



Faculty of Law

FACULTY FACT SHEET



ON GOOD AUTHORITY



Message from the executive dean, Prof. Kathleen van der Linde

The Faculty of Law wishes to welcome every law student to our three sites of delivery at the Mahikeng, Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark campuses. We are proud of all the people involved at the faculty: staff, students and alumni.

In the next few years, we envision a future-fit LLB qualification that will respond to the ever-changing landscape of legal education, the transformation of our laws and the evolution of legal jurisprudence.

Our qualifications will keep track of the connection between law and technology, including AI and robotics. Our signature undergraduate and graduate qualifications will attract students from across disciplines, including information technology, natural and applied sciences, commerce and social sciences. Skills embedded in our courses equip students with abilities crucial to the work or business environment of the 21st century.

We strive for excellence in teaching and learning, research and community engagement. Our faculty guarantees quality training in legal ethics, relevant and forward-looking research, and meaningful community engagement that considers the need for social justice and equity. We are committed to making a positive contribution to every student, the law and our society.

THIS IS US

Quality is key

The Faculty of Law provides quality legal education across its undergraduate and postgraduate offerings. We undertake focused and impactful research and are involved in the community with numerous projects.

The goal of the faculty is to equip law students with the knowledge, ethics and skills they will need in their professional lives, whether as practitioners, entrepreneurs, social architects or employees. We strive to expand the science of law through the in-depth research that our staff and postgraduate students conduct in the service of democracy for a just and fair society.

We offer law programmes across our three campuses and have law clinics in Mahikeng, Mbombela and Potchefstroom. We therefore have a presence in and understanding of the needs of our people in urban and rural environments.

In our undergraduate studies, we incorporate public law, legal philosophy and sound exposure to private and mercantile law, underpinned by criminal and procedural law. The postgraduate offerings on master's-degree and doctoral levels encompass diverse fields, including environmental law and governance, estate law, international child law, labour law, public law and legal philosophy, criminal law, and international trade law.



NWU – an internationally renowned university

The NWU proudly represents the African continent on the global stage as one of the largest and most sought-after universities in the world. Known for its excellence in teaching, learning and research, the university boasts a student population from 65 nationalities and serves as testimony to the global competitive advantage of the NWU.

Through strategic international collaborations with experts and other institutions of higher learning, the NWU further ensures a global footprint of distinction and quality. Consequently, the NWU takes great pride in the value of its comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as its proven research track record.

In its strong drive to foster increased internationalisation for staff and students alike, the Faculty of Law holds a number of memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and memoranda of agreement (MoAs) with African, European and American universities and law schools. The most recent is with the Dunărea de Jos University of

Galați, Romania, which came with the Erasmus Collaboration Agreement. The Faculty of Law also has MoUs with national and international organisations, such as UN-HABITAT (the United Nations Human Settlements Programme) and the Consumer Goods and Services Ombud (CGSO). These MoUs and MoAs govern aspects such as student exchange (at under- and postgraduate level), staff mobility, co-teaching and co-publication, funding for visiting colleagues, community engagement and collaboration on shared conferences and colloquia.

Faculty facts

- The fields of expertise of the academic staff members at the faculty cover a wide spectrum of legal disciplines and nearly half of them hold doctoral degrees.
- The faculty collaborates with the Free University of Berlin (Freie Universität Berlin), Germany, to conduct research on urban governance and its relationship with international and domestic legal systems.

- The faculty has maintained excellent collaboration with the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands.
- The faculty hosts the South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability. This is one of the few NRF Tier 1 Chairs in law faculties in South Africa.
- The faculty hosts the Annual International Corporate and Financial Markets Law Conference and the Annual International Banking, Competition & Corporate Law Conference.
- The faculty annually hosts the Juta Mock Trial competition and its students participate in several other moot court competitions in South Africa and abroad.
- In terms of a cooperation agreement concluded in 2025, the CGSO will be operating a satellite office at the Mahikeng Campus, serving the community while also exposing postgraduate law students to work experience.





Our faculty in numbers

(Staff and student figures as on 1 April 2026)



Undergraduate students:
2 808



Postgraduate students:
421



International students:
68



NRF-rated researchers:
8



Academic staff:
112



Support staff:
49

Internationally acclaimed NRF B-rated researchers

Prof. Christa Rautenbach (NRF-B3: 2022–2026)
Prof. Klaus Beiter (NRF-B3: 2026–2030)

Established researchers: NRF C-rated researchers

Prof. Anél du Plessis (NRF-C1: 2021–2026)
Prof. Avitus Agbor (NRF-C2: 2021–2026)
Prof. Howard Chitimira (NRF-C2: 2023–2027)
Prof. Wian Erlank (NRF-C1: 2025–2029)
Prof. Oliver Fuo (NRF-C2: 2024–2028)
Prof. Brewsters Soyapi (NRF-C2: 2023–2028)

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

In our undergraduate programmes we are committed to academic excellence, have an innovative approach to the teaching of law, and aim to offer high-quality instruction in law subjects.

Mahikeng Community Law Centre

At the community law centre, we provide quality legal assistance to the community – primarily to indigent people who qualify for free legal assistance. The service also serves as a space where students undergo practical legal training and are empowered to apply their skills in a safe environment.

The centre serves the communities around Mahikeng and offers professional and technical assistance to local non-profit organisations and traditional councils who share our commitment to social justice. The centre also trains candidate attorneys for admission and enrolment.

Potchefstroom Law Clinic

The law clinic is committed to legal education and access to justice and operates in the provinces of North-West and Mpumalanga. It is involved in several projects, such as the provision of free legal services to poor and marginalised people who qualify for such services in terms of our means test policy, legal education that includes practical legal

training to students, community-outreach activities, capacity-building programmes and advisory services.

These projects are undertaken in cooperation with several organisations such as Legal Aid South Africa, government departments, provincial community-based paralegal organisations, and different NGOs and CBOs. Funding from international and national donors enables the law clinic to conduct these activities.

Short learning programmes

Any member of the public may enrol for these courses if they comply with the admission criteria. Our programmes comply with the prescribed 40-hour formal training and standards set by the court-annexed mediation rules as one of the requirements for registration as a mediator. These programmes can be adapted to your needs and presented as in-house training programmes.

The Potchefstroom Law Clinic offers a variety of short courses and short learning programmes, primarily to community-based paralegals, but also to social workers, candidate legal practitioners and legal practitioners.

[Click here to see which undergraduate programmes we offer](#)

[Click here for our postgraduate diplomas and short learning courses](#)

[Click here for our postgraduate programmes](#)



RESEARCH

Research chair

Research Unit for Law, Justice and Sustainability

The [Research Unit for Law, Justice and Sustainability](#) addresses developmental and legal challenges in South Africa. The various projects in the unit deal with cutting-edge issues that cut across both the public and private sectors. Examples are trade and development, land issues, poverty alleviation, environmental governance, the realisation of socio-economic rights, religion and culture.

The research unit is closely linked with the accredited journal, [Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal](#).

Research chair

NRF South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability (CLES)

The [South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability \(CLES\)](#) forms part of the Research Unit for Law, Justice and Sustainability in the faculty.

The CLES is devoted to legal scholarship and research skills development for sustainable urban development in South Africa, the broader African region and beyond. The CLES aims to produce and publish relevant research and collaborate with policymakers, government officials, NGOs and any institution devoted to urban development and sustainable governance.

Alumni from the CLES hold senior positions in academia and practice beyond South Africa.

Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal

The [Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal](#) is the flagship of the faculty and has taken its place among a range of renowned internationally accredited journals. PER/PELJ is a Gold Open Access, Quartile 2 journal and indexed in (a.o.) SciELO SA, SCOPUS and DOAJ. The journal has had more than 989 000 article downloads to date.

The faculty has also recently launched the *NWU Law Student Journal*, which is administered by students. As a student, you will have an opportunity to be involved in research and administration at an early stage.

APPLICATIONS

Admission requirements

The Faculty of Law has different admission requirements for various degree programmes. [Click here](#) for detailed information.

How do I apply?

Please refer to our [website](#) for online applications.

Money matters

For a wide range of bursaries and financial support, please contact 018 299 2672 or visit our [website](#).

We want to hear from you

Phone 018 299 1921 (undergraduate) or 018 299 1952 (higher degrees). You can also send an [email](#) or visit our [website](#).