Quality Enhancement Project
Institutional Reports: Phase 1
Due Date: 11 December 2015

Name of Institution	University of Pretoria
Contact Person	Professor Norman Duncan/ Professor Wendy Kilfoil
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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.

1. INTRODUCTION

From the start of the QEP process, the principle at the University of Pretoria was to use an inclusive approach to the development of the self-evaluation reports, led by the teaching and learning portfolio and supported by the Quality Assurance unit.

The first report was prepared by identifying relevant stakeholders per focus area, including student representatives from the SRC and Faculty Houses. Each focus area was chaired by a Deputy Dean for Teaching and Learning or equivalent. In total, 84 individuals were involved, 21 of them students. The scribe's notes from each session were drafted into a preliminary report and circulated for comment to each group for its next meeting. The amended draft was again circulated to all groups and then to the Deans and the Executive. Further suggestions were then incorporated. Data were obtained from the institutional research department or other relevant sources.

The first draft of the second report was drawn up in consultation between Education Innovation (Director, Deputy Director: Academic Development, Deputy Director: E-Learning and Media Development) and Deputy Deans of Teaching and Learning or their equivalents in each Faculty. The draft was then circulated to the wider group of staff members who had prepared the first self-evaluation. The SRC Academic officer and the president of the SRC reviewed the draft in view of their recent attendance at a CHE QEP event and because most of the students who had participated in the first report had graduated. Their additional input is noted at the end of each focus area. The draft incorporating all comments was then circulated to the Vice-Principals Academic and Planning for comment. The final version was sent to the Academic Planning Committee for approval.

2. FOCUS AREA 1: ENHANCING ACADEMICS AS TEACHERS
Includes: professional development, reward and recognition, workload, conditions of service and performance appraisal.

2.1 Summarise what the university considers to be the key issues in enhancing academics as teachers in one or two paragraphs.

Learning about teaching is all about the ecosystem. The University has in place a department dedicated to providing relevant teaching development interventions as priority programmes or on demand. Each academic department is itself an ecosystem for peer-enhanced learning, sometimes through structured mentoring of junior staff. The system of rewards for teaching (promotion and awards) is described below. Research into teaching and learning is encouraged by grants as well as peer groups such as the Science Teaching and Learning (SCITAL) forum on campus. The funding of conference attendance for organizations such as HELTASA also encourages learning about teaching and research into teaching and brings academics into contact with other researchers and new ideas. Teaching days/ seminars within Faculties also provide lecturers with the opportunity to display their methods and successes.

In addition to central initiatives, Faculties also have their own focus areas. One Faculty might focus on the flipped classroom, for instance, and provide workshops for lecturers on this topic; the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the Faculty of Law are two examples. Another might focus on high impact modules; for instance, this is a particular focus in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. A third might focus on open educational resources; for instance, the deliberate approach in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Some Faculties might explore a combination of these and other areas. The Faculty of Law, for instance, has focused a great deal on inquiry-based learning, but also increasingly on the use of clickers and the flipped classroom. Most interventions involve the Department for Education Innovation to some extent, so it is possible to see the mosaic as it develops.

2.2 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?

The University is research-intensive and we continually (re)conceptualize what it means to teach in a research-intensive university. One change to the professional development of teachers relates to the Induction Programme for new academic staff. For the first time in 2015 we integrated the teaching and research orientation into one Academic Induction Programme. Although the induction has been reduced from seven to five days by combining the two aspects, the opinion of the heads of teaching and learning in Faculties appears to be that this is still too long. The plan is now to have a shorter, generic programme focusing on both teaching and research and then to have workshops that focus in-depth on relevant topics during the year. One of the points made by the participants in the October Induction programme was that new lecturers need immediate, just-in-time training in how to teach at the very beginning of their tenure and the possibility will be investigated.

Priority programmes, funded by the Skills Levy, were expanded to include Mobile and web technology, Inquiry-based learning, Marking and Curriculum development. One problem with priority programmes is that attendance can be poor or sessions have to be cancelled because not enough people register or too many people cancel. Academics ascribe this phenomenon to workload as the average staff: student ratio at the University of Pretoria is much higher than some other research-intensive universities and the academics at UP present virtually all undergraduate modules on a parallel medium basis – one group in Afrikaans and two or more groups in English. Although a policy prescribes that newly appointed lecturers attend the Induction Programme, the assessment training and *clickUP* training during the probationary period, the implementation of this policy currently is not monitored. It will however be monitored as from 2016.

The Department for Education Innovation continues to offer just-in-time training in Faculties, Schools and Departments.

Two members of staff at UP are part of the TAU Fellowship Programme for mid-career professionals and report that they are finding the experience instructive.

The focus on using technology to transform teaching and learning at UP, in line with its adoption of a hybrid model, has led to several initiatives in 2015, starting with the teaching and learning conference in January focusing on 'Flexible Futures: Shaping e-learning for higher education'. A number of workshops were held during the year and in November a follow-up conference entitled 'Flexible Futures: Shaping e-learning for the University of Pretoria'. The January conference included a number of international universities and experts as well as presentations from UP staff, some of whom have been running fully online programmes for a number of years. The November conference included one contact day sandwiched between five online days on each side to allow academics to experience what it means to work online and with social media. Each Faculty has held discussions on what hybrid means to them and how it should be implemented.

The new focus in the University on a hybrid teaching model has seen a focus in the Faculty of Education on more technology-enhanced teaching within the Unit for Distance Education, an investigation into student technology ownership or access, and training in the facilitation of e-learning.

We have refocused our Task Team on Student Access and Success to explore data use for student success. As part of the Siyaphumelela initiative funded by the Kresge Foundation, this task team receives data coaching.

The Programme for Academic Leadership (PAL) continues to involve academic leaders in research into teaching topics. The 2015 group focused on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). The University also continues to fund SoTL grants and a number of publications has resulted.

The University identified the need for professional development of new academic heads of department. The Human Resources department worked with an education consultant from the Department for Education Innovation to draw up a curriculum for academic HoDs. It was launched on 28 May 2015. The main elements of the curriculum are the networking opportunities, topic discussions (online discussion board and face-to-face interventions), Faculty-specific information (collaborative space), structured mentoring, support department assistance information and links to open education resources. Newly appointed HoDs have been enrolled on the programme as the 2015 pilot group. Their participation was used to quality assure the programme. Feedback thus far suggests that the programme is providing the just-in-time information required for newly appointed HoDs to take the lead in the management of an academic department and thus impact positively on teaching. A suggestion has been made that the University also consider funding the appointment of an individual professional coach for new HoDs on an individual basis, since such new appointees are often highly skilled in academic matters, but their management experience may be limited. This intervention will be implemented as from 2016 for all newly appointed HoDs.

Under the leadership of the Vice Principal: Academic, the senior appointments committee will in future require a teaching portfolio as part of any application for promotion in addition to evidence of research excellence. Each Faculty was requested to produce its own set of criteria for the portfolio; at some stage, it might be possible to combine them into one set. Training in compiling a teaching portfolio is available from the Department for Education Innovation. Training for the committee in evaluating teaching portfolios will be provided from 2016.

Related to the recognition of teaching, a new award for postgraduate supervision will be introduced. We already have institutional awards for research, teaching and community engagement but research

supervision was noted as a gap. Supervision of postgraduate students is a key aspect of the University of Pretoria's long-term vision of becoming a leading research intensive university in Africa, recognised internationally for its quality, relevance and impact, and also for developing people, creating knowledge and making a difference locally and globally. The awards for excellence in supervision will recognize the contribution, in support of the University's strategic goals related to postgraduate training, made by members of the University's academic staff who excel as supervisors of postgraduate research students. Excellence in supervision can be demonstrated by outstanding leadership in enhancing the University's productivity and efficiency with respect to the development of young researchers and academic scholars. The awards will be granted on the grounds of exceptional performance in the supervision of postgraduate students measured in terms of the academic achievement of the students and evidence of excellent mentorship and guidance provided to the students The criteria for the award have been drawn up and it will be awarded for the first time in 2016.

The University is currently in the process of streamlining the awards into an integrated system. The teaching awards used to be every second year but now are awarded every year. They are supported by Faculty-based awards. The ideal is that the winners in the Faculties will be put forward for the institutional award, which would streamline the process, and the institutional winner would be nominated for the national award. However, not all Faculties wish to align their awards with the criteria for the institutional award: they would rather nominate someone different for the latter. The 2015 UP institutional winner succeeded in winning a national CHE/ HELTASA teaching award.

The main thrust of community engagement at UP is that it is integrated into the curriculum and students earn credits for it. An award was given for community engagement for the first time in 2015, based on the criteria for the international Talloires Network award, although slightly amended to suit our curricular approach. Theoretically, the UP winner will be nominated for the Talloires award. However, it will not always be possible as UP's community engagement is embedded in the curriculum and therefore predominantly lecturer-led while Talloires tends to reward student-led community engagement. All lecturers involved in community engagement work with the Community Engagement Office to develop their understanding of the field and their students receive briefings as well.

The Human Resources department has been engaged in developing a professional development programme for the nGap Scholars.

2.3 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.

Examples of changes are indicated above but extra information is provided below for the Faculty of Health Sciences:
1. Academic Induction Programme
   Health Sciences has updated and modified the Faculty–specific Medical Education Orientation Programme (MEOP) to be more inclusive and feedback was very positive.
2. Focus on hybrid model
   Health Sciences has identified champions for hybrid delivery of teaching for all Departments or study areas. They are tracking current use of online learning as a baseline exercise and several innovative projects using technology to enhance learning are being supported, including by funding from the Teaching Development Grant. Funding was also requested in the Faculty plan to support a major initiative in the use of video capture and off-site access to enhance clinical skills development. Examples of successful interventions were (1) online instruction in the use of the partogram (a tool for monitoring the progress of labour by obstetricians), which the students

found very useful: they rated the learning experience as valuable; and (2) the use of online quizzes to improve problem solving in Dentistry.

3. Data coaching

   The Faculty participates in the data coaching provided by the Siyaphumelela through active engagement in the Task Team for Student Access and Success.

4. New programme for academic HoDs

   Health Sciences is in the process of developing a series of programmes for leadership at Faculty executive level (Dean, Deputy Dean) as well as for HoDs, School chairs, specifically for research and education. In the short term only Kirkpatrick levels 1 (reaction) and 2 (perceived learning) will be measurable but over time it is hoped that evidence of improved leadership capability and leadership appointments will be collected.

5. Use of the teaching portfolio for promotion

   Health Sciences Faculty requires a teaching portfolio for all promotions and confirmation of probation (not only for senior appointments) and the Education Consultant provided training and worked with individuals to develop these portfolios. We have also promoted the use of the portfolio for formative development in performance management. We believe there is more work to do in this area to enhance the quality of the portfolios as well as the validity and reliability of the evaluation.

6. Creation of a system of awards

   Health Sciences has developed a set of criteria for teaching awards at three levels – emerging, established and excellent, which may be awarded for individuals or teams, and which also makes provision for clinical as well as classroom teaching. The criteria for the Excellent level are aligned with the UP Chancellor's Teaching Award so that the winner may be put forward directly as the Faculty's nominee. The winners of the Faculty's Established teacher awards may be put forward for the University Teaching Excellence and Innovation Awards. For the first time in 2015 all the awards were made at the Faculty's annual awards function in November, at the same time as the research awards.

For training programmes, evidence is always collected in the form of participant feedback.

2.4 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars of changes that have not been successful and suggest reasons.

Initial data coaching with the Task Team on Student Success had limited success. We set aside a day for the Task Team to work with the data coach. The instrument used to assess data maturity was not adequately dealt with during the session and Faculties did not have extra time to spend on it afterwards. Participants did not see enough difference from what we already do and therefore did not see the relevance of continuing to work on the document. By setting our own agenda for the November coaching session, and having the data coach work with UP staff in advance of the session, the time was spent more effectively. One skill that we have to acquire is the visual presentation of data to make it more understandable to audiences not necessarily skilled in reading complex Excel spreadsheets and extracting actionable data.

A workload model is still in the process of being developed. Workload remains an issue at UP with rigorous targets set for research output and fairly high teaching loads, high staff-to-student ratios and classes offered in both English and Afrikaans separately. The performance management system remains the basis for the negotiation and monitoring of workload.

2.5 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.

Most of the practices were dealt with under 2.2.

In addition to participant feedback on priority training, such as the Academic Induction, we would like to be able to gain an idea of the impact of the training. One of the questions asked is always what impact staff development has on the University's performance indicator of student success. We thus designed an impact survey that we have tried to implement on paper and online. We have not had much success, for a variety of reasons. One reason is that, except on rare occasions, lecturers do not go away and implement a change immediately. We have anecdotal evidence of changes to teaching or assessment practices that yielded significant increases in student engagement. Second, many of the lecturers who attend courses are fairly junior. They could be teaching a module for the first time and have no baseline data for comparison to see if any change they make has a positive impact: they do not know where to obtain previous semesters' results, for instance. We shall persist with the survey and see if we can get it to the stage where it starts to yield reliable data.

2.6 Identify the main challenges the university still faces in relation to this focus area.

Generally, academics teach well at the University as attested by our high student success and completion rates. Lecturers care about their students and their success. Yet workload is both a practical and a mental barrier to innovation in teaching. Lecturers do not have time to attend at least one CPD activity annually. More importantly, perhaps, is that academics are so busy that they cannot free up intellectual capacity to consider creativity in teaching.

In Health Sciences, one of the greatest constraints is that many of the clinical staff members are joint appointees of the University and Provincial Department of Health and such staff members have heavy patient loads. Ideally, one-third of their time should be allocated to academic activities, including their own postgraduate studies and research but, in practice, it is less than this, leaving very little time to devote to developing additional professional skills as teachers. Many of the clinical lecturers in this category are not career academics but are registrars completing their Medical or Dental specialist qualifications and the incentives to advance as teachers are not great.

A similar problem exists in the Faculty of Veterinary Science, where the majority of lecturers in two of the five departments are also clinicians who have to spend on average 25 weeks in clinics (treating patients and teaching students) per annum, currently up to 47 weeks in some cases where posts have not been filled, much more than a third of their time.

Students who attended the CHE Student Forum noted a point made at the meeting that being in possession of a Master's or a PhD does not necessarily make an academic a good teacher. It was argued that specialised forms of training should be given to lecturers, especially those responsible for first- and second-year courses. They also advocated alternative teaching methods: lecturers should be able to engage with students on a deeper level than is sometimes the case. They also need to incorporate technology and other means of teaching.

The University acknowledges that the points made might be applicable in varying degrees at UP. At the moment UP remains committed to its priority programmes that provide teaching induction as well as just-in-time training for assessment or using technology and opportunities for specific training in some aspect of teaching for individuals, departments or Faculties. The debate is ongoing in the higher education sector in South Africa about whether formal teacher training should be a requirement for academics.

3. FOCUS AREA 2: ENHANCING STUDENT SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

Includes: career and curriculum advising, life and academic skills development, counselling, student performance monitoring and referral.

3.1 Summarise what the university considers to be the key issues in enhancing student support and development.

It is important to have a tested ecosystem in place in terms of both input and processes. On the input side, the University provides lecturers, Faculty Student Advisors, mentors, tutors, counsellors, financial advisors, online administrative and learning environments, classrooms, etc. In terms of processes, the University has ways of identifying at-risk students very early and monitoring progress. So, for instance, the Student Academic Readiness Survey (STARS) is implemented during registration, quickly processed, and the results are made available to each individual student, mentors and Faculty Student Advisors (FSAs). The online university academic orientation programme (UPO) has been changed from a single online course to one UPO per Faculty and student progress is monitored by the FSAs. A mid-year cluster analysis also results in at-risk students being identified and referred to FSAs. Analytics for Learn is part of the learning management system (*clickUP*) and is proving increasingly important in terms of continuous alerts.

Students may at any time self-identify for assistance to lecturers, counselling staff in the Department for Student Affairs, health services, financial aid, FSAs, tutors, mentors in residences or general mentors.

The word 'tested' was used deliberately in the first paragraph. Many interventions have developed as a result of pilots at the University: for instance, the FSA system. Many interventions are continually monitored and evaluated annually, such as the mentorship system. Specific interventions are researched from particular perspectives: for instance, the use of the tutors in a particular Faculty (Humanities and Law, for instance) or the impact of tutoring on the tutors themselves, a project initiated by the Vice Principal: Academic in 2015.

Many high impact practices have been identified internationally. The secret for UP has been not to implement all of them but to establish what problems we are trying to solve and what works within our own context and within our resource constraints. One intervention piled on another can, in fact, further disadvantage students who need support, by overloading them. It is most useful when interventions operate synergistically: for instance, the use of the STARS is integrated with the mentoring and FSA initiatives.

3.2 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 student support and development?

The Task Team on Student Access and Success now focuses on the use of data to improve first-year student success, linking to the Siyaphumelela project with the same focus. The task team has considered the QEP reports and the results of the South African Survey of Student Experience (SASSE) and is investigating the extent to which historical social asymmetries (e.g. racial and gender inequalities) are reflected in current student success rates.

The student academic readiness survey (STARS), administered during registration to first-year students, is well-established and other South African universities have asked if they can use it. It has been developed as an online questionnaire at UP, which will speed up the administration and processing of the questionnaire.

As indicated, the online academic orientation programme for first years, UPO, has been changed so

that there is no longer one generic module for the University but a module per Faculty. FSAs are now used to monitor the UPO academic orientation module for first years and ensure that they complete the tasks. They add Faculty-specific support for their students. The module is reserved for registered students. The next step will be to take elements of UPO that would be generic for any student wanting to enter university and package them as a MOOC on the Blackboard open platform.

Analytics for Learn has come into its own in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and is ready to scale to all Faculties. Analytics for Learn has been used to provide high level analyses of student engagement and quality use of the environment to Faculties as decision-making tools. Data have been provided to lecturers of modules being reviewed as well as of at-risk modules. The Vice Principal: Academic has received data on Master's programmes suitable for further online development in a hybrid model.

The Faculty of Humanities started a writing centre in 2014 and it is being extended to small numbers of students in two other Faculties in 2015 to pilot its success with them. The sustainability of the writing centre is dependent on funding being made available for it.

3.3 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars to illustrate specific aspects of the change(s) that are successful. Provide evidence for claims of success. Where an activity is in the planning stages, indicate what evidence will be collected.

In 2014 and 2015 Analytics for Learn has been the basis for cooperation between the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and the Department for Education Innovation on the Faculty's Six Weeks project. The aim of the project is to alert first-year students in three high impact modules to any risk within the first six weeks and then at regular intervals. Students are directed to specific interventions such as tutorials or FSAs. The Faculty is continually collecting student feedback (although more could be collected) and student results. Some students and their parents are alarmed when they are alerted of potential risk and informed of resources such as the FSA or tutors. Students who are alerted that they are doing well seem motivated. It also appears that many students who are identified as at risk after the first six weeks are able to recover towards the end of the semester. However, those who are identified as at risk after six weeks, and who are still at risk after ten weeks (the next check point), are unlikely to recover.

3.4 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars of changes that have not been successful and suggest reasons.

We wish to note one change that is in the process of implementation but that has yet to mature. It is not that it is unsuccessful but that more time is needed to reap optimal benefits from the system.

The Analytics for Learn program does not work as well as it might for a variety of reasons. International institutions that have been successful in implementing learning analytics have access to skilled data scientists or analytical expertise. The lack of data analysts/ scientists at UP and in higher education in South Africa will remain a challenge. Within the University, more people need to have access to Analytics for Learn (e.g. students, members of the Executive, Deans) and consultation with Blackboard is ongoing. PeopleSoft and Blackboard grade centres have to be integrated seamlessly, a process that has been going on for six years owing to lack of capacity in the integration team in the University's ITS department; security concerns by academic administration and the Faculties; the need for changes by Blackboard and so on. Academics then need to be convinced to put all their continuous assessment marks into the grade centre to enrich the Analytics reporting and this is unlikely to happen before the system works perfectly, as it generates too many queries from students if systems do not align perfectly. More work still needs to be done on the system to give more people access and to produce student-facing report cards/ dashboards to motivate students to improve their own performance and complete in minimum time. Progress with the integration of PeopleSoft with

Blackboard for this purpose has been slow as has the uptake of the grade centre by academics.

3.5 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.

The Siyaphumelela grant has enabled two interesting projects:

1. The establishment of learning communities among students taking two or more subjects in common. The project has been launched by the Department of Student Affairs for the extended programme at the Mamelodi campus. Learning communities are identified internationally as a high-impact practice. The key feature is that students who study the same subjects work together to support each other's success.
2. The development of a software application to give guidance to school learners from as early as Grade 9 on academic preferences, career choice and appropriate higher education programmes. The problem that we want to solve is that inappropriate course choice has been revealed by longitudinal research at the University to be the biggest cause of dropout in the first year. The App, known as *Career App.Tizer*, was launched in November at a Flexible Futures conference organized by the University. The App will later be shared, first with the other Siyaphumelela grant holders and then with other partners. The key features are identifying students' aptitudes and abilities and then linking these to relevant careers and UP programmes.

In Health Sciences there are three undergraduate Schools, each of which has a different approach to student support and mentorship. The approaches have been operating more or less in isolation. During 2015 the Deputy Dean: Education introduced a Student Support Forum where all the staff involved in tutoring and mentoring programmes can come together and share practices and experiences. The participants have reported that the Forum and sharing are valuable.

3.6 Identify the main challenges the university still faces in relation to this focus area.

Resources are constrained and therefore we need to target interventions that work. We have spent several years identifying and piloting interventions and continue to conduct research on their impact. Additional experimentation often requires additional resources that have to be sourced from outside the University. Perhaps the biggest challenge is to get weaker students to use the support resources optimally; better students are more likely to use resources with the result that they perform even better.

Students who attended the CHE Student Forum noted the following:
- Student support services in universities are short-staffed. It is difficult to gain access to the psychologist. There are various restricting procedures in place that prevent the full use of such support services, including pre-screening and group appointments before personal appointments. Trained student psychologists might alleviate the strain on the limited support services currently available at a university.
- Tutors in universities are not always well-equipped to tutor other students. There is a need for tutor development as this would contribute positively to tutors (students) being passionate about lecturing and pursuing postgraduate degrees in the university.

The University would like to note in response to each of the points made by the students:
- The University of Pretoria is no exception to staffing constraints in support services but the processes in place enable the counselling service to use its resources optimally.
- At UP lecturers work with education consultants to offer two or three days of intensive training to tutors prior to the start of the semester. The SRC has recently requested that the student feedback instrument used to assess lecturers be adapted to assess tutors and the process is underway. Major research has been conducted in two Faculties into their tutoring

system. A research project into the impact of tutoring on the tutors was initiated by the Vice Principal: Academic in 2015 and a series of focus group interviews were held. The results of the research were handed over in November 2015. As a further step, a set of actionable recommendations is being developed for the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning.

4. FOCUS AREA 3: ENHANCING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Include: teaching and learning spaces, ICT infrastructure and access, technology-enabled tools and resources, library facilities.

4.1 Summarise what the university considers to be the key issues in enhancing the learning environment.

The learning environment is an ecosystem that includes
- formal teaching spaces and resources, physical and virtual; and
- learning spaces and resources, formal and informal, on-campus and in residences (private or university-provided), at the University or in the workplace or community, physical and virtual.

Funding is needed to enable the development and maintenance of a variety of learning spaces. Virtual learning needs hardware, software (licences) and bandwidth as well as computer laboratories and Wi-Fi. Funding is needed to convert lecture-type spaces to more interactive learning spaces.

4.2 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 the learning environment.

More of a focus on flat spaces for some types of teaching and learning has resulted in a scan by the Department of Facilities Management of the venues suitable for adaptation on campuses. Facilities Management, ITS and Education Innovation have a cluster goal for 2016 to develop specifications for spaces to facilitate the implementation of the hybrid model. One of the options being considered is to identify large indoor spaces such as lobbies and wide corridors that could become additional spaces of learning, equipped with tables, chairs and Wi-Fi. As Wi-Fi is ubiquitous outside of lecture halls, this approach should not require an additional investment in this technology.

Wi-Fi within lecture halls was piloted in the Faculty of Education and all campuses have identified priority lecture halls for the installation of Wi-Fi with sufficient density to serve the size of the venue. We have received another R15 million capital allocation for Wi-Fi deployment in 2016, which should be sufficient for full and sufficiently dense Wi-Fi coverage in all lecture halls by the time the full deployment is complete. Sufficient access to venues to perform installation is now the main constraint and will determine the duration of the Wi-Fi deployment project. The contractors usually require two consecutive days for installation, since scaffolding is typically involved, especially in larger venues. The roll-out plan will be refined and continuously updated but there are many unknowns at this point that will affect the end date of the full Wi-Fi deployment. The project governance is handled by the Steering Committee of the Unit for Academic IT and priorities will be determined by academic requirements. We plan to monitor the usage of the Wi-Fi equipped lecture halls as we deploy, to guide our densification programme, which will follow the initial rollout which is now in a procurement phase.

The Vice Principal: Academic, with some members of Faculties, undertook an evaluation of problems in teaching venues in 2015, whether facilities or IT related, and the two departments concerned have worked to address the issues. Many of the problems were caused by power surges resulting from load-shedding.

A new skills laboratory has been completed at the Faculty of Veterinary Science with several of the models being developed on the campus. It includes supervised laboratories as well as a student self-help laboratory where students can practice skills on their own. Guidance is given on the use of the technology through videos embedded on the desktops in QR codes. The new facility has already been the basis for a number of papers read at international conferences. The refurbished skills laboratory at

the Faculty of Health Sciences will include the ability to monitor and capture students' procedures on video.

The recent expansion of lecturing and laboratory facilities on the Mamelodi campus will allow the University to increase the number of students to be admitted to the extended programmes. Furthermore, the upgrade of existing teaching facilities and the installation of state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment have enhanced the learning environment considerably. Serious discussion is also underway on the further use of the Mamelodi campus to support excellent school learners as well as provide research facilities.

The uptake of *clickUP* increased again in 2014, with nearly 82% of modules having an online presence and three Faculties having almost 100% of their modules online. The drive now is to ensure that the quality of use of the environment improves. Training is provided to lecturers on how to optimize the use of *clickUP* and how to facilitate online.

The Department of Mining in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT acquired a virtual reality centre. It has opened up the potential of virtual and augmented reality for teaching other subjects on campus as well. Its use will greatly increase students' employability as they gain exposure and experience in a simulated environment.

The number of modules using community sites of learning has remained stable although the numbers of students involved for credit grew to 12 000. About 1 500 community sites are used by the University's students. The placement of students for work-integrated learning was also taken on by the Community Engagement unit for some Faculties. The University is interested in creating opportunities for internships and entrepreneurship, giving graduates attributes that will stand them in good stead in the workplace once they graduate.

4.3 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars to illustrate specific aspects of the change(s) that are successful. Provide evidence for claims of success. Where an activity is in the planning stages, indicate what evidence will be collected.

The Unit for Distance Education is planning more online elements for its new B.Ed. Honours programme. They are collaborating with the Department for Education Innovation: besides the training of academics in online facilitation, members of Education Innovation conducted a survey at four learning centres to determine students' access to technology. Once the new degree is operational, student feedback will be collected and student progress and success tracked.

The changing and increasing use of online environments is interesting. The University is planning to benchmark with an international university and have them review the use of the Blackboard environment and the different tools used by the University in early 2016. At a later date, a fuller benchmarking of the other environments might be undertaken.

4.4 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars of changes that have not been successful and suggest reasons.

The roll out of adequate Wi-Fi to all lecture halls remains a long-term project owing to the shortage of resources. A single Wi-Fi point per lecture hall (Wi-Fi presence only) is totally inadequate to serve the needs of large classes and installation and ongoing maintenance are expensive. It is not that the project is unsuccessful but that it is taking a long time to implement owing to resource constraints.

4.5 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.

The virtual reality implementation is in its initial stages. The ability to immerse a student totally in a work environment with no need to negotiate sites of learning and no exposure of students to potentially dangerous environments has great promise.

In line with the hybrid learning model adopted by the University, we are striving to work with lecturers to put more programmes mostly online, particularly at Master's level. We have some online Master's programmes that have been running for several years, the longest now for 11 years. At undergraduate level as well we are working to use technology to support students who cannot always be in class or are absent for fairly prolonged periods – for sporting activities, for instance. Blackboard Collaborate is particularly useful technology to support this initiative. It has been used successfully for conferencing, interaction with guest lecturers, e-tutoring and as the basis for the hybrid conference held over two weeks in November.

4.6 Identify the main challenges the university still faces in relation to this focus area.

- Study spaces for day students remain a problem. It would be wonderful if we could replicate the Engineering Study Centre but external funding is needed to achieve this goal. The repurposing of open indoor spaces might alleviate the problem to some extent if we can source funding.
- Computer laboratories remain essential for students with no personal devices and for computer-based testing.
- Power blackouts negatively affect equipment in classrooms such as bulbs in projectors, sound equipment and the like. The quality of the teaching experience is impacted when essential equipment does not work because a power surge damaged it.
- There is a plan in place to install generators where we do not already have them.

Students who attended the CHE Student Forum noted the following:
- Enhancing the diversity of the lecturer cohort would enhance the teaching and learning environment; that is, having a more diverse lecturer profile with mixed ratios of male, female, white, black, etc. The argument was that this diversity would make the learning and teaching space more accessible to the majority of students.

In response to the students' observations, UP has a transformation plan in place with equity targets to try to bring about a change in the profile of lecturing staff, among others. In terms of physical spaces for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, computer laboratories and some study spaces provide support and the plans to try to create more learning spaces should also support such students.

5. FOCUS AREA 4: ENHANCING COURSE AND PROGRAMME ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT
Includes: admissions, selection, placement, readmission refusal, pass rates in gateway courses, throughput rates, management information systems.

5.1 Summarise what the university considers to be the key issues in enhancing course and programme enrolment management.

The ecosystem for enrolment is external and internal, systemic and individual. The University recently completed a major business re-engineering project following an analysis of the processes related to student enrolment. The project was focussed on optimising student services, by integrating and streamlining functions and processes within the student administrative environments. The goal is to provide integrated and holistic services from recruitment of prospective students, through application processes to admissions and registrations right through to final graduations. These processes are now aligned to be able to optimise and automate as many of these processes as possible in improving effectiveness and efficiencies.

The University continues to support the concept of foundation or extended programmes. Students have come to value these programmes and actually apply to enter them rather than waiting to be placed into them if they do not quite meet entry requirements. Quantitative and anecdotal evidence suggests that students do well in such programmes and develop as self-directed learners. Success rates for black students on these programmes are even better than those for other students. Students entering the mainstream second-year courses from extended programmes continue to flourish. The University plans to increase the number of students registered in the programmes on the Mamelodi campus for the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Natural and Agricultural Sciences and introduce extended programmes for the Faculties of Humanities, Veterinary Science and Education. The campus can accommodate about 1 000 students.

High impact modules (HIMs) or gateway modules remain a focus of attention and resourcing (tutors, clickers, workshops). The Siyaphumelela initiative has one project focused on the review of underperforming modules and the reviews have focused on HIMs as well.

5.2 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 course and programme enrolment management.

Institutional changes that have been made include the restructuring of Client Services and Academic Administration and merging the departments into the newly integrated Department of Enrolment and Student Administration (DESA). Although the new department has been established, the functional structures are currently being finalised. These include the new divisions for Enrolment, Student Systems, Student Administration and General Services. Plans are in place to ensure full implementation of the new structure by 1 March 2016.

In addition to the above restructuring, the University is also designing and developing enhanced services, functions and structures for international and postgraduate students to align with the University's 2025 Strategic Plan.

5.3 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars to illustrate specific aspects of the change(s) that are successful. Provide evidence for claims of success. Where an activity is in the

planning stages, indicate what evidence will be collected.

The strategy is to provide more online student services from application through to registration. The market seems to respond positively to this strategy. Undergraduate online applications are increasing annually. We moved from 60% paper applications to only 30% paper applications in one year. In addition, only online registration was available for the 2015 intake and that improved efficiencies in the January processes significantly. Being aware that there are still some limitations for students related to online access and internet availability, we provided dedicated venues to assist students with the online registration. JuniorTukkie has been working continuously to assist various schools in locations with limited internet availability.

The online application and registration system was implemented very successfully in Health Sciences where they have to deal with thousands of applications for selection courses and manage a complex admissions process in a very short space of time early in the year.

5.4 Provide one or more (but not more than 5) exemplars of changes that have not been successful and suggest reasons.

We are really unsure about the value of the NBT. Not all Faculties require it. It is obligatory for the Faculty of Health Sciences where it forms part of the selection process. The Faculties of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences use it to place students in the extended and augmented programmes. The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences also uses it as a safety net when students narrowly miss entry requirements to assist them in accessing the Faculty. Yet we find that waiting for the NBT results holds up the application process and our research shows that, for academic literacy at least, the NSC English mark is a more reliable predictor of academic success in the first semester. The picture is more varied across Faculties for the Mathematics NBT. We have conducted research annually on the relative predictive validity of the NSC and NBT results, including in 2015. Basically, our research concludes that the NBTs are useful in combination with the NSC results but that the NSC results are the better predictor.

The University has in the past dropped an entry assessment on the basis of research comparing the predictive validity of that test, the NSC and the NBT language results for first-semester success for first-year students. Dropping the entry test improved the efficiency of the registration process, reducing the time by three days.

There are so many data points that suggest interventions, including the results of STARS and first-test marks, that additional testing might not be necessary. The matter is still under consideration.

5.5 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.

Funding from the Siyaphumelela grant is enabling the University to build institutional research capacity. We are addressing pass rates in gateway courses through the related review project. In fact, as part of the 2016 teaching and learning plan, the Vice Principal: Academic has laid down very specific targets for reducing the number of at-risk modules and data will provide useful input in reaching these targets.

Throughput rates are generally interrogated but we have a specific focus on differential throughput rates based on historical social fault-lines. Completion rates are thus under investigation and will be the focus of the data coaching as part of the Siyaphumelela project in November. The data should suggest where we need to intervene and when.

The existing information management system employed by the University did not have the ability to perform cohort analyses to calculate throughput and graduation rates. Given the complexity involved in these calculations, and the necessity to have the ability to do multiple factor analyses on throughput rates, it was decided to implement a commercial software package known as HEDA (Higher Education Data Analyser). This system is already used by thirteen other South African universities and the developers interact regularly with the DHET to align data definitions in HEDA with the HEMIS data definitions.

The University is in the process of implementing a variety of subject areas in HEDA addressing information needs for senior managers: reports on application and admissions, registrations, graduates, research output, performance measures, human resources and cohort results. The priority areas addressed first are information reports on performance measures and cohort results and it is planned that both of these areas will be completed by the end of 2015. Key features of the reports will be the flexibility to sub-set data and compare different factors that might impact on the cohort results.

5.6 Identify the main challenges the university still faces in relation to this focus area.

The University decided some years ago to change its information technology platform and for this purpose a system renewal project was initiated that impacted on the whole university in the sense that its databases and associated policies for collecting and storing of data, the restructuring and analysis of meta data and the delivery and reporting of information were revised. Fundamental changes to data structures were implemented resulting in structural changes in the data (e.g. student identification numbers were changed, not all data were migrated to the new system and data schemas were rebuilt). The result was that, in essence, a new time series for students was constructed, starting in 2011, with the consequence that graduation rates for three-year study programmes could for the first time be calculated in 2013 (minimum time) and for four-year programmes a year later. Following the custom to present graduation rates at minimum time plus 2 years, the first graduation rates that can be calculated for 3 year study programmes is in 2016 and for four-year programmes in 2017.

Students who attended the CHE Student Forum noted the need for a more Afrocentric academic programme that focused on African epistemology and pedagogy. The University works continuously on adapting its curricula to be locally and globally relevant. A conference is also planned for January 2016 entitled 'Transforming the curriculum: South African imperatives and 21st century possibilities'.

6. REFLECTION ON PHASE 1 OF THE QEP

6.1 What has been the effect on the university of participating in the QEP for the past two years?

The most helpful part of the process has probably been the opportunity for self-reflection. The least successful has been in terms of achieving the stated goals of the QEP to identify partner institutions to collaborate on particular areas of interest or to share strengths.

The Inkundla was rather frustrating as time was too short and there were no tools to help institutions to derive the architecture of a practice and see how it could or could not be used in their context.

The QEP workshop in March at Unisa was a little more in-depth and therefore better but UP representatives had different experiences in different focus areas. The draft summary did not assist in making sense of the system. The attitude of some universities in thinking everything must be referred to the Minister, so that he can provide funding or tell universities what to do, supported a bureaucratic rather than an academic understanding of what a university is. The process in March, and at the

universities, generally needs greater participation by academics as opposed to quality assurance or even academic development people or there will be limited impact within the universities.

The QEP project leader at UP communicated the report on the submission as well as the report by the team attending the workshop in March to all the participants in the drafting of the first report.

The final QEP's summary report was discussed at the Senate Committee for Teaching and Learning. The document was referred to individual Faculties to look at possibly actionable recommendations.

- The Overview was the most useful part of the document as it involved synthesis and reflection and not just a summary of input from de-identified institutions. However, it became less useful when it was directive rather than discursive or revealed implicit assumptions. To discuss one theme only, professional development, further analysis and synthesis could have occurred and models could have been developed to illustrate choices. For instance, the professionalisation of teaching (p.16) is noted as a desirable practice gaining momentum internationally. How such professionalisation occurs at different institutions is addressed. There are no real recommendations, however, or models, to guide institutions in making their decisions about professional development. The information is thus not actionable.
- Another useful section was Chapter 8 on 'Evidence for success provided in the submissions'. The analysis of different types of evidence was something we could use within universities to categorize our data. Data collection and analysis with actionable recommendations ('knowledge mobilisation') are weaknesses in the South African university system. It might be that the analysis picked up results from the focus on the collection of HEMIS-type data. What is lacking again is a model of the types of actionable evidence that universities should collect.

The pedagogical competence workshop in Durban was possibly the most productive activity of the QEP. The focus outside ourselves reduced the tendency to look at our own contexts and problems and argue in a rather circular fashion.

The Vice Principal: Academic participated in the study tour to Scottish universities. He was impressed by the way in which learning spaces have been integrated with social spaces and by the voice that students have in academic matters. This event would therefore also be classified as successful in linking to ideas that the University has been pursuing and showing what is possible.

6.2 In what ways did the university's involvement in the QEP promote or strengthen collaboration with other universities on specific issues?

The UP representatives picked up a couple of good ideas that needed further contact (e.g. a particular practice at Stellenbosch in their First Year Academy). That occurred at the contact session at Unisa in March. However, it is impossible to initiate any collaboration based on a report in which the universities are de-identified.

The University already works quite well across the sector on common themes such as the first-year experience, foundation programmes and e-learning. We also share our expertise with other universities on request but nothing has come out of the QEP that has increased that interaction. We are very open to learning from other institutions and sharing our expertise with them.

6.3 Looking back over the past two years, in a page or two, summarise the university's main triumphs, improvements, changes and challenges related to the four QEP focus areas.

Changes at UP came about as a result of strategic planning and funding rather than the QEP process.

In terms of challenges, resource constraints are probably the most influential:
- Balancing academic workload and time for staff development, student support, etc.
- Reducing staff: student ratios when we do not have funding to employ more lecturers.
- Sourcing funding to support students with great potential to register and flourish at the university.
- Making student support and development opportunities compulsory in the light of full lecture/ practical/ community engagement/ WIL (work-integrated learning) schedules.
- Changing lecture-style classroom venues into flat spaces or study spaces when we have limited funds to do so.
- Getting students to complete in minimum time.
- Knowing the right questions to ask to ensure that we can act on data that we collect.

We do have strategies in place to address some of the challenges.

We list below three triumphs, improvements or changes of those outlined in more detail above.

Focus area 1: Staff Development
- The development of a programme for academic HoDs
- The addition of priority programmes in areas such as marking, curriculum development, etc.
- Data coaching

Focus area 2: Student Support
- Siyaphumelela grant and intensified data-based approach to first-year success
- Closer monitoring of the online UPO module for first-year extended academic orientation
- Development of the Career App.tizer

Focus area 3: Learning Environments
- Gradual roll out of Wi-Fi in lecture halls
- Audit of lecture halls and collaboration by Facilities Management and ITS as well as Education Innovation to develop specifications for teaching and learning spaces to support the hybrid model
- The new virtual reality facility at Mining Engineering

Focus area 4: Student Enrolment
- Integration of student recruitment and enrolment practices in a new department
- Success of our extended and augmented programmes in terms of developing self-directed learners who go on to succeed in the mainstream programmes
- Deployment of HEDA