



# COMMUNICATION PLAN

DURING THE TENURE OF THE MUT ADMINISTRATOR



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StayOnComms

## **Introduction**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2022, Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) received a communique from Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education & Training in the Republic of SA, stating that after consultations with the Council on Higher Education, as well as other stakeholders, he had deemed it fit in the interest of MUT to dissolve the MUT Council. He informed the University that he had appointed Professor Lourens Van Staden as the Administrator.

The terms of reference for the appointment of the administrator as gazetted on 10 October are as follows:

1. Take over the role, powers, functions, and duties of the MUT Council for a period of 24 months.
2. Identify and initiate processes and initiatives that will restore proper governance and management at the University.
3. Initiate the independent external investigation (a forensic audit) into the range of financial control weaknesses and suspected financial irregularities as a matter of urgency.
4. Further, where criminal activity is evident, full legal processes must follow so that there is visible consequence management for illicit practice.
5. Develop and begin the implementation of a 5-year development plan that will address the range of problems and challenges that have been identified in all the Independent Assessor reports and in the CHE's institutional audit reports.
6. Take responsibility for the appointment and for the filling of senior level posts including that of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, within 12 -18 months of the term of office of the Administrator.
7. Review the senior appointments made in 2022 to ensure that the institutional statute and all applicable policies were strictly adhered to. Further to this, the Administrator must ensure that there are necessary employment probity assessments for new management recruits.
8. Ensure that a new council is constituted in accordance with the institutional statute as soon as is practicable; and that there is a proper induction of all members and an effective handover of the governance role to the new Council. The recommendation of a probity assessment for potential members of Council must be followed through.

## **Guiding principles**

- Fair and equitable relations with the MUT executive.
- Non-interference with the executive's decision-making powers.

- Inclusive communications vs exclusive communications.
- Centralised Administrator's communications vs scattered communications.
- Adherence to the mandate of DHET's Terms of Reference.

### **Target stakeholders**

- Staff, students, and alumni
- Parents/Guardians
- Community of Umlazi and the greater KZN region
- General Public
- Media
- Donors and Funders
- DHET and all statutory organisations

### **Communication channels:**

The following are a variety of the communication channels that will be used to provide updates during the Administrator's tenure:

- Media (both electronic & print)
- Social Media networks: Facebook & Twitter
- Website
- WhatsApp-StayOnComms
- MUT Radio
- Weekly Good News Friday,
- Email
- Frequently Asked Questions ([www.mut.ac.za/administrator/faqs](http://www.mut.ac.za/administrator/faqs))

- SMSes
- Media relations- (Press statements, briefings/meetings) where necessary
- Weekly Good News Friday,

**Key messages in our communications**

1. The appointment of the administrator: Terms of reference
  2. Profile on the administrator and his team of experts
  3. Systemic reporting on progress
  4. Issues management
  5. MUT/Deloitte Hotline
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## COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN DURING THE TENURE OF THE MUT ADMINISTRATOR

This Plan is premised on these goals:

Goal 1: Clear delineation of the role of the administrator.

Goal 2: Consistent communications about progress against the Terms of Reference.

Goal 3: Issues and crises management

Goal 4: Implementation of the Terms of Reference

### Goal 1: Clear delineation on the role of the administrator

#### Objective 1: To keep the University community and all stakeholders abreast with the roles and responsibilities of the Administrator

Actions	Execution	Date	Accountability
Administrator introduction (role, team, and modus operandi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website</li> <li>▪ Email</li> <li>▪ Social media platforms</li> <li>▪ SMS</li> <li>▪ GnF</li> <li>▪ Bi-monthly communique (From the Desk of the Administrator)</li> </ul>	Jan 31	Administrator/MarComms
Provide strategic intent-Who he is vs who he is not		Jan 31	Administrator/MarComms
Explain Terms of reference		Jan 31	Administrator/MarComms
Provide pertinent information on project plans being undertaken by the administrator		Jan 31	Administrator/MarComms

**Objective 2: To make students and interest groups understand the communication channels**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Provide weekly information to students and interest groups on how to channel concerns and submissions	Website Social media platforms	31 January	Administrator/MarComms
Develop FAQ page regarding what the Administrator is here for and what he is not here for	SMS	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Reinvigorate a Hotline Campaign for the University and all its stakeholders		Before 23 Dec	Risk Management/MarComms

**Objective 3: Reassure the University and its stakeholders about the Administrator's Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and strategic intent to restore stability**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Send an official communique to parents about the role of the administrator and how this does not affect the business of the University.	Website MUT Radio	Jan-March 2023	Administrator/MarComms
Provide pertinent updates on progress being made after each 'Engagement' meeting	Website SMS	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Share the Project Plan with the entire University	Website SMS	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Provide descriptors on key areas of action and achievements every quarter	Website SMS	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms

**Objective 4: Provide an opportunity for the Administrator to meet and greet staff and students**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Invite the Administrator to MUT Radio to talk about his role	Website	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Develop an MUT Administrator microsite (SharePoint)	Email	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Develop FAQ page on the microsite	Social media platforms SMS	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms

**Objective 5: To keep the momentum on progress made**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Enhance University communications with information Administrator role	Website	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Ensure that key messages on the Administrator role are communicated widely	Email Social media platforms SMS GnF	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms

**Goal 2: Consistent communications about Terms of Reference.**

**Objective 6: Provide prompt communications on achievements and challenges if there are some**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Targeted communications after 'Council' meetings	Website	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Monitoring and evaluation of communications	Email	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms

	Social media platforms SMS GnF		
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**Goal 3: Issues and crises management**

**Objective 7: To provide clarity in communication and pre-empt crises**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Test messages and execute	Website	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Use various mechanisms such as 'social listening' to manage communications	Email Social media platforms SMS GnF	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms

**Goal 4: Implementation of the Terms of reference**

**Objective 8: To provide clarity on progress made with the Terms of Reference**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
Touchbase with stakeholders on progress made with the Terms of Reference	Website	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms
Provide updates and where there are bottlenecks, reassure stakeholders on what is being done about those.	Email Social media platforms SMS GnF	Ongoing	Administrator/MarComms



