



VC's VOICE



Johanna Messiah from the Student Access & Enrolment Office, assists learners from local schools who were given the opportunity to apply online with the assistance of an admissions officer.

Record enrolment of first-time entering students in 2022

The University's flexible digital-first approach to recruitment over the pandemic has paid dividends with a record high of 8 633 first-time entering (FTEN) students registered for the 2022 academic year.

COVID-19 and the subsequent national lockdown in March 2020, had an immediate negative impact on undergraduate enrolment, most marked in 2021 when 5 972 first-year students registered.

However, in 2022 the enrolment numbers have recovered exceptionally well with a 44.57% increase in first-year registrations, exceeding the target of 7 000.

This points to the effectiveness of measures put in place in 2020 and then in 2021 through the Enrolment Management Task Team (EMTT) and bodes well for sustainability given the additional tuition fee and input subsidy income these enrolments will generate.

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The EMTT has evolved to become a sub-committee of MANCO, the Enrolment Management Committee (EMC), and contains key role-players in the student enrolment process, chaired by the Registrar, Mr Edgar De Koker.

Strategically, this committee will be monitoring and improving systems and processes related to the entire enrolment cycle.

EMC strategies included a successful digital recruitment campaign. While the University attracted many applicants, the challenge remained to ensure that these applicants enrol at Mandela University.

Through various collaborative and responsive strategies, the EMC, which met weekly during the enrolment cycle, worked tirelessly to ensure the enrolment target was met. This required the Academic

Administration department, working closely with the Deans, Residence Administration, Student Financial Aid, ICT department, Communication and Marketing, as well as other departments in the value-chain.

This approach has proven effective which resulted in the record enrolment.

Student Recruitment (SR) teams have traditionally relied on face-to-face interactions, through open days, campus tours, school visits, national career day exhibitions, church and community initiatives and parent evenings. Over lockdown, however, these modes of interaction were severely restricted.

This year SR drove an innovative digital campaign over a range of platforms that reached even those without easy access to technology, namely youth living in remote or underprivileged areas across the country.

While ICT experts helped departments set up remote learning and connection arms, SR radically adapted its traditional campaign messages to focus on health and wellness, rather than purely academic information. This helped to cement the university as a caring, informative, humanising and people-centred institution.

Media interviews positioned Mandela Uni as a thought leader on various topics while an intense radio advertising campaign reached prospective students living in remote areas, where internet access was limited or non-existent.



By overcoming physical contact limitations of the lockdown, the campaign cost-effectively reached and generated 43,526 unique applications from applicants across all nine provinces during the 2020/2021 recruitment cycle.

Ironically, despite the physical distance between SR and its audiences, the team reached more prospective students through its digital approach, with social media and website platforms recording a reach into the millions.

Online ceremonies welcomed students on 28 and 29 January, in tandem with a virtual orientation programme from 25 January to 13 February. In the build-up to the official University Welcoming Ceremony, students and their parents or guardians were invited to attend a virtual faculty meet-and-greet session, hosted by the Executive Dean of their respective faculties, which included an opportunity to meet lecturers.

The First-Year Success (FYS) Orientation programme started on 31 January and lectures began on 14 February 2022.

As at 13 March 2022, the University's registration statistics surpassed the target of 30 953 with a total 31757 students having registered. Of these, 28 601 are undergraduate and 2 909 are postgraduate students.

Since the digital strategy implementation in 2020, the University has grown its social media platform audience by 86% and increased impressions – the number of times posts are displayed to users – by 36% to over 34.5 million.

These platforms are extremely influential when aspiring students research their universities of choice – and their experience of how a university responds to queries has great impact on that final choice.

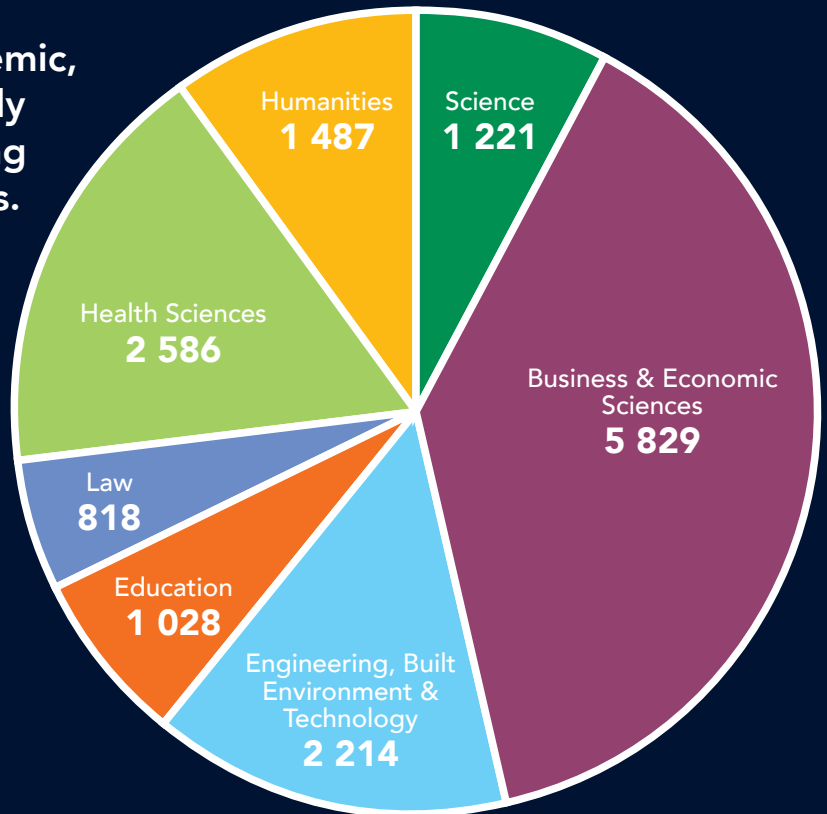
With a somewhat normal return to life, the University will embrace a hybrid model for student recruitment, with 70% of activities remaining digital and 30% targeted face-to-face interaction, in line with COVID-19 guidelines.

Welcoming ceremonies

Given the fluidity of the pandemic, a decision was made to virtually host the University's Welcoming Ceremony and Faculty sessions.

The January sessions were well received, as indicated on the pie chart, especially that of the Vice-Chancellor's Welcome with 3524 views.

All the sessions can be viewed on the University's [YouTube site](#)



Engagement Colloquium and Transformation Indaba

The Engagement and Transformation Portfolio started the academic year with an Engagement Colloquium followed by a Transformation Indaba.

The two-day "Celebrating & Re-Imagining Engagement Colloquium" held on 7 and 8 February 2022 included the launch of the Engagement Forum. This forum will have a footprint in faculties, entities, divisions and stakeholder communities.

Day one showcased and celebrated the projects of the 2020 and 2021 Engagement Excellence Awards. Day two emphasised the re-imagining of the University's approach to engagement.

Examples of projects underpinned by the principles of convergence, solidarity, social justice, and knowledge democratisation were presented, with a round-table discussion comprising academics and members of the community providing insights into how the University is viewed by external stakeholder communities.

The colloquium was followed by the first Mandela University Transformation Indaba on 9 and 10 February 2022, which reviewed our performance against the current Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) 2018-2022 and started to develop the next five-year plan in alignment with Vision 2030.

Participants were invited to offer input within six specific groupings: Curriculum Transformation, Student Access and Success, Holistic Student Support, Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, Employment Equity, Inclusive Institutional Culture, and Sustainable Resource Stewardship and Mobilisation.

The well-attended Indaba was crucial in highlighting transformation successes and challenges across the University portfolios.

As part of the ongoing intellectual engagement with the University's renaming, the Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) held a panel discussion on 10 February entitled "Mandela Identity in the Context of University Transformation". This dug deeper into the name "Mandela" and what the name and identity mean within our context.

In 2022, TIMS intends to import a critical Mandela orientation into the broader University. This includes establishing ways to facilitate and sustain institutional awareness on critical Mandela scholarship. The institute also aims to engage with individual faculties at the University on the Mandela Identity.

A three-pronged media campaign was rolled out, asking five key questions on the meaning and implications of the Mandela name at a personal and institutional level, with book prizes for insightful responses.



Boost for on-campus Infrastructure

In a substantial boost for our on-campus infrastructure, Nelson Mandela University has opened two of three new student residences to be built this year.

The 500-bed residence in Summerstrand opened in February and a further complex of 300 beds was completed in April. These are desperately needed as there is a shortage of affordable on-campus accommodation for students at South African colleges and universities.

A residence with a further 1000 beds is due for completion in October. Added to the 200-bed residence opened on George Campus last year, this makes up 2000 new beds.

Balancing the demand for beds with the equally important need for prudence and financial sustainability, Mandela University opted not to use the funding allocations as they were initially planned. Instead, we have combined government grants, received once every three years, and supplemented this with loan funding, which has meant more blocks can be built.

In addition to the funding model, the new residences are being built with the innovative Peri Uno construction method which enables floor plans to be duplicated easily, and gives a cost saving at scale. They also include various sustainability interventions and form part of the University's broader infrastructure plans, based on an award-winning urban design framework.

Looking ahead

In addition to the fiscal pressure exacerbated by COVID-19, leading to reductions in funding, with significant cuts on Infrastructure and Efficiency Grant Funding, there has also been a below inflationary allocation of block funding to universities. Nonetheless, there are exciting developments across several of our campuses.



A view of the new residences in Sanlam Student Village





Faculty of Law building under construction



In 2021, the Faculty of Law opened a new building on South Campus, the design of which symbolises a commitment to the Constitution of South Africa and social justice.



Work on a new 1000 bed residence should be complete later in 2022

In 2021, the Faculty of Law opened a new building on South Campus, the design of which symbolises a commitment to the Constitution of South Africa and social justice.

Phase 1 of the closed campus project aims to enhance security to the Summerstrand South, North and Ocean Sciences Campus cluster with respect to entrances, access roads and the perimeter fence. The tender was awarded in 2021 and work is nearing completion. The transportation hub, which will facilitate the orderly control of public transport to the Summerstrand South, North and Ocean Sciences Campus cluster, is complete.

Work also started on the commons and conference areas of the Ocean Sciences Campus, and an extension of E-Block on this campus which is changing the façade of this building. Looking further ahead at Ocean Sciences, work has started on a futuristic Science Centre which will include a digital dome-shaped auditorium, teaching laboratories, exhibition space and other amenities.

Following the University's adoption of the renewable energy strategy, the installation of solar plants is considered for each campus. The South Campus renewable energy farm is already operational and a R5.3-million solar installation on Missionvale Campus

should be active later this year. Funds permitting, solar farms will also be installed on the Second Avenue Campus and, after this, the George Campus.

Most of the ongoing infrastructure and maintenance work undertaken as part of the Missionvale Campus readiness plan, including adapting existing infrastructure for the new Medical School needs and security upgrades, has been completed.

If a pre-pandemic visitor were to arrive on the George, Missionvale, South and North campuses today, they would see a vastly different landscape than they would have two years ago!

Indigenous languages and the law

In a celebration of multilingualism and linguistic diversity at Mandela University, the Faculty of Humanities marked *International Mother Tongue Day* in February by hosting a seminar titled *“Writing Legal Judgments in isiXhosa: Indigenous Languages and the Law”*.

Through its Language Policy, Mandela University recognises the diversity of languages represented among students and staff, and is committed to pursue, and provide, a fair and inclusive language environment in knowledge creation.

The International Mother Tongue Day's seminar topic was inspired by Judge Mandisa Maya, the President of the Supreme Court of Appeal and one of the candidates for Chief Justice of South Africa.

During her interview for the position of Chief Justice, Judge Maya expressed her commitment

to inclusivity, plurality and diversity in the South African judicial system. Her history in the South African legal system suggests her recognition of indigenous languages in ensuring fairness and access to justice for all.

Maya was the first judge to write her judgment in her mother tongue of isiXhosa, and has actively encouraged the use of South African languages in court as a way of increasing access to justice.

UNESCO declared the theme of the 2022 International Mother Language Day *“Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities”*. This aligns with the Faculty's thematic area of Digital Humanities and its contribution to the academic project of revitalising the humanities, a key strategic trajectory for the University.

The University recognises the role of digital resources to advance multilingualism, support

quality education and inspire social cohesion quality teaching and learning for all.

Although English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans are the main languages spoken in the Eastern Cape, the student and staff body of Mandela University stretches far beyond the 11 official languages of South Africa. One of the projects of the Digital Humanities team in 2022 is in the field of Virtual African Language Learning to support virtual acquisition of isiXhosa and Sesotho.

Organised by the School of Languages, Media and Communication, the Zoom seminar featured Dr Zakeera Docrat of the University of the Western Cape as the speaker and Glancina Mokone of Mandela University's Law Faculty as the respondent.

Dr Docrat published her first book in 2021, titled *A Handbook on Legal Languages and the Quest for Linguistic Equality in South Africa and Beyond*.

Missionvale project part of an 'African solution to the world's problems'

The University's aquaponics project on Missionvale Campus has been praised by the US acting Consul General to South Africa for offering an African solution to the world's problems.

Nelson Mandela University hosted acting Consul General Will Stevens on his visit to the aquaponics facility, which is funded by the Mondelez International Foundation and run in partnership with INMED South Africa and the University.

The adaptive agriculture and aquaponics project grows several tons of fish and fresh produce each year. The process brings together aquaculture (fish farming) and hydroponics (soilless crop production) in a closed system that uses 90% less water than traditional agriculture.

It is a tangible part of the University's outreach to society, with crops going to feed school children in the area around Missionvale. From the start of 2022, aquaponics has become a subject in the primary school curriculum, and a visit to this asset on our campus is a learning experience for the young farmers of the future.

The vision of the project has been to create an alternative source of food for schools with overstretched nutritional budgets and, over the two years of COVID-19, this need has increased.

We were therefore delighted to hear the words of the acting Consul on the need to talk about African solutions not only to African problems but also to world problems. He praised the work on Missionvale Campus as a solution that could be replicated around the world.

The consulate visitors, the US Agency of International Development (USAid) and delegates from the Bisho-based Eastern Cape Infrastructure Investment Office were welcomed by Missionvale Campus Senior Director Sharon Masiza.



BEARING FRUIT: Nelson Mandela University Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation Professor André Keet, left, and Missionvale Campus Senior Director Sharon Masiza show Will Stevens, US acting Consul General to South Africa, fresh produce harvested from the University's aquaponics project on Missionvale Campus.

Our Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Engagement and Transformation, Professor André Keet, put the value of the scheme into context, citing a few of the University's 250 engagement projects. Many are directed towards areas such as poverty, unemployment and inequality, and channelled through our Hubs of Convergence.

Students from the University's Faculty of Agriculture conduct research and take part in in-service training through the aquaponics project, and the Department of Dietetics also plays a role in assessing the nutritional value of food produced.

Prof Keet's words echo the values of our institution: "If you want to see the new spirit of the University, its pulsating soul, then you will see it here, socially embedded on Missionvale Campus. We are located within the space that literally represents the challenges that we need to engage with. And we must be willing to get our hands dirty."

One New Brighton school has launched its own system from the knowledge gained from the Missionvale project. It's an example of how sharing our resources and skills can ripple out to benefit the wider community.

Whistle blower channels at Mandela University

Nelson Mandela University has a new Whistleblowing Policy which outlines the steps to take if you would like to speak out – or “blow the whistle” – about improprieties in the workplace, along with guidelines on how to support and protect whistle blowers, and how the University will respond.

Whistleblowing is a key tool to promote individual responsibility and organisational accountability, and the new policy aims to provide a safe route for employees, students and third parties to raise concerns internally.

It aligns with Mandela University’s commitment to zero-tolerance of fraud, corruption and irregular behaviour.

As a member of this University, each one of us is responsible for upholding core values and ensuring that we embody the enduring legacy and ethos of our iconic namesake, Nelson Mandela in all that we do. Every individual therefore has an obligation to raise serious issues of concern so that these can be appropriately addressed.

The University has made an Ethics Hotline facility, independently managed by Whistleblowers (Pty) Ltd, available to report violations in an anonymous environment. It can field calls or information supplied in 16 languages – including South Africa’s 11 major official languages – and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Skilled information agents, trained to screen for hoax reporting, elicit valuable information from direct callers. Direct conversations can be held at no or little cost to the caller using tollfree and SMS Please Call Me services.

South Africa’s Protected Disclosures Act

One obstacle in the fight against corruption, however, is the fact that individuals are often too intimidated to speak out or blow the whistle on corrupt and unlawful activities they observe in the workplace.

Fortunately, the Protected Disclosures Act (PDA), also known as the Whistleblowing Act, applies to individuals in the public and private sectors. The Act provides that employers have a duty to authorise appropriate internal procedures for receiving and dealing with information about improprieties, along with a duty to take reasonable steps to bring the internal procedures to the attention of every employee.

Furthermore, employers have a duty to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect employees from any detriment due to their disclosure of such information.



HOW TO 'BLOW THE WHISTLE'

Step 1: Select a communication channel

24/7/365 Hotline: 0800 438 737

SMS: 33490 (a caller using the SMS service receives an automatic response advising that an information agent will call them back)

WhatsApp: +27 (0) 71 868 4792

Email: nelsonmadelauni@whistleblowing.co.za

Website: www.whistleblowing.co.za

App: Download the Whistleblower App from Google Play or the Apple App Store.

Step 2: Report

A trained information agent will take your call, put you at ease and help you to provide all the information you can about the matter you are reporting.

Step 3: Investigation

You will receive a confidential reference number and the matter will be referred to the University to be investigated internally. It may also be referred to a law enforcement agency (keep the reference number provided confidential as you will need this for follow-up).

Visit the University Staff and Student Portal and the dedicated [Whistleblower webpage](#) for more information details on reporting channels, protection against retaliation and related policies. The Whistleblower webpage will publish all reported cases each quarter.

Further information is available from Reena Chetty at the University’s Ethics Office on Reena.Chetty@mandela.ac.za

Putting science in service of society

Nelson Mandela University will host two exciting science conferences this year under the banner of Science for Society, the Faculty of Science's engagement strategy.

2022 is the 100th anniversary of the Union of Pure and Applied Physics – of which South Africa was a co-founder 2022 – and it is also the International Year of Basic Sciences for Development, which focuses on the links between basic sciences and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is timeous therefore that Mandela University is hosting the annual conference of the South African Institute of Physics (SAIP 2022) from 4-8 July with the theme "100 years of Physics in Africa – Past, Present and Future".

SAIP 2022 is an excellent opportunity to participate in these international celebrations as we focus on the growth of physics in Africa over the last 100 years and at the same time look to the present and future, exploring how this subject can address development challenges facing Africa.

Mandela University also will host the 7th Biennial African School of Fundamental Physics and Applications (ASP 2022) and third Biennial African Conference on Fundamental Physics and Applications (ACP 2022), from 28 November to 9 December.

Through our Dean of Science, Prof Azwinndini Muronga, the Faculty is further involved in science

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engagement strategies and policies at national, continental and international stages.

The Faculty of Science's Engagement and Partnership Portfolio as well as the Faculty Engagement Committee were born of the Faculty's strategy of Science for Society, signalling our intent and commitment to public education and engagement with science.

The engagement strategy calls for integration of research and training, learning and teaching, and engagement and partnerships in a meshed and sustainable manner.

The conference will include a Physics in Industry day that calls on physics graduates to take part. This will provide a platform for stimulating knowledge transfer and collaboration between industry and academic partners.

The Department of Physics will host the SAIP 2022 conference as an online event, while ASP 2022 and ACP 2022 will be a hybrid conference.

These conferences are an honour not only for our institution and the Nelson Mandela Bay metro, but also for South Africa as a whole. They are furthermore a tangible expression of engaged scholarship, reflecting our commitment to "Science for Society". This in turn is aligned with Vision 2030's strategic focus areas which include the pursuit of impactful, pioneering research, innovation, and internationalisation to address grand societal challenges and promote sustainable futures.



The banner features the Nelson Mandela University logo at the top center. Below it, the text reads "ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS (SAIP 2022)". To the left is a stylized atom logo and the SAIP logo. To the right is a profile of a woman with a map of Africa behind her head. A yellow box in the center contains the date "Date: 4-8 July 2022". A yellow circle on the right says "100 years of Physics in Africa Past, Present and Future". A small tag at the bottom right says "Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth)". The text "SAIP2022" is in the bottom left corner.

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Human Resources and HEAVA appointments

With effect from 1 January 2022 Ms Nandipha Sishuba has been appointed Nelson Mandela University's Executive Director: Human Resources, reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations.

Ms Sishuba joined the University from the Eastern Cape Department of Health in 2018 as Senior Director: People and Institutional Capability. In her new role, she will provide strategic direction and leadership, and be responsible for the overall management of the Human Resources (HR) portfolio, in support of the University's vision, mission, and strategic goals.

Ms Sishuba holds an MSc in Public Policy and Management from the University of London, an MBA from the South Eastern Louisiana University, an MA (Industrial Psychology) from the University of Fort Hare and a Diploma in Project Management from Damelin.

HEAVA professors

In addition to associate and full professors, the University can boast a wide spectrum of HEAVA professors, namely Honorary, Emeritus, Ad Personam, Visiting and Adjunct professors.

These titles are generally conferred in recognition of an association with, or contribution to, the teaching, research, scholarship, creative, professional, and community engagement work or academic management of the University. Nominations for HEAVA appointments are primarily based on a person's work in nationally, and in some cases internationally, recognised disciplines.

In terms of Nelson Mandela University's policy, a member of staff, eminent person or retired individual may qualify for a HEAVA professorial title. HEAVA professors have the opportunity to work across traditional faculty boundaries and departmental divisions to encourage multi- and transdisciplinary scholarship. It is also expected that these appointments strive to address diversity and promote the regeneration of the academy.



Nandipha Sishuba

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The names below are our latest HEAVA appointments, dating to the start of 2021.

Honorary

- Humanities: Richard Levin (Public Management)
- Science: Gideon Smith (Plant Systematics)
- Institute for Coastal and Marine Research: Kerry Sink

Emeritus

- BES: Richard Haines (Economics), Alex Brettigny (Accounting Sciences), Derek Forsyth (Accounting Sciences)
- EBET: Stefanus Buys (Quantity Surveying)
- Education: Naydene de Lange (Education Management), Nonnie Botha (Educational Research and Engagement)
- Health Sciences: Raj Naidoo (Pharmacy), Esmeralda Ricks (Health Science Management)
- Humanities: Lyn Snodgrass (Humanities Management)
- Science: Graham Kerley (Conservation Ecology), Jannie Engelbrecht (Physics), Pieter van Niekerk (Physics)

Visiting

- Humanities: Sydney Mufamadi (Public Management), Sinfree Makoni (Applied Linguistics)
- CriSHET: Sharon Stein (Higher Education)
- Institute for Coastal and Marine Research: Nicola James (Fish Ecology), Lara van Niekerk (Estuaries Management)
- DVC ET: Somadoda Fikeni (Political Science), Simon McGrath (International Education and Development)

Adjunct

- BES: Doug Mattheus (Marketing)
- EBET: Stephen Read (Urban design), Casper Paul Kotze (Engineering Management), Jeremy Thobo Gibberd (engineering management)
- Humanities: King Thembinkosi Bonakele (Humanities Management)
- Institute for Coastal and Marine Research: Bernadette Snow (Development Studies and Marine Science), Lorien Pichegru (Marine Biology)