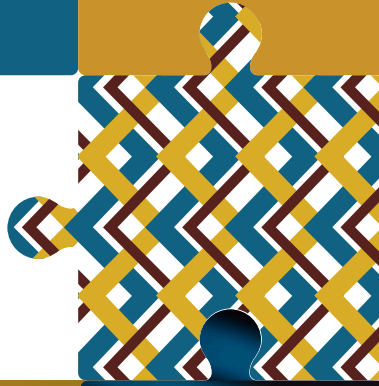




MUT
MANGOSUTHU
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**IGNITE
2030**

**FROM VISION
TO DELIVERY**



2026-2030
Strategy and
Strategic
Plan



shape and own the future



MUT

MANGOSUTHU
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

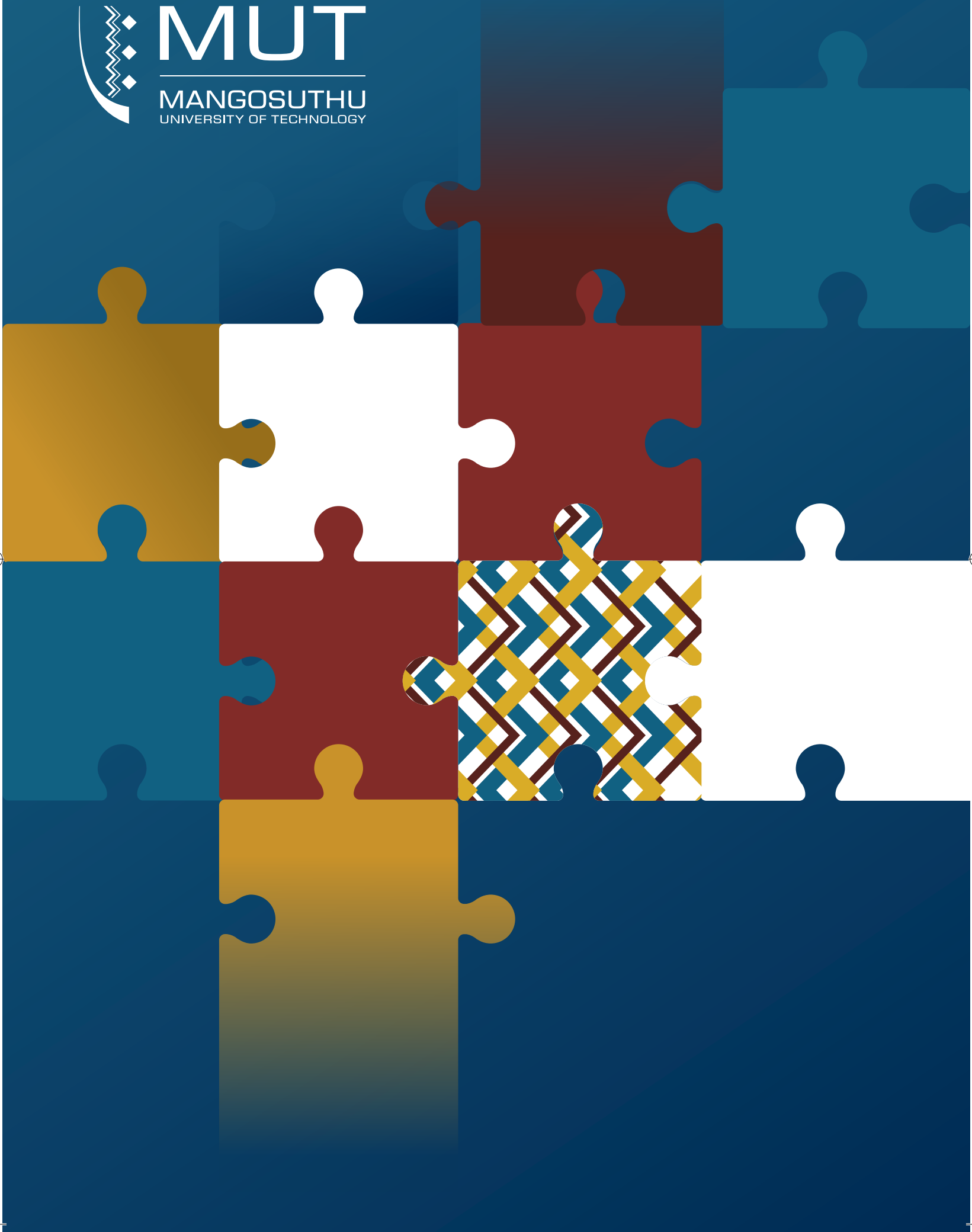




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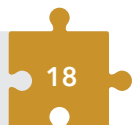
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JOINT FOREWORD BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRINCIPAL AND THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL



On the 08 October 2025, Council approved the MUT Strategy 2026-2030, our compact to shape and own the future. We issue this foreword jointly because delivery rests on unified leadership and collective action across the University community.

Guided by the MY MUT values namely, Mastery, Yearning for Growth, Mutual Respect, Ubuntu, and Transparency, the strategy aligns our work across governance and leadership; learning, teaching and research; financial sustainability; a supportive campus environment; and strengthened internationalisation and partnerships. It sets clear goals with measurable

indicators, embeds disciplined performance reporting through EMC, PRC, ARCC and Council, and commits us to data-informed, risk-aware, and digitally enabled execution.

In practice, this means modernising curricula with industry, deepening work-integrated learning, and entrepreneurship, advancing impactful applied research, and nurturing an inclusive, safe, and wellness-oriented community. Progress will be tracked quarterly and reviewed at mid-term to keep us responsive and accountable.

We call on staff, students, alumni, and partners to live the MY MUT values daily and to turn this plan into visible results for our region and country—together, we will Shape and own the future.

Professor Nokuthula Sibiyi
Vice-Chancellor & Principal

Dr Mosidi Makgae
Chair of Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) Strategy 2026-2030 affirms the institution's commitment to shaping and owning its future through a focused and integrated approach to academic excellence, innovation, digital transformation, and social impact. It marks a shift from broad institutional ambition to targeted, measurable transformation aligned with MUT's identity as a University of Technology (UoT).

Rooted in Umlazi, Durban, South Africa, MUT's strategic posture is defined by its dual commitment to academic excellence and socio-economic transformation. The strategy is structured around five strategic goals that consolidate institutional priorities. It integrates digitalisation into research and innovation, embeds entrepreneurship across academic programmes, and repositions broader sustainability and institutional development imperatives within a set of eight cross-cutting strategic enablers. These enablers represent MUT's foundational capabilities such as ethical governance

and financial stewardship, essential for achieving institutional transformation.

This strategy repositions MUT from a transactional model of programme delivery toward an integrated framework that foregrounds entrepreneurship, digital fluency, and developmental impact while reaffirming its core mission to develop skilled technicians and technologists. The plan introduces five Strategic Goals, 20 Strategic Objectives (SOs) and 23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), each aligned with annual targets from 2026 to 2030.

Importantly, the strategy builds on the recommendations and lessons of the Administrator's Close-Out Report (2024). The 2026-2030 Strategy is therefore not only a roadmap for future growth, but also a platform for consolidating institutional recovery and renewal. It positions MUT as a resilient, values-driven, and responsive university committed to national development, technological advancement, and inclusive transformation.

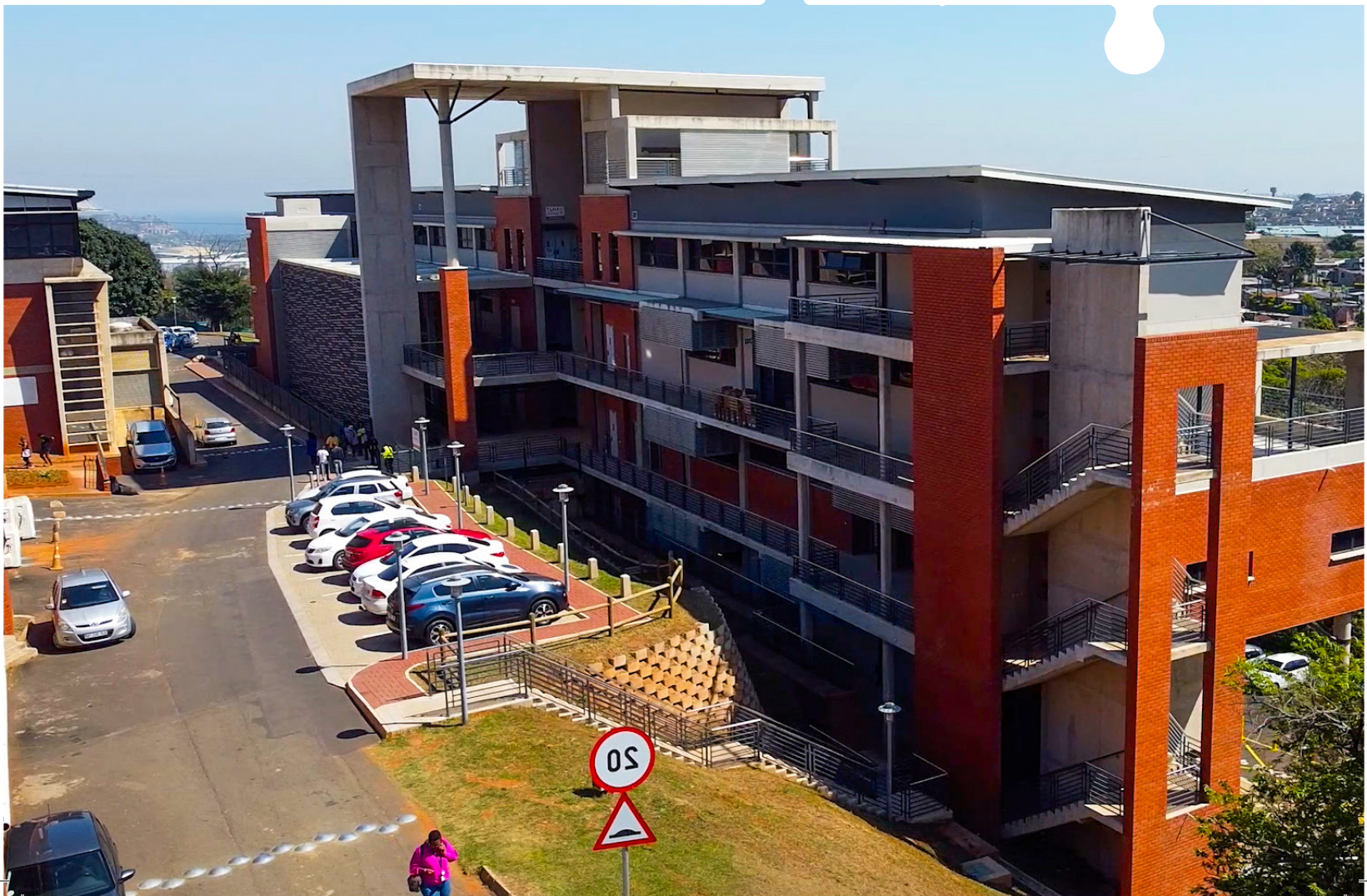
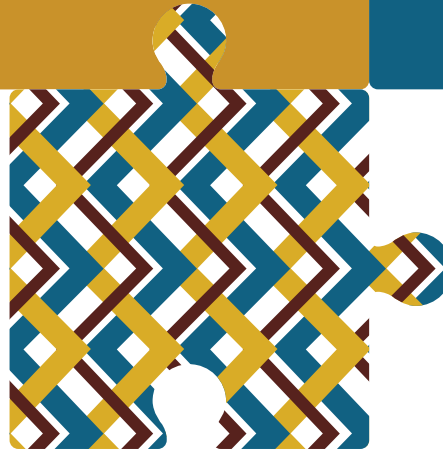
This document is structured into two key sections:

1. **The Strategy Framework** - outlining MUT's vision, mission, strategic identity, and five core goals.
2. **The Strategic Plan** - detailing an annual breakdown of targets and implementation milestones.

SECTION

1

THE STRATEGY
FRAMEWORK



1.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of the MUT Strategy 2026-2030 takes place against a backdrop of deep institutional introspection and renewal. Since the 2012 and 2024 Council on Higher Education (CHE) institutional audits, together with independent assessor reports commissioned by the Minister of Higher Education and Training and the Administrator's Close-Out Report (2024), a consistent set of governance, leadership, and performance challenges has been highlighted. MUT acknowledges these findings, which expose historical weaknesses in accountability, operational coherence, and institutional stability.

This strategy signals a deliberate commitment to transformation and recovery. It seeks to reposition the university on a foundation of ethical leadership, good governance, values-based performance, and long-term sustainability.

The strategic focus is also shaped by South Africa's evolving development needs and global imperatives. In alignment with the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP 2030), the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPSET), the Decadal Plan for Science, Technology, and Innovation (DPSTI), the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the African Union's Agenda 2063, MUT commits to advancing inclusive, quality education, innovation-led development, and social equity. This Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) is further developed in line with the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997, as amended) and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999), which provide the legislative

framework for governance, accountability, and financial management in public universities. There are currently no court rulings with material impact on the mandate or operations of MUT for the 2026-2030 planning cycle.

Forward-looking elements, including Fourth and emerging Fifth Industrial Revolution (4IR/5IR) technologies, digital transformation, and environmental stewardship, are embedded to ensure MUT's relevance and resilience in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape. A high-level Theory of Change (ToC) underpins this strategy, connecting institutional inputs to intended outcomes and guiding the development of measurable and achievable implementation plans (See annexure 2).

MUT STRATEGY 2026-2030 DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The development of the MUT Strategy 2026-2030 followed an iterative, evidence-informed, and participatory process, drawing on best practices in higher education and public sector strategic planning. The development was characterised by rigorous analysis, inclusive consultations, and iterative validation across all governance levels. Inputs from students, staff, faculties, management, council, industry partners, and external stakeholders have been consolidated to ensure that the strategy reflects both the University's internal aspirations and external contextual demands.

a) Grounded in Bryson's Strategic Change Cycle

The process reflected key steps from Bryson's Strategic Change Cycle (2004), a widely used model for strategic planning in public institutions:

- **Initiation and agreement:** The Executive Management Committee (EMC) endorsed the process, facilitated by the Directorate for Institutional Planning and Research (DIPR).



- **Contextual assessment:** Internal and external assessments were conducted using SWOT, PESTEL, and TOWS, methodologies (Annexure 1).
- **Strategy formulation:** Strategic issues identified through structured consultations, informed by institutional reviews, led to five strategic goals, and supporting strategic enablers.
- **Review and adoption:** The draft strategy underwent EMC reviews and workshops with the cross-functional Strategy Development Task Team (SDTT), ensuring inclusive input from across faculties, divisions, students, and staff.
- **Implementation planning:** The strategy is supported by a results framework, cascading institutional plans, and a monitoring and evaluation system aligned to performance indicators and targets.

b) Aligned with DHET and HEQC Planning Norms

The process adhered to planning norms and expectations set by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC):

- **Policy alignment:** Directly aligned with the National Development Plan 2030, White Paper for Post-School Education and Training, Decadal Plan for Science, Technology and Innovation, Sustainable Development Goals, and Agenda 2063. The strategy actively responds to the national and provincial priorities of government which seeks to;
 - (i) drive inclusive growth and job creation;
 - (ii) reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living; and

(iii) building a capable, ethical, and developmental state.

- **Evidence-based planning:** Insights from the appraisal of the 2020-2025 Strategy, based on audited HEMIS data, informed the new cycle.
- **Responsiveness to institutional reviews:** Reflects key lessons from the CHE audits (2012 and 2024), the Independent Assessor's reports, and the Administrator's Close-Out Report.
- **Integrated planning architecture:** Structured to cascade into the 5-Year Development Plan, Annual Performance Plan (APP), Institutional Operational Plans (IOPs), and Departmental Operational Plans (DOPs). Goals and KPIs are underpinned by budgetary allocations and resource frameworks to be detailed in the APPs and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).
- **Performance and sustainability focus:** Supported by financial sustainability measures, a risk register, performance-based budgeting, and institutional KPIs.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Broad internal and external consultations, supported by a cross-functional task team, promoted institutional ownership.

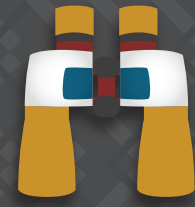
c) Driven by Measurable Outcomes

The strategy is underpinned by a Theory of Change (Annexure 2) that links institutional inputs to outcomes and impact. It is operationalised through strategic objectives, key performance indicators, and annual targets, supported by a monitoring and evaluation framework.



1.2 VISION

To be a leading University of Technology advancing transformative education, pioneering research and innovation, and inclusive development.



1.3 MISSION:

We empower society through innovative learning, applied research, entrepreneurial graduates, and collaborative partnerships.



1.4 CORE VALUES: (MY MUT)

The MY MUT values build on our core principles from the previous cycle, Accountability, Respect, Integrity, and Excellence, while expanding them with aspirational, contextually relevant ideals like Ubuntu and Mastery. This evolution affirms MUT's identity as a values-driven university, rooted in tradition and responsive to transformation.

- M** **MASTERY:** Excellence in applied learning, teaching, research, community engagement, leadership, and innovation.
- Y** **YEARNING FOR GROWTH:** Commitment to lifelong learning, entrepreneurial thinking, and continuous development.
- M** **MUTUAL RESPECT:** Fostering inclusivity, diversity, dignity, respect, and ethical partnerships within and beyond the university.
- U** **UBUNTU:** Social responsibility, collaboration, and impact-driven community engagement grounded in shared humanity.
- T** **TRANSPARENCY:** Commitment to trust, integrity, accountability, and ethical leadership.

To embed these values into daily practice, MUT has developed a Values-in-Practice Framework (Annexure 3), which defines expected behaviours and provides institutional indicators and monitoring mechanisms to guide culture, performance, leadership, and student engagement.



1.5 STRATEGIC GOALS

MUT's strategy is built on the following five key goals guiding institutional growth and impact:

GOAL 1: FUTURE-FIT LEARNING AND TEACHING

Advance student success and graduate readiness through effective learning support, curriculum renewal, digital integration, work-integrated learning, and entrepreneurship education, while leveraging community engagement as a strategic enabler to strengthen applied learning and social responsiveness.

GOAL 2: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Strengthen institutional resilience by diversifying income sources and optimising resource use, supported by the strategic enablers of financial sustainability, good governance, and data-driven decision-making to ensure long-term viability.

GOAL 3: RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Enhance research productivity, innovation, and collaborations, while embedding digital transformation institution-wide, enabled by digital transformation, intellectual property management,

and data-driven decision-making to ensure future-readiness and socio-economic impact.

GOAL 4: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, INTERNATIONALISATION AND VISIBILITY

Grow mutually beneficial national and international partnerships to expand academic collaboration, mobility, and visibility, enabled by stakeholder engagement and transformational leadership to position MUT as a globally connected, socially responsive institution.

GOAL 5: ENGAGING, INCLUSIVE, AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Foster student and staff wellness, inclusivity, transformation, and safety through accessible infrastructure, supportive services, and an enabling institutional culture, underpinned by the strategic enablers of environmental sustainability, risk management, and values-driven leadership.

These high-level Goals provide the strategic direction for 2026-2030. Their corresponding Strategic Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are detailed in Section 2, which operationalises each Goal into measurable outcomes.

1.6 CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIC ENABLERS

While the goals define MUT's priorities for 2026-2030, their achievement depends on strong cross-cutting enablers. These enablers form the backbone of implementation, ensuring that progress is measurable, sustainable, and embedded in an environment where staff, students, and communities can thrive.

ENABLER	FOCUS AREA	STRATEGIC INTENT
1. Transformational Leadership and Performance	Values-driven leadership, academic quality, performance accountability	Build a high-performance, student-centred culture through inclusive, values-based leadership, talent development, and intentional change management.
2. Good Governance	Council oversight, compliance, transparent decision-making	Strengthen ethical governance by aligning policies, decision rights, and accountability to public sector standards and student interests.
3. Financial Sustainability	Income diversification, long-term financial health	Advance institutional resilience through prudent resource management and growth in second- and third-stream income to support accessible quality education.
4. Digital Transformation	Smart operations, technology-enabled systems	Drive institution-wide digital transformation by embedding technology into teaching, research, operations, and support functions, with shared responsibility across staff and students.
5. Business Continuity and Risk Management	Resilience, operational agility, risk mitigation	Embed risk management and continuity planning to safeguard academic delivery and essential services.
6. Stakeholder and Community Engagement	Inclusive collaboration, partnerships, communication	Foster trust and co-ownership by strengthening partnerships with students, staff, alumni, industry, communities, and global collaborators.
7. Environmental Sustainability	Climate-conscious operations, SDG alignment	Embed sustainability in infrastructure, curricula, and community engagement to promote environmental responsibility.
8. Data-Driven Decision-Making	Evidence-informed planning and performance	Institutionalise a culture of data-driven decision-making by embedding high-quality data and analytics into planning, teaching, governance, and continuous improvement across the institution.

Section 2 presents the detailed Strategic Plan, translating vision into action. Supporting evidence and frameworks are provided in the annexures for full alignment between context, risks, values, indicators, and implementation.

SECTION

2

**THE STRATEGIC
PLAN
(2026 - 2030)**



2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section outlines how the MUT Strategy 2026–2030 will be implemented. It translates strategic intent into measurable action aligned to institutional goals, national priorities, and global higher education trends. Each strategic goal is supported by objectives, performance indicators, baselines, targets, and accountability lines.

Implementation is guided by:

- 5 Strategic Goals
- 20 Strategic Objectives
- 23 Key Performance Indicators
- 2024 baseline data (where applicable)
- Annual targets (2026–2030)

The EMC leads goal implementation, with facilitation by the DIPR. Progress is reported to the EMC, reviewed by the PRC and ARCC, and submitted to Council on a quarterly basis. Detailed definitions, calculation methods, baselines, and data sources for each KPI are provided in Annexure 5: Technical Indicator Descriptions (TIDs). This ensures consistency, reliability, and auditability of institutional performance reporting.

DISCLAIMER ON OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES, AND IMPACTS

The MUT Strategy 2026–2030 is informed by a Theory of Change (Annexure 2), which distinguishes between outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Given the five-year horizon of this plan, the majority of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are outcome-oriented, reflecting the changes realistically achievable within this strategic cycle. Outputs are included selectively, particularly where they serve as leading indicators of progress (e.g., curriculum renewal, partnerships, and digital transformation initiatives). Long-term impacts, such as graduate employability, societal transformation, and institutional reputation, are captured in the Impact Statements for each Goal and will be tracked even beyond 2030 through subsequent strategic planning cycles.

Some indicators introduced in the MUT Strategy 2026–2030 are new, reflecting fresh strategic priorities (e.g., entrepreneurship, wellness, digital transformation, transformation index). As such, they do not have audited baselines from the 2020–

2025 cycle. The first year of implementation (2026) will provide the audited baseline for these indicators. This approach aligns with DHET guidelines, which allow new baselines where indicators are newly adopted.



GOAL 1: FUTURE-FIT LEARNING AND TEACHING

Impact statement: By 2030, MUT will consistently achieve higher student success, throughput, and graduation rates, producing work-ready, entrepreneurial graduates equipped with future skills and grounded in inclusive and digitally enhanced learning experiences.

Table 1: Future-Fit Learning and Teaching¹

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)	BASELINE (2024)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SO 1. Enhance student success through effective learning and support systems.	1. % Student success	83%	84%	85%	86%	86%	86%
	2. % Throughput rate (n+1)	44% ²	50%	53%	55%	57%	60%
	3. % Graduation rate	21%	22.5%	22.5%	23%	23%	23%
SO2. Curricula to align with industry, future skills, and digital literacy	4. % of programmes with curricula formerly reviewed and updated to integrate industry input, future skills, and information literacy	New	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
SO3. Strengthen staff capacity	5. % of academic staff with PhDs	25%	26%	27%	28%	29%	30%
SO4. Expand Applied Learning across all eligible qualifications.	6. % of eligible qualifications with WIL components	61%	62%	70%	80%	80%	80%
SO5. Institutionalise entrepreneurship education	7. % of qualifications embedding entrepreneurship education	New	10%	60%	70%	85%	90%

¹ Headcount enrolment and first-time entering enrolment (FTEN) are governed by the ministerially approved Student Enrolment and Efficiency Plan (SEEP). These indicators are therefore not repeated as KPIs in this Strategy but remain binding commitments that are monitored through the Annual Performance Plan (APP).

²

GOAL 2: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Impact statement: By 2030, MUT will be financially resilient and sustainable, with diversified income streams, optimised resource use, and strengthened brand trust, enabling long-term stability in teaching, research, and support services.

Table 2: Financial Sustainability

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)	BASELINE (2024)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SO6. Diversify income sources.	8. % of institutional income from third-stream sources	2%	5%	7%	9%	10%	10%
SO7. Optimise academic-to-non-academic staff cost ratio.	9. Academic: non-academic staff cost ratio	1:1.12	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1

GOAL 3: RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Impact statement: By 2030, MUT will be recognised for impactful applied research, innovation, and postgraduate growth, with digital transformation embedded across learning, teaching, research, and institutional operations.

Table 3: Research Innovation, and Digital Transformation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)	BASELINE (2024)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SO8. Improve research output, innovation, and funding.	10. # of DHET-approved research output units	77.5	82	90	98	102	105
	11. Rand value of revenue-generating research projects	R8.9m	R9.5m	R10m	R10.5m	R11m	R11.5m
SO9. Expand research collaborations.	12. # of active industry/government research collaborations	10	6	8	10	12	14
SO10. Drive digital transformation operations.	13. % of approved strategic digital transformation initiatives implemented annually	New	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%

GOAL 4: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, INTERNATIONALISATION AND VISIBILITY

Impact statement: By 2030, MUT will be a visible, trusted, and globally connected institution, leveraging strategic partnerships and international collaborations to enhance its reputation, socio-economic contribution, and stakeholder trust.

Table 4: Strategic Partnerships, Internationalisation and Visibility

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)	BASELINE (2024)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SO11. Strengthen national socio-economic and industry collaborations.	14. # of active industry and socio-economic collaborations	7	10	12	15	18	20
SO12. Expand international mobility.	15. # of students and staff participating in international mobility programmes	20	30	35	40	45	50
SO13. Grow global academic and research collaborations	16. # of active global collaborations	10	10	15	20	25	30
SO14. Enhance brand visibility and trust.	17. % of staff/ students rating MUT 9-10 as a place to study/ work	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%	98%



GOAL 5: ENGAGING, INCLUSIVE & SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Impact statement: By 2030, MUT will provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive campus environment where staff and students thrive, with equity, diversity, transformation, and wellness fully embedded in institutional culture.

Table 5: Engaging, Inclusive & Supportive Environment

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)	BASELINE (2024)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SO15. Enhance student support and wellness	18. % of students rating support services effective	New	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%
SO16. Improve inclusive infrastructure and digital access.	19. % of facilities aligned with universal access	New	50%	60%	70%	85%	100%
SO17. Advance transformation and inclusive culture.	20. % Transformation and inclusion index	New	85%	85%	90%	95%	100%
SO18. Strengthen staff and student holistic well-being and development.	21. % of staff and students rating wellness effective	New	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%
SO19. Enhance student and staff safety and security.	22. % of reported safety/security incidents logged and responded to within agreed turnaround time.	New	70%	80%	85%	90%	95%
SO20. Strengthen governance, accountability, and compliance	23. Achievement of unqualified audit opinion with no material findings ("clean audit")	Qualified audit with material findings	Clean Audit	Clean Audit	Clean Audit	Clean Audit	Clean Audit

Progress against the Strategic Goals will be reviewed quarterly through institutional performance reporting and undergo a mid-term strategic review in 2028. This review will assess goal achievement, contextual changes, and recalibrate targets where necessary to ensure continued alignment with national priorities and institutional needs.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

The implementation of this Strategic Plan is guided by the University's Strategic Planning Governance Framework (2024). Oversight rests with Council, with the EMC leading execution and the DIPR facilitating monitoring and reporting. Progress will be tracked through quarterly reports to EMC, PRC, ARCC, and Council, with a mid-term review scheduled for 2028 to assess progress, address emerging challenges, and recalibrate priorities where necessary to ensure continued alignment with national priorities and institutional goals. Strategic risks associated with the implementation of each Goal are monitored through the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

(ARCC) and aligned with the institutional risk register. Achieving this Strategy relies on a culture of data quality and evidence-based decision-making, with every unit accountable for ensuring the accuracy, reliability, and timely use of institutional data. MUT does not oversee or manage any public entities, and the Strategy aligns to the principles of the District Development Model, with the University collaborating with provincial and local government structures to strengthen regional socio-economic development.

2.3 STRATEGIC RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The implementation of the Strategy 2026–2030 takes place in a dynamic and uncertain environment. In line with the Revised Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans, MUT has identified key strategic risks that could affect the achievement of its

goals, together with mitigation measures. These risks are monitored continuously and reported through governance structures. The summary below highlights the core risk areas and institutional responses.

RISK AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Financial Viability	Insufficient third-stream income, over-reliance on government subsidy, and escalating costs.	Diversify income sources; strengthen debt recovery; optimise cost structures.
Digital Capacity	Limited ICT infrastructure and lag in digital transformation.	Prioritise ICT investments; implement digital strategy; train staff and students.
Leadership Stability & Governance	Institutional instability due to leadership changes or governance lapses.	Strengthen governance structures; succession planning; capacity development for leadership.
Research Output & Innovation	Low DHET-accredited research output and limited commercialisation of IP.	Incentivise publications; expand research partnerships; improve postgraduate pipeline.

RISK AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Reputation & Stakeholder Trust	Reputational damage from audit findings or underperformance.	Proactive stakeholder engagement; improve audit compliance; enhance brand visibility.
Student Success & Throughput	Low graduation and throughput rates; high dropout.	Improve academic support; track cohorts; strengthen WIL and curriculum relevance.
Capacity to Deliver on Mandate	Skills gaps, academic staff shortages, and heavy workloads.	Recruit and retain qualified staff; implement workload management model; invest in development.
Stakeholder & Community Engagement	Weak partnerships with industry, alumni, and community.	Establish partnership frameworks; expand alumni engagement; prioritise CEAD projects.
Transformation & Inclusivity	Gaps in employment equity, inclusivity, and institutional culture.	Implement EE plans; monitor transformation index; promote inclusive culture initiatives.
External Shocks	Vulnerability to socio-economic shocks, pandemics, or climate risks.	Scenario planning; strengthen emergency preparedness; diversify risk exposure.

Accountability for Strategic Goals is allocated as follows:

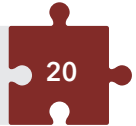
GOAL	PRIMARY ACCOUNTABILITY	SUPPORTING ROLES
Goal 1: Future-Fit Learning, Teaching	DVC: Teaching & Learning	Deans
Goal 2: Financial Sustainability	CFO	Executive Director (ED): Institutional Advancement and ALL
Goal 3: Research, Innovation, and Digital Transformation	DVC: Research, Innovation & Engagement	DVC: Resources & Planning
Goal 4: Strategic Partnerships, Internationalisation and Visibility	ED: Institutional Advancement	DVC: Research, Innovation & Engagement (academic & research collaborations)
Goal 5: Engaging, Inclusive & Supportive Environment	DVC: Resources & Planning (infrastructure, safety, digital access);	DVC: Teaching & Learning (student support, wellness)

ANNEXURES



The following annexures provide the supporting evidence base, frameworks, and technical specifications that underpin the MUT Strategy 2026–2030. They ensure transparency, alignment with FSAPP and AGSA requirements, and strengthen the monitoring and evaluation framework. Each annexure should be read in conjunction with the main Strategy document, as they provide detailed analyses, risk assessments, and indicator definitions that enable effective implementation and oversight.

ANNEXURE 1: CONSOLIDATED SWOT-TOWS-PESTEL ANALYSIS



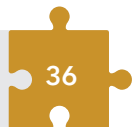
Provides a consolidated internal and external situational analysis that informed the identification of strategic issues and priorities.

ANNEXURE 2: THEORY OF CHANGE (TOC)



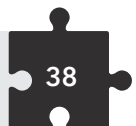
Outlines the logical framework linking inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for the Strategy 2026–2030.

ANNEXURE 3: VALUES-IN-PRACTICE FRAMEWORK (MY MUT VALUES) IS

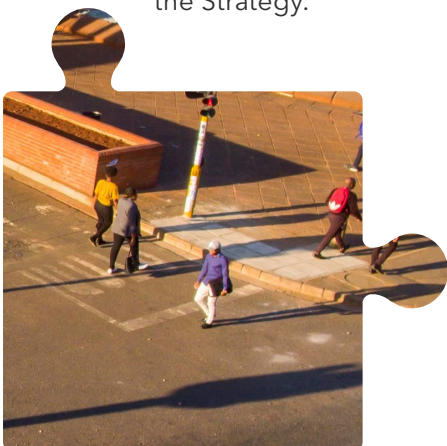


Translates the five MYMUT values into expected behaviours, institutional indicators, and monitoring mechanisms.

ANNEXURE 4: TECHNICAL INDICATOR DESCRIPTIONS (TIDS)



Provides definitions, calculation methods, data sources, frequency, and responsible offices for each KPI in the Strategy.



ANNEXURE

1

CONSOLIDATED MUT SWOT, TOWS, AND PESTEL ANALYSIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUT STRATEGY 2026-2030

1 INTRODUCTION

This in-depth SWOT, TOWS, AND PESTEL analyses for Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) has been conducted to inform the development of the MUT Strategy for 2026-2030. This analysis integrates insights from institutional reports and strategic documents spanning over a decade, from 2012 to 2024, including the four audited annual reports of the university providing a thorough evaluation of the university's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By consolidating findings from various assessments, this analysis examines critical areas such as governance, academic quality, financial sustainability, employability support, and institutional culture.

The goal is to address all previously identified challenges and opportunities to guide the development of strategic initiatives that will enhance MUT's performance and reputation. This approach is particularly significant, as one of the recurring criticisms of previous strategies has been their failure to incorporate feedback from external assessments

and institutional audit reports. This has led to persistent issues and the university being placed under administration more than once.

In this strategic cycle, there is a deliberate effort to ensure that all challenges and weaknesses identified over the past 12 years are addressed to prevent a recurrence of past issues. The following section outlines the background and evolution of the reports and documents that have informed this intensive SWOT analysis.

1.1. BACKGROUND AND EVOLUTION OF THE REPORTS

- i. **HEQC Institutional Audit Report (2012):** This was one of the earliest comprehensive evaluations of MUT, conducted by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) in 2011 and published in early 2012. The audit focused on the institution's transition from a technikon to a university of technology. It assessed the

- university's alignment with the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), governance, academic quality, and community engagement. The report highlighted significant challenges in governance and academic management, which laid the groundwork for future strategic planning efforts.
- ii. **Pityana and Favish Report (2018):** Following governance crises and administrative instability, this report was commissioned to provide an in-depth analysis of MUT's institutional challenges. It focused on the root causes of the governance issues and offered recommendations for creating a sustainable governance framework. The report emphasized the need for better role clarity between council and management, improved financial oversight, and a strategic approach to academic development.
 - iii. **Prof. Anthony Staak Report (2021):** By 2021, ongoing governance issues and financial instability had prompted the need for another independent review. Prof. Anthony Staak was commissioned to assess the financial and operational health of the university. His report called for an urgent strategic turnaround, highlighting the need for better fiscal management, leadership stability, and a comprehensive strategic realignment to ensure the institution's sustainability.
 - iv. **Institutional Audit Report by CHE (2024):** This audit, conducted by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in 2024, focused on evaluating MUT's institutional quality management systems, governance, and academic functions. The audit report highlighted issues in strategic planning, governance, and resource allocation, and provided recommendations for strengthening the quality management system and improving student success rates.
 - v. **Turnaround Strategy (2023-2031):** Initiated in 2023, the Turnaround Strategy was a comprehensive response to address the issues highlighted in previous reports. It outlined specific short, medium, and long-term objectives aimed at reforming governance, fiscal management, academic quality, and community engagement. This strategy served as a roadmap for MUT to realign its operations with best practices in higher education governance and management.
 - vi. **Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) Viability Workshop (June 2024):** Held in mid-2024, this workshop was crucial for reviewing the viability of MUT's academic offerings. The workshop discussed the strategic focus on optimizing Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) over headcounts to improve funding and resource allocation, and the need for aligning the Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) with industry needs and national priorities. The workshop underscored the importance of improving throughput rates and optimizing classroom and lab usage.
 - vii. **Organisational Culture Diagnosis Report (August 2024):** Conducted in 2024 by Lyra Southern Africa, this study assessed the internal culture at MUT, focusing on staff perceptions of leadership, morale, and the work environment. The report revealed significant issues related to leadership support, communication, and staff morale, which were seen as barriers to effective strategic implementation. It provided key insights into the internal challenges facing the institution and recommended strategies for cultural transformation.
 - viii. **Employability Support Benchmarking Report (2024):** This report, compiled by Vitae in 2024, compared MUT's employability support structures against those of other South African and African institutions. It highlighted the need for more structured career services, better alumni engagement, and enhanced digital infrastructure to support employability outcomes. The report served as a critical input for improving the university's support for student employability and aligning its services with labour market needs.
 - ix. **SWOT Analysis by MUT Management (19 August 2024):** As part of the strategic planning process for 2026-2031, senior management conducted a SWOT analysis to synthesize insights from various internal stakeholders. This analysis aimed to provide a comprehensive view of the institution's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, forming the basis for the next phase of strategic development.

x. **Audited Annual Reports (2020-2023):** The audited reports from 2020 to 2023 provide a comprehensive evaluation of MUT's progress in implementing the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. These reports were instrumental in tracking the university's performance against predetermined objectives across key areas such as teaching and learning, research, community engagement, and governance. The reports highlighted achievements, including steady growth in research output and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), while also identifying areas requiring improvement, such as student success rates, operational efficiency, and financial management. Collectively, the audited reports serve as critical tools for reflection and realignment,

offering evidence-based insights that guide the development of the next strategic cycle, ensuring MUT remains on course to fulfil its mission and vision while addressing emerging challenges and opportunities in higher education.

xi. **Consultations with Stakeholders** (Faculty of Management Sciences and The Faculty of Applied and Health Sciences- so far)

The VC and Principal send a call to volunteers in the university to act as a Strategy Development Task Team (SDTT): It is made of 11 members and its role is to support the strategy development office DIPR. From academic and support divisions and the two labour unions in the university.

2 METHODOLOGY

Facilitated by the Directorate of Institutional Planning and Research (DIPR) and led by the Vice Chancellor, Principal, and Chief Strategist, MUT management consolidated various SWOT analyses into a single, cohesive document for the development of the MUT Strategy 2026-2030 through a systematic and structured process. The key steps in this methodology are outlined below:

a. Document Review and Data Extraction:

A thorough review of a selection of strategic reports and documents from 2012 to 2024 was conducted to extract relevant SWOT data. Key themes and patterns were identified across the reports to ensure that all critical insights were captured and documented.

b. Thematic Categorisation and Integration:

The extracted data were organised into thematic categories corresponding to the four SWOT dimensions: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Similar points from different reports were consolidated, while unique insights were retained to ensure a comprehensive and balanced view of the institution's strategic landscape.

c. Cross-Referencing and Validation:

The consolidated themes were cross-referenced with the original source documents to verify accuracy and ensure consistency. This validation step was essential to confirm that the final SWOT analysis accurately represented the content and context of the source reports.

d. Contextual Analysis:

The contextual relevance of each report was considered, including the timing of its publication, the specific challenges MUT faced at that time, and the evolution of the institution's strategic focus. This step provided a nuanced understanding of how these factors influenced the SWOT findings and their implications for strategic planning.

e. Narrative Construction:

The consolidated SWOT analysis was then crafted into a coherent narrative, highlighting MUT's current strategic position and the key factors shaping its future direction. This narrative serves as a foundation for developing strategic initiatives in the MUT Strategy 2026-2030.

This methodology ensured that the final SWOT, TOWS and PESTEL analyses are not only comprehensive but also reflective of the diverse inputs and evolving context of Mangosuthu University of Technology over the past 12 years.

3

CONSOLIDATED SWOT ANALYSIS FOR MUT 2026-2030

3.1. STRENGTHS

- 1. Accreditation with the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and Professional Bodies:** All MUT programmes that require accreditation are fully accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and relevant professional bodies. This ensures that the institution meets the highest standards of quality, compliance, and industry relevance. MUT staff also play a critical role by serving on prestigious accreditation councils, such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), with professionals including Chartered Accountants (CAs) and Professional Engineers (PrEng). This accreditation framework bolsters the university's credibility, aligning its qualifications with both national and professional standards.
- 2. Community Engagement and Social Impact:** MUT is deeply committed to community engagement, playing a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of the local area through education, skills training, and outreach initiatives. These efforts have significantly strengthened the university's relationship with the surrounding community and amplified its social impact. The university's dedicated Community Engagement Directorate ensures structured and impactful engagement, driving MUT's contribution to regional development and societal advancement.
- 3. Strategic Location:** Situated in Umlazi, Durban, MUT is strategically positioned to serve a historically disadvantaged population. This unique location enables the university to address educational inequalities and make a meaningful impact on local development.
- 4. Technical and Applied Education Focus:** As a University of Technology, MUT's emphasis on science, engineering, and technology aligns with its mandate to provide industry-relevant education. This focus ensures that its academic programs equip students with practical skills that meet labour market demands.
- 5. Dynamic Academic Staff:** The faculty boasts a balanced mix of young and seasoned academic staff, combining fresh perspectives with extensive experience, creating significant potential for research growth, innovation, and mentorship in both teaching and postgraduate supervision.
- 6. Governance Reform and Accountability:** MUT has made significant strides in governance reform, improving leadership capacity, and fostering greater accountability. These reforms have addressed several previous governance issues, enhancing transparency and decision-making processes. However, ongoing efforts are required to fully stabilize governance structures, as challenges such as leadership turnover and trust deficits remain. This progress, though incomplete, positions MUT on the right path towards long-term institutional resilience.
- 7. Active Alumni Network:** MUT has effectively engaged its alumni network to support mentoring, work-readiness workshops, and career guidance, enhancing the student experience and improving employability outcomes.

- 8. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) and Industry Partnerships:** MUT has made significant strides in enhancing student employability through the success of its Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) initiatives. These programs, which are closely tied to strong industry partnerships, provide students with valuable practical experience that aligns with labour market demands. Collaborations with various industry sectors ensure that academic programs remain relevant and help bridge the gap between theory and practice. This integration of WIL with industry partnerships is a key strength that enhances graduate readiness and strengthens MUT's ties to the professional world.
- 9. Research Productivity:** MUT has shown consistent success in exceeding research output targets from 2020 to 2023. This reflects the institution's growing research culture, which is a critical asset for future growth and reputation building.

- 10. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL):** The FOCUS Conference at MUT, established over a decade ago, serves as a cornerstone for advancing SoTL within the institution. The conference fosters interdisciplinary dialogues and provides a platform for academics to share innovative research and best practices in teaching and learning. The event has gained international recognition, drawing participation from scholars, and thought leaders, further enhancing MUT's reputation in this critical area.
- 11. Financial Growth:** The Faculty of Management Sciences consistently demonstrates financial stability, serving as a key contributor to the university's financial sustainability. Its strong performance enables the cross-subsidisation of resource-intensive faculties, such as Engineering and Applied and Health Sciences, supporting their strategic growth and development.

3.2. WEAKNESSES

- 1. Governance and Leadership Instability:** Despite recent efforts to improve governance, MUT continues to experience leadership instability, with frequent turnover in senior management and ongoing tensions between council and executive leadership. This instability, compounded by a lack of trust among key stakeholders, has hindered effective decision-making and slowed strategic progress. These persistent governance issues continue to pose challenges to the institution's ability to achieve long-term stability and sustained growth.
- 2. Financial Vulnerability:** MUT's heavy reliance on government funding and student fees, combined with historically weak financial controls and inadequate oversight, has resulted in significant financial instability. This vulnerability is further compounded by an over-reliance on the Faculty of Management Sciences for financial sustainability, which contradicts the institution's strategic goal of emphasizing STEM programs. Moreover, inconsistencies in program fees across faculties

undermine financial credibility and transparency, intensifying these challenges. This challenge is further exacerbated by persistent financial deficits in programs within the Natural Sciences and Engineering departments, that undermine financial credibility.

- 3. Inadequate Infrastructure:** Outdated and overcrowded facilities across the university continue to negatively impact the quality of education, the overall student experience, and the work environment, posing a significant challenge to MUT's ability to provide a conducive institutional setting. The lack of adequate office spaces, boardrooms, and kitchen facilities further affects staff productivity and morale. These issues are compounded by insufficient maintenance of existing infrastructure, which exacerbates the deterioration of facilities. This persistent challenge, identified as far back as the 2012 HEQC Institutional Audit, is particularly acute in STEM-focused faculties, where inadequate laboratory facilities and teaching spaces hinder

the implementation of planned qualifications and limit the growth of strategically important programs.

4. High Staff Turnover, Low Morale, and Poor Succession Planning: High staff turnover, low morale, insufficient HR policies (e.g., policies on staff retention), and the absence of effective succession planning have contributed to operational inefficiencies and a challenging work environment.

5. Inconsistent Digital Infrastructure: MUT's digital infrastructure is underdeveloped, limiting its ability to effectively support online education, administrative efficiency, and student services. These gaps in digital infrastructure have been a persistent barrier to adapting to modern educational delivery methods and implementing institution-wide digital transformation. Addressing this issue is critical for improving operational efficiency and ensuring the institution's competitiveness in the digital age.

6. Deep Institutional Divisions and Lack of Trust: The university has struggled with deep-rooted divisions and a lack of trust among governance bodies, staff, and leadership. These divisions have created a fragmented institutional culture that impedes strategic alignment and effective implementation of reforms.

7. Inadequate Response to Historical Issues: MUT has often been slow to address long-standing issues identified in previous audits and reviews. This inadequate response has perpetuated challenges in governance, fiscal management, and institutional culture, undermining efforts to build a stable and effective organization.

8. Declining Student Success Rates: A notable decline in student success rates over the past few years is a critical weakness. This issue impacts academic performance and retention, which needs immediate attention in the next strategy.

9. Inconsistent Operational Efficiency: The 2023 MUT Annual Report revealed a growing number of audit findings, underscoring persistent operational inefficiencies, particularly in procurement

processes. Delays in institutional activities and operations due to inefficient systems and processes have been noted, with some procedures not being followed consistently. These inefficiencies could significantly hinder the university's overall effectiveness and long-term goals.

10. Limited Commercialisation of Research: Despite strong research productivity, MUT faces challenges in commercializing its research outputs. This gap limits the institution's ability to fully capitalize on its research potential, both financially and in terms of societal impact.

11. Inconsistent Quality Assurance: The institution faces challenges in maintaining high academic and operational standards due to the absence of robust and consistently applied quality assurance criteria and processes. This weakness highlights the need for stronger frameworks and mechanisms to ensure that quality is upheld across all departments and functions, which is essential for long-term institutional success and credibility.

12. Absence of a Comprehensive Transformation Charter: MUT lacks a formal transformation charter, which is essential not only for promoting inclusivity and diversity but also for driving progressive institutional reforms. Transformation at MUT should encompass modernising processes, improving institutional effectiveness and efficiency, and adopting innovative practices that align with national and global standards. Without this guiding framework, the university misses opportunities to systematically enhance its operational performance and foster a forward-thinking, inclusive environment that supports both social and institutional growth.

13. Declining Research Productivity: The removal of research incentives has led to a significant decline in academic output, discouraging staff from engaging in research activities and impacting the university's overall research standing.

14. Limited Academic Growth Opportunities: The absence of postgraduate programs limits opportunities for academic and professional development, restricting the university's ability to grow its research and academic reputation.

15. Toxic Institutional Culture: A pervasive toxic work environment, marked by intimidation and a lack of open communication, negatively impacts staff morale, engagement, and innovation, hindering institutional progress.

3.3. OPPORTUNITIES



- 1. Enhancing Digital Capabilities:** MUT has the opportunity to strengthen its digital infrastructure, which is currently underdeveloped. By investing in modern ICT systems, the university can improve online education, enhance student services, and streamline administrative processes. Expanding these digital capabilities would not only address operational inefficiencies but also position the university as a leader in innovative, tech-enabled education. Strengthening its digital foundation will be crucial for MUT's growth, adaptability, and long-term sustainability in the ever-evolving educational landscape.
- 2. Expanding Academic Offerings:** Broadening the Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) to include more postgraduate and industry-relevant programs can attract a diverse student body and enhance MUT's academic profile. This expansion is crucial for meeting the needs of both students and the labour market.
- 3. Interdisciplinary Program Development and Growing Demand for STEM Skills:** The increasing national and global demand for STEM professionals presents an opportunity to develop interdisciplinary programs that integrate business acumen with technical expertise. Programs such as Business Analytics or an MBA with specialisations tailored for engineering and applied health sciences graduates can leverage the strengths of the Faculty of Management Sciences and STEM faculties. These offerings align with market needs and position MUT to produce well-rounded graduates equipped with both technical and managerial skills, enhancing their employability and the institution's academic profile.
- 4. Strengthening Industry Partnerships:** Expanding collaborations with industry to better align the curriculum with labour market demands and increase Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities can improve graduate employability and reinforce MUT's position as an industry-aligned institution.
- 5. Community-Centric Initiatives:** Leveraging its strategic location, MUT can further engage in localized research and social impact projects. These initiatives can address socio-economic challenges in the region and solidify MUT's role as a community-centric institution.
- 6. Cultural Transformation Initiatives:** Implementing cultural transformation initiatives, as recommended in the Organizational Culture Diagnosis Report (2024), offers an opportunity to foster unity, collaboration, and a shared vision. This transformation is key to overcoming internal divisions and building a more cohesive institutional culture.
- 7. Building a Trust-Based Governance Model:** There is an opportunity to develop a governance model based on mutual trust and respect, as emphasized in previous reports. This model can be achieved through transparent communication, inclusive decision-making processes, and clear role definitions.
- 8. Diversifying Income Streams:** Developing third-stream income through research, consultancy, and short-term courses can reduce the university's dependence on government funding and improve financial sustainability. This aligns with the objectives outlined in the Turnaround Strategy (2023-2031).
- 9. Expanding Digital Capabilities:** Given the global shift towards digital education and infrastructure, MUT has the opportunity to enhance its ICT and digital infrastructure to support modern teaching and operational needs.

10. Process Automation for Operational Efficiency:

Automating key institutional processes presents a significant opportunity for MUT to streamline operations, reduce human error, and improve overall efficiency. By implementing automated systems, the university can enhance service delivery, reduce delays, and ensure consistent adherence to processes, ultimately boosting operational management. This shift towards automation would also allow for better resource allocation, improved transparency, and a more responsive administrative framework, positioning MUT for greater long-term success.

11. Sustained Community Engagement: The increase in community projects offers the potential to further engage in socio-economic development initiatives, particularly by expanding on successful student entrepreneurship programs.

12. Boosting International Collaboration: With a demonstrated, albeit fluctuating, presence in international partnerships, MUT has an opportunity to stabilize and expand its global footprint through increased exchange programs and international student recruitment.

3.4. THREATS



1. Risk of Institutional Decline: Failure to address the existing challenges and unresolved issues at MUT could result in the university facing reputational and operational decline. This poses the serious risk of MUT being relegated in its status, potentially impacting its ability to compete with other institutions, attract quality students and staff, and secure funding. Proactively resolving these problems is essential to maintaining its standing as a higher education institution and ensuring its long-term viability and growth.

2. Unresolved Governance Risks: Despite recent efforts to improve governance, MUT continues to face significant risks due to ongoing leadership instability and unresolved governance challenges. Frequent turnover in senior management, ongoing tensions between the council and executive leadership, and a lack of trust among key stakeholders threaten the successful implementation of strategic initiatives. If these issues are not addressed, they could escalate and undermine the university's reputation, operational effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

3. Economic and Political Instability: The broader socio-economic environment in South Africa, characterized by high unemployment and political uncertainty, poses risks to student enrolment, financial stability, and institutional planning. These external factors could adversely

impact MUT's operations and strategic goals.

4. Increased Competition: Competition from other institutions with superior infrastructure and academic offerings could lead to reduced student enrolment and lower competitiveness. MUT must continuously improve its programs and facilities to maintain its attractiveness to prospective students.

5. Accreditation Risks: Ongoing management and governance challenges have led to a moratorium imposed by the DHET on the approval of new qualification submissions from MUT. This poses a significant threat to the university's ability to expand its academic offerings and meet future educational demands. Failure to resolve these governance issues could further jeopardize existing programme accreditations, potentially undermining the institution's academic credibility and limiting its growth prospects.

6. Entrenched Political Factions: The presence of entrenched political factions and internal power struggles remains a threat to effective governance and strategic implementation. These factions can obstruct decision-making processes and hinder the institution's ability to execute its strategic plan.

7. Cultural Resistance to Change: Resistance to change, as noted in several reports, could impede

the successful implementation of the strategic plan. An initiative-taking approach to managing change and engaging stakeholders will be crucial to overcoming this resistance and fostering a supportive institutional culture.

8. Operational and Compliance Risks: The increasing number of audit findings in 2023 signals risks associated with internal compliance and operational processes. This could lead to financial and reputational damage if not addressed.

9. Fluctuating National and International Engagement: MUT has faced inconsistencies in national projects and international collaborations, with a steep decline in 2023. Sustained engagement is essential to mitigate the risk of losing national and international influence.

10. Financial Sustainability Risks: MUT faces a significant threat to its financial sustainability due to high student headcounts coupled with low Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) caused by low success rates. The current funding model allocates resources based on FTEs rather than headcounts, meaning that an inflated student population without corresponding success puts undue pressure on the university's limited resources. This misalignment between headcount and FTEs risks further straining MUT's financial health and operational capacity, threatening the institution's ability to meet its long-term objectives.

11. External Funding Constraints: Delays in government funding disbursements pose

significant challenges to the university's financial stability, creating cash flow uncertainties that impact operational planning and the timely execution of institutional priorities.

12. Identity vs. Financial Viability Conflict: The strategic emphasis on STEM programs, while vital for the university's long-term positioning, risks financial destabilization due to the current reliance on the Faculty of Management Sciences as a primary source of financial stability. Balancing this shift with financial sustainability remains a critical challenge.

13. High Staff Costs: Rising salary expenses for academic staff are outpacing income growth, creating financial strain on the university. This challenge is further compounded by a high support staff component, which adds to the overall cost structure and limits the institution's ability to allocate resources efficiently.

This SWOT analysis provides an evaluation of MUT's strategic position, incorporating insights from over 12 years of reports and assessments. The analysis highlights both historical and current challenges, as well as opportunities for improvement.

The next sections will include a TOWS analysis to develop actionable strategies based on these findings, followed by a PESTEL analysis to evaluate external factors influencing MUT's strategic environment. This comprehensive approach will ensure that the MUT Strategy 2026-2030 is well-informed, resilient, and aligned with the institution's long-term goals.

4

CONSOLIDATED TOWS ANALYSIS FOR MUT 2026-2030 STRATEGY

The TOWS analysis is an extension of the foundational SWOT framework, offering a more action-oriented approach to strategic planning. While SWOT categorises internal and external factors as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, TOWS, developed by Heinz Weinrich (1982), maps these elements into actionable strategies. Scholars like

David (2011) and Kotler & Keller (2016) highlight TOWS as essential for translating SWOT insights into practical initiatives. For MUT, the TOWS analysis bridges the gap between understanding strategic factors and implementing effective strategies for the 2026-2030 planning cycle.

4.1. STRENGTHS + OPPORTUNITIES (SO): LEVERAGE STRENGTHS TO EXPLOIT OPPORTUNITIES

a. Expand Academic Offerings with Industry Partnerships:

Leverage strong industry relationships and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) success to develop postgraduate programs and short courses that address labour market needs. Programs such as Business Analytics and STEM-focused MBAs can align MUT's PQM with global demand for interdisciplinary skills.

b. Enhance Digital Capabilities Through Alumni Engagement:

Engage the active alumni network to support the development of digital infrastructure and e-learning platforms, improving teaching, learning, and administrative processes while aligning with digital education trends.

c. Leverage Community Engagement for Institutional Impact:

Strengthen community engagement initiatives to drive cultural transformation, expand localised research, and address socio-economic challenges. Community-centric technical education and research projects can enhance MUT's regional impact and visibility.

d. Boost Graduate Employability Through WIL and Entrepreneurship:

Expand WIL initiatives and student entrepreneurship programs to enhance employability and deepen ties with the local economy. Use these initiatives to attract international students and partners for collaboration.

e. Promote Research Productivity for Funding:

Leverage MUT's research output to secure additional funding for ICT and infrastructure development. Enhanced research commercialization can unlock new income streams and align MUT with global trends in applied research.

f. Foster Governance Reform for Partnerships:

Build on governance reforms to establish stable,

transparent relationships with industry and international partners. These reforms can support stronger collaborations, research ventures, and exchange programs.

4.2. STRENGTHS + THREATS (ST): USE STRENGTHS TO MITIGATE THREATS

a. Strengthen Governance to Counter Political Challenges:

Use governance reforms to establish transparent decision-making processes that minimize the influence of political factions, fostering trust and alignment among stakeholders.

b. Leverage FMS Financial Stability to Address STEM Challenges:

Use the financial surpluses of the Faculty of Management Sciences (FMS) to subsidize STEM programs. Align new qualifications with national priorities to attract additional funding and mitigate financial risks.

c. Optimise Alumni Engagement for Financial Sustainability:

Strengthen the alumni network to generate third-stream income through donations, sponsorships, and partnerships, reducing dependency on government funding.

d. Maintain Accreditation Through Industry Collaboration:

Utilise strong industry ties to align academic programs with professional standards, ensuring accreditation stability and mitigating risks from management challenges.

e. Address Competition by Strengthening Local Impact:

Capitalise on MUT's strategic location in Umlazi to position the university as a leader in community-driven education, differentiating it from competitors with superior infrastructure.

f. Leverage Research Productivity to Enhance Institutional Capacity:

Focus research efforts on strategic niches, such as STEM innovation, renewable energy, and community health, to build institutional prestige, attract partnerships, and address internal

challenges. Use research outputs to inform governance improvements, enhance compliance, and develop dual-purpose infrastructure that supports both research and teaching, indirectly strengthening operational resilience.

4.3. WEAKNESSES + OPPORTUNITIES (WO): ADDRESS WEAKNESSES TO CAPITALIZE ON OPPORTUNITIES

- a. Modernise Infrastructure for Growth:**
Prioritize the development of modern laboratories, teaching spaces, and digital infrastructure to support postgraduate programs, improve research outputs, and address student needs.
- b. Diversify Revenue Streams with Faculty-Specific Initiatives:**
Introduce short courses, consultancies, community collaborations, and faculty-specific projects to reduce reliance on government funding and diversify income sources.
- c. Align Policies with Strategic Priorities:**
Update outdated policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to reflect MUT's focus on inclusivity, digital transformation, and community engagement.
- d. Foster Cultural Transformation for Staff Retention:**
Address toxic institutional culture by implementing leadership succession plans, professional development initiatives, and a comprehensive transformation charter.
- e. Boost Student Success Rates Through Digital Tools:**
Leverage the existing Learning Management System (LMS) by providing comprehensive training for staff and students to maximize its potential. This optimisation can improve retention, support targeted academic interventions, and enhance student success and throughput rates, aligning enrolments with funding models and improving overall institutional performance.

f. Enhance Research Commercialization for Financial Stability:

Use research outputs to generate income through patents, technology transfer, and industry partnerships, aligning commercialization efforts with financial goals.

g. Leverage Strategic Location for Infrastructure Development:

Use MUT's location to attract local government support and private partnerships for campus improvements, addressing critical infrastructure needs.

4.4. WEAKNESSES + THREATS (WT): MITIGATE WEAKNESSES TO AVOID THREATS

a. Strengthen Financial Management and Controls:

Implement rigorous financial controls, fiscal training for staff, and risk management strategies to safeguard the institution's financial health and reduce operational inefficiencies.

b. Develop Succession Plans for Leadership Stability:

Formalise leadership succession planning to ensure stability, address governance challenges, and build trust within the institution.

c. Address Infrastructure Gaps Incrementally:

Focus on phased upgrades to facilities, starting with high-impact areas such as STEM laboratories and teaching spaces, to mitigate risks associated with outdated infrastructure.

d. Combat Resistance to Change Through Stakeholder Engagement:

Develop change management strategies that include stakeholder consultations, regular communication, and feedback mechanisms to ensure successful implementation of strategic initiatives.

e. Improve Student Support to Counter Competition:

Invest in academic and psychosocial support for students to improve retention and success rates, enhancing MUT's competitive standing against institutions with superior resources.

5 PESTEL ANALYSIS

The PESTEL analysis is a strategic tool used to evaluate the external factors influencing an organization, as outlined by scholars such as Aguilar (1967) and Johnson et al. (2011). It complements SWOT and TOWS analyses by providing a broader view of the macro-environmental forces—Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal—that impact strategic planning. For MUT, integrating PESTEL with internal analyses ensures that its 2026-2030 strategy is not only aligned with internal strengths and weaknesses but also responsive to external opportunities and threats, fostering a holistic and adaptive approach to strategic development.

5.1. POLITICAL FACTORS

- **Shift to Coalition Politics:** The 2024 elections in South Africa resulted in the ruling ANC losing its majority for the first time since 1994, leading to a new era of coalition politics. This shift introduces political instability and potential policy changes as different parties, including the ANC, DA, and newly emerged MK Party, negotiate coalitions to govern effectively. This unstable political environment could affect higher education funding policies and governance frameworks.
- **Government of National Unity (GNU):** The formation of a GNU could lead to shifts in educational priorities, potentially impacting funding, and regulatory policies for universities like MUT. Any changes in leadership or policy direction within the Ministry of Higher Education may affect strategic initiatives at MUT.

5.2. ECONOMIC FACTORS

- **Fiscal Constraints and Budget Adjustments:** South Africa's economic challenges have led to significant budget cuts and fiscal consolidation efforts. The 2024 budget speech highlighted the need for strategic expenditure cuts and a reduction in non-interest spending to manage the budget deficit and national debt. This economic reality may limit public funding for higher

education and necessitate that MUT explores alternative income streams, such as partnerships and third-stream income, to maintain financial stability.

- **Unemployment and Economic Stagnation:** High unemployment rates and economic stagnation continue to pose significant challenges in South Africa. These issues could affect student enrolment rates and the ability of graduates to find employment, putting additional pressure on the university to align its programs with labour market needs and improve graduate employability.

5.3. SOCIAL FACTORS

- **Demand for Skills Development:** With high unemployment and a growing demand for skills that align with the evolving job market, there is an increasing need for universities to offer programs that enhance employability. MUT's focus on technical and applied education is a strength that can be leveraged to meet these societal needs.
- **Youth Disenchantment and Low Voter Turnout:** The declining voter turnout and political disenchantment among the youth reflect broader dissatisfaction with current socio-economic conditions. As an institution serving a young and disadvantaged population, MUT has a critical role in addressing these challenges through education and community engagement.

5.4. TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS

- **Digital Transformation Needs:** The underdeveloped digital infrastructure at MUT is a significant weakness that needs urgent attention. The global trend towards digitalization and the increased reliance on remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the need for substantial investments in ICT infrastructure and digital literacy programs to support modern teaching and learning methods.

- **Growing Role of EdTech:** The rise of educational technology (EdTech) solutions presents opportunities for MUT to enhance its educational delivery and administrative efficiency. Partnerships with tech companies and leveraging innovative digital tools can help the university improve access to education and student support services.

5.5. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- **Sustainability and Green Initiatives:** As global and national focus on sustainability grows, there is increasing pressure on educational institutions to adopt green practices. MUT can explore integrating sustainability into its curriculum and campus operations, aligning with global trends towards environmental responsibility.
- **Climate Change Impacts:** Environmental challenges, such as extreme weather events predicted by the South African Weather Service, could disrupt campus operations, and require the university to have robust disaster preparedness plans in place.

5.6. LEGAL FACTORS

- **Regulatory Changes in Higher Education:** Changes in higher education policies and regulations, particularly those affecting accreditation standards and compliance, could impact MUT's program offerings and institutional accreditation. It is crucial for MUT to stay informed about policy changes and ensure compliance to maintain its reputation and program quality.
- **Financial Accountability and Anti-Corruption Measures:** Recent government initiatives to address financial mismanagement and enhance transparency, such as compliance with the FATF and State Capture Commission recommendations, may lead to stricter oversight and accountability requirements for public institutions, including universities.

The PESTEL analysis reveals that MUT must navigate a complex external environment characterized by political uncertainty, economic constraints, and technological advancements. To succeed, the university must align its strategic initiatives with these macro-environmental factors, focusing on financial sustainability, digital transformation, and initiative-taking community engagement. This comprehensive approach will help MUT adapt to changing conditions and thrive in the evolving higher education landscape.

6 CONCLUSION

The integration of SWOT, TOWS, and PESTEL analyses provides a robust framework for developing the MUT Strategy 2026-2030. By addressing historical challenges and leveraging opportunities, MUT can build a resilient, innovative, and sustainable strategic plan that enhances its performance and reputation

in a dynamic and competitive higher education landscape. The institution must remain adaptable, initiative-taking, and community-centric to navigate the complexities of the evolving external environment and achieve its strategic goals.

ANNEXURE

2

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR MANGOSUTHU UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 2026-2030

The Theory of Change (ToC) provides a logical framework that explains how MUT's Strategic Goals will lead to the desired institutional impact. It maps the link between resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact, ensuring alignment with King IV principles of governance, performance, and accountability.

1 IMPACT (LONG-TERM CHANGE BY 2030)

A sustainable, globally recognised institution, excelling in transformative, innovative, and socially responsive education.

- Producing employable graduates, impactful research, and strong partnerships.
- Financially resilient, inclusive, and future-fit in a rapidly changing higher education environment.

2 OUTCOMES (STRATEGIC RESULTS EXPECTED)

By 2030, MUT aims to achieve:

- Higher student success, throughput, and graduate employability.
- Increased postgraduate enrolments, research outputs, and protected intellectual property.
- Expanded WIL, entrepreneurship, and community engagement opportunities.
- Diversified income sources and stronger financial resilience.
- Enhanced brand visibility and institutional trust.
- Improved digital infrastructure, governance systems, and culture of inclusivity and transformation.

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE 2026–2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



3

ACTIVITIES (WHAT MUT WILL DO)

- Review and renew the PQM with industry input and DHET alignment.
- Implement student support systems, mentoring, and digital/blended learning.

- Establish entrepreneurship hubs, WIL placement offices, and community engagement projects.
- Strengthen income diversification efforts, fundraising, and financial planning.
- Invest in research support systems, digital infrastructure, and governance processes.
- Deliver equity, diversity, inclusion, and transformation programmes across campus.

4 OUTPUTS (MEASURABLE DELIVERABLES)

- Academic programmes reviewed and updated to embed future skills.
- Qualifications with WIL and entrepreneurship components.
- Growth in research partnerships, patents, and funded projects.
- New and renovated infrastructure meeting universal access standards.
- Active regional and international partnerships/ MoUs.
- Uptake of wellness, CPD, and transformation initiatives among staff and students.

5 INPUTS & RESOURCES

- Budget allocations linked through the APP and MTEF cycles.
- Skilled academic and professional staff, supported by CPD.
- ICT systems and infrastructure investment.
- National and international partnerships.
- Governance frameworks (Strategic Planning Governance Framework, Risk Register, TIDs).

6 ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

- Stable governance and leadership structures.
- Continued DHET subsidy funding and compliance with reporting frameworks.
- Effective participation by staff, students, and stakeholders.
- Mitigation of risks identified in the institutional Risk Register.

7 TOC LOGIC SUMMARY

- **Inputs** (resources, staff, funding) enable →
- **Activities** (curriculum renewal, WIL, research projects, infrastructure upgrades) which produce →
- **Outputs** (updated programmes, partnerships, CPD uptake, patents, wellness initiatives) leading to →
- **Outcomes** (improved success, employability, inclusivity, financial sustainability) that contribute to →
- **Impact** (a sustainable, globally recognised, socially responsive and future-fit university).

ANNEXURE

3

MUT VALUES-IN-PRACTICE FRAMEWORK (VPF)

PURPOSE:

To translate MUT's institutional values into observable, measurable behaviours aligned with performance systems, leadership expectations, and the student experience. The framework supports values-led decision-making and complements the six strategic enablers in the MUT Strategy 2026-2030.

AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	LINKED GOAL/ ENABLER	POTENTIAL MITIGATION
1. Financial Viability	Over-reliance on 1st-stream income and low performance in 2nd/3rd-stream revenue generation	Goal 2, Enabler 3	Implement Financial Turnaround Plan; accelerate income diversification initiatives; build donor and industry networks
2. Digital Capacity and Integration	Inadequate infrastructure or staff readiness to implement 4IR/5IR technologies and data-driven systems	Goal 3, Enablers 4, 8	Staff training in digital pedagogy and analytics; invest in smart classrooms and infrastructure upgrades
3. Leadership & Governance Instability	Weak leadership pipeline, performance culture, or governance lapses rooted in historic findings	Enablers 1, 2	Leadership development plans; embed performance management; implement governance reforms and compliance audits

AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	LINKED GOAL/ ENABLER	POTENTIAL MITIGATION
4. Research Output and Commercialisation	Low baseline in accredited research units and insufficient innovation capacity	Goal 3	Research mentorship, incentives, and structured partnerships to drive publications and applied projects
5. Institutional Reputation and Brand Visibility	Limited visibility affecting stakeholder trust, partnership potential, and student attraction	Goal 2, Goal 4	Implement marketing strategy; strengthen public reporting; increase success storytelling
6. Student Success and Throughput	Persistent dropout and low throughput rates undermine institutional performance	Goal 1	Expand high-impact teaching practices; academic support systems; track at-risk students through data analytics
7. Capacity to Deliver Strategic Plan	Institutional fatigue, inadequate staffing, or misalignment between strategic intent and operational capacity	Enablers 1, 5, 8	Clear KPIs and responsibilities; embed M&E framework; align DOPs to the strategy
8. Stakeholder Engagement Fatigue	Inadequate or inconsistent engagement from industry, community, and government	Goal 4, Enabler 6	Maintain structured communication plans; embed co-ownership models; monitor partnership health
9. Transformation and Inclusion Gaps	Slow progress in equity, wellness, and access to inclusive services may affect staff/student experience	Goal 5, Enabler 7	Annual transformation audits; wellness programmes; equity-linked funding mechanisms
10. Environmental and Operational Shocks	Climate risks, service delivery interruptions (e.g. power, water), or systemic external disruptions	Enabler 5, 7	Business continuity planning; embed sustainability in infrastructure and curriculum

ANNEXURE

4

STRATEGIC RISKS SUMMARY FOR DRAFT MUT STRATEGY 2026–2030

AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	LINKED GOAL/ ENABLER	POTENTIAL MITIGATION
1. Financial Viability	Over-reliance on 1st-stream income and low performance in 2nd/3rd-stream revenue generation	Goal 2, Enabler 3	Implement Financial Turnaround Plan; accelerate income diversification initiatives; build donor and industry networks
2. Digital Capacity and Integration	Inadequate infrastructure or staff readiness to implement 4IR/5IR technologies and data-driven systems	Goal 3, Enablers 4, 8	Staff training in digital pedagogy and analytics; invest in smart classrooms and infrastructure upgrades
3. Leadership & Governance Instability	Weak leadership pipeline, performance culture, or governance lapses rooted in historic findings	Enablers 1, 2	Leadership development plans; embed performance management; implement governance reforms and compliance audits
4. Research Output and Commercialisation	Low baseline in accredited research units and insufficient innovation capacity	Goal 3	Research mentorship, incentives, and structured partnerships to drive publications and applied projects

AREA	RISK DESCRIPTION	LINKED GOAL/ ENABLER	POTENTIAL MITIGATION
5. Institutional Reputation and Brand Visibility	Limited visibility affecting stakeholder trust, partnership potential, and student attraction	Goal 2, Goal 4	Implement marketing strategy; strengthen public reporting; increase success storytelling
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7. Capacity to Deliver Strategic Plan	Institutional fatigue, inadequate staffing, or misalignment between strategic intent and operational capacity	Enablers 1, 5, 8	Clear KPIs and responsibilities; embed M&E framework; align DOPs to the strategy
8. Stakeholder Engagement Fatigue	Inadequate or inconsistent engagement from industry, community, and government	Goal 4, Enabler 6	Maintain structured communication plans; embed co-ownership models; monitor partnership health
9. Transformation and Inclusion Gaps	Slow progress in equity, wellness, and access to inclusive services may affect staff/student experience	Goal 5, Enabler 7	Annual transformation audits; wellness programmes; equity-linked funding mechanisms
10. Environmental and Operational Shocks	Climate risks, service delivery interruptions (e.g. power, water), or systemic external disruptions	Enabler 5, 7	Business continuity planning; embed sustainability in infrastructure and curriculum



MUT

MANGOSUTHU
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



FROM VISION
TO DELIVERY

IGNITE
2030



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