

Born on 12 March 1973 in Mpumalanga Township, Hammarsdale, in KwaZulu-Natal, Prof Emmanuel Mfanafuthi Mqgqwashu began his academic career at the former University of Durban-Westville as a postgraduate student assistant in the English Department from 1996 to 1998. When the senior academics in the English Department of the former University of Natal in Durban saw his published paper under the postgraduate students' section in a SAPSE-accredited academic journal published in 1998, they offered him a scholarship as one of their 1999 master's-degree students in English Literature. This paper was a piece that had initially been his assignment for his 1998 BA Honours degree. When the former universities of Durban-Westville and Natal merged to become the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004, he moved from the English Department to the Faculty of Education.

From 2009, the same year in which he was promoted to senior lecturer, he took up his first academic leadership and management role as head of the School of Languages, Literacies, Media and Drama Education. He occupied the head of school role until 2012. After his Sabbatical Leave of 2013, from June of the same year he became the Education Studies Cluster Leader, a position he held until 2014. It is in this year that Prof Mqgqwashu joined Rhodes University. He served Rhodes University as the English Education subject leader from 2014 until the end of 2015, and during this period he was promoted to associate professor. From 2016 to 2017 he served Rhodes University as head of the Education Department. His contribution encouraged the Education Faculty to appoint him in the role of deputy dean from June 2017 until December 2018. In 2019 he left Rhodes University to join the North-West University as the director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning directorate called Faculty Teaching and Learning Support. He occupied this role from October 2019 until November 2022. He recently assumed another North-West University directorship in the newly formed Centre for Higher Education Professional Development in the Faculty of Education.

Prof Mqgqwashu is a C-rated NRF researcher, with successful supervision of postgraduate students, publications in local and international academic journals, conference presentations as keynote speaker and plenary panellist in local and international contexts. His other recent scholarly work involved being a co-investigator in an NRF research project called *Access and Inclusion in Higher Education*, with a focus on ways in which disciplinary discourses and pedagogic practices across disciplines in higher education serve to include and exclude students. This project involved academic staff across 18 universities, including comprehensive universities and universities of technology. His latest project, in which he was one of the lead researchers in South Africa, involved five institutions: the University of Johannesburg, the University of Bristol, the University of Fort Hare, the University of Brighton and Rhodes University. The project was called *The influence of rurality on student trajectories through higher education: a view from the South*. Funded by the National Research Fund and Economic Social Research Council/Newton, the project ran from 2017 to 2020. The project investigated how students negotiate the transition from school and home in rural contexts to "university learning". In addition to master's-degree and doctoral students who graduated from the project, as well as several academic journal articles in local and international journals, a book entitled *Rural Transitions to Higher Education in South Africa: Decolonial Perspectives* was published in 2021 by Routledge.