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Vaal University of Technology

Vaal University of Technology

Convocation Constitution

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1. Definitions

"Act"	The Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act no. 101 of 1997) as amended.
"Convocation"	The Convocation of the University as contemplated in paragraph 47 of the Statute.
"Convex"	The Executive Committee of the Convocation as contemplated in paragraph 51 of the Statute.
"Council"	The Council of the University as contemplated in Section 27 of the Act and Chapter 4 of the Statute.
"Institutional Forum"	The body contemplated in section 31 of the Act and Chapter 6 of the Statute.
"Senate"	The body contemplated in section 28 of the Act and Chapter 5 of the Statute.
"Statute"	The Statute of the Vaal University of Technology as Government Gazetted on 3 April 2013 No. 36325.
"the University"	The Vaal University of Technology as designated in Government Gazette no 26117 of 19 March 2004.

2. Name and Status of the Convocation

- 2.1 The Convocation is known as the Convocation of the Vaal University of Technology, hereafter referred to as the Convocation.
- 2.2 The Convocation is recognised by the Council as a structure of the University in terms of Chapter 9 of the Vaal University of Technology Statute.

3. Mission

- 3.1 The Convocation recognising the important role it has to play in the life of the Institution commits itself to promoting the interests of the Vaal University of Technology in the pursuit of those principles and objectives outlined in this Constitution.
- 3.2 The Convocation supports and enhances the University's vision and mission through maintaining and expanding positive relationships with its members and through utilising and maximising their expertise, goodwill and influence in support of the University.

4. Principles

- 4.1 The policies, functioning and actions of the Convocation shall be based on the following principles:
- a) Freedom of expression;
 - b) Democratic decision-making;
 - c) Non-discrimination;
 - d) Non-political party alignment;
 - e) Responsibility and accountability;
 - f) Multi-cultural co-operation, and
 - g) Any other principle enshrined in the South African Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa.

5. Function of the Convocation

- 5.1 In terms of paragraph 47 of the Statute, the Convocation may discuss and state its opinion on any matter relating to the University, including matters which may be referred to it by the Council.

6. Objectives

The objectives of the Convocation shall be:

- 6.1 To promote, protect and maintain the interest and rights of the Convocation.
- 6.2 To foster an interest in and promote respect for the Vaal University of Technology.
- 6.3 To promote or challenge any law or regulation or proposed law or regulation that affects the interests of education.
- 6.4 To do all such activities as are deemed to be in the interest of the Convocation and its members and which are consistent with the principles and objectives of the Convocation.
- 6.5 To raise funds, to administer and select recipients for bursaries, special focus will be placed on needy student who have a passion to further their studies but due to funding are unable to do so.
- 6.6 To maintain a database of members in order to enhance communication and information dissemination between members of the University, and to form the voters' roll for the election of Council members.

7. Members of the Convocation

- 7.1 The Convocation consists of:
- a) The graduates and all holders of diplomas and certificates of the University;
 - b) The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and the full-time academic staff of the University; and
 - c) Former full-time academic staff of the University who have left the service of the University on account of their having reached the retirement age if they are not members of the Convocation in terms of sub-paragraph (a).

8. Convocation Roll

- 8.1 The Registrar keeps the roll of the Convocation.
- 8.2 Every member of the Convocation must notify the Register of his or her address and of any changes of address.

9. Office-Bearers

- 9.1 The office-bearers of the Convocation shall be the President, Deputy-President and the Secretary to the Convocation.
- 9.2 The Convocation Officer to the Convocation, who is an employee of the University designated by the Registrar, shall be responsible for the administration of the office of the Convocation, and shall perform tasks as delegated by the office-bearers.
- 9.3 The President holds office for two years from the date on which the term of the office of the predecessor ends.
- 9.4 The President holds office for one term, but with the option of standing for a second term.
- 9.5 The President shall preside at the Annual General Meeting, Special General Meetings and Convocation Executive Committee (Convex) meetings. The President shall be competent to represent the Convocation and perform any other duties required by this Constitution, or act upon decisions taken at the Annual General Meeting or by the Convocation Executive Committee.
- 9.6 The Deputy President shall act as and perform all the functions and exercise all the powers of the President if the latter is absent, or precluded from acting as President.

- 9.7 Should the President for any reason vacate his or her office prior to the expiry of his or her term of office, the Convocation must elect a successor in accordance with the provision of paragraph 49 (c) of the Statute.
- 9.8 The Vice-Chancellor and Principal must act for the duration of the election of a President as Acting President.
- 9.9 The Registrar serves as Secretary to the Convocation.
- 9.10 The President and Secretary, the latter with the authorisation of the former, shall be responsible for the drafting of press releases and/or statements.

10. Election of President and Deputy President

- 10.1 Call for nominations will be sent out to all members via electronic notice, one publication in a national newspaper and on the Vaal University of Technology website.
- 10.2 Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Convocation Officer in terms of the University Election Rules.
- 10.3 A member of the Convocation is eligible for election to the office of the President, if he/she has been a member of the Convocation for at least 10 years.
- 10.4 The President and Deputy President must be elected in accordance to the Institutional Election Rules at a Meeting of the Convocation by secret ballot and by majority of the members present.
- 10.5 Whenever a tie between candidates arises, successive rounds of voting shall take place at the Meeting until a single candidate is elected.
- 10.6 The President of the Convocation may not be a full-time employee of the University.
- 10.7 All other procedures for holding an election of officers shall be determined by the Constitution as well as the Institutional Statute and Institutional Rules.
- 10.8 A successful candidate is elected as from the date of the election or, where appropriate, with effect from the date on which the relevant vacancy will occur.

11. Convocation Chapters

- 11.1 The Convocation may constitute regional Chapters of Convocation where it deems that there are sufficient members to warrant the formation of such a chapter.

- 11.2 A Chapter may be demarcated on a provincial, municipal or international basis or a combination of provinces or municipalities.
- 11.3 A Chapter shall be approved at the Annual General Meeting.
- 11.4 A Chapter shall be constituted as follows:
- a) Chairperson;
 - b) Deputy Chairperson; and
 - c) Any convocant who satisfies the requirement of paragraph 7 of the Constitution and residing within the demarcated region.
- 11.5 The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be elected at the Chapter Annual General Meeting.
- 11.6 The Chapter Management Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and three other *bona fide* members elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- 11.7 The quorum for the Chapter Annual General Meeting shall be 50% plus 1 *bona fide* members.
- 11.8 Procedures for the convening of the Chapter Annual General Meeting and election of its office-bearers shall be in accordance with the Constitution.
- 11.9 The President and Deputy President of the Convocation shall be *ex officio* members of all Chapters.
- 11.10 The Convocation Officer will provide administrative services for all Chapters.

12. Annual General Meeting

- 12.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be convened by the Secretary in consultation with the President and shall be held at a venue and at a time to be determined by the Convocation Executive Committee.
- 12.2 Any member desiring to table any business must, at least two weeks before the meeting, forward a statement in writing to the Convocation Officer or the President, setting forth in the form of a motion the subject proposed for consideration.
- 12.3 The reason or each motion must be stated and must be signed by the proposer and seconder. The proposer and seconder, who must be *bona fide* members of the Convocation, must be present at the Annual General Meeting to present and motivate the motion.
- 12.4 Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be published in a national newspaper or publication at least ten weeks before the day appointed for holding such meeting with a statement of the business to be brought before the meeting.

- 12.5 Thirty members shall form a quorum. Meeting procedures shall be in accordance with the Institutional Statute and Rules.
- 12.6 Should both the President and Deputy President be absent or precluded from chairing at the Annual General Meeting, a chairperson shall be elected by show of hands.
- 12.7 Should there be no quorum, the President may adjourn the meeting to a date not less than seven days later and require the secretary to give notice of the time and venue of the meeting to all members of the body concerned and if this is done the members present at the start of the meeting constitute a quorum despite any provision to the contrary.
- 12.8 Voting on every resolution shall be by show of hands provided that any member shall have the right to call for a ballot.
- 12.9 Absent members may not vote by proxy.
- 12.10 A member may not, without the permission of the Chairperson speak more than once on a motion or amendment thereof, but the mover of the motion or amendment may reply.
- 12.11 A point of order may be raised when a member is of the opinion that:
- a) There is a deviation from the matter under discussion;
 - b) A member uses insulting or repulsive language; or
 - c) Discussions are contrary to the procedural rules.
- 12.12 All resolutions of the Convocation shall be decided by a majority vote of those present.
- 12.13 Every resolution duly passed shall be binding on every member of the Convocation.
- 12.14 The Secretary and Convocation Officer shall not be permitted, *ex officio*, to cast a vote at the Convex Meetings or Annual General Meetings.
- 12.15 For every motion the chairperson shall have a vote, and in the case of a deadlock the President, shall also have a casting vote.

13. Purpose of Annual General Meeting

- 13.1 The purposes of the Annual General Meeting shall be:
- a) To receive the President's Annual Report;
 - b) To receive the Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Annual Report;
 - c) To receive and approve a Financial Report of the Convocations financial affairs since the last Annual General Meeting;
 - d) To elect committee members for the following where vacancy will be opening up; and
 - e) To conduct any other competent business.

14. Special Meetings

- 14.1 A special meeting may be called by the President of his/her accord at any time for a purpose to be stated by him/her. Such meeting shall be called by him/her or failing him/her by the Secretary of the Convocation, on the receipt of a request in writing by not less than twenty-five members of the Convocation. The written request shall state, in the form of the specific motion, the subject proposed to be considered at the meeting.
- 14.2 No business other than for which notice has been given shall be transacted at such meeting. An amendment to a specific motion stated in the request may be moved at such meeting only with the consent of the President and the proposer(s) of such motion.

15. Executive Committee of the Convocation

- 15.1 The Executive Committee of the Convocation supports the realisation of the functions of the Convocation and ensures the furtherance of the aims and objectives thereof.
- 15.2 The Committee shall comprise of the following members:
- a) The President of the Convocation, who serves as Chairperson;
 - b) The Deputy President of the Convocation;
 - c) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor dealing with external relations and partnerships;
 - d) One full-time academic staff member designated by the Convocation;
 - e) One member elected by the Convocation from amongst its members;
 - f) Secretary of the Convocation - *ex officio*
 - g) Convocation Officer - *ex officio*
- 15.3 The Committee shall have the right to co-opt any member of Convocation for any particular purpose.

16. Members of the Executive Committee of the Convocation

- 16.1 The members of the Executive Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Convocation shall hold office for two years, restricted to two consecutive terms of office.
- 16.2 If any members of the Executive Committee of the Convocation elected by the Annual General Meeting of the Convocation vacates office before the expiration of his/her period of office, the Committee may appoint a member of the Convocation to fill the vacancy and to hold office for the unexpired portion of such period, provided that not more than 50% of vacancies may be filled in this manner, and provided further than if vacancies occur in addition

to those vacancies so filled by the Executive Committee, a special meeting of the Convocation shall be convened by the President to elect members to fill such vacancies.

- 16.3 Any member of the Executive Committee of the Convocation who is absent from two consecutive ordinary meetings of the Executive Committee without written apology received 24 hours before a meeting shall be deemed to have resigned from the Convocation Executive. If a member tenders an apology for absence for three consecutive meetings, he/she is deemed to have resigned.
- 16.4 Sub-paragraphs 16.1 - 16.3 shall also apply to Chapter Committee Members.

17. Election of Members of the Executive Committee of the Convocation

- 17.1 A member of the Convocation shall be duly nominated for election to the Executive Committee if duly nominated and seconded by two members of the Convocation. If the nominee is not able to be present at the Annual General Meeting, he/she must indicate in advance his/her acceptance of his/her nomination, in writing, to the Secretary of the Convocation.
- 17.2 Membership of the Executive Committee shall be open to all members of the Convocation as defined in paragraph 7 and provided that the internal/external ration is maintained.

18. Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Convocation

- 18.1 Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at least twice a year and at such other times as may be deemed necessary by the President.
- 18.2 The time and place of such meetings would be communicated by the Convocation Officer.
- 18.3 Notwithstanding sub-paragraph 18.1 the President shall summons the Executive Committee to meet if he is requested to so, in writing, by not less than two members of the Executive Committee of the Convocation, the object of the meeting being stated in the request.
- 18.4 At least fourteen days' notice shall be given for meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 18.5 In any meeting of the Executive Committee, four members shall form a quorum. In the event of there being no quorum present 10 minutes after the stated time of the meeting, the meeting may be adjourned to a specific date and at such adjourned meeting the members attending entitled to vote shall form a quorum.

- 18.6 All resolutions of the Executive Committee shall be decided by a majority vote of those present.
- 18.7 For every motion the chairperson shall have a vote, and in the case of a deadlock the President, shall also have a casting vote.
- 18.8 The President of the Convocation can submit any motion to the Executive Committee for decision making on a 'round-robin' basis. A decision is only regarded as binding if signed by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee.
- 18.9 Any member of the Convocation shall be entitled to attend the Executive Committee Meetings in an observer capacity - provided that such a request is made to the Convocation Officer at least three days in advance.

19. Powers of the Executive Committee

- 19.1 Apart from any functions or powers which may be conferred upon it by the Convocation, the Executive Committee shall be vested with the following special powers, namely:
- a) To fund-raise from members of Convocation or from any other source.
 - b) Establish and coordinate projects, including fundraising projects.
 - c) To receive and manage such funds as the Council of the University or any other body may make to the Executive Committee for the maintenance of the Convocation organisation or for any other purpose of the Convocation.
 - d) To appoint trustees to hold any such funds in trust.
 - e) To cause proper records to be kept for the proceedings of the Convocation as well as proper books of accounts and records of income and expenditure.
 - f) To extend recognition to and withdraw recognition from any person/s who are members of the Convocation.
 - g) To elect members to the Council, Senate and Institutional Forum.
 - h) To replace any office bearer in the Executive Committee should there be a vacancy.
 - i) General to perform any act in furtherance of the interests of the Convocation and of the University.

20. Termination of Membership

- 20.1 A member of the Convex or Chapter Committee vacates his or her position on the Convex or Chapter Committee respectively if he or she:
- a) Resigns;
 - b) Dies;
 - c) Is absent from two consecutive ordinary meetings of the Convex without written apology;

- d) Isorbecomes insolvent;
- e) Is declared to be of unsound mind by a court of the Republic;
- f) Is removed from an office of trust by a court of the Republic, or is convicted of an offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment without the option of a fine by a court of the Republic; or
- g) Is otherwise disqualified in terms of the Institutional Statute, Rules or Code of Ethics.

21. Appointment of Members of the Convocation to serve on Council

- 21.1 In terms of paragraph 8 (a) **xiii** of the Institutional Statute the two representatives to serve on the Council of the Vaal University of Technology is nominated by the Executive Committee of the Convocation for a period of two years in accordance to paragraph 9 (b).
- 21.2 If a vacancy arises for a Convocation representative to serve on the Council due to an appointed incumbent not being able to complete his or her term of office for any reason whatsoever, a member of the Convocation may be appointed to the Council for the remainder of the previously appointed incumbent's term of office, at a meeting of the Convex.

22. Appointment of a Member of the Convocation to serve on Senate

- 22.1 In terms of paragraph 21 (E)(vi)(K) of the Institutional Statute one member of the Convocation elected by the Convocation who is neither a staff member nor a student of the University, to serve on Senate for the duration of their specific office.
- 22.2 If a vacancy arises for a Convocation representative to serve on Senate due to an appointed incumbent not being able to complete his or her term of office for any reason whatsoever, a member of the Convocation may be appointed to Senate for the remainder of the previously appointed incumbent's term of office, at a meeting of the Convex.

23. Appointment of a Member of the Convocation to serve on the Institutional Forum

- 23.1 In terms of paragraph 30 (I) of the Institutional Statute one member of the Convocation who is not a student, employee or a Council member, in accordance with the Rules will be nominated to serve on the Institutional Forum of the Vaal University of Technology for a period of two years in accordance to paragraph 31 (c).
- 23.2 If a vacancy arises for a Convocation representative to serve on the Institutional Forum due to an appointed incumbent not being able to complete

his or her term of office for any reason whatsoever, a member of the Convocation may be appointed to the Institutional Form for the remainder of the previously appointed incumbent's term of office, at a meeting of the Convex.

24. Submission of Resolutions

- 24.1 A copy of all formally adopted resolutions of the Convocation and a statement of such other matters as the Convocation or the Convex may from time to time decide, shall be sent to the Executive Officer of the Council for the information of the Council.

25. Role of the Convocation Office

- 25.1 Develops strategic and operational plans for the Convocation Office in consultation with the Convex.
- 25.2 Reports to the Executive Committee on its operations at meetings of the Convex;
- 25.3 Provides administrative and operation support to the Convocation and its Executive Committee for purposes of furthering the mission and goals of the Convocation;
- 25.4 Executes resolutions of the Convocation and its Executive Committee, were applicable.
- 25.5 Reports annually on its activities in the above at the Annual General Meeting of the Convocation.

26. Amendments to the Constitution

- 26.1 Amendments to this Constitution shall be by a simple majority of a duly constituted Annual General Meeting of the Convocation. Motions to that effect must be submitted to the Convocation Officer copying the Secretary one month prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting and provide that notice of the proposed alteration of this Constitution was given in the notice calling of the meeting.

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