

## Concept brief: F1 Leadership for Change programme (F1 L4C)

Many complex questions remain about continuous difficulties that our society faces in general and young people in particular in dealing with issues of social imbalances and life experiences, chief among them the question regarding how the current generation could still carry attitudes and behaviours reminiscent of the past.

The Leadership for Change Programme that started in 2010 is a study abroad leadership development programme that aims to enhance social cohesion and to build a new campus culture of student relations across boundaries.

The programme is one of the flagship interventions of the University of the Free State and the Office of Student Leadership Development, strengthening the series of student engagements. It is an international programme of short duration that focuses on first years of the Bloemfontein- and Qwaqwa campuses in building layers of new thinking and engagement among students of diverse backgrounds.

The programme will include a Study Abroad component of two weeks, during which intense exposure to academic, social, cultural and residential lives of students at global universities is provided.

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- enabling students to break down experiences of isolation through an intense international induction programme;
- enabling students to end racial stereotyping, fears and concerns through guided exposure to cross-cultural environments;
- introducing students to positive models of social integration and student life and demonstrate the desirability and possibilities for learning and living together;
- building cross-racial unity and communities among students in other contexts through structured programmes of instruction and support; and
- establishing international networking for students (and staff) of the UFS with colleagues and programmes globally.

Students will be selected on the basis of strict criteria focussed mainly on their **commitment to learning, academic record and leadership abilities**. Participants will form part of a “cohort of change” during their undergraduate studies. Therefore pre- and especially post-visit engagement programmes will be developed in collaboration with various strategic stakeholders to assist the group to exert the necessary dialogue and concomitant influence on their peers. These programmes will run in conjunction with existing programmes for leadership development and of learning communities, such as in residences.

Reciprocal programmes and collaboration between the UFS and participating institutions will be considered and be implemented during and following the engagement and will address key questions regarding fundamental change in student harmonisation and the understanding of diverse cultural and social integration. A sustainable shift in student engagement can be achieved through the study-abroad international programme.

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