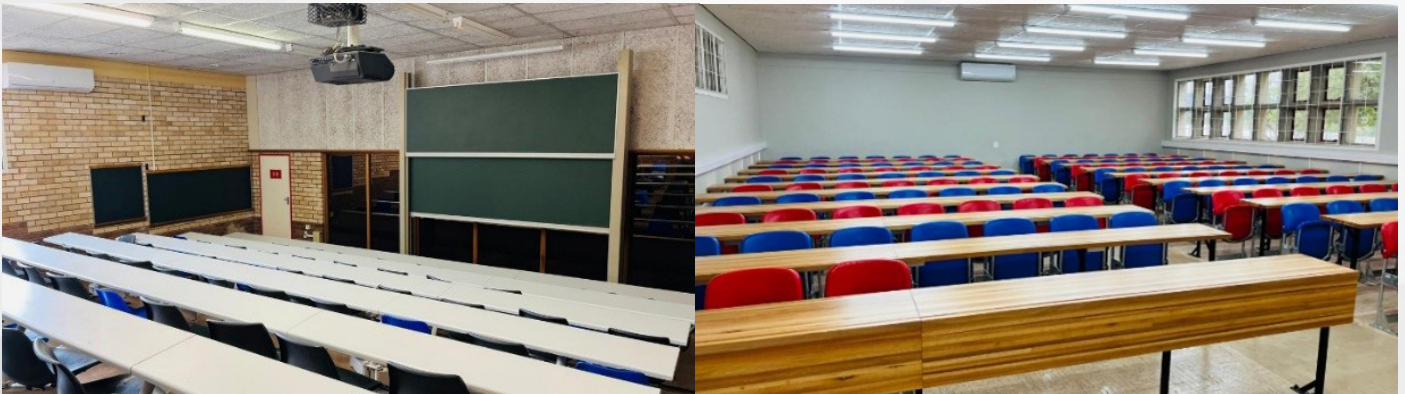


SHAPING EDUCATION

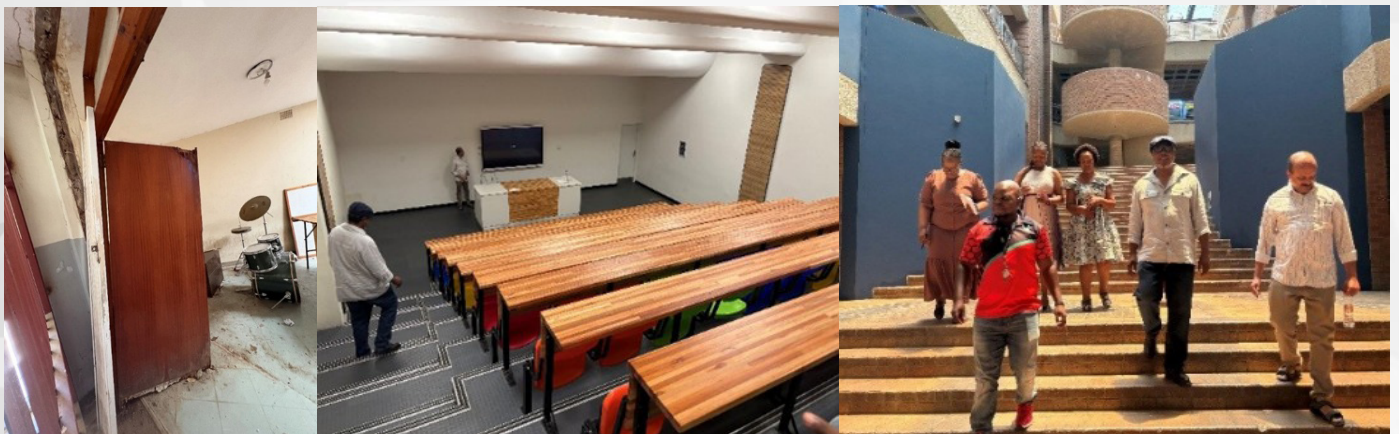
January marked a focused and energetic start to the 2026 academic year for the Faculty of Education (FED), characterised by student administration processes, campus readiness activities, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement across both the Komani and Mthatha campuses.

The month commenced on 7 January with the registration of returning students, followed by the registration of First Time Entering Students (FTENs) on 15 January. In parallel, the faculty facilitated the first round of student appeals from 15-16 January, during which 49 students submitted applications for consideration. A second round of appeals was conducted on 30 January, with 19 students submitting appeals. These processes were central to ensuring access, continuity and academic planning for the year ahead.

Ensuring institutional readiness was a key priority. On 12 January, the Executive Dean (ED), Prof BD Bantwini, met with the Deputy Executive Dean, Prof PT Mpiti, Heads of Department (HoDs) - Dr AM Buka, Dr T Saziwa, Dr N Magadla, Dr Z Seleke, Ms N Ndamase, and Mr T Sihele - as well as Deputy HoDs, including Prof B Makena, Dr O Madalambana, Dr T Mpahla, Dr N Kumanda, and Ms Z Ginyigazi. The engagement also included representatives from key support units, namely Facilities, Transport, Registration and Administration, and ICT, on the Komani campus to assess overall institutional readiness. The meeting was complemented by a campus walkabout to evaluate the preparedness of teaching and learning spaces.



A similar readiness exercise took place from 14-16 January on the Mthatha campus, led by the ED and senior leadership. While the Faculty confirmed readiness to commence teaching and learning, several operational challenges were identified and noted for urgent attention.



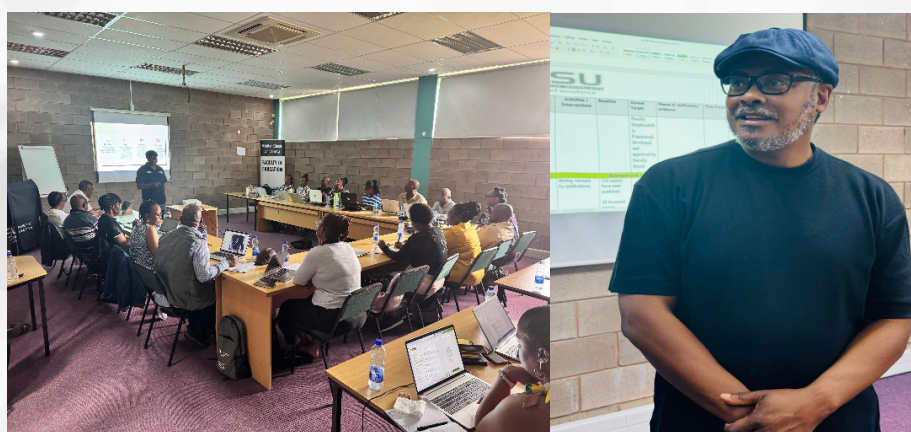
As the chairperson of the Eastern Cape Provincial Quality Learning and Teaching Committee (EC-QLTC) and as a

representative of WSU, on 13 January 2026, Prof Bantwini was invited to attend the release of the 2025 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination results and the 2026 National Senior Certificate results ceremony, which recognised and celebrated outstanding matriculants for their academic excellence. This engagement underscores the Faculty of Education's active involvement in provincial education structures and its ongoing commitment to quality teaching and learning.

On 19 January, the Faculty had the privilege of welcoming, for the first time, the newly appointed Vice-Chancellor, Dr T Mgwebi, together with members of the Executive Management Committee (EMC), including the Deputy Vice-Chancellors for Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, and Institutional Support and Development, the Executive Director for Student Affairs, the Senior Director for Marketing, Communication and Development, as well as other Directors, during their visit to the FED headquarters on the Komani campus. During this visit, the Executive Dean, Prof BD Bantwini, presented the faculty's state of readiness to the Vice-Chancellor and stakeholders present. This engagement provided an important opportunity for executive-level interaction, strategic alignment, and reaffirmation of the faculty's preparedness for the 2026 academic year.



Strategic direction was a key focus during the period 20-23 January, when the Deanery convened a strategic planning session. The purpose of this session was to ensure that academic, administrative, and strategic priorities are well aligned for the 2026 academic year.



The faculty also recorded an important milestone in its professional development offerings. The Short Learning Programme (SLP), *Conflict Management for School Management Teams (SMTs)*, has been officially endorsed by the South African Council for Educators (SACE). This endorsement carries 15 SACE professional development points and is valid from 12 December 2025 to 12 December 2028, affirming the quality, credibility, and relevance of the faculty's continuing professional development initiatives.



On 23 January, the WSU Marketing & Communication Directorate advertised three FED Short Learning Programmes through NewsDesk: *Blended Learning Pedagogies*, *Curriculum Development and Transformation*, and *Assessment in Higher Education*. These programmes will be offered in both online and contact modes across various dates in 2026, expanding access for education practitioners and academics.

WSU
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In pursuit of excellence

SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME

Curriculum Development and Transformation
Faculty of Education

The purpose of this course
To equip academics in higher education with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively design and transform curricula in line with contemporary educational practices and ensure participants with a comprehensive understanding of curriculum development and transformation theories, frameworks, and strategies, enabling them to create relevant, engaging, and student-centred learning experiences.
Mode of Delivery: Contact and/or Online

Requirements
Fees: R 8 000
Duration: Competency based 3 days

Targeted Population:
Anyone working as an academic in higher education (post-school Education)

Minimum number of 30 participants

START DATE:
08 Apr 2026

SCAN OR [CLICK HERE](#) TO APPLY:

WSU
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SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME

Assessment in Higher Education
Faculty of Education

The purpose of this course
To provide support and equip academics to improve their own practices on assessment and to grasp the principles of assessment, which will include assessment of learning and assessment for learning. This SLP will also assist academics in further aligning their assessment activities with relevant FETC levels. Lastly, this will enable academics to use assessment to advance learning to improve student success.
Mode of Delivery: Contact and/or Online

Requirements
Fees: R 8 000
Duration: Competency based 3 days

Targeted Population:
Anyone working as an academic in higher education (post-school Education)

Minimum number of 30 participants

START DATE:
18 May 2026

SCAN OR [CLICK HERE](#) TO APPLY:

WSU
WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
In pursuit of excellence

SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME

Blended Learning Pedagogies
Faculty of Education

The purpose of this course
To equip academics with knowledge, skills, and competencies required for Blended Learning facilitation. These competencies will enable the academics to enhance their ability to teach in face-to-face and online (blended learning) environments.
Mode of Delivery: Contact and/or Online

Requirements
Fees: R 8 000
Duration: Competency based 3 days

Targeted Population:
Anyone working as an academic in higher education (post-school Education)

Minimum number of 30 participants

START DATE:
23 Feb 2026

SCAN OR [CLICK HERE](#) TO APPLY:

Student leadership engagement was prioritised on 26 January, when the office of the Executive Dean hosted a productive meet-and-greet session with representatives from the CSRC and EDUSSOC from both the Komani and Mthatha campuses. The engagement was led by Student Affairs officials, Ms N Rabaza from Mthatha and Ms N Dimaza from Komani. Discussions focused on strengthening relationships, sharing faculty priorities, addressing student-related challenges, and identifying collaborative strategies to effectively respond to these issues.



From 27-29 January 2026, the faculty conducted a three-day engagement focused on planning, reviewing and refining Work Integrated Learning-School Based Experience (WIL-SBE) guidelines and procedures for the academic year. These sessions were essential for quality assurance, institutional compliance, and incorporating insights from departmental reflections and stakeholder engagements.



Looking Ahead

February promises to be equally active. Orientation Week will take place from 2-5 February 2026, with Faculty Days scheduled for 2 February in Mthatha and 3 February in Komani. Komani campus, which is the FED headquarters, will also host a visit from the Portfolio Committee on 2 February 2026.

From 4-6 February, the faculty, in collaboration with the Directorate for Learning and Teaching (DLT), will host a Student Module Guides (SMG) workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to update and align module guides to ensure currency, coherence, and alignment across programmes.

On 13 February, the faculty will convene a Quality Improvement Planning session in response to the mock reviews conducted in November 2025. This initiative forms part of the faculty's preparations for the forthcoming Council on Higher Education (CHE) National Reviews of the B.Ed Foundation Phase (FP), B.Ed Senior Phase and Further Education and Training (SP & FET), and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The session aims to strengthen quality assurance processes and promote continuous improvement.

In addition, the Faculty of Education, in partnership with the African Research Collaborative (ARC), the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP), and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) as a key partner, is preparing to host the ARC-SACNASP SheSTEAM Summit on 14 February 2026. Through this collaboration, more than 250 learners will be brought by DBE to the summit. The initiative aims to empower young girls from underrepresented and economically marginalised communities by expanding access to Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) through hands-on learning experiences, mentorship, and exposure to both local and international expertise.

The faculty looks forward to building on January's momentum as the 2026 academic year unfolds.