Institutional Operating Plan

2021 - 2025

UNIVERSITY *of the* **WESTERN CAPE**

IOP 2021/2025
Connecting Possibilities

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UWC Mission Statement

UWC is a research-led university responsive to the needs of a changing world through excellence in learning, teaching and research, and the generation and application of new knowledge.

Firmly anchored in its local and sub-regional context and inspired by its distinctive academic role in building a more equitable and dynamic society, the University continues to empower its students, staff and partners to advance its mission of serving the greater public good and searching for humane and sustainable solutions to the challenges of our time. This is pursued through high academic standards, intellectual rigour and productive partnerships and networks beyond the confines of disciplinary and geographic boundaries.

UWC Vision 2035

By 2035, the University of the Western Cape (UWC) will be widely recognised as a leading research-led university, most notably for the nexus between its undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes and its research endeavour, its substantial place in key areas in the knowledge ecosystem, its keen focus on the public good and transforming lives, and its productive relationships and effective partnerships with universities and key agencies in Africa and beyond.

UWC Values Statement

The University's Mission is underpinned by the following five enduring values and associated behaviours to guide our actions and decisions, and our interactions with the world, and to serve as a compass against which to view our work:

1. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We respect and strive for excellence in teaching and learning, and research and innovation as we strive to be widely recognised as a leading research-led university.

To this end, we seek to bring learning, teaching, research and innovation into an appropriate balance with each other. We recognise the importance of academic freedom and encourage a reflective culture among all members of the University community, rooted in taking responsibility for excellence. More formally, we challenge mediocrity, critically review and assess what we have done, apply appropriate benchmarks, and use the results to bring about the necessary improvements that will make us more efficient and effective. We aim to be leaders in both distinct and differentiating niche areas of excellence that are consistent with our Mission, while maintaining high standards overall.

2. ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSIVENESS

We cultivate a socially responsive, people-centred approach through education, research and critical engagement on important matters.

Accordingly, we commit to the pursuit of knowledge that is responsive to societal and disciplinary contexts. We encourage independent thought and critical engagement as a means to help transform lives and to work for a more equitable, inclusive and just society. We shall continue our work with communities, while instilling in our students a culture of engagement and drawing strategically from partnerships, alliances and international opportunities that address challenging issues of local and global concern. Consequently, academic excellence cannot be delineated from relevance and impact.

3. INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We expect high standards of ethical and professional behaviour, within a collegial institutional climate that is open to challenge and constructive contestation and holds the best interest of the University at heart.

Accordingly, we are accountable for our actions and decisions and shall engender trust within and between our communities through values-based leadership. We commit to credible, ethical and trustworthy conduct and the fair treatment of others, and shall practise openness and transparency while honouring confidential and private information. We have a long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability and stewardship of our campus resources. We also uphold the high standards of intellectual inquiry, academic freedom and quality service provision.

4. COLLEGIALITY AND COLLABORATION

We place a high premium on collegiality, collaboration, accountability and shared responsibility.

Accordingly, we work with each other across departmental and disciplinary boundaries to foster partnerships between groups (whether internal or external). We

shall work to make it easy for students and staff to connect, communicate and collaborate meaningfully and to achieve what is best for the broader University, as well as for individual teams.

5. INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY
The University is committed to equity, diversity, inclusivity and fairness, and seeks to nurture and build on our diverse cultural heritage.

Accordingly, we commit to the creation of a welcoming, inclusive and diverse community, accentuated by a caring, productive and respectful culture. We shall continue to advance the imperatives of access and commit to creating an atmosphere of trust, tolerance of opinion as well as mutual support in a community characterised by a rich diversity of people and ideas. We remain committed to the protection of the rights and dignity of individuals and therefore shall not tolerate any forms of discrimination, including that based on race, sexual orientation, religion or xenophobia.

A university
led by research,
with a nexus
between degree
and research
programmes
and a keen focus
on transforming
lives

Preface

This Institutional Operating Plan (IOP) puts forward an overarching aspiration for UWC "to be widely recognised as a research-led university, most notably for the nexus between its degree and research programmes, its substantial place in key areas in the knowledge economy, its keen focus on transforming lives and its productive relationships and effective partnerships with universities and key agencies in Africa and beyond".

This aspiration, articulated in the University's Vision for 2035, reflects UWC's progress and successes over the past years, as well as its commitment to use and apply its intellectual vibrancy and academic capacity to serve the public good and advance social justice, inclusiveness, diversity and sustainability.

The University's celebration of its 60th anniversary in 2020 highlighted many accomplishments, which position it well in the South African higher education landscape. But it is also acutely aware that it cannot rest on its laurels. What worked well in the past may not be as effective as embracing emerging opportunities and navigating the challenges that lie ahead. UWC therefore has to remain vigilant in its responses to challenges and opportunities.

The general strategy proposed here for achieving this vision is captured by two words: Connecting Possibilities.

(i) Connecting is relational and is closely linked to the University's commitment to socially responsive or engaged teaching, and learning and research. It suggests a greater connectedness with the environment within which it is anchored. It speaks to UWC's ability to connect through partnerships and networks nationally and internationally. It also signals the need for greater connectivity among the different constituents and to connect them through sustainable ecosystems. It also aims to make boundaries permeable so that its students and staff can easily cross structural and disciplinary boundaries. Focusing on connecting digitally highlights the intention to set the institution on a digital transformation journey as part of repositioning itself as a modern university.

(ii) Possibilities allow us to think creatively and imaginatively about possible futures for UWC. This seeks to facilitate an openness to entertain different ideas about the University's role and core purpose, and its strategies and priorities to articulate what "could" be UWC's evolving role over the next five to 15 years. The intention is to embrace the uncertainty and ambiguity of the environment, reimagine and seize the opportunity to be open-minded, welcome the chance for engagement, and anticipate UWC's Connecting Possibilities.

WHY DEVELOP AN INSTITUTIONAL OPERATING PLAN?

The IOP is a living document that builds on the previous plan (IOP 2016-2020) and will change over time. The specific impetus for the strategic rethinking and crafting of a new IOP comes from both internal and external conditions that create opportunities to differentiate and move the University into the next decade with confidence. As such, this document serves multiple purposes, as it:

- provides a guiding framework for critical reflection on UWC's current and future position and its desired role in the higher education landscape;

- serves as a platform to bring together diverse groups of people to share thoughts and identify significant opportunities and challenges that will have the greatest influence on the University's future;

- seeks to capture our collective imagination and galvanise the UWC community around a shared sense of purpose, values and ideals;

- allows the University to set priorities and consider worthwhile trade-offs towards goal attainment; and

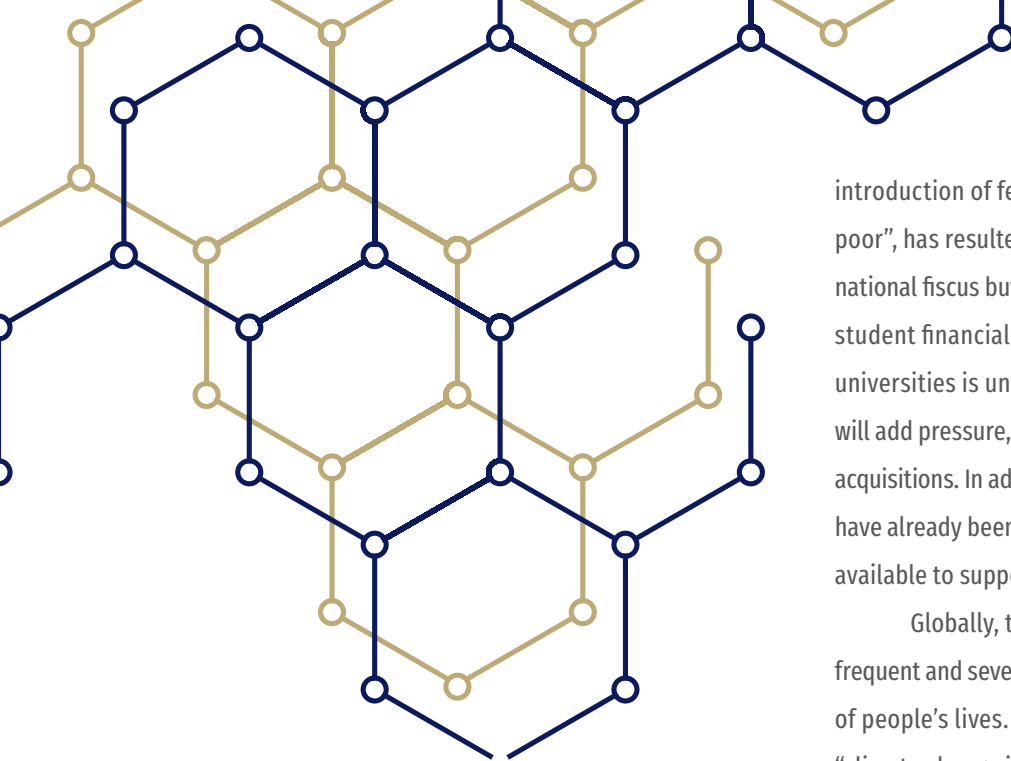- feeds into (statutory) national planning processes.

The IOP is not an end in itself, but a means to an end and a lever for change. The IOP seeks to foster coherence, alignment and unity of purpose, while leaving enough flexibility for faculties and divisions to pursue excellence and creativity in ways that are important to them.

Why change? Internally, change is triggered by ongoing analyses and dissonance between the "ideal" intent and current realities. We have identified some interrelated drivers for change:

- As a caring university community, there is a general feeling that much more can be done to help students succeed academically and acquire the requisite attributes and values to thrive as global citizens in the 21st-century knowledge economy.

- There is a sense that we often attempt to be "all things to all people" and fail to seize opportunities to differentiate ourselves through indecision and a failure to set distinct priorities.

- The adage that "bureaucracy is the death of any achievement" speaks to an inflexible, siloed organisational culture in which effort, often not supported by appropriate modern technologies, is fragmented and the energy of academics and researchers is diverted from their core functions in order to compensate for ineffective processes. Improved systems and policy congruence are needed for faster decision-making and improved responsiveness.

- The need to achieve increased financial sustainability over a planned period.

EXTERNAL DRIVERS OF CHANGE

"Inequality in South Africa has long been recognised as one of the most salient features of our society. South Africa is consistently ranked as one of the most unequal countries in the world, an

empirical fact that has its roots in the history of colonisation and apartheid. In addition to being extremely high, South African inequality appears to be remarkably persistent. Despite many efforts by government to reduce inequality since our democratic transition in 1994, progress has been limited."[1]

According to the latest available data, South Africa reported a Gini coefficient of 0,65 (in 2015), one of the highest worldwide. Patterns relating to income distribution, employment and access to resources remain stubbornly skewed by race and gender. The COVID-19 pandemic has further ravaged the South African economy, which was already in deep crisis following years of corruption that has bled the fiscus, wrecked key public entities and hobbled service delivery. There are predictions of unprecedented decline in the GDP, mirroring the global economic downturn. South Africa's unemployment rate is in the order of 30% and disproportionately affects young people struggling to enter the labour market. Public budgets, including those of the University and research system, are under considerable strain and likely to be for the foreseeable future. The 2015-16 Fees Must Fall protests, and the subsequent

introduction of fee-free higher education for the "poorest of the poor", has resulted in increased budgets for universities from the national fiscus but most of the new money was directed to support student financial aid. Real growth in the government subsidy for universities is unlikely in the next five years and a weak currency will add pressure, especially on library, ICT and research equipment acquisitions. In addition, the budgets of the national science councils have already been cut significantly, directly affecting national funds available to support research and postgraduate bursaries.

Globally, the effects of climate change contribute to more frequent and severe environmental disasters, affecting every aspect of people's lives. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, "climate change is one of the most urgent issues facing humanity today". The Union further stresses that the "world's most vulnerable people — with the fewest resources and options — will suffer the most".

This IOP is very aware of the fact that no public university can plan for its future without taking into account the enormous challenges that confront society. Universities have an important role to play in finding solutions and helping to improve lives and livelihoods. Along with other knowledge institutions and partners, universities are well placed to harness scientific, technological and other advances for the public good and to provide a critical appraisal of concepts such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE IOP

Planning is an iterative process. Thinking behind the planning effort was organised around four key questions:

Who we are as an institution?
Where do we wish to go?
How do we get there?
How will we know if we are making progress?

The development of the IOP is the product of substantial work and the convergence of several overlapping national and institutional planning processes. This implies that the formal process is not the "be-all and end-all" of planning but that planning is a dynamic process in which different mandates are derived from

1. Inequality trends in South Africa, Statistics South Africa, Report No 03-10-19

ongoing interaction with several regulatory bodies and funding agencies, including national departments.

The formal IOP process solicited diverging and converging input through a combination of processes: task teams; electronic surveys and questionnaires; analyses and independent reports on UWC's relative performance; expert advice; consultative webinars; position papers; a multimedia student competition; all-leader workshops with heads of departments and directors of units; and active engagement with senior management and the University Council. Extending over 15 months, the process yielded valuable feedback from multiple constituents and input from executives and deans. A total of 11 task teams were established, broadly premised on the three core goal areas and five enabling goal areas of the previous IOP. Three of these goal areas were split into different task teams for more in-depth emphasis on matters of significance to the University.

Thematically, the task teams focused on:

1. The student experience;
2. Enrolment of undergraduates and postgraduates;
3. Learning and teaching;
4. Research intensiveness;
5. Establishing a culture of innovation;
6. UWC's people framework;
7. Financial sustainability;
8. UWC in the public domain;
9. Infrastructure development;
10. Information technology; and
11. Leadership, management and governance.

For the purpose of uniformity, the task teams were requested to assess the current IOP and the emerging environment, and propose a set of recommendations that maintain and strengthen approximately 70% of what worked well in the 2016-2020 IOP; set aside about 15% to build momentum and nurture emerging areas and capabilities; and provide at least 15% scope to explore viable options for future growth.

The 11 task teams, each chaired by a senior UWC academic, brought together different institutional roleplayers with varied interests whose deliberations resulted in Phase 1 and Phase 2 task team reports that have been used as part of the input to inform the compilation of this document. It is important to note that the task team process commenced just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, and they had to perform their work under conditions of lockdown. Conducting strategic planning in times of crisis always poses the risk of short-term thinking and a tendency to wait for the storm to pass before tackling long-term challenges. Fortunately, under the able guidance of the chairpersons, the task teams were able to stay focused and look beyond immediate concerns to consider UWC's future over the medium to longer term. We are greatly indebted to all task team members for their commitment to the process and the University. The work and reports of the task teams have contributed significantly to shaping a Discussion Document that solicited inputs from different stakeholders and helped to inform the IOP. Despite the constraints of the lockdown, student input was solicited through a survey and a multimedia student competition.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES AS ENDURING COMMITMENTS

The IOP process also provided the opportunity to revisit UWC's Mission, Vision and core values, and these form part of this IOP. Although mission statements are enduring, they are not cast in stone, and a restatement of purpose may be required as an institution evolves. The first critical moment of redefining UWC's mission occurred in the build-up to its attainment of autonomous university status in the early 1980s. In 1982, the University adopted a new Mission Statement ("UWC Objectives"), in which it rejected the apartheid ideology on which it was founded with a formal declaration of non-racialism and "a firm commitment to the development of the Third World communities in South Africa". As a result, UWC became the first residential South African university, in defiance of the apartheid state, to "open" its doors to all who qualified and paved the way to later declaring itself the intellectual home of the democratic left.

The second moment of redefinition of purpose was necessitated at the advent of democracy to align UWC's role with the broad post-1994 goals and aspirations of the new democratic order in South Africa. Following the promulgation of the Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997, the University adopted a new Mission Statement in the same year. The 1997 Mission Statement was thus amended slightly in the 2010 IOP.

Although the previous mission statement served the University well over the past two and a half decades, there was consensus that it required updating to more adequately represent UWC's current purpose, sense of identity, strategic direction and renewed self-confidence, without seemingly articulating UWC's sense of future through a "gaze into the rear mirror".

GOAL AREAS

The IOP develops a number of specific goals (ends) and objectives and actions (the means) to enhance the University's strategic position in eight goal areas:

- **Goal Area 1: The Student Experience**
  To facilitate a meaningful and stimulating university experience for students, from initial registration to graduation, by building co-curricular opportunities, responsive support services and institutional cultures that allow for growth and development, and that lay the foundation for lifelong learning; and efficient and effective enrolment management geared towards enhancing the University's overall mission and long-term ambitions.

- **Goal Area 2: Learning and Teaching**
  To provide high-quality, evidence-based learning and teaching opportunities that are underpinned by responsive curricula and a diversity of learning, teaching and assessment approaches in order to nurture graduates who have the knowledge, skills and attributes to succeed in the world of work; are lifelong learners; and are socially aware, ethical and caring global citizens.

- **Goal Area 3: Research and Innovation**
  To strengthen UWC's position as a research-led university, contributing to the transformation of society through its knowledge-production endeavours and recognised for its

general research capabilities and research strengths in selected areas.

- **Goal Area 4: People Framework**
  To continue to position UWC as an employer of choice through a dynamic and supportive work environment and a resilient culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity and excellence.

- **Goal Area 5: Financial Sustainability**
  To strengthen UWC's financial base through efforts to optimise state subsidy potential, and to embark actively on initiatives to diversify and secure new income streams to effectively support UWC's academic mandate, its broader aspirations and strategic priorities, whilst continuing to build reserves for strategic utilisation and supporting UWC's ongoing financial sustainability.

- **Goal Area 6: UWC in the Public Domain**
  To optimise the range of media platforms and publications that position UWC as a vibrant, intellectually stimulating, research-led university where students and staff can realise their aspirations.

- **Goal Area 7: Developing the Campus and its Surroundings Areas**
  To develop UWC's campuses as dynamic sites that effectively support academic and related activities through appropriate physical and ICT infrastructure that also assist in anchoring the University in different communities and connecting it to diverse publics.

- **Goal Area 8: Leadership, Governance and Management**
  To provide robust governance and effective values-based leadership at all levels to further develop UWC as a vibrant institution of high repute, supported by accountable management practices.

CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

The University has identified four interdependent cross-cutting areas that have the potential to facilitate large-scale change with a view to proactively leveraging the institution's capabilities to achieve its strategic goals. These are areas in which the University has made significant advances over the past years in response to

an increasingly digital age; its anchoring role in surrounding communities; establishing mutually beneficial partnerships; the University's standing in the higher education ecosystem; and its international relationships. The University's extensive involvement in these areas, both formal and informal, as well as the sheer number of initiatives, suggests that there is a growing risk of ad hoc project proliferation and change saturation. Instead, what is required is a more thoughtful and structured approach to deliver on the strategic objectives and to see the cumulative benefit from its multiple efforts at change on a university-wide scale.

In the rollout of the IOP, there are significant opportunities at each level of the University to both understand and embed the cross-cutting areas more consciously into relevant aspects of its work in order to derive optimal benefit. The University community will therefore be invited to consider the applicability and potential influence of each of the following four cross-cutting areas in each of the goal areas for these to mature into strategic, institutional capabilities.

1. Digital transformation

One of the principles behind digital transformation is that it breaks from the traditional top-down, institutionally initiated IT approaches to an increasingly demand-driven, bottom-up approach that is more receptive to the changing behaviours, expectations and needs of the core business and its users. Although the call to put people and strategy before technology presents daunting challenges for all sectors, the opportunities that result from it are significant. A second pressure that is unlikely to abate is the need to keep pace with the explosive growth in new technologies and the associated data and cybersecurity risks that accompany it. This will require a strategic investment in and increased embeddedness of the digitalisation of business processes across all portfolios; a conscious update or replacement of legacy systems; higher processing speed capacity and the development of common data platforms; 24/7 access; and improved use of immersive technologies and artificial intelligence, to name a few. The University stands to benefit significantly from a well-conceived

digital transformation strategy and has to invest more strategically in the revamping of its digital infrastructure and capabilities to harness its full potential. As an essential part of any digital transformation approach, increased attention must also be given to improve the support for eResearch and cloud computing requirements.

The previous IOP initiated a number of digitalisation projects to enhance the University's fitness to function as a connected 21st-century university. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the speed and scale of digitalisation, necessitating students and staff to study and work remotely. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, the implementation progress of several ICT projects was ad hoc, often lacking proper project and vendor management. In contrast, the urgency of the pandemic has resulted in significant collaboration between executive lines, faculties, professional support units and vendor coordination to roll out the provision of devices and data and, in doing so, has helped to reduce the digital divide that exists in the University community. Building on this momentum, the IOP proposes that UWC remains ambitious in its outlook and embarks on a sustained, deliberate, phased journey to digitally transform the entire institution through smarter integration and embeddedness of digital technologies, business processes and key competencies at all levels of the University. The recently adopted Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy is an important step in support of this approach. The redevelopment of the University's website and the introduction of the UWC intranet site are steps in the right direction, but much more is required.

2. An anchor institution

The University's approach to positioning itself as an anchor institution presents transformative opportunities to give effect to its academic mandate, while actively contributing to the distinctiveness, vibrancy and character of its immediate surroundings and the region more broadly. There is a growing expectation that public institutions should not operate in isolation, but rather integrate their development plans in innovative ways to affect and influence their immediate environments. As such, UWC will continue to immerse itself in its
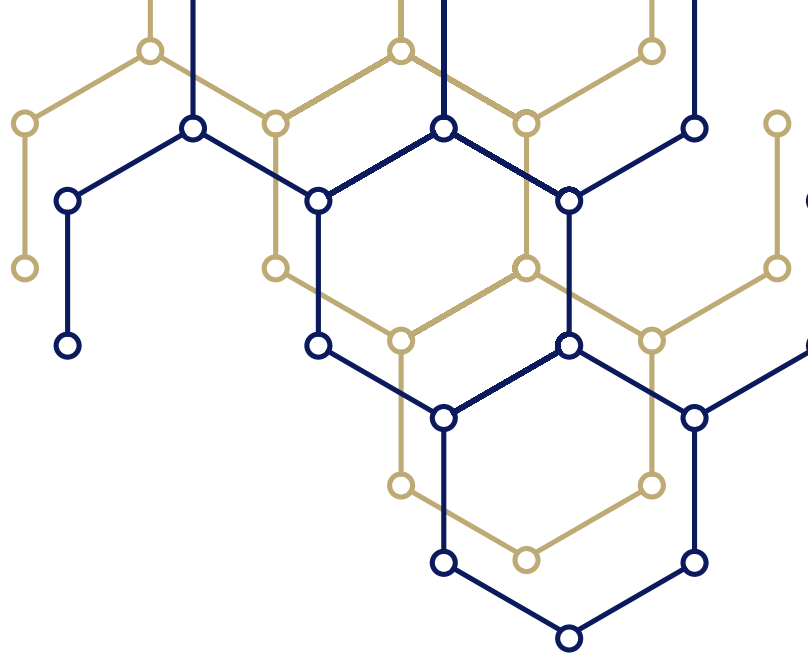
neighbourhoods, both urban and rural, and promote cultural, educational, developmental, social and economic relationships with its locales. Through its intellectual and professional talent and capacity, UWC has a growing prominence in urban and rural settings, and is increasingly seen as an important resource in the region, more especially by marginalised communities. This demands the University to be much more imaginative, thoughtful and purposeful about its sense of place and its intellectual, cultural, geographical and ecological footprint. Understanding its collaborative value as an anchor institution, UWC will assist in building mutually beneficial ecosystems with different roleplayers — public, private, philanthropical, business and civil society — who are able to create sufficient scale, scope and geographies of opportunities.

3. Collaborative partnerships within an ecosystem

As a research-led university, UWC plays an essential role in collaborative partnerships within South Africa and globally. In doing so, the University has broadened its horizons and participated in a number of leading national and international projects in several disciplines. This has opened the way for the University to engage as a trusted partner in addressing the global challenges of our time, such as climate change, food security, health and well-being, custodianship of data and a shared sense of humanity. To avoid unproductive competition and minimise duplication of effort, it becomes vital for UWC to develop strategic approaches to internationalisation through participation in well-targeted collaborative partnerships and research networks. It also prompts UWC to expand its strategic relationships in the Global South, with a particular focus on Africa. UWC also needs to carefully explore long-term business and industry relationships beyond disciplinary boundaries and jurisdictions to build sustainable ecosystems.

4. Internationalisation

Internationalisation has been an important focus at UWC and has been embedded as a cross-cutting theme across all goal areas in

the IOP, as well as in the critical teaching and learning, and research and student development imperatives. The focus globally has been on increasing the competencies of individuals to better appreciate and be enriched by the diversity of culture, language and experience of people across borders through academic mobility and exchange. Given UWC's history, it is particularly well positioned to offer insights and experience from the African perspective. UWC has grounded its international partnerships on the principles of mutual reciprocity and respect, which are important to redress the skewed legacies of knowledge production.

Internationalisation is an integral part of what UWC's Mission encapsulates and will strengthen efforts towards realising the institutional Vision. The recruitment of international students and staff enriches the experiences of the UWC community, strongly supporting increased diversity and inculcating a sense of belonging to the continent as well as supporting the Internationalisation@Home initiative. In view of the fact that most South African students cannot afford to travel abroad to benefit from the international exposure afforded by studying in another country, and that limited funded opportunities are available to support such experiences, the

Internationalisation@Home initiative adds to the diversity and richness of the UWC student experience. The learning and teaching, as well as research and innovation goal areas, will further benefit from UWC's internationalisation strategy of supporting staff and student mobility to its international partners through dedicated donor-funded programmes. Through focused attention being paid to establishing sustainable partnerships, UWC has developed a number of long-term strategic partnerships that continue to benefit the knowledge project of the institution.

Emphasis is also being placed on the membership of UWC in strategic research and institutional consortia. This entails, amongst others, leveraging UWC's existing networks to access consortia of institutional partnerships. "Our friends are your friends, and we are all stronger when we work and play together" may be an apt description of this strategy. UWC staff and students would benefit mutually from this collective internationalisation strategy.

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS AND UWC'S CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES

The IOP 2021–2025 and associated institutional goals must follow from realistic assumptions about both the opportunities and the challenges facing the South African public higher education sector, including the following:

- Demand for access to higher education and traditional campus-based educational experiences will not diminish, but parents and students prefer campuses that are safe and inviting for all; integrate academic and personal development in physical, digital and virtual online environments; and are successful in graduating students who are well prepared to enter the world of work.
- Universities will be challenged to adapt to the "new normal" confronting society and arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The ability of institutions to enhance their online presence in accredited programme provision will become a key differentiator.
- Programme distinction through focused and transdisciplinary research niche areas is becoming increasingly important, especially in the light of pressure on the demand for new

knowledge and ways of applying it at scale in a climate of fiscal austerity.
- Competition between regions and institutions for local and international partnerships with businesses, parastatals and other institutions will increase. Such partnerships have the potential to be lucrative and to enable institutions to be more competitive.
- Increased competition for excellent students, particularly for funded postgraduate students, will put universities under pressure to develop a range of highly selective recruitment and retention instruments to facilitate planned expansion and retention in accordance with mandated enrolment targets.
- The volatility and economic uncertainty of the environment will have serious implications for fundraising and the capacity to embark on longer-term projects. This will create a more stressful work environment, which can contribute to the erosion of trust and collegiality.
- University budgets will be under increasing financial pressure as a result of pressure from government to redirect expenditure to other pressing priorities, as well as the capping of fees and the lack of a lasting solution to the funding of the "missing middle" group of students who fall outside of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). As a result, the current business models will be tested more than ever before.
- In an era in which the value of higher education is being questioned at unprecedented levels, institutions will have to communicate more effectively with the public to showcase their activities and demonstrate their contribution to society, with the view to building greater trust.
- Data privacy issues will impact higher education issues, as universities will be under pressure to secure student and research data, guard against data breaches and demonstrate responsible enforcement.
- The global issues of our time that inform, amongst others, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[2] requires the University to consider in which areas it has the intellectual capacity to make the most significant contributions.

2. The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030 (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)

Goal Area 1:
The Student Experience

To facilitate a meaningful and stimulating university experience for students, from initial registration to graduation, by building co-curricular opportunities, responsive support services and institutional cultures that allow for growth and development and that lay the foundation for lifelong learning; and efficient and effective enrolment management geared towards enhancing the University's overall mission and long-term ambitions.

INTRODUCTION

Students are and will always be at the heart of the University's endeavours. Since the founding of the University more than sixty years ago, successive generations of graduates have been testament to the vibrant, sometimes turbulent, but always life-changing experiences of studying at UWC. Many have gone on to become leaders in public life, business and academia. We are committed to ensuring that future generations of UWC students can also thrive and develop to their full potential. The achievement of this goal is central to the work of all sections of the University and permeates every goal area of this IOP. However, in this specific goal area, our focus is on the co-curricular experiences, institutional cultures and support services that enrich the lives of students and nurture their talents and

capabilities throughout their association with the University — from first contact and through their undergraduate and postgraduate studies to becoming alumni and lifelong ambassadors of their alma mater. The goal area also strives to contribute to effective enrolment management as well as to ensure better coordination and synergy of initiatives across the divisions and functions of the University, which together contribute to an enriching student experience.

While we have made significant progress in enhancing the UWC student experience, we acknowledge that our efforts continue to be informed by the broader societal context within which UWC is located. In particular, the University's very location poses limitations but also provides opportunities. The main campus remains closed off from vibrant city life. Poor transport networks and safety concerns limit the mobility of students, many of whom are first-generation students with very limited financial resources. As a result, Oppidan (or daily-commuting) students cannot easily make use of the University facilities after hours, or take part in the various extramural activities that are available on campus. These are some of the realities that cannot be wished away. Instead, they push the University to work harder to provide the facilities, opportunities and connections that contribute to an enriching university experience, and that equip graduates to function as professionals and active citizens. Our physical location, however, is also our strength, as it anchors us close to the communities that we serve. It connects us to feeder schools, clinics, hospitals, NGOs and communities that are the lifeblood of so much of our research, teaching and community engagement.

UWC has a student body that is diverse in terms of race, gender, age, nationality and prior qualifications. It is this diversity that continues to attract students to study at UWC as their institution of choice, especially at postgraduate level. The findings of our 2018 Graduate Exit survey were particularly encouraging: 94% of respondents were proud to graduate from UWC; 88% would recommend UWC to their friends and family; 78% of graduates said they would choose UWC again as a place to study; and 87% said the University provided them with an intellectually stimulating environment.

The University's transformation from a bleak college in the "bush" to a modern park-like campus has also been remarkable. Today, for example, we have cutting-edge infrastructure, facilities and programmes in the biological and physical sciences that can hold their own internationally.

UWC has seen the opening of several new facilities that contribute significantly to enriching student life. The refurbishment and equipping of a new facility for the support unit for differently-abled students provides an important study and networking space for students to access specialised equipment, resources and expertise. The construction of a 2 700-bed student village adjacent to the campus is in progress. This will not only double the number of UWC-owned beds, but will locate them within walking distance of the main campus and study amenities, such as the 24/7 study hall and high-performance sports facilities.

Sport has become a central part of university life and has the potential to bring the campus community closer together. The University has increased the number of sporting codes that it offers through the introduction of rowing, and significant gains have been made to advance women in sport in particular. The increasing national media exposure of UWC's rugby, cricket, netball and women's soccer teams has been indicative of progress in these areas. An increase in the number of Sport Merit Awards over the last IOP period has enabled the more competitive recruitment of sportswomen and men,

which, in turn, has led to an increase in the number of UWC students and graduates joining professional as well as national teams. This has, importantly, been supported by the high-performance sport facilities and capacity, which have contributed to giving students better access to medical, nutritional and psychological support.

Student governance structures continue to play a leading role in shaping campus life through, amongst others, the SRC, student faculty councils, clubs and societies, and sporting codes. Examples of student-led initiatives include the Food Security Project, a nutrition and wellness programme that responds to hunger on campus, and the SRC's Ikamva Lethu Fundraising Campaign, which annually raises funds to support indigent students with bursaries, study resources and food subsidies. The flagship student leadership incubator programme is aimed at preparing students for leadership and governance roles. Opportunities are also created for students to participate in volunteer programmes.

The safety and security of students will always remain a priority. University campuses are not immune to the scourge of gender-based violence. The University has put in place policies and processes to address gender-based violence (GBV), as well as initiatives to build and enhance institutional cultures that are inclusive and respectful of diversity. We aim to provide a supportive, inclusive environment for all students that addresses barriers to success and respects diversity. As will be discussed further in Goal Area 7, there are a number of infrastructure projects, such as improving lighting, that have also been implemented to improve safety on campus.

Work has also begun to build better coordination and synergy between student support initiatives across the University by bringing them under the umbrella of an overarching student success strategy (see Goal Area 2). This focus will be expanded on in this IOP period, especially within the framework of the Siyaphumelela Project, which includes the First-Year Experience initiative and the "Making your Mark through Mapworks" project.

The latter incorporates multiple learning styles and strategies to facilitate student psycho-social support. A Mental Health Project to enhance existing and future mental health initiatives and practices within the Centre for Student Support Services and the broader campus has been introduced and is supported by research to ascertain the factors that affect the mental health of students, as well as mitigating interventions. This work is framed by the Mental Health Policy adopted in 2020.

ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT: DETERMINING THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE UNIVERSITY

The number of students, where they come from, and the programmes and degrees for which they register (undergraduate and postgraduate) all contribute to creating a diverse and interesting campus community, and this is shaped by the University's enrolment mandate. UWC's six-year enrolment mandate (2020 to 2025) from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) requires the University to manage its enrolment, retention and throughput in line with nationally agreed targets and system-wide differentiation. Failure to achieve targets allocated by the DHET can have significant implications for UWC's subsidy, which takes account of both student enrolment and, importantly, graduation output.

As illustrated in Figure 1 to the right, UWC is mandated to increase its student headcount from 23 727 in 2020 to 26 740 (or 21 472 full-time equivalent students) by 2025. In line with the University's desire to increase its share of postgraduate students and its overall research output, its approved enrolment plan is predicated on much slower annual increases in first-time entering undergraduates (school-leavers), allowing for increased growth in postgraduate studies. This growth at advanced qualification levels will assist the University to maximise resources and increase its overall share of the public purse by 0.42% by the end of the IOP period. The challenge to reimagine UWC's student mix and bridging the gap between its research aspirations and current reality is both exciting and daunting.

The strategies and tactics of the University's enrolment management plan are to ensure a steady growth in postgraduate enrolments and to improve the general success and retention of all students, which will help the University achieve one of the central pillars to becoming a research-led university. While these objectives
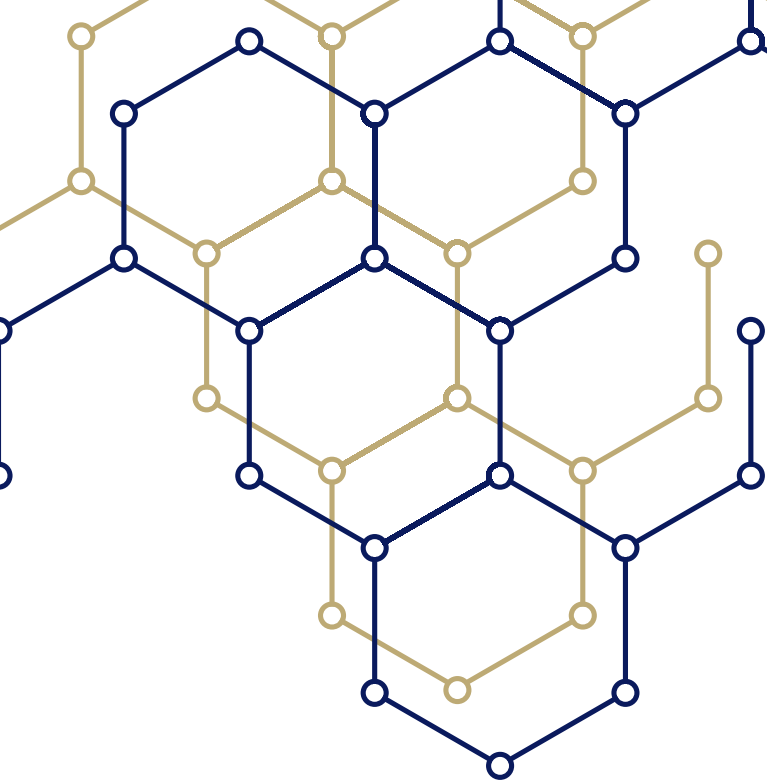
are further elaborated on in Goal Areas 1, 2 and 3, it will require significant effort and capacity at all levels to sustain enrolment efforts in the current economic climate through the mitigation of risks whilst leveraging opportunities.

Students' learning experiences, engagement with the University and its surrounding communities, as well as their life experiences are multidimensional. Ongoing attention must be given to providing a stimulating environment in which students can thrive. It also requires a caring and collaborative institutional culture that is open to change, tolerant of cultural diversity and modelled on values-based leadership at all levels. Importantly, success in this goal area requires a body of both academic and professional support staff who are equipped and committed to engage effectively and compassionately with students. The strengthening of professional support services will receive focused attention in this IOP.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

Figure 1: UWC's Mandated Enrolment Growth, 2020 to 2025

Legend: Unweighted FTEs · Student enroll · Weighted Teaching Input FTEs (Mandated)
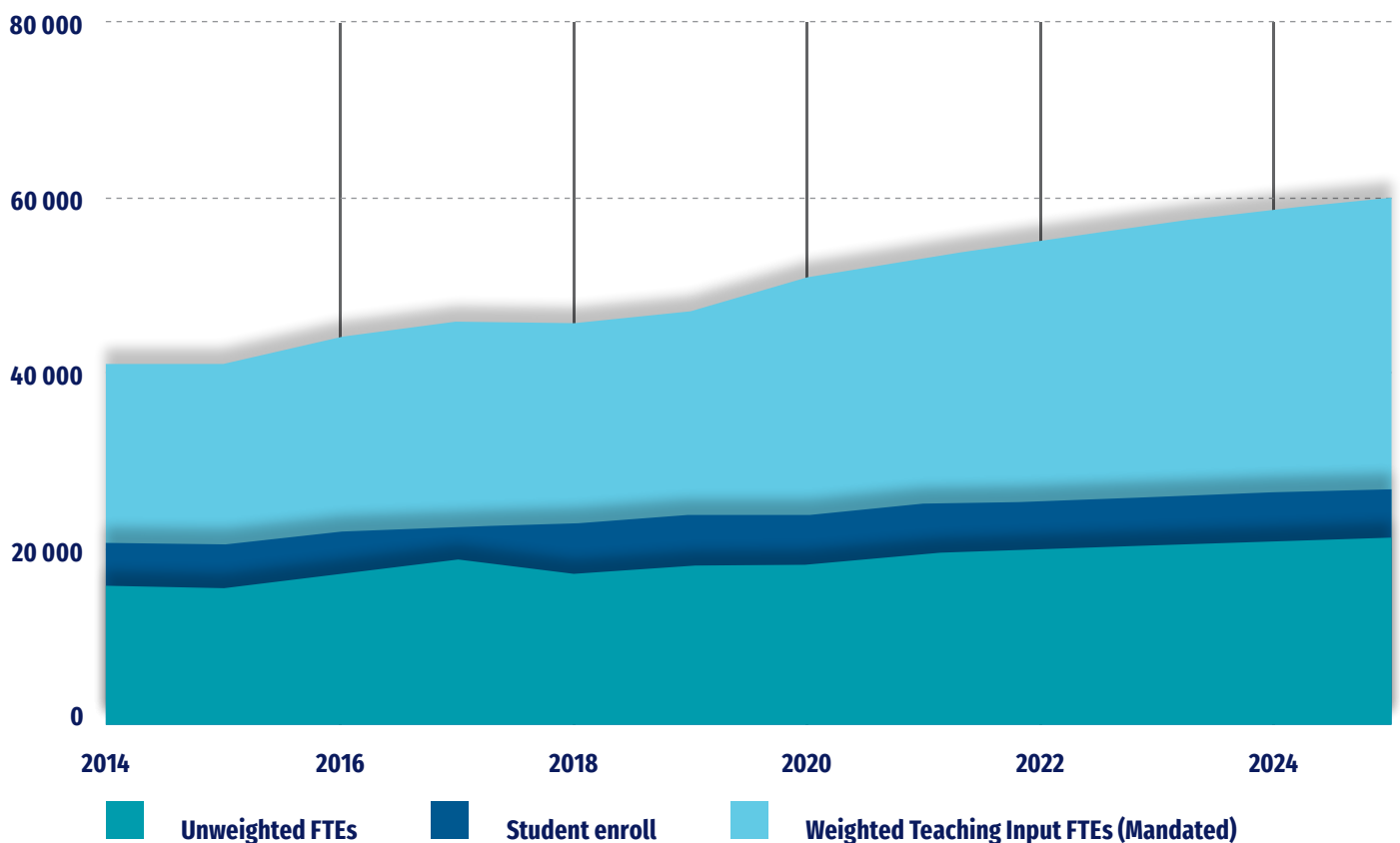
1. Enhancing opportunities to provide students with a transformative university experience

As indicated above, UWC wishes to focus on ensuring that students enjoy an enriching experience at every stage of their higher education journey, from their first contact with the University as prospective students, through selection and registration, transitioning from school to university, and their undergraduate and postgraduate studies to career advice, transitioning to the world of work and becoming alumni. Much has been done to nurture the holistic development and academic success of students throughout their university careers. However, over the years, we have seen the ad hoc proliferation of support interventions, with relatively little assessment of reach and impact. During this IOP period, we therefore plan to conceptualise and implement a more systematic and coordinated support programme that covers the student's entire university career.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Identify and evaluate current support initiatives (based on a common assessment framework) across the key stages of the student journey as the basis for the development and implementation of a systematic and coordinated next-generation support programme that also addresses current gaps and shortcomings.
- Establish a community of practice to collaborate, share information, advance good practice in this area and work towards establishing greater synergy between projects.
- Develop an online platform to build a digital transcript of individual students' participation in co-curricular activities.
- Scale up existing face-to-face and digital support and development programmes and explore the optimal use of online platforms to promote student life more broadly.

2. Building and enhancing a supportive, inclusive environment for all students that addresses barriers to success, respects diversity and creates a sense of belonging

Students' sense of belonging is closely associated with their perceived connectedness with the University and the extent to which they are motivated and likely to persist and succeed in their studies. UWC prides itself on its commitment to inclusivity and diversity, and ability to attract a diverse range of students from all walks of life, experiences and backgrounds. For many students, particularly first-generation university students, the transition from school to university and the experience of navigating the different stages of application, admission, curriculum choices, adjustment to residence life, etc. can be overwhelming and alienating.

Increased attention will be paid to encourage interpersonal and intergroup relationships with peers and a supportive relationship with staff. These relationships will be marked by care, tolerance and trust within a framework that protects the rights and dignity of each individual. Special attention will be given to the varied expectations and needs of different segments of the student body to ensure that all students are reached, particularly vulnerable groups of students who often experience additional barriers (for example, differently-abled students) such as alienation and exclusion, and find it difficult to cope or fit into the mainstream.

The principles of inclusivity and diversity are strongly connected with UWC's core values and its commitment to create an atmosphere of trust and tolerance and to protect the rights and dignity of individuals. In a society with high levels of crime and gender-based violence, which add to increased levels of anxiety among students, the safety and well-being of students remain a key concern. The University will expand its efforts to gain a better understanding of students' experiences and expectations and to implement practical steps to address these concerns on both systemic and personal levels. This includes organisational arrangements, the physical infrastructure, students' online experiences, and exposure to bullying and cybercrime. Particular concerns that have grown during the COVID-19 pandemic are students' mental health and well-being, including concerns about suicide. The latter concerns will receive priority attention in this IOP, with a view to better understand students' experiences, levels of anxiety and depression, and to proactively identify and support students at risk.

Students' involvement in campus activities fulfils an important role in building a dynamic and vibrant campus life and bettering the student experience, aligned to the key goals of connecting students to each other and the world around them. There is, however, general acknowledgement that student participation in extracurricular activities varies significantly for different groups of students. For example, Oppidan students are constrained by long travel time to the campus as well as the lack of safe after-hours transport options. Many students need to hold down part-time jobs, in addition to family responsibilities. Consideration therefore will be given to ways in which all students may be better positioned to benefit from broader participation in campus life, beyond formal academic studies. Another challenge facing the University is keeping students engaged in all aspects of campus life, and developing and sustaining a vibrant, inclusive and transformative student experience in the midst and aftermath of the pandemic.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Step up its efforts to create a welcoming atmosphere and give students a sense that they are valued and that their voices, opinions and active participation in the University's life matter and are valued. These efforts are geared to actively promote a respectful, tolerant and caring campus community. Student perception surveys will be administered to assess progress in this area.

- Provide an enabling campus environment that promotes the health, safety and well-being of all segments of the student body, with particular focus on mental health support, which is one of the priorities funded through the Siyaphumelela programme (also see Goal Area 2).

- Promote active student participation in sporting, cultural and leisure activities, as well as participation in student government and societies. Current life skills programmes will be expanded so that all students have the opportunity to acquire new life skills.

- Promote student engagement with local communities through

voluntary work, as well as formal service-learning opportunities.

3. Providing students with responsive and professional support services that contribute to a positive student experience

Meaningful student engagement is based on a multitude of factors, including the nature and quality of the relationship between staff and students. While the interaction between academics and students necessarily occurs more frequently in the learning, teaching and assessment context, professional and support staff also interact with students and exert powerful influences on, amongst others, students' motivation and sense of belonging. This IOP acknowledges the value of professional and support services staff to promote the well-being of students and to influence the overall experiences of students.

In this regard, UWC will encourage:

- All faculties and divisions to review and rethink current institutional culture and functioning of services/units (in particular those that are student-facing) with a view to enhance service delivery and the relationships of trust between the administrative and professional staff and students as markers of a healthy institutional culture. In undertaking this exercise, attention should be paid, where appropriate, to addressing long-held bureaucratic rules and practices, policy incongruences and outdated legacy systems, which might constrain staff-student relations. Faculties/units will also be encouraged to share good experience and practice in this regard.
- Staff in student-facing services/units will be provided with appropriate capacity building and training opportunities to enhance service delivery and staff job satisfaction. This will include the opportunity to enrol for formal qualifications and participate in communities of practice.

4. Changing the size, shape and mix of the student population and academic programmes

UWC's enrolment plan must be supported by a strategic implementation

plan that enables the University to pursue its core academic and research goals and aspirations in a more deliberate and integrated way. As indicated earlier, UWC's enrolment mandate is predicated on much slower annual increases in first-time entering undergraduates, allowing for increased opportunities to grow postgraduate enrolment broadly across the University, but with particular focus on selected niche areas that reflect the research strengths of the institution. This will allow for both greater opportunity for top-performing current students to progress to advanced levels of study, as well as the recruitment of students nationally, from the rest of the continent and internationally.

The increased scope to expand current and introduce new postgraduate programmes, including fully online postgraduate programmes, will assist UWC to diversify and remain fiscally strong. Enrolment management at the postgraduate level will require attention being paid to the recruitment and retention of students. With respect to the latter, the findings and recommendations of the Council on Higher Education's recent National Review of Doctoral Education, for example, will be of value to guide the strengthening of doctoral education at UWC.

The University is mandated to offer fully online postgraduate programmes to at least 3% of its total student body within this IOP period. This will require the development of strong student success-related practices in a fully online environment and the introduction of digitally enabled flexible online learning capabilities to increase geographic reach. The University will focus strategically on developing fully online offerings of programmes in areas of high demand. The need to seek accreditation for online programmes also presents a unique opportunity to review and reimagine UWC's programme and qualification mix (PQM) and to expand into new fields of study, including areas where UWC may wish to enter partnerships or offerings in non-traditional campus sites, such as farmland for sustainable agriculture. A review of the PQM is specifically addressed in Goal Area 2.

While specific interventions are identified below, it must be stressed that issues relating to the recruitment, success and retention of both undergraduate and postgraduate students are dealt with across all areas of this IOP.
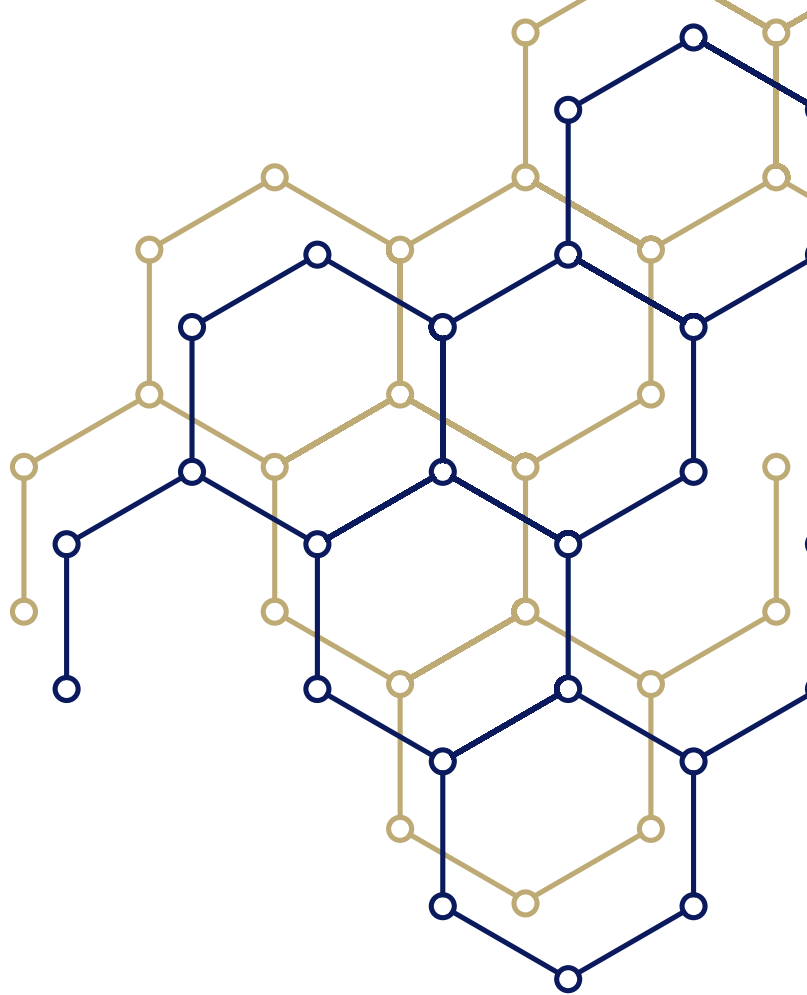
In further support of this area, UWC will:

- Develop and implement an improvement plan for the recruitment and registration of students that is aligned with achieving the targets set in our approved enrolment mandate. The plan will identify areas that require priority attention and will demarcate roles and responsibilities across different divisions and faculties. The improvement plan will be premised on a comprehensive review of the University's policies, administrative capacity and systems for undergraduate and postgraduate student recruitment and registration.
- Develop and implement a policy framework and standard operating procedures to support fully online postgraduate programme offerings.
- Focus on the optimal use of bursary and scholarship opportunities in support of the University's enrolment plan.•
Review UWC's PQM with a view to exploring new study areas and expanding the range and delivery mode of accredited programme offerings (see Goal Area 2).
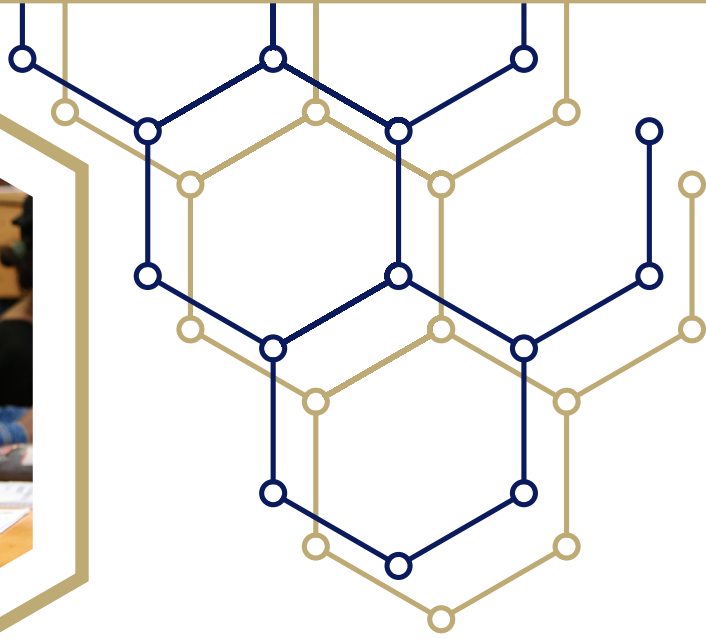
Goal Area 2:
Learning and Teaching

To provide high-quality, evidence-based learning and teaching opportunities that are underpinned by responsive curricula and a diversity of learning, teaching and assessment approaches in order to nurture graduates who: have the knowledge, skills and attributes to succeed in the world of work; are lifelong learners; and are socially aware, ethical and caring global citizens.

INTRODUCTION

Universities are required to focus on addressing global and local social, economic and environmental challenges through their research and innovation focus and, most importantly, through their role in preparing graduates who are responsible citizens and ethical professionals able to contribute to finding solutions towards a more equitable and just society. If our graduates are to meet these requirements, we have to critically and rigorously consider our internal practices, policies and procedures. This requires paying continued attention to, amongst others, what we teach, how we teach, how students learn, how we assess learning and how we build institutional and disciplinary cultures and structures that support students and staff alike. In considering all of the above, universities must remain cognisant of the rapidly changing world of work and the implications thereof in terms of the additional skills and attributes

that will equip students for changing work environments, including global shifts in the nature of work.

UWC is designated as a contact university and, despite the intention to deliver some programmes in a fully online/distance mode, the on-campus and classroom experiences and engagements are considered valuable and important for our students' development, especially at the undergraduate level and given that a majority of our students come from disadvantaged schooling and home backgrounds. Although COVID-19 has dramatically affected the classroom and campus experience in the short to medium term, we remain committed to providing an enriching on-campus experience for the majority of our students. However, we will draw on the rich experience gained during the course of the pandemic to strengthen learning and teaching, particularly through the application of relevant technology and digital platforms. The incorporation of the invaluable experiences of this period into our future practices will enable the University to give effect to the notion of blended learning as it applies to UWC.

UWC has achieved much in strengthening learning and teaching over various IOP cycles, including the following:

- The Student Retention and Success Framework has been developed and approved. Multiple student success initiatives are in place, including the strengthening of tutorials through increased tutor training, tutor support and tutor evaluation; peer mentoring and peer learning; support for academic and digital literacies; and a First-Year Experience (FYE) programme. Through Project Y, attention has been given to enhancing undergraduate students' critical thinking and research skills to better prepare them for postgraduate studies. Extended curriculum programmes are provided in the faculties of Arts, Community and Health Sciences, Education, Economic and Management Sciences, Law and Natural Sciences to students who show potential but do not meet the standard entry requirements. These programmes were all reviewed in the last IOP cycle and processes are under way to address the recommendations to improve the quality and success rates of these programmes and their articulation with the mainstream.

- The Charter of Graduate Attributes is now a widely accepted document and its implementation has resulted in the incremental embedding of desired attributes into the curriculum.

- The Professionalisation of Teaching: UWC has a good track record in terms of initiatives aimed at the professionalisation of teaching, which include the recognition of teaching excellence as part of the academic promotion criteria; support for staff to undertake further training and development in higher education teaching and learning, such as the CHEC Postgraduate Diploma (Higher Education) (Teaching & Learning) and the South African Teaching Advancement at University (TAU)Fellowship Awards. There has also been an increase in publishing in the area of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). UWC offers its own induction courses for new academics, and these contribute significantly to embedding teaching professionalisation.

- Enhancing Technological Platforms: There is an ongoing focus on the importance of digital resources and skills, and building the confidence of students and staff to use technology more effectively to support learning, pedagogical approaches and engagement. The Digital Academic Literacy (DAL) Programme is an important initiative that supports thousands of new students annually. The uptake of blended and flexible learning has been facilitated, amongst others, by Ikamva, the University's

learning management system. The Centre for Innovative Education & Communication Technologies (CIECT) continues to actively promote and support academics' development in eLearning. The COVID-19 lockdown necessitated the shifting of all academic programmes to online mode. This required tremendous effort and dedication from all teaching staff, various support units and students, and was testament to the robustness of UWC's digital resources and infrastructure, despite significant challenges relating to access to devices and data provisioning. UWC has also begun to increase the capacity and skills of academics and students to engage with cutting-edge immersive technologies. For example, the University was able to optimise its virtual laboratory partnership with Learning Science UK to provide virtual access to the laboratory-based sciences when physical access to laboratories was restricted during the pandemic.

A number of the initiatives outlined above have benefited from funding support from various of the Department of Higher Education and Training's capacity development grant streams, and this has assisted specifically to extend the scope and reach of the interventions.

While we have made significant gains, a number of pressing challenges remain. Of particular concern is that student performance has not improved. An analysis of the performance of the 2015 cohort of students enrolled in three-year degree programmes found that only 23% of students graduated in minimum time, with 33% dropping out. After six years, 44% of the cohort had graduated and the dropout increased to 44%. A comparable analysis of the 2015 cohort enrolled in four-year degree programmes found that 36% of the cohort graduated in the minimum time, with 29% dropping out. Two years later, 56% of the cohort had graduated, with 32% dropping out. The slightly better performance of students in the four-year programmes is to be expected, given the higher entry requirements for admission to these programmes. UWC's performance remains below the average for traditional universities in the national system.

A key focus for this IOP period therefore will be to significantly improve undergraduate student performance so that it is minimally in line with DHET benchmarks for traditional universities and on par with peer institutions. However, we are clear that this goal must be achieved without compromising the integrity of our assessment standards and graduate outcomes.

While we will expand on strategies that have shown promise in the past period, our focus in this IOP will be on using learning analytics to comprehensively enhance curriculum and student support interventions and improve the tracking and monitoring of student performance (see below). This work will benefit from UWC's full participation in the Siyaphumelela network, which has as its primary goal "to improve institutional capacity to enact data-driven strategies that support student success".

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

1. Student success and retention

UWC is committed to fostering a conducive and flexible learning environment that supports student success and retention. In this regard, it is essential to recognise that student success, similar to the student experience, is influenced by many factors. Addressing student success and retention challenges will require a concerted effort by every part of the UWC community.

As indicated, UWC's student success rates do not compare favourably with the broader national sector, and work has already been done to better understand the factors affecting student success. For example, data shows that early failure increases the chances of drop-out — meaning that students who fail modules at the first-year level, even when promoted to the following year of study, are more likely to drop out in later years. The University has been monitoring modules with low pass rates over a number of years and this has led to the identification of modules with failure rates of between 20% and 29%, and those with failure rates greater than 29%. Of particular concern in the latter group are modules with high enrolment (150 or more students), which are offered in more than one programme, which are prerequisites,and which have experienced low pass rates over time (not just in one year). These modules will receive concerted attention in this IOP cycle.
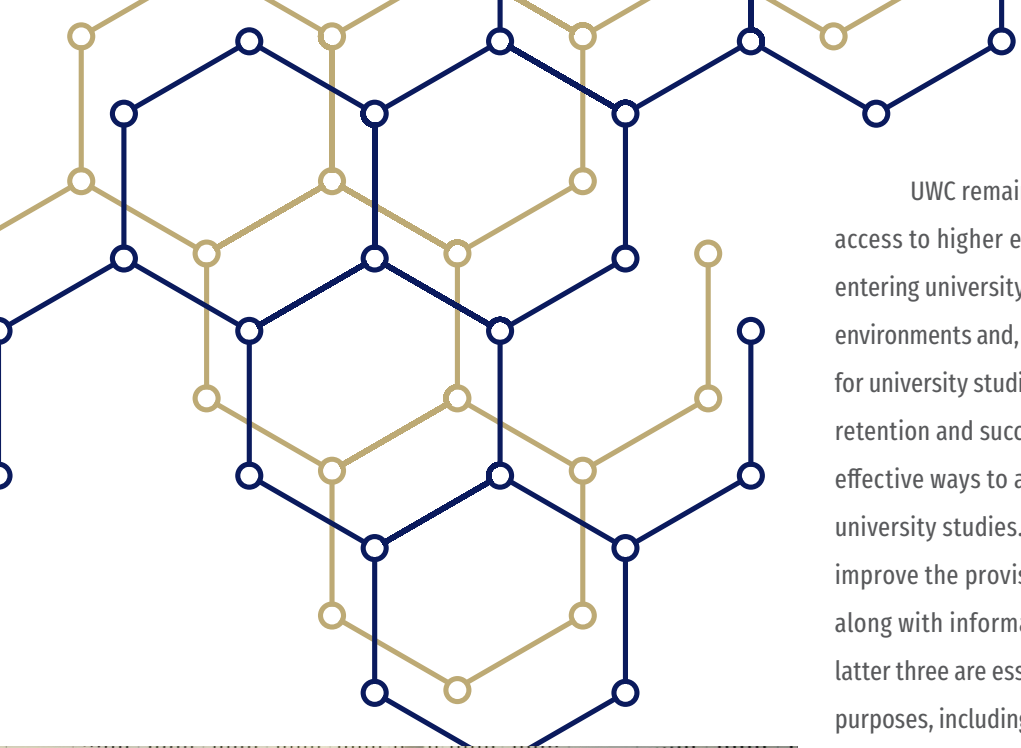
UWC remains committed to the widening and broadening of access to higher education. However, we recognise that students entering university come from very different and unequal schooling environments and, generally, there is a lack of academic preparedness for university studies. These factors have a direct influence on student retention and success. We will continue to make every effort to find effective ways to address the articulation gap between school and university studies. This will include renewed attention being paid to improve the provision of quality extended curriculum programmes, along with information literacy, computer and eLiteracy skills. The latter three are essential for engaging in online platforms for multiple purposes, including assessment, communication, eResearch, etc.

Attention will be paid to strengthening the University's business intelligence capacity so that robust learner analytics and tracking systems are in place to allow for the comprehensive monitoring of student performance at all levels — individuals, modules, programmes, departments and faculties.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Strengthen its business intelligence capacity to increasingly use learning analytics and tracking systems to gain a better understanding and to effectively address student success and retention.
- Support faculty interventions to address modules with high failure rates.
- Improve the quality and success rates of the extended curriculum programmes and their articulation with the mainstream.
- Track student progress through cohort studies and focus on interventions to increase the proportion of students who complete qualifications in the minimum time.
- Continue to refine the First-year Mentorship and Transitioning programme.
- Improve the quality of tutorials through the tutor enhancement programme, which includes the selection, training and evaluation of tutors and the appointment of Faculty Tutor Coordinators. In addition, the tutorial

management system will be updated with a view to monitoring student attendance and performance and the effectiveness of tutorials, in particular through the incorporation of data on student engagement with learning processes.

- Pilot the appointment of academic advisors in selected faculties.
- Offer digital academic literacy training to all students.
- Develop a more integrated approach to student development that links psycho-social and academic support.
- Increase the number of students whose academic performance is at a level that allows them to access postgraduate study opportunities.

2. Providing responsive and enabling academic programmes

Over the last number of years, curriculum transformation has been one of the most significant undertakings within the ambit of learning and teaching in South Africa. The call for curriculum renewal has been informed by various stakeholders from within the academy and beyond. These include calls for the decolonisation of the curriculum, which in turn have led to questions about the purposes of higher education, including its role in social justice. Curriculum renewal is also necessary in order to respond to the changing nature of work, professional practice, technological advances and, importantly, the need for the curriculum to reflect the core values and ethos of the University.

Curriculum review is usually undertaken within a process that also considers graduate attributes, including aspects such as scholarship, critical citizenship and social good, lifelong learning, deep and broad engagement with creative thinking and problem-solving, academic literacy, and autonomous and collaborative learning and communication. UWC is committed to the ongoing expansion of our understanding of the concepts of "graduateness" and employability to acknowledge the changing labour market with a greater emphasis on independence, self-learning, problem-solving, critical thinking and entrepreneurship. The current Charter of Graduate Attributes will be reviewed and, as part of this process, consideration will be given to whether an augmented charter is required for postgraduates.

UWC is further committed to creating responsive, flexible and renewed curricula that will ensure students can engage confidently and authentically with local, continental and global contextual realities and navigate these spaces from a social justice and engagement perspective. During the last IOP cycle, some groundwork was done towards curriculum renewal. However, progress was uneven, and was hampered by the lack of a guiding institutional framework and approach to curriculum transformation and renewal.

UWC has an ongoing process of institutional programme and departmental reviews and has participated in a number of external programme alignment, renewal and review processes, which are often driven by professional and disciplinary bodies.

In the coming period, the University also plans to embark on a comprehensive review of its programme and qualification mix (PQM), with a view to the possible rationalisation of programmes, as well as the identification of new offerings and the targeted expansion into new discipline domains. We recognise that this area is regulated by the policies and processes of the Department of Higher Education and the Higher Education Quality Committee and will work closely with these partners to motivate changes to the PQM.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Build capacity for the implementation of the Curriculum Renewal and Transformation (CRT) Framework and Policy. Particular attention will also be paid to the curriculum development of programmes earmarked for online delivery.
- Review and update the Charter of Graduate Attributes.
- Comprehensively analyse its current PQM and plan for programme renewal and rationalisation, bearing the University's academic strengths and the enrolment mandate in mind.

3. Developing an enabling environment for excellence in learning and teaching, with a focus on the professionalisation of learning and teaching and supporting infrastructure

In giving effect to this objective, the University recognises the importance of people, systems and infrastructure (digital and

physical). The role of academic staff as scholarly university teachers forms an integral part of strengthening UWC as a research-led university, and the University remains committed to its focus on enabling and supporting academic staff in their development as university teachers who are able to assess and use appropriate pedagogical (and andragogical) approaches in support of student learning and student success. UWC will also continue to further foster and support multimodal learning and teaching that promote academic literacy and the realisation of graduate attributes across all faculties.

The COVID-19 experience has fast-tracked the use of digital technologies in learning and teaching. Going forward, UWC would like to build on this and optimise approaches to flexible learning and provisioning in all its forms. This would require us, amongst others, to continue to expand our understanding and application of e-pedagogies, instructional design and assessment for online learning and teaching. Online learning must be planned for, and not treated as a fallback from face-to-face teaching. A renewed focus is also needed on teaching and assessment practices within a flexible and blended learning context. The online shift to assessment is often cause for concern about academic integrity. The University will endeavour to employ the least intrusive forms of digital control and proctoring for summative evaluation, mindful of students' right to privacy, the structural inequality of many more advanced online surveillance systems, and the increased digital demand of such approaches. A greater focus will be placed on formative and ongoing assessment as opposed to digital control or intrusiveness.

As indicated above, attention also needs to be given to the systems and infrastructure, including the configuration of learning and teaching spaces (both formal and informal) and technological platforms, to support a quality learning and teaching environment.

In this regard, UWC will:

• Continue to promote the professional development of academics as university teachers through, amongst others:
  – the offering of staff induction programmes;
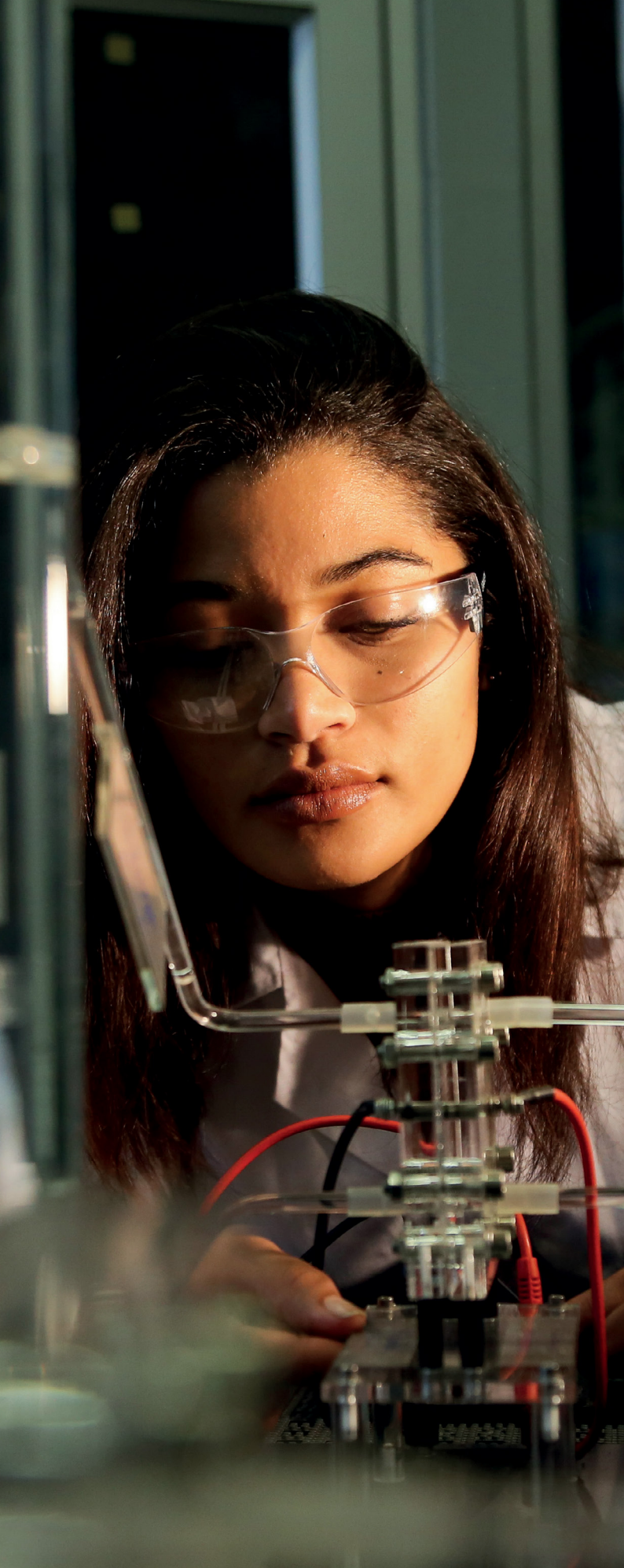
- funding support for staff to enrol in formal qualifications in teaching and learning in higher education (such as that offered under the umbrella of the Cape Higher Education Consortium) and to access short courses; and

- learning and teaching workshops and annual colloquia that focus on sharing learnings and progress in key areas such as assessment and eLearning. Taken as a whole, these activities will contribute to stimulating learning communities across the institution.

• Provide dedicated funding support for staff to embark on scholarship that focuses on teaching and learning (SoTL) and to present their research at relevant conferences. This area will be strengthened, in particular, through our national and international partnerships and participation in various SoTL networks.

• Focus on improving the integration of teaching and assessment practices with the curriculum.

• Focus on advancing university teaching through leadership development initiatives that will include offering the Certificate Programme for Academic & Professional Leaders (P4APL), and workshops for HODs and Deputy Deans of Learning and Teaching.

• Provide training and support to staff to improve their understanding and application of e-pedagogies and instructional design for effective online teaching.

• Continue to improve and expand the functionality of UWC's iKamva learning management system.

• Expand the understanding and adoption of emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) as part of learning and teaching approaches.

• Focus on physical infrastructure development and adaptation to provide conducive formal and informal learning and teaching spaces that contribute to an optimal classroom experience and support multimodal teaching approaches.

4. Academic engagement: Community engagement, service learning and continuous professional development
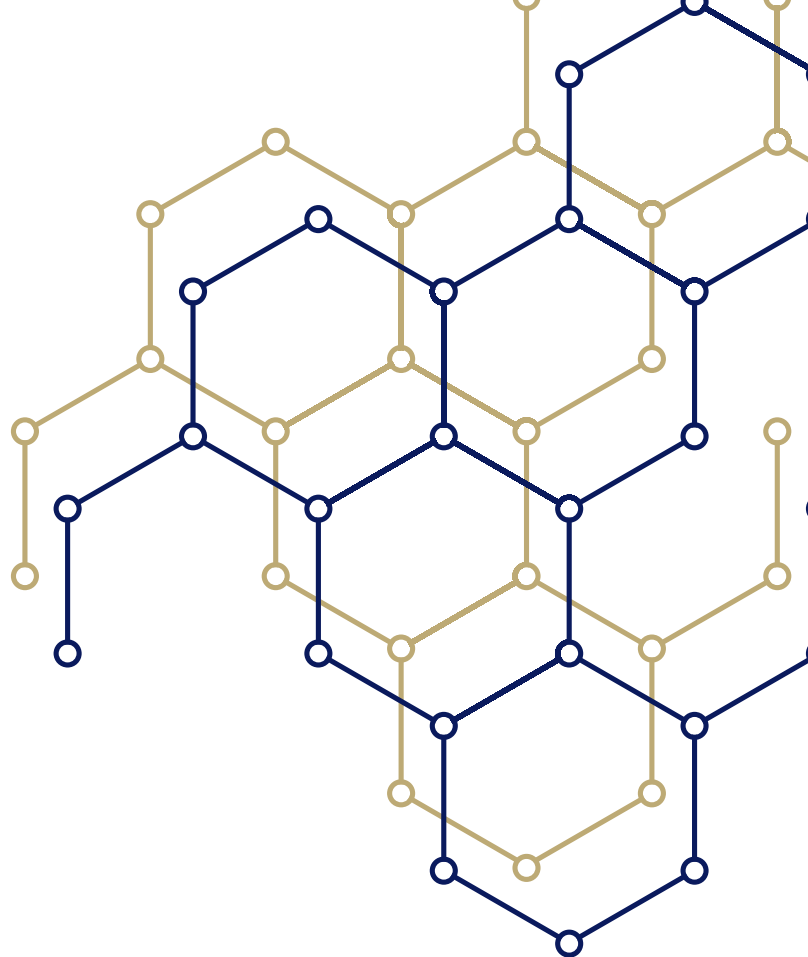
Integral to the core work of the University is the integration of a wide range of community engagement and service-learning activities into the formal curriculum at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Working closely with faculties, UWC's Community Engagement Unit (CEU) promotes and facilitates community engagement opportunities that increasingly seek to establish equitable partnerships with communities, especially those in reasonable proximity to the campuses of the University. These partnerships play an important part in rooting UWC as an anchor institution in its immediate environment, enabling it to better support local social and economic development.

Much of our experience in this area has been built through the requirement of service learning for teacher education programmes and programmes across the faculties of Community and Health Sciences and Dentistry. However, degree offerings in faculties that largely concentrate on general formative education do not traditionally include service learning and other forms of experiential learning. The lack thereof has been identified as a barrier to students finding employment and in their adaptation to work environments, as well as the lack of exposure to grassroots concerns and issues relating to the students' chosen disciplines and professional fields. As part of the broader focus on curriculum and assessment approaches, opportunities for expanding experiential learning will be explored.

Earlier in this goal area, reference was made to the fast-changing world of work and this requires ongoing retraining and upskilling of the workforce. UWC has not been able to optimise its knowledge base in support of the continued development of individuals and organisations. Through continuing professional development (CPD) and other short courses, opportunities will be created for the ongoing education and training of professionals in a range of areas. These short-cycle programmes will be targeted to individuals in the public and private sectors, including UWC alumni, and have the added potential of generating third-stream income for the University.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Focus on fostering sustainable partnerships with communities that will allow all parties to actively discover knowledge, teach and learn from each other.
- Promote and support the scholarship of engagement.
- Seek to increase service learning and other forms of experiential learning opportunities for students.
- Assess the current short course and CPD offerings to identify those that should continue and/or be strengthened and to develop new course offerings, supported by targeted marketing strategies.
- Implement a technology solution that will support the registration and monitoring of students in short course and CPD offerings.
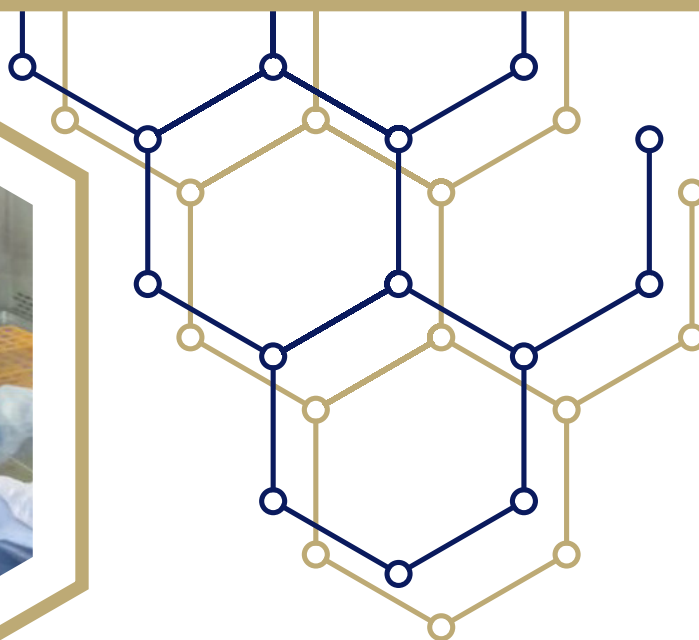
Goal Area 3:
Research and Innovation

To strengthen UWC's position as a research-led university, contributing to the transformation of society through its knowledge-production endeavours and be recognised for its general research capabilities and research strengths in selected areas.

INTRODUCTION

Through consecutive IOPs, UWC has expressed its intention to position itself as a university that is increasingly recognised for its capacity to produce and advance new knowledge in areas of recognised research strength, and to work towards the translation of knowledge through innovative endeavours.

Over the last fifteen years, significant progress has been made in most of the key areas associated with research capacity building. Strengthening and consolidating UWC's research capabilities as well as diversifying and deepening the pool of productive researchers remain a key priority and the overarching goal for research in the coming five years. As UWC is increasingly recognised as one of the country's research-led universities, this position needs to be further consolidated, but in ways that harness a more explicit research identity. For a few years now, eResearch has been at the forefront of research support services at universities and research centres worldwide, and its

importance is likely to grow in the era of big data and big science. EResearch is broadly defined as the use of advanced information technologies to foster better, faster and higher-impact research by improving efficiency and interconnectedness across the full research data lifecycle. During this IOP period, the University will develop and implement an eResearch strategy to guide and coordinate activities in support of this area.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the global university ranking systems, UWC continues to feature among the top 150 institutions in the Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings, coming in at 126 in the 2021 rankings. UWC has a number of externally recognised areas of research excellence. In 2016, the University was ranked first in physical science by Nature's Index for the whole of Africa. The University hosts the SARChI Professor in Astronomy and Astrophysics, which are major research areas in the Physics Department, which is also a partner in the Square Kilometre Array (SKA). There also are strong research groups in the Science Faculty that focus on hydrogen fuel cell technology. UWC's school of public health is designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Training in Human Resource for Health Development. The University hosts the NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security and the UNESCO Chair in African Food Systems. The Centre for Humanities Research is the only humanities centre in the country to enjoy the status of a DSI-NRF flagship. UWC, in partnership with the Robben Island Museum, hosts the Mayibuye Archives, which together with the other archival collections of the University will be relocated to the new state-of-the-art Archives Building (see Goal Area 7) in the coming period, giving renewed impetus to archival-based research in the arts and humanities and beyond. UWC also has demonstrated capacity in policy research in areas such as poverty, land and agrarian studies, as well as in constitutional law, human rights and governance.

Progress during the previous IOP cycle shows that, between 2016 and 2020, the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) A-rated researchers increased from three to seven, while the number of B-rated researchers increased from 26 to 35. Overall, the proportion of academic staff with NRF research ratings and with doctoral degree qualifications also increased. During this period, SARChI chairholders also increased, from 13 to 18. Enrolment targets for master's and doctoral students were exceeded slightly, and postdoctoral fellowships increased from 110 in 2016 to 137 in 2018. International research partnerships also continued to grow over this period, and it is encouraging to note that good progress has been reported for the support role provided to Principal Investigators by the Grants & Contracts Division of UWC's Department of Finance.

During this period, the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) also provided grant funding for several initiatives that support academic staff in different stages of their academic careers. UWC also manages, on behalf of the DHET, two national UCDP projects that are aimed specifically at supporting emerging and female academics. The DHET's Historically Disadvantaged Development Grant (HDI-DG), now renamed the Sibusiso Bengu Development Programme, supported the development of a number of emerging niche areas, a new postgraduate offering in eLogistics and a partnership with an international partner that resulted, amongst others, in a new postgraduate programme offering in Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality. The HDI-DG also helped increase the University Library's e-capacity and provided additional funding for international journal and database subscriptions, including Scopus and

the Web of Science. This has assisted, in particular, to augment the Library's capacity to provide bibliometric support to researchers applying for NRF ratings and major grant funding.

In 2020, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) conducted a national review of doctoral programmes. The preparation of UWC's self-evaluation report, which informed the review, was a valuable process of self-reflection to identify areas for improvement.

At the end of 2019, the Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST) released the findings of a comprehensive national study that looked at the quality of research outputs in South Africa. Following the study, Prof Johann Mouton, who led the national study, prepared a report for UWC, focusing on UWC's research outputs by permanent instruction and research staff (PIRS) in the context of the national study. The findings indicated that, in terms of per capita publication output and normalised knowledge output,[3] UWC was ranked 11th and 12th, respectively. These findings are replicated in the latest DHET research output report for the sector, published in 2021, in which UWC was ranked 11th in relation to weighted per capita research output for 2019. In terms of publication subsidy units, UWC recorded a steady and significant increase, with its share of the sector's total publication output in 1990 at 0.9%, increasing to 2.6% in 2017. PhD graduate numbers increased from 14 in 1998 to 120 in 2017, representing a compound annual growth rate of 11.34%, the second-highest of all universities over this period. The normalised doctoral output indicator divides the number of doctoral graduates by permanent academic staff with PhDs. In the recently released DHET research output report, UWC was ranked 12th in 2019, with a value of 0.31 in relation to this indicator, meaning that doctorate staff members at UWC produce, on average, one PhD graduate every three years, which is below the sector average of 0.36. In contrast, UWC is ranked 5th in the same report in relation to the proportion of its permanent academics with doctoral degrees. Taken together, these metrics show that, while UWC has performed admirably in recruiting academics with PhDs or encouraging those without to obtain the qualification, more work needs to be done in improving the publications and PhD graduation output of the University.

When preparing this IOP and considering approaches to further strengthen the University's research and innovation efforts, the broader economic environment within which this has to be considered is a source of great concern. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, government subsidy to universities is unlikely to increase (in real terms) in the next five years. Given that, at the best of times, the National Research Foundation (NRF) is only able to support a relatively small proportion of the postgraduates enrolled in the system, the NRF's new policy for postgraduate funding is likely to result in a further reduction in postgraduate support. Furthermore, the significant reductions in the budgets of the national science councils are likely to put a squeeze on the funding available for the purchase of expensive research equipment. And, in the likely event of a weakening of the currency against the dollar or other major currencies, the resultant strain on University finances is likely to affect the acquisition of library, ICT and research equipment, as well as regional and international travel, amongst others. This presents a big challenge for a resource-constrained institution such as UWC. To counter some of these challenges, the library is working on alternative avenues to support research, including Open Access Publishing, Open Access Research Resources, etc. However, Open Access initiatives need to be embedded and embraced by the institutional workflows and adherence to sharing and caring for societal values.

And, as the global financial impact of COVID-19 begins to have an effect on international donor funding, there are already signs that some donors and foundations that have traditionally supported research and scholarship in South Africa are reviewing and also refocusing their investment priorities.

Notwithstanding the funding challenges facing universities, UWC has provided support to nascent research initiatives through the provision of seed funding for pilot research projects that could lay the basis for formative work in developing larger project proposals.

In relation to the South African higher education policy and regulatory environment, the establishment of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in May 2019 through the bringing together of the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET) and the Department of Science & Technology (DST) was intended to

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3. All publication and graduate outputs divided by headcount of permanent instruction and research staff
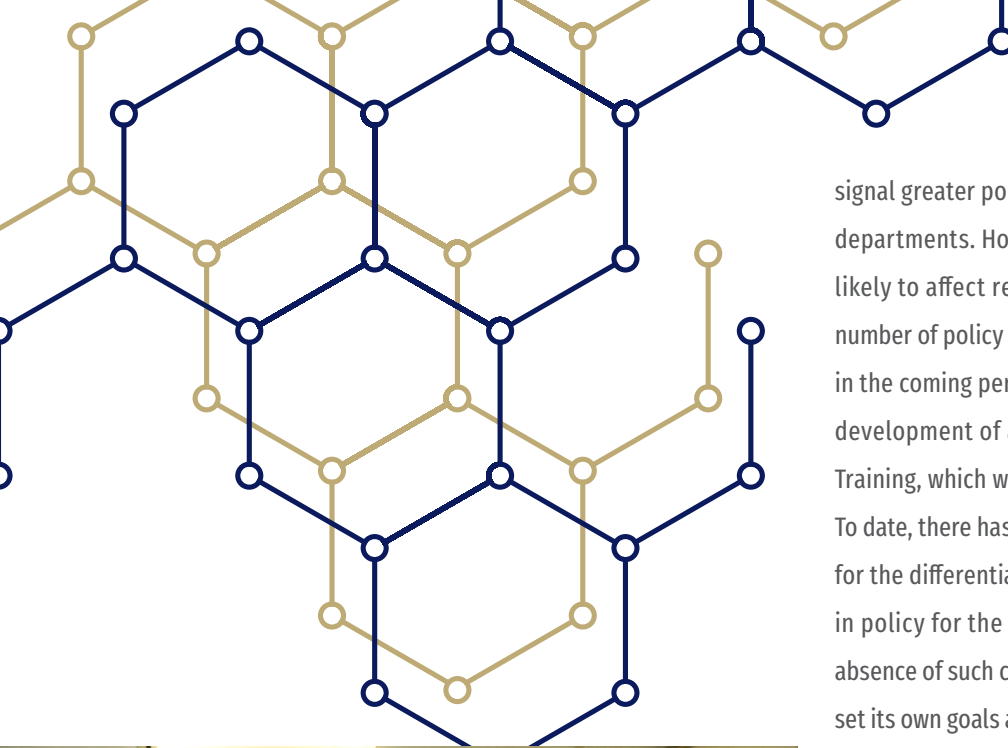
signal greater policy and regulatory coordination between the two departments. However, the extent to which this development is likely to affect research policy and funding is yet to be seen. A number of policy processes are under way that may affect research in the coming period. Significant work has been done towards the development of a National Plan for Post-School Education and Training, which was due to be released in 2019, but is still awaited. To date, there has also been little progress towards a national policy for the differentiation of universities. As such, there are no criteria in policy for the designation of research universities and, in the absence of such criteria, it remains important for each university to set its own goals and targets. Other developments include a review of South Africa's higher education, science, technology and innovation institutional landscape, and the development of a "Decadal Plan for Science, Technology and Innovation". The findings of the national review of doctoral qualifications that was mentioned earlier may also influence the future funding of doctoral programmes and other policy parameters governing the qualification.

While UWC is deeply rooted in its local context, it is necessary for any university that aspires to be research-led to work very hard in building strong international partnerships and striving to enrich its institutional context through international students and staff, and visiting staff. Indeed, studies have shown that one of the key characteristics of leading research universities is their ability and record in recruiting international academics and students. In other words, universities that rely principally on their own undergraduates to continue into graduate programmes or that recruit primarily from their own graduates to join the academic ranks are unlikely to become leading research universities.[4] Further, a 2007 survey of European universities also found an inverse correlation between endogamy (academic inbreeding) in hiring practices and research standing: the universities with the highest degree of endogamy did less well with respect to research performance.[5] Whilst the focus remains on retaining our talented undergraduate students for postgraduate studies and "growing our own timber" in terms of emerging academics remain important, initiatives to recruit postgraduate students and academics from

4. Salmi, J. (2009) World-Class Universities. Washington, DC: The World Bank
5. Aghion, P et al. (2008) Higher Aspirations: An Agenda for Reforming European Universities. Brussels: Bruegel

beyond UWC and our own borders are increasingly important in giving effect to our internationalisation focus and the diversity of our student and staff bodies.

UWC has many longstanding and mutually beneficial international partnerships, and these are sustained in different ways, but relationships between individual academics are at the core of all meaningful knowledge-driven partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously affected the flow of postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows and researchers across borders, and this is likely to remain constrained until the pandemic is brought under control. However, the extensive use of online platforms that was precipitated by the pandemic does offer new possibilities for building international (and national) networks without always having to incur travel and other opportunity costs.

INNOVATION

This goal area also focuses on innovation and the relationship between innovation and research. According to the 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, "Innovation comprises the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service) or process, or a new marketing method, or a new organisational model in business practice, workplace organisation or external relations".[6] Flowing from this definition are different types or forms of innovation, namely: (i) the development of new or improved products, processes and services derived from new ideas and inventions emanating from research and development initiatives (R&D); (ii) the development of ideas and interventions (products, services and models) that meet social needs and create new social value, relationships or collaborations; and (iii) the development and implementation of ideas that give rise to new or improved organisational processes and services. For the purpose of this IOP, therefore, innovation is understood as the development and implementation of new or improved products, processes and services that are derived from the generation of new ideas, resulting in the creation of social and/or economic value.

In order to support innovation, the necessary infrastructure required to facilitate it needs to be identified. The University has several divisions and offices that support innovation, and these include the Technology Transfer Office, the Business Development Office, and the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. In addition, the CoLab has been an active role-player in social innovation partnerships and activities at the University. Of crucial importance in this area is the founding of a wholly owned private company, UWC Innovations (Pty) Ltd, which was established to promote and facilitate the commercialisation of UWC's intellectual property through the creation of spinout companies in which UWC Innovations will hold equity on behalf of the University. The first technology spinout company in which UWC holds equity, as well as its first not-for-profit company (NPC), of which UWC has majority membership, has been established.

Through activities and initiatives undertaken by some academic departments and research units, UWC has made good progress in developing innovation-focused collaborative partnerships in the preceding IOP cycle. In particular, UWC has forged strong partnerships with government, specifically the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and its agencies, namely the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) and the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). A prime example in this regard is the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Vehicle Programme, located in UWC's Hydrogen South Africa Systems Integration Competence Centre, through which two high-profile demonstration projects have been launched. The first project, a small fleet of hydrogen-powered scooters, will be trialled as part of the South African Post Office's Cape Mail Hub delivery vehicle fleet, and the second project is a hydrogen-powered forklift — the first to be produced in South Africa. Both launches have been well supported by the DSI.

In partnership with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), UWC has also established a Seed Fund to develop early-stage technologies through the commercialisation value chain. At the time of preparing this IOP, more than R10 million has been invested through the Seed Fund in support of 22 projects. UWC has also secured R14 million from the DSI-funded Strategic Health Innovation Partnership (SHIP), which is administered by the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC). The provision of a grant of

6. Department of Science and Technology (2019) White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, iv

almost R9 million from the DSI's National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) to support the activities of the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) has enabled the commercialisation of UWC's intellectual property through the signing of a number of licences with third parties, through which the University is beginning to receive monetary benefits.

The COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to global health, social and economic upheaval of unprecedented proportions, and it is clear that its effects will continue to be felt for years to come. The pandemic has been a stark reminder of the scourge of poverty and inequality that continues to be a feature of South African society. However, this crisis also provides the opportunity for the country to re-imagine its future direction. The White Paper on Science and Technology refers to the concept of responsible research and innovation (RRI) as being concerned with producing ethically acceptable, sustainable and socially desirable research and innovation outcomes. RRI is underpinned by the principle that research and innovation need to be responsive to a wide range of stakeholders and societal challenges, and be sensitive to the values, needs and expectations of South Africans.[7] Consonant with this principle, UWC wishes to strengthen its research and innovation focus and, aligned with its mission and informed by its values, to refocus its research endeavours as part of its commitment to social justice, the reduction of inequality, and the building of a humane and equitable society.

Building on past success, the focus in this goal area will be on:

1. Developing strategies to further strengthen UWC's research profile

In the introduction to this goal area, reference was made to UWC's performance in the national public higher education sector and the lack of direction nationally regarding the differentiation of universities in South Africa. While UWC is proud of the progress it has made, it is clear that there is still much work to be done. Currently, the pool of UWC staff actively involved in research is low relative to the group of universities against which UWC benchmarks itself. Increasing

7. Department of Science and Technology (2019) White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, 12

research outputs and strengthening UWC's position as a research-led university will not be achieved unless there is growth in the pool of research-active academic staff. It is also recognised that the goal of becoming a research-led university must go beyond a narrow focus on measurable metrics to include critical success factors such as the extent to which UWC is able to transform its institutional culture and practices so that these are more supportive of its staff and responsive to the needs of a rapidly changing world.

While the University has demonstrable research strengths in a number of research areas, there is an urgent need for the development of a clearly articulated, institution-wide research agenda that will be supported by a strategy that facilitates the identification, formal recognition and provision of strategic support to a set of agreed research niche areas. Despite the challenges posed by a constrained funding environment, funding opportunities continue to exist for collaborative multi- and transdisciplinary research initiatives that address key global challenges such as poverty and inequality, access to health care, climate change and environmental sustainability, food security, migration, big data management and stewardship, etc. For such an institution-wide research agenda and strategy to have the desired outcome and effect, leadership and commitment at central, faculty and departmental levels is a *sine qua non*. It is also recognised that the success of such a strategy will require formal leadership support and a shared commitment to the garnering of internal and external resources, as well as ensuring that there is a supportive (policy, governance, management and administration) environment in place in which creativity can flourish.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop a research agenda that is premised on the identification and specification of a core set of transdisciplinary research themes for the University. Existing research strengths will be an important point of departure for such an exercise, and should be informed by the potential for:
  – building on existing synergies/collaboration across disciplines and faculties,

- enhancing strategic collaboration with local, national and international research partners,
- forging alignment with local, national and/or global priorities such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals,
- support from funding partners,
- contributing to innovation in all its forms, and
- providing opportunities for nurturing postgraduate students and emerging scholars.

- Develop clear criteria for the identification, recognition and support of research niche areas that will support the research agenda of the University. There will be a need to assess the extent to which the existing research niche areas conform to these agreed-to criteria, or to require targeted support in order to perform at the expected levels. Such an assessment will also aim to identify emerging interdisciplinary and cross-faculty opportunities for intellectual exchange and debate that could form the basis for the development of new trans-disciplinary research themes (see above).

- Give focused attention to building a critical mass of active researchers beyond the relatively few high performers who are overstretched. In this regard, concerted efforts must be made to improve research publication outputs.

- Through recognising that different kinds of interventions and incentives will be required to support academics at different stages of their research careers, will require each faculty to develop strategies (with clear objectives and outcomes) that will target:
  - emerging researchers,
  - mid-career researchers, and
  - established and leading researchers.

- Develop strategies at the faculty and department levels to attract and increase postdoctoral fellows, especially in those research niche areas targeted for focused attention and support.

- Develop strategies to support emerging and mid-career researchers to improve their research profile by gaining recognition through NRF research ratings.

2. Establishing a supportive and enabling research environment

Research-intensive universities are characterised by highly complex research administration and management systems (RAMS) that are dependent on the expertise and services of a range of competent professional staff. The existence of a well-integrated research support architecture that involves the Research Office, the Human Resources Department, Legal Services, the Information and Communication Systems Department and the Finance Department is critical for creating and sustaining an enabling research environment. Although UWC has worked hard to build its capacity to support its growing research base, especially given the historical legacy of under-resourcing in this area, much work is required to have the necessary coordinated approach across the various divisions that provide support to researchers.

The Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) has developed a useful competency framework for research management professionals. The SARIMA framework considers aspects such as research planning, strategy and policy development; researcher development; partnerships and collaboration; research funding; research ethics and integrity; management of funded research; research data and research information management; and research uptake, utilisation and impact.

In this regard, UWC will:
- Finalise the Senate review of the University's research administration and management systems (RAMS) and develop an improvement plan with clear timelines.
- Develop an effective and sustainable research support framework in which the different elements of the research administration and management system work in synergy to support the University's research agenda.
- Actively work towards shifting the research support environment from one driven by compliance to one that values the principles of accountability and transparency, with the appropriate levels of monitoring and evaluation in place. As part of this focus, attention will be given to establishing greater levels of trust and understanding

between researchers and managers involved in research administration and support services.

• Develop and implement an eResearch strategy to guide and coordinate activities in support of this area.

3. Improving UWC's postgraduate enrolment and retention and creating a conducive environment for postgraduate students

Part of being a research-led university implies that a university will have a significant proportion of its students enrolled in postgraduate programmes, and especially at master's and doctoral level. Honours degrees are important qualifications that form the pipeline to masters degrees for students who are not enrolled for professional programmes at the undergraduate level. Postgraduate diplomas often also cater for students from more than one undergraduate disciplinary background and, at UWC, such offerings include programmes that focus on new, multidisciplinary areas that have emerged in response to the fast-developing digital and technology landscape. Programmes delivered at honours level are considered to be postgraduate programmes, but are largely taught programmes and therefore become an important intersection between the portfolios of the DVCs Academic and Research & Innovation and require greater coordination between these portfolios.

As indicated earlier, UWC has performed well in terms of meeting its enrolment targets for masters and doctoral students. However, because the honours and postgraduate diploma targets have not been met recently, overall postgraduate enrolment targets were not attained. A number of programmes at the honours level have been earmarked for online delivery as part of a shift to the provision of blended learning by UWC, but progress in terms of its implementation has been slow, something that may have had an adverse effect on the attainment of enrolment targets. Although enrolment targets (at the masters and doctoral levels) are largely met, UWC does not, however, have an explicit strategy for the coordinated recruitment and selection of high-quality students for postgraduate programmes. The under-enrolment at the honours level, which comprises mostly one-year programmes, has had a direct effect on annual graduation numbers, which have fallen short of the targets set. While UWC's overall performance in terms of time-to-degree of masters and doctoral students compares favourably with national benchmarks, some areas require targeted attention. One of the factors that affects the differential time-to-completion rates is the uneven spread of supervision responsibilities amongst academic staff. A recently completed review of postgraduate research degree programmes at UWC showed the wide variation in supervision loads in 2018 where, at one extreme, the majority of academics supervised one PhD student and, at the other extreme, one supervisor had 23 PhD students. It is clear from the review that this is an area that requires urgent attention.

Given that government funding at postgraduate level is linked to graduate outputs, UWC has to improve academic administration systems relating to postgraduate students to better support the postgraduate lifecycle and to assist with timeous interventions that could reduce attrition and support completion. Creating a conducive environment and understanding the needs of postgraduate students as part of a broader student community are important factors in being able to attract and retain students. As part of UWC's reflection in preparation for the CHE's doctoral review process, a number of areas were identified for strengthening in support of recruitment, retention and throughput of doctoral students, and some of these apply more broadly to postgraduate students and are included below.

In this regard, UWC will:

• Attend to the application processes for programme accreditation of targeted programmes to be offered via online platforms as distance offerings and redesign the curriculum for this purpose.

• Reconfigure the Marks Administration System and SASI systems to also include the automation of postgraduate student administration functions that will support the full postgraduate student lifecycle.

• Improve the academic administration processes in relation to postgraduate students from recruitment to graduation.

• Improve coordination and support between the different DVC portfolios to improve the support of honours-level programmes.

- Develop strategies to increase supervisory capacity and improve supervision practices.
- Develop clear guidelines (at faculty and departmental levels) with regard to postgraduate supervision loads and identify strategies to improve throughput challenges at the masters and doctoral levels.
- Improve the monitoring of postgraduate students' progress towards degree completion, especially at the doctoral level.

4. Expanding UWC's innovation focus and strengthening its innovation capacity

In order to strengthen and grow UWC's capacity for innovation, attention will be given to developing policies, support structures and systems to realise economic and social benefit through the generation of new ideas that result in new or improved products, services and (organisational) processes.

UWC has good examples of the value of multi- or trans-disciplinary approaches in research, but this is not necessarily as strongly embedded in relation to innovation, where concrete collaboration across disciplines can be a distinguishing strength.

Innovation does not happen in isolation and requires partnerships across different spheres of the public and private sectors. Over the last few years, UWC has managed to improve relationships with various industry roleplayers, but there is still a lot of room to expand such relationships and develop mutually beneficial, innovation-focused partnerships.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Use the forthcoming Integrated Innovation Strategy for the University as the basis for initiating a university-wide dialogue on the vision and shared understanding that must underpin innovation across all sectors of the University.
- Revisit existing policies, identify policy gaps and address these as they relate to the area of innovation.
- Where appropriate, include a focus on innovation as part of the transdisciplinary research themes.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and explore new partnerships with other universities, industry, government and the broader society in order to advance the University's focus on the effective development and implementation of new technological and social ideas and products in support of the public good.
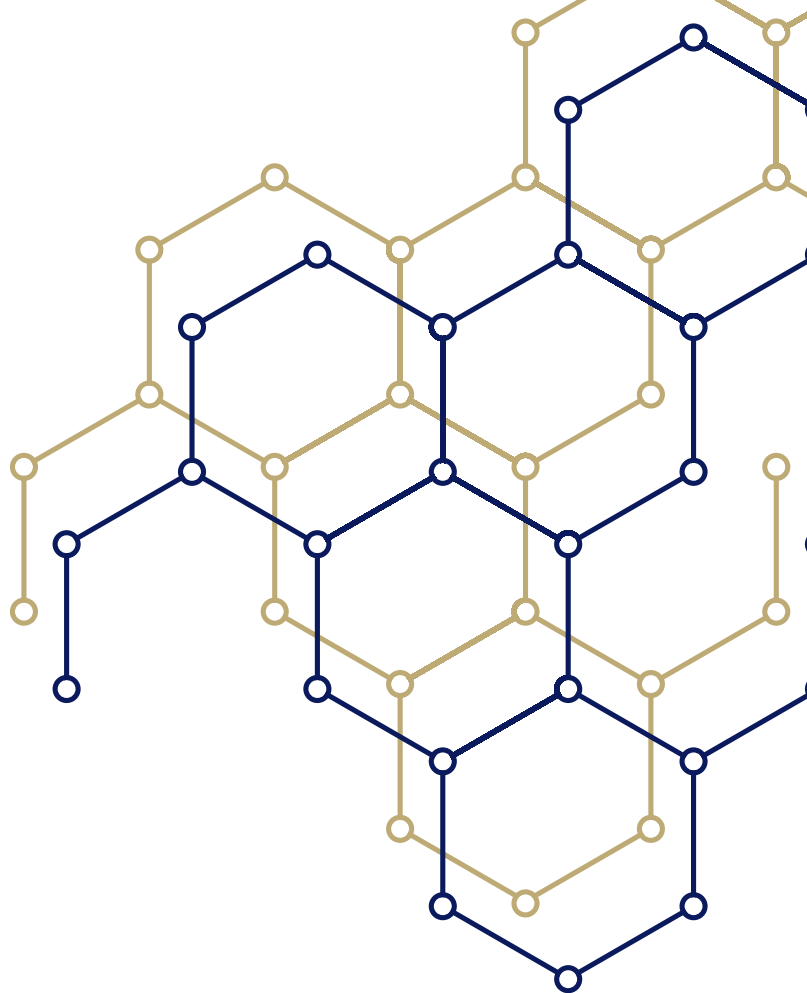
Goal Area 4:
People Framework

To continue to position the University of the Western Cape as an employer of choice through a dynamic and supportive work environment and a resilient culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity and excellence.

The People Framework is primarily an enabling goal in support of the core goals of the IOP, namely: Student Experience, Learning and Teaching, and Research and Innovation. It should therefore be read in conjunction with the broader strategic aspirations of the University.

UWC's sustained performance in recent years has been realised in large measure due to the quality, commitment and hard work of its staff. Achieving the strategic objectives of this new IOP and realising UWC's Vision 2035 will again depend on those characteristics of its staff. Recognising that attracting and retaining high-quality staff is a defining factor in the University's success and in the success of its students, UWC seeks to offer a working environment that is rewarding and fulfilling. It is committed to deploying staff wisely, developing their capacity, creating conditions in which they are able to work optimally, and reflecting on performance to address difficulties and acknowledge achievement.

Change is the order of the day. UWC is a large university with more students and staff than ever before in its history, and staff and student growth will continue

over this IOP period. To the challenges of growth must be added the challenges of the changing world of work for both academic and professional support staff. The increase in staff numbers, combined with new technological advances and new ways of working with and relating to colleagues, has significant implications for the University and the institutional culture it wants to create. In addition, the governance and decision-making processes within universities increasingly reflect the complex, multi-stakeholder interests that have a direct effect on their effective functioning.

During this IOP, UWC will continue its strategic approach to: (i) achieve a proper fit between the staffing profile, the competency requirements and University-wide strategic goals; (ii) manage diversity and make progress towards greater employment equity, while also attending to the need to attract staff internationally; (iii) create a more conducive organisational culture and support an institutional climate geared towards strategic goal attainment; (iv) refine and link UWC's reward strategy to its overall strategic attainment and its performance appraisal; and (v) modernise and improve the operational efficiency in support of effective human resources management.

During the previous IOP cycle, some of the initiatives in support of this goal area were:

- A focus on staff development in which a comprehensive staff development programme was rolled out that was aimed at supporting the delivery of the different IOP objectives. A revised strategy for coaching practices was also initiated as an integral part of leadership development initiatives.
- Employment equity (EE) remained an important focus and, in addition to the targets in the EE Plan and the University's recruitment and appointment processes, UWC ringfenced funds for the targeted recruitment of black (African) professors. The new Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) initiated by the DHET also supported the recruitment and appointment of emerging African academics into strategic fields. Through the University Capacity Development Programme of the DHET, the development of emerging academics — with a focus on female and African academics — was also supported (also see Goal Areas 2 and 3). The University's Employment Equity Plan 2020-2025 was also completed in 2020 and progress in its implementation will be tracked during this IOP period.
- The implementation of an eRecruitment system in 2016 that assisted in expanding UWC's recruitment reach and improved turnaround times of its recruitment processes.
- Attention to the safety of staff. Gender-based violence on university campuses is a deeply concerning threat to safety and, in addition to the physical infrastructure improvements made to improve safety, the University also undertook a review of existing policies and frameworks to curb sexual harassment and gender-based violence, as well as to safeguard the needs of people living with disabilities.
- Building and maintaining sound employee relations and promoting a positive workplace environment remain important matters on the agenda of engagements between the executive management and the UWC Employees Union (UWCEU), the recently launched staff union.
- In terms of access to further education and training, UWC extended its staff rebate agreements with CPUT and UCT. The CPUT agreement includes outsourced workers, who enjoy a 100% rebate benefit at UWC.

- The conclusion of the conversion of employees from the UWC Defined Benefit Fund to the UWC Defined Contribution Fund and the people processes were handled with care to mitigate risks such as a significant staff turnover or the unforeseen loss of critical staff.

- UWC continued participation in Remchannel, an internet-based remuneration survey to monitor and align the University's rewards strategy with good practice in the sector whilst being mindful of the institution's financial realities. Staff costs were managed within the national cost norms, and the University's accelerated promotions process for academic staff was used successfully in a number of instances to retain staff.

- In a context of ongoing student growth, UWC maintained a stable full-time equivalent student-to-staff ratio that compares favourably with most of the other traditional South African universities (staff included in this ratio are permanent instruction and research staff).

- Focusing on building capacity and capabilities through deliberate recruitment and development activities by way of the development of People Plans, which have been developed by all faculties and divisions.

- The Human Resources Department also worked with a significant number of stakeholders to develop an Administration Design Project to better understand the changing roles and responsibilities of administrative staff in faculties. The implementation of this project commenced in 2019.

- In support of improved operational efficiency, effective human resources management and improving integration between systems, the University embarked on an integrated enterprise resources planning (ERP) system that combines finance and human resource functions. Further refinement and integration are required for the campus community to experience the improvements and benefits of the process.

Over the next period, a number of internal and external factors will continue to influence the priorities articulated in the sections below.

Lessons learned from the prolonged period of social distancing and remote work have provided a steep learning curve and have significantly affected the nature and conditions of the working environment. This could fundamentally impact the approach to work spaces and work processes and, going forward, will require a careful assessment of the suitability and flexibility of such arrangements for the different types of roles at UWC. Secondly, the digitisation and digitalisation[8] of the working environment is likely to have a significant influence on the nature and speed of work, increasingly making some manual functions obsolete. Thirdly, the combination of work pressure, blurred work-life boundaries, and personal anxiety about health and safety may increase the need for deliberate staff-engagement strategies. Fourthly, changes in the regulatory environment, such as privacy rights under POPIA, may render the University exposed. And, finally, with salaries being the largest budget item, the people component is closely bound to the University's financial sustainability.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be to:

1. Attract, retain and engage excellent talent through creating a conducive work environment

The University recognises the critical nature of talent management across the institution to create an environment in which individuals are able to support strategic objectives and optimise strategic opportunities. As a research-led university in an increasingly competitive environment, UWC will need to demonstrate foresight and implement a set of integrated processes to differentiate itself. Through a Talent Management Framework, UWC will pay closer attention to the integration of institutional objectives and human resource processes in order to achieve greater value from its recruitment and retention of and engagement with employees. Unlike the standard HR processes for the filing of vacancies, a talent management focus will require the involvement of senior leaders within the University to cultivate top talent, forge closer ties with agencies nationally and internationally, and link these to succession planning.

8. Digitisation is the conversion of analogue/paper-based work to a digital form, whereas digitalisation is the use of technologies and digitised data to influence the business or ways in which work gets done

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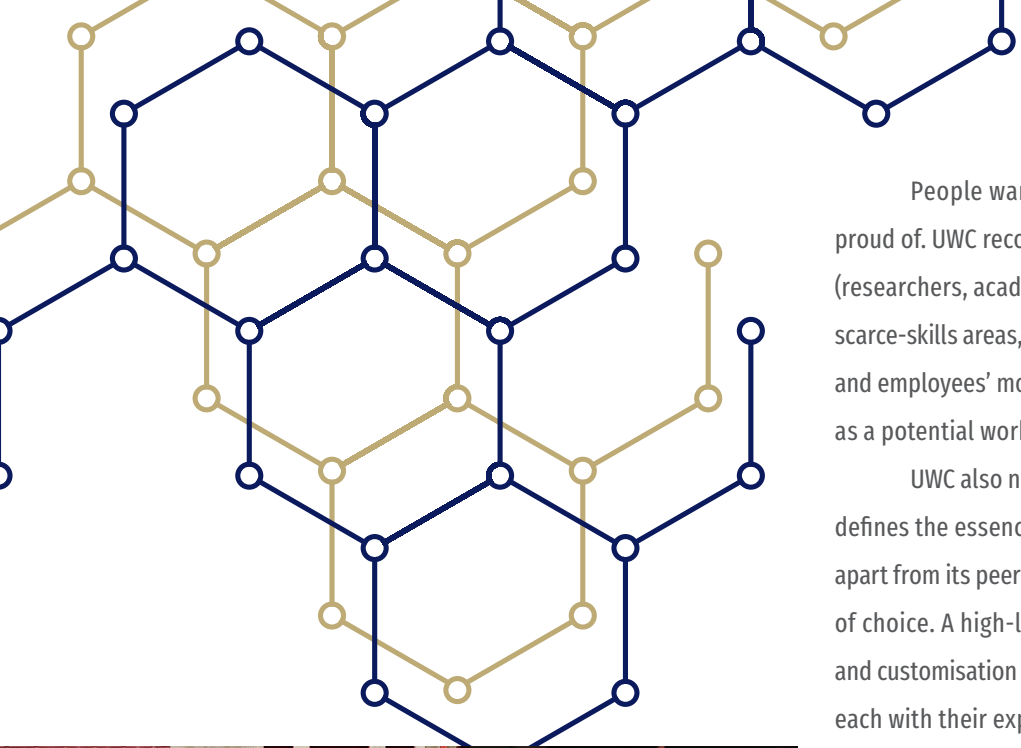
People want to work for an institution that they can be proud of. UWC recognises that its ability to compete for top talent (researchers, academics and professionals), especially in globally scarce-skills areas, will require a better understanding of applicants' and employees' motivations, expectations and perceptions of UWC as a potential workplace.

UWC also needs an Employment Value Proposition (EVP) that defines the essence of what the University stands for, what sets it apart from its peers and why it should be considered as an employer of choice. A high-level EVP will also require further segmentation and customisation as a living document to speak to various audiences, each with their expectations.

Although UWC has a relatively low staff turnover, it recognises the value of engaging with staff meaningfully and the continuous need to employ strategies to retain and develop its staff. This challenge of engagement is particularly compounded by the scale and distribution of staff working at multiple campus sites and working from home through flexible working arrangements. Disengaged employees are likely to take less responsibility, ownership and agency. UWC will encourage the use of the employment value proposition as a motivational tool for engagement and to connect employees' respective roles to the University's mission and core values, and to provide recognition and encourage collaboration with colleagues and peers. In doing so, it will help address shortcomings in another area in need of improvement: meaningful engagement and communication with prospective and existing staff.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Revise and implement a University-wide Talent Stewardship Framework (TSF) to emphasise the critical connection between talent and the attainment of key University strategies. The TSF will assist, amongst others, to proactively identify key positions that will differentially add value to UWC's long-term future.
- Develop strategies to attract and retain top talent to support the strategic imperatives articulated in various goal areas of

this IOP, and specifically in support of increasingly positioning UWC as a research-led university.

- Continue to align staff development processes with the strategic intentions of the IOP and in support of the institution's 2035 vision.
- Refine the People Plans of faculties and professional, administrative and support staff (PASS) units to plan for and identify pivotal, high-value-added academic, research and professional support roles that are crucial to realising UWC's strategic intent.
- Develop a process to engage current and prospective employees in increasing the institutional understanding of the factors and/or benefits (tangible and intangible) that motivate or stimulate the choices of different generations of highly capable individuals, which could include, but are not limited to, factors such as compensation, location, work-life balance and career pathing.
- Develop a differentiated employee value proposition (EVP) as a tool to compete for and attract highly capable people to UWC.

2. Promote employment equity and diversity

The spirit of UWC's equity and diversity approach is set out in its Mission and Values statements. These principles are congruent with the transformation objectives as enshrined in the Constitution and other legislation. The University stands to benefit vastly from conscious, dedicated efforts to diversify its staffing profile, achieve greater employment equity and recruit and cultivate the next generation of talented academics, researchers and professional and support staff. Transforming the University administration and preparing the next generation of black and women scientists in niche areas are vital to this goal.

UWC will continue to pay focused attention to employment equity and to diversifying its staffing profile, with a specific focus on addressing the under-representation of black African staff and women, especially in senior positions. UWC's 2020–2025 EE Plan commits the University to a number of numerical targets and has identified a number of barriers to achieving the targets, and these will be addressed in this IOP period. As part of a focus on diversifying staff, ongoing attention will also be given to the age, gender and nationality of staff. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the recruitment and appointment of international staff also pose various challenges that require more focused attention to remain internally competitive.

During this period, a Performance Development System (PDS) will be implemented to enhance the learning process, involve and engage all staff in people development issues and embed a culture of performance that links people management, professional support and development to the attainment of UWC's strategic goals. Key to the success of a PDS is enabling individuals to better understand their roles and functions in relation to UWC's broader strategies. The PDS will not only support the University's vision of being a reflective learning institution but will also recognise the need for collaboration and the importance of working across functional units and departments.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Pay focused attention to the implementation of its EE Plan and the following areas in the Plan earmarked for improvement:
  - review and monitor recruitment and selection procedures at all levels;
  - attend to the findings of the Culture & Climate Survey and have a follow-up survey;
  - raise awareness of diversity and EE;
  - attend to the career development and retention of EE-designated employees;
  - develop a Succession Plan linked to the EE Plan; and
  - review and improve the work environment.
- Streamline processes associated with the appointment of international staff and focus on building relationships with key national departments involved in various aspects of the process of appointing international staff (such as the issuing of work permits, etc.).
- Revisit staff development activities to improve alignment with the requirements of the IOP goal areas and the skills required to support the cross-cutting areas.

- Implement a Performance Development System as part of embedding a culture of sustained performance and ongoing learning.

3. Create a workplace climate and culture that value individuals, promote health and well-being and facilitate meaningful employee engagement

Consistent with a previous survey, the 2018-19 employee Culture and Climate survey identified several positive traits, but also highlighted a number of concerns pertaining to the organisational culture that lead to an erosion of trust and, if left unattended, can become destructive to the overall University.

The University leadership is committed to addressing concerns raised by staff about the pervasiveness of bureaucratic practices. These challenges have been amplified by researchers. To address these concerns as a matter of urgency, leadership has commissioned an independent expert to advise on decentralisation, linked to appropriate accountability measures, as part of a potential solution.

Goal Area 8 highlights the importance of values-based leadership and good governance principles as contributors to the desired organisational culture. Aligned with the University's values statement, employees at all levels of the organisation will be encouraged to live and model these values and behaviours in their engagement with each other, students and external stakeholders.

Over the next period, the University will encourage employees at all levels across the institution to rally behind the Vision 2035 and to help clarify individual and functional roles and responsibilities for the successful implementation of the goals of the IOP.

The health, well-being and mental health of staff and students are a growing concern and remain an absolute priority. The contextual factors facing the University have resulted in an increasingly complex and uncertain operating environment and a more pressing concern about the general well-being and mental health of employees and students. In 2020, under the Disaster Management Act, all institutions were compelled to implement some form of remote work in the context of the pandemic. UWC

adopted a flexi-time and flexi-place policy to accommodate flexible working hours and workplace arrangements for specific categories of staff. Understanding that flexible work arrangements are not suitable for all positions and situations, UWC will explore and clarify the extent to which such will be implemented to support employee work-life balance; help attract, retain and motivate staff; and increase job satisfaction and people's ability to handle stress.

The University leadership will foster respectful relationships with the employee representative body, based on proactive, open communication to discuss and resolve issues. Through such initiatives, UWC seeks to build on existing relationships and foster trust between employees and supervisors in order to create an open and empowered working environment.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Focus on finding sustainable solutions to address the institutional culture and behaviours that promote accountability, transparency, employee recognition, employee fulfilment, coaching/mentoring, collaborative work, open communication and career development — identified by staff as important focus areas.
- Administer a follow-up Climate and Culture survey towards the end of the IOP cycle to measure progress made as a result of the corrective measures.
- Address organisational design issues in order to clarify roles, responsibilities and interdependencies towards achieving the objectives of the IOP in this goal area.
- Appoint a task team to review the effectiveness of UWC's Wellness Strategy, including the Employee Assistance Programme, especially in view of the effect of the COVID-19 lockdown regulations.
- On the basis of the team's findings, the University will draw on specialist advice to refine or redevelop the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Use the intranet and other channels to consistently raise awareness of the importance of physical and mental health to help staff cope more easily with difficult challenges (e.g.

grief, anxiety and burnout) in both their personal and professional lives.

- Explore and clarify the extent to which flexible work arrangements can be implemented to support employee work-life balance, help attract, retain and motivate staff, and increase job satisfaction and people's ability to handle stress.
- Revisit existing policies and policy gaps in support of an institutional culture that reflects a people-centred focus.

4. Refine its reward strategy to improve alignment with best practice in the sector whilst being mindful of UWC's financial realities

The revision and refinement of UWC's reward strategy are aimed at achieving the University's strategic goals and objectives. The 2016-2020 IOP promised to constantly review the appropriateness of the reward strategy so that it can keep pace with good practice and better align it with the strategic objectives, but this unfortunately did not happen.

In an increasingly competitive environment, the purpose of an effective reward strategy is not only to be able to compete successfully in attracting talent but, equally important, to avoid losing key staff to other institutions. An effective strategy will help to drive a healthy institutional culture, influence appropriate behaviours and ultimately help the University achieve its strategic objectives.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Conduct a national benchmarking exercise within the HE sector to compare and implement best practices to ensure that remuneration is fair and equitable across the University.
- Review critical scarce skills and niche areas in terms of rewards and benefits with a view to attract and retain high-calibre talent to the University.
- Review the benefits structure for all fixed-term contracts and part-time staff.
- Contain employee remuneration costs within national HE norms to ensure UWC's financial sustainability.
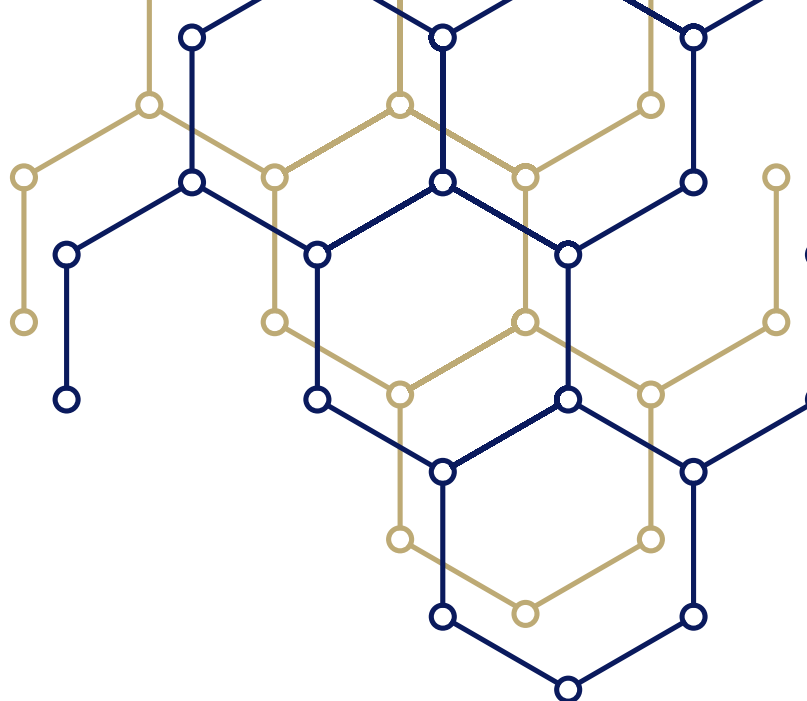
5. Improve operational efficiency in support of effective HR management

During the 2016-2020 IOP period, UWC implemented an integrated enterprise resource planning system (ERP) to integrate the respective human resources and finance systems and to achieve greater efficiencies and data integrity. Implementing the shared system has started to simplify operations and improve decision-making, but more work still needs to be done for the HR system to become fully automated, better integrated with the finance system and more data-driven. The Human Resources Department has also enabled a number of processes to shift from manual to digital processes. It is important to maintain momentum and build a digital culture across the University.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Identify the most critical initiatives, as well as those that will add the most value to internal and external users of the HR function, and pool the necessary resources to pilot and implement such initiatives.
- Increasingly move away from paper-based processes towards digitised processes.
- Optimise digitalisation opportunities to support data-informed staffing decisions.

Goal Area 5:
Financial Sustainability

To strengthen UWC's financial base through efforts to optimise state subsidy potential, and to embark actively on initiatives to diversify and secure new income streams in order to effectively support UWC's academic mandate, its broader aspirations and strategic priorities, whilst continuing to build reserves for strategic utilisation and supporting UWC's ongoing financial sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Success in this goal area requires a balance of sound financial planning and management to ensure that revenue is spent in accordance with agreed budgets and according to appropriate processes. At the same time, it requires continued attention to creating the conditions and supporting mechanisms to successfully generate additional funds through traditional and non-traditional avenues. Many factors affect a university's revenue, but subsidy income and other revenue generation provide an indication of the progress made in terms of implementing strategy. This IOP strongly argues for a mission-driven approach to UWC's core academic mandate, supported by behaviours that demonstrate UWC's values. Success in this approach can go a long way in strengthening UWC's relationships with its different stakeholders, including funders and donors. The process to develop this IOP kicked off on 9 March

2020, five days after the first case of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in South Africa. At that stage, it was impossible to imagine the global impact of COVID-19 on people and their well-being, the significant loss of lives and livelihoods, and the effect on global and regional economies. At national and organisational levels, budgets had to be reprioritised urgently, existing plans had to be adapted and new ones developed. The South African economy was already struggling, and the effect of COVID-19 has resulted, amongst others, in a sharp decline in economic growth and a significant increase in unemployment, further increasing levels of poverty in an already hugely unequal society. Prior to COVID-19, the country already faced a challenging economic environment, with international confidence in South Africa plummeting and international rating agencies downgrading South Africa to "junk status". In the context of higher education, UWC's previous IOP period started with national student protests that continued until mid-2017, and ended after the first year of the outbreak of the global pandemic in 2020. In both incidents, this resulted in unprecedented disruption at the level of the national system, as well as at an individual university level.

In October 2020, Statistics South Africa published a high-level comparison of the 2019 revenue sources of the country's 26 public universities, distinguishing between three income categories: government grants, tuition fees and other income. For the sector as a whole, the income split between these categories was: government grants – 48%; tuition fees – 33%; and other income – 19%. Excluding the two new universities, Sol Plaatjie and Mpumalanga, UWC's proportion of tuition fee income was the lowest in the country, at 21%, and its dependency on government grants, at 60%, was the third-highest of all. Considering that a significant proportion of tuition fee income is earned

through NSFAS, the overall reliance on state funding is high. Compared to the sector, UWC has done relatively well in terms of other income (19%), with only six universities having higher proportions, and these include the group of well-established former advantaged universities with significant donor funding income.

In December 2017, the government announced significant increases in university funding, but the main focus of the additional funding was to fully fund students from low-income families through the NSFAS. UWC benefits from this bold initiative, especially as it would, in the medium to long term, assist to reduce student fee debt. However, the issue of financial support for the "missing middle"[9] category of students, comprising a large proportion of UWC's students, remains unresolved. The economic impact of COVID-19 is affecting the ability of the state to adequately fund higher education and honour the NSFAS commitment and, given these challenges, the Minister of Higher Education and Training acknowledged that, "while increasing student funding is welcome, it is not sufficient, because if we increase student funding at the expense of the system, we are then shooting ourselves in the foot".[10]

Given the country's ongoing economic challenges, it is not clear to what extent funding for higher education and research councils will be affected negatively going forward, but subsidy is unlikely to significantly increase in real terms during this IOP period. Given the University's dependence on state funding, UWC will continue to do careful financial planning and management to ensure that it remains a going concern, meets ongoing commitments and is able to adequately fund the strategic priorities articulated in this IOP.

When considering the high-level funding categories referred to earlier, it is worth noting the following in terms of government grants, tuition fees, and other income:

9. The "missing middle" are students who do not qualify for free higher education bursaries (NSFAS), but who cannot afford studies unaided
10. https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2021-05-04-increasing-student-funding-is-like-cutting-off-our-nose-to-spite-our-face-blade-nzimande/

- Despite the challenges around government funding of higher education, UWC's ministerially approved enrolment mandate affords it the opportunity to further increase its proportion of the national subsidy allocation. Goal Area 1 speaks to the University's enrolment mandate and categories of under-enrolment, especially in terms of meeting its postgraduate enrolment targets. Goal Areas 2 and 3 propose strategies to address issues of student retention and success. Progress in these areas will have a positive effect on UWC's ability to secure its share of the subsidy allocation. UWC has also has a good track record in securing earmarked funding through other grant opportunities offered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

- Following the national student protest action referred to earlier, a significant change in higher education funding in South Africa relates to the fact that the Minister of Higher Education and Training now caps percentage increases in annual tuition fees that public universities are allowed to charge. As stated earlier in this IOP, UWC remains firmly committed to offering equitable and affordable access to higher education, but capping fee increases for all universities at the same level disproportionately disadvantages universities such as UWC, which operate from a very low fee base. It also distorts the levels at which the government funds individual students studying at different public universities. The DHET is expected to release a new policy on fee regulation, and this could assist in assessing UWC's position regarding tuition fees in the period ahead. With the introduction of new academic offerings, however, the University will carefully assess the range of costs associated with the delivery of such programmes and seek to find the appropriate balance between cost and affordability.

- In the previous IOP, progress was made in terms of securing third-stream income, and significant groundwork was done to further support the growth and diversification of the University's revenue base. With the University growing and diversifying its revenue base, it recognised that many of the

initiatives will not yield significant short-term income. As part of this approach, the institution has invested significantly, for example, in building capacity in augmented and virtual reality, both as an academic offering and as technology that can enhance the learning and teaching environment. Through this, UWC can prepare students for a changing world of work and offer opportunities for new industry partnerships.

Significant gains were made in this area during the previous IOP period. These achievements are testament to the University's ongoing commitment to funding its core mandate in support of its role as a public university; financially supporting strategic initiatives; and considering opportunities that could not be anticipated as part of normal planning processes. In addition to achievements highlighted elsewhere, the following should also be noted:

- Throughout the previous IOP cycle, which at times played out in a highly volatile higher education environment, UWC remained a going concern.

- Financial sustainability is a continuing process that requires ongoing attention being paid to income, expenditure and investment, and managing financial risks. As part of this process, the previous IOP cycle saw the conclusion of the very complex and sensitive process of converting the University of the Western Cape Pension Fund (UWCPF), a defined benefit plan that was registered and governed by the Pension Funds' Act and controlled by an independent Board of Trustees, to a defined contribution plan.

- UWC's fundraising efforts over the previous IOP period continued and yielded good results, also in terms of alumni support. During this period, UWC also received a block of flats as a gift to support the ongoing shortage of student accommodation at universities. Recognising that fundraising is a complex area that requires ongoing effort and focused attention to building respectful relationships, there is still significant scope for increasing revenue through fundraising. Fundraising initiatives often happen in silos, but COVID-19
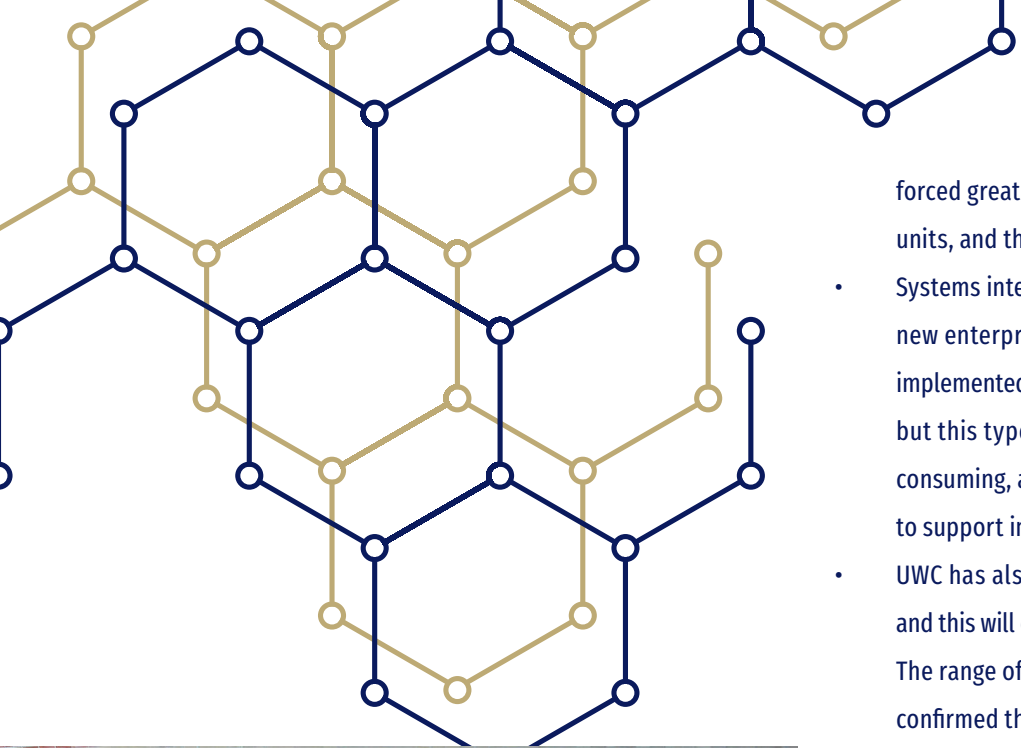
forced greater collaboration between different institutional units, and the University plans to build on this experience.

- Systems integration was another important focus, and a new enterprise resource planning system, InforLN, was implemented. Implementation has largely been completed, but this type of process is always challenging and time-consuming, and further refinement will continue in order to support improved integration.

- UWC has also managed to increase its financial reserves, and this will continue to be an important focus going forward. The range of challenges faced during the last few years has confirmed the need for universities to be in a position from where they can access funding to assist with unforeseen circumstances, respond to unique opportunities and fund strategic initiatives with long-term financial benefits that fall outside of annual budget parameters.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

1. Continuing to grow and diversify UWC's revenue base

Challenges around state subsidy were referred to earlier and, taking broad economic and societal realities into account, universities are likely to continue to face pressure in terms of their income streams. This requires careful thought about how UWC can further grow and optimise financial opportunities linked to its rich and growing knowledge base. In considering such opportunities, the University is clear about its role as a public university, and this informs the approach to revenue-generating initiatives. Growing and diversifying the revenue base has the potential to earn additional income at different organisational levels, but it is crucial that it should be managed within a framework that has the potential to contribute towards the University's income base.

In the introduction to this goal area, reference was made to the potential to further increase UWC's revenue through optimising state subsidy by attending to areas in which enrolment is below the University's mandated targets. In addition to Goal Area 1, which focuses on enrolment, Goal Areas 2 and 3 also speak to the intention

to focus on student retention and success at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Both of these goal areas also refer to expansion of the University's programme and qualification mix through the introduction of new programmes and qualifications. As part of UWC's enrolment mandate, the institution is allowed to offer a number of programmes fully online, and this will also assist in addressing some areas of under-enrolment and create opportunities for future enrolment growth.

UWC's focus is not limited to its location in Cape Town, but being located in an area with other very strong universities requires UWC to specifically focus on a number of distinctive academic strengths. To be successful in building strong, mutually beneficial partnerships and attracting significant research funding, UWC will have to invest in ensuring that it has the required intellectual leadership and academic capacity in place to support the selected areas. This focus is also emphasised and expanded on in Goal Areas 3 and 4.

There is a need for greater coordination of efforts relating to funding applications and responses to grant opportunities. Fundraising for any kind of revenue, whether it be for research or other initiatives, will require a renewed focus on prioritising funding partnerships, building relationships with funders and improving the ways in which we acknowledge such partnerships and report on progress with implementation.

In addition to securing reserves, universities are increasingly looking at options in which capital investment can generate a return on investment (ROI). UWC has an example of this approach in the commercial space that it acquired as part of the investment in a building for the Bellville Community and Health Sciences (CHS) faculty. Especially in off-campus infrastructure developments, such options could be explored further. The building that UWC is developing to house the augmented- and virtual reality (AR/VR) showroom and design studio also has the opportunity for an ROI approach.

UWC has not been able to build significantly on its expertise base in providing academic consulting services to the public and private sector. This is a specialised field, and many universities rely on dedicated units to manage and advance this focus. Goal Area 2

also speaks to increasing UWC's academic engagement initiatives through short course and continued professional development offerings.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Monitor and track the financial implications of under-enrolment.[11]
- Pay attention to the refinement of the cost analysis associated with programme delivery to inform the pricing (tuition fees) of new offerings through traditional, blended and fully online modes.
- Actively explore the expansion of existing ROI initiatives associated with University facilities.
- Develop an Integrated Enterprise Strategy, which will provide a management framework within which the following activities and associated financial distribution models will be managed:
  - Management consulting,
  - Continuing professional development programmes and short courses, and
  - Fundraising.
- Explore management models and approaches to prospective clients, "market" academic expertise to the public and private sector, and support academics in securing equitable contracts, billing and timeous quality delivery.

2. Refining and optimising systems integration and financial management approaches

University systems, particularly as they apply to procurement, appointments and contract management are often experienced as cumbersome, non-flexible and not sensitive to the turnaround times and external requirements, most notably within the grant-funded research and innovation environment. It is recognised that UWC's financial management processes must withstand rigorous audit regimes, but the current management approach often results in frustration and delays. It also creates unhealthy tensions and does not contribute to creating a conducive institutional environment. In 2020, a Senate Task Team was established to explore perceptions of increasing managerialism and bureaucracy in research

11. Under-enrolment refers to the University not meeting enrolment targets as a result of not meeting intake targets and achieving lower than planned retention, which affects overall headcount targets

administration and academic life more generally at UWC and, based on the recommendations of the Task Team, decisions will be taken regarding the approach going forward.

During the previous IOP cycle, a new enterprise resource planning system, InforLN, was implemented. There are still integration challenges between the finance and human resource management systems. These require attention to ensure that the new system achieves its objectives and supports strategic decision-making.

In the light of ongoing financial constraints, the University community will have to carefully assess expenditure, with a greater awareness of potential waste and inefficiencies. Financial sustainability has to focus in equal measure on revenue and expenditure. This approach should also be embedded in budget discussions.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Revise financial management policies, practices and systems, informed by the findings of the Senate Task Team as well as those of other investigations and benchmarking exercises.
- In building on the above, recognise the requirements and specific needs of different units on campus and work towards digitising and streamlining financial and procurement processes so that they are more responsive to the needs of the campus community.
- Give priority attention to the outstanding integration items affecting the InforLN system.
- Consciously work towards refining the University's annual budget processes.
- Revisit financial and procurement policies and procedures to ensure that policy documents are updated and continuously refined, and that supporting documents describing processes and procedures are documented and also updated regularly.
- Optimise digitalisation opportunities to support data-informed financial decisions.

3. Refining fundraising efforts and building UWC's alumni base on a continuous basis

UWC has strengthened and increased its fundraising activities

and this focus will continue in this IOP period. With increased pressure on the institution's finances and ongoing pressure on the finances of the higher education system, there is an urgent need for greater emphasis on raising funds from private and public sources and building on the financial support of UWC's growing alumni base.

Conscious of the major shifts that have occurred globally and locally since the inception of its last multi-year strategy, the Institutional Advancement Office conducted a horizon scan exercise at the end of 2020 to inform the development of a new strategy that is relevant to the changing fundraising landscape and that speaks directly to current challenges, the drivers of change and the shifts that are likely to emerge.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Finalise and implement an Integrated Fundraising Strategy that will seek to better coordinate and steer UWC's fundraising initiatives within a framework of ethical and responsible fundraising and investment.
- Refine institutional approaches for donations and strengthen grant funding support for the institution at large.
- Actively expand its fundraising base and its timeous responses to opportunities that arise.

4 Improving integration between institutional strategies and financial planning

This IOP seeks to improve integration between different goal areas and highlight cross-cutting areas and inter-dependencies. UWC has a well-established process of five-year financial planning that seeks to take account of contextual and other changes in the financial landscape whilst focusing on ongoing financial sustainability. The resourcing of the IOP would require a rethink and reprioritisation of elements of the five-year plan.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Consider the cost of implementation of the IOP elements that cannot be achieved through current annual budgets and that are not supported by existing grant-funded projects. In
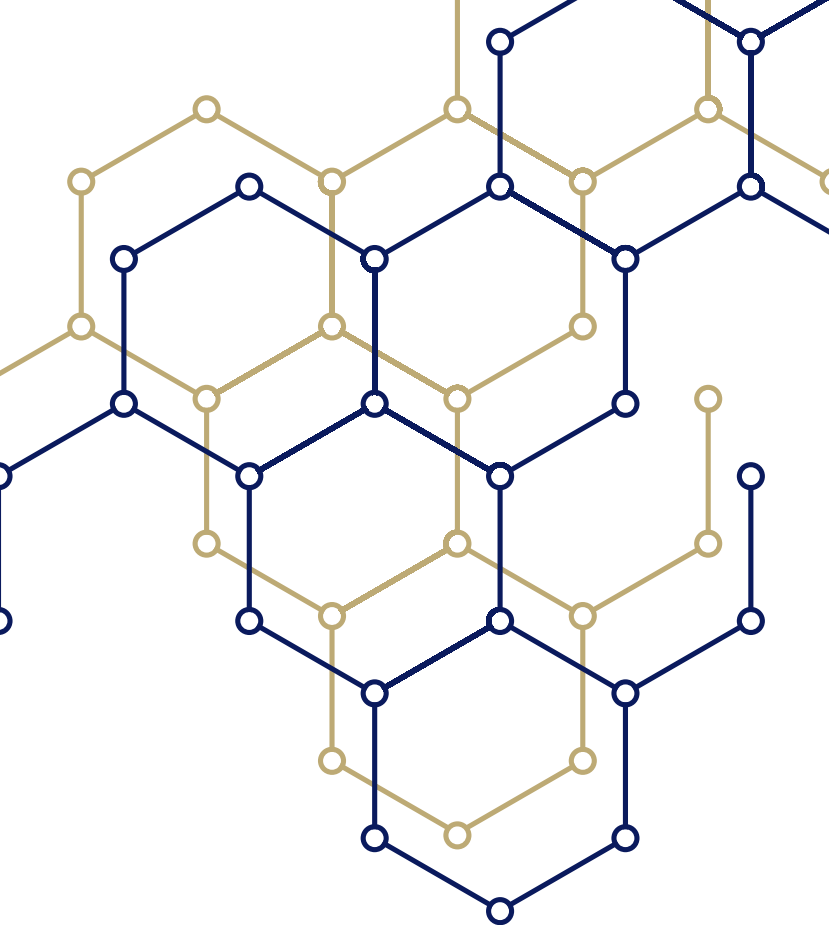
consultation with the executive and faculty leadership, the Council Finance Committee and the University Council, the five-year plan will then be refined towards aligning the budget with key strategies in this IOP.

- Base the funding of strategic projects on proposals, outlining funding requirements as part of an implementation plan with planned outputs, longer-term outcomes and, where applicable, the expected financial returns.
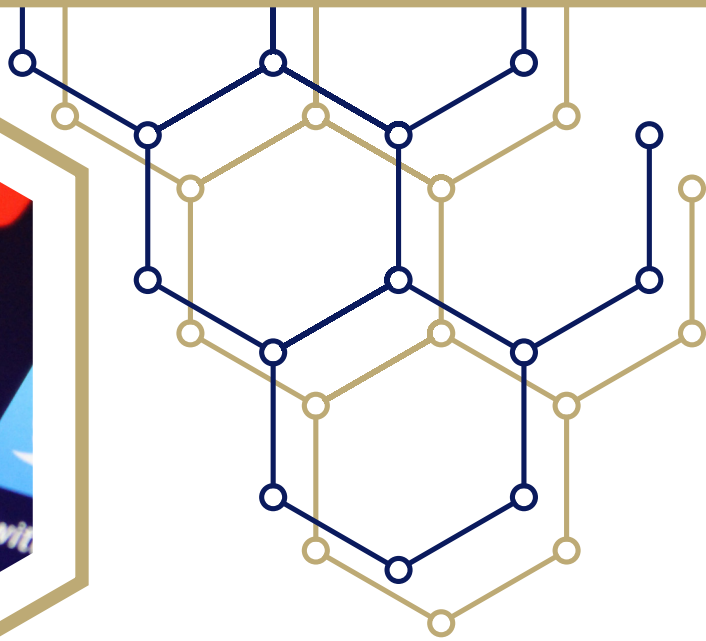
Goal Area 6:
UWC in the Public Domain

To optimise the range of media platforms and UWC publications to position UWC as a vibrant, intellectually stimulating, research-led university where students and staff can realise their aspirations.

Communication has changed significantly over the last decade, with the most significant change relating to how technology has resulted in immediate communication, mainly due to smartphones and the increased acceptance and utilisation of social media platforms as formal and informal news outlets. Social media platforms have also resulted in a decrease in the reliance on traditional media as a source of information. While it has become easier for individual organisations to share their news and messages with a vast audience, the same audience is bombarded with information. The manner in which information is packaged for different audiences through the use of various platforms has become an essential part of modern communication.

During the previous IOP cycle, UWC made significant strides in this goal area. UWC finds itself in an exciting position where it is increasingly acknowledged by peers and members of the public for its contribution to scholarly as well as socially relevant endeavours. Notwithstanding the strides it has made in building its reputation as a university of good academic standing, UWC's history as a historically disadvantaged university, and some of the

lingering public perceptions regarding the quality of its academic offerings, still require countering.

Navigating a complex and rather "noisy" communication landscape requires a dynamic, yet carefully integrated, communications and branding strategy that is not only responsive, but also well attuned to UWC's longer-term vision and purpose. There has been a significant increase in social media accounts linked to UWC, with many research units and faculties having their own such accounts. While this in itself is not a problem, it poses some challenges in terms of brand consistency and the integration of strategic messaging.

During the previous IOP period, key staff appointments were made in the media office. This resulted in an increased UWC presence in the print media, as well as in appearances on television and radio programmes. There was also a strong leaning towards positive coverage of UWC by the press, which included graduations, research and innovation initiatives, the achievements of individual researchers and students, the acquisition of new buildings and equipment, and the appointment and academic achievements of UWC's senior researchers, especially the SARChI chairs. The National Research Foundation's confirmation of A-ratings for UWC staff also received significant media coverage across a broad spectrum of media outlets and platforms. Sporting events, the performance of UWC teams and individual athletes, and UWC sports code coaches generated ongoing and significant media attention.

Internal communication has also been supported by improved IT infrastructure, resulting in improved connectivity. Towards the end of 2020, UWC launched its intranet site, as well as a new UWC website. Both of these significant developments required input and buy-in from the broader UWC community.

One of the considerable advantages of the new website is that it is mobile-friendly. In the absence of a UWC intranet for internal communication, the previous website became a tool for both internal and external communication and information. This resulted in a website trying to achieve too many objectives, with a significant amount of information that required ongoing updating, which often did not take place. The UWC community is still adapting to the two platforms. Continued attention is needed to distinguish clearly between the purpose of the intranet and the website in order to prevent a situation where the same information is duplicated across the two platforms.

An Integrated Communication Strategy was also developed in the previous IOP period and is likely to be formally approved during the course of 2021. The focus of this IOP period will be on this strategy's implementation. Content management has also received attention and is embedded in the new website and supported by clear workflows in the media office.

UWC has various well-established practices and events linked to undergraduate student recruitment, including visits to schools, participation in selected national recruitment activities, and an annual Open Day for prospective students. Following the COVID-19 lockdown measures, these activities required a new media strategy and events management approach, and the University hosted a range of online events with individual faculties to replace the annual Open Day. Career advice was also managed online through various communication platforms. More concerted attention will be given to managing the challenges resulting from a shift to online communication platforms.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

1. A Mission- and Vision-informed approach to positioning UWC in the public domain

The new Mission and Vision adopted in this IOP seek to locate the institution as a dynamic, research-led university that is operating in a vastly changed national and international landscape when compared to the previous IOP period. Giving prominence to the shifts in the Mission and Vision will require careful attention being paid in terms of messaging and giving prominence to events, activities and thought-leadership opportunities that clearly signal the University's strategic intent in these changing times.

Brand management is an essential part of organisational positioning in the public domain and received limited attention during the previous IOP cycle. Continued engagement, through marketing campaigns and other initiatives, is required to broaden UWC's brand positioning. The new University website will assist in this regard. Still, dissemination of all brand information and brand consistency require a more coordinated and systematic approach to advance the positioning of UWC.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Through the use of multimedia communication platforms, position UWC as a thought leader in the national and global arena, especially in the transdisciplinary research themes that have been identified as the central pillars of the University's research agenda.
- Monitor and evaluate the use of technology and digital platforms for communication to ensure optimal and effective communication across different platforms, directed at different audiences and stakeholders.
- Develop an annual branding and marketing programme that must include the advance scheduling of prominent UWC publications, such as the Annual Report and other (annual) publications from executive divisions and faculties.

2. Developing a national and international student recruitment media campaign that is targeted at postgraduate offerings

Goal Areas 1 and 3 of this IOP speak to student recruitment and enrolment, with a specific focus on postgraduate students. UWC has many ongoing recruitment and engagement initiatives linked to undergraduate students, but has not actively pursued a coordinated approach to postgraduate and international recruitment. Despite the lack of a clear international recruitment strategy, UWC continues to attract many international students, especially from other parts of the continent. The University is also mandated to offer fully online postgraduate programmes to at least 3% of its total student body within the current IOP period, and this will require a very specific recruitment focus.

The importance of UWC's website as an initial way of exploring the University and its programmes must not be underestimated, and should remain a key focus in the ongoing refinement of the website.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Build a web and social media presence aimed at positioning the institution as a university of choice for prospective students
- Focus on improving the institutional understanding of UWC's international student population and their reasons for choosing to study at UWC. Based on these engagements, as well as analyses of international student data over the last years, a recruitment strategy for international students will be developed.
- Develop a coordinated approach to postgraduate recruitment that will include mapping opportunities for financial support in different postgraduate offerings through SETA and other funding avenues.

3. Actively seeking robust relationships and partnerships

The importance of partnerships and the role of relationships in partnership building feature throughout this IOP and its Goal Areas. Strategic partnership building is also central in giving effect to the University's Mission and Vision statements. UWC will continue to develop extensive, mutually beneficial partnerships with other local and international universities, business organisations, community groups, government at various levels, and donor agencies and
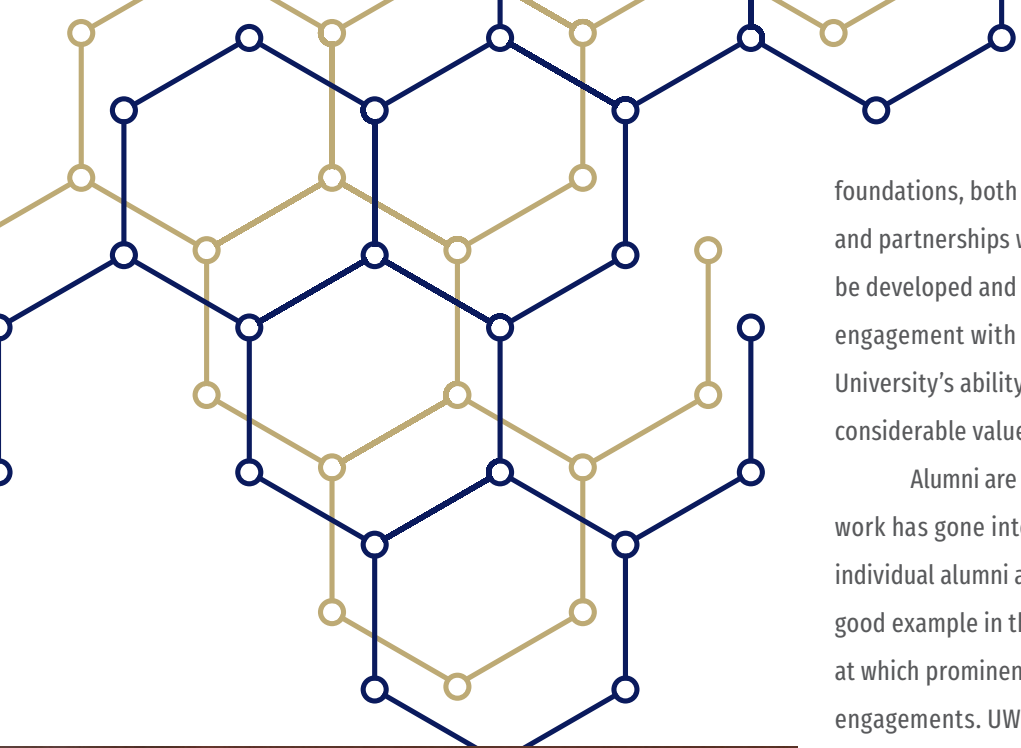
foundations, both locally and internationally. These relationships and partnerships will be expanded, and existing partnerships will be developed and strengthened further. However, the successful engagement with these various partners is dependent on the University's ability to position itself as an institution that adds considerable value to these relationships.

Alumni are very important brand ambassadors and significant work has gone into building and strengthening relationships with individual alumni and alumni networks. The Law Faculty serves as a good example in this regard, and has also arranged various events at which prominent alumni have participated in various academic engagements. UWC wishes to continue to increase active alumni participation and alumni giving. More productive relationships and engagements with alumni enable them to speak enthusiastically and authoritatively about initiatives at their alma mater and see the mutually beneficial value of contributing to and reaping pride from the University's future successes.

UWC will also focus on continuously improving its database of collaborative engagements and relationships with philanthropies, donors, government agencies, NGOs, alumni and others to identify the diverse range of stakeholders and the nature of their contribution to the institution.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop a strategic engagement programme targeting UWC's current and potential partners in order to publicise the adoption and focus of the University's new IOP.
- Identify and engage with prominent UWC alumni as part of building UWC's public engagement strategy.
- Continue to translate the research output and scientific publications of researchers and profile their efforts through accessible online and print media, such as the recently launched research magazine, *Signals*.
- Better align its communication strategies with its stakeholder-mapping process to better understand the institution's partners and to enable leadership to have more strategic engagements with key partners and stakeholders.

Goal Area 7: Developing the Campus and Surrounding Areas

To develop UWC's campuses as dynamic sites that effectively support academic and related activities through appropriate physical and ICT infrastructure that also assist in anchoring the University in different communities and connecting it to diverse publics.

Infrastructure development is a slow and costly endeavour. It is crucial for UWC to have a clear vision of its academic strengths and aspirations for infrastructure development to support its academic priorities in meaningful ways. UWC has a successful track record in implementing large-scale infrastructure projects that include both the repurposing of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings. Over the years, the University has put in place robust infrastructure planning, management and procurement processes. Project and University governance processes are also in place to ensure proper oversight.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue to influence how many organisations will approach the development and provision of their infrastructure going forward. In the engagements that informed this goal area, it was reiterated that UWC's

mandate as a contact university had not changed and it was agreed that, especially at the undergraduate level, face-to-face teaching was still the ideal form of academic engagement. It was also recognised that being on campus enriches students' university experiences in different ways, including the nature and frequency of engagement with academics and peers, and access to a wide range of academic and student services, clubs, societies, sports facilities and different campus events. However, there are positive learnings from remote working and the online learning, teaching and research experience that is likely to influence how we conceptualise new buildings and the repurposing of existing facilities in the future.

The previous IOP articulated the intention to position UWC as an anchor institution, helping to profile its metropolitan sub-region as a knowledge hub and desirable destination, and contributing to the area's transformation. As part of an anchoring focus, the University deliberately chose to expand its physical footprint beyond the main campus and, in addition to the Dental Faculty's facilities at the Tygerberg Hospital Estate and Mitchell's Plain, the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences building in Bellville is a recent example of giving effect to this strategic approach in the previous IOP cycle. The off-campus infrastructure developments that are in progress include the Greatmore Street development (Arts and Humanities) in Woodstock, the Transhex building (envisaged as a digital hub with a virtual and augmented reality showroom and laboratory) on Voortrekker Road, as well as the Unibell student accommodation development in Belhar (to the south of the campus). In their unique way, each of these developments provides new opportunities for UWC to connect with and contribute to the surrounding communities, build on existing partnerships and forge new connections with a range of possible stakeholders within and beyond the sub-region.

Whilst UWC has clearly articulated its intention to increasing play an anchoring role in the sub-region through the physical location of certain of its activities, the key anchoring role of the University through its academic and community engagement endeavours is still in the early stages of articulation as part of an anchoring strategy (see Goal Area 2, for example). In this regard, the University has to consider how it matures and integrates its thinking, actions and communication to support its intentions and responsibilities as an anchor institution across all spheres of its core work.

During the previous IOP cycle, Cape Town suffered a severe drought. This brought into focus the need to attend to sustainability and efficiency, not only in terms of water but also in other areas. The University completed a water purification plant and piloted an air-to-water plant for the administration building. Ongoing attention is also given to installing fittings that will assist in reducing water utilisation. Water sustainability has received significant attention from an infrastructure point of view, but behaviour across campus does not seem to have changed significantly, requiring leadership involvement. A centralised transport planning system was also introduced, which has resulted in a significant reduction in transportation trips, a rationalisation in the sizes of vehicles used, and a significant reduction of costs associated with transportation. Especially in the context of power outages and load shedding, which are likely to persist for the coming decade, attention has also been paid to the more efficient utilisation of energy in new and existing buildings. UWC has also focused on planting endemic and drought-resistant plants, and this is being formalised through the development of a Landscaping Masterplan for the University.

Infrastructure development is costly, and UWC is very dependent on the DHET's Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant (IEG) funding for infrastructure expansion

and upgrading. In recent years, UWC has not achieved significant success in fundraising for infrastructure development from sources beyond the DHET. However, given the effect of COVID-19 on the public purse, the DHET's infrastructure grant funding could be reduced going forward. UWC will therefore have to reconsider its fundraising approach to support infrastructure development priorities.

For some time now, there has been increased pressure on universities to provide more student accommodation. Given the continued increase in student numbers, UWC has not made significant progress in this regard. However, when preparing this IOP, the 2 700-bed Unibell student accommodation development to the south of the campus is under way; this will significantly increase UWC's student accommodation offering. This development is the result of extended negotiations and a land-swap agreement that resulted in the University obtaining additional land close to the Unibell station and around the Belhar Indoor Sports Centre, with the erven close to the Unibell station being developed as student accommodation and the bulk of the additional land being earmarked for additional sports facilities.

The safety of students and staff is a key concern. In this regard, it is acknowledged that UWC is part of the broader society and the University therefore is not immune to the safety challenges experienced in our society. In addition to the University's own Campus Protection Services, UWC also works in partnership with other role players, such as the South African Police Services (SAPS) and neighbourhood watch services in surrounding communities. In areas such as the Bellville CBD, safety is more complicated, and UWC has a security staff presence to assist with safety around its building and between the CHS building and the designated parking areas. During the previous IOP, various projects aimed at improving safety on campus were completed. These included attention being given to safe walks, improved lighting, enhanced security at UWC residences and specific attention to improving safety in the area between the campus and the Unibell station.

Failure to change the nature of the surroundings and achieve appropriate land use and corridor development conducive to the academic and innovation project will have long-term adverse consequences, not only for UWC but also for the region's ability to revitalise the surrounding residential areas. UWC is strategically located to be a powerful partner in transforming the whole area into a model post-apartheid space and reconnecting it to the city's mainstream life, but it cannot achieve this alone. Through the Voortrekker Road Central Improvement District (VRCID) initiative and the work of the Greater Tygerberg Partnership (GTP), the revitalisation of Bellville has been receiving attention and UWC will continue to support and participate in these initiatives. One of the consequences of UWC's isolated location is the ever-increasing demand for vehicle parking spaces on campus. Over the last number of years, the number of parking bays on campus has increased and the quality of several parking areas has been improved. However, parking provision is still not sufficient, with many vehicles parked in areas not designated or developed for parking, which affects the campus environment's overall quality. The increase in vehicles is exacerbated by the limited public transport options to and from the campus. The completion of the Bellville CHS building, which resulted in more than 2 000 staff and students no longer being on the main campus, has brought some relief to the parking situation. Going forward, new models of learning and teaching could further alleviate some of the parking challenges, but this remains an area that will have to be monitored and managed.

Infrastructure planning also has to continuously consider the long-term holding capacity of the main campus and the nature of the desired campus environment. With enrolment growth (and the concomitant increase in staff numbers), there is increased land-use pressure for academic and professional activities and support provision, such as student residential accommodation, sports facilities and road infrastructure and parking. To optimise the campus's potential holding capacity and retain its park-like character requires an ongoing commitment to an urban collegiate density of 1 m² of building on 1 m² of land. Part of the challenge faced is that existing buildings cannot easily be extended vertically, as the ground conditions on the main campus are not optimal, hence the fact that most of the buildings that were constructed before the 2000s are only two or three storeys high. With continued enrolment
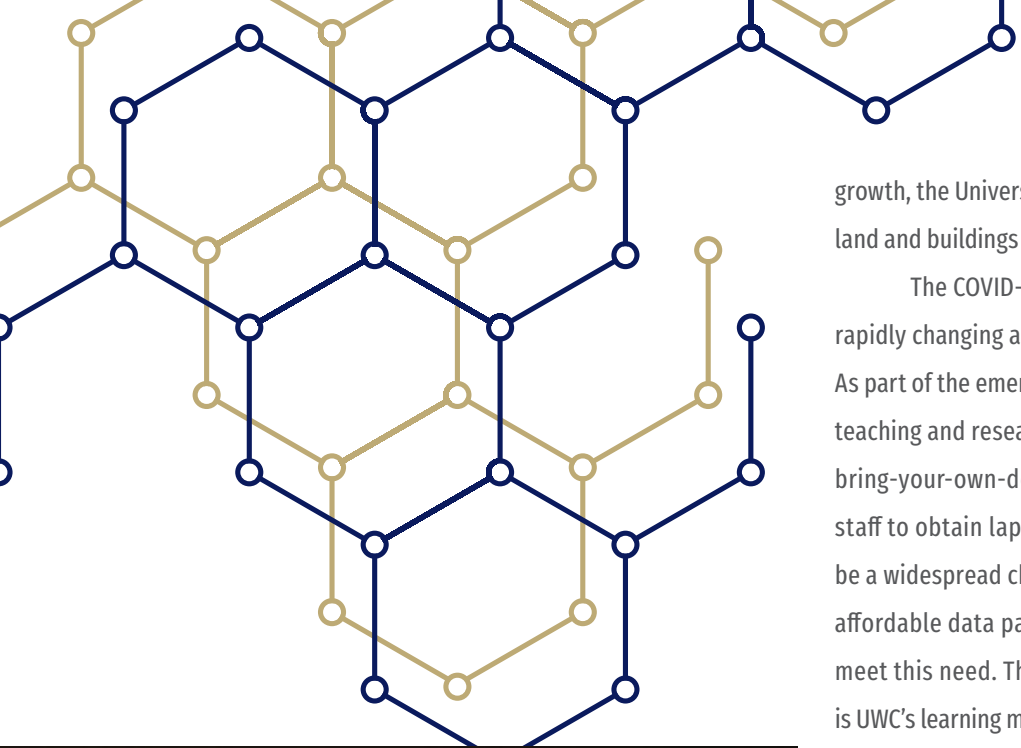
growth, the University will continue to explore options to acquire new land and buildings and rethink space utilisation and optimisation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the already rapidly changing and expanding function of information technology. As part of the emergency move to remote working and online learning, teaching and research, universities had no option but to facilitate a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) approach by assisting students and staff to obtain laptops. In addition, access to data also proved to be a widespread challenge, and universities nationally negotiated affordable data packages with all the major service providers to meet this need. The current iKamva platform (powered by Sakai) is UWC's learning management system (LMS), and has been successful in providing a stable and secure environment for blended teaching and learning. During the previous IOP cycle, investment in the system also enabled the LMS to support the emergency move to online learning and teaching.

Mention was made earlier of the strategic focus to continue to expand UWC beyond the main campus, and this shift has increased the pressure for connectivity between campuses. UWC's main campus is in Bellville South; its oldest additional campus is the Dentistry Faculty building in Mitchell's Plain. It has another Dentistry campus close to Tygerberg Hospital, and its most recent campus is in the Bellville CBD. An additional campus site is also being developed in Woodstock, and students and staff on all of UWC's various campuses must be connected. Better physical connectivity through the suitable development of the region and improved public transport would make a significant difference, and effective, real-time classroom connectivity is urgently needed. Improved public transport provision remains a dim prospect in the short to medium term and points to the need for the University to continue to explore its own options, possibly in partnership with neighbouring higher education and TVET institutions and the regional development agencies.

Physical and ICT infrastructure are key enablers of learning, teaching and research, and their purpose and functionality have to be informed by the University's academic aspirations and priorities.

Building on previous successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

In UWC's context, the idea of UWC as an anchor institution is intended to be closely connected with the notion of UWC as an engaged university, seeking to meaningfully connect with different publics. Over the last number of years, UWC has been consistent in articulating engagement in a context in which it is aware of its distinctive academic role and its potential to help build a more equitable society. Its Mission and Vision speak to the imperative of being responsive to local and global challenges. In this regard, infrastructure development can be an important enabler, locating the University in different areas in support of new and different kinds of engagements and partnerships. As part of this approach, the quality of the university experience of students and staff requires more attention at all of the smaller campuses and when considering new developments.

During the previous IOP cycle, significant developments took place to the south of the main campus. However, the built environment surrounding the main campus is still largely perceived as uninviting, hostile and sterile, reducing the University's impact and cutting its students off from the city's mainstream life. Aggravating this exclusionary effect is that public transport initiatives have primarily passed the campus by. In addition, the collapse of Metrorail has worsened the situation, and restoring the full service in and around Cape Town could take until the end of 2021 or beyond. The planned new passenger railway line between Khayelitsha and Kuils River will assist, but there continue to be safety issues associated with public transport.

A focus on integration with the sub-region also requires a good understanding of sub-regional planning and, in this regard, building relationships with City of Cape Town (CCT) and Western Cape Government (WCG) planners in which ideas and plans can be shared openly is crucial. The range of challenges with the Belhar (Unibell) student accommodation project highlighted the urgency to achieve greater alignment of UWC planning with that of the CCT and the WCG.

Infrastructure management is also concerned with the effective utilisation of existing buildings and, as part of trying to improve effective venue management, space-utilisation audits were conducted in the previous IOP cycle. The results indicated that there is often a mismatch between venue booking and venue utilisation, both in terms of booked venues not being used and in terms of the number of actual users occupying a venue versus the requested number of users. As part of the focus on the utilisation of venues, the inconsistency of audio-visual (AV) equipment in different venues and the suitability of certain spaces were also noted as issues, especially concerning prefab venues.

Traditionally the relationship between enrolment growth and infrastructure development was rather simple; going forward, universities are likely to have to continue to adapt to changes in their traditional operating models, with much more emphasis on a blended approach to learning and teaching, the possibility of dual classrooms, and exploring block-teaching approaches — all of which are likely to affect the space requirements of teaching venues. More flexible ways of working might also affect office space requirements in the future. All of the issues listed above are still quite uncertain at this time, and the impact on existing space as well future space requirements are not yet clearly understood or well defined, but traditional thinking around university infrastructure development will undoubtedly have to adapt to meet the needs of students and staff going forward. From an infrastructure perspective, it is anticipated that there will be implications in terms of more advanced technology requirements in classrooms to better support blended learning and teaching. It would be important to understand how possible new ways of working and studying would influence the requirements of academics and students in terms of the University's infrastructure provision. For example, the "bring-your-own-device" approach has various implications, including a significant increase in charge-point requirements.

Student accommodation remains a high priority, and the Unibell student accommodation development will contribute significantly to UWC's residence offering. The University also acquired some land during the previous IOP cycle. It will have to carefully consider balancing the future utilisation of these properties, with some of them being well suited for further student accommodation development. New management and partnership

models will be explored for all new student accommodation projects.

Despite well-established processes and procedures to manage infrastructure development, there are some policy gaps, and existing policies have not all been reviewed and updated regularly. UWC also does not have an integrated sustainability strategy. All of the large-scale infrastructure projects in the previous IOP cycle included sustainability elements. These were project-specific and largely depended on the nature of individual projects and the cost, viability and practicality of the suggested sustainability interventions.

In this regard, UWC will:

1. Support and influence sub-regional development and reintegration

- Positioning UWC as an anchor institution will remain a priority that requires a comprehensive institutional approach. In terms of infrastructure development, the focus will be on:
  – UWC's role in urban revitalisation and place-making (city building),
  – leveraging the increased importance of research, enterprise and innovation in regional development and in creating a learning region,
  – continuing to work with the GTP and actively building partnerships with public local authorities, firms, civil society and other stakeholders in order to identify shared agendas and clear priorities, and
  – continuing to acquire strategic properties/erven that could be utilised or developed as student accommodation in the future, or to locate certain programmes/disciplines off-campus in closer proximity to communities or industries to support ongoing partnerships. The acquisition of such properties should be clearly aligned with UWC's core mandate and strategic focus.
- Focus on the completion of infrastructure development projects that have already received IEG and other funding,

and that seek to expand UWC's physical footprint and connect its academic initiatives to appropriate communities, partners and stakeholders. These are:

– Unibell Student Accommodation project, where 2 700 new beds are being developed as part of three clusters of student accommodation in Belhar, to the immediate south of the Unibell station,

– repurposing an old school building in Greatmore Street (Woodstock) to house programmes and research partnerships linked to the Centre for Humanities Research, and

– refurbishing the Transhex building in Voortrekker Road as a digital hub that will house, amongst others, the AR/VR showroom.

2. Expand University infrastructure

• Continue to apply for and seek to optimise the funding opportunities provided by the DHET's IEG and, in doing so, seek to find a balance between projects focusing on:

– UWC's academic project, including new programme areas. In this regard, the University will seek to find a balance between the repurposing and refurbishment of old infrastructure and new developments;

– the needs of students and improving their university experience, especially at smaller campus sites; and

– addressing compliance issues and backlog maintenance.

• Focus on the completion of infrastructure development projects that have already received IEG and other funding. These include:

– the South Campus Education Precinct Project, which will relocate all UWC's Education Faculty facilities to a new precinct development on the south campus,

– refurbishing and repurposing the vacated Faculty of Community and Health Sciences space (after their move to the Bellville building),

– repurposing and refurbishing the current Education building when the faculty moves to its new facilities on the south campus, and

– repurposing the Senate building in order to relocate the Robben Island Museum/UWC-Mayibuye Archives, house the other archival collections bequeathed to UWC, along with the University's own archives and the academic programme in museum and heritage studies, along with (digital) archiving, preservation and visual history research activities. This revitalisation of the archives is a pivotal development for UWC and has the potential to shape the undergraduate and postgraduate experience in the arts and humanities; provide invaluable resources for researchers from UWC and beyond; and provide exciting opportunities for public education.

3. Manage and optimise the utilisation and quality of existing University infrastructure

- Adopt an overarching infrastructure development focus that will increasingly support technology-based approaches to learning, teaching and research activities.
- Continue to implement initiatives to improve safety on campus.
- Continue to focus on campus greening and the development and implementation of a Landscape Development and Maintenance Plan.
- Improve space management by utilising appropriate software and adapt existing processes to assist the University to implement effective space management.
- Address policy gaps and the review of existing policies.
- Update the University's Campus Development Plan (Master Plan) to improve its alignment with UWC's enrolment mandate for 2021 to 2025 and to begin to account for likely changes in future infrastructure requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Technology is a key enabler of any modern university's core academic, research and operational goals and, as it is increasingly available in various forms, its use has become engrained in how we live and work. There is a global shift from the focus on information technologies to digital transformation, which refers to the adoption of digital technology to transform an organisation's core functions and activities by replacing non-digital processes with digital processes or replacing older with newer digital technology.

Students and staff increasingly require an interactive and engaging experience and expect flexible and secure IT tools, systems and spaces to be available to them inside and outside the classroom to facilitate this shift. In this regard, universities face a large and growing challenge to use technology creatively to meet learning, research, administrative and support goals across a broad front. UWC has embraced this challenge, and this is evident in the fact that the University was mostly able to manage the added pressure on systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. UWC is increasingly a digitally enabled university. The opportunities represented by this are exciting, but require careful planning and management to ensure that the integrity of the academic project and the quality of support and operational services are not compromised.

ICT needs to be centrally aligned across the University, compared to the current, segregated model perpetuated by existing structures. In addition, UWC will need to be more proactive in protecting student and employee data, taking careful decisions on partnerships and data exchanges with other organisations, vendors and governments. Any technology should be inclusive and cannot be rolled out without considering the clear effect of inclusion on all the stakeholders involved, as well as the security aspects.

UWC will require a clear Integrated Digital Transformation Plan to drive pervasive digital transformation and digital inclusion. Such a plan will have to consider improved support to enrolment and finance, registration, teaching and learning, research, graduation, and the role of alumni, while considering the full life cycle of a student. Improvements in IT come from organisational structure, establishing missions and strategy, working with people and making the best of their knowledge, and it should be a key institutional objective to ensure that IT systems adequately support all academic and operational functions with a clear understanding of the requirements of the student life cycle. Establishing institutional relationships with platforms and technologies remains important

but at the same time, the University has to be more proactive in protecting student and employee data, making careful decisions on partnerships and data exchanges with other organisations, vendors and governments. As part of a student-centred approach, a focus on mobile accessibility should also be a priority.

In this regard, UWC will:

1. Focus on IT infrastructure
- Further enhance the iKamva LMS, with a specific focus on finding cloud-based solutions to improve disaster recovery.
- Improve support to data-intensive research requirements through cloud-based capacity solutions.
- Utilise desktop virtualisation software technology to support student access to software in a BYOD environment.
- Provide quality connectivity to all UWC sites through fit-for-purpose virtual network technologies that must meet the general as well as specific needs of the respective sites.
- Acquire a software solution that will support online and flexible learning, as well as the student life-cycle requirements of carousel-type academic offerings.
- Introduce enterprise monitoring and management systems to monitor and manage infrastructure capacity — storage, computing, networks and WAN.
- Implement core switch upgrades that will assist in reducing the overheads of managing physical infrastructure.
- Shift telephony to internet protocol telephony infrastructure to deliver end-to-end digital communication — this is already in place in most of the newer buildings on campus.
- Upgrade SASI and SEMS systems to strengthen the current system and include postgraduate student administration functionalities.
- Upgrade classroom infrastructure to support dual/hybrid teaching approaches.

2. Improve IT security
- Acquire automated vulnerability management tools to assist in tracking vulnerabilities in real time to allow for timeous mitigation and remediation in the server and desktop environment.
- Integrate the Novell Identity Management Platform with next-generation firewall to improve monitoring of UWC network activity.
- Provide an endpoint detection and response (EDP) solution that offers protection over and above normal malware protection and also provides better insight into the security environment within which we operate.

3. Improve IT governance
- Develop an Integrated Digital Transformation Strategy against which planning and progress will be reported and monitored.
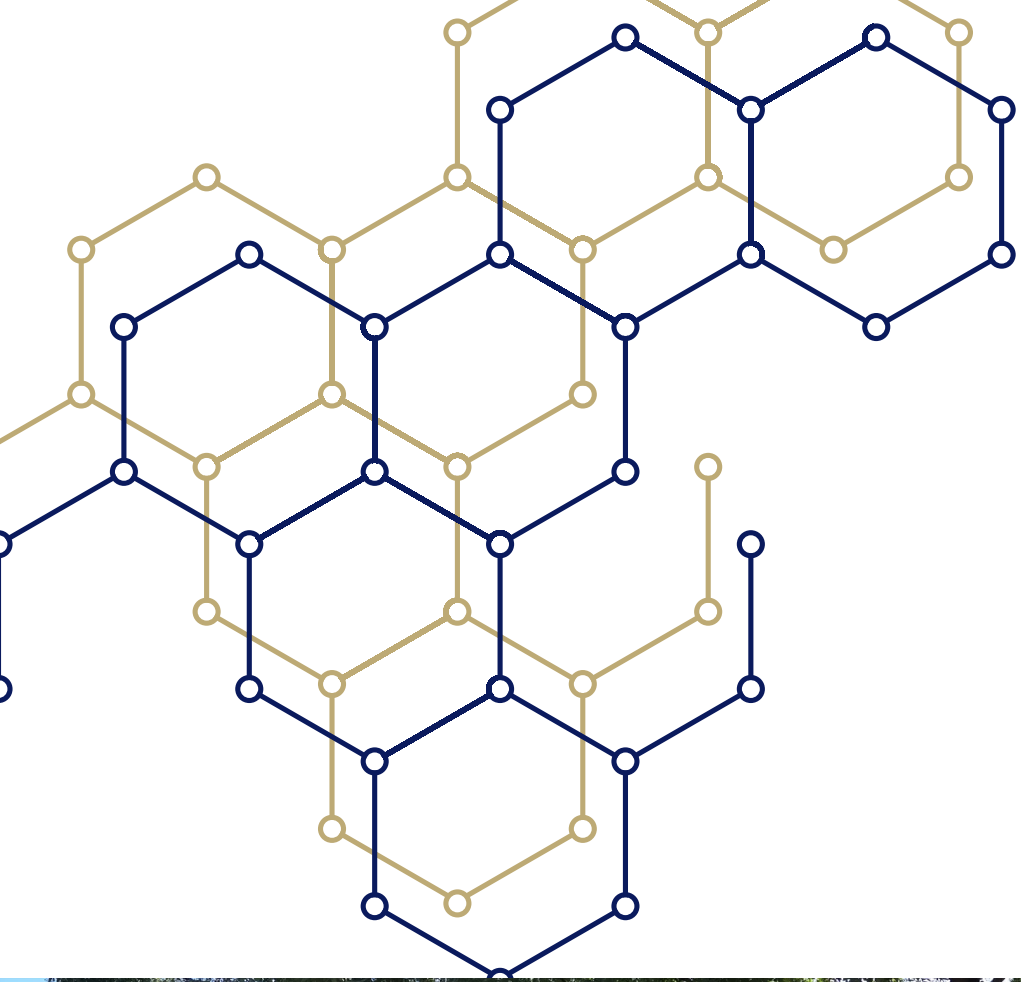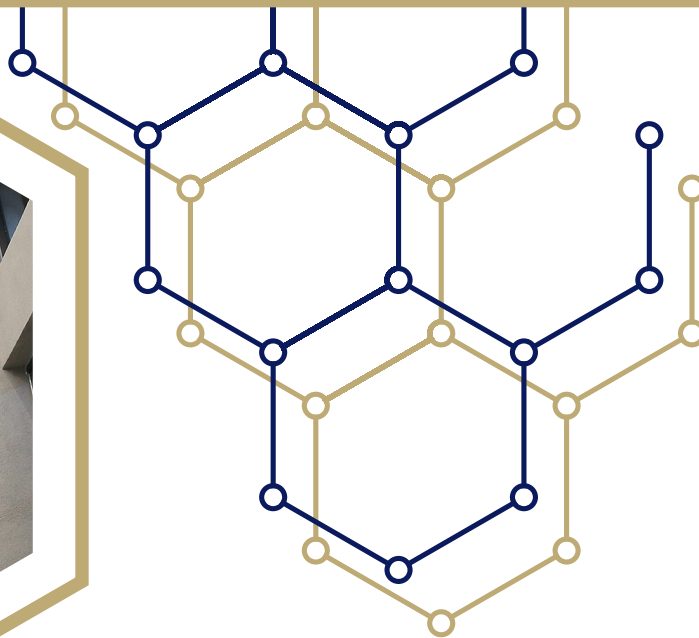
Goal Area 8: Leadership, Governance and Management

To provide robust governance and effective values-based leadership at all levels to further develop UWC as a vibrant institution of high repute, supported by accountable management practices.

Given the range and possible future impact of the challenges that the world is facing, ethical and decisive leadership in support of more sustainable and equitable paths is required at global, national and organisational levels. UWC's Mission statement commits the institution to draw on its intellectual capital and networks to respond to these challenges. In pursuit of this commitment, the University stands to benefit from ethical and values-based leadership that is able to respond to the needs, challenges and opportunities ahead.

UWC has a broad and committed leadership base that is able to rise to the challenge of giving effect to the Mission statement and guide the University towards its stated Vision for 2035. This, however, will require ongoing attention being paid to UWC's future direction, by shaping and reshaping the institutional discourse and culture, and optimising the social and intellectual capacity of the institution.

Over the past IOP period, UWC's leadership has become much more attentive to the rapidly changing institutional context, with all its risks, complexities and uncertainties. Through active engagement and vigilant oversight, the leadership collective was able to interpret the dynamic context in which UWC is working to hold an inspirational vision of what is possible in the medium term, along with practical measures for adapting and effecting change in a coherent manner, while simultaneously keeping an eye on the future. All parts of the campus community were challenged to interpret their respective activities in terms of the Vision and to become adept at new ways of seeing and responding in a challenging and ever-changing environment.

Crises put organisations to test, often highlighting strategic and structural weaknesses that otherwise may be overlooked. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic tested the resilience of the University and the effectiveness and robustness of UWC's leadership, governance and management at all levels. During this period of great uncertainty, anxiety and isolation, leadership traits such as empathy, agility and an ability to communicate with clarity became even more crucial to help both staff and students cope with widespread anxiety and isolation and to maintain a semblance of connectedness and a sense of belonging within their respective teams. One of the lessons drawn from handling the pandemic reasonably well is that different stakeholders inside and outside the University rallied together, offered practical suggestions and assisted in making appropriate, evidence-based decisions in a concerted effort to leave no one behind. As challenging as this experience may have been, new insights have been gleaned and the importance of values-based governance was evident.

The value of leadership is often under-appreciated. The development of the previous IOP commenced with an entirely new executive team, as well as a number of new deans. This team faced the immediate challenges associated with the national student protests under the banner of Fees Must Fall (2015/2016), and the final year of implementation of the IOP coincided with the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges the leadership team faced, they managed to continue to focus on key issues of strategic significance, and other goal areas in this IOP capture some of the successes achieved. This IOP period will benefit from leadership stability and continuity and the conclusion of the appointment of a number of new deans.

Leadership plays an important role to promote and advance UWC's core values: (i) academic excellence; (ii) engagement and responsiveness; (iii) integrity and accountability; (iv) collegiality and collaboration; and v) inclusivity and diversity. While this might start with leadership, it must permeate the whole University if the values are to give life to the ways in which we work. In this IOP, leadership, management and governance bodies will be expected to focus on developing robust, ethical, collaborative and values-based relationships and to make the well-being of the UWC community a priority. It will require a rethinking of what it means to lead with a sense of purpose, empathy and inclusivity as we move into a post-COVID-19 era.

In the period preceding the IOP 2016–2020, the University experienced particular governance challenges, specifically at Council level. Unfortunately, these were widely reported in the media and caused reputational damage. During the previous IOP cycle, Council took important steps to address the issues of dysfunctionality and to put in place the necessary mechanisms to restore confidence and build trust. At the heart of this was a thoughtful focus on UWC's progress in implementing its strategic objectives and on consistently seeking better alignment between strategic intentions, policies and practices.

Governance at UWC is understood to mean the processes that regulate the functioning of the University. It is shaped by both formal values, rules and structures and informal practices and institutional cultures of "how things are really done here". Changing an organisation's culture is one of the most complex leadership challenges, especially as informal culture often trumps strategic intent and formally adopted policies or rules. This is the antithesis of good governance and contributes to inhibiting transparency and collegiality. Thus, a deliberate leadership focus is necessary, especially to ensure alignment between policy, strategy and practice.

To effectively address the complex grand challenges and wicked problems of our time, universities must harness strengths to be gained from working collaboratively, both within the institution and with external partners. While the interests of partners may be diverse, successful partnerships are premised on mutual respect and a commitment to shared values and goals.

In a university context, it is important to find a balance between respect for academic authority and independence, to ensure uniformity around rules and accountability, and to invest trust in participatory processes.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

1. Building leadership that consistently provides clarity of purpose and direction and that demonstrates visible support for the development and execution of multifunctional plans through explicit priority-setting

The development of this IOP included various processes of engagement with the leadership and broad campus community that also considered amendments to UWC's Mission, Vision and Values statements to better capture current contexts and future aspirations, whilst reaffirming some core principles and values that continue to guide the University. Following this process, it is an important leadership function to maintain clarity of purpose and direction in the implementation of the various objectives articulated in the IOP.

Leadership implementation efforts and good governance oversight benefit from clear plans and strategies that support future intentions. To this end, the leadership will hold on to a compelling, inspirational and future-oriented vision and direction as articulated through the IOP goal areas, and will support this through appropriate plans and strategies.

It is acknowledged that universities are complex organisations, serving multiple audiences with different expectations, and ensuring a continued focus on strategic priorities in pursuit of the University's desired future is a key leadership responsibility. Ongoing engagement with different internal and external role players and partners will assist in harnessing the significant knowledge and expertise base of the University and its strategic partners towards its desired future.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Work consistently to promote the newly revised Vision, Mission and Value statements as the basis for articulating its intellectual identity, purpose and future direction.

- Maintain a holistic view of the IOP as a living document throughout the five-year cycle. The Senate and Council will oversee the development and adoption of a series of multifunctional five-year plans. These will include, among others, plans pertaining to the Student Experience; Learning and Teaching; Research and Innovation; People ; Financial Sustainability; Student Enrolment; and Physical Infrastructure.

- Cascade the multifunctional five-year plans into an annual budget, an annual performance plan and bi-annual rolling plans for faculties, departments and units to promote greater horizontal and vertical alignment and assist with monitoring progress towards goal attainment. This approach is intended to promote institutional responsiveness to contextual challenges and opportunities, regulatory requirements and the needs of multiple stakeholders. Where necessary, applicable policies and strategies will be reviewed and adjusted to achieve optimal outcomes. We shall draw from the needs and aspirations of the respective portfolios to prioritise, develop and implement an integrated strategy document for each of the four cross-cutting areas, ensuring all the components are unified to achieve the desired strategic objectives and maintain a systems perspective.
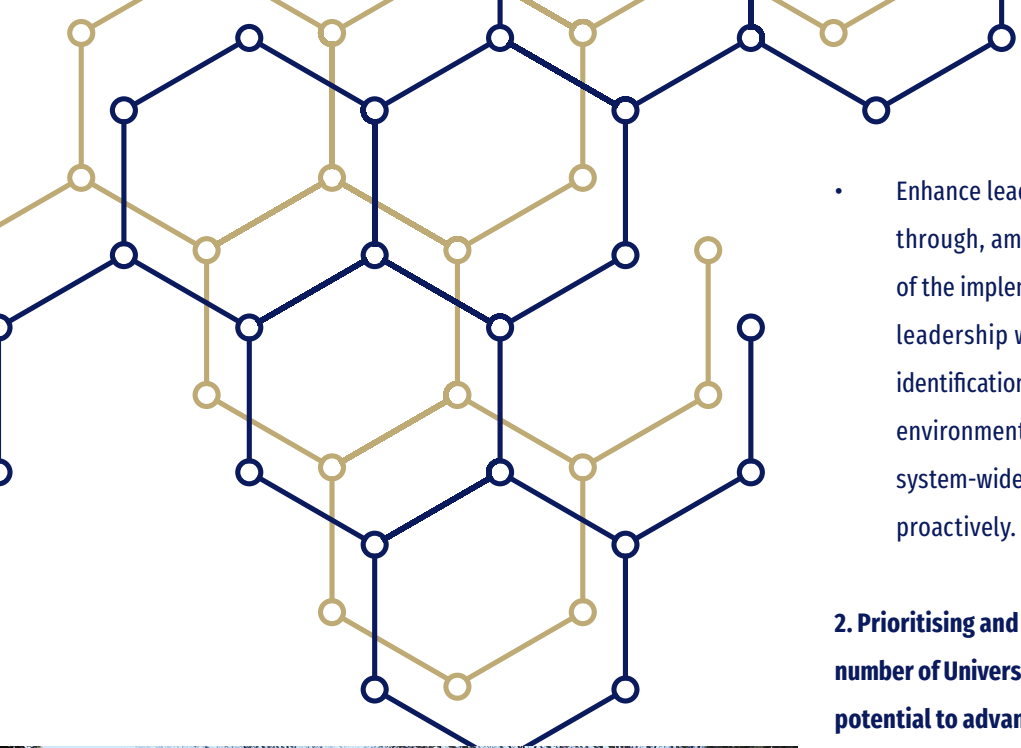
- Enhance leadership and governance oversight at all levels through, amongst others, the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the IOP and associated plans. The leadership will also be encouraged to undertake an identification of trends and issues in the internal and external environment to gain a more holistic and long-term view of system-wide strategic risks, with a view to mitigating these proactively.

2. Prioritising and supporting the implementation of a select number of University-wide change initiatives with the biggest potential to advance UWC's Mission and sustain its future

In a post-pandemic context, the University will increasingly be challenged to confront a range of traditional approaches, for example, to efficiency, productivity, human connection and campus experiences.

The Preface of this IOP highlights four interdependent cross-cutting areas that have the potential to facilitate large-scale change with a view to proactively leveraging the University's capabilities to achieve its strategic goals. It also recognises that there is a need for a more thoughtful and structured approach to delivering on the strategic objectives and to see the cumulative benefit from its multiple change efforts on a University-wide scale. In this regard, the intention is to embed the cross-cutting areas into relevant aspects of the University's functioning more consciously in order to derive optimal benefit.

To achieve meaningful change at the desired scale will require the active involvement of every sector of the University community. Effecting large-scale change is not easy and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to embed new ways of working at scale and simultaneously achieve agility and responsiveness. This will require a change-management mindset underpinned by dynamic leadership, good governance and appropriate accountability frameworks to ensure proper oversight and alignment with the strategic objectives.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop strategic frameworks and implementation plans for each of the four cross-cutting areas, namely: (i) digital transformation; (ii) anchoring the University in place; (iii) collaborative partnerships within an ecosystem; and (iv) internationalisation. Over the IOP period, leadership will invest a concerted and sustained effort to harness the potential of these cross-cutting areas and develop and maintain a register of cross-cutting projects and partnerships, which will include, amongst others, resource needs and expected outcomes.
- Draft and review standard operating procedures, where applicable, without reducing creativity to achieve an optimum strategy-culture alignment and to maintain consistency of quality, practices and results. Such procedures will go a long way to improve efficiency, assign responsibilities as well as communicate expectations, and will assist in modernising business processes and documenting change.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of the cross-cutting areas.

3. Investing in a diverse leadership corps, widely recognised as credible in national and international terms, to model responses to South Africa's transformation challenges and to advance the University's global competitiveness

It has been said that leaders who have ceased to learn, cease to lead, and that where leaders are committed to learning, institutional growth and development can follow. UWC will continue to foster a dynamic and inclusive intellectual environment that will attract and retain a diverse leadership corps at all levels that will lead the implementation of a strategic agenda in support of the IOP objectives and key strategic priorities.

The University recognises the need to also focus on succession and on preparing the next generation of managers and leaders.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop a talent-management strategy and plan to attract, retain and develop its leadership pool with the requisite capabilities and skills to meet future challenges in a highly competitive and changing environment. This will include the targeted recruitment of both academic leaders in strategically identified research areas and senior professional managers.
- Develop an effective leadership development and succession-planning framework that involves much more than attending development programmes or filling vacancies.
- As part of the leadership-planning strategy, mentors and coaches will be appointed and cross-generational leadership will be encouraged.

4. Fostering and structuring sustainable, collaborative work relationships and expanding the University's knowledge networks and platforms to achieve increased scale and impact

The changing mission and roles of universities in the knowledge economy, and their interconnectedness with internal and external roleplayers, necessitate a critical reassessment of the efficacy of universities' leadership and work processes and governance systems. In line with the previous IOP, the University will continue to foster networks and active engagements, which are central to knowledge creation and dissemination and which contribute to achieving greater synergies across disciplinary silos and geographical boundaries. This includes collaboration within the institution, as well as engagements with an array of external roleplayers, including local communities, businesses, NGOs, branches of government, and other universities and research institutions in South Africa and internationally. Many of these networks, partnerships and multilateral agreements come with their own challenges, and careful attention needs to be given to ensure that all parties benefit optimally from participation and that all obligations are met. This requires leadership support and oversight. As a number of externally funded entities proliferate and structures outside the traditional academic departments increase, there is a need to pay greater attention and oversight to stated obligations, the fulfilment of agreements, achieving goal-oriented results, addressing emerging issues and sustaining a trustworthy relationship.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Audit all current formal partnership agreements as the basis for developing a stakeholder map, which, in turn, will assist in prioritising partnerships that support UWC's strategic objectives in particular. This process will also guide management and governance practices and decision-making, particularly in relation to the strengthening of priority relationships with external partners, and with appropriate communication and resource allocation.
- Conduct an internal assessment of the policies, systems and processes required for the responsive governance, management and oversight of formal partnerships.

5. Operationalising strategies through efficient modes of execution and improved lines of accountability between individuals and structures in the University

Bridging the gap between having strategic intentions and carrying them out effectively is the perennial challenge of strategy execution. Too often, there is a gap between what people say and what they do. Effective implementation in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment involves building trust and learning from both success and failure. Leadership credibility depends on leaders doing what they promise and making things happen. By effectively implementing plans across functions, formal leadership will play a critical role in establishing the credibility of the University's strategic choices and strengthening conviction and confidence. The development of key indicators of success, commonly known as key progress indicators (KPIs), is widely recognised as best practice. The effectiveness of the leadership in the coming years will depend on the effective use of meaningful indicators of progress. Among other things, this will involve a frequent review of strategic and operational risks to take account of changed circumstances, the creation of enabling conditions, the removal of obstacles that may impede execution, committing and reprioritising resources aligned with strategy, and drawing on staff with the requisite skills that enable them to contribute meaningfully.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop an annual performance plan (APP) and establish annual priorities based on the IOP and associated multifunctional five-year plans, bi-annual action plans and cross-cutting area plans (see above) to ensure the sustainable implementation of goals and institutionalisation of strategies. There will be an increased focus on the annual budgeting process to ensure that key strategies are resourced and to achieve strategy-budget alignment.

- Raise levels of accountability by identifying and tracking meaningful metrics to monitor progress against stated goals and objectives. In doing so, the University will engage with roleplayers to find appropriate balance between quantitative and qualitative indicators across a range of input, output, outcomes and impact factors. Where possible, benchmarking appropriate indicators against peer institutions will be used to also assess UWC's progress within the national higher education system.

- Strengthen the technological and human capacity required to facilitate the transparent flow of information required for monitoring and decision-making processes. As part of this focus, attention will also be given to improving the quality, integration and storage of data in support of consistency, data integrity and the sharing of information to support informed decision-making.

- Build on and further refine existing enterprise risk management processes to enhance the effectiveness of strategy implementation and to actively mitigate key risks. Attention will be given to leveraging digital platforms to assist with the assessment of strategic and emerging risks more frequently, using, among others, insight-driven analytics to proactively refresh the risk profile.

In the implementation of this Institutional Operating Plan, the leadership, governance and management structures endeavour to ensure all planning, monitoring and evaluation approaches are appropriate to the culture and ethos of UWC as a knowledge institution.

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