

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS: Delivered by Prof Karin Barac on
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**A reflection on accounting within South Africa's higher education
landscape**

The purpose of this inaugural address is to reflect on accounting within South Africa's higher education landscape, and the responsibilities that it brings in its wake. This address comprises of two distinct parts.

The first part will provide a brief overview of the nature of a university, showing that the activities of the universities of today are focussed on and by society's demands. Then, the state of academic accounting in South Africa, and elsewhere, is examined, with specific reference to the influence exercised by the professional accounting bodies (particularly, in this country, by the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants) – an examination, if you will, of the tensions between “training” (for immediate absorption into the workforce) and “educating” (for a more contemplative life, perhaps, embracing teaching, research and innovation). The attributes accounting graduates are now expected to possess, as well transformation demands within academia and business, are specifically considered.

The second part of this address presents the vision for the Department of Auditing at the University of Pretoria, and connects this to the aforementioned reflections.

The term “accounting” as it is used in this address, refers to all disciplines in financial sciences that contribute to the education and development of professional accountants. These disciplines include

financial accounting, management accounting, financial management, taxation and auditing.

The term “blacks” also requires clarification. In the context of this address “blacks” refers to people of colour; those most oppressed by the previous apartheid regime.

The nature of a university

We are all functioning in a rapidly changing environment, the rate of whose change has been called “radical” by Nadler and Tushman (1995). This is creating many uncertainties and adding complexities which are challenging traditional beliefs and ideas, where adherence to previously “proven” orders and structures can no longer guarantee success.

Social institutions, such as universities, professions and businesses, operate in this changing society in terms of an explicit or implicit social contract; a shared understanding of appropriate behaviour that guides social actors to behave in ways that are broadly recognized as moral (Carnegie & Napier, 2009). Back in the 1970s Schoker and Sethi (1973) expressed the opinion that the growth and sustainability of universities was based on their ability to deliver socially desirable ends.

Many believe that from a functionalist perspective, institutions such as universities or the professions are constantly being assessed by their output, to determine their legitimacy and relevance. This is in line with

the thinking of Schoker and Sethi (1973), Van Ginkel (2004) and Llop (2004). This perspective suggests that universities and the professions can only maintain their status and independence if they continuously demonstrate the benefits of their services to society. This notion is based on the legitimacy theory which suggests that, where there is a severe breach of a social contract by an institution (that is, where there is a serious failure to comply with society's expectations), the community may, as stated by Carnegie and Napier (2009), *'revoke' its contract to continue operations.*

Against this background and context, the obvious question arises: What is the function of a university?

This is a topic that has been widely explored over the years. One has only to turn to the work of Jaspers (in 1960), Von Humboldt (in 1964), Rasovsky (in 1990), and more recently Bok (in 2003) to follow its development. It was Karl Jaspers (in 1960) who said that a university was a community of scholars and students engaged in a common search for the truth.

Striking a more practical balance, Duderstadt (2000:132), for instance, in his paper published in 2000, claimed that:

The university has an obligation for impartial scholarship, high professional integrity, commitment to the development of human resources and sensitivity towards the need for its services in society at large.

Daniel Tarschys, Secretary General of the Council of Europe in the 1990s, described the extraordinary character of universities as follows (De Groof, Neave & Svec 1998:Foreword):

The university is in origin and to a considerable extent remains, a mediaeval corporation: that is to say, a private association recognised by the state as pursuing a public purpose.

According to Mok (writing in 2003:119), over the years the role of universities has changed: they now act less as critics of society and more as servants responding to the needs of society. Bok commented in 1986 on the importance of stakeholder expectations when he stated that university education creates high expectations in stakeholders who are often quick to voice criticism if their expectations are not fulfilled. In her 2004 inaugural address to this university, Prof Koornhof (2004) identified various university stakeholders and their expectations. They include:

- **Students, their parents and/or family/partners**, who consider university education as a key to a better quality of life, a rewarding career, future financial security as well as recognition and status;
- **Employers**, who expect market-ready graduates who require the minimum of additional investment to fulfil their work commitments. They require their graduate employees to have a high level of knowledge, an ability to apply such knowledge to practical situations and an acceptable generic skill set;
- **Professional bodies**, that require new professionals to be competent and able to perform at an acceptable standard in the workplace, from day one;

- **Academics**, who strive to produce “the educated mind” that critically questions rather than expediently accepts contemporary ideas and methods; that pursues the truth as an end in itself; that is able to perceive the whole and not only individual parts, and that has a sense of moral responsibility towards society.
- **The government** that has the responsibility to oversee educational systems and provide adequate funding, and in return expects accountability from these institutions regarding the use of such funding: in other words, an acceptable return to society on society’s tax investment, measured by an acceptable flow of competent and employable graduates. Government also has to protect the interests of the broader society, and the sustainability of the education system, and of the country as a whole.

Critics refer to the “poverty of university education” if these stakeholder expectations are not met. Failure to meet stakeholder expectations may arise where students are not encouraged to reflect on the social consequences of their training and future actions. University education therefore goes beyond the mere transfer of knowledge. It lies, according to Nagy and Robb (2008), in producing graduates able to contribute to the society of which they become part, while at the same time emerging as independent learners capable of challenging and changing society and able to appreciate the totality of relationships within society. All this is done, as Boyce (2002) rightly pointed out, against the background of an increasingly demanding society, limitations on state funding available for tertiary education, and greater complexity in higher education governance as well as increased competition for student enrolment.

Accounting academics

It has long been accepted that accounting academics are facing the “publish-or-perish” phenomenon. The vast body of literature dealing with research productivity in accounting departments generally assumes that tenure, promotion and merit processes use research (particularly the quality of journals in which faculty members publish) as a benchmark. On the global front accounting academics have been making strides, ever so often, according to Reinstein and Calderon (2006), by discounting the value of applied scholarship and scholarship of teaching. Generally, as reported by Jackling, Natoli, Nuryanah and Ekakayake in 2013, there is still a belief that the competition to publish remains fierce, especially in elite journals. Reinstein and Calderon (2006) support this notion by referring to the rigor of the research and the resources required to publish in elite journals, while the reality of publishing in most elite journals is that it has declined very significantly over time. For example, during the 1950s, *The Accounting Review* published around 25 articles per issue; this number has fallen to about 8 per issue during the 2000s, despite the substantial increase in the number of qualified faculty members (those holding doctorates) relative to the 1950s. They (Reinstein and Calderon 2006) go on to say that most accounting faculties simply cannot afford to reduce the large teaching loads or to provide the computer support and research assistants needed for their faculty members to compete successfully for the few available slots in these elite journals. Additionally, such faculties generally do not have high quality doctoral programmes essential to provide the much needed foundation.

Accounting research has of course also been criticised. Waymire (2012) for example questions the current stature and relevance of accounting research, claiming that “*we need to ensure that we produce research that someone cares about*”. He (2012) appeals for more innovative and relevant research in accounting, but acknowledges that the constant pressures to publish, teach more or new courses, improve teacher ratings, and to provide administrative service, leaves little time for such research. It is easier to simply do more of the same *because this increases the odds of satisfying the requirements of a university’s incentive system* (Waymire, 2012). The inherent nature of accountants – their tendency to like clarity and focus - also impacts negatively on innovative research. Accounting academics often train undergraduate or master’s students to work toward a “right answer”, while for innovative research a much boarder mind-set is needed (Waymire, 2012).

As indicated at the beginning of my address, knowledge creation (or research, as it used to be known), is at the core of a university’s being. This is reflected in the vision of the University of Pretoria, which sees itself as a research-intensive university. Realisation of this vision by accounting and other financial sciences departments at the University of Pretoria remains a challenge, as the vast majority of accounting academics here are currently in their academic infancy, only recently embarked on the research trajectory that will eventually establish them as scholars.

Chapman (2012) cautions that, as the process of becoming a published researcher is arduous and complex, and while tools and techniques are necessary for successful research, they are in themselves not sufficient. Expertise and judgment are traits that are built up over years of reading,

observing the efforts of others, and by the researcher's own self-assessed efforts.

Accounting professions generally influence accounting academia, and as I have alluded to in this address, accounting academia's impact on research is not reflected in innovative or pertinent studies. Such influence is mostly, according to Evans and Juchau, (2009), reflected in the curriculum, teaching and assessment of programmes being offered. Venter and de Villiers (2013) claim that in the case of the South African Institute for Chartered Accountants (or SAICA as generally referred to) and its relationship with South Africa's accounting academia, this influence is much more pronounced and acts as a disincentive to engage in research. Venter and de Villiers (2013) ascribe this to various mechanisms used by SAICA to emphasise the teaching of currently accepted accountancy elements. These mechanisms include stringent and actively monitored accreditation requirements; financial rewards (for example its subvention scheme whereby financial support flows from the profession to academics); the publication of professional examination results in a format that prominently highlights the university the successful graduates studied through, a practice that has a significant impact on the prestige of an accounting department (as adduced by Van der Schyff (2008)); and the prescriptive syllabus based on its competency framework. This competency framework, used by South African universities offering SAICA-accredited programmes, is comprehensive (as far as the private sector's financial administrative needs are concerned), and affords little opportunity for accounting students to generate new ideas and information by building arguments or by drawing abstractions into generalisations that contribute new

solutions. Studies by Niewoudt and Wilcocks as well as by Niewoudt, Wilcocks and Kilpert in 2005 and 2006 show that 89% of South African accounting academics believe that their education and professional accounting training did not prepare them to do research, and that they generally only spend 5% of their time on research activities.

The fact that many professional accounting lecturers themselves have not been exposed to research prior to their appointment at universities exacerbates the situation (according to Venter and De Villiers, 2013), resulting in teaching-intensive accounting departments, with below average research outputs (both in quantity and quality) from South African accounting academics.

Graduate attributes

In this address I have alluded to the fact that today's universities are striving to meet society's needs (those needs that society has currently identified and voiced for itself, and not necessarily those that are in its longer term best interests), and in doing so, I argue that their focus, especially in a developing country such as South Africa, should not only be on knowledge creation or research but they should play a role in the skills development. Recent shifts in education and labour market policy have resulted in universities being placed under increasing pressure to produce employable graduates (Bridgstock, 2009). Governments (particularly in the UK, Australia and Canada, and even in South Africa) have made public funding for universities partially contingent upon demonstrable graduate outcomes, with an emphasis on the production of 'work-ready' graduates who are competent within their disciplinary

fields and who possess the abilities necessary to negotiate the world of work (Barrie, 2006; Bowden, Hart, King, Trigwell, & Watts, 2000). However, dissension exists regarding exactly what constitutes employability and which graduate attributes are required to foster employability in tertiary students.

The body of published literature contains compelling evidence that accounting graduates do not meet employers' expectations due to shortcomings in their skills development. One could turn to the studies of Sin, Reid and Jones (2012), Paisey and Paisey (2010) and Hancock; Howieson; Kavanagh; Kent; Tempone and Segal (2009) to substantiate the argument. Although a study which I performed in 2009 supports the importance of skills development in accounting graduates, teaching-intensive accounting departments offering SAICA accredited programmes have been producing graduates which, over the years have been proven to be in high demand. Independent research shows that for the 200 largest companies listed on the JSE Ltd, 35% of the 2215 directorships are held by CAs, almost nine out of 10 (89.6%) CFOs of these companies are CAs, and many of the greatest South African entrepreneurs and business leaders such as Ivan Glasenberg of Glencore/Extrata, Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Stephen Koseff of Investec, Sizwe Nxasana of FirstRand, Brian Joffe of Bidvest and Whitey Basson of Shoprite, are all qualified as CAs.

While recognising the importance of CAs to the South African economy there are nevertheless various issues relating to the demands that universities produce graduates with the accountancy industry's required

attributes packaged in an instantly usable postgraduate form that need to be examined. Question: Is the price accounting departments at South African universities are expected to pay for being more teaching-intensive than research-intensive justified? Question: is this price too high for a research-intensive university such as the University of Pretoria? These questions form part of the on-going debate in South Africa as to whether professional accounting education should even be offered by universities; but if so, how should it be structured?

Transformation expectations add heat and extra dimensions to this debate as universities in South Africa have the added burden of being expected to play a critical role in restoring the imbalances brought about during the apartheid era (Kulati, 2000). According to the Ministerial Statement on Higher Education Funding (2006/7 to 2008/9) (MoE, 2006) universities should make major contributions to the social transformation of the South African society and stimulate national economic growth and development. Through their student admissions policies, and their teaching and learning activities, universities can assist in creating a fairer and more just society for South Africa and thereby actively participate in the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), which stresses a stronger focus on middle- and high-level skills development in order to ensure achievement of an acceptable economic growth target (MoE, 2006).

Akoojee, Nkomo and Twalo (2012) believe that achieving a reduction in the labour market's inequalities demands from higher education that it goes beyond the traditional supply notion of producing market-ready and

competent graduates – it requires initiatives to maximise disadvantaged students' success. This is because, according to the research conducted by Borhat, Mayet and Visser (in 2010), positive labour market outcomes for white students surpass those for students from disadvantaged communities.

Transformation expectations

Should South African universities offering SAICA-accredited programmes meet their transformation expectations to redress imbalances of the past by developing competent graduates from disadvantaged communities, closure within the South African accounting profession will be dismantled. Closure, also referred to as social closure, is a philosophical construct used to analyse the domination and monopolization of power and opportunities by status groups defined by racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, sexual and other features (Murphy, 1984). The concept arises in the work of Weber, whose research investigated social stratification as the rationale for one group to monopolize advantages by closing off opportunities to another group of so-called “outsiders” (Malsh, Gendron and Grazzini, 2011). Many recent scholars, including Bonnin and Ruggunan (2013), Ramirez (2001) and Annisette (1999 & 2003), identify professional closure as a particular genre (or sub-set) of social closure – where exclusion is based on access to and success in obtaining the education and credentials which are fundamental to achieving a professional designation or status.

Drawing on social closure theory, indications are that, since the abolition of apartheid in 1994, processes of closure on the basis of race (and

class because these are so closely interrelated) are still prevalent in the South African accounting profession (Hammond, Clayton and Arnold, 2009). Although this is evident in accounting professions elsewhere (for example it may be seen in the under-representation of African-Americans in the US public accounting profession (Stewart, Wells & Ross, 2011:9), and the lack of international Chinese accounting graduates in Australian mainstream accounting firms (James & Otsuka, 2009), the existence of on-going imperialism against the Chinese and Maori accountants excluding them from “the power structure” within the New Zealand accountancy profession (Kim, 2004) , or the appearance that Scottish chartered accountants are predominantly from the middle and upper classes (McPhail, Paisey and Paisey, 2010)), in the South African context it relates to the majority of the population, not to a marginalised minority (SAICA, 2013a; Statistics SA, 2011).

Mdepa and Tshiwula (2012) believe that imbalances within the education system contribute significantly to the inequitable representation of blacks in the South African accounting profession. Since 1994, some mitigating steps have been taken: for example the higher education sector has been the focus of policy development and structural reform intended to transform practices that belonged to apartheid society (Scott and Lesaka, 2010). Realising that this will take years to correct, the SAICA has also embarked on various transformation initiatives (Streng, 2011; Wiese, 2006). The most significant of these is its Thuthuka project (Thuthuka being the isiZulu word meaning “to develop”). This is one of the most effective skills development initiatives launched to date, and demands intensive teaching and other inputs from South African universities, with the aim to

develop human and institutional capacity, so as to increase scarce and critical skills (SAICA, 2012a; The Witness, 2013).

There is already an extensive body of knowledge on initiatives to support students (think of the work of Watson, Apostolou, Hassell & Webber 2003 & 2007; Apostolou, Hassell, Rebele & Watson 2010; Apostolou, Dorminey, Hassell & Watson 2013), mainly relating to a single class or course, or to supporting the attainment of specific institutional or professional competency requirements (Stone, Lightbody & Whait, 2013; Bloch, Brewer & Stout 2012; Young & Warren 2011). Research, however, places little emphasis on initiatives directed at achieving success in professional examinations (Flood & Wilson, 2008).

The Thuthuka project, aiming to support black students aspiring to become chartered accountants, was introduced by SAICA in their effort to promote professional inclusivity. Since its inception in May 2002, Thuthuka has grown from a single provincially based project (in the Eastern Cape) to one that now embraces various projects across South Africa, and involves SAICA, government, and commerce and industry: and South African universities are being used as the vehicle for these skills development initiatives (Temkin, 2010a; Wiese, 2006).

In 2005 the Thuthuka Bursary Fund was established (Temkin, 2010b) with 26 beneficiaries starting their studies in 2006. Today there are approximately 1 800 Thuthuka bursary holders who are attending twelve

universities across the country. The most recent universities to receive accreditation for their accounting courses, and thus become eligible for the SAICA and National Skills Fund support, is the University of Limpopo. The R25 million grant is intended for the support of 452 students. Then, the partnership between the Bankseta, the University of Cape Town and SAICA has resulted in an investment of R64 million in the University of Zululand that is intended to enable 400 students to gain access to a high-quality undergraduate degree programme with international recognition. And finally, the investment of R84 million by the National Skills Fund and the Department of Higher Education and Training in the Walter Sisulu University was intended to give 425 previously disadvantaged students access to an undergraduate degree that would previously have been unavailable to them (Thuthuka, 2013; Engineering News Online, 2012).

The Thuthuka Bursary Fund is a unique and comprehensive scholarship model that addresses far more than the student's academic tuition needs. The Thuthuka programme not only finances students' education; it also funds books, meals and accommodation, and gives them an allowance. In addition it also facilitates their study efforts by offering mentorships, extra classes, tutorials and life skills training. It also ensures that all graduates get to perform their traineeships in reputable businesses – with donors getting first preference (Engineering News Online, 2012). Thuthuka therefore promotes workplace readiness by offering a broad spectrum of academic and non-academic support that students might need on their paths to becoming CA(SA)s (The Witness 2013).

Previous studies, such as those by Wiese (2006), and Sadler and Erasmus (2005 & 2003) have identified the barriers to becoming chartered accountants experienced by South African blacks. These include factors relating to their secondary education – the lack of pertinent information and career advice at school, the lack of qualified teachers and resultant poor mathematics literacy – and the limited access to computers and the internet both within the schools, and their almost total absence from their wider communities. Vandiar (in 2010) as well as Weil and Wegner (in 1997) identified other, more general barriers which have an impact on learning: these include poor language and numeracy skills; financial constraints hindering access to higher education; a lack of family understanding of higher education’s value and challenges, and poor study skills. The differences in cultural values between blacks and those with so-called western backgrounds (and particularly those students whose parents, grandparents and more are/were graduates) result in a lack of confidence when socialising, which in turn manifests as awkwardness in the corporate environment. If one adds to the mix a limited business literacy the potential for progress in the workplace is essentially absent (Wiese 2006). Wiese (in 2006), Rawana (in 1996) and Van Greuning (in 1986) identified further challenges almost unique to the experience of blacks in the workplace: transport problems (leading to usually unjustified accusations of “unreliability”); racism in the workplace; a lack of mentorship opportunities, and black role models; a conspicuous lack of commitment to their development on the part of the top managements of auditing firms; a lack of sensitivity to the wider social issues confronting black

trainees, and excessive idle time that is the result of not being given sufficiently challenging tasks.

These correlate well with the obstacles reported by Stewart *et al.* (in 2011) and Hammond (in 2004), that hinder the advancement of African-Americans in the US public accounting profession. These include the ill-preparedness of African-Americans for academic training (they have passed through the under-financed public school system); their lack of familiarity with business and finance (arising from a history of statutory and social exclusion from these fields); their perceptions of being isolated from peers, supervisors and key social networks; their work assignments and experiences being judged to be insufficiently “significant” in nature to justify advancement, and their company personnel evaluations being perceived to be a distorted reflection of their performance.

Accounting and other financial sciences departments at the University of Pretoria are participating in the SAICA’s Thuthuka initiative. Interventions have been put in place to address some of the barriers experienced by black students, thereby equipping accounting students with the skills and confidence they require to overcome social closure based on race within the profession. Such interventions directly impact the character of the University’s accounting and other financial sciences departments, in that they are teaching-intensive as opposed to research-intensive.

Vision for the Department of Auditing

The challenge put to any Head of a Department at the University of Pretoria is to provide leadership in respect of performing core academic functions of under- and post-graduate teaching, and stimulating pure research, and community engagement. In my capacity as Head of the Department of Auditing, it is one of my duties to engage in critical discussion on the development of the strategic and managerial aspects of the University's vision (which is to be identified globally as a research-intensive university), its mission, objectives, values and strategic priorities.

A reflection on accounting within the higher education landscape, as presented in the first part of this address, provides me with a deep understanding of the matters to be embraced in the Departmental vision, namely; research, teaching, graduate attributes and transformation.

The Department of Auditing (which was established in 2001), currently has three main focus areas, namely: developing the disciplines of auditing, internal auditing and forensic accounting (which addresses the issue of fraud risk management). The Department of Auditing therefore strives to be:

- A leader in the education of internal and external auditors, as well as forensic accounting (fraud risk management) practitioners;

- Recognized at national and international levels for its excellence in creating and disseminating knowledge in audit-related areas;
- A positive contributor to South Africa's economic and social development by producing innovative internal audit, external audit and forensic accounting graduates, with significantly marketable skills.

In its efforts to become an education leader the Department has embarked on a journey to identify, develop and implement teaching's internationally recognised best practices. This process is based on the wide body of knowledge on accounting education, research being conducted in the Department, and assistance from teaching & learning specialists. Not only students will benefit by our following best teaching practices, but it could equally result in efficient and effective teaching which could then provide lecturers with additional time to develop themselves and to undertake research.

In being recognised nationally and globally for excellence in creating and disseminating knowledge, research capacity needs to be established in the Department. This requires of staff members that they obtain higher degrees, supported with personal research plans to develop as/into true scholars. Mentoring and monitoring of these efforts should be done to ensure acceptable progress is made. The focus should be on the establishment and building of a research culture within the Department. This could be done by reaching out to international scholars to collaborate on research, by establishing research groups within the

Department, by growing postgraduate students (especially in the fields of forensic accounting and internal auditing), by managing postgraduate throughput rates, by mentoring novice research staff, and introducing an internal peer review system.

By producing graduates with sought-after attributes, who are in demand both in South Africa and elsewhere, the Department will not only meet the expectations of professional accounting and auditing bodies, but will assist the University fulfil its skills development obligations. Through its involvement in the Thuthuka project, and other transformation initiatives (for example doing research on the standing and demand of internal auditors in the South African public sector and the transformation of the South African accounting profession and its involvement with the Department of National Treasury and Office of the Auditor General of South Africa) the Department has taken up the challenge to break down modes of social closure. While the Thuthuka project is specifically focused on addressing SAICA's and the private sector's need for accelerated transformation (and this can be done by addressing closure issues), the Department is also involved in initiatives specific to the needs of the public sector, including the accounting and auditing skills needs in the National Treasury and the Office of the Auditor General of South Africa, Various interventions and projects have been introduced or will be introduced in the Department to develop graduate attributes to match those accepted by graduates from world-class institutions – and many of these are focused on the generic skill set of students. The Department's revised teaching model promotes independent learning as well as peer teaching (learning from one's co-students and/or those a

year or two ahead), two important teaching strategies aimed towards the development of students.

With such an ambitious vision, tensions are likely to follow, especially where objectives are perceived to be in conflict. This would be immediately apparent to the lecturers in the Department who bear the brunt of the students' reaction to the usually very heavy study load, and have to balance this against the Faculty's and University's desire for world class research and associated publication in accredited journals. To become a recognised academic and scholar requires a significant investment in time (Chapman 2012). Adding to this tension, lecturers have to devise effective interventions to assist those of their students who come from the worst resourced schools in currently disadvantaged communities. In these schools there is often an absence of adequately qualified teachers, particularly in the area of mathematics, and career guidance is at best limited (Mdepa and Tshiwula, 2012). Being ranked second last (143 out of 144 countries surveyed) on the quality of its schools' mathematics and science education in *The Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013* (WEF, 2013), serves as a clear indication of the magnitude of the problem facing not only this Department, but all of South African tertiary educational institutions.

Tension exists between the accounting profession and university education: uncertainties exist regarding the extent to which students should be prepared for professional accounting examinations, and quick integration into the workplace, as opposed to being taught and encouraged to develop an ability to demonstrate wider, and critical,

independent thought, which is in line with the traditional purpose and the more contemplative, considered pace of university education (Koornhof 2004).

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Departments, to manage these tensions. This requires a consultative approach, particularly since this Department already has a long and respected history of academic achievement. I am therefore relying on my committed, dedicated and hard-working colleagues in the Department of Auditing to continue developing ways to “work smarter” within the constraints of its limited resources, while at the same time stimulating creativity and innovation in our research programmes and transformation initiatives to remain at the forefront of accountancy’s higher education.

Conclusion

In conclusion I want to express my sincere gratitude:

- For the Grace of God;
- To the Council and executive management of the University of Pretoria for their trust and the opportunity to lead the Department of Auditing;
- To my colleagues in the Department of Auditing for their open minds, understanding and commitment;
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