

# Review of the Language Policy of Stellenbosch University 2006

## Project Plan

### 1. Brief

On 30 January 2006, the Rector convened the following Task Group for the Review of the Language Policy:

Prof Russel Botman (project owner)  
Prof Leon de Stadler (project leader)  
Prof Anton of Niekerk  
Dr Edna van Harte / Robert Kotzé  
Dr Brenda Leibowitz  
Mr Mohammed Shaikh  
Mr Kobus Ehlers  
Dr Barbara Pool (project manager)  
Ms Thanja Allison (secretariat)

This Task Group has the following brief:

- To critically evaluate the current Language Policy and Language Plan (hereafter called the Language Policy) in view of the decisions made over the past three years.
- To revise the present Language Policy with a view to implementation in January 2008.
- To pay particular attention to the realisation of Point 5 of Vision 2012

The Task Group will carry out its brief on the basis of an extensive consultation process and investigations regarding experiences of the present Language Policy. For this purpose, a Reference Group is being constituted on invitation to the statutory bodies of the University, the University community, experts, and interested parties in the greater context of the academic functions of the University. An opportunity will also be created for input from the general public. In the process of consultation, the premise will be that language (and therefore the Language Policy as well) is an academic matter that serves the academic functions of the University.

To calibrate the activities of the Task Group, a calibration team consisting of Profs Johann Groenewald, Tommy Park and Arnold Schoonwinkel and Dr Gert Steyn has been constituted.

The Task Group will also make use of three advisers, namely Prof Theo du Plessis (University of the Free State), Prof Christa van der Walt (Education, Stellenbosch University) and Prof Vic Webb (University of Pretoria).

### 2. Background

The review process takes place in accordance the current Language Policy, which stipulates that the policy will be subject to revision every three years. Provision 7.5 of the Language Plan states:

“The Language Policy and Language Plan are thoroughly reviewed every three years for possible revision. Revisions to the Language Policy and Language Plan related to academic issues are referred to the Council via the Senate.”

The review process will take place against the background of (a) all decisions made about the policy in the past three years, (b) the results of an investigation into the acceptance of the policy, (c) any further investigation that may be carried out, (d) the prevailing public debate on the Language Policy, and (e) policy standpoints regarding diverse matters such as enrolment planning and the promotion of diversity.

### **3. Objectives**

#### **3.1 General objective**

To create a workable Language Policy on the basis of a critical consideration of the present Language Policy and Language Plan, taking into account the University's commitment to Afrikaans, as expressed in the fifth point of Vision 2012, but also taking into account the political, social and especially educational realities within which the University has to function.

#### **3.2 Particular objectives**

- a. To formulate the values and points of departure that guide the Language Policy.
- b. To (re)formulate the Language Policy, taking into account the abovementioned values and points of departure, so that it will be clear how the Language Policy serves Vision 2012 and the objectives of the University concerning teaching, research, community service and management.
- c. To provide guidelines for the implementation and financing of the Language Policy.
- d. To develop an instrument that will help to measure the language presence at the University (and this does not apply to Afrikaans only).
- e. To make proposals concerning the monitoring and assessment of and research on the Language Policy. The monitoring, assessment and research could be both retrospective and directed towards the future and should take the University's core functions into account.
- f. To make particular proposals with regard to the realisation of Point 5 of Vision 2012, focusing specifically on how the University will participate in promoting Afrikaans, both now and in the future.
- g. To develop a communication plan on the basis of which communication can take place regarding language issues, both during and after the project.

#### 4. Deliverables

- a. A revised Language Policy that includes a section on the values and points of departure that direct the Language Policy (Objectives 3a and 3b).
- b. An implementation plan (Objective 3c).
- c. A document regarding the financial implications of the Language Policy of the University (Objective 3c).
- d. A measuring instrument to determine language presence (Objective 3d).
- e. A language database, which includes the database on the basis of which measurements are taken (Objective 3d). The tasks of setting up, filling in and maintaining this database will be contracted out.
- f. A monitoring, assessment and research plan regarding the Language Policy of the University (Objective 3e).
- g. Concrete proposals for the realisation of Point 5 of Vision 2012 (Objective 3f).
- h. A communication plan for language at the University (Objective 3g).
- i. Reports on investigations into the objectives and deliverables.

#### 5. Project design and time frame

The timeline provides for consultation with the Committee for Learning and Teaching, the Language Committee, Faculty Boards, the Institutional Forum, Senate and Council.

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Date of commencement</b>	<b>Final date</b>
1.	Preparation		
a)	Notify role players in the Reference Group	24 Feb	
b)	Invite all interested parties to make submissions to the Task Group (cut-off date: 31 March)	24 Feb	
2.	A policy document that includes a section on the values and points of departure that direct the Language Policy		
a)	Discuss the values, principles and premises	14 Feb	ongoing
b)	Do a critical evaluation of the present Language Policy and Language Plan	13 March	ongoing
c)	Discuss and formulate the underlying value system	13 March	ongoing
d)	Liaise with role players in the Reference Group	13 March	28 April

e)	Analyse the submissions, objections, letters, etc. Prepare a first draft	1 May	21 July
f)	Further consultation Reference Group	29 May	21 July
g)	A second round of consultation with the Reference Group	24 July	30 Aug
h)	Submit conceptual framework for the Revised Language Policy to the SU Council (interim reporting might also take place)	26 June	18 Sept

	<b>Important:</b> Consultation with the Rector's Management Team and the Executive Committee of Senate is an ongoing process.		
3.	An Implementation Plan; a document on the financial implications of the Language Policy at the University		
	a)	Draw up a draft implementation plan	25 Aug (provisional)
	b)	Draw up a document that identifies the financial implications of the Language Policy	25 Aug (provisional)
4.	A measuring instrument to determine the language presence; the structure of a language database that incorporates, among others, the database on the basis of which measurements are taken.		
	a)	Create a measuring instrument to determine language presence	25 Aug (provisional)
	b)	Create a language database with the required language specifications	To be determined 25 Aug (provisional)
5.	Communication Plan		
	a)	Draw up a communication plan for language	28 April
6.	Promotional Plan: Afrikaans (Vision 2012, Point 5)		
	a)	Draw up a promotional plan	25 Aug
7.	Final approval		
	a)	Submit the final version of the revised Language Policy and all related policy documents to Senate	13 October
		Submit the final version of the revised Language Policy and all related policy documents to Council	13 Nov

## 6. Budget

Is submitted separately.

Language Task Group

20 March 2006, with amendments by the Management Team VR(T)