

# Providing evidence-based decision support

*Can and should Unisa be everything to everyone, everywhere?*



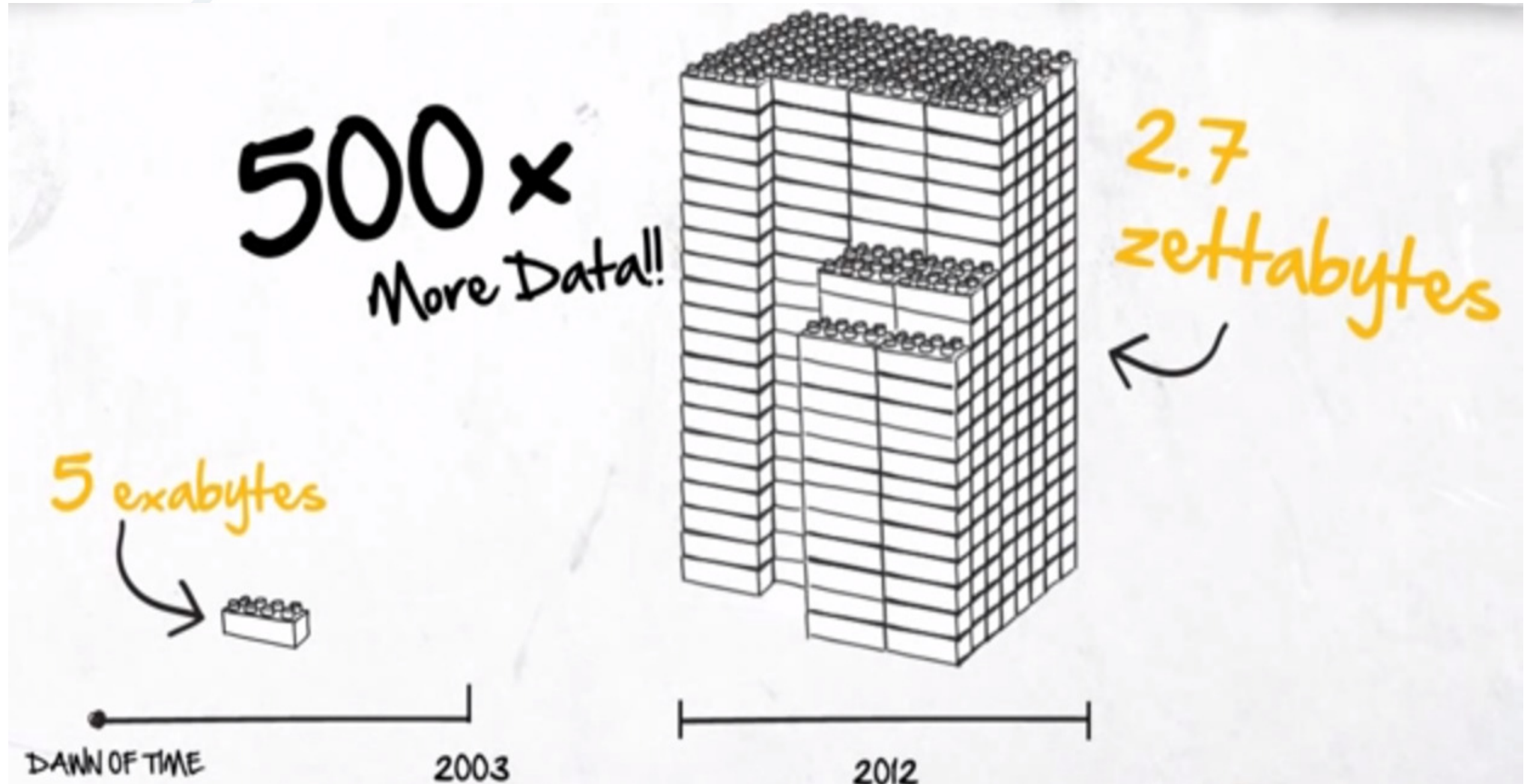
Siphelo Mapolisa,  
Liz Archer & Yuraisha Chetty

Learn without limits.

UNISA |   
university  
of south africa



# The promise of Bigger Data




# The new Institutional Researcher





We are LEARNING ANALYTICS



YOU WILL BE ASSIMILATED

RESISTANCE  
IS  
FUTILE

# Learning analytics is about *what*, not *why*

We don't always need to know the cause of the phenomenon; rather, we can let data speak for itself"

(Mayer-Schönberger & Cukier, 2013, p. 14).

**We need the why for informed intervention**

## Diagnosis vs Informed Intervention

Take two aspirin  
and call me in the  
morning!



## **Case study: International Student Profile**

- Approached by top management
- Provide an international student profile
- 9% of students International students

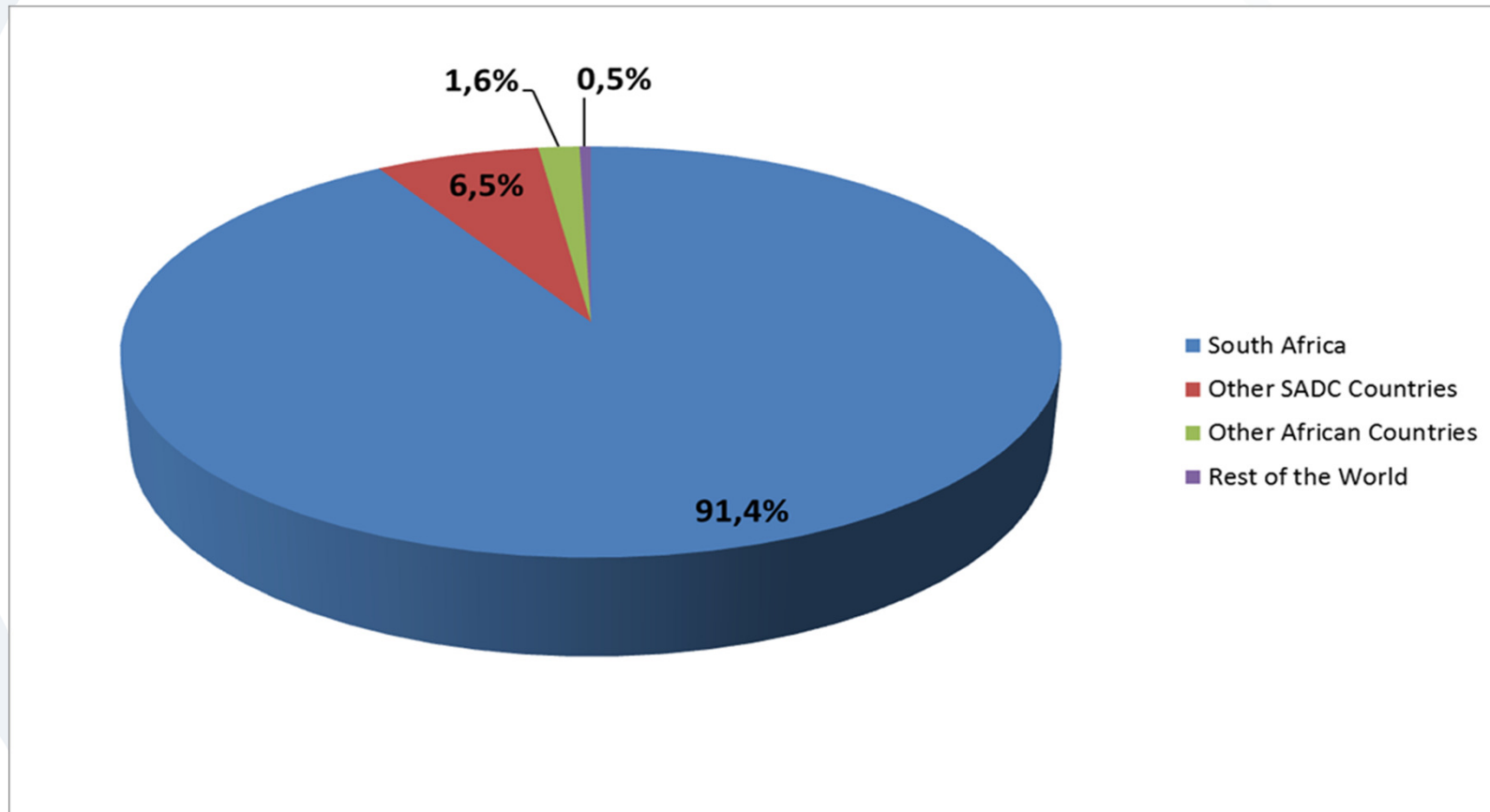




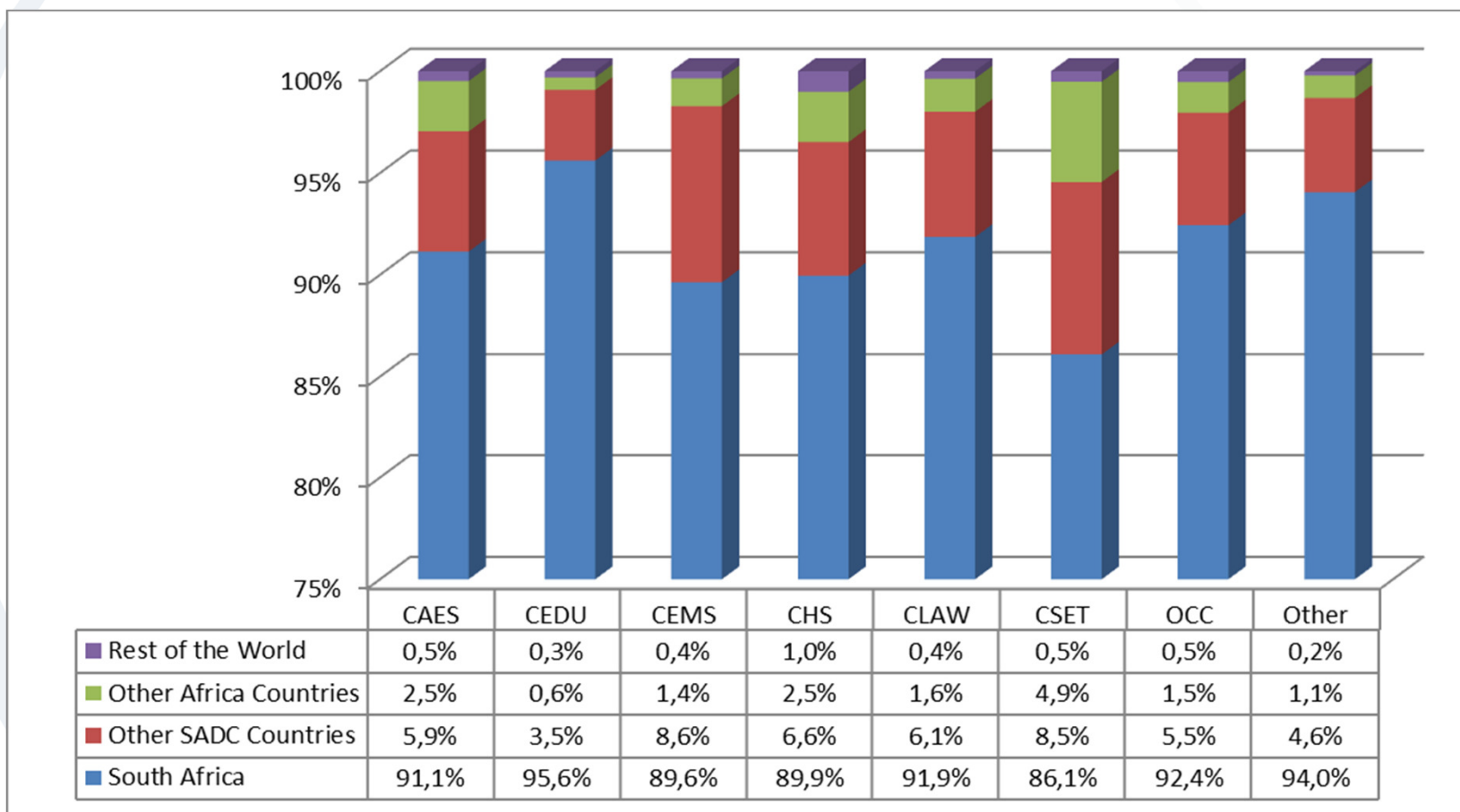
catnip for  
senior  
managers



# Student Enrolment by Nationality, 2013



## Student Enrolment by Nationality and College, 2013





# **Unisa students residing out of South Africa 2012-2013**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Country of Residence</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Other SADC countries</b>	12 281	12 518
<b>Other African Countries</b>	1 915	1 905
<b>Rest of the World</b>	2 479	2 215
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>16 675</b>	<b>16 638</b>

Table 3: Student Enrolment by Nationality and College, 2009-2013

Appendix D: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Gender

College		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
South Africa						
CAES						
CEDU						
CEMS						
CHS						
CLAW						
CSET						
Occasional						
Other						
Other SADC						

Appendix E: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Race

Gender		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Female						

Appendix F: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Age Group

Appendix G: Unisa Students Residing Outside of South Africa, 2012-2013

	2012		2013	
	N	%	N	%
	49 962	14,0%	50 414	13,0%
	47 769	13,4%	48 199	12,4%
	1 682	0,5%	1 717	0,4%
	334	0,1%	338	0,1%
	176	0,0%	158	0%
	1	0,0%	2	0%
	30 183	36,5%	141 183	36,4%
	19 509	33,5%	130 572	33,7%
	8 496	2,4%	8 456	2,2%
	1 630	0,5%	1 664	0,4%
	531	0,1%	474	0,1%
	17	0%	17	0%
	15 596	32,4%	129 850	33,5%
	103 377	29,0%	116 284	30,0%
	9 055	2,5%	10 328	2,7%
	2 624	0,7%	2 698	0,7%
	525	0,1%	518	0,1%

Appendix H: International Student Enrolment by FTEN status

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
FTEN Status	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
South Africa	257 170	91,9%	282 942	91,6%	318 008	91,5%	325 473	91,2%	354 302	91,4%
F	49 296	17,6%	48 195	15,6%	63 976	18,4%	60 031	16,8%	58 925	15,2%
T	9 249	3,3%	21 762	7,0%	22 406	6,4%	20 476	5,7%	22 442	5,8%
E	35 039	12,5%	33 810	11,0%	34 450	9,9%	47 319	13,3%	52 349	13,5%
N	161 628	57,8%	176 646	57,2%	195 180	56,2%	195 740	54,9%	218 965	56,5%
Z	1 958	0,7%	2 529	0,8%	1 996	0,6%	1 907	0,5%	1 621	0,4%
Other SADC Countries	14 851	5,3%	18 039	5,8%	21 306	6,1%	23 377	6,6%	25 183	6,5%
F	3 068	1,1%	3 780	1,2%	4 514	1,3%	4 761	1,3%	4 404	1,1%
T	641	0,2%	1 843	0,6%	2 319	0,7%	1 894	0,5%	1 722	0,4%
E	897	0,3%	950	0,3%	1 258	0,4%	2 606	0,7%	2 998	0,8%
N	10 164	3,6%	11 339	3,7%	13 128	3,8%	14 038	3,9%	15 985	4,1%
Z	81	0,0%	127	0%	87	0%	78	0%	74	0%
Other African Countries	6 044	2,2%	6 008	1,9%	6 331	1,8%	6 093	1,7%	6 280	1,6%
F	1 355	0,5%	918	0,3%	1 020	0,3%	965	0,3%	916	0,2%



# Context

- White Paper for Post School Education and Training (2013)
  - Unisa ≠ sole dedicated open distance learning institution in SA
- Unisa's social justice mandate
- Enrolment planning
  - Currently 9% (76% SADC) move to 8%
- Public critique
  - Student services and exam security

# The real question..

How do we rationalise international student numbers in a planned informed manner?

Lenses:

- Academic
- Administrative
- Legal
- Financial





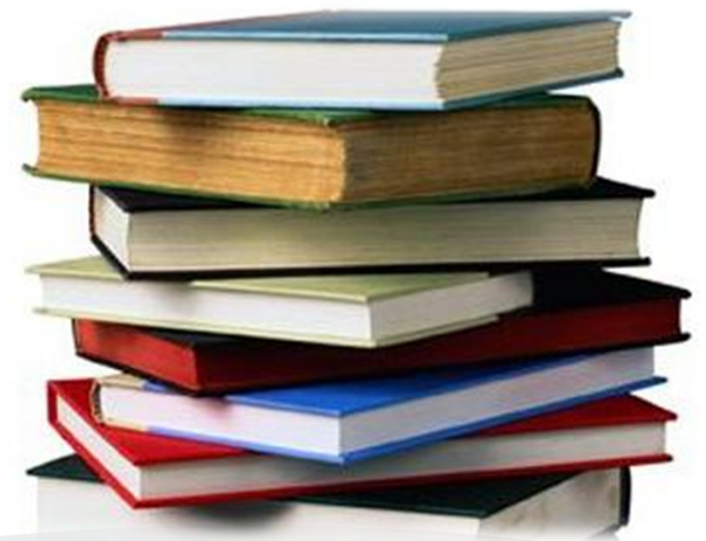
# Research Approach and Process



- Semi-structured face-to-face interviews
- Sampling – purposeful, key stakeholders
  - Academic planner
  - Department of Student Assessment and Administration
  - Finance
  - Legal Services
- Thematic analysis

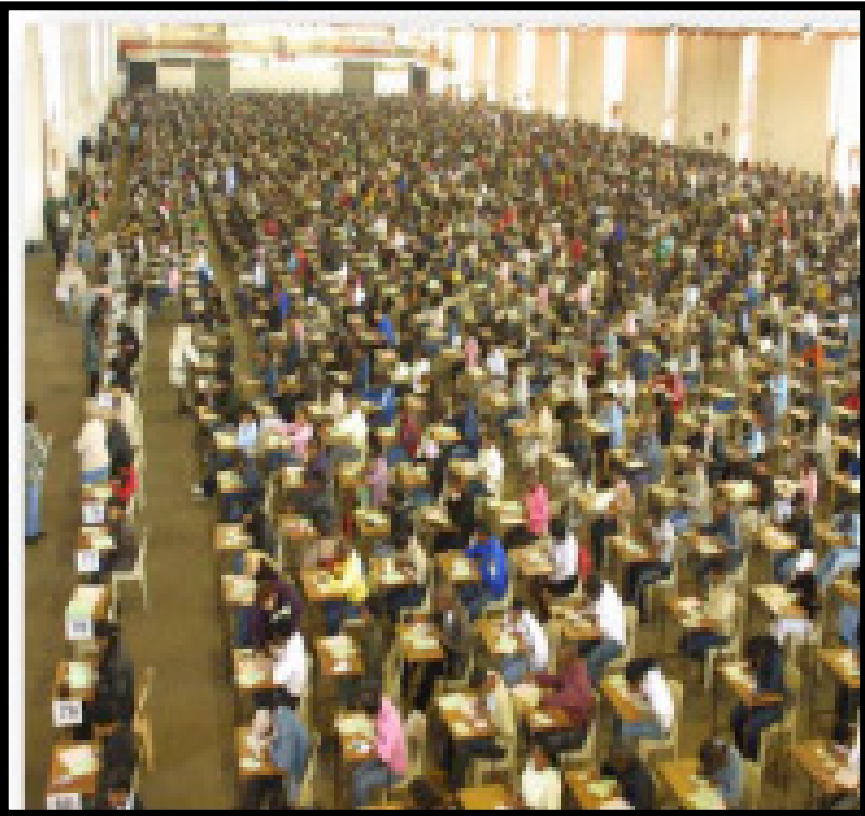
# Academic

- Qualifications:
  - General formative
  - General academic
  - Vocational
  - Professional
- Legal obligation for practical placement
  - Education or Medical and Allied fields
- Professional qualifications
  - Accredited by local professional body
- Scarce skills areas
  - E.g. Social work
  - Historically 16 000 at Unisa
  - Suggested cap 10 000



# Administration

- Exam venues (October 2013)
  - 550 Total, 70 rest of Africa, 140 in rest of world
  - 125 catered for five or less students
  - Invigilation and test security
- Licensee arrangements
  - Process of rationalisation
  - Impact on exam venue arrangements



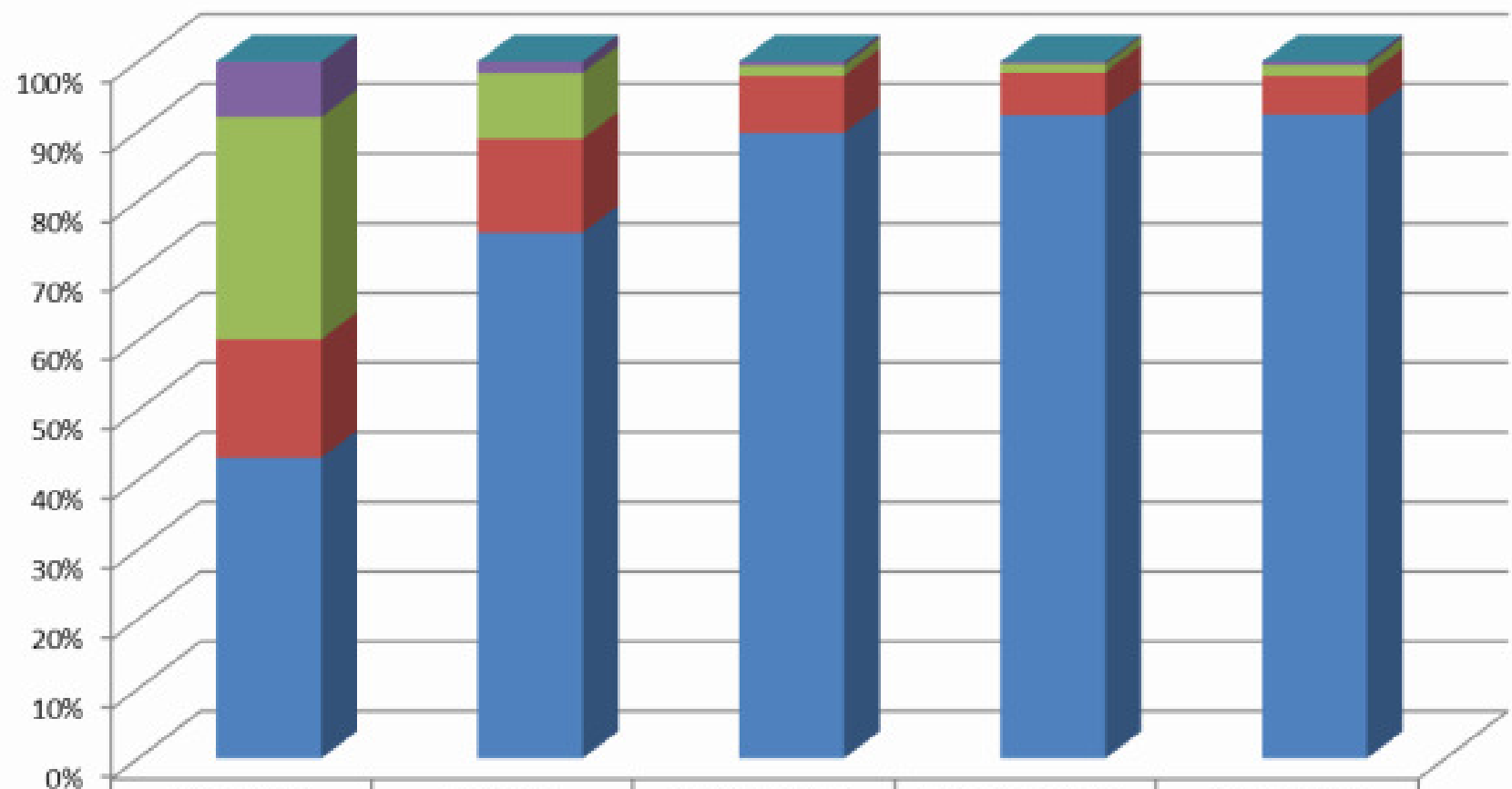


# Legally

- No statutory requirement for Unisa to check visas
- Students not required to have a student visa
- Problems
  - Student visas for visiting students
  - Students using Unisa as a reason for acquiring student visas



**Figure 2: Student Enrolment by Qualification level and Nationality, 2013**



	Doctorate	Masters	PG below MA	Under Graduate	Non-Formal
No information	0,1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rest of the World	7,9%	1,6%	0,6%	0,3%	0,5%
Other African Countries	31,9%	9,5%	1,4%	1,2%	1,5%
Other SADC Countries	17,0%	13,5%	8,2%	6,1%	5,5%
South Africa	43,1%	75,4%	89,8%	92,3%	92,4%

# Recommendation

- Focus for rationalisation
  - Undergraduate modules and courses
  - Modules/Qualifications with venue based examination
  - Qualifications with work integrated learning or practical components
  - Professional Qualifications
  - Examination venues catering for low numbers of students
  - Courses in **scarce skill** areas, prioritise SA students





# Achieving extinction



Table 3: Student Enrolment by Nationality and College, 2009-2013

Appendix D: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Gender

College		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
South Africa						
CAES						
CEDU						
CEMS						
CHS						
CLAW						
CSET						
Occasional						
Other						
Other SADC						

Appendix E: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Race

Gender		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Female						

Appendix F: Student Enrolment by Nationality and Age Group

Appendix G: Unisa Students Residing Outside of South Africa, 2012-2013

	2012		2013	
	N	%	N	%
	49 962	14,0%	50 414	13,0%
	47 769	13,4%	48 199	12,4%
	1 682	0,5%	1 717	0,4%
	334	0,1%	338	0,1%
	176	0,0%	158	0%
	1	0,0%	2	0%
	30 183	36,5%	141 183	36,4%
	19 509	33,5%	130 572	33,7%
	8 496	2,4%	8 456	2,2%
	1 630	0,5%	1 664	0,4%
	531	0,1%	474	0,1%
	17	0%	17	0%
	15 596	32,4%	129 850	33,5%
	103 377	29,0%	116 284	30,0%
	9 055	2,5%	10 328	2,7%
	2 624	0,7%	2 698	0,7%
	525	0,1%	518	0,1%

Appendix H: International Student Enrolment by FTEN status

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
FTEN Status	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
South Africa	257 170	91,9%	282 942	91,6%	318 008	91,5%	325 473	91,2%	354 302	91,4%
F	49 296	17,6%	48 195	15,6%	63 976	18,4%	60 031	16,8%	58 925	15,2%
T	9 249	3,3%	21 762	7,0%	22 406	6,4%	20 476	5,7%	22 442	5,8%
E	35 039	12,5%	33 810	11,0%	34 450	9,9%	47 319	13,3%	52 349	13,5%
N	161 628	57,8%	176 646	57,2%	195 180	56,2%	195 740	54,9%	218 965	56,5%
Z	1 958	0,7%	2 529	0,8%	1 996	0,6%	1 907	0,5%	1 621	0,4%
Other SADC Countries	14 851	5,3%	18 039	5,8%	21 306	6,1%	23 377	6,6%	25 183	6,5%
F	3 068	1,1%	3 780	1,2%	4 514	1,3%	4 761	1,3%	4 404	1,1%
T	641	0,2%	1 843	0,6%	2 319	0,7%	1 894	0,5%	1 722	0,4%
E	897	0,3%	950	0,3%	1 258	0,4%	2 606	0,7%	2 998	0,8%
N	10 164	3,6%	11 339	3,7%	13 128	3,8%	14 038	3,9%	15 985	4,1%
Z	81	0,0%	127	0%	87	0%	78	0%	74	0%
Other African Countries	6 044	2,2%	6 008	1,9%	6 331	1,8%	6 093	1,7%	6 280	1,6%
F	1 355	0,5%	918	0,3%	1 020	0,3%	965	0,3%	916	0,2%

# Finding the signal in the noise



**Data  $\neq$  Evidence-based decision support**





**? Questions**

# Thank you

**Learn without limits.**

UNISA

