

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

**MARCH 2026
BULLETIN**

Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 1, Issue 3



TEACHING, RESEARCH & INNOVATION - THE FED UPDATE

The Faculty of Education continues to strengthen its commitment to academic excellence, research development, and institutional transformation through a series of impactful activities held throughout March 2026. These initiatives reflect the faculty's strategic focus on enhancing teaching, learning, research, governance, and stakeholder collaboration.

STRENGTHENING POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION CAPACITY



The faculty successfully hosted a **Supervisor Workshop** on 02 March 2026 in Komani (34 academic staff) and 03 March 2026 in Mthatha (63 academic staff). The workshop focused on best practices in postgraduate supervision, mentorship, and student support, with a strong emphasis on improving research quality and postgraduate completion rates. This initiative plays a critical role in strengthening supervision capacity and fostering a robust postgraduate research culture.

The third colloquium of the **Enabling Quality Postgraduate Education (EQPE) project** was held on 16-17 March 2026 under the theme "Enhancing the Knowledge Project." The two-day event brought together over 100 participants, including academics, deputy vice-chancellors, research leaders, and institutional postgraduate directors from 23 public and 8 private higher education institutions. Representatives from key national bodies, including the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Council on Higher Education, and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, were also in attendance.

The colloquium marked the culmination of a series of three national engagements led by the EQPE project, funded by the University Capacity Development Project of DHET and spearheaded by Professor Sioux McKenna. Implementation took place in partnership with the Community of Practice for Postgraduate Education and Scholarship (CoP PGES) under Universities South Africa (USAf)'s Advancing Early Career Researchers and Scholars (AECRS) programme, led by Professor Stephanie Burton.

The faculty was represented at the colloquium by Prof BD Bantwini, whose participation contributed to ongoing institutional efforts to strengthen postgraduate education and research development.

Keynote Speaker: Prof Jonathan Jansen
Distinguished Professor of Education
Stellenbosch University

2026 EQPE Colloquium 16 - 17 March 2026
Birchwood Hotel & OR Tambo Conference Centre

Enhancing the Knowledge Project

Keynote Topic: What is postgraduate education? What should it achieve? Who does it serve?

ENABLING QUALITY POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

higher education & training ucdp UNIVERSITIES SOUTH AFRICA CoPPGES

Supporting Emerging Researchers

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Non-Credit-Bearing Research Proposal Module Writing Workshop

From 02-04 March 2026, the faculty conducted a Non-Credit-Bearing Research Proposal Module Writing Workshop, attended by 100 Master of Education and Doctor of Philosophy in Education students. The workshop provided structured support on research design, proposal development, academic writing, and ethical research practices. It also created a platform for student-academic staff engagement, contributing to improved postgraduate progression, research quality, and overall research productivity.

MAR
17

Training and Resources in Research Ethics Evaluation (TRREE)

On 17 March 2026, the faculty conducted its second Training and Resources in Research Ethics Evaluation (TRREE) workshop for the year, in response to urgent requirements from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The workshop was attended by 85 staff members and postgraduate students, who were guided through the process of completing the TRREE modules and obtaining the required certification. This initiative contributed to ensuring that researchers remain compliant with institutional research ethics standards, while also strengthening awareness and understanding of ethical research practices across the faculty.

ENHANCING FACULTY GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

On 04 March 2026, 31 chairpersons and deputy chairpersons participated in a Committee Leadership Workshop aimed at strengthening governance structures. The session focused on leadership development, institutional policies, and effective committee functioning. This initiative enhanced accountability, coordination, and decision-making within faculty committees, contributing to improved operational efficiency and institutional culture.



STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



The faculty convened its first Education Advisory Board (EAB) Meeting for 2026 on 13 March. The meeting brought together key stakeholders from the education sector and academia to provide strategic guidance on curriculum relevance and teacher education priorities. Discussions emphasised alignment with national priorities and responsiveness to emerging educational challenges, reinforcing the faculty's commitment to stakeholder engagement and programme relevance.

Advancing Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

A two-day Collaborative Workshop and Webinar on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) was held on 10–11 March 2026 in partnership with the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences (FMPAS) and Royal Holloway, University of London. The workshop explored integrating indigenous knowledge into teaching, learning, and research while promoting interdisciplinary and international collaboration. The engagement highlighted the importance of indigenous knowledge in advancing inclusive, contextually relevant, and transformative educational practices.



Collaborative Workshop and Webinar on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)





Global Engagement for Student Success

S. Peter, TDP Coordinator, represented the faculty at the **DREAM 2026 Conference** in Portland, USA (02-05 March 2026). His presentation on the impact of the Tutorship Programme highlighted how structured academic support and technology integration enhance student performance and success. The conference provided valuable opportunities for global benchmarking and knowledge exchange.

Tutor Development and Digital Innovation

The Tutor Training Programme was conducted on 11 March 2026 (Mthatha, online - 129 tutors) and 12 March 2026 (Komani, face-to-face - 44 tutors). The training focused on digital transformation in tutorship, equipping tutors with skills in platforms such as MS Teams, Moodle, and Microsoft Forms.

Key highlights included training on smart classroom technologies, hybrid teaching approaches, and the use of innovative tools such as the tutor help desk, dashboard, and Tutoria AI chatbot. Tutors were also guided on administrative processes, reporting systems, and ePortfolio development, ensuring both academic and operational readiness.



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND RECURRICULATION



RECURRICULATION RETREAT

A three-day **Recurriculation Retreat** (09-11 March 2026) was held at the Komani Health Resource Centre to finalise the development of Student Module Guides for the BED Intermediate Phase and Foundation Phase programmes.

ADVANCING DIGITAL PEDAGOGY AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES



Ongoing Student Module Guide Workshops across departments focused on ensuring alignment across campuses, horizontal and vertical curriculum coherence, and adherence to programme design prescripts. These efforts are key to ensuring a consistent, meaningful, and well-structured curriculum.



The Centre for African Language Teaching (CALT) Workshop, held on 12-13 March 2026 at the University of Fort Hare (East London), focused on digital innovation and curriculum development. FED participants were trained in instructional video production and engaged in developing curriculum resources and an online short course for teaching reading and writing in isiXhosa. The workshop also promoted reflective academic practice, strengthening digital pedagogy and teaching effectiveness.



Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) Summit.

Three faculty representatives, Prof BD Bantwini, Dr Magadla and Dr Kumanda, attended the Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) Summit.

Convened under the theme "Strengthening Foundational Learning Through the Continued and Expanded Rollout of Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education Across All Provinces," the summit brought together policymakers, education specialists, researchers, teacher educators, and community stakeholders. The engagement reaffirmed the critical role of language in improving learning outcomes, particularly in the foundational years of education.

Participation in the summit provided valuable insights into national policy directions and best practices in bilingual education, further strengthening the faculty's commitment to advancing inclusive, contextually relevant, and language-responsive teaching and learning approaches.

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Faculty members participated in the adjudication of the **Nelson Mandela Museum 2026 Human Rights Essay Competition and Oral Presentations**. In the competition for Grade 10 and 11 learners across South Africa, promoting human rights and democracy in line with the Constitution, over 500 essays were submitted, and 10 learners advanced to the final stage. The adjudication process was conducted with dedication and commitment, including participation from two adjudicators from the faculty, Mr Mzwamadoda Petse and Ms Nontuthuzelo Ngubane.



The initiative promotes human rights awareness, research, and public speaking among learners while strengthening partnerships between the Faculty and the Nelson Mandela Museum.

Strengthening Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

THENSA WILSA INFORMATION SHARING SESSION 2026

The faculty participated in the THENSA WILSA Information Sharing Session 2026, focusing on WIL, graduate employability, entrepreneurship, and digital transformation. This engagement afforded the faculty an opportunity to contribute to the finalisation of the national WIL policy and to participate in THENSA/WILSA capacity development workshops commencing in April 2026. It also presents valuable opportunities to establish partnerships with the Embassy of Ireland, SANWIL, the SELCO Foundation, and other South African institutions. These collaborations will support key priorities such as staff capacity building, expanded partnerships and access, the development of WIL short learning programmes (SLPs), adoption of mixed-modality approaches, utilisation of virtual workspaces, and the advancement of project-based learning.

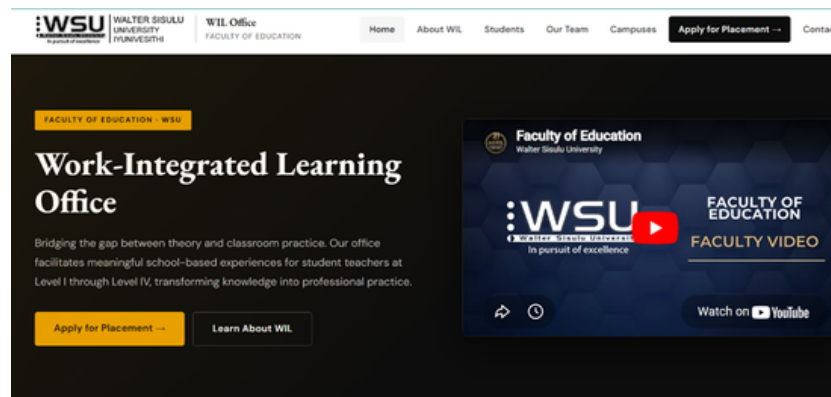


Innovative WIL and Tutorship Programme Developments

The faculty continues to drive innovation through the Tutorship Programme:

- **Tutors4WIL Initiative:** A pilot project designed to support student teachers during school placements. A total of 17 tutors were trained (Komani: 12 March; Mthatha: 13 March), equipping them to bridge the gap between theory and practice through structured mentorship.
- **Digital Placement Model 2026:** Progress has been made in developing a digital placement platform, including a WIL Office webpage, automated placement systems, and school selection tools. This initiative reflects a shift towards technology-enhanced WIL processes.

[Click on the picture to be redirected to the website](#)



STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC COLLABORATION IN MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

On 17 March 2026, the Department of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education (MSTE) held a collaborative meeting with Rhodes University's RUMEP team. The engagement focused on strengthening partnerships, supporting in-service teacher development, and addressing gaps in mathematics content knowledge. The collaboration aims to generate research outputs and enhance professional development, with plans to formalise the partnership.



STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ACASS PROGRAMME

The faculty hosted a strategic engagement with the Advanced Creative Arts Side Skills (ACASS) Programme on 25 March 2026. The session was comprised of the ACASS Director, Dr Wanda Dion Skoti, who introduced the programme and outlined potential areas for collaboration. The iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu Faculty of Education was represented by Professor BD Bantwini, Professor PT Mpiti, Dr P Nqabeni, Dr J Tebekana, and Dr K Ngoma.

Discussions focused on strengthening Creative Arts education through community engagement initiatives, short learning programmes, and professional development for educators. The ACASS team also showcased pilot projects implemented in local schools, demonstrating the programme's impact.

The engagement was well received, with both parties expressing interest in formalising a partnership to advance arts education, support teacher development, and enhance community-based learning initiatives.

Showcasing Faculty Research Output

The Faculty of Education continues to demonstrate strong research productivity, with a growing body of scholarly publications contributing to knowledge advancement across key areas of education, including curriculum development, mathematics and science education, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, digital learning, and school leadership.

The table below provides an overview of recent publications produced by academic staff in 2026. These outputs reflect the faculty's commitment to research excellence, innovation, and addressing critical educational challenges at both local and global levels.

Readers are encouraged to explore these contributions further- by clicking on each publication title, you will be directed straight to the full article online

NO	AUTHOR(S)	Publication Title
1	S. Chiphambo	The Missing Link: Understanding Teacher Engagement in Mathematics Professional Development Programmes in South Africa
2	T. Makhoba, S. Chiphambo, A. Ngqunguza, L. Nqoma, N. Agyeman & N. Mtsi	Enhancing primary mathematics educators: Strategizing In-service teacher training for the advancements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the Chris Hani East District
3	M.D. Omojemite	Socio-Cultural And Economic Drivers of Forced Motherhood and The Coping Mechanisms of Domestic Violence Survivors
4	B. Seleke	Repositioning indigenous knowledge in digitally-enhanced global classrooms: A South African perspective on epistemic justice and curriculum innovation
5	Dieketseng Olga Letittia Setsubi & Benjamin Seleke,	Indigenous knowledge systems as a catalyst for inclusive self-directed learning in rural South African secondary schooling: Evidence from a mixed-methods case study
6	Seleke, B., & Teis, N. J. P.	Unpacking the challenges and potential of an indigenous political economy in a multipolar world order
7	Bafundi Zealous Mapisa & Belinda Rindai Musodza	Navigating the management terrain: Insights from school management teams of Amathole East District, South Africa

NO	AUTHOR(S)	Publication Title
8	Bafundi Zealous Mapisa	Role of the Whole School Evaluation in Enhancing Instructional Practices: A Case Study of Selected Schools in the Eastern Cape
9	Baidoo J	Digital Equity Through Blended Learning: A Social Justice Framework for Mathematics Education in Eastern Cape, South Africa
10	S. Chiphambo	Problem-Solving Errors in Highest Common Factors and Lowest Common Multiples: An Analysis of Pre-Service Teachers' Misconceptions
11	S.J.C. Masuku, S. Boateng,	Kitchen science as a pedagogical model: Integrating students-constructed problem-based learning to enhance thermodynamic conceptualisation in physics education
12	S. Dlamini, S. Masuku, M.S. Ali, H.A. Al-Lohedan, G. Rabbani, L. Kotsedi, T. Mokoena, T. Mahule, T. Mokhena, Mohd. Hashim, J. Msomi, A. Nhlapo	Structural, Magnetic, and Electron Spin Resonance Properties of Nickel Nanoferrites Synthesized by High-Energy Ball Milling
13	T. Maqoqa	Integrating Digital Twins, Mathematical Modelling and Embodied AI to Bridge Simulation–Reality Gaps in Robotics Education: A Qualitative Case Study in South African HEIs
14	Msi, Y., Matsepe, M.E., Sehowa, M.K	Errors in trigonometric proof-related reasoning tasks: Insights from Grade 10 learners at a rural Eastern Cape School
15	Matsepe, ME., Ogbonnaya, U.I	Reasoning and proof in Euclidean geometry: a comeprative analysis of Grade 11 South African textbooks
16	Kumanda N	Policy implications on learner retention in selected rural primary schools in South Africa
17	Kemi Adu and Nomxolisi Mtsi	Social, Cultural and Historical Experiences of Africans on Decolonising the Climate Crisis: A Desktop Analysis

NO	AUTHOR(S)	Publication Title
18	Kemi Adu	<u>Gender And Learning Styles as Correlates of Grade Six Mathematics Performance in Selected Schools in Buffalo City, South Africa</u>
19	Boateng S & Mndela Z B	<u>The influence of professional teacher development programmes on physical sciences teachers' content knowledge and practical skills in mechanics and electromagnetism</u>
20	Boateng S & Kumi-Manu R.N	<u>Assessing pre-service science teachers' academic knowledge and misconceptions about Evolution and Genetics Concepts</u>
21	Boateng S & Qashani S	<u>Contextualising ICT integration in rural science classrooms: A case study on the influence of digital tools on physical sciences teaching and learning in South African schools.</u>
22	Masuku JC S & Boateng S	<u>Kitchen science as a pedagogical model: Integrating students-constructed problem-based learning to enhance thermodynamic conceptualisation in physics education</u>
23	Mivuyo Bolosha ¹ & Owen Madalambana	<u>Examining the Impact of Learner Absenteeism on the Academic Performance of Grade 12 Students: A Case Study of a School in the Butterworth District</u>
24	Lungelwa Khesa ¹ & Owen Madalambana	<u>The role of school management teams in enhancing education quality: A case study of four schools in the Chris Hani West Education District, South Africa</u>
25	Mandla Msitshana & Owen Madalambana	<u>The role of school management teams in enhancing education quality: A case study of four schools in the Chris Hani West Education District, South Africa</u>
26	Amahle Mbenyana, Owen Madalambana	<u>Lived experiences of ICT use in teaching and learning of history in one selected school of Chris Hani West District</u>
27	Bulelwa Makena	<u>Lexicons as fundamental aspects in text comprehension</u>

NO	AUTHOR(S)	Publication Title
28	Olika Moila, Bongani D Bantwini	Lecturers' and Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of 4IR Tools to Teach and Learn Practical Components of Selected Modules to Improve Equal Access to High-Quality Education: A Case of One University in the Eastern Cape

IN CONCLUSION

The March 2026 activities demonstrate the Faculty of Education’s continued commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and collaboration. Through strategic initiatives in research, teaching, governance, and partnerships, the faculty is actively shaping a responsive, high-quality, and future-oriented education environment.

