



Executive Summary

Audit Report on the University of Fort Hare

October 2009

**1 Quintin Brand Street, Perseour Technopark, Brummeria, Pretoria, 0002; PO Box 94
Perseour, Technopark, 0020; Telephone: +27 12 349 3927, E-mail: lange.l@che.ac.za
Visit our website at <http://www.che.ac.za>**

HEQC Audit Report Number 23

© 2009 Council on Higher Education

1 Quintin Brand Street
Persequor Technopark
Brummeria
Pretoria
P.O. Box 94
Persequor Park
0020
Tel: +27(0)12 349 3850
Fax: +27(0)12 349 3927
Website: <http://www.che.ac.za>

Acronyms

AP	Audit Portfolio
BCM	Business, Commerce and Management
CE	Continuing Education
CESU	Co-operative Education Services Unit
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CREST	Centre for Research in Science and Technology
DEI	Department of Education and Innovation
ELC	East London Campus
EMT	Executive Management Team
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurer
FBSC	Faculty Balanced Scorecard
FQAC	Faculty Quality Assurance Committee
GMRDC	Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre
GSC	General Student Council
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HoD	Head of Department
IBSC	Institutional Balanced Scorecard
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IF	Institutional Forum
IOP	Institutional Operating Plan
IP	Institutional Profile
IQAC	Institutional Quality Assurance Committee
ISER	Institute of Social and Economic Research
IT	Information Technology
ITS	Integrated Tertiary System
LAU	Learning Advancement Unit
LibQual	Library Quality Survey
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NRF	National Research Foundation
PAT	Placement and Access Tests
PFSA	Public Financial Services Agency
PGDHET	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education and Training
RUEL	Rhodes University East London
QA	Quality Assurance
QMU	Quality Management Unit
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANTED	South Africa Norway Tertiary Education Development Programme
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDE	Senate Discretionary Exemption
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SP2000	Strategic Plan 2000
SRC	Students' Representative Council
TLC	Teaching and Learning Centre
TTMA	Transversal Training Management Agency
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Overview of the Audit

Introduction

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) has statutory responsibility to conduct institutional audits as indicated in the Higher Education Act of 1997. This responsibility of the HEQC is also recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in the accreditation of the CHE as the Education and Training Quality Assurer (ETQA) for the higher education band.

The audit of the University of Fort Hare (UFH) was conducted by the HEQC in terms of its mandate. This document reports on the audit process and findings based on the Audit Portfolio and documentary appendices provided by the University of Fort Hare, supplementary documentation requested from the institution, and interviews and observations made during the audit visit that took place between 05 and 09 May 2008.

This report¹ comprises an overview of the audit visit, the findings of the Audit Panel in relation to the audit criteria set by the HEQC, and a list of commendations and recommendations that are based on the findings of the Panel.

The Audit Process

In November 2005 the Executive Director of the HEQC secured the consent of the then Vice Chancellor, Professor Swartz, and the executive management team at the University of Fort Hare that the University would participate in an institutional audit between 05 and 09 May 2008.

The University of Fort Hare subsequently conducted its institutional self-evaluation in the agreed time and produced an Audit Portfolio for review by the Audit Panel. The University appointed its Quality Management and Assurance Unit to facilitate the preparation of the audit. An Audit Steering Committee was formed, which consisted of thirteen criterion convenors and an extended team of fifty-five staff members and students, to guide the self-evaluation process.

The Quality Management and Assurance Unit also ensured that internal and external stakeholders were kept informed of the audit process through numerous road shows, workshops and meetings. After the criterion convenors had submitted their narratives, a report writer was appointed to amalgamate the narratives into a self-evaluation report which was then reviewed by five critical readers. Senate and Council also contributed by reviewing and approving the final draft of the report.

¹ The report includes four appendices: Appendix A lists the objectives of HEQC audits; Appendix B provides the names of the members of the Audit Panel, Appendix C lists the documents submitted by the University of Fort Hare and Appendix D contains the audit visit schedule.

The Audit Portfolio (which included a self-evaluation report, appendices and supporting documentation, also in an electronic version) was submitted to the HEQC as scheduled on 01 February 2008.

The HEQC set up an audit panel consisting of senior academics and academic administrators from the higher education community, all of whom had taken part in auditor preparation workshops run by the HEQC. An Audit Portfolio meeting was convened in Pretoria on 13 and 14 March 2008 at which the Audit Panel considered the Audit Portfolio in preparation for the audit visit. During this meeting, the Audit Panel identified additional documents to be requested from the University of Fort Hare prior to the audit visit.

The Interim Director of the Institutional Audits Directorate of the HEQC, accompanied by the audit officer and the audit administrator, undertook a preparatory visit to the University of Fort Hare in March 2008. During that visit, the format and programme for the audit visit and other details of the audit were discussed and generally agreed to by the senior management of the University of Fort Hare.

A sub-panel consisting of Professor Ralph Lawrence, Professor Talvin Schultz and Dr Karen van Heerden, and supported by Professor Dolina Dowling and Mr Frempong Acheampong from the HEQC, carried out site visits to the East London and Bhisho campuses of the University during April 2008.

The audit visit took place from 05 to 09 May 2008. The Audit Panel undertook a tour of the UFH library which houses the Liberation Movement Archives and the De Beers Centenary Art Gallery on 04 May. Interviews were conducted with the Council, senior management and committee members on 05 and 06 May. On 07 and 08 May the Audit Panel split into three groups and interviewed a wide range of UFH's staff members and students as well as community representatives. Interviews were completed on 08 May, and verbal feedback was given to the Vice Chancellor and the executive team on 09 May 2008.

Open sessions were also available for any staff members, students or members of the community to meet the Audit Panel and make submissions. Some staff members made use of the opportunity to address the Panel.

In all, the Audit Panel interviewed a total of 412 people in 41 interview sessions during the audit visit, including

- Council members
- The Vice Chancellor and members of his executive management team
- Members of Senate and other Senate committees
- Executive Deans of Faculty and Heads of Department
- Academic and academic support staff
- Professional and administrative staff
- Full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Representatives of staff unions
- Representatives of the SRC
- Civic and community representatives
- Alumni.

This report reflects on the audit process and its findings are based on the Audit Portfolio provided by the UFH, supplementary documentation requested from the institution, and interviews and observations made during the audit visit. Every effort has been made to understand the quality arrangements at the institution at the time of the audit visit and to base the Panel's conclusions on the documentation submitted, the interviews held and the observations made.

It is expected that the University of Fort Hare will use these findings to strengthen its internal quality management systems and thereby facilitate the improvement of the quality of its core academic activities. Decisions about the manner in which this is done, and the priority accorded to the various recommendations, is the prerogative of the University of Fort Hare. The HEQC expects the University to submit an improvement plan based on the Audit Report within five months after the publication of the Audit Report.

The HEQC would like to thank the University of Fort Hare for the highly co-operative manner in which it has participated in the audit process. The HEQC also wishes to express appreciation for the openness and confidence demonstrated by the Vice Chancellor and management in allowing the Audit Panel to conduct its work. Efficient preparation by the University of Fort Hare resulted in a trouble-free audit that enabled the auditors to focus their attention on the main purposes of the audit. The hospitality and assistance of the University of Fort Hare's staff is greatly appreciated. In particular we would like to thank Professor Rod Bally, Ms Kuselwa Marala and their team for the preparation of the documentation, as well as for their co-operation and helpfulness throughout the process.

Executive Summary

Brief Overview of the University of Fort Hare

1. The University of Fort Hare (UFH) is a small English-medium, predominantly undergraduate, higher education institution. It is located in the Amathole District Municipality of the Eastern Cape Province, one of the most economically deprived provinces in South Africa. UFH has three campuses: a main campus located in Alice, a town situated 120 kilometres northwest of East London; a campus in Bhisho, the administrative capital of the Eastern Cape Province; and a campus in East London.
2. In 2004 University of Fort Hare incorporated the East London campus (ELC) of Rhodes University as part of the restructuring of the higher education landscape in South Africa. The incorporation meant that UFH's enrolment grew from 6,399 in 2003 to 8,755 in 2004 and that the programme qualification mix of UFH was significantly altered. The incorporation of ELC added an urban dimension to the historical rural base of UFH. It also created the need to build a fully-fledged campus in East London, which has to be viewed against the backdrop of historic infrastructure challenges at the main campus in Alice.
3. In 2007, UFH had a total headcount enrolment of 8,807 students distributed across five Faculties. There are a number of strategic units, institutes and centres that have links to the Faculties. In 2007 UFH had a staff complement of 2063 academic and non-academic staff members.

Institutional Mission

4. Fort Hare's evolution in the last 10 years was marked by an institutional crisis which took the University to the brink of collapse. Since 2000 UFH has been involved in a 'turnaround' strategy as a result of which the institution has managed to re-establish governance structures, achieved administrative stability, cleared its massive debt, and galvanised different internal stakeholders into action around a common academic project (AP: 17). This process was spearheaded by the adoption of the Strategic Plan 2000 (SP2000), which articulated a new vision and mission for the University, and the subsequent development of the Institutional Operating Plan (AP: 17). The Panel noted with appreciation the energy, commitment and inventiveness which management, staff and students have invested in this process and the considerable achievements of the University in this regard.

Commendation 1

The HEQC commends the University of Fort Hare for the progress it has made in recovering from the crisis of the latter part of the 1990s, and for its efforts in working systematically on the various strategic and operational aspects that constituted that particular crisis.

5. The Panel noted the wide scope of UFH's vision - teaching and learning and research are mentioned in terms of excellence; research is socially and ethically

- relevant; and UFH is concerned with the development not only of the nation but the world at large - against the backdrop of the institution's troubled history and its many constraints both in terms of its own finances and the poverty of the region in which it is located. The Panel would like to encourage the university leadership to commence a strategic dialogue across UFH together with its external stakeholders about the vision of the University in order to ensure that its capabilities and resources can respond to demands posed by the current mission.
6. The Panel heard during interviews with a range of staff, students and unions that, while they were encouraged by management to be actively involved in the development of SP2000, their participation in the development of the Institutional Operating Plan (IOP) and beyond has not been as warmly welcomed. The Panel suggests that the institution take steps to ensure that the process of implementation of its IOP, and any further strategic initiatives, should be regarded as an inclusive process. Furthermore, the Panel heard from interviews with alumni that there have been few systematic efforts by the University to enlist the intellectual and material support of its graduates to help the institution in its development. The Panel would like to urge UFH to mobilise its many alumni in a systematic manner in order to create an active, involved and supportive convocation.
 7. Against the backdrop of the historic challenges noted above, UFH has had to contend in its new planning cycles with the consequences and challenges of the incorporation of the East London Campus. The Panel appreciates that this has created many new administrative, logistical and, most importantly, financial pressures and demands on the University. The Panel would like to caution UFH about the dangers of expansion and sustainability of ELC which could be to the detriment of the Alice campus. The Panel strongly urges UFH to find ways in which it can conceptually and operationally reconcile its rural and urban orientations without undermining the sustainability and development of the Alice campus and its specific role in relation to the local population.

Recommendation 1

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare revisit its view of the future role and strategic development of the campuses to ensure that the overall quality of the educational experience offered to students and staff in the Alice Campus is not compromised by growth plans for the East London Campus.

Transformation at UFH: Equity, Redress and Institutional Culture

8. The Panel heard during interviews with Council members, senior management and the student leadership that transformation at UFH entails (i) producing good quality graduates and research; (ii) becoming a first-choice institution; (iii) being able to generate income; and (iv) engaging with curriculum and pedagogy in a contextual manner. The Panel was impressed with the rich and nuanced understanding of transformation shown by these stakeholders. However, the Panel is of the view that the aspect of transformation needs further engagement, formulation, and, particularly, clear operational strategies at faculty and departmental level. During interviews with a range of staff members the Panel

found differing and, in many cases, hazy views about what constitutes transformation at UFH. The Panel suggests that the institution develop a communication strategy to ensure that all staff members and students are aware of the strategic thrusts of the institution and know how they may play their part to ensure successful outcomes.

Recommendation 2

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare give attention to the area of communication at all levels of the institution in order to galvanise staff, students and other stakeholders into action around the institution's strategic plan.

9. With regard to the student body UFH student enrolment is predominantly African. The incorporation of the East London campus in 2004 introduced significant numbers of White, Coloured and Indian students to the University, the majority of whom still remain on the East London campus. However, the numbers of White students have declined steadily since 2004 whereas African student numbers have grown in the same period. The Panel heard during interviews with management that this is a concern and that the institution has put strategies in place to counteract this trend.
10. UFH enrolls more female students (62.3%) than males (37.7%). The Panel was pleased to note that, contrary to national trends, female students from 2000 until 2005 show a constant higher headcount in enrolments in the field of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and Business, Commerce and Management (BCM) (IP: 22). Given this trend the Panel would like to encourage the university to develop specific support mechanisms for female students enrolled in SET and BCM.
11. Given that UFH has a large majority of black South African students, equity and redress for the institution involves responding to the needs of the communities in the Amathole District and surrounding communities by offering affordable access to financially poor students, as well as access to academically under-prepared students. The University achieves this through a Senate Discretionary Exemption (SDE) policy. Students enrolled under this policy are supported through various initiatives in the Teaching and Learning Centre. The Panel concurs with the university that UFH is providing higher education access to a student population which by virtue of social-economic circumstances would otherwise find it very difficult to access similar opportunities elsewhere.

Commendation 2

The HEQC commends the University of Fort Hare for its initiatives and success in providing access to higher education for socially and economically deprived students particularly from the Amathole District.

12. The Panel noted the university's plans to introduce a compulsory module for all first year students as part of its curriculum renewal and transformation project. This module, called the 'Grounding Programme', is scheduled for piloting in the second half of 2008 (AP: 26). An underlying theme of the Grounding Programme is the re-invention of the University's African identity. The Panel found from interviews with management and the student leadership considerable enthusiasm for the programme. However, the Panel learned that there are some unresolved

issues pertaining to the rollout as well as to the programme's strategic intent. There is also a need for a substantial amount of additional resources to be invested by the University. While the Panel supports the pedagogic innovation represented by the introduction of the Grounding Programme, it would like to encourage the institution to analyse carefully the practical implications of operationalising this programme and the extent to which its contents and expected outcomes will respond to the immediate difficulties academics experience in helping students to succeed in their degrees.

Recommendation 3

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare ensure that the pedagogic purpose and the curriculum design of the Grounding Programme help in improving the success rate of students and the quality of graduates produced by the University, and that the required range of resources (financial and human as well as operating systems) needed for its successful implementation be made available.

13. In line with its mission statement the University has set itself the goal of responding to other national imperatives, such as increasing the supply of skills in the areas of science and technology. The Panel noted that 'the impact of the incorporation of the East London Campus had the effect of reducing the proportions of Science, Engineering and Technology from some 23% of the student population to just 18%'. This constitutes a deviation from its mission statement (AP: 28). Hence, UFH faces the challenge of increasing, in the medium-to long-term, its proportion of SET students, in an environment in which higher education institutions generally are struggling to find suitable candidates in these fields. Nonetheless, the Panel encourages the institution to develop innovative strategies to meet its enrolment targets in SET.
14. The Panel was particularly pleased to note the participation of UFH in the Thuthuka Accounting programme as this represents a significant contribution by the institution to the national skills development project (AP: 27). Against the backdrop of UFH's history, and given its more recent near collapse, it is commendable that the institution nonetheless continues to enjoy the endorsement of the relevant professional bodies as a host for a project as critical as the Thuthuka programme.

Commendation 3

The HEQC commends the University of Fort Hare for its continued participation in the Thuthuka Accounting programme and the contribution it is making to this national skills development project.

15. With regard to the staff profile, UFH acknowledged that it faces 'challenges of attaining employment equity targets as set out in its Employment Equity Plan' (AP: 93). While the population of the Province is 87.2% African and 3% White, Africans only constitute 71.1% of the UFH workforce (AP: 93). There is also a high number of foreign staff at the University (AP: 94). The Panel noted that foreign staff members tend to be mostly senior academics and that they are amongst the prominent researchers at the University. The Panel concurs with the institution that it needs to ensure that data is collected on the nationality of staff so that it can better manage its Employment Equity programme.

16. The gender distribution of the workforce at the institution appears to be relatively equitable. It is, nevertheless, characterised by ‘a clustering of females at the bottom of the hierarchy with numbers substantially diminishing as one goes up the institutional levels’ (AP: 93; IP: 38). The Panel encourages UFH to develop innovative strategies to attract senior South African academics, in particular female and black academics, to the university. Furthermore, UFH, like other institutions within the HE system, is grappling with the need to replace an ageing academic work force. In the light of this, the institution’s human resource strategy is an important element to make Fort Hare a sustainable and intellectually vibrant university.

Recommendation 4

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare develop a comprehensive human resources strategy which takes into account its equity targets as well as the urgent need to develop an appropriate succession plan for an ageing cohort of academics, particularly at senior and middle level.

17. The identity of UFH as an African university is reflected in the considerable number of students and staff from the rest of Africa; in particular, the majority of postgraduate students in all programmes come from the rest of Africa. The Panel appreciates the role that UFH plays in human resource development on the continent. However, from a national developmental perspective, the paucity of South African students at postgraduate levels raises the question about the return on investment for the national project, more so at a time when the country is sorely in need of high-level skills. In this regard, the Panel suggests that the University investigate the obstacles that prevent South African students from enrolling in postgraduate programmes at UFH and then develop strategies to increase these enrolments.

Recommendation 5

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare explores ways to recruit and retain South African students at the postgraduate level.

18. The Panel learned from documentation and heard during interviews with staff and students that the International Office is under-resourced and is unable to provide optimal support for international students. The Panel is concerned that this is negatively impacting on students’ learning experience and urges the university to provide adequate resources for this Office.

19. The Panel was disconcerted to learn from documentation and from interviews with international students and with a range of staff that the presence of students from the rest of Africa and even black South Africans from other parts of the country has been met with xenophobic attitudes on the part of both local staff and students (AP Appendix 6, p.13). The Panel has the impression that management is either not fully aware of the problem, or that the problem has not been taken seriously enough. The Panel urges UFH to investigate the extent of xenophobia and intolerance among and between staff and students, and to take the necessary measures to increase levels of tolerance and respect for persons on each of its campuses and in the residences.

Recommendation 6

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare investigates the extent of xenophobia among and between staff and students across the

institution, and, in the light of its findings, (i) put in place interventions to prevent the occurrence of xenophobic activities; (ii) put in place mechanisms that increase tolerance and respect for persons whatever their nationality; and (iii) resources the International Office in such a manner that it can provide better service to international students and play a meaningful role in helping to manage xenophobic behaviour on campus.

Institutional Planning, Resource Allocation and Quality Management

20. The Panel was pleased to learn during interviews with Council members that Council is effective in exercising its governance mandate, and that a cordial relationship exists between Council and Senate. The members interviewed by the Panel exhibited a clear understanding of the vision and mission and other broad issues confronting UFH. The Panel was particularly impressed by the commitment of the Council members to the well-being of the institution. The Panel, in this regard, agrees with Council's view that UFH should ensure that it does not sacrifice its Fort Hare identity in the process of growing its urban footprint.
21. UFH had an active and vibrant Institutional Forum (IF) between 1997 and 1998. The Panel learned with concern during interviews with staff that the IF thereafter became almost dormant and that meetings were characterised by poor attendance, to the extent that it nearly collapsed in 2005 (AP: 39). The Panel noted with appreciation the attempts made to revive the IF in 2006 by placing it under the Registrar and regulating its meetings in the University Calendar. The Panel suggests that the institution investigates effective strategies to ensure that the IF plays its role as envisaged in the Statute.

Recommendation 7

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare clarifies and strengthens the role of the Institutional Forum so that it functions effectively in accordance with the University of Fort Hare Statute.

22. The Panel was pleased to learn from interviews that there is an induction programme for the SRC. It concurs with the student representatives interviewed that the induction programme should be more formally structured as a capacity building tool. The Panel suggests also that the University consider extending its induction programme to all SRC committees. During visits to the East London and Bhisho campuses the Panel found that there is general student apathy towards the SRC. The Panel encourages the institution to assist the SRC to have a stronger presence on these campuses.
23. The governance and management structures function effectively through the implementation of an Institutional Balanced Scorecard (IBSC) (AP: 33). The Executive Management Team's (EMT) monthly meeting agendas have been substantially re-structured to follow the goals, measures and targets of the IBSC. The Panel concurs with the institution that 'there has been a significant improvement in the focus and functioning of EMT' (AP: 35). The Panel heard during interviews with management that Faculty Balanced Scorecards (FBSC) have been developed for all Faculties and key support service departments as well

- as a selected number of units within departments. The Panel would like to urge the institution to expedite the review and target-setting process that is currently underway, and to cascade the scorecards to all units within the institution.
24. The Panel learned from the documentation and interviews with Executive Management that the university has adopted a new management model in which Deans are given executive functions and substantial responsibility for planning and budgeting (AP: 38). The Panel was pleased to learn that posts of DVC: Management and Administration, and Executive Deans for the portfolios of Research and Student Affairs, have been created. The Panel was concerned to learn about the lack of a culture of service at Fort Hare. This seems to be particularly serious in the case of administrative and support services. The filling of these posts might help in creating a better and more welcoming image of the institution for both prospective students and staff.
 25. The Panel would like to alert the institution of the need to monitor the functioning of the new management model in order to avoid the risk of devolution which would perpetuate the silo effect that the institution is trying to avoid. In this regard, UFH might like to consider the possibility of creating organisational spaces where the integration of the Faculty - and the institutional-level strategies in relation to the core functions can take place.
 26. A new “3-year cycle planning model” has been developed that is directly linked to institutional and Faculty goals (AP: 41). The Panel heard with appreciation during interviews with Deans that Faculties now engage actively in budget planning based on their strategic plans. The Panel concurs with the institution that the new budgeting process has resulted in “...increased accountability, better understanding of the University’s financial position, and a gradual shift in mindset in terms of planning before budgeting” (AP: 41), but would like, however, to urge the institution to build the requisite financial skills among the institutional managers.
 27. The Panel noted the difficulties experienced by the institution due to the lack of sophisticated utilisation of institutional data. The Panel heard during interviews with management that there is a shortage of data in certain key areas. This seriously undermines the institution’s capacity to plan and design interventions, and to act on problems and monitor outcomes. This is of particular concern when it comes to the monitoring of students in relation to teaching and learning, and undermines the institution’s intentions to improve the quality of provision at programme level. The problems faced by UFH with the implementation of the Integrated Tertiary System (ITS) seem to have their origins in enforcing the effective use of the ITS. In this regard, the Panel was encouraged by the submission that efforts are being made to improve the utilisation of the ITS through the South Africa Norway Tertiary Education Development Programme (SANTED) Sakha Ngethemba Project and the ITS iEnabler training.

Recommendation 8

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare ensures that the relevant staff be properly trained on Integrated Tertiary System so that the system can be used to generate management reports and other institutional data that would enhance planning and facilitate decision-making at all levels.

28. The Panel noted that the Quality Management Unit (QMU) is under-resourced and needs to be strengthened. Nevertheless, the Panel heard positive remarks during interviews with staff about the work of the Unit and the support that it provides to the academic enterprise. The Panel acknowledges the Unit for its work in the institution and its success in involving academics across all the Faculties.
29. The Quality Assurance Framework at UFH includes an Institutional Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC), which ‘oversees, monitors and reviews policies, procedures and mechanisms that contribute to the enhancement of total quality management’ (AP: 45). In addition, all Faculties have Faculty Quality Assurance Committees (FQAC) that, among other things, “...advise and provide guidance on the sufficiency of quality management systems of academic programmes and continuing education courses” (AP: 46). The Panel is concerned about the proliferation of committees with a focus on quality. While the institution has made important progress in the development of an internal system of quality assurance that is shared across Faculties and departments, the Panel is concerned that the committee structures at Faculty and Senate levels seem to make quality assurance a parallel process that takes place outside the realm of institutional planning and the three core functions. This creates operational ineffectiveness and conceptual inconsistencies which the institution is encouraged to address.

Benchmarking and Surveys

30. UFH benchmarks itself in a number of ways. Firstly, it uses the Institutional Balanced Scorecard to set targets that have been benchmarked against external norms and standards (AP: 135). Secondly, the institution has embarked on measures to benchmark against peer institutions through projects like the Peer Data Sharing Group (AP: 136). Thirdly, the University Library has participated in its own first benchmarking exercise through the International LibQual survey (AP: 138). Fourthly, peer review is used for the rating of individual researchers through the National Research Foundation (NRF) system. Lastly, the Panel learned that many of UFH’s qualifications for professional fields are subject to professional accreditation. The Panel noted with appreciation the variety of benchmarking activities that the institution undertakes.
31. While the Panel was pleased that student satisfaction surveys were conducted in 2006 and 2007, it encourages the institution to ensure that all survey instruments are used to make improvements. A monitoring process needs to be put in place which has the allocation of responsibility so that the quality of the core functions and support services are enhanced.

Teaching and Learning

32. UFH does not have an academic plan in place (AP: 50). Although the Panel heard in interviews with academic staff that the IOP contains elements of an academic plan, it is not persuaded that a declared interest in increasing the percentage of postgraduate students and the number of students in SET and BCM can be regarded as an academic plan. The Panel suggests that UFH develop and

implement a comprehensive academic plan that will enable it to conceptualise academic planning particularly in relation to teaching and learning and overall quality considerations.

Recommendation 9

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare develops and implements a comprehensive academic plan taking into account the implications that this plan would have for the implementation of the forthcoming teaching and learning policy.

33. The Panel was concerned to note that most of the policies relating to teaching and learning are either very new or still in draft form. Furthermore, the Panel heard of uneven and inconsistent implementation of policies across Faculties, and a general inability to monitor the implementation of approved policies, due to “internal resistance” and “lack of capacity” (AP: 55). The Panel urges UFH to finalise and consolidate the many policies that affect the quality of teaching and learning at the institution, and to set up appropriate mechanisms for their implementation and monitoring.

Recommendation 10

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare develops, finalises and consolidates the policies and procedures that affect the quality of teaching and learning at the University, and sets up structured mechanisms for their implementation and monitoring.

34. In the area of experiential learning, the University has a Co-operative Education Services Unit (CESU). The Panel found from interviews with staff that this unit is inadequately resourced, and it was unclear what role it plays in practice. The Panel heard during interviews with students that they are not being adequately supported during placements. To a very large extent, experiential learning activities at the University appear to be *ad hoc*. During interviews with employers the Panel was told that the University does not make optimal use of the experiential learning opportunities that are available for students. From the staff of CESU, the Panel learned that the functioning of the unit is going to be reviewed ‘in the light of a newly developed policy on co-operative education’. The Panel wishes to encourage the University to expedite giving effect to this intention, and to develop mechanisms to manage and monitor the placement of students, and the quality of co-operative learning at the University in general.

Recommendation 11

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare creates the appropriate mechanisms for academics to give effect to the goals of teaching and learning in the development of curriculum and in all activities pertaining to teaching and learning, as a way of improving the quality of student experience at the institution. This should include the improvement of the experiential learning component in those programmes which require such a learning component; particular attention should be given to ensure that there is a functioning system to record, monitor and assess the content and progress of the student’s learning experience in the workplace.

35. The Panel heard in interviews with academic staff and students that there are many courses in which evaluations do not take place. Furthermore, there is no system in place at the Faculty level to manage the feedback obtained from student

evaluations. Both managers and academic staff concurred that staff members do not generally make use of the institution's *on-line Evaluation Assistant Tool*. The Panel agrees with UFH about the need to develop a culture of evaluating courses and lecturers by students (AP: 55), and urges the University to institute proper mechanisms that will ensure that the process is used effectively so that the quality of teaching and learning is enhanced.

36. In terms of using information for academic planning and the improvement of teaching and learning, the Panel heard from the academic managers that they have access to academic data through the ITS. While the system could allow the Executive Deans and Head of Departments to identify at-risk students, the Panel heard that this rarely happens. During interviews with management, the Panel heard with appreciation about efforts being made by the institution to develop a management information system that will provide reliable and accurate data for planning purposes and that will constitute the basis for interventions to improve the quality of teaching and learning. These include the University's *ITS i-Enabler*. The Panel encourages UFH to finalise the development and implementation of this system so that academics can improve access to critical information for decision-making purposes especially on matters that affect the quality of teaching and learning, such as tracking a student's performance.
37. The Panel agrees with the sentiments expressed by senior management that the committee structure at the institution is unwieldy and counter-productive in two respects. Firstly, the Panel heard that the effectiveness of certain officials is seriously compromised by the enormous amount of time spent in committees. This situation is further complicated by the fact that staff members have to travel long distances between campuses to attend committee meetings. Secondly, there is overlap and duplication in the work of many of the committees. The Panel would like to encourage the University to consider a re-configuration of its committee system to enhance effectiveness.

Recommendation 12

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare undertakes a review of its committees dealing with teaching and learning and develops an effective and efficient committee structure that avoids dual processes and overlaps and focuses clearly and decidedly on the improvement of the quality of the core functions of teaching and learning at the institution.

38. The Panel heard during interviews with academics that the Institutional Balanced Scorecard has enabled academic departments to focus on issues of quality in the core functions. The Panel is, however, of the view that the institution's well-developed capacity to measure its performance through the Balanced Scorecard is not exploited fully to achieve strategic targets in relation to throughput and success rates. The Panel encourages UFH to ensure a structured and systematic way of responding to poor success and throughput rates in individual programmes.
39. All problems notwithstanding, the Panel noted with appreciation the dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of many lecturers at all campuses, and was pleased to note students' enthusiasm about the quality of education offered at UFH. The Panel also heard positive remarks from external partners about the new status of

UFH and expectations that this would enhance graduate capabilities. Some representatives from the employer sector, however, were concerned that the quality of UFH's graduates may have declined in recent years. The Panel would like to impress upon the institution the importance of improving the quality of its graduates and of building and sustaining stakeholder and employer confidence in its graduates.

40. **Academic Development.** The Learning Advancement Unit (LAU), which is accessible on both the East London and Alice campuses, provides a range of academic support programmes. The Panel heard from the Executive Deans that there are no mechanisms in place to evaluate the outcomes and/or success of these programmes. The Panel urges UFH to consider the development of appropriate evaluation systems and mechanisms to measure the impact of the various academic support programmes. The Panel learned in interviews with students that there is no equivalence in the provision of student development programmes across campuses. In particular, these services are non-existent at the Bhischo campus.
41. UFH makes use of a Senate Discretionary Exemption Policy (SDE) in conjunction with Placement and Access Tests (PAT) to promote and widen access as well as improve retention and throughput rates. The Panel learned in interviews with both the Executive Deans and staff of the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) that there are no mechanisms to track SDE and PAT students. Furthermore, there is currently insufficient data to do any meaningful analysis of PAT students as the system has been in place for only two years. The Panel strongly encourages the institution to develop mechanisms to ensure that the relevant data is collected and then to put in place processes for the analysis of such data.
42. During the site visits, and in interviews with staff and students at the campuses, the Panel found that residence facilities and their services are unequal across campuses. The Panel learned during a visit to the Alice Campus residences that the residence management system is dysfunctional with virtually no-one being responsible for maintenance in the residences. The Panel also saw numerous visible and obvious instances of transgressions of health and safety regulations. The lack of access control in the Alice residences also poses a security risk to students, with women students being particularly vulnerable. The Panel urges UFH to take immediate steps to improve the quality of the residences at the Alice Campus.
43. At the East London campus, students are accommodated in rented buildings, which are spread within a two kilometre radius from campus. The Panel heard during interviews with students that the lack of transport arrangements between the residences and campus impacts negatively on student learning as well as posing safety risks for students. The Panel urges UFH to review the residence management model at the East London campus, and explore alternative off-campus housing systems.

Recommendation 13

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare takes urgent steps to ensure a safe and secure residence environment that is supportive of a quality learning experience at its campuses.

44. **Library.** UFH has a 'main' library located at the Alice Campus and a 'major' library at the East London Campus, as well as 'small' libraries serving the Bhischo

campus and the Nursing Science students in East London (AP: 64). The library collection is relatively small for a university that caters primarily for undergraduate studies and has a stock of books that can hardly be regarded as 'current' (AP: 64). During site visits, the Panel found that the libraries offer unequal provision for students in terms of book collections, opening hours, and electronic resources, including computer terminals. The Panel urges the University to ensure that there is equitable provision of library services across the campuses and to take measures to enhance the library stock in line with the programme offerings.

45. Despite the financial and other resource constraints, the Panel found that UFH has a well-functioning library service that is clearly benchmarked against other libraries nationally and internationally. The Panel was particularly pleased to learn of the development and implementation of *Your Survival Tool* as a training programme to assist staff and students to become familiar with the on-line catalogue OPAC and search engines (AP: 64). The library constantly seeks feedback from academics and undergraduate and postgraduate students on the efficacy of *Your Survival Tool* and the performance of the library in general. Furthermore, the Panel found that the library staff are aware of the extent and type of user-education and support that is needed by UFH academics and students, and are able to provide it. The Panel wishes to congratulate the Department of Library Services for these notable achievements.

Commendation 4

The HEQC commends the University of Fort Hare for the effective manner in which it makes use of its library services to promote quality in the core functions of teaching and learning, research and community service, and for benchmarking its library services appropriately.

46. **Information and Communication Technology.** During 2004–2005, the University embarked on a Network Upgrade Project which ensured that all three campuses as well as departments which are located in different buildings in East London are integrated into a single network to enable staff and students to access network resources from any campus (AP: 68). The Panel was pleased to note on its tour of facilities that the University has converted the Great Hall at Alice into a 'state-of-the-art' computer laboratory with the installation of 360 new computers. However, the Panel heard in interviews with students that at the other campuses the computer facilities are insufficient to support student learning.
47. The University currently has a 1 megabyte dedicated link between Alice and the East London campus for the provision of services including video-conferencing, ITS access and WebCt Access for Accountancy students (AP: 70). The Panel heard during interviews with the IT staff of a number of challenges facing the University with regard to ICT provisioning. The Panel heard during interviews with academic and support staff that there is a need for training of staff to ensure effective use of the ITS as a management information system. Given the critical importance of IT in teaching and learning, the Panel urges the institution to strengthen its capacity to provide IT support across all the campuses. It suggests that the institution develop a system to address the issue of equitable access to IT and that student access to ICT be monitored across all campuses. The Panel would also like UFH to consider exploring the integration of appropriate technologies into its teaching strategy,

especially given such factors as the distance separating its two main campuses and the rural location of the Alice Campus.

Recommendation 14

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare develops an Information and Communication Technology policy that addresses the use of Information Technology facilities that includes disaster recovery, adequate internet access in the residences, effective use of the Integrated Tertiary System as a management information system, and equitable access to Information Technology facilities for all students across campuses, and ensures that such provision is systematically monitored and evaluated. This process could involve an investigation on the viability of integrating appropriate technologies into the teaching and learning strategy to improve overall quality of the support provided to students.

48. **Certification.** The responsibility for developing quality arrangements for learner records and certification at UFH rests with the Registrar's Office, which includes Student Administration and Examinations (AP: 76). The University conducts certification in terms of a Certification Policy which was approved in 2004 (AP: 77). The Panel is satisfied that the oversight and monitoring arrangements for the capturing of student data by the Examinations Department is discharged appropriately. The Panel is, however, concerned about the large number of errors that are later picked up by students, as evidenced by the reports to Faculty Boards, at the start of the year. The Panel is of the view that this may be due to inaccuracies and omissions in the initial recording of marks by the academic staff, and urges the University to ensure that processes are put in place to address this shortcoming.

Recommendation 15

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare institutes procedures at all phases of the examination, certification and related processes to minimise errors and inaccuracies in published examination results.

49. **Short Courses.** The Panel heard in a range of interviews with management and staff involved with Continuing Education (CE) courses that UFH does not have a central body that is responsible for the organisation and management of CE courses neither does it have an institutional database of CE courses. This constitutes a major risk that could impact on the quality of provision of CE courses. The Panel urges UFH to expedite the process of registering its CE courses on the ITS. This should not be limited only to credit bearing CE courses, as it is equally important for the University to record properly and account for the offering of non-credit bearing CE courses.
50. The Panel heard during interviews with the staff involved with the management of CE courses that the Transversal Training Management Agency (TTMA) and Public Financial Services Agency (PFSA) have been very effective in responding to the development needs of the Eastern Cape Provincial Government in particular by appropriately designed and customised CE courses. These agencies are both based at the Bhisho Campus. The Panel wishes to congratulate these two units for their invaluable contribution to the human resource development of the province.
51. While the Panel heard that CE courses that are offered within the University are individually evaluated at the conclusion of each course, the Panel found that there

is no review system in place to evaluate the impact of the full range of CE courses, and to assess the extent to which they are contributing to the vision and mission of the University. The Panel urges UFH to give attention to these matters. Furthermore, the Panel is of the view that the certification of CE courses is not subjected to the same rigour and quality checks that exist for formal programmes and encourages the institution to develop a rigorous system in this regard.

52. **Programme Development.** UFH has a draft document entitled *Guidelines and a Framework for Programme Design*, which sets out processes and procedures, as well as templates to guide curriculum development. This document includes a *Curriculum Development and Review Policy*, but the Panel was unable to establish its status as it appeared incomplete in many respects. The Panel urges UFH to ensure that these two important documents are finalised, approved by the appropriate structures, and implemented to guide the process of curriculum development and review.

Recommendation 16

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare finalises its *Guidelines and Framework for Programme Design* together with the accompanying *Curriculum Development and Review Policy*, and ensures that programme development resulting from this review process is implemented consistently across the institution and that appropriate monitoring mechanisms are in place.

53. **Programme Reviews.** The Panel noted that a system of programme review was non-existent prior to the implementation of the Institutional Quality Assurance Framework in 2006, and that Faculties only started engaging in ‘self evaluations’ with the adoption of SP2000 (AP: 99). The professional degree programmes have, however, undertaken regular reviews in response to engagement with their professional bodies (AP: 99). In addition, the incorporation of the East London Campus compelled some Faculties to undergo ‘a process of rationalising academic offerings’, which has resulted in some sort of programme review (AP: 99).

Recommendation 17

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare ensures that there is participation by external stakeholders, such as industry experts, professional bodies and academic peers from other universities in the development and review process of its programmes where appropriate.

54. While academic departments are required to undergo a self-evaluation process every five years, the Panel heard during interviews with senior staff that most academic departments have not met their timeframes in this regard. The Panel urges the institution to ensure that departments undertake programme reviews and that this includes external experts and stakeholders. A more disconcerting revelation is the fact that the University does not have a formal system in place for the review of learning materials (AP: 100). The Panel concurs with the institution that this needs to be established as a matter of urgency across all Faculties. It is through the regular review of learning content that the institution can achieve and maintain curriculum relevance and responsiveness as implied in the UFH mission statement.

55. **Staffing.** The Panel heard of particular challenges facing UFH with regard to staffing. These include the inability of the University to attract and retain suitably qualified staff. Both management and staff attributed the main cause to “the poor financial situation at the university”. The Panel heard from management that the institution has tried to improve its salary structure relative to other universities, but it is still in the “lower quartile”. The rural environment of the Alice campus, with the resultant lack of schools and housing, was also given as a contributory factor. The Panel suggests that UFH explore innovative ways to address this challenge. This could include, for example, engaging in discussions with the Municipality on ways in which the surrounding environment can be developed.
56. A direct consequence of the difficulty that the University has in attracting staff is that UFH has a relatively large proportion of academic staff with low academic qualifications. The Panel heard in interviews with junior academics across all campuses of their frustrations in trying to gain higher degrees as they typically have high teaching loads and have to spend considerable time travelling between campuses. The Panel urges UFH to address this unsustainable situation by ensuring that junior academics have the opportunity to enhance their qualifications, and thus secure tenure and promotion.
57. Responsibility for academic staff development rests with the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), which offers a range of services through the Learning Advancement Unit. The Panel heard from a range of interviews with staff that the human resource department which is supposed to play a supportive role in these processes by providing administrative support is somewhat dysfunctional. The Panel urges the institution to take steps to strengthen the Human Resource function at the University and to put mechanisms in place to ensure accountability of the department. This could include the development and implementation of a performance management system.

Recommendation 18

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare strengthens the Human Resource function in the institution and develops and implements mechanisms to measure its effectiveness.

58. The Panel learned from the Portfolio and in interviews with academic staff as well as TLC staff, of the numerous challenges associated with staff development at UFH. These range from insufficient funding and lack of capacity within the TLC, to general apathy on the part of academic staff. The Panel heard during interviews with staff that “time constraints and workload” are the main reasons for not making use of this development opportunity. Nonetheless, the Panel was generally pleased about the work of the TLC and the various initiatives it has put in place to support teaching and learning at UFH, and congratulates the centre for the commitment of its staff. The Panel is of the view that it is imperative for UFH to continue to support its academic staff.
59. **Assessment.** Despite the policies and rules for moderation, the Panel found that the moderation administration process is uneven across the Faculties and campuses. In particular, the Panel heard during interviews with staff that the criteria used for the appointment of external examiners varies across departments and Faculties. Furthermore, from interviews with academics and external examiners the Panel

heard that UFH has no system in place to deal with external examiners' comments. The Panel urges the institution to ensure that the moderation process is used optimally so that the student learning experience is enhanced.

60. The Panel heard during interviews with students that supplementary examinations follow immediately after the regular examinations, within two weeks of the examination period, and that this does not allow sufficient time for students to prepare. The Panel found from interviews with academics that there is limited time for marking, moderating and publication of results between the examinations and the supplementary examinations. This seems to be having a negative effect on the quality of the academic process. The Panel urges UFH to reconsider its scheduling of supplementary examinations in order to allow for adequate time for students to prepare for supplementary examinations and for the marking and recording of results to be concluded.
61. The Panel found that UFH's assessment practices are uneven and this can have an effect on the quality of provision. The practice of external examination is inconsistent across faculties. The Panel interviewed external examiners who have been examiners for the same department for many years. The Panel also found that examinations are not anonymous. This exposes students and the institution to possible unfairness. The Panel would like to encourage the institution to review its assessment practices as a matter of urgency as they might constitute a reputational risk for the institution. Furthermore, the Panel heard that plagiarism is an increasing practice among students and lecturers are unable to act on it. The Panel would like to urge the institution to give plagiarism greater prominence in their rules and prospectus and to find ways to make this into a much more visible issue for students.

Recommendation 19

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare reviews its various policies and procedures for assessment to ensure that the principles of assessment are observed and that all aspects of assessment are covered. The institution would then need to put in place adequate mechanisms to ensure consistent implementation and monitoring of assessment policies and procedures.

62. **Research.** The Panel heard during interviews with management and academic staff of the intensity of the drive to establish a research culture at UFH. The Panel also heard of many challenges faced by academics, in particular that conditions make it difficult for UFH to maintain its young and emerging corps of researchers. Despite the institution's efforts to 'broaden the research base', research activities are still concentrated within a very small group of academics. The Panel urges UFH to find ways of encouraging all its academics to engage in research. This could be achieved, for example, by setting targets of research output per year for various categories of academic staff.

Recommendation 20

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare develops an institutional strategy to embed a research culture, which includes clear criteria

for the identification and development of niche areas, and that the necessary resources to support these niches areas are made available.

63. The Panel heard in interviews with management and academic staff that funding, both in terms of study leave and research leave, is available for staff wishing to pursue higher degrees. The Panel congratulates UFH for its commitment to the further development of the research and development function and the improvement of staff qualifications, especially taking into account the material conditions that prevail at the institution.

Commendation 5

The HEQC commends the University of Fort Hare for the various initiatives aimed at developing a research culture at the University, and in particular, for its investment in staff development to enable academics to acquire higher degree qualifications, which has the potential to yield significant returns for the University's research capacity and research culture in the future.

64. In terms of the research budget, the Panel would like to impress on UFH the need for strategic investment in research infrastructure which aligns budget provision with research focus and niche areas on a sustainable basis, as well as the need to invest in a formal research information system to support the monitoring of the research function. UFH is particularly urged to ensure that all campuses have adequate provision of computers and library resources to enhance the promotion of research.

65. The Panel noted that UFH's research output has increased steadily since 2003. The 2008 CREST report indicates that the University ranked 15th in terms of research output among all 23 public higher education institutions. However, the number of staff that publishes is very small given the total number of academic staff at UFH. The fields in which publications are highest are in Science and Agriculture, which accounted for more than 50% of the total article equivalents. The Panel congratulates the Faculty of Science and Agriculture for the leading role it plays in contributing to research production at UFH, and urges the other faculties to seriously consider ways of increasing their research production.

66. The Panel heard in interviews with academics from various Faculties that UFH is yet to develop and formalise an institutional policy on research ethics. Currently, ethical clearance for research projects is handled in an *ad hoc* manner. The Panel urges UFH to ensure that the policy is finalised and implemented as soon as possible.

Recommendation 21

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare as a matter of urgency develops a comprehensive policy on research ethics in order to protect the reputation of the institution in this area.

Postgraduate Education

67. Despite being primarily an undergraduate teaching institution, UFH is nevertheless committed to growing its enrolments in postgraduate education. Doctoral and Masters programmes are offered in all faculties. The Panel noted that headcount postgraduate enrolment has increased steadily since 2004. The Panel also noted that

the majority of enrolments for masters' degrees were in the Social Sciences. The University acknowledges a number of challenges relating to postgraduate throughput and graduation rates. The Panel agrees with UFH that the use of an interactive and effective IT system to track and monitor postgraduate students could be one of the ways in which students can be assisted to complete their studies within the recommended times.

68. While UFH has procedures in place to govern the relationship between supervisors and postgraduate students, the Panel learned during interviews with postgraduate students of instances of poor communication between students and supervisors. It heard in interviews with academics of the high workload in terms of both undergraduate teaching and postgraduate supervision. The Panel urges UFH to find ways of decreasing the supervisor-to-student ratio, for example, by increasing the pool of supervisors and using the UFH Postgraduate Guide effectively to regulate all postgraduate supervision matters.
69. UFH has a *Postgraduate Assessment Policy* which describes the process for the internal and external assessment of theses and dissertations. The Panel noted in documentation provided and heard during interviews with postgraduate students and staff that the policies and procedures are not rigorously adhered to across departments and campuses. The Panel encourages the institution to develop mechanisms which will ensure the consistent application of policies and procedures across all Faculties and campuses.

Community Engagement

70. UFH has a Community Engagement Policy, approved by Council in November 2007. The Panel did not get any clear indication of the University's plans to establish a coordinating unit for community engagement. Furthermore, there is no conceptualisation or strategy to give direction to existing and future activities in this area. The Panel urges UFH to engage with the development of appropriate mechanisms for managing the quality of community engagement as a core function, and to ensure its integration into the curriculum.

Recommendation 22

The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare should develop a conceptual framework to guide the implementation of a vast array of community engagement activities in order to facilitate both the quality assurance of these activities and the appropriate integration of community engagement into the curriculum.

71. The Panel heard in interviews with employers and business partners that UFH has healthy relationships with the local municipalities – an MOU currently governs the relationship between UFH and the Amathole District Municipality, while in the case of Buffalo City there are Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and tenders. The Panel also heard during interviews with management that there are "...various means of tracking and evaluating community engagement projects", which include "donor reports" and "evaluations by external bodies such as UNESCO". The Panel, however, urges UFH to develop and implement its own internal evaluation system that would include an institutional-level scrutiny of SLAs.

72. The Panel was pleased to receive confirmation in interviews with various staff members who deal with community engagement about the range of projects that currently exist in the departments, centres and institutes of the University.

Conclusion

UFH is rightly proud of its intellectual role in the struggle against apartheid, and its contribution to the education of large numbers of black graduates. Having come out of a prolonged institutional crisis, the University has been re-defining its identity as an African university with a rural and developmental orientation. The institution is pursuing this agenda under a set of financial constraints which have the potential to cripple its financial and academic sustainability. In this context, the institution should be cautious of making decisions which may further compromise the sustainability of the Alice campus, and also the distinctive character of Fort Hare. While sufficient funding is important it is not the only driver of academic sustainability. The Panel found enough examples of intellectual creativity and imagination at Fort Hare which can be used to reconstruct the institution's academic life in order to offer university education of recognisable quality and standards.