



CUT

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

Student Affairs 2025/2026 Interim Report

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The higher education environment is fundamentally shaped by its support systems, which are essential for establishing and sustaining an environment that effectively supports the academic project. Student Affairs serves as a strategic enabler that facilitates an institutional environment aimed at building and strengthening the student community. Through driving student engagement initiatives that positively influence student development, Student Affairs has positioned itself as a strategic champion within the university community. In this context, it is important to note that this report has been prepared to demonstrate strategic improvements in the facilitation of services that restore student dignity and place human development at the centre of institutional priorities. At the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State, Student Affairs adopted a Ten-Point Plan that categorises priority areas, inter alia, student housing development and improvement strategies, the establishment of vibrant student life, sport improvement strategies, youth development, entrepreneurship and employability, as well as student social wellness. These categories serve as pillars that drive the implementation plan and demonstrate both internal and external collaborations aimed at promoting social change and enhancing student wellbeing.

This report consolidates selected categories that account for the strategic work delivered during the final quarter of 2025 and the first quarter of 2026. The impact of Student Affairs interventions has been observed as catalytic in fostering a renewed institutional culture of care, vibrancy, and university stability. These interventions have contributed significantly to rebuilding the CUT brand and maintaining internal cohesion in comparison to 2024. Student Affairs cultivated a culture of social care for students from diverse backgrounds through a variety of social compact programmes that were initiated during the reporting period. In leveraging diverse talents, sport, and living-and-learning initiatives, this report demonstrates how these interventions have contributed towards promoting student talent and excellence. In this regard, while considerable improvement is clear, several strategic initiatives remain in progress to further strengthen the impact of enhancing the student experience at CUT.

2. STUDENT AFFAIRS IN THE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT

As part of institutional governance, Student Affairs plays an important role in a variety of committees. Importantly, there are currently two committees institutionally driven by Student Affairs, which largely demonstrate the effectiveness of the division in advancing the broader business of the institution. These committees operate according to terms of reference that have been reviewed and approved through various institutional governance structures within the delegation of authority. The committees conduct quarterly meetings as part of institutional governance processes and report on their activities accordingly. The committees are outlined below.



2.1. Student Services Committee (SSC)

The Student Services Committee (SSC) was re-established from the former Student Affairs Council to bring together a variety of stakeholders involved in student support services within the institution. The committee has undergone capacity-building initiatives for all its members and developed a scorecard that reflects its annual direction and strategic priorities for the year.

2.2. Student Academic Affairs Committee (SAAC)

The Student Academic Affairs Committee (SAAC) was established to address student concerns relating to areas that support teaching and learning. The committee revised its terms of reference, which were approved by the University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) during its meeting held on 15 April 2026. The committee remains active and functional, and during the last quarter a report was prepared and submitted to UTLC for noting.

3. STUDENT DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Student Affairs participates in various student disciplinary committees as part of its collective institutional responsibilities. For instance, Student Affairs at the Welkom Campus forms part of the Student Academic Disciplinary Committee, which is chaired by the Dean of Student Affairs. A similar arrangement exists at the Bloemfontein Campus. Both committees deliver verdicts for students who have been processed through disciplinary hearings on a quarterly basis.

4. GOVERNANCE AND STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Student governance constitutes a significant component of Student Affairs and drives the preparation of students for institutional representation. This area has continued to receive significant priority through ongoing system development and improvement aimed at redefining the institutional climate of student-centredness. The renewed institutional culture continues to position CUT as an institution whose reputation remains intact within the broader higher education sector. This section of the report reaffirms the institution's commitment to stability through a multi-pronged strategy that places students at the centre of service delivery and institutional priorities.

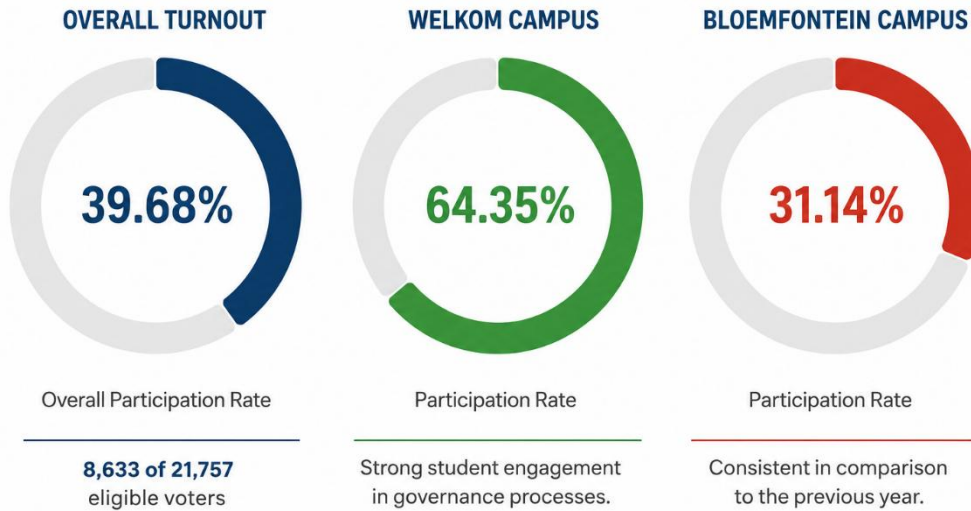
4.1. SRC Elections (September 2025)

The Student Representative Council (SRC) elections are held annually during the second week of September. For the current SRC term of office, the elections were held on 10 and 11 September 2025, constituting one of the most significant governance processes undertaken by the Student Affairs division during the reporting period. The elections were facilitated through an electronic voting system,



demonstrating CUT's ongoing commitment to digital transformation embedded within student services.

SRC ELECTION PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW



The SRC term of office commenced on 1 October 2025, and the critical process of institutional compliance regarding the SRC began in October through efforts to establish an Institutional SRC. This matter remains under discussion and will be further articulated in the section addressing the SRC Policy Review. The election achieved a total voter turnout of 8,633 students out of 21,757 eligible voters, representing an overall participation rate of 39.68%. The participation rates per campus were as follows:

- **Welkom Campus:** Approximately 64.35% participation, reflecting strong student engagement in governance processes.
- **Bloemfontein Campus:** Approximately 31.14% participation, indicating consistency in comparison to the previous year.

4.2. SRC Induction Programme

The Student Affairs unit facilitated a comprehensive SRC Induction Programme on 18 and 19 September 2025 at the I-Gym (Boet Troskie Small Hall). This programme was designed as a foundational intervention aimed at ensuring that newly elected SRC members were adequately oriented to the institutional, administrative, and governance landscape of the Central University of Technology. The induction programme served as a critical component of the SRC transition process by providing student leaders with essential institutional knowledge required to execute their responsibilities effectively.



4.3. SRC Leadership Capacity-Building Programme

The Student Affairs unit facilitated a Student Representative Council (SRC) Leadership Capacity-Building Programme from 3 to 7 October 2025 at Golden Gate, Clarens. The programme brought together SRC members from both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses, reflecting an integrated institutional approach to student leadership development. The programme further initiated broader discussions on ethical leadership and servant leadership. This intervention was conceptualised as a strategic leadership development initiative aimed at equipping SRC members with the necessary competencies, knowledge frameworks, and governance tools required to execute their mandates effectively. The programme was anchored on key institutional and governance documents, including the SRC Terms of Reference (ToR)/Constitution, CUT Vision 2030, and the CUT Strategic Plan (2021–2025), thereby ensuring alignment with the university's broader strategic direction.



4.4. SRC Engagement with Governance, Risk and Compliance

The Student Affairs section facilitated an SRC Engagement with the Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) Unit on 17 November 2025, which brought together SRC representatives from both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. The engagement formed part of the institutional process aimed at developing the Draft Institutional Risk Register for 2026, thereby positioning student leadership as a critical stakeholder in institutional risk management processes. The session was held at Japie Van Lill and was facilitated by senior officials within the Governance, Risk and Compliance portfolio, reflecting a deliberate institutional effort to promote inclusive and participatory governance practices.





4.5. SRC Engagement with Legal Services

The Student Affairs unit facilitated an SRC Engagement with the Legal Services Unit on 18 November 2025 at the CILT Training Room, with participation from SRC members representing both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. This engagement formed part of a broader institutional initiative aimed at strengthening legal awareness, governance compliance, and policy literacy within student leadership structures. The programme was delivered by the Legal Services Unit and focused on equipping SRC members with a comprehensive understanding of institutional legal frameworks, disciplinary procedures, and statutory obligations applicable within the higher education environment.



4.6. SRC Engagement with the Wellness Centre

The Student Affairs unit facilitated an SRC Engagement with the Wellness Centre on 20 November 2025, which brought together SRC representatives from both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. This engagement formed part of ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening collaboration between student leadership and institutional support services, particularly in relation to student wellbeing, mental health, and holistic development.

4.7. SRC Engagement with Marketing and Institutional Branding

The Student Affairs unit facilitated an SRC Engagement with the Marketing and Communications Department on 19 November 2025 at Kopanong Building (Room 003). The engagement brought together SRC representatives from both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses and was led by the Deputy Director of Marketing, Mr Matome Kganakga, to address matters relating to institutional branding and strategic communication at CUT. This engagement formed part of a broader institutional initiative aimed at strengthening student leadership visibility, brand alignment, and strategic communication, thereby positioning the SRC as an integral component of the university's public image and stakeholder engagement framework.



4.8. SRC Participation in Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance

The Student Affairs unit facilitated SRC participation in a CUT Stakeholder Engagement Session held on 15 October 2025 at the Welkom Campus and led by the Institutional Planning and Quality Enhancement (IPQE) Unit. This engagement formed part of a consultative process aimed at informing the development of the Institutional Operational Plan (IOP) 2026–2030, aligned with the strategic imperatives of CUT Vision 2030.

The engagement provided SRC members with critical insights into the following areas:

- Institutional planning frameworks and strategic processes.
- Quality assurance mechanisms and performance monitoring systems.
- The university's long-term strategic trajectory and development priorities.

4.9. SRC Strategic Planning Sessions

In further strengthening SRC operational effectiveness, both SRC structures undertook Strategic Planning Sessions aimed at aligning their programmes with institutional priorities. This significant milestone resulted in the development of SRC programmes of action intended to enhance institutional alignment and operational efficiency.

- The Bloemfontein SRC Strategic Planning Session was held on 24–25 November 2025 at Japie Van Lill.
- The Welkom SRC Strategic Planning Session took place on 1–2 December 2025 at O Block.



5. POLICY INITIATIVES

The area of student governance worked concurrently with the SRC to facilitate policy transformation. This important mandate remains ongoing through a variety of policy review processes aimed at enhancing institutional efficiency and strengthening governance systems. In this context, the following two policies were approved by the CUT Governing Council:

- Student Charter.
- Policy Framework on SRC Privileges and Incentives.

5.1. SRC ToR Review

Student Affairs conducted a review of the SRC Terms of Reference (ToR) with the intention of incorporating the Institutional SRC in compliance with the National Framework on Student Governance. The SRC organised a Policy Summit from 27 to 28 March 2026 with recognised student organisations to consolidate agreements and recommendations that should be incorporated into the SRC ToR. Additionally, a law firm is in the process of being appointed to conduct the legal vetting of the proposed amendments and to ensure that the relevant governance structures are consulted for recommendation and final approval by Council.



5.2. SRC Support During Registration and Orientation Period

In January 2026, the Office of Governance and Leadership Development played a central role in facilitating the effective participation and operational readiness of the Student Representative Council (SRC) during the university's registration and orientation period, which is widely recognised as a critical and high-pressure phase



within the academic calendar. This period is characterised by heightened student activity, administrative complexity, and potential institutional risk. As such, the Office implemented a series of coordinated interventions aimed at ensuring institutional stability, student support, and effective governance participation by the SRC.



5.3. Engagement Between the Dean, SRC, and Student Political Organisations

The Office of Governance and Leadership Development facilitated a strategic engagement between the Dean of Student Affairs, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and recognised student political organisations and societies. At the Welkom Campus, this initiative took place on 9 March 2026, while the Bloemfontein Campus engagement was held on 16 March 2026. These engagements formed part of the broader institutional mandate aimed at strengthening participatory governance, revitalising student activism, and enhancing cooperation and collaboration in delivering impactful services to students.

The programme further included:

- Former and current SRC leaders providing leadership insights and mentorship.
- Institutional representatives offering guidance on academic processes and governance structures.

As reflected in the programme, sessions were delivered by faculty officials and student leaders, thereby ensuring both technical knowledge transfer and experiential learning opportunities.



6. STUDENT LIFE

This section of the report provides an overview of activities that reaffirm Student Affairs' commitment to fostering a vibrant campus life. The existence of campus life within a university environment contributes significantly to the development of a student community through the enhancement of learning and social interaction. In this context, CUT continues to foreground its renewed institutional culture in which campus life contributes towards building a learning community and promoting social cohesion. This section of the report covers activities implemented during the first quarter of 2026, with the intention of highlighting significant developments and progress within student life initiatives.

6.1. First-Year Orientation 2026: Student Affairs Initiative

The unit actively participated in the planning and implementation of the First-Year Orientation Programme. A key highlight was the First-Year Heritage Tour held on 29 January 2026, which attracted approximately 4,700 students at the Bloemfontein Campus. At the Welkom Campus, the Orientation Programme was held on 27 January 2026 and remained a vibrant and engaging activity for first-year students. Approximately 800 first-year students attended this important event.





6.2. CUT Institutional Events

The unit contributed to institutional events through organised developmental groups that consistently presented performances demonstrating student talent and creativity. In addition, CUT FM remained a strategic partner that connected the institution with the broader community through the mobile broadcasting of institutional events. For instance, the choral society and dance groups performed during the Official Academic Opening ceremonies at both campuses, while CUT FM ensured that its outside broadcasting team was present to support and cover the events. These institutional events included, among others, graduation ceremonies across all campuses.

6.3. First-Year Student Leadership Programme

The First-Year Student Leadership Programme enrolled approximately 200 students and focused on leadership development aligned with institutional values. The programme continues to serve as an ecosystem for co-creating lifelong experiences that are grounded in resilience and student success. As part of the orientation programme, this group of students embarked on educational tours during which various heritage and monument sites in the regions where CUT campuses are located were visited.

6.4. Poetry and Book Launch

On 13 February 2026, the unit supported the book launch of Ms Puseletso Mokoenyana, held at the Green Grass area of the Bloemfontein Campus. This event was organised in collaboration with the Wellness Centre in commemoration of Valentine's Day. One of the key pillars of student life activities is the integration of knowledge-sharing and meaningful experiences that support human learning and development. In this context, the book, authored by a CUT student, reflected an important example of student achievement, and the support of initiatives of this nature serves as an epitome of celebrating excellence.

6.5. Christian Revival Church Student Organisation

The Student Life Unit supported the CRC Student Organisation Fresher's Praise Party held on 13 March 2026 at the Amphitheatre from 18:00 to 21:00. This revival programme contributed towards the spiritual upliftment of students and fostered a sense of community and belonging within the learning environment. The event also served as an opportunity to launch the affiliation process for student organisations and societies for the 2026 academic year. Approximately 500 students attended the event, which contributed positively towards broadening student networks and strengthening social interaction.



6.6. Automation System for Affiliation of Student Organisations and Societies

The unit is working collaboratively with ICT to develop a digital platform for the recognition and affiliation of student organisations and societies. This initiative forms part of the institution's broader reconstruction and systems-efficiency strategy aimed at improving student services. The process is currently underway, and the first trial phase was initiated during March 2026 to assess the functionality of the system. It is anticipated that the platform will be fully operational for the 2027 affiliation cycle of student organisations and societies.

6.7. Debate Society Participation in the Jozi Rumble Debate Tournament

The Jozi Rumble 2026 Tournament was hosted from 3 to 5 April 2026 by the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Jozi Rumble is widely regarded as a developmental debating tournament characterised by its fast-paced and highly competitive nature. The tournament serves as a preparatory platform for emerging debaters by equipping them with the resilience, adaptability, and competitive rigour required for participation in larger and more demanding tournaments within the debating circuit.





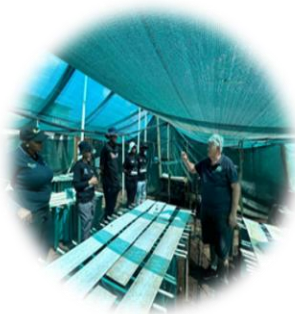
6.8. Debate and Public Speaking Society

On 10 March 2026, the CUT Welkom Campus Debate and Public Speaking Society and the Bloemfontein Campus Debate Society received an official invitation from the Wits Debating Union, which was also shared with the Office of Student Affairs. Participation in competitions of this nature contributes towards positioning CUT as a university of excellence, where student engagement initiatives form part of broader platforms that facilitate holistic student learning and development.



6.9. Enactus Welkom Campus

From 31 March to 1 April 2026, Enactus CUT Welkom attended the Enactus CUT Snail Farming Training Programme held at Dicla in Krugersdorp. Seven students, together with Ms Lefera, the Enactus CUT Co-Faculty Advisor, attended the training programme. The training was funded through the Welkom Campus Principal's Office strategic projects fund. It provided the Enactus team with both practical and theoretical knowledge relating to snail rearing, shelter construction (greenhouse development), feeding practices, operational management, health and safety procedures, as well as snail farming revenue streams.



6.10. One University, Two Campuses Joint Choir Opening

On 7 March 2026, choirs from the Welkom and Bloemfontein campuses came together for a joint official opening during which both choirs prepared and rehearsed collectively



for their respective graduation ceremonies. The joint opening programme also included team-building activities aimed at strengthening collaboration and institutional unity between the two campuses.



6.11. Red Bull Dance Your Style

On 24 March 2026, Red Bull, in partnership with the office, hosted the “Red Bull Dance Your Style” tournament, where students were afforded an opportunity to showcase their talents through dance performances. Two finalists successfully secured qualification and advanced to the final competition. The finals were held in Bloemfontein on Saturday, 28 March 2026.



6.12. Opening Church Service

On 31 January 2026, an Opening Church Service was held as part of an established platform designed to support student worshippers and spiritual development within the university community. The opening service was meaningful and well supported by students, serving to set a positive and reflective tone for the academic year ahead. It provided first-year students with an opportunity to come together in a welcoming and spiritually uplifting environment. The service encouraged a sense of community, unity, and reflection, thereby assisting students to connect as a collective community in pursuit of their academic journey and success.



7. CUT RADIO STATION

The station played a significant role during the registration period by providing real-time information and supporting communication initiatives in collaboration with the Finance Department. It also actively participated in all four days of the First-Year Orientation Programme through planning, activations, entertainment, and social media coverage. CUT FM further enhanced its visibility through an Outside Broadcast at the Welkom Campus Open Day, thereby strengthening cross-campus engagement and institutional visibility. The month concluded with participation in the MERSETA Career Awareness Campaign, during which the station supported youth empowerment through interviews and broadcast activities.



7.1. Instrumental Collaborations for Vibrant Student Life

The beginning of the year represented a high-impact period characterised by a focus on major events, strengthened partnerships, and internal alignment. CUT FM played a central role, particularly at the Bloemfontein Campus, through the management of activations, sound, entertainment, and social media coverage, thereby contributing to a dynamic and engaging student experience. A key highlight during this period was the hosting of the Red Bull “Dance Your Style” Bloemfontein qualifiers, which strengthened commercial partnerships while simultaneously promoting youth culture and student engagement. The station also supported student achievement by



promoting a student book launch, thereby providing a platform for academic and literary recognition. In collaboration with the Language Development and Support Unit, CUT FM participated in World Read Aloud Day and International Mother Tongue Day by hosting learners and promoting multilingual literacy and cultural awareness.



Further demonstrating its commitment to strategic partnerships, CUT FM covered the Samsung Innovation Campus Graduation Ceremony in collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT), as well as the Communications and Marketing Department. Coverage included interviews, live reads, and news reporting. Internally, the station hosted its first full station meeting and initiated one-on-one engagement sessions with team members in preparation for the upcoming radio year. In addition, CUT FM partnered with the CUT Wellness Centre to deliver a week-long health campaign that included outside broadcasts, interviews, and on-air promotional activities.

7.2. First Inaugural Men's Conference

The month of April marked the official commencement of the new radio year at CUT FM, characterised by programming changes and team restructuring. These developments included a refreshed programme line-up, presenter transitions, and the introduction of new presenters, producers, news anchors, and technical team members. The station adopted the strategic theme "Reclaim. Rebuild. Rise.", reflecting its commitment to strengthening its market position, rebuilding internal capacity, and enhancing its role as a leading youth media platform within the Free State. During this period, CUT FM also supported the SRC Men's Conference through on-air promotions, news coverage, and social media engagement, thereby reinforcing its role in supporting student-led initiatives and institutional programmes.



8. RESIDENCE LIFE

Student residences form part of the broader institutional environment that supports the academic project within a teaching and learning context. Institutional culture and social cohesion are largely influenced by the manner in which student residences are organised and how they contribute towards creating a conducive environment for student settlement and development within the university community. This section of the report reflects on activities aimed at cultivating conducive living-and-learning environments for students.

8.1. Academic Residence Awards Ceremony

One of the core value systems of CUT is the celebration of excellence as part of advancing Vision 2030. In this regard, Student Housing proudly hosted the Best Academic Residence Awards Ceremony for both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses in a combined event held at the Hotel School on 29 August 2025. The ceremony recognised and celebrated students who demonstrated outstanding academic performance during the 2024 academic year. A total of 112 awards were presented to students who achieved an academic average of 75% and above. This ceremony symbolised the impact of the residence mentorship programme in advancing academic excellence among first-year students. For instance, Ms A.T. Tiyo from Manheim Ladies Residence emerged as the overall best-performing student across all residences. In addition, Welgemoed Female Residence was recognised as the Best Performing Residence, reflecting its collective commitment to academic excellence, with Loggies Residence placing second and Huis Technikon Residence third. The institution looks forward to building on this momentum and hosting an even greater celebration during the 2026 Residence Awards Ceremony.



8.2. First Annual Student Housing Indaba

Student housing forms a critical component of the institutional ecosystem that supports student success. The ongoing strategy for system improvement depends on rigorous planning processes that facilitate enhancement plans for quality student accommodation. In this regard, Residence Life hosted the First Annual Student Housing Indaba from 23–24 October 2025 as part of the Student Affairs Ten-Point Plan. The theme of the Indaba was: “Regeneration of Student Housing in Cultivating Student Citizenship through the Promotion of Living and Learning.” The Indaba aimed to review whether student housing systems at CUT are aligned with broader sector developments, policies, and best practices intended to enhance the student experience. The Indaba was attended by internal stakeholders, including students, staff members, and the Student Representative Council from both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. This platform also served as an opportunity to reaffirm the institutional vision of “One University, Two Campuses.” The core objective of the Indaba was to invite critical stakeholders to reflect deeply on how CUT residence



spaces should be viewed not merely as places of accommodation, but rather as environments where students cultivate responsibility, empathy, accountability, and social cohesion. The Indaba contributed towards reimagining the utilisation of residence spaces as environments that support learning and the development of student communities through meaningful educational opportunities. Emphasis was placed on revitalising living-and-learning programmes in support of lifelong learning.



8.3. Annual Residence Leadership Awards Ceremony

Student Housing, in partnership with Governance and Student Life, hosted the Annual Residence Leadership Awards Ceremony in recognition of SRC members, House Committees, and Residence Mentors for their outstanding leadership contributions in supporting students across various institutional activities and programmes. These awards emerged from a broader strategy aimed at consolidating leadership recognition initiatives into a combined awards platform that will rotate between both campuses from 2026 onwards. This reconfiguration seeks to ensure that Student Affairs remains a flagship division that unites both campuses in pursuit of Vision 2030.





8.4. Appointments of Wardens and House Committees

The 2026 Wardens' interviews and House Committee elections were conducted from 16 to 31 October 2025. These appointments form part of the broader support ecosystem within student housing, including the representation of students in residence governance structures. In this regard, both CUT campuses continue to function effectively through these leadership categories, which contribute significantly towards facilitating living-and-learning activities within residences.

8.5. Residence Annual Leadership Training

The Annual Residence Leadership Training Programme assists in laying a foundation for House Committees and Wardens to effectively navigate and execute their responsibilities. The programme further serves as an orientation platform for residence leadership through a value-based leadership development approach. In this regard, the programme represents the first official annual residence leadership intervention and, for the current year, was held from 14–16 January 2026 as a combined training programme for both campuses.



8.6. Residence Registrations and Placements

This annual activity assists in ensuring that residences are effectively utilised for the academic year. Residence registrations were conducted concurrently with academic registrations, which for the current year took place from 19–30 January 2026. In addition, all available university residence spaces were allocated, with the exception of Welgemoed Residence, which remains under refurbishment and will be reallocated once renovations have been completed in order to maintain institutional revenue streams.



8.7. Residence First-Year Welcoming Activities and Residence Orientation

Residences actively participated in the Student Affairs inaugural First-Year Orientation Programme held from 27–31 January 2026.



Various residences also hosted their own first-year welcoming sessions, including combined first-year activities such as the Mr and Miss Residence competition held on 7 March 2026. These activities assisted students in settling into residence life while simultaneously revitalising living-and-learning programmes and promoting campus vibrancy.



8.8. Annual CUT Accreditation of Private Student Accommodation

The 2026 accreditation inspection process for private student accommodation providers opened on 1 August and closed on 30 September 2025. This important institutional process contributes significantly towards enhancing the quality of student accommodation offered by accredited private providers. However, the process continues to experience challenges relating to limited institutional capacity to conduct regular inspections and ongoing monitoring activities.



8.9. Residence, Fees and Financial Aid, and FUNDI Merchant Training

Residence Life, in partnership with the Fees and Financial Aid Office, hosted a FUNDI Merchant Training Programme from 4–6 February 2026 at both the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. The training programme was initiated to assist CUT-accredited private accommodation providers in effectively operating the FUNDI system, particularly in relation to onboarding procedures and the claiming of accommodation allowances for students.



8.10. Residence Mentorship Programme

The primary objective of the Residence Mentorship Programme is to support first-year students residing in CUT residences by assisting them to balance their academic and social lives effectively. Each academic year, first-year students are assigned peer mentors to ensure that their journey towards academic success is adequately supported. These mentors provide guidance, support, and assistance as mentees navigate challenging periods and encounter new learning experiences and obstacles. The mentorship relationship enables students to share personal skills, experiences, and knowledge, thereby fostering growth and development throughout the process. In addition, the programme aims to cultivate a residential environment that is caring, collaborative, and committed to supporting student growth and holistic development.

9. WELLNESS CENTRE

The Wellness Centre remains a critical support unit within Student Affairs and has implemented a range of integrated, student-centred programmes aimed at promoting holistic wellbeing across physical, psycho-social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. During the reporting period, the Centre successfully delivered preventative, promotional, and responsive interventions that contributed significantly to the general wellbeing of students.



9.1. First-Year Orientation

The Wellness Centre actively participated in the institutional First-Year Orientation Programme held from 27–30 January 2026. The Centre served as a frontline intervention platform aimed at introducing new students to the university’s wellness ecosystem. This engagement was not merely informational but strategically positioned to ease students’ transition into higher education, which is widely recognised as a high-risk adjustment period. Through structured presentations, interactive engagements, and direct student interaction, the Wellness Centre ensured that students understood the scope, accessibility, and confidentiality of the services offered. This early intervention approach is critical in reducing future crises, improving student retention, and promoting academic success. In this regard, the programme contributed towards increasing the visibility of the Centre’s services, improving student engagement, and strengthening referral pathways.



9.2. Valentine’s Hunt and Couple Testing Campaign

On 13 February 2026, a large-scale campaign was successfully rolled out to students in promotion of a healthy lifestyle and responsible health practices. The Valentine’s Hunt and Couple Testing Campaign was designed as an innovative, student-centred health promotion intervention that integrated social engagement with critical public health messaging. Recognising that traditional health campaigns often experience challenges relating to student participation, the Wellness Centre adopted a creative and experiential approach aimed at increasing student involvement. The initiative strategically leveraged the Valentine’s period to expand services and awareness initiatives that encouraged voluntary HIV testing, particularly among couples, addressed stigma and misconceptions surrounding HIV/AIDS, and promoted open dialogue on relationships, trust, and sexual health responsibility.





9.3. Reproductive Health Awareness

From 17–20 February 2026, a Reproductive Health Awareness Campaign was organised as a targeted multi-day intervention aimed at addressing key sexual and reproductive health challenges affecting the student population. The campaign responded to the growing need for accessible, accurate, and stigma-free health education within the university environment. The Wellness Centre adopted a comprehensive service delivery model that combined education, awareness, and on-site health services to ensure both effective knowledge transfer and practical access to healthcare support services.



9.4. Spiritual Support Picnic

On 11 March 2026, a Spiritual Support Picnic was conceptualised as a holistic wellness intervention that recognised spirituality as a critical, yet often underrepresented, dimension of student wellbeing. The initiative provided a non-formal and inclusive platform through which students could engage in reflection, connection, and spiritual expression. Within this context, the picnic assisted students in managing increasing academic pressure through opportunities for mental and spiritual reflection and meditation. The programme further aimed to provide students with emotional grounding and inner resilience while fostering a sense of community, belonging, and support.



9.5. Wellness Week

From 16–20 March 2026, Wellness Week served as the flagship programme of the Wellness Centre, representing a fully integrated and multi-dimensional approach to student wellbeing. The programme was designed as a high-impact and high-visibility intervention that brought together various wellness services within a single, coordinated platform. Through a combination of screenings, awareness sessions,



counselling services, and interactive activities, Wellness Week created a one-stop service environment where students could access multiple forms of support simultaneously. The campaign experienced a strong student turnout, which contributed towards increasing student awareness and consciousness regarding health and wellbeing matters.



9.6. Peer Educators Training

On 1 and 2 April 2026, the unit organised a Peer Educators Training Programme, which served as a strategic capacity-development initiative aimed at extending the reach and impact of the Wellness Centre through student-led interventions. Peer Educators serve as a critical bridge between the Wellness Centre and the broader student population. The training programme focused on equipping participants with foundational knowledge relating to health and wellness issues, communication and facilitation skills, as well as basic psycho-social support and referral mechanisms.

9.7. Gospel Unplugged (Weekly)

Gospel Unplugged is a structured and recurring initiative designed to nurture both spiritual growth and emotional wellbeing through a relaxed, relatable, and engaging approach that extends beyond traditional formats. Each session typically features a short devotional message, worship music, interactive discussions, personal testimonies, and practical reflections intended to guide participants throughout the week.



9.8. Campus Radio Wellness Programmes (Weekly)

CUT FM supported the rollout of Wellness Programmes that serve as a strategic communication and outreach tool utilised by the Wellness Centre to extend its reach beyond physical interactions. Through structured weekly broadcasting slots, the



Centre delivers accessible, relevant, and timely wellness information to the broader student population. The Centre offered two weekly programmes, namely “I Have an ASK” presented by the Social Worker at 09:00, and “Health Talk” presented by the Professional Nurse at 11:00. These internal collaborations contributed significantly towards strengthening the methodologies used to implement health campaigns across student platforms. The initiative is expected to continue into the next quarter of 2026.

9.9. Food and Nutrition Programme

The Food and Nutrition Programme is a targeted and needs-based intervention implemented through a collaborative effort between the Wellness Centre and key stakeholders to address food insecurity among vulnerable and unfunded students. Recognising nutrition as a critical factor influencing academic success, the programme provides monthly grocery hampers as part of a holistic support strategy aimed at promoting student wellbeing, retention, and academic performance. The Wellness Centre coordinates the identification and assessment of beneficiaries, the distribution of nutritionally appropriate food parcels, and ongoing monitoring processes to ensure that support is delivered with dignity, confidentiality, and fairness. From January to April 2026, a total of 104 students benefited from the programme.



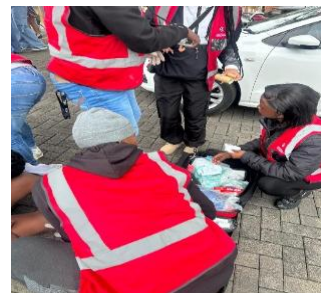
9.10. Basic Counselling Training (Disability Unit and Department of Basic Education)

On 24 and 25 April 2026, the Wellness Centre facilitated a Basic Counselling Skills Training Programme for students from the Disability Unit and the Department of Basic Education as part of its broader mandate to strengthen institutional capacity for student support. This important collaboration reaffirmed the institution’s transformative strategy in delivering student-centred support services and demonstrated how this area of student support continues to drive the integration of students from diverse backgrounds. Recognising that student wellbeing is a shared institutional responsibility, the intervention was designed to equip non-specialist staff and students with foundational skills to provide first-line emotional and psycho-social support.



9.11. Wellness Marshals – Intersivity Tournament

The Wellness Centre plays a critical role in supporting student safety and wellbeing during the Intersivity Tournament between the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. This initiative involves the strategic deployment of trained Wellness Marshals, all of whom are certified in first aid and equipped to provide immediate emergency care, including basic life support, injury management, and initial responses to medical incidents. The initiative further provides students with specialised skills and enhances their lifelong learning experiences as part of developing graduates who are responsive to the demands of the labour market. In addition, the Wellness Marshal team contributes positively towards student development by assisting in the de-escalation of potentially threatening situations and maintaining stability during student activities and events.



10. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

10.1. Team Building Session

From 30–31 March 2026, a Team Building Session was organised to provide ongoing capacity development for staff and to strengthen the operational effectiveness of the Wellness Centre. Recognising that quality service delivery is directly influenced by team dynamics, the session focused on enhancing collaboration, communication, and collective accountability among staff members. Key achievements of the programme included improved teamwork, strengthened internal relationships, and enhanced quality of services provided to students.



10.2. Centre Planning Session

On 17 April 2026, the Centre embarked on a 2026 Planning Session, which served as a critical moment of reflection and strategic alignment aimed at strengthening the operational and strategic direction of the Wellness Centre. The session provided an opportunity to assess organisational performance, identify operational gaps, and refine strategic priorities in alignment with Student Affairs objectives and broader institutional goals. This process ensured that the Wellness Centre remained proactive, data-informed, and strategically aligned, thereby enhancing its contribution towards student success and institutional objectives. Key achievements included alignment with institutional Vision 2030 and the Strategic Plan 2026–2030.



11. OPERATIONAL SPORT

The Operational Sport Unit continues to offer twelve (12) competitive sporting codes coordinated across the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. These sporting codes include Athletics, Basketball, Cheerleading, Cricket, Disability Sport, E-Sport, Football, Golf, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, and Volleyball. These sporting codes are registered in various leagues and competitions within the Free State province, as well as within University Sport South Africa (USSA) competitions. Coordination of the sporting codes is shared among four Deputy Managers and the Manager, supported by part-time staff such as coaches and other sport performance personnel. This section of the report outlines achievements recorded from October 2025 to April 2026.

11.1. Athletics

Participation in various Athletics Free State (AFS) track-and-field leagues was undertaken as part of demonstrating the vibrancy and competitiveness of the CUT Athletics Team. For instance, eight athletes were selected for the Under-23 Free State



Team that participated in the National Track and Field Competition held in Germiston from 25–29 March 2026. In addition, a team consisting of 28 athletes represented CUT at the USSA Track and Field Championships hosted by the University of the Western Cape from 22–25 April 2026. The club also includes staff members who participate in several marathons across the country, with the Two Oceans Ultra Marathon being one of the major events.



11.2. Basketball

This sporting code participated in the USSA Tournament hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand from 1–5 December 2025. Both the male and female teams competed in the B Section of the tournament. The men's team finished in fifth position, while the women's team narrowly missed promotion to the A Section after losing their semi-final match and ultimately finishing fourth overall. The teams are currently participating in the Mangaung League as well as the Inner-City Super League. They also participate in the Intersarsity Basketball League against institutions such as the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses), Sol Plaatje University, and North-West University. In addition, one of the players qualified as a table official and was appointed by Basketball South Africa to officiate at national competitions.





11.3. Cheerleading

Cheerleading remains a relatively new sporting code within university sport, and CUT has demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting student talent in this area. The CUT Cheerleading Team participated in Free State League competitions and also competed during the Varsity Cup Rugby Competition, where the team achieved second position overall. This important milestone further positions CUT as a university that actively promotes and celebrates student talent.



11.4. Cricket

CUT has a competitive cricket team that participates in both university sport and open cricket competitions within the Free State province. In this regard, the team participated in the Mangaung Cricket League from September 2025 until 25 April 2026. The team also participated in the USSA Tournament hosted by Stellenbosch University from 1–5 December 2025. Recruitment initiatives continue to be prioritised to ensure sustainability and maintain the competitiveness of the sporting code.



11.5. Disability Sport

Disability Sport forms an integral component of CUT's commitment to inclusivity and transformation. This sporting code serves as an important reflection of the institution's dedication to social justice and institutional inclusiveness. In this context, six athletes were selected for the Free State Team that participated in the South African Sport Association for the Physically Disabled (SASAPD) Championships held in



Stellenbosch from 27–31 March 2026. This sporting code continues to serve as an important measure of the institution’s commitment to supporting students from diverse backgrounds.

11.6. E-Sport

E-Sport is a modern sporting code that promotes innovation, creativity, and digital competitiveness, and it is officially recognised as one of the sporting codes within University Sport South Africa (USSA). As a university that positions itself as a home of innovation, CUT established an E-Sport team to embrace and support the growing prominence of this sporting discipline in alignment with the institution’s innovation-driven narrative. In this regard, the CUT E-Sport Team participated in several competitions during the reporting period and also conducted selection trials to identify players who will represent the institution in the upcoming Varsity E-Sport Competition scheduled for July 2026.

11.7. Football

The Football Club consists of two male teams and one female team. These teams participate in the ABC Motsepe League and the Sasol League respectively. Both the male and female teams participated in the USSA Football Tournament hosted by the University of Pretoria from 1–5 December 2025. The male team finished in 12th position overall and did not qualify for participation in the 2026 Varsity Football Competition. The female team finished in 18th position and was subsequently relegated to the B Section for the 2026 USSA competition. This setback has prompted a strategic review of the football programme aimed at improving competitiveness and overall performance. In addition, the female team won the Free State Sasol League Competition and represented the province at the SAFA National Playoffs, where the team lost in the semi-final and ultimately finished in fourth position overall. Current strategic focus areas include player recruitment and the restructuring of the technical team in order to strengthen future team performance.



11.8. Golf

The Golf Team participated in the USSA Golf Tournament hosted by Nelson Mandela University from 1–5 December 2025. The team achieved second position overall,



thereby reaffirming CUT's competitiveness within this sporting code. The team also participated in various regional and national competitions aimed at strengthening its competitive performance and visibility. In addition, the club established the CUT Junior Champs initiative, which seeks to promote golf while fostering relationships and partnerships with various stakeholders, including the recruitment of potential student-athletes.



11.9. Hockey

The CUT Hockey Team participates in the Free State Hockey League, which commenced on 4 April 2026. Both the male and female teams participated in the Intervarsity Hockey Tournament involving the University of the Free State and Sol Plaatje University. Two female players were selected to represent the Free State Team at the South African Hockey National Championships scheduled to take place in Johannesburg from 4–9 May 2026. In addition, Ms Thandokazi Mthombeni and Mr Donavin George were appointed as team managers for the female and male teams respectively.





11.10. Netball

The Netball Club hosted open trials for female players on 18 February 2026 and for male players on 19 February 2026. The purpose of these trials was to select teams that would participate in the Mangaung Metro League. Consequently, four CUT teams, consisting of two male teams and two female teams, were selected and entered into the league. In this context, seven first-team female players attended trials for the Free State Crinums, Free State Sonneblom, and Northern Cape Diamond teams participating in the Telkom Netball National League. This participation formed part of preparations for both the USSA and Varsity Netball competitions. Furthermore, the CUT first male and female teams participated in the Intervarsity Netball Tournament hosted by North-West University on 11 April 2026. The club also hosted the Netball Night League on 10 April 2026, which will continue until June 2026 as part of empowering volunteers who will assist during the USSA Netball Tournament to be hosted by CUT. This initiative also serves as a platform for broader engagement with the CUT student community while promoting social interaction and recreational participation among students from CUT and neighbouring colleges.



11.11. Rugby

The male rugby teams participated in the Varsity Cup Rugby Competition and the Young Guns (Under-20) Competition. The teams unfortunately lost all their matches



and were subsequently relegated to the Varsity Shield Competition for 2027. This decline in performance has largely been attributed to recruitment challenges, which are currently being addressed across all competitive sporting codes within the institution. In addition, two male players and one female player were invited to attend the South African Rugby Under-20 Training Camp. The male players progressed to the final round of selection; however, only one male player was ultimately selected for the team that will participate in the international series scheduled to take place in Gqeberha. This tournament forms part of the preparations for the Under-20 Rugby World Cup taking place later this year. Currently, three male teams and one female team are participating in the Free State Rugby League.



11.12. Volleyball

The male Volleyball Team won the Free State Club Championships and subsequently qualified to participate in the Zone 6 Volleyball Club Championships held in December 2025. However, the team was unable to attend the tournament due to financial constraints. The team also participated in the USSA Beach Volleyball Tournament held in November 2025 and finished in 14th position out of 25 participating institutions. The club is currently participating in the Mangaung League and continues to attend various competitions aimed at strengthening competitiveness and development within the sporting code. In addition, the club hosted a volleyball tournament on 25 April 2026 as part of its ongoing sporting development initiatives.



11.13. First Annual Sport Indaba

Recognising the need to expand and strengthen its strategic blueprint for sport development, CUT hosted the First Annual Sport Indaba on 22–23 August 2025 at A-Lodge. The purpose of the Indaba was to facilitate dialogue on the future of sport at CUT as a catalyst for student development, institutional pride, and community engagement.

The following strategic enablers were identified and agreed upon in order to reposition and strengthen sport at the university:

- Instilling a culture of excellence and high-performance sport programmes.
- Ensuring student wellbeing and holistic development through sport participation.
- Promoting transformation, equity, and inclusion across all sporting codes.
- Identifying infrastructure needs and resource requirements.
- Identifying sport technology innovations and research opportunities that will position sport at CUT more competitively within elite and broad-based participation structures.
- Identifying strategic partnerships and community engagement opportunities.





12. EXECUTIVE CONCLUSION

The Student Affairs environment presents this report as a reflection of its strategic priorities, institutional improvements, and overall impact in shaping comprehensive student support services. The report captures activities implemented across the various units within Student Affairs to consolidate progress made towards advancing Vision 2030. Guided by the Student Affairs Ten-Point Plan, the report demonstrates the division's impact and sustained efforts in contributing towards a renewed institutional culture and the cultivation of cohesive student communities at CUT. The reconstruction and strengthening of the Student Affairs environment require a holistic and integrated approach, encompassing policy review processes, institutional transformation initiatives, and the consolidation of flagship projects that advance institutional values and strategic priorities. These initiatives remain critical operational imperatives for Student Affairs, particularly within the context of financial constraints that continue to affect strategic growth and institutional impact. Nevertheless, this report demonstrates significant progress towards advancing student-centredness through the holistic support and development of students across multiple dimensions of university life.



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