

Esteemed Guests, Faculty Members, Graduates, Families, and Friends,

Dear graduate

On behalf of the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), it is with immense pleasure and pride that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each one of you on this special occasion.

Today marks a significant milestone in your journey, one that you have worked tirelessly towards and one that deserves celebration and recognition in every way possible. Just as it is a moment of pride, graduation is also a time of reflection, and anticipation for what lies ahead. This day is not just about receiving your qualification; it is a testament to your growth, both academically and personally. Throughout your time at VUT, you have not only gained knowledge but also developed critical thinking skills, creativity, and a sense of responsibility towards society.

As VUT Vice Chancellor and Principal, I am privileged to witness the culmination of your hard work, dedication, and perseverance. You have shown not only academic excellence but also the qualities of resilience, determination, and adaptability that are essential for success in today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world. As you step into the next phase of your life – be it furthering your studies, entering the workforce, or pursuing your passions, remember that the skills and experiences you have gained here will guide you towards achieving your dreams and making a positive impact to the world. Always remain curious, continue to learn, and never shy away from challenges, for it is through challenges that we grow and evolve. Be courageous in pursuing your goals, compassionate in your interactions, and ethical in your decisions.

May I add that your graduation comes at a critical time when VUT is celebrating twenty years as a University of Technology. Throughout these years, VUT has and continues to offer an expansive catalogue of industry tailored undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which span the fields of Applied and Computer Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Human Sciences and Management Sciences. Our diverse Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) caters to a wide range of students with interests and ambitions in various disciplines, just like you.

Reaching two decades is not only a significant milestone for VUT, but it also testament to the institution's dedication to education, innovation, and excellence in the field of technology. Such anniversaries are not only moments to reflect on past achievements but also to look forward to future advancements and contributions to the world of technology and academia. Today we look back with pride at that fateful year in 2004 which saw the restructuring of the higher education landscape, leading to the birth of VUT. Since then, the institution has seen significant growth in its activities and reach – and you are a greater part of our story of access to success.

As I said, graduations are also a good time for reflection, and therefore, I encourage you to reflect on your journey thus far and recognize the support that you have received from your lecturers, academic advisors, fellow students, family, and friends. All of them have been instrumental in contributing to your career aspirations, even in the minimalistic way possible, and it is important to express your gratitude to them. Let's give them a BIG round of applause!

Lastly, the world awaits your talents, ideas, and contributions. Go out there with confidence, courage, and a determination to make a difference.

Once again, on behalf of the VUT community, I wish you all the best for a bright and fulfilling future. May your journey be filled with success, happiness, and countless opportunities.

**Congratulations once again, graduates. We are immensely proud of you!**