



1ST
EDITION

**DUT**
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INYOVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE

DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
PEOPLE & OPERATIONS

People & Operations NEWSLETTER

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: PEOPLE & OPERATIONS

Dr David Matheakuena Mohale

Let me take this opportunity to welcome all members of the DUT community and thank you in advance for taking the time to read the first ever People and Operations Newsletter. The newsletter is a timely intervention, taking into account a combination of the University's opportunities, risks and challenges. I hope that you will enjoy the content and we look forward to receiving your feedback for purposes of continuous and sustained improvements.

September 2026 marks my 20th year as a professional. I was just over 20 years old when I started my first full-time job as a Communications Officer.

Over the years, I have read thousands of pages on subjects including leadership, management, governance, organisations and teams. Given my background in politics, I must also add ideology to that list. While ideology is inherently subjective and divisive, its usefulness lies in helping us to understand why people behave in a particular way.

My own orientation on leadership and management is inspired by dominant ideas I would have imbibed over the years. Two, in particular, stand out and I consciously try to align my thinking



and behaviour with them. The first has to do with the question once posed by the former State President, Kgalema Motlanthe, to a workshop where I was a participant: “For what am I what I am?” For purposes of our context, let me paraphrase: “For what am I a DUT employee?” “For what am I the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations (acting)”?

My second lesson also draws from politics. On the occasion of our induction as newly elected members of a provincial structure, the presenter asked us a pointed question: “What gap did you identify before your election?”

I have always asked myself these two questions to inform both my approach to and outlook on leadership. The answers to these questions are important as they help us to think deeper about our unique individual contribution to the implementation of organisational strategy.

The clarity and simplicity of strategy alone do not determine organisational success. Ultimately, people matter.

This explains our philosophical position as DUT that our people are the source of everything that happens. People can be the source of progress, stagnation and at worst, regression.

When I accepted the delegation to act as the DVC: People and Operations, my innermost voice had to grapple with these two questions. Having been a member of the Executive Management Committee for over nine years, I had a fair picture of the state of DUT. With this understanding and knowledge, I knew from

the very beginning that while we have made significant progress since the implementation of ENVISION2030, I was fully aware that soft issues remained and continue to remain among our biggest challenges.

In my first meeting with the heads of business units within the People and Operations Division, I proposed that for 2027, we single out Distinctive Education as our organising focal point. This did not suggest that the other Strategic Objectives are any less important. People and Operations is essentially about support. Distinctive Education is about the creation of “a compelling and future-oriented living and learning environment.” The realisation of this ideal will ensure that members of staff and students join DUT by design and not by default. The pursuit of this Strategic Objective has direct responsibilities for all ambits under People and Operations:

HUMAN CAPITAL SERVICES

The unit is our alpha regarding our recruitment process. How our officials carry themselves, from the first interaction with candidates, including inviting them to an interview, is important. They mirror our values and principles. Any little deviation may deter the prospective employee from joining us. HCS is also responsible for facilitating humane and compassionate exit of staff members. Thus, the manner in which a staff member is treated when they leave the University may either boost or harm our reputation through word of mouth.

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT

REM is responsible for the creation of livable spaces for our staff and students. A new staff member expects to arrive at an office that is ready and conducive to supporting performance. A new student from a far-flung rural community in South Africa is expecting to be housed in a clean, safe and habitable residence. They look forward to being impressed by the state-of-the-art smart lecture hall and laboratory. They expect sporting amenities that will enhance their holistic development and growth. Our students expect that buses will run daily and on time, for their lectures and other University activities, either on our campuses or at residences.

PROTECTION SERVICES

None of us can fully embrace the concept of a living and learning environment if our campuses, offices, residences and other spaces are not safe and secure. Protection Services is responsible for this function while respecting the important principle of privacy.

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

IPME is the heartbeat of DUT. It is the custodian of university plans. A well-developed and clearly articulated strategy gives DUT a competitive edge, strengthens our reputation and provides staff and students with compelling reasons to choose DUT by design.

ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT

There is an adage that says, “To live is to risk dying”. Our quality and beautiful plans notwithstanding, the reality of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity requires that we must reinforce our institutional integrity to protect and defend the academic project. Examples abound and are not limited to Covid-19, the July 2021 unrest and the frequent floods that often result in damage to our infrastructure.

LEGAL SERVICES

Another daily risk we grapple with is litigation. Sometimes we are wronged and we need to initiate litigation. This unit supports all University departments and ambits with legal expertise to safeguard DUT’s legal interests.

MIDLANDS CAMPUSES

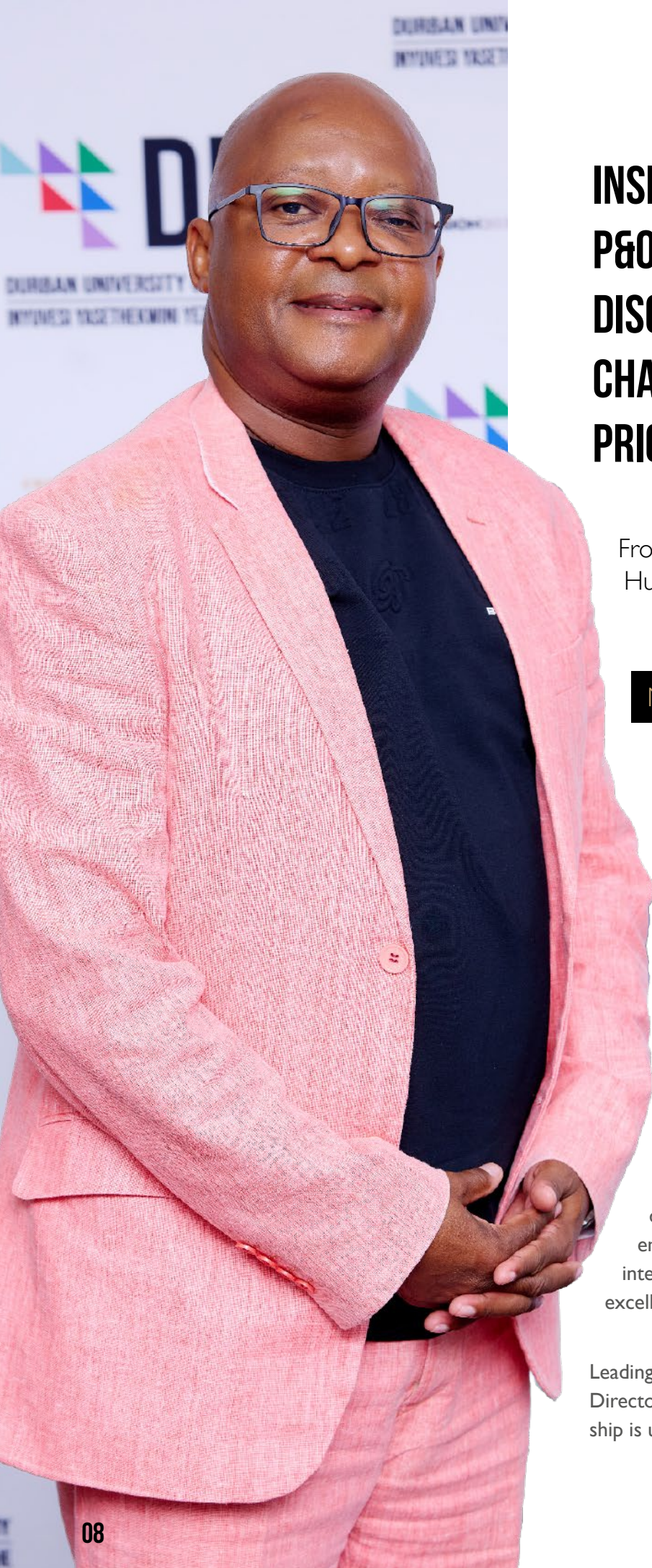
The University comprises seven campuses. We have the duty of care to ensure that staff and students experience the same standard of service and support across DUT, regardless of the campus at which they are based.

With our collective commitment to contribute towards the creation of a compelling and future-oriented living and learning environment, we decided to introduce new initiatives:

- A quarterly People and Operations Newsletter to clarify the value proposition of this Division, communicate plans and activities transparently and honestly and report on achievements and challenges, in our effort to engender accountability;
- Revamp our induction and orientation programmes for new staff members across the University;
- Implementation of timely consequence management to ensure that we do not tolerate sub-cultures and practices that are inimical to DUT's culture of a shared responsibility and accountability;
- A welcome function for new staff members by the People and Operations leadership and a celebratory event for staff members and interns who graduated in 2026;
- Intentional, purposeful, regular teambuilding activities to ensure a cohesive, performing and accountable P&O Division that supports the entire University; e.g. the P&O Spring Day celebration was one such initiative, bringing colleagues together to connect and enjoy time with one another;
- Innovative and ongoing policy workshops to ensure that policies and SOPs bring life into the University instead of being stored on SharePoint;
- An aggressive recruitment drive to ensure that P&O units are fully capacitated for optimal service delivery;
- Implemented a focused campaign that successfully reduced audit findings;
- Expanded the leadership training programme to include a number of managers and senior managers across the University;
- Piloted the Young Workers Webinar in recognition that DUT's sustainability is not only about resources but also, about creating a culture that values its younger workforce;
- Implemented the first phase of the qualification verification exercise for members of Executive and Senior Management to safeguard the integrity of both the academic project and the commitment to having the right people in the right positions, performing the appropriate roles;
- The institutional lecture on DUT culture and how a culture of excellence could be leveraged as we prepare for the final phase of ENVISION2030, the Transformed Phase.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all P&O unit heads for their unwavering support since I assumed leadership of the portfolio. I wish to thank all members of staff for their enthusiasm and commitment to serve DUT energetically and loyally.

Lastly, my hearty thanks to my Secretary, Mrs T Hlengwa, for being the reliable pillar. I also thank Ms N Sukazi for embracing the idea of the newsletter and delivering it within the agreed-upon timeline. I also thank Mr K Mthembu, the intern in our office whose contribution in only two months far surpasses the level of performance expected from an intern.



INSIDE LEADERSHIP: SENIOR P&O LEADERS DIVISION DISCUSS SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, AND PRIORITIES

From the Senior Director:
Human Capital Services' Perspective

Mr Victor Mothobi

Serving as the Senior Director: Human Capital Services (HCS) at Durban University of Technology (DUT) is both an honour and a privilege. While the role encompasses human resources systems, policies and processes, it extends far beyond these functions. It is about creating an enabling environment where employees can thrive, contribute meaningfully and collectively advance the University's ENVISION2030 vision. Human Capital Services plays a strategic role in building an institution where people are recognised as its greatest asset. The unit is responsible for attracting, developing, supporting and retaining talented employees while fostering a culture rooted in integrity, respect, compassion, accountability and excellence.

Leading a dedicated and capable HCS team, the Senior Director, Mr Victor Mothobi emphasises that leadership is ultimately about people, listening, guiding, taking

responsibility and helping others realise their full potential. Together, the team continues to strengthen Human Capital Services as a trusted strategic partner that empowers employees to contribute meaningfully to the success of DUT, its students and the broader South African society. This commitment has been accompanied by both rewarding achievements and complex challenges. However, each obstacle has provided an opportunity to innovate, improve service delivery and reinforce Human Capital Services' role as a strategic enabler of organisational excellence.

Mr Mothobi credits the unit's success to a cohesive, values-driven team committed to collaboration, professionalism and continuous improvement. Among the unit's notable achievements are strengthening people-centred practices, supporting organisational transformation, enhancing governance processes and promoting employee wellbeing.

Looking ahead, the priority remains clear: positioning Human Capital Services as a strategic partner that enables organisational excellence through people. With a continued focus on employee wellbeing, leadership development, innovation and service excellence, the department remains committed to cultivating an inclusive, high-performing workplace that supports DUT's long-term strategic goals.

“When employees feel valued, supported and empowered, they are better positioned to contribute to institutional success.”

“Investing in our people ultimately strengthens our collective ability to achieve the University's strategic aspirations,” says Mr Mothobi.

Explaining how Human Capital Services can help shape the future DUT aspires to, Mr Mothobi highlights the importance of leading by example. “The culture we create within Human Capital Services should reflect the culture we aspire to build across the University. By consistently demonstrating professionalism, integrity, empathy, innovation and service excellence, we can positively influence organisational culture and strengthen employee engagement.

I am fortunate to lead a highly committed and capable HCS team that consistently demonstrates professionalism, resilience and a genuine commitment to serving the University.”

Nikiwe Sukazi



From the Midlands Campuses Directors' Perspective

Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane

Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, Campus Director of Durban University of Technology Midlands Campuses, details her role in managing day-to-day operations.

“My role is to provide strategic leadership and oversight while ensuring that operations on the Midlands campuses align with the University’s strategic priorities. Ultimately, my role is about creating opportunities for student success while advancing DUT’s strategic vision in the Midlands region,” says Mthiyane.

Central to this responsibility is creating a people-centred learning and working environment that supports academic excellence, research and innovation. Mthiyane’s role also involves building and strengthening partnerships with local communities, government and industry stakeholders. Reflecting on her first year in her role, Dr Mthiyane describes the journey as one centred on understanding the unique dynamics of the Midlands Campuses.

“I have spent this year listening and learning from staff, students and stakeholders.”

“Although both Indumiso and Riverside campuses are in Pietermaritzburg, each has a distinct identity and set of challenges. Indumiso Campus, situated in Imbali township, serves as a unique community with strengths and needs, while Riverside Campus operates within the suburban environment of Scottsville,” she says.

Understanding these contextual differences has been critical for Dr Mthiyane in identifying opportunities for growth and ensuring that strategies are responsive to each campus’s specific circumstances. The past twelve months have also involved building trust and fostering collaboration across campuses, divisions and departments throughout DUT.

“I am hoping these collaborations will create a strong foundation for sustainable growth,”

One of the most significant milestones during Dr Mthiyane's first year has been leading the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) that formalizes a dual-solid reporting model for the Midlands Campuses. Approved by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) in March 2026, the MoA strengthens accountability, improves operational efficiency and enhances collaboration among stakeholders to improve both staff and student experiences. Another major achievement has been the substantial improvement of Wi-Fi infrastructure across both campuses. Moreover, recent ICT upgrades have significantly enhanced connectivity, creating a better environment for teaching, learning and administrative operations.

"The successful completion of these upgrades demonstrates the impact of collaborative problem-solving and shared accountability in addressing challenges that had affected the campuses for many years."

Dr Mthiyane also focuses on improving service delivery by strengthening communication and collaboration between academic support and operational divisions. Through a regular Midlands Management engagement, representatives from the Human Capital Services, Finance, Procurement, Real Estate Management and other support divisions meet directly with Midlands-based Managers to identify challenges and develop practical solutions.

Beyond operational engagement, she has placed significant emphasis on cultivating a collaborative and people-centred culture. By incorporating DUT's Living Values and Principles into monthly engagements, opportunities have been created for reflection, dialogue and mutual learning. This approach has strengthened collegial relationships, improved trust among stakeholders and encouraged a culture of collective problem-solving.

"Students have a seat at the table. The SRC representatives participate in all our monthly Midlands Management engagements."

Her vision includes expanding programmes in scarce-skills areas, particularly Science, Engineering and Technology (STEM), while exposing students to emerging technologies, innovations and entrepreneurship opportunities. Indumiso and Riverside Campuses are expected to play an important role as centres for community-responsive teaching, research and engagement that align with provincial and national development priorities.

"By producing socially responsible, work-ready and entrepreneurial graduates, the Midlands Campuses can strengthen DUT's reputation as an innovative, engaged and inclusive University."

For Dr Mthiyane, the most rewarding part of leading the Midlands Campuses has been witnessing the dedication, resilience and potential of both staff and students. Whether improving staff experiences, resolving operational challenges or creating opportunities for student success, the collective commitment of the campus community continues to inspire. Through collaborative leadership, strategic partnership and a commitment to student success, the Midlands Campuses are well positioned to play an increasingly significant role in advancing DUT's ENVISION2030 strategy.

"Above all, it has been rewarding to help build a stronger sense of belonging, collaboration and shared ownership of the future of our campuses," she concluded.

Nikiwe Sukazi



From the Director: Protection Services Unit's Perspective

Mr Charles Sehlogo

The Protection Services Unit (PSU) plays a vital role in ensuring that Durban University of Technology remains a safe and secure environment for teaching, learning and working. Leading this responsibility is Director of Protection Services Unit, Mr Charles Sehlogo whose role encompasses everything from campus security and risk management to emergency preparedness and stakeholder collaboration.

The unit's responsibilities are extensive, spanning security operations across all seven campuses, technical surveillance system, investigations, health and safety compliance, card protection, stakeholder coordination through the Safe-U initiative, and the overall administration and strategic management of the department.

Reflecting on his first year at DUT, Mr Sehlogo acknowledges that adjusting to the higher education environment has been both enlightening and demanding.

"Institutions of higher learning develop established ways of working overtime, and change can sometimes be met with resistance, because it introduces discomfort and uncertainty," he says.

While describing the University as a complex but well-functioning institution, Mr Sehlogo notes that his journey has required patience, resilience and a deep appreciation of the interconnected nature of University operations.

"I cannot say I have completely learnt every aspect of how DUT operates. Like a well-oiled machine, success relies on different units working together in a coordinated manner, and Protection Services is one of those important components."

Since joining the University just over 12 months ago, Mr Sehlogo has overseen several significant initiatives aimed at strengthening safety and security across DUT.

Among the unit's major accomplishments has been the advancement of two large-scale tenders relating to Security Services and the CCTV and Access Control systems. These projects are expected to enhance the University's overall security infrastructure and operational efficiency.

Additional achievements include:

- Strengthening access control measures at the ML Sultan campus;
- Assisting in the removal of criminal elements within the institution;
- Ensuring comprehensive security coverage across DUT's seven campuses through security personnel and CCTV monitoring;
- Appointing a service provider to support the health and safety function;
- Restoring and maintaining critical fire detection and fire suppression systems;
- Establishing a task team to conduct patrols in crime hotspots surrounding the University, significantly reducing incidents affecting students and staff;
- Improving campus safety visibility through the installation of signage across all campuses;
- Completing the installation of gun safes;
- Successfully supporting security operations during graduation ceremonies despite disruption attempts;
- Completing drone pilot training and enhancing footage analysis capabilities;
- Synchronising the University's database with the Impro system to streamline identification card production and registration processes.

These initiatives reflect PSU's commitment to strengthening campus safety while continuously improving operational effectiveness. Looking ahead, Mr Sehlogo identifies the finalisation of the Security Services and CCTV and Access Control tenders as key priorities for the unit.

"The specifications for both tenders have been completed and submitted to the Procurement Unit for advertisement," he explains.

Other priorities within the PSU include reviewing and updating the University's security policy, formalising operational structures, developing critical standard operating procedures (SOPs), and investing in specialised staff training. Planned training initiatives include advanced driving and tactical manoeuvre programmes, first aid training for security supervisors, and investigation and reporting training for personnel.

By creating a safe, secure and compliant environment, the unit provides the foundation that allows students, staff and stakeholders to focus on their core purpose of learning, teaching, research and innovation. Through its ongoing efforts, PSU continues to contribute meaningfully to the achievement of DUT's strategic goals and the broader ambitions of ENVISION2030.

Nikiwe Sukazi



DUT Steve Biko Campus

INSTITUTIONAL LECTURE COMMEMORATING STEVE BIKO

By Dr David Matheakuena Mohale

Dr David Matheakuena Mohale, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations recently delivered an institutional lecture in commemoration of the anti-apartheid activist, Steve Biko. The lecture, hosted at the DUT Hotel School was entitled: “Leveraging Steve Biko’s timeless teachings

to assert the DUT efficacious culture while repelling insidious sub-cultures.”

The lecture, directed by Ms Phumzile Xulu, took place on the day of the 49th anniversary of Steve Biko’s death on 12 September 1977. It was Dr Mohale’s second lecture commemorating Steve Biko. In 2018, he delivered a lecture titled, ‘From Biko’s Consciousness to the Crisis of Youth Conscious Unconsciousness.’ Reflecting on his legacy, Dr Mohale highlighted the significance of DUT’s association with the name Steve Biko, noting that one of the University’s seven campuses bears his name.

“In the same lecture 13 years ago, Ngugi wa Thiong’o reminds us that names do matter, and they are important for self-definition. For choosing the name

Steve Biko, DUT proudly and openly associates with the progressive agenda of the empowerment of our people. This is best represented, I argue, by the phrase on our ENVISION2030 statement of intent...“and thus contributing to improving lives and livelihoods”. In many of the documents we have written over the years since the adoption and implementation of ENVISION2030, we have said that the improvement of lives and livelihoods will be achieved through the transformation of economies and societies, starting with our pole position in geographies where we operate. Essentially, ENVISION2030 reasserts the DUT is a university serves humanity, and not a university that just exists during economic, political and social chaos,” he said.

In his speech, Dr Mohale also reflected on the role of leadership in shaping the institution and suggested that:

“DUT’s future success would depend on strengthening leadership at every level of the University, rather than viewing it not only among those with formal titles.”

The programme also provided a platform for panel discussion and live question-and-answer session, facilitated by Mr Zwakele Ngubane. Reflecting on the lecture was a distinguished panel comprised Prof Ndumiso Ngidi, Prof Zamokuhle Mbandlwa, Dr Thabiso Msomi and Mr Sihle Nkosi who shared insights and perspectives on the lecture.

Prof Mbandlwa encouraged members of the University community to continue learning from Steve Biko’s teachings including his commitment to assisting and

empowering others. Reflecting on transformation, Prof Ngidi shared his personal experience working at DUT at different stages of the University’s transformation journey and highlighted the differences in between. Dr Msomi imposed a thought-provoking question on sub-culture in the institution. He argued that when trust is lost in the Values, people are forced to develop survival strategies which he said, do not speak to the DUT Values. In the same context, Mr Nkosi reflected on his lived experience as a student leader with staff behaviour which has been normalised in the institution.

During the question-and-answer session, the audience also shared comments, asked questions and had meaningful discussions with the panelist.

Mr Fisokuhle Zondi, from the Faculty of Management Sciences, thanked Dr Mohale for what he described as ‘insightful lecture’ and further shared that the late Steve Biko was one of his personal heroes.

“Steve Biko’s teachings are treated and seen as history nowadays, but I strongly believe that they are not just history; They are what we can use as a modern tool for institutional governance. Steve Biko insisted that students should be intellectually independent and so we should focus on producing top academic tier or research standards to ensure that we meet these requirements by Steve Biko,” said Mr Zondi.

Miss Sanele Ntusi, from the Faculty of Accounting and Informatics engaged Mr Nkosi’s perspective on educational paths.

“Not everyone is destined to follow the same educational path, some individuals are naturally gifted with leadership qualities.”



Pictured from left to right: Prof Zamokuhle Mbandlwa, Prof Ndimiso Ngidi, Dr David Mohale, Dr Thabiso Msomi, Mr Sihle Nkosi, Mr Zwakele Ngubane.



It is important that we use these strengths and abilities, not only for our personal growth but also to contribute positively to our University and broader society. By doing so, we can inspire others, drive meaningful change and help build a stronger community,” said Miss Nkosi.

Delivering the vote of thanks, Ms Helen Mogorosi expressed appreciation to Dr Mohale, the panellists, guests, staff, students and everyone who contributed to the successful hosting of the Institutional Lecture.

Ms Mogorosi thanked Dr Mohale for a thought-provoking lecture that challenged the DUT community to reflect on how Biko’s teachings could be leveraged to strengthen DUT’s institutional culture while confronting subcultures that may undermine the institution it aspires to become. “Importantly, the lecture reminded us that institutional culture is not abstract culture is what we do. It is reflected in how we lead, how we make decisions, how we serve, how we treat one another and how willing we are to take responsibility,” said Mogorosi. She emphasised the importance of translating DUT’s institutional values into everyday behaviours and leadership practices as the University progresses on its ENVISION2030 journey

Nikiwe Sukazi, Helen Mogorosi



DUT SIGNS RECOGNITION AGREEMENT WITH NEHAWU AND NTEU

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) marked a significant milestone on 1 July 2026, with the formalisation of a Recognition Agreement between the University and two workers' unions: The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU), and The National Tertiary Employees Union (NTEU). DUT Management and the leadership of three unions at the University, revisited the Recognition Agreement and made live amendments.

DUT Management was represented by Dr David Mohale, Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor: People and Operations, Mr Victor Mothobi, Senior Director: Human Capital Services, Mr Mxolisi Msomi, Director: Employee Relations and Wellness and Mr Lindani Mchunu, Employee Relations Specialist.

Mr Msomi described the signing of the Recognition Agreement between NEHAWU and NTEU as a significant milestone for the University. He noted that the previous recognition agreements, which had been concluded around 2007, had become outdated and no longer served their intended purpose, as they were not aligned with current good labour relations practice or the applicable legal framework. Although several attempts had been made over the years to review these agreements, they were frustrated by individuals pursuing their own interests. Mr Msomi welcomed the new agreement as providing DUT with a sound platform to regulate labour-management relations more effectively, promote stability across the institution, and foster a constructive partnership between management and organised labour going forward.



Pictured: NEHAWU representatives.

“The signing of Recognition Agreement marks the formal and constructive partnership between unions and University Management. “

DUT and the unions are both expected to work collaboratively to promote sound labour relations, mutual respect and achievement.

Nomthandazo Zola Mdlalose, Chairperson: NTEU, commended DUT Management for maintaining good

relations with the unions. For Mdlalose, this was a victory to them. She further revealed that from January – June 2026, their members were not represented but the DUT management gave them Organisational Rights. Organisational Rights allowed the unions to represent their members. She added that this alone demonstrated DUT's commitment to its employees and that, Recognition Agreement works hand in hand with the University policy.

Mdlalose shared some of her expectations of this Recognition Agreement:

- Commitment to good faith and engagement;
- Respect of Recognition Agreement;
- Constructive collective bargaining;
- Communication channels should be made to facilitate timely information;
- Prompt resolution of dispute;
- Compliance with laws;
- Mutual respect and professional conduct.

Prince Mthalane, a Regional Office Bearer of NEHAWU, explained the formalization of the Recognition Agreement as a historic and significant milestone for

NEHAWU at DUT. According to Mthalane, it is not merely the signing of a document, it is the recognition of workers' democratic choice to be represented by the union. He further said that it establishes a formal framework for constructive engagement between the union and the University and provides certainty on organizational rights, consultation, and collective bargaining.

The three parties; DUT, NTEU and NEHAWU agreed that reaching this point required considerable patience, determination, and commitment from all parties. It was a process involving continuous engagement and numerous discussions between the unions and the university, and careful negotiations to ensure that the final agreement reflects sound labour relations principles.

Mthalane expressed that his expectation moving forward is that this agreement becomes a foundation for a mature, stable, and productive labour relations environment at DUT. Adding to that, Mthalane wishes to further engage the university in good faith on matters affecting employees, resolving workplace challenges through dialogue, and contributing positively to the university's success.



“We also hope to grow the union further by demonstrating through our actions that NEHAWU is an effective, principled, and reliable representative of workers.”

“Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that employees enjoy fair treatment, decent working conditions, and meaningful participation in decisions that affect their working lives, while contributing to the continued growth and excellence of DUT. We view this agreement as the beginning of a stronger partnership founded on fairness, accountability, and respect for workers’ voices.”

The recognition agreement demonstrated that meaningful labour relations are built through dialogue, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to advancing the interests of both employees and the institution.

Nikiwe Sukazi.



Pictured: Mr Sandile Chaphi, Director: Planning.

DHET VISITS DUT FOR SITE INFRASTRUCTURE INSPECTION

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) conducted a two-day infrastructure site visit at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) on 22-23 June 2026. This visit was part of DHET's ongoing oversight and monitoring on the progress of infrastructure projects at DUT.

Dr David Mohale, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations at DUT, welcomed all attendees, including Mr Donald Kubayi, the DHET representative. He briefly outlined the purpose of the day before handing proceedings over to Mr Kubayi.

Mr Kubayi explained that the site visit is a follow-up on the 2025 Portfolio Committee engagement with DUT. Further, he emphasized that their focus as DHET is mostly on infrastructure. This was necessitated by the observation that some institutions are falling behind on expenditure, for the 5th and 6th cycle. Even though DUT on the 5th cycle is not falling behind, Kubayi expressed that there are projects that were delayed.

DUT experienced stoppages of major projects like DUT355 and DUT481 respectively from the Department of Labour and Employment (DoEL) and the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, resulting in slow pace of spending. Both projects have since been cleared on 29 May 2026. It is expected that DUT355 will be completed by the end of the third quarter of 2026, while DUT481 will be completed towards the end of 2027.

Currently, the DHET is engaged with the National Treasury in terms of the remaining allocation for the year 2027 until 2030. Mr Kubayi further said that primary focus will be on Ministerial Projects because the budget is too small. Institutions with good expenditure would be prioritized, then institutions with low expenditure or stalled projects in that category would be next.

“When we look at the expenditure, we see that DUT has 100% expenditure but the two building projects had challenges. We would like to see DUT moving towards the completion of those projects,” said Mr Kubayi.

On the second day of the visit, Mr Sandile Chaphi, Director: Planning: Real Estate Management, shared some light on Imbali Lodge and Indumiso Engineering Buildings. Mr Chaphi spoke on Indumiso Engineering Building 1 & 2 cracks that had been identified from a structural perspective. “Those are one of the buildings that were run by a contractor that we are currently in arbitration with”, said Mr Chaphi. He stated that a new contractor has been put in place to do the repairs.

In alignment with the shared challenges on the two projects, Mr Kubayi added that the Imbali Precinct Projects are affecting performance. There was a letter from the Municipality that was sent to DUT which approved the allocation that was meant for the lodge to be used towards the new residences, according to Mr Kubayi. He added that DUT should move towards new projects.

“As I have mentioned earlier, our focus is mostly on infrastructure. I want to see the institution doing well because for the most part on the cycle, DUT has been doing well.”

“The primary challenges that were holding DUT back are; Imbali Precinct Project, Student Centre and the Engineering Buildings,” said Mr Kubayi.

Responding to Mr Kubayi’s question on structural challenges, Mr Chaphi addressed the issue during a Questions & Answers session. He stressed that It’s a quality issue with the contractors, however, because the current repairs are being done by a different contractor, minor repairs have been done so far and better results are expected. Mr Chaphi added that DUT has been liaising with the Engineers responsible for the structural assessment to seek second opinion.

The Midlands visit also focused on student residences as there have been perennial challenges. The issue of the student accommodation was one of the focus areas during the visit by the Portfolio Committee last year. The Student Residence Renovation Programme was initiated to improve accommodation standards,



Pictured: DUT 481 Project: Health Sciences Building



Dr David Mohale and Mr Donald Kubayi



Indumiso Campus: Engineering Building under construction

enhance health and safety compliance, and provide a conducive living environment for students across the University residences.

Mr Kubayi encouraged DUT to get a solution with regards to the Imbali Lodge Site challenges, understanding that the issues uncovered there are not short-term and therefore cannot be resolved immediately. He suggested that DUT could in the meantime consider finding a space on campus that could accommodate a certain number of students. That would be progress, according to Mr Kubayi.

Mr Chaphi suggested to Mr Kubayi, that there's 2 ways of looking into this matter; the first one is the sub-division, and the second one is to review DUT's campus plan which is done internally and then from there they can do the proposal. Supporting Mr Chaphi, Dr Mohale explained that the Executive Management Committee (EMC) recently approved the student housing development framework that comprises several approaches

to solving the shortage of beds. One of the approaches is to identify available pieces of land on our campuses and surrounding areas for purposes of development and building.

According to Dr Mohale, the renewed focus to engage meaningfully with both the City of eThekweni and the Msunduzi Local Municipality should help to secure support in line with their spatial development plans. While DUT interest is to secure beds for students, municipalities also stand to benefit in terms of revenue collection and potential economic growth.

Concluding the proceedings, Dr Mohale and Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, Campus Director for Midlands, thanked Mr Kubayi for his visit, and acknowledged his contributions to DUT's ongoing development.

Nikiwe Sukazi, Dr David Mohale.

OPTIMISING OUR FOOTPRINT, RESTORING OUR HERITAGE: THE REVIVAL OF 123 BOTANIC AND 23 ST THOMAS

The Real Estate Management is unlocking strategically important campus capacity, addressing maintenance legacies, and preserving architectural heritage for the DUT community.

At the Durban University of Technology (DUT), the demand for high-quality, functional space is a priority shared by staff and students alike. Addressing space constraints and historical maintenance backlogs requires more than quick fixes; it demands a strategic shift toward responsive asset stewardship, through engineering remediation, and proactive real estate planning.

In direct alignment with this vision, the Real Estate Management portfolio has delivered a comprehensive turnaround of two key University-owned and managed properties: 123 Botanic Road and 23 St Thomas Road. This initiative reflects a broader commitment to optimizing existing University assets, unlocking previously dormant footprints, and setting a higher benchmark for maintenance turnaround across our campuses.

OVERCOMING LEGACY CHALLENGES: TARGETED SITE INTERVENTIONS

Both properties are protected under the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, requiring technical precision to preserve historical character while delivering modern functionality.



Pictured: 23 St Thomas Road Building.

123 BOTANIC ROAD: RECLAIMING UNDERUTILISED CAPACITY

Following the expiration of an external commercial lease, this building stood vacant and at risk of progressive deterioration. Recognizing the urgent need for usable institutional space, the team stepped in to arrest the decay, stabilize the foundation, and comprehensively overhaul the interior footprint.

**Rather than leaving
valuable square
meterage idle, I23
Botanic has been
restored as an active,
high-utility university
asset.**

23 ST THOMAS ROAD: RECTIFYING HISTORICAL MAINTENANCE DEFICITS

At 23 St Thomas, previous substandard maintenance and renovation attempts had left ongoing structural liabilities. The project team tackled these root causes directly rather than applying temporary patches:

- Complete Roof Replacement & Multi-Layer Waterproofing: Resolving long-standing water ingress and moisture issues once and for all;
- Structural Timber & Masonry Rectification: Ensuring full load-bearing compliance, durability, and safety;
- Modern Air-Conditioning & Climate Control: Significantly improving indoor air quality and work-space comfort for incoming occupiers.

A PHASED FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE REAL ESTATE DELIVERY

Phase 1: Rapid Turnaround & Immediate Habitation (Completed)

To prevent further operational downtime, initial works focused on swift emergency stabilization securing building envelopes, clearing hazards, and addressing urgent health and safety standards to establish immediate compliance.

Phase 2: Comprehensive Foundation-to-Roof Remediation (Completed)

Moving past superficial repairs, Phase 2 addressed core infrastructure in strict accordance with Amafa conservation standards:

- Substructure Reinforcement: Detailed foundation assessments and ground stabilization;
- Heritage Facade Renewal: Restoring classic exterior masonry, timber, and heritage aesthetics with refreshed, modern durability;
- Long-Term Weatherproofing: Comprehensive exterior sealing and upgraded drainage to protect the assets against future degradation.

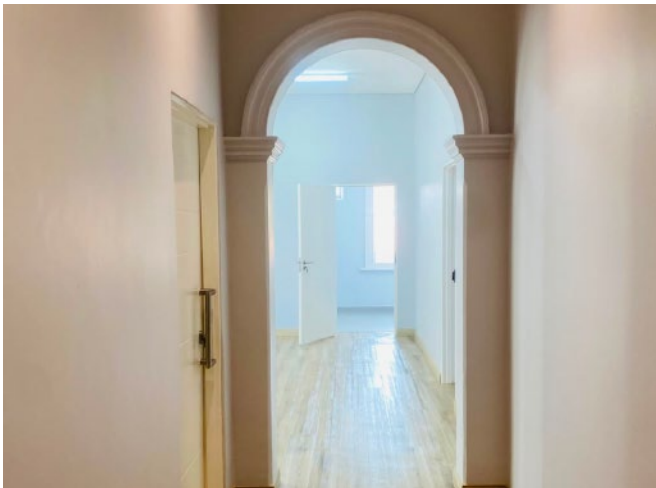
Phase 3: Digital Connectivity, Security & Community Hubs (Underway / Planned)

The final phase focuses on outfitting both environments for optimal everyday use and collaborative benefit:

- ICT & Seamless Connectivity: Full rollout of structured network cabling and high-speed campus Wi-Fi;
- Integrated Safety & Access: Commissioning smart access control, energy-efficient security lighting, and dedicated CCTV monitoring;
- Spaces for Collaboration: Introducing a modern, fully equipped boardroom alongside indoor and outdoor recreational spaces designed specifically for staff and students to meet, engage, and collaborate.



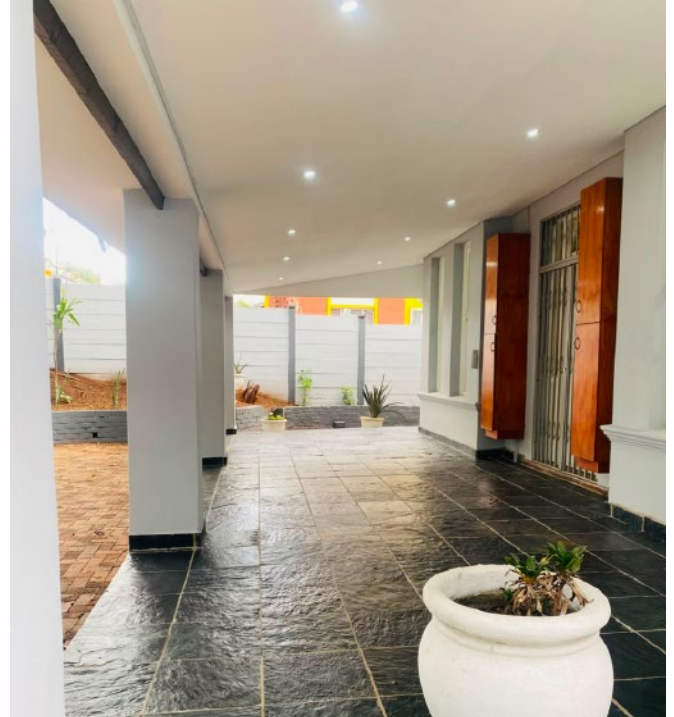
Roofing & Waterproofing: Comprehensive roof refurbishment and specialised waterproofing treatment at 23 St Thomas, resolving historic leak vulnerabilities with reinforced membrane sealing and precision joint flashing to guarantee complete weather protection.



123 Botanic Garden Road: Interior Hallway & Archway
Restored interior passage at 123 Botanic Gardens Road, featuring freshly painted walls, an elegant molded archway, and brand-new wood-look laminate flooring that replaces the previously borer-damaged floors. This revitalized corridor leads directly into the upcoming executive boardroom space.



23 St Thomas: (Exterior Façade & Covered Veranda Restoration)
Completion of structural and aesthetic upgrades to the front elevation at 23 St Thomas, showcasing freshly treated charcoal-painted support pillars, revitalised exterior masonry, and restored roof eaves with integrated rainwater gutters. The spacious tiled patio and curated garden bedding enhance the property's architectural character while delivering a durable, high-standard exterior finish.



123 Botanic Garden Road: Covered Veranda / Outdoor Patio
Newly renovated veranda at 123 Botanic Gardens Road, showcasing restored slate tile flooring, fresh neutral exterior finishes, modern downlighting, and upgraded landscaping.

CHARTING A NEW TRAJECTORY IN CAMPUS REAL ESTATE

The revitalisation of 123 Botanic and 23 St Thomas marks a decisive step toward proactive, accountable, and high-impact property management. By systematically clearing historical backlogs, safeguarding heritage, and converting dormant spaces into functional university hubs, DUT continues to build an inspiring, resilient, and supportive campus environment for all.

Sarah Shezi



Pictured: From left to right: Dr David Mohale, Dr Hlengiwe Mabizela, Dr Thabiso Msomi, Ms Bongekile Sithole, Ms Zandile Manganyela, and Mr Victor Mothobi.

DUT HOSTS YOUNG WORKER'S SEMINAR

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) hosted a first of its kind seminar for young workers on Monday, 27 July 2026 at Mansfield Hall. The initiative was led by the People and Operations Division and brought together by staff across the University.

The hybrid seminar aimed to empower young workers at DUT, address challenges they face in the workplace, and bridge the gap between theoretical learning and workplace realities.

The seminar was opened by Dr David Mohale, Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor: People and Operations, described the event to be both professional and personal for him. He went on to share his journey since he joined DUT more than 9 years ago. Moreover, he revealed to the audience that in his professional journey,

he had to master the art of thinking like his line manager at a tender age of 20 years. Upon his arrival at DUT, Dr Mohale explained that he received remarkable support from his line manager, Prof. Thandwa Mthembu, which stood out for him.

Dr Mohale further outlined the need to be patient with younger staff members. "I urge that we listen to reflect and not to respond," he said.

Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, Midlands Campuses Director layered the purpose of the seminar to go beyond just a commemoration of Youth Month. Dr Mthiyane, who was the chairperson of the organising committee, described the significance of the seminar in celebrating and recognizing contributions made by young workers across DUT. She explained that the seminar was

intended to create a safe space for young staff members to speak about their lived experiences and for the leaders and managers to listen with compassion. She expressed hope that the engagements would generate practical insights that can inform DUT policies, leadership practices, developmental programs and the workplace culture.

The seminar was honoured by the presence of Prof. Bongani Nkambule, Dean of Research: College of Health Sciences at University of KwaZulu-Natal. Prof. Nkambule delivered a keynote address and later engaged with the audience during a Q&A session.

In his address, Prof. Nkambule, highlighted the importance of publishing impactful research papers, mentorships in higher institutions and collaborations. He encouraged scholars to seek mentorship beyond their comfort zone, which he explained to be DUT in this case. While on that note, he then added that through society, one can build networks and be exposed to opportunities outside of DUT.

**“Mentorship alone
can accelerate
growth within higher
education.”**

“The four core functions in academia are; supervision, research, teaching, and the ability to attract funding. Those are the four pillars that you must remember as an academic. Moreover, as a young academic, it is time for you to look at supervision models. There is nothing to lose with exposing your students to variety of expertise within the same project,” he said.

A panel consisting of young DUT workers opened the dialogue and engaged in insightful discussions. Skillful-

ly facilitated by Miss Sarah Shezi, the panel was then joined by Dr Thabiso Msomi, Dr Hlengiwe Mabizela, Miss Zandile Manganyela, and Miss Bongekile Sithole. The brain trusts tackled matters affecting young workers at DUT, while simultaneously sharing their lived experiences as DUT staff members.

During the panel discussion, Miss Zandile Manganyela emphasised the importance of providing junior staff members with relevant experience. She urged line managers and trainers to relook at onboarding young individuals and create programmes for them so that they know and understand what is expected of them in the workplace. Dr Thabiso Msomi encouraged young workers to strive for excellence in all their endeavors.

Miss Bongekile Sithole reflected on how she successfully navigated a high-pressure work environment. Dr Hlengiwe Mabizela in her discussion, offered constructive insights into how the University can better support young academics. She suggested site visits by executives, which would potentially benefit the workers.

As the programme was coming to an end, Mr Mxolisi Msomi, Director: Employee Wellness, spoke on mental health matters. Mr Msomi encouraged the audience to take care of their mental health and also be mindful of factors that may compromise it. Mr Msomi further advised them to ask for help when it is needed and practice healthy boundaries.

In closing, Mr Victor Mothobi, Senior Director: Human Capital Service extended a special thanks to all the participants, and those who contributed to making the seminar a success. The event ended with a gifting segment, where the organising team, the facilitator, the keynote speaker, and the panelist were appreciated for their contribution.

Nikiwe Sukazi



Pictured: People and Operations (P&O) staff members who graduated in the 2026 DUT Autumn graduation ceremonies with P&O heads.

PEOPLE & OPERATIONS DIVISION HOSTS GRADUATION CELEBRATORY LUNCHEON HONOURING STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

The People & Operations Division at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) recently hosted a Graduation Celebratory Luncheon at the Rendezvous Restaurant on Wednesday, 10 June

2026, in recognition of staff members who recently graduated during the DUT 2026 Autumn Graduation ceremonies. The event celebrated their academic achievements while honouring their commitment to continuous learning and professional development within the division.

The luncheon reflected DUT's Living Values, with a particular emphasis on excellence, and served as an opportunity to acknowledge the graduates' dedication and commitment to academic success, as well as their ability to effectively balance leadership roles and professional responsibilities.

Miss Sarah Shezi, Acting Director: Planning, welcomed all guests and graduates from the People and Opera-

tions Division, congratulated them on their academic achievements and commitment to personal and professional growth. She highlighted the significance of the occasion as a celebration of dedication, perseverance, and lifelong learning, encouraging attendees to take pride in their accomplishments and to fully embrace the importance of this milestone.

Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People & Operations, Dr David Mohale, delivered engaging opening remarks at the event, warmly welcoming attendees and acknowledging the presence of colleagues. He expressed appreciation to the executive leadership of the division and congratulated staff members on their achievements and further emphasised the importance of their collective contribution to DUT.

Dr Mohale highlighted that DUT's core business is teaching and learning, supported by research, innovation, and community engagement, and stressed the critical role of both academic and support staff in enabling the institution to fulfil its mandate.

He further encouraged graduates and staff to view their qualifications not merely as titles, but as tools for identifying gaps within the University system and contributing meaningful solutions that strengthen institutional effectiveness.

“DUT's commitment to excellence and continuous improvement calls for the practical application of knowledge to prevent it from becoming obsolete,

was not only a personal milestone but also a strategic contribution to the institution.

She highlighted that:

“individual development within People & Operations strengthens the entire University, as staff members serve as the engine that enables DUT to deliver on its mandate of becoming a world-class institution.”

“Directors, Managers, mentors, and families created the enabling environment that allowed you to succeed, and DUT continues to foster a culture where learning and development are both supported and celebrated,” Dr Mthiyane added.

She encouraged graduates not to let their qualifications “gather dust,” but to actively apply their knowledge to challenge outdated processes and contribute innovative solutions within the institution. She urged



while urging staff to remain responsive, innovative, and solution-driven in addressing institutional challenges. We rely on more, especially our younger colleagues, to navigate and respond to this changing landscape,” said Dr Mohale.

Mr Victor Mothobi, Senior Director of Human Capital Services, delivered a congratulatory message to graduates, reminding them that their achievements do not mark the end, but the beginning of a new journey filled with opportunity and growth. He encouraged them to believe in themselves as much as those around them do, acknowledging the sacrifices made by parents and families who supported their educational journey and believed in their potential.

“These graduates have already proven their capability and should continue to grow, remain curious, and move forward with confidence.”

“Their success is not achieved overnight, but through continuous effort, resilience, and commitment to growth rather than perfection. Graduates must always trust their journey, remain true to themselves, and recognise that every challenge they have faced has prepared them for the next chapter of their lives,” Mr Mothobi explained.

DUT Midlands Campuses Director, Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, reflected on the significance of academic achievement, noting that only a small percentage of young South African adults attain master’s qualifications. Drawing on the idea that “growth is a great separator,” she emphasised that the graduates progress

graduates to continue seeking growth opportunities and to view themselves as leaders who have demonstrated discipline and commitment through their academic journey.

Wandile Ndlovu, Interior Design Intern within the Real Estate Management (REM) Unit, reflected on her graduation experience. She described it as a truly special and unforgettable milestone and for her, walking across the stage and being recognised for her hard work was incredibly rewarding, particularly after overcoming financial challenges while balancing work and studies. She mentioned that graduating Cum Laude and receiving the Dean’s Merit Award made the achievement even more meaningful, marking a significant moment of pride and accomplishment in his academic journey.

Mr Victor Mothobi, Senior Director of Human Capital Services, together with Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People & Operations, Dr David Mohale, expressed appreciation to the following graduates by presenting tokens of appreciation: Miss Wandile Ndlovu, Mr Mxolisi Mthiyane, Miss Sizokuthanda Nonhle Ngubane, Miss Nokwanda Masuku, Mr Njabulo Duma, Mr Mzamo Msani, Mr Charles Sehlogo, Mr Mfundo Mvelase, Ms Andiswa Mfeka, Miss Bonisiwe Mbatha, Mr Thandokuhle Shongwe, and Miss Nomvuzo Ngcobo.

Among the speakers who shared remarks were Chief Risk Officer, Dr Sikhuthali Nyangintsimbi, Mr Mxolisi Mthiyane, who spoke on behalf of the graduates, and Mrs Nokuthula Hlengwa, who presented the graduate video.

In her closing remarks, Miss Sarah Shezi extended her appreciation to all guests, speakers, and graduates for making the event a success and congratulated the graduates on their academic achievements, wishing them continued success in their future endeavors.

Phiwayinkosi Sibiya



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INYANISI TOGETHER KUMIYE YETZONUCHWEPHEZHE

ENVISION 2023

CONNECTION. INSIGHT. IMPACT. INNOVATION.
LEARNING. PROFESSIONALISM. COLLABORATION. INTEGRATION.
CREATIVE. DISTINCTIVE. DRIVEN.



Pictured: Ms Zelda La Grange

DUT HOSTS THE THIRD ANNUAL SECRETARIES' DAY CONFERENCE 2026

Durban University of Technology (DUT) Secretaries and Administrative professionals travelled to Champagne Sports Resort, in the Drakensberg for the Third Annual Secretaries' Day Conference. The three-day event which was facilitated by the Human Capital Services unit featured informative presentations, professional development sessions, team-building activities, and networking opportunities.

The luncheon reflected DUT's Living Values, with a particular emphasis on excellence, and served as an opportunity to acknowledge the graduates' dedication and commitment to academic success, as well as their ability to effectively balance leadership roles and professional responsibilities.

Delegates arrived at the resort on 9 September 2026 and were welcomed with a strategic team-building session comprising a range of outdoor activities designed to encourage collaboration and strengthen workplace relationships.

Opening the programme, Ms Zamazulu Nyawose from the Real Estate Management unit thanked the attendees for honouring the invitation and participating in

the conference. She reminded delegates of the important role they play in supporting the administration of offices and ensuring the smooth functioning of daily operations.

Miss Zinhle Madela, chairperson of the Organising Committee, delivered message of appreciation and encouragement to the delegates. She emphasised that secretaries and administrative professionals are valued and respected for their significant contributions to the University.

According to Miss Madela, the Annual Secretaries Day Conference was established to recognise and celebrate the meaningful contributions of executive assistants, secretarial staff and administrative professionals.

“The commitment and dedication that each of you bring to your roles does not go unnoticed.”

“From the Human Capital Services unit, we thank you for being on the ground and ensuring that operations run smoothly. I hope that during this conference you feel celebrated and appreciated,” said Miss Madela.

The conference provided delegates with an opportunity to expand their knowledge through engagements with industry experts and seasoned professionals. On the second day of the conference, Mr Tholo Motaung, Director of Corporate Affairs of the Office Professionals of South Africa (OPSA) facilitated a session focused on effective communication and stakeholder management, the evolving role of the executive secretary, digital productivity and AI in the modern workplace

and managing multiple priorities and time effectively.

Mr Motaung explored the four communication styles: analytical, driver, amiable, and expressive. He also highlighted several skills necessary for effective communication and professional success, including time management, active listening, accountability, and setting clear targets.

“We teach people how to treat us; however, approach matters most.”

“When making follow-ups, consider using a gentle approach. You need to create a work system that works for you to improve your performance. Active listening is equally important because it helps you understand what is being said rather than what you think has been said,” said Mr Motaung.

The delegates attended a masterclass presented by Ms Zelda La Grange, a former private secretary to the late former President Dr Nelson Mandela. She shared valuable insights from her experience working closely with President Mandela and reflected on the lessons that shaped her professional journey.

Ms La Grange explained that when she first joined President Mandela’s office, there were only five employees and often found herself working independently. She spoke highly of President Mandela’s kindness, humility, and commitment to inclusivity.

She further highlighted the importance of effective time management and maintaining ethical standards in the workplace. According to Ms La Grange, she was never expected to compromise her ethics and her



Participants during a team building activity.

integrity. Instead, President Mandela encouraged open communication and created space for her to provide constructive feedback.

One of the most valuable lessons she learned from him was the importance of trust.

“If you know that your boss trusts you, do not disappoint them.”

“The way you approach a person determines how they treat you,” she shared.

Later in the programme, delegates were joined by members of DUT senior management comprising of Dr David Mohale, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: People and Operations; Mr Victor Mothobi: Human Capital Services Senior Director; Dr Maditsane Nkonoane,

Registrar; and Mr Siboniso Shabalala, Chief Financial Officer.

The executives presented appreciation certificates to the delegates in recognition of their dedication and contribution to the University.

In closing, Mrs Sthabile Dlamini, Executive Secretary to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning encouraged delegates to believe in themselves and recognise their value as professionals who helped drive organizational success.

“You are assets and builders who make things happen in the workplace,” she said.

The conference concluded on a high note with an intentional networking session, providing delegates with an opportunity to connect, share experiences, and strengthen professional relationships.

Nikiwe Sukazi



DUT women at the Women's Day event at Lake Eland.

DUT CELEBRATES AND EMPOWERS WOMEN

In commemoration of Women's Day, The Durban University of Technology (DUT) recently hosted a Women's Day celebration at Lake Eland. The event was led by the Human Capital Services in collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor: People and Operations.

More than 100 DUT women from DUT's Durban and Midlands campuses gathered to celebrate in the scenic surroundings of Lake Eland. Master of Ceremonies, Miss Zamazulu Nyawose, ensured the event got off to a vibrant start as attendees arrived dressed in their safari-themed outfits. She welcomed all those present and thanked the ladies for honouring both the invitation and the theme.

The event was graced by the presence of Dr Nonhlanhla Mthiyane, Midlands Campuses Director. In her opening remarks, Dr Mthiyane thanked the Human Capital Services unit for sponsoring the event and for ensuring its success. She also extended her appreciation to Dr Davis Mohale and Mr Victor Mothobi for their support.

In her address, Dr Mthiyane highlighted the important roles women play in society, within their families and in the workplace. She encouraged women to celebrate themselves more often and to recognise their meaningful everyday contributions. She further conveyed a message of support from the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor: People and Operations, Dr David Mohale.

Speaking on behalf of Dr Mohale, Mthiyane stated: "I urge the more experienced women to take the younger women by the hand, teach them the DUT processes and systems, and mentor them so that they are also as more equipped colleagues."

“I encourage women of DUT to start working together and avoid working against one another.”

The activities on the day included a game drive, spa treatments, suspension bridge crossing and zip lining. One of the attendees, Miss Khethiwe Mzimela shared her experience of the trip:

“Honestly, the safari experience was 10 out of 10!”

“ It was such a refreshing break from the usual work environment and the perfect opportunity to relax, have fun and meet amazing women from different departments.

The game drive was definitely a highlight. Being out in nature, seeing the animals and just enjoying the beautiful surroundings made for a truly memorable experience. Then came the zipline. As much as I wanted to be adventurous, I had to be honest with myself; I am terrified of ziplining! So, I chose the massage instead and honestly, I think I made the best decision. The massage was amazing and probably one of the best experiences I’ve ever had. I left feeling completely relaxed and refreshed.”

Mzimela also appreciated the opportunity to connect with other women, sharing laughs and stories along the way. Most excitingly, she said she made new friends.

In closing, Ms Lalitha Chetty, Director: Legal Services, expressed her heartfelt thanks to the event organisers, the Human Capital Services unit and the Office of the DVC: P&O for recognising and celebrating women of DUT.

Nikiwe Sukazi



DUT NOBAHLE MNCUBE FINISHES HER SIXTH COMRADES MARATHON IN 10:50:39

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) is celebrating the outstanding achievement of Senior Project Manager for Infrastructure Projects in the Real Estate Management (REM) Unit, Miss Nobahle Mncube, who successfully completed the 2026 Comrades Marathon, crossing the finish line in an impressive 10:50:39 during the Up Run from Durban to Pietermaritzburg on Sunday, 14 June 2026.

Miss Mncube was one of 30 DUT runners who proudly represented the institution at this year's iconic race. Alongside her colleagues, she took on the demanding route with determination and perseverance, reflecting DUT's spirit of excellence both on and off the racecourse. Her finish not only marked a personal milestone but also contributed to the strong collective performance of the DUT Comrades team.

She joined DUT in January 2026. In her role, she oversees infrastructure projects through various stages of development and supports the delivery of key institutional initiatives, including the DUT355 and DUT481 projects.

For Miss Mncube, the 2026 Comrades Marathon carried special significance as it marked her sixth participation in the world-renowned ultra marathon, earning her a sixth medal. Her journey to the finish line was not without challenges. In addition to recovering from flu during her preparations, she also navigated the emotional loss of her father earlier this year.

Pictured: Ms Nobahle Mncube at the 2026 Comrades Marathon

“My training was disrupted by the passing of my dad at the beginning of this year, and I only bounced back in April. I was just praying for my experience to carry me through,” she said.

Despite these difficulties, she remained committed to completing the race, drawing on both her experience and determination.

Reflecting on the emotional nature of long-distance running, Miss Mncube described it as a deeply personal and reflective experience.

“One experiences all sorts of emotions during a long-distance run. However, it is a perfect time for self-reflection and to deal with things that you sometimes find hard to talk about or share with anyone.”

“All in all, it is free therapy: you cry, laugh and wonder why you started, but you are happy when you get to the finish line,” she said.

Although many athletes follow strict nutrition and training regimens ahead of the race, Miss Mncube approached the event with her characteristic humour, noting that she had not been as strict with her nutrition as she should have been, but was still able to successfully complete the race.

Having now completed six Comrades Marathons, her achievement stands as an inspiration to colleagues and aspiring long distance runners alike. Her ability to balance a demanding professional role with the physical and mental demands of ultra distance running highlights her resilience, discipline and unwavering commitment.

Encouraging fellow runners and future participants, she offered simple but powerful advice. “Go out there and enjoy it to the fullest. It is not easy, but it is worth it in the end.”

Mncube’s successful completion of the 2026 Comrades Marathon is a testament to her endurance and determination, embodying the spirit of perseverance that continues to inspire the DUT community.

Sinamile Sithole

Spring Has Sprung

