



**Vice-Chancellor's Quarterly
Report to Council
Third Quarter, 2019**

21 September 2019

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

THIRD QUARTER, 2019

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1 INTRODUCTION

In spite of there being much to celebrate as we reflect on the third quarter, we are acutely aware that our country is beset with the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide, as well as a resurgence of xenophobic attacks. As part of our report to Council, we will outline some initiatives being activated at sectoral and institutional levels to support GBV survivors and massify structured programmatic interventions to address this challenge.

Notwithstanding our efforts to foreground our values and promote social justice, the University readily acknowledges that it is a microcosm of the broader South African society and, as such, students and employees are increasingly vulnerable to acts of violence and criminality. During this quarter, the University has experienced student protests arising from challenges primarily relating to the safety and security of students and employees on and off campus. We have engaged the SRC and student activists about their concerns. The multi-stakeholder Safety and Security Task Team which was established during #FeesMustFall, will be revitalised to ensure that the implementation of our commitments to enhancing the safety of students and employees are sustained and closely monitored.

The main theme for this quarter is transformation and this report will provide Council with an overview of strategic highlights and challenges in relation to our Vision 2020 strategic priorities and the transformational goals articulated in our Integrated Transformation Plan.

2 VISION 2020: STRATEGIC PLANNING

The University continues to implement the key strategic redirections emerging from our revised Vision 2020 strategy, the inaugural address and the listening campaign to give full expression to our vision to be a dynamic, African university recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

2.1 ORGANISATIONAL REDESIGN – CASE FOR CHANGE

Since the Council meeting in June, the organisational redesign process has cascaded from senior to middle management and operational levels in all faculties and support service portfolios to facilitate the co-creation of future-focused, fit-for-purpose structures, systems, and processes. The Working Group will present the proposals to Council during the course of this meeting, following which consultation processes with organised labour and potentially impacted employees will unfold in the final quarter of 2019.

2.2 STRATEGIC GROWTH TRAJECTORIES

Steady progress has been made in reimagining our institutional identity and strategic positioning, linked to the legacy and values of Nelson Mandela.

Revitalising the Humanities

A number of exciting initiatives are underway to revitalise the humanities as a core component of the University's overall academic strategy. The proposal for the establishment of the Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) has been tabled at the recent Research and Engagement committee

where it was endorsed. The proposal was also circulated to all faculties for further comment and will now proceed to the other decision-making structures of the University for approval. In the interim, to provide for an online presence on the Mandela Scholarship Project, we have designed a website that can be accessed using the following link: <https://cmssp.mandela.ac.za/>

The Memorandum of Understanding with the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) has been developed and the signing will take place at the next meeting between the CEO of NMF and the Vice-Chancellor.

CriSHET, in collaboration with Queen's University Belfast (QUB), co-hosted a Winter School at the University in August 2019 to consider alternative, emancipatory imaginations for higher education and to reflect anew on the idea and the purpose of the university. With the objective of fostering networks on the African continent and elsewhere, we hosted a group of 30 scholars from Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, the United Kingdom, India, Ireland, Canada and Germany. The Winter School was a great success and various working groups have been established to build intellectual collaborations.

The Perspective Online, an online student journal, was launched by *CriSHET* in March this year in partnership with the Dean of Students and the Department of Student Governance and Development. The journal aims to provide a space for students to think critically, develop their ideas and advance their academic writing skills.

In addition, *CriSHET* has organised a number of seminars, public lectures and book launches that can be seen to have contributed to promoting intellectual vibrancy at the University.

Ocean Sciences

We are currently developing an updated five-year ocean sciences strategy for 2020-2025. This includes supporting the faculties to develop academic programmes, qualifications, short learning programmes and research endeavours to position the University as a premier destination of choice on the African continent for ocean sciences.

The next phases of the infrastructural and spatial plan for the Ocean Sciences Campus are being scoped to ensure that current and future developments progressively build towards creating a conducive ecosystem for transdisciplinary learning, teaching, research and engagement. The planning for the new multi-purpose ocean science centre has commenced, which includes a 150-seater auditorium, state-of-the-art digital planetarium and immersive visualisation technology. The University will make use of this facility to promote research, host public lectures and conferences, and reach out to schools throughout South Africa to inspire budding young scientists to pursue ocean sciences qualifications and careers.

During July 2019, the Ocean Sciences Campus hosted numerous visits from high school learners in preparation for the Eskom Expo for young Scientists in Port Elizabeth, which took place in early August 2019. The theme for the World Maritime Day celebrations in 2019 is "Empowering women in the maritime community" and several events have been held to raise awareness of the wide range of career development opportunities available to women in the maritime industry.

We also received a delegation from the University of the South Pacific which has its main campus on the island of Fiji. Based on the successful discussions, we are preparing an MOU that will link the two universities in focus areas such as ocean sciences, teacher training and curriculum development, and

social justice and democracy. This will be our first “South-South” partnership with countries in the Pacific region and both universities are already working jointly in the £20m transdisciplinary “One Ocean Hub” project. The One Ocean Hub directly addresses the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal 14 for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans.

Medical School

The conditions to be attended to by the University towards full accreditation of the MBChB degree were addressed and submitted to the Council on Higher Education (CHE) by the end of July 2019. In addition, we submitted the electronic copy of the Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) on 6 September 2019. The HPCSA Decentralised and Distributive Platform Questionnaire will be submitted after the accreditation visit scheduled for 28 October to 1 November 2019. The CHE site visit will be combined with that of HPCSA.

Once the HPCSA’s Provisional Accreditation has been completed and full CHE accreditation and SAQA registration has been awarded, the University can offer the MBChB Degree as a qualification.

The infrastructure for the basic sciences, anatomy and physiology, and skills laboratories and offices should be completed by October 2019 in time for the site accreditation visit. However, the issue around student residences requires more engagement and meetings are underway with the relevant government infrastructure directorates to explore possibilities.

Learning and teaching equipment in the computer laboratories and lecture venues are being upgraded.

Earlier this year, executive management approved the first cohort of staff appointments that were critical for the accreditation of the medical programme. In August 2019, MANCO approved the organogram and the second cohort of staff appointments for the medical programme.

3 DISTINCTIVE EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY THAT CONTRIBUTES TO STUDENT ACCESS FOR SUCCESS

3.1 PROMOTING STUDENT ACCESS FOR SUCCESS

A comparison between 2019 and 2020 acceptance offers extended to first-time entering undergraduates, shows an increase in the proportion of applicants coming from schools in quintiles 1 to 3. Acceptance offers to quintile 1 to 3 applicants increased to 56% for 2020, up from 43% in 2019. This means that as the University we have to deploy adaptive measures to cater for the diverse needs of students that come to our University.

3.2 TEACHING, LEARNING AND CURRICULUM

Within the Learning and Teaching portfolio there are multiple strategic projects directed at decolonisation and transformation, in particular through curriculum renewal in all the faculties. Every faculty is engaged in curriculum renewal in some way or another. We have been critically aware of how our changing times require more than a technical and compliance-oriented approach to curriculum renewal and we have encouraged faculties to draw on what the future requires of us within and across various disciplines as such efforts continue to unfold.

Progress with conceptualising and implementing humanising pedagogies is ongoing with the aim of deepening the understanding and praxes related to this distinguishing aspect of Mandela University's learning and teaching philosophy. The Humanising Pedagogy Research Hub was launched in August 2019 and was very well attended by a cross-section of potential scholars keen to pursue research under this institutional theme.

Other initiatives that we believe will contribute towards embedding a transformative intellectual and institutional culture in the University are the Decoloniality Reading Club, successfully launched on 15 August 2019, and dialogues on Decolonising STEM, which will be further advanced through a seminar and videos disseminated via social media. The Knowledge and Pedagogy Symposium was hosted on 19-20 September 2019 to showcase teaching and learning innovations and to map some of the transformation advances in the academic project, with a special focus on decolonisation, Africanisation and digitalisation.

3.3 ACADEMIC STAFF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

The University supports its newly appointed and emerging academic staff in several ways, using both external and internal funding instruments. The New Generation Academic Programme (NGAP) is funded by the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology (DHES) and allows for young academics from designated groups to be fully employed with reduced workloads so they can concentrate on obtaining their higher qualifications and advance their career paths.

The Early Career Academics Advancement Project (ECAAP) links with the NGAP to support and advance the development of the next generation of scholars and teachers in the higher education sector. The ECAAP aims to contribute to early career academics' professional development by focusing on areas that include a scholarly approach to teaching; collaboration and networking; communication; research methodologies; and postgraduate research supervision. The ECAAP is open to all Nelson Mandela University academics who have been appointed to an academic role for the first time and/or have less than five years' experience in such a role.

We currently have twelve academic staff members receiving NRF Thuthuka grants. This funding supports academics in three tracks, namely: working on a doctorate (PhD track), post-doctoral, and NRF rating track. The University co-sponsors the funding at 1:1 and this enables many academics to begin their research careers.

The University furthermore benefits from the NRF-First Rand Foundation Black Academic Programme (NRF-FRF BAAP), which began with its first cohort in 2018. NRF-FRF BAAP allows for funding to pay for academic replacement and research running costs to enable black academics to either complete their PhD or do postdoctoral work, while remaining permanently employed. This allows for the successful recipient to focus entirely on their research and accelerates either higher degree completion and/or the production of peer-reviewed research publications. In 2018, two academic staff members from the University received this award. We received a further three awards in 2019 and have applied for four to hopefully begin in 2020.

With the support of University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) funding, the University runs the Masters (MSP) and Doctoral Support Programmes (DSP). These programmes provide small group

interventions to guide academics through their postgraduate research by offering support in proposal development, research methodologies, and data collection. Those that complete the programmes have a high success rate for completion of their qualifications (>70% on past data), although we still struggle to achieve a greater than 50% completion rate for the programmes.

3.4 PROMOTING MULTILINGUALISM

Since last year, an enormous amount of information has been gathered through ‘courageous language conversations’ across various University constituencies and this will inform the emerging language policy. The intention is to ensure that the language policy not only informs the language of teaching and learning at the University, but also encompasses a much broader set of domains such as the medium of official communication in a variety of contexts.

At *CriSHET*, there is also work on decolonising engagement tools by rethinking Xhosa terms and concepts in the intellectual space as a contribution to intellectualising African languages and grounding the University in its specific location through language.

4 ENGAGED, INNOVATIVE SCHOLARSHIP CULTURE THAT GENERATES KNOWLEDGE RECOGNISED FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY

Having approved the University’s Research and Innovation Strategy at the Council meeting in June this year, MANCO has approved an implementation plan (with funding implications). This, we hope, will improve the research outputs of the University going forward.

4.1 CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING, TEACHING, RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT AND INNOVATION

University excellence awards

We celebrated our University Excellence awards at a glowing evening banquet on 10 September 2019 where 49 of our staff from across the University were honoured for excellence in learning and teaching, research (including creative outputs), engagement and innovation.

Also worth noting is the award of an NRF “P-rating” to Dr Alastair Potts who is Deputy Director for our African Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience. The first for our University, the P-rating refers to young researchers, who have held the doctorate for less than five years and who, on the basis of exceptional potential demonstrated, are considered likely to become future leaders in their field.

Other accolades

At the annual SARIMA conference held earlier in September (with participation of around 500 delegates from at least 26 countries), Mr Imtiaz Kahn in our Research Capacity Development Office received the award for Excellence in Research Management.

A successful 31st Annual Conference of the Southern African Institute of Management Scientists was hosted earlier this month by our School of Management Sciences (Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences). This year’s conference theme was “Responsible Management in Disruptive Times”.

The University hosted the Southern African Wildlife Management Association annual conference in Wilderness earlier this month. The conference attracted 165 delegates from 10 countries in Southern Africa and further afield.

4.2 INNOVATION

We have had a number of initiatives related to innovation in recent weeks, all in support of growing the focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, job creation and commercialisation at the University. The Minister of DHEST and a delegation from the Department of Science and Innovation visited our uYilo eMobility programme in eNtsa on 16 August 2019, which is funded by the Technology Innovation Agency. The visit enabled uYilo to engage with the Minister and his delegation on the challenges and opportunities that exist with the adoption of electric vehicles and associated technologies in South Africa, while showcasing some of their ongoing innovation projects.

This quarter also saw the close out of Stage 3 of the BCX National Innovation Programme which is run by Propella. Propella onboarded 46 start-ups based on BCX's brief to incubate innovative, scalable ideas. This comprised 53 founders of which 75% are at BBBEE Level 1 and 68% are under the age of 35. At the end of July, after an intensive 18-month programme, the programme graduated two ventures and took a further four ventures into Stage 4 where the focus will be on commercialising their minimum viable product. This represents a 13% commercialisation success rate, which far exceeds the industry norm of 5%.

Achieving national recognition for Propella, Innovative Dental Solutions was selected for the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) Pitch and Perfect Competition; they achieved top 20 in the SA Innovation Summit competition and are one of 20 South African innovators to be invited to participate in the Inventors Garage at the SA Innovation Summit in September 2019.

4.3 INTERNATIONALISATION: GLOBAL FOOTPRINT AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Our Internationalisation Strategy, having served at all the internal University committees, is now ready for presenting to Council. We are already working on an Internationalisation Implementation Plan, which will place great emphasis on expanding our footprint on the African continent and the global South. Our established partnerships with global collaborators and institutions will be strengthened by the deliberateness of the Internationalisation Strategy and Plan which are now in place.

4.4 REIMAGINING ENGAGEMENT

In reimagining engagement, *CriSHET* has been involved in co-creating the Hubs of Convergence (HoC). An Inception Committee has been set up to map out various projects that might fall under the auspices of the HoC. The philosophy and approach to engagement is being reimagined for greater impact and the following interventions have been initiated:

- Development of a framework document on engagement and transformation against which to review the University's engagement approach;
- Signature projects that align with the philosophy of the Hubs of Convergence (HoC); one of which relates to 'remodelling' the Bird Street Campus; and

- Additional support for the scholarship of engagement, including a seminar series on reimagining engagement.

5 ENHANCING STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Student leadership and governance

The Student Life and Development division continues to implement various leadership programmes to develop potential, aspiring and current student leaders, including Beyond the Classroom and Leaders for Change. The Women in Leadership programme has also been developed and two seminars have been held. The VC has also initiated a mentorship and coaching programme targeting female student leaders in the SRC and two sessions have been held to create a safe space for these students to engage with the VC on issues affecting female students.

Annual Youth Convention

The second Annual Youth Convention was held from 30–31 July 2019 with former President Kgalema Motlanthe delivering the keynote address. The convention is becoming a signature event focusing on youth development and leadership issues in collaboration with external partners.

Student nutrition

The student nutrition programme continues, but is under strain as the demand exceeds supply. We are exploring additional partnerships in response to the ever-increasing demand.

Student financial support

To date, Financial Aid has administered more than R930m to support academically deserving, financially disadvantaged undergraduate students during 2019.

With the increasing demand from senior undergraduate students to pursue postgraduate studies, we have prepared a submission for increased bursary funding for postgraduate research students for 2020. This has become necessary in the light of the NSFAS funding only covering the first qualification (undergraduate diploma or degree).

Student entrepreneurship and enterprise development

In providing substance to the work on the student entrepreneurship front, some highlights are indicated below:

- The University's Enactus team participated in the national competition on 8-10 July 2019 and won 2nd prize.
- The University hosted the launch of the national student entrepreneurship week on 1 August 2019 in partnership with the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) office of USAF and the DHEST.
- The University hosted two entrepreneurship development seminars focusing on the integration of entrepreneurship into the curriculum, as well as current and aspiring entrepreneurs within the University and beyond.
- Two of our student entrepreneurs participated in the national competition of student entrepreneurs organised by EDHE in September 2019.

6 TRANSFORMATIVE INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

6.1 DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The University's Diversity Month takes place during August and aims to advance respect for diversity and deepen social inclusion. Diversity Month was packed with 33 events and programmes coordinated by CANRAD and hosted by various faculties and entities across all campuses. The themes that were covered included a focus on gender; creative expressions, including visual arts, dance, music and cultural programmes; politics and democracy; internationalisation; and dialogues and seminars covering a wide range of topics.

We also hosted the annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture on 12 September 2019, which was attended by more than 400 students, staff and visitors. The focus on human and gender relations generated lively discussion.

6.2 GENDER TRANSFORMATION AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

On 10 September 2019, the University community engaged in a march led by the Chair of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and Management, as well as gender activists to express our collective distress at the escalation of GBV and femicide incidents in our country. In recent weeks this prevailing national crisis was brought into sharp focus, yet again, with the spate of rapes and deaths of young students and women at the hands of men, including their intimate partners. The release of the SAPS crime statistics on 12 September 2019 confirmed an increase in serious crimes, including sexual assault, rape and murder.

Gender transformation working group

A gender transformation working group (GTWG) has been established to drive the development of the gender transformation strategy and implementation plan. The main tasks of the GTWG are to advise on and support programmatic interventions to curb GBV; strengthen promotion and protection mechanisms; and serve as a stakeholder driven 'coordination' mechanism on gender matters. The GTWG has prioritised the development of a declaration against GBV for implementation at the beginning of the 2020 academic year.

Responding to GBV cases

Amendments to the Sexual Harassment and Offences Policy have brought about a change in the composition of the panel which adjudicates these matters. The panel consists of a chairperson with a human rights background (we are currently making use of the services of one of the female attorneys from the University's Refugee Rights Centre who has extensive experience in litigation), a GBV expert, a member of the University's Sexual Harassment Committee, and a member of the SRC.

The hearing process is inquisitorial in nature, rather than accusatorial, whilst still remaining fairly informal and observing the rules of natural justice. The rationale for this, is that the complainant not be subjected to secondary victimisation in relation to the trauma suffered during the commission of the misconduct. Psycho-social support is provided throughout the hearing by a designated GBV counsellor employed within Campus Health Services. Matters of this nature are prioritised by Legal Services and are set down as soon as the investigation reports are received from Protection Services.

Safe haven support system

As the leadership, we have committed to providing student GBV survivors with a safe haven support system, which will include:

- A secluded space where the survivors of violations can live while they are supported to transition back into their normal routines;
- A series of connecting safe spaces on campus where activists and individuals working on issues of gender- and sexual-based violence can operate, and students feeling unsafe can seek help; and
- Linkages with off-campus gender hubs, which themselves have to be safe.

The Safe Haven will be part of a multi-pronged strategy to end the abuse of women at our University. This extends to strong and deliberate advocacy for gender equality, women's empowerment and zero tolerance of GBV at the highest level of our governance and management structures. It also includes ongoing academic research on gender equality and GBV, increased platforms for debate and dissemination, and advocating for national policies and strategies to address gender- and sexual-based violence.

Launch of the Centre for Women and Gender Studies

The interim director of the Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) has been identified and will take office from 1 October 2019, following which the Centre will be formally launched on 3 October 2019. The main purpose of the Centre will be to conduct scholarship and implement programmatic and advocacy interventions that contribute towards advancing gender equality and equity, improving the lives of women and girls, and shifting gender relations within our communities and broader society.

6.3 EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

When compared to the Economically Active population (EAP), the employment equity profile of the University shows that transformation has been very slow, particularly at the senior management level, within the academy, and among specialised support professionals and middle management who serve as a pipeline for senior leadership positions. By contrast, the equity profile at lower occupational levels (PL 13 to 17) has transformed more dramatically, sometimes beyond the set equity targets, largely due to the reintegration of more than 800 service employees.

It is also concerning that the total number of employees with disabilities remains low at 40, which may be an indication of under-reporting. Various initiatives are being implemented by the Equity Office and the Unit for Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS) to encourage employees to declare their disabilities and to ensure that appropriate reasonable accommodation measures are implemented within the workplace.

Appointments

Appointments made between 1 April and 31 August this year, are reflected in the table below. This shows that, for academic employees, the under-represented groups (A, C, I) increased by fifteen, representing a 2.4% improvement, while employees from non-designated groups declined by two, representing a 0.3% improvement of the total academic profile. For PASS employees, it is noted the under-represented group (A, C, I) increased by seven, representing a 0.4% improvement, while the non-designated group of employees reduced by seven, representing a 0.4% improvement.

Number of Appointments (New Permanent Employees)

APPOINTMENT TYPE		1 April 2019 to 31 August 2019					
PERMANENT & LONG-TERM CONTRACT	APPOINTMENT	A,C,I	W	F	Male	Female	
	ACADEMIC	25	13	3	19	22	
	PASS	49	0	0	23	26	
<i>Permanent Total</i>		74	13	3	42	48	
GRAND TOTAL		90			90		

A: African; C: Coloured; I: Indian; W: White; F: Foreigner

Executive Appointments

For the year under review, the University has seen an extraordinary number of vacancies at the executive level. In post levels 2-4, there were 12 vacancies, of which eight have been filled with only two (2) filled by candidates from non-designated groups.

Terminations

A total of 33 employees left the employ of the University for the period 1 April to 31 August 2019. Of these terminations, 14 (42%) were PASS employees and three (9%) were academic employees from the under-represented groups.

Department of Labour Director-General Review of Employment Equity Plan

In terms of section 43 of the Employment Equity Act, the Director-General may conduct a review to determine whether an employer is complying with the Act. Nelson Mandela University was selected for a review in 2019 to assess the implementation of the University's Employment Equity Plan for 2017- 2022.

The implementation of the recommendations emerging from this review requires that the employment equity targets be revised to accelerate the diversification of the employee profile, especially in occupational categories where designated groups are currently under-represented. Consultation sessions are being conducted with the faculties and PASS portfolios to revise equity targets as informed by the workforce profile, vacancies, possible retirees and measures to overcome barriers to recruiting and selecting equity candidates.

6.4 BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (BBBEE)

As an important dimension of transformation, BBBEE is receiving the attention it deserves to ensure that we improve our BBBEE recognition level. A detailed report has been developed to analyse the University's 2018 BBBEE scorecard and this will inform the formulation of a comprehensive BBBEE strategy. This strategy will include targets and a clear indication of responsibilities to promote accountability for implementing BBBEE interventions within the relevant portfolios.

7 EMPLOYER OF FIRST CHOICE BY INVESTING IN TALENTED, HIGH-PERFORMING EMPLOYEES

Institutional culture is an important dimension of transformation which goes beyond diversifying the workforce demographic profile by creating a workplace environment that promotes respect for diversity, social inclusion and equality.

7.1 INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

Institutional Culture Working Group

HR has established an institutional culture working group (ICWG) in partnership with the Engagement and Transformation portfolio. The ICWG has met several times to scope the dimensions of a transformative institutional culture and to design appropriate programmatic and organisational development interventions. This work has been informed by an analysis of existing data and institutional research reports including the VC's Listening Campaign and previous institutional climate surveys.

Performance management

A plan has been submitted to HRREM for consideration, which proposes timeframes for the development of a competency-based performance management system. During the course of 2020, the focus will be on developing the performance management policy and implementation guidelines, designing the system in consultation with key stakeholders, and conducting training programmes with a view to commencing implementation in earnest from January 2021.

Talent management

The University is embarking on a deliberate, structured talent management approach to produce a critical mass of demographically diverse academic employees and leadership. This includes deliberately developing a sustainable pipeline of Black and women academics.

Remuneration and Benefits Harmonisation

Roadshows were conducted in August and September 2019 to create awareness of employee benefits especially among service level employees. This information will be included in the on-boarding programme for new employees joining the institution.

Phase 2 of the project is underway with the crafting of guiding principles to inform the new remuneration philosophy and policy of the University. Further ground work has commenced with the extraction of the payroll data for the internal parity analysis exercise and the preparation of data with proposals and costs for the conversion to cost to company.

Engagements with organised labour

Meetings between Management and organised labour commenced with two formal engagements in the last quarter held to provide clarity with regards to the VC's macro structure that was approved by Council in June 2019. Further engagements are scheduled to continue early in the next quarter to consult with organised labour on the implications of the organisational redesign process, as required by labour legislation.

7.2 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

A total of 67 individuals (50% African; 23% White; 19% Coloured; and 4% Indian) accessed the Employee Wellness Programme during this quarter. The participants were composed of 29% academic employees, 42% administrative employees, and 29% newly integrated employees. The presenting problems supported by the EWP included 54% psychosocial problems, 29% workplace-related problems, and 16% family problems.

7.3 HR BUSINESS PROCESS RE-ENGINEERING

HR is continuously expanding the catalogue of intuitive HR services available to users through the Customer Relations Management (CRM) portal. Cases are automatically routed to predetermined work teams, ensuring appropriate levels of expertise, supported through self-help manuals and FAQs thereby improving HR responsiveness. This collaborative project with ICT Services uses technology to empower line managers with consistent, reliable advice and provides incident information regarding employees, placing less reliance on HR intervention for self-help items.

8 ENABLING SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE THAT PROMOTE AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The People and Operations (previously Institutional Support) portfolio is embarking on a new strategic direction with the vision of improved service efficiencies and optimising delivery platforms and tools. The key objectives of this strategy, ultimately, are to: a) deliver value adding services; b) reduce the administrative burden of support functions on the academy; c) optimise and where necessary invest in automation and digitalisation of business processes for the purpose of improving effectiveness and efficiencies and reduce the costs of service delivery; and d) create a high performance, high productivity and innovative work environment and culture.

8.1 TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESEARCH

A key component to any University's digital transformation project is the application of technology to support teaching, learning, assessment and research. Initiatives worth reporting in this quarter are enumerated below:

Connectivity of dispersed delivery sites

Connectivity at two of the delivery sites for the Nelson Mandela Business School (East London and Bellville) has been completed using a fibre optic link that is more secure and directly connected to the SANREN. ICT has been assisting the Faculty of Education in presenting the Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Live streaming and recording of sessions are enabled from Missionvale Campus to multiple TVET facilities across South Africa. The Zoom video conferencing solution's automated cloud recording and automatic transcription capability now plugs into the University's Learning Management System (Moodle). More delivery sites are planned for the next phase of the programme.

Connectivity strategy for the medical school

A comprehensive connectivity strategy for the medical school and the entire Faculty of Health Sciences is being developed. This entails connecting the major teaching hospitals and clinics which requires collaboration with other stakeholders – primarily the Department of Health, Walter Sisulu University and the Metro. In preparation for the accreditation site visit, it was resolved that EDUROAM (WiFi) services will be extensively required within Dora Ngizwa Hospital. In addition, ICT Services is working on a proposal to extend WiFi coverage to health facilities in identified areas – starting with the Livingstone, PE Provincial and Uitenhage hospitals, respectively.

Improved WiFi connectivity

The University continues to invest resources in expanding and densifying WiFi access across all its campuses. To date, 1282 access points have been installed providing uncapped WiFi coverage in learning and teaching, living and general social spaces on campus. In addition, the first phase of the project to connect 36 of the largest accredited off-campus residences across the Metro commenced during this quarter and was completed in the first week of September 2019. The switch-over process to the University network will offer faster and higher capacity connectivity to about 5000 off-campus students.

System to capture research outputs

The first phase of an ambitious project of digitalising the process of capturing and submitting research outputs is nearing completion. This application enhances the University's capacity to optimise opportunities for improving the research output subsidy, estimated at over R100m annually. The system will go live after testing in the 3rd quarter.

8.2 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS

Digitalisation and business analysis reports

The following business improvement projects are at different levels of implementation:

- The University embarked on a project to upgrade the enterprise resource planning system (ITS) to Integrator 4.1. The system went live on 17 August 2019 and allows for agile deployment of future enhancements.
- An online booking and appointment system for accessing campus health services has gone live and will assist in minimising congestion at the campus health clinics.
- The Governance Portal was launched in August 2019 and provides one-stop access to governance information resources, links to institutional committees, legislation, policies, procedures and forms.
- The partial roll out of Diligent Boards has proven to be effective and the reduced amount of hard-copy documents supports the drive towards paperless business processes in alignment with our sustainability imperatives. A further roll out is planned in the fourth quarter.
- The digitalisation of the contract management system within the Legal Services Office is underway. A total of 2410 contracts had been scanned by the end of July. ICT is also assisting with the design of an electronic tracking system for the contract approval process, including flagging contracts awarded via the tender process within a reasonable period of the termination date.

Student admissions for 2020

The streamlining and automation of undergraduate admissions processes has led to faster turnaround times of admissions decisions from 20 days to an immediate response for current Grade 12 applicants and within 48 hours for other applicants. Furthermore, the system filters applicants studying towards an NSC so that they are guided to apply for programmes for which they qualify.

As at 19 September 2019, a total of 9524 provisional acceptance offers were made to prospective first time entering undergraduates for 2020. The total number of provisional offers has increased by 165.4% compared to the same date last year. This development stands the University in good stead in building readiness for the impending Central Application Service (CAS) being planned for implementation in 2021 for the 2022 student intake.

Student transport and fleet management solution

In order to better manage student transportation provided by the University, Shared Services together with ICT are in the process of investigating both a short-term student transport solution as well as a longer-term fleet management system.

Space optimisation solution

Investigations for a space management solution are underway to enhance space optimisation and utilisation using technology. Examples include optimal use of timetabling tools, rollout of the Zoom video conferencing and webinar solutions, and digital class attendance solutions.

Safety and security technologies

The University has made a considerable investment in surveillance, access control, intruder alarms and other digital technologies to improve the University's ability to deter, detect and probe crime within its precincts.

A comprehensive, integrated safety and security technology strategy that was approved by Management, including the following interventions:

- Biometric-based access for student residences;
- An electronic risk solution (i.e. Online Intelligence) which has been procured and is currently being installed and will be operational by October 2019;
- Observation, Monitoring, Analytics and Response (OMAR) Room upgrade (previously referred to as the control room) on North and George Campuses;
- Panic alarms in computer labs;
- LPR (License Plate Recognition) capability cameras at campus entrances; and
- Increased number of CCTV cameras to a total of more than 1000 cameras in the security network.

9 LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

The financial sustainability of the University is critical going forward within a context of an economic recession, escalating costs, and ever-increasing demands for widening access to quality higher education.

Our financial sustainability imperatives foreground the need for strategic coherence and clarity to provide a justifiable and consistent basis for making difficult investment choices and assessing opportunities for cost reductions. Against this background, the 2020 budget directives provide a guiding framework to inform the annual budgeting process and provide the parameters for institutional, operational, capital, salary and strategic budgeting at the University.

Strategy-aligned budgeting is becoming increasingly crucial and the criteria to be applied to identify catalytic transversal strategic projects include the extent to which these contribute to: strategically positioning and transforming the University; cross-functional collaboration, integration and innovation; sustainability and third stream income generation; and multiple positive impacts on students, staff and the broader society.

10 CONCLUSION

As we approach the close of the third quarter for 2019, it is clearer now more than ever before that we need to courageously exercise leadership in transforming our ways of knowing, doing and being to truly fulfil our purpose as a university in the service of society. The persistent challenges confronting our country require of us to engage with our internal and external communities as equal partners in co-creating sustainable, knowledge-based solutions. In doing so, we need to ensure that we are fit-for-purpose in pursuing our strategic and transformational imperatives as we chart the future within highly volatile, uncertain global and local contexts. We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Council for their wise stewardship in promoting good governance and ethical leadership as we collectively seek to promote the public good.

During the next quarter, I will report on the University's efforts to promote our long-term academic, financial, social and environmental sustainability with a special focus on the key issues indicated below.

Key Issues Going Forward:

- Development of ocean sciences strategy (2020-2025), including the development of a campus governance and management model;
- Preparation for accreditation site visit for the medical programme;
- Approval of Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies by Senate and Council as part of our strategy to revitalise the humanities;
- Development and approval of integrated postgraduate funding support strategy;
- A review of the institutional and faculty-based research and engagement entity landscape;
- Construction of new student residences in Port Elizabeth and George;
- Implementation of comprehensive safety and security strategy on all campuses;
- Development of gender transformation strategy and implementation plan;
- Development of BBBEE strategy and targets to improve the University's BBBEE recognition level;
- Completion of organisational redesign process for final approval by Council.