



**VAAL UNIVERSITY  
OF TECHNOLOGY**

*Inspiring thought. Shaping talent.*

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

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# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION

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The year 2021 was a very significant year in the history of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT). This was the year when the University came out of administration. It was also the second year of the global Covid19 pandemic with its concomitant challenges on all higher education institutions. On 15 August 2019, the Minister of Higher Education and Training gazetted the appointment of an Administrator for the Vaal University of Technology, and Prof I Rensburg was appointed as Administrator for a period of two years, ending in July 2021.

The administration period ended in 2021 with a review of academic, human resources, finance and governance policies and processes. A new Council was also established together with the committees of the Council. Section 3 and Section 4 will deal with the structure of the Council in more detail. These sections will also detail some of the achievements of the new Council since its establishment. The VUT was also in the second year of the management of teaching and learning under Covid19 conditions. The University leveraged the successes achieved in 2020 in this respect to intensify and expand on the management of teaching and learning under these conditions. The institution's successful response to the Covid-19 challenge was undertaken under two core themes: Saving lives (Biosafety of staff and students) and Successful Completion of the Academic Year. While indubitably the stringent focus on biosafety and the introduction of strict Covid-19 protocols was able to save many lives, VUT mourned the passing a few members of staff. Yet within this context of enormous stress, staff and students responded magnificently and succeeded in saving the academic year 2021, with student performance being quite high. Sections 10 and 11 will show some of these aspects. The seemingly perennial problem facing the University in 2021 remained the vacancies at senior management level, with only one DVC position filled in 2021. The picture will be shown particularly in Section 10 of the report.

Against this background, the Annual Report has been prepared with care and diligence, ensuring that it is reflective of these realities and reflexive on the mission and strategic intent of the University. In terms of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended, and the Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions gazetted in 2014, the University submits to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, an Annual

Report detailing the activities, management and administration of the University for the period under review. The Annual Report for 2021 meets the requirements of the Reporting Regulations. The report integrates significant information about strategy, risks, and opportunities and correlates them with social, environmental, economic and financial perspectives, with a view to enabling stakeholders to assess the University's performance and its ability to create and sustain value over the short, medium and long term.

The University further operates within the directives of the Auditor General of South Africa and within the framework governed by the general principles of governance as outlined in the King IV Report on Governance. In both cases the University endeavours to comply with the principles and directives. The University embraces the idea of linking the experience of students, staff and the community with this public accountability mandate as a transformational guide to ensure fitness of purpose and relevance to a changing and ever complex environment. This idea represents a business case for the University's continuous efforts to create opportunities, possibilities and broaden access. Finally, the Annual Report highlight the effectiveness and/or non-effectiveness of the University's Governance, Management, Administration and Risks where these do occur, and how such challenges are being dealt with.

## SECTION 2

# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL

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"You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated" - Maya Angelou

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to dominate our lives in 2021 and we remember our colleagues, family and friends that were lost to us during 2021. Management sadly lost 2 key new appointments DVC: Research, Innovation, Commercialization and Internationalization (RICI). Prof John Odiyo and the Executive Director Human Resources, Mr Peter Morris. The positions had not been filled by the end of 2021.

The year was a year of transition from the Administrator and his team to Council and an Acting Principal and Vic-Chancellor. The revised Institutional Statute was gazetted and this was accompanied by a revised Delegations of Authority (DoA). The SRC constitution was revised and approved by Council resulting in the end of the Interim SRC and the election of a new SRC in November 2021.

The rebranding of VUT with a new logo was approved by Mancom in February, with an internal launch in September 2021, that reflects of vision, mission and our roots in the Vaal area. The Closure of campuses continued with the Ekurhuleni staff and students transferred to the Vanderbijlpark campus at the beginning of the year. Teach-out plans for the other two campuses are in place.

On-line registration was fully rolled out after the pilot in 2020. Further refinements will be continuous, but online registration is the new norm. COVID-19 protocols unfortunately forced us to u with graduations in virtual model. A major revision of policies in all portfolio's was undertaken to close off the administration period, approved by Mancom and Senate where necessary.

Blended learning has become the new norm with the finalization of student data analytics linked to VUTELA as well as the Augmented Virtual Reality (AVR) learning platform, specifically for the science-based faculties, as well as to support curriculum transformation. A programme and faculty viability model was finalised which will assist in future resource



## SECTION 3

# VUT GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

### University Council

The Council of the Vaal University of Technology governs the University in accordance with the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997, the Institutional Statute (Gazetted on 12 February 2021) and the Institutional Rules. Council is assisted in this function by the Senate of the University, management, the Institutional Forum and the SRC. The University Council comprises lay councillors and professional members. In terms of the new Statute, sixty-seven percent of the members of Council are neither students nor employees of the Vaal University of Technology. The University was under administration for the greater part of 2021, with the newly constituted Council taking over the governance of the University in August.

### Composition of Council

As of 31 December 2021, the composition of Council was as follows:

COUNCIL COMPOSITION

Name	Statutory Provision	COUNCIL	ARC	FINCOM	HRC	GOVCOM	REMCO	EXCO	IF	SENATE
<b>External Members</b>										
Ms R Buthelezi	Section 9 (A) viii	C					C	C		
Prof NI Morgan	Section 9 (A) vii	DC	M		M	C		M		
Ms CE Simpson	Section 9 (A) viii	M	C	M				M		
Mr T Zororo	Section 9 (A) viii	M	M			M				
Mr N Mahlako	Section 9 (A) ix	M	M							
Mr S Mahlalela	Section 9 (A) viii	M		C	M		M	M	M	
Ms S Hamdulay	Section 9 (A) viii	M		M		M				
Mr S Khanyile	Section 9 (A) vii	M		M					M	
Ms JB Manche	Section 9 (A) vii	M			C		M	M		
Prof MJ Radebe	Section 9 (A) vii	M			M					M
Ms TS Sebela	Section 9 (A) ix	M				M				
Dr CM Kganakga	Section 9 (A) viii	M								M
Vacant	Section 9 (A) vii	M								
<b>Internal Members</b>										
	Section 9 (A) i	M	M	M	M	M	M	M		C
Prof Margaret Linington (Acting VC)										
Ms Nontando Mgobo (Acting DVC: R&P)	Section 9 (A) ii	M	M	M	M	M		M		M

Dr L Maleho	Section 9 (A) iii	M							
Dr A Harmse	Section 9 (A) lii	M							
Mr T Bojabotsheha	Section 9 (A) iv	M							
Mr P Tjotjo	Section 9 (A) v	M							
Mr AN Ndlovu	Section 9 (A) vi	M							
Mr AJ Smith	Section 9 (A) vi	M							

**Key:**  
**C:** Chairperson  
**DC:** Deputy Chairperson  
**M:** Committee Member  
**NON-M:** Non-member  
**A:** In Attendance

The attendance record of Council members to Council and Council Committees was as follows:

Member	12/08/21 Council Induction Day 1	13/08/21 Council Induction Day 2	13/08/21 Seminal Council Meeting	17/09/21 Council Meeting	22/10/21 Council Workshop Day 1	23/10/21 Council Workshop Day 2	23/10/21 Urgent Council Meeting	26/11/21 Council Meeting
Buthelezi, R (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Manche, J (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
Sebela, T (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zororo, T (Mr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Morgan, N (P(rof)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓
Radebe, M (Prof)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mahlalela, S (Mr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Khanyile, S (Mr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Kganakga, C (Dr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mahlako, N (Adv)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Simpson, C (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hamdulay, S (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Linington, M (Prof)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mgobo, N (Ms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maleho, L (Dr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓
Harmse, A (Dr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bojabotsheha, T (Mr)	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tjotjo, P (Mr)	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Smith, AJ (Mr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Ndlovu, A (Mr)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓

**Attendance to Committees of Council 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021**

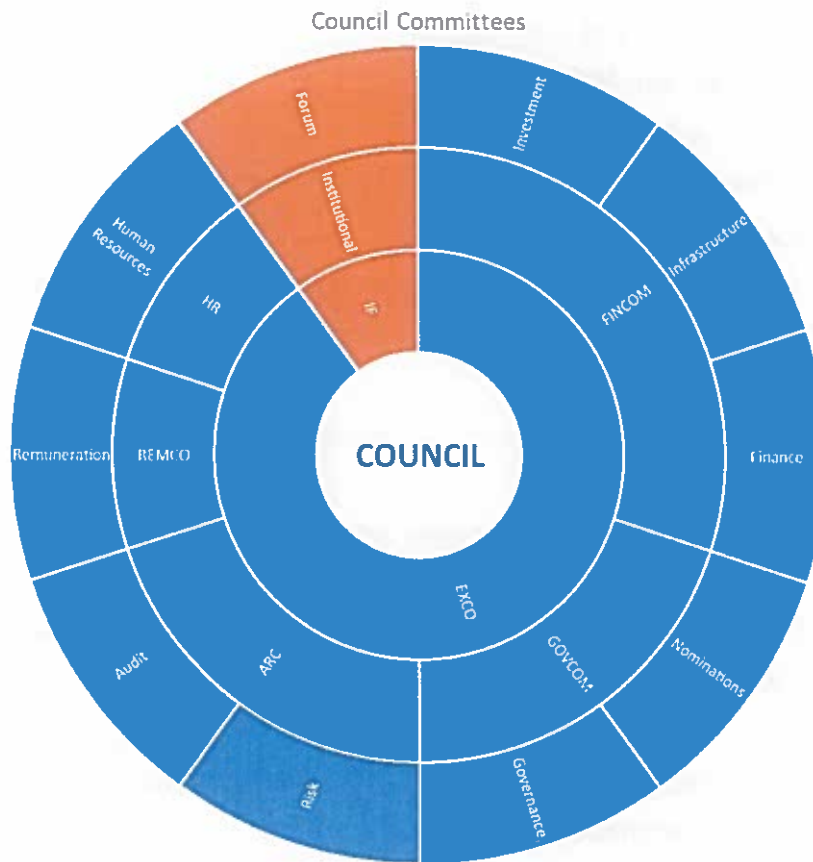
Member	13/09/21 EXCO Meeting	14/10/21 HR Com Meeting	21/10/21 EXCO Meeting	03/09/21 Senate Meeting	06/09/21 IF Induction & Meeting	09/09/21 IF Discussion	05/11/21 IF Meeting	18/11/21 EXCO Meeting
Buthelezi, R (Ms)	✓		✓					✓
Manche, J (Ms)	✓	✓	✓					✓
Sebela, T (Ms)								
Zororo, T (Mr)								
Morgan, N (Prof)	✓	✓	✓					✓
Radebe, M (Prof)		✓		✓				
Mahlalela, S (Mr)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Khanyile, S (Mr)					✓	✓	✓	
Kganakga, C (Dr)				✓				
Mahlako, N (Adv)								
Simpson, C (Ms)	✓		✓					✓
Hamdulay, S (Ms)								
Linington, M (Prof)	✓	✓	✓					✓
Mgobo, N (Ms)	✓	✓	✓					
Maleho, L (Dr)								
Harmse, A (Dr)								
Bojabotsheha, T (Mr)								
Tjotjo, P (Mr)								
Smith, AJ (Mr)								
Ndlovu, A (Mr)								

**Key:** ✓ - Attended, N - Absent, N/A - not a member yet



## Committees of Council

The Committees of Council as at 31 December 2021 were as follows:



Council had its Seminal meeting of 13 August 2021, considered a proposal for appointment of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Council, as well as the composition of all committees of council and their membership.

During the year under review, all committees of council were afforded an opportunity to review and sign-off on their Charters, annual committee work-plans, as well as standing orders for all committees of the University. This included the Institutional Forum (IF) of the University which assumed office on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2021. All Committees and the IF also appointed their Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons respectively. In accordance with section 8(G) of the Statute, Council may delegate its functions to a committee of the Council, with the right to delegate. Other matters approved by Council include the following:

### **Audit and Risk Matters**

- External Audit Engagement letter for year Ending 31 December 2021.
- Audit Planning memorandum.
- Annual Performance Plan and Risk Register.

### **Finance and Infrastructure Matters**

- The 2022 Institutional Budget.
- Student Debt Write-Off and Proposed Fee Increments for 2022.

### **Human Resource Matters**

- Review of Policy on the recruitment and appointment of Vice-Chancellor and Principal.
- Review of Policy on the recruitment and appointment of Senior Managers.

### **Governance Matters**

- Review of Charters of Committees of Council and recommendation to Council for final approval.
- Review of Standing Orders of Committees and recommendation to Council for Final approval.
- Amendments to Institutional Rules where the proposal for appointment of Deputy Chairpersons of Committees was considered.

### **Senate Matters**

- Conferment of Professorship of the Incoming Vice-Chancellor and Principal.
- 2022 Academic and Committee Calendars.

### **University Management and Administration**

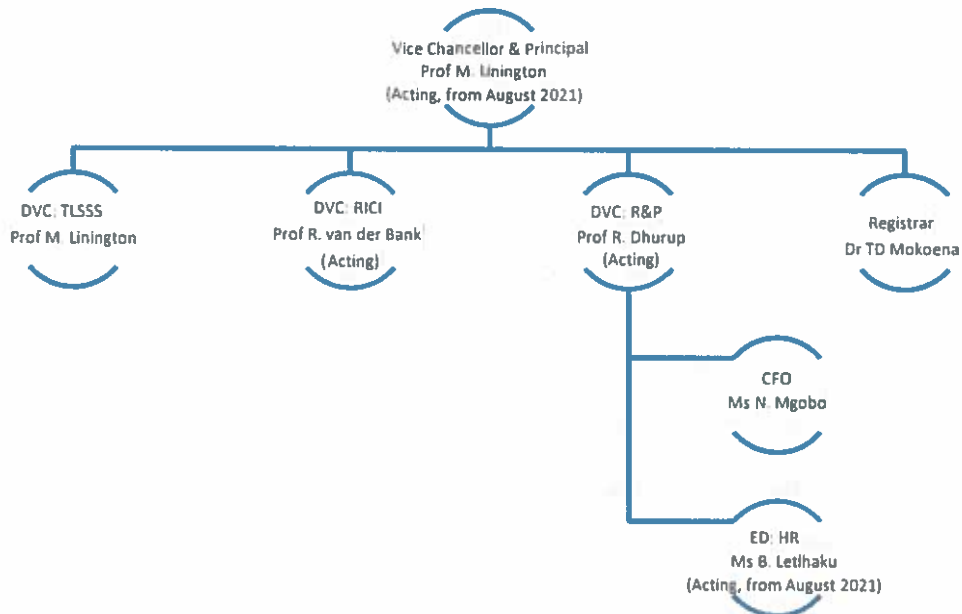
The management and administration functions of the University are executed in compliance with the prescripts of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, University Statute and Institutional Rules. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is the Chief Accounting Officer in charge of the overall management and administration of the University. In the performance of the management and administration functions the Vice-Chancellor is assisted by the Management Committee (MANCOM). The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is accountable to Council. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal and his management team are responsible for the management functions of the University, while Council is responsible for the governance functions. The roles and functions of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and those of the Chairperson of Council are clearly delineated.

In 2020, VUT had no substantive Vice-Chancellor and Principal. In terms of Government Gazette 42639 published on 15 August 2019, the Administrator took over the role, powers, functions and duties of the Vaal University of Technology Management, for two years ending

in 2021. An acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal was then appointed by the Administrator to act until the end of the year, whilst recruitment for the new substantive Vice-Chancellor and Principal was underway.

### Senior Management Structure

As alluded to above, the Management Committee (MANCOM), under the leadership and stewardship of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, manages the day-to-day operations of the University. MANCOM comprises the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (VC) (as chairperson), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching, Learning, and Student Support Service (DVC: TLSSS), Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation, Commercialization, and Internationalisation (DVC: RIC), Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Resources and Planning (DVC: R&P), the Registrar, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and the Executive Director: HR. This top decision-making body is represented in the Figure below.



The following senior management appointments were made in 2021:

- Odiyo, JO – DVC: Research, Innovation, Commercialisation and Internationalisation (RICI)<sup>1</sup>
- Morris, PJ – ED: Human Resources (HR)<sup>2</sup>
- Chili, MM – ED: Centre for Academic Development (CAD)
- Vilakazi, SP – ED: Governance and Legal Services (GLS)
- Mapukata, RPN – ED: Advancement

<sup>1</sup> Passed on.

<sup>2</sup> Passed on.

## SECTION 4

# REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL ON GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

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In terms of the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997 (the Act) and the revised Institutional Statute of the Vaal University of Technology as gazetted on 12 February 2021 (the Statute), the Council of the University is the governing body of the University. Council provides strategic direction and plays an oversight role over its own committees and the work of management. The governance of the Institution, as with other public universities in the country, conforms to three dictums of governance: cooperative governance (in accordance with the Constitution of the RSA, the Act and the Statute), corporate governance (as per the Statute and King IV) and academic governance (as per the Act and the Statute).

2021 saw the exit of the administrator (Prof Rensburg) after 2 years and the induction of a new Council on 13 August 2021, as well as the successful appointment of a Vice-Chancellor and Principal who will join VUT on 1 February 2022. This gave impetus to the strategic plan and the upward trajectory of the University. In October 2021, VUT rebranded the university which I believe will revitalise the image of the University of Technology.

### **Governance Compliance and Leadership**

I would like to commend Council for making strides to ensure that it provides oversight and support to the management team, whilst providing strategic support to the University, ensuring that it fulfils its mandate. Council held two ordinary meetings and one special meeting in 2021. Although it had only been in office for a few months, the VUT Council achieved notable successes. The internal control environment of the university continues to be an area of improvement to achieve sound governance aimed at steering the university towards being a resilient and sustainable organization.

The following are some significant 2021 achievements by the VUT Council through its Committees:

1. The Appointment of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.
2. Constitution of Committees of Council.
3. Constitution of the Institutional Forum.
4. Constitution of the SRC and approval of the SRC Constitution.
5. The following are matters which were approved during the year 2021:
  - The External Audit Plan
  - The Annual Performance Plan for 2022
  - The Risk Register
  - Litigations Register
  - The Council took a considerable amount of time considering the 2022 Institutional Budget, which was ultimately approved. This also included the proposed Student Fee Increments.
  - Student Debt Write-Offs
  - Several policies and governance documents (Institutional Rules and Charters of Committees, Standing Orders) were reviewed and approved.
  - Policy on the recruitment of Senior Managers and policy on the recruitment of the Vice-Chancellor was reviewed and approved.

Council also held its Strategic Workshop on 21 and 22 October 2022 where various interventions were discussed with the aim of steering the University and its Management towards achieving strategic goals of the institution. Several Challenges were pointed out including the impact of COVID-19. Further to the issues raised at the strategic workshop, Council noted and is monitoring the issues raised by the Administrator in his exit report.

The impact of emergency remote teaching on student success was positive with an increase in student success rates. This was a sectoral phenomenon and VUT will reflect on the pedagogical advantages of continuous assessment (that includes reassessment) into the future. I am pleased to report that Vaal University of Technology displayed the ability to be decisive and agile throughout this difficult period which enabled a stable environment through online teaching and learning. This also enabled Council to be effective and efficient by having all meetings virtually.

## **Audit outcomes for the year**

Effort has been made for the University to achieve institutional compliance with legislation and the university's own rules, with special focus on timely completion of the audited Annual Financial Statements and punctual submission of the Annual Compliance Report to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and on punctual submission of the mid-year Annual Performance Report. Additionally, the finalization of the Institutional Risk Register (IRR) is underway and regular reporting of risk assessments and mitigations will be done.

Ngubane was engaged to audit the Annual Financial Statements of the University for the 2021 financial year. Ngubane issued an unqualified audit opinion with findings as the financial statements submitted for audit were not prepared and supported by complete accounting records in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as required by Regulation 7(4)(b)(xii) of the Regulations for Reporting by Public Higher Education Institutions of the Higher Education Act. Material misstatements on significant account balances and disclosures in the Annual Financial Statements were detected and subsequently corrected and/or the supporting records were provided subsequently, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

The basis for the material misstatements were common across all the functional units and they signaled to a deficient control environment wherein the standard operating procedures derived from policies and computer systems were inadequate to a point where records and reports extracted were inconsistent and to a certain extent unsupported. Interventions to address system inadequacies and sound document management are underway to ensure an improvement in the 2022 audit outcome.

Moreover, the entity endured extended periods without the requisite governance structures as well as vacancy rates in key positions. This disparity was the main root cause for failure to ensure that necessary resources were in place for consistent compliance throughout the year and for effective response to the audit process. Most of the findings that led to the opinion resulted from inadequate accounting records; incorrect interpretations of IFRS standards resulting in inaccurate financial calculations as well as a lack of supporting evidence for the balances disclosed in the Annual Financial Statements.

An audit action plan has been compiled by management which implementation will be verified by the Internal Audit Function with oversight by the Audit and Risk Committee. Management and Council are committed to improving the internal control environment and ensuring sound financial management which will contribute to an improved audit outcome in the future.

## **Infrastructure**

Council is paying attention to capacity and expertise available within the institution with particular attention to the Assets Department, to ensure full maintenance of the institutional Asset Register. The completion of infrastructure projects continues to be a risk and a threat for the institution and

Management should complete the integrated Infrastructure Master Plan for both the Vanderbijlpark Campus and Science Park/Sebokeng campus, and an integrated campus plan (including Quest Conference Centre). Together with this development should be the completion of delayed infrastructure projects. These will include the full completion of the Wi-Fi rollout project and improvement and upgrading as IEG funding becomes available.

At the start of the Administration period, lack of cleanliness and poor maintenance of teaching venues was seen as having substantial impact on the quality of teaching and learning at VUT. At the onset of the pandemic, sanitization of campus areas and residences (rather than cleanliness) was prioritized with subsequent close monitoring of hotspots. At present, with the mode of delivery having shifted to blended learning, cleanliness of teaching venues has become of lesser impact. However, practical classes are still delivered face-to-face. Ongoing maintenance, and confirmation of the safety and cleanliness of the laboratories is essential.

The Operations and Logistics Division has embarked on an ongoing process of refurbishment of student residences, to ensure compliance with DHET norms and standards for student accommodation. At the same time, a culture of student learning in residences needs to be supported, inter alia by projects rolled out by Student Support Services and the Centre for Academic Development (learning communities, mentor and tutor support etc.) this will ensure that university residences are seen and experienced as living and learning centres.

Operations and Logistics has conceptualised ways to integrate considerations of environmental sustainability into future planning and operations. Focus areas will include development of Green Buildings, Energy Saving Designs and Fittings, Water Savings Systems and Alternatives, Renewable Energy such as Solar Photo-Voltaic Panels (Solar PV Systems) and Waste Management Strategies including Recycling, Re-Use, etc.

## **Academic Matters and Human Resources**

The ongoing review of the institutional PQM and the Enrolment Plan considers the alignment of the role of VUT as a UOT with enhanced enrolment in the SET faculties to regain ground

lost to mission drift, regular alignment of VUT curricula with changes in industry (especially in the context of the rapidly evolving 4IR), the introduction of extended curricula, the reconsideration of admission requirements and the review of progression rules to support student progress.

Management continues to aim for incremental implementation of online capabilities for the student life-cycle (applications, registration, identification of student underperformance, assessment, graduation etc.), which will enhance security of processes and contribute to policy decisions at VUT becoming increasingly data-driven.

The positions of three of the four Executive Deans were under advertisement in 2021 and these will be finalized to ensure appropriate senior faculty leadership. Furthermore, academic staff capacity has suffered considerably from the freezing of posts due to the constrained budget. At the same time, the implementation of the Workload Policy together with the introduction of staff workload monitoring and the development of norms and standards and guiding principles regarding workload, will contribute somewhat to alleviating this very difficult situation. A full roll-out, institutionalization and consequence management of performance management is underway and therefore targets have been set to enhance the percentage of academic staff with a Master's and Doctoral degree, and to ensure ongoing professional development.

There has been a need for close monitoring of the procurement function, in view of persistent attempts to subvert this function and to revert to earlier corrupt practices. Moreover, there has been development of additional capacity and efficiencies in supply chain management to enable timeous advertising and award of tenders.

## **Conclusions**

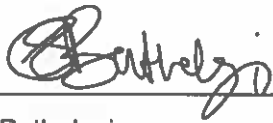
The year 2021 brought about unprecedented challenges that called on the University to stretch itself in various ways to ensure that its core mission was not compromised whilst adapting rapidly to changes and challenges that came about due to the administration period. The installation of a new Council proved to be very effective in dealing with several challenges facing the University.

Key challenges facing the University in 2021 were fee income from self-funded students, a deficit budget and lack of third-stream income, remote teaching and learning challenges, availability of high-speed Wi-Fi on campus and in residences, and purchase of a Virtual Reality



(VR) and Augmented Virtual Reality (AVR) learning platform specifically for science, engineering, and technology to support remote learning. These challenges beset the University in 2020 and 2021 and featured constantly on the agendas of Mancom, Council and Committees of Council.

As of 2021, there was still a considerable risk to achieving a break-even budget outcome; The University should continue to focus closely on cost elimination and containment measures and income growth from donors.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Ms. R Buthelezi  
Chairperson of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
30 June 2022

Date

## SECTION 5

# VUT STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY

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As a public university in a democratic dispensation, VUT seeks to contribute to the sustainability of the region and country in which it operates. Sustainability is understood here as involving environmental, economic, social and social justice issues. VUT remains committed to sustainable development practices to ensure a healthy environment, nurtured through the reduction of its environmental footprint. VUT also seeks to contribute towards economic and socio-political transformation and to serve the public good by producing critical citizens for a vibrant democratic society. Finally, as intrinsic sites of civil society, universities like VUT are expected to build relationships between the state and civil society so that some of the problems faced by communities, especially the disadvantaged ones, could be better understood in order to find ways of addressing these problems.

This report will consider, firstly, contributions made by VUT to the economy and to building South Africa in terms of the students it graduates. We will then address various facets of our engagement with local and regional communities. Finally, we will consider issues of environmental sustainability.

### **Building South Africa through well-qualified VUT Graduates**

VUT's Vision positions the institution as 'An African university that leads in quality teaching and learning, informed by research and driven by innovation and technology'. Furthermore, VUT's Mission requires the institution 'To produce employable and entrepreneurial graduates who can make an impact in society'. Both Vision and Mission speak to VUT as a University of Technology, that should maintain closer links with a wide range of industries through its Advisory Boards, and through liaison by individual staff members. VUT also seeks to appoint members of staff who have had experience in industry. The Advisory Boards in particular are critical to VUT developing curricula which respond to industry and societal needs. An example of this are the recently re-curriculated diplomas which produced their first graduates in 2020. Teaching and learning strive to link access with success. VUT registers a large number of students from highly disadvantaged communities, seeks to support students in finding means to fund their studies (for instance through very lengthy and time-consuming negotiations with

NSFAS), and then offers a wide range of academic support initiatives to ensure that access is indeed linked to success. The Centre for Academic Development (CAD) organizes a substantial tutorial system, a Writing Centre, and much needed MSET support and development. In addition, work is currently underway on developing a tracking system that will allow underperforming students to be identified at an early stage. In 2020 VUT produced 3588 graduates, and for the very challenging year of 2021 the university graduated 4544 students.

## **Social Sustainability and Social Responsibility Initiatives**

### **E-skills CoLab**

In terms of our social responsibility initiatives, VUT has made invaluable contributions to various communities through the E-skills CoLab. The E-skills CoLab is part of a Government E-Skills project under the auspices of NEMISA (National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa) and DCDT (Department of Communications and Digital Technologies). The main purpose of the CoLab is skilling, upskilling and reskilling of citizens, unemployed youth and other community members, within the digital context. The digital context is moving rapidly and the 4IR is with us, thus training within this space plays a vital role in the future of South Africa's. A lot of the CoLab training is focused on participants within the urban, rural and deep rural areas of Southern Gauteng and Northern Cape and include ad-hoc projects in various other provinces.

The 2021 year was indeed a challenging year with the Covid Pandemic and the E-skills CoLab was not immune to the devastating effects it had on our staff, communities and the country. Since 2020, most of our training initiatives were moving online and this was a challenge due to the limitations in access to internet, costs of data and a digital divide that even grew wider in a time when it was supposed to be totally overcome. This is indeed an area of great concern to the CoLab, the university and the country at large. Even though there are hundreds and even thousands of training opportunities available online and in some cases, free of charge, the challenges for our community people to be part of this online training revolution is just a dream, out of reach for many due to poverty and inequalities when it comes to the digital divide.

One way for the CoLab to overcome some of these internet challenges was to adapt the learning material and trying to conduct face-to-face classes amidst the various lockdown levels and associated challenges that accompanied it. No classes, then class with max 30% occupancy, then class with 50% occupancy, then no class again. And this was the wave we had to ride over the last 12 months.

Despite these challenges, the CoLab managed to train and change lives in communities throughout the country.

The CoLab trained in 4 categories for 2021:

- Basic digital literacy for citizens,
- ICT specialist courses (IBM),
- COURSERA for unemployed graduates and people who wanted to up-skills and re-skills themselves into the 4IR world, and lastly,
- Digital Transformation for the Government employees.

The following numbers were trained for 2021:

Category	Participants	Number trained
Basic Digital Literacy (Microsoft and Mobile Literacy)	Communities, Inmates	1615
ICT Specialist 4IR (IBM)	Participants with IT Background including VUT IT Students and Northern Cape and Gauteng Government employees	231
ICT Specialist 4IR (COURSERA)	Participants with IT Background including VUT IT Students and Northern Cape and Gauteng Government employees	447
Digital Transformation for Government employees	CHIETA, DCS (Department of Correctional Services) & Teachers from Northern Cape and Gauteng	130

### Ad-hoc projects

#### *Cell Phone Repairs*

The CoLab also participated and presented several other courses. One of these was a Cell Phone repair course in Aliwal North, with the Youth Directorate office within the Premier's office. The training was conducted for 3 weeks and included MICT Seta accredited unit standards for electronics. During the practical week, participants received a fully compliant toolkit with all the necessary equipment to perform their duties as Cell Phone Repair Technicians.

### ***KAXU Solar – Mentoring and Coaching***

The KAXU Solar project is a project where the CoLab is involved in the mentoring and coaching of new and upcoming SMME's in the Khai-Ma district (Pofadder, Pella, Witbank & Aggenyes) in the Northern Cape. KAXU is part of Abengoa, one of the biggest Solar companies in South Africa. This year was a continuation of the project from 2021 and a new group of SMM's started on the program. Various Master classes have been presented to them and the coaching and mentoring is carrying on a weekly basis until March 2022.

### ***Department of Correctional Services (DCS)***

The CoLab had the opportunity to train 86 inmates from two correctional services site in Heidelberg (Medium facility) and Zonderwater (Medium and maximum facility). The online Microsoft training was changed into mostly offline with only the assessment taking place online. This was due to Prison rules and regulations in terms of access to internet and the use of technology inside the facilities. This pilot training project was such a success that we will be rolling out training, with NEMISA and the other CoLabs, to all prison's country wide from 2022.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

The VUT Community Engagement department with the support of the various government departments hosted and or facilitated the following events/initiatives:

- Imbawula Story Telling community conversations by reliving history through storytelling in Paul Roux, Free State on 26 to 27 February 2021.
- Social Cohesion Dialogue and Youth Empowerment sessions were hosted in Paul Roux in the Free State. This event took place in partnership with the department of Sport Arts and Culture in collaboration with the VUT, NYDA, Vodacom, FSGLTA, Beer Association of South Africa and Youth in action. The aim of the initiative was to empower and educate the youth in the Free State about Social Cohesion and Economic opportunities available for youth development. The event concluded with the hosting of a sporting event where different sporting codes such as netball and football competed against each other with the view and objective of fostering Social Cohesion, Promoting Active Citizenry, Youth Activism and advocating for responsible behaviour.
- VUT Tourism Skills Development Training  
The VUT Community Engagement department in partnership with the National Department of Tourism and the Provincial Tourism Authorities, facilitated skills

development training for tourism monitors in the Vaal, hosted at the VUT on 11 October to 5 November 2021. The program aimed to enhance tourism safety and create awareness of the key tourist attraction sites which provide the necessary skills and possible employment to the unemployed youth of Gauteng and its surrounding areas. Twenty-five learners were trained over a period of 4 weeks during the first phase and received a reasonable monthly stipend over a period of two years.

- **Gender Based Violence Workshop**

The Community Engagement department hosted a Gender Based Violence Workshop facilitated by Sabata Bahurutsi, a Non-profit Organisation from 4 to 8 October 2021 at the VUT Sisonke Restaurant. In total, 20 VUT staff members participated and received certificates of attendance after the completion of the workshop. The focus was on Conflict Management and Gender Reconciliation.

- **VUT/Boipatong Community Engagement Dialogue and Heritage Extravaganza**

VUT in collaboration with the Social Cohesion Advocacy, Boipatong museum and the Department of Sports Arts and Culture, hosted this event on 24 September 2021 in the Boipatong Community Centre.

- **Kwamashu, Isipingo and Umlazi Social Cohesion Dialogue**

VUT in collaboration with the KwaZulu Natal Provincial Department of Sport Arts and Culture; KZN Community Safety and Liaison; ASONET and Home for Africans - hosted a **Kwamashu, Isipingo and Umlazi Social Cohesion Dialogue** at Montclair Sports Ground and Umlazi COMTECH and eBukhosini Sports Ground retrospectively in Durban on 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2021. The objective of this event was to bring different race groups affected by the July Durban unrest and looking in Phoenix KZB under one roof, where several black community members were killed by the Indian community because of rebuttal to looting and touching of businesses.

- **Women's Dialogue**

The Vaal University of Technology partnership with the Provincial Department of Sports Arts and Culture hosted the **Women's Dialogue 2021** at the Women's Living

Heritage Monument in Tshwane, on 13 August 2021. The theme was "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke Gauteng Realising Women's Quality". The following were speakers at the event: Mr Joseph Radebe, Acting Director Community Engagement (Program Director), Dr. Sam Zungu, Ms. Sharda Naidoo, Ms. Lonwabo Mlabathekis, Ms. Harriet Ineku Buga and Ms. Shirley Naran.

- VUT Sedibeng Social Cohesion Youth Month Integrated Project

During its youth month programs the VUT Community Engagement department was involved in the following projects:

- Renovating a house and providing groceries for an impoverish family in Boipatong.
- Renovating a house of an elderly citizen in Bophelong - Muvhang, on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- Human Rights Memorial and Survivors Dialogue on 1st March 2021 at the Human Rights Precinct, in partnerships with Ubaba Oqotho Men's Forum, the provincial Department of Arts from 11:00 until 14:00.

The Dialogue is one of many activation programs and a build-up activity towards the Main Annual Human Rights Celebration on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2021 that find expression in the national calendar declared as a public holiday. The event was meant to honour, recognize, and remember the victims and survivors of the Sharpeville massacre, a tragedy that occurred on the 21st of March 1960 where 69 protesters that were boycotting the use of Dom-pass were killed and injured by the apartheid police force. It is further reported that many of the protesters were shot at the back while they flee from the brutality displayed and meted against them by the police force.

More than 200 participants and 40 VIP delegates that made up of community members, government officials, members of the civil society organization in Sharpeville and the surrounding environment participated in the event. Mr Shameem Bolton the CEO of Ahmed Foundation delivered a keynote address.

- Cleaning Campaign at Nangalembe Monument (Zone 7 massacre)

The VUT Community Engagement department in partnership with the Vaal Tourism Association, embarked on a cleaning campaign on 27 January 202, in a quest to preserve and maintain the site of memories in the Emfuleni Municipality. Thirty people

attended a night vigil of Chris Nangalembe in memory of many people that were injured on 12 of January 1991.

- **Cleaning Campaign at Sharpeville Human Rights Memorial Site**  
The VUT Community Engagement department in partnership with "Ubaba-Oqotho" Men's Forum, took an initiative to clean the Sharpeville Memorial Precinct on 25 January 2021, before the Human Rights Month.

### **Environmental Sustainability at the VUT, 2021 and beyond**

The rationale for environmental sustainability is drawn from the Legislative Framework including Acts and Regulations as published by Government. These acts and regulations can be summarised as follows:

- a) The National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998) sets key principles and directives that all developments must be socially and economically sustainable and that environmental management must place people and their needs at the forefront of its concern. It further provides a framework for integration of environmental issues into planning, design, decision-making, implementation of plans, development proposals and operations of entities.
- b) The Environment Conservation Act (73 of 1989) (ECA) - The Act provides for the effective protection and controlled utilisation of the environment and for matters incidental thereto and, in addition, contains a number of provisions that are of paramount importance to the development of infrastructure and equally applies to the development and operations of the VUT.
- c) The National Water Act (36 of 1998) was promulgated in response to the protection of the right to water as a basic human need and environmental right in the Constitution. The Act regulates the protection use development, conservation, management and control of country's water resources.
- d) Atmosphere Pollution Prevention Act (45 of 1965) and National Air Quality Act (39 of 2004) is aimed at providing control over all sources of air pollution. Control of pollution is divided into four categories, namely, noxious or offensive gases, smoke, dust and motor vehicle emissions.



The recently approved new Safety, Health and Environmental Management Policy for the Vaal University of Technology acknowledges and speaks to this legal framework and incorporates elements of environmental sustainability into the Policy.

### ***Environmental sustainability initiatives to date***

The VUT Centre for Alternative Energy, within the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, is a research centre which focuses on/off-grid electricity supply to rural communities; energy efficiency in buildings and households; general alternative energy supply; fuel cell and hydrogen research; and printing of fuel cell membrane electrode assemblies. The MEng (Energy Efficiency) was launched in 2020 with 25 students registering in March. As an outcome of their research, the Centre installed on an experimental basis a small solar panel on the roof of S-building at Vanderbijlpark Campus. To date, monthly savings have been approximately R7 000, and the Solar PV System has been problem-free. The plan is to expand the system to other university buildings. These systems will not only have obvious savings benefits for the university but will provide extended research and project implementation opportunities for our under-graduates as well as post-graduate students.

A number of research initiatives have taken place within the Faculty of Human Sciences, more especially in terms of climate change, the Sustainable Development Goals and tourism, resulting in conference presentations and accredited research outputs. This research makes important contributions to industry and society through its recommendations in terms of the sustainable use and development of natural resources and also in terms of addressing the issues associated with climate change such as its impact on coastal areas and nature reserves. More importantly, some of the research in the faculty has also highlighted the devastating impact of the COVID19 pandemic on the tourism and hospitality industry and has suggested ways to build resilience in a sustainable manner, such as through the gradual re-opening of the industry.

### ***VUT Sustainability Strategies looking ahead***

The institution is currently in the process of developing a Campus Infrastructure Master Plan and has already included in its scope for its future development consideration for sustainability as a core pillar of success. In terms of this scope, the following areas are to be considered in all planning, specification, design, implementation and operations that will influence the new look, image and impact of the University within the Vaal community and surroundings.

The following areas are intended as key focus points:

- a) Development of Green Buildings
- b) Energy Saving Designs and Fittings
- c) Water Savings Systems and Alternatives
- d) Renewable Energy such as Solar Photo-Voltaic Panels (Solar PV Systems)
- e) Waste Management Strategies including Recycling, Minimisation, Re-Use, etc.

### ***Energy Projects and Strategies***

VUT has identified the need for business continuity in the area of energy supply in the main campus and residences alike. This need is deemed critical due to the unreliability of the municipal power supply that keeps tripping; interruptions are very costly to the VUT community, especially to the academic programme. During such power interruptions, on-line learning that is heavily reliant on Wi-Fi availability both on the campuses and in the residences is affected. Master's and PhD students who store samples for their research work in the laboratories lose this work, as changing temperatures affect the samples.

The Institution has submitted a project called "Greening of the University – Provision of Solar PV Systems" to DHET for the 6<sup>th</sup> IEG funding cycle and is awaiting outcomes. This programme intends to install Solar PV for the entire University from the main campus to the residences. Existing carports and roof tops have been identified as suitable areas for this installation. The envisaged saving on the energy bill has been calculated at 30%, based on the current municipal bill. The strategy is to supplement the municipal power supply and ensure that all critical areas of the University are provided with power, even in event of power interruption from the Municipality, so that university business can continue unimpeded. The Maintenance Plan that is currently under development is also very specific about the type of light fittings that must be used for all street lighting and building lighting going forward, with LED fittings to be considered so as to save on power consumption. Currently all light fittings being replaced in the building and corridors are LED compliant for energy and cost saving purposes.

### ***Water Projects and Strategies***

The dilemma presented by the water cuts and low pressure from the municipal water supply has prompted VUT to consider alternative water supplies, especially in the Science Park (Sebokeng) Campus and residences. A funding application has been submitted to DHET for the provision and installation of a borehole system and purification system on the Sebokeng site, so as to supplement the municipal water supply. This is also seen as a critical project in the VUT context to ensure business continuity and sustainability of the academic programme.

VUT is also considering the harvesting of rainwater for use in bathrooms and watering of the grounds where feasible. This effort will save potable water and decrease the municipal water bill significantly. The institution has recently planted trees around the Sebokeng residences as part of the greening and landscaping programme which the University is pursuing, with the aim of creating a conducive, appealing and healthy learning, teaching and living environment for students and staff.

### ***Waste Management Strategies***

The recently approved Safety, Health and Environmental Management Policy requires University Management, staff and students to intentionally plan and execute their activities and operations in total observance and promotion of a clean and sustainable environment.

A summary of matters addressed under this section in the VUT Policy are the following:

All laboratory operations, clinic facilities, food services, health sciences, etc, that generate hazardous waste during their productive processes need to take cognisance of legislative responsibilities and take necessary measures to eliminate and/or reduce their impact on the environment.

The activities pursued by VUT in the process of infrastructure development and operations may affect natural river courses and streams that flow directly into the Vaal River. Consequently, infrastructure design must take into account the intended and unintended impacts on the stream flows and quality of the water.

VUT will develop a strategy on the reduction and recycling of waste. The aim of waste prevention is to stabilise waste generation in order to minimise impact on the environment, improve resource efficiency and reduce the cost of waste management.

The substantial quantity of waste generated through VUT operations must be recycled, composted or recovered by other methods, including energy recovery. However, there is also a need to put in place measures to support recycling and composting. The strategy and actions will focus on the following:

- a) Enabling and encouraging participation in recycling, composting and recovery;
- b) Stimulating markets through sustainable purchasing;
- c) Developing a recycling economy for all waste streams;
- d) Implementing a product producer responsibility policy; and
- e) Setting recycling and recovery targets.

VUT has therefore positioned itself through its infrastructure planning, development, implementation and operations to comply with environmental legislation and to protect the environment, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –

- a) Prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
- b) Promote conservation; and
- c) Secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

## SECTION 6

# WORKER AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION AT VUT

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### A. Worker participation

The absence of industrial action at VUT indicates that employee relations are stable. Still, there is a challenge with the turnaround time for disciplinary cases. A strategy for speeding up the resolution of disciplinary cases has been devised. A positive discipline culture will be created by sending a message to the institution about consequences for misconduct, timely corrective action and thus reducing the perception of extreme prejudice and encouraging desired behaviour and conduct. Discipline and grievance training for line managers is part of the plan so that they can deal with the less complex and less difficult discipline issues. The turnaround time for disciplinary cases will be reduced as a result of this. We have sought to train our own employees to serve as case chairpersons in part because of the high cost of external service providers. In November 2021, we trained our line managers to become a pool of chairs. The MUF holds regular meetings four times a year, as well as needed ad hoc meetings. As a result of the closure of satellite campuses and the transfer of employees, there have been numerous meetings.

### Recruitment

In VUT's senior staff recruitment processes, close to 400 employees from all 4 faculties take part in voting for the best candidate on their presentations. These employees fall in different forums, which are, Institutional Forum (IF), Senate and the Faculty Boards. Their votes are taken into consideration when the Selection Panel (SP) recommend appointable candidates. The SP is also composed of employees of the university, external experts and council members.

## **Salary Negotiations**

Salary negotiations in 2021 for implementation in 2022 did not take place because of the financial situation in the university. Unions were requested to wait until the 2022 registration of students was over to ascertain if the planned numbers of students were met. VUT unfortunately did not achieve the expected student numbers, hence the negotiations were further deferred into the second quarter of 2022.

## **B. Student participation**

Cooperative governance and relationship management with students and student leaders is addressed through the Student Life and Governance Unit within SSS. The SRCs are mandated by the Higher Education Act of 1997 to be the representatives of students, and University officials communicate with students through the Student Representative Councils (SRCs).

The Student Representative Council serves as the voice for the general student population. Members of the SRC form part of statutory committees that include the Institutional Forum, Senate and the university Council.

The current SRC was elected in the first online election at VUT after a review of its constitution. That ensured the establishment of Faculty Councils and Post-Graduate Councils which aim at facilitating engagements with Executive Deans and HODs. Student leaders are consulted in almost all cases that have a direct bearing on student life. That happens at departmental level as well as Management Committee level. This is a deliberate step to deepen student engagement and to ensure that students fully participate in cooperative governance of the institution.

## SECTION 7

# REPORT ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RISK

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The Vaal University of Technology (VUT) continues with its endeavours to inculcate a culture that promotes effective risk management throughout the institution. This it does by ensuring that management at senior level is involved in driving the risk management processes through established structures within their departments and units. The university acknowledges the role risk management plays in ensuring that certain situations are not only circumvented but are dealt with in a way that protects the integrity and sustainability of the university. This further requires the involvement and participation of all stakeholders from the students, staff, the community, as well as people that do business with the university. The university continues with risk assessments, in order to improve the situation, and mitigating the envisaged impact of risks, if they were to occur.

Formal risk assessment processes were initiated during the year under review, to identify the strategic risks of the university. Although these processes were moving at snail pace considering the impact of work-from-home, adjustment to the rescheduled academic calendar, availability of stakeholders, etc. The outcome was the Strategic Risk Register which also enclose the university's commitment towards the mitigation of identified risks. Enterprise risks are being reviewed on an annual basis to consider emerging risks and new development in the environment during the year. Risk management processes remain continuous and are reviewed annually looking into improvements going forward.

Risk governance structures are in place to provide the appropriate oversight of internal control and risk management processes with the aim to improve the overall of the internal control environment. There is sufficient and responsive mitigation of identified risks to minimize risk exposure levels.

The mitigation strategies (and internal control measures) have been developed subsequent to thorough engagements with the relevant stakeholders, and the implementation of these is being encouraged and closely monitored by the Risk Management unit. This process is ongoing and remains one of the priorities of Risk Management Committee.

## **Risk Management Structures**

The Audit and Risk Committee of Council has been properly constituted and is fully operational in line with the provisions of the relevant prescripts. This Committee provides an oversight role to the governance of risk within the institution. The university has also implemented a risk champions approach in order to ensure process management at lower levels.

The Enterprise Risk Management Framework was approved by the Management Committee of the university, and this led to the establishment and appointment of the Risk Management Committee, which will play a pivotal role in the management of risks within the institution. The University is in the process of procuring a Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) System. Acquisition of this system will improve the efficiency of our risk management processes and assist in the implementation of the Combined Assurance Model.

## **Risks Managed in 2021**

The year 2021 continued to present different challenges as Covid-19 remained a threat to the normal proper and adequate functioning of the university. Covid-19 remained a risk that the university needed to continuously deal with. The response strategy by the university ensured that the risk posed by Covid-19 was under control. The university had to manage this risk together with other risks that posed a threat to it, and these risks included the following:

**Strategic Risks** – The university managed develop a strategic risk register that was linked to the strategic objectives of the university, and these strategic risks are being managed at an executive level due to their nature. The management of strategic risks involves different departments and units, and these responsibilities are exercised collaboratively so that the benefit is maximized. The university identifies about 15 strategic risks which are manageable in line with the primary core responsibilities of those risk owners.

**Financial risks** – As per the requirement to review institutional risks on an annual basis, the VUT Strategic Risks were reviewed in 2021 in consideration of the 2021 Annual Performance Plan (APP). One of the major challenges was achieving the mandate of the university articulated in the VUT 2020-2024 Strategy and 2021 APP, given the drawback noted in the prior year. Council and Council Committees were established and this ensure proper of implementation and quarterly monitoring of the institutional performance.



There are also challenges experienced with the non-achievement of FTEN targets in line with the Enrolment Plan signed with the Department of Higher Education. The strategic policies including FTEN policy has been developed and collaborations with internal and external stakeholder remain ongoing to minimize impact and work towards solutions going forward.

The University continues to experience financial challenges from different fronts and it is trying its best to resolve these, or at best to manage them in such way that does not create instability. These challenges have posed some risks to the university and as a result there are finance strategic risks that were identified. In response to these risks the university is developing a financial strategy which will be finalised in 2022, to achieve a stable and sustainable environment.

**Operational Risks** – The operational risks were identified through the process of assessments, and this process is on-going, and the register remains a live document. The university's risk champions are at the forefront of dealing with these operational risks at their unit level. A lot of risks have been identified through assessments that have taken place at departmental level, and the Risk Management unit is closely monitoring the implementation of the suggested and agreed upon mitigation strategies and actions.

Procurement system and processes have been identified as risk which requires immediate intervention, given that it is the anchor that holds critical and core operations of the university. The Supply Chain Management Policy review and capacitation of the function are some of the ongoing focused actions towards addressing the negative enterprise-wide impact.

Due to the deferred projects from the prior year impact of hard lockdowns, historically ageing infrastructure and the decreased Infrastructure Efficiency Grants (IEG) funding in the under review are some of the contributors to the current delays in the completion of some infrastructure projects. The development of the Infrastructure Management Policy and Infrastructure Development Plan have been developed as a measure to facilitate and improve infrastructure management of the university.

**Compliance risks** – the issues pertaining to compliance are a big challenge at the university, and there are risks that emanate from this challenge which continues to the institution. Non-compliance can be costly for the university because it involves laws that are administered by other external agencies who will not hesitate to punish the institution through sanctions. Some of these sanctions can be severe for the university, hence the urgency with which the risks

emanating from non-compliance should be addressed and managed. The university continues to engage with DHET and other relevant stakeholders to ensure compliance, as championed by the Compliance unit.

Depending on available budgets, VUT also seeks to ensure that we also actively drive the initiative around the training and awareness of POPI by all its stakeholders, the development and implementation of POPI Management Policy to ensure adherence to legislation.

**Reputational risks** – There are continuous threats that seek to destabilize the university, and potentially these are risks related to unrest and instability, allegations of corruption against the officials. The university however has continued its engagements with DHET and the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on the issues that pose reputational risks, and these engagements have proven fruitful.

### **Statement on Reasonable Assurance**

The control-assessment tool is currently under development, the 1st control self-assessment is anticipated to be conducted in 2022, subsequent to its approval. The University continues to develop and review policies in order to address compliance gaps as well as improving the situation on risk management. This process is geared towards improving the internal control environment.

### **Conclusion**

There were changes in the year under review, and the risks that the university was faced with posed some threats. The institution was however able to withstand the risks storm and managed these identified risks in a way that mitigated the impact. University managed to proceed with assessments, and the extrapolation of strategic risks from this process. The appointment of the Risk Management Committee as well as the constitution of the Audit and risk Committee of Council proved to be milestones that catapulted the risk management regime within the institution to another level. The systematic approach to risk management adopted by the university will ensure that the process of decision-making is well informed, and the university is protected from any imminent risk hazards.

The risk management processes and policies remain under scrutiny to continuously assess their effectiveness to ensure that the university can leverage the benefits of effective risk

management and timeously improve the risk management processes as the university's risk maturity improves. The Risk Management Committee continues to monitor the implementation of the risk and compliance management strategies to ensure optimized impact. The desire and willingness to improve risk management continues to guide our engagement on the subject together with departments participating as well, and this will ensure that the institution stays afloat.

## SECTION 8

# STATEMENT ON TRANSFORMATION

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### **The Social Justice and Transformation Unit**

Like many public universities seized with responding to the national transformation imperatives, the Vaal University of Technology established the Transformation Office in 2009. Currently called the Social Justice and Transformation (SJT) Unit – to foreground social justice principles in university operations - this office serves an important strategic and coordinating function when it comes to organizational transformation. Thus, Institutional transformation forms part of the Vaal University of Technology approved strategy 2020-2024.

### **Goals of the SJT Unit**

Besides reviewing the VUT Integrated Transformation Plan and social justice policies, some of the goals set for the year were: assisting faculties and support departments to develop their faculty and departmental plans in line with the Vaal University of Technology's Employment Equity Plan.; continued support for students and staff with disabilities; setting up of Faculty Transformation and Diversity Committees. The SJT also conducts monitoring, evaluation and reporting on progress made on broad transformation including on employment equity and annual submission of progress reports to the Department of Employment and Labour. Some of the committees in place to assist with the monitoring of progress include the Employment Equity and Diversity Committee and the Gender and Disability Forums.

### **Faculties' contribution to transformation**

In the following each Faculty reports on their transformation activities during the 2021 academic year.

#### **Faculty of Applied and Computer Sciences**

Initiatives seeking to develop staff, women and people living with disabilities

Covid-19 regulations and restrictions compelled the Faculty to transform the way the curriculum was executed.

The Faculty embarked on the Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) mode where students and staff had to be urgently trained on the usage of VUTela (learning management system). The practical laboratories in the C-block are located on the third floor and do not have lifts installed.

As a result, arrangements were made for students who were wheelchair bound to conduct their practicals in laboratories located on the ground floor. Each laboratory in the new Physical and Life Sciences building has made provision for a workstation for students living with disabilities.

*Transformation with regards to teaching, learning and research activities.*

The Faculty saw seven (7) female staff and one male staff members graduate with PhD qualifications. Two female staff members and one male staff graduated with a Master's degree.

To encourage multi- and inter-disciplinary research activities, the Faculty initiated the following three (3) focus areas within which research collaboration is conducted:-

- i. Water and Remediation,
- ii. Health and Wellbeing, and
- iii. Information Systems and Smart Technology Applications.

*Research profile*

The total number of staff members actively involved in research in the Faculty is listed according to race and gender in table 1.

Table 1: Research staff profile

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	23	14
Coloured	0	1
Indian	3	2
White	5	2
Total	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>

The Faculty is committed to encourage staff members and make resources available for all the research staff. It is pleasing to notice that female staff members are actively involved in the Faculty research activities.

### *Staff and student profile*

The table below provides a distribution of the faculty's teaching staff profile.

Table 2: Teaching staff profile

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>African</b>	67	54	<b>121</b>
<b>Coloured</b>	0	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Indian</b>	3	1	<b>4</b>
<b>White</b>	7	10	<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>143</b>

It can be noticed that the number of females is more than the number of males, an indication of the Faculty's commitment to institutional transformation.

### *Staff qualifications*

The number of staff with a Masters' qualification is illustrated in table 3 according to race and gender.

Table 3: Staff with a Masters' qualification

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>African</b>	25	32	<b>57</b>
<b>Indian</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>White</b>	1	2	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>60</b>

This table shows that females in the Faculty are also very much involved in the acquiring of higher qualifications.

The number of staff with a Doctoral qualification is illustrated according to race and gender in table 4.

Table 4: Staff with Doctoral qualifications

<b>Gender Description</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	13	11	24
Coloured	0	1	1
Indian	2	1	3
White	4	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>33</b>

Table 4 depicts that more work still needs to be done to encourage female staff members to enrol for and complete a PhD qualification.

Tables 5a and 5b show the number of Professors available in the Faculty where four (4) staff members are male Full Professors, and one (1) staff member is a female Full Professor, while six (6) staff members are Associate Professors.

Table 5a: Full Professors in the Faculty

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	0	3	3
Coloured	0	0	0
Indian	1	1	2
White	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 5b: Associate Professors in the Faculty

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	1	3	4
Coloured	1	0	1
Indian	0	0	0
White	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>

The tables 5a and 5b show that there is a lot to be done to increase the number of female staff members to supervise postgraduate students and present papers at the conferences as well as publishing them in accredited journals.

### *Student profile*

The student profile according to race and gender in the Faculty is given in table 6.

Table 6: Student profile

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	1591	1456	3047
Coloured	9	6	15
Indian	2	4	6
White	6	7	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1609</b>	<b>1474</b>	<b>3083</b>

It is evident from Table 6 that female students prefer to study in this Faculty, a clear indication that transformation has found a home in our Faculty.

### ***Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS)***

The FMS contributed to the transformation imperatives by promoting inclusiveness, and eliminating the alienation, marginalisation and discrimination of designated individuals and groups within the faculty. Our understanding of transformation in the faculty is that it involves intentional and specific procedures followed in ensuring that there is equity in facets such as access, opportunity, and outcomes for staff and students. It also involves the re-curriculation agenda, with the decolonisation of the curriculum having become topical matter in recent years.

### ***Staff profile***

The staff profile within the FMS demonstrates that there is diversity and inclusion of the different racial groups and genders existing in South Africa. The distribution of the academic staff by race and gender within the FMS is presented in the table below.

Table: Teaching staff profile

<b>Race</b>	<b>Female Headcount</b>	<b>Male Headcount</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	27	38	65
Coloured	1	-	1
Indian	2	-	2
White	16	4	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>88</b>



The permanent staff profile shows that African Males (43%) are the largest group, followed by African Females (31%). Overall, with all racial groups combined, females are the majority within the faculty (52%). A need exists, however, to increase the number of Indian and coloured academics within the FMS.

### **Staff qualifications**

Inherent within the strategic plan of the FMS is the goal to increase the number of staff with higher degrees, especially masters and doctoral qualifications. The profiles of staff who hold master's qualifications are shown in the table below;

**Table: Staff with a master's qualification**

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	21	20
Coloured	0	-
White	7	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>

A total of 48 staff members in the FMS are holders of master's degrees. The majority of these staff are Africans (85%), with African females comprising a substantial number (44%). This distribution is likely to shift in the next few years as the drive for staff members to obtain doctoral qualifications bears the expected fruits.

**Table: Staff with doctoral qualifications**

Race	Female	Male
	Headcount	Headcount
African	8	13
Indian	2	-
White	6	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>

In total, 33 staff members in the FMS are holders of doctoral degrees. Among these, Africans, who hold doctoral qualifications are the largest number (64%), up from the previous year's 53%. This increase could be attributed to the efforts by the faculty to provide motivation

and support to staff members studying towards vertical qualifications. This support includes activities such as mentoring, postgraduate induction, workload reduction, financial support for research, conference attendance and internal supervision. This trajectory is likely to be maintained as more staff register for doctoral qualifications and as they complete their studies.

**Table: Senior Staff Members**

Race	Female Senior Lecturers	Male Senior Lecturers
	Headcount	Headcount
African	6	10
Indian	2	0
White	11	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>

The faculty has a complement of 31 senior lecturers, of which the majority (61%) are females. Efforts are in place to increase the number of African female senior lecturers. This will be realised by offering them support for doctoral studies and assisting them to identify publication opportunities and motivating them to participate in community engagement programmes.

**Table: Senior Academic Staff with Professorships**

Race	Female Full Professors	Male Full Professor	Female Associate Professors	Male Associate Professors
	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount
African	-	1	2	1
Indian	-	-	-	-
White	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

The FMS has three Associate Professors and one Full Professor. Two of the associate professors are female. To increase the number of professors in the faculty, three female senior lecturers have been nominated to attend the Future Professors Programme. Internal mentorship and support is also provided to the current cohort of senior lecturers to enhance their eligibility for future promotion.

### *Student profile*

**Table: Student profile**

Race	Female	Male	TOTAL
	Headcount enrolments	Headcount enrolments	
African	2 748	1 957	4 705
Coloured	13	13	26
Indian	-	-	-
No Information	4	4	8
White	6	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 771</b>	<b>1 976</b>	<b>4 747</b>

The majority of the students are of the African racial group (99%), with females comprising highest represented group (58%). This distribution is attributed to the recruitment process and the regional population.

### *Curriculum transformation*

Over the years, the faculty's curricula have been transformed in various ways in tandem with the dynamic nature of the content, emergent pedagogies, diversity in academic staff and the means by which knowledge is acquired. Topical in this account is the Africanisation of the curricula, to ensure that learning has been contextualised to reflect the environment in which we exist.

### *Research profile*

The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 created fertile ground for ground-breaking research within the faculty. One of the new research avenues considers the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on various facets of business and management, such as marketing, retail business, supply chain management, accountancy, and human resource management. Additionally, the technological avalanche experienced since the emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution has generated an impetus to determine the influence of technology on business. Such research possibilities have been considered in the FMS.

## SECTION 9

# REPORT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FORUM TO THE COUNCIL

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The Institutional Forum (IF) is established in terms of the Higher Education Act (Section 31(1) of Act 101 of 1997. The institutional forum (IF) advise the university Council on policy matters, including the execution of the provision of the Act and National Policy on Higher Education.

The HE Act and the University Statute sets out the following areas of focus for IF:

- The Implementation of the HE Act and the National Policy on Higher Education.
- Race and Gender Equity policies
- The Selection of Candidates for senior executive management posts.
- Codes of conduct, mediation and dispute resolution procedures, and the fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research, and learning.
- Performs such functions as determine by the Council
- Advice Council on the Appointment of senior managers

**The Institutional Forum participated in the recruitment of the following**

- Vice Chancellor and Principal
- Deputy Vice Chancellor of RICl: Research, Innovation, Commercialization, and Internationalization
- Deputy Vice Chancellor of resources and planning
- Executive Director Human Resources
- Dean of Management Science
- Dean of Human Sciences
- Dean of Engineering

## **The Composition of the Institutional Forum**

The Composition of the Institutional Forum is provided for in the Vaal University Statute of 2021 as follows:

### **Constituency**

Nehawu Representative  
Women and Gender Representative  
  
Academic Representative  
Senate Representative  
Senate Representative  
Nteu Representative  
Convocation Representative  
Council Representative  
Council Representative  
Non-Academic Representative  
Non-Academic Representative  
Mancom Representative  
HR Representative  
Student Support Representative  
Disability Representative  
Director Transformation Representative  
SRC Representative

### **Representative**

Mr. Joseph Radebe (Chairperson)  
Ms. Kediemetsi Mokotsi  
(DeputyChairperson)  
Mr Ricardo da Rocha  
Dr Johannes Gauda Maseko  
Professor T Padayachee  
Mr. Treasure Mawele  
Mr. Lucky Shashaoka  
Mr. S Mahlalela  
Mr. S Khanyile  
Mr. Jimmy Mabasa  
Mr. Moeketsi Maleke  
Mr. Leonard Swana  
Ms. Boitumelo Letlhaku  
Mr. Sibusiso Mchunu  
Mr Sandile Moyo  
Mr. George Mvalo  
Ms. Nonhlanhla Matlaleng

### **Committee Secretariat**

Registrar Dr. Dan Mokoena Secretariat  
Committee Secretary Ms. Refiloe Mofokeng

### **Activities of the Institutional Focus**

The following activities were conducted in the reporting period:

- The IF is part of the task team responsible for the appointment of the University Chancellor
- The institutional Forum has concluded its Charter/ Terms of Reference that is referred to governance committee for approval

- IF requested that it be accorded and granted its full participation and equal rights in the recruitment, selection, and appointment of senior executive management position
- The IF has adopted the approved Council Code of conduct as their guiding document to guide its conduct

### Challenges

Institutional Forum (IF) at VUT is properly constituted and functional and the main challenge is its participation in the entire process of Selection, recruitment, and appointment of senior executive management.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr J Radebe  
IF Chairperson

30 JUNE 2022  
Date

## SECTION 10

# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT ON MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

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The Management and Administration of the University rests upon the Vice-Chancellor and Principal who exercises responsibility within the prescripts of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, University Statute and Rules and King IV Report on Corporate Governance. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal executes this responsibility with the assistance of the Executive Management of the University. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is the Chief Accounting Officer in charge of the overall management and administration of the University. In the performance of the management and administration functions the Vice-Chancellor is assisted by the Management Committee (MANCOM). The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is accountable to Council. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal and his management team are responsible for the management functions of the University, and Council for the governance functions.

For the first three quarters of 2021, VUT was under administration and as such had no Vice-Chancellor and Principal (VC). Prof M Lington was appointed as acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal for the rest of 2021. The following report considers the VC's reflections on the management and administrative functions of VUT in 2021.

### Changes in Management and Administrative Leadership

Significant key positions pertinent to the provisioning of the VUT reconfiguration were identified and filled, allowing for the establishment of a solid management structure that began guiding the institution under the direction of the Administrator. The following appointments were made:

#### Senior Appointments

EMPLOYEE NUMB	SURNAM	FULL NAMES	sGende	sRaceCt	JOB TITLE	Date Join
202101005	ODIYO	JOHN OGONY	M	A	DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR: RICI	2021/02/01
202101064	MORRIS	PETER JOHN	M	C	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: HR	2021/03/15
202101067	CHILI	MUNTUWENKOSI MEHLAYABUKA	M	A	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: CAD	2021/05/01
202101180	VILAKAZI	S'MANGALISO PATRICK	M	A	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: GLS	2021/07/01
202101261	MAPUKATA	RITA PEARL NOMTHANAZO	F	A	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: ADV.	2021/12/01

## Recruitment

In VUT's senior staff recruitment processes, close to 400 employees from all 4 faculties take part in voting for the best candidate on their presentations. These employees fall in different forums, which are, Institutional Forum (IF), Senate and the Faculty Boards. Their votes are taken into consideration when the Selection Panel (SP) recommends appointable candidates. The SP is also composed of employees of the university, external experts and council members.

## Staffing Issues

### Total workforce profile at year-end

Total Workforce profile as at November 2021

Occupational Levels	Male					Female					Foreign Nationals		Total Staff	AGES			
	A	C	I	W	Sub-Total	A	C	I	W	Sub-Total	M	F		<35	35-60	61-65	>65
Top management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Senior management	7	0	1	0	8	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	10	0	7	3	0
Professionally qualified and experienced specialists and mid-management	133	2	8	44	187	98	4	9	72	183	44	25	439	37	351	47	4
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen, and superintendents	89	0	2	14	105	185	4	2	45	236	6	3	350	41	294	15	0
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making	29	0	0	1	30	22	1	0	0	23	0	0	53	2	43	8	0
Unskilled and defined decision making	35	0	0	0	35	99	1	0	1	101	0	0	136	6	118	11	0
<b>TOTAL PERMANENT</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>4</b>
Temporary employees	297	5	2	31	335	244	8	3	34	289	85	17	726	292	405	12	17
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1715</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>21</b>



### **Staff turnover**

<b>Movement Type</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% Staff average</b>
RESIGNATION	14	0.0144
PERMANENT APPOINTMENT	12	0.0123
RETIREMENT	25	0.0257
DISMISSAL - MISCONDUCT	1	0.0010
DECEASED	11	0.0113

### **Insourcing**

It is widely believed that insourcing might have a positive socio-economic impact and will support the institution's social impact report. Insourcing was considered against the institution's financial viability and risk and with this background, VUT had undertaken to use a staggered approach when insourcing of the Security Services.

During phase 1 (which lasted from 2020 – 2021) a total of Headcount of 67 Staff members from the protection services department had been insourced.

<b>Protection Services – Insourced Staff Phase 1</b>	
<b>Post</b>	<b>Headcount</b>
Director	1
Operations Manager	2
Senior Systems Technicians	1
Security Liaison Officer	2
Head Investigator	1
Head Card Section	1
Fire Response Officer	1
Operations Officer	5
Surveillance Technician	2
Supervisor – Traffic Control	1
Client Services Supervisor	1
Investigation Officer	3
Guard Commanders	21
Records Administrator	1

Traffic Warden	6
Investigation Assistant	2
CCTV Operator	12
Call Centre Controller	4

During phase 1 (which lasted from 2020 – 2021) a total of Headcount of 67 Staff members from the protection services department had been insourced.

Phase 2 which will take place in 2022, includes positions like Card Controllers, Client Service Consultants and 210 x Security Guards

### ***Policy review, and performance management***

The following policies have been sent to the language editor for review, namely the Vaccination Policy, The Talent Management Policy and the 9 Box Talent Matrix guide.

Policies that are at the stake holder consultation stage include the Appointment Categories and Conditions of Employment Policy, Retrenchment Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy and the Policy for Study Assistance of Dependents and Employees.

Performance Management was rolled out to all positions between Post Levels 1 to 7 (P1 to P7) for the reporting period. Through continuous awareness and information sharing sessions on the performance management system and process and its alignment to skills development, the number of performance contracts entered into increased and the rollout will continue in the coming year. The Performance Management Policy was approved, and rollout was initiated with the review of performance of PL2-5 positions through a panel review. Those being reviewed were required to present on their objectives, their progress, achievements and challenges. The process was to be rolled down to further Peromnes levels but was delayed due to pandemic challenges. A strategy to promote awareness of Performance Management for all VUT staff was developed, and rollout will continue in the coming year.

### ***Staff Wellness***

The VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY is committed to ensuring that their workforce is productive and healthy, by placing value on both physical and mental health. The University understands that both personal and work-related problems can have a negative impact on its employees, and that this can result in diminished productivity, reduced performance and

inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. Mental health issues could also have an effect on the organisation and result in high turnover, increased absenteeism, a decline in employee productivity, workplace violence or harassment and substance abuse by employees. It is for this reason that the Wellness Specialist post has been identified as a critical post and advertised to ensure that these needs are catered for.

### ***Worker participation***

The absence of industrial action at VUT indicates that employee relations are stable. Still, there is a challenge with the turnaround time for disciplinary cases. A strategy for speeding up the resolution of disciplinary cases has been devised. A positive discipline culture will be created by sending a message to the institution about consequences for misconduct, timely corrective action and thus reducing the perception of extreme prejudice and encouraging desired behaviour and conduct. Discipline and grievance training for line managers is part of the plan so that they can deal with the less complex and less difficult discipline issues. The turnaround time for disciplinary cases will be reduced as a result of this. We have sought to train our own employees to serve as case chairpersons in part because of the high cost of external service providers. In November 2021, we trained our line managers to become a pool of chairs. The MUF holds regular meetings four times a year, as well as needed ad hoc meetings. As a result of the closure of satellite campuses and the transfer of employees, there have been numerous meetings.

### ***Salary Negotiations***

Salary negotiations in 2021 for implementation in 2022 did not take place because of the financial situation in the university. Unions were requested to wait until the 2022 registration of students was over to ascertain if the planned numbers of students were met. VUT unfortunately did not achieve the expected student numbers, hence the negotiations were further deferred into the second quarter of 2022.

## **Management of the Student Life-Cycle**

### **Introduction**

Due to the extension of the 2020 academic year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, the 2021 registration period commenced on 1st March 2021 with the anticipation that it would end on 31st March 2021 as defined in the approved VUT calendar. But, by 05th May 2021, VUT was still managing the administration of student's registration processes. Both the admission of new students and the registration of both first time entering and returning students were done using the 2021 pilot online registration process and despite the challenges that were experienced, the institution successfully registered a total of 17 588

students (85% of the 2021 target), using the online system. No student was onsite during this period, all processes were performed remotely. The areas of focus will be on the, 2021 selections and admissions for First Time Entering Students (FTENs), and finally the online registrations process.

### Selection and Admissions

- Diplomas and bachelor's degrees

The selection of prospective students started in the previous year and continued concurrently with the registration as the approved quota for some of the programmes were not achieved. For the Bachelor and the Diplomas, although we have received a total of 65 361 applicants (117 158 applications), we only managed to register 4 262 FTEN (88.9%) with a target of 4 795.

- Advanced Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma

In the case of the above, although the percentage of enrolments increased from 2020 to 2021, VUT still did not meet the enrolment targets for first time entering advanced diploma programme. The University managed to register 1 171 students, which can be translated to 58.8% of the target. The postgraduate diploma enrolments were significantly lower than the target that was set for this qualification level. VUT managed to register 412 students, a deficit of 625 from the target of 1 037 that was set; this translates to an enrolment percentage of 39.7%. These lower enrolment numbers could indicate that the University may be required to market the programmes further as these programmes lead to the vertical articulation of programmes to the Doctoral level.

Despite the efforts to convert the admissions that were confirmed into registrations, a deficit of 337 spaces was recorded. A detailed analysis is provided in the table below.

Faculty	Target FTEN	Actual FTEN	Target First Intake	Actual First Intake	Target Seniors	Actual Seniors	Target H/count	Actual H/count	% Target Total H/count
Applied & Computer Sciences	690	540	954	555	2514	2186	3468	2741	79.0%
Engineering	1453	1228	1562	1277	3753	4414	5315	5691	107.1%
Human Sciences	1359	1439	1559	1503	3267	3606	3606	5109	105.9%
Management Sciences	1141	1055	1387	1096	2897	3114	4285	4210	98.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4643</b>	<b>4262</b>	<b>5463</b>	<b>4431</b>	<b>12432</b>	<b>13320</b>	<b>17894</b>	<b>17751</b>	<b>99.2%</b>

## Registration Process

The plan for 2021 was to register students online, using the ITS- iEnabler platform. The process was challenging however the issues below indicated as hindering the process significantly and are being given attention.

- Changing of the student initially registered at the Ekurhuleni campus to the Vanderbijlpark campus.
- The delay in processing the 2020 results which significantly affected the progressing of students from one study period to the next. This included the re-assessment of students by the faculties and requiring that marks be changed.
- Class groups that were not set up, incorrect set ups of groups, and some were set to low maximum levels in order to accommodate social distancing in the case that the University took a decision for students return to campus and for practical classes that required laboratory use. This was challenging as most students experienced registration errors due to this limitation of class groups.
- Clashes on the teaching timetable, while some clashes could be resolved, others were as a result of the fact that students were not progressing academically as they should be.
- Re-admission of students for old qualifications which was not anticipated.
- NSFAS funding decisions that were still pending.
- Issuing of quotations to international students. For these group of students to calculate the amount that is required, they need a quote, unfortunately this was not a thought through process and frustrated the students
- Students subjected to credit management process as a result of historical debt.
- Unavailability of an effective call centre/ student support service to support the university. This included all stakeholders who needed to be available to resolve the email enquiries from students.

Despite the above challenges, a total of 19 905 students were registered (Including 1 448 WIL students: 69 international and 1 379 national students). Below is a breakdown of both international and national student registrations by campus. The Ekurhuleni Campus was closed, and students moved to the Vanderbijlpark Campus of the University, which explains the 0 registrations for 2021 for the campus. The Uppington Campus is using a phasing out teaching method of closing the campus, hence the declining numbers as each academic year progresses.

YEAR	2021		
	International	National	Grand Total
Ekurhuleni	0	0	0
Secunda	2	232	234
Sebokeng	0	520	520
Uppington	0	30	30
Vanderbilpark	802	18 319	19 121
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>19 101</b>	<b>19 905</b>

### ***Examinations and Assessment***

In an attempt to accommodate the online teaching model that was implemented, Management resolved to continue with CASS (continuous assessment) instead of summative assessment across all modules and subjects, as defined in the Assessment Policy, in order to ensure compliance with Covid-19 protocols and to ensure that no student would be left behind (to ensure participation of all students in assessment opportunities). All assessments were conducted online, bar a few practical and clinical assessments conducted on campus under strict Covid-19 protocols.

### ***Graduations***

In spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, students still called for a physical graduation ceremony. However, this was not possible. Instead VUT, as with other higher education institutions around the country, did not hold a physical graduation ceremony. The University opted to hold virtual graduation ceremonies. After these ceremonies were concluded, students were invited to the Isak Steyl Stadium, VIP Lounge to collect their certificates; or could opt to have their certificates mailed (via registered mail) or couriered to them.

Despite these challenges, the Division successfully managed to graduate all qualifying students for both Spring and Autumn virtual ceremonies. From all the challenges presented by Covid-19, the department learnt to adapt, automate and reskill such that various processes can now currently be performed online, unlike in the pre-Covid-19 era. The applications for November 2021 graduation were opened immediately after the winter graduations, the closing date was 17 September 2021, the graduations were extended to 22 – 25 November 2021.

The total number of students approved for graduation were as follows:

- Applied and Computer Science	- 170
- Management Sciences	- 312
- Engineering	- 370
- Human Sciences	- 242
<b>Total</b>	<b>= 1094</b>

The total number of students who attended the graduation are:

- Applied and Computer Science	- 106
- Management Sciences	- 214
- Engineering	- 257
- Human Sciences	- 141
<b>Total</b>	<b>= 808</b>

The collection of qualification and photo shooting at Isak Steyl stadium started on the 22nd to the 25th of November 2021. The project was a success.

### ***Conclusion***

With the academic year 2020 having to be extended to 28 February 2021 and thus impacting on the start of the academic year 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic subjected the academic administration function to several challenges and forced it to reshape its business processes to adapt to the changing environment. To a large extent, this was successfully achieved.

### **Student Support Services**

Student Support Services is a dynamic area with ever-changing boundaries, whose focus is on forging inter-relationships between different aspects of student life at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT). It has the ultimate goal of helping students not only to access higher education, but to succeed in it. This Division is expected to keep responding effectively to all the challenges that VUT has to contend with on a regular basis.

Student Support Services strives to ensure that Vaal University of Technology provides quality student experience in a collegiate environment. Support programmes are provided from the time when students join university until they complete their studies. The division is made up of the following units/departments that work together with an intention of achieving common goals: VUT Sport, Student Life and Governance, Student Counselling and Support, HIV/AIDS Unit, Student Accommodation as well as the Campus Clinic.

### **VUT SPORT**

The strategic focus of VUT Sport is to broaden access and participation in sport. The department facilitates the engagement of student and staff in sport and recreation by providing them with opportunities to actively participate in sport. VUT believes that participation in sport can make an important contribution to the holistic development of student athletes with specific focus on personal wellness, inclusivity and social cohesion. The department retains

administrative and financial responsibility for participation of students in competitive and recreational sporting codes at regional, provincial and national level.

The VUT Stadium is well maintained in order to create a safe and enabling environment. This function is critical to keep the fields attractive and a marketing point of the university. The following developments have been completed soccer poles for C field installed, walls inside stadium were repaired, western and northern side precast wall repaired. Palisade fence to close off the parking area has been installed.

## **Sports Achievements**

### **The volleyball Club:**

- The VUT men attained position four and women won bronze medal. The captain Ms. Makhosazana Dlamini was voted the best blocker of the tournament.
- VUT ladies qualified for the Zone 6 club championship to be held in Mozambique 06-16 Jan 2022.

### **Softball Club: USSA National champion men and woman 7 years.**

- Three male and female students as well as a manager were selected to form part of the USSA national teams.
- VUT Softball ladies' player Ms. Koketso Ramaila and Ms. Moshibudi Mswazi were selected to form part of the under 18 Junior national team to travel to Lima, Peru - December 2021.

**Netball:** Sedibeng Netball selected four (4) players from VUT Netball to represent the district in the 2021 Spar U21 & Senior National Netball championships held in Cape town.

**USSA Basketball:** The ladies' basketball team was crowned National USSA Champions for the 11<sup>th</sup> time. The men's team received a bronze medal (3rd position) after an upset and it conceded defeat in the semi-finals against a strong University of Johannesburg team.

**Football Club:** The VUT football team is the epitome of the department's mandate to create real opportunities for student athletes which could change their lives forever. Televised matches provided the invaluable marketing of the VUT brand and exposure for players to be recruited by professional clubs. The display of football and conduct of VUT players was



applauded by all stakeholders who had an opportunity to watch the team play their enterprising football. Games were televised on SuperSport and covered in a range of media platforms.

**The University Sport Company (USC) 2021:** The institution is a member in good standing of the University Sport company and has signed the media rights agreement:

- The marketing, public relations and total student experience will be extended to 2022 because **the Football club qualified for the 2022 Varsity Football** as resolved by the USSA NEC in view of concerns regarding the impact of COVID19 long suspension of sport.
- The Basketball men and women qualified for the 2022 Varsity tournament and Athletics club was tipped to form part of the teams that will participate. However, due to the unfavorable financial climate the teams will not compete due to the high cost of attending the tournament.

## **STUDENT LIFE AND GOVERNANCE**

Student Life and Governance (SLG) is one of the six subdivisions of Student Support Services. It provides and manages opportunities for optimal student experience.

SLG supports SRC, student structures with regards to student development and training, elections, policy review, administration, and management. Most of the activities were heavily impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic and as the primary deliverables essentially involved physical gathering/ contact, the number of actions and activities that took place was also impacted.

The unit focused on two major deliverables in 2021, these were the SRC Constitutional Summit as well as the SRC elections. In addition to these deliverables, the department continued to implement and improve on administrative processes through the development of Standard Operating Procedures.

### **The SRC Constitutional Summit**

The previous SRC Constitution was last ratified in 2009 and has posed several challenges during SRC Elections. There was a court order that was issued against the undeclared SRC Elections results in 2019 which led to the University incurring costs.

A constitutional summit was scheduled for the third quarter of 2021, due to limitations posed by the National State of Emergency and its accompanying legislative directives, it was

determined that the summit should continue in an online format. Following a series of engagements with stakeholders to ensure the smooth running of the process, the summit process was concluded in September 2021. Thereafter the SRC's Constitution was successfully amended and adopted by the VUT Council.

## **SRC Elections**

The SRC Elections are an indispensable process allowing students to vote into office their preferred candidates and organisations who will serve and represent their interests in the Student Representative Council (SRC). This is done through a well organised series of events from the appointment of service providers, the receipt and adjudication of nominations and objections and finally to the announcement of results and constituting of the SRC at the end of the counting process.

In 2021, the Student Life and Governance Office successfully piloted online SRC elections. This was done primarily through:

1. A constitutional review process that amended the SRC Constitution to allow for the taking place of electronic elections
2. The creation/ purchasing of an in-house elections process or alternatively, the appointment of a service provider that could execute on online SRC elections.

The Constitution was successfully amended. The VUT IT Department also commenced the purchasing process of internal voting software as well as the development of an in-house solution. Unfortunately, due to delays in the upgrading of internal software and the impact thereof on licensing, it was deemed no longer feasible to pursue the in-house solution on software purchase for the 2021 leg of the elections. KDBS consulting was thereafter appointed, following a bidding process led by the procurement department, they successfully implanted and executed online SRC elections as well as the constituting of elected members in November and December 2021.

The SRC took place successfully. The following statistics are relevant to the process:

1. 9037 ballots were submitted out of a possible 20 673 eligible voters. This meant a 44% overall voter turnout which was the highest recorded turnout in recent VUT elections.
2. In proportional seat elections, the EFFSC received the largest proportion of votes (5 819 or 64.9% of total votes cast). They were followed by the SASCO who received 2001 votes or 22.3% of the total votes cast.
3. With respect to two independent seats, candidate Tshembani Trust Manganyi received 3 135 votes or 29.4% of total votes cast. the second independent candidate was Mr. Ntsako Qhibi who received 2 954 or 27.7% of the total votes cast.

## **STUDENT COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT**

Student Counselling and Support Department is committed to ensuring that students receive care and support, addressing barriers that may inhibit them from reaching their academic goals and creating spaces for students to gain critical skills that are needed for lifetime success. Whilst Covid-19 impacted on each area of the Department's functions, the Student Counselling and Support staff never lost sight of providing mental health and wellbeing support to the students. The year 2021 was marked by a complete overhaul of the way in which Student Counselling and Support Department provides services. The student Counselling and Support Department transitioned to tele-therapy in a manner that did not compromise student access, privacy and confidentiality.

The therapeutic team implemented 30 psycho-educational outreach sessions which involved 250 students and offered therapy to 1297 students over 60 sessions in response to the diverse needs of students. The therapy sessions conducted were related to relationships, anxiety and emotional imbalance. The team also utilised social media platform to inform students about the 24/7 helpline provided by Higher Health and also provided them with biblio-therapy.

The University Pastoral Counsellor provided bereavement counselling to 11 students over 26 sessions and offered containment to 6 students who were further referred for therapy. The psychometrists' unit remained driven by commitment to foster student learning through rendering workshops on adjustment to university life, career development and job preparation. There were 876 students that were supported with programmes such as study skills, time management, career choices and job preparation.

## HIV/AIDS Unit

The institutional HIV/AIDS Unit is responsible for the coordination, facilitation and implementation of HIV/AIDS, health, wellness mobilization and development programmes in line with VUT Policies and Procedures.

### Prevention and Awareness Campaigns to Break the Cycle of new HIV/TB/STI's/COVID-19 Transmissions

First Year Students Orientation	HIV/TB/STI's Programme	COVID SCREENING:
1000 Of First Year Students reached on Orientated week.	Screened and Tested: 2 286	Daily screening Average:110
Risk Assessments Forms: 1840	Number of Campaigns hosted: 3	Total Screened: 2 000
Referral of at-risk students: 24	Number of HIV Positive Students: 30	Total Tested: 18 Deaths: 0

### Development of effective Implementation of Peer Education Student Internship & WIL Programme

Student Peer Education	Student Internship & WIL
Peer Education Activities: 6 087	Monitoring and Evaluation on VUTELA and reporting.
Educational Sessions: 1 144	Appointment of additional x2 Interns
Risk Assessments: 4 886	Student Entrepreneurship Week Activities SEW
X2 Students Virtual Webinar	
Students Virtual Webinar with the University of Fort Hare.	
Peer Education Certificate ceremony	
Collaboration on GBV Programmes: WITS and VUT Visit to University of Mpumalanga.	

## STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

The department's primary focus is to create conducive living and learning environments for students who are registered at the Vaal University of Technology by providing accommodation solutions for on campus university owned residences as well as off-campus privately owned residences. In order to identify suitable private accommodation, an Accreditation Committee was established and committee members received appointment letters. The accreditation process started on the 18<sup>th</sup> October closed 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The evaluation of residences started on 22 November 2021 and was finalized on 5 December 2021.

Students received psycho-social support through the assistance of Wardens who also act in Loco Parentis, offering emotional and pastoral care to student. Covid 19 protocols were adhered to as staff and students were monitored to follow policies. Needy students received sponsorship in the form of food and toiletries from Seriti Mining and Gift of the Givers

Organisation and that made the situation manageable as residences controlled the movement of student by also allowing students minimal times to visit shops for their basic needs. Victim Empowerment Centre was launched in 2020 and renovations started and the center is at 98% to completion.

Living and Learning Unit continued with physical activities in smaller groups to keep students who were on campus busy when they were not engaged in academic work. The University residence had few students as most participated in online learning. Mentorship programmes were severely affected by the pandemic as students could not engage with their mentors whilst online was the only means of learning. Maintenance schedules were conducted on rotational basis to adhere to the 60/40 staff ratio on /residence campus as guided Department of Health and DHET, and some staff members got infected and affected by the pandemic. Strict measures of assessment were conducted by the wellness staff before a student or staff members returned to work.

### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS (CAMPUS CLINIC)**

Campus Health Services (Campus Clinic) renders a comprehensive primary health care services. The clinic provides the following services for both students and staff: emergency medical services; paramedics on site; reproductive health services; family planning; male circumcision; health talks; ARV programme; treatment collection for Student and Staff; HIV/AIDS Testing; 90-90-90 strategy by National Department of Health; PrEP was introduced on Tuesday (01 June 2021) and marketed via VUT FM; 8 (eight) students qualified to be initiated. PrEP is the use of anti-HIV medication that keeps HIV negative people from getting HIV.

### **Achievements**

Four professional nurses from Campus Clinic attended and passed Covid-19 Vaccination training offered by the Department of Health and 455 Staff members attended the Faculty Board meetings whereby vaccination information was disseminated.

### **Special projects**

South African Blood Transfusion (SANBS) blood drive VUT Community blood donors	42 donated
Physical Assessment were done on 2 <sup>nd</sup> year Sports Management students doing SAFA Practical's Course	144 Students
Hepatitis Vaccines for Biomed Students in the Faculty of Health Science	804 students 7staff members
FLU Vaccination Campaign	211 Students 477 staff members
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>688</b>

## **Institutional Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment**

The implementation of the Institutional Implementation Plan (IIP) underpinning the approved 2021 Annual Performance Plan (APP) aligned to the institutional strategy was initiated by the Unit through communicating the planned actions on portfolio level.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 academic year continued until 28 February 2021. However, the unit ensured that engagement with stakeholders and processes related to the 2020 Annual Performance Report continued as to ensure meeting the agreed upon deadlines. The review of the performance on the 2020 APP and IIP indicators commenced in February 2021. After ManCom approval, the report was submitted to the external auditors. The Unit coordinated the audit where after the audited report was published in the 2020 Annual Report.

In July 2021, the Unit facilitated the development of the 2021 mid-year performance reports against the 2021 APP and IIP. This process was concluded by the end July, enabling the Administrator's approval of the mid-year performance report before VUT exits Administration. The 2021 Mid-Year Performance report was submitted to DHET by 30 November 2021 in line with the requirements of the reporting regulations. The Unit facilitated engagements with portfolios, using the outcomes of the consultation and evaluation process of the Mid-year Report to inform the development of the 2022 APP and IIP. The Council of the University approved the 2022 APP and the plan was submitted to DHET by 15 December 2021.

The catalytic projects, aimed at improving the performance of the University, approved by ManCom at the end of 2019, continued in 2021 due to delays with implementation caused by the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. The Planning Unit coordinated the timeous reviews on the progress of the projects and submitted regular reports to ManCom. A final report on the projects progress was submitted to ManCom by the end of 2021.

The Unit coordinated the processes related to HEMIS reporting ensuring that the 2020 Staff, Postdoc and Space databases were successfully submitted to DHET by the deadlines provided by DHET. Despite the 2020 academic year extending to 28 February 2021, the second 2020 Student HEMIS submission was submitted to DHET by the 30 April 2021 deadline and the 2020/21 HEMIS audit could start within the planned timeframes. The 2019/20 HEMIS audit was completed successfully, and the 2019/20 HEMIS final audit report together with the final 2019 Student database 3<sup>rd</sup> submission was made by the required due date to DHET.

The Unit also makes use of the HEDA business intelligence software to provide data analytics as well as dashboards of operational and HEMIS data that were provided to University stakeholders. Services for ad-hoc information such as cohort analysis, block grant projects, NSFAS extraction etc. were also provided to the relevant stakeholders on request.

Year 2021 was the second year of implementation of the DHET approved 2020-2025 enrolment plan. The DHET Enrolment Ministerial Statement on Enrolment Planning informs the process of a mid-term review cycle of the approved enrolment targets is conducted by the end of the third year of implementation. The process of reviewing the targets set based on the actual achievement and developments in the environment was initiated at the end of September. Before the end of the year, the Unit facilitated the initial engagements with the faculties, providing online actual values to guide decisions on projected target amendments. The enrolment planning process will continue into 2022 and to be concluded by 30 June 2022.

### **Programme Accreditation and Curriculum Development**

The activities of the Programme Accreditation and Curriculum Development Department (PACD) are aligned with the academic planning activities of the Registrar. PACD is responsible for maintaining VUT's Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM). The Department's focus is to support faculties in the development and design of new programmes to be included in VUT's PQM and to review programmes already on the PQM. Programme approval and accreditation is strongly shaped by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) programme accreditation framework and criteria, as well as by the legislative requirements of other statutory and professional councils.

Internal programme approval and accreditation mechanisms ensure that all new and existing academic programmes meet the necessary quality requirements for submission for external accreditation. PACD monitors and audits programmes according to the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework (HEQSF), and collaborates with faculties to ensure that the standards of qualifications meet the criteria of DHET, the CHE and SAQA. These processes can be extremely time-consuming and take between 18 and 24 months.

Table 1 indicates the total number of new programmes and programme reviews (with less than 50% changes) submitted through internal and external approval, accreditation and registration processes. These lesser changes are undertaken according to a 3-5 year cyclical review process (as per DHET, CHE requirements). The 'less than 50%' changes made to

programmes ensure that they maintain relevance to current industry trends and national needs, enhance student throughput and provide succession planning.

Table 1: Total number of new programmes submitted and programme reviews taken through internal and external approval, accreditation and registration processes.

Internal and external approval, accreditation and registration processes during 2021	Number of programmes submitted
<p>Programmes submitted to the VUT Academic Planning and Development Committee (New HEQSF-aligned programmes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diploma in Ecotourism Management</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Ecotourism Management</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Sport Management</li> <li>• Master of engineering in Educational Instruction</li> </ul> <p>Current programmes on PQM (&lt;50% changes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diploma in Digital Media Production</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Digital Media Production</li> <li>• Diploma in Digital Media Production</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Digital Media Production</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Logistics</li> <li>• Diploma in Logistics</li> <li>• Diploma in Cost and Management Accounting</li> <li>• Diploma in Internal Auditing</li> <li>• Diploma in Human Resources</li> <li>• Diploma in Marketing</li> <li>• Diploma in Fine Art</li> <li>• Diploma in Legal Assistance</li> <li>• Diploma in Labour Law</li> <li>• Diploma in Logistics</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Logistics</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Safety Management</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Retail Business Management</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Retail Business Management</li> <li>• Diploma in Sport Management</li> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Sport Management</li> <li>• Diploma in Internal Auditing</li> <li>• Diploma in Financial Information System</li> <li>• Diploma in Human Resource Management</li> <li>• Diploma in Mechanical Engineering</li> </ul>	29
<p>DHET submission (approval)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Legal Techniques and Research</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Safety Management</li> </ul>	3



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Public Relations Management</li> </ul>	
CHE online submissions	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Diploma in Legal Techniques and Research</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Safety Management</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Public Relations Management</li> </ul>	
South African Qualifications Authority (Registration on the NQF)	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Education in Higher Education</li> <li>• Doctoral of Engineering in Metallurgical Engineering</li> <li>• Diploma in Environmental Science</li> <li>• Advanced diploma in Tourism Management</li> </ul>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>39</b>

The following feedback was received from the CHE in 2021

Three programmes are still pending CHE accreditation:

- Advanced Diploma in Legal Techniques and Research
- Postgraduate Diploma in Safety Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Public Relations Management

Five programmes were accredited:

- Master of Education in Higher Education
- Doctoral of Engineering in Metallurgical Engineering
- Diploma in Environmental Science
- Advanced diploma in Tourism Management
- Bachelor of Communication Studies (Pending SAQA registration)

### **Extended programme**

Diploma in Information Technology: Extended Programme was approved through internal processes (11 June 2021 Senate ratification)

### **Challenges experienced in 2021**

- Covid-19
- Redesign of training and development workshops for online presentation
- Internet connectivity
- Delays in approval of minutes by internal processes (APDC/SENEX/SENATE) and delays in approval, accreditation and registration by external agencies

In 2021 the PACD Virtual Workshop team continued with online workshops for both Phase 1- Curriculum Design, and Phase 2- Programme Accreditation (internal and external processes) of the development lifecycle of a new academic programmes. We also continued with online meetings, consultations, online submission, etc. (work from home philosophy) to reduce cost and risk for VUT and its employees.

## **Quality Enhancement**

The Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) continued its mandated workload in 2021, which spanned the reviews of faculties, support units, and assisting faculties with preparation for professional body accreditation. As well, the QPU managed external body reviews and related external work and assisted in the process of the transfer/closure of the VUT sites of delivery.

### **Review of Faculties**

The faculty of Human Sciences external review was completed in 2021. The Improvement Plan is in process, with feedback from the external review being discussed with each department in the faculty, as well as the supporting departments.

### **Review of Support Units**

The external reviews of the Library, Co-Operative Education, the PACD and the CAD's Tutor System was completed, and the external reports are expected in 2022.

The review of the Community Engagement department was initiated, with the external review to take place in 2022.

The IT department underwent an audit (external provider). The QPU has initiated an Improvement Plan process, wherein the recommendations from the audit report can be monitored.

### **Professional Bodies**

#### ***Bachelor of Nursing (Curriculum R174)***

The QPU worked together with the Department of Health Sciences for the re-submission of a new programme "Bachelor of Nursing (Curriculum R174)" to the South African Nursing Council (SANC). The QPU ensured that the department addressed all the deficiencies identified by SANC. The application, together with the supporting evidence was submitted in December 2020.

In 2021, a mock audit was conducted for the mentioned programme using the documents submitted to SANC, and this served as the self-evaluation component of the review. This mock audit was conducted virtually, which means there was no site visit as part of the external process. The Nursing department provided a virtual tour in lieu of the site visit. The external report was received from the external peer reviewers, containing recommendations that must be addressed prior to the next SANC visit.

### ***ECSA Accreditation***

The QPU drafted the Faculty of Engineering and Technology's remedial action/ improvement plans as part of the documentation that was re-submitted to the professional body for the accreditation visit.

The QPU quality assured 18 self-study reports from the faculty, as well as the remedial action reports. These QPU reports were approved by Senex in December 2021.

### **External (CHE) Reviews**

#### **The CHE National Doctoral Reviews**

The QPU submitted the Doctoral self-evaluation report to the CHE at the end of March 2020. The external review took place between 12-15 October 2020.

Following the external review, the external draft report was received in 2021. The QPU crafted an Improvement Plan (IP) based on the outcomes of the external report. This was done in consultation with all the relevant stakeholders and contributors to the Doctoral review process. The Doctoral IP was submitted to the CHE in November 2021. The CHE will monitor the progress of the Doctoral IP at regular intervals.

#### **The CHE Pilot Audit**

The QPU crafted an Improvement Plan (IP), based on the report from the CHE. The recommendations were allocated to the various stakeholders for actioning. The implementation of the IP is monitored regularly with the view to prepare for the upcoming CHE Institutional Audit in 2022.

#### **The CHE Institutional Audit**

The QPU engaged with all the audit documents, namely the Manual for Institutional Audits and Framework for Institutional Audits. These documents were summarised and compared to the new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) documents, in preparation for the audit and the implementation of the QAF. The QPU staff attended the CHE audit webinars, workshops and short courses.

## **The CHE Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)**

Discussions on the new QAF were held with the Registrar, DVC: T&L, SSS, ED of Human Resources, where issues contained in the QAF that impacted quality audits and reviews were highlighted.

In line with previous external audit recommendations, and in an attempt to align to the new QAF, the QPU and the PACD submitted a formal proposal for a merger of the two departments, with an attendant structure and lines of reporting.

## **CHE Quality Assurance Guidelines for Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning and Assessment During the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020**

The CHE released quality assurance guidelines in 2020, to address the concerns in Higher Education regarding the quality in teaching, learning and assessment during the academic period affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, the QPU had initiated the process of review and reporting for each of the four faculties, as well as the associated support units. In 2021, 3 faculties submitted their responses. Feedback is still awaited from the Faculty of Engineering and some support units.

## **Closure of Satellite campuses**

Following a decision made by VUT in 2020 to close its sites of delivery, the QPU was mandated to facilitate the quality assurance of the teach-out/transfer process. The QPU developed a Teach Out/Transfer Guideline, which details the processes that allows VUT to fulfil its educational and contractual obligations to currently enrolled students and staff during the closing of a campus. The teach-out/transfer plan will be used as a framework for the review of the process.

In 2021, the QPU delivered a quality report on the process that was followed by VUT on the closure of the Ekurhuleni campus.

For the Upington campus, preliminary evaluations on the fitness of the new site were conducted by the QPU, with recommendations made for remedial action purposes. The recommendations were addressed by the Upington sub-committee. Thereafter this site was reviewed by an external panel for its fitness as a site of teaching and learning. The QPU compiled all evidence and complete the application documents for accreditation of the new Upington site of delivery. The documents was furnished to the DVC: Teaching and Learning and SSS.

With regard to the Secunda campus, the QPU revised the Teach Out/Transfer Guideline and coordinated and collected all Teach-out plans from the faculties to the Secunda sub-committee.

#### **Ethical Clearance Processes**

In 2021, ethical clearance was approved for the QPU's focus group interviews. Professional body reviews received an exemption for the ethical clearance process.

#### **Development and implementation of online surveys**

The QPU held meetings with the CAD to collaborate and strategize on ways in which to apply for funding and purchase of software for conducting surveys. A graduation satisfaction survey questionnaire was developed which was informed by means of stakeholder consultation and benchmarking on national level. This survey will form part of the catalytic initiatives of the institution.

#### **Revision of Quality Assurance Policy**

The Quality Assurance Policy was revised by means of stakeholder feedback, benchmarking with policies of institutions of higher learning and alignment of the policy with the new Quality Assurance Framework of the CHE.

#### **Governance of Information Technology**

The university is in process of reviewing the 2020-2024 business strategy, as it was crafted during administrator's period. We are now in pre-post pandemic area (i.e., Covid-19), the need to include digital transformation strategy as part of the business strategy is more urgent. This will further refine IT governance framework's objective and further align business strategy and IT strategy.

IT Services has crafted the ICT Charter or IT governance framework (i.e. in 2021) that is awaiting approval from Mancom. This living document will be finalized upon the review of the business strategy. Tentative approval of the charter will enable the convening of IT Steering committee. We trust the IT Steering committee can be inaugurated during the second semester 2022.

The final IT governance framework document will bridge the gap between business strategy and ICT strategy, using ITIL and COBIT as guiding principles. The governance structure will further address risks around IT capacity, value creation and resources allocation.

## The VUT Library and Information Services

The essential responsibility of the VUT Library is to build and shape collections that maintain their current relevance, effectively respond to the information needs of researchers, and ensure access to these resources when needed. The Library therefore, continues to make electronic resources accessible from multiple platforms, on-campus and remotely, by providing appropriate discovery tools and proactively exploring new technologies and best practices in an ongoing effort to improve services and create a better environment for library users. For example, VUT subscribes to EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS), which takes research to the next level through a combination of content and technology, taking into account all of the critical elements in the research process, and changing the expectations of how a discovery solution can and should address the needs of its users. Basically, EDS is similar to a Google-Search platform as it searches across all library resources. The E-Resources librarians organize and arrange training with vendors for the librarians on the use of new research databases or new features in the electronic resources generally, in order for them to be able to train the students.

As a primary function, the Acquisitions section in the library ensure adherence to the allocated budget and the requisitions process is managed in such a way as not to overspend. Prescribed books are given priority. Although not many, all prescribed books received in 2021 were catalogued and provided with item records. There was a slight decline on the utilization of books budget in 2021 and increase on the e-books request. This is due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdown levels as classes were facilitated online. It has also been noticed that most libraries in the world are moving to the direction of electronic resources due to the challenges brought by the pandemic.

The Library used to operate 24/7 until the outbreak of COVID-19 in South Africa. As from 27 March 2020, the library operating hours were disrupted by the COVID-19 lockdowns, and had to open for limited hours only. The library continued to open from 08h00-16h30 during the week and closed over weekends until end 2021.

The Library acquired useful products from UKS in October 2021, such as disinfection light and book box to disinfect books returned by patrons, workstations and surfaces. Therefore, books are currently disinfected before they go to the shelves.

Three staff members were transferred from Ekurhuleni Library to the Main Library, Vanderbijlpark Campus in April 2021. The three staff members are Mphilwenhle Hlongwa, Mologadi Truly Tsiri and Rebone Modiegi Modipa. Ms Hlongwa has been placed at the Client

Services as an Information librarian for the Faculty of Human Sciences including the Department of Education which is based at Sebokeng Campus. Ms Tsiri and Ms Modipa joined the Circulation Services at the Main Desk.

Due to the pandemic, there were no face-to-face information literacy classes and as a result the library experienced a decline on the number of students attending these classes. Some academics arranged for online training via MS Teams and Blackboard. However, students who had permit to access the campus visited the library for help on the use of electronic databases and other information resources of the library. In this instance, one-on-one training was provided observing social distancing. In addition, reference queries from the users through emails and telephone were attend to by the Information Librarians on day-to-day basis.

The Library and Information Services had been embarked on the Review Project exercise with the aim of getting to understand where it is doing well and where further development is needed for improvement purposes. It is exciting that the two Information Librarians were trusted by Library Management Committee to lead such a big project. The project was a teamwork exercise where staff members were responsible for various criterions. The external panel review was conducted on the 4-5 October 2021. The project was a success with the support and assistance from Ms T. Naidoo in the Quality Promotion Unit.

The Library is subscribing to LibGuides, a content management and information sharing system designed specifically for libraries. The platform allows users to easily navigate through and find resources that are relevant to their particular subject field, class or assignment. Thus far, the VUT Library has eighteen LibGuides together with a LibGuide specifically created for the first-year students to assist them navigate the library easily. Basically, LibGuides provide a platform for Information Librarians to guide their users to various library resources and to give users direction on how to perform some activities such as finding library resources.

The "ASK-A-LIBRARIAN" platform proved to be a useful tool during the periods of online and working from home. Users were able to make appointments when they want to visit the library. In addition, users are able to send library related queries via this platform and receive their responses within one working day.

The New Books Display that was hitherto featured at the entrance of the library in the beginning of 2020, was a new way to market library books and for current awareness purposes. However, this had to be pended in terms of the COVID-19 library protocols, as

users were not permitted to browse through the collection. The Library anticipate to continue with this exercise as soon as the country go back to normal and the national state of disaster lifted.

## **University Infrastructure**

The University is one of the older universities with over 50 years of existence, and as such its infrastructure, including both buildings (superstructure) and services infrastructure (roads, water mains, sewer mains, electrical supply/reticulation, HVAC system, etc.) is visibly showing signs of distress. Over the years the constant growth in the university population, in terms of growth in student numbers, lecturing staff, administration and support staff has not been met with equal infrastructure development and maintenance with lack of planning and inadequate funding playing a big role in this space.

The university's infrastructure delivery model is based on combined funding from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the university's own funding. The decision, taken during 2020, to close all Satellite campuses, has a strong bearing on the infrastructure needed to support institutional programmes, as these will now be consolidated within the Vanderbijlpark and Science Park Campuses.

### ***Campus Infrastructure Masterplan***

During 2019, VUT approved its Strategic Plan 2020-2024 with clear strategic objectives, one of which is the improvement of institutional infrastructure. The University has since begun the process of sourcing a multi-disciplinary professional team to drive the development of the Campus Infrastructure Masterplan and a decision from the SCM process on the award is still awaited, expected in April 2022. This Masterplan will direct infrastructure planning, funding and development in the medium to long term. The strategy is to use the land available on the Sebokeng campus /Science and Technology Park, as there is sufficient land to accommodate the future growth of the university.

The University has put in place a plan in to accelerate the re-procurement of all infra-structure and deferred maintenance items, particularly where there were non-awards in 2021. The Infrastructure Projects Implementation Programme (IPIP), was also helped with the release of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle funding of about R185 million, by DHET in the last quarter of 2021. However, the number of projects under 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle had to be reviewed and reprioritized as the funding was now reduced, this was due to the previous year's reprioritization of funding by DHET to accommodate COVID 19 challenges that faced the entire education sector. After the process



of reprioritizing, a reduced number of projects are being put out to tender for implementation. The reprioritized projects focused on the enhancement of students/learning facilities such as ICT Infrastructure, Student Study Centre, Laboratories (Health & Science Department) and Residences.

All deferred maintenance projects that are re-tendered are expected commence on the ground in May and June 2022.

### ***Infrastructure Governance Committee***

VUT had approved the establishment of the Infrastructure Projects Steering Committee (IPSC) and Terms of Reference (TOR) were also approved. The IPSC started its oversight work where all projects are being reported, progress and challenges discussed. This committee is also a platform where future projects are going to be evaluated and prioritized for recommendation to the Management Committee (MANCOM), before any submission to the potential funders such as DHET, etc.

### ***Infrastructure Conditional Assessment***

VUT conducted and completed a Building and Infrastructure Assets Conditional Assessment in the last quarter of 2021, and this report was used during the annual audit to determine the impairment cost of buildings. The current scoring of the University infrastructure is at 3.5 on a scoring scale of 5. A more detailed assessment and scoping for the works for all buildings that fell below the acceptable scoring was completed. The cost estimates for the repair work of buildings under the category noted as poor and very poor, are now completed. Operations and Logistics will ensure that there are periodic conditional assessments of infrastructure, the results of which need to be captured on the infrastructure assets register and used to inform infrastructure plans and budgets.

### ***Infrastructure Maintenance Plan***

VUT has developed an Infrastructure Management Policy that incorporates the Infrastructure / Assets Maintenance Plan as part of the aspects for consideration during the planning and implementation of infrastructure and building maintenance. All risks associated with the physical, functional and operational attributes of assets will be ranked and prioritized accordingly, for the undertaking of maintenance activities. Instance of non-compliance with

Health and Safety requirements of all infrastructure assets will be addressed properly during the planning and implementation of maintenance activities.

Operations and Logistics will ensure that there is a system or process for the prioritisation of repairs. VUT has commenced with the development of an Infrastructure Maintenance Management Plan for all services infrastructure and buildings / facilities, and the completion of this was delayed due to the updated information from the cost estimates of poor buildings. The Infrastructure Maintenance Management Plan is planned for completion in May 2022 and will be revised over a three-year period upon completion of each Facilities Conditional Assessment rating.

### ***Safety, Health and Environmental Policy***

Accounting to the challenges of COVID 19 and challenges with the Condition of some Learning Facilities and administration buildings, in the last quarter of 2021, VUT was visited by the Department of Labour (DOL) on issues of non-compliance. The Department of Labour issued prohibition letters for some buildings and office spaces. VUT is busy addressing all the issues raised by DOL, some have been closed and some are still being attended to for closing in 2022.

MANCOM has also approved the establishment of Safety, Health and Environmental Committee and Terms of Reference (TOR) for the oversight of all compliance matters relating to the OHS Act and regulations. The SHE Management Policy and TOR direct that a training be conducted for all committee members including SHE Representatives, this is in a Skills Development Plan for the 2022.

The approved SHE Management Policy gives rise to the need for University Management, Staff and Students to intentionally plan and execute their activities and operations in total observance and promotion of clean and sustainable environment.

A summary of matters addressed under the Environmental Management section in the policy are the following:

1. All laboratory operations, clinic facilities, food services, health sciences, etc, that generate hazardous waste during their productive processes need to take cognisance of the legislative responsibility and take necessary measures to eliminate and/or reduce their impact on the environment.

2. VUT is no exemption as its activities affect natural river courses and streams that flow directly into the Vaal River in the process of its infrastructure development and operations. Consequently, infrastructure design must take into account the intended and unintended impacts on the stream flows and quality of the water.
3. Operations of the VUT laboratories, food services, etc., are to adhere to the requirements of this legislation. They need to ensure that there are no foreign elements that can cause damage and/or pollution downstream when discharged, either through the greywater system or the stormwaters system.
4. VUT should develop a strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste, which will emphasise the increasing importance of waste prevention measures within strategic waste planning. The aim of waste prevention is to stabilise waste generation in order to minimise impact on the environment, improve resource efficiency and reduce the cost of waste management.
5. The substantial quantity of waste generated through VUT operations including all labs and food facilities, must be recycled, composted or recovered by other methods, including energy recovery. However, there is also a need to put in place measures to support recycling and composting. The strategy and actions will focus on the following:
  - a. Enabling and encouraging participation in recycling, composting and recovery;
  - b. Stimulating markets through sustainable purchasing;
  - c. Developing a recycling economy for all waste streams;
  - d. Implementing producer responsibility policy; and
  - e. Setting recycling and recovery targets.
6. VUT has set to comply through its infrastructure planning, development, implementation and operations to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –
  - a. Prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
  - b. Promote conservation; and
  - c. Secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

The OHS Department is now busy with the engagements on the Fire Safety Policy that will be submitted for approval by MANCOM and Council in the second quarter of 2022.

### ***Student Residence Refurbishments***

The Operations and Logistics working with the Residences Team completed a full assessment of the residences needs and identification of renovation projects. The list included the old residences with water and sewer reticulation, buildings not compliant with OHS Act and Regulations regarding the fire escapes, buildings that were affected by 2016 fees must fall and these were taken out of operations.

The reprioritization of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cycle projects approved the Procurement Plan that accommodates the identified projects under the Residences Projects. The combined budget is about R20.0m and implementation is due in 2022.

### ***Highlights on the Operations and Logistics Achievements***

The following are the achievements realized under the Portfolio of Operations and Logistics:

- i. The completion of Refurbishment of 13 Student Town Residences that were available for students accommodation from beginning of 2021.
- ii. The completion of the refurbishments in the three old residences that were available for students accommodation from beginning of 2021.
- iii. The completion of the Meropa Residences refurbishments, adding a total of 120 beds for students accommodation from beginning of 2021.
- iv. Completion of 2021 Buildings and Infrastructure Assets Condition Assessment that informs the VUT Maintenance Plan, done internally.
- v. Completion and approval of SCM Infrastructure Policy that seeks to guide all planning and sourcing of service providers for Infrastructure Delivery within VUT.
- vi. Some water proofing projects started in the main campus, especially the D-Block which was a high risk from an electrical point of view.
- vii. Some buildings received installation of fire detection system as part of the programme that is being rolled out to tackle fire risk and exposure.

## **Protection Services and Campus Safety**

The insourcing of Protection Services at VUT has seen a paradigm shift on how campus safety is viewed. With the first phase of insourcing completed, the following functions have already been added to ensure a comprehensive set of services to be provided:

- Operations Management – consists of the Command Centre that focuses on quick response and hands on management of campus security.
- Technical Team – consists of an in-house technical team that is responsible for installations, repair and maintenance of security equipment.
- Liaison team – responsible for professionalising the security environment, building relations with students and staff and proactively identifying areas for continuous improvement.
- Card and Visitor Control – responsible for management access to students, staff, visitors and service providers.
- Investigation and Traffic – responsible for attending to criminal cases and to maintain compliance with campus road and traffic policies.

Phases 2 to 4 will be undertaken from 2022 through to 2024 which will see VUT having a full complement of Protection Services staff with no dependence on an external security service provider. Protection Services is also focused on the 4th industrial revolution and is poised to implement biometric controls with the renovation of the main gate and robot gate planned in 2022. In addition, VUT has planned the establishment of a Protection Services Building centralizing all the services in one location. The Protection Services Building will house a Command Centre, i.e. main campus and Science Park to ensure quick response to students and staff with agreement from the SAPS to position their quick response unit within the Command Centre at the main campus.

## **Resource Mobilisation, Marketing and Fundraising**

### **Resource Mobilisation 2021**

The 2021 year was characterised by many challenges and risks in relations to the primary function of raising resources for the University, thus affecting ideal targets of the Department of Resource Mobilisation (DRM).

While the pandemic caused havoc globally and nationally in 2020, the situation worsened in 2021 with further uncertainties for economic performance which suffered a ruthless downward trend. For fundraising, this meant that the traditional donor market had become inaccessible as companies saw profit levels plummet on the stock exchanges in this country and globally. For example, our loyal market has been the FTSE 100 companies of the United Kingdom and member companies of the Chilean/South Africa Chamber of Commerce. After 2020, such loyalty was replaced by reluctance as such stakeholders concentrated on satisfying domestic delivery and addressing internal challenges and profit margins. This has been aggravated by the closure of global borders, causing the DRM to cancel all noteworthy roadshows such as the USA initiative to be undertaken in partnership with the Universities of Michigan and Kentucky. This roadshow was planned to coincide with the global launch of the VUT Fundraising Campaign, *Our Time Has Come*.

A turnaround strategy was implemented to focus on the domestic donor market, with incentivized offerings to the South African private sector. While this strategy promised encouraging dividends for University with two critical projects to be funded by the banking sector, the July 2021 unrest in KwaZulu-Natal ended such prospects. This resulted from financial and infrastructural losses suffered by these two banks in the unrest.

Further complexities in building private sector support for the University resulted through the areas of governance and risk. In 2020, the VUT was under administration and as such had no Vice-Chancellor and Principal. In terms of Government Gazette 42639 published on 15 August 2019, the Administrator took over the role, powers, functions and duties of the Vaal University of Technology Management, for two years. Governance regulations of companies prevent such stakeholders from entering into any partnership with institutions under Administration. As an institution under Administration, the DRM failed to convince many members of the private sector to fund projects at the VUT. One such example was SASOL, a critical stakeholder for the VUT in the region. While this issue raised red flags for prospective partners, another related matter resulted in much concern for philanthropists and company CEO's and Chairs-that of leadership. The absence of a University Council as a Governance oversight structure, and the absence of a Vice-Chancellor and Principal as Chief Accounting and Fundraising Officer raised challenges of an unprecedented magnitude as stakeholder appetite to support the VUT, waned.

In 2019, promises were made to prospective funders that the VUT Foundation would be established to appease governance and risk anxiety. As an independent body comprised of highly influential South Africans as Trustees of the Foundation, the VUT would have enjoyed the benefits of funds raised and held by the Foundation. The University's failure to fast-track the establishment of this structure resulted in the locking of many corporate and philanthropic

doors nationally and globally and the loss of millions of rand for the University. This has, and continues to act as a source of much frustration for the Director of the DRM.

Internally, the failure by the University to provide decent infrastructure (such as suitable offices), a budget and a team to aid the Director in her herculean deliverables, has acted to disable her in her work. This has resulted in a reputational risk for her and the University as funders are incensed by the lack of commitment by University Management to such a critical portfolio designed for the University's sustainability and stability. Much of the work is funded by the Director herself. The absence of a consistent and stable reporting structure has further affected departmental deliverables with the Director having reported to four line managers in three years.

In spite of the above challenges, the DRM has succeeded in the following:

- Raising R5 822 402.82 for projects.
- Receiving sponsorships of R584 853.82
- Assisting with payment of student debt and bursaries as follows:
  - 25 students (Applied and Computer Sciences)
  - 93 Students (Engineering)
  - 21 Students (Human Sciences)
  - 17 Students (Management Sciences).
- Partnering with Gift of the Givers to stock the VUT Clinic with medication and Equipment.
- Partnering with SASOL and Gift of the Givers to build a clinic for students at Educity.
- Establishing and Growing the Food Insecurity Programme by supplying food packages to students, through a three-year partnership with Gift of the Givers.
- Strengthening the VUT relations with surrounding communities and capacitating the Human Sciences Faculty by raising funds for the VUT Law Clinic in Sebokeng.

The DRM expects the situation to improve in 2022 due to the opening of international borders, the ending of all lockdown levels in South Africa, the appointment of a Council and Vice-Chancellor and Principal for the University, the finalisation of the Fundraising policy and the establishment of the VUT Foundation.

## ADVANCEMENT AND INTERNATIONALISATION

### **Rebranding of the University**

The internal brand launch took place in October 2021 and continuous awareness and engagement with internal stakeholders helps to promote the use of the new templates and introduce the Brand Style Guide as a term of reference when using the VUT Brand elements. The external brand launch was planned to coincide with the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor and Principal and the introduction of the newly appointed Council at the beginning of 2022.

### *Brand and Corporate Identity Policy*

ManCom approved the policy in October 2021 and the implementation thereof commenced in January 2022.

Ongoing online roadshows are conducted with faculties and departments/units to discuss the importance of the policy and the consequences for staff and students if the brand is being violated or abused.

A **DO THIS, NOT THAT** under the #BRANDCHANNEL was created and used as a platform for sharing important brand related information where the Brand Style Guide and Brand & Corporate Identity is broken down into smaller tips and snippets which is easier for staff to digest and remember. Furthermore, this effective communications medium also addresses FAQ from staff relating to templates.

### *Brand Style Guide*

The Brand Style Guide and the qualification certificate templates were signed off by the Marketing and Brand Manager for implementation at the end of March 2022.

### *VUT Entities with Own Logos and Identities*

To avoid entities becoming negative towards the new brand and its regulations, the Marketing and Brand Manager arranged individual online meetings with each department that had its own identity, logo and slogan. These identities include Dhlare Remedy, ICBT, Ambio, CAD, Bodutu Art Gallery and F'SASEC.

They had become very close to their previous identities and this strategic approach helped them to align the identity of their entities with the monolithic brand architecture of the master brand. The Graphic Design Studio assisted with the design of the new logos.



### *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book*

Copies were distributed internally to each department and to external stakeholders at each event. Two copies are kept at the Goldfields Library for reference.

### *Photoshoot of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal*

The Marketing and Brand Manager arranged and supervised the photoshoot through the support of the Photography Lecturer from the faculty of Human Sciences. This collection will be used for various university publications to profile the VC. The final photoshoot will take place as soon as we have received the new academic regalia of the VC.

### **Champion-a-Student Campaign**

The campaign was initiated in 2017 with the support gaining momentum from committed companies such as Liquid Telecom SA; IBM; Frigoglass and De Beers Group. The total amount generated for 2021 financial year amounts to R3 655 770.76 which benefited 69 students across four faculties. The funding criteria of each company stipulates that a selected student must be academically performing and financially needy, thus VUT followed the funding criteria to select and identify qualifying students.

- *Poverty Alleviation Programme*

- Rise Against Hunger

- The organisation supplies a monthly donation of food packs to VUT for ± 1500 students. Distribution is done through the Victim Empowerment Centre (VEC) at the residences and Amphitheatre. The database of the beneficiaries (students) is managed by both the Manager of the VUT VEC and the office of the Acting Executive Director: Advancement and Internationalisation.

- Ad-hoc donations of food parcels and dignity packs

- The University received additional support from Seriti Mining; Tisong Project (Arcelo Mittal Metal) and President Hyper Vaal in support of the VUT VEC wellness programme.

### **Community partnership and social impact**

The office of the MEC: Gauteng Department of Community Safety sponsored all the operational equipment required for the Victim Empowerment Centre. A letter was sent to the office of the MEC requesting that the Centre should be officially handed over to our Vice-Chancellor and Principal to seal the partnership and establish a continuous the relationship at a date to be confirmed.

## Internal collaborations

- Vice-Chancellor's meet and greet with internal stakeholders

Prof Ntate Dan Kgwadi resumed work on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 and started immediately with engagements with internal stakeholders as a way of introducing himself to the VUT community and getting to know staff members from various faculties/support departments and student structures. His main objective is to stabilize and bring an end to corruption at VUT.

Structural adjustment had to be done to the Advancement and Internationalisation portfolio to provide strategic support to the office of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal. Ms Tandi Mapukata who was appointed as Executive Director: Advancement and Internationalisation on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2021, was subsequently seconded to play this role in the office of the Vice-Chancellor.

- Marketing and profiling the institution

The Advancement and Internationalisation department provides support to all the internal departments to guide and assist in profiling and marketing the institution through initiatives that aim to improve public perception of the VUT in the higher education environment and positively influence the immediate community. This is achieved through the following programmes:

- Alumni Relations

Embracing the spirit of generosity, the Tseleme Social Club hosted charity golf days to raise money for the Dress a Child to School campaign. To date, the following schools have benefited from the foundation: 2016- Thusang Primary School, Leeudoringstad, Maquassi-Hills Local Municipality; 2017- Phatsima Primary School, Phola, Boikhutso Township; 2018- Hartsrivier Primary School, Mocweding Village, Pampierstad; 2019- Ineeleng Primary School, Kuruman; 2020- Molotsi Primary School, Mabeskraal and 2021- Molokotoane Primary School, Jouberton.

The selection of beneficiaries is linked to schools where our alumni attend primary and high school education.

- Public Relations

The University hosted virtual Autumn and Spring Graduations Ceremonies for 2021. Graduates were allowed to collect their certificates at the VUT Isak Steyl Stadium and were awarded an opportunity to take family pictures in the academic attire. This was

done in response to the stipulated government lockdown regulations with the approval of the VUT Covid-19 Campus Biosafety Task Team.

➤ **Events Management**

Most of the events were hosted online to comply with the Covid-19 lockdown regulations. Only physical events that were approved by the VUT Covid-19 Campus Biosafety Task Team took place on or off campus, to ensure compliance to all the lockdown levels as prescribed by the National Corona Virus Command Council and National Department of Health.

➤ **VUT Open Day**

The physical Annual Open Day which was a strong and reliable marketing tool for the institution was replaced by an online MaVUTi Voice publication. The e-booklet was shared via a link with all Life Orientation teachers at all high schools. The booklet was compiled with inputs from faculties and support departments.

➤ **Corporate Communications**

The Advancement and Internationalisation department continues to explore creative ways and use internal and external opportunities to profile and market the institution. The following communication media were utilized for this purpose, namely: Facebook, Twitter, VUT website, e-communication, the Daily Bulletin and VUT FM, print and virtual press.

## **Student Recruitment**

### **a) Introduction**

Student Recruitment function assists the University to realize its strategic objectives. It is the purpose of the function to find and attract as many achieving applicants as possible, to provide the Vaal University of Technology with a constantly developing student cohort. (A higher pass, success and throughput rates; sustainable subsidies; financial stability; graduates of high quality and increasing credibility as a Tertiary Institution.

The mission is to attract and recruit as many top achieving applicants as possible, to provide the Vaal University of Technology with a constantly growing and developing student cohort to meet its strategic enrolment plans.

To achieve the above objective the Student Recruitment office has embarked on various processes inter alia:

- Direct high school visits
- Presentations at career exhibitions
- Hosting of school visits to campus
- Hosting Head Masters' Function
- Sharing and distribution of student recruitment information e.g. flyers, information booklets etc.
- Effective use of digital and online marketing and student recruitment
- Radio interviews in identified educational programmes

**b) School visits**

Unfortunately due to covid-19 pandemic and the related national lockdown levels Student Recruitment could not use all the operational strategies as normal. Hence the adoption of new strategies according to the applicable lockdown levels.

For the reporting year the Student Recruitment worked with Corporate Communications and Marketing in the creation of MaVUTi-Voice a digital interactive tool that contains the same information as contained in the student recruitment booklets.

A list of high schools was obtained with their contact details and the link for MaVUTiVoice sent to the identified schools to minimize the direct visits to schools and personal contact.

**c) Career exhibitions**

Some of the critical career exhibitions attended are national ones hosted by Careers Exhibition and Information Association (CEIA).

Throughout the year these exhibitions took place in various provinces. Some were attended and some not depending on the distance and the budgetary constraints.

Hosting of school visits to campus and Head Masters' function have been put on hold in an effort to avoid super spreader gatherings.

**d) Integrated student recruitment**

A new Integrated Student Recruitment Committee was formed in order to have an integrated approach to student recruitment.

The committee is made up of Student Recruitment representatives, faculty representatives, Marketing, Institutional Planning, Financial Aid, Enrolment/ Academic Administration and other relevant sections of the university.

This is the committee that lays a guide to what students are recruited, how, when and why.

#### **e) Conclusion**

With Student Recruitment efforts and all the other stakeholders involved, including the online application facility the University experienced about 107 000 applicants for 2022 academic year.

As the lockdown levels were updated by the national government and restrictions getting reduced, the direct visits to identified schools were embarked upon with all the necessary protocols observed.

The reports on the school visits are provided for purposes of University Bio Safety Committee and ensuring that gatherings comply with the safety protocols

### **Internationalization**

#### **a) Introduction**

The Vaal University of Technology adopts a vision of comprehensive internationalisation, with a specific focus on academic excellence, research and innovation. The University integrates international and intercultural dimensions in all aspects of its core business and service functions. It specifically focuses on the international visibility, footprint, impact and connectedness of academic project, research and innovation. It aspires to excel in all aspects of its internationalisation process, including the support for international students and staff.

The International Relations department is placed to drive the above processes including promotion of staff and student mobility.

#### **b) Objectives**

The objectives of International Relations include:

- To facilitate reciprocal exchange of staff and students – **to increase strategic engagements**
- To influence the internationalisation of teaching, learning and research – **to increase research capacity**
- To increase the number of undergraduate and postgraduate international students – **to improve enrolment management**

- To create opportunities for researchers, academic and support staff to participate in internationalisation of the institution – **to increase research capacity**
- To develop strategic alliances and collaborations with local, continental, and global partners – **to increase strategic engagements through a number of signed MoU's particularly with African Universities**

Due to covid-19 and the related national lock down levels, not all the objectives could be achieved in the reporting year particularly the reciprocal exchange of staff and students.

**c) Achieved**

- Identified opportunities for academics and research staff are published in the daily billboard from time to time,  
Some opportunities are directly communicated to targeted faculties.
- Strategic alliances – e.g. SASUF, SANORD, F'SASEC, UNIPID, DUALE HOCHSCHULE BADEN (DHBW), Full Bright, etc continue to exist and explored for purposes of adding value.
- A few MoU's have been initiated with African institutes and awaiting finalization

**d) Conclusion**

The covid-19 pandemic has adversely affected the internationalization function of the university, especially when it comes to staff and student mobility. Some online and digital processes will be explored going forward.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Professor Ntate Dan Kgwadi  
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

30 June 2022

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date