

Preface

The development of a new Institutional Operating Plan (IOP) provides the opportunity for the University of the Western Cape (UWC) community to pause and consider the Institution's future direction.

This Discussion Document puts forward an overarching aspiration for UWC *"to be widely recognised as a premier research-led university, most notably for the nexus between its degree and research programmes, its substantial place in key areas in the knowledge economy, its keen focus on transforming lives and its productive relationships and effective partnerships with universities and key agencies in Africa and beyond"*.

This aspiration, articulated in the proposed Vision for 2035, reflects UWC's stature as a research-led university, its successes over the past years as well as its commitment to use and apply its intellectual vibrancy and academic capacity to serve the public good and advance social justice, inclusiveness, diversity, and sustainability.

The University's recent celebration of its 60th anniversary highlighted many accomplishments which position it well in the South African higher education landscape. But it is also acutely aware that it cannot rest on its laurels. What worked well in the past may not be as effective as embracing emerging opportunities and navigating the challenges that lie ahead. UWC, therefore, has to remain vigilant in its responses to challenges and opportunities.

The general strategy proposed here for achieving this vision is captured by two words: *Connecting Possibilities*.

(i) *Connecting* is relational and is closely linked to the University's commitment to socially responsive or engaged teaching & learning and research. It suggests a greater connectedness with the environment within which it is anchored. It speaks to UWC's ability to connect through partnerships and networks nationally and internationally. It also signals the need for greater connectivity among the different constituents and to connect them through sustainable ecosystems. It also aims to make boundaries permeable for its students and staff to easily cross structural and disciplinary boundaries. Focussing on connecting digitally highlights the intention to set the Institution on a digital transformation journey as part of repositioning itself as a modern university.

(2) *Possibilities* allow us to think creatively and imaginatively about possible futures for UWC. It seeks to facilitate an openness to entertain different ideas about the University's role and core purpose, its strategies and priorities to articulate what "could" be UWC's evolving role over the next 5 to 15 years. The intention is to embrace the uncertainty and ambiguity of the environment, reimagine and seize the opportunity to be open-minded, welcome the chance for engagement, and anticipate UWC's *Connecting Possibilities*.

The Discussion Document's main elements include a revision of UWC's Vision (Vision 2035) and Mission statements, as well as its core values and associated behaviours. The document offers some crosscutting themes that should permeate the different goal areas. It then

covers the eight Goal Areas with associated objectives that define the focus for this IOP period and suggests steps for goal attainment.

Why develop an Institutional Operating Plan?

The IOP is a living document that builds on the previous plan (IOP 2016-2020) and will change over time. The specific impetus for strategic rethinking and crafting a new IOP comes from both internal and external conditions that create opportunities to differentiate and move the University into the next decade with confidence. As such, this document serves multiple purposes as it:

- provides a guiding framework for critical reflection on UWC's current and future position and its desired role in the higher education landscape;
- serves as a platform to bring together diverse groups of people to share thoughts and identify significant opportunities and challenges that will have the greatest impact on the University's future;
- seeks to capture our collective imagination and galvanise the UWC community around a shared sense of purpose, values and ideals;
- allows the university to set priorities and consider worthwhile trade-offs towards goal attainment; and
- feeds into (statutory) national planning processes.

The IOP is not an end in itself, but a means to an end and a lever for change. The IOP seeks to foster coherence, alignment and unity of purpose while leaving enough flexibility for faculties and divisions to pursue excellence and creativity in ways important to them.

Why change? Internally, change is triggered by ongoing analyses and dissonance between the 'ideal' intent and current realities. We have identified some interrelated drivers for change:

- As a caring university community, there is a general feeling that much more can be done to help students succeed academically and acquire the requisite attributes and values to thrive as global citizens in the 21st-century knowledge economy.
- There is a sense that we often attempt to be 'all things to all people' and fail to seize opportunities to differentiate ourselves through indecision and a failure to set distinct priorities.
- The adage that "bureaucracy is the death of any achievement" speaks to an inflexible, siloed organisational culture where effort, often unsupported by appropriate modern technologies, is fragmented and the energy of academics and researchers diverted from their core functions to compensate for ineffective processes. Improved systems and policy congruence are needed for faster decision-making and improved responsiveness.
- The need to achieve increased financial sustainability over a planned period.

External drivers of change

"Inequality in South Africa has long been recognised as one of the most salient features of our society. South Africa is consistently ranked as one of the most unequal countries in the world, an empirical fact that has its roots in the history of colonisation and apartheid. In addition to being extremely high, South African inequality appears to be remarkably persistent. Despite many efforts by government to reduce inequality since our democratic transition in 1994,

progress has been limited". (Inequality trends in South Africa, Statistics South Africa, Report No 03-10-19)

According to the latest available data, South Africa reported a Gini Coefficient of 0,65 (in 2015), one of the highest worldwide. Patterns relating to income distribution, employment and access to resources remain stubbornly skewed by race and gender. The COVID-19 pandemic has further ravaged the South African economy that was already in deep crisis following years of corruption, which has bled the Fiscus, wrecked key public entities and hobbled service delivery. There are predictions of unprecedented decline in the GDP, mirroring the global economic downturn. South Africa's unemployment rate is the order of 30% and disproportionately impacts young people struggling to enter the labour market. Public budgets, including those of the university and research system, are under considerable strain and likely to be for the foreseeable future. The 2015/16 'Fees Must Fall' protests and the subsequent introduction of fee-free higher education for the 'poorest of the poor' had resulted in increased budgets for universities from the national Fiscus, but most of the new money was directed to support student financial aid. Real growth in the government subsidy to universities is unlikely in the next five years, and a weak currency will add pressure, especially on library, ICT and research equipment acquisitions. In addition, the budgets of the national science councils have already been significantly cut, directly impacting national funds available to support research and postgraduate bursaries.

Globally, the effects of climate change contribute to more frequent and severe environmental disasters, impacting every aspect of people's lives. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, "climate change is one of the most urgent issues facing humanity today". The Union further stresses that the "world's most vulnerable people - with the fewest resources and options - will suffer the most".

This IOP is very aware of the fact that no public university can plan for its future without taking into account the enormous challenges that confront society. Universities have to play an important role in finding solutions and helping to improve lives and livelihoods. Along with other knowledge institutions and partners, universities are well placed to harness scientific, technological and other advances for the public good and give concrete meaning to concepts such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The process of developing the IOP

Planning is an iterative process. Thinking behind the planning effort was organised around four key questions:

Who we are as an institution?

Where do we wish to go?

How do we get there?

How will we know if we are making progress?

The development of the IOP is the product of substantial work and the convergence of several overlapping national and institutional planning processes. This implies that the formal process is not the be-all-and-end-all of planning but that planning is dynamic and that different mandates are derived from ongoing interaction with several regulatory bodies and funding agencies, including national departments.

The formal IOP process solicited diverging and converging input through a combination of processes: task teams, electronic surveys and questionnaires; analyses and independent reports on UWC's relative performance; expert advice; consultative webinars; position papers; a multi-media student competition; all-leader workshops with heads of departments directors of units; and active engagement with senior management. Extending over 15 months, the process yielded valuable feedback from multiple constituents and input from Executives and Deans. A total of 11 task teams were established, broadly premised on the three core goal areas and five enabling goal areas of the previous IOP. Three of these goal areas were split into different task teams to give more in-depth emphasis to matters of significance to the university. Thematically the task teams focused on:

- The student experience;
- Enrolment of undergraduates and postgraduates;
- Learning and teaching;
- Research-intensiveness;
- Establishing a culture of innovation;
- UWC's people framework;
- Financial sustainability;
- UWC in the public domain;
- Infrastructure development;
- Information technology; and
- Leadership, management and governance.

For purposes of uniformity, the task teams were requested to assess the current IOP and the emerging environment and propose a set of recommendations that: maintain and strengthen approximately 70% of what has worked well in the 2016-2020 IOP; set aside about 15% to build momentum and nurture emerging areas and capabilities; and provide at least 15% scope to explore viable options for future growth.

The 11 task teams, each chaired by a senior UWC academic, brought together different institutional role-players with varied interests whose deliberations resulted in Phase 1 and Phase 2 task team reports that have been used as part of the input to inform the compilation of this document. It is important to note that the task team process commenced just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, and they had to perform their work under lockdown conditions. Conducting strategic planning in times of crises always poses the risk of short-term thinking and a tendency to wait for the storm to pass before tackling long-term challenges. Fortunately, under the able guidance of chairpersons, the task teams were able to stay focused and look beyond immediate concerns to consider UWC's future over the medium to longer-term. We are greatly indebted to all task team members for their commitment to the process and the University. The work and reports of the task teams have contributed significantly to shaping this Discussion Document. Despite the constraints of the lockdown conditions, student input was solicited through a survey and a multi-media student competition.

Mission, vision and values as enduring commitments

The IOP process also provided the opportunity to revisit UWC's Mission, Vision and core values.

Although mission statements are enduring, they are not cast in stone, and a restatement of purpose may be required as institutions evolve. The first critical moment of redefining UWC's mission occurred in the build-up to its attainment of autonomous university status in the early 1980s. In 1982 the University adopted a new Mission statement ("UWC Objectives") in which it rejected the apartheid ideology on which it was founded with a formal declaration of non-racialism and "a firm commitment to the development of the Third World communities in South Africa". As a result, UWC became the first residential South African university, in defiance of the apartheid state, to "open" its doors to all who qualified and paved the way to later declaring itself the intellectual home for the democratic left.

The second moment of redefinition of purpose was necessitated at the advent of democracy to align UWC's role with the broad post-1994 goals and aspirations of the new democratic order in South Africa. Following the promulgation of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, UWC adopted a new Mission statement in the same year. The 1997 Mission statement was slightly amended in the 2010 IOP (see the phrase in italics) and read as follows:

"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."

Although the current Mission statement has served the University well over the past two and a half decades, there is consensus that it is in need of an urgent update to more adequately represent UWC's current purpose, sense of identity, strategic direction and renewed self-confidence. While there is much to be proud of, there seems to be an over-emphasis on historic achievements such as "its proud experience in the liberation struggle" and that UWC's sense of future direction is confusingly sought through a "gaze into the rear mirror".

UWC does not exist for its own sake or for narrow self-interest but strives through its core work for the betterment of society. If the Mission statement is meant to provide a synoptic view of our institutional identity captured in a purpose statement, then how do we reimagine and create an inspiring, purposeful and forward-looking narrative of the University which will serve us well for the coming years?

Awkward and painful as it may be, we cannot overemphasise the power of words and the importance of mission and vision clarity to steer UWC's core business and direction. Very little of the subsequent goal setting and strategies will matter if there is confusion about where we are heading. Once clarified and consensus is achieved, the Mission and Vision statements can serve as good references for strategy setting at multiple levels across the

University and to differentiate ourselves from our peers while it can simultaneously articulate the Institution's social and service orientation.

What is offered for consideration are revised Vision and Mission statements and a set of core values and associated behaviours. These were drafted following inputs from two workshops, one with the University Council and a UWC All Leader workshop that included senior management, directors of institutes, centres and professional support units, IOP task team chairpersons, and heads of academic departments.

Proposed UWC Mission

UWC is a research-led university responsive to the needs of a changing world through excellence in teaching, learning and research and the generation and application of new knowledge.

Firmly anchored in its local and sub-regional context and inspired by its distinctive academic role in building a more equitable and dynamic society, the University will continue to encourage its students, staff and partners to advance its mission of serving the greater public good and searching for humane and sustainable solutions to the challenges of our time. This will be realised by achieving high academic standards, intellectual rigour and productive partnerships and networks beyond the confines of disciplinary and geographic boundaries.

Proposed UWC Vision 2035

The current Vision statement was adopted in 2010 to sketch a picture of UWC's desired future by 2025. The same vision was adopted five years later to project an end-state by 2030. The current vision statement reads as follows:

"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 where 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."

Critique of the current Vision statement is that it lacks brevity and is not memorable. There are also views that it is not sufficiently inspiring and challenging to create an 'unsettling' tension with the status quo. In response, the following 2035 Vision statement is proposed:

"By 2035, the University of the Western Cape will be widely recognised as a premier research-led university, most notably for the nexus between its undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes and its research endeavour, its substantial place in key areas in the knowledge ecosystem, its keen focus on the public good and transforming lives, and its productive relationships and effective partnerships with universities and key agencies in Africa and beyond."

Proposed values and behaviours

The Mission is underpinned by the following five enduring values and associated behaviours to guide our actions and decisions, and interactions with the world and to serve as a compass to view our work against:

1. Academic excellence: We respect and strive for excellence in teaching and learning and in research as we strive to be widely recognised as a premier research-led university.

To this end, we seek to bring learning, teaching and research in an appropriate balance with each other. We recognise the importance of academic freedom and encourage a reflective culture among all members of the University community, rooted in taking responsibility for excellence. More formally, we challenge mediocrity, critically review and assess what we have done, apply appropriate benchmarks, and use the results to provide encouragement and make us more efficient and effective. We aim to be leaders in distinct and differentiating niche areas of excellence, consistent with our Mission while maintaining good standards overall.

2. Engagement and responsiveness: We cultivate a socially responsive, people-centred approach through education and research and critical engagement on important matters. To this end, we commit to the pursuit of knowledge that is responsive to societal and disciplinary contexts. We encourage independent thought and critical engagement as a means to help transform lives and the orientation to work for a more equitable, inclusive and just society. We will continue to connect with communities, instil in our students a culture of engagement and draw strategically on partnerships, alliances and international opportunities to address challenging issues of local and global concern.

3. Integrity and accountability: We expect high standards of ethical professional behaviour and a collegial climate of critical professionalism among staff that is open to challenge, with the best interest of the University at heart.

Accordingly, we are accountable for our actions and decisions and engender trust within and between our communities through values-based leadership. We commit to credible, ethical and trustworthy conduct; fair treatment of others; practice openness and transparency while honouring confidential and private information. We have a long-standing commitment to

environmental sustainability and stewardship of our campus resources. We also uphold the high standards of intellectual inquiry, academic freedom and quality service provision.

4. Collegiality and collaboration: We place a high premium on collegiality, collaboration, accountability and shared responsibility.

Accordingly, we work with each other across departmental silos and disciplinary boundaries and foster partnerships between groups (albeit internal or external). We promote ways to make it easy for students and staff to connect, communicate and collaborate meaningfully and to achieve what is best for the broader University as well as for individual teams.

5. Inclusivity and diversity: The University is committed to equity, diversity, inclusivity and fairness, and seeks to nurture and build on our diverse cultural heritage.

Accordingly, we commit to creating a welcoming, inclusive and diverse community accentuated by a caring, productive and respectful culture. We will continue to advance the imperatives of access and commit to creating an atmosphere of trust, tolerance of opinion and mutual support in a community characterised by a rich diversity of people and ideas. We remain committed to the protection of the rights and dignity of individuals and will therefore not tolerate any forms of discrimination, including that based on race, sexual orientation, religion or xenophobia.

Goal areas

The plan develops a number of specific goals (end) and objectives and actions (the means) to enhance the University's strategic position in eight goal areas:

- Goal Area 1: The Student Experience seeks to provide students with a meaningful and stimulating university experience through strategic approaches to co-curricular support, student engagement strategies and enrolment management, geared towards achieving the University's medium- to long-term ambitions for its size and shape.
- Goal Area 2: *Learning and Teaching* aims to provide students with research-led teaching that is contextually responsive, embedded in a relevant and dynamic curriculum and supported by diverse assessment approaches, aligned to achieving the desired learning outcomes.
- Goal Area 3: *Research and Innovation* seeks to strengthen UWC's position as a research university, contributing to the transformation of lives through its knowledge production endeavours and recognised for its general research capabilities and research strengths in selected areas.
- Goal Area 4: *People Framework* seeks to position UWC as an employer of choice through a dynamic and supportive work environment and a resilient culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity and excellence, enabling the University to meet its Vision and strategic goals.
- Goal Area 5: *Financial Sustainability* aims to support UWC's financial sustainability through budget alignment with strategic intentions and a focus on strengthening income diversification.
- Goal Area 6: *UWC in the Public Domain* aims to optimise the range of media and publication platforms to position UWC as a vibrant, intellectually stimulating, university where students and staff can realise their aspirations.

- Goal Area 7: *Developing the Campus and its Surroundings Areas* seeks to develop UWC's campuses as dynamic sites that effectively support academic and related activities through appropriate physical and ICT infrastructure that assist in anchoring the University in different communities and connecting it to diverse publics.
- Goal Area 8: *Leadership, Governance and Management* aims to provide robust governance and effective values-based leadership at all levels in order to maintain and develop a vibrant and viable institution of high repute supported by accountable management practices.

Crosscutting areas

Digital transformation

The previous IOP initiated a number of digitalisation projects to enhance the University's fitness to function as a connected 21st-century university in the digital age. COVID-19 has, however, accelerated the speed and scale of digitalisation, necessitating students and staff to study and work remotely. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, the implementation pace of several ICT projects was and ad hoc, often lacking proper project and vendor management. In contrast, the urgency of the pandemic has resulted in significant collaboration between executive lines, faculties, professional support units and vendor coordination to roll out the provision of devices and data and, in doing so, helped to reduce the digital divide that also exists in the University community. Building on this momentum, the IOP proposes that UWC remains ambitious in its outlook and embarks on a sustained, deliberate, staged journey to digitally transform the entire institution through smarter integration and embeddedness of digital technologies, business processes and key competencies at all levels of the University. The recently adopted *Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy* is an important step in support of this approach. The redevelopment of the University's website and the introduction of the UWC intranet site are steps in the right direction, but much more is required.

One of the principles behind digital transformation is that it breaks from the traditional, top-down, institutionally-initiated IT approaches to an increasingly demand-driven, bottom-up approach that is more receptive to the changing behaviours, expectations and needs of the core business and its users. Although such external pressure to put people and strategy before technology presents daunting challenges for all sectors, the opportunities that result from it are significant. A second pressure that is unlikely to abate is the need to keep pace with the explosive growth in new technologies and the associated data and cybersecurity risks that accompany it. This will require: a strategic investment and increased embeddedness of the digitalisation of business processes across all portfolios; a conscious update or replacement of legacy systems; higher processing speed capacity and the development of common data platforms; 24/7 access and better work-life integration; improved use of immersive technologies and artificial intelligence to name a few. The University stands to benefit significantly from a well-conceived digital transformation strategy and has to invest more strategically in the revamping of its digital infrastructure and capabilities to harness its full potential. As part of a digital transformation approach, increased attention must also be given to improve the support to e-research and cloud computing requirements.

Anchored in Place

The University's approach to positioning itself as an anchor institution presents transformative opportunities to give effect to its academic mandate while actively contributing to the distinctiveness, vibrancy and character of its immediate surroundings and the region more broadly. There is a growing expectation that public institutions should not operate in isolation but rather integrate their development plans in innovative ways to impact and influence their immediate environments. As such, UWC will continue to immerse itself in its neighbourhoods, both urban and rural and promote cultural, educational, developmental, social and economic relationships with its locales. Through its intellectual and professional talent and capacity, UWC has a growing prominence in urban and rural settings and is increasingly seen as an important resource in the region and, more especially by marginalised communities. This demands of the University to be much more imaginative, thoughtful and purposeful about its sense of place and its intellectual, geographic, cultural and ecological footprint. Understanding the collaborative value of anchoring in place, UWC will assist in building mutually beneficial ecosystems with different role-players – public, private, philanthropy, business and civil society - able to create sufficient scale, scope and geographies of opportunities.

Collaborative Partnerships within an ecosystem

As a research-led university, UWC plays an essential role in the national system of higher education and the global knowledge economy. In doing so, it allows the University to broaden its horizons and participate in a number of national and international projects in several disciplines. It also opens the way to engage as a trusted partner in addressing the global challenges of our time, like climate change, food security, global health and wellbeing, custodianship of data and our shared sense of humanity. To avoid unproductive competition and minimise duplication of effort, it becomes vital for UWC to develop strategic approaches to internationalisation through participation in major collaborative partnerships and research networks. It also prompts UWC to expand relationships in the developing world, with a particular focus on Africa. UWC also needs to carefully explore long-term business and industry relationships beyond disciplinary boundaries and jurisdictions to build sustainable ecosystems.

Internationalisation

Internationalisation has been an important focus at UWC and embedded as a cross-cutting theme across all goal areas in the IOP, as well as in the critical teaching and learning, research and student development imperatives. The focus globally has been on increasing the competencies of individuals to better appreciate and be enriched by the diversity of culture, language and experience of people across borders through academic mobility and exchange. Given UWC's history, it is particularly well-positioned to offer insights and experience from the African perspective. UWC has grounded its international partnerships on the principles of mutual reciprocity and respect, which is important to redress the skewed legacies of knowledge production.

Internationalisation is a crucial part of what UWC's Mission encapsulates and will strengthen efforts towards realising the Institutional Vision. The recruitment of international students and staff enriches the experiences of the UWC community, strongly supporting increased diversity and inculcating a sense of belonging to the Continent as well as supporting the Internationalisation@Home initiative. In view thereof that most South African students

cannot afford to travel abroad to benefit from the international exposure afforded by studying in another country and the fact that there are limited funded opportunities available to support such experiences, the Internationalisation@Home initiative adds to the diversity and richness of the UWC student experience. The learning and teaching, as well as research and innovation goal areas, will further benefit from UWC's internationalisation strategy of supporting staff and student mobility to its international partners through dedicated donor-funded programmes. Through focused attention to establishing sustainable partnerships, UWC has developed a number of long-term strategic partnerships that continue to benefit the knowledge project of the Institution.

Emphasis is also being placed on the membership of UWC in strategic research and institutional consortia. This, amongst others, entails the leveraging of UWC's existing networks to access consortia of institutional partnerships. 'Our friends are your friends, and we all stronger when we work and play together' may be an apt description of this strategy. UWC staff and students would mutually benefit from this collective internationalisation strategy.

Planning assumptions and UWC's contextual challenges

The IOP 2021-2025 and associated institutional goals must follow from realistic assumptions about the opportunities and the challenges facing the South African public higher education sector, including the following:

- Demand for access to higher education and traditional campus-based educational experiences will not diminish, but parents and students prefer campuses that integrate academic and personal development in both physical, digital and virtual online environments.
- Universities will be challenged to adapt to the "new normal" confronting society. Institutions with an enhanced on-line presence in accredited programme provision will become a key differentiator.
- Programme distinction and research niches will increasingly be a more important principle of organisation than the conventional department, under pressure of the demand for new knowledge, and ways of applying it at scale in a climate of fiscal austerity;
- Competition between regions and institutions for local and international partnerships with businesses, parastatals and other institutions will increase. Such partnerships have the potential to be lucrative and to enable institutions to be more competitive;
- Increased competition for excellent students, particularly for funded postgraduate students, will put universities under pressure to develop a range of highly-selective recruitment and retention instruments to facilitate planned expansion in accordance with mandated enrolment targets
- The volatility and economic uncertainty of the environment will have serious implications for fundraising and the capacity to embark on longer-term projects. This will create a more stressful work environment which often results in an erosion of trust and collegiality.
- Universities' budgets will be under mounting financial pressure as a result of pressure from Treasury to redirect expenditure to other pressing priorities, as well as the capping of fees and the lack of a lasting solution to the funding of the 'missing middle'

group of students who fall outside of the NSFAS. As a result, current business models will be tested more than ever before.

- In an era in which the value of higher education is being questioned at unprecedented levels, institutions will have to communicate more effectively with the public to showcase their activities and demonstrate their contribution to society, with the view to building greater trust.
- Data privacy issues will impact higher education issues as universities will be under pressure to secure student and research data, guard against data breaches and demonstrate responsible enforcement.

Questions for further consideration

In reading this Discussion Document, please reflect on the following:

- *Do you think the proposed new Mission Statement has the potential to serve us well for the coming years?*
- *This Discussion Document identifies four cross-cutting areas. How best can these be embedded across all or most of the goal areas?*
- *Are the proposed objectives for the IOP period clearly articulated in each of the goal areas? If not, how can they be strengthened?*
- *Are there significant gaps/omissions in any of the goal areas?*
- *The Discussion Document does not yet include the criteria for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the IOP. Please share your thoughts on the most appropriate measures of progress and success.*

Goal Area 1: The Student Experience

To provide students with a meaningful and stimulating university experience through strategic approaches to co-curricular support, student engagement strategies and enrolment management geared to enhance the University's overall mission and long-term ambitions.

Introduction

This student experience and enrolment management component of the IOP 2021-2025 is one of three core strategies of the IOP and places the student at the centre of the University's endeavours. The goal is predicated on a diverse campus profile in response to demands for increased access and an increasingly diverse student body in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and prior qualifications. It is also based on the view that the student experience extends throughout the student lifecycle to, among others, nurture students' capabilities through a lifelong relationship with the University, from the first contact through their undergraduate and postgraduate experiences to their alumni status.

In considering the progress made in this Goal Area during the previous IOP cycle, the overall sense is that good progress was made, and there is a strong foundation on which to build going forward. The student experience is impacted by almost everything that the University does, and it is, therefore, impossible to give a comprehensive overview of progress in this area. In addition to the work done by the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Student Development and Support (SDS), other executive lines and faculties also have various initiatives in place to support students, their campus experience, their mental and physical wellbeing and their journey towards academic success.

Sport has become a central part of university life and has the potential to bring the campus community together. The University increased the number of sporting codes that it offers, which has allowed for greater student involvement. The national media exposure of UWC rugby, cricket, netball and women's soccer has increased significantly and also reflect the Institution's commitment to improving gender equity through sports. The introduction of an increase in the number of Sport Merit Awards over this IOP period has enabled the Sports Administration Department to recruit better athletes than in previous IOP periods without compromising academic pre-requisites. This has led to a rise in the number of UWC athletes joining professional as well as national teams. The combined efforts of the Sports Administration Department and the academic focus on developing High-Performance Sport as a research niche area gives student-athletes opportunities to access better medical and psychological support, allowing for a much-improved student experience in the arena of sport at UWC.

There has also been a shift towards more healthy meals being provided by new vendors of food outlets on campus as well as having a wider variety of meals being served. Through this, the University has tried to be more sensitive to the wellbeing and cultural diversity of its campus community.

UWC was also able to provide opportunities for students to participate in volunteer programmes, but unfortunately, sufficient data in this area is lacking. The UWC work-study programme continued to present many opportunities for students to get involved in co-

curricular activities that provided funding support. Examples of such co-curricular initiatives include: the student leadership incubator programme aimed at preparing students (e.g. the SRC) for leadership and governance roles; the Media Society geared to facilitate student engagement and give a diverse range of students a voice on campus; and Careers Xplora where students are prepared for job interviews, prepare CVs and engage with potential employers online.

The Office of the DVC: SDS also introduced special projects led by students, and two such initiatives are the Food Security Project and the Ikamva Lethu Fundraising Campaign. These initiatives have gained much traction and have contributed significantly to the immediate and real needs of UWC students. The former partnership project sponsored a student nutrition and wellness programme to assist student with hunger on campus, while the latter campaign, led by successive SRCs, annually raises funds to support indigent students with bursaries, study resources and food subsidies. Another initiative, *'Making a difference,'* is led by the Economic and Management Sciences Faculty and has been in existence for more than 7 years to raise funds to support students with their academic, as well as food security needs.

The University has seen the opening of several new and modern facilities that also contribute significantly to an improved and enriching student experience, such as the refurbishment of the unit for differently-abled students, a 24/7 study hall, and improvements to high-performance sports facilities. The construction of a 2 700 beds student village adjacent to the campus is in progress, which will not only double the number of UWC owned beds but will locate them within walking distance from the campus and study amenities,

Student wellbeing remained a priority during the previous IOP cycle and efforts aimed at supporting students included counselling services for individuals and groups, as well as peer mentoring. A *'Making your Mark through Mapworks'* project, incorporating multiple learning styles and strategies to facilitate student psycho-social support, retention and success, was introduced, and the first cohort of students participated in 2018. A Mental Health Project to enhance existing and future mental health initiatives and practices within the Centre for Student Support Services and the broader campus was introduced and supported by research to ascertain the needs of UWC's students for assistance and the factors that affect their mental health. A Mental Health Policy was developed and completed in 2020. The DVC: Academic also introduced a First-Year Experience project that will continue on this IOP cycle (see Goal Area 2).

Through the Gender Reconciliation Programme in partnership with Genderworks, the focus on gender reconciliation work was further expanded. The University also offered a number of focused initiatives to build and enhance a supportive, inclusive environment for all students that address barriers to success and respects diversity. UWC also adopted and implemented a Sexual Violence Policy that seeks to instil a culture of human rights and address the scourge of sexual violence prevalent in society. We believe that it will strengthen the mechanisms that we have in place to make UWC a safer campus for all. In Goal Area 7, reference is also made to a number of projects that were implemented to improve the physical infrastructure of the campus to improve safety on campus.

The results of our 2018 Graduate Exit survey, released in 2019, indicated that 94% of graduates were proud to graduate from UWC, 88% would recommend UWC to their friends and family, while 72% said they found their workload during their studies manageable.

Furthermore, 78% of graduates said they would choose UWC again as a place to study, while 87% said the University provided them with an intellectually stimulating environment. In 2020 during COVID-19, a total of 88% of graduates indicated that they found employment within 3 months of graduation compared to 86% in the prior year.

There is, however, a need to build greater alignment between the co-curricular programmes offered in various executive lines and in faculties. It is important to strengthen a university-wide culture that recognises the centrality of working with our students towards greater success in all areas of student achievement and development.

The number of students, where they come from, the programmes and degrees for which they register (undergraduate and postgraduate) all contribute to creating a diverse and interesting campus community and this is shaped by the University's enrolment mandate. UWC's six-year enrolment mandate (2020-2025) from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) requires UWC to manage its enrolment, retention and throughput in line with nationally agreed targets and system-wide differentiation. The strategies and tactics in this IOP are focused on postgraduate enrolment growth and the general retention and success of all students. During this IOP period, there will be minimal increases in the intake of first-time entering students (at an annual average of about 0.3%) and accelerated growth at postgraduate levels, in line with UWC's research focus. This growth at advanced qualification levels will assist the University to maximise resources and increase its overall share of the public purse by 0.42% by the end of the IOP period. The challenge to reimagine UWC's student mix and bridge the gap between its envisaged research-led identity and current reality is both exciting and daunting. It will require massive effort and capacity at all levels to sustain enrolment efforts in the current climate through mitigate risks whilst leveraging opportunities.

UWC has a long-standing commitment to equitable and epistemological access, and integral to this commitment is a concern that students should not only succeed but also develop their transformative capacities to help make meaningful differences to society. The range and quality of experiences, both formal and informal, that the University offers to each student should therefore not only enrich their learning and academic development but also challenge and nurture them intellectually and support them to become responsible and critical global citizens.

Students' learning experiences, engagement and life experiences are multi-dimensional in nature, implying that being well-versed in their respective disciplines is only part of what is needed for students to succeed in life. Students graduating from UWC need to command significant social capital, be broadly educated, show innovative flair at applying and extending knowledge. To achieve these, students need support in developing their sense of accomplishment and their sense of agency as active and responsible members of an intellectual community that critically engages with academic knowledge and the uses thereof to address broader societal needs. This requires ongoing attention to providing a stimulating environment in which academic and professional support staff are able to engage effectively with students and in which students are able to study with a growing sense of relevance, obtaining knowledge skills and adaptive capabilities as a basis to fulfil their future roles and becoming lifelong learners. A caring and collaborative institutional culture that is open to change, tolerant to cultural diversity and modelled on values-based leadership at all levels

will advance goal achievement in this area. These must be strong considerations for the next IOP period.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) Enhancing opportunities to provide students with a transformative university experience

UWC takes pride in its students and graduates and commits to a long-term view of its students' sense of accomplishment, personal and professional development and experiences with the university throughout their student lifecycle: from their first contact as prospective students, through admission and their undergraduate and postgraduate education to graduation and alumni status. Over the years, much has been done to provide UWC students with meaningful and stimulating intellectual experiences and life experiences through dynamic academic programmes and strategic approaches to the provision of support services and relevant co-curricular programmes.

This IOP will build on successes to date and draw lessons from students' positive experiences. As indicated earlier, UWC has many co-curricular and support initiatives, but they are proliferated in an uncoordinated way without an adequate sense of efficacy or coherence. Many of these processes remain ad hoc, are not formalised, have limited reach and impact is not adequately evaluated. The University will also undertake a systematic assessment of current student support (co-curricular) initiatives to inform the development and implementation of the next generation of coordinated student support programmes across the university.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop a database of current campus-wide student support initiatives.
- Develop a framework for the evaluation of current initiatives with the view to informing the conceptualisation and implementation of a structured and coordinated student support programme.
- Establish a community of practice to collaborate, share information, advance good practice in this area and work towards establishing greater synergy between projects.
- Develop an online platform to automate students' co-curricular experiences with a view to building a digital record to produce transcripts.
- Scale-up existing digital learning support and development programmes (such as personal mastery, graduate development, leadership development, career counselling) onto existing tools like Careers Explora to assist with students' workplace readiness.
- Customise the "Make your Mark through Mapworks" tool and create synergies with the Siyaphumelela project at UWC aimed at enhancing the use of learning analytics in the development of evidence-driven student success initiatives (See Goal Area 2).
- Scale-up online radio broadcasting capacity and investigate a blended mix even when the licence has been obtained so as to achieve social cohesion and inclusivity of programmes for student clubs, sports, music (UWC Choir) and differently-abled students
- Expand student engagement on policies and practices affecting student life initiative online.

(2) Build and enhance a supportive, inclusive environment for all students that address barriers to success, respects diversity and creates a sense of belonging.

Students' sense of belonging is closely associated with their perceived connectedness with the University and the extent to which they are motivated and likely to persist and succeed in their studies. UWC prides itself in its commitment to inclusivity and diversity and to attract a diverse range of students from all walks of life, experiences and backgrounds. For many students, particularly first-generation university students, the transition from school to university and the experience of navigating the different stages of application, admission, curriculum choices, adjustment to residence life etc., can be overwhelming and alienating.

Increased attention will be paid to encourage interpersonal and intergroup relationships with peers and a supportive relationship with staff. These relationships will be marked by care, tolerance, and trust within a framework that protects the rights and dignity of individuals. Special attention will be given to the varied expectations and needs of different segments of the student body to ensure that all students are reached, particularly vulnerable groups who often experience additional barriers (e.g. differently-abled students), alienation and exclusion and find it hard to cope or fit into mainstream.

The principles of inclusivity and diversity are strongly connected with UWC's core values and its commitment to create an atmosphere of trust and tolerance and to protect the rights and dignity of individuals. In a society with high levels of crime and gender-based violence, the safety and wellbeing of students remain a key concern, adding to increased levels of anxiety among students. The University will increase efforts to gain a better understanding of students' experiences, expectations and to implement practical steps to address these concerns at both systemic and personal levels. This includes organisational arrangements, the physical infrastructure, students' online experiences and exposure to bullying and cybercrime. Particular concerns that have grown during the COVID-19 pandemic are students' mental health and wellbeing, including concerns about suicide. These concerns will receive significant attention in this IOP, with a view to better understand students' experiences, levels of anxiety and depression and to proactively identify and support students at risk.

Students' involvement in campus activities fulfils an important role in building a dynamic and vibrant campus life and to better the student experience, aligned to the key goals of connecting students to each other and the world around them. There is, however, general acknowledgement that student participation in extracurricular activities varies significantly for different groups of students. For example, oppidan students are constrained by long travel time to the campus as well as the lack of safe after-hours transport options. Many students also need to hold down part-time jobs, in addition to family responsibilities.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Step-up its efforts to create a welcoming atmosphere and give students a sense that they are valued and that their voices, opinions and active participation in the

University's life matters and is valued. Student perception surveys will be administered to assess progress in this regard.

- Actively promote a respectful, tolerant and caring campus community.
- Provide an enabling campus environment that promotes student health and wellbeing, with particular focus on the mental health support, which is a priority funded through the Siyaphumelela programme.
- Promote active student participation in sporting, cultural, and leisure activities as well as participation in student government and student societies.
- Promote student engagement with local communities through voluntary work as well as engaged learning opportunities.

(3) Provide optimal support services to enable excellence in the academic core and give students the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the campus community and its environment.

Meaningful student engagement is based on a multitude of factors, including the nature and quality of the relationship between staff and students. While the interaction between academics and students necessarily occur more frequently in the learning, teaching and assessment context, professional and support staff also interact with students and exert powerful influences on students' connectedness, motivation and sense of belonging. This IOP acknowledges the value of professional and support services to promote the quality of life, healthy lifestyles, living and learning conditions and the overall experiences of students. There is also an awareness that post the 2015/2016 student unrest, the reciprocal trust relationships between students and staff have not been fully restored. There are, unfortunately, also instances where people allow long-held bureaucratic rules and practices in the institutional culture, policy incongruences and outdated legacy systems to set the tone and cause people to disengage.

In this regard, UWC will encourage:

- All faculties and divisions to review and rethink the institutional culture and functioning of units with a view to promoting a professional student-staff relationship as a marker of a healthy culture of engagement.
- Staff in student-facing services to participate in customised, motivating development programmes.
- Staff in student-facing services to further their studies and participate in communities of practice.

(4) Changing the size, shape and mix of the student population and academic programmes

UWC's enrolment management strategies for the period 2021-2025 enable us to pursue its core academic and research goals and aspirations in a more deliberate and integrated way. Because these goals are inherently multifaceted and complex, the enrolment plan will help to reflect on the priority-setting processes and the consideration of trade-offs that will shape the academic profile of the student body.

Over this IOP period, UWC is mandated to increase its student headcount from a base of 22 443 in 2017 to 26 740 (or 21 472 fulltime equivalent students) by 2025. This represents an average annual increase of 2.2% between 2017 and 2025. The plan is predicated on much slower annual increases of first-time entering undergraduates

(school-leavers) of about 4500 to 4700 by 2025, allowing for increased opportunities for current students to progress to advanced study levels. This shift gives UWC greater agility and opportunities for more deliberately build a strength-based research identity while also achieving academic coherence and distinctiveness in selected niche areas.

The increased scope to expand current and introduce new postgraduate programmes, including fully online postgraduate programmes, will assist UWC to diversify and remain fiscally strong. Enrolment management at postgraduate level is as much about recruitment as it is about retention because it is important to retain top-performing students already enrolled at the University and to recruit talented students from elsewhere in the country and beyond. Goal Area 2 focuses on special attention that will be given to campus-wide strategies to improve student retention and success. It also focuses on addressing the nexus between learning and teaching and research to strengthen the pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

UWC is mandated to offer fully online postgraduate programmes to at least 3% of its total student body within the current IOP period. This will enable UWC to build strong student-success-related practices in a fully online environment and introduce digitally-enabled Flexible Online Learning capabilities to increase its geographic reach. The University will revise its policies and procedures related to enrolment practices encourage faculties to develop fully online offerings with programmes in higher demand whilst also strategically building capacity to grow a critical mass of students in selected niche areas based on strong academic outcomes. The need to seek accreditation for online programmes also presents a unique opportunity for the university to review and reimagine its Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) and to expand into new fields of study, including areas where UWC may wish to enter into partnerships or offerings on non-traditional campus sites such as farmland for sustainable agriculture.

This IOP offers a unique opportunity to align the enrolment management plan to UWC's overall ambition and strategic intent and reshape UWC's academic profile towards its 2035 vision.

This IOP deals with strengthening recruitment, enrolment, academic administration systems and processes (especially in relation to postgraduate students), student success, student retention, and preparation for online delivery of mandated programmes in Goal Areas 2,3,6 and 7, and the associated strategies are also captured in those goal areas.

In further support of this area, UWC will:

- Improve priority-setting and coordination of recruitment, enrolment and retention efforts,
- Develop and implement the policy framework to support fully online offerings;
- Focus on the optimal use of bursary and scholarship opportunities.
- Review its administrative capacity and support for professional student support services, including the division for postgraduate studies.

Goal Area 2: Learning and Teaching

To provide students with research-led teaching that is contextually responsive, embedded in a relevant and dynamic curriculum and supported by diverse assessment approaches, aligned to achieving the desired learning outcomes.

Introduction

Inherent to its role as knowledge creators, universities are required to focus on addressing global and local challenges through its research and innovation focus, and through its role in preparing graduates who will be able to contribute to finding solutions and bringing about change through their knowledge and conduct as responsible citizens and ethical professionals. For students and graduates to be able to meet these requirements we have to critically consider our internal practices, as articulated in various policies and procedures, continue to focus on the content of what we teach, consider appropriate pedagogical approaches and assessment practices. In considering all of the above, universities must remain cognisant of the rapidly changing world of work and the implications thereof in terms of the additional skills and attributes that will equip students for changing work environments, including global shifts in the nature of work.

The majority of UWC's students are enrolled in undergraduate programmes and learning and teaching are therefore important focus areas in giving effect to the University's academic mandate. UWC is designated as a contact university and despite the intention to also deliver some programmes in a fully online and distance mode, the on-campus and classroom experiences and engagements are considered valuable and important for our students' development, especially at the undergraduate level. It is also acknowledged that, with so many of UWC's students not residing on campus or in University residences, the experience of students in the classroom and on the different UWC campuses contribute significantly to the overall university experience of students. COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the classroom and campus experience and has changed the nature of students' engagement with academics and peers.

COVID-19 is likely to continue to impact our core and support functions during the foreseeable future. Despite the significant challenges experienced during the pandemic, there were also valuable learning and teaching gains through technology and optimising digital platforms. It is essential to continue to reflect on the COVID-19 experience to see how we can incorporate some of this period's valuable experiences into our standard practices. Among others, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of research skills, problem-solving, innovation, entrepreneurship and the ability to work independently. We will have to consider how these skills can be further developed and nurtured amongst our students in the future.

UWC has achieved much in strengthening learning and teaching over various IOP cycles. At a high-level, the University strives to provide students with every opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to be confident individuals, responsible citizens and well-prepared professionals upon graduation with the required knowledge to explore postgraduate opportunities and to enter the world of work.

Although UWC funds many initiatives in this goal area, the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) Teaching Development Grant, which, together with other DHET grants, were merged into the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), has provided invaluable support to funding initiatives in this goal area. The funding supported UWC's tutoring programme and provided academics with opportunities to continue developing and professionalising their teaching practices and leadership skills. It also provided research grants for the advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Some work has also been funded in terms of curriculum renewal. The Historically Disadvantaged University Development Grant (HDI-DG) supported the 2020 launch of Zone Learning to provide an experiential incubation space supporting entrepreneurship development. The Foundation Provision Grant supports extended curriculum programmes in the faculties of Arts, Community and Health Sciences, Education, Economic and Management Sciences, Law and Natural Sciences. These programmes were all reviewed in the previous IOP cycle. The process of addressing the recommendations to improve these programmes' quality and articulation with other programmes is underway.

UWC has a good track record in terms of initiatives aimed at the professionalisation of teaching, which includes formalising teaching as part of academic promotion criteria, funding to attend and present at conferences, funding for further training and development such as the CHEC Postgraduate Diploma (Higher Education) (Teaching & Learning), annual Learning and Teaching awards, and South African Teaching Advancement at University (TAU) Fellowship Awards. There has also been an increase in publishing in the area of the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching. UWC's continued professional development and induction course, Towards Professionalisation, contributes significantly to embedding teaching professionalisation. The Accelerated Excellence Programme (AEP) was also introduced as an initiative aligned with the Reward and Recognition of Learning and Teaching strategy.

The UWC Charter of Graduate Attributes is now a widely accepted document and has resulted in gradueness progressively being embedded in the curriculum. There is also an increased focus on graduate employability, particularly given the lack of graduates' experience as a reason for not appointing them. Authentic learning and real-world learning experiences are leveraged in an increased number of programmes, acknowledging that a significant number of UWC students are further disadvantaged due to limited social capital.

There is an ongoing focus on the importance of digital resources, skills, and confidence to engage with technology and increase digital skills from learning, teaching, communication, and engagement with the world of work. In teaching, the primary driver of innovation in the use of emerging technologies has been pedagogical. Over the previous IOP cycle, there was an increase in the uptake of blended, flexible learning through different methodologies, e.g. the flipped classroom, the University's learning management system (iKamva), concept maps, and social media. The incorporation of digital approaches increased the need for digital literacy and resource improvement and in this regard, the functionality of UWC's learning management system (LMS), iKamva, receives continuous attention. The Centre for Innovative Education & Communication Technologies (CIECT) actively promotes and supports academics' development in eLearning. All faculties have reported that academics use various information and communication technologies to enhance active learning forms at various

levels. The COVID-19 lockdown situation required all academic programmes to shift to online mode and this dramatic shift required tremendous effort and dedication from all teaching staff, different support units, and students. UWC's digital resources and infrastructure showed its robustness in this shift, but it also revealed significant challenge relating to access to devices and data provisioning.

The emergency shift to online provision also increased the focus on asynchronous online assessment necessitated by lockdown and social distancing requirements. This has emphasised the need for a renewed focus on assessment and formative assessment, with increased feedback and agentic learning opportunities to become more integrated and valued as central to the learning and teaching process.

In recognising the range of challenges associated with student success and retention, the previous IOP cycle saw UWC's Student Retention and Success Framework's development and approval. Multiple student success initiatives are in place, including additional tutoring with increased tutor training, tutor support and tutor evaluation; peer-mentoring and peer learning; academic and digital literacies support; summer and winter schools and boot camps; a First-Year Experience (FYE) programme; and support for faculty-specific, approaches to student tracking and interventions. Through Project Y, attention was given to enhancing undergraduate students' critical thinking and research skills to prepare them for postgraduate studies.

The increased focus on technology and digital environments poses exciting challenges and in practice, it means that the University has to provide both basic and high-end skills training. The Digital Academic Literacy (DAL) Programme is an important initiative that supports thousands of new students annually. At the same time, the University is also exploring and increasing the capacity and skills of academics and students to engage with immersive technologies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the University was also able to optimise its virtual laboratory partnership with Learning Science UK, which was of immense benefit to the laboratory-based sciences at UWC when most students could not access University laboratories. This experience confirmed the value of virtual environments and will continue to play a vital role in the coming years.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) Providing responsive and enabling academic programmes

Programme and curriculum renewal, including deliberating on the undergraduate programme and qualification mix (PQM), are essential aspects of the University's academic mandate. UWC has an ongoing internal programme - and departmental reviews and has participated in a number of external programme alignment, renewal and review processes, but the institution has not recently embarked on a comprehensive review of its PQM.

Over the last number of years, curriculum transformation has been one of the most significant undertakings within the scope of learning and teaching in South Africa. This is usually undertaken with a process that also considers graduate attributes, including first-

tier aspects such as scholarship, critical citizenship and social good, lifelong-learning, deep and broad engagement with creative thinking and problem-solving; second-tier thinking such as inquiry-focused and knowledgeable, critically and relevantly literate, autonomous and collaborative, and skilled communicators. UWC is committed to creating a responsive, flexible, renewed and transformed curriculum that will ensure that students can engage confidently and authentically with local, continental and global contextual realities and navigate these spaces from a social justice and engagement perspective. During the previous IOP cycle, some groundwork was done for curriculum renewal. Still, progress was uneven, and the University does not have an institutional framework and approach to curriculum transformation and renewal.

UWC is also committed to the ongoing expansion of our understanding of the concepts of gradueness and employability to acknowledge the changing labour market with a greater emphasis on independence, self-learning, problem-solving, critical thinking, entrepreneurship, freelancing and building an online presence and identity. At the moment, UWC does not distinguish between undergraduate and postgraduate students in terms of its Charter of Graduate Attributes. A reflection on this will form part of reviewing the current Charter.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Comprehensively analyse its current programme offering and plan for programme renewal and rationalisation, keeping the University's academic strengths and the enrolment mandate in mind.
- Develop a Curriculum Renewal and Transformation (CRT) Framework and Policy.
- Review and update the Charter of Graduate Attributes and build institutional capacity to implement the CRT Framework and Policy.
- Focus on curriculum development of programmes mandated to be offered online in future.

(2) Develop an enabling environment for excellence in learning and teaching, with a focus on the professionalisation of learning and teaching and enabling infrastructure

In giving effect to this objective, the University recognises the importance of people, systems and infrastructure (digital and physical).

The role of academic staff as scholarly university teachers forms an integral part of strengthening UWC as a research-led university and the University remains committed to its focus on enabling and supporting academic staff in their development as university teachers, able to assess and use appropriate pedagogical (and andragogical) approaches in support of student learning and student success. UWC will also continue to further foster and support multimodal learning and teaching that promote literacy (critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, networking, problem-solving, design-based thinking) and expand repertoires to make sense of and produce meaning through multimodal texts.

The COVID-19 experience has fast-tracked the use of digital technologies in learning and teaching. Going forward, UWC would like to build on this and optimise approaches to

flexible learning and provisioning in all its forms. This would, amongst others, require us to continue to expand our understanding and application of e-pedagogies and instructional design for online learning and teaching. Given the ongoing COVID-19 challenges, online learning must be planned for, and not treated as a fallback from face-to-face teaching. A renewed focus is also needed on assessment practices and teaching practices within a flexible learning context from a non-separatist perspective, using a blended or hybrid learning approach, notwithstanding that a limited number of programmes will be offered solely via online learning mode.

The online shift to assessment is often cause for concern about academic integrity. The University will endeavour to employ the least intrusive forms of digital control and proctoring for summative evaluation, mindful of students' right to privacy, the structural inequality of many of many more advanced online proctoring systems and the increased digital demand of such approaches. A greater focus will be placed on formative and ongoing assessment as opposed to digital control or intrusiveness.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Promote professional learning communities, development to enhance the trans-disciplinary programme and course delivery and innovation opportunities.
- Continue to offer the university teaching staff induction programme and provide funding support for staff to enrol for the CHEC Postgraduate Diploma in Learning and Teaching and participate in Learning and Teaching workshops.
- Provide funding support for staff to embark on research that focuses on learning and teaching, attend SoLT writing retreats, and to present at Learning and Teaching conferences.
- Share learnings and progress through annual colloquia that focus on Learning and Teaching, Assessment, and E-learning.
- Focus on improving the integration of teaching and assessment practices with the curriculum.
- Focus on advancing university teaching through leadership development initiatives that will include offering the Certificate Programme for Academic & Professional Leaders (P4APL), workshops for HODs and Deputy Deans of Learning and Teaching.
- Provide training and support to staff to improve their understanding and application of e-pedagogies and instructional design for effective online teaching
- Continue to improve and expand the functionality of UWC's iKamva learning management system
- Expand the understanding and adoption of emerging technologies such as AR/VR as part of learning and teaching approaches.
- Focus on physical infrastructure development and adaptation that provides conducive formal and informal learning and teaching spaces that provide an optimal classroom experience and supports teaching with technology and dual teaching.

(3) Student success and retention

UWC is committed to fostering a conducive and flexible learning environment that supports student success and retention. In this regard, it is essential to recognise that student success, similar to the student experience, is impacted by many factors. Addressing student success and retention challenges will require a concerted effort by every part of the UWC community.

Currently, UWC's student success rates do not compare favourably with the broader national sector and during the previous IOP cycle, significant work was done to better understand student success. It was found that UWC's undergraduate programmes predominantly experienced low on-time completion, significantly delayed completion, and high drop-out rates. Using cohort studies as a methodology, specific markers were identified that could be used to alert the institution to challenges concerning undergraduate student success. Amongst others, UWC's data shows that early failure increases the chances of drop-out – meaning that students who fail modules at the first-year level, even when promoting to the following year of study, are significantly more likely to drop-out in later years.

The University has been monitoring modules with low pass rates for many years. This focus has now been refined to distinguish between high impact modules (with 20-29% failure rates) and highest impact modules (with failure rates greater than 29%). The highest impact modules are also considered to be modules with high enrolment (150 and above), which are offered in more than one programme, are pre-requisites, and have experienced low pass rates over time (not just in one year). These modules will receive specific attention in this IOP cycle.

UWC welcomes the widening of access to higher education. Students entering university come from very different and unequal schooling environments, and in general, there is a lack of academic preparedness for university studies. These factors directly impact student retention and success. UWC's structures are not fully equipped to address these challenges, increasing drop-out rates and negatively impacting student throughput, success, and graduation rates. UWC remains committed to finding effective ways of addressing these concerns.

Many UWC students also lack specific necessary computer literacy skills. As the goal-posts for basic computer literacy continuously shift, there is an increased need for students to engage in online platforms, including various eTools for content creation, communication and assessment. Students also need to attain digital media literacy skills for e-assessment purposes and prospective employment opportunities. There is also a need to continuously promote anti-plagiarism discourse, whether a student is submitting a reflective piece or assignment, engaging in a discussion forum, or submitting a thesis.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Support faculty interventions to address high impact (high priority) modules.
- Focus on the implementation and refinement of the First-year Mentorship and Transitioning programme.

- Continue to offer its tutor enhancement programme that includes the appointment, training and evaluation of tutors and the appointment of Faculty Tutor Coordinators.
- Pilot the appointment of academic advisors in selected faculties.
- Offer digital academic literacy training to students.
- Increase UWC's number of Turnitin user profiles to support anti-plagiarism.
- Increasingly use learning analytics and tracking systems to understand better and effectively address student success and retention.
- Focus on developing a more integrated and supportive approach that links psycho-social support and academic literacy support.
- Track student progress through cohort studies and focus on interventions to increase the proportion of students who complete qualifications in the minimum time.
- Strengthen UWC's business intelligence capacity and support the implementation of data tools to allow faculties to increasingly use learning analytics to track student performance and inform practice.
- Focus on increasing the number of students whose academic performance is at a level that allows them to access postgraduate study opportunities.

(4) Academic engagement: Community engagement, service learning and continuous professional development

As part of the University's academic endeavours there is a wide range of community engagement activities that take place at undergraduate and postgraduate level and as part of the formal curriculum. Aligned to its mission, UWC's Community Engagement Unit (CEU) promotes and facilitates community engagement opportunities that increasingly seek to establish equitable partnerships in support of sustainable communities. This requires ongoing effort and will remain an institutional priority.

Apart from teacher education programmes and the clinical work of students in the health sciences, university degree offerings traditionally do not include service-learning and other forms of experiential learning. The lack thereof has, however, been identified as a barrier in students finding employment and in their adapting to a new work environment and as part of the focus on curriculum and assessment approaches opportunities for experiential learning will also be explored.

Earlier in this goal area reference was made to the fast-changing world of work and this requires ongoing retraining and upskilling of the workforce. UWC has not been able to optimise its knowledge base in support of the continued development of individuals and organisations. Through continuing professional development (CPD) and other short courses, opportunities will be created for the ongoing education and training of professionals in a range of areas. These short cycle programmes will be targeted to individuals in the public and private sector, including UWC alumni and have the added potential of generating third stream income for the University.

In this regard UWC will:

- Focus on fostering partnerships with communities that allow all parties to actively discover knowledge, teach, and learn from each other.

- Promote and support the Scholarship of Engagement.
- Seek to increase service-learning and other forms of experiential learning opportunities for students.
- Assess the current short course and CPD offerings to identify those that should continue and/or be strengthened and develop new course offerings, supported by targeted marketing strategies.
- Implement a technology solution that will support the registration and monitoring of students on short course and CPD offerings.

Goal Area 3: Research and Innovation

To strengthen UWC's position as a research-led university, contributing to the transformation of lives through its knowledge production endeavours and recognised for its general research capabilities and research strengths in selected areas.

Introduction

Through consecutive IOPs, UWC has expressed its intention to position itself as a university that is increasingly recognised for its capacity to produce and advance new knowledge in areas of recognised research strength and to work towards the translation of knowledge through innovative endeavours.

Over the last fifteen years, significant progress was made in most of the key areas associated with research capacity building. Strengthening and consolidating UWC's research capabilities and diversifying and deepening the pool of productive researchers, remain a key priority and the overarching goal for research in the coming five years. As UWC is increasingly recognised for its research outputs, research capacity and support need to be further strengthened and consolidated in a manner that harnesses a more explicit research identity.

Progress during the previous IOP cycle shows that between 2016 and 2020, the number of National Research Foundation (NRF) A-rated researchers increased from 3 to 7 while the number of B-rated researchers increased from 26 to 35. Overall the proportion of academic staff with NRF research ratings and with doctoral degree qualifications also increased. During this period, SARChI chair holders also increased from 13 to 18. Enrolment targets for PhD and masters students were slightly exceeded, and postdoctoral fellowships increased from 110 in 2016 to 137 in 2018. International research partnerships also continued to grow over this period, and it is encouraging to note that good progress has been reported for the support role provided to Principal Investigators by the Grants & Contracts Division of UWC's Department of Finance.

Grant funding from the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) funded several initiatives to support academic staff in different stages of their academic careers and various postgraduate student support initiatives. UWC also manages two national UCDP projects, specifically aimed at supporting emerging and female academics. The DHET's Historically Disadvantaged Development Grant (HDI-DG) supported the development of a number of emerging niche areas, a new postgraduate offering in e-Logistics and a partnership with an international partner which, amongst others, resulted in a new postgraduate programme offering in Augmented and Virtual Reality. The HDI-DG also helped increase the University Library's e-capacity and provided additional funding towards international journal subscriptions.

In 2020, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) conducted a national review of doctoral programmes. The preparation of UWC's self-evaluation report, which informed the review, was a valuable process of self-reflection.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the global university ranking systems, UWC continued to feature in the Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings amongst

the top 200 institutions, and it was ranked number 1 in Physical Science in Africa in the 2016 Nature Index.

At the end of 2019, the Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST) released the findings of a comprehensive national study that looked at the quality of research outputs in South Africa. Following the study Prof Johann Mouton, who led the national study, prepared a report for UWC, focusing on UWC's research outputs by permanent instruction and research staff (PIRS) in the context of the national study. The findings indicated that in terms of per capita publication output and normalised knowledge output,¹ UWC was ranked 11th and 12th, respectively. In terms of publication subsidy units, UWC recorded a steady and significant increase with its share of the sector's total publication output in 1990 at 0,9%, increasing to 2,6% in 2017 (2.6%). PhD graduate numbers increased from 14 in 1998 to 120 in 2017, representing a compound annual growth rate of 11.34%, the second-highest of all universities over this period. The normalised doctoral output indicator divides the number of doctoral graduates by academic staff with PhDs. In terms of this indicator, UWC was ranked 9th in 2017 with a value of 0.32, meaning that doctorate staff members at UWC produce on average one PhD graduate every three years, which is slightly higher than the national average of 0.3.

When preparing this IOP and considering approaches to strengthen our research and innovation efforts further, the economic environment within which this has to be considered is a source of great concern. Real growth in the government subsidy to universities is unlikely in the next five years, and a weak currency will add pressure, especially on the Library, ICT and research equipment acquisitions, as well as regional and international travel, amongst others. The budgets of the national science councils have already been significantly reduced and the National Research Foundation (NRF), at the best of times, is only able to support a relatively small proportion of the postgraduates enrolled in the system, and this is highly unlikely to change in the coming years. The NRF's new policy for postgraduate funding is likely to result in a further reduction in postgraduate support. National equipment funding programmes have also decreased considerably. Also, the global financial impact of COVID-19 will affect international donor funding, with early signs that some donors/foundations that traditionally supported research and scholarship in South Africa are refocussing their investments domestically.

In terms of the higher education policy environment in South Africa, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology was established in May 2019, bringing the Department of Higher Education & Training and the Department of Science & Technology together under a single umbrella. This shift is intended to signal greater policy and regulatory coordination between the two departments but the impact on research is yet to be seen. A number of policy processes are underway that may impact on research in the coming period. Significant work has been done towards the development of a National Plan for Post-School Education and Training, which was due to be released in 2019 but is still awaited. Other developments include a review of South Africa's higher education, science, technology and innovation institutional landscape, and the development of a Decadal Plan for Science, Technology and Innovation. Earlier, the national review of doctoral qualifications was mentioned, the findings

¹ All publication and graduate outputs divided by headcount of permanent instruction and research staff

of which may impact the future funding of doctoral programmes and other policy parameters governing the qualification. To date, there has also been little progress towards a national policy for the differentiation of universities. As such, there are no criteria in policy for the designation of research universities. In the absence of such criteria, it remains important for each university to set its own goals and targets.

Whilst UWC is deeply-rooted in its local context, any university that aspires to become more research-intensive works very hard to build strong international partnerships and strives to enrich its institutional context through international students, staff and visiting staff. UWC has many longstanding and mutually-beneficial international partnerships, and these are sustained in different ways, but individual relationships are at the core of all meaningful partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously impacted the flow of postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows and researchers across borders and it is likely to be constrained until the pandemic is brought under control. However, the extensive use of online platforms, precipitated by the pandemic, does offer new possibilities for international (and national) collaboration without always having to incur travel and other opportunity costs.

This Goal Area also focuses on innovation and the relationship between innovation and research. According to the 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, “Innovation comprises the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service) or process, or a new marketing method, or a new organisational model in business practice, workplace organisation or external relations²”. By extension these definitions include different types of innovation: (i) Product innovation as the implementation of new or improved products, processes and services derived from new ideas and inventions emanating from Research and Development (R&D), resulting in the creation of social and/or economic value; (ii) social innovation is defined as new ideas (products, services, and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social value, relationships or collaborations; and (iii) systems innovation is the implementation of new or improved internal organisation’s products, processes and services derived from new ideas and ways of doing things, resulting in the creation of improved organisational processes and functions.

The necessary infrastructure to support innovation needs to be identified. Institution-specific support at UWC includes the Technology Transfer Office and, to some extent, the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and the Business Development Office. In addition to some academic departments and research units' innovation focus, the CoLab has been an active role-player in social innovation partnerships and activities. UWC has made good progress in building a substantial base of partners and networks for innovation collaboration, including partnerships with government departments and their agencies, local and international universities, and industries. Of specific importance is the founding of the wholly-owned private company, UWC Innovations (Pty) Ltd, to facilitate the commercialisation of UWC’s Intellectual Property by creating spinout companies UWC Innovations will hold equity on behalf of the University.

² Department of Science and Technology , White Paper, 2019: iv

UWC has made good progress in its innovation focus over the previous IOP cycle, and some examples are included. UWC successfully built up a substantial base of partners and/or networks for collaboration in the past few years, mainly through partnerships with local universities and industries. In particular, UWC has forged strong partnerships with government; specifically, the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and its agencies including The National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) and Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), as well as the DST funded Strategic Health Innovation Partnerships (SHIP), administered by the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC). UWC has established a Seed Fund to develop early-stage technologies through the commercialisation value chain by partnering with TIA. At the time of preparing this IOP, more than R10 million has been invested in support of 22 projects. UWC has secured R14 million from the DST funded Strategic Health Innovation Partnership administered by the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC).

Almost R9 million has been secured from the DSI's National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO) for the staffing and capacity development of the UWC Technology Transfer Office (TTO) and facilitation of commercialisation activities. This has enabled the TTO to better support the University's innovation aspirations and activities. Commercialisation of UWC's intellectual property is making progress, and a number of licenses have been signed with third parties, and these are beginning to yield monetary benefits. UWC has filed a number of patent applications and trademark registrations, having some patents granted in different jurisdictions and having a number of trademarks registered in South Africa. The University has also established a wholly-owned private company, UWC Innovations, to facilitate the commercialisation of its intellectual property through the creation of spin-out companies, where UWC Innovations will hold equity on behalf of the University. The first technology spin-out company, in which UWC holds equity, as well as its first Not-for-Profit Company (NPC), of which UWC has the majority members, have been established. The Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Vehicle Programme, located in UWC's Hydrogen South Africa Systems Integration Competence Centre, has launched two high profile demonstration projects: A hydrogen-powered forklift – a first in South Africa as well as a small fleet of Hydrogen powered scooters to be trialled in the South African Post Office Cape Mail Hub delivery vehicle fleet. Both launches were supported at the highest levels of the DSI.

The COVID-19 pandemic loomed large in 2020, and at the time of finalising this IOP, it is clear that there are no quick solutions and that its effects will continue to be felt for the coming years. The pandemic has led to global health, social, and economic upheaval of unprecedented proportion. It has been a stark reminder of the scourge of poverty and inequality, which continue to characterise South African society. However, the crisis also provides the opportunity to re-imagine and forge a future direction for the country and its institutions. The White Paper on Science and Technology refers to the concept of responsible research and innovation (RRI) as being 'concerned with producing ethically acceptable, sustainable and socially desirable research and innovation outcomes. RRI is underpinned by the principle that research and innovation need to be responsive to a wide range of stakeholders and societal grand challenges, and be sensitive to the values, needs and expectations of South Africans'³. In this context, UWC wishes to strengthen its research and

³ Department of Science and Technology, 2019:12, White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation

innovation focus and, in support of its Mission, the 2035 Vision, and informed by its values, refocus its research endeavours as part of its commitment to social justice, reducing inequality and building a humane and equitable society.

Building on its past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) Harnessing and building on existing strengths to further strengthen UWC’s research environment

In the introduction to this goal area reference was made to UWC’s performance in the national public higher education sector and the lack of direction nationally regarding the formal differentiation of universities in South Africa. Notwithstanding this and despite some continued historical challenges, UWC has chosen to firmly locate itself within the group of traditional universities that have a strong focus on research and a mix of discipline-based and professional degree qualifications. When considering UWC’s research performance within this sub-group of universities, it is clear that there is still much work to be done. In particular, the work of the core of highly productive researchers needs to be fully supported through the strengthening of a responsive and enabling research environment, alongside the expansion of the pool of UWC staff actively involved in research activities. Unless this is achieved, increasing research outputs and strengthening UWC’s position as a research-led university will not be fully realised.

It is also recognised that progress has to go beyond a focus on more easily measurable metrics and has to delve deeper into how the desired shift to increasingly become a more research-intensive university should be managed and supported. Critical success factors will include the extent to which UWC is able to transform its institutional culture and practices to be more flexible and responsive to a rapidly changing world.

The University is at a point where it has a significant number of research niche areas and research strengths. Still, to make significant progress going forward, a clearly articulated research agenda with a set of agreed institution-wide research focus areas could assist, especially in terms of resource decisions in a financially constrained time. Despite the challenging financial climate, opportunities exist particularly for collaborative multi-disciplinary research that addresses key global challenges such as inequality, healthcare, climate change/ environmental sustainability, food security, migration, big data management and stewardship, etc. For a limited set of institution-wide research themes to be taken forward in an impactful way will require leadership and commitment at central, faculty and departmental levels. It is also acknowledged that institutional research themes will require formal leadership support, a shared commitment towards the garnering of internal and external resources as well as ensuring that there is a conducive regulatory environment in place (policy, governance, management and administration) in which creativity can flourish.

This calls for a mission-informed focused and value-driven approach.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Identify a core set of transdisciplinary research themes. Existing research strengths will be an important point of departure and should be informed by the potential for:

- building on existing synergies/collaboration across disciplines and faculties,
- external partnerships: local, national and international,
- alignment with local, national and/or global priorities such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals,
- support from funding partners,
- innovation in approach and/or innovation in the form of products,
- 'thought leadership' and engagement possibilities, and
- opportunities for postgraduate students and emerging scholars.
- Focus on intellectual leadership and where required in selected fields recruit and appoint recognised leaders in the field to strengthen the focus area and assist in developing additional internal capacity.
- Carefully assess its research niche areas against benchmarks to differentiate between established and emerging niches in order to determine the nature and level of support required for the niches to perform at the expected levels. Such an assessment will also aim to assess inter-disciplinary and cross-faculty opportunities for intellectual exchange and debate from which may also emerge new transdisciplinary themes (see above).
- Require of faculties to formally commit support to one or more transdisciplinary research theme(s) and articulate their envisaged role in strengthening the selected area(s).
- Identify and prioritise UWC's most important strategic partnerships, nationally and internationally and give focused attention to strengthen these through leadership and individual researcher engagements in the challenging period ahead. This will include a focus on strengthening specific continental partnerships and optimising opportunities for joint collaborative approaches with other agencies and universities.
- Give focused attention to building a critical mass of active researchers beyond the relatively few high performers who are overstretched. In this regard, recognising the need different kinds of support and incentives required at different career stages, specific support strategies will be developed for:
 - Emerging researchers,
 - Mid-career researchers, and
 - Established and leading researchers.
- Actively work towards establishing a more enabling research environment for all academic staff and engage with the distinctive operational, management and governance needs of research centres and institutes to improve the support to such units.
- Support academic staff in gaining recognition for their research through NRF research ratings.
- Expect faculties and departments to assess and address postgraduate supervision and throughput challenges as well as low publication outputs by some permanent academic staff.

(2) Improve UWC's research, administration and management system (RAMS)

At universities with a strong research focus, the roles, responsibilities and functions of RAMS are increasingly complex, and implementation requires the services of a range of highly competent professional staff. Research administration is a cross-cutting area that

involves the Research Office, the Human Resources department, Legal Services, the Information and Communication Systems Department, various directorates in the Finance Department, as well as academic administrative support. UWC has worked hard to build its capacity to support the growing research base, especially given the historical legacy of under-resourcing in this area, but UWC does not have a coordinated approach to research support.

The Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) has developed a useful competency framework for research management professionals. UWC has participated in regional initiatives designed to benchmark performance in key areas against good practice. The SARIMA framework considers aspects such as research planning, strategy and policy development; researcher development; partnerships and collaboration; research funding; research ethics and integrity; management of funded research; research data and research information management; research uptake, utilisation and impact.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Work towards developing an effective and sustainable research ecosystem in which the relevant sub-systems/components work in synergy to support the University's research agenda.
- Review its current systems and processes against established benchmarks and develop a plan with clear timelines for aspects identified for improvement.
- Actively work towards shifting the research support environment from one of compliance to accountability with the appropriate levels of monitoring in place. As part of this focus, attention will be given to establishing greater levels of trust and understanding between researchers and managers.

(3) Creating a conducive environment for postgraduate studies and improve UWC's postgraduate enrolment and retention

Part of being an increasingly research-intensive university implies that a university will have a significant proportion of its students enrolled in postgraduate programmes and especially at masters and doctoral level. Honours degrees are important qualifications that form the pipeline to masters degrees for students who are not enrolled for professional programmes at the undergraduate level. Postgraduate diplomas often also cater for students from more than one undergraduate disciplinary background, and at UWC such offerings include programmes that focus on new areas in the fast-developing digital and technology landscape. Programmes delivered at honours level are considered to be postgraduate programmes, but are largely taught programmes and therefore become an important intersection between the portfolios of the DVCs Academic and Research & Innovation and require greater coordination between these portfolios. A number of programmes at the honours level have also been earmarked to be delivered online as part of a distance learning provision by UWC, but progress in terms of implementation has been slow, and this also impacts the attainment of enrolment targets.

As indicated earlier, UWC has performed well in terms of meeting its enrolment targets for masters and doctoral students. However, because the honours and postgraduate

diploma targets have not been met, overall postgraduate enrolment targets were not attained. Although enrolment targets are largely met, UWC does not have an explicit strategy for coordinated recruitment and selection of high-quality students for postgraduate programmes. Graduate output (graduation) has also fallen short of the targets set, and this is directly impacted by the under-enrolment at the honours level as these are mostly 1-year programmes that directly impact annual graduation numbers. Student retention at postgraduate level is a concern that also affects graduation. UWC's overall performance in terms of time to degree of masters and doctoral students compares well with national benchmarks, but some areas require attention. There are also some concerns regarding the spread of supervision responsibilities among academic staff.

Government funding at postgraduate level is focused on outputs (graduation), and UWC has to improve academic administration systems relating to postgraduate students to better support the postgraduate life-cycle to assist with timeous interventions that could reduce attrition and support completion.

Creating a conducive environment for students and understanding the needs of postgraduate students as part of a broader student community are important factors in being able to attract and retain students. As part of UWC's reflection in preparation of the CHE's doctoral review process, a number of areas were identified to be strengthened in support of recruitment, retention and throughput of doctoral students and some of these apply more broadly to postgraduate students and are included below.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Attend to the approval of certain programmes to be offered via online platforms as distance offerings and redesign the curriculum for this purpose.
- Develop the MAS and SASI systems to also include postgraduate student administration functions that will support the full postgraduate student life-cycle.
- Improve the academic administration processes in relation to postgraduate students from recruitment to graduation.
- Improve coordination and support between different DVC portfolios to improve the support of honours-level programmes.
- Focus on promoting student support services, including psycho-social support for postgraduate students.
- Providing training opportunities to postgraduate students that include a focus on basic and advance research methods, ethics, supervisory relationships, project management and funding applications.
- Provide mentoring support to postgraduate students.
- Arrange retreats for postgraduate students that focus on proposal completion, thesis completion and publication
- Provide opportunities and funding for some masters and doctoral students to become part of research teams.
- Improve the monitoring of postgraduate student progress.
- Focus on building supervisory capacity and examine discrepancies in supervisory loads
- Strengthen research partnerships to co-teach, gain access to and provide co-supervision, and further explore joint degree opportunities

(4) Expand UWC's innovation focus and strengthen its innovation capacity

In order to strengthen and grow UWC's capacity for innovation, attention will have to be given to develop the policies, support structures and systems to realise economic and social benefit through generating new and improved products, services and processes.

UWC has good examples of the value of multi- or transdisciplinary approaches in research, but this is not necessarily as strongly embedded in relation to innovation where concrete collaboration across disciplines can be a distinguishing strength.

Innovation does not occur in isolation and requires partnerships across different spheres of the public and private sector. Over the last number of years, UWC has managed to improve relationships with various industry role-players, but there is still a lot of room to expand such relationships and develop mutually-beneficial partnerships.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop an Integrated Innovation Strategy for the University.
- Revisit existing policies, identify policy gaps and address these in the area of innovation.
- Where appropriate, Include a focus on innovation as part of the transdisciplinary research themes.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and explore new partnerships with other universities, industry, government and the broader society in order to further UWC focus on the effective development and implementation of new technological and social ideas and products in support of the public good.

Goal Area 4: People Framework

To continue to position the University of the Western Cape as an employer of choice through a dynamic and supportive work environment and a resilient culture that embraces diversity, inclusivity and excellence, enabling the University to meet its Vision and strategic goals.

UWC's sustained performance in recent years has been realised in large measure due to the quality, commitment and hard work of its staff. Achieving the strategic objectives of this new IOP and realising UWC's 2035 Vision will again depend on those characteristics of its staff. Recognising that attracting and retaining high-quality staff is a defining factor in the University's success and in the success of its students, UWC seeks to offer a good working environment. It 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.

Change is of the order of the day. UWC is a large university with more students and staff than ever before in its history, and staff and student growth will continue over this IOP period. To the challenges of 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 advances and new ways of working with and relating to colleagues, has significant implications for the University and the institutional culture it wants to create. In addition, the governance and decision-making processes within universities increasingly reflect the complex, multi-stakeholder interests which directly impact their effective functioning.

This discussion document is indicative of the University's plans to continue its strategic approach to (i) achieve a proper fit between the staffing profile, the competency-requirements and university-wide strategic goals, (ii) manage diversity and achieve employment equity, (iii) create a more conducive organisational culture and supporting an institutional climate geared towards strategic goal attainment; (iv) refine and link UWC's reward strategy to UWC's overall strategic and its performance appraisal; and (v) modernise and improve the operational efficiency in support of effective human resources management.

In order for the University to continue on its growth trajectory, it is vital that we continue to focus on new capabilities that are required and to ensure a fit between our objectives and priorities and the appointments that we make, as well as on the development of our staff. At the beginning of the previous IOP cycle, a comprehensive staff development programme was rolled out aimed at supporting delivery of the different IOP objectives, and some of these are reflected in Goal Areas 2 and 3. A revised strategy for coaching practices was also initiated as an integral part of leadership development initiatives.

Employment Equity (EE) remained an important focus, and in addition to the targets in the EE Plan and the University's recruitment and appointment processes, UWC ring-fenced funds for targeted recruitment of black (African) professors to strengthen and diversify the profile of the University in line with the diverse demographic profile of the country. The new-Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) initiated by the DHET also supported the

recruitment and appointment of emerging African academics into strategic fields. To date, UWC has made 19 NGAP appointments.

In 2019 a task team established to lead the drafting of the UWC Employment Equity Plan 2020-2025, which was completed in 2020, seeking to support increased diversity at all levels of the institution and articulating UWC's commitment to employment equity and the prescripts of the Employment Equity Act.

In response to digital opportunities in the area of recruitment, the University successfully implemented an e-Recruitment system in 2016 that assisted in expanding UWC's recruitment reach and improved its turn-around times on recruitment processes.

Goal Areas 1 and 7 speak to the importance of the safety of UWC's people and the different projects that were implemented to improve the safety of students and staff. Gender-based violence on university campuses is a deeply concerning threat to safety. In addition to the physical infrastructure improvements made to improve safety, the University also undertook a review of existing policies and frameworks to curb sexual harassment and gender-based violence, as well as to safeguard the needs of people living with disabilities.

The previous IOP cycle also saw the launch of the new staff union, the UWC Employees Union (UWCEU). Building and maintaining sound employee relations as well as promoting a positive workplace environment remain important matters on the agenda of engagements between the executive management and the UWCEU.

An important aspect of staff retention is the ability to provide a range of benefits to employees, including access to further education. To this end, UWC extended its staff rebate agreements with CPUT and UCT. The agreement with CPUT includes outsourced workers who already enjoy a 100% rebate benefit at UWC. The conversion of employees from the UWC Defined Benefit Fund to the UWC Defined Contribution Fund was also concluded, and the people processes were handled with care to mitigate risks such as a significant staff turnover or the unforeseen loss of critical staff. UWC also continued to participate in Remchannel, an internet-based remuneration survey to monitor and align the University's rewards strategy with good practice in the sector whilst being mindful of the institution's financial realities. During the previous IOP, staff costs were managed within the national cost norms.

In response to increasing student numbers, UWC's permanent research and instruction staff category has also grown and UWC was able to keep its full-time equivalent student-to-staff ratio stable and this ratio compares well with most of the other traditional South African universities. As part of focusing on building capacity and capabilities through deliberate recruitment and development activities, all faculties now have People Plans. The Human Resources Department also worked with a significant number of stakeholders to develop an Administration Design Project to better understand the changing roles and responsibilities of administrative staff in faculties and implementation started in 2019.

In seeking to find innovative ways to improve operational efficiency in support of effective human resources management and improving integration between systems, the University embarked on an integrated enterprise resources planning (ERP) system, combining finance

and human resource functions within ‘Softworx Infor LN’ and ‘Educos Vision’ respectively. Goal Area 7 also speaks to the InforLN project, which has been implemented and now requires further refinement and integration.

Building on similar surveys conducted in 2011 and 2014, a Value Survey was administered among staff in 2018 that assessed the connection between people’s personal values and their sense of current organisational values to gain a sense of the desired organisational values. The results were shared with the campus community in 2019 through a series of workshops and conversations.

Over the next period, a number of internal and external factors will continue to influence the priorities articulated in the sections below. The prolonged period of social distancing and remote work will, in all likelihood, increase employees’ expectations of flexible work approaches, which will necessitate a careful assessment of the suitability and flexibility of such arrangements for the different types of roles. Secondly, the digitisation and digitalisation of the working environment is likely to significantly influence the nature and speed of work, increasingly making some manual functions obsolete. (Digitisation is the conversion of analog/ paper-based work to a digital form, whereas digitalisation is the use of technologies and digitised data to impact the business or ways in which work gets done.) Thirdly, the combination of work pressure, blurred work-life boundaries, and personal anxiety about health and safety may increase the need for deliberate staff engagement strategies. Fourthly, changes in the regulatory environment, such as privacy rights under POPIA, may render the University exposed. And finally, with salaries being the largest budget item, the people component is closely bound to the University’s financial sustainability challenges.

The People Framework is enabling in support of the core goals: Student experience, Learning and Teaching, and Research and Innovation. It should therefore, be read in conjunction with the broader strategic aspirations of the University.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be to:

(1) Attract, retain and engage excellent talent and creating a conducive work environment.

The University recognises the critical nature of talent management across the university to create an environment where individuals are able to support strategic objectives and optimise strategic opportunities. As a research-led university in an increasingly competitive environment, UWC will need to demonstrate foresight and implement a set of integrated processes to thrive and differentiate itself. This will involve a range of strategies to cultivate and attract top talent to meet its strategic imperatives, position the university as an employer of choice, actively engage staff members, and modernise its HR processes to create consistency and embed these into the day-to-day management of the University. Through a Talent Management Framework, UWC will pay closer attention to the integration of institutional objectives and human resource processes in order to achieve greater value from its recruitment, retention and engagement with employees. Unlike the standard HR processes for the filing of vacancies, a talent management focus will require the involvement of senior leaders within the University to cultivate top talent,

forge closer ties with agencies nationally and internationally and link these to succession planning.

People want to work for an institution that they can be proud of. UWC recognises that its ability to compete for top talent (e.g. researchers, academics and professionals), especially in globally scarce-skills areas, will require a better understanding of applicants' and employees' motivations, expectations and perceptions of UWC as a potential workplace. To this end, the University will engage current and prospective employees to gain such insights. UWC also needs an Employment Value Proposition (EVP) that clearly articulates the specific benefits an employee receives in return for the skills, capabilities and experience they bring to the university. To prospective and current employees, it defines the essence of what the University stands for, what sets it apart from its peers and why it should be considered as an employer of choice. It will also demonstrate that the contributions of employees are recognised, respected and valued. Once development, a high-level EVP still needs to be further segmented and customised as a living document to speak to various audiences, each with their expectations.

Although UWC has a relatively low staff turnover, it recognises the value to engage staff meaningfully and the continuous need to employ strategies to retain and develop its staff. This challenge of engagement is particularly compounded by the scale and distribution of staff working at multiple campus sites and working from home through flexible working arrangements. Disengaged employees are likely to take less responsibility, ownership and agency. UWC will encourage the use of the employee value proposition as a motivational tool for engagement and to connect employees' respective role to the university's mission, core values and to provide recognition and to encourage collaboration with colleagues and peers. In doing so, it will help address shortcomings in another area in need of improvement: meaningful engagement and communication with prospective and existing staff.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Develop and implement a University-wide Talent Management Framework (TMF) to emphasise the critical connection between talent and the attainment of key university strategies. The TMF will, amongst others, assist to
 - proactively identify key positions that will differentially add value to UWC's long-term future;
 - Identify a pool of individuals to fill such positions;
 - develop HR systems that will align the talent pool with the identified position (vacancy).
- Refine the People Plans of Faculties and professional support units to plan for and identify pivotal, high-value-added academic, research and professional support roles that are crucial to realising UWC's strategic intent.
- Develop a process to engage current and prospective employees to increase the institutional understanding of the factors and/or benefits (tangible and intangibles) that motivate or stimulate the choices of different generations of highly capable individuals, which could include, but are not limited to factors such: compensation; location; work-life balance; and career pathing, to name a few.

- Develop a differentiated employee value proposition (EVP) as a tool to compete for and attract highly capable people to UWC.

(2) Employment equity and diversity

The spirit of UWC's equity and diversity approach is set out in its Mission and Values statements. These principles are congruent with the transformation objectives as enshrined in the Constitution and legislation. The University stands to benefit vastly from conscious, dedicated efforts to diversify its staffing profile, achieve employment equity and to recruit and cultivate the next generation of enthusiastic academics, researchers and professional and support staff. Transforming the University administration and preparing the next generation of black and women scientists in niche areas are vital to this goal.

In the years to come, UWC will continue to pay focused attention to employment equity and to diversifying its staffing profile with specific focus on addressing the under-representation of black African staff and women, especially in senior positions. In 2020 the University submitted to the Department of Employment and Labour its Employment Equity Plan for the five-year period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2025. The EE Plan commits the University to a number of numerical targets and identified several barriers to affirmative action, which will be our focus to drive transformation towards a more inclusive institution.

During this period, a Performance Development System (PDS) will be implemented to enhance the learning process, involve and engage all staff in people development issues and embed a culture of performance that links people management, professional support and focused development to the attainment of UWC's strategic goals. Key to the success of a PDS is enabling individuals to better understand their roles and functions in relation to UWC's broader strategies. The PDS supports the university's vision of being a reflective, learning institution.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Give focused attention to the implementation of its EE Plan and the following areas in the Plan earmarked for improvement
 - review and monitor recruitment and selection procedures at all levels;
 - attend to the findings of the Culture & Climate Survey and have a follow-up survey;
 - raise awareness of diversity and EE;
 - attend to the career development and retention of EE designated employees;
 - develop a Succession Plan linked to the EE Plan; and
 - review and improve the work environment.

(3) Create a workplace climate and culture that values individuals, promotes health and wellbeing and facilitates meaningful employee engagement.

Consistent with a previous survey, the 2018/19 employee Culture & Climate survey identified several positive traits but also highlighted a number of concerns pertaining to

the current organisational culture that leads to an erosion of trust and, if left unattended, can become destructive to the overall university.

The University leadership is committed to addressing concerns raised by staff about the pervasiveness of bureaucratic practices. These challenges have been amplified by researchers. To address these concerns as a matter of urgency, leadership has commissioned an independent expert to advise on decentralisation, linked to appropriate accountability measures, as a potential solution. The new IOP also focuses on the importance of values-based leadership and good governance values and principles as important contributors to the desired organisational culture. Aligned to adopting the proposed Value statement, employees will be encouraged to live and model these values and behaviours in their engagement with each other, students and external stakeholders.

Over the next period, the University will encourage employees at all levels across the university to rally behind the proposed unified 2035 Vision and to help clarify what each role and function is accountable for in the bigger picture of the IOP to address the perceived prevalence of rank and authority in a hierarchical system. In addition, the plan will give increased focus to collaboration and the importance of working across functional units and departments.

The health, wellbeing and mental health of staff and students is a growing concern and remains an absolute priority. The contextual factors facing the University have resulted in an increasingly complex and uncertain operating environment and a more pressing concern about the general wellbeing and mental health of employees and students. Under the Disaster Management Act, all institutions were compelled to implement some form of remote work in the context of the pandemic. In 2020 UWC adopted a Flexi-time and Flexi-place policy to accommodate flexible working hours and workplace arrangements for specific categories of staff. One of the main challenges that the period beyond COVID-19 will require is the need to balance the demands of work with personal responsibilities and interests. Understanding that flexible work arrangements are not suitable for all positions and situations, UWC will explore and clarify the extent to which such will be implemented to support employee work-life balance, help attract, retain and motivate staff and increase job satisfaction and people's ability to handle stress.

The University leadership will foster respectful relationships with the employee representative body based on proactive, open communication to discuss and resolve issues. Through such initiatives, UWC seeks to build on existing relationships and foster trust between employees and supervisors in order to create an open and empowered working environment.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Focus on finding sustainable solutions to address the institutional culture and behaviours that promote: accountability, transparency, employee recognition, employee fulfilment, coaching/mentoring, collaborative work, open communication and career development –identified by staff as important focus areas.
- Administer a follow-up Climate and Culture survey towards the end of the IOP cycle to measure progress made as a result of the corrective measures.

- Address organisational design issues in order to clarify roles, responsibilities and interdependencies towards achieving the objectives of the IOP in this goal area.
- Appoint a task team to review the effectiveness of UWC’s Wellness Strategy, including the Employee Assistance Programme, especially in view of the impact of COVID-19 lockdown regulations.
 - On the basis of the team’s findings, the University will draw on specialist advice to refine or redevelop the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Use the intranet and other channels to consistently raise awareness of the importance of physical and mental health to help staff cope more easily with difficult challenges (e.g. grief, anxiety and burnout) in their personal and professional lives.
- Explore and clarify the extent to which flexible work arrangements can be implemented to support employee work-life balance, and help attract, retain and motivate staff and increase job satisfaction and people’s ability to handle stress.
- Revisit existing policies and policy gaps in support of an institutional culture that reflects a people-centred focus.

(4) Refine its reward strategy to improve alignment with best practice in the sector whilst being mindful of UWC’s financial realities.

Although employers and employees may have differing reasons for developing and refining a reward strategy, it is important to note that an effective reward strategy is aimed at achieving the University’s strategic goals and objectives. The 2016-2020 IOP promised to constantly review the appropriateness of the reward strategy so that it can keep pace with good practice and better align it with its strategic objectives. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

In an increasingly competitive environment, the purpose of an effective reward strategy is not only to be able to compete successfully to attract talent but equally important, to avoid key losing staff to other institutions. An appropriate strategy will help to drive a healthy institutional culture, influence appropriate behaviours and ultimately help the university achieve its strategic objectives.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Review critical skills and niche areas in terms of rewards and benefits with a view to attract and retain high calibre talent to the university;
- Do a national benchmarking exercise within the HE-sector to compare and implement best practices to ensure that remuneration is fair and equitable across the university;
- Review benefits structure for all fixed-term contracts and part-time staff; and
- Contain employee remuneration costs within national HE norms to ensure UWC’s financial sustainability.

(5) Improve operational efficiency in support of effective HR management

During the 2016-2020 IOP period, UWC implemented an integrated enterprise resource planning system (ERP) to integrate the respective human resources and finance systems and achieve greater efficiencies and data integrity. Implementing the shared system has started to simplify operations and improve decision-making, but more work still needs to

be done for the HR system to become fully automated, better integrated with the Finance system, and more data-driven. The Human Resources Department has also enabled a number of processes to shift from manual to digital processes. It is important to maintain momentum and build a digital culture across the university.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Identify the most critical initiatives as well as those that will add the most value to internal and external users to the HR function and pool the necessary resources to implement it.
- Develop dashboards with up to date information that will enable heads of departments and senior management to make data-informed staffing decisions and to have analytics at their fingertips.

Goal Area 5: Financial Sustainability

To support UWC's financial sustainability through budget alignment with strategic intentions and a focus on strengthening income diversification.

Introduction

Success in this goal area requires a balance of sound financial planning and management to ensure that revenue is spent in accordance with agreed budgets and according to appropriate processes whilst also creating the conditions and supporting efforts to generate additional funds through traditional and non-traditional avenues. Many factors impact a university's revenue, but both subsidy and other revenue generation provide an indication of the progress made in terms of implementing other IOP goal areas, especially in relation to meeting enrolment and student success targets. This IOP strongly argues for a Mission-driven approach to UWC's core academic mandate, supported by behaviours that demonstrate UWC's values. Success in this approach can go a long way in strengthening UWC's relationships with its different stakeholders, including funders and donors.

The process to develop this IOP kicked off on 9 March 2020, 5 days after the first case of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was confirmed in South Africa. At that stage, it was clear that, in addition to China, several countries in Europe were struggling to contain the spread of COVID-19 and started to introduce lockdown and other measures. In March 2020, it was impossible to imagine the global impact of COVID-19 on people, their wellbeing, the significant loss of lives and livelihoods, and the impact on global and regional economies. In South Africa state budgets had to be reprioritised urgently, existing plans had to be adapted and new ones developed. The South African economy was already struggling, and the impact of COVID-19 has, amongst others, resulted in a sharp decline in economic growth, and a significant increase in unemployment, further increasing levels of poverty in an already hugely unequal society. Similarly, UWC had to put emergency arrangements in place and reprioritise budgets to support the move to remote working and online learning, teaching and research.

Economically, the past five years have been particularly challenging with international confidence in South Africa plummeting and international rating agencies downgrading South Africa to "junk status". The previous IOP was conceptualised during the 2015/16 national student protests, under the banner #Feesmustfall, which posed significant financial challenges to the sector and UWC. Following the national student protests, the government significantly increased funding to universities, but the main focus of the additional funding was to fully fund students from low-income families through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). UWC benefited from this bold initiative, especially as it would, in the medium to long term, greatly assist to reduce student fee debt.

The onset of student protests exposed some of UWC's financial vulnerabilities, and the previous IOP, therefore, had a strong focus on strengthening the University's financial viability through strategies aimed at growing and diversifying UWC's revenue base and improving systems integration and management. All of these areas have received attention, but most require further development for them to become fully embedded and institutionalised.

In a context of ongoing student enrolment growth, which means that subsidy and tuition fee income continued to grow, continued progress was made in increasing the proportion of other revenue sources, but UWC's overall combined revenue from the state and fees remain very high. In October 2020, Statistics South Africa did a high-level comparison of the 2019 revenue sources of the country's 26 public universities, distinguishing between three income categories: *government grants*, *tuition fees*, and *other income*. For the sector as a whole, the income split between these categories was: government grants - 48%; tuition fees – 33%; and other income – 19%. Excluding the two new universities, Sol Plaatjie and Mpumalanga, UWC's proportion of tuition fee income is the lowest in the country at 21% and its dependency on government grants at 60%, was the third-highest of all. Considering that a significant proportion of tuition fee income is earned through NSFAS, the reliance on state funding is higher than what is currently stated. Compared to the sector, UWC has done quite well in terms of *other income* (19%) with only six universities having higher proportions, and these include the group of well-established former advantaged universities with significant donor funding income. Given the country's economic challenges it is not clear to what extent funding to higher education and research councils will be impacted going forward, but subsidy is unlikely to significantly increase in real terms during this IOP period, and UWC will therefore have to do very careful financial planning to meet ongoing and to adequately fund some of the strategic priorities articulated in this IOP.

UWC continues to invest in growing and diversifying its revenue base, recognising that many of the initiatives will not yield significant short-term income. As part of this approach the Institution has, for example, significantly invested in building capacity in augmented and virtual reality, both as an academic offering and as technology that can enhance the learning and teaching environment, prepare students for a changing world of work and result in new industry partnerships. As part of entering into an international partnership supporting this focus, the University acquired a building in Bellville. This facility will be refurbished and repurposed as a digital hub to house an AR/VR showroom and will also support other income generating initiatives that build on industry partnerships. Goal Area 3 of this IOP also speaks to the investment that has been made in support of other innovation initiatives.

The previous IOP cycle also saw the conclusion of the very complex and sensitive process of converting the University of the Western Cape Pension Fund (UWCPF), a defined benefit plan, registered and governed by the Pension Funds' Act, and controlled by an independent Board of Trustees, to a defined contribution plan.

UWC's fundraising efforts over the previous IOP period continued and yielded good results also in terms of alumni support. During this period UWC also received a block of flats as a gift supporting the ongoing shortage of student accommodation at universities. Recognising that fundraising is a complex area that requires ongoing effort and focused attention to building respectful relationships, there is still significant scope for increasing revenue through fundraising. Fundraising initiatives often happen in silos, but COVID 19 forced greater collaboration between different institutional units and the international fundraising drive to support the provision of devices and data for students under the banner #NoStudentLeftBehind, is a good example of a collaborative approach to fundraising.

Systems integration was also an important focus in the previous IOP cycle, and a new enterprise resource planning system, InforLN, was implemented. This type of process is always time-consuming, and the implementation process posed various challenges and requires further refinement to support improved integration.

UWC has also managed to increase its financial reserves, and this will continue to be an important focus going forward. The range of challenges faced during the last few years has confirmed the need for universities to be in a position where it can access funding to assist with unforeseen challenges as well as respond to unique opportunities that fall outside of annual budget parameters.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) Continuing to grow and diversify UWC’s revenue base

UWC is very clear about its role and purpose as a public university in South Africa, and this also frames how the University looks at opportunities to diversify its income. UWC’s focus is not limited to its location in Cape Town, but being located in an area with other very strong universities requires UWC to focus on a number of distinctive academic strengths. To be successful in building strong mutually-beneficial partnerships and attract significant research funding, UWC will have to invest in ensuring that it has the required intellectual leadership and academic capacity in place to support the selected areas. This focus is also emphasised and expanded on in Goal Area 3.

There is a need for greater coordination of efforts relating to funding applications and responses to grant opportunities as there have been examples (such as entrepreneurship development) where the lack of coordination resulted in external confusion and unnecessary internal competition. Fundraising for any kind of revenue, whether it be for research or other initiatives, will require a renewed focus on prioritising funding partnerships, building relationships with funders and improving the ways in which we acknowledge such partnerships and report on implementation progress.

In addition to UWC’s continued focus on building reserves, universities are increasingly looking at options where capital investment can generate a return on investment (ROI). UWC has an example of this approach in the commercial space that it acquired as part of the Bellville CHS faculty building investment. Especially in off-campus infrastructure developments, such options could be further explored. The building that UWC is developing to house the AR/VR showroom and AR/VR design studio also has the opportunity for an ROI approach, but it would be important to consider a set of guiding principles to support this approach.

There is also the opportunity for UWC to improve participation in public and private sector offerings significantly. There is currently no central strategy driving the potential to mobilise the public and private sectors (including the markets) to access and generate funds. Similarly, UWC has also not been able to significantly build on its expertise base in providing academic consulting services. This is a specialised field, and many universities rely on dedicated units to manage and advance this focus. Goal Area 2 also speaks to

increasing UWC’s academic engagement initiatives through short course and continued professional development offerings.

In considering UWC’s revenue base and the current split between government grants, tuition fees, and other income signals the importance of increasing third-stream income and confirms that UWC’s fee base is very low. The Department of Higher Education and Training is expected to release a new policy on fee regulation and this should assist in assessing UWC’s position regarding tuition fees in the period ahead. UWC remains committed to providing equitable and affordable access to higher education opportunities.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Build capacity to improve support relating to grant proposal writing.
- Improve overall grant management and reporting.
- Develop an Enterprise Strategy, consolidating the various elements and cross-referencing other policies and strategies, particularly including:
 - Management Consultancy,
 - Continuing Education, Short Courses and Online Education, and
 - Fundraising.
- Update and align the policies on Management Consulting and the Private Work Policy to make fair provision for revenue generation for UWC.
- UWC will explore management models and approaches to approach prospective clients, ‘marketing’ academic expertise to the public and private sector and to support academics in securing equitable contracts, billing and timeous quality delivery.
- Embark on a process to better understand UWC’s fee base within the national higher education landscape.

(2) Refine and optimise systems integration and financial management approaches

As part of the engagement process towards developing this IOP, various concerns were raised regarding current University systems, particularly as they apply to procurement, appointments, and contract management, especially within the grant-funded research and innovation environment. It was recognised that UWC’s financial management processes must withstand rigorous audit regimes but the current management approach results in ongoing frustrations and delays. It also creates unhealthy tensions and does not contribute to creating a conducive institutional environment. At the Senate meeting of 5 November 2020, a Task Team was established to explore perceptions of increasing managerialism and bureaucracy in research administration and academic life more generally at UWC and based on the recommendations of the Task Team, decisions will be taken regarding the approach going forward.

During the previous IOP cycle, a new enterprise resource planning system, InforLN, was implemented. There are still integration challenges between the finance and human resource management systems. These require attention to ensure that the new system achieves its objectives and supports strategic decision-making.

In light of ongoing financial constraints, the University community will have to carefully assess expenditure with a greater awareness of potential waste and inefficiencies. Financial sustainability has to focus in equal measure on revenue and expenditure. This approach should also be embedded in budget discussions.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Revise financial management policies, practices and systems, based on the findings of the Senate Task Team as well as that of other investigations/ benchmarking exercises.
- Give priority attention to the outstanding integration items impacting the InforLN system.
- Consciously work towards refining the University's annual budget process.

(3) Continue to refine its fundraising efforts and building its alumni base

UWC has strengthened and increased its fundraising activities and this focus will continue in this IOP period. 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 UWC's growing alumni base. Conscious of the major shifts that have occurred globally and locally since the inception of its last multi-year strategy, the Institutional Advancement Office conducted a horizon scan exercise at the end of 2020 to inform the development of a new strategy that is relevant in the changing fundraising landscape and that speaks directly to current challenges, the drivers of change, and the shifts that are likely to emerge.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Finalise and implement an Integrated Fundraising Strategy that will seek to better coordinate and steer UWC's fundraising initiatives.
- Refine institutional approaches for donations and strengthen grant funding support for the Institution at large.
- Actively expand its fundraising base and its timeous responses to opportunities that arise.

(4) Focus on improving integration between institutional strategies and financial planning

This IOP seeks to improve integration between different goal areas and highlight cross-cutting areas and inter-dependencies. UWC has a well-established process of five-year financial planning. In consultation with the executive and faculty leadership, the Council Finance Committee and the University Council, the five-year plan will be refined towards aligning the budget with key strategies in this IOP that will require additional funding.

Goal Area 6: UWC in the Public Domain

To optimise the range of media platforms and UWC publications to position UWC as a vibrant, intellectually stimulating, research-led university where students and staff can realise their aspirations.

Communication has changed significantly over the last decade with the most significant change relating to how technology has resulted in immediate communication, mainly due to smartphones and the increased acceptance and utilisation of social media platforms as formal and informal news outlets. Social media platforms have also resulted in a decrease in the reliance on traditional media to share information. Although it has become easier for individual organisations to share their news and messages with a vast audience, the same audience is bombarded with information. The manner in which information is packaged for different platforms and audiences has become an essential part of modern communication.

During the previous IOP cycle, UWC made significant strides in this goal area. UWC finds itself in an exciting position where it is increasingly acknowledged by peers and members of the public for its intellectual vigour and contributions. However, UWC's history as a historically disadvantaged university and some of the lingering public perceptions in this regard still require countering. In the previous IOP period, there were numerous incidents where the mainstream media, even though they were reporting on UWC issued and branded information, still confused UWC and UCT.

Navigating a complex and rather "noisy" communication landscape requires a dynamic, yet carefully integrated communications strategy that is responsive whilst well attuned to UWC's longer-term vision and purpose. There has been a significant increase in social media accounts linked to UWC with many research units and faculties having their own social media accounts. While this in itself is not a problem, it poses some challenges in terms of brand consistency and the integration of strategic messaging.

During the previous IOP period, key staff appointments were made in the media office. This resulted in increasing UWC's presence in the printed media, as well as appearances on television and radio programmes. There was also a strong leaning towards positive coverage of UWC by the press that included graduations, research and innovation initiatives, the achievements of individual researchers and students, new buildings and equipment, the appointment of and work of UWC's SARChI chairs. The National Research Foundation confirmation of A-ratings for UWC staff also received significant media coverage across a broad spectrum of media outlets and platforms. Sporting events, the performance of UWC teams and individual athletes and UWC sports code coaches, generated ongoing and significant media attention.

Internal communication has also been supported by improved IT infrastructure resulting in improved connectivity. Towards the end of 2020, UWC launched its intranet site as well as a new UWC website. Both of these are significant achievements that required input and buy-in from the broad UWC community. One of the considerable advantages of the new website is that it is mobile-friendly. In the absence of a UWC intranet for internal communication, the previous website became a tool for internal and external communication and information. This resulted in a website trying to achieve too many objectives with a significant amount of information that required ongoing updating, which often did not happen. The UWC

community is still adapting to the two platforms. Continued attention is needed to clearly distinguish between the purpose of the two platforms to prevent a situation where the same information is just duplicated on the intranet and the website.

An Integrated Communication Strategy was also developed and is likely to be formally approved before adopting this IOP. Content Management has also received attention and is embedded in the new website and supported by clear workflows in the media office.

UWC has various well-established practices and events linked to undergraduate student recruitment, including visits to schools, participation in selected national recruitment activities, and an annual Open Day for prospective students. Following COVID-19 lockdown measures, these activities required a new approach and UWC hosted a range of online events with individual faculties to replace the annual Open Day. Career advice was also managed online through various communication platforms.

Building on past successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) A mission and vision-informed approach to positioning UWC in the public domain

This IOP locates UWC within a new institutional Mission and Vision. The new Mission and Vision are respectful of UWC's past but seeks to locate the institution as a dynamic research-led university in a vastly changed and changing national and international landscape. Giving prominence to the shifts in the Mission and Vision will require careful attention in terms of messaging and giving prominence to events, activities and thought-leadership opportunities that locates high-end achievements within the new mission and vision, clearly signalling the University's strategic intent.

The previous IOP highlighted the importance of an Integrated Communication Strategy and a focus on content management to guide and give prominence to UWC's strategic intent through its communication. The Strategy has been developed, and the focus during this IOP period will be on implementation.

Brand management is an essential part of organisational positioning in the public domain and has received limited attention during the previous IOP cycle. Continued engagement, through marketing campaigns and other initiatives, is required to broaden UWC's brand positioning. The new University website will assist in this regard. Still, dissemination of all brand information and brand consistency require a more coordinated and systematic approach to advance the positioning of UWC.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Update the Integrated Communication Strategy to ensure alignment with this IOP with a specific focus on the Mission and Vision and the core Goal Areas and focus on embedding the workflow approach to support improved content management.
- Focus on positioning UWC as a thought leader in the national and global arena. This strategy must also support Goal Area 3's establishment of transdisciplinary research themes.
- Monitor and evaluate the use of technology and digital platforms for communication to ensure optimal and effective communication across different platforms, directed at different audiences and stakeholders.

- Focus on communication that is not purely event-driven, but that deliberately locates different activities and achievements within UWC’s strategic intentions and aspirations
- Develop an annual branding and marketing programme that must include the advance scheduling of prominent UWC publications such as the Annual Report and annual (and other) publications from executive lines and faculties.

(2) Develop a national and international campaign of recruitment that focuses on undergraduate and postgraduate offerings

Goal areas 1, and 3 of this IOP speak to student recruitment and enrolment, with a specific focus on postgraduate students. UWC has many ongoing recruitment and engagement initiatives linked to undergraduate students but has not actively pursued a coordinated approach to postgraduate and international recruitment. Despite the lack of international recruitment, UWC has many international students, especially from other parts of the continent. UWC is also mandated to offer fully online postgraduate programmes to at least 3% of its total student body within the current IOP period, and this will require a very specific recruitment focus.

The importance of UWC’s website as an initial way of exploring the University and its programmes must not be underestimated and should remain a key focus in the ongoing refinement of the website. Goal area 7 also speaks to the further development of the University’s student administration systems to better support the life-cycle of postgraduate students. That will also assist in strengthening UWC’s positioning of postgraduate studies. Recruitment practices should also take account of the option of transferring from another university to UWC to complete a degree.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Build a web and social media presence aimed at positioning UWC as a University of choice for prospective students
- Increasingly use students and their experiences as part of recruitment initiatives
- Focus on improving the institutional understanding of UWC’s international student population and their reasons for choosing to study at UWC. Based on these engagements and analyses of international student data over the last years, a recruitment strategy for international students will be developed.
- Develop a coordinated approach to postgraduate recruitment that will include mapping opportunities for financial support in different postgraduate offerings through SETA and other funding avenues.

(3) Actively seek robust relationships and partnerships

The importance of partnerships and the role of relationships in partnership-building features throughout this IOP and its goal areas. Strategic partnership building is also central in giving effect to the University’s mission. UWC will continue to 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. However, underlying them all will be a concern to enhance the University’s capacity, reputation, and resources to

position UWC as an institution that adds considerable value, both nationally and internationally.

Alumni are very important brand ambassadors and significant work has gone into building and strengthening relationships with individual alumni and alumni networks. The Law faculty serves as a good example in this regard and has also arranged various events where prominent alumni have participated in academic engagements. UWC wishes to continue to increase active alumni participation and alumni giving. More productive relationships and engagements with alumni 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 also focus on continuously improving 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.

In this regard, UWC will:

- Give prominence to UWC's range of partnerships, including those related to UWC's community engagement focus as part of the University's public communication.
- Seek to engage appropriate partners to visibly support the institution's long-term objectives
- Identify and engage prominent UWC alumni as part of building UWC's public intellectual profile.
- Embark on a comprehensive stakeholder-mapping process to better understand UWC's partners and to enable leadership to have more strategic engagements with its partners and stakeholders.

Goal Area 7: Developing the Campus and Surrounding Areas

To develop UWC's campuses as dynamic sites that effectively support academic and related activities through appropriate physical and ICT infrastructure that assist in anchoring the University in different communities and connecting it to diverse publics.

Infrastructure development is a slow and costly endeavour. It is crucial for UWC to have a clear vision of its academic strengths and aspirations for infrastructure development to support its academic endeavours in meaningful ways. UWC has a successful track record in implementing large-scale infrastructure projects that include both the repurposing of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings. Over the years, the University has put in place robust infrastructure planning, management and procurement processes. Project and University governance processes are also in place to ensure proper oversight.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue to influence how many organisations will approach infrastructure development and provision going forward. In the engagements that informed this goal area, it was reiterated that UWC's mandate as a contact-university hasn't changed and it was agreed that, especially at the undergraduate level, face-to-face teaching is still the ideal form of academic engagement. It was also recognised that being on campus enriches students' university experience in different ways, including the nature and frequency of engagement with academics and peers, access to a wide range of academic and student services, clubs, societies, sports facilities, and different campus events. However, there are positive learnings from remote working and the online learning, teaching and research experience that are likely to influence how we conceptualise new buildings and the repurposing of existing facilities in the future.

The previous IOP articulated the intention to position UWC as an anchor institution, helping to profile its metropolitan sub-region as a knowledge hub and desirable destination and contribute to the area's transformation. As part of an anchoring focus, the University deliberately chose to expand its physical footprint beyond the main campus and in addition to the Dental Faculty's facilities at the Tygerberg Hospital Estate and Mitchell's Plain, the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences building in Bellville is a recent example of giving effect to this strategic approach in the previous IOP cycle. The off-campus infrastructure developments that are in progress include the Greatmore Street development (arts and humanities) in Woodstock, the Transhex building (envisaged as a digital hub with virtual and augmented reality showroom and laboratory) on Voortrekker Road and the Unibell student accommodation development in Belhar (to the south of the campus). In their unique way, each of these developments provides new opportunities for UWC to connect with and contribute to the surrounding communities, build on existing partnerships and forge new connections with a range of possible stakeholders within and beyond the sub-region.

Whilst UWC has articulated its intention to increasingly play an anchoring role in the sub-region through the physical location of certain of its activities, the key anchoring role of the University through its academic and community engagement endeavours, although implicit, has not been articulated clearly as part of an anchoring strategy. In this regard, the University has to consider how it matures and integrates its thinking, actions and communication to support its intentions and responsibilities as an anchor institution.

During the previous IOP cycle, Cape Town suffered a severe drought. This brought into focus the need to attend to sustainability and efficiency, not only in terms of water but also in other campus areas. The University completed a water purification plant and piloted an air-to-water plant for the administration building. Ongoing attention is also given to installing fittings that will assist in reducing water utilisation. Water sustainability has received significant attention from an infrastructure point of view, but behaviour across campus doesn't seem to have changed significantly, requiring leadership involvement. A centralised transport planning system was also introduced, which has resulted in a significant reduction in transportation trips, a rationalisation in the sizes of vehicles used, and a significant reduction of costs associated with transportation. UWC has also focused on planting endemic and drought-resistant plants, and this is being formalised through the Development of a Landscaping Masterplan for the University.

Infrastructure development is costly, and UWC is very dependent on the DHET's Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant (IEG) funding for infrastructure expansion and upgrading. In recent years UWC has not achieved significant success in fundraising for infrastructure development. Given the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, the DHET's infrastructure grant funding could be reduced going forward. UWC will have to reconsider its fundraising approach to support infrastructure development priorities.

For some time now, there has been increased pressure on Universities to provide more student accommodation. Given the continued increase in student numbers, UWC has not made significant progress in this regard. However, when preparing this IOP, the 2700-bed Unibell student accommodation development to the south of the campus is underway that will significantly increase UWC's student accommodation offering. This development is the result of extended negotiations and a land swap agreement that resulted in the University obtaining additional land close to the Unibell station and around the Belhar Indoor Sports Centre with the erven close to the Unibell station being developed as student accommodation and the bulk of the additional land being earmarked for additional sports facilities.

The safety of students and staff is a key concern. In this regard, it is acknowledged that UWC is part of the broader society, and the University is therefore not immune to the safety challenges experienced in our society. In addition to the University's own Campus Protection Services, UWC also works in partnership with other role-players such as the South African Police Services and neighbourhood watch services in surrounding communities. In areas such as Bellville, safety is more complicated, and UWC has a security staff presence to assist with safety around its building and between the CHS building and the designated parking areas. During the previous IOP various projects, aimed at improving safety on campus were completed and these included attention to safe walks, improved lighting, enhanced security at residences and specific attention to improving safety in the area between the campus and the Unibell station.

Failure to change the nature of the surroundings and 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 city's mainstream life, but it cannot achieve this alone. Through the Voortrekker Road, Central Improvement District (VRCID) initiative and the work of the Greater Tygerberg Partnership (GTP), the revitalisation of Bellville has been receiving attention and UWC will continue to support and participate in these initiatives. One of UWC's isolated location symptoms is the ever-increasing number of vehicles on campus that require parking. Over the last number of years, the number of parking bays on campus has increased and the quality of several parking areas improved. However, parking provision is still not sufficient with many vehicles parked in areas not designated or developed for parking, impacting the campus environment's overall quality. The increase in vehicles is exacerbated by the limited public transport options to and from the campus. The completion of the Bellville CHS building, which resulted in more than 2 000 staff and students no longer being on the main campus, has brought some relief to the parking situation. Going forward, new models of learning and teaching could further alleviate some of the parking challenges, but this remains an area that will have to be monitored and managed.

Infrastructure planning also has to continuously consider the main campus's long-term holding capacity and the nature of the desired campus environment. With enrolment growth 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 retain its park-like character requires an ongoing commitment to an urban collegiate density of 1 m² of building on 1 m² of land. Part of the challenge faced is that existing buildings cannot easily be extended vertically as the ground conditions on the main campus are not optimal, hence the fact that most of the buildings that were constructed before the 2000s are only 2 or 3-storeys high. With continued enrolment growth, the University will continue to explore options to acquire new land and buildings and rethink space utilisation and optimisation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the already rapidly changing and expanding function of information technology. As part of the emergency move to remote working and online learning, teaching and research, universities were had no option but to facilitate a bring your own device (BYOD) approach by assisting students and staff with obtaining laptops. In addition, access to data also proved to be a widespread challenge, and universities negotiated affordable data packages with all the major service providers to provide in this need. The current iKamva platform (powered by Sakai) is UWC's learning management system (LMS), which has been successful in providing a stable and secure environment for blended teaching and learning. During the previous IOP cycle, investment in the system also enabled the LMS to support the emergency move to online learning and teaching.

Earlier mention was made of the strategic focus to continue to expand UWC beyond the main campus, and this shift increases the pressure for connectivity between campuses. UWC's main campus is in Bellville South; its oldest additional campus is the Dentistry Faculty building in Mitchell's Plain. It has another Dentistry campus close to the Tygerberg Hospital, and its most recent campus is in the Bellville CBD. An additional campus site is being developed in Woodstock and students and staff on all of UWC's different campuses must be connected. Better physical connectivity through suitable development of the region and

improved public transport would make a significant difference and effective, real-time classroom connectivity is urgently needed.

Physical and ICT infrastructure are key enablers of the learning, teaching and research and their purpose and functionality, therefore, has to be informed by the University's academic aspirations.

Building on previous successes, the focus in this goal area will be on:

(1) Infrastructure development

In UWC's context, the idea of UWC as an anchor institution is intended to be closely connected with the notion of UWC as an engaged and university, seeking to meaningfully connect with different publics. Over the last number of years, UWC has been consistent in articulating engagement in a context where UWC is aware of a distinctive academic role and its potential to help build a more equitable society. Its mission and vision speak to the imperative of being responsive to local and global challenges. In this regard, infrastructure development can be an important enabler, locating the University in different areas in support of new and different kinds of engagements and partnerships. As part of this approach, the quality of students and staff's university experience require more attention at all of the smaller campuses and when considering new developments.

During the previous IOP cycle, significant developments took place to the south of the main campus. However, the built environment surrounding the main campus is still largely perceived as uninviting, hostile and sterile, reducing the University's impact and cutting its students off from the city's mainstream life. Aggravating this exclusory effect is that public transport initiatives to improve mobility have primarily passed the campus by. Improving the public transport connections between different parts of the metropole continue to pose challenges to urban planning and initiatives to improve mobility over the last decade, have not benefitted the University. In addition, the collapse of metrorail has worsened the situation and restoring the full service in and around Cape Town could take until the end of 2021. The planned new passenger railway line between Khayelitsha and Kuils River will assist, but there continues to be safety issues associated with public transport.

A focus on integration with the sub-region also requires a good understanding of sub-regional planning and in this regard building relationships with City of Cape Town (CCT) and Western Cape Government (WCG) planners where ideas and plans can be openly shared, are crucial. The range of challenges with the Belhar (Unibell) student accommodation project highlighted the urgency to achieve greater alignment of UWC planning with that of the CCT and the WCG.

Infrastructure management is also concerned with the effective utilisation of existing buildings, and as part of trying to improve effective venue management, space-utilisation audits were conducted in the previous IOP cycle. The results indicated that there is often a mismatch between venue booking and venue utilisation, both in terms of booked venues not being used and in terms of the number of actual users occupying a venue versus the requested number of users. As part of the focus on the utilisation of venues,

the inconsistency of audio-visual (AV) equipment in different venues and the suitability of certain spaces were also noted as an issue, especially concerning prefab venues.

Traditionally the relationship between enrolment growth and infrastructure development was rather simple, going forward universities are likely to have to continue to adapt to changes in its traditional operating models with much more emphasis on a blended approach to learning and teaching, the possibility of dual classrooms, and exploring block teaching approaches – all of which are likely to impact on the space requirements of teaching venues. More flexible ways of working might also impact office space requirements in future. All of the issues listed above are still quite uncertain at this time and the impact on existing space as well future space requirements are not yet clearly understood or well-defined, but traditional thinking around university infrastructure development will undoubtedly have to adapt to meet the needs of students and staff going forward. From an infrastructure perspective it is anticipated that there will be implications in terms of more advanced technology requirements in classrooms, should a blended approach, for example, be followed. It would be important to understand how possible new ways of working and studying would impact the requirements of academics and students in terms of the University's infrastructure provision. For example, the 'bring your own device' approach have various implications, including a significant increase in charge point requirements.

Student accommodation remains a high priority, and the Unibell student accommodation development will contribute significantly to UWC's residence offering. The University also acquired some land during the previous IOP cycle. It will have to carefully consider balancing the future utilisation of these properties with some of them being well-suited for further student accommodation development. New management and partnership models will be explored for all new student accommodation projects.

Despite well-established processes and procedures to manage infrastructure development, there are some policy gaps, and existing policies have not all been regularly reviewed and updated. UWC also does not have an integrated sustainability strategy. All of the large-scale infrastructure projects in the previous IOP cycle included sustainability elements. These were project-specific and largely depended on the nature of individual projects and the cost, viability and practicality of the suggested sustainability interventions.

In this regard, UWC will:

a. Support and influence sub-regional development and reintegration

- Positioning UWC as an anchor institution will remain a priority that requires a comprehensive institutional approach. In terms of infrastructure development, the focus will be on:
 - UWC's role in urban revitalisation and place-making (city building)
 - Leveraging the increased importance of research, enterprise and innovation in regional development and in creating a learning region,

- Continuing to work with the GTP and actively building partnerships with public local authorities, firms, civil society and other stakeholders in order to identify shared agendas & clear priorities, and
 - Continuing to acquire strategic properties/erven that could be utilised or developed in future as student accommodation or to locate certain programmes/ disciplines off-campus in closer proximity to communities or industries to support ongoing partnerships. The acquisition of such properties should be clearly aligned with UWC's core mandate and strategic focus.
- Focus on the completion of infrastructure development projects that have already received IEG and other funding, and that seek to expand UWC's physical footprint and connecting its academic initiatives to appropriate communities, stakeholders, and partners:
 - Unibell Student Accommodation project where 2700 new beds are being developed as part of three clusters of student accommodation in Belhar, to the immediate south of the Unibell station,
 - Repurposing an old school building in Greatmore Street (Woodstock) to house programmes and research partnerships linked to the Centre for Humanities Research, and
 - Refurbishing the Transhex building in Voortrekker Road as a digital hub that will, amongst others house the AR/VR showroom.

b. Expand university infrastructure

- Continue to apply and seek to optimise the funding opportunities provided by the DHET's IEG, and in doing so will seek to find a balance between projects focusing on:
 - UWC's academic project, including new programme areas. In this regard the University will seek to find a balance between the repurposing and refurbishment of old infrastructure and new developments;
 - The needs of students and improving their university experience, especially at smaller campus sites; and
 - Addressing compliance issues and backlog maintenance.
- Focus on the completion of infrastructure development projects that have already received IEG and other funding, these include the:
 - South Campus Education Precinct Project that will relocate all UWC's Education Faculty facilities in a new precinct development on the south campus,
 - Repurposing the Senate building in order to relocate the Robben Island-Mayibuye Archives, house the University archives, and the academic programme in museum and heritage studies, (digital) archiving, preservation and visual history research activities,
 - Refurbishing and repurposing vacated Faculty of Community and Health Sciences space (after their move to the Bellville building)
 - Repurposing and refurbishment of the current Education building when the faculty moves to their new facilities on the south campus

c. Manage and optimise utilisation and quality of existing university infrastructure

- Adopt an overarching infrastructure development focus that will increasingly support technology-based approaches in learning, teaching and research activities.
- Continue to implement initiatives to improve safety on campus.
- Continue to focus on campus greening and the development and implementation of a Landscape Development and Maintenance Plan.
- Improve space management by utilising appropriate software and adapt existing processes to assist the University to implement effective space management.
- Address policy gaps and the review of existing policies.
- Update the University's Campus Development Plan (Master Plan) to improve its alignment with UWC's 2021 – 2025 enrolment mandate and to begin to account for likely changes in future infrastructure requirements.

(2) Information and communications technology infrastructure

Information Technology is a key enabler of any modern university's core academic, research and operational goals and, as it is increasingly available in various forms and its use becomes engrained in how we live and work. There is a global shift from the focus on information technologies to digital transformation that refers to the adoption of digital technology to transform an organisation's core functions and activities by replacing non-digital processes with digital processes or replacing older technology with newer digital technology.

Students and staff increasingly require 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 to facilitate this shift. In this regard, 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, and this is evident by the fact that the University was mostly able to manage the added pressure on systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. UWC is increasingly a digitally-enabled university. The opportunities represented by this are exciting, but require careful planning and management to ensure that the integrity of the academic project and the quality of support and operational services are not compromised.

ICT needs to be centrally aligned across the University compared to the current segregated model perpetuated by existing structures. In addition, UWC will need to be more proactive in protecting student and employee data, taking careful decisions at partnerships and data exchanges with other organisations, vendors and governments. Any technology should be inclusive and cannot be rolled out without considering the clear impact of inclusion for all the stakeholders involved as well as the security aspects.

UW will require a clear an Integrated Digital Transformation Plan to drive pervasive digital transformation and digital inclusion. Such a plan will have to consider improved support to enrolment and finance, registration, teaching and learning, research, graduation and the role of alumni while considering the full lifecycle of a student. Improvements in IT come from organisational structure, establishing missions and strategy, working with people and making the best of their knowledge and it should be a key institutional

objective to ensure that IT systems adequately support all academic and operational functions with a clear understanding of the requirements of the student life cycle. Establishing institutional relationships with platforms and technologies remain important, but at the same time the University has to be more proactive in protecting student and employee data, making careful decisions around partnerships and data exchanges with other organisations, vendors and governments. As part of a student-centered approach, a focus on mobile accessibility should also be a priority.

In this regard, UWC will:

a. Focus on IT Infrastructure

- Further enhancing the iKamva LMS, with a specific focus on finding cloud-based solutions to improve disaster recovery.
- Improve support to data-intensive research requirements through cloud-based capacity solutions.
- Utilise desktop virtualisation software technology to support student access to software in a BYOD environment.
- Provide quality connectivity to all UWC sites through fit-for-purpose virtual network technologies that must meet general as well as specific needs of respective sites.
- Acquire a software solution that will support online and flexible learning as well as the student lifecycle requirements of carousel-type academic offerings.
- Introduce enterprise monitoring and management systems to monitor and manage infrastructure capacity - storage, computing, networks and WAN.
- Implement core switch upgrades that will assist in reducing the overheads of managing physical infrastructure.
- Shift telephony to internet protocol telephony infrastructure to deliver end-to-end digital communication – this is already in place in most of the newer buildings on campus.
- Upgrade SASI and SEMS systems to strengthen the current system and include postgraduate student administration functionalities.
- Upgrade classroom infrastructure to support dual/hybrid teaching approaches.

b. Improve IT Security

- Acquire automated vulnerability management tools to assist to track vulnerabilities in real-time to allow for timeous mitigation and remediation in the server and desktop environment.
- Integrate Novell Identity Management Platform with next generation firewall to improve monitoring of UWC network activity.
- Provide an endpoint detection and response (EDP) solution that offers protection over and above normal malware protection that will also provide better insight into the security environment within which we operate.

c. Improve IT Governance

- Develop an Integrated Digital Transformation Strategy against which planning and progress will be reported and monitored.

Goal 8: Leadership, Governance and Management

To provide robust governance and effective values-based leadership at all levels in order to maintain and develop a vibrant and viable institution of high repute supported by accountable management practices.

The world is at a crossroads requiring decisive leadership to point towards a more sustainable and equitable path. Having been at the vanguard of change, the University has a responsibility to draw on its intellectual capital and networks to produce a model of ethical and values-based leadership able to respond in creative and intelligent ways to the needs, challenges and opportunities ahead. UWC has a broad formal and informal leadership base of engaged people who are fully committed and able to rise to the challenge. This requires a rethinking of the university's future direction to effectively shape and reshape the institutional discourse and culture, promote the social and intellectual vitality of the university and enable its academic community and networks to devise and implement appropriate strategies.

Over the past IOP period, the leadership collective has become much more attentive to the rapidly changing context with a greater appreciation of the risks, complexities and uncertainty that accompanies it. Through active engagement, the leadership collective was able to interpret the dynamic context in which UWC is working to hold an inspirational vision of what is possible in the medium term, along with practical measures for adapting and effecting change in a coherent manner, while simultaneously keeping an eye on the future. All parts of the campus community were challenged to interpret their respective activities in terms of the vision and to become adept at new ways of seeing and responding in a challenging and ever-changing environment.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic tested the resilience of the University and the effectiveness and robustness of UWC's leadership, management and governance at all levels. During this period of great uncertainty, anxiety and isolation, leadership traits such as empathy, agility and an ability to communicate with clarity became even more crucial to help staff and students cope with widespread anxiety and isolation and to maintain a semblance of connectedness and a sense of belonging within their respective teams. One of the lessons drawn from handling the pandemic reasonably well is that different stakeholders inside and outside the University rallied together, offered practical suggestions and assisted in making appropriate, evidence-based decisions in a concerted effort to leave no one behind.

As challenging as this experience may have been, leaders have an opportunity to leverage new insights and advancements made during the pandemic and encourage greater flexibility and openness to reimagine the role of the university, rather than attempting to revert to old ways of doing.

In this IOP, leadership, management and governance bodies will be expected to focus on developing robust, ethical, collaborative and values-based relationships and to make the wellbeing of people a priority. It requires a rethinking of what it means to lead with a sense of

purpose, empathy and inclusivity. This is of vital importance as Universities move into a post-COVID-19 era.

Governance at UWC is mostly understood to mean the processes that order or regulate the functioning of the University. It entails both formal values, rules and structures and informal practices ('this is how things are really done'), which determine how power relations are played out. While some informal practices are, to some degree, accepted as necessary for the smooth functioning of the institution, it also leads to a perceived lack of transparency and accountability. Moreover, informal practices can be perceived as a formal process by academics, students and academic support staff, which causes confusion among the different stakeholders. Informal practices not supported or in compliance with the written laws or rules are the antithesis of good governance. Thus, a focus on alignment between practice and policy is necessary.

The University's core governance structures are complemented by a broader University community comprising both internal and external actors with different mandates and interests to pursue, but who all seek to achieve what is best for the University and play a collective role in making the University function well. For the University community to harness the common strengths and minimise the limiting self-interest of different constituencies, collaboration rather than competitive governance is needed, however diverse these interests may be. This entails, among other things, a shared vision and plan that contains aspirational goals, practical and concrete principles to guide practice with greater clarity so that the interconnectedness of people, structures, processes and goals are realized.

UWC also requires approaches to governance that are appropriate to its academic project and in compliance with the DHET's stipulated institutional governance requirements. This would differ from, for example, managing a large company or a non-profit organisation. On the one hand, a university needs hierarchical structures where policies and rules are required to ensure oversight, compliance, adherence to standards of academic excellence, ethical conduct and, importantly, to hold leadership accountable for its chosen strategy. Such rules, if widely endorsed and supported by institutional memory, enable quicker and more efficient decision-making processes. On the other hand, the academic project necessarily takes place in a highly decentralised way. Governance (in the form of administrative procedures) is also required at the level of modules, tutorials, research projects, sports teams, student societies, residences and time allocation at the individual level. As a consequence of these tensions, the following can be distilled:

- Any overarching policies and rules should enable and not inhibit creativity and a sense of ownership and responsibility. This implies a need to guard against both over-regulation and under-regulation. While over-regulation and micro-management associated with that typically lead to institutional stagnation, under-regulation easily compromises standards of excellence. Over-regulation can occur when new layers of rules are introduced to cover every possible exception and malpractice, leading to increasing administrative bureaucracy. Such highly centralised management structures typically slow down academic processes. Under-regulation occurs whenever individual students, staff members, departments, committees and even faculties set their own standards of excellence without testing and developing that sufficiently through interaction with others (rigorous scrutiny and ongoing peer review). A helpful guideline here is to ensure

that more detailed regulations serve the purpose of broad value-based institutional policies.

- Hard-core bureaucratic culture at work in the University often extends from the central administration to faculties and then back again, sometimes with authoritarian signals from departmental heads. This inhibits knowledge creation and innovation, a key pillar of the University.
- There is a need for a framework that enables governance structures to strike a balance between respect for the academic authority, the need for uniformity around rules, investing of trust in processes and extensive reporting (the auditing regime).
- The academic project and not the bureaucratic project should remain the University's focus, and 'rules' for accountability should be foregrounded by 'values' to inform the desired culture.

Good governance is at the heart of any successful organisation. UWC can benefit vastly from embedding good governance principles as a means of influencing and transforming the institutional culture and holding people to account. Several ideas are proffered, such as inclusive participation, equity and consistency, innovation and adaptability, transparency, ethics and accountability, and effectiveness and efficiency.

There are a number of mechanisms for strengthening the governance principles, and these include focused and targeted workshops on important governance principles, committee training, effective reporting protocols to constituencies, the establishment of communities of practice across various areas; the establishment of governance reflective spaces, better implementation of policies with increased monitoring and evaluation.

UWC's Mission should also guide its leadership, management and governance approaches, confirming that 'participation' in the institution is not just for its own sake but rather to give life to the broader issues of diversity and social justice.

Principles and values of good governance

Two main principles and values are identifiable. The principle of *accountability* is identified as one of the principles to be further pursued. There seems to be an acknowledgement of the inherent tension in the University between different spheres of authority and the need to clarify it with a view to hold people to account and avoid situations where the balance tilts in an undesirable direction. Another principle relates to improved *transparency* as a value of governance. This foregrounds a governance principle for stakeholders to access relevant information timeously, to meaningfully participate in deliberations and decision-making processes, subject to effective scrutiny and reasoning for decision-making.

Other values of governance that may need to be nurtured alongside the two key principles explored above include 'people-centeredness'; 'collegiality'; 'ethical' behaviour; and 'inclusivity'. A collaborative rather than a competitive governance approach would harness the common strengths and minimise the limiting self-interest of different constituencies, thereby advancing UWC's goals. Such an approach should be carefully managed and could balance the tensions that arise from over-regulation and under-regulation and the impact it may have on the academic project.

In this regard, UWC will

(1) Consistently articulate the University’s Mission, Vision and Values demonstrate visible leadership support for multi-functional plans through explicit priority-setting, giving due weight to the University’s core functions and alignment of enabling goals in support thereof.

Vision is easily lost, and leadership easily dissipated in mere compliance and confusion about an institution’s core purpose within the higher education ecosystem. The leaders of the University are committed to playing a dynamic and strategic role in the co-creation of a compelling, future-oriented, unified vision, clarification of UWC’s core purpose and the articulation of appropriate goals and strategies to keep the university on a positive trajectory in response to fundamental issues facing the institution. This requires the university community to be open and to envision and work towards scenarios of a future that are appreciative of its past but very different in its evolution. Such openness also has to confront the oversimplified, juxtaposed expectations of university missions to only serve instrumentalist or inherently common good purposes.

Universities are complex organisations serving multiple audiences and expectation, requiring an appropriate balancing of these tensions. Through its academic mandate, leadership commits to lead with humility, empathy and care to co-create a responsive academic environment that shifts towards a university of the future, built on solid practices of equity and social justice. In doing so, leadership will:

- promote mutually beneficial collaborative research partnerships nationally and internationally,
- advocate for its students 21st-century skills for the 4th industrial revolution and entrepreneurial skills for employment and innovation opportunities, and
- encourage learning experiences open to Africanisation and de-colonization of curricula.

Leadership will remain attuned to contextual challenges, opportunities and regulatory requirements and continually educate and effectively share such information and regulatory and compliance issues with all role-players across the university. It will also promote the optimising of modern technologies and the utilisation of online systems and platforms for effective communication, stakeholder engagement and promoting goal achievement while being attuned to a number of risks accompanied by such approaches. Planning remains dynamic. The leadership as a collective will continuously articulate the mission and understanding of the core values to inform long-term thinking and operational planning. The collective will initiate and manage iterative planning processes to produce and support multi-functional plans throughout the university, make the processes participative and make such plans available online to provide feedback loops.

(2) Prioritise and support the implementation of a select number of university-wide change initiatives with the biggest potential to advance and sustain UWC’s future (intellectual) position and help impact challenges of local and global concern.

Changing an organisation’s culture is one of the most complex leadership challenges. UWC has a strong tradition of collaborative practices to generate and apply knowledge to effect change and improve the lives of students and society at large. Change should be in the DNA of all universities’ core missions. Ironically, universities are also notorious for

being slow to change. Disciplinary boundaries, increased levels of specialisation, regulatory and compliance demands, siloed business processes, and antiquated manual business processes are contributing factors to inhibit transparency and an open collaborative culture.

Nurturing a culture of change is a large-scale transformational process that requires concerted effort and the support of everybody, but it starts at the top. It starts with actively engaged leaders who are able to provide solutions to the challenge at hand. The leadership's commitment to institutional transformation involves nurturing a culture of change and creating an enabling, collaborative climate for the sustained generation of new knowledge to address the complex challenges of our world.

The new IOP provides a unique opportunity for the leadership to promote an understanding and rally support around a new set of institutional priorities that really matter most and the urgency thereof. Awkward as it may be, significant collaborative leadership effort will go towards active dialogue, clarifying and generating energy around a new vision, a revised mission statement and the need for core values and desired behaviours. The process will also necessitate priority-setting and making tradeoffs, where applicable, and cascade and implement these in terms of approved multi-functional faculty and divisional plans. The ability of leadership to commit to and implement change projects will not only demonstrate their commitment and keep the items top-of-mind but also model change behaviours. There is also no one-size-fits-all to embed new ways of working at scale and achieve agility and responsiveness.

Change is a function of perceived need. Meaningful change will require an actively 'engaged community' where individuals within the organization make meaningful contributions to much-needed change and, as a result, have a stake in its transformation. In striving for sustained change, the leadership teams will ensure that systems, structures and processes are in place to enhance the desired culture to reflect new values and behaviours that underpin the change in culture. Dynamic leadership is also underpinned by good governance systems and accountability frameworks to ensure proper oversight and alignment with the strategic objectives.

(3) Invest in a diverse leadership corps, widely recognised as credible in national and international terms, to model responses to South Africa's transformation challenges and to advance the university's global competitiveness

Leaders who have ceased to learn, cease to lead. Where leaders are committed to learning, the institution's development follows. UWC will continue to attract and retain a diverse leadership corps to drive and execute a strategic agenda for a modern South African university and a commitment to diversity, transformation and sustainability at all levels. In tune with the IOP's articulation of UWC's future needs as well as an understanding that the future will be different than the present, requiring different skill sets for tomorrow, the university will develop and implement a framework for succession and knowledge transfer with a people-skills perspective. It will allow UWC to identify high performers, implement an appropriate set of strategies to effectively accelerate the development, improve retention and empower the next generation of managers and leaders to meet future challenges. This will give support to rising leaders to harness their

value at the university and increase the pool of talented persons to fill key positions. As part of the succession planning strategy, mentors and coaches will be appointed, and cross-generational leadership encouraged, giving the youth, women and Africans (in line with UWC's EE plan) more opportunities to participate in leadership development activities, such as an African and Women Leadership Development Programme. The implementation will be done within a performance appraisal framework and would need to be monitored closely to ensure that they bear fruits.

(4) Foster and structure sustainable relationships with external partners locally, nationally and internationally, and expand the university's knowledge networks around efficient governance systems to achieve increased scale and impact.

The changing mission and roles of universities in the knowledge economy and their interconnectedness with external role players necessitate a critical reassessment of the efficacy of university governance systems. I

In line with the previous IOP, leadership continues to foster and be inspired by wider connections and active engagement with an array of external role players on issues that matter. Several individuals and units in the university are also encouraged to partner with or lend support to new knowledge networks nationally and internationally, which often transcend narrow disciplinary and departmental boundaries. As a mark of a healthy university, these include multiple formal and informal connections within and university relationships with communities, businesses, NGOs, branches of government and other universities and research institutions in South Africa and internationally. These networks are vital to promote a trustworthy environment and inspire participants to think differently about key issues that matter.

This objective seeks to maximise the value of governance at UWC. In that way, the university intends to harness the common strengths and minimize the limiting self-interest of different constituencies, seeking collaboration rather than competitive governance, however, diversified the stakeholders may be. This entails, among other things, that the IOP includes aspirational goals and practical and concrete principles that will guide governance practice with greater clarity so that the intended value of the interconnectedness of the structures, processes and goals are realized. This will emphasize the role that both internal and external actors play and will require the promotion of multi-level governance and the strengthening of existing partnerships, and the building of new partnerships with industry, communities, private and public sector institutions.

An internal assessment of the range of formal and informal partnerships will also shed light on the efficacy of transformational leadership at UWC and how multi-level governance of university-external organisations-partnerships between the University and for e.g. industry, communities, public sector institutions facilitates the integration of academic and research activities into societal development to achieve positive impact.

To achieve greater cohesion and alignment of rules, policies and practices across the various dimensions of the University system, UWC will adopt a more formal rule-compliance approach to governance both in terms of core governance structures and

complementary internal-external structures. Overall, it will give a more prominent role to the academic project by foregrounding it in governance and creating a better understanding of the principles, values and culture that underpin it.

(5) Operationalise strategies through various modes of values-based governance and revise lines of accountability between actors and structures in university.

Bridging the gap between having strategic intentions and carrying them out effectively 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. All plans are implemented in relatively unstable environments, and universities are no exception. Reality is thus seldom as clean-cut as formulating a five-year strategy document and implementing it methodically as a plan without expecting setbacks. Instead, operationalising strategies involves making sense of dynamic situations, making prioritised choices and trade-offs, acting on these choices through implementation strategies and then to reflect and making revisions. In the context of a university, good governance means that interconnected parts come together smoothly and processes collaborate to achieve a culture that is robust, flexible and informed to make the right decisions.

A culture of accountability starts at the top but 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. As part of the accountability process, the leadership will develop meaningful diagnostic metrics to register progress against its stated goals and objectives. In doing so, it will engage a number of role players to find an appropriate balance between quantitative and qualitative metrics across a range of input, output, outcomes and impact factors. This will consider ideas arising from ‘slow science’ movements about the appropriateness of some instruments of measurement. In addition, a ‘values-based governance’ model is proffered to strengthen the lines of accountability between actors and structures in the university. To this end, current practices will be revised towards a redeveloped focus on ‘good governance principles’ grounded within identifiable values-based principles.

Suggested values-based principles to underpin good governance strategies are inclusive and collaborative participation, equity and consistency; innovation and adaptability; transparency; ethics and accountability; and trust. Leadership will promote, communicate and conserve these core governance values as enduring tenets of the university. Further attention will also be paid to the ‘modes of governance’ (such as decentralisation vs centralisation to ensure agility to leverage opportunities while promoting the academic project (learning and teaching; research and innovation; and community engagement) through an alignment of rules and policies across various strata of the university system.
