

Mitigating Graduate Unemployability through Student Academic Support at the University of Fort Hare

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ABSTRACT This paper reports on how the University of Fort Hare manages its academic development or support programmes and curricula for the benefit of all students using a developmental approach. It explains how the university has structured and managed its quality-assured academic support programmes in an endeavour to mitigate potential unemployability of its graduates. Informed by its mission and vision, the university promulgated strategic plans that address gaps in our knowledge of academic support programmes through quality assurance measures aimed at improving academic access, graduate quality and employability potential. This case study adopted a mixed methodology. Using secondary statistical data captured from the academic support programmes on offer, and participatory expository observation, the paper shows how such programmes potentially impact on access, graduate output rates, and perceived employability. Statistical data were analysed using simple descriptive statistics plotted on frequency tables and backed by narratives from a key informant, and researchers. The perceived positive impact of the Fort Hare academic support project makes a strong case for universities to sustain capacity building and sustainability if challenges of access, teaching and learning and student employability are to be realised.