



## THE UKZN TRANSFORMATION CHARTER

### OUR VISION

The vision of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (the University) is “to be the Premier University of African Scholarship.” The achievement of this vision is dependent on the transformation of the University.

The notion of transformation which the University embraces is deeper and broader than a narrow categorization based on race and gender representation. It means changing the identity and culture of the University in every aspect of its mission.

Transformation is profoundly advanced by improving the quality of human relationships, and meaningful behavioural change can best bring the identity and culture of the University into alignment with its vision.

### OUR ASPIRATIONS

We ASPIRE TO BE a transformed university which:

- Heals the divisions of our nation’s past, bridges racial and cultural divides, and lays the foundations for a university that is united in its diversity;
- Promotes high quality research, excellent teaching and learning, and responsible community engagement;
- Promotes African scholarship in every discipline and uBuntu/Botho in its organisational culture; Embraces socially and contextually relevant curricula that reflect the University’s location in South Africa, Africa and the World;
- Recognises the importance and value of African languages as academic languages;
- Prioritises the well-being and growth of every individual student and staff member;
- Reflects race and gender representation in its management structures, personnel profile, and student population;
- Is socially cohesive and inclusive;
- Is free of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, class, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and disability;
- Nurtures collegiality, recognises and respects difference, and celebrates diversity;
- Reflects a new and refreshing culture of tolerance, understanding and vibrant engagement within the University community.

## **OUR CURRENT CONTEXT**

We RECOGNISE that:

- Our transformation has already begun, and that considerable progress has been made;
- The University nevertheless still has much to achieve to realize its transformation objectives.

## **OUR COMMITMENT**

We COMMIT ourselves:

- to the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, notably:
  - (i) Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms; and
  - (ii) Non-racialism and non-sexism.
- to the principles of efficiency, integration and devolution that underpin the Statute of the University;
- to the UKZN PACT, which promotes mutual respect, responsibility, and excellence in teaching and learning;
- to work together until the objectives set out below are manifested in our University.

**Therefore, we the staff and students of the University of KwaZulu-Natal  
adopt this Transformation Charter.**

## OUR CHARTER

The University shall be a place where:

### **Research, Teaching, Learning and Scholarship are a Vocation for All**

- Access to learning will continue to be promoted to advance social transformation and redress;
- Scholars will pursue their studies in accordance with the principle of freedom of inquiry and research;
- Scholars will advance knowledge and culture through globally-competitive research and scholarship, and research-led teaching and learning;
- Research and curricula will be socially and contextually relevant;
- African languages will be promoted as academic languages;
- The University will be student-centred and provide a caring environment for every student;
- A holistic approach to education, characterized by excellence in teaching and learning, will produce skilled self-confident and socially responsible graduates, conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation.

### **Race and Gender Representation is Evident in All Structures**

- The staff profile of the University at all occupational levels will reflect the demographics of our province and country;
- Gender equity within the management levels of the University will be ensured, and women will be adequately represented in all management structures;
- The implementation of employment equity and the advancement of designated groups within the
- University structures will be part of the performance management requirements of all line managers;
- Mentorship programmes that develop, support and nurture black and female academic staff members will be provided;
- Mentorship and professional development programmes that attract and retain staff of the highest calibre, develop all staff to their full potential, and meet equity objectives will be developed.

### **A Socially Cohesive and Inclusive Institutional Culture Thrives**

- Social cohesion will be valued and promoted through engagement and understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity in all its forms;
- Every individual will be encouraged to promote social interaction among diverse social groupings, whether among or between staff and students;
- The University will adopt, implement and monitor policies and procedures that aim to eliminate discrimination in all its manifestations including ethnicity, race, gender, nationality, class, religion, sexual orientation and disability;
- Processes will be devised in such a way as to break a code of silence around instances of discrimination in any form;
- Structures and procedures for problem-solving and dispute resolution will be strengthened to handle grievances in a fair and constructive manner;
- The University will enhance on-going education and training for staff and students that sensitises the University community to the lived experiences of its diverse constituencies. It will in this way foster understanding and tolerance, and promote the celebration of diversity;
- The social and personal well-being of staff and students, and an enabling environment for the realization of their full human potential, will be actively promoted.

### **Good Modes of Governance are Enshrined**

- Good corporate governance will be ensured through commitment to democratic representation, devolution, consultation, accountability and transparency;
- Governance, leadership and management will be practiced in a manner that encourages and facilitates positive, proactive, and continuous institutional transformation;
- The University leadership and management will be responsible and directly accountable for creating an environment that cherishes diversity and equity, and which is conducive to respect, tolerance and understanding.

### **The Right to Freedom of Expression is Guaranteed**

- Every individual whether student or staff is a valued member of the University community, and each voice will have the right to be heard;
- Ongoing debate and dialogue on all aspects of transformation and organisational culture will be fostered;
- The University will enhance its role as a leader in transformation by holding regular debates and discussions that will broaden understanding, and identify trends that inhibit and obstruct transformation;

- These engagements will be conducted according to commonly developed “rules of debate”
- appropriate to a university that espouses critical thinking and well-founded argument;
- Members of Senate will participate actively in debates and discussions and will assume a responsibility in preparing the University for the advent of the broader transformational challenges inherent in global change and the achievement of the University’s vision;
- The right to freedom of expression will be counterbalanced by responsibility, accountability and the limitations spelt out within the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

### **Advancement of the Transformation Agenda is the Responsibility of All**

- All members of the University community will understand the meaning of transformation and accept individual and collective responsibility for its advancement;
- Leaders within all stakeholder groupings will play a critical role in advancing the transformation agenda;
- Leaders will develop a shared understanding of transformational leadership behaviour, and practice it;
- Key stakeholder groupings will commit to the process of transformation, and contribute actively to it by clearly defining their roles and responsibilities, and improving interpersonal stakeholder relationships at all levels;
- Academics will embrace the notion that universities are places of reflection to extend the boundaries of human existence and will acknowledge the centrality of human relationships in meeting the challenges of our times, and in realising the vision and strategic objectives of the University;
- Students will recognise that they have individual and collective responsibilities to participate in the building of an institutional identity based on mutual respect and tolerance;
- Staff members will take pride in making the University an institution where courtesy; accountability; mutual respect and efficiency are core values.