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UCT statement on legal action over appointment of DVC

The University of Cape Town confirms that we have been formally notified that the unsuccessful candidate in the recruitment process for the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching & Learning, is taking legal action against the university.

UCT believes that, although it is unfortunate, it is within the unsuccessful candidate's rights to seek legal recourse if they believe that there were irregularities with the process. UCT reiterates that the appointment of the DVC: Teaching & Learning was a fair, transparent and above-board process.

The university notes misleading media and social media reports claiming that the successful candidate did not meet the equity requirements and key criteria as advertised for the post. This is not true. The appointment was supported and welcomed by the selection committee, the Senate, and the Council. All of these bodies independently viewed the candidate and her extensive experience in South African higher education as meeting the key criteria of the post. The objection came after the selection process was concluded and came from the unsuccessful candidate and some members of the BAC.

UCT Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price rejects subsequent claims that the process was unfair and that the unsuccessful candidate was not seriously and properly considered by the selection committee. This is simply not factual. The insinuation that Dr Price personally could block an appointment is flawed. The process simply does not allow it with a selection committee of over 20 independent representatives. Dr Price was also not the chair of the committee.

Some reports have personalised the matter between Dr Price and the unsuccessful candidate. This is unfortunate. Dr Price was but one member of a large selection committee.

UCT reiterates that we believe the selection process was rigorous, fair and transparent. The selection committee included representatives of multiple constituencies and was demographically very well represented. The committee agreed overwhelmingly that the successful candidate was appropriately qualified and deserving of the job.

We are confident that this was the correct decision and that the legal process will confirm this.

ENDS

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