



2026-06-19

The Vaal University of Technology (VUT) has learnt with profound sadness of the passing of Professor Tandi Matsha-Erasmus, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU).

On behalf of the VUT Council, Executive Management, staff, students, alumni and the broader University community, I extend our deepest condolences to the Council, management, staff, students and alumni of SMU, as well as to Professor Matsha-Erasmus's family, friends and loved ones.

Professor Matsha-Erasmus was an accomplished scholar, researcher and respected higher education leader whose contribution to the advancement of academic excellence, research and institutional transformation will leave an enduring legacy. Her leadership of SMU reflected a deep commitment to strengthening health sciences education, advancing knowledge production and improving the lives of communities through higher education.

South Africa's higher education sector has lost a visionary leader who understood the transformative power of education and dedicated her life to empowering others through knowledge, innovation and service.

As Vice-Chancellors, we often carry the shared responsibility of navigating complex institutional challenges while remaining steadfast in our commitment to students, staff and society. Professor Matsha-Erasmus fulfilled this responsibility with distinction, integrity and compassion. Her leadership extended beyond the confines of her institution and contributed meaningfully to the broader development of higher education in South Africa.

The outpouring of tributes from students, colleagues and stakeholders is a testament to the impact she had on countless lives. She will be remembered not only for her academic achievements and leadership, but also for the humanity, warmth and dedication she brought to her work.

During this time of grief, VUT stands in solidarity with the entire SMU community as they mourn the loss of an exceptional leader and servant of higher education.

May her soul rest in eternal peace.

Professor Stephen Khehla Ndlovu
Vice-Chancellor and Principal