



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD



20
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TEACHING
& LEARNING
REPORT

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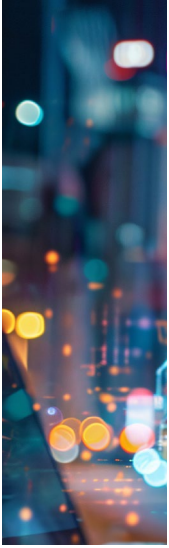
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Foreword

Teaching and learning lie at the heart of the University of Cape Town's (UCT) mission. They are where ideas take root, values are lived and future leaders are shaped. Each year, as we reflect on our progress, we are reminded that our classrooms – physical and virtual – are not just sites of knowledge exchange, but spaces where society itself is reimagined.

The 2024 Teaching and Learning Report offers a glimpse into a university in motion: one that honours its deep traditions of academic excellence while continuously transforming to meet new demands. It reveals a community committed to equity, innovation and social responsiveness – the living expression of our Strategy 2030.

In 2024, we took decisive steps to make learning more inclusive, future-fit and socially responsive. The approval of our revised multilingual Language Policy, first by Senate then by Council in December 2024, marked a transformative milestone – one that affirms the power of language in building belonging and advancing knowledge justice.

This policy, developed through the leadership of the Multilingualism Education Project, acknowledges isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English as UCT's official languages, while recognising South African Sign Language, Khoekhoegowab

and Afrikaaps as languages for development. It repositions multilingualism as a driver of equity and epistemic access, not a barrier to learning.

The piloting of the SoTL4Change@UCT programme further demonstrated our commitment to fostering innovation in teaching. Designed to elevate academic practice through reflective scholarship, the programme equips educators to engage critically with teaching and learning challenges, bridging disciplinary knowledge with pedagogical expertise. This work is reshaping our classrooms into spaces that are intellectually rigorous, inclusive and responsive to societal change.

In parallel, the development of the UCT Framework for AI in Education signalled our readiness to navigate the frontiers of digital transformation with creativity and care. As global conversations about artificial intelligence evolve, we are ensuring that our approach to digital innovation remains human-centred, ethical and aligned with our academic mission.

Nearly 80% of our courses have now migrated to Amathuba, our new learning management system. This is a significant leap in embedding digital technologies that enhance, rather than replace, the rich in-person experience that defines UCT's campus life.



Faculties across the university demonstrated remarkable innovation in curriculum renewal and student engagement.

We also showcased the power of holistic student support. Programmes such as Living and Learning, UCT Plus and first-year and peer mentorship initiatives have strengthened our focus on developing the whole student – academically, socially and emotionally. The expansion of health and wellness services, together with disability advocacy and inclusive pedagogies, reflects our commitment to creating environments where every student can thrive.

Faculties across the university demonstrated remarkable innovation in curriculum renewal and student engagement. From law clinics addressing social justice issues, to health sciences integrating isiXhosa communication courses, and science and commerce faculties embedding decolonial and multilingual approaches – these examples illustrate UCT's ongoing transformation in practice.

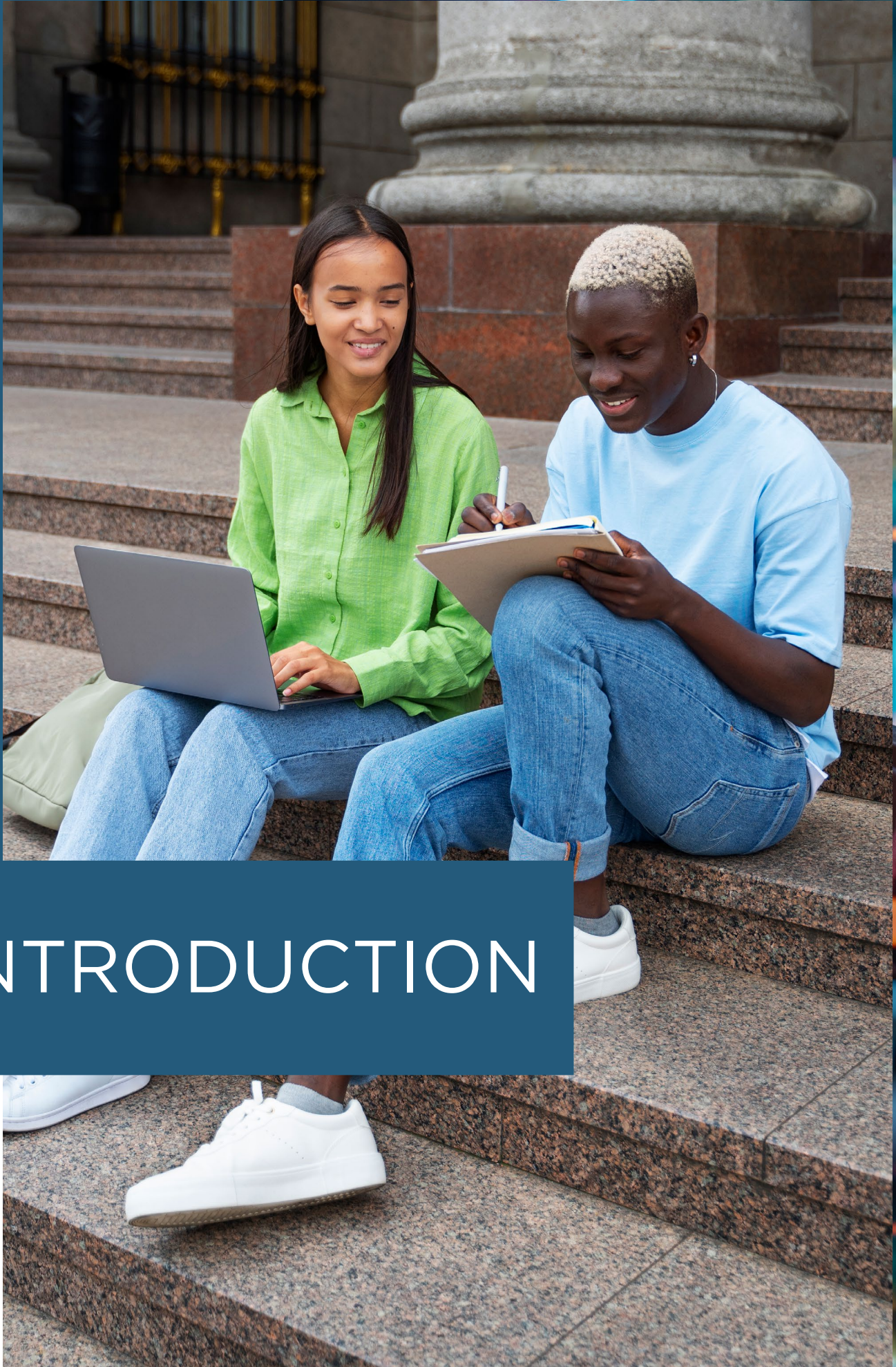
As we move forward, initiatives such as the full migration to Amathuba, the continued expansion of multilingual and decolonial pedagogies, and the strengthening of our academic support systems will shape learning environments that are adaptive, connected and transformative.

I am grateful to every colleague who contributes to this work of shaping not only work-ready graduates but world-ready citizens who are ethical, adaptable and inspired to serve society. Together, we are realising the

promise of Vision 2030 – building an inclusive, sustainable and globally engaged African university that continues to lead with integrity, curiosity and care.



*Professor Mosa Moshabela
Vice-Chancellor, University of Cape Town*



INTRODUCTION



Introduction

In 2024, teaching and learning at the University of Cape Town set the course for transformative change and strategic improvement across the institution. The year was marked by a series of proactive initiatives designed to enhance student success, streamline processes, and ensure the financial sustainability of teaching and learning operations. The university-wide undergraduate curriculum review across faculties also gained momentum through faculty-specific projects aligned with Vision 2030. This work was supported by dedicated funding to ensure alignment with institutional priorities.

A key focus of 2024 was on improving enrolment processes, including how demographic data were collected. Technical system updates were successfully implemented, leading to a significant reduction in incomplete records and bringing to the fore the challenges related to enrolment targeting. Significant work was undertaken to better understand the challenge of tracking applicant registration and diagnosing underlying factors, such as funding constraints, accommodation, and administrative delays, all of which are crucial to optimising student recruitment strategies.

Financial sustainability of the institution emerged as a critical priority. The Senate Teaching and Learning Committee analysed student numbers in light of increased throughput, fee concessions, and administrative load on the institution's

finances. These discussions led to strategic proposals for establishing guiding principles that align academic decision-making with the institution's financial realities. These measures are expected to influence future budgetary planning and safeguard the long-term viability of academic programmes.

Substantial progress was made with several strategic projects. UCT celebrated a successful Council on Higher Education audit and developed proposals to extend promotion opportunities for academics on teaching-rich conditions of service beyond the rank of Senior Lecturer, underscoring the institution's commitment to academic excellence. Reframed internal academic reviews continued with an updated approach centred on strategic alignment, flexibility, and a transversal



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approach. This work is supported by the development of a Quality Assurance Framework and a pilot data repository and dashboard to strengthen institutional quality management.

A key milestone for the advancement of digital education was the ratification of the Digital and Online Education Policy promoting greater flexibility, accessibility and resilience through digital technologies for teaching. The year 2024 also brought new capabilities to Amathuba, adding support for advanced reporting, student progress tracking and learning analytics, as well as the ability to create engaging interactive content. UCT's new Learning Store portal introduced a single point of discovery for all of UCT's short courses and professional development opportunities.

Time was spent addressing the rapidly evolving role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education by introducing a dynamic framework for AI in Education, signaling the university's commitment to harnessing technological advances while upholding academic integrity. The use of potentially unreliable AI detection tools in identifying academic misconduct emerged as a concern during these discussions, prompting a decision to treat such AI detector scores as initial flags to stimulate discussion rather than definitive evidence of misconduct. The AI framework is being finalised for adoption in 2025.


In the classroom, UCT's commitment to excellence was evident in the citations for the Distinguished Teacher Awards, awarded to myself for Mechanical Engineering, Associate Professor George Hull – Philosophy, Dr Yunus Omar – School of Education, and Dr Bianca Tame – Sociology. These teachers demonstrated

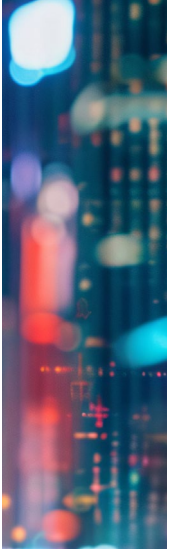
a sustained commitment to inclusive, transformative education that shaped not only curricula and scholarship, but also the lives of students far beyond the classroom.

The 2024 Teaching and Learning conference attracted over 260 participants for the theme "All About Curriculum: New Visions and Future Directions", with rich discussions on topics such as innovative and responsive curriculum design, promoting epistemic and social justice, the role of language and cultural inclusivity, the integration of digital technologies, and the opportunities and challenges that artificial intelligence presents for curriculum design and implementation.

The year yielded a diverse yet interlinked set of teaching and learning initiatives which not only reinforced UCT's commitment to excellence but also paved the way for future innovations that will shape the academic experience at the institution. The strategic groundwork laid in 2024 promises a more resilient, inclusive, and dynamic teaching and learning environment in the years to come.



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Report structure

This report is structured as follows.

Section 1

Provides an overview of the contribution that the Centre for Higher Education (CHED) makes to supporting the academic project at UCT.

Section 2

Provides teaching and learning reflections from faculty perspectives, including a discussion of contextual issues, student achievements, and faculty facts and figures.

Section 3

Provides an overview of the institutional services that support teaching and learning across the university. These include contributions from the Department of Student Affairs, Disability Services, and Student Wellness Services.

Section 4

Provides profiles of the 2024 Distinguished Teacher Awardees as well as a selection of students who have demonstrated excellence in different ways in their faculties.

Section 5

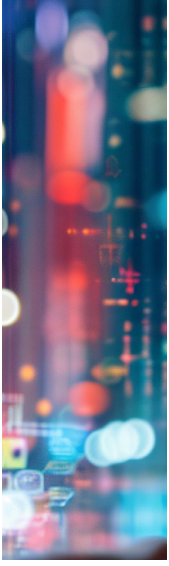
Provides the link to a companion report that gives a detailed quantitative analysis of teaching and learning in 2024. This institutional overview includes comparison with previous years in terms of student and staff profiles, student success, and other indicators.





section *one*

Centre for
Higher Education
Development



Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED)

CHED is UCT's nexus of academic and educational development, committed to advancing and supporting inclusive, high-quality teaching and learning across the university. As a strategic arm of the DVCTeaching and Learning portfolio, CHED operates as a transversal academic centre that works in close partnership with all faculties to support student success, enable academic staff development, and advance curriculum transformation. Each of its constituent units, namely the Academic Development Programme (ADP), the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT), the Centre for Educational Assessments (CEA), the Careers Service (CS), the Hasso Plattner d-school Afrika, and the Dean's Office Strategic Projects, contributes to an integrated teaching and learning ecosystem at UCT.

The higher education landscape, locally and globally, continues to reshape ways in which teaching, learning and student support are conceptualised and enacted at UCT and through CHED. This context, juxtaposing historical legacies and contemporary demands, often results in a delicate balancing act of ensuring no student is left behind while making pedagogical advancements, to stay abreast of future-focused innovations. The growth of digital education as a field has prompted more sophisticated use of online

platforms to ensure pedagogical congruence with sound teaching and learning practices. Literacy practices have also expanded beyond traditional domains to encompass academic, numeracy, digital, multilingual and multimodal literacies, with artificial intelligence emerging as a significant site of both support and contestation.

AI is prompting reconsideration of assessment integrity and ethics, creativity, and critical thinking, compelling us to recontextualise our pedagogical approaches and academic values.

In 2024, CHED's work spanned the full teaching and learning continuum. This ranged from foundational student support and tutoring, to literacies, language and numeracy development, curriculum transformation, assessment innovation, postgraduate and staff capacity-building, digitally enabled learning, and institutional data analytics. CHED has consolidated its own interventions to advance UCT's Vision 2030 commitment to unleashing human potential through digital acceleration, epistemic pluralism and the growing imperative to enable student agency and academic resilience. CHED continues to straddle its dual identity as service provider and support arm as well as its advocacy role as thought leader in the field of higher education studies.

An institutional footprint

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) continues to enable many of our institutional initiatives through policy, funding interventions, and collaborative capacity development interventions aimed at enhancing access and equity. CHED led the institutional implementation of national higher education imperatives through vehicles such as the DHET's University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), the Language Policy Implementation Plan, and the New Generation of Academic Practitioners (nGAP) programme.

With over R12.5 million in UCDG funding distributed across CHED, faculties, and the Research Office, the scale of institutional collaboration was notable in 2024. While 64% of UCT's funded projects targeted staff development, these were inextricably tied to student development and curriculum reform. CHED's stewardship of this funding, through the Dean's Office, ensured coherence, equity of access, and sustainability.

From course evaluations and curriculum reform, to leadership development, from AI readiness to academic literacy, these projects reflect an institution-wide approach grounded in transformation, innovation, and social responsiveness.

CHED's staff development programmes

Professional development opportunities, through postgraduate diplomas, short courses, and ongoing capacity-building, remain central to enabling academics and support staff to keep abreast of changing demands nationally and institutionally. Academic staff development initiatives continue to offer

enhancement support to academics across their career trajectory, through cohort based and individual interventions.

Among many others, cohort programmes like the New Academic Practitioners' Programme (NAPP), The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Change at UCT (SoTL4Change@UCT), and the Tutor Development Programme (TDP) offer carefully scaffolded, research-informed pathways that not only strengthen individual teaching practice but also build collective capacity across disciplines and faculties for pedagogical preparedness.

New Academic Practitioner Programme (NAPP)

Through a contextualised induction programme, NAPP supports academics in their transition into higher education through teaching, learning, assessment, and curriculum activities.

In 2024, 36 new academic staff representing all faculties participated in the Programme themes which included:

- Designing teaching for effective learning, curriculum alignment, decolonial pedagogies,
- Digitally enabled teaching, and
- Critical reflection for teaching and curriculum change.

SoTL4Change@UCT

The newly developed Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL4Change@UCT) programme, piloted in 2024, was designed to elevate academic teaching practices through systematic and relevant inquiry into higher education teaching and learning challenges. Positioned to bridge the gap between disciplinary teaching and teaching & learning scholarship, the programme seeks to transform



participants' understanding of pedagogy in a university classroom. The programme was piloted with 11 academic staff from the faculties of Humanities, Health Sciences, CHED and EBE.

Tutor Development Programme

In 2024, the Tutor Development Programme (TDP), funded through the UCDG, was implemented as a university-wide initiative to professionalise the tutoring role, align training across faculties, and foster an institutional culture of inclusive academic development. The TDP responds to longstanding inconsistencies in tutor training by offering a scaffolded, research-informed, and future-facing framework, built around a three-tiered curriculum that supports tutor induction, deepens professional practice, and cultivates academic identity and research engagement.

In 2024, Tier 1 (Becoming a Tutor) that provides induction training was enthusiastically adopted across four faculties, and demand for expanded

offerings has grown. The Tier 3 (Beyond Tutoring), focused on creating academic pathways, has been producing a range of advanced short courses, and the concept of a tutor research community has gained traction among both tutors and academic developers.

Some implementation challenges were, however, encountered. Amongst these was the need for more robust tracking of tutor trajectories and measuring long-term impact as we are already noticing subtle shifts in how tutoring is understood and supported across the university. Similarly, improving the coordination of tutor data (including appointment records, training participation, and feedback) will be critical as the programme grows.

Staff development workshops on curriculum and course design among others, continue to offer customised support to academics keen to enhance their practice. Similarly, CHED's digital footprint extends to support for academics in the digital education space. The successful



migration to Amathuba mentioned in the next section, led by the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT), alongside the development of the UCT Framework for AI in Education, and the launch of the Learning Store, signal a move towards coherent digital strategies that promote flexibility, accessibility, and future-facing teaching.

In 2024, a milestone was reached in the development of the Course Merchant short courses portal, branded as The Learning Store, which integrates with Amathuba and the PayU payment gateway. This portal provides a searchable and browsable catalogue of most short courses offered by UCT, making it easier for prospective participants to find, enrol and pay for short courses. Further development work is planned to allow for online purchase of a broader range of short courses, enabled by

a seamless integration with SAP Finance. The Learning Store will be launched in 2025.

Responding to an evolving higher education landscape

In 2024, the emergent influence of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) on teaching and learning prompted much discussion within the university, leading to the need for institutional guidance on appropriate use thereof.

CILT, through the Online Education Sub-Committee, led the development of the UCT Framework for AI in Education to create a coherent and future-facing response to AI that promotes AI literacies, assessment integrity and AI innovations. CILT also advocated for institutional funding in 2024 to implement an AI Teaching Innovation grants programme.



Academic development initiatives and interventions are now more intentional about foregrounding student agency, adopting models that position students as partners in knowledge creation and curriculum change, rather than as customers in a transactional relationship. □□



CHED's student success interventions

The Academic Development Programme (ADP), continued to consolidate and reimagine extended curriculum work (mentioned in the next section) as success-oriented rather than remedial in responding to uneven student readiness. The Writing Centres, Numeracy Centre, and Language Development Group (LDG) intensified support in multimodal literacies, adapting to the shifting profile of the student body while embracing the affordances of multilingual pedagogy and AI integration.

The Writing Centres extend beyond merely offering technical writing skills, helping students refine the quality of written outputs through an understanding of writing in the disciplines or finding their voice. The 2 885 consultations and attendance of more than

10 500 students at its workshops in 2024 (a noticeable increase in demand) signalled that these centres continue to service a significant institutional need.

Academic development initiatives and interventions are now more intentional about foregrounding student agency, adopting models that position students as partners in knowledge creation and curriculum change, rather than as customers in a transactional relationship. A critical approach to the prevailing discourse of “student success” has underscored the need for socially just, contextualised, and relational interventions, moving away from deficit framings. The evolution of academic advising hubs, deeper tracking of student and tutor trajectories, and enhanced short course infrastructure will support a more responsive and agile university.

From learning to success

CHED's Careers Service remains central to UCT's commitment to student success through and beyond graduation. In 2024, the Careers Service played a pivotal role in bridging academic learning with the world of work, providing students with tailored career development support, employer engagement opportunities, and graduate recruitment pathways.

Here, students are guided through the transition into formal employment or entrepreneurial endeavours. We are proud that for the 13th consecutive year, in 2024 the Careers Service was voted 'Best Careers Service' by the South African Graduate Employers Association (SAGEA).

Learning analytic insights were used to determine learning gained through participation in programmes and activities for 70 Careers Service programmes. The data indicated that prior to the event/activity, an average of 36% of students reported that they felt unsure about future steps to plan for their career. After completion of the programme/activity the average shrunk to 5%. By comparison, students who reported that they were ready to act based on the knowledge gained increased from 11% at the start the event to 53% at the end of the event.

To increase access to employment, the Careers Service advertised 538 opportunities on its jobs portal in 2024, with 10% of these being bursary opportunities. Students were also able to network with employers at three Career Expos in 2024 which attracted 146 employer exhibitors and 5 328 students.

Student employability

The annual Graduate Exit Survey revealed growth in the number of graduates in formal



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employment at the time of graduation, with a 3,4% increase from 48,3% in the previous year to 51,7% for the 2024 graduates. Approximately 81,5% of the Class of 2024 were 'meaningfully occupied' at the time of graduation, defined as in employment, studying further or self-employed. Of the graduates who were studying further or planned to study further, 79,4% indicated UCT as their institution of choice and most relied on family or bursaries to fund their studies.

It was interesting to note that Education, Health Care and Art & Design were the most common industries for self-employed graduates. Half of the graduates in this category were freelancers, while the other half reported that they owned businesses. Of the business owners, a quarter employed staff.

Acknowledging leadership potential

Approximately 3 000 students participated in the UCT Plus programme in 2024, an initiative that recognises students' leadership potential. Four leadership pathways are acknowledged in the programme: Elected Leadership, Leadership through Role-modelling, Community Service Leadership and Leadership through Active Learning. Upon successful completion, transcript awards were issued to 1 500 students in 2024, an increase of 20% from 2023.

The power of the 'invisible'

With CHED's focus on visibility and impact in 2024, the educational and academic development of students as well as staff development programmes gained attention, enabling critical discussions on pedagogical purpose and process in current times. Through concerted effort, CHED strengthened its multi-layered network of programmes, partnerships, and practices across all faculties. CHED's contribution is not simply additive or supportive, but substantive. In reshaping pedagogical cultures, challenging deficit discourses, and foregrounding inclusive and transformative educational development, CHED operates across a wide spectrum, from foundational student support and multilingual policy development to capacity development of academic staff, digital transformation, and AI integration.

Many of CHED's most impactful contributions are neither easily quantifiable nor immediately visible. Mentorship of students, faculty advising, data-informed reflective teaching, and cross-disciplinary communities of practice have quietly but powerfully shaped student outcomes. These 'invisible contributions' are often relational, affective and situated, but challenge dominant metrics of success and remind us that transformation is as much about academic content as it is about care, relationality, and institutional culture. CHED's work in curriculum transformation further exemplifies this ethos. In 2024, some faculties partnered with CHED to review and redesign undergraduate curricula, foregrounding epistemic diversity, social justice, and contextual relevance. Through sustained collaboration, enabled by the UCDG, CHED supported faculties to move beyond compliance-driven change to deeper curricular reimagination.

The 2024 T&L Conference, "All About Curriculum: New Visions and Future Directions" amplified this work, providing a reflective platform to theorise, share, and challenge. The 1.5-day conference attracted 282 registrations and 260 attendees. The programme featured 65 abstract presentations and a keynote by the Dean of Science, Professor Hussein Suleman, on "Automation for Transformation in Learning Spaces". Participants engaged deeply with issues of curriculum change, transformation, and collaboration in teaching and learning. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with commendations on the quality of speakers, the variety and relevance of sessions, and valuable networking opportunities provided.

Responding systemically and strategically

The imperatives of transformation and decolonisation continue to drive change in the curriculum, pedagogies and support practices across the university and through CHED. Through its steering and input in teaching and learning policy, CHED ensures that UCT's pedagogical commitments are not only policy statements but are translated into everyday practices that support learning, foster belonging, and enable success across the diverse student body.

CHED played a key role in the assessment and online education policy development through consultative engagements and campus wide deliberations with students and staff. A highlight in 2024 was the Senate approval of the revised Digital and Online Education Policy to promote greater flexibility, accessibility, and resilience through digital technologies for teaching at UCT. Educational assessments for school leavers and university entrants enable a nuanced understanding of preparedness for

tertiary education while academic advising continues to be pivotal in student decision making in relation to their studies. CHED staff also play an important role in the innovation landscape. Entrepreneurial and design thinking approaches are being embedded across programmes, enabling students to engage creatively and resiliently with rapidly evolving social, cultural and economic contexts.

The Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) staff led the development of the Language Policy and offered expertise in aligning policy aspirations with classroom realities. The work of MEP highlights the value of students' linguistic repertoires in shaping epistemic access, and challenges deficit framings of language by positioning multilingualism as a driver of equity, transformation, and social justice. In 2024, CHED supported faculties in creating pathways for students to learn and demonstrate academic knowledge across a range of South African languages and through translanguaging as

a pedagogy. This included expanding access to isiXhosa communication courses for health sciences students, embedding multilingual glossaries in extended curriculum courses, and piloting multilingual tutorial practices in Commerce and Humanities. In parallel, Language Development staff collaborated with colleagues in faculties to build capacity for integrating African languages into teaching materials and assessments, supporting the principle of additive multilingualism while strengthening English academic and research literacies.

UCT's Language Policy revision

A much-needed revision of the university's [Language Policy](#) (outdated by more than a decade) coupled with an expectation to align with the evolving landscape through the DHET's New Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions in South Africa, created an opportunity for the university to strengthen the promotion of





CHED's work resists the temptation of mere showcasing by offering a vision of development that is embedded, enabling and transformative. □ □



multilingualism through policy. The policy is inclusive and promotes diversity with IsiXhosa, Afrikaans and English as the university's official languages. South African Sign Language (SASL), Khoekhoegowab and Afrikaaps (Kaaps) are acknowledged in the policy as languages for development.

A highlight in 2024 was that the revised, multilingual policy was approved by Senate and Council.

Further, in 2024, UCT's Language Policy was bolstered by the Language Development plan that included a range of language awareness, promotion, and development activities implemented in the build-up to policy approval. Amongst these was the very first Language Indaba, held to promote an understanding of the policy (in draft at the time). Another highlight of 2024 was the launch of a Literature Competition, aimed at promoting indigenous language creativity, literacy, and preservation.

Shaping and building the teaching and learning ecosystem together

CHED, together with faculties, responded to the challenges of equitable access and success imperatives, bridging digital divides, supporting diverse and multi-modal literacies, confronting infrastructural constraints, and ensuring meaningful access to quality learning for all students. CHED's contributions to teaching and learning at UCT in 2024 demonstrate the power of working relationally, systemically, and analytically.

CHED's work resists the temptation of mere showcasing by offering a vision of development that is embedded, enabling, and transformative. CHED will continue to strengthen the strategic alignment between student success, inclusive pedagogy, and institutional sustainability. CHED recognises that the cumulative, often invisible, acts of care, critique, and creativity produce lasting shifts in how the university teaches, learns, and becomes.



section *two*

Teaching
& Learning in
the Faculties



Teaching & Learning in the Faculties

The year 2024 began under the shadow of disruptions, once again, testing the resilience of teaching and learning. A strike by PASS staff placed considerable pressure on registration processes in the faculties, a moment which could easily have derailed the start of the academic year. Student fee debt-related protests followed in quick succession, necessitating a shift to online and hybrid modes of teaching. With a swift Council decision to permit students with fee debt in term one to return, in-person lectures resumed after two weeks, and the remainder of the academic year proceeded uninterrupted.

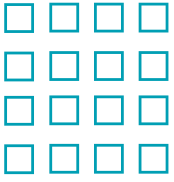
The university made strides in curriculum reform, working towards more inclusive, future-oriented programme offerings that are responsive to both global shifts and local needs. Key developments included rearticulation focused on reducing credit loads and enhanced interdisciplinary flexibility, creating better alignment with graduate attributes.

The impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and assessment prompted robust debate, with renewed emphasis on academic integrity and the development of core skills. Additional initiatives to support implementation of the UCT Assessment Policy included the development of case studies for the Good Practices for Assessment Guide and piloting the Assessment Studio. Expanded support structures, including mentorship programmes,

targeted skills workshops, and psychosocial support helped foster more equitable access. These initiatives were supported by the continued migration to Amathuba, the university's new digital learning platform. Alongside this, the extended curriculum programmes further advanced equitable access and success, combining targeted academic support, mentorship, and psychosocial interventions to ensure that diverse students are able to thrive within a changing higher education landscape.

By the end of 2024, most undergraduate courses had shifted to Amathuba, marking a significant milestone in providing a more consistent and enhanced digital learning experience for students. The platform was further strengthened through the implementation of two new modules, Performance Plus and Creator Plus, that enabled advanced reporting capabilities, student progress tracking, and learning analytics. These tools also expanded opportunities for innovative teaching and course design, supporting more interactive and engaging student learning experiences while offering valuable insights into how best to enhance academic support.

More than a technical migration, it has signaled an important shift in how student feedback was gathered and monitored, providing more structured evaluation of courses and prompt access to results by departments.



Teaching & Learning within the Extended Curriculum Programmes

UCT offers Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) in all faculties except for Law, with a variety of placement models and types of credit-bearing courses. The ADP is responsible for oversight of ECPs' implementation in faculty-based units. The DHET's Foundation Grant (managed by the ADP) enables the university to support the academic performance of first-time entering undergraduate students who require additional support.

A slight decrease in headcount enrolment figures was noted in 2024 across Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) as compared to 2023. The data indicates that 743 first-time entering students were enrolled in extended curriculum programmes (compared to 785 first-time entering students in 2023).

Overall, the data reveals that foundation students generally achieve higher success rates than ECP students in 'regular' courses. The trend suggests a steady improvement in recent years, despite a four-year decline between 2013 and 2017. These success rates recovered in 2024 to 80%, matching its starting point in 2013. This can be attributed to a range of factors, including greater emphasis on psychosocial support and enhanced integration of academic development interventions within curricula. Faculty reports that follow describe the impact of ECPs in more detail.

Data Analytics for Student Success (DASS)

Through the DASS project, the DASS team worked with staff to build capacity to use data analytics.

Course-level reports include the Know your Course and Students (KYCS) report, which provides course convenors and lecturers with a profile of the student cohort at the start of each course, along with historical course result data showing student and course performance trends, and a diagnostic assessment analysis of NBT subdomain data. The report also



highlights persistent equity gaps in student achievement in the course. The KYCS report was made available on-demand directly in Amathuba course sites in 2024, to increase its visibility and reach.

DASS reintroduced a bi-annual process for identifying courses with consistently low pass rates, previously known as “Courses Impeding Graduation” (CIGs) and provides a Course Pass Rate report, with an accompanying interactive dashboard, to faculty leadership and relevant committees. This spotlight on under-performing

courses helps focus attention on underlying causes such as student preparedness or programme curricula which may need re-alignment to improve student success.

An inaugural Student Data Festival, which brought together data practitioners from UCT and regional universities, was hosted by DASS in 2024. Staff from various faculties and units across UCT gave a series of presentations at the event to showcase how they use student data, and which data tools, platforms and repositories are available across the institution.





FACULTY OF COMMERCE





Faculty of Commerce

The 2024 academic year unfolded within a demanding but ultimately productive environment, where operational challenges intersected with the faculty's longer-term commitments to curriculum renewal, inclusivity, and student success.

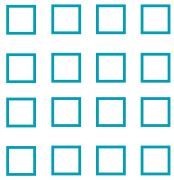
At the start of the year, registration and admissions were shaped by an embargo on NSC results, which delayed final admissions decisions and increased the workload on Faculty Office staff. These pressures coincided with Readmission Appeals Committee (RAC) and Faculty Examinations Committee (FEC) processes, creating an unsustainable overlap in governance and administrative cycles. In preparation, the faculty developed registration websites and course registration lists, ensuring students could access clear guidance. Staff were trained across departments to handle queries efficiently. Twenty-four orientation leaders supported orientation, and a new query-tracking system recorded 1 800 walk-ins during registration week, reflecting both the demand for in-person support and the faculty's capacity to respond.

While the staff strike created operational challenges, it presented an opportunity for the faculty to reflect on communication and support systems during periods of disruption.

Student representatives actively voiced concerns during this period, ensuring that the impact on academic progress was minimised. Many of the faculty's responses in 2024 reflected commitments first made in 2023. The 2023 report emphasised the need to reduce academic exclusions through revised progression rules and the introduction of the revised BCom in Management Studies. In 2024, these commitments began to show tangible results: fewer exclusions were recorded.

The BCom in Management Studies expanded the faculty's suite of programmes. The BCom in Management Studies also created alternative pathways for students who might previously have exited a programme without a degree, to graduate with a meaningful qualification. Similarly, the faculty had committed to embedding extended degree pathways and structured use of concessions as a strategy to improve throughput. In 2024, these reforms were consolidated and supported by new advising systems and more transparent governance processes in FEC and RAC.

Taken together, the year's contextual issues reflected both continuity and change, while strategically, demonstrating its commitment to the trajectory set in 2023.



Student success

Student success remained central to the faculty's teaching and learning agenda in 2024. From the start of the academic year, a series of deliberate interventions and programmes were implemented to ensure that students were supported, guided, and equipped to thrive both academically and personally.

At registration, workshops for FECR and RAC students were introduced to provide early interventions and clarify progression requirements. These workshops were complemented by personalised advising sessions, where most concession students registered face-to-face with academic staff. This proactive approach reduced confusion, set clear expectations, and linked students to appropriate support structures at the earliest possible stage. Staff reported that this contributed to fewer late-stage crises and gave students greater clarity and confidence about their pathways. FECR workshops continue to be provided at key points throughout the year, for example, in the lead-up to exams where sessions focus on exam preparation and incorporate input from teaching staff to ensure alignment with course expectations and to provide targeted support for students.


The extended degree programme, embedded as standard practice, continued to prove invaluable, building on earlier reforms. In this programme, the first year of study was configured in a more manageable way for students who transitioned into extended pathways through reduced workloads,

enhanced mentoring, and targeted psychosocial support. EDU data demonstrated steady performance improvements, particularly in the second- and third-year cohorts, reflecting the effectiveness of interventions made during the first semester and July review points. By strategically treating four years as the building block for academically vulnerable students, the faculty reduced exclusion risk while improving throughput. Importantly, the consistent application of FECR rules, probation letters, and monitored transitions helped to prevent the loss of students who, under older rules, would have exited without a degree.

The faculty also strengthened financial and psychosocial support available to students. The Commerce Crisis Fund again proved invaluable in assisting students who had not received allowances, providing transport and food security during vulnerable periods. In parallel, the faculty partnered with The Saville Foundation and the Greenlight Movement to pilot a well-being metric, allowing students to assess their quality of life and identify areas for personal growth. These initiatives ensured that success was not narrowly defined in terms of grades, but holistically, encompassing mental health, financial stability, and personal development.





A team of BBusSc Finance students won the south African round of the 2024/5 Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute University Research Challenge, in which 18 Southern African university teams participated. 

Case studies and student experiences reflected the impact of these initiatives. Students who had failed 'gateway' courses such as mathematics in their first semester reported that moving into extended pathways allowed them to balance their workloads and engage more deeply with core concepts. Others described how resilience workshops ahead of mid-year exams gave them practical strategies to manage stress and improve focus. The cumulative effect of these measures was seen in the data: exclusion rates continued to decline, more students stayed the course, and performance improved across extended cohorts.

Beyond academic support, Commerce students excelled in many areas. The SAICA Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) exam is the second and final professional exam written by candidates towards the Chartered Accountant designation of CA(SA). 'UCT candidates' are those who completed UCT's APC Professional Programme. The faculty is proud that in the 2024 APC sitting, 1 165 UCT candidates passed the APC, the highest number ever from the programme. UCT candidates attained an overall 82% pass rate, compared to 73% nationally. For first-time candidates, UCT obtained 84%, while the national average was 81%. The impressive 84% first-time pass rate for UCT candidates is a notable increase from 73% in 2023. Three UCT candidates were included in the Honours Roll list of the top five performing candidates. This achievement underscored the continued

strength of the College of Accounting and its graduates, reaffirming Commerce's status as a leading provider of excellent Chartered Accountants in South Africa.

A team of BBusSc Finance students won the South African round of the 2024/5 Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute University Research Challenge, in which 18 southern African university teams participated. The team had to submit an investment analysis report on JSE-listed Netcare, and the university teams with the four reports judged to be best had to present their investment case to a live audience at the JSE in Johannesburg. Commerce teams have participated in the competition for 16 years and emerged victorious in 11 of them.

Commerce celebrates academic excellence every year at the Faculty of Commerce Awards for Excellence and the Commerce EDU Awards ceremonies. Both events are true highlights of the year, filled with excitement and celebration, with prizes generously sponsored by corporates, industry bodies, and departments.

Community-building and support initiatives also contributed to student success in the Commerce EDU. The first-year induction day, first-year mentorship programme, Spectacles Initiative (where students are offered eye tests and spectacles where needed), presentation skills workshops, and graduation celebration were highlights of the academic year. These initiatives are supported by funders and

partners such as Investec and The Saville Foundation.

Analysis of 2024 data shows steady improvements in course pass rates across the faculty. Extended-degree students, who had been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 era emergency remote teaching, showed significant recovery by their third year, with pass rates now approaching those of mainstream cohorts. The combination of reduced workloads, targeted mentoring, and psychosocial support has been especially effective. Faculty-wide tutor training and embedded resilience workshops also contributed to stronger outcomes in large classes. Consistent application of FECR rules and early interventions through FEC and RAC processes further stabilised results, reducing volatility in progression. Overall, the faculty recorded higher course pass rates in 2024 compared to 2023, reflecting the impact of intentional curriculum reform and structured student support.



Curriculum and pedagogy

The year 2024 reflected a year of consolidation of the curriculum review process, with a sustained focus on creating clear pathways for success. One of the most significant developments in 2024 was the consolidation of the Bachelor of Commerce in Management Studies as a cornerstone of the faculty's academic offering.

What began as a programme designed to provide coherence for students whose progression was blocked has now matured into a flagship programme with its own distinctive identity. The programme is aligned with the faculty's graduate attributes but is also distinguished by its interdisciplinary structure, enabling students to take courses across multiple faculties and strengthen

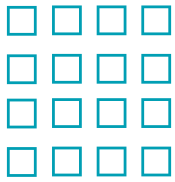
their academic and professional horizons. In 2024, the programme enabled successful completion of a substantial number of students who might otherwise have been academically excluded, creating pathways that connect UCT Commerce graduates with global opportunities for study, exchange, and professional recognition. It is becoming a signature programme that both enhances throughput and showcases the Faculty and the Commerce degree globally, combining inclusivity with excellence.

The faculty advanced curriculum renewal by engaging with graduate attributes as the central organising principle of teaching and learning. The process moved beyond structural changes to programmes and interrogated deeper questions of transformation:

- What defines student success?
- What qualities define a Commerce graduate?
- How can graduates be prepared for an increasingly complex world?

The articulation of graduate attributes such as workplace readiness, digital fluency, resilience, adaptability, and ethical leadership was identified, ensuring that every qualification speaks to the values and competencies the faculty wishes its students to embody.

Pedagogical renewal has also developed further in the faculty. Assessments such as reflective essays, capstone projects, group work, and oral presentations are being integrated to ensure graduate attributes are demonstrable at the exit level. Teaching approaches are shifting towards dialogue, inquiry, and relational engagement, recognising students as active knowledge-makers. This also reflects a commitment to epistemic justice, moving away from



traditions of overwork and elitism towards care, inclusivity, and recognition of diverse knowledges.

Implementing revised rules within the FEC and the RAC also contributed to improved outcomes. Processes were strengthened to ensure that concession decisions were clear, transparent, and communicated early. Probation letters specified progression requirements in unambiguous terms, and students were monitored systematically throughout the year. All students with concessions were reviewed for the first time during the mid-year FEC sitting, which increased the overall workload for staff, but improved the engagement with academically vulnerable students.

Departments reported a reduction in emergency concession requests and a greater level of predictability in progression management. The improved functioning of the FEC and RAC processes was also directly linked to a reduction in academic exclusions in the faculty. This trend confirms that earlier interventions, combined with clear rules and consistent application, can reduce attrition and support more students in completing their studies within an achievable timeframe.

Professional registration was maintained through external accreditation and reviews. The College of Accounting concluded its accreditation visit with the Association of

Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), reaffirming the faculty's role as a leading provider of professional accounting education. The Section of Actuarial Science initiated a comprehensive review to ensure that the programme remains aligned with international standards and that graduates continue to be recognised globally. In collaboration with CHED, the faculty also advanced the registration of foundation courses with the DHET. This project ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and formally recognises foundational teaching central to Commerce degrees.

The expansion of tutor training across departments supported the quality of learning, equipping tutors with both content and mentoring skills. This was particularly significant in the Commerce first-year 'gateway' courses, such as accounting, economics, and information systems, where additional tutoring and psychosocial support contributed to improved pass rates compared with 2023.

The role of AI in teaching and assessment was actively debated in 2024. Faculty discussions recognised the risks associated with AI but also explored opportunities for redesigning teaching and assessment. Detection tools were used cautiously and treated as conversation triggers rather than conclusive evidence of misconduct. Staff began experimenting with assessment formats, prioritising originality, critical thinking, and problem-solving. These are skills AI cannot replicate. These explorations are expected to continue into 2025 as Commerce refines its approach to AI in education.



Student voice and engagement

Student voice remained a defining feature of teaching and learning in the Faculty of Commerce during 2024. The faculty sustained multiple avenues for engagement, ensuring student perspectives informed daily operations and longer-term planning. The Commerce Student Council (CSC) continued to meet regularly with the Deanery, creating a formal mechanism for identifying and addressing student concerns.

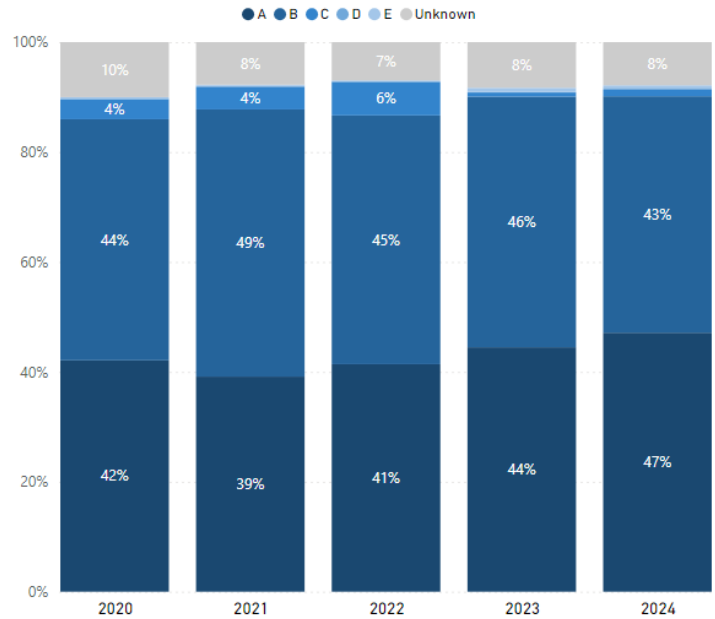
These engagements strengthened staff and students' communication, enabling the faculty to respond quickly to issues raised. In parallel, the "Third Thursdays: Commerce Education Matters" series provided a platform for reflection and discussion. In 2024, the programme engaged with themes such as the evolving role of professionals as change agents, UCT's revised assessment and language policies, the language of disciplinary learning, the opportunities

and challenges of generative AI, and flexible pathways within Commerce curricula.

The faculty hosted a DPR and RAC evening, co-organised with the CSC and the Deputy Dean (Undergraduate Affairs). This forum allowed students to engage with academic progression rules and concession processes while providing staff with direct feedback on how students experience these systems. Data from the faculty's 2024 figures reflected the value of these interactions: academic exclusions declined further, and fewer emergency concession requests were recorded. In part, the faculty attributes this improvement to clearer communication and earlier interventions shaped by student engagement. Additionally, the faculty embedded a model of vulnerability-based support, which provides assistance according to academic or personal need, regardless of background. This approach has normalised help-seeking behaviour and ensured that inclusivity is central to student success initiatives across the faculty.



Figure 1. NSC Aggregates of First-time Entering Undergraduates COM



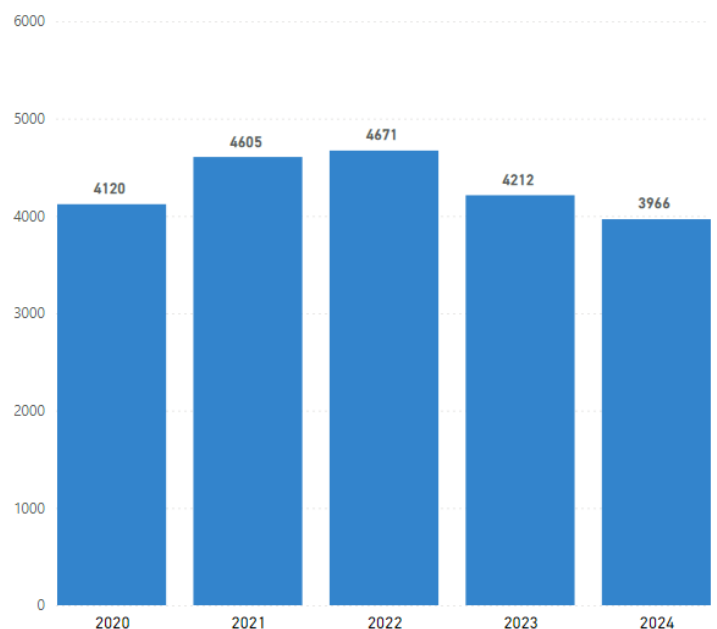
Faculty facts and figures

The faculty's 2024 performance data illustrates important trends in student access, progression, and success. These figures demonstrate both the gains made through curriculum reform, extended degree implementation, and enhanced advising, as well as the challenges that require ongoing attention.

Undergraduate admission and enrolment

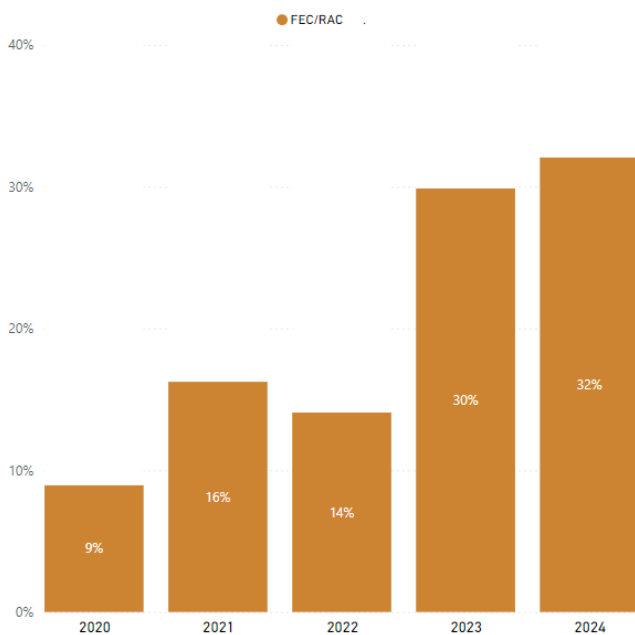
The 2024 NSC aggregate data (see Figure 1) show a continued upward shift in the number of A-aggregate entrants, alongside a decline in C-aggregate entrants. This indicates that the intake quality has strengthened, reflecting stricter admissions requirements. The higher proportion of academically prepared students has contributed to improved performance in first-year courses, with fewer students requiring supplementary assessments in 2024. Undergraduate enrolments in 2024 remained stable overall (see Figure 2). Commerce continues to carry one of the largest undergraduate cohorts at UCT, which places significant pressure on teaching venues, advising capacity, and academic governance processes. Despite these pressures, enrolment patterns were consistent, and the faculty maintained its role as one of the key contributors to UCT's undergraduate student body.

Figure 2. Total Enrolment COM



The 2024 Enrolment EDU figure (see Figure 3) shows that extended-degree students are a consistent and significant component of the faculty's undergraduate population. The number of first-year students in the EDU has nearly doubled since 2020 to 236 students. This reflects the deliberate strategy to identify academically vulnerable students early and transition them into extended pathways with more manageable workloads. The EDU enrolment's strength lies in retaining students who might otherwise have exited and ensuring that they have realistic opportunities to complete their degrees within extended but achievable timelines.

Figure 4. Undergraduates per Year with Faculty/Senate Permission to Continue COM



Academic concessions and exclusions

The FEC concessions analysis highlights the significant role that concessions play in planning students' academic journey. The volume of concessions remains high (see Figure 4), reflecting the size and complexity of Commerce programmes. With the consistent implementation of the n+1 rule

Figure 3. Total Undergraduate Enrolment in EDU COM

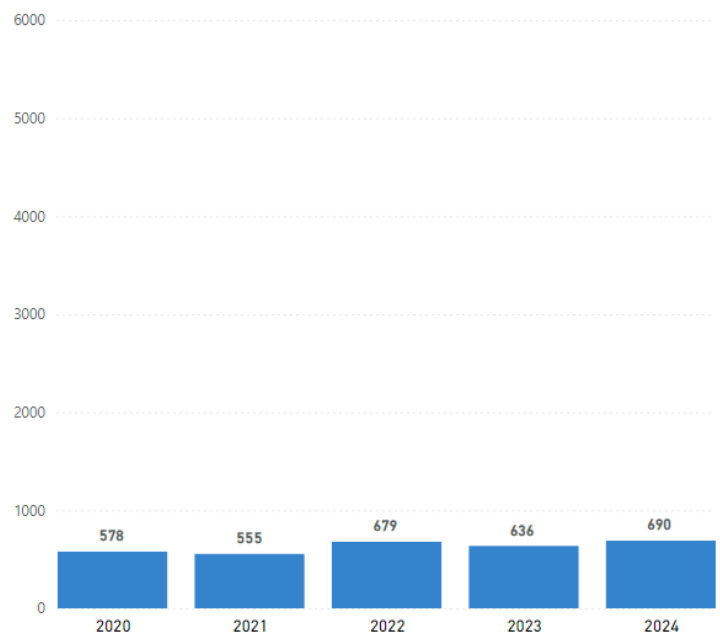
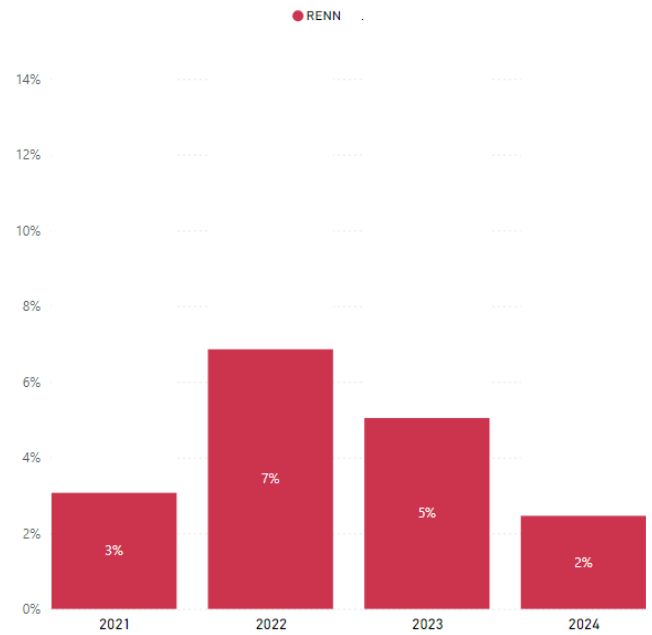
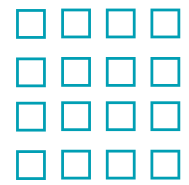


Figure 5. Undergraduates per Year Excluded for Academic Reasons COM



across all degrees, the concession rules have now been established in all departments. Proactive use of concessions enabled students to remain in the system rather than face exclusion. The overall decline in exclusions recorded (see Figure 5) in 2024 confirms that concessions were used effectively as preventative measures.



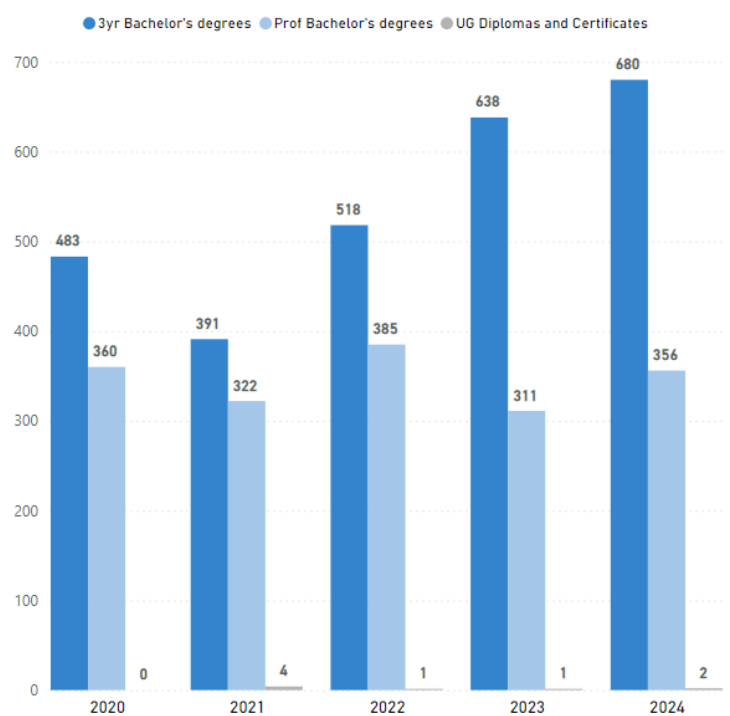
Graduations

The number of undergraduate degrees awarded in 2024 increased by 6% for the professional Business Science degrees and by 14% for the Bachelor of Commerce degrees (see Figure 4).

This growth reflects stronger throughput, a decline in exclusions, and the effect of new graduation pathways such as the BCom in Management Studies.

These reforms ensured that more students could complete their studies within structured timelines, boosting overall graduate output and reinforcing Commerce's contribution to UCT's success.


Figure 6. Total Undergraduate Degrees COM



The Population Group Registration figure below for 2024 shows that the Faculty of Commerce continues to reflect a diverse undergraduate student body.

African students comprise the largest proportion of the faculty's enrolment of 43%, followed by coloured, Indian/Asian, and white students. This diversity of the undergraduate student body is consistent across undergraduate cohorts, reinforcing the faculty's commitment to access and transformation within the institution.



The BBusSc programme sustained strong outcomes, with approximately 79% of students completing in the minimum of four years. 

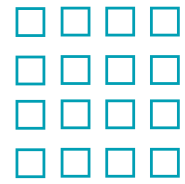
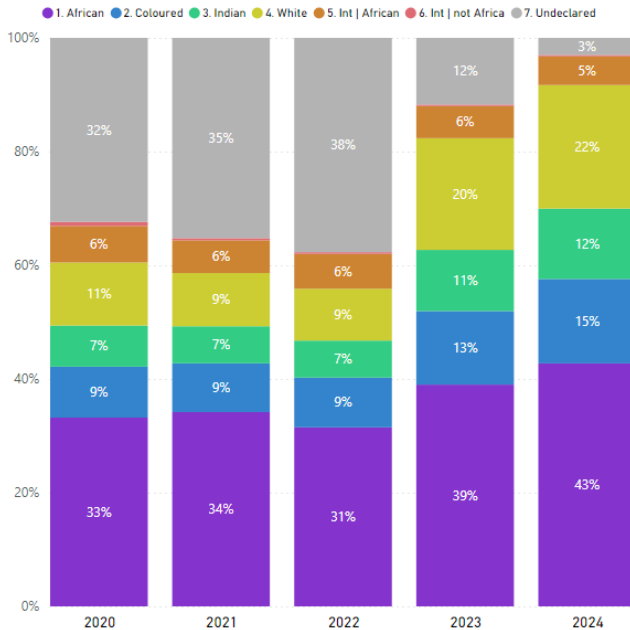


Figure 7. Undergraduate Enrolments by Population Group COM



The extended degree option has therefore become an essential part of the faculty's throughput strategy, aligning degree completion with realistic student workloads and preparedness. For the BCom Extended Degrees, most students completed within four years as intended. The BBusSc programme sustained strong outcomes, with approximately 79% of students completing in the minimum of four years. Figure 8 highlights that, despite overall improvements in student success across the faculty, differences remain between African and white students in terms of time-to-degree.

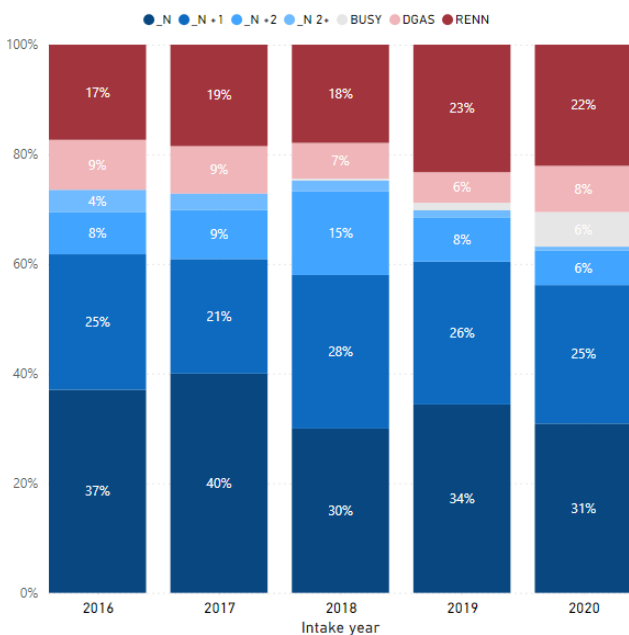
Throughput

Cohort data for 2015–2019 confirms that most BCom students complete in four years (n+1) rather than the nominal three years.

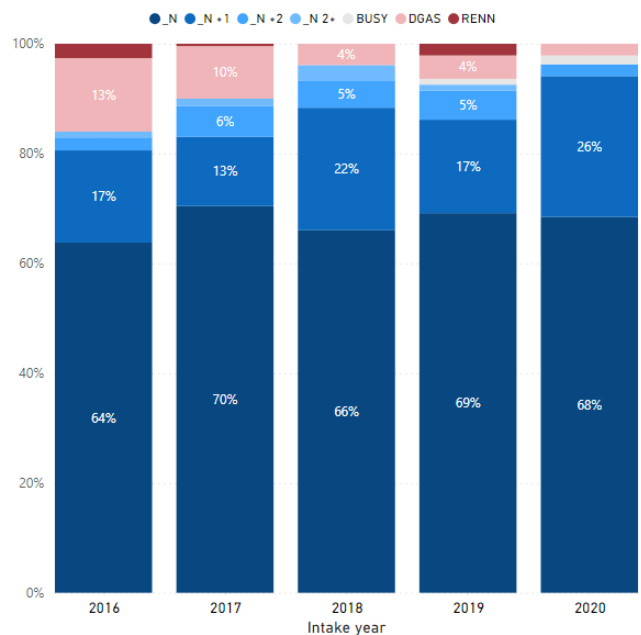
African students are more likely to take longer to complete their degrees or to transition into extended pathways. Additionally, they are also more likely to be academically excluded. This reflects systemic inequalities in prior schooling, access to resources, and financial pressures.

Figure 8. Final Academic Status of Undergraduates by Intake Year COM

African Students



White Students





Encouragingly, 2024 data also shows signs of progress. The expansion of extended degree pathways, structured use of FEC concessions, and targeted support initiatives such as the EDU mentoring have helped narrow the gap compared to earlier cohorts. Closing the throughput gap remains a faculty priority, and the 2024 measures show steady progress.



Looking ahead

The Faculty of Commerce enters 2025 with a clear set of priorities shaped by the achievements and lessons of 2024.

A central goal is to consolidate the gains in student success and throughput achieved through extended degree pathways, FEC/RAC reforms, and new graduation routes. The faculty will continue to strengthen advising and mentoring systems to ensure that the decline in exclusions is sustained and that throughput gaps narrow further. Attention will also be given to aligning faculty priorities with UCT's Vision 2030, particularly in relation to inclusivity, care, and transformation. Additionally, the faculty's graduate attributes will be finalised and documented.

Curriculum renewal will remain a major focus. The faculty plans to finalise the Section of Actuarial Science review, advance the registration of foundation courses with the DHET, and further embed the university's Assessment Policy. Special focus will be placed on strengthening high-risk courses and refining extended-degree structures to reflect realistic completion timelines.

Key challenges include managing the operational implications of the earlier release of matric results, which will require improved coordination between admissions, RAC/FEC processes, and registration. Infrastructure renewal remains an urgent concern, particularly the maintenance and upgrading of teaching venues to ensure that large student cohorts are adequately accommodated. Financial sustainability remains critical, as enrolment pressures and fee debt continue to shape the faculty's resource discussions.

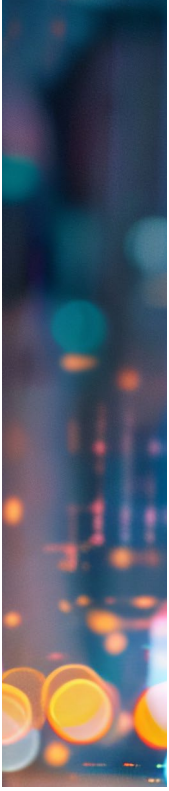
Opportunities exist in the responsible integration of AI in teaching and learning, with staff development planned to equip academics to use these tools in ways that enhance, rather than undermine, learning.

Looking ahead, the faculty recognises that its strength lies not only in its students' success but also in its staff's commitment and well-being. The pressures of large-scale enrolments, complex advising, and heavy governance responsibilities place significant demands on both academic and PASS staff. The faculty is therefore committed to sustaining staff care — through training, workload planning, and recognition of the essential contributions of all colleagues — as part of its broader mission of inclusivity, care, and transformation.



FACULTY OF ENGINEERING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT





Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment

The faculty's proactive use of the Student Enrolment Advisor Tool (SEAT) academic advising tool meant that most registrations were completed before the official deadline, despite initial disruption to the academic year. This not only reduced stress for administrative staff but also ensured that students were able to enter the year with a sense of stability.

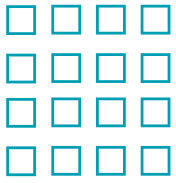
The experience highlighted the value of digital systems in cushioning the impact of institutional challenges. While the disruption was deeply felt, it revealed the remarkable adaptability of academic staff who reshaped courses and sustained learning. EBE emerged stronger, demonstrating its ability to navigate volatility with agility and care.

Beyond these early challenges, 2024 was characterised by continuity and curriculum transformation. Systemic change also came through the revision of progression rules. These were redesigned to reduce attrition while creating structured opportunities for students who demonstrate academic promise but do not meet conventional thresholds. This initiative reflects EBE's commitment to both

excellence and equity, and its alignment with UCT's Vision 2030 and EBE's Vision 2050.

First-year gateway courses remained a focal point. While Mathematics showed signs of improvement, Physics continued to present challenges. EBE responded with an expanded suite of support measures, including enhanced supplementary examinations (SUPPs) and Tutored Reassessment Programmes (TRPs), coupled with strengthened relations and communication with the Faculty of Science on its Service courses, the dedication of colleagues in the faculty's extended degree programme (ASPECT), the appointment of a full-time Student Success Coach and the mobilisation of peer Student Success Ambassadors in EBE.

These interventions extended beyond academic advising, recognising that psychosocial wellbeing is inseparable from performance. Workshops on time management, financial stress, and mental health, alongside the efforts of the Faculty Wellness Manager, created a more holistic environment for learning.



These key contextual issues paint a picture of EBE navigating 2024 with resilience and creativity. What could have been a year defined by disruptions instead became one of steady transformation, a year in which digital integration deepened, student support expanded, and our foundations for sustainable excellence in teaching and learning were strengthened in line with our ethos - “Imagine, Create, Sustain”. Above all, 2024 reaffirmed EBE’s ethos, enshrined in its Vision 2050 (Goal 3), of being future-fit, socially responsive, and student-centered; a vision that continues to guide EBE’s role in shaping the next generation of engineers and built environment professionals.



Student success

Student success remained at the heart of EBE’s work in 2024, with a deliberate focus on academic support, psychosocial wellbeing, and the creation of inclusive pathways for achievement. A major enabler this year was funding from the UCDG, which underpinned our student success coaching initiative. This support enabled the work of our full-time Student Success Coach and the team of 22 Student Success Ambassadors, as well as the appointment of sessional psychologists to extend mental health support to students. Together, these resources allowed for earlier interventions, a wider reach, and a stronger safety net for students navigating the pressures of demanding curricula.

EBE also continued to build on the strength of the extended curricula programme under ASPECT, which has become a thriving and imaginative space for rethinking how best

to support students in their transition from school to university. By creating opportunities to bridge the gap between matric and first-year studies, the programme has been instrumental in levelling the playing field, offering academic scaffolding alongside mentorship and confidence-building for students who might otherwise struggle.

At the level of coursework, first-year gateway courses such as Mathematics and Physics remained a central focus. Expanded SUPPS and TRPs, alongside discipline-specific interventions, improved outcomes in Mathematics, though Physics continued to pose challenges. These initiatives were complemented by faculty-wide workshops on time management, study strategies, exam preparation, and managing financial stress, reflecting our recognition that success is deeply tied to student wellbeing.

Graduation and progression data confirm the impact of these efforts: over 500



undergraduates completed their studies in 2024, while hundreds more benefitted from academic concessions and revised progression rules that reduced attrition without compromising standards. 2024 was a year in which student success was approached holistically; academic excellence balanced with psychosocial care and innovation coupled with inclusivity.



Curriculum and pedagogy

Curriculum transformation in 2024 was marked by both structural reform and pedagogical innovation, with the Faculty-wide Curriculum Review Project at its core. This multi-year initiative is reshaping the student experience by addressing credit overload, course duplication, and courses impeding graduation (CIGs) with persistently high failure rates. The project deliberately connects structural adjustments with teaching philosophy, aiming to align every programme with UCT's Vision 2030 and EBE's Vision 2050 commitments to equity, inclusivity, and future-fit graduate.

Faculty-wide workshops and departmental "changemakers" sessions provided fertile ground for building capacity for change. Civil Engineering finalised its new undergraduate curriculum for implementation in 2025,



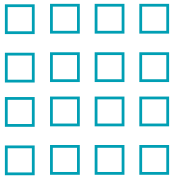
In 2024, student success was approached holistically; academic excellence balanced with psychosocial care, and innovation coupled with inclusivity. □ □

embedding themes of climate resilience, infrastructure renewal, and inclusive development. Electrical and Mechanical Engineering explored problem-based learning approaches, while Architecture and Geomatics advanced holistic curriculum reviews under new leadership. Across these efforts, careful attention was given to transition mapping, ensuring that students who straddle old and new curricula are not disadvantaged.

Curriculum renewal also took on a reflective and contextual dimension. New content invited students to engage critically with engineering's historical role during apartheid, linking professional practice to broader questions of justice and accountability. Meanwhile, cross-cutting modules and modular resource-sharing models were explored to reduce duplication and encourage interdisciplinary learning.

Pedagogical innovation gained momentum through the Amathuba digital platform, creating a vehicle for embedding analytics, adaptive pathways, and interactive content into teaching practice. Staff were supported to build digital fluency, and in some areas, notably Chemical Engineering, early experimentation with AI tools demonstrated the potential for new technologies to enrich learning and assessment.

Increased efforts were made to decolonise and drive inclusivity within curricula. The expansion of the isiXhosa engineering glossary, contextualised design projects, and community-engaged coursework exemplified how EBE is weaving cultural and linguistic inclusivity into technical training. These initiatives highlight the conviction that teaching and learning in EBE must not only be technically rigorous but also inclusive and socially responsive. These efforts live up to our aspirations and our professional



accrediting bodies' requirements for strong graduate attributes. Taken together, 2024 saw curriculum and pedagogy in EBE advance along two complementary tracks: systemic reform to improve progression and reduce structural barriers, and innovation in teaching practice to prepare graduates for the social, technological, and environmental challenges of the 21st century. This dual approach is laying the groundwork to ensure that EBE produces engineers and built environment professionals who are not only globally competitive and sought after for their technical abilities, but also attuned to the demands of justice, resilience, and transformation for societal impact.



Student voice and engagement

Student voice and partnership remained a defining feature of teaching and learning in EBE during 2024. Representation is deeply embedded across the faculty's governance

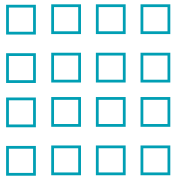
Student Success
Advisors, peer mentors
and student societies
played an important
role in strengthening
engagement, by creating
platforms for dialogue,
academic support and
professional growth. □ □

structures, ensuring that students are not only consulted but also actively contribute to decision-making. Students hold seats on the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Committee (UGTLC) and the Faculty Board, and play an active role in the RAC, where their perspectives are integral to sensitive deliberations on student progression.

At the departmental level, class representatives meet regularly with Heads of Department, Programme Conveners, and Directors, creating space for direct feedback and collaborative problem-solving. These processes are complemented by scheduled meetings between the EBE Student Council, the deputy dean of undergraduate studies, the dean of ebe, the undergraduate manager, and the Faculty Manager, where students' issues are discussed openly and addressed systematically.

A clear reporting and escalation protocol strengthens this framework: students are encouraged to raise academic concerns first with their lecturer, then escalate to the course convener, programme director, head of department, deputy dean of undergraduate studies, and ultimately to the Dean of EBE. This process highlights EBE's commitment to listening carefully and responding appropriately at every level.

The student voice is also incorporated through EBE-specific course evaluation questionnaires, run for every course with the support of CILT via Amathuba. Feedback from evaluations play a vital role in the feedback loop enabling lecturers and conveners to reflect on their teaching and make meaningful improvements. Beyond compliance, these evaluations enable ongoing dialogue between staff and students, and have become a space where student experiences



actively shape the evolution of teaching quality and curriculum design.

Student Success Ambassadors, peer mentors and student societies played an important role in strengthening engagement, by creating platforms for dialogue, academic support, and professional growth. Collectively, these channels not only gave students a voice but also cultivated a culture of shared responsibility in shaping their educational experience.

The year 2024 affirmed EBE's ethos of partnership (EBE Vision 2050 – Goal 1, 3 & 4): students are not passive recipients of education but active collaborators in the ongoing transformation of curriculum, pedagogy, and faculty culture.



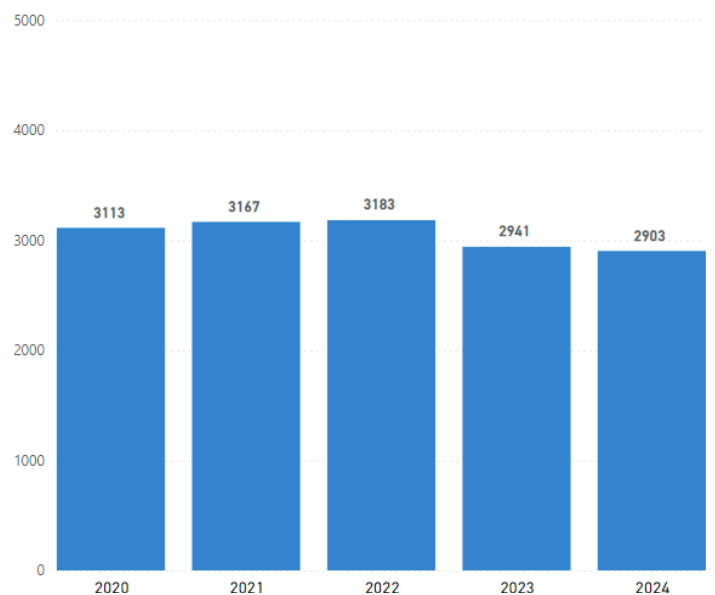
Faculty facts and figures

The story of teaching and learning in EBE during 2024 is also demonstrated by the data, providing interesting insights into student access, progression, and success. Data presented in Figure 1-8, supported by the Data Analytics for Student Success (DASS) team, helped the faculty track trends, identify risks, and evaluate the impact of interventions.

Undergraduate admission and enrolment

Figure 9 shows total undergraduate enrolment between 2020 and 2024. Numbers peaked at 3 183 in 2022, before falling to 2 941 in 2023 and 2 903 in 2024. While this reflects broader national enrolment pressures, the faculty continues to sustain a substantial cohort of nearly 3 000 undergraduates. This stability highlights the continued demand for engineering and built environment programmes in South Africa and beyond. It also highlights the ongoing demand for academic support initiatives such as ASPECT, and targeted student success coaching in sustaining throughput.

Figure 9.
Total Undergraduate
Enrolment
EBE



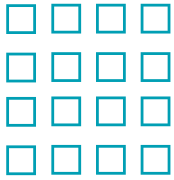


Figure 10. Total First-time Entering Undergraduate Enrolment EBE

Figure 10 shows first-time entering undergraduate enrolment from 2020 to 2024.

The faculty welcomed 681 new undergraduates in 2024, slightly higher than 2023 (662) and consistent with the steady intake levels of recent years (approximately 660–680 annually).

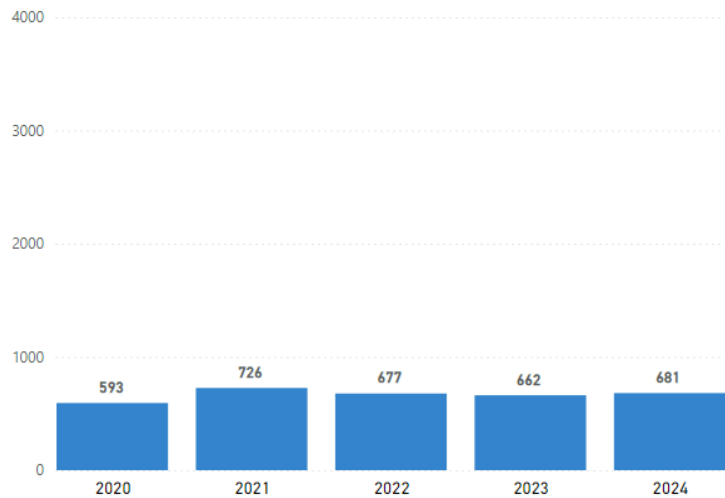


Figure 11 below shows the NSC aggregate profile of first-time entering undergraduates for the period 2020-2024. In 2024, 78% of entrants achieved an A–C aggregate, with nearly half (48%) attaining an A aggregate equivalent, the highest proportion over the past five years. This points to the faculty's continued ability to attract high-achieving school leavers, while also maintaining access for those who require more support. Targeted initiatives, from ASPECT to supplementary teaching and psychosocial interventions, remain critical in levelling the playing field for students with more modest NSC scores and those who struggle to cope with the transition from the NSC to first year university life.

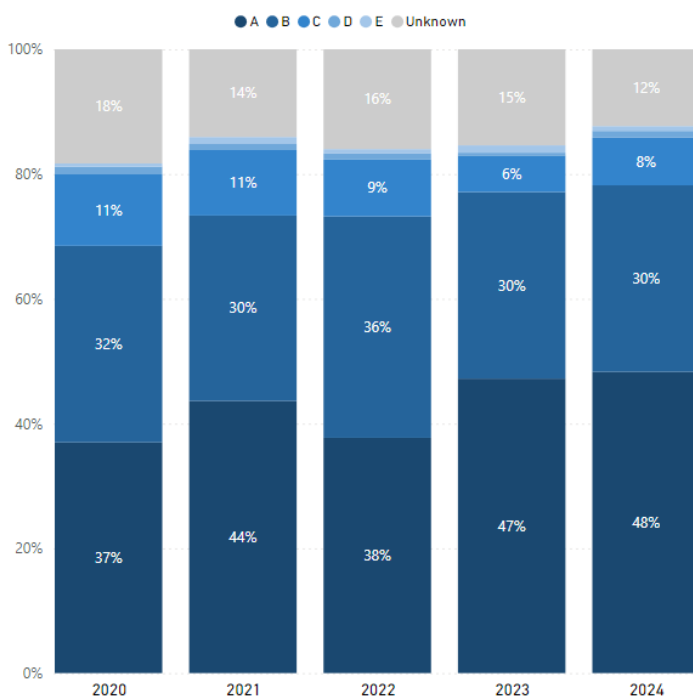


Figure 11. NSC Aggregates of First-time Entering Undergraduates EBE

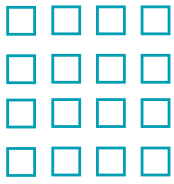


Figure 12 shows the demographic profile of undergraduate enrolments from 2020 to 2024. African students accounted for 54% of the undergraduate cohort in 2024, up from 35% in 2020-2022, reflecting transformation gains aligned with UCT's Vision 2030. Other groups have remained relatively stable, with coloured (7–9%), Indian (7–8%) and white students (16–24%) comprising about a third of the cohort. International enrolments have declined slightly, while undeclared demographic data dropped significantly, improving transparency. These shifts highlight progress in broadening access and the continuing need to pair representivity with student success initiatives that ensure equitable outcomes.

Figure 12. Undergraduate Enrolments by Population Group EBE

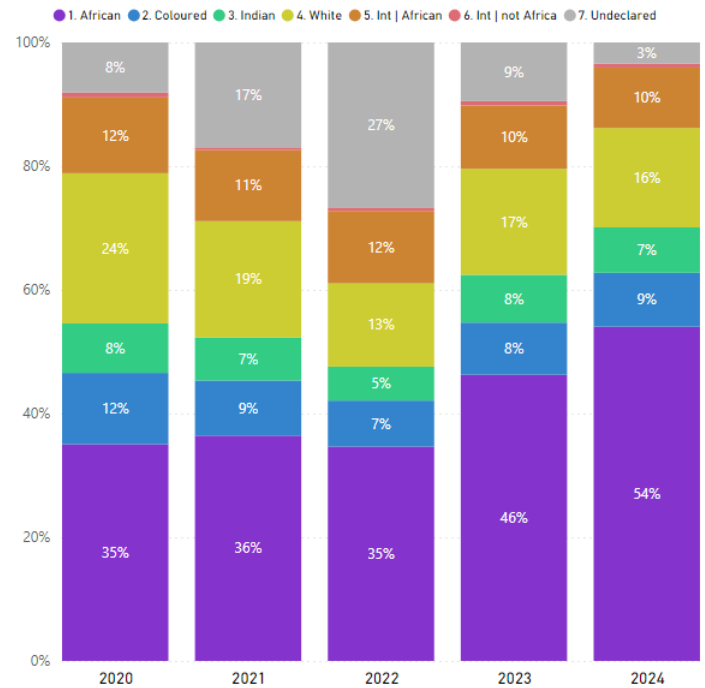
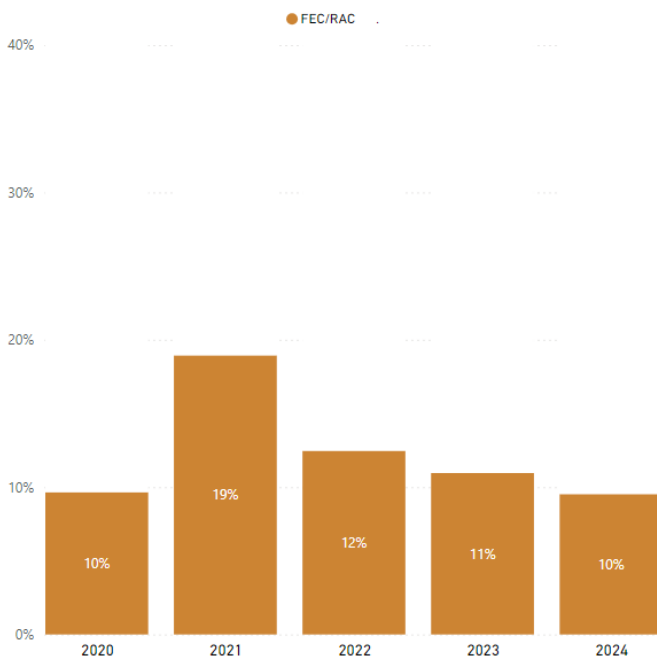


Figure 13. Undergraduates per Year with Faculty/Senate Permission to Continue EBE



Academic concessions and exclusions

Figure 13 shows the proportion of students requiring Faculty Examination Committee (FEC) or Senate Re-admissions Appeals Committee (RAC) approval between 2020 and 2024. This has stabilised at around 10–12%, comparable to pre-pandemic levels. The peak of 19% in 2021 reflected the academic disruptions of COVID-19, but subsequent declines show the impact of revised progression rules, expanded concessions, and earlier interventions. This demonstrates EBE's ability to combine academic rigor with care, providing structured pathways to reduce attrition.

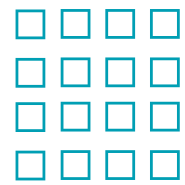
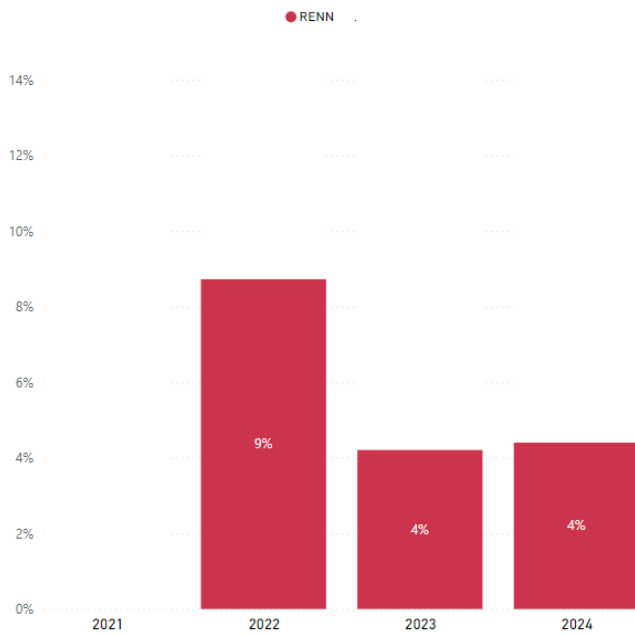


Figure 14. Undergraduates per Year who were Academically Excluded EBE



Exclusion rates reflect the legacy of the pandemic. In 2020 and 2021, UCT made the decision not to exclude students due to COVID-19 disruptions.

As a result, many who had fallen into poor academic standing carried forward into 2022, when exclusions spiked to 9%. By contrast, in both 2023 and 2024 the exclusion rate fell to 4%, signaling a return to stability. This decline reflects both the recovery of academic performance post-pandemic and the effectiveness of faculty interventions in reducing exclusion risk while maintaining standards.

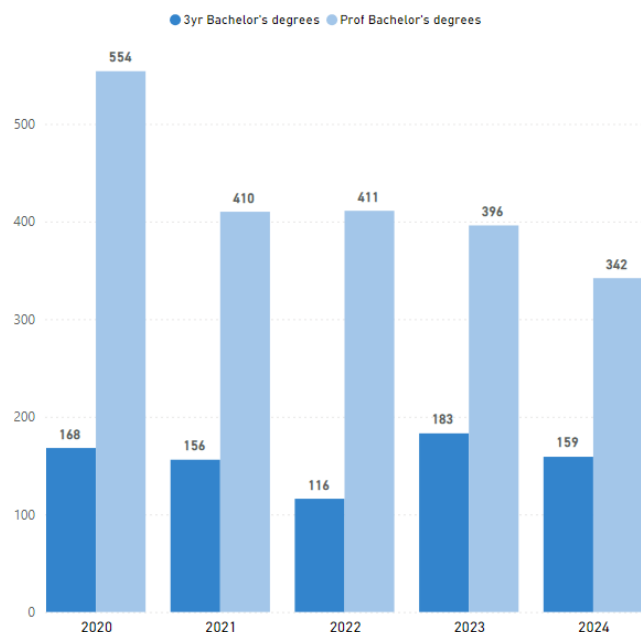
Graduations

Figure 15 (below) shows the total undergraduate degrees awarded by qualification between 2020 and 2024. Across this period, EBE consistently produced a substantial number of graduates, though with some year-on-year fluctuation.

In 2024, 159 three-year bachelor's degrees and 342 professional bachelor's degrees were

awarded, bringing the total to just over 500 undergraduate completions. The trend reflects a gradual decline from the higher outputs of 2020 (when 722 degrees were awarded in total), stabilising around 500 graduates annually in recent years. This stabilisation is consistent with enrolment patterns and progression data, and signals EBE's efforts in maintaining throughput despite national challenges in higher education.

Figure 15. Total Undergraduate Degrees Awarded by Undergraduate Qualification EBE



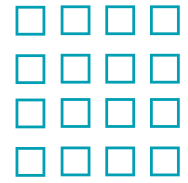
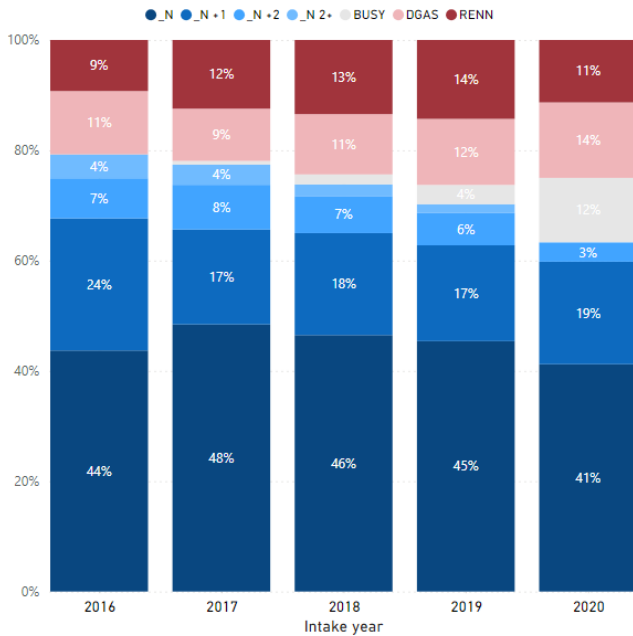


Figure 16. Final Academic Status of Undergraduates by Intake year EBE



Graduation

Figure 16 shows that between 41% and 48% of students completed their studies within regulation time (N), while a further 17–24% graduated within one additional year (N+1) from 2021 to 2024. Generally, about two-thirds of students complete within the expected timeframe, while an additional 7–8% complete in extended timeframes (N+2+). Attrition through deregistration or exclusion affects roughly a fifth of each cohort, underlining persistent systemic challenges. Nevertheless, the combined effect of ASPECT, and psychosocial support has ensured that delayed progression increasingly results in eventual success, rather than permanent exclusion.





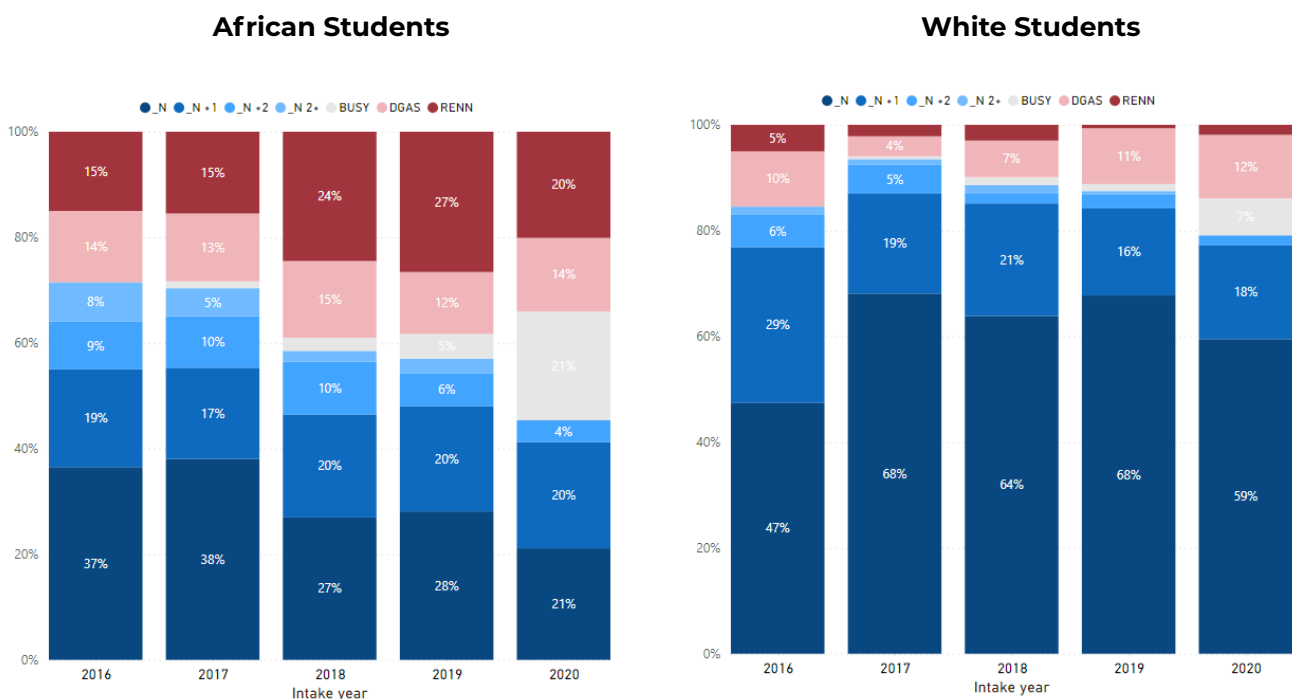
Throughput

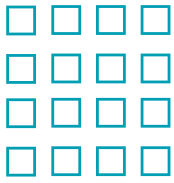
Figure 17 (below) highlights differences in retention and completion patterns between African and white students for the 2016-2020 intake years. While overall retention has improved, African students show lower on-time completion and higher N+1 and N+2 rates than their white peers. This reflects lingering challenges related to academic preparedness and financial or psychosocial pressures. However, attrition among African students has declined, indicating that initiatives such as ASPECT and TRPs are having positive impact. It

is also interesting to note that the percentage of African students who completed their degree within N+1 steadied at approximately 20%. This again is an indication of a sustained impact of student support initiatives such as ASPECT.

White students continue to record shorter on-time completion, but the overall throughput gap is narrowing as equity-focused interventions take hold across the faculty. COVID-19 had a negative impact on both African and white students in that for the 2020 intake, students who were able to complete in record time (N) dropped to 21% and 59% respectively.

Figure 17. Final Academic Status of Undergraduates by Intake Year





Overall, these facts and figures paint a picture of EBE sustaining large and diverse cohorts, attracting strong entrants, and making measurable progress in widening participation. At the same time, they highlight the value of student success interventions in ensuring that access is matched by achievement. Behind each percentage is a student journey, and EBE remains committed to enabling those journeys through a balance of academic excellence, care, and inclusivity.



Looking ahead

Looking to 2025, EBE is poised to build on the momentum of 2024 and take forward several strategic priorities that will shape the student experience and enhance the quality of our programmes.

A major focus will be preparations for the 2026 Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) accreditation visit for our BSc(Eng) programmes. These preparations are already influencing curriculum renewal, assessment practices, and the alignment of graduate attributes with professional standards. This process provides an opportunity to align with national and international benchmarks while retaining our commitment to inclusivity, care, and responsiveness.

Curriculum reform will continue to be a central thread. The Faculty-wide Curriculum Review Project will move from design to implementation in several programmes. Civil

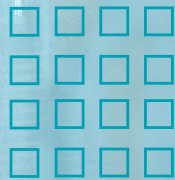
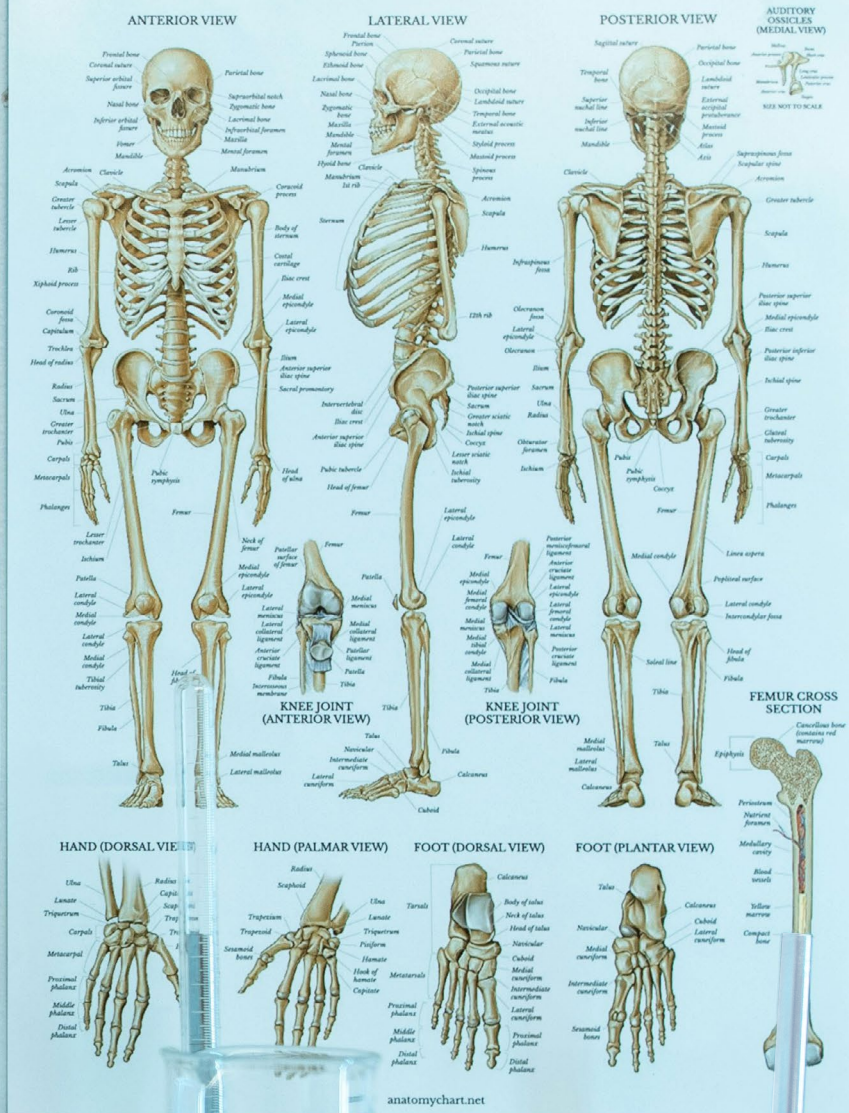
Engineering's new undergraduate curriculum is set to roll out in 2025, embedding themes of climate resilience, infrastructure renewal, and social responsiveness. Other departments will advance their curriculum mapping, with a sharper focus on reducing credit overload, eliminating duplication, and embedding interdisciplinary and problem-based learning. Particular attention will be paid to 'gatekeeper' courses also known as CGIs, with new approaches to teaching and assessment aimed at improving progression and retention.

Building on the gains of 2024, in 2025 the intention is to expand discipline-specific student support through GearUp in Mathematics and Physics through the ASPECT programme. EBE also plans to extend its multilingual glossary project, recently funded by the DVC for Teaching and Learning, to strengthen accessibility and inclusivity in first-year learning. Alongside this, the student success coaching model will deepen its integration with academic advising, ensuring early and proactive support for students across all years of study.

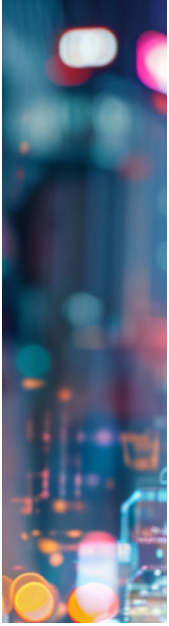
Finally, EBE will expand industry-linked experiential learning through vacation work and project-based opportunities. This includes initiatives such as industry-led seminars (eg Women in Engineering), aimed at channeling student talent into graduate programmes, and revitalising partnerships with organisations like Engineers without Borders.

In summary, EBE anticipates that 2025 will be a year of consolidation and preparation, embedding curriculum reform, strengthening student success initiatives, and readying the faculty for both the challenges of accreditation and the evolving higher education landscape.

THE SKELETAL SYSTEM



FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



Faculty of Health Sciences

With the national fiscus under significant pressure, the Western Cape Provincial Department of Health and Wellness experienced in-year budget cuts amounting to R600 million. Not only did this severely affect service delivery, but also negatively impacted the capacity for clinical teaching with reduced registrar posts (impacting enrolment and less teaching and supervisory capacity for medical students) as well as slashed theatre slates.

In addition, the Clinical Training Grant (CTG) budget, which funds a number of clinical teachers, was cut by 7% year-on-year, putting further pressure on clinical training. Mitigation measures were put in place to manage the impact on teaching and clinical exposure opportunities through simulation and alternative clinical training sites.

The faculty engaged in pre-emptive strategies late in 2023, to limit disruption to teaching linked to student fee debt issues in 2024. Measures put in place were successful in 2024, as the number of students with fee debt was reduced, and with earlier resolution through a Council concession, students with fee debt in Term 1 were allowed to return earlier, minimising the loss of learning time. Thirty-six percent of health sciences undergraduate students are dependent on NSFAS funding.

The funding criteria changes in 2023, such as capped accommodation, meant that even NSFAS-funded students were now also impacted by student fee debt in 2024. With the earlier start to the academic year and longer teaching year, health sciences students are at higher risk of food insecurity, fee debt and interruptions to their studies due to funding challenges. The issue of timeous NSFAS allowances was raised by the South African Medical and Health Sciences Deans with Universities South Africa (USAF), that engaged with the DHET for health sciences to be granted their allowances at the beginning of the academic year.



Student success

The proportion of students attaining Dean's Merit List (DML) for their excellent academic results, and Degrees with Distinctions and Honours have been steadily increasing. In the MBChB programme, 7% of students from 1st to 5th year were awarded DML for having attained $\geq 75\%$ GPA. In the Health and Rehabilitation Science programmes DML was awarded to students in 1st to 3rd year as follows for having attained $\geq 70\%$ GPA: 10% in Audiology, 12% in Physiotherapy, 21% in Occupational Therapy, and 27% in Speech-Language Pathology. In 2024, the faculty was delighted to award

Degrees with Distinctions to 16% of Physiotherapy graduates, 29% of Audiology graduates, 30% of Occupational Therapy graduates, and 48% of Speech-Language Pathology graduates. Degrees with honours were awarded to 46% of MBChB graduates.

Prize-giving ceremonies for both finalists and returning students were held, where >125 academic prizes were awarded to outstanding undergraduate students. Some exceptional students were awarded multiple prizes (see Section 4 for more). The Dean's Prize for the overall Top Final year student in the undergraduate programmes for the duration of their studies was awarded to both Yusra Sablay and Rudolph Hoffmann, having both attained 86% cumulative GPA for the duration of their studies in Occupational Therapy and MBChB respectively.

The faculty continues to shine as a beacon of academic excellence and leadership, with two of its graduates named among the 10 recipients of the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship for 2024 in the southern African cohort (six of whom were UCT students or alumni). Dr Leago Sebesho (MBChB, 2021), and Dr Savannah Verhage (MBChB, 2021) were

selected as Rhodes Scholars-elect, for their "outstanding intellect, character, leadership and commitment to service". With the increase in students on FEC conditions, the Education Development Unit (EDU) initiated a more structured approach to augmented support which focused on generic learning skills and strategies as well as content-specific support. The feedback has been very positive with students reporting an improved sense of belonging and reduced sense of shame, as well as improvement in academic performance.

The Student Development and Support (SDS) Unit at Health Sciences and Student Wellness Service (SWS) have continued offering wraparound psychosocial support to students. This includes:

- 1) mental health support through counselling and support groups;
- 2) medical and counselling services for preventing and managing occupational injuries and diseases, impairments and disabilities, pregnancies, leave-of-absences, and bereavements;
- 3) funding support through connecting to financial aid, managing faculty-administered bursaries, scholarships, fee debt relief, and providing students in distress with short-term relief funding.



Prevention strategies at the faculty include the Orientation & First Year Experience Programme, and the Peer Mentorship Programme, where every first-year health sciences student is connected to a peer mentor trained by mentor facilitators. Peer Mentorship endeavours provide support to students to transition from school to university, adjust to university life in the academic and psychosocial spheres, and build a sense of belonging. The goal is twofold: to develop graduate attributes, and to retain students with adequate progress in academic programmes to graduate in minimum time.

Food insecurity was noted to be on the rise among students in 2024, thus nutritional support was provided through the winter months, as well as 24-hour support during exam periods, through a collaboration between SDS, Deanery and Food & Connect. Students experiencing food insecurity were also referred to the UCT Food Sovereignty Programme run by DSA.

Occupational exposure and injuries

Having noted an increase in clinical student occupational injuries, especially needle stick injuries, a small task-team comprised of Clinical Skills, Occupational Health and Safety, SDS and the Deputy Dean was established to look at secondary prevention and education interventions. All 4th year MBChB students underwent refresher training in phlebotomy and IV cannulation. In addition, the Policy for the Management and Treatment of UCT Staff and Students Accidentally Exposed to Blood or Body Fluids will be reviewed to include prevention strategies, the FHS Student Keep Safe e-Handbook will be aligned, and teaching strategies will be reviewed requiring DOPS

(Direct Observation of Procedural Skills) to be signed off before students entering clinical years can undertake clinical procedures involving sharps with remote supervision.



Curriculum and pedagogy

The faculty launched three pilot projects exploring Near-Peer Teaching And Peer-Assisted Learning in Communication Sciences and Disorders, in clinical skills exploring the master training of student trainers for Basic Life Support (BLS), and in academic support for students on FEC conditions.

Following implementation of the new Assessment Policy, a number of changes to assessments served at the Accreditation Committee during 2024 with a pleasing shift towards increasing the proportion of formative assessments, enabling students an opportunity to improve before completing summative assessments. The year 2024 was also the first year in which tutored supplementary examinations were piloted for students in MBChB year 3, providing an additional four weeks of tutoring and academic support before completing the supplementary examinations, thereby increasing the chances of success.

The Faculty of Health Sciences received 27 final-year medical students from Gaza at the end of July 2024 as a humanitarian response, providing them with up to 12 months of elective clinical training after they were displaced from their universities due to the ongoing war. The initiative followed the framework established for Ukrainian students in 2022/23 and was coordinated with the Islamic University of Gaza and Al-Azhar University of Gaza to ensure academic requirements

are met, allowing students to graduate from their home universities upon completion. The faculty established a working group to ensure academic rigor and adequate psychosocial support, partnering with Gift of the Givers for social resources and support. The faculty of Health Sciences made substantial curriculum transformation progress across undergraduate programmes in 2024.

A comprehensive framework was developed following three years of stakeholder engagements, providing historical context while aligning with UCT Senate principles and faculty priorities.

Macro-design workshops revealed different needs: Health and Rehabilitation Sciences required micro-shifts in curricula design, while MBChB identified needs for larger structural changes, particularly in pre-clinical to clinical training transitions. All programmes will integrate Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice (IPECP) to dismantle hierarchies and enhance understanding of collective healthcare teamwork.

The transformation catalysed development of faculty graduate attributes and competencies, addressing “What skills, knowledge and values should our graduates exemplify?” This follows a two-phase approach: developing programme-specific competencies with staff, then integrating these into teaching, learning and assessment practices.

The UCDG enabled Educational Leadership Fellowship expansion, allowing more staff to undertake curriculum change projects including professional identity formation, curriculum mapping, and teaching method advancement. An asynchronous course covering curriculum design, leadership and assessment was developed alongside bi-weekly

collaborative spaces.

The faculty embraced “radically democratising pedagogies” - a transformative social justice approach emphasising longitudinal integrated clerkships and near-peer teaching over traditional didactic methods.

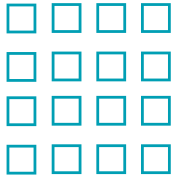
Generative Artificial Intelligence presents new teaching enhancement opportunities. While some departments use AI to strengthen question banks, the transformation team explores AI for simulation tool development, demonstrating innovative educational technology integration that maintains focus on humanistic healthcare education values.

Students launched the Student Curriculum Lekgotla (SCL), a student-led initiative that promotes curriculum transformation through collaboration, inclusivity, and social responsiveness by positioning students as active partners in shaping healthcare education. The SCL hosts student-driven curriculum indabas to gather insights on critical issues such as interdisciplinary integration, equity in assessment, and cultural competency in clinical education, with feedback mechanisms ensuring student perspectives directly inform faculty priorities. This African-centric model for continuous curriculum assessment represents a pioneering student-initiated approach to responsive, sustainable education reform that harmonises academic rigor with cultural relevance.



Student voice and engagement

Health Sciences students and societies demonstrated exceptional leadership and community engagement throughout 2024. The Health Sciences Students Council (HSSC) organised impactful initiatives including mental health campaigns and interdisciplinary collaboration events; and significantly increased student election participation from

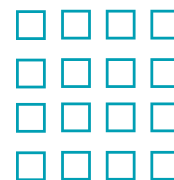


10% to 33%. The UCT Surgical Society expanded to over 400 members, raised over R100 000 through their charity ball for Groote Schuur Hospital Trust, and launched the Surgical Soul Podcast. SHAWCO continued operating as a major student-led NPO, running three monthly Saturday clinics across Cape Town communities, introducing new Play Group initiatives, and providing interprofessional healthcare services involving medicine, physiotherapy, audiology, and occupational therapy students. The African Research Society secured over R600 000 in funding through their Interdisciplinary Research Apprenticeship Program. Additional active

societies included the Physiotherapy Student Council, OTASA student UCT branch, and the recently launched Health Sciences Arts and Music Society collectively representing the diverse professional development and community service commitments across all health sciences disciplines.

The Department of Student Affairs' annual Student Leadership Awards (SLA) event acknowledges individual students and student teams across all faculties for their leadership contributions in respect of community, social justice health and media. Two student societies, viz. the Health Sciences Students Council (HSSC) and the Surgical Society, and four individual students from Health Sciences were recognised during this awards ceremony.





Two of the three Kerry Capstick-Dale Leadership Awardees in 2024 were health sciences students Naledi Mohale and Ubuntu Hlatshwayo, who were recognised for enriching the life of UCT through their exceptional leadership qualities in student affairs, and displaying an enlightened approach to life, generosity of spirit, humour and integrity.



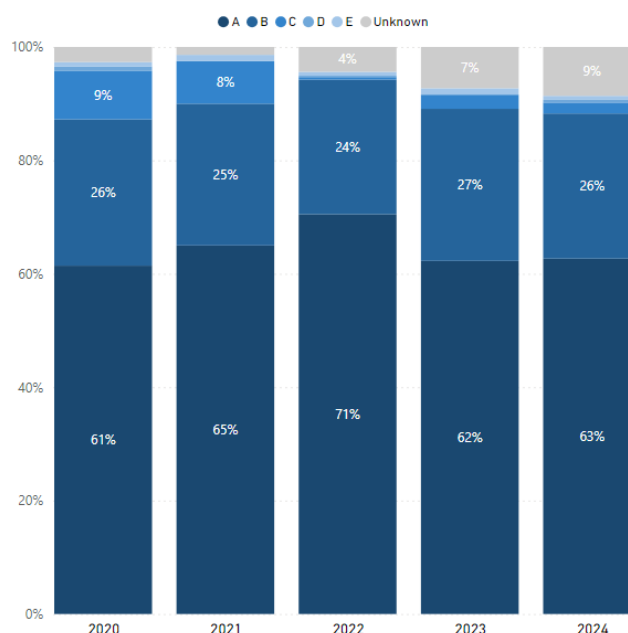
Faculty facts and figures

Undergraduate admission and enrolments

The 2024 admissions cycle showed similar patterns to prior years (see Figure 18) with large numbers of applicants. Careful management of offers ensure that the faculty attained the enrolment target. To mitigate the under-enrolment in the 2023 intake, the faculty selected an additional 20 Tertiary applicants directly into second year MBChB. This had implications for tailored courses and additional resources for Becoming a Professional & Becoming a Health Professional, which is usually completed in first year.

Given the highly competitive nature of our professional programmes, most first-time entering students enter with NSC results in the A and B bands (which incorporate academic results and National Benchmark Test results), similar to previous years. Across all five professional programmes, 63% of our first-time entering students entered with an NSC A aggregate, and a further 26% with B aggregates. For the highly competitive MBChB programme, first-time applicants enter exclusively with NSC A aggregates.

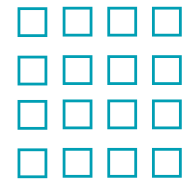
Figure 18. NSC Aggregate Equivalent of first-time Entering Undergraduate Students FHS



The Health Sciences programmes received and accepted higher numbers of applicants who completed school-leaving certification other than NSC, with 9% of first-time entering students in 2024 as compared to 1% five years ago.

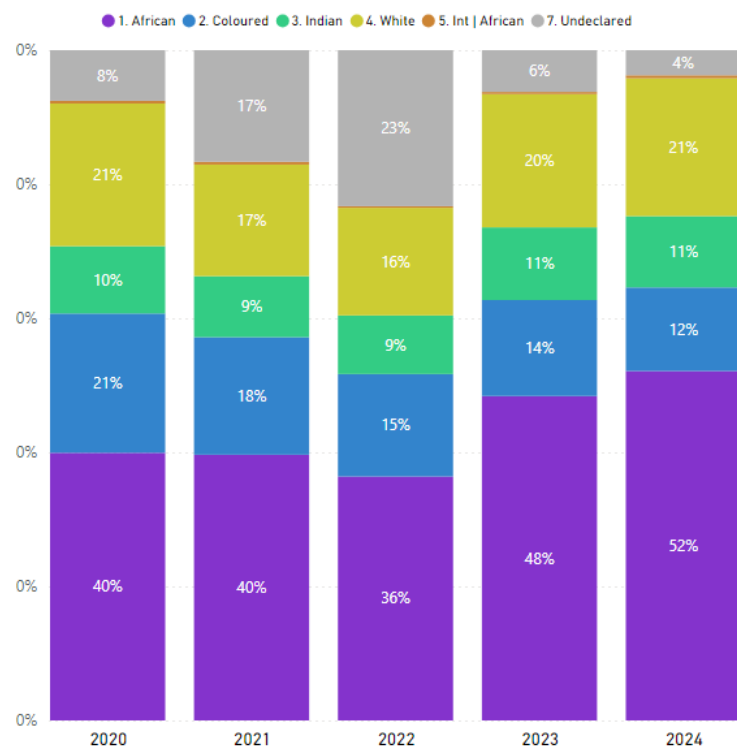
In 2024, Open Day was held in person for the first time at the Health Sciences Campus, enabling a more relevant and personable recruitment and engagement for prospective applicants. It garnered much interest with over 1 500 learners registering their interest in advance, and over 5 000 visitors to the campus on the day despite inclement weather.

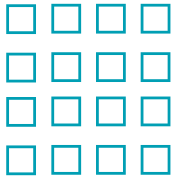
The opportunity to undertake a campus tour was particularly appealing to visitors, who were able to engage directly with staff and current Health Sciences students.



Undergraduate enrolments increased to 2 296, which is a 3% increase since prior year, and 14% increase in five years as the faculty prioritised the maximum number of enrolments. Enrolment by population group (see Figure 19) illustrates the diversity of the Health Sciences student body: in 2024, 52% of our undergraduate students identified as African (as compared to 40% in 2019; 12% as coloured (as compared to 21% in 2020); 21% white (as compared to 21% in 2020); and 11% Indian (similar trends across the past five years). These figures suggest that, overall, the faculty continues to reflect diversity in our student body, while acknowledging that it is concerned with under-representation in some population groups, notably coloured students where the proportion has declined and is below the UCT average.

Figure 19.
Undergraduate Enrolments
by Population Group
FHS

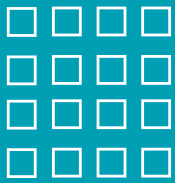
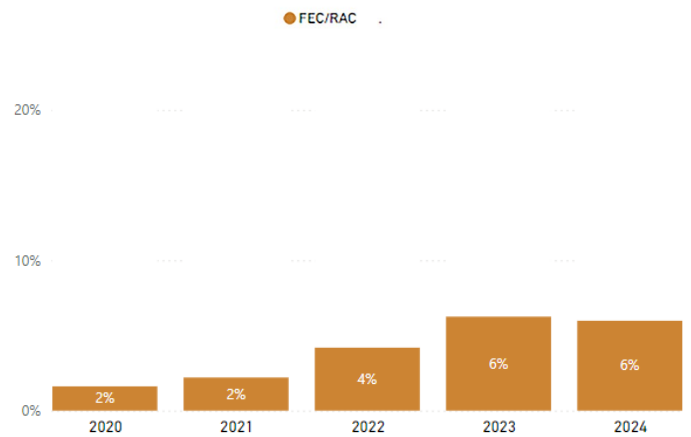




Academic concessions and exclusions

Academic exclusions (see Figure 20 and 21) remained minimum (1%) especially when compared to the proportion in all faculties (3 to 5%). The small proportion is partly due to relatively good academic performance of health sciences students in general, as well as intentional and consistent practice by the Faculty Examination Committee to grant concessions for readmission when students face exclusion for the first time. Consequently, the proportion of students with concessions to continue conditionally has stabilised at 6% compare to an average of 3% in preceding years. This is still significantly lower than the 14% noted across UCT.

Figure 20. Undergraduates per Year with Faculty/Senate Permission to Continue FHS



The proportion of students with concessions to continue conditionally has stabilised at 6%

Graduations

Graduations increased by 8% from 378 in 2023 to 411 in 2024 (see Figure 22). This aligns with increased enrolments at the start of these graduating cohorts.

Figure 21. Undergraduates per Year who were Academically Excluded FHS

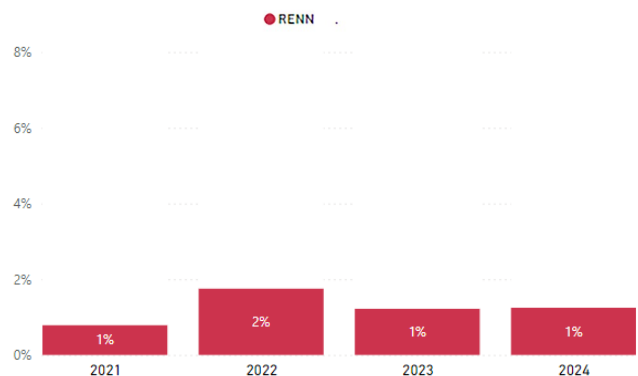
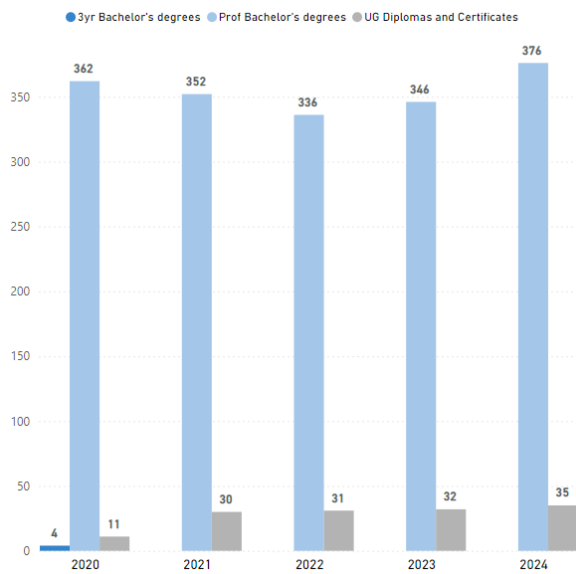


Figure 22. Total Undergraduate Degrees Awarded by Undergraduate Qualification FHS



Cohort completion rates

When examining cohort data for completion in minimum time, it has consistently fallen within a 71-74% range for the MBChB 6-year programme over the past five years (see Figure 24), even with larger cohort sizes.

Particularly encouraging is that MBChB cohort completion within N+1 has ranged between 85-90%. The range for completion in minimum time for all Health and Rehabilitation Sciences' four-year degree programmes was slightly more varied (see Figure 25). The larger-than-usual 2017 cohort reflected a drop in throughput to 58%, predominantly due to 14% who Dropped-out in Good Standing (DGAS).

Several measures were implemented since to assist with larger class sizes and has improved year-on-year to 68% of the 2020 cohort having completed in minimum time (see Figure 23). The cohort completion within N+1 varied between 73-88% in the past five years. The variance in minimum time versus N+1 throughput (10-20%) indicates that the faculty might be under-utilising the Extended Curriculum Programme for those who could benefit from the programme.



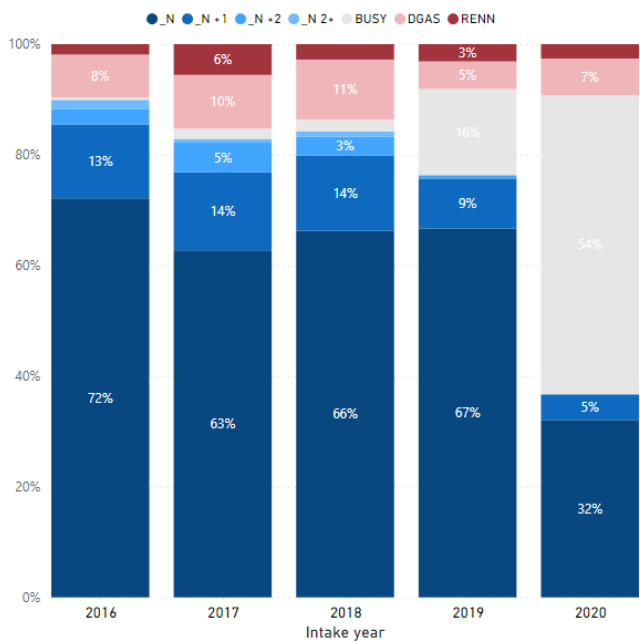
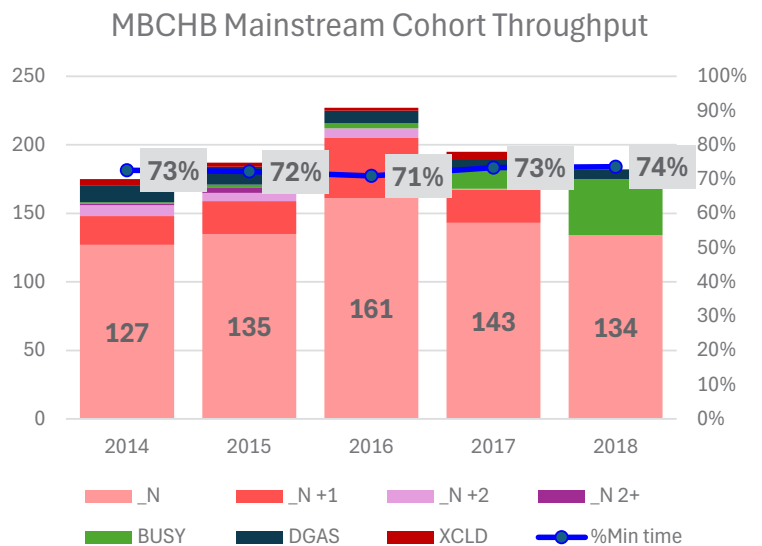


Figure 23. Final Academic Status of UGRDs by Intake Year FHS

The Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP's) have very small cohorts (<10 per annum in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; and ≤15 per annum in MBChB), making it difficult to interpret throughput rates. However, these rarely exceed 50% completion in the extended minimum time. The ECP's are currently under revision.

Figure 24. MBChB Mainstream Cohort Throughput FHS



HRS Mainstream Cohort Throughput

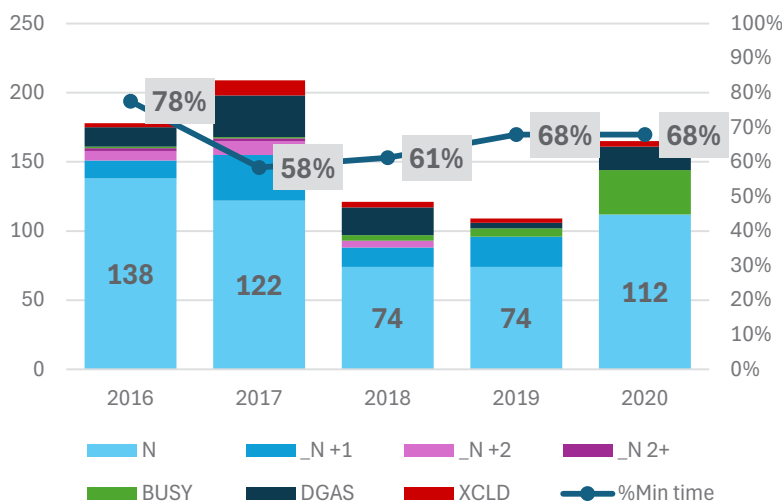


Figure 25. Health & Rehabilitation Sciences Mainstream Cohort Throughput Mainstream Cohort Throughput FHS



Success rates at academic year of study

When considering the success rates at academic year of study level, these have steadily improved in the last five years, which bodes well for improved throughput for current cohorts. Second- to final year progression rates are between 82% and 98% for Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and MBChB; and between 77-100% for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. First year progression ranges between 72% (Audiology) and 97% (MBChB). Very pleasingly, three final year classes (Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy) graduated 100% of those who started in 2024. The Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP's) have very small cohorts (<10 per annum in Health and Rehabilitation

Sciences, and ≤ 15 per annum in MBChB), making it difficult to interpret throughput rates, however, these rarely exceed 50% completion in the extended minimum time. The ECP's are currently under revision.



Looking ahead

The focus for 2025 will be two HPCSA Evaluation visits for the Biokinetics programme (including in principle approval of conversion to a four-year undergraduate professional programme), and the MBChB programme. Curriculum Transformation efforts will continue and as a focus on implementing the assessment strategy, as well as integrating Artificial Intelligence into the curriculum while protecting academic integrity.



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES





Faculty of Humanities

In 2024, for the second consecutive year, the first-time entering enrolment figure was larger than initially planned. The Faculty of Humanities enrolled over 1 800 first-time entering students across all undergraduate programmes; the majority in the general degrees (BA and BSocSci). While it is standard practice in the faculty to hold two orientation events, it was especially necessary in 2024 to accommodate the higher intake given that these cohorts were previously approximately 1 200 students. Large classes remained a challenge for the faculty throughout the year.

Registration of returning students coincided with orientation, and was offered in a hybrid mode, with curriculum advice offered in person, and registration taking place online. During the registration period, administrative staff across the university embarked on a legal strike, which delayed registration processing. Given the large student numbers, the strike had a significant impact on the faculty processes, resulting in some students not having been registered by the time lecturers had commenced.

Further impact, as in other years, was negotiations with fee-blocked students during this same period, resulting in late registration for this cohort as well. However, along with the rest of the university, we extended the change

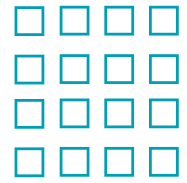
of curriculum period by a week, and by the end of Week two of the semester all students were registered. Hereafter, the academic year proceeded smoothly.

Over the course of the year, the effects of the rise of generative AI on our teaching and assessment models remained a challenge. By mid-2024, the faculty had developed a set of guidelines to assist teaching staff in course and assessment design, as well as to provide a clear process for any suspected misconduct, in recognition of the fact that AI tools carry the potential both to support student learning; and to be used in ways that allow students to bypass key learning objectives in their submitted work and assessments.

The year ended on a high note, with the re-introduction of the Humanities Dean's Excellence Awards evening. Two Dean's Awards for Teaching Excellence in the faculty were awarded, to Elthea De Ruiters in Social Anthropology; and Dr Gwyn Ortner in the School of Languages and Literatures. The faculty is also proud to report that three of the four Distinguished Teachers' Awards in 2024 (see Section 4) were awarded to Humanities staff, namely, Dr Bianca Tame (Sociology); Dr Yunus Omar (School of Education); and Dr George Hull (Philosophy).



Student success



In 2023, the faculty had established a new central unit, the Umthombo Centre for Student Success, to provide holistic student support across the Humanities faculty, from 1st year through to PhD studies. Umthombo's vision statement, developed in 2024, reflects this aim: "to provide strategic leadership in the diverse Humanities faculty, fostering the creation of spaces for students to flourish throughout their academic journeys." In 2024, Registration, Orientation, Academic Advising, Mentorship, the Extended Degree Programme, Tutor Training, Psychosocial Support, and the faculty's curriculum change project were coordinated by the Umthombo Centre in close collaboration with Humanities departments – marking an important moment for the faculty in bringing these services together in support of student success.

The 2024 Advisor group, comprised of a mix of Faculty Curriculum Advisors, Performing and Creative Arts Advisors (PACA) and Registration Curriculum Advisors, worked collaboratively on curriculum advice and registration approvals during the registration period, while faculty advisors and PACA advisors provided ongoing academic advice to students as needed. A dedicated email address for curriculum queries was established to allow students quick access to answers on academic/curriculum queries by dedicated senior advisors.

In 2024, 322 first-year extended degree students were mentored by senior undergraduate students. The mentors were given training and oversight by a Senior Mentorship Co-ordinator who provided training and oversight of the programme which





supports first-time entering students in their first year while they transition into university and supports senior students in their role as mentors. The Faculty Student Development Officer ran weekly support groups with FEER students, and students granted a concession to return by the RAC.

The faculty has always provided training to new tutors, through workshops run twice a year at the start of each semester. In 2024, however, through the support of the DHET University Capacity Development Grant, this programme was significantly expanded. About 116 tutors were identified and received ongoing rather than once off training. Tutors were identified by departments and were required to have completed our basic tutor training to join the programme. Tutors were trained through both in-person sessions and online modules; these modules covered tutorial facilitation, academic literacies, multilingualism, assessment, inclusive teaching, and academic integrity with AI. The program collaborated with multiple university departments and support services. Tutors in the programme supported 2 070 students across 39 humanities courses through “Plus Tutorials” - additional learning support spaces including workshops, consultations, and group discussions.

The annual Awards evening, for students on the Dean’s Merit list, who had achieved an average of over 70% with a full course load, was a regular event on the faculty’s calendar

previously but fell away during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time, the faculty hosted an awards evening towards the end of 2024, covering several years of Dean’s Merit List awardees. Over 600 students were invited, with 210 in attendance on the evening.



Curriculum and pedagogy

In 2024, the Faculty of Humanities continued its curriculum review of the general (BA and BSocSci) degrees that commenced in 2023. The faculty, in collaboration with the IPD, outlined how students progress through their majors, using data such as pass rates of specific courses; movement between years one to three of the major; and the numbers of students who were eligible to proceed from undergraduate to postgraduate degrees. The data was presented to departments, resulting in generative conversations on content, process and pedagogy in each departmental space. Another key outcome was a better understanding across the faculty of how workload and notional learning hours work, such that courses could be designed with greater awareness of students’ available time. The curriculum change team also ran a survey with students, focusing on their experiences in the undergraduate general degree. One of the main findings reported was the high workload.

In December 2024, the faculty held a special Faculty Board on curriculum change, at which it was determined that credits for first- and second-year courses would be reduced to address workload across courses. Faculty Board members agreed to partner with the curriculum change team in 2025 to ensure better alignment between course credits and notional hours. Next steps in 2025 include re-designing courses, with the intention of rethinking notional hours alongside shifts in pedagogy and assessment practices.



Student voice and engagement

Results from the 2023 South African Survey of Student Engagement (SASSE), received in 2024, revealed that Humanities students were fairly responsive, providing immensely valuable feedback, specifically in response to the question, “What one change would most improve the educational experience at this institution?” Student responses highlighted the importance of managing workload and the academic calendar, in particular. An emphasis on rest and recovery also emerged in the data, for example, “I wish more emphasis was put on rest” and “Allowing students to have mental health days: I can honestly say that if I wasn’t so drained and exhausted all the time, I would probably be enjoying my degree.” The faculty took this feedback very seriously and used it to inform its curriculum change process from 2024 onward.



Faculty facts and figures

Undergraduate admission and enrolments

Enrolments in 2024 were high, with 5 540 undergraduate students registered in the faculty, 1 877 of whom were first time entering students (see Figure 26 and 27). This is the highest number of undergraduate students overall since 2021 (caused by higher retention rates with fewer completions and exclusions during the COVID-19 pandemic). It is also the highest intake of first years over the five-year period. A combination of contributing factors may have caused this, including the university’s request for the faculty to increase its enrolments, and a difference in the ‘take-up’ rate of students with slightly lower FPS scores. This had also impacted on the NSC aggregate range of first-time entering students, as seen in Figure 28.

Figure 26. Total Undergraduate Enrolment HUM

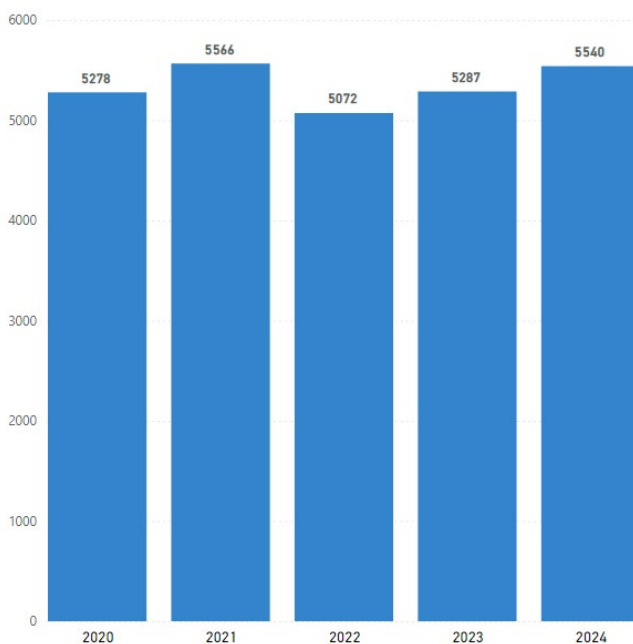


Figure 27. Total first-time Entering Undergraduate Enrolment HUM

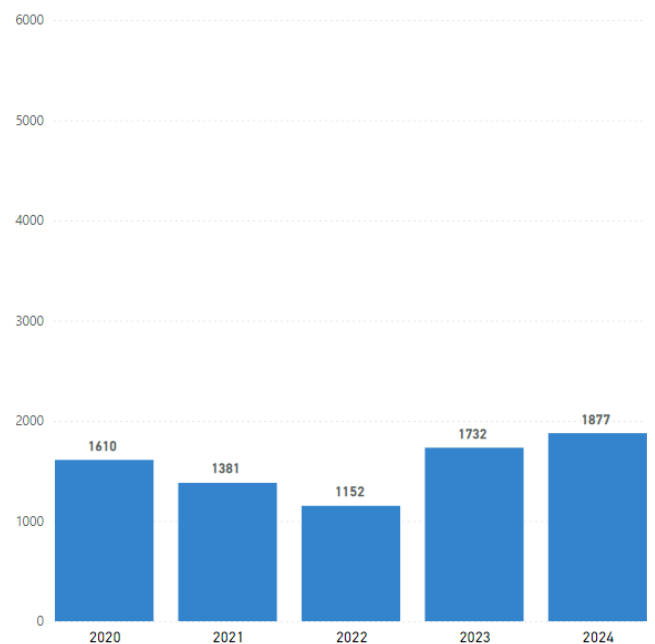
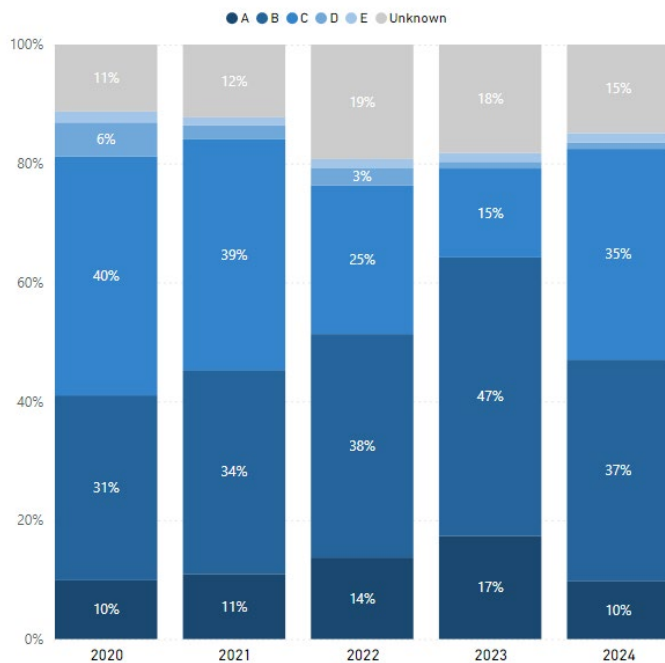


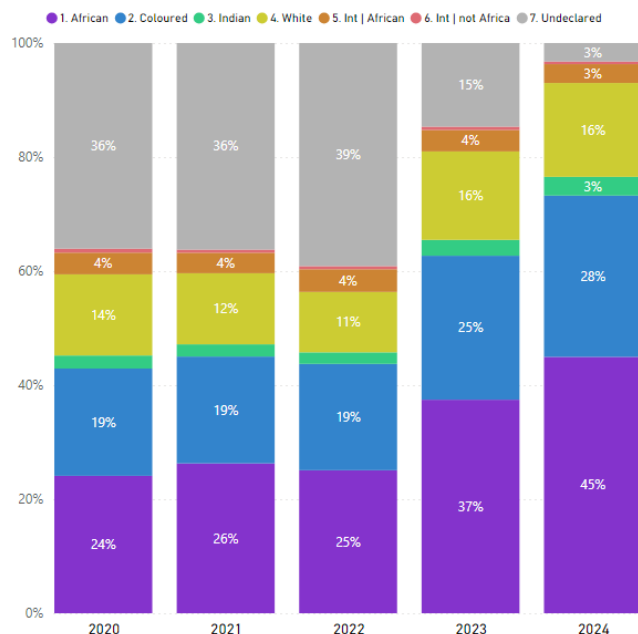
Figure 28. NSC Aggregate Equivalents of First-time Entering Undergraduates HUM



Only 10% of first-time entering students had an A aggregate – reflecting a faculty Point Score (FPS) of more than 480, as compared to 17% in 2023, and a further 37% had a B aggregate – reflecting an FPS of more than 420 to 479 (as compared to 47% in 2023). About 35% entered with a C aggregate, compared to 15% in 2023. While different to 2023, these ranges are not unprecedented and the NSC aggregates (though fairly different in terms of population group) are comparable with the 2020 first-time entering cohort.

The faculty continued to attract some of the country's highest performing students while expanding access through extended degree programmes to offer support to students with the potential to success but with slightly lower matric scores. The faculty is proud of its increasingly diverse student body as illustrated by the data. Undergraduate enrolments by population group in 2024 reveals a positive shift with 45% of our undergraduate students identified as African (as compared to 24% in 2020). It was encouraging to note an improvement in students enrolled in the 'coloured' category (28% as compared to 19% in 2020) given the demographics of the Western Cape, recognising that our university should serve the communities in which it is situated. It is noted that this is also above the university-wide average of 18%). About 16% white (as compared to 14% in 2020) students and 3% of each Indian and international African were enrolled in 2024, indicating minimal change since 2020. The faculty was concerned that international enrolments from outside Africa remained very low and is in conversation with IAPO about international student placements, with some visa challenges during registration having been noted.

Figure 29. Total Undergraduate Enrolment by Population Group HUM



Academic concessions and exclusions

The proportion of students who are academically at risk and who were granted concession to continue their studies dropped from 10% in 2023 to 7% in 2024 (see Figure 30). The faculty was pleased with the improvement and more rigorous progression rules implemented in 2023 have stabilised in 2024.

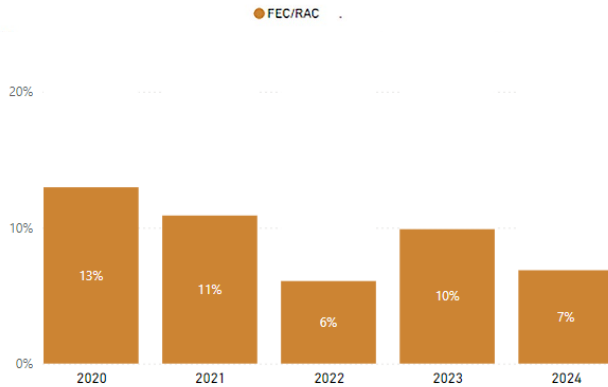
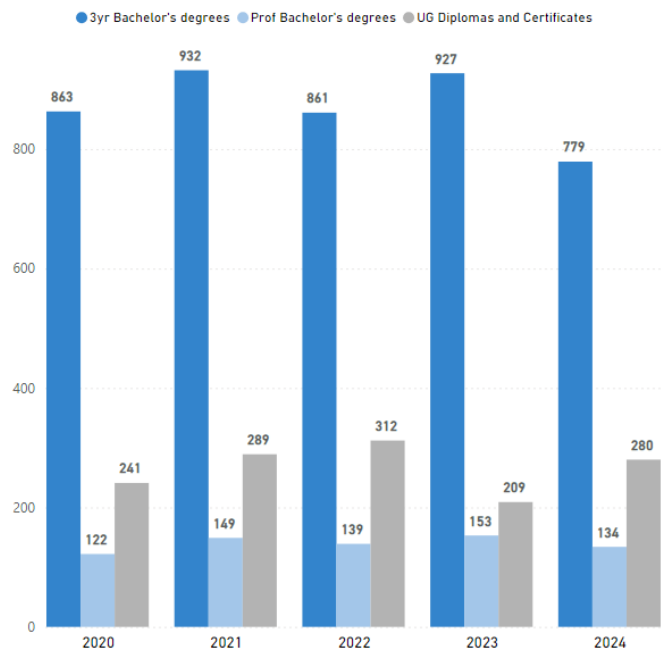


Figure 30.
Undergraduate per Year
with Faculty/Senate
Permission to Continue
HUM

Graduations

In 2024, the faculty awarded 913 Bachelor's degrees and 280 diplomas/certificates. Of these, 779 students graduated with Bachelor's Degrees and 134 with Professional Bachelor's Degrees.

Figure 31.
Undergraduate
Degrees Awarded by
Undergraduate Qualification
HUM



Throughput

Humanities undergraduate throughput (Figure 32) rates remained fairly constant, as compared to previous years – 49% of undergraduate students of the cohort who began in 2020 finished in minimum time (the university average is slightly lower at 43%), with another 20% completing within an additional year (the university average for 2024 was 21%). About 69% of students from this cohort thus graduated within N+1. Humanities academically excluded 12% of students from this cohort, 3% lower than the 2019 cohort (the university average was 11%). About 13% of students in the cohort dropped out in good standing – the university average here was 11%. The throughput gap, however, remains a concern, with 38% of black African students graduating in minimum time, compared to 67% of white students.

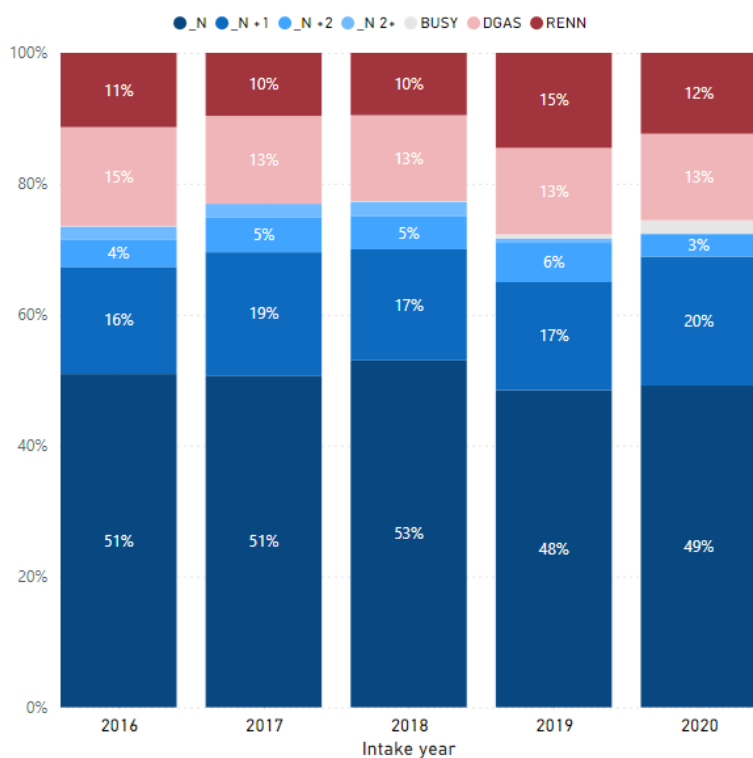


Figure 32.
Final Academic
Status of Undergraduates
by Intake Year
HUM



Looking ahead

In 2025, the faculty aims to consolidate its curriculum change plans, taking forward the credit reduction process agreed upon in December 2024. The curriculum change team will run workshops, open to all teaching staff in faculty departments, focusing on workload,

pedagogy, and assessment practice. The Humanities Teaching and Learning Committee will engage with the new Assessment Policy.

We will also continue to work with the Peoplesoft development team to upload all the undergraduate programmes onto its programme enrolment module.



FACULTY OF LAW





Faculty of Law

The Faculty of Law initiated the implementation of its Faculty Vision for Teaching and Learning, which dovetails with the university's Vision 2030 for holistic, innovative and future-oriented education.

The faculty ensures that changes to existing courses and the introduction of new courses are aligned with its vision in "building a community of teaching and learning practice that co-creates high-quality innovative, research-informed, skills-based participatory learning and critical thinking". The faculty's vision permeates through service to students, with 2024 focussing on improving and streamlining our processes to promote a people-centred administration.

The 2024 academic year began with a successful orientation programme, with orientation leaders and the Law Students Council (LSC) welcoming new students across all undergraduate programmes in the LLB degree (four-year undergraduate, three-year 'graduate', and combined stream students (from Humanities and Commerce). For first-time entering students, registration was done in person and onsite during orientation to provide adequate support to this cohort in choosing electives and managing their workload. The Orientation Committee and the Student Advisors worked together to ensure

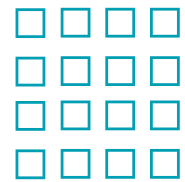
that all students had access to curriculum advice, and to facilitate the immediate resolution of issues affecting registration.

The faculty of Law offers several Service courses to students in other faculties, including, Commerce and Engineering & the Built Environment faculties. The Department of Commercial Law is primarily responsible for these service course offerings, with over 2 000 students who attend courses in Business Law, Company Law, and Labour Law. These courses created opportunities to collaborate with other faculties and build interdisciplinary partnerships, to expose students to legal concepts, and assist students who may enter industry with basic legal knowledge necessary for compliance and ethical conduct.

Funding challenges remained an obstacle to student success, particularly caused by increasingly restricted NSFAS rules of eligibility and a capped housing allowance. This placed a disproportionate impact on students in the 'graduate' LLB stream, who already had an undergraduate degree, and were not eligible for undergraduate or postgraduate funding (as the LLB is considered an undergraduate degree). The faculty has worked hard to fundraise for this cohort, but it remains a challenge.



Student success



Student academic advisors played a crucial role in supporting students and the teaching and learning project in 2024, once again. They are often the first port-of-call for students struggling with their workload, but also when they are facing personal challenges. Some of the faculty's advisors are also convenors of core courses or year coordinators of the LLB programme, which allows advisors insight into the challenges experienced by students and to find solutions to mitigate some of these.

The Faculty of Law annually had 15 teaching assistants in the LLB programme across the three departments. Teaching assistants (tutors) bridge the chasm between lecturer and student, and allow greater unstructured learning within and outside the classroom. Tutors are trained internally by a programme run through the Deputy Dean (undergraduate), with volunteer lecturers who cover different

aspects, including engaging with students professionally, marking appropriately to the requisite level, and key UCT policies.

In 2024, the faculty continued to implement skills workshops. Academically vulnerable students were offered skills workshops to support their learning and confidence. These workshops intended to develop both soft skills and core academic skills. Soft skills included encouraging students to take agency over their work, through time-management tasks, timetabling and prioritising of deadlines, and study skills. Academic skills focused on case reading and summaries, problem questions, and tips to answer exam questions, depending on the student's level. Beneficiaries of these workshops were students who were

academically excluded (RENN) and readmitted through the Readmission Appeals Process, students who had not met the progression rules for the first time (FECR); and students identified after mid-year who had not been successful in two or more courses (PASS classes). These workshops form part of the Law faculty's strategy to intervene early to prevent students from academic exclusion.

The faculty's mentorship programme, run by the Law Students' Council (LSC), continued in 2024. The LSC coordinated and managed a peer-mentorship programme for students, with intermediate and final year students offering mentorship to first-year students. Every new student in the faculty was matched with a peer-mentor during orientation. The purpose of the mentorship programme is to support students through the transition to university and UCT and build a sense of community and *esprit de corps* among students.



Curriculum and pedagogy

Staff attended the annual Regional Law Teachers' Conference at which UCT, the University of the Western Cape and Stellenbosch University partnered to coordinate and participate in. In 2024, many Faculty staff attended and five Law faculty staff members presented a paper on the theme "AI and Legal Education".

With the proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools that are freely and easily accessible, the faculty engaged with the difficulties of assessing students through written assessments. Faculty members have engaged in different fora across the university and with colleagues from other institutions to develop appropriate responses to student use of AI in

the form of Large Language Models (LLMs), which presented particular challenges in legal education, where skills to persuade rely on strong oral and written communication. If students rely on AI tools, they are not building these core critical thinking, problem solving skills that are developed through writing.

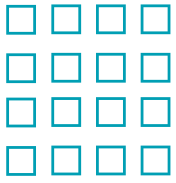
To reflect more deeply on this challenge, the faculty hosted an academic conference in July 2024 on the theme "AI and the Law", which connected academics from local and international universities to engage on contemporary issues related to AI across different disciplines of law. The conference generated robust discussion, with participants having shared ideas on the possibilities for AI to improve access to justice and streamlining routine legal work. There were also significant discussions on the risks and dangers of AI in ethical and professional conduct, academic integrity and the development of core skills like critical-thinking and problem-solving.

In terms of teaching and learning governance and the curriculum, the Faculty's Academic Planning Committee (APC) and Faculty Board addressed such matters, with support from the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee in an advisory capacity on complex issues affecting undergraduate teaching. During 2024 the Faculty considered and amended many of its progression rules for alignment with the N+1 requirement. This included amendments to the sub-minimum rule, to the oral supplementary rule, and the rule regarding supplementary examinations.



Student voice and engagement

The LSC is very active in implementing interesting initiatives that provide psychosocial support to students to combat isolation and to promote inclusion into the faculty's student life. In addition to the mentorship



programme they run Kramer4Fun, an initiative specifically designed for social activities with other law students, including games evenings, movie nights, mountain hikes, picnics and similar activities. The LSC's contribution was recognised by the university through the award they received at the Student Awards ceremony in 2024.

The Faculty of Law has a vibrant student life, with many student societies and organisations that work alongside internal and external partners. One of the key areas of focus for these student organisations was the promotion of social justice projects. Community Service (DOL3001X) is a degree prerequisite course that requires students to apply their legal knowledge and skills in practical ways to benefit disadvantaged individuals or groups. Several student organisation projects took

place in 2024, including the SHAWCO Law project, Students for Law and Social Justice, Phaphama SEDI and others. Among these are the Moot Courts highlighted below.

Moot Courts

The faculty has a staff Moots Committee to coordinate internal and external moot competitions, as well as a staff Integrated Assessment Moots (IAM) committee, which is responsible for managing the IAM which is a capstone degree requirement of the LLB.

The IAM requires every final year LLB student to register for the IAM course, work in pairs to prepare written heads of argument on an integrated set of facts and argue the case in a moot court setting before a panel, made up of all members of the teaching staff, including teaching assistants. The IAM brings together many of the core skills and graduate attributes that the Faculty of Law aims to develop, including, oral and written communication,



critical thinking, problem solving, and research skills. Additionally, the IAM requires students to move beyond discrete areas of law and employ their knowledge and skills across multiple areas of the law (hence, integrated), and students can participate in an active learning environment, which simulates court practice – this is always a highlight of the degree.

In 2024, the Faculty of Law hosted the Kate O'Regan Moot Court Competition. The Moots Committee, in partnership with the Student Moot Society and the Centre for Law and Society (a research unit in the Department of Public Law), developed the rules for the competition, the moot question, and managed the logistics including sourcing judges from the judiciary and the Bar Council, and arranging travel arrangements for participating university teams.

The Student Moot Society participated in several external moot competitions in 2024:

The Centre for Child Law Moot

The UCT team placed third for their heads of argument. UCT was represented by students Amohelang Molefi and Tanya Gwenhure, with Molefi awarded the best speaker award. Our team was coached by two Teaching Assistants from the Department of Public Law, Praise Adejimi and Jordan Murray.

Centre for Applied Legal Studies Moot

The UCT team was represented by students Farisai Jaka, Tadiwanashe Magadzire, and Frances Lancaster, who earned first place winning the competition. UCT had entered a second team, represented by students Hlumani Ndlovu, Luyanda Mtembu, and Ropafadzo Zharare, who earned third place.



Faculty facts and figures

Undergraduate admissions and enrolments

In 2024, the Faculty of Law enrolled 46 first-time entering students (FU) on its four-year undergraduate LLB programme. As can be

seen in Figure 33, first-time entering students make up a small cohort of the total undergraduate enrolments (including returning students).

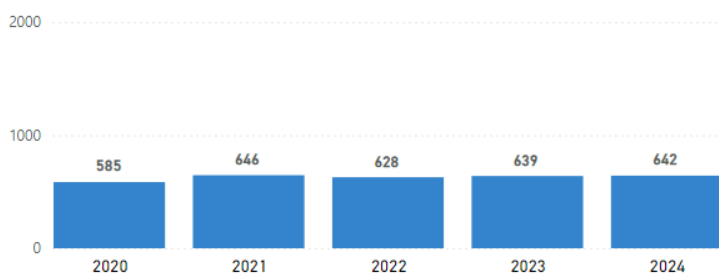


Figure 33.
Total Undergraduate
Enrolment
LAW

By population group, (see Figure 34), the Faculty of Law has improved its transformative mandate by significantly increasing students in the race categories of African to 47% of total undergraduate enrolments, and a more modest increase of coloured students to 18% of total undergraduate enrolments.

Figure 34. Undergraduate Enrolments by Population Group LAW

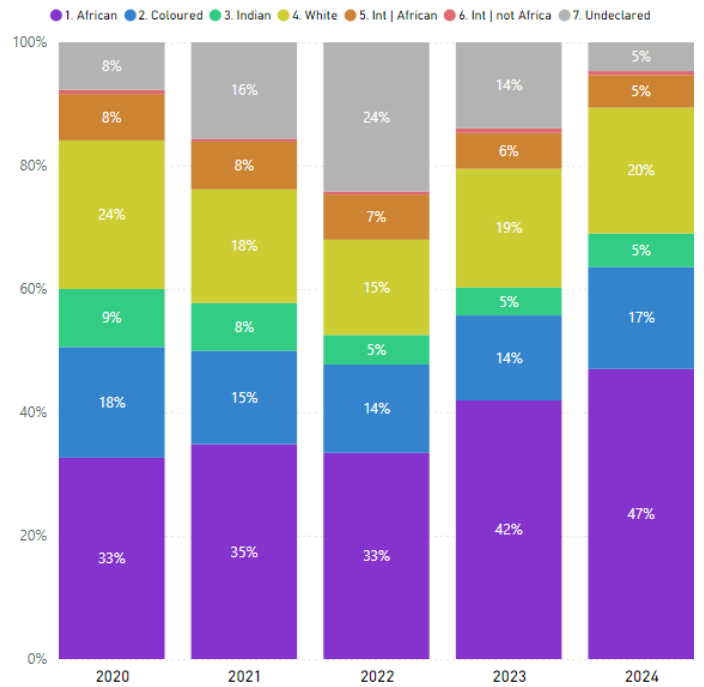
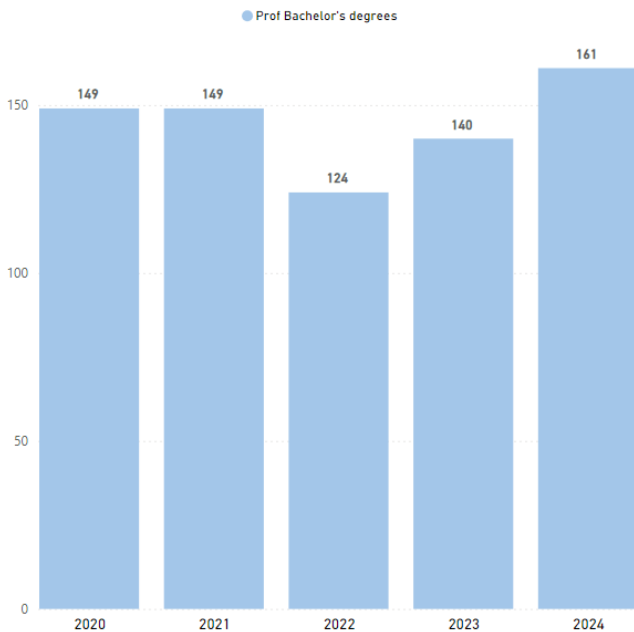


Figure 35. Total Undergraduate Degrees Awarded by Undergraduate Qualification LAW



Graduations

In 2024, the Faculty of Law graduated 161 students from its LLB degree (see Figure 35).

Throughput

When comparing the performance of students in different race population groups (see Figure 37), it is clear that the faculty and university has more work to do in closing the success gap for African students as the rate of academic exclusions are significantly higher, with zero RENN status students in the white category, but 27% African students

academically excluded in 2024. Although this percentage appears high, due to the small cohort of LLB students, this 27% translates only into six African students who were excluded in 2024, which shows a more optimistic picture.

Indian and white students have remained relatively stable over the last few years. Students from other countries on the African

continent make up the majority of International students (34 enrolments from the continent compared to four International non-African enrolments in 2024).

The throughput rate for LLB students shows several trends over a five-year period (see Figure 36). The 2020 intake year shows a smaller percentage of students completing in the standard duration for the degree (N), but an increase in the number of students completing in N+1 years. The number of students academically excluded during the 2024 academic year significantly decreased (from 31% in 2023 to 17% in 2024, demonstrating the faculty's attempts to support students to prevent academic exclusions).

Figure 36. Final Academic Status of Undergraduates by Intake Year LAW

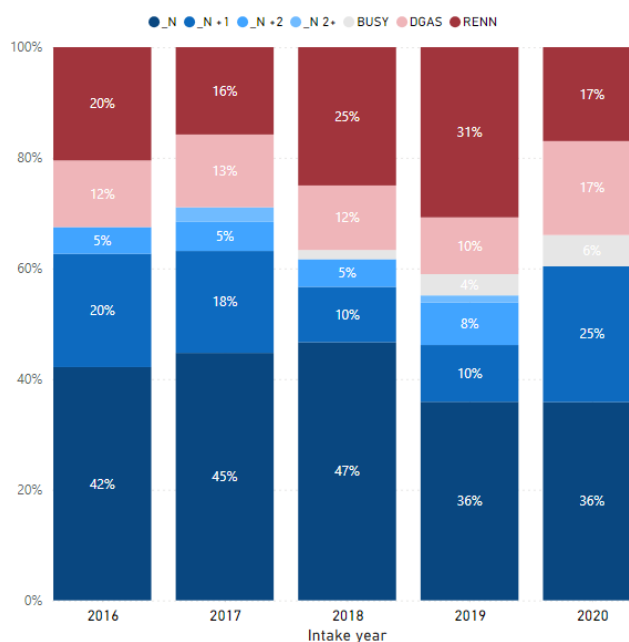
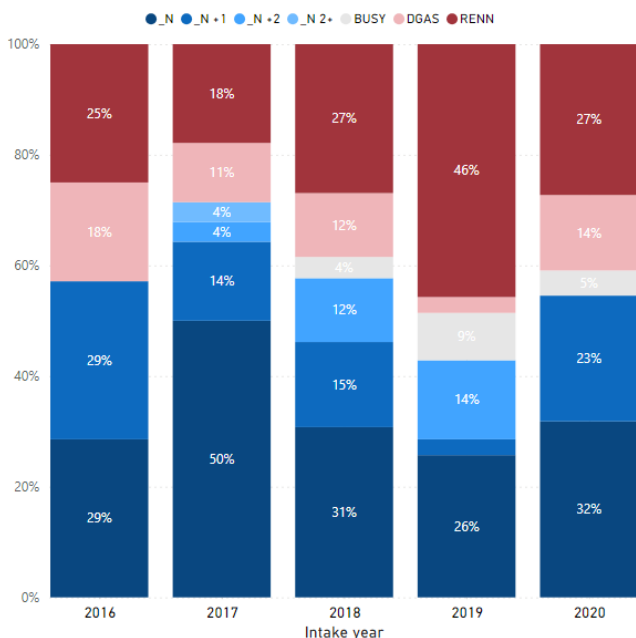
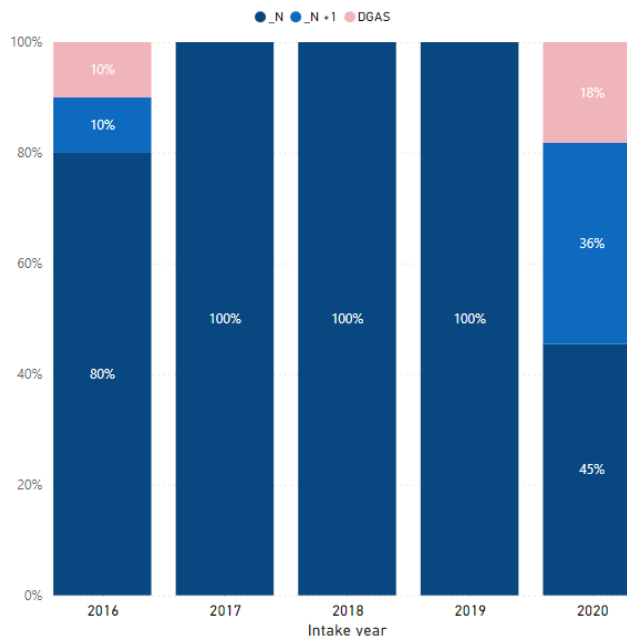


Figure 37. Final Academic Status of Undergraduates by Intake Year

African students



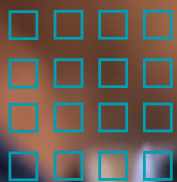
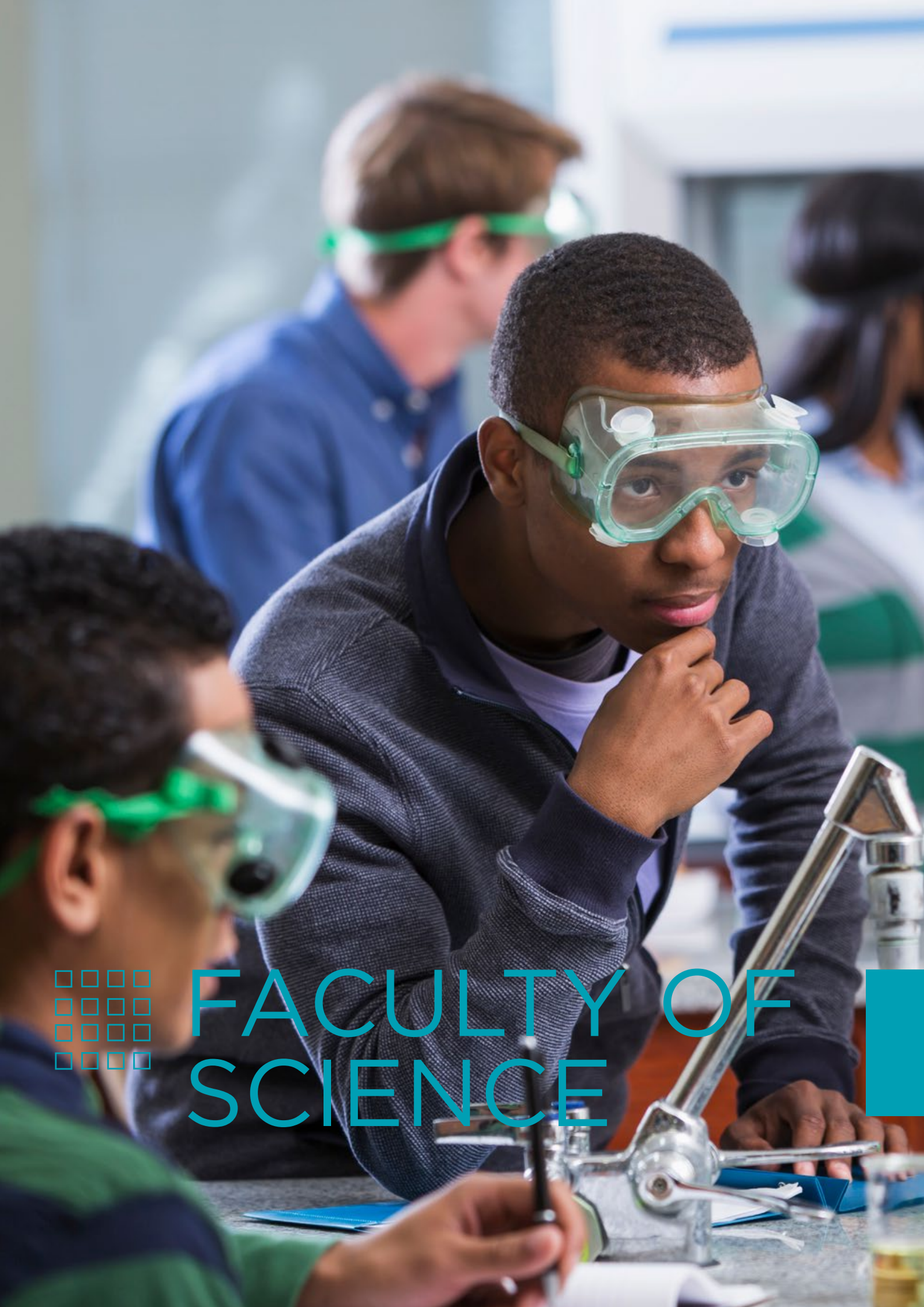
White students



Looking ahead

Plans for 2025 onwards include the implementation of the credit load review, and alignment of skills to the LLB graduate

attributes. The Faculty of Law will continue to streamline and rationalise its course offering, to cater to a new generation of legal professionals that are able to meet the demands of the current complexities of legal practice in South Africa and globally.



FACULTY OF SCIENCE





Faculty of Science

It was a year in transition for the Faculty of Science, marking a clear shift from pandemic-era teaching modalities to the new realities brought by Artificial Intelligence (AI). Spaces for teaching and learning were reconsidered: the Science Learning Centre in the newly-built Chris Hani Building was used flexibly for whiteboard-oriented tutorials and as a general-purpose study area. Its uniquely designed furniture, which encourages flexible group work and peer learning, proved highly popular with students throughout the year.

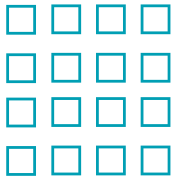
AI has influenced both what is taught and how students learn, particularly in the sciences where AI naturally integrates with disciplinary practices. UCT's Artificial Intelligence Initiative, developed and launched in 2024 and hosted by the faculty of Science, aims to support AI-related teaching and learning across disciplines. In 2024, the faculty designed and obtained approval for a new BSc major in Artificial Intelligence and launched the AI-related Statistics and Data Science major, which received an enthusiastic response from students.

Generative AI's impact on student learning was widely discussed within the faculty. In response, a multi-faceted approach was adopted: learning from experience, increasing assessments in controlled environments, and

actively monitoring and addressing potential academic misconduct. The faculty established the Academic Misconduct Committee, fully operational by mid-2024, to address incidents related to AI misuse, including undisclosed AI use, inequitable access to AI tools, and risks associated with biased or inaccurate AI systems. A faculty workshop on Assessment Practice recommended that, for all undergraduate courses in 2025, at least 80% of the final grade should derive from controlled assessments (eg invigilated exams, in-lab practicals, fieldwork) to uphold academic integrity.

Shifts in student enrolments were also observed, with a growing preference for majors in numerical sciences (Mathematics, Statistics and particularly Computer Science) and declining interest in other disciplines. This trend presents both opportunities and challenges: the faculty intends on increasing resources and requested additional lecturing capacity to support AI teaching, while adjusting enrolment targets and planning strategies to bolster disciplines with declining numbers.

Teaching facilities continue to pose challenges, with persistent issues in classroom support and maintenance of laboratories and equipment. Addressing these priorities is essential to maintain high-quality teaching and learning experiences across the faculty.



Student success

The Faculty of Science has made substantial progress in promoting student success and enhancing throughput rates during 2024. Several key initiatives were undertaken, including the pilot of the Siyaphumelela project, an externally funded collaboration with the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED). This project aims to develop academic advising and student support interventions and will continue until mid-2027. The faculty is the first at UCT to design these tools, processes, and interventions, which are planned for implementation across the institution. A prototype dashboard was developed, in collaboration with CILT, that integrates data from PeopleSoft and Amathuba gradebooks in order to identify students at risk.

Student achievements mentioned in Section four highlight the faculty's impact, demonstrating how students are equipped with both academic and real-world skills.

Despite these successes, some departments continue to face challenges, particularly low pass rates in a limited number of high-impact courses. To address this, the faculty initiated a data-driven review in January 2024, analysing student performance across all courses and departments. This process identified problem areas, informed interventions, and guided the adoption of pedagogical innovations such as flipped classroom models. Measures to improve student engagement included exploring mandatory attendance and improved scheduling coordination with other faculties. The overarching goal is to enhance student performance and throughput rates.

Psychosocial support was strengthened through the full-time appointment of a Student Development Officer (SDO), who is the first point of contact for students, and supports study skills development, the first-year mentorship program, and referrals to UCT services. The SDO plays a central role in orientation, collaborating closely with the Dean and Deputy Dean for Undergraduate Matters to implement initiatives that enhance academic, personal, and social success.

In 2024, the SDO formalised developmental advising coordinated the Science Mentorship





Program, which expanded from 150 students and 22 mentors in 2023 to 250 students and 41 mentors in 2024, earning UCT PLUS accreditation for mentors. The SDO also led the academic recovery program, Impumelelo, supporting at-risk and readmitted students through structured planning, monthly reflective quizzes, and ongoing consultations and provided RAC support, with over 70% of RENN student consultations having taken place before appeals were submitted. Beyond academic guidance, developmental advising and psychosocial support were made more accessible, integrated, and effective. The faculty has also renewed its partnership with Student Wellness Service to provide professional counselling services, which are partially funded by the faculty and extensively utilised by students.

The Faculty of Science employs 21 Student Advisors (six Senior and 15 regular), who are full-time academics critical to maintaining the high standard of undergraduate programs. Their invaluable contributions were recognised through a monthly honorarium.

The faculty uses a transfer model to place students in the Science Extended Degree Programme

(SEDP). Initially, all accepted Science applicants join the three-year programme (SB001). Based on their performance in the class tests run in teaching week five, underperforming students may transfer to extended programme courses. If students transfer into two or more extended courses, they become part of the Science Extended Degree Programme (SB016). This means that students in the extended programme complete their first year over two years, extending their degree to four years. Ultimately, 86 students transferred into the SEDP, which represented about 17% of the first-year cohort in 2024.



Curriculum and pedagogy

In 2024, the Faculty of Science conducted a series of curriculum change workshops to explore teaching practices, pedagogical philosophies, and opportunities for constructive reform. The objectives included supporting at-risk students, increasing graduate throughput, and modernising the curriculum and overall student experience.

A significant achievement was the Faculty Board's endorsement of a reduction in the minimum credit load for the BSc degree, from 420 to 360 credits, while retaining

the requirement of 120 Level 7 credits. This decision has enabled students to reduce elective courses in the first and second years without limiting available combinations of Science majors. The number of required Science credits was also reduced from 276 to 180 to foster interdisciplinary learning. Readmission criteria were revised to reflect these changes while upholding the N+1 graduation goal.

In response to concerns regarding academic misconduct and the growing influence of AI, a workshop on Assessment Practice concluded with a commitment to increase the proportion of marks assessed under invigilated conditions to 80% for all Science courses, thereby limiting the use of unapproved AI or online resources (see Key Contextual Issues above).

Early outcomes of the 2024 curriculum reforms hold promise, evidenced by increased numbers of students qualifying for BSc degrees and a notable reduction in academic exclusions. Efforts to support lower credit loads, particularly for students approaching graduation and at-risk cohorts, are ongoing.

The faculty also initiated three DVC-funded projects in 2024 aimed at enhancing student success and aligning with Vision 2030, which emphasises interdisciplinary learning, computational fluency, and practical skills development:

Project 1:

Unleashing geoscientific excellence – This project focused on developing a cohesive Earth Sciences curriculum to enhance integration and graduate flexibility. A revised GEO1009F curriculum, incorporating input from the Department of Oceanography and new content from the Department of Environmental & Geographical Science, was approved for 2025 implementation.

Discussions also addressed a reduced-credit version of GEO1009F for Geomatics majors and adjustments to Chemistry requirements for Geology and Oceanography students.

Project 2:

Redesigning CSC1016S – This initiative redesigned CSC1016S as a blended learning course to meet the growing demand for computational skills. The revised course description was approved for the 2025 handbook, with piloted content in 2024. Milestones included the development of new lecture slides with CILT support and enhancements to a browser-based Java coding environment. All 2024 assessments were conducted online, streamlining the marking process.

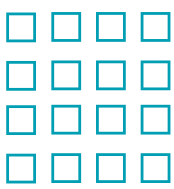
Project 3:

Improving chemistry throughput – This project aimed to boost student success by training tutors and upskilling postgraduate students. Temporary lecturers and teaching assistants were appointed from a diverse postgraduate pool, gaining valuable teaching experience. Student feedback was highly positive, and notable improvements were observed following integration of input from both students and academic staff.



Student voice and engagement

Science students actively engage with the faculty and departments at multiple levels. Class representatives provide initial feedback to convenors and departments, highlighting both successes and areas for improvement. Heads of Departments are responsible for closing the feedback loop, ensuring that issues are addressed efficiently. Student societies play a vital role in promoting science and providing leadership opportunities, from February's Societies Day to December's Jack Elsworth



lecture, where Chemistry students combined acting and chemistry demonstrations to engage children and parents.

The first-year mentorship programme broke new ground in 2024 under the management of the Student Development Officer. The programme was closely linked to the Science is Tough (But So Are You!) book project which reached its first publishing phase with first chapter drafts rolled out to students.

Content was disseminated through a dedicated Amathuba site, with weekly newsletters integrated into the structured mentoring programme. This initiative was showcased at the annual UCT Teaching and Learning Conference in November.

The Science Students Council and Postgraduate Science Council remained critical in maintaining engagement with the Dean's office and faculty committees throughout the year. In 2024, the faculty identified limited engagement and structural issues within

the Science Student Council as a challenge. To address this, the SDO encouraged the Student Councils to take responsibility and organise student initiatives. The faculty supported the establishment of official Amathuba sites, enhancing the Council's autonomy and communication with students. In 2024, the faculty hosted its inaugural annual Student Awards Ceremony, uniting departments to recognise class medalists and named award winners. The event was highly successful, with strong attendance across departments.

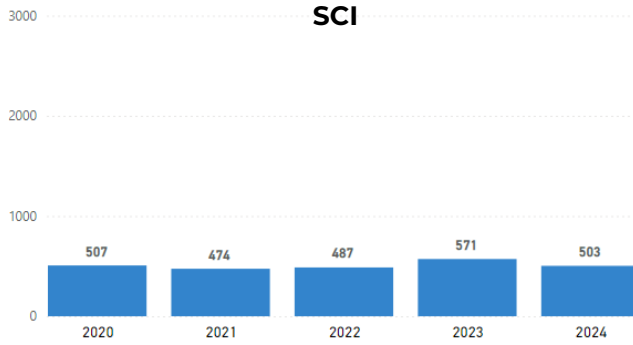


Faculty facts and figures

Overall, the data for 2024 indicate steady growth in undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments, improvements in the academic preparedness of entering students, progress in equity admissions, and strong postgraduate throughput. While academic exclusions remain a concern for a small proportion of students, recent curriculum changes and targeted interventions are expected to improve degree completion and student success.



Figure 38. Total First-time Entering Undergraduate Enrolment SCI



Undergraduate admission and enrolments

First-time undergraduate enrolments in Science are shown in Figure 38. The faculty aimed for 500 students in 2024 and enrolled 503, closely meeting the target.

Figure 39 illustrates total undergraduate enrolments, which have gradually increased due to extended degree completion times among pandemic cohorts. Changes to degree regulations are expected to reduce time-to-completion in future years. However, an increased intake of students will mean that total student numbers may not decrease in future.

Figure 39. Total Undergraduate Enrolment SCI

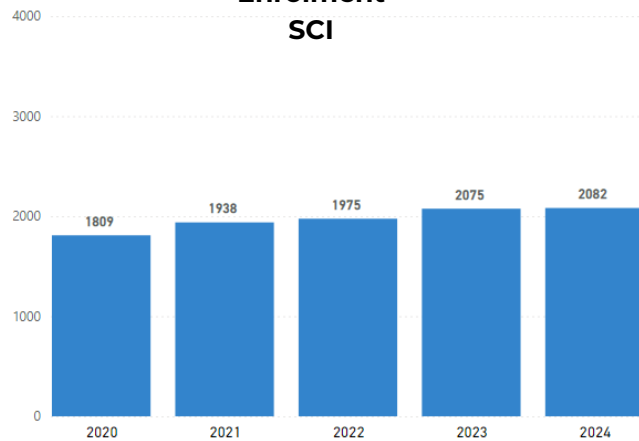


Figure 40. NSC Aggregates Equivalent of First-time Entering Undergraduates SCI

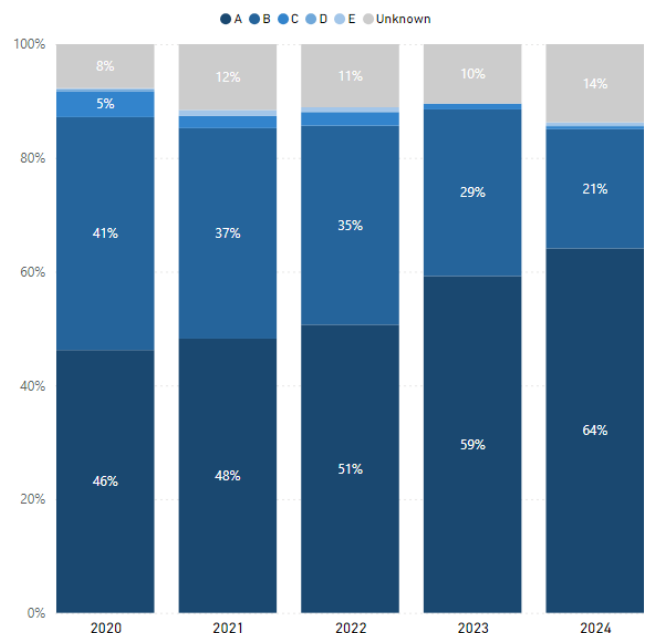
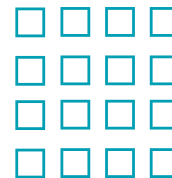


Figure 40 highlights improvements in the NSC profile of entering students. Science admits students in bands, and more students are entering the faculty in the higher bands, even meeting our equity targets comfortably in some redress categories. These patterns mask much-needed improvement in performance in NSC Mathematics and NSC Physical Science, given that those scores are doubled when deciding admission into a BSc.



**Figure 41. Total Undergraduate Enrolments by Population Group
SCI**

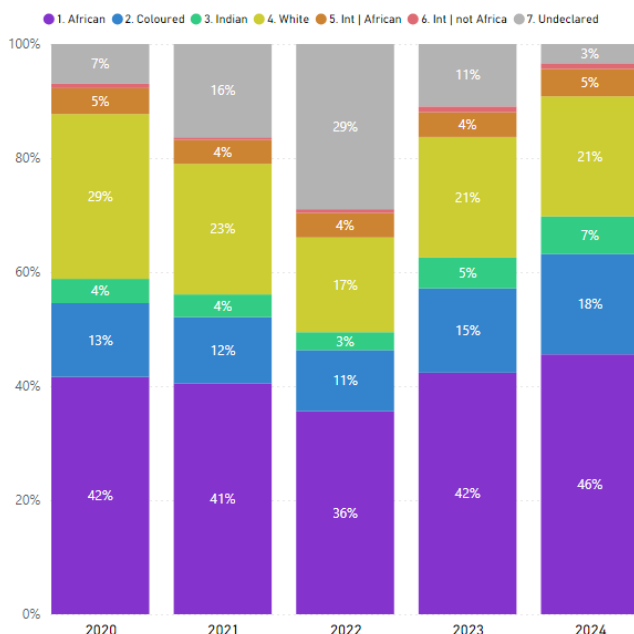
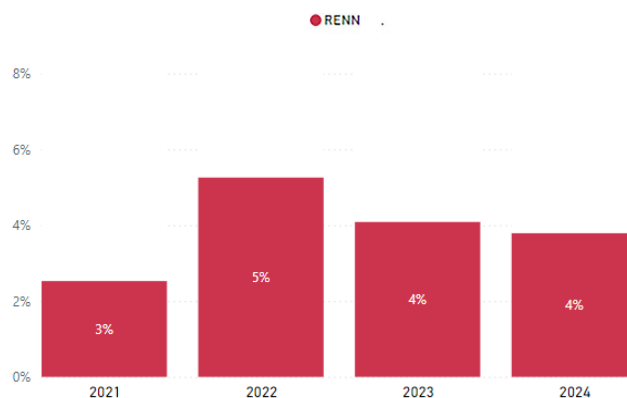


Figure 41 shows some progress in admitting students from designated equity groups while maintaining minimum academic standards to ensure student success.

Academic concessions and exclusions

Figure 42 presents the proportion of academically excluded students who did meet the progression criteria. The number is comparable to other faculties, with expected declines due to reduced credit load requirements.

**Figure 42. Undergraduates per Year who were Academically Excluded
SCI**



Graduations

Figure 43 summarises degree completion times for students entering between 2016 and 2020, showing that approximately 70% complete their BSc within N+2 years. The trend suggests a decrease in students who are academically excluded, but it is of concern that a significantly low number (consistently more than 10%) of students leave the programme.

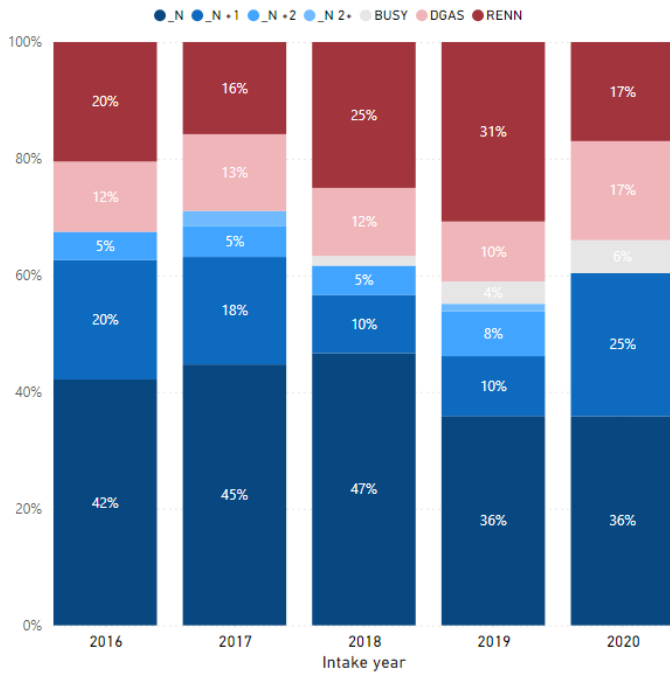


Figure 43.
Final Academic Status
of Undergraduates
by Intake Year
SCI



Looking ahead

In 2025, the faculty will sustain Curriculum Change workshops aimed at strengthening support systems and fostering key graduate attributes. Planned topics for a course that all BSc students should engage with include academic writing, critical thinking, language proficiency, and foundational science skills. Using an inter-departmental curriculum development approach, the workshops will further explore the historical context of science, including the influence of colonialism on its development,

to encourage thoughtful engagement with diverse scientific perspectives. Academic integrity training for undergraduate students has been identified as a priority by the Academic Misconduct Committee in December 2024 and will be co-developed with CILT.

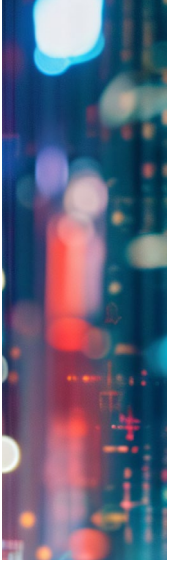
Faculty-wide tutor training, endorsed by departments across the faculty, will also be advanced in collaboration with CHED. In addition, interventions will be put in place to strengthen support for student advisors, underscoring their critical role in student success.





section *three*

Enabling Success
Beyond the
Classroom



Enabling Success Beyond the Classroom

UCT continues to work toward creating a teaching and learning environment where all students feel welcome. Through greater awareness of student needs balanced with more inclusive practices, we hope to create an enabling environment where students will thrive.

The university recognises that students are not merely products of an academic system but holistic individuals whose success depends on support that extends beyond the classroom. This includes strong advocacy for disability inclusion, comprehensive health and wellness services, guidance on careers and employability, and opportunities to develop leadership potential. By addressing these interconnected dimensions of student life, we aim to create an environment where every student can thrive academically, personally, and professionally. While there is still much to do, progress was made in 2024.

Holistic student development in the Living and Learning ecosystem

The Department of Student Affairs (DSA), through the Office of Residence Life, continues to drive student success and holistic development by embedding co-curricular learning into the university's residence system. UCT accommodates approximately 7 300

students across 33 residence spaces, where Living and Learning (L&L) programmes provide inclusive, developmental environments.

Findings (based on an institutional study in 2022 that identified at-risk students) prompted tailored interventions that integrate student leadership, academic support, and co-curricular development, particularly for students from historically marginalised groups. These initiatives led to the development of the L&L Framework in 2024.

The Framework fosters peer-led learning communities that empower students essential life and academic skills. Key skills under the development lens in 2024 included communication, time management, leadership, problem-solving, and promotion of help-seeking behaviour — all vital requirements for academic success and psychosocial wellbeing. Students reported improved self-image and a greater sense of belonging, confirming the value of social constructivist and humanising pedagogical initiatives in residence-based learning.

UCT recognised that to optimise these initiatives, they should be harmonised with faculty structures. In 2024, baseline data collected from 172 of 220 residence peer tutors (78%) provided a foundation for reimagining



how residence life intersects with the academic project. Findings illustrate a need for greater collaboration between faculties, the DSA, and student leaders in fostering holistic learning environments. Students highlighted gaps in faculty-based learning support, for example, and its integration with residence structures. This baseline study shaped a system-wide strategy to align L&L efforts with academic priorities and support the development of capabilities that enhance persistence, wellbeing, and success across UCT's diverse student body in future. Implementation of this strategy is planned for 2025.

Disability Advocacy

The Disability Advocacy portfolio at UCT is dedicated to embedding disability-inclusive practices into the university's core values. In 2024, a key focus was on minimising access barriers for prospective students with disabilities, unlocking opportunities for inclusion that might otherwise not have existed. To enable this, a mechanism of specialised accommodation for entry of prospective students with disabilities

was created. In partnership with CHED, the reasonable accommodations mechanism was implemented for applicants with disabilities who wrote the NBT tests.

With the aim of increasing access to communication for all students and staff, the vocabulary bank for Deaf students was expanded, to identify and establish new signs for unfamiliar academic terminologies and concepts in specific courses. Through the 2024 Language Indaba, a greater understanding of SASL and deaf culture was promoted.

Student Health and Wellness

The Student Wellness Service (SWS) provides primary health care across all campuses through a main clinic and satellite locations.

The need for counselling services continued to escalate, with nearly 3 500 more consultations in 2024 (11 654) than in 2019 (8 200). In response to the heightened demand for psychosocial student support, capacity within the Counselling Services Unit was expanded

to include additional counsellors on a sessional basis in 2024. The counselling team is comprised of Psychologists, Social Workers and a Wellness Coach.

Ongoing efforts were introduced to strengthen the clinic operations and improve turnaround times. This included collaborative partnerships with external organisations such as the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), October Health App and the Ollie Health platforms to provide additional 24-hour counselling services for students.

In 2024, a total of 11 654 counselling sessions were conducted (see Figure 44 below) by the SWS counsellors and the 24-hour telephonic counselling service (SADAG), signalling a slight increase in utilisation of services compared to 2023.

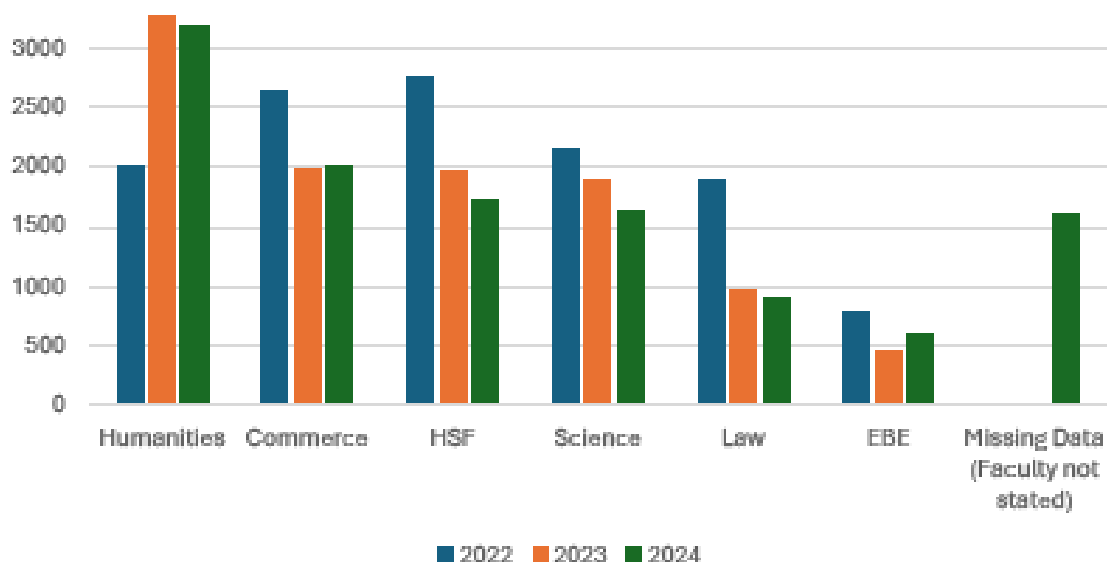
Same-day psychological services were available through the “walk-in service” at the Upper and

Lower Campus clinics where appointments are not required.

As indicated in Figure 43 below, the Faculty of Humanities presented the highest demand for central counselling services. When examining 2024 data for clinical presentations, the highest number of cases were for anxiety (40.2%), depression (24.3%) and academic stress (23.2%); a similar trend as seen in 2023. Peak demand for services was evident before the examination period (May to June), with another noticeable spike in October. The 2024 data on consultations by year of study suggests that students in their second to final years of study used the service the most (60% of total consultations), and first year students used it the least.

This may be attributed to the directed interventions focused on first year students and increased academic pressure at more advanced levels of study.

Figure 44. SWS Counselling Sessions by Faculty



Health promotion, wellness education and awareness

The SWS actively promoted health and wellness through several outreach programmes and campaigns in 2024. Among these were nine wellness events (including Wellness Wednesdays and Wellness Drives) where health-related information was shared. Health promotion talks and workshops were held throughout the year, reaching 5 574 students. Clinicians also conducted health screening for mental disorders, with 3 195 consultations held.



section *four*

Celebrating Excellence
in Teaching & Learning



Celebrating Excellence in Teaching & Learning

Excellent teaching creates the conditions for curiosity, resilience, and achievement to flourish, while the outstanding accomplishments of students affirm and extend the value of teaching. Together, they embody a shared creation of knowledge, creativity, and transformation that defines the spirit of academic community. What follows are but a few examples of excellence within teaching and learning at UCT.

Distinguished Teacher Award

The Distinguished Teacher Award (DTA) is the university's highest recognition of teaching excellence. The award honours sustained,

impactful, and innovative contributions to teaching and learning, with a recent emphasis on curriculum transformation, inclusive practice, responsiveness to students, and the scholarship of teaching. Eligible nominees are academic staff who have taught at UCT for at least five years. A maximum of four awards may be made annually.

The four 2024 Distinguished Teacher Award recipients represent UCT's strongest traditions and boldest aspirations in teaching. Their practices span disciplines, pedagogical approaches, and communities, but share a common commitment to equity, innovation, reflection, and student success.





Professor Brandon Collier-Reed – Department of Mechanical Engineering

Professor Collier-Reed was commended for his long-standing and deeply reflective contributions to engineering education. With over 25 years of experience and leadership roles as Head of Department and Deputy Dean, he has made a significant mark on curriculum development, including nationally recognised contribution to over 60 engineering programme reviews.

His teaching philosophy, centered on student agency and professional apprenticeship, reflected a commitment to inclusive and transformative pedagogy. His work on multilingualism and academic literacies addressed key barriers to student success in STEM fields. His portfolio reflected careful engagement with student feedback and offered both thoughtful and constructive critique on evaluation systems. He was described by students as approachable, respectful, and inspiring.

Dr George Hull – Department of Philosophy

Dr Hull exemplifies a powerful model of decolonial, critically engaged pedagogy. His Philosophy of Race course, in particular, was recognised for fostering a pedagogy of discomfort and empowerment, encouraging students to confront challenging material with care, openness, and intellectual rigour.

He was recognised for innovative efforts to widen access to philosophy through initiatives

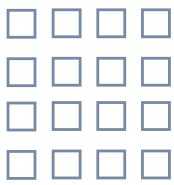
like Philosophy for Non-Philosophers, outreach to school learners, and reshaping the philosophical canon to include historically marginalised voices. His supervision style, described as “horizontal” and inclusive, was also highlighted as a strength.

His portfolio reflected strong student and colleague endorsements, and his work was considered to be a critical force in revitalising the discipline and fostering a space of inclusive intellectual bravery. Dr Hull’s contributions to curriculum transformation, public engagement, and pedagogy stand as a benchmark for the discipline and the institution.

Dr Yunus Omar - School of Education

Dr Omar was recognised for his intellectually rigorous, inclusive, and socially responsive approach to teaching. His pedagogy, informed by feminist and justice-oriented frameworks, demonstrated careful attention to the affective and structural conditions of the classroom. His portfolio reflected both meticulous preparation and an openness to continuous improvement. He was recognised for modelling reflective practice through cultivation of a respectful, debate-rich classroom culture that actively encouraged peer critique. His efforts to support students beyond formal teaching, and his responsiveness to diverse student needs, were seen as defining features of his approach.

He made noteworthy contributions to curriculum renewal and demonstrated leadership through departmental transformation work as well as in organising the Neville Alexander Conference. His impact on students, many of whom cite his influence on their educational and professional trajectories, was powerfully evident. Dr Omar is considered a deeply reflective and committed educator whose approach embodies the values of transformative education.



Dr Bianca Tame – Department of Sociology

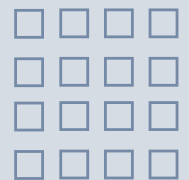
Dr Tame’s teaching, grounded in Freirean and social constructivist frameworks, foregrounds participation, reflexivity, and co-construction of knowledge. She has an impressive ability to make complex material accessible and meaningful to students and was recognised for her collaborative work in shaping curriculum and postgraduate programmes such as the MPhil in Theories of Justice and Inequality. Her experience in labour and activist education together with her role in the Africa Decolonial Research Network were considered as strengths that bridge theory and praxis.

Described by her department as a ‘treasure’, Dr Tame’s commitment to mentorship, tutor development, and inclusive pedagogical

practice resonated strongly with what the DTA seeks to recognise. Her contribution was seen as quietly radical, deeply principled, and transformative for both students and colleagues. Dr Tame exemplifies decolonial pedagogy in practice.

Showcasing student achievements

We also celebrate the exceptional achievements of our students with an understanding that student achievement stands alongside teaching excellence as a marker of institutional quality. Together, they form a reciprocal relationship that advances the university’s vision of academic distinction and transformative impact. A few highlights of student achievements in 2024 are listed below.



Faculty of Commerce

Jordan Smith, a student entrepreneur and founder of Cartel (a parking solution for UCT) represented the university at the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) Entrepreneurship Intersvarsity challenge in 2024.

He progressed from the regional rounds to the national finals, where he showcased a strong business concept and received positive feedback. He was also awarded the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce Academic Innovation Award.



Faculty of Science

Christopher Blignaut, a Computer Science student, was part of the winning team “Nexura” in the 2024 TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) Sustainathon Challenge, a global competition focused on affordable and clean energy. Their first-place finish included a prize of R35 000 and a three-month internship at TCS in India.

Similarly, neuroscience student Blessing Gumbu was recognised for his research on maternal inflammation’s impact on foetal brain development, and for leadership within

the university, including advocating for better integration between Upper Campus and Health Sciences.

Faculty of Health Sciences

The Bongani Mayosi Medical Students Academic Prize, which recognises a final year medical student who epitomises the Academic Legendary and Altruistic Life of Prof Bongani Mayosi, was awarded to Luxolo Mdolo. The Forman Prize for the best undergraduate student who has made a special contribution to student affairs was awarded to Amandla Lurani and Etandwa Guda.

These examples reveal threads in the rich tapestry of excellence and success woven into teaching and learning by our staff and students. By fostering environments that encourage deep learning approaches to critical engagement and holistic development, teaching naturally translates into enhanced student success and graduate readiness, shaping future leaders who embody the values of the institution. Together, these intertwined forms of excellence advance the university’s mission to enable transformative learning, impactful scholarship, and prepare graduates to contribute meaningfully to society.



section *five*

Teaching
& Learning
in Numbers



Teaching & Learning in Numbers

This chapter provides the link to a companion report that focuses primarily on undergraduate student headcount enrolments and profiles at an institutional level, as well as undergraduate student academic performance, from 2020 to 2024. Faculty-specific data are provided in Chapter 2. An analysis of postgraduate enrolments, profiles and performance can be found in the 2024 Postgraduate Report. The companion report has three sections. The first section reports on enrolments and enrolment profiles of undergraduate students in the 2024 year and compares annual changes since 2020.

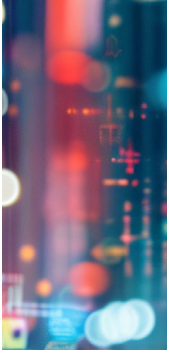
The second section looks at teaching and learning in terms of overall graduate outputs and undergraduate student performance. Cohort analysis of first-time undergraduates is presented only in faculty reports for specific undergraduate programmes. The third section reports on academic staff profiles and changing FTE student to FTE staff ratios. Unless otherwise stated, comparisons are year-on-year, referring to 2024 relative to 2023.

A note on the use of racial categories for population groups in the companion report:

for monitoring purposes and in response to our reporting obligations to DHET, it is necessary to use apartheid racial designations. In the report, we use the following self-declared classifications to refer to students and staff: African, coloured, Indian, white, and International. The classification 'black' encompasses African, coloured, and Indian South Africans. In recent years we have continued to compare performance of African and white students to monitor the persistent performance gap that exists especially between these two groups.



Follow [\[this link\]](#) to access the companion report.



Conclusion

I wish to thank the many colleagues who helped to bring this Teaching and Learning Report together, including the Deputy Deans, CHED staff, and staff from the Institutional Planning Department. Particular mention must go to Lisa de Vos and Paula Harker who led the project team in producing this year's report.

The year 2024 marks a pivotal moment in the university's strategic journey, as it represents the halfway point toward achieving the ambitions of Vision 2030, and is thus a fitting time to take stock of how the objectives that have been set related to Goal One (Developing a holistic, innovative, future orientated education) are shaping up. Many of the activities associated with the successful achievement of these objectives have been presented earlier in this report, but I wish to highlight a few in the paragraphs that follow.

There has been a particular focus on expanding professional development opportunities for teaching staff over the past few years. The New New Academic Practitioners' Programme (NAPP) continues to be a flagship offering and looks at developing academics' pedagogical knowledge and practice. About 39 academics completed the programme across all faculties this year. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is a new programme for academic staff that was run for the first time and aims to build capacity for research-informed teaching. It encourages reflective practice and fosters a scholarly approach to teaching and learning. These initiatives are indicative of UCT's

strategy to enhance teaching excellence and ensure that academics are equipped with the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality, student-centred learning experiences.

The migration from Vula to Amathuba continued, with 483 second- and third-year courses being completed during the year. The final phase of the migration (1 328 postgraduate teaching sites and the remaining undergraduate sites) launched in August and is due to be completed by June 2025. To facilitate this migration, the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) ran a total of 52 training sessions and recorded 1 042 participant engagements. They ran 28 staff training sessions for 308 participants. CILT also offered 30 AI in Education workshops with just over 500 participants. On top of this training, a new short course for teaching staff, Designing with AI, was launched on Amathuba in September, with 40 participants having taken part.

The move to Amathuba was initially implemented without a course evaluation capability. This gap was addressed in 2024, with 529 course evaluations conducted on Amathuba. However, with 844 evaluations still taking place on Vula, there is some way to go before the migration is complete. CILT and the Centre for Educational Assessment (CEA) are collaborating on the development of a Course Evaluation Policy and Practices Framework as part of a UCDG-funded project. This work is critical, as the use of course evaluations remains a point of contention for many staff.



In Section 2, the faculty reports highlight many significant achievements. To recap a few, in the Faculty of Commerce, the number of undergraduate degrees awarded increased by 6% for the professional Business Science degrees and by 14% for the Bachelor of Commerce degrees, reflecting stronger throughput, a decline in exclusions, and the effect of new graduation pathways such as the BCom in Management Studies. Furthermore, 1 165 UCT candidates passed the 2024 SAICA Assessment of Professional Competence (APC), the highest number ever from the Programme. In the faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment, African students now make up 54% of the undergraduate cohort, up from 35% in 2022, demonstrating progress in broadening access and aligning with UCT's Vision 2030 transformation goals. Approximately 48% of first-time entering undergraduates in EBE achieved an A aggregate equivalent, the highest proportion in the past five years, reflecting the faculty's ability to attract high-achieving students while maintaining access for those needing additional support. In the Faculty of Health Sciences, undergraduate enrolments rose to 2 296, a 14% increase over five years.

African students now make up 52% of the undergraduate cohort, up from 40% in 2019, demonstrating progress in transformation. Degrees with Honours were awarded to 46% of MBChB graduates, and among Health and Rehabilitation Sciences graduates, distinctions were awarded to 48% of Speech-Language Pathology graduates. In the Faculty of Humanities, 5 540 undergraduate students were registered, including 1 877 first-time entering students, which was the highest intake in five years. Approximately 49% of the 2020 cohort graduated in minimum time, with 69% completing within N+1, outperforming the UCT average. In the Faculty of Law, academic exclusions decreased from 31% in 2023 to 17% in 2024, reflecting the impact of early interventions such as skills workshops, mentorship, and revised progression rules. African students make up 47% of total undergraduate enrolments, and coloured students account for 18%, showing measurable progress in advancing the faculty's transformation mandate. In the faculty of Science, the Science Mentorship Programme expanded significantly, from 150 students and 22 mentors in 2023 to 250 students and 41 mentors in 2024. The BSc credit load reduced

from 420 to 360 credits, lowering required Science credits from 276 to 180. This reform aims to improve progression and graduation rates, with early outcomes showing increased numbers of students qualifying for BSc degrees and a decline in academic exclusions.

In March and September, we celebrated 7 565 graduates across 21 ceremonies, including 289 PhD graduates. Graduations are a highlight of the academic year and reaffirm the success of our academic project. They are moments where hard work is celebrated and research is recognised. No one who attends a graduation ceremony can leave unmoved by the jubilation and pride displayed by those present.

This Teaching and Learning Report was written in 2025, reflecting on the activities during 2024. I'd like to pay tribute to Emerita Professor Linda Ronnie, the DVC Teaching and Learning, whose term of office came to an end in December 2024, and whose activities are presented in



No one who attends a graduation ceremony can leave unmoved by the jubilation and pride displayed by those present. □ □

this report. E/Prof Ronnie held the portfolio for 18 months, playing a critical role in guiding UCT through the post-COVID-19 period as we re-evaluated exactly how to provide quality education in this new world. Her leadership during this time was marked by a clear focus on academic excellence, ensuring that UCT remained responsive to the changing needs of students and staff while advancing the goals of Vision 2030.

*Prof Brandon Collier-Reed
DVC: Teaching & Learning*



SARAH BAARTMAN HALL

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we are
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