

## **Vice-Chancellor First-year welcome speech: 2020**

Good morning ladies and gentleman and a special welcome to the class of 2020.

Your attendance here at the First-Year Welcome Ceremony shows your eagerness to begin your higher education path with us and we are proud and grateful that you have chosen CPUT as your academic partner.

Let me also say right at the outset how grateful we are that you as parents and guardians have entrusted your sons and daughters to us. In selecting CPUT, you have made a wise choice – this institution is one of South Africa's leading universities of technology.

Annually we receive well over 100 000 applications for new admissions. This year all of these applicants competed for close to 9000 first year places. These statistics alone reflect the confidence of the public in CPUT.

CPUT is a relatively young institution, having been established as a result of a merger between the former Cape and Peninsula Technikons in 2005.

We have seen thousands of students graduate, made history by launching Africa's first and second nanosatellite, rolled out new qualifications, revamped our campuses, improved our processes and filed a number of exceptional patents.

At CPUT giving back is an important part of our university culture. Through our Service Learning Programmes we encourage our students to use their skills to make a difference in the local communities, while our researchers are urged to find solutions to real-life problems.

CPUT must produce graduates who understand the need to save our planet and in their daily responsibilities will ensure environmental sustainability.

Innovations like the satellites, water saving technologies and others are borne in our high-tech laboratories, research facilities, IT facilities and well-resourced libraries. All of which will be at your disposal now. Students also have access to



a wide range of academic support services, a notable one being the First-year Experience programme that focuses on holistically supporting all our first year students so that they proceed to their second year of study.

As you begin your educational journey, I want to take this opportunity to encourage each and every one of you to pursue and to achieve academic excellence, here are a few ways you can do that:

- Be accountable and responsible
  - Work hard and smart from day one, work ahead of the lecturer, read materials before it is discussed in class. CPUT assesses students continuously, every assessment counts; you can't wait for year end to make up for lost time.
  - Invest in textbooks, a good artisan must have the right tools
  - Attend classes regularly. It is widely known that there is a high correlation between good attendance and results.
  - Be punctual, whether for lectures or exams.
  - Make full use of all the academic development services that the university provides
  - Constantly seek opportunities for personal, social and intercultural growth.
  - Challenge your mind, exceed your own limitations and discover new ideas and knowledge.
  - Read extensively, you must know and understand the world around you.
  - Have a balanced life – enjoy student life to the fullest, but at all times be responsible. You have the privilege of studying in one of the most beautiful provinces in the country and our campuses are situated all over it. Our Wellington campus in the Boland is home to breath-taking scenery and some of the most historically significant buildings in the region. Explore it and appreciate your surroundings. In Cape Town and Bellville you are a short walk or drive from the best beaches and tourist activities. Stay in touch with your relevant Student Development officer and take part in trips planned throughout the year, adventures like these are subsidised by the institution and will help you see places you would not visit on your own otherwise.
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In conclusion

To the parents:

Hold us accountable, show an interest in the progress of your child, and contact us if you have any concerns. Together, we can achieve the best for your sons and daughters. Thank you once again for attending and entrusting your sons and daughters with us.

Thank You

