UKZN STRATEGIC PLAN: 2023-2032
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FOREWORD
MESSAGE FROM THE UKZN CHANCELLOR

The UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan provides a momentous milestone in the history of the University and lays the foundation to propel the institution to great heights in its endeavour to maintain and further strengthen its status as the Premier University of African Scholarship, with global stature. To achieve this aspiration will entail significant investment in human, physical and financial resources. The effective implementation of the Strategic Plan will require robust and non-bureaucratic structures and systems to achieve the UKZN vision, a clear sense of urgency and destiny. With the support of its partners – in government, industry, and the international community – we will strive to promote the academic project with the aim to make the University of KwaZulu-Natal a hub for high-impact research, innovation, and entrepreneurship as well as graduate studies and research.

During the preceding UKZN 2017-2021 strategic plan period, the University reached significant milestones including the expansion of its physical infrastructure supported by DHET, significant transformation of its staff and student profiles, and a step change in staff who graduated with a PhD. The University also maintained the lead nationally in terms of having the most published research outputs, as recognised by the Department of Higher Education and Training. The University provided visionary leadership in medical research, including COVID-19 vaccinology.

During the UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan, it is expected that the University will put thrust on leveraging the new and emerging technologiesparticularly i4.0 to enhance access and improve the quality of our academic offering to address the labour market needs of our students and improve the quality of life for our people and the nation. During the plan period, the University must strive to promote the academic project through research, teaching, and disseminating new knowledge. For the University to change our reality and continue to inspire greatness, we must change our mindset, choices, actions, behaviours, experiences, and feelings so that we can break new ground.

It is my conviction that we shall all work together towards building a world-class University for a better South Africa, the continent of Africa and the world for us to unlock infinite possibilities for all.

Dr Reuel Khoza
UKZN Chancellor
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL

It is a great honour to be part of the 10-year UKZN strategic planning journey. The UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan was developed through a highly consultative and participatory process which involved all key stakeholders of the university from within and outside the institution. The Strategic Plan reflects the collective resolve of key stakeholders of the University in achieving the institution’s strategic vision in the next 10 years. The aspirations of the University expressed in the institution’s strategic statements will require significant investment, especially in human capital development and the attraction and retention of talent at all levels to achieve the academic project.

The UKZN Strategic Plan 2023-2032 is aimed at strengthening the academic project of the University to enhance excellence in all the strategic areas of the institution. I am pleased that this Strategic Plan has been developed taking cognisance of the national and global trends and context of Higher Education particularly regarding the evolving stiff competition for faculty and students, declining funding from governments, and the increasing demands for accountability. The Strategic Plan underscores the quest of the University to promote partnerships, enhance its position in the global ranking of universities, and leverage the growing application of i4.0 technologies in teaching/learning and research.

The University’s intention to address the financial challenges facing the students, particularly the growing number of students from Quintile 1-3 schools being admitted to UKZN is a significant milestone. The Strategic Plan also makes a strong case for the accountability and sustainability of the University including the emerging issues and risks that need to be managed. More importantly, through the Strategic Plan, the University acknowledges the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic occasioned which has given impetus to the further deployment of digital platforms to accommodate increased accessibility to our academic programmes.

The Strategic Plan comes at a time when the University is fully seized with the Project Renewal initiative that will bring significant transformation in the core business of the academic project. In this regard, the Strategic Plan proposes the reconfiguration of key divisions of the University such as Student Support, the deanery, professional services and executive to enhance efficiency in our services and provide an excellent student experience.

During the Plan period, Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship being critical components of the function of our university will be resourced substantially to make the University a hub for high impact cross-cutting interdisciplinary research and innovation, with the development of focused research institutes an ongoing project.

We are persuaded that in pursuing this path we shall reposition our institution for continued global competitiveness and sustainability. This Strategic Plan is being implemented following a successful rebalancing of the institution’s finances and positioning of the University on a sustainable growth path. As Council, we are excited to be part of this ambitious and forward-looking blueprint of the University for the next 10 years. We applaud the hard work and diligence of the members of the task team that developed this Strategic Plan and the stakeholders who provided input in the strategic planning process. We look forward to working collectively together to implement the UKZN 10-year Strategic Plan 2023-2032.

Dr Leticia Moja
Chairperson of Council
The UKZN 10-year Strategic Plan (2023-2032) is founded on its enduring vision and mission, but it has been conceived at a time of increased turbulence in the national, regional, and international Higher Education sector that the University leadership must contend with. Internationally, the sector is witnessing digital disruptions—unbundling and the gig economy; universities being perceived as social institutions; and new forms of credentialing, coupled with Lifelong Learning. This Strategic Plan has also been developed in an environment in which institutions of higher learning in South Africa have been adversely affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic that impacted lives and livelihoods affecting access, including a decline in student numbers and decreasing revenues from the various University income streams. The University also opened its gates to a huge number of students from Quintile 1-3 Schools to pursue a university education.

The University Strategic Plan 2023-2032 takes a long-term view, with a focus on Africa as the growth market while allowing flexibility in the delivery of the UKZN products—hence the ten-year proposed time-frame with inbuilt, continuous monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems. Since this document is an overview of the Strategy, much of the detail of the evaluation, monitoring and lines of reporting has not been included, but the Strategy has been designed to a level of detail that ensures its implementation and sustainability.

We see the African continent, its people and its intelligentsia as an opportunity rather than as threatening competition. Furthermore, aligning our programs and scholarship to addressing national and continental issues will enable the University to attract external funding. The Strategic Plan 2023-2032 is also cognisant of the global and national operating environment underpinned by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the regional and national development blueprints including Africa Agenda 2063 and the South African NDP 2030.

The Strategic Plan presents five strategic goals that the University aspires to deliver upon during the 10-year plan period. These strategic goals are: Excellent Teaching and Learning; Excellent Student Experience; Excellent and High Impact Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship; High Impact Societal and Stakeholder Community Engagement; and Targeted Internationalisation. Over the next 10 years, the University will build a resilient physical and human infrastructure to foster innovation and entrepreneurship while continuing to engage in cutting-edge research so that it not only makes an increasing intellectual impact internationally but also benefits society by addressing immediate challenges and societal needs. By creating partnerships and relationships with public and private sector partners as a vehicle for achieving its aspirations, the University will pursue its core purpose – to inspire greatness in every aspect of its mandate. In short, the University will remain distinctive in promoting change and innovation whilst preserving knowledge and values.

The University will strive to establish key high-impact interdisciplinary research institutes and promote institutional collaboration with industry and all stakeholders in order to provide a strong foundation that ensures relevant programmes are continually offered. To further facilitate the effective delivery of the Strategic Plan, UKZN will continually strive to grow a deep service culture across the institution, delivering excellence within an enabling environment, and providing world-class infrastructure to support a vibrant knowledge community. At the heart of the service culture is our value system—the REACH principles that all at the University will aspire to live by daily. These principled values point to a future where we will expand our world-leading research to address the most challenging global questions and exploit our capability for interdisciplinary research; transform the way our students learn to make them the most employable graduates and truly global citizens who continually take advantage of new and emerging technologies to meet the needs of the 4th Industrial Revolution. In all we do, we must ensure that all our activities make a positive difference to society.

The UKZN Strategic Plan is embedded in the ongoing Project Renewal that will catalyse the institution to build on our service ethos, academic standing, history, tradition, and culture and help the realignment of the University’s Academic and Administrative structures with the changed and changing conditions under which we all work. We further aim to increase efficiencies in the management of key resources in order to deliver strategic priorities at competitive rates. Our commitment to providing transformed education to previously disadvantaged groups, promoting excellence, openness and inclusivity, and our longstanding resolve to social responsibility remain our
guiding principles. This commitment will also entail an effort to provide a research connection to issues ‘on the ground’ and within areas of national importance. It will cultivate and improve staff and student experiences, whilst factoring in key sustainability issues.

This Strategic Plan is the most ambitious our University has ever developed since it was reconfigured in 2004. Its successful implementation will entail a review of the resource allocation model to align with the academic strategy across the Colleges in the University. It will also entail significant resources—human, intellectual, material, and financial, from a diverse mix of sources including increased income from enterprises, University assets, alumni, and strategic partnerships, with a specific emphasis on research grants.

To ensure our ongoing viability in this rapidly changing ecosystem, the University must develop a sustainable financial model that is responsive to the prevailing needs of the institution, fair to its mandate as an instrument of transformation, and transparent in its operations. This must involve careful consideration of key components of revenue generation, cost containment efficiencies, multi-year financial planning, and strategic resource allocation. With respect to the academic project, the University must adapt to shifts in the Higher Education sector – shifts from credentialing to short skills, to lifelong learning, and continuing integration of the sciences and humanities/social sciences. The University must also strive to nurture students into active citizens who fit into the needs of society and the economy, producing new knowledge for nation-building and addressing global challenges. The University must be able to build new cohorts of intellectuals with creative, critical, and problem-solving skills.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the team of colleagues who worked tirelessly in facilitating consultation sessions and overseeing the development of the UKZN Strategic Plan 2023-2032 by giving so generously of their time and ideas. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the larger University community for supporting this effort and for providing input during the consultation process. As the UKZN executive team, we look forward to working with you and all our stakeholders - to vigorously pursue our vision and mission over the next decade. Let us work together in taking collective responsibility to oversee and monitor the implementation of this Strategic Plan. By investing in the future of our University, we are investing in the future of KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa.

Professor Nana Poku
Vice-Chancellor and Principal
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<th><strong>Activity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Definitions</strong></th>
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<td>AGOHA</td>
<td>African Growth Opportunity Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>A starting point or foundation by which success or failure will be judged over time</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRICS</td>
<td>Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa</td>
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<td>BSCs</td>
<td>Balance Score Cards</td>
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<td>Budget</td>
<td>The amount of money that will be spent to achieve the strategic plan</td>
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<td>CFM</td>
<td>College Finance Manager</td>
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<td>CHE</td>
<td>Council for Higher Education</td>
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<td>CHRM</td>
<td>College Human Resources Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>Corporate Relations Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWUR</td>
<td>Centre for World University Ranking</td>
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<td>DHET</td>
<td>Department of Higher Education and Training</td>
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<td>DPS</td>
<td>Director: Professional Services</td>
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<td>DVC</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<td>DVCTL</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning</td>
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<td>DVCR</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<td>ELF</td>
<td>Executive Leadership Forum</td>
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<td>EMC</td>
<td>Executive Management Committee</td>
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<td>Enablers</td>
<td>Supporting strategies that will enable us to achieve the strategic goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESeleT</td>
<td>Empowerment, Service Excellence, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSBL</td>
<td>Graduate School of Business and Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>HEIs</td>
<td>Higher Education institutions i4.0 - The fourth industrial revolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>IKS</td>
<td>Indigenous Knowledge Systems</td>
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<td>KPIs</td>
<td>Key Performance Indicators</td>
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<td>KRAs</td>
<td>Key Result Areas</td>
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<th><strong>KRI</strong>s</th>
<th><strong>Definitions</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Master Plan</td>
<td>Detailed activities that will be undertaken over the plan period</td>
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<tr>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOOCs</td>
<td>Massive Open Online Courses</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRF</td>
<td>National Research Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSFAS</td>
<td>National Student Financial Aid Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>A business metric that measures the performance and progress of a business against its key objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>indicator</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESTEL</td>
<td>Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSET</td>
<td>Post Secondary Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PU</td>
<td>Productivity Units (i.e. 60 PUs = 1 author article)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAQA</td>
<td>South African Qualification Authority</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SoTL</td>
<td>Scholarship of Teaching and</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSD</td>
<td>Student Services Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>The steps that will be taken to reach milestone for each strategic objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Target – a milestone that has been set to be achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>Training Needs Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVETs</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCDG</td>
<td>University Capacity Development Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UREC</td>
<td>University Research and Ethics Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTLC</td>
<td>University Teaching and Learning Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
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1.0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan is to position the University as an international research-intensive institution of higher learning, contributing to practical approaches to the challenges facing humankind at every level. This Strategic Plan is expected to advance the institution's academic project to result in the production of graduates with high levels of knowledge, skills and values who will be agents of change needed by our society. To achieve the strategic goals set in this Plan, the University will require committed and knowledgeable staff endowed with high levels of integrity.

The review of the UKZN 2017-2021 revealed that substantial achievements were realised in the following critical areas: human capital development; infrastructure expansion; advances in research productivity and quality; transformation of students and staff profiles; and the leveraging of new ICT for teaching and learning. The UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan therefore builds on the strengths, challenges and lessons learnt from the UKZN strategic plan 2017-2021 and seeks to make further improvements. In particular, the new Strategic Plan contains the following salient elements:

1. A move towards the student holistic experience whilst in the care of UKZN
2. A coherent and concerted drive, in terms of internationalisation
3. A move towards the quality of research as opposed to incentivising quantity
4. Efficient service provision in support of the academic project
5. Upgrades of infrastructure particularly in STEM disciplines, such as laboratories and clinical training areas
6. The move towards digitalisation of our academic offerings.
7. Develop key support strategies for the academic project particularly in Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, Student Experience, community engagement and Internationalisation
8. Alignment of the strategic plan with SDGs, Africa Agenda 2063 and NDP 2030
9. Strengthening infrastructure, human, technological and systems capacity that set a new platform of excellence in Higher Education globally and in recognition of the national and global trends
10. Leveraging online learning to mitigate adverse effects of unforeseen emergencies such as COVID-19
11. Enhancement of the UKZN ICT platform to accommodate increased accessibility to our programs
12. Provide clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Plan
13. Restructure the role of Executive portfolios: College Finance Manager, College Human Resources Manager and Corporate Relations Officers to report to their Executive Directors and align with the institutional vision and strategies
14. Repositioning the Deanery to play a central role in the University’s core business, with greater autonomy
15. Devolve managerial control currently performed by the DVCs in the Colleges, School Deanery, College Deanery, and Academic Leadership within the schools to the Directors of Professional Services Structural enhancements at the level of the Student Services Division and the establishment of a Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and a Dean of Students to bring co-ordination, coherence, management and oversight in terms of the entire suite of student support services, including the residences, and the student experience strategy
16. Gradual establishment of high-impact research institutes in key thematic key areas
The quest by UKZN to position itself strategically in the national, continental, and global Higher Education sector shall be guided by the institution’s strategic plan - vision, mission, core values, aspirations, ambitions and enablers:

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL 2023 - 2032**

**STRATEGIC MODEL**

**VISION**
To be the premier university of African scholarship.

**MISSION**
To be a truly South African university of choice that is academically excellent, innovative in research, entrepreneurial, and critically engaged with society.

**VALUES**
- **REACH**
  - RESPECT
    - Promote mutual respect, courtesy, and inclusiveness
  - EXCELLENCE
    - Display quality, leadership and energy in all that we do
  - ACCOUNTABILITY
    - Be responsible and accountable in the behavior we display towards stakeholders.
  - CLIENT ORIENTATION
    - Embrace and celebrate difference, respect and support each other, and act with integrity to benefit society and the environment by transforming and enriching lives.
  - HONESTY
    - Deliver with integrity - steadfastly and adherence to good governance
  - TRUST
    - The principle that underpins all of the others.

**GOALS**
- **EXCELLENT TEACHING AND LEARNING**
  - Attract high-potential students and develop them to their full potential to become globally aware professionals, leaders and citizens

- **EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
  - Produce graduates with knowledge, skills and networks to build meaningful and agile careers that can be sustained and adapted over the course of their lifetime

- **EXCELLENT, HIGH IMPACT RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
  - A globally-ranked research intensive university responding to major societal, economic and environmental challenges

- **HIGH IMPACT SOCIETAL AND STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
  - Achieve meaningful interactions for mutual benefit

- **TARGETED INTERNATIONALISATION**
  - Achieve an international outlook that is integral to the University’s aspiration to be a world-class African university

**ENABLERS**
- **TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**
  - With implementation plans, milestones and resource needs

- **STUDENT EXPERIENCE STRATEGY**
  - With implementation plans, milestones and resource needs

- **RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY**
  - With implementation plans, milestones, and resource needs

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**
  - With implementation plans, milestones and resource needs

- **INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY**
  - With implementation plans, milestones and resource needs

**ASPIRATIONS**
- The South African university of choice for the most talented students and scholars.
- Recognised for research impact, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

**RESPECT**
Promote mutual respect, courtesy, and inclusiveness

**EXCELLENCE**
Display quality, leadership and energy in all that we do

**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Be responsible and accountable in the behavior we display towards stakeholders.

**CLIENT ORIENTATION**
Embrace and celebrate difference, respect and support each other, and act with integrity to benefit society and the environment by transforming and enriching lives.

**HONESTY**
Deliver with integrity – steadfastly and adherence to good governance

**TRUST**
The principle that underpins all of the others.
The Strategic Plan is further informed by the ongoing Project Renewal that has the overarching aim of ensuring that we remain a leading world-standard research and teaching institution that:

- Positively fosters speedy and flexible responses to new academic opportunities and cross-disciplinary working wherever appropriate
- Simplifies both academic and administrative processes
- Reduces academic administrative time
- Removes the need for multiple record-keeping
- Retains strong participation by academic staff at all levels in the formulation of strategy and policy throughout the University
- Allows professionally informed decision-making to be undertaken in a more devolved and responsive manner, within minimal but clearly specified parameters required for audit, policy, or legal reasons

This Strategic Plan 2023-2032 has identified five Strategic Goals and corresponding enablers that will expand the University’s growth and competitive edge while addressing emerging needs in the operating environment.

The Strategic Plan has an enterprise risk management plan that will be used to guide its overall risk management approach. In this regard, the University will use the risk management plan to proactively monitor any emerging risks to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and promptly take mitigation measures to address the risks.

Monitoring and evaluation will be used to measure accomplishments and detect deviations while ensuring that corrective actions and adjustments are made to counter the deviations. Effective monitoring will help to identify difficulties and problem areas, and to take immediate remedial action, thereby ensuring that targets are achieved. Regular reporting at all levels will be necessary for follow-up and documentation. Annual, midterm and summative reports will be prepared. These reports will highlight key achievements against set targets, identify challenges encountered, lessons learnt and recommendations on the way forward.
2.0. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) was established in 2004 when the Universities of Natal (founded in 1910) and Durban-Westville (founded in 1960) were merged. This reconfiguration established the institution as one of the largest residential universities in South Africa. UKZN’s previous two Strategic Plans (2007–2016; 2017-2021) pursued the aspiration of the institution to become a Premier University of African Scholarship and to enhance its research character. This orientation has enabled UKZN to be the only merged South African university consistently and highly ranked globally in terms of its academic quality and research impact.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal is located across five campuses which serve as the main hubs of its academic activities, within two metropoles – Durban, the eastern seaport and Pietermaritzburg in the midlands. The greater Durban area is fast urbanising and has a port which handles large volumes of shipping and general cargo for the African continent. The Campus Master Plan, which serves as a guide for future growth and improvement, will be continuously revised to align with the Strategic Plan to reflect the changes in UKZN’s size, organisation, and priorities. This will ensure that the University grows as a comprehensive, college-based, research-intensive institution with carefully aligned undergraduate and postgraduate teaching portfolios.

In 2012, UKZN adopted a College Model structure – a fundamental outcome of the 2007-2016 Strategic Plan, which was consolidated in the 2017-2021 planning period. The development of the 2023-2032 Strategic Plan, which is embedded in the ongoing Project Renewal aims to guide further refining the implementation of the College Model to further improve resource utilisation, and management and central administrative support functions. The University’s current physical infrastructure accommodates the academic activities in the four colleges of Agriculture, Engineering and Science; Health Sciences; Humanities; and Law and Management Studies.

The student population at UKZN during the previous plan period 2017-2021 stabilised at about 45,000 comprising both undergraduates and postgraduates and representative of regional demographics. It is expected that enrolment will remain stable at this level to match the resources. However, there is a need to increase the proportion of postgraduate enrolment to about 30% while marginally reducing the undergraduate enrolment to 70% of the total student population. The University has a staff complement of approximately 4,400 staff, and over 148,370 alumni (8,785 of whom are now international). UKZN’s research centres and institutes are thriving – in the past five years, UKZN has produced the highest number of published research outputs of any university in South Africa. Accompanying this success is the maturing of UKZN’s intellectual property and knowledge-transfer office, InQubate. The office acts as a hub for the growth of student entrepreneurship and industry collaborations and is the driver for the management and commercialisation of UKZN’s intellectual property.

UKZN has a proud heritage of academic excellence and a history of making a transformative impact regionally, nationally, and globally. UKZN remains deeply committed to advancing African scholarship and being an institution of choice for staff and students. As a transformative University which nurtures and develops academic talent and diversity among its students and staff, UKZN aspires to create a deep service culture that inspires greatness across the institution, among its partners and among the communities it serves. As part of its institutional transformation, UKZN has embraced symbols that are consistent with the vision of being a Premier University of African scholarship. The transformation symbols include the anthem iHele, the academic dress and corporate branding which reflect the institution’s African roots.

The principles of equity and opportunity in participation for both students and staff underpin this Strategic Plan. A focus on the provision of scholarships and residential accommodation, together with targeted investments in student support will be required to encourage participation by students who experience disadvantage. Within this context, the quality of the student experience will be paramount. This will need investment in the expansion and improvement of teaching and learning facilities, digital technologies, and the creation of supportive learning, social, and residential environments.

This Strategic Plan assumes that classroom teaching and campus life will remain core to UKZN but will require digital extension and enhancement. Therefore, in the next 10 years, UKZN’s growth parameters have been prioritised as follows:

- The growth of the institution will be restricted to the current geographic spread between the cities of eThekwini and Msunduzi.
An exception is the Health Sciences, where there is a need for an extended platform into rural areas for the provision of training and services.

- UKZN will make provision for extended online education and other programmes for experiential learning to meet the needs of communities far from our campuses.
- A cap in the growth of the headcount in student enrolment at 45,000 is anticipated for 2023-2032 with a growth in postgraduate enrolment of up to 30% of total student enrolment.

**3.0. UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES**

The University’s ambitions over the next 10 years are to:

- be a university to which our students, staff and alumni are proud to belong, and where our values unify us in what we do and how we do it.
- be a place where people can achieve great things, with the finest possible conditions for staff and students to do what they do best and work together as a connected community.
- embed sustainable, responsible approaches in all our practices, enabling every one of our people to play a part in a healthier future for our University and planet.
- be committed to equality and diversity, and to equal opportunities for all.
- set high expectations of ourselves and hold each other to account for delivery.
The UKZN Strategic Plan 2017–2021 articulated a clear vision for the University as a Premier University of African Scholarship. The Plan was to propel UKZN to be a globally connected proudly African university, with excellence in teaching and learning; research, innovation, entrepreneurship; community engagement and internationalisation.

During the plan period 2017–2021, UKZN achieved a strong global standing which has enabled the institution to establish new and significant international strategic partnerships. The University has performed well in producing research Author Units (AUs) and in the number of highly cited and nationally recognised researchers. Recent work in the strengthening of the research productivity (PUs) system and incentivising research impact and quality has seen a rise in the publication by UKZN academics in high-impact journals and in the Leiden citation index. The University saw a rise in the percentage of research output generated with international authors which exceeded the target, partly attributable to UKZN’s increased international collaborations in COVID-related research.

During the 2017–2021 period, the University has continued to make changes to the academic programme offerings and academic structure. This includes refreshing the content of taught curricula as part of the National Qualifications Framework, the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training. COVID-19 forced the institution to focus on the planning and implementation of emergency remote teaching and learning. During the pandemic, the University leveraged large-scale Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in teaching and learning and established a robust remote online learning to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on academic programmes and enrich student experiences. We continue to advance the appropriate decolonisation of curricula across the institution.

The UKZN 2017–2021 strategic plan period saw investments in physical infrastructure supported by the Department of Higher Education and Training – primarily in student residences and in the construction of a modern academic facility at the Edgewood campus. The Campus Master Plan is now set to steer UKZN towards further capital projects and advance the 2023-2032 Strategic Plan. The 2017-2021 period saw an increase in the percentage of permanent academic staff with PhDs. The developmental lecturer programme has been the main driver for these results. The University has also made contributions to local, regional, and national skills development agendas through relevant research solutions and participation in planning and advisory structures.

The previous period also witnessed a steady growth in enrolment numbers largely influenced by the increased competition from private knowledge providers and other progressive public universities. At the same time, high operation costs, rising student debt, increased enrolment of students from Quintile 1–3 schools, a decline in third-stream income, and insufficient NSFAS funding from government were some of the challenges the University was faced with.
Nationally, the Higher Education landscape will continue to see changes in national policy including reforms to the policy and regulatory environment. The Higher Education Amendment Bill, passed by the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces at the end of 2016, gives the Minister of Higher Education and Training new powers to determine policy on several issues including recognition of prior learning within Higher Education. The Minister also has jurisdiction over the regulation of tuition fees/funding of Higher Education for the poor as well as financial aid for students from middle-income families.

The demand for free, quality, and decolonised Higher Education is likely to continue into the future and may create an unstable environment for the running of universities in South Africa. There will be increasing pressures to find new and innovative means to engage students.

UKZN carries a heavy responsibility to create an institutional culture that promotes engagement, dialogue, and tolerance for diverse values. The challenge for University leadership is to provide an engaged, open, and connected form of leadership that practically serves and meets the needs of students. UKZN’s primary aim is to shape a future that works for all—by putting people first and empowering them to cope with our evolving world. For students and staff, UKZN should be a place of new and original thoughts and ideas that will shape a brave new future.

Several exciting opportunities are emerging for the University. These include the continued commitment by the Department of Higher Education to provide funding for infrastructure development at universities and the introduction of the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) for general development within the institution. The UKZN Strategic Plan 2023–2023 aligns with the National Development Plan 2030: Our Future – Make it Work (2013); the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy for KwaZulu-Natal (2011); and the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-School System (2013).

The Plan also aligns with Africa Agenda 2063 and the UN SDGs. In common with other Universities the world over, UKZN is increasingly faced with multiple challenges, from both our internal and external environments, that include rapid technological advancement, government regulations,
and competition from a number of post-school courses offered by private institutes with prospective students having more choice in terms of their education. In addition, Universities are faced with declining government funding, the impacts of globalisation, and the demand for quality education and accountability by stakeholders - government, students, and funding bodies.

6.0. GLOBAL OPERATING CONTEXT

Globalisation is a key driver of internationalisation in the Higher Education sector; and global mobility continues to grow for students, academics, and university brands. This will not only intensify competition but will also create opportunities for more meaningful global partnerships and expanded access to student and academic talent. UKZN will have to strengthen its efforts to increase the international mobility of both students and staff, especially within Africa.

UKZN will need to respond to the increase in the availability of ‘knowledge’, especially online, which is driving the expansion of access to university education globally. This driver of change will intensify as digital technologies, particularly i4.0, continue to transform the media, retail, entertainment, and other industries – including Higher Education. The national phenomenon of an ageing researcher cohort and the continued decline in the per capita funding of Higher Education will be major constraints for the internationalisation agenda, especially regarding UKZN’s world-ranking aspirations.

The idea that the world is currently entering the Fourth Industrial Revolution (i4.0) is gaining traction. The Fourth Industrial Revolution builds on the Third – the digital revolution that has been prominent over the last half-century. This has seen a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres, resulting in changes that are evolving at dizzying speeds, disrupting almost every industry in every country on Earth. This rapid change, however, presents countless possibilities for billions of people across the world connected by mobile devices – with unprecedented processing power and storage capacity. Emerging technology breakthroughs in fields like artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology, biotechnology and materials science, energy storage, and quantum computing will all amplify these possibilities.

The breadth and depth of the above changes will herald the transformation of entire sectors of society and result in positive gains in terms of efficiency, productivity, and safer and more rewarding jobs. However, the changes may also lead to undesirable consequences such as greater inequality in societies and the displacement of workers by technology.

Although it is true that Higher Education around the world faces disruptive forces such as MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses) that will increasingly provide international platforms for education and training, the value of a residential university that simultaneously offers global connectivity and access while also being deeply embedded in its local community is less susceptible to disruption. Key to this strategic approach is the strength of partnerships and the degree of entrenchment in local communities, the public sector, as well as in industry and corporate partners. It is the intention of UKZN to become a tertiary education institution that is highly connected or ‘plugged in’ to its regional partnerships, and to create an inviting culture for regional partners on all our campuses. The environmental factors also impacting Higher Education across the world include but are not limited to those reflected in Figure 2.
Environmental factors impacting Higher Education across the world

- **More HEI Choice for Students**: Changing balance of power from providers to end-users.
- **More Players in the HEI Market**: Increase in competition between providers.
- **Uncertain Political Times**: The team should begin by establishing the process's milestones.
- **Challenges of "Free Education"**: For financial resilience and sustainability.
- **Declining Public Financing for HEIs and Students**: Competition for additional income.

**Reduced Market Share of HEIs**
 Increased competition for resources, better students and better academics.
The UKZN 10-year Strategic Plan 2023-2032 has been developed through a highly consultative and participatory process. The planning process received inputs from all four Colleges and was extensively benchmarked against strategic plans of comparator universities on the African continent and beyond. Furthermore, the metric-driven NDP 2030 national indicators were used to develop the plan. The Higher Education sector performance indicators and measures were used to develop a framework for the implementation plans and for the monitoring and evaluation framework. Additional performance indicators were generated by divisions within the University, including the College Deanery of Teaching and Learning, College Deanery of Research, Student Services, Corporate Relations, and directorates of professional services. Performance measures from the UKZN 2017-2021 strategic plan relevant to the new objectives were adopted for the UKZN Strategic Plan 2023-2032. The planning process further critically reviewed the UKZN 2017-2021 Strategic Plan to understand achievements, challenges and lessons learnt to inform the development of this current plan.

7.0. STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The South African university of choice for the most talented students and scholars.

To be recognized globally for the excellence of our research, learning and innovation, and for the benefits we bring to society and the environment both local and international.

Renowned for delivering learning and teaching programmes that transform talented students into thoughtful and accomplished graduates.

Acknowledged as a leader in embedding sustainability and good governance in all aspects of the University’s teachings and learning, research, and engagement.

Vision
To be the premier university of African scholarship.

Mission
To be a truly South African university of choice that is academically excellent, innovative in research, entrepreneurial, and critically engaged with society.

Values
Respect
Promote mutual respect, courtesy, and inclusiveness

Excellence
Display quality, leadership and energy in all that we do

Accountability
Be responsible and accountable in the behavior we display towards stakeholders.

Client Orientation
Embrace and celebrate difference, respect and support each other, and act with integrity to benefit society and the environment by transforming and enriching lives.

Honesty
Deliver with integrity – steadfastly and adherence to good governance

Trust
The principle that underpins all of the others.
7.1.1. Vision Statement

The Vision of UKZN is to be “The Premier University of African Scholarship”. UKZN carries forward the Vision of the predecessor plan and the privilege of making its own choices while harnessing the expertise and energy of those within and outside the institution – to grow the esteem of the University. This Vision differentiates UKZN from other research-led universities. In this era of rapid globalisation and in the context of vast and powerful forces of cultural imperialism, UKZN undertakes the responsibility to ensure the development of intellectual enterprises which are relevant to the local socio-cultural context. The University sees itself as central to development in South Africa, and pivotal in efforts to advance globally recognised African priorities. UKZN will therefore shape its African Scholarship Agenda by ensuring that knowledge production systems which align with the local African context, inform the University’s global engagement.

7.1.2. Mission Statement

UKZN’s Mission is to be “A truly South African university of choice” that is academically excellent; innovative in research; entrepreneurial; and critically engaged with society. This Mission Statement commits UKZN to being one of the great universities of the world, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship in ways that enrich and transform society in Africa and globally.

7.1.3. Values Statement

UKZN is at work to establish a value-driven organisational culture that empowers the institution and its people to achieve institutional goals. The guiding values are respect, excellence, accountability, client orientation, honesty and trust – represented as R.E.A.C.H.T. The gist of these values is that the behaviour and actions of everyone at UKZN will demonstrate:

- Respect: UKZN undertakes to promote mutual respect, courtesy, and inclusiveness.

- Excellence: UKZN undertakes to display quality, leadership, and energy in all that it does.

- Accountability: UKZN promises to be responsible and accountable in the behaviour displayed towards all its stakeholders.

- Client Orientation: UKZN undertakes to satisfy the needs of all its clients, stakeholders, and partners, on a consistent basis.

- Honesty: UKZN promises to deliver with integrity – steadfastly and with adherence to good governance.

- Trust: underpins all the other institutional values. The implicit trust enjoyed by every member of UKZN and their well-defined actions that embrace the R.E.A.C.H.T values are the important ingredients of the moral fibre of the institution.

7.2. The Academic Strategy

The Academic Strategy integrates the entire range of learning experiences of students while in the care of our University. This includes providing an enabling environment that affords students the support to optimise their learning, including appropriate pastoral care; developing in our students the attributes that will enable them to become employable and easily find jobs in the labour market; and integrating learning within the community to enrich the learning contexts, developing their sense of civic duty and nationhood.
8.0. STRATEGIC GOALS

The UKZN 2023-2032 Strategic Plan is focused on the following five strategic goals:

- **Excellent Teaching and Learning**
  Attract high-potential students and develop them to their full potential to become globally aware professionals, leaders and citizens.

- **Excellent Student Experience**
  Produce graduates with knowledge, skills and networks to build meaningful and agile careers that can be sustained and adapted over the course of their lifetime.

- **Excellent and High-Impact Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship**
  A globally-ranked research-intensive university responding to major societal, economic and environmental challenges.

- **High-Impact Societal and Stakeholders Community Engagement**
  Achieve meaningful interactions for mutual benefits.

- **Targeted Internationalisation**
  Achieve an international outlook that is integral to the University’s aspiration to be a world-class African university.
Each of the strategic goals has a supporting strategy to enable its effective implementation. The roadmap for the rollout of the strategy is displayed below.
8.1. Goal 1: Excellent Teaching and Learning

The aspiration of this goal is to attract high-potential students and develop them to their full potential to become globally aware professionals, leaders and citizens.
8.2. Goal 2: Excellent Student Experience

The aspiration of the student experience goal is to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills, and networks to build meaningful and agile careers that can be sustained and adapted over the course of their lifetimes. UKZN will transform the way our students learn to make them highly employable graduates and truly national and global citizens. This includes our commitment to providing transformed education to previously disadvantaged groups.
8.3. **Goal 3: Excellent Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (RIE)**

The main aspiration of this goal is to make UKZN a globally ranked research-intensive university responding to major societal, economic, and environmental challenges. Our research will create strategic, reciprocal partnerships that bring opportunity, innovation, and mutual benefit for all stakeholders. Research will be integrated into teaching to give students an enriched experience.
Strategic Research Institutes

The Strategic Plan will make provision for several new initiatives including the establishment of high-impact interdisciplinary research institutes. We already have a Maritime Law and Maritime Studies Unit that on an enlarged footing could undertake a wide range of issues including autonomous shipping and smart ports, marine and transport economies, port pricing, marine environmental law, law of the sea, marine environment resource management, and marine pollution prevention and response. Other possibilities include Computational Intelligence, Data Science and Genomics; Culture and Indigenous Knowledge Systems; Social Cohesion; Sustainable Development and Food Security; and Sustainable Cities. These and other possible institutes are exciting intellectual opportunities—for staff, students, and strategic partners alike. The University will make investment available to create an eco-system to ensure that ambitious and successful institutes have appropriate support, guidance, and governance structures to flourish within UKZN.
8.4. Goal 4: High-Impact Societal and Stakeholder Community Engagement

The main aspiration of this goal is to achieve meaningful interactions with stakeholders and communities for mutual benefit. This goal further seeks to position UKZN at the global cutting edge to facilitate the University’s positive impact on change social cohesion, as outlined in the National Development Plan 2030. The goal envisages meaningful and reciprocal interactions between the University and local, national, and international stakeholders as a catalyst for social justice.

Mission and Priorities of Societal and Stakeholder Community Engagement

Our mission is to be: 1) recognised as a university that creates an opportunity for our whole community through transformative education, research and engagement; 2) an international exemplar for pioneering civic collaborations that deliver health, social, environmental and economic benefits for all, with a clear sense of place and historical context; and 3) a leading cultural and creative partner for our region, integral in securing Durban as one of the world’s most vibrant cities.
8.5. **Goal 5: Targeted Internationalisation**

The main aspiration of internationalisation at UKZN is to achieve an orientation that is integral to the University’s quest to be a world-class African university. We aim to achieve a global reputation as a world-class, highly-ranked African University through a strategic portfolio of international partnerships, attracting a diverse population of the world’s most talented students and scholars.
The Internationalisation Strategy

The internationalisation strategy for UKZN is intended to rebuild the image and brand of the University and improve income, reputation, and relevance on the African continent as well as globally. Over the next 10 years, this strategy will focus on:

1. Postgraduate programmes where international students pay their fee and receive the tuition on-line, thereby remaining in their own country within national and institution defined frameworks.
2. The establishment of satellite UKZN campuses at key points across the continent.
3. Joint qualifications and collaborative delivery with overseas institutions within institutional and national legal framework.
4. Improving the number of international research partners.
5. Establishing a dedicated team in the Research Office to source international research grants, particularly in the STEM disciplines.
6. Attract global talent into Schools to meet scarce skills needs and contribute to targeted outcomes.
7. Establishment of a dedicated office, headed by a senior academic, to deal with internationalisation.
8. Meeting the legal obligations of joint qualifications – the need for consultation with CHE in this regard.
9. Obtaining of visas, where required – the burden would be minimised by having students remain where they are and learning on-line.
10. Postgraduate supervision being conducted on-line and international supervisory skills being built up.
11. Internationalisation to be advanced through established structures such as BRICS.
12. Strengthen collaboration across the continent in areas such as climate change, poverty and health.
13. Exposing UKZN's staff and students to the international interface in appropriate ways.
14. Positioning GSB&L towards international recognition, develop strategies for the School's interface on the African continent. GSB&L should assist all Schools by taking over the administration of short courses.
15. Ensuring the internationalisation strategy increases and diversifies income to the University and initiatives started must be self-sustaining. The internationalisation strategy will be enhanced through the development of Branding Strategies and also the development of Alumni Strategic Plans.
9.0 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The portion of the Strategy dealing with sustainability focuses on ensuring that our institutional, managerial, administrative, academic, and financial structures are fit for purpose; that they are configured optimally; that they are capable of balancing both growth and consolidation; and that they can ensure the long-term financial viability of the University. The priorities are as follows:

1. Income generation, increasing the current levels of surpluses and cash from operations for investment in the University’s infrastructure
2. Rebalancing the staff composition in favour of academic and academic-related appointments
3. Capital development funded from both internal and external sources
4. Targeting staffing investments in areas of growth, whilst managing staff costs overall
5. Prioritising the programme of capital development funded by both internal and external sources
6. Continuing to develop robust risk management processes by focusing on accountability and consequence management
7. Promotion of fundraising and delivering the development campaign through working with UKZN Foundation, Alumni and Convocation
8. Strengthening revenue diversification through fundraising, development grants, research grants, consultancies revenues from auxiliary services
9. Promoting a culture of continuous budgetary monitoring and evaluation by budget holders
10. Reviewing of University Finance Procedures & Allocation Models

11. Developing international alumni network to build long-term relationships
The Staff Experience will be enhanced through reconfiguring the Deanery and Executive Management roles at DVC level. In particular, the Strategic Plan repositions the Deanery to play a central role in the University’s core business, with greater autonomy. The Strategic Plan also reinforces the Deanery roles by enabling their direct relationships with other structures in the institution including University Research and Ethics Committee (UREC), University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC), Executive Management Committee (EMC) and Senate. Similarly, managerial control which currently is performed by the DVCs in the Colleges, School Deanery, College Deanery, and Academic Leadership within the schools will be devolved completely to the Director of Professional Services (DPS).

The DPS will oversee the professional service sector, including Directors and Managers in the central structures, Colleges, and Schools, and thus effectively extract academics from the administration of the academic project. This will allow the Schools’ Deanery and DVCs to focus on providing strategic and intellectual vision and direction within the structures they lead. The college DVCs will also provide strategic direction in terms of growth; and support and facilitate the functioning, intended outcomes and impact of the Schools. The cross-cutting DVCs will on the other hand play a unifying role, particularly in the guidance of a uniform interpretation and deployment of policies and processes. The College Deans will be responsible for closely monitoring the quality of academic delivery, particularly that of early career staff who comprise nearly two-thirds of the academic staffing complement.

The role of the Executive portfolios that will be restructured include Finance Managers at College level, HR Managers at College level, and Corporate Relations Officers at School level. These roles will report to their respective Executive Directors and align with the overarching institutional vision and strategies.

### 10.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The UKZN Strategic Plan 2023-2032 will be evaluated and monitored on a quarterly basis each year to ensure successful implementation. The outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation process will be used to measure accomplishments and detect deviations and ensure corrective actions and adjustments are made.

5.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

In addition, the M&E systems shall provide key information on planning and implementation and consequently assist the University to make evidence-based decisions. The University’s data management mechanisms will be strengthened to ensure systematic data collection, storage, and analysis.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal will establish an M&E committee which will be responsible for evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Plan and submitting quarterly reports. The M&E...
Committee will develop appropriate methodologies for monitoring, and follow-up, including control systems at all levels. This will be done through progress reports, review meetings, budgets, and budgeting control systems. During the implementation period of the Strategic Plan, the University will conduct relevant surveys to determine the impact of various strategic objectives. In this regard, critical data shall be collected and analysed before results are disseminated to improve the Plan’s implementation. Annual, midterm and summative evaluation of this Strategic Plan will also be carried out. These reports will highlight key achievements against set targets, identify challenges encountered, lessons learnt and recommendations on the way forward.

11.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

The University will use the risk register to guide its overall risk management approach. The risks are identified from the PESTEL model—Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal situation analysis. The key risks and any other emerging risks that could hinder the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be proactively monitored and adequate mitigation measures put in place to address the risks. The Strategic Plan 2023-2032 will be implemented within the national and UKZN HE regulatory framework.

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