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UCT granted first-of-its-kind full membership on global cybersecurity body

The University of Cape Town's (UCT) focus on cybersecurity has seen the institution being honoured as the first academic institution in Africa to be granted full membership of the Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST), the recognised global leader in incident response.

Cybercrime is on the rise, and higher education institutions continue to be at high risk of being attacked not only for their data, but also for their IT infrastructure, according to Roshan Harneker, senior manager for Information and Cybersecurity Services (ICS), who led the application.

Founded in 1990, FIRST is a prestigious forum recognised as a global leader in incident response. It has only 483 members from 84 countries, representing the public, private and education sectors.

Harneker said: "UCT is in good company, the membership will aid and strengthen the institution's existing capabilities. If accessed, the IT infrastructure can potentially aid cybercriminals with their illegal activities."

The membership allows UCT access to a network of the world's leading security experts, said Harneker. The university will also receive support in effectively and proactively managing IT security-related incidents.

"This significant achievement sees UCT once again raising the bar in cybersecurity, and we hope it will inspire other higher education institutions to join this exclusive forum too," Harneker concluded.

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