

TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION



REPORT OF THE SECOND
CYCLE QUALITY AUDIT
OF UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY,
MAURITIUS

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Réduit

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Tertiary Education Commission is a statutory body under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research. The Commission has as objects to allocate government funds, promote, plan, develop and coordinate tertiary education in Tertiary Education institutions under its purview in order to achieve an accountable and responsive tertiary system of international standards. Since 2005 the objects of the Commission has been extended to include the responsibility to promote and maintain high quality standards in post-secondary education through appropriate quality assurance and accreditation processes.

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1. Executive Summary

This document reports on the Second Cycle Quality Audit of University of Technology, Mauritius. (UTM) carried out by a team of five auditors in November 2017. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by UTM was the starting point of the Audit. Information and statistics given in this report reflect the status of the University for a period of 5 years ranging from July 2012 to August 2017.

The Audit Panel's findings have been worked out within the scope elaborated in the Quality Audit Handbook published by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) in 2010. The Audit Panel spent four days at the University. The findings are based on the SER and information gathered through various interview sessions with UTM staff, students and stakeholders, and documents consulted at the institution. In addition to analysis and comments presented in the report, the Panel has formulated commendations of good practice and recommendations for appropriate improvement.

UTM is a public institution established in the year 2000 and is located at La Tour Koenig, Pointe-aux-Sables, Port-Louis, Mauritius. It boasts a small but dedicated team of academics and administrative staff striving for the welfare of its students. Though, the University has come a long way, it has yet to reach its full potential. The UTM has over 3000 students on campus and some 1000 additional students at affiliated institutions. It aspires to remain a key regional player in the Tertiary Education Sector. The University is engaging in strategic actions and partnerships that will help UTM develop into an institution of excellence with a regional and international dimension to all its activities. The UTM campus is set to grow further with the projected building of a state-of-the-art UTM Tower and other infrastructural developments.

The UTM has four Schools: the School of Business, Management and Finance (SBMF), the School of Sustainable Development and Tourism (SSDT), the School of Innovative Technologies and Engineering (SITE) and the School of Health Sciences (SHS) which all have close links with public and private sector organisations. The University offers a range of comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes. The University is also the awarding body for programmes of local institutions like the JSS Academy Ltd, the Fashion and Design Institute, the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and other affiliated institutions, including the Anna Medical College.

UTM is expected to implement the full list of recommendations made by the Panel which is part of this report. The complete list of recommendations is available in this report and it is expected that UTM will use the findings of the Audit Panel to strengthen its quality assurance system and, thereby, facilitate the improvement of its core activities.

2. Overview of the Audit

2.1 Background

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) is the statutory body under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research (MoE & HR, TE & SR) responsible for ensuring and monitoring quality in tertiary institutions in Mauritius. This Report on the Second Cycle Quality Audit of the University of Technology, Mauritius is published by TEC, further to the institutional audit carried out in publicly-funded tertiary institutions. Publicly-funded tertiary institutions are required to undergo institutional academic quality audits. These audits adopt the audit process as per the Quality Audit Handbook for Tertiary Education Institutions (2nd Edition, 2010).

The audit took into consideration of the existence and effectiveness of the quality processes that the organisation has in place to achieve its stated objectives, monitoring the performance of the institution in meeting its objectives and achieving the desired outcomes. The audit also addresses actions taken by the organisation to improve its overall effectiveness and the means for monitoring the extent to which the desired outcomes are attained.

For the purpose of this report, quotations and references from the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) are identified in the Report as (SER).

The membership of the Audit Panel is provided in Appendix A, and Appendix B defines abbreviations and technical terms used in this Report.

2.2 Terms of Reference of the Auditors

- a) To make a commitment to act as a quality auditor for the institution identified as per the schedule worked out and participate in the pre-audit workshop and the audit.
- b) To act within the scope identified in the Quality Audit Handbook.
- c) To be objective at all times, ensuring that they are non-judgmental in their approach; that they are aware of possible personal bias.
- d) To observe confidentiality.
- e) To give full support to the Chairperson.
- f) To work as a team, ensuring that members are working in harmony with a view to accomplishing a fact finding mission grounded on the Self-Evaluation Report.
- g) To identify good practice as well as unhealthy practice and make necessary recommendations.
- h) To ensure that there is agreement among the members on the conclusions of the panel.
- i) To fully co-operate in getting the audit report ready within two months of the audit by writing the specific observations made and checking with the Tertiary Education Commission's Secretariat to see that the report is a true reflection of the panel's findings.

2.3 The Audit Process

The Audit Panel was appointed by the TEC in June 2017 to undertake the second cycle quality audit of UTM. The SER was submitted to the Commission on 31 August 2017 and same was circulated to the Audit Panel members for their views and comments, and for additional information that may be required prior to the Quality Audit exercise. UTM was informed of the programme of work of the Audit during a meeting with UTM on 31 October 2017.

UTM was also informed of necessary arrangement required during the Audit exercise and the additional information requested by the Panel and the interview schedule was also discussed with representatives of UTM for the smooth running of the said exercise.

The first meeting of the Panel was held on 05 November 2017 to examine the information submitted by UTM and to finalise its programme of work for the Audit exercise.

The Audit exercise started on 07 November 2017 and ended on 10 November 2017. The Audit Panel split into two groups on 07, 08 and 09 November 2017 for interview sessions with the Heads of Department, academic staff, Administrative and Support Staff, representatives of affiliated institutions and individuals for the open session.

The UTM in consultation with the TEC agreed on two themes for the Audit, namely 'Curriculum and Assessment' and 'Admission and Progress'.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with around 170 people in some 35 interview sessions during the Audit Visit, including:

- Board of Governors
- Members the Academic Council
- Director General
- Head of Schools
- Head of Departments
- Staff Committee
- Planning and Finance Committee
- Acting Registrar
- Academic staff
- Staff Union
- Students' Union
- Members of the Quality Assurance Committee

Open sessions were also available for any member of the University community to meet the Audit Panel. Some staff members and union representatives took advantage of this

opportunity to meet with the Panel. The Panel met with some 34 persons during the open session.

This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the Audit Visit, which ended on 10 November 2017, and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the SER provided by UTM, supplementary information requested as well as information gained through interviews, discussions and observations during the Audit Visit. While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the University's quality arrangement within the scope of the audit, the Report does not identify every aspect of quality assurance and its effectiveness or shortcomings.

It is expected that UTM will use these findings to strengthen its quality management systems with the objective of facilitating quality improvement in all spheres. The decision about the manner in which this is to be done is the prerogative of UTM. While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the University's activities within the scope of the audit, the report does not identify every aspect of the QA system, and their effectiveness or shortcomings. It is expected that UTM will submit an improvement plan based on this report.

TEC expresses its appreciation to the UTM for the cooperative manner in which it has participated in the audit process. TEC also thanks the UTM for providing additional information and access to key documents to the Audit Panel during the course of the Audit.

The Audit Panel would like to thank Dr S P Seetulsingh-Ghoorah, Director General, Mr D Venethetan, Head of Quality Assurance and other staff at UTM for their cooperation in the audit process.

3. Audit Findings

3.1 Progress Made on the Recommendations of the Quality Audit of 2008

As per its Terms of Reference, the Audit Panel investigated the progress made by the UTM in the implementation of the recommendations of the Quality Audit Report 2008. The Panel noted with concern that only few of these recommendations have been implemented thoroughly.

The observations of the Panel on some general recommendations are given hereunder.

1. There are three main challenges which confront the University at this time in its effort to achieve a robust institutional quality profile. The first is to address the legacy of what might be called “underfunding” through ensuring that UTM is able to have the infrastructure and resources to provide quality higher education. This includes issues of maintenance and developing the IT infrastructure of the University.
2. A second major challenge is related to the attraction and retention of academic, professional and administrative staff. The Panel heard about legislative and regulatory hurdles to establishing a staff complement which will meet current and future demands. It is suggested that the Board of the University needs to earnestly engage with the relevant authorities on this matter. If not addressed, there are significant threats to the sustainability, quality, reputation and growth of the University.
3. The third major challenge is to firmly grow the institution as a university of technology with an institutional culture and identity and which is more technology driven in such a way that it is sufficiently distinctive to gain staff, student, community and stakeholder ownership and support. The University must conceptualise and give appropriate expression to the three core functions of teaching and learning, research and community engagement in such a manner that reflects its identity as a university of technology.

The University is congratulated that it aspires to position itself as a University of Technology in the national tertiary education system, and embed in its programmes the requisite “technology” in its programme modules, in work-based learning and the preparedness of students for the workplace.

4 Commendations and Recommendations

4.1 Commendations

1. The Panel commends UTM for the imagination and aspiration in its Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 to firmly position itself as a university of technology in the Mauritian tertiary education sector by focusing on technology in its programmes, career-oriented education, work-based learning in its courses and appropriately qualified staff. 15
2. The Panel commends the commitment, passion and enthusiasm of academic staff, full-time and part-time, in facilitating quality education, linking practice to theory and supporting students. 27
3. The Panel commends the academic community for the quality of teaching and support provided to students in their studies. 29
4. The Panel commends the efforts of UTM academic staff to build close working relationships with industry practitioners and prioritise business networking opportunities, especially in the fields of technology and tourism/hospitality management. The employability of graduates in these fields is considered high by local standards and holds solid promises as trends in these specific sectors continue on their growth paths and have the potential to increase in the future. 32
5. The Panel commends UTM for receiving international professional accreditation in two programmes which enables international portability and enhancing the recognition of qualifications. 36
6. The Panel commends UTM for efforts made to embed work-based learning in academic programmes, where relevant. 39

4.2 Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that UTM ensures that the Strategic Plan goals and activities, in a context of planning resourcing and quality, are implemented across the University in Schools and administrative areas with clear time-frames, deliverables and allocation of responsibility to individuals. 15
2. The Panel recommends that UTM develop a university risk-management framework and maintain a register for the management of risks. 16
3. The Panel recommends that UTM develop a fit-for-purpose quality assurance framework which is supported by robust policies and procedures for the academic and support areas, and which includes a formal benchmarking good practice component for the core academic and administrative functions. 17
4. The Panel recommends that the UTM Board commission a review of all the governance structures (corporate and academic) of the University in order to identify governance lacunae, including weaknesses, composition, terms of reference, accountability mechanisms and lines of authority in the current arrangements. 18
5. The Panel recommends that the UTM Board consider ways to ensure the consistency, continuity and stability of appropriate University leadership after years of high turnover of Director Generals and senior staff. 19
6. The Panel recommends that UTM gives attention to administrative efficiency and effectiveness through reducing bureaucracy, speeding up processes and communication of decisions. 20
7. The Panel recommends that UTM ensure the comprehensive implementation of the IIS Phase I in order to derive maximum benefit for Phases II and III, where staff training, customisation of the system and digitising University records are prioritised. 20
8. The Panel recommends that UTM give attention to IT-related issues, such as enhancing campus-wide WIFI, attention to an updated University website, ensuring that all software licences are current, and that attention is given to secure the IT server rooms and the regular back up of university data. 20
9. The Panel recommends that the UTM Board urgently signal to the relevant authorities that it requires increased funding in order to meet its tertiary education mandate and provide quality education, research and community service, in view of the national 2030 economic, social and educational objectives. 21
10. The Panel recommends that UTM give urgent attention to addressing infrastructure and maintenance issues at a range of levels to enhance the campus environment for students and staff. 22
11. The Panel recommends that UTM's leadership take urgent action, in a context a call for trust, cooperation and transparency, to enhance effective communication and

- conflict resolution mechanisms between management and staff and students, and with the staff and student unions. 23
12. The Panel recommends that UTM urgently address human capital issues, including filling key vacant positions, conducting promotion processes, strengthening formal staff induction, putting in place a staff performance appraisal system, conduct a staff climate survey and develop a comprehensive staff development policy for all staff, academic and support. 24
 13. The Panel recommends the UTM to establish an explicit and dedicated teaching and learning leadership and oversight role at institutional level to raise the quality and profile of the teaching and learning function. 25
 14. The Panel recommends UTM to implement a management information system which provides timely and reliable data for use by the management, various committees, schools and heads of departments on the quality, viability, and relevance of programmes. 25
 15. The Panel recommends the UTM to make provision for adequate full-time academic staff positions in Schools to align with student enrolments and the number of academic programmes. 26
 16. The Panel urgently recommends that UTM Board of Governors implement the staff promotions policy and provide fair and equitable process for promotions and reward. The criteria of promotion should provide flexibility for academic staff to be rewarded. 27
 17. The Panel recommends the UTM management to work closely with the Student Council to implement initiatives to improve the campus life of students and staff. 27
 18. The Panel recommends that UTM focus its resources on academic programmes for which it has developed competitive advantages and/or which are highly relevant to the needs of the national economy. UTM should also define the minimum student enrolment number required for running an academic programme. 28
 19. The Panel recommends that UTM computerise the admissions process. 28
 20. The Panel recommends that the appropriate processes be put in place in the Registrar's Office to address student requests/queries/complaints in a timely manner. 29
 21. The Panel recommends that UTM address the serious lapse in effective and efficient administration, and that training or disciplinary action be taken in cases of inaction and non-responsiveness by management or staff, where warranted. 29
 22. The Panel recommends that UTM makes provision for a gymnasium and a fully equipped student common room in its plans for infrastructure development, and that the existing amenities (football, volleyball, basketball etc.) be upgraded to international norms. 30

23. The Panel recommends that the appropriate infrastructural changes be implemented to allow students with disability to have access to all amenities on campus. 30
24. The Panel recommends that UTM fully implement a performance management system for all staff with proper feedback and ensure academic staff are accountable through the performance review process for their implementation of relevant action plans and policies, and that annual performance reviews be consistently implemented and supported by available and relevant data to ensure their utility to both the staff member and UTM. 31
25. The Panel recommends that UTM seriously consider the establishment of a Marketing and Communications Unit to better position the University in the national and regional tertiary education market and to address the public image of UTM. 33
26. The Panel recommends the UTM review the academic honesty policy and renew the plagiarism software licence for use in all undergraduate and postgraduate modules. 37
27. The Panel urgently recommends UTM to strengthen its graduation process through developing capacity for the internal printing of testamurs, including the use of identification numbers; having proper record keeping to enable secure re-issuing of certificates; and to provide actual testamurs at graduation ceremonies. 38
28. The Panel recommends the UTM to formalise Programme Advisory Committees to strengthen the role of industry and alumni in the development, management and evaluation of programmes. 39
29. The Panel recommends the UTM to establish a work-based learning unit which takes full carriage of this important activity in close consultation with Schools. 39

5. MATTERS FOR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE FIRST QUALITY AUDIT

Recognising the importance of continuous quality improvement, the Panel evaluates the progress made by the UTM in implementing the recommendations of the TEC Quality Audit Report 2008. During this audit process, the Panel sought for evidence pertaining to the continuous improvement and effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the UTM. In its SER, the University provided a summary of the actions and progress made in implementing the 15 recommendations from its TEC Quality Audit Report 2008.

The Audit Panel's findings on each of these recommendations are outlined below. Many of these matters address issues directly relating to University of Technology, Mauritius, or to the themes of Curriculum and Assessment and Admission and Progress.

6. Institutional Mission, Aims and Objectives

As a university of technology, the University has a particular purpose and role within the higher national education landscape. It presently provides a large number of undergraduate professional and applied education to mainly Mauritian students and a small number of international students. It offers both undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications. It has one single campus that accommodates just over 3000 students enrolled for a limited range of degree and diploma programmes mainly in the areas of innovative technologies and engineering; sustainable development and tourism; business, management and finance, and in health sciences. Since 2015, there has been attention to “enhancing the quality and flexibility of learning and focused on increasing [the] retention of students.” (SER p13)

The University has an updated vision and mission in the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020. The Panel was informed that due to operational issues, the UTM website does not have the latest versions of the vision and mission. It is important that the updating of the website is completed as soon as possible as this is where the public access information about the University. It is also one of the major places where the University manages its national and international image and reputation.

The University noted in the SER (p38) that a draft Strategic Plan was submitted to the Board in December 2015. It indicated that the Board recommended that the Plan be implemented in a phased manner underpinned by clear financial strategies for each of the strategic actions. However, two years later these strategic actions are still under consideration by the Planning and Finance Committee and the Board. Further, there was a decision by heads of schools and heads of sections that due to competition the plan should remain broad and not reveal information which could be used by competitors. The Panel is of the opinion that this approach has inherent dangers as it actually can obfuscate the details of what is agreed to and what must be done. The Panel suggests that this decision be revisited for the sake achieving shared understandings of what is to be done, participation by staff and transparency at governance and management levels. Releasing high level objectives without the details is a commonly accepted approach for organisations to retain their competitive advantage and intellectual property.

The Panel probed both the Strategic Plan and the operational plan in order to gain insight into the extent of the linking of the mission, strategic objectives, planning, allocation of resources and assurance of quality with the reasonableness of implementation against timeframes and allocation of responsibility to individuals for their implementation.

UTM aspires to be a leading higher education institution which fosters socio-economic advancement through scholarship in the core functions. Considerable work remains to be done to engage with the implications of the vision and mission to make the institution fit-for-purpose and responsive to national priorities. Growing as a university of technology is a work in progress, and this work must continue. By the use of institutional monitoring and evaluation the institution's leadership is strongly encouraged to explore more systematically the philosophical, organisational, structural, academic culture and programme implications that are fundamental to being a university of technology which intends to make a socio-economic impact in its local and regional context.

The Panel noted that the Strategic Plan is, in general, a positive attempt to locate the University in the national tertiary education sector as a university of technology, taking into account the various characteristics of what constitutes a university of technology globally. Some of these include giving attention to a 'technology' focus, and career-oriented work-based learning requirements for students in the academic programmes. It also gives attention to ensuring that as a university of technology there is care to identify and retain appropriately qualified academic and research staff.

Commendation 1:

The Panel commends UTM for the imagination and aspiration in its Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 to firmly position itself as a university of technology in the Mauritian tertiary education sector by focusing on technology in its programmes, career-oriented education, work-based learning in its courses and appropriately qualified staff.

Yet, the Panel was concerned that while there is imagination and aspiration in the Strategic Plan, it appears to be unrealistic about what can be achieved in the period of the Plan. Global good practice suggest that such a plan is realistic and achievable within the timeframe and with the appropriate allocation of resources. It was of concern to the Panel that in both the Strategic and Operational Plans there are no specific timeframes, linking to allocation of resources, and allocation of responsibilities to individuals for delivery. In this case, it would not be possible to easily monitor or evaluate the realisation of the plans. Of concern is the lack of accountability for the Plan and that the Board, in particular, has failed since 2015 to oversee that the Strategic Plan is well and realistically crafted to ensure the delivery of its objectives at leadership, School, administrative and support environment levels. It appears that as there is no documented accountability mechanisms the Plans have the potential to fail the University community in advancing UTM's growth and development.

Recommendation 1:

The Panel recommends that UTM ensures that the Strategic Plan goals and activities, in a context of planning resourcing and quality, are implemented across the University in Schools and administrative areas with clear time-frames, deliverables and allocation of responsibility to individuals.

The Panel enquired about the extent to which the University identifies and manages its risks. It was informed that there is no institutional risk-management framework, nor is there an institutional risk register through which to manage risks. As part of the development and

management of the Strategic and Operational Plans, an identification and management of risks at UTM would be imperative.

Recommendation 2:

The Panel recommends that UTM develop a university risk-management framework and maintain a register for the management of risks.

The Self-Evaluation Report characterised the period from 2012 – 2017 as part of the second quality audit cycle. UTM was last audited in 2008, and at that audit it received 15 recommendations. While a few of the recommendations were addressed and finalised, the Panel was dismayed to note that many of the recommendations were not comprehensively addressed. The Panel recognises that there may be a number of reasons for this, but is of the opinion that the failure to address all the recommendations speaks to some significant institutional weaknesses in the last decade.

7. Institutional Approach to Quality Assurance

The Panel attempted to understand the approach to quality at the University and noted that considerable progress is yet to be made to embed an explicit culture and practice of quality at the University. The Panel heard that the University previously had a growing and strengthening quality culture and management of quality in prior years, but that this has eroded. The University is encouraged to give attention to the management of quality at the University beyond a minimalist and compliance approach to quality.

While some interviewees had a nuanced understanding and practice of quality, the Panel noted that it is not widely shared. The University must ensure that there is a collective understanding of quality beyond compliance across all sections of the institution. In looking at number of policies, the Panel noted that they were not very substantive or detailed or followed good higher education practice in terms of policy development. For example, there appeared to be some confusion about a well-detailed purpose and rationale of policies and procedures to be followed in a number of the policies which were viewed. While the current policies may have been appropriate in the founding years of the University, the Panel suggests that there be a review of policies and processes beyond what is currently in place. Such a review is a critical step for UTM to grow its academic stature and to deal with increasing complexities of a growing tertiary education institution.

Other areas in which quality must be embedded include the comprehensive implementation of departmental and programme reviews, and monitoring of improvement plans; the development and consistent implementation of surveys (including student, staff, employer and graduate surveys for improvement purposes); adequate functioning of industry advisory boards, and the quality management of support and service areas supporting the academic project. Some of these issues will be addressed later in this Report.

The Panel heard from a number of interviewees about the importance of having a vibrantly functioning Quality Assurance Unit for the University. It was noted that there is limited capacity and leadership provided by the Unit. The Panel suggests that the Quality Assurance Unit's roles, responsibilities and capacity be monitored to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency to provide the necessary leadership, expertise, capabilities and skills to give effect to the quality improvement agenda of the University through, for example, the School quality

coordinators. The Panel strongly suggests that the University develop a new and comprehensive Quality Framework or update its 2012 Quality Framework for all areas of the University, both academic and support. This Framework must include benchmarking as a central component in the management of quality. Providing awareness workshops and training for staff would be an appropriate subsequent activity after the finalisation of the Quality Framework and quality procedures.

Recommendation 3:

The Panel recommends that UTM develop a fit-for-purpose quality assurance framework which is supported by robust policies and procedures for the academic and support areas, and which includes a formal benchmarking good practice component for the core academic and administrative functions.

The Panel met with members of the Quality Coordination Committee and heard about its role in the University. While its members indicated that they are responsible for the academic project in the Schools, the Panel is of the opinion that the Committee must become more structured, functional and results driven. It was of concern that the lack of formal documentation, agenda setting and minute taking would be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the Committee and holding members or University environments accountable for decisions taken.

In addition, the Panel observed that there was no committee which fulfilled the function of quality assurance oversight of the administrative and support environments of the University. Given that there is a fundamental relationship between the academic project of the University and the administrative and support areas, this must receive urgent attention. The Panel heard from a number of interviewees, for example, about the important impact that administration units (for example, human resources, finance, procurement, admissions, maintenance) have on providing quality education. It was noted that sometimes this has a negative impact on students and academics. The Panel urges the University to consider expanding the terms of reference and membership of the Quality Coordination Unit to include all administration and support environments.

8. Administrative and Management Issues

8.1 Governance

8.1.1 Principles of Governance

The Panel met with a number of members of governance structures at the University. In general, the Panel gained the firm impression that for a range of reasons the governance structures were not operating optimally. It would appear that stronger communication between governance committees would address issues of reported poor communication.

A key reason which may hinder the good functioning of the governance system appears to be the currency of the terms of reference and mandate of committees where, after 17 years, these committees require revision or major changes to their mandates and procedures. For example, the Panel heard from both the President of the Board and from the Director General that

neither has responsibility for a number of fiduciary or decision-making powers in the University – in fact, indicating that the other is responsible. This in practice could not be true. The Panel noted that this could be due to a lack of clarity of powers or a shifting of responsibility on either the Director General’s or on the President of the Board’s part. Either way, it is not good governance practice to have such a situation prevail.

The Panel is concerned that the Board of the University is dysfunctional either by a lack of clarity or by a lack of powers granted to it in legislation and regulations. There is evident confusion about the relationship and reporting lines of the Director General to the Board. The Director General is not performance managed by the Board and is not held accountable by the Board. Board members indicated that they have no participation in the Director General’s appointment and that the Director General is not accountable to the Board. Further, the Director General indicated that she is a full member of the Board, without any reference to being present in an ex officio capacity in view of her position as would be the case in many universities and, therefore, of the consequent role played by the head of the institution on the Board. This scenario sets up potential conflicts of interest and could place members of the Board in a difficult position when decisions are to be made. The Panel gained the impression that particularly the external members appeared to be disempowered by the current Board arrangements.

The Panel noted that there could be some benefit to conducting a review of the governance committees of the University to explore whether they would function more effectively and efficiently in their roles through proposing changes to the legislation, statutes and regulations related to the University. The Panel is of the opinion that the Board, led by the external members, is failing to provide strong leadership and exercise its oversight role at UTM. Seventeen years after its establishment, there may be reason to revisit the institutional governance structures as the university develops and matures. The Panel urges that the Board and management give attention to all University governance structures to enable the effective and efficient running of the University by reviewing the composition and terms of reference of committees and proposing relevant legislative or regulatory changes, the setting of agendas, putting in mechanisms for reviewing their performance and provide secretarial support and record keeping.

Recommendation 4:

The Panel recommends that the UTM Board commission a review of all the governance structures (corporate and academic) of the University in order to identify governance lacunae, including weaknesses, composition, terms of reference, accountability mechanisms and lines of authority in the current arrangements.

In considering its future, attention must be given to effective Board oversight and accountability led by the independence of the external members in holding the Director General and management accountable for targets and deliverables, amongst other requirements, set for the University. In particular, the Board is encouraged to ensure that management, under the leadership of the Director General, finds ways to develop a culture of respect, responsibility, accountability, transparency, service and excellence, not only for itself as a management team, but for all staff.

The Panel suggest that there must be firm engagement by leadership to locate the institution in national tertiary education debates and to ensure that the University staff do not remain isolated from relevant participation in national academic discussions. In terms of its reputation, the University must continue to ensure that it is well integrated in the sector through its academic and research activities, including its engagement with industry partners, the wider community and society. This engagement with industry partners would establish linkages with economic sectors in addition to discrete individual enterprises.

The Panel places on record its disappointment with respect to the engagements with and the behaviour of the Director General towards the audit process and towards the Panel during the audit. The Director General attempted to interfere with the audit process through her actions to manipulate or efforts to derail the audit process in various ways and question the independence and integrity of the Panel. Regrettably, the Director General confirmed some comments made by or intimations expressed by stakeholders to the Panel during the audit visit about her leadership at the University. Nevertheless, the Panel placed aside the attempts to interfere and focussed on the purposes of the TEC audit.

The Panel noted the turnover of management and leadership at UTM in the last 10 years. As already noted above, the Board is encouraged to find ways to ensure that there is the kind of leadership in place which will assist the University to fulfil its education and research mandate as a public University in Mauritius. Part of this is for the Board to reflect with the University's management its provision of emotionally intelligent and intellectually strong, but compassionate and fair, leadership for all staff and students at UTM.

Recommendation 5:

The Panel recommends that the UTM Board take steps to ensure the consistency, continuity and stability of appropriate University leadership after years of high turnover of Director Generals and senior staff.

8.1.2 Top management leadership

Administration and Service Standards

The Panel was made aware by many staff and students that the administrative systems must urgently be improved across the University. The Panel also had the opportunity to walk around the campus and visit various areas of administration. The Panel suggests that service-level agreements and service standards must be set and more effectively monitored in line with the strategic direction of the University. A key aspect of this is testing the extent to which the University's administrative services are capable of supporting the core functions. Administrative systems and human resource management services that do not operate optimally have the potential to have a crippling effect on academic processes, and particularly, on the institution's ability to ensure quality of educational provision and research.

One particular concern which was raised by staff and students, and even by senior staff, is the time it takes to have requests for approval signed. There is significant frustration about the back and forth administrative processes to get signatures, and that it sometimes take longer than six months for straight-forward approvals to be granted. It is all the worse when approvals are to be authorised by University senior management.

Recommendation 6:

The Panel recommends that UTM gives attention to administrative efficiency and effectiveness through reducing bureaucracy, speeding up processes and communication of decisions.

8.1.3 Institutional Information and Technology Systems

After hearing from staff about the challenges with respect to ICT infrastructure, the Panel undertook a visit of the ICT infrastructure. The Panel is deeply concerned about the integrity of the University's management information systems which are currently being implemented through IIS. It appears that staff training on IIS is not prioritised (because of heavy staff workloads) to enable the attainment of the benefits of ISS Phase I and to enable the successful implementation of the subsequent phases. To realise the maximum benefit of IIS, it will be important to capture all relevant and available data beyond the last few years which have been captured to this point. The Panel suggests that an electronic record of key data is captured which dates back to the establishment of the University.

Recommendation 7:

The Panel recommends that UTM ensure the comprehensive implementation of the IIS Phase I in order to derive maximum benefit for Phases II and III, where staff training, customisation of the system and digitising University records are prioritised.

The Panel heard that urgent attention must be given to updating outdated software or renewing software licences. In addition, the University must ensure that there is an active maintenance agreement to customise and support IIS, and that the University systems are protected from viruses or cyber-attacks. It is critical that WIFI is stable and adequate, that the University website is up to date.

It was reported, and which the Panel verified through observation, that there are two high risks to ICT at the University. The first risk is that the main server room is not well secured, has no effective fire retardant system and that there is risk of water damage to the servers from the air-conditioning system. The second risk is the lack of policy and procedure around the back up of data and its storage off site in the case of disaster. Without any disaster recovery protocols in place, the University is at high risk of the loss of its key data and the ability of the University to function in instances of fire, sabotage, or faulty equipment or software.

Recommendation 8:

The Panel recommends that UTM give attention to IT-related issues, such as enhancing campus-wide WIFI, attention to an updated University website, ensuring that all software licences are current, and that attention is given to secure the IT server rooms and the regular back up of university data.

The University's comprehensive use of data for planning and performance measurement purposes is yet to be implemented, including ensuring that staff at all levels make optimal use of generated reports, as well as data to inform resourcing priorities. The Panel encourages the

University to significantly strengthen the planning and institutional research functions, including retaining staff who will concentrate on ensuring the collection of accurate data and its analysis, and that includes meeting its data requirements.

8.1.4 Management of Funds Budgeting and Finance

While noting the financially precarious situation in which the University finds itself, the Panel was made aware by the Board, leadership and many staff that the University's financial affordability and sustainability is of considerable concern for a range of reasons. One of these would be to the effectiveness of the internal budgeting processes and management of finances which is outside the scope of the audit. There were concerns expressed by a number of interviewees about the financial sustainability of the University. Foremost is the lack of funding provided by government, but that the University is expected to operate optimally as a public university.

Recommendation 9:

The Panel recommends that the UTM Board urgently signal to the relevant authorities that it requires increased funding in order to meet its tertiary education mandate and provide quality education, research and community service, in view of the national 2030 economic, social and educational objectives.

The University is encouraged to develop a viable, performance-oriented and transparent budgetary model that links academic and core priorities with the planning and budgetary processes. In this regard, the Panel suggests that the University develop a comprehensive financial and budgeting model that is geared to the short- and long-term financial stability and quality academic provision of the University, and implements it in a participative, transparent and rigorous manner.

The Panel appreciates that student fees are a very politically delicate issue. The University will need to carefully consider the further measures it needs to take to ensure the viability and sustainability of the University. As an equally important public tertiary education institution in terms of expectations and delivery, the annual government grant per student is only approximately Rs1, 800 compared to roughly Rs45, 000 per student in other similar public institutions. However, UTM students must pay fees but in fact receive lesser facilities relative to other higher education institutions.

The Panel suggests that regular communication to staff and students on decisions related to budget and finance would be important. While the Panel understands and acknowledges the severe constraints of the historical resourcing disadvantage for UTM, it urges the University to assist its staff, students and stakeholders to have a frame of reference that is more entrepreneurial and innovative about its opportunities and possibilities, and move beyond a 'deficit' frame of reference, as a first step to fulfil its potential.

The Panel heard from interviewees about the frustrations related to the cumbersomeness of the University procurement process. It was reported that there is a heavy reliance on one person. Best practice would suggest that a clear segregation of duties is needed in the area of procurement as it presents a potential risk to the University. The University is encouraged to address these issues above.

8.1.5 Infrastructure

The Panel is concerned with the extent that the environment and infrastructure supporting learning, teaching, research and community engagement has been allowed to deteriorate. The Panel concurs with the concerns expressed by the Board, management, staff and students about the quality of the overall campus environment that supports the academic enterprise and impacts on the reputation of the University. Areas for attention include ensuring that the physical campus promotes an adequate learning environment, including its social, recreational, and sporting aspects. There are serious concerns which relate to the adequacy and maintenance of computer laboratories, the adequacy of the library facilities, and the quality of the physical infrastructure, including the electrical and plumbing systems. Management is aware that these issues significantly impact on the quality of student and staff life and is encouraged to ensure that they are addressed as soon as possible. Indeed, these have aspects which are linked to standards of health and safety which cannot be ignored.

The Panel noted that capital funding has been received to increase the infrastructure of the University. It is imperative that the University acts with speed to begin the approved capital projects.

UTM offers affordable education to its students, mainly drawn from Mauritius. The provision of an encompassing student experience extends from the lecture halls and laboratories to other learning and social spaces on campus is a fundamental challenge for the institution. It not only involves substantial funding but a different conceptualisation of the educational process.

Given that UTM has enrolled a small number of international students, a further challenge is presented in terms of the support and interventions international students require for academic success and for their integration into the Mauritian local communities. There is an absence of an integrated conceptualisation of both the curricular and the non-curricular dimensions of student life in order to provide students with a rounded educational experience that develops leadership, professional and social skills, including aspects of critical and global citizenship. It appears that senior managers are aware of some of the constraints and opportunities in this regard.

Recommendation 10:

The Panel recommends that UTM give urgent attention to addressing infrastructure and maintenance issues at a range of levels to enhance the campus environment for students and staff.

In terms of persons with disabilities, the Panel heard and noted that, in particular, buildings and infrastructure fails to adequately accommodate persons with disabilities. It is important that administrative or academic staff are sensitised and trained to respectfully assist and support those with disabilities.

8.1.6 Human Resources

The Panel heard about low staff morale from many of the staff who were interviewed. The Panel is of the opinion that there is a need to strengthen the relationship between management, on the one hand, and staff and the student union, on the other. Both the Staff and Student Unions expressed serious misgivings to the accuracy of the narrative and

perspectives of the SER presented for the audit, as did a number of other staff members. The Panel was concerned that some staff members and members of governance committees indicated that they did not have access to the SER prior to the audit visit.

It appears to the Panel, that the two big challenges to UTM is infrastructure and staff morale. It is clear to the Panel that there is a serious trust deficit by staff of senior management. This potentially extends to students and to other University stakeholders. The Panel noted the comments made in the SER about actions taken by staff and students to resolve issues in the press. Staff and the student union indicated some frustration with management as issues are seldom resolved, or when they are, it takes a long period of time. There was annoyance with the process of needing to submit written documentation of complaints or concerns which is alleged to, thereafter, disappear into the administrative system of the University. The Panel was informed that there have been a number of issues which have been vented in the press and television. Certainly this is damaging to the University's reputation and image. In this regard, the Panel heard that there is a need for a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy to repair the image of the University in Mauritius. The University may wish to consider the establishment of a marketing and communications unit. Such actions would assist in positioning UTM as a university of technology and address issues related to its image and reputation in Mauritius and internationally.

Recommendation 11:

The Panel recommends that UTM's leadership take urgent action, in a context a call for trust, cooperation and transparency, to enhance effective communication and conflict resolution mechanisms between management and staff and students, and with the staff and student unions.

In considering its future, consideration must be given to finding ways by the senior management team to develop a culture of respect, responsibility, accountability, transparency, service and excellence not only for itself but for all staff.

As noted elsewhere in this Report, the Panel is of the opinion that part of building an institution and culture will be the development of an appropriate performance management system for all staff. The Panel urges the University to strengthen the support mechanisms for staff while establishing performance and accountability mechanisms at all levels.

The Panel is aware that annual performance review and promotions of academic and administrative staff have not taken place for some time. The lack of performance review and promotion will have significant impact in the retention and employment of high calibre staff for the UTM to achieve its aspiration to be a leader as a university of technology.

In order to attract and retain the best talent at the University in line with its strategic plan and vision, the Panel considers that a clear policy for staff promotion and development should be urgently put in place. This should be accompanied by an action plan to be implemented within a reasonable timeframe in order to offset staff turnover whilst looking at motivational aspects, career prospects and stimulating a sense of belonging for both academic and non-academic staff.

Recommendation 12:

The Panel recommends that UTM urgently address human capital issues, including filling key vacant positions, conducting promotion processes, strengthening formal staff induction, putting in place a staff performance appraisal system, conduct a staff climate survey and develop a comprehensive staff development policy for all staff, academic and support.

9 Management of academic activities

Teaching and Learning

9.1 Governance of Teaching and Learning

The UTM Act 2000 provides powers to the Academic Council to be the principal academic body of the University. The Academic Council has key responsibility to have control and general regulation of teaching, examination, and research; and the responsibility for the maintenance of appropriate academic standards and quality. The Academic Council is chaired by the Director General and it has representatives from all four schools. The student voice is also represented by student membership. Academic Council has four standing committees. They include the four School Boards. The Panel reviewed the agendas and minutes of the Academic Council and the School Boards. New members of the Academic Council are inducted to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The Academic Council has overarching responsibility to monitor teaching and learning outcomes.

It was unclear to the Panel how the Academic Council evaluates its own performance and the performance of its standing committees to ensure that they are all discharging their responsibilities. It is also unclear on the extent to which the Academic Council monitors the teaching and learning outcomes at the University level to form judgments on quality and standards. The Panel suggests that the Academic Council consider conducting a biennial self-review, including the appraisal of its standing committees. The Panel also suggests that Academic Council develop University-level key performance measures for teaching and learning to be monitored on annual basis and that new targets are set to improve outcomes.

9.2 Teaching and Learning Leadership

Teaching and learning leadership is provided by Academic Council and School Boards. UTM offers 138 academic programmes. Some programmes are offered in partnership arrangements. The University relies heavily on part time academics to deliver its core business of teaching. The University aspires to be a leading technology university in Mauritius. It aims to ensure that all academic programme design embeds technology and innovation. To achieve the aspirations, the University needs to recognise international developments in technology-enabled learning. It also needs to recognise innovative pedagogies in curriculum design, teaching, assessment, and monitoring the quality of programmes. The Panel suggests that there is an urgent need to establish a University-wide senior academic position to lead learning and teaching innovation and ongoing enhancement. The new role should provide University-level leadership and consideration should be given to establish structures at school and department level to improve teaching and learning. The position could also play an important role in leading the current Quality Assurance Committee and other academic committees.

Recommendation 13:

The Panel recommends the UTM to establish an explicit and dedicated teaching and learning leadership and oversight role at institutional level to raise the quality and profile of the teaching and learning function.

9.3 Program Reviews and Ongoing Improvement

The University has systematic processes to review academic programmes. External experts are engaged to review programmes. The institution relies heavily on external experts as a mechanism to assure quality of the programmes. Discussions with the Academic Council suggests that the Council uses student enrolment in the programme as an indicator of success. Whilst the Panel recognises that student enrolment in a programme is an indicator of a programme's financial viability, it is not a measure of academic outcomes or quality. The Panel found lack of evidence on how trend data is used to assess the quality and relevance of programmes. The Panel suggests that the UTM consider the implementation of information management systems which collect, store, and provide timely and reliable data on academic performance of its programmes. Indicators such as enrolments, student retention, completions, student experience at programme level, and graduation rates are key in assessing the quality and relevance of programmes. Such an initiative will significantly assist the Board of Governors, Academic Council, Schools, and Heads of Departments to assess performance at various levels.

Recommendation 14:

The Panel recommends UTM to implement a management information system which provides timely and reliable data for the use by management, various committees, schools and heads of departments on the quality, viability, and relevance of programmes.

9.4 Program Management

Academic programmes are led by various academic leaders in schools. In some schools, programmes are led by Heads of Departments and in other schools it is led by Programme Coordinators or other full time academic staff. The Heads of Department and Programme Coordinators are assisted by part-time teaching staff. UTM has 138 academic programmes, 47 full time academic staff, and 115 administrative staff. In terms of gender balance, UTM has 64% of female staff of whom 43% are female academics. The ratio between full-time and part-time academics is around 20:80. For example, in School of Information Technology and Engineering, there are 22 full-time, and 80 part-time academic staff. Schools rely heavily on part-time academics to deliver modules. Part-time academics also develop learning materials, and mark assessments. The Panel notes that there is strong evidence to suggest that Schools are under-resourced. The workload of academic staff is significant. Some Heads of Department and Programme Coordinators are responsible for more than eight programmes. It was noted that UTM has been successful in attracting and recruiting young academics. Young academic staff are trained in various academic roles. However, it was observed by the Panel that the University has not been able to retain them due to lack of an active promotion and succession process.

Recommendation 15:

The Panel recommends the UTM make provision for adequate full-time academic staff positions in Schools to align with student enrolments and the number of academic programmes.

9.5 Quality of Teaching

As outlined earlier, most of the teaching staff are part-time academics. The University currently uses anonymous student surveys to assess the performance of teaching staff. The paper-based survey is distributed, collected, and analysed by academic staff in schools. Reports are prepared by Programme Coordinators and submitted to School Boards. The current system allows academic staff to collect, analyse and report their own feedback on modules to School Boards. The University does not have the capacity to analyse and report student experience data at University and school level. As a next step, UTM should consider the centralisation of all data systems so that student, employer and staff experience surveys, etc., are coordinated by a central office, and data is reported to various stakeholders, particularly for monitoring and improvement purposes. Other forms of feedback could also be used such as a module coordinator report on teaching teams for monitoring and improvement purposes.

9.6 Professional Development

UTM has supported academic staff to attend conferences. In recent years, the opportunity for professional development has been minimal. Whilst academic staff have expertise to design, deliver and assess programmes, there is urgent need for professional development in areas such as: using technology in teaching, assessment design, integrity of assessments, student engagement, and innovative strategies to facilitate learning (teach) and engage students in their learning. UTM operates on a single campus and range of initiatives could be implemented to develop staff. They could range from establishing a programme coordinator and head of departments network to exchange interdisciplinary expertise. Likewise, academic peers from Schools could be engaged to run workshops with staff on wide range of topics such as finances, human resources, information technology security, health and wellbeing of staff and many other areas.

9.7 Academic Staff Performance Reviews and Promotions

As performance management is already noted previously in this Report, the Panel draws the attention of the University to the fact that it is common practice in organisations to undertake performance review of all staff. Annual performance review enables to review staff performance and set new priorities and targets. At the University, the overarching responsibility for human resource matters falls under brief of the Staff Committee. The Staff Committee is the sub-committee of the Board of Governors. Discussions with staff suggest that performance reviews of academic and administrative staff have not taken place for many years. Interviews with members of the Staff Committee suggests that policies and processes for staff performance review have not been finalised. Similarly, promotions for academic and administrative staff have not occurred for many years. It was reported to the Panel that the last academic promotion was made in 2013 and the last administrative promotion took place in 2008.

While the University policy states that staff can apply for promotions annually, no such call for applications for promotions have been invited for many years. Many staff across the University raised serious concerns about their future careers at UTM with no evident

opportunity for progression or succession. This concern was also raised by Staff Union which represents more than 70% of employees. The current practice limits many young and established academics to progress and succeed in their careers. This in turn will have significant implications in the development of future research leaders and scholars in Mauritius. The Panel is of the opinion that UTM must recognise the long-term impact of this issue due to lack of promotions over many years and must provide some flexibility for all full-time academics to apply for promotion.

Recommendation 16:

The Panel urgently recommends that UTM Board of Governors implement the staff promotions policy and provide fair and equitable process for promotions and reward. The criteria of promotion should provide flexibility for academic staff to be rewarded.

9.8 The Student Experience

Many factors have influenced student choices to consider UTM as a destination of study. Factors such as location, cost, ease of entry, and referral from friends are some of the elements in influencing their choices. The Panel spoke with students who spoke highly about the teaching staff. They value the expertise of academic staff and their contribution to student learning. The Panel gained the strong impression that there is tremendous goodwill by academic staff to deliver their duties with pride.

Commendation 2:

The Panel commends the commitment, passion and enthusiasm of academic staff, full-time and part-time, in facilitating quality education, linking practice to theory and supporting students.

While students who were interviewed value highly the quality of teaching, they raised significant concerns about quality of facilities, amenities, classroom infrastructure, audio-visual technology in classrooms, and lighting, opening hours of canteen and their safety (in evening classes). Almost every student interviewed expressed that they do not feel that there is a University campus atmosphere. They spoke about poor campus life activities and a lack of a sense of belonging at the campus. UTM could implement range of initiatives in partnership with Student Council. Initiatives such as sports, music, social night and inter-faith festivals could be organised to establish a vibrant campus life.

Recommendation 17:

The Panel recommends the UTM management to work closely with Student Council to implement initiatives to improve the campus life of students and staff.

10 Admissions

Admissions (Thematic Audit)

In its quest to attract students, the University has been involved in a process of developing a wide range of academic programmes and reviewing existing programmes on a regular basis. The number of academic programmes as they appear on the University website stands at 138. About 100 of these programmes, of which 37 are at postgraduate level, are advertised (Annex 1.4 to SER) and for which only a few attract the required minimum numbers of students to economically run the programme in a sustainable manner. It was observed by the Panel that

UTM is offering academic programmes even when the critical mass of student numbers to reach a financial breakeven point, is not present. The Panel noted that many academic programmes are run with less than 10 students.

The management of the wide range of programmes is tedious and unproductive to both academic and non-academic staff. The Panel is of the opinion that there is an excessive workload on the 48 full academic staff in relation to development and review of academic programmes.

Recommendation 18:

The Panel recommends that UTM focus its resources on academic programmes for which it has developed competitive advantages and/or which are highly relevant to the needs of the economy. UTM should also define the minimum student enrolment number required for running an academic programme.

The Panel noted that UTM has aligned the entry requirements of its academic programmes to that prescribed by TEC.

The admissions process involves the submission of an application form in hard copy to the Student Affairs Department, in the Registrar Office, after payment of the required processing fees. The application is then forwarded to the Schools for processing by programme coordinators who scrutinise applications for eligibility and makes recommendations to the relevant head of school for admission. These are returned to the Registrar's Office for the release of award letters to applicants.

It was reported that the whole process is manual and cumbersome. More so, programme coordinators oversee up to 10 different programmes (Annex 4.6 to SER) which adds to the workload of academics. The Panel was surprised to note that such a basic function in a university of 'technology' has not yet been computerised.

Recommendation 19:

The Panel recommends that UTM computerise the student admissions process.

The Panel noted the functioning of the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) Committee which considers applications under the category of special cases. The APL committee operates at the level of the school and admission decisions in relation to special cases are harmonised.

The Panel was informed that a few academic programmes had acquired recognition of local/international institutions such as the Mauritius Medical Council, AMBA and IOSH. While the Panel commends the University for such initiatives, it is vital that professional programmes offered by the University are duly accredited by the corresponding local and/or international professional bodies. This will help UTM in large part to acquire international recognition and attract more local, regional or international students in the medium to long term.

The Panel suggests that UTM seeks accreditation of its professional academic programmes with the corresponding local/international professional bodies.

The Panel met with first-year students to understand the reasons that prompted these students to select UTM for their studies and whether they were satisfied with the offerings. Most of

the students were satisfied with their choice of programme and claimed that the smaller class sizes and closer interaction with academics was an advantage for the university. Students studying at higher levels claimed that the combined academic and industry experience with part-timers was also very fruitful. As already noted earlier in this Report, the ratio between full-time and part-time academics at UTM is approximately 1:8 (80% of academic staff are part time to the university).

Commendation 3:

The Panel commends the academic community for the quality of teaching and support provided to students in their studies.

10.1 Student Council and Welfare

The role of the Student Council is to promote the general interest and welfare of all students. It also represent students in negotiation/discussion sessions with senior management for the purpose of addressing the needs of the student population.

The Panel noted with concern that the requests of the Student Council were often left unattended (and, it was reported, until its concerns reached the National Assembly as a Private Notice Question to the Government). Indeed, it was reported to the Panel that when complaints for specific issues e.g. air conditioning, overhead projectors, first-aid kits, sport amenities etc..., are forwarded to the Student Affairs Department, office of the Acting Registrar, there is complete absence of feedback on actions being taken to address the complaints. This appears consistent with what the Panel heard from staff members in terms of requests for maintenance, etc. From the discussions, it was clear that there was a breach of communication between senior management and the Student Council which needs to be addressed. Students equally complained about the lack of interdepartmental communication within UTM.

The Panel met with the office of the Acting Registrar and noted the extensive bureaucracy surrounding management of trivial issues in relation to student affairs. The Panel heard that decisions that require minutes often take weeks. The lack of resources, though evident, does not, however, justify the delays in decision making.

Recommendation 20:

The Panel recommends that the appropriate processes be put in place in the Registrar's Office to address students' requests/queries/complaints in a timely manner.

Recommendation 21:

The Panel recommends that UTM address the serious lapse in effective and efficient administration, and that training or disciplinary action be taken in cases of inaction and non-responsiveness by management or staff, where warranted.

In terms of student welfare, there is a limited number of activities organised by the Student Council over an academic year. These include for instance the Fresher's party, Activity Week and the end-of-year party. It appears that activities from clubs are completely absent. The Panel noted the poor infrastructure associated with the organisation of student activities on campus. Students who were interviewed by the Panel indicated that they have to live in a dormant campus with the canteen closing at 5 pm and the library closing at 6 pm, while most

students remain on campus until 8 pm. The Student Council justified the absence of extracurricular activities because the University does not have the required facilities.

Recommendation 22:

The Panel recommends that UTM makes provision for a gymnasium and a fully equipped student common room in its plans for infrastructure development. TEC also recommends that the existing amenities (football, volleyball, basketball, etc.) be upgraded to international norms.

The Panel noted that the university has no provision to allow access to its premises to students with disabilities.

Recommendation 23:

The Panel recommends that the appropriate infrastructural changes be implemented to allow students with disability to have access to all amenities on campus.

The Panel took note of security issues while students move from the main campus to the BPML building during evening lecture sessions because of absence of lighting along the pathway. The Panel suggests that measures be taken to install appropriate lighting in all areas used by students during evening sessions.

11 Staff Council

The Panel met with members of the Staff Union, a duly registered association whose function is to cater for the needs of the University staff and to ensure that their rights are respected. Staff representations are made through the Staff Union representatives in formal meetings with Management.

The Panel noted significant concerns from staff about the lack of infrastructure, issues not being addressed, delays in decision making and the lack of facilities for staff members. It was reported to the Panel that since 2014 the relationship with Management has not been good. An opinion was expressed that there has been no proper negotiations due a lack of goodwill on the part of Senior Management. The last meeting with Management was in March 2017. The Panel was unable to verify this.

The Panel concluded that there exists no proper channel of communication between the Union and Management. Morale is low among both the academic and non-academic staff. Staff feel that there is a lack of concern for their health and wellbeing by management.

11.1 Staff Welfare

The Staff Committee reports to the Board of Governors (BOG) and has an external chair. Two external members of the Committee had resigned and have not been replaced at the time of the Audit Visit. The Committee assists the BOG in making decisions in the areas of staffing, promotions, welfare and leave. Budgetary issues have impacted staff and UTM in its operations.

11.2 Staff Appointments, Appraisal and Promotion

As noted above in this Report, appointments, appraisal and promotion of academic and non-academic staff members are regulated by the policy document Employment and Promotion

Policy and Criteria which was last revised in 2011. The document covers the general criteria for academic promotion but there are no guidelines or criteria for non-academic promotions.

The last academic promotions took place in 2013 in spite of the fact that the document stipulates that the promotion exercise is to be carried once annually. The last non-academic promotion was in 2008.

There has been no performance review of academic and non-academic staff for many years. The Panel strongly feels that UTM needs to have a process in place which includes communicating, assessing, coaching, developing and recognising employee talent and performance which will result in effective achievement of organisational and individual goals. It would include communicating performance expectations to individual employees and assisting employees in connecting their objectives to UTM's overall mission through goal setting. An annual review of employee performance with written documentation should be conducted. Areas of improvement could then be identified and training, coaching and guidance provided.

Recommendation 24:

The Panel recommends that UTM fully implement a performance management programme for all staff with proper feedback and ensure academic staff are accountable through the performance review process for their implementation of relevant action plans and policies, and that annual performance reviews be consistently implemented and supported by available and relevant data to ensure their utility to both the staff member and UTM.

11.3 Staff development

Academic and non-academic staff attend workshops and conferences, mostly local, to enable them to perform better in the work place. In addition, staff are encouraged to pursue their MPhil/PHD studies and are sponsored by UTM through a financial policy that will allow them to meet with their supervisors and to attend conferences. Several staff members have benefitted from this policy. Staff members are refunded fees paid for studies they undertake in their course of their duties through the Staff Improvement Qualification Annex. For studies undertaken at UTM 90% of the fees are refunded and for studies undertaken at other universities 50% of the fees are refunded.

The Panel noted that this has been discontinued for non-academic staff.

12. Marketing, Communications and Public Relations

The Panel noted that UTM has been making serious efforts to address a chronic mismatch between the academic qualifications of graduates and the specific requirements of the world of work. This challenge has been the subject of high level discussions between the senior University staff and private sector institutions to map out a clear policy orientation that would assist graduates to find gainful employment in emerging sectors whilst addressing also the issue of a high unemployment rate in Mauritius. Both the Mauritian Government and industry professionals are conscious of the need for university programmes to be aligned and hold relevance to the country's new development policy orientation to advance socio-economic growth and employment/wealth creation.

The linkages being formed by UTM with specific industry players since its creation has allowed for the employability of its graduates especially in sectors related to technology and hospitality management. Newly developed programmes are being offered in such areas as graphic designs, photography and film making, etc., in line with Government's decision to encourage investment in new sectors such as cinematography and the blue economy.

The University has been successful in launching collaborative relationships with some publicly funded institutions and specific private enterprises. Several memoranda of understanding have been signed with those entities to enable a harmonious blending of theory with applied or hands-on industry practice. The experience has proven fruitful in the specific areas such as technology, engineering, tourism and hospitality management. Job prospects for graduates are said to be relatively high in these areas of collaboration. The interest of the public and private sector in the University was amply manifested by the significant attendance at the meeting with industry stakeholders and the Panel. This is a good indication of the private sector's willingness to work with and rely on the University to deliver academic and professional programmes which are aligned to industry expectations and market dynamics.

Commendation 4:

The Panel commends the efforts of UTM academic staff to build close working relationships with industry practitioners and prioritise business networking opportunities, especially in the fields of technology and tourism/hospitality management. The employability of graduates in these fields is considered high by local standards and holds solid promises as trends in these specific sectors continue on their growth paths and have the potential to increase in the future.

Based on the growth trends and the development of new economic sectors, including the notion of smart city concepts, the blue economy, the air corridor, etc., there is a compelling necessity for further consolidation, development and strengthening of the current linkages between the University and industry. This should also pave the way for producing increased numbers of quality graduates and their employability thereafter. It is a particular condition for growth, more so that UTM is presently confronted with fierce competition from private sector tertiary education institutions. The Panel was informed that private universities or institutions have of late been increasing and are embarking on tertiary education programmes which represent a new development node as advocated by the government in its Vision 2030 programme which intends to position Mauritius as a Knowledge Hub in this part of the world. With annual intake in public universities on the decline, UTM has the enormous task to meet and satisfy the aspirations of Mauritian youth, address industry demands and respond to national human resource requirements while, as the same time, also positioning itself as a sought after tertiary education institution amidst growing competition in the Mauritian and regional market.

It was most evident to the Panel there is a palpable desire and motivation among academics to adapt to the changing management environment and leadership. Regardless of the current challenges, they appeared to be tuned to continuously "thrive on chaos" as a way of life on campus. Notwithstanding the poor university image reported to the Panel already noted earlier in this Report, largely resulting from a series of adverse press and media reports on

UTM leadership, administration, quality standards, infrastructural amenities, and generally modest campus atmosphere, shows the urgent need for UTM to display a more professional image in the eyes of the people of Mauritius and internationally. A review of the UTM marketing and communication strategies internally towards its staff, students and parent institutions, and externally towards industry players, foreign partners and the population is urgently warranted.

Specific strategies would include setting up a Marketing and Communication Unit at UTM. This unit should be manned by a team of experienced professionals specialised in market development, communications and public relations. The team should work in close collaboration with the heads of schools, departments as well as with the full-time and part-time academics in order to adopt a bottom-up approach and thus enhance the image of the University from grass-roots level, promote effectively for its respective programmes in areas of demand for the public and private sector institutions and which will attract school leavers in Mauritius and from the regional market. The role of this unit should extend internationally for network consolidation and better market visibility. The Board of Governors should be less complacent and more daring in its policy orientation and orientated on effective results. It is a matter of long term vision and audacity in a highly competitive world.

Recommendation 25

The Panel recommends that UTM seriously consider the establishment of a Marketing and Communications Unit to better position the University in the national and regional tertiary education market and to address the public image of UTM.

It is also imperative that in order to enable the University to interact more closely with industry stakeholders at institutional levels in addition to its notable efforts to deal with specialists at enterprise levels only. Technology impacts in all business activities with varying degrees of intensity. Whereas a specific business enterprise could be more inclined to drive the University towards programmes of specific individual interests, the various private sector representative bodies (Business Mauritius, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and sector specific associations – banks, financial services, insurance, asset management, offshore businesses, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality, agriculture, etc.) have the possibility to certainly assist UTM to develop an increasingly global view of its respective sectors and requirements in terms of human capital, avoidance of programme duplication and also in sharing ideas and research on new industry trends, market demands and areas of innovation.

The Panel formed the view that it is far from sufficient for UTM to be satisfied with finalising only a limited number of memoranda of understanding with private business entities if these are not made applicable to the benefits of the parties signing them. It is important for the University to review its existing memoranda and make an assessment of its contribution to the learning experience of students and the role and engagement of those enterprises in with the University and vice versa.

The scarcity of financial resources at the University, while real, appears to be have caused some simplistic responses from within the University with respect to the inability to turn its fortunes around. At worst, the danger is accepting that the current financial situation is a matter of destiny. The Panel noted, however, that there is a prevailing view among many University stakeholders that the accepted reality should be that the University is actually in a

position to raise its own funds to contribute to its sustainability and survival. The University of Technology was designed to be a self-financed entity and to compete with other private academic institutions. The reliance of the University on government grants and limited course fees seems to suggest that the Board and management see the role of UTM as a mere extension of the University of Mauritius, but with less resources. It appears that UTM cannot be run along the lines as smaller model of UoM and therefore requires new imagination and resourcefulness by leadership and staff in this regard.

On the other hand, the Panel was made aware that there is a stark paradox in the current state of affairs of public universities and which is particularly unfair to UTM students. Where academic programmes are free or highly subsidised by Government (with an annual grant of Rs 500 million for certain institutions), access to university education is fairly easy, where security is reinforced, management is professional, staff facilities and learning experience of students are of relatively high quality. Where the government grant is minimal (approximately Rs 6 million annually at UTM) academic programmes are made payable at relatively high costs by students with comparatively lower family income. Accessibility is difficult due to location, campus security is problematic, infrastructure and basic amenities are in undesirable conditions, the management of quality requires attention, and campus life is arguably unattractive. This makes it then a matter of social justice to which both government and the University must be cognisant and responsive.

As already noted earlier in the Report, a fundamental and fair interrogation is required by the Board and management of the University on the reasons that a fee-paying student should opt to study at UTM in the context where private universities offer similar programmes in more accessible locations and which provide learning environments with facilities worthy of a Knowledge Hub concept. This is a question deserving substantial discussion and the development of strategies by the UTM Board and University leadership.

With private sector tertiary education institutions expanding in Mauritius and which are profitable business ventures, it suggests that the market exists and self-financing is a viable option for UTM. To attract more students, the quality of infrastructure and life generally on campus should be conducive to learning and research. In its current state, and bearing in mind a problem of attitude, management style and accountability, business as usual is not an option for both the Board of Governors and management. Bold actions are urgently called for to redress the situation. This is all the more so bearing in mind the public perception of the University following a series of negative press reports in recent times.

The Panel suggests that UTM, as a public tertiary education institution, consider ensuring that linkages and partnership of UTM with industry should be more strategically crafted in order to stimulate private sector investment in its programmes and therefore serve as a revenue stream. Given that the private sector serves as the backbone of private universities in Mauritius, there could be scope for strategic partnerships by UTM with business and industry, where its programmes are aligned to industry requirements. There is potential for the University to source its own funding to supplement its reliance on Government grants.

In addition, activities which are within the University niche areas, such as (advanced) research, technological innovation and sustainable development modelling could attract financing and/or sponsorship by multinational companies. The proposed Marketing and

Communications Unit of the University could play a critical role in positioning UTM as a centre of innovation in Africa.

Strategic alliances with universities internationally and foreign organisations (regional and international) should also be contemplated with a view to giving a new academic and applied research dimension to UTM. The Panel suggests, for example, that with a clear intent and some audaciousness, a restructured and a professionally managed UTM has the potential to emerge as a regional centre of learning and development and obtain accreditation from international agencies to offer executive development programmes for middle management cadres for the region. This is an opportunity that could unleash the University's potential to impart knowledge in economic sectors where Mauritius has attained professional maturity, namely, in technology and tourism, and for people in the Vanilla Islands and in Africa by way of example.

The passion for quality and the internal motivation to constantly aim at excellence should be reflected in the posture and outlook of any institution focused on the outside world. As an institution of learning needs to communicate and network in an effective and professional manner for its own public image and reputation, it is imperative for UTM to also demonstrate professional maturity in its dealings with people in general, and with professionals, and to develop a more inspiring leadership internally in order to boost staff morale, student motivation and the nation's confidence.

In the new age of the 4th Industrial Revolution (or more correctly known as the 6th Techno-Economic Paradigm), UTM leadership has the task to take the University to the next level of technology and innovation. In this context, a respect for engagement with internal and external stakeholders is critical, where people are valued, will make the University stand out as role model for the world of tomorrow. A leadership that stimulates the talents lying untapped within people and which inspires creativity among its energetic Mauritian youth and helps to build a better society is critical for the success for the University. Transparency, integrity, fairness, professional maturity and elegance as well as positive thinking are the essential tools needed to build the UTM of the future, worthy of a modern Mauritius.

13. Curricula and Programmes

13.1 Programme Design, Validation, Approval and Review

Programme Development and Approvals

Programme development at UTM starts at school level. Schools identify programme needs based on industry feedback. The Panel heard about many instances across all schools where industry experts are involved in programme design and ongoing reviews. New programme proposals are reviewed and approved in School Board meetings. The Academic Council ultimately reviews and approves all academic programmes. School Boards and Academic Council also play a lead role in programme reviews. External review of programmes engage international experts. The Panel reviewed sample of programme and module outlines from all four schools. Module outlines include information about aims of the modules, learning outcomes, assessment types and other information. Modules content and assessments play an important in achieving programme learning outcomes. Based on the programme and module content reviewed, it is unclear how UTM maps programme learning outcomes with modules

in a qualification. It is also unclear how individual assessment align with modules learning outcomes.

In moving forward, the Panel suggests that the UTM consider the use of online technology in programme development and approval process. This involves online programme concept proposal for the senior management to consider. Once the Programme Concept Proposal (business case) is approved by senior management, then Schools can commence the development of programme proposal (academic case) for School Boards and Academic Council to consider. The Panel suggests that programme development includes national and international benchmarking to ensure that programmes are comparable with international standards.

UTM has a number of programmes that are accredited by international bodies. Accreditation provides another level of quality assurance. It also assures students and employers about the quality and currency of curriculum design.

Commendation 5:

The Panel commends UTM for receiving international professional accreditation in two programmes which enables international portability and enhancing the recognition of qualifications.

13.2 Learning Resources

Library and Learning Resources

UTM has library which is resourced with qualified staff. The library has hard copy text books and access to several e-databases. The librarian is a member of the Academic Council. The Programme Development and Approvals process consults the library for new text books. The library provides students to photocopy materials and it also provides some space for students to study. Many students and staff raised concerns that the library does not have a wide range of e-resources to meet programme and interdisciplinary needs. Some students have to use another university library to access e-resources. The Panel urges UTM Management to resource the library adequately to meet the needs of students and staff, or strengthens to collaborative relationships with other libraries to provide access to staff and students to library resources. Access to e-resources to align with the wide range of programmes is important for students and staff.

13.3 Programme Organisation and Delivery

Innovative Use of Technology in Teaching

UTM aspires to position itself as a leading provider of technology. Internationally and nationally, significant development in innovative technology is taking place. In the higher education sector, programmes are delivered and assessed fully online. Discussions by the Panel with students and staff suggests that UTM uses traditional face-to-face method of teaching and assessment of students. In some modules, staff use Moodle as a learning technology tool. However, this is not used across all modules. To position the University as a leading provider of technology, the UTM needs to deploy learning technologies to support learning and innovate in the area of current teaching and learning practices. The Panel urges the University to consider the use of a learning management systems, such as its chosen current use of Moodle, in all modules across the University.

13.4 Supporting Academic Staff to Deliver Outcomes

Academic staff at the UTM are actively engaged in teaching, research, and engagement. The Panel met with many academic staff who are dedicated to improve teaching, research, and engagement outcomes. Many academic staff are involved in administrative tasks such as attending open days, industry/employer visits, organising work-placements, and providing extra tutorial support to students. As already noted above, many staff have raised concerns about administrative workload which has impact on their teaching and research priorities. Staff have also raised concerns about lack of computers, laptops, internet access, and space issues. These issues if not addressed have serious implications on the quality and productivity of academic staff. The Panel urgently urges the UTM Board to see that these issues are addressed as a matter of priority.

13.5 Monitoring and Assessment

13.5.1 Integrity of Student Assessment

Assessment plays an important role in achieving the learning outcomes. Assessment is part of curriculum design and it measures student attainment of skills and knowledge. The successful completion of a qualification assures students, employers, and other stakeholders that the student has successfully met all requirements of the degree, including meeting all the assessment requirements. Review by the Panel of documentation and interviews with staff and students raises two serious concerns relating to academic quality and maintenance of standards at UTM.

The first concern relates to the lack of system to ensure academic honesty or to assess plagiarism and academic misconduct. The Panel was informed that the UTM had the license to detect plagiarism and misconduct through the use of *Turnitin* software. The software is widely used internationally to assess the integrity of a student's submitted work. The absence of such tool compromises the integrity of assessment and academic rigor in marking assessments. The minutes of the Research Degree Committee submitted to the Chair of the Academic Council dated 31 October 2017 raised concerns about this issue. So far, no resolution has been reached by Senior Management on the renewal of *Turnitin* software. The lack of *Turnitin* also has serious quality and reputational implications on the integrity of research degree dissertations and their subsequent awards.

Recommendation 26:

The Panel recommends the UTM review the academic honesty policy and renew the plagiarism software licence for use in all undergraduate and postgraduate modules.

The second issue relates to student failure in modules. UTM allows students to re-sit for examinations as many times as necessary during the duration of the degree. A student could re-sit or re-submit assessment as many times as s/he wishes to pass a module. After second or multiple attempts, the student mark/grade in the module would be based on academic achievement rather than a base pass mark. The current practice at UTM whilst providing students the opportunity to pass, is in effect a lowering of academic standards. It also contradicts international good practices in assessment marking and moderation, and setting academic standard and quality safeguards in this regard.

13.5.2 Testamur Integrity and Graduations

Graduation at UTM is managed by the Registrar's office. Academic Council approves the list of eligible students after grades and results are processed by the relevant School Board. UTM has engaged an external company to print student testamurs. The UTM testamur does not have a numerical identification or unique code. The chances of fraud is high in the absence of using a unique ID and its recording in a register. Discussions with staff of the Acting Registrar's office suggests instances of prior cases of fraud. There have been instances where UTM is unable to verify and print student transcripts. Most recently, a medical student with Anna Medical College lost a transcript. UTM has been unable to timeously provide the replacement transcript due to issues around record keeping. At graduation students are provided with dummy certificates. Discussions with staff and review of student complaints shows that it takes up to or more than 4-6 months for UTM to provide original testamurs to graduates.

Recommendation 27:

The Panel urgently recommends UTM to strengthen its graduation process through developing capacity for the internal printing of testamurs, including the use of identification numbers; having proper record keeping to enable secure re-issuing of certificates; and to provide actual testamurs at graduation ceremonies.

14. Collaborative Provisions

The University has collaborations with two institutions, namely the Anna Medical College and JSS Academy. The SER describes UTM's understandings of the collaboration with the Anna Medical College (pp54 – 55). The SER is silent on JSS Academy. Both institutions representatives expressed their institution's general satisfaction with the arrangements and oversight of UTM. The Memoranda of agreements appeared to be working well.

Anna Medical College raised some concern around some administrative issues, such as delays in results being published which could compromise student enrolments for the following academic semester. It was reported that this unresolved issue has been officially raised 2 – 3 times with UTM. There was a concern about the delay providing the graduation certificate timeously to graduands. A student has been waiting for a re-issue of a certificate from UTM for 6 months. The University is encouraged to address these issues.

The University expressed some frustration with the arrangements related to Anna Medical College's oversight and the role of TEC in this regard. The Panel encourages the two parties to find an independent mediator, if necessary, to resolve the issues of who the regulator is and who oversees the academic programmes, etc., of Anna Medical College.

15. Industrial Links/Work-based Experience

15.1 Work-based learning

One of the strength of UTM is the integration of work-based learning in programmes. Many staff and students interviewed spoke very positively about this strength. Many UTM students find jobs prior to graduations. The early contact with the employers as part of work-based learning has resulted in students securing jobs. All initiatives related to work-based learning is managed by the Schools. Significant effort is made by academic staff in managing the logistics of work-based learning.

Commendation 6:

The Panel commends UTM for efforts made to embed work-based learning in academic programmes, where relevant.

Schools have played a lead role in engaging with industry and employers to develop programmes. Industry experts are actively engaged in programme development and reviews. The collaboration between the Schools and employers has resulted in the success of work-based learning. The engagement of industry and employers enable the Schools to gain insights on industry trends, future skill needs, and labour market trends in Mauritius and beyond. Progress so far on industry engagement is only through the Schools. The Panel urges the University to take lead role in formalising Programme Advisory Committees across all programmes to strengthen links with industry, employers, and alumni.

Recommendation 28:

The Panel recommends the UTM to formalise Programme Advisory Committees to strengthen the role of industry and alumni in the development, management and evaluation of programmes.

Recommendation 29:

The Panel recommends the UTM to establish a work-based learning unit which takes full carriage of this important activity in close consultation with Schools.

16. Community Service and Good Citizenship

The School of Business Management and Finance developed the guidelines for The Community Learning and Engagement (CLEn 1000) intended to be a new and innovative credit-based mandatory component introduced at The School of Business Management and Finance (SBMF) undergraduate programmes in 2015. The CLEn initiative strives to integrate community learning and social responsibility as a cornerstone of undergraduate education. It is a field-based initiative which aims at promoting civic engagement in community organisations for undergraduate students who will have direct off-campus experience and which contributes to their intellectual, personal and professional development. A list of NGO's with mentors was made available to the Panel. No formal activity had been recorded for the Panel to validate.

It is widely recognised that community service and active citizenship opportunities help students become informed, responsible citizens. It not only contributes to their personal growth but can be used as a conduit for them to address community challenges. It also helps in the development of their leadership skills.

The Panel is of the opinion that UTM could address, more formally, ways to integrate service learning and good citizenship into its programmes that would require the involvement of management, staff and students. In addition, the University could consider the development of a community engagement framework which would integrate the core functions of teaching, learning and research.

17. Appendices

17.1 Appendix A: The Audit Panel

Prof Mark Hay, Strategic Support to the Vice-Chancellor Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa (Chairperson),
Associate Professor (Dr) Mahsood Shah, CQUniversity, Australia.
Associate Professor (Dr) Dinesh Kumar Hurreeram, University of Mauritius.
Sen M. Ramsamy Managing Director, Tourism Business Intelligence.
Dr Rosida Coowar, Former Associate Professor/Associate Chair Engineering Technology and Construction Department, University Of North Carolina Charlotte, USA

Secretary to the Audit Panel:

Mr Vijay Ramchurn, Mauritius Qualifications Authority, Mauritius

Logistic Support to the Panel:

Dr Vivek Gupta Ramnarain, Ag Head Quality Assurance and Accreditation Division, Tertiary Education Commission, Mauritius

Mr Yashvin Gopaul, A/Quality Assurance and Accreditation Officer, Tertiary Education Commission

Mrs Heetisha Laximan, Programme Officer, Tertiary Education Commission

17.2 Appendix B: Acronyms and abbreviations

AMBA	The Association of MBAs
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
BOG	Board of Governors
BPML	Business Park Mauritius Ltd
CLEn	Community Learning and Engagement
ESD	Employability Skills Development
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IIS	Integrated Information System
IOSH	Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
IT	Information Technology
JSS	Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreeshwara
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery
MoE & HR, TE & SR	Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
QA	Quality Assurance
SBMF	School of Business, Management and Finance
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SHS	School of Health Sciences
SITE	School of Innovative Technologies and Engineering
SSDT	School of Sustainable Development and Tourism
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
UTM	University of Technology, Mauritius

17.3 Appendix C: Institutional Context (Extract from SER)

UTM is a public institution established in year 2000 and located at La Tour Koenig, Pointe-aux-Sables, Port-Louis, Mauritius. It boasts a small but dedicated team of academics and administrative staff striving for the welfare of our students. Our academics are involved in teaching as well as research with international publications. Many of them are PhD holders while others are pursuing their doctoral studies. While the University has come a long way, it has yet to reach its full potential. Our purpose is to increase access to higher education through needs-based internationally-recognised programmes to help build an innovative and sustainable future and put technology at the service of society.

The UTM has over 3000 students on campus and some 1000 additional students at affiliated institutions. It aspires to remain a key regional player in the Tertiary Education Sector. The University is engaging in strategic actions and partnerships that will help UTM develop into an institution of excellence with a regional and international dimension to all its activities. The UTM campus is set to grow further with the projected building of a state-of-the-art UTM Tower and other infrastructural developments.

The UTM has four Schools: the School of Business, Management and Finance (SBMF), the School of Sustainable Development and Tourism (SSDT), the School of Innovative Technologies and Engineering (SITE) and the School of Health Sciences (SHS) which all have close links with public and private sector organisations. We have recently created a Department of Creative Arts, Film and Media Technologies that will offer a BA (Hons) in Film and Video Production, a first for Mauritius. A Department of Maritime Business and Technology is in the pipeline.

The University offers a range of comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes. We are placing emphasis on identifying and developing niche and needs-based areas of operation in line with Government Vision 2030. New programmes are being developed in key areas of science and technology including health and medical sciences, maritime technology, green/smart innovative technologies. The University is also the awarding body for programmes of local institutions like the JSS Academy, the Fashion and Design Institute, the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and other affiliated institutions, including the Anna Medical College.

The University is committed to the principles of good governance and firmly believes in transparency and in accountability to its stakeholders. All Financial statements due since 2010 and as at December 2015 have been submitted to the National Audit Office where they are presently under examination. Annual Reports 2001-2009 are being modified to incorporate Audit-certified financial statements dating as far back as 2002 so that these can be laid before the National Assembly. The Annual Report covering the reporting period June 2009- December 2015 has been compiled and is awaiting certification of financial statements for publication.

Since August 2015, we have brought a number of changes to regulations aimed at enhancing the quality and flexibility of learning and focused on increasing retention of students at UTM. While making our system more flexible, we are also increasing academic quality and standards. While remaining faithful to our mandate to provide multi-level higher education and recognise prior learning and experience, the University has for its August intake already applied the higher 'A' level entry requirements for direct entry into its undergraduate programmes.

To ensure quality and standard of programmes UTM also relies on a pool of part-timers and overseas professors who act as external moderators and PhD supervisors. Programmes and regulations are regularly updated to reflect worldwide trends and all new proposals are fully debated at the level of the Academic Council before approval.

The School of Health Sciences (SHS) has been formally set up in 2015-2016 with one of its main aims being improving quality assurance of medical programmes for which UTM is the awarding body. The University of Technology Mauritius is, since December 2016, recognized as a medical institution by the Medical Council of Mauritius, which constitutes a major achievement and a recognition of quality. The MBBS programme and Regulations have been revised and will help improve quality of programme delivery, assessment and monitoring.

UTM is committed to ensuring that students have a fulfilling and intellectually stimulating experience that prepares them for worldwide opportunities. The University is coming up with its graduate attributes and over the coming years will be moving towards outcome-based assessment. Work-based learning through work placement and Employability Skills Development (ESD) are becoming compulsory components of all our programmes. In addition a Life Skills and Good Practices module as well as business studies are now included in our programmes to promote a culture of entrepreneurship amongst students. These measures demonstrate the commitment of our University to prepare students for employment, personal development and sustainable practices in view of meeting the ever growing challenges of life and demand of the local market in order to sustain the diversified economy of Mauritius.

UTM firmly believes in strategic partnerships and schools will strive to develop international alliances as well as increase local linkages with industry, government and educational institutions via collaborative research work, workshop, community development, and academic programmes.

The UTM has a strong desire to expand its teaching and research capacity and provide even greater service to the community. It will continue to strive for quality teaching and research, to provide services to the community, to develop highly-qualified personnel for our industries and employers, and to respond to the changing needs of students, employers, and the community at large.