented a process by means of which responsibility of ExDean and involvement of Legal Office are spelled out and reporting to mentioned committee; * Monitoring by UMC and Senate in place.	Goal 3; * Goal 6		

Strategic Risk Register

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22	ExDir CRM	Strategic	Protecting the brand and reputation of the NWU	A reputational risk is evident if the public and stakeholders do not believe the university is living up to its promise of social justice. The perceptions of stakeholders with regard to the NWU's standing in comparison with other HEI's.	3	4	R0	12	0	0	0,75	3	R0	2021/07/02		Varying levels of client service resulting in poor customer satisfaction.; * Under developed ethical culture at the NWU. * Market research amongst FTENs who do not take up the offered spaces, some hold the perception that the NWU is not as good as other universities; * Poor client service evident in some departments leading to complaints on social media and HelloPeter.; * The exit interviews of some employees indicate unhappiness with their experience at the NWU.; * Complaints on social media indicate unequal treatment.; * Ethics assessment of 2020 shows that the NWU has an underdeveloped ethics culture.	The marketing strategy promoting multi linguisticism; * The recruitment strategy currently focuses on quality of TL delivery; * Message delivery of the promise of academic excellence and overtly moving away from any notion related to "campus niche".	Goal 1; * Goal 4; * Goal 6		
12	DVC Integrated Planning	Strategic	Enrolment	Over and under enrolment resulting in financial losses	3	4	R100 000 000	12	0	0	0,75	3	R20 000 000	2021/07/07		Risk of not reaching enrolment targets; Decline in distance students over time; Haphazard process admitting FTEN students in instances where first choice could not be implemented.	Enrolment plan (2020-2025) developed and approved; * Well defined recruitment and admission process in place	Goal 1; * Goal 4; * Goal 6		

Strategic Risk Register

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					Impact	Likelihood	Exposure		Impact	Likelihood										
10	DVC Executive Deans	TL Strategic	School Leavers	Standards gap between basic and tertiary education leading to ill preparedness of school leavers for tertiary education	3	3	R120 000 000	9	0	0	0,75	2	R18 000 000	2021/08/11		Basic Education curriculum and tests are performed to guide teaching quality not admission into qualifications and sufficient. Students allocation of students to second entering HE are not and third choices if admission adequately prepared requirements to preferred choice for university studies have not been met; * Faculty plans The general quality in place to enhance and manage of entering students student throughput; * Offering into HE is declining supplemental instruction (SI) leading to under interventions, group, and preparedness. The individual tutorial interventions, declining quality of and one-on-one student support entering students and walk-in services. Each faculty has a knock-on effect has student advisors (usually on the realisation of honours or master's students) who the enrollment plan; * mentor junior students.; * Offering The Covid-19 of Academic Literacy module that pandemic also runs over the whole first year influenced 2020 (and including components of reading, 2021) matriculant writing and basic computer progress significantly literacy; also providing guidance in as all needed to go terms of learning strategies.; * online. Quality Offering of bridging courses to augment skills of university entrants; * NWU TL Strategy (2016-2020) indicating that the NWU student-value proposition is, amongst others, underpinned by the equity of access and an empowering and supportive learning experience.; * Strategic Intelligence Reports provided at regular intervals to FMCs and other structures for monitoring and informed decision-making purposes.	Admission tests and placement tests are performed to guide admission into qualifications and third choices if admission requirements to preferred choice for university studies have not been met; * Faculty plans The general quality in place to enhance and manage of entering students student throughput; * Offering into HE is declining supplemental instruction (SI) leading to under interventions, group, and preparedness. The individual tutorial interventions, declining quality of and one-on-one student support entering students and walk-in services. Each faculty has a knock-on effect has student advisors (usually on the realisation of honours or master's students) who the enrollment plan; * mentor junior students.; * Offering The Covid-19 of Academic Literacy module that pandemic also runs over the whole first year influenced 2020 (and including components of reading, 2021) matriculant writing and basic computer progress significantly literacy; also providing guidance in as all needed to go terms of learning strategies.; * online. Quality Offering of bridging courses to augment skills of university entrants; * NWU TL Strategy (2016-2020) indicating that the NWU student-value proposition is, amongst others, underpinned by the equity of access and an empowering and supportive learning experience.; * Strategic Intelligence Reports provided at regular intervals to FMCs and other structures for monitoring and informed decision-making purposes.	Goal 1; * Goal 4	Plan for a diversified academic offering for entering students to allow for enhanced access, but not to set students up for failure. Programme development and admission requirements are thus carefully managed by faculties and approved through Senate sub-committees such as SCAS and the ARC. Continuously improve the effectiveness of orientation programmes that familiarise students with the demands of their academic programmes, the academic environment at the university, and the range of available support services	
14	DVC ExDeans; Registrar	TL Strategic	Programme Offering	Slow external approval process of qualifications/programmes leading to loss-of opportunities and possible irrelevance of NWU programme offering.	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,75	2	R0	2021/08/11		Qualification approval process (Q&AP) workshops hosted by external ensure a proper understanding of process of relevant regulatory frameworks.; * programme approval Clear internal and external leads to loss-of business processes to ensure opportunities and academic programme development, sufficient curriculum of NWU programme design, and clarity on internal and external approval processes in place. ; * NWU TL Strategy, Teaching-Learning and Assessment Policy and Rules clarifies the purpose and scope of sound academic programme development at macro, meso, and micro levels.; * Regular opportunities exist for the quality review of internal and external academic programmes.; * Productivity measurement tool has been implemented in all faculties.; * Productivity and quality model designed for departments to give objective insight.	External (HEQC) and internal (Q&AP) workshops hosted by external ensure a proper understanding of process of relevant regulatory frameworks.; * programme approval Clear internal and external leads to loss-of business processes to ensure opportunities and academic programme development, sufficient curriculum of NWU programme design, and clarity on internal and external approval processes in place. ; * NWU TL Strategy, Teaching-Learning and Assessment Policy and Rules clarifies the purpose and scope of sound academic programme development at macro, meso, and micro levels.; * Regular opportunities exist for the quality review of internal and external academic programmes.; * Productivity measurement tool has been implemented in all faculties.; * Productivity and quality model designed for departments to give objective insight.	Goal 1; * Goal 6	PQM Internal audit that will be done over 3 years. ; * POM review of 2019/2020 POM in planning phases; SI finalising the dashboard that will be used for subsequent review; every faculty will have engagement with the DHET ; * offering over a three-year period Outcomes of to decide on relevance and internal reviews, sustainability in order to better soft reviews, and refine the responsiveness of the external reviews of NWU POM.; * Rigorous planning academic process in place for new academic programme ; * offerings, after the completion of POM audit the HEQSF process.; * Planned roll-out of IPEs and EPEs in faculties and support departments.	The consequence of 2019/2020 POM review and subsequent engagement with the DHET ; * offering over a three-year period Outcomes of to decide on relevance and internal reviews, sustainability in order to better soft reviews, and refine the responsiveness of the external reviews of NWU POM.; * Rigorous planning academic process in place for new academic programme ; * offerings, after the completion of POM audit the HEQSF process.; * Planned roll-out of IPEs and EPEs in faculties and support departments.

Strategic Risk Register

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19	ExDir Student Life; Campus DVCs; Registrar	Operational	Protest	Possibility of student protests/unrest on campuses disrupting academic activity and endangering staff and student safety.	3	3	R50 000 000	9	0	0	0,75	2	R7 500 000	2021/07/11		The ongoing possibility for student unrest and violence at the various campus levels; as well as the inadequacy of security services in accordance with pre-determined (incl electronic equipment) all campus levels to contain possible unrest situations; Lack of an optimal model to deal with student grievances before such become the cause for disruption.; #feesmustfall movement possibly erupting again ; Political national agendas; * Damage to property is possible, also the risk of safety of staff and students.	Well-described process to deal with any instances of crime as establishment of Joint Operating Teams including SAPS, liaison with Public Order Policing and Intelligence Services; ; * Protection of services at all campuses operating in accordance with pre-determined SOPs; * Policy and Rules on Gatherings, Demonstrations and Emergency contingency plans in place; ; * Continuous engagement with stakeholders. ; * Monitor and identify any possibility for unrest at campus due to elections.; * Template for dealing with concerns and giving proposals, by Student leaders for UMC members to respond. Regular meetings with SCC and student leaders to share information and provides a reciprocal communication channel. This leads to improved communication with student leaders and regular meetings with key UMC members.	Goal 4; * Goal 6	Replacing all desktops with laptops for agility purposes.	APP as prescribed by SRC Constitution to be converted annually into plans of action; * Contingency measures
15	Registrar	Strategic	Compliance	Financial losses, possible imprisonment and penalties due to lack of compliance to legislation, statutory requirements, licenses and other legal requirements.	3	3	R0	9	0	0	0,75	2	R0	2021/07/19		Lack of awareness of compliance requirements, absence of complete checklists, consequences in turn, monitored by some inefficiencies in management and governance in the structures; * Reporting to UMC and to ARCC which covers the process and risk.; * Risk and Compliance Policy approved by Council to guide responsibilities; * Institution-wide implementation.; * Lack of follow-up through on the (16(1) and 16(2)) and committee implementation of structures finalised and policies.; * Ethics risk operational.; * Governance assessment oversight done by ARCC who indicating that NWU reports to Council could be prone to members disregarding policies and not adhering to these, bypassing rules and organisational procedures.	Systematic annual review process implemented involving all owners of legislation with the aim to draft improvement plans that are, in turn, monitored by management and governance in the structures; * Reporting to UMC and to ARCC which covers the process and risk.; * Risk and Compliance Policy approved by Council to guide responsibilities; * Institution-wide implementation.; * OHS committee functionaries (16(1) and 16(2)) and committee structures finalised and operational.; * Governance oversight done by ARCC who reports to Council	Goal 6	Development of three-year Ethics Management strategy and Ethics Management Plan; Ethics awareness training flowing from audit; establishment of dedicated portal to report transgressions. ; * Policies to be supplemented with implementation plan/rules and assignment matrix (the latter as per the NWU Policy on delegations, assignments and advocacy)	

Strategic Risk Register

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7	DVC TL	Strategic	Market place Expectations	Perceived inability to meet market-place expectations in that graduates do not find employment quickly enough.	2	3	R0	6	0	0	0,75	2	R0	2021/08/11		1) There is a structural dis-incentive for researchers to advance their inventions and publication patenting. It typically requires more work and dedication to get it market ready for sale or licensing. 2) Our inventions are seldom caused by "industry pull" forces, often leaving it irrelevant or of little interest to industry. : * Skills mismatch of students into labour markets (mix and level) considering the mega trends. The materiality revolves around. n(i) evident gaps between skills required by workplace and the content of academic programs; (ii) the inability to have a smooth integration of Work-Integrated-Learning opportunities into mainstream offerings	Participation of NWU in ratings and rankings process by means of clear focus and strategy and with bespoke data.; * The NWU, through the development of aftergraduate attributes and integrating these into module outcomes, better prepares its students to lead professional, public and personal lives and afford them a strategic edge in the world of work.; Stronger focus on entrepreneurial skills through various initiatives within but also external to academic programmes.; * Through proper academic-programme planning and curriculum design, the NWU's PQM is relevant and responsive. ; The NWU Career Office provides services to NWU students and potential employees to ensure the relevance of the graduate output of the NWU. ; * Through regular engagements with the industry, the NWU ensures that its graduate output meets professional demands.	Goal 1; * Goal 4	Micro-credentials framework is in development which will provide for the development of specific transferable but also subject-specific skills that students will acquire and be recognised for through digital badges. Stronger focus on WIL and SL and its management through the WISL system - prepares students better for world of work requirements.	

13.5 Annexure 5: Annual Financial overview 2023

Report of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and the Executive Director: Finance and Facilities

Purpose

This report presents a summary of the financial results of the North-West University for the year 2023. It provides an overview of the budgeting and budgetary control processes implemented and highlights the financial achievements during this period.

Budgeting and Budgetary Control Processes in 2023

13.5.1 Budgeting Process

To ensure a transparent and effective budgeting process, the University Management Committee (UMC) annually approves the budget principles and timeline prior to the commencement of the budgeting activities. For the 2023–2025 period, the University followed an interactive budget process that involved the following steps:

1. **Integration with Strategy and Performance Plans:** Managers were required to link their department's strategy and Annual Performance Plan (APP) with the required resources. This approach ensured that financial planning was directly aligned with strategic objectives.
2. **Consideration of Various Factors:** During the budgeting process, several key factors were considered, including:
 - Past trends and data
 - Assumptions and forecasts
 - Risks and concerns, including the medium-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic
 - Benchmarking against similar institutions
 - Application of zero-based budgeting principles where feasible
3. **Detailed Budget Preparation:** Managers revised the detailed budgets for 2023 and 2024 and compiled detailed budgets for 2025 using the IDU budgeting software. This involved meticulous planning and allocation of funds at the KFS account level.
4. **High-Level Budget Framework:** A high-level budget was compiled, considering the approved Annual Performance Plan, viability and sustainability indicators, and the medium- to long-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. This high-level budget served as the overarching framework during the budget process.

13.5.2 Budget Approval Process

The approval process for the 2023–2025 rolling budget was consistent with previous years and involved multiple levels of scrutiny and recommendation:

- **University Budget Committee:** Initial approval and recommendations.
- **University Management Committee:** Further evaluation and endorsement.
- **Finance Committee:** Detailed financial review and recommendation.
- **University Council:** Final approval.

Task teams assisted in formulating recommendations on personnel cost budget allocation, infrastructure plans, and strategic fund allocation to ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded budget.

13.5.3 Budget Control Process

The budget control process remained robust, with all levels of management actively involved in budget oversight. Key aspects included:

- **Performance Agreements:** All staff performance agreements were linked to the APP, ensuring accountability and alignment with the University's financial goals, highlighting the financial management responsibility for all managers as well.
- **Variance Reporting:** Monthly variance reports were generated and closely monitored. These reports were reviewed quarterly at the University Management level via Management Statements, which were also presented biannually to the Finance Committee of Council.

- **Income-Linked Expenditure:** For sources of funds (SOF) 2, 3 and 5, expenditure was restricted to actual income received, thus preventing overspending and ensuring financial discipline.

Conclusion on budgeting and budgetary control processes for 2023

The University achieved significant financial milestones in 2023, demonstrating resilience and strategic management amidst challenges. Key financial achievements include:

- **Balanced Budget:** Despite the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the University maintained a balanced budget, ensuring financial stability.
- **Revenue Growth:** Effective resource allocation and strategic planning led to notable revenue growth, enhancing the University's financial position.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Implementation of zero-based budgeting and stringent budget control measures resulted in improved cost efficiency across various departments.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Strategic fund allocation facilitated essential infrastructure investments, supporting the University's long-term sustainability and growth.

In summary, the University's financial results for 2023 reflect a well-managed budgeting process and effective budgetary control, contributing to significant financial achievements and ensuring a strong foundation for future growth.

Overview of financial achievements

The financial achievements of the North-West University (NWU) for the year ended 31 December 2023 are reviewed with the context of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact over the last four years in mind. This period has been characterised by delayed operations and altered spending patterns. Although activities began returning to normal in 2022, the resulting surplus is primarily due to "unspent funds" rather than excess income over expenses.

The financial review for the year ended 31 December 2023 is presented under the following headings:

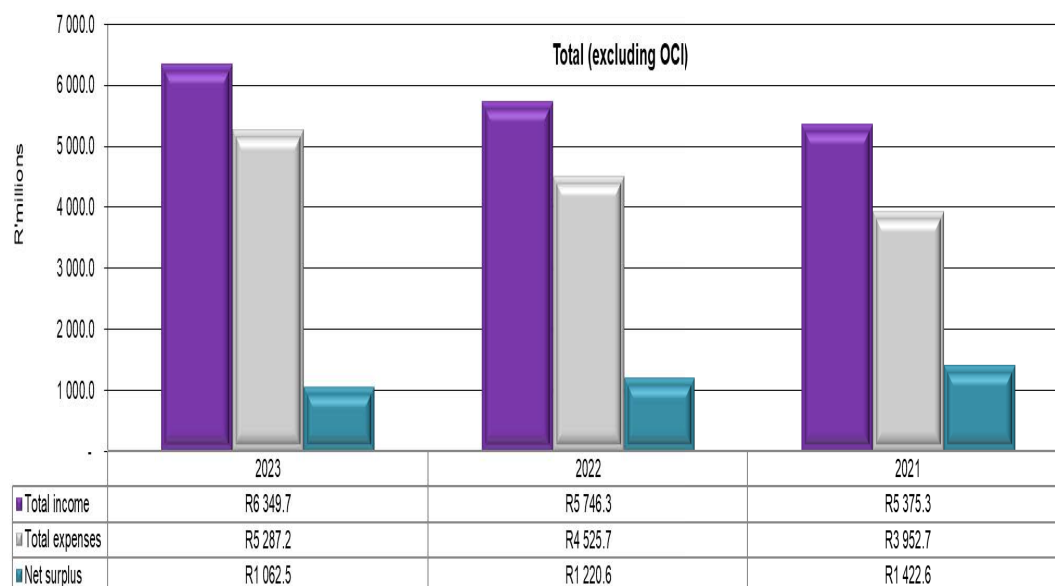
• Surplus and growth

The total surplus for 2023 is R1 062,5 million (2022: R1 220,6 million and 2021: R1 422,6 million) and decreased by 12,9% compared to 2022. The total surplus expressed as a percentage of total income was 16,8% for 2023 (2022: 21,2% and 2021: 26,5%). The total surplus can be divided into surplus from recurrent activities of R974,9 million (2022: R1 272,2 million and 2021: R1 282,2 million) and surplus from non-recurrent activities of R87,6 million (2022: R51,6 million deficit and 2021: R140,4 million surplus). Expressed as a percentage, surplus from recurrent operations represents 15,4% of total income for 2023 (2022: 22,1% and 2021: 23,9%) and non-recurrent surplus of 1,4% (2022: -0,9% deficit and 2021: 2,6% surplus).

The total income of the University increased by 10,5% during 2023 to R6 349,7 million compared to the previous year (2022: R5 746,3 million) and increased by 6,9% in 2022 compared to 2021 (R5 375,3 million). Total expenditure of R5 287,2 million increased by 16,3% for the 2023 financial year (2022: R4 525,7 million). Total expenditure increased in 2022 by 14,5% compared to 2021 (R3 952,7 million). Operating expenditure increased due operating activities returning to normal spending patterns.

The impact of IAS19 valuations on expenses is an increase of R4,5 million for 2023 (2022: R2,9 million increase), compared to the increase of R8,6 million for 2021.

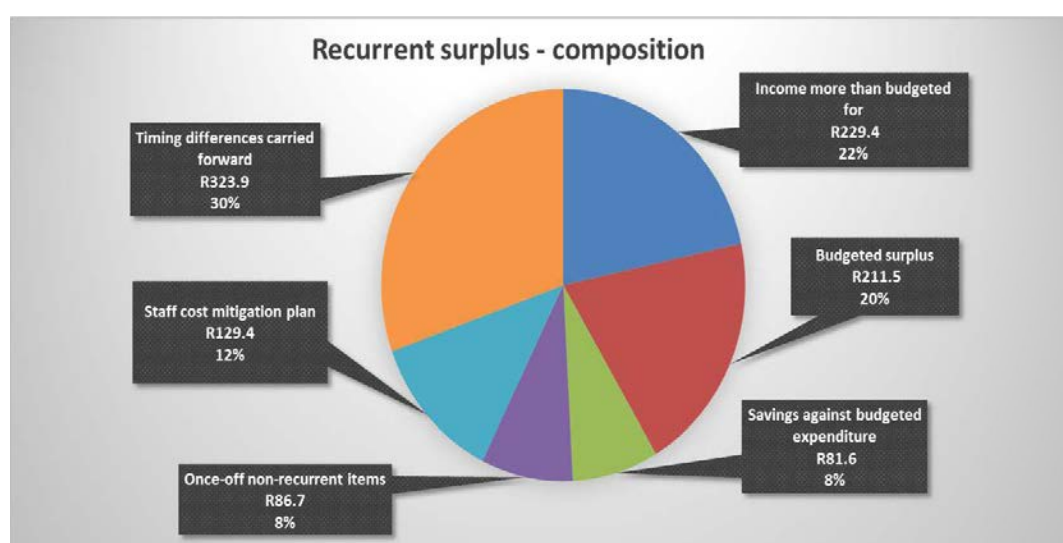
Other comprehensive income (OCI) for 2023 totalled a surplus of R59,6 million (2022: R17,0 million and 2021: R87,4 million). This gave rise to a reportable total comprehensive income for the year of R1 122,1 million (2022: R1 237,6 million and 2021: R1 510,0 million).



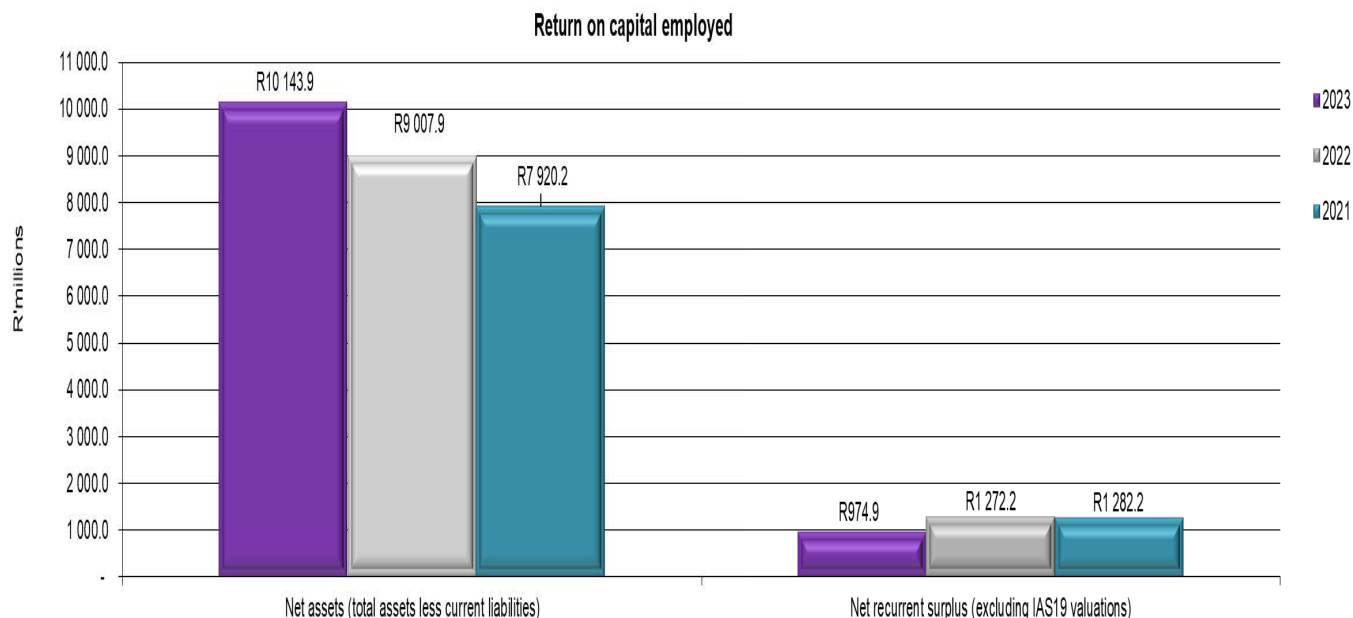
The income of the University from recurrent activities increased by 8,7% to a total income of R6 244,3 million, while the total expenses from recurrent activities increased by 17,8% to a total expenditure of R5 269,4 million for 2023. The surplus for the 2023 financial year from recurrent activities represents 15,6% (2022: 22,1% and 2021: 24,5%) of the total recurrent income.

The surplus from recurrent activities is attributed to:

- Planned savings on staff costs in the amount of R129,4 million (2022: R139,5 million and 2021: R213,3 million) in line with the medium to long term staff cost mitigation plan that was informed by the Financial Impact Model developed during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- the infrastructure efficiency earmarked grant for infrastructure projects that is recognised only as and when the expenses are incurred;
- timing differences due to for example capital and macro-maintenance projects, as well as strategic projects not completed during the year, which were carried over to 2024;
- favourable investment returns on a growing long term investment portfolio and an increase in the interest rate;
- staff remuneration savings on vacant positions; and
- savings against operating budget allocations due to 'new' spending patterns that vested during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

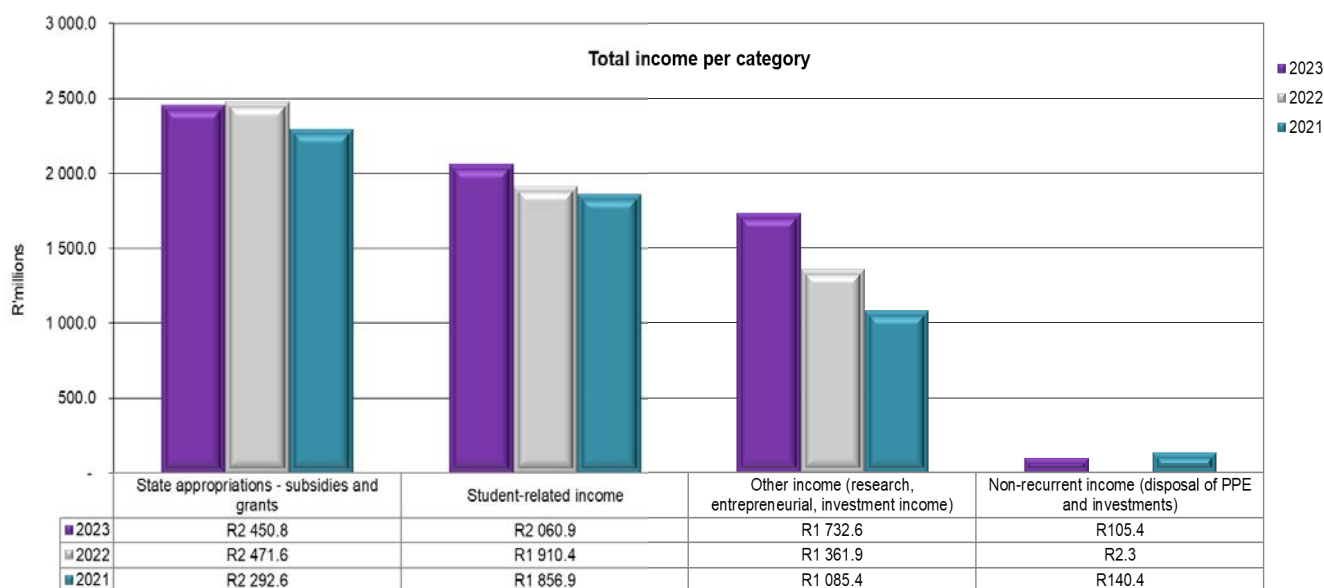


The University's return from recurrent operating activities on capital employed (total assets less current liabilities) decreased to 9,6% (2022:14,1% and 2021:16,2%). This is mainly due to an increase of 12,6% in net assets and a decrease in the recurrent surplus.

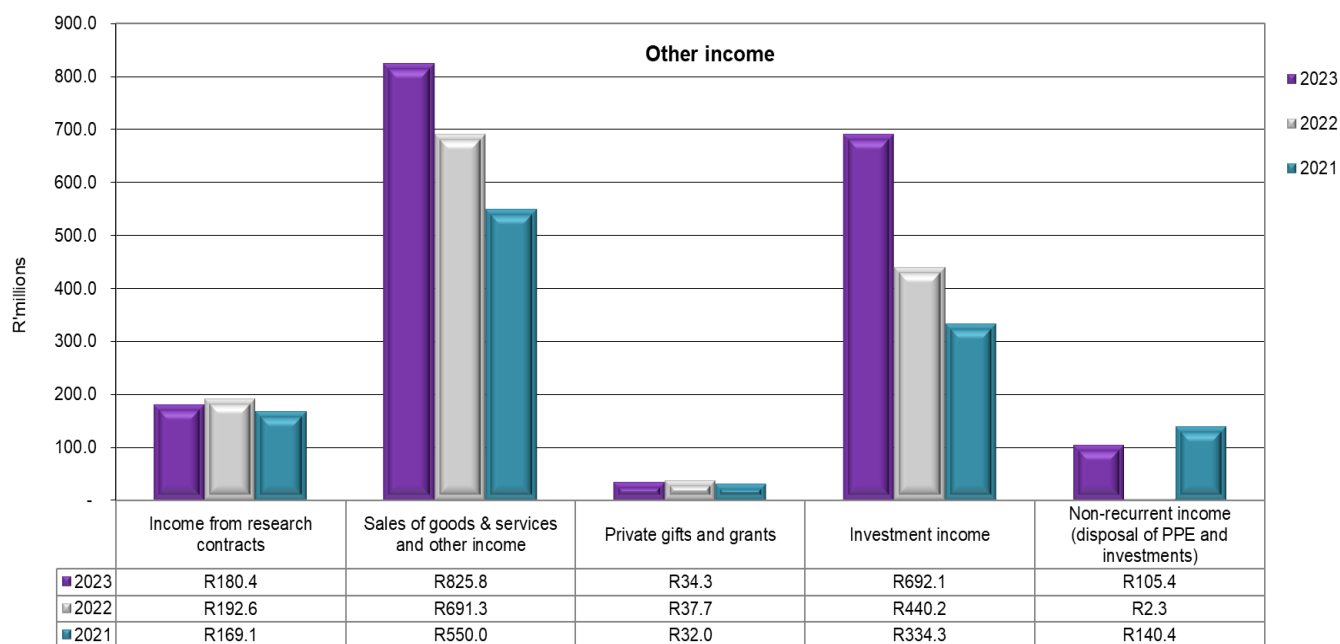


Income from state appropriations (subsidies and grants) represents 38,6% of total income (2022: 43,0% and 2021: 42,6%) a decrease of 0,8% from 2022 to 2023 – compared to the 7,8% increase from 2021 to 2022. Allocations were revised during October 2023 and the Department of Higher Education and Training reduced the 2023 block grant by R8,5 million and earmarked grants by R3,2 million. Total state subsidies comprise a 97,2% block grant and 2,8% earmarked grants. Earmarked grants in the amount of R117,1 million were deferred (2022: R97,0 million and 2021: R121,7 million). This amount includes R33,9 million received in advance regarding the final gap funding grant, which is being phased out. Universities will be responsible for surpluses and deficits in gap grant funding until the cohort of students who benefitted from the gap grant no longer enrol at the University.

Tuition fees increased by 5,1% for contact students and 4,2% for distance students for 2023 (2022: 4,2% for contact students and 4,7% for distance students, compared to 4,7% for contact students and 5,4% for distance students for 2021). Our major growth driver, namely student numbers, increased by 1,7% for 2023 and student-related income was 7,9% higher than in 2022 (2022: 2,9% higher and 2021: 5,2% higher in comparison with previous years). NSFAS funding enabled a higher number of enrolments of students funded by NSFAS. The number of NSFAS students for 2023 was 27 693 (2022: 26 586 and 2021: 23 897 students). The total student-related income represents 32,5% of the total income (2022: 33,2% and 2021: 34,5%).



Other income represents 27,3% of total income (2022: 23,8% and 2021: 20,2%). This ratio excludes non-recurrent income (1,7% of total income), which may affect comparability depending on events and related amounts per year. Non-recurrent income for 2022 was 0,0% and for 2021 it was 2,6%.



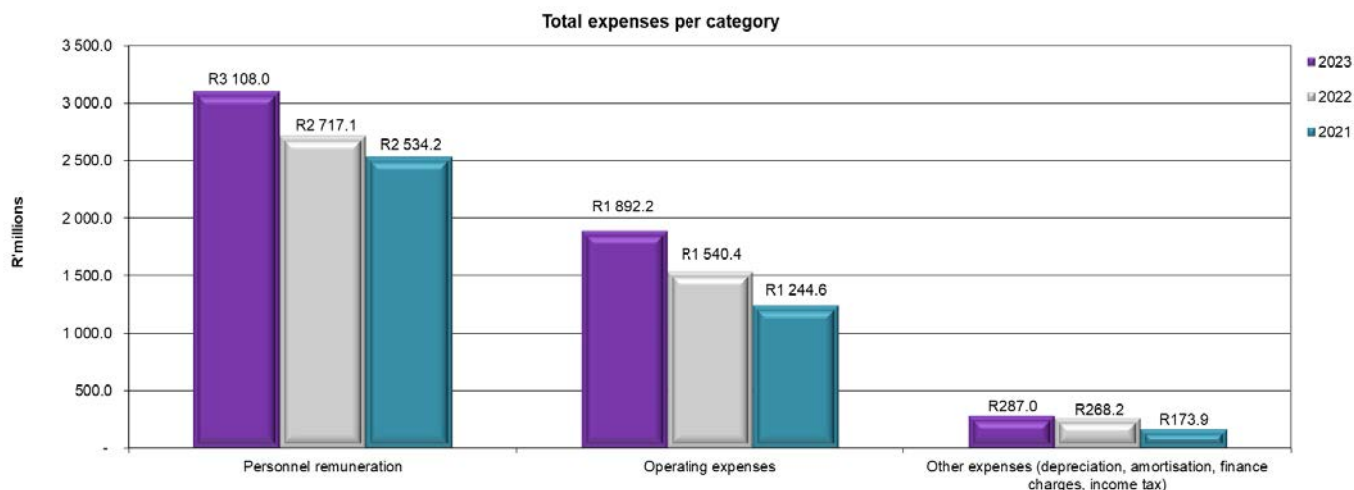
Total expenditure increased by 16,8% (2022: increased by 14,5% and 2021: decreased by 1,0%). Note should be taken of the increase for 2023, as would normally be expected in line with higher education inflation, and also of the underspending of funds on operations due to the impact of COVID-19, which interrupted trends in this ratio and gave rise to a decrease in total expenditure during 2020 and 2021.

Personnel remuneration increased by 14,4% compared to 7,2% for 2022 (2021: 0,6%). The increase reflects a combined weighted annualised average of the 6,0% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) as a result of a differentiated COLA offer implemented, based on peromnes levels of permanent and fixed-term staff. The total cost of personnel expenditure for 2023 increased to 49,0% of total income (2022: 47,3% and 2021: 47,1%). Despite the increase in income and the impact of the IAS19 valuations, more vacancies were filled. Council-controlled personnel expenditure is closely monitored to stay within the norm set by the Department, i.e. 57,5%–63,0%. This target includes amounts paid for services outsourced, while the University shows amounts paid for services outsourced as part of operating expenses. The ratio for total council-controlled personnel cost compared to total council-controlled income was 53,4% for 2023 (2022: 51,1% and 2021: 50,2%). The main reason for this increase in 2023 is the higher number of vacancies that were filled as operations were stabilising. The staff cost mitigation plan in response to the forecasted medium to long term financial impact of COVID-19 was still applicable and therefore resulting in a lower ratio. The total effect of IAS19 valuations amounted to a R4,5 million increase in staff expenses (recurrent and non-recurrent) for 2023 (2022: R2,9 million increase and 2021: R8,6 million increase).

Operating expenditure increased by 22,8% compared to 2022 as a direct result of operations recovering from the effects of COVID-19, with no restrictions that prevented activities from continuing. During 2022 operating expenses increased by 23,8% compared to 2021 (2021: 1,5% decrease). Operating costs represent 35,8% of total income (2022: 34,0% and 2021: 31,5%), which is mainly due to the increase in income as well as savings still occurring on certain categories of operating expenses. This ratio is therefore still below the maximum target of 42%. A number of projects were carried over to 2024 due to the ripple effect of the diminishing COVID-19 conditions, as well as timing differences.

Expenses include an amount of R38,9 million (2022: R59,2 million and 2021: R50,9 million) written off as irrecoverable and doubtful student debt. The student debt ratio (before impairment) seems above the norm of 20,0% for the sector for 2023 at a ratio of 25,6% of tuition fees (2022: 10,8% and 2021: 14,3%), but this is due to NSFAS owing the NWU an amount of R361,7 million at year-end (2022: R53,7 million and 2021: R88,5 million) and only paying that amount in January 2024. If this amount is taken into consideration, the ratio is 8,01%, which is well within the sector norm. Provision for expected credit loss on student debtors increased by R46,1 million or 153,0% in 2023, compared to the R33,1 million or 52,4% decrease in 2022 (2021: R28,7 million or 31,2% decrease). This is mainly due to a once-off provision of R23,4 million included for the write-off of UDL bursary contracts during 2016 to 2018. The impact of the expected credit loss on sundry debtors was an increase of R1,3 million for 2023 (2022: R2,0 million decrease and 2021: R0,5 million decrease), and bad debt of R9,6 million was written off (2022: R20,8 million and 2021: R4,7 million).

Other expenditure relating to depreciation and finance charges, also including non-recurrent expenditure, increased by 7,0% (2022: 54,2% increase and 2021: 18,0% decrease). Depreciation on right-of-use lease assets of R46,1 million, finance charges of R5,3 million on lease liabilities and loss on investments of R15,5 million were the main contributors to these increases.



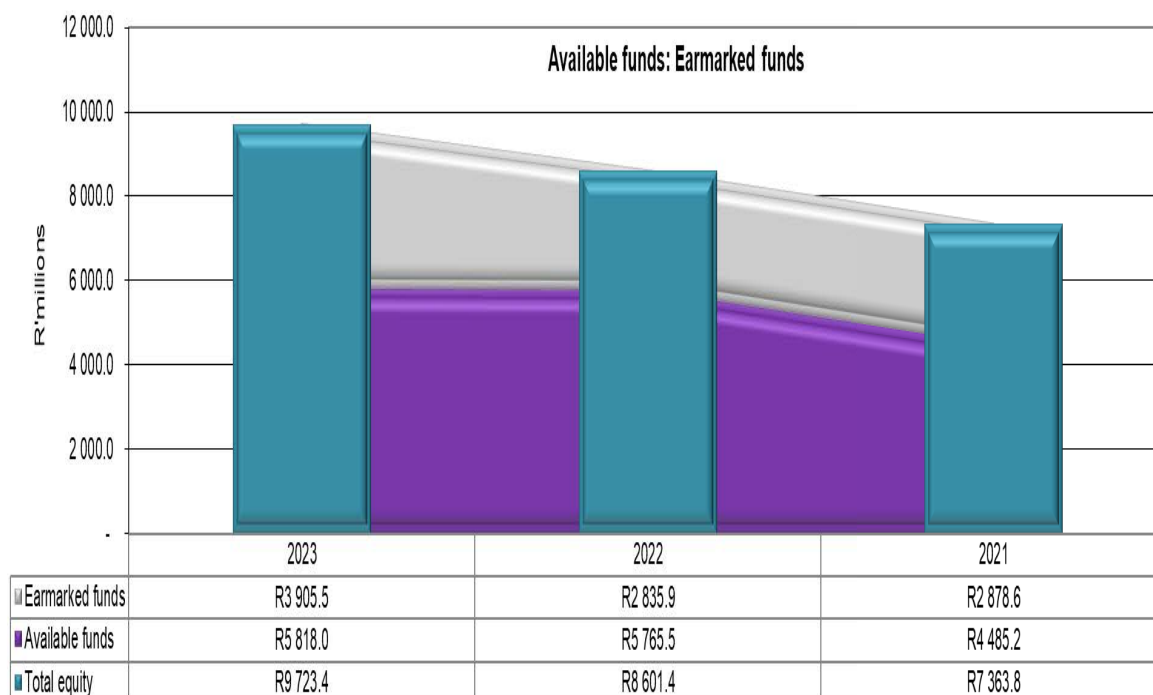
Strict monitoring of income and expenses together with tight budgetary controls, heightened awareness and behaviour regarding savings resulted in a surplus for 2023 and therefore a positive contribution towards the University's available reserves. As mentioned above, a material portion of the savings can be attributed to timing differences and will result in a spending against reserves in 2024 and beyond. The increase in assets serves as an indication that timing differences relating to 2022 were partially eliminated during spending in 2023, thereby "catching up" with time lost during the COVID-19 period and creating potential for income-generating operations.

• Equity

The University's equity increased by 13,0% in the 2023 financial year (2022: 16,8% and 2021: 25,8%), mainly due to the surplus for the year. An increase of R53,5 million in the net asset value of employee benefits (employer surplus account of the pension fund and disability reserve fund) on 31 December 2023 must be noted – as per external actuarial valuation in terms of IAS19 (2022: R8,1 million increase and 2021: R78,2 million increase). This increase is purely a result of the return earned on the employer surplus portion of the pension fund investments. Investment in property, plant and equipment contributed R335,6 million to the higher equity percentage (2022: R153,2 million and 2021: R83,1 million). The unrealised fair value adjustment reserve increased by R104,2 million during 2023, compared to the R53,6 million decrease in 2022 (2021: R126,4 million increase).

The available funds decreased to 59,8% of total equity (2022: 67,0% and 2021: 60,9%), despite the recurrent surplus of 15,4%. Available funds were utilised during 2023 to fund infrastructure projects that were previously postponed, resulting in the minor decrease in the percentage of available funds. Other projects commenced late in 2023 and will only be completed in 2024 – thus spending against 2023 available reserves carried forward will again take place during 2024.

The sustainability ratio of Council-controlled reserves over total expenditure for the year was 1,10 (2022: 1,27 and 2021: 1,13). The improvement in Council-controlled reserves (which increased from R4 485,2 million in 2021 to R5 818,0 million in 2023), is indicative of the commitment of the NWU to financial sustainability and maintaining the DHET norm of 1,0. The University expects this ratio to stabilise in future once spending patterns normalise from the fluctuations attributable to COVID-19-related conditions over the last three financial years.



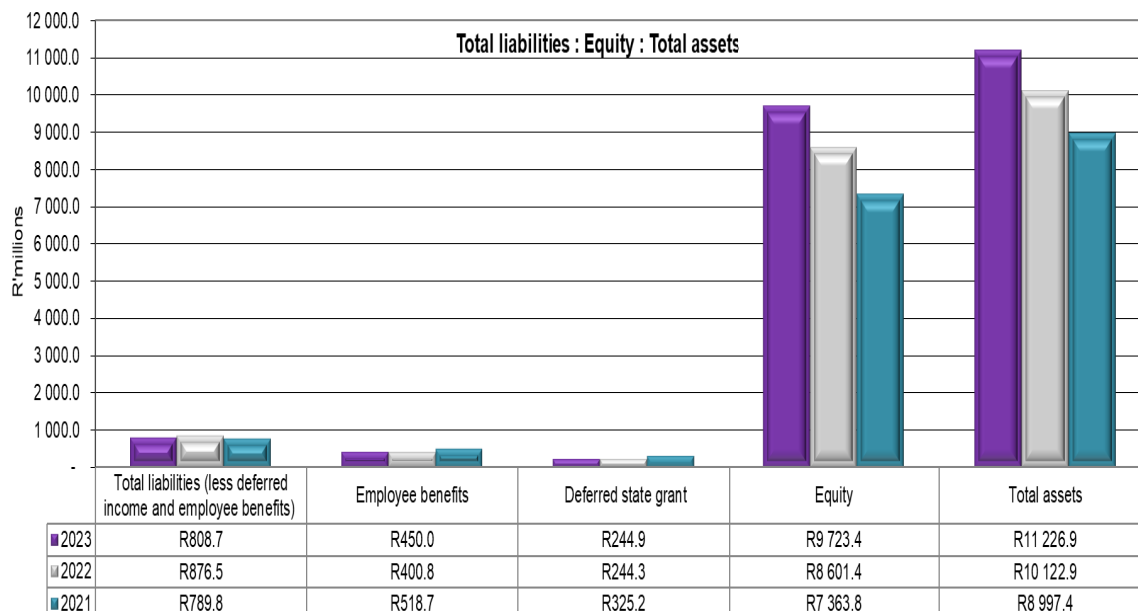
• Solvability

The total liabilities (R1 503,5 million) at year-end for 2023 expressed over total equity (R9 723,4 million) means the University's ratio of debt to equity is 0,15 (2022: 0,18 and 2021: 0,22). This is the result of an increase of 13,0% in equity (2022: 16,8% and 2021: 25,8%) for the reasons explained above, and a decrease of 1,2% in total liabilities (2022: 6,9% decrease and 2021: 17,5% decrease). The amount of R244,9 million (2022: R244,3 million and 2021: R325,2 million) (including accumulated interest) relating to the previous as well as the new cycle infrastructure grants, is included in total liabilities under deferred state grant.

Infrastructure projects were able to continue during 2023, as well as the capitalisation of buildings. State deferred grants increased by R0,6 million for the year (2022: R80,9 million decrease, compared to a decrease of R231,4 million for 2021). A twenty-year long-term loan in the amount of R235,0 million was entered into with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) during 2021 for the establishment of student housing on the Mafikeng campus. No additional amount was taken up during 2023 (2022: R102,2 million taken up and 2021: R111,9 million taken up), resulting in R20,9 million still available on this facility. The project was completed during 2023. The grace period of 24 months on capital repayment elapsed and instalments (including capital portion) started in October 2023. Capital of R3,3 million was redeemed on the DBSA loan for 2023.

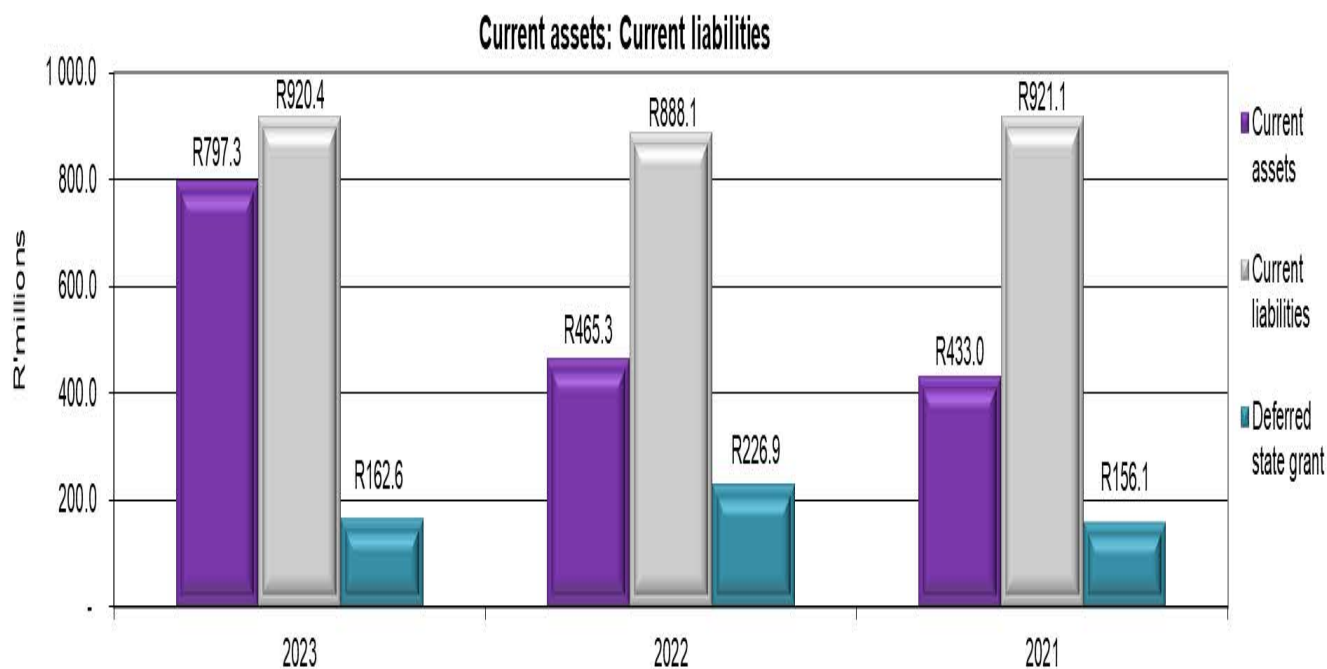
The total liabilities expressed over total assets indicate a ratio of 0,13 for the year (2022: 0,15 and 2021: 0,18). Thus total liabilities are covered 7,47 times by total assets (2022: 6,65 and 2021: 5,51 times).

The Financial Impact Model built in response to the COVID-19 pandemic indicates that the University's income sources are volatile and therefore will result in a significant financial impact if any change occurred in the medium and long term. Therefore the University will be vigilant in monitoring and managing this potential impact on the current solvability and sustainability, while the current improvement on the solvency ratios will go a long way towards enabling the University to withstand any resulting potential financial impact.



• Liquidity

The working capital ratio indicates that the current liabilities are covered 0,74 times by the current assets (2022: 0,42 times and 2021: 0,40 times). If the analysis is expressed in rand value, the current assets (excluding current portion of investments) increased by R332,2 million for the 2023 financial year, whilst current liabilities for the same period decreased by R32,0 million, this being the reason for the increase in the working capital ratio compared to 2022. This is due to the decrease of R64,3 million in the current portion of deferred state grant (R162,6 million or 15,0% of total current liabilities) relating to infrastructure grants. For 2022 this portion of deferred income represented 20,4% (2021: 14,5%) or R226,9 million (2021: R156,1 million) of total current liabilities.



Funds invested in highly liquid financial instruments for 2023 improved to R7 641,0 million (2022: R7 220,3 million and 2021: R6 445,6 million), representing an increase of 5,8% from 2022 to 2023, compared to the movement from 2021 to 2022, where funds increased by 12,0%. This total includes the amount of R1 092,1 million as the current portion of investments for 2023 (2022: R 705,9 million and 2021: R1 904,9 million).

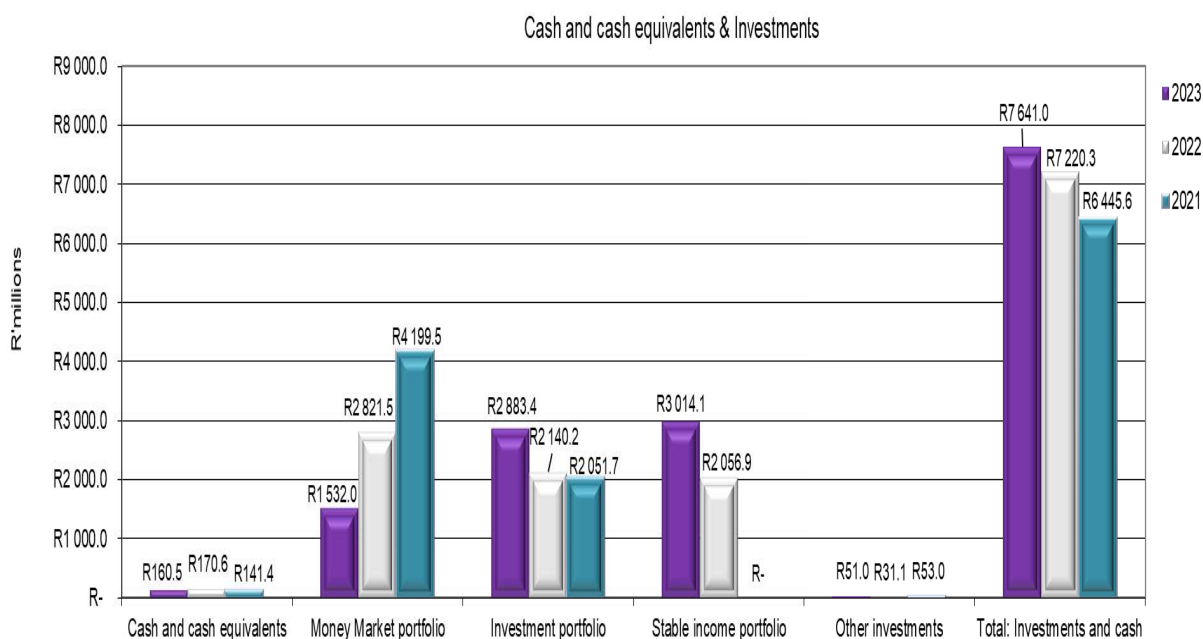
	2023	2022	2021
	R million	R million	R million
Cash and cash equivalents	160,5	170,6	141,4
Money market portfolio (NCDs)	1 532,0	2 821,5	4 199,5
Broker portfolio (listed shares, bonds and unit trusts)	2 883,4	2 140,2	2 051,7
Stable income portfolio	3 014,1	2 056,9	0,0
Other investments (unlisted, including associates)	51,0	31,1	53,0
Total investments and cash	7 641,0	7 220,3	6 445,6

The cash-flow situation is monitored closely in order to achieve an optimal balance between long-term and short-term investments to optimise investment income without compromising cash flow for operational needs.

• Cash flow

The University generated a surplus of R1 062,5 million for the 2023 financial year (2022: R1 220,6 million and 2021: R1 422,6 million), while the net cash flow amount generated from operating activities was R155,4 million (2022: R720,3 million and 2021: R723,3 million). The total net cash flow decreased by R10,1 million in 2023, taking into account inter alia R664,2 million of net investment income, transfers of cash and cash equivalents to longer term investments (R342,0 million), investment in property, plant and equipment (R530,9 million) and an R0,1 million increase in deferred state grant. For the 2022 financial year the net cash flow increased by R29,2 million and for 2021 it decreased by R143,9 million.

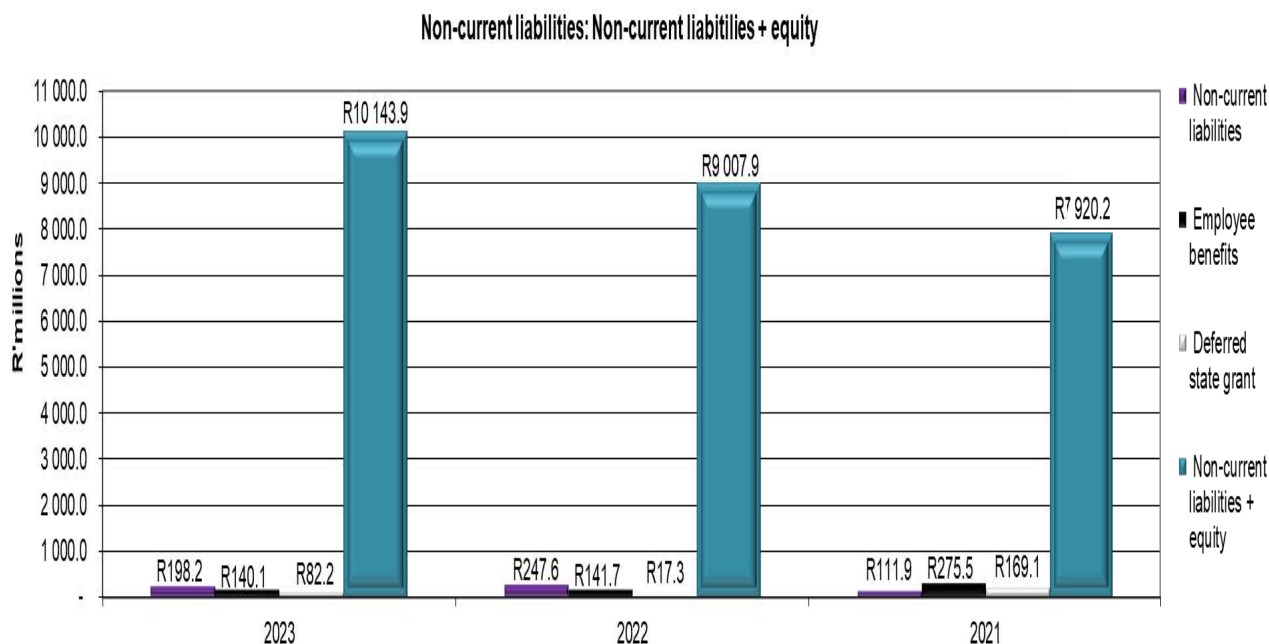
The University manages and plans cash flow needs with great caution, even more so in response to the medium to long-term financial impact of COVID-19. Constant effective decision-making resulted in the University currently being in a viable cash-flow situation. Although 16,4% of the money market investment portfolio have maturity dates during 2024 and are shown as part of current assets, the nature and purpose of these investments are long-term, focusing on investments with a period of 12 months and longer to optimise returns. Funds are reinvested as they become available on maturity, taking cash flow needs into consideration.



• Gearing ratios

Gearing ratios analyse the extent to which long-term finance is used as a source of financing. It is a longer-term indication of liquidity.

Non-current liabilities represent 4,1% of total funds employed (2022: 4,5% and 2021: 7,0%). This ratio decreased as equity increased, compared to decreasing borrowing commitments, employee benefits and lease liabilities. Infrastructure grant amounts expected to be utilised in 2024 were transferred to current liabilities.



- Conclusion**

With regard to the University as a tertiary institution with the core business of teaching-learning, research and implementation of expertise (including community service), the NWU again added material value to the economy, and was able to achieve its financial goals. In this regard the following can be highlighted:

- NWU still provides affordable higher education.
- 12 358 students received degrees and diplomas during 2023.
- The University remains committed to supporting and enhancing academic performance and awarded bursaries in the amount of R250,1 million from own funds to students.
- The NWU's Financial Aid offices administered a total of R2,8 billion in bursary funds during 2023.
- The cash flow investment in property, plant and equipment amounted to R530,9 million (2022: R416,0 million and 2021: R353,4 million), which is attributable to DHET infrastructure and efficiency funding, as well as funding from own reserves. (Not all projects have been completed, resulting in some macro-maintenance being carried forward to 2024). Total assets increased by 10,9% (2022: 12,5% and 2021: 14,9%).
- The stabilising of available reserves at 59,8% of total equity from a very low base at the end of 2014 (although some spending against this reserve is to be expected, as explained above).
- The maintaining of a sound solvency position and optimal liquidity levels during the 2023 financial year to ensure that the NWU remains a going concern.

Council and Management are committed to maintaining this financial health, despite dependency on state subsidies and tuition fee-related income, with the latter income totalling 71,1% of turnover (2022: 76,2% and 2021: 77,1%). The increase in NSFAS-funded students highlights this dependency. NWU's financial results from recent years provide a solid foundation for navigating future uncertainties and challenges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mabe', with a stylized, circular flourish at the beginning.

MR CLEMENT MABE
CHAIRPERSON: FINANCE COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beer', with a stylized, circular flourish at the beginning.

MS ELMARIE DE BEER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: FINANCE AND FACILITIES





Established: 1 January 2004 (by merger)

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Auditor

Nexia SAB&T
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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND APPROVAL OF THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Council is ultimately responsible for the preparation, integrity and objectivity of the consolidated financial statements and related financial information included in this report, which is a fair presentation of the activities of the University at the end of the financial year. In order to meet this responsibility, they are assisted by management, the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee of the Council, the Finance Committee of the Council, and the internal auditors of the University. Both the internal and external auditors have unrestricted access to all documents, minutes, records and information and no limitations have been placed on the audits. The external auditor is responsible for reporting on the consolidated financial statements. Internal controls and administrative systems, which have been designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the integrity of the financial statements and that assets have been protected and transactions carried out in terms of the University's policies and procedures, are in place and are properly maintained on a cost-effective basis.

The consolidated financial statements comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), including full and responsible disclosure in accordance with the University's accounting policies and in the manner required by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997 (as amended)). The consolidated financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis and all indications are that the University will continue in existence for the foreseeable future. The accounting policies have been applied consistently and are supported by reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates.

The consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 as set out on pages 12 to 60 have been approved and authorised by the Council on 13 June 2024 and are signed on behalf of the Council by:

**CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL****VICE-CHANCELLOR****EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: FINANCE AND FACILITIES**

Independent auditor's report to the Council of North-West University and the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Report on the audit of the consolidated financial statements

Opinion

1. We have audited the consolidated financial statements of the North-West University and its subsidiaries (the group) set out on pages 12 to 60 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2023, consolidated statement of comprehensive income, consolidated statement of changes in equity and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, as well as notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.
2. In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the North-West University and its subsidiaries (the group) as of 31 December 2023 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no 101 of 1997.

Basis for opinion

3. We conducted our audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the consolidated financial statements section of our report.
4. We are independent of the group in accordance with the *Code of professional conduct for auditors* of the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in South Africa. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IRBA code and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits in South Africa. The IRBA code is consistent with the corresponding sections of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *International code of ethics for professional accountants (including International Independence Standards)*.
5. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of matter

6. We draw attention to the matter below. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Material Impairments – Trade and other receivables

7. As disclosed in note 12 to the financial statements, a material impairment to the amount of R81 681 000 (2022: R34 350 000) was incurred.

Responsibilities of Council for the consolidated financial statements

8. The council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no. 101 of 1997 and for such internal control as the council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
9. In preparing the consolidated financial statements, the council is responsible for assessing the group's ability to continue as a going concern; disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern; and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the accounting authority either intends to liquidate the group or to cease operations or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the consolidated financial statements

10. Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.
11. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the consolidated financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

12. In accordance with the Public Audit Act 25 of 2004 (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, we must audit and report on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance against predetermined objectives for selected objectives presented in the annual performance report. The council is responsible for the preparation of the annual performance report.
13. We selected the following objectives presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 31 December 2023 for auditing. We selected objectives that measures the University's performance on its primary mandated functions and that are of significant national, community or public interest.

Objective	Page numbers	Purpose
Promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions.	141	Promote excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions
Intensify research and innovation.	142	Strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation

Objective	Page numbers	Purpose
Develop a clearly differentiated student value proposition.	142	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
Develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff and student profile	143	Attract, develop and retain excellent staff and create an equitable staff profile

14. We evaluated the reported performance information for the selected objectives against the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting framework, as defined in the general notice. When an annual performance report is prepared using these criteria, it provides useful and reliable information and insights to users on the University's planning and delivery on its mandate and objectives.

15. We performed procedures to test whether:

- the indicators used for planning and reporting on performance can be linked directly to the University's mandate and the achievement of its planned objectives
- the indicators are well defined and verifiable to ensure that they are easy to understand and apply consistently and that I can confirm the methods and processes to be used for measuring achievements
- the targets can be linked directly to the achievement of the indicators and are specific, time bound and measurable to ensure that it is easy to understand what should be delivered and by when, the required level of performance as well as how performance will be evaluated
- the indicators and targets reported on in the annual performance report are the same as what was committed to in the approved initial or revised planning documents
- the reported performance information is presented in the annual performance report in the prescribed manner
- there is adequate supporting evidence for the achievements reported and for the reasons provided for any over- or underachievement of targets.

16. We performed the procedures for the purpose of reporting material findings only; and not to express an assurance opinion.

17. We did not identify any material findings on the reported performance information for the selected objectives.

Other matter

18. We draw attention to the matter below.

Achievement of planned targets

19. The annual performance report includes information on reported achievements against planned targets and provides explanations for over- and underachievement. This information should be considered in the context of the material findings on the reported performance information.

Report on compliance with legislation

20. In accordance with the PAA and the general notice issued in terms thereof, we must audit and report on compliance with applicable legislation relating to financial matters, financial management and other related matters. The council is responsible for the University's compliance with legislation.
21. We performed procedures to test compliance with selected requirements in key legislation in accordance with the AGSA findings engagement methodology. This engagement is not an assurance engagement. Accordingly, we do not express an assurance opinion or conclusion.
22. Through an established AGSA process, we selected requirements in key legislation for compliance testing that are relevant to the financial and performance management of the University, clear to allow consistent measurement and evaluation, while also sufficiently detailed and readily available to report in an understandable manner. The selected legislative requirements are included in the annexure to this auditor's report.
23. We did not identify any material non-compliance with the selected legislative requirements.

Other information in the annual report

24. The council is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report. The other information does not include the consolidated financial statements, the auditor's report and those selected objectives presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported on in this auditor's report.
25. Our opinion on the financial statements and our findings on the reported performance information and the report on compliance with legislation do not cover the other information and we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion on it.
26. In connection with our audit, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the consolidated financial statements and the selected objectives presented in the annual performance report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.
27. If based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement in this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Internal control deficiencies

28. We considered internal control relevant to our audit of the consolidated financial statements, annual performance report and compliance with applicable legislation; however, our objective was not to express any form of assurance on it.
29. We did not identify any significant deficiencies in internal control.

Other reports

30. We draw attention to the following engagements conducted by various parties. These reports did not form part of our opinion on the financial statements or our findings on the reported performance information or compliance with legislation.

Audit-related services

31. We issued the following agreed-upon procedures engagement reports on the funding received by the University:

Completed:

Engagement Name	Description of engagement	Period covered Reporting	Reporting Date
Department of Higher Education and Training - Infrastructure Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the progress reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training, by agreeing expenditure to supporting documentation	1 January 2023 – 31 December for 2023	29 February 2024
Department of Art and Culture - Language grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of bursary report on bursaries paid in relation to the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture.	1 January 2023 – 31 December for 2023	11 March 2024
National Research Fund Projects	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure report to the National Research Fund and scholarship grant allocations.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	16 April 2024
University Capacity Development Programme Grant – BRICS Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the qualitative report to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	21 March 2024
University Capacity Development Programme Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the progress reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	20 May 2024
University Staff Doctoral Programme	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the progress reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	24 May 2024
University Capacity Development Programme Grant – University Led Collaborative projects	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the progress reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	19 April 2024
University Capacity Development Programme Grant - Nationally Led: Future Professors Programme	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the progress reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	19 April 2024
Publications and Submission of Articles	Agreement of the 2023 Research Articles Submission to supporting journals and publications.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	15 May 2024
Department of Science and Innovation - Water Research HySA	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the financial income and expenditure statements to the Department of Science and Innovation.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	31 May 2024

Engagement Name	Description of engagement	Period covered Reporting	Reporting Date
Department of Higher Education and Training - Clinical Training grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	24 May 2024
Veterinary Science Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	31 May 2024
Department of Higher Education and Training Foundation Programmes Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	24 May 2024
Department of Education and Training – nGap Grant	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	24 May 2024
Department of Education and Training - NESP	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024	24 May 2024
Department of Education and Training - Clinical enrolments	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the enrolments data to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	22 June 2024
Department of Education and Training Veterinary Science enrolments	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in the submission of the enrolments data to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	22 June 2024
DHET Excel (Fin. Data)	The objective of the audit is to perform procedures to ensure compliance with the reporting requirements regarding the financial data returns of North West University for the period of 31 December 2023.	1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023	28 June 2024

In progress:

Engagement Name	Description of engagement	Period covered Reporting	Reporting Due Date
HEMIS Data	The objective of the audit is to assist the University in evaluating the accuracy and validity of the student, staff and academic program data the submission of the expenditure reports to the Department of Higher Education and Training.	1 January 2023 - 31 December 2023	31/07/2024

32. In terms of the IRBA rule published in Government Gazette No. 39475 dated 4 December 2015, we report that Nexia SAB&T has been the auditor of North-West University for 1 year.

Nexia SAB&T

Nexia SAB&T

Gerrit Janse van Vuuren CA (SA)

Director

Registered Auditor

28 June 2024

Rustenburg

Annexure to the auditor's report

The annexure includes the following:

- the auditor's responsibility for the audit
- the selected legislative requirements for compliance testing.

Auditor's responsibility for the audit

Professional judgement and professional scepticism

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout our audit of the consolidated financial statements and the procedures performed on reported performance information for selected objectives and on the University's compliance with selected requirements in key legislation.

Financial statements

In addition to our responsibility for the audit of the consolidated financial statements as described in this auditor's report, we are also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made.
- conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements. We also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists relating to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the University and its subsidiaries to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements about the material uncertainty or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion on the consolidated financial statements. Our conclusions are based on the information available to us at the date of this auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a University to cease operating as a going concern
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and determine whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

Communication with those charged with governance

We communicate with the accounting authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the accounting authority with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to have a bearing on our independence and, where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

Compliance with legislation – selected legislative requirements

1. The selected legislative requirements are as follows:

Legislation	Sections or regulations
Higher Education Act of South Africa, Act no 101 of 1997	Section 34(4)(a) Section 34(4)(b) Section 34(5) Section 34(6) Section 27(7)(c) Section 27(7)(e) & s27(7)(A)-(C) Section 20(5) Section 40(3)(a)(i) Section 40(3)(a)(ii) Section 40(3)(a)(iii)
Regulations for Reporting by Higher Education Institutions	Section 7(4)(b)(xii) Section 4(1)-(2) Section 5(1) Section 5(2)(a)(d)(g)(m) Section 6(2) Section 6(2)(d) Section 6(2)(3)
Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act	Section 34(1)

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	NOTES	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
ASSETS		11,226,945	10,122,930
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		9,337,521	8,951,754
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (PPE)	6a, 6b	2,433,747	2,147,430
INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	7	16,056	16,543
INTANGIBLE ASSETS	8	7,921	6,320
INVESTMENTS	9	6,388,373	6,343,809
DEFERRED TAX ASSET	30	386	133
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	16	491,038	437,519
CURRENT ASSETS		1,889,424	1,171,176
INVENTORIES	11	66,567	36,839
TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES	12	570,256	257,828
INCOME TAX RECEIVABLE	30	2	0
CURRENT PORTION OF INVESTMENTS	9	1,092,116	705,895
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	13	160,483	170,614
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		11,226,945	10,122,931
EQUITY	14	9,723,406	8,601,351
NON-DISTRIBUTABLE RESERVES		2,419,468	1,979,594
FIXED ASSET RESERVE FUND (PPE)		2,186,043	1,850,399
UNREALISED FAIR VALUE ADJUSTMENT RESERVE		233,425	129,195
RESERVE FUNDS		7,303,150	6,620,930
RESTRICTED USE FUNDS		558,119	535,850
STUDENT AND STAFF ACCOMMODATION FUNDS		293,785	262,616
DONATIONS AND SIMILAR FUNDS		68,147	59,552
RESEARCH AND OTHER (CONTRACTS) FUNDS		196,187	213,682
NWU PENSION FUND AND DISABILITY FUND		491,038	437,519
HELD FOR INVESTMENT IN PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		436,002	38,708
UNRESTRICTED RESERVE FUNDS - EDUCATION AND GENERAL		38,195	36,648
DESIGNATED RESERVE FUNDS - EDUCATION AND GENERAL		5,779,796	5,572,205
NON-CONTROLLING INTERESTS		788	827
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		420,531	406,575
BORROWINGS - INTEREST-BEARING	15	198,201	210,743
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	16	140,082	141,658
DEFERRED STATE GRANT	17	82,248	17,344
LEASE LIABILITIES	6b	0	36,830
CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,083,008	1,115,004
CURRENT PORTION OF BORROWINGS - INTEREST-BEARING	15	12,542	3,273
CURRENT PORTION OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	16	309,933	259,172
CURRENT PORTION OF DEFERRED STATE GRANT	17	162,622	226,936
CURRENT PORTION OF LEASE LIABILITIES	6b	42,130	51,632
TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES	18	382,362	463,354
INCOME RECEIVED IN ADVANCE	19	119,639	99,818
NET CONTRACT LIABILITIES	20	53,775	10,814
INCOME TAX PAYABLE	30	5	5

* Amounts less than R1 000 are disclosed as Rnil due to rounding down to the nearest thousand.

The notes on pages 17 to 60 are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

(as required by Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997, as amended))

		EDUCATIONAL & GENERAL			STUDENT AND STAFF ACCOMMO- DATION: RESTRICTED	2023 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
	NOTES	COUNCIL- CONTROLLED: UNRESTRICTED OR DESIGNATED R'000	SPECIFICALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES: RESTRICTED R'000	SUB-TOTAL R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
RECURRING ITEMS		894,362	34,711	929,073	45,534	974,607	1,272,260
INCOME		5,463,120	289,009	5,752,129	492,178	6,244,307	5,743,985
STATE APPROPRIATIONS - SUBSIDIES AND GRANTS	21	2,450,818	0	2,450,818	0	2,450,818	2,471,598
TUITION AND OTHER FEES	22	2,060,957	0	2,060,957	413,448	2,474,405	2,255,876
INCOME FROM CONTRACTS	22	3,283	177,128	180,411	0	180,411	192,628
FOR RESEARCH		4,058	174,390	178,448	0	178,448	190,046
FOR OTHER ACTIVITIES		(775)	2,738	1,963	0	1,963	2,582
SALES OF GOODS & SERVICES	22	208,013	74,002	282,015	66,987	349,002	280,683
TOTAL REVENUE		4,723,071	251,130	4,974,201	480,435	5,454,637	5,200,785
OTHER INCOME		51,047	539	51,586	11,743	63,329	65,264
PRIVATE GIFTS AND GRANTS		20,043	14,242	34,285	0	34,285	37,732
INVESTMENT INCOME	25.1	668,959	23,098	692,057	0	692,057	440,204
EXPENDITURE		4,568,758	254,298	4,823,056	446,644	5,269,700	4,471,725
PERSONNEL REMUNERATION	23	2,973,840	75,697	3,049,537	58,438	3,107,975	2,717,067
ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL		1,678,351	26,080	1,704,431	0	1,704,431	1,495,361
OTHER PERSONNEL		1,291,003	49,617	1,340,620	58,438	1,399,058	1,218,777
IAS19 - ADJUSTMENTS (EMPLOYEE BENEFITS)		4,486	0	4,486	0	4,486	2,929
OTHER CURRENT OPERATING EXPENSES	24	1,301,397	171,690	1,473,087	319,106	1,792,193	1,491,724
NET IMPAIRMENT LOSSES ON FINANCIAL ASSETS	12	89,544	6,322	95,866	(1)	95,865	44,857
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE EXPENSED	29	4,168	0	4,168	0	4,168	3,846
DEPRECIATION	6a, 6b, 7	194,926	554	195,480	45,448	240,928	204,971
AMORTISATION	8	689	0	689	0	689	483
SUB-TOTAL		4,564,564	254,263	4,818,827	422,991	5,241,818	4,462,948
FINANCE CHARGES	26	4,194	35	4,229	23,653	27,882	8,777
NON-RECURRING ITEMS		86,424	1,067	87,491	124	87,615	(51,630)
INCOME		104,230	1,067	105,297	124	105,421	2,266
PROFIT ON DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	25.2	0	1,067	1,067	124	1,191	118
PROFIT ON INVESTMENTS		0	0	0	0	0	2,148
NET FAIR VALUE GAIN ON FINANCIAL ASSETS THROUGH PROFIT OR LOSS	9.1	104,230	0	104,230	0	104,230	0
EXPENDITURE		17,806	0	17,806	0	17,806	53,896
LOSS ON DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	25.2	2,319	0	2,319	0	2,319	285
LOSS ON INVESTMENTS		15,487	0	15,487	0	15,487	0
NET FAIR VALUE LOSS ON FINANCIAL ASSETS THROUGH PROFIT OR LOSS	9.1	0	0	0	0	0	53,611
NET SURPLUS BEFORE INCOME TAX		980,786	35,778	1,016,564	45,658	1,062,222	1,220,630
INCOME TAX EXPENSE	30	(252)	0	(252)	0	(252)	58
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		981,038	35,778	1,016,816	45,658	1,062,474	1,220,572

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023 (continued)**

(as required by Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997, as amended))

	NOTES	EDUCATIONAL & GENERAL			STUDENT & STAFF ACCOMMO- DATION: RESTRICTED R'000	2023 TOTAL R'000	2022 TOTAL R'000
		COUNCIL- CONTROLLED: UNRESTRICTED OR DESIGNATED R'000	SPECIFICALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES: RESTRICTED R'000	SUB-TOTAL R'000			
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		981,038	35,778	1,016,816	45,658	1,062,474	1,220,572
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (OCI)		59,581	0	59,581	0	59,581	16,997
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit		59,581	0	59,581	0	59,581	16,997
Remeasurements of employee benefit obligations							
PENSION FUND - SURPLUS	16.1	53,519	0	53,519	0	53,519	8,060
DISABILITY RESERVE FUND - SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	16.2	1,275	0	1,275	0	1,275	(14)
HEALTH CARE (MEDICAL) - SURPLUS	16.3	4,787	0	4,787	0	4,787	8,951
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		<u>1,040,619</u>	<u>35,778</u>	<u>1,076,397</u>	<u>45,658</u>	<u>1,122,055</u>	<u>1,237,569</u>
Surplus for the year attributable to:							
- North-West University		981,077	35,778	1,016,855	45,658	1,062,513	1,220,574
- Non-controlling interests		(39)	0	(39)	0	(39)	(2)
		<u>981,038</u>	<u>35,778</u>	<u>1,016,816</u>	<u>45,658</u>	<u>1,062,474</u>	<u>1,220,572</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to:							
- North-West University		1,040,658	35,778	1,076,436	45,658	1,122,094	1,237,571
- Non-controlling shareholders		(39)	0	(39)	0	(39)	(2)
		<u>1,040,619</u>	<u>35,778</u>	<u>1,076,397</u>	<u>45,658</u>	<u>1,122,055</u>	<u>1,237,569</u>

The notes on pages 17 to 60 are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

DESCRIPTION	UNRESTRICTED RESERVE FUNDS: EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL R'000	DESIGNATED RESERVE FUNDS: EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL R'000	SUB-TOTAL A R'000	RESTRICTED RESERVE FUNDS: DONATIONS AND SIMILAR FUNDS R'000	RESTRICTED RESERVE FUNDS: RESEARCH AND OTHER (CONTRACTS) R'000	SUB-TOTAL B R'000	RESTRICTED RESERVE FUNDS: STUDENT AND STAFF ACCOM- MODATION R'000	FIXED ASSET RESERVE FUND (PPE) R'000	HELD FOR INVESTMENT IN PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT R'000	UNREALISED FAIR VALUE ADJUSTMENT RESERVE R'000	NWU PENSION FUND AND DISABILITY FUND R'000	SUB-TOTAL C R'000	TOTAL R'000	NON- CONTROLLING INTEREST R'000	TOTAL EQUITY R'000
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2021 (note 14)	32,496	4,452,655	4,485,151	72,286	207,292	279,578	246,681	1,697,190	41,525	182,806	429,459	2,598,224	7,362,954	829	7,363,782
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	0	1,194,404	1,194,404	(7,269)	41,801	34,532	54,184	0	0	(53,611)	8,060	8,633	1,237,569	0	1,237,569
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	0	1,185,453	1,185,453	(7,269)	41,801	34,532	54,184	0	0	(53,611)	14	587	1,220,572	0	1,220,572
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	0	8,951	8,951	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,046	8,046	16,997	0	16,997
TRANSFERS	4,152	(74,854)	(70,702)	(5,465)	(35,411)	(40,876)	(38,249)	153,209	(2,817)	0	0	111,580	2	(2)	(0)
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2022 (note 14)	36,648	5,572,205	5,608,853	59,552	213,682	273,234	262,616	1,850,399	38,708	129,195	437,519	2,718,437	8,600,524	827	8,601,351
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	0	882,870	882,870	5,574	30,204	35,778	45,658	0	0	104,230	53,519	203,407	1,122,055	0	1,122,055
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	0	878,083	878,083	5,574	30,204	35,778	45,658	0	0	104,230	(1,275)	148,613	1,062,474	0	1,062,474
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		4,787	4,787			0					54,794	54,794	59,581	0	59,581
TRANSFERS	1,547	(675,279)	(673,732)	3,021	(47,699)	(44,678)	(14,489)	335,643	397,294	0	0	718,449	39	(39)	0
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2023 (note 14)	38,195	5,779,796	5,817,991	68,147	196,187	264,334	293,785	2,186,043	436,002	233,425	491,038	3,640,293	9,722,618	788	9,723,406

The notes on pages 17 to 60 are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	NOTE	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	<u>27</u>	155,398	720,275
INVESTMENT INCOME LESS COST OF FINANCE		664,175	431,427
INTEREST RECEIVED	25	679,847	427,789
DIVIDENDS RECEIVED	25	12,210	12,415
INTEREST PAID	26	(27,882)	(8,777)
NET CASH GENERATED FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		819,573	1,151,702
CASH FLOWS UTILISED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(780,099)	(1,184,272)
PURCHASES OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	<u>6a</u>	(530,903)	(416,034)
PROCEEDS FROM SALE OF PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		3,018	1,882
RECEIVED DEFERRED STATE GRANT		92,119	29,754
INCREASE IN INTANGIBLE ASSETS (internally generated)	8	(2,290)	(2,294)
PROCEEDS ON INVESTMENTS		(15,487)	2,148
WITHDRAWALS FROM INVESTMENTS		5,082,673	5,676,600
PURCHASES OF INVESTMENTS		(5,409,229)	(6,476,328)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		(49,605)	61,738
PROCEEDS FROM INTEREST-BEARING BORROWINGS	15	0	102,154
PAYMENTS OF INTEREST-BEARING BORROWINGS	15	(3,273)	0
PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF LEASE PAYMENTS	<u>6b</u>	(46,332)	(40,416)
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		(10,131)	29,168
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT BEGINNING OF THE YEAR		170,614	141,446
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF THE YEAR	13	160,483	170,614

The notes on pages 17 to 60 are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY

1.1 Legal persona and country of registration

The University is a legal person in the Republic of South Africa and is regulated by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended by Act 54 of 2000.

1.2 Nature of business, operations and main activities

The operations and main activities of the University are education, research and community service, based on its vision and mission.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these consolidated financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

2.1 Basis of preparation

These consolidated financial statements are presented in rand (R) (rounded off to the nearest thousand, unless otherwise indicated), which is the University's functional currency, and are prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The financial statements comply with IFRS as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). The consolidated financial statements are also prepared in accordance with the requirements set by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997 (as amended)). Council approved the consolidated financial statements on 13 June 2024.

The consolidated financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, except for:

- electing to carry financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- and
- valuing post-employment and disability benefit obligations by using the projected unit credit method.

Management is of the opinion that the University has adequate resources to continue with operational activities for the foreseeable future and therefore will continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its consolidated financial statements.

The preparation of consolidated financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the consolidated financial statements, are disclosed in note 4.

Since the financial amounts relating to subsidiaries are insignificant in relation to the consolidated financial accounts, only the consolidated financial statements are presented in the annual report.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.1 Basis of preparation (continued)

(a) *Standards, amendments and interpretations effective in 2023 and adopted by the University*

- **Definition of Accounting Estimates – Amendments to IAS 8**

The amendment to **IAS 8, 'Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors'**, clarifies how companies should distinguish changes in accounting policies from changes in accounting estimates. The distinction is important, because changes in accounting estimates are applied prospectively to future transactions and other future events, but changes in accounting policies are generally applied retrospectively to past transactions and other past events as well as to the current period.

- **Disclosure of Accounting Policies– Amendments to IAS 1**

The IASB amended **IAS 1, 'Presentation of Financial Statements'**, to require entities to disclose their *material* rather than their *significant* accounting policies. The amendments define what is 'material accounting policy information' and explain how to identify when accounting policy information is material. They further clarify that immaterial accounting policy information does not need to be disclosed. If it is disclosed, it should not obscure material accounting information.

To support this amendment, the IASB also amended IFRS Practice Statement 2, 'Making Materiality Judgements', to provide guidance on how to apply the concept of materiality to accounting policy disclosures.

These amendments did not have a significant impact on the University during the current reporting period.

2.2 Basis of consolidation

All the different components, including the institutes, bureaux, companies and educational units of the University, as well as the results, assets and liabilities of the Mahikeng, Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark Campuses, are included in the consolidated financial statements.

Subsidiaries are entities controlled by the University. The University controls an entity when it is exposed to, or has rights to, variable returns from its involvement with the entity and has the ability to affect those returns through its power over the entity.

Subsidiaries are consolidated from the date on which control commences until the date on which control ceases.

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared using uniform accounting policies for similar transactions and other events in similar circumstances.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.2 Basis of consolidation (continued)

(a) Subsidiaries

When the University loses control over a subsidiary, it derecognises the assets and liabilities of the subsidiary, as well as any non-controlling interests (NCI) and other components of equity. Any resulting gain or loss is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

The University applies the acquisition method to account for business combinations. The consideration transferred for the acquisition of a subsidiary is the fair values of the assets transferred, the liabilities assumed towards the former owners of the acquiree and the equity interests issued. The consideration does not include amounts related to the settlement of pre-existing relationships. The consideration transferred includes the fair value of any asset or liability resulting from a contingent consideration arrangement.

Subsequent changes in the fair value of the contingent consideration are recognised in surplus or deficit. Identifiable assets acquired and liabilities and contingent liabilities assumed in a business combination are measured initially at their fair values at the acquisition date.

The University recognises any non-controlling interest in the acquiree on an acquisition-by-acquisition basis, either at fair value or at the non-controlling interest's proportionate share of the recognised amounts of the acquiree's identifiable net assets.

Acquisition-related costs are expensed as incurred.

Goodwill is initially measured as the excess of the aggregate of the consideration transferred and the fair value of the non-controlling interest over the net identifiable assets acquired and liabilities assumed. If this consideration is lower than the fair value of the net assets of the subsidiary acquired, the gain on a purchase is recognised immediately as a surplus.

Accounting policies of subsidiaries have been changed where necessary to ensure consistency with the policies adopted by the University.

(b) Transactions eliminated on consolidation

Inter-company transactions, balances, income and expenses on transactions are eliminated. Surpluses and deficits resulting from inter-company transactions that are recognised in assets are also eliminated.

2.3 Property, plant and equipment (PPE)

2.3.1 Property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses, except for donations of assets, which are initially recorded at fair value less depreciation and impairment. Fair value is considered as deemed cost. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Subsequent costs are included in an asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the University and the cost of the item can be measured reliably (macro maintenance). The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance not recognised as macro maintenance are charged to surplus or deficit during the financial period in which they are incurred.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.2 Basis of consolidation (continued)

2.3 Property, plant and equipment (PPE) (continued)

2.3.2 Land and buildings comprise mainly lecture halls, laboratories, hostels and administrative buildings. Land and buildings are not depreciated. The useful life of buildings is considered to be indefinite due to building maintenance done according to the ten-year macro maintenance rolling plan. However, the macro maintenance included in the carrying amount of land and buildings is depreciated using the straight line method. Buildings still under construction at year end are included at cost. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight-line method to depreciate the depreciable amount, which is the difference between their cost and their residual values, over their estimated useful lives, as referred to below.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount (note 2.6).

Gains and losses on disposals of property, plant and equipment are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised in surplus or deficit.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE PER ANNUM	USEFUL LIFE
Buildings and other improvements	Indefinite	The useful life is estimated as indefinite.
(macro maintenance)	10,00%	The useful life is estimated at 10 years.
Computer equipment	20,0%–33,3%	The useful life is estimated at 3 to 5 years.
Computer equipment less than R5 000	33,3%	The useful life is estimated at 3 years.
Servers and printers	20,0%	The useful life is estimated at 5 years.
Laboratory equipment	15,0%	The useful life is estimated at 6,67 years.
Specialised equipment	4,0%–20,0%	The useful life is estimated at a range between 5 and 25 years.
Furniture	5,0%–10,0%	The useful life is estimated at a range between 10 and 20 years.
Vehicles	10,0%–20,0%	The residual value of the vehicle pool is estimated at 50% after 5 years for passenger vehicles, which is the average replacement term of vehicles and 10 years for commercial vehicles
Synthetic hockey field (carpet)	12,5%	The useful life is estimated at 8 years.
Synthetic hockey field (base)	2,0%	The useful life is estimated at 50 years.
Low value assets	33,3%	The useful life is estimated at 3 years.
Right-of-use leased assets	50,0%–33,3%	Depreciated over the lease term.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.3 Property, plant and equipment (PPE) (continued)

2.3.3 Actual improvements to buildings are capitalised (macro maintenance) when it is probable that future economic benefits exceeding the originally estimated performance standard of the existing asset will flow to the business. Routine maintenance with regard to buildings and equipment is charged to surplus or deficit as incurred.

2.3.4 Costs relating to library books are written off in the year acquired. See note 29.

2.4 Investment properties

Investment properties, principally comprising land and buildings, are held for long-term capital appreciation and rental yields and are not occupied by the University. Investment properties are carried at cost less accumulated impairment losses and accumulated depreciation.

Depreciation on investment properties is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their cost less their residual value over the estimated useful life of 50 years.

2.5 Intangible assets

Goodwill

Goodwill arises on the acquisition of subsidiaries and represents the excess of the consideration transferred over the University's interest in net fair value of the identifiable assets, liabilities and contingent liabilities of the acquiree and the fair value of the non-controlling interest in the acquiree.

For the purpose of impairment testing, goodwill acquired is allocated to each of the cash-generating units (CGU's) that is expected to benefit from the acquisition or business combination. Each unit to which the goodwill is allocated represents the lowest level within the entity at which the goodwill is monitored for internal management purposes. Goodwill is monitored at the operating segment level.

Separately recognised goodwill is carried at cost less impairment losses and goodwill impairment reviews are undertaken annually. The carrying value of goodwill is compared to the recoverable amount, which is the higher of the CGU's value in use and its fair value less costs of disposal. Any impairment is recognised immediately as an expense and is not subsequently reversed.

Computer software

Computer software is initially recognised at cost and subsequently at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Amortisation is provided to write down intangible assets, on a straight-line basis, over an average useful life of 10 years. The residual value, amortisation period and amortisation method are reassessed when there is an indication that there is a change from the previous estimates.

Computer software is the result of consolidation of subsidiaries.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.6 Impairment of non-financial assets

Intangible assets not ready for use are not subject to amortisation and are tested annually for impairment. Assets that are subject to depreciation or amortisation are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable.

An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less cost of disposal and its value in use. For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are largely independent cash flows (cash-generating units).

Impairment losses are recognised in surplus or deficit in the period in which the impairment loss occurs. Prior periods' impairments of non-financial assets (other than goodwill) are reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date. An impairment loss is reversed only to the extent that the asset's carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined, net of depreciation or amortisation, if no impairment loss had been recognised.

2.7 Foreign currency translation

Functional and presentation currency

Items included in the financial statements of each of the University's entities are measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which the entity operates ('the functional currency').

Transactions and balances

Foreign currency transactions are translated into the functional currency using the exchange rates prevailing at the dates of the transactions or valuation where items are remeasured. Foreign exchange gains and losses resulting from the settlement of such transactions and from the translation of monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies at year-end exchange rates are recognised in surplus or deficit.

Foreign exchange gains and losses that relate to borrowings and cash and cash equivalents are presented in the statement of comprehensive income within 'finance income or cost'. All other foreign exchange gains and losses are presented in the statement of comprehensive income within 'other (losses)/gains'.

Translation differences on non-monetary financial assets and liabilities, such as equities held at fair value through profit or loss, are recognised in surplus or deficit as part of the fair value gain or loss.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.8 Investments and other financial assets

(i) Classification

The University classifies its financial assets in the following measurement categories:

- those to be measured subsequently at fair value through profit or loss; and
- those to be subsequently measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on the University's business model for managing its financial assets and the contractual terms of the cash flows.

For assets measured at fair value, gains and losses will be recorded in surplus or deficit.

The University reclassifies debt investments when and only when its business model for managing those assets changes.

(ii) Recognition and derecognition

Regular way purchases and sales of financial assets are recognised on trade-date, the date on which the University commits to purchase or sell the asset. Financial assets are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from the financial assets have expired or have been transferred and the University has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership.

(iii) Measurement

At initial recognition, the University measures a financial asset at its fair value plus, in the case of a financial asset not at fair value through profit or loss (FVPL), transaction costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition of the financial asset. Transaction costs of financial assets carried at FVPL are expensed in surplus or deficit.

Financial assets with embedded derivatives (when applicable) are considered in their entirety when determining whether their cash flows are solely payment of principal and interest.

Debt instruments

Subsequent measurement of debt instruments depends on the University's business model for managing the asset and the cash flow characteristics of the asset. There are two measurement categories into which the University classifies its debt instruments:

- **Amortised cost:** Assets that are held for collection of contractual cash flows, where those cash flows represent solely payments of principal and interest are measured at amortised cost. Interest income from these financial assets is included in finance income using the effective interest rate method. Any gain or loss arising on derecognition is recognised directly in surplus or deficit and presented in other gains/(losses) together with foreign exchange gains and losses;
- **FVPL:** Assets that do not meet the criteria for amortised cost or fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI) are measured at FVPL. A gain or loss on a debt investment that is subsequently measured at FVPL is recognised in surplus or deficit and presented net within other gains/(losses) in the period in which it arises.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.8 Investments and other financial assets (continued)

Equity instruments

The University subsequently measures all equity investments at fair value.

Changes in the fair value of financial assets at FVPL are recognised in other gains/(losses) in the statement of comprehensive income as applicable.

(iv) Impairment

The University assesses on a forward-looking basis the expected credit losses associated with its debt instruments carried at amortised cost. The impairment methodology applied depends on whether there has been a significant increase in credit risk.

2.9 Inventories

Inventories are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Net realisable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business, less the cost of completion and applicable variable selling expenses.

Cost of inventory is determined by the following methods:

- 2.9.1 Central warehouse, trade, cafeteria and residence inventories are stated at the weighted average cost.
- 2.9.2 Printed publications are stated at the weighted average purchase price.
- 2.9.3 Veterinary health inventory is stated at the weighted average purchase price.

Provision for obsolete and slow-moving inventory is made where applicable and recognised in surplus or deficit.

2.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and investments in money-market instruments with an initial maturity of less than three months. Cash and cash equivalents are short-term highly liquid instruments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash which are subject to insignificant changes in value.

2.11 Trade and other receivables

The University holds trade receivables with the objective of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore trade receivables are initially recognised at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less loss allowances.

The University applies the IFRS 9 simplified approach to measuring expected credit losses, which uses a lifetime expected credit loss allowance for all trade receivables and contract assets.

To measure the expected credit losses, trade receivables and contract assets have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due. Receivables held by the University do not have a significant financing component. The contract assets (which arise from research contracts) relate to unbilled work in progress and have substantially the same risk characteristics as the trade receivables for the same types of contracts. The University has therefore concluded that the expected loss rates for trade receivables are a reasonable approximation of the loss rates for the contract assets.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.11 Trade and other receivables (continued)

The expected loss rates for student debtors are based on the three payment collection profiles and the corresponding historical credit losses experienced. The historical loss rates are adjusted to reflect current and forward-looking information on macroeconomic factors affecting the ability of the cash-paying students to settle their accounts. The University uses a global rating as the probability of default (PD) to calculate the expected credit loss (ECL) for government funded student debt.

Sundry trade receivables and contract assets are written off when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery. Indicators that there is no reasonable expectation of recovery include, amongst others, the failure of a debtor to engage in a repayment plan with the University, and a failure to make contractual payments for a period of more than 90 days past due.

Impairment losses on trade receivables and contract assets are presented as net impairment losses within operating profit. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against the income from sale of goods and services and other income as bad debt recovered.

For other sundry receivables the University uses a global corporate average rating table to indicate the PD for government and similar-to-government debt. Interest rates applicable to unsecured loans are used for credit ratings regarding corporate customers. Outstanding debt of 90 days and older owed by individuals is expected to be impaired in full.

2.12 Equity

The accumulated funds are subdivided on the basis of their employability between restricted and unrestricted funds and comprise mainly the following:

Educational and General – Council-controlled – Unrestricted or designated

Unrestricted and designated funds relate to funds over which the Council of the University has absolute legal control and discretion. Designated funds are unrestricted income which the Council has designated for purposes that it deems fit. Decisions in this regard can always be changed at the discretion of Council. The Council-controlled segment predominantly represents the teaching component of the University.

It reflects the University's subsidised activities and comprises mainly formula subsidy, tuition fees, sales of goods and services and investment income. (Refer to sub-total A in the statement of changes in equity.)

Educational and General – Specifically funded activities – Restricted

Specifically purposed income (restricted) relates to funds that have been provided in terms of legally enforceable requirements of the purpose for which they may be expended. This may result from a contract, a condition of a grant, a bequest or a condition stipulated in a notarial deed of donation. Council has no discretion or control in this regard, but retains an oversight role in regard to ensuring that expenditure is in accordance with the mandate received from funders. (Refer to sub-total B in the statement of changes in equity.)

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.12 Equity (continued)

Included in sub-total C column of the statement of changes in equity are the following funds:

Student and staff accommodation – Restricted

The student housing segment relates to the provision of accommodation and accommodation-related services to students (residences). Income from this source (income stream 3) is shown separately in the statement of comprehensive income as per requirements of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Fixed asset reserve fund (PPE)

These are funds utilised and invested in property, plant and equipment (PPE).

Held for investment in property, plant and equipment

These funds are reserved for approved and already committed future investment in, or acquisition of PPE.

Unrealised fair value adjustment reserve fund

The University has elected to recognise unrealised changes in the fair value of investments at FVPL in a separate fund as these funds are not readily available for use.

NWU Pension Fund and Disability Fund

These funds equal the amount invested in employee benefits as reflected in non-current assets.

Other

Funds representing non-controlling interests, as a result of the consolidation of other entities, are shown separately in the last column of the statement of changes in equity.

2.13 Employee benefits

2.13.1 Pension

The University has a defined-contribution plan. A defined-contribution plan is a pension plan under which the University pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. The University has no legal or constructive obligations to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Retirement-benefit costs are provided in terms of a defined-contribution plan (North-West University Pension Fund). The North-West University Pension Fund had a fixed-contribution plan with a defined-benefit guarantee for all new enrolments since 1 January 1995 but this option was ring-fenced on 31 December 2003. A new option was introduced on 1 January 2004 for all new members of the fund and is a pure defined-contribution plan. The contributions to the defined-contribution plan are recognised as expenditure in the relevant period in which the liability arises, and the liability is thus matched with the benefit received by the employee during his/her working life.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.13 Employee benefits (continued)

2.13.2 Disability Reserve Fund

The disability benefits are provided in accordance with the rules of the North-West University Disability Reserve Fund, which was established on 1 January 1995.

The objective of the fund is to provide disability benefits to the members of the North-West University Pension Fund. After a waiting period of six months, a member who is disabled receives a disability income equal to 82,5% of the member's monthly salary, subject to a maximum disability income benefit as determined by the Trustees. The income is reduced by the member's contributions to the North-West University Pension Fund. The disability income will continue to the earlier of recovery or 65 years of age.

The asset recognised in the statement of financial position is the fair value of plan assets less the present value of the liabilities at the end of the reporting date. This is calculated annually by qualified independent actuaries using the projected unit credit method and discounting the estimated future cash outflows using interest rates of government corporate bonds that are denominated in rand (R).

Actuarial gains and losses arising from experienced adjustments, changes in actuarial assumptions, the effects of asset ceilings (if any, excluding interest) and amendments are charged or credited to other comprehensive income (OCI) in the period in which they occur.

2.13.3 Post-employment medical benefits

The University's net obligation in respect of post-employment medical benefits is calculated separately for each plan by estimating the amount of future benefit that employees have earned in the current and prior periods, discounting that amount and deducting the fair value of any plan assets.

The calculation of post-employment medical benefits is performed annually by a qualified actuary using the projected unit credit method. When the calculation results in a potential asset for the University, the recognised asset is limited to the present value of economic benefits available in the form of any future refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan. To calculate the present value of economic benefits, consideration is given to any applicable minimum funding requirements.

Remeasurements of the net post-employment medical benefit liability, which comprises actuarial gains and losses, the return on plan assets (excluding interest) and the effect of the asset ceiling (if any, excluding interest), are recognised immediately in OCI. The University determines the net interest expense (income) on the net post-employment medical benefit liability (asset) for the period by applying the discount rate used to measure the post-employment medical benefit obligation at the beginning of the annual period to the then net post-employment medical benefit liability (asset), taking into account any changes in the net post-employment medical benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contributions and benefit payments. Net interest expense and other expenses related to post-employment medical benefit plans are recognised in profit or loss in personnel remuneration costs.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.13 Employee benefits (continued)

2.13.3 Post-employment medical benefits (continued)

When the benefits of a plan are changed or when a plan is curtailed, the resulting change in benefit that relates to past service or the gain or loss on curtailment is recognised immediately in profit or loss. The University recognises gains and losses on the settlement of a post-employment medical benefit plan when the settlement occurs.

2.13.4 Termination benefits

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated by the University before the normal retirement date, or whenever an employee accepts voluntary redundancy in exchange for these benefits. The University recognises termination benefits when it is demonstrably committed to a termination when the University has a detailed formal plan to terminate the employment of current employees without possibility of withdrawal. In the case of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy, the termination benefits are measured based on the number of employees expected to accept the offer. Benefits falling due more than 12 months after the reporting date are discounted to their present value and are treated as other long-term employee benefits. Termination benefits settled within 12 months are treated as short-term employee benefits. Refer to note 23.

2.13.5 Bonus plans

The University recognises a liability and an expense for bonuses. The University recognises an accrual where contractually obliged to do so or where there is a past practice that has created a constructive obligation.

2.13.6 Accumulated annual leave

Employee entitlements to annual leave are recognised at an undiscounted amount in accordance with the conditions of service of the employees, with leave accruing to them as a result of services rendered. These include annual leave and accumulated leave. Leave payments that become payable within 12 months after the reporting date are disclosed as the current portion of employee benefit obligations.

2.14 Income

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable from the sale of goods and delivery of services in the ordinary course of the University's activities. Revenue is shown net of value-added tax (as applicable), rebates and discounts and after eliminating sales within the group.

Income is recognised when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured, when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the entity and when specific criteria have been met for each of the University's activities as described below. The amount of revenue is not considered to be reliably measurable until all contingencies relating to the activity have been resolved. The University bases its estimates on historical results, taking into consideration the type of customer, the type of transaction and the specifics of each arrangement.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.14 Income (continued)

The accounting policy regarding the elements of gross income includes the following:

2.14.1 State apportionment – subsidies and grants are recognised as income over the periods that are required to systematically match the income with the related expenditure for which it is intended. Subsidies for specific purposes, e.g. capital expenditure, are brought into the appropriate fund at the time they are available for expenditure for the purpose provided. However, if the funding is provided in advance of the specified requirement (i.e. the University does not have immediate entitlement to it), the relevant amount is retained as a liability until the University has complied with all the conditions attached to the construction of the asset, after which the grant is deducted from the carrying amount of the asset.

2.14.2 Grants from the government are recognised where there is a reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and the University will comply with all conditions attached.

Government grants relating to costs are deferred and recognised in the statement of comprehensive income over the period necessary to match them with the costs that they are intended to compensate.

Government grants relating to property, plant and equipment are deducted in calculating the cost of the asset. The grant is carried as a liability in the statement of financial position until the University has complied with all the conditions attached to the construction of the asset, after which the grant is deducted from the carrying amount of the asset.

2.14.3 Tuition fees and residence fees are recognised as the service and products are rendered over a period of time. These fees are based on the services rendered to date as a percentage of the total services to be performed by the University. Income is considered to be received for the performance of a single obligation based on a fixed transaction price and it is highly probable that there will not be a significant revenue reversal. Tuition fees do not contain a significant finance component and full payment is required by end of July of each year. Delivery of these services falls within the financial period of the University.

2.14.4 Research income mainly arises from contracts with customers. Contracts may differ regarding time frames and performance obligations but revenue is recognised based on a fixed transaction price. Payments from customers are received according to contract terms and revenue is recognised over time when the University satisfies a performance obligation in terms of a research contract. Research contracts do not contain a significant finance component.

The University assesses the progress made and confirms the stage of completion on the reporting date based on the percentage of completion method. For contracts with completion dates after year end, assessments may give rise to a contract asset or a contract liability. Contract assets relate to the University's right to consideration for work completed but not billed at reporting date. Contract liabilities relate to the advance consideration received from the customer for which the University is to still satisfy an obligation.

2.14.5 Dividends are received from financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss (FVPL). Dividends are recognised as investment income in surplus or deficit when the right to receive payment is established.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.14 Income (continued)

2.14.6 Interest income from financial assets at FVPL is included in the net fair value gains/(losses) on these assets. Interest income on financial assets at amortised cost, calculated using the effective interest method, is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income as part of investment income.

Interest income is calculated by applying the effective interest rate to the gross carrying amount of a financial asset.

2.14.7 Donations received are recognised at the fair value on the date of the donation.

2.14.8 Rental received is recognised over the lease term on a straight-line basis.

2.15 Leases

Leases are recognised as a right-of-use asset and a corresponding liability at the date at which the leased asset is available for use by the University. Assets and liabilities arising from a lease are initially measured on a present value basis. The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease and are allocated between principal and finance cost. Refer to note 6b for detail.

2.16 Provisions

Provisions are measured at the present value of the expenditure expected to be required to settle the obligation using a pre-tax rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the obligation. The increase in the provision due to passage of time is recognised as interest expense.

Provisions for legal claims are recognised when the University has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount has been reliably estimated. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

2.17 Tax

The University is exempt from income tax in terms of Section 10(1)(cN) of the Income Tax Act. Subsidiary entities are not exempt from tax and are liable for normal South African Income Tax. On consolidation, this may give rise to current income tax and deferred tax.

2.18 Trade payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers.

Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade payables are measured initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.19 Borrowings

Borrowings are recognised initially at fair value, net of transaction costs incurred. Borrowings are subsequently stated at amortised cost; any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the redemption value is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income over the period of the borrowings using the effective interest method.

Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless the University has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date.

2.20 Borrowing costs

General and specific borrowing costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of a qualifying asset are capitalised during the period of time that is required to complete and prepare the asset for its intended use or sale. Qualifying assets are assets that necessarily take a substantial period of time to get ready for their intended use or sale.

Investment income earned on the temporary investment of specific borrowings, pending their expenditure on qualifying assets, is deducted from the borrowing costs eligible for capitalisation.

Other borrowing costs are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

3. FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT

The University's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks: market risk (including currency risk, price risk, cash flow interest rate risk and fair value interest rate risk), credit risk and liquidity risk.

The University's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the University's financial performance.

Council delegated the responsibility of the process of risk management to the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee. This Committee reports key risks to Council twice a year, or more often if the need arises.

The risk approach of the University is based on the following definition of risk: "Risk can be defined as a potential threat or possibility that an action or event will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives". The University's approach is to balance opportunities and risks based on the supposition that the University sustains itself as a going concern. As there are risks that will have direct financial implications and others that will not have (immediate) direct financial implications, risk profiles are differentiated as "financial risks" and "non-financial risks".

Risk abatement strategies are identified based on the strategic objectives of the University according to the Institutional Plan. The University Management (through defined responsibility and accountability of Executive Management) identifies the most significant risk events, conditions or areas. There is an established line function with the remit of determining the identification, assessment, intervention measures and all aspects of the management of risk affecting the University.

Previously identified and newly identified risks as well as new events and actions that are potential risks are included in the risk register of the University. The list is maintained, reviewed and updated at least biannually and is managed accordingly.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

3. FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

Despite these structures and procedures, the potential exists that adverse events may occur that may affect the results of normal operations throughout the University at all levels of activity.

Only in limited instances are financial instruments used to cover risks linked to the University's activities. Where instruments are used to cover risks linked to the University's activities, each instrument is linked to an asset or liability, or an operational or financing transaction. Management of these instruments, which are mostly traded on organised or related markets, is centralised. Financial institutions are selected on their national grading to limit risks and to provide diversification.

The University's investment policy is designed to limit exposure to financial risks and no portfolio that has speculative characteristics is utilised. A money-market division and five independent investment management companies are responsible for managing these related risks.

3.1 FINANCIAL RISK FACTORS

Market risk

(i) Price risk

The University's exposure to equity securities price risk arises from investments held by the University and classified in the statement of financial position either as at FVOCI or at FVPL.

To manage its price risk arising from investments in equity securities, the University diversifies its portfolio. Diversification of the portfolio is done in accordance with the prescripts set by the Committee for Investments.

The majority of the University's equity investments are publicly traded and are included in listed shares that are traded on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange. The risk exists that the value of these financial instruments may fluctuate as a result of changes in the market price.

A 1% movement of the All Share Index (ALSI) of the JSE, while all other variables held constant and all the University's equity instruments moved accordingly, would affect the value of the investments to be R7 337 000 higher/lower as at 31 December 2023 (2022: R6 195 000) (refer to note 9.1). Owing to the unpredictability of equity market returns, a general indicative percentage of 1% is used to highlight the changes in market value of equity investments.

(ii) Cash flow and fair value interest rate risk

In the case of long-term borrowings, the University's interest rate risk is limited because loans are only entered into at a fixed interest rate and in South African currency. Borrowings issued at fixed rates expose the University to fair value interest risk. Interest rates on overdraft facilities are linked to the prime rate and are floating. Income and operating cash flows are substantially independent of changes in the market interest rates and therefore no formal interest rate risk management policy exists.

Interest rate risk and therefore cash flow risk arises mainly from cash and cash equivalents.

At 31 December 2023 an investment performance measurement was done by the University, which indicated an actual yield on the University's cash and cash equivalent portfolio of 9,48% (2022: 6,89%). Had the interest rate been 0,5% higher/lower (50 basis points), the surplus would have been R13 342 000 higher/lower (2022: R19 117 000).

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

3. FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

3.1 FINANCIAL RISK FACTORS (continued)

Market risk (continued)

(iii) Credit risk

Credit risk arises from cash and cash equivalents, contractual cash flows of debt investments carried at amortised cost and at FVPL, favourable derivative financial instruments and deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures regarding outstanding receivables.

The University's policy is designed to limit exposure to any single financial institution. Council evaluates the financial institutions annually and sets a credit limit for each institution. The University's investments in debt instruments are considered to be low-risk investments. Cash and cash equivalents as well as investments are only placed with reputable financial institutions with high credit ratings.

No credit evaluations are done for trade receivables – other debtors, nor for student debtors.

The University also does not require any collateral as security.

This credit risk exposure is mitigated by requiring students to pay an initial instalment in respect of tuition and accommodation fees at registration. Students with an outstanding balance from the previous year are only permitted to renew their registration after settling the outstanding amount as well as paying the current year's initial requirements. (Refer to note 12 for detailed disclosure.)

Credit risks are limited by the large number of clients, the diversity of the University's activities and a strict recovery policy. The University is of the opinion that no significant concentration of risk that has not been insured or adequately provided for existed at year end.

Trade receivables, contract assets and debt investments carried at amortised cost are subject to the expected credit loss model. (Refer to note 10b.)

The maximum credit exposure in relation to debt investments that are measured at fair value through profit or loss at the end of the reporting period is the carrying amount of these investments.

While cash and cash equivalents are also subject to the impairment requirements of IFRS 9, the identified impairment loss was immaterial.

Liquidity risk

Prudent liquidity risk management implies maintaining sufficient cash levels and ensuring availability thereof to meet obligations when due. Constant monitoring, cash management and thorough cash planning ensure that the University is able to meet its commitments (arising from borrowings and other liabilities) at all times, under both normal and stressed conditions. The University has minimised the risk of liquidity, as is reflected in its substantial cash and cash equivalents.

	2023	2022
Listed investments – shares and bonds	97%	96%
Cash and cash equivalents	3%	4%
Total	100%	100%

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

3. FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

3.1 FINANCIAL RISK FACTORS (continued)

Liquidity risk (continued)

The table below analyses the University's non-derivative financial liabilities into relevant maturity groupings based on the remaining period at the reporting date to the contractual maturity date. The amounts disclosed are the undiscounted cash flows. Balances due within 12 months equal their carrying balances as the impact of discounting is not significant.

	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
	Less than	Between	Between	Over
	1 year	1 and 2 years	3 and 5 years	5 years
Liabilities at amortised cost				
2023				
Borrowings	34,476	32,961	90,856	243,576
Lease liabilities	42,130	0	0	0
Trade and other payables	<u>382,362</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
2022				
Borrowings	23,617	32,466	89,640	259,725
Lease liabilities	51,632	43,782	0	0
Trade and other payables	<u>462,467</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Liquidity ratio			2023	2022
			R'000	R'000
Current assets*				
Inventories			66,567	36,839
Trade and other receivables			570,256	257,828
Income tax receivable			2	0
Cash and cash equivalents			<u>160,483</u>	<u>170,614</u>
			<u>797,308</u>	<u>465,281</u>
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables			382,362	462,466
Contract liabilities			53,775	10,814
Income tax payable			5	893
Current portion of interest-bearing borrowings			12,542	3,273
Current portion of post-employment benefits			309,933	259,172
Current portion of deferred grant income			162,622	226,936
Current portion of lease liabilities			42,130	51,632
Income received in advance			<u>119,639</u>	<u>99,818</u>
			<u>1,083,008</u>	<u>1,115,004</u>
Net liquidity of operations			<u>(285,700)</u>	<u>(649,723)</u>
Ratio			<u>0.74</u>	<u>0.42</u>

* Current portion of investments is not included in the calculation of the liquidity ratio as it is the intention of the University to reinvest these investments when they mature, in investments of the same nature as our non-current investments portfolio.

3.2 CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

The University's objectives when managing capital are to safeguard the University's ability to continue as a going concern and to maintain an optimal capital structure to reduce the cost of capital. A well-planned budgeting process is followed each year to meet these objectives. A sound financial position has been established by limiting exposure to debt and increasing investments and cash balances.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

3. FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

3.2 CAPITAL MANAGEMENT (continued)

	2023	2022
	R'000	R'000
Assets		
Investments (current and non-current)	7,480,489	7,049,704
Cash and cash equivalents	160,483	170,614
Total	7,640,972	7,220,318
Liabilities		
Non-current liabilities (excluding deferred income)	338,283	389,231
Current liabilities (excluding deferred income)	920,386	888,069
Capital commitments (infrastructure) (note 28)	1,376,743	1,054,585
Total	2,635,413	2,331,885
Net position	5,005,560	4,888,433

The greater part of capital commitments is being financed through subsidy from the Department of Higher Education and Training.

3.3 FAIR VALUE ESTIMATION

The fair value of financial and non-financial instruments traded in active markets is based on quoted market prices at the reporting date. A market is regarded as active if quoted prices are readily and regularly available from an exchange, dealer, broker, industry group, pricing service or regulatory agency, and those prices represent actual and regularly occurring market transaction on an arm's length basis. The quoted market price used for financial assets held by the University is the current bid price. These instruments are included in Level 1 of the table below. Instruments comprise primarily JSE equity investments. The fair value of forward foreign exchange contracts is determined using quoted forward exchange rates.

The fair value of financial instruments that are not traded in an active market is determined by using valuation techniques. The University uses a variety of methods and applies assumptions based on market conditions existing at each reporting date. These valuation techniques maximise the use of observable market data where it is available and rely as little as possible on entity-specific estimates. If all significant inputs required to determine the fair value of an instrument are observable, the instrument is included in Level 2.

The carrying values of the following financial assets and liabilities are deemed to approximate their fair value: cash and cash equivalents, trade and other receivables and trade and other payables. An explanation of these is given by means of notes with regard to each item.

Note 9 contains further information with regard to investments and note 15 with regard to borrowings.

The following table presents the University's assets and liabilities that are measured at fair value at 31 December 2023.

	Level 1	Level 2	Total
	R'000	R'000	R'000
Assets			
Debt investments at fair value through profit and loss (FVPL)			
Equity securities - Listed shares in public companies	733,795		733,795
Bonds, credit linked notes and unit trusts	4,025,204		4,025,204
Investments - Unlisted shares that do not qualify as an investment in equity-accounted investees		2,334	2,334
Total assets	4,758,999	2,334	4,761,333

The following table presents the University's assets and liabilities that are measured at fair value at 31 December 2022.

Assets			
Debt investments at fair value through profit and loss (FVPL)			
Equity securities - Listed shares in public companies	619,473		619,473
Bonds, credit linked notes and unit trusts	3,403,068		3,403,068
Investments - Unlisted shares that do not qualify as an investment in equity-accounted investees		1,694	1,694
Total assets	4,022,541	1,694	4,024,235

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

4. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES, ASSUMPTIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of accounting estimates, which, by definition, will seldom equal the actual results. Management also needs to exercise judgement in applying the University's accounting policies. Estimates, assumptions and judgements are continually evaluated. They are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the University and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

4.1 Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

Estimates and assumptions having a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are addressed below. Based on knowledge of the estimates and judgement, we do not expect there to be material adjustments to the carrying amount of the assets or liabilities within the next year.

(i) Property, plant and equipment

The University annually estimates the useful life and the expected residual value of items of property, plant and equipment for measurement and ensures that changing circumstances are taken into account. Refer to note 2.3.

(ii) Employee benefits

The present value of the employee-benefit obligations depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a number of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost/(income) for benefits include the discount rate, the expected salary and pension increase rates, mortality rates, contribution rates and number of dependants. Any changes in these assumptions will have an impact on the charge to surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income (OCI) and may affect planned funding of the employee benefits.

The appropriate discount rate is determined at the end of each year, which represents the interest rate that should be used to determine the present value of the estimated future cash flows expected to be required to settle the pension, disability and post-retirement medical obligations. The expected increases in salaries and pensions are based on inflation rates, adjusted for salary scales.

Other key assumptions for pension, disability and medical obligations are based in part on current market conditions. Additional information is disclosed in note 16.

(iii) Loss allowance for impairment of trade receivables and contract assets

Measurement of expected credit loss allowance for trade receivables and contract assets. Management need to classify and group receivables according to characteristics and identify key assumptions in determining the loss rate. Refer to note 2.11.

(iv) Impairment of goodwill

Goodwill is allocated to the University's cash-generating units (CGUs). The recoverable amount of cash-generating units has been determined based on value-in-use calculations. These calculations require the use of estimates. Refer to note 8.

4.2 Significant judgements

(i) Impairment of financial instruments

The loss allowances for financial assets are based on assumptions about risk of default and expected loss rates. The University uses judgement in making these assumptions and selecting the inputs to the impairment calculation, based on the University's past history, existing market conditions and forward-looking estimates at the end of each reporting period.

5. NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

The number of permanent employees and fixed-term employees with benefits totalled 3 993 at the end of 2023 (2022: 3 975).

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6a. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Movements (R'000)	Land	Buildings and other improvements *	Vehicles	Furniture	Laboratory equipment	Specialised equipment	Computer equipment	Servers and Printers	Synthetic hockey field	Assets less than R15 000	Computer equipment less than R5 000	Total	NWU owned assets SUB-TOTAL	NWU leased Right-of-use assets ** SUB-TOTAL
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Carrying amount at 31/12/2021	30,713	1,294,337	37,944	64,800	50,680	187,773	80,279	32,694	7,360	19,397	3,070	1,809,052	1,809,052	0
Cost	30,713	1,606,895	60,900	157,540	101,863	405,276	199,014	62,549	11,701	37,121	6,245	2,679,820	2,580,576	99,244
Accumulated depreciation	0	(312,558)	(22,956)	(92,740)	(51,183)	(217,503)	(118,735)	(29,855)	(4,341)	(17,724)	(3,175)	(870,768)	(771,524)	(99,244)
Additions during the year	0	300,051	14,915	12,657	18,329	67,834	86,900	20,226	0	20,847	3,154	544,912	416,034	128,878
Depreciation for the year	0	(63,621)	(2,360)	(11,579)	(13,383)	(35,677)	(46,985)	(13,842)	(1,323)	(13,497)	(2,220)	(204,485)	(158,759)	(45,726)
Cost of reclassifications during the year	0	260	0	(472)	0	0	212	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accumulated depreciation of reclassifications	0	(152)	0	194	0	0	(42)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cost of disposals/scrappings during the year	0	0	(2,331)	(20,339)	(18,284)	(53,620)	(65,088)	(6,661)	0	(13,858)	(2,432)	(182,612)	(182,612)	0
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	0	0	1,150	20,231	18,265	53,593	64,382	6,658	0	13,851	2,432	180,563	180,563	0
Carrying amount at 31/12/2022	30,713	1,530,876	49,318	65,492	55,607	219,903	119,658	39,075	6,037	26,740	4,004	2,147,430	2,064,278	83,152
Cost	30,713	1,907,207	73,484	149,386	101,908	419,490	221,038	76,114	11,701	44,110	6,967	3,042,120	2,813,998	228,122
Accumulated depreciation	0	(376,331)	(24,166)	(83,894)	(46,301)	(199,587)	(101,380)	(37,039)	(5,664)	(17,370)	(2,963)	(894,690)	(749,720)	(144,970)
Additions during the year	0	235,905	13,275	34,507	20,824	95,152	56,356	54,885	0	18,301	1,697	530,903	530,903	0
Depreciation for the year	0	(78,066)	(2,906)	(11,649)	(14,673)	(38,033)	(57,112)	(18,302)	(1,323)	(15,919)	(2,460)	(240,441)	(194,250)	(46,191)
Cost of disposals/scrappings during the year	0	(718)	(4,103)	(1,878)	(4,998)	(42,309)	(33,653)	(2,931)	0	(8,755)	(1,714)	(101,056)	(101,056)	0
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	0	136	1,661	1,551	4,936	42,281	32,986	2,906	0	8,742	1,714	96,911	96,911	0
Carrying amount at 31/12/2023	30,713	1,688,132	57,246	88,025	61,698	276,996	118,237	75,634	4,714	29,111	3,241	2,433,747	2,396,786	36,961
Cost	30,713	2,142,394	82,657	182,016	117,735	472,334	243,742	128,069	11,701	53,657	6,950	3,471,967	3,243,845	228,122
Accumulated depreciation	0	(454,261)	(25,411)	(93,991)	(56,037)	(195,338)	(125,505)	(52,435)	(6,987)	(24,546)	(3,709)	(1,038,220)	(847,059)	(191,161)

Buildings and equipment with a cost price of R114 388 000 (2022: R151 248 000), funded with Government grants, were not included above (note 2.14.2).

Government grants are recognised as deferred income (current liability) and then applied against the cost of the relevant asset as the asset is obtained/developed, in accordance with IAS 20.

All assets are unencumbered. All disposals of land and buildings acquired with the financial support of the government requires approval from the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in terms of the Higher Education Act.

The University has a ten-year rolling plan in accordance with which large-scale building maintenance takes place and which is evaluated annually in order to properly maintain the buildings.

There were no changes in the estimates in the current year.

The assets register with full particulars of land and buildings is available for inspection at the registered address of the University.

Refer to note 28 regarding capital commitments.

Right-of-use assets are included in Buildings and other improvements and had a balance of R36 961 000 at year-end (2022: R83 152 000).

* Included are buildings still under construction at year end in the amount of R144 910 000 for 2023 (2022: R1 054 585 000) as well as borrowing costs capitalised in the amount of R3 405 000 (2022: R13 039 000) - refer to note 15.

** Right-of-use assets consist only of buildings. Refer to note 6b regarding right-of-use assets.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

6b. LEASES

This note provides information for leases where the University is a lessee.

(i) Amounts recognised in the statement of financial position

The statement of financial position shows the following amounts relating to leases:

	2023	2022
	R'000	R'000
Right-of-use assets		
Buildings	36,961	83,152
Lease liabilities		
Non-current (discounted amount)	0	36,830
Current portion of lease liabilities	42,130	51,632
	42,130	88,462

(ii) Amounts recognised in the statement of comprehensive income

The statement of comprehensive income shows the following amounts relating to leases:

Depreciation charge of right-of-use assets (included in depreciation)	46,191	45,726
Interest expense (included in finance cost)	5,299	7,763
Expense relating to short-term leases (included in operating cost)	2,433	1,572

The total cash outflow for leases in 2023 was R53 923 000 (2022: R55 061 000).

(iii) Reconciliation of cash flows:

Opening balance	88,462	0
Additions	0	128,878
Interest recognised as an operating expense	5,299	7,763
Payments:		
- Capital (included in financing activities)	(46,332)	(40,416)
- Interest (included in operating activities)	(5,299)	(7,763)
Closing balance	42,130	88,462

(iv) The University's leasing activities and how they are accounted for

The University leases various buildings, mainly to accommodate students, as well as offices where needed. Buildings leased to students are deemed to be student accommodation and is therefore a service rendered to a customer.

Rental contracts are typically for fixed periods of 12 months to 3 years, but may have extension options.

Contracts may contain both lease and non-lease components. For leases of real estate for which the University is a lessee, it has elected not to separate lease and non-lease components and instead accounts for these as a single lease component because the difference is negligible.

Lease terms are negotiated on an individual basis although terms and conditions are of a similar nature. The lease agreements do not impose any covenants other than the security interests in the leased assets that are held by the lessor. Leased assets may not be used as security for borrowing purposes.

Assets and liabilities arising from a lease are initially measured on a present value basis.

Lease liabilities include the net present value of fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), but not lease payments to be made under extension options.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

6(b). LEASES (continued)

(iv) The University's leasing activities and how they are accounted for (continued)

The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease. If the rate cannot be readily determined, which is generally the case for the University, the University's incremental borrowing rate is used, being the rate that the University would have to pay to borrow the funds necessary to obtain an asset of similar value to the right-in-use asset in a similar economic environment with similar terms, security and conditions.

The University borrowed funds from the Development Bank of Southern Africa in September 2021 at a rate of 7,85%. This rate was used as an indication of the weighted average incremental borrowing rate for the University.

Lease payments are allocated between principal and finance cost. The finance cost is charged to surplus or deficit over the lease period so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability for each period.

Right-of-use assets are measured at cost comprising the following:

- * the amount of the initial measurement of lease liability; and
- * any lease payments made at or before the commencement date.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term or underlying assets useful life on a straight-line basis, and in the case of the NWU the lease term is the shorter.

Payments associated with short-term operating leases are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in surplus or deficit. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of 12 months or less.

(v) Contractual maturities of lease liabilities

The amounts disclosed are the contractual undiscounted cash flows. Balances due within 12 months equal their carrying balances as the impact of discounting is not significant.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
As at 31 December		
Less than 1 year	42,130	51,632
Between 1 and 2 years (discounted amount 2022: R36 830 000)	0	43,782
Total contractual cash flows	<u>42,130</u>	<u>95,414</u>

7. INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

Carrying amount at beginning of year	16,543	17,029
Cost	24,327	24,327
Accumulated depreciation	(7,784)	(7,298)
Depreciation	(487)	(486)
Carrying amount at end of year	16,056	16,543
Cost	24,327	24,327
Accumulated depreciation	(8,271)	(7,784)

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
7. INVESTMENT PROPERTIES (continued)		
Income	10,783	9,813
Rental income (short-term investment income - note 25)	10,699	9,776
Other	84	37
Less: Expenditure (direct operating expenses arising from investment properties that generate rental income)	7,387	4,985
Bad debt written off	309	1,113
Personnel remuneration	808	770
Maintenance - buildings	3,828	705
Municipal fees and property tax	(320)	(85)
Operating costs	187	284
Services outsourced	2,088	1,712
Depreciation	487	486
Net surplus from investment properties	3,396	4,828

The fair value measurement for investment properties has been categorised as a Level 3 under IFRS 13.

Investment properties consist of business buildings that are leased.

Valuation processes

Valuation of investment property is done every 5 years.

The previous valuation in 2017 was done by Acom Valuers. The same valuers did the valuation for the year ending 2022.

Valuer has appropriate qualifications and experience in the valuation field to professionally value the investment property.

Assumptions used for the valuation of Cachet Park include an occupancy rate of 95% (2017: 95%) and a rental margin of 68,6% (2017: 67,9%). No tax implications were applicable.

Present value of future cash flow projections, based on lease agreements, were used in the calculation of the fair value in the amount of R80 000 000 (2017: R82 000 000), using a discount rate per annum of 9,50% (2017: 9,50%).

The sensitivity analysis below shows the impact on the fair value of the investment property to changes in key valuation assumptions.

	Discount rate		
R'000	8,50%	9,50%	10,50%
Rental (5% decrease)	84,941	76,000	68,762
Rental (per valuers' report)	89,412	80,000	72,381
Rental (5% increase)	93,882	84,000	76,000

All assets are unencumbered. All disposals of land and buildings acquired with the financial support of the government require approval from the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997).

Leasing arrangements

The investment properties are leased to tenants under operating leases with rentals payable monthly. Lease payments for some contracts may include CPI increases, but there are no other variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Minimum lease payments receivable on leases of investment properties are as follows:		
Within 1 year	9,097	8,778
Between 1 and 2 years	8,359	7,767
Between 2 and 3 years	7,182	7,127
Between 3 and 4 years	7,161	3,918
Between 4 and 5 years	0	696
	31,799	28,286

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

8. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	Computer software * R'000	Goodwill R'000	Total R'000
Closing carrying value - 31/12/2021	3,559	950	4,509
Cost	3,768	950	4,718
Accumulated amortisation	(209)	0	(209)
Additions (externally with consolidation)	2,294	0	2,294
Amortisation charges	(483)	0	(483)
Closing carrying value - 31/12/2022	5,370	950	6,320
Cost	6,062	950	7,012
Accumulated amortisation	(692)	0	(692)
Additions (externally with consolidation)	2,290	0	2,290
Amortisation charges	(689)	0	(689)
Closing carrying value - 31/12/2023	6,971	950	7,921
Cost	8,352	950	9,302
Accumulated amortisation	(1,381)	0	(1,381)

* Computer software is internally generated by OpenCollab (Pty) Ltd (subsidiary) and intangible assets are included in the University's statements during the consolidation of subsidiary's results.

9. INVESTMENTS

9.1 Total investments

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (FVPL) as elected at initial recognition.

Comprise:

- * Debt investments that do not qualify for measurement at either amortised cost or FVOCI;
- * Equity investments that are held for trading; and
- * Equity investments for which the entity has not elected to recognise fair value gains and losses through OCI.

Refer to note 2.8.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Investments at FVPL		
<u>Unlisted investments</u>		
Unlisted shares that do not qualify as an investment in equity-accounted investees	2,334	1,694
<u>Listed investments</u>		
Shares in public companies	733,795	619,473
Bonds and credit linked notes	3,434,730	2,570,667
Unit trusts	590,474	832,401
	<u>4,761,333</u>	<u>4,024,235</u>

Financial assets at amortised cost

Comprise assets that meet both of the following criteria:

- * asset is held within a business model whose objective is to collect the contractual cash flows; and
- * the contractual terms give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest.

Refer to note 2.8.

Cash portfolio (Committee for Investments)	15,764	(4,628)
Negotiable Certificates of Deposits (NCDs) (Money Market portfolio)	2,668,491	2,995,156
Other	34,901	34,941
	<u>2,719,156</u>	<u>3,025,469</u>

Presented as follows:

Non-current assets	6,388,373	6,343,809
Current assets	1,092,116	705,895
Total investments	<u>7,480,489</u>	<u>7,049,704</u>

The University reinvests all investments which mature in investments of similar long-term nature.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

9. INVESTMENTS (continued)

9.1 Total investments (continued)

	2023	2022
<u>Financial assets at fair value through profit of loss (FVPL)</u>	<u>R'000</u>	<u>R'000</u>
Balance at beginning of year	4,024,235	2,052,898
Additions - shares in public entities	10,732	16,892
Additions - bonds and credit linked notes	864,063	1,175,655
(Disposals)/additions - unit trusts	(241,927)	832,401
Net profit/(loss) transferred to surplus or deficit	104,230	(53,611)
Balance at end of year	<u>4,761,333</u>	<u>4,024,235</u>

FVPL financial assets are denominated in rand.

Amounts recognised in the statement of comprehensive income

The following amounts were recognised in surplus or deficit:

Fair value gains/(losses) on debt instruments at FVPL

Listed investments	103,591	(54,126)
Unlisted investments	639	515
	<u>104,230</u>	<u>(53,611)</u>

Other information

The register with full particulars of the above-mentioned investments is available for inspection at the registered address of the University.

Refer to notes 3 and 10 for additional disclosure on financial instruments.

PURCO SA is the purchasing consortium of the Higher Educational sector in South Africa. North-West University is a member of the consortium. The NWU is entitled to utilise PURCO SA on specific tenders to obtain the best prices. PURCO SA is not a subsidiary, associate, joint venture or unconsolidated special purpose entity.

The University has no other interest or investments in unconsolidated or structured entities.

9.2 Investment in subsidiaries

The University is the ultimate holding entity of the group.

All the subsidiary entities, with the exception of NWU Open Learning Operations Proprietary Limited, are incorporated in South Africa and their principal place of business is situated in South Africa. The principal place of business for NWU Open Learning Operations Proprietary Limited is situated in Windhoek, Namibia.

Details as reflected in the respective entities' annual financial statementsPUK Kanselierstrust (100% interest)

The principal business of the trust is to promote higher education at the University.

Carrying amount of trust funds	1,565	1,527
Attributable profit	<u>37</u>	<u>26</u>

WTX Invorderaars Proprietary Limited (100% interest)

The company is dormant and not actively trading.

Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable profit/(loss) after tax	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

NWU Property Development NPC (Incorporated association not for gain) (100% interest)

(previously known as PUK Ontwikkelingstrust (Incorporated association not for gain))

The principal business of the company is to generate funds in order to realise the vision and mission of the University.

Carrying amount: Reserves	16,208	16,208
Attributable profit/(loss): Non-distributable	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Notable related-party transaction: Amount held in NWU Money Market investments

Investment is unsecured and payable/due on request from Trust	<u>5,698</u>	<u>5,698</u>
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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

9. INVESTMENTS (continued)

9.2 Investment in subsidiaries (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Details as reflected in the annual financial statements (continued)		
<u>OpenCollab Proprietary Limited (94,90% interest)</u>		
The principal business of the company is to provide software development, maintenance, support and consulting services.		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable loss after tax	(757)	(38)
Notable related-party transactions:		
Operating expenses paid to related party	9,862	9,955
Amount held in NWU Money Market investments on behalf of related party		
Investment bears interest at 9,48% (2022: 6,89%) and is available on call.	5,545	6,784
<u>Innovation Highway Proprietary Limited (100% interest)</u>		
The principal business is acting as holding company as well as an incubator for early venturing in a commercial environment, from which fully-fledged spin-out companies will be formed.		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable loss after tax	(8)	(11)
<u>Hydrogen Core Technologies Proprietary Limited (100% interest)</u>		
The principal business of the company is the commercialisation of HySA technologies (under DST funding).		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable loss after tax	(17)	(14)
<u>Medehive Proprietary Limited (previously Hyfra Proprietary Limited) (100% interest)</u>		
The principal business of the company is the commercialisation of HySA technologies (outside DST funding).		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable (loss)/profit after tax	0 *	(4)
<u>North West Fibre Proprietary Limited (100% interest)</u>		
The principal business of the company is the development of fibre technology.		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable profit/(loss) after tax	0	0
<u>NWU Open Learning Operations Proprietary Limited (100% interest)</u>		
The principal business of the company is to act as a point of reporting and support to all Namibian students who are enrolled at the NWU through distance learning.		
Carrying amount of shares	0 *	0 *
Attributable (loss)/profit after tax	(97)	(925)
Total assets and liabilities of consolidated subsidiaries		
Assets	34,535	34,099
Liabilities	1,117	(24)

*Amounts less than R1 000 are disclosed as Rnil due to rounding down to the nearest thousand.

The University has no other interest or investments in unconsolidated or structured entities.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

10. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Financial instruments carried in the statement of financial position include investments, trade and other receivables, cash and cash equivalents, borrowings, derivatives, trade and other payables.

The fair values of these financial assets are deemed to approximate their carrying amounts.

10a. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS BY CATEGORY

	Amortised cost R'000	Fair value through profit or loss R'000	Total R'000
31 December 2023			
Assets			
Investments (note 9)	2,719,156	4,761,333	7,480,489
Trade and other receivables (excluding prepayments and VAT) (note 12)	528,158	0	528,158
Cash and cash equivalents (note 13)	160,483	0	160,483
Total	3,407,798	4,761,333	8,169,132
Liabilities			
Borrowings (note 15)		210,743	210,743
Trade and other payables (note 18)		382,362	382,362
Total		593,105	593,105
31 December 2022			
Assets			
Investments (note 9)	3,025,469	4,024,235	7,049,704
Trade and other receivables (excluding prepayments and VAT) (note 12)	233,333	0	233,333
Cash and cash equivalents (note 13)	170,614	0	170,614
Total	3,429,416	4,024,235	7,453,651
Liabilities			
Borrowings (note 15)		214,016	214,016
Trade and other payables (note 18)		462,467	462,467
Total		676,483	676,483

10b. CREDIT QUALITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The University has the following types of financial assets that are subject to the expected credit loss model:

- * Debt investments carried at amortised cost; and
- * Trade and other receivables;
- * Contract assets relating to research contracts.

While cash and cash equivalents are also subject to the impairment requirements of IFRS 9, the identified impairment loss was immaterial.

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets at amortised cost include NCDs, treasury bills and listed corporate bonds, loans to related parties and other receivables. The identified impairment loss was immaterial.

Instruments are considered to be of low credit risk when they have a low risk of default and the issuer has a strong capacity to meet its contractual cash flow obligations in the near term.

Trade receivables and contract assets

The University applies the IFRS 9 simplified approach to measuring expected credit losses which uses a lifetime expected loss allowance for all trade receivables and contract assets. Refer to note 2.11 for accounting policy and method of grouping of assets.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

10. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

10b. CREDIT QUALITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS (continued)

Trade receivables and contract assets (continued)

The following information was used to determine the expected loss allowance for both trade receivables and contract assets.

Trade receivables were divided between student debtors and other debtors.

	Potch campus	Vaal campus	Mafikeng campus
STUDENT DEBTORS			
31 December 2023			
Groups as classified for payment collection purposes:			
NSFAS funded students	1,274	680	1,337
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.91%	0.91%	0.91%
Other government funded students	6	14	2
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.91%	0.91%	0.91%
Cash paying students	17,220	5,012	20,342
Historical 4 year average + 50% of Unemployment rate (31,90%)	33.25%	34.69%	38.99%
Other bursaries	2,369	791	835
Historical 4 year average + 50% of Unemployment rate (31,90%)	33.25%	34.69%	38.99%
Open distance learning students - Self-paying	2,779	0	0
Historical 4 year average + 50% of Unemployment rate (31,90%)	33.25%	n/a	n/a
Open distance learning students - Other government funded	88	0	0
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.91%	0.91%	0.91%
Open distance learning students	23,411	0	0
Bursary projects (2016 - 2018) - to be written off	100.00%	n/a	n/a
Loss allowance per campus	47,147	6,497	22,516
TOTAL LOSS ALLOWANCE			76,160

31 December 2022

Groups as classified for payment collection purposes:

NSFAS funded students	17	45	102
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.92%	0.92%	0.92%
Other government funded students	0 *	0 *	0 *
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.92%	0.92%	0.92%
Cash paying students	10,296	3,358	14,563
Historical 3 year average of actual bad debt + Unemployment %	32.90%	32.90%	32.90%
Other bursaries	139	198	27
Historical 3 year average of actual bad debt + Unemployment %	32.90%	32.90%	32.90%
Open distance learning students - Self-paying	1,287	0	0
Historical 3 year average of actual bad debt + Unemployment %	32.90%	32.90%	32.90%
Open distance learning students - Other government funded	71	0	0
PD based on a BB- government rating	0.92%	0.92%	0.92%
Open distance learning students	0	0	0
Bursary projects (2013 - 2015) - written off in 2022	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Loss allowance per campus	11,811	3,601	14,692
TOTAL LOSS ALLOWANCE			30,104

* Amounts less than R1 000 are disclosed as Rnil due to rounding down to the nearest thousand.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

10. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

10b. CREDIT QUALITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS (continued)

SUNDRY DEBTORS

31 December 2023	Rating	PD (90+ days)	Total R'000
Classified groups:			
Government	BB-	0.0091	22
Similar to government and universities	BB-	0.0091	167
Municipalities	BB-	0.0091	3
Corporates with balances above R1 million (4 customers)		individually calculated PD	42
Corporates with balances under R1 million		0.3082	19
Individuals and other		Full amount 90 days and longer outstanding	5,268
Loss allowance			5,521
31 December 2022	Rating	PD (90+ days)	Total R'000
Classified groups:			
Government	BB-	0.0092	126
Similar to government and universities	BB-	0.0092	131
Municipalities	BB-	0.0092	1
Corporates with balances above R1 million (3 customers)		individually calculated PD	88
Corporates with balances under R1 million		0.3082	17
Individuals and other		Full amount 90 days and longer outstanding	3,883
Loss allowance			4,246

The expected credit loss on contract assets at year end amounts to R30 000 (2022: R56 000) and is considered non-material.

Credit risk exposure per category:

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Investments (note 9)		
FVPL - listed shares	733,795	619,473
FVPL - unlisted shares	2,334	1,694
FVPL - bonds, credit linked notes and unit trusts	4,025,204	3,403,068
Amortised cost - money market instruments*	2,719,156	3,025,469
Trade and other receivables (note 12)	570,256	257,828
Cash and cash equivalents	160,483	170,614
Total	8,211,228	7,478,146

* An amount of R2 668 492 000 (2022: R3 823 497 000) is invested in "AA" Bank NCDs and Treasury Bills with guaranteed buy-back. Same day settlement.

11. INVENTORIES

Net realisable value (see note 24)

Foodstuffs (Residence and Catering Services)	1,784	1,497
Other consumables	60,030	32,863
Veterinary health	4,753	2,479
	66,567	36,839
At cost		
Foodstuffs (Residence and Catering Services)	2,026	1,754
Other consumables	60,030	33,021
Veterinary health	4,753	2,479
	66,809	37,254
Inventories recognised as an expense and included in operating expenses during the period	56,217	47,103

Obsolete inventory in the amount of R242 000 (2022: R415 000) was written off (see note 24).

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

12. TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Balance at beginning of year	292,178	328,475
Plus: Net movement	408,293	43,669
	700,471	372,144
Less: Bad debts written off	(48,534)	(79,966)
Balance at end of year	651,937	292,178
Less: Loss allowance	(81,681)	(34,350)
Balance at beginning of year	(34,350)	(69,459)
Debtors written off during current year	48,534	79,966
Allowance for credit losses created in current year	(95,865)	(44,857)
Balance at end of year	570,256	257,828
<u>Details of trade and other receivables</u>		
Students		
Tuition and residence fees	526,811	205,842
Less: Loss allowance	(76,160)	(30,104)
Sub-total: Students	450,651	175,738
Sub-total: Advances and prepayments	38,982	24,495
Other debtors		
Projects: Services rendered	42,233	42,488
VAT	3,116	0
Other	40,795	19,353
Less: Loss allowance	(5,521)	(4,246)
Sub-total: Other debtors	80,623	57,595
Total trade and other receivables	570,256	257,828

Student receivables

Student debtors who have not paid their accounts by the autumn graduation ceremony of the following year are considered non-recoverable or doubtful and handed over to attorneys for collection. Current student debtors are also not allowed to register for studies unless outstanding balances are settled or repayment contracts have been negotiated. The increase or decrease in the loss allowance, debts written off, as well as amounts previously written off and recovered during the year, are included in current operating expenditure.

Refer to note 2.11 for accounting policy and calculation of expected credit loss (ECL).

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Movement in the loss allowance for student debtors:		
Balance at beginning of year	30,104	63,194
Student debtors written off during current year as uncollectable	(38,902)	(59,181)
Increase in expected loss allowance during the year	84,958	26,091
Balance at end of year	76,160	30,104
The ageing of student debtors that are past due is as follows:		
Student debtors past due and impaired (enrolled up to 2023)	76,160	30,104
Student debtors past due but not impaired (enrolled again in 2024)	450,651	175,738
Total balance at end of year	526,811	205,842

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

12. TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES (continued)

Other debtors

Trade receivables and contract assets are written off when there is no reasonable expectation of recovery. Indicators that there is no reasonable expectation of recovery include, amongst others, the failure of a debtor to engage in a repayment plan with the University, and a failure to make contractual payments for a period of 90 days or more.

Impairment losses on trade receivables and contract assets are presented as net impairment losses within operating profit. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against the same line item.

Refer to note 2.11 for accounting policy and calculation of expected credit loss (ECL).

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Movement in the loss allowance for sundry debtors:		
Balance at beginning of year	4,246	6,265
Other debtors written off during current year as uncollectable	(9,633)	(20,785)
Increase in expected loss allowance during the year	10,908	18,766
Balance at end of year	5,521	4,246
The fair values of trade and other receivables are as follows:		
Student debtors	450,651	175,738
Other debtors	77,507	57,595
Financial assets	528,157	233,333
Advances and prepayments	38,982	24,495
VAT	3,116	0
Total	570,255	257,828

The fair value is deemed to approximate the carrying amounts.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the carrying value of each class of receivables mentioned above. The University does not hold any collateral as security.

13. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Short-term bank deposits	119,024	126,240
Bank balances	40,416	43,374
Petty cash advances	1,043	1,000
	160,483	170,614

The weighted average effective interest rate on short-term bank deposits was 9,48% (2022: 6,89%).

The fair value is deemed to approximate the carrying amounts.

The cash and cash equivalents are managed together with investments according to the financial needs of the University. Funds are totalled and restricted funds are not managed separately.

Unspent grant funds of R361 946 000 (2022: R341 767 000) are included in the total funds of the University consisting of cash and cash equivalents and investments. These funds are restricted and may only be used for specific grant requirements.

The reserves have been split between restricted funding and non-restricted funding.

Guarantees of R30 000 are currently held by ABSA Bank (2022: R30 000).

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

14. EQUITY

The movement in equity is the result of the normal financial cycle after fair value adjustments had been made.
Refer to note 9 for detail.

Transfers between funds include the following:

- If the utilisation of funds results in the creation of an asset, the amount so utilised is transferred from its relevant fund to property, plant and equipment funds. It also includes depreciation;
- Where Council has designated funds for specific purposes, e.g. bursaries;
- Funds allocated for financing of major capital expenditure projects (funds held for investment in property, plant and equipment); and
- On completion of certain projects/defined activities, the surplus is transferred to designated funds.

15. BORROWINGS - INTEREST-BEARING

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Carrying amounts		
<u>Development Bank of Southern Africa - Student housing</u>		
Total - Development Bank of Southern Africa loan	210,743	214,016
Less: Current portion	12,542	3,273
Non-current liabilities	<u>198,201</u>	<u>210,743</u>

Facility amount as per agreement is R235 000 000 with a term of twenty (20) years.

An ABSA Fixed Deposit of R28 654 000 serves as a debt service reserve required balance for the loan.

Capitalised borrowing costs

This loan bears interest at a base rate plus margin, the base rate being variable 1-month Jibar and margin 232 basis points. Interest is calculated on the facility outstanding from time to time on the basis of the actual number of days elapsed and a 365 day year, nominally compounded.

Capital repayment commences 24 months after the first disbursement, with 216 monthly instalments.

240 monthly interest instalments starting on the interest payment date following the first disbursement.

The first disbursement (based on first claim for expenditure expensed) was received on 29 September 2021.

Monthly repayment instalments of R1 973 085 will be made after the 24 months capital grace period.

Last payment to be made during September 2041.

Borrowings are carried at amortised cost using the effective rate method.

The fair value approximates the carrying amount.

Maturity of borrowings (capital and interest):

Less than 1 year	34,476	23,617
Between 1 and 2 years	32,961	32,466
Between 3 and 5 years	90,856	89,640
Over 5 years	<u>243,576</u>	<u>259,725</u>
	<u>401,869</u>	<u>405,448</u>

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

16. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
ASSETS		
Net assets recognised in the statement of financial position		
North-West University Pension Fund (note 16.1)	491,038	437,519
Total employee benefit assets	<u>491,038</u>	<u>437,519</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accrued leave	309,933	259,172
Post-employment medical benefits (note 16.3)	140,082	141,658
Total employee benefit liabilities	<u>450,015</u>	<u>400,830</u>
Less: Current liability - accrued leave	<u>(309,933)</u>	<u>(259,172)</u>
Total non-current liability	<u>140,082</u>	<u>141,658</u>

16.1 North-West University Pension Fund

The North-West University Pension Fund, which is registered in terms of and governed by the Pension Funds Act (Act 24 of 1956 (as amended)), was implemented on 1 January 1995.

A fourth option was introduced on 1 January 2004 for all new members of the Fund, namely a fixed-contribution option (2023: 99,87% or 3 917 members and 2022: 99,87% or 3 882 members). A statutory actuarial valuation of the North-West University Pension Fund is undertaken every three years. On 31 December 2022, the effective date of the most recent statutory actuarial valuation, the retirement benefit fund was found to have a surplus of R437 744 000.

No formal valuation calculations were done in terms of IAS19 (revised) in reporting on the defined benefit pension fund, as the Fund converted all its defined benefit members to defined contribution members with annuity policies being purchased for all the pensioners in 2019. As at 31 December 2020, the Fund did not have any defined benefit obligations remaining as at that date. The asset reflected in the IAS19 disclosures was the balance in the employer surplus account.

Similarly, for 2021, 2022 and 2023, there are no defined benefit obligations as all obligations are of a defined contribution nature.

Only a build-up of the employer surplus account (reflected as an assets for IAS19) is being prepared since 2020.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Current estimated employee benefit obligation:		
Fair value of plan assets at year-end	<u>(491,038)</u>	<u>(437,519)</u>
Recognised in other comprehensive income:		
Actual return on assets	<u>(53,519)</u>	<u>(8,060)</u>
Total actuarial gain	<u>(53,519)</u>	<u>(8,060)</u>
Recognised in the statement of financial position:		
Opening net asset	(437,519)	(429,459)
Remeasurements recognised in other comprehensive income	<u>(53,519)</u>	<u>(8,060)</u>
Asset at year-end	<u>(491,038)</u>	<u>(437,519)</u>

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

16. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (continued)

16.1 North-West University Pension Fund (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Movement in the plan assets:		
Fair value of plan assets at 1 January	437,519	429,459
Actuarial gain/(loss)	53,519	8,060
Fair value of plan assets at 31 December	491,038	437,519
Plan assets comprise:		
	2023 %	2022 %
Local equity securities	40,9	46,3
Global equity securities	29,2	23,3
Local bonds	14,0	15,7
Global bonds	3,3	2,7
Local cash	1,6	3,5
Global cash	1,2	-0,6
Local property	3,8	5,5
Global property	3,8	1,8
Local commodities (other)	1,1	1,8
Local ILB	1,1	-
	100,0	100,0

16.2 North-West University Disability Reserve Fund

The disability benefit is 82,5% of the member's pensionable salary as at the date of disability. In addition, the fund pays the employer contributions to the North-West University Pension Fund. The employee contribution of 7,5% is included in the 82,5% of pensionable salary. A decision was taken for the purposes of this valuation to include the employer contributions in the benefits payable. This additional liability was taken into account. A statutory actuarial valuation of the North-West University Disability Reserve Fund is undertaken every three years. On 31 December 2022, the effective date of the recent statutory actuarial valuation, the disability reserve fund was found to have a surplus of R1 275 000.

Disabled pensioners were outsourced in 2020 and the Fund did not have any defined obligations remaining as at 31 December 2021. Disclosure for 2022 and 2023 is limited to only a build-up of the net asset value (or surplus) at year end. The surplus was reduced due to a contribution holiday taken on member disability premiums.

Investments were realised into the Fund's bank account on 22 May 2023 and Sanlam Corporate confirmed that the final disbursements from the bank account was made on 5 December 2023. The bank account has been closed and the North-West University Disability Reserve Fund ceased to exist with no assets remaining.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Current estimated employee benefit obligation:		
Fair value of plan assets	0	(1,275)
Impact of asset ceiling	0	1,275
Asset at year-end	0	0
Recognised in profit or loss:		
Current service costs	438	69
Net interest	(51)	(83)
Reversal of provisions and funding of disability income premium	888	0
Total included in personnel remuneration	1,275	(14)
Recognised in other comprehensive income:		
Impact of asset ceiling limitation	(1,275)	14
	(1,275)	14

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

16. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (continued)

16.2 North-West University Disability Reserve Fund (continued)

Valuation calculations in terms of IAS19 (revised) (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Recognised in the statement of financial position:		
Opening net asset	0	0
Expense	1,275	(14)
Remeasurement recognised in other comprehensive income	(1,275)	14
Asset at year-end	0	0
Movement in the plan assets:		
Fair value of plan assets at 1 January	1,275	1,261
Expected return on plan assets	51	83
Reversal of provisions and funding of disability income premium	(888)	
Cost of outsourcing	(438)	(69)
Fair value of plan assets at 31 December	0	1,275
Plan assets comprise:		%
Local cash		100,0

16.3 Post-employment medical benefits

In accordance with current staff practice, contributions to the medical aid fund are also made on behalf of retired employees (Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle Campuses) who had been employed before 1 January 1999.

Valuation calculations in terms of IAS19 (revised) are done annually and the results of the valuation are as follows:

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Current estimated employee benefit obligation:		
Present value of obligation	140,082	141,658
Recognised in profit or loss:		
Current service costs	869	966
Net interest	14,983	14,225
Total included in personnel remuneration	15,852	15,191
Recognised in the statement of comprehensive income:		
Actuarial gain recognised in other comprehensive income (OCI)	(4,787)	(8,951)
Recognised in the statement of financial position:		
Pensioners	118,698	117,362
Active employees	21,384	24,296
Present value of unfunded liability	140,082	141,658
Movement in the liabilities:		
Liability at 1 January	141,658	147,666
Interest cost	14,983	14,225
Service cost	869	966
Contribution	(12,641)	(12,248)
Actuarial gain	(4,787)	(8,951)
Liability at 31 December	140,082	141,658

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

16. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (continued)

16.3 Post-employment medical benefits (continued)

Valuation calculations in terms of IAS19 (revised) (continued)

	2023	2022
	%	%
Other actuarial assumptions at the reporting date:		
Inflation rate	6,13	6,44
Discount rate	10,98	11,07
Principal actuarial assumptions at the reporting date:		
Expected future salary increases	6,13	6,44
Expected future medical cost increases	8,13	8,44
Mortality rates	Pre-expected retirement age: SA1985-90 light Post-expected retirement age: PA(90)-2	

The sensitivity analysis below illustrates how results change under various alternative assumptions.

Assumption	Variation	% change in past-service contractual liability	% change in service cost plus interest (contractual liability)
2023			
Salary/Health-care cost inflation	+1%	-6,4%	+1,2%
	-1%	+7,3%	-1,4%
Mortality	+1%	-3,3%	- 3,4%
	-1%	+3,3%	+3,4%
2022			
Salary/Health-care cost inflation	+1%	-6,7%	+0,8%
	-1%	+7,6%	-1,0%
Mortality	+1%	-3,3%	- 3,3%
	-1%	+3,3%	+3,3%

Expected contributions to post-employment benefit plans for the year ending 31 December 2024 are R13 177 000.

There are currently no long-term assets set aside in respect of the NWU's post-employment health care liabilities. Therefore, no assumption specifically relating to assets has been made.

16.4 Associated Institutions Pension Fund

Some of the permanent staff in the relevant staff categories (Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle campuses), (2023: 0,13% or 5 staff members and 2022: 0,13% or 5 staff members) exercised the option of remaining members of the Associated Institutions Pension Fund (AIPF), which fund is registered in terms of and governed by the Pension Funds Act (Act No. 24 of 1956 (as amended)). Upon retirement these staff members receive retirement benefits in terms of a defined-benefit plan. The University has a liability to make an additional contribution to the pension fund if the cash flow of the AIPF is insufficient for the payment of the pensions of pensioners. The latest valuation was done on 31 March 2005 and the results show a funding level of 151,4% and a R3 631 000 surplus. The AIPF is administered by the State.

The amount as recognised in the statement of comprehensive income (note 23 – Personnel remuneration) for 2023 is R787 200 (2022: R726 900).

16.5 NWU Provident Funds

The NWU provident funds were established on 1 March 1993 and 1 March 1996 respectively. All permanent staff members in the relevant staff categories (Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle Campuses 2023: 60 staff members and 2022: 60 staff members) contribute to the NWU provident funds. The Registrar of Pensions does not require that a fixed-contribution fund be valued actuarially. The fund is 100% funded because benefits are limited to fixed contributions plus growth. The University has no further obligation towards the funds.

The amount as recognised in the statement of comprehensive income (note 23 – Personnel remuneration) for 2023 is R1 324 000 (2022: R1 520 000).

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
17. DEFERRED STATE GRANT		
Deferred income mainly comprises state infrastructure grants. These grants are capital by nature.		
Capital projects	244,870	244,280
Balance at beginning of year	244,280	325,199
Subsidy received during the year	78,655	16,290
Interest capitalised during the year	13,464	13,464
	336,399	354,953
Recognised during the year	(91,529)	(110,673)
Balance at end of year	244,870	244,280
<u>Presented as follows:</u>		
Non-current liability: Long-term portion	82,248	17,344
Current liability: Short-term portion	162,622	226,936
	244,870	244,280
18. TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES		
Trade creditors	239,389	328,367
Student fees - credit accounts	142,973	134,099
Financial liabilities	382,362	462,466
VAT	0	888
	382,362	463,354
The fair value approximates the carrying amount.		
19. INCOME RECEIVED IN ADVANCE		
Student-related fees and deposits (including tuition fees)	2,563	2,864
Deferred earmarked grants (operational by nature - granted annually)	117,076	96,954
	119,639	99,818
The fair value approximates the carrying amount.		
20. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES RELATING TO CONTRACTS WITH CUSTOMERS		
All contract assets and contract liabilities relate to research contracts.		
Contract assets		
Opening balance	45,128	33,390
Consideration received during the period	36,290	15,883
Performance obligations completed	(57,082)	(4,145)
Total contract assets - Closing balance	24,336	45,128
Contract liabilities		
Opening balance	55,942	80,256
Performance obligations met during the period	(110,001)	(86,030)
Performance obligations not satisfied	132,170	61,716
Total contract liabilities - Closing balance	78,111	55,942
Net contract liabilities	53,775	10,814

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

20. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES RELATING TO CONTRACTS WITH CUSTOMERS (continued)

Performance obligations not satisfied

Unsatisfied performance obligations amounting to R78 111 000 (2022: R55 942 000) relate to research contracts and revenue will be recognised as the performance obligations are met during future accounting periods.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
21. STATE APPROPRIATIONS - SUBSIDIES AND GRANTS		
<u>Unrestricted or designated</u>		
Operating purposes	2,381,912	2,399,147
Earmarked grants	68,906	72,451
Total: State appropriations - subsidies and grants	<u>2,450,818</u>	<u>2,471,598</u>

There are no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies at year end.

22. REVENUE FROM CONTRACTS WITH CUSTOMERS

Revenue is derived from the transfer of goods and services over time and at a point in time in the following major categories:

	2023 R'000	2023 R'000	2023 R'000
	Tuition and other fees	Income from contracts	Sales of goods & services
Timing of revenue			
Revenue recognised at a point in time	0	0	349,002
Revenue recognised over time	2,474,405	180,411	0
Total revenue from external customers	<u>2,474,405</u>	<u>180,411</u>	<u>349,002</u>
Total revenue from contracts with customers			3,003,819
	2022 R'000	2022 R'000	2022 R'000
	Tuition and other fees	Income from contracts	Sales of goods & services
Timing of revenue			
Revenue recognised at a point in time	0	0	280,683
Revenue recognised over time	2,255,876	192,628	0 *
Total revenue from external customers	<u>2,255,876</u>	<u>192,628</u>	<u>280,683</u>
Total revenue from contracts with customers			<u>2,729,187</u>

* A prior year amount of R345 388 000, regarding residence fees, has been reclassified and adjusted to be included as part of tuition and other fees. This resulted in a decrease in sales of goods and services, amounting to R345 388 000 and an increase in tuition and other fees in the amount of R345 388 000.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

	COUNCIL- CONTROLLED: UNRESTRICTED OR DESIGNATED	SPECIFICALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES: RESTRICTED	STUDENT & STAFF ACCOMMO- DATION: RESTRICTED	2023 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
23. PERSONNEL REMUNERATION					
Remuneration and fringe benefits	2,903,644	75,614	58,374	3,037,632	2,811,432
Arbitration awards	343	0	0	343	68
Accrued leave	50,761	0	0	50,761	(111,858)
NWU Disability Reserve Fund	1,220	31	24	1,275	(13)
AI Pension Fund	753	19	15	787	727
NWU Provident Fund	1,266	33	25	1,324	1,520
Post-employment medical benefits	15,852	0	0	15,852	15,191
	2,973,840	75,697	58,438	3,107,975	2,717,067

Annualised Gross Remuneration to University Management (excludes exceptional payments - exceeding an annual aggregate of R249 999)

Name	Office held	Basic salary	Post- employment benefits	Other short-term benefits	Total costs to NWU 2023	Total costs to NWU 2022
		R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Prof MB Tyobeka #	Vice-Chancellor	3,672	350	367	4,389	3,755
Prof LA du Plessis	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Campus Operations (Vaal Triangle)	2,594	312	731	3,637	3,664
Prof MM Verhoef	Registrar	2,663	460	344	3,467	2,864
Ms E de Beer	Executive Director: Finances and Facilities	2,829	292	243	3,364	2,843
Prof RJ Balfour	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning	2,565	274	320	3,159	2,855
Prof MJ Mphahlele	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation	2,560	243	266	3,069	2,756
Prof DMD Balia	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Campus Operations (Potchefstroom)	2,484	237	332	3,053	2,707
Prof S Swanepoel	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Assigned Functions and Campus Operations (Mafikeng)	2,190	354	383	2,927	2,823
Dr V Singh	Executive Director: People and Culture	2,389	212	270	2,871	2,605
Mr NC Manoko	Executive Director: Corporate Relations and Marketing	2,242	213	288	2,743	2,427
Dr S Chalufu	Executive Director: Student Life	2,075	197	168	2,440	2,219
Prof ND Kgwadi #	Vice-Chancellor	0	0	0	0	5,629
Total		28,263	3,144	3,712	35,119	37,147

- All members of management was in service for the full year - 2023. No annualising of remuneration..

Management member not in service for full year - 2022. Remuneration annualised.

These include annual remuneration, levies, bonuses and in the case of the Vice-Chancellor, housing benefits.

Refer to note 32 - Related-party transactions.

Number of senior staff members 2023: 11 (2022: 11).

	COUNCIL- CONTROLLED: UNRESTRICTED OR DESIGNATED	SPECIFICALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES: RESTRICTED	STUDENT & STAFF ACCOMMO- DATION: RESTRICTED	2023 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000	R'000
Other information regarding personnel remuneration					
Accrued leave - increase/(decrease) (note 16)	50,761	0	0	50,761	(111,858)
Retirement benefit costs	343,580	8,804	6,797	359,181	327,095
Members' contributions	122,332	3,135	2,420	127,887	116,776
Council contributions	221,248	5,669	4,377	231,294	210,319
Senior management remuneration	35,119	0	0	35,119	35,953
For managerial services	35,119	0	0	35,119	35,953

Payments for attendance at meetings of the Council and its Committees

Name	Number of members	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Chair of Council: Honorarium, travel and accommodation expenses	1	386	401
Chairs of committees: Honorarium, travel and accommodation expenses	8	643	866
Members of Council: Honorarium, travel and accommodation expenses	50	1,194	852
Total		2,224	2,119

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

	COUNCIL- CONTROLLED: UNRESTRICTED OR DESIGNATED R'000	SPECIFICALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES: RESTRICTED R'000	STUDENT & STAFF ACCOMMO- DATION: RESTRICTED R'000	2023 TOTAL R'000	2022 TOTAL R'000
24. OTHER CURRENT OPERATING EXPENSES BY NATURE					
Inventory written off (note 11)	5	0	238	242	415
Foodstuffs (Residence and Catering Services)	5	0	238	242	257
Other consumables	0	0	0	0	158
Auditor's remuneration	4,318	244	0	4,562	4,122
Audit fees	3,178	244	0	3,422	2,662
Other costs	1,140	0	0	1,140	1,460
Bursaries*	22,177	34,540	0	56,717	42,266
Electronic databases and project services	60,233	25	0	60,258	72,963
Licences	96,553	442	780	97,775	97,382
Maintenance	179,030	6,179	56,521	241,730	200,841
Professional fees	121,790	31,910	306	154,006	148,531
Rent: Buildings	3,785	854	1,068	5,707	3,351
Rent: Equipment	21,798	587	270	22,655	19,807
Services outsourced	106,279	229	51,891	158,399	136,199
Travel (local and international)	143,880	37,484	292	181,656	141,424
Utilities	80,415	182	136,257	216,854	190,887
Goods and services - other	461,134	59,015	71,483	591,633	433,536
	<u>1,301,397</u>	<u>171,690</u>	<u>319,106</u>	<u>1,792,193</u>	<u>1,491,724</u>
* Bursaries					
Bursaries paid from NWU funds - set off against tuition fees	216,270	0	0	216,270	205,618
Bursaries paid from external and other funds	22,177	34,540	0	56,717	42,266
Total bursaries paid	<u>238,447</u>	<u>34,540</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>272,987</u>	<u>247,884</u>
25. INVESTMENT INCOME					
25.1 Operating income (short-term investment income)	644,885	23,098	0	667,983	418,803
Interest	634,186	23,098	0	657,284	409,027
Rental received (investment properties - note 7)	10,699	0	0	10,699	9,776
Long-term investment income	24,074	0	0	24,074	21,401
Interest	11,864	0	0	11,864	8,986
Dividends (listed investments)	11,832	0	0	11,832	12,415
Dividends (other investments)	378	0	0	378	0
	<u>668,959</u>	<u>23,098</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>692,057</u>	<u>440,204</u>
25.2 Realised (loss)/profit on disposal of investments	(15,487)	0	0	(15,487)	2,148
Financial instruments at fair value through profit or loss	(15,487)	0	0	(15,487)	2,148
	<u>(15,487)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(15,487)</u>	<u>2,148</u>
26. FINANCE CHARGES					
Long-term loans (note 15)	0	0	18,388	18,388	462
Bank account	3	0	0	3	4
Exchange differences	3,153	165	0	3,318	(78)
Other	1,018	(152)	7	873	626
Interest paid for lease liabilities	20	22	5,258	5,300	7,763
	<u>4,194</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>23,653</u>	<u>27,882</u>	<u>8,777</u>

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
27. CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Surplus for the year	1,062,474	1,220,572
Adjusted for:		
Fair value (profit)/loss on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	(104,230)	53,611
Loss allowance: Trade and other receivables (note 12)	95,865	44,857
Other impairments	0	569
Depreciation (note 6a and 7)	240,928	204,971
Amortisation charges (note 8)	689	483
Loss on disposal/write-off of assets - property, plant and equipment	1,128	167
Increase/(decrease) in leave provision (note 16)	50,761	(111,857)
Increase in retirement benefit obligations (note 16)	4,486	2,929
Utilised deferred state grant (note 17)	(91,529)	(110,673) *
(Increase)/decrease in deferred income tax assets (note 30)	(252)	59
Investment income (note 25)	(676,570)	(442,352)
Finance charges (note 26)	27,882	8,777
Operating surplus before changes in working capital	611,632	872,113
Changes in working capital	(456,234)	(151,838)
Increase in inventories	(29,727)	(4,273)
Increase in trade and other receivables, excluding allowance for credit losses	(408,293)	(43,669)
(Increase)/decrease in income tax receivable	(2)	15
Decrease in trade and other payables	(80,993)	(42,377)
Increase/(decrease) in contract liabilities	42,961	(36,052)
Increase/(decrease) in income tax payable	0	5
Increase/(decrease) in income received in advance	19,820	(25,487)
Cash flows from operating activities	155,398	720,275

* Utilised deferred state grant funding represents the amount as recognised in the statement of comprehensive income and can therefore not be disclosed as part of investing activities in the statement of cash flow.

For this reason, a prior year amount of R110 673 000, was reclassified to cash flows from operating activities.

This resulted in a decrease in the cash flow from operating activities, amounting to R110 673 000 and an increase in cash flows utilised by investing activities in the amount of R110 673 000.

28. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

The following commitments not recognised in the statement of financial position existed at year-end with regard to capital expenditure approved but not yet incurred:

Buildings	1,376,743	1,054,585
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This expenditure will be financed with internal and external funds (note 6).

29. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE EXPENSED

Capital expenditure expensed consists of library books	4,168	3,846
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30. INCOME TAX AND DEFERRED TAX ASSET

The University is exempt from Normal SA Income Tax in terms of Section 10(1)(cA) of the Income Tax Act, and consequently also from the provision for any deferred taxation.

Other comprehensive income (OCI) relating to the University is therefore also exempt from taxation.

As a result of the consolidation of OpenCollab Proprietary Limited, Innovation Highway Proprietary Limited, North West Fibre Proprietary Limited, Medehive Proprietary Limited, Hydrogen Core Technologies Proprietary Limited and NWU Open Learning Operations Proprietary Limited, which are not exempted from tax, a tax liability is shown with regard to tax currently payable, based on taxable income for the year.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

30. INCOME TAX AND DEFERRED TAX ASSET (continued)

Tax is calculated at 27% (2022: 28%). Deferred tax is applicable to OpenCollab Proprietary Limited.

	2023 R'000	2022 R'000
Income tax expense		
Current tax	0	0 *
Deferred tax	(252)	58
Total income tax expense	(252)	58
Tax reconciliation		
Surplus before tax	1,062,222	1,220,630
Unrecognised loss/(surplus)	122	954
Exempt income	(1,063,379)	(1,221,598)
Non-deductible expenses (SARS interest and penalties)	82	3
Prior year tax	0	219
Change in rate	18	0
Taxable income	(935)	208
Deferred tax asset (accrual for leave pay)		
Opening balance	134	192
Movement	252	(58)
Closing balance	386	134
Income tax payable		
Opening balance	5	0 *
Movement	0	5
Closing balance	5	5
Income tax receivable		
Opening balance	0 *	16
Movement	2	(16)
Closing balance	2	0 *

*Amounts less than R1 000 are disclosed as Rnil due to rounding down to the nearest thousand.

31. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Management considered all pending legal matters and is of the opinion that the possibility of any significant outflow in settlement is remote. No further disclosure regarding the details of each case is considered necessary.

32. RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Included in unlisted investments are entities that do not qualify as an investment in equity-accounted investees which are related parties (refer to note 9.1).

Refer to note 9.2 for disclosure of subsidiaries.

The national Department of Higher Education and Training has a significant influence on the University and is therefore also considered a related party (refer to note 21).

Compensation of the University Management is considered related-party transactions. Refer to note 23 for disclosure of remuneration.

All transactions with related parties are transactions at arm's length and all transactions with related parties, with the exception of compensation of the University Management, have been eliminated on consolidation.

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** (continued)**33. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD**

Events after the reporting period are those events that occur between the reporting date and the date on which the financial statements are authorised to be issued. Adjusting events are those events that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period and non-adjusting events are those events that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period.

The University appointed a COVID-19 task team during 2020 following the rapidly changing circumstances and financial uncertainties as a result of the Corona virus pandemic. The task team is continuing to make use of a Financial Impact Model (FIM) to do financial planning and closely monitor the possibly ongoing impact of COVID-19. This flexible model is based on different scenarios, assumptions and factors and these are constantly updated with new information and indicators. A mitigation plan was also implemented to address the medium term (2021 to 2024) financial needs of the NWU and to assist with cash flow.

Operations have been gradually settling and adapting to the new norm brought about by COVID-19. Patterns have changed, and the University has been adapting successfully.

The risk strategy of the University is that its investments are of a long-term nature and therefore the University has adequate available reserve funds at its disposal to help sustain financial stability while facing possible new challenges.

The University does not intend to liquidate or cease trading, nor does Management perceive that the current events will influence or cast significant doubt upon the University's ability to continue as a going concern. The NWU Management is absolutely committed and completed the 2023 academic year successfully, with the support of the DHET and the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation.

No adjustments affecting the financial position have been made between the reporting date and the date of approval of this report.

13.7 Annexure 7: Requirements as per the regulations

Check list – NWU Integrated Annual Report as compared to the stipulations of the reporting regulations (Regulation Gazette, no 10209, 9 June 2014)

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report	Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 Integrated Annual Report IAR/notes
<i>Alignment should be apparent between the institution's strategic plan, APP, AR, budget and mid-term performance report</i>		Paragraphs 8, 9 and Annexure 1

The APP to be the basis of the AR		Paragraph 8.5 and Annexure 1
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Annual Report to reflect the following:				
1	1	Info on performance of institution for preceding year to be signed by council chair and VC	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(a) to be signed by council chair and VC</i>	See paragraph 9
2	1	Must have a performance report in which the work of the university as reflected in APP and the extent to which APP had been realised, are contained; as well as the extent to which the institution believes it has met objectives and goals contained in the strategic plan	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(a) to be signed by council chair and VC</i>	See paragraph 9 and Annexure 1

3	2	Must include in the chairperson of council report the following:	<i>See chair of council report in section 10 (governance)</i>	Paragraph 10
4	2	Council Chair report Council chair report assessing the performance and degree of progress in respect of objectives that were pursued by strategic plan for the year under review, done in a way that gives due account to economic, social and environmental aspects. Also not confining itself to past issues	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair Section 10</i>	Paragraph 10
5	2	Council Chair report Effective ethical leadership and corporate citizenship	<i>RR4 RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair</i>	Yes – paragraph 10.9.2
6	2	Council Chair report Statement of council on IT in the report of the IT Governance Committee	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair</i>	Yes – paragraph 9.1.8

7	2	Council Chair report	Compliance with laws, codes, standards	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) –Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.9.9
Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant paragraph in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
8	2	Council Chair report	Remuneration of externally elected council members	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraphs 10.7.3 and 11.4
9	2	Council Chair report	Statement of council on sustainability	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.8
10	2	Council Chair report	Statement on going concern	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.1
11	2	Council Chair report	Statement on financial controls outside financial statements	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.2
12	2	Council Chair report	Financial control inadequacies considered material (individually or in combination with others) that resulted in actual financial loss, including fraud and material losses	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraphs 10.9.7 and 10.9.8 (Note: this paragraph does not strictly address inadequacies that led to material losses)
13	2	Council Chair report	Statement of financial health and viability	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.4
14	2	Council Chair report	Campus development; infrastructure development, facilities, major capital works events, student support, ODL, working with industry	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Student support – Yes in VC report (paragraph 4.5) Infrastructure/campus development/development, major capital work – paragraph 9.6
15	2	Council Chair report	Statement on risk management (how council has dealt with the matter, council taking responsibility for RM and making a statement on the effectiveness of the process; also how it came to making the statement in an objective and independent way. Disclosing that a reporting system is in place to monitor changes in the risk profile of the university and gaining assurance that RM is effective)	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 7.7

16	2	Council Chair report	In respect of all council committees, that these are chaired by external independent members, with needed expertise and skills. Also reference to important matters dealt with by the relevant committees that affected the institution – also possible unresolved matters. Summaries of attendance of members to these committee meetings to be included.	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraphs 10.7 , 10.9 and Annexure 3 paragraph 13.3.7
17	2	Council Chair report	Statement on borrowings	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 9.5.2.7
Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
18	2	Council Chair report	Statement on tenders	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.3
19	2	Council Chair report	(Statement) Report of council on transformation	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 6.10 – statement Yes – paragraph 6 for report
20	2	Council Chair report	Statement on contracts management, SLAs, monitoring of suppliers' performance	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.6
21	2	Council Chair report	Statement of workplace ethics	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.9.1
22	2	Council Chair report	Report of council on governance of risk ⁸	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair RR Implementation Manual 7(i) <u>Report to be signed by officer/committee with designated risk responsibility and the chair of that committee</u>	Yes – Paragraph 7.8 Report on internal/administrative structures and controls
23	2	Council Chair report	PAIA requests	RR Implementation Manual 7(b)	Yes – paragraph 10.9.10
24	2	Council Chair report	Statement on penalties, sanctions, fines	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 10.10.5
25	2	Council Chair report	Events	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – paragraph 5

⁸ Check compliance to these requirements and make sure that all elements are included

26	2	Council Chair report	Significant changes that took place	RR Implementation Manual 7(b) Council chair	Yes – main paragraphs 3 , 4 , 8 and 9
27	3	Governance statement	Statement of council on governance	RR Implementation Manual 7I to be approved by council	Yes – paragraph 10.1
28	3	Governance statement	Council and council committees (including statement that role of chairperson is distinct from that of VC; length of tenure of council chairperson); appraisal Also Council attendance register	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council RR Implementation Manual 7(4)I(ii)	Yes – paragraphs 10.1 , 10.2 and para 10.5 , Annexures 2 and 3 Yes – Council percentage attendance (See Annexure 2 , paragraph 13.2) Attendance figures are provided to DHET separately
Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
29	3	Governance statement	Remuneration committee to explain remuneration philosophy and how implemented; reference to any ex gratia/ex lege payments / disclosure of performance evaluation, and bonuses paid; and a note to the finance report that reflects disclosure of executive remuneration	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council	Yes – Annexure 3 , paragraphs 13.3.7.4 and 11
30	3	Governance statement	Finance committee	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council	Yes – Annexure 3 , paragraph 13.3.7.2
31	3	Governance statement	Planning and resources committee – NWU has an Assets Committee and People and Culture and Employment Equity Committee	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council	Yes – paragraph 10.2
32	3	Governance statement	Council membership committee – Exco is the Council membership committee	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council	Yes – Annexure 3 , paragraph 13.3.7.6
33	3	Governance statement	Audit committee and Risk committee – NWU has Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i) to be approved by council	Yes – Annexure 3 , paragraph 13.3.7.2
34	3	Governance statement	IT Governance committee – NWU has a Technology and Information Governance Committee	RR Implementation Manual 7I(i)	Yes – Annexure 3 , paragraph 13.3.7.5
35	3	Governance statement	Statement on conflict management	RR Implementation Manual 7I(ii) -to be approved by council	Yes – paragraph 9.2.4.3
36	3	Governance statement	Statement on worker and student participation	RR Implementation Manual 7I(iii) to be approved by council	Yes – paragraph 9.2.4.4

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
37	3	Governance statement	Statement on workplace ethics	RR Implementation Manual 7(d)(iv) <u>to be approved by council</u>	Yes – paragraph 10.9.1
38	4	Sustainability statement	Statement on sustainability	RR Implementation Manual 7(d) <u>to be approved by council</u>	Yes – paragraph 10.8
39	5	Senate report	Report of Senate to Council	RR Implementation Manual 7I – <u>to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3
40	5.	Senate report	Changes in academic structures	RR Implementation Manual 7I – <u>to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3
41	5.	Senate report	Composition of Senate	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – Annexure 3, paragraph 13.3.1
42	5.	Senate report	Significant developments and achievements in respect of TL & R	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – para 3.4.1 (TL), paragraph 3.4.2 (Research)
43	5.	Senate report	Composition and size of student body	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3.3.1
44	5.	Senate report	TL – Outputs– limitations on access to certain courses; levels of academic progress in different disciplines and levels of study; awards and achievements; outputs produced	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3.5.1
45	5.	Senate report	Research outputs – summaries of various programmes; awards; funding; outputs produced	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3.5.2
46	5.	Senate report	Access to financial aid – (for students and researchers)	RR Implementation Manual 7I <u>Senate report to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 3.3.4
47	6	IF report	Report of IF to council (activities as per statute; all instances of advice sought from IF; composition of IF; number of meetings)	RR Implementation Manual 7(f) – <u>IF report to be signed by IF chair</u>	Yes – paragraph 10.11
48	7	VC report on M/A	Report of VC on management and administration	RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 4
49	7	VC report on M/A	Principal <u>achievements</u> measured <u>in relation to plans, goals, objectives</u>	RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 4.1
50	7	VC report on M/A	<u>Managerial and administrative aspects of the operations</u> of the university, including new appointments at senior level	RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u>	Yes – paragraph 4.2

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
51	7	VC report on M/A	Achievement of admin structures and resources – re personnel and systems – to be assessed to realistic expectations (Including diversity management; HR matters; adequacy of staffing, quality of information.	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u></i>	Yes – paragraph 4.4 and onwards
52	7	VC report on M/A	Extra-curricular activities; changing patterns in the provision for academic courses	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u></i>	Yes – paragraph 4.6
53	7	VC report on M/A	Statement on self-assessment of the achievement of the VC in attaining the objectives for the period under review, with detailed summary of realised achievements (or self-evaluation) to be included.	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(g)- <u>to be signed by VC</u></i>	Yes – paragraph 4.7
54	8	Report on internal admin/operational structures and controls	Internal audit report (Statement to be signed: <i>The ARCC reviewed the report on internal administrative/operational structures and controls in the year under review at its meeting held 8 October 2019, which meeting quorated, and the documentation for approval by the committee was circulated with the meeting agenda in advance with due notice</i>)	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(h) – <u>to be signed by ARCC chair and IA director</u></i>	Yes – paragraph 7.8
55	9	Report on risk exposure assessment and the management thereof	Report of council on risk (exposure) assessment and management of risk, including statement of risk management, reporting system in respect of risks, that university risk management measures are effective.	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(b) RR Implementation Manual 7(i) Report to <u>be signed by officer/committee with designated risk responsibility and the chair of that committee</u></i>	Yes – paragraph 7 Also Annexure 4
56	10	Annual financial review	Report by Chair of finance committee and CFO	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – <u>report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</u></i>	Yes – Annexure 5
57	10	Annual financial review	To provide an overview of budget process and how resource allocation was done; how strategic goals were supported and how operational sustainability is to be ensured	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – <u>report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</u></i>	Yes – Annexure 5
58	10	Annual financial review	Indicate inclusivity of stakeholders – also attending to budgetary control mechanisms in maintaining financial discipline	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – <u>report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</u></i>	Yes – Annexure 5

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
59	10	Annual financial review	Address salient features in statements re financial condition of institution and how primary strategic drivers were attended to. Intelligent comments needed. Statement needed distinguishing between financial consequences of the use of assets representing restricted and unrestricted funds.	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</i>	Yes – Annexure 5 (Information below the headings Surplus and Growth)
60	10	Annual financial review	Report to focus on operational finance – thus excluding non-current items or dramatic movements in investments (although latter matters could be mentioned, the focus should be on operations)	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</i>	Yes – Annexure 5 (Information under the headings Surplus and Growth)
61	10	Annual financial review	To be viewed as a thorough financial analysis of the institution, using all data in financial statements, and any other financial records	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</i>	Yes – Annexure 5 (Information under the headings Equity, Solvability, Liquidity, Gearing ratios)
62	10	Annual financial review	Indicate access to financial aid and the provision thereof; incl. financial aid by external bodies	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</i>	Yes – paragraph 3.3.4
63	10	Annual financial review	Indicate changes in tuition fees	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(j) – report to be signed by chair of Fin Comm and CFO</i>	Yes – Annexure 5 (Information under the headings Surplus and Growth)
64	11	Audit Comm report	Report of the Audit Committee	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</i>	Yes – paragraph 7.8
65	11	Audit Comm report	Report indicative that the ARCC has satisfied itself with the expertise, resources, experience of the inst. Finance function. Results of the review to be disclosed	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</i>	Yes – Annexure 3, paragraph 3.3.7.1
66	11	Audit Comm report	ARCC to report internally to Council re its statutory duties, and duties assigned to it by Council	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</i>	Yes – Annexure 3, paragraph 13.3.7.1
67	11	Audit Comm report	ARCC to report on its statutory duties: how it was carried out; whether ARCC is satisfied with independence of external auditor; committee's view on financial statements and the accounting practices; whether internal controls are effective; and on the internal audit function	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</i>	Yes – Annexure 3, paragraph 13.3.7.1
68	11	Audit Comm report	ARCC to provide a summary of its role and details of its composition, number of meetings and activities	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</i>	Annexure 3, para 13.3.3 and Annexure 1, paragraph 13.2

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
					Yes – Annexure 3, paragraph 13.3.7.1
⁶⁹	11	Audit Comm report	ARCC to recommend the integrated report to Council for approval	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(k)- <u>to be signed by chair of ARCC and council chair</u></i>	Yes – ARCC approval on 8 June 2023
⁷⁰	12	Transformation report	Policies that promote transformation in HE and their effectiveness and impact	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(l) – <u>report to be signed by VC and council chair</u></i>	Yes – various sub-paragraphs in paragraph 6
⁷¹	12	Transformation report	Report to indicate initiatives that seek to assist people from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, women, people with disabilities.	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(l) – <u>report to be signed by VC and council chair</u></i>	Yes – various sub-paragraphs in paragraph 6
⁷²	12	Transformation report	Transformation iro TL and R activities	<i>RR Implementation Manual 7(l) – <u>report to be signed by VC and council chair</u></i>	Yes – 6.6 – academic transformation
⁷³	13		Report of the independent auditor	<i>Annexure 6</i>	Yes – Annexure 6

Requirements of the RR in regard of the format and content of the Annual Report				Reference to relevant section in Reporting Regulations ("RR")	Substantiation in 2022 AR/notes
⁷⁴	14		Other info and supplementary financial data (verified by independent auditor); copies of approved minutes of each council meeting with agendas and attendance registers	<i>Provided separately electronically to DHET</i>	
⁷⁵	15	Dept may arrange for a visit to institution to discuss AR, if necessary			
⁷⁶	16	Three hard copies to be submitted by 30 June as well as electronic copy			

Summary of stipulations of RR in regard to core capabilities of structures/functionaries

Responsibilities of Council reflected as follows in the Council report	
	To provide effective leadership based on ethics
	To ensure that this HEI is a responsible corporate citizen
	To ensure that this HEI's ethics are managed effectively
	To act as the focal point for and custodian of governance
	To understand that strategy, risk, performance and sustainability are inseparable
	To ensure that the ARCC is effective and independent
	To be responsible for risk governance and to ensure an effective risk-based internal audit function; to report on the institution's system of internal controls
	To be responsible for IT governance
	To comply and to ensure compliance with the laws
	To appreciate that stakeholders' perceptions affect the reputation of the HEI
	To ensure the integrity of the HEI's integrated report
	To act in the best interest of the HEI

Responsibilities of the vice-chancellor, through the executive team reflected as follows in management report	
	To see to adequate measures that would ensure economy, efficiency, effectiveness and ethical behaviour in accordance with relevant legislation
	Amongst others, for planning, budgeting, authorisation, controls, evaluation of procurement and utilisation of resources
	Important to see to best practices for general and management purposes.
	Financial planning needs to be flexible and reporting to be flexible so that budgeting, allocation and employment of financial resources are to the best advantage of the institution.
	Simultaneously seeing to high quality in respect of primary activities of teaching-learning and research
Council to ensure that these primary operations and management & administration functions are fully functional	
Council remains responsible for governance and the exec management for effective management and administration	
	The annual report needs to show how and the extent to which these functions were executed.
-	

14 List of Acronyms

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
ACCA	Association of Chartered Accountant
AI	Artificial Intelligence
APP	Annual Performance Plan
AR	Annual Report
ARCC	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee
Author	Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research
B-BBEE	Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
BOD	Board of Donors
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
BTMG	Bridging the Mathematical Gap Modules
Cachet Park CID NPC	Cachet Park City Improvement Districts Non-Profit Company
CAF	Combined Assurance Forum
CE	Community Engagement
CESM	Classification of Educational Subject Matter
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Chat GPT	Free-to-use Artificial Intelligence system
CHCC	Campus Health Centre
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CIBD	Construction Industry Development Board
CIMA	Chartered Institute of Management Accountant
CIPC	Intellectual Property Commission
CIR	Cyber Incident Response
CLES	South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability
COLA	Cost-of-Living Adjustment
Comserv	Community service years
CoSSS	Campus Committee on Student Support Services
Council EXCO	Council Executive Committee
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease
CRM	Corporate Relations and Marketing
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CTL	Centre for Teaching and Learning
DBS	Digital Business Strategy
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DRP	Disaster Recovery Plan
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor

DVC IT	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Information Technology
DVC RI	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation
DVC TL	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning
ECSA	Engineering Council of South Africa
EE	Employment Equity
EEP	Employment Equity Plan
Efundi	E-learning system
EPE	External Programme Evaluation
EPPM	Enterprise Project Portfolio Management
ExDeans	Executive Deans
ExDIR FF	Executive Director: Finance and Facilities
F-EDU	Faculty of Education
F-EMS	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
F-ENG	Faculty of Engineering
F-HS	Faculty of Health Sciences
F-LAW	Faculty of Law
FTEN	First Time Entrant
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HEMIS	Higher Education Information Management System
HEPI	Higher Education Price Index
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HESCoP	Higher Education Sustainability Community of Practice
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
HR	Human Resources (People and Culture)
HyFlex	Hybrid-Flexible
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IF	Institutional Forum
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards
IGF	Information Governance Framework
IIRC	International Integrated Reporting Council
IoT	Internet of Things
IPE	Internal Programme Evaluation
ISM	Internal Success Model
IT	Information Technology
IWMS	Workplace Management Software
KPA	Key Performance Area
LIS	Library and Information Services

LMS	Learning Management System
MBA	Master's in business administration
MC	Mahikeng Campus
NEMISA	National Electronic Media Institute
NGDE	Next Generation Digital Environment
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIST	United States National Institute of Standards and Technology
NPC	Non-profit company
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NPO	Non-profit organisation
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NWU	North-West University
OHHRI	Occupational Hygiene and Health Research Initiative
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
P&C	People and Culture
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act
PC	Potchefstroom Campus
PG	Postgraduate
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
PowerBI	Microsoft's interactive data visualisation and analytics tool for business intelligence
PPM	Project and Portfolio Management
PQM	Programme Qualification Mix
PSET	Post School Education and Training
PYES	Presidential Youth Stimulus
QE	Quality Enhancement
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
R&O programme	Registration and Orientation programme
RemCom	Remuneration Committee
RR	Reporting Regulations
SABPP	South African Board for People Practices
SADC	South African Development Community
SAICA	South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
SALA	Student Academic Lifecycle Administration
SAMRC	South African Medical Research Council
SANORD	Southern African Nordic-Centre
SAPS	South African Police Service

SARCHI	South African Research Chairs Initiative
SARIMA	South African Research and Innovation Management Association
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
SAVAC	Strep A Vaccine Global Consortium
SCC	Students' Campus Council
SCD	Student Counselling and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDTC	Student Diversity and Transformation Committee
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SETA	Sector Education Training Authorities
SHE	Sustainability, Health and Environment
SI	Supplemental Instruction
SIEM	Security Information and Event Management System
SIS	Student Information System
SL	Service learning
SMC	Senior Management Committee
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRC	Students' Representative Council
THE	Times Higher Education
TIA	Technology Innovation Agency
TL	Teaching and Learning
TREES	Tourism Research in Economics, Environs and Society
TTIS	Technology Transfer and Innovation Support
UCDG	University Capacity Development Grant
UCE	Unit for Continuing Education
UG	Undergraduate
UMC	University Management Committee
UnivPrep	University Preparatory Programme
USAF	Universities South Africa
USSA	University Sport South Africa
UTEA	University Teaching Excellence Award
VC	Vice-Chancellor
VdB	Vanderbijlpark Campus
VHIS	Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme
WFP	World Food Programme
WIL	Work-integrated Learning
WISL	Work-Integrated and Service Learning

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