DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION INNOVATION

Annual Report 2024

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department for Education Innovation

Departement vir Onderwysinnovasie
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1 Executive summary

The Department for Education Innovation (EI) promotes, enables, and supports teaching excellence by offering a range of professional development opportunities. These opportunities focus on innovative methodologies, teaching and learning technologies, and data-driven solutions. In line with this mission, EI enhances the implementation of UP's teaching model, *TEACH The UP Way*. This approach is student-centred, inclusive, technology-enabled, self-directed, inquiry-based, assessment-driven, and incorporates flipped learning.

Awards and highlights

- The e-education team received an international Anthology 2024 Catalyst Award for the outstanding training and implementation of clickUP ULTRA.
- Mastercard Foundation Programme Phase II (2024-2030) Funding: Starting in July 2024, a seven-year funding agreement provides US $39,813,321 (nearly a billion rand) to support students from Africa.
- The Vaal University of Technology (VUT) sought assistance from the e-learning group to train their lecturers on Blackboard ULTRA. Following the initial training session, VUT requested additional training opportunities.

Teaching excellence and innovation

- Promoting, support and training of lecturers to implement the hybrid teaching and learning model at the University of Pretoria, TEACH The UP Way.
  - ◊ Providing and maintaining a comprehensive and integrated digital teaching and learning ecosystem aligned to the TEACH The UP Way.
  - ◊ This approach enables the development of scalable, flexible, and active learning environments informed by data.
  - ◊ Online Global Teaching and Learning: This is a faculty-driven initiative, but EI arranges two CoP meetings and maintains the online module for lecturers.
- The 10th Flexible Futures Conference from 20-21 August 2024, at the Future Africa Institute, focusing on reimagining assessment in higher education. The conference featured around 60 presentations and sessions and attracted approximately 267 attendees. The event explored the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI), academic integrity, and innovative assessment strategies. The average rating for the usefulness of the conference was 4.57 out of 5, showing high participant satisfaction, and 95.4% indicated that they are likely to attend the 2025 conference.
- A total of 21 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) grants were awarded, comprising seventeen research grants and four innovation grants.
- Student Feedback on Teaching: A self-enrolment App was developed and implemented to support data preparation

for the SFTS process. A guide has been developed to effectively support lecturers and departmental administrators in using the App.

- In 2024, the Creative Studios & Communication Technology (CS&CT) Unit delivered 520 graphic design projects and 213 video teaching and learning-related productions across three campuses.

Curricular Community Engagement (CCE)

- Curricular community engagement is valued as integral to the academic project. In 2024, 19,967 students across 226 modules collaborated with 323 sites to successfully complete their curricular community engagement projects.
- The Community Engagement (CE) Unit hosted an annual transdisciplinary CE seminar in 2024.
- In reimagining community engagement, UP has developed the Curricular Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit. This framework and toolkit guide staff, students, and community partners in advancing strategic objectives that align with UP's vision and mission.
- In 2024, the CCE projects at Moja Gabedi, involving 183 students from various academic programmes, addressed local needs, fostered sustainable development, and attracted 622 community members, showcasing meaningful engagement and lasting impact.

Digital teaching and learning ecosystem

- The new clickUP ULTRA integrates innovative AI tools, leveraging generative AI for course design, assessment creation, and rubric development. The AI Conversation Tool allows instructors to create debate scenarios featuring AI personas, fostering critical engagement and deeper interaction with the content for students.
- Successful implementation of clickUP ULTRA: This version of Blackboard features simplified navigation, a mobile-friendly experience, and intuitive workflows. It also facilitates data-driven learning analytics to keep students engaged and on track for success.
- The University commenced the implementation of clickUP ULTRA for all first-year students in 2024, following extensive preparation and training for lecturers that began in 2023.
    - ◊ Coinciding with the rollout of clickUP ULTRA, a strike from some UP staff led to the closure of the campus. Consequently, the university was compelled to transition all teaching and learning activities to remote delivery within less than 12 hours, utilising the new version of the LMS for first-year students and their lecturers. Thanks to thorough preparation and exceptional support from the e-learning team, the transition was executed seamlessly, with no disruption to classes.
    - ◊ Introduction of a redesigned clickUP ULTRA Lecturer Help Site and a new clickUP ULTRA Student Introduction Module.
- Increase lecturer awareness and encourage the adoption of technologies available to UP students to enhance teaching by scaling and personalising learning experiences while promoting active student engagement. These technologies include the TurningPoint mobile polling app, H5P in-video assessment tools, VitalSource e-books, publisher courseware, and a range of e-assessment tools (refer to *Teach Large Classes the UP Way 2025*).
    - ◊ Anthology® Ally helps students with learning disabilities and second-language students to improve their academic performance. It also promotes an inclusive learning environment. Ally integrates into clickUP where it generates alternative formats, such as HTML, ePUB, audio, and electronic braille, designed to work better with assistive mobile devices and study tools.
    - ◊ Cirrus Assessment is primarily used for summative computer-based testing in computer laboratories. This objective assessment platform, branded as QuestUP at UP, ensures secure and reliable evaluations by enabling the creation of reusable question banks and automating the grading process.
- Watermark Course Evaluations & Surveys: Student feedback is essential to better classroom dynamics. Lecturers receive or even elicit quick, informal feedback or hold discussions with class representatives.
- Implementation of Milestones (badges) and Achievement Studio (Skills-based digital credentials platform): The badges feature within clickUP visually represents students' progress and accomplishments throughout their learning journey in a module. These features support the administration, incentivisation, and recording of unique learning paths.

Learning analytics

- A comprehensive document was developed to explain all the learning analytics initiatives at UP to support student success: *Learning analytics at UP*
- Data integration between clickUP LMS data & Peoplesoft & Anthology Reach data enables UP to incorporate real-time LMS data into the platform, enabling personalised advising informed by LMS engagement data.
- HERI Developed and maintained Power BI dashboards: Module Analytics, Learner Analytics, Academic Success Coaches Activity, Tutorial Attendance, Student Feedback on Teaching Enrolment and the UP Readiness Survey. The users of the Power BI dashboards are the Academic Success Coaches, Deputy Deans, HoDs and Education Consultants.

Professional Development

- EI offers a comprehensive suite of professional development courses to enhance teaching and learning excellence. These include:
    - ◊ 24 Professional Development Courses facilitated by the Education Consultancy (EC), designed to address diverse educational needs.
    - ◊ 15 specialised E-Learning Professional Development Courses, including training on clickUP ULTRA, to empower educators in digital pedagogy (five newly

developed staff development courses).

- ◊ The Academic Induction Programme supports new academics in navigating their roles effectively.
- ◊ Online Tutor Training Course equips tutors with essential skills for engaging and supporting students in online environments.
- ◊ A new course on Curriculum Development was designed and delivered, a significant addition to the continuous professional development courses.

- The Academic Induction Programme was revised to broaden the focus on aspects key to the academic role and to create more awareness of the support provided to academic staff to ensure enhanced teaching and learning practices.
- The clickUP ULTRA training and implementation for 2023-2024 included fifteen-week-long training cycles for lecturers from May 2023 to December 2024. During this period, 71 workshop sessions were conducted, filling 3 101 seats with approximately 803 unique attendees. The average feedback score for these sessions was an impressive 0.95.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

- Revised the Generative AI T&L Guides for lecturers and students. These guidelines were highlighted at the OEB Conference in Germany and featured in Arthur Goldstuck's book.
- Enabled and introduced new clickUP ULTRA generative AI capabilities to streamline tasks for lecturers. Anthology (Blackboard), in collaboration with Microsoft, developed several new Gen AI tools to enhance the quality and effectiveness of lecturers in clickUP ULTRA:
- AI Design Assistant: Simplifying Course Creation makes Blackboard the first major LMS to utilise generative AI for course, assessment, and rubric creation.
  - ◊ The AI Conversation Tool enables instructors to create debate scenarios with AI personas, encouraging students to engage critically with the content.
  - ◊ The Department for Education Innovation has also developed an AI eLearning Support Bot to assist UP lecturers in effectively utilising clickUP ULTRA and other e-learning technologies.
- AI Tutoring Guidelines and Implementation of the 24/7 AI Tutoring App to support the students in preparing before class and consolidating their knowledge after class.

Student academic success initiatives

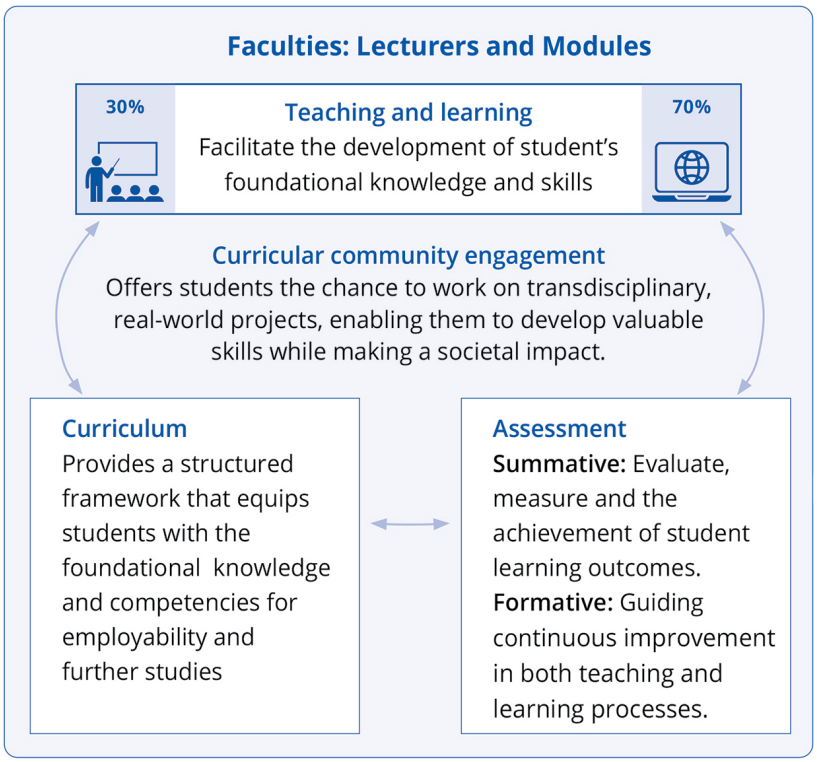
- Mastercard Foundation Programme Phase II (2024-2030) Funding: Starting in July 2024, a seven-year funding agreement provides US $39,813,321 (nearly a billion rand) to support students from Africa. Phase II is designed to amplify inclusivity, academic support, and employability outcomes. The initiative will benefit 600 scholars (300 comprising 200 undergraduates, 100 Honours, and 300 postgraduates). On average, 150 students will be recruited annually over the next four years.
- Teaching Assistants and Tutors
  - ◊ A tutorial attendance app was developed to solve the issue of collecting tutorial attendance data. The tutorial attendance solution uses Microsoft Power Apps to generate QR codes or quick codes to record students' attendance at tutorials.
  - ◊ In total, 506 teaching support staff completed the institutional tutor training. In the first semester of 2024, 170 tutors completed the institutional tutor training across all faculties. Anthology REACH (branded as Support@UP): This comprehensive, integrated planning and student advising platform was implemented and piloted. The platform provides a central hub for institutional communications, planning, and tracking, improving student advising and providing early alerts for at-risk students.
  - ◊ High Impact Modules (HIMs) project: Coordinating and supporting the High Impact Modules (HIMs) project to boost the success rates of selected modules by conducting comprehensive evaluations and implementing targeted interventions.
- First 3 weeks @ UP: The purpose of the project is to implement a structured plan to engage with, identify, and support students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. It focuses on proactive strategies, such as using clickUP and the Polling App for engagement and assessment, ensuring student preparedness and active participation, and monitoring performance.

Development and renewal of policies, guidelines, procedures, and T&L documents

- Teaching and learning policy (S5147/24)
- Procedure on student feedback on teaching survey (S 5156/24)
- Procedure for selection of prescribed materials (S 5155/24)
- Generative AI guides for lecturers and students
- Study Guide Templates
- Teaching Portfolio Template
- Peer Review at UP
- Student feedback module enrolment guidelines for lecturers & administrators
- High Impact Modules Project (HIMs): Managing Module Reviews
- AI Tutoring Guidelines
- Continuity plans in case of suspension of contact classes for lecturers & students
- Load-shedding guidelines for lecturers & students

2 Introduction

The Department for Education Innovation (EI) at the University of Pretoria is dedicated to promoting, enabling, and supporting teaching excellence. Teaching excellence involves various practices that contribute to quality education, including developing appropriate assessment methods, designing curricula thoughtfully, creating an inclusive and engaging environment for learning, pursuing continuous professional development, and inspiring and engaging students, regardless of the mode of education.



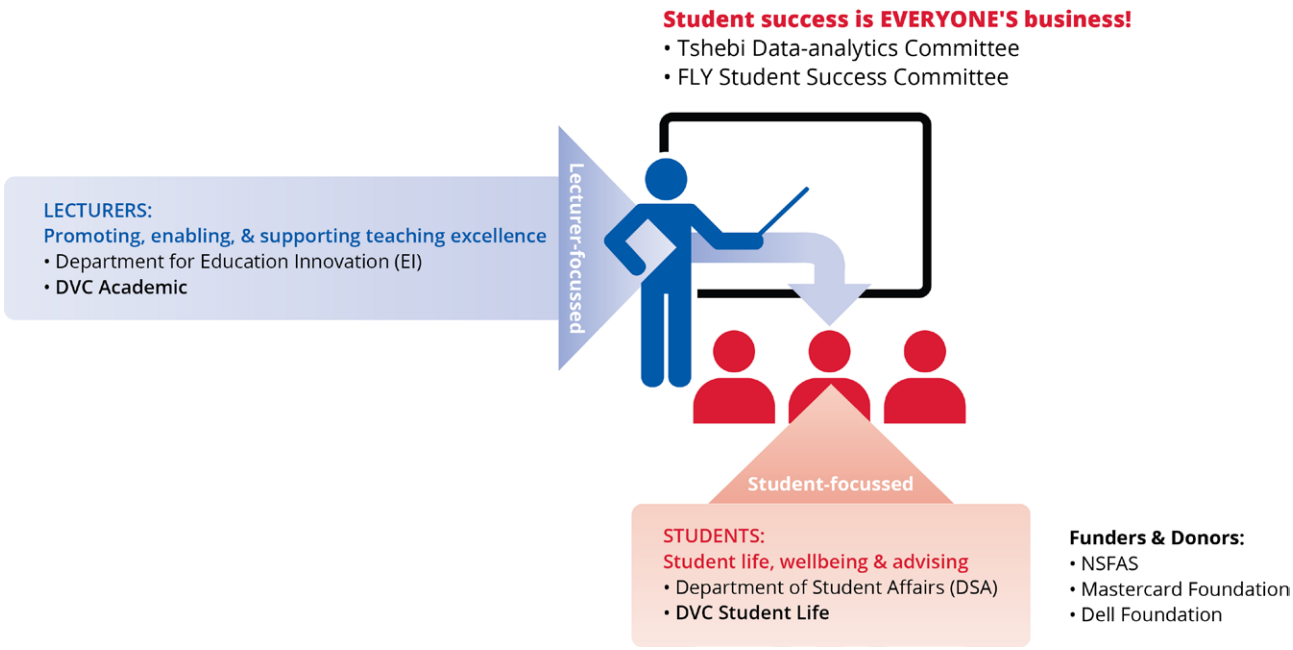
This is achieved through consultation, professional development, training, and support provided to teaching staff. The main goal of EI is to train and develop academic staff professionally. However, it is acknowledged that many staff members need customised support to effectively use educational technology and improve their teaching quality, thereby enhancing student learning. Lecturers teaching high impact modules (HIMS) receive the highest priority for intensive, personalised support. This support is available through various resources, including online support material and personal advice from Educational Consultants, Instructional Designers, and the Creative Studios Unit. Each Faculty benefits from having dedicated Educational Consultants and Instructional Designers to provide focused support. An illustration on the following page highlights the department's focus areas.

The services EI delivers are primarily staff-oriented, while teaching staff in each Faculty is student-oriented. Each of the EI units works across different levels; these are as follows:

Institutional: working across faculties according to their areas of expertise.

- Within faculties: providing support to the staff within a specific Faculty.
- EI departmental work: managing administrative tasks, generating reports, conducting internal work, and supporting EI units.

Additionally, EI manages the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) grants to catalyse teaching and learning innovations. The EI Department also organises the annual Flexible Futures conference, where academic and support staff can showcase their research to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, and student success at UP. Another important aspect of EI's work is providing the University with a teaching and learning digital ecosystem and a student success digital ecosystem. The figure on the following page illustrates the department's emphasis.



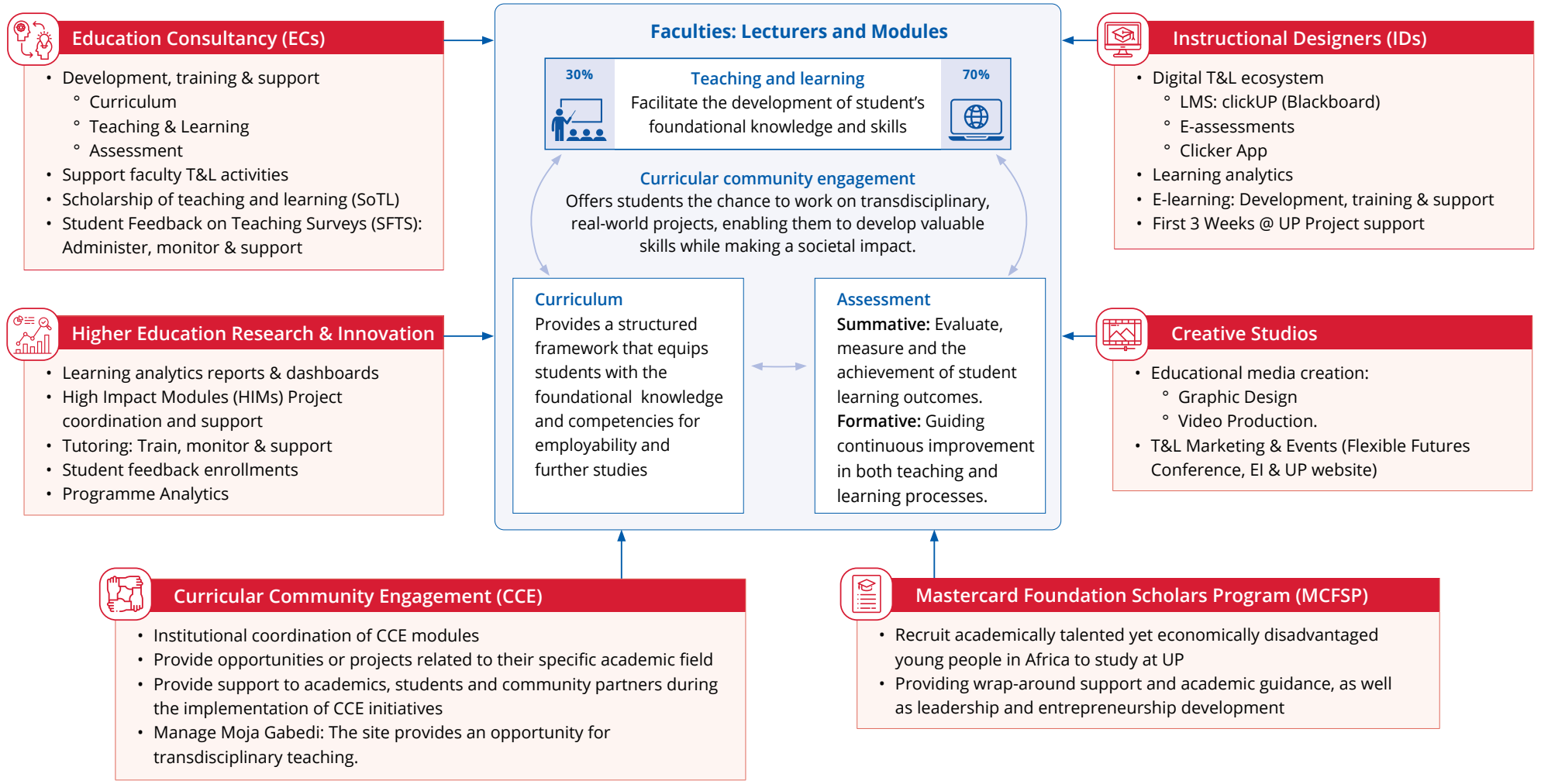


Figure 1: The Department's focus and structure within the University

3 The EI team

The Department has a team of 68 full-time experts in education, assessment, community engagement, instructional design, graphic design, videography, learner analytics, communication technology, educational research, student academic development, student success and wrap-around support. The various sectors collectively contribute to producing outstanding teaching and learning so that students are supported to succeed in their studies.

The Department, led by Professor Gerrit Stols, is divided into two sub-directorates, each overseen by its own deputy director. The Deputy Director of E-Learning and Media Development is Dr Dolf Jordaan, while Dr Rejoice Nsibande was appointed in 2024 as the Deputy Director for Academic Development. Ms. Daisy Ngwenya serves as the Senior Management Assistant. The unit heads include Ms. Elize de Waal (Operations Office), Ms Detken Scheepers (E-Education), Dr Juan-Claude Lemmens (Higher Education Research and Innovation), and Dr Eugene Machimana (Community Engagement). Mr. Almero du Pisani, the head of Creative Studios and Communication Technology, retired early in 2024. Since his retirement, Ms. Hettie Mans has been acting in his position. The position of Head of the Education Consultancy is vacant following the appointment of Dr Rejoice Nsibande as deputy director. Ms Faith Mathibedi has been appointed as acting head.

Dr Rejoice Nsibande, the Deputy Director of Academic Development, has oversight on the Education Consultancy, Higher Education Research and Innovation Team (HERI) and the Curricular Community Engagement Units. Through this integrated approach, the units under Academic Development have an opportunity to support the university in advancing teaching excellence, enhancing student access and success, and contributing to societal impact. The focus is on providing opportunities for continuous professional learning for academic staff, data-driven insights to enhance teaching practices and support curriculum design to create inclusive and impactful educational experiences, which include partnerships between the university and its local and national communities, creating experiential learning opportunities and addressing societal challenges.

Dr Dolf Jordaan serves as the Deputy Director of E-Learning and Media Development. In this role, he provides strategic leadership on e-learning policies and their implementation within a hybrid learning environment, overseeing the educational technology ecosystem to ensure alignment with institutional goals. His responsibilities encompass fostering pedagogical development, promoting innovative educational environments, and collaborating on national and international projects to enhance teaching and learning through data-driven strategies.

The OPS Office is spearheaded by Ms Elize de Waal, who leads a team of skilled and experienced staff in support of EI. The Senior Administrative Officer position is held by Ms Angela Bekker and Ms Lesego Mametse was appointed as Senior Administrative Assistant in 2024. Ms Gertrude Maepa is also assisting the office. The support of the Operations Office (OPS) is required in human resources, financial and logistical matters to ensure that EI functions optimally. The core mandate of this support unit within EI is to promote, encourage, and sustain the best administrative practices by consciously striving to increase effectiveness and efficiency. The Reception at the Hatfield campus provides a single point of control for the entrances to EI, gives information for first-line enquiries and receives deliveries. The Operations Office assists with all financial procedures, requests, and forms, as prescribed in the UP Policies and Procedures document. The OPS office offers a comprehensive service to the EI Department in coordinating and managing internal human resource functions and liaising with the Department of Human Resources (HR). The OPS office is responsible for all logistic and maintenance matters within EI.

The following diagram outlines the basic organisational structure of the Department for Education Innovation (EI):

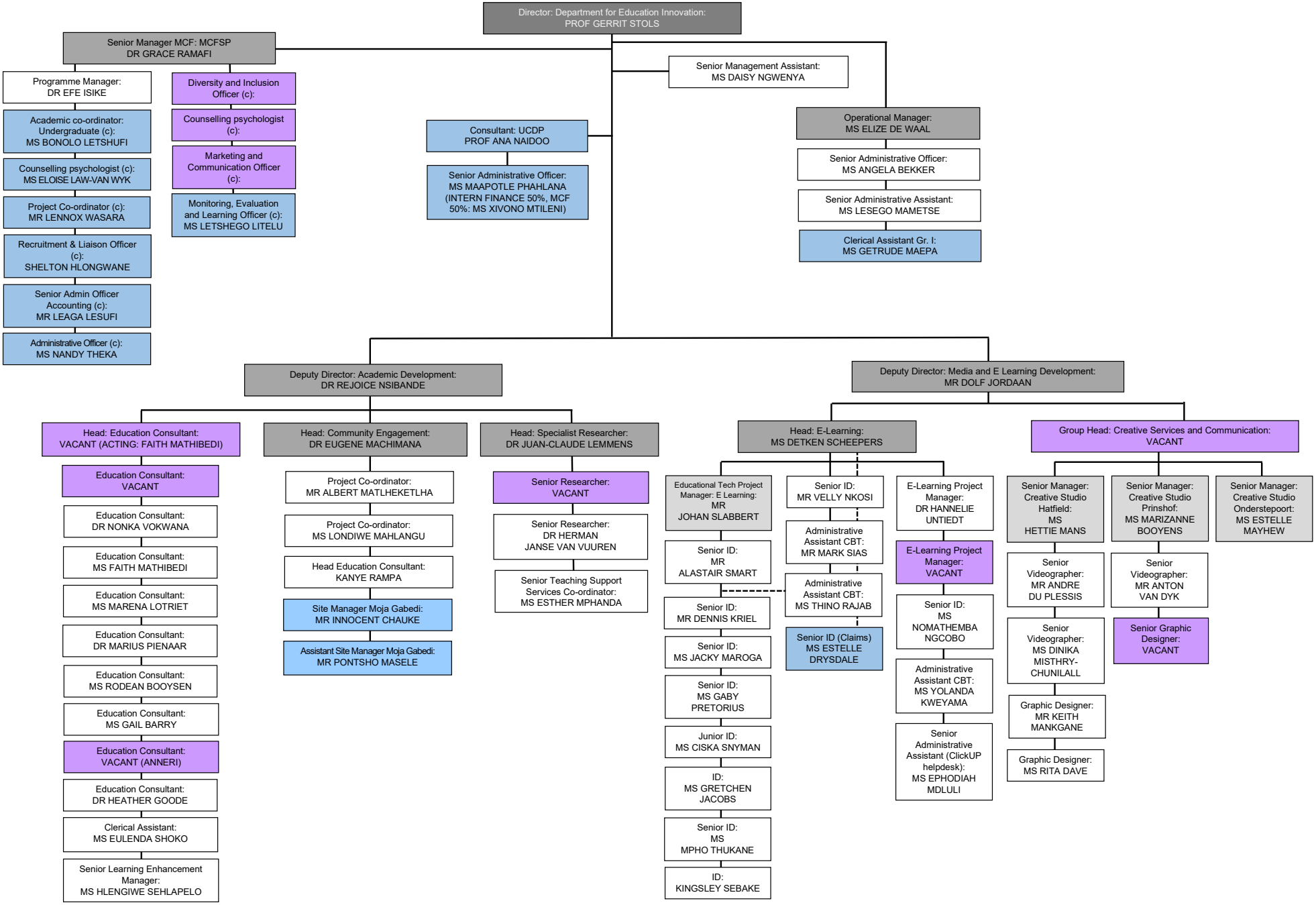
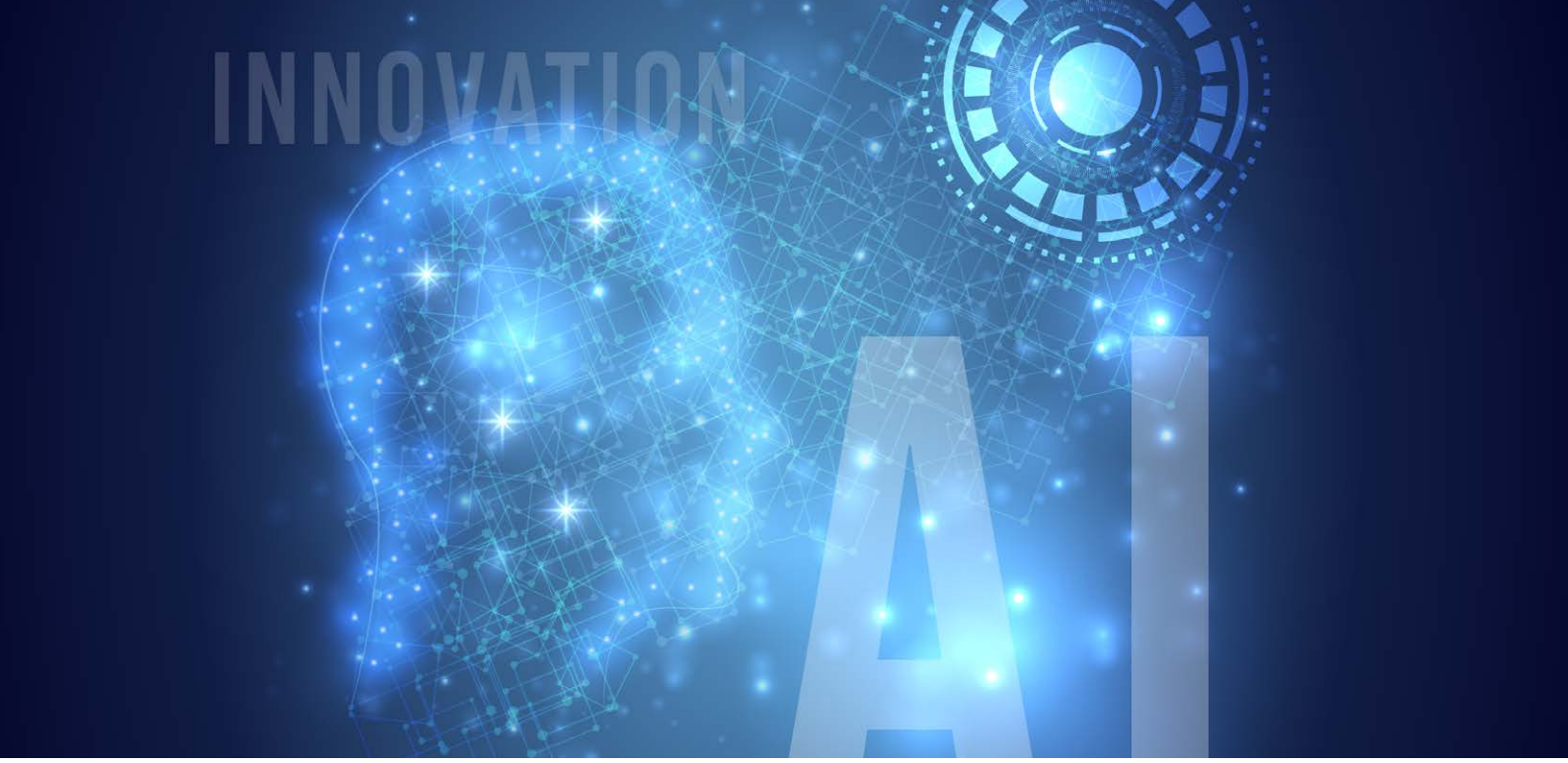


Figure 2: The organisational structure of the Department for Education Innovation (EI)



4 Teaching excellence and innovation

Teaching excellence includes thoughtful curriculum design, the development of suitable assessments, and the creation of an inclusive and engaging learning environment. Additionally, it involves pursuing ongoing professional development of lecturers to enable them to inspire and engage ALL students effectively, irrespective of the educational mode. At the University of Pretoria (UP), these practices align with the institution's strategies for student success, which incorporate integrating technology and using learning analytics to augment the educational experience. International collaboration on teaching and learning initiatives of various scopes and forms has been part of UP's offerings for many years. This has led to a community of practice (COP) for academics involved in global online teaching and learning. This community at UP meets twice yearly to learn from one another and share resources online.

Effective student learning requires a learning environment in which all students actively participate to take control of their learning. The Chronicle of Higher Education article explains how traditional teaching deepens inequality. Supiano[1] suggests a way to address it: 'Inclusive teaching has two main components: putting more structure into a course, giving clear instructions so that all students know what to do before, during, and after class; and thoughtfully facilitating class discussion so that everyone can participate'. This was confirmed in another large-scale study by Haak et al[2]: 'Our highly structured course significantly improved student performance in this broad-based comparison—but did so disproportionately for EOP [historically underserved] students'. They explained what they mean by putting more structure into a course: '...giving clear instructions so that all students know what to do before, during, and after class.' Active learning was promoted by using clickers to ensure that all students participated in class sessions and requiring all students to complete a weekly low-risk assessment. Preparation before class equalises students' readiness for class and enables all students to participate actively in class.

4.1 TEACH The UP Way

The hybrid teaching and learning model at the University of Pretoria, TEACH The UP Way, can be described as a technology-enabled, flipped learning approach that is inquiry-based and informed by data. This application of hybrid teaching and learning encourages students to prepare independently for each class and engage and critically discuss issues in class. If appropriately facilitated, this teaching and learning model promotes inclusive education that could address the needs of all students.

1 Supiano, B. (2018). Traditional Teaching May Deepen Inequality. Can a Different Approach Fix It? The Chronicle of Higher Education. https://www.chronicle.com/article/traditional-teaching-may-deepen-inequality-can-a-different-approach-fix-it/

2 Haak, D., HilleRisLambers, J., Pitre, E., & Freeman, S. (2011). Increased structure and active learning reduce the achievement gap in introductory biology. Science, 332, 1213-1216. https://doi:10.1126/science.1204820

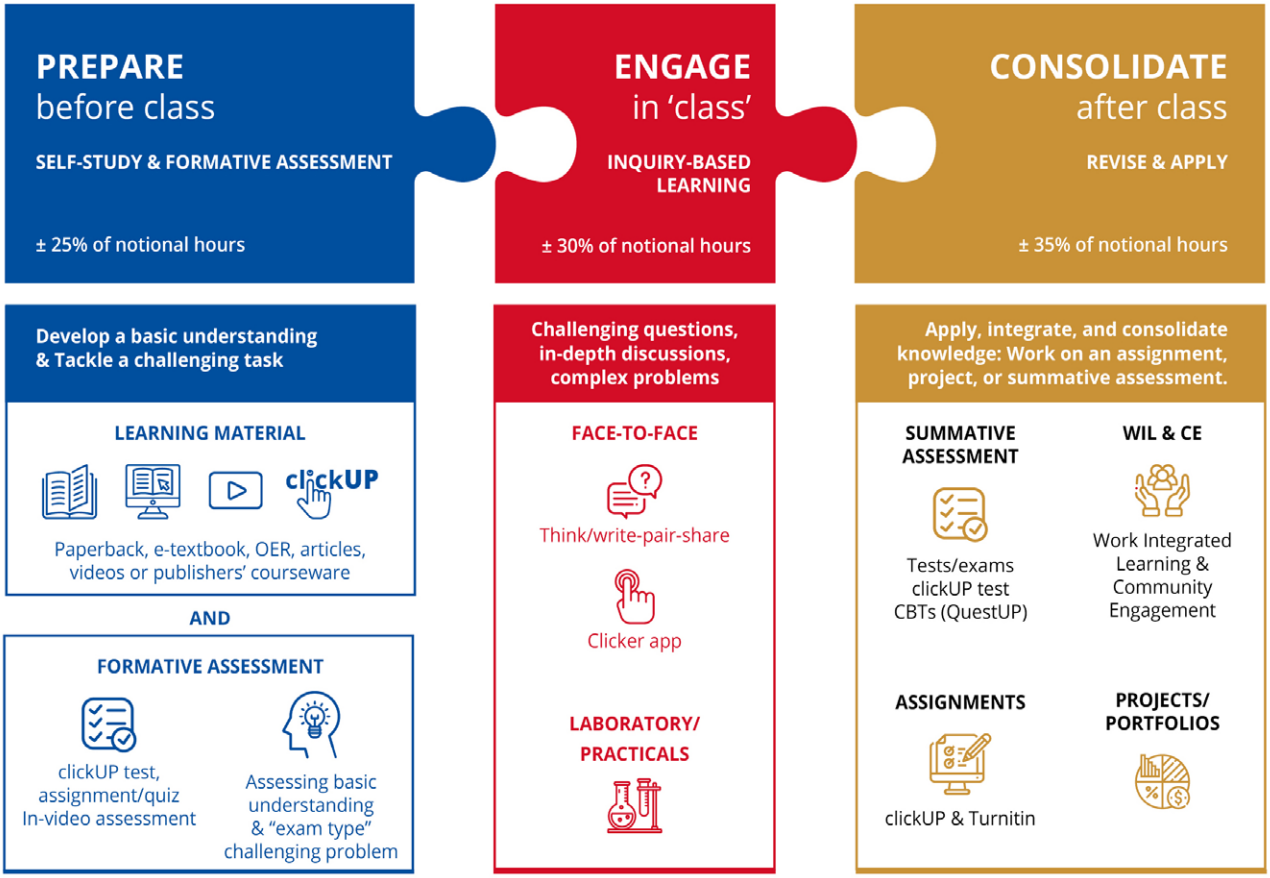


Figure 3: The University's flipped-learning methodology

This model gives students the best of both worlds - online and in-person - and will allow them to succeed at university and in life beyond university. In addition, this model will prepare a new generation of students to flourish in the world of work because it encourages students to take control of their learning, apply skills, solve complex problems, and, in the process, develop digital fluency.

Prepare before class

Quality instruction relies on students arriving to class well-prepared, allowing new teaching to build upon their existing knowledge. Students' preparedness for class can be achieved by thoughtfully combining pre-reading and formative assessment that incorporates productive struggle. Situating this preparation within a real-world scenario, case study, problem or inquiry could spark students' interest to engage with the pre-class activities. An explanation of how this preparation will be explored during class discussions may further enhance students' engagement during this phase.

Students can prepare for class using resources such as traditional textbooks, e-textbooks, PDF and MS Word files, videos, or publishers' learning systems. Formative assessments administered before class enable students to monitor their progress and help lecturers gauge students' understanding, allowing them to design instruction accordingly. These formative assessments not only assist lecturers in monitoring student comprehension but also empower students to take control of their learning, thereby preparing them for lifelong learning.

Productive struggle, failure, or friction are crucial elements of student struggle, which is a vital condition for brain growth, development, and learning[3]. Neuroscientific research has demonstrated that these experiences can help to strengthen neural connections and promote deep learning[4]. In a meta-analysis of 53 studies, Kapur and Bielaczyc[5] found that productive failure can effectively improve student learning in flipped learning environments. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating productive struggle, failure, and friction into educational practices to foster meaningful learning experiences and promote cognitive growth. Lecturers are thus prompted to incorporate at least one question of exam-level difficulty into the students' preparatory materials before class.

Technology offers powerful ways to assess student preparedness, such as online tests and in-video assessments. Lecturers can determine students' readiness for lectures through various methods, including having

3 Boaler, J., Munson, J., & Williams, C. (2022). The importance of struggle and mistake-making in learning. Frontiers in Education, 7, 946506. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.946506

4 Berridge, K. C., Robinson, T. E., & Aldridge, J. W. (2009). Dissecting components of reward: 'Liking', 'wanting', and learning. Current Opinion in Pharmacology, 9(1), 65-73. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.coph.2008.12.014

5 Kapur, M., & Bielaczyc, K. (2022). Productive failure: A meta-analysis of 53 studies. Educational Research Review, 35, 100428. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2021.100428

students complete a Blackboard assessment before class or embedding interactive quizzes into videos using H5P software, with results tracked in the clickUP Grade Center. These features are readily available in clickUP, the university's learning management system:

- Pre-reading & clickUP test/quiz (step sheets for clickUP Original and clickUP Ultra)
- In-video assessment (H5P): Embed interactive quizzes into videos and tracked students' results in clickUP Gradebook (step sheets for clickUP Original and clickUP Ultra).
- Publishers' courseware for some 1st year courses, e.g. Connect (McGraw-Hill), MindTap (Cengage), MyLab (Pearson).

4.1.1 Engage in class

Inquiry-based learning enables students to think, communicate, and justify their ideas. The information gathered from activities before class can and should be used to formulate a few challenging questions/ assignments that could lead to in-depth discussion. Research shows that inquiry-based learning motivates students, stimulates critical thinking, and creates opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of concepts. Interaction in face-to-face lectures can be achieved in various ways:

- Think-Pair-Share is a strategy in which students first think about a question independently. Then, they pair up to discuss their ideas before finally sharing their insights with the larger group.

Clicker Mobile App (step sheet): The Point Solutions Clicker App for smartphones/tablets is an interactive quiz platform designed to engage students in classroom activities. It enables students to respond to various question types and automatically records their results in the ClickUP Gradebook. The system's feedback also provides students instant feedback about their understanding anonymously and non-threateningly.

- Utilise data analytics on individual student performance and engagement in clickUP to facilitate timely interventions: Course Activity Report, Student Activity Details for Assessments, and Student Activity.

4.1.2 Consolidate after class

Students who need extra help can now access 24/7 support from AI tutors using various generative AI platforms. These AI tutors can provide a helpful student guide to the material. However, it's crucial to guide students on how to assess this support to ensure alignment with the module's models, theories, and practical applications. After class, it's important to give students opportunities to reflect on, integrate, and restructure their knowledge. This can involve:

- Preparing for an upcoming test or assessment
- Working on assignments
- Watching a recording of the lecture and reflecting on it
- Creating concept maps or summaries
- Project-based learning is another form of inquiry-based learning where students collaborate on a complicated interdisciplinary problem, inside or outside the classroom, over an extended period.
- Laboratory work and practicals support learning by allowing students to experiment, discover concepts, and develop teamwork skills. They also introduce students to work safety precautions.
- Work-integrated learning (WIL) integrates theory with practices from the work environment within a purposefully designed curriculum. It is compulsory for some professional qualifications at UP and plays a fundamental role in developing the competencies graduates need to enter the workforce.
- Curricular community engagement provides an in-depth learning experience for students and benefits the communities in which they work. It fosters skills in managing relationships, problem-solving, and civic responsibility, giving students a competitive edge when entering the workforce.

Many tools and approaches are available for assessing student learning, including technology-enhanced and online assessments. Some options include clickUP assignments, online tests through platforms like Cirrus (QuestUP), and Gradescope, which uses AI to group similar answers and allows instructors to grade each group simultaneously. Proctorio integrates with clickUP (Blackboard) and QuestUP (Cirrus Assessment) and uses machine learning and facial detection for secure remote exam proctoring.

4.2 Curriculum design and innovation

Curriculum design is crucial to teaching excellence, as it lays the foundation for effective learning experiences and student success. A well-designed curriculum ensures students acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to achieve desired learning outcomes. By aligning the curriculum with learning outcomes, ensuring coherence and sequencing, incorporating engaging content, employing diverse learning strategies, providing effective assessment and feedback, being flexible and adaptable, promoting inclusivity and accessibility, and continuously evaluating and improving the curriculum, lecturers can create a learning environment that fosters student success and prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century:

1. Alignment with Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes should be clearly defined, measurable and achievable within the given timeframe. By aligning the curriculum with these outcomes, lecturers can ensure that students have the necessary opportunities to develop the required skills and knowledge.
2. Coherence and Sequencing: The content and learning activities should build upon each other, progressively allowing students to develop their understanding and skills. This coherence and sequencing ensure that students connect meaningfully between different concepts and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.
3. Engaging and Relevant Content: The curriculum should include relevant and engaging content to promote student engagement and motivation. The content should be carefully selected to reflect the students'

interests, needs and backgrounds. Lecturers can make the learning experience more meaningful and applicable to students' lives by incorporating real-world examples, case studies and hands-on activities.

4. Assessment and Feedback: Effective assessment strategies should be aligned with the learning outcomes and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and skills. Regular formative and summative feedback helps students identify their strengths and areas for improvement, allowing them to make necessary adjustments to their learning approach.
5. Flexibility and Adaptability: Lecturers should be open to modifying and refining the curriculum based on student feedback, assessment results and emerging trends in the field. This flexibility ensures that the curriculum remains relevant and effective in meeting the learning objectives.
6. Inclusivity and Accessibility: The curriculum should be designed to accommodate diverse learners, including those with different cultural backgrounds, learning disabilities or special needs. By providing appropriate support, resources and accommodations, lecturers can ensure all students have equal opportunities to engage with the content and achieve their full potential.
7. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement: Lecturers should regularly assess the effectiveness of the curriculum through student feedback, assessment data and self-reflection. Based on these evaluations, necessary revisions and enhancements should ensure the curriculum remains relevant, engaging and effective in meeting the desired learning outcomes.

The Department for Education Innovation (EI) plays a crucial role in collaborating with Faculties to ensure curriculum design quality, coherence and alignment at both the module and programme levels. EI provides training and support to help lecturers translate curriculum intent into well-structured formal programmes. This may involve workshops, guidelines and resources on devising programme rationale, defining exit-level outcomes, aligning graduate attributes and assessment criteria, and calculating notional learning hours and credits. As explained, EI mainly ensures curriculum design quality, coherence and alignment at the module and programme levels. After this process, the Division of Institutional Planning (DIP) is responsible for managing all external registration of qualifications with the Department of Higher Education and Training Programme Qualification Mix (DHET PQM), the Council on Higher Education (CHE) for accreditation, and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for registration. They also manage the University of Pretoria's Programme Qualification Mix (UP's PQM). Whilst the Department of Enrolment and Student Administration's (DESA) primary focus is not on curriculum development regarding learning outcomes and alignment, they offer valuable guidance on other internal changes, such as credit allocations and ensuring the consistency of information already present in the yearbook. DESA plays a crucial role in managing internal changes to academic programmes through the use of Forms A and B. Form A is specifically designed for internal changes, such as name changes or shifting modules to different year groups, and follows a structured approval process through Teaching and Learning and Faculty Council meetings. DESA is well-versed in the content of the yearbooks and provides assistance to faculty members in completing these forms accurately.

At the module level, Education Consultants from EI work with lecturers to refine the module's purpose and description for the yearbook. They provide guidance on constructive alignment, ensuring that the module objectives, content and assessments are well-aligned and contribute effectively to student learning. Education Consultants also review the study guides and offer advice on assessment strategies. In the context of the HIMS Project, Education Consultants engage with lecturers to address key questions related to module design. They help lecturers clarify the primary objectives and outcomes of each module and ensure that these align with the overall programme goals. Education Consultants also assist in determining the appropriate topics to be covered in the module, optimising the sequencing of content to enhance student learning and understanding. They identify any redundant or unnecessary content and provide suggestions for streamlining the module for better efficiency and student engagement. At the programme level, Education Consultants advise on credit allocation and the progression of learning outcomes based on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels. For existing programmes, they assist lecturers in mapping module outcomes against the exit-level outcomes, ensuring a coherent and well-structured curriculum. For new programmes, Education Consultants help lecturers identify and define programme outcomes that align with the desired graduate attributes and assessment criteria.

Through collaboration with academics and cutting-edge educational technology tools, EI is well-positioned to drive meaningful curriculum innovation. The department aims to provide the technology platform for Faculties to drive the integration and effectiveness of micro-credentials and transdisciplinary approaches, streamline curriculum mapping and reporting, and ensure the alignment of course content and assessments with educational outcomes.

- One of the key focus areas for the department is implementing and managing the Anthology Milestones platform, which will support the delivery of micro-credentials and facilitate transdisciplinary education. This initiative aligns with the growing demand for flexible, skills-based learning opportunities that bridge the gap between academia and the workforce.
- Another critical aspect of the department's curriculum innovation work is using software for effective curriculum mapping and accreditation reporting. EI works closely with academic departments to map curriculum content to accreditation standards and learning outcomes, ensuring that programmes meet the requirements for accreditation. This process will involve thorough documentation and analysis of course content, assessments and student learning outcomes.
- EI leverages the Blackboard Goals tool to further align course content and assessments with educational outcomes. This tool will enable the department to manage and track the alignment of course content, teaching methods and assessments with intended learning

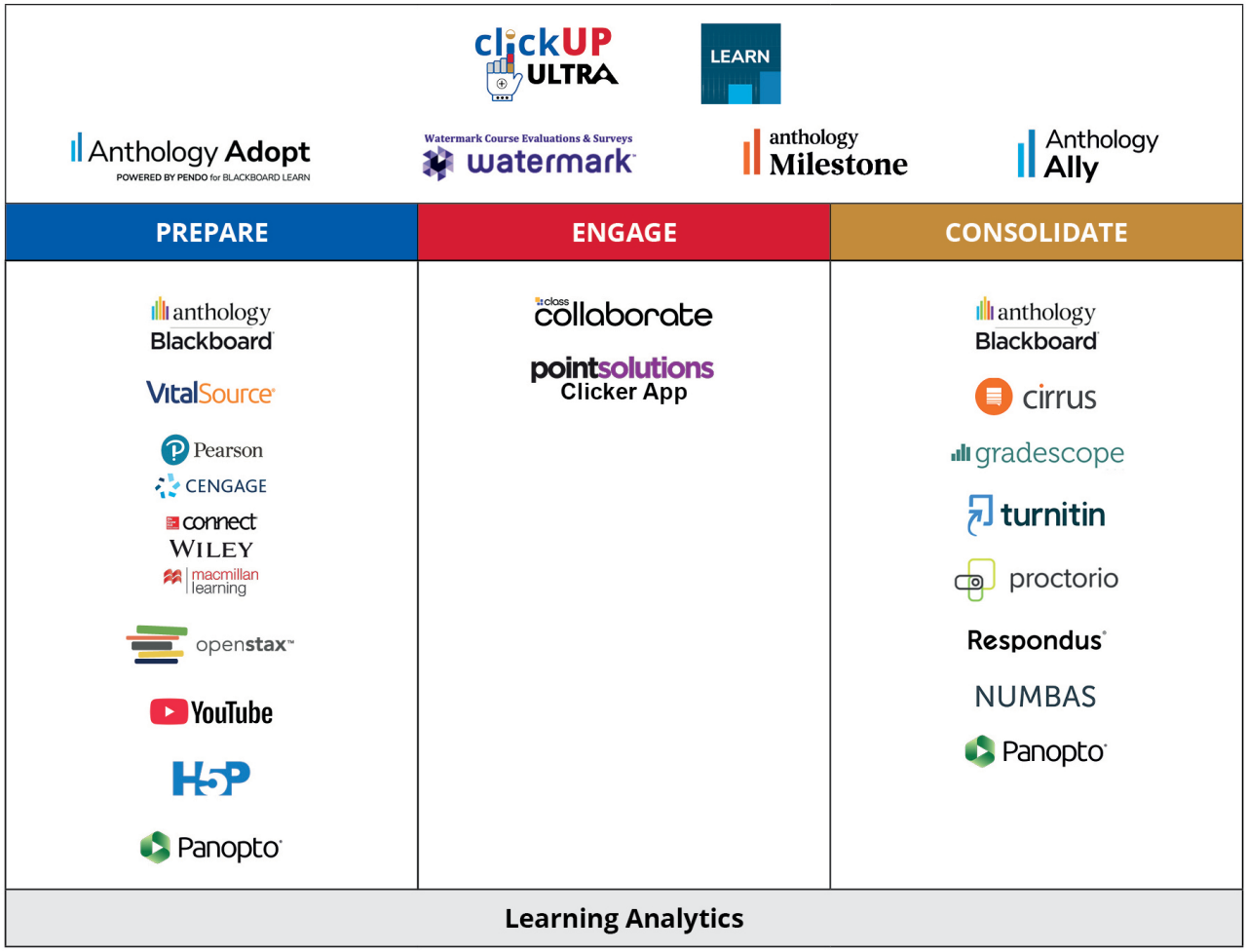
outcomes. By ensuring that assessments are robust, fair and aligned with course objectives, the university seeks to promote effective student learning and achievement. The department supports and trains academic staff in utilising educational technology tools for curriculum design and assessment, empowering them to develop and deliver high-quality, outcomes-oriented courses.

4.3 Educational technology infrastructure

The university integrates technology to enhance its teaching and learning methodologies. This approach enables the development of scalable, flexible, and active learning environments informed by data. At the core of the learning environment is Blackboard Learn as learning management system (LMS), called clickUP, and Blackboard Mobile, which serve as vital instruments for enabling hybrid learning. The following table summarises the University of Pretoria's current digital teaching and learning ecosystem:

Learning Management System, clickUP (Blackboard): In 2015, the University shifted from a locally hosted platform to a managed hosting environment. In December 2019, we adopted Software as a Service (SaaS), which enabled a continuous delivery environment. SaaS reduces downtime by permitting continuous updates with minimal or no disruption. In January 2020, we implemented clickUP Ultra Navigation. The University renewed its contract with Anthology (Blackboard) for another five years, beginning in 2021. The University of Pretoria (UP) is transitioning to clickUP Ultra, an updated Learning Management System (LMS) designed to enhance the teaching and learning experience. This phased implementation began in July 2023 with 14 lecturers and expanded to include all first-year courses in 2024. By 2025, the transition aims to encompass all undergraduate modules, including first-, second-, and third-year courses. ClickUP Ultra offers a modern, streamlined interface with simplified navigation and mobile-friendly access, aligning with universal design principles. It introduces new tools and features, such as streamlined grading, an updated grade book, and seamless integration with third-party applications, all supported by data-driven learning analytics to keep students engaged and on their path to success.

The University utilises Blackboard Mobile to provide students with greater access to learning materials across various devices. The clickUP app lets students view content and engage in courses using mobile devices. The app is compatible with iOS and Android devices, enabling students to access content, participate in discussions, join virtual Blackboard Collaborate classes, and view their grades through the Blackboard app. Before 2022, clickUP users had access to two separate mobile apps: the Blackboard Student App and the Blackboard Instructor App. However, in 2022, these two apps were combined, offering a user experience akin to accessing clickUP from a computer. The interface also adjusts according to the user's role within a course. One advantage for instructors is the capability to manage their courses through the updated app. In 2024,



several other modifications allowed students a similar user experience via the mobile app. The longitudinal undergraduate student average mobile activity data show interesting data that may indicate that students were more engaged on their mobile devices in 2024. It may also be an outcome of the improved user experience.

Students' preparedness for lectures can be determined or assessed in various ways. Formative assessments provide valuable information to lecturers that they should modify their teaching of the content to improve student learning. Technology enables us to assess student preparedness in many powerful ways. Students can complete a Blackboard assessment before class, while lecturers can now embed interactive quizzes into videos using H5P software and track students' results in the grade centre. These features are directly available on Blackboard.

Publisher courseware is integrated into clickUP: Publisher courseware utilises adaptive learning systems that tailor the learning experience according to each student's unique needs, determined by their responses to questions, tasks, and experiences. These courseware environments also offer electronic assignments that facilitate formative assessments, aiding students throughout their learning journey. Blackboard has broadened its content delivery services via collaborations with multiple publishing companies, with many academic departments benefiting from these international publisher partnerships. Leading the way, publishers devised courseware and customised adaptive learning platforms. In 2023, some publishers who supported instructors and granted students access to their content on clickUP included McGraw-Hill Connect and Create, Pearson's MyLab/Mastering, WebAssign/ Cengage/Mindlinks, and WileyPlus. The use of the publisher companies' content is visible in the figure below, which displays the average content item interactions per type in 2023.

- ***H5P (In-video assessment):*** The in-video assessment tool was introduced in 2020 to enhance the ability to conduct continuous assessments while watching videos during students' pre-class preparation. In 2024, new features and improvements were implemented, such as Flashcards in random order and numerous new content types and improvements, including new branching scenarios. Training sessions were offered as part of the e-education group's professional development portfolio. An online course on in-video assessment was also made available to assist lecturers in using the software. Since its integration into clickUP in 2020, the in-video assessment tool has been activated in 3,762 courses.

- ***Point Solutions Mobile Clicker app***: To encourage active learning, even in large classes, a student response system (Clicker app) captures individual student responses during class, automatically logging the results (grades) in the clickUP Grade Centre. The Point Solutions Mobile Clicker app enables students to answer multiple-choice questions. It can be employed in any virtual online session (e.g., Class Collaborate), accessible to students from any location. The mobile app's usage supplies instructors with data on class attendance (with integrated geolocation), student engagement, and student comprehension (formative assessment).

Creating opportunities for students to reflect, integrate, and restructure their knowledge after class is critical. This could include preparing for a summative assessment, working on an assignment, watching a class recording and reflecting on it, drawing a concept map, making a summary, working on a project, or applying knowledge to solve an integrated complex problem. Using different assessment approaches and strategies to assess the various learning outcomes during a particular course of study is always important – not only during challenging times or pending emergencies. A balance of formative and summative assessments over time, collected from multiple sources, provides a more authentic, reliable, and valid picture of the student's learning.

Online assessment platforms: A range of electronic assessment options facilitates regular evaluation and feedback for both formative and summative assessments. The University employs several systems, including QuestUP, clickUP, Turnitin, e-publishers' assignment tools, and Numbas. In 2022, the Cirrus Assessment system replaced QuestionMark Perception as the University's primary summative objective assessment system, known as QuestUP within the institution. It supports secure objective evaluation by generating reusable question banks and automating grading. Instructors also utilise numerous tools within clickUP to administer various assessment formats for grading diverse online activities, such as discussions, blogs, wikis, and journals, as well as managing assignment submissions and grading and setting objective assessment items. Turnitin confirms the originality of a student's work by identifying similarities between assignments and other documents. Its resubmission feature allows students to improve their academic writing through similarity checks and reports, learning to paraphrase, summarise, and cite sources as part of an academic argument. Publishers of various textbooks, like Cengage, McGraw Hill, and WileyPlus, offer electronic assignments that facilitate formative assessments, aiding students throughout their learning journey. The extended lockdown period significantly impacted e-assessment utilisation, leading to a considerable shift in online assessments towards the clickUP system.

- ***Proctorio:*** Lecturers are encouraged to create assignments that make cheating harder using more authentic assessments, such as case studies and original application questions. However, many ways exist to enhance online assessments, including proctoring systems. The University uses Turnitin and Proctorio to discourage plagiarism and cheating in an online environment. Proctorio integrates with both clickUP tests and Cirrus. It uses advanced machine learning and facial detection technology to deliver accurate and reliable exam proctoring. The AI and machine learning-based remote proctoring solution works through a Chrome browser extension. It can provide features such as video/ audio/screen recording, ID verification, and lock-down options with the ability to prevent content distribution. However, Proctorio was only used in a few courses in 2024.

- ***Gradescope:*** Classifying and grading tests and papers are time-consuming and require concentration and attention to detail. In addition to all the above-mentioned online tools, the University has acquired Gradescope to assist lecturers with this issue. Gradescope is a feedback and assessment tool that dramatically reduces the time and effort associated with grading exams, homework, and other assignments. This tool helps lecturers to administer and use AI to grade all online or in-class assessments. Gradescope's AI-assisted grading allows instructors to automatically group similar answers and grade all the answers in each group simultaneously. Gradescope supports the evaluation of Computer Science, physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, engineering, and economics assessments. It further enables instructors and graders to give better and more timely feedback.

- ***E-rater:*** Turnitin provides automated assistance with marking and developing students' writing proficiency. Another app, ePortfolios, allows students to create a library collection of single, large assignment files. Lastly, the Blackboard portfolio tool allows students to gather artefacts submitted in assignments across modules into a central, website-like environment. This tool allows students to share their portfolios with lecturers and download the final product to keep as evidence of their development during their studies.

- ***Cirrus Assessment (QuestUP):*** The University continued to use the Cirrus Assessment cloud-based, online Computer-Based Testing (CBT) system in 2023. This system enables students to write a test on any hardware that possesses an internet connection and browser. The system operates across any browser-enabled device, which opens the possibility of writing CBT tests on student laptops in an IT lab or lecture hall. Laptops could be secured with a lock-down browser to disable students' ability to move between screens while writing tests. It also allows students to write assessments off-campus.

- ***Turnitin****:* Turnitin is used to verify the originality of a student's work by detecting the similarity of assignments to other documents. The resubmission function in Turnitin allows students to develop their academic writing through the similarity check and report as they learn how to paraphrase, summarise, and cite documents as part of an academic argument. Turnitin (a similarity and plagiarism detection service) is also integrated into and available in clickUP to check students' assignments for inappropriate copying from each other or other online resources. The number of papers submitted to Turnitin has been increasing annually.

Watermark Course Evaluations & Surveys: Student feedback is essential to better classroom dynamics. Lecturers receive or even elicit quick, informal feedback or hold discussions with class representatives. Course evaluations are part of the formal requirements that allow students to give feedback on a module. The information generated specifically addresses teaching and learning issues. While the information obtained from student surveys can immediately assist lecturers in improving their curriculum design and delivery, such data are also crucial in compiling departmental and faculty reports on teaching and learning matters.

Pyramid: A few significant data enhancements were implemented in 2024. Through consultation with Deputy Deans, academic staff employment level was integrated into the data models to distinguish between senior and junior staff. Other enhancements to the existing perspectives include student GPA, appeal status data and ensuring students' e-mail accounts align with what is used in clickUP. The latest version of Pyramid, which includes new features such as AI, was installed in the second semester.

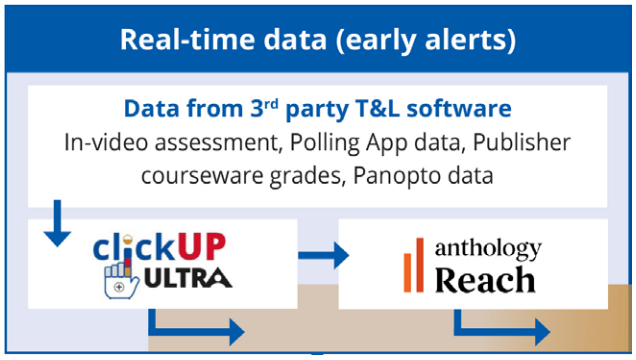
Impact software solution: In 2022, Impact change management software was introduced to offer contextual support within clickUP. This platform promotes digital transformation and adoption by providing LMS-integrated messaging and insights into technology usage. Utilising Impact assists in adopting clickUP by delivering contextual support for instructors and students and valuable data regarding users' engagement with clickUP features. It also enables users to submit support requests directly to the e-support office. Several campaigns were initiated to inform users about clickUP developments, including a campaign to encourage downloading alternative Blackboard Ally content formats, which reached 70% of users. The Impact Software will be replaced by Anthology adopt in 2024.

Anthology Ally: The University is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment by expanding students' access to educational resources. To further this goal, the department has integrated Anthology Ally, a software solution designed to optimise digital content for accessibility. This initiative aims to shape the institution into a more inclusive space for learning. Anthology Ally enhances the student experience by empowering students to interact with course content in ways that prioritise usability, accessibility, and quality. Ally integrates into clickUP, making digital course content more accessible to a broader range of students. It automatically checks digital files for accessibility issues. The software is particularly beneficial for students with learning disabilities and those who speak English as a second language, as it helps them to improve their academic performance. The software automatically scans digital files for accessibility issues and generates alternative formats like HTML, EPUB, audio, and electronic braille. Furthermore, Ally provides feedback to instructors, guiding them in making their course materials more accessible. Ally uses machine learning to translate English documents into 25 languages, including Xhosa, to cater to the diverse linguistic needs of the student body. The university's Department of African Languages has contributed to this initiative by assisting with the software translation for Zulu.

4.4 Learning analytics

The Department for Education Innovation (EI) plays a crucial role in effectively managing, promoting, and utilising data related to teaching and learning by leveraging the advanced data capabilities of clickUP (Blackboard Learn). Through data analytics, lecturers gain valuable insights into student performance, engagement, and learning patterns, empowering them to make informed decisions that enhance student outcomes and optimise educational effectiveness. By collecting, integrating, and analysing data from various sources, each lecturer can tailor their teaching to meet the specific needs of their students. The data sources include student engagement and assessment data from clickUP, student feedback, marks from electronic assessment platforms like QuestUP (Cirrus), in-video assessment marks through H5P, class engagement data via the Clicker App, and marks from publishers' courseware. The learning analytics enable lecturers to identify students who may require additional support, tutoring, or advising, allowing for proactive intervention. By leveraging these insights, lecturers can create scalable and personalised learning experiences and interventions, fostering an evidence-based approach to educational decision-making. This strategy empowers lecturers to refine their teaching methods, develop targeted interventions, and allocate resources more effectively, ultimately improving student success at the course level.

Lecturers can enable the Blackboard Analytics for Learn Student Report and make it available to students within each course. The aim is to provide a holistic overview of the intersection between student learning analytics and teaching analytics manifested in courses' pedagogical sound learning design.



clickUP data reports (see next page)	
Reports for students:	Reports for lecturers
• How Am I Doing? (Performance compared to other students) • Progress Tracking | Notifications	• Content Report | Course Activity Report • Course at-a-glance Report • Test analytics reports: clickUP & QuestUP • Teaching Analytics

4.4.1 Students' dashboards and alerts

Students can monitor their progress within clickUP. The clickUP notification settings enable students to receive alerts when their activity or grade falls below their peers, providing an automated process for self-monitoring. This feature encourages students to self-reflect and take ownership of their learning journey. Through clickUP, students receive push notifications via email and on the clickUP mobile application when new content becomes available, such as tests, assignments, or when they have unread blogs, journals, or discussion entries. Students have the flexibility to manage their user settings for these notifications, ensuring they receive the most relevant and timely information. The 'Activity Stream' page is a centralised hub for students to access important updates when they log into clickUP. This feature allows students to view notifications in a single location, streamlining the process of staying informed about their academic progress. Moreover, clickUP allows students to personalise their activity stream by selecting which notifications they wish to receive. This customisation enables students to focus on the most relevant information to their individual needs and preferences. The available notifications encompass a range of seven grades and activity alerts, including:

- 'No recent activity': This notification informs students when they have yet to actively participate in the course recently.
- 'Grade low or at-risk': Students receive this alert when their performance in a course falls below a certain threshold or is considered at risk of failing.
- 'Grade dropped or increased': This notification informs students about significant grades changes, whether they have improved or declined.
- 'Low course activity': Students are alerted when their overall engagement with a course is lower than expected or desired.
- 'Course activity in the top 10%': This notification recognises students who demonstrate outstanding participation and engagement in a course, placing them among the top 10% of their peers.
- 'Grade in the top 10%': Students receive this notification when their academic performance in a course is exceptional, ranking them in the top 10% of the class.

By offering these personalised notifications, clickUP empowers students to take control of their academic journey, providing timely insights and recognitions to support their success. By leveraging these personalised dashboards and nudges, students can stay informed about their progress, identify areas where they may need to focus more attention, and take proactive steps to enhance their academic performance. This student-centric approach fosters a sense of accountability and encourages students to actively engage with their learning materials, ultimately contributing to their overall success in their educational pursuits.

4.4.2 Lecturers reports and dashboards to identify at-risk students

The value of academic staff at the modular level remains a pivotal foundational principle for student success globally and at UP. Within clickUP, several embedded data functions enable lecturers to monitor students, identify, and support at-risk students: Course Activity Report, Student Activity Details for Assessments, and Student Activity. By leveraging the Gradebook, lecturers can track their student's progress using the following tools:

- Progress reports: This feature in the grade book displays all types of user activity and details of students' progress marks within the course, providing a comprehensive overview of student engagement.
- Analytics Alerts: Acting is an early warning system that allows lecturers to identify at-risk students and send automated messages. For instance, lecturers can use this tool to determine which students' progress grades changed and the missed due dates or days since the last access and reach out to them accordingly. The system sends activity stream notifications to students.
- Premium reports: Lecturers can generate various reports for their courses that track students' performance, including identifying at-risk students based on clickUP activity and grades.

clickUP offers a range of effective communication methods to connect with students, particularly those who may be at risk. Lecturers can easily make notes of their interventions with students, while the gradebook enables them to filter and select specific students and send contextual messages to them. With clickUP, lecturers can provide feedback to students and track their progress, empowering students to succeed.

4.5 Flexible Futures Conference

The Flexible Futures conference allows lecturers and researchers to share their experiences, insights, and innovative approaches to university education. By bringing together a diverse group of professionals, the conference facilitates the exchange of ideas and promotes academic collaboration. Attendees can learn from their peers, discuss challenges and solutions, and explore new pedagogical techniques. The conference inspires lecturers to adopt innovative classroom approaches by showcasing successful initiatives and research findings. This knowledge-sharing and expertise contributes to developing a vibrant teaching and learning community at the University of Pretoria. Moreover, the Flexible Futures conference provides a space for critical reflection on the future of higher education. As the educational landscape evolves, universities need to adapt and explore new models of teaching and learning.

The Department for Education Innovation hosted the 0th Flexible Futures Conference from 20-21 August 2024, at the Future Africa Institute, focusing on reimagining assessment in higher education. The conference featured around 60 presentations and sessions and attracted approximately 267 attendees. The event explored the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI), academic integrity, and innovative assessment strategies. As technological advancements like AI reshape assessment practices, the conference aimed to balance these developments with human expertise to ensure fairness, transparency, and enhanced learning outcomes. Sub-themes included balancing AI with human judgment, maintaining academic integrity, leveraging learning analytics, and exploring innovative and formative assessment methods. A highlight of the event was a panel discussion chaired by Alta van der Merwe, featuring Deputy Deans of Teaching and Learning. The panel delved into reimagining assessment in higher education, offering insights and strategies to navigate the evolving landscape.

Positive feedback and high ratings indicated the immense value attendees gained and their excitement for future engagements. The average rating for the usefulness of the conference was 4.57 out of 5, showing high participant satisfaction. From the feedback, 67.7% of respondents are inspired to present a paper at the next conference, and 95.4% are likely to attend the 2025 conference.

The conference featured distinguished speakers such as Prof Blaženka Divjak from the University of Zagreb and Prof Surette van Staden from the University of Innsbruck. Prof Divjak focused on leveraging learning analytics and design in the AI era, discussing how assessment can evolve to remain valid and reliable while embracing AI's potential. Prof Van Staden addressed the challenges posed by increased student numbers and the role of technology in maintaining quality feedback and assessment integrity in higher education.

A major discussion point was the integration of AI in assessments while ensuring academic integrity. Participants explored how AI can enhance assessment practices without compromising ethical standards. Other important themes included formative assessments for ongoing student feedback and the role of collaborative assessments in improving critical thinking. The 10th Flexible Futures Conference was pivotal in shaping the future of assessment at the University of Pretoria. By bringing together academics, researchers, and industry professionals, the conference fostered collaboration, innovation, and meaningful discussions to navigate the evolving education landscape in the AI age.

4.6 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) at the University of Pretoria addresses two core objectives. Firstly, it supports lecturers' professional development in discipline-specific teaching, particularly where learning challenges have been identified. Secondly, it enhances the student learning experience by improving student success and throughput. These objectives are achieved through the University of Pretoria's Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) from the Department of Higher Education and Training, which provides seed funding for SoTL projects. This funding empowers lecturers to become reflective practitioners, advance their teaching methods, and foster more meaningful student engagement in modules, disciplines, and programmes.

In 2024, the University awarded twenty-one SoTL grants, of which seventeen were research grants and four were innovation grants. Two recipients resigned during the year, and nineteen close-out reports were submitted. During this period, the SoTL Team introduced significant process improvements to strengthen the SoTL framework. These included updating the forms and documents for the upcoming 2025 cycle, hosting an information webinar, and co-hosting the first SoTL Community of Practice (COP). The COP offered a collaborative platform where participants shared insights, strategies, and experiences pertinent to SoTL.

The SoTL programme encompassed a diverse set of projects spanning Engineering, Health Sciences, Business, Education, Humanities, and the Sciences. These undertakings included smaller-scale pilot studies with 18 to 20 participants and larger initiatives that engaged more than 300 students. Most projects were implemented in 2024, while certain pilot programmes are planned for 2025 as a way to build upon findings and extend their impact.

Innovation in teaching and learning in 2024 was evident in the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and online simulations. Further enhancements involved developing peer-led learning communities, which proved highly effective in Engineering and Health Sciences, and boosting practical and experiential learning methodologies. There was also progress in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices, offering a more inclusive and holistic learning environment for students. Notable research outcomes this year included new approaches to gamification in tax education, implementation strategies for peer-led learning communities in high-impact modules, the integration of AI technologies (including GPT-4 and GPT-3.5-turbo) in medical education assessment, and the development of pre-service teacher training methodologies. Many of these findings were shared at the inaugural SoTL Community of Practice meeting. The impact and dissemination of SoTL projects were extensive, with multiple conference presentations

across various disciplines and several manuscripts currently under peer review. These projects contributed to curriculum transformation initiatives at the University, where technology was blended more thoroughly with traditional teaching practices to enhance students' learning experiences.

4.7 The UP 2 U Workshop

The 17th UP2U Conference, held at the Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, on 19 August 2024, focused on the evolving role of learning designers in higher education, particularly in authentic assessment and integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning. The conference aimed to explore how AI is reshaping traditional assessment practices and the support needed for academic staff to adapt to these changes.

The keynote address by Professor Gerrit Stols, Director of the Department for Education Innovation at the University of Pretoria, emphasised the need to balance technological advancements with human interaction in learning. He also focused on the evolving role of learning designers in higher education, particularly in the context of authentic assessment and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning.

The presentations covered a wide range of topics, focusing on the evolving role of learning designers in higher education, particularly in the context of authentic assessment and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning. Some of the focus points include:

- Multimedia's Role in Assessment: Several presentations explored how multimedia can enhance assessment practices, making them more engaging and effective for students.
- Navigating the Changing Educational Landscape with Learning Experience Designers: Presentations highlighted the importance of learning experience designers in helping academic staff adapt to new technologies and assessment methods.
- Balancing AI and Critical Thinking: Discussions focused on the impact of AI tools like ChatGPT on higher education assessments and the need to balance technological advancements with critical thinking skills.
- Supporting Academic Staff in Rethinking Assessment Approaches: Presentations focused on supporting academic staff as they rethink and redesign their assessment approaches in a blended learning environment.

- Leveraging Technology for Efficient and Effective Grading: Some presentations examined how technology can streamline grading processes, particularly for role-play and other interactive assessments.

The conference also addressed the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in higher education. Antonia Makina from the University of South Africa discussed how instructional design can be transformed to better integrate AI, while Salomien Boshoff from Akademia examined the impact of ChatGPT on higher education assessments. Additionally, Thamie Ndlovu from North-West University highlighted the role of Learning Experience Designers in navigating the changing educational landscape with AI.

The conference featured 24 presentations from representatives of various universities, including the University of Pretoria, the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Free State, North-West University, the University of South Africa, and Akademia. Overall, the 17th UP2U Conference provided a comprehensive overview of the current trends and challenges in higher education assessment, focusing on the integration of AI and the role of learning designers in supporting academic staff. The event fostered a collaborative environment for sharing ideas and best practices, ultimately aiming to enhance the learning experiences of both academic staff and students.

Feedback was received from 50 of the 74 attendees who participated both online and in person. The majority of the attendees were in person. Attendees appreciated the wide variety of topics covered, especially the sessions on AI in education. The conference was engaging and informative, providing a valuable learning platform. The overall organisation and smooth running of the event were highly praised.

Attendees also shared qualitative feedback of advice they received during the UP2U workshop, such as:

- "Assessment should align with the Learning Objectives and directly reflect and measure the learning outcomes."
- "Do not write off AI Tools because of their negatives, but learn the specific tool and experience it first hand."
- "AI is here, and there's no need to avoid it. When used correctly, it can be a useful tool."

Some attendees suggested improving student attendance tracking and linking it to their assessment performance. The feedback indicates that it is very likely that attendees will participate in the UP 2 U conference again in 2025.

4.8 Policies, Guidelines, Procedures, and T&L documents

The Department for Education Innovation (EI) has had a productive year, marked by significant strides in supporting and advancing teaching and learning (T&L) across the institution. A key focus has been the development and enhancement of critical T&L documentation, alongside the review and updating of policies, guidelines, and procedures to align with evolving educational needs and regulatory requirements:

- Teaching and learning policy (S5147/24)
- Procedure on student feedback on teaching survey S 5156/24)
- Procedure for selection of prescribed materials (S 5155/24)

EI updated the study guide templates to enhance alignment with the university's teaching and learning strategy and recent Generative AI and assessment developments. Additionally, we developed the Teaching Portfolio Template, which serves as a comprehensive tool for academic staff to document and reflect on their teaching practices, achievements, and contributions. Furthermore, the Peer Review at UP framework was established to foster a culture of constructive feedback and professional growth among educators, ensuring high standards of teaching excellence. To further streamline processes and enhance the quality of teaching, Student Feedback Module Enrolment Guidelines for Lecturers and Administrators were introduced.

Amidst the electricity shortage crisis in South Africa, we formulated the subsequent guidelines for lecturers and students:

- Load-shedding guidelines for lecturers
- Load-shedding guidelines for students

In anticipation of student or staff strikes, EI took proactive measures and created the following plans to enable a smooth transition to remote teaching, if required:

- UP Teaching Continuity for Lecturers
- UP Teaching Continuity for Students

ChatGPT raised the discussion on the impact of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education. It has disrupted the status quo globally in higher education as students have begun using it to write their essay submissions. It is essential for lecturers to carefully evaluate the benefits and limitations of these AI technologies, including potential ethical concerns, and to adapt their teaching and assessment strategies to align with the changing educational technology landscape. Therefore, EI developed guides to assist lecturers and students in comprehending the nature and potential use of ChatGPT:

- Lecturer's Guide: Leveraging Generative Artificial Intelligence for Teaching and Learning Enhancement at UP
- Student Guide: Leveraging Generative Artificial Intelligence for Teaching and Learning Enhancement at UP
- Using Generative AI@UP: A Two pager guide
- AI tutor guidelines for students (including a Tutorial 24/7 App)

5 The Education Consultancy Unit

The University of Pretoria has a unique staff development structure, with a dedicated Education Consultant (EC) assigned to each Faculty to support curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment initiatives. The Education Consultancy team consists of Acting Head, Ms Faith Mathibedi, Ms Marena Lotriet, Ms Rodean Booysen, Dr Marius Pienaar, Dr Nonkanyiso Vokwana, Dr Heather Goode, and Ms Gail Barry. Recent developments have impacted staffing: two ECs have resigned, and the former Head has been appointed Deputy Director of Academic Development. Processes are underway to make appointments to ensure that all faculties are supported. Efforts were made to manage workloads effectively and proactively maintain seamless faculty support. Following structural changes in the Department for Education Innovation, the Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS) section has been integrated into the Education Consultancy unit. Ms Hlengiwe Sehlapelo, the Senior Learning Enhancement Manager responsible for SFTS, is now part of the Education Consultancy team. Additionally, Ms. Eulenda Shoko provides essential administrative support to the team.

5.1 Background

The Education Consultancy unit provides strategic leadership and drives change in curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment innovation. Within faculties, under the guidance of Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning, ECs build relationships with schools and departments and serve on Teaching and Learning Committees (TLCs). They contribute to updating faculty policies, procedures, teaching-related documents, and curriculum development. Individual lecturers are supported on request to enhance their teaching practice. Education Consultants (ECs) support teaching staff in engaging in ongoing professional development, experimentation, and reflection on practice. The latter is supported through SFTS and peer reviews of lectures. The focus of professional development support is career-staged aligned with the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers. ECs contribute to the university's efforts in realisation of the six imperatives for enhancing academics as university teachers, which include

1. enabling continuous professional development (CPD),
2. establishing and maintaining university teacher development structures, organisations, and resources,
3. ensuring that academics are recognised and rewarded for their work as university teachers,
4. advance university teaching through leadership development,
5. promoting knowledge production and knowledge sharing about university teaching and learning, and
6. developing expectations of academics in their role as university teachers.

The Education Consultants (ECs) actively contribute to institutional initiatives, including participation in task teams focusing on Curriculum and Differential Student Success, Global Online Teaching and Learning, and Policy Development. Additionally, some team members engage at a national level, such as through their involvement in the Council on Higher Education's Community of Practice (HEPS) for Modes of Provision, which has been shared for public comment.

5.2 Overview of the 2024 activities

5.2.1 Professional development

The University of Pretoria (UP) recognises the importance of professional development in enhancing academics' scholarly competence and pedagogical proficiency. This aligns with the university's mission of fostering a dynamic learning environment, steeped in research-informed teaching and enriched by the appropriate utilisation of pertinent technologies. The Education Consultants (ECs) offer a range of institution-wide workshops and priority courses, emphasising the university's commitment to nurturing academics as teachers and fostering a culture of continuous professional development.

All newly appointed full-time and part-time lecturers begin their professional development journey with a comprehensive Academic Induction Programme. This induction familiarises the academics with the relevant infrastructure and support systems in place to foster teaching excellence and advance the scholarship of teaching and learning. Following the induction, each lecturer is expected to engage in continuous professional development activities. The tables below show lecturer participation in both institution-wide and faculty-specific professional development courses.

Table 1: Institution-wide courses offered by the Education Consultancy Unit

Course Title	N=sessions presented	N= attendees
Academic Induction Program (530)	2	119
Accountable Assessment Part 1: Foundation Assessment (A23AAF)	2	8
Accountable Assessment Part 2: Assessment Principles in Practice (A23AAP)	2	7
Curriculum Design and Development (T23CDD)	2	22
Feedback to Students (T21FDB)	2	23
Learning Theories for the Digital Age (T21LTD)	2	28
Objective Assessment (A21OBA)	2	22
Rubric Design (A21RUD)	2	8
Smart Marking for Teaching Assistant (A22SMA)	4	152
Study Guide (T21STG)	2	40
Teach with Learning in Mind (T23TLM)	2	10
Teaching in Different Modalities (T23TDM)	2	5
Teaching Portfolio (D22TPO)	4	46
Teaching Students to Question (T23TSQ)	2	6

In 2023, the growing demand for peer reviewers to conduct class observations highlighted the need to expand the available pool of reviewers. In response, the Education Consultants (ECs) proposed and developed a Peer Reviewer Workshop aimed at senior lecturers responsible for class observations. The pilot workshop, attended by 34 participants, was successfully facilitated and received positive feedback, indicating its value to participants. Following its success, the workshop was reviewed and incorporated into the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course list for 2025 (The full Professional Pedagogical Development Course List for 2025 is accessible here).

In addition to institution-wide courses, the ECs also facilitated various faculty-specific sessions, in some cases collaborating with faculty staff. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of sessions conducted within each faculty.

Table 2: Faculty-specific training

Faculty	Training offered	Facilitator/s or Coordinator/s	Date	N=Attendees
Engineering Built and Information Technology	INNOVIL (all)	Gail Barry	Jan/Feb	118
	Tutors	Gail Barry	Jul/Aug	53
	Information Science	Gail Barry	April	8
	Town and Regional Planning	Gail Barry	May	8
	Town and Regional Planning	Gail Barry	June	7
	Construction Economics	Gail Barry	August	12
Economic and Management Sciences	EMS Brown Bag presentation - entitled Think Before You Sync: Defining, Developing and Assessing Critical Thinking in EMS.	Heather Goode	June	20
	Dept of Taxation workshop on large class engagement	Heather Goode	September	11
	EMS T&L Day Teaching with AI	Heather Goode	October	120
Health Sciences	Workshop: Developing CT in Hons	Heather Goode	November	10
	Portfolio workshop	Marena Lotriet & Marius Pienaar	February	18
	H5P workshop for Microbiology	Alfred Hlabane	March	10
	Gamification workshop for Microbiology & Virology	Marius Pienaar	June	5
	Workshop for Critical Thinking and Critical reflection for HS Curriculum task team	Heather Goode	May	5
Humanities	Taking UP Teaching x2	Marena Lotriet	Feb/July	22
	Tutor training x4	Marena Lotriet	Feb/March/August	116
	Get-together (+ discussion) for Humanities lecturers who attended the February AIP	Marena Lotriet (coordinator)	May	3
	Humanities T&L Discussion Forum: "You can't say that!" - Dealing with Student Conflict in Class	Marena Lotriet (Coordinator)	May	26
	Humanities T&L Discussion Forum: AI Ideas Hub	Marena Lotriet	August	25
	T&L Information session: App demonstration	Bonza Majozi	June	27
	AI in Higher Education (Department of Sociology)	Heather- Goode & Gail Barry	August	7
Mamelodi Campus	Transition Pedagogy: developing the ECP framework	Faith Mathibedi	March	11
	Accommodating student diversity in the teaching and learning environment	Faith Mathibedi	June	14
	Teaching and Learning Day: Fostering motivation and engagement.	Faith Mathibedi & Prof Peet du Toit	November	8

Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Curriculum: Backwards Design	Marena Lotriet & Nonkanyiso Vokwana	February	15
	Framework for Conceptualisation of excellence in teaching	Nonkanyiso Vokwana & Ina Louw	February	40
	Pedagogy as an aspect of excellence in teaching and learning	Nonkanyiso Vokwana	April	18
	Curriculum Enhancement	Nonkanyiso Vokwana & Prof Paulette Bloomer	November	27
	Induction Lite	Nonkanyiso Vokwana& Ina Louw	Feb, May & July	32
	Chemistry Tutor Training X2	Nonkanyiso Vokwana, Faith Mathibedi & Alfred Hlabane	July	47
	Curriculum workshop for the Biochemistry Department	Nonkanyiso Vokwana	December	11
	Strategies to Design for Critical Thinking in Programme Design	Nonkanyiso Vokwana & Prof Gordon Uno	Jan	49
	Exploring Student Support from a Humanistic Pedagogy Perspective	Nonkanyiso Vokwana & Dr Kgadi Mathabathe	August	17
Theology	Customised orientation programme for part-time lecturers	Marius Pienaar	May	6
Veterinary Science	Curriculum Development: Backwards Design (to Assessment Committee)	Marena Lotriet & Elmarie Mostert	April	16
Education	Pre-University Academy Workshop on Cooperative & Collaborative Learning	Marena Lotriet & Marius Pienaar	January	16
	Group work Assessment seminar for the Department of Humanities Education	Marius Pienaar	August	20

5.2.2 Professional learning for non-permanent staff with teaching responsibilities

Whilst there are well-established opportunities to support permanent academic staff, little to no support has been provided for the professional learning of contract or part-time staff with teaching responsibilities. This year, several professional learning initiatives were introduced in faculties, including Humanities, Theology and Education. Plans are underway for other faculties, such as Veterinary Science and Law, to implement their orientation programmes in 2025. These programmes are tailored to the specific context of each faculty.

5.2.3 Peer Review of Teaching

Class observations offer a valuable opportunity for continuous professional learning and growth. Education Consultants (ECs) provide comprehensive feedback through detailed reports and personalised discussions with each lecturer, fostering reflective practice and targeted professional development. Creating a supportive and collaborative environment that encourages open dialogue, mutual respect, and actionable insights is essential to ensure the process is impactful and meaningful.

The table below captures the number of class observation conducted per faculty. Class observations were conducted by the EC responsible the faculty, however, there were instances where colleagues had to provide support. This was the case when the volume of requests was high and in Health Sciences because a new EC has not been appointed yet. The numbers captured in the table exclude class observations conducted by peers in the respective disciplines.

Faculty	Total number of lecture observations
Engineering Built and Information Technology	49
Education	11
Economic and Management Sciences	33
Health Sciences	41
Humanities	23
Law	2
Natural and Agricultural Sciences	21
Theology	2
Veterinary Science	2

Guidelines are in place for peer reviews to ensure that the process is conducive for both the Education Consultants and the lecturers whose teaching is reviewed. Adherence to these guidelines supports the professional development agenda of the practice.

5.2.4 Teaching Awards

Teaching awards are vital in recognising and rewarding academics' exceptional contributions as university teachers. These awards acknowledge individual achievements and foster a culture of teaching excellence within the institution. The University of Pretoria presents several prestigious teaching awards, including the Teaching Excellence Award and the Community Engagement Award, which recognise academics who have exhibited outstanding teaching skills, pioneered innovative pedagogical approaches and demonstrated a strong commitment to student learning. By celebrating these individuals, the university emphasises the significance of teaching and inspires other academics to pursue excellence in their teaching practice.

The impact of these awards extends beyond the individual recipients, serving as an inspiration to other academics within the university. This creates a positive ripple effect throughout the institution, encouraging more academics to strive to deliver high-quality learning experiences to their students.

The Education Consultants provide guidance and support to lecturers in preparing their teaching portfolios for Teaching and Learning award applications. In some cases, Education Consultants have also contributed to processes to improve Teaching and Learning Awards in faculties. For example, in Humanities, the Education Consultant contributed to the conceptualisation of the Humanities Teaching Excellence Awards, focusing on new approaches and criteria, and the number of awards presented. This also included the Student Choice Teaching and Learning Awards, which was awarded for the first time to a lecturer in Humanities. The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences also reconceptualised its Teaching and Learning Awards to clarify the focus, eligibility and criteria.

5.2.5 Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS)

The University of Pretoria is committed to improving teaching and learning by regularly soliciting student feedback on teaching. As important stakeholders, students' experiences are regularly sought to inform the quality of teaching in modules and learning programmes. The Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS) aims to allow lecturers to collect feedback, among other sources (peer review, class observation reports, etc.), regarding their teaching. Reflecting on the SFTS reports assists lecturers in continuously improving their teaching, learning and assessment practices, curricula and the general quality of the modules they teach. In this case, student feedback provides insights that lead to understanding the success of and gaps in teaching interventions to facilitate student success. SFTS reports and lecturer reflections are also used in performance reviews and as part of applications for promotion.

In 2024, eight SFTS cycles (flexible and fixed) were administered. The table below captures the participation trends in terms of module enrolments, lecturers involved in the process and student response rates across the two semesters.

Project_2024	Modules	Lecturers/cycle(unique)	Lectures/cycle (all)	Respondents	Enrolments	% Response rate
Quarter 1 _2024	8	8	9	178	644	27,64%
ENDQ1/MIDSEM1_2024	241	287	414	10736	46147	23,26%
Quarter 2_ 2024	65	90	142	1912	6301	30,34%
ENDQ2/ENDSEM1/MIDYR_24	572	757	1090	28921	101471	28,50%
SoM-SEM1_2024	24	156	198	1566	4996	31,35%
1st Semester Total_24	**910**	**1298**	**1853**	**43313**	**159559**	**28,22%**
Project_2024	**Modules**	**Lecturers/cycle(unique)**	**Lectures/cycle (all)**	**Respondents**	**Enrolments**	**% Response rate**
Quarter 3 _2024	21	39	48	513	3478	14,75%
ENDQ3/MIDSEM2_2024	492	515	875	8717	66882	13,03%
Quarter 4_ 2024	49	126	178	884	6967	12,69%
ENDQ4/ENDSEM2/ENDYR_24	533	743	1121	14295	84843	16,85%
SoM-SEM2_2024	23	154	179	785	3877	20,25%
2nd Semester Total_24	**1118**	**1577**	**2401**	**25194**	**166047**	**15,51%**
1st & 2nd Semester Total	**2028**	**2875**	**4254**	**68507**	**325606**	**21,87%**

5.2.6 Global Online Teaching and Learning at UP

The University of Pretoria has a long-standing tradition of international collaboration in teaching and learning. These efforts have culminated in the establishment of a Community of Practice (COP) for academics engaged in global online teaching and learning. The COP meets twice a year to exchange ideas, share resources, and foster collaboration. The COP currently encompasses 36 reported projects involving 49 UP lecturers and 91 international lecturers from 30 countries.

In 2024, the COP, convened by Education Consultant Ms Marena Lotriet, hosted two key sessions. The first session, held on 3 June, centred on the theme "We and the others in war and peace – broadening world views and enhancing critical thinking in Arts Education." Prof Riata Steyn from the Faculty of Education highlighted collaborations between UP Arts Education students and their counterparts at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, showcasing projects such as Banners for Liberty, We and the others (addressing stereotypes on albinism), and Horrors of War, Hopes for Peace (exploring conflict and resolution).

The second session, held on 13 July, focused on "The Value of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Projects in Building & Sustaining Global Partnerships." This gathering coincided with the EMS T&L Brown Bag event and featured a presentation by Prof Mourad Dakhli. Drawing on his extensive experience in COIL and Virtual Exchange (VE) projects, Prof Dakhli discussed their role in developing competencies and strengthening international partnerships.

Ms Lotriet also contributed to broader discussions on COIL and global online teaching and learning through presentations to various audiences. These included a session during the University of Leeds visit in April, a presentation to the Senate Committee for Internationalisation and Globalisation in June, and an invited presentation to the UNISA Research Office. These activities underscore UP's commitment to advancing global engagement and collaboration through innovative teaching and learning practices.

6 The e-Education Unit

The E-Education Unit, led by Detken Scheepers, consists of e-learning project managers, instructional designers, CBT assistants, and a clickUP Helpdesk administrator. The project managers oversee activities in e-learning professional development, computer-based testing (CBT), support, and multimedia or application development. Team members are typically involved in at least one of these areas in addition to providing instructional design support to their allocated Faculty. A decentralised service delivery model allows the unit to support all nine faculties across the Hatfield, Prinshof, and Onderstepoort campuses, while a hybrid model provides services to the Mamelodi and Groenkloof campuses from Hatfield.

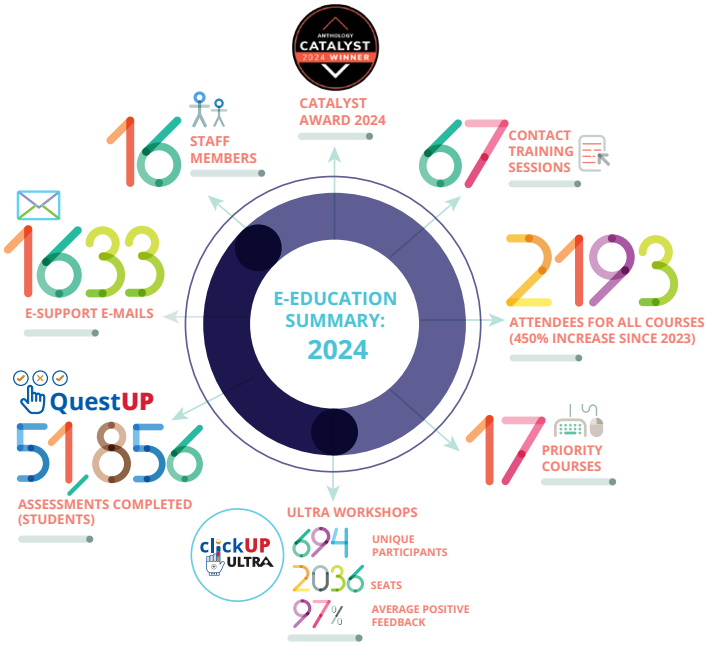
At the end of February 2024, Erika de Bruyn retired, and an executive decision was made to transfer her position to the academic sector. This had significant operational implications, particularly for the Faculty of Health Sciences, where she was based. To address clickUP and CBT support challenges and mitigate potential risks to student assessments, Gretchen Jacobs, who previously supported the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies through the e-Support Office, transitioned to replace Ms. de Bruyn. As a result, Ciska Snyman took on the responsibility of supporting the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies.

Due to a steady decline in demand, the student clickUP walk-in office at the Faculty of Health Sciences was closed. Ephodiah Mdluli was reassigned to the Hatfield campus to manage the e-Support clickUP desk, which Gretchen Jacobs had previously handled.

The retirement of Dr El-Marie Mostert at the end of 2023 created an additional gap within the team. This position was fully integrated into the Educational Consultancy Group, with her e-learning responsibilities redistributed among the Head of the E-Education Unit and members of the CBT team.

Farewell function of Ms Erika De Bruyn

These staffing changes and position losses significantly burdened the remaining team members. Those providing CBT support to the Faculty of Health Sciences often worked extended hours, including weekends and vacation periods, to manage the increased workload. The situation was further exacerbated by serious health challenges faced by six members of the E-Education team in 2024, underscoring the urgent need for improved work-life balance and additional resources to support the team effectively.



E-education summary: 2024

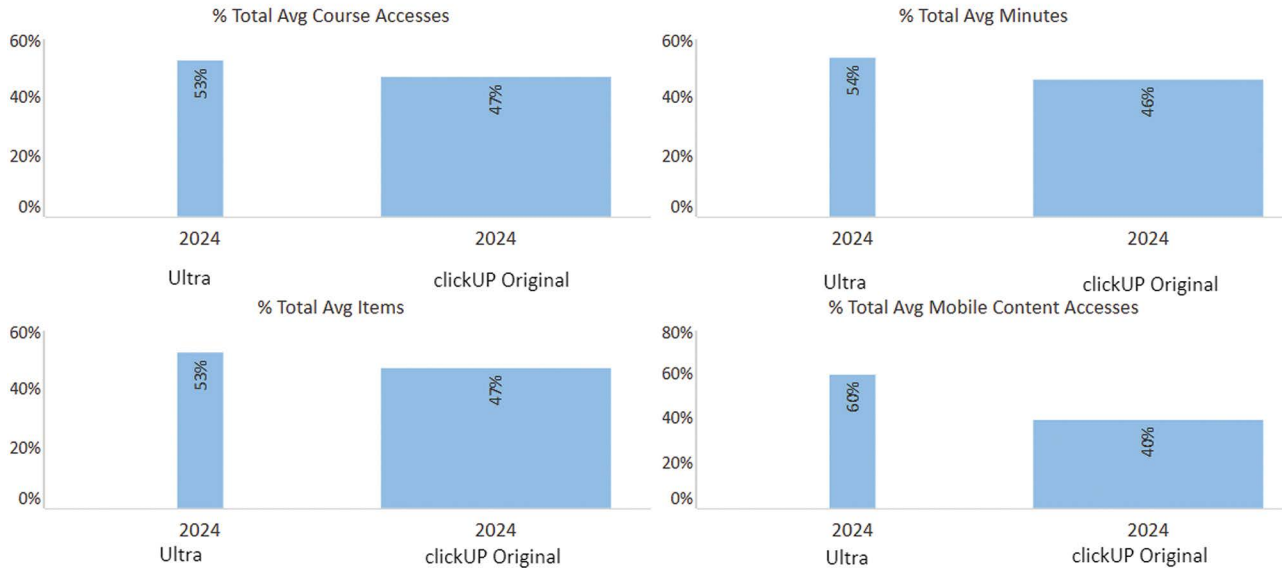
6.1 Background

The e-education unit provides change management, professional development and innovative leadership to build the University's capacity to implement a hybrid approach. They implement, monitor and evaluate the university's teaching, assessment, learning platforms, systems and policies. Additionally, they implement upgrades to existing and new educational technology.

Implementing these upgrades requires significant time and ongoing changes due to the upgrades in institutional software. Successes in using educational technologies would not have been possible without extensive staff development and the timely and efficient support provided to lecturers, administrative staff and sometimes even students. This support requires frequent consultation with other professional and support services departments and technical support staff from suppliers.

6.1.1 E-Learning Professional Development Courses

The e-education team implements various strategies to foster lecturers' independence in using institutional e-education systems. Continuous professional development is vital to this initiative, as it equips lecturers to effectively use tools like clickUP, Turnitin, and QuestUP. Training is delivered in various formats, such as priority courses (facilitated and self-paced online) and on-demand individual training. The offering is set out in a booklet that provides detailed information on workshop descriptions, topics, and outcomes.



The clickUP Ultra Workshops cover a comprehensive range of topics, including Overview, Content, Engagement, Assessment, Grading and Gradebook, Administrators, Smart Marking for Teaching Assistants Part 2, E-tutoring and Resources for Tutor Coordinators. The impact of these courses on student engagement is illustrated in the following figure. The data indicate that, although only about 30% of all undergraduate courses were conducted in the Ultra format, students enrolled in these courses demonstrated higher engagement levels than those using the original clickUP platform. Notably, students enrolled in Ultra courses have a significantly higher percentage of mobile usage.

Turnitin training encompasses an introduction to the platform and specific grading and feedback sessions. Additional courses include Trendy Tools for Cool Lectures, Narrated PowerPoints, In-Video Assessment (H5P), Clickers (Point Solutions), Class Collaborate and E-Learning for Academics. For QuestUP (Cirrus Assessment), the training focuses on Questions and Marking and Assess and Deliver functionalities.

6.1.2 clickUP course for First-year Students

The aim of the clickUP introductory online self-paced course is to familiarise all new students with clickUP (Blackboard, the University's LMS). We encourage students to register as early as possible in the year to complete the course. The course has built-in exercises that simulate activities such as uploading Turnitin assignments. Students can also work through the resources available on the clickUP Student Help Site before and after being formally registered. Some of the valuable resources on the clickUP Student Help Site include instructions on how to log in to clickUP and navigate the system, use Blackboard Class Collaborate and the discussion board, submit Turnitin assignments, and set up a university email address.

6.1.3 E-assessment

A range of electronic assessment options facilitates regular evaluation and feedback for both formative and summative assessments. The University employs several systems, including QuestUP, clickUP, Turnitin, e-publishers' assignment tools, and Numbas, to support the various assessment strategies that lecturers may follow. The e-education team provides consultation, training and support services for QuestUP, clickUP, Turnitin and H5P.

6.1.4 Comprehensive support and resources

Lecturers can access extensive support for clickUP on the clickUP Original Help Site and the clickUP Ultra Help Site. Similar support is available for the QuestUP system on the QuestUP Help Site. The content is organised into sections that contain step-by-step instructions and/or videos to guide users through the various Learning Management System processes. Users can browse sections sequentially or use the search bar for quick access to information.

For additional assistance, the E-Education Unit offers an e-support office that is staffed by two dedicated team members who handle the administrative side of e-learning, whilst instructional designers provide more specialised educational support and guidance.

6.1.5 System upgrades

Educational technologies are evolving at an unprecedented pace due to agile development methodologies, which prioritise frequent updates, iterative improvements and user-centred design. Unlike traditional development cycles, which often resulted in slower, static updates rolled out over extended periods, agile approaches allow for rapid responses to user needs, technological advancements and pedagogical trends. This dynamic environment ensures

that educational tools remain relevant, functional and aligned with the evolving demands of modern teaching and learning. However, it also requires educational institutions to adapt quickly, stay informed about ongoing changes and continuously train staff to leverage these technologies effectively. The shift from slower development cycles to agile practices has fundamentally transformed how educational technologies are integrated and maintained in academic environments.

6.1.6 Implementation of New Educational Technology

The e-Education Unit is pivotal in ensuring that the University remains at the forefront of teaching and learning innovation by actively scanning the environment for emerging educational technologies. By identifying and evaluating new tools and platforms, the unit ensures that the institution can adapt to evolving trends, meet the diverse needs of students, and create engaging, effective learning experiences. This proactive approach allows the unit to recommend and implement technologies that enhance accessibility, scalability, and inclusivity whilst addressing modern pedagogical challenges. Through its efforts, the e-Education Unit fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, equipping educators and students with cutting-edge solutions that elevate the quality of education and prepare graduates for success in a technology-driven world.

The e-Education Unit focuses on exploring and integrating new technologies that support micro-credentialling software, enabling the recognition of specialised skills and achievements. Additionally, the team prioritises measuring curriculum outcomes and seamlessly implementing newly acquired lecture-capturing software to enhance teaching and learning delivery.

6.2 Overview of the 2024 Activities

The highlight of 2024 was the international recognition of the quality of clickUP Ultra courses, with the team receiving the prestigious Anthology Catalyst Award in the Training & Professional Development category, marking 25 years of hybrid learning at UP. Throughout the year, the e-education group focused on implementing clickUP Ultra, investigating the Goals tool for the EMS AACSB project and delivering exceptional service to the faculties.

6.2.1 Priority e-learning professional development courses

In 2024, the department conducted 67 contact training sessions across 17 priority courses to help lecturers integrate educational technology. The clickUP Ultra workshops proved particularly popular, with 694 unique participants attending multiple sessions, filling a total of 2,036 seats. This high level of repeat attendance demonstrated strong engagement with the training program. Participant satisfaction was consistently excellent, with feedback scores between 0.96 and 0.98 across all courses.

While the in-person clickUP Original courses were phased out, they remained available as self-paced online modules. However, uptake was minimal since most new lecturers opted to learn the more current clickUP Ultra system instead.

Attendance at other priority courses was notably lower. The self-paced online courses, which were developed in 2020, saw diminished participation in 2025. Nevertheless, these courses served as a valuable alternative when 11 instructor-led sessions had to be cancelled due to insufficient enrolment.

Table 3: Number of participants who completed e-education priority courses in 2024

Course	Contact Session Attendees	Dates	Average Feedback score	Online Course Completions	Total no. of completions
clickUP Ultra Overview	439	22 Jan, 05 Feb, 08 Apr, 10 Jun, 14 Oct, 4 & 25 Nov	.96	-	439
clickUP Ultra Content	398	23 Jan, 06 Feb, 09 Apr, 11 Jun, 15 Oct, 5 & 26 Nov	.97	-	398
clickUP Ultra Engagement	342	24 Jan, 07 Feb, 10 Apr, 12 Jun, 16 Oct, 6 & 27 Nov	.98	-	342
clickUP Ultra Assessment	386	25 Jan, 08 Feb, 11 Apr, 13 Jun, 17 Oct, 7 & 28 Nov	.97	-	386
clickUP Ultra Grading & Gradebook	386	26 Jan, 09 Feb, 12 Apr, 14 Jun, 18 Oct, 8 & 29 Nov	.98	-	386
clickUP Ultra Administrators	85	16 & 17 Jan, 29 Feb, 10 May, 20 Nov	.90	-	85
Clickers	45	16 Feb, 19 Jul	.93		45
clickUP Overview (Original)	Discontinued	-	-	6	6
clickUP Content (Original)	Discontinued	-	-	6	6
clickUP Assessment (Original)	Discontinued	-	-	6	6
clickUP Modalities of Participation (Original)	Discontinued	-	-	1	1
clickUP Metrical (Original)	Discontinued	-	-	0	0
Turnitin	8	16 May, 19 Nov	1.0	4	12
Tii Grading and Feedback	3	17 May	1.0	3	6
Grade Center (Original)	9	8 March	1.0	2	11
Narrated PPTS	4	23 Jul	.98	3	7
Trendy Tools for Cool Lectures	13	5 March, 30 Jul	1.0	-	13
ELA	0		-	-	0
In-Video Assessment	12	13 March & 25 July	.99	1	13
Blackboard Class Collaborate	0		-	4	4
QuestUP 1	15	14 March & 5 Jun	-	-	15
QuestUP 2	12	15 March & 6 Jun	-	-	12
Total attendees, average feedback score	**2 157**		**.98**	**36**	**2 193**

Table 4 compares the attendance of the e-learning courses in the past five years to better understand the impact of the clickUP Ultra implementation.

Table 4: Comparison of attendees of e-education priority courses over the last five years

Courses	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
clickUP Ultra Overview	-	-	-	257	439
clickUP Ultra Content	-	-	-	223	398
clickUP Ultra Engagement	-	-	-	181	342
clickUP Ultra Assessment	-	-	-	191	386
clickUP Ultra Grading & Gradebook	-	-	-	190	386
clickUP Ultra Administrators	-	-	-	25	85
Clickers	-	-	-		45
clickUP Assist / Administrators (Original)	13	24	25	35	0
clickUP Overview (Original)	27	82	69	60	6
clickUP Content (Original)	26	69	65	27	6
clickUP Assessment (Original)	26	70	71	27	1
clickUP Collaboration/modalities for participation (Original)	14	42	27	7	0
clickUP Metrical (Original)	11	42	32	1	0
Turnitin	29	63	38	33	12
Turnitin Grading and feedback	18	50	24	18	6
clickUP Grade Center (Original)	33	79	73	37	11
Creating digital lectures /narrated PPTS	19	54	45	23	7
Mobile tech / Trendy tools	16	52	36	12	13
ELA	10	18	8	0	0
In-video assessment	29	51	32	18	13
Blackboard Class Collaborate	-	55	55	21	4
QuestUP	9	34	124	77	27
Totals	**271**	**751**	**724**	**396**	**2 193**

6.2.2 Ad hoc training

The e-Education Unit organised two module improvement sessions in July to assist lecturers with their Ultra course design. Eleven additional departmental and combined sessions were delivered, reaching a total of 136 lecturers. The details of these sessions can be found in Table 5.

Table 5: Ad-hoc e-Learning, Training, and Information sessions.

Topic (s) covered	Date	Faculty & Dept(s)	Campus	Number of attendees	Duration	Presenter
clickUP Ultra Orientation	2 May 2024	PVN 110	Onderstepoort	7	4 hours 30 min	Alastair Smart
Clickers Training	30 Apr 2024		Hatfield	3	3 hours	Kingsley Sebake
clickUP Ultra Orientation	29 Jan 2024	All 9 faculties + Mamelodi	Hatfield	20	3 hours	Ciska Snyman
clickUP Ultra Orientation	1 Feb 2024	EBIT School of Information Technology Assistant Lecturers	Hatfield	24	3 hours	Ciska Snyman
clickUP Ultra Orientation	9 Feb 2024	Humanities tutor coordinators	Hatfield	10	1 hour	Gaby Pretorius
DESA clickUP Ultra Training	30 Apr 2024	DESA	Hatfield	5	3 hours	Ciska Snyman
PointSolutions	14 May 2024	Microbiology & Virology	Prinshof	9	2 hours	Ciska Snyman (P) Gretchen Jacobs (S)
clickUP Ultra	10 July 2024	Historical and Heritage Studies	Hatfield	5	2 hours	Johan Slabbert Gaby Pretorius
ClickUP Training	19 July 2024	Agricultural Economics, Extension & Rural Development 2024 SFSE CMAAE	Online	8	2 hours	Mpho Thukane (p)
Class Collaborate Ultra overview & Original	6 Aug 2024	Early childhood department new lecturers	Groenkloof	6	3 hours	Manyaku Maroga Gretchen Jacobs
PointSolution	6 Sept 2024	Architecture	Hatfield	15	1 hour	Kingsley Sebake
clickUP Ultra Module Improvement Session	12 July 2024	Health, VET, Theology, NAS, Education, EBIT and EMS	Hatfield	14		Hosted by Ciska Snyman & Mpho Thukane. Supported by Detken, Johan, Gretchen, Alastair, Kingsley, Estelle, Gaby, Manyaku and Hannelie.
clickUP Ultra Module Improvement Session	19 July 2024	NAS, Health, Education, EMS, Theology and Humanities	Hatfield	11	6 hours	Hosted by Ciska Snyman & Mpho Thukane. Supported by Detken, Johan, Gretchen, Alastair, Estelle, Gaby and Hannelie

6.2.3 Teaching and Learning Analytics

Several strategic projects were completed in 2024 to enhance its data integration, reporting capabilities, and learning design initiatives. These efforts include integrating advanced data models, leveraging AI-driven insights, and adapting systems to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving academic environment. EI has successfully implemented solutions that support data-driven decision-making, improve teaching practices, and promote student success by fostering collaboration across internal and external stakeholders. The following paragraphs outline key projects, their outcomes, and their impact on institutional goals and the broader higher education landscape.

Mapping PeopleSoft Data to the Student Information System: Integrating PeopleSoft data into the Student Information System (SIS) data model has significantly enhanced data extraction capabilities. The new process, implemented between late 2023 and April 2024, required adding tables to the daily extraction framework. This initiative involved extensive consultations via more than 360 e-mail exchanges with international and external stakeholders. The frequent modifications to the data model were necessitated by evolving requirements, highlighting the project's complexity.

AI Integration and Reporting: The new Learning Management System (LMS), which incorporates advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) features, was released, and a project was launched to integrate AI tool data into the data warehouse. This integration enabled reporting and research on AI tool usage and supported the presentation of findings at a national workshop. The project was efficiently managed through 17 e-mail exchanges.

Enhancements for Late Registration Reporting: In response to challenges posed by late course registrations, an additional data field capturing students' academic levels was integrated into the data warehouse. This enhancement facilitated the development of reports for key stakeholders, including Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning, the Department of Student Enrolment and Administration, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and the Department for Institutional Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation. This project required 10 e-mail exchanges for coordination.

Adapting the Data Warehouse for Strategic Needs: The Department faces an ongoing need for technical consultation to adjust the data warehouse to meet the demands of its new LMS and support the development of quantitative learning design reports. These reports are critical for enhancing course design and integrating responsible AI features to monitor teaching practices. Significant updates to the database and OLAP perspectives have been identified as essential to maintaining the data warehouse's value and supporting the University's Institutional Digital Transformation strategy.

Supporting National and Institutional Reporting: The annual student, staff, and academic programme data submissions to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) serve critical purposes, including performance monitoring, future planning, and state funding distribution. The reliability of these data submissions is regularly audited, requiring evidence of mechanisms to ensure accurate student registration data. Physical and online meetings with university personnel ensured the finalisation of this project, with meeting agendas documenting all participants.

Faculty-Requested Reports and Strike Impact Analysis: Faculties requested numerous reports on students' ClickUP activity, intervention needs, and success analytics based on biographical or school data. The February 2024 staff strike necessitated additional reports to track educational activity during the transition to fully online academic operations. Late student registrations, a direct consequence of the strike, were analysed in two detailed reports addressing their impact on academic performance. These reports were shared with senior leadership for strategic discussions.

B-BBEE Verification Support: The Office of Employment Equity and B-BBEE, alongside the National Skills Authority (NSA), sought assistance with their annual B-BBEE verification. Detailed reports were developed to address data gaps, focusing on instructional designers' contributions and student activity metrics. This effort provided critical insights into skills development activities for verification purposes.

Enhancing Learning Design and Analytics: The institutional rollout of Anthology Ultra LMS aimed to improve teaching and pedagogical design while promoting student success. Teaching and Learning Analytics (TLA) data empowered lecturers to refine course quality and outcomes. Leveraging the Community of Inquiry Quantitative Teaching Presence Framework (QTPF), 150 reports were distributed to lecturers, integrating best practices and LMS student success tools. Approximately 450 lecturers engaged with these resources in 2024, receiving longitudinal insights that informed course enhancements.

While direct correlations to student success remain challenging to quantify, improved course designs and increased student engagement highlight the initiative's positive impact. More than 2,000 reports were disseminated, reinforcing the University's commitment to leveraging Learning Analytics (LA) for continuous improvement in alignment with global educational standards.

Examples of data included in Learning Design reports shared with lecturers:

The strategic initiatives undertaken in 2024 to enhance data integration, reporting capabilities, and learning design have effectively positioned the institution to meet the evolving demands of the academic landscape. Through integrating advanced data models, AI-driven insights, and improvements to the data warehouse, the university has fostered a culture of data-driven decision-making that supports operational efficiency and academic excellence. These efforts have optimised internal processes and enabled better stakeholder collaboration, improving teaching practices and student success. The continued focus on enhancing learning design, integrating technology, and addressing institutional needs has underscored the university's commitment to staying at the forefront of higher education innovation. These foundational projects will serve as a springboard for further advancements in learning analytics, pedagogical strategies, and institutional growth, reinforcing the university's leadership role in higher education.

6.2.4 Course Development and Review

Tutors and Teaching Assistant training

During the first semester, the e-Education Unit developed and launched new self-paced online courses on clickUP Ultra to support teaching assistants (TAs) and tutors. Dr H Untiedt developed Smart Marking Part 2, which builds upon Part 1 (delivered by the ECs) and provides TAs with practical guidance on marking using clickUP Ultra and Turnitin. Two separate Smart Marking courses were created to address the needs of TAs working in both clickUP Original and clickUP Ultra.

Ms G Pretorius developed e-Tutoring in the clickUP Ultra course, which equips tutors with the skills to use clickUP Ultra effectively to achieve their tutoring objectives. She

Table 6: e-Tutor & Teaching Assistant Training 2024

Course	Number of completions/enrolments
Smart Marking Part 2 for clickUP Original	30 completed
Smart Marking Part 2 for clickUP Ultra	27 completed
e-tutoring in clickUP Ultra	48 enrolled
Resource for Tutor Coordinators	12 enrolled

also created the Resource for Tutor Coordinators, which helps lecturers optimise their clickUP Ultra courses to enable tutors to perform their tasks efficiently.

These courses are designed for maximum flexibility, allowing users to access the content anytime and learn at their own pace. This self-paced approach eliminates the need for facilitators, enhancing accessibility whilst freeing up valuable time for instructional designers to focus on other priorities.

Course updates

The e-Education Unit regularly updates clickUP, QuestUP, and Turnitin courses to align with agile system development practices. Integrating the AI assistant within clickUP Ultra and Turnitin's new AI detection tool required substantial revisions to workshops and courses. These updates were essential to ensure optimal use of these tools and to address emerging technological capabilities. Feedback from lecturers indicates a balanced view of the AI assistant features in Ultra, acknowledging both their advantages and associated responsibilities.

E-education self-paced academy

The e-Education Unit developed a self-paced academy in clickUP Ultra to support lecturers during disruptions to academic continuity or when they cannot attend in-person sessions. The development of standalone online workshops for clickUP Ultra has progressed, with the Overview, Grading, and Gradebook units now complete. Additional self-paced online courses were developed for non-Ultra tools, including Turnitin, Turnitin Grading & Feedback, In-video Assessment, and Narrated PowerPoint.

E-assessment

A range of electronic assessment options facilitates regular evaluation and feedback for both formative and summative assessments. The University employs several systems, including QuestUP, clickUP, Turnitin, e-publishers' assignment tools, and Numbas.

Instructors utilise numerous tools within clickUP to administer various assessment formats for grading diverse online activities, such as discussions, blogs, wikis, and journals, as well as managing assignment submissions and grading and setting objective assessment items. Turnitin confirms the originality of a student's work by identifying similarities between assignments and other documents. Its resubmission feature allows students to improve their academic writing through similarity checks and reports, learning to paraphrase, summarise, and cite sources as part of a scholarly argument. Publishers of various textbooks, like Cengage, McGraw Hill, and Wiley Plus, offer electronic assignments that facilitate formative assessments, aiding students throughout their learning journey.

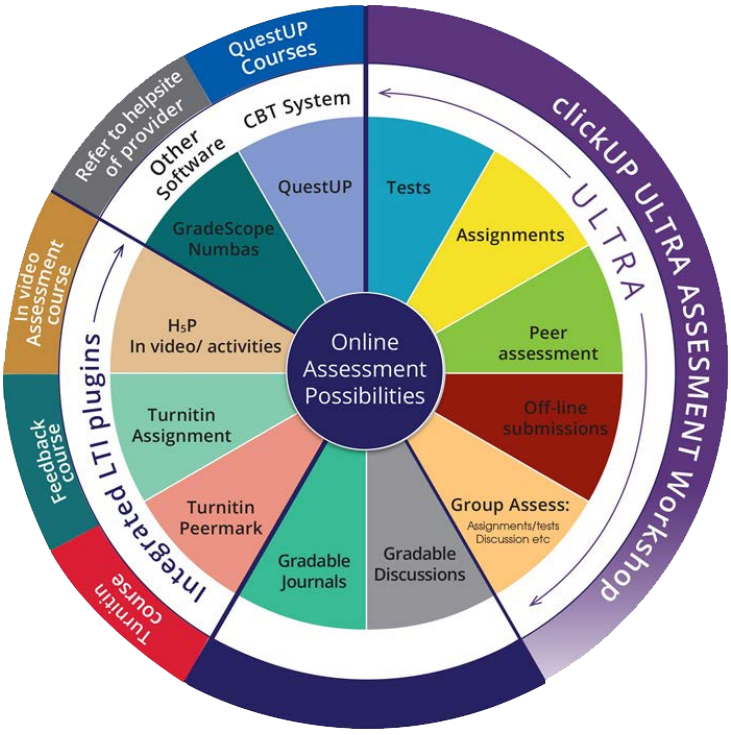


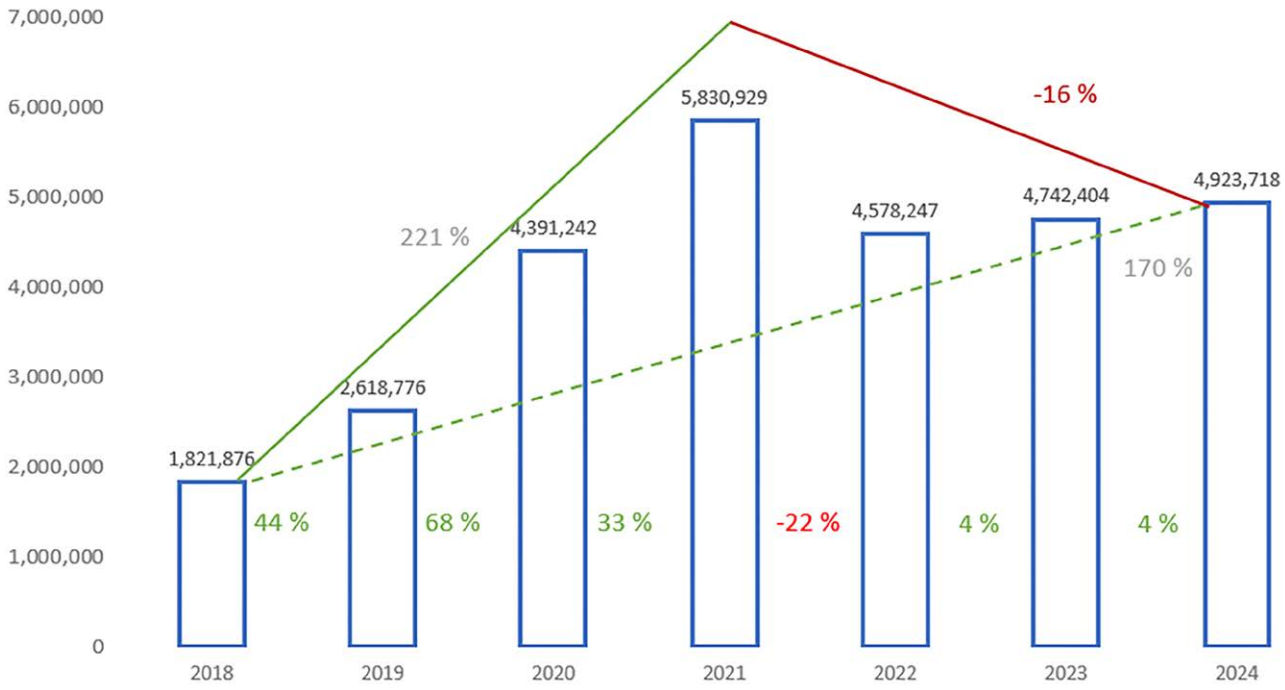
Figure 4: Online Formative and Summative Assessment Possibilities available

The table below demonstrates the utilisation of various e-assessment tools available to lecturers. clickUP continues to serve as the primary e-assessment environment, offering lecturers flexibility in tool selection and autonomy of use.

Table 7: Online assessments graded attempts in clickUP and integrated systems 2020-2024

Test type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
clickUP tests	2,299,186	3,086,596	2,254,583	2,147,593	2,146,176
clickUP assignments	703,114	870,308	623,989	537,060	364,756
Graded discussions	39,840	73,477	77,569	76,700	87,840
Graded wikis	3,961	4,019	3,292	3,337	1,188
Graded blogs	2,424	6,224	6,486	5,765	6,450
Graded journals	6,057	8,448	11,190	16,073	20,783
Turnitin submissions	463,995	536,381	442,626	340,199	315,874
McGraw Hill assignments	323,531	436,762	285,201	283,962	573
Cengage	208,150	367,871	387,502	543,138	243,138
LTI	64,808	126,385	154,545	351,857	1,035,491
Self and peer assessments	808	1,783	2,116	2,255	5,598
MATLAB					1,023
Other	275,368	312,675	329,148	355,682	327,457
TOTAL	***4,391,242***	***5,830,929***	***4,578,247***	***4,663,621***	**4,556,347**

The figure below demonstrates the growth of e-assessment graded attempts per term. Notably, online e-assessment graded attempts have grown by 170% since 2018, while the impact of the pandemic is visible through a growth of 221% between 2018 and 2021.



Turnitin remains essential for academic integrity at the University. Turnitin's AI detection score offers valuable insights into the authenticity of student work in the face of advanced AI writing tools. Analysing text patterns and comparing them to known AI-generated content can flag potential instances of AI usage. This tool empowers educators to address the evolving

landscape of academic integrity and ensure students engage in original, independent work. However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of AI detection tools. They are not foolproof and may produce false positives or negatives. Additionally, as AI writing technology continues to evolve, the accuracy of these detectors may require ongoing refinement and adaptation.

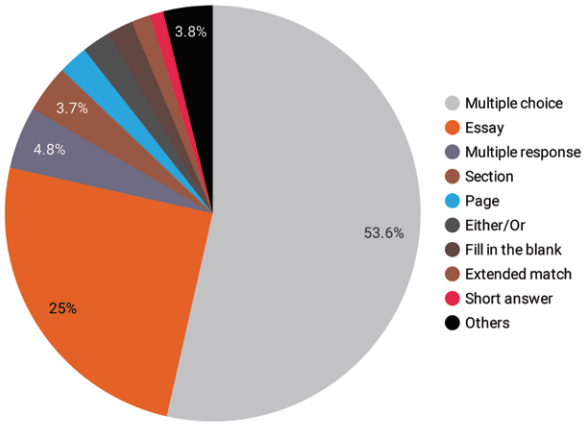
Table 8: Turnitin feedback from 2020 – 2024

	Submissions	Scored	Instructor	ETS	PeerMark
Total 2020	257,802	12,585	1,167,047	2,748,189	463,955
Total 2021	323,550	64,848	2,081,270	2,932,832	272,299
Total 2022	273,826	67,709	4,578,459	2,951,841	11,661
Total 2023	203,937	61,916	3,812,054	2,761,213	11,552
Total 2024	214,952	57,469	4,242,017	3,286,685	8,021

The number of student assessments conducted through QuestUP in 2024 exceeded 2023 levels, driven by increased adoption within the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Health Sciences. However, there was a significant decline in usage at the Hatfield campus. This decrease can be attributed to several factors: lecturers transitioning to textbook content providers for assessments, staff departures through resignations and retirements of QuestUP users, and AIM modules shifting to clickUP for assessments following 2020.

Table 9: QuestUP assessments completed by students, 2020-2024

CAMPUS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	QuestionMark Perception		Cirrus	Cirrus	Cirrus
Hatfield CBT labs	296	0	14822	3535	2772
Hatfield IT Labs	38	0	0	0	0
Mamelodi	0	0	0	0	0
Prinshof	20089	17349	15401	19322	24068
Onderstepoort	3837	4334	17578	18630	20812
Groenkloof	1353	0	1264	7080	4204
TOTAL	**25613**	**21683**	**49065**	**48557**	**51856**



Question types

Departments at the Faculties of Health and Veterinary Sciences also use the capabilities of MS PowerPoint to administer assessments in computer laboratories. In contrast, some departments in EBIT use the specialised functionalities that Numbas affords to meet their assessment needs.

Table 10: NUMBAS assessments taken by students

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
NUMBAS	120,000	194,224	112,679	24,226	90,164

Table 11: PowerPoint assessments are taken by students

CAMPUS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prinshof	3,059	3,815	5,692	6,332	5,524
Onderstepoort	0	0	0	95	0
TOTAL	**3,059**	**3,815**	**5,692**	**6,427**	**5,524**

6.2.5 Comprehensive Support and Resources

Module creation and enrolment

The overall number of QuestUP student assessments increased in 2024 compared to 2023, primarily due to greater adoption within the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Health Sciences. However, usage at the Hatfield campus declined significantly. Several factors contributed to this decrease: lecturers moving to textbook provider assessment platforms, the departure of experienced QuestUP users through retirement and resignation, and the migration of AIM modules to clickUP for assessment purposes after 2020.

Table 12: Non-PeopleSoft clickUP modules and enrolment of students and staff.

Service	2023	2024
Create merged modules	186	130
Programme modules and user enrolments	850 modules 6000+ users	240 modules 5000+users
Residence clickUP pages	37 courses SIS file upload of users	37 courses SIS file upload of users
Faculty clickUP Pages	40 courses SIS file upload of users	40 courses SIS file upload of users
EUP courses and user enrolment	284 courses 4000+ users	258 courses 5000+ users
PUA courses and user enrolment	25 courses 127 students	26 courses 190 students
Sponsored guests	100+users	180+users

clickUP help desk

The table below illustrates the email and just-in-time training support provided by each e-support office over the past five years. Support requests have decreased due to three main factors: the implementation of departmentally managed PeopleSoft security processes, the more intuitive Ultra system requiring less assistance, and contextual help through the Impact product in clickUP Ultra.

Table 13: Comparison of the number of requests supported by the e-support office 2020- 2024

	Email responses					Just-in-time training				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
clickUP e-support (Hatfield) (Include emails from students)	7,415	7,892	5,973	4,960	1,475	342	137	109	62	0
clickUP e-support (Health Sciences staff)	593	1,321	1,103	688	158	5	3	1	0	0

Table 14: Modules on clickUP 2018-2024

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
UG modules	2,460	2,364	1,957	1,991	2,054	1,988	1,982
PG modules	2,245	2,263	1,292	1,340	1,333	1,361	1,410
%UG modules	94.4%	95.2%	97.9%	97.6%	94.3%	95.6%	96.2%
% PG modules	37.6%	47.1%	59.9%	60.4%	59.2%	59.7%	62.4%
Number of departments	117	115	113	112	109	109	109

System upgrades

clickUP has undergone a significant upgrade, introducing several new features and integrations. Most notably, the long-awaited Google Drive integration has been completed after six months of development, enabling seamless collaboration between lecturer and student domains. Multiple upgrades were implemented to facilitate clickUP's LTI 1.3 technology integration with various platforms: Turnitin, GradeScope, Numbas, Google Drive, McGraw-Hill Health, JOVE, Perusall and Pearson Seamless. These integrations streamline workflows and enhance the overall user experience.

Additionally, work is underway with Modo Labs to integrate clickUP functionalities and information into the UP Mobile App. Further PeopleSoft integrations are in development, including updating Hierarchies, streamlined instructor clickUP access via PeopleSoft, and migrating all SIS integration processes to PeopleSoft.

6.2.6 Implementing New Educational Technology

Ultra Implementation Progress: The second phase of Ultra implementation has been completed successfully across all faculties' first-year modules. Additionally, nearly 200 additional modules were created in Ultra at the lecturers' request. The 2025 Ultra rollout preparations for first, second and third-year modules progressed well, with 694 staff members completing Ultra training during 2024. An additional training week was scheduled for October 2024, supported by UCDG grant funding. Regular monthly emails kept stakeholders informed of clickUP Ultra updates and project progress. The project received additional promotion through a TuksFM interview with M Thukane and C Snyman.

The lecturer and student help sites underwent monthly updates to maintain relevance and usability, including essential documentation and examination period support resources.

- The project earned an Anthology Catalyst Award for Professional Staff Development, leading to several training and presentation opportunities:
- Two cycles of Blackboard Ultra training at the Vaal University of Technology (15-17 July and 26-29 August 2024).
- Presentation on Ultra course transition at the Innovate & Educate Africa Event (Sandton, 8 May)
- Insights sharing at the Blackboard Learn Ultra User Group (11 July)
- Presentation on effective Gradebook utilisation at the Anthology Digital Teaching Symposium (14 November)
- The instructional designers contributed significantly to the Anthology Idea Exchange, accounting for 16.8% (1,027 of 6,124) of ideas through new submissions and voting.

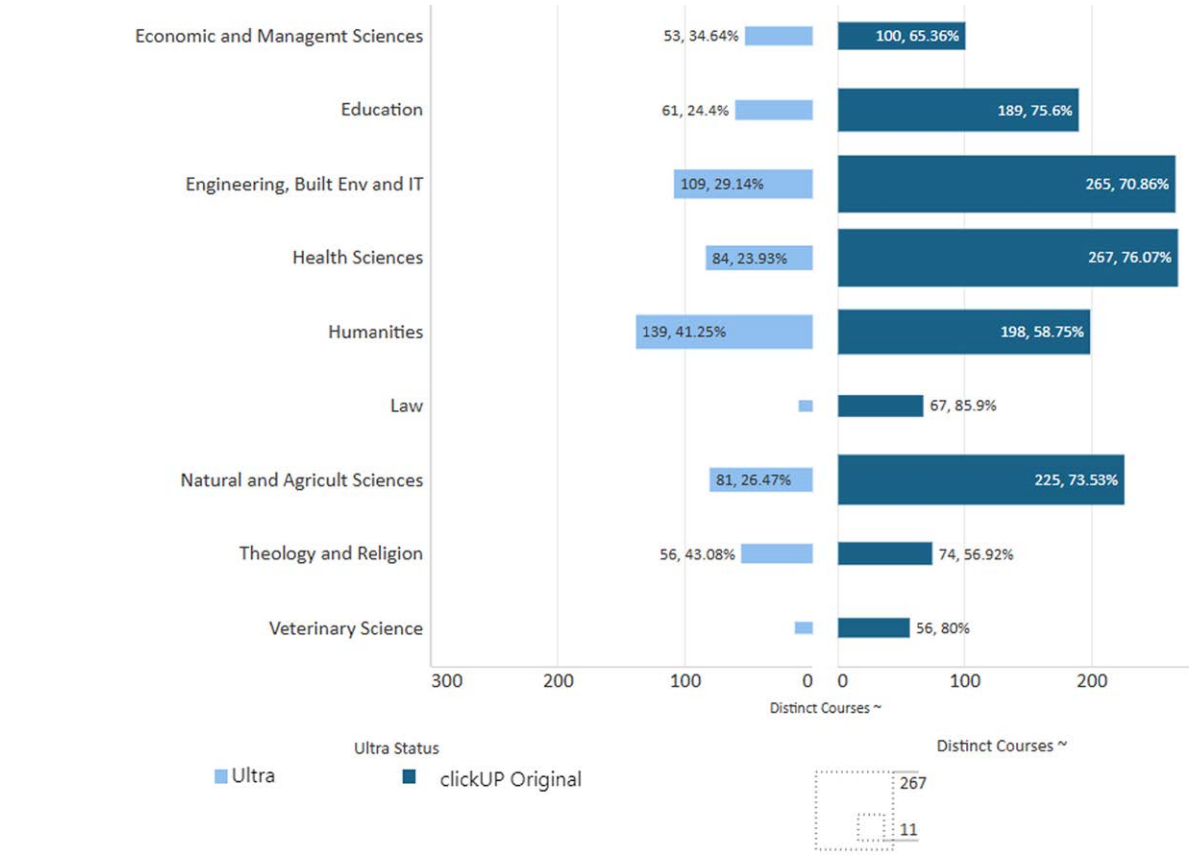


Figure 5: UG Courses Ultra Adoption per Faculty Courses and Percentage Instructors

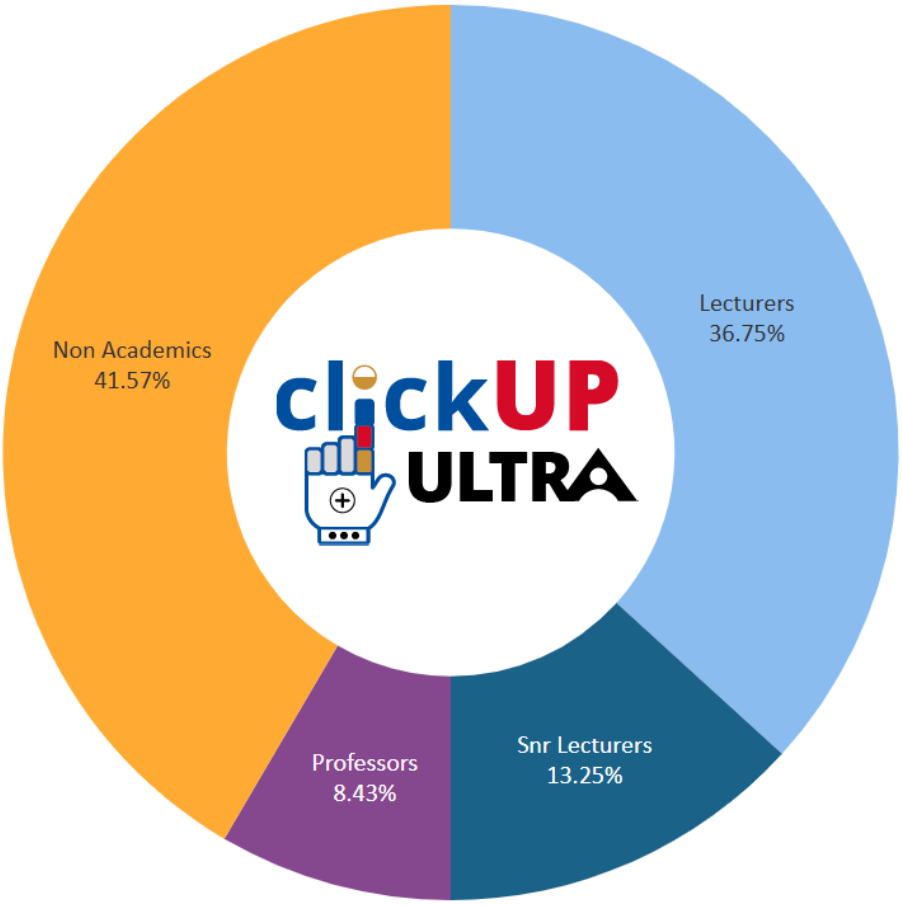
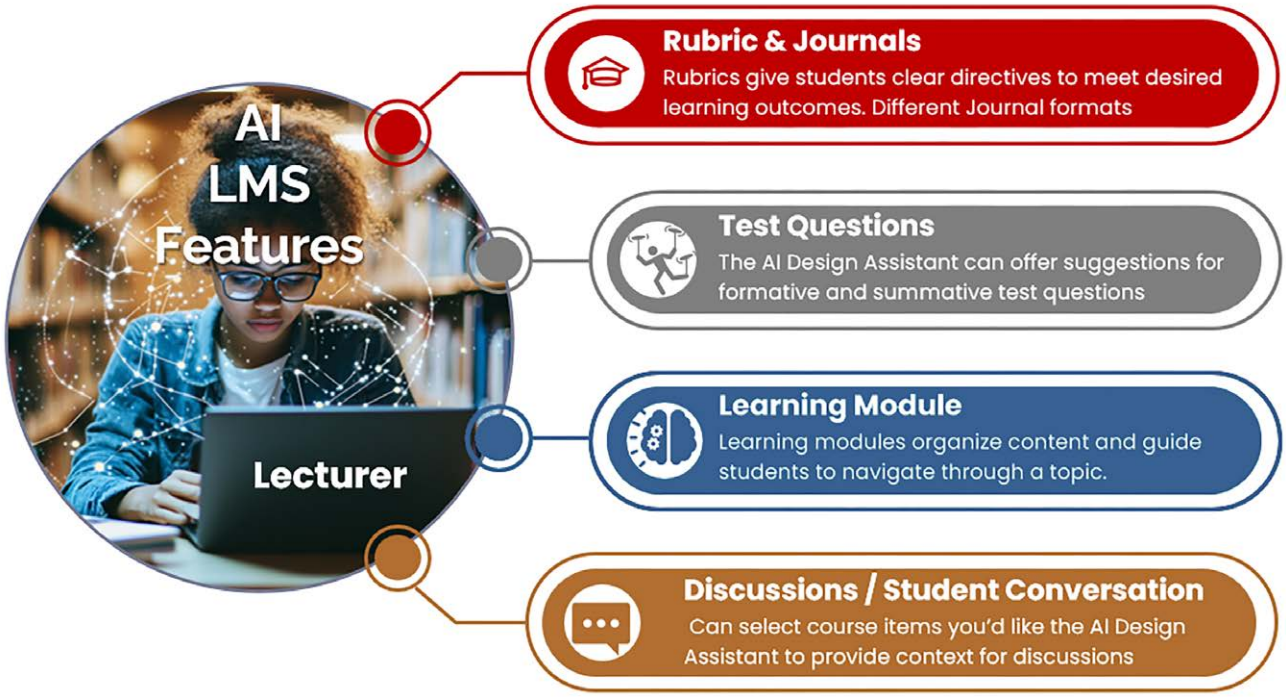
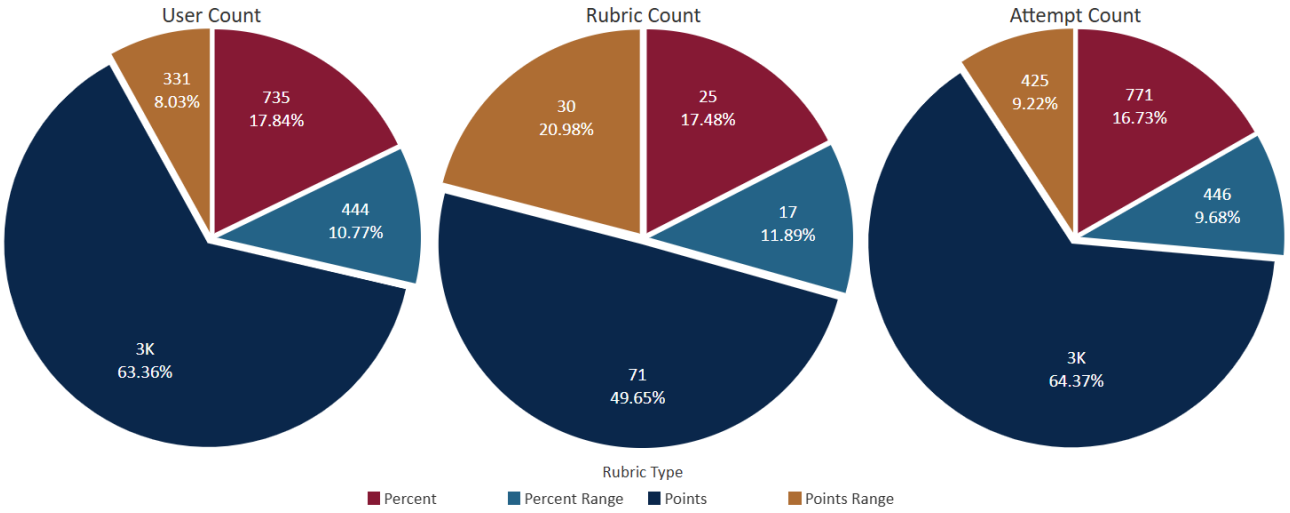


Figure 6: Ultra Adoption by Staff Job Description in UG Courses

clickUP AI tools: Numerous new AI features were introduced into clickUP during 2024. The AI Design Assistant streamlines course creation, saving you time. It allows you the ability to harness advanced AI capabilities to craft learning modules, develop rubrics, build question banks, and design assessments.



The AI Design Assistant uses Microsoft's Azure OpenAI Service to automatically generate outputs. It provides limited course information (e.g., course title, description) and prompts the Azure OpenAI Service through its API. Instructors can enhance output generation by including additional prompt context. Anthology has embraced the Trustworthy AI framework, aligning with principles from the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, the EU AI Act, and the OECD AI Principles, with input from global education leaders. The following figure indicates the different types of AI-generated rubrics that were created by AI and then accepted and adapted by instructors:



clickUP Goals and EAC Implementation: Following a request from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences' Deputy Dean for Teaching and Learning, an investigation was conducted into automating their AACSB accreditation process. The clickUP Goals tool and EAC Visual Data offer comprehensive program effectiveness assessment capabilities by aligning goals with course content and streamlined data analysis. Key developments included project meetings and product demonstrations with Anthology representatives and faculty stakeholders. Johan Slabbert and Barry Lauth developed an academic hierarchy for EAC, which is pending review with the Quality Unit and Faculties. AACSB rubrics were implemented for BCom and BCom Honours programmes in clickUP. The project highlighted the importance of institutional readiness, stakeholder appointment and understanding of financial implications. The Director of Education Innovation and the Deputy Dean for Teaching and Learning will submit a proposal to the UP Executive.

Panopto Integration: In collaboration with ITS, EI has evaluated Panopto's integration with clickUP (Blackboard). This video management platform will enable secure video content creation, sharing and management with comprehensive analytics on video usage across the University of Pretoria.

Milestones: Micro-credentials and alternative credentials are rapidly gaining prominence in the landscape of higher education in South Africa, presenting innovative ways to address the country's evolving educational and workforce needs. These credentials, which typically focus on specific skills or knowledge areas, allow learners to acquire competencies aligned with market demands. Given South Africa's challenges with unemployment and skills mismatches, micro-credentials offer a practical solution to bridge the gap between formal education and employability. By emphasising targeted learning outcomes, they cater to students seeking to upskill, reskill, or supplement their qualifications without committing to traditional, lengthy degree programs. Micro-credentials are also used to signal expertise to employers and can indicate a commitment to life-long learning.

The primary value of micro-credentials lies in their ability to provide flexible, targeted, and rapidly attainable learning opportunities that address specific skills and knowledge gaps. In some literature, a key debate is whether micro-credentials belong in higher education. In this context, Micro-credentials can supplement traditional degrees by offering targeted skills alongside broader academic learning. In this way, they can be considered short-learning programmes. They can, therefore, support lifelong learning and professional development for graduates needing updated competencies (e.g., digital tools, and AI skills). However, Universities can use micro-credentials to bridge theory and practice, providing professional and personal development pathways.

Part of Micro-credentials' value is democratising education, making it more accessible and inclusive. In a country characterised by socioeconomic disparities, these credentials provide affordable, modular learning opportunities that individuals across diverse backgrounds can pursue. Institutions of higher education in South Africa are increasingly incorporating micro-credentials into their offerings to meet the demand for lifelong learning and to remain globally competitive. These credentials also facilitate collaborations between universities and industries, ensuring that the skills imparted are relevant and aligned with employer expectations, thus enhancing graduates' job readiness.

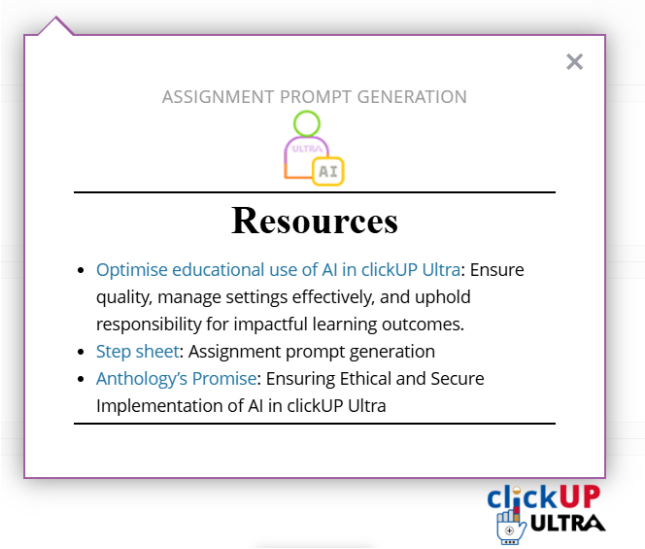
Moreover, micro-credentials and alternative credentials promote a culture of continuous learning, which is crucial in a rapidly changing global economy. This is particularly significant for South Africa as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and digital transformation reshape the job market. These credentials empower individuals to remain adaptable and competitive by equipping learners with agile, up-to-date skills. Additionally, they create pathways for non-traditional learners, such as working professionals, to engage with higher education in a manner that accommodates their schedules and career goals. As the demand for flexible, skills-oriented education grows, micro-credentials are poised to play a transformative role in South Africa's higher education sector, driving individual growth and national development.

The University of Pretoria is implementing Anthology Milestones to enable students to certify and showcase their skills and achievements through stackable digital badges and credentials. Backed by industry-leading standards, Milestone leverages various criteria, from event attendance to outcomes achievements, empowering our students to demonstrate and articulate their skills. Through the range of awarding options, Milestone minimises administrative effort while incentivising learners and motivating program completion. A learner's portfolio can be curated with badges and work samples and stays active beyond graduation, empowering them with the tools and language to demonstrate to potential employers that their skills and achievements go beyond their resume.

A small task team is busy drafting a report to provide institutional guidance on implementing Milestones while work continues to integrate and test Milestones within Ultra Achievements.

Adopt: Anthology Adopt assisted the E-education team in providing on-screen guidance to users or messages. It surfaces detailed insights on the usage of content and features, identifies opportunities to streamline the user experience journey, and provides engaging in-app outreach tools to quickly communicate important updates to users. Moreover, it allows users to understand new developments, content and features. Users are kept up to date with the release of new features, while alert messages enable students and instructors to receive contextual information.

Adopt's analytics provide a detailed view of user engagement with delivered messages, walkthroughs, tooltips, surveys, and links to external resources. Below are examples of Adopt messages posted to students and instructors in 2024.



6.2.7 Anthology visitors and workshops

The Department for Education Innovation received numerous visits from Anthology. Moreover, the E-education presentations at national Anthology workshops focused on implementing the exemplary staff development portfolio and using AI tools in clickUP.

7 Higher Education Research and Innovation Unit

The Unit for Higher Education Research and Innovation (HERI) is led by Dr Juan-Claude Lemmens. The unit includes two senior researchers: Mr Bonza Majozi and Dr Herman Janse van Vuuren. Ms Esther Mphanda serves as the Senior Teaching Support Services Coordinator (Institutional Tutor Coordinator), overseeing the management, reporting and support of teaching support staff, including tutors and teaching assistants.

7.1 Background

The Higher Education Research & Innovation (HERI) work involves coordinating and supporting the High Impact Modules (HIMs) project, an initiative led by the Tshebi Committee, designed to boost the success rates of selected modules by conducting comprehensive evaluations and implementing targeted interventions. Additionally, HERI is tasked with the development of a number of dashboards. These tools provide insights into student performance and engagement patterns, aiding in identifying areas for support and improvement. Beyond these, HERI also plays a crucial role in supporting the implementation and further development of several critical applications and systems, including Anthology REACH (Support@UP), a tutorial attendance application, and an SFTS enrolment application. These efforts collectively aim to streamline educational processes, enhance student support mechanisms, and foster an environment conducive to higher learning and innovation.

7.2 Overview of the 2024 activities

7.2.1 Anthology REACH

Education Innovation (EI) launched Anthology REACH in 2024, a holistic Integrated Planning and Advising for Student Success (iPASS) platform, to bolster student success and retention. This unified platform will empower the advising team to efficiently handle student success operations and enhance the institution's communication, planning, and monitoring tools from a single central hub. Establishing a unified and all-encompassing student success platform is essential for upholding the University's prominence in student success and refining ongoing initiatives by granting all stakeholders involved in student success access to valuable insights. These insights will facilitate data-driven decision-making and prompt communication. Anthology REACH is used by the Academic Success Coaches (ASCs) to provide targeted academic assistance to students. It is a central hub for institutional communications, planning, and tracking, improving student advising and providing early alerts for at-risk students. It aims to provide an integrated, holistic overview of students, including stakeholders' engagement with students. The platform is designed to provide a comprehensive view of student data and facilitate early intervention.

7.2.2 UP Readiness Survey

The UP Readiness Survey measures students' readiness for university education. Readiness for university education can broadly be defined as a student's level of preparation (financial, social, and academic engagement) to succeed at a higher education institution. The results of the UP Readiness Survey are used to identify first-time first-year students for targeted interventions, such as first-generation students for the STARS peer mentorship programme or academic advising by the Academic Success Coaches. In addition, the information can also be used to identify and refer students who reported financial distress, accommodation challenges, data/device challenges, or a recognised disability to the respective support departments. The results are also used to understand the profile of the new cohort of students. The survey captures the following demographic and pre-entry characteristics: first-generation students, school-related characteristics, financial considerations, housing arrangements, transport opportunities, data and device needs, and the employment status of parents or guardians.

7.2.3 Tutoring

At the University of Pretoria, the tutoring programme is vital in supporting student success and enhancing academic achievement across various disciplines. This initiative is financially supported through two primary sources: the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) grant and the University's own Department of Finance. The UCDP grant, allocated by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), aims to bolster higher education institutions' efforts to improve teaching and learning outcomes, while the Department of Finance at the University ensures that adequate resources are allocated to sustain and expand tutoring services. This dual funding structure enables the University of Pretoria to provide comprehensive tutoring services, addressing the diverse needs of its student body and contributing significantly to the academic support ecosystem.

Tutoring, a co-curricular activity, is intrinsically linked to teaching and learning. Its purpose is to enhance students' understanding and deepen their learning. Ms Mphanda plays a supportive role for both tutors and Faculty tutor coordinators. The University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) funding is earmarked explicitly for tutorials in High-Impact Modules (HIMs), particularly on first-year modules.

Tutors and teaching assistants tasked with marking, receive training on proper marking principles through the Smart Marking courses. Part 1 is a two-hour course that focuses on the educational theory regarding marking and providing feedback. After completing the course, tutors receive an automated letter of participation. Part 2 consists of two online, stand-alone clickUP courses that teach tutors and teaching assistants how to use marking tools in clickUP and Turnitin. Part 2 takes about two hours to complete, and participants also receive an automated letter of participation.

Tutors complete the self-paced online tutor training course to ensure they are adequately trained and prepared for their roles and responsibilities (link). This course takes about four hours to complete. After completing the course, tutors receive an automated letter of participation. The training covers the following five themes:

- Theme 1: Introduction to Tutoring
- Theme 2: Tutoring for Learning in Higher Education
- Theme 3: Exploring Tutorial Spaces
- Theme 4: Knowing your students
- Theme 5: Evaluating your tutorial practice

HERI developed a tutorial attendance solution, utilising QR codes to record students' attendance. This system generates reports for the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) grant. The Deputy Deans can access the Faculty's tutorial data, including activities by tutors, students, and their lecturers, via the Deputy Dean's SharePoint site. Alternatively, all HoDs and Deputy Deans could use this link to access the data. Deputy Deans or HoDs enrolled in a clickUP module have automatic access to the data.

7.2.4 SFTS Enrolment App

The SFTS Enrolment App was developed to improve the process of enrolling modules for course evaluations. Lecturers or administration staff can easily enrol in modules via the app. The uploading of the modules and lecturers to the Watermark course evaluation solution was automated in 2024, which decreased the time the SFTS office initially spent to upload the information and it has also reduced the number of human errors. The enrolment data are available on the SFST Enrolment Application dashboard on PowerBI. HERI integrated the Watermark API with Power BI. This allows HERI to draw on the course evaluation data and to pair it with data used in the Module Analytics dashboard. This has also allowed for the development of a Power BI dashboard that can be used to monitor course enrolments per administration cycle and faculty grouping. This data provides the deputy deans and HoDs another view of the performance or status of a module, based on the feedback from students. It will also provide additional information in the HIMs project.

7.2.5 High Impact Modules (HIMs) Project

The main objective of the HIMs project is to improve the success rate of modules experiencing lower pass rates by pinpointing the critical areas requiring support and concentrating available resources on those modules. The Department for Education Innovation helps with module reviews through its data analytics team, instructional designers, educational consultants, and tutoring support. In the past, the interventions implemented on high-touch modules have significantly improved pass rates.

The module review process takes a team- and data-based approach. For each module review, an analysis is conducted to determine the specific issues affecting the

module's performance regarding curriculum, assessment, policies and practices, support services, communication, students, and lecturers. The review process is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, as well as stakeholder insights. Some potential causes of poor student performance in these modules include:

- Curriculum: the structure of the programme, alignment, content of the module, prior knowledge/skills, admission requirements, and credits (notional hours).
- Assessment (formative and summative): anticipated outcomes, quality, marking, moderation, level, nature, weights, quality assurance, and cognitive demand.
- Teaching and learning: student involvement, prerequisites, prior knowledge, essential concepts, clickUP content, learning materials, study guides, communication, and cognitive demand.
- Student data: readiness, engagement, class attendance, dropout rates, deregistration rates, early alerts, and formative assessment.
- Policies and practices: timetable, facilities, prerequisites, student support (including lecturer availability, tutors, and FSAs).
- clickUP (LMS): design, activities, assessment, communication.

The interventions are determined based on the outcome of the review and may include dedicated team support from EI, access to data in clickUP dashboards and module analytics from PowerBI, formative evaluations through surveys, and further data analysis. In addition, the deputy deans pay special attention to these high-impact modules and report on their progress.

HIMs PROJECT PROCESS

To support the improvement of low-performing modules, the following six-step process is employed:

Step 1: Deans and Deputy Deans use the HIMs dashboard to identify the HIMs modules in their faculties:
- High Impact Modules (success rate < 70% & enrolment > 20)
- Faculty selected modules (i.e. success rate < 70% at 1st year, < 75% at 2nd year, < 80% at 3rd year)
- Student selected modules (i.e. through the faculty houses)

Step 2: Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning collaborate with the Heads of Departments and lecturers. Staff from HERI activate the module on the Module Review App, where lecturers can proceed with the module review, facilitated by the Education Consultant.

Step 3: Responses to the module review will be available on the SharePoint portal to the Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning and the Education Consultants. Additional resources or evaluations of the module are uploaded to the faculty's document library on the SharePoint portal.

Step 4: Based on actionable data from the module self-evaluation report, Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning, Heads of Departments, or module coordinators can request support from the relevant sections of the Department for Education Innovation, including:
- Education Consultants support enhancements in teaching and learning quality, assessment, and curriculum design.
- Instructional Designers to assist with clickUP, course/learning design and setting up the Retention Center in clickUP.
- The SFTS team will support with formative mid-semester surveys.
- Tutorial funding for these modules throughout the course.

Step 5: Evaluation of module interventions and outcomes: The lecturing team evaluates the module interventions and outcomes and reports to the Head of Department and Deputy Deans at the end of the semester.

Step 6: Reporting on the interventions at a Tshebi meeting: Heads of Departments or Deputy Deans give feedback on the impact of the interventions at a Tshebi meeting, which presents and discusses data of high-impact service modules across the phases of progression and arrives at actionable recommendations for follow-up by Deputy Deans.

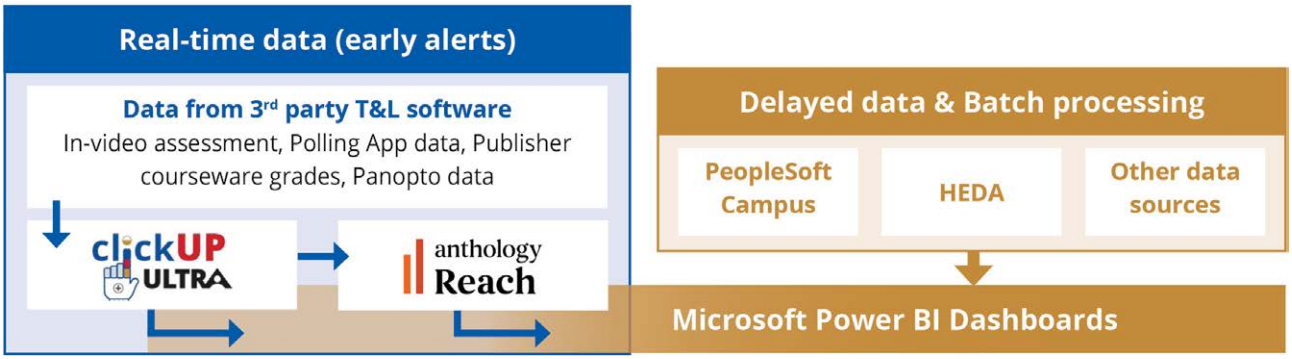
To enhance the performance of underperforming modules, Deans and Deputy Deans utilise the HIMs dashboard to identify HIMs within their faculties. Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning work closely with Heads of Departments and lecturers. HERI initiated the module in the Module Review App, enabling lecturers to commence the review process, which an Education Consultant supports. Outcomes of the module review are accessible to Deputy Deans for Teaching and Learning and Education Consultants via the SharePoint portal. Any additional resources or assessments related to the module are uploaded to the Faculty's document library on the SharePoint portal.

7.2.6 Learner and course analytics: Reports, dashboards & alerts

The University of Pretoria enhances student success through a data-driven strategy that identifies at-risk students early. PowerBI Dashboards offer valuable insights into learner and teaching analytics, enabling data-driven decision-making to improve student outcomes and instructional quality. HERI harnesses data from multiple platforms, including HEDA, Blackboard, Snowflake, surveys, and student feedback to enhance our understanding of student performance, engagement, and needs. By integrating these diverse data sources, the university is well-equipped to implement strategies that enhance student success and address specific educational challenges. The university creates user-friendly dashboards for management, lecturers, and students; namely the Module Analytics, Learner Analytics

dashboards, Academic Success Coaches Activity, Tutorial Attendance, Student Feedback on Teaching Enrolment and the UP Readiness Survey feedback. This enables personalised advising and real-time monitoring of student performance, with effective use of the clickUP Gradebook and setting up a current grade being essential. HERI trains and supports the consumers of their Power BI dashboards, which is mainly targeted toward the Academic Success Coaches, deputy-deans and HoDs.

HERI also trains end-users of the applications that we developed, using self-help manuals, online training or short videos. HERI is responsible for training the users of the Anthology Reach CRM solution, namely the Academic Success Coaches, Mastercard Foundation team and the Peer Advisors.



HERI's Dashboards (see next page)

- Learner Analytics Dashboard
- Module Analytics Executive Dashboard
- Tutorial Attendance Dashboard
- UP Readiness Survey Dashboard
- SFTS Enrolment Dashboard and App
- Module Review Dashboard and App
- Anthology Reach Solution (Support@UP)

From left: Dr Eugene Machimana, Mr Innocent Chauke, Ms Kanye Rampa, Mr Pontsho Masele, Mr Albert Matlheketlha and Ms Londiwe Mahlangu

8 The Community Engagement Unit

Head of the Unit for Community Engagement is Dr Eugene Machimana. The staff members supporting him are Ms Kanye Rampa, Mr Albert Matlheketlha, Ms Londiwe Mahlangu, Mr Innocent Chauke and Mr Pontsho Masele. These staff members support the community engagement work of the faculties: Ms Kanye Rampa (EBIT, HUM and VET), Mr Albert Matlheketlha (HEALTH, LAW and THEO), Ms Londiwe Mahlangu (EDU, EMS and NAS), Mr Innocent Chauke (Moja Gabedi) and Mr Pontsho Masele (Maja Gabedi). These staff members can be seen in the picture below.

8.1 Background

The University of Pretoria (UP) is firm in its intent to continue strengthening and mainstreaming curricular community engagement (CCE) as one of its core functions, alongside teaching, learning, and research. CCE is central to the academic project as we seek positive societal impact through the graduates we produce and the new knowledge we create. CCE forms one of the critical interfaces between the University, its host communities, and society at large. Acknowledging our intimate relationships and interdependence with stakeholders and partners, our engagement is anchored on the concept of mutual benefit with two-way flows of knowledge between participants. We value and respect those we work with, embracing a plurality of knowledges, including the expert knowers from the communities we collaborate with.

Key features of our collaborations are establishing a shared understanding of the issues we collectively seek to address and co-designing initiatives for shared commitment and ownership. Our curricular community engagement is rooted in and arises from our teaching, learning, and research. It is not an adjunct to them. As a critical interface between

the University and society, it brings theory, practice, and research together as we embed the philosophies of citizenship and lifelong learning. It also gives expression to our intent to have a positive societal impact.

We define CCE as the teaching, learning, and scholarship that engages academic staff, students, and the community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. While sharing some similarities, CCE is distinct from work-integrated learning (WIL).

Our approach and practices are framed by our institutional engagement philosophy. Across the diverse publics we interact with, we are mindful of our potential impacts on others, how they might impact us, and the interests we share. Through collaboration and partnering, we amplify our societal contributions. CCE is more than just doing research on communities; it must include using the knowledge gained to address their issues in practical ways.

Community engagement is credit-bearing, making it more sustainable as it is programme-based and has clear outcomes and rigorous assessment. Engaging with society and communities is a core University function that flows from UP's teaching and research functions. The institutional Policy frames our approach to community engagement, which applies to all members and structures of the University community. It recognises that we are integral to our host communities and affirms the importance of communities and civil society in the broader sense. The policy guides and shapes our CE programmes and their integration into core and support functions. It is aligned with our strategic priorities, ensures ethical conduct, and serves as the basis for operational decision-making and practices.

The UP, through its nine faculties, including the Mamelodi Campus, leverages CCE as a vehicle for fostering social transformation in communities. This transformation is driven by partnerships that equally value the voices of all participants. Community engagement is a strategic priority for UP and is embedded in teaching, learning and research, as mandated by the 1997 Education White Paper 3: A programme for the transformation of higher education. UP defines community engagement as the planned, purposeful application of resources and expertise in teaching, learning and research in the university's interaction with external communities to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes aligned with the institution's vision and mission.

The management of community engagement at an institutional level is the mandate of the Unit for Community Engagement in EI, supported by the Community Engagement Management System (CEMS) database. This Unit collaborates with a range of internal and external stakeholders. As most students involved in community engagement earn credit towards their degrees, lecturers, faculties, and students are, therefore, the primary stakeholders. External communities, governmental and non-profit organisations, and the private sector are the other significant stakeholders. The Unit for CE in EI and/or faculties are responsible for the following:

- Providing each student with a suitable opportunity or project related to their specific academic field. This opportunity or project must meet the specific outcomes of the module based on community engagement while solving community-identified problems.
- Providing each student enrolled for these modules with a suitable and safe site where they can do their community-based work.
- Providing suitable transport to the site when required. This is often the biggest challenge and the costliest item owing to the need for more safe public transport.

The staff in the CE office are responsible for ensuring that the Community Engagement Policy is implemented, that students are briefed and kept as safe as possible, and that sites of learning are found and regularly quality assured. Any activities undertaken must align with the learning outcomes that the students must achieve. The policy explicitly addresses the issue of the relationship between communities and the University as partners in the process. The protocol of the CE policy addresses the safety of staff, students, and community members. Maps of safe routes to sites of learning are provided on the CEMS, where students and staff can download them. Moreover, students are briefed on security before starting their CE modules.

8.2 Overvew of 2024 activities

In reimagining community engagement, UP has developed the Curricular Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit. This framework and toolkit guide staff, students, and community partners in advancing strategic objectives that align with UP's vision and mission. CCE is central to the university's academic mission, as it aims to create positive societal impact through the graduates we produce and the knowledge we co-create. As a strategic priority, CCE has full support at the highest levels of the University. An example of this commitment is reflected in the focus of the 2024 Senate Conference: Teaching with Impact: Advancing Curricular Community Engagement for Societal Transformation. The CCE Framework and Toolkit are closely aligned with and follow the UP Integrated Academic Framework, launched in 2023. It is especially integral to the Teaching and Learning System and Pathway featured in the toolkit.

Students and academics undergo orientation before engagement, and the learning focuses on engagement processes, interventions, and outcomes. CCE activities and learning outcomes within specific modules are aligned with students' potential career paths. The Unit for Community Engagement, in collaboration with the Faculty of EMS and the Mamelodi Campus, co-hosted the annual CE Seminar. The CE Seminar was attended by representatives from both national and international universities. The Unit for CE produces several Community Engagement Newsletters annually. These publications highlight the outstanding community engagement efforts undertaken by our academics and students across various faculties:

- Lentšu La Sechaba: Volume 20 (2024)
- Lentšu La Sechaba: Volume 21 (2024)
- Lentšu La Sechaba: Volume 22 (2024)
- Lentšu La Sechaba: Volume 23 (2024)
- Lentšu La Sechaba: Volume 24 (2024)

Although numbers might change annually, 226 modules and 19,967 students were involved in CCE activities in 2024. The University's insurance policy covers up to 3,000 students daily in the field. The table below highlights some of the community partners that collaborated with the university in 2024:

Faculties	Modules	#Students	Example of sites
EBIT	3	1511	Keep that Gold Shining, Whispers Speech, Moja Gabedi, Hearing Centre and Smuts Foundation House Museum
HUM	29	1326	Second Chance Recovery Centre, Jacaranda Children's Home, Transoranje School for the Deaf, Laerskool Hennopspark and Rietfontein North Primary School
VET	15	1855	Freedom Park, Ratjiepane community clinic, Makapanstad tribal office
FHS	123	9454	Bophelong Clinic, Stanza Bopape CHC, Adelaide Tambo Clinic, Refilwe Clinic and COSUP - Ikageng
LAW	2	-	-
THEO	4	67	Tau Village, Gilead Community House, The Potter's House, The Inn and Bronberg Church
NAS	31	516	K49 Citrus Packhouse, Rooikoppies Boerdery, DW Nthathe Adult Education Centre, Eersterust Welfare Organisation for the aged (Ewofa) and Majakaneng Magaliesberg nature
EMS	4	88	Dinokeng Game Reserve, University of Pretoria (Mamelodi Campus), Kwalata Game Lodge and Kwalata Community Development Initiative.
EDU	15	5 150	Blind SA, Crawford International Pre-primary School, Sunnyside Primary, Love Christian Preschool and PS Fourie Primary School
Total	226	19, 967	

There are rarely any incidents and even fewer claims because communities realise the value of the student's contributions and have been known to drive off people attempting to steal a student's vehicle, for instance. Students apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems in partnership with local communities, who have identified the problem in their environments. Student learning is highly contextualised for South Africa and includes elements to develop social responsibility. Students learn to work with leaders in mostly marginalised and underserved communities in the inner city or the precincts around the campuses, townships, and informal settlements. However, they also provide their knowledge and skills to museums, zoos, animal sanctuaries, local farmers, schools, hospitals, and business start-ups. Students help to solve immediate problems and to transfer and develop skills for communities to solve problems independently in the future. CCE activities at the University are credit-bearing in the curriculum, and students cannot graduate without showing evidence of achieving the outcomes of modules through CCE. Formal assessment is also required, which can be formative and summative.

8.3 Moja Gabedi

Moja Gabedi, located at 384 Festival Street and owned by the City of Tshwane, was once an unofficial rubbish dump. In 2019, the University of Pretoria's Unit for Community Engagement initiated a project to rehabilitate this neglected site. After an extensive cleanup operation organised by the NAS Faculty involving 3,000 tons of topsoil and 200 tons of compost, the land was revitalised. Trees were planted, gardens were developed, and temporary structures were erected to serve as therapy centres. Managed by the Unit for Community Engagement in the Department for Education Innovation at the University of Pretoria, Moja Gabedi is benefiting from active student involvement. The site managers, funded by the University, are Innocent Chauke and Pontsho Masele. Under their guidance, Moja Gabedi is transforming into an urban garden that serves the local community.

The university has integrated Moja Gabedi into its curriculum, allowing students to earn credits through community service. Students from the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program are also using the site for their entrepreneurship activities, thereby also providing financial support to Moja Gabedi. In addition, a Dutch non-profit organisation called The Breadhouse is utilising Moja Gabedi for their "Baketainer" project. They are converting sea containers into a bakery to provide affordable bread to the community.

In 2024, the CCE projects at Moja Gabedi demonstrated a robust and meaningful contribution to community engagement and learning experiences. A total of 183 students, drawn from various academic programmes—including JCP, OT, NAS and EDU—successfully implemented a range of projects to address local needs and foster sustainable community development. These student-driven initiatives enhanced the learners' practical skills and problem-solving abilities and provided valuable services and resources to the community. As a result, Moja Gabedi attracted 622 community members, illustrating the positive response and growing interest in these collaborative efforts. Together, the diverse projects and the community's active participation highlight the lasting impact of CCE at Moja Gabedi.

After more than 25 years, Almero du Pisani retired early in 2024 from his position as the head of Creative Studios and Communication Technology.

9 The Creative Studios and Communication Unit

The Creative Studios and Communication Technology (CS&CT) Unit operates across three University of Pretoria campuses. The facilities are managed by Ms Marizanne Booyens (Prinshof studio), Ms Estelle Mayhew (Onderstepoort studio), and Ms Hettie Mans (Hatfield studio), all of whom reported to Mr Almero du Pisani until his retirement in mid-2024. Following his retirement, Ms Marizanne Booyens and Ms Hettie Mans assumed acting leadership roles to ensure continuity and maintain high-quality service delivery. At the Prinshof Campus, Ms Marizanne Booyens and Ms Mmatlhapi Mhlakaza are the graphic designers, while Mr Anton van Dyk serves as the video producer. Ms Mmatlhapi Mhlakaza resigned at the end of September, creating a vacancy in the Prinshof team.

At Onderstepoort, only Ms Estelle Mayhew remains as a graphic designer. At the Hatfield Campus, there are three graphic designers: Ms Hettie Mans, Ms Rita Dave, and Mr Keith Mankgane. Additionally, there are two video producers at the Hatfield Campus: Mr Andre du Plessis and Ms Dinika Mishtry Chunilall. The video and graphic design staff provide services to all campuses under a matrix management model.

9.1 Background

The Creative Studios and Communication Technology (CS&CT) Unit enhances teaching and learning by developing high-quality visual and audio content. Through collaboration with lecturers and instructional designers, the unit produces engaging graphics, animations, illustrations, and educational videos that effectively support innovative teaching practices. By combining creative expertise with technical precision, the CS&CT Unit plays a pivotal role in simplifying complex academic concepts and aligning its efforts with the University of Pretoria's educational goals. By transforming ideas into visually compelling and accessible content, the unit empowers both students and educators, fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment.

9.2 Overview of 2024 activities

In 2024, the Creative Studios & Communication Technology (CS&CT) Unit completed an impressive total of 733 projects, showcasing creativity, resilience, and unwavering dedication. Despite staffing changes and leadership transitions, the team delivered 520 graphic design projects and 213 video productions across three campuses.

Notable achievements included major university campaigns such as the Flexible Futures Conference, UP2U, and the Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot Court Competition. These efforts significantly enhanced teaching and learning across multiple faculties. The team was pivotal in producing a comprehensive video series for the Moot Court held in Kigali, Rwanda, featuring live event coverage, interviews, and promotional highlights.

Additionally, Mr Keith Mankgane, a graphic designer at the Hatfield Campus, enrolled in the Instructional Design Tools for e-Learning short course offered by EnterprisesUP. This eight-week online course, conducted through clickUP, enhanced Keith's skills in developing multimedia learning materials and strengthened the team's instructional design capabilities.

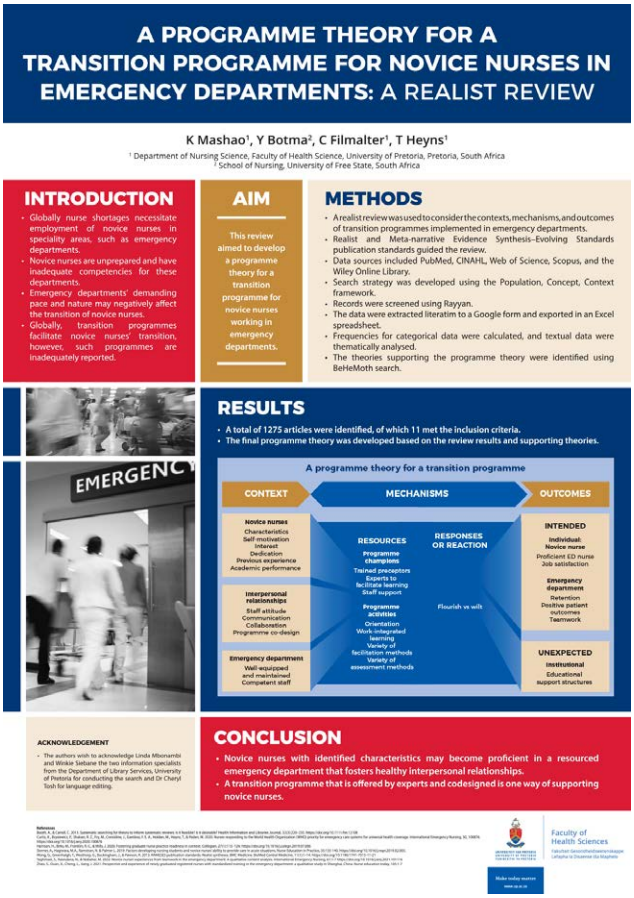
The Prinshof Campus focused on supporting the Faculty of Health Sciences, providing specialised design and media services tailored to medical education. A significant highlight was designing the visual identity for the new clickUP Ultra learning management system, setting its professional look and feel. The team also earned recognition at the 2024 Health Sciences Faculty Research Day with two award-winning research posters.

The Onderstepoort Campus specialises in scientific illustrations and bespoke visual aids for the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Their work includes detailed medical diagrams, research posters, and educational materials tailored to veterinary education and research.

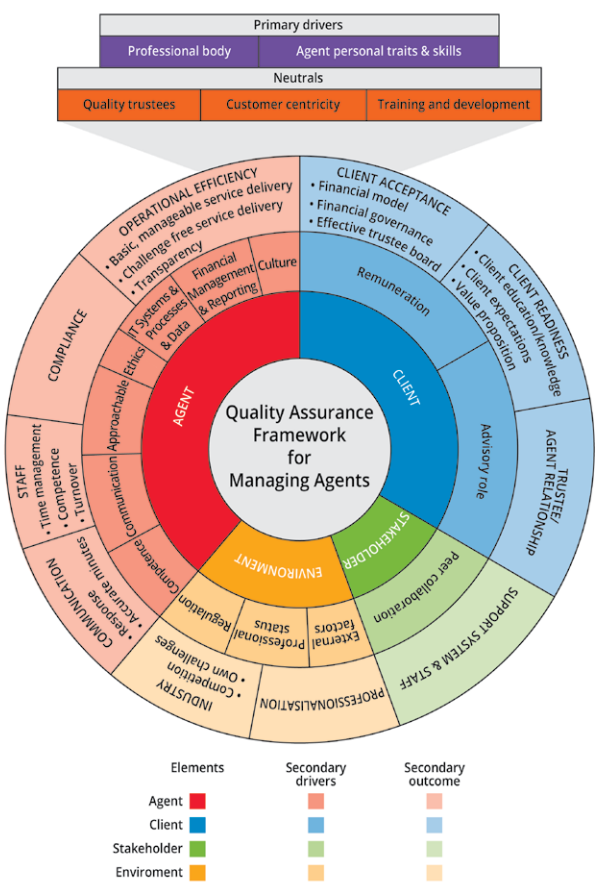
The video team participated in a collaborative session with the University of the Free State (UFS), which facilitated the exchange of knowledge on teaching media production and contributed to the continuous development of best practices across institutions.

Through cross-campus collaboration and the innovative use of emerging technologies, such as AI-generated voiceovers and automated design workflows, CS&CT enhanced its creative capacity. The unit's projects supported key university initiatives in Education Innovation, aligning with the University of Pretoria's strategic goals. The team remains committed to creative excellence, technological innovation, and expanding its impact on teaching, learning, and university branding.

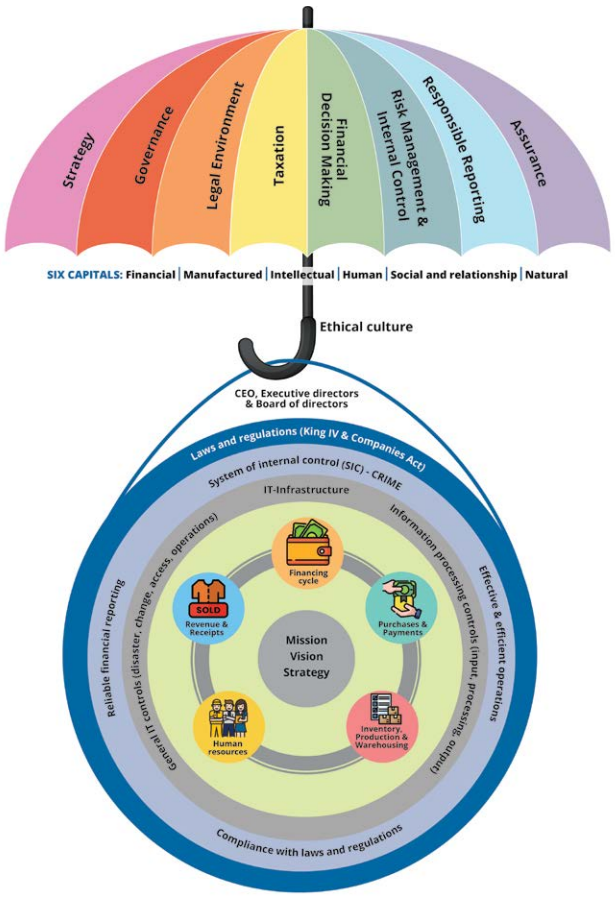
1st Prize. Category: Advanced Academic
Client: Prof. Sandra Spijkerman
Department of Anaesthesiology



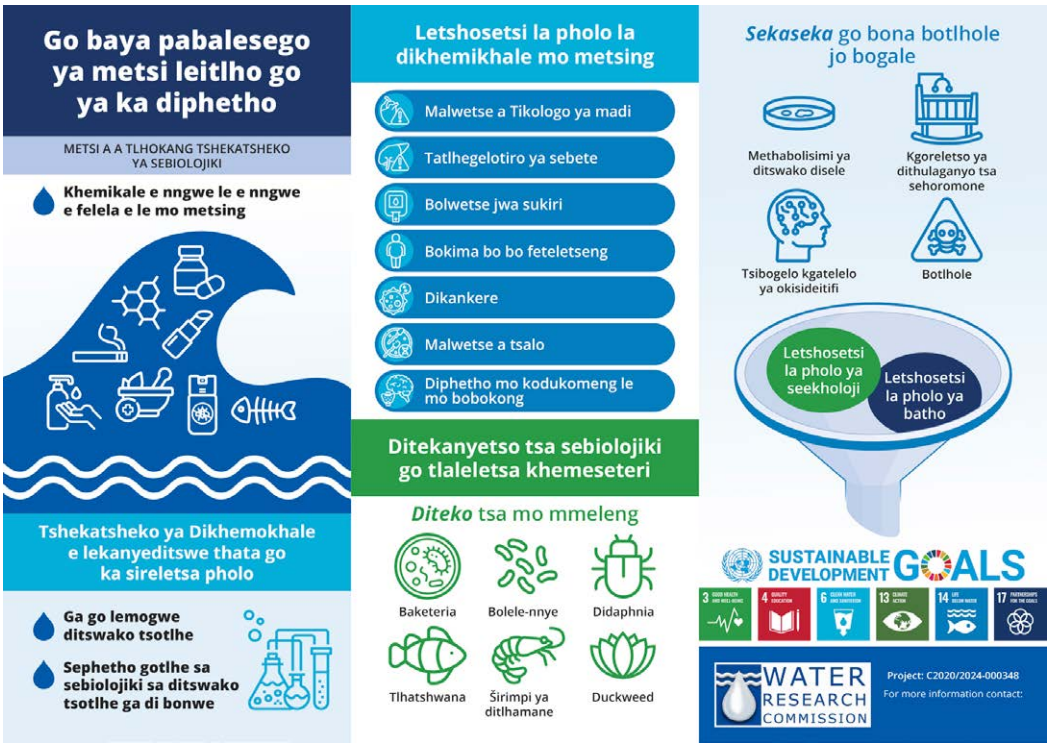
2nd Prize: Category: Doctoral
Client: Ms. Kapari Mashao
Department of Nursing Science



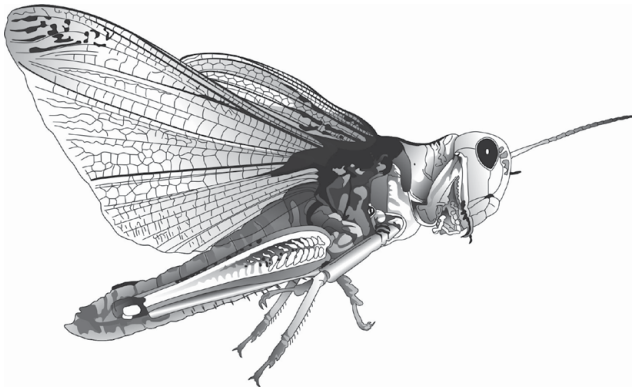
Quality Assurance Framework Organogram
Client: Carla Coetzee
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences



Infographic
Client: Bernice Beukes
Department of Auditing

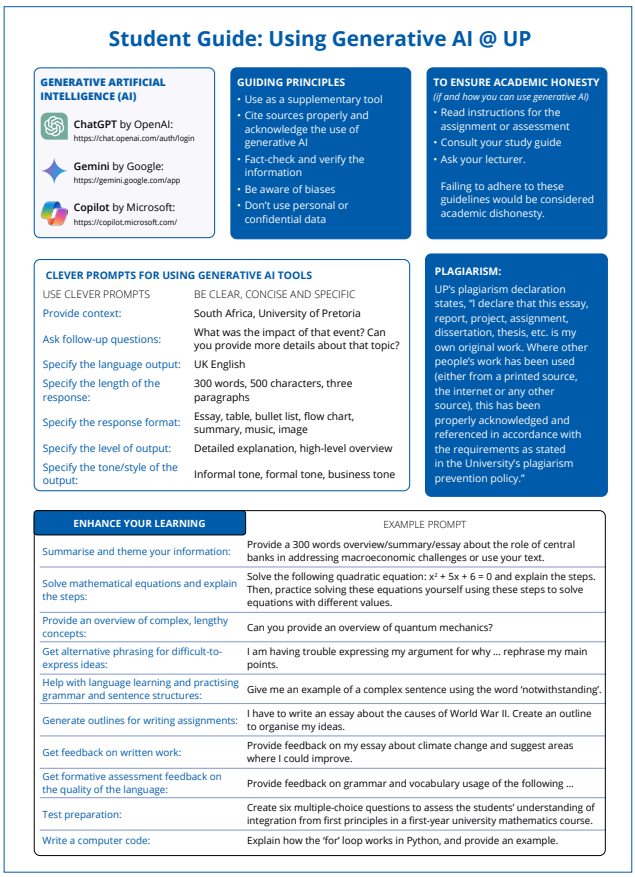


Water in need for biological screening
Client: N Aneck-Hahn
Faculty of Health Sciences (Urology)
The Water in need for biological screening pamphlet was created in English and Sotho for a research project that creates awareness about chemicals and toxicity in water.



Locust illustration
Client: Ned Snelling
Faculty of Veterinary Science
Anatomy and Physiology

This illustration depicts Meganeura, an extinct dragonfly studied by the Department of Anatomy and Physiology at the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Part of the Meganeuridae family, M. monyi is one of the largest-known flying insects, with wingspans reaching up to 75 cm.



Student Guide: Using Generative AI @ UP

Student Guide: Using Generative AI @ UP
Department for Education Innovation

Created a guide's visual layout and design to help students understand how to use generative AI tools like ChatGPT responsibly. The guide provides guidelines on ethical use, effective prompts, avoiding plagiarism, and enhancing learning through AI-supported study methods.

Revamp orientation video
Client: Kanye Rampa
Community Engagement

This community engagement video was revamped using AI-generated characters and audio, set on a 3D-animated aeroplane, symbolising connection and learning. The production involved scripting, 3D modelling, AI voice synthesis, and dynamic animations, ensuring a polished, evergreen video aligned with the university's mission.

Library Day 2024
Client: Elsabe Olivier
Library Services

This project was created for Library Day 2024, highlighting University of Pretoria librarians as they shared their journeys and reasons for choosing the profession. It featured a retro-styled design, combining old graduation photos of each staff member with their contemporary portraits, creating a nostalgic yet modern visual experience.

10 The Mastercard Foundation Unit

Dr Grace Ramafi, the Senior Manager, oversees the overall management of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Programme at the University of Pretoria. Dr Efe Isike, the Programme Manager, is responsible for supporting postgraduate Scholars at the master's level and managing the operational aspects of the Programme. The Undergraduate Academic Coordinator, Ms Bonolo Letshufi, supports the selection of Scholars for the Programme and assists with course selection, academic advising, monitoring, liaising with faculties, mentoring, and referral services. Ms Eloise Law-Van Wyk, the Counselling Psychologist, provides students with academic counselling and psychosocial support. Mr Lennox Wasara serves as the Project Coordinator for Entrepreneurship, Community Engagement, and Transitions, while Mr Shelton Hlongwane is the Senior Recruitment and Liaison Officer. Mr Hlongwane is tasked with developing student recruitment strategies, recruitment processes, and data management. Mr Hlongwane assumed the role after Mr Sifiso Khuboni resigned on 1 December 2023. The position was reviewed and upgraded to a higher-level role. Mr Hlongwane officially joined the team in July 2024. The Accounting Officer, Mr Leaganoshi Lesufi, and the Administrative Officer, Ms Nandy Theka, play crucial roles in financial and administrative management. Mr Lesufi is responsible for developing and overseeing financial operations, ensuring compliance, and reporting all fund transactions accurately. Ms Theka, on the other hand, manages administrative and finance support for the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Programme. Other team members include a finance intern, Ms Xivono Mtileni, and two Scholar assistants, Ms Lilian Kafuko and Mr Tony Oche. Both are alumni of the Programme and are currently pursuing PhDs in International Relations and Food Science, respectively. On 1 December, a new staff member joined as the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Officer. Interviews for the Marketing and Communications Officer position were held on 10 December 2024. An appointable candidate has been offered the position, and the role is anticipated to be filled by February 2025.

10.1 Background

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at the University of Pretoria (UP) represents a transformative partnership between the Mastercard Foundation and UP, aimed at fostering inclusive and impactful higher education. Initiated in 2013, this programme addresses educational and socio-economic barriers for young Africans, enabling them to achieve academic excellence and become agents of change in their communities. The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program offers funding support to high-achieving young Africans interested in undergraduate or postgraduate studies at UP. It specifically targets students who will contribute to the continent's transformation through their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, as evidenced by their leadership. In addition to their academic programmes,

community service, internships, and entrepreneurial skills are essential components of the programme. Scholars are also expected to participate in community engagement programmes. They are offered leadership training workshops as part of the wraparound and transition support necessary to help them move smoothly from education to dignified and fulfilling employment or entrepreneurship. Graduates find employment within three months after graduation. The programme continues to support its Alumni in pursuing multiple pathways, such as higher degrees, work, and entrepreneurship. Mental health and well-being support are provided to them in addition to sharing workplace development skills and mentorship. Twenty-seven African countries are represented in the Program. As part of the support, the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program covers:

- Full tuition fees
- Accommodation in a UP residence
- A modest monthly stipend
- Prescribed textbooks
- Medical aid cover for the duration of the study
- Visa costs
- Reasonable travel costs (including flight tickets) to and from South Africa
- Academic and non-academic workshops

The Foundation extends beyond direct Scholars' support to strengthening UP's institutional systems. The Foundation continues to strengthen UP's reputation as a hub for transformative education in Africa. Examples include:

- CRM Implementation: A $500,000 investment supports the Anthology REACH CRM system, enhancing student retention and alumni tracking.
- Benchmarking and Collaboration: UP serves as a model for inclusive learning and operational excellence, hosting peer institutions to share expertise in campus planning, financial processes, procurement, and disability support.
- Program Associates: A training initiative employs 24 graduates, addressing employment challenges and supporting UP's administrative functions.
- The broader UP students will be invited to participate at Moja Gabedi site as part of community engagement. We will work with the UP Community Engagement Unit.
- Mastercard Foundation Scholars together with the broader UP students (on a voluntary basis) will be trained as Peer Counsellors by Solid Minds (Mastercard Foundation Partner). The Student Counselling Unit will oversee/supervise the Peer Counsellors.

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Programme exemplifies the University of Pretoria's dedication to social impact, innovation, and the empowerment of young African leaders. It establishes a robust platform for sustained success and meaningful global contributions. The Foundation continues to champion academic excellence by focusing on:

- Supporting under-represented groups, including 70% young women, refugees, internally displaced persons, and individuals with disabilities.
- Building a resilient and inclusive academic community.
- Promoting leadership, entrepreneurship, and employability.
- Enhancing UP's reputation as a leading hub for transformative education in Africa.

10.2 Comprehensive wrap-around support for scholars

The Scholar Support Programme takes a holistic, needs-based approach to ensure Scholars achieve academic excellence, develop leadership capabilities, engage actively with their communities, and transition seamlessly into professional careers. By offering personalised academic guidance, comprehensive financial assistance, leadership development opportunities, and psychosocial support, the programme creates an environment where Scholars can flourish. Additionally, the initiative highlights the importance of cultural inclusion, community engagement, and personal growth, equipping Scholars with the skills and mindset to make a lasting impact locally and globally. Through this multifaceted approach, the programme empowers Scholars to maximise their potential while fostering a sense of social responsibility and contribution.

- **Academic Support:**
  - ◊ Guidance and Planning: Academic Coordinators support Scholars in charting their academic paths, offering advice on course selection, setting achievable research timelines, and ensuring they meet graduation requirements within designated timeframes.
  - ◊ Individualised Support: One-on-one consultations assist Scholars in defining realistic academic and career goals, improving study techniques, and managing time effectively.
  - ◊ Liaison Role: Coordinators serve as intermediaries between Scholars and faculty, addressing academic concerns and resolving issues with supervisors or staff. They also facilitate access to tutorials and peer mentoring programmes, enhancing academic success and retention.
  - ◊ Progress Monitoring: Regular check-ins and progress assessments provide Scholars with timely feedback and interventions. In cases of academic difficulty, Scholars may be redirected to more suitable programmes.
  - ◊ Ongoing Communication: Coordinators maintain consistent dialogue with Scholars, faculty, and departmental staff to align academic objectives and foster a supportive environment.

- **Financial Support:**
  - ◊ Full coverage of tuition fees throughout the study period.
  - ◊ Accommodation and meals provided in a UP residence or accredited housing.
  - ◊ A monthly stipend.
  - ◊ Funding for prescribed textbooks, medical aid, visa

fees, and round-trip flights to and from the Scholar's home.

- ◊ Bereavement travel support.
- ◊ A one-time winter allowance.
- ◊ Annual stationery allowances for both postgraduate and undergraduate Scholars.
- ◊ Annual printing credits for both postgraduate and undergraduate Scholars.

- **Leadership Support in 2024:**
  - ◊ The Program team benefitted from two support workshops on leadership (Trauma Informed Approaches) and on Mental Health and Mindset. For Scholars the below were provided:
  - ◊ Mastercard Transformative Leadership Programme: Introduced in 2024 as a five-month pilot project by ALLI, this program empowers Scholars to critically examine their personal and leadership narratives through five full day sessions, daily reflective practices, and one-on-one mentoring. Following its success, it will continue in the Program's next phase.
  - ◊ Peer-Led Leadership Networks: Scholars engaged in peer-led leadership communities, fostering collaboration, resource sharing, and cultivating enduring professional and personal networks (Scholars SRC, Baobab, etc.).
  - ◊ Values-Driven Leadership Training: The Program emphasises integrity, accountability, and responsible decision-making, instilling a foundation for principled and ethical leadership.
  - ◊ Cultural Awareness and Inclusion: Training prepares Scholars to lead in diverse environments by promoting cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, ensuring they are equipped to manage and celebrate diversity effectively.
  - ◊ Practical Leadership Experiences: Hands-on opportunities, such as project management and mentorship roles, enable Scholars to apply leadership theories and develop critical management skills in real-world contexts.
  - ◊ Equitable Leadership Practices: Guidance is provided to help Scholars foster equitable, respectful, and supportive work and study environments, encouraging diverse perspectives and mutual respect.
  - ◊ Mentorship and Support Systems: Scholars were connected with mentors and peer networks for continuous guidance, personal development, and advice on navigating personal and professional challenges.

- **Psychosocial Support:**
  - ◊ Scholars are provided with comprehensive access to therapeutic interventions and mental health support. This includes counselling on time management, substance abuse awareness, and career guidance, with tailored interventions for underperforming Scholars.
  - ◊ International Scholars receive specialised orientation and support networks to ease cultural adjustment and transition. Many Scholars, including Programme Alumni, have benefitted from multiple forms of counselling provided through the Programme.

- **Academic Counselling:**
  - ◊ Personalised Support: Scholars received individual guidance on study techniques, time management, and balancing academic and extracurricular commitments.
  - ◊ Resource Utilisation: Throughout 2024, Scholars were encouraged to utilise academic resources such as tutoring services, writing labs, and faculty advising.
  - ◊ Performance Monitoring: Regular check-ins were conducted to identify challenges, followed by tailored strategies to support academic success.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives:**
  - ◊ Inclusive Support from Orientation: From the moment Scholars join the Programme, diversity and inclusion are prioritised. Activities begin at orientation to ensure Scholars feel respected and valued.
  - ◊ Collaboration with Key Units: The Programme partners with the Transformation Office, Disability Unit, and Human Rights Unit to promote inclusivity and accessibility.
  - ◊ Cultural Immersion Workshops: These workshops are offered during orientation and throughout the academic year to deepen cultural understanding.
  - ◊ Heritage Day Celebration: A highlight of the Programme calendar, this annual event showcases the diverse cultures represented by the 27 African countries participating in the Programme.

- **Transition Support:**
  - ◊ Internships and Job Placements
  - ◊ The Programme has established partnerships with organisations to offer internships and practical work opportunities.
  - ◊ In 2024, 31 internships were completed, with 23 new internships scheduled for the December/January holiday period.

- **Career Readiness:**
  - ◊ Workshops and Training: Scholars participated in CV writing, interview preparation, and job search strategy workshops led by the African Careers Network (ACN), a Mastercard Foundation partner, as well as sessions during the Programme's July research conference and workshops by UP's Career Services Unit.
  - ◊ Leadership and Entrepreneurship Masterclasses: These masterclasses were offered to both Scholars and Alumni, equipping them with advanced skills for career progression.

- **Networking and Mentorship:**
  - ◊ Scholars were connected with Alumni, mentors, and industry professionals, providing valuable guidance and expanding career opportunities.

This comprehensive support system empowers Scholars to achieve academic success, develop leadership and career readiness skills, and transition effectively into professional roles while embracing cultural diversity and inclusion.

10.3 Community Engagement and Service Initiatives

The Programme facilitated workshops to prepare Scholars for meaningful community service and fostered partnerships with local organisations to ensure impactful contributions. In 2024, 44 Scholars actively participated in community engagement activities, providing invaluable support to various initiatives. Notable beneficiaries included:

- Lefika la Botshelo in Hammanskraal: A centre dedicated to the transformation and empowerment of orphaned and vulnerable children.
- Pfuna Vanhu Help Mense Shelter: A non-racial, non-profit organisation providing shelter and support for vulnerable and homeless families, as well as abused children and women.
- Tutoring in Schools: Scholars offered academic assistance to learners, supporting their educational development.
- Soup Kitchens: Several initiatives in the vicinity of UP provided meals to homeless individuals, ensuring essential support for those in need.

Scholars are encouraged to give back to less fortunate communities, fostering a sense of responsibility and a commitment to sustainable development within their home countries. The Programme includes a 24-hour minimum community service requirement, though many Scholars exceeded this due to their dedication. To maximise learning, structured debrief sessions are conducted, allowing Scholars to reflect on their experiences and reinforce key outcomes from their engagement activities. This approach ensures that Scholars not only make meaningful contributions but also develop a deeper understanding of community challenges and the value of service in driving positive change.

10.4 Overview of 2024 activities

10.4.1 Phase I (2013–2023): Achievements and Impact

In the first phase of a ten-year partnership with the University (2013-2023), the Program has supported 397 Scholars surpassing the 347 Scholars initially targeted with a $21,5 million including an additional $100,000 entrepreneurship fund in 2018 which was added to the funding to develop the entrepreneurial skills of the Scholars:

- **Demographics:** 41% of participants were female, with representation from refugees and individuals with disabilities.
- **Outcomes:** In 2024, 53 Scholars (34 females and 19 males) graduated leading to 213 Scholars completing one degree, 79 Scholars two degrees, and 11 Scholars completing three degrees in Phase I of the Program.
- **Attrition Rate:** The Program maintained a low attrition rate of 9.6%, outperforming the university's overall rate of 13.9%.
- **Alumni Success:** Out of the 284 Alumni, 165 achieved dignified employment, 48 transitioned to higher education enrolment, or internships. Many advanced to PhD programmes at prestigious institutions on the continent and overseas.
- **Community Engagement:** Alumni served as mentors and ambassadors, contributing to recruitment and support efforts.

10.4.2 Phase II (2024–2030): Strategic Enhancements

With $39.8 million in funding, Phase II is designed to amplify inclusivity, academic support, and employability outcomes. The initiative will benefit 600 scholars (300 comprising of 200 undergraduates, 100 Honours and 300 postgraduates). On average, 150 students will be recruited annually over the next four years. The Program prioritises females, refugees, internally displaced persons, and individuals with disabilities—groups not previously targeted intentionally—the demographic composition of 70% female, 25% refugees, 5-10% young people with disabilities and 65% international students. The Program supports academic programmes within the following faculties:

- Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and IT
- Faculty of Humanities
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences
- Faculty of Theology and Religion

Phase II of the Mastercard-funded project was officially launched in June 2024. The inaugural Phase II cohort, consisting of 63 postgraduate Honours and Master's students, commenced their studies in July 2024. One Scholar withdrew voluntarily due to valid personal and family circumstances, leaving a total of 62 Scholars in the 2024 cohort. For 2025, the Programme has accepted 73 undergraduate students, 32 Honours students, and 71 Master's students, continuing its commitment to academic excellence and transformative education.

10.4.3 Challenges and Lessons Learned

Operational Hurdles: Delays in processing settling-in allowances for international Scholars highlighted the need for more efficient and streamlined administrative systems. Additionally, gaps in mental health support services were identified, prompting plans to enhance psychological resources in 2025. The delays in postgraduate admissions

for Honours and Master's students created complications in the Mastercard review process and caused further delays in visa applications, underscoring the importance of better coordination and timely processes.

Language Barriers: The non-acceptance of Duolingo language tests at UP posed a significant challenge, particularly for students from countries where English is not the primary language. Interactions with Francophone and other non-English-speaking applicants further emphasised the importance of robust language support resources, which will become a priority in the coming year.

Sustainability Efforts: There are ongoing discussions to integrate sustainable practices into Programme activities, including enhanced support for operational resources in collaboration with UP's Finance and Operations Office. Sustainability in Programme operations will remain a key focus in the year ahead. Furthermore, the widespread belief that South Africa is an unsafe destination for outsiders stems from a lack of understanding of the country's cultural and social environment, highlighting the need to address these misconceptions proactively.

These challenges have offered valuable lessons that will inform efforts to improve the Programme's processes, support systems, and overall impact moving forward.

11 Research outputs

Publications in Accredited Journals

Nsibande, R. and Modiba. M. (2024). Perspectives and discourses on teaching evaluations in a South African university. Ethnography and Education Special Issue, 19(3), 225–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2024.2354208

Books

Goode, H.A., 2024, Critical Thinking Skills for Students: Curriculum and Practice in South African Higher Education. UNISA Press, ISBN 978-1-77615-206-3

Books Chapters

Dube, K., Booysen, R.M. & Chili, M. (2024). Education Issues Post-COVID-19: Advancing Sustainability- A Policy Perspective. In Dube, K.(eds) Redefining Education and Development. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031069954-2_13

Dube, K., Booysen, R.M. & Chili, M. (2024). Redefining Education and Development: Innovative Approaches in the Era of Sustainable Goals. In Dube, K.(eds) Redefining Education and Development. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031069954-2_13

Vokwana, N., Baleni, L. & Ndawule, L. (2024). Technology-enhanced Assessment: Opportunities and threats to lecturers; Electronic ISSN 2524-5570 2524-5562, 30 May 2024 by Springer Nature

Vokwana, N., Baleni, L. & Nkonki, V. (2024). The positioning of technology-enhanced learning (TEL) practice within connectivism theory for developing blended learning, Electronic ISSN 2524-5570; Print ISSN 2524-5562, 30 May 2024 by Springer Nature.

Invited keynote, seminar, or guest speaker

Stols, G. (13-14 September 2024). Harnessing the power of Generative AI in STEAM education. Keynote presented at the STE*M Education International Conference, Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

Stols, G. (18 September 2024). Useless assessments: AI and digital learning. Keynote presented at the NWU AI Forum, Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University, South Africa. Stols, G. (19 August 2024). Welcome and keynote address. Keynote presented at the UP2U Conference, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Stols, G. (18 May 2024). Exploring the connection between beauty and science with ChatGPT. Keynote presented at the 2024 Provincial STEAM Seminar, Kingswood College, Makhanda, South Africa.

Conference Papers

Barry, C.G. (2024, August 21–22). Enhancing Collaborative Assessment Practices through AI: A Case Study from a Master in Education Programme. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Bharath, P., & Sebake, K. (2024, August 21–22). Exploring the efficacy of Clickers PointSolutions in higher education: Enhancing attendance tracking, classroom engagement, and assessment. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Getsos, S., & Kriel, D. (2024, August 21–22). AI learning and assessment intervention for Practical Law (PRR) 400 students. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Getsos, S., & Kriel, D. (2024, October 17). An artificial intelligence (AI) learning and assessment intervention for Practical Law (PRR) 400 students. Fully Online and Distance Education Symposium (FODES), University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Jordaan, D. (2024, July 22). Data-driven pedagogical change management in implementing Ultra. Anthology Together, Orlando, Florida, USA.

Jordaan, D. (2024, August 21–22). Micro-credentials and Digital Badges. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Jordaan, D. (2024, November 4). AI usage in the LMS at UP. Ethical AI in Action World TourConference, GIBS, Sandton, South Africa.

Mathibedi, M.F., & Hlabane, A.S. (2024, November 26-29). Bridging the feedback loop by empowering Teaching Assistants as effective markers. HELTASA, University of Limpopo and & University of Venda, LImpopo, South Africa.

Nsibande, R., Majozi, B., Mphanda, E., and Mathabathe, K. (2024, June 25-28). Leveraging Technology for Systematic Attendance Tracking and Capturing Student Feedback to Enhance Teaching Quality and Manage Resources. Siyaphumelela Conference, The Wanderes Club, Johannesburg.

Scheepers, D. (2024, May 8) The University of Pretoria's approach to transitioning to Ultra courses. Paper presented at Innovate & Educate Africa, Anthology at Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Smart, A., & Sebake, K. (2024, August 21–22). Contextualised activities towards lecturer agency: From scaffolded activities to challenges in clickUP Ultra. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Smart, A., & Thukane, M. (2024, October 17). Enhancing quality assurance in online education: Opportunities and challenges of AI tools inside the LMS in the South African context. Fully Online and Distance Education Symposium (FODES), University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Snyman, C. (2024, October 17). Unlocking learning: Virtual escape rooms as a game-based learning strategy. Fully Online and Distance Education Symposium (FODES), University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa. (Awarded best abstract).

Snyman, C., & Drysdale, E. (2024, November 14). Setting Up Your Gradebook for Ultra Success: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Assessment. Digital Teaching Symposium. Online.

Snyman, C., Wolmarans, G., Pretorius, G., & Silinda, Z. (2024, August 21–22). Reimagining attendance tracking in higher education: Challenges and solutions for enhancing academic integrity. 10th Flexible Futures Conference, Future Africa Institute, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

Stegmann, R., Batchelor, J., Goode, H.A., Makaula, S., Stoltenkamp, J. and Zawada, B.E. (2024, September 25th - 27th). Negotiating Binaries in Modes of Provision: A Higher Education Practice Standard for Blended and Online Learning. 6th SAQAN Conference 2024, Livingstone, Zambia.

Membership of Associations / Research Bodies / International Committees

Heather Goode: Council on Higher Education Community of Practice: The HEPS on Modes of learning and teaching provision

- Heather Goode: USAF Digital Education Community of Practice (DELT CoP)
- Rejoice Nsibande: International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL)
- Jordaan, Dolf: Anthology Community Leadership
- Jordaan, Dolf: Abtology Leadership Circle
- Slabbert, Johan: Anthology Leadership Circle

External Workshops presented

Goode, H.A. 2023 National Visualise Your Thesis Competition as judge @UJ, 28 February 2024

Goode, H.A. DBA Webinar: How to Write a Good Thesis, Westford University College, 1 March 2024.

Goode, H.A. Lateral Thinking for solving business challenges in the digital world, Westford Uni Online/Westford for Business,Westford University College, 19 March 2024.

Goode, H.A. Webinar for UniVen: Incorporating Entrepreneurship in the Curriculum, 15 November 2024.

Goode, H.A. Webinar Generative AI in Higher Education: Navigating between Friend, Foe, Fiend, and Frankenstein, The Department of English Studies, UNISA. 26 March 2024

Goode, H.A. Webinar Reflecting on negotiating binaries in Modes of Provision: the development of a HEPS,The Independent Institute of Education (The IIE):Accreditation and Quality Assurance Academic Forum, Friday, 18 October 2024

Mathibedi, M.F. Implementing module reviews (Siyaphumelela National Service Workshop: SAIDE), 14 April 2024.

Nsibande R and Mazibuko, N. 'Do No Harm': Re-thinking student feedback on teaching and courses in higher education. Cape Peninsula University of Technology. 7 August 2024.

Stegmann, R., Batchelor, J., Goode, H.A., Makaula, S., Stoltenkamp, J. and Zawada, B.E. Webinar, CHE - Your QAF Lunch Hour No. 5 - The HEPS on Modes of learning and teaching provision. 16 Aug 2024

Stegmann, R., Goode, H.A., and Zawada, B.E., CHE The HEPS on Modes of learning and teaching provision. Durban Workshop presentation, October 2024

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