

JOB DESCRIPTION

REFERENCE NUMBER:	AP1147
JOB TITLE:	Vice-Chancellor and Principal (5 Year – Fixed Term) (P1)
LOCATION:	uMthatha
BACKGROUND TO POSITION:	The Vice-Chancellor and Principal is the chief executive and academic officer of the University and reports to and is accountable to the University Council. The incumbent will provide strategic leadership and overall management of the University's academic, research, financial, operational, and administrative functions to ensure excellence in teaching and learning, cutting-edge research and innovation, student success, financial sustainability, transformation, and community engagement. The University seeks a candidate who possesses a deep understanding of the institution's current context and has the capability to ensure that it retains its premier position in the Eastern Cape. The ideal candidate should inspire a culture of accountability across all levels. With firmness, integrity, and resolve, they will lay the groundwork for Walter Sisulu University's bold transformation into its future as an 'impactful, technology infused African university'. This leader will enjoy the confidence and support of stakeholders, fostering collaboration and a shared commitment to repositioning the University to address its challenges and seize emerging opportunities. Above all, the candidate will provide strong and decisive leadership in the pursuit of excellence in teaching, learning, research, and innovation, and ensuring that the University's work transforms lives, communities, and the nation. The purpose for the position is to: • Lead the strategic direction, positioning, and growth of the University in line with its vision, mission, and values. • Provide inspirational leadership in academic excellence, research output, innovation, and student-centred development. • Drive institutional transformation, inclusivity, and social justice in accordance with the

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- principles of the Constitution of South Africa.
- Ensure sound governance, good financial management, financial sustainability and fundraising, and compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, and university policies.
- Strengthen partnerships with government, industry, communities, and international stakeholders to enhance the University's impact.
- Promote a high-performance, ethical, and collaborative organisational culture across all campuses.
- The marketing of Walter Sisulu University to the national and international community in order to create academic and investment interest.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

KPA 1) Strategic Leadership

Provide visionary, future-focused leadership to position the University for long-term sustainability and excellence, ensuring alignment with the institutional strategic plan and national higher education priorities.

- Develop, communicate, and execute strategic priorities in line with Council-approved strategic plan.
- Demonstrate measurable progress against institutional strategic objectives.
- Ensure effective alignment of faculty/department plans with institutional goals.
- Produce quarterly and annual strategic performance reports for Council and stakeholders.

KPA 2) Academic and Research Leadership

Lead and promote excellence in teaching, learning, research, innovation, and community engagement to enhance academic reputation and social impact.

- Improve student success, throughput, and graduation rates in line with targets.
- Increase research outputs, citations, and innovation initiatives.
- Strengthen quality assurance and accreditation compliance.
- Expand research funding, collaborations, and postgraduate enrolments.

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KPA 3) Institutional Transformation and Management

Drive institutional transformation, equity, and inclusivity, ensuring efficient management of resources, systems, and process.

- Implement transformation plans in line with Employment Equity targets and social inclusion commitments.
- Enhance organisational culture through staff engagement and climate surveys.
- Improve operational efficiency through process optimisation.
- Achieve diversity and representative targets at all levels.

KPA 4) Sound Governance and Financial Sustainability

Uphold governance standards, legislative compliance, financial stewardship to ensure sustainability and accountability.

- Ensure compliance with the Higher Education Act, institutional statutes, and Council policies.
- To report through and is accountable to Council on all matters pertaining Walter Sisulu University.
- Submit accurate financial reports within statutory deadlines.
- Achieve clean or unqualified audit outcomes.
- Maintain balanced budgets with efficient cost controls and diversified revenue streams.

KPA 5) Student Governance and Support

Provide effective leadership in student governance, welfare, and support systems to ensure a conducive learning environment and strong student engagement

- Strengthen student support services (academic, wellness, disability, financial aid).
- Ensure functional SRC and student governance structures in line with policy.
- Improve student satisfaction ratings in annual surveys.
- Reduce student-related conflicts through proactive engagement.

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KPA 6) Public Relations and Brand Enhancement

Enhance the University's profile, reputation, and positioning nationally and internationally through strategic communication and brand management

- Increase positive media coverage and stakeholder perceptions.
- Maintain brand consistency across platforms and events.
- Promote institutional achievements, research breakthroughs, and community impact.
- Grow alumni engagement and public trust.

KPA 7) Stakeholder Engagement

Build and maintain strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including government, industry, alumni, communities, and higher education bodies

- Establish and maintain formal partnerships and collaborations.
- Secure stakeholder support for institutional projects and initiatives.
- Participate in national and regional higher education forums.
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes from stakeholder engagement efforts.

STAKEHOLDER LIAISON:

- Liaison with internal stakeholders i.e. Chairperson of Council, Council, Executive Committee of Council, Council and University appointed committees, Senate, Senex, Executive Management Committee, Deans, Divisional / Departmental Heads, Staff and Students.
- Liaison with external stakeholders i.e. other tertiary institutions, Government Offices – Department of Higher Education, Finance Institutions, Donors and Potential Donors and Convocation.

COMPETENCIES:

- Visionary leadership with the ability to inspire and unite diverse stakeholders.
- Exceptional communication, negotiation, and diplomatic skills.
- Strong financial acumen and the ability to drive institutional sustainability.
- Strong managerial and business management skills.
- High levels of integrity, ethical conduct, and

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- accountability.
- Resilience, adaptability, and the ability to lead through change.
- Emotional intelligence and political sensitivity.
- Management of complexity and ambiguity.
- Risk management.
- Corporate governance.

INHERENT CRITERIA:

Minimum Qualification(s)

- Doctoral degree.
- Qualification in management, business and finance will be an added advantage.

Minimum Experience

- An outstanding academic, with an established track record in the academic environment, and a minimum of 10 years' experience in a senior leadership position in a university/institution of higher learning, with knowledge in operations, financial management and strong academic leadership.
- Demonstrated academic achievement, with a substantial track record in teaching, research, and scholarly publications.
- Extensive experience in strategic planning, resource management, governance, and stakeholder engagement.
- Demonstrated commitment to transformation, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- A deep understanding of the South African higher education landscape, challenges, and opportunities.
- A proven track record of sound financial management; good governance; strategic, motivational and decisive leadership; ability to navigate, mitigate and manage risk; while envisioning and implementing change.
- A strategic visionary with compelling interpersonal talents, particularly in the framework of effective communication and influence.

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APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- A letter of motivation showing how you meet the requirements.
- A comprehensive CV.
- An abridged CV.
- Names and contact details for at least 3 referees.
- Walter Sisulu University's job application form.
- Certified copies of matric and degree certificates and Identity Document.
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To apply please forward your application quoting reference number **AP1147** to Genevieve Michel c/o shireen1147@talenting.co.za

"Walter Sisulu University is committed to employment equity and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply"