



UNIVERSITY *of the*  
WESTERN CAPE

# Institutional Operating Plan

2016 – 2020



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# 2030 VISION

*Attuned to South Africa's need to make the best use of its talent pool and to be globally competitive, UWC will be a vibrant intellectual space where people engage with matters of real significance at the highest levels of competence, and it will be widely recognised for this role. As a research-intensive university,*

#### **UWC will have:**

- a successful first degree programme, developed in dynamic relation to the research programme and attracting students from a range of backgrounds and nationalities,
- respected postgraduate and research programmes in strategically selected spheres,
- a substantial place in the knowledge economy in partnership with other research institutions, industry and the state,
- a well-developed set of productive relationships with other academic and research bodies, government at various levels and the professions, and
- a mature and growing network of active partnerships with other universities, globally and in Africa.

Through its activities and practices, UWC will strive to be an effective partner in the larger national project. It will contribute to building a sustainable and equitable non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, multilingual society in which people use their freedom to good effect and honour their responsibility for hard work, social justice and nurturing the environment. Based on this vision, UWC will also play a significant role in the new era of Africa's development.

# PREFACE

*This Institutional Operating Plan (IOP) articulates a broad, integrated, operational framework for 2016 to 2020 within a strategic interpretation of UWC's role as a public South African university.*

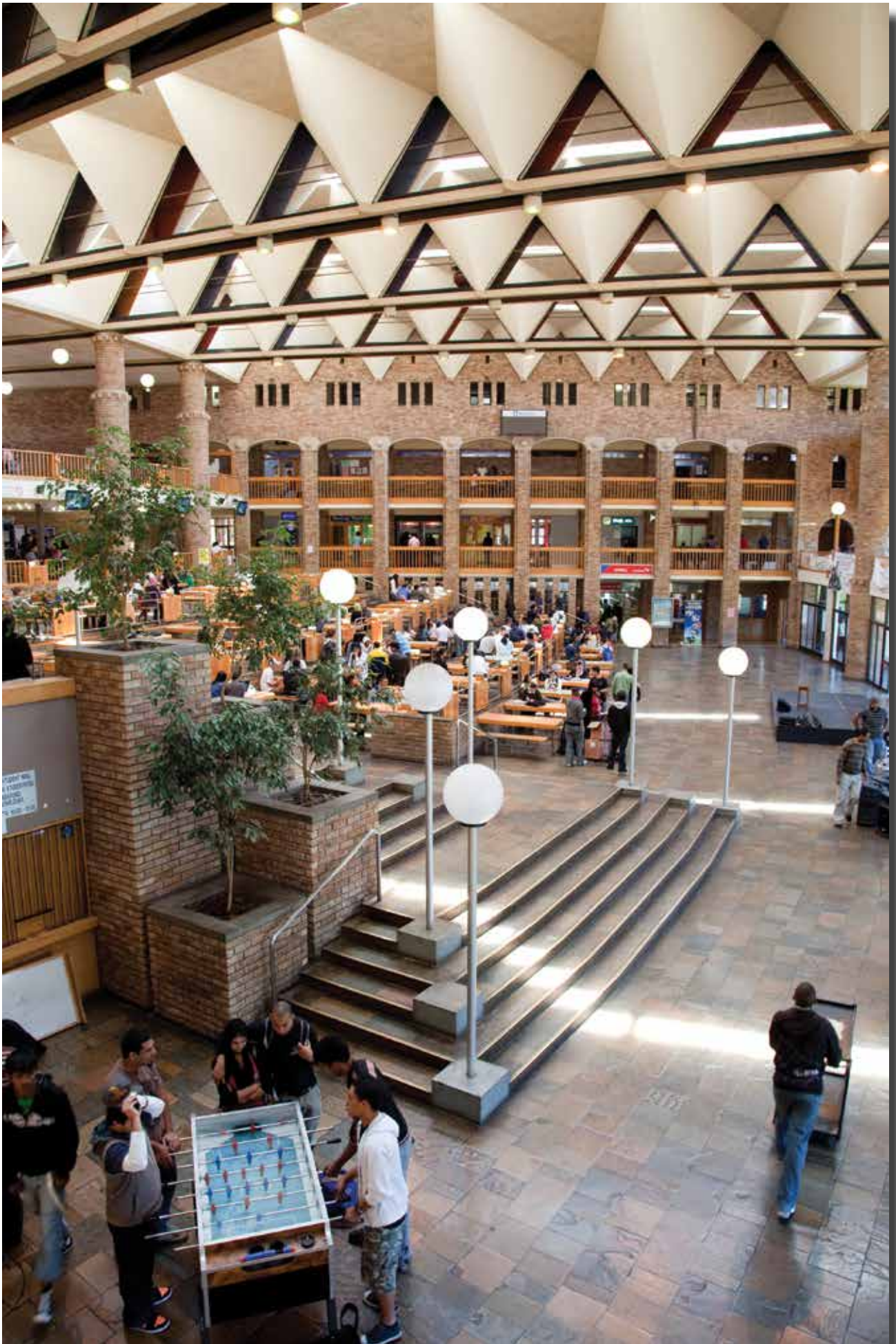
It is marked by cross-cutting concerns with national transformation and social justice, inclusiveness and diversity, sustainability and innovation, the need for local and global partnerships, and the underlying principle that resources follow strategies. The plan builds on excellent work that is being done, but also reflects a concern with ongoing improvement and with responding creatively to the challenges of a rapidly changing environment. Accordingly, most of the strategies and activities described in the IOP for 2010 to 2014/5 are maintained, with some being modified in the light of experience, and a further group being "game-changers" addressing newly defined needs. The strategies that are maintained are generally refocused to deepen the approach and to account for what has already been achieved in those areas. The "game-changers" are identified and outlined below. Their full development will necessarily be outside of the IOP process, with identified champions, detailed implementation plans and timeframes.

Fundamental to the plan is the understanding of UWC as an institution driven by intellectual imperatives. In the words of Vice-Chancellor Tyrone Pretorius, "A university ... has to be an unapologetically intellectual community with an ongoing interest in the significance of knowledge for our country and world." Or, in the words of a past Vice-Chancellor, the late Professor Jakes Gerwel: In the absence of "a perceived and experienced nexus with a real and shared-in world, a university is emasculated and intellectually anaemic". The social engagement envisaged here draws on the full range of intellectual resources in pursuing national and global transformative goals and balancing inherent tensions. Outcomes may range from interventions that advance development in communities to enabling students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed; and from improving public health to creative enjoyment of diversity in culture and thought. The intellectual foundation of all such engagement is understanding the complex and

fast-changing environment from a range of perspectives so as to be able to respond innovatively and with integrity to its needs. This calls for excellence: excellence in critical engagement with national and global challenges and the pursuit of knowledge through the rigour of disciplines, and excellence in critically and ethically deploying knowledge across disciplines. There can be no compromise on the aspiration to excellence, and all strategies are to be read as informed by it.

Since the last IOP, UWC has been formally acknowledged as a research-intensive institution, leading the nation in research impact in several spheres and having a large and growing postgraduate community. Maintaining and developing this position requires rigorous attention to staffing, facilities and practices. It also depends on growing national and international research partnerships, and requires competitiveness in funding applications. The key point is that UWC's research-intensive standing is sustainable only if it is also a research-led university. This has implications for the nature of its academic programmes, and for the basis of its partnerships and wider engagements. A research-led institution has to be developing research capacity in all its students and academic staff, both through the demands that its curriculum makes and through policies and practices that support such development. And, in exploring partnerships outside the academic sphere, research and a sense of the relevance and possible applications of that research are primarily what such a university has to offer. Ongoing social and technological innovation shapes the university's ability to be a significant player in the global knowledge economy.

It is a distinctive feature of UWC that it is both research intensive and one of South Africa's most successful institutions in providing meaningful access in terms of South Africa's transformation imperatives. Since the last IOP, the University's leading position in this field has been



acknowledged at a high level nationally. Effective inclusion is probably the greatest challenge to South Africa's higher education system as it steadily expands. If access is not followed by inclusion and success on a significant scale, the system will have failed, with dire consequences for South Africa's future. UWC's approach has a distinctive nuance: in providing meaningful access, it has over many years focused on intellectual challenges rather than on backlogs, with the understanding that students are more receptive to forward-looking, problem-solving strategies than to notions of catching up. In addressing these issues since the last IOP, a committed focus on improvement has been accompanied by disciplined pursuit of the scholarship of teaching and learning. This, in turn, has led to an alertness to emerging 21st-century requirements, giving this IOP a particular focus on skilledness in learning. Effective learning shapes the student's academic profile and efficacy as a researcher and scholar, while promoting skilfulness in engaging with, adapting and innovating and taking responsibility for progress. The focus on skilledness in learning has implications for staffing and staff development, particularly in regard to the appropriate use of digital media and to developing service-learning partnerships. It also has implications for establishing an effective balance between guided socialisation into a learning community and independent learning, and for student access to appropriate media on an adequate scale. It also has implications for the ways in which the broadening, inclusive intellectual climate of the University is cultivated, e.g. through community engagement and work experience programmes, debates and lectures, exhibitions, travel opportunities, sport, field trips, films, and music and drama performances.

In the last IOP, UWC defined itself as an engaged university, rather than as a historically disadvantaged (HDI) or market-driven institution. This did not imply a binary opposition between *engaged* and *ivory tower*. Rather, UWC saw the excellence of intellectual work as promoted by the challenge to make sense of a complex and changing world. That view stands. Connectedness and engagement in various forms are critical for the 21st-century university. They generate a number of tensions that are particularly stimulating and important to the intellectual project.

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**Some complex connectedness and engagement is institutional:**

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- UWC is one of Cape Town's anchor institutions: a major and reliable player in the social and economic life of the Western Cape region. However, the burden of an HDI history often obscures this fact to the considerable disadvantage of the institution. UWC increasingly needs to be *seen* as an anchor institution. A university's *recognised* engagement with its local environment – with communities, with the city and with industry – is a vital factor in enabling it to meet its mandate. It affects the institution's ability to attract and retain talent, to build partnerships, to secure adequate financial and other support, and to sustain an intellectually challenging environment. Working towards being perceived more clearly as an anchor institution in the city, and advancing the ways in which the University functions as an anchor institution that is vital to the region's welfare, are a high priority for UWC.
  - UWC also is a national university, playing an important part in the national system of higher education as a research-intensive institution. It draws students from across the country and is a leading player in major national projects and in a number of disciplines. Maintaining and extending its national reciprocal network with other universities, research partners, research councils, industries, donors and communities requires concerted attention in the period covered by this IOP.
  - International connectedness raises an institution's visibility and stature, improves the chances of securing large-scale joint funding for research, and broadens the experience of staff and students, equipping them better to participate in the global knowledge economy. It also opens the way to engagement as partners in addressing the global challenges of our time, like climate change, food security, and a sense of common humanity. This requires the strategic development of UWC's approaches to internationalisation, strengthening existing major partnerships, building on functional links, and paying focused attention to expanding relationships with universities in the developing world, with a particular focus on Africa.
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Digital connectedness across a range of media is a characteristic of the 21st-century university in a digital age. This connectedness facilitates the rapid building of networks, efficient relationships with academic, industrial and community partners, rich internationalisation, making wider knowledge resources available, and providing for more frequent interaction between teachers and students. However, the constant connectedness of the digital world introduces significant skills challenges and requires new forms of social engagement. Failure to attend to these can readily result in digital exclusion and disaffection. Addressing these issues requires strategic attention being paid to implementation goals and to the infrastructure and training on which attaining them depends.

Other forms of engagement and connectedness that are critical for the 21st-century university relate to the ways in which people interact in pursuit of common objectives. In a situation in which attention needs to be paid to alienation and disengagement across the nation, these forms of connectedness can play a critical role in national transformation. Formal leadership has an ongoing responsibility for fostering an ethical community around the intellectual project, but the following forms of connectedness can be achieved at UWC only with the concerted support and effort of all formal structures of the University.

- A university is a community that finds its coherence in a dynamic intellectual project. It is in joint, ongoing, critical engagement with this project, which has constantly to be foregrounded in various ways, that a university community is established and its boundaries are extended. The seriousness of the intellectual enterprise generates an ethical community.
- Education for a rapidly transforming society necessarily involves building a culture of inclusiveness that values diversity and connects people in new ways. This has considerable implications for holistic student development and for the manner in which interactions are initiated and pursued on and from the campus.
- Location in active professional or business networks is vital for young graduates, and particularly for people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds who are otherwise often socially excluded in unrecognised ways. Assisting students to become connected in relevant ways is an important responsibility for each academic programme.

A university and its members need to be widely connected, but the role of the university as a *connector* is also important. It is a role that will be explored further in this IOP period. UWC is well located – physically, historically and in terms of its core intellectual focus – to play an important role





in bringing people, communities, ideas and even ideologies together around the search to build a better and more inclusive society.

At this point it is important to note that the process of preparing this IOP was interrupted by the widespread national student protest action under the banner of *#FeesMustFall*. This resulted in a long delay and significant environmental changes, so that the project could be completed only in 2016. It also brought a number of important societal concerns into sharp focus nationally, many of them beyond the scope of the University to deal with. Much has been written and will continue to be written about the student protest action. The IOP is not the appropriate platform to explore this in any detail. However, it is important to note that many of the social concerns were already anticipated at UWC in the discussions and draft documents from which the IOP has been distilled. The protest highlighted both the urgency of transformation projects and the risks to and vulnerability of institutions under pressure to accede to short-term demands.

Transformation is at the heart of UWC's mission. It is strongly embedded in its history as a public institution actively working for the public good through its commitment to the transformation of the country, both pre- and post-apartheid. Transformation is woven into UWC's intellectual project, and its fruits are evident in the rich diversity of the University's student and staff composition. However, these aspects mark the early stages of an ongoing project. The transformation of higher education in South Africa is a dynamic project, both as part of the broader political, social and economic transformation of the country, and because universities are powerful agents of national transformation. Through its practices and the way the institution makes sense of its role in knowledge generation and learning promotion, it can either reproduce the patterns of inequality that continue to mark society, or make change evidently sensible and productive.

UWC's historical position and its ongoing focus on equitable and affordable access mean that it is well positioned to take forward its transformation project. Accordingly, transformation is a crosscutting theme in this IOP. UWC strives to be a significant agent of transformation by playing a distinctive intellectual and academic role in building an equitable, just and dynamic South Africa.

A concern with sustainability is an aspect of this larger transformational concern. Sustainability is not primarily a technical or environmental matter. It is a social necessity that speaks to a vision of the future in which elements critical to that future are sustained. On this basis it requires



the University to engage critically with its own institutional practices.

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**Lasting transformation requires rigorous attention to sustainability in the following broad areas:**

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- Attracting and retaining staff and students
  - The workplace
  - Teaching, learning and research
  - The natural environment
  - The cultural environment
  - The built and ICT environment
  - Financing and economic management
  - Governance and decision making in the long-term public interest
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This IOP is the product of substantial work. Universities achieve strategic coherence when their core purposes are agreed, and when what is necessary to achieve those purposes has been explored and planned by their staff and students. In this case, UWC's leadership devoted sustained effort to framing preliminary thinking on how to build on the University's deep intellectual tradition and its strengths while boldly seeking to position it as a distinctive 21st-century institution. Following the preparation of a number of position papers, a Green Paper was developed to stimulate campus-wide discussion towards the preparation of a new IOP. Continuity was signalled by working from the three core goals and five enabling goals of previous plans to

frame high-level strategic priorities. The Green Paper process included gathering responses from across the campus community via an online portal, interviews with various staff members, and three campus-wide IOP planning workshops. Led by members of the University executive, 12 focus groups were established, providing input on: The student experience; Enrolment; Teaching, learning and the 21st-century graduate; Research; Innovation; Internationalisation; Human capital; the Financial framework; UWC's public profile; UWC in the digital age; Infrastructure development; and Leadership. The outcomes of these processes are captured in this IOP White Paper, informing the ways in which strategic objectives are pursued.

Leadership at all levels is critical for carrying forward and continuing to give substance to a plan of this nature. Much of what is planned here will have a momentum of its own, which will be monitored and steered in measurable ways. That monitoring and steering is a collective leadership responsibility, making particular demands on Council and Senate, so a key priority is building a community of leaders who respect one another and work together to implement and adapt.

The IOP has been prepared with integrity and will serve as a guiding framework throughout the period to 2020. However, the environment is changing so fast that practical and ethical responsiveness will almost certainly lead to the plan being modified before then. Dynamic engagement has to be sustained as circumstances change. This requires leadership to monitor and analyse progress, provoke new responses to changing circumstances, be open to shifting boundaries and the redefinition of goals, and make sure that new and emerging responses are aligned to the larger vision.



# MISSION and CORE VALUES

*The University of the Western Cape is a national university, alert to its African and international context as it strives to be a place of quality, and a place to grow from hope to action through knowledge. It is committed to excellence in teaching, learning and research, to nurturing the cultural diversity of South Africa, and to responding in critical and creative ways to the needs of a society in transition. Drawing on its proud experience in the liberation struggle, the University is aware of having a distinctive academic role in helping build an equitable and dynamic society.*

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**This broad statement of our mission is underpinned by the following values:**

1. We nurture democratic leadership and innovative problem solving. This means that we honour and promote conscious, values-based, integrative leadership as a key means of aligning action with principled vision, and of creating a caring, productive and respectful culture.
  2. We respect and strive for excellence in teaching and learning, and in research. To this end we encourage a reflective culture among all members of the University community, rooted in taking responsibility for excellence. More formally, we critically review what we have done and assess ourselves, applying our own and international benchmarks, and use the results to make us more efficient and effective. Finally, recognising that we need to differentiate in order to excel, we aim to be leaders in niche areas of excellence while maintaining good standards overall.
  3. We cultivate a socially responsive, people-centred approach to education that encourages our graduates to engage with the challenges of the day and to make powerful contributions to building an equitable and sustainable society. To this end we interact and work with each other and with external players, building robust partnerships within which we are able to address tough issues, speak directly about concerns, and develop ideas and proposals in terms of a sophisticated sense of realities.
  4. We expect high standards of integrity and respect from one another across the institution. Accordingly, we are committed to equity, diversity, inclusivity and fairness, and seek to nurture and build on our diverse cultural heritage. We honour collegiality and a climate of critical professionalism among staff. We also promote high standards of service provision that require continuous improvement.
  5. We place a high premium on collaboration, teamwork, accountability and shared responsibility. Accordingly, we work with each other and with external groups in ways that speak of caring and connection, and that are mutually beneficial, mutually empowering and mutually responsible.
  6. We seek to communicate well within the institution, informing one another of what we are doing, giving due prominence to achievements, drawing one another to significant intellectual, cultural and sporting events on campus, and equipping one another to speak with confidence about the University to external audiences.
  7. We seek to understand the perspective of others and we value their good opinion. Accordingly, we acknowledge a communal responsibility to promote an appropriate image of UWC through the reflective ways in which we respond to others and to the major challenges facing our society, through the confident and ethical ways in which we conduct our relationships, and through the pride with which we speak about the University's vision and its achievements.
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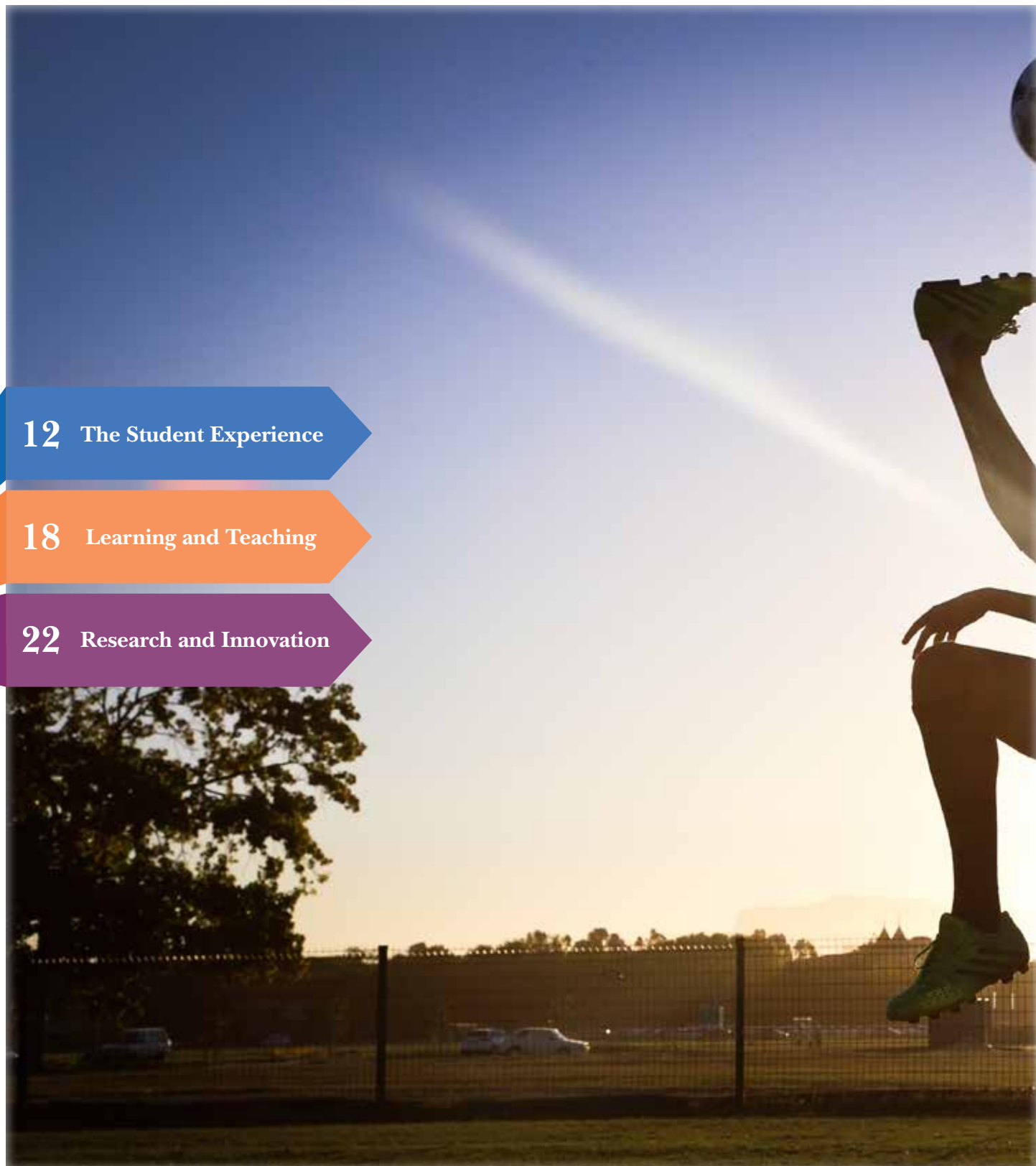


# CORE GOAL AREAS

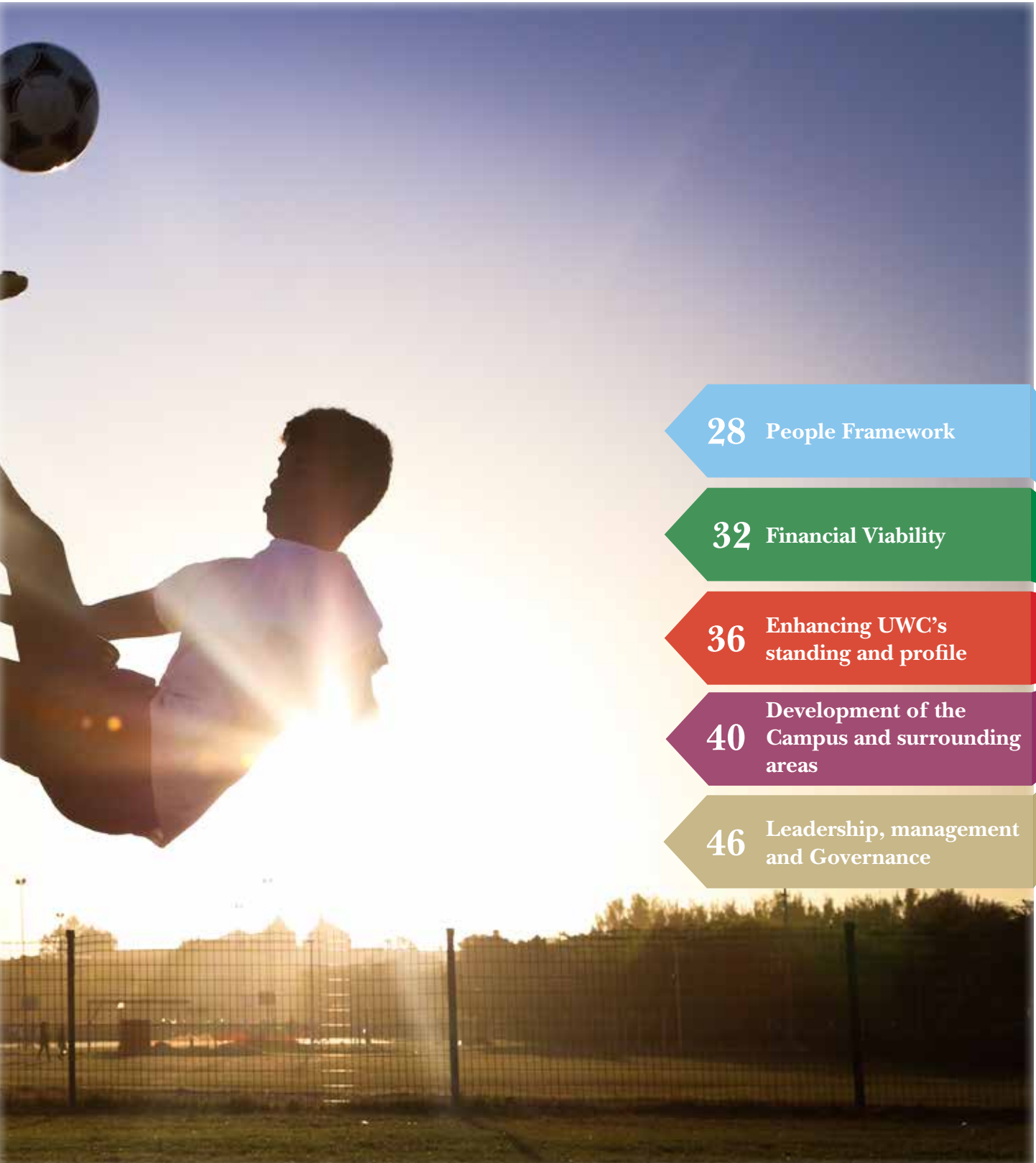
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*To provide UWC students with a meaningful and stimulating university experience through a strategic approach to student enrolment management and the provision of enabling and relevant co-curricular opportunities.*

UWC has a long-standing commitment to providing epistemological access to higher education. Underlying this commitment is a concern with both access to higher education and success in it. Students should have every opportunity to excel in their studies so that they can contribute to national development. Being well-versed in their disciplines is only part of what is needed. Students graduating from UWC need to command significant social capital, be broadly educated, and show innovative flair at applying and extending knowledge. Recognising these needs has important practical implications: well-planned management of student entrance into the institution and of opportunities to engage in its academic, intellectual and communal life are essential.

The University's enrolment mandate from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (its Enrolment Plan) requires it to manage student enrolment and throughput in line with nationally agreed targets and system-wide planning. UWC's response goes beyond compliance. A strategic approach to managing student entrance and participation is an important factor in enabling the University to meet its obligations as a public higher education institution in South Africa, and to do so with intellectual and social integrity.

UWC is currently in the middle of a six-year enrolment cycle. The agreed goals require the University not only to grow its student body, particularly at the postgraduate level, but also consciously to change its distinctive profile in terms of academic field, programme type and demography. Important progress has been made, particularly towards building a critical mass of postgraduate students in identified niche areas. The University has also been able to sustain a more strategic approach to enrolment planning at faculty level, and to increase capacity by strategic improvements in staffing and in the development of infrastructure, areas directly affected by an increase in student numbers. UWC is set to continue on this positive trajectory. However, it recognises significant contextual factors that both affect the realisation of its goals and offer new opportunities.

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**Some of these contextual factors are:**

- national student protests about affordability;
- the human resource demands of the National Development Plan;
- an underperforming school system;
- the shrinking pool of learners doing Science and Mathematics at school;
- growing youth unemployment;
- limited financial support for qualifying students who do not have the means to support themselves in their studies;
- pressure for mission clarity of post-school institutions;
- increased competition for qualifying students;
- a new funding framework supportive of institutional differentiation; and
- new modes of delivery using information technology: these lie behind the development of blended learning and the expansion of distance-learning mandates.

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A strategic approach to student enrolment management and the student experience in this dynamic context involves building capacity at all levels to mitigate risks and use opportunities. Responding innovatively to these opportunities opens up ways of enhancing UWC's distinctiveness, most immediately through postgraduate growth in niche areas of excellence and the alignment of undergraduate programmes to these areas.

Meaningful access is a holistic concern integral to the University's intellectual project. Students need support in developing a sense of agency: a sense of themselves as active and responsible members of an intellectual community that engages rigorously with academic knowledge and uses it to understand and address the needs of the larger society. This requires dedicated, ongoing attention to building and

sustaining a learning environment in which academic and support staff are able to engage effectively with a new generation of students, and in which students are able to study with a growing sense of relevance, obtaining the highest levels of knowledge and skill as a basis for fulfilling their future roles in society and becoming lifelong learners. Such an environment is structured on the recognition that effective student learning happens both formally and informally, on and off campus. Effective learning, in other words, is multi-dimensional in nature. It draws actively on students' personal experiences, social interactions and academic engagement, all of which are influenced by new ways of thinking and rapid change. Each of these areas needs to be recognised and understood if students are to develop and grow holistically. Among other things, this implies that the classroom and the broader campus environment need to be developed as complementary learning spaces.

The co-curriculum is crucial in this regard. It involves formal and informal practices and interventions to support and facilitate student learning and development outside the classroom. It has been argued above that the co-curriculum is central to UWC students' developing the kinds of attributes that will enable them to play a valuable role in society and to pursue their careers with confidence when they graduate. Enhancing learning as a sense-making experience through a co-curriculum that both draws on the diversity of student backgrounds and interests and exposes students to the intellectual demands of a professional environment is an ongoing project embedded in UWC's strategic intentions.

The University has institutionalised structures to implement and give effect to these intentions. Signifying the new thrust was the establishment of the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Student Development and Support. This went along with a reconfigured Centre for Student Support Services and an ongoing programme of realignment and strengthening of student support systems. This process of prioritisation and realignment has been gratifyingly fruitful. Important progress has been made in several areas: expanding the range of co-curricular offerings to reach a more diverse group of students; establishing clearer conceptual alignment across different initiatives and practices; building awareness of the importance of the co-curriculum in faculty planning; integrating activities conducive to building UWC graduate attributes; and paying increased attention to building a physical environment conducive to learning, living and working well. Every advance has led to new recognition of the complexity and continuing importance of the task.

Supporting and informing these developments at UWC and strengthening its standing as a research-intensive university has been the progress towards developing the area of student development and support as a focus of scholarship. Key here has been UWC's role in launching and running the *Journal for Student Affairs in Africa*, undertaking a number of research initiatives to build new knowledge and inform practice, and establishing significant national, regional and international partnerships in the field. Its involvement in these important networks has signalled UWC's growing standing in building new understandings and practices around student development and support. This scholarly focus will be strengthened further.



## *UWC will:*

### **1. Use co-curricular activities to enhance learning opportunities and support students in developing their full potential as excellent professionals and responsible citizens.**

UWC will continue to develop the classroom and campus as complementary learning spaces, recognising that a dynamic, responsive and supportive co-curriculum substantially assists students to thrive, as they feel part of an intellectually engaged university community that is equipping them to leave the university confident in their ability to engage with a fast-changing and complex world. With this in mind, UWC will continue to work towards greater alignment between the formal academic curriculum and the co-curriculum, and particularly work towards preparing its graduates to enter the world of work as “T-shaped” individuals. T-shaped people have both depth in their discipline and breadth in deploying the range of skills that 21st-century society demands. They are skilful rather than merely skilled.

Faculties, in particular, are increasingly contributing to extending the learning experience of their students through exciting and intellectually challenging co-curricular opportunities.

### **2. Build and enhance a supportive, inclusive environment for all students that addresses barriers to success, respects diversity and creates a sense of belonging.**

An institution's culture is reflected in the values it is seen to uphold. Among the attributes that will require particular attention because of problems in the national social climate are tolerance and creative, respectful engagement based on a perception of diversity as an asset. Increased attention will be paid to encouraging interpersonal and intergroup relationships that foster an inclusive, connected and purposeful community and strengthen a culture of equity and diversity on campus. These relationships will be marked by rigorous interaction and debate within a framework of respect and tolerance. Students from all backgrounds will be engaged, including those from vulnerable groups and some who are often viewed as hard to reach.

In addition, student safety and well-being, on and off university campuses, has become an issue of widespread concern in recent years. The exceptional student experience UWC aims at requires addressing these concerns in both systematic and personal ways. The University will develop a range of means to engage students and to gain a better understanding of their experiences, expectations and aspirations. It will actively promote collaboration and dialogue around key issues between students, support services and academic areas, thereby building agency to equip students to respond to these demands. In addition, the University will engage a number of role-players such as the City of Cape Town and local agencies to actively promote the off-campus safety of students and staff in neighbourhoods and to improve safe public transport to the campus.

Student involvement in campus activities plays an important role in building a dynamic campus life and a better student experience. The University will actively promote students' active participation in sport, culture, volunteering and student societies as important vehicles for student development. This will promote engagement with people who share their interests, and will build social skills, especially in facilitating diverse student interaction and a sense of affinity with the institution. UWC advanced greatly in this regard over the period of the last IOP. The establishment of structures, clubs and societies to promote sport, cultural and other activities will continue to receive specialist attention. All the University's sporting and cultural codes will be strengthened as far as possible, and students' achievements and experiences will be celebrated regularly to foster a sense of personal accomplishment and pride in their association with the University.

Experience as a student representative is valuable, both in developing a lively understanding of the successful functioning of a major institution and in preparing for leadership in business or professional life. At UWC, faculties, peer programmes, key student groups and clubs and societies are committed to working together to provide rich leadership experience for individuals at all levels of the institution's functioning.





### 3. Give students the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the campus community and organisations and communities in its environment.

The University appreciates the value of residence life in building a strong university community and in support of students' academic success. Students live and learn in residences, so UWC will significantly increase the number of affordable bed spaces and will continue to develop its residences and build a distinctive residential environment as a site of academic and intellectual engagement. Sustaining well-managed residences that offer a nurturing environment promoting academic excellence and cultural and sporting participation will remain a priority in this IOP period. Formal induction programmes will continue to be offered to support first-year students. At another level, UWC has begun a process of accrediting off-campus accommodation in terms of the standards promoted by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

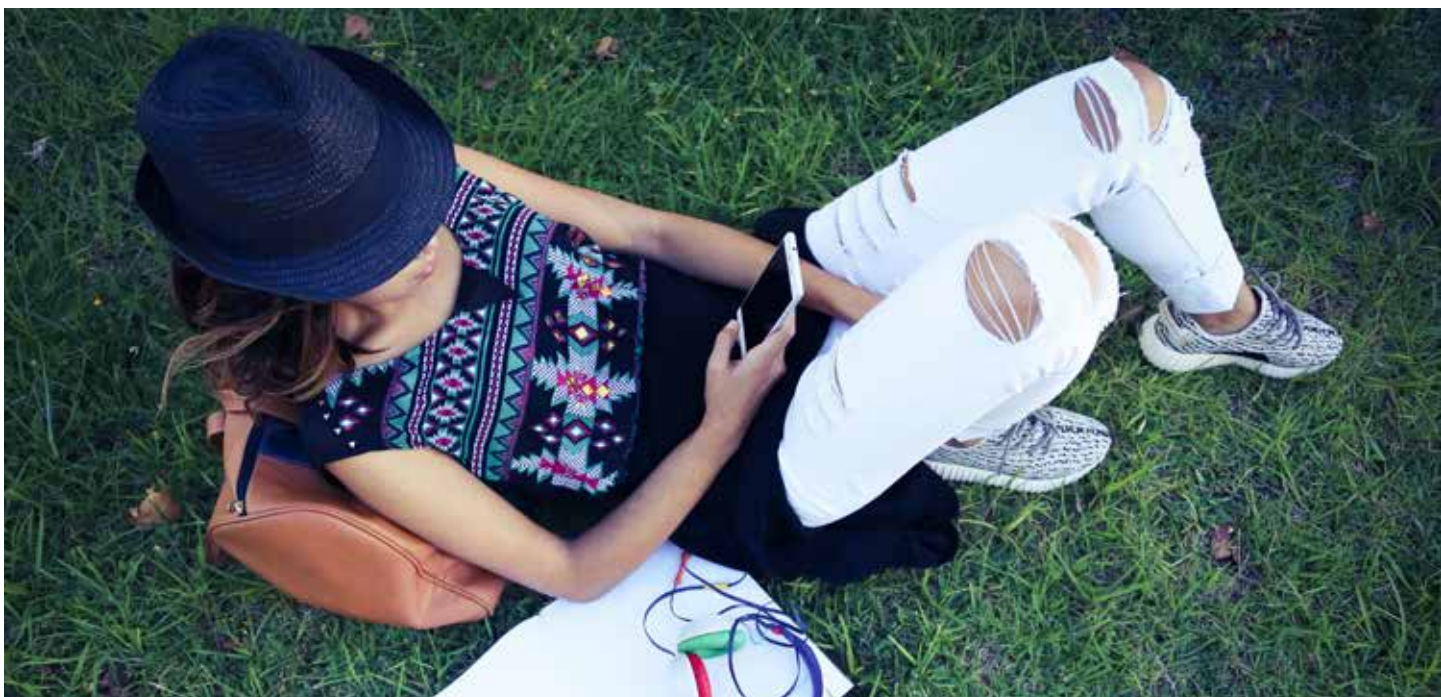
In preparing students to be excellent professionals and citizens, the University will seek ways of increasing their opportunities to experience the world of work and to participate in practical community service. These two poles are vital to the transformation project. Our graduates should enter the world of work imbued with a culture of professionalism, and should be critically familiar with the practices and codes of their chosen field. As democratic citizens they need also to develop a sophisticated and sympathetic sense of the issues facing communities and the ways in which meaningful transformation can be brought about. The University will establish a diverse network of employers and

alumni and international partners, enabling students to develop their social and cultural capital within such active networks and relationships with others. The University will expand negotiations for appropriate work placement and opportunities for entrepreneurship, community engagement, and seeking new scope for volunteerism and community partnerships.

The innovative and responsible use of ICTs is an important means of enhancing the student experience. Graduates should leave the university with the attributes they will require as 21st-century citizens, so UWC will use digital technologies to deepen student engagement with learning and enable students to connect themselves more effectively in the campus community and make the most of their time at the University. The innovative use of digital platforms will enable UWC to focus communications wisely and improve student engagement in targeted ways through on-line communities and study groups. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UWC's student development and support systems.

In the past, UWC has participated in the national Student Engagement Survey. It will continue to develop and manage coordinated student surveys as a valuable way of discerning salient patterns in students' experiences of the University, both inside and outside of the classroom.

This strategic focus on student experience and engagement is designed to sharpen students' disposition and goals, bring their identity into critical review, and develop plans for significant improvement.



**4. Change the size, shape and mix of the student population and academic programmes.**

UWC will continue to systematically influence the shape, size and mix of the student body in ways that will distinctly characterise the University and accord with national planning. At the time of preparing the IOP, the DHET, in consultation with universities, had embarked on a review of projected enrolment in relation to shrinking resources, academic programme development and inadequate growth in infrastructure capacity. In response, the University will develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy aimed, among other things, at building greater institutional viability. UWC will consolidate the projected number of first-time entering students, attract transfer students who have demonstrated outstanding ability to succeed, arrest student attrition and address the barriers to growth in postgraduate and international student enrolment. Overall, the implication is slower growth in headcount enrolment than was originally projected for this period, with implications for the projected undergraduate: postgraduate ratio. In terms of enrolment by major field of study, the proportional targets will remain unchanged. A key strategic lever towards the achievement of the University's enrolment mandate is the retention of graduating students for enrolment in postgraduate programmes to create a critical mass in niches and areas of postgraduate priority. In view of UWC's mandate in a differentiated post-school system, the University will continue to emphasise postgraduate growth.

The University will review its student recruitment promotional material and related web pages, embarking on innovative marketing strategies to attract excellent undergraduate, postgraduate and international students and so strengthen the pool of qualifying applicants. The pool of international applicants will be enhanced through collaborative relations with other African universities. Developing and tracking the effectiveness of UWC's marketing strategy is essential to leveraging UWC's points of distinction, niche areas and cost advantages, and to highlighting these to prospective students, their parents, alumni, donors and partner institutions.

The University will also explore opportunities presented by recent advances in ICT to explore multiple modes of delivery, especially in selected programmes at postgraduate level.

While the key initiatives of the University in this area will seek to support its enrolment mandate, UWC will pay special attention to continuing to attract and retain applicants from diverse backgrounds, and to recognising and supporting the diversity of its student body as a valuable institutional asset.

**5. Provide optimal support services (academic administration) that enable excellence in the execution of all academic core functions.**

UWC recognises that the success of its strategic intentions is strongly dependent on efficient administrative systems to support its broad academic and support intentions.

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**Particular attention will be paid over this IOP period to:**

- Strengthening the student enrolment management system across the institution so that all the practices and processes that govern and affect the recruitment, selection, registration, throughput and graduation of its students work in strong alignment and in pursuit of common intentions and outputs. In addition, attention will be paid to the continuous improvement and better alignment of all academic administrative processes and improved scholarship administration so that students experience seamless service and optimal student lifecycle communication and management. Such aligned practice is important to enhance the function of the University's professional services and to contribute significantly to richer student experiences and academic success.
  - Enhancing the organisation and functioning of the University's administrative and business intelligence systems to provide information for understanding student participation and better supporting the academic project and the strategic intentions that underpin it.
  - Enhancing the professional capacity of administrative staff so that they can work in skilled and efficient ways within an appropriate framework of accountability.
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## GOAL 2:

### Learning and Teaching

*To provide opportunities for an excellent learning and teaching experience that is contextually responsive to the challenges of globalisation and of a society in transition, and that enhances the students' capacities to be change agents in the 21st century.*

In the pursuit of its mission, UWC continues to place excellence in teaching, in support of effective learning, among the central concerns of its intellectual project. Excellence in teaching is at the forefront of the University's commitment to its students. Over the last IOP period the University made substantial progress in enhancing its capacity to deliver on its teaching and learning mandate and improve on the quality and relevance of its academic programmes. Central to this was the strengthening of a range of structural and organisational changes initiated just before the last IOP was implemented. Among other things, a Directorate for Teaching and Learning was established, a Director of Teaching and Learning and Deputy Deans of Teaching and Learning were appointed, and teaching and learning specialists were employed in most of the faculties. These leading figures have been supported and guided in their work by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees and the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee. The latter brings faculty leadership together with other key role players across the institution whose responsibilities are important to the teaching and learning function. Especially important here has been the participation of the Director of the Centre for Innovative Educational and Communication Technologies [CIECT] and the Director: Community Engagement. These structural and organisational changes have embedded the University's declared priorities in the planning, delivery and advancement of the teaching and learning function.

Structural changes have been mirrored by strategic changes in processes associated with professional advancement and the recognition of excellence. These now place excellence in teaching and learning alongside excellence in research as an institutional goal and a criterion for measuring achievement. For example, appointment and promotion guidelines now include teaching and learning as a key performance area. Equally important to progress has been the focused attention paid to the scholarship of teaching and learning, embedding it more fully in the intellectual life of the institution and reasserting it as an area of institutional excellence. Dedicated research funding has been provided and important national and international research partnerships have been developed in this area. These developments are seen as especially important to advancing

UWC's commitment to being a research-led university, where what happens in the classroom is informed by the research interests of members of staff who draw on their research to enliven their teaching. UWC is committed to student learning as a research-led process, so that research is increasingly prominent as a means of learning. The ideal is that students at undergraduate level are thoroughly inducted into research and research principles to support their ongoing formal and informal learning.

Improved access to higher education is meaningless without improved opportunities for success. In addition to introducing a range of teaching and learning support measures in support of this commitment and strengthening extended curriculum provision across the institution, the last five years have also seen significant strides being made towards improved teaching practice across the faculties. Building on the understanding that learning takes place in a variety of ways and through a variety of modes, both inside and outside the classroom, these efforts have continued to signal the value and importance of pedagogical practice that acknowledges students' real-life experiences, the context that has shaped these experiences and the shifting expectations that each generation brings to the classroom. In UWC's context there are particular challenges, shaped by both historical and contemporary forces. These demand pedagogical practice informed by an understanding of the complexity of this context, alert to ways in which it may impede or profitably shape students' learning, and seeking to nurture the values that underpin a socially just society.

One particular challenge is the rapid changes of the digital era, particularly in and prompted by communications media. These changes require the University to deepen its understanding of how these media may impact on student learning and thus how lecturers can advance student learning through the creative use of new technologies. UWC therefore accepts the ongoing challenge to understand better the ways in which learning can be enabled for 21st-century students and to provide its students with learning opportunities to equip them for confident participation in local and global working environments. Working with confidence in those environments also signals the importance of a learning experience that is international

in orientation. Promoting the internationalisation of the curriculum and providing students with opportunities to engage in learning opportunities with students in other countries, especially on the African continent, and to practise internationalisation at home continue to be important concerns for the University in moving forward.

Graduates are expected to possess a level of knowledge and skilfulness that equips them both for particular roles and to be adaptable as the environment changes. But effective national transformation requires more. The 2013 Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) study of the employment pathways of 2010 graduates across the four universities in the region showed clearly how important 'social capital' is to gaining employment and how disadvantaged the majority of UWC students (and of South African students from similar backgrounds) are in this regard<sup>1</sup>. In response to this challenge, the UWC academic experience must go beyond developing student skilfulness in using knowledge related to their career paths: it must be an experience that builds social capital and facilitates student pathways into the world of work. UWC's Charter of Graduate Attributes, launched during the course of the previous IOP, provides a goals framework to guide the faculties in achieving this. The Charter will be reviewed regularly. While much progress has been made, much still needs to be done in embedding these attributes in the curriculum and ensuring full alignment across academic programmes. This will receive priority in this IOP period.

The progress that the University has made in pursuing these goals was analysed at some depth in UWC's Institutional Submission to the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) for its Quality Enhancement Project (QEP), a national initiative that seeks to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the system. Considering its feeder community, the University will critically engage the QEP and make the priorities and challenges identified in the submission integral to its planning for the next five years. At the same time, the University will continue to participate actively in the various activities of the QEP, recognising that participation can add substantial value to its own efforts and that UWC is able to contribute significantly to broader systemic change.

Much of the work that needs to be done over the next five years in sustaining UWC's trajectory of improvement and commitment involves the systematic institutionalisation of the changes that have been introduced. Central to this is continuing to strengthen the organisational structures and processes set up to enhance UWC's teaching and learning mandate and to embed improved practices in the University's everyday functioning. This is an ongoing process. Excellence in teaching and learning requires alertness to new opportunities in a constantly changing external environment, and sustained creative rigour in responding to them.



<sup>1</sup> CHEC (2013). *Pathways from University to Work*. Cape Town: CHEC.

## *UWC will:*

### **1. Shape the academic curriculum to support the development of 21st-century graduate attributes.**

UWC is committed to giving its students every opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and social capital to be confident 21st-century citizens and professionals when they graduate. They will be lifelong learners, displaying an entrepreneurial and pioneering spirit, constantly gaining and using new knowledge to adapt in times of rapid change, and alert to the challenges and opportunities represented by digital technologies. The academic experience of the institution's students has to equip them to thrive as locally and globally engaged citizens who are able to make sense of a changing environment, both locally and in the world at large. To this end, the University is committed to ongoing review of the UWC Charter of Graduate Attributes and to explore how these attributes may best be promoted in the academic curriculum. Especially important here is the creation of opportunities for authentic learning, where students are required to actively apply their knowledge to real-world issues, and opportunities are created within their learning experience for them to connect with a range of professional, business and social communities outside the institution.

### **2. Promote enhanced learning opportunities through the innovative use of emerging technologies.**

The technological advances of the 'digital age' are fundamentally changing both how students learn and engage with information, and what competences they will require in a world of work equally influenced by these advances. UWC is committed to enabling its academic staff to enhance the learning experience of students by developing the multiple academic and digital literacies that inform this context and are needed to engage with it effectively.

Strengthening the informed use of technologies in learning and teaching is a central feature of the plan. This must be underpinned by pedagogical rationales that draw on the potential of these technologies to transform learning and teaching, especially by facilitating the active participation of students. In this regard, exploring less-traditional digital media

of learning and communication will be particularly important. The University is building its capacity to be a 'connected' campus that pursues excellent learning opportunities, among other things through facilitating the 'internal' and 'external' connectedness of its students. Digital technologies are an important vehicle to support this intention.

In this IOP period the focus will be on: instructional design; ongoing research into the field of innovative education and communication technologies; software development and application; digital academic literacy programmes; ongoing ICT skills training; the design and development of materials for multiple digital platforms; and creating integrated, seamless and flexible processes and infrastructure to support a well-connected campus.

### **3. Develop an environment conducive to excellence in learning and teaching in support of student success and retention.**

Significant attention was paid in the previous IOP to strategies aimed at promoting excellence in teaching at UWC. Perhaps the most important among them were measures aimed at increased the professionalisation of learning and teaching across the institution and at building a more responsive learning and teaching environment to promote flexible learning. The substantial progress made towards these objectives provides a solid foundation for the ongoing pursuit of excellence in learning and teaching at UWC, not least as a key component of student success and retention. Attention will also be paid to recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching.

Over the next five years there will be an increased emphasis on learning. The significant gains in improving pedagogical practice and the scholarship of teaching and learning will be a base for developing flexible and carefully aligned processes to enable students to improve their learning ability and increase their chances of excelling in their studies. This shift in emphasis has large implications. It derives from a conviction that access is not to be confused with admission. Admission is a technical matter. Access involves student attitudes and the teaching and institutional provision, which, taken together, make for intellectual success. UWC will explore means of promoting intellectual access for a diverse range of students through its teaching practices and supportive facilities. Among other things, it will develop different kinds of 'learning spaces' across the campus, providing for both formal and informal learning opportunities.

Rich and lively informal learning opportunities will be provided and supported alongside an excellent formal academic programme.

UWC is a research-led university. Accordingly, excellence in learning and teaching is consciously underpinned by a strong research ethos and culture of scholarship across the institution. This ethos and culture are intended to be evident to students from the first year of undergraduate studies, building student confidence in the importance of research-based enquiry as engagement with the real world, and so retaining and attracting the best students to postgraduate studies.

#### **4. Provide responsive and enabling academic programmes to enable graduates to equip themselves to meet 21st-century challenges.**

UWC is committed to offering academic programmes that are contextually responsive, relevant and enabling. This involves an ongoing commitment to transforming the curriculum to privilege intellectual engagement, and to challenge the dominance of particular voices and bodies of knowledge while exploring others. Major new fields are emerging that offer exciting opportunities, and it is necessary to take account of thinking that has received inadequate attention in South Africa, such as the work of scholars from other parts of Africa. Over the next five years, UWC will continue to transform the curriculum, expanding its breadth and depth in ways that help the University's

graduates equip themselves to be confident 21st-century citizens who are engaged both locally and globally. An important part of this is to further internationalise the curriculum, with an increased focus on intellectual engagement with the African continent and context in ways that are conducive to greater collaboration and so to create opportunities for UWC students to become part of broader, more diverse learning communities. UWC believes that its academic programmes are particularly enriched through approaches that offer a strong disciplinary base but facilitate the interdisciplinary learning and knowledge-sharing conducive to students moving effectively into the world of work upon graduation. A further demand that the University gladly meets is for continuous professional development programmes tailored to the needs of people to be successful in the workplace and in life.

In pursuit of these objectives, UWC will seek to maximise the opportunities offered by its programmes and qualifications mix (PQM), exploring innovative ways of sharing and disseminating knowledge and skills, including through new programmes of study. Where possible, formal learning and teaching will be supported through scholarly opportunities for community engagement. And, in line with its commitment to improving access to higher education, UWC will collaborate with a range of role players to improve articulation across the post-school education and training system.



*To strengthen UWC's position as an excellent research and innovation university with local relevance, regional impact and global recognition.*

In the last IOP, UWC signalled its intention to position itself as an excellent research university in South Africa, with the capacity to produce and advance new knowledge in areas of recognised research strength and to work towards the translation of this knowledge through innovative endeavours. The last five years have seen the University steadily pursuing these objectives and notching up significant achievements along the way. These achievements are well documented. Among them, UWC became the first historically disadvantaged institution to host a Department of Science and Technology (DST) / National Research Foundation (NRF) Centre of Excellence and a DST/NRF Flagship Project. UWC is now one of South Africa's leading research-intensive universities and this position must be consolidated, further strengthened and capitalised on in the immediate and long term.

Some important research milestones reached over the last five years include: an increase in the number of researchers rated by the National Research Foundation (NRF), from 65 in 2010 to 124 in 2015; an increase in the number of SARCHI research chairs, from three in 2010 to 14 in 2015; an increase in the proportion of permanent academic staff with PhDs to 56% in 2015, amongst the highest of South Africa's 26 public universities; 1 048 total weighted research outputs

achieved in 2014, an increase of 157% on the 667 achieved in 2010; and ongoing growth in postgraduate enrolment, especially at Master's and doctoral level.

UWC has long had an interest in innovation and has established itself as a pioneer and leader in biotechnology, bioinformatics and the hydrogen economy. More formal entry into the innovation space has followed the fundamental research and developments in science. During the last IOP period, UWC created an institutional infrastructure to nurture and support a culture of social and scientific innovation across the faculties. This included the establishment of a Technology Transfer Office, a Business Development Unit, a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and a number of professional entities to take forward specific innovation and commercialisation ventures. In a sense, serious work towards placing UWC as a significant player in the global knowledge economy has just begun. The scientific and financial imperatives for innovation make it a major area of focus for 2016-2020. UWC's use of its intellectual resources to connect to the broader society and help address a range of transformational issues in society, the economy and the health sector brings substantial academic advantages.

Photo by Paul Grendon





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**In addition, becoming part of a strong innovation system demonstrably has rich and complex benefits:**

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- It raises the pace of scientific development to amplify the advantages of each innovation.
  - It builds robust, long-term, mutually supportive relationships between the innovation partners.
  - It generally leads to the establishment of companies in close proximity to the University and so to increasing the number of highly qualified people and excellent facilities in the area. This enhances UWC-industry partnerships: industry has access to academic expertise and the University is able to place its students for practical experience and to draw on a wider pool of specialists for teaching and thesis supervision.
  - It changes public perceptions of the University.
  - It generates enhanced financial benefits for the University and other partners.
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These developments in research and innovation have come about through a carefully planned strategic process, involving the interplay of cutting-edge research by eminent scientists and a range of strategies to strengthen the University's research capacity and provide an enabling research and innovation environment. Central to the trajectory the University has followed is a commitment to building identified areas of research strength across the institution. This strategy of research niche development, framed by a Research Policy developed at the beginning of the last IOP period, has been a very important factor in what has been achieved. It has been especially important in directing the effective allocation of resources, and so making best use of work already far advanced. Among other developments, the niche areas of excellence have leveraged important external funding and partnerships, attracted and developed a critical mass of nationally and internationally recognised researchers able to offer cutting-edge postgraduate programmes, and positioned UWC as research leader in a number of important fields. Some niches are also driving innovation ventures. This strategy has been supported by other, broader research-development strategies, such as the highly effective staff PhD initiative, aimed at strengthening the institution's overall research enterprise.

The substantial developments at UWC affirm the appropriateness of the strategic decisions taken. However, they also mark out an area of heightened challenge. Having

entered the research-intensive and innovation space, the University has to sustain and build on its position. This will involve further increasing the proportion of postgraduate enrolment, broadening the base of active researchers, and developing innovation capacity and effectiveness.

- UWC has made important strides towards increasing its postgraduate enrolment and building its capacity to support excellent postgraduate study. This has made it aware that continuing to grow its postgraduate student pool and to sustain or improve present postgraduate throughput rates comprise complex challenges. More organisational capacity is needed to support postgraduate study, and greater 'out-of-the-box' thinking is needed to attract students. Among other things, this may involve new types of postgraduate offerings through, for example, joint programmes with other universities.
- The striking increase in overall research output over the past five years is a gratifying affirmation of policy. However, a closer look reveals the unevenness of this output across faculties and departments. It is germane to UWC's intellectual project and to its standing as a research-led institution that it works with determination towards the goal of all academics being productively involved in contributing to the research enterprise, building their own scholarship, attracting postgraduate students and being actively engaged in drawing from their research to inform their teaching and community engagement. Sustaining an enabling research environment is critical to this end.
- Becoming a significant innovation player in the global knowledge economy is vital for UWC's standing, partnerships, financial health, and ability to contribute to economic growth and transformation. Accordingly, UWC is committed to deepening its innovation capacity and, with a view to effective development, to aligning the institutional infrastructure development in this regard with research planning.

Recognising the significance of this area, the University instituted a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor position in 2015, dedicated to the portfolio 'Research and Innovation'.

One of the most important factors making an impact on the University's research efforts is the continued volatility and vulnerability of the external research-funding environment, both nationally and internationally. At the national level, social development priorities continue to impact on available state funding, and internationally the global financial crisis has reinforced the view that economic development needs

to be based on sustainable paths to inclusive growth, with a renewed focus on building capacity for innovation. Capacity in the administration and management of research funding is therefore a key strategic competence for institutions that wish to exploit evolving opportunities for research collaboration supported by major funders. Emerging economies such as Brazil, India and South Africa are employing international instruments aimed at South-South collaboration. For these and other reasons, research-funding instruments and modalities have become strategic issues in diversifying and exploiting new research-funding sources.

In such an environment the University is committed to strategies enabling it to respond rapidly to opportunities that open up, make maximum use of them, and secure participation in research partnerships that are able to attract and sustain on-going funding. The University recognises that the internationalisation of its research enterprise provides an important pathway for this to happen, particularly through global research networks. Participating in these wider networks while remaining relevant to the local and regional context puts UWC in a position both to strengthen its own research and to contribute to a more powerful "Southern" voice within these networks.

### *UWC will:*

#### **1. Continue to strengthening its postgraduate offerings and explore options of expanding the programme and qualification mix (PQM).**

Over the period of this IOP, institutional resources will continue to be applied strategically to enhance and expand the University's postgraduate offerings, especially in niche areas of research excellence and to create opportunities for postgraduate studies in them. Attention will also be paid to supporting and nurturing new research niches. The University will identify high-profile researchers in these areas from outside UWC and seek to connect them more directly with the University as extraordinary professors or research associates, building strong networks for mutual benefit and drawing on their rich experience and expertise. In this regard, a particular effort will be made to develop relationships with leading African scholars from across the continent. This overall strategy will not only build and strengthen niche areas of research excellence, but will raise the profile of UWC locally, regionally and internationally.

#### **2. Sustain an enabling research environment that promotes research.**

UWC is committed to being a place in which innovative thought and knowledge production can thrive. Building on the changes to the organisation and management of research functions initiated in the last IOP, the University will sustain and further develop an enabling research environment that is responsive to researchers in different fields and at different stages of their careers. This will involve working for continued improvement in the systems for financing research activities, administering the research function and managing research information. Improved efficiency in the production and management of credible and reliable data on UWC's research and innovation efforts will be pursued by implementing agile, responsive and integrated systems for information management regarding research and innovation. This will go a long way towards enabling the University to monitor its research activities effectively. To sustain the upward trajectory of its research outputs, existing incentive strategies to reward research excellence will be extended and new strategies to improve the research productivity of all academics across the institution will be implemented.

UWC recognises that facilitating access to adequate and appropriate resources for high-quality research is critical to its research aspirations. The University therefore will continue to pursue strategies for collaborative investment in major facilities and to increase and diversify the available funding for research and research cooperation. It is particularly important to find sustainable ways of maintaining shared regional facilities and the expensive research equipment that is vital to a number of the institution's areas of research excellence.

The intellectual and knowledge resources that researchers use in research are a vital part of a vibrant research environment. In this regard, the library is particularly important. The University therefore will continue to prioritise the development of its library resources, particularly those that enhance access to valuable digital knowledge sources. The library will increasingly be positioned as a key asset in research aspirations.



### 3. Maintain a critical mass of strong, productive researchers.

A critical mass of strong, productive researchers who are well supported within an enabling environment is necessary to sustain UWC's growing research profile. Over the period of this IOP, particular attention will be paid to broadening the base and diversifying the profile of active and productive researchers at UWC. Among other things, the University will take further the measures it has introduced to increase the proportion of academic staff with PhDs, with a particular focus on increasing the number of highly qualified black and women academics. The University will also actively support academic staff to secure recognition for their research through being rated by the National Research Foundation (NRF).

The continued development of the new generation of researchers is a high priority. In addition to its current commitments in this regard, UWC will implement a range of strategies to develop and support early-career researchers, including assisting them to establish themselves as recognised researchers and build their research capabilities for the future. Here again, UWC will pay particular attention to overcoming the barriers that, sometimes in less than obvious ways, restrict the development of young black and women researchers. It is thus committed to developing strategies that are sufficiently nuanced to recognise and address these complexities. A key strategy will be the intensification of the University's efforts to build and sustain a dynamic and vibrant pool of post-doctoral fellows. UWC recognises that a critical mass of productive post-doctoral researchers is an important indicator of research intensiveness and is very important to sustaining and growing research capacity and productivity.

### 4. Establish and sustain strong, strategic and mutually beneficial research partnerships.

Strong and sustainable research partnerships at local, regional and international level have high strategic value for UWC, with four major benefits:

- Building robust research partnerships that are capable of attracting major funding and achieving more than either partner would achieve alone.
- Enhancing UWC's research profile through strategic partnerships that strengthen the resource base and expertise available to UWC researchers.
- Connecting UWC researchers with their academic peers in national and international universities and research organisations, as well as with government, industry and civil society.
- Strengthening UWC's postgraduate supervisory capabilities through the involvement of national/international collaborating partners.

The University is committed to strengthening existing partnerships and to identifying and pursuing opportunities for new strategic partnerships. In all cases it will be alert to the potential benefits and will pursue them with energy.

UWC recognises the national and institutional importance of establishing and strengthening partnerships with universities and research organisations in the global South, especially on the African continent. It therefore will pay particular attention to South-South and South-South-North partnerships that, through a focus on excellence, build research capacity and raise the profile of African researchers.

**5. Grow and strengthen UWC’s postgraduate culture and support to postgraduate students.**

UWC will build on its recent success in growing postgraduate studies, and will continue to pay systematic attention to enhancing the postgraduate student experience, recognising that its senior students are vital to building its research capacity and contributing its knowledge to society. Attention will be paid to strengthening UWC’s postgraduate enrolment. A key strategy in this regard is the retention of graduating students for postgraduate studies. The retention of students already enrolled in postgraduate programmes will also be a focus area for continued attention.

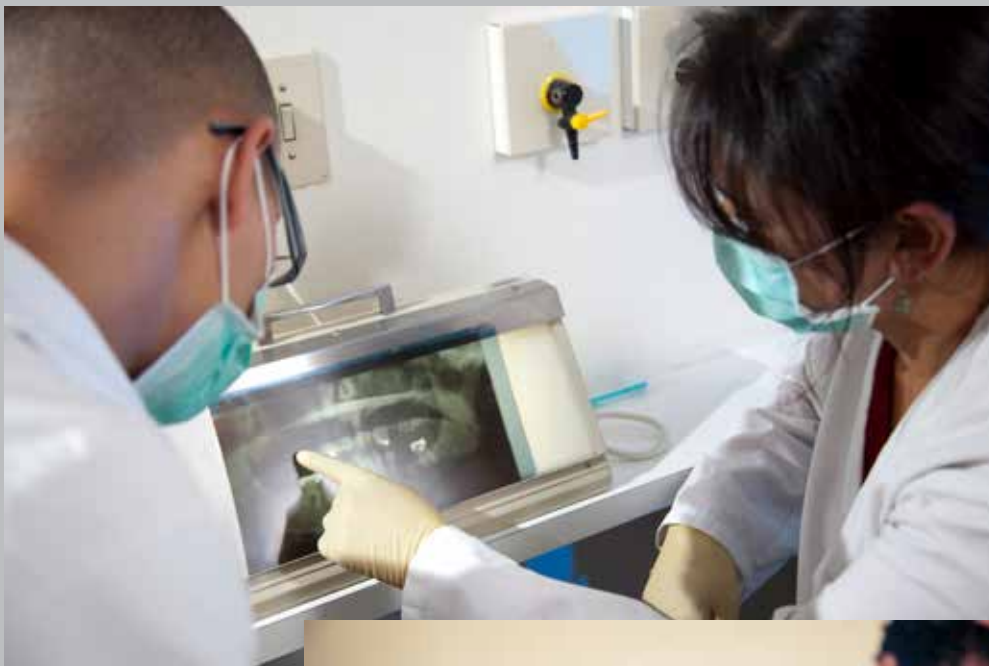
The University will continue to work towards improving the efficacy of postgraduate supervision and the administrative efficiency of postgraduate programmes. A number of the identified strategies for improving UWC’s overall research capacity also have important implications for increasing supervisory capacity.

To give prominence to the focus on postgraduate programmes and the necessary supportive infrastructure, the University will establish a School of Postgraduate Studies to: enhance research capacity across faculties, build postgraduate communities of practice, facilitate cross-institutional alignment of postgraduate programmes and support services, expand opportunities for student exchange and international collaboration, and enhance funding support for postgraduate students. Focused attention will also be paid to doctoral students through the establishment of a Doctoral Support Academy.

**6. Continue to build and strengthen its innovation capacity.**

UWC is committed to continuing to support and further develop its innovation capacity. This will include paying attention to developing strong partnerships to support and facilitate the effective development and implementation of new technological and social ideas and products in pursuit of the public good. Such partnerships generally involve universities, industry or public agencies, government at various levels and, increasingly, players from the broader society. The development, protection and transfer of intellectual property is a key consideration in such partnerships, but IP development and transfer is understood within an innovation context, where it is not a linear, unidirectional process, but is iterative: all partners are involved in development, critique, improvement and further innovation for the greater benefit of all involved. UWC is committed to working with the DST to develop an effective, modern innovation system for South Africa. It is also committed to using the opportunities that the DST, other government departments and other partners offer for strengthening the institution’s innovation capacity and orientation.





## Laboratory Block



*To continue positioning UWC as a higher education employer of choice through a supportive work environment and a resilient institutional culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity and excellence, clearly enabling the University to rise to contextual challenges in support of its institutional vision and strategic goals.*

UWC's standing as a research-intensive institution and its ongoing improved performance against a number of internal and external indicators have been achieved in the most part through the quality, commitment and hard work of its staff. Planning for the future is predicated on their continued excellence and commitment as they own the strategic objectives of this IOP and work to realise the vision of their University.

The remarkable change in UWC's performance and standing has involved ongoing engagement with and adaptation to a rapidly changing environment, overcoming various difficulties and using the opportunities that they presented. In this regard, staff face challenges of institutional growth, the impact of technology, new patterns of interaction, the need for curriculum responsiveness to changing demands and a shift towards measurable performance. UWC is a large university with more students and staff than ever before in its history, and ongoing staff and student growth will be a feature of this IOP period. To the challenges of this growth must be added the challenges of the changing world of work for both academic and professional support staff. The increase in staff numbers, combined with new technological media and new ways of working with and relating to colleagues, has significant implications for the University and its institutional culture.

Meeting the challenges of rapid change effectively requires us to focus on the new capabilities required and to work actively towards building the needed capacity. Staff at all levels and in all areas of the University contribute to the standing and overall performance of the institution. To contribute effectively, they must have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience. Equally important, they should feel confident in carrying out their work in ways that demonstrate the commitment and values that they bring to the task. With this in mind, UWC is committed to deploying staff wisely, developing their capacity, creating conditions in which they are able to work optimally, and reflecting on performance to address difficulties and acknowledge achievement. A high priority for the University during this

IOP period, then, is to extend the work done to establish a continuously improving professional staff.

UWC also seeks to be an attractive employer in terms of providing a stimulating and rewarding employment environment. In a context of constant change, and particularly in a vibrant region like the Western Cape, the higher education market is highly competitive, particularly when it comes to attracting and retaining excellent people from designated groups. In 2007 UWC adopted a rewards model that benchmarked UWC remuneration levels against those of other higher education institutions in South Africa. Since 2014, staff remuneration has compared favourably with the general higher education market in South Africa, with the exception of executive members, whose remuneration falls below the average. UWC has been able to manage its staff costs within national norms. However, market volatility could result in UWC not being able to maintain this position. Key associated risks for the University include remaining financially viable without both losing fine staff and weakening the institution's ability to attract excellent people.

As with all universities, UWC has some staff on fixed-term employment contracts. A lot of work has gone into managing this important category of staff better, and the phasing in of benefits for contract staff has been one of the major achievements. As a result of different pools of funding, levels of funding and funding requirements, contract appointments will continue to pose challenges that require careful thought.

The under-representation of black African and female staff at senior levels, especially in senior academic positions, is an issue of national concern. It is also an area of concern for UWC. The University's Employment Equity Forum has been active in monitoring and advising on a range of equity and diversity challenges and in developing the University's Employment Equity Plan. Compared with other universities, UWC has done relatively well. However, it is still not where it would wish to be.



Over the past number of years, dedicated attention has also been paid to establishing positive relations with organised structures. The University is currently in a transitional phase in terms of the newly formed staff union, but has afforded it some organisational rights whilst it is registering with the Department of Labour. UWC acknowledges and respects the importance of organised labour to represent the interests of its members and will continue to engage with the union in pursuit of its strategic objectives.

In the last IOP period, a number of important new policies were introduced, including a Sexual Harassment Policy and a Policy on Managing People with Disabilities, as well as Grievance and Disciplinary policies. In giving effect to its goal of being a supportive and fair employer, it is important for UWC to have a dynamic policy environment guiding institutional processes.

UWC's human resources management capacity has steadily increased in depth and professionalism, and the institution wishes to continue to build this capacity. A human resources function that is well-aligned with institutional strategy is in a unique position to facilitate processes and to support leadership in achieving strategic intentions.

Staff development remains a key focus area. In terms of staff development the University now has a well-developed annual cycle of programmes based on a learning needs analysis. UWC staff members also participate in regional staff development initiatives, which include a programme for leadership development at middle-manager level, as well as a number of UWC-specific initiatives. UWC continues to believe that individual and collective leadership are required for an institution to perform optimally. In the period ahead, the University wishes to sharpen its focus on improved ways of engaging with and strengthening leadership at all levels.

Through a supportive institutional culture that values diversity, inclusivity and excellence, combined with effective

leadership at all levels, UWC is positioned to sustain a positive, well-performing University community that is able to deliver on the strategic objectives of this IOP.

### *UWC will:*

- 1. Pay focused attention to building the required capacity and capabilities in its staff through recruitment and development activities aligned with its strategic goals and objectives.**

Recognising that the successful implementation of the IOP largely depends on the commitment and expertise of its staff, UWC will aim to find the optimum fit between strategic intent, resource allocation, individual capabilities and expertise. This will include attention being paid to appropriate staff and leadership planning at the different levels. UWC believes that its ongoing success depends on finding an appropriate balance between developing new talent and attracting top talent nationally and internationally. Integral to the sustainability of the University's success is the pursuit of an integrated staffing strategy that is adequately aligned to its strategic objectives. This will pay attention to the balance between experience and the nurturing of emerging talent, growing a critical mass in niche areas and key professions, and leadership development and succession planning.

Recognising that attracting and retaining high-quality staff is a key factor in the University's success and in the success of its students, UWC will optimise its distinctive role in society, as well as ensure a clear sense of purpose to attract the best staff in a competitive environment. The University's approach to recruitment recognises that attracting top researchers and staff in global scarce-skills areas increasingly calls for more flexible contractual arrangements. A further

complicating factor is the number of staff who will be retiring in the next few years. UWC's people-planning processes must proactively address this challenge.

In the fast-changing local and global contexts, with increased levels of uncertainty and fluidity, the role of leadership becomes increasingly important. As a research-led institution it is critically important for UWC to ensure that appropriate academic leadership is in place across faculties and departments to strengthen intellectual engagement with societal issues and to build the intellectual community.

UWC has a relatively low staff turnover and it will continue to employ strategies to retain and develop its staff. The changing work environment and increased demands to engage various internal and external role players require improved communication, networking and relationship-building skills. UWC will put strategies in place to raise the levels of professionalism across the board. In regard to staff who are not academics, a mind shift will be promoted: from a "non-academic and support staff" role to pursuing a profession in academic support. This will include staff development initiatives and formal programme offerings in collaboration with partner institutions to promote career tracks in these fields. The University will also continue to nurture the development of emerging academics as lecturers, researchers and supervisors. In partnership with the DVC: Academic, for example, a lot of attention has been paid to academic staff development through the Talent Stewardship Programme. This project identifies promising young academics, some from UWC's own postgraduate students, and places them on a structured accelerated development path with appropriate mentoring support. It will continue. On the same theme, in 2016 UWC also appointed its first staff in accordance with the new DHET nGAP (new generation academic project) and will continue to participate in this national process as an important element of the University's overall Talent Stewardship Programme.

## 2. Actively pursue greater representation in support of equity and diversity.

The University's history and mission incline it to a transformative agenda that respects the value and importance of equity and diversity. As such, the

University is committed to diversifying its staffing profile in ways that address historic inequities and recognise emerging contextual challenges. Of particular importance is addressing the under-representation of black African staff and women, especially in senior positions.

Leadership at all levels will be required to report progress against the Employment Equity Plan annually to give effect to the stated objectives. The outcome of this will be a staffing profile that increasingly reflects greater diversity, among other things in terms of demographics, geographic origin, culture, gender, race, language, religion and age.

UWC recognises that the deliberate facilitation of purposeful change is essential for transformation and sustainability and that line functions across the University have an important role in strategy execution. Senior leadership will take responsibility for this goal, with expert support provided by the Human Resources division.

## 3. Continue to develop and sustain a climate and culture conducive to realising the University's strategic vision.

UWC seeks to offer a stimulating and supportive working environment conducive to productivity and increased collaboration, using strategies that promote respect and mutual trust, transparency, greater accountability and open communication. Such strategies will increasingly draw on technology to improve workflow, transparency, efficiency and accountability. Internal communication strategies will be particularly important to keep staff apprised of developments and progress against strategic objectives, and to make sense of changing priorities.

Recognising that universities function within increasingly complex operating environments characterised by rapid change, UWC is committed to developing its capacity as a learning organisation that is open to critical self-reflection and change. Its institutional culture bears the imprint of its proud history and is continuously influenced and shaped by how it conducts its business and how its staff and students relate to one another and to the broader community. This, in turn, influences staff and student conduct and achievement. As an element of developing and sustaining a culture that cherishes excellence, appreciates diversity, embraces inclusivity and is receptive to constructive organisational change,





attention will be paid to supportive policies and practices conducive to staff well-being. Increasingly, the institutional culture reflects a staff- and student-centred focus.

A conscious ('awareness with a purpose'), leader-led institutional strategy for the ongoing transformation of the work culture and climate will receive ongoing attention. It aims at promoting desirable behaviour and work achievement and a service orientation that supports people and is centred on the students. Future strategies will emerge from the progress and success of the last number of years in building sound employee relations. In this regard, employee 'wellness' and work-life balance are identified as areas for ongoing attention and are key to establishing a workplace in which optimum, positive energy is directed towards achieving the set goals.

In sum, people-planning at UWC must support the institution's unfolding sense of itself and of the ways in which UWC takes forward the challenge of being an excellent university in a global environment while being responsive to the social and economic development imperatives of South Africa.

#### **4. Refine its reward strategy to improve alignment with best practice in the sector, whilst being mindful of the institution's financial realities.**

UWC strives to offer affordable tertiary education to students, with its fees being among the lowest in the country. Its main sources of income are state subsidies and tuition income. Given the fact that state subsidy growth is not keeping pace with inflation, and given the national tension around the provision of affordable access to higher education, maintaining staff remuneration at the desired level will be a big challenge in the IOP period. Staff cost remains the largest budget item and requires very careful monitoring. Whilst being fully aware of its financial realities, the University also recognises the need to keep its reward policy in pace with changes in the higher education market.

The University will continue to implement a comprehensive reward model that includes both intrinsic and extrinsic components and that attends to: remuneration, benefits, learning and development opportunities, quality of work life, recognition, incentives, internal and external fairness and equity, market positioning, and the need to attract and retain scarce skills. Given the internal and external inequities of the past, UWC has come a long way in stabilising

its remuneration practices and establishing a framework that promotes fairness and is financially sustainable. In a differentiated higher education context, UWC is constantly reviewing the appropriateness of its current strategy so that it can keep pace with good practice and better align its reward and remuneration strategy with the institution's strategic objectives. As part of this process, attention will be paid to ways of recognising, inter alia, seniority, experience, scarce skills, qualifications, research rating, supervisory track record, international networks and ability to attract research funding. The review process will include external benchmarking and will be undertaken in consultation with the appropriate structures.

#### **5. Improve operational efficiency in support of effective human resources management.**

The University is sharply aware of the need to constantly support and develop all aspects of people planning in ways that assist in realising the University's overall objectives. This is a key strategic issue. It requires ongoing monitoring and reviewing of all aspects of people planning in relation to institutional goals. Substantial progress was made in this area in the previous IOP period, and continued attention will be paid to the ongoing streamlining and improving of people processes and the reviewing of policies and practices necessary to support the implementation of the University's strategic goals.

In this IOP period, the University will implement an integrated enterprise resource-planning system, integrating two critical functions currently performed separately. Because the human resources and finance systems are managed separately, there is a data integrity risk arising from the separate entering of data. The new system will integrate these important functions. The introduction of the shared system will assist in addressing operational inefficiencies, eliminating information gathering in silos, integrating human resources information with other data sources, simplifying operations and supporting improved decision making.

*To strengthen and diversify UWC's financial base with a view to the financial sustainability needed to support UWC's academic mandate and deliver on strategic priorities.*



South African universities operate within the larger economic realities of the country and the world. Since the economic downturn of 2008, the global economy has continued to experience some instability and volatility, impacting particularly on the economies of developing countries. This is likely to continue into the new IOP period. At the time of preparing this document, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had warned that "global growth remains moderate, with uneven prospects across the main countries and regions". Internally, South Africa is significantly short of meeting its performance targets in terms of economic growth. The economy is under tremendous pressure, brought about by a variety of factors, including ongoing challenges in the mining sector, fragmentation of labour unions, ongoing annual industrial action, service delivery protests, the country's growing deficit budget, an unattractive tax regime and a relatively volatile political environment. In addition to the lingering threat of the lowering of South Africa's investment grade credit rating by the "Big Three" rating agencies, the Minister of Finance indicated in his 2016 Budget Speech that the South African economy is expected to grow by less than 1% in 2016.

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**In addition to the above, there are a number of factors directly affecting universities' financial positions:**

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- The effects of the current economic climate are experienced directly by South Africans at a domestic level. Households increasingly experience financial strain, which affects their ability to meet the tuition fee and living cost implications of university study.
  - In real terms, state funding through subsidy allocation has decreased annually for the last number of years. This puts upward pressure on the increases in student fees levied by universities.
  - The support for poor students available through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is inadequate to meet the demand. Furthermore, a large proportion of financially needy students, called the "missing middle", fall outside the NSFAS-support framework.
  - Research agency funding is increasingly under pressure.
  - The weakness of the Rand against all of the main international currencies has a very negative impact, not least in raising the cost of internationally sourced resources such as staff, equipment, laboratory consumables and library material.
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In addition to the above, this IOP is being finalised at a time when the largest national student protest, which started in mid-October 2015 under the banner #FeesMustFall, resulted in the President announcing in October 2015 that, nationally, there would be no increases in public university fees in 2016. The University received some support from the State to compensate partially for the resultant loss of income in 2016. However, the protest is ongoing. For the duration of this IOP, issues around equitable and affordable access to higher education will remain high on the national agenda, and universities are likely to be under continued pressure in terms of annual fee increases.

In line with the University's Mission, UWC's Management and Council have been very clear in expressing the University's support for equitable and affordable access to higher education and the fact that the successful development of the country depends on a higher education system that broadens access to include growing numbers of students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, current uncertainties have the potential of introducing serious financial challenges, especially at historically disadvantaged universities, which do not have the level of reserves to serve as a buffer while a sustainable national system is set in place. The University will have to engage with these financial pressures whilst remaining true to its Mission and its academic mandate as a research-led public university with a strong commitment to access through its undergraduate programme.

Despite the bleak economic realities referred to above, and the uncertainty regarding the level of government funding to universities, it has to be said that UWC has managed, over the past two IOP cycles, to reposition itself in terms of both its academic stature and its financial viability. The recapitalisation by Government in 2004 was an important catalyst on which the University was able to build with marked success. However, in the absence of substantial reserves, the more sophisticated, research-led UWC remains significantly vulnerable in financially uncertain times.

UWC has grown significantly in student and staff numbers and, measured against various indices of academic performance, it is now in the top group of universities in the country. The academic stature of a university directly affects its ability to attract the best researchers, postdocs and postgraduate students. This, in turn, has an effect on the quality of the education offered at undergraduate level. In addition, it effects national and international funding opportunities, especially for large-scale projects. The symbiotic relationship between academic excellence and financial viability is a major planning consideration, so careful strategies must determine resource allocation.

Through rigorous management practices, the University has been able to generate annual financial surpluses that have enabled it to begin to build a reserve. This vital buffer against unanticipated problems is almost without precedent in historically disadvantaged universities. It needs to be considerably greater. Even though this achievement marks a laudable move in the right direction, it is far from representing a decisive triumph over historical disadvantage in financial terms. Gratifyingly, state- and donor-funded infrastructural support has yielded much-needed new buildings, and the process of repurposing old infrastructure is under way. Challenges that remain in this area relate to the accumulated cost of deferred maintenance and the University's proportion of funding for state-supported infrastructure developments.

UWC's strengthened financial position has been achieved whilst balancing institutional needs with affordability to promote access, resulting in the University still charging amongst the lowest fees in the country. The improved financial viability can be attributed to sound financial planning and management, as well as to the University's ongoing success, despite national and international challenges, in attracting third-stream income, mainly through high-end research activities. Although there has been significant improvement in systems of financial control, the responsiveness of systems to queries for real-time data requires further attention. In view of the large proportion of research funding from overseas, exchange rate fluctuations also pose some risk.

The University continues to find itself in a position where student debt is an ongoing risk, although this risk is managed within acceptable norms through the committed cooperation of students, parents, guardians and donors. UWC has a large proportion of students from economically poor backgrounds, but the student body is very diverse, with significant numbers of students from backgrounds of some affluence. A challenge in the period of this IOP must be to identify ways of raising income to levels needed for sustainability, while developing ways of keeping access to the University open to students from economically poor backgrounds.

In order to expand its activities in teaching, research and innovation on the scale they justify, UWC needs to continue improving its financial strength. It is important, both for the core business of the University and for its ability to attract funding and investment, that UWC builds on its reputation for excellence in a dynamic higher education environment. This requires investment in the best available staff and appropriate infrastructure, supported by cutting-edge information and communications technology. It also requires

investment in environments that are conducive to study and work, both on the main campus and on the satellite campuses. These things, in turn, require a commitment to financial stability across a broad front.

Continuing to deliver on its mandate as a public university with a critical role in the current and future development of South Africa depends on the entire campus community bearing UWC's financial sustainability in mind. Without the required financial resources, UWC cannot deliver on its mandate. This will require ongoing reflection on how every aspect of the University is managed. It will also require sober reflection on the demands made on the University by its members. A university cannot be financially sustainable unless its core business, the academic project, is healthy and of recognised excellence, so this has to be a primary concern.

Financial sustainability requires the University to constantly balance complex sets of tensions. It has to optimise its use of the institution's vast knowledge base to increase income-generation opportunities, forge new partnerships and capitalise on opportunities, without ceasing to connect with and support the communities to which the University is traditionally linked from which it draws large numbers of students. UWC has to be internationally connected and recognised for the knowledge it contributes to addressing complex, fast-changing global realities, while sustaining its local relevance and impact. The list continues. Clearly, for the purpose of this goal area, the focus must be on a growing awareness and understanding of the financial implications of the institution's choices and the financial and other risks associated with these choices.

## ***UWC will:***

### **1. Grow and diversify its revenue base.**

With state subsidy unable to keep pace with inflation and fund the much-needed growth of the national post-school sector, combined with student fee increases that are modest (as a result of the low fee base) and taking broad economic and societal realities into account, UWC faces increased pressure in terms of income. Amidst these pressures the University has to ensure that it stays true to its mission and that its undergraduate and postgraduate academic projects are not compromised. In this context the University has to think more strategically about: optimising the potential of its vast knowledge base; as well as strengthening and expanding business and industry partnerships.

The University is developing and will introduce an Enterprise Business Strategy to stimulate and incentivise income-generating activities that produce unrestricted distributable resources. Under this broad umbrella, support will also be provided to commercialisation activities, viability studies, intellectual property management and entrepreneurial activity.

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#### **Consideration will also be given to:**

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- High-end research dealing with global challenges. This requires funding that is usually beyond the institution's capabilities to provide without the assistance of major partnerships and sophisticated and ethical business expertise.
  - Knowledge transfer as an important role of the University. The University needs increased and expanded continuing education and short courses.
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Commissioned research is a mark of an institution's public recognition. In recent years there has been increasing interest in the provision of 'services' to external parties. The University will formalise and develop its management consulting capability within a framework from which such services can be provided.

In this IOP period, attention will be paid to governance structures and a supportive and enabling policy and legal framework, enabling these activities to flourish without compromising the financial and audit regimes within which public entities operate.

All universities at times require additional resources. They need to be able to implement specific strategies that cannot be funded through normal income streams, in order to be able to respond to opportunities that arise, or to offset unplanned losses. For a university of its scope and size, UWC has very limited reserves, and a large proportion of its reserves are ring-fenced. UWC therefore must continue to develop and maintain its reserves. Without them, its financial viability may be significantly compromised. It will also invest its funds to maximise return on investment.

Third-stream income, although ring-fenced for specific research and academic purposes, is crucial to realising the University's mission and academic aspirations. Improved institutional support will be given to academics pursuing grant funding, especially from large funding corporations which often have very demanding and rigorous application and reporting requirements.



The University has made good progress in improving income generation through the use of its facilities. This area will also continue to be developed.

## **2. Fundraising, alumni and private gifts.**

The University has a varied track record in fundraising. With increased pressure on the institution's finances and ongoing pressure on the higher education system's finances, there is an urgent need to give greater emphasis to raising funds from private sources and building on the financial support of a growing alumni base. During this IOP period, specific attention will be paid to the development and implementation of a more targeted Fundraising Strategy to approach business, industry and our alumni community. Focused attention will be paid to strengthening a culture of philanthropy, developing alternative revenue streams through alumni, growing revenue from major gifts and support from current and prospective donors, and increasing the number of bequests to the University. In addition, the University will implement a campaign with clear themes, priorities and targets to raise substantial funds for major capital developments.

## **3. Improve systems integration and management – and operational models.**

Attention will be paid to incorporating a new, more flexible and dynamic financial system that will allow for the integration of different systems, among other things to enable us to better understand the financial relationships and interdependencies within which UWC operates. Improved technical and interpretative capacity in this area will assist the University to better understand and predict the financial implications of strategic and operational decisions.

Rigorous and effective stewardship of the University's financial resources is a priority. UWC seeks ongoing improvement in the checks and balances used to achieve the best possible value for money. Financial

control mechanisms have been improved significantly and will continue to receive attention. As part of managing costs, attention will also be paid to reducing overheads and to promoting a more proactive approach to value-for-money and shared services. A new procurement system will also be introduced that will address some of the frustrations and shortcomings of the current system.

It is anticipated that student fee increases will be under ongoing pressure during this IOP period, but, in accordance with best practice models, differentiation strategies should be pursued further to ensure that fees are set at appropriate levels in terms of the actual cost associated with the delivery of specific programmes. Attention will also be paid to the structuring of fees for postgraduate studies.

The public regulatory and reporting environment has changed dramatically over the last number of years and business intelligence capability will also be improved to provide better access to accurate and timeous information to support UWC's financial reporting.

## **4. Continuously improve alignment between budget and strategy.**

In successful organisations, resources follow strategies. UWC will be increasingly systematic and proactive in budgeting and planning, aligning the annual budgeting with the University's overriding institutional priorities whilst leaving room for new initiatives. This often is more difficult to achieve in resource-constrained environments, but the University recognises that unless key strategies are appropriately funded they are less likely to succeed. In UWC's strategic resource allocation processes, the focus is on enhancing academic excellence and providing our students with a quality university experience in and outside the classroom. The University aims to achieve these goals through informed, transparent and collaborative processes.

# GOAL 6:

## Enhancing UWC's standing and profile

### To shape the internal and external standing and profile of UWC as a vibrant, research-led institution through the use of various communication and marketing strategies.

At this exciting stage in its history, UWC faces a complex set of communication challenges. It draws on a proud and distinctive intellectual record as a historically disadvantaged institution (HDI) that repudiated the apartheid basis on which it was founded and aimed for academic excellence as essential to building an equitable and dynamic society.

#### HELPS FUND STRUGGLING STUDENTS

## UWC gets R1m injection from energy company

**Newsweek Desk**

The university's kamma drive has a holistic approach to their needs

The university's kamma drive has a holistic approach to their needs

The university's kamma drive has a holistic approach to their needs

## Science labs open doors for pupils

Support science learning from between for teachers

Support science learning from between for teachers

Support science learning from between for teachers

## Disabled graduate seeks no favours

'I don't think that having cerebral palsy makes me different'

'I don't think that having cerebral palsy makes me different'

'I don't think that having cerebral palsy makes me different'

#### LEADS FOR SUCCESS

## Helping build good businesses

Helping build good businesses

Helping build good businesses

## New UWC centre a major leap in improving our understanding of the cosmos

New UWC centre a major leap in improving our understanding of the cosmos

New UWC centre a major leap in improving our understanding of the cosmos

## UWC ranked as top research institution

UWC ranked as top research institution

UWC ranked as top research institution

## UWC to upskill data analysis industry

UWC to upskill data analysis industry

UWC to upskill data analysis industry

## UWC takes on big science

CERN research

UWC takes on big science

## UWC students win top prize for banking app

UWC students win top prize for banking app

UWC students win top prize for banking app

## Flats gift for UWC students

Flats gift for UWC students

Flats gift for UWC students

## CAPE JEWELS

CAPE JEWELS

CAPE JEWELS

Today, as a modern South African and African university in the top league, it is increasingly acknowledged by peers for the intellectual excellence of its research. In a differentiated higher education landscape it is now a research-led university and a major locus of international activity. However, its history as an HDI also has negative aspects. A very significant and demanding negative feature of the heritage is the reputation of HDIs as inferior. This has to be surmounted through a careful programme of communication. A less difficult task is holding before the public UWC's role as an agent of transformation in post-apartheid South Africa: it has a distinctive track record as an institution that enables people from sometimes severely disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed at university and aspire to excellence. Meeting this complex communication challenge requires an integrated, effective communications system throughout the university, and calls for consistent alignment between the communication strategy and the University's longer term vision and purpose. It is important to note that communication is not an isolated function with its own agenda: it is first and foremost about where the University as a whole is heading and what it aspires to achieve – about understanding how the communications function can support the institution to attain its goals and share its successes.

A second challenge pertains to the country's transformational journey of self-discovery and huge socio-economic disparities. These may relate to forms of digital inclusion/exclusion, levels of media literacy, generational differences and different ways of understanding. All of these have to be taken into account in deciding on the nature, media channels and locations of communication, and in differentiating target audiences and finding the appropriate language and idiom for communicating with them.

A third communication challenge is the rise in new technologies, a proliferation of user-generated content and a shift to mobile communications. The challenge of massive volumes of social media data and conversations that concern an institution's brand and reputation requires careful planning if the University is to make best use of major opportunities for communicating with an already interested set of publics across multiple channels.

A fourth challenge concerns the wide range of interested people, nationally and internationally, in other universities, business, industry, government, philanthropies, alumni networks, community organisations and the media. Their varied reach and influence can hugely extend the University's communication efforts if they are well informed. Attracting and sustaining their practical support is essential if the University is to attain its goals. The challenge is how and

through which media to communicate with such important constituencies with integrity and conviction.

Communication must be directed by an integrated cross-campus strategy, agreed under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor, with implementation skilfully led and tactfully monitored and coordinated by Institutional Advancement.

## ***UWC will:***

### **1. Communicate its vision, strategic intent and achievements in targeted ways and expect leaders at all levels to share responsibility for interpreting the institution's vision and achievements to relevant publics.**

In today's digital environment where masses of information are readily available, leaders must communicate strategically, regularly and consistently. The way they do so interprets the University's vision and communicates its achievements to greater or lesser effect. UWC will focus on effective, strategic communication of its vision and activities, rising above simple reporting of immediate events to interpreting their significance in ways that command respect. Leaders at all levels must develop a sophisticated, shared sense of where the University is and where it is heading, and interpret this to a range of publics in ways that testify to rigorous intellectual engagement. The leaders' sense of institutional identity and ability to engage and communicate with stakeholders about issues that are part of the big picture is fundamental to building and sustaining internal and external confidence, informing the life of the University with shared purpose, and conveying a growing sense of the implications and possibilities of its vision. For this strategy to succeed, it is equally critical that what the leadership communicates authentically reflects the leadership teams' shared understanding of UWC's complex history and mission, its remarkable achievements, what still needs to be done and why it matters today more than ever. Unless clearly articulated leadership messages aligned with the strategic intentions articulated in the IOP are available for publication, it is likely that the university's communication material will favour immediate reporting rather than conveying a compelling sense of significance.

### **2. Establish an integrated communication strategy across role players.**

UWC will have an integrated communication strategy focused on the overall institutional goals. This strategy

will unequivocally set the tone for a collaborative communication environment across executive portfolios, faculties and institution-level groups. Those responsible for communication will take full advantage of the available resource capabilities in the leadership, without being constrained by organisational 'silos' or having to piece together uncoordinated messages. They will also increasingly engage with stakeholders and draw on networks of communication professionals to enhance the overall effectiveness of messages and eliminate duplication. The roles and contributions of staff in public relations, marketing, advertising, recruitment, communication, etc. must be acknowledged, along with the need for these sections to work as a mutually supportive team with a coordinated agenda.

In the initial phases of setting up an integrated approach it may be necessary to assign coordinating responsibilities to a senior executive to provide guidance in the integration so that all necessary components form part of the critical path. An important measure of success for such an integrated communication plan is its ability to: help reshape and reposition UWC's brand; enhance awareness; increase the quality, mix and pool of enrolment applications; help build a conducive and transparent institutional culture; foster meaningful engagement; promote the institution's academic distinctiveness and achievements; and strengthen fundraising initiatives among a range of stakeholders.

### **3. Develop a content management plan to give prominence to UWC's strategic intent, high-end achievements and enhanced reputation.**

The global trend towards the consolidation and convergence of volumes of data, sound and images into digital format, as well as the plethora of content creators, has led to a huge proliferation of content. To achieve focus in this context, the University will develop a content management plan to guide the deliberate and proactive planning, creation, delivery, structured archiving and management of meaningful content. Giving strategic prominence to cross-platform content that tells the UWC story in publications, photos, video, interactive media, etc. and is linked to the University's long-term objectives will significantly increase its usefulness, reusability and consistency, and will systematically enhance UWC's strong reputation in all areas of the IOP. The University will project-

manage the process to: (a) identify appropriate content linked to strategic goals and establish the appropriate messaging, voice and tone for the execution of each strategy; (b) determine the structure through which content will be organised, prioritised and accessed; (c) guide responsible people regarding ways to manage and maintain up-to-date content for reuse; and (d) develop and appropriately adapt policies and procedures to sustain the content as it evolves over time. The content management strategy affords the University a prime opportunity to develop and give prominence to the kind of content that reflects what the University authentically stands for and to emphasise issues that resonate with the principles and values of UWC and its strategic partners. In implementing the strategy, the University will draw on a range of internal and external stakeholders and make full use of leading figures to achieve good (and, where relevant, long-term) media engagement. This will give public prominence to niche areas and institutional strengths, and will increase the probability that UWC experts are eagerly sought after for comment and longer contributions. Content geared towards the internal community is equally important to motivate people, informing them of how well the institution is performing against stated objectives and how various functions in the University are developing.

UWC will plan and implement a comprehensive communication and marketing campaign that takes account of the respective internal and external audiences. This will enable the University to use each marketing method and communication medium to its fullest advantage. An essential step will be securing broad buy-in from and participation by faculties and departments. Faculty leadership will assign appropriate persons to coordinate and champion significant content campaigns pertaining to upcoming achievements and to interpret their significance. The University will build in a strong measurement framework to track the increased demand for content and provide insight into the interests and behaviours of users.

### **4. Pay careful attention to a coordinated branding and marketing programme.**

Linked to its integrated communications strategy and content management plan, the University will embark on a carefully crafted identity and marketing campaign to build and broaden its brand awareness and maintain brand consistency. It will actively support a community of brand ambassadors, starting with its academics and professional support staff, to promote a strong, relevant brand and develop dynamic and





persuasive marketing material that is highly responsive to changing communication trends.

UWC will invest in digital technologies and a more responsive and well-organised design of its website to appeal to a range of visitors and allow easy navigation on multiple devices and platforms. The amount of time staff and students spend on new media and mobile communications compared to traditional communications strategies makes investment in this area an obvious imperative. Increasingly, more material will become mobile-friendly, and UWC will attract significant interest from a wider internal and external audience, continuing to promote the University's brand on its website and through multiple social media channels.

## **5. Sustain a vigorous national and international campaign of recruitment.**

The University will have a vigorous, ongoing campaign of recruitment aimed at making UWC the first choice of an increasingly excellent and diverse group of national and international students and staff. A means of initially introducing the University to prospective students and their families will be through campus visits on the University's website and other digital platforms. Prospective students will also be able to apply efficiently and easily on the admission website. Since many prospective out-of-province students and international students may select the city or country of choice first when seeking a university, the Cape Town and South Africa brands will be used in marketing, promotional and recruitment material and digital communications. Recruitment practices will also take account of the option of transferring from another university to UWC to complete a degree. This may increasingly become a strategy for cost-conscious students and families.

Related commitments include: (a) building and maintaining an exciting web presence; (b) promoting a good general reputation and visible public presence; (c) developing personalised content and outreach channels to make students know they are part of the UWC community and to address concerns and questions; (d) providing excellent service and response to communication by faculties, student development and support and the Registrar in dealing with applications and enquiries; (e) gathering personal narratives of current students and conscious enlisting of local and international alumni support; (f) undertaking dedicated visits to schools and ongoing communication with them about the University's standing and achievements.

## **6. Actively seek robust relationships and partnerships.**

UWC will promote public engagement and strong, enduring collaboration and partnerships between the internal community and a range of external stakeholders.

Engaged and satisfied partners are powerful ambassadors for the University. This plan seeks to engage appropriate partners to visibly and qualitatively support the institution's long-term objectives. UWC will develop extensive, mutually beneficial partnerships with business and business organisations, community groups, government at various levels and other universities, both locally and internationally. These relationships and partnerships will be expanded, and existing partnerships will be further developed and strengthened for various mutually satisfactory purposes. However, underlying them all will be a concern to enhance the University's capacity, reputation and resources in order to establish its image as an institution that adds considerable value, both nationally and internationally.

Another important group of brand ambassadors is the alumni. Like staff, their own insights and experiences will inform their perspectives of the campus and, like staff, they have a vested interest in seeing UWC's stature and reputation enhanced. UWC will actively build on its existing efforts to identify and build high-impact alumni networks, and update and mine databases to segment different target audiences among the alumni. The intended outcome is an increase in active alumni participation and alumni giving. More productive relationships with alumni will enable them to speak enthusiastically and authoritatively about initiatives at their alma mater and see the mutually beneficial value of contributing to and reaping from the University's future successes.

UWC will expand and continuously improve its database of collaborative engagements and relationships with philanthropies, donors, government agencies, NGOs, alumni and others to identify the diverse range of stakeholders and the nature of their importance to the institution. Such a stakeholder-mapping process will enable leadership at all levels to make evidence-based decisions on committing resources and championing long-term engagements with specific stakeholders.

## GOAL 7:

### Development of the Campus and surrounding areas

## *To develop the campus and strategically influence the development of the surrounding areas, and to develop and maintain modern, coherent physical and ICT infrastructure.*

Its location and the quality of its buildings, equipment, landscape and surrounding areas have a profound influence on UWC. They affect the way it is able to present itself to the outside world and secure support and partnerships, the extent to which 21st-century teaching and learning is enabled on campus, and the access students have to cultural and social amenities likely to enrich their education and promote transformation. These concerns have informed planning over many years, and have received particularly concentrated attention over the past decade.

UWC has spent significant resources to influence the development of the environment around the University and to secure improvement in transport facilities to mitigate some of the disadvantages of its location. It has had real but limited success, and these matters will continue to receive planning attention in the period of this IOP. The University has had far more success in improving the landscape, facilities and equipment on its campuses, responding to the changing nature of the academy and to the steady increase in student numbers. The five years covered in this IOP will see the continuation of an ambitious building plan, the refurbishment and renewal of old buildings on and off the main campus, and the decanting of spaces to be developed for growth, consolidation and ambitious new developments. As an index of the scale of expected change, at least five major capital projects will be completed by 2019. The outcome will be an expanded campus footprint that is urban in scale and density, with important connections to the fabric of the surrounding communities. Research-intensive universities are generally acknowledged in all major regional planning in the modern world as key catalysts for economic and social transformation. On its campuses there is broad recognition that UWC's long-term best interests lie

in suitable development around it: an economically vibrant sub-region with excellent public transportation, strong communities, and a range of accessible social and cultural amenities. The primary concern is a connected university with a strong identity and a dignified sense of place, projecting a sense of safety and security.

A number of internal and external imperatives that have been factored into the IOP drive the need for change and will require ongoing strategies to partner with and lobby external agencies to achieve that change.

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#### These include:

- the pressing need to influence the development of the broad area around the University so that (a) the city capitalises on the presence of three universities within two kilometres, (b) the universities are reconnected with the mainstream life of the city, and (c) an innovation-friendly precinct brings the universities together in building the regional economy,
  - a mandate to enrol more undergraduate and postgraduate students,
  - growing competition to attract and retain excellent students, teaching staff and researchers,
  - pressure to be responsive to the changing knowledge economy and the dynamic relationships with business which this calls for in the pursuit of innovation, and
  - advances in technology across a broad front, with major implications for research and teaching.
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**Taken holistically, these resolve themselves into five challenges the University must address.**

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- The built environment surrounding the main campus is perceived as uninviting, hostile and sterile, reducing the University's impact and cutting its students off from the mainstream life of the city. Aggravating this exclusory effect is that public transport initiatives to improve mobility have largely passed the campus by. This ongoing isolation is a glaring challenge to urban planning. Failure to change the nature of the surroundings, and to achieve appropriate land use and corridor development conducive to the academic and innovation project, will have long-term adverse consequences, not only for UWC, but also for the region's ability to revitalise the surrounding residential areas. UWC is strategically located to be a powerful partner in transforming the whole area into a model post-apartheid space and reconnecting it to the mainstream life of the city, but it cannot achieve this alone. As a powerful signal of its vision and commitment, it has acquired a multi-storey Medical Centre in the Bellville CBD. This will help influence the regeneration of a decaying business area and will promote UWC as an anchor institution of note in the sub-region.
  - The second challenge concerns growth and the main campus's long-term holding capacity. There is increased land-use pressure for academic and professional activities and their support, student residential accommodation, sports facilities, road infrastructure and parking, and places of arrival. To optimise the campus's potential holding capacity and to retain its park-like character requires the University to commit to a future urban collegiate density of 1 m<sup>2</sup> of building on 1 m<sup>2</sup> of land. The University unquestionably needs more space and will continue actively to explore the acquisition of additional land south of the campus and along the connecting corridor between the campus and its satellite sites in Bellville. UWC lacks the resources to initiate student housing developments on the required scale and will engage with a number of role players to make significantly more accommodation available, developed to the University's specifications. Good residential accommodation and social and cultural facilities will have a significant impact on the University's learning environment, its culture and its students' success.
  - A third challenge pertains to the main campus's accessibility, inadequate public transport, increased traffic congestion and perceived public safety and security concerns. There are many positive views about the scale of developments and open spaces on campus, and about the general quality of landscaping and the nature reserve. However, these are qualified by a strong sense that the campus is an island. Recent developments, such as the Life Sciences Building, have helped to "open" the campus, but the sense of isolation is emphasised by the area being poorly served by public transport systems and the fact that many of the facilities effectively become inaccessible after hours and on weekends for those who do not have access to private transport.
  - The fourth challenge relates to the rapidly changing and expanding function of information technology. Information technology is a vital component of university life. When IT initiatives are aligned with the University's strategic goals, their impact can be phenomenal. As the world move deeper into the 21st-century it is important to appreciate the role of Information Technology in connecting the campus instantly with the world, enabling high-end research, dramatically expanding the range of the classroom, enhancing the student experience, fostering efficient administration, and facilitating strong communication among internal and external communities. It is a key enabler of any modern university's core academic, research and operational goals and, as it is increasingly available in various forms, its use becomes second nature. Today's tech-savvy students and staff prefer an interactive and engaging experience and expect flexible and secure IT tools, systems and spaces to be available to them inside and outside the classroom. Universities face a large and growing challenge to use technology creatively to meet learning, research, administrative and support goals across a broad front. UWC has embraced this challenge. It is increasingly a "smart" university, and the opportunities represented by this are increasingly exciting.
  - The fifth challenge relates to keeping the main and satellite campuses connected. UWC's main campus is in Bellville South. Its oldest satellite campus is the Dentistry Faculty building in Mitchell's Plain. It has a further Dentistry satellite campus in Parow, in close proximity to Tygerberg Hospital. Its most recent campus is in the Bellville CBD. Students and staff on all these campuses must feel connected. A common vision and mission helps. Better physical connectivity through suitable development of the region and improved public transport would make a major difference. Furthermore, high-level real-time classroom connectivity can overcome many obstacles.
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## *UWC will:*

### **1. Cultivate a reintegration of the region through innovation partnerships, urban renewal strategies and closer links with local communities.**

A high priority during this IOP period is for UWC to break decisively from its balkanised apartheid position and connect to the mainstream life of the city. It is an excellent university, but it increasingly needs to be perceived as an anchor institution, helping to profile its metropolitan sub-region as a knowledge hub and a desirable destination, and contributing to its transformation. With that in mind, and to help promote the regeneration of Bellville's decaying central business district, the University has acquired the multi-storey Medical Centre and is in the process of repurposing it for four health departments. This will make the University more visible, improve the practical training of its students, and bring healthcare services to a readily accessible area close to the major bus and rail stations.

To improve public safety and better integrate the main campus with its satellite campuses and complementary surroundings, UWC will prioritise the acquisition of land to open a connecting corridor between the main campus and its Bellville CBD and Tygerberg Hospital Estate satellite campuses. It will engage with a number of landowners and policy makers to help influence the quality and character of the surrounding areas, better

connect the University with the city, and improve public transport networks. These strategies aim at building a total 'living and learning' environment in which all the opportunities available within an urban environment are accessible to UWC's students, staff and visitors.

In recent years, the increase in residence places on campus has not kept pace with enrolment growth. In 2015, only 22% (FTE: 27%) of UWC students were accommodated in residences owned or leased by the University. UWC acknowledges the urgent need for affordable student accommodation close to the campus and will explore a range of models to address this need.

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#### **The current campus has limited holding capacity, so the University will:**

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- Acquire additional land for student accommodation south of the campus.
  - Prioritise and explore partnership arrangements and funding models with a number of role players to significantly increase suitable off-campus student accommodation.
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The University will seek means of addressing issues of land use and local planning with a view to contributing to the appropriate development of its region as the centre of metropolitan Cape Town, and to the region's economic and social vibrancy. UWC and its neighbours stand to benefit greatly from strategic initiatives that take their interdependencies into account and keep the transformative potential of a modern urban environment in mind.





## 2. Create a distinctive built environment and implement major capital projects within a coherent, integrated zoning and investment strategy.

UWC will continue to update the Campus Development Plan against an appropriate long-term horizon. The University's approach is to consolidate faculty and administrative provision in each precinct, accommodate the scale of growth and meet changing academic needs by revamping buildings to improve efficiency. As it provides for future needs and stimulates economic, social and cultural development, UWC will become more attractive to staff and students, and will advance the region's standing as an innovation centre.

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**Six major capital projects are planned for immediate attention in the University's programme of rolling refurbishment, upgrades and provision of new learning and residence spaces.**

- Repurposing the multi-storey Medical Centre in the Bellville CBD.
- Developing high-capacity ICT connections between the campuses at Mitchell's Plain, Bellville, Tygerberg and the main campus.
- Bringing the departments of the Faculty of Education together on the south campus. They are currently scattered over a number of locations on and off campus. Infill developments on the south campus site will cater for specialist simulation areas.
- Refurbishing decanted science facilities to bring together four cognate disciplines – Computer Science, Information Systems, Mathematics and Statistics – in working proximity with the new Science precinct. Infill will provide new flat-floor lecture facilities.
- Erecting an infill building between the Old and New Arts buildings to accommodate the Arts Faculty research centres with facilities for visiting and postgraduate researchers.
- Developing a new student residence complex to provide affordable and appropriate student accommodation in close proximity to the campus.

Robust project management practices will be used to seek the ongoing alignment of these capital infrastructure projects with the wider strategic objectives of the University and to run the projects on time and within budget.

UWC will also implement measures to increase the sense of safety on campus through, amongst other things, improved lighting in strategic areas and improved access and surveillance technology.

The University will launch a major capital campaign to augment university and state funding with private and donor funding for new buildings.

## 3. Optimise space use, address maintenance and backlog maintenance and actively introduce sustainability measures.

The inefficient use of space dramatically affects the budget and drains resources sorely needed in other areas. UWC's determination to optimise the use of space will require more active and efficient management. The University will conduct regular surveys to improve the accuracy of reporting and analysis, identify space surpluses, shortfalls and priority accommodation requirements, and encourage efficient use of reliable space data and a space inventory to enable effective decision making. It will promote the efficient allocation of rooms fit for purpose and of appropriate size and quality. The surveys will also support the renovation programme so that facilities can be brought up to date progressively in terms of technology, general function and appearance.

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### To these ends, UWC will:

- Review effective space-management policies.
  - Analyse current space use in the light of national norms and the need to provide for growth.
  - Upgrade the existing timetabling software and management technology to improve information gathering.
  - Conduct space-use surveys for effective venue management to support the University as a learning community.
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A number of buildings constructed in the 1960s and 1970s are showing signs of wear, and their electrical and plumbing services and mechanical infrastructure are reaching the end of their lifespans. The University has conducted facilities condition surveys to assess the life and fitness of buildings and has identified maintenance requirements. To manage maintenance needs proactively, the University will implement a rolling programme of maintenance and refurbishment of older buildings to improve the facilities, attend to issues of universal access, and extend the life of the buildings. It will promote and manage the effective use of classrooms and laboratories, and progressively identify capital projects for refurbishment, aligning these with the strategic plan.

Aligned with the maintenance plan, the University will develop and implement an environmental sustainability plan as part of a broader sustainability strategy.

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**In addition to criteria such as ageing, suitability and safety, the maintenance plan will assist in securing better return on investment by better aligning sustainability efforts, such as:**

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- increased water efficiency and water harvesting,
  - reduced air pollution,
  - transport efficiency and enhanced trip reduction,
  - integrated waste management systems and limited use of hazardous materials,
  - improved biodiversity, including drought-tolerant landscaping,
  - future sustainability features of the built environment, and
  - sustainable management of the nature reserve.
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Maintenance and backlog maintenance initiatives will take into account ways to support and fund sustainability efforts through efficiencies and returns on investment without compromising compliance with best practice and health and safety regulations. As has been mentioned, the University will gather baseline data and produce timely and accurate information to measure progress in the implementation of facilities maintenance and sustainability matters and see where efficiencies can be achieved. The data will feed into an electronic database for monitoring purposes and will assist with regular reporting against institutional targets to be reviewed annually.

**4. Leverage and maintain a reliable and secure information and communications technology infrastructure.**

UWC will seek to have appropriate technology in all buildings. In the period covered by this IOP it will upgrade and expand the campus network and use ICT as a strategic instrument, supported by an integrated management information and business intelligence system to enhance business functions, thereby greatly improving access to learning material. It will also install high-end ICT connectivity between the main campus and its Bellville, Tygerberg Dentistry and Mitchell's Plain satellite campuses.

UWC is committed to a major programme of technology-enabled management and learning and will systematically improve infrastructure and systems and the institution's capacity to use them to maximal advantage. As information and communication technology advances and the maturity levels of systems vary, UWC's systems increasingly experience severe pressure from the increased complexity of IT security, and the proliferation of devices connected to the internet and cloud services. UWC will address its IT challenges in a comprehensive IT strategy to support the University's strategic goals by taking full advantage of the opportunities and mitigating key risks of the fast-developing ICT environment.



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**UWC will systematically seek to:**

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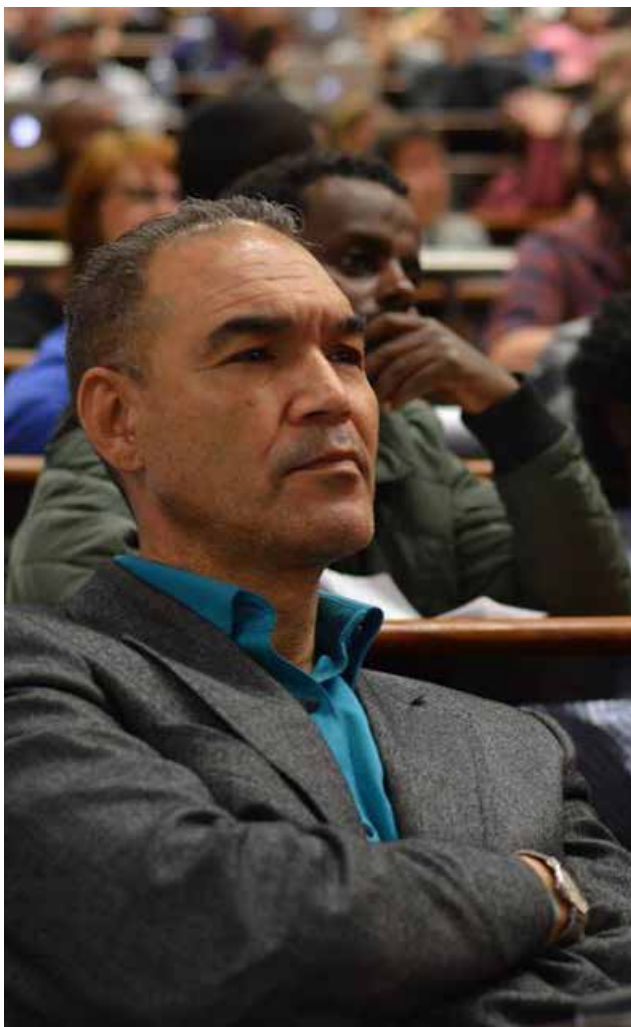
- Leverage enabling technologies, resources and a robust learning management system (LMS) such as Sakai to create campus-wide opportunities for staff and students to enhance student learning, and for file sharing and curricular innovation. It will explore the optimal use and consolidation of fixed computer lab facilities, campus learning spaces and learning commons to maximise the effectiveness of space in the library.
  - Support research excellence and innovation by providing high-bandwidth connectivity and a secure computing environment marked by data integrity, privacy, information and network security and effective disaster recovery. It will also expand its IT infrastructure to support high-end research teams and their need to access and share complex data remotely in the confidence that these transactions are secure. With these same goals in mind, UWC will collaborate with partners to facilitate high-volume data storage, co-invest in off-site data centre infrastructure to house research systems, and develop an appropriate framework for file sharing and on-demand network access to cloud services.
  - Improve Wi-Fi provision and safe and secure access to multiple devices, including mobile devices, to enhance the student experience and strengthen the relationship with prospective students, enrolled students, family members, alumni and members of the community. UWC has already commissioned the phased rollout of the Wi-Fi densification project to expand campus wireless coverage to indoor and outdoor areas so that a very large number of devices can use it without excessive data charges.
  - Support, upgrade and enhance the integration of key business processes and administrative systems to streamline workflow and enhance the integrity and stewardship of shared data. UWC will consider its current and future business intelligence needs and invest in appropriate data analytics tools to improve efficiencies and support data-driven decisions.
  - Identify areas and address issues of IT governance, cyber-security and emerging technologies to improve the levels of maturity, ensure business continuity of IT resources and the recovery of information repositories in the event of a disaster.
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## GOAL 8:

### Leadership, Management and Governance

*To provide effective leadership at all levels in order to maintain and develop a vibrant and viable institution of high repute supported by strong governance and management practices.*



Universities depend on capable leadership to enable them to respond in creative and intelligent ways to the needs, challenges and opportunities generated by a fast-changing environment. While executive members have a particular responsibility in this regard, they are necessarily part of a much wider leadership collective. Successful organisations have a broad formal and informal leadership base of engaged people who are committed to the institutional vision, interpreting it contextually and holding it consistently before internal and external stakeholders. This effectively shapes the institutional discourse and culture, promoting the social and intellectual vitality of the university, enabling it to establish fruitful academic and community networks, and making it possible to develop and implement strategies and

plans effectively. In short, sustained and nurtured leadership capacity throughout the University is the basis for it to develop and thrive.

UWC's remarkable story of progress, over the last ten years in particular, has depended on a growing commitment to coherent leadership across many levels in the University. Some of the milestone achievements have already been mentioned in the other goal areas. Over the period of the last IOP, the leadership collective, with the consistent support of the Vice-Chancellor, was able to interpret the context in which UWC is working to hold an inspirational vision of what is possible before the campus community, and systematically to flesh out appropriate engagements and responses, along with practical measures for adapting and effecting change in a coherent manner. All parts of the campus community were challenged to interpret their activities in terms of the vision, to make sacrifices towards realising it, and to become adept at new ways of seeing and responding in a challenging and ever-changing environment. For the last IOP period, the general picture is of an engaged and productive campus.

The period has also involved some costly institutional learning. The general effectiveness of leadership, management and governance was significantly affected in the last two years of the period by damaging public contestation over roles at a high level. This affected confidence and pride in the institution. The general picture thus came under threat, emphasising the vulnerability of a successful institution if roles are not clearly understood and the main vision yields to sectional interests. Contestation is in the nature of a university, but for it to take the institution forward it has to be ethical and within the same conversation. UWC has learned from this. The leadership, management and governance bodies are committed to robust, ethical and constructive relationships. This is of vital importance as universities move into a new era.

While preparing this IOP, the education context generally and the immediate operating environment of the University changed significantly. Externally, the most pressing challenges were changes in the regulatory environment, declining per capita state subsidy and growing pressure



on universities to develop alternative business models and generate new and more sustainable sources of income. In direct conflict with these trends, the national wave of student protests effectively shifted the primary financial pressure for free education to institutions, burdening them directly but unsustainably with a major implication of rising inequality in the nation. This coincided at UWC with the appointment of a substantially new leadership team in 2015. In demanding times, the new executive has needed to find its coherence as a team, nurture leadership, enhance a compelling and sustainable vision for the future, and contribute to generating intellectual enthusiasm on campus and stimulating productive thinking.

To be sustainable, university leadership must increasingly have a broad and coherent base. In addition to facing the considerable challenges to universities internationally, leadership needs to sustain intellectual capacity to make sense of the complex issues of a nation in transition, to balance often seemingly irreconcilable tensions, to promote a sense of common purpose among staff and students internally in an increasingly polarised climate, and to demonstrate the organisational skill to steer and translate well-intended strategies into realistically executable plans. No individual or small team can possibly address such demanding challenges. Even the most talented leaders need the input and shared responsibilities of a leadership collective to take forward the aspirations of a modern university in the current national circumstances.

## *Against this background, the University's formal leadership will:*

### **1. Consistently articulate the University's direction and promote its development in terms of its vision, mission and strategic goals to sustain its proud intellectual tradition.**

Over several decades, UWC has developed and sustained a distinctive, engaged intellectual tradition, alert and responsive to a constantly changing environment. This has given the institution a profound sense of purpose and stewardship. UWC's leadership is committed to working in this tradition as it seeks to build consensus around meaningful ways of keeping the University on a strong, positive trajectory. This requires of the University community both an openness to productive change and a commitment to the stability necessary for effective implementation. Put in another way, a compelling, engaged, future-oriented vision is

vulnerable to the vagaries of public discourse if it is not secured in a solid strategic plan true to the University's values and dynamic understanding of its mission.

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### **Formal leadership and structures that have a leadership responsibility have a key and complex role to play in:**

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- translating the vision into a coherent set of realistic plans to integrate and guide the broad strategic thrusts of the institution,
  - helping resolve the tension between competing priorities, and
  - giving prominence to creative sustainability thinking.
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To achieve this, the leadership will support multi-year, functional plans for each goal area, making strategic priorities explicit and giving due weight to the University's five core functions: teaching, learning, research, innovation and community engagement.

### **2. Nurture a culture of meaningful change to enhance the University's ability to adapt to new circumstances while remaining true to its values and so pursuing intellectual excellence.**

A university committed to working at the frontiers of knowledge is by definition intimately engaged with the dynamics of change. It has a threefold responsibility for knowledge and its application. It has to: (a) do its best to articulate what needs to change, (b) highlight the implications of that change, and (c) bring about the change in a sustainable way. This applies to the ways in which it handles both institutional change and change in academic knowledge. In all its activities, a university is rightly expected to be an intellectually astute institution.

UWC's intellectual leadership is committed to being attuned to the University's context to help negotiate, champion and defend necessary changes and developments with assurance and accuracy. In line with UWC's commitment to the transformation and sustainability that is necessary for South Africa's success, the University will select and prioritise a set of University-wide change initiatives with the biggest potential to advance the intellectual and strategic gains it has made and help it tackle new challenges and opportunities with assurance.

The need to adapt without compromising the University's core values and principles is given appropriate prominence throughout this IOP. The plan introduces new strategic themes, such as responding to the changing nature and impact of innovation and digital technologies on organisations and their people, the need for a more systemic and comprehensive approach to international networks and strategic partnerships, and the changing demography and requisite competencies and expectations of people in the 21st century. The challenges associated with these themes differ in nature and complexity. In addition to requiring novel approaches, they demand appropriate change process methodologies and consistent encouragement from collective leadership to increase the University's chances of success across functional areas. UWC's leadership team will articulate the rationale for change in these areas, awakening enthusiasm and sustaining the momentum of an institutional culture focused on open-mindedness, critical thinking, transformation and sustainable change. To maintain confidence on a University-wide scale will require strong coordination and programme management methodologies so that there is not a misalignment between strategy and project execution.

**3. Confidently embrace the future and invest in opportunities to prepare a new generation of leaders.**

The important transformative role of universities in society requires UWC to reflect consistently on the realisation of its vision and to adapt in sustainable ways that engage the confidence of up-and-coming generations. In pursuit of this objective, the University will progressively invest in a diverse leadership corps with the combined skill sets, broad areas of expertise and organisational capabilities to negotiate practicable change, make sense of new organisational realities, and dare to imagine and plan for inspiring futures. Clearly, this diversity has to be understood in national and international terms, modelling responses to South Africa's transformation challenges in ways that advance the University's global competitiveness.

Securing well-equipped leaders at all levels to drive and execute a strategic agenda for a modern South African university requires dedicated effort and careful institutional investment, unequivocally supported by all governing bodies. UWC's senior leadership

is committed to diversity, transformation and sustainability as key leadership imperatives and will require the committed support of leadership at all levels to achieve what is desired.

UWC will develop a dynamic framework for succession and knowledge transfer and implement an effective set of strategies to attract, retain, promote and develop talent and effectively empower the next generation of leaders to meet challenges with intellectual and ethical integrity. A set of inclusive leadership strategies will include building communities of practice, making targeted appointments, giving support to rising leaders to harness their value to the institution, and making vigorous efforts to specifically recruit and retain African and/or women leaders. In line with UWC's intellectual and scholarly ambitions, the formal leadership will identify selected areas with a sustainable competitive advantage for developing the next generation of leaders and giving them the opportunity to acquire sufficient experience and capacity to sustain the university in the long run.

**4. Embed leadership as a theme throughout the University, promoting commitment to a compelling identity and fostering sustainable relationships and partnerships on a growing scale, both internally and externally.**

UWC's distinctive identity has been defined by a deep commitment to understanding where we are as a country and vigorously exploring what is still necessary to achieve the transformation so widely desired. Effective leadership is needed to secure such ongoing intellectual engagement as being at the heart of the University's strategic priorities, and to use the University's passion, mission and sense of purpose to motivate academics, students and other constituents to share in the engagement. The leadership is committed to building on a compelling and inspiring identity around the institution's core purposes, aspirations and emerging strengths, showing how they make sense and why they are important. In building a shared commitment to a compelling identity, and by constantly rethinking key assumptions, the leadership will develop a powerful set of meta-messages to promote dialogue, produce greater focus and energy, shape a dynamic intellectual discourse and help members of the University find a sense of meaning in their work.



Secondly, leadership at all levels will foster wider connections, encourage active engagement and help inspire people to think differently about key issues that matter. These things go along with promoting a trustworthy working and educational environment in which staff and students experience a sense of belonging, and better connecting individual and group interests to the University's broader, strategic agenda. Building trust takes time and greater collaboration cannot be achieved casually. Leadership will take active steps to overcome the silo approach, which generates unnecessary challenges, and to place greater emphasis on institutional cohesion.

Thirdly, in today's interconnected world it is critical for leadership to promote and support new knowledge networks, encourage academics to transcend narrow disciplinary boundaries and sustain the multiple formal and informal connections and alliances that mark a healthy university. These networks and alliances exist both within the institution and beyond it. Those outside the University include relationships with communities, businesses, NGOs, branches of government, and other universities and research institutions in South Africa and internationally. The formal leadership accepts an ongoing responsibility to raise awareness of the importance of these connections and to expand the university's capacity to sustain reciprocally beneficial strategic relationships and expand access to knowledge networks. A key step is the development of a focused internationalisation strategy that supports the goals of this IOP. Within the institution, building and maintaining a stakeholder map will enable leadership to prioritise key connections and revisit the assumptions and levels of commitment and influence in each, with a view to more effective engagement and new conversations and opportunities. This will assist the University to reassess the rules of stakeholder engagement and benefit from the depth and breadth of well-founded, long-term relations.

#### **5. Be efficient in the execution of strategies and in insisting on accountability.**

Bridging the gap between having strategic intentions and carrying them out is the perennial challenge of strategy execution. Effective implementation in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment involves building trust, both through success and through manifestly learning from failure.

Leadership sustainability depends on leaders doing what they promise. By effectively implementing plans across functions, formal leadership will play a critical role in establishing the credibility of the University's strategic choices and strengthening conviction and confidence. Among other things, this will involve the creation of enabling conditions, the removal of obstacles that may impede execution, and drawing on staff with the requisite skills that enable them to contribute meaningfully.

By consistently delivering on promises, leadership builds trust and maintains a reputation for reliability. To this end, leadership will establish annual priorities and realistic implementation strategies linked to resources. Such an approach makes it possible for progress to be seen, promotes reflective practices and encourages constructive feedback. However, all plans are implemented in a relatively unstable environment. Trust will also be built by identifying strategic risks and integrating appropriate contingency measures into plans.

Meaningful diagnostic metrics are necessary to register progress and to raise levels of accountability. The leadership will put integrated systems in place to gather and share information, and to provide insights to inform decisions. Where possible, benchmarking appropriate indicators against peer institutions will be used to help raise standards across institutional goal areas, enabling leaders to proactively identify strategic systemic issues and prioritise them for action.

The culture of accountability extends beyond formal leadership. In this regard, good governance and accountability frameworks are only as useful as the learning that arises from them by all parties involved. Through transparency, responsible decision making and respect for diversity, the leadership will facilitate the effective management and oversight of the institution's core business systems and processes to build a culture of accountability among all members of the University community and expand the use of effective feedback systems.