

Institutional feedback report

Name of Institution	North-West University
Date of institutional visit	7 February 2017
Names of peer reviewers	Prof K Pillay Prof E de Kadt
Name of CHE person involved in the visit	Prof D Grayson
Date draft report submitted to institution	31 March 2017
Date of final report	1 June 2017

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO QEP PEER REVIEWER REPORTS

Four focus areas were selected for Phase 1 of the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) with which all institutions were asked to engage, namely: (1) enhancing academics as teachers, (2) enhancing student support and development, (3) enhancing the learning environment, and (4) enhancing course and programme enrolment management. In September 2014 each university produced a baseline submission that addressed the following questions for each focus area:

- Which aspects of your institution's Strategic Plan relate to this focus area? (Please be specific by quoting from the Strategic Plan).
- What activities do you currently have in place related to this focus area that are successful? What evidence do you use to conclude that they are successful? (Do not provide detailed evidence, just a description of the type of evidence you collect and a short summary of the results.)
- What activities related to this focus area have you initiated during the past three or four years that have not been as successful as you had hoped? In what ways were they unsuccessful? What do you think might be the reasons for the lack of success?
- What activities have you recently implemented or are you planning to implement in the next 12 to 18 months related to this focus area? Why have you chosen these particular activities? What is the need or problem they are intended to address?
- What are the challenges or problems related to this focus area that still need to be addressed in your institution?

The submission also included an introductory section on the contextual features of the institution that are salient to student success, a description of how the submission was prepared, and a concluding section on other activities the institution was undertaking to promote student success and challenges being faced.

Universities were asked to submit final reports by 11 December 2015 that indicated improvements that had been made or were being planned since the baseline reports were submitted. The stated aim of the report is shown below.

The aim of the institutional report is to demonstrate efforts to bring about enhancements in each of the four Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) focus areas since the beginning of Phase 1 of the QEP in February 2014, reflect on the journey towards enhancement and assess the extent to which the efforts have resulted in improvements.

Because of widespread student protests in the last few months of 2015, some reports were submitted early in 2016. In the final report, for each focus area universities responded to the following questions:

- Summarise what the university considers to be the key issues in [this focus area] in one or two paragraphs.
- During Phase 1 of the QEP, what changes at institutional level (a) have been made, (b) are in progress, or (c) are in the planning stages that relate to enhancing academics as teachers?

- Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars to illustrate specific aspects of the changes that are successful. Provide evidence for claims of success. Where an activity is in the planning stages, indicate what evidence will be collected.
- Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars of changes that have not been successful and suggest reasons.
- If possible, identify one or more promising practices related to this focus area. Describe the practice and provide evidence for success. Suggest what the key features might be.
- Identify the main challenges the university still faces in relation to this focus area.

The document also included an introduction that described how the report was prepared and a concluding section on reflections on Phase 1 of the QEP.

During 2016 and early 2017 individual institutional visits were carried out by two peer reviewers and the Director: Institutional Audits. The CHE communicated with the DVC Teaching and Learning or Academic to find a suitable date for the visit, and then a formal letter was sent to the Vice-Chancellor, which included the names of the peer reviewers and a request to indicate whether he or she felt there was a serious conflict of interest. In addition to logistical matters, the letter described the purpose and format of the visit as follows:

The purpose of the institutional visit is to provide a structured opportunity for institutional leaders to engage with peer reviewers external to the institution about the journey they are taking towards improvement in the QEP focus areas, the milestones achieved, the challenges encountered along the way and the plans for further improvement. It is also an opportunity for institutions to receive feedback on their engagement with the focus areas and suggestions for what else they might consider doing, or doing differently, based on what is being learned in and with the sector. Please note that we are interested in what is being done at your university that relates to the four Phase 1 focus areas, not just designated QEP activities.

The broad frame for the visit is appreciative inquiry (AI), originally developed by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987)¹. AI is a strengths-based approach to change management that uses the “positive core” of an organisation as the starting point for growth and improvement. In contrast to problem-solving – trying to fix what is – it employs a generative method to envision what does not yet exist. While it is impossible for peer reviewers to engage in a full-blown AI process, the institutional visit is intended to focus on the positives as a springboard for thinking about what to enhance and how.

During the visit we would like to meet with the following groups of people over the course of the day:

1. Senior management (60 minutes)
2. Key role players involved with Focus Area 1 (80 minutes)
3. Key role players involved with Focus Area 2 (80 minutes)
4. Key role players involved with Focus Area 3 (80 minutes)

¹ Cooperrider, D.L. & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. In Woodman, R. W. & Pasmore, W.A. (Eds), *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, Vol. 1, Stamford, CT: JAI Press, 129-169.

5. Key role players involved with Focus Area 4 (80 minutes)
6. Senior management (30 minutes for feedback)

The team will have read the university's QEP baseline report and final report. At the meetings, the team may ask for further information beyond what was in the two documents. The university may also wish to bring additional information to the meetings.

The selection of participants is up to you. However, we hope that you will be able to be part of the first meeting, and if possible, the last. For the meetings with senior management, we would like to speak with people who have the authority and responsibility to implement and drive initiatives at institutional level that relate to the four focus areas of Phase 1 of the QEP². For the meetings on the focus areas, we hope that students will be included.

Several weeks before the institutional visit, the two peer reviewers were sent the institutions' two reports, two articles on Appreciative Inquiry and the peer reviewer manual, which contains, among other things, a list of possible questions and detailed guidelines for the peer reviewer report. Immediately prior to each institutional visit, the peer reviewers and the Director: Institutional Audits spent most of a day preparing for the visit by going through the institution's two submissions in detail. During this preparatory meeting, several specific questions for the senior management were formulated and areas in which the panel wanted more information were identified for each focus area. The meetings that took place during the institutional visit were audio-recorded, and the audio files were sent to the peer reviewers after the visit for reference.

Each peer reviewer report is based on three data sources: the institution's baseline submission, the institution's final report and the content of the meetings during the institutional visit. As stated in the letters to the VCs, institutions could provide additional information during the visit. Some institutions did provide further documentation to elaborate on specific issues during the visit or, by agreement, emailed additional documentation immediately after the visit; in these cases such documentation was also taken into account in writing the report. It was necessary to limit the scope of the work in this way to ensure that the work could be completed within a specified time frame and also to be fair to all institutions.

Following receipt of the peer reviewers' reports, the CHE undertook a process of editing and harmonisation of the reports (to ensure a reasonable level of consistency among them) before sending them to institutions. In the initial letter to each VC it was indicated that the reports would be sent to the institutions for corrections, but that institutions were not expected to add new information at this stage. After the corrections were received from institutions, the final report was produced; new information was not included. It is hoped that the report will be a useful resource for an institution in its own journey to improvement. In addition, the reports will be among the documents that the CHE will use to produce a document synthesising what has been learnt during Phase 1 of the QEP across the sector. The final reports will serve at the Institutional Audits Committee and the Higher Education Quality Committee for information.

² (1) Enhancing academics as teachers, (2) Enhancing student support and development, (3) Enhancing the learning environment, (4) Enhancing course and programme enrolment management.

1. INTRODUCTION

North-West University (NWU) was created by means of a university merger in 2004 which brought together three campuses spread across two provinces. These three campuses, Vaal Triangle, Potchefstroom, and Mafikeng, are relatively distant geographically, and have significantly different student populations, programme profiles and campus cultures. Following on the merger, NWU adopted a 'federal' approach to creating a unitary multi-campus institution. The three campuses were positioned as of equal standing, each with considerable autonomy and each headed by an executive campus rector accountable to the Vice-Chancellor.

Of the permanent headcount staff component of 3477 (data from 2013), academic staff totalled approximately 37%. Student headcount enrolments in 2013 were at 60 975 (including both undergraduate and postgraduate students), of whom 59.4% (36 195 students) were in contact programmes. The just over 40% Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students were mainly registered in the Faculty of Education, with a few registrations in Nursing and Theology, and the vast majority were recorded under the Potchefstroom campus, which presumably means they are following programmes offered by staff on the Potchefstroom campus. The demographic profile of undergraduate students varies considerably from campus to campus, and between contact and ODL students. In Mafikeng nearly all students are African, in Potchefstroom the vast majority of contact students are white and the vast majority of ODL students are African, and at the Vaal Triangle campus about 80% of students are African.

At the time of writing of the two institutional reports, the institution was structured with a total of 15 campus-based faculties, each located on one campus only, which resulted in some duplication of faculties as they functioned largely autonomously of each other. Mafikeng campus, which focuses on rural development, has the following 5 faculties: Agriculture, Science and Technology; Commerce and Administration; Education; Human and Social Sciences; and Law. Potchefstroom campus has the following 8 faculties: Arts; Economic and Management Sciences; Educational Sciences; Engineering; Health Sciences; Law; Natural Sciences; and Theology. Potchefstroom campus has strong contact student enrolments in SET, and the vast majority of ODL students are enrolled in Education. Vaal Triangle campus has two Faculties: Humanities; and Economic Sciences and Information Technology, with the majority of enrolments in business and IT. Faculties are generally structured by means of Schools, rather than Departments. Within this highly devolved academic structure, support services, too, tended to be structured and to function independently on each campus, with some guidance from the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom.

It is clear that such a devolved structure would be likely to perpetuate the legacy of sharply different cultures on each campus, as well as varied structures and processes, even though care was taken to ensure effective delivery of the academic programme on each campus.

During the period of the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP), however, the University has made concerted efforts to move away from its federal model, in which historical inequities had become entrenched. NWU produced a new *Institutional Strategy 2015-2025*, under the leadership of the new Vice-Chancellor (appointed in 2014). The overarching purpose of the NWU *Institutional Strategy 2015-2025* is, 'To transform and position the NWU as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence, with a commitment to social justice'. This is further supported by the institution's vision statement: 'To be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care'. Within this overarching goal, the institution seeks to focus on the nexus between research and teaching and learning and to maintain a balance between these fields of activity. Community engagement is to be integrated into each of these.

The development of the new Strategy was followed by a major restructuring process, with the goal of moving the institution towards becoming a unitary institution with equity of provision, resources and student experience. This restructuring (which is still to be implemented) includes, most notably, a reduction to eight institutional faculties, which will now, in most, cases be multi-campus, with a single executive dean per faculty. With the awareness that not all programmes can be offered on all campuses, the incoming executive deans will be seeking to identify areas of strength and niche areas on specific campuses, in terms of the institution's strategic plan and of the student profile on specific campuses. Comparable restructuring of the support services is also taking place, with these units now operating across the institution. For instance, the several Academic Development and Support Services are being brought together into a unitary Centre for Teaching and Learning, with representation on each campus. This revised institutional structure has been approved by Senate and Council and will be implemented during the course of 2017. The panel congratulates the institution on the speed with which this major restructuring has been undertaken under the new leadership.

The restructuring was accompanied by the development of a policy framework, with a specific focus on teaching and learning. The institutional Teaching and Learning Strategy has already been approved by Senate and Council (June 2016) and the Framework for Student Access, Retention, Attainment and Success is available in draft form. In the context of all these discussions a major new institutional project, The Project for the Transformation of Teaching and Learning (*TransfTL Project*), has been conceptualised, which will allow for systematic consideration of all associated issues over the coming years.

A further draft framework, 'the Development of Learning Interfaces', seeks to position NWU as a 'leading provider in the field of multimodal education in South Africa'. This focus has emerged from NWU's longstanding experience with ODL (it is the second largest provider of ODL after UNISA), where 'Open' refers to the open registration system, with more than one intake per year. This is seen as the start of a journey towards shifting contact curricula into modified modes of delivery, drawing on a blend of technologies, which will allow the institution to occupy a fairly unique position in the sector and respond to the national need for flexible and increased access to higher education, as well as developing

novel ways to enhance the student experience. Again, all of this represents a substantial amount of collaborative work, on which the institution is to be congratulated.

One of the challenges experienced by NWU, the variety of languages spoken by the student cohorts on the differing campuses, is being addressed by means of a functionally multilingual language policy, which seeks to acknowledge the various languages spoken by staff and students, both as an asset and as part of their heritage. In looking ahead, NWU will be asking what language means for curriculum renewal, and how students with specific home languages can best be accommodated.

It is clear that this restructuring will have impacted on the institutional approach to the QEP, and will have resulted in some substantial differences and shifts between the baseline report (2014), the final report (early 2016), and the interviews.

In both the documentation and the discussions, the positive aspects of engaging in the QEP process were noted by senior management. It was agreed that the QEP process had created an awareness of quality enhancement as a continuous process among all staff, and had led to considerable staff enthusiasm and commitment. Developing the reports had brought the different functional areas together into groups as sites of deep reflection on the impact of current approaches and processes. During these discussions, participants were surprised to discover how much in each of the focus areas was actually being done at NWU, on the several campuses, though much of this was not visible to others. It was realised that though processes and activities might be structured differently, they were still aligned in terms of intentions. Given the interrelatedness of many issues which affected different units, the QEP had the effect of contributing to breaking down silos, and the emergence of joint efforts across campuses. The QEP-led interactions with other higher education institutions, which had enabled mutual learning, were also noted with appreciation. In short, the QEP had come at a very good time for NWU, and had led to staff engaging seriously in reflections on teaching and learning.

Clearly, there has been broad institutional involvement in the QEP, driven by a QEP Steering Committee, with four task teams appointed to develop reports for each focus area, each headed by a member of senior management and including representation from all campuses. Due to the restructuring process, many improvements are still in progress or at the planning stage.

2. FOCUS AREA 1: ENHANCING ACADEMICS AS TEACHERS

(Including professional development, rewards and recognition, workload, conditions of service and performance appraisal)

THE INSTITUTION'S STRENGTHS

NWU has a long commitment to high quality undergraduate education, which is salient in two of the mission elements in the *Institutional Plan 2014*. The DVC: Teaching and Learning

(T&L) heads up the academic portfolio, and is assisted by the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom. Committees include an Institutional T&L Committee, and T&L Committees in most faculties. These committees are sometimes complemented by task teams, e.g. the Standing Task Teams on the use of technology in T&L on two campuses. Much staff development is undertaken by the Academic Development and /or Support (ADS) units on the three campuses, each headed by a Director, which largely function independently. Some synthesis is enabled through the Senior Director: Academic Development and Support, based in the Institutional Office. The ADS units report to the Vice-Rector Teaching and Learning on their respective campuses, who in turn sits on the campus Deans' Forum.

Institutional Teaching Excellence Awards (ITEA) have been in place since 2007 (reviewed in 2013), as well as an Institutional Course for New Lecturers (ICNL), which was made compulsory in 2006. There is an extensive system of quality assurance review of programmes, which also occasions some staff development as the trends emanating from programme reviews are reported regularly to Senate. A wide variety of professional development opportunities for staff, on a wide range of topics, is provided by the ADS unit on each campus and the Institutional Office.

A Framework for SOTL has been developed, and since 2013 some funding for SOTL research has been provided by the institution. Annual SOTL/ Teaching and Learning conferences – both on each campus, and at an institutional level – assist in bringing these innovations to the attention of other staff.

THE APPROACH TAKEN TO IMPROVEMENT

Improvements were situated under the umbrella of the institutional restructuring, and the finalisation of the *Teaching and Learning Strategy*, both of which foregrounded an institutional approach, intended to overcome the acknowledged fragmentation of activities. There are a number of associated policies, including policies on teaching and learning, assessment and moderation, study guides, supplemental instruction and student feedback. In the new *Institutional Strategy 2015-2025*, innovative learning and teaching is included in the institutional purpose statement. In addition, the University has conceptualised the ambitious Transformation of Teaching and Learning Project (*TransfTL Project*), which seeks to provide an integrated planning, implementation and monitoring framework for a variety of projects relating to teaching and learning, including several related to the focus areas or strategic drivers identified in the Teaching and Learning Strategy, over a number of years.

Given the considerable scope of organisational restructuring, many improvements are still in the conceptualisation stage and will only start being realised when committees and task teams begin their work.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN AND PROGRESS MADE

General comment on structural matters

The three ADS units have been operating largely independently, with the exception of the ICNL and the Teaching Awards. Some coordination has been taking place through the institutional ADS unit in the Institutional Office in Potchefstroom, under the leadership of the Senior Director for Academic Support. It has become clear that these units are at present not equitably resourced. In the new structure they are to be fully integrated across the three campuses, as sub-units of the new Centre for Teaching and Learning, and resourced equitably. In addition, there will be deans and deputy deans with cross-campus responsibilities, including deputy deans for teaching and learning in almost all faculties.

A further challenge is that staff in ADS are currently not appointed on academic conditions of service, but nevertheless are expected to model good teaching to academics; being considered support staff detracts from their credibility. A position paper is currently being developed on the possibility of introducing professional support staff as a third category as distinct from academic staff and support staff, with appropriate recognition and remuneration/conditions of service. The panel endorsed this approach, as in line with global trends, though suggested that the term 'support' should perhaps be avoided.

Professional development

Two significant improvements were reported, by means of further reviews of both the ICNL, and the institutional Teaching Excellence Awards.

The QEP created the possibility of benchmarking the ICNL against what is available at some other universities. The ICNL is the first component of the NWU professional development programme, and is compulsory for new staff (experienced lecturers may be given an exemption), though not all complete the programme. While it is not currently linked formally to probation, a proposal is being developed which will link it to the one year of probation for academic staff. The second phase of ICNL is managed separately on each campus, but the same areas are covered, strategies are shared, and the same outputs are required. The programme begins with a more theoretical Phase One, three days delivered at a central site to all participants, covering topics such as assessment, e-assessment, teaching large classes, technology integration, quality and teaching generation Z. The more hands-on Phase Two takes place on the individual campuses and typically involves a further three-day workshop, and the development of a portfolio of evidence. Each member of staff is allocated a mentor, who does a class visit, followed by reflection; student evaluations form part of the portfolio of evidence. It was noted in the interviews that real development does take place during the programme, with participants introducing innovations into their teaching. The programme is repeated several times during the course of the year, to accommodate new members of staff as soon as they join the University.

Already some campus components of the ICNL are offered online; the 'new', fully aligned ICNL will be offered in blended mode.

The ICNL programme is currently not credit-bearing, but thought is being given to possible collaboration between the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Faculty of Education,

by means of which the ICNL could become one module of a PGDip. (This would be along the lines of a comparable programme offered at UKZN.) At present, completion of the ICNL is required for staff wishing to apply for Teaching Excellence Awards.

There has also been continued growth in SOTL research and output, which the university has continued to fund over and above the Teaching Development Grant. On the Potchefstroom campus, two SOTL lecturers have been appointed, one in Academic Support, the second in the Faculty of Health Sciences, with the goal of 'developing teaching and learning quality, through the promotion of a research-based approach to the professional development of academic staff.' These two appointments have been having substantial impact in creating awareness around and understanding of SOTL research. The campus ADS units have also promoted reflective teaching practice and led the formation of communities of practice across disciplines, for instance for joint journal publications. SOTL presentations are made at the annual T&L conferences, both on individual campuses, and at an institutional conference, which are jointly a proven means of alerting other staff to interesting innovations. SOTL will find a home in the new Centre for Teaching and Learning, once the revised organisational structure is implemented.

The appointment of the SOTL lecturer/ teaching and learning expert (a former ADS member) in the Faculty of Health Sciences has raised interesting questions about the placement of teaching and learning experts in faculty environments. This particular placement was motivated by the need for teaching and learning methodologies to be contextualised specifically for clinical sciences, and the appointee has established a unit for health professions development. The institution is giving consideration to the advisability of extending this model to other Faculty environments, which might happen by identifying someone in an academic appointment who has a particular interest in teaching and learning. At present there are colleagues in faculties with evolved capacity in teaching and learning, whom other staff turn to, but no formal arrangements are in place.

Staff development has also sought to ensure the quality of the numerous ODL programmes. NWU partners with the Open Learning Group (OLG) as provider of ODL programmes. The OLG are not academics who teach, but rather provide administrative support for some of NWU's ODL programmes. Academics who teach in the ODL programmes are all members of NWU faculties. The Unit for ODL (UODL) underwent a recent external audit, and the need for collaboration between the Centre for Teaching and Learning (to be established) and UODL has been acknowledged. Much of the ODL delivery is paper-based, as many participants do not presently have access to technology or the internet. NWU does not envisage moving exclusively to on-line delivery of programmes for a number of years.

The Faculty of Education (where the majority of ODL courses are based) ensures that staff who teach in the ODL programmes are adequately equipped for this function. Task agreements are set up with staff, and new staff who do not have ODL experience and are expected to teach in that mode are assigned a mentor. In addition, there is close collaboration

with the ADS unit, for instance around workshops on incorporation of blended learning or curriculum design.

Recently, a campus-wide needs assessment for the future expanded rollout of ODL to programmes in other fields of study was undertaken, and the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) has become involved, to ensure enhanced quality.

Platforms are emerging for lecturers to share their teaching and learning practice through in-house workshops and colloquia. Participation of individual lecturers can lead to whole faculties becoming engaged.

Staff development as regards the use of technology for teaching and learning is dealt with in Focus Area Three.

Rewards and recognition

Following revision, the Institutional Teaching Awards are now offered on three levels: the Emerging Teaching Excellence Award (*ETEA*); the Teaching Excellence Award (*TEA*); and the Distinguished Teaching Excellence Award (*DTEA*). The awards are not competitive in nature, but are criterion-referenced, so numerous awards (which are monetary) can be made. The process is developmental, with participants enrolling in a process that involves a number of types of evaluation: compilation of a portfolio, peer evaluation, benchmarking and student evaluations. In 2016, 55 members of staff participated in the process. Faculties request each School to submit one or two nominations. There is careful alignment of the award criteria across campuses, with both an internal and an external moderation panel. It was noted that there had been a clear improvement in quality over the years. These awards articulate with CHE-HELTASA National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards, and are also a factor in promotion applications. An award for teams (including teams across campuses) is also under consideration.

Teaching and Learning Awards are also available in some faculties, but without a purse.

A draft revised Promotions Policy is being developed, but is still under debate, as to the best means of accommodating the recognition of excellence in teaching, and whether differential promotion pathways would provide an optimal solution for recognising that staff may wish to pursue differentiated career pathways.

Workload

A review of workload models currently in use in the various faculties was undertaken and showed considerable variation, both in terms of scope and range of activity, and in terms of the underlying methodologies. It was concluded that the development of a generic institutional workload model would be well-nigh impossible, but that an institutional workload framework would be possible and should be undertaken.

Of considerable interest in the interviews was the discussion around the detailed workload model developed by the Faculty of Natural Sciences on the Potchefstroom campus, which takes into account teaching, research and third-stream income (the latter being essential to fund a Faculty of Science adequately.) The model provides a way of taking decisions among competing demands for more staff. Departments that bring in considerable third-stream income may qualify for additional staff. There is strict control over initiating new programmes, in relation to staffing requirements and cost implications. Such a model or framework, were it to be more generally introduced, should allow for variation across faculties, in terms of faculty specificities.

Conditions of service and performance appraisal

Performance appraisal has been implemented for all academic and support staff, with a mid-term and final review, which is moderated. Teaching is included in the evaluation; in the Faculty of Science both the School Director and Research Director are present, and teaching evaluations and throughput rates are considered. Staff negotiate tasks and developmental goals over a three year period. In the Faculty of Health Sciences, School Directors are now encouraging teaching development and SOTL research, as well as compliance with research targets. A Forum of School Directors meets once a month in the Faculty and develops a programme which focuses on needs of lecturers for the year. Where there are problems, a lecturer may be referred to an academic development workshop. School Directors ask lecturers about innovative practice, workshops they have attended and also look at student feedback (80% of modules have to be evaluated by students per semester). At the same time, it was noted that some staff complain that teaching innovation is not recognised and that they are penalised if they do not achieve the required research outputs.

There has been some further clarification about the role that academic managers (e.g. School Directors) should play in the leadership of teaching and learning, and in supporting the professional development of teaching staff; but this has not yet resulted in an approved policy document.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The panel urges the institution to continue work on a coherent and systematic staff development policy or framework, in order to optimise the new opportunities for institutional coherence emerging from the restructuring process.

The panel suggests that, in restructuring, the institution should look for ways of strengthening academic development across the board with both faculty-based specialists and centralised higher education specialists (for instance, considering the example of the University of Western Cape).

Similarly, in restructuring, the institution is urged to consider multiple ways of building strong linkages between staff on different campuses, be they in the same Faculties or

Schools, or in functionally similar environments. This might include exploring ways of supporting the development of communities of practice in disciplines across the campuses, as a means of also supporting innovation in teaching.

The panel urges the institution to find ways of promoting a scholarly approach to teaching for all staff, over and above their disciplinary research.

In addition, the institution should continue to work on finalising an institutional workload framework. The University of KwaZulu Natal has developed a comprehensive workload framework that takes account of the specific contexts of different faculties, and is transparent.

The University is further encouraged to find optimal ways of utilising the institutional promotions policy to further promote quality teaching. It may be useful to consult universities that have taken a lead in enabling academics to be promoted all the way to full professor on the basis of their teaching and teaching-related research, such as Rhodes, the University of KwaZulu Natal and the University of Johannesburg.

The panel encourages the university to ensure that all Faculties draw on equitable means of including teaching in performance appraisals. These recommendations should apply to all NWU teaching staff, whether engaged in campus-based programmes or in ODL.

3. FOCUS AREA 2: ENHANCING STUDENT SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

(Including career and curriculum advising, life and academic skills development, counselling, student performance monitoring and referral)

THE INSTITUTION'S STRENGTHS

The teaching and learning mission of the NWU Institutional Plan (which preceded the current *NWU Institutional Strategy 2015-2025*) aims to develop and empower well-rounded graduates, and increase the throughput of post-graduate students by: i) ensuring that campuses have policies, processes and practices that broaden access; ii) creating an environment that supports a balanced student experience; iii) continued improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, and curriculum transformation; iv) improving the prospects of the NWU graduates through an Employability strategy developed through the Career centre.

One of the University's strengths in this focus area is its very large and well-established Supplemental Instruction (SI) programme, which has been running since 2004. SI is offered on all campuses, primarily, but not only, in first year modules. In 2013, SI was offered in 44% of at-risk modules. Monitoring data shows that students who participate in SI achieve an average mark in those modules that is 10% higher than students who do not participate. Participation in SI has also been shown to be linked to increased retention. In the multi-

lingual environment of NWU, SI instructors are able to facilitate sessions in several languages.

All students write an academic literacy test at the beginning of the year. All students must take a one semester academic literacy module. For students identified to be at risk, they are required to take a preparatory module that includes academic reading and writing, study skills and computer and information literacy prior to the academic literacy module. All campuses of the University have Writing Centres, staffed by trained senior students.

Peer mentoring of all first year students is done on the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle campuses, while on the Potchefstroom campus it is done for first-year students in residence. Mentors are senior students who are accepted as mentors following an interview. Mentors undergo an initial two-day training, followed by additional training in specific areas. At the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle campuses, mentors meet with their mentees twice a week.

The Career Centre plays an important role in increasing students' employability through a range of services to students and employers, and through creating networks to liaise among students, employers, alumni and academics. The Career Centre offers workshops and individual student consultations, career fairs, consultative workshops with employers and an online portal where employers can advertise jobs. The number of students attending workshops and consultations has grown enormously, from 887 in 2011 to 2024 by August of 2014. The University also participates in several national surveys related to employment.

THE APPROACH TAKEN TO IMPROVEMENT

NWU has recognised that structural mechanisms, such as policies, collaborative forums and appropriate oversight committees, are essential for enhancing a range of crucial student support services and realising equitable practices across the three campuses.

Since 2014, NWU has established a Forum for Access and Success, which integrates planning around the provision of various services to support access, retention and success. In addition, this Forum has interrogated the approach to the first-year experience, and reviewed foundation and access provisioning, academic literacy modules, and the writing and reading centres.

A very important development for the NWU in 2016 is the draft *Framework on Student Access, Retention, Attainment and Success* (ARAS). The ARAS framework will focus on all NWU students, but will include an individualised approach to each student population (undergraduate contact/on-campus, open distance learning (ODL) and postgraduate students). Through the Framework the University endeavours to understand the various factors that affect student access, retention and success, and how these are embedded within the institution and related to the wider socio-economic and educational environment of the University. Using the Framework, the University aims to develop multi-disciplinary, collaborative approaches to support students, where there is coherence across the system. It is also recognised that research into selection and placement, student success and dropout,

the student experience and the first work destination of NWU students, could be important outcomes of using large data sets as predictive tools.

Further structures established to improve coherence across the three campuses have included a Student Oversight Committee, convened by the Institutional Registrar, which has been aligning the orientation programme across campuses, and the Standing Committee for Academic Literacy. The respective heads of the Academic Literacy programmes at the different campuses have been engaging in regular inter-campus consultations.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN AND PROGRESS MADE

Career and curriculum advising

The lack of an integrated approach to curriculum advice to students was mentioned as a severe challenge. The 2015 report recommended that career and curriculum advice should be offered to prospective students prior to admission and registration.

In addition to the range of activities of the Career Centre mentioned above, the Centre developed a graduate destination survey, first conducted in 2015, wherein feedback from graduates on their experience in finding employment, the relevance and quality of their curricula, and the opportunities provided by NWU to develop their employability is obtained.

Life and academic skills development

1. Supplemental instruction and academic peer mentoring

As mentioned above, the Supplemental Instruction (SI) programme, facilitated by SI leaders, has been in existence at NWU since 2004 and the university has one of the best and most widely used systems in the country. In the interviews it was reported that SI is provided in 489 modules, involving over 500 SI leaders.

NWU was accredited as an international centre for SI in 2012, and has produced Master's degrees and journal articles on SI. As of 2015, SI and academic advising and tutoring have a standardised core training programme. Contributing to the success of the SI programme is a set of training manuals developed for SI leaders, mentors and supervisors, outlining their respective roles and responsibilities. Currently, the programme targets, though is not limited to, "at-risk" modules, i.e. modules with a pass rate of less than 50%, those with challenging content, or those with large classes. Though SI is largely used in first year modules, research indicates its effectiveness at further levels of study, e.g. during 2013, more students attended SI from their second year onwards. SI undergoes continuous monitoring, and an annual report is tabled at Senate to compare the module results of SI and non-SI students. Feedback from students is obtained via external academic programme evaluations, which indicate a positive, highly beneficial experience.

Another improvement in academic support is the academic peer mentoring programme, which had been implemented at the Vaal Triangle Campus in 2010, and at the Mafikeng

Campus in 2011, and originally largely aimed to support first year students in extended programmes. Both these campuses have expanded the programme from 2013 and 2014, respectively, to include all first-year students, whilst the Potchefstroom Campus provides it to mainly those first-years in residences. Following an interview, successful senior students who apply to be mentors are trained in an initial two-day programme, followed by on-going training. Mentees and mentors are matched in terms of biographical information and study programmes during the orientation programme. Mentors at the Vaal Triangle and Mafikeng campuses meet twice a week for hourly sessions with their mentees, throughout the academic year. At the Potchefstroom campus, mentors meet with their mentees at least three times per term, although they usually meet on a weekly basis. Attendance is monitored by senior mentors, and students who miss their sessions are contacted by SMS or email. Mentees' feedback indicates the success of the programme, also corroborated (on the Vaal Triangle Campus) by checking the examination results of mentees. A quarterly consolidated report on the mentoring system at each residence is submitted at the Potchefstroom Campus, and more extensive research is underway to measure the impact over a longer period of time.

Other peer support at residences of all the campuses includes Student Counselling and Development (which requires that students undergo ongoing training). Academic advising has also been piloted at the Potchefstroom Campus, as of 2015, as a broader strategy to address student problems. Academic advisors are full-time students who have proven to be exceptional SI mentors. They are trained by the Reading and Learning Support (R&LS) Unit staff, who also monitor and support the advisors, and have follow-up mini training sessions. Seven academic advisors have been allocated to five faculties, and have set working hours and designated offices. Students consult with advisors on a voluntary basis.

2. Academic literacy

To ensure that all students develop academic literacy (AL), a benchmark test is written by all first-year students upon entrance and NWU makes mandatory a first-year module in academic literacy. An additional module may be required if students are identified as at-risk by the Test of Academic Literacy Levels (TALL) or the Toets van Akademiese Geletterheidsvlakke (TAG). The modules explore study methods, academic reading and writing, language use, seminar skills, and computer literacy and information skills. Though the modules have been successfully implemented on all campuses, feedback is mixed. Whilst satisfactory pass rates were achieved, some positive correlations were seen between success in the academic literacy modules and other academic modules, and while positive feedback was generally received from students, some student feedback highlighted that certain areas of the modules, e.g. reading and computer literacy, were more useful than others.

In order to enhance the benefit of academic support provided, an approach to making it more programme/subject-specific is underway. Staff consultation indicated that the modules, presented in each semester since 2009, may be too generic. In 2015 the Standing Committee for Academic Literacy decided that these should be re-developed to be more discipline/content-specific on all three campuses, as specified by the needs of the campuses.

Already, seven first semester courses have been developed, for different schools of the Faculties of Humanities (4 courses) and Economic Sciences and Information Technology (3 courses) at the Vaal Triangle Campus. In 2015, the Potchefstroom and Mafikeng campuses started collecting data from relevant stakeholders to develop new learning and teaching materials for 2016.

Furthermore, academic literacy has been improved by the reading development computer program, run by reading laboratories on each campus. On two of the campuses, students are encouraged during orientation to complete a reading test using computer-assisted evaluation prior to entering the programme. Success of the programme is measured by improvements in reading indexes and the complexity of content. However, the current reading program does have challenges, including that of the software used. Efforts are being made to develop software that is more economical, accessible and suited to tertiary-level skills. Members of the reading forum have made recommendations in a draft reading report as to the appropriate software programme to be used, with impact measured in a study undertaken in the second semester of 2015 at the Potchefstroom campus.

To develop academic writing, writing centres are present at all campuses to assist undergraduate students, though increasingly requests are also being received from postgraduate students. To support ODL students, an Online Writing Laboratory is being developed, in collaboration with Stellenbosch University and the University of Pretoria, to provide synchronous and asynchronous support. Student feedback from each session rates the services highly, and a new system of online evaluation and recordkeeping is being developed. The implementation of an online booking and tracking system in the Potchefstroom campus has been highly successful.

One of the challenges experienced by the writing centres is the lack of continuity amongst the consultants, who are often senior students, owing to the part-time nature of their work. To address this, retired academics are being invited to be consultants. A current collaborative project with other universities to investigate ways of providing interactive online training and assistance to both students and consultants may also address this problem. Another challenge, among staff, is the lack of awareness and understanding of the services provided by the writing centres. The following initiatives are in the planning stages: i) redesigning and attaining accreditation/certification for consultant training; ii) establishing an Online Writing Centre to accommodate the needs of ODL students and those who cannot visit the centre; iii) increasing opening hours. As of 2015, staff of the reading laboratories and writing centres collaborated on developing a comparable impact measurement on the improvement of reading and writing proficiency.

3. Orientation programme and related initiatives

Projects within a well-designed orientation programme improve the first-year experience. Currently there is a compulsory two-week orientation programme prior to registration. NWU aims to make a part of the orientation programme more faculty-specific, and also intends to include academic services, such as the library. An example of a successful revision of the

orientation programme is that the library is developing a programme to assist the transfer of literacy skills. On the basis of reports from all campuses, the Student Oversight Committee concluded that the revised orientation programme had been implemented successfully during 2015.

One cross-campus initiative, the “StudyWell Project”, aims to develop an advanced online analytical process (OLAP) tool to promote student success based on assessing a student’s profile and the factors within the university climate that impact on their acculturation to university life, and determining effective interventions to provide them with appropriate support. Gathering quantitative data has been contentious, as currently used instruments showed forms of bias. However, according to the report, data was to be analysed in January 2016 to determine if adapted questionnaires were sound. Interviews and world café sessions contributed to the first phase of qualitative data collection to determine the demands and resources of the first-year experience. In the second phase a Student Demands Resources framework will be developed as a foundation for a fair, unbiased and culturally-sensitive questionnaire.

Another project is the first-year experience (FYE) survey, which was undertaken in 2014 and 2015 in order to understand how university services, programmes and processes impact on the quality of students’ first-year experience, and whether there are any trends that may inform changes in policy and practice.

To further improve the interventions offered to at-risk students, NWU is working with the University of Pretoria to use its Student Academic Readiness Survey (STARS), which aims to identify factors contributing to a student’s readiness for university life and suggest appropriate interventions. According to the report, the survey was to be administered at the start of 2016.

Provision for disabled students

Concerning disability support, NWU has an approved policy on the equality of disabled students and the environment they should enjoy, to enable their success in all spheres of university life. To manage this and to liaise with the teaching and learning committees, disability units have been established on the three campuses, each supporting different profiles of students, and each in different structural locations. These units ensure that all information for application and admission is in an easily accessible format, and assess the needs of the students with disabilities prior to enrolment, providing a special orientation, and making information available as to the support these students can receive. The units also guide academic units and academic staff on supporting students with disabilities, e.g. in the Institutional Course for New Lecturers. Feedback is received from students with disabilities on the effectiveness of the support structures, and the disabilities units relay this to the Teaching and Learning Committees. At the Vaal Triangle Campus, which supports approximately 45 students (according to the 2015 report), the disability office prepares a “letter of accommodation” and has developed an extensive website to guide academic staff in accommodating the needs of students with disabilities. At this campus, the disability office

promotes the employability of final year students with disabilities through work seminars, CV and job interviewing workshops, and career fairs. At the Mafikeng Campus, the number of students with disabilities increased between 2008 and 2015; 42 of the 44 students who graduated in this period have found employment.

Extended Programmes

At the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle Campuses, 43 extended programmes are offered (most are variants, not completely different programmes), catering for about 10% of all first-time entering students. The success rates of extended degree students are generally high.

A pilot University Preparatory Programme (UnivPrep) has also been developed for students who do not meet admission requirements for mainstream degree programmes; it was to be reviewed in 2016.

According to the 2016 report, the Potchefstroom Campus was to apply to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to introduce extended programmes in 2016. The main challenge is in developing an access model that optimises admissions and placement assessment, and articulates the relationship between UnivPrep and the extended programmes.

While on paper NWU has a large number of extended programmes, in reality this number is more limited, as in the case of the BSc programme there is only one programme with twenty variations. The relatively high uptake of the extended programmes on the Mafikeng campus is largely due to students coming into the system with Maths Literacy instead of Maths. However, the strict progression rules have developed an academic culture of higher pass rates.

Student performance monitoring and referral

It appears that NWU has yet to develop a successful institutional approach to on-line student performance monitoring. Challenges are still being experienced in ensuring that all marks are immediately entered into the LMS (Sakai), which means that early identification of students at risk is not possible. It appears that the 'Official Mark System' is not integrated within the LMS, and that the necessary capability in the system has not yet been activated. The panel felt that this was an area of serious concern, especially given that many other institutions already have such a system in place.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The panel acknowledges with appreciation the long-standing traditions of student support on the several campuses, and the commitment and dedication of staff (for instance, through the writing centres, the SI programme, and the Career Centres).

At the same time, the panel found a marked lack of institutional coherence in this focus area, and felt some concern that the new restructuring proposals do not yet appear to provide the

high-level leadership necessary to draw together the many initiatives into a coherent whole – and also to represent student development and success effectively at executive level in a time of competition for possibly limited budgets. The panel therefore urges that NWU consider means of ensuring the necessary high-level leadership for the student support domain, to ensure that this focus area continues developing the potential which is already apparent.

Overall in this focus areas, the majority of student support systems appear sound, yet there is some duplication and too little articulation and reporting. NWU might wish to consider aligning its policies more closely with national and international guidelines, principles and values. It is also important that existing excellent practices be shared and implemented on an institution-wide basis.

Besides the one mention at the interviews that there is no online curriculum advising, there was no other discussion on curriculum advising, and the topic is only covered in the 2015 report, which notes the current ad hoc approach and the lack of a unitary system. The panel urges the university to implement its own recommendations highlighted in the 2015 report, specifically the creation of a unitary system.

In the case of career services, it would appear advisable to appoint a dedicated career consultant on each campus to expand the good work being done in this area. Integrating the student support systems on a one-stop platform per campus would also assist students (following the example of the excellent new Learning and Research Commons, on Vaal Triangle campus).

The result of the regular surveys in which NWU participates appear currently to be reported only at meetings of the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning. In order to maximise the perspectives gained from these surveys, the panel urges the institution to find innovative ways of bringing survey results to the attention of staff more broadly.

The panel welcomes the development of the ARAS framework, and suggests that it could be further enhanced through collaboration between academic and support staff in communities of practice, and evidence-based research projects and feedback systems that can allow for adequate monitoring and evaluation of interventions. (The institution will, of course, require bearing the implications of the *Protection of Personal Information Act* in mind when collecting student data.)

The panel urges the institution to find an immediate solution to the challenges preventing the early identification of ‘at risk’ students. A well-integrated, computerised system for student performance monitoring is recommended in order to standardise mark entry, provide real-time correct data and put in place a referral system to help students who may be prevented from failing. The panel suggests that the institution should also continue utilising reliable and valid assessment methods to develop student risk profiles and to track their learning,

with data stored in a repository accessible to staff responsible for student support. It would be helpful to define important terms that inform business rules, e.g. success, at-risk etc.

The matter of plagiarism appears to have been somewhat neglected at NWU; the panel suggests that an effective policy framework be developed using data collected from staff and students, and should be formalised in the university. With the necessary capacity, the writing centres could play an important complementary role in educating students about plagiarism. Given that it is important that the ODL students should also be able to access the services of the writing centres, the panel urges the institution to complete expeditiously the development of the Online Writing Laboratory.

The panel notes the widespread rollout of SI with appreciation, but, given that there appears to be little use made of tutorials as a formal part of course offerings, it suggests that the university also consider the importance of tutorials as sites of deep learning with a different function to SI remedial interventions.

The panel suggests that the student evaluation system be further developed and better executed for evenness of processes across the campuses.

Finally, while the university has reported with enthusiasm about its use of senior students as academic advisors in certain faculties, the panel is wary of this practice for pedagogical reasons. The university is encouraged to look at the UFS's academic advising system, which uses well-trained advisors. Advising is a high impact practice that has been shown to improve student success.

4. FOCUS AREA 3: ENHANCING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

(Including teaching and learning spaces, ICT infrastructure and access, technology-enabled tools and resources, library facilities)

THE INSTITUTION'S STRENGTHS

Sections 1 and 5 of the *Institutional Plan* for 2014 identify themes for various aspects of the learning environment. Included is the adoption of blended learning as a key institutional strategy.

In this regard a decided strength is the long-standing investment and experience in logistics and infrastructure for ODL. This has included the establishment of at least 55 Open Learning Centres across the country (2014 figure). These Centres (often located in schools or local government offices) are equipped with Smart Boards for the transmission of lectures and downloading of study material, with some limited resources, including some computers with internet access. All lectures are captured in electronic format, in some cases with simultaneous translation in up to four languages. For these purposes, a proprietary hardware-based solution, namely SMART Technology, is utilised; Moodle is used for the ODL LMS.

There has also been considerable work done by NWU's IT department, for instance as regards web conferencing, and web solutions in support of teaching and learning. Web conferencing between campuses (primarily for inter-campus meetings) utilises an online, software-based web conferencing service, termed Connect@NWU. Sakai is used for the on-campus LMS (branded as eFundi).

A Student IT Walk-In service on each campus assists students who bring their own devices to campus.

The campus Libraries have begun positioning themselves as multi-learning spaces, into which technology-related services are being integrated. A particularly significant development has been the new Learning and Research Commons on Vaal Triangle campus, which has brought together a number of support services under one roof, for both students and staff, including ADS, Student Counselling, ICT support, Reading and Writing Centres and technology-enhanced teaching.

There is an integrated library website, which provides information on the services of the three campus libraries and ensures seamless access to electronic resources for users both on and off campus. Efforts to promote Open Access have been supported by the NWU's signing of the Berlin Declaration.

THE APPROACH TAKEN TO IMPROVEMENT

Efforts are underway to build structured coordination and coherence across campuses, by means of committees, task teams, and framework documents. For instance, this focus area is included as Project area 5 in the overarching *Transformation of Teaching and Learning Project*. An institutional Library Forum has been established, with representation on other institutional committees, e.g. on the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning. An e-guide task team has been formed, chaired by the Chief Director of Information Technology, to investigate alternative platforms and technologies which could be utilised for the development of e-guides. A draft *Framework for e-guides* (learning guides) has been produced, and agreement has been reached as to the design principles which will inform the development of all e-guides at NWU.

The institutional reports confirm that the extensive ODL system needs to be integrated into overall planning for technology-enabled learning, which, in spite of all the work being done, is currently not happening. The institutional Teaching and Learning Strategy, approved in 2016, will allow NWU's strategy of blended learning to be appropriately positioned and decisions related to the infrastructure required for technology-enabled learning to be taken, moving beyond the two different solutions and two separate LMSs currently being utilised. A blended learning Steering Committee has now been constituted, to take the closer integration of technology and teaching and learning forward.

At the same time, individual units and department continue with pilots involving technology-enabled learning on an experimental basis.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN AND PROGRESS MADE

General comment

In the interviews, it was noted that the challenges of the recent student protests had greatly influenced developments. They had led to a great willingness to understand the needs of students, and this had resulted in changes and growth on the part of the University. Innovative ways had emerged of addressing needs communicated by students. Presently the University is working towards providing students with access when they are unable to visit campus. There have also been efforts to negotiate with service providers to allow students cheaper or free access to data, since if the solution to increasing access is to go online when students cannot come on campus, there will have to be innovative ways to bring down costs. NWU has also been developing an online strategy that will allow students to download material and have it available on devices offline.

Teaching and learning spaces

While the final report states unequivocally that, “The key point is that the campus as a whole should be regarded as an environment that supports student learning”, it was noted in the interviews that many more traditionally minded role-players do not yet recognise the importance of learning space design. Hence the need for guidelines around learning spaces, that are then consistently applied. For instance, learning spaces could be for either private study or collaborative learning; outdoor areas would need technology and places to recharge devices. Unused areas in buildings could be transformed into spaces where students might gather. It appears that NWU, led by the Libraries, is gradually becoming aware of these possibilities.

There would appear to be a need for a grand vision for infrastructure planning, and to this end an integrated Facilities Planning Committee is to be established in the near future, with the three campus rectors involved. Currently the Physical Infrastructure/ Facilities planning department feels the lack of integrated planning, with each campus having its own plan. There is convergence in thinking that the institutional macro-plan cannot be run by Infrastructure Planning only – it must also be informed by faculties; and hence this new solution is developing. Such an approach would link the enrolment plan more closely to the allocation of resources, by ascertaining the kind of facilities and the number of staff members required. This will further strengthen the link between the strategic intent of the university and allocation of resources.

At the same time, initiatives on individual campuses continue. For instance, the Academic Development Unit on Potchefstroom campus has developed a focus on learning spaces – it has a Technology Commons area, which it annually revamps with new layout and furniture,

to see what works best for student learning. This is presently on an experimental basis and funded by ADS. If successful, it could be rolled out on a larger basis.

The ODL learning centres have also been receiving attention, from both IT and ADS. Wi-Fi has now been installed, and all classes recorded, resulting in a considerable increase in the time ODL students spend watching recorded lectures. The ODL Unit is responsible for coordinating use of the Learning Centres, and for the venues themselves, and tries to visit each Centre once a year.

ICT infrastructure and access

The final report noted good progress with regard to a number of aspects of ICT infrastructure and access. These included: upgrading of the LMS, Sakai (eFundi); a successful pilot project on lecture capturing on all three campuses; live streaming of lectures on Vaal Triangle campus in two subjects; Wi-Fi coverage in all business areas, recreation rooms and open spaces on the three campuses; installation of Wi-Fi hotspots in the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle residences; and technology to support virtual meetings and classes. The panel was informed that computer utilisation on campus has increased considerably, as well as the types of software used. Around 6000 students use the LMS simultaneously on a daily basis; this could be further expanded by means of additional servers.

Areas where further thought is still needed involve access to campus systems from home and possible assistance to students in acquiring devices. (There have been a number of initiatives in this regard; in particular, a pilot has seen computers purchased for IT students, which are paid back over time.) NWU has successfully negotiated with a service provider for cheaper data for students (October 2016 – January 2017), and the Association of SA Directors of IT is trying to negotiate a more permanent solution, with 75% cost discount.

For historical reasons, NWU is currently running two LMSes (Moodle for ODL students, Sakai for contact students), in part because ODL utilises a service provider, the Open Learning Group. However, the institution has realised the potential risk of dependence on an external service provider, and the intention is to move to a single aligned system within the next few years that will provide for all students. Registration systems for all contact and ODL students will also be on a single system. The panel noted with appreciation this intended move towards harmonisation on a single system.

NWU has both 'closed' and 'open' computer labs (including in the Library); many of the latter are open 24/7. Negotiations with the owners of 'closed' (dedicated) labs have led to many of these becoming available for extended periods during office hours. The Manager: Library Services, Vaal Triangle Campus is investigating implementing a 2-hour time slot for student access – currently some students stay on computers in the lab for up to 5 hours, limiting access for other students. The panel felt that a booking system for the computer labs might make considerable sense, perhaps a system where students are able to see online where computers are vacant and book them.

Technology-enabled tools and resources

In line with the institutional blended learning strategy, NWU has embarked on a major multi-year project to transform the current predominantly paper-based study guides to electronic format. By means of pilot projects, a variety of IT and teaching and learning standards for e-guides have been developed and tested, and are currently being utilised for the roll-out of ODL BEd modules. The recommendation of the e-guide task team is that more than one platform be available, to accommodate the differing needs of different academic programmes. At the same time, a fixed set of IT and Teaching and Learning standards and criteria need to be followed and complied with, which will be spelled out within the *Draft Framework for E-guides*.

Staff interest has grown around the institutional move towards blended learning for campus-based programmes, with workshops being held and some lecturers migrating primarily contact modules onto a blended platform. At present the considerable majority of modules (over 90%) have a presence on eFundi, though this is not compulsory, and the type of usage varies considerably. Some faculties have taken a clear stand on blended learning. The Engineering Faculty has taken a decision to transform curricula to blended learning within three years, with this also applying to its PG Diploma. The Faculty of Education is moving to blended mode semester by semester.

Another area of challenge at NWU is that of learning analytics, which, while not yet available, the institution envisages using to develop reliable predictors of student success. It was indicated that the new Centre for Teaching and Learning is to make provision for a learning analytics specialist, who will need to be recruited. It will also be necessary to put pressure on IT as regards the capability of doing learning analytics, and achieving integration of the relevant databases. It is hoped that there will be considerable progress within the next half year.

Library facilities

The Library Forum has continued to make good progress, as regards the achievement of coordinated and integrated planning for library services across campuses, in collaboration with other academic and support units. Task groups around key issues have been formed with members from all three libraries. The libraries have also become involved in information literacy training interventions.

The focus of the libraries on repurposing library spaces so that they are compliant with 21st century demands was strongly endorsed by the student participants in the interviews, who felt that the learning environments are now inviting to students. Considerable assistance is available to students, such as guidance on what to study and funding opportunities. Students find that their needs are better accommodated by means of the mix of quieter areas and more social areas.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The panel endorsed the efforts made, particularly by the libraries, to repurpose library spaces in line with student needs, and to achieve more integrated library planning.

The panel strongly supported the emerging need for an institutional macro-plan with respect to space and infrastructure planning and management, which would be informed by both Facilities Management (and other support services) and by the faculties, to ensure that academic needs are being met.

Similarly, the institution is urged to put in place guidelines around the development of learning spaces, and to ensure that these are consistently applied.

The institution is urged to continue its efforts to integrate systems and services, both across campuses and between ODL and campus teaching and learning.

The panel urges the institution to obtain the necessary learning analytics capacity, to allow appropriate use to be made of the available bodies of data in the development of effective student tracking and referral systems.

5. FOCUS AREA 4: ENHANCING COURSE AND PROGRAMME ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT

(Including admissions, selection, placement, readmission refusal, pass rates in gateway courses³, throughput rates, management information systems)

THE INSTITUTION'S STRENGTHS

Reliable processes and systems regarding enrolment planning, admissions and placements are all in place, with online applications and registrations being initiated from 2012 and gradual progress being made.

THE APPROACH TAKEN TO IMPROVEMENT

The approach taken to improving the planning and implementation of enrolment management includes the use of instruments such as the *NWU Enrolment Plan*, the *Admission Policy*, the *University PQM* and the approval process for academic programmes. Supporting student success is a data warehouse storing an overview of students' performance that is maintained by the Management Information System (MIS).

In the past, there were different practices on each campus. The University has started to align the business processes for the whole institution.

³ "Gateway courses" are those courses that have a large impact on students' ability to progress. Typically they are prerequisites for other courses, and often they have large enrolments. At many universities, examples of gateway courses are first year Mathematics and Economics. In some cases, if students fail a gateway course they automatically have to extend their studies by one or two semesters.

Improving admissions and placement, by means of assessment, and the alignment of these processes, as well as recruitment across campuses, is in planning stages. Key to these areas is the ARAS Framework discussed in Focus Area 2.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN AND PROGRESS MADE

Enrolment planning

Student enrolment planning, management and monitoring aims to increase graduate output at all levels, and to do so there is a steering mechanism to direct academic planning to meet targets, monitored by the MIS. There has been ongoing incremental improvement in these processes during the past few years. The input and output targets are approved formally at the faculty (Faculty Management Committee) and campus levels (Extended Campus Management Committee and Campus Senate Committees), and finally by the Institutional Senate, Institutional Management and Council within the *Institutional Plan* for all campuses. The targets are determined on a programme and curriculum level. The historical enrolment figures per curriculum level for the previous five years are reviewed by each academic programme leader, who also considers staff capacity and performance management, current and future infrastructure capacity needs and planned new programmes. The percentage of 'over-enrolment' to be allowed is also calculated in order to compensate for students who apply for admission but do not enrol. Distance student input is provided by the Unit for Open Distance Learning. A strong emphasis is placed on output targets (i.e. student success), using predictive modelling.

Enrolment management is aligned with student marketing and recruitment, as well as the student selection and admission process. This incorporates general national Grade 12 enrolment trends, as well as market-related input, provided by the Department of Marketing and Communication.

Enrolment planning, management and monitoring emphasises the determination of both input and output targets and indicators. The baseline submission (2014) highlighted that NWU needs to develop a more strategic approach, wherein there is greater directing of enrolment planning in line with the University's desired shape and size, as well as an enhanced capacity to monitor the external environment and make more informed decisions about institutional academic priorities.

To improve reporting on student participation in experiential learning, a system for accurate recording of work-integrated learning and service learning is needed, especially in programmes where reporting of this is required for registration by statutory councils and professional bodies. The Registrar, with approval from Institutional Management, has initiated the development of such a project. The specifications, according to the 2015 report, are being considered.

An online MIS Dashboard enables student registrations to be monitored on a curriculum level, on a daily basis during February to March, allowing school and faculty-specific

monitoring and detailed reports. The MIS also reports on registration, enrolment, graduates, drop-out and various other indicators, which are updated monthly. It includes business intelligence reporting solutions, such as dashboards, reports and cubes, and audits and error checks of data in a three tier process to verify the data, in order to grant users access to strategic management information. The monitoring and reporting of the enrolment plan is also done at the level of directors of schools/research entities, and deans and vice-rectors on each campus. The MIS is a home-grown (not commercial) program, with external input sourced for dashboards. It has great flexibility, but there is a need for an increase in staff in the division to develop improved functionality and stability.

Dashboard interfaces linked to a central system will allow for analyses of trends and cohorts, and well as projections on student academic achievement. However, a lack of capacity with the MIS to provide such information, and lack of training for academic managers and staff hinders this initiative.

Application, selection and registration

Senate discussions in 2014 and 2015 highlighted the need to initiate research into developing an effective admissions and placement assessment system, to review current admissions and selection criteria and standardise these in terms of APS, NSC and NPV results. The project will also analyse current practices of assessment in these areas across all faculties and make recommendations, considering the different campus needs and student profiles. Engineering, for example, has its own set of purpose-built entrance tests.

Online application and registration processes have been implemented since 2012, with relative success in encouraging potential and returning students to use the system. Approximately 40% of students at the Potchefstroom Campus use it, with less uptake at the other campuses. However, students who have to repeat modules must still register manually, thus the system must still be optimised. During the interview, it was reported that the aim was to achieve an 80% online use in the near future. However, it was noted that disadvantaged students face great challenges in this regard from a lack of basic computer literacy skills and access to computers. Most of these students prefer face-face contact for the enrolment process. In 2015 at the Mafikeng Campus the University had to do online applications because of student protests, and worked with local government to enable students to do online registrations and NSFAS applications.

Provisional offers are made to students during their Grade 12 year, followed by an SMS to make firm offers to students who meet the entry criteria. However, there is no requirement for students to notify the University about whether or not they will take up the offer. Therefore about 40% more offers are made than places available, based on historical data of realisation rates.

A significant contributor to the success in this focus area is the ongoing development of a single student administrative system across the campuses, and the training of end-users of this system, enabling a standardised approach in the management of student administration.

As a means of increasing access for students with poor Mathematics results, the University offers a two-week intensive maths course in January on the Mafikeng and Vaal Triangle campuses called “Bridge the Mathematical Gap”. Students’ final marks in this course can be used as a substitute for their NSC mark for admission purposes. In 2016 at the Mafikeng campus there were 30 participants, of whom 27 were admitted to mainstream programmes and 3 to extended degree programmes.

NWU has also initiated a project to align the recruitment, application and admission process across all campuses in order to prepare for the university’s inclusion into the DHET’s Central Application System.

NWU has made further progress with regard to the alignment of programmes across all three campuses, which prior to 2012 had not been the case, and which had been impacting on the equivalence of programmes and equity of provision, liaison with external bodies and processes at the institutional level. The HEQSF alignment, which started in 2012, established a framework for future work.

Employability

A careers services management solution is required to provide relevant information on students’ interactions with employers, employments trends and graduate tracking. The Career Services Manager (CSM) is such a solution that has been identified for use by Career Centre Staff, students and employers. It is a web-based approach that provides a single platform to all the services of the Career Centre (such as CV development, access to employer profiles and online career resources, networking with employers, job postings, participation in career fairs and recruiting) in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. It will also enhance the ability of NWU to track graduates in employment.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The panel commends NWU on its success in implementing an effective MIS for handling enrolment data, and suggests that improved communication and user education will allow enhanced use of such data to improve student success.

The panel suggests that the development of an Academic Planning Strategy, informed by an Institutional Research and Planning Department, would allow NWU to engage in more strategic enrolment planning, which the institution is clearly experiencing as a need.

The DVC: Teaching and Learning has, since 2013, presented an annual enrolment monitoring report to the Senate. The panel suggests that the institutional research capability

to monitor enrolment trends on an ongoing basis to enhance this report could be increased by the use of a template developed by the Management Information Unit.

The panel encourages NWU to continue refining its online approaches to applications and registrations, as being of considerable benefit, especially to ODL students and students from some distance away.

The panel acknowledges the cohort study produced by the DVC: Teaching and Learning in 2015 as an initial step towards regular reporting on student cohort studies, and recommends that a system to enable such studies be developed in conjunction with the Management Information Unit, in order to inform planning of student support services and interventions. It would be further important to ensure that results of such studies can be made useful to all teaching staff by means of a capacity to disaggregate data down to programme level.

The panel notes that the two institutional QEP reports do not comment on gateway courses, and on student performance in these courses. Focused pedagogical attention to gateway courses – courses like mathematics and economics that are prerequisites for progression in a programme, but with high failure rates – would undoubtedly help improve student throughput and success, as has been the experience at other institutions.

In addition to the suggested system for monitoring students early on during the semester, the panel also recommends that the University develop a system to track students' progress throughout their degree so that interventions can be made before a student is excluded. The University may want to look at the “robot system” developed by the University of KwaZulu Natal, in which the academic status of each student is displayed as green, amber or red, and is visible to both the student and to a faculty-based student counsellor. When a student's status changes from green to amber, an alert is sent out to the student and the counsellor.

6. SUMMARY

NWU is a university moving from a federal system, with its many historical legacies, to one that is unitary. Approved strategies and draft frameworks submitted after the two reports of 2014 and 2015 and prior to the institutional visit (Appendix 2) present a positive perspective by not only embracing the challenges of transformation at a number of crucial levels – especially the strategic and practical – but also by showing a clear, emphatic vision of teaching and learning that addresses the quality of the teaching and the learning experience, as well as student throughput and success in increasingly culturally diverse environments. The two reports on their own identify some good practices and emerging projects that speak promisingly to improving teaching and learning, but also report honestly on gaps. But it is in the later strategy and framework documents, especially those relating to teaching and learning, access, retention, attainment and success, and learning interfaces, and in the conversations held during the visit, that the panel has seen definite signs of creating a unitary, transformed university. While it is recognised that the university is facing inordinately

difficult challenges in moving towards a unitary system, the management team is to be congratulated on its achievements thus far in this direction.

The panel recommends that NWU develop a culture of evidence-based decision-making, by means of ongoing institutional research. (Such an approach is, for instance, strongly embedded in both UFS and UP, who might be consulted.) NWU is urged to bear this in mind while implementing the restructuring plan, and to ensure systems whereby research undertaken by the Institutional Office could also be diffused across the institution.

Specific comments in each of the focus areas are given below.

Focus Area 1: Enhancing Academics as teachers

NWU is commended on the move towards an overall, coherent conceptualisation of enhancing academics as teachers, where practices such as the induction programme and the teaching excellence awards form part of a developmental process with demonstrated impact. It is also commendable that these practices have achieved considerable staff buy-in.

The panel also recognises that the new proposed structures for teaching and learning will have many benefits for academics as teachers. The *TransfTL Project* specifically addresses the professional development of academics.

The panel urges the institution to continue work on a coherent and systematic staff development policy or continuous professional development (CPD) framework, in order to optimise the new opportunities for institutional coherence emerging from the restructuring process. It is also recommended that this emerging CPD framework should involve all academics and not just new ones. It will be useful to explore the induction programme as a compulsory component of a formal probation process; and also as credit-bearing towards a potential PG Diploma (UKZN and Rhodes offer two exemplars).

Similarly, in restructuring, the institution is urged to consider multiple ways of building strong linkages between staff on different campuses, not least in order for successful projects on one campus or in one faculty to come to the attention of others. Existing approaches, such as the various teaching and learning conferences, could be complemented by enhanced communication systems across and between faculties, and support for the development of communities of practice.

As a general principle, the panel recommends that academic staff development become further embedded in disciplines (as is already emerging in certain environments) and achieve stronger links with higher education specialisation. The stated focus on SoTL is likely to be highly beneficial in this regard, as is promoting the desirable scholarly approach to teaching and learning.

The Science Faculty appears to have achieved a fully developed and workable workload model, and the panel encourages the university to develop a workload model or framework

for the institution as a whole, to assist in assigning equitable workloads. Other institutions which might be consulted in this regard are, for instance, UP and UKZN.

The panel appreciates that NWU is presently considering how best to include the recognition of teaching excellence in its promotions criteria. NWU might wish to consult some other institutions which have developed good systems for the evaluation of teaching excellence and SOTL for promotion purposes e.g. UP, UKZN, Rhodes and UJ.

Focus Area 2: Enhancing Student Support and Development

At present, the many interesting projects around student support depend primarily on staff enthusiasm and on individuals – a common trait across the sector – but this brings with it the danger of compromising successful initiatives if the key person leaves. The panel sees a need for overall coherence supported by structures and policy, and recommends strongly that the university consider a structure driven at executive level that draws together the various initiatives for academic and other support for students. In this regard, NWU might wish to consider UJ as a possible model for the close integration of academic and psycho-social student support, where the DVC and respective directors take responsibility to draw together the various support structures.

The panel was most impressed by the scale at which SI is practised in the university, and the way in which it is becoming a pipeline to bring young people into academia, and wishes to commend the institution on this success. NWU is encouraged to share this experience with the sector. At the same time, the institution might consider complementing the remedially-oriented SI approach with other forms of tutoring which offer additional in-depth approaches to learning, e.g. scheduled and required tutorials for modules, as well as formal tutor training.

The panel urges NWU to take immediate action to implement the early and continuous monitoring of student performance. It was not clear to the panel what is currently preventing the university from having all marks on one system, monitoring student performance and developing risk profiles, but these need to be investigated. A referral system needs to accompany a monitoring system if it is to be of value in preventing students from failing or dropping out.

The panel has a concern about the use of senior students as faculty advisors, as it is not appropriate to have students monitoring other students. UFS and UP have good systems for faculty advisors; while there are doubtless budget constraints, the experience of other institutions has shown this to be a cost-effective contribution to student retention and success.

The panel urges NWU to continue its work around developing risk profiles for incoming students, to allow the necessary developmental initiatives to be implemented at the onset of the study programme.

The panel recommends that NWU consider ways of ensuring the equitable rollout of both curriculum advising (which appears to be seriously under-developed), and career advising, on all campuses.

Focus Area 3: Enhancing the Learning Environment

The panel noted with appreciation that, within the new unitary institutional model, NWU intends developing a more integrated approach towards space planning. It is recommended that in that process of creating an institutional master plan, there will be ongoing conversations between those primarily concerned with teaching and learning and those primarily responsible for infrastructure, to ensure that infrastructure is designed as fit for purpose. (This could well be achieved through broad representation on the proposed Facilities Planning Committee.)

The panel endorsed the efforts made by the Libraries, to repurpose existing library spaces as ‘learning spaces’ in line with student needs. The panel recommends that this approach be extended more broadly by means of institutional guidelines, to ensure that each campus environment as a whole supports student learning in and out of the classroom. In addition, the University is encouraged to look creatively at how more spaces for student learning, both individual and collaborative, can be developed, including outdoor spaces.

The virtualisation of computer labs – where all software currently only accessible in the PC labs will become available on students’ devices – is an excellent technology initiative to address the usage problems associated with the labs, and the panel urges the institution to take this initiative forward.

The increased use of blended learning provides the opportunity to increase access and learning opportunities for students who cannot come to campus, as well as offering new affordances for learning, provided that the design of online materials is pedagogically sound. To this end, the University is encouraged to employ specialised learning designers. The panel also notes with interest that e-assessment is being developed for summative and formative assessments.

The institution is strongly urged to continue its efforts to integrate systems and services, both across campuses and between ODL and campus-based teaching and learning.

The panel also urges the institution to obtain the necessary learning analytics capacity, to allow appropriate use to be made of the available bodies of data, under the guidance of the new Centre for Teaching and Learning.

Focus Area 4 : Enhancing course and programme enrolment management

NWU is making progress in aligning processes for enrolment management, with the SET faculties offering a good example of collaboration and communication. The panel suggests

that research on the predictive validity of placement tools, together with enhancing the university's data analytics capabilities, would add additional value to these processes.

Partnerships with schools and the Bridge the Mathematical Gap programme are commended as sound initiatives for increasing student access and success.

The panel urges NWU to continue refining its approaches to online applications and registration, while combining this with the necessary curriculum advising.

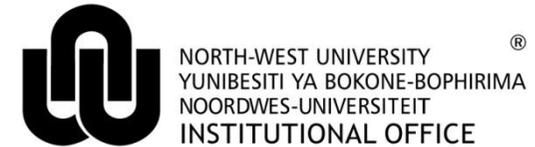
Considerable work still needs to be done as regards monitoring and tracking of students, though the panel notes that there are initiatives in this regard. In order to enhance enrolment management, the panel recommends that the system should require applicants to confirm promptly their acceptance of a firm offer. Similarly, it is also important to track students' progress throughout their whole degree, and the panel recommends the implementation of an automated system (such as UKZN has put in place via their MIS), in order to proactively avoid the loss of struggling students who may otherwise drop out or be excluded.

Conclusion

The panel commends NWU on the truly astounding progress it has made in restructuring, as compared with the 2014 baseline submission. There is ample evidence that this has taken enormous honesty, commitment, and hard work, and the panel wishes NWU well with the implementation of what has been conceptualised.

APPENDIX 1: Programme

Programme: CHE visit for QEP
7 February 2017
Institutional Office Building C1: Room 135



TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	ATTENDANCE
07:30- 08:00	Coffee/Tea	Roof Garden	
08:00 – 08:15	Welcome and Introductions	Room 135	Prof Dan Kgwadi (Vice-Chancellor) Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning) (Overview: 10 Min) Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar) Prof Frik van Niekerk (DVC: Research, Innovation and Technology) Prof Lumkile Lalendle (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning and Quality, Mafikeng Campus) Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Linda du Plessis (Acting Rector, Vaal Triangle Campus) Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Nthi Mokoena (Director: Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus) Dr Esmarie Strydom (Director: Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus) Prof Mariëtte Lowes (Project Coordinator, Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning) Prof Dawid Gericke (Acting Director: Institutional Academic Development and Support) Prof Marilyn Setlalentoa (Dean: Faculty of Human & Social Sciences, Mafikeng Campus) Ms Elmarie de Beer (Executive Director: Finance & Facilities) Mr Joep Joubert (Chief Director: Physical Infrastructure and Planning)

			Dr Jannie Jacobsz (Director: Quality Office) Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities))
08:15 – 09:15	Discussion: Senior Management	Room 135	Prof Dan Kgwadi (Vice-Chancellor) Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning) Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar) Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities) Prof Frik van Niekerk (DVC: Research, Innovation and Technology) Prof Lumkile Lalendle (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning and Quality, Mafikeng Campus) Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning, (Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Linda du Plessis (Acting Rector, Vaal Triangle Campus) Prof Kobus Pienaar (Dean: Faculty of Natural Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Melvin Mbao (Dean: Faculty of Law, Mafikeng Campus) Prof Marilyn Setlalentoa (Dean: Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Mafikeng Campus) Prof Robert Balfour (Dean: Faculty of Education Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus) Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Nthi Mokoena (Director: Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus) Dr Esmarie Strydom (Director: Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus) Ms Elmarie de Beer (Executive Director: Finance & Facilities) Mr Joep Joubert (Chief Director: Physical Infrastructure and Planning) Dr Jannie Jacobsz (Director: Quality Office)
09:15 – 09:25	Reflection		Panel and Scribe
09:25 – 10:45	Focus Area 1: Enhancing academics as teachers	Room 135	Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning) Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar) Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities) Prof Lumkile Lalendle (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning and Quality, Mafikeng Campus)

			<p>Prof Mariëtte Lowes (Project Coordinator, Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>Prof Robert Balfour (Dean: Faculty of Education Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Prof Kobus Pienaar (Dean: Faculty of Natural Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Dr Esmarie Strydom (Director: Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Dr Gerda Reitsma (Faculty of Health Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Malie Zeeman (School of Information Technology, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Ms Ria Nel (Director: Remuneration and Organisational Development)</p> <p>Dr Chrisna Botha-Ravynze (School of Economic Sciences, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Prof Lihwa Siziba (Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Prof Mirna Nel (School of Education Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Prof Dawid Gericke (Acting Director: Institutional Academic Development and Support)</p> <p>Dr Dirk van den Berg (Academic Advisor, Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Hunadi Rakhudu (School of Nursing Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Ms Annelize Cronje (Senior Academic Development Advisor: Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus)</p>
10:45 – 10:55	Reflection		Panel and Scribe
10:55 – 12:15	Focus Area 2: Enhancing student support and development	Room 135	<p>Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar)</p> <p>Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities)</p> <p>Prof Sonia Swanepoel (Dean: Faculty of Commerce and Administration, Mafikeng Campus)</p>

			<p>Prof Herman vd Merwe (Dean: Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Ms Diné Du Preez (Student Advisor: Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning, (Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Prof Dawid Gericke (Acting Director: Institutional Academic Development and Support)</p> <p>Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Mariaan Klopper (Manager Student Development, Institutional Academic Development Servicesupport)</p> <p>Ms Ellen Materechera (Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Mr Cornelius van Rooyen (Financial Aid, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Ms Prem Coopoo (Dean of Students, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Prof Tobie van Dyk (Head: Centre for Academic Literacy and Professional Language Practice, Faculty of Arts, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Lerato Wana (Student Guidance and Counselling, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Ms Nomasomi Morule (Academic advisor: Student support, Academic Development Centre, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Mr Peet Roos (Acting Manager: Career Centre)</p> <p>Prof Alida Herbst (Director: School for Psychosocial Behavioural Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p>
12:15 – 12:25	Reflection		Panel and Scribe
12:25 – 13:00	Lunch	Roof Garden	Approx 35 delegates (previous and next session participants)
13:00 – 14:20	Focus Area 3: Enhancing the learning environment	Room 135	<p>Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar)</p> <p>Prof Linda du Plessis (Acting Rector, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Mr Bram Schouwstra (Manager: Projects, Unit for Open and Distance Learning)</p>

			<p>Dr Hennie Esterhuizen (Academic and Office Solutions, Information Technology)</p> <p>Dr Marieta Jansen van Vuuren (Senior Academic Advisor, Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Dr Heleen Coetzee (Lecturer: Psychology, Faculty of Health Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Hunadi Rakhudu School of Nursing Science, Faculty of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Mafikeng Campus</p> <p>Ms Hendra Pretorius (Manager: Library Services, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Ms Neli Kaunda (Director: LibraryServices, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Dr Mathew Moyo (Director: Library Services, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Mr Rassie Louw (Manager: Teaching and Learning Technology, Institutional Academic Development Services)</p> <p>Ms Vanessa Olivier (Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Claudia Pietersen (Director: Information Technology)</p> <p>Dr Alfred Henrico (Senior Lecturer: School of Business Management, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Adelle Lotter (Academic and Office Solutions, Information Technology)</p> <p>Mr Kobus Le Roux (Head of Department and Researcher: Higher Education Teaching-Learning: Academic Support Services)</p> <p>Prof Jan Steenekamp (School of Pharmacy, Faculty of Health Sciences)</p> <p>Dr Ronel Pretorius (School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences)</p> <p>Prof Awie Kotze (Dean: Faculty of Health Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Bibi Bouman (Director:Community engagement)</p> <p>Dr Myrtle Erasmus (Faculty of Education, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Ms Elmarie de Beer (Executive Director: Finances and Facilities)</p> <p>Mr Joep Joubert (Chief Director: Physical Infrastructure and Planning)</p> <p>Mr Boeta Pretorius (Chief Director: Information Technology)</p>
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			Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities)
14:20 – 14:30	Reflection		Panel and Scribe
14:30 – 15:40	Focus Area 4: Enhancing course and programme enrolment management	Room 135	<p>Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching-Learning)</p> <p>Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities)</p> <p>Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar)</p> <p>Dr Nelda Mouton (Subject Matter Expert: Institutional Registrar)</p> <p>Prof Mariëtte Lowes (Project Coordinator, Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>Mr Franco Nkoana (Campus Registrar, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Mr Jan-Hendrik Viljoen (Acting Manager: Management Information)</p> <p>Mr Jaco-Phillip Ellis (Manager: Student Administrative Systems)</p> <p>Ms Nandi Mintoli (Admissions and Student Records, Academic Administration, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Ms Alta van Zyl (Admissions, Academic Administration, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Mr Sam Ndaba (Admissions and Student Records, Academic Administration, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Mr Neels Vermeulen (Director: Academic Administration, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Prof Sonia Swanepoel (Dean: Faculty of Commerce and Administration, Mafikeng Campus)</p> <p>Mr Piet Steyn (Student Recruitment, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Me Elza Hatting (Faculty of Engineering, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Me Karle Bell (Marketing, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Potchefstroom Campus)</p> <p>Prof Herman vd Merwe (Dean: Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology, Vaal Triangle Campus)</p> <p>Ms Inonge Kakula (Faculty of Education and Training, Mafikeng Campus)</p>
15:40 -- 15:50	Reflection		Panel and Scribe
15:50 – 16:20	Conclusion: Senior Management	Room 135	<p>Prof Dan Kgwadi (Vice-Chancellor)</p> <p>Prof Martin Oosthuizen (DVC: Teaching and Learning)</p> <p>Prof Frik van Niekerk (DVC: Research, Innovation and Technology)</p>

			<p>Prof Marlene Verhoef (Institutional Registrar) Ms Elmarie de Beer (Executive Director: Finance & Facilities) Mr Erik Marx (Project Manager: Finance and Facilities) Prof Lumkile Lalendle (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning and Quality, Mafikeng Campus) Prof Rantoa Letšosa (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Linda du Plessis (Acting Rector, Vaal Triangle Campus) Dr Gerhard du Plessis (Director: Academic Support Services, Potchefstroom Campus) Prof Nthi Mokoena (Director: Academic Development and Support, Mafikeng Campus) Dr Esmarie Strydom (Director: Academic Development and Support, Vaal Triangle Campus) Prof Mariëtte Lowes (Project Coordinator, Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning) Dr Jannie Jacobsz (Director: Quality Office)</p>
16:20-16:30	Wrap up and Departure		

APPENDIX 2: List of additional documents provided by the NWU

North-West University Strategy 2015-2025

North-West University Teaching and Learning Strategy: 2016-2020

A Framework for students success: Access, retention, attainment and success (10 October 2016)

NWU Framework for the development of learning interfaces (17 October 2016)

Powerpoint presentation by the DVC: Teaching and Learning (7 February 2017)

NWU Institutional structure

NWU Top structure