

TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS EXPECTED

... Leadership, Responsibility and the Transformation of our University



**BEING THE SPEECH OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR-
PROF. WAHAB OLASUPO EGBEWOLE, SAN
AT THE ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR THE
NEWLY APPOINTED PROVOST, DEANS, DIRECTORS
AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS ON MONDAY, AUGUST 10,
2026**

Protocols

I am delighted to welcome all of us on board as co-travellers on the journey of reshaping and contributing to the bright future of this great university. While I am excited, I also carry a profound sense of responsibility because the task before us is both enormous and noble.

When I assumed office, I made a promise to the university community, with the world as our witness, that **the sun shall rise again for this university**. That declaration was not a mere cliché; it was a deliberate, intentional and decisive commitment. It has since become my daily watchword and constant challenge. It is a bond and a covenant. Every day, I strive conscientiously to fulfil that promise and to attain the goals we have set for our institution.

In making these appointments, we have carefully looked outward to understand best practices and inward to identify the needs and strengths of our university. We have entrusted each of you with strategic responsibilities because we believe you possess the capacity to add value and make meaningful contributions in your respective areas of service.

Universities thrive not only because they have distinguished academics but also because they have effective administrators who build systems that support teaching, research, innovation, and community engagement. Every unit, whether academic or administrative, contributes to the institution's success. Consequently, the effectiveness of every Provost, Dean, Director, and Deputy Director directly influences the reputation, performance, visibility, ranking and future of our university.

The past three years and nine months have been revealing, challenging, and transformative. They have provided invaluable lessons that continue to shape our resolve to build a university we can proudly call our own, a university that will become the pride of Africa and earn global recognition.

This morning, I wish to reflect on the timeless principle: **"To whom much is given, much is expected."** This enduring truth reminds us that every privilege comes with a corresponding responsibility. Leadership is not a reward for past

accomplishments; it is a call to greater service, higher standards, and deeper commitment.

Your appointments represent far more than new titles or offices. They signify trust. They reflect confidence. They embody expectations. Above all, they present an opportunity to shape the future of this university through your decisions, your character, and your actions.

One of the greatest challenges confronting higher education today is not the lack of capable people but the tendency to become custodians of the status quo. As newly elected Provost and Deans, newly appointed Directors, and Deputy Directors, I encourage you to see yourselves not merely as **maintenance officers**, but as **improvement officers**. The most important question each of you must answer is this: **Who will you become because of this appointment?**

Maintenance certainly has its place. Every institution needs leaders who preserve standards, protect valuable traditions and cultures, and ensure that systems continue to function effectively. However, true leadership demands much more than maintaining the status quo. It requires the courage to ask difficult but necessary questions:

Can this process be simplified?

Can this service be delivered more efficiently?

Can we achieve better outcomes with the resources available?

An improvement officer never settles for the familiar refrain, *"This is how we have always done it."* Instead, such a leader continually asks, *"How can we do it better?"* Every policy, procedure, meeting, report, and service should be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

Our university cannot afford leaders who merely keep the lights on. We need leaders who make the lights shine brighter. When your tenure comes to an end, your successor should inherit a stronger unit than the one you inherited. Your systems should be more efficient. Your staff should be more competent and motivated. Your processes should be more transparent. Your stakeholders should

be more satisfied. That is the true mark of an improvement officer and an honour for leadership.

As you join us in driving the actualisation of **Vision 1:10:500**, permit me to offer a few guiding principles that will justify the confidence reposed in you.

First, lead with integrity

Integrity remains the foundation of credible leadership. Every decision should be guided by fairness, transparency, accountability, and the university's best interests. People may not always agree with our decisions, but they should never question our honesty or our commitment to doing what is right.

Second, pursue excellence

Excellence should be our standard, not our aspiration. We must never allow good to become the enemy of the best. Every policy we implement, every report we prepare, every programme we coordinate, and every service we deliver should reflect professionalism, competence, and quality. Excellence is not an occasional achievement; it is the result of disciplined habits, consistent effort, and an unwavering commitment to continuous improvement. As leaders, we must inspire excellence by exemplifying it in our decisions, our conduct, and our daily work

Third, promote teamwork

No Provost, Dean, Director, or Deputy Director succeeds alone. The complexity of today's university environment demands collaboration across faculties, departments, centres, and administrative units. We must break down unnecessary barriers, share knowledge, support one another, and work collectively toward our institutional goals. We must collaborate to complete, not to compete. Avoid territorial protection because no faculty or unit can be an island unto itself. Your faculty and your unit is just a part of the University of Ilorin and not the University of Ilorin.

Fourth, embrace innovation

Innovation is the engine of progress. The landscape of higher education is evolving rapidly, driven by advances in technology, artificial intelligence, changing student expectations, funding realities, and global competition. To remain relevant and competitive, we must be willing to challenge conventional thinking, embrace new ideas, and adopt better ways of working. We must continually ask ourselves:

How can we improve our services?

How can we simplify our processes?

How can we create greater value for our students, staff, researchers, and society?

Fifth, invest in people

The greatest strength of any institution lies in the quality, commitment, and potential of its people. As leaders, we have a responsibility to create an environment where individuals are valued, supported, and empowered to excel. We must encourage our staff, nurture emerging talents, recognise outstanding contributions, embrace constructive feedback, and provide opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.

As we reflect on our responsibilities, let us remember that leadership is measured not by authority but by impact. Years from now, people may not remember the positions we occupied, but they will remember the systems we improved, the people we mentored, the problems we solved, and the legacy we left behind.

The position of Provost, Dean, Director, or Deputy Director is not merely an elevation in rank; it is an invitation to make a meaningful difference. Leadership in a university should never be defined by the office we occupy but by the value we create.

Our university is counting on each of us to contribute our quota toward its advancement. In your new capacity, make it your personal commitment to leave

every office, every system, every process, and every team better than you found them.

Let your watchwords be **integrity, excellence, innovation, teamwork, continuous improvement, and measurable impact**. Let every decision you make, every initiative you undertake, and every action you take reflect these values, so that your leadership leaves a legacy of transformation and enduring institutional progress.

Institutions rise when leaders refuse to be satisfied with mere maintenance and instead pursue continuous improvement with courage, vision, and unwavering commitment.

Together, let us ensure that the promise we made that **the sun shall rise again for this university** is fulfilled, and that this institution becomes a beacon of excellence for Africa and the world.

Your Litmus test

- *Your faculties and your units must fully subscribe to the memo manager between today and Wednesday, 12th August, 2026.*
- *Digest the strategic plan of the University 2023 – 2028.*
- *Produce the strategic plan for your faculty or unit within the overall strategic plan of the University for your tenure.*
- *Come up with action plans for the faculty or unit strategic plan.*
- *Accompany the plan with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).*
- *Submit all these on or before 30th August, 2026.*
- *Ranking is imperative; all your staff **must** update their profile on or before 9th September, 2026. Any faculty or unit with issues, including outstanding ones, demonstrates challenges at the level of your leadership.*

Thank you, and God bless our university.



UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN
OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
TEMPLATE FOR REPORTING THE CURRENT STATUS OF
ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES

Note: The administration wishes to be appraised of the activities/projects/programmes of faculties/departments/centres/units to harmonise and support their implementation. Kindly use the template below to report such activities/projects/programmes, although it may comprise other items and information not on this template; ensure that the items on this template are captured in your submission. Please submit the report no later than August 31, 2026.

- 1. Faculty/Unit:**
- 2. Activity/Project/Programme:**
- 3. Responsible/Accounting Officer (With Contact Info):**
- 4. Objectives/Expected Benefits:**
- 5. Internal/External Collaborating Entities:**
- 6. Current Status (Proposed, Ongoing, Completed):**
- 7. Total Cost:**
- 8. Amount Expended So Far:**
- 9. Challenges Encountered:**
- 10.Challenges Envisaged:**
- 11.Support Required:**
- 12.Where Support is Expected From:**
- 13.Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**
- 14.Timeline:**
- 15.Any other pertinent information:**