Pretoria — The universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch have adopted new language policies. Stellenbosch University Council chairperson George Steyn said, by approving the proposed new language policy, the council had expressed its unequivocal support for multilingualism, without excluding students who were not proficient in either Afrikaans or English.

He said the policy was based on the principle that languages of instruction must promote access and academic success at Maties and that the institution’s language policy must serve its academic project.

The policy explicitly made provision for students who prefer to study in Afrikaans, while also improving access to education for students who are proficient in English only.

Steyn said the revised policy “reaffirms our commitment to the users of Afrikaans, English and IsiXhosa, being the three official languages of the Western Cape”.

University of Pretoria spokesperson Anna-Retha Bouwer said English would become the primary language of instruction and assessment. The policy was adopted by the council of the institution, in concurrence with the senate.

“For students who are already registered, the use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction will be phased out gradually. The implementation date is subject to the process to be followed with government.” Both Maties and Tuks adopted their policies on Wednesday.

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