



Executive Summary

INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT REPORT

ON THE

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AAMP	Accelerated Academic Mentorship Programme
ADS	Academic Development and Support
AL	Assistant Lecturer
APK	Auckland Park Kingsway Campus
APP	Annual Performance Plan
App	Application
APS	Admission Points Score
B Degree	Bachelor Degree
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BTech	Bachelor of Technology
CAA	Central Academic Administration
CAPQP	Centre for Academic Planning and Quality Promotion
CASD	Centre for Academic Staff Development
CAT	Centre for Academic Technologies
CBE	College of Business and Economics
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DFC	Doornfontein Campus
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DIPEM	Division of Institutional Planning, Evaluation and Monitoring
DTE	Division for Teaching Excellence
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EMC	Emergency Medical Care
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
ERT	Emergency Remote Teaching
FADA	Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture

FEBE	Faculty of Engineering & Built Environment
FHS	Faculty of Health Sciences
FOE	Faculty of Education
FOH	Faculty of Humanities
FOL	Faculty of Law
FOS	Faculty of Science
FYE	First-Year Experience
GES	Global Excellence and Stature
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ID	Instructional Designer
IF	Institutional Forum
IIS	Institute for Intelligent Systems
IP	Institutional Profile
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
IQMS	Internal Quality Management System
ISSI	Integrated Student Success Initiative
IT	Information Technology
JBS	Johannesburg Business School
KPA	Key Performance Areas
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LIS	Library and Information Services

LMS	Learning Management System
MAPS	Mastering Academic and Professional Skills
MEC	Management Executive Committee
MECA	Management Executive Committee: Academic
MLSO	Multilingual Language Services Office
NDP	National Development Plan
nGAP	New Generation of Academics Programme
NMU	Nelson Mandela University
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NUMSA	National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa
PG	Postgraduate
PGDip (HE)	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
PGES	Postgraduate Experience Survey
PGS	Post Graduate School
PMS	Performance Management System
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
PQM	Programme and Qualification Mix
PsyCad	Centre for Psychological Services and Career Development
PWG	Programme Working Group
QA	Quality Assurance
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework
QMS	Quality Management System
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
RAU	Rand Afrikaans University
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RU	Rhodes University
SA	South Africa

SAGEA	South African Graduate Employers Association
SARCHI	South African Research Chairs Initiative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEC	Student Enrolment Centre
Senex	Executive Committee of Senate
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SLP	Short Learning Programme
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSE	Senior Student Experience
STLC	Senate Teaching and Learning Committee
SU	Stellenbosch University
SWC	Soweto Campus
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
TWR	Technikon Witwatersrand
UFS	University of the Free State
UG	Undergraduate
UGES	Undergraduate Experience Survey
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UJELP	UJ English Language Programme
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UoT	University of Technology
UP	University of Pretoria
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VC	Vice-Chancellor
WIE	Work-Integrated Education

WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand
WPBL	Workplace-Based Learning

Executive Summary

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) was established through the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997, as amended) primarily to assure quality in the South African higher education sector and to advise the Minister on aspects of higher education. The National Qualifications Framework Act (No. 67 of 2008, as amended) conferred additional responsibilities on the CHE as the Quality Council for higher education, with overall responsibility for the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). The CHE executes its quality assurance responsibilities through its permanent committee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). The CHE, through the HEQC, exercises its quality assurance function using a variety of mechanisms, one of which is institutional audits that are mandated by the Higher Education Act.

The *Framework for Institutional Audits (2021)*¹ and its attendant *Manual for Institutional Audits (2021)*² are key instruments to regulate the implementation of institutional audits. These documents are also aligned in important aspects with the new Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)³ that was approved by the HEQC and Council in September 2020 and which will be implemented in the medium term by the CHE. Institutional audits are strongly influenced by both the specific context within which each higher education institution (HEI) works and by the national transformational agenda within which higher education functions. The HEQC has identified a need to do full audits of all HEIs in South Africa. A full audit of an institution determines whether or not, and to what extent, its Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems, policies and procedures ensure the effective provisioning of good quality higher education that enhances the likelihood of student success through quality learning and teaching, research opportunities and integrated community engagement. The emphasis is less on ensuring that required standards are met at a particular threshold than on the deliberate, continuous, systematic and measurable improvement of the student experience, as well as on building reflexive praxis to develop quality cultures in institutions.

The following principles guided the institutional audit of the University of Johannesburg:

1. The primary responsibility for internal quality assurance rests with individual HEIs. Each institution is responsible for the establishment, implementation, maintenance,

¹ <https://www.che.ac.za/publications/frameworks/framework-institutional-audits-2021>

² <https://www.che.ac.za/publications/frameworks/manual-institutional-audits-2021>

³ <https://www.che.ac.za/publications/frameworks/quality-assurance-framework-qaf-higher-education-south-africa>

improvement and enhancement of its own quality management and assurance systems.

2. The uniqueness of each institution's size, shape, location, context and mission is recognised.
3. The value of institutional audits rests on the compilation of credible, contextually relevant, and reliable information that is required for internal quality-related planning and self-evaluation, peer review and public reporting (for example, by publishing executive summaries).
4. Student experience, student engagement and participation and the student voice are central to an evaluation of an institution's quality management system (QMS).
5. The institutional audit is a peer-driven and evidence-based process to ensure that the HEQC and its audit panel reports are transparent, informed and consistent.
6. Institutional audits are developmental and intent on supporting continuous quality improvement and enhancement.
7. Institutional audits are required to balance their developmental character with the regulatory requirement that the CHE and the HEQC act on poor provisioning where institutions have no clear commitments, processes, practices or plans to improve.
8. Institutional audits are a key component of the HEQC's broad-based quality assurance mandate.

Aligned with international practice, the HEQC's review methodology consists of an institutional self-evaluation report (SER), and an external peer review, which verifies, triangulates and validates the self-evaluation of the institution. The external peer review consists of a document analysis of the SER and an institutional PoE, as well as a site visit at which interviews are conducted with constituencies and physical infrastructure is visited. This audit report forms the outcome of the institutional audit of the University of Johannesburg (UJ).

UJ was founded in 2005 as a comprehensive university with a legacy that emerged from a range of very diverse institutional identities. The incorporation of the Daveyton and Soweto Vista campuses into the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), followed by a merger with Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR) meant that, as of 1 January 2005, UJ was an amalgamation with characteristics typical of the apartheid higher education (HE) system. The transformation of this institution had to address the demographic profiles of staff and students, the research profile, the diverse and differentiated Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM), as well as the visibility of the University in the HE sector.

UJ operates on four campuses in Gauteng, namely the Auckland Park Bunting Road Campus (APB), the Auckland Park Kingsway Campus (APK), the Doornfontein Campus (DFC), and the Soweto Campus (SWC). As stipulated in the SER, PQM offerings are structured into seven faculties, one college, and a business school. These are the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA), the Faculty of Education (FOE), the Faculty of Engineering & Built Environment (FEBE), the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), the Faculty of Humanities (FOH), the Faculty of Law (FOL), the Faculty of Science (FOS), the College of Business and Economics (CBE), and the Johannesburg Business School (JBS).

UJ has a student population of over 50,000, with approximately 78.7% enrolled in undergraduate programmes and 21.3% in postgraduate programmes. More than 3,000 are international students from 80 countries. The student demographics reflect 80.5% African students, 5% White, 3.4% Indian and 2.6% Coloured. Of these, 53.7% are women, 22.6% are IsiZulu speakers, another 11.5% speak Sesotho, and 17.6% are English-speaking students.

The 11 784 (2021) staff complement also reflects a similar demographic profile with 55.2% African, 19.3% White, 5% Indian and 4.3% Coloured. Of this staff complement, 50.4% have PhD qualifications and 26.4% are professors.

The average staff-to-student ratio is 28.4%, which supports a success rate of approximately 85% per year. It should be noted that 61.9% of students receive National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding, and 11.8% are in residences.

The vision, mission and values of the University are directed by it being a Pan-African university that focuses on internationalisation and innovation, with a high priority placed on knowledge production. There is recognition that student access and success cannot be separated, and the University sees itself as having an obligation to provide effective support within a vibrant learning environment and constantly striving to ensure that every student has access to affordable and high-quality education in an environment that is diverse, respectful, and inclusive.

The institutional audit panel for UJ executed its task by analysing the submitted SER as well as the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE), as referenced in the SER, with due consideration of the Institutional Profile (IP). The panel validated claims made in the SER and tested the reliability of the PoE through a process of triangulation of evidence, which included information obtained during the site visit and interviews.

The panel was impressed by the quality of the SER and the comprehensive and well-structured PoE. It was, however, evident that duplication of content occurred due to the nature

of the standards, and it is therefore noted that some examples provided for evidence are duplicated although a different standard is being addressed. The interviews provided complementary information and generally confirmed assertions made in the SER. The alignment of the various stakeholder groups and the consistency of their responses to the questions posed were well noted.

The UJ site visit covered five days, from 16–20 May 2022, of which the first four were allocated to online interviews with the various stakeholders as identified by the panel in consultation with the institution. The last day was spent on site, visiting facilities and sites of delivery on the four campuses, concluding with oral feedback to the senior management of the University regarding preliminary, non-binding findings.

The panel's overall impression was that UJ used the opportunity for self-evaluation and reflection, employing the 16 standards provided as a framework for an honest and transparent narrative of its journey towards maturity in the quality assurance of its core functions.

The University provided clear evidence that confirmed the trajectory of the institution, from its founding some 17 years ago to being a leader in various fields today. The consistency of the essence of the UJ vision, linked to performance indicators, targets, and the measuring of performance against the strategic objectives, has enabled a common understanding of and impetus towards institutional success. There is general agreement on how different elements of the institutional vision and mission are understood. The institution is loyal to all levels of staff as well as students. The Pan-African nature of the institution has been ingrained into the academic programmes, support services, processes, and systems at the institution. In this regard, the significant role of marketing and branding in establishing a consistent UJ narrative cannot be underestimated. Strategic planning processes, management and academic leadership at UJ are structured through good governance practices that ensure the integration of processes towards an effective QMS. Embedded *fitness for purpose* is evident in the strong governance and management structures at UJ. It was also found that the student-centred approach adopted by the institution finds expression in its policies, processes and structures, ensuring a coherent support system. The lived experience of students at UJ is linked to holistic support provisioning towards ensuring student success. UJ aligns staff development initiatives with the interventions needed to ensure effective support to students in order to enhance the likelihood of student success. The UJ curriculum design framework enables flexible, tailor-made course combinations that offer students opportunities to calibrate their own learning trajectories.

In terms of UJ being a comprehensive university, the panel found strong evidence of the

fitness of purpose of the institution in relation to its role in the South African (SA) HE system, as well as internationally. The focus on workplace exposure through an overarching concept of Work-Integrated Education (WIE) is evident on the four campuses and confirms the vocational and professional nature of many of the programmes at the institution. UJ's values of *imagination* and *regeneration* are evident through the transformational thrusts of innovation and digitalisation. The GES (Global Excellence and Stature) strategy for innovation, digitalisation initiatives and components of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) are embedded in curriculum review processes, automation of administrative processes that are underway, and the development of smart classrooms and virtual campuses. UJ is also commended for not only having sophisticated and well-integrated information systems but also for empowering role players at all levels of the institution to access and use data and information for sound decision-making.

UJ identified areas for improvement during the self-evaluation process. Issues that emerged directly from the self-evaluation process or institutional knowledge and experiences provided insight into areas where possible enhancements could be made to fulfil the achievement of its strategic plans and objectives. Of the concerns raised by the panel, the absence of faculty and departmental operational plans for the academic project (including units that provide support for the cross-functional implementation of the University's strategic plan) is one of the most pertinent. Another recommendation worth mentioning in the summary relates to the University not having an approved review cycle for the periodic scheduling of programme and academic support unit reviews to ensure that all programmes and service units are evaluated within a specific time frame. In addition to the formal recommendations, the panel made some additional suggestions for UJ's consideration relating to infrastructure, the imperative to publish, performance management, and postdoctoral fellows.

The panel agreed that, as a transformed university, UJ has reached a level of functional maturity with high levels of efficiency through the QMS and, under the current leadership, is likely to continue its upward trajectory in the years ahead.

The following is a summary of the audit panel's commendations and recommendations for the University of Johannesburg.

Focus Area 1: Governance, strategic planning, management and leadership support the core academic functions

The four standards in Focus Area 1 concentrate on the role that an institution's *governance, strategic planning* (as contained in its *vision, mission and strategic goals*), *management and*

academic leadership play in its quality management in order to enhance the likelihood of student success and to improve the quality of learning, teaching and research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive, integrated community engagement.

Standard 1: *The institution has a clearly stated vision and mission, and strategic goals which have been approved by appropriate governance structures, subject to comprehensive stakeholder engagement.*

The progressive development and refinement of UJ's vision contains some recurring themes – internationalisation, growth and innovation, and prosperity – as well as its newly stated commitment to Pan-Africanism. The vision, mission and strategic goals provide a shared and stable basis for acceptance by the university community.

Regular “conscious recalibration” of the University's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and their translation into the business model, has provided the University with a level of planning maturity, and an ability to adapt and leverage a more innovative character. The annual inclusion of the KPIs into the performance contracts of the executive management allows the University to monitor its implementation of strategic goals, an approach that has led to the innovative nature of the business model of UJ.

Student-centredness as a defining attribute is infused into the activities, decision-making, and governance structures at UJ. The way students are supported, for example, through the Integrated Student Success Initiative (ISSI) project, is but one example.

The three pillars – student-centeredness, being an authentic university, and being a caring university – have contributed to addressing complex social and academic outcomes meaningfully and maturely.

The UJ strategy of contextualising the benefits of the 4IR as a catalytic initiative provides the University with a competitive edge in the SA HE system.

UJ's location in Johannesburg – the SA financial and business capital – is advantageous in furthering it as a Pan-African university. The name of the University has converted easily into an African brand (according to the Marketing and Communication division): UJ has thus taken advantage of its position and brand to introduce its business school as ‘an African Business School’. This transformative imperative, including the drive for diversity and inclusiveness, has shaped the Pan-African identity of UJ, and the increasing number of collaborations with other African institutions furthers this agenda. The University has indeed created a special niche market for itself.

The UJ culture embraces the idea of engagement, which takes place in many ways, such as informal engagements between the Vice-Chancellor (VC) and students, and with both staff and students across the four campuses four times a year. The panel concluded that these engagements have created a trust relationship, evident in all the interviews.

Commendations:

- a) UJ seems to be a substantially transformed institution where the transformation agenda has been translated into many processes, such as the epistemology of disciplines and the development of elective courses such as African Insights. The leadership needs to be commended on the establishment of a shared vision within the University and throughout the different levels and structures. The uniformity in the shared understanding and embracing of the UJ business model for Pan-Africanism, international recognition, and technology innovation through the 4IR, is remarkable.
- b) With respect to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), the inclusion of research conducted through the GES strategy in the teaching domain is seen as a differentiating attribute from other universities.

Standard 2: *The stated vision, mission and strategic goals align with national priorities and context (e.g. transformation, creating a skilled labour force, developing scarce skills areas and a critical citizenry, and contributing to the fulfilment of national goals as informed by the NDP and related national planning), as well as sectoral, regional, continental and global imperatives (e.g. Africa Vision 2063 or the Sustainable Development Goals).*

In its commitment to transformation, UJ is aligned with national priorities and responsive to its context through initiatives such as the Africa by Bus tour, the African Insights course, and research collaborations with other institutions in Africa. The University is conscious of its role in creating a skilled labour force, developing scarce skills – with an explicit focus on Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) as per enrolment targets – and of developing a critical citizenry. The comprehensive nature of UJ – through its formative and vocational programmes and its purposeful relationship to the national development agenda – ensures that it responds to needs in a range of economic sectors. The various transformative activities, for which different task teams are responsible, have culminated in a comprehensive and integrated approach to transformation.

The reach of UJ extends across Africa towards the fulfilment of continental and global imperatives, but it was noted that the SDGs for Africa are not explicitly referenced in the

strategic framework of the University.

Most UJ students come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and receive NSFAS funding. The understanding of transformation at the Institution, however, goes beyond demographic representation. Although the demographic profile of staff reflects the diversity of the SA population, the University also values the international dimension with 20% of staff being non-SA citizens.

Curriculum transformation has led to the integration of such issues as 4IR and decolonisation. Conversations on curriculum transformation started in 2015, a process driven by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Academic and Research, in accordance with specific guidelines that include, inter alia, that the curriculum needs to reflect diverse epistemologies. Theories of decoloniality are woven into programmes (e.g. in Religious Studies and Social Work), and different languages are used in learning spaces. All students are encouraged to complete the free course, African Insights, which considers eight themes, namely:

- What is Africa?
- The Question of Language
- The South African Inheritance
- The National Struggle for LGBTIQ+ rights
- African Women and their Words
- Slavery and the Diaspora
- Forms of Exile
- The African Renaissance.

The development of African languages, along with the development of flagship institutes, has extended the contribution of the University through the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Students are encouraged to take the short online course on 4IR, which is also available to the public. Anchored by UJ's desire to be a leading university in the use of 4IR, technology cuts across all faculties and is given African characteristics, as seen in the symbols, the marketing material, and the partnerships forged on the continent. Publications, collaboration with other African institutions, and conferences position UJ as a Pan-African institution and a continental agent of change, with a direct impact on society.

Several university initiatives encourage student engagement, such as the VC's reading club, which was mentioned in many of the interview sessions and is referred to throughout the audit report. Its aim is to encourage a culture of critical reading among both staff and students.

Commendations:

- c) UJ is commended for the efforts of the VC and the Chair of Council towards developing critical citizenry by way of the critical reading sessions. The efforts by the Institution to disseminate knowledge on 4IR to its students as well as to the general public were also noted with appreciation.

Recommendations:

- 1) It is recommended that the University's consideration of the SDGs for Africa, and the inclusion of these into the strategic impetus for internationalisation be articulated more explicitly in order to maintain the momentum of UJ towards becoming a Pan-African university and contributing to Africa Vision 2063.

Standard 3: *There is demonstrable strategic alignment between the institution's quality management system for core academic activities across all sites and modes of provision and its vision, mission and strategic goals, as well as its governance and management processes.*

UJ clearly has a thorough QMS in place that aligns its vision, mission and strategic goals with its governance and management processes. Council – supported by its six governance committees – exercises rigorous oversight over the strategic objectives and their attainment. Council seems not to exceed its mandate, and the relationship between Council and the Management Executive Committee (MEC) is professional and purposeful, mutually respectful, and understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. The VC and his management team have the Chair of Council's support in effecting the vision, mission and goals of UJ and its strategic plan. The University is commended for how its vision, mission and goals translate into a strategic plan, which is operationalised throughout the various levels of the institution, right to the level of individual staff members' performance agreements.

Quality assurance takes place through the regular reporting of various governance structures, from the level of faculties via the faculty boards, up through the Senate and its subcommittees to the MEC and Council, each with its subcommittee. Alignment of the planning and quality initiatives for the academic project is considered at the Management Executive Committee: Academic (MECA), although quality assurance (QA) is monitored primarily through the achievement of KPIs.

Council's own performance review results in clear public accountability, reported via the *Annual Report*. Every committee has a charter: evaluative questionnaires and reviews of the mandate of every committee are completed annually. The results are presented to the relevant

oversight structure – the MEC, Senate or Council.

The professionalisation of Council is evident in the appointment of highly experienced and qualified people to Council, with strong, experienced leaders appointed as chairs of Council committees. Structures ensure that Council overreach does not happen, while the Corporate Governance Office within the Registrar's Portfolio offers professional support and guidance to governance structures.

A powerful performance culture at UJ means that staff members have performance agreements linked to the institutional KPIs and to an incentive scheme. Some interviewees raised concerns that the stringent performance management approach might be destructive to the academic project, and that it could stifle creativity. It was argued that the targets set should take cognisance of academics' workloads in order to make the KPIs realistic and achievable.

The MEC targets are drawn from a matrix of 87 KPIs and are allocated to MEC members based on their areas of responsibility. The performance of the MEC is reviewed annually through an assessment of each member's performance contract for that year.

UJ cascades its annual plans to faculties after approval by Council. The annual faculty plans are developed by the deans, and shared with the departments and line managers, and then with individual employees. Around April, the annual reporting sessions for faculties are held: the planning and reporting cycles are aligned with mid-year and year-end performance discussions, which review progress made and challenges faced. Consultation within faculty structures informs operational decisions, and such consultation is reported to be deep and meaningful. The Institutional Forum (IF) also serves as a good sounding board during decision-making processes.

In addition, informal visits to faculties allow the MEC to hear inputs in a less structured way. Critical engagement meetings on the various campuses highlight concerns, including those from support staff and labour, which could then be taken up in the formal structures to be translated into policy or operational change. These frequent but informal engagements with staff and students seem to be a powerful proof of institutional accountability.

In addition to their formal research outputs, academics are encouraged to interact with the broader community and to make their work accessible through publications in the popular media and through presentations in the public domain. Such interactions enhance the standing of UJ in the community.

Apart from the regular discussions, both the VC and Chair of Council also avail themselves for regular book readings, which have clearly made a difference on the campus community. Although the intention with these interactions is to create a reading culture, they clearly contribute to the perception that both leaders are accessible to internal stakeholders.

While the required formal QA mechanisms are in place to review the functioning of the respective governance and management structures, accountability to stakeholders commendably also takes place in informal ways, which engenders alignment with and trust in institutional leaders at UJ.

Recommendations:

- 2) It has been noted that the translation of the strategic plan decentralised into faculty plans is not a process used by the institution and that it relies on using the performance management system (PMS) for the monitoring of progress. It is recommended that consideration of faculty plans – either as a three-year rolling plan or as an Annual Performance Plan (APP) for the year (n) should also be seen as an important instrument to align and integrate planning, ensure quality, and allocate resources.

Standard 4: *There is a clear understanding of and demonstrable adherence to the different roles and responsibilities of the governance structures, management and academic leadership.*

The appropriate governance and management structures are well established, with each structure having its own detailed charter.

UJ has always used collegial decision-making processes. On paper, the Institution has a typical hierarchical governance structure, but the Senate sees itself as an equal and regards itself as empowered to participate by raising questions and debating issues. Senators participate based on their expertise as much as their status. The University evaluates the induction programmes for the Council and Senate annually to measure their effectiveness in empowering their respective members.

The conviction that participation takes place in the best interest of the University became particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. In discussions about assessment policy and experiences with assessment, staff felt free to contribute, irrespective of their location in the institution. Audit interviews also revealed that young colleagues are encouraged to participate in governance structures. Apart from professors and heads of departments (HoDs), less-experienced colleagues also participate in Senate meetings and faculty boards. When

committees are constituted, junior or 'upcoming' colleagues are included to expose them to the decision-making structures at the University. Academic Development Programmes also expose colleagues to the governance structures at UJ.

Students are also involved in various governance and operational structures. Although the University has stated that the students *could* participate more in the Senate, the interviews showed that students were very active in the operational committees in the Registrar's portfolio, where they articulated challenges from the student body perspective.

In short, the various role players understand their roles and feel empowered to participate.

Commendations:

- d) UJ has a clear and strong institutional governance structure and is commended for the rigour of its adherence to principles of good governance.

Recommendations:

- 3) It is recommended that the University establish processes where students are encouraged and empowered to participate as actively and meaningfully in the Senate as they do in other institutional structures.

Focus Area 2: The design and implementation of the institutional quality management system supports the core academic functions

The four standards in Focus Area 2 concentrate on how the *design and implementation of an integrated quality management system* in the institution enhances the likelihood of student success and improves the quality of learning, teaching and research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive, integrated community engagement within the context of the institution's mission.

Standard 5: *A quality assurance system is in place, comprising at a minimum, of:*

- (i) *governance arrangements*
- (ii) *policies*
- (iii) *processes, procedures and plans*
- (iv) *instructional products*
- (v) *measurement of impact*
- (vi) *data management and utilisation*

as these give effect to the delivery of the HEI's core functions.

Teaching and Learning

Regulation of the QMS was demonstrated during the Covid-19 period when a seamless transition to an online system of instructional delivery, known as **Emergency Remote Teaching** (ERT), took place. Hybrid or “blended learning was done at UJ from as early as 2005”.

During the ERT period, many modules changed from summative to continuous assessment. The nature of the assessment (i.e. multiple-choice, essays and other types of assessments that required critical thinking) helped keep transgressions low. Academics, however, expressed concerns about the integrity of certain assessments. The Invigilator App used in summative assessments made cheating more difficult but was not foolproof. Students, however, commented that the app interpreted *any* movement as cheating. The University indicated that, where transgressions of academic integrity were identified, a flexible disciplinary approach was applied by providing opportunities for rehabilitation within the measures allowed by policy. UJ is commended for introducing the Invigilator App to help maintain the integrity of assessments. The institution should emphasise inculcating an understanding of the importance of academic integrity as part of normal pedagogy.

Preparation of students at UJ for the **4IR** is considered a very **innovative** mechanism to foreground new technological developments in discipline-specific ways: 91 academic innovations with different purposes have been introduced since 2019. The most commendable innovation is the introduction of two online modules, African Insights and 4IR, offered to the students, but to any alumnus or member of Convocation as well. The Africa by Bus programme is innovative and exciting and is congruent with the Pan-African vision at UJ.

The student-centred approach at UJ was visible during the #FeesMustFall period, which led to the **decolonisation** debates at HEIs. The issues were extensively debated before an institutional position was formalised. Partnerships with other institutions include, for example, publishing a book that documents debates on decolonisation, compiled by the deans of law across universities. The uptake on decolonisation issues has been positive, and students have played an important role in the process. Some faculties, such as Health, are including African knowledge systems and epistemology in their curricula. The Faculty of Humanities has explored many concepts and African perspectives in undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) programmes that offer additional African languages in UG degrees. Many research projects in PG programmes have delivered research outputs in indigenous languages.

Clear lines of authority and accountability within curriculum development processes point to

an effective QMS. **Curriculum transformation** focuses on multilingualism, innovations, Work-integrated Education (WIE) and decolonisation. Consideration of the student profile serves as the departure point – firstly to meet the students where they are in their learning path; and secondly, to identify innovative and creative interventions that support students academically and otherwise. Traditional face-to-face or online learning is in place, but other activities to support students are initiated. Flexible learning adds value to traditional learning approaches and methods.

The SER clearly defines flexible learning practices, but a common understanding of what it means is lacking. Students understand curriculum transformation from a language integration (i.e., SeSotho and isiZulu) viewpoint and also in relation to the conceptualisation of African contexts and content in the curriculum, while academics view transformation as meeting student needs by using the student-centred learning approach.

Industry involvement in curriculum design and review processes takes place by including external partners in faculty advisory groups and/or boards. The role of industry is seen as pertinent to student employability, and to ensuring the relevance of programme standards for the world of work. UJ is committed to ensuring that students are work ready.

The arrangements around **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** are interesting: Responsibility for the RPL policy resides in the office of the DVC: Academic. RPL applications are submitted to the Student Enrolment Centre (SEC), under the Registrar's office, and deans provide oversight in this process. All applications are received centrally and routed to the relevant faculty. A working group within the faculty is seemingly mandated to execute this function. In the case of PG students, RPL applications are routed to faculties for selection. In the case of UG students, the RPL process is an online system that applies the rules per university policy. The number of students admitted through RPL is very low and insufficient for any comparison between the performances of RPL students and those of PG students with access through the normal route.

Articulation between the different types of qualification is a priority, given the recent alignment with the Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF). The different types of programmes are developed with articulation in mind through a work-integrated process. UJ has found that progression between the different types of programmes requires dedicated articulation pathways to be designed. Specific reference was made to the transitioning of Bachelor of Technology (BTech) degree students within the various faculties through bridging qualifications that allow students to progress beyond the postgraduate diploma.

Student support is designed by using relevant survey data. When entering the institution, first-years are introduced to all the services available. The First-Year Experience (FYE) establishes an ethos for how students will experience the transition from school to university. UJ provides a suite of support interventions. Tutors provide reports on and help at-risk students. Senior students are advised on services, such as training on Blackboard, the Centre for Psychological Services and Career Development (PsyCad), Career Services, and services for the world of work. A comprehensive booklet is available to students living with disabilities from the Disability Unit, which arranges a special orientation for such students. During the ERT period, students living with disabilities were supported. The Primary Healthcare Service Unit offers health and wellness services and sessions to showcase the variety of services and products on offer. In response to Covid-19, the unit developed online services. Students also received support through the provisioning of the necessary devices, counselling, and data.

International students who could not go back home were accommodated in residences and provided with meals. Furthermore, during the July 2022 unrest (riots), UJ delivered meal packs to students across campuses.

Supporting students in rural areas was challenging. UJ made counselling available to students and staff through telephonic and online systems. Data and airtime were provided to staff responsible for this purpose. This counselling method however presented challenges, as psychologists are mostly trained for face-to-face counselling. The issue of ethics was addressed by asking clients seeking counselling services to provide consent by completing a Google form. Another challenge was that students preferred different platforms for the counselling sessions, i.e. Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, which the University then had to accommodate. UJ allowed at-risk students to return to campus first.

All the support units thus moved from physical interactions to an electronic online system during the pandemic. One example was the development of an app for information in terms of emergency contact numbers, with information on gender-based violence foregrounded. Another was the wellness awareness programmes made available via social media. Sports coaches custom-made online training sessions and introduced virtual competitions across partnering universities, both local and international.

The strength of the UJ student success support lies in being driven by **data and evidence**. PsyCad, for example, captures information about students when they access the service. This information is used for referrals, identification of trends, and the development of intervention programmes. It is also used as a management and decision-making tool, for example, when making decisions about the employment of relevant staff, such as social workers and

psychologists. The Medimes system is another example. Developed by the Health Services division as a patient recording system, it means that health professionals can access information across campuses to identify specific health challenges and create intervention programmes.

Student surveys at UG and PG level are sources of data used to identify the support interventions needed and to triangulate student feedback on teaching or academic support initiatives. These surveys monitor student experiences in the teaching environment but also provide qualitative data to understand throughput and success rates. At UJ, more than 125 interventions now address student success.

The various governance structures work together towards an effective student support system. The Division of Institutional Planning, Evaluation and Monitoring (DIPEM) monitors high-level data trends, such as throughput and success rates, as well as the effectiveness of the many interventions intended to increase success rates. The planning unit has representation on the Student Success Committee, which sits regularly and shares ideas. The Division of Teaching Excellence (DTE) liaises and works with faculties to ensure that the implementation of interventions takes place, and that best practice is shared through, inter alia, the masterclasses. Evidence of the influence of the masterclasses was provided by interviewed academics who developed apps and assessment practices from what they have learned. Individual academics provide evidence of the implementation of new ideas and improved classroom practices in their teaching portfolios, presented for promotion purposes. The Centre for Academic Staff Development (CASD) also works with academic staff by sharing how ideas learned in the masterclasses can be implemented at the departmental level; thus, steering the staff development agenda.

Academic staff development initiatives at UJ are driven by the need to improve student success. The development of engaged pedagogies to facilitate epistemological access results in teaching and learning that is responsive to student needs. An impact analysis of staff development programmes takes place through the teaching portfolios submitted as part of the promotion process. In the portfolios, academics reflect on how the developmental activities in which they have taken part, have influenced their teaching and their students' learning. Reflection is an important aspect of the professional learning process. Through this process, they identify their strengths as well as gaps within their teaching approach. Regular reviews and evaluations of staff development programmes are conducted using platforms such as Mentimeter, and Google questionnaires, as well as regular reporting and check-in meetings to identify any other forms of academic staff developmental needs.

Support and training were provided to support staff during the ERT period to equip them to adapt to and support online teaching and learning. With the shift to remote teaching, staff development focused on, for example, the basic uses of technology to enhance teaching. Tutors learned to conduct tutorials online. All divisions, including the Registrar's domain, Academic Development and Support (ADS), and the DTE worked collaboratively with faculties and schools. UJ also developed services and training programmes that are now offered online. Communities of practice with other universities such as the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), and the University of Pretoria (UP) were formed, whilst senior managers were sent for training on different systems. Standard operating procedure (SOP) manuals were developed for every process and are updated regularly. UJ embarked on an enhanced security awareness campaign on issues, such as hacking, and created protocols on how to access systems. Line managers approved requests for items, such as bigger screens, to be taken home so that staff could work comfortably. Collaboration was key and was heightened during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The panel was concerned about the increase in **staff attrition**, which occurred during the ERT period. This attrition was apparently not abnormal for the University as Gauteng is very competitive in terms of remuneration, career progression, and career development opportunities. The main reason provided for the attrition was staff retirements.

Student governance and engagements seem to be very robust, with students represented in governance structures, such as Council, Senate, and Faculty Boards. Student Representative Council (SRC) members represent the student voice at the college and departmental levels. Rigorous engagements with students contributed to developing the stance taken by the University on the issue of mandatory vaccination. However, the SRC members interviewed called for even more intensive capacity development of students in structures other than Academic Exclusion Committees, as they felt poorly equipped to participate effectively in faculty and academic committees. They argued that representatives should be elected to committees a full year before the beginning of a new year, since electing student representatives in June is considered too late as, by then, students have made many other commitments.

Student participation in committees such as Admission, Registration, and Graduation is a key QA component in the student life cycle, and UJ is commended for its positive involvement of students in governance bodies.

Research

Emerging researchers are given opportunities, such as workshops and time relief, to conduct research. Researchers are therefore able to focus on their research while the teaching load is delegated. UJ follows a focused research process, and a group research approach in dedicated research entities receives an increased allocation to resources as a means of increasing research output. Staff actively pursue international collaborations that enhance the international reputation of UJ.

Research niche areas are based on identified needs. Researchers partner with industry and provide mentorship to novice researchers in excellent research facilities. Attracting and supporting postdoctoral fellows is part of the internationalisation process, and postdoctoral fellows contribute significantly to the increase in research outputs.

Academics are encouraged to research infusing 4IR into the curriculum, while the research focus of the chair of Teaching and Learning and the Pan-African Institute aims to increase knowledge on African epistemologies that are seen as mechanisms to drive decolonisation. UJ understands the importance of impacting society and being an agent of change on the African continent. UJ has instituted various activities to drive the Pan-African agenda, including recruiting academics from other African countries, partnering with academic colleagues elsewhere in Africa, and steering collaborative research focusing on certain SDGs.

Research and teaching are not seen as mutually exclusive; at UJ, teaching is research-driven. UJ encourages scholarship in teaching and learning (SoTL). The CASD has offered workshops on SoTL to promote an understanding of how research and teaching are linked. Faculty-based focus groups look at the quality of teaching and learning and how an integrated approach informs research and community engagement. SoTL usually feeds into the UG curriculum, for example, through the promotion of case study writing and using practice notes in sessions. Several applications (i.e., gamification) have been developed to monitor student responses during lectures. The Post Graduate School (PGS) Advisory Board helps to link research in professional fields with teaching and learning and provides reports at regular meetings. These reports are submitted to various institutional committees.

The panel has noted that interviewees raised concerns about whether UJ's acceleration of the research agenda is at the expense of staff wellbeing.

Community engagement

The Community Engagement Unit at UJ works collaboratively with the faculties and divisions

across campuses. The **philosophy and scope** of community engagement is expressed as a focus on service-learning, research, and organised outreach projects to various communities. A bi-annual community engagement event shares flagship projects, while community-based forums are held four times a year. The Faculty of Science, for instance, participated in a water donation drive and conducted career guidance at Soweto schools; the Faculty of Education and FADA painted Soweto classrooms during community outreach; UJ has trained accounting teachers at state schools, and supported inmates at the Krugersdorp Prison with academic skills development.

Faculty-based focus groups look at integrating teaching and learning, research and community engagement: UJ understands that **service-learning** is about giving back to communities while students develop competencies that enable them to be critical citizens who think about societal challenges in their communities and who can work in teams; thus, contributing to developing attributes that characterise a UJ graduate.

Community-based education seems integral to the UJ vision to be a university of choice in Africa. UJ also aspires to make an impact on the African continent, and values getting closer to communities. UJ offers an online tutoring programme for high school learners, especially from poor areas, and has established mobile libraries to improve literacies.

Community-based learning links to service-learning curricula too. Final-year law students gain experience practising law in a practical module where community clients engage directly with students. Through such projects, UJ contributes to addressing issues of poverty, housing, xenophobia, child well-being, and slavery. These projects are used to drive the decolonisation debate, especially in the law curriculum.

Collaborative research with community-based organisations establishes intervention programmes, such as providing accessible nutrition education and developing an urban farming project in Hillbrow to address sustainable food production. These projects attract international students interested in community-based and action-based research.

Quality assurance

UJ has annual discussions across faculties on trends in enrolment, qualification design, programme and curriculum reviews, and the Programme Working Group (PWG) meets quarterly to engage in depth on programme reviews and improvements, as well as to develop new programmes for the market. The outcomes are shared with academics who then spearhead conversations on curriculum design and review within the relevant department(s), seemingly a very consultative process. The executive committee of the Senate (Senex)

approves programmes, and decisions are noted by the Senate. The QA value chain is thus aligned and integrated with all the necessary governance processes. Where programmes or departments had been reviewed and improvements formulated no improvement plans were however seen by the panel. The panel did find references made to improvement plans in the Faculty of Science, in academic policy and reflection on external reviews.

The discussions of the PQM by the DVCs, deans and HoDs are taken as an opportunity for self-reflection, focusing on the relevance or currency of a programme as well as the identification of emerging qualification needs. HoDs are responsible for positioning their departments strategically through the development of new qualifications and proposing the phasing out of qualifications according to enrolment plans. Multiple inputs on market needs inform enrolment targets. The continuous review of qualifications as programmes is driven by the office of the DVC: Academic and the Registrar.

Commendations:

- e) UJ is commended for its proactive preparation of students, including comprehensive, holistic and sustained academic and psychological support, and the provisioning of data and electronic devices, all of which enabled students to adapt to ERT.
- f) The effective utilisation of and the relationship between the various governance structures within the Teaching and Learning mandate, the use of data points that lead to the identification of student support interventions, and aligning staff development initiatives with these needs, are commendable and need to be shared with other HEIs. The institution also allows opportunities for staff to present best practices through a masterclass arrangement.

Recommendations:

- 4) UJ introduced an Invigilator App in order to assure the integrity of online assessments. Academics and students indicated that the App was not 100% accurate in detecting transgressions. It was also stated that, due to load shedding and poor internet connection, many students could not submit assignments or tests. It is recommended that the use of the Invigilator App be thoroughly assessed in terms of fitness for purpose.
- 5) It is recommended that UJ assess the feasibility of presenting some of the modules in an African language, perhaps at the postgraduate level to contribute to the Pan-African agenda (module outlines and study guides).
- 6) It is recommended that increased access through RPL as an alternative route be

considered.

- 7) It is recommended that training be provided to students who serve on different committees, and that the timing of the training initiatives be reconsidered to prepare students optimally for their commitments.
- 8) It is recommended that UJ engage with academic staff to ensure a balance between the drive towards the research output by the institution, and staff wellbeing.

Standard 6: *Human, infrastructural, knowledge management and financial resources support the delivery of the institution's core academic functions across all sites of provision, in alignment with the concomitant quality management system, in accordance with the institution's mission.*

The professional development of academic staff is managed by the DTE. The DTE offers professional development opportunities to enhance academics' capacity to teach in different modalities. Professional opportunities focused on the teaching role include the PGDip (HE), masterclasses, workshops, and publications on innovation in teaching, including SoTL. Faculty-based instructional designers (IDs) and the Centre for Academic Technologies (CAT) offer extensive support for online module design and monitor the quality and offering of such modules. The Accelerated Academic Mentorship Programmes (AAMP) offers academics extensive support.

The principle underpinning the academic staff development programmes offered by the ASD is the need to ensure student success. A holistic view of teaching and learning is needed, and the CASD promotes engaged pedagogies that ensure epistemic access. The partnership between CASD, CAT and the Centre for Academic Planning and Quality Promotion (CAPQP) seems effective.

The DTE should share the concept of masterclasses with other university staff development units. At these masterclasses, academics reflect on and share scholarly teaching practices with colleagues. Although the idea of peer-sharing practices is not new, calling it a masterclass is likely to appeal to academics and attract bigger audiences. Wider acceptance of the masterclasses provides opportunities for presenting best practices. Academic staffing is well-managed, and aligned with institutional growth, and mentoring and coaching for the professional development of next-generation academics is well-resourced.

The impact of these academic staff development programmes is monitored through activities, such as teaching portfolios submitted as part of the promotion process, check-in meetings, and regular reviews of programmes using different platforms, such as Mentimeter, and Google

questionnaires.

The position of Assistant Lecturer (AL) is an interesting innovation. Three-year positions are available through a faculty-based referral system for master's degree students. The scope of AL work includes teaching with a focus on research. The AL is a talent pipeline offering a developmental path for emerging academics. The incumbent is paired with a mentor or coach, with an opportunity to participate in the AAMP. Human Resources (HR) contribute to the AL 'onboarding' (i.e., induction) process while the impact of ALs in the institution is also monitored.

Positioning professional development in the same unit as the QA practitioners has turned out to be a preferred practice and structural arrangement for the University as it closes the loop in the teaching and learning space from a QA perspective.

UJ has a comprehensive Staff Wellness Programme with some services being outsourced. During the pandemic, preventive programmes and capacity building in relation to mental health and stress became a particular focus.

The institution has the required infrastructure to support the academic project on all its campuses, including specialist laboratories, computer laboratories and appropriate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provision. As part of the GES strategy, UJ prioritised the widespread availability of Wi-Fi across all campuses. Its ICT 4.0 strategy is designed to support the strategic objectives and goals of the University. UJ has committed itself to 'anytime and anywhere' connectivity, which seems to have been implemented on all the campuses. During the engagement with the students, it was indicated that not all residences were connected yet. Innovations, such as the chatbot and the development of apps, enable both staff and students to log calls when they experience challenges.

UJ is investing in a university-wide, digital, or virtual campus ICT project aimed at conceptualising what the University will look like in the future in terms of, among other things, operations, safety, and the classroom of the future. Hardware and software for smart classrooms have been acquired and are being installed. Facilities that simulate real-world environments, such as the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) laboratory, and virtual reality laboratories – used in courses in mining and education – ensure that students receive training that prepares them adequately for the world of work.

UJ has adopted other innovative approaches to afford students opportunities to learn and practise real-world skills. To this end, it has developed the notion of Work-Integrated Education (WIE), which incorporates diverse forms of practice-based learning, including WIL, simulations, service-learning, problem-based learning, etc. WIE is seemingly adequately

monitored across all sites.

While UJ is exploring a hybrid model of teaching and learning at the PG level, it encourages face-to-face learning for UG students.

In terms of **financial management and resources**, the inclusive, zero-based budget process has the academic project at its core and ensures financial stability for the institution. In 2020, for example, budget prioritisation supported online learning, with devices being made available to NSFAS-funded and other students in need, as well as making e-textbooks available. Sound financial principles supported by the budgeting guidelines are applied through the budgetary management process. Over-expenditure is permitted for critical activities through a dedicated approval process. It was noted that requisitions related to research projects are allowed towards the end of the year.

The initiatives to raise funds for underprivileged students are commendable. It was noted that UJ, as a well-resourced institution, approved a decision to register NSFAS students without confirmation of funding, despite the associated financial risk. Because of a delay in the dispensing of NSFAS-approved student funding, approval by the Council was sought to fund NSFAS students using projections on the number of students that NSFAS was likely to fund. The University mitigated the risks of non-payment by having students sign an acknowledgement of debt, ensuring that they are ultimately responsible for the payment of fees. The University also used R20 million from the SRC Trust Fund to assist with registration.

The institution applies extremely prospective financial management principles, with rigorous checks and balances within a zero-based budget, and maintains a healthy reserve. UJ is therefore strategically cushioned against unforeseen and/or untimely but necessary future expenditures (such as COVID-19), but its financial approach also enables the institution to be very innovative.

The equitable allocation of resources across all campuses is notable. Campus finance offices have a business partner function and serve as intermediaries between finance, the faculties and entities or units. These offices are responsible for facilitating discussion and allocations during the budget planning processes. It also provides a large presence on the APK and DFC campuses where students can be serviced when matters on NSFAS arise. The executive deans and teams prioritise resources according to faculty and campus needs, and smart classes are equally distributed across campuses according to needs. Greater amounts were spent on backlog maintenance on the older campuses. Residences on the DFC and Bunting campuses are being refurbished. The NASPERS building is being refurbished to

house the Business School, School of Architecture, and research chairs.

UJ positions itself as an international university of choice and the Library and Information Services (LIS) play an important role in the quest of UJ towards being a research-intensive university. The various strategies range from encouraging collaboration between centres, institutes and faculties to aligning research with the SDGs, focusing on increasing citation rates, and providing the development of research capacity for PG students, post-doctoral fellows and emerging scholars. Promoting internationalisation at the faculty level is done by using the virtual space where broader international perspectives and sources (such as the use of international instruments in law) are showcased.

UJ has a library on every campus, and all students have access. Since 2018, UJ has made approximately R10.5 million available annually for purchasing e-textbooks for students in priority modules. By the end of 2020, all the available funding had been used with 123 e-textbooks downloaded 27 400 times. Information management is promoted by competent, discipline-based subject librarians. There is equitable resourcing for journals and for purchasing materials on a need basis. LIS facilities are being made available online and through the offering of webinars.

Commendations:

- g) Innovation in practices and approaches, such as the provisioning of e-textbooks, keeping abreast of information trends, and providing all resources electronically through the library. Information management contributes to UJ as an internationally recognised institution.

Standard 7: *Credible and reliable data (for example on throughput and completion rates) are systematically captured, employed and analysed as an integral part of the institutional quality management system so as to inform consistent and sustainable decision-making.*

UJ is a known front-runner amongst the public HEIs for its digitisation and digitalisation, having invested in sophisticated databases for academic and operational purposes, which are used for analysis, monitoring, and reporting. UJ generates specific reports to inform the day-to-day operations as well as operational and strategic decision-making, and to measure progress against targets, strategic objectives, and KPIs. The core functions of teaching and learning, and research are supported and monitored by information drawn from the data.

Cutting-edge technology is also used to support the student life cycle. The student information system integrates with other systems, and data are retrieved for reporting.

Applicants can apply online. Live updates are provided throughout the registration process allowing the institution to make data-driven decisions, amend strategies, and devise plans accordingly. Despite the volume and complexity of application and registration data, a high level of data integrity is maintained.

UJ is heading towards full robotic automation of all business processes, an ambitious initiative necessitated by large numbers of applicants, students, and enquiries. Covid-19 was a driver for moving processes to online platforms. With the digitalisation at the university, the concern is that face-to-face interactions with students could be jeopardised.

These determining factors for the success of the digital strategy at UJ were noted:

- 4IR is determinedly driven by institutional leadership that sets the tone.
- The merger, which led to the establishment of UJ, forced a rethink of its business processes, which informed its digitalisation.
- The need to improve application rates led to simplifying and clarifying application processes.
- Collaboration within the institution is essential to capture, generate and retrieve and use data effectively.
- Systems training is part of process training.

Commendations:

- h) The UJ management is commended for driving digitalisation throughout the institution. This has led to a highly sophisticated and reliable data management system and process, which in turn enables consistent and sound decision-making.

Recommendations:

- 9) It is important that the institution balance its student-centred approach and the human touch within the drive towards digitalisation.

Standard 8: *Systems and processes monitor the institution's capacity for quality management, based on the evidence gathered.*

Both the MEC and the Covid Coordination Committee have access to real-time data on matters such as teaching and learning, research, campus activities, student-related matters, and communication, and deans and HoDs can access information specific to their domains, whether at faculty, programme, or module level.

With regard to quality management of teaching and learning, a priority module index

referencing all interventions that targeted the improvement of student success rates was established. For example, data on student performance in assessments before and after interventions were assessed. This provided information on the success of the intervention.

The PsyCad service captures student information when students access it. Using this information, staff are able to refer students to other, useful sites. As an effective management tool, PsyCad identifies sites requiring more staff. Information relating to the type of problems that students experience enables the unit to employ relevant staff and an increased number of social workers. PsyCad is in the process of employing a resident psychologist.

Similarly, Health Services has developed a patient recording system, Medimes, which provides health professionals with access to information about health challenges across campuses. They can then create intervention programmes accordingly.

Information about NSFAS students who had not logged into Blackboard during the pandemic was used to inform support interventions to ensure that these students were not left behind.

Information is clearly readily available to and easily accessible by decision-makers at all levels of the institution. Staff and students provided multiple examples of participation in governance structures where the QA of the core functions of the University was discussed. Many also mentioned the training interventions available to equip them to unlock data for decision-making. Senior managers received system training, and SOP manuals developed for every process, are updated regularly. The Academic Administration Unit coordinates and conducts faculty training sessions for business processes.

Commendations:

- i) The institution is commended for venturing into the sphere of robotics and automation, with specific reference to the registration processes, having sophisticated and well-integrated information systems, and empowering role players at all levels of the institution to access and utilise data and information for sound decision-making.

Focus Area 3: The coherence and integration of the institutional quality management system support the core academic functions

The four standards in Focus Area 3 concentrate on the coherence and integration of the various components comprising the institutional QMS, and on how these work in concert to support the likelihood of student success and improve the quality of learning, teaching and

research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive integrated community engagement in accordance with the mission of the institution.

Standard 9: *An evidence-based coherent, reasonable, functional and meaningfully structured relationship exists between all components of the institutional quality management system.*

Examples of the integration between multiple processes and structures among the operations at UJ are provided using the 4IR and decolonisation as instances. Additional examples demonstrating existing linkages and/or relationships and synergies among the Internal Quality Management System (IQMS) components could have been provided, but any additional evidence for corroboration is limited. Responses to further enquiry about relationships between and within the components of the IQMS confirmed the SER statement (p. 131) that “the integration of operations and quality assurance is less formal”. The emphasis was seemingly on:

- 4IR, Pan-Africanism, the GES strategy and decolonisation, and how institutional efforts focused on implementing these strategic initiatives at the curriculum and departmental level – and with external partners; and
- related reports and discussions by the Senate and Council, where
 - reports submitted to institutional committees indicate how the department, at the module level, deals with decolonisation; and
 - the Senate subcommittee on teaching and learning invites academics to present current activities and practices in relation to decolonisation.

An integrated and meaningfully structured relationship exists between all role players, if one considers the entire curriculum design process up to the actual offering of the modular content. Instructional Designers (IDs), who are attached to faculties and colleges, are responsible for quality reviews of module design and online pedagogies and work with the relevant lecturer or HoD. IDs also conduct training programmes, working with individual staff members, and they work closely with CASD and other support units. This example provides evidence of the integration of different structures and processes within the IQMS.

While the evidence for Standard 5 demonstrates a system of quality monitoring and evaluation of the learning and teaching function, the same could not be established for the functions of research and community engagement. It was not possible to conclude that the developments and improvements in these areas result from a coherent and functional QMS. It was noted (in Standard 5) that examples are provided of community engagement projects that had been

initiated by faculties. These projects integrate research and inform learning and teaching and vice versa.

The relationship between the various IQMS structures is said to be limited to activities, outdated policies and plans, and discussions by the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee (STLC), MECA, Senex, and Senate. There is evidence of the evaluation and reporting of functions, through the monitoring of the KPIs, particularly in relation to the statutory annual plan. The panel could not confirm that internal reporting informs decision-making for continuous improvement since no improvement plans could be found. The PMS (which is embedded in the strategic objectives of the University, and which underpins all performance in respect of the institutional goals) informs the monitoring of individual performance via formal mid-year and year-end reviews and thus supports the academic function. Interviewees confirmed that the PMS was linked to a performance bonus.

Conducting programme reviews forms a critical component of monitoring and evaluating the learning and teaching function (also addressed in Standard 8). The outcomes of the reviews illustrate – or provide evidence of – a sound relationship between academic departments, faculties, and oversight units in the Division of Teaching Excellence (DTE) and the Division of Institutional Planning, Evaluation and Monitoring (DIPEM). For example, the SER notes, “various departments from different faculties in the University are collaborating to enhance their students’ 4IR experience”. However, no structured process exists where all programmes are periodically reviewed, to ensure that all programmes are indeed reviewed and that none is neglected. The approach employed for the identification and scheduling of programmes for review seems to be the responsibility of faculties and departments. As stated in the SER (p. 129), the “process is based on Faculties identifying the programmes to be reviewed”. For example, the religion faculty follows a five-year cycle to benchmark their offerings against national and international standards, whereas engineering programmes are scheduled two years prior to their external accreditation. In the Science Faculty, module throughput rates inform which programmes will be reviewed so that weaknesses can be addressed.

Meaningfully structured relationships between the core academic functions and the support divisions lead to continued development, with monitoring of the interventions implemented.

Although there seems to be coherence within the Quality Management Framework, certain policies and plans such as the UJ Quality Plan (2010 to 2016) and the *Guidelines for Programme Reviews* (2015) to name only two, need revision. Evidence of the integration and coherence within the QMS in terms of policy governance could therefore not be determined.

Recommendations:

- 10) It is recommended that the institution review all policies and plans that support a coherent Quality Management Framework, as some seem to be outdated.
- 11) It is recommended that the University develop a schedule that will accommodate all programmes and academic support units and/or services to be reviewed within a review cycle to be determined by the University. This should be done considering the QAF that is envisaged to come into effect from 2024.

Standard 10: *Evidence-based regular and dedicated governance and management oversight of the quality assurance system exists.*

The introduction of ERT in 2020 was used to show that decision-making is not done in isolation and is under dedicated management oversight. The interrelationship between decision-making nodes (such as MEC, MECA, the deans, and HoDs) includes a feedback loop to the structure responsible for implementation. Evidence-based, regular and dedicated governance and management oversight of the QA system exists. Quality management begins with the executive dean and faculty management team translating the institutional vision and mission statements into short-, medium-, and long-term goals, and devising the strategies for achieving these, as reported in the annual faculty reports, where performance assessments are reported against institutional sets of KPIs.

A format or template for annual faculty reporting is not standardised, and annual faculty reports differ in terms of standard, content, and quality. Standardising the report format would facilitate comparative analysis for institutional reporting.

Individual module lecturers are the custodians of the quality management of curricula, teaching and learning. Their relative autonomy as subject experts is balanced with clear lines of accountability to faculty structures (the Faculty Management Committee [FMC]). FMC decisions are discussed and ratified at Faculty Board meetings.

The *Central Academic Administration Report* outlines accountability in the management and governance of the student academic life cycle, from application to graduation. The Student Enrolment Centre (SEC) aligns its planning and reporting with the institutional and faculty enrolment targets.

At UJ, key performance areas (KPAs) are filtered down to line managers, who identify and discuss accountability for specific KPAs with the relevant staff. The KPAs are recorded as their responsibility in the performance contract, ensuring all staff members work towards the

same strategic goals. Staff non-compliance with certain QA requirements is identified through a dedicated reporting process and assessment of performance at various institutional levels.

The VC's Distinguished Awards, the UJenius programme for students, the VC's weekly letters, and stakeholder reports celebrate good practice in academic and support areas. The Institutional Annual Report is presented to the Council. The reports are analysed and discussed when targets and objectives are not met to ensure future success.

Standard 11: *Planning and processes exist for the reasonable and functional allocation of resources to all components of the institutional quality management system.*

UJ, as a multi-campus university, allocates resources following the principle of equality amongst all campuses, according to campus-specific requirements. Where faculties have multi-campus presences, distribution is according to the needs of the faculty on that campus. The executive deans and their teams allocate budgets based on faculty operational requirements and strategic intent. The ring-fenced funds allocated for the GES initiative are an example of resource allocation aligned with strategic intent. The finance department has a presence on all campuses and acts as an intermediary between finance and the faculties and entities or units.

The panel recommended that the financial needs for the institutional QMS be integrated into the annual budgeting of the different structures, in line with their relevant functions, with each executive line manager identifying financial and staff resourcing needs.

The Academic Workload Policy (2019) proposes principles and guidelines for determining workload within the teaching, research, and community engagement functions. The executive deans, in consultation with the relevant HoDs, are responsible for applying the workload model to ensure an equitable and fair academic workload across faculties and departments. The same principle (which seeks to promote transparent and equitable workload distribution), also applies in the support units.

Standard 12: *The quality assurance system achieves its purpose efficiently and effectively.*

The effectiveness and efficiency of internal quality systems are most stringently tested when an organisation faces disruptions that require radical changes. Disturbances, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, require quick responses to ensure that business continues. UJ has reflected on its response to the pandemic by implementing ERT, which certainly tested the efficiency and effectiveness of the QMS well beyond its architecture of governance and policy.

[Q]uality, not as an abstract concept, but as a lived reality, now depended on the sum of

individual and collective commitment and strategies in response to a truly novel challenge. The uniqueness of challenges meant that staff was now called upon to draw on their agency in ways that well exemplify IQA (SER, p. 135).

All departments, faculties, and staff members faced both personal and professional challenges to which the University needed to respond; support staff needed to orient operations to online delivery, and Central Academic Administration (CAA) had to adjust all the procedures and time frames that support the student life cycle. A fully-fledged online application and selection process was implemented and is “close to 70% ready for a fully online academic administration” (SER, p. 138).

Fitness for purpose was maintained as the QA system conformed to the approved policies, and procedures, and the performance culture at UJ helped it to respond appropriately to the disruption.

UJ prioritised **resources** for the academic project, providing additional, well-conceptualised support to academic and support staff, and students. Students received data, devices for online learning, and psychological and academic support. PsyCad provided a cost-effective system (as already reported) with 24-hour access. Online seminars supported students and academics alike. The availability and use of Blackboard to teach, WIL arrangements with employers, uses of the technology underpinning the pedagogical approach to enhance teaching, group training sessions for students and academics, and collaborative approaches amongst the faculties and schools were all constantly assessed.

This collaborative approach facilitated through the DTE and its divisions, ensured that QA practices were implemented. For example, the arrangements put in place by the CAT meant the Ulink portal engaged with students, provided learning materials and aligned the registration with the learning process. Through its strong information technology (IT) department, UJ built in-house systems for capturing results and randomising examination paper systems. Additional resources supported the introduction of the digitisation process.

The University creates an environment for engagements with various industry representatives, advisory board members and other stakeholders. This contributes to the relevance of the curriculum, professional standards for practice in the workplace, and innovations for consideration. A shared responsibility was acknowledged towards the resources required where work placement is necessary.

The panel agreed with the concluding statement for this standard in the SER, namely that the 2020 experience of online teaching affirmed the soundness and adaptability of governance,

management, policies, systems and processes underpinning the QMS at UJ.

Commendations:

- j) UJ has exceptionally demonstrated that the QA processes were effectively and efficiently implemented, particularly through introducing the ERT processes in a seamless manner that was fit for purpose.

Focus Area 4: Curriculum development, learning and teaching support the likelihood of student success

The four standards in Focus Area 4 concentrate on how effectively the institutional quality management system enhances the likelihood of student success, improves learning and teaching and supports the scholarship of learning and teaching. These standards drill down in greater detail in Focus Area 2.

Standard 13: *An effective institutional system for programme design, approval, delivery, management, and review is in place.*

The University has procedures for programme design and development, approval and review. UJ processes and decision-making seem to be thorough at each stage and across all levels of programme design.

The approval processes for formal qualifications are distinct from those for non-formal qualifications, such as the Short Learning Programmes (SLPs). SLPs do not proceed to the Senate but are approved by Senex only, largely a pragmatic response to the challenge of turnaround times for SLP approval (see Standard 5), which allows the institution to respond quickly to the market. This accelerated process does not diminish the quality of the approval and review process for the SLPs as the Programme Working Group (PWG meets quarterly and engages in-depth on matters material to offering the SLPs. This flexibility in the SLP approval process is commendable, contributing to the currency of innovative programmes identified for skills development. However, an even quicker response could be created by holding these PWG meetings monthly, as their processes could then be aligned even better with other institutional meetings.

Proposed programme design matters are initiated in the departments, prepared and approved there, and then proceed to faculty structures, which have both teaching and learning and quality oversight roles. Once approved there, the programme proposals are ratified by Faculty Boards. The involvement of the PWG as a quality structure in this process contributes to a

thorough consideration of programme design matters. Once all Faculty Board and PWG concerns have been addressed, the programme approval applications are submitted to Senex, and subsequent ratification by the Senate. This process flow ensures an effective quality process.

Programme reviews, which follow the same process, consider the extent to which the programme takes into account student characteristics and the articulation possibilities within the PQM. All programmes are developed with articulation in mind through a work-integrated process. UJ is therefore aware of and does address articulation possibilities, specifically in relation to the diploma, as required by the HEQSF. The regular reviews of the PQM ensure its alignment with designed articulation pathways, and one of the strengths at UJ is the pathways created to articulate between the University of Technology (UoT) (vocational) programmes and formative or professional degree qualifications. Senior management is accountable for the suite of qualifications and programmes, which are not considered in isolation. When the dean and the HoD in question evaluate programmes, two drivers are considered: have the programmes possibly lost currency have they thus become irrelevant and do emerging qualifications need to be considered instead. These discussions take place with due consideration of enrolment patterns and targets.

Benchmarking, internal programme reviews, moderator reports, student feedback, advisory feedback from professional bodies and national reviews are all duly considered. UJ develops questionnaires for benchmarking programmes to improve and strengthen the programmes. UJ also requests facilitators to review the SER and to consider all improvements suggested. UJ also conducts regular programme reviews and/or evaluations, using platforms, such as Mentimeter, regular reporting and check-in meetings, and then provides sessions and/or workshops to meet the support needs of academics, as part of the academic development process. The robust programme review process is thus developmental and linked to staff development opportunities offered by the DTE and the CAT. UJ encourages colleagues to engage in processes of self-reflection and to learn from each other.

Programme reviews consider the coherence between the intentions articulated during accreditation applications and the implementation of programmes. New initiatives, such as African-centeredness and 4IR, are testimony to this. Discussions across faculties deal with trends in the design of qualifications, any new initiatives that will influence graduate attributes and the design of curricula that take cognisance of market needs and shortages.

Decisions taken during times of significant disruption regarding curricula, teaching and learning approaches, assessment, and the role of technology, remain within the precepts of

the QMS. The programme review processes (both internal and external) thus contribute to a robust and responsive PQM. UJ has implemented an efficient and effective QA system in the form of policies, systems, procedures, and governance structures.

Recommendations:

12) It is recommended that a dedicated five-year cycle for programme reviews should be implemented.

Standard 14: *There is evidence-based engagement at various institutional levels, among staff, and among staff and students, with:*

- a. curriculum transformation, curriculum reform and renewal;*
- b. learning and teaching innovation; and*
- c. the role of technology (1) in the curriculum, (2) in the world of work, and (3) in society in general.*

The University facilitates **engagements** with students and staff on curriculum innovation, transformation, and reform, and aligning curriculum intent with the vision of the University. UJ staff and students actively debated decolonising the curriculum, and the language and culture of the University. These debates have resulted in a shared understanding of the meaning and implications of the process required, with implementation taking place in different ways. The evidence for decolonisation in the curriculum varies from changing the pedagogy to become culturally more inclusive, to including different ways of knowing and/or epistemologies, such as oral traditions.

Two other areas of deliberation were those around assessment processes, and programme and qualification structures. Deliberation on the question of possible over-assessment resulted in changes in the number of assessment opportunities offered to students in different faculties.

The University recognises the needs of a diverse student population. Despite evidence that 'the market' prefers focused degree programmes, UJ has recognised that the changing world of work requires different knowledge and skills and has therefore explored ways in which interdisciplinary programme offerings can be developed to prepare "future-fit graduates". The Annual Report presents evidence from the Graduate Employability Study that gathered information from 2017, 2018 and 2019 UJ graduates. The 7 697 responses (the highest number ever) showed that 90.5% of the respondents were employed within a year of completing their degrees. Graduates who had completed four-year B degrees and those with PG diplomas and master's degrees were amongst the most successful in becoming employed.

Students expressed their appreciation of the UJ leadership. They valued the response by the

University to the pandemic and the introduction of ERT. They noted that the University had put good support structures in place and that the student leadership was involved when challenges required discussion. An example was the difficulties with the online registration period. With the intervention of the SRC and the resolute actions of the organisation, the technological glitches in the system were eliminated. Students however observed that University feedback to student surveys was absent.

The commitment of PsyCad to promote student mental health has been noted. PsyCad introduced a wide variety of psychological interventions and facilitated academic accommodation in partnership with students, lecturers, departments, and faculties. Furthermore, the PsyCad Career Services Unit provides career development and graduate recruitment services.

WIE, as an overarching concept, includes, inter alia, WIL, and is a characteristic of the UJ suite of curricula. The Law Clinic is a good example of **innovation** using WIE. Student learning in the Law Faculty is embedded in well-structured and functional legal aid clinics. In Biokinetics, students practise on patients or clients, and hospitality management students are trained in a simulated work environment. WIL is embedded in all new Engineering Faculty programmes, while Emergency Medical Care (EMC) exposes students to an integration of theory and practice within a simulated workplace. Education students have real-world experience in the teaching practice module.

An industry-related committee at UJ discusses issues related to WIL. The UJ WIE booklet (2021) provides details on WIL requirements and operations. Student involvement in this process is not evident, but industry participation through advisory boards and committees is clear.

The focus on **technology** in the curriculum is demonstrated through the new BA degree with specialisation in Politics, Economics and Technology, which aims to prepare students for critical citizenship in a context of rapid technological change. The combination of WIE and social justice is very innovative. The Institute for Intelligent Systems (IIS) has developed a master's programme in collaboration with the Departments of Psychology, Anatomy and Philosophy to respond to the need for a "University's Industry 4.0" transition.

The focus of UJ on 4IR is one way in which the University distinguishes itself in the SA HE landscape. UJ staff view 4IR as a mechanism for introducing technology into the curriculum. Examples include computer-generated simulations of real-world scenarios and conditions to train students to perform emergency medical rescue services. Another innovative example is

the printing of construction materials for low-cost housing by the FEBE (Doornfontein campus).

Supporting academics by having faculty-based IDs with links to the CAT is noteworthy. The IDs help design courses via the institutional Learning Management System (LMS), based on issues flagged during programme reviews. This investment in professional staff to support the academic project has contributed to the relatively speedy and smooth manner in which UJ moved teaching and learning online.

An important aspect of curriculum renewal in the SA context relates to the use of multiple **languages** for academic purposes. At UJ, the Multilingual Language Services Office (MLSO) provides language services to staff and students. Innovative pedagogies use different languages to facilitate epistemic access to the disciplines. The UJ English Language Programme (UJELP) helps to develop students' proficiency in English as an academic language, while faculty-specific Mastering Academic and Professional Skills (MAPS) courses aim to develop discipline-based language and literacy practices.

UJ promotes the SoTL as a mechanism for **researching** challenges in teaching and learning. One of the KPAs for teaching is significantly defined as: "Teaching development as a scholarly activity". SoTL research is funded through the Teaching Innovation Fund. Collaborative SoTL research and publication are encouraged. UJ has definite platforms for sharing SoTL, such as masterclasses and Connect@1 sessions. The development of SoTL is also facilitated through a module on the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDip [HE]), the publication of SoTL studies in peer-reviewed, in-house publications, as well as in *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South* journal, housed at UJ. Furthermore, criteria related to the Teaching Portfolio in the academic promotions process provide evidence of the valuing of scholarly teaching at UJ.

There is evidence that UJ ensures that staff in different areas – including executive, administrative, support, professional and academic staff – are cognisant of the vision and mission of the University and that there is a shared understanding of its goals in relation to the academic project. The commitment by UJ to being responsive to its context, including its location in Africa, means that it capitalises on its location in Johannesburg, South Africa's economic hub, through the creation of partnerships and suitable academic programmes.

UJ has managed to create a shared understanding among staff of its priorities for curriculum innovation, including teaching, learning and assessment. Engagements with staff across various disciplines, levels of seniority, and experience ensure that standards are set and aligned with the vision of the University. Effective structures and fora have been established

for deliberations on curriculum matters, and processes for monitoring and evaluating implementation are in place.

Recommendations:

- 13) It is recommended that processes be put in place to engage students on different fora in terms of issues related to their learning, innovation, curriculum, and WIL. Data from student surveys on various aspects of teaching and curricula should be considered as part of these engagements, and timeous feedback should be provided to participating students.

Standard 15: *The students' exposure to learning and teaching at the institution, across all sites and modes of provision, is experienced as positive and enabling of their success.*

There are multiple opportunities for student feedback on the quality of modules and programmes, as well as on their experiences of courses, teaching, learning and assessment, mostly through surveys, including faculty mini-surveys. The CAT surveys focus on students' experiences of online learning, especially during the ERT period. The feedback is analysed, and made available to staff, and the findings are discussed as relevant and then used to alter teaching to improve the student learning experience.

Normally, all modules should be evaluated every two years. During the ERT period, all first-year modules were evaluated to ensure a quick turnaround time for where challenges were being experienced. Data generated from questionnaire responses were compiled in the Report on Module and Teaching Evaluations. Findings determined whether academic development interventions were needed to address aspects inhibiting student performance. While recognising the special circumstances presented during COVID-19, the panel cautioned against using standardised tools as a one-size-fits-all approach to evaluating teaching and courses. It is noted, for example, that during ERT, student feedback led to adjustments on timelines for the submission of assessments.

UG and PG students fill in separate surveys that monitor 'student life' experiences at the University broadly. UG experience surveys (UGES) from 2018 to 2020 provided evidence of respondents' satisfaction with the services and support provided by UJ, particularly during ERT. Approximately 20% of the 2020 undergraduates responded to the survey. The large majority (80%) of these were positive about online teaching and assessment processes, despite the challenging circumstances (SER, p. 155).

Postgraduate students who completed the PG Student Experience on their lockdown

experiences in 2020 were largely positive (94.8%) about their learning experiences and the support they received (SER, p. 157). The time taken to grant ethical clearance for studies and the time taken to examine theses were both raised as concerns.

The 2021 UJ survey on PG students who did not return indicated finances as the main obstacle. During interviews, some students confirmed that they were unsure of where to find relevant information about PG studies. It was noted that the PGS had subsequently compiled an information resource.

Graduate surveys are exclusively confined to the transition to the world of work, and no qualitative assessment of student experiences in the teaching domain is included. Similarly, no evidence was reported or could be found about the processes and mechanisms that deal with student complaints, also in relation to academic exclusions and appeals. The panel was aware of a process calling for a national student ombudsman office.

The 2021 Studocu rankings rate UJ jointly first for students' experiences of studying remotely and for diversity and inclusivity.

The DIPEM is central to monitoring KPAs and KPIs at UJ by analysing relevant data and producing reports in relation to its APP. Reports on student success, throughput, and dropout rates are used in planning and decision-making from executive management downwards.

Standard 16: *Institutions engage with and reflect on the employability of their graduates in a changing world.*

Since 2014, UJ has administered annual surveys to recent first-time graduates from all faculties. The surveys gather and analyse relevant data about the employability of recent graduates. The latest report presents the graduate tracer data for 2018 to 2020. Since 2020, PG students have been included. Generally, the majority of graduates find employment in the first three months following graduation (64.1% for students with a three-year B degree, and 70.6% for students with a four-year B degree), with 90.5% of participants finding employment within one year of graduation.

The *Graduate Employability Survey Report* of 2021 links the UJ findings with a research-based account of employability, nationally and internationally, to consider measures that would enhance employability. Data reflect on employment status, the value of the qualification to employment and the relationship between study and current employment. It also considered the impact of COVID-19 on job opportunities, stating that 65.2% of graduates had difficulty finding employment. The employment categories were aligned with the Quacquarelli Symonds

(QS) Employability Rankings definitions in 2020.

UJ participates in the Universum annual talent survey that works with over 2,000 universities, alumni groups, and professional organisations. Comparative data provide a snapshot of the employment readiness of a graduate cohort. In 2020, 71.4% of UJ graduates felt prepared for their field of employment.

The South African Graduate Employers Association (SAGEA) surveys and the experience surveys (UG and PG) asked students about their employment aspirations. UJ identified career counselling as necessary before a student registers: PsyCad functions as a hub for counselling and connectivity between students and employers. Its on-campus Career Resource Centres provide access to printed and electronic career and company information. Its Graduate Recruitment Programme is supported by a variety of top national and international companies and facilitates graduate recruitment. The report also cited the reasons why a student had chosen a particular employer. This report elaborated on findings about the role of WIE and specifically WIL, as previously noted.

Linking the student with the industry happens by making the employer visible by:

- conducting virtual and specialist career fairs;
- providing internships;
- requiring students to produce e-portfolios as part of the graduates' Professional Development Plans in some faculties; and
- strengthening the relationship with the alumni.

The Alumni Office facilitates and maintains contact with its worldwide alumni community. Alumni involvement is crucial to the sustainability and growth of the University and provides essential ties between the past and the present. Alumni are invited to share in the transformation agenda of the University by giving them special access to the online modules, Artificial Intelligence and African Insights.

Commendations:

- k) The University is commended on the initiatives taken to ensure that new alumni as well as those founding members of the University contribute to the transformation of the institution and that they are encouraged to participate in institutional innovations, such as the Artificial Intelligence and African Insights online modules.

Recommendations:

- 14) It seems that the graduate surveys have only been used for employability purposes.

It is recommended that these are also used to determine the quality of teaching and learning during the student experience.