

FIRST SEMESTER REPORT 2016
OF
THE CENTRE OF ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT
BY

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Herein is a short report of targets achieved by the CAD during the first semester of 2016. The targets are aligned with the goals of the Pre - determined objectives namely to improve student access and success and to optimize teaching and learning.

Goal 1 Optimize teaching and learning

1. Rector's Award for Teaching Excellence

We have seventeen (17) staff members within the university who have enlisted as candidates for the RATE awards this year. An initial workshop has been conducted to get the candidates working on their teaching portfolio. RATE awards ceremony is scheduled for the 24th November 2016.

2. RATE Policy

A new policy for RATE was drafted and reviewed by some stakeholders in the first semester. Suggestions were worked into the draft copy and the draft copy has been presented at the faculty Board meetings for comments. We hope to have the policy finalised by November 2016.

3. Evaluation of Teaching and learning

The following lecturer evaluations were conducted in the first semester:

	Human Sciences			Engineering									Applied Sciences						Management Sciences																																																					
Evaluations Conducted	Communication & Education			Hospitality, Tourism & PR Management			Legal Studies			VAD			Civil			Metallurgy			Mechanical			Industrial			Power			Chemical			Electronic Communications			Process Control			Physics & NDT			Chemistry			Biotechnology			Health Sciences			Mathematics			ICT & OMT			Software Studies			Marketing & Sports			Human Resources			Accountancy			Logistics			Totals		
Number of lecturers	10	0	0	0	2	6	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	3	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	8	9	0	58																															
Number of students	21	0	0	0	7	1	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	3	0	5	0	0	7	2	0	5	3	0	6	0	0	3	2	0	3	6	0	15																																		
					2	5		7			1				2	7		5						7			6			8			6			6		62																																		

4. Student Evaluation Policy

The student Evaluation Policy was presented at the faculty board meetings in the university and comments and inputs were worked into the policy. The policy has been presented and approved at the Curriculum Committee meeting held on the 23rd June 2016. It was approved at the SENEX in July 2016 and has been edited and is ready to be submitted to Senate 2016.

5. Orientation of Newly Appointed Academics

Orientation programme in January 2016 attended by ten (10) newly appointed academic staff members. The staff members attended the second workshop on teaching philosophy construction. Provided individualised support in teaching by CAD staff members. It should be noted that the programme is ongoing throughout 2016.

6. Academic Staff Development Workshops

The following workshops were conducted in the first semester:

	DATES	TITLE	No STAFF MEMBERS
1	21 th -22 nd January	Orientation Programme for the newly appointed academics	10
2	29 th February	Question setting skills in Engineering	28
3	3 March	Examinations Rules and Regulations	22
4	10 May	Understanding the Higher Education Student	15
5	31 May	RATE Information Session	10

7. The Tutor Development Programme provides initial and ongoing training opportunities to build the capacity of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) tutors to best meet the student's needs. The training helps the tutors to become familiar with the program and understand their role fits into the overall structure. They assist students with their academic work and creating opportunities that enables students to develop and test their understanding.

8. The following training was offered:

Date 2016	ENGINEERING	APPLIED SCIENCE	HUMAN SCIENCE	MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	CAD	TOTAL TUTORS TRAINED
22-23 Feb	Chemical 9 Mechanical 2 Industrial 1 Metallurgy 2	IT 1 Biotechnology 5 Computerscience 2	Safety 1 Fashion 3	Tourism 1 Accounting 2 HR 2		
TOTAL	14	8	4	12	0	38
16 - 17 March	Metallurgy 2 Industrial 1 Civil 4 Mechanical 21	NDT 3 Biotechnology 1	Visual Arts 1	Accounting 4 Marketing and Sports management 1	Maths centre 1	
TOTAL	28	4	1	5	1	39
20 - 21 April		NDT 2 Biotechnology 1	VAD-Photography 4 VAD –Graphic design 4	Logistics 1 Accountancy 1 Marketing 1		
TOTAL	0	3	8	3	0	14
					All Tutors trained	91

Goal 2 To improve student access and success:

9. The First Year Experience (FYE) programme at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) is a new initiative, and in the process of been established. The purpose of the FYE programme is to draw from current best practice and to develop, step-by-step, a central and coherent transitional experience for first year students (Adapted from Van Zyl, 2013).

It is aimed at (1) improving the adjustment to the university experience, (2) the development of academic competencies, (3) enhanced comfort and relationships with faculty and peers, (4) social, emotional and moral development and support, and (5) a greater understanding of multiculturalism (Feldman & Zimbler, 2011; Thomas, 2012; Van Zyl, 2013).

The FYE does not strive to be a one-stop service-center, but rather strives for holistic and university wide coordinated actions,

Orientation 2016 statistics:				
Faculty orientation	Date	No of students	No of students	No of students
Applied and Computer Sciences	15 January	70		
Management Sciences (Day 1)	25 January	379		
Management Sciences (Day 2)	26 January		353	
Management Sciences (Day 3)	27 January		243	
Engineering and Technology	27 January	498		
Human Sciences	1 February	736		
TOTAL		1683	596	2279
Orientation 2016 statistics:				
Sport and recreation program	Date	No of students		
Management Sciences	29 January	122		
Engineering and Technology	29 January	149		

Human Sciences	30 January	231
Applied and Computer Sciences	30 January	181
TOTAL		412
Extended orientation 2016 statistics:		
FYE Motivational Seminars	Date	No of students
Management Sciences	11 February	188
Applied and Computer Sciences	12 February	280
Human Sciences	17 February	435
Engineering and Technology	19 February	181
TOTAL		1084

It should be noted that action plans for 4 faculties has been developed to address first year student academic needs in VUT and is being actioned during 2016.

10. The Writing Lab assists students with all aspects of academic writing. Aspects include of writing include: reading strategies, writing research proposals, writing and format of scientific reports, referencing, paraphrasing and general academic writing. These strategies were used in individual and group consultation as well as in workshops. There has been a strong focus on research report writing and discourse language in the workshops. The workshops were across the diploma and B-Tech level, students are being assessed more and more through reading and writing. There has also been an Academic Literacies project running in tandem with Writing Lab activities, the Academic Literacies program will stand on its own from the second semester onwards.

Below is a breakdown of the numbers for the first semester in 2016. First the number of students in consultation by faculty, then the number of students in workshops also by faculty as well as course. This year there has been a separation of group consultation in the report. In the first term the Writing Lab has seen an overall total of **1432** students in

consultation and **1219** in academic literacies workshops fall .(Coordinated by KT Khumalo).

Numbers of consultations in the writing lab.

Group Consultations:	
Faculty	No of Students
Applied and Computer Sciences	21
Engineering and Technology	31
Human Sciences	135
Management Sciences	874
Total:	1061

One on one Consultations:	
Faculty	No of Students
Applied and Computer Sciences	48
Engineering and Technology	17
Human Sciences	75
Management Sciences	198
Total:	338

11. The main aim of the maths centre is to assist VUT registered students with mathematics and statistics problems. We strive (together with the maths department), for improvement in their mathematics performance, develop their self-confidence and ensure independent life-long learners with strong critical thinking mathematical abilities. The following services were provided during 2016 so as to support the Department of Mathematics in trying to improve success and pass rate for the students.

Below are also attendances:

Consultations (mathematics 1,2,3 and others= statistics and intro)

Monthly Math's-Centre Attendance
Semester 1- 2016

Subjects	Group	February	March	April	May	June	Group Totals
Intro	All	13	47	30	17	0	107
Maths 1	Engineering	*	427	393	67	9	896
	Applied	*					
	Sciences		109	83	6	0	198
	All	619	536	476	73	9	1713
Maths 2	Engineering	*	239	231	28	6	504
	Applied	*					
	Sciences		49	59	16	0	124
	All	172	288	290	44	6	800
Maths 3	Engineering	277	223	194	23	52	769
Statistics	All	17	8	7		0	32
Monthly Totals		1098	1102	997	157	67	3421

12. Learning Communities for first year students

The Learning Communities program was established in November 2014. A Learning Community at VUT comprises of senior students who are appointed as Mentors and first year students known as Mentees who are divided into small groups of 30. Each group of 30 mentees is allocated to one Mentor who progressively strives to facilitate a smooth transition from high school to university life and culture. Transition should be perceived as a change from inside the classroom but also from outside the classroom as well, influencing the Mentees academic achievement and psychosocial lifestyle. Numbers of mentors in 2016.

Total Mentors appointed from January – March **75**
Total Mentors appointed in April was, **123**
Total mentors remaining in May were, **119**
Total mentors remaining in July are, **87**
Total number of Mentees identified from January – June 2016 is 2763 (Regular first year attendants)

MENTORS STATISTICS PER DEPARTMENT

FACULTY	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF MENTORS
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES	Cost Management	7
	Accounting	
	Financial Information System	1
	Human Resource Management	4
	Internal Auditing	6
	Logistics	4
	Marketing	5
	Retail Management	1
	Sports Management	4
TOTAL		32
HUMAN SCIENCES	Fashion	2
	Fine Arts	2
	Graphic Design	2
	Hospitality	2
	Labour Law	3

	Legal Assistance	3
	Policing	6
	Public Relations	5
	Safety Management	8
	Tourism	5
TOTAL		38
APPLIED SCIENCES	Analytical chemistry	3
	Biomedical Technology	3
	Biotechnology	3
	Information Technology	11
	Non Destructive Testing	5
TOTAL		25
ENGINEERING	Chemical	4
	Civil	2
	Computer Systems	1
	Electrical	9
	Industrial	2
	Mechanical	6
	Metallurgy	4
TOTAL		28

13. The objective of this report is to review the uptake and use of technology for learning through VUTELA. The use of blended learning at VUT is gaining momentum amongst enthusiastic students and innovative lecturers who are committed to the best teaching and learning practices (Kozma, 2008). E-Learning is supportive in the drive to foster increased student success and throughput rates that goes hand-in-hand with a change in learning and teaching practice. Currently for the second semester of 2016 we are using clicker technology to record workshop attendance in 2016. :

VUTELA STATS FOR 1ST SEMESTER 2016						
ACADEMICS TRAINED- BLACKBOARD	ACADEMICS TRAINED- INSTRUCTIONALDESIGN	GROUP SESSIONS	NO. OF VUTELA TRAINING	NO. OF INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN WORKSHOP	NO. OF STUDENTS TRAINED	
40	43	44	8	6	539	

14. Teaching and Learning Policy for VUT is compiled, after going through an extensive consultative process it is ready to be presented at the Curriculum Committee.

15. Language Development Policy of the VUT approved by the curriculum committee and Senex and is ready to be approved and presented at Senate.