



**Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council  
Quarter 4, 2022**

**1 December 2022**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is a privilege to present this fourth and final quarterly report to Council as we approach the end of the year. In this report, Council will be provided with an overview of the strategic highlights and challenges for this quarter while also flagging areas of importance as we build readiness for the 2023 academic year (AY). In alignment with our annual reporting cycle, sustainability and stewardship is the theme for quarter four with a focus on efforts to build a solid foundation for meeting current operational needs while promoting long-term strategic alignment and sustainability.

## **2. VISION 2030 STRATEGIC TRAJECTORIES**

Various strategic milestones have been reached over the past five years since our historic renaming in 2017 from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to Nelson Mandela University. The development and implementation of Vision 2030 is foremost among these, with the core purpose of being in the service of society as we strive to contribute to creating a sustainable, socially just world. Sustainability and responsible resource stewardship is a key pillar of Vision 2030, as expressed in our strategic trajectories which include the Medical School, Ocean Sciences and Revitalising the Humanities.

### **2.1. Medical School**

The accreditation of our new Medical School has taken place successfully with the undergraduate medical programme being accredited for up to four years of training, inclusive of the first clinical rotation in the fourth year of study. This brings the goal of complete accreditation for the full six-year programme closer.

The recent selection of 100 first-year students for 2023, our third intake, confirms the effective marketing and popularity of the MBChB programme as more than 7 000 high-quality applications were received. There is also a sizeable waiting list which will help to ensure full uptake of all places.

Mandela University hosted the Society of Rhinoplasty Surgeons of South Africa (SORSSA) Congress in November, which included international experts. This strategic partnering will increase the visibility of the Medical School internationally and stimulate further professional relationships.

In October, the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS) inaugurated medical programme lecturer, Dr Savania Nagiah, as one of ten of the country's leading emerging scientists, further enhancing the reputation and positioning of the Medical School. SAYAS members are young scientists under the age of 40, who have PhDs and are deemed excellent in their fields of expertise.

## **2.2. Ocean Sciences**

The multi- and transdisciplinary work conducted on our Oceans Sciences Campus has a strong focus on sustainability. For example, in October, we hosted participants of the United Nations Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protections (GESAMP) workshop on the *"Potential role of atmospheric deposition in driving ocean productivity in the Southwest Indian Ocean"*. We also hosted the final day of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) symposium in October, with 750 participants taking part in Special Sessions on the Ocean Sciences Campus. The Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR) is also hosting an Italy-South Africa bilateral workshop, organised by the Italian embassy, on 1 and 2 December with a focus on the theme of *"Green Solutions and Marine Biodiversity for Sustainable Blue Growth"*.

International partnerships continue to develop and the five-year relationship between Mandela University and the Carl-von-Ossietzky University in Oldenburg has been extended to a close collaboration between the marine sciences at both institutions. New projects in 2022 have included the NRF/DSI-funded project SeaMap; a collaboration with the University of Oldenburg investigating the hydrological and geobiological drivers of modern supratidal microbialites funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), and a collaboration with HIFMB and University of Oldenburg on seagrass as pollutant filters funded by GIZ (Meerwissen).

## **2.3. Revitalising the Humanities**

In this quarter, the Faculty of Humanities has been forging partnerships through seminars, colloquia and masterclasses involving our postgraduate students, the University and the wider Gqeberha community. Further afield, the Executive Dean was part of the Vice-Chancellor's delegation to the United States of America to explore possible collaboration with the University of Maryland, Rutgers University, Columbia University, the Obama Foundation, and the National Museum of African American History amongst others.

The University's Raymond Mhlaba Centre partnered with the South African National NGO Coalition, the SABC and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council to host a hybrid event on advancing good governance in the city. The dialogue involved all political parties who form part of the coalition government in Nelson Mandela Bay. There was a general call from the participants to make this an annual event.

The launch of the Nelson Mandela University-Brigalia Bam Foundation partnership on 25 November was a significant step towards the identification, curation, and publishing of black women's literary and other forms of heritage. The Brigalia Bam Archive is the first archival collection identified for acquisition in response to the institutional thematic area of Origins, Culture, Heritage, and Memory, with a focus on gendered histories and women's intellectual archive.

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

The high-level 2023 academic delivery plan was approved by all the governance structures in August and September. Since then, faculties have engaged in the more detailed planning for each module and programme, and this was shared with academic leaders and the Deanery on 4 November. In a nutshell, there will be a range of responsive mixes of campus-based and online LT activities along the blended learning continuum.

Greater use will be made of pre-recorded, and at times virtual, lectures followed by flipped classroom and discussion-based approaches for on-campus lectures and small-group tutorials. Assessments will largely be proctored in on-campus venues, with some piloting of e-assessments in supervised on-campus and accredited off-campus venues.

Quality advancement activities will largely focus on enhancing equality of learning experiences across the different LT modes and e-assessments. We will also need to ensure that students have access to devices and connectivity so that they can continue to engage in online learning activities. Other challenges being attended to include developing a timetable to cater for on-campus and virtual classes; finding spaces on our campuses where students can work on online activities, attend virtual classes, and charge their devices; and boosting Wi-Fi density to accommodate the increased demand for connectivity.

Lecturers will need to familiarise themselves with the technology available in venues and how to optimally use it. Reflections on the lessons learnt will be captured on an ongoing basis throughout the year as this will guide refinements and innovations going forward.

#### **3.1. Teaching Development (TD)**

##### ***New Generation of Academics Programme***

The University has been allocated a budget of over R865m over three years, starting this year, for the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP). This programme makes a valuable contribution to the development of young academic staff with doctoral qualifications. Active recruitment is underway to fill four nGAP vacancies, which will increase the Mandela University cohort to 21.

##### ***Early Career Academics Advancement Programme***

A two-day in-house symposium for Early Career Academics Advancement Programme (ECAAP) was held from 20-21 October with the theme “*Responding to new and post COVID-19 learning and teaching in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) academic world*”.

##### ***Beginning Your Journey at Nelson Mandela University***

In total, 65 academics from all seven faculties joined the Beginning Your Journey (BYJ) programme this year, actively engaging with topics such as multilingualism and the evaluation of teaching, and assessment techniques. The purpose of the BYJ programme is

to empower newly appointed academics to facilitate student success through effective learning, teaching, and assessment.

### ***Curriculum Development***

Regular consultations are convened with Learning Programme Coordinators and academics engaged in curriculum design and development throughout the year. The Teaching Development team has been assisting with building the capacity of academics to approach various aspects of rearticulation.

### **3.2. Digital Learning Experience Design and Innovation (LXD)**

Two staff members of the Digital Learning Experience Design and Innovation cluster (LXD) of the LT Collab travelled to Germany to provide Moodle training to members of the DAAD-funded Digi-Face project, for which Mandela University is the project's online learning coordinator. Digi-Face comprises 15 university centres of excellence from 11 African countries.

The project to develop the University's first fully online qualifications in partnership with Higher Education Partners South Africa (HEPSA) is gaining momentum with a team of seven academics, supported by LXD, working on developing a basket of online qualifications ranging from Advanced Certificates to Masters' degrees. The activation of these programmes will constitute the start of the Virtual Academy, which will position the University as a provider of online learning offerings.

### **3.3. Learning Development Cluster (LD)**

#### ***First-Year Success (FYS)***

A blended approach will be adopted for the 2023 Orientation to leverage the advantages of both face-to-face and online offerings. This will assist as an ongoing source of support for first-year students to equip them to meet the challenges of transitioning into higher education. Through a partnership with the School of Information Technology, the University will continue to develop the Pre-Uni DigiReady course as an Open Online Moodle offering available to all provisionally and finally accepted students. This will help to ease the anxiety of students who may be experiencing Mandela Online for the first time.

#### ***Student Success Coaching***

The research team within the LT Collab has been tracking the 2020, 2021, and 2022 student intakes admitted under the new Applicant Score (AS) model. This research assists with identifying students requiring developmental interventions after the first semester or first year. As an outflow of the organisational redesign process, Student Success Coaching (SSC) is a new programme implemented in this quarter to identify and timeously assist students who are academically vulnerable.

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

### **4.1. Research excellence**

The Mandela University research chairs contribute significantly to financial sustainability, with more than R40-million in research income generated in 2022. This figure excludes additional income these chairs generate through research publications, postgraduate student enrolments, and graduate outputs.

In September 2022, Prof Darelle von Greunen, Director of the Centre for Community Technologies (CCT) received the NRF Award for Public Engagement in Research, and Prof Syden Mishi, from Business and Economic Sciences, received the NRF Research Excellence Award for an Emerging Researcher. We are also pleased to report to Council that CCT has won the @OutSystems Innovation Award for Social Impact with their C-Vive application, which raises cancer awareness among citizens to facilitate early diagnoses and treatment interventions.

### **4.2. Postgraduate studies**

As of 31 October 2022, 600 Honours, 502 Master's and 228 Doctoral scholarships had been awarded postgraduate scholarship funding from Council, the National Research Foundation (NRF) and other external funders. The total of 1 330 awards comprises 85% Black (African, Coloured, Indian and Asian) students, and 67% of the award-holders are women. Of the 858 students who have taken up the awards thus far, 82% are Black and 65% are women. Over the review period, 137 postdoctoral and research fellowships were awarded, of which 68% are black and 39% women.

### **4.3. Academic staff support**

The University has leveraged funding from the NRF and DHET to ensure that academic staff receive the support and training needed to attain higher degrees. We have 17 active Thuthuka grant holders, of whom 82% are black and 59% are women. In addition, the Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) currently funds seven academics, 5 of whom are women.

### **4.4. International Office**

The first leg of the Africa Engagements and Partnerships Programme (AEPP) was completed in early July 2022. Over the review period, MoUs emanating from this visit have been signed with Salale University, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopian Civil Service University, Addis Ababa Science and Technology University, Makerere University and the University of Nairobi.

Nelson Mandela University's visibility on other international platforms through networks, alliances and associations continues to grow. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation recently participated in the Australia Africa Universities Network's (AAUN) forum and AGM hosted by Australian National University on 28-29 October 2022. AAUN is a strategic link for Nelson Mandela University to forge sustainable collaborations with Australian universities and a platform to link emerging and experienced researchers.

To promote and sustain the works of the Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS), Dr Magoqwana visited Japan as part of the research fellowship with Okayama University as part of the UNCTAD-STI Young Female Scientist Programme. This involved building collaborations with more than five different universities in Japan while giving seminars and guest lectures in Doshisha University-Japan Society for African Studies; the Japanese Network for the African Studies; and sociology and anthropology undergraduate students in Okayama University. Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola, has also been engaged in several international engagements to launch and discuss her book, *Female Fear Factory*, with scholars based in Canada, Germany and France.

#### **4.5. Library and Information Services**

There has been an increased number of researchers and students using online sources outside of the library, with fewer using the library space for research. In response to these changing user needs, LIS has an active mobile app where users access services and resources, 24/7, wherever they are.

Our Library became an active member of the Libraries Very Interested in Sharing (LVIS) group of the global Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) on 20 September 2022. Members provide items at no charge to other LVIS members hence our users will no longer have to pay for articles that are not available in Southern African libraries and can only be supplied by international partner libraries who are also members of the LVIS group.

### **5. TRANSFORMATIVE INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL COHESION**

The work of the Engagement and Transformation Portfolio contributes towards sustainability and stewardship through five key strategic imperatives, namely: revitalising the humanities, transdisciplinarity, repositioning engagement, the Mandela academic posture and identity, and transformation and social justice. These, in turn, are expressed through various projects to promote diversity and social cohesion both within and outside the University.

#### **5.1. Institutional Culture Working Group**

The Institutional Culture Working Group's (ICWG) five-year implementation plan seeks to activate the Statement of Commitment to an Inclusive Institutional Culture within the

University. As part of this initiative, the ICWG mandated the development of a short learning programme to foster a transformative institutional culture at all levels of the University, with the pilot phase commencing in October 2022.

## **5.2. Public lectures and events to stimulate a vibrant intellectual culture**

The Advancing Critical University Studies across Africa (ACUSAfrica) network's 2022 colloquium was hosted by the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) from 2-4 November. The colloquium was enabled by collaborations fostered by CriSHET with Queen's University Belfast, the University of Ghana, and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). It is financially supported by the National Research Foundation (NRF). Entitled "*Reflexive Solidarities in Techno-Rational Times*", this event expands Mandela University's footprint in creating a sustainable intellectual, critical engagement with the transformation of higher education on the African continent.

The Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) held a panel discussion titled "*Radical Openness*" at the ACUSAfrica colloquium. The session engaged in a critique of the social figure of Mandela with an emphasis on the effect that naming has on higher education institutions and their interconnectedness with institutional culture.

The South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) hosted the fourth *International South African Cultural Observatory Conference* on 9 and 10 November in Tshwane, where our Executive Dean of Humanities, Prof Pamela Maseko, participated.

CriSHET and CANRAD co-hosted the Inaugural Govan Mbeki Institutional Public Lecture on 10 October 2022, where former deputy Finance Minister Mcebisi Jonas spoke on "*Navigating Global and Domestic Turmoil: The Urgent Need for Visionary Collaborative Leadership*".

## **5.3. Transformation Office**

The review process of the Integrated Policy for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of, and Protection Against, Unfair Discrimination as well as the related policies has been underway and will serve before Council today. Awareness building and training as it relates to the institutional equality-related policy regime is ongoing. Advocacy interventions are also continuing and focus on topics such as LGBTQIA+, social inclusion, anti-discrimination, and other relevant contemporary issues.

## **5.4. Engagement Office**

With the lifting of the COVID-19 regulations and the national state of disaster, the COVID-19 Coordinating Committee (CCC) has been dissolved and reconceptualised. The lessons learnt from the excellent work of the CCC will be integrated into the engagement matrix of the University and continue to play themselves out within the projects of the Engagement Office and beyond.

There has been a rising demand from various stakeholder-communities across the country to partner with the University, and the Engagement Office is involved in initiating and managing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to facilitate this. These partnerships assist us in advancing sustainability in new ways and assist in sourcing funding for some of this work.

The Continuing Education Unit commenced with the five-year Short Learning Programme (SLP) renewal process in July. As part of this review, a strategic conversation will be initiated to reconceptualise SLPs as a sustainable source of third-stream income.

A larger institution-wide conversation on positioning SLPs will be undertaken in 2023.

### **5.5. Solidarity economy and food security**

The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) continues to contribute to the pursuit of social justice through its ongoing work in building solidarity economy education which focuses on establishing community food systems. This includes a proposed Greenhouse Project that could serve as a site for seedling production that supports a network of community gardens across Nelson Mandela Bay. CIPSET has also recently embarked on research and engagement to build solidarity economies with marginalised coastal fishing communities as part of the One Oceans Hub's longer-term strategy for sustainable community food systems.

## **6. ENHANCING STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

### **6.1. Student governance**

The 2022 elections for the Student Representative Council (SRC) were held online and saw 52% of the student population voting. This is the most expansive voting turnout ever experienced at Mandela University, which dispels the notion of youth apathy. The Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (DASO) won 39.4% of the votes, with the South African Student Congress (SASCO) achieving 32.9%, followed by the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC) with 23.1%. The SRC constitution has been reviewed to respond to digital SRC elections protocols, a move that is expected to be institutionalised.

### **6.2. Student health and wellness**

The mandate of Student Health Services (SHS) is to sustain student health and wellbeing, essentially through promoting a healthy lifestyle. We strive to sustain student health and well-being through basic health services and the resuscitation of vegetable gardens in George and the residence areas of our Gqeberha campuses is an important milestone in this regard.

There is deep concern nationally about the mental health of young people, which is shared by Nelson Mandela University as a result of trends that we have seen. Twenty-three (23) students were hospitalised after attempting suicide in September and October. We are taking steps to address this with preventive strategies that include making available short videos on suicide prevention and substance abuse. In addition, psycho-educational workshops on different topics are presented face-to-face and virtually on a weekly basis at on- and off-campus residences. A peer-to-peer approach utilises peer helpers to extend the reach and minimise stigma associated with seeking assistance through accessing psychosocial programmes and services.

### **6.3. Universal Accessibility and Disability Services**

Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS) has hosted sessions to introduce more than 100 staff and students to Sign Language to promote inclusion. UADS also collaborated with Career Services over this period to provide work readiness workshops to 11 students with disabilities who recently graduated. Furthermore, UADS developed a digital video aiming to provide visually impaired students with information about the availability and use of assistive devices. This will be used during the Special Schools community engagement programme to recruit visually impaired students to Mandela University.

### **6.4. Madibaz Sport**

Our return to campus has revived student participation in all sporting codes. The ongoing intent is to build a database of external stakeholders with whom Nelson Mandela University can forge viable strategic partnerships to promote the viability of all sporting codes. In this quarter, Madibaz Sport secured a three-year extension of the SPAR sponsorship for the netball team and, on the George Campus, we have secured a Discovery sponsorship of R100 000 towards hosting our half-marathon race.

## **7. ENABLING SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE THAT PROMOTE AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

### **7.1. Infrastructure**

We are seeing excellent progress across our campuses with construction projects such as refurbishments on our Ocean Sciences campus, as well as the Science Centre and new student residences. We will need to continue in this vein to ensure that we optimally utilise the Infrastructure and Efficiency funding for the benefit of our core academic missions. Poor expenditure by universities is the biggest risk to infrastructure programmes across the entire PSET system but, fortunately, Mandela University has over the years, performed well in the delivery of infrastructure projects.

## **7.2. Digitalisation**

Our digital transformation strategy includes projects relating to e-assessment, the cloud migration strategy, improved space optimisation, and Wi-Fi densification. This will be significantly bolstered by more than R131-million infrastructure and efficiency funding allocated to the University by the DHET over the next three years. With the certainty that the university will not revert to its pre-COVID-19 operating model, we have added 12 high-capacity, “smart” lecture venues across all campuses to the list of facilities that can support synchronous online and face-to-face sessions. The University will be providing an additional 15 hybrid-ready venues before the start of the 2023 academic year.

## **7.3. Human Resources**

The Sustainability and Institutional Viability Task Team (SIVTT) is reviewing and analysing student: staff ratios, the cost of employment, and workloads as part of its mandate to improve efficiencies and promote long-term sustainability. Not only are staff-related costs the largest component of total institutional costs, but system inefficiencies can also impede staff performance and productivity. The University is exploring strategies to right-size the ratios between academic staff and students, and between academic and support staff, including benchmarking within the higher education sector. This will help to ensure that staff compensation is competitive, staff costs are contained, and operations are efficient.

During the period under review, Prof Marshall Sheldon was appointed as the new Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology (EBET). Between August and October 2022, 63 appointments were made, comprising 24 Academics and 39 PASS staff. 92% of these were from underrepresented groups, which contributed positively to diversifying the workforce equity profile. A total of 23 employees (six Academic and 17 PASS) left the University.

## **7.4. Water and Energy Sustainability**

With more people on campus, water and energy consumption has risen over the second half of 2022. The University is pursuing a focused water management protocols and risk mitigation plans. This includes installing more than 168 water tanks, 152 water meters, 150 flush valves, six boreholes producing approximately 630 000 litres per day, and a return effluent (grey) water management system that helps to reduce the use of potable municipal water for the gardens. While this augurs well for the medium-term, the ongoing drought and the monthly drop in the combined dam levels, require that the University continues to use water wisely.

The impact of loadshedding and the need to fast-track alternative energy resources is also part of our long-term sustainability strategy, along with several other energy-saving measures. To this end, the University is actively pursuing the installation of a photovoltaic farm on each campus, which will provide 30% of our energy needs. These installations will cost R65m in total but will save the University R10m per year.

## **7.5. Communication and Marketing**

Under the banner of *Advancing Mandela: Five Years On*, Communication and Marketing has supported various faculties and divisions in publicising and celebrating the fifth anniversary of being renamed Nelson Mandela University. The year-long programme was launched on 28 September 2022 with an institution-wide event that also inaugurated a series of new names for faculty buildings. We are happy to inform Council that the Communication and Marketing department won an international Digital Communication Award, coming in third place for its Autumn graduation online campaign, which celebrated the University's first fully in-person graduation ceremonies in two years post-COVID.

## **8. ENHANCE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND RESPONSIBLE RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP**

### **8.1. Strategic resource mobilisation**

As of the end of October 2022, roughly R69.4m had been received for bursaries and scholarships out of the target of R90m for 2022. As reported in the third quarter, most funds not yet paid are from the SETAs, delayed due to administrative issues. To date, 1 010 students have received bursaries from the income mobilised through the Nelson Mandela University Trust, with 92% of these black students.

The Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Advancement Office has also mobilised funding for engagement projects that contribute to the transformation imperatives of the University, with a target of R10m for 2022. By the end of October, R7.6m had been received for engagement projects and an additional R6.65m had been secured, but not yet received.

### **8.2. Responsible resource stewardship**

As at the end of September 2022, the University forecast an operating surplus of R16.1m, with R78.6m surplus after forecasted investment income. The forecast considers key financial assumptions that are reviewed and updated monthly. A detailed financial report will be tabled at Council.

The current MTEF budget allocations and Appropriation Bill result in a 0.9% increase on 2021 block grant subsidy for 2022, which is more favorable compared to a dire scenario of a 5% cut scenario and marginally better than the budgeted 0% increase.

As of 31 October, 19 216 NSFAS funded students were registered at Mandela University out of 32 749 enrolled students (59%). A total of 9 471 applications for financial concessions for qualifying students up to and including the "missing middle" have been received. After clearing qualifying students now funded by NSFAS, 3 336 students remain registered on concessions.

With regards to enrolments for 2023, it is encouraging that the University is continuing to

increase the number of provisionally accepted applicants this year compared to the same date last year. We are also continuing to improve on attracting applicants from quintile 1-3 schools. However, there is still much uncertainty regarding NSFAS and the student funding model for 2023.

The 2023 budget has been approved by MANCO and was considered by the FFC on 10 November. The University has had to implement significant interventions to balance this budget, reprioritising and resetting baseline budgets while prioritising the academic project. A balanced operational budget for 2023 will be presented to Council. The Annual Budget and Annual Performance Plan (APP) will be tabled for Council, and a separate report on B-BBEE.

The 2023 budget includes a zero increase in subsidy and a 4.45% increase in tuition and student accommodation fees. The SRC will be consulted before Council meets. The University awaits the final pronouncement by the Minister on fee increases, which has been the sectoral approach in recent years.

### **8.3. Long-term financial planning**

Against a difficult national and international financial operating environment, Mandela University will need to remain disciplined while also remaining true to our philosophy of being an institution in the service of society. The prevailing economic environment requires of us, now more than ever before, to diversify our sources of income so that we are not as reliant on government subsidy, NSFAS and tuition fee income for our long-term financial sustainability.

Under the auspices of SIVTT, the University is embarking on various sustainability interventions to guide resourcing and investment priorities at institutional level. Through the process of cascading Vision 2030, members of executive management have developed strategic plans, which will provide the parameters for sustainable and strategy-aligned resource mobilisation and budgeting at institutional level from 2024 onwards.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

Sustainability must continue to be foregrounded if we are to take Nelson Mandela University confidently and boldly into the future. South Africa's higher education sector, as with the broader national and international economy, has been under significant pressure which makes this imperative even more urgent. Sustainable resource mobilisation and stewardship is a critical strategic enabler and requires of all of us to diligently pursue innovative strategies to optimise the utilisation of financial, human, digital, infrastructural, and environmental resources endowed to us. Against this background, we salute our students and staff who have persevered through another difficult year to position Mandela University as a higher education institution of choice. We also thank the members of Council for their gracious support and oversight as we look to the future and prepare for the 2023 academic year.