



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
Office of the Registrar

LANGUAGE POLICY

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to determine language planning, management and practice at the University of Pretoria in a framework that promotes multilingualism, equitable access, academic quality, equality and social cohesion, as well as to redress historical imbalances.

2. Scope

This policy has University-wide application.

3. Consequences of non-compliance

Failure to implement the Language Policy could potentially result in the University not being compliant with the applicable regulatory framework. This could, amongst other, negatively affect the University's reputation and result in a loss of confidence in the institution. Such loss of confidence could in turn, result in financial losses for the institution and compromise its transformation efforts.

Failure to comply with the policy could result in disciplinary action being taken in terms of the applicable disciplinary code.

4. Principles

The University of Pretoria's language policy seeks to:

- 4.1 facilitate the provision of education of the highest quality to ensure post-university success for graduates and promote the University's local, regional and international standing through thriving scholarship;
- 4.2 promote inclusiveness and social cohesion, while guarding against exclusivity and marginalisation, and in this way contribute to creating an environment where all students and staff feel confident and comfortable and can enjoy a sense of belonging;
- 4.3 be transformative in attending to historical injustices and promote justice, equality and equitable access for all students and staff at the University;

- 4.4 facilitate an equitable learning environment that provides equal access to knowledge and resources;
- 4.5 recognise the intrinsic intellectual, cultural and social value of the diverse range of linguistic backgrounds that students and staff bring to the University;
- 4.6 promote multilingualism in all South African languages, with specific responsibility for the development of Sepedi to the highest level of scholarship; and
- 4.7 be sustainable and practicable within the context of the University's financial, staffing and infrastructural resources.

5. Policy statement

In support of the above considerations, the following policy is adopted:

- 5.1 English is the language of teaching and learning (in lectures, tutorials and assessments) except in cases where the object of study is a language other than English, and in programmes with profession-specific language outcomes, subject to approval by Senate.
- 5.2 The University must identify needs and provide the necessary financial and other resources to facilitate teaching and learning in the medium of English.
- 5.3 The University must provide spaces and resources for drawing on students' strongest languages (in particular Sepedi and Afrikaans, but where possible also other South African languages) to assist students in understanding key concepts in their modules.
- 5.4 English, Sepedi and Afrikaans are the languages of official communication and administration on all campuses and in residences, with services being provided in other South African languages where requested, feasible and affordable.
- 5.5 The University must adequately resource the development of Sepedi to a higher level of scientific discourse and must support and sustain Afrikaans as a language of scholarship.

- 5.6 The University must encourage and enable students and staff formally and informally to learn other South African languages.
- 5.7 The University must provide staff members with the necessary support and training to enable them to communicate in at least English.
- 5.8 The University must use at least English, Sepedi and Afrikaans for ceremonial purposes.
- 5.9 The University must provide learning support for language impaired students and staff and those living with other disabilities.

6. Implementation Rules

- 6.1 This policy applies from 1 January 2022.
- 6.2 Where the class size remains practically feasible and academically justifiable, students who enrolled for the first time in 2018 or earlier, will continue to receive their tuition (lectures and tutorials), study guides and assessment materials (tests, examinations, assignments and the like) in Afrikaans for the designated completion time of the programmes where these were available in Afrikaans when the student first enrolled for that programme.
- 6.3 Where this right currently exists, students who enrolled for the first time in 2018 or earlier, will be allowed to answer any assessments in Afrikaans for the designated completion time of the programme.

Senate and Faculties

- 6.4 The University must produce a language development plan that will be submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training. Progress in terms of the implementation and achievement of the objectives of the Language Development Plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

- 6.5 All faculties will review their language plans annually to ensure that they remain current and relevant and to ensure that they are aligned with and support the achievement of the objectives of the Language Development Plan of the University.
- 6.6 The Faculty plans are subject to approval by the Executive. They will serve at Senate for information and noting.
- 6.7 The University must appropriately allocate financial and human resources to enable the realisation of the objectives of the Language Development Plan.
- 6.8 The relevant deans and directors will be responsible for the execution of the approved Language Development Plan.

Communication

- 6.9 The Language Policy of the University and the Language Development Plan will be available on the University of Pretoria's website and Intranet.

Assessments

- 6.10 Notwithstanding 5.1 above, students enrolled for professional qualifications may be required from time to time to complete a task in a particular language as part of their professional training.
- 6.11 Notwithstanding 5.1 above, undergraduate research essays and postgraduate dissertations and theses may be completed in any language, where reasonably practicable.

Disputes

- 6.12 Should a dispute arise between a lecturer and a student(s) regarding the language of tuition, the dispute will be resolved according to the process set out in the Escalation Policy of the University.

Responsible member of the Executive

- 6.13 The member of the Executive designated by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal is responsible for overseeing the implementation of and all decisions relating to the University's language policy.
- 6.14 The member of the Executive designated by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal will report annually to Council on the implementation of the University's language policy and the implementation of the Language Development Plan.

7. Associated documents

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (Section 29(2))

The Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997 as amended)

Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions

The National Language Policy Framework (2003)

Pan South African Language Board Act (No. 59 of 1995)

Escalation Policy of the University of Pretoria

8. Policy life cycle

This policy should be reviewed at least every four (4) years.

9. Document metadata (to be updated after approval by Council)

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