



**VAAL UNIVERSITY  
OF TECHNOLOGY**

*Inspiring thought. Shaping talent.*

**Speech by Prof Khehla Ndlovu, Vice-Chancellor and Principal  
Vaal University of Technology  
Certification Ceremony  
20 June 2025  
Desmond Tutu Great Hall**

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Good morning.

It is a great pleasure and a deep honour for me to be with you today at this special moment, a moment of celebration, pride, and new beginnings.

Let me begin by congratulating each and every one of you who is receiving a certificate today. You have done something truly important. You have proven that learning does not stop when you leave school, it continues every day, and you have taken the bold step to grow your skills, your confidence, and your value in the world.

Today, we honour not only your achievement, but also your journey.

Some of you came to class after long shifts.

Some of you studied while raising families.

Some of you may have doubted yourselves along the way. But you did not give up. You showed courage. You showed discipline. You showed heart. That is what makes today powerful.

It is not just about a certificate, it is about self-respect.

It is not just about a piece of paper, it is about the doors that are opening because you worked for them.

Let me be clear: no university can function without the people who clean, who maintain, who make the spaces safe and welcoming for others. Too often, this work is overlooked. But we at VUT see you. We appreciate you. And today, we celebrate you.

We also thank our partners, EDPT SETA and Ontoanetse Consulting, for helping make this dream a reality. You understood that investing in people is the best kind of investment. You believed in the potential of our workers, and you gave them the tools to rise. For that, we are grateful.

To our graduates, you are skilled professionals who play a vital role in creating safe, healthy and dignified environments. Your work speaks of excellence, and today you stand as leaders in your field.

This certificate means you now carry a new responsibility. You are now role models. Other staff members are looking at you and saying: *“If they can do it, so can I.”* So I encourage you to keep rising. Take the next course. Share your knowledge. Apply what you’ve learned. Be the change that lifts others with you.

There is a Zulu proverb I often reflect on: **“Indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili.”** (*You ask the way from those who have walked it.*) You have walked the path. Others will follow you. Be proud of that.

In closing, I want to say: thank you for choosing growth over comfort. Thank you for showing what is possible when we believe in ourselves. Thank you for reminding us that dignity comes from doing your work with excellence, no matter the job title.

From all of us at VUT: Well done. We are proud of you. We walk with you. And we look forward to seeing you continue to shine.

**Congratulations, graduates. Your journey has just begun.**

I thank you!