



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

7 September 2018

UCT's new policy puts sharp focus on sexual diversity

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has officially launched its Inclusivity Policy for Sexual Orientation. The policy promotes UCT's commitment towards a culture that has zero-tolerance towards all forms of discrimination and aims to ensure consistent engagement between students and staff and create an environment that respects and celebrates inclusion of sexually diverse staff and students on campus.

"The University of Cape Town has a constitutional and legal duty to take positive steps towards the creation of an environment in which staff and students will flourish and will be able to reach their full potential, regardless of their race, sex, class, ability status, gender, sexual orientation or other relevant attributes or characteristics," states the policy. The monitoring of implementation of the policy resides with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Transformation whilst the coordination for programme implementation and policy infringements rests with the Office for Inclusivity & Change.

Under the policy, academic staff and tutors are encouraged to use content and language that is inclusive, neutral and non-discriminatory. The policy suggests, as an example, that instead of using language that assumes every household has a mother and a father, it would be more inclusive to refer to parent/s; or talk about diverse families, which will signal that heterosexual and queer partnerships are equally valid.

The policy also seeks to ensure that within the UCT administrative structures the inclusion of all sexual orientations is respectfully managed and that sexually diverse staff and students should be able to receive equitable and non-discriminatory service and care.

"The birth of this policy is something our students and staff can be proud of. This is such a milestone for UCT and it's a milestone for South Africa being one of the first universities to actually ratify a policy dedicated to the inclusion of sexually diverse populations," said Dr Sianne Alves, director of the UCT Office for Inclusivity and Change.

In support of UCT's transformation mandate the policy makes reference to four functional areas of the university, namely teaching practice, communication and media, institutional culture and service provision.

The literature included in teaching should also, where reasonably possible, include research and discipline-specific content that recognises Africa's heritage and current practices in relation to same-sex partnerships. Much of this is a learning curve and staff are encouraged to support and learn from one another's pedagogy and praxis.

The same holds true for university communication from students, staff and affiliated entities who should, where possible, adopt appropriate language, and/or imagery that is inclusive of all partnerships rather than asserting one representation.

Although ratified in December 2017, the policy was only launched recently as further awareness needed to take place around campus.

View the [launch of the policy at UCT](#).

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Aamirah Sunday

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5427
Cell: (076) 947 6071

Email: aamirah.sunday@uct.ac.za

Website: www.uct.ac.za