



Highlights Division for Global Engagement



Message from the Senior Director

The first quarter of 2025 was primarily focused on registration for the 2024 academic year. The challenges experienced included the timeous issuing of visas for new and returning students and student funding. Challenges related to the aforementioned are dealt with on an annual basis, registration proceeded smoothly. The period in question also saw UJ host several international delegations. Up to the end of March, UJ hosted delegations from Canada, Lesotho, Finland, China and the U.S.

In February, UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Letlhokwa Mpedi and UJ Senior Director for Global Engagement, Professor Ylva Rodny-Gumede participated in the American Council of Educators (ACE) conference in Washington D.C. in the U.S.

The Division for Global Engagement hosted representatives from 15 Canadian universities and colleges in March. UJ colleagues from across the university presented on strategic areas of interest with a view for potential collaboration. Several Canadian universities showed an interest in developing COIL programmes with the University of Johannesburg

Study Abroad and International Student Services

UJ Study Abroad Department Highlights a Vibrant Start to 2025

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Study Abroad and International Student Services Department has had a dynamic and impactful first quarter in 2025, marked by a series of academic, cultural, and administrative initiatives that reflect the university's commitment to global engagement and student support.

Welcoming the Global Class of 2025

On 28 February, the department hosted its International First-Year Student Welcome Function at Oppierif Residence Hall. The event welcomed 198 international students, who were introduced to essential university services through engaging presentations by Protection Services, PSYCAD, Career Services, Student Affairs, UJISS, and Qatar Airways. This was also an opportunity for the students to meet the Division for Global Engagement staff and learn further what services it can provide to them.

Forming Bonds at Gold Reef City

To foster friendships and cultural exchange, 100 international first-year students participated in a fun-filled excursion to Gold Reef City on 01 March. The outing provided a relaxed environment for students to connect, form societies, and meet other international students.

Academic and Cultural Immersion with IES Abroad (Inbound)

From 29 March to 01 April, the department partnered with IES Abroad to deliver a rich academic and cultural program. Students attended lectures on gender equality in South Africa and the history of Johannesburg, and visited key heritage sites including the Apartheid Museum, Constitution Hill, and the Cradle of Humankind.

Exploring China by Train

In March 2025, UJ students participated in the China by Train programme—an immersive educational journey across several Chinese cities. The program combined academic seminars with cultural exploration, offering students a unique opportunity to learn about China's history, development, and global influence while travelling by rail. Highlights included visits to historical landmarks, university campuses, and innovation hubs, fostering a more profound understanding and international collaboration.

Global Academic Collaborations

The first quarter also featured several high-impact academic programs:

- **UJ/Cornell Summer School:** A collaborative initiative with Cornell University, offering students a unique opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary learning and cross-cultural dialogue.
- **Tübingen SLP, Germany:** UJ students participated in a Short Learning Programme (SLP) in Tübingen, Germany, focusing on global citizenship and sustainable development.
- **University of Cincinnati/UJ Education SLP:** This joint program emphasised educational innovation and comparative learning between South African and American contexts.
- **Yale Law School/UJ Faculty of Law Visit:** This joint program brought together law students from both schools to discuss challenges faced by students in the law and the role of the law in society.
- **Inbound Exchange Students:** UJ welcomed a new cohort of exchange students from partner institutions worldwide, enriching the campus with diverse perspectives and academic contributions.

Strengthening Administrative Foundations

Behind the scenes, the department has also been hard at work ensuring smooth operations and compliance. We continue to diligently update student records and visa information on ITS and ensure that all required clearance documents are accurately stored and managed through Perceptive Content. These efforts are crucial in maintaining the integrity and efficiency of international student services. Once all records are finalised, the Immigration reporting process will commence.



UJ/Cornell Summer School



Academic Services

EU Erasmus Programmes

The Academic Services Unit supports new Erasmus applications, coordinates staff mobilities (incoming and outgoing) and processes new Erasmus agreements.

The period January to February is annually a very busy period when we receive a high number of requests to partner on new Erasmus International Credit Mobility (ICM) applications and to sign new Erasmus Inter-Institutional Agreements (IIA). Academic Services assisted the following partners with their Erasmus submissions. EU partners are the leads on Erasmus applications and we will wait to hear the outcome of the applications later this year. The following were submitted:

1. University of Bologna, Italy
2. Pezzano from L'Orientale, Naples, Italy
3. Erudio Center for Higher Education
4. University of Patras, Greece
5. Ege University, Turkiye
6. University College of Teacher Education Tyrol, Austria
7. Mercatorum University, Rome, Italy
8. Constructor University, Bremen, Germany

The unit also opened an Erasmus call for non-academic staff and have created a new website platform for all UJ staff to follow and apply for open calls advertised. During this period we also co-hosted and incoming Erasmus delegation from Laurea University, Finland, together with colleagues from the College of Business and Economics. During this period we also welcomed colleagues from the University of Helsinki (and Erasmus partner) but who were at UJ as part of the DAIIA project.

Italy

The Academic Services unit supports the strategic partnership between UJ, the Gauteng City Region Observatory, the Gauteng Provincial Government and the Reggio Emilia Municipality. As part of this ongoing partnership, Ms Anisa Khan coordinated the UJ bid and co-developed and wrote the concept for the “Green Amandla” project. The project proposal concept passed through the first round of review and the outcome of the application will be announced after June 2025.

Italian partnerships have also received a boost through the announcement that UJ is partner on two projects funded through the Italian Ministry, the UNITAFRICA project that launched on the 14th February and the ACHIEVE-IT project. Both projects include scholarships for staff and student mobility as well as advanced training courses.

Finland

Besides the incoming delegations that were jointly hosted by Academic Services (Laurea and University of Helsinki), Ms Anisa Khan also worked closely with colleagues in CBE to secure third stream funding for a contracted research project between the Department of Logistics, Transport and Supply Chain Management and Nurminen Logistics, Finland.

Universitas 21

Ms Anisa Khan was invited by our U21 partners, the University of Edinburgh and the University of Amsterdam to deliver a workshop on Global South- North partnerships for the Edinburgh-UvA joint International Staff Week held from the 3-5th of March. This was a valuable opportunity to profile UJ and to share the principles and values that we apply to establishing equitable partnerships. The workshop titled “Lessons from the South- Navigating sustainable partnerships through alliances, networks and multilateral partnership models”, was very well received.

During this period Academic Services also coordinated the U21 Seed Funding Call, of which five applications were submitted.

A call was also sent out to partners to join the Nature Positive Coalition and although we did not formally indicate that we would join (there was a requirement for all partners who were interested in joining to make a financial commitment), we were later invited to join without making this commitment. Three UJ researchers responded to the call, coordinated through Academic Services. The coalition of researchers are working on together on a large grant funding project, which if successful could have very positive returns on investment for UJ.

Following the successful bid to host the U21 Global Research Leader’s meeting at UJ, Prof Ylva Rodny-Gumede and Ms Anisa Khan have been actively engaged and working closely with the U21 GSRL team in the planning of the content of the meeting, in suggesting speakers and in making substantive input on the programme.

USA

Planning for the UJ- Illinois Urbana Champaign collaboration to support the cohort of Future Professors also formed a major part of the first quarter, with the planned mobilities to take place in mid-April.

Sweden- SASUF

Ms Anisa Khan and Prof. Ylva Rodny-Gumede both worked closely as part of the SASUF 2025-2035 Steercom and successfully bid to coordinate the work package four “WP 4: Science and Education Policy – From Policy to Action”, coordinated together with Stockholm University. This WP engages university leadership in identifying AU-EU opportunities, enhancing alignment with funding priorities and developing actionable strategies that connect policy discussions with tangible outcomes. A key focus is supporting Vice-Chancellors in navigating complex AU-EU policy landscapes by providing the necessary resources and expertise to lead these efforts effectively. Expert-led

briefings, workshops, and webinars on AU-EU research policies, funding mechanisms and strategic alignment will equip university leaders with the knowledge needed to strengthen institutional positioning.

IEASA

Ms Anisa Khan was elected to serve and a member of the Council of the International Education Association of South Africa.

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

Academic Services processed 15 agreements to completion as per below.

Q1: JANUARY TO MARCH 2025

Region	Country	Name	Faculty	Type
Oceania	Australia	Murdoch University	Humanities	MOU
North America	Canada	McMaster University	IO	MOU
Philippines	Manila	De La Salle University (DLSU)	IO	MOU
Asia	China	Shandong University	IO	MOU
Hungary	Budapest	Hungarian University of Fine Arts (HUFA)	IO/FADA -Visual arts	Erasmus +
Zimbabwe	Africa	National University of Science Technology (NUST) Zimbabwe	IO	Framework Agreement
Slovenia	Europe	University of Nova Gorica	Science	Erasmus +
Middle East	Türkiye	Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam	FEBE	Erasmus+
Europe	Portugal	University of Minho	IO	Erasmus+
Middle East	Türkiye	Firat University	IO	Erasmus+
Europe	Bulgaria	Sofia University	Humanities	Erasmus+
Europe	Italy	University of Palermo	Science	Erasmus+
USA	Washington D.C	American University	IO/ Law	MOA
India	Kerala	Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW)	Humanities	Framework Agreement
UK	Brighton, Sussex	University of Sussex	IO	Collaboration Agreement



International Student Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing

A visit from the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Management Team on 04 March 2025 to discuss the following:

- Collaboration,
- Memorandum of Understanding,
- Prospective students, applications, admissions, and registrations
- Student welfare and Study Abroad opportunities
- Student finance matters
- Recruitment of undergraduate and postgraduate prospective students

Attended a Botswana Human Resource Development Council (BHRDC) Fair and Career Clinics from 25 to 28 March 2025. The Fair facilitated a week-long engagement among education and training providers, industry, development partners, and prospective students, offering career counselling, skills expositions, and other career guidance to enable potential learners to make informed choices for their education and career planning.

The Fair attracted over 12000 visitors during the week of its hosting, many of them young people who are transitioning to tertiary education institutions.



Botswana Human Resource Development Council (BHRDC) Fair and Career Clinics



National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Management team visit

Fundraising and Administration

The fundraising submitted a total of R85 736 831 funding applications. These include Intra-Africa Scholarship Mobility Scheme, the Erasmus Capacity Building in Higher Education, DAAD and U21 Seed Funding.

Coordinated the China by Train with Study Abroad. This is a pilot project between students in South Africa and China through which skills transfer, joint learning and sharing of best practice in start-ups and entrepreneurship development will be realised.

Negotiated a 5-year MoU with the National Manpower Development Secretariat in Lesotho. The MoU will enable Basotho students to pursue studies in priority areas at UJ. These priority areas are aligned with Lesotho's national development goals and focus on equipping students with the skills necessary to contribute to the country's human capital development and economic growth.

Coordinated 3 nominations from Science and FEBE under the Schmidt Science Fellowship Programme.

Communications and Marketing

- UJ rises in 2025 QS Subject Rankings
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/uj-rises-in-2025-qs-subject-rankings/>
- A transformative semester abroad: My experience at Vilnius University
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/a-transformative-semester-abroad-my-experience-at-vilnius-university/>
- Geopolitical shifts are affecting higher education on the continent
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/geopolitical-shifts-are-affecting-higher-education-on-the-continent/>
- UJ hosts delegation from UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/uj-hosts-delegation-from-un-office-for-digital-and-emerging-technologies/>
- UJ hosts Finnish delegation to advance educational innovation
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/uj-hosts-finnish-delegation-to-advance-educational-innovation/>
- China by Train: UJ students embark on global innovation and entrepreneurship journey
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/china-by-train-uj-students-embark-on-global-innovation-and-entrepreneurship-journey/>
- Autism in Africa conference champions Afrocentric collaboration and awareness
<https://news.uj.ac.za/news/autism-in-africa-conference-champions-afrocentric-collaboration-and-awareness/>



Canadian Universities/Colleges delegation visit



China Africa Institute visit



U.S. Consul-General visit