## INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Greetings,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Nokubonga Mathimba, an MBA student currently pursuing studies at the Graduate School of Business (GSB) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

You are cordially invited to participate in a research study that aims to explore and enhance collaboration between academic and professional services staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, specifically at the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Sciences. The purpose of this study is to gain insights into the current state of collaboration, identify potential challenges, and develop strategies to enhance collaboration between these two groups. By participating, you will play an integral role in shaping the future of collaboration within our university.

If you agree to participate in this study, the following procedures will be involved:

**Complete a Brief Questionnaire:** Participants in the study will be asked to complete a brief online questionnaire, which serves as the initial data collection method. The questionnaire will gather demographic information and elicit participants' perspectives on collaboration between academic and professional services staff. It will include multiple-choice questions, rating scales, and Likert-type items to collect quantitative data. Additionally, there will be an open-ended question where participants can provide any additional comments, insights, or feedback regarding collaboration between academic and professional services staff. Participants can expect this questionnaire to take approximately 20 to 30 minutes of their time.

**Data Collection:** Upon agreeing to participate, participants will access the online questionnaire through a provided link, which will be approved and permitted by the UKZN ethics committee. They will be able to complete the questionnaire using their preferred device, such as a computer, tablet, or smartphone, connected to the internet. The online platform will ensure the confidentiality and privacy of participants' responses. They will submit their answers electronically upon completion, and the collected data will be securely stored and organized for analysis. In cases where the online system is not accessible or participants prefer an alternative, in-person data collection may be arranged.

**Data Analysis:** The collected data from the online questionnaire will undergo quantitative analysis. Various statistical techniques, such as descriptive statistics, correlations, regression analyses, or other appropriate methods, will be employed to examine the data. The analysis will focus on identifying patterns, relationships, and statistical significance related to collaboration between academic and professional services staff. Aggregate results will be generated to summarize the findings, ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of individual participants.

**Risks and Benefits:** Participation in this study will involve no risk, as every effort will be made to ensure the strictest confidentiality and privacy of your information. The benefits of this study include contributing to the understanding of collaboration between academic and professional services staff and potentially improving working relationships within the university.

**Confidentiality:** Your identity and personal information will be kept strictly confidential throughout the study. All data collected will be stored securely and accessible only to the research team. Any reports or publications resulting from this study will not include information that could personally identify you.

**Sample Size and Study Location:** The estimated sample size for this study is approximately 100 participants. The study will be conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, specifically at the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Sciences.

**Contact Information**

If you have any questions about the study, its procedures, or your rights as a participant, please contact the researcher, Ms Nokubonga Mathimba at 208524635@stu.ukzn.ac.za or 0731120827/ 0332605946.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research, you may contact the Ethics Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal at:

**HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION**

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X54001

Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Kindly note that your participation in this research study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without providing a reason. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not affect your current or future relationship with the University of KwaZulu-Natal or any associated organizations. Should you decide to withdraw, please inform me as soon as possible via email at 208524635@stu.ukzn.ac.za, allowing sufficient time for me to find another participant to ensure adequate data for analysis. In the event of the study being terminated for any reason, your participation will automatically cease.

There will be no reimbursement provided for your participation in this study, and you are not expected to incur any costs. Your involvement will be voluntary, and there will be no financial compensation involved.

I will ensure that all information, including personal details, is treated with strict confidentiality. Transcripts, emails, and any other correspondence will be securely stored in a password-protected vault within my OneDrive folder. Access to this information will be limited to myself and my supervisor, Professor Bibi Chummun. Any physical documents will be appropriately shredded, while electronic copies will be deleted from the OneDrive folder once the required storage time, as per the university's policy, has elapsed.

Kindly indicate your willingness to participate in this research study by completing and signing the section below.

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**CONSENT**

I……………………………………………. (Name of the participant) have been informed about the study entitled Enhancing collaboration between academic and support staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natalby Nokubonga Mathimba

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits to which I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at 0731120827 or at 208524635@stu.ukzn.ac.za

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

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Durban
4000

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Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

**Additional consent, where applicable**

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview YES / NO/ N/A

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Signature of Participant Date