

Institutional Forum Report to Council for 2018

Introduction

The Institutional Forum (*hereafter referred to as IF*) at the University of Cape Town is required to report to the University Council annually. The purpose of the report is to provide Council with an account of the activities of the IF and to give it a sense of the issues that arose in the IF and their significance for transformation in the University. In 2018 the UCT IF met thirteen (13) times. These meetings consisted of two (2) Induction Workshops, 4 out of the 5 required meetings for the year and one (1) special meeting. In addition, five (5) IF EXCO meetings were held. This report provides a thematic overview of key transformation matters that were raised during these meetings.

Governance

The focus for the institutional forum during 2018 was to build stronger ties with the different university structures, including but not limited to Senate, Council and the SRC. Central themes that influenced the Institutional Forum's strategy in 2017 was the need to repurpose the role of the IF and to establish the IF as a proactive oversight body for Transformation related matters in the University. Led by the University Strategic Plan, the IF focused on contributing towards systematic change in two ways. The first was to complete the formation of a key structure, the Institutional Forum Executive Committee (IF EXCO) to improve the efficiency of the IF and to become more responsive to transformation matters as they arise at UCT.

The purpose of the IF EXCO is to expedite discussions and formulate a collective decision on potential advice to Council and/or the Executive. The second systemic change was to develop a subsidiary body, called the Transformation Forum, which was comprised of Transformation Chairs from across faculties, departments and residences. It was decided that the work of the Transformation Forum, should be reported more regularly to the IF as there are deeper issues being grappled with at the Transformation Forum which the IF should be aware of. Third, the VC, Prof Phakeng, proposed that there be a structural realignment to bring the work of the Employment Equity Forum closer to the Institutional Forum.

Thus, the governance of IF has been strengthened structurally to have oversight of transformation, diversity and inclusion within the university.

Appointment Processes

IF has had approved senior appointments for the university and noted key concerns in the alignment of senior appointment processes and composition of selection committees for senior appointment. Council was advised to address these concerns with the University Human Resources Committee.

APPENDIX I

University Employment Equity Forum Report to IF 2018

1. Purpose

The committee is a subcommittee of IF and advises the Vice-Chancellor on employment equity and transformation matters related to employment equity

2. Status

In September 2018 the status of the EEF was amended as a committee that primarily functions to advise the Vice –Chancellor to a committee that acts as a subcommittee to the Institutional Forum (IF) and reports to the IF.

Its purpose was amended as follow:

“Section 3.

Having regard to the preamble in 8 below, the committee shall advise the Vice-Chancellor on employment equity and transformation matters related to employment equity. The Vice-Chancellor must therefore consult the EEF on:

3.1 an analysis of the University of Cape Town’s employment policies, practices, procedures and the working environment, to identify employment barriers which adversely affect people from designated groups;

3.2 the University of Cape Town’s employment equity plan;

3.3 the implementation of the employment equity plan and barriers to implementation, including barriers related to recruitment, retention, staff development, the institutional climate, discrimination in the workplace;

3.4 the University of Cape Town’s annual report on employment equity to the Department of Labour.”

Its composition was amended as follows;

“Section 4. 2

4.1 and 4.2 Chair from Vice Chancellor Mamokgethi Phakeng to Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Loretta Feris

4.7 Up to three (3) members of staff to represent staff with disabilities.

4.9 The Director of the Office for Inclusivity and Change;

4.10 The employment equity specialist of the university.”

The terms of reference were amended as follows;

“Section 8.

8.1 Preamble

a) The Employment Equity Act requires UCT as a designated employer to prepare and implement an employment equity plan which inter alia must set out its numerical goals and the affirmative action measures to achieve employment equity. It must also create procedures that will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan reasonable progress is being made towards implementing employment equity.

b) The EEF is the forum for consultation on these and other matters pertaining to employment equity as required by the Act. It advises the Vice-Chancellor and reports to the Institutional Forum.

c) The role of the EEF must be seen in the context of the Vice-Chancellor’s accountability for transformation more generally and the role of the Institutional Forum which has specific functions laid down in the Higher Education Act, advising Council on equity policies and on the fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human rights and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research and learning.

f) The EEF is a forum for Employment Equity representatives and for trade unions to share experiences as well as being a communication channel between staff on the ground and the senior executive

8.2 The Vice-Chancellor shall

a) consult the forum regarding the employment equity plan for the University and seek the forum’s advice before submitting the statutory annual employment equity report in terms of the Employment Equity Act;

b) seek the advice of the forum on questions of transformation as it relates to employment equity as he/she considers necessary.

8.3 The Employment Equity Forum may

a) refer any matter relating to employment equity to the IF where it believes that the issue is one on which the IF should be advising the Council;

b) submit a report or proposal direct to Council if for any reason it considers this necessary.

8.4 The Employment Equity Forum shall provide a forum to share experience and good practice on employment equity.”

3. Matters considered at EEF

3.1 Employment Equity Fund

The Employment Equity Fund is funded partially by GOB and the VC discretionary fund and managed by an ad hoc committee that is chaired by the DVC Transformation.

A further suggestion to leverage off the EE Fund for positions targeting “Employees with Disabilities” was raised for consideration going forward.

3.2 Declaration by Employee (EEA1) form completion 4

It is the duty of the university to collect information from each employee in the workforce to complete a declaration using the EEA1 form. The EEA1 collect information pertaining to Gender, Race and Disability status. As part of the completion of the 2019-2023 EE plan this data must be collected for reporting purpose and the EEF decided on a three-pronged approach:

1. An email communique to all university employees coming from the desk of the Deputy Vice Chancellor to raise awareness about the duty to report to the Department of Labour (DoL) on the categories required to declare, also defining “people with disabilities” as per the Employment Equity Act.
2. As Proof of Evidence the EEA1 Declaration by Employee forms may be obtained and submitted electronically by all employees via a protected online site and/or delivered and collected manually. All completed forms will be in custody of the Employment Equity Office for the annual audit checks done by DoL.
3. In compliance with the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 and PPI, the confidentiality of the information on the EEA1 form will be contained by the Employment Equity Office.

Information only to be shared for purpose of the act specifically relative to reasonable accommodation of “people with disabilities”.

3.3 Employment Equity Reporting Tool

A reporting tool was designed by The ED ICTS and his team to draw a Real Time report of the numeric profiles of the University overall figures and Faculty/Departmental figures. The EE Data tool provides access to reports in a more effective and efficient manner and intend to alleviate assumed targets used in the recruitment process.

The roll out of the Reporting tool will effectively be done through a staggered process which involves training the HoD’s and Deans as part of the initial roll out, and then extending the training to Transformation Chairs. 5

3.4 Progress report on Recommendations for UCT made by DoL.

A request to DoL for an extension to submit the university's new Employment Equity Plan has been approved for end December 2018. The following matters have been addressed:

The composition of the Forum

This has been revisited and attendance registers are clear on which Faculties/Departments, Unions and other stakeholders are represented at the EEF meetings. Attendance registers will be signed and kept as evidence of constituency of the forum. The new format for the Attendance register used in the EEF meetings include statutory designated categories which include "Faculty/Dept, Race, Gender & Disability"

Compliance with Section 16 of Employment Equity Act

This is currently in progress. Consultation is underway with employees to attempt to reach agreement on matters such as:

- The conducting of the analysis on identified EE barriers which include a profile of the designated employer's workforce to determine the degree of underrepresentation of people from designated groups in various occupational levels in the workforce.
- The preparation and implementation of the employment equity plan referred to in section 20; and
- A report referred to in section 21.

The EE Analysis Report as required by section 17 of the Act.

To reflect the workforce profile analysis conducted to determine a degree of under representation of people from the designated groups, the institution has successfully utilised the EEA 12 template contained in the Employment Equity Regulations, 2014 and conducted a Barriers analysis. The Barriers analysis and Consultation process is complete and currently being prepared for the EEA13 Affirmative Action Measures which will be used to prepare and develop the new UCT Employment Equity Plan as required by section 19 of the EE Act.

The new UCT EE Plan 6

a. The plan will have clear objectives to be achieved for each year of the plan as required by section 20(2)(a) of the Act; Departments and Faculties has submitted Numeric Targets for the plan period.

- b. Barriers and affirmative action measures will include timelines attached to track progress and responsible persons to monitor the implementation of these measures.
- c. The plan expects to have numerical goals for the plan period and numerical targets for each year of the plan.
- d. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan will contain clear roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders with timelines included as to when the monitoring will be conducted.
- e. Internal procedures to resolve any dispute about the interpretation or implementation of the plan as required by section 20(2)(g) will be ascertained after further discussion and agreement from Council and/Senate and will be confirmed before submission of the plan.
- f. Senior persons responsible for implementing and monitoring the plan are aimed to be included on the plan as required by section 20(2) (h) of the Act.

A special meeting of the EEF was held on 8 November where faculties and departments shared the first iteration of their respective plans and a final meeting will be scheduled for 6 December to formally approve the UCT plan.

3.5 Matters still to be resolved

A proposal was raised to create smaller groups for “employees with disabilities” at the university to draw on those voices who are able to identify and raise concerns or provide input on Disability in the work place. In this manner a broader group of experience will be represented and the Transformation Chair representing “Employees with Disabilities” will use the EEF platform to bring forward issues pertaining to these employees.

The Committee was requested to develop a “Charter of Commitment” to ensure all Faculty, Departmental and Union constituencies are present at EEF meetings or alternatively, ensure a substitute representative attends such meetings.

3.6 Conclusion

In summary the focus of the EEF in 2018 was to ensure that the university meets the Director General Review's recommendations to formulate a new university Employment Equity Plan by the agreed deadline. The exhaustive consultation process as per statutory requirements which was recently concluded, has provided informative feedback on Affirmative Action measures. These measures should enable the university to determine realistic and stretch employment equity targets and produce progressive actions to be managed by senior members and stakeholders over this period. The development of the Employment Equity reporting tool predicts a more proactive and robust monitoring and manageable system for gauging whether the university is reaching their targets prior to reporting to Department of Labour. The recent Declaration by Employees should affect the disability numeric profile of the university positively from a targeting perspective and enable opportunities for future transformation initiatives.

Appendix II

Transformation Forum Overview 2018

The Transformation Forum was formed in 2017 as a subcommittee of the IF. The purpose of the forum is to learn and share good practice whilst grappling with issues that hinder cultural shifts towards the inclusive and transformation environment that is sought at UCT.

The summary below provides an overview of the work conducted by the Transformation Forum in 2018.

Structural Guidelines

In 2018, the work of the Transformation Forum evolved around establishing guidelines to standardize the work of the forum as well as the work of the transformation committees. A key outcome of the Transformation forum work this year included the finalisation of the Transformation forum terms of reference as well as the framework for Transformation Committees. Both documents enable the systemic work of the transformation committees and formalise their roles within their respective areas.

However, it is noted that despite the formalisation of the function of Transformation committees, there are several challenges experienced where transformation committee members themselves are victimised either by their line managers and/or colleagues because of the kind of critical work that they do within their spaces. Going forward in 2019, deeper engagement with leadership will need to establish protective parameters to ensure that the transformation committee members are enabled to conduct their work in a more supportive environment.

Recognising Transformation work

Throughout 2018, it was noted that regardless of one's position, the work of Transformation is consistently evolving – and as a result, there is a notable impact on one's time.

In order to recognise the important and demanding work that is done in addition to one's full time work – the transformation forum members considered introducing Key Performance Areas (KPA's) within transformation committee members job descriptions.

A working group was formed to establish these KPA's and how the additional work integrates within the traditional working week.

Over and above recognition via KPA's, a transformation award with related criteria was favourably considered by Transformation Forum members. The intention of this award would be to recognise transformation committee's and individuals who are innovating in the area of inclusion and furthering the cause and intention of transformation.

Capacity Building and Sharing of Good Practice

One of the main functions of the transformation forum is to share good practice and identify areas of capacity development for transformation committee members. This year, the focus was developing a theory of change for transformation work in respective faculty and departments. Members received a one day training on theory of change and then were asked to apply this knowledge to their transformation work. The Faculty of humanities theory of change process was presented at the Transformation forum to enable other transformation committees

Inclusion catalysing institutional change

Grappling with the inclusion of all within UCT's space and with renewed emphasis on the African identity of UCT – transformation forum members considered the question of how to include traditional practices within the physical infrastructure and current processes at UCT. To guide this conversation, Mr Mbedzi and Gogo Ndozi shared the legal framework and the traditional practices used by students and staff. The intention of this first seminar was to understand what constitutes traditional practice and what accommodations UCT could consider.

Following this first engagement, UCT will work with traditional leaders and government representatives to establish how our infrastructure can accommodate African customs, rituals and processes to enable student and staff wellness, health and affirmation of African identity.