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UCT Vice-Chancellor marks first 100 days in office

The University of Cape Town Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, has been in office for 100 days since taking over the role on 1 July 2018.

Professor Phakeng has led the university through a period of just over three months, but UCT has recorded some key milestones in this short period. Some of the most significant moments include:

- National Women's Month offered an opportunity for reflection on how women can influence and lead, and UCT marked the occasion with an event on 8 August titled "For Womxn by Womxn". The event saw the [launch of three substantial](#) research programmes on gender inequality worth up to R1.5 million a year for five years, all focused on gender issues. Professor Phakeng's goal is to help create the space for more women's voices and nonconforming gender voices to be heard.
- One important step that UCT has taken is the [launch of the Inclusivity Policy for Sexual Orientation](#). The policy aims to create a campus environment that is free from discrimination in all spheres, including teaching content and language, the university's code of conduct, and culture. It helps us examine the way members of the campus community teach, communicate and engage with one another in creating an inclusive culture on campus for sexually diverse populations.
- In honour of Madiba's 100th birthday this year, UCT [launched the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance](#) in July. The school will help to promote Mandela's values of ethical and selfless leadership. It epitomises Professor Phakeng's vision of strengthening our excellence as a university, driving transformation, ensuring a sustainable future for UCT and further establishing this institution as a beacon of leadership in Africa.
- UCT's excellent performance in the [2019 Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Rankings](#) saw the university climbing 15 places from 171st in 2017 to

156th position this year. UCT has reinforced its position as the top university in Africa.

- UCT also maintained its top position in Africa for graduate employability and is placed 18th in the world for graduate employment (in work after one year), according to the [2019 Quacquarelli Symonds \(QS\) Graduate Employability Rankings](#).
- Professor Phakeng believes that UCT should strive to be a significant player in addressing the critical challenges of our society. As such, she recently proposed the establishment of the "[Futures Think Tank](#)", which will consider the implications of global challenges – such as climate change, the fourth industrial revolution, artificial intelligence and global migration – for universities and society as a whole.
- UCT residences achieved a 55% reduction in [water usage](#) based on a comparison of the university's municipal records for January to July 2018 and 2015 water-use patterns for the same period. The Graduate School of Business campus achieved a 47% reduction. However, other campuses showed a reduction of 11% overall.
- A total of three executive appointments were made. These are the Chief Operations Officer, Dr Reno Morar; the Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Associate Professor Linda Ronnie; and the Executive Director: Libraries, Ms Ujala Satgoor.
- Professor Phakeng pledged to donate 10% of her salary every month to the [Vice-Chancellor's Student Support Fund](#) with effect from 1 July 2018.
- UCT's [Hasso Plattner School of Design Thinking](#) was among eight global institutions to earn themselves a spot on the Pioneers 2018 list, which celebrates creative education and lauds schools that do things differently.
- UCT's top scientific minds dominated at this year's [National Research Foundation \(NRF\) Awards](#) ceremony, accounting for 11 of the 37 academics honoured at the prestigious annual event.
- The university's [six online courses have been singled out as world class](#) by global Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) monitoring website Class Central. UCT had three courses on Class Central's annual Top 50 MOOCs of All Time list; and a further three MOOCs included in The Definitive List of Courses for Learning About the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

ENDS

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