2021 DVC T-L Portfolio Milestones report

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1   Introduction

Teaching and Learning are the core business of higher education. The quality of education, whether in non-formal or formal programmes, depends not only on efficient academic processes, structures and lecturer teaching skill, but also on the scope, quality and accessibility of professional support for teaching, learning and the curriculum project, as provided by the different T-L Support Departments within the DVC T-L division.

Together, academics and professional support staff must ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and sustainable, that teaching and learning are stimulating, collaborative, lead to critical thinking, and in an evolving state of innovation and transformation. In this challenging context, student as well as staff development must always be complementary in terms of our commitment to a quality education experience, but also to the NWU ethic of care. The Office of the DVC TL steers and monitors projects and activities to optimize and support transformation and high quality teaching and learning, as per the T-L Strategy (2021-2025) and the NWU Annual Performance Plan (APP).

During 2021, the Office of the DVC T-L and its support departments focused on the work required as per particular T-L support related goals stated in the APP. As was the case in 2020, whilst all the "normal" work and projects of the portfolio have received due attention, the Covid 19 impact remains one of the external factors that drives not only the thinking surrounding the transformation and development of teaching and learning support, but indeed have resulted in many new projects to accommodate and improve on professional services delivery to staff and students in a virtual setting and often with a hybrid approach.

Students studying online (irrespective of their locations), and staff teaching online, still need to access the invaluable services of the Library and Information Services (LIS), staff and students need access to the Language Directorate (LD) interpreting and translation services, the Career Centre (CC) need still to create networking opportunities for students and potential employers whether in a face-to-face (f2f) or virtual setting, the Unit for Continuing Education (UCE) need still to plan for Short Learning Programme (SLP) delivery of existing contracts and new ones, now in both the online and limited contact modalities, whilst the Academic Grants Administration (AGA) had been key to the re-planning, with the DHET and NWU Finances, of earmarked grants to support teaching learning during the pandemic.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) remains the central point for student and staff support and development, with reprioritised services and resources that have received accolades from faculties and students alike over the past 18 months; supporting ever increasing volumes of requests for eFundi help, SI and mentor assistance in modules and other types of online student support, and also staff training and assistance with eFundi development for appropriate online teaching or a hybrid approach for purposeful contact teaching, as well as advising on best online, hybrid or purposeful f2f interactions with student groups while optimizing the teaching and learning environment and ICT utilization (in collaboration with IT).

During a time of continued turmoil, amongst other important projects, the Qualification and Academic Programme Planning Unit (Q&APP) has been working diligently with Faculties and

Strategic Intelligence (SI) to ensure that qualification and programme applications and amendments are processed in a compliant manner, and that the annual yearbook audit is completed on-time. The Unit for Open and Distance Learning (UODL) with Faculties concerned have remained similarly vigilant in their support of distance students who still up to this point have not been able to benefit from open and accessible Learning Support Centres (LSCs) due to lock-down restrictions. The LSCs are only now at the point of re-opening doors to again offer much needed support to distance students and the UODL SALA remains responsible to ensure that these venues remain Covid 19 compliant while addressing the needs of our distance cohorts.

From the onset of the 2021 academic year, the Office of the DVC T-L has closely engaged with all T-L support departments, Faculty Leadership, CRM, SALA, the Quality Enhancement Office, the Registrar's Office, the Student Life leadership, Facilities, SI and the procurement office, to ensure that no stone remains unturned in a collaborative effort to keep the academic programme alive, to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, and to keep up with quality T-L support initiatives to staff and students. The minutes of the twice monthly meeting of the DVC T-L with all role-players concerned have served both at Senate and the UMC at different junctures during the year to indicate all the critical aspects that have been addressed. From these critical engagements flowed important planning initiatives such as, amongst others, Faculty Assessment Plans, Faculty Monitoring and Evaluation Reports, the reconfigured Academic Calendar, planning for purposeful limited T-L interventions in 2021, and the planning for T-L and assessment for 2022.

The report that follows offers a summary of key T-L support milestones reached from January to end September of 2021 by the DVC T-L's support portfolio to realise high quality teaching, learning and the curriculum project at the NWU.

2 The Academic Grants Administration Office

Reporting on academic grants administration takes two forms, namely the n-Gap initiative and reports on various teaching, learning and research grants administered by the AGA Office.

2.1 The n-GAP initiative

The first part contains composite information on the n-GAP initiative so that Management can see who are involved and where the appointments were made. The narrative reports for the 27 n-GAP appointments at the NWU phases 1 to 6, were submitted to DHET before 31 August 2021. The NWU was awarded five new positions for phase 7; these positions were advertised with the closing date at 21 June.

Because of the lockdown it was not possible to visit the n-GAP colleagues and mentors on the different campuses as was done in the past. Six online meetings (each per phase) were held with all the n-GAP lecturers, mentors, directors, academic grants administration staff and where possible, the Deputy Deans and supervisors. The People and Culture practitioners of each of the Faculties were also invited. The attendance rate was highly satisfactory; stakeholders within each of the phases had the opportunity to meet and engage in critical discussions. Much appreciation was related for these meetings. Individual meetings with nGAP lecturers and/or Directors, mentors and supervisors take place throughout the year.

Below is the information regarding the current 27 n-GAP lecturers.

	Gender	Faculty	School
Phase I	Female	Economic and Management Sciences	Business Management (1)
			Accounting Sciences (2)
		Health Sciences	Nursing (1)
	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Physics (1)
		Engineering	Industrial Engineering (1)
Phase 2	Female	Law	Law (1)
	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Information Technology and Computer Science (1)
			Mathematics (1)
		Health	Psychology (1)
Phase 3	Female	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (2)
		Engineering	Industrial Engineering (1)
Phase 4	Female	Economic and Management Sciences	Tourism Management (1)
	Female	Health	Psychology (1)
	Female	Natural and Agricultural Sciences *(Resigned end February 2021, the position is advertised and will be appointed under phase 7)*	Microbiology (1)
	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Biochemistry (1)
Phase 5	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Biochemistry (1)
	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Computer Science and Information Systems (1)
	Female	Engineering	Minerals and Chemical Engineering (1)
	Male	Education	Setswana (1)
	Male	Engineering	Electrical Engineering (1)
Phase 6	Male	Law *(Resigned June 2021, position advertised and will be appointed under phase 7)*	Undergraduate Studies (1)
	Male	Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Indigenous Knowledge System Centre (1)
	Male	Engineering	Mechanical Engineering (1)
	Male	Education	Mathematics, Science and Technology Education (1)
	Female	Economic and Management Sciences	Accounting Sciences (1)

2.2 Reports on the various TL and Research grants administered by the NWU

The second set of reports concerns the submission of reports within the DHET cycle on the various Grants administered by the University in support of Teaching-Learning as well as Research and

Innovation (the two having been combined as a result also of the new format requirements set by the DHET in terms of the UCDP).

An online collaboration arranged by DHET and CREST took place on 6 September 2021 re the 2021-2023 UCDG plan, the implementation, monitoring and evaluation and finalising the plan on MIS (Management Information System) of DHET after the "cut" in the budget as communication received in July.

Academic Grants reports submitted to DHET Jan-August 2021:

GRANT	SUBMISSION DATES
Report: UCDP/G for 2018-2020 the narrative and financial report with external audit findings for 2020	31 May 2021
Applications for n-GAP Phase 7: Submitted seven applications in October 2020: Outcome was good, five new Grants awarded to NWU for appointments in 2021/2022	March 2021
Report: Language Grant and application for third round of Grant – successful. First time of Arts and Cultures history that the same Grant was awarded to the same University for three times	15 March 2021
Report: Foundation Grant (financial report with external audit findings)	31 May 2021
Report: Clinical Grant (four grants) (narrative and financial reports with external audit findings)	31 May 2021
Report: Veterinary Science Grant (one) (narrative and financial reports with external audit findings)	31 May 2021
Report: n-GAP (27 narrative reports and financial report with external audit findings)	31 August 2021
Clinical Grant audited enrolments	31 July 2021

All the financial reports on the grants submitted to the external auditors lead to positive factual findings and judged to be "clean"; no matters of emphasis or disclaimers.

2.3   DHET communication

The communication from DHET in June included the revised Ministerial Statement as well as an information letter regarding the "cut" in the initial amounts for the above mentioned grants. For the UCDG, funding was cut from R45 033 747 to R41 051 127 for 2021. A template had to be completed to indicate how this decrease in funds will be addressed in the 21 projects. The submission was approved by DHET in September.

With the other grants with periods from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the decrease in funding is implemented in the revised budgets.

2.4   DHET and CREST new initiatives

These initiatives are aimed to put all the GRANTS on the Management Information System (MIS) within the next year. These include n-GAP, Future Professors Programme, NESP etc. For the UCDG all programme leaders and focus area leaders will get access to their projects on the system to ensure transparency and to complete/report on the spending on their projects.

3 The Centre for Teaching and learning

3.1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all sectors, and higher education has been no exception. The diversity of campus cultures, financial health, business models and students has led to a similar diversity in the impact of and response to the pandemic. While there was no pandemic playbook for higher education nor for the support needed from the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), CTL took on the challenge and supported academic staff members and students to respond to the challenge and to continue with teaching and learning while ensuring a positive learning experience for students. We are proud do report on several of our flagship interventions as managed in our three directorates.

3.2 Directorate: Faculty TL Support

3.2.1 Framework for Faculty-directed Model for Support and Development: Revision of Faculty Teams Model

One of the opportunities that the NWU's CTL has in common with similar centres at other merged SA universities is to demonstrate the effectiveness of well-coordinated and thought-through support for T&L in a complex context. No merged university in SA has eight faculties, schools and academic departments geographically located across three different campuses which were once different universities. While some view this as a challenge, the FTLS Directorate chooses to view this aspect of the merger as an opportunity for the development of grounded data, drivenresearch and evidence-based support that prioritises the 'student voice' and the views of academic staff who engage with students daily in lecture rooms across the different sites of delivery.

Given the specificity of the challenges owing to the different demographics and histories of both our students and staff at all three campuses, the CTL Faculty Teams Model and its effectivenessin supporting students and academic staff across the three campuses have been compromised.The Terms of Reference for the CTL Faculty Teams, observations of interactions between the FTLS Directorate and academic staff, and regular data generation from official meetings all reveal challenges for the current model for faculty teaching and learning support.

The team distribution into faculties, for example, was such that members and the Team Lead satat different campuses with the aim of providing support for a specific faculty. Having a CTL FacultyTeam Lead stationed at one campus to look after a faculty with staff members located across thethree campuses is a significant reason for the appearance of the limited impact and effectivenessoutlined by the CTL Faculty Teams Model. At best, CTL Faculty Leads also seem to have been doing more work than members within a Team. In turn, this work by Team Leads has concentrated on the campus where they are located, leaving academics at other campuses less'attended to' and fragmenting the FTLS Directorate in terms of the support it is meant to offer.

The other aspect that seems to have undermined the CTL Faculty Teams Model is the principle guiding membership. While it is impossible to have expertise, qualifications and experience as the only requirements for colleagues to join a specific CTL Faculty Team, part of the reason TeamLeads accepted more responsibility can be ascribed to team members in a Team having limited knowledge of the faculty they were assigned and disciplines in it. In cases where a CTL Faculty

Team Lead and/or some of the members hold a qualification from the same faculty, working relationships with academics have been noticeable. There is thus an urgent need to address these concerns in a manner that will strengthen the work of the CTL Faculty Teams Model without compromising the specific needs of each faculty on all three campuses.

3.2.2 On Enhancing the CTL Faculty Teams Model: CTL Faculty Representatives Approach

The CTL Faculty Teams Model still has a place in our work and requires strengthening. To realise such a goal, we have developed a scientific and scholarly approach to generate baseline data. Our data sources are the middle managers of Schools and student representatives within faculties who are spread across the three campuses. Such data are generated and added to thealready existing individual day-to-day requests from lecturers. We are convinced that a systematic, scholarly and triangulated approach to generating data that will inform our Student Academic Development and Support (SADS) as well as Academic Professional Development (APD) initiatives is the best option. A collaborative approach with faculties on developing facultysupport activities has already been planned and put in place. Decisions on when, why and how we develop workshops for students and academic staff, organise seminars and/or curriculum conversations within faculties, or invite 'outside' or international scholars and innovative local andinternational researchers in specific fields of study have been made collegially and collaboratively with faculties.

To ensure a research-led and informed approach to faculty support, we propose the Faculty *Teaching and Learning Convener* role – a representative that will work directly and closely with school directors (and/or their deputies), programme leaders (and/or their deputies), subject heads (and/or their deputies) and student chapters within their faculty. In this context, the bulk of the role profile for the *Faculty Teaching and Learning Convener* involves research engagements withthese stakeholders in each faculty. The purpose of such research will be to create opportunities for academics and students to express their experiences and views on curricular issues, teachingand learning, assessment, and the overall educational experience (for both academics and students) within a programme. Furthermore, in collaboration with programme leaders (and/or deputies) and subject heads (and/or deputies) in each faculty, the *Faculty Teaching and LearningConvener* leads the process of incorporating such 'grounded data' into future Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans (FTLP), which will feed into the Integrated Faculty Teaching and Learning Plans. Figure 1 below shows the new FTLS Vision, better read on the CTL website:
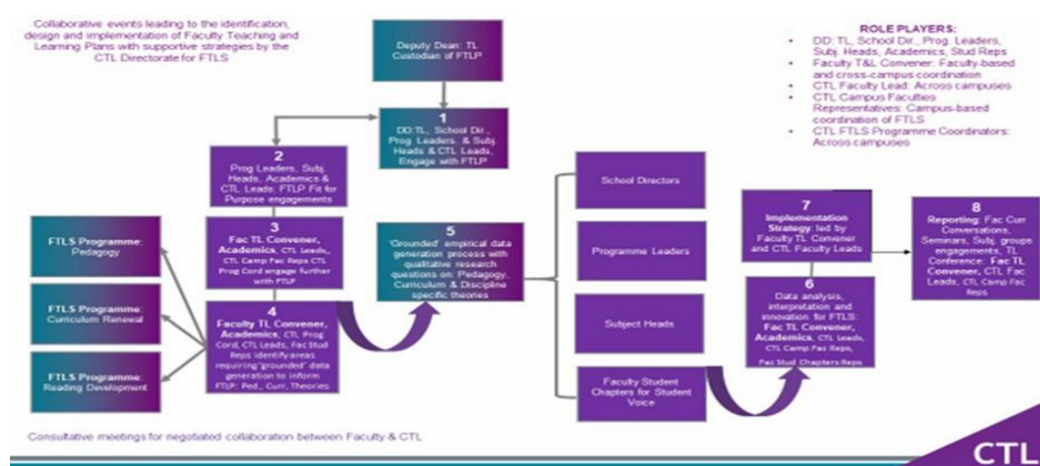
This plan is designed to strengthen faculties' Discipline-based TL Research Footprint, while efficiently responding to 'real' issues on the 'ground'. As shown in the above figure, academic and student voices are not only paramount to our goals; they are equally crucial in the formulationof FTLPs. As a CTL Directorate, we can only be led by faculties in how we offer support, hence our recommendation for the appointment of a *Faculty Teaching and Learning Convener* who is a member of a faculty. This collaborative approach is enabling a meaningful response to unique NWU TL matters.

3.2.3   Project: Postgraduate Research Support Hub

The Postgraduate Research Support (PGRS) project resulted from a series of consultations and conversations around academic support for postgraduate pipeline students as well as the concerns raised in the national Doctoral Review (2020) with data on dropout and graduation ratesin specific fields of study. This project was created to close the gap between undergraduate andpostgraduate support and to increase throughput and retention of postgraduate students. Pipeline students are those who have spent more than the required number of years to complete a qualification, as well as those students who may not have exceeded the required years of completion yet, but are finding it challenging at a particular stage in their research.

The primary aims of the project are to improve research skills and knowledge of postgraduate students to increase their research skills and ensure quality research reports. The PGRS project offers three activities in partnership with the Research Office, and in future, there will be collaboration with the NWU Writing Centre to strengthen the academic writing of postgraduate student researchers. The activities are as follows: Activity 1 – workshops; Activity 2 – postgraduate advising support in walk-in hubs; and Activity 3 – writing camps based on set admission criteria. The intention is to focus on research teaching and not supervision to change the culture of student supervisory approaches at the NWU from a traditional type to a mixed approach where new role players, such as CTL, contribute to addressing throughput.

Activity 1 – The project has conducted three of the projected eight workshops for 65 postgraduate students across the three campuses. There are already plans to conduct follow-up workshops on research methodology and ethics application processes, as feedback from participating students indicated a need in this regard. The three conducted workshops were covered by the SABC, interviews were published on social media spaces, and a segment on the PGRS project was aired on multiple radio stations in March 2021. Link: https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/north-west-university-implements-ucdp-to-assist-students/

Activity 2 – There is a graduate movement of supporting by research advising specialists goingto postgraduate students within the walk-in hubs. In addition, there is also an eFundi site calledthe *PG Research Support Hub* for postgraduate students. This site is linked to the 'One Stop' site available to all PG students at the NWU, and covers both administrative-related information and academic functions espoused on the project's site. Link:

https://efundi.nwu.ac.za/portal/site/9189a963-dd8b-4c11-83e5-39a8ddced85e/tool/c0952ca1-a51f-4a45-b059-60422314837e.

This activity also aims to bridge the gap by extending support to undergraduate students who have a module with a research component(s) or assignments which require research knowledge and skills. Additional planning and opportunities include lunchtime discussions with the advising specialists and CTL student academic advisors as well as the CTL SADS domain liaison; conversations on research-related challenges faced by undergraduate as well as honours students will be held. Advising specialists will also be in-house consultants to SADS research-related activities.

Activity 3 – A writing retreat was planned. In total, 15 students were selected to participate in the writing camp that was offered on August 2021.

Overall, to promote awareness of the PGRS project and the support offered by the advising specialists, a promotional video and presentations by the campus coordinators were part of the successful marketing campaign during the first semester of 2021. This is the link to the video: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1iTtojRIMaWMAvPcjZMxtZEV6QijNF0iw

3.3 Directorate: Central TL Functions

3.3.1 Project Management System

The Directorate *Centralised Teaching and Learning Functions* identified a need for a single process within the department to be developed to manage requests and staff productivity. The learning design process flow was formulated through multiple discussions on the different units' staff members and clear role differentiation.

A system was required to manage the request, staff allocation and provide reporting within the learning design process for module-specific and other requests. Several options were considered, but due to the unique workflow and the need for future development, CTLF decided to create a system that can be easily and quickly modified to accommodate their ever-changing needs.

The ARROW (Agile Reporting & Request Organizing Workflow) app was developed in-house. This app will meet the system needs of CTLF based on the learning design process flow. ARROW provides a platform to add additional information and files to requests, allocate team members, provide reporting, and integrate with Microsoft Teams to communicate effectively and send notifications.

The template for ARROW has been used to create a similar app for the sister CTL directorate, *Special Projects, and Research*, and will also be used by the third CTL Directorate, *Faculty Teaching and Learning Support*, in the future development of their app.

3.3.2 CTL One Access Point

CTL strategic planning required a one-access-point approach for all incoming requests. An interactive map was developed that provides information on the different services offered and allows online request submissions.

The data are captured in a central database to overview all requests within the different units. The different directorates follow similar processes and will open the door to future development of a single system to manage these requests and promote collaboration.

3.3.3 End-user support

After the restructuring of the T&L Technologies help desk and call centre during 2020 (in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown), the team has since the beginning of 2021 received more than 14 000 telephone calls and responded to more than 6 600 requests (4 239 for the whole of 2020) from staff and students for assistance via the Service Manager. Working under immense pressure, the team has maintained a satisfaction rate of above 90% (from satisfaction surveys received).

With the lowering of the lockdown levels, the on-campus resources made available to staff and students are being opened. The One Button Studios on Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses have been opened and are used by staff and students again.

3.3.4 Learning design

The Instructional Design Capacity Building Programme has delivered the first four of 12 Instructional Designers. The first cohort successfully completed the online Master's Programme in Instructional Design and Technology Integration (presented by the University of Georgia, Athens).

During the first semester of 2021, the instructional designers and education technologists initiated a process to define roles and responsibilities so as to provide a full spectrum of services to academic staff during the learning design process. This process has been concluded. As part of their learning design role, the education technologists will focus on assisting staff with the design and development of the learning experience within eFundi. Instructional Design will shift their focus to assist lecturers to address curriculum-related issues such as constructive alignment, assessment approaches, developing modules for new qualifications, and updating older modules to incorporate new developments in industries and the world of work. This change in focus will be implemented during the second half of 2021. The instructional designers are also in the process of becoming Quality Matters-certified reviewers to assist in the UCDG project to review and improve modules at risk. The aim is to use these new ID skillsets to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the NWU.

During 2021, better integration between the graphics team, the video team, the multimedia and learning technologist resulted in more eFundi developments and better visual incorporation between eFundi lesson sites and multimedia learning objects. We have designed and are busy with the final phases of development for several games:

- The first game is for tourism – School of Tourism Management. The students lacked a general knowledge of South Africa, and we developed a game to let them practise with the content. The game was designed to teach students core concepts in an authentic scenario-based world. To include an element of competition, one of our multimedia designers coded a leader board where the scores are updated, and the ranking is visible to students.
- The second game is for accounting sciences. The students struggle with foundational knowledge and therefore cannot succeed in the module. The game follows a narrative approach to learning where learners follow two characters throughout the module. There are various animations, quizzes, and interactive activities. Students are scored, and their progress is measured accordingly.

With the sudden move of all teaching and learning activities to emergency teaching and learning, many lecturers during 2020 reacted by just making sure that study material was available onlineto students. With few exceptions, little time was spent on proper learning design during 2020. Now, during 2021, it seems that lecturers have started to re-evaluate what they have done during 2020 and are working towards improvement. The result is that the teams within CTLF responsible for learningdesign have been extremely busy during the first semester of 2021. In the first semester of 2021, the education technologists (with a learning design function) and the instructional designers have worked on a total of 157+ modules to date. It is important to note that some of the projects are completed and some are ongoing.

Owing the challenges and opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the drive to get modules online, the instructional designers were focussed on assisting in the design and development of online teaching and learning experiences.

During the first half of 2021, there was a substantial increase in request for the design and development of digital study material to address the need for students to have access to practical components traditionally dealt with in laboratories, simulation labs and other NWU facilities. The investment made in additional capacity in the video studio has enabled us to address these needs.

Projects worked on during the first half of 2021:

Video Studio	45 Projects, which include video productions for onsite in laboratories, workshops, simulation lab practical sessions. 2D and 3D animations, voice-overs, and video tutorials	• Engineering • Nursing • Animal Researchand Ethics • Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences • Biochemistry • Education • Theology • Law • Humanities – Languages
Multimedia Studio	21 Projects, which include interactive study material, graphic elements, animations. Assisted in 52 eFundi module requests	• Health Sciences • Education • eFundi Animations • Humanities • School of Tourism Management • CTL (Centre for Teaching and Learning) • Accounting Sciences

Graphic Design Request and Study Guide Formatting

Study Guides formatted (Jan – June2020)	Certificates		Graphic Design		
	Short Courses requests	Other requests	Research	Teaching & Learning	Corporate & Other Design
			Job Requests	Job Requests	Job Requests
532	112	22	11	76	36*

The Unit for Coordinating and Scheduling processed 2 647 study guides for the second semester in the first semester of 2021 across all three sites of delivery.

3.3.5 Work-integrated Service Learning (WISL) System

To successfully implement the WISL system, the faculties, and schools with Work-integrated Learning (WIL) components were targeted and prioritised based on the levels of WIL activity, professional body requirements and alignment to the configuration of the WISL system. To date, the faculties of Education and Health Sciences have been on-boarded successfully. The first to roll out the system was Education, followed by Nursing in 2020. Biokinetics, Pharmacy, Social Work, and Dietetics rolled out the system in 2021. The schools that are expected to get on board in 2022 are the School of Agriculture and the BA Tourism Management programme. In addition, the formalising of service learning (SL) within modules will be culminated by the WISL system in conjunction with the submission of guidelines and standard operational procedures that will guide WIL and SL practices and processes within the institution. As a result, the WISL system will be rolled out, targeting schools where service learning is integrated within modules in 2022. The faculties or schools that have been identified include, but are not limited to, Engineering, Music, and Industrial Psychology.

3.4 Directorate Special TL Projects and Research

3.4.1 CPD Workshops and Webinars

This summary report includes data and information on all the CPD opportunities offered during the first semester of 2021. Of the 64 in-house workshops and online webinars planned for 2021, a total of 44 CPD opportunities were already offered in the first semester of 2021. Due to COVID-19 regulations, all events were online webinars; in the second semester, opportunities will most probably also be online.

In addition to the in-house webinars offered, the academic and professional staff of the NWU had access to online workshops and courses at Epigeum, Coursera, Manga & OLC. The 44 CPD opportunities had an overall attendance of N=1 227, and the online platforms had an overall enrolment of N=178. The most popular online platform is Epigeum with University Teaching: Core Skills as well as Blended Learning.

3.4.2 Digital assessment project – Lecturer training

The Cirrus software solution was identified as the preferred solution for digital assessment at the NWU. The training of lecturers in the use of Cirrus software is imperative for the success of implementing digital assessment. Fifteen modules were identified to participate in the pilot project, which includes up to 20 lecturers. Several training opportunities for 20 academics and CTL were conducted in the first semester.

3.4.3 Teaching awards

Six new Teaching Awards were implemented in the first semester of 2021. The rationale for diversifying the awards was to create a platform for a larger group of academics to highlight excellence in their teaching and learning practices. The six new types of awards are Faculty Teaching Award; Teaching with Innovation and Communication Technologies (ICT) Award; Innovation in Teaching and Learning Award; Online Teaching Award; Novice Teacher Award; and

the University Teaching Excellence Award (UTEA). Participation in the new award types is also good, with faculty representation across the three sites of delivery. A total of 90 university teachers are participating in the different new types of awards, as outlined in the table below.

With the new dispensation of NWU Awards, the team also, for the first time, presented a session on technical assistance and a session on teaching philosophy statements. The technical support zoomed in on the technical aspects of the portfolio that would be submitted, while the session on teaching philosophy spoke to the role, position and importance of the subject in a portfolio. The sessions were well attended and had a satisfaction rate above 90%.

Participation in NWU Teaching Awards

Award	Count
Novice Teaching Award	8
University Teaching Excellence Award	3
Teaching with ICT Award	4
Online Teaching Award	10
Innovation in Teaching and Learning Award	2
Faculty Teaching Awards	63
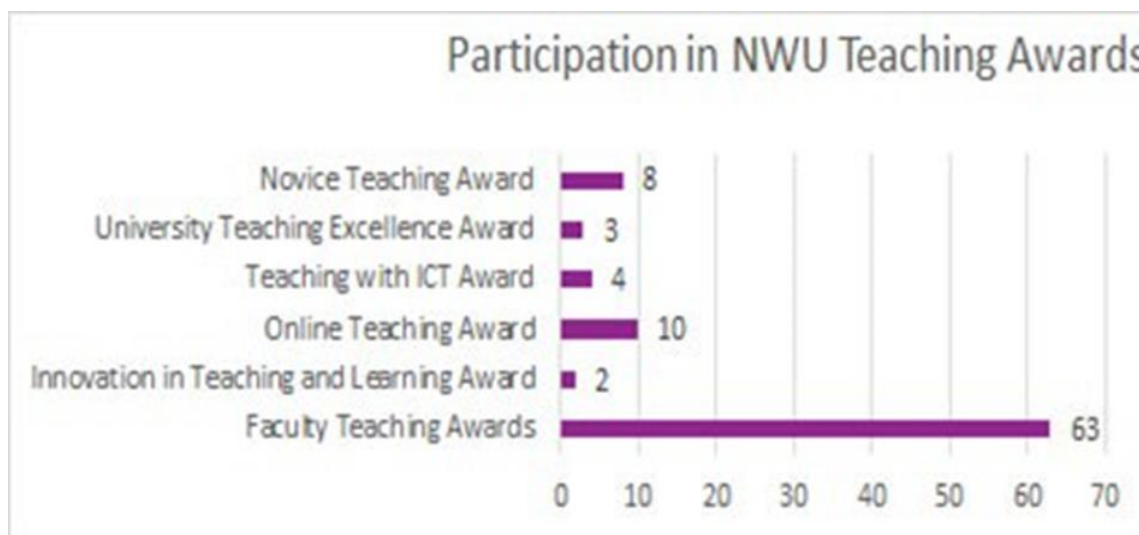
3.4.4 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Strategies to support SoTL participants to successfully complete SoTL projects include Pomodoro Fridays (dedicated writing sessions), writing retreats, and an ethics in SoTL workshop. The Pomodoro writing sessions are scheduled for every second Friday of the month and attempt to enhance SoTL research and for members to become part of a community of practice. The purpose of these sessions is to allow for dedicated time where participants can actively engage in their own academic writing.

A three-day virtual writing retreat was hosted from 2 to 4 February 2021 to support SoTL researchers to conceptualise, develop and/or produce a research output. The virtual retreat consisted of short online information sessions on key issues pertaining to SoTL: From conceptualisation to execution. Participants also had the opportunity to consult and discuss their draft/planned research output and/or SoTL project with an SoTL expert. The bulk of the time was spent on writing. A second writing retreat is planned for September 2021.

A need for a specific development opportunity pertaining to Ethics and SoTL research was identified during the SoTL writing retreat. A two-day workshop (10 to 11 March 2021) was developed and presented, focussing on the ethical issues related to researching one's own teaching practices, involving NWU students and lecturers. The ethical implications for each step of the SoTL research process were discussed in detail. This workshop also included practical examples and guidelines. The format of the online workshop included information sessions,

breakout sessions in groups with feedback, brainstorming, expert panel discussions, and input from scientific and research ethics committees. A chapter output is submitted for review in the CTL book publication.

3.4.5   Communities of practice

Communities of practice (CoP) is an important aspect for the promotion of knowledge production and knowledge-sharing about teaching and learning. Two CoP's have been established: SoTL CoP and COPAI (Community of Practice Academic Integrity). The SoTL CoP aims to provide support for staff members in Health Sciences (School of Recreation) to become reflective practitioners and to register an estimate of eight individual SoTL projects. This CoP will contributeto establishing a scholarly approach to teaching and learning at the NWU.

3.4.6   CoPAI

Going beyond academic misconduct, CTL invited NWU academics and support staff during June 2021 to become part of an initial conversation where we aspired to establish a CoP that would focus on academic integrity at the NWU. This CoP will be driven from CTL, and the Quality Enhancement Office at the NWU, across all eight faculties and three campuses, where Professor Anné Verhoef will fulfil a leading role. This initiative is funded from UCDG Project 13: SoTL in CTL. The CoPAI aims to engage faculty academic managers as well as all support departments atthe NWU. This is the birth of a coherent and cohesive vision for academic integrity at the NWU and the beginning of a long-term project in which we will strive to diversify and grow.

3.4.7   Siyaphumelela network participation and NWU Student Success initiative

The NWU joined the national Siyaphumelela student success network in 2019. In 2020, the NWU submitted a University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) funding application to DHET for the implementation of a student success initiative at the NWU. In achievement of the project outcomes, NWU staff participated in various capacity-building opportunities. Thirty (30) NWU staff and seven students attended, while five NWU staff presented at the Siyaphumelela-hosted conference.

Fifty-five (55) NWU staff also attended Siyaphumelela network-facilitated webinars and workshops. Four NWU staff member participated in the Student Success Forum (SSCF), and 75 NWU staff member attended the NWU Student Success initiative capacity-building workshops

3.4.8   Virtual Mobility project

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown and travel restrictions, it is impossible to continue with the project as planned for 2021. To provide NWU academics and professional support staff an opportunity to engage with national and international colleagues on teaching-learning-related best practices, the decision was made to use the 2021 available funding for registrations for virtual national and international conference attendance. A call for application for attendance of a virtual conference was sent out at the beginning of June, and academics have already started applying for the funding. Several of the applicants also have accepted abstracts and will deliver papers at the funded opportunities. The closing date for applications was 31 August 2021. On 6 September more than 50 staff members were funded to attend and present at virtual conferences.

3.4.9   CTL Mentorship programme

A mentorship initiative in collaboration with the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) was launched in 2021. For CTL, 10 mentees and nine mentors applied for the 2021 programme, and 10 mentees and 10 mentors collaborate in the FHS cohort. Although the 2021 mentorship programme will include participants from CTL and FHS, all activities have been contextualised for each group individually. Some of the activities will in nature allow groupings of CTL and FHS colleagues to work and explore together, which will also strengthen understanding of the activities and experiences of their respective appointments in a professional support directorate and within a faculty.

For CTL, the purpose of the mentorship programme is to develop CTL professional support staff to understand their roles and responsibilities around teaching and learning and to develop their capacity in guiding lecturers in designing and sustaining meaningful teaching and learning experiences.

3.4.10   STLES Semester 1

During the first semester, a total number of 2 437 contact and distance survey links were individually distributed to 1 100 lecturers via email. CTL distributed reports to 972 individual lecturers during the first semester of 2021.
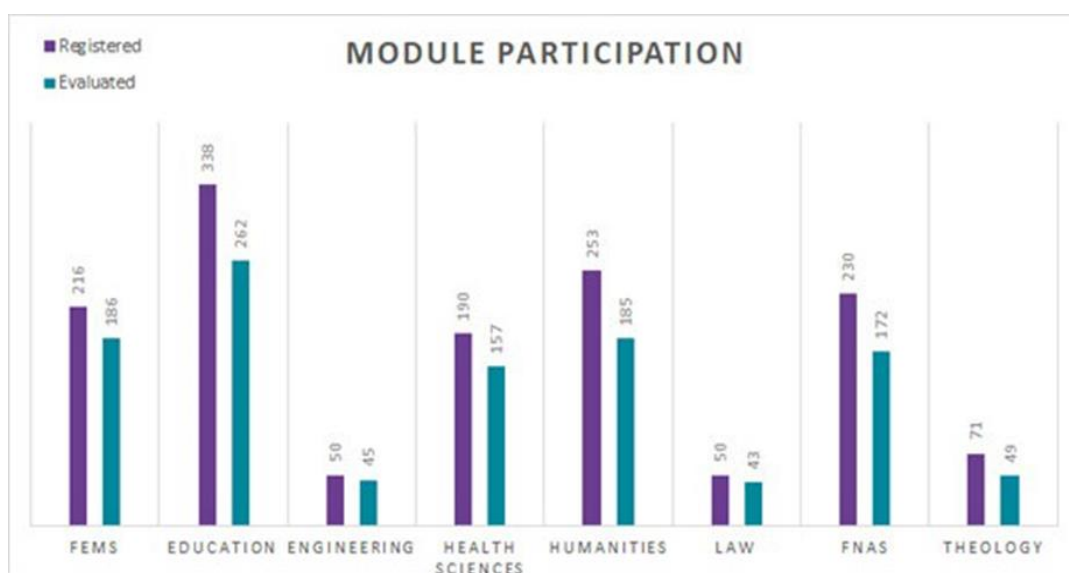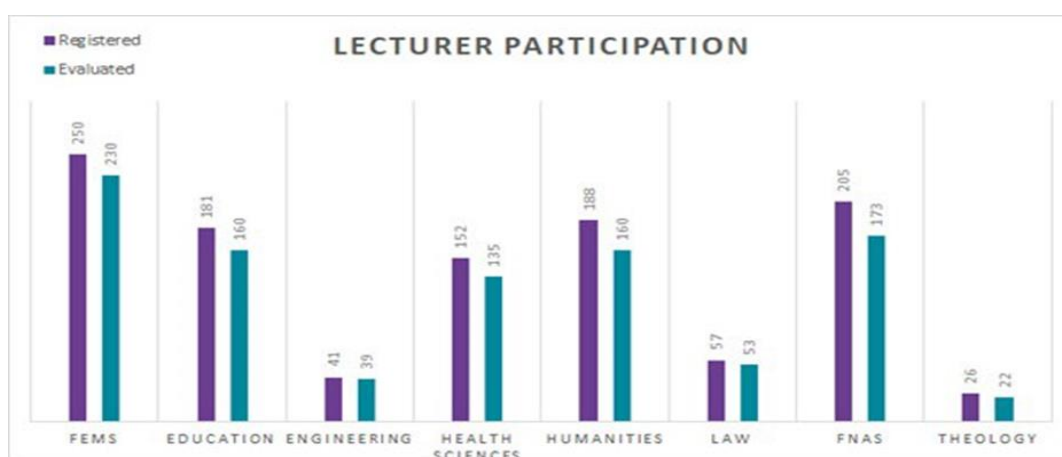
In total, there were 30 535 (contact) and 6 099 (distance) responses during the first semester of 2021. This does not mean that 36 634 students completed the survey, as the students are requested to complete an evaluation for each of their modules.
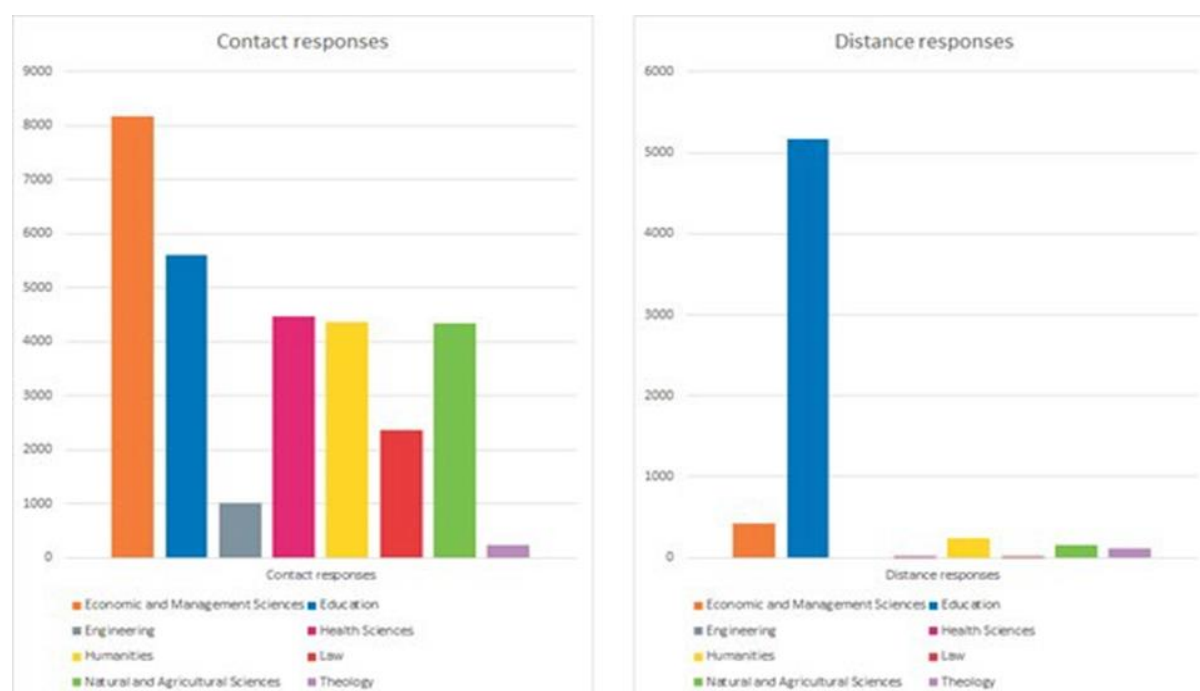
The survey questions were amended to allow for students to share their perspectives on remote teaching and learning. The survey now consists of 26 Likert-scale questions and five open-ended questions. The average student satisfaction for contact (81%) and distance (82%) pertaining to teaching and learning during the first semester adheres to the DHET requirements.

2021 First Semester STLES Contact students' satisfaction rate				
Faculty	**Educational approach**	**Assessment practices**	**Module evaluation**	**Overall T&L practices**
FEMS	84%	81%	81%	82%
Education	84%	84%	82%	83%
Engineering	74%	71%	69%	71%
Health Sciences	82%	78%	79%	80%
Humanities	83%	80%	79%	81%
Law	83%	76%	79%	79%
FNAS	81%	78%	77%	79%
Theology	87%	85%	85%	86%
Total:	**83%**	**80%**	**79%**	**81%**

2021 First Semester STLES Distance students' satisfaction rate				
Faculty	Educational approach	Assessment practices	Module evaluation	Overall T&L practices
FEMS	84%	83%	86%	85%
Education	81%	79%	83%	81%
Engineering	N/A			
Health Sciences	77%	79%	78%	78%
Humanities	86%	83%	83%	84%
Law	85%	90%	82%	86%
FNAS	82%	80%	83%	82%
Theology	88%	85%	88%	87%
Total:	82%	80%	83%	82%

4   The Language Directorate

4.1   Introduction

Highlights of the Language Directorate (LD's) activities given the continued lockdown stages and modes of teaching-learning necessitated thereby are set out below. Most heavily impacted were the Interpreting Services (IS), as dealt with to some extent in the previous Milestones report.

4.2   Interpreting Services activities

The IS staff continued to provide the expanded language services to which they had been repurposed from the initial lockdown. From the initial remote T-L only, the gradual reintroduction of face-to-face classes occurred, and this increased the workload of the IS, because of the utilisation of both the remote and face-to-face modes in parallel.

IS staff continued doing interpreting, translations, transcriptions, recordings and direct voice-overs of lectures. The latter continued to be mostly from English to Afrikaans as before, because most lecturers continued to opt to originate T-L material in English first and subsequently make available the Afrikaans versions with the assistance of the LD staff. eFundi communications with students, assessments and assignments were also translated. For IS staff more used to working from Afrikaans to English, the switch in direction continued to be challenging. Quality control checking continued in groups working together, with a more experienced staff member who originally monitored interpreting quality also now doing so for other work produced by IS staff.

Additional software applications mastered were the OmegaT translation memory-based platform and the Zoom Educational platform, which includes an interpreting channel, in addition to the channel carrying the original remote T-L broadcast. The OmegaT training was done by one of the IS staff who is experienced in the use of the application, with a recording of the training made available for later viewing and reviewing where so required.

Introduction of Zoom interpreting on the Zoom Educational platform has made simultaneous interpreting of online Zoom classes possible, and in addition, a blend of face-to-face and Zoom class interpreting also developed. This is a first in the world. The IS is also working with the Zoom company in feedback with the aim of possible refinement of the educational platform.

An added benefit is that Zoom-interpreted classes are recorded (as are the original broadcast) so that captured lectures can be made available for later use by students. Interpreting assistants do the recordings, which are provided to lecturers to make available on various platforms, inter alia via eFundi and Nextcloud.

These newly acquired skills of EI staff were gained in close cooperation with lecturers and added to the overall T-L value students experience. Teamwork between lecturers and interpreters was once again significantly enhanced by such cooperative efforts as the IS could assist lecturers lecturing via Zoom.

4.2.1   Interpreting services provided outside NWU

The LD continued with the provision of an educational interpreting service at the Potchefstroom College of Agriculture, for which we have been contracted since 2007. This service generates third income stream revenue.

The NWU IS has established itself over time as experts in agricultural interpreting, providing these services at annual congresses, conferences, symposia and management meetings of GrainSA and PotatoesSA, as well as other agricultural conferences. These are both third income stream revenue-generating and community engagement activities.

This year again saw an interpreting service into English, Afrikaans, Setswana, Sesotho, isiZulu and isiXhosa provided by NWU at the GrainSA annual congress, which was presented virtually via Zoom.

4.2.2   Interpreting equipment innovation

The challenges with the mobile hotspot-generating interpreting systems were being resolved and should be fully effective by the end of 2021.

4.3   Language Directorate terminology resources

The redesigned Excel template introduced last year (which automatically generated a bidirectional list while the original unidirectional entries were being made e.g. while the interpreter entered Afrikaans-English terms in one Excel tab, a list of English-Afrikaans terms was generated in another tab) is proving its value. Also, the much more convenient availability of terminology lists per module is working well. Currently terminology lists for some 130 modules across faculties are available. These lists are essential as we proceed with the introduction of MPs in modules and programmes. Some lists have been done in Setswana and Sesotho, and one in isiXhosa (which it is envisioned will be used in the MP SLP). Updating this resource is an ongoing process.

4.4   Language Directorate reference resources

In addition to a collection of textbooks and dictionaries purchased over the years as reference works mostly for interpreters, many out of print dictionaries and textbooks have been copied in PDF format over the years. Printed reference works are kept in the interpreting satellite offices or

translators' offices where they are mostly required, but electronic references have only been informally distributed among interpreters as required.

In order to make these resources available so that they can be accessed by all staff, a central repository has been created, in which electronic resources currently available in distributed fashion throughout the LD will be collected in a central database that is available to all staff. This work is currently in progress, with the initial process due for completion during the rest of the year, but will be constantly updated.

4.5   Language Policy Revision process

The language audit process as part of the language policy review to the end of the first semester progressed on schedule, but delays have been encountered because of challenges in making the language audit surveys available multilingually in the NWU's official languages in QuestionPro, the NWU's survey instrument of choice. These problems were overcome but the process has been delayed by some four weeks. However, going forward it is foreseen that the delay will be made good during audit data processing, report-compilation and stakeholder consultations.

4.6   Language Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

4.6.1   Multilingual Pedagogies Short Learning Programme (MPSLP)

The MPSLP had originally been designed as five contact workshop sessions in the course of 2020 was forced to move online due to the Covid-19 lockdown. Participants were encouraged to use in their remote T-L activities the multilingual strategies that they had learned about up to that point. The move to the online environment caused a delay in the completion rate of the SLP and drop-out by some lecturers, under the pressure of ERT-L. The online platform for the course is an eFundi site named "Multilingual Pedagogies".

The MP team and all the participants in the MPSLP have access to the site and share experiences in strategy implementation with each other. The first intake participants are currently in the process of completing the SLP. The SLP is due to go fully online as a facilitated 8-week self-study programme on Moodle, with the assistance of CTL, later in 2021.

The MPSLP team submitted a presentation on the multilingual pedagogies work to the BAAL Language in Africa Special Interest Group conference in June 2021. Prof Cromarty as Research Coordinator chaired the session when this presentation was made online. The paper based on the presentation is currently being reviewed for one of the Special Issues that the Research Coordinator is co-editing. The journal is Language, Culture & Communication. Finally, the MPSLP team will be p[resenting a second paper (pre-recorded) for the Suisse conference in November on Beyond Multilingualism – Translanguaging in Education. Their paper is titled: A multilingual pedagogies initiative in higher education.

4.6.2   Language Planning and Monitoring

Two reports have been submitted to SCLPAS so far (April and July). Prof Cromarty populated excel sheets with information she had obtained from previous LD annual reports and previous Language Planning and Monitoring (LPME) reports for SCLPAS and sent them to faculties in order to verify the information. This stimulated interaction between the LD and the faculties and information was updated in the process. This was followed up with Zoom meetings to which

faculties invited Faculty members involved. In the process core teams for LPME were established in each Faculty. Prof Cromarty is preparing an updated report for the September SCLPAS meeting.

Prof Cromarty as Research Coordinator for LPME has also designed a research instrument that can be used by each Faculty to determine how students and staff are experiencing T-L in the flagship modules. This instrument has been distributed to faculties for their input and some responses have been received. Reporting on progress will take place at the September SCLPAS meeting.

The Research Coordinator is co-editing two Special Issues for two international journals: Language, Culture & Communication, and the Journal for Multilingual and Multicultural Development. The articles are currently under or due for review. She also has an article, together with co-authors, in both SIs.

BAQONDE work: Prof Cromarty is also a member of two BAQONDE committees: the dissemination committee and the committee for quality control. Apart from monitoring the work packages that each institution is responsible for, we were responsible for showcasing and disseminating information about Baqonde in our regions. This was done with the Marketing and Communication department of NWU. Information on NWU and BAQONDE has appeared in various press releases and newspapers and in various languages such as English, Afrikaans and isiZulu. Unfortunately we have not yet been able to disseminate the information is Setswana.

As part of the Language Awareness Week (LAW) activities Prof Cromarty was responsible for the Friday morning session on BAQONDE and multilingualism. She had invited BAQONDE members to report on the aims, vision and projected work of BAQONDE. She then posed three questions, to be answered by fur experts in pre-recordings. These pre-recordings were presented on the conference platform, followed by a discussion by a panel consisting of three NWU staff members from different faculties and three students. This session was well-received and feedback was very positive.

Apart from presenting and chairing at the BAAL Language in Africa Conference on 14 June 2021, the LPME Research Coordinator also presented at The Learner Conference on 8 July, together with her PhD student, and also at the AILA (World Association of Applied Linguistics) conference on 18 August. The papers based on these conference presentations have been written up and submitted for publication.

4.6.3   Language acquisition SLPs

The School of Languages is handling the design and implementation of these SLPs. Covid-19 severely disrupted the contact courses (which are by far the preferred mode for language acquisition). So far, there have been two online courses presented for Setswana, which were not the SLP formally developed by the School of Languages. There were 37 attendees. The Sesotho SLP is under development and due for completion in 2021.

Since our previous report, one Afrikaans acquisition SLP has also been presented on PC (16 attendees starting, only 9 completing). On VC there were only 3 staff members expressing interest,

making presentation non-viable. If language acquisition courses are not written into staff's performance agreements, non-completion has no repercussions.

There are two staff members in the Afrikaans Department prepared and available to present the SLP, in multimodal format, should interest so indicate. Marketing of this SLP has been initiated.

4.7 Conclusion

The Language Directorate, and the Interpreting Services in particular, have adjusted well to the changed demands of the mixed-mode presentation and the provision of the language services that are required as language plans are being implemented. This can be directly ascribed to the excellent and committed staff, in particular the interpreting satellite office managers and their staff, and Prof Rosemary Cromarty in her role as LPME Research Coordinator. The LD has thus been able to contribute substantially to the NWU's ability to give effect to a language policy that is aligned with national thinking and policy as regards language policies of higher education institutions.

5 The Career Centre

NWU Career Centre seeks to enhance NWU student employability. The below updates share some of the 2021 milestones that were successful achieved.

5.1 Work Readiness

The last week of August 2021, the department coordinated a series of workshops in webinar format. Twelve companies from different industries delivered a total of 25 presentations on topics in six broad themes, and 640 students participated in the event. Details are available at the following link:

https://news.nwu.ac.za/another-successful-round-entrepreneurship-and-work-readiness-seminars-nwu-career-centre

5.2 NWU Virtual Career Fair

NWU Career centre hosted two virtual fairs, in March and June 2021 respectively. In total 3098 students attended the 2021 Virtual Fairs. The last fair is planned for the month of October, and currently efforts are underway to ensure that we close off the year on a high note.

5.3 CV and Interview training

The Career centre is seeing a positive and steady upward improvement in the attendance of CV writing and Interview training workshops. Up to this point, a total number of 3525 students participated in our training opportunities. A number of 3525 are active students on our eFundi page and 640 students attended our scheduled training sessions.

5.4 2021/2022 NWU Career guide publication

The annual publication of the Career Guide is now available:

http://services.nwu.ac.za/sites/services.nwu.ac.za/files/files/career-

This is the 13th copy of the publication, and we are proud of our efforts to ensure that we continue to also in this manner to support NWU Students and Industry in bridging the gap between industry and NWU students.

5.5   GDS and Universum Study

To date, the Graduate Destination Survey recorded 1665 participants. The study is due to be closed by end September 2021.

https://nwugds2021.surveyanalytics.com/

The 2021 report from the Universum study has been shared with internal stakeholders and academia. The department hosted three (3) information sharing session as follows in August. A number of 86 staff members, inclusive of members from University Management, attended the information sharing sessions.

5.6   Newsletter:

NWU Career Centre is due to publish its first newsletter that will in future be published annually at the mid-year point from the year 2022. The first eNewsletter will be available on the 1st of October 2021. The team adopted the name **"KGATELOPELE" eNewsletter publication**. This is a Setswana word that means *progress towards success*. We are indeed ready as a team to take progressive steps towards moving through the challenging Covid 19 period with wonderful lessons learnt, despite many heartaches experienced. Additionally, we are confident with our efforts to remain sustainable, and adopt and grow our online presence as a compliment to enhance career centre capacity and to further improve our outreach to NWU students.

5.7   Career Centre 2021 Job Opportunities:

The department attracted a good number of job opportunities were shared to date. A number of 94 Job opportunities were recorded. These opportunities varied from SAICA & SAIPA articles; Graduate development opportunities; Fulltime employment opportunities; Bursary opportunities and Part-time opportunities or Vacation jobs. We are hoping to attract more opportunities towards the end of the year 2021.

5.8   Career Centre General matters

Career Centre Mid-year performance discussion were finalised on the 05-08 July, and all information documents related to this process were uploaded on next cloud by 30 July.

Overall Career Centre Staff remains to work together as a team. We continue to embrace our learnings from all the challenges related to Covid19, and the lockdown. A reflection bosberaad is planned towards end October / November to wrap up the year and reflect on the outlook plans for the year 2022.

The Quality Improvement Plan has been finalised, and approved by the DVC T-L. A total of 34 recommendations were noted from the QE Office soft review. The implementation will continue to be managed over a period of time. Four quality-related strategic themes with eight (8) activities will be monitored towards improvement by March 2022.

6   The Unit for Open and Distance Learning

6.1   Introduction

At the start of 2021 the Director UODL T-L (Ag) had one-on-one meetings with the Executive Dean of each Faculty to discuss the possibility of more programmes to be offered via the Distance mode of provision. It must be mentioned that the Faculty of Health Sciences distance offering had to be phased out during 2019 to align with the HEQSF requirements. There are, however, plans for at least three programmes to be delivered via distance in the near future. In this regard, the Academic Manager had a meeting with Prof Petra Bester, Director of AUTHeR. The following distance programmes are in the planning phases: Higher Certificate in Health Promotion (Application in progress, approved at SCAS); and the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (Application in progress, approved at Faculty Q&APP committee).

The School of Nursing Science is also planning a bridging programme at NQF Level 7 for nurses who have NQF Level 6 Diplomas and wish to continue with postgraduate diplomas. Application documents are being prepared to be submitted to SCAS.

Another contribution to the distance offering is the Postgraduate Diploma in Industrial Engineering which will commence in 2022. The Faculty of Engineering is the last of the NWU Faculties to on-board with distance offerings.

As the Unit for Open Distance Learning (UODL) continues to strive towards delivering a service of excellence to all their stakeholders, the following milestones for 2021 are worth mentioning.

## 6.2   Primary initiatives in support of teaching and learning

The report highlights the foci of the UODL in regard of enhanced service delivery.

6.3 Implementation and Finalization of new UODL structure

The approval of the upper level of the new structure of the UODL indicating a split in Management in November 2020 by UMC, implied for the first time, two directors in the management of the Unit, viz the UODL T-L Director and the UODL SALA Director. It was clear that, in order to implement the new structure effectively, alignment between these two directorates was imperative. Since the start of 2021, meetings to negotiate roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines within and between these two directorates were at the order of the day, in consultation with NWU Organisational Development. This resulted in a complete organisational structure showing hierarchical relationships between managers and staff members reporting to them with complete sections at the bottom level at the end of May 2021. It distinguished between the UODL T-L workspace and the UODL SALA workspace.

6.4 Assistance with sit-down assessments at LSCs

The UODL was instrumental in the support of mid-semester, mid-year (and end-year) sit-down assessments for contact students who have not returned to NWU campuses. The mid-year sit-down assessments, for example, took place at 26 UODL Learner Support Centres (LSCs), including the Potchefstroom, Vaal Triangle and Mafikeng Campuses. It must be mentioned that this was the first time that contact students wrote at distance centres, which is quite historic. The total modules accommodated in such a manner for the Faculty of Economic Management Sciences and the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences were 28 modules, but due to the change to stricter lock-down restrictions announced to prevent Covid-19 from spreading, nine of the modules scheduled from 30 June to 7 July could not be written as sit-down assessments. As far as practical centres are concerned, three Curro Colleges were secured to accommodate the three biggest practical centres. One in Pretoria, one in Cape Town and one in Secunda. In Rustenburg, the Akanyang Teaching Centre with RBI was secured. The e-learning Coordinator drafted a detailed process document for the virtual machine drive, which covers all the necessary activities that need to happen, from set up to trouble shooting, in collaboration with NWU IT.

6.5 UODL colloquium in planning stage, set for end of October 2021

The UODL realises the need for reflection on the purpose and functioning of the UODL within pandemic and post pandemic times. Furthermore, in light of the 4IR, the UODL needs to rethink

their value proposition to their students, but also to faculties especially following market research indicating the need for more effective communication with our students and enhance support. In this respect there is currently a strong drive for the planned Communication and Support Office (previously named and approved as the Back Office by UMC).
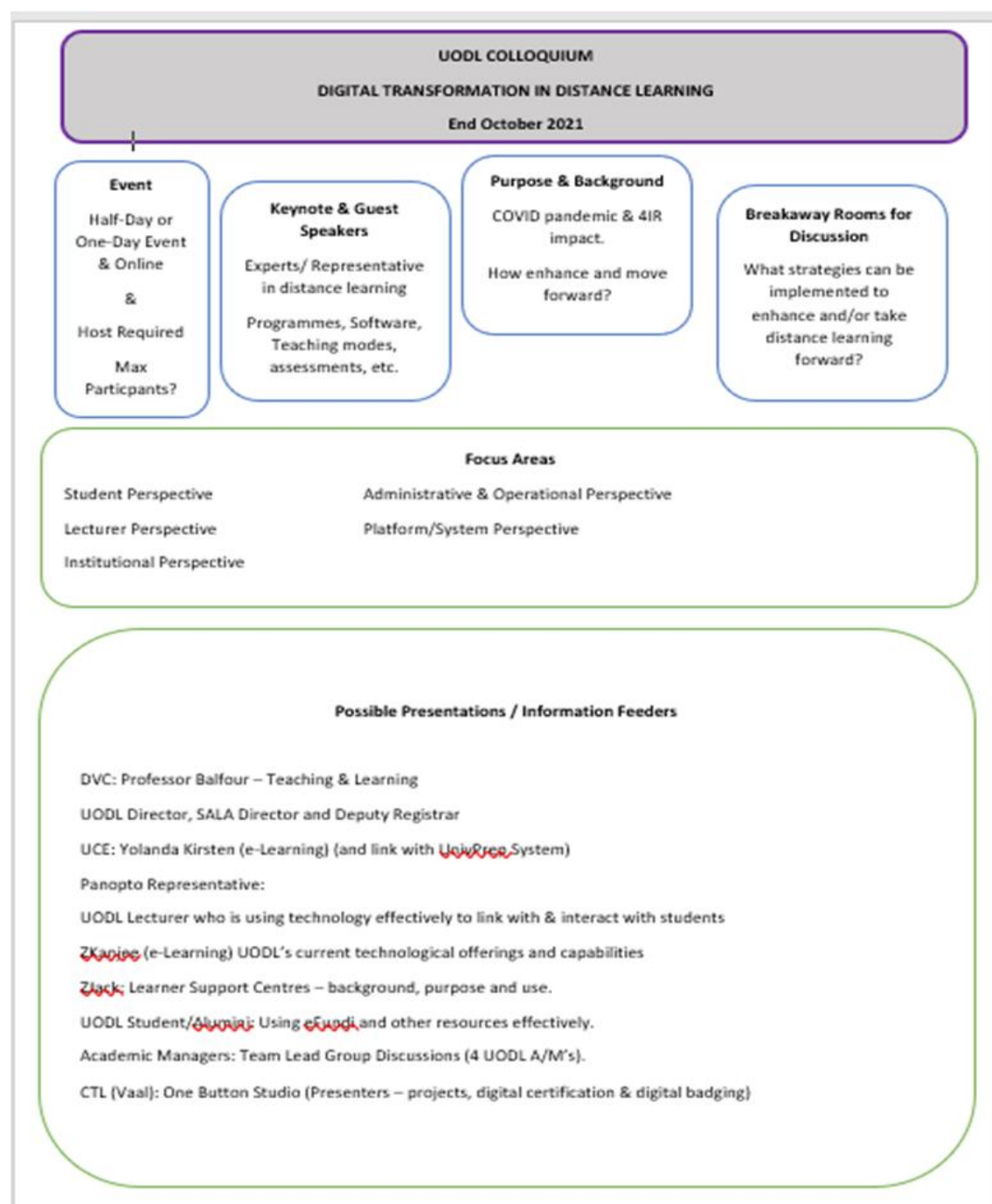
6.6 Establishment of a Marks Processing System (MPS) office at the UODL

The office was established after the need arose during 2020 for a dedicated office to oversee all marks capturing, calculation of marks as well as the finalization of mark son the MPS-system. All processes in the UODL-assessment department were re-evaluated and changes were made were applicable. The office is tasked with the creation of evaluations on the MPS. This is an integral part of the processing of assessments within the assessment department, without this process no

assessment can be processed on the MPS. This office is also tasked to ensure that the SALA deadlines are met on the release of results to students.

6.7 Professional development training (ICT skills) by UODL's E-learning Section for UODL Staff members

Research was undertaken with the UODL staff members to establish which ICT skills they are most in need of. Based on the results, the E-learning Section head developed the initial training sessions. The project launched officially on 14 September 2021 with two sessions having already been conducted. Participants were both online and "in-person". The sessions were well received and training/content development in terms of ICT skills training needs is underway.

6.8 Study Material Review Process in progress

Several meetings and discussions were held to ensure reflection on new and enhanced ways of distributing study material at the UODL. The inputs of faculties and especially programme leaders were integral to this process. The feedback hereto will be shared with the faculties involved at a meeting scheduled on 6 October 2021.

6.9 A paperless environment for UnivPrep

Staff members within the UnivPrep Office, who historically experienced a lot of manual actions in their day-to-day tasks, migrated to a more paperless environment with the help of UODL's E-learning team and the Unit for Continuing Education (UCE). The UODL and UCE have close collaborations on several other projects as well.

6.10 Registration portal for streamlined registrations

The registration processes at the UODL are streamlined into paperless filling with self-registration options in all postgraduate programmes available. No registration forms are being done via e-mail anymore. Application statistics were also made easily accessible via the NWU Dashboard.

The table shows the new programmes envisaged for distance delivery in 2023.

Table 1: Status of new qualifications for future offering via the distance mode of delivery

Status of new distance qualification approval as on 27 July 2021					
		PQM clearance received from the DHET	Next step: To be submitted to CHE (outcome expected in approximately 18 months)	After CHE approval, SAQA registration (approx. 5 months process)	Expected enrolment date (subject to remaining external approvals)
1	Postgraduate Diploma in Critical Care Nursing – Resubmission	Approved 2021-01-16	HEQC Online submitted 2021-07-12		2023
2	Postgraduate Diploma in Health Services Management – Resubmission	Approved 2021-01-16	HEQC Online submitted 2021-07-09		2023
3	Postgraduate Diploma in Midwifery – Resubmission	Approved 2021-01-16	HEQC Online submitted 2021-07-09		2023
4	Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing Education – Resubmission	Approved 2021-01-16	HEQC Online submitted 2021-07-09		2023
5	FHS Postgraduate Diploma in Primary Care Nursing – Resubmission	Approved 2021-01-16	HEQC Online submitted 2021-07-18		2023
6	Higher Certificate in Health Promotion (C&D)	Approved 2021-01-16			

6.11   Roadshows

This initiative started in the Project and Management Office at the UODL. However, we soon realised it could be used for the entire student population at the UODL. Therefore, the two teams going on these roadshows also included the Quality Control Manager as well as the Learning Support Manager as it makes also financial sense that the budgets be brought together for the single aim of reaching out to the students. Roadshows were arranged in partnership with Provincial DBE Offices in Free State, Mpumalanga, KZN and Eastern Cape. Full reports were provided to DVC T&L. Gauteng and Limpopo Roadshows have been postponed due to increasing numbers of COVID-19 infections in the country. Upon return from each Roadshow a dedicated task team usually responds on the completed hard copy query forms that were brought back from the encounter with the students.

6.12 Enhanced Student Support

Interactive sessions on the use of online resources: Interactive sessions on the use of online resources have been scheduled with students for the 21st and 22nd September. This will allow for students to interact and ask questions regarding resources they are struggling with.

6.13 Working under Covid 19 Regulations

At the start of 2021 a Business Continuity document was drafted collectively by the UODL EXCO and section heads with the aim to maximise productivity and the safety of UODL staff members and students and provided guidance and direction to staff members. The pandemic provided for trying times, but it also provided opportunity for thinking out of the box and creating innovative ways of making sure that the UODL continue to serve its client as best it can. In this way the virtual centre was established and was fully operational since the start of 2021. The E-learning team at the UODL supported lectures, students and staff members optimally in their endeavors to keep work productivity to the maximum under the trying circumstances. A formalised online process and booking system has been put in place for UODL staff to request technical assistance from the e-Learning Team. Statistics are being tracked on a daily basis. The feedback we have had from the programme leaders is that it assists them with their oversight role. Live "connect sessions" with students on accessing UODL resources were done and continuous as the need arises. Process and instructional video were compiled and be rolled out during the second semester.

6.14 Concluding Remarks

At the UODL, we really do welcome the voice of the student, irrespective of the platform used. Insights from the Marketing Department derived from a focus group discussion with distance students underline, together with previous data from our evaluation surveys to students, visits to our ODL centres and our roadshows, the dire need for a Communication and Support desk/office, an initiative that is currently strongly driven by the UODL T&L Directorate. These insights were shared with the UODL EXCO and as such will further aid in our upcoming colloquium in which we plan to rethink the UODL, its fitness for purpose during and post pandemic times and our value proposition in a 4IR world.

7   Qualification and Academic Programme Planning

7.1   Introduction

The Qualification and Academic Programme Planning (Q&APP) unit, with its work broadly supporting the NWU curriculum project as directed by the 2021-2025 Teaching and Learning Strategy, has seen steady growth in the more than two years since it has been established. This project involves a programme qualification mix (PQM) review over the next 3 year period to ensure a responsive and financially viable academic offering, and that the size and shape of the academic offering are aligned with a) the mandate of a traditional university, b) the NWU Strategic foci and market direction, c) NWU transformation goals, and d) the DHET requirement of stemming the proliferation of qualifications at the undergraduate level, with specialisation rather at a later stage in the student academic life cycle.

7.2   Major projects/initiatives in support of teaching and learning

7.2.1   NWU PQM

The NWU PQM received its second DHET approval late in 2020 and is available on the NWU intranet as a valuable source document, especially for the faculties. The PQM contains second order instead of third order CESMS (classification of educational subject matter) numbers for most of the qualifications, especially at undergraduate level. This change allows the NWU more freedom in its programme offerings, as it moves away from very specialised to less specialised programmes, with a focus on the undergraduate level.

Despite the pandemic, all SCAS meetings for 2021 took place in a virtual format. Drivers for these changes were:

- quality, coherence, sustainability and cross-campus alignment of the academic offering,
- responsiveness to environmental and political changes, and
- being relevant to the current and future needs of the communities we serve.

7.2.2   Applications that served at SCAS

A reflection on PQM activity since 2019 shows a year-on-year increase, with the total number of applications approved by SCAS increasing by approximately 110% from 2019 to 2020. Until June 2021, 171 applications have already been submitted; it is predicted that at this rate 2021 will see some 342 applications, which is an increase of 33% from last year. This figure does not include

new qualification applications as expected, all applications increased year-on-year, with yearbook changes being the highest, followed by continuing education applications.

A faculty breakdown shows a year-on-year increase for the three years, except FLAW, FNAS and FTHE, which do not look like they will match previous years after prediction. The faculty with the highest number of applications for 2019 and 2020 was FNAS but FHS is currently leading in 2021.

A good example of curriculum transformation in the School of Music was the three undergraduate music programmes BA (Music), BMus and Dip (Music), where the revision of the validity and relevance of the traditional undergraduate "Western classical/art music survey" produced changes to curricula and pedagogy. The renewed diverse, inclusive and decolonised programmes also boast innovative pedagogical approaches that embrace the possibilities of new media and technology. A new programme, Social Inclusion and Development, was added to the PhD (Social Sciences).

The transformational focus of the MA with Positive Psychology resulted in its re-curriculation to ensure alignment of module content to module purpose, outcomes and credits, and to include African contextualization.

Table 1: Status of external submissions

	DHET: PQM clearance (for new qualifications)	DHET: Site extensions	DHET: Increase in research credits for coursework master's degrees	CHE: Accreditation		SAQA: Registration
	Approved	**Approved**	**Approved**	**Submitted**	**Approved**	**Approved**
FHS	1UG		2 PG	5PG		1UG
	5PG			1UG		2PG
FTHE	3UG					1PG
FNAS		5PG	1PG	1PG		
FEMS				1PG	1PG	1PG
FEDU				1UG & 1PG	1PG	1PG
FENG						1PG
FHUM		2UG	1PG			
	All DHET submissions approved			2 of 10 submissions accredited to date		7 registrations, SAQA project is ongoing

Table 1 above indicates the status of the SCAS approvals that continued onto external approval process.

7.2.3   New qualifications and programmes

For the widening of access, designed for student success, three undergraduate qualifications for the contact and distance modality were approved for PQM placement: the Diploma in Christian Ministry, the Higher Certificate in Pastoral & Palliative Care and the Higher Certificate in Theology. On the postgraduate level access to the Master of Nursing Science degree has been widened through the diploma pathway. Diploma graduates from nursing colleges can now obtain the advanced diploma to continue on to the postgraduate diplomas, of which five nursing specialisations have been submitted for accreditation.

Two pioneering qualifications have been accredited and await SAQA registration. The BEdHons (Language Education) provides a student the option of specialising in one of seven South African

languages and supports the NWU multilingual policy. The Bachelor of Human Resource Development Honours has been accredited and awaits SAQA registration.

Academic programmes that extend the NWU niche area offering are e-Science, added to the MA (Development and Management), which will be offered from 2022. Work is progressing on the MSc equivalent in e-Science for 2023 implementation. Both these programmes will be joint degrees in collaboration with Wits University, under the auspices of the CSIR.

In summary, the year-on-year increase in applications is indicative, on the one hand, of ongoing and intensified programme reviews. The trend, on the other hand, raises concerns about whether the volume of these changes is warranted and to what extent these changes are aligned with the Teaching and Learning Strategy. To this end, Strategic Intelligence has developed a PQM review tool that will be instrumental to the planned Q&APP-driven PQM review. The aim of the review is to analyse the current academic offering, and that analysis will inform the NWU PQM of the future.

7.2.4 Yearbook preparation for 2022

In order to support SALA with its preparation of the 2022 yearbooks, the third yearbook audit was completed in March. As reported to the SCAS in April this year, fewer corrections are required and are mostly of a technical nature. These are qualification/programme title and module name inconsistencies, credit discrepancies, and module outcomes that are lacking or not aligned with NQF level descriptors. Q&APP, in collaboration with the CTL, continues to experience wonderful cooperation with faculties to ensure that yearbooks are ready for publication by September 2021, as scheduled. Through this project, it is reported that yearbook challenges at the beginning of each year are continuing to decrease, which bears testimony of the value and maturation of the project.

7.2.5 The curriculum management system

The curriculum management system, renamed Tsela, is in the final testing phase, before soon going into production.

7.2.6 The SAQA project

Much work has again gone into the SAQA project, where we are at phase 3 of 4. All HEQSF-aligned qualifications have been registered by SAQA, with ID numbers and the assurance that the content of the SAQA registered qualifications is correct and complete. The latter phase will continue in phase 4, planned for next year. Added to the SAQA project will be the annual re-registration of those qualifications that are nearing their expiration date.

7.2.7   2.7   Concluding remarks

Because Q&APP does not deal directly with students or the public, its operations were not as severely affected by the pandemic as they might have been. Beyond what has already been stated, Q&APP staff could continue to work effectively from home and in compliance with protocols.

The NWU response to the challenges brought about by the pandemic generates confidence for the albeit uncertain future and ensures enthusiasm to continue with what has been planned, most notably the PQM review and the production phase of Tsela.

8 Unit for Continuing Education

8.1 Introduction

The UCE appointed a new Director who joined the team and lead the work to be done in 2021. From commencement of the 2021 academic year, a business plan, strategy and workforce optimization plan with subsequent structure and role clarifications were developed and approved through all the relevant University structures. The new optimization structure was proposed during July and the implementation thereof is already in an advanced phase. The focus of the Strategy is to retain for the UCE a competitive edge, and in doing so to move towards working and thinking along the lines of a technology/ digital savvy department and offering. Subsequently, the UCE management team has been assigned to engage with relevant team members and stakeholders to ensure smooth changeover to the optimized structure and the role clarifications for all.

Throughout the year, campus-based team meetings with staff were held to ensure smooth transition into the optimized structure and that each member is clear with regard to role expectations. In essence, UCE wishes to emphasize that its organizational structure refers to the collection of duties and relationships that explicitly define the functions that each unit and individual staff member must fulfil, complemented by optimal communication between and among work groups.

The UCE optimization plan is aimed at guiding the UCE's financial turnaround, ensuring that it is able to compete in the evolving digital landscape while delivering on its mandate of providing a range of compelling informative, educational programmes, whether in a face to face or digital modality.

Moreover, the UCE are driving towards the following strategic objectives:

- Generate positive, nurturing, and learning-focused experiences for participants.
- Provide online learning as an innovative means of addressing the complex range of personal, professional, and lifelong learning challenges and goals of today's learners.
- Increase our SLP offerings and distribution of ground-breaking programmes in niche areas.
- Optimise our brand and visibility and impact of SLP`s, and our reputation for delivery.
- Attract and maintain a high quantity of participants.
- Engage with a focused and carefully selected clientele.
- Produce highly influential participants for the global civil society.
- Widen our footprint locally and globally through our online visibility and extensive strategic networks.

8.2 Business Development Milestones 2021

It has been challenging to engage with our stakeholders during 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on movement and gatherings. Despite this, the UCE managed to record the following milestones during the year:

8.2.1 Operational

- New BD workflows training completed – to enhance our efficiency (15 October 2021).
- Sign new job descriptions and targets for 2022 (15 October 2021).

- Compile 2022 short course calendar (30 October 2021).
- Complete 2022 product offering list, including discussions with faculties (30 October 2021).
- Strengthen Customer Care Centre service delivery (30 October 2021).
- Sales and product training – (15 November 2021).
- Functional website (15 October 2021).
- Complete marketing material for 2022 (15 November 2021).

8.2.2 Business continuation

- We are at an advanced stage to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development to train more than 300 social workers in South Africa. These newly developed short courses are also registered by the South African Council for Social Service Professions and will afford us the opportunity to market them to the more than 30 000 social workers in South Africa (30 October 2021).
- Market the social workers' short courses to South African Police force (30 November 2021).
- The EDTPSETA remains one of our key customers – identified Mr Willem Mostert to work with them and strengthen our relationships. Submitted RPF's worth more than R 3 000 000,00 and await feedback (30 September 2021).
- Identify 5 SETA's to build relationships with and start engagements (30 September 2021).
- We are discussing with the North-West Local Economic Department to roll out our short course in Local Economic Development throughout the province (15 October 2021).
- Extend DEA contract worth R 3 000 000,00 – net profit of this contact R 140 000,00 (30 September 2021).

8.2.3 Event coordination and participant support

- Participant support and training for personnel and management completed and handover from Production to Event coordination: 31 October 2021
- Migration from excel event planning sheets to new project planning and training: 31 October 2021
- Assessors and moderator's intervention and faculty discussions - 30 September 2021

8.2.4 Systems

- Flow processes for UCE, diagrammed, workflows, project plans on Zoho - 15 October 2021.
- Training on new processes - 31 October 2021.
- System integration with Paygate, KFS and SCA - 30 November 2021.
- System integration with digital badging - 30 November - (align with launch of MOOC's)
- Website launch and integration with Participant administration system - 30 September 2021.

8.2.5 Product development: Production

- MOOC - 100 courses launched by 30 November 2021.
- Identification of short courses for 2022 development - 30 November 2021.
- Request for all outstanding study material of active courses from faculties and linked. to CRM products module- 31 December 2021.

8.2.6 Product development: Product design and planning

- Appointment of curriculum designer by 31 October 2021.

- SCAS register clean-up - 31 October 2021.

- SCAS automated process and portal - 31 October 2021.

- SCAS manual in collaboration with Mr Boshoff - 30 November 2021.

- Formal SCAS handover of full complement announcement to faculty by UCE and Q&APP - 1 January 2021

8.2.7   Governance and financial management: Financial management

- Financial model to be clarified - 30 September 2021

- TAS system and ad hoc payment routing and process - 15 October 2021

- Closure of events 2018 - 2020 - 31 December 2021

- Grade R outstanding debtors - 31 December 2021

- Budgets for each course, loaded onto CRM products module

- Training on how to compare budgets with course expenses training - 30 September 2021

8.2.8   Governance and financial management: Strategic communication

Training completed for newly assigned collaborators and handover of previous tasks completed by 30 October 2021

9   Library and Information Services Milestones

9.1   Introduction

The year 2021 has progressed at a much better pace in terms of the Library and Information Service delivery as compared with the previous year. Informed by the popular adage; experience is the best teacher, the LIS, having navigated the COVID-19 landscape in 2020, came back in 2021 with a better plan for managing and delivering service to students and staff, whether online or in person. This report provides LIS milestones for the period from January 2021 to date.

In order to ensure that the year ran as smooth as possible, the LIS proceeded with its yearly annual planning meeting which took place in November 2020. The planning session provided the LIS with an opportunity to review activities of 2020 and planned for the coming year with the review in mind. Major highlights in 2020 included the shift in focus regarding the acquisition of books, where emphasis was placed more on eBooks in support of online Teaching and Learning. Similarly, training on how to find and use information online also took center stage as users of the LIS needed more guidance on the use of the virtual library. These services and more, are ongoing LIS work but what is unique is the way they were rolled out. The enhancement to these services continued in 2021 in order to provide our students and staff with an exceptional user experience for them to succeed in their endeavours. One growth point in this report, is the establishment of the Research and Open Scholarship directorate, in response to the growing imperatives in Open Science. In any event, our Teaching and Learning is research driven, and as such, this development helps in all facets of the University's core business. It is also important to mention from the outset, that the LIS also proceeded with the development of a new strategic plan, which is based on the NWU 2015 – 2025 strategy. The work is being finalized and will be shared soon. The milestones are arranged according the LIS' key areas of work as follows.

9.2   Collection development and management

As in year 2020, the focus this year remained on improving the LIS' online collections of eBooks and related online resources in order to continue to support the online Teaching & Learning modality. At the time of compiling this report, the expenditure for the book budget in 2021 was at 71% - including encumbrances. The remaining book budget would be used to acquire online resources on the LIS' wish list of faculty recommended resources. Although the usage statistics of the eBooks seem to be lower than the previous year, some titles remain popular as the academic project continues online. In order to improve usage, LIS-Faculty collaborative efforts are being explored on an ongoing basis. One more highlight under this section is the review of the Library Management System (LMS) which is ongoing. If budgets permits, the LIS hopes to move or upgrade the system in order to benefit from improved system modules.

9.3   Basic Information Literacy

Information literacy skills provision plays a major role in ensuring that students particularly at the undergraduate level acquire proper information handling skills. In the current online modality provision, the LIS developed a video which was used to welcome first year students during the first quarter of the year, as part of the orientation programme. The video highlighted the LIS spaces and services available to them, as well as providing them with information regarding proper training on library use. In order to further enhance Faculty – LIS collaboration in the use of eBooks, faculty specific training workshops were conducted in the first half of the year. In most cases, the participation by academics was encouraging and some of those who could not attend, requested for the development of recorded presentations, which they could follow when they got time. This initiative flowed from the LIS participation in the Institute of Emerging Leadership in Online Learning (IELOL) 2020 Programme organised by the Online Learning Consortium. The LIS also participated in the development and finalization of the CALLAS report, which was a major milestone in the period under review. Training of undergraduate students continued during the year either as part of the ALDE programme or as stand-alone online sessions with the Faculty Librarians from across campuses.

9.4   Advanced Data and Information Literacy Training

In order to ensure that the LIS' support for both TL & Research is well balanced, and in response to the growing demands of Open Science, the LIS established a Research and Open Scholarship Services unit which was marked by the appointment of a director to spearhead key activities in this regard. The appointment took place at the beginning of February 2021. All research support activities previously supported by other LIS sections, were handed to over to this new unit. At the same time, vacant positions for Research support librarians, were also filled as the moratorium on the filling of positions was gradually lifted. This helped to have a more focused training for postgraduate students and researchers at large. Training of users in various research data management activities is ongoing. One of the major highlights initiated by this section was the hosting of a Webinar on Research Visibility: Driving Open Access (with Open Research Data) without violating the Copyright Law, POPIA, and Code of Ethics, which was a very successful event. A follow up Open Access Week Colloquium has been scheduled for 26 October 2021. In addition, the LIS in collaboration with the NWU Research Support office, and IT, initiated the

development of a draft Open Access Policy, which has already been consulted with faculties. Feedback from faculties on the draft Open Access policy is now being incorporated into the policy initiative, as well as feedback received through a survey of faculty members regarding their perceptions of an Open Access Policy. Another highlight worth mentioning, is the development of a Postgraduate Research One Stop Master page – the first of its kind - and is available on eFundi.

9.5 Quality, Projects and Outreach services

9.5.1 Quality

Following the successful finalization of the LIS Self-Evaluation (SE) in 2020, a report was designed and approved by the DVC-TL and was submitted to the Quality Enhancement office in the first quarter of the year. The SE will be followed by a Peer Review which is scheduled for 12 -15 October 2021. This is another major highlight for the LIS and all planned activities such as the identification of the peers to be involved as well as documentation to be distributed, have already been finalized. In addition, the LIS quality manual which is a key document to be used during the evaluation, was updated and is ready for use.

9.5.2 Projects

The long awaited Teaching and Learning Commons for the library on the Mahikeng Campus was officially opened on the 4th of March 2021, following delays due to the devastating effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. The new spaces include a new look law library, a Teaching and Learning Commons on the lower ground where CTL's makerspaces will be hosted as well. The spaces also include a re-designed 24-hour study centre which has dedicated collaborative spaces, in addition to individual study areas. For details, please follow through the development spaces available at: http://library.nwu.ac.za/renovations

Yet another project highlight is the finalization of preparations for the expansion of the Faculty of Education library on the Potchefstroom Campus. The plan designs are complete and handover of building to the contractors is scheduled for 18 October 2021. All active books have been identified and will be moved to the main library, alongside the staff members.

In addition, the LIS successfully applied and secured funding from the University strategic funds for the purposes of implementing projects relating to the establishment of a digital scholarship centre, development of a Chabot, and a Robot. These projects are at various stages of further development are in line with the University's 4IR initiatives.

9.5.3 Outreach

The LIS continues to promote visibility within and outside campus through formal publications and contributions to professional news via the Eish newsletter, the LIS blog and LIASA - the LIS professional newsletter. To this end, articles were published and continue to be submitted for publication. This helps a lot in providing the LIS and the University at large with exposure on the good work being done.

9.6 LIS Annual Report 2021

The LIS Annual Report was compiled and completed during the first half of 2021. The report that highlights the LIS' 2020 activities is available at:

9.7 LIS Conclusion

The year 2021 has proven to be another successful year for the LIS with key milestones flowing from the University APP as well as the LIS Department Operational Plan (DOP) having already been registered during the period under review. The remaining period of the year will be used to finalize and consolidate the gains of the year.

10 Report Conclusion

This extensive report offers a clear reflection on the valuable contributions from the DVC T-L Office and its 8 T-L support units to provide for continued quality and excellence in teaching and learning. The coordination of the many activities in the DVC T-L Office entails continued management oversight and vigilance, and in the last two years, especially given the risks posed by Covid-19 on the progress and coherence of activities involving a range of university internal and external stakeholders.

During the period associated with Levels 5-3 of the Lockdown, the Office has maintained contact with all managers on a frequent and routine basis with a view to assessing and responding to the need for support, direction and development in the online as well as the printed-distance teaching and learning modalities.

We can state with confidence that the DVC T-L Leadership Team has developed flexible and responsive approaches to team collaboration with Finance, P&C, SALA, CRM, SI and other University stakeholders to ensure the continuation of the academic programme, irrespective of external and internal challenges.

Prof Robert J Balfour
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