Beyond the Classroom (BtC)
Leadership Programme
Get off your umtarara

The term “umtarara” comes from Granny Tilly, a relative of BtC facilitator Kim Elliott, who would use the expression to indicate that an individual should stop complaining and rather do something about it. It is Granny Tilly’s own made-up word, but one that has stuck.

In the first year of BtC in 2009, if students expected things to be done for them or if they complained about something, Kim would say “get off your umtarara” and make things happen. As a result, the BtC class of 2009 adopted the expression as the slogan for the programme.
Beyond the Classroom (BtC) is a voluntary leadership programme that introduces students to the requirements of leadership in a practical programme run by the Department of Student Governance, Development and creative manner, assisting them to develop skills needed for effective, ethical leadership.

It explores and addresses the importance of diversity in daily interactions, encourages teamwork with others from diverse backgrounds, enhances skills in conflict resolution and communication, and encourages intellectual growth over a year-long period.

Students are also required to complete 20 hours of community service and this, like every module of the course, ensures that participants are encouraged “to get off your umtarara!” No fewer than 13 different projects – ranging from sport coaching to homework assistance – benefit from this NMMU initiative.

BtC started in 2009 with 29 students. The first programme was so successful that in 2010 students requested a class be offered at a South Campus residence too. By 2013, classes were offered on North, South, Second and Missionvale campuses and at a residence in Central. 217 students successfully completed the programme this year (2013).

BtC, which receives financial and other support from various corporates, forms an important part in the university’s new ground-breaking co-curricular programme.

Thank you for your support.

Facilitators: Kim Elliott and Deidré Potgieter
I am a better leader than I was yesterday ...

I am equipped and sharpened with skills that make me stand out and glow ...
The skills that built my confidence and made me aware of my strengths, are those that made me realise that the sky is not the limit ...

Through BtC, I have been taken out of my comfort zone; I have met inspiring people who motivated me to have a desire to stand on my own feet and swim out to meet my boat.

Today, I am a better leader than I was yesterday. I have grown emotionally by spending time with people with special needs during my community outreach at Aurora. This made me realise how much change I can bring to people’s lives by just caring for them.

I am not a leader anymore, I am the leader through BtC.

Tshifiwa Machete, third-year BPsych (Counselling), Faculty of Health Sciences

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**A conscious decision**

It took two years of debate – whether or not to embark on a journey, a voyage that would set me apart, and bring me that much closer to “my stars”. This self-development quest meant I had to physically enrol on the programme ... it took a conscious decision.

In the beginning, walls of stigma were broken down and perceptions of knowing were carved into learning. The encouragement and openness made it easy to harness the course teachings. Yet, you had to work hard to proceed ... a conscious decision.

Clearly we were being groomed for the outside world. We were involved in many tasks and activities; group work was a core element and though we chimed that “every day was a Friday”, realistically it should be that “no day is a holiday.” This links with the BtC ethos of working hard.

Clearly, with all this mentoring, we will be much stronger, smarter and better equipped to go out there and use these qualities fearlessly, but it will take ... a conscious decision!

Therefore, our quest is to strive and go. With endless milestones within our reach, the wind behind us and attainment ahead ... The mandate is simple, to use your investment in the outstanding BtC leadership programme and multiply it into a multi-million success. But to do this, it will take ... a conscious decision!

Tando Koyana, second-year Management Diploma, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences
Conjuring confidence

BtC has made me a more confident individual. I believe more in myself and my capabilities to make a positive contribution to the world in which I live.

BtC has awakened in me leadership, hope, joy, friendship, confidence and enlightenment. Thanks to BtC I have become what I once aspired to be!

I’m sad to let go of something that has brought me so much joy, but am comforted knowing that this is the beginning of a better chapter in my life for which I am now so well prepared to tackle.

Thank you for equipping us with skills that will not only make us more employable but better members of society. I personally cannot wait to share all the amazing life lessons and stories that BtC has developed in me.

Tawanda Musonza, third-year BCom Marketing, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

Beyond the Classroom - a class where there is no right or wrong answer, where personal values, opinions, thoughts are valued. A class that builds strengths within an individual, a class that makes you feel comfortable, allows you to be yourself and reach out to the next person.

Because of BtC ...

- I am a different person from when I started at university
- I understand what it means to be a leader
- I’ve become a confident individual
- I know where to look for opportunities ...

Noluvuyo Mbeki, second-year BCom Economics, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences
The first class I ever attended was nerve-wrecking. I was afraid people would judge me or look down at me. On the contrary, I was accepted for who I am. I was treated the same as everyone else.

I learned how to deal with conflict and most importantly, how to be an ethical leader. Everything boils down to how you react to the state of the world.

**Either you accept the things going on, or you make a change.**

I am now so eager to make a change, not in the world but in the people of the world. I want to show them that there is more to life than just working and earning a salary.

Because of BtC, I have learned that there is so much more you can do with your time. Just taking time out to listen to another person’s troubles helps and benefits you tenfold.

**The BtC programme changed my outlook on life to want more and to give more!**

Craig Barnes, BTech: Management, Faculty of Business Economics and Science

"BtC taught me to take charge ... to set goals and work towards them rather than just wait for a magical change in life."

Ruben Heilig, first-year BCom Marketing Management, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences
Respect for the natural environment

BtC taught me that my measures to succeed are not where I stand in my moments of comfort, but where I stand in moments of challenge.

In these challenges, I have learnt to care for my environment by keeping my own surroundings green and clean.

I am involved in the community, where I now know that a giving hand is also a receiving hand.

Sinovuyo Mbadlanyana, second-year National Diploma: Accounting, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

BtC is a life-changing experience. How do you put that in words?

Thanks to BtC I am motivated to explore my potential in all aspects of my character to be accountable for my actions and to always “go for it!”

I believe it has helped shape me into a better student, daughter and friend.

It was quite amazing when I discovered at our last meeting that the facilitators did not physically do anything to change who I am; but rather simply motivated the change.

They helped me realise I could always do better, do more, be better.

Natalya Apopo, first-year Industrial Psychology, Faculty of Business and Economic Science
BtC has helped me do just this - go BEYOND THE CLASSROOM.

BtC helped me be aware of my surroundings, to challenge myself daily and grow in areas that I didn’t even know I needed growth.

It was an amazing experience!

BtC not only emphasised the importance of studies, but presented us with skills and competencies best learnt practically, like presentation and conflict management skills.

I also learnt the importance of never giving up and that of always giving of our best.

Somila Nonyongo, second-year Diploma Logistics, Faculty of Business and Economics Sciences

I used to think that there is no school for professionalism, but guess what? Thanks to Backpack to Briefcase, I now know how to conduct myself during interviews and at formal dinners.

Sisonke Dlambulo, third-year Environmental Health, Faculty of Health Sciences
Coming to university wasn’t easy, but thanks to BtC I now have priorities and a vision for my future.

*I am becoming the person I always wanted to be.*

Today, I am proud to say I’m no longer afraid to be noticed; I enjoy getting involved and being part of anything that makes a significant difference in people’s lives.

It’s almost as if this programme has invoked the leader within me because I now tend to seek leadership opportunities.

My actions have truly surprised me in very good way. I want to continue this lifestyle and try to be an inspiration to the youth.

**Chanté King, first-year Diploma in IT, Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology**

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I am so glad I responded to an email sent via NMMU-Communiqué to join the BtC Leadership Programme.

I enjoyed all the sessions but especially the presentation skills one. In fact, I was so motivated that I applied to become a How2buddy for 2014 and was accepted. I also applied to become a House Committee member and was also successfully voted in.

I am grateful that the BtC programme encouraged me to “get off my umtarara” because I am going to be a leader to other students next year.

Thank you to everyone involved in the BtC programme; for caring for us and building us to become great leaders around the globe.

**Bennita Masitha, first-year Diploma Agricultural Management, Faculty of Science**
A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step

In the wake of ability, was born opportunity, surprised by the potential I had as an individual and the urge to do more for my community ...

Was it just that I had joined Beyond the Classroom (BtC)? Little did I know that I was beginning a journey that has completely changed my life.

I am amazed at how much I have done this year, not only in terms of my academics but in terms of giving back to the community.

Where was I before 2013?

But that’s it. It’s never too late.

**BtC has made me be the change I want to see in society.**

Keith Nare, third-year BSc Biochemistry and Chemistry, Faculty of Science

‘What you put in is what you will get out.’

It’s true. “Getting off my umtarara” and seeking a better tomorrow externally is something I will carry forever.

Today I am more confident, ready for new opportunities, appreciative of the importance of good communication and aware that I am responsible for making a difference in my own life.

I am also grateful for my new friends, especially the German one, for our visit to the Cheetah Breeding Project and the work we were able to do in the community.

Buyisiwe Ndungane, BTech Quantity Surveying, Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology
It would be unfair for me to pick a single workshop that played an enormous role in making me a better person, because they started making changes from our very first class.

BtC taught me not only to plan but to act or “get off my umtarara” as our facilitator always says!

I can humbly say that I have accomplished things I never thought I would in the ten months that I have been part of this remarkable team.

This has been the most rewarding experience because I was able to meet the most amazing people while doing the extraordinary.

**BtC has instilled greatness in me.**

Thank you BtC, you have prepared me for the beginning of a fruitful life ahead!

**Mpho Seakamela, third-year Psychology, Faculty of Health Sciences**

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**Values**

I first joined BtC to get credit on my CV. I did not realise how much impact it would have on my life. It has changed how I function personally and professionally.

When you are young like me you never find time to sit down and think about your core values and how they affect you as a leader or those around you. BtC allowed me to think critically about who I am and what I value.

I now know what it means to be an ethical leader and realise how much our country needs such leaders.

BtC has made me value and appreciate. **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University not just as a place where I will get my degree, but as a place where I will walk out as a true leader.**

It has exposed me to many opportunities at NMMU. I am now confident as a leader and challenged myself to apply for leadership positions.

My facilitator helped me and taught me how to write a CV; because of the help I received, I am now Vice-Chairperson of the NMMU Psychology Society.

I had many “a-hah moments” as Oprah Winfrey would say. Moments that I will forever cherish. Moments that have made me and my future better and brighter.

**Aviwe Tebekana second-year Psychology, Faculty of Health Sciences**
Beyond the Classroom graduates

The success stories of BtC graduates speak for themselves even while the students are still at university, but more especially within the workplace. In 2011 and 2012 the recipients of the university’s top student leadership accolades, the Vice-Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence in Leadership all went to BtC graduates.

Curtis Young and Veronique Pilander won the awards in 2011, and Last Siakalangu and Lana Nazer won in 2012.

In the next section of the booklet they share insights on the impact that the programme has already had on their young lives.
In 2012 I completed the Beyond the Classroom (BtC) leadership programme, which is a year-long leadership development programme aimed at encouraging students to go beyond what is expected of them in the classroom. As a result, I adopted the NMMU graduate attributes and values as a part of my daily life throughout my various activities because I see the value therein.

I have learnt the importance of reflecting on tasks and activities upon completion to ensure that I learn and develop from each project in which I participate.

BtC has not only taught me the importance of having excellent communication skills, leadership skills and an above-average academic record but actually granted me the opportunities to achieve this through numerous platforms.

Although BtC is only for a year, once you “get off your umtarara”, it’s for life!

Curwyn Mapaling (2012): third-year BPsych: Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Health Sciences

Thirsty for opportunities

Being a BtC graduate has made me thirsty for opportunities and excellence. This is because I have managed to succeed, excel and grow holistically thanks to the lessons learnt.

BtC taught me to:

• always search for better opportunities – to be involved but to maintain a balanced lifestyle at all times,
• be a better person, to aim high, to work towards my goals, values and to respect others,
• have different inter and intrapersonal skills - from study skills to networking skills,
• always reflect on everything that transpires within my circle of life.

The programme is one of the main keys to better life opportunities.

I can’t talk about my story at NMMU without mentioning BtC. Doors have opened, and within my short period at the university, I have learnt not to get tired till the worse becomes better and better becomes best. I have also learnt and realised that being the change I want to see in the world is one big step towards a better tomorrow.

BtC allowed me to start living my dream now and to inspire, motivate, enlighten, challenge and change lives of others by utilising any opportunities I get to do so.

Sendibitiyosi Gandidzanwa (2012): third-year Biochemistry, Chemistry and Microbiology, Faculty of Science.

Fast fact:
Sendi was nominated for the Vice-Chancellor’s Excellence in Leadership Award in 2013 and won SRC Person of the Year and Arts and Culture Administrator of the Year in 2013.
**Thank you, thank you, thank you ...**

Thank you for the time and effort you put into providing students with wonderful opportunities that allow them to discover more about themselves, to better themselves and to leave university with more than just a degree.

Today, because of BtC, I am able to do something I never thought I would ever have the courage to do - speak in front of a hall of strangers.

I am eternally grateful for helping me to better myself and realise that I can do more than I give myself credit for. As I finish my undergraduate degree, I feel more confident in my ability to face the big bad world.

Elika Nsebula (2012): third-year BA Media, Culture and Communication (MCC), Faculty of Arts

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**Mandela Rhodes Scholar**

I joined BtC in 2009, when I was doing my first year. At that point, being a student meant going to classes and then back to my residence. I did not care about what was happening around me.

BtC changed that. I soon realised that NMMU had more than just my course modules to offer. BtC pushed me out of my comfort zone and I started being a student “beyond the classroom” – getting out there and being involved.

In the process, I gained confidence as I discovered that I had more potential than I was giving myself credit for.

I share NMMU’s values of ubuntu and diversity and have grabbed every opportunity that enabled me to show my passion for one or both of these values.

Kegomoditswe ‘Meme’ Mathobela (2011): MTech, Biomedical Technology, Faculty: Health Sciences

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**Fast fact**

In 2012, Meme was awarded the Abe Bailey Travel Bursary and she is currently a Mandela Rhodes Scholar.
Going places

Unathi Beku (2012), a third-year BA Development Studies student in the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences, has been selected for the Activate Leadership Programme.

Khwezi Kondile (2010), a Quantity Surveying honours student in the Faculty of Engineering the Built Environment and Information Technology, was selected to attend the Y20 Summit in Mexico and the G8-G20 Youth summit in Washington.

Curtis Young (2010), a Business and Economics graduate and former winner of the Vice-Chancellors Excellence in Leadership Award, went straight from the Standard Bank Graduate Programme to a managerial position in Johannesburg.

Presentation skills

In 2012 I took part in the Vodacom National Mobile Apps contest. I had to give a 20-minute presentation on my app, called My Pill Reminder, aimed at reminding elderly patients to take their chronic medication.

Before BtC, I would have been scared to death to stand in front of hundreds of people, but thanks to what we learnt and the confidence I gained, my presentation went well and I came first in the postgraduate section.

So allow me to thank you for the BtC programme and for pushing us to “get off our umtarara”.

Cainos Mukandatsama (2011), Master’s Computing Sciences, Faculty of Science
Giving back

I have not forgotten the values you taught us about giving back to the community. On Christmas Eve I helped to organise a big charity drive for our community to target disadvantaged individuals. We cooked samp and mincemeat, collected clothes and gave away food parcels.

For me, doing community work will be living the legacy of the BtC programme.

Nthabiseng Makhoba: BCom Industrial Psychology in Human Resource Management, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

The Nestle Proactive Engager Specialist Award

I believe it was my general ‘I-can-do-it’ approach that did it – that saw me win this proactive engager award.

It’s about “getting off your umtarara”. I have nothing but praise for the education I received at NMMU, and especially the Beyond the Classroom leadership programme

The knowledge I gained and the skills I developed helped me shine. It speaks for me. I had something to show for all the things I had on my CV.

Pearl Phoolo, BCom Honours in Business Management, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

Fast fact:
Both Nthabiseng and Pearl Phoolo were selected by their company to attend the annual One Young World summit held in Johannesburg in 2013.