



University of South Africa

CHARTER ON TRANSFORMATION

PREAMBLE

We, the Council, Management, Staff and Students of the University of South Africa –

AFFIRM

that the context of transformation in Unisa is unprecedented political and social change following the advent of democracy in South Africa

ENDORISING

the need to:

- galvanize the university to help fulfil societal aspirations for a just, prosperous society as encapsulated in the Constitution
- provide equitable access to higher education institutions, programmes and knowledge
- redress previous injustices referred to in the Constitution and the Higher Education Act 1997, (Act 101 of 1997) based on race, gender, class and ethnicity, and
- provide scholarship and tuition aimed at social and human resource development that is socially responsive

ACKNOWLEDGING

the collective efforts of higher education in South Africa thus far, towards a more equitable dispensation

WE DECLARE THAT

Transformation is fundamental and purposeful advancement towards specified goals: individual, collective, cultural and institutional, aimed at high performance, effectiveness and excellence. It entails improvement and continuous renewal guided by justice and ethical action, and achievement of a state that is demonstrably beyond the original.

Individual and collective change requires regular and frequent introspection and self-critique to examine how assumptions and practices are expressive of and resonant with transformational goals.

Cultural change requires the creative disruption and rupture of entrenched ways of thinking, acting, relating and performing within the institution and a willingness to adapt.

Institutional change entails the reconfiguration of systems, processes, structures, procedures and capabilities to be expressive of transformational intent. Transformation is monitored, milestones agreed, progress evaluated and measured, with individual and collective accountability for clearly identified responsibilities.

Transformation is sponsored, driven and led by the Vice-Chancellor. It is also articulated and advocated by the entire institutional leadership.

Transformational leaders are to be found at all levels and in all sectors of the organization, not necessarily dependent on positional power. They are distinguished from mere actors by their insight into how things are in comparison to where they need to be, with the resolve and capability to act catalytically in pursuit of institutional and societal change imperatives, in the face of opposition, resistance and limited resources.

Transformation keeps us at the frontier as pathfinders: to find ever better and innovative ways of enriching the student experience, elaborating and building upon African epistemologies and philosophies, developing alternative knowledge canons, and advancing indigenous knowledge systems that ground us on the African continent, without averting our gaze from the global horizon.

WE COMMIT TO

constructing together a new DNA for Unisa, characterised by openness, scholarly tradition, critical thinking, self-reflection and the values of African cultures – openness, warmth, compassion, inclusiveness and community.

THIS WE SHALL ACCOMPLISH THROUGH

- **COMMUNICATION:** Ensuring shared meaning and promoting mutual understanding at all levels, by making explicit relevant decisions, actions, choices and events timeously and transparently
- **CONVERSATION:** Active participation in dialogue that transforms the relationship and narrows the scope of differences while enhancing understanding and empathy
- **CONSERVATION:** Preserving and utilising what is best from our legacy, making choices and decisions and taking actions in the present, which ensure a sustainable future
- **COMMUNITY:** The university staff, students and alumni cohering around our shared vision, aspirations and interests in the spirit of Ubuntu, while embracing diversity in its multiple forms
- **CONNECTION:** Reinvigorating stakeholder relations to find greater synergy, harmony and meeting of minds in pursuit of transformational goals
- **CARE:** Fostering a sense of belonging among the members of the Unisa community so that they feel accepted, understood, respected and valued
- **COLLEGIALITY:** Cultivating an ethos of professionalism, shared responsibility, mutual respect, civility and trust while understanding and acknowledging each other's competencies and roles
- **COMMITMENT:** Dedicating ourselves individually and collectively, to promoting and upholding the vision, goals and values of Unisa
- **CO-OPERATION:** Working together proactively and responsively towards the realisation of Unisa's goals and aspirations
- **CREATIVITY:** Nurturing an environment that is open and receptive to new ideas, that liberates potential and leads to imaginative and innovative thinking and action
- **CONSULTATION:** Taking into account, in good faith, the views, advice and contributions of appropriate stakeholders and individuals on relevant matters... and:

COURAGE to act, decide and make choices with conviction and resolution in the best interests of the Institution.

THIS PLEDGE WE MAKE, confident that the institutional climate we seek to create will free us from the shackles of our pasts in order that we may face the future with confidence, pride and dignity.

Signed this _____ day of _____