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MANUAL

IN ACCORDANCE WITH

THE PROMOTION OF ACCESS TO
INFORMATION ACT (NO. 2 OF 2000)



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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

INFORMATION MANUAL

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1 INTRODUCTION

The University is currently governed in terms of the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 and its revised institutional statute which was promulgated in government gazette number 23132 dated 15 February 2002.

The University of the Witwatersrand owes its origin to the South African School of Mines which was established in Kimberley in 1896 and transferred to Johannesburg as the Transvaal Technical Institute in 1904, becoming the Transvaal University College in 1906 and renamed the South African School of Mines and Technology four years later.

Full University status was granted in 1922, incorporating the College as the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, with effect from 1 March. The University had at that stage six faculties: Arts, Science, Medicine, Engineering, Law and Commerce.

Two important books on the history of the University are:

Wits the Early Years. A History of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and its Precursors 1896 – 1939, by Bruce K Murray (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982)

Wits the 'Open Years'. A History of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 1939 – 1959, by Bruce K Murray (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1997)

2 STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

2.1 Structure

The University's academic structure is one of 35 schools in five faculties. Each school is currently led by a Head of School and each Faculty falls under the control of an executive Dean. The five faculties are: Commerce, Law and Management; Humanities; Science; Health Sciences; and Engineering and the Built Environment. Each Faculty has a Faculty Board and a range of committees. Research entities are either central ones or associated with particular Faculties. The Senate is the highest governance structure for academic matters. The Council is the highest overall governance structure. The University Forum is consulted on all matters of importance to the University and also plays a proactive role. The University executive consists of the five Deans, three Deputy Vice-Chancellors (one of whom is the Vice-Principal), an Executive Director (Finance), the Registrar and the Vice-Chancellor. An appeals process exists for all decisions and is contained in policy documents relevant to each area of functioning.

Listings of all schools, research entities and administrative structures are contained in the University Calendar which is available from the Registrar's Division. This also contains a list of all academic and research staff and senior administrative staff.

2.2 Functions

The function of the University is contained in its Mission Statement which is published in the Calendar. It reads as follows:

The fundamental role of any University is to promote freedom of enquiry and the search for knowledge and truth. Wits has built a reputation for itself in this role, establishing itself at the industrial and commercial heart of South Africa as a centre

for education and research of the highest quality. Wits mission is to build on this foundation in a way that takes account of its responsibilities within South Africa today, and to maintain and enhance its position as a leading University in the republic, Africa and in the world by sustaining globally competitive standards of excellence in learning, teaching and research.

2.3 Governance

The University Council, Senate, Forum and office bearers exist and function in terms of in terms of Section 27, 28, 29 and 30 of the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended.

3 CONTACT DETAILS OF INFORMATION OFFICER

The Information Officer is the Vice-Chancellor who has delegated this power for the purposes of this Act to the Registrar as Deputy Information Officer.

Contact details for the Registrar are as follows:

Street Address:

Room 10008, Senate House
Jorissen Street
Braamfontein
2050

Postal Address:

Private Bag 3
WITS
2050

Telephone Number: +27 11 717 1200

Facsimile Number: +27 11 4037593

Electronic Mail: registrar@registrar.wits.ac.za

Website: <http://www.wits.ac.za>

4 REQUESTS FOR ACCESS TO INFORMATION

All persons wanting to make application for access to records held by this institution in terms of the Act may obtain the prescribed application form from the Registrar's office (details in 3 above).

5 DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECTS ON WHICH THIS INSTITUTION HOLDS RECORDS AND CATEGORIES OF RECORDS HELD ON EACH SUBJECT.

The University holds a wide range of records – these are held at school, faculty, institute, research entity, department or central level. A central registry is maintained of all documents relevant to central administration. A student registry is maintained centrally and on the Health Sciences Campus and a University archives exists. In addition to University documents the University has a range of historical and other valuable collections in paper and other forms. Information about these collections is generally available from the relevant

entity such as the library, or research entities. The following categories of information are kept:

- Agendas, minutes and documents of all statutory governance structures
- Agendas, minutes and documents of non-statutory governance structures.
- Information related to students includes academic records, registration histories, profiles and statistics, theses and dissertations.
- Information with respect to student clubs, societies and bodies.
- Information related to teaching and learning including examination papers, syllabus and rules books and standing orders.
- Information related to research including reports, annual reports, statistics and committee documentation.
- Information related to administration (including financial administration) including reports, policies, guidelines and contracts.
- Information related to human resources including conditions of service, staff contracts, statistical information (including equity reports) and staff records.
- Reports as required by legislation.

6 CATEGORIES OF RECORDS AVAILABLE WITHOUT A PERSON HAVING TO REQUEST ACCESS THERETO (SECTION 15)

The following information is automatically available:

Annual reports and statements (including financial reports); the University Calendar; information contained on the internet website.

7 DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FROM THE UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO GAIN ACCESS TO THOSE SERVICES

A comprehensive list of services is contained in the University's Calendar, available at a fee from the Registrar's office, the details of which appear in 3 above. More information is on the University's website.

8 PARTICIPATION IN POLICY OR DECISION MAKING BODIES OF THE UNIVERSITY (SECTION 14(g))

Students and staff participate in policy and decision making processes of the University in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997, as amended, as well as in terms of those internal procedures as agreed with student and staff representative bodies from time to time.

Other interested persons may submit their comments or proposals in writing to the Registrar at the address stated in 3 above.

9 A DESCRIPTION OF ALL REMEDIES AVAILABLE IN RESPECT OF AN ACT OR A FAILURE TO ACT BY THE UNIVERSITY

A student or member of the public may lodge a complaint in writing with the Registrar. The University's internal Grievance Procedure may be utilised by staff members and the student grievance procedure by students.

If the complaint is in respect of an act, or a failure to act in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000, the complainant may take such steps as provided for in sections 74 to 82 of this Act.

10 OTHER INFORMATION

For any other information not contained in this manual, kindly contact the Deputy Information Officer, the contact details of which are given in 3 above.

This manual will be updated annually.

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