

46TH ANNUAL SAACDHE CONFERENCE 2026



Theme
Rooted Currents: Healing, Growth, and Belonging
in Southern African Higher Education.

 **15 – 17 SEPTEMBER 2026**

 **THE BOARDWALK CONFERENCE CENTRE,
QOEBHERA**

Hosted by the Eastern Cape Region:

 NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

 RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn.

 University of Port Hare
Together in Excellence

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In pursuit of excellence

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION INFORMATION PACK

Below are the guidelines to ensure the successful submission of abstracts for the 2026 SAACDHE conference.

CONFERENCE THEMES (Choose one of the following.)

1. Aloes of Wisdom

- Cultural identity, traditional practices shape student mental health.
- Indigenous and spiritual healing practices,
- Ubuntu and African worldviews relevant to student life,
- Language inclusivity and cultural safety in support services,
- Student identity formation within culturally diverse campus contexts,
- Decolonised, student-centred counselling approaches.

2. Echoes of the Ancestors:

- Trauma recovery
- Resilience.
- Intergenerational trauma.
- Honour memory, culture and psychological strength;
- Supporting students navigating psychospiritual conflict and ancestral identity

3. Shifting Sands:

- Adapting Student Mental Health to Social and Environmental Change
- Prepare students to face modern pressures and dynamic environments.
- Mental health in the digital era
- Equipping students to advocate for their own mental health needs
- Reimagining student counselling policies

4. Braided Streams:

- Inclusive and Accessible Support



- Equity, inclusion, and belonging within student mental health systems
- Ensuring equitable access to counselling for rural, multilingual, and low-income students supporting first-generation students in navigating academic culture
- Promoting peer-led and community-based mental health models on campus
- Design of safe and inclusive counselling environments where diverse identities can thrive.

5. Roots and Rainmakers:

- Sustaining Student Support Teams and Collaborative Ecosystems
- Burnout prevention among counselling and student wellness staff
- Supervision and peer support systems for practitioners
- Collaboration across counselling, student affairs, and academic departments
- Institutional advocacy for sustained investment in student mental health.

TYPE OF PRESENTATION

Conceptual Paper

A conceptual paper should present new ideas, summarise current knowledge, and/or describe application to enhance learning and best practice.

Research Paper

A formal paper demonstrating analysis, interpretation, and logical argument based on in-depth independent research conducted.

Workshop

A semi-structured workshop or group that promotes engagement and discussion amongst professionals to promote learning and enhance practice in the domain of student development and support. Clear objectives and learning outcomes, designed to enhance practice and allow for application in student development and support.

Poster Presentation

Emerging research, innovative practices, programme evaluations, or case studies in a visually engaging format. Abstracts should include the purpose of the poster, context, brief description of methods or approach, key insights or preliminary findings, and the relevance to student counselling and development in higher education.



PRESENTATION FORMATS AND GUIDELINES

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION CHECKLIST	
The abstract was prepared in accordance with the proposed guidelines:	
General	
Font: Arial	
Font size: 12	
Spacing: double spaced	
Abstract between 250 and 300 words	
The conference theme or subtheme is indicated.	
The language and technical editing are acceptable.	
The presenter included an abbreviated CV	
Research paper or poster	
The research problem is stated.	
The methodology is explained: e.g. research design, sample, data collection and analysis.	
The results are mentioned.	
Conceptual paper or poster	
The problem being addressed in stated.	
The envisioned contribution is stated.	
Workshop	
The purpose of the workshop is described.	
An outline for the workshop is provided.	
The duration of the workshop is provided.	
The intended outcome of the workshop is provided.	
Poster	
The purpose and context of the poster.	
The Research methodology or approach.	
The key insights or preliminary findings.	
The relevance to student counselling and development in higher education.	

PLEASE NOTE

- All authors interested in presenting are invited to submit the [abstract submission form](#), no later than **30 June 2026**.
- Full contact details and institutional affiliation of authors must be given.



- Abstract must be in English and not longer than 300 words (this excludes references, figures or tables).
- The argument presented in your submission must be clearly written, coherently developed and backed with concrete experiences and/or data.
- All abstracts will be reviewed and may be selected for presentation.
- Notification of acceptance/non-acceptance will be e-mailed to the author(s).
- Failure to register for the conference by the presenting author will automatically render the abstract not included in the final programme.
- Please note that submission of an abstract entails a commitment to attend and present the paper should the abstract be accepted.

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Selection of contributions will be done using the following criteria:

- Is it relevant to the conference theme?
- Is the key theme, purpose/ rationale and method (where relevant) clear?
- Is it significant and original?
- Is it based on valid and reliable data?

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

- Step 1: Download and complete the [abstract submission form](#).
- Step 2: Email the completed form and a 1 page CV of presenter(s) to conference@saacdhe.co.za with **SAACDHE Conference 2026 - Abstract Submission** in the subject line.