What is this all about?

In 2019, the University of Cape Town (UCT) introduced the **transformation benchmarks**. These benchmarks operationalize the transformation framework and offer 9 benchmark categories and 30 actions transformation committees can take to contribute to transformation, inclusion and diversity on campus. The UCT Transformation Report (2019) shared our collective achievements in relation to the benchmarks and offers a useful baseline to which we can compare our progress in relation to transformation, inclusion and diversity.

To assist Transformation Committees (TCs) and other transformation agents, the Office for Inclusivity and Change (OIC) has developed a toolkit for TCs. The toolkit will help TCs implement actions to strengthen transformation in their department or faculty. The toolkit is comprised of sections which cover each individual benchmark and a Transformation Improvement Plan template which acts as a worksheet. The former offers guidance and the latter offers practice, together the tool can assist us to strengthen transformation at UCT.

1

Developing a transformation improvement plan

What to expect?

- **GUIDANCE:** Each section will guide you towards actions the TC can take to strengthen transformation, inclusion and diversity. These actions align with the expectations of the Transformation Framework.
- **A CHECKLIST:** the actions are arranged in a checklist to make progress easy to track.
- **A SHORT VIDEO:** each section will include a short video which shares a brief explanation of the benchmark and the actions.
  - **A WORKSHEET:** each section of the toolkit corresponds to a segment of the Transformation Improvement Plan template. Fill in the template as you go.
    - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** the actions described here are not expected to be fulfilled by the TC chairs only. These describe the actions all TC members should be involved in and often involve staff members, students and community members as well.

Action checklist for section 1

☑ **HOST A MEETING** with your TC. Include a discussion about your benchmark scores for the previous year and actions the TC could take in the current year to strengthen transformation, inclusion and diversity.

☑ **SHARE THE CURRENT TRANSFORMATION REPORT** with staff and students in your department or faculty. Encourage discussion about the transformation challenges and good practices in your department or faculty.

☑ **FILL IN THE "OVERALL GOALS" SECTION** of the Transformation Improvement Plan template to assess your TC's areas of strength and challenges.

TIP

The actions in your Transformation Improvement plan should align and can overlap with the actions developed in response to the Inclusivity Survey.

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Need a refresher?
Here is a summary of the transformation benchmarks.

The A, B, Cs of transformation

UCT has employed transformation benchmarks to encourage the university to take bold actions to integrate, respond to and support transformation, inclusion and diversity. The benchmarks fall into nine categories. Each category suggests how the university can better practise transformation. The forthcoming sections will deal with each of these benchmarks individually.

A. Strategic integration of transformation

Within the institution how well is transformation mainstreamed within basic strategic actions?

B. Student access and support

How is the institution supporting diverse students with disparate backgrounds to be included, to fully participate and to succeed within UCT?

C. Staff access and support

How is the institution supporting diverse staff members from disparate backgrounds to be included, to fully participate and to grow within UCT?

D. Place and space: language, names, symbols, artworks and identity

How is the university affirming the dignity, acknowledging the contributions and experiences, and placing special attention on those who have been historically marginalised?

E. Institutional responses to unfair discrimination, harassment and violence

How is the university practising its zero-tolerance approach to any form of unfair discrimination, harassment, sexual violence and behaviour that demeans others?

F. Community engagement: anchoring UCT in community

How is the university supporting, building solidarity with and providing professional services to communities?

G. Teaching and learning support: decolonisation, marginalisation and accessibility

To what extent is the curriculum and pedagogy employed meeting the needs of and accessible to marginalised persons? How has curriculum, pedagogy and the broader learning environment been decolonised?

H. Owning UCT's African identity

How is the university centring its African identity through scholarship, teaching and learning practice, or activist initiatives?

I. Innovations, alternate approaches and best practices

What are the innovations and best practices which have been employed to further transformation, inclusivity and diversity?

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Find a detailed breakdown of the **TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS** below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

A. Strategic integration of transformation

A1
The faculty/department systematically analyses transformation, inclusion and diversity, and incorporates findings into annual planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Conduct an analysis of the transformation context in your faculty/department and ensure the analysis is shared with faculty/department management to inform annual or strategic planning.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Your transformation report from the previous year acts as an analysis to inform transformation actions in the forthcoming year. This report or any other which analyzed the transformation context in your department and informed annual planning at a faculty/departmental level could fulfil this action.

A2
Main communication or knowledge product of faculty/department (for e.g. annual report, special edition of journal or other) explicitly addresses issues related to transformation, inclusion and diversity.

Ensure that the main communication or knowledge product for the department/faculty includes a section which reflects the transformation, inclusion and diversity dimensions of the entity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Include a section on transformation, inclusion and diversity or the work of the TC in your annual report to council, senate or the DHET.

A3
Key messages/communications on transformation, inclusion and diversity disseminated to faculty/department stakeholders.

Ensure that at least one faculty-wide communication in the form of an email, poster campaign, or social and behaviour change campaign focuses on transformation, inclusion and diversity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

An email on student demographics, a poster campaign in response to racism or a social and behaviour change campaign focussing on patriarchal masculinities.

A4
Percentage of the annual budget spent on transformation, inclusion or diversity programming in the preceding 12-months

Ensure that the relevant finance representative tracks all expenditure related to transformation, inclusion and diversity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Expenditure for events, poster campaigns, workshops/trainings or other sessions, or research (among other actions) focussing on transformation, inclusion and diversity.

A5
Percentage of annual budget allocated to transformation, inclusion or diversity programming in the forthcoming 12-months.

Create and submit a budget to faculty or department to cover transformation, inclusion and diversity programming in the forthcoming year. Calculate what % of the overall faculty/department budget would be allocated to transformation, inclusion and diversity actions.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Your transformation improvement plan when completed could act as your budget.

A6
At least 3 staff members participate in the transformation committee with an agreed upon TOR and at least 10% of time allocated to transformation committee functions.

Ensure that there are at least 3 TC members. If there are fewer either nominate new members or elect new members. Ensure that the TC has an updated Terms of Reference. If the TC does not have an updated TOR – update and ratify the TORs. TORs should explicitly mention that TC members to spend 10% of time on TC related actions and should align with the UCT transformation framework.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host TC meetings and keep agenda and minutes, update TC TORs and vote to ratify, and make sure that TC members are adhering to the term limits associated with TCs.

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Find a detailed breakdown of the TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

B. Student access, support and success

B1 Progress has been made towards attaining a more diverse student and graduate profile; with a X% shift in the preceding 12 months

Ensure that the faculty is tracking faculty student profile disaggregated by department and/or sub-departments (if sub-department hosts more than 50 students) and faculty graduate profile disaggregated by department and/or sub-departments (if sub-department hosts more than 50 students).

Ensure there is evidence of an X% shift in preceding 12 months towards achieving a more diverse student and graduate profile.

Keep a summary note on actions taken to achieve diversity in student body.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host a special TC meeting with person responsible for tracking student demographics. Discuss any issues faced by excluded demographic groups (for example women students in engineering). Create recommendations for better including excluded groups.
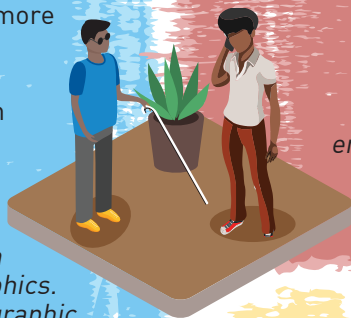
B2 Students can access educational and psychosocial support.

Ensure education support is provided and/or institutional services available to students is communicated and track the number of users of department/faculty-specific service.

Ensure that psychosocial support is provided and/or institutional services available to students is communicated and track the number of users of department/faculty-specific service.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Create and disseminate an email for students which shares contact details of available educational and psychosocial support.

B4 The faculty/department has an anonymous feedback and complaint mechanism or referral system in place to address student/staff grievances.

Create or maintain a mechanism or referral system, and track number of users in the preceding year. Keep a description of process for resolving complaints, and number of complaints resolved in the preceding year.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Create an anonymous feedback box on your website or using one of the free online suggestion box sites which allow for anonymity.

B3 Host at least one faculty/department-wide learning-activity, dialogue or discussion on issues (specific to the themes of diversity, inclusion and/or transformation) affecting students.

Host a learning activity, discussion or dialogue and keep the agenda and list of participants. Collect feedback from attendees about experience of event and effectivity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host an hour long online or in-person discussion with students on their experience of a health-crisis, social issue or current political event. Use online hosting sites such as Microsoft Teams, Vula or Mentimeter to encourage interaction and discussion

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Find a detailed breakdown of the TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

C. Staff access, support and success

C1 Progress has been made towards overall diversity (more black, women and disabled staff members) in the faculty/department; with a minimum X% shift in the preceding 12 months.

Ensure the faculty/department is tracking the staff profile disaggregated by department and/or sub-departments (if sub-department hosts more than 20 staff members). Ensure there is evidence of an X% shift in preceding 12 months towards achieving a more diverse staff profile. Keep a summary note on actions taken to achieve diversity in staff body.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host a special TC meeting with the EE manager or another relevant representative to discuss progress towards EE in your faculty/department. Discuss how EE reps can be upskilled, supported or acknowledged in their roles.

C2 Progress has been made towards equal participation of diverse staff members (more black, women and disabled persons) in committees, advisory bodies and other decision-making entities; with a minimum X% shift in the preceding 12 months.

Keep a list of how representative faculty/department committees/decision-making bodies are in terms of race, gender and disability.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Facilitate a discussion between TC members and the management of the relevant faculty/department to ensure that committees and decision-making bodies include and represent diverse groups. Where a committee isn't representative make recommendations for including a relevant group (for example including more women or persons with a disability).

C3 The faculty/department has created or participated in a support and advancement programme (also referred to as a pipeline) to support, advance and grow black, women and disabled academics and managers.

Keep a description of the advancement structure/pipeline, including milestones of pipelines and number of participants. Make sure to communicate the support (related to diversity, inclusion and transformation) available and/or communication of institutional services available to staff, and track the number of users of faculty/department-specific service.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Communicate information on the New Academics Programme or highlight the creation of an inhouse mentorship programme for new staff members which encourages growth for designated groups.

C4 Progress has been made towards diversity (more black, women and disabled postgraduate students and post-docs) in the faculty/department; with a minimum X% shift in the preceding 12 months. In non-academic departments the inclusion of early-career professionals who are black, women or disabled can be listed here.

Track the faculty postgrad profile disaggregated by department and/or sub-departments (if sub-department hosts more than 20 staff members). Track faculty post-doc profile disaggregated by department and/or sub-departments (if sub-department hosts more than 20 staff members). Keep a summary note on actions taken to achieve diversity in staff body.

FOR EXAMPLE:

The development of an internship programme for designated groups or plan of action to better include previously excluded groups.

C5 Orientation to UCT's commitment to transformation, inclusivity and diversity is integrated into employee briefing for new employees.

Ensure that diversity, inclusion and transformation is included into briefings for new employees, such as a generic email to new staff members or briefing session agenda which includes info on transformation.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Create a generic email that could go out to new staff members which shares information about UCT's approach to transformation and important contact details.

C6 At least one faculty/department-wide learning-activity, dialogue or discussion on issues (specific to the themes of diversity, inclusion and/or transformation) affecting staff.

Host a learning activity, discussion or dialogue and keep the agenda and list of participants. Collect feedback from attendees about experience of event and effectivity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host an online or in-person discussion or dialogue dealing with a health crises, social issue or challenges facing staff. Use an online platform such as Microsoft teams, Mentimeter or WhatsApp to encourage interaction and discussion.

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Find a detailed breakdown of the TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

D. Place and space: language, names, symbols, artworks and identity

D1 At least one example of contribution to development, amendment, implementation or dissemination of policies or processes related but not limited to heritage, disability, gender, language and/or race.

Note any actions taken to contribute to policy or process development, amendment, implementation or dissemination.

FOR EXAMPLE:

An email communication with staff members informing/ reminding them about a policy, or a presentation to a dean's advisory council (or other relevant governance structure) on a policy.

D2 At least one faculty/ department-wide intervention which contributed to a more transformed, inclusive or diverse campus environment. Eligible actions should focus on inclusion in relation to language, naming of buildings or spaces, symbols or symbolic representations, artworks or engage critically with diverse identities.

Keep a list of interventions in the form of events hosted, processes formally initiated or changes which occurred in the preceding 12 months.

FOR EXAMPLE:

i) Renaming of venues, buildings, roads or other infrastructure;
(ii) procuring new or re-curating artworks;
(iii) heritage projects which focus on researching or disseminating information or engaging communities on slavery, colonialism or apartheid;
(iv) disability inclusion i.e. making all venues accessible;
(v) specific dialogues about space or place which aim to improve classrooms, the workplace and social environments;
(vi) sexuality inclusion i.e. diverse pronouns and gender neutral restrooms;
(vii) other specific interventions related to this theme.

D3 Knowledge or advocacy product or communication which explicitly redresses historical privilege and power as manifest in colonialism and apartheid.

All staff or student communication or campaign which explicitly responds to historical privilege and power as manifest in colonialism and apartheid.

FOR EXAMPLE:

An email communication or social media campaign focussing on race, class and gender in relation to access to laptops, data or other relevant resources needed for learning.

Race and gender are lenses we can use to understand inequality. Due to historic and current racial and gender discrimination, even today not everyone is treated equally.

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Find a detailed breakdown of the TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

E. Institutional responses to discrimination harassment and violence

E1 At least one example of contribution to development, amendment, implementation or dissemination of policies or processes related but not limited to sexual offences, sexual harassment, discrimination and gender discrimination.

Note any actions taken to contribute to policy or process development, amendment, implementation or dissemination.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Contribute to institutional policy review and development processes through writing a submission or response to a policy draft. Alternatively, create an email communication for staff members informing/reminding them about a policy, or a presentation to a dean's advisory council (or other relevant governance structure) on a policy.

E2 Students and staff have better access support and services as survivors of discrimination, harassment or abuse, as well as counsel for alleged perpetrators.

Communicate a description of department/faculty-specific services available and/or institutional services available to students and staff. Track number of users of faculty/department-specific service.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Through email communications, posters or a social media campaign communicate the contact details to institutional services (such as survivor support or student wellness services) or department/faculty-specific services.

E3 Students and staff have better knowledge and awareness of services, support and experiences related to discrimination, harassment or abuse.

Host trainings, awareness-raising actions or advocacy campaigns which focus on sexual, gender or racial discrimination, harassment or abuse. Keep a list of participants and collect feedback from attendees about experience of event and effectivity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host awareness raising and/or sensitization sessions on relevant themes. Try inviting a facilitator from the OIC or an external organisation if there isn't one available on the TC.

Race, gender and disability plays a role in discrimination and prejudice. A young coloured lesbian woman from a low-income neighbourhood will face challenges that an affluent heterosexual woman may not.

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THE A TO Z OF TRANSFORMATION
SECTION 1 OF 11

Find a detailed breakdown of the **TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS** below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

F. Community engagement: anchoring UCT in community

F1 The faculty/department has a written agreement to collaborate with a community-based, civil or social organisation or enterprise which seeks to contribute to social justice, human rights, redress or response to violence, discrimination or harassment, or is otherwise committed to transformation, inclusion or diversity.

Track the partnership agreements, reports or minutes of the meeting with the organisation. If appropriate, conduct an assessment or reflection on how effective partnership has been to build community engagement

FOR EXAMPLE:

Initiate, develop or formalize a relationship with a relevant organisation or enterprise. This could include a local community-based organisation focussing on access to food, habitat for humanity or #BlackLivesMatter. A written agreement with the organisation would highlight the ways in which the department/faculty will work together with the organisation to further transformation, inclusion or diversity within or beyond UCT.

F2 The faculty/department has participated in multilateral engagements with community-based, civil or social sector bodies, networks or other coordination mechanisms which seeks to contribute to social justice, human rights, redress or response to violence, discrimination or harassment, or is otherwise committed to transformation, inclusion or diversity.

Note the community-based, civil or social sector bodies, networks or other coordination mechanisms the faculty/departments participated in, track the number of meetings attended and associated workplans.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Participate or encourage participation in multilateral forum, networks or movements which contribute to social justice. Try participating in sessions by the Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychology in Africa, Conferences by Engineering Diversity or networks focussing on the inclusion of LGBTIAQ persons in health professions. Make sure that the forum or network is contributing to transformation, inclusion or diversity.

F3 In the preceding 12-months the faculty/office has made at least one substantive contribution to multilateral engagements with community-based, civil or social sector bodies, networks or other coordination mechanisms which seeks to contribute to social justice, human rights, redress or response to violence, discrimination or harassment, or is otherwise committed to transformation, inclusion or diversity.

Note any faculty/departments contribution to the work and outcomes of the community-based, civil or social sector bodies, networks or other coordination mechanisms.

FOR EXAMPLE:

In addition to participating in multilateral forum, networks and movements, make a concrete contribution. This could include presenting at a forum or network, contributing to a joint statement or planning an activity linked to a national or global campaign (like the 16 Days of Activism). Make sure the action contributes to transformation, inclusion or diversity.

F4 The faculty/department has built relationships with community-based, civil or social sector organisations or enterprises which contribute to learning, technical support, research or provision of direct services (ad hoc or otherwise)

Keep track of the names of the stakeholders, describe the nature of the relationship and how this relationship contributes to learning, technical support, research or the provision of direct services/support.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Develop or strengthen an existing relationship with a community, civil or social organisation. This could include (i) a relationship which provides legal services to marginalized persons, (ii) students working at a mobile HIV clinic, (iii) research which collaborated with a street committee to prevent fires in informal settlements or (iv) workshops with school going children on harmful gender norms. Make sure this action provides technical support.

F5 Opportunities are offered to staff and students to connect with, learn from, apply learning or build solidarity and support diverse social constituencies.

Track the opportunities provided to staff and/or students to connect with specific communities.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Build solidarity and connect with local communities in an informal manner. This could include collecting non-perishable foods for a local shelter, painting a local school or collecting books for a community library. Make sure this action builds solidarity.

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Find a detailed breakdown of the **TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS** below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

G. Teaching and learning support: decolonization marginalization and accessibility

G1

(a) In the preceding 12-months the faculty has initiated a review, implemented changes or assessed curriculum and pedagogy to address obstacles which impede student success. The review, implemented changes or assessment explicitly responded to colonialism, systemic racism or other examples of structural inequality and violence.

(b) In the preceding 12-months the non-academic department has initiated a review, changes or an assessment of aspects or processes within the learning environment (access to ICTS, communications on race, community safety, research methodology etc.) which impede full enjoyment of the teaching, learning or research environment. The review, implemented changes or assessment explicitly responded to colonialism, systemic racism or other examples of structural inequality and violence.

Track courses, pedagogy and/or curriculum, which underwent review, changes or assessment OR track the elements or processes of the teaching, learning or research environment which underwent review, change or assessment.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host a workshop with course convenors to assess how courses include content on HIV, gender, race or disability. If an assessment has already been conducted, brainstorm content that could be included on these topics. In a non-academic department review how inclusive administrative or other processes are. For example, do forms include intersex persons or trans persons? If an assessment has already been conducted, brainstorm how these processes could be improved. Make sure these changes explicitly respond to colonialism, systemic racism or other examples of structural inequality or violence.

G2

In the past-12 months staff received training and/or capacity building on sensitively talking about oppression within classrooms and integrating content on anti-oppression into curriculum and teaching resources. Training and capacity building could cover themes such as intersecting inequalities, decolonialism, HIV/AIDS, GBV, sexual and gender diversity, or transformation, inclusion and diversity.

Host training or capacity building on sensitively talking about oppression within classrooms and integrating content on anti-oppression into curriculum and teaching resources. Keep a list of the participants and collect feedback from attendees about experience of event and effectivity.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host a workshop or training session on dealing with social issues such as race, gender, disability or class in the classroom, or a session on integrating anti-oppressive content or approaches into the curriculum, teaching, learning or support activities. Request support from the OIC or an external service provider to assist with facilitation, if TC members are unable to facilitate the session.

G3

In the past 2 years research or evaluation (including informal and activist research) has been conducted and/or published on either integrating anti-oppressive content into teaching and learning or integrating anti-oppressive approaches to ensure the full enjoyment of the learning environment.

Create a TC resource folder of research drafts, papers or publications.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Based on the actions taken under G1 and G2 write and share (or publish) a report on actions taken to adopt anti-oppressive approaches in the teaching and learning environment including support actions.

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Find a detailed breakdown of the TRANSFORMATION BENCHMARKS below. These benchmarks describe the actions you are expected to report against at the end of the year.

H. Owning UCT's African identity

H1

Actions taken which adopt an afro-centric lens, centre the African continent or critically respond to UCT's African Identity within curriculum, pedagogy, research, through workshops, trainings or discussions, co- or extra-curricular activities, through supporting international students and challenging xenophobia within learning environment.

Keep a list of actions taken and the participants or stakeholders in the actions. Collect feedback from participants/ stakeholders about experience of event.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Host a discussion to coincide with Africa Day, or a discussion focussing on indigenous knowledge, language or practice. Other than a discussion, consider conducting research, developing or contributing to afro-centric curricula, or co- or extra-curricular activities which centre our African identity.

While we live with the repercussion of apartheid and colonialism till today, young people are also reimagining what it means to be African.

I. Innovations, alternate approaches and best practices

I 3

New, innovative or alternate approaches to build a transformed, inclusive and critically diverse higher education institution.

Are there any new, innovative or alternate approaches adopted in your faculty/department? What was this approach and how was it a success?

FOR EXAMPLE:

Experiment, test or try out a new or innovative practice or project. Transformation is both creative and an experiment, we encourage you to be both.

The detailed breakdown of the transformation benchmarks can be overwhelming. Don't fear! The forthcoming sections will assist you to deal with each benchmark category individually. The A, B, C's of transformation are easier one letter at a time.

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