



**ESHEC**  
ESWATINI HIGHER  
EDUCATION COUNCIL

*Ensuring relevance & excellence*

# **ESWATINI HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL**

## **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024**







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## COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Ms Makhosazana Madondo - Board Chairperson

**W**e are pleased to present the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) 's annual performance report for 2023/2024. This report encapsulates our steadfast commitment to excellence, transparency, and accountability in fostering the growth and development of higher education within the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Throughout 2023/2024, ESHEC has diligently pursued its mandate of ensuring the quality, relevance, and accessibility of higher education in alignment with national priorities and international best practices. Our efforts have been guided by a strategic vision to empower individuals, institutions, and the nation through education, research, and innovation.

This report comprehensively overviews our achievements, challenges, and aspirations over the past year. It reflects our unwavering dedication to advancing the higher education

landscape in Eswatini, promoting academic excellence, nurturing talent, and driving socio-economic progress.

We thank all stakeholders, including government ministries, higher education institutions, students, professional bodies, subject matter experts (SMEs) and the broader community of higher education stakeholders, for their continued collaboration and support. Together, we are laying the foundation for a brighter future where education catalyses transformation and prosperity.

We invite you to explore this report and join us in our ongoing journey to shape the future of higher education in Eswatini.

**Ms. Makhosazana Madondo**  
**Board Chairperson**



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REMARKS

Dr. Loretta Mkhonta - Chief Executive Officer

I present the Eswatini Higher Education Council's Annual Performance Report for 2023-2024 with great pride and accomplishment.


This period has been marked by significant progress and transformative initiatives to enhance the quality and accessibility of higher education in Eswatini. Over the past year, the Council has made remarkable strides in shaping the future of higher education by developing a comprehensive Higher Education Policy. This policy serves as a cornerstone for our efforts to elevate educational standards and ensure that our institutions are well-equipped to meet the demands of the modern world. Our key achievements included reviewing and updating guidelines for evaluating institutions and programmes. This now consists of a robust framework to address the growing field of online learning, ensuring that digital education is held to the same high standards as traditional formats.

In our continuous effort to support the government in its educational endeavours, the Council conducted an extensive study that provides a clear framework for funding higher education. This study is instrumental in shaping future policies and ensuring financial resources are allocated efficiently and equitably.

This year, the Council surpassed its targets in conducting institutional assessments for government-funded higher education institutions and evaluating 95 programmes. This rigorous assessment process is crucial for maintaining high standards across the board and fostering an environment of continuous improvement.

In addition to these assessments, the Council has strengthened its periodic monitoring of higher education institutions to ensure compliance with the Higher Education Act of 2013. This proactive approach not only upholds the integrity of our





*In our continuous effort to support the government in its educational endeavours, the Council conducted an extensive study that provides a clear framework for funding higher education. This study is instrumental in shaping future policies and ensuring financial resources are allocated efficiently and equitably.*

educational standards but also fosters a culture of accountability and excellence.

Furthermore, we have embarked on a comprehensive data collection initiative to gather relevant higher education indicators. This data is vital for informed decision-making and strategic planning, helping us to identify trends, address challenges, and capitalise on opportunities within the sector.

This year, one of our standout achievements was launching an online platform designed to enhance the efficiency of the Council's core functions, including the registration and data management of higher education institutions. This digital transformation has streamlined processes, reduced administrative burdens, and improved the overall functionality of our operations.

A highlight of the year was our inaugural conference, held in collaboration with the Eswatini Research Association. This event marked a significant milestone in our efforts to promote

research and collaboration within the higher education community. It provided a platform for sharing knowledge, fostering partnerships, and exploring innovative solutions to the challenges facing higher education today.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all members of the Council, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Finance, our partners and stakeholders for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, we have made significant strides in transforming higher education in Eswatini, and I am confident that we will continue to build on this momentum in the years to come.

Thank you.

  
**Dr. Loretta N. Mkhonta**  
**Chief Executive Office**

# Board of Directors



**Ms Makhosazana Madondo**  
Chairperson



**Dr Sonene Nyawo**  
Chairperson of the Academic  
Planning and Development  
Committee



**Mr Mfundo Msibi**  
Chairperson of the  
Finance Committee



**Prof. Justice Thwala**  
Board Member



**Mr Makhosini Makhubu**  
Board Member



**Dr Rangarirai P. Taruvinga**  
Board Member



**Ms Hlobisile Ndzimandze**  
Board Member



**Mr Henry Tums Du Pont**  
Board Member



**Prof. Thuli Nhlengetfwa**  
Board Member



**Ms Khulile Sikhondze**  
Board Member



**Ms Matshidiso Tfwala**  
Board Member



**Ms Gcinaphi Dlamini**  
Board Member



**Dr Ntombifuthi Mhlongo**  
Board Member



# ESHEC Secretariat



**Dr Loretta Mkhonta**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Mr Mangaliso Sifundza**  
Finance and  
Administration Manager



**Dr Ncamsile D Motsa**  
Research Monitoring and  
Publications Manager



**Dr Monica Nkwanyana**  
Quality Assurance  
Manager



**Dr Emmanuel Lungile Howe**  
Senior Quality Assurance  
Officer



**Mr Mihla K Khumalo**  
Advocacy and  
Communications Officer



**Ms Batfobile Dlamini**  
Quality Assurance  
Officer



**Ms Siphiwayinkhosi Nsibande**  
Quality Assurance  
Officer



**Mr Musawenkosi Zwane**  
Quality Assurance  
Officer



**Ms Tanele Dlamini**  
Admin and Personal Assistant  
to the CEO



**Mr Nhlanhla Sigwane**  
Information and  
Technology Officer



**Mr Thembinkhosi Mkhabela**  
Transport and  
Logistics Officer

# Compliance Consultants

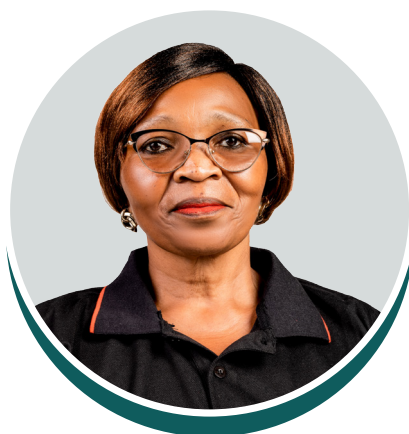
The ESHEC Compliance Consultants are part-time personnel who periodically monitor compliance in Higher Education Institutions. They also monitor the implementation of Self Development Plans post Institutions and Programmes assessments.



**Dr Darren Chipota**  
Compliance Consultant



**Dr Edmund Mazibuko**  
Compliance Consultant



**Dr Phindile Mabuza**  
Compliance Consultant



**Dr Sikhomba Gumbi**  
Compliance Consultant



**Dr Tibekile Manana**  
Compliance Consultant



**Ms Lucy Mkhonta**  
Compliance Consultant



# 1. BACKGROUND

## Background

ESHEC is a parastatal entity established under the Higher Education Act of 2013. This legal framework sets the stage for ESHEC's operations and defines its core responsibilities (Higher Education Act of 2013). The Eswatini Qualifications Framework (ESQF) underscores ESHEC's quality assurance functions (ESQF, 2020). The Public Enterprise Unit (PEU) circular of 2017 confirmed ESHEC's parastatal status.

**The Definition of Higher Education:** The Higher Education Act of 2013 defines higher education as "all learning programs that commence after secondary schooling" and higher education institutions as "any institution which provides higher education on a full-time, part-time, or distance education" and secondary education as "post-O-level or A-level."

### 1.1 Corporate Statements

The following vision, mission, and values align with ESHEC's work ethic and mandate, guiding leadership decisions and staff philosophy.



#### PURPOSE

We regulate and coordinate higher education, ensuring institutions produce programmes responsive to the country's socio-economic needs.



#### INTENT

Globally comparative higher education institutions (HEIs) and programmes.



#### VALUES

1. **Professionalism** – ESHEC is committed to upholding and maintaining high proficiency standards when providing services to the nation.
2. **Integrity** – We strive for honesty, fairness and objectivity in all our dealings with HEIs and other stakeholders.
3. **Partnerships** – We value the collective wisdom from sustainable and beneficial partnerships with public and private organisations.
4. **Accountability** – We transparently work towards clear objectives and accept responsibility for our decisions and actions.
5. **Responsiveness** – We will provide frank, impartial, and timely feedback to the government, stakeholders, and partnerships.

## 1.2 ESHEC's Mandate

ESHEC has a comprehensive mandate under the Higher Education Act of 2013 to oversee various facets of higher education in Eswatini. Its responsibilities include the following:

a) **Quality Assurance**

ESHEC is responsible for ensuring quality in higher education by developing and implementing a quality assurance framework for universities, colleges, and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions.

b) **Registration of Providers**

ESHEC registers higher education institutions (HEIs) based on criteria that ensure HEIs meet the requisite standards. This process is crucial for upholding the integrity and quality of higher education in Eswatini (Higher Education Act of 2013).

c) **Policy Advisory Role**

ESHEC also acts as an advisory body to the Minister of Education and Training, providing expert advice on higher education matters and influencing policy decisions, as required by the Higher Education Act of 2013.

d) **Coordination of long-term Planning and Overall Development of Higher Education**

e) The Higher Education Act of 2013 assigns the Council a crucial role in shaping the educational environment in Eswatini. ESHEC is expected to collaborate with various stakeholders, including academic institutions and sectors of the economy, to ensure that higher education is in line with national development goals and human resource needs.

f) **Resource Vetting**

One essential but often overlooked role of ESHEC is resource vetting. The council is responsible for thoroughly reviewing and approving resources for funding higher education. ESHEC plays a crucial role in the financial planning and oversight of public higher education institutions in Eswatini, ensuring they receive adequate funding and are financially sustainable.

g) **Programme Admissibility**

ESHEC has the authority to determine the admissibility of higher education study programs or, in other words, the accreditation of learning programs. This involves a rigorous evaluation to ensure the programs meet the set criteria and standards. The Higher Education Act (2013) states that ESHEC shall be responsible for the accreditation, promotion, coordination, and determination of higher education, as well as the maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in higher education institutions (Subsection 5 [1]).

## 1.3 Theory of Change in the Higher Education Act

The theory of change embedded in the Higher Education Act of 2013 in Eswatini is designed to improve higher education institutions' quality, accountability, and transparency. This Act is the legal basis for accreditation, registration, and quality assurance efforts. These efforts result in outcomes such as a list of accredited institutions and performance metrics, which lead to higher educational standards and greater institutional accountability. Ultimately, the goal is to develop a skilled workforce and enhance public confidence in the higher education system.



## 1.4 Regulatory Framework: Guidelines and Standards

In 2016, ESHEC established an institutional framework to achieve the strategic objective of formalising quality assurance processes in higher education systems. This was done by implementing regulations and standards outlined in the Higher Education (General) Regulations of 2016, published in Legal Notice 14 of 2016.

1. **Regulations for Establishment** – Outlines the requirements for establishing a higher education institution (HEI) or a qualification awarding institution – establishment results in provisional authority to operate an HEI, valid for two years.
2. **Regulations for Registration** – The following regulations apply to higher education institutions already in operation, particularly those under provisional authority. This includes applications for amending the initial provisional authority, such as a change of ownership. According to these regulations, the Council can shut down an institution if it still does not meet ESHEC standards after assessment for registration post-provisional stage, which results in full registration for five (5) years.
3. **Regulations for Accreditation of Institutions and Programmes** – These regulations govern the accreditation of new and existing programs proposed by higher education institutions and other educational institutions.
4. **Institutional Assessment Standards** – These twelve (12) standards are used to evaluate HEIs for accreditation.
5. **Programmes Evaluation Standards** – These ten (10) standards are used to evaluate programmes proposed by HEIs for accreditation.





## **2.**

# **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

## 2.1 Governance

During the past financial year, the ESHEC Council Subcommittees and Council held all their mandatory meetings as required by the PEU Act. At these meetings, several essential items were approved, including the 2023/2024 Audit Report, the 2023/2024 Annual Report, and the first, second, and third-quarter performance reports. Additionally, nine (9) ESHEC Policies were reviewed and approved.

The Finance Committee held one (1) extraordinary meeting, the Academic Planning and Development Committee (APDC) held three (3) extraordinary meetings, and the Council held two (2) extraordinary meetings during the financial year. Notably, one extraordinary meeting of the Council on 10 August 2023 was called to approve the ESHEC Strategy for 2023/2026, the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers, and the Revised Budget for 2023/2024, which was necessary for strategic projects.

## 2.2 ESHEC Retreats

The Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) held a retreat for the Council, secretariat, and key stakeholders from the Public Enterprise Unit (PEU) and the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) at Nkonyeni Estate from Tuesday, 4 July to Friday, 7 July 2023. The retreat aimed to reach an agreement on various critical strategic issues. An update on the progress of the decisions made during the retreat was presented to the Council during the third quarter meeting.

## 2.3 Internal Control Environment

During the 2023/2024 financial year, the Council developed and approved the following policies;

**Table 2.1: Policies and Approval Status**

Policy		Approval Status
1.	Fixed Asset Policy	Approved
2.	Procurement Policy	Approved
3.	Petty Cash Policy	Approved
4.	Communication Policy	Approved
5.	Internship and Fellowship Policy	Approved
6.	Wellness Policy	Approved
7.	Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy	Approved
8.	Policy on Accommodating Disability	Approved
9.	Board Charter	Approved

## 2.4 Staff Capacity Development

### 2.4.1 Training for the Quality Assurance (QA) Team

On April 3 and May 3, 2023, the QA team was trained on the Eswatini Qualifications Framework (ESQF) and programme design using notional hours.

### 2.4.2 Training on Qualifications and the Coding Framework

The ESHEC secretariat held a capacity-building exercise from August 17 to 18, 2023. The purpose was to equip the ESHEC team with the knowledge and skills to understand the qualification and part-qualification registration responsibilities. The team also studied the Coding Framework to appreciate its significance, structure, and practical application for classifying qualifications. Additionally, they explored how ESHEC should communicate with the Eswatini Qualifications Authority (EQA) for qualification recommendation and registration in higher education.



### 2.4.3 Benchmarking Trip

From June 5th to June 9th, 2023, the ESHEC team, led by the CEO, visited the Republic of South Africa to learn from its education system and improve the sustainability and effectiveness of higher education in Eswatini. During their visit, the team visited six education entities, including the Media Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Department of Basic Education (DBE), and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

During the visit to MICT SETA, our team sought insights into the operations and impact of SETAs on higher education quality in South Africa. We also aimed to understand the Council on Higher Education's (CHE) processes for ensuring higher education quality, including policies, fees, systems, and research. At the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), we discussed various issues related to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and gained a better understanding of the similarities and overlaps between the functions of CHE and SAQA.

Conversations with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) gave us a deeper understanding of funding issues in South African higher education and insights into how research in higher education is influenced, driven, and financed. We also met with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to understand how preschool, primary, and secondary education integrate with higher education.

Finally, our visit to the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) allowed us to appreciate issues related to prior learning, articulation, and the design, implementation, assessment, and certification of occupational qualifications, including trades.





3.

# TRANSFORMATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

**E**SHEC has taken several steps to transform higher education in Eswatini, including developing the ESHEC Strategy for 2023 – 2026, the National Higher Education Policy, and the Review of Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions and Programmes.

### **3.1 Development of the Higher Education Policy**

ESHEC facilitated developing and validating the National Higher Education Policy, coordinated by the ESHEC Research function. The process involved engagement with various stakeholders, including government ministries, both private and public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the Education Portfolio Committee from the House of Assembly (2018-2023), trade unions, professional bodies, student bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and others. Benchmarking the policy was integral to the development process, which involved looking at regional, continental, and international policies. Some of the institutions benchmarked included the Council of Higher Education, the South African Qualifications Authority, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education and Training Quality Authority, NSFAS, and others.

The policy aims to address potential shortcomings of the current education system and to provide affordable and quality education to all citizens of Eswatini while ensuring equal access. It advocates for increased inclusion and access to higher education. It seeks to enable local HEIs to produce graduates who can contribute to the country's development by equipping students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and values to perform effectively as citizens, tackle future challenges, take advantage of and contribute towards emerging opportunities towards the socio-economic development of Eswatini. The Draft Eswatini National Higher Education policy was finalised on 15 March 2024. It has been presented to the Principal Secretary and the Director of the MoET. A cabinet paper for the policy has also been completed, and readiness for the policy's submission to Cabinet, which the MoET will facilitate.

### **3.2 Review of the Higher Education Institutions Fees Structure**

Schedule 5 of the Regulations for establishment, registration, and accreditation outlines the fee structure for higher education institutions. The assignment's primary goal was to assess ESHEC's current fee structure for services provided to HEIs and propose a new, more robust, competitive, and professionally sustainable structure in line with ESHEC's services. The process involved researching multiple countries and conducting benchmarking exercises in South Africa, including the Council of Higher Education (CHE).

Engagements and consultations were also done with;

- The MoET and other relevant Ministries
- Relevant stakeholders, including government ministries, HEIs, and ESHEC Council representatives, were engaged.
- The office of the Chief Tertiary, EQA, PEU, Education Management Information System (EMIS) Manager, Ministry of Finance (Director of PEU and Director of Budget),
- HEIs (both public and private), the ESHEC Council and Secretariat

### **3.3 Reviews to Include Guidelines for Online Learning**

With the support of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), ESHEC is conducting an ongoing consultancy to review and update the twelve institutional standards and ten programme accreditation standards currently in use. This initiative aims to enhance and develop quality standards for regulating traditional and online programmes and institutions. By the end of the reporting period, the revised standards had been validated by higher education institutions (HEIs) and other stakeholders through a workshop and subsequently approved by the Council. They are now awaiting final validation by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET).





### 3.4 Launch of ESHEC Strategy for 2023 to 2026

On August 23, 2023, SHEC launched its three-year strategy and revealed a brand refresh at an event at the Royal Villas in Ezulwini.

- The strategy recognises that higher education cannot exist in isolation and aims to foster collaboration with industry and all stakeholders.
- It focuses on developing learning programs that address emerging skills, skills mismatch, and scarce skills in the local higher education system.
- Additionally, the strategy aims to improve ESHEC's efficiency by automating all operational processes related to HEI applications to minimise turnaround time.

The ESHEC strategic projects will be ongoing for three years (2023 – 2026). There are nine (9) strategic projects, with individual project leaders responsible for successful implementation. Details of the progress in implementing the strategic projects are contained in Appendix 1 of the report.



# **QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**



## 4.1 Introduction

The Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) is responsible for developing and enforcing a solid quality assurance framework within higher education. This framework includes various components such as registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion, standards development, and compliance. According to the Higher Education Act of 2013 and the Higher Education (General) Regulations of 2016, as outlined in Legal Notice 14 of 2016, all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) operating within Eswatini must register and adhere to the specified standards. It is essential to comply with these regulations to maintain the integrity and quality of higher education in Eswatini.

## 4.2 Overview of Higher Education Institutions in Eswatini

Higher education in Eswatini is provided through forty-seven (47) institutions.

**Table 4.1: Ownership of Higher Education Institutions**

Ownership	No. of Institutions	Percentage
Public	12	25.5%
Private	35	74.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

Seven institutions are universities, while thirty-two (68%) are colleges. Eight (17%) are Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres. Both colleges and TVETs play essential roles in higher education, offering different pathways and meeting diverse career aspirations. Colleges prioritise academic learning through specialised programs, while TVETs focus on developing practical skills and vocational training. Both types of institutions are crucial for addressing varied workforce needs and fostering socioeconomic development.

## 4.3 Institutional Assessments

ESHEC continued offering external quality assurance services to higher education institutions and conducted institutional and programme accreditation evaluations.

## 4.4 Programme Accreditation

ESHEC reviewed ninety-six (96) programmes as illustrated in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Programmes Assessed for Accreditation**

Discipline/ Field of Study	Frequency	Percentage
Education	6	6%
Business, Commerce and Administration	26	27%
Information and Communication Technologies	5	5%
Arts and Humanities (Religion)	3	3%
Services	18	19%
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	17	18%
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	9	9%
Health and Welfare	12	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.5 Capacity - Building of Higher Education Institutions

ESHEC organised quarterly coordination meetings and biannual capacity-building forums for HEIs and other stakeholders, including subject matter experts (SMEs), who support ESHEC's quality assurance work. The workshops are detailed in Table 4.3.



**Table 4.3: Capacity Building Workshops of Higher Education Institutions**

Capacity Building Training Workshops	Date	Number of Participants
Subject Matter Experts Training	30 June 2023	64
Data Protection and Information Management Training by ESCCOM	11 August 2023	71
Review of Institutional and Programme Accreditation Guidelines	14-15 February 2024	43

#### 4.5.1 Orientations

The QA team also held orientations for HEIs to help them understand the institutional assessment and program accreditation guidelines. The focus was on using notional hours in program design. These orientations aimed to provide HEIs with the knowledge and skills needed to implement the guidelines effectively, ensuring quality assurance and alignment of accreditation processes with established standards and requirements of ESHEC.

**Table 4.4: Orientations**

Name of Institution	Date
Regent Business School	16 May 2023
ECODEC	19 May 2023
SANU	30 May 2023
UNESWA (Kwaluseni/Luyengo Campus)	26/ 27 June 2023
William Pitcher College	29 June & 14 September 2023
Ngwane Teacher Training College	11 September 2023
His Majesty's Correctional Orientation	14 September 2023
IRDM	24 November 2023
RSA College	22 February 2024
ACTS	23 February 2024
ASIT (RSTP)	23 February 2024
Matsapha Police Academy	28 February 2024
Good Shepherd College of Health Sciences	29 February 2024

#### 4.6 Ensuring Compliance and Monitoring

Ensuring compliance with the regulations of the Higher Education Act is crucial for establishing, registering, and accrediting higher education institutions and programs.

##### 4.6.1 Research on Foreign and Franchised Programmes

ESHEC conducted a review and verification exercise to identify unaccredited programs offered by foreign or franchising bodies. The research was conducted through regulatory bodies in the countries of origin of the programs to ensure a comprehensive understanding and validation of academic programs' accreditation status and the awarding bodies' recognition and legitimacy. The verification exercise revealed that many foreign programs offered in Eswatini do not have accreditation in their countries of origin. These programs are from accreditation bodies in the United Kingdom, India, and South Africa. In its meeting on 21 March 2024, the Council resolved that franchised programs not accredited in their country of origin will no longer be offered in Eswatini. ESHEC encouraged all HEIs to design and develop programs responsive to the country's socio-economic needs. All fourteen (14) affected HEIs were formally informed.

The resolutions of the Council align with Part 1 of the Regulations for Establishment of Higher Education Institutions (Section 3) published in Legal Notice 14 of 2016, which covers applications to offer foreign or franchise qualifications. They also align with Part 3 of the Regulations for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Programmes (Section 44) published in Legal Notice 14 of 2016 regarding the recognition of accreditation from other countries. The resolution ensures that all programs align with the Eswatini Qualifications Framework (ESQF) levels to ensure comparability, transparency, and compatibility for coherence and recognition.

**4.6.2 Compliance Monitoring of Higher Education Institutions**

In 2023, ESHEC initiated a strategic effort to monitor compliance with HEIs from April 2023 to March 2024. The monitoring exercise included the following:

- Reviewing institutional policies, procedures, and records to assess compliance with regulatory requirements and standards.
- Conducting physical inspections of facilities, classrooms, laboratories, and other infrastructure to ensure adherence to safety, accessibility, and quality standards.
- Interviewing key stakeholders, including administrators, faculty members, students, and support staff, to collect insights into institutional quality practices and compliance efforts.

During this reporting period, monitoring visits were carried out in thirty-five (35) private HEIs that had been provisionally registered between 2017 and 2018. Compliance monitoring has not yet begun with public HEIs, as they are undergoing institutional assessments and program accreditation. Critical findings for compliance and monitoring are classified into four focus areas: adherence to ESHEC quality standards, establishment of institutional quality assurance units, development and implementation of improvement plans, and support with Self-Assessment Reports (SAR).

**4.6.3 Adherence to ESHEC Quality Standards: Monitoring**

Below are the findings on how institutions fared in terms of selected ESHEC standards for institutions;

**4.6.3.1 Governance Structures and Strategic Planning**

Table 4 shows that 59% of private HEIs have governance structures, while 46% require more defined governance structures with unclear academic leadership roles and responsibilities, per ESHEC standards and regulatory frameworks.

**Table 4.5: Governance Structures and Strategic Planning in Private HEIs**

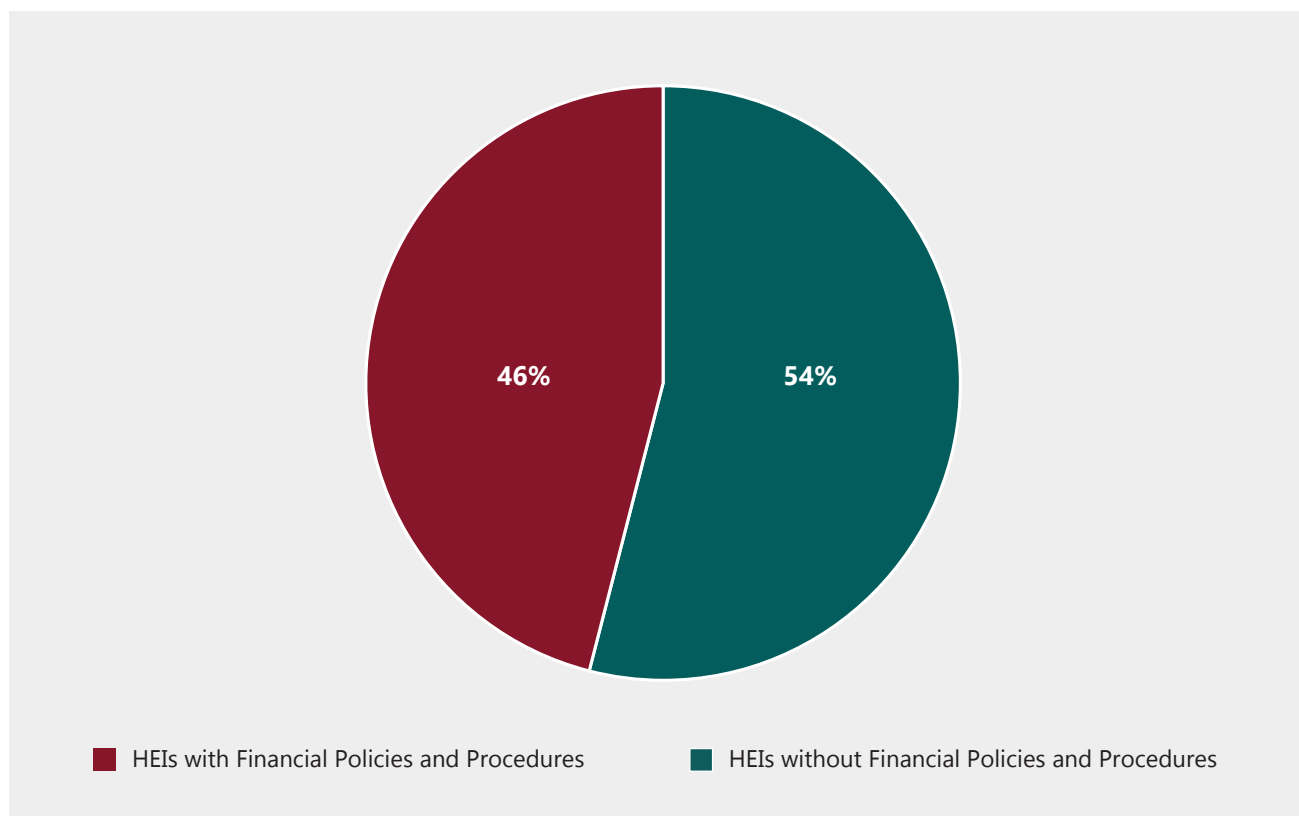
Variables	Number of HEIs with	Number of HEIs without
Governance Structures	19 (54%)	16 (46%)
Strategic Planning	24 (69%)	11 (31%)

The data presented above shows that 69% of private higher education institutions (HEIs) have a strategic plan, while 31% operate without one. Most HEIs face challenges in strategic planning, which is crucial for enhancing core academic functions within private HEIs. Additionally, many of these strategic plans do not align with the institutions’ educational vision and competing priorities.

**4.6.3.2 Financial Feasibility for Private HEIs**

Some private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) lack transparency in financial management and accountability mechanisms. According to Figure 4.1, 54% of these institutions lack comprehensive financial documentation and reporting measures, exacerbating the challenge of financial transparency and accountability within private HEIs. These institutions heavily rely on revenue generated from high student tuition fees. Consequently, student enrollment rates remain low, leading many institutions to supplement their income in other business ventures.

**Figure 4.1: Financial Policies and Procedures in Private HEIs**



On the other hand, the institution's founders usually centralise annual budgeting discussions and allocations without proper consideration or inclusivity of management structures. Moreover, there is a prevalent trend among private HEIs to prioritise profit-making, which often influences the teaching and administrative methodologies employed within these institutions.

#### **4.6.3.3 Human Resources: Staffing**

A significant challenge in private higher education institutions is the considerable difference between the number of full-time and part-time staff. Most institutions have almost 80% of their staff working part-time. These institutions need to improve in providing complete staff data, including profiles and qualifications, which makes their workforce composition less transparent. The criteria for recruiting and selecting staff members should be clearly defined to reduce uncertainties related to staff appointments.

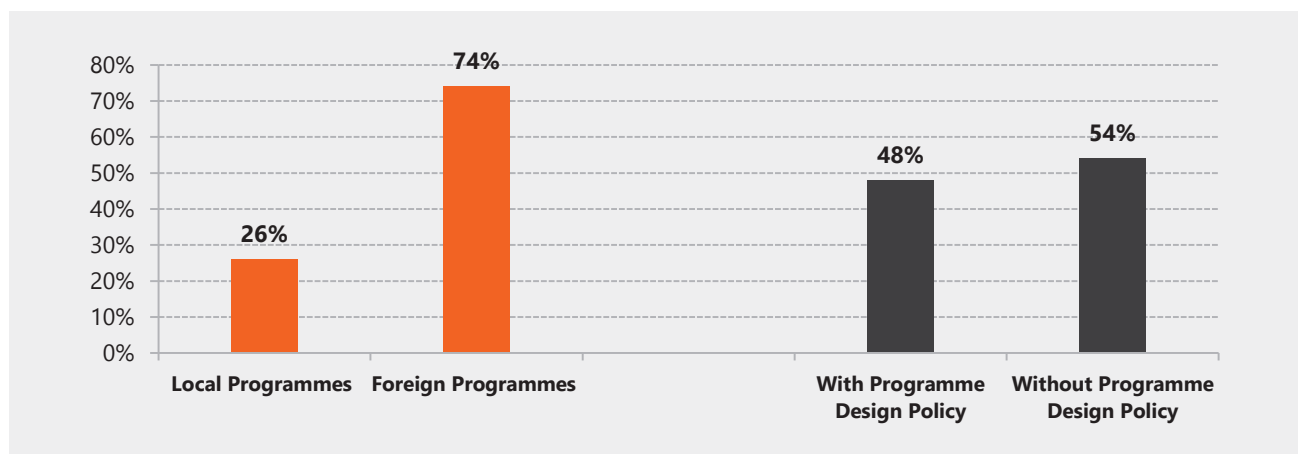
Financial constraints create a challenge as many institutions cannot hire permanent staff, leading to a heavy reliance on part-time personnel. Staff welfare is also a significant concern, with reports showing underpayment or non-payment, which contributes to dissatisfaction among personnel. Additionally, disparities in qualifications between academic and management staff highlight potential issues in recruitment policies. High staff turnover rates worsen existing challenges and contribute to instability within the workforce.

#### **4.6.3.4 Programme Design and Development Policies in HEIs**

The design and development of programs are crucial in the accreditation process. According to Figure 2, 54% of private higher education institutions (HEIs) do not have policies for program design and development. Additionally, 48% of HEIs lack these policies because they offer foreign programs developed by other providers outside of Eswatini.



**Figure 4.2: Programme Design and Development Policies in HEIs**



A recent verification exercise by ESHEC revealed that approximately 74% of Private HEIs offer foreign or franchise programmes. The remaining 26% predominantly provide local programmes focusing on Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVETs).

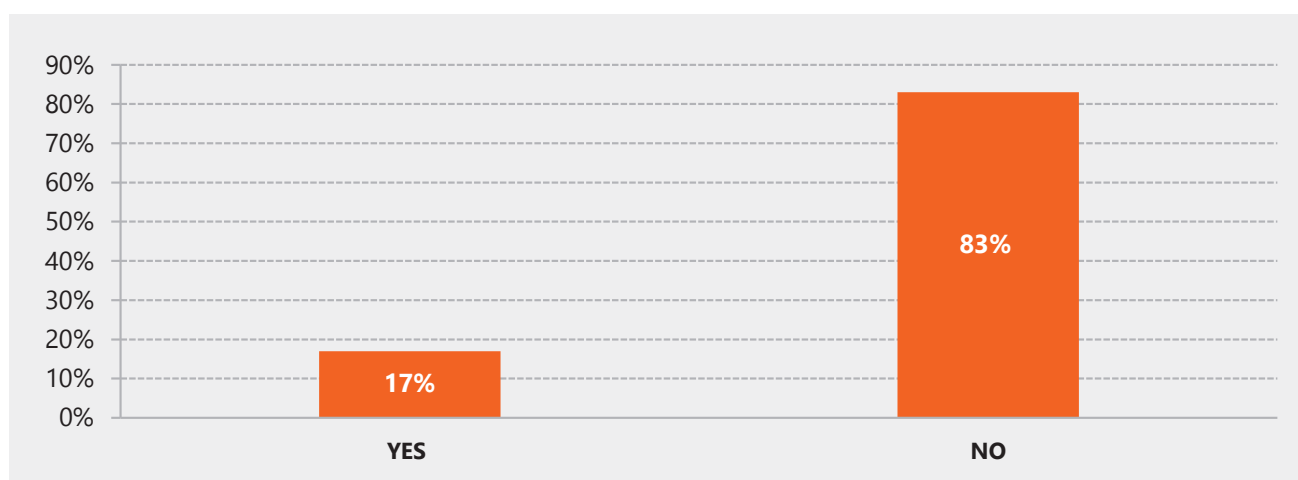
#### **4.6.3.5 Infrastructure and Facilities**

Teaching and learning face significant challenges due to dilapidated buildings and insufficient technological facilities such as Wi-Fi and computer laboratories. The inconvenient location of higher education institutions (HEIs) in malls and busy city centres adversely affects the learning environment. Moreover, these buildings' health and safety standards could be more questionable. The HEIs do not have libraries. Additionally, student enrollment exceeds the infrastructure capacity, exacerbating the resource strain.

#### **4.6.3.6 Setting up of Institutional Quality Assurance Units**

The Figure below (Figure 4.3) shows that only 17% of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have quality assurance units or directorates. However, their focus is primarily on academic aspects rather than on the institution as a whole. This situation persists despite ESHEC training for HEIs in November 2022 and March 2023 on the step-by-step development and implementation of quality assurance units. The training led to some colleges and technical and vocational education and training institutions (TVETs) establishing quality assurance committees or adding quality assurance responsibilities for existing academic personnel after the training. One challenge identified is that some HEIs, which have appointed personnel to this role, selected individuals who lack the seniority and authority necessary to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

**Figure 4.3: Internal Quality Assurance Units in HEIs**



83% of higher education institutions (HEIs) do not have quality assurance units or directorates primarily due to financial constraints, a lack of understanding about their role, and inadequate resources for their establishment and maintenance. To address this issue, the ESHEC Compliance Unit provides training and assistance to HEIs.

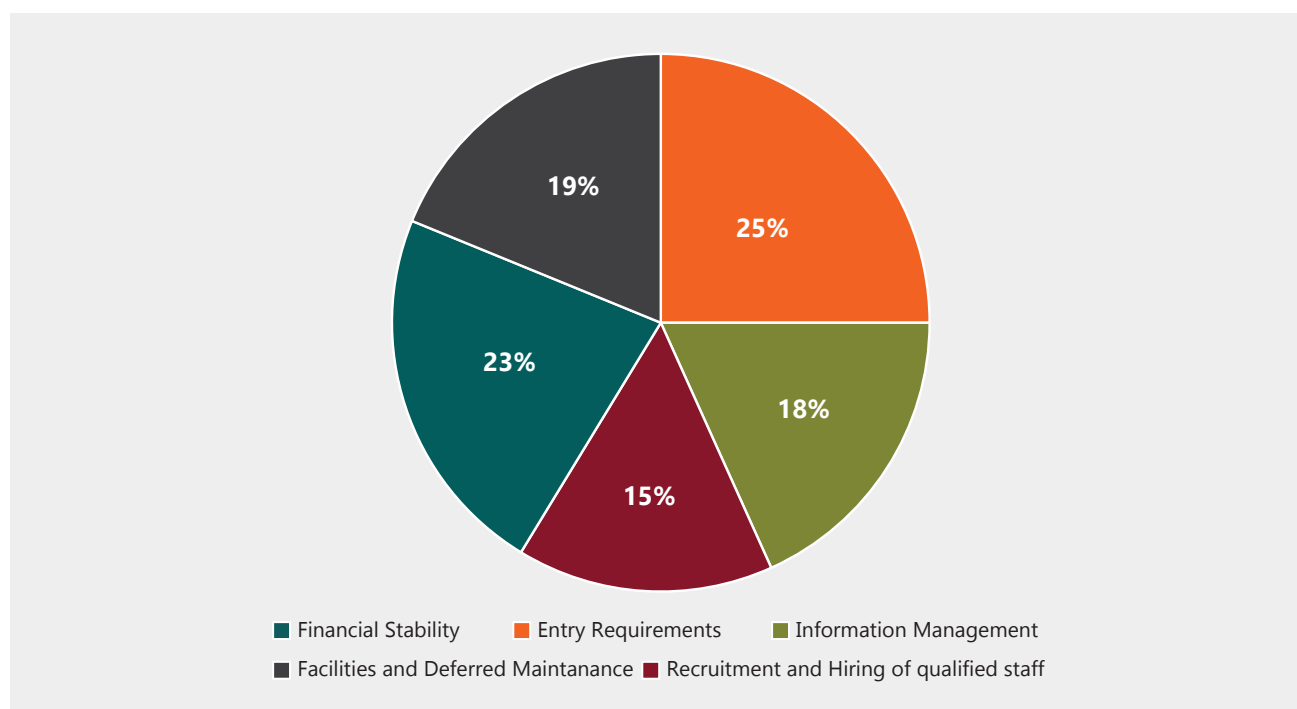
#### 4.6.3.7 Development and Implementation of HEIs Improvement Plans

During the reporting period, eleven (11) higher education institutions (HEIs) underwent assessments, with eight (8) of them subsequently submitting and actively working on their Improvement Plans. However, a significant challenge arises from the need for better understanding and ownership of these plans within the institutions. To address this issue, compliance assists institutions in implementing the recommendations outlined in their Improvement Plans.

#### 4.6.4 Emerging Risks in Quality Assurance

Educational institutions face various challenges that require careful navigation to maintain quality and sustainability.

**Figure 4.4: Emerging Risks**



The risks we must consider include changing entry requirements, information management, and financial stability. Financial stability is always a concern, especially with fluctuating funding and economic uncertainties affecting program viability and institutional resilience. Hiring qualified staff is also challenging due to competition and changing skill demands. Risks to infrastructure integrity and student experience come from facilities and deferred maintenance. We need proactive strategies, collaboration among stakeholders, and agile governance to address these risks effectively.



**5.**

# **RESEARCH, MONITORING, AND PUBLICATION**



## 5.1 Introduction

The Research activities of the 2023/2024 performance year were a concerted effort, guided and framed within the Research Unit's six (6) strategic goals. Each step was part of a collective vision, ensuring that ESHEC stayed updated on higher education matters and better understood the national and internationally evolving quality assurance trends.

## 5.2 Key Achievements

### 5.2.1 Strategic Goal 1

Strategic Goal 1 aims to keep ESHEC updated with the latest trends and developments in higher education nationally and internationally.

ESHEC produced its first three (3) academic publications in April, May, and July 2023. These publications are:

- (a) "Towards Equitable and Sustainable Quality Education in Institutions of Higher Learning in Eswatini"
- (b) "Barriers to Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions"
- (c) "Adopting Blended Learning for Quality and Equitable Education in Higher Education Institutions"

Collectively, the publications provide contextually relevant information, principles and recommendations for achieving quality within higher education in Eswatini and similar contexts.

### 5.2.2 Strategic Goal 2

Strategic Goal 2 involves identifying knowledge gaps, challenges, and barriers to quality education (assurance) in the Eswatini context and areas for improvement.

From December 6th to 8th, 2023, the ESHEC and Eswatini Educational Research Association (ESWERA) collaborated to host a conference titled "Transforming Education for the Emerging Context."

### 5.2.3 Strategic Goal 4

Strategic Goal 4 focuses on enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of higher education in Eswatini.

On behalf of the Eswatini Government, the ESHEC, in collaboration with ESEPARC, has developed and proposed a Sustainable Funding Model for Higher Education in Eswatini. The model aims to promote autonomy for HEIs, enabling them to operate independently and efficiently without relying heavily on government funding. This policy balances access, quality, relevance, and sustainability in higher education, making it affordable and available to all students. It also invests in research and development to enhance program relevance and improve education quality. The policy emphasises making higher education accessible to all students while ensuring quality, relevance, and sustainability.

### 5.2.4 Strategic Goal 5

This goal speaks to developing an institutional framework to inform skill development.

#### 5.2.4.1 White Paper on Collaborative Skills Development in Eswatini

In August of 2023, ESHEC facilitated the development of a White Paper that explores a model for skills development in Eswatini that is similar to South Africa's SETA (Sector Education and Training Authorities).

The White Paper was the foundation for the ESHEC symposium on 1 November 2023. At the symposium, industry experts and academics gathered to discuss and devise ways to implement this model and engage industries in higher education, ultimately benefiting the country.

#### 5.2.4.2 Survey on Skills Gap, Mismatch, and Emerging Skills Study

In the previous performance year, ESHEC launched a statistical study on the country's skills gaps, mismatches, and emerging skills. The ESHEC Unit has held several meetings with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's (MoLSS) Human Resources and Planning Department (HRPD) to discuss the proposed study and collaboration between the entities. This collaboration will enable the survey to reach a broader population beyond the higher education institutions where ESHEC operates.

The survey is aligned with the Ministry of Education and Training's Multi-Year Action Plan for 2022-2025 and the MoLSS's National Skills Development Master Plan. It will involve both the public and private sectors in skills development and anticipation in Eswatini. The study's problem statement and concept paper have been developed and presented to the Acting Director of Education and the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Training.

#### 5.2.5 Collection of Basic Data on Higher Education in Eswatini

During the reporting period, the ESHEC Research function gathered essential primary data from various higher education institutions (Please See the Appendices).

### 5.3 Summary

Research areas for ESHEC will include developing and validating accreditation standards and quality assurance metrics, financial sustainability studies, policy impact analyses, and stakeholder satisfaction surveys. Comparative studies with international higher education standards, workforce readiness assessments, and technological integration in education are also crucial. Additionally, ESHEC could focus on ethical and social responsibility in higher education, transparency mechanisms, institutional diversity, and longitudinal studies on student outcomes. Such a multifaceted research approach will enable ESHEC to effectively oversee and improve the higher education landscape in Eswatini, fulfilling its role in the theory of change.





# **6. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS**



The ESHEC Communications Policy was finalised with input from all staff members and further approved by the ESHEC Board. In 2023-2024, the Advocacy and Communications Office facilitated quarterly engagements with the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS).

### 6.1 The Editors Forum Workshop

On the 5th of May, 2023, ESHEC successfully engaged the Eswatini National Editors Forum in Mbabane. The event was attended by 15 participants, including eight (8) editors from print and electronic media and senior reporters. Representatives from The Times of Eswatini, Eswatini News, Eswatini Observer, Eswatini Financial Times, and Independent News were present.

### 6.2 ESHEC Publications

The Advocacy and Communications Office, in collaboration with the Research, Monitoring, and Publications Manager, has created a template for all research papers to be published. The first, second, and third papers have already been released.

The first edition of the ESHEC Newsletter was completed and distributed to stakeholders and the media in April 2023. The second edition was released in July, the third in October, and the fourth in December 2023.

In October 2023, the ESHEC Annual Performance Report for 2022/23 was compiled and shared with stakeholders.

### 6.3 ESHEC Strategy for 2023/2026 and Rebranding

The Advocacy and Communications Office facilitated the launch and rebranding of the ESHEC Strategy 2023-2026 on 23 August 2023 at Ezulwini.

## THE LOGO

### RATIONALE






**ESWATINI  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL**

- Burgundy also represents meaning of creativity, wisdom, dignity, grandeur, devotion, peace, pride and independence.
- Turquoise evokes clarity of thought and communication. It is one of the most inspiring colors in marketing, associated with recharging the spirit, replenishing energy levels, and provoking positive thought.
- This vibrant hue symbolizes adventure, ambition, creativity, success and sociability. Orange is often associated with positivity. Optimism energy and determination.
- This colour mark communicates the energy, growth, strength, harmony and tradition associated with the organization.

ESHEC Corporate Brand Guidelines | ESHEC Confidential | 2023

## 6.4 Participation at the Eswatini Trade Fair 2023

ESHEC participated in the Eswatini International Trade Fair (EIFT) 2023, which took place from September 1 -10.

## 6.5 The Inaugural Fundzela Indaba

On November 1, 2023, ESHEC hosted its inaugural symposium at the Royal Villas Hotel in eZulwini. The main objective of the “Indaba” was to provide a platform for ESHEC, HEIs, government ministries, and private sector stakeholders to come together and discuss ways to address current skill gaps, bridge skills deficiencies, and align graduates with both present and future national and global skill requirements. Additionally, through this symposium, ESHEC aimed to promote collaboration and gain support to ensure the development of relevant and high-quality human resources in the country, both now and in the future.

## 6.6 Public Awareness of ESHEC Mandate and Processes

For 2023-2024, ESHEC saw a steady increase in the coverage of ESHEC activities in both print and electronic media. The Communications office further facilitated public awareness of ESHEC through Awareness Radio Jingles on EBIS 1 siSwati Channel, which commenced on 6 October 2023 and ended on 12 December 2023. The jingles were played before the morning and evening news bulletins until mid-December 2023.

ESHEC has also established a social media presence on Facebook: x (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn.





# 7.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



### **7.1 ESHEC's Digitized Integrated System**

The Council hired Mawema Consultancy, an Information Technology (IT) firm, to help implement an online system for registering institutional and program accreditation data.

On May 25, 2023, ESHEC officially launched its integrated digital system in Ezulwini.

The ESHEC Business Process System has been upgraded, with chat boxes for communication based on input from the ESHEC Quality Assurance unit (QA).

### **7.2 Moving ESHEC Files to Royal Science and Technology Park**

ESHEC has partnered with the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) to store all its files in compliance with Eswatini's legislation, which requires all data for emaSwati to be hosted within the country.

### **7.3 Automation Initiatives**

ESHEC conducted a benchmarking exercise with Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) and the Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accidents Fund. Following that, ESHEC hired a specialised consultancy to develop its systems. The consultancy's offerings included upgrading and integrating the current system with other systems using artificial intelligence (AI).

AI will have a central role in interpreting processes and generating reports. CCG Systems provides various services, including the Automation of ERP Systems, Municipal Planning and Budgeting, Cloud-Based Solutions, E-procurement, Asset Management, Grant Realization, Contract Management, Performance Management, and Annual Financial Statements. ESHEC aims to improve efficiency, transparency, and strategic success by adopting these initiatives, ultimately benefiting the emaSwati community. Due to the interconnected nature of ESHEC's functions, implementing such a database will enable strategic integration to enhance operational efficiency and data accuracy.

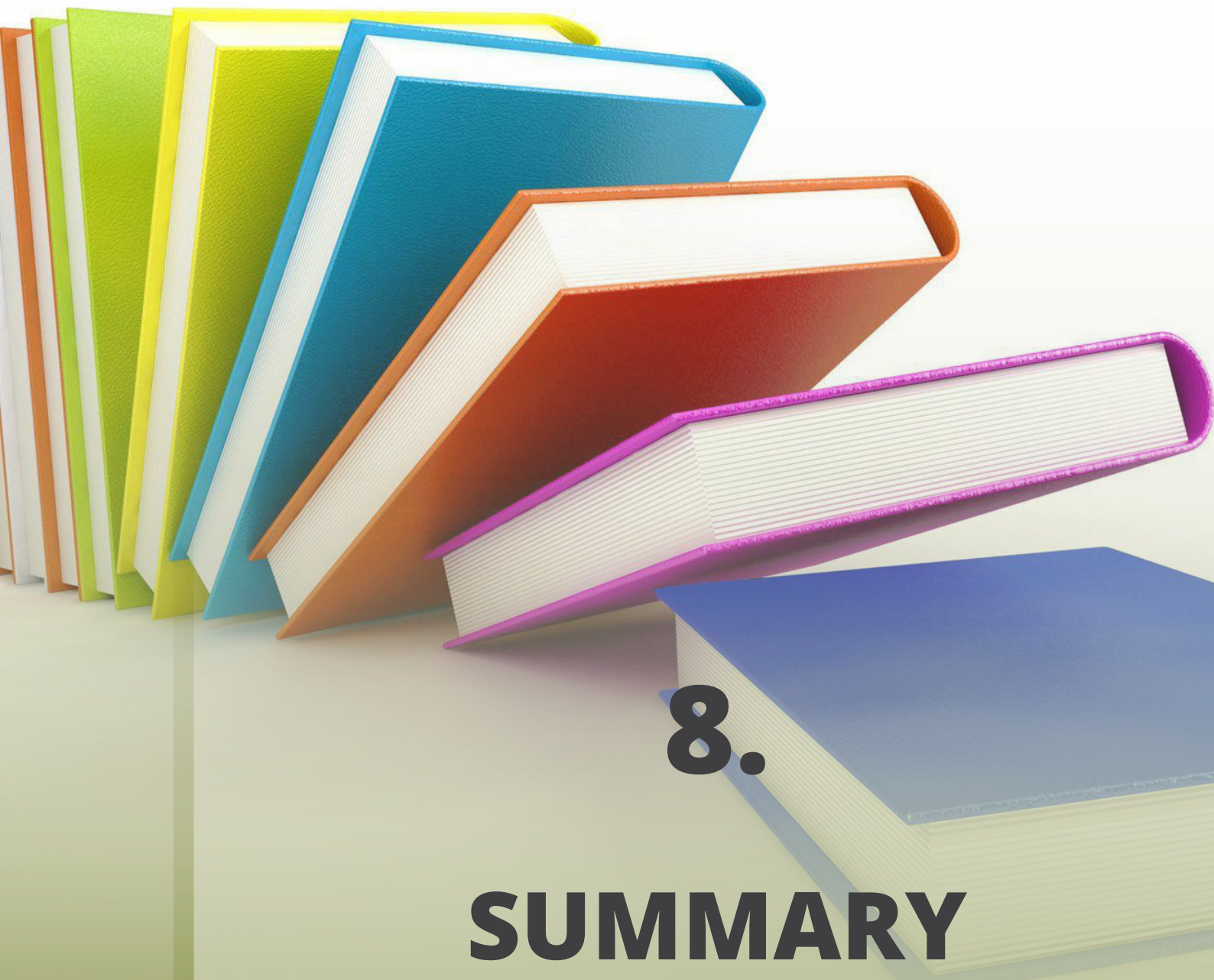
### **7.4 ESHEC Registry**

ESHEC engaged personnel from the Eswatini National Archives, who previously developed the ESHEC File Management Policy and file indexing in 2022. They recommended that ESHEC obtain standards from the Eswatini Standards Authority (SWASA).

### **7.5 Summary**

ESHEC currently has a primary database used to establish and register higher education institutions and programs. Developing and maintaining specialised databases is crucial for ESHEC to fulfil its multifaceted responsibilities in higher education effectively. These databases, which encompass accreditation, quality assurance, funding, and international engagement, serve as invaluable sources of information for decision-making, policy formulation, and stakeholder coordination.

One of the essential databases needed by ESHEC is an accreditation database. This database would contain comprehensive information about accredited higher education institutions and their programs, including accreditation status, validity periods, and any conditions or recommendations made during the accreditation process. A database dedicated to quality assurance reports, audits, and evaluations of higher education institutions is also critical. Integrating this database with the Accreditation Database could streamline quality checks. Overall, a well-structured database ecosystem would significantly enhance ESHEC's capacity to elevate the standard of higher education in Eswatini.



**8.**

# **SUMMARY ACHIEVEMENTS**

In the 2023/2024 financial year, ESHEC has made significant progress in increasing its visibility and effectively engaging with all stakeholders, including the public, which is the consumer of higher education. We established the Advocacy and Communications function to enhance ESHEC's visibility among its partners and consumers. From the beginning, our goal has been to establish a strong presence in the higher education sector, and we are successfully achieving this.

ESHEC has made significant progress in developing a transformative Strategic Plan for 2023/2024 to 2025/2026 and a roadmap for implementing strategic projects. The strategy outlines a clear plan for accrediting relevant, scarce, and emerging skills and collaborating with the industry. We also fostered collaboration with regional and continental higher education quality assurance networks during the reporting period.

ESHEC took part in regional and continental forums for higher education, including the Southern Africa Quality Assurance Network (SAQAN) and the African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) network. Additionally, ESHEC collaborated with South Africa and Zimbabwe to harmonise operations and leverage their expertise and human resources to build the capacity of Eswatini HEIs and subject matter experts. The ongoing compliance monitoring of HEIs offers valuable insights into higher education in Eswatini, particularly in research and collaboration with stakeholders.

The institutional assessments covered two government-funded higher education institutions (HEIs): the University of Eswatini (UNESWA) and the Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU). Ninety-six (96) programmes were evaluated in terms of programme accreditation, and feedback on areas needing improvement was provided to the HEIs. After fulfilling the requirements, the Bachelor of Medicine program at the Eswatini Medical and Christian University (EMCU) was accredited by ESHEC.

ESHEC has successfully automated its core business processes, including applications, registration, and data management, and this system has been fully implemented across all registered HEIs. Furthermore, ESHEC has established a research function and conducted a study to transform HEI financing and access. The study, completed in the reporting period, proposes a sustainable funding formula for higher education based on performance indicators.







# 9.

## APPENDICES



STRATEGIC PROJECTS	INTENT	COMMENTS/NOTES
<b>Core Data Management</b>	Accurate data available to make decisions will ensure that institutions produce qualifications responsive to the country's socio-economic needs.	<p><b>Basic Data for ESHEC:</b> In the last quarter, ESHEC gathered essential primary data from various higher education institutions. This initiative aimed to equip ESHEC with crucial information on higher education, including student enrolment, completion rates, staff complement, and student data by qualification type.</p> <p><b>ISCED Classification:</b> ESHEC, in collaboration with the EMIS department and Eswatini Qualifications Authority, is developing an Education Management Information System (EMIS) for higher education. This system, aligned with UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), will enhance operational efficiency and improve decision-making processes for the Eswatini Government, ESHEC, EQA, and higher education institutions (HEIs).</p> <p>ESHEC and Eswatini Qualifications Authority are working on a concept paper that will guide the development of the HEMIS project.</p> <p><b>Skills Development and Anticipation:</b> A Statistical Study During the reporting period, ESHEC planned to initiate a study addressing the significant gaps and mismatches between the currently available and the required skills. Additionally, there is a low employment rate for recent graduates, a lack of proper utilisation of skills and a general unpreparedness among the workforce to meet the demands of the rapidly changing job market. The study would involve both the public and private sectors in terms of skills development and skills anticipation in Eswatini. The goal is not only to gain a solid understanding of the skills needed in the future but also to gather up-to-date information, key statistics, and quantifiable data regarding current skills surplus and deficit, future needs, and the disparities between higher education and industry requirements.</p>

STRATEGIC PROJECTS	INTENT	COMMENTS/NOTES
		<p>Beginning in September 2023, ESHEC has held several meetings with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's (MoLSS) Human Resources and Planning Department (HRPD) to discuss the ESHEC's proposed study and collaboration between the two entities. A problem statement and a concept paper for the study were developed, after which a formal letter of request was written to the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, on 23 October 2023.</p> <p>On 11 April, ESHEC had an audience with the Acting Director of Education and the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Training to present the proposed study. A cabinet paper has been developed and submitted to MoET to facilitate the Cabinet's approval of the study.</p>
<b>TVET Support</b>	Creating a relevant framework and providing support for the underserved TVET sector.	<p>ESHEC is developing guidelines for the quality assurance of TVET programmes. The TVET policy is housed in the Ministry of Education. DIVT and ESHEC will unpack the policy's contents, identify collaboration areas, particularly vocational education placement, and introduce industry levies that could benefit student placements.</p> <p>ESHEC and DIVT have agreed to schedule and participate in a benchmarking exercise in other countries that offer TVET in May 2024. This exercise aims to identify best practices in developing quality assurance standards for TVETs and governance structures within a country's TVET system</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Security Legal team is reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ESHEC and DIVT, which will be signed in May 2024.</p>
<b>AI Alignment</b>	AI alignment with the HEI environment.	<p>During the reporting period, the project leader attended the AI conference in Tanzania from 28 to 30 November 2023, and a report was shared. She also attended a workshop titled "Showcasing Artificial Intelligence-related Innovations, Research, and Practice," by African Higher Education Students and Youth, hosted by AAU from 6 to 10 November 2023. After this, a desk review of the current situation of artificial intelligence in higher education was conducted. This informed the addition of the standard on artificial intelligence to the revised institutional and programme standards.</p> <p>A survey to be sent to all HEIs to evaluate the current situation on Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education has been formulated, and a questionnaire has been drafted. These will be disseminated by the 26th of April.</p>



STRATEGIC PROJECTS	INTENT	COMMENTS/NOTES
<b>Rebranding Strategy</b>	Rebrand ESHEC to position it as a value-adding and enabling entity rather than just a regulator.	<p>ESHEC was rebranded in August 2023 to increase visibility and position itself as a value-adding entity rather than just a regulator. This rebranding was part of a larger strategy to enhance the organisation's effectiveness, reputation, and impact. On 11 August 2023, the council approved the plan, strategic projects, and revised budgets. Three strategic programmes facilitate the implementation of the strategy. The success of the rebranding and strategy is an ongoing endeavour, and ESHEC must continue to promote itself through various events and marketing efforts.</p> <p>To maintain momentum, ESHEC must continue to promote itself by participating in career fairs, hosting forums with stakeholders, especially government ministries and industry, and actively marketing its brand.</p>
<b>Stakeholder Collaboration</b>	Ensure constant stakeholder collaboration to access their expertise in creating quality and relevant programmes.	<p>ESHEC has identified key stakeholders in regional higher education councils, industry, professional bodies, subject matter experts and government ministries and added them to their register. Two surveys were conducted to establish a baseline of stakeholder relations and perceptions. Over 60% of customer satisfaction was recorded, and stakeholder perceptions informed the frequency of meetings, communication platforms, and improvement strategies. ESHEC signed at least four MOUs with various stakeholders.</p> <p>ESHEC has increased its database of stakeholders and will continue to monitor their perceptions. The surveys have effectively established a baseline for stakeholder relations and perceptions.</p>
<b>Culture Transformation</b>	To ensure that ESHEC has an inclusive culture of growth and collaboration (interdependence, communication, and employee capacitation).	<p>During the reporting period, all Senior Managers were enrolled in various programmes to upskill, which was informed by the probation report and the need to implement the strategy. The CEO and Finance manager enrolled in an Orgtology training programme to ensure they were well equipped to drive the ESHEC strategy. The Research, Monitoring and Publications Manager enrolled in a Monitoring and Evaluation Course with UCT GetSmarter, and the Quality Assurance Manager enrolled in a Leadership programme with Gibbs. The Quality Assurance Manager and the Research, Monitoring and Publications Manager completed their course during the year under review.</p> <p>Further, ESHEC conducted an employee satisfaction survey to determine employee interdependence, communication and level of satisfaction with the different training initiatives implemented by the employer. The collected data has not been analysed yet. Nonetheless, the research unit will conduct the analysis and make recommendations during the first quarter of 2024/2025.</p>

STRATEGIC PROJECTS	INTENT	COMMENTS/NOTES
		<p>To inculcate a high-performance culture into our workforce, during the fourth quarter of the reporting period, ESHEC engaged a Human Resources Human Capital Management consultancy to train all ESHEC employees on HR issues, including performance contracting, team building, and other HR-related matters. The programme began in March and is expected to be completed in May 2024.</p>
<b>Ensure Automation</b>	ESHEC core business is fully automated.	<p><b>ESHEC Portal</b> – the project leader monitors the institution upload status, encouraging institutions to complete accurate data uploads, assisting institutions by providing support during data uploads, storing and protecting data, and safeguarding sensitive information within ESHEC.</p> <p><b>Moving ESHEC Files to the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP)—ESHEC has engaged the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) to host all its files. The primary objective is to ensure a smooth migration between ESHEC and the consultant before the end of the contract.</b></p> <p>ESHEC also embarked on a benchmarking exercise at Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) and the Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accidents Fund to improve ESHEC's automation system.</p>
<b>Optimise operational construct</b>	Ensure that ESHEC processes, targets, policies, operating procedures, and the organogram are connected intelligently.	<p>One vendor was engaged in presenting to ESHEC to understand the procurement system. The finding was that it is possible to integrate the different processes using AI. The software can be installed to incorporate the other methods. These can be linked to the social media pages, and a report on public perceptions of ESHEC can be produced.</p> <p>To identify the different processes to be automated, the team considered those listed in the strategy and added others, namely the HR ones and staff retention issues. The way forward is to prepare the tender document for the system's procurement.</p>
<b>Development of a comprehensive PMS</b>	Ensure that ESHEC has accurate data to understand their human and Org performance.	<p>The ESHEC team is presently being trained in performance management. A consultancy to develop a performance management system will be procured in the 2024/2025 performance year with an allocated budget. After that, the PMS will be automated.</p>

## APPENDIX 2

### GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF BASIC DATA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN ESWATINI

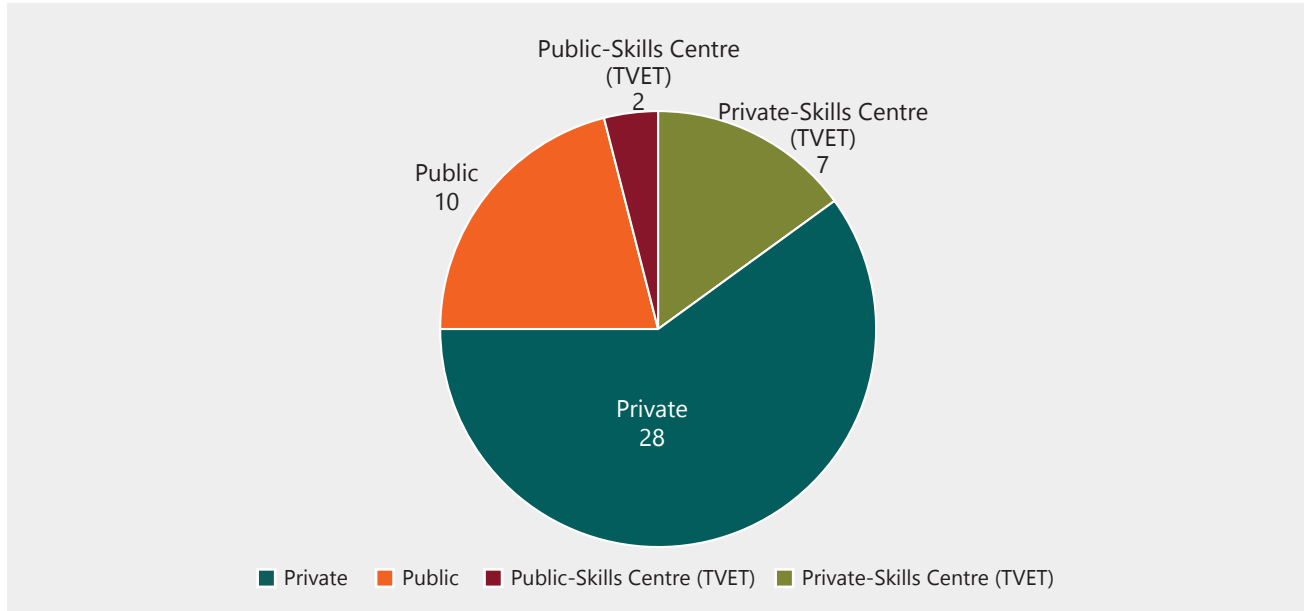
#### 1. Credible Institutions – 47

##### 1.1. Private Institutions – 35 (includes 7 TVET Institutions)

##### 1.2. Public Institutions – 12 (includes 2 TVET Institutions)

##### 1.3. All Skills Centres

##### 1.3.1. TVET (both public and private) – 9



**Figure 1: Credible Institutions**

#### 2. Student Enrolment

##### 2.1. Total Students for Public Institutions: 13 314

##### 2.1.1. Certificates: 439

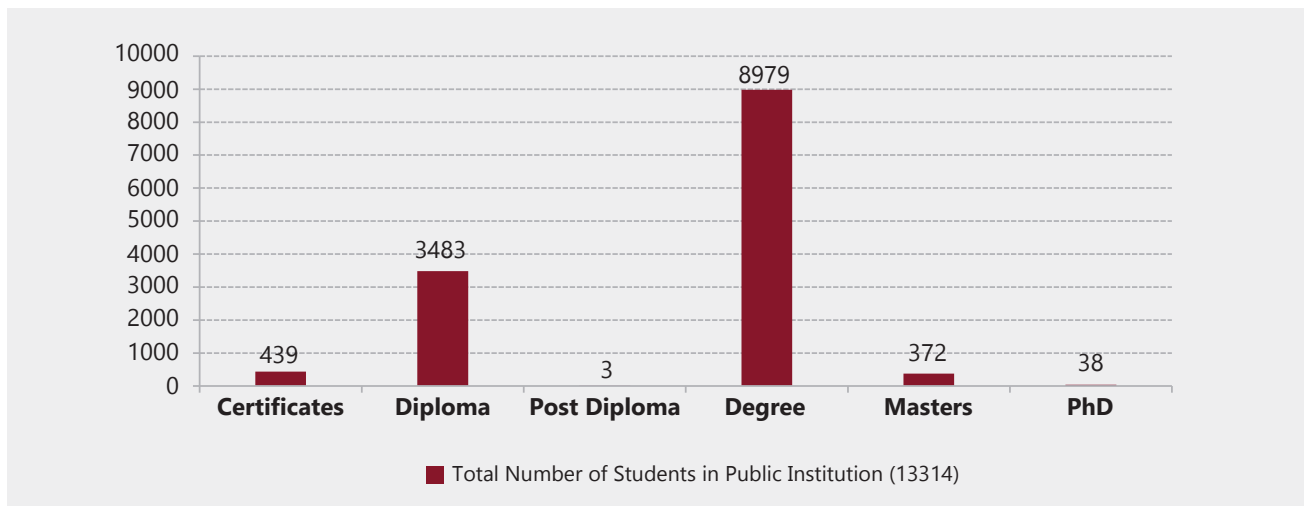
##### 2.1.2. Diploma: 3483

##### 2.1.3. Post-Diploma: 3

##### 2.1.4. Degree: 8979

##### 2.1.5. Master's Degree: 372

##### 2.1.6. PhD: 38



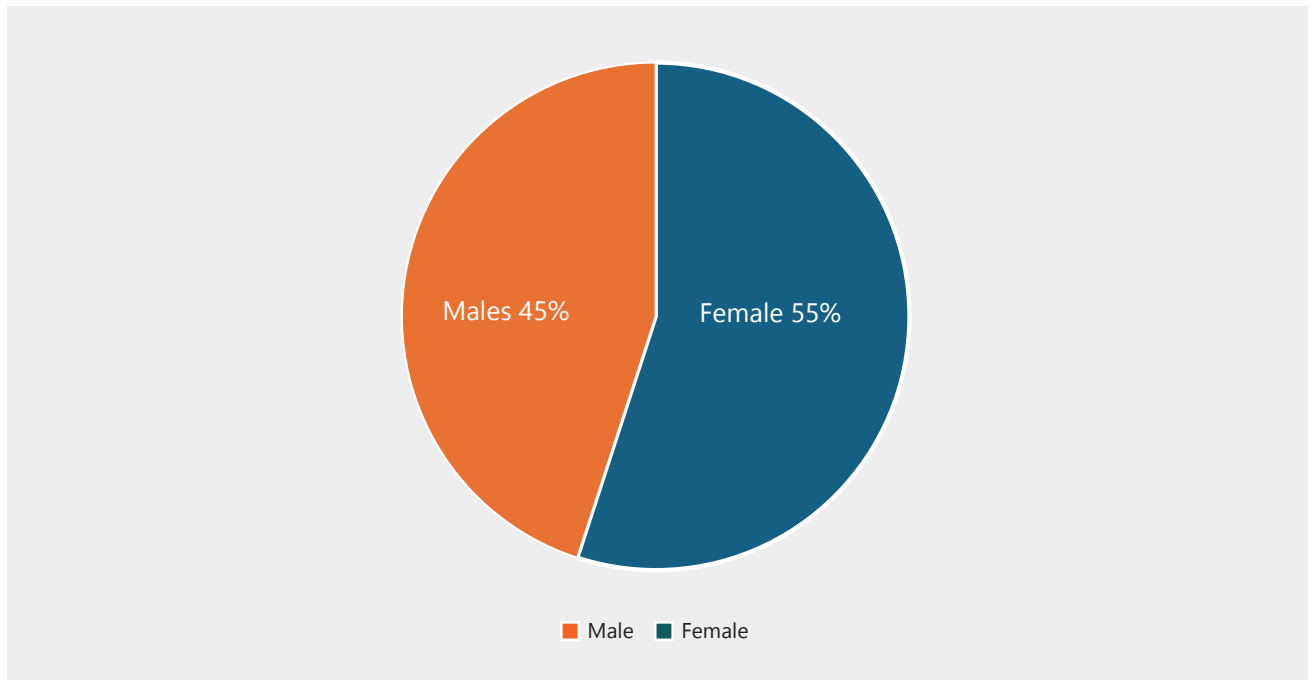
**Figure 2: Total Number of Students in Public Institutions**



## 2.2. Gender Enrolment

2.2.1. Males - 8577

2.2.2. Females - 13314



**Figure 3: Gender Enrolment**

## 2.3. Completion Rates for Public Institutions: 3067

2.3.1. Certificates: 188

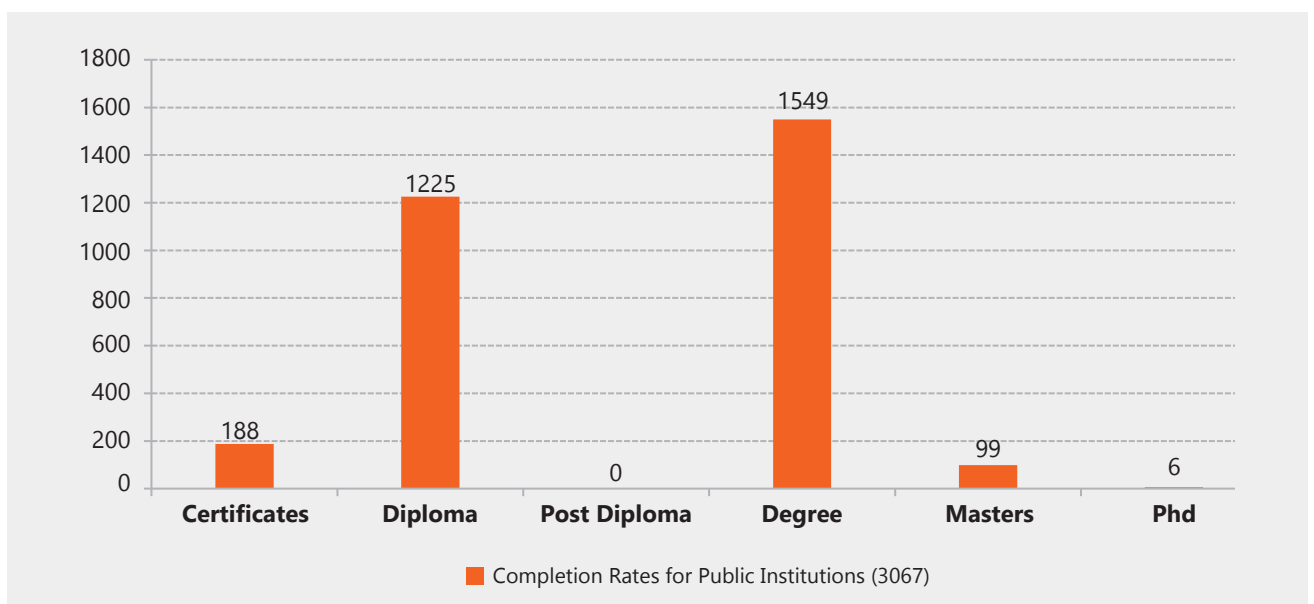
2.3.2. Diploma: 1225

2.3.3. Post-Diploma: 0

2.3.4. Degree: 1549

2.3.5. Master's Degree: 99

2.3.6. PhD: 6



**Figure 4: Completion Rates for Public Institutions**

## 2.4. Total Number of Students for Private Institutions: 8577

- 2.4.1. Certificates: 2801
- 2.4.2. Diploma: 2115
- 2.4.3. Post-Diploma: 65
- 2.4.4. Associate Degree: 2859
- 2.4.5. Degree: 672
- 2.4.6. Master's Degree: 65
- 2.4.7. PhD: 0

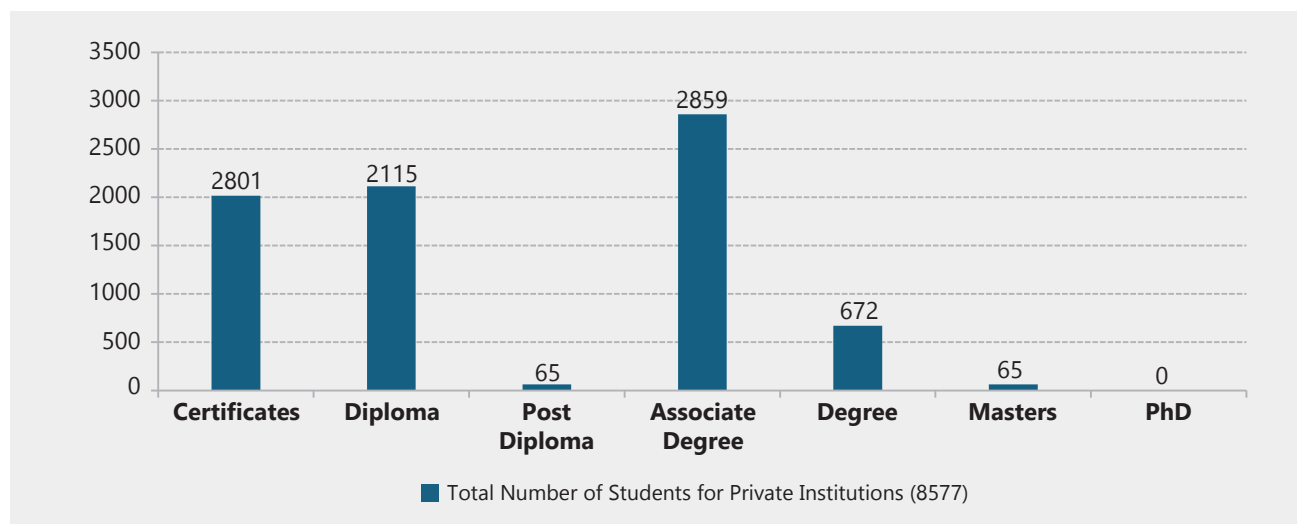


Figure 5: Total Number of Students in Private Institutions

## 2.5. Completion Rates for Private Institutions: 4593

- 2.5.1. Certificates: 2419
- 2.5.2. Diploma: 1247
- 2.5.3. Post-Diploma: 50
- 2.5.4. Associate Degree: 693
- 2.5.5. Degree: 161
- 2.5.6. Master's Degree: 23
- 2.5.7. PhD: 0

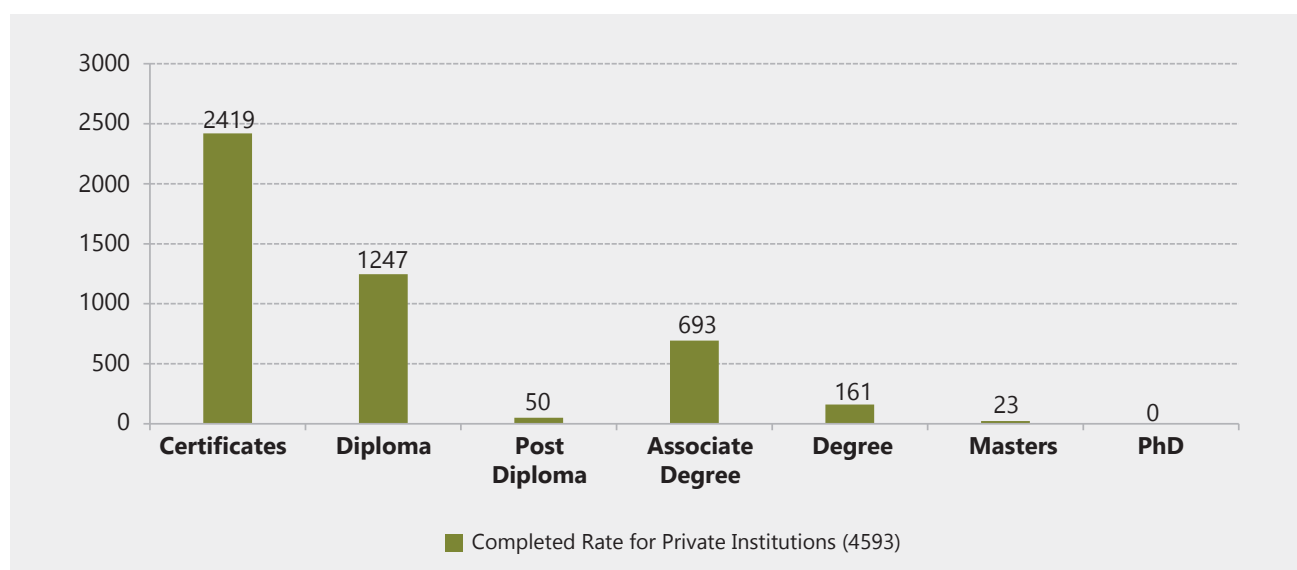
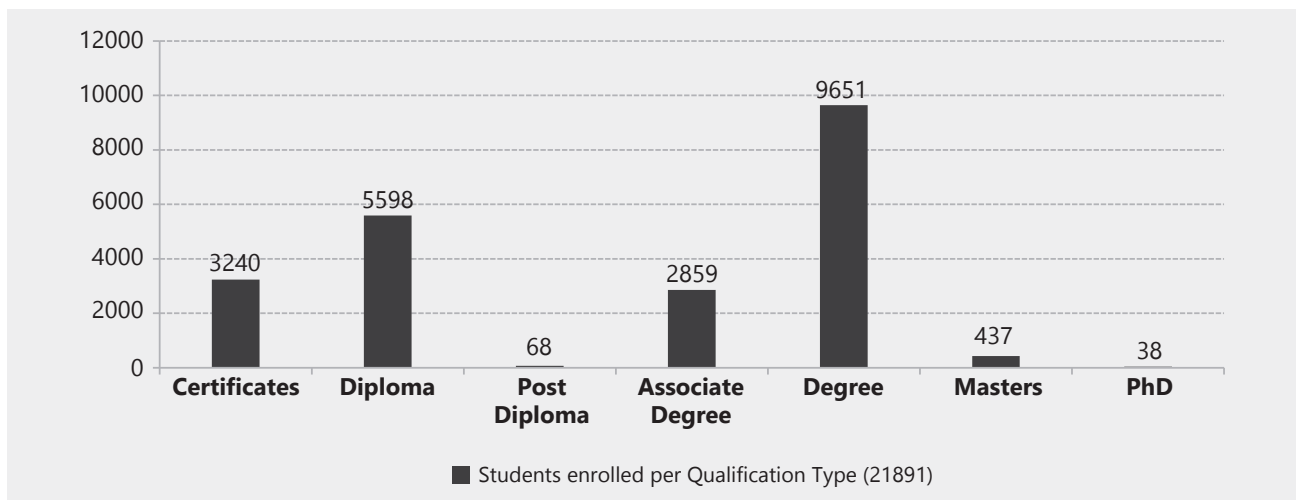


Figure 6: Completion Rates for Private Institutions

## 2.6. Total Number of Enrolled Students per Qualification Type: 21891

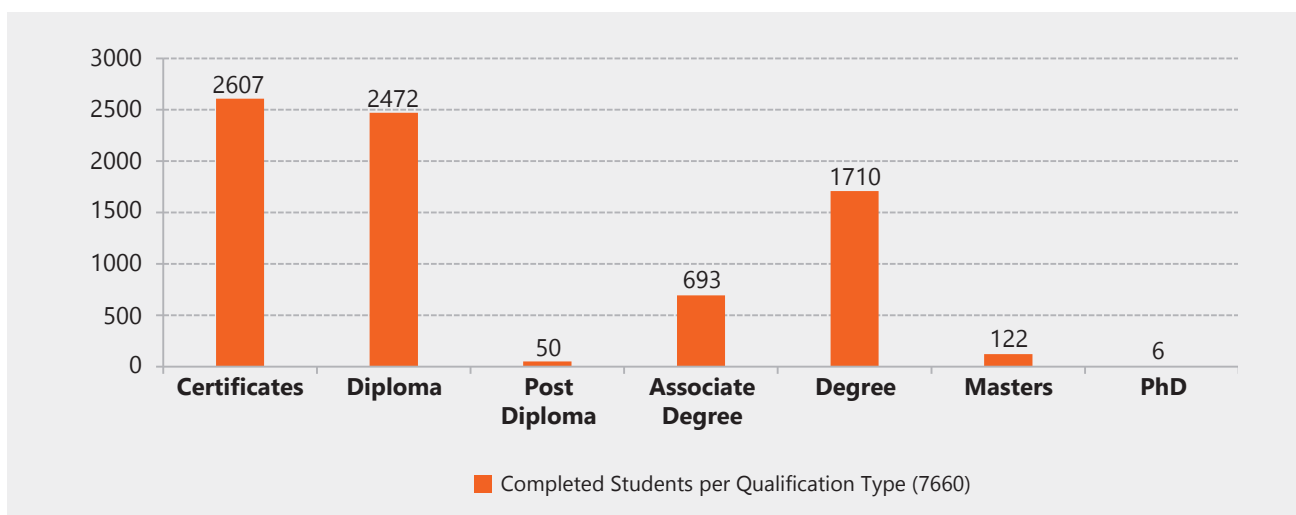
- 2.6.1. Certificates: 3240
- 2.6.2. Diploma: 5598
- 2.6.3. Post-Diploma: 68
- 2.6.4. Associate Degree: 2859
- 2.6.5. Degree: 9651
- 2.6.6. Master's Degree: 437
- 2.6.7. PhD: 38



**Figure 7: Total Number of Enrolled Students per Qualification Type**

## 2.7. Total Number of Completed Students per Qualification Type: 7660

- 2.7.1. Certificates: 2607
- 2.7.2. Diploma: 2472
- 2.7.3. Post-Diploma: 50
- 2.7.4. Associate Degree: 693
- 2.7.5. Degree: 1710
- 2.7.6. Master's Degree: 122
- 2.7.7. PhD: 6



**Figure 8: Total Number of Completed Students per Qualification Type**

## 3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. Information on Skills' Centres is not available.





# Audited Financial Statements

**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

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## General Information

<b>Country of incorporation and domicile</b>	Eswatini
<b>Nature of business and principal activities</b>	Development and implementation of a system of quality assurance for higher education which includes registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion and standards development.
<b>Council Members</b>	<p>Ms. Makhosazana Madondo : Council Chairperson  Mr. Mfundo Msibi : Finance Committee Chairperson  Dr. Sonene Nyawo : ADPC Chairperson  Ms. Matshidiso Thwala : Member  Ms. Hlobisile Ndzimandze : Member  Ms. Khulile Sikhondze : Member  Ms. Gcinaphi Dlamini : Member  Dr. Rangarirai Taruvinga : Member  Mr. Makhosini Makhubu : Member  Prof. Thuli Nhlengetfwa : Member  Prof. Justice Thwala : Member  Dr. Ntombifuthi Mhlongo : Member  Mr. Henry du-Pont : Member  Dr. Loretta N. Mkhonta : Chief Executive Officer</p>
<b>Business address</b>	Lilunga House Mbabane
<b>Postal address</b>	P.O. Box 6582 Mbabane
<b>Bankers</b>	Nedbank Eswatini First National Bank Eswatini
<b>Auditors</b>	Kobla Quashie and Associates Chartered Accountants (Eswatini) Manzini

## Council Members Responsibilities and Approval

The council is required by Section 35 (1) of The Higher Education Act, 2013 to maintain adequate accounting records and the Council is responsible for the content and integrity of the annual financial statements and related financial information included in this report. It is their responsibility to ensure that the annual financial statements fairly present the state of affairs of the council as at the end of the financial year and the results of its operations and cash flows for the period then ended, in conformity with International Financial Reporting Standards. The external auditors are engaged to express an independent opinion on the annual financial statements.

The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and are based upon appropriate accounting policies consistently applied and supported by reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates.

The Council acknowledges that they are ultimately responsible for the system of internal financial control established by the council and place considerable importance on maintaining a strong control environment. To enable the Council to meet these responsibilities, the council sets standards for internal control aimed at reducing the risk of error or loss in a cost effective manner. The standards include the proper delegation of responsibilities within a clearly defined framework, effective accounting procedures and adequate segregation of duties to ensure an acceptable level of risk. These controls are monitored throughout the council and all employees are required to maintain the highest ethical standards in ensuring the council's business is conducted in a manner that in all reasonable circumstances is above reproach. The focus of risk management in the council is on identifying, assessing, managing and monitoring all known forms of risk across the council. While operating risk cannot be fully eliminated, the council endeavours to minimise it by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, controls, systems and ethical behaviour are applied and managed within predetermined procedures and constraints.

The Council is of the opinion, based on the information and explanations given by management that the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that the financial records may be relied on for the preparation of the annual financial statements. However, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The Council Members have reviewed the council's cash flow forecast for the year to 31 March 2025 and, in the light of this review and the current financial position, they are satisfied that the council has or has access to adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The external auditors are responsible for independently reviewing and reporting on the council's annual financial statements. The annual financial statements have been examined by the council's external auditors and their report is presented on page 39.

The annual financial statements set out on pages 41 to 55 which have been prepared on the going concern basis, were approved by the Council on 27 August 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



**Ms. Makhosazana Madondo**  
Council Chairperson



**Mr. Mfundo Msibi**  
Finance Committee Chairperson



**Dr. Loretta N. Mkhonta**  
Chief Executive Officer





## Independent Auditors' Report

### To the member of Eswatini Higher Education Council

We have audited the annual financial statements of Eswatini Higher Education Council, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes, and the directors' report, as set out on pages 41 to 55.

### Directors' Responsibility for the Annual Financial Statements

The company's directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these annual financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, and in the manner required by the The Higher Education Act, 2013. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these annual financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the annual financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the annual financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the annual financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the annual financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the annual financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the annual financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Eswatini Higher Education Council as at 31 March 2024, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, and in the manner required by the The Higher Education Act, 2013.

**Kobla Quashie and Associates**  
**Chartered Accountants (Eswatini)**  
**Manzini**  
**Registered Auditor: Daniel Bediako**  
**Chartered Accountants (Swaziland)**  
**Manzini**

**8 June 2018**

## Council Members' Report

The Council members submit their report for the year ended 31 March 2024.

### 1. Review of Activities

#### Main Business and Operations

The organisation is engaged in development and implementation of a system of quality assurance for higher education which includes registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion and standards development and operates wholly in Eswatini.

The operating results and state of affairs of the council are fully set out in the attached annual financial statements and do not in our opinion require any further comment.

### 2. Going Concern

The Council members believe that the Council has adequate financial resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future and accordingly the annual financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The council members are not aware any new material changes that may adversely impact the Council.

### 3. Events after the reporting period

The members are not aware of any matter or circumstance arising since the end of the financial year and up to the date of this report.

### 4. Council Members

The members of the council during the year and to the date of this report are as follows:

Name	Position
Ms. Makhosazana Madondo	Chairperson
Mr. Mfundo Msibi	Finance Chair
Dr. Sonene Nyawo	APDC Chairperson
Ms. Matshidiso Thwala	Member
Ms. Hlobisile Ndzimandze	Member
Ms. Khulile Sikhondze	Member
Ms. Gcinaphi Dlamini	Member
Dr. Rangarirai Taruvinga	Member
Mr. Makhosini Makhubu	Member
Prof. Thuli Nhlengetfwa	Member
Prof. Justice Thwala	Member
Dr. Ntombifuthi Mhlongo	Member
Mr. Henry Tum Du Pont	Member
Dr. Loretta N. Mkhonta	CEO

### 5. Auditors

Kobla Quashie and Associates Chartered Accountants (Eswatini) Manzini.

## Statement of Financial Position

Figures in Lilangeni	Note(s)	2024	2023
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	2	1,416,016	1,495,860
Intangible assets	1.12&3	845,124	560,212
		<b>2,261,140</b>	<b>2,056,072</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Trade and other receivables	4	2,672,264	277,107
Cash and cash equivalents	5	900,882	2,768,707
		<b>3,573,146</b>	<b>3,045,814</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>5,834,286</b>	<b>5,101,886</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
Funds			
Accumulated funds		948,076	546,298
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Capital reserves	6	1,182,757	1,495,860
Deferred income	7	2,547,485	1,658,614
		<b>3,730,242</b>	<b>3,154,474</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	8	1,155,968	1,401,114
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>4,886,210</b>	<b>4,555,588</b>
<b>Total Equity and Liabilities</b>		<b>5,834,286</b>	<b>5,101,886</b>





## Statement of Comprehensive Income

Figures in Lilangeni	Note(s)	2024	2023
Revenue	9	14,102,837	9,136,236
Operating expenses		(13,725,940)	(8,662,138)
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>376,897</b>	<b>474,098</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>376,897</b>	<b>474,098</b>
<b>Total surplus for the year attributable to:</b>			
Council		376,897	474,098

## Statement of Changes in Funds

Figures in Lilangeni	Accumulated Fund	Total Equity
<b>Balance at 1 April 2022</b>	<b>(203,100)</b>	<b>(203,100)</b>
Changes in equity		
Surplus for the year	474,098	474,098
Prior year adjustment	275,300	275,300
Total changes	749,398	749,398
<b>Balance at 1 April 2023</b>	<b>546,298</b>	<b>546,298</b>
Changes in equity		
Total comprehensive income for the year	376,897	376,897
Prior adjustment - Adjustment to Fixed Assets Register	24,881	24,881
Total changes	401,778	401,778
<b>Balance at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>948,076</b>	<b>948,076</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows

Figures in Lilangeni	Note(s)	2024	2023
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Cash used in operations	10	(2,223,929)	2,328,229
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	2	(247,855)	(753,363)
Purchase of other intangible assets	3	(284,912)	(560,212)
<b>Net cash from investing activities</b>		<b>(532,767)</b>	<b>(1,313,575)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Movement in deferred income		888,871	1,658,614
<b>Total cash movement for the year</b>		<b>(1,867,825)</b>	<b>2,673,268</b>
Cash at the beginning of the year		2,768,707	95,441
<b>Total cash at end of the year</b>	5	<b>900,882</b>	<b>2,768,709</b>



## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1. Presentation of Annual Financial Statements

The annual financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, and the Higher Education Act, 2013. The annual financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, and incorporate the principal accounting policies set out below.

#### 1.1 Property, Plant and Equipment

The cost of an item of property, plant and equipment is recognised as an asset when:

- it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the council; and
- the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

Property, plant and equipment is initially measured at cost.

Costs include costs incurred initially to acquire or construct an item of property, plant and equipment and costs incurred subsequently to add to, replace part of, or service it. If a replacement cost is recognised in the carrying amount of an item of property, plant and equipment, the carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised.

Property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less accumulated depreciation and any impairment losses.

Property, plant and equipment is carried at revalued amount, being the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

When an item of property, plant and equipment is revalued, any accumulated depreciation at the date of the revaluation is restated proportionately with the change in the gross carrying amount of the asset so that the carrying amount of the asset after revaluation equals its revalued amount.

The revaluation surplus in equity related to a specific item of property, plant and equipment is transferred directly to retained earnings when the asset is derecognised.

Property, plant and equipment are depreciated on the straight line basis over their expected useful lives to their estimated residual value.

Property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or revalued amount less accumulated depreciation and any impairment losses.

The useful lives of items of property, plant and equipment have been assessed as follows:

Item	Average useful life
Office furniture and fittings	10 years
Office and IT equipment	5 years
Motor vehicles	5 years

The residual value, useful life and depreciation method of each asset are reviewed at the end of each reporting period. If the expectations differ from previous estimates, the change is accounted for as a change in accounting estimate.

The depreciation charge for each period is recognised in profit or loss unless it is included in the carrying amount of another asset.

The gain or loss arising from the derecognition of an item of property, plant and equipment is included in profit or loss when the item is derecognised. The gain or loss arising from the derecognition of an item of property, plant and equipment is determined as the difference between the net disposal proceeds, if any, and the carrying amount of the item.

## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.2 Financial Instruments

#### Initial Recognition

The council classifies financial instruments, or their component parts on initial recognition as a financial asset, a financial liability or an equity instrument in accordance with the substance of the contractual arrangement.

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised on the council's statement of financial position when council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

#### Fair Value Determination

The fair values of quoted investments are based on current bid prices. If the market for a financial asset is not active (and for unlisted securities), the council establishes fair value by using valuation techniques. These include the use of recent arm's length transactions, reference to other instruments that are substantially the same, discounted cash flow analysis, and option pricing models making maximum use of market inputs and relying as little as possible on entity-specific inputs.

#### Trade and Other Receivables

Trade receivables are measured at initial recognition at fair value, and are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. Appropriate allowances for estimated irrecoverable amounts are recognised in profit or loss when there is objective evidence that the asset is impaired. Significant financial difficulties of the debtor, probability that the debtor will enter bankruptcy or financial reorganisation, and default or delinquency in payments (more than 30 days overdue) are considered indicators that the trade receivable is impaired. The allowance recognised is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the effective interest rate computed at initial recognition.

The carrying amount of the asset is reduced through the use of an allowance account, and the amount of the loss is recognised in profit or loss within operating expenses. When a trade receivable is uncollectable, it is written off against the allowance account for trade receivables. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are credited against operating expenses in profit or loss.

Trade and other receivables are classified as loans and receivables.

#### Trade and Other Payables

Trade payables are initially measured at fair value, and are subsequently measured at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

#### Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and demand deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. These are initially and subsequently recorded at fair value.

#### Bank Overdraft and Borrowings

Bank overdrafts and borrowings are initially measured at fair value, and are subsequently measured at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method. Any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the settlement or redemption of borrowings is recognised over the term of the borrowings in accordance with the council's accounting policy for borrowing costs.

## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.3 Leases

A lease is classified as a finance lease if it transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership. A lease is classified as an operating lease if it does not transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership.

#### Finance Leases – Lessee

The lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and reduction of the outstanding liability. The finance charge is allocated to each period during the lease term so as to produce a constant periodic rate on the remaining balance of the liability.

### 1.4 Share Capital and Equity

An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of an entity after deducting all of its liabilities.

### 1.5 Employee Benefits

#### Short-term Employee Benefits

The cost of all short-term employee benefits is recognised during the period in which the employee renders the related service.

#### Pension Obligation

The Council currently operates a defined contribution plan. The Council pays contribution to a privately administered pension plan on a mandatory, contractual or voluntary basis. Once the contributions have been paid, the Council has no further payment obligation. The regular contributions constitute net periodic costs for the year in which they are due and as such are included in staff costs.

#### Statutory Benefits

Provision is not made for statutory termination obligation in terms of the Employment Act, 1980. It is considered that the Council's contribution to the pension fund which can be recovered against such statutory obligation at present exceed the liability.

### 1.6 Provisions and Contingencies

Provisions are recognised when:

- the council has a present obligation as a result of a past event;
- it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; and

The amount of a provision is the present value of the expenditure expected to be required to settle the obligation.

### 1.7 Government Grants

Government grants are recognised when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the council will comply with the conditions attaching to them; and
- the grants will be received.



## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.7 Government Grants (continued)

Government grants are recognised as income over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs that they are intended to compensate.

A government grant that becomes receivable as compensation for expenses or losses already incurred or for the purpose of giving immediate financial support to the entity with no future related costs is recognised as income of the period in which it becomes receivable.

Government grants related to assets, including non-monetary grants at fair value, are presented in the statement of financial position by setting up the grant as capital reserves or by deducting the grant in arriving at the carrying amount of the asset.

Grants related to income are presented as a credit in the income statement (separately).

### 1.8 Revenue

The Council generates revenue from certificates / programme fees, application fees, registration fees and certificate verification fees. Revenue is recognised at the time the application is submitted to the Council. Interest income

Interest is recognised on an accrual basis unless collectability is in doubt.

### 1.9 Related Parties

The major related party to the council is the Government of Swaziland which exercises a significant influence over its financial and operating decisions as it provides funding for its annual budget. The institute received the following allocation for the year under review

#### Heading

Government subvention	10,216,000	10,000,000
-----------------------	------------	------------

### 1.10 Tax

Current tax assets and liabilities  
The council is exempt from tax.

### 1.11 Impairment of Assets

The organisation assesses at each end of the reporting period whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, the organisation estimates the recoverable amount of the asset.

Irrespective of whether there is any indication of impairment, the organisation also:

- tests intangible assets with an indefinite useful life or intangible assets not yet available for use for impairment annually by comparing its carrying amount with its recoverable amount. This impairment test is performed during the annual period and at the same time every period.
- tests goodwill acquired in a business combination for impairment annually

If there is any indication that an asset may be impaired, the recoverable amount is estimated for the individual asset. If it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of the individual asset, the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs is determined.

## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.11 Impairment of Assets (continued)

The recoverable amount of an asset or a cash-generating unit is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. If the recoverable amount of an asset is less than its carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount. That reduction is an impairment loss.

An impairment loss of assets carried at cost less any accumulated depreciation or amortisation is recognised immediately in profit or loss. Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease. Goodwill acquired in a business combination is, from the acquisition date, allocated to each of the cash-generating units, or groups of cash-generating units, that are expected to benefit from the synergies of the combination.

An impairment loss is recognised for cash-generating units if the recoverable amount of the unit is less than the carrying amount of the units. The impairment loss is allocated to reduce the carrying amount of the assets of the unit in the following order:

- first, to reduce the carrying amount of any goodwill allocated to the cash-generating unit and
- then, to the other assets of the unit, pro rata on the basis of the carrying amount of each asset in the unit

An entity assesses at each reporting date whether there is any indication that an impairment loss recognised in prior periods for assets other than goodwill may no longer exist or may have decreased. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amounts of those assets are estimated.

The increased carrying amount of an asset other than goodwill attributable to a reversal of an impairment loss does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset in prior periods.

A reversal of an impairment loss of assets carried at cost less accumulated depreciation or amortisation other than goodwill is recognised immediately in profit or loss. Any reversal of an impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation increase.

### 1.12 Intangible Assets

An intangible asset is recognised when:

- it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity; and
- the cost of the asset can be measured reliably.

Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost.

Expenditure on research (or on the research phase of an internal project) is recognised as an expense when it is incurred.

An intangible asset arising from development (or from the development phase of an internal project) is recognised when

- it is technically feasible to complete the asset so that it will be available for use or sale.
- there is an intention to complete and use or sell it.
- there is an ability to use or sell it.
- it will generate probable future economic benefits.
- there are available technical, financial and other resources to complete the development and to use or sell the asset.
- the expenditure attributable to the asset during its development can be measured reliably.

Intangible assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any impairment losses.

## Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### 1.12 Intangible Assets (continued)

An intangible asset is regarded as having an indefinite useful life when, based on all relevant factors, there is no foreseeable limit to the period over which the asset is expected to generate net cash inflows. Amortisation is not provided for these intangible assets, but they are tested for impairment annually and whenever there is an indication that the asset may be impaired. For all other intangible assets amortisation is provided on a straight line basis over their useful life.

The amortisation period and the amortisation method for intangible assets are reviewed every period-end.

Internally generated brands, mastheads, publishing titles, customer lists and items similar in substance are not recognised as intangible assets.

### 1.13 Capital Reserves

Any amounts received to fund the acquisition of items of property, plant and equipment are recorded as capital reserves and are amortized into revenue over the useful life of the asset in line with the depreciation policy.

### 1.14 Deferred Income

Deferred income represents funds which have been received from the Government which are set aside for the councils operations. These are transferred into the income statement over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs that they are intended to compensate.

## Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

### 2. Property, Plant and Equipment

Figures in Lilangeni	2024			2023		
	Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation	Carrying Value	Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation	Carrying Value
Furniture and fittings	807,369	(269,151)	538,218	807,369	(216,980)	590,389
Motor vehicles	1,007,875	(666,775)	341,100	1,007,875	(466,375)	541,500
Office and IT equipment	836,842	(300,144)	536,698	588,987	(225,016)	363,971
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,652,086</b>	<b>(1,236,070)</b>	<b>1,416,016</b>	<b>2,404,231</b>	<b>(908,371)</b>	<b>1,495,860</b>

#### Reconciliation of Property, Plant and Equipment - 2024

	Opening balance	Additions through business combinations	Depreciation	Total
Furniture and fittings	590,389	-	(52,171)	538,218
Motor vehicles	541,500	-	(200,400)	341,100
Office and IT equipment	363,971	247,855	(75,128)	536,698
	<b>1,495,860</b>	<b>247,855</b>	<b>(327,699)</b>	<b>1,416,016</b>

#### Reconciliation of Property, Plant and Equipment - 2023

	Opening balance	Additions	Depreciation	Total
Furniture and fittings	161,429	490,810	(61,850)	590,389
Motor vehicles	741,900	-	(200,400)	541,500
Computer equipment	159,919	262,553	(58,501)	363,971
	<b>1,063,248</b>	<b>753,363</b>	<b>(320,751)</b>	<b>1,495,860</b>

### 3. Intangible Assets

	2024			2023		
	Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Amortisation	Carrying Value	Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Amortisation	Carrying Value
Online Registration and Accreditation System	845,124	-	845,124	560,212	-	560,212

#### Reconciliation of Intangible Assets - 2024

	Opening balance	Additions	Total
Online Registration and Accreditation System	560,212	284,912	845,124



## Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

Figures in Lilangeni	2024	2023
<b>4. Trade and Other Receivables</b>		
Trade receivables	2,569,870	134,718
Government of Eswatini: Deposits	-	39,995
Deposits	75,974	75,974
Staff loans	26,420	26,420
	<b>2,672,264</b>	<b>277,107</b>

<b>5. Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>		
Bank balances	900,882	2,768,707
<b>Bank balances:</b>		
Nedbank Swaziland Limited	883,005	2,768,707
First National Bank	17,877	-
	<b>900,882</b>	<b>2,768,707</b>

<b>6. Capital Reserves</b>		
Non-current liabilities	1,430,612	1,495,860
Capital reserves arise from capitalisation of the councils assets. Capital reserves are amortised to revenue over the expected life of the assets in line with the depreciation policy.		
Opening balance	1,495,860	1,063,248
Additions	-	753,363
Amortization of capital reserves	(313,103)	(320,751)
	<b>1,182,757</b>	<b>1,495,860</b>

<b>7. Deferred Income</b>		
Opening balance	1,658,614	-
Funds received during the year	10,216,000	10,000,000
Funds utilised	(9,177,369)	(8,341,386)
	<b>2,697,245</b>	<b>1,658,614</b>

Deferred income represent funds received from the Government which are recognised into income over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs that they are intended to compensate.

## Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

Figures in Lilangeni	2024	2023
<b>8. Trade and Other Payables Trade and Other Payables</b>		
Trade payables	914,213	832,669
Payroll payables	95,253	185,466
Amounts received in advance	2,000	379,604
Other payables	19,625	3,375
PEU subscription	124,877	-
	<b>1,155,968</b>	<b>1,401,114</b>
<b>9. Revenue</b>		
Government subvention	9,327,129	8,341,386
Programme Accreditation Fees	4,337,013	218,417
Registration fees	19,000	10,000
Subscriptions	42,798	205,883
Amortisation of capital reserves	313,103	320,751
Other income	63,794	39,799
	<b>14,102,837</b>	<b>9,136,236</b>
<b>10. Cash used in Operations</b>		
Profit before taxation	376,897	474,098
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation	327,699	320,751
Prior year adjustment	24,881	275,300
Changes in working capital: Trade and other receivables	(2,395,157)	(116,934)
Trade and other payables	(245,146)	942,402
Capital reserves	(313,103)	432,612
	<b>(2,223,929)</b>	<b>2,328,229</b>

## Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

### 11. Risk Management

#### Financial Risk Factors

The council's activities expose it to a variety of risk, credit risk, liquidity risk and cash flow interest risk.

The council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the council.

Risk management is carried out under policies approved by the councillors. The finance department identifies, evaluates and hedges financial risks in operation with the council's operating units. The council provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies covering specific areas, such as foreign exchange risk, interest rate risk, credit risk, use of derivative financial instruments and investment of excess liquidity.

#### Market Risk

Market risk includes currency risk, interest rate risk and equity price risk. From time to time derivative financial instruments are entered into to reduce this exposure to market risk.

#### (i) Currency Risk

The council was not exposed to significant currency risk at the reporting date.

#### (ii) Interest Rate Risk

The council's income and operating cashflows are substantially independent of changes in market interest rates and the council primarily borrows and lends at variable rates, and its exposure to interest rate risk is reflected under the respective borrowings.

The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on the exposure to interest rates for both derivatives and derivative instruments at the end of the reporting period. For floating rate liabilities, the analysis is prepared assuming the amount of the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period was outstanding for the whole year. A 100 basis point increase or decrease is used when reporting interest rate risk internally to key management personnel and represents management's assessment of the reasonable possible change in interest rates.

#### (iii) Legal Risk

Legal risk is the risk that the council will be exposed to contractual obligations which have not been provided for.

#### (iv) Operational Risk

Operational risk is the risk of direct or indirect loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from external events. The initiation of all transactions and their administration is conducted on the foundation of segregation of duties that has been designed to ensure materially the completeness, accuracy and validity of all transactions. These controls are argueded by management and executive review of control accounts and systems, electronic and manual checks and controls, back-up facilities and contingency planning.

## Notes to the Annual Financial Statements

### 11. Risk Management (continued)

#### (vi) Liquidity Risk

Prudent liquidity risk management implies maintaining sufficient cash and marketable securities, the availability of funding from an adequate amount of committed credit facilities and the ability to close out market positions. The council remains confident that the available cash resources and borrowing facilities will be sufficient to meet its funding requirements.

#### (vii) Credit Risk

Credit risk arises from cash and equivalents, deposits with bank and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to corporate, government and individual customers, including outstanding receivables and committed transactions.

#### (viii) Cash Flow and Fair Value Interest Rate Risk

The council's income and operating cashflows are affected, but not to a significant extent, by change in the market interest rates. The council's interest rate risk arises from long term borrowings. Borrowings issued at variable rates exposes the council to cashflow interest rate risk. Borrowings issued at fixed rates expose the council to fair value interest rate risk. The council's borrowings are mainly variable interest rate borrowing and as such they expose the council to cash flow risk

#### Fair Value Estimation

The nominal value less impairment provision of trade payables and receivables are assumed to approximate their fair values. The fair value of financial liabilities for disclosure purposes is estimated by discounting the future contractual cash flows at the current market interest rate available to the council for the council for similar financial instruments.

Prudent liquidity risk management implies maintaining sufficient cash and marketable securities, the availability of funding through an adequate amount of committed credit facilities and the ability to close out market positions. Due to the dynamic nature of the underlying businesses, council treasury maintains flexibility in funding by maintaining availability under committed credit lines.

### 12. Comparative Figures

Certain comparative figures have been reclassified.



## Detailed Statement of Financial Performance

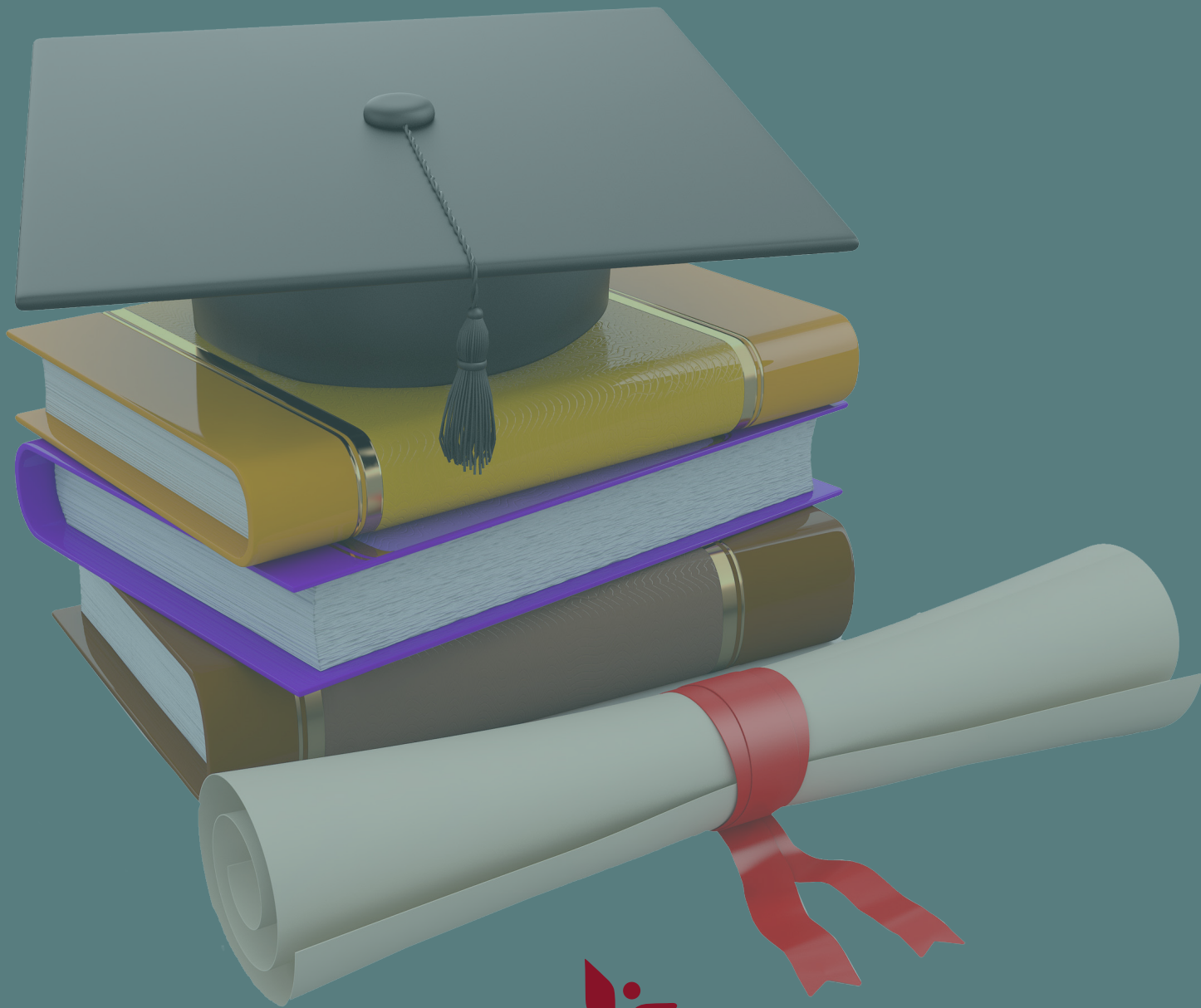
Figures in Lilangeni	Note(s)	2024	2023
<b>Revenue</b>			
Government subvention		9,327,129	8,341,386
Certificate and programme fees		4,337,013	218,417
Application and verification fees		19,000	10,000
Subscriptions		42,798	205,883
Amortization of capital reserves		313,103	320,751
Other revenue		63,794	39,799
	9	<b>14,102,837</b>	<b>9,136,236</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
Accounting fees		-	6,000
Advertising		599,903	427,277
Audit fees		65,500	65,550
Bank charges		40,246	38,836
Council allowances		528,990	496,147
Council meeting expenses		167,099	89,768
Capital expenditure		-	753,363
Computer expenses		202,760	37,707
Consulting fees		583,550	1,344,230
Depreciation		327,699	320,751
Employee costs		5,102,180	1,541,371
IT System administration expenses		110,139	240,050
Implementation of NQF expenses		314,159	327,321
Insurance		98,453	61,538
Internet connection fees		-	17,493
Legal expenses		331,513	98,683
Miscellaneous expenses		19,939	45,027
Motor vehicle expenses		97,051	161,079
Postage		-	367
Printing and stationery		76,047	198,325
Quality assurance programmes expenses		2,989,539	1,249,286
Quality management expenses		68,928	370,034
Regulatory tender fees		21,977	42,346
Rent		524,815	627,215
Repairs and maintenance		6,190	2,130
Research and skills development		686,165	-
Staff training		124,086	49,695

## Detailed Statement of Financial Performance

Figures in Lilangeni	Note(s)	2024	2023
Staff welfare		188,441	24,280
Subscriptions		181,296	-
Telephone and fax		105,673	2,053
Trainee Programme		55,000	-
Travelling expenses		68,607	24,216
Non- recoverable funds		39,995	-
		<b>13,725,940</b>	<b>8,662,138</b>
<b>Surplus / (deficit) for the year</b>		<b>376,897</b>	<b>474,098</b>

The supplementary information presented does not form part of the annual financial statements and is unaudited





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