

Henley Business School set to open up Cape Town campus

World-famous business school, Henley Business School, which has been active in Johannesburg for 30 years, is set to open its doors in Cape Town in one of the city's most creative business hubs - a move which will boost skills development and the local economy.



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The school will offer four of its accredited qualifications, three at undergraduate level, and its honours-level Postgraduate Diploma in Management Practice, from its new Brickfield campus in Woodstock. The new campus will also host the school's executive education and customised programmes for its Cape Town-based corporate clients.

Welcoming Henley's decision to open a Cape Town campus, Wrenelle Stander, the CEO of Wesgro, the official trade and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape, said the move is a positive addition to the talent landscape in the province.

"Henley's international alumni network is well-recognised and powerful, and we anticipate our business community leveraging this as they grow their organisations and the Western Cape economy. We look forward to Henley's faculty, students and alumni contributing to constructive conversations at a provincial level," Stander said.

The dearth of skilled workers and professionals has long been identified as a major constraint to growing SA's economy and reducing the unemployment rate.



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Among other goals, the National Development Plan (NDP), a long-term plan articulating the country's vision to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030, targets increasing the number of university enrolments as part of efforts to boost SA's skills base.

Boosting skills development

Business schools are expected to play a central role particularly in terms of boosting leadership and management skills, key to the success of any organisation.

There are some 22 local schools in SA offering Masters in Business Administration programmes (MBAs) — the world's best known and most widely recognised management education qualification—with the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business and the Stellenbosch University's Business School (USB) being the most notable in the Western Cape.

While Henley has no immediate plans to offer a fully-fledged MBA programme at its Cape Town campus, it says there will be support available to its MBA students based in the city – but they will be officially registered with the Johannesburg campus. Most of the MBA work is done remotely but there are in-person sessions and these are held in Johannesburg.

“Cape Town is South Africa's innovation capital and one of the most exciting places in the country to be doing business – and thinking differently about how to do business that builds the country. At Henley Africa, we are eager to be a part of this energy. And as the country's fastest growing and only international business school, we know Henley has a lot to offer the mother city,” said Jon Foster-Pedley, dean and director of Henley Africa.



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Henley's own research indicates that an estimated 36% of senior managers in the public sector did not have the required-level of qualification for their position in 2021, and in the Western Cape, on average, just 29% of managers working across all industries have some form of management qualification. “We simply have to get these numbers up and we want to make it as easy and accessible as possible for more South Africans to rise through the academic ranks,” Foster-Pedley said.

Rashika Padarath, head of Henley's degree-level management development programme, said the flexibility and structure of the schools' programmes could give thousands of working people “who may lack the formal qualifications or the luxury of time to study at business school the skills and confidence to manage and lead themselves and others well.”