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Your world to a better future

VUT Disability Case Study

:

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Overview

- Pre 2016 environment
- VUT Disability Vision
- Pre 2016 environment
- Strategies implemented
- Monitoring mechanisms
- Investing in (dis)Ability
- Outcomes
- Conclusion



VUT Disability Vision

- To ensure that VUT progressively “becomes an accessible higher education institution for people with disabilities”

Mission

- To remove barriers that prevent students and staff with disabilities from fulfilling their potential



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The pre 2016 environment

- “ We have a two percent disability employment target that was since set by government in 1996, with the initial deadline set for the year 2000, to allow companies and all organizations to reach the target, the deadline has been postponed four times to 2015, yet we still have an institution like the VUT with zero percent achievement of the target.”Hendrieta Bogopane-Zulu, Deputy Minister, Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 16 April 2013



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The pre 2016 environment

- < 2 staff who declared a disability
- No coordination of disability across campuses
- No disability focus in place
- Built environment a barrier to access
- Lack of a facility for both staff and students
- 2010 access audit gathering dust
- A staff disability policy developed for compliance
- Absence of voice for staff and students with disabilities

• Absence of vehicle for SwDs

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Strategies

- Engaged with key informants
- Set up a Disability Forum
- Reviewed disability policy
- Developed strategy for people with disability
- Motivated for new disability services post
- Advocated for a more accessible environment
- Awareness

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Awareness

- Road shows
- EE Dialogues
- Awareness campaigns
- Disability week
- Training workshops and public lectures
- VUT FM
- SJT newsletter
- VUT publications
- VUT Annual Review
- Annual equity update



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Monitoring

- Council
 - Transformation Forum
 - Executive Management Committee
 - Faculty T&D Committees
 - Employment Equity and Diversity Committee
 - Institutional Forum
 - Disability Committee



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2016-2018

- Appointment of a Disability Services Coordinator
- Approved Policy and Strategy for People with Disabilities
- Guidelines for Reasonable Accommodation
- Mandate for staff and students with disability vested in SJT Unit
- Additional parking bays and ramps
- Access audit roll out plan
- Procurement of assistive devices for staff and students



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Investing in (dis)Ability

- Assistive devices
- Test batteries
- Wheel chairs
- Ergonomic chair
- Ramps
- Ablution facilities
- Parking bays
- Lockable lifts
- New building
- Student bursaries
- Customised vehicle



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Investing in SwDs



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2016-2018 Disability Journey

- Focus on students with disabilities
- R1.1 million (student bursaries :2017)
- Surveys:
 - Perceptions survey of students with disability
 - Staff with disability

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Outcomes

Infrastructure

- Ablution facilities on campus and residences
- Additional ramps and parking bays
- R30 million Disability Services and African Languages Building
- R7 million audit roll out (2018)

Students

- From 13 students (2016) to 44 registered students (2018) in four faculties
- > 10 students with disabilities graduated over the past 2 years
- In 2017, 21 students achieved between 71% and 100% results
- Dedicated lifts including at the library
- Procurement of a customized 25 seater bus

Staff

- From 0.19% staff (2013) to 0.99% staff (2018)
- Combination of improved declaration by staff and recruitment
- Provision of assistive devices



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Disability Services Unit (SW)



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Student Administrative Support

Access

- admissions
- Student orientation
- Governance, leadership and management
- Social inclusion

Support

- Admission form
- Financial aid application
- Staff access, support and achievement
- Student access, support and success

Success

- 10 students graduated over past 2 years
- 21 Students achieved between 71% and 100% in 2017



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Student Achievement



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“I have been waiting for this moment and I am grateful I have made it despite my circumstances. This proves that I can achieve my dreams with any condition.”

Tshepho Moeti, ND Tourism, Upington
Campus Autumn Graduation
Ceremony, April 2016



Quote



- “Life has so much to offer and I won’t let my disability, family or anything else get in the way of my goals and aspirations. This is just the beginning. I am also committed to making a success of my career as a System’s Analyst at Arcellor Mittal. There too, I have colleagues that encourage and understand my zest for life. I’m going to live my life to the fullest.” Jabulani Msiza, on receiving his National Diploma, OMT, during the VUT April 2016 graduation ceremonies



Conclusion

- The VUT firmly believes that the future for social transformation lies in creating an enabling and affirming environment for everyone including people with disabilities.
- We are resolute in creating affirming learning, living and working environments for both students and staff.
- Investing in students with disabilities is investing in the future of this country and the continent.

