



# From the VC's desk



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

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Dear colleagues and students

I am writing to give you important information about your responsibility to report wrongdoing at the University of Cape Town, and to inform you about a toll-free hotline that will enable you to do so easily and confidentially.

In line with good and responsible corporate governance, UCT has appointed KPMG for a period of three years to provide an external and confidential hotline. The hotline has been operational since 01 January 2015 and neither UCT nor KPMG has any control or access to any of the calls made. The only way UCT will know about such a call is by receiving a report from KPMG about a matter that needs to be investigated.

The KPMG Ethics Line has been accredited by the Ethics Institute of South Africa (EthicSA) as being in compliance with the External Whistle-Blowing Hotline Service Provider Standard EO 1.1.1. This certification is a best practice set of guidelines for external whistle-blowing hotline service providers; it has been created to establish a set of principles to guide companies in terms of integrity, efficiency, independence, protection and availability. The hotline number is provided below, along with a typical set of questions that would be asked of anyone using the hotline number.

## **Background to UCT's Whistle-Blowing Guidelines**

UCT's Whistle-Blowing Guidelines were approved by Council in December 2010. They are available [here](#) and are reviewed annually by the Risk Management Committee. They are intended to protect people at UCT, as well as the operations, assets and the reputation of UCT, against wrongdoing. These guidelines apply to all staff, students, consultants, vendors, contractors, and/or any other parties with a business relationship with the university. In terms of the guidelines, anyone with a reasonable basis for believing that an irregular act has occurred or is occurring has a responsibility to report this immediately. Furthermore, anyone making a report must act in good faith when reporting an allegation, and must disclose all information available to him or her that is relevant to the matter.

UCT is committed to maintaining a culture of ethical compliance. Given that most cases of fraud at the workplace are perpetrated internally, it is incumbent upon employees and other stakeholders to report any instances of fraud, corruption or misconduct. It is therefore important that when a report is made to KPMG, as much detail about the fraudulent, corrupt or unethical practice is provided, to make it easier to carry out a meaningful investigation. Callers reporting any wrongdoing are protected by law and can insist on being anonymous if they so wish. All investigations will be undertaken by UCT in line with the Whistle-Blowing Guidelines as approved by Council.

I wish to emphasise that whistle-blowing is not a channel for reporting employment grievances, general complaints, petty arguments or personality clashes; these must be dealt with in terms of the university's grievance procedures. The Office of the Ombud provides a safe and objective environment where individuals can air their concerns, receive appropriate referrals, be advised of relevant policies and procedures, and discuss formal and informal options for addressing these concerns.

## What to report to the hotline

What to report to the hotline should be any incidents of wrongdoing, including, for instance, criminal offences, theft, fraud, unethical behaviour or misconduct, health and safety violations, irregular awarding of tenders, damage to the environment, financial statement fraud, student financial aid fraud, dishonesty, misuse of property and assets including P-Cards, misuse of donor grants and corruption. This extends to ethics in the academic and research areas, including examinations. The Discrimination and Harassment Office (DISCHO) is available to assist the UCT community in matters of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment in general, domestic violence and rape.

The KPMG Ethics toll-free line for UCT is **0800 650 000**. This is an accredited, external hotline manned 24 hours a day and operating 365 days a year. Calls are fielded by experienced call centre agents in any of the official languages, as well as French, Dutch, German and Portuguese. All reported information is captured onto a call-sheet and transited directly to a designated person at the university.

It is important that when a report is made, relevant details should be available, including:

- In which division/department did the incident take place?
- Where specifically did it happen?
- What is the nature of the incident?
- Date and time the incident took place?
- How long has this been going on?
- How often does this happen?
- Number of people involved and names?
- Does anybody else know about it?
- Do you have any proof that could assist in the investigation?
- Are there any witnesses?

If you have any other relevant information which could be of assistance when undertaking an investigation, please inform the hotline operator.

Whistle-blowers are protected by law. The Protected Disclosures Act no 26 of 2000 makes provision for procedures in terms of which employees may disclose information anonymously regarding unlawful or irregular conduct by their employers or fellow employees. It is for this reason that all matters reported on the hotline will be referred to the Risk Management Committee to ensure that the necessary investigations have been carried out. Where corruption, fraud and/or abuse of property or assets is proven, the committee will ensure that the necessary action is taken against the perpetrators. KPMG will be marketing the hotline over the next few months at UCT to all stakeholders, with special focus on key departments such as Procurement, Properties and Services, Treasury, Student Affairs and the Research Office.

Should you require further information, please contact Mr Shai Makgoba, Finance Executive: Risk and Relationship Management, on 021 650 2754 or click here to [email](#).

Sincerely

Dr Max Price  
Vice-Chancellor