**Protocol for the Election of Deans**

**1. Introduction**

The Dean is elected by the Faculty. As such this is not a selection process governed by a representative Committee and this process is therefore not covered by the recruitment and selection policies of the University. This election process is managed by the Registrar, with involvement by the Director: HR, where appropriate. The Faculty’s decision as regards the choice of Dean is a recommendation which requires approval by Senate and Council.

Deans are appointed for a period of five years. The election process is normally completed by 1 January in the year in which the Dean takes office, usually on 1 July. In the case of an internal candidate being the Dean-elect, this allows the Dean-elect to be mentored by the Dean for six months and ensure a smooth transition.

The period of appointment is usually from 1 July to 30 June such that the incoming Dean has a period of orientation and settling down and is involved in planning for the next academic year.

**2. Guiding principles**

The following are guiding principles in the election of Deans:

* The Dean of a Faculty is fore mostly, an academic leader and as the leader of the faculty is entrusted with a central role in facilitating a creative environment for the promotion of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.
* The Deans are elected and as such, are accountable in a system of academic governance characterised by democratically established faculty committees. This stands in contrast to the Executive Dean positions in other universities, whereby persons occupying these positions are identified by selection committees.
* Rhodes University prides itself on the centrality of the academic project at this institution and the accountability of the Dean to their Faculty, is seen as critical to this.
* The election process must be informed by institutional and Faculty imperatives. These imperatives include: the role of the Dean within Rhodes University (see role profile for this purpose); the needs of the Faculty as regards the academic project; the strategic imperatives of the University related to the academic project and its impact on the Faculty; as well as institutional and faculty equity and transformation goals and imperatives.
* The process should be consultative and participatory.
* An expansive approach should be taken to the identification of candidates including: where feasible, the removal of barriers to self-nomination and consideration of suitable candidates outside of the University, in line with the strategic imperatives of the University. Given that external candidates may be involved, consideration needs to be given to certain governance and legislative requirements.
* Where possible,the election of a new Dean and Deputy-Dean should not occur at the same time.

**3. Process for electing a Dean**

3.1 Nine months prior to the end of the current Dean’s term of office, the Registrar will place on the faculty agenda (a normal Faculty meeting, involving the current Dean), an item to start the process for electing a Dean and shall administer the process described in 3.2 and 3.3 below;

3.2 For larger faculties, the faculty shall elect a group of three of its members, called the Faculty Election team. This shall take place as follows:

3.2.1 Members of the Faculty shall nominate academics to sit on this Faculty Election team;

3.2.2 Each member of Faculty shall have three votes and this team shall be identified by a majority vote of those at the meeting;

3.2.3 This Faculty Election team should be established academics, recognised by their peers for their wisdom and who will not be standing for election. The current Dean will not be a member of this group, even if the person is not standing for re-election;

3.2.4 The group will elect a Chair person from their midst.

3.3 In the case of a smaller faculty, the Faculty can elect to have a Faculty Election team or an external facilitator, either external to the Faculty or the University. If a Faculty Election team is supported, the process described in 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 shall apply. If an external facilitator is to be used, the Faculty shall agree on that facilitator;

3.4 The roles of the Faculty Election team (or facilitator) are as follows:

*3.4.1 Information gathering and sharing*; the Faculty Election team will be responsible for ensuring that all the necessary documents (Faculty Transformation Plan, Faculty Development Plan, University Transformation Report, Institutional Development Plan, the Dean’s role profile, demographic profile of staff of Faculty and institution, conditions of service of Deans and others) are available on a relevant web site. In the case of attracting external candidates, this website will need to be accessible to outside candidates.

The Faculty Election team should consult with the current Dean as necessary but the Dean will play no part in decision-making. Where the current Dean is not standing for re-election, the Dean may be asked to prepare a written report, a critical reflection on experiences as Dean.

The Faculty Election team will consult more widely within the University, including the Vice Chancellor’s Office, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Equity & Institutional Culture.

This information gathering serves two purposes, to give the Faculty Election team a better understanding of the role of the Dean and to give them the necessary background to chair the faculty workshop. The Registrar’s Office can be expected to provide administrative assistance in supporting this team e.g. collection of information required, putting information on websites and organisation of meetings;

*3.4.2 Facilitation of Workshop:* the Faculty Election team will arrange and chair a workshop at which the needs of the faculty and institution as they relate to the Faculty are identified and discussed and that the role of the Dean, process of appointing the Dean and relevant conditions are service are understood. The Faculty Election team will ensure that all members of faculty have an opportunity to participate in the discussion so that a range of voices is heard. Where the current Dean is available for re-election, s/he will not participate as already s/he has access to this information. This also avoids any perceptions or concerns that the current Dean may be unduly influence the discussion.

As part of the workshop, the Faculty Election team will lead the discussion on the specifics of the candidate assessment process and ensure that a process is identified. The candidate assessment process is the process by which the candidates will demonstrate their suitability for the role of Dean. For more detail and the various considerations, see Appendix 1;

The Director: HR or his/her designate can assist the Faculty in putting the documentation together for the candidate assessment process. This documentation needs to be provided to candidates.

*3.*3.4 *No identification of individuals*: the Faculty Election team, as a collective, will not approach individuals and will not, as a group, make nominations. Each member of this team may, in their individual capacity, make or support a nomination.

**4. Process**

The following process is followed:

4.1.1 The Registrar calls for nominations. Such nominations can either be internal (i.e. from amongst current staff at Rhodes) or external (i.e. from outside of Rhodes). Where external nominations take place, only Black South African candidates will be considered in line with the institution’s Employment Equity Plan, subject to point 4.1.14 below;

4.1.2 A nomination shall require the support of the nominator as well as:

(a) In the case of the Faculty of Law, Pharmacy and Education, the support of four other staff in the relevant Faculty and the acceptance of the nomination by the nominee;

(b) In the case of the Faculties of Commerce, Humanities and Science, support of at least 10% of the Faculty and the acceptance of the nomination by the nominee;

(c) Staff may only nominate and/or support one internal nominee and one external nominee;

(d) The nominator is responsible for ensuring that the nominee meets the education and experience requirements of the role profile for the role of Dean. This is critical as no shortlisting of all those nominated will take place;

(e) Internal nominees are encouraged to meet with the Director: HR to explore what appointment as Dean would imply for them personally in terms of their remuneration and their career trajectory. External nominees will be provided with the conditions of service and will be invited to contact the Director: HR;

4.1.3 The Registrar announces the nominations;

4.1.4 The nominees are advised of the candidate assessment process and the requirements of the Faculty, as per item 3.4.2 above. All nominees must have access to relevant institutional and faculty documentation. The HR Division will ensure provision of these.

The Chair of the Faculty Election Team shall be available to external nominees to discuss the nature of the post and the strategic imperatives of the institution and faculty. This is to ensure that the external nominees are as informed as internal nominees who would have participated in the faculty workshop.

The HR Division can support the Faculty in making the necessary arrangements for external nominees to travel to Grahamstown;

4.1.5 Once a submission is made by a nominee (in line with the Faculty assessment process as per Appendix 1), the person shall be referred to as a candidate;

4.1.6 Candidates do not participate in the process except as candidates. They shall not have a vote;

4.1.7 The candidate assessment and election process will be followed in its entirety whether there is only one candidate or multiple candidates;

4.1.8 In line with the Faculty requirements (as per Appendix 1), candidates submit relevant documentation to the Registrar for onward transmission to the members of the Faculty;

4.1.9 A special Faculty Board meeting is held at which candidates will present a vision for the faculty and answer questions from the faculty, questions related to the vision and the requirements of the role of Dean. This meeting shall be chaired by the Chair of the Faculty Election Team. The Director: HR or designate shall be in attendance at this meeting to ensure that all legal and good governance requirements related to this process are met and to advise the Faculty as required.;

4.1.10 The Registrar will administer and manage the election process. The successful candidate requires the support of an absolute majority of Faculty. If, after the first and subsequent rounds of voting, no candidate has an absolute majority, the candidate with the least amount of votes in that round of voting will no longer be considered and a further round of voting will take place. In the event of a tie, a re-election shall take place until an absolute majority is achieved. The vote takes place via a postal vote;

4.1.11 The recommendation will be announced to Faculty, noting that approval is required from Senate and Council. The Registrar will ensure that the relevant documentation and recommendation is put before Senate and Council for approval. It is Senate and Council’s responsibility to ensure that the Faculty decision also supports the University’s needs, interests and imperatives and that the recommended candidate meets the requirements of the Dean role profile. As such, Senate and/or Council can refer to the matter back to Faculty if the proposed candidate does not meet the profile requirements;

4.1.12 In the case of Deans in the Faculties of Education, Law and Pharmacy where the Dean role is usually occupied at the same time as the academic role, the appointment of an external Dean will constitute an extra post for the department/Faculty. This is not the case for the Deans of the other faculties. Approval for the additional post will need to go to the Budget Executive Committee via the Director: Human Resources. The decision to allow the external appointment of Dean will take into account budget considerations, strategic and transformation imperatives and any current vacancies or upcoming retirements or vacancies. Where there is no approval for the additional post, the internal candidate with the next highest vote, shall be recommended by the Faculty.

Where an external appointment is supported and in the case of the Faculties of Law and Pharmacy, the Faculty will need to confirm if the candidate will also be Head of Department (HoD). The current dispensation in these two Faculties is that the Dean is also the HoD. Where the Faculty is of the opinion that a separate HoD shall be appointed, this shall impact the remuneration package offered to the external candidate;

4.1.13 Unsuccessful external candidates will be advised of the outcome of the election process by the Registrar;

4.1.14 If there are no suitable internal candidates and no suitable external Black South African candidates, the Faculty Election Team may motivate to Senate, for its approval, the consideration of white external candidates with preference being given to white women.

5. **Institutional contract with the new Dean**

Following the approval of the Faculty’s recommendation, the Director: HR will on behalf of the institution, issue a letter of contract subject to the conditions of service that prevail for that appointment.

For further information refer to the relevant conditions of service:

* Conditions of Service for Internal Candidates in the Faculties of Commerce, Humanities and Science
* Conditions of Service for Internal Candidates in the Faculties of Education, Law and Pharmacy
* Conditions of Service for External Candidates

**Written: From source document re the Faculty Deans, approved by Council, 12th of September 2013,**

**Updated with practical considerations by Director: HR**

**Considered at Academic Leadership Forum on 2nd of October 2013**

**Discussion at Dean’s Form on 3rd of October 2013**

**Considered at meeting of Deans on 23 October 2013**

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**Appendix 1: Candidate assessment process**

The Faculty needs to confirm the details of the process by which the candidates will demonstrate their suitability for the role of Dean. The Director: HR or his/her designate can assist the Faculty with this task.

This includes:

(a) Confirmation of the education and experience requirements of the Dean as these may differ by Faculty

(b) The submission process

(c) The candidate assessment process

(a) Confirmation of role profile of Dean

The Dean’s role profile specifies the following education and experience requirements:

***“EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE***

While the education and experience of the Dean is not prescriptive and the requirements may be different in different Faculties, the majority of Deans will have the following attributes:

* At least a PhD
* Usually at the level of at least Associate-Professor
* Typically at least 10 years working experience as an academic and/or researcher

The individual being considered as Dean has a successful track record in the following areas:

* Own research, preferably having led initiatives at the departmental/Faculty level to improve research within the department/Faculty
* Supervision of post-graduates, up to PhD level, with a keen understanding of the role of supervisor
* Teaching at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels, preferably having led initiatives at the departmental/Faculty level to review, improve curriculum and assessment in the department/Faculty
* Having explored Community engagement (CE) linkages in terms of teaching and research
* Leadership and management roles at the departmental or faculty level having led initiatives at the departmental/Faculty level to review current functioning or explore new processes or taken responsibility for large projects. These can be formal (e.g. HoD, Deputy HoD, Acting HoD, Head of research or teaching within the department) or informal roles (e.g. mentoring of young staff, research leadership roles, head of a departmental or Faculty project)
* Co-ordination and administration at the departmental or faculty level

Involvement in University Committees including Faculty, Senate, Institutional Planning Committee with exposure to the myriad of academic student and staff processes. “

The Faculty needs to consider the appropriateness of these requirements for its Faculty. For example, in the Faculty of Science, the Faculty may believe that the Dean must have a PhD and must be at the level of Associate Professor while in the Faculty of Commerce, the Faculty may believe that the Dean must be at the level of Associate Professor with at least a Masters’ degree.

(b) Submission process

It is recommended that candidates submit the following documentation:

* Full curriculum vitae
* A detailed letter of motivation arguing for his/her suitability relative to the requirements for the role of Dean
* Written document detailing the vision for the Faculty.

Candidates need to be advised of the requirements of Faculty.

(c) Candidate assessment process

A typical process to assess the merit of all candidates is as follows:

* Referee reports are accessed for all (even internal candidates to ensure an equivalent process) the candidates and provided to the Faculty (or Faculty Election Team) before the meeting with candidates.
* Each candidate makes a written submission of their vision to the Faculty. The length of this can be prescribed by the Faculty. This would usually be sent to all members of the Faculty prior to the presentation being made.
* Each candidate is given 15 minutes to make a brief presentation of their vision to the Faculty.
* A question and answer session related to the vision follows, typically lasting 30 minutes.
* Other questions to assess the person’s suitability as Dean are asked of each candidate, typically lasting 45 minutes.
* Qualification and employment check conducted for external candidate if person is successful candidate. This is conducted by the HR Division.

The Faculty shall be required to confirm interview questions to assess the competencies of each candidate as per the Dean role profile. The Director: HR or designate can assist with drafting of these questions.