

JOB DESCRIPTION

REFERENCE NUMBER: AP1162

JOB TITLE: Executive Dean (Fixed-Term)

LOCATION: Potchefstroom Campus

BACKGROUND TO POSITION: Reporting to the Senior DVC: Teaching and Learning, the Executive Dean serves as the executive leader and accountable head of the Faculty of Engineering, responsible for strategically positioning and transforming the Faculty as a cohesive, unitary entity distinguished by academic excellence, research impact, innovation, and a sustained commitment to societal and industry advancement within the broader framework of a unitary NWU.

- As the executive leader and accountable manager, to transform and position the Faculty of Engineering as a unitary, future-oriented Faculty of distinguished academic and professional excellence, committed to transformation, inclusivity, and societal impact within a unitary NWU.
- To set a compelling strategic direction aligned to NWU's institutional strategy and emerging global engineering and technology trends, including digital transformation, artificial intelligence, sustainable engineering, smart infrastructure, and industry 4.0 advancements.
- To elevate the Faculty's academic and research profile by:
 - Advancing cutting-edge engineering research and innovation;
 - Strengthening postgraduate throughput and doctoral supervision capacity;
 - Promoting interdisciplinary, industry-relevant, and application-driven scholarship;
 - Expanding third-stream income through funded research, innovation initiatives, commercialization, and strategic partnerships.
- To foster strong strategic partnerships with industry, government, and professional bodies, positioning the Faculty as a preferred partner for engineering innovation, skills development, and technology transfer in South Africa and beyond.

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KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Strategy Development

- Develop faculty strategy, implement the NWU strategy in the faculty, taking account of its multi-campus nature and national imperatives.
- Co-determine and be jointly accountable for the successful implementation of the NWU Teaching and Learning strategy and the Research and Innovation strategy.
- Co-determine, develop and be jointly accountable for successful implementation of the overall NWU strategy.
- Develop, continuously refine, and execute a Faculty Strategy that translates the NWU Institutional Strategy into a differentiated, high-impact Faculty roadmap, considering the Faculty's multi-campus configuration, resource profile, transformation imperatives, and national priorities in higher education.
- Provide strategic coherence across campuses, ensuring academic programme alignment, elimination of duplication, optimal resource utilisation, and harmonised standards of academic excellence within a unitary NWU framework.
- Co-determine and be jointly accountable for the successful implementation of the NWU Teaching & Learning Strategy and the Research & Innovation Strategy, ensuring:
 - Alignment of programme offerings with market and societal demand
 - Growth in postgraduate throughput and supervision capacity
 - Improvement in research productivity, impact, and funding diversification
 - Integration of digital, blended, and AI-enabled pedagogies.
 - Embed strategy into operational execution, by:
 - Translating strategic priorities into measurable annual faculty performance plans
 - Setting clear lead and lag indicators aligned to NWU dashboards
 - Ensuring disciplined monitoring, risk management, and corrective action.
 - Drive strategic differentiation and positioning, identifying niche areas of academic strength and emerging growth opportunities to enhance the Faculty's national and global competitiveness.
- Integrate transformation and Employment Equity targets into strategic planning, ensuring representativity, pipeline development (Masters/PhD

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progression), and leadership succession within the Faculty.

- Build a performance and accountability culture, where strategy is not aspirational but measurable, transparent, and embedded in leadership KPAs.

2. Teaching and Learning

- Lead and direct teaching and learning practices, processes and competencies that achieve academic excellence as well as teaching and learning innovation.
- Support the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to promote teaching and learning innovation.
- Continuous curriculum renewal delivering socially responsive and programmes that are congruent with national imperatives.
- Lead and direct effective academic planning to deliver flagship programmes that provide competitive advantage to the NWU.
- Lead and direct effective enrolment planning to ensure optimal enrolment levels in various academic fields, qualification levels and modes of delivery.
- Aligned academic programmes and aligned modes of delivery on all campuses.
- Lead quality assurance of academic programmes to ensure academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.
- Professional qualifications to meet minimum standards set by professional bodies.
- Direct the integration of research outputs into teaching and learning to enhance professional qualifications and graduate employability.
- Ensure preparation of students for post-graduate research programmes where relevant.
- Consistent achievement of superior teaching and learning metrics.
- Financially strengthening, third-stream revenue that consistently enhances the financial sustainability of the NWU.

3. Research and Innovation

- Establish and maintain a research environment and support infrastructure enabling world-class research.
- Implement inter- and trans-disciplinary research that differentiates the NWU nationally and internationally.
- Lead, direct and participate in national and

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international collaboration addressing NWU niche research areas.

- Ensure research outputs and quality of notable international profile and impact.
- Lead and direct flagship research entities that provide competitive advantage to the NWU.
- Clustering research and innovation appropriately around agreed research themes focusing on national and international imperatives.
- Lead and direct fundamental research, applied research, research in application, curiosity-driven research, blue skies research and directed research.
- Facilitate differentiation and third-stream revenue generation through innovation and commercialisation.

4. Community Engagement

- Lead and direct community engagement initiatives that are integrated with teaching and learning as well as research.
- Participate in community engagement initiatives with joint accountability.

5. External Strategic Relationships

- Funding, professional recognition, academic development, employment, research opportunity realisation through effective local and international relationships with peers, higher education institutions, research community, industry, professional bodies and the community.
- NWU Brand positioning and promotion with joint accountability through effective relationships with national and local government, the community, industry, students, parents and alumni and other stakeholders.

6. People Management and Development

Academic Excellence & Talent Stewardship

- Build and sustain a cohort of academics of superior standing, demonstrated scholarship, and high research and teaching performance aligned to NWU's strategic priorities.
- Drive the recruitment, retention, and progression of high-calibre academic talent across campuses.

Faculty Leadership & Management Capability

- Appoint, develop, and hold accountable senior

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faculty managers (e.g., Deputy Deans, School Directors, Research Leaders) to ensure best-practice people leadership, operational discipline, and performance execution.

Employment Equity & Transformation Leadership

- Lead the development and execution of the Faculty Employment Equity Plan aligned to institutional and sectoral targets.
- Improve representativity across academic and support staff levels, with specific focus on black academics, black women, and persons with disabilities.

People Profile & Workforce Planning (Joint Accountability)

- Co-determine and actively manage the faculty's people profile (staff and students across all delivery modes), ensuring alignment to enrolment plans, research intensity, funding realities, and institutional affordability.

Staff Development & Performance Management

- Implement best-practice staff development systems, including mentorship, leadership development, early-career academic support, and structured succession planning.

Management and Leadership

- Faculty composition (structure, staffing), effectiveness and efficiency.
- Schools and Research entities (sub-units) team composition and effectiveness joint accountability.
- Joint accountability with leadership team for management effectiveness of the institution.
- Joint accountability with own team for faculty effectiveness, including governance and management arrangements.
- Stakeholder relationship development and effectiveness.
- Corporate governance conformance, reporting and risk management.
- Budgeting, cost management and cost-effectiveness
- Faculty processes and systems design, utilisation, effectiveness and efficiency.
- Personal effectiveness, wholeness and development.
- Values-based behaviour leadership and personal compliance.

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KEY FUNCTIONAL/TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES:

- In-depth knowledge of the South African Higher Education system, policies, and governance frameworks.
- Strong strategic planning and implementation capability within a multi-campus environment.
- Advanced understanding of curriculum design, accreditation, and quality assurance processes.
- Expertise in academic planning, enrolment management, and performance measurement.
- Proficiency in research governance, ethics, and innovation management across disciplines.
- Ability to manage the research–innovation–commercialisation value chain.
- Sound knowledge of people management, talent development, and succession planning in academia.
- Competence in institutional governance, risk management, and compliance.
- Management accounting, budgeting, and financial oversight proficiency.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- High level of digital and information systems literacy to support academic and operational excellence.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A Doctoral degree in Engineering (NQF level 10).
- Membership of appropriate academic and professional networks.
- Professional registration with ECSA.
- A minimum of ten (10) years' management experience.
- Specialist teaching and learning or research experience.
- Significant experience in higher education.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- A letter of motivation stating clearly how you satisfy the requirements of the position
- A comprehensive CV
- An abridged CV
- A list of accredited research output and/or a portfolio of your creative work
- Names and full contact details for at least 3 referees
- Certified copies of matric and degree certificates and Identity Document
- Proof of registration with professional bodies

To apply please forward your application quoting reference number **AP1162** to Genevieve Michel c/o carmen1162@talenting.co.za

Incomplete applications will not be considered!