



# **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**

**Submission for Phase One of the  
HEQC Quality Enhancement Project**

**2 September 2014**

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## A. Introduction

The following two items will form the introduction to the narrative report as prescribed in the CHE's document *Quality Enhancement Project: The Process for Public Institutions* (hereafter: "QEP Process document").

- A brief description of the features of the institutional context that are most salient to the success of NWU students.
- A description of the process followed in the preparation of the submission, including the names and designations of the people involved in producing various sections of the submission.

### 1. Features of the institutional context that are most salient to the success of NWU students

The NWU has 15 faculties, located on three campuses that are relatively far apart and spread across two provinces, the North-West Province (Potchefstroom and Mafikeng Campuses) and Gauteng (Vaal Triangle Campus). In order to manage the complexity of a multi-campus environment, NWU has adopted a management model in terms of which it operates as a unitary, multi-campus institution, with an Institutional Office in Potchefstroom, under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor, and three campuses of equal standing that are each managed by an executive campus rector accountable to the Vice-Chancellor. The Institutional Office fulfils an oversight, facilitative and coordinating role in terms of planning, policy development, implementation and review, institutional process design, institutional quality, consistency of provision, budget allocation, and overall institutional branding and positioning. In addition, the Institutional Office provides a range of shared services in areas requiring scarce and specialised human resources, or in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness. Within this guiding and supportive framework, each campus has operational responsibility and autonomy in terms of the conduct of its core business and the provision of support services.

Since the merger at the start of 2004, the University has paid significant attention to ensuring that students are provided with a consistent learning experience and environment in terms of the academic standards of their learning programmes, and the quality and standards of support and administrative services. Factors that impact on this challenge are the geographical distance between the campuses, as well as the different histories and developmental phases of the institutions from which the merged University was formed (the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education and the University of North West). While substantial progress has been made in promoting the equity and standards of academic provision, further attention needs to be paid to the conditions, in terms of institutional policies, processes, structures and systems that will ensure a consistent, high quality learning environment for all students. Specific challenges include the institutional planning, coordination and monitoring of activities across campuses, based on effective consultation between responsible staff members and units.

#### 1.1. Strategic positioning and vision and mission

The vision of North-West University is to be a pre-eminent university in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation. To achieve this, the University will consistently explore the synergies and positive and functional relationships associated with the teaching-research nexus, by means of strategies that include the following:

- Commitment to high quality undergraduate education, in which students are developed as critical thinkers, with the capacity to increasingly take responsibility for their learning and to investigate problems in their fields of study in an appropriate and innovative manner;
- Ensuring that (i) first-year drop-out rates, (ii) module success rates, (iii) throughput and retention rates, as well as (iv) graduation rates are optimised;
- Curriculum renewal that builds on the results of research and innovation, as well as partnerships with industry and other communities, in order to ensure that students are exposed to the latest ideas and schools of thought, as well as contextual challenges, in their academic programmes;
- The systematic development of research areas which can contribute to the strengthening of existing undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and especially can encourage the development of new postgraduate programmes;
- Consistent growth in postgraduate enrolments, especially at master's and doctoral level, in order to increase the pool of candidates who will pursue research careers, whether in higher education or the national system of innovation in general;

- Giving appropriate recognition to both teaching-learning and research and innovation in institutional reward and recognition systems, including criteria for promotion, staff awards and performance management;
- Providing effective capacity development opportunities so that staff can develop their professionalism as competent university teachers as well as skilled researchers.

In addition to its commitment to strengthening the linkages between teaching-learning and research, another key manner through which the University differentiates itself in the South African higher education sector is through its significant involvement in open and distance education. The University is the second largest provider of distance education in South Africa. In 2012 and 2013, the respective percentages of students enrolled in distance education programmes were 41.5% and 40.6% of total headcount enrolments (24,780 out of a total headcount enrolment of 60,975 in 2013). While by far the majority of distance education students are currently enrolled in the major field of Education (87.8% in 2013), the University has embarked on a process to progressively diversify its enrolments in distance education across various major fields of study.

The University will build on its considerable experience in the field of distance education, by means of participation in the open learning movement and the development of learning analytics. In this manner, NWU intends to develop into a leading provider of multi-modal education in South Africa, as well as the SADC. However, the potential of electronically-mediated and online learning will be used not only in open and distance education but also within contact education, through the progressive development of blended learning in order to promote the use of an appropriate range of teaching and learning methods in all modes of educational provision.

*Attached as **Annexure 1**, please find the first level of the NWU Strategic Plan for 2014. The plan has several deeper, more detailed levels which will be made available on request.*

*In the text on focus areas one to four, reference will be made to Annexure 1.*

## **1.2. Current institutional profile, staff and students**

In 2013, NWU had a permanent headcount staff component of 3477 which presents a total growth of 26% since 2007, while there were 1288 permanent academic staff members. The ratio of academic to support staff has remained stable over the period from 2007 to 2013, with academic staff constituting approximately 37% of permanent headcount staff members. Headcount enrolments stood at 60 975, of which 59.4% (36 195 students) were enrolled in contact programmes.

The three campuses each have their own foci, which are dependent on a number of factors, such as historic and current areas of strength, and the geographical area where the campus is located.

- **Mafikeng Campus**

The Mafikeng Campus is well positioned to make a distinctive contribution to rural development. It has 5 faculties, namely Agriculture, Science and Technology; Commerce and Administration; Education; Human and Social Sciences; and Law. The Campus offers the only BSc Animal Health programme and the only residential programme for a Diploma in Animal Health in South Africa that is recognised for registration by the South African Veterinary Council. In terms of broadening access to education and training opportunities that address rural development needs, the Campus intends to start engineering programmes in agricultural and transport engineering, and to offer an honours degree in transport economics, for which external approval currently is awaited. In response to the country's intention to implement the National Health Insurance (NHI) system, the Campus intends to increase its provision of health-care related programmes and the process of application is underway.

- **Potchefstroom Campus**

The Potchefstroom Campus has eight faculties, namely Arts; Economic and Management Sciences; Educational Sciences; Engineering; Health Sciences; Law; Natural Sciences and Theology. It has a strong focus on the development of knowledge and expertise linked to the broader context of the developmental state in South Africa. In terms of its academic profile, the Potchefstroom Campus is currently involved in a large-scale process of expanding its involvement in engineering and the built environment. As is clear from the NWU Profile in Annexure 2, the Campus has a strong focus on SET enrolments in its contact programmes.

The Campus has developed substantial expertise and experience in open and distance learning. It presents programmes in teacher education and nursing as well as certain theological programmes by means of open and distance learning, and is currently in the process of diversifying the range of academic fields in which it offers programmes by means of this mode of delivery.

- **Vaal Triangle Campus**

The Vaal Triangle Campus has two faculties, namely Humanities; and Economic Sciences and Information Technology. Since the establishment of the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology in 2008, the Campus has significantly expanded its academic programme offerings in fields such as Accounting, Risk Management and Information Technology. The NWU profile in Annexure 2 indicates that the majority of the Campus' enrolments fall in the field of Business and Management. To support its focus on the fields of business management and information technology, the Campus has established an enterprise development centre, and has invested considerably in infrastructure development for the establishment of a Centre for Risk Management. The postgraduate programmes in information technology have a focus on serious games development and multilingual speech technology.

*Attached as **Annexure 2**, please find a table and comments on the student profile and enrolment figures.*

### **1.3. The framework that guides teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning at NWU is guided by the Teaching and Learning Framework, as well as a range of policies that deal with matters relating to teaching and learning, assessment and moderation, study guides, supplemental instruction, teaching excellence awards, student feedback, the management of academic programmes, and academic staff promotion. In addition, the NWU is currently in the process of finalising its teaching and learning strategy. The strategy identifies four strategic drivers that will help the University to realise its vision of being a leading South African provider of flexible dual-mode education, known for its innovative approach to teaching and learning and the outstanding learning experience that we provide to our students. These four drivers are:

- High quality teaching and learning, which is learning-centred, and to large extent depends on developing and strengthening the expertise of our academic staff in the area of teaching and learning;
- Student access and success – with a focus on addressing the needs of individual students;
- Curriculum transformation and renewal, and
- An enabling learning environment, in which staff and students can flourish, and where effective use is made of technology to understand students' learning needs and to support a variety of teaching and learning methods and styles.

Furthermore, graduate attributes are articulated in the draft strategy as

- Responsible citizens;
- Knowledgeable professionals;
- Innovative thinkers; and
- Individuals with a high level of personal effectiveness.

The draft strategy presents work-in-progress, based on the University's commitment to addressing the factors that contribute to student success and the development of graduates who can contribute optimally to social and economic development. Various parts of the discussion of the four focus areas of the QEP will reflect the discussion that is currently underway at NWU around the draft teaching and learning strategy.

## **2. Preparation of this submission**

The introduction of the QEP as the HEQC's approach to the second cycle of quality assurance was generally well received. An important consideration in this regard, is that the four focus areas of the QEP coincide to a large extent with the four strategic drivers of the teaching and learning strategy as outlined in Section 1.1. The work related to the QEP provides the University with a significant opportunity to take its teaching and learning strategy forward by clarifying what we already do well, as well as identifying issues that need further attention. Furthermore, there is general consensus within the University with the underlying concerns that inform the QEP, in terms of the need for a systematic approach to the challenge of student success, and for institutional collaboration to address this challenge.

In terms of the institutional process for developing the Institutional Submission, the Institutional Management meeting of 19 March 2014 approved the composition of the steering committee that would oversee and

coordinate the work on the QEP during its first phase, while the meeting of the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning on 18 April 2014 approved the composition of the four task teams, that each took responsibility for the work on one of the four QEP focus areas.

QEP related activities were communicated as follows to internal stakeholders:

- Detailed written background was provided to all task team members (see name list in Annexure 3) by means of a memo from the DVC: Teaching-Learning dated 20 March 2014.
- A detailed information session for all task team members was held on 10 April 2014.
- QEP documentation as developed by the CHE was placed on the intranet and Share drive of NWU in April 2014.
- The Quality Office's Newsletter in May 2014 provided an outline of the characteristics of the Quality Enhancement Project, and was made available to all staff members in electronic format.
- Presentations and reports by the DVC: TL at meetings of the Institutional Management, Senate and the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning.

In terms of student consultation, during July 2014 meetings were held with student leaders on each campus in order to discuss the quality enhancement project and to obtain inputs from them on relevant issues relating to each focus area.

The QEP Steering Committee consisted of the following members:

- Prof Martin Oosthuizen (Chair; DVC: Teaching-Learning)
- Dr Jannie Jacobsz (Project Coordinator, Director: Quality Office)
- Prof Lumkile Lalendle (Vice-rector: Teaching-Learning and Quality, Mafikeng Campus)
- Prof Mariëtte Lowes (Convenor of Task Team 1, Vice-rector Teaching-Learning, Potchefstroom Campus)
- Prof Rantoa Letsosa (Convenor of Task Team 2, Vice-rector Designate Teaching-Learning, Potchefstroom Campus)
- Prof Linda du Plessis (Convenor of Task Team 3, Vice-rector, Vaal Triangle Campus)
- Prof Marlene Verhoef (Convenor of Task Team 4, Institutional Registrar)
- Mr Janco Jordaan (President: Institutional Students' Representative Council).

*Attached as **Annexure 3**, please find the full list of the participants forming part of the task teams participating in the initial drafting of this document.*

## B. The four focus areas for Phase One of the QEP

### 1. Focus Area 1: Enhancing Academics as Teachers

#### 1.1. Which aspects of your institution's Strategic Plan relate to this focus area?

At the NWU the enhancement of academics as teachers is guided by and grounded in its framework and policies for teaching and learning (as per Section 1.1 (c)), and also is informed by the current consultative process around the draft Teaching and Learning Strategy, inter alia, in terms of the strategic drivers and the graduate attributes that are articulated in the draft strategy.

Mission element 1 reads "Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and all its people. The NWU does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise."

Mission element 2 reads "Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continents and the world."

Goals and action plans linked to these two mission elements that are of particular relevance for Focus Area 1 are the following (only those with a direct bearing on the focus area are listed here. For the full text, please consult Annexure 1):

Mission element 1	
<b>Goal 1.3</b>	<b>Alignment:</b> Ensure that policies, practices, and processes are adjusted in order to establish a sustainable synchronization of growth and development in the university core business.
<i>Action plan 1.3.1</i>	Continue with the review of policies, systems and procedures across NWU campuses in order to ensure alignment at all levels.
<b>Goal 1.5</b>	<b>Equity:</b> Ensure that policies, processes and practices are directed towards proactively addressing historically entrenched forms of discrimination. This pursuit is to take place within the guiding principle that all the NWU campuses should reflect a diverse student and staff population within the parameters of achieving the agreed minimum diversity targets.
<b>Goal 1.7</b>	<b>Quality:</b> Ensure that quality is managed as an integral part of all facets of NWU's core-business. <i>(Cross reference: cf Section 22 for Action Plans and Deliverables for Quality Management for T-L purposes)</i>
<i>Action plan 1.7.1</i>	Continuously guide the development and implementation of an institutional quality management system at the NWU in order to ensure ongoing quality enhancement and fostering the culture of ongoing improvement.
<i>Action plan 1.7.2</i>	Emanating from the investigation into the outcomes of the EPEs and other programme evaluations, taking a strategic view on the way in which the lessons learnt from these evaluations could be directed into an institutional process founded by the underlying principle of "Design for Quality" [HEQC Impr Plan recomm 7].

Mission element 2	
<b>Goal 2.1</b>	Continue to improve the quality of teaching-learning through the Teaching-Learning and other relevant institutional strategies and regulatory compliance within the higher education sector.
<i>Action plan 2.1.3</i>	Finalise the report on the review of the status of teaching and learning.
<i>Action plan 2.1.5</i>	Ensure that quality assurance of academic programmes contributes to the empowerment of academics in Teaching and Learning.
<b>Goal 2.5</b>	Utilise diverse strategies to promote a culture of excellence in teaching and learning.
<i>Action plan 2.5.1</i>	Promote the Scholarship of teaching and learning (HEQC Impr Plan recomm 10).
<i>Action plan 2.5.2</i>	Develop and implement a framework and process for curriculum renewal at NWU.
<i>Action plan 2.5.3</i>	Continue to expand and monitor the effectiveness of incentives for improving Teaching and Learning
<i>Action plan 2.5.4</i>	Develop an action plan for improving teaching and learning practice based on the institutional report for the HEQC audit and the status review on Teaching and Learning.

**1.2. What activities or facilities 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.)**

**(a) Institutional award system for excellence in teaching and learning (ITEA)**

The University implemented the Institutional Teaching Excellence Awards (ITEA) in 2007, and in 2013 the ITEA policy was comprehensively reviewed and approved by Council. ITEA forms a key element of NWU's intention to continue to expand and monitor the effectiveness of its incentives for improving teaching and learning. Over a period of a year, a limited number of teaching staff enrol in a process that consists of various methods of evaluation such as the compilation of a portfolio, peer evaluation, benchmarking and student evaluations. Recipients of the awards receive at last half their award as a payment into their research accounts, with the expectation that it will be used to further develop their professional competence as university lecturers by means of disciplinary research and, in some cases, the scholarship of teaching and learning. The award is considered an important criterion for promotion.

A key difference from the previous system for teaching awards is that the current system acknowledges the different levels of development amongst participating staff members. Thus the revised policy includes the following categories: i) Emerging Teaching Excellence Award (*ETEA*); ii) Teaching Excellence Award (*TEA*); and iii) Distinguished Teaching Excellence Award (*DTEA*).

- The *ETEA* recognises lecturers who display a long term vision for their professional and career development, through exceptional and proven achievement towards innovation in teaching and learning within their field.
- The *TEA* also honours exceptional and proven achievements in excellent and innovative teaching, while encouraging scholarly teaching that leads to contextualized teaching approaches and strategies that make learning accessible, applicable and valid to students in a specific discipline.
- The *DTEA* recognises lecturers for leadership and achievements in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and endorses excellence by making the award as a commendation within the category of the *TEA*.

The ultimate aim of enhancing the competency levels of academics as teachers is to promote and ensure the success of students.

Evidence that this process is successful can be found in the success that NWU staff members achieve in the HELTASA national teaching excellence awards. Furthermore, the portfolios that the ITEA participants prepare demonstrate how successful performance in ITEA contributes to student success as measured by module pass rates, students' evaluations of lecturers and modules, and performance of the candidates in terms of research output. Various ITEA award winners also take part in projects relating to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and make presentations at the annual teaching and learning conference.

While ITEA has proven to be a successful process, it is seen as time consuming by the participants as well as the evaluators, which impacts on the number of staff who participate. In order to increase the participation, attention is being paid to application requirements within the revised policy that may restrict participation unnecessarily. In addition, pre-training will be made available to candidates so that they are prepared effectively for participation. As it stands, the training provided to candidates deals with the formal policy requirements, but not with the practical steps that they need to follow in order to be ready for participation.

**(b) Quality assurance system of programmes**

NWU's Quality Policy provides for a system of programme review consisting of a process of internal programme evaluation (IPE), followed in some cases by an external programme evaluation (EPE), on a three to six year cycle. The IPE process, consisting of the typical elements of self-evaluation, peer review, and follow-up, focuses on identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and delivery of a programme (including all modules in the programme) and compiling an effective action plan with time-lines for elaborating on the strengths and minimising the weaknesses. A range of criteria, derived from the HEQC's criteria for programme accreditation, is used to assess the standards and quality of the programme. The criteria include the need for the programme within a national context, its design, the teaching and learning approach, the standard of delivery by means of study guides, contact sessions and e-learning, assessment, support rendered by the Library and IT services, and trends relating to student academic achievement over the previous three years. An extensive set of data and evidence that includes feedback from students enrolled in the programme, students who have already completed the programme and employers, is used.

The process supports School Directors and Deans in managing the quality and standards of the programmes for which they are responsible, with the ultimate aim of enhancing student success. Because every staff member involved in the programme takes part in this review, it provides a valuable opportunity for staff development through evidence-based reflection on elements of good practice and those in need of improvement. The self-evaluation report is analysed by a review panel consisting of the School Director, one member of another school in the Faculty, lecturers in the programme, a representative of Campus Academic Development and Support (ADS) and the programme manager. At the conclusion of the self-evaluation, the School Director prepares a comprehensive report to the Dean that provides an improvement action plan based on a concise, honest appraisal of the programme's strengths and weaknesses. A progress report is submitted to the Dean and the Vice-rector every six months for as long as the action plan timeline justifies. In this manner, the responsible staff members take responsibility for implementing a systematic process of quality enhancement based on the review findings. The respective campus Vice-rectors submit an annual report at Senate reflecting on the outcomes of IPE's conducted on their respective campuses.

Faculties select a number of completed internal programme evaluations to participate in external programme evaluations, based on considerations such as whether the programme has received an extremely positive or negative evaluation, trends in enrolments and student performance, or other strategic considerations. The EPE process, which is coordinated by the NWU Quality Office, focuses on the validation of the preceding internal review, and assesses the extent to which the process has contributed to quality enhancement. Panels for the EPE process consist of external subject specialists, that include international participants, as well as the Institutional and Campus Directors of ADS, the Director of Quality Management, and campus vice-rectors as observers. The Quality Office then prepares an evaluation report based on the findings and recommendations of the panel, which is submitted to the School Director, the relevant Dean and the Vice-rector for comment on factual errors and omissions and final approval. Three months after conclusion of the EPE, the School Director provides an improvement plan to the Dean, Vice-rector and Quality Director. Thereafter a progress report is submitted to the Dean and the Vice-rector every six months, until the action steps have been implemented satisfactorily. The Quality Office provides general feedback on the emerging trends, outcomes and risks identified during EPE's and Professional Body Reviews at meetings of the Institutional Senate and Institutional Management.

Till recently, IPEs and EPEs have been conducted at the campus level, which has impeded on their ability to contribute to quality enhancement amongst staff members who are responsible for the same programme at an institutional level. Lately, the NWU has expanded the EPE system to evaluate aligned programmes across campuses. This allows staff responsible for similar programmes across campuses to engage in a collaborative process for ensuring the consistency of academic standards and the learning experience across campuses.

The success of the system of programme quality assurance in enhancing the quality of teaching is evident in the overall self-evaluative process adhered to as well as the outcomes obtained. As quality assurance is seen by the NWU as part of the responsibility and activities of all staff, IPEs and EPEs assist in the development of academic staff through the self- and peer-evaluation and improvement processes. This brings about a continuous, active and responsive approach towards quality through active sharing and dissemination of good practice and the modification of ideas. Areas in need of development are identified and communicated to the respective Academic Development and Support departments for follow up and possible academic staff development interventions where required. The involvement of staff from the ADS contributes to the incorporation of the outcomes of programme evaluation processes into staff development activities. However, more should be done to ensure that the outcomes of programmes reviews are used optimally in planning capacity development opportunities for staff.

**1.3. What activities or facilities related to this focus area have you undertaken or put in place 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?**

**(a) Institutional Course for New Lecturers (ICNL)**

As decided by Senate, the Institutional Course for New Lecturers (ICNL) has been made compulsory for all newly appointed lecturers since 2006. Newly appointed lecturers undergo training in three phases to achieve the following outcomes:

- Facilitate learning and create effective and efficient learning environments for their learners
- Create valid and reliable assessment tasks to assess student learning
- Be knowledgeable about the research structures established to improve research productivity at the NWU

- Develop an awareness and elementary capacity regarding the foundational and ethical issues in science; and
- Know where to find appropriate support services for teaching, learning and research activities (institutional and on campus).

Phase 1 of the course introduces newly-appointed lecturers to the University's strategy and policies for teaching and learning, as well as to various support services, and provides a brief overview of the higher education landscape. This phase takes place on an institutional level and academics from all three campuses attend, which provides them with an opportunity to meet their colleagues. Phase 2 of the course, which is presented at a campus level, builds on the first phase by creating practical opportunities for newly-appointed lecturers to explore aspects of pedagogy, curriculum development and student learning. During this phase, participants develop a portfolio in which they reflect on their learning during the course. In this manner, new lecturers receive an orientation to scholarly practices relating to teaching and learning, as well as information and encouragement to participate in activities relating to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The purpose of Phase 3 is to introduce newly appointed academics at the University to the philosophical foundational issues of their respective subject fields.

Feedback from participants who have completed all three phases of the ICNL indicated that they experienced it as fragmented, as the presenters did not pay adequate attention to the interrelationship between the various phases. In particular, Phases 1 and 3 seemed to operate from different conceptual frameworks, while the academic development staff who present Phase 2 on each campus did not share a common approach in terms of its contents, and the manner in which it is presented. Accordingly, there was not consistency in terms of implementing Phase 2 on the campuses. Furthermore, as part of Phase 2, the ADS staff should oversee the assigning of newly-appointed lecturers to mentors in faculties. In some faculties, this did not occur, while in some others, that have implemented the mentoring process, newly-appointed lectures did not fully benefit from it.

As a result, a comprehensive review has been initiated, in order to improve the coherence of the course, and to ensure consistency in its implementation. The review recommends that the course be rearranged through the combination of Phases 1 and 3 into a revised Phase 1, in which lecturers will be introduced to broader higher education issues, career development and scholarship. In addition to steps to promote consistency in the presentation of Phase 2, consideration is also being given to a new strategy and implementation plan for a mentoring process that will fully benefit both the mentor and the mentee. As the Human Capital Division already offers mentoring workshops, staff from Academic Support Services will work with Human Capital to ensure that these workshops adequately address the needs for academic mentoring. It is proposed that an adapted version of the ICNL be implemented from 2015 onwards.

### **(b) Professional Development of Academic Staff**

NWU provides various professional development opportunities relating to teaching and learning to its academic staff, by means of workshops, colloquia, seminars and short courses. Topics covered include the facilitation of learning, e-learning, technology integration, curriculum and instructional design, and assessment. These opportunities are not compulsory so that their attendance depends on awareness and interest amongst academic staff, and perceptions on the relevance and quality of these opportunities. Consequently, attendance is low and in the case of an online short course that was piloted on one of the campuses, the dropout rate was high. The most cited problem was that the workload of the short course was too demanding, even though lecturers could pace their own learning.

A review of these activities has revealed that there is no consistency in the provision of professional development across the three campuses of NWU. Some opportunities are based on a needs analysis, while others are assumed to be necessary. This fragmentation emanates from a lack of an institutional strategy for professional development, which impacts on how lecturers are systematically guided in their careers as academics. Efforts to think carefully about a professional development strategy that will work at NWU are underway. The purpose of this review is to develop a more systematic approach to understanding priority areas in which staff need support, as well as the best format for the provision of such developmental opportunities – particularly the relationship between those that are provided in a more generic manner for all staff members, and those that may best be provided within the context of specific faculties and schools.

Various recent initiatives illustrate an attempt to introduce a more systematic approach to professional development. Thus, one campus has introduced a Capacity Building programme consisting of a series of bi-annual workshops and seminars, targeted at both lecturers and staff developers. The programme provides developmental opportunities at two levels. Firstly, it develops lecturers in key areas of teaching and learning, but secondly it provides more in-depth training required for staff developers. By providing ADS staff with an

opportunity to enhance their skills, particularly with respect to new challenges relating to teaching and learning technology, blended learning and open and distance education, they will be empowered to eventually develop in-house workshops/seminars on these topics. At another campus, a systematic process is underway to support academic staff in the use of technology to create an optimal learning environment, by means of blended learning and the development of electronic study material.

**1.4. What activities or facilities have you recently implemented or acquired or are you planning to implement or acquire in the next 12 to 18 months related to this focus area? Why have you chosen these particular activities or facilities? What is the need or problem they are intended to address?**

**(a) Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

NWU has adopted a framework for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in order to promote reflective practice, stimulate research and innovative ideas in teaching and learning, afford opportunities for discourse on assumptions, beliefs and values on teaching and learning, and to promote collaboration on teaching and learning within the institution. The University recognises that teaching and learning should be the subject of scholarly reflection and research, so that teaching is not removed from the community of scholars, but forms part of scholarship, which results in improved student learning

The NWU promotes the SoTL through the funding of projects across all campuses. Funding for these projects is in its second year. In 2013, a strategic allocation of R1 million was provided in order to initiate SoTL projects at the University, and SoTL funding forms a key aspect of the University's Teaching Development Plan for the period from 2014/5 to 2016/7. Project grant holders are required to submit annual progress reports on their work, and many of them also present their findings at the NWU SoTL conference, which serves as a platform through which teaching and learning practices and ideas are shared. This annual conference will be convened for the fourth time in 2014.

Academic Support Services have been utilised to launch the SoTL initiative. Ideally this initiative should be placed in a Centre for Higher Education linked to a Faculty as this would provide SoTL with an academic home and strategically position it with dedicated academic staff who are qualified scholars in this area. The creation of an appropriate academic home for SoTL work would contribute appreciably to addressing perceptions that such work does not constitute proper research. However, as such a structure is not currently in place, academic support units on campuses seem to be the most appropriate home for this activity. On the one campus a dedicated staff member within the academic support unit has been appointed to promote SoTL in the faculties, and to manage the financial support given to candidates involved with SoTL projects.

It is still too early to determine the impact or effectiveness of the SoTL project on student success. Early indicators of success are the increased interest of staff members in SoTL projects, the number of staff involved in SoTL research projects and the number and quality of presentations made at the annual SoTL conference. Success will be measured more accurately once the outcomes of the SoTL projects show results in terms of improved practices in teaching and learning and in students' academic achievement. In this regard, more attention needs to be paid to the implementation of monitoring mechanisms that will require grant holders to demonstrate how their projects are being translated into improved teaching and learning practices and to improved student learning. Further evidence of the impact of the SoTL initiatives will be the publication of articles in accredited journals and presentations at national and international level. In this manner, the SoTL projects and the SoTL conference will form the basis on which communities of practice and of inquiry will be developed to focus on the enhancement of the student learning experience.

**(b) Stimulating innovative use of technology in teaching and learning by academics**

With the increased expectation regarding the uses of electronic devices and communication in higher education, standing task teams on the use of technology in teaching and learning have been established on two campuses, and should be established on the third campus. The aim of the task teams is to create platforms for communication, demonstration and reporting on initiatives regarding the use of technology in improving teaching and learning. The task teams have representation from Teaching and Learning Committees in faculties, as well as staff members from information technology services and academic support units on campuses as well as the institutional office. Membership includes those staff members who are considered innovators in terms of the use of technology and who can demonstrate their innovations.

Opportunities are created to stimulate innovation by means of the integration of appropriate technology in teaching and learning. Various campus-wide or faculty-based projects provide innovative lecturers with the opportunity to experiment with existing teaching-learning technology, or to develop and integrate technology in

a safe and well-supported environment. On one campus a show case on the innovative use of technology in teaching and learning has been held in order to provide an opportunity for academic staff, and particularly ITEA participants, to present and demonstrate innovation in the class room. The intention is that participants in the showcase will receive funding and on-going support for experimental work, as well as for the publication of the results of their work and participation in relevant conferences and forums. By means of such opportunities for the dissemination of innovation, a core group of lecturers will be established to champion the broader adoption of technology as a means of enhancing student learning.

At some campuses, initiatives are also underway to develop facilities in which academic staff can enhance their capabilities in the area of technology-enabled teaching and learning. For example, at the Potchefstroom Campus planning is taking place to establish a teaching and learning commons. It should serve as a 'laboratory' where lecturers receive the necessary support and assistance to experience and experiment with new technologies, such as electronic devices and applications. The commons will be staffed by academic support staff members with expertise in the use of technology in teaching and learning. Challenges in establishing the commons are resources in terms of space and additional staff capacity.

Use of technology in teaching and learning is, however, fragmented because cooperation and the exchange of ideas are often confined to a campus or even a faculty. To improve the impact of experimental work and capacity development in the use of educational technology, information, experience and resources need to be consolidated and aligned across the university - especially so that lecturers are empowered to use technology optimally in addressing their students' learning needs, but also so that unnecessary duplication, which adds to the workload of lecturers, is reduced.

### **(c) Promotion criteria and promotion appraisal of academics**

Currently, eligibility for promotion relies heavily on disciplinary research output, and less on creative and innovative teaching and learning practices and educational research. Furthermore, while the University has an established system for teaching excellence awards (see the discussion of the ITEA awards in Section 2 above), there has not been sufficient clarity on the manner in which promotion criteria should recognise successful participation in the ITEA process as a demonstration of research and innovative practice in the area of teaching and learning.

A review of the promotion criteria for academics staff members has taken place and awaits final consideration and approval. The revised criteria aim to create an appropriate balance between performance measurement in teaching and learning, research on teaching and learning, subject specific research output as well as participation in community engagement. The approach being followed focuses on a qualitative assessment rather than the use of specific quantitative norms and indicators. Thus, while there is a specific set of criteria for each level of appointment, the assessment primarily should be based on a consideration by peers of the candidate's broad accomplishments in each main sphere of activity (teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement – including service learning and community-based research).

The new criteria for the promotion of academic staff members provide for the recognition of good scholarship in teaching and learning, as well as innovative teaching and learning practices and contributions to curriculum development. Research output in SoTL, such as the presentation of papers at national and international conferences, must also be acknowledged. The quality of the work published must thus be regarded as important as well as measuring the impact that the research has on teaching and learning practices.

## **1.5. What are the challenges or problems related to this focus area that still need to be addressed in your institution?**

### **(a) Professional development planning for teaching staff**

The discussion in Section 1.3 has referred to the need to develop a more coordinated approach to the provision of professional development opportunities for staff. A further challenge is that NWU needs to provide its academic staff, and especially staff at early stages of their careers, with a supportive environment within which they can plan their professional career path. To this effect, a professional development model should be developed that provides newly appointed lecturers with a trajectory for their development up to professorship level. Lecturers should understand the competences that they are expected to demonstrate in the various domains of their professional roles, taking into account the criteria for promotion. In the area of teaching and learning, a set of well-defined standards for good teaching practices should be developed that provide clear direction to academic staff, while they also should receive guidance in terms of the resources that are available to assist them. Practices for mentoring and performance management within faculties and schools should take their cue from the systematic planning, monitoring and review of the staff members' personal

development plans, and should be key mechanisms for allowing staff to assess their progress. This means, inter alia, that peer mentoring of lecturers within faculties should be formalised and implemented in a consistent manner. The peer mentoring system can be utilised for supporting newly appointed lecturers, for supporting lecturers who participate in the ITEA awards, and for helping staff to engage with student feedback on their performance.

In addition to the role that academic managers and peers play, ADS units at the Institutional Office and on the campuses should also contribute to the professional development model. They can do so through the various activities that have been discussed in this section, such as ITEA, ICNL and SOTL, and within the professional development framework a “Development Academy” could be created to support lecturers interested in ITEA, SoTL and professional development as a whole. As part of the professional development model, ADS units should also contribute to the development of the standards for good practice in teaching and learning, and as part of this process could play a leading role in the formalisation of a professional qualification for teaching at NWU. While a needs analysis with respect to such a formal qualification has been conducted, this work needs to be taken forward so that there is a set of robust data as a basis for planning a formal qualification.

#### **(b) Cross-campus interaction between lecturers**

As a multi-campus university, with significant distances between the campuses, it is of critical importance that mechanisms should be implemented to encourage cross-campus interactions between lecturers. Such interaction is important so that lecturers in the same programme can develop a sense of shared responsibility for the planning and delivery of the curriculum, but also so that students can be exposed to diverse teaching styles. More attention needs to be paid to the creation of an effective framework for cross-campus collaboration by means of the design, implementation and monitoring of institutional policies and procedures relating to quality assurance (programme reviews, internal and external moderation), processes for programme design and management, and methods of programme delivery. In the latter regard, consideration should be given to practical possibilities for cross-campus teaching, which makes effective use of technology. In the area of staff development, possibilities should also be explored for ways in which academic staff from different campuses may be involved in joint capacity development projects. The ADS units at the Institutional Office and on the campuses could play a facilitative role in helping staff from similar programmes to explore opportunities for collaboration and sharing good practice in their teaching and learning activities.

## 2. Focus Area 2: Student Support and Development

### 2.1. Which aspects of your institution's Strategic Plan relate to this focus area?

NWU is committed to excellence in Teaching and Learning as articulated in its teaching and learning mission as per the NWU Institutional Plan.

Mission element 1 reads "Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and all of its people. The NWU does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise."

Mission element 2 reads "Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continents and the world."

In addition Mission element 3 makes provision for mechanisms and measures to improve the throughput of postgraduate students.

Goals and action plans linked to the mission elements concerned that are of particular relevance for Focus Area 2 are the following (only those with a direct bearing on the focus area are listed here. For the full text, please consult Annexure 1):

Mission element 1	
<b>Goal 1.2</b>	<b>Access:</b> Ensure at all campuses that policies, processes and practices are directed towards ensuring increased and broadened participation in line with enrolment targets agreed with the DHET and the diversity targets set by Council in November 2010.
<i>Action plan 1.2.1</i>	Implement diverse strategies to support and improve student access within an overarching strategy for student access and success as set out in Mission Element 2.6.
<i>Action plan 1.2.4</i>	In line with national guidelines, improve financial aid to academically deserving students while ensuring that higher education at the NWU remains affordable and accessible.
<b>Goal 1.10</b>	<b>Student experience:</b> Ensure that a suitably enabling environment is created for students, conducive to the creation of a balanced student experience as regards academic, social-cultural and sports activities in and across campuses; and also in terms of the development of students into leaders.
<i>Action plan 1.10.1</i>	Maintain a sound and balanced student experience, including organized student life, sport and cultural activities, taking into account the imperative of academic activity.
<i>Action plan 1.10.2</i>	Continue to position sport as one of the core strengths of the student non-academic life.

Mission element 2	
<b>Goal 2.1</b>	Continue to improve the quality of teaching-learning through the Teaching-Learning and other relevant institutional strategies and regulatory compliance within the higher education sector.
<b>Goal 2.3</b>	Engage in a process of curriculum transformation, building on the HEQSF alignment project.
<i>Action plan 2.3.3</i>	Ensure that learning outcomes reflect the principles of Good Citizenship as an input in the global sustainability conversation.
<i>Action plan 2.3.4</i>	Ensure that learner participation in experiential learning (including work integrated learning as well as service learning) is optimized.
<b>Goal 2.6</b>	Implement diverse strategies to improve student access and success (this section provides an elaboration on the transformation elements of access and success with specific respect to teaching and learning).
<i>Action plan 2.6.1</i>	Develop a systematic framework for student access and success at NWU.
<i>Action plan 2.6.2</i>	Evaluate and continue with strategies to promote student preparedness and improve access in a flexible and responsible manner.
<i>Action plan 2.6.3</i>	Measure and report on student achievement against NWU targets for teaching and learning success on an ongoing basis.
<i>Action plan 2.6.4</i>	Continue with the provision of student support services, including the Supplemental Instruction (SI) system, across all campuses [HEQC Impr Plan recomm 10, 12].
<b>Goal 2.7</b>	Develop and implement an Employability Strategy to promote the career prospects of NWU graduates, through the articulation between teaching and learning activities and the Career Centre.
<i>Action plan 2.7.1</i>	Promote employer awareness of the strengths of NWU and its graduates by promoting external networks of current and potential employers.
<i>Action plan 2.7.2</i>	Continue to facilitate the creation of networks of academics and employers within NWU to improve the

	employment and employability of NWU students and graduates.
Action plan 2.7.3	Ensure that the Career Service provides students with effective career guidance and preparation services
Action plan 2.7.4	Continue with the graduate tracer study.

<b>Mission element 3</b>	
<b>Goal 3.5</b>	Find and establish an effective mechanism to measure and improve the throughput of postgraduate students.
Action plan 3.5.1	Continue with the implementation of the new postgraduate management system by June 2014.
Action plan 3.5.2	Continue with the development of automated monitoring mechanisms for measuring student throughput based on the proposed new postgraduate management system.

Student success relies heavily on enhanced integration and acculturation. The former refers to issues such as finances, counselling support, career guidance and integration into campus and residence campus life. The latter refers to the literacies that students need to develop in order to achieve academic success. The discussion of the focus area will review various current and planned strategies and systems at NWU to promote integration and success. The underlying theme is a commitment to understanding learning needs and challenges faced by different kinds of students.

**2.2. 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)**

**(a) SI (Supplemental Instruction)**

NWU has a well-established Supplement Instruction (SI) programme, which commenced in 2004, and is implemented at all campuses. In common with the approach that is adopted internationally, SI provides a non-remedial approach to learning enrichment that increases student retention and performance, by means of regularly scheduled, out-of-class “super group” study sessions where students work together to consolidate key concepts and develop effective study strategies. SI sessions are facilitated by SI leaders, students who have previously and successfully completed the targeted module. SI leaders attend lectures, take notes and act as model students for their peers. In this manner, SI creates broader learning communities for many disciplines. Although the SI programme at NWU is largely used in first year modules to support the first year experience, research has shown that it is equally effective at further levels of study. During 2013, there was a noticeable trend for more students from their second year onwards to attend SI.

At NWU, the SI programme targets, but is not limited to, “at-risk” modules, defined as modules with a pass rate of less than 50%, modules with challenging content, or modules with large classes. During 2013, the percentage of at-risk modules in which SI was presented fluctuated from 33% at the Mafikeng Campus to 63% at the Vaal Triangle Campus (an average of 44% “at-risk” modules across the University). SI attendance and the performance of students are monitored on a continuous basis, and an annual report is tabled at Senate that amongst others statistically compares the final module results between SI participants and non-SI participants. The most recent annual report demonstrates that for a sample of modules across the campuses during 2013, students who attended SI achieved an average module mark that is 10% higher than those who did not participate, and also have higher average levels of academic achievement. This trend is consistent with monitoring data for the period from 2008 to 2013. The monitoring data also suggests that more regular attendance provides the most benefit in terms of academic achievement, although the evidence is not consistent across all the years. Significantly, a review of the impact of SI attendance for the period from 2008-2013 suggests that the SI programme contributes to student retention, as withdrawal percentages are consistently higher for students who do not attend SI. From the annual reports it becomes evident that participation in SI at NWU does contribute to improved student success and pass rates.

To ensure the successful and consistent implementation of the programme, the SI manager has developed a suite of training manuals for SI leaders, SI mentors and supervisors, and participating lecturers, which set out their respective roles and responsibilities.

The feedback obtained from students during external academic programme evaluations, as well as during the consultative process relating to the QEP, also supports the notion that they experience the SI programme as highly beneficial. They appreciate the opportunity that the smaller groups provide for personal interaction with the SI leaders, and it is often mentioned that some SI facilitators are willing “to walk the extra mile” by facilitating in a variety of (home) languages as requested by SI participants. This assists learners to comprehend key concepts much faster, which in turn, empowers them to explain difficult work and or concepts to other fellow students. It must be acknowledged that, as the QEP consultative process indicated, there are

SI leaders who misuse the system and do not fulfil their responsibilities appropriately. While this problem is monitored and addressed as effectively as possible, it remains a challenge to ensure that all role-players contribute effectively to the success of the SI programme.

### **(b) Career Services**

The Career Centre plays a vital role in promoting the employability of NWU students, through the services that it offers to students and employers, as well as the networks that it creates for liaison amongst employers, alumni, academics and students. The Career Consultant provides workshops and individual consultations that help students to understand the qualities that employers are looking for, and provides specific guidance and support relating to CV-writing, preparation for job interviews, and the job search process. Evidence of the effectiveness of the Career Consultant's work is the sustained growth in the number of students using this service. While 887 students attended workshops and consultations in 2011, in 2014 to date (August 2014) the number has grown to 2024. This sharp growth means that more capacity needs to be developed to provide career consultancy services. Work has commenced on the development of online resources to support students in CV-writing and preparation for job interviews, while consideration also must be paid to appointing dedicated career consultants on each campus.

The annual career fairs that are held on each campus provide students with the opportunity to network with potential employers, so that they can develop a better understanding of the range of careers in their respective disciplines and fields of study. Since 2009, there has been a steady growth in the number of companies that participate in the career fairs. Feedback is obtained from the participating companies to assess their satisfaction with the career fairs, as well as their impressions of the students' career awareness and their attractiveness as potential employees. In addition to the career fairs, the Career Centre provides various other services to employers and students, including the CareerZone, an online career portal where employers can advertise vacancies, the career guide which contains information on a range of careers, and opportunities for employer presentations.

In order to enhance opportunities for liaison with employers, various employer consultative workshops have been held since 2011, providing opportunities for employers and academics in specific professional fields and fields of study to discuss the qualities of NWU graduates and to consider how the curriculum best can prepare graduates for the "world of work". These consultations have been well attended, and need to be taken further through the creation of structures for more regular consultations with employers

A further manner in which the Career Centre contributes to employability is by means of regular participation in a range of national surveys, including the Universum South African Student Survey, the Universum South African Professional Survey (since 2013), and the SAGRA Employer & Candidate Surveys. These surveys help the University to improve its understanding of NWU students' academic experience, their preparedness for the world of work, and their job goals and expectations, while also learning from alumni about their career progress and the degree to which their academic programmes prepared them for their professional lives. The Career Centre currently is also involved in the development of a graduate destination survey, to obtain feedback from recent graduates on their experience in finding employment, the relevance and quality of their academic programmes, and the opportunities provided by NWU to develop important qualities and skills relating to the world of work. While survey results are reported at meetings of the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning, and, in some cases, at campus management meetings, more needs to be done to ensure that perspectives gained from surveys relating to employability are used for curriculum planning and review, as well as academic development opportunities.

In order to provide a more effective and efficient service to current and potential employers and students, the Career Centre is in the process of implementing a comprehensive career services management system. This system significantly will enhance employers' ability to interact with the University, will increase students' ability to access career information and career development opportunities, and to develop their employment related skills, and will also provide for the monitoring of students' use of the career services.

**2.3. 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?**

**(a) Development of academic literacy**

All students are required to take at least one semester course to improve their academic literacy. Students who are identified as at-risk in their studies by an academic literacy test, which all first-years write at the beginning of the year, are required to take an additional introductory module in academic literacy before the compulsory module is taken. This module aims to assist students in the process of acculturation, by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to function effectively in a higher education environment. Topics include study methods, academic reading and writing, language use and seminar skills, as well as computer literacy and information skills.

Feedback on the modules has been mixed. The general experience on all three campuses of NWU is that both modules have been successfully implemented. Satisfactory pass rates are achieved, with the average rate over the past three years at above 80% for students who take the modules in Afrikaans and above 70% for those who take the English module. Student feedback by means of a questionnaire survey conducted during 2013, as well their regular feedback on modules and lecturers, confirms the importance of and need for these modules. There also are some positive correlations between student achievement in the academic literacy modules and their achievement in their other modules. It should be noted, though, that during the consultations with students as part of the QEP process, students indicated that they found certain parts of the modules, especially those dealing with reading and computer literacy, more useful than others. Furthermore, a current review of the status of teaching and learning indicates that some members of academic staff regard the modules as too generic, and not sufficiently embedded within broad disciplinary contexts.

One of the main points of criticism in the research literature of academic literacy interventions that are generic in nature is that it is difficult to determine whether the skills developed in the modules are always transferred to students' other modules. Therefore, a process is currently underway to revise the academic literacy modules. One of the key goals is to make them more faculty or discipline specific, which could facilitate the transfer of academic skills and improve student motivation in these modules.

Another matter that will be addressed during the review concerns the arrangements relating to the reading development programme, which is part of the academic literacy module. On each campus provision is made for reading laboratories where students can develop their reading skills. Reading development focuses on the building of vocabulary and fluency in silent reading, with the goal of providing personalised developmental opportunities. Success is measured by the improvement of individual reading indexes (the product of their reading rates and comprehension levels) and the complexity of the reading content. On two of the campuses, students are encouraged to complete their first reading test, by means of a computer assisted evaluation, during the orientation programme, so that they can commence with the reading development programme as soon as possible.

The current arrangements for reading development suffer from various challenges in terms of the software used. While the University uses a combination of various reading programmes, inter alia to support reading development in different languages, some of the programmes are no longer supported by their suppliers, or require significant staff resources. They are also laboratory-based, which limits students' ability to participate in reading development. In terms of their contents, the programmes are not optimally geared towards the development of academic reading skills at tertiary level, as they have a more generic content. The programmes also require significant staff resources to record reading skills. Clearly, attention needs to be paid to developing new approaches that will provide for reading development that is geared more to tertiary-level reading skills, that are more accessible, and that record progress in a more economical manner.

**(b) Writing Centres**

At all NWU campuses, writing centres assist undergraduate and postgraduate students in improving their academic writing abilities. Typically, students receive support with argumentation, paragraphing, referencing and the conceptual structuring of assignments. The centres do not write texts on behalf of students or undertake editing and proofreading work. The writing centres are receiving increasingly more requests for writing support from postgraduate students, and attention is being paid to ways of strengthening the support that is available to them. One strategy is the establishment of an Online Writing Laboratory to provide synchronous and asynchronous support (see also Section 2.5(c) on the need for make such a laboratory available to ODL students).

The writing centres train senior students to act as consultants, with whom students can schedule personal consultations that are informal and supportive. The consultants are required to maintain a high standard of professionalism and to treat every text with respect and confidentiality. Practices with respect to the recruitment of consultants vary across the campuses. At Mafikeng only full-time master's and doctoral students are appointed to handle all requests, while at other campuses senior consultants and those with more experience are used for some postgraduate requests, while the junior consultants are used for day-to-day consultancy and walk-in requests. Due to the part-time nature of their work, there is a lack of continuity amongst the consultants. Steps to address this challenge include inviting retired academics to do writing consultation work.

Records of all consultations are kept, and the effectiveness of writing support is measured by asking students to complete a short questionnaire at the end of each session. Students rate the services as highly relevant. Research is also underway into the transfer of skills and knowledge through the use of the writing centres, inter alia by analysing the records of consultations. To a lesser extent, the number of returning students provides an indicator of success. A new system of online evaluation and recordkeeping is currently being developed in order to enable more effective measuring of performance and impact.

An area of weakness is that some lecturers are not aware of the support provided by the writing centres, and therefore do not refer students for assistance. Another challenge is the impression amongst academics and students alike that the Writing Centre performs an editing service, despite the fact that this type of service is not part of its mandate. However, since the number of requests for such an editing service is increasing on an annual basis, the possibility of creating such a service is being investigated.

In order to increase the availability of writing support, a collaborative project with other universities has recently commenced which will investigate ways of providing interactive online training and assistance to both students and consultants.

#### **2.4. 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?**

##### **(a) Framework for student access and success**

NWU is in the initial stages of developing a framework for student access and success. The increasing diversity of the student body, including levels of academic preparedness, makes it essential to develop an integrated understanding of their learning needs, and the types of support that will allow them to achieve success. The University will therefore explore a framework that creates a coherent understanding of the conditions that promote epistemological access, and the development of appropriate graduate attributes (as outlined in the draft teaching and learning strategy – See Section.1.3).

A first challenge relates to integration. As the previous discussion in this section has demonstrated, a range of academic support systems are already in place. However, they are not coordinated in a holistic manner, and therefore the staff involved in these interventions and programmes do not work collectively to consider how the results of their work contribute to a broader understanding of student success. There is a need to create communities of practice consisting of members of academic and support staff that can collaborate on specific dimensions of student success, such as the first year experience, or academic literacies that support curricular progression.

A second challenge concerns learning analytics. The development of a framework for student access and success necessitates the gathering, storing and use of data to make it useful to the different stakeholders that are responsible for contributing to student success. NWU needs to develop the analytical ability to profile students and track their learning achievements in order to: i) identify at-risk students in a timely manner; ii) monitor student persistence on a regular basis; and iii) develop an evidence base for programme planning and learner support strategies. Therefore, it is important that systematic institutional research should be conducted in order to identify the types of data that should be collected for the purpose of student profiling and tracking. In addition, a repository must be built in which relevant data for learning analytics can be collected. The availability of such predictive data significantly will strengthen NWU's ability to refer students to relevant student support units, such as ADS and Student Counselling units "in-time", so that they are able to receive the appropriate support while it can still make a difference.

A key element of learning analytics capability is that the student selection and placement process should make use of reliable and valid assessment methods, in order to contribute to the development of student risk

profiles. This is important so that students can receive appropriate guidance in terms of their study programme, but also so that academic staff can form a clearer understanding of the levels of academic preparedness amongst their students. To this effect, the current assessment batteries need to be re-evaluated for the University's current population of students, in order to ensure that, as far as possible, they are free of cultural bias. Further research is needed on the selection and placement process.

Recently, the NWU has received NRF funding to conduct current research regarding selection and placement, student success and dropout, the student experience and the first work destination of NWU students. This research project should make a significant contribution to the development of a coherent framework for student access and success.

### **(b) Academic peer mentoring programme**

The academic peer mentoring programme started as an initiative to support first year students in extended programmes, and was implemented at the Vaal Triangle Campus in 2010, and at the Mafikeng Campus in 2011. At the Vaal Campus, the programme has progressively been expanded to include all first-year students from 2013 onwards, while at the Mafikeng Campus a similar expansion occurred in 2014. At the Potchefstroom Campus the academic peer mentoring programme is mainly available for first-year students in residences.

The programme is designed to assist first year students in making a successful transition into university life. Mentees are recruited during the orientation programme and assigned to a mentor, who is a senior student, tasked with helping first year students to handle various challenges relating to their adjustment to university life. Biographical and study programme information is obtained from all students who apply to participate in the peer mentoring programme, and on one campus mentors and mentees are matched, as far as possible, in terms of gender and study programme.

Senior students who apply to be mentors are invited for an interview and successful candidates are trained by means of an initial two-day training programme followed by on-going training on the concept of mentoring, and various aspects of the first-year experience, including time management, peer pressure, and the academic and social environment. The training also develops mentors' skills with respect to verbal and non-verbal communication. While mentor training is slightly different on the campuses, in order to accommodate the differences in student context and culture, the basic elements of the training are the same.

At the Vaal Triangle and Mafikeng campuses, academic peer mentors meet with their mentees twice a week for no longer than one hour at a time, throughout the academic year. At the Potchefstroom campus, mentors must meet their mentees at least three times per term, although meetings usually occur on a weekly basis. Experienced mentors are appointed as senior mentors to help monitor the attendance of sessions. Mentees who do not attend their sessions are contacted by short message service (SMS) and email. The effectiveness of the programme typically is assessed by means of feedback from the mentees. Specific campuses also have other measures of success. At Vaal Triangle, the success of the programme is also measured by checking the exam results of those mentees who attend the sessions. At the Potchefstroom campus, a consolidated report on the mentoring system at each residence is submitted on a quarterly basis. In addition to such measures, a more extensive research project is underway to measure the impact of peer mentoring over a longer period of time.

Based on the success of the progressive expansion of the peer mentoring programme at the other campuses, consideration should be given to whether the programme should be implemented more widely at the Potchefstroom Campus.

## **2.5. What are the challenges or problems related to this focus area that still need to be addressed in your institution?**

### **(a) Coordination of Student Counselling and Development Services**

There is need for greater co-ordination of student support and development services within and across campuses. At a cross-campus level, there is a need for greater inter departmental communication so that the programmes and services that are provided to students can be aligned. The discussion of the development of a framework for student access and success in part 2.4(a) of this section has already referred to the need to develop an effective electronic student referral and tracking system, which will provide for student profiling and the early detection of at-risk students. This system should also ensure that accurate records are kept of the support sections that have provided students with assistance so that it is possible to build a history of the developmental support provided to students.

**(b) Plagiarism awareness and prevention amongst students:**

The University currently lacks a policy and procedures for addressing the challenge of plagiarism. At some campuses, the academic development units do facilitate workshops on plagiarism, while students are also encouraged to subject their work to Turnitin, which is available on the LMS, to check for plagiarism. However, there are insufficient strategies for promoting awareness of plagiarism, which is a prerequisite for the successful academic acculturation of students at the NWU. There is also a need for a consistent set of disciplinary procedures for dealing with plagiarism offences. As a first step in developing an effective policy framework, data has been collected from both lecturers and students in order to understand the problem clearly, and a sliding scale to evaluate the severity of plagiarism offences has been developed in cooperation with the SRC. The capacity of the writing centres to educate students about plagiarism and to analyse suspected cases of plagiarism will be strengthened. The next step involves the formalisation of the policy framework so that it can be integrated into the rules and policies of the University.

**(c) Academic support for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students:**

This section of the submission focuses on academic support for ODL students. Section 4.2(a) addresses the broader learning environment provided to them. In the light of the importance of ODL provision at NWU, it is critical that ODL students receive a level of academic support that is comparable to that of on-campus students. To assist them in understanding the arrangements and requirements of their academic programmes, students receive tutorial letters and information booklets on important matters such as contact classes, assignments and examinations, as well as assignment rubrics that explain the assessment criteria. As far as possible, students also are provided with individual assessment feedback to help them to understand their progress in achieving learning outcomes.

The University recognises that interaction between lecturers and students plays a critical role in promoting student success in ODL, and makes use of interactive whiteboard technology at its 55 open learning centres to provide opportunities for students to interact with their lecturers and each other. Use of this technology makes it possible to provide students with feedback more quickly. In some cases, facilitation sessions are provided after the interactive white board session. Various questionnaire surveys conducted during 2013 and 2014 amongst students in educational and nursing sciences have indicated that students generally are positive about the interactive whiteboard sessions, the pedagogical skills of their lecturers during such sessions, and the facilitation sessions. The data indicated that staff succeeded in creating a positive learning environment where students and lecturers interact with each other more often.

However, there are various areas in which the support to ODL students should be improved. For instance, while students receive support material to assist them in developing their writing and reading skills as part of their study material, they do not have access to the services of the writing centres. The development of an Online Writing Laboratory (OWL) is therefore needed as soon as possible, and the necessary investment needs to be made in this facility. A pilot study to this end is envisaged for the first semester of 2015. It is also important to ensure that ODL students are provided with effective opportunities for improving their information literacy skills. While the library and information services make digital resources available to ODL students, and each open learning centre has a small resource centre, the challenge is to help students to develop skills in the retrieval and manipulation of information resources. The University also realises that it has not sufficiently developed the competency levels of its academic staff members to engage with ODL as a mode of teaching and learning. In order to develop a more integrated approach to the academic support of ODL students it is important that the ADS units become more involved in the planning and provision of academic support to them, which includes the development of academic staff as facilitators of ODL.

### 3. Focus area 3: Enhancing the Learning Environment

#### 3.1. Which aspects of your institution’s Strategic Plan relate to this focus area?

In the Institutional Plan, Mission Elements 2 and 5 are particularly relevant to the enhancement of the learning environment.

Mission Element 2 states the University’s commitment to “*Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continent and the world.*”

Mission Element 5 indicates that NWU will position itself in the sector “*as an accountable, effective, well-managed, financially viable and innovative institution, with a strong client focus to enhance the quality of the core business and to ensure sustainability.*”

The operationalization of the Institutional Plan for 2014 in terms of various goals and actions plans (see Annexure 1) contains various aspects that relate to the learning environment, including teaching and learning technology, as part of the teaching and learning strategy (Section 2.1) and IT and Library Services (Section 5.8).

Mission element 1	
<b>Goal 1.3</b>	<b>Alignment:</b> Ensure that policies, practices, and processes are adjusted in order to establish a sustainable synchronization of growth and development in the university core business.
<b>Goal 1.8</b>	<b>Redress:</b> Ensure that policies, processes and priorities aimed at redressing systemic and organizational imbalances and inequalities are in place, with specific reference to rectifying historically entrenched practices.
<i>Action plan 1.8.2</i>	Continue to report by means of comprehensive disaggregated figures to relevant structures on the building infrastructure expenses at the NWU.
<b>Goal 1.9</b>	<b>Resource allocation:</b> Ensure, through proper processes and structures, that the distribution of NWU resources is aligned, equitable and transparent to support the core-business strategies of the NWU.
<i>Action plan 1.9.1</i>	Continue with the ongoing optimisation of the budget process.
<i>Action plan 1.9.2</i>	Continue to steer the respective campus niches and longer-term growth and development objectives.
<i>Action plan 1.9.3</i>	Ensure that resource allocation is addressed in accordance with IP targets.
<b>Goal 1.10</b>	<b>Student experience:</b> Ensure that a suitably enabling environment is created for students, conducive to the creation of a balanced student experience as regards academic, social-cultural and sports activities in and across campuses; and also in terms of the development of students into leaders.
<i>Action plan 1.10.1</i>	Maintain a sound and balanced student experience, including organized student life, sport and cultural activities, taking into account the imperative of academic activity.

Mission element 2	
<b>Goal 2.6</b>	Implement diverse strategies to improve student access and success (this section provides an elaboration on the transformation elements of access and success with specific respect to teaching and learning).
<i>Action plan 2.6.4</i>	Continue with the provision of student support services, including the Supplemental Instruction (SI) system, across all campuses [HEQC Impr Plan recomm 10, 12].

Mission element 5	
<b>Goal 5.8</b>	Ensure effective and adequate support functions and integrated business systems to promote the success of the core business.
<i>Action plan 5.8.1</i>	Continue to refine NWU systems with a view to ensure optimal integration.
<i>Action plan 5.8.3</i>	Continue with the implementation of the 3-year IT Strategic Plan to use ITC as a strategic differentiator for core business.
<i>Action plan 5.8.4</i>	Continue to see to the establishment of appropriate library provision at all campuses of the NWU in order to support new Teaching and Learning and Research Strategies as well as campus niches.
<b>Goal 5.11</b>	Develop a strategic infrastructure plan (SIP) that is informed by the enrolment plan, research plan, support function plans as well as the various audits (Maintenance Audit, Disability Audit, OHS and Risk Audits) and standards (environmental, sustainability and internal technical standards).
<i>Action plan 5.11.1</i>	Draft and submit a plan to the DHET early in 2014 as required.
<i>Action plan 5.11.2</i>	Coordinate annual infrastructure application procedures and processes in order to update the SIP on an annual basis for publication in January of each year.
<i>Action plan 5.11.3</i>	Execute annual infrastructure plan as approved by Council.
<i>Action plan 5.11.4</i>	Development of a long-term operating and facilities management plan to forecast expenditure in terms of the development of new spaces.
<i>Action plan 5.11.5</i>	Development of a monthly cash flow forecast for approved projects.

**3.2. What activities or facilities 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.)**

**(a) Logistics and infrastructure for Open and Distance Learning**

NWU regards the logistical and infrastructural arrangements that it has established for the delivery of its programmes through open and distance learning (ODL) as a success. As stated in Section 2.5 (c), the Unit for Open Distance Learning (UODL) on the Potchefstroom Campus has 55 open learning centres in South Africa and Namibia to which lectures are broadcast. Each study centre has at least two interactive whiteboards to which lecturers can be broadcast, while study material can be downloaded and shown on the whiteboards. In some cases simultaneous translation of lectures into up to four official languages is provided, in order to enhance student access. Furthermore all lectures are captured in electronic format, so that students can revisit the lecture at a later stage that is convenient to them. Alternatively students who could not attend the lecture can access the recorded version online.

Lecturers also communicate with students via other forms of technology such as SMS messages and Facebook pages. It thus becomes clear that NWU has made significant progress in the use of advanced virtual technology to make it possible for students to receive high-quality teaching at the open learning centres. The effective use of technology in ODL supports the University's intention, as formulated in its draft teaching and learning strategy (See Section 1.3, and Section 4.4), to adopt a blended learning approach in which a combination of face-to-face and electronic teaching and learning approaches are used.

Each open learning centre has a resource centre providing relevant learning material, computers with internet access, a DVD for each module, and a person to assist the students. A centralised call centre is dedicated for academic and administrative enquiries, while a process is underway to enter a partnership with LifeAssist in order to provide a 24 hour tele-counselling service to ODL students.

In 2014 the UODL developed a pilot on-line questionnaire to find out how students experience teaching and learning and approximately 2000 students responded online to this questionnaire. The data indicated that the students are positive towards the teaching and learning process that they experienced. The positive response to the questionnaire led to the development of a more substantial online questionnaire that will be disseminated to the students in September 2014. This questionnaire will ask students for their views on a number of topics e.g. application process, registration process, learning material, examinations, assignments, support from the lecturer, student life and their perception about their programmes. This data will be analysed and written up in a report that will be available in December 2014.

**(b) Student IT Walk-In Service**

Students are increasingly bringing their own devices to campus and use these devices to access their learning material, the internet and their social networks. This in turn created a need for support and the Student IT Walk-in Service was established. The primary objective of this service is that students should have a single point of contact on each campus where they can have their IT issues, in terms of hardware and software, attended to in a timely manner. Although this service is available on all three campuses, it has not yet reached comparable and equitable levels of maturity across the campuses.

The management of incidents and requests at the Walk-In Service is done according to ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) principles. The service model entails that all requests for service are logged at the Walk-in Service, and that the resolution of the service is tracked by means of a work log that follows the workflow from the initial recording and categorisation of the request, assignment of a responsible technician to resolve the problem, the description of the completed work, communication to the client that the work is completed, confirmation of the completed request by the client, and client evaluation of the service provided. The Walk-In service remains the owner of the incident throughout its lifecycle. Should the Service Centre not be able to assist, it ensures that the incident is recorded and channelled to the appropriate experienced persons for timely assistance.

As the incident and request handling process is based on ITIL principles of best-practice, a sustainable and reliable service is delivered to clients. Student evaluations indicate that they have a very positive experience of the IT walk-in service. However, there is a need to create greater awareness about the service.

**3.3. What activities or facilities related to this focus area have you undertaken or put in place 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?**

**(a) Web conferencing**

The distance between the campuses poses a challenge with regards to collaboration and sharing of resources, and the limits the ability of staff and students to collaborate in teaching and learning activities. In 2003 a high-end, proprietary system, Tandberg, was installed to facilitate distributed meetings. The system consists of end-points and multiple control units connected through dedicated and costly ISDN lines, and its reliability is highly dependent on the leased ISDN lines between sites. This solution is geared towards meetings and is not suitable for teaching and learning or broadcasting of events. Recently, the University has investigated an alternative technological solution that will promote collaboration amongst staff and students in teaching and learning activities. Some goals of such enhanced collaboration are that lecturers should be able to share teaching activities within programmes and modules; that students should be able to follow modules that are not offered on their campus; that ODL students should have improved access to their learning material and their lecturers, and also to improve productivity due to less time spent on travelling between campuses and to open learning centres to attend meetings.

In determining the most suitable alternative, the University has had to choose between two categories of possible solutions, namely: (i) Proprietary hardware-based solutions (e.g. Polycom, Cisco, Aver and SMART Technologies) or (ii) Software-based solutions, with industry-standard hardware. Most organisations seeking flexible, scalable and cost-effective solutions opt for the second category, while organisations with fewer high-end venues opt for the first. Over the past two years, NWU has been successful in establishing an online, software-based web conferencing service, called Connect@NWU. This service currently utilises Adobe Connect Enterprise Edition 9.2. It is a scalable and flexible solution offering entry-level to high-level quality of service for multiple purposes. Unlike proprietary hardware solutions, Connect@NWU offers freedom of choice when it comes to peripheral hardware, allowing more flexible and sustainable installations in terms of cost and supportability.

This service is mostly used for meetings and only a few tests have been done with regard to its possible usage for teaching and learning. A proposal that calls for a project to upgrade and modernise video conferencing facilities in 12 venues across the university, is currently serving with the Institutional Management, but this proposal only intends to address meetings.

In order for the University to adopt a coordinated approach to the use of web conferencing as a means of promoting its teaching and learning activities, a number of issues need to be addressed. Firstly, as indicated in Sections 2.5(c) and 3.2(a), the Unit for Open and Distance Learning (UODL) has implemented a proprietary hardware-based solution, namely SMART Technology's interactive whiteboards and podiums in conjunction with SMART's Bridgit conferencing software to broadcast lectures to its open learning centres. This proprietary solution offers interactivity, content sharing; remote collaboration and chat/discussion facilities between participants to address the specific needs of off-campus students. This means that the web—conferencing solution used for ODL provision differs from Connect@NWU. Further work on the Connect@NWU solution for teaching and learning purposes should explore ways in which it can enhance the learning environment of ODL students, so that more clarity can be obtained on whether this solution should complement or eventually replace the use of SMART Technology as a technological platform for ODL provision.

Secondly, users must be empowered so that they can use the technology effectively. Training is required on three levels: i) the end users themselves; ii) support staff (including venue coordinators and first-line support staff); and iii) staff supporting the infrastructure. Users also need to be aware of the multiple uses of Connect@NWU and the fact that it can be used on mobile devices, personal computers and with custom venue installations. Thirdly, venues (including classrooms and meeting venues) must be equipped with the necessary peripheral hardware that will yield the best web conference experiences, based on the individual characteristics of each venue. Aspects such as size, lighting, acoustics and furnishings need to be considered when choosing the equipment. In addition, an integrated approach to the installation of venues is required, which aligns with user needs and budgetary constraints. A final challenge concerns connectivity as the single point of failure. All web conference solutions are highly dependent on internet connectivity and the reliability of a participant's local network connection. Despite upgrades done by SANREN, instabilities still occur. It is also important to note that high quality video and audio settings increases the burden on bandwidth. Thus, while web-conferencing capability holds significant potential benefits for enhancing the teaching and learning environment, significant work still needs to be done in this area.

**3.4. What activities or facilities have you recently implemented or acquired or are you planning to implement or acquire in the next 12 to 18 months related to this focus area? Why have you chosen these particular activities or facilities? What is the need or problem they are intended to address?**

**(a) Renewal of the libraries to provide an optimal learning environment**

As a key partner in the research and learning process, the library plays a central role in creating spaces outside the classroom to support student-directed and collaborative learning. Over the past few years, the libraries have begun to reshape themselves into multi-purpose learning spaces that provide a variety of group study, meeting and training rooms, as well as facilities for individual learning, within a technology-intensive environment with expanded public computing work stations. Each campus library also contains a 24 hour study centre. The creation of interactive learning environments could support the blended learning approach and include facilities such as a hands-on training classroom and small group seminar rooms which can be booked online. To enhance the experience of the libraries as multi-purpose learning spaces, they also provide for more informal conversations in lounges and a coffee shop.

At the undergraduate level, growing emphasis is being placed on the effective use of technology and technology-related services in supporting students to develop their ability to turn information into knowledge. This means, inter alia, that students should be able to use one workstation as an integrated space from which they are able to access library collections, the learning management system (eFundi) and electronic study guides. It also means that spaces for collaborative learning should provide network connectivity, and printing facilities. As part of the repurposing of library space in the 60 odd year old building in Potchefstroom two projects concerning the weeding of books and journals in print were executed to create space for an information commons aimed at increased access to information for undergraduates. A hands-on training facility is instrumental in optimising usage of available sources. On the Mafikeng campus similar spaces were identified to accommodate undergraduate and postgraduate students.

At the postgraduate level, each library provides, or is planning to provide, dedicated space for honours students, and for masters and doctoral students. The research commons that has been established at the Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle Campuses creates a supportive environment in which masters and doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and staff can engage in research with dedicated support from library staff with respect to literature searches and access to information.

As part of the process of reshaping the library services, the Vaal Triangle Campus recently opened its doors to its new Learning and Research Commons. This project, the biggest infrastructure project in the history of the campus, represents a R70 million full-service learning, research, and project space. It is home to not only the campus library, but also other vital support services such as Academic Development and Support; Student Counselling and Development; Information Technology Support and Writing and Reading Centres. In addition to supporting students to achieve success, the clustering of a wide range of support services at one location, means that the LRC can serve as a hub for enhancing academics as teachers, inter alia in terms of their ability to use technology effectively to support teaching and learning.

Subject to availability of funds, the Mafikeng campus is working towards a research commons project that is set to commence in 2015 as the first phase of the entire space re-engineering project. The second phase will see the refurbishment of the current 24 hour reading centre into a much more interactive space with a coffee shop and this has been earmarked for 2016. Also, in line with student enrolment projections, another proposal for the extension of the current library building on the already excavated adjacent piece of land has been submitted.

The libraries have implemented various systems to enhance access to information. An integrated library website has been developed that makes available seamless access to scholarly information sources. It also provides information on the services of the three campus libraries. The Information Systems Section ensures seamless on and off-campus access for all registered NWU patrons to electronic information. Staff and students have access to a range of scholarly databases and other electronic resources, including: A-Z list of journals and e-books, online examination papers, electronic course reserves, newspaper articles, databases for accredited journal verification, impact factors, and new acquisitions. A one-stop service is provided by using the Ebsco Discovery Service which retrieves information from all databases with one search.

The Library Web Master (Information Systems Section) is responsible for the maintenance of the webpage of the North-West University libraries, as well as for the development and updating of library information on the LMS (eFundi), Millennium Web OPAC, special collections webpages (DBText databases) and staff intranet.

A series of LibGuides using *SpringShare* have been developed under the guidance of the Web Master. Their main purpose is to assist users in accessing digital collections and allow them to search library resources and research information by subject area. They have proved to be a powerful mechanism for communication with users.

Great strides have been made to promote Open Access by becoming one of the many South African universities to sign the Berlin Declaration. The current institutional repository (Boloka) is instrumental in NWU research outputs being made more visible and freely available. The purpose of Open Access and the role of the institutional repository were introduced on higher levels such as the Research Directors' Forum at the University, thus creating academic awareness of these two issues.

Feedback from staff and students indicates that there are varying degrees of awareness amongst users aware of the full spectrum of services offered by the library. For instance, some of the students who were interviewed as part of the QEP process indicated that they are not aware that they can access information regarding library resources from the web – even though the IT survey of 2013 indicated that students use the library website most frequently. This confirms the need for more awareness campaigns with respect to the availability of information resources at the library. Students also indicated that noise levels pose a problem in some of the study areas. The LibQual survey to obtain feedback from staff and students on the effectiveness and efficiency of the campus libraries in terms of their learning and research spaces, facilities and services will be conducted as soon as the new spaces have become available for use.

### **(b) Blended learning**

NWU has begun to implement a blended learning approach, as a key strategy for addressing the needs of its students as twenty-first century learners. By means of blended learning, the University intends to provide its on-campus and ODL students with a high quality learning experience in which they are able to engage in a variety of learning activities that are aligned with their learning needs and styles. The draft teaching and learning strategy defines blended learning in the following manner:

*“Blended learning is the integration (or fusion) of thoughtfully selected complementary teaching and learning approaches and technologies based on educational merit as determined by factors such as the pedagogical context, the nature of the discipline and the learning material, and the profile of the students, so that the strengths of each are blended into a unique learning experience. It is a fundamental redesign that transforms the structure of, and approach to, teaching and learning embedded in a range of delivery modalities.”*

During 2014, a blended learning roadmap was developed to provide an initial framework for the work on blended learning. The intention of the roadmap is to outline critical success factors for the process, to provide a basis for the establishment and work of teams of academics on the design and redesign of academic programmes within specific disciplines, and to outline some of the resources, such as best-practice guidelines, to assist the design and redesign teams. In support of blended learning, a process has started to develop interactive e-guides, also referred to as “SMART-guides”,<sup>1</sup> as part of a learning environment that supports student-directed learning. Key design principles have been established for the interactive guides. Thus, the design of the learning event should accommodate online and contact learning; use content rich media; be responsive to different learning needs and styles so that students are able to achieve the learning outcomes; provide for multiple formal and informal assessment opportunities that require both collaborative and individual activities; and use embedded activities that make it possible to track students’ progress. These learning environments should enable learners to communicate with lecturers and peers in a variety of formats e.g. email, social media networks, the LMS, and online chats.

Much work still needs to be done. While a blended learning steering committee has been constituted, it has not yet begun its work. A needs analysis of human resources, physical infrastructure, and information resources must be conducted in order to determine how to create a learning environment that will support blended learning, while adequate budgeting provision needs to be made. Furthermore, academic teams need to develop a time frame and implementation plan for the creation of an interactive learning environment within their programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> (“SMART” is an acronym referring to: **Student**-directed learning; **Learning Management**; **Assessment**; a **Responsive** environment; and **Tracking** as a tool for learning analytics

### **3.5. What are the challenges or problems related to this focus area that still need to be addressed in your institution?**

This section discusses three challenges that all have implications for the successful implementation of a blended learning strategy, and particularly the elements of the strategy that involve technology-enabled learning.

#### **(a) Capacity development of academic staff for technology-enabled learning**

The success of the blended learning strategy requires first and foremost the readiness, empowerment and buy-in of academic staff to use the possibilities of technology in their teaching practices. Lecturers need to understand how technology might impact on their roles as transmitters and facilitators of knowledge, as well as the skills that they need in order to design effective blended learning events. They also need to understand how the effective use of technology can improve student learning. In addition to an understanding of curriculum design, they need to develop basic knowledge and skills in the use of available technologies. Therefore, it is important to clearly define the skills and roles that are needed within the University to support the development of a learning environment that makes effective use of blended learning. Those academics who are ready and show interest in the development of blended learning programmes and modules should engage in appropriate training opportunities and methodologies through a development process supported by the Academic Development and Support Units. The developmental process will include pedagogical as well as technology-related training, direction and support. Furthermore, lecturers need access to support from instructional and graphic designers who can assist them in creating interactive learning events. Access to such support at NWU is limited, and definitely is not sufficient to support a large-scale rollout of blended learning.

#### **(b) IT support for technology-enabled learning**

With the acceptance of blended learning as part of the draft teaching and learning strategy, more emphasis will be placed on the provision of innovative and technology-driven support to academic teachers. Wi-Fi provision on all campuses is a dire need and will be critical for the rollout of the use of electronic study guides and other mechanisms for implementing blended learning. Other challenges include the development of a learning material repository, the increased demands amongst students for learning device support, adequate facilities to charge devices, and the capacity to support the development and implementation of an e-learning platform.

IT services have been proactive in working on various technology solutions to support teaching and learning, such as the development of a lecture capturing system to allow students to view lectures online. However, the absence of a well-articulated teaching and learning strategy, as well as a clear plan for the implementation of blended learning, means that IT services have not had a clear framework in which they can translate teaching and learning needs into specific priorities and actions in support of technology-enabled learning. Thus, IT services have engaged in “technology push” in an apparent strategic vacuum, which is not necessarily valued by academics. This contributes to the perception that IT thinks that “it knows better”, or wishes to prescribe certain solutions to academics. One purpose of the newly constituted blended learning steering committee is that it should provide a forum in which IT services can align their strategic imperatives with the strategy for teaching and learning.

There are other challenges in relation to technology-enabled teaching and learning. Firstly, considerable investment must be made in improving the functionality of the LMS system. The SAKAI based LMS (eFundi) has been implemented over the last number of years and functions quite well in providing a platform for electronic interaction between students and lecturers. However, the system needs to be expanded and customised so that it can support a learning environment in which staff and students take full advantage of the possibilities inherent in e-learning. A typical example is the under-utilisation of electronic assessments via the LMS. There is a need for greater human resources and funding to improve the functionality of the LMS.

Another challenge is that ODL provision needs to be integrated into the overall planning relating to technology-enabled learning. One example of non-integration is the use of a different LMS, namely Moodle, for ODL provision. The use of two learning management systems is a matter which will have a definite impact on systems efficiency but also the ability to provide appropriate support in terms of instructional design and other aspects of interactive e-learning, especially once the teaching learning strategy has been finalised, and a growing number of academic programmes engage in the process of creating blended learning environments in all modes of delivery. It is therefore important that an integrated LMS is developed to support the further development of technology-enabled teaching and learning.

### **(c) Study Guides**

NWU recognises the importance of high quality course materials as a key aspect of enhancing resource-based learning for all students, whether they are studying on-campus or by means of open and distance learning. The Study Guide Policy, which was approved in 2007, requires that study guides be developed for all modules in order to support a learner-centred approach in which students are guided to achieve the specified learning outcomes. According to the policy, study guides should promote interactive learning by leading students through a series of well-planned interfaces, such as textbooks, library and internet searches, e-learning, laboratory work, tutorials and face-to-face contact with the lecturer or a facilitator. Provision is made for the progressive increase in the autonomy of learning demanded by the level descriptors. Since the objective of interactive study guides is to promote the integration of teaching, learning and assessment, they should provide a constructive platform for the conduct of formative and summative assessment by helping students to understand the applied competence, in terms of knowledge and skills, which they will be required to demonstrate as evidence of their mastery of the learning outcomes.

The key challenge is the lack of consistency in the implementation of the policy, which leads to appreciable variation in the quality of the study guides. Reviews of study guides by means of student feedback and programme evaluations point out that students do not always find them useful. Common problems identified in external programme evaluations between 2007 and 2013 are that learning outcomes need to be defined more coherently, and need to be commensurate with the relevant NQF level descriptor. Students also need to receive clearer guidance on their respective learning activities. There are also still modules in which study guides are not available, and a more effective system needs to be developed to track the availability and quality of study guides, whether in paper-based or electronic format. The current study guide policy will be reviewed after the approval of the new teaching and learning strategy.

## 4. Focus Area 4: Enhancing Course and Programme Enrolment Management

### 4.1. Which aspects of your institution's Strategic Plan relate to this focus area?

To a large extent, mission elements one and two of the NWU strategic plan steer the university's course and programme enrolment management processes:

Mission element 1 reads "Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and all its people. The NWU does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise."

Mission element 2 reads "Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continents and the world."

Goals and action plans linked to these two mission elements that are of particular relevance for Focus Area 4 are the following (only those with a direct bearing on the focus area are listed here. For the full text, please consult Annexure 1):

Mission element 1	
<b>Goal 1.1</b>	<b>Mainstream transformation</b> to ensure that it becomes a natural and measurable part of all the NWU's operations in accordance with the Transformation Charter and IP elements.
<i>Action Plan 1.1.1</i>	Link transformation to the performance management of all managers at the NWU.
<b>Goal 1.2</b>	<b>Access:</b> Ensure at all campuses that policies, processes and practices are directed towards ensuring increased and broadened participation in line with enrolment targets agreed with the DHET and the diversity targets set by Council in November 2010.
<i>Action Plan 1.2.1</i>	Implement diverse strategies to support and improve student access within an overarching strategy for student access and success as set out in Mission Element 2.6.
<i>Action Plan 1.2.2</i>	Optimize the marketing and recruitment strategy in accordance with the respective campus niches and the minimum diversity targets.
<i>Action Plan 1.2.3</i>	Review the placement and registration action plan for each campus.
<i>Action Plan 1.2.5</i>	Start with the development of an NWU access master plan in which due account is given to the principles of the NDP.
<b>Goal 1.3</b>	<b>Alignment:</b> Ensure that policies, practices, and processes are adjusted in order to establish a sustainable synchronization of growth and development in the university core business.
<i>Action Plan 1.3.1</i>	Continue with the review of policies, systems and procedures across NWU campuses in order to ensure alignment at all levels.
<i>Action Plan 1.3.2</i>	Utilising the extensive HEQSF project as a vehicle, determine an as-is as well as an ideal future view on academic programme alignment at the NWU and implement plans to achieve the ideal future alignment.

Mission element 2	
<b>Goal 2.1</b>	Continue to improve the quality of teaching-learning through the Teaching-Learning and other relevant institutional strategies and regulatory compliance within the higher education sector.
<i>Action Plan 2.2.1</i>	Monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of the enrolment plan.
<i>Action Plan 2.2.2</i>	Initiate the development of an Academic Planning Strategy.
<b>Goal 2.2</b>	Use the enrolment plan developed in 2013 as steering mechanism to address academic planning in a balanced way across campuses in accordance with the targets.
<i>Action Plan 2.2.1</i>	Monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of the enrolment plan.
<i>Action Plan 2.2.2</i>	Initiate the development of an Academic Planning Strategy.
<b>Goal 2.4</b>	Ensure an effective academic programme development, management and review process that results in a dynamic, integrated, responsive and relevant PQM.
<i>Action Plan 2.4.1</i>	Complete the alignment of NWU qualifications and programmes with the requirements of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF).
<i>Action Plan 2.4.2</i>	Develop an optimal system for programme development, management and review that supports an effective, streamlined programme approval process, as well as continuing alignment of programmes with the HEQSF and across campuses.
<b>Goal 2.6</b>	Implement diverse strategies to improve student access and success (this section provides an elaboration on the transformation elements of access and success with specific respect to teaching and learning).
<i>Action Plan 2.6.1</i>	Develop a systematic framework for student access and success at NWU.

**4.2. What activities related to this focus area that are deemed to be successful do you currently have in place? 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.)**

**(a) Enrolment planning, management and monitoring**

Well-managed student enrolment planning, management and monitoring, an integrated chain of events, contributes to student success at the North-West University. One of the key objectives of enrolment planning is to increase graduate output at all levels.

Through goal 2.2, the strategic plan makes provision for “a steering mechanism to address academic planning in a balanced way across campuses in accordance with the targets.” At NWU, enrolment management is aligned with student marketing and recruitment (to attract a suitable pool of qualifying applicants) as well as student selection and admission processes. These related processes are monitored throughout and are reported on at the campus level.

In order to submit the required Enrolment Plan to the DHET, the first step in the process is the determination of student enrolment targets. These targets are determined at a programme and curriculum level within schools/entities at each campus. The targets include headcount enrolments (based on actual registration in previous years as well as resource requirements) and estimated full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments based on historical trends and the enrolment shape by qualification type and major fields of study.

Estimated outputs are determined based on analyses of student throughput, success and graduation rates (referred to as student retention). A sophisticated Management Information System (MIS) is critical to determine trends in relation to the retention of students. Student tracking is a complicated management information process and determination of output targets is difficult without a proper tracking system which provides actual historical analyses and trends (the need for a student tracing system is described under Focus Area 2). It is therefore important to emphasize that enrolment planning at NWU does not only involve setting of targets in relation to student intake, but a strong emphasis is placed on output performance indicators (i.e. student success) using predictive modelling.

Enrolment management cuts across various functions and departments at the NWU (campus as well as Institutional levels) including programme development, financial aid, academic registration, academic student support services and marketing and recruitment.

The communication of input and output targets at the NWU is done as part of the Council approved Institutional Plan (and campus plans) and aligned with individual performance management of staff. The monitoring and reporting of the enrolment plan is also done at the level of Directors of Schools/Research Entities, Deans and Vice-rectors on each campus. A performance management system within MIS is used to monitor progress in terms of meeting the various targets within the various campus plans.

Although this alignment of planning and performance management is, in our opinion, a notable success related to enrolment planning, management and monitoring at the NWU, suggested further improvements to the process are discussed under point 5 of this Focus Area (under matters that we have not yet addressed).

The paragraphs below provide more detail on the process being followed at the NWU.

- ***Determination of targets***

Student enrolment targets are determined from a programme and curriculum level basis. For each cycle of student enrolment planning the academic programme leader of each academic programme within a faculty receives a document with historical enrolment figures per curriculum level for the previous five years.

Programme leaders initiate the process in determining the number of planned student enrolments per curriculum based on the information received as well as staff capacity, current and future infrastructure capacity needs and planned new programmes. Numbers per programme and curriculum are consolidated to determine the total number of students per school/entity, faculty and eventually the campus and the NWU overall. Each year campuses determine the number of students who apply for admission in relation to those that actually enrol. This information is used to determine the percentage of ‘over-enrolment’ to be allowed in accepting students before the registration period in order to reach the targets set in the Enrolment Plan.

Approval of targets is formally done at faculty (Faculty Management Committee) and campus levels (Extended Campus Management Committee and Campus Senate Committees) and aligned with the strategic planning of the respective faculty and campus. The final consolidated NWU Enrolment Plan is approved by the Institutional Senate, Institutional Management and Council (as part of the Institutional Plan).

In relation to distance enrolment planning, the Unit for Open Distance Learning also provides input in relation to distance students. The departments of Marketing and Communication provide additional information in relation to general national Grade 12 enrolment trends as well as market-related input.

- **Monitoring**

Student enrolments are monitored on a curriculum level basis (with the help of an online MIS Dashboard as indicated in Table 1) to ensure that the planned targets in terms of the number of students in each school within each faculty have been reached and are aligned with the submitted enrolment plan.

Detail reports at programme and curriculum level allow managers to monitor student enrolments for their specific school or research entity, as well as the total for each faculty to assist deans especially in the beginning of the year during the registration process. The monitoring is done on a daily basis during February to the end of March each year (registration period).

**(b) Information management capabilities to support the management of enrolment planning, and the monitoring of recruitment and admission**

The alignment of enrolment planning to performance management against the plan (monitoring) as described under (a) above is regarded as a good practice impacting on student success at the NWU, and the supporting management information system plays a key role in the success achieved in this area. The NWU MIS reports on registration, enrolment, graduates, drop-out and various other indicators. The system includes a variety of business intelligence reporting solutions (reports, cubes, dashboards, etc.) which afford users of the system access to strategic management information. The data on this system is updated monthly, based on a three tier data import process with audit functions and error checking on each tier. This ensures accurate and trustworthy data.

A single student administrative system across all NWU campuses is continuously developed, and regular training is supplied to all end-users of the system. This ensures a standardised approach in relation to the maintenance of student administrative data. Dashboard interfaces linked to a central student administrative system provide end-users with online access for management information purposes in order to assist in interpreting salient trends and developing a longitudinal view on KPA achievements, particularly as regards cohort analyses and throughput and dropout rates. The calculations are based on clear and concise business rules and definitions, and the service provision is aligned across all NWU campuses. The source systems from which data warehouse information is gathered are the following: student records, academic programme development, research administration system and HR system.

**4.3. What activities or facilities related to this focus area have you undertaken or put in place 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?**

**(a) Optimising the link between student success and programme enrolment management**

Despite the design and implementation of an effective management information system for handling of enrolment data, the NWU has some way to go towards optimising the link between student success and programme enrolment management.

The University still lacks important data that would allow it to take a strategic intelligence view on programme and enrolment management (this concern extends into the need for more comprehensive student tracking capabilities as a means of understanding trends relating to student success, as discussed in Focus Area 2).

Furthermore, it is apparent that end-users do not utilise the various available interfaces and the reports generated as strategic intelligence. It seems that academic administrators in faculties in general do not make use of various self-help reports and interfaces aimed at providing intelligence to academic managers. Users seem uninformed on what information is carried in the system and what reporting solutions are available. Better communication and user education will empower users to seek and use data in a meaningful way, to understand how improved data usage could contribute to student success, and to plan appropriate interventions to support students who are at-risk. However the effort is hampered by a serious lack of capacity

within the MIS to provide such information and training as the available staff have to devote their full attention to the actual management of the data.

**4.4. 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?**

The following three activities provide a sample of recent initiatives and implementations that will continue to be rolled out in the next 12 to 18 months and beyond. All three are considered to be matters that need to be addressed at the systemic level for further improvement initiatives in the area of course and programme enrolment management to be sustainable.

**(a) Cross-campus alignment of programmes**

The management of programmes across three campuses continues to pose a range of challenges which the NWU has been actively trying to address for the past years – a project (envisaged in the strategic plan as Goal 2.4 and its associated action plan 2.4.1) which will continue well into the next 12 to 18 months.

Up to the point where the HEQSF alignment started in 2012, academic programme planning for formal qualifications and academic programmes as well as for non-formal programmes happened to a great extent at the campus level. Inability to effect the required alignment of programmes did not only impact on the equivalence of programmes and the equity of provision across campuses (an internal matter of concern), but liaison with external bodies and records management of submissions and responses were problematic at the institutional level.

As foreseen in the 2012 and 2013 Institutional Plan, the HEQSF alignment project provided a framework for collaborative review of all qualifications across the three campuses. To mitigate the many risks associated with unaligned programmes linking to a single qualification, the national HEQSF alignment project was utilised as the ideal opportunity to ensure current and future alignment of the complete academic offering of the North-West University not only with the HEQSF (an external requirement), but also across campuses.

Clusters of academics worked on the alignment of the entire portfolio of NWU qualifications and programmes for submission to the HEQC in the required format, thereby establishing a basis for future inter-campus cooperation over and above that which existed before.

**(b) Development of a policy on programme development, management and review**

Two major aspects related to the programme development, management and review process were identified in the 2013 Institutional Plan:

- Revised policy/policies and procedures had to be drafted as foreseen (Action plan 1.3.1)
- Systems development had to be completed as planned (Action plan 2.4.2).

A report to the meeting of the Institutional Committee for Teaching and Learning of September 2013 on the above identified two more matters which arose as part of the work relating to the development and management of qualifications and programmes:

- As an interim measure, urgent attention had to be paid to the quality of submissions to external bodies as poorly prepared documents were impacting on the success of submissions and also held a potential reputational risk.
- Another matter that did not form part of the initial planning for 2013, but which emerged as an added complication, was the fact that records management in the Office of the Registrar made it extremely difficult to track applications to external bodies and the responses received.

Careful consideration of items originally identified as separate issues in the Institutional Plan pointed to the need for a single somewhat more comprehensive policy that covered the life cycle of the development, management and review of a qualification/academic programme. This would include arrangements for continued attention to cross-campus alignment of programmes.

The revision of the current policy and procedures was therefore designed to take at least the following considerations into account:

- Simplification of the programme approval process

- Clarity on and alignment between campus-based and institutional approval responsibilities and procedures
- Management of the external regulatory environment
- Assistance and guidance to members of academic staff
- Development of an accurate and up-to-date database.

For the development/revision of policy, SENEX agreed on the composition of a task team that would steer the revision of the Academic Programme Management Policy. This task team, chaired by the DVC: Teaching-Learning, takes responsibility for a comprehensive review of the current policy, and has now developed it into what is currently referred to as the Draft Policy for Programme Development, Management and Review.

The following amendments to the internal approval process were implemented with immediate effect as interim arrangements until the revision of the policy has been finalised:

- Additional support is now provided for documenting programme information.
- The process for receiving and distributing information was redesigned in collaboration with the Institutional Registrar, and the responsibility for communicating feedback from external bodies to campuses was moved to the Office of the DVC: TL.
- The format of the feedback letter was designed to alert academic programme owners to further action needed, to point them to the assistance available on their respective campuses, and to offer further assistance should that be required.

The three Vice-rectors: Teaching and Learning/Academic as well as a number of Deans have commented favourably on the improvements to date, and these senior academics continue to serve on the committee overseeing the progress in this regard.

### **(c) Development and implementation of an electronic system to support qualification and programme development, management and review**

This section relates to Item 2.4.2 of the NWU Institutional Plan.

Predating the HEQSF realignment project of the HEQC, the NWU initiated the development of a comprehensive academic programme management system (referred to below as the Kuali system) to support the processes related to academic programme development, management and review. The Kuali system will eventually feed administrative processes, and goes a long way towards providing a single solution for comprehensive records management which will replace the current (largely manual) set of processes and systems.

The goal is to ensure the integrity of the management of academic programme planning processes and to improve information management related to academic programmes and qualifications. The system will afford end users (academic programme owners, Deans and other academic leaders) a direct line of sight on –

- existing qualifications, programmes and modules,
- internal and external approval processes related to the new programmes and qualifications and amendments to qualifications, programmes and modules,
- internal processes (including Faculty, campus and Senate approval processes), and
- progress with submissions to external bodies.

It will also serve as the single repository for all associated documentation and other records of communication on the development, management and review of a programme/qualification and its constituent modules.

This electronic system, intended to improve the operational aspects of the programme development and approval phases of the programme management process, has been in development for an extended time (ITS), and needs to be ready to support implementation of the new policy referred to in (b). The following points capture the progress in the development of the system:

- Development of report formats, refinement of work flow, implementation of security and QA testing have all been completed.
- User acceptance testing is in process.
- Liaison with MIS to migrate legacy data and effect integration with existing central NWU systems is in process.
- HEQSF project data is being readied for migration to the new system.
- Development of training materials is in the final stages.

Representatives of all campuses and the relevant support services have been involved in the user acceptability testing, which serves also as a form of preliminary training in the use of the system.

Activities of an ongoing nature to ensure the sustainable implementation of the system include the following:

- Further refining of the draft Policy on Programme Development, Management and Review once the system is functional, as well as the implementation thereof and ongoing monitoring of the implementation
- Records management
- Non-technical user support
- Providing ongoing assistance to campuses with qualification and academic programme planning and the associated internal communication, including facilitating ongoing cross-campus interaction of programme clusters
- Ongoing development and refinement of the system in order to keep this considerable asset current and functional
- Technical support to the core team.

The above tasks will remain the joint responsibility of the Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning, the Office of the Registrar and Information Technology Services, with the Office of the DVC: Teaching and Learning being responsible for all support to campuses up to and including the institutional programme approval process, as well as for communication and assistance to internal stakeholders up to the final approval of a programme or qualification or any proposed amendment to a programme or qualification. The Office of the Registrar is the point of dispatch and receipt of communication with external bodies, and is also responsible for records management. The two offices are jointly responsible for discussions with external bodies, and a regular meeting ensures that this task is managed appropriately.

ITC will be responsible for all aspects of systems management, including but not confined to the ongoing technical maintenance and further development of the system and user support to the core users in the same manner as in which support is provided for other existing and emerging systems that support core business.

The development of the new system took into account the processes identified by the task team, but these no longer have to be described in the policy as the system will support/maintain many of the core work processes related to programme development, management and review. Further refining the draft Policy on programme development, management and review will take place in consultation with the task team nominated by Senate once the system is fully functional. It is suggested that this Task Team remain in place to refine the policy, but also to advise the DVC: TL further on the implementation of the system supporting the policy.

The NWU portfolio of qualifications and academic programmes generates a large amount of records, many of which will in future be generated and recorded as an automated process, but it will remain necessary to provide oversight to ensure the ongoing integrity of the records. Some capacity will be needed to support academics interacting with the system – this is of a non-technical nature, including assisting navigating what is now a user-friendly user interface.

#### **4.5. What are the challenges or problems related to this focus area that still need to be addressed in your institution?**

It is indicated above that the alignment of planning and performance management in this area is, in our opinion, a notable success related to enrolment planning, management and monitoring at the NWU. In section three of this response to Focus Area 4 we noted that improved use of information needs attention.

A matter that has not yet received attention is creation of a more pronounced focus on strategic enrolment planning at the NWU. The need for improved capabilities to support institutional planning and tactical and operational decision-making is prompted by Action Plan 2.2.2 which expresses the need for development of an Academic Planning Strategy.

The NWU currently does not have an Institutional Research (IR) and Planning Department to support informed strategic decision-making. For the existing Management Information department to move beyond simply reporting to DHET and supplying static data to internal users into the realm of meaningful institutional research, the existing team would need to be positioned differently, and a wider set of capabilities and expertise would be needed (including a capacity for more sophisticated trends analysis and predictive modelling).

The period of renewed strategic planning that was ushered in by a combination of the conclusion of the first ten years after the merger and the installation of a new Vice-Chancellor affords the NWU an opportunity to chart a new strategic direction. Appropriate provision for institutional research and planning capacity will be considered as part of the comprehensive strategic planning process.

## C. Supporting documentation

### Annexure 1: Strategic Plan

<b>NWU Institutional Plan 2014</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	The NWU's vision is to be a pre-eminent university in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation.
<b>Mission</b>	The NWU's mission is to become a balanced teaching-learning and research university and to implement its expertise in an innovative way. This the Institution will achieve as it lives its values, strives for sound management and pursues transformation, while being locally engaged, nationally relevant and internationally recognized.
<b>Strategy</b>	The NWU strategy in support of its mission is to increase quality and quantity of research through focus in terms of campus niches, appropriate incentives and capacity building and development, while strengthening the quality of teaching and learning by improved client focus, e-learning, innovation and diversity.
Mission element 1	Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and all its people. The NWU does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise.
Mission element 2	Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continents and the world.
Mission element 3	Develop and maintain high-quality, relevant and focused research, aligned with national priorities, supplying innovative solutions to challenges faced by the scholarly community, the country, the continent and the world.
Mission element 4	Implement our expertise in teaching-learning and research, both commercially and community-directed, for the benefit of the province, the country, the Southern African region, the continent and ultimately the world.
Mission element 5	Position the NWU in the sector as an accountable, effective, well-managed, financially viable and innovative institution, with a strong client focus to enhance the quality of the core business and to ensure sustainability.
	<b>Goal    Action plans</b>
<b>ME 1</b>	<b>Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and all its people. The NWU does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise.</b>
1.1	<b>Mainstream transformation</b> to ensure that it becomes a natural and measurable part of all the NWU's operations in accordance with the Transformation Charter and IP elements.
1.1.1	Link transformation to the performance management of all managers at the NWU.
1.1.2	Include transformation in all formal NWU meeting agendas and ensure effective communication.
1.2	<b>Access:</b> Ensure at all campuses that policies, processes and practices are directed towards ensuring increased and broadened participation in line

with enrolment targets agreed with the DHET and the diversity targets set by Council in November 2010.	
1.2.1	Implement diverse strategies to support and improve student access within an overarching strategy for student access and success as set out in Mission Element 2.6.
1.2.2	Optimize the marketing and recruitment strategy in accordance with the respective campus niches and the minimum diversity targets.
1.2.3	Review the placement and registration action plan for each campus.
1.2.4	In line with national guidelines, improve financial aid to academically deserving students while ensuring that higher education at the NWU remains affordable and accessible.
1.2.5	Start with the development of an NWU access master plan in which due account is given to the principles of the NDP.
1.3	<b>Alignment:</b> Ensure that policies, practices, and processes are adjusted in order to establish a sustainable synchronization of growth and development in the university core business.
1.3.1	Continue with the review of policies, systems and procedures across NWU campuses in order to ensure alignment at all levels.
1.3.2	Utilising the extensive HEQSF project as a vehicle, determine an as-is as well as an ideal future view on academic programme alignment at the NWU and implement plans to achieve the ideal future alignment.
1.4	<b>Diversity:</b> Ensure that the NWU grows systematically as a multi-campus university that draws on its diversity in terms of demographics, socio-economic background, status and socio-cultural viewpoints. In particular, it wishes to promote multiculturalism and the open exchange of diverse views in a context that allows different traditions, beliefs and viewpoints to co-exist harmoniously, thus enriching each other within NWU as a dynamic and unitary community.
1.4.1	Create further opportunities for dialogue and debate on contentious issues.
1.4.2	Utilise the celebration of the 10th year of NWU existence and the 20th year of SA Democracy to enhance the unity-in-diversity approach at the University.
1.5	<b>Equity:</b> Ensure that policies, processes and practices are directed towards proactively addressing historically entrenched forms of discrimination. This pursuit is to take place within the guiding principle that all the NWU campuses should reflect a diverse student and staff population within the parameters of achieving the agreed minimum diversity targets.
1.5.1	Evaluate progress made with employment equity targets and monitor the adequacy of NWU Employment Equity policies and its implementation.
1.5.2	Optimise the campus-wide “growing our own timber” project in each of the NWU faculties and investigate possibilities to extend such programmes to support departments.
1.5.3	Continuously evaluate the performance of the capacity-building fund in addressing the staff profile at the NWU in line with the approved employment equity target.
1.5.4	See to a proactive approach to link equity and development at the NWU.
1.6	<b>Increased unity:</b> Co-ordinate the review, optimisation and implementation of policies, processes, procedures and systems that support the core business, while recognising its integrated nature towards the establishment of an inclusive institutional culture based on the value system of the University. (Cross reference: Cf IP goal 38 that focus on the integrated brand strategy and synergies in terms of corporate and campus

	communication)
1.6.1	Ensure ongoing compliance with the Statute and the unifying policies, rules and procedures.
1.6.2	Ensure ongoing inculcation of NWU value set, as well as the Code of Ethics.
1.6.3	Make optimal use of the celebration of the 10th year of the NWU existence to enhance unity at the NWU.
1.7	<b>Quality:</b> Ensure that quality is managed as an integral part of all facets of NWU's core-business. <i>(Cross reference: cf Section 22 for Action Plans and Deliverables for Quality Management for T-L purposes)</i>
1.7.1	Continuously guide the development and implementation of an institutional quality management system at the NWU in order to ensure ongoing quality enhancement and fostering the culture of ongoing improvement.
1.7.2	Emanating from the investigation into the outcomes of the EPEs and other programme evaluations, taking a strategic view on the way in which the lessons learnt from these evaluations could be directed into an institutional process founded by the underlying principle of "Design for Quality" [HEQC Impr Plan recomm 7].
1.7.3	Finalise the previous quality-management cycle related to the NWU Gaps Register (2008) and the HEQC audit (2009), and start with an appropriate process to embark on the preparations for the forthcoming audit cycle.
1.7.4	Ensure the enhancement of quality assurance, client-service orientation and an overall awareness of quality among all the support services of the NWU (primary and secondary units).
1.8	<b>Redress:</b> Ensure that policies, processes and priorities aimed at redressing systemic and organizational imbalances and inequalities are in place, with specific reference to rectifying historically entrenched practices.
1.8.1	In relation to the parameters regarding redress in national statutes, measure progress made by the NWU as regards redress, and compare this progress to other relevant universities.
1.8.2	Continue to report by means of comprehensive disaggregated figures to relevant structures on the building infrastructure expenses at the NWU.
1.8.3	Continue to pursue best-practice principles for strategic procurement management, broad-based black economic empowerment, as well as local business support.
1.9	<b>Resource allocation:</b> Ensure, through proper processes and structures, that the distribution of NWU resources are aligned, equitable and transparent to support the core-business strategies of the NWU.
1.9.1	Continue with the ongoing optimisation of the budget process.
1.9.2	Continue to steer the respective campus niches and longer-term growth and development objectives.
1.9.3	Ensure that resource allocation is addressed in accordance with IP targets.
1.10	<b>Student experience:</b> Ensure that a suitably enabling environment is created for students, conducive to the creation of a balanced student experience as regards academic, social-cultural and sports activities in and across campuses; and also in terms of the development of students into leaders.
1.10.1	Maintain a sound and balanced student experience, including organized student life, sport and cultural activities, taking into account the imperative of academic activity.
1.10.2	Continue to position sport as one of the core strengths of the student non-academic life.
1.11	<b>Success:</b> Measure the University's performance by using a variety of benchmarks, including the ten elements of transformation.

1.11.1	Refine the transformation dashboard as a measuring tool to monitor the progress made with the implementation of the ten elements of transformation.
1.11.2	Continue to measure the performance of the NWU according to its KPAs.
1.11.3	See to ongoing integrated reporting on the extent to which IP goals are realised at regular intervals.
1.11.4	Conduct an internationally-led self-evaluation involving national and international peers to determine to what extent the current vision and mission have been accomplished.
<b>ME 2</b>	<b>Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high-quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continent and the world.</b>
2.1	Continue to improve the quality of teaching-learning through the Teaching-Learning and other relevant institutional strategies and regulatory compliance within the higher education sector.
2.1.1	Oversee development of required institutional submission on the enhancement of teaching and learning as part of HEQC 2nd cycle of institutional audit.
2.1.2	Finalise and implement the teaching and learning strategy and plan.
2.1.3	Finalise the report on the review of the status of teaching and learning.
2.1.4	Ensure effective expenditure of annual Teaching Development Grant and the successful submission of reports according to DHET requirements.
2.1.5	Ensure that quality assurance of academic programmes contributes to the empowerment of academics in Teaching and Learning.
2.2	Use the enrolment plan developed in 2013 as steering mechanism to address academic planning in a balanced way across campuses in accordance with the targets.
2.2.1	Monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of the enrolment plan.
2.2.2	Initiate the development of an Academic Planning Strategy.
2.2.3	Continue to develop a strategy for Open and Distance Learning that ensures that NWU has a high quality, diverse portfolio of programmes that are offered by means of ODL.
2.3	Engage in a process of curriculum transformation, building on the HEQSF alignment project.
2.3.1	Develop a plan for curriculum renewal at NWU.
2.3.2	Promote the development of well-designed academic programmes with explicit and appropriate learning outcomes.
2.3.3	Ensure that learning outcomes reflect the principles of Good Citizenship as an input in the global sustainability conversation.
2.3.4	Ensure that learner participation in experiential learning (including work integrated learning as well as service learning) is optimized.
2.4	Ensure an effective academic programme development, management and review process that results in a dynamic, integrated, responsive and relevant PQM.
2.4.1	Complete the alignment of NWU qualifications and programmes with the requirements of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF).
2.4.2	Develop an optimal system for programme development, management and review that supports an effective, streamlined programme

	approval process, as well as continuing alignment of programmes with the HEQSF and across campuses.
2.5	Utilise diverse strategies to promote a culture of excellence in teaching and learning.
2.5.1	Promote the Scholarship of teaching and learning (HEQC Impr Plan recomm 10).
2.5.2	Develop and implement a framework and process for curriculum renewal at NWU.
2.5.3	Continue to expand and monitor the effectiveness of incentives for improving Teaching and Learning
2.5.4	Develop an action plan for improving teaching and learning practice based on the institutional report for the HEQC audit and the status review on Teaching and Learning.
2.6	Implement diverse strategies to improve student access and success (this section provides an elaboration on the transformation elements of access and success with specific respect to teaching and learning).
2.6.1	Develop a systematic framework for student access and success at NWU.
2.6.2	Evaluate and continue with strategies to promote student preparedness and improve access in a flexible and responsible manner.
2.6.3	Measure and report on student achievement against NWU targets for teaching and learning success on an ongoing basis.
2.6.4	Continue with the provision of student support services, including the Supplemental Instruction (SI) system, across all campuses <i>[HEQC Impr Plan recomm 10, 12]</i> .
2.7	Develop and implement an Employability Strategy to promote the career prospects of NWU graduates, through the articulation between teaching and learning activities and the Career Centre.
2.7.1	Promote employer awareness of the strengths of NWU and its graduates by promoting external networks of current and potential employers.
2.7.2	Continue to facilitate the creation of networks of academics and employers within NWU to improve the employment and employability of NWU students and graduates.
2.7.3	Ensure that the Career Service provides students with effective career guidance and preparation services
2.7.4	Continue with the graduate tracer study.
2.8	Optimize NWU's involvement in Continuing Education.
2.8.1	Approve and implement the strategy for Continuing Education at NWU.
<b>ME 3</b>	<b>Develop and maintain high-quality, relevant and focused research, aligned with national priorities, supplying innovative solutions to challenges faced by the scholarly community, the country, the continent and the world.</b>
3.1	Create an enabling environment for research staff in order to develop into a university where research and teaching-learning are balanced
3.1.1	Continue to improve time management of academic staff closer to the ultimate target for teaching and learning (50%), research (50%), with implementation of expertise included in both elements.
3.1.2	Increase the number and monitor the output of post-doctoral fellows.
3.1.3	Seek new international funding opportunities and improve the reporting system for international funding sources and international agreements in order to increase total research grants from international sources.

3.2	Improve the research profile of the NWU in terms of total research output, the qualification profile of staff, productivity and focused excellence in order to position NWU among the top six universities in terms of total research and innovation output.
3.2.1	Encourage academic staff participation in the NRF rating system by due consideration of rating status as part of the promotions criteria and the performance management system, as well as by formal staff training.
3.2.2	Increase the ratio of the postgraduate component (master's & doctoral) enrolments in relation to the total contact student headcounts.
3.2.3	Recruit more postgraduate students by evaluating and benchmark the NWU postgraduate bursary fund, maintaining sound postgraduate support levels (implement the new postgraduate bursary scheme), exploring innovative postgraduate enrolment strategies, exploring the removal of penalties for late registration.
3.2.4	Increase total accredited publication units and the subsidy generating publications per academic staff member
3.2.5	Increase the total research output (research masters, article equivalents and PhDs (the latter times three)) per academic staff member and the total research output units.
3.2.6	Continue the significant investment in research capacity development, replacement of expensive equipment and infrastructure in the annual budget.
3.2.7	Participate in DST/NRF Research Chairs Programme and support and manage Chairs allocated to NWU.
3.2.8	Encourage research publications in international journals.
3.2.9	International Rating.
3.2.10	International Ranking.
3.3	Develop Research Staff Capacity.
3.3.1	Continue to review the Research Capacity Development Plan and report to the Institutional Committee on Research and Innovation.
3.3.2	Implement and monitor research sabbatical programmes, based on the framework approved by Senate in 2010, on the campuses through performance agreements.
3.3.3	Create the opportunity through the performance management system for academic staff to improve their academic qualifications.
3.3.4	Emphasize and support master's and PhD delivery.
3.4	Monitor the Research Entities model and expand the external marketing and communication of research, and explore cross campus, inter-university and global collaboration initiatives.
3.4.1	Evaluate the performance of all the research entities annually through the work of the Institutional Committee for Research and Innovation and in the 6-yearly international reviews, 2012-2014. Demonstrate planned research programmes, aligned with national priorities and relevant global imperatives and map research entity development needs and research support levels annually to coincide with the long-term rolling planning and budgeting cycle.
3.4.2	Seek new research collaboration opportunities that are aligned with the University's research strengths and potential within the University's management model.

3.4.3	Continue to develop multi-disciplinary collaborative research networks (in consultation with campuses) to diversify and strengthen research, cultivate diversification of research funding, expand research networks and improve research impact within the Research Entities.
3.4.4	Implement a holistic research infrastructure strategy to optimize centralized and de-centralised research infrastructure, a virtual equipment store, based on total life cycle planning of infrastructure, integrated with physical infrastructure planning.
3.4.5	Implement Research Themes or Clusters to facilitate cross-campus collaboration, enhance the viability of research entities, promote researcher capacity development and strengthen the NWU international profile.
3.5	Find and establish an effective mechanism to measure and improve the throughput of postgraduate students.
3.5.1	Continue with the implementation of the new postgraduate management system by June 2014.
3.5.2	Continue with the development of automated monitoring mechanisms for measuring student throughput based on the proposed new postgraduate management system.
3.6	Refine quality assurance processes and mechanisms.
3.6.1	Develop a process for the internal and external programme reviews of all research-based master's and doctoral programmes.
3.7	Optimize strategies to explore fully research funding opportunities in the sector.
3.7.1	Review the Strategic plan for Research, Innovation and Community engagement, and align funding strategies with the Plan.
<b>ME 4</b>	<b>Implement our expertise in teaching-learning and research, both commercially and community-directed, for the benefit of the province, the country, the Southern African region, the continent and ultimately the world.</b>
4.1	Pursue relevant and dynamic implementation of expertise and commercialization of research results.
4.1.1	Monitor the implementation of the framework for the implementation of expertise and align support with the respective campus niches.
4.1.2	Increase the NWU third-stream income.
4.1.3	Promote innovation as a culture at NWU.
4.1.4	Investigate the current available incentives and develop new incentive models where applicable on an ongoing basis.
4.1.5	Monitor the available support for commercialisation and entrepreneurship in terms of the respective campus strategies.
4.1.6	Compile a complete socio-economic impact assessment study of the value added by the NWU in the country, the provinces and communities near its campuses, and annually update the assessment.
4.1.7	Publish and/or update a brochure of NWU expertise in print and electronic versions when needed.
4.2	Expand community engagement of the NWU so as to share NWU's passion and know-how with communities to generate wider benefits for society, and build robust social capital.

4.2.1	Monitor the functioning of the NWU Social Development Trust (NWU SDT) and ensure a wider participation of the private sector in NWU community projects, reporting at least twice per annum to IM and Senate.
4.2.2	Grow the ratio of external funds to own funds in the NWU SDT fund by at least 10% and grow the NWU SDT fund by at least 10% over and above annual inflation.
4.2.3	Benchmark and monitor the impact of the community engagement projects.
4.2.4	Develop at least two new social entrepreneurs and secure at least two new companies using the NWU SDT fund.
4.3	In a holistic manner, align commercialization and social engagement activities with core activities.
4.3.1	Monitor the implementation of the framework to ensure a proper alignment of community engagement activities with teaching/learning (community based learning programs), with research (research in application, applied research, community based research) and innovation (establishment of community businesses) to achieve sustainable community development.
4.3.2	Conceptualise, plan and implement by February 2014 a focussed intervention on environmental issues. Ensure alignment of this initiative with implementation of expertise in order to promote diligence with regard to the so-called triple-bottom line in all activities.
4.4	Refine quality assurance processes and mechanisms.
4.4.1	Monitor quality assurance mechanisms for implementation of expertise and review the quality management system and procedures annually.
4.4.2	Monitor implementation strategies in relation to closing the quality management gaps identified during the HEQC Audit in relation to innovation and community engagement.
4.5	Focus on business development.
4.5.1	Explore business development opportunities in order to generate income to support the core business of the University.
4.6	Development, integrate and embed sustainability into strategy and standard operating procedures and reporting in all core business activities.
4.6.1	Develop an appropriate framework to guide integrated sustainability planning and reporting.
<b>ME 5</b>	<b>Position the NWU in the sector as an accountable, effective, well-managed, financially viable and innovative institution, with a strong client focus to enhance the quality of the core business and to ensure sustainability.</b>
5.1	Continue to build an aligned NWU brand through integrated marketing, communications, development and design efforts.
5.1.1	Implement, monitor and evaluate the refined brand positioning as a creative platform for communications, marketing and development campaigns, in order to align the NWU visual brand image.
5.1.2	Implement an integrated strategy to commemorate and celebrate the 10-year celebrations of the merger.
5.1.3	Identify events and platforms to position the university as a leading university
5.2	Develop an integrated online stakeholder engagement framework that is aligned with the NWU brand strategy, communication plans, campus operational plans and departmental plans, incorporating appropriate platforms such as the NWU website, mobile applications, social media, and other online user technologies used in online communication and marketing.

5.2.1	Deploy the NWU multi website focussing on NWU core business
5.2.2	Develop eCommerce guidelines and processes
5.2.3	Develop an online content strategy
5.2.4	Enhance social media engagement capacity focussing on NWU core business
5.2.5	Enhance content development online focussing on NWU core business
5.3	Redevelop the NWU intranet as an important internal communication tool to ease daily workflow, enhance user experience and to facilitate employee engagement.
5.3.1	Revise current intranet content from a user perspective, publish and identify additional needs not currently catered for.
5.4	Increase the frequency of national media coverage in order to enhance the university's public profile.
5.4.1	Monitor and evaluate the functioning of all electronic news platforms with regard to populating and publishing information by the respective role players (newsrooms, apps and NWU web).
5.5	Enhanced engagement with and mobilization of the NWU's primary stakeholders with the aim to establish viable, sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships nationally and internationally.
5.5.1	Manage a stakeholders database to ensure that key stakeholder information is frequently updated and available
5.5.2	Revise the content of the stakeholder version of the NWU Annual Report to work towards adhering to the principles of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).
5.6	Develop a strategy for the optimal functioning of an Institutional Advancement Office with specific reference to alumni relations and development activities.
5.6.1	Development office role clarification and deliverables for the IO and the campuses
5.6.2	Update the Institutional Advancement Quality Manual
5.6.3	Expand fundraising initiatives within the value framework of the NWU
5.7	Implement the framework for internationalisation while strengthening management and quality.
5.7.1	Monitor the needs and constraints on campuses regarding internationalisation and assist campuses in appointing staff for this activity at the appropriate level.
5.7.2	Monitor the implementation of the Internationalisation Framework and Plans as well as the progress to achieve targets and benchmarks for internationalisation annually.
5.7.3	Develop appropriate Management Information reports to provide automatic/regular reports on Internationalisation progress to management.
5.7.4	Maintain an Internationalisation Policy and relevant procedures and guidelines to govern/manage Internationalisation at the NWU. Monitor implementation.
5.7.5	Maintain the NWU contracts data base (including i.e. internationalisation attributes) and provide a management tool for contracts.
5.7.6	Establish a Customer Relationship Management system at NWU and use same for managing International relations.
5.8	Ensure effective and adequate support functions and integrated business systems to promote the success of the core business.

5.8.1	Continue to refine NWU systems with a view to ensure optimal integration.
5.8.2	Preparation for the implementation of the Quali Financial System (KFS).
5.8.3	Continue with the implementation of the 3-year IT Strategic Plan to use ITC as a strategic differentiator for core business.
5.8.4	Continue to see to the establishment of appropriate library provision at all campuses of the NWU in order to support new Teaching and Learning and Research Strategies as well as campus niches.
5.8.5	Investigate the use of online recruitment and access to 1.5m database of candidates and shorten the selection process.
5.9	Ensure that policies and action plans are in place to promote staff wellness.
5.9.1	Implement a comprehensive holistic staff wellness strategy and related student services.
5.9.2	Develop and implement a Disability Management Strategy.
5.9.3	Implement, on an ongoing basis, the NWU HIV/AIDS reviewed Policy and Strategic Plan by IO and Campus coordinators to facilitate all business unit activities in an equitable manner supported by committed leadership at the highest levels.
5.9.4	Implement People Management as a compulsory KPA in performance agreement of all managers.
5.10	Maintain a strong focus on risk management and compliance.
5.10.1	Continue to address gaps and risk abatement strategies, among others through the alignment and refinement of processes.
5.10.2	Publish and submit the DHET version of the NWU annual report in line with the reporting guidelines.
5.10.3	Create a culture of understanding of occupational health and safety with the required training and awareness, conduct audits and implement a proper Occupational Health and Safety management system.
5.11	Develop a strategic infrastructure plan (SIP) that is informed by the enrolment plan, research plan, support function plans as well as the various audits (Maintenance Audit, Disability Audit, OHS and Risk Audits) and standards (environmental, sustainability and internal technical standards).
5.11.1	Draft and submit a plan to the DHET early in 2014 as required.
5.11.2	Coordinate annual infrastructure application procedures and processes in order to update the SIP on an annual basis for publication in January of each year.
5.11.3	Execute annual infrastructure plan as approved by Council.
5.11.4	Development of a long-term operating and facilities management plan to forecast expenditure in terms of the development of new spaces.
5.11.5	Development of a monthly cash flow forecast for approved projects.
	end - 22/11/2013

**Annexure 2: NWU Profile 2013/2014**

Fact Report Set Status	Latest							
Report Year	2013							
<i>Enrolment Count</i>			<i>Race</i>					
<i>Campus Name</i>	<i>Presentation Method</i>	<i>Undergraduate Postgraduate</i>	<i>*Unknown</i>	<i>African</i>	<i>Coloured</i>	<i>Indian/Asian</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
Mafikeng	Contact	Occasional student		15	1	2	1	19
		Postgraduate		1622	15	17	59	1713
		Undergraduate	1	7577	70	32	58	7738
	<i>Contact Total</i>		<i>1</i>	<i>9214</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>118</i>	<i>9470</i>
	Distance	Undergraduate		1237	2	2	3	1244
	<i>Distance Total</i>			<i>1237</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1244</i>
<b>Mafikeng Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>10451</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>10714</b>
Potchefstroom	Contact	Occasional student		18	2	2	102	124
		Postgraduate		1854	232	107	3148	5341
		Undergraduate		2259	719	169	11673	14820
	<i>Contact Total</i>			<i>4131</i>	<i>953</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>14923</i>	<i>20285</i>
	Distance	Occasional student					5	5
		Postgraduate	273	4913	281	17	230	5714
		Undergraduate	767	15133	1254	25	567	17746
	<i>Distance Total</i>		<i>1040</i>	<i>20046</i>	<i>1535</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>802</i>	<i>23465</i>
<b>Potchefstroom Total</b>			<b>1040</b>	<b>24177</b>	<b>2488</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>15725</b>	<b>43750</b>
Vaal Triangle	Contact	Occasional student		27			26	53
		Postgraduate		500	14	22	301	837
		Undergraduate		4304	90	90	1066	5550
	<i>Contact Total</i>			<i>4831</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>1393</i>	<i>6440</i>
	Distance	Postgraduate		26	3		3	32
		Undergraduate		38	1		0	39
	<i>Distance Total</i>			<i>64</i>	<i>4</i>		<i>3</i>	<i>71</i>
<b>Vaal Triangle Total</b>				<b>4895</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1396</b>	<b>6511</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>1041</b>	<b>39523</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>17242</b>	<b>60975</b>
Fact Report Set Status	Latest							
Report Year	2013							
<i>Campus Name</i>	<i>CESM Field Of Study</i>	<i>Enrolment Count CESM Weighted</i>	<i>%</i>					
Mafikeng	Business & Management	2275.17	21.24%					
	Education	2076.75	19.38%					
	All Other Humanities & Social Sciences	3709.58	34.62%					
	Science, Engineering & Technology	2652.50	24.76%					
<b>Mafikeng Total</b>		<b>10714.00</b>						
Potchefstroom	Business & Management	4964.08	11.35%					
	Education	23261.67	53.17%					
	All Other Humanities & Social Sciences	6709.83	15.34%					
	Science, Engineering & Technology	8814.42	20.15%					
<b>Potchefstroom Total</b>		<b>43750.00</b>						
Vaal Triangle	Business & Management	2618.17	40.21%					
	Education	1203.25	18.48%					
	All Other Humanities & Social Sciences	1832.08	28.14%					
	Science, Engineering & Technology	857.50	13.17%					
<b>Vaal Triangle Total</b>		<b>6511.00</b>						
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>60975.00</b>						

Fact Report Set Status	Latest			
Report Year	2013			
<i>Campus Name</i>	<i>Presentation Method</i>	<i>CESM Field Of Study</i>	<i>Enrolment Count CESM Weighted</i>	
Potchefstroom	Contact	Business & Management	4931.08	24.31%
		Education	2549.75	12.57%
		All Other Humanities & Social Sci	4562.92	22.49%

		Science, Engineering & Tech	8241.25	40.63%
	<b>Contact Total</b>		<b>20285.00</b>	
	Distance	Business & Management	33.00	0.14%
		Education	20711.92	88.27%
		All Other Humanities & Soc Sci	2146.92	9.15%
		Science, Engineering & Tech	573.17	2.44%
	<b>Distance Total</b>		<b>23465.00</b>	
<b>Potchefstroom Total</b>			<b>43750.00</b>	
Grand Total			43750.00	

- In 2013, headcount enrolments stood at 60 975, of which 59.4% (36195 students) were enrolled in contact programmes. Headcount enrolments grew from 44 726 in 2007, which constitutes a total growth of 34.5% between 2007 and 2013 (an annual average growth of 5.6%). The proportion of contact to distance enrolments has remained relatively constant since 2007. Between 2012 and 2019, the NWU forecasts overall growth in headcount enrolments of 3,1%, so that total headcount enrolments are predicted to reach 72 762 by 2019 from 58 752 in 2012.
- In 2013, postgraduate enrolments stood at 22.4% in terms of total headcount enrolments, and 21.8% in terms of contact enrolments.
- In terms of race and gender profiles, enrolments from the “African” and “White” groups constitute by far the majority of enrolments. Comparing statistics for total headcount enrolments in 2007 and 2013, the proportion of African students has grown from 59.1% to 64.8%, while that of White students has declined from 36.2% to 28.2%. Coloured students grew from 3% to 4.4%, while Asian students declined from 1.6% to 0.8%. In terms of contact enrolments, the proportion of African to White students in 2013 was 50.2% to 45.5%. The proportion of female students rose slightly from 63.9% to 66.9%.
- In 2013, NWU had an undergraduate success rate of 85.1% for both contact and distance students, while the graduation rate was 25%. For contact programmes, the graduation rate for three-year diplomas and degrees was 20.9% and for four-year professional degrees 18.4%. In distance programmes, the graduation rate for three-year diplomas and degrees was 15.8% and for four-year professional degrees 23.1%. At 15%, the drop-out rate for first-year contact students in 2013 was higher than the average of approximately 12% since 2007, and attention needs to be paid the reasons for this decline.
- In 2013, the Mafikeng Campus had a total of 10 713 headcount enrolments, of which 16% were at the postgraduate level. African students made up 97.5% of headcount enrolments. In terms of major fields of study, 34.6% of headcount enrolments were in “Other Humanities” and 24.8% in SET. The Campus will focus on moderate growth at the undergraduate level with a strong focus on broadening access in SET and Business and Management, and to gradually raise its proportion of postgraduate students.
- In 2013, the Potchefstroom Campus had 43 750 headcount enrolments, of which 46.4% (20 286) were enrolled in contact programmes, with postgraduate enrolments at 25.1% (26.3% of contact enrolments, and 24% of distance enrolments). In terms of contact headcounts, African and White students comprised 20.4% and 73.6% respectively, while for distance education the ratios were 85.6% African and 7.6% White. In terms of major fields of study, the Campus has a strong focus on SET enrolments in its contact programmes, with 40.6% of students in this major field of study, and 24.5% of contact enrolments in Business and Management. 90.3% of distance enrolments are in the major field of Education.
- The Vaal Campus had 6512 headcount enrolments in 2013, of which 13.3% were postgraduates. African students made up 75% of enrolments, and White students 21.3%.

### Annexure 3: The membership of the four task teams

Note: IO = Institutional Office; VTC = Vaal Triangle Campus; MC = Mafikeng Campus; PC = Potchefstroom Campus

Campus	Title	Name	Department/Position
<b>TASK TEAM 1</b>			
PC	Prof	Mariëtte Lowes (Convenor)	Vice-rector: Teaching and Learning
MC	Prof	Lumkile Lalendle	Vice-rector: TL & QA
IO	Dr	Muki Moeng (Dep Convenor)	Acad. Development and Support (Director)
VTC	Dr	Esmarie Strydom	Academic Dev. and Support (Director)
MC	Dr	Mamolahluwa Mokoena	Academic Development Centre (Director)
IO	Ms	Ria Nel	Organisation Development (Director)
MC	Prof	Dawid Gericke	Faculty of Education and Training (Dean)
PC	Prof	Flip Schutte	Faculty of Law
PC	Prof	Jaco Fouche	School of Accounting Sciences
VTC	Prof	Mirna Nel	School of Education Sciences
MC	Ms	Hunadi Rakhudu	Nursing Sciences
MC	Dr	Eva Manyedi	Quality Coordinator
ISRC	Mr	Janco Jordaan	Institutional SRC
<b>TASK TEAM 2</b>			
PC	Prof	Rantoa Letsosa (Convener)	Vice-rector Designate: TL
VTC	Dr	Saneth Dreyer	Student Development
VTC	Ms	Daleen Gerber	School of Information Technology
PC	Ms	Elza Hatting	Faculty of Engineering
PC	Dr	Gerhard du Plessis	Academic Support Services (Director)
PC	Prof	Fanus van der Merwe	Faculty of Econ. and Man. Sciences
MC	Dr	Ellen Materechera	Academic Development Centre
IO	Ms	Mariaan Klopper	Academic Development and Support (Manager)
PC	Prof	Johann van der Walt	School for Languages
IO	Ms	Bernice Smit	Career Centre (Manager)
MC	Ms	Lerato Wana	Guidance and Counselling
MC	Ms	Bogadi Sito	Bursaries
<b>TASK TEAM 3</b>			
VTC	Prof	Linda du Plessis (Convenor)	Vice-rector
IO	Ms	Liesel van Wyk	Director, Physical Infrastructure and Planning
IO	Ms	Adelle Lotter	Academic and Office Solutions
VTC	Mr	Hendra Pretorius	Library Manager
MC	Ms	Claudia Pietersen	Director, Information Technology
VTC	Dr	Marieta Jansen van Vuuren	Academic Development and Support
PC	Mr	Kobus le Roux	Academic Support Services
MC	Mr	Rick Van Rooyen	Student Dean(Acting ), Campus Sport
MC	Ms	Matshidiso Poee	Academic Development Centre
MC	Ms	Manare Tshenye	Library
<b>TASK TEAM 4</b>			
IO	Prof	Marlene Verhoef (Convenor)	Institutional Registrar
PC	Mr	Tom Larney	Campus Registrar (Acting)
VTC	Ms	Elbie Steyn	Campus Registrar
IO	Mr	Jan-Hendrik Viljoen	Manager (Acting), Management Information
IO	Mr	Jaco-Phillip Ellis	Manager, Student Administrative Systems
PC	Mr	Tom Cato	Manager, Student Administration
MC	Dr	Nelda Mouton	Manager, Admissions/ Student Admin
VTC	Mr	Neels Vermeulen	Director, Academic Administration
PC	Ms	Corrie Postma	Manager, Faculty of Health Sciences
MC	Mr	Hosea Kgoa	Faculty of Agric. Science and Technology

MC	Ms	Nomasomi Morule	Academic Development Centre
MC	Prof	Sonia Swanepoel	Dean, Commerce and Administration
PC	Mr	Johan Pyper	Marketing and Communications