



# CONSTITUTION OF THE CONVOCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG (UJ)

## PART A: INTRODUCTORY

### 1. Preamble

- 1.1. UJ resulted from the merger of its legacy institutions, being the former Technikon Witwatersrand and the former Rand Afrikaans University (into which the Soweto and East Rand campuses of the former Vista University were incorporated).
- 1.2. UJ's alumni (including those of its legacy institutions), management and employees are important role players to promote the best interests, image and reputation of UJ and express collectively their opinion on matters relating to UJ.
- 1.3. UJ established a Convocation, by virtue of the Statute, as a structure for deliberation by these role players in accordance with the University vision, mission and values.

### 2. Definitions

Unless the context indicates a contrary intention, the following words and expressions bear the meanings assigned to them and cognate expressions bear corresponding meanings:

- 2.1. **Council** means the governing body of UJ, established in terms of section 26(2)(a) of the Higher Education Act;
- 2.2. **Convocation** means the body established in terms of section 26(2)(g) of the Higher Education Act and as described in Chapter 9 of the Statute;
- 2.3. **Convocation Constitution** means this constitution of the Convocation;

- 2.4. **Convocation Member** means a member of Convocation as contemplated in paragraph 4;
- 2.5. **Exco** means the Executive Committee of the Convocation.
- 2.6. **Exco Member** means a Convocation Member duly appointed to Exco;
- 2.7. **Higher Education Act** means the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997 and subsequent amendments to the Act;
- 2.8. **Institutional Forum** means the Institutional Forum established in terms of section 26(2)(f) of the Higher Education Act;
- 2.9. **Policy on General Standards** means the Policy on the General Standards with which Persons must comply to Serve on UJ Structures or Participate in UJ Activities;
- 2.10. **Rules** means the institutional rules, policies, disciplinary measures and discipline provisions, and codes of conduct issued by the Council, the Senate or others body or functionary authorised to do so by the Council, within UJ;
- 2.11. **Statute** means the Statute of UJ as published and promulgated on 19 July 2019; and
- 2.12. **UJ** means the University of Johannesburg, a university duly established under the Higher Education Act.

## **PART B: CONVOCATION**

### **3. Roles and Objectives of Convocation**

The Convocation:

- 3.1. is a structure, accountable to Council, that represents the interests of the Convocation Members and UJ;
- 3.2. executes its responsibilities in accordance with the higher education framework with specific reference to *inter alia* the following:
  - 3.2.1. the Constitution of South Africa, Higher Education Act and other applicable legislation, the Statute, the Rules and this Convocation Constitution.

- 3.2.2. generally accepted principles regarding the role of a university and its place in society;
  - 3.2.3. Higher Education governance requirements;
  - 3.2.4. National Higher Education imperatives; and
  - 3.2.5. principles of public accountability, corporate citizenship, good governance and ethical conduct;
- 3.3. promotes a positive image/reputation of and respect for UJ as a whole;
  - 3.4. fosters a sense of responsibility, obligation and accountability towards the UJ community in general and their “Alma Mater” in particular;
  - 3.5. debates and states its opinion on any matter relating to the best interests of UJ, including matters referred to it by the Council, the Senate or the Institutional Forum;
  - 3.6. elects representatives to serve on the Council as provided for by, and in accordance with, the Statute; and
  - 3.7. is a structure in which Convocation Members participate voluntarily and as such without UJ incurring any obligation to remunerate or compensate them, or provide them with any benefits.

#### **4. Membership of Convocation**

- 4.1. Membership of the Convocation consists of:
  - 4.1.1. Alumni (diplomates and graduates of formal subsidised qualifications from UJ, the former Rand Afrikaans University and the former Technikon Witwatersrand);
  - 4.1.2. the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Registrar and other members of the Management Executive Committee of UJ;
  - 4.1.3. permanent academic employees of UJ; and
  - 4.1.4. retired permanent academic employees of UJ.
- 4.2. Convocation Members must, at all relevant times, comply with the requirements of the Policy on General Standards.

## **5. Meetings and related matters iro Convocation**

- 5.1. Meetings and meeting procedures are in accordance with the Statute and the University's Rules for Effective meetings.
- 5.2. The President serves as chairperson at meetings of the Convocation as well as meetings of the Exco. In the absence of the President, the Deputy President serves as chairperson of a meeting. In the absence of both the President and Deputy President, the Vice-Chancellor or representative serves as chairperson for the particular meeting.
- 5.3. The Convocation has one annual general meeting. The meeting may be postponed or brought forward in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.4. The President, in consultation with the Registrar, may call an extraordinary or emergency meeting in accordance with the Rules for Effective Meetings.
- 5.5. Any motion for consideration at a meeting of the Convocation must be lodged in writing with the Registrar at least two weeks before the date of the meeting.
- 5.6. Prior to the commencement of a meeting, every member is obligated to indicate (i) a possible personal conflict of interest and (ii) compliance with the Policy on General Standards.
- 5.7. A quorum for a duly constituted meeting shall be at least 200 Convocation Members.
- 5.8. Decision-making is primarily based on the principle of consensus and/or sufficient consensus.
- 5.9. If consensus on a matter tabled for discussion is not reached, a motion on the matter is put to the vote by the Chairperson. The motion is carried if two-thirds of the Convocation Members present at the meeting vote in favour of the motion.
- 5.10. In the instances where a meeting is not quorate the Convocation Members will be supplied with a notice with a request to provide their inputs on the items that require approval via electronic means.
- 5.11. A summarised report of each meeting is submitted to Council.
- 5.12. Council must consider the advice given by the Convocation and provide written reasons if the advice is not reasonable accepted.

5.13. The Registrar acts as the official secretariat that ensures that the administration of meetings is in accordance with the principles of good governance and the University's Rules for Effective Meetings.

## **6. Election of Convocation Officials**

6.1. The Convocation must elect from among the Convocation Members a President.

6.2. The Convocation must elect from among the Convocation members a Deputy President.

6.3. Should the position of the President become vacant during the term of office, the Deputy President will become President for the remainder of the exiting President's term of office.

6.4. Should the position of the Deputy President become vacant during the term of office, the Exco elects an Exco Member to become the Deputy President for the remainder of the exiting Deputy President's term of office.

6.5. In the absence of the President and Deputy President, the Vice-Chancellor or representative will act as President until the position is filled.

## **PART C: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CONVOCATION**

### **7. Role of the Executive Committee**

7.1. The Exco executes the mandate given to it by the Convocation.

7.2. Exco Members must act within their powers of authority, and perform their fiduciary, care and skills duties as per the University's Rules for Effective Meetings.

7.3. Exco Members have no executive powers within UJ.

7.4. Exco:

7.4.1. promotes a positive image/reputation of and respect for UJ;

7.4.2. fosters a sense of responsibility, obligation and accountability towards the University community in general and UJ as their "Alma Mater" in particular;

- 7.4.3. debates and states its opinion on any matter relating to the best interests of the University, in particular the Convocation, including matters referred to it by the Council, the Senate or the Institutional Forum;
- 7.4.4. identifies opportunities and risks that may impact positively/negatively on the Convocation or UJ;
- 7.4.5. identifies projects and participate in projects that promote the well-being and prosperity of the Convocation and UJ;
- 7.4.6. addresses any urgent matter prior to the next meeting of the Convocation; and
- 7.4.7. ensures effective and efficient operation of Exco by reviewing the functions and efficiency of Exco (and other Convocation committees if applicable) and by addressing any deficiencies accordingly.

## **8. Composition of Exco**

Exco consists of:

- 8.1. the President;
- 8.2. Deputy President;
- 8.3. three additional Convocation members elected by the Convocation;
- 8.4. the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (or representative appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal) (*ex-officio*);
- 8.5. the Registrar or Registrar's representative who acts as secretary (*ex-officio*);
- 8.6. the Alumni Relations Officer (*ex-officio*); and
- 8.7. the two representatives of the Convocation on Council, if not already elected as members of Exco, as contemplated in 8.1 to 8.3.

## **9. Meetings of Exco**

- 9.1. Meetings and meeting procedures are in accordance with the University's Rules for Effective meetings.

## **10. Eligibility and election of 1) Exco Members and 2) Convocation Members to serve on the Council**

- 10.1. The Convocation elects (in addition to the President and the Deputy President):
  - 10.1.1. the other members of the Exco (to make up the composition of Exco, together with the *ex-officio* members); and
  - 10.1.2. the two members of the Convocation to serve on the Council.
- 10.2. A Convocation Member is eligible to be elected by the Convocation as an Exco Member and/or a member of the Council if s/he:
  - 10.2.1. has been a member of Convocation for at least 5 years;
  - 10.2.2. is entitled to be appointed in a position of trust, including as a director in terms of the legislation regulating the governance of companies (including the stipulations of King IV); and
  - 10.2.3. meets the requirements as stipulated in the Policy on General Standards.
- 10.3. Members of the Convocation elected by the Convocation to serve on the Council must be external to UJ, i.e. not a current student of UJ or a current employee of UJ;
- 10.4. Convocation Members elected by the Convocation to serve on the Council shall also be members of the Exco.
- 10.5. The nomination and election of members to serve on Exco take place in accordance with the University's Policy on Nominations and Elections and the principles of good governance.
- 10.6. Nominations and elections are conducted via a secure online system.

## **11. Terms of office of members of the Executive Committee**

- 11.1. Exco Members who also serve on Council (by virtue of an election by Convocation), hold office as members of the Exco for the same period that they serve on Council (as determined by the UJ Statute).

11.2. All other elected office-bearers hold office for a period of three years.

11.3. Exco Members may be re-elected, subject to the provisions of the Statute.

## **12. Termination of membership and vacancies**

12.1. Membership of the Exco shall be terminated if an Exco Member:

12.1.1. resigns.

12.1.2. is absent from three consecutive meetings without tendering an apology to the secretary prior to the relevant meeting which is found acceptable at that meeting;

12.1.3. fails to or ceases to meet or comply with the stipulations of the Policy on General Standards; or

12.1.4. is found unfit by the Human Resources, Social and Ethics Committee of Council (HRSEC) to continue to be a member of the committee on the ground of conduct contrary to the letter and spirit of this Convocation Constitution (the HRSEC also has the power to impose a lesser sanction).

12.2. Apart from the President's and Deputy President's position, a position on Exco that becomes vacant within six months after the outcome of the election for the position, will be filled by the next candidate in accordance with the election results for the particular position and for the remainder of the term of the exiting member of Exco. If the vacancy arises after a six-month period, the vacancy will be filled by the normal process of nominations and elections, as per the Policy on Nominations and Elections.

## **PART D: GENERAL**

### **13. General principles of good governance**

Convocation Members and Exco:

13.1. are committed to the general principles of good governance, including transparency, accountability, institutional autonomy, communication, codetermination and institutional effectiveness;

- 13.2. are committed to realising the vision of the University by acting in accordance with UJ's mission and its core values;
- 13.3. acknowledge and support the key roles of the other internal organs/structures of UJ;
- 13.4. commit themselves to consciously refrain from acting outside their powers; and
- 13.5. act in accordance with the fiduciary duty and the duty of care and skill, including good faith that is owed to UJ.

#### **14. Amendments to the Constitution**

- 14.1. The Convocation Constitution forms part of the Rules. Council may grant, revoke or reassign to other structures or officials the authority to issue Rules.
- 14.2. Council approves a constitution for the Convocation as well as subsequent amendments to the Convocation Constitution:
  - 14.2.1. at the request of the Convocation expressed in a resolution:
    - 14.2.1.1. of which notice signed by the proposer and at least one seconder was submitted to the Registrar in writing at least twenty- one (21) days prior to the date of a meeting;
    - 14.2.1.2. supported by two-thirds of members present at a quorate meeting of the Convocation;
  - 14.2.2. in other instances after consultation with the Convocation, provided that for justifiable reasons Council may amend the Convocation Constitution temporarily without prior consultation with the Convocation, but which amendments will only become permanent after consultation with the Convocation.

#### **15. Dissolution**

- 15.1. Council may for justifiable reasons dissolve the Exco and appoint an interim Exco, with a composition as it may determine until the election of a new Exco in terms of the Convocation Constitution.

15.2. The Convocation is a legal structure in accordance with the Statute and may not be dissolved other than by amendment of the Statute.

## **16. Version Control**

- Approved by Convocation on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2009
- Aligned with UJ Statute by the Registrar 24 February 2011
- Aligned with UJ Statute 2012
- Amended at a Special Meeting of the Convocation 14 October 2014
- Amended at a Special General Meeting of the Convocation held 29 February 2016
- Amended in line with the Amended UJ Statute of 24 March 2017
- Amendments noted at the EXCO of Convocation meeting of 27 September 2017
- Amendments supported at the Council meeting of 14 June 2018
- Amendments approved by Council of 23 November 2018
- Amendments approved by Council on 23 June 2022, after consultation with Convocation