



Draft Minutes of an Annual General Meeting of Convocation held virtually on Saturday, 20 November 2021 via the MS Teams Platform

Present: 73 members as per the attendance register.

AGENDA ITEM NO. & TITLE	DECISION AND/OR SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION
<p>2. Welcome address by Convocation President, Mr Siyabonga Vezi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President welcomed all members present to the 2021 AGM. • The President acknowledged and indicated his appreciation to all members of CONVEX as well as all members who made the time to attend and be part of the AGM. • The President indicated that elections would be taking place to fill vacancies that had arisen with CONVEX. • He also advised that it was important to apprise members of what transpired during the 1st year of the newly elected CONVEX as well as reminding members that the Vice Chancellor would be making a presentation providing an update on DUT Matters. Members were advised that the contract of the Vice Chancellor was renewed for another

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr O Ntshulana <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members who raised objections to the adoption of the minutes were requested to indicate exactly what they were not agreeing to with regards to how the minutes were captured instead of speaking in broad terms. Members to indicate what the amendments were to be effected on the minutes.
4. Update on DUT Matters	
	<p>The Vice Chancellor, Professor Thandwa Mthembu, provided an update to the members of Convocation by presenting his report on DUT Matters titled ‘Snippets on DUT’ (Presentation attached), highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was not possible to provide a comprehensive view of DUT in 2021 in the time allocated to him. • The State of the University Address (SOUA) provides detailed information on what the university plans to do in the ensuing year. • The presentation will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ENVISION2030 ▪ DUT’s DNA and the DUT Way ▪ Key Challenges and Success (Highlights)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENVISION2030 – is a one page strategy map. The strategy is based on the idea of a balanced score card. Of the 4 perspectives, Stewardship, is the most fundamental one as it defines our character, our values and our principles indicating the way a new DUT should emerge. ENVISION2030 is about the right kind of people, with the right kind of principles and values and with the right kind of behaviours that are aligned to ENVISION2030. The systems and processes in place are to ensure the sustainability of the institution and the value-add should be seen in what is achieved in the broader society and ultimately contributing to improving lives and livelihoods. • DUT's DNA and the DUT Way - Are the values and principles that are to be embedded. The DNA has two strands captioned 'Innovative and Entrepreneurial: and "People-Centred and Engaged"'. The previous strategy emphasized student-centredness but it was felt that what was needed was to think broadly of all people. People are at the source of all that we do emphasizing the right people in the right seats doing their roles right. <p>Key Challenges and Successes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Living our 'values and principles'; embedding 'The DUT Way' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Magna Charta Observatory's (MCO) Living Values Methodology (LVM). ○ Moving towards ensuring that everybody fully understands what each of the values means.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have 'living values' charters that will define clearer, the behaviours that is expected of students, staff in general and management in particular. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformed leadership, management and staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DUT – Different, Upended, Transformed. A lot of transformation has taken place at the university. ▪ Sixty percent (60%) of the VC's direct executive reports are female, a preponderance of female directors appointed. ▪ 'Right' people in the 'right' seats and performing their roles 'right'. Thirty one (31) academics without Master's retrenched in August 2021. Ensuring the integrity of programmes at DUT and the quality of people who deliver these programmes are beyond reproach. The institution needs individuals with the highest qualification that increases DUT's reputation, outputs and quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum. • Stakeholder inertia and nostalgia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ co-determination, co-governance instead of cooperative governance, co-management. ▪ Still have a situation at DUT where staff still consider themselves former ML Sultan or Technikon Natal. ▪ In the past there was a lot of co-governance – there were situations in which unions exercised a lot of influence over management in respect of salary negotiations and influence over appointments to the university. This was not in keeping with the Higher Education Act of 1997.
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Systems and Processes

- Towards a new philosophy of education at DUT (Innovation and Entrepreneurship, PBL, Design Thinking, research approaches at UG)
 - Convocation would be pleased to note that DUT is pursuing a new philosophy of education – previously UoTs/Technikons prided themselves in producing graduates for the workplace. However that workplace has now dwindled. Now graduates are trained in such a way that they are adaptive to changes in the world and they will be in a position to initiate change around themselves, regions and possibly the world.

- Digital Environment
 - Looking at a new ERP system – when the new management came on board, many of the systems were manual. Moving away from manual to digital and automated systems.
 - Multi-modal teaching, learning and work
 - Online SRC Elections (moved from 6436 voters in 2018 to 13388 in 2021 – more than a 100% increase).
 - The digital environment and online systems has helped DUT improve significantly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institutional Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jettison the legacies of the merger, realign with ENVISION2030 and the multi-modal environment – there has not been an undertaking by the university to jettison the past and try and craft a new DUT. ○ Reviews of HR, ITSS (to be renamed ICTS), REM (Real Estate Management) to name a few. Looking into who within the current staff fits into the new structure. There may be individuals who do not fit within the structure and this would be a challenge at DUT in 2022. Management will go through the consultation process with the unions around these structures. <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial management ratios: sustainability principles for salary increases – DUT is in one of the healthiest financial positions even though government funding has dwindled. The budget for 2021 and 2022 has been reduced. Block grants and earmarked grants have been reduced. First tranche of funding was not received in April but in August 2021. ○ Resource Allocation Model (RAM) ○ From 3 to 7 months' salary coverage and working towards 12 months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long Term Spatial Plan: 2020 - 2040
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Turnaround in infrastructure and Maintenance backlogs ○ Systematic implementation of the spatial plan, most of it funded internally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green-compliant buildings ○ Towards off-grid renewable energy sources ○ Water harvesting <p>Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaged university <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ‘Transforming societies and economies; ‘contributing towards improving of lives and livelihoods. ○ Teaching-Learning and Research-innovation focusing on SDG’s and Agenda2063. ENVISION2030also aligns with the NDP2030. ○ Public webinars in response to July uprising and destruction of public and economic infrastructure. ▪ Innovation and entrepreneurship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Innobiz Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation launched on 4 November 2021. ○ Over 3500 students trained on entrepreneurship - 150 businesses in incubation, 45 student enterprises set up and running.
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- Transient Impacts
 - Many awards to DUT (Times Higher Education World University rankings) top 500 in the world ; top 5 in South Africa, the Innovate Durban 2021 Youth innovation challenge, winning over UKZN in the province.
 - DUT's model for innovation and entrepreneurship will be implemented by the EDHE in 10 other universities in South Africa in 2022, UCT included.

Questions & Comments:

The following questions and comments were raised following Professor Mthembu's presentation:

Q: Huge improvement on the gender representation at the university. Is there a plan to accommodate young individuals at the institution to have a generational mix and to have succession planning?

A: One must understand the type of environment we are in and manage the business of the university which is teaching and learning.

Generational Mix: think about encouraging more of the young individuals to be interested in academia and go up through to the highest qualification the university requires. Consider inviting the DVC:RIE, Directors of Research and TTI to address young individuals on opportunities available at DUT.

	<p>Q: Could the Vice Chancellor include inputs made by graduates in his SOUA?</p> <p>Additionally, alumni that have graduated many years ago could now be very successful and financially secure and such individuals could assist with some of the challenges that students face.</p> <p>A: Convocation is represented on Council, which is the ultimate body that deals with policies of the university. Convocation, through its representatives on the various structures, can could put forth a number of ideas on any aspect of the university operations.</p> <p>Well-monied individuals – the Inyathelo report provides an insight into how well the different universities are doing with regards to alumni contributions. The information at hand indicates that alumni giving is low. There is an expectation from alumni that the university must keep on giving . DUT is not a profit making institution. The university relies on government grants. DUT needs support from its alumni instead of members of Convocation always thinking that the university must give back. It is the graduates that must give back for the sake of the sustainability of the university for future generations.</p> <p>The President further added that alumni be the ones to identify businesses that could support DUT and that the Vice Chancellor was always willing to avail himself to meet with such individuals. The President thanked the Vice Chancellor for the update on DUT.</p> <p>(The Vice Chancellor left the meeting, wishing members well during the AGM).</p> <p>Additional Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt that the Vice Chancellor’s presentation is always rushed due to time allocation. He had raised a number of issues that were of interest to alumni and who had wished to
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	<p>engage with the Vice Chancellor in terms of making follow-ups and contributions following his presentation. It was suggested that the Advancement and Alumni relations Office liaise with the Vice Chancellor on the matters that were raised after he had left the meeting. Part of the follow-up was related to his report from 2020 and his update on under Systems and Processes on issues related to projects at DUT that were estimated to cost R475m in both Durban and Pietermaritzburg. These projects were indicated as being completed in 201. Additionally, the renovations to residences amounted to R40m and was also expected to be completed in 2021. It was expected that the Vice Chancellor would have touched on these matters as they are aimed at increasing efficiency. There have also been delays to the completion of projects. What was the reason for the delays and what would delays cost the university?</p>
5. Report from the President of Convocation	
	<p>The President presented his report for 2021 (report attached), highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the President's report is to provide an update to members on the activities and events of the Executive Committee of Convocation as well as Advancement & Alumni Relations in 2021 since the last AGM held virtually on Saturday, 21 November 2020. • COVID 19 - The year has not been an easy one due to COVID-19, having to acclimatize to the new normal has made life a challenge. • The President noted that it even with the new normal of having to go virtual and the resistance from some members with regards to a virtual AGM, it was possible to convene the AGM to provide feedback to members on what has transpired during the year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AGM was being held virtually as correspondence from the university was received discouraging engagements on a face to face basis. The President appealed to members to embrace the new normal. He indicated that even with the covid numbers declining it was still important for members to continue being vigilant. • He further indicated that the numbers of alumni attending the virtual AGM has been very positive as compared to previous face to face AGMs where the turnout was poor. • CONVEX Meetings – CONVEX managed to hold 4 fully quorate meetings for 2021. The first meeting included an induction as well as members being presented with a code of conduct. The President thanked fellow CONVEX members for ensuring that the meetings took place and were able to share ideas. A number of members were elected in 2020 and had had to adjust to what was expected of them. • Governance Structures – Convocation has 3 representatives on Council who were elected in 2020 and thus began their 4-year term of office at the 2020 AGM. There are 2 representatives on the Institutional Forum who will be serving a 3 year term ending in 2023. • The President emphasized that attendance to these meetings by the relevant representatives was crucial. • Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of Convocation (Election of Vice President) – At the AGM of 2020, there were amendments to the Constitution that were recommended and were supposed to have served at Council for approval. However, these recommendations on the Constitution have not yet been approved by Council as this coincided with the review of the DUT Statutes in which Convocation is cited. There were areas in the Constitution that was in contradiction to the Statute as it related to the election of the Vice President of Convocation. The Constitution states that the Vice President is to
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	<p>be elected at the first meeting of CONVEX following the AGM. Following the review of the Statutes, Council resolved that Convocation amend the Constitution to reflect what is in the Statute ie. The Vice President is to be elected at the AGM of Convocation. As Council is the highest decision making body, it is within its rights from time to time to make such directives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed Amendments to the Rules for Convocation - Following the last AGM, there was a need to amend the Rules of Convocation. The documents were circulated with the notice of the AGM. Inputs and comments were to have reached the office by 5 November 2021. The office had advised that no comments were received. These amendments to the Rules for Convocation will assist in streamlining the execution of the AGM and Convocation matters in general. • Sub-committee to look into the Graduate Economic Participation Framework – a sub-committee was formed to look into the Graduate Economic Participation Framework which was initiated by alumni in 2020. There has been engagement with university management in this regard and proposing policies that needed to be reviewed by the university. This is work in progress. • Taking forward ENVISION2030 – Convocation has continuously engaged on this matter in particular with regard to entrepreneurship. The Task team that continued the work on this initiative was the Vice President of Convocation, Ms A Shabangu and Convex member, Dr Zamokuhle Mbandlwa. Some input has been made in this regard and going forward more should be achieved. • 2021 Activities & Initiatives
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DUT Connect Online Platform – have a presence on the DUT Connect Online Platform with a number of subscribers on the platform. The President encouraged alumni to market the platform and get alumni to register on the platform for maximum benefit of alumni. ▪ Bursaries and Student Financial Assistance – The Advancement and Alumni Relations Office continues to contribute towards these initiatives. Additionally the office supports the Phakimpilo Programme. An amount of R250 000 was transferred to the programme. The President highlighted that the amount of R3.835 961.37 was a drop compared to the amount allocated to assist students in 2020. Covid-19 has largely been responsible for the drop in donor funding. The President made a clarion call to alumni to assist in identifying and securing businesses to support the university. He reiterated the sentiment of the Vice Chancellor that Convocation must outward instead of inward looking. The President challenged alumni to donate to these initiatives or assist by making the necessary introductions to individuals that could provide support to the university. ▪ DUT Connect Alumni Magazine – The magazine received a bronze award at the MACE Excellence Awards held in July 2021. The President indicated that he would like to see more alumni profiled in the magazine. He requested that alumni contact the office to suggest who could be profiled. ▪ DUT Alumni Mentorship and Alumni Engagement Webinars – A number of webinars were hosted during 2021 to assist graduates with tips and preparing them for the workplace.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Media – The President advised that the numbers didn’t look too encouraging. Encouraged alumni to tag alumni pages to increase the social media footprint. The numbers on LinkedIn however were encouraging. ▪ Updating of Information – members were encouraged to continue updating their details so as to be kept informed of developments and receive communication. ▪ Challenges – Related to Covid-19. With the exception of the meeting in march 2021, all other CONVEX meetings have been held virtually. Issues of connectivity have hampered meetings. The issue of instilling a sense of philanthropy amongst alumni remains a challenge. The President encouraged alumni to be outward looking and see how they could assist the university. ▪ Concluding Remarks – The President thanked the members for the opportunity to have served Convocation for almost 10 years (in his capacity as a Council representative and then as President of Convocation). Convocation has transformed into a highly respected body at the university. He thanked CONVEX members for the respect afforded to him and the opportunity to lead. He wished members well during their term of office and thanked those members that had not been re-elected for their dedication and valuable contribution to Convocation and DUT. The President advised that he will always avail himself and remain a participating member of Convocation. <p>Comments and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President was thanked for the report covering the progress and work done by CONVEX. He was also thanked for his leadership.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report was short and precise. The President was reminded that in his conclusion he indicated that he will still fully participate in the affairs of Convocation even after his term as President has ended. It was expected that previous leaders would still participate in the activities of Convocation. <p>Additional Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda for the AGM was not adopted. Elections were proceeding without the adoption of the Constitution. A suggestion was made to temporarily halt the election process until a decision was taken to either adopt the Constitution or not. The question arose as to which Constitution was being used. A decision was also needed as to whether to accept the amendment relating to the election of the Vice President as instructed by Council. Amendments that are made will be checked against the university statute and other relevant policies of the university before it is approved. This matter raised a point of exigency. • Queries were raised by members who had received the Voter keys and IDs well in advance to when elections were to take place. • Concerns were raised of members' hands being raised and not being acknowledged. • NRF related concerns – Concerns relating to foreign students benefiting from NRF funding. A request was made to the Advancement and Alumni Relations Office to look into the matter. • Employment at DUT – concerns relating to foreign students being prioritised and receiving work contracts. South African DUT students are only being employed as tutors having to complete a claim form for payment.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President's report did not speak on serious matters that concern graduates or refer to the operations of the university. • Issues were raised with the office of the DVC but through the hierarchy referred back to Convocation. Questions were raised regarding the Procurement policy of the university that should benefit alumni. Alumni have made many proposals but these have become stagnant with no feedback. • Concerns were raised about staff employment being terminated due to not having the necessary qualifications ie. A Master's degree. • On a point of exigency, the President was requested to make a ruling on the election of office bearers. The President requested the DUT Statute to be screened and informed members of Clause 36.2 which states "The president and vice president are elected at the annual general meeting of convocation by secret ballot, from the nominations received and hold office for a period of three years'. The DUT Statute was approved by the Minister of Higher Education in January 2012. • CONVEX to consider holding at least 2 consultative meetings prior to the AGM to discuss matters of concern. <p>Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards to the Vice Chancellor's report in 2020 relating to systems and processes, CONVEX, would engage with the Vice Chancellor on these matters. He is always willing to make time to engage with the various stakeholders. CONVEX would seek clarity from the Vice Chancellor's office in relation to what was presented in 2020, financial impact and delays in projects.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment relating to the election of the Vice President was discussed and the amendment submitted, however, Council instructed Convocation to amend the Constitution. The structures within the university must be respected even if not in agreement. The matter relating to the election of the Vice President is reflected in the 2012 approved DUT statutes. • With regards to the agenda of the AGM, the agenda was circulated timeously and no further additions were received by the office. • Members with hands raised will be acknowledged. At the 2020 AGM members were asked to use the chat facility whilst the 2021 AGM has allowed members to raise hands should they have a question or comment. • The issue of members receiving their voter keys and ID. The system being used for elections is Election Runner. Alumni who have RSVP'd would have received emails with their voter keys and IDs as their RSVP served as registration. The emails were sent out in advance as it is not possible to envisage the exact time that elections would take place. Votes submitted would only be counted once at the end of the voting session. • Convocation/CONVEX has made significant inroads at the university in persuading the recruitment process of the university. • The President takes the criticism with regards to the report not covering all aspects of university operations that alumni would have like to hear about. However, the new CONVEX team has made significant inroads. The SCM policy of the university was reviewed and adopted by Council in September 2021 which was influenced by Convocation. • Dismissal of staff – the process of staff requested to obtain their Master's degree began in 2008.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards to the request of physical meetings, there might not be sufficient numbers as attendance in the past to physical AGMs were poor with difficulty in obtaining a quorum of 30 people. Need to move with the times. Attendance via the virtual AGMs has been more positive. • Amendments to the Constitution and Rules for Convocation do not become effective at this AGM. They would need to first be approved by Council. • It is not a good idea to abandon the AGM but the President will be guided by the office. • NRF Funding – The office will follow up with the DVC:RIE to ascertain if DUT is prioritising foreign students . However, it must be noted that there are higher number of foreign PhD students compared to South African PhD students. • Employment of foreign students – The office to consult with HR on this matter. • There has a lot of confusion and disagreement around the elections. Members could propose that the elections be deferred to a Special AGM as members must not be seen as being forced to vote. • It was noted that there are gaps in the Rules and these are being attended to by engaging with convocants at this AGM. • As the Chairperson, the President is duty bound to follow the rules as they are however also noting that he has to consider the sentiments of this constituency. There was no draft constitution that was being utilised at the AGM. • Members could decide at this AGM whether or not to take the directive from Council with regards to the election of the Vice President of Convocation and petition Council on this matter. However members to note that Council will be within its rights to disband Convocation.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the request from the President regarding being advised on halting the AGM, the Secretary to Convocation advised the President that the office was not aware of any clause or provision that spoke to the termination of a scheduled AGM. The President has the authority to adjourn the meeting for reasons of exigency and reconvene at a later date. The Secretary further advised that the Rules and Constitution have been followed accordingly. <p>Resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the concerns around the election and calls for the meeting to be adjourned, the President announced that the AGM would adjourn following the conclusion of Item 5 of the agenda - “Report of the President of Convocation”. A Special AGM to be convened with the continuation of the agenda from Item 6 “Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of Convocation (Election of the Vice President of Convocation)”. Mr Vezi to continue holding office as the President of Convocation until the Special AGM. The current membership to continue as such until the Special AGM.
6. Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting adjourned at 21h53.

Read and confirmed on this ----- day of ----- 2022

President of Convocation