

7. REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR ON MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

7.1 Introduction

The Vice-Chancellor's Report on management and administration addresses the following aspects:

- The principal managerial/administrative achievements, measured in terms of the plans, goals and objectives set for the period under review;
- Managerial/administrative aspects of the operations of the institution, including new senior executive/administrative appointments;
- The achievements of the administrative structures and resources, regarding both personnel and systems, assessed in terms of realistic expectations;
- The adequacy of staffing levels, particularly in critical areas;
- The extent to which equity targets in the workplace have been realised;
- The quality of information available to management and the administrative processes involved;
- Student services and extra-curricular activities;
- Relationships with the community, both academic and service;
- Changing patterns in the provision of academic courses; and
- A statement of self-assessment of the achievement of the Principal in attaining the objectives set for the period under review with summary detail of realised achievements (self-evaluation).

The report has been structured according to the above points.

7.2 The Principal Managerial and Administrative Achievements

The University's main managerial and administrative achievements for 2017 include the following:

- In terms of financial management, MUT has again managed to stay within its target variance of less than 3% between its actual expenditure and the annual budget, with a variance of 2.3%.
- Furthermore, MUT received an unqualified audit opinion of its 2017 Annual Report and Annual Financial Statements, as in 2016.
- The University met its institutional planning and reporting commitments to the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET). The 2017 Mid-Year report and the 2018 Annual Performance Plan were submitted to the DHET on schedule, as were the various annual HEMIS (Higher Education Management Information System) reports.

7.3 Managerial and Administrative Aspects of the Operations of the Institution

Below are some of the main features of MUT's operations during 2017:

- MUT was still operating during 2017 with a number of personnel acting in senior management positions, including the position of Vice-Chancellor and the Deans of all three faculties.
- The development of the University's research capacity received a significant boost with the engagement of a Research Professor in each of the three faculties: Prof. K Shale (Faculty of Natural Sciences), Prof. KG Phago (Faculty of Management Sciences), and Prof. TC Haupt (Faculty of Engineering).
- Other senior appointments made during the year included that of the Director: Quality Management and Development.
- Austerity measures that were introduced in 2016 were sustained during 2017.
- Efforts to grow the third-stream income of the University continued, but fell far short of the target. A total of R1,35-million was generated, against a target of R3-million.
- The University struggled during 2017 with delays to key infrastructure projects, including a new Student Centre, Engineering Laboratories and offices, and new Student Housing. By year end, a contractor was appointed to finalize phase 1 of the student housing project.

7.4 The Achievements of the Administrative Structures and Resources

MUT's administrative structures achieved some noteworthy successes in the course of 2017. These included the following:

- The University was peaceful during most of the year, despite continuing conflict at many other institutions. Unlike 2016, when MUT did not lose a single day of teaching and learning as a result of any kind of dispute, there was a student protest in the first quarter of 2017 which resulted in five lost days. However, the university put effective measures in place which ensured that students caught up with lost time and performed well.
- The Teaching and Learning Development Centre (TLDC) continued to focus on its key objectives, viz. to provide professional development opportunities for academic staff and to provide an academic monitoring and support system for students. Six academic staff members received teaching excellence awards. A total of 382 staff members (against the TLDC target of 200) participated in 16 (target of 10) professional development opportunities during 2017. The TLDC facilitated the deployment of tutors, mentors and supplemental instructors across all faculties, with at least one tutor for each academic programme. Students' performance was monitored using the HEDA system and support was provided to 90% of students identified as being "at risk", which matched the target.
- The Cooperative Education Department reports that monitoring took place of 70% of students in work-integrated learning (WIL) during 2017. This fell short, however, of the department's target of 90%. A work-readiness programme was facilitated across 13 WIL programmes (target of 15); and 497 students (target of 500) were involved in the roll-out of an Employability Improvement Programme. Five new training partnerships were established, against a target of 10.
- MUT's Library Services launched its new Digital Environment during 2017, including 100 laptop computers, 110 desktop computers, one smart-board and six heavy-duty printers. The purchase of the new equipment was made possible by a donation of R2,2-million from Nedbank Eyethu Foundation. Network cabling for the two Library laboratories was upgraded to enhance performance. Access to databases has improved and the Library can now accommodate more students for research purposes and training. Library Services spent R13-million during the year on the acquisition of new learning material. The plagiarism detection software Turnitin was acquired and the first training in its use was offered in November, attended by 80 students and staff members. An E-learning infrastructure project to enhance the Library's capacity to support blended teaching and learning received funding from the DHET's grant for historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs).

7.5 The Adequacy of Staffing Levels, Particularly in Critical Areas

The ratio of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent Instructional/Research (I/R) staff to FTE students in 2017 was 1:45 and the headcount ratio of permanent I/R staff to student headcount was 1:57. However, when the FTE ratio of total I/R staff to student FTEs is calculated, the picture changes to 1:29. The latter ratio is in accordance with the average I/R Staff to Student FTE ratio in the higher education sector.

Notwithstanding the above I/R Staff and Student FTE ratios, MUT has not achieved its targeted total of 239 permanent I/R staff. By the end of 2017 the total number of permanent I/R staff amounted to 205. This shortfall of permanent I/R staff compels the university to make excessive use of part-time and temporary academic staff. Some of the possible reasons for not filling all of the vacant I/R staff positions are the difficulty in finding I/R staff with the required qualifications and industry experience and slowness of the recruitment processes. MUT is planning to make a concerted effort in 2018 to address those factors.

7.6 The Extent to which Equity Targets in the Workplace have been Realised

MUT's equity profile has largely remained the same in 2017 as it was in 2016. Regarding its overall staff gender composition (including permanent and temporary staff), MUT has 52% male staff members and 48% female. Regarding overall racial distribution, MUT has managed to achieve an overall composition of 83% African, 1% Coloured, 10% Indian, and 6% White. Foreign staff members make up 6,5% of the personnel. On the academic side, the gender profile is more skewed towards males, with 63% male and 37% female. The academic gender profile will be strongly addressed in 2017. Regarding racial distribution of academic staff, MUT's 2017 profile comprised 73% African, 1% Coloured, 18% Indian and 8% White staff members.