Press release – UCT Renewal welcomes AGM postponement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UCT Renewal – Alumni Initiative

Cape Town, 12 November 2026

UCT Renewal welcomes postponement of Convocation AGM: University of Cape Town must follow its own rules

The AGM moves to 26 January 2027 "due to a procedural matter", weeks after UCT Renewal reminded the University of its own notice rules

UCT Renewal, an alumni initiative for good governance at UCT, welcomes the University of Cape Town's decision to postpone the Annual General Meeting of its Convocation from 3 December 2026 to 26 January 2027. The postponement follows UCT Renewal's letters of 29 October 2026, which pointed out that notice of the meeting had been given late, contrary to the University's own Statute.

UCT's notice says only that the meeting was moved "due to a procedural matter". In the spirit of transparency, a principle UCT Renewal takes very seriously, alumni have a right to know which one. We call on UCT to confirm it to its more than 200,000 graduates.

Why this postponement is positive

Rules exist to protect every member equally. When an institution sees that it has not followed its own rules and puts it right, that is good governance at work, and UCT deserves credit for it.

UCT's Statute requires at least six weeks' notice of the AGM. For a meeting on 3 December 2026, notice was due by 22 October 2026. It was emailed to members and published on Facebook on 27 October 2026, five days late, and ten days after one particular alumni group (connected to the President and certain members of the ExCo) had already circulated the confirmed date and time. UCT Renewal raised this unfairness in writing on 16 October 2026 and again 29 October 2026. The new date of 26 January 2027 now gives every member the full notice the Statute requires.

UCT has not said whether the late notice is the "procedural matter". If it is, UCT should say so plainly. If it is something else, members are equally entitled to know. Either way, a meeting that follows the rules is a meeting whose decisions alumni can trust.

How UCT Renewal held Convocation to its own rules

UCT Renewal did not wait for problems to surface at the meeting. Over the past two months, we have written to the University, in good faith and well ahead of time, asking it to follow its own Statute:

1. **23 September 2026 – a vote for every member.** We asked for a 48-hour voting window, so that alumni abroad in different time zones or unable to attend at 18h00 on a Thursday evening could still vote on motions. This is important for stakeholder engagement. On 28 September 2026, UCT replied that this had been "considered and rejected".
2. **16 October 2026 – equal treatment.** We asked the Secretary of Convocation why one alumni group had circulated the AGM date and time before notice went to all members. The details circulated were different to those on the publicly available UCT Calendar.
3. **29 October 2026 – the six-week rule.** We pointed out that paragraph 41(3) of the Statute requires six weeks' notice of the AGM, and that notice was five days late.
4. **29 October 2026 – the meeting decides its procedure.** We pointed out that paragraph 42 says the procedure at a meeting of Convocation is decided by the meeting, not by officials. We asked for the authority on which members attending in person were told they could vote only with a smart device. We note that UCT persists with this change in procedure in the notice to postpone the AGM.

5. **29 October 2026 – an accurate record.** Under paragraph 42(c)(i), the AGM must confirm the minutes of the August Special General Meeting. We sent corrections to the draft minutes because it leaves out that the President's ruling on a matter raised not being part of the Agenda was immediately challenged.
6. **29 October 2026 – the agenda.** Under paragraph 42(c)(ii), the AGM must deal with business of which notice has been given. We gave notice of two items: the late and unequal notice of the AGM, and the President's own undertaking of 17 August 2026 to deal with concerns of conflict of interest which were raised at the Special General Meeting and deferred. Despite this, the Conflict of Interest item did not appear on the Meeting Agenda.
7. **29 October 2026 – motions, with notice.** As a courtesy, we gave advance notice of two motions, on asynchronous voting and on amending the Executive Committee rules on voting procedures for elections. We asked UCT to confirm the correct procedure by 9 November 2026.

UCT has not yet replied to these letters in writing. But the postponement shows that the rules matter, and that alumni who speak up can make a difference. We intend to lodge formal notices of motion on each of these issues raised in our letters and to ask the Vice-Chancellor's office to intervene.

What UCT can now put right before 26 January

The extra two months give UCT the chance to resolve the other matters we raised, before members meet:

- **Equal treatment.** Explain how one alumni group, UCT Alumni for Palestine, had the confirmed AGM date and time on or before 16 October 2026, before notice went to all members, and make sure it does not happen again.
- **Conflict of interest.** Place on the agenda the concerns about the impartiality of members of the Convocation Executive, as the President of Convocation undertook at the Special General Meeting on 17 August 2026.
- **An accurate record.** Correct the draft minutes of the August meeting, which leave out that the President's ruling was immediately challenged.
- **A vote for every member.** Let members abroad or in other time zones vote on motions for a period after the meeting on 26 January 2027 and prepare the necessary technology for this to be seamless.

- **Voting in person.** The new notice still says every member attending in person must bring a smart device to vote, with no alternative. The Statute says the meeting decides its own procedure, so this change should be put to the meeting.

The new notice is dated 10 November 2026 but reached members on 12 November 2026, one day before the original deadline for registration and motions. This delayed communication is disrespectful to those who were working to respect the deadlines set by the Convocation Secretariat. It also says a dry run will be held on "Wednesday, 25 January 2027". That date is in fact a Monday.

What alumni should do now

The new date also gives alumni more time to take part. We urge every UCT graduate to:

- **Register by Tuesday, 5 January 2027.** Registrations already made remain valid. Register even if you are in a time zone that makes attendance of the AGM difficult so that you can still vote if that option is available.
- **Submit motions by Tuesday, 5 January 2027** to registrar@uct.ac.za. Motions already lodged will be carried forward.
- **Attend on Tuesday, 26 January 2027 at 18h00**, online or at the Kramer Law Building, Middle Campus.

Both deadlines fall over the festive season, when many alumni are away. We urge members not to leave it to the last minute.

Comment from UCT Renewal

Serron Ben-Tovim, Chairperson of UCT Renewal, said:

"This is a good day for UCT's corporate governance. Rules are there to protect every member, and UCT has shown it will follow its own. We raised the late notice in writing weeks ago, and we welcome the University putting it right. In the spirit of transparency, we now ask UCT to tell alumni which procedural matter led to the postponement, and to use the extra time to answer the other questions we have raised and prepare for electronic voting of motions. We encourage every graduate to register by 5 January and take part on 26 January. It may be a groundbreaking AGM if alumni in other time zones are able to vote on motions over a 48 hour period as we propose. "

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Media contact

Chairperson: Mrs S Ben-Tovim uctrenewal@gmail.com

Notes to editors

- UCT Renewal is an alumni initiative working to protect the University of Cape Town's academic standing, good governance and institutional integrity. UCT Renewal – Academic Excellence & Institutional Integrity
- The Convocation is made up of all UCT graduates and holders of UCT diplomas and certificates, together with the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, academic staff and emeritus professors.
- Paragraph 41(3) of the UCT Institutional Statute requires notice of the AGM to each member at least six weeks before the meeting. Paragraph 42 provides that the procedure at a meeting of Convocation is decided by the meeting.
- View UCT Renewal's correspondence with the Secretary of Convocation at UCT Renewal – Academic Excellence & Institutional Integrity

Supporting documents

- The full email correspondence between UCT Renewal and the Office of the Registrar is available for download. Personal contact details and the surnames of private individuals have been redacted.
- **Correspondence 1:** Proposed motions (PDF). Our letter of 29 October 2026 proposing motions for the Convocation AGM, with the email thread of 29 October to 10 November 2026. (Annexures 1–2): link here
- **Correspondence 2:** Response to the Meeting Pack (PDF). Our response to the Notice of Meeting, with the email thread and its supporting documents. These are our letter of 29 October 2026, the Call for Apology and Pledge, and our email of 16 October 2026. (Annexures A–C): link here