

Open University  
of Mauritius



# ***Annual Report*** ***2019/2020***

Open University  
*of* Mauritius



# ANNUAL REPORT

1 JULY 2019 – 30 JUNE 2020

# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

The Honourable Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology  
2nd Floor, MITD House  
Pont Fer  
PHOENIX

Honourable Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

I have the honour of submitting the report of activities of the Open University of Mauritius for the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020.

This report has been prepared in line with the Section 6A of The Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act and The National Code for Corporate Governance for Mauritius.

Yours faithfully



**R Duva Pentiah, CSK**  
Chairperson  
Open University of Mauritius

Open University  
of Mauritius



# CORPORATE INFORMATION

CHAIRPERSON  
*Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK*

DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
*Dr Kaviraj Sharma Sukon*

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of Mauritius





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## CHAIRPERSON'S PREFACE

The year 2019/2020 has been a challenging year, driving organisations and the workforce to adapt to new realities. The Open University of Mauritius (OU) has stood up to the challenge, adapting and even thriving on change.

Capacity building is a vital element on our agenda. In this endeavour, OU has secured the services of Advance HE, UK, to train all its academic staff in the delivery of Higher Education. This initiative will allow academic staff of OU to become certified professionals in Higher Education through membership and fellowship to Advance HE.

In parallel, the University also continued to improve its Quality Assurance system under the guidance of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), UK. OU is also forging ahead to develop and computerise its processes to improve quality of service delivery at all levels.

In line with its strategic goal to provide high-quality distance education and online learning materials, OU signed a number of agreements with prestigious universities/institutions such as University of Gavle (UoG), Kenyatta University, Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL), and CILT (UK) during this financial year. In addition, OU signed a contribution agreement with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to provide support to review and offer the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), 'Introduction to Sustainable Development in Business'.

OU progressed further in its plan to set up a School of Public Health with the continued collaboration of the WeLReN/CiC/Imperial College, London.

Just like the outside world, Mauritius was also impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and was on lockdown for 72 days in 2020. Being a tertiary education provider, OU faced numerous challenges with the lockdown. However, even in such difficult conditions, OU was able to adapt and change the way it was operating to face the challenges posed by the lockdown, and in its endeavour to be part of the solution, OU took crucial decisions to implement strict sanitary protocols for the safety of its employees, learners, and stakeholders. As a consequence, all tutorials were shifted to purely online mode from the start of the lockdown until the end of the semester. Nevertheless, OU did not compromise on its assessment procedures and maintained the conduct of examinations with all sanitary protocols at the end of the semester, after the lifting of the lockdown.



Some units – the Examinations Unit, Admissions Office, General Administration, Academic Affairs Division, Procurement Unit, Audio Video Production Unit, Engineering and Technology Services Unit and Finance Division – continued to operate, using a mix of ‘work from home’ mode and attendance at the office to ensure business continuity as well as to keep the spread of coronavirus to a minimum during the lockdown period.

In an innovative approach, the Board made provision for learners to be issued their certificates without having to physically attend a Convocation Ceremony, given that such ceremonies could not be held in May 2020, as originally planned.

Despite the challenges faced in 2019/20, OU has had a fruitful year and I extend my thanks to all Board Members, the Director-General and his staff for their contribution in the achievements of OU during the period under review.



**Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK**  
Chairperson of Board  
Open University of Mauritius

2021



## DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S FOREWORD

Despite the difficult environment, especially due to Covid-19, Open University of Mauritius (OU) pursued its continued growth with more than 8,000 learners. The University registered a surplus of approximately Rs 86 million at closure of accounts. All OU staff members showed their sheer dedication to move most of the operations online. In fact, in anticipation of the confinement, both the academics and non-academics developed guidelines for learners and part-time tutors to ensure that there is minimum disruption in the teaching and learning process. The detailed guidelines not only showed how to operate new software but also how to motivate learners to accept e-learning with enthusiasm. The success was evident when very experienced and senior part-time tutors finally started giving lectures online.

The adoption of the andragogical strategies to ensure learning was taking place has also been fast. With the collaboration of all the stakeholders, OU has been able to maintain all the examinations on our campus. Everyone helped to maintain the necessary sanitary conditions such as social distancing and provision of sanitizers. All the students and invigilators wore their masks in a disciplined way. I shall always be grateful to everyone for the unflinching support they have been extending throughout the year.

This year has been an opportunity for OU to share its experience with colleagues from other conventional universities in order to allow them to transfer their processes online. We welcomed them to OU so they could see how we are undertaking our activities. They had the opportunity to visit our studio that has been refurbished. Indeed, the three-year plan to renew most of the equipment in the studio was completed at a cost of around Rs 30 million. The latest technology for video and audio productions has been acquired.

The revamped studio has played a pivotal role in the production of videos for the Student Support Programme (SSP). Over 1,500 videos have been produced for students of grades seven, eight and nine. During the year under review, the number of viewers crossed the one million mark. The entire OU team feels very proud that the video productions have been very useful to students who could not be at school due to the lockdown. The advantage of the videos is that students, educators and parents can use them anytime and anywhere, not only to study but also to revise before the examinations. We are thankful to the parent Ministry for entrusting the SSP project to OU. Our colleagues and the educators who reported to our studio despite the restrictions to travel and the fear of infection deserve our sincere appreciation.

OU continues to shine at the international level with the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) that it has developed in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning. The MOOC entitled 'Introduction

to Sustainable Development in Business' has been followed by nearly nine thousand people from over fifty countries. The learning materials, including the text and videos, have been developed by OU. The programme is managed by the academics of OU, while resource persons appointed by OU have provided support to the local and international learners. This MOOC has not only helped OU but also Mauritius to reach greater heights.

With an increasing student population, recruitment remains continuous in order to provide quality services to the learners. Twenty-seven new recruits joined the academic, administrative and technical cadres.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, the Senior Chief Executive, the Chairperson, the Board Members, all OU staff members and their families, the local and international partners of OU, the part-time tutors, and my dear learners, for their collaboration.



**Dr Kaviraj Sharma Sukon, PFHEA**  
Director-General  
Open University of Mauritius

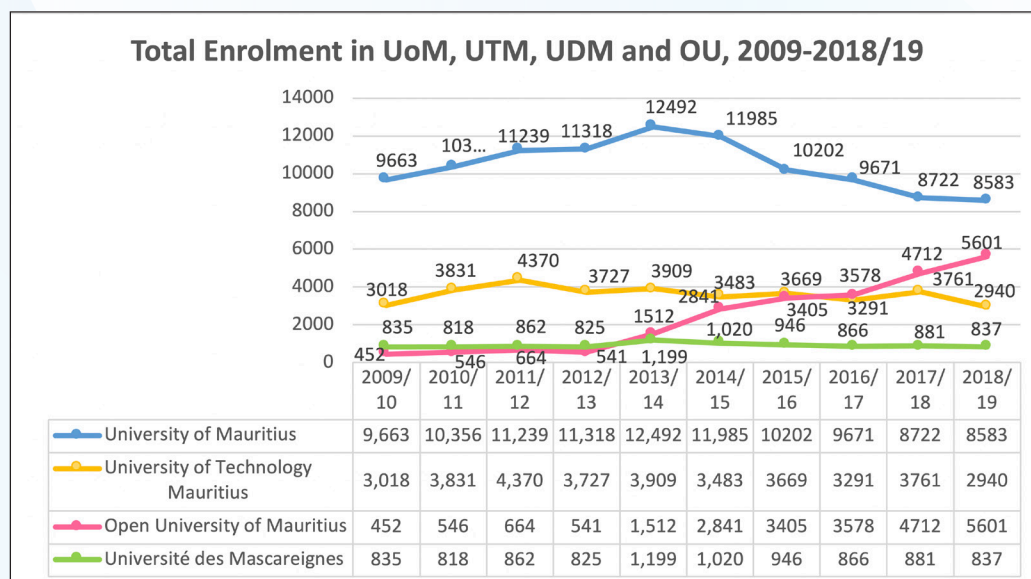
2021

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2019/2020



## 1. Growth

Open University of Mauritius (OU) is the only public university in Mauritius that has had a positive growth over the last seven years.



Source: Tertiary Education Commission

## 2. Student Intake

Number of new learners including international learners admitted to study undergraduate programmes, postgraduate programmes and non-award short courses during the year 2019/2020 is 3,895.

2,260 of them joined in July 2019, while 1,635 joined in February 2020.

Number of medical professionals who followed Continuous Medical Education courses: **166**

Total number of learners as at June 2020: **8,746**

## 3. First Cycle Quality Audit

The First Cycle Quality Audit of OU by the Tertiary Education Commission was carried out in March 2018. As per the Quality Audit Report, at OU,

*"...learning programmes are effectively organised and managed";*

*"Student support is furthermore integrated in all the functions of the institution."*

Source: Report of the First Cycle Quality Audit of the Open University of Mauritius, TEC, 2018

### The TEC Audit Panel also commended OU for

*"having in place a programme validation process;*

*for the high calibre of resource persons and the invaluable role they play in the design and quality of learning experiences;*  
*the allocation of scholarships for PhD to new recruits;*

*its outreach and support to some incarcerated individuals who were offered an opportunity to study..."*

## 4. Diverse Programmes of Studies

Total number of courses offered: 67 out of which 2 are new. (46 academic programmes + 21 short courses).

As an approved provider of Continuous Medical Education (CME) by the Medical Council of Mauritius, OU also offered seven CMEs to medical professionals.

OU is the ONLY tertiary institution offering John Wiley's MSc Financial Analysis programme in Africa.

## 5. Massive Open Online Course

OU, in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), has developed a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) called 'Introduction to Sustainable Development in Business'. Over 8,851 people from over 50 countries completed the MOOC.

## 6. Sound Financial Position

The University registered a surplus of approximately Rs 86M at closure of accounts for FY 2019/20.

## 7. Convocation Ceremony

A convocation ceremony for Award Courses was organised in August 2019. Number of awardees is 369.

## 8. OU is ISO 9001:2015-Certified

The University remains the only ISO 9001:2015-certified local public university.



## 9. Reinforcing the Human Resources

Twenty-seven new recruits joined the academic, administrative and technical cadres. With an increasing student population, recruitment remains continuous in order to provide quality services to the learners.

## 10. Solid Partners

OU has 63 partners. Its major partners include Imperial College London, Commonwealth of Learning, Commonwealth Secretariat, University of KwaZulu Natal, John Wiley & Sons, among others. OU signed agreements with 10 new partners in the year 2019/20.

OU is a Member of: Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU); International Association of Universities (IAU); International Council for Distance Education (ICDE); African Council for Distance Education (ACDE); Association of African Universities (AAU) and Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA).

## 11. Corporate Social Responsibility

As its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives, OU offers two scholarships to inmates and employs persons with special needs.

# OPEN UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS FOUNDATIONS





## Legal Entity

The Open University of Mauritius (OU) is a body corporate. It was enacted by the Parliament of Mauritius. The Act is cited as the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010 (Open University Act)* as amended in 2012.

The aim of OU is to conduct its affairs in accordance with the statutes and principles established by its Act and in accordance with all relevant and applicable legislation, rules and regulations.

## Objects of OU

The objects of OU are to:

- a. advance and disseminate learning and knowledge through a diversity of means, with emphasis on information and communication technologies;
- b. provide wider opportunities for education and training to the population, through open and distance learning, and promote lifelong learning;
- c. encourage the use of open and distance learning at all levels of education and training through collaboration, optimal use of existing resources and good practices;
- d. encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research and development in educational technology and related matters; and
- e. be the focal point for the provision of open and distance learning in Mauritius through the establishment of active partnerships with local public and private institutions, as well as overseas institutions engaged in providing education and training.

## Functions of OU

The functions of OU are outlined in Section 5, under Part II of the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 10 of 2012*. **(Refer to Annex 1.)**

## Powers of OU

To enable OU to attain its objects and discharge its functions most effectively, the *Open University of Mauritius Act* makes provision under Part II Section 6 for the powers of OU. **(Refer to Annex 2.)**

# **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

# **REPORT**

Open University  
*of* Mauritius



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## Compliance Statement

Corporate Governance is the combination of processes and structures implemented by the Board of OU to inform, direct, manage and monitor the activities of the University towards the achievement of its objectives.

OU has always recognised the importance of good governance as being critical to the effective performance and operation of the University. We hold strong values of responsibility and integrity.

We are committed to an environment where open and honest communication is the expectation, not the exception.

Throughout the year that ended on 30 June 2020, to the best of the Board's knowledge, OU has complied with the Corporate Governance Code for Mauritius (2016). OU has applied the principles set out in the Code and explained how these principles had been applied.

## Governance Structure

In line with Principle 1 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, OU is headed by an effective Board that has been set up in line with the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010*. Moreover, the responsibilities within the organisation are clearly defined.

Every employee, who is recruited according to an approved scheme of service, has a well-defined schedule of duty.

## The Board

In line with Principle 3 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, the procedures for the appointment of the Chairperson and Members of the Board is defined in the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010*.

## Board Charter

In line with the National Code for Corporate Governance for Mauritius (2016), all the elements of the Board Charter are defined in the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010*.

Part III Section 10 of the *Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010* stipulates the terms of reference of the OU Board and is given hereunder:

The Board shall be the governing body having the direction and superintendence of OU and its principal functions include:

- (a) devising or approving strategic plans and policies for OU;
- (b) overseeing its management and development;
- (c) monitoring and reviewing its operations; and
- (d) providing rigorous accountability standards in its various operations.

The Board may

- (a) on behalf of OU:
  - (i) confer honorary degrees;
  - (ii) appoint the academic and general staff;
  - (iii) manage and control its affairs, property and finance;
  - (iv) subject to the *Public Procurement Act*, enter into any contract or other arrangement;
  - (v) institute or discontinue courses of study; and
  - (vi) take any decision on a question of policy relating to its administration and functioning;
- (b) do all such things as may be necessary for, or incidental or conducive to, the performance of its functions under subsection (1).

The procedure to be observed for the convening and holding of meetings of the Board are specified in the statutes as detailed below:

## Meetings of the Board

1. The Board may regulate its proceedings in such manner as it thinks fit.
2. In the absence of the Chairperson at a meeting of the Board, a member of the Board elected by the members present, shall preside at that meeting.
3. Where a member of the Board has an interest in a matter being considered or about to be considered by the Board, he shall –
  - (a) as soon as practicable after the relevant facts have come to his knowledge, declare the nature of his interest; and
  - (b) not be present during any deliberation, nor vote with respect to that matter.
4. A quorum shall be constituted by six members of the Board and no business may be transacted at a meeting of the Board unless there is a quorum.
5. Each member present at a meeting of the Board shall be entitled to one vote on a matter arising for decision at the meeting, and the person presiding the meeting shall, in the event of an equality of votes, have a casting vote.
6. A decision carried by a majority of the votes cast by the members present and voting at a meeting shall be a decision of the Board.
7. The Board shall meet at least six times in one calendar year.

## Corporate Objective Statement

### Vision

The vision of OU is to be one of the best open universities in the world.

### Mission

The mission of OU is to use technology and flexible mode of teaching to serve society, transform lives, and make high-quality education, lifelong learning, and training accessible to everyone while promoting excellence in research.

Therefore, OU endeavours to

1. Expand the scope and scale of quality higher education available to school leavers;
2. Provide greater access to continuing professional education, skills development and training at an affordable cost;
3. Provide more opportunities for lifelong learning;
4. Play a leading role in research and development and application of learning technologies for education and training;
5. Foster national, regional and international partnerships and collaborations for the optimal use of resources for open and distance learning; and

6. Provide quality learning programmes in Mauritius and the region in a learner-centred environment using state-of-the-art information and communication technologies.

## Strategic Directions

OU aspires to be among the best open universities in the world. OU has been the only local public university to have a positive growth during the last seven years while being the only ISO-Certified public university of Mauritius.

In its mission to offer high-quality tertiary education using technology and the flexible mode of teaching and learning, OU has enabled working adults to earn a university degree while fulfilling their professional and personal obligations. Employees are thus free to study at their own place and pace while taking advantage of the blended mode of study with tutorial support as well as the use of the available online learning facilities.

Moreover, OU remains one of the most affordable public universities in Mauritius, which is yet another way that it is ensuring that higher education becomes accessible to a larger proportion of the Mauritian population. OU has also secured strategic partnerships with internationally reputed partners that enable it to provide higher quality blended learning materials.

The Strategic Plan 2017-2025 was prepared after various consultations so as to meet the challenges of a rapidly and continuously evolving local and international higher education landscape. An in-depth SWOT analysis enabled OU to formulate its strategic goals and objectives which are expected to take it to new heights by constantly pushing its boundaries to achieve its ultimate vision.

OU aims at securing a fair share of the African and Asian education markets. All efforts will be geared towards achieving this goal by the year 2025.

## Strategic Goals 2017-2025

OU has formulated the following sixteen goals that it expects to achieve by the year 2025:

1. *The First Choice for Higher Education*
2. *An Excellent Faculty*
3. *An Effective Quality Assurance System*
4. *Excellent Evaluation, Assessment and Examination Mechanisms*
5. *High-Quality Distance Education and Online Learning Materials*
6. *The Best Provider of Lifelong Learning Opportunities, Employability Courses and Consultancy*
7. *Well Established Open School Division*
8. *Professional Learner Support and Excellent Customer Care*
9. *Excellent Marketing and Public Relations*
10. *Effective Financing Strategy*
11. *A Competent, Productive, Motivated and Satisfied Human Resource Base*
12. *Effective Management Support*
13. *The Best ICT Facilities and Building Infrastructure*
14. *Effective Research, Consultancy and Innovation*
15. *An Effective Library Service*
16. *An Effective Partnership, Collaboration and International Network*

OU's Strategic Plan 2017-2025 has also enumerated a series of milestones to be attained in terms of financial performance and student enrolment, among others.

A Performance Agreement is signed annually with the parent Ministry mentioning the deliverables and KPIs following the Board's approval.

## Values

The Values of OU are:

- Openness
- Flexibility
- Diversity
- Quality
- Excellence

## Code of Ethics

OU has developed its Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics as approved by the Board is given at **Annex 3**.

Code of Ethics is a written set of codes issued by OU to its employees and stakeholders to help them conduct their actions in accordance with its primary values and ethical standards.

OU is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct in all its activities and all its staff have the responsibility to act ethically and in accordance with the OU Code of Ethics.

## Job Descriptions

The duties of the Chairperson, the Director-General and the Registrar are outlined in the *Open University of Mauritius Act*:

### Chairperson of Board

The Chairperson shall –

- (a) preside at every meeting of the Board and any Convocation;
- (b) ensure that the decisions taken by the Board are implemented; and
- (c) perform such other duties and exercise such powers as may be assigned to him by the Act or the Statutes.

### Director-General

The Director-General shall –

- (a) be the chief academic and executive officer of the Open University;
- (b) hold office for a period of 5 years, renewable for further periods of 3 years and on such terms and conditions as the Board may determine;
- (c) in the absence of the Chairperson, preside at a Convocation and confer degrees, diplomas or other academic qualifications upon persons entitled to receive them;
- (d) exercise control over the affairs of the Open University; and
- (e) ensure the faithful observance of the provisions of this Act, the Statutes and the rules and regulations.

## Registrar

The duties of the Registrar shall be to –

- (a) act as Secretary to the Board and the Academic Council, and to keep minutes;
- (b) be the custodian of the records, the common seal, and such other property of the Open University as the Board shall commit to his charge;
- (c) arrange for the conduct of examinations;
- (d) issue any advice convening meetings of the Board, the Human Resource Committee, the Academic Council, Boards of Examiners and of any committees appointed by the Open University;
- (e) conduct the official correspondence of the Board and the Academic Council; and
- (f) perform such other duties as may be specified in the Statutes or the Regulations or may be required from time to time by the Board or the Director-General.

## Organisational Chart

OU's Organisational Chart is at **Annex 4**.

The aims and objectives of each Division and major Units are documented and same is posted on the website of OU.

## The Structure of the Board and its Committees

In line with Principle 2 and Principle 4 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, the relevant details including remuneration of the Members of the Board are presented.

## Composition of the Board

The Board is constituted as follows:

SN	Name of Directors	Board Appointments as per <i>Open University of Mauritius Act</i>	Classification of Membership as per the Code of Corporate Governance
1.	<b>Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK</b> Chairperson	Appointed by the Prime Minister	Independent and Non-executive Chairperson
2.	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General	Appointed by Prime Minister on advice of Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	Executive Director
3.	<b>Mr S Ragen</b>	Appointed by Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	Non-Executive Director
4.	<b>Mrs S Gayan, GOSK</b>		Non-Executive Director
5.	<b>Mr P Ramsurrun</b>		Non-Executive Director
6.	<b>Mrs R D Rampersad</b>		Non-Executive Director
7.	<b>Mr J Ramdenee</b>		Non-Executive Director
8.	<b>Mr J Malié</b>		Non-Executive Director
9.	<b>Mrs K Ramsohok-Heerasing</b>	Elected by and from the academic staff	Non-Executive and Non-independent Director
10.	<b>Mr V S Patten</b>	Elected by and from the general staff	Non-Executive and Non-independent Director
11.	<b>Mrs S L D Gopee</b>	Registrar and Secretary	Secretary to the Board

## Remuneration of Board Members

As the conditions of service and salaries of OU staff are governed by the Pay Research Bureau (PRB) Regulations, the remuneration of Board Members is also determined using the rates stipulated in the *PRB Report 2016*.

During the period under review, the Chairperson of OU drew a monthly fee of Rs 29,925, in line with the recommendations of *PRB Report 2016*.

The Board meetings are held in line with schedule (Sections 2 and 23) of the statutes of the *Open University of Mauritius Act*.



## Attendance and Remuneration at Board Meetings

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 7 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK</b>	7	1,150 <i>(transport allowance only)</i>
2 Executive Heads of local public tertiary education institutions having developed partnerships with OU	<b>Mrs S Gayan, GOSK</b> Director-General Mahatma Gandhi Institute/ Rabindranath Tagore Institute	3	3,130
	<b>Mr P Ramsurrun</b> Ag Registrar <i>Université des Mascareignes</i>	7	7,150
2 persons who shall have substantial knowledge and experience of tertiary education and open and distance learning	<b>Mrs R Rampersad</b> Educational Technologist University of Mauritius	7	7,150
	Vacant	-	-
1 person from the private sector and shall have substantial industrial experience	<b>Mr J Ramdenee</b> Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited	0	0
1 person from the public sector	<b>Mr S Ragen</b> Secretary for Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Institutional and Administrative Reforms	5	5,370
1 person from civil society and engaged in community service	<b>Mr J Malié</b> Rector Orchard Secondary School of Excellence	6	6,260
1 person elected by and from the academic staff	<b>Mrs K Ramsohok-Heerasing</b> Lecturer Open University of Mauritius (on LWP)	6	6,260
1 person elected by and from the general staff	<b>Mr V S Patten</b> Head, Graphics, Publishing & Printing Open University of Mauritius	6	5,340
The Director-General	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Open University of Mauritius	7	6,230

## Appointment of Board Members

Part III, Section 9 of the *Open University of Mauritius Act* stipulates the composition and mode of appointment of Board Members, as quoted below:

*"There shall be a Board which shall consist of*

- (a) a Chairperson, to be appointed by the Prime Minister;*
- (b) 7 persons to be appointed by the Minister, out of whom -*

- (i) 2 shall be executive heads of local public tertiary education institutions having developed partnerships with the Open University;
  - (ii) 2 shall have substantial knowledge and experience of tertiary education and open and distance learning;
  - (iii) one person shall be from the private sector and shall have substantial industrial experience;
  - (iv) one person shall be from the public sector;
  - (v) one person shall be from civil society and engaged in community service;
- (c) a person who shall be elected by and from the academic staff;
- (d) a person who shall be elected by and from the general staff; and
- (e) the Director-General.”

The Director-General, appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of the Minister, is the Chief Executive and Academic Officer of OU.

Part V Section 18 of the *Open University of Mauritius Act* stipulates the mode of appointment of the Director-General and is quoted below:

*“There shall be a Director-General of the Open University who shall –*

- (a) be appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of the Minister;*
- (b) be the chief executive and academic officer of the Open University; and*
- (c) hold office on such terms and conditions as may be specified in the Statutes.”*

The procedure for the appointment of the Registrar is specified in the statutes.

## **Tenure of Office of Members of Board**

Every appointed or elected member of the Board shall hold office for a term of three years.

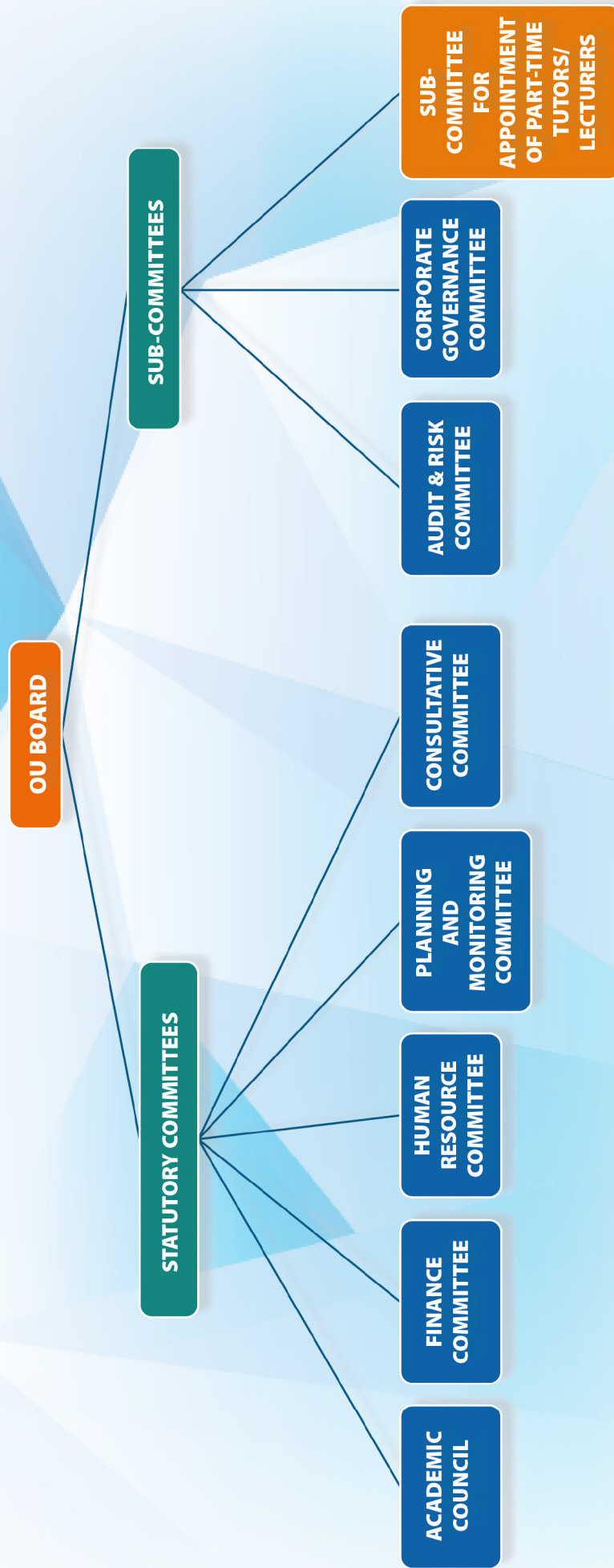
An appointed member shall be eligible for reappointment for not more than one further term of three years.

## **Vacancy in the Board Composition**

There is currently one vacancy among appointed Board Members which is “One person who has substantial knowledge and experience of tertiary education and open and distance learning.”

The parent Ministry has been requested to fill the vacancy and follow-up is being done.

# The Board's Structure for Corporate Governance



## Board Committees

The *Open University of Mauritius Act* makes provision for the setting up of the following statutory committees to assist the OU Board in the performance of its functions:

- Finance Committee
- Human Resource Committee
- Planning and Monitoring Committee
- Consultative Committee

In order to facilitate the effective running of the University, the Board has also established a number of Sub-Committees. Specific responsibilities are delegated to these Committees which are as follows:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Corporate Governance Committee
- Sub-Committee for Appointment of Part-Time Tutors/Lecturers

All Chairs of the Statutory and Sub-Committees discuss and have in-depth deliberations before submitting their recommendations to the Board for consideration. Each Chair presents their papers and reports on proceedings of their committees at the subsequent Board Meeting.

## Finance Committee

### Composition

#### **Chairperson:**

Mr P Ramsurrun, Ag Registrar, *Université de Mascareignes*

#### **Members:**

- Dr K S Sukon, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius
- Mrs R D Rampersad, Educational Technologist, University of Mauritius
- Mr J Ramdenee, Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited
- Mr J Malié, Rector, Orchard Secondary School of Excellence
- Mr R Rumzan, Manager, Financial Operations, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology as Co-opted Member (until March 2020)
- Mr B Mahadeo, Manager, Financial Operations, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology as Co-opted Member (as from March 2020)

***Note: Mr Rumzan has retired from the service with effect from March 2020 and Mr B Mahadeo is replacing him.***

The Finance Committee's responsibility is to make recommendations to the Board on:

- (a) The financial position of OU from time to time;
- (b) All other matters relating to finance; and
- (c) Such other matters on which it may be requested by the Board to report.

## Attendance and Remuneration at Finance Committee Meetings

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 7 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mr P Ramsurrun</b> Ag Registrar <i>Université des Mascareignes</i>	7	15,575
Member	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General Open University of Mauritius	7	6,230
Member	<b>Mrs R Rampersad</b> Educational Technologist University of Mauritius	7	7,840
Member	<b>Mr J Malié</b> Rector Orchard Secondary School of Excellence	7	7,840
Member	<b>Mr J Ramdenee</b> Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited	0	0
Co-opted Member	<b>Mr R Rumzan</b> Manager, Financial Operations Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	5	5,600
	<b>Mr B Mahadeo</b> Manager, Financial Operations Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology ( <b>w.e.f. March 2020</b> )	2	2,240

## Human Resource Committee

### Composition

#### **Chairperson:**

Mr S Ragen, Secretary for Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms

#### **Members:**

- Dr K S Sukon, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius
- Mrs S Gayan, Director-General, MGI/RTI
- Mr P Ramsurrun, Ag Registrar, *Université des Mascareignes*
- Mr J Malié, Rector, Orchard Secondary School of Excellence
- Mr P Sadien, Assistant Manager, Human Resources, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology - (**as Co-opted member**)

The Human Resource Committee's responsibility is to:

- (a) Make recommendations to the Board for appointments to any office in OU, other than that of Director-General;
- (b) Be responsible for staff matters, including conditions of service, criteria for the appointment, promotion, transfer of staff, discipline, welfare, staff development and training programmes; and
- (c) Appoint such disciplinary committee as may have to be set up.

### **Attendance and Remuneration at Human Resource Committee Meetings**

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 17 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mr S Ragen</b> Secretary for Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms	17	37,595
Member	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General Open University of Mauritius	17	15,130
Member	<b>Mrs S Gayan, GOSK</b> Director-General Mahatma Gandhi Institute/ Rabindranath Tagore Institute	8	8,960
Member	<b>Mr P Ramsurrun</b> Ag Registrar <i>Université des Mascareignes</i>	17	19,040
Member	<b>Mr J Malié</b> Rector Orchard Secondary School of Excellence	17	19,040
Co-opted Member	<b>Mr P Sadien</b> Assistant Manager, HR Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	17	19,040

### **Planning and Monitoring Committee**

**Chairperson:**

Mrs S Gayan, GOSK, Director-General, Mahatma Gandhi Institute/Rabindranath Tagore Institute

**Members:**

- Dr K S Sukon, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius
- Mr S Ragen, Secretary for Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms

- Mrs R D Rampersad, Educational Technologist, University of Mauritius
- Mr V Patten, Head, Graphics, Publishing and Printing, & Leader of Quality Team, Open University of Mauritius

The Planning and Monitoring Committee's responsibility is to make recommendations to the Board on:

- Immediate, medium- and long-term plans of OU, taking into account the present and future needs of Mauritius;
- Monitoring the execution of all plans of OU and suggesting measures for quality assurance; and
- Such other matters on which it may be requested to do so.

### Attendance and Remuneration at Planning and Monitoring Committee Meetings

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 2 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mrs S Gayan, GOSK</b> Director-General Mahatma Gandhi Institute/ Rabindranath Tagore Institute	2	4,450
Member	<b>Mr S Ragen</b> Secretary for Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms	0	0
Member	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General Open University of Mauritius	2	1,780
Member	<b>Mrs R Rampersad</b> Educational Technologist University of Mauritius	2	2,240
Member	<b>Mr V S Patten</b> Head, Graphics, Publishing & Printing Open University of Mauritius	2	1,780

The Section 2(4)(3) of the Statutes of OU states that the Planning and Monitoring Committee should meet at least three times a year. OU had planned to hold three meetings during the period January to December 2019.

However, due to the unavailability of quorum, the third meeting could not be held. Nevertheless, follow-up on items were carried out, particularly on the review of the Strategic Plan 2017-2025, of which the Board was kept informed.

### Consultative Committee

*The constitution of this committee is being considered by the Parent Ministry.*

The Committee is responsible for advising OU on:

- The development of programmes of study and research, in line with the needs of the labour market;

- (b) The relevance of the curricula of programmes of study to the labour market needs;
- (c) Effective quality assurance of the programmes of study; and
- (d) Placements, internships and research.

## The Audit and Risk Committee

### **Composition:**

#### ***Chairperson:***

Mr J Ramdenee, Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited

#### ***Members:***

- Mr J Malié, Rector, Orchard Secondary School of Excellence
- Mrs R D Rampersad, Educational Technologist, University of Mauritius

#### ***In attendance:***

Mrs P Ramdoo-Sadien, Internal Auditor/Senior Internal Auditor, OU

The Audit and Risk Committee has to focus on:

- The functioning of the internal control system;
- The functioning of the internal audit department;
- The risk areas of the institution's operations to be covered in the scope of the internal and external audits;
- The reliability and accuracy of the financial information provided by management to the Board and other users of financial information;
- Whether OU should continue to use the services of the current external and internal auditors;
- Any accounting or auditing concerns identified as a result of the internal or external audits;
- OU's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements with regard to financial matters;
- The scope and results of the external audit and its cost-effectiveness, as well as the independence and objectivity of the external auditors;
- The nature and extent of non-audit services provided by the external auditors, where applicable.



## Attendance and Remuneration at Audit and Risk Committee Meetings

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 2 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mr J Ramdenee</b> Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited	2	2,850
Member	<b>Mrs R Rampersad</b> Educational Technologist University of Mauritius	2	2,090
Member	<b>Mr J Malié</b> Rector Orchard Secondary School of Excellence	2	2,090
Internal Auditor OU	<b>Mrs P Ramdoo-Sadien</b> Internal Auditor/Senior Internal Auditor Open University of Mauritius	2	0

## Corporate Governance Committee

### Composition

#### **Chairperson:**

Mr J Malié, Rector, Orchard Secondary School of Excellence

#### **Members:**

- Dr K S Sukon, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius
- Mrs R D Rampersad, Educational Technologist, University of Mauritius
- Mrs K Ramsohok-Heerasing, Representative of OU Academic Staff

The terms of reference for the Corporate Governance Committee are as follows:

The Committee shall:

- operate as a standing committee of the OU Board;
- oversee all matters concerning Corporate Governance activities of OU aimed at the promotion and achievement of the objectives and such related matters as may be referred to the Committee by the Board;
- determine, agree and develop the University's general policy on corporate governance in accordance with the applicable Code of Corporate Governance;
- prepare the Corporate Governance Report to be published in the University's Annual Report; and
- ensure that disclosures are made in the Annual Report in compliance with the disclosure provisions in the Code of Corporate Governance.

## Attendance and Remuneration at the Corporate Governance Committee Meeting

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 1 meeting)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Mr J Malié</b> Rector Orchard Secondary School of Excellence	1	1,425
The Director-General	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General Open University of Mauritius	1	890
Member	<b>Mrs R Rampersad</b> Educational Technologist University of Mauritius	1	1,120
Member	<b>Mrs K Ramsok-Heerasing</b> Representative of OU Academic Staff	1	1,120

## Sub-Committee for Appointment of Part-Time Tutors/Lecturers

### Composition

#### **Chairperson:**

Mrs R D Rampersad, Educational Technologist, University of Mauritius

#### **Members:**

- Dr K S Sukon, Director-General, Open University of Mauritius
- Mr V Patten, Representative of OU General Staff, Head, Graphics, Publishing and Printing, Open University of Mauritius

The Sub-Committee had already approved the database of part-time tutors/lecturers in 2018/19. In August 2019, the Board approved that, as from 2019/2020, only new appointments for part-time tutors/lecturers to be added to the database be submitted to the Sub-Committee and the Chairperson for approval. Accordingly, the number of appointments processed has reduced considerably and in order to facilitate the process, emails were used. Thus, no remuneration was paid to members.

## Academic Council

Part IV of the *Open University of Mauritius Act* stipulates the Academic and Management Structure of OU.

Section 15 makes provision for the setting up of the Academic Council which

- (a) is the principal academic body of OU;
- (b) has control and general regulation of teaching, examination, and research;
- (c) is responsible for the maintenance of appropriate standards and discipline among the learners of OU; and
- (d) grants transfer of credits to learners in respect of learning acquired in another institution.

The constitution of the Academic Council, the term of office of its members, its functions and powers and the procedure to be observed for the convening and holding of its meetings are as specified in the statutes.

### **Composition and Membership of the OU Academic Council, Attendance at the Council Meetings and Remuneration**

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period from July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 2 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period from July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General Open University of Mauritius	2	Nil
The Executive Director of the Tertiary Education Commission or his Representative	<b>Prof S Nair</b> Executive Director, Tertiary Education Commission ( <b>until October 2019</b> )	1	890
	<b>Mr A Valaydon</b> Ag Head Research & Planning Division	1	890
Representative of the University of Mauritius	<b>Dr S Rosunee</b> Associate Professor University of Mauritius	1	890
Representative of the University of Technology, Mauritius	<b>Mr K Bhujun</b> Officer-in-Charge ( <b>until 30 January 2020</b> )	1	1,120
The Chief Technical Officer of the Ministry responsible for the subject of education or his representative	<b>Dr R Auckbur</b> Chief Technical Officer (Education)	0	0
2 representatives of public tertiary level institutions having developed partnerships with the Open University, to be nominated by the Minister	Vacant	0	0
The Director of Academic Affairs	<b>Dr R V Sannasee</b> Director, Academic Affairs Division OU ( <b>until August 2019</b> )	1	890
Representative of Director of Multimedia Division and ICT Division	<b>Mr S A Latchayya</b> Head Audio-Video Production OU	2	1,780

Representative of Director, Quality Assurance & Capacity Building	<b>Mr V Patten</b> Head, Graphics, Publishing & Printing OU	2	1,780
3 Heads of Schools, Centres or Units of the Open University of Mauritius, to be nominated by the Director-General	<b>Mr I Seetaramadoo</b> Director, Open School OU	2	1,780
	<b>Mr S Nunkoo</b> Financial Controller OU	2	1,780
	<b>Dr P Appavoo</b> Senior Academic Media Coordinator and Officer Responsible for Research Office at OU	2	1,780
Representative of learners to be nominated by the Board	Vacant	0	0
Representative of the academic staff elected by and from the academic staff	<b>Mr G Henriette-Bolli</b> Lecturer OU	2	1,780
Such other members, not exceeding 3 in number, as may be co-opted by the Board, including one person with experience and interest in research	<b>Mr B Seetannah</b> Associate Professor University of Mauritius	2	1,780
	<b>Dr R Nunkoo</b> Senior Lecturer University of Mauritius	0	0

## Other Committees

### Public Procurement Activities

OU is responsible for the planning and conduct of its procurement in line with the *Public Procurement Act 2006*. It ensures that the procurement methods, the bidding process and the issue of procurement contracts are dealt with in line with the provisions of the *Public Procurement Act* and relevant regulations.

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 to 30 June 2020, OU conducted 63 Departmental Bid Committees, in line with the modernisation of procurement rules and procedures as set out in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development Circular Letter No. 2 of 2016.

The composition of the DBC is as follows:

Director-General	Chairperson
Financial Controller	Member
Senior Procurement & Supply Officer	Member
Office Management Assistant	Secretary

The terms of reference of the DBC are:

1. Vetting bidding documents for procurement below prescribed amounts, contract forms, terms and conditions, and addenda to bidding documents and clarification to bidders if any;
2. Opening of bids;
3. Referring bids to the Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC) for examination and evaluation;
4. Attending to request(s) from BEC for any clarifications arising at evaluation stage.

Fees paid to the Chairperson and members of the DBC at the DBC meetings were as follows:

Membership	Name/Position	Attendance for the period July 2019 to June 2020 (Total out of 63 meetings)	Remuneration received during the period July 2019 to June 2020 Rs
Chairperson	<b>Dr K S Sukon</b> Director-General	57	24,000
Ag Chairperson	<b>Mrs S L D Gopee</b> Registrar	3	1,200
Ag Chairperson	<b>Mr I Seetaramadoo</b> Director, Open School	3	1,200
Member	<b>Mr S Nunkoo</b> Financial Controller	59	20,370
Member	<b>Mrs B Auckburally</b> Accountant	4	1,320
Member	<b>Mr P Arlanda</b> Senior Procurement and Supply Officer	58	20,010
Member	<b>Mrs D Chatooh</b> Ag Senior Procurement and Supply Officer (Stores)	4 <i>(Replaced Mr Arlanda at 4 meetings during his absence)</i>	1,350
Member	<b>Mr V Thanthonee</b> Purchasing & Supply Officer	1 <i>(Replaced Mr Arlanda at 1 meeting during his absence)</i>	330

Following the opening of the quotations, officers in the grade of Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Administrative Officers, Higher Executive Officers, Executive Officers, Clerk/Word Processing Operators were called upon to act as chair/member/secretary of the Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC).

### **Committee of Needs**

The Committee of Needs of OU operates in line with the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2006. The role of the Committee of Needs is to plan and monitor the procurement activities of the organisation.

## Profile of Board Members



**Mr Rajeswara Duva Pentiah, CSK** is the Chairperson of OU since July 2015. He retired from the Civil Service as Permanent Secretary on 1st December 2013. He holds the Part 1, Institute of Statisticians (Now Royal Statistical Society), UK, a Diploma in Public Administration and Management, Mauritius and a Fellowship – Total Quality Management in the Public Sector, National Institute of Public Administration, Malaysia.

He has 42 years' experience in the Public Service (06.10.71 to 30.11.13), including nine years at the Public and Disciplined Services Commission (1987–1996) and has acted as Secretary, Public Service Commission on a temporary basis.

He has served the Ministries of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms; Health and Quality of Life; Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research; Public Infrastructure, Environment and National Development Unit; Women's Rights and Child Welfare; Social Security and National Solidarity; and Public Utilities, among others.

He was also the Officer-in-Charge of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre from 2002 to 2003.

He has served on numerous Parastatal Boards as Chairman and Member. He has also been a Board Director of Omnicane Ltd.

In 2016, he was elevated to the rank of CSK by the President of the Republic of Mauritius in recognition of his contribution to the Public Service.

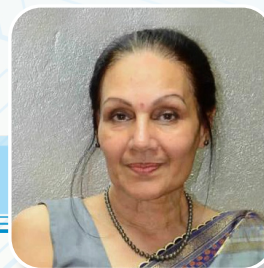


Born in 1956, **Mr Swaminathan Ragen** is the Secretary for Public Service at the Ministry of

Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms since January 2020. He holds academic qualifications as follows: B Com, M Com, PGCE, Diploma in Public Administration and Management and MSc in Public Sector Management.

He served as Assistant Secretary from 1985 to 1994 and Principal Assistant Secretary from 1994 to 2005. He also acted as Secretary to the Public Service Commission and Disciplined Forces Service Commission from 2005 to 2006 and in 2015. He was appointed Permanent Secretary in 2006 and Senior Chief Executive in April 2019.

He is also acting as the Officer-in-Charge of the Higher Education Commission as from 2019. He was also director of numerous parastatal bodies and NPF funded private companies such as NHDC, NTC, Omnicane, RDA, Mauritius Housing Company Ltd and others.



**Mrs Sooryakanti Nirsimloo-Gayan, GOSK** is the Director-General of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and Rabindranath Tagore Institute.

She has a BSc (Hons) Econ 1973, London School of Economics & Political Science, University of London and an MSc (Econ) 1977, School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London, under a UNESCO Fellowship.

Her academic interests include Mauritian history, society and culture, cultural diversity, cultural policy and heritage. She has a long-standing interest in Indian classical dance, and Indian culture.

In 1988, Mrs S Gayan was given the Outstanding Young Person Award by the *Jeune Chambre Économique de Maurice* for Cultural Achievement and she was also shortlisted by the international jury among the three finalists for the international award of Outstanding Young Person by JCI that year.

In 2013, she was elevated to the rank of GOSK by the President of the Republic of Mauritius for her contribution in the field of culture and education.



**Dr Kaviraj Sharma Sukon** is the founder Director-General of the Open University of Mauritius. He was the chairperson of the MCA Board from November 2005 to 11 July 2012. He also chaired the Board of the Mauritius Museums Council from 2018 to 2020.

He started his career as a Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Mauritius in 1996 after completing his PhD in Mathematics from the University of Mauritius and University of Loughborough. He also holds an MBA from the University of Surrey.

He later joined the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate as Research and Development Officer where he started the marking of the first international paper in Mauritius in 1999.

Afterwards, he joined HRDC as the Manager-Research/Head of the Research and Consultancy Division where he led the development of the first National Human Resource Development Plan. He has been providing consultancy services to ADEA, UNESCO, ILO and UNDP. He prepared The Peer Review Report on educational reforms in Mauritius, 2000-2005; UNESS (UNESCO National Education Support Strategy) for Mauritius in 2010; and the National Employment Policy for Mauritius in 2011. He has published several research papers and supervised DBA/PhD Theses.

Dr Sukon is also the Chairperson of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.



**Mr Prakash Ramsurrun** is the Ag Registrar since March 2013 of the *Université des Mascareignes*,

a local public tertiary education institution having developed partnerships with OU.

He holds a BA (Hons) Economics & Government (University of Essex, UK), an MA in Economics, Government & International Relations (University of London, UK) and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education – PGCE (University of Wolverhampton, UK).

He has been the Manager at *Université des Mascareignes* (ex-Swami Dayanand Institute of Management) since August 2000. He was Assistant Manager and Head of Department of Business Administration at *Université des Mascareignes* from May 1995 to July 2000; Education Officer at the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology from March 1985 to April 1995; and Lecturer at the North London Institute of Further Education, UK from September 1983 to December 1984.



**Mrs Rubina Devi Rampersad** is a trained Educational Technologist working at the University of Mauritius, with more than 23 years of experience in Distance Education and Professional Development. She was Officer-in-Charge of the Centre for Professional Development and Lifelong Learning (University of Mauritius) from 2010 to 2014. She has been actively involved in the design of Distance Education and Online programmes, short courses, commissioned programmes and MOOCs.

She holds the following qualifications: MSc Educational Technologies and Knowledge Society (University of Mauritius); *Maîtrise en Formation à Distance (Université du Québec à Montréal)*; Graduate Diploma in Leadership Development in ICT and the Knowledge Society (Dublin City University); Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (University of Mauritius); Masters in English Literature (University of New South Wales, Sydney); and BA (Hons) in English and History (University of Mauritius).



**Mr Jaisen Ramdenee** is the Managing Director of Kathari Infratech Limited and Director of JRS Integrated Farms Limited.

He holds a B Eng (Hons) in Manufacturing System Engineering.



**Mr Jacques Malié, MSK** was the Rector of *Collège du St Esprit*. He had been exercising as Educator and Deputy Rector of the College before being appointed as Rector. At present, he is Rector at Orchard Secondary School of Excellence.

He holds a *Licence-es-Lettres* and a *Maîtrise d'Anglais* from *Université de Nice, France*. He also has a *Diplôme Universitaire de Méthodologie et de l'Enseignement Audio-Visuel des Langues Vivantes, Université de Nice, France*.

He has been a member of several Boards of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, including the High Level Sports Unit.

He is presently a CAF and FIFA Instructor in Administration and Management at international level.



**Mrs Kheertee Ramsohok Heerasing** is a Lecturer in Accounting and Finance at the Open University

of Mauritius. She holds an MSc in International Finance from Kingston University.



**Mr Viswanaden Sooprayen Patten** is the Head of Graphics, Publishing and Printing Unit of the Open University of Mauritius and is the Leader of the Quality Assurance Team at OU.

He holds a *Brevet de Technicien Supérieur en Industries Graphiques* from *École Supérieure Estienne des Arts et d'Industries Graphiques, Paris France*. He also holds a Master of Philosophy in Publishing Studies from University of Stirling and an MBA from Indira Gandhi National Open University, India.



**Mrs Subhashini Luckshmi Devi Gopee** is the Registrar & Secretary to the Board of Open University of Mauritius.

Mrs S Gopee is the first Registrar of OU, appointed since January 2017.

She has a BSc (General) from the University of Delhi and an MSc in Quality Management from the University of Mauritius.

Prior to joining OU, she had worked at middle management level in a public tertiary education institution for fifteen years. Mrs Gopee also served for five years in the public sector in the technical field and had been an Education Officer in a private secondary school at the beginning of her career.



## Board Information

The Board has unrestricted access to the University's related information, including that of its employees.

Heads of Sections or their Representatives are called in at Board meetings as and when required to provide additional information and clarifications regarding items on the agenda.

During the 2019/20 financial year, the Board held 7 meetings.

Below is a summary of the main topics handled by the Board during the period under review:

- a) Appointment of full-time staff
- b) Review and approval of financial reports
- c) Schemes of Service and other Human Resources matters
- d) Several matters regarding the acquisition of office equipment/e-learning materials/vehicles
- e) Auditors' reports
- f) Details of joint ventures and collaborative agreements
- g) Open University Annual Report 2018/19
- h) Participation in Training, Missions and Workshops by OU staff
- i) Appointment of part-time tutors
- j) Appointment of International Faculties
- k) New policies and review of existing policies

All Board Members have signed a confidentiality undertaking to keep all information and issues discussed at Board meetings confidential. Members of the Board are not allowed to divulge any information to any other person/employee or authority without the express authorisation of the Board.

The Code of Ethics approved by the Board addresses how employees should behave including while handling information.

## Evaluation of Performance of Members of the Board

The OU Board has to develop a policy for evaluation of the performance of Board Members. However, in the meantime, the performance of Board Members is assessed continuously by the Chairperson through observation and discussions.

The Chairperson ensures that

- all members are given the opportunity to participate in discussions;
- members do not divert from the agenda;
- the discussions are geared towards enabling an informed decision being taken on matters under consideration;
- the knowledge and experience of members are effectively harnessed while performing their duties.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest by Board Members

The Registrar keeps a record of the declaration of interest by Board Members. Whenever a member declares interest, he/she leaves the meeting room while the item concerned is being discussed and decision taken as required in Statute 1(3) of the *Open University of Mauritius Act*.

## Reporting with Integrity

In line with Principle 6 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, OU has always presented a fair, balanced and understandable assessment of its financial, environmental, social and governance position, performance and outlook. The presentation includes

- Corporate Governance Report
- Report on activities
- Financial Statements and Accounts that fairly represent the state of affairs of OU

The Financial Statements are submitted to the Board for approval upon the recommendations of the Finance Committee. The Financial Statements are prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs) issued by the International Public Sector Accounting Standard Board (IPSASB) and Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act.

The Annual Report is approved by the Board not later than three months after the end of the Financial Year and submitted to the National Audit Office not later than four months after the end of the Financial year as per the requirement of the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act.

Upon receipt of the report of the National Audit Office, the Annual Report is finalised and submitted to the parent Ministry for tabling at the National Assembly for the attention of members of the Government, one of the major stakeholders of OU and the other members of the National Assembly.

The Annual Report is posted on the OU website for consultation by all its other stakeholders. In order to disseminate information on its various activities, policies, procedures and plans to its stakeholders, OU has also posted the following documents on its website:

- *The Open University of Mauritius Act No. 2 of 2010*
- The Vision and Mission Statement of the Open University of Mauritius
- *The Strategic Plan 2017-2025* of the Open University of Mauritius
- The Organisational Chart of the Open University of Mauritius
- The General Rules and Regulations for Learners
- The Programme Documents
- Information on Fees
- The Code of Ethics of the Open University of Mauritius
- The IT Policy of the Open University of Mauritius

OU endeavours to conduct its activities by ensuring that:

- there is no adverse impact on the environment;
- all persons are treated equally without any discrimination as stipulated in its Act;
- it fulfils its responsibilities to the best of its capabilities while maintaining the highest ethical standards as outlined in its Code of Ethics and that it abides by the Code of Corporate Governance;
- it provides a safe and secure environment for its employees to work in.

## Environment

One of the ways OU is contributing to the preservation of the environment is through the use of information and communication technologies for dissemination of its learning materials.

OU offers learners the opportunity to learn at their own place and pace. Instead of producing printed materials, it posts all the learning materials on the e-learn platform, which are downloadable via the internet, hence contributing towards reducing the use of paper.

In order to continuously improve our work processes, OU is developing various software systems for admissions, recruitment, student information systems, etc. In addition, it is ensuring judicious use of all its resources through energy-saving measures.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

In an endeavour to assist the most vulnerable persons of the society, OU employs three persons having disabilities. It also offers personalised tutoring to disabled students and it provides scholarships to inmates.

## Safety and Health

OU strives to provide its employees and learners with a healthy work environment.

The safety and health of everyone on our premises and campuses is a major priority with a 24-hour insurance cover for all its employees and it also subsidises the medical insurance scheme for them.

OU employs a part-time Safety and Health Officer, in line with the requirements of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005*. The Safety and Health Officer's role is to ensure that OU provides a safe learning and working environment.

## Safety and Health Committee

OU has set up the Safety and Health Committee in conformity with the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005*. The Committee meets regularly and the minutes of proceedings are transmitted to the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training.

The terms of reference of the Committee are to:

- (a) provide a healthy and safe workplace;
- (b) eliminate risks and hazards at the worksites;
- (c) conform to statutory and regulatory requirements;
- (d) establish, implement and review safe working practices; and
- (e) adopt an integrated approach towards safety and health at work by seeking the collaboration, co-operation and participation of all employees.

## Related Party Transactions

The University produced audio-visual and printed materials and services at concessionary terms to government ministries and departments as per OU Policy. During the financial year 2019/2020, a total amount of Rs 23,841.75 was waived on sale of goods and services in accordance with the prevailing pricing policy.

During the Financial Year 2019/20, one officer was seconded to the Mauritius National Assembly to assist in the implementation and monitoring of the "Live Broadcasting of the proceeding of the House Project". As per practice in the civil service, he was remunerated by OU during the period of secondment.

## Risk Governance and Internal Control

### Risk Assessment

In line with Principle 5 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, OU has always endeavoured to identify the risks in its processes and the procedure for controlling, avoiding, and addressing those risks.

Accordingly, each Section of the organisation has identified major risks associated with their processes based on a risk matrix and suggested actions to be taken to either prevent or control it as well as actions to be taken in case the risk occurred.

OU has been successfully certified for ISO 9001:2015 by the Mauritius Standards Bureau.

Under the ISO 9001:2015 requirements, OU has carried out its risk assessment and has ensured that same are properly addressed.

## Internal Control

The Management has written procedures for its various processes that ensure that members of the staff are aware as to how to proceed with their duties. In addition, OU has established control procedures for its processes. Supervision and cross-checking of records, claims, figures, etc. are mandatory for all procedures involving the release of payments, remunerations, allowances, etc. No payment is issued without the proof of approval from the relevant authority. For example, for payment of fees to service providers, the signed contracts as per tenders approved by the Board are verified and provided as evidence.

In addition to all approval of payments, there are different Controlling Officers and Authorising Officers to ensure that the claims for payments are verified at two levels before being sent to the Finance Division. The Finance Division also exercises control on the claims for payments by cross-checking the claims with relevant approvals.

Payment of fees by learners is another aspect where the mechanism of internal control is exercised.

The Internal Audit function is yet another mechanism for ensuring that the internal control system is functioning properly.

## Audit

In line with Principle 7 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius, OU has made provision for an independent internal audit function as well as for submitting its Annual Report to the External Auditor.

### Internal Audit

The Internal Auditor is required to carry out audit activities as per an Audit Plan and submit her report on findings to the Audit and Risk Committee which makes recommendations on same to the Board.

The Internal Auditor carries out her duties in all independence and she is given access to facilities for same by management.

The Director-General is not a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and this ensures that the Internal Auditor performs her duties and reports her findings independently.

The Internal Auditor is free to perform day-to-day auditing of financial transactions and processes.

### External Audit

The Annual Report 2018/19 was submitted to the External Auditor in October 2019. The external auditors were at OU from January to July 2020 (excluding the confinement period of 20 March to 30 May 2020). They were provided with all the information and documents they required for carrying out their audit.

The Management Letter was received on 10 September 2020 and a reply was sent to the National Audit Office in mid-September 2020. It was recommended that OU carries out a minor change in the Statement of Accounts for the year 2018/19 that is eventually submitted to the parent Ministry.

## Relations with Parent Ministry

Since OU is a public body, its main stakeholder is the parent Ministry. The University maintains constant communication with the parent Ministry through regular correspondences. Moreover, representatives of the parent Ministry are members of the statutory committees.

The Chairperson and the Director-General meet the officials of the parent Ministry in line with Principle 8 of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius.

## Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

Members of the OU Board acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) Adequate accounting records and maintenance of effective internal control systems;
- (ii) The preparation of Financial Statements which fairly present OU's state of affairs as at the end of the financial year and the results of its operations and cash flows for that period and which comply with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS); and
- (iii) The selection of appropriate accounting policies supported by reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates.

The External Auditors (National Audit Office) are responsible for reporting on whether the Financial Statements are fairly presented.

## Directors' Statement of Compliance

Members of the Board of OU affirm that:

- (i) Adequate accounting records and an effective system of internal controls have been maintained;
- (ii) Appropriate accounting policies supported by reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates have been used consistently;
- (iii) Applicable accounting standards have been adhered to;
- (iv) The Code of Corporate Governance as applicable to Statutory Bodies has been adhered to. Explanations have been provided on how the Code has been applied; and
- (v) The provisions of Part V of the *Public Procurement Act* regarding bidding exercises have been complied with.

Signed on behalf of the OU Board Members.



**Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK**  
Chairperson of Board  
Open University of Mauritius

29 September 2020



**Dr K S Sukon**  
Director-General  
Open University of Mauritius

29 September 2020

## Directors' Statement for Internal Control

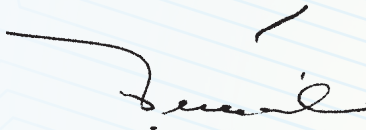
The OU Board acknowledges its responsibility for the setting up of an adequate system of internal controls and for the setting up of appropriate policies to provide reasonable assurance that the control objectives have been attained. The Board and its Sub-Committees closely monitor the activities of the University. Procedures and policies are well documented and consistently applied. Management has the relevant experience and skills to ensure proper running of the University. There is no history of fraud and irregularities.

The role of Management includes:

- identifying and evaluating the risks faced;
- formulating related policies and procedures to manage these risks;
- designing, operating and monitoring a suitable system of internal controls; and
- implementing the policies approved by the Board.

## Internal Audit Function

The Internal Auditor reports to the Audit and Risk Committee on audit work carried out. During the period under review, two meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee were held to consider the report of the Internal Auditor.



**Mr R Duva Pentiah, CSK**  
Chairperson of Board  
Open University of Mauritius

29 September 2020



**Dr K S Sukon**  
Director-General  
Open University of Mauritius

29 September 2020



# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



## Vision

To be among the best open universities in the world.

## Mission

Use technology and flexible mode of teaching to serve society, transform lives and make high quality education, lifelong learning, and training accessible to everyone while promoting excellence in research.



OU was set up following the phasing out of the Mauritius College of the Air with the promulgation of the *Open University of Mauritius Act in 2010*. The organisational structure of OU is at **Annex 4**.

The staff of the ex-MCA opted to join the establishment of OU and consequently, the organisation started to operate by allocating new roles and functions to these staff. New Sections were set up and staff were posted in Sections where they had to adapt to the new responsibilities assigned to them. Moreover, some Sections that existed under the ex-MCA had to be phased out and members of staff were redeployed to new ones being set up.

All Heads of Divisions and Heads of Units report to the Director-General.

However, given that OU is a relatively young university, some Divisions/Institutes have not yet been established completely.

As at date, the following Divisions are operational:

- The Academic Affairs Division
- The Open School Division
- The Administration Division
- The Finance Division
- The Multimedia and ICT Services Division

### Academic Affairs Division (AAD)

The Academic Affairs Division is the primary coordinating division for academic programmes and academic support operations. The AAD is responsible for providing support to learners and tutors at Réduit and the study centres. From the organisation of induction sessions to convocation ceremonies, staff of the AAD play a pivotal role in ensuring that every student has the best learning experience at OU. The AAD contributes in the development and administration of academic policies, regulations and research as well as management of its study centres across the island and Rodrigues.

The Responsible Officer of AAD leads the Division with the collaboration of two Senior Academics and a team of young academics. Two Administrative Officers head the administrative team comprising the support staff and trainees. One Administrative Officer oversees the Help Desk Office, assisted by a support staff.

### Open School Division (OSD)

The Open School Division designs, develops and delivers training programmes based on industry requirements to ensure that employees remain competent. The Division provides the required support to its learners who are civil servants who enrolled on our courses to upgrade their skills for appointment and better performance in higher positions, young job seekers who joined OU to enhance their employability skills and corporate staff who wish to improve their managerial skills. OSD is also responsible for the management of consultancy projects such as the Student Support Programme.

The Director of the Open School leads the Division consisting of one Senior Academic Media Coordinator, Academics and Academic Media Coordinators to achieve its objectives. An Administrative Officer heads the administrative team comprising the support staff and trainees.

### Research Office

The Research Office encourages creative research, innovative scholarship, and a spirit of inquiry to generate new knowledge within the University across inter-disciplinary projects. The Office promotes and coordinates institution-wide services to seek and manage research funding and grants from various institutions including government, research bodies, foundations, and industries. Presently, research is being carried out in online learning, technology in education, Public Health, and Inter-cultural studies, amongst others.

A Senior Academic Media Coordinator who is assisted by two full-time Research Assistants as well as Academics, heads the Office. An Administrative Officer heads the administrative team comprising support staff.

## Finance Division

The Finance Division manages the financial resources of OU. The main activities of this Division are to prepare the annual budget, prepare Financial Statements at the end of the financial year, process payments to suppliers, service providers, part-time Resource Persons and process payment of salaries and other benefits to full-time staff. The Finance Division is also responsible for procurement of goods and services as well as management of stores. It has the responsibility to ensure that OU abides by all statutory and legal requirements in finance, procurement and supplies management.

The Finance Division is led by a Financial Controller with the collaboration of an Accountant, assisted by the financial and procurement cadres and support staff.

## Administration Division

The Administration Division coordinates the various activities of the University and is responsible for general administrative matters, Procurement Secretariat, legal matters, human resources, marketing activities, admission of learners, sanitary precautions following outbreak of COVID-19 and organisation of examinations.

The Registrar's Office provides services to all Statutory Committees and is responsible for the dissemination of the decision of these committees to all other Divisions and Sections for implementation.

The Registrar heads the Administration Division in collaboration with the Administrative Officers and assistance of support staff.

### General Administration and Management Units

The General Administration and Management Units consist of the Open Registry and the Confidential Registry.

The Open Registry is responsible for the general registry functions for all incoming/outgoing mails and the safekeeping of files. The Unit manages the ancillary staff, the transport services, security services, safety and health matters, cleaning services, etc.

The Confidential Registry is responsible for the management of confidential files of the University and is the procurement secretariat.

The General Administration and Management Units are each headed by an Administrative Officer and assisted by support staff and trainees. Safety and Health matters are under the responsibility of a Safety and Health Officer.

## Human Resources Unit

The Human Resources (HR) Unit develops sound HR policies and procedures to meet the needs of OU while ensuring compliance to established procedures applicable to parastatal bodies based on guidelines of the HRM Manual of the Ministry for Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (MPSAIR), the provisions of the *PRB Report*, MPSAIR Circulars and the Regulations.

The HR Unit is headed by an Administrative Officer with the assistance of support staff and trainees.

## Marketing and Public Relations (MPR) Unit

The Marketing and Public Relations Unit is responsible for the marketing and communication strategies which are implemented through multiple media and events to inform various audiences about OU's programmes as well as its vision, mission and functions. Each year, MPR plans and executes major communication campaigns and events, including advertisements, Convocation Ceremonies, Induction

Sessions of new learners and CPD events for Medical Practitioners. It further interacts with the public and prospective students.

The Unit is headed by a Marketing and Development Officer who is assisted by a team comprising staff from administrative, documentation and graphics cadres as well as a trainee.

### Admissions Office

The Admissions Office is responsible for the enrolment of the local and international learners. The Office addresses requests for module(s) exemption, as well as assists and counsels learners throughout the registration process. The Office also assists in the organisation of Convocation Ceremonies and is responsible for issue of certificates after each Convocation Ceremony.

The Admissions Office is headed by an Administrative Officer who is assisted by support staff and trainees for the general services.

### Examinations Unit

The mission of the Examinations Unit is to implement a credible, effective and transparent assessment and evaluation system that will meet the expectations of the Academia and the learners. The Unit manages the paper setting process, enlists the examiners, moderators and invigilators and prepares the examinations calendar. It conducts the examinations, processes the marks and declares the results twice yearly.

The Unit is headed by a Deputy Registrar with the collaboration of the Examination and Administrative Officers and assisted by support staff and trainees.

### Quality Assurance Division (QAD)

Quality Assurance is a vital component in the operations of OU as a provider of higher education and is part of the ongoing pursuit of higher levels of achievement and quality in the University. The Quality Assurance Division focuses on action planning and continuous improvement. It enhances the reputation of the University and meets external demands by implementing quality processes in delivery of higher education, ensuring quality assurance of all administrative processes and continuous quality improvement of the system.

The Quality Assurance (QA) Team is led by a Team Leader, who is assisted by a Quality Assurance Officer, and an Administrative Officer who is, in turn, assisted by one support staff on a part-time basis.

### Multimedia and ICT Division

This Division ensures the provision of technical support to OU staff and learners. OU offers courses on the blended mode and uses technology to provide the most practical and convenient learning facilities to its learners. With the support of this Division, the University has been able to address the online tutorial services successfully during the confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OU aims at bringing higher education at the doorstep of all its learners and in order to achieve this objective, it is equipped with the latest technological equipment and facilities. OU online learning platform is accessible on a 24/7 basis as is the online library having e-books, online journals, etc. to enhance the learning process of its learners. All the learning materials are available online which offers learners the opportunity to study at their own pace and place and even during confinement.

Tutorials are recorded and posted on the learning platform for our learners to access same whenever they need. OU provides fully equipped computer laboratories as well as Wi-Fi facilities to its learners at its learning centres.

The Multimedia and ICT Division is responsible for ensuring that all equipment and building infrastructure are in proper working conditions to enable a conducive learning and working environment.

This Division is currently overseen by the Director-General who, with the collaboration of the Responsible Officers of the following Units, ensures a quality service to its learners and all stakeholders:

- Library;
- Graphics, Publishing and Printing Unit;
- Audio-Video Production Unit;
- Student Affairs Unit;
- ICT Unit; and
- Engineering and Technology Services Unit.

### **Library**

The Library complements the curriculum requirements of the University by providing books and other materials to support the work, studies and research of staff and learners. The Library manages the e-library of OU which has a vast collection of e-books and online journals.

The Library is headed by a Head Library Services and is assisted by a team from the documentation cadre. An Administrative Officer and a support staff also provide assistance to the Library.

### **Graphics, Publishing and Printing (GPP) Unit**

The Graphics, Publishing and Printing Unit uses up-to-date multimedia technology to deliver quality designs and prints. The services offered are targeted towards both its internal and external clients, namely its parent Ministry, other ministries and parastatal organisations and are tailored to the needs and requirements of the clients to meet and exceed their expectations.

The GPP Unit is headed by a Head of Graphics, Publishing and Printing who has a team from the Graphics/Printing/Tradesman cadres and one Copy Editor for the copy editing and proofreading services provided by the Unit. One Administrative Officer heads the administrative team, assisted by support staff and a trainee.

### **Audio-Video Production (AVP) Unit**

The Audio-Video Production Unit is mainly involved in producing video support for our learners and other external stakeholders. The Unit manages all the necessary equipment needed for the good functioning of the audio-visual production activities. The main tasks are recording of lectures, videos in classroom and OU studio, and editing of the videos for uploading, and broadcasting for the Student Support Programme Project.

The Head of Audio-Video Production leads the Unit with the collaboration of the technical staff assisted by support staff.

### **Student Affairs Unit (SAU)**

The Student Affairs Unit provides continuous assistance to all of our registered learners. The Unit manages the e-learn platform to enable our learners to have 24/7 access to their learning materials. The Unit is also in charge of the management of OU's website.

The Unit is under the direct responsibility of a Graphics Artist who is supported by staff from the documentation cadre who are assisted by trainees.

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Unit**

The Information and Communication Technology Unit provides effective, efficient and collaborative ICT services, solutions and strategies in a timely manner so as to support the University's strategic goals. The objectives of ICT Services are to be the partner for providing innovative and creative solutions and reliable information in order to help OU achieve its objectives and goals and to identify factors that contribute towards learners' satisfaction.

The Systems Analyst/Senior Systems Analyst heads the Unit, assisted by staff from the Systems Analyst cadre and one support staff.

### **Engineering and Technology Services (ETS) Unit**

The Engineering and Technology Services Unit provides specific services within the organisation in two distinct areas of activities, namely the technology services and the building maintenance services. Technology services cater for all activities to develop and maintain the physical and technical infrastructure of the institution, to support the digital system and services in both the staff and learner's domains. The building maintenance services of the Unit aim at managing and maintaining the buildings, equipment and infrastructure of OU at Réduit and Forest Side.

The ETS falls under the responsibility of the Senior Technical Executive who, with the collaboration of the Technical Executive and assistance of staff from the technical and tradesman cadres as well as support staff, ensures delivery of services to OU staff and learners.

# RESPONSE TO COVID-19

# PANDEMIC



The year 2019/2020 was marked by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic both at international and national levels. Similar to countries worldwide, Mauritius was caught unawares by this unprecedented sanitary emergency. All organisations, including educational institutions, have had to adapt and find new ways to continue their operations.

The major consequence for educational institutions was that students were no longer able to attend classes on the campus following the announcement of the closure of all educational institutions in Mauritius by Mid-March 2020.

Consequently, similar to other Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs), OU had to stop the delivery of face-to-face tutorials at its study centres. However, this did not disrupt the learning process for our learners who are trained to be independent learners.

The online learning platform, OU's e-library (both accessible on a 24/7 basis), dedicated Programme Managers together with administrative and technical staff support the learners in their studies. When face-to-face tutorials were ceased completely due to the lockdown, OU delivered the tutorials via the online mode. In addition, learners were continuously in contact with OU staff via email, Skype, WhatsApp, fixed and mobile phones, social media platforms such as Facebook, among others.

OU made extensive use of software such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Skype and WhatsApp for online delivery of tutorials. Instruction manuals on use of Zoom software were also prepared and disseminated to Programme Managers, tutors and learners for guidance.

As regards sanitary protocols implemented in March 2020, OU followed the instructions issued by authorities

- to stop the use of fingerprint electronic attendance system, and use attendance registers instead;
- to provide hand sanitizers to staff members;
- for cleaning and disinfecting of door knobs, switches, door handles, hand rails, and so on; and
- for fixing notices on health and safety precautions to be taken by staff with respect to COVID-19.

In anticipation of the lockdown, Management informed its members and stakeholders about its "new normal" operations. Measures had been taken for continuation of work, with least disruption, during the lockdown period. All Heads of Sections were instructed to create WhatsApp groups for staff of their Sections to ease communications. During the lockdown, staff who are normally not allocated a laptop, were issued same so that they could continue to work while being away from office.

In addition, some staff who had to attend duty during the lockdown, required a Work Access Permit (WAP) and protective equipment. Consequently, Management made necessary arrangements to submit applications for WAP for several staff who had to either attend the office daily or occasionally and to provide face masks, gloves, hand sanitizers as well as transport facilities to bring staff to the office and drop them back home, as public transport was not functional.

The Director-General attended duty nearly every day during the lockdown period together with staff of Sections such as the Audio-Video Production Unit and Engineering and Technology Services Unit as OU has played an instrumental role in assisting the parent Ministry in the production and dissemination of video lessons for students of primary and secondary schools. These video lessons were aired on the national television channel in order to allow the students to continue their lessons remotely. The Open School Division staff also provided support for preparation of the video lessons for primary and secondary school students.

Staff of other Sections such as the Finance Division, the Administrative Division, the Examinations Unit, the Admissions Unit, among others, had to attend duty at the office occasionally.

The Registrar's Office had to liaise with the Prime Minister's Office on a regular basis in order to secure the WAPs.

Before the lockdown and during the lockdown period, OU had undertaken procurement procedures for purchase of hand sanitizers, masks, gloves, *visières*, disinfectants, and so on to be issued to staff who

worked during lockdown as well as to staff who would be resuming work immediately after the lockdown was lifted. The Finance and Administration Divisions, including the Health and Safety Officer worked in close collaboration to ensure that protective equipment were provided to staff on time.

Management had to eventually prepare for the resumption of duty after the lockdown and in line with circulars from the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms, all officers in the Management Team and Ancillary cadre had to resume duty as from 11 May 2020. WAPs were again sought for these officers as well as for those who had to resume duty on a roster basis until 1 June 2020.

Management issued a list of instructions to staff on precautionary measures they had to take to attend duty such as wearing of face mask, using hand sanitizers and maintaining social distancing, staying at home in case of fever, actions to be taken if a staff falls sick, and so on. Information was also circulated on the various actions taken by Management to implement the sanitary protocols required by authorities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Management also effected a disinfection of all offices prior to 11 May 2020 in view of resumption of work by staff. Arrangements were subsequently made for

- regular sanitisation of common surfaces of office premises;
- taking body temperature of all staff and visitors every day;
- restricting and controlling access to OU premises to visitors and recording their personal details;
- offering online mode of payment of application fees and registration/re-registration fees to new and ongoing learners via mobile applications and internet banking;
- making arrangements for maintaining social distancing among staff in their offices, and in lifts;
- identification of an isolation room for any staff or visitor who falls sick with COVID-19 like symptoms;
- registering attendance manually and eventually installation of a face recognition attendance machine to allow for contactless registration of attendance;
- development of a protocol in case any staff falls sick with COVID-19 like symptoms while on duty;
- floor markings to observe social distancing; and
- placing notices regarding sanitary measures to be observed while on premises of OU.

After lifting of lockdown and easing of social distancing measures, OU was authorised to organise its end-of-semester examinations and same was done as from 1 July 2020 under strict sanitary conditions. This required very detailed planning and provision of all arrangements for sanitising of classrooms after each examination session, taking body temperature of learners, making provision for cases of learners falling sick, isolation rooms, etc.

In addition, OU had to cancel its Convocation Ceremony scheduled for May 2020 and made arrangements for the issue of the certificates to graduates, so as not to penalise them.

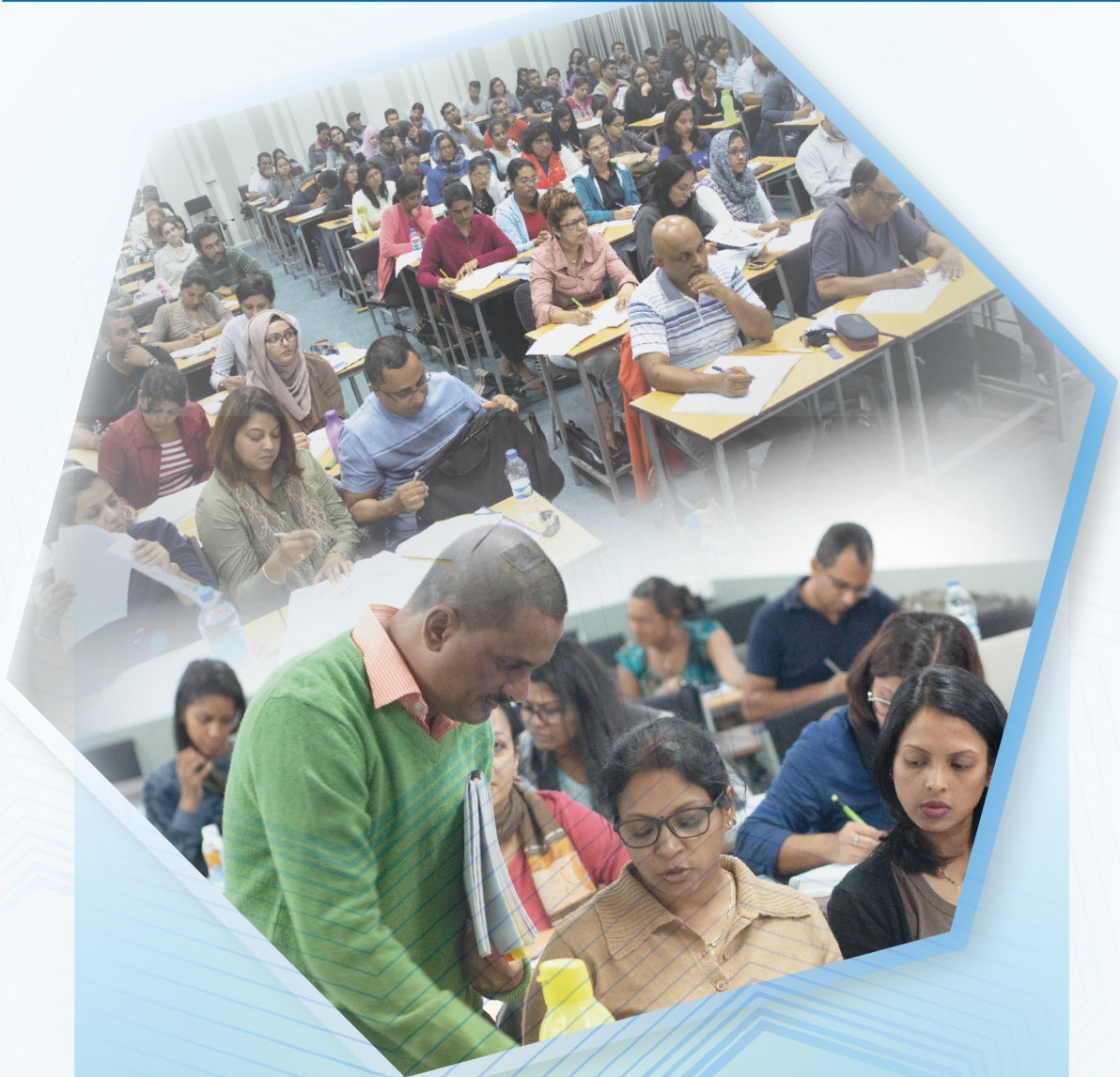
Under the national COVID-19 testing campaign, OU arranged for the Ministry of Health and Wellness to carry out Rapid Antigen COVID-19 tests for all its employees in July 2020.

OU has been able to face this very difficult phase with the collaboration of its entire staff and learners. It continues to provide its services in an uninterrupted manner to its learners and other stakeholders.





# TEACHING AND LEARNING



***“... commends the Open University of Mauritius on the general commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.”***

*Source: Report of the First Cycle Quality Audit of the Open University of Mauritius, TEC, 2018*

Open University of Mauritius is playing a pivotal role in enhancing access to flexible, affordable, and quality higher education through blended open and distance learning (ODL) mode to learners belonging to all social classes. OU, which was the first local public university to offer employability skills courses, continues to provide the soft skills courses freely in order to ensure that its learners are employable.

ODL is the main way of combining work and family responsibilities with educational opportunities as it frees learners from constraints of time and place. It provides the flexibility, the qualifications and the world-class teaching everyone desires. Learners can earn a qualification while working; they may wish to work part-time and study part-time; and others, including school-leavers can study full-time.

With its well-established blended learning strategy, supported by innovative study materials and videos, learners get an exceptional learning experience in their own time, at home, work or wherever they choose – reading, watching or listening to materials supplied, working out course activities and assignments with regular support from their tutor who is always just an email away. Learners nearly get individual attention coupled with a number of face-to-face sessions organised in the afternoon during weekdays and on Saturdays. All the undergraduate and postgraduate modules have at least ten hours of optional face-to-face lectures delivered on-site.

Our learners are independent but not isolated. OU has always accompanied its learners on their journey even when the country went on lockdown with the COVID-19 Pandemic, from 20 March to 30 May 2020. The University made an effective use of its resources and expertise to ensure continuity in its services to enhance the learning process of its learners.

## Course Development

OU has continuously improved its offerings at all levels.

Distance Education and e-Learning materials are at the heart of the operations of open universities.

The design of OU programmes is done with a lot of care. Following market surveys and preliminary discussions with stakeholders, the Programme Managers produce the first draft of the programme document, which is thoroughly analysed internally.

The resulting second draft is presented to the Advisory Committee, that comprises subject-matter experts, academics from other institutions as well as potential employers who have the opportunity to voice out their opinion on various aspects of the programme document. Only the programme documents that are validated by the Advisory Committee are submitted to the Academic Council for discussion and approval.

The programme document outlines the level of the programme, the objectives and learning outcomes, the programme duration, the entry requirements, the target audience, the content of the various modules as well as the assessment criteria. All of OU's programmes are continuously monitored to ensure that they remain relevant and up to date with latest developments.

## Design of ODL Materials

ODL materials have some conspicuous elements of instructional design in line with COL guidelines for course writing, such as:

- Presentation of content into Units structured for self-learning;
- Learning outcomes-based writing of each Unit;
- 'Tutorial' mode of content explanation;
- Use of access and learning devices;
- Gradual embedding of teaching and learning;
- Self-assessment questions in line with constructivist theory of learning; and
- Space provided for learners to write their answers – 'generous' layout with a liberal use of 'white space'.

We endeavour to produce learning materials that are purposeful, structured, learner-centred and paced as well as engaging.

**Tables 1 & 2** show the number of courses offered in 2019/20 at various levels.

**Table 1: Number of Programmes at Various Levels**

Number of Programmes Offered Per Level for the Period 2019/20	
Programme Level	2019/20
PhD/DBA	2
Postgraduate	12
Undergraduate	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

**Table 2: Number of Courses at Certificate Level**

Level	Total Number of Courses Per Level
Foundation Programmes	2
Employability Courses	2
Award Courses for the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms in collaboration with Civil Service College, Mauritius	3
Continuous Professional Development Courses	1

## Registration and Re-registration Statistics

Open University of Mauritius continued to register a positive growth in the number of learners at all levels.

**Tables 3 & 4** show registration/re-registration per level for the year 2019/20 as follows:

**Table 3: Students Registered/Re-registered Per Level**

Programme Level	Number of Learners for Year 2019/20 Enrolled Per Level
PhD/DBA	26
Postgraduate	542
Undergraduate	2,779
Diploma	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,384</b>

**Table 4: Student Registration/Re-registration Statistics Per Programme at Open School Division**

Short Programme/ Course	Intake July 2019	Intake Jan 2020	Intake Feb 2019	Intake March 2019	Intake Oct 2019 (Indian Learners)	Intake Nov 2019 (Indian Learners)	Total Number of Learners for Year 2019/20 Per Level
Foundation Courses	192	145			17	15	369
Employability Skills Courses*	641	698					1,339
Courses for the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms in collaboration with Civil Service College, Mauritius	29			59	96		184
Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Courses			20				20

\*It should be noted that the majority of the candidates registered on employability skills courses include OU learners who are already enrolled on full-fledged undergraduate or postgraduate programmes.

## Special Programme Offered

### The Director Development Programme

The Director Development Programme is a prestigious programme that positions participants at the heart of the learning process, assisting existing Directors, aspiring Directors, Managers and leaders to strengthen and master governance practices with innovative tools and resources. The Programme is run by OU and the Mauritius Institute of Directors (MIoD), two high-calibre institutions which are combining their expertise in Open and Distance Learning and director training respectively, to provide a unique learning package for the first time in Mauritius. The programme has been conceived to offer busy, high-level cadres the opportunity to study in a flexible manner, with minimum disruption to their family and professional schedules.

## Programme Reviewed

### The BSc (Hons) Computer Science Programme

The BSc (Hons) Computer Science programme is designed to give students experience of core technologies and techniques while making it possible for them to design and build software programs and systems. The programme consists of a combination of skills that enable our graduates to keep pace with this fast-moving subject, and achieve rewarding careers around the world. The applied project will enable students to acquire valuable skills in teamwork, project planning, time management and presentation, applying their learning to design and implementation of an applied project. Graduates mainly go on to work in the ICT industry as software developers, system analysts, software engineers or consultants, among others. Academic possibilities include further studies towards a Master's degree programme or MPhil/PhD qualifications.

## Other Activities

### Participation of OU Students in National Elocution Contest

The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)* and the French Embassy in Mauritius organised a national elocution competition to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the *Francophonie* on 10 March 2020. Two students of OU succeeded in reaching the final stage of the competition.

### **Tailor-Made Courses**

Courses for the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms in collaboration with the Civil Service College, Mauritius offered to the Civil Service officers by Open School Division during the year 2019/20 were:

- (i) Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision (OMA) Mauritius, Cohort 5, Semester 2
- (ii) Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision (OMA) Mauritius, Cohort 6, Semester 1
- (iii) Award Course for Citizens Advice Bureau Organisers Cohort 1, Semester 2

### **Foundation Courses**

In line with its philosophy to democratise access to university education, OU offers Foundation Courses through the Open School Division. These courses aim at better preparing candidates for higher education while allowing them to meet the minimum requirements to undertake undergraduate studies.

These courses have been carefully developed by a team of experts to:

- ensure smooth transition to university
- motivate learners and give them a greater chance of success
- play a key role in helping learners to revisit learning skills, while giving them the necessary confidence and preparatory experience they need for success at university.

On successfully completing four Foundation Courses (eight modules) including English through Open Distance Learning (ODL), candidates are eligible to join degree programmes offered at OU.

During the year 2019/20, there were two intakes for Foundation Courses.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the Open School Division moved its training to live, online sessions using Zoom as the delivery platform. All learners were sent an invite to attend the online Zoom sessions instead of attending the usual scheduled face-to-face sessions. The timings remained the same for all slots. Thus, all the Foundation Courses were delivered successfully.

Required training materials and hand-outs were made available to learners prior to the sessions so they could access these during the Zoom meetings and could save and print same post-sessions.

### **Short CPD Courses Commissioned by Other Stakeholders and Run by Open School Division:**

- (i) Diploma in Meteorology for Meteorological Technicians Cohort 2, Semester 2; and
- (ii) Employability Skills Courses

### **CPD Approved by Medical Council**

During the financial year 2019/2020, the Marketing and Public Relations Unit organised seven Continuous Medical Education (CME) courses of around 8 hours each, web-streamed live from the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (RCPE) and meant for General Practitioners and Specialists. Medical events on the following topics were organised:

- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Diagnostic Medicine        | 19 September 2019       |
| • Diabetes and Endocrinology | 02 October 2019         |
| • Cardiology                 | 31 October 2019         |
| • Neurology                  | 05 November 2019        |
| • Gastroenterology           | 21 November 2019        |
| • Updates on Acute Medicine  | 28 and 29 November 2019 |

The Medical Council of Mauritius approved the above Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses. The Medical Council of Mauritius awards four CPD Credit Points after the successful completion of each medical event from RCPE.

There were 166 participants in 2019/2020 consisting of 112 male and 54 female doctors.

### Assessment Activities

The OU Examinations Unit manages the paper setting process, enlists the examiners, moderators and invigilators and prepares the examinations calendar every semester. The Unit conducts the examinations and processes and declares the examination results twice yearly.

Although the activities of the Unit have continued to increase in terms of number of modules and learners, much emphasis has been placed on quality assurance of examinations in order to meet one of the Examinations Unit's objective: "Ensure that Assessment is fair, reliable and valid".

For the period under review, the Unit has delivered assessments for more than 5,700 learners and it had to make special arrangements with institutions abroad – Universities or Examination Centres – for the assessment of its learners who reside outside Mauritius.

The table that follows (**Table 5**) provides details on the different examinations conducted by OU during that period. It is also to be noted that during this period, 5 learners completed their PhD.

**Table 5: Examinations Conducted for Period July 2019 to June 2020**

Examinations	No. of Programmes Examined	No. of Modules Examined	No. of Learners
OU Nov/Dec Exam 2019 (Postgraduate + Foundation)	13	92	1,136
OU Nov/Dec Exam 2019 (Undergraduate)	28	344	4,232
Master of Public Health Sept 2019	1	5	53
Master of Public Health Feb 2020	1	3	3
Employability Skills	1	19	258
Civil Service – OMA/CS	1	6	124
Meteorological (Diploma)	1	5	20
Undergraduate (IGNOU)	1	1	1
PhD			5

### Convocation and Certificate Award Ceremonies

OU organised its Convocation Ceremony at Paul Octave Wiehe Auditorium, Réduit in two sessions, held on 22 and 23 August 2019.

The Chief Guest on 22 August 2019 was Mr Raj B Dansinghani, OSK, Senior Advisor on Educational Matters to the Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology.

On 23 August 2019, the Chief Guest was Mr Matthias de Larminat, Managing Director, Vivo Energy Mauritius Limited.

Twelve shields were offered to Toppers of individual subjects for their high performance and two Overall Toppers, one at undergraduate and another at postgraduate level, were also rewarded for their exceptional performances.

A second convocation ceremony was scheduled for May 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown, the convocation ceremony was cancelled. OU made special arrangements for the learners who had completed their programmes and awarded their degree and issued their respective certificates. As at 30 June 2020, the process of preparation of certificates was under progress.

Table 6 shows the number of learners who graduated in the Convocation Ceremony during the year 2019/20.

**Table 6: Number of Graduates Per Levels**

Level	Number of Graduates
Honorary Degree	1
DBA/PhD	6
Undergraduate Degree	200
Postgraduate Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates	126
Undergraduate Diploma	32
Undergraduate Certificate	4
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES</b>	<b>369</b>

#### Completion of Non-Award Courses

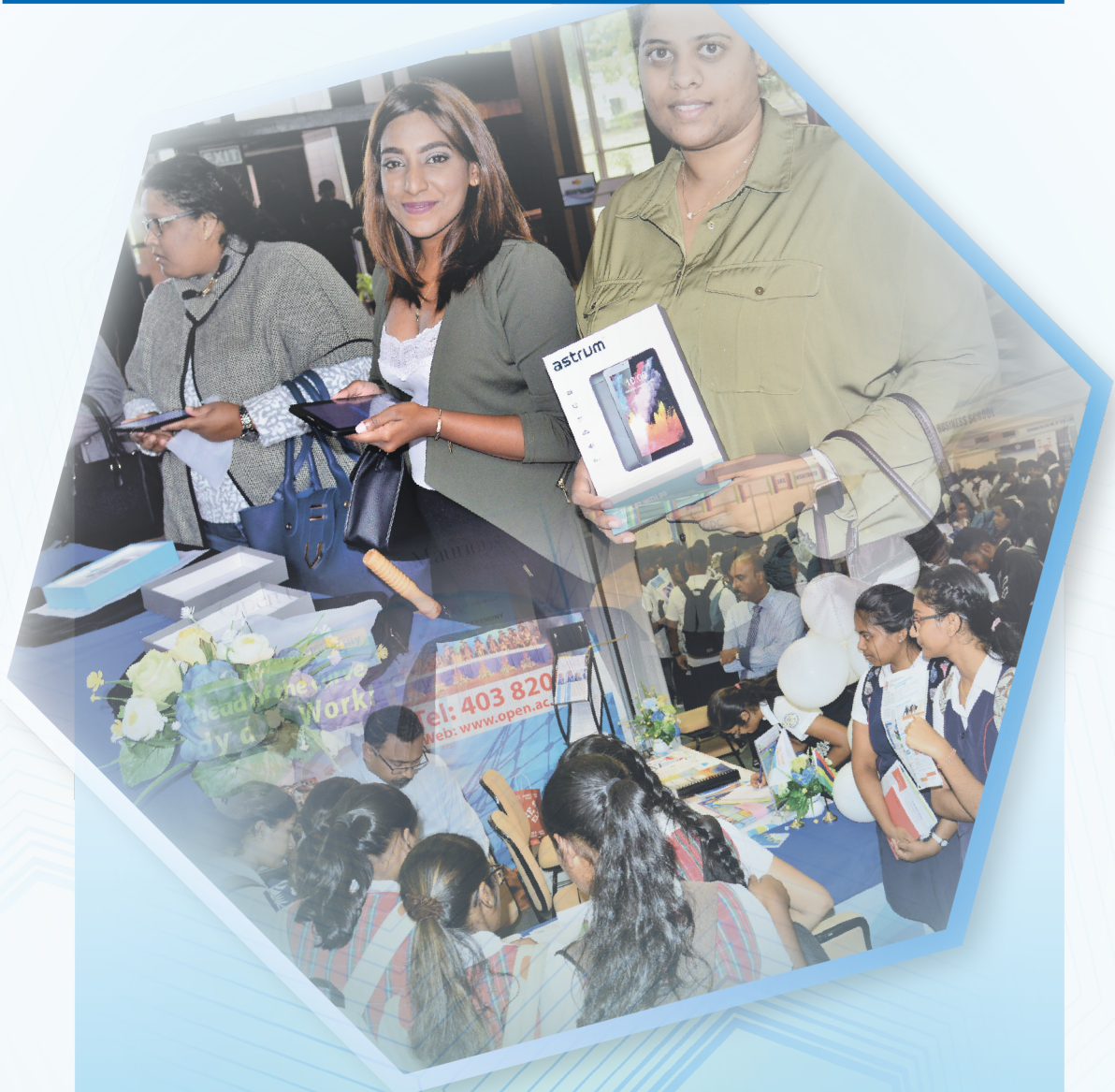
**Table 7: Number of Candidates Who Successfully Completed the Non-Award Short Courses**

Course Name	No. of Candidates Who Completed the Course Successfully
Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision (OMA) Mauritius	32
Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision (OMA) Rodrigues	17
Advanced Secretarial Course Mauritius	33
Advanced Secretarial Course Rodrigues	1
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF CANDIDATES</b>	<b>83</b>





# REACHING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS



*“Students have expressed their satisfaction with the learning environment, support received from staff, the flexibility of the programmes and the technology used in teaching and learning.*

*The caring approach, availability and quick response to queries, range of learning and assessment approaches were praised by students.”*

Source: *Report of the First Cycle Quality Audit of the Open University of Mauritius, TEC, 2018*

Within quite a short period of time, the University has set up a strong support system with the following elements:

- Pre-enrolment counselling and information services;
- Induction materials including fact sheets;
- Free tablet with pre-loaded learning materials to those enrolled in degree programmes;
- Induction session with information and advice given on preparation for distance learning including study skills;
- One Programme Manager for learners of each programme. Support provided through e-learning platform, emails, and face-to-face sessions. The Programme Manager ensures the smooth running of programme/s under his/her responsibility;
- A virtual learning platform where learning resources are provided;
- E-library with over 500,000 titles accessible from anywhere and at any time;
- Recorded video sessions are provided;
- Handbooks/guides on dissertations and assignments;
- Guide on distance education;
- Weekly planners of face-to-face sessions to respond to academic needs of learners;
- Additional sessions to respond to specific academic difficulties of learners;
- Plan for submission of assignments;
- One tutor for each of the modules in which a learner is enrolled;
- Assignments with feedback given to learners;
- Special support organised for special needs/bed-ridden learners as well as for inmates enrolled in our programmes;
- Dissertation/project supervisor;
- Anti-plagiarism software facilities (Turnitin);
- Organisation of Skype sessions/Virtual classrooms;
- Social media facilities for learners;
- Well-equipped classrooms as well as space for peer group meetings outside teaching hours;
- Use of MOOCs for programme delivery;
- Counselling sheets for exams;
- Placement for learners in some programmes.
- Personal email account for each learner; and
- Constant communication with learners via individual and bulk email as well as SMS.

As can be seen from the list above, both human and technological inputs are integrated within the system. The main support services provided on the e-learning platform include:

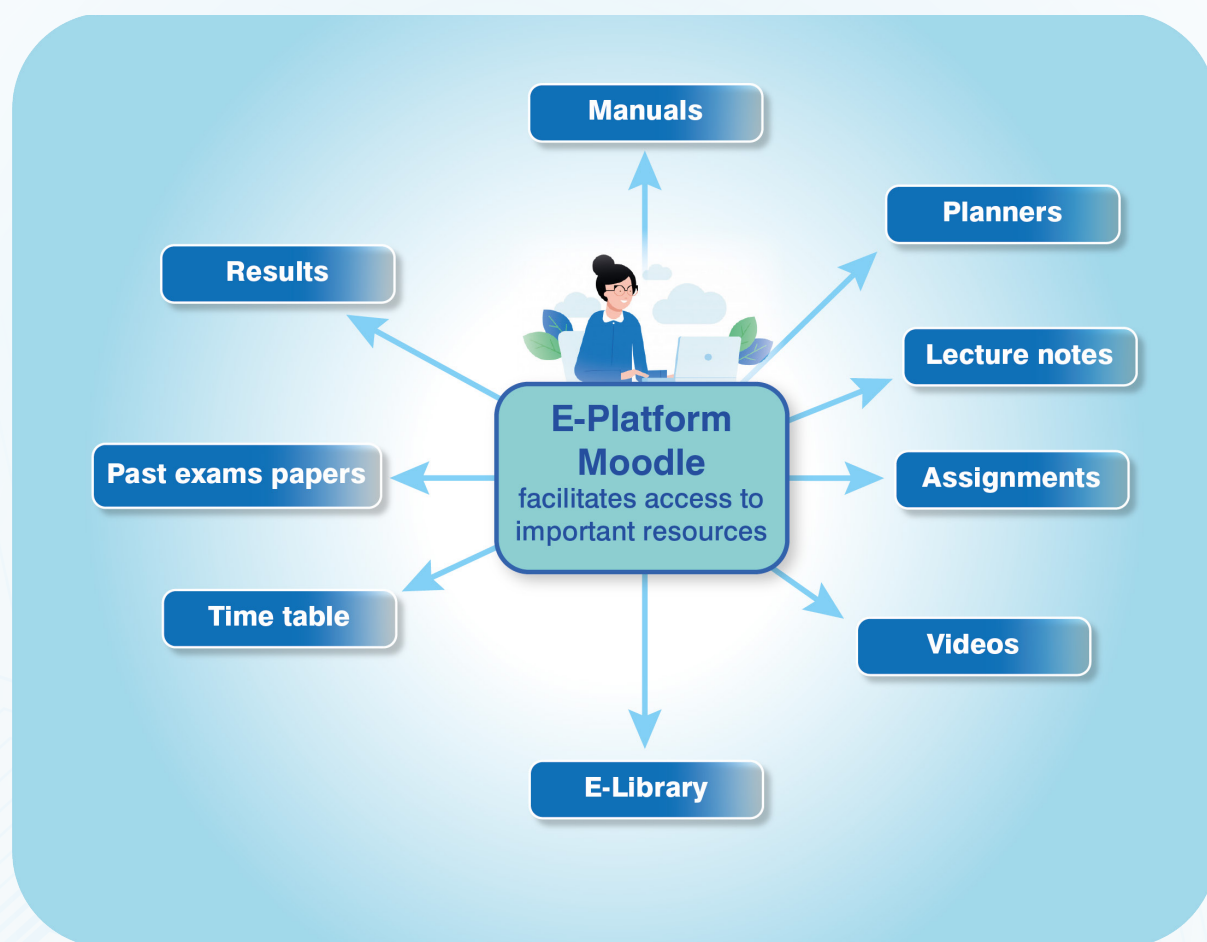
- Access to resources and assignments;
- Dissemination of information, general notices, guides;
- Use of anti-plagiarism software;
- Past exam papers; and
- Discussion forum.

The COVID-19 Pandemic outbreak and the subsequent lockdown of Mauritius from 20 March to 30 May 2020 was an unprecedented situation which had a direct impact on OU's services to learners and stakeholders, but OU did not stop its services or delivery of courses. Likewise, it ensured that student support services were not disrupted.

## Support to Learners

**Diagram 1** below illustrates how OU learners are supported. Several resources aimed at enhancing their learning experience are available on a 24/7 basis.

**Diagram 1**



The e-learn platform Moodle is OU's virtual learning environment. It provides all the necessary information to the learners.

### **Presentation on e-Learn Platform during Induction**

Presentation was done on "How to access the e-learn platform – Moodle" to new learners during Induction sessions in August 2019 and February 2020.

A video recording that provides a step-by-step guide on the use of the e-learn platform was also distributed to all learners for the intakes of August 2019 and February 2020.

### **Revamping of the Moodle Platform**

The Moodle platform was revamped in December 2019. The site layout and interface functions of the platform were improved to make them more attractive and user-friendly. The new platform provides for online announcement and contents.

**Table 8** shows the volume of activities on the platform.

**Table 8: Statistics of the Management of the E-Learning Platform**

Core Activities	Total (Jul to Dec 19)	Total (Jan to Jun 20)	Grand Total (Jul 19 to Jun 20)
Access to new users in all modules registered	2,113	2,253	4,366
Access to existing users in all modules (learners and tutors)	7,045	4,465	11,510
Programmes/Modules created for new and existing intakes	672	572	1,244
Uploaded/Imported materials	290	866	1,156
Uploaded videos	270	121	391
Queries	1,416	984	2,400
Bulk mails (sent to learners)	63,100	81,488	144,588
SMS	599	64	663

### Mobile Application for Moodle Platform

Users can have access to the Moodle platform when and where they need it, even offline, through the mobile application. Access to learning materials and activities, submission of quiz and receiving push notifications are all within easy reach of learners.

### Counselling Activities

Both academic and administrative cadres provide ongoing counselling and support to respond to the administrative and academic needs of the learners throughout their academic journey.

### Communication with our Learners

The mailing system was used to communicate with the registered learners on several issues, including:

- (i) Planner and timetable;
- (ii) Cancellation, preponing and postponing of classes;
- (iii) Information about Induction and convocation ceremony;
- (iv) Registration to participate in events;
- (v) Individual credentials of new Moodle users; and
- (vi) Registration of new modules.

Learners were also contacted through SMS.

### Email Account

A personalised email account was created and provided to all new learners as from January 2020. The new email account is used to communicate with the learners.

### Usage of Anti-Plagiarism Software: Turnitin

Turnitin is a valuable tool to help students learn about what constitutes plagiarism and to help them to develop their academic writing skills. It is also a deterrent for students who may copy the work of others without acknowledgement.

September 2019: 4,000 licences for the period of September 2019 to April 2020 were also acquired to allow learners to run their assignments through Turnitin.

April 2020: 5,000 licences (4,000 paid and 1,000 free) were renewed for the period April 2020 to April 2021.

## Website

The website is regularly updated with relevant information including latest news and notices on the University's activities. Information is provided on OU's organisational structure, Corporate documents, Enrolment, Induction, Convocation Ceremony, Workshops, Open Days, Career Fairs, events organised such as Symposia and Conferences, the Academic Calendar, ongoing programmes and fees, Notice of Vacancies and procurement exercises and so on.

In order to allow secure connections on OU's website, SSL Certification (from http to https) was acquired in December 2019.

## Marketing Activities

### Advertising and Communication

Advertisements aimed at informing prospective learners of enrolments were broadcast or disseminated in various media as given in **Table 9**.

**Table 9: Number of Adverts and Items Disseminated per Medium**

Medium	Number of Adverts/Items Disseminated
Television	49
Radio	81
Newspapers/Magazines	27
Posters/Flyers/Brochure on courses	35,000

The following methods were also used for marketing activities:

- Social media and online ads comprising web banners, Google Ads, Facebook and Instagram ads;
- Branded souvenirs, corporate items like pens, notebooks, etc.; and
- Email, SMS/WhatsApp.

OU's official social media platforms have more than 14,000 followers and they continue to grow daily. The followers were kept aware of events happening through OU's Facebook and Instagram pages. These platforms also serve to showcase programmes offered and have proved to be ideal for responding to queries and interacting promptly with the public.

During the Financial Year 2019/20:

- more than 10,000 emails were exchanged with the public; and
- more than 1,000 interactions occurred through social media.

Corporate items, such as pens, notebooks, and other branded souvenirs, were either distributed through competitions, made available for everyday sale, or sold to learners during Convocation Ceremonies.

### Induction Sessions

Two major Induction Sessions for the following intakes were organised:

- (i) **August 2019 intake** at Paul Octave Wiéhé Auditorium, Réduit, Moka on 27 July 2019;
- (ii) **February 2020 intake** at Paul Octave Wéhé Auditorium, Réduit, Moka on 01 February 2020.

A new format of the Induction was proposed with tutorial videos produced in-house to provide guidance to new learners about Study Skills, E-Library/Online Journals, Time Management, Assignment Submission and Writing Skills. The Inductions were opportunities for new learners to meet the Director-General, Programme Managers and other key staff of the University and to benefit from a number of presentations to help them start their learning journey with OU. Study materials and a number of fact

sheets were distributed to learners during the Induction. A total of about 38,000 items were provided to learners during all Induction activities for the financial year under consideration.

### **Export of Services Mission 2019**

The Marketing and Development Officer of OU participated in the Export Services Mission in Uganda from 30 September to 03 October 2019 organised by the Economic Development Board. Several tertiary education institutions participated in the event whose objective was to promote the public and private Higher Education Institutions of Mauritius. The mission consisted of two fairs and several presentations in secondary schools to showcase individual institutions, their uniqueness, programmes on offer, study facilities, etc. Prospective learners interacted on a one-to-one basis and they were kept on record for further procedures.

### **International University and Career Expo 2019**

OU participated in the International University and Career Expo 2019 at SVICC, Pailles on 14, 15 and 16 February 2020 to market the programmes offered by OU, to explain how to study through the blended ODL mode at OU, and for the pre-enrolment counselling of prospective students there. During the opening ceremony held on 13 February 2020, the Chief Guest, His Excellency Prithvirajsing Roopun, President of the Republic of Mauritius, visited the OU stand.

### **Activities during Confinement: COVID-19 Pandemic**

During the lockdown, the MPR Unit continued its operation from home. Staff followed up on the TV, online and press advertisements. Prospective learners were emailed e-posters to promote OU programmes and queries were attended to on a daily basis via social media, WhatsApp and email. The volume of queries during confinement was unexpectedly higher than usual and staff provided the necessary support in a timely manner.

The Unit also worked from home to coordinate online events from the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh to engage local doctors to participate in live COVID-19 updates, which provided very pertinent information about the pandemic worldwide, techniques to deal with patients, challenges and coping strategies.

### **Visit of Kenyan Delegation**

OU welcomed a delegation of 60 representatives from Kenya on 04 December 2019. The delegation consisted of school Directors and Rectors from Kenya Private Schools Association. The delegation was given an exposé about OU and they discovered more about the University through a clip and presentations. The delegates expressed their appreciation towards the warmth of OU staff and showed high interest towards our programmes.

## **Library Facilities**

The Library Unit has continuously ensured the:

- Provision of books (including e-books) and other learning resources to support the work, studies and research of OU library users;
- Reference service – assisting users in finding information and in research;
- Training of learners in using the e-Library and accessing online journals;
- Preparation of schedules for the broadcast of Student Support Programme on MBC;
- Enhancing e-Library collections;
- User Education;
- Law Corner – Specialised for law students, with technology and other library facilities; and
- Photocopy services – Books, journals and assignments.

All new learners were given a pack consisting of one **DVD** on how to access, search and download information/documents from online databases and an updated **Factsheet** with the user ID and Passwords for the different **Online Databases**, during each induction session.

### **Student Support Programme – Broadcast Schedules**

The Library continued preparing broadcast schedules of Student Support Programmes, for the half-hour

slot on MBC 3 during weekdays and 2 hours on Saturday, aimed at students of Grades 7 and 8. The video programmes were aired every day:

- July 2019 – March 2020: **1,176** programmes.
- From 6 April to 30 June 2020, **six hours** of programmes were **broadcast daily** on three MBC TV channels, namely Channel 2, Bhojpuri Channel and Senn Kreol.
- **1,755** video programmes were aired **for the period April – June 2020**, on the above-mentioned channels.

### Services Offered

- E-library with over 500,000 titles accessible from anywhere and at any time;
- Dissemination of information through:
  - (1) Online databases, emails, phones and face-to-face sessions;
  - (2) Moodle: Current Awareness Bulletin, list of dissertations, Order of Manuals, links to Online Databases, Online Dictionaries, Online Encyclopaedias and EBSCOhost and E-books training videos;
- Uploading OU learners' names to the e-library system of UoM for easy access to e-publications such as dissertations.
- Uploading OU learners' names to Westlaw Online Databases.
- Providing DDC and Cataloguing books to learners of BA (Hons) Library and Information Science for the module "Workshop on Classification and Cataloguing".
- Updating list of programmes in the Library Video Archives to be sent for evaluation and write-off.

### e-Library

The e-library is accessible 24/7, that is, at any time, on any day, from any location, provided there is Internet access. Thus, learners do not need to be on campus to have access to e-library facilities. The first online databases available to the Library users of OU were EBSCOhost and Emerald.

Over the years, the Library further enhanced its e-library collections by adding the following databases:

- JSTOR
- ProQuest Literature Online
- ProQuest Arts and Humanities
- Westlaw Legal Online Database – for Law students

Moreover, Library users could also access the online databases under Research4Life which comprises five programmes with different areas of focus, from the Library premises:

- **HINARI** - Health and Medical research;
- **GOALI** - Law and Social Sciences;
- **AGORA** - Agricultural research;
- **ARDI** - Research for Innovation and Technology;
- **OARE** - Environmental research.



## Statistics on Usage of Databases

Usage of the different databases showed a consistent growth. Usage was as follows:

**Table 10: Online Searches on Databases**

Database	No. of Searches from July 2019 to June 2020
EBSCOhost	303,111
Emerald	50,651
JSTOR	19,803
ProQuest Arts and Humanities	4,066
ProQuest Literature Online	5,127
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>382,758</b>

The Library collections are primarily in digital format (490,000 e-books and 15,000 online journals). The Library tries its best to ensure that the learners make use of the digital documents. The usage statistics of the online databases show that the number of searches has doubled as compared to the previous financial year (July 2018 – June 2019). Great effort is made to help learners adapt to a digital library.

## Sales Service

For the financial year 2019-2020, 16 learners bought 39 manuals for an amount of Rs 8,425.

## Library Services during the Confinement: COVID-19 Pandemic Outbreak

The Library teams have continued to provide online access to resources, services and other library support by working from home. The Unit has an extensive range of e-resources and encourages staff and students to utilise them where possible. Users were guided on the usage of online resources through emails.

## Graphics, Publishing and Printing Services

### Services Offered

- Graphic design and desktop publishing;
- Copy editing and proofreading;
- Electronic scanning;
- Offset printing in full colours;
- Finishing services (binding, laminating and stitching);
- Reprographic services;
- Consultancy on matters pertaining to graphic design, book design and general print production; and
- Technical assistance and expertise to other parastatal and government organisations in the field of logo design, corporate publications, and acquisition of printing/reprographic equipment.

## Statistics

For the year 2019-2020, the Unit has produced a total of 17 internal jobs and completed 8 jobs for external clients as listed in the following tables.

**Table 11: Range of Print Materials Produced by the Graphics, Publishing and Printing Unit**

Nature of Work	Internal Client (Units)
A4 prints (Sheets+ Fact Sheets)	58,576
Assignment Cover Sheet	32,500
Brochure	4,660
Business Card	660
Card (Invitation Card, Refreshment Voucher and Gown Voucher)	3,988
Certificate	894
Door Plate	17
DVD Labelling	6,956
Exam Answer Booklet	32,000
Flyers	37,604
Manual	3,203
Note Book	150
Note Pad	6,300
Others: Booklet (Annual Report, Magazine, etc.)	199
OU Headed Paper	50,000
Poster	3,840
Sticker	3,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>245,047</b>

The GPP Unit also provides services to external customers under various agreements as shown in **Table 12**.

**Table 12: Details on Projects for External Clients**

External Client	Type of Work	Project	Quantity (Units)
Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	Brochure	Mauritius Africa Scholarship Scheme	500
	Cards	School Calendar 2020	500
	Poster	School Calendar 2020	1,000
University of Mauritius	Booklet	Annual Report 2017-2018	25
	Booklet	ACU Booklet	70
University of Technology, Mauritius	Brochure	Promotional Brochure	750
National Audit Office	CD/DVD Labelling	Annual Report	125
	CD/DVD Jacket Cover	Annual Report	125

## ICT Services

The main clients/stakeholders of the Unit are the staff of OU including both academics and non-academics, our learners and part-time staff.

### Services Offered

1. IT Unit provided assistance during the:
  - Convocation Ceremonies (22 and 23 August 2019);
  - Induction Sessions (27 July 2019 and 01 February 2020); and
  - Implementation of online Souvenir System for Marketing.

In view of recent lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic, IT Unit faced the challenge to provide the following facilities to all stakeholders:

- Securing registration and re-registration systems via SSL certificates to accept other modes of online payment;
- Implementation of MyT and Juice applications to allow online payments by learners;
- Updating learner registration system for enrolment;
- Providing support to tutors on Part-Time Tutor online application;
- Coordinating issues regarding the new computerised Exams system between Examinations Unit staff and the consultant developing the system;
- Setting up and giving access to Grammarly software to CS of Examinations Unit;
- Providing support to staff having issues in accessing their mail from home;
- Updates on the registration/re-registration system;
- Updating and testing in Classroom Allocation System;
- Designing test cases for Vacancy System;
- Continuing Support for Classroom, Vacancy System, Zoom for tutors and learners;
- Updates in Payroll system for the month of May; and
- Renewal of the following licenses:
  1. Symantec Antivirus (47 Licences)
  2. Cute System
  3. Fingerprint machine
  4. DYNDNS

### Activities of the ICT Unit

1. Continuous update of student registration system by adding the following new features:
  - New interface for programme operation (enable, disable, extension, set deadline);
  - New interface for module fees operation; and
  - New interface for generation of Statistical Report.
2. Continuous update on re-registration system by adding the following new features:
  - Update and swapping of programmes of students;
  - Restricted access according to Departmental request;
  - Develop interface for statistical report;
  - New report as per staff requirements; and
  - Develop a module whereby learners will upload their individual payment details.
3. Designing and implementation of Help Desk System at OU by adding the following features:
  - Database for Help Desk Office where records of queries can be kept in a classified manner;
  - Generation of a statistical report; and
  - Design a form that can be filled online and record can be converted to excel document.
4. Designing and implementation of new online application for vacancies and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) system.
5. Attendance system for capturing of attendance through face recognition has been implemented on a rental basis to ease the contactless registration of attendance.

6. The implementation of Wi-Fi/Internet Connection via Airbox at Dunputh Lallah SSS for OU learners where face-to-face sessions were held.
7. Preparing specification and following procurement procedures for the purchase of New Tablets PC for August 2020 and January 2021 intakes.
8. The following software agreements have been renewed:
  - Antivirus (147 licenses);
  - Grammarly software (Yearly);
  - Antivirus (47 licenses);
  - Cute System Finance software (Every 3 Months);
  - Cloud hosting server;
  - Domain Names;
  - IMPP Wi-Fi service at OUCC campus;
  - ILP Rental;
  - Part-Time Tutor System; and
  - Examination System.

### Acquisitions

#### 1. *IT Equipment and Software*

- IT Unit provides technical support in elaborating technical specifications for the purchase of IT equipment and Software.
- IT Unit also manages the process of License renewal for software.

#### 2. *Software Purchase*

The examination and part-time tutor systems which have been outsourced have been implemented and are operational. Two further software are being outsourced, namely HR System and Accounting Software. IT Unit has worked out the specifications and procurement exercise has already been initiated. As at 30 June 2020, the bids were being examined by the Bid Evaluation Committee.

#### 3. *Provision of Tablets for Students*

Tablets are purchased by OU to be provided to students. During period July 2019 to 30 June 2020, IT Unit commissioned and uploaded materials in 2,500 tablets. Respective modules as per programme are uploaded in each tablet. IT Unit also provides technical support to learners regarding faulty tablets, whenever the need arises.

### Statistics

Statistics are compiled based on number of applicants through in-house system.

1. The Registration System (intake July 2019 to January 2020) received 4,621 applications for programmes offered by OU.
2. The Re-Registration System was used by 4,233 learners.
3. The Part-Time Tutor System received applications from 800 resource persons.
4. Tablets purchased and commissioned

Date	No. of Tablets
02 July 2019	300
06 August 2019	1,500
13 August 2019	300
26 November 2019	400

## Audio-Video Production Activities

From **July 2019 to June 2020**, the following activities were carried out:

- Recording of 102 video programmes for OU comprising face-to-face sessions, lectures recorded in studio, OU functions, clips, documentary, etc.;
- Recording of 497 video programmes under the Student Support Programme (Grades 7 to 9) as well as for students of Grades 7-12;
- Recording of 322 videos (Primary Support Videos) at the request of the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology; and
- Mastering and dubbing of a total of 4,775 DVDs and CDs.

The **videos** represent **19,671 edited-minutes** or about **327 hours** of recorded and edited videos as shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Number of Videos Produced for Financial Year 2019 – 2020**

Types							Total	Mins
Lectures, Workshops, etc.	102 videos						102	9,319
Student Support Programme (NYCBE)	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grades 10/11/12				
	30	212	212	43			497	5,896
Primary Support (COVID-19)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6		
	21	11	71	71	78	70	322	4,456
<b>TOTAL</b>							<b>921</b>	<b>19,671</b>

### Video, Photography and Design of In-house Events

All the marketing videos and artworks as well as the video and radio scripts used for advertising are produced in-house by the AVP Unit.

### Activities during Confinement due to COVID-19 Pandemic

During the lockdown, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology solicited OU's help to produce video-recorded lessons in our Studio to be aired on the National Television similar to the SSP Videos for Grades 7, 8 and 9.

## Engineering and Technology Services

The Engineering and Technology Services (ETS) has ensured an optimal utilisation of all equipment at OU to enable all Divisions and Units to function and meet their objectives during the year under review and has thus:

- planned investment in equipment, made technical and budgetary proposals, contributed in preparation of procurement documents and monitored installation and commissioning of equipment and systems;
- ensured that all buildings, infrastructure and equipment at Réduit and Forest Side are in good conditions at all times for the provision of a conducive working and learning environment to the staff and appropriate tutorial rooms to our learners;
- reported on the application of Information and Communication Technology for the educational requirements;

- managed technical/equipment stores and implemented a programme of preventive and corrective maintenance; and
- undertaken repairs of equipment related to network and electrical infrastructure in both buildings (at Réduit and Curepipe).

The ETS has also carried out maintenance work in network, electrical, painting, plumbing and pipe fitting in our campus, contributed fully in the provision of a quality support to its immediate clients during the face-to-face sessions with learners and in various other activities such as Zoom and web meetings.

One of the major achievements of the ETS was the upgrading of the Video Studio by acquiring state-of-the-art technology. The Video Studio and its Control Room were completely renewed with 3 new cameras inside the Studio, fully compliant with HD SDI protocol and quality. The lighting system inside the Video Studio was also replaced by LED technology. The new Video Studio was of great help for the production of video lessons for primary school students requested by the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology during the COVID-19 lockdown period.

The ETS staff had to work throughout the whole lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide support for recording in the Video Studio.



# QUALITY ASSURANCE



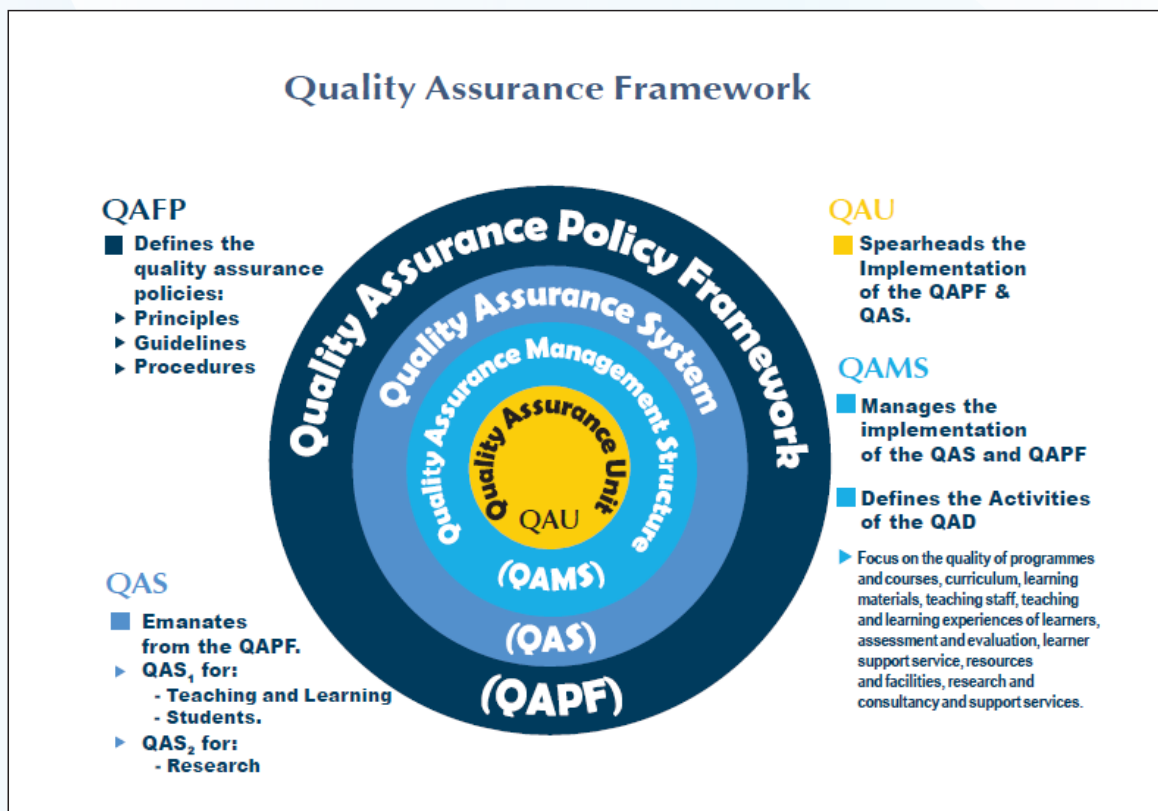
**“... the Panel noted a commitment and awareness of the growing importance of quality assurance.”**

Source: *Report of the First Cycle Quality Audit of the Open University of Mauritius*, TEC, 2018



The Quality Assurance Policy Framework of OU is reproduced hereunder:

Diagram 2: The Quality Assurance Policy Framework of OU



### Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK

The QAA (UK)'s assistance was sought to evaluate and propose workable solutions regarding OU's structure, quality processes and systems. As part of the consultancy, two QAA Consultants organised and delivered a 5-day training, from 24 to 28 February 2020, on European Standard Guidelines (ESG). The Quality Assurance Team, Programme Managers, Academics and key Administrative staff benefitted from this training.

In the second phase of the consultancy, remote meetings with the QAA Consultants are ongoing to ensure progress on the delivery of a report to OU. The outcome of this exercise would be to provide a gap analysis and workable solutions to address OU's Quality Assurance System implementation.

### ISO 9001:2015

The University has successfully transitioned from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015. The services of a Consultant (Symbiosis Management Training Centre and Consultancy Ltd) were retained to train staff on the new standards and to assist OU in updating its Quality Policy Manual. Following the transition, yearly surveillance audits are conducted by the Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB) to ensure that the quality system in place meets the requirements of the ISO Standards.

Table 14 below illustrates the Internal Audits undertaken in the period under review:

Month	Divisions/Units
July 2019	Admissions Office
	Engineering and Technology Services Unit
	General Administration/Management Unit
	Marketing and Public Relations Unit
	Procurement Unit
August 2019	Examinations Unit
	Finance Division
	Stores Unit
October 2019	Graphics, Publishing and Printing Unit
	ICT Unit
	Library Services
January 2020	Engineering and Technology Services Unit
	Open School Division
March 2020	General Administration/Registrar's Office

## Surveys

### Learner Surveys

Regular Learner Surveys are conducted on a semester-wise basis to assess the quality of services dispensed by OU and to discern the needs of learners, with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of service provided by the University. Since 2017 till date, five Learner Surveys have been completed: one is in the process of finalisation and one is in the launching stage. Information compiled is presented to Management and tabled at the ISO Management Review Meeting (MRM).

### Tracer Surveys

Tracer Surveys are ideally conducted once a cohort has graduated. To date, one Tracer Survey has been done by the Quality Assurance Division (QAD), while another one was done in collaboration with TEC and World Bank whose findings have not yet been published. The purpose of Tracer Surveys is to identify and follow up with OU's graduates to record their views/experiences during their study and their transition to the job market but also to guide OU in its quest to enhance the relevance and quality of materials offered.

## Queries and Complaints

The team collects data regularly during internal audits and on a more regular basis through a summary of Queries and Complaints logged by different Units/Divisions (Academic Affairs Division, Open School Division, Admissions Office, Director-General's Office, Examinations Unit, Student Affairs Unit and Finance Division) regarding issues learners may have during their educational journey at OU. Such information is used to investigate the problem and take necessary corrective actions but also to dissipate all doubts the learner may have. Those data are analysed, presented and discussed at the Management Review Meeting.

## Customer Care

Queries related to Moodle access, change in learners' personal details, request for access to learning materials, support to download materials and information about Turnitin report were handled promptly by the Student Affairs Unit to sustain an effective customer care.

Nearly all queries received from learners were resolved within 48 hours by the Student Affairs Unit team.



# PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATION AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS



***“The Open University of Mauritius is a very good institution. It is a young university and it is doing well. In fact, it is one of the best institutions of the Commonwealth.”***

Prof Asha Kanwar, CEO and President of COL, Interview on MBC on 21 February 2019.

We now live in an era where the world is increasingly connected; where many regional and international agencies and networks are engaged in activities to further the cause of education, including ODL. These agencies as well as OU can derive mutual benefits through partnerships, collaboration and networking.

Successful collaborative research projects have already resulted in enhanced visibility of OU, at both national and international levels. In turn, this has also attracted other universities and even non-academic organisations who wished to collaborate.

The successful and rapid growth of OU would not have been possible without the support from international partners. For instance, together with Imperial College London (ranked among the top five universities in the world) we have conducted several training programmes for medical doctors and specialists. The team from Imperial College London is also helping us to set up a school of public health that will play a pivotal role in Mauritius and in the region. OU is offering the Master of Public Health in collaboration with Imperial College London.

OU is a member of several prestigious international networks of universities:

- Association of Commonwealth Universities
- International Council for Open and Distance Education
- African Council for Distance Education
- Distance Education Association of Southern Africa
- Association of African Universities
- International Association of Universities

OU works with the following partners:

- Imperial College, London (UK)
- Stockholm University (Sweden)
- University of California, San Diego (USA)
- Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (UK)
- Commonwealth of Learning (Canada)
- University of South Africa
- Botswana Open University
- Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK)
- Open University of Tanzania
- Open University of Sri Lanka
- Charles Sturt University (Australia)
- African Virtual University (AVU)
- Indira Gandhi National Open University (India)

### **Signature of MoUs**

For the year 2019/2020, OU has signed MoUs/MoAs with the following institutions:

- University of Gävle (UoG) (July 2019)
- Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to provide support to OU to review and offer a MOOC on “Introduction to Sustainable Development in Business”
- AdvanceHE
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), UK CILT (UK) Awarding Organisation Centre
- Kenyatta University
- National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC)
- Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL)
- University of Gävle (UoG) (December 2019)
- WeLReN/CiC/Imperial College London
- Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance (MFSGG)
- University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN)
- Emerald Publishing
- Down Syndrome Association (Mauritius)

## Collaboration with the Parent Ministry

### Student Support Programme

The Student Support Programme (SSP) is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology with OU, Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), and Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI). The SSP has been developed with the assistance of the Government of India through the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). NCERT hosts the servers. Students of Grades 7 to 9 are provided additional support freely through the SSP platform **ssp.moe.mu.org**.

### The e-VBAB (e-VidyaBharati AarogyaBharati) Network Project

Under the broad umbrella of the commitments of the Third India-Africa summit in 2015, thousands of scholarships are being offered by the Government of India to provide students access to higher education and to enhance skills of professionals in Africa. This is the second phase of the “Pan African e-Network Project” which was conceived by former President of India, late Dr A P J Abdul Kalam. The first project provided education and medical services to Africa through the use of satellite links. The ex-Mauritius College of the Air and subsequently OU, acted as the implementing educational organisation for that project which ended in 2017.

Following the success of the first “Pan African e-Network Project”, the Government of India has launched a technologically-upgraded version of the project to service African students for 5 years. Broadband technology is now used for the e-VBAB project. Reputed Indian universities are involved in the project. They are recognised by UGC (University Grants Commission) of India. As per UGC criteria for the delivery of online programmes, only universities ranked amongst the first 100 ones have been selected. The Government of India has designated TCIL (Telecommunications Consultants India Limited) as the implementing agency for the e-VBAB project. Mauritius has again become a partner country for the project through an agreement with TCIL signed on 07 October 2019. With its expertise and strong experience in the delivery of programmes through technology, OU has been selected as the learning centre in Mauritius. Through an agreement signed with TCIL on 8 April 2020, OU will benefit from various facilities.

After the agreement with TCIL, OU has established contacts with TCIL India and the Indian universities to gather information on programmes and the set-up for programme delivery.

With COVID-19, there is growing uncertainty regarding the job market. Skilling and re-skilling are high on Government agendas and OU is ready to take up the challenge.



# RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY



*Effective Research, Consultancy and Innovation represent one of OU's strategic objectives. All academics at OU are given the opportunity to do research, present papers and publish their academics papers.*



## Knowledge Diffusion

1. OU organised a workshop on Research Integrity with UNISA experts (Live streaming) on 10 October 2019. OU academics and staff from other TELs participated in the workshop. A certificate of attendance was issued to participants.
2. The First Research Forum was organised on 04 November 2019 for OU academics. This platform gave academics the opportunity to share their work, which they had already presented in conferences. The presenters were Dr P Appavoo, Mrs S Nundoo-Ghoorah, Mr A Gokhool, Mrs V Gooria, Mrs M Gungea, Mr T Chadeea, and Mrs R Doomun.
3. A 2-hour workshop was conducted by Professor E J Van Niekerk (Department of Educational Leadership and Management of the University of South Africa) on "Thesis Supervision" at OU (07 February 2020).
4. On 18 May 2020, Emerald Publishing - Africa held a 2-hour Webinar session on "Guide to Getting Published" for OU academics. The training executive was Mahynour Okda.

## Attendance and Paper Presentation at Conferences

1. Dr Appavoo attended the SARIMA Conference 2019 from 02 to 07 September in Cape Town, South Africa. This conference targeted professionals and researchers from various universities in Africa, Europe, and the USA to share their expertise and learn new skills in the field of Research Management (RM).
2. Presentation at the Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF9) in Scotland in September 2019:

Presentation	Name of Academics	Dates	Title of Presentation
Paper presentation	Mrs M Gungea	7-13 September 2019	Assessing the needs of industries to enhance graduate employability – the case of Mauritius.
	Mr T Chadeea	7-13 September 2019	Developing a framework for the implementation of Augmented Reality in the pedagogy of the Open University of Mauritius.
Presentation	Mrs R Doomun	6-13 September 2019	Implementation of a competency based ICT curriculum at OU.

## Submission and Publication of Research Articles in Peer-reviewed Journals

The following articles were published:

- a) Veer Ramjeawon, P and Rowley, J (2020). "Enablers and Barriers to Knowledge Management in Higher Education: Perspectives from South Africa and Mauritius". *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-12-2019-0362>.
- b) Jeeneea, R and Sukon, K (2020). The Mauritian Response to COVID-19: Rapid Bold Actions in the Right Direction. *VoxEU.org*. <https://voxeu.org/article/mauritian-response-covid-19>.

## Ongoing Research Projects

1. Continuity Learning Programme – a COVID-19 learning experience
2. Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning – A qualitative analysis of online reviews.

3. Challenges of carrying out research by ODL learners
4. Gender biasness of the teaching profession

### Other Activities

1. The following applications under different Research Schemes were submitted to Higher Education Commission (HEC) on 04 December 2019:
  - Enhancing Research Capacity to Bridge the Gender Gap  
Title: "Empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Rodrigues: A breakthrough using ICT tools"
  - Inter-disciplinary/Inter-institutional Team-based Research  
Title: "Tertiary Educational qualifications as a predictor for effective employability: The Industry perspective".
  - Research Publication Incentive Scheme  
Under this scheme, two peer-reviewed publications and one Book chapter were submitted.
  - Incentive Scheme for Master's by Research/Doctoral Completion  
Under this scheme, a list of 7 DBA/PhD awardees was submitted.
2. The marking rubric and guidelines for dissertations have been finalised and are now being implemented.
3. Twelve PhD research proposal presentations have been completed online and feedback provided enabled students to bring the necessary corrections to their Research Proposal (May 2020).
4. A Research Ethics Committee has been set up to process all requests for ethical clearance from OU learners and researchers/academics.

### Activities during Confinement – COVID-19 Pandemic

The Research Office has been working remotely during the COVID-19 lockdown. There were opportunities for regular virtual meetings during the lockdown period which enabled this office to continue operating. Two research proposals have been prepared and submitted to Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC) during the COVID-19 confinement, namely:

- a) Accredited Community Social Health Practitioners (ACSHioN) in collaboration with Imperial College London.
- b) Stay Home and Close Contact System (SHCCSys) in collaboration with UTM and UoM.



# OUR PEOPLE



*The Director-General of OU is the Chief Executive and Chief Academic Officer of OU. He is assisted in his functions by the Director of the Open School, the Registrar, the Management team and by academics and non-academics including administrative, technical, financial, general services and minor/workmen's cadres.*

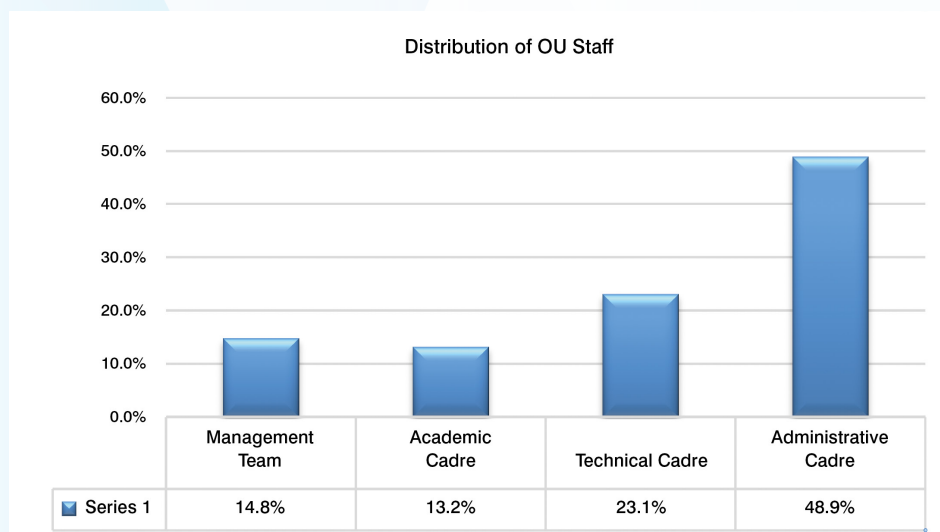
The staff population of OU consists mostly of staff from the ex-Mauritius College of the Air.

### Staff Population of OU

As at 30 June 2020, the staff population on permanent and pensionable establishment of OU was 182 including:

- ◆ 27 Management Team,
- ◆ 24 Academic Cadre,
- ◆ 42 Technical Cadre
- ◆ 89 Administrative Cadre

**Figure 1** below shows the distribution of OU staff as at 30 June 2020:



**Figure 1**

In addition, OU has also enlisted:

- Visiting Faculties under TEC scheme;
- Part-time Lecturers;
- Trainees in line with OU Policy and Government schemes; and
- Students from Tertiary Education Institutions under work based learning programmes.

The organisation’s structure as per Open University of Mauritius Act is at **Annex 4**.

### Part-time Tutorial Support to Our Learners

#### For Academic Affairs Programmes

- OU enlisted the services of part-time tutors to provide tutorial support to our learners:
- For the semester **July 2019**: **212 part-time tutors** (excluding dissertation supervisors) were appointed by OU.
- For the semester **February 2020**: **202 part-time tutors** (excluding dissertation supervisors) were appointed by OU. Skype sessions were also organised for students in Rodrigues.

#### For Open School Programmes

- July 2019 – June 2020: **60 part-time Tutors**

## Visiting Faculties

OU has also enlisted two Visiting Scholars under TEC scheme for one year ending in 2019, namely Dr Myriam Blin to devise a learning and teaching strategy which will be implemented by the University and Dr Jessica Auerbach, to conduct research on Interculturality with the aim of launching a journal on Intercultural Studies.

## External Appointments

The following vacant posts were filled by external candidates:

- Lecturer (on contractual basis);
- Assistant Systems Analyst;
- Technician (Engineering and Technology Services);
- Assistant Financial Operations Officer; and
- Clerk/Word Processing Operator.

## Retirements

Five officers retired from the service during the period under review:

- The Head Library Services;
- A Lecturer;
- A Senior Printing Officer;
- A Senior Documentation Officer; and
- An Assistant Documentation Officer.

## Resignations

Five officers resigned from the service during the period under review:

- An Administrative Officer;
- A Quality Assurance Officer;
- An Assistant Systems Analyst; and
- A Clerk/Word Processing Operator.

## End of Contractual Appointment

One officer's contractual appointment ended during the period under review:

- Director (Academic Affairs Division).

## Capacity Building

- A one-day workshop on 'Employability and Performance Indicators in the Higher Education Sector' was held on 10 September 2019 at Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor of OU, Réduit.
- A four-day 'Technology-Enhanced Learning Workshop' from 23 to 26 September 2019 was organised at OU to equip the academics and administrators with the skills and competence required to optimise the use of the University's e-learn platform in delivering an engaging and supporting learning experience to its students.

The team unveiled the new OU Moodle platform using the latest version of Moodle platform and participants were given an opportunity to shape the interface (template and quality standards) of the platform through their work during the workshop. Participants got the opportunity to review best practices and challenges in online flexible learning and assessment.

- A talk on the nature of Quality, 'Quality as a paradox' was delivered by Professor Fernando Padro, from Australia, on 11 September 2019 at OU, Réduit.
- The workshop of BA (Hons) Library and Information Science was held from 30 September to 04 October 2019 at OU, Réduit.

- The workshop on 'Learning and Teaching in Higher Education – Module 1' was delivered by Dr Warren Edmund Kidd, Trainer of Advance HE UK from 03 to 06 February 2020 at OU, Réduit.

## Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE)

The Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (CLTHE) was designed by academics at Advance HE (UK) in collaboration with OU. The programme was developed to align with the globally recognised Professional Standards Framework (PSF). The framework identifies the areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values which provide the context for participants throughout the programme when developing, discussing and reflecting on their academic practice.

The Advance HE's Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education is for experienced staff – comprising three modules of 4 days' duration each, and covering core areas of teaching and learning in higher education.

The programme is aligned with the UK Professional Standards Framework and facilitates achievement of HEA Associate Fellowship, Fellowship or Senior Fellowship.

The 'CLTHE Module 1 Workshop' was held from 03 to 06 February 2020 at OU. 24 Academics participated in the workshop.

Delivery of Module 2 is scheduled for November 2020 and that of Module 3 for March 2021.

### Training of Part-time Tutors by Student Affairs Unit

Individual training was given to tutors having difficulties in using the Moodle platform. This training empowers them to use the platform for uploading of lecture notes and other documents and also to communicate with learners through messages and chat.

### Training of Non-academic Staff

Seventy-one members of staff from the administrative, financial, procurement and technical cadres followed the 'Training on Tender Preparation and Evaluation' organised by the Civil Service College at OU premises in two batches: on 16, 28, 30 October 2019 and 18, 23 and 30 June 2020.

## Attendance at Workshops/Trainings/Courses/Seminars

### Academic Staff

#### **Mrs A Tirvassen, Senior Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the "Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills" on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- Half-day workshop on "Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices" on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.
- Research Seminar on "*Diversité, interprétation, écriture: démarches de recherche sur l'appropriation des langues*" by Prof Véronique Castellotti on 28 October 2019 at MIE.

#### **Mrs S Nundoo-Ghoorah, Senior Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the "Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills" on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Dr T Luckho, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Half-day workshop on “National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Risks” on 29 August 2019 at Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel, Port Louis.
- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, BalACLava.
- Workshop on “Establishing Regulatory Impact Assessment Framework in Mauritius” on 04 September 2019 at Caudan Arts Centre.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mrs T Jutton-Seebarrun, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- One-day workshop on “African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Technical Support Mission to Mauritius” on 03 October 2019 at Flying Dodo, Bagatelle.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mrs V Gooria, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Workshop panel session on “Bringing together global leaders to develop new tools for universities and society to plan for and navigate this new world” on 26 August 2019 at Hennessy Park Hotel, Ébène.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019.

**Mrs S Samjawon-Neerbun, Lecturer**

participated in a half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mr A Gokhool, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, BalACLava.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.



- “Annual Conference of the State and Other Employees Federation” held on 22 January 2020 at 14.00 hrs at the seat of the Federation, Unity House, Beau Bassin.

**Mr A J Rumjaun, Lecturer**

participated in a half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mr B Permall, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mrs K Ramsohok-Heerasing, Lecturer**

participated in a two-day hands-on training workshop on “Academic Language Editing” held on 23 and 24 July 2019 at MIE.

**Mr Y Boodhun, Lecturer**

participated in a half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mrs M Gungea, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Two-day hands-on training workshop on “Academic Language Editing” held on 23 and 24 July 2019 at MIE.
- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Dr L J Belle, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mr M Sohoraye, Lecturer**

participated in a half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

**Mrs R Doomun, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- “National High-Level Workshop for Education on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for Excellence” on 24 July 2019 at Quatre Bornes Municipal Council Hall.
- One-day workshop on “Internet Safety: Policy Guidelines to Develop Digital Citizenship Education” on 11 September 2019 at Palms Hotel, Quatre Bornes.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.
- “Second Feasibility Workshop for United Nations Technology Innovation Lab” on 14 November 2019 at Ravenala Attitude Hotel, Balaclava.
- “Fintech, Blockchain and AI Trade Mission” on 18, 19 and 20 November 2019 at Labourdonnais Hotel, Port Louis.
- Training on “‘R’ programming language by *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie*” from 25 to 28 November 2019 at *Campus numérique francophone (CNF) de Réduit*.
- “National Research and Education Network” workshop on 04 December 2019 funded by *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)*.
- Conference for the “SDG’s & Green & Creative Quatre Bornes” at the Municipality of Quatre Bornes held on 16 January 2020.
- Half-day workshop on “Software Testing” on 05 February 2020 at the Engineering Lecture Theatre 2 at University of Mauritius.
- Full-day workshop on “Together for a Better Internet” on 12 February 2020 at the National Computer Board.
- “Melting Pot 2020 Innovation Summit – ‘MasterClass on AI/ML’” held on 14 February 2020 at Hennessy Park Hotel, Ébène.

**Mr T K Chadeea, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.
- Half-day workshop on “Software Testing” on 05 February 2020 at the Engineering Lecture Theatre 2 at University of Mauritius.

**Mr D G Henriette-Bolli, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.

#### **Mr P Dookhun, Lecturer**

participated in the following:

- Half-day workshop on “Sharing Digital Teaching and Learning Practices” on 22 October 2019 organised by the TEC.
- “Fintech, Blockchain and AI Conference” on 18 November 2019 at Labourdonnais Hotel, Port Louis.

#### **Dr A Jugmohun, Technical Officer/Senior Technical Officer**

participated in a full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

#### Open School Division

#### **Mr I Seetaramadoo, Director Open School**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- “First African Knowledge Exchange Forum on Corporate Governance” from 27 to 29 November 2019 at Long Beach Hotel.

#### **Miss M Li Yin, Senior Academic Media Coordinator**

participated in the following:

- Two-and-a-half-day training on “Train the Trainer” course by Civil Service College, Mauritius held on 26, 28 and 30 August 2019 at Atom House, Port Louis.
- Two-day training on “Negotiation and Mediation Skills”, a course by Civil Service College, Mauritius held on 10 and 12 September 2019 at Atom House, Port Louis.
- Research Seminar on “*Diversité, interprétation, écriture: démarches de recherche sur l’appropriation des langues*” by Prof Véronique Castellotti on 28 October 2019 at the Frank Richard Lecture Theatre, MIE.
- Collaboration to ‘*La Journée du Prof de Français*’ on 28 November 2019 organised by MOE and the French Embassy.

#### Research Office

#### **Dr P Appavoo, Senior Academic Media Coordinator**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

- Seminar on “Soviet and Russian Space Exploration” held on 26 November 2019 at Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre.
- Two-day workshop on “Building Faculty, Expertise in E-Learning” by Dr Upasana Gitanjali Singh on 03 and 04 February 2020 at *Université des Mascareignes*.
- Seminar on “Globalisation, National Development and Poverty” in Mauritius on 19 March 2020 at Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.

## Non-Academic Staff

### Learners Support Staff

#### **Mr M Hosany, Office Management Assistant**

participated in the Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

#### **Mrs B N Hosenally, Management Support Officer**

participated in the following:

- Seminar on “Occupational Safety and Health for Employers/Employees in the Parastatal Organisations” from 10 to 11 December 2019 by Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training.
- Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

#### **Mrs R Hosany, Office Management Assistant**

participated in the Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 09 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

## Administration Division

#### **Mrs S Gopee, Registrar**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of performance funding models and a strategy for the implementation of the model for the public Higher Education Sector” on 29 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- “First African Knowledge Exchange Forum on Corporate Governance” from 27 to 29 November 2019 at Hotel Long Beach.

#### **Ms M Gokhul, Administrative Officer**

participated in the following:

- National workshop for Land Drainage Authority – Project “Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change in the Republic of Mauritius” on 24 October 2019 at the Ravenala Attitude, Turtle Bay, Balaclava.

- Seminar on “Occupational Safety and Health for Employers/Employees in the Parastatal Organisations” from 28 to 29 January 2020 at Occupational Safety and Health Training and Information Centre, Level 2, Victoria House, Port Louis.

***Mrs P D Dusoruth, Administrative Officer***

participated in the Conference on “Data Protection Today – Breaking the Iceberg” held on 16 January 2020 at Intercontinental Hotel, Balaclava Fort, Balaclava.

***Mrs S Ramsurrun-Jugroo, Administrative Officer***

participated in the Seminar on “Mauhazard: An Interactive Tool to Assess Hazard Perception Skills of Drivers in Mauritius” on 05 September 2019 at the MRC.

***Mr R K Gungah, Higher Executive Officer***

participated in the Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

***Mrs L B Jewan, Higher Executive Officer***

participated in the Seminar on “Occupational Safety and Health for Employers/Employees in the Parastatal Organisations” from 16 to 17 July 2019 at Occupational Safety and Health Training and Information Centre, Victoria House, Port Louis by Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training.

***Mrs S Ramkissoon, Management Support Officer***

participated in the Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 09 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

*Marketing and Public Relations Unit*

***Mrs K Sanassee, Office Management Assistant***

participated in the Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 09 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

*Human Resources Unit*

***Mr S D Ramkissoon, Office Management Assistant***

participated in the Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

***Mrs R Tulsi, Management Support Officer***

participated in the Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

***Mrs D Nattoo, Management Support Officer***

participated in the Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 09 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

*ICT Unit*

***Mrs P Hurgobin, Assistant Systems Analyst***

participated in the Training Programme on “Cybersecurity Fundamentals” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 18 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

## Quality Assurance Team

### **Mr V Patten, Head Graphics, Publishing and Printing**

participated in the following:

- Full-day workshop on the “Development of an action plan for the improvement of the Quality Assurance Framework of the Higher Education” on 28 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.
- “First African Knowledge Exchange Forum on Corporate Governance” from 27 to 29 November 2019 at Hotel Long Beach.

### **Mrs M Chadee, Quality Assurance Officer**

participated in a full-day workshop on the “Development of an action plan for the improvement of the Quality Assurance Framework of the Higher Education” on 28 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

## Examinations Unit

### **Mr V Veerabudren, Deputy Registrar**

participated in a full-day workshop on the “Development of a scheme for the upgrading of qualifications of lecturers to doctoral level as well as their teaching skills” on 30 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

## Finance Division

### **Mr S Nunkoo, Financial Controller**

participated in the SIL workshop on “Strengthening Financial Management in the Public Sector” on 29 January 2020 at Caudan Arts Centre.

### **Mrs N B Ackburally, Accountant**

participated in a full-day workshop on the “Development of Performance Funding Models and a Strategy for the Implementation of the Model for the Public Higher Education Sector” on 29 August 2019 held at Westin Turtle Bay Resort and Spa, Balaclava.

## Admissions Unit

### **Mrs S Bunsy, Documentation Officer**

participated in the Training Programme on “Handling Difficult Customers” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 02 March 2020 at Atom House, Port Louis.

### **Mrs R Nundloul, Management Support Officer**

participated in the Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting” by Civil Service College, Mauritius on 09 March 2020 at Fooks House, Port Louis.

## Internal Audit Unit

**Mrs P Ramdoo-Sadien, Internal Auditor/Senior Internal Auditor** participated in the “IFRS Update – IAS 12,16,38 by PwC Academy” on 20 November 2019 at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Tower, Ébène.

## ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF OU

### Financial Position

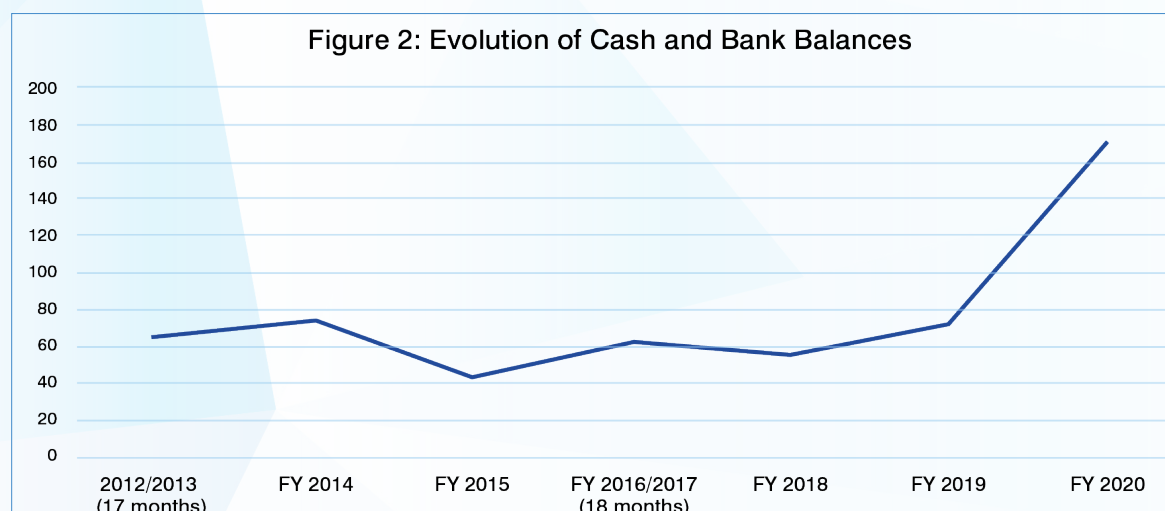
Since its establishment on 12 July 2012, OU had to develop its strategic plan in order to steer its operations. It has developed sound financial strategies and policies. Based on latest financial results as at 30 June 2020, it is clear that the overall financial position of OU has improved compared to previous financial years. With the recent Government decision to provide free tertiary education to Mauritians up to undergraduate level, OU has registered significant increase in enrolments for its courses and its student population is expected to reach around 8,500 by end of 2020.

**Table 15: Key Financial Results**

Financial Year	Government Grant	Operating Income	Operating Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Cash and Bank Balance
	Rs M	Rs M	Rs M	Rs M	Rs M
2012/2013 (17 months)	151.1	55.1	184.50	21.70	64.50
FY 2014	88.4	115.7	175.90	28.20	74.60
FY 2015	39.4	108.6	177.60	(29.60)	43.20
FY 2016/2017 (18 months)	77.4	204.2	292.20	(10.60)	62.80
FY 2017/2018	42.3	149.9	201.30	(9.10)	56.20
FY 2018/2019 (unaudited)	39.7	184.2	214.00	9.90	72.9
FY 2019/2020	29.4	278.1	221.1	86.4	172.2

### Cash Position

Following the significant increase in enrolment of learners during the financial year 2019/2020, the cash balance of OU has increased by Rs 99.3M and has attained Rs172.2M. The increase in cash balance is directly related to the increase in revenue from course fees. OU has received an amount of Rs 260M as course fees during FY 2019/20 as compared to Rs165M for the preceding financial year, representing an increase of Rs 95M (58%). The evolution of cash and bank balance is shown in **Figure 2** below.

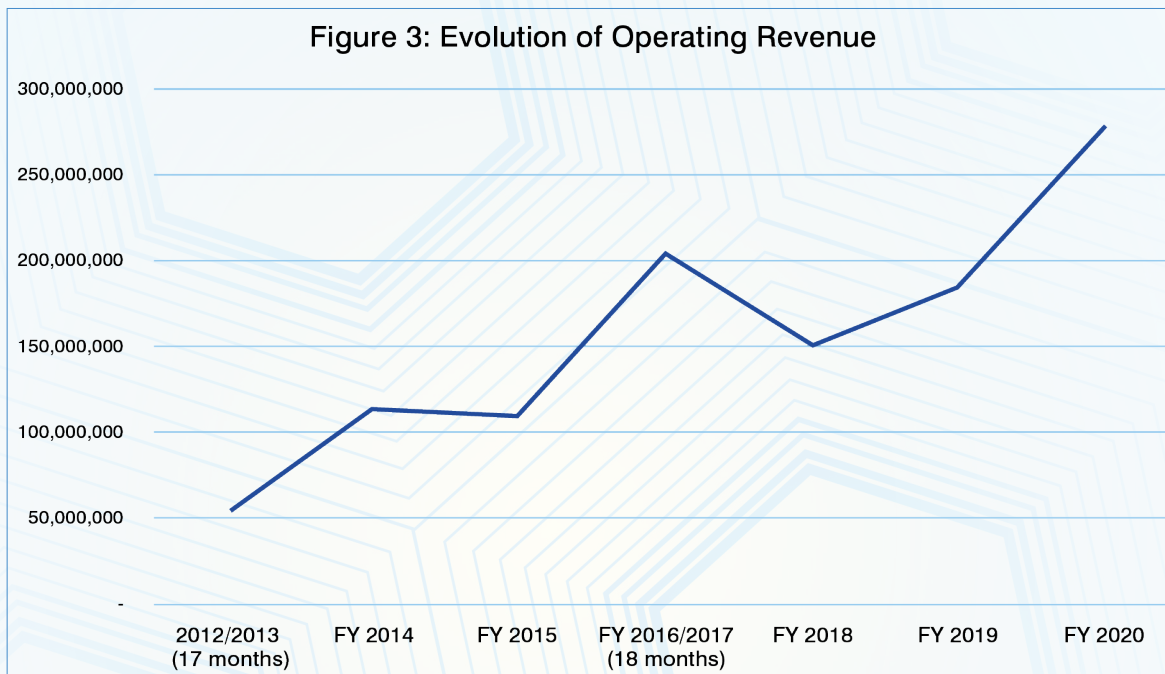


## Operating Results

As per the unaudited Accounts of OU for the financial year ended 30 June 2020, OU has registered a **surplus of Rs 86.4M**. The main reasons for the surplus may be summarised as follows:

- Increase in revenue from fees following the new Government measure on Free Tertiary Education Scheme as from January 2019. Revenue from fees has increased by Rs 95M.
- OU is currently generating 90% of its operating revenue from fees from learners as well as from other activities relating to printing and audio-video productions.

The evolution of operating revenue is depicted in **Figure 3** below.



Though Government contribution towards OU's Budget decreased over the years, OU managed to sustain its budget by generating revenue mainly from course fees from learners and by adopting rigorous measures towards expenditure management. OU is currently generating 90% of its operating income mainly from course fees.

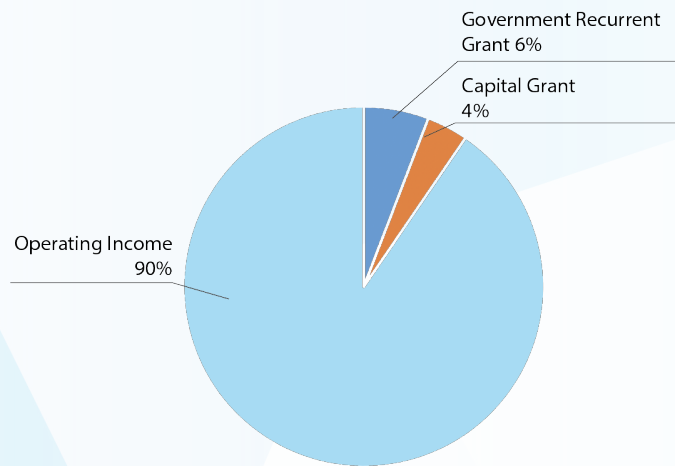
When OU started operation in 2013, the percentage of Recurrent Grant over Total Operating Income was around 72%. As per the latest figures, the percentage of Recurrent Grant over Total Operating Income is around 6%.

It should be also noted that in 2013, OU was generating around 27% of its operating income through course fees. With the exponential growth in learners over the last seven years, OU is currently generating nearly 90% of its total Operating Income.



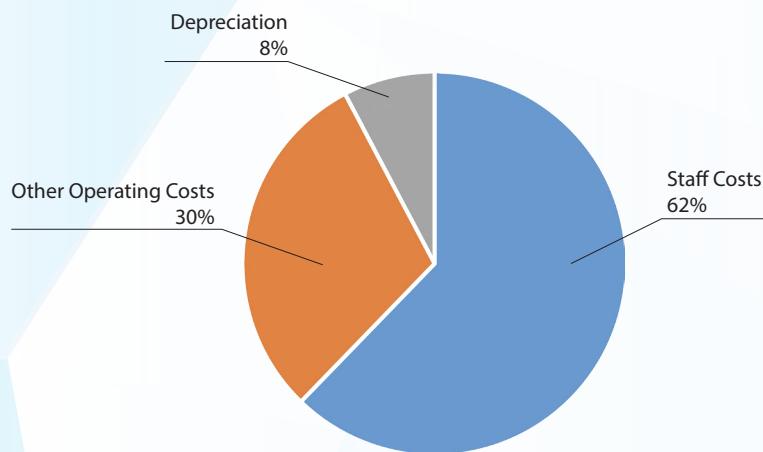
The distribution of Revenue for the FY 2019/20 is depicted in **Figure 4** below:

**Figure 4: Distribution of Revenue for the FY 2019/2020**



The distribution of expenditure of OU for the FY 2019/20 is shown in **Figure 5** below:

**Figure 5: Distribution of Expenditure for FY 2019/2020**



Based on the above financial results and the growing trend of learners, it is expected that OU will achieve its target to attain financial independence by 2025.



**REPORT OF THE  
DIRECTOR OF AUDIT**





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**REPORT OF THE  
DIRECTOR OF AUDIT**

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**On the Financial Statements  
of the Open University of Mauritius  
for the year ended 30 June 2020**

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**NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE**

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# NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT

### TO THE BOARD OF THE

### OPEN UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

#### Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

#### Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of the Open University of Mauritius, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020 and the statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets/equity, cash flow statement, and the statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the *Basis for Qualified Opinion* section of my report, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Open University of Mauritius as at 30 June 2020, and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs).

#### Basis for Qualified Opinion

##### Receivables – Rs 32,440,485

Included under Receivables were

- Course Fees debtors of some Rs 12.9 million that were due for periods before 30 June 2018. Of this sum, details were not available regarding debts of some Rs 2.5 million. Proper actions that could ensure the collection of these overdue debts were yet to be taken by the University.
- Sundry Debtors of some Rs 1.6 million that were due since the years 2013 and 2014 that have not been collected till date.

Recoverability of these debts is uncertain. Appropriate allowances for expected credit losses have not been made in accounts.

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report. I am independent of the Open University of Mauritius in accordance with the INTOSAI Code of Ethics, together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Mauritius, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my qualified opinion.

## **Key Audit Matters**

Key Audit Matters are those matters that, in my professional judgment, were of most significance in my audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of my audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters. I have determined that there are no key audit matters to communicate in my report.

## ***Other Information***

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report of the Open University of Mauritius, but does not include the financial statements and my report thereon.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Open University of Mauritius's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible of overseeing the Open University of Mauritius's financial reporting process.

## **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs, will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISSAIs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Open University of Mauritius's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Open University of Mauritius's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Open University of Mauritius to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

I also provide those charged with governance with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with those charged with governance, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or, when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

## **Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements**

### ***Management's Responsibilities for Compliance***

In addition to the responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements described above, management is also responsible to ensure that the Open University of Mauritius's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations, including compliance with the provisions of laws and regulations that determine the reported amounts and disclosures in an entity's financial statements.

### ***Auditor's Responsibilities***

In addition to the responsibility to express an opinion on the financial statements described above, I am also responsible to report to the Board whether:

- (a) I have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of my knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of the audit;
- (b) the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act and any directions of the Minister, in so far as they relate to the accounts, have been complied with;
- (c) in my opinion, and, as far as could be ascertained from my examination of the financial statements submitted to me, any expenditure incurred is of an extravagant or wasteful nature, judged by normal commercial practice and prudence;
- (d) in my opinion, the Open University of Mauritius has been applying its resources and carrying out its operations fairly and economically; and
- (e) the provisions of Part V of the Public Procurement Act regarding the bidding process have been complied with.

I performed procedures, including the assessment of the risks of material non-compliance, to obtain audit evidence to discharge the above responsibilities.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

### ***Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act***

I have obtained all information and explanations which to the best of my knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of my audit.

The Open University of Mauritius has complied with the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act.

Based on my examination of the accounts of the Open University of Mauritius, nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe that:

- (a) any expenditure incurred was of an extravagant or wasteful nature, judged by normal commercial practice and prudence; and
- (b) the Open University has not applied its resources and carried out its operations fairly and economically.



***Public Procurement Act***

In my opinion, the provisions of Part V of the Act have been complied with as far as it appears from my examination of the relevant records.



**C. ROMOAH**  
Director of Audit

National Audit Office  
Level 14,  
Air Mauritius Centre  
PORT LOUIS

19 May 2021



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
**30 JUNE 2020**



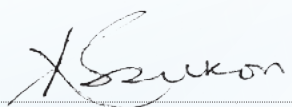
# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

		30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Notes	Rs	Rs
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5	172,175,561	72,904,232
Receivables	6	32,440,485	30,419,113
Inventories	7	3,079,346	2,538,881
		<b>207,695,392</b>	<b>105,862,226</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Receivables - Car Loan	8	9,205,257	12,280,694
Property, Plant & Equipment	9	35,567,988	36,523,837
Intangible Assets	10	8,953,549	11,591,198
		<b>53,726,794</b>	<b>60,395,729</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>261,422,186</b>	<b>166,257,955</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Payables	11	26,362,339	25,041,200
Car Loans	12	4,076,256	3,915,191
Employee Benefits	13	6,000,000	11,500,000
		<b>36,438,595</b>	<b>40,456,391</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Car Loans	12	9,205,257	12,280,694
Long-term Employee Benefits	13	63,902,530	54,826,408
Pension Obligation	14	235,248,832	167,615,113
		<b>308,356,619</b>	<b>234,722,215</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>344,795,214</b>	<b>275,178,606</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>(83,373,028)</b>	<b>(108,920,651)</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated Fund		(83,373,028)	(109,070,916)
Revaluation Reserve		-	150,265
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>(83,373,028)</b>	<b>(108,920,651)</b>

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

Approved by the Board of the Open University of Mauritius on 29 September 2020

  
 Mr Rajeswara Duva-Pentiah  
 Chairman

  
 Dr Kaviraj Sharma Sukon  
 Director-General

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

		30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Notes	Rs	Rs
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Revenue from Exchange Transactions	15.1	277,024,038	182,951,692
Revenue from Non Exchange Transactions	15.2	30,414,763	40,905,295
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b><u>307,438,801</u></b>	<b><u>223,856,987</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Staff Costs	16	137,641,928	137,353,641
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense	9 & 10	17,081,388	17,894,317
Other Operating Expenses	17	66,398,684	64,309,802
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b><u>221,122,000</u></b>	<b><u>219,557,760</u></b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>		<b><u>86,316,801</u></b>	<b><u>4,299,227</u></b>

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS/EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	Notes	Accumulated Fund Rs	Revaluation Reserve Rs	Total Rs
<b>Opening Balance as at 1 July 2018</b>		<b>(119,817,797)</b>	<b>311,931</b>	<b>(119,505,866)</b>
Surplus for the year		4,299,227	-	4,299,227
Remeasurement on Actuarial Gain	14	4,633,925	-	4,633,925
Prior Year Adjustments		1,813,729	-	1,813,729
Transfer of surplus depreciation	4.1 (c)	-	(161,666)	(161,666)
<b>Closing Balance as at 30 June 2019</b>		<b><u>(109,070,916)</u></b>	<b><u>150,265</u></b>	<b><u>(108,920,651)</u></b>
<b>Opening Balance as at 1 July 2019</b>		<b>(109,070,916)</b>	<b>150,265</b>	<b>(108,920,651)</b>
Surplus for the year		86,316,801	-	86,316,801
Remeasurement on Actuarial Loss	14	(60,866,978)	-	(60,866,978)
Prior Year Adjustments		248,065	-	248,065
Transfer of surplus depreciation	4.1 (c)	-	(150,265)	(150,265)
<b>Closing Balance as at 30 June 2020</b>		<b><u>(83,373,028)</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>(83,373,028)</u></b>

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

# CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Rs	Rs
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Surplus for the year	<b>86,316,801</b>	<b>4,299,227</b>
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation and Amortisation Expense	17,081,388	17,894,317
Prior Year Adjustment	248,065	1,813,728
Remeasurement on Actuarial Gain/(Loss)	(60,866,978)	4,633,925
Pension Liability	67,633,719	4,501,215
(Gain)/Loss on disposal of Non Current Assets	(42,999)	40,596
<b>Operating Profit before working capital changes</b>	<b>110,369,996</b>	<b>33,183,008</b>
<b>Changes in Working Capital:</b>		
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	1,054,065	(4,384,255)
Increase in Inventories	(540,465)	(4)
Increase in Payables	1,982,889	10,230,029
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>112,866,485</b>	<b>39,028,778</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of Non Current Assets	(13,638,156)	(22,253,518)
Proceeds from Disposal of Non Current Assets	43,000	-
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>(13,595,156)</b>	<b>(22,253,518)</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/DECREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>99,271,329</b>	<b>16,775,260</b>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT BEGINNING OF PERIOD	72,904,232	56,128,972
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF PERIOD</b>	<b>172,175,561</b>	<b>72,904,232</b>

## Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

### 1. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and Cash Equivalents consist of cash in hand and balances with bank. Cash and Cash Equivalents included in the Cash Flow Statement comprised the Statement of Financial Position amounts.

	Rs	Rs
Cash and Cash Equivalents are made up of:		
Cash at bank	172,130,245	72,544,679
Cash in hand	45,316	359,553
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at year end</b>	<b>172,175,561</b>	<b>72,904,232</b>

### 2. Non-Current Assets

Non-current assets were acquired at an aggregate cost of Rs 11,671,830. Out of which Rs 10,702,233 was financed by means of capital grant from the Government.

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

## STATEMENT OF COMPARISON OF BUDGET AND ACTUAL AMOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual Amounts on Comparable Basis	Difference Original and Final Budget	Notes	Difference Final Budget and Actual Amounts	Notes
	Original	Final					
	Rs	Rs					
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>							
<b>Recurrent Grant</b>							
Recurrent Grant	20,000,000	17,000,000	17,905,000	3,000,000	18.2.1	905,000	
Additional Recurrent Grant - NYCBE	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,431	-		431	
Course Fees - OU Learners	71,219,000	97,500,000	102,663,213	(26,281,000)	18.2.2	5,163,213	18.3.1
Course Fees - Government (Free Tertiary Education Scheme)	160,610,000	148,150,000	152,403,964	12,460,000	18.2.2	4,253,964	18.3.1
Acquisition of Motor Vehicles	-	(3,000,000)	(3,000,000)	3,000,000	18.2.3	-	
Other Income	10,000,000	12,000,000	13,747,870	(2,000,000)		1,747,870	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>267,829,000</b>	<b>277,650,000</b>	<b>289,720,478</b>	<b>(9,821,000)</b>		<b>12,070,478</b>	
<b>Capital Grant</b>							
Capital Grant	5,000,000	5,000,000	2,871,001	-		(2,128,999)	18.3.2
Additional Capital Grant - NYCBE	5,000,000	6,272,635	6,272,635	(1,272,635)		-	
Funds for acquisition of Motor Vehicles	-	3,000,000	3,000,000	(3,000,000)	18.2.3	-	
Other Income	-	43,000	43,000	(43,000)		-	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>14,315,635</b>	<b>12,186,636</b>	<b>(4,315,635)</b>		<b>(2,128,999)</b>	
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>277,829,000</b>	<b>291,965,635</b>	<b>301,907,114</b>	<b>(14,136,635)</b>		<b>9,941,479</b>	
<b>PAYMENTS:</b>							
<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>							
<b>Personal Emoluments</b>							
Salary	89,500,000	80,000,000	78,607,760	(9,500,000)		1,392,240	
Compensation 2017	295,000	250,000	242,841	(45,000)		7,159	
Compensation 2018	865,000	790,000	775,099	(75,000)		14,901	
Compensation 2019	960,000	870,000	861,227	(90,000)		8,773	
Compensation 2020	-	270,000	262,290	270,000		7,710	
End-of-Year Bonus	6,700,000	6,700,000	6,428,446	-		271,554	
Allowances	2,500,000	3,500,000	3,216,664	1,000,000		283,336	
Extra Assistance	6,000,000	5,000,000	4,828,675	(1,000,000)		171,325	
Passage Credit	5,000,000	3,200,000	2,316,394	(1,800,000)		883,606	
Overtime	6,500,000	5,200,000	5,053,853	(1,300,000)		146,147	
Pensions contribution & Gratuity	11,500,000	10,200,000	10,065,080	(1,300,000)		134,920	
National Savings Fund	1,100,000	1,100,000	993,495	-		106,505	
Cash in Lieu of Sick Leave	4,200,000	4,000,000	3,510,957	(200,000)		489,043	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>135,120,000</b>	<b>121,080,000</b>	<b>117,162,781</b>	<b>(14,040,000)</b>	18.2.4	<b>3,917,219</b>	18.3.3
<b>Travelling and Transport:</b>							
Refund of Bus Fares	4,500,000	3,500,000	3,337,135	(1,000,000)		162,865	
Travel Grant	2,000,000	1,500,000	1,334,000	(500,000)		166,000	
Commuted Travel & Petrol Allowance	4,300,000	4,000,000	3,875,595	(300,000)		124,405	
Mileage	700,000	580,000	563,620	(120,000)		16,380	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>	<b>9,580,000</b>	<b>9,110,350</b>	<b>(1,920,000)</b>	18.2.4	<b>469,650</b>	18.3.3

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.



# STATEMENT OF COMPARISON OF BUDGET AND ACTUAL AMOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020 (CONT'D)

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual Amounts on Comparable Basis	Difference Original and Final Budget	Notes	Difference Final Budget and Actual Amounts	Notes
	Original	Final					
	Rs	Rs					
<b>Payments (Cont'd):</b>							
<b>Cost of Running Office</b>							
Uniforms	150,000	103,000	102,530	(47,000)		470	
Chairperson/Board Fees	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,076,861	-		423,139	
Medical Scheme	800,000	700,000	680,000	(100,000)		20,000	
Telephone & Postages	3,500,000	3,000,000	2,383,716	(500,000)		616,284	
Electricity	3,500,000	3,200,000	2,756,129	(300,000)		443,871	
Water	100,000	140,000	94,391	40,000		45,609	
Motor Vehicles Running Expenses	1,700,000	1,100,000	876,381	(600,000)		223,619	
Office Expenses & Incidentals	170,000	900,000	468,681	730,000		431,319	
Hospitality & Ceremonials	500,000	500,000	343,557	-		156,443	
Publicity, Advertisement & Recruitment Expenses	700,000	400,000	231,775	(300,000)		168,225	
Insurance of Staff	150,000	180,000	163,621	30,000		16,379	
Overseas Passages & Allowances	1,000,000	700,000	572,529	(300,000)		127,471	
Office Stationery	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,064,615	-		435,385	
Legal & Consultancy Fees	200,000	285,000	283,250	85,000		1,750	
Repairs & Maintenance: Building & Equipment	10,000,000	7,500,000	5,599,491	(2,500,000)	18.2.5	1,900,509	
Audit Fees	625,000	625,000	275,000	-		350,000	
Insurance of Building, Equipment & Furniture	150,000	150,000	125,721	-		24,279	
Institutional Links	1,000,000	1,000,000	646,997	-		353,003	
Security Services	1,700,000	1,900,000	1,602,332	200,000		297,668	
Graphics/Printing & Audio-Visual Materials	4,500,000	4,000,000	3,135,161	(500,000)		864,839	
Resource Centre (Library)	2,500,000	800,000	706,010	(1,700,000)	18.2.5	93,990	
Marketing & Outreach Activities	3,000,000	3,800,000	3,531,526	800,000		268,474	
Staff Development & Training	3,500,000	1,250,000	129,080	(2,250,000)	18.2.5	1,120,920	
Research & Development	1,000,000	800,000	650,287	(200,000)		149,713	
Quality Assurance Activities	2,725,000	1,700,000	1,461,300	(1,025,000)		238,700	
<b>Academic Affairs:</b>							
Induction Expenses	300,000	125,000	90,148	(175,000)		34,852	
Part-time Tutors	10,000,000	10,000,000	8,710,979	-		1,289,021	18.3.4
Marking of Assignments/Projects	7,500,000	6,000,000	4,021,335	(1,500,000)		1,978,665	18.3.4
Exams Expenses	13,000,000	11,000,000	9,571,716	(2,000,000)	18.2.5	1,428,284	18.3.4
Educational Software Licences	70,000	125,000	87,837	55,000		37,163	
Insurance of Part-Timers & Learners	500,000	1,000,000	635,170	500,000		364,830	
General Academic Expenses	1,800,000	1,750,000	1,695,973	(50,000)		54,027	
Programme Development	5,000,000	2,500,000	1,585,000	(2,500,000)	18.2.5	915,000	18.3.4
Supervision of Doctoral Learners	3,500,000	1,500,000	820,235	(2,000,000)	18.2.5	679,765	
Tablets for Learners	10,000,000	9,200,000	5,695,088	(800,000)		3,504,912	
Award Ceremonies & Conferences	1,000,000	500,000	350,364	(500,000)		149,636	
Overseas Study Centres	3,000,000	3,000	467	(2,997,000)		2,533	
Collaboration with other Universities	2,500,000	2,800,000	1,234,229	300,000		1,565,771	
Rental of Building & Parking for delivery of courses	18,000,000	20,000	13,000	(17,980,000)	18.2.6	7,000	
Feasibility study for construction of new building	45,000,000	-	-	(45,000,000)	18.2.7	-	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>167,340,000</b>	<b>84,256,000</b>	<b>63,472,482</b>	<b>(83,084,000)</b>		<b>20,783,518</b>	
<b>ADDITIONS TO NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>16,659,837</b>	<b>16,575,472</b>	<b>12,175,797</b>	<b>(84,365)</b>		<b>4,399,675</b>	
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>330,619,837</b>	<b>231,491,472</b>	<b>201,921,410</b>	<b>(99,128,365)</b>		<b>29,570,062</b>	

The notes on pages 121 to 138 form an integral part of the Financial Statements.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON REPORTING ENTITY

The Open University was established by the *Open University Act No. 2 of 2010*. This Act was proclaimed on 12 July 2012.

The Open University is a corporate body wholly owned by the Government of Mauritius under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research.

The objects of the Open University are to:

- (a) advance and disseminate learning and knowledge through a diversity of means, with emphasis on information and communication technologies;
- (b) provide wider opportunities for education and training to the population, through open and distance learning and promote lifelong learning;
- (c) encourage the use of open and distance learning at all levels of education and training through collaboration, optimal use of existing resources and good practices;
- (d) encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research and development in educational technology and related matters; and
- (e) be the focal point for the provision of open and distance learning in Mauritius through establishment of active partnership with local public and private institutions, as well as overseas institutions engaged in providing education and training.

## 2. BASIS OF PREPARATION

### (a) Statement of Compliance

The Financial Statements of the Open University have been prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSASs) issued by the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB).

### (b) Going Concern

The Financial Statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and the accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the period. They have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

With the implementation of IPSAS 39-Employee Benefits as from the financial year 2018/2019 onwards, there has been a material change in terms of provision and disclosure for Pension Obligations in the Financial Statement. The effects of the implementation of IPSAS 39 though material to the accounts, do not preclude OU to report as a 'Going Concern', as this has no impact on the operational side. It is also presumed that OU will continue its operation normally in the forthcoming years.

OU is governed by the *Statutory Bodies Pension Fund Act* and as per the provisions of the Act, an actuarial valuation of the pension fund needs to be carried out at intervals of not more than 5 years. The pension fund of OU is being managed by the State Insurance Company of Mauritius Ltd (SICOM Ltd). As per the Valuation Report as at June 2019, SICOM Ltd has advised that the contribution rate needs to be increased as well as funds need to be injected to ensure the sustainability of the Pension Fund over the forthcoming years in the best interest of beneficiaries. OU is expecting policy guidelines from competent authorities and will do needful adjustments in the Pension Fund.

**(c) Use of Estimates and Judgements**

The preparation of Financial Statements, in conformity with IPSAS and generally accepted accounting practices, requires the use of estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the Financial Statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period.

In the application of OU's accounting policies, which are described in Note 4, Management are required to make judgements, estimates, and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions, based on actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the estimate affects only that period or in the period of revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods. Estimates include but are not limited to fair valuation of inventories, accounts receivables, accrued charges, contingent assets and liabilities, and degree of impairment of property, plant and equipment.

**(d) Functional and Presentation of Currency**

The Financial Statements are presented in Mauritian Rupees. Roundings have been done where applicable to the nearest rupee.

**(e) Reporting Date**

The present Financial Statements have been prepared for the year ending 30 June 2020. Comparative figures relate to the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

**(f) Measurement Base**

The accounting principles recognised as appropriate for the measurement and reporting of the Financial Performance, Cash Flows, and Financial Position are on accrual basis using historical cost except for Property, Plant and Equipment which have been based on fair value.

### **3. IPSAS ISSUED BUT NOT YET EFFECTIVE**

The Financial Statements comply in all material respects with applicable International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

In the current period, the Open University has adopted all of the improvements and amendments to the standards effective at the reporting date.

IPSAS 3 (Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors) requires disclosure of new IPSAS that have been issued but are not yet effective.

**(a) IPSAS 41- Financial Instruments (Effective for accounting period beginning on or after 1 January 2022)**

IPSAS 41 prescribe the accounting and disclosure for financial instruments. The objective of this standard is to establish principles for the financial reporting of financial assets and financial liabilities that will present relevant and useful information to users of financial statements for their assessment of the amounts, timing and uncertainty of an entity's future cash flows.

**(b) IPSAS 42 - Social Benefits (Effective for accounting period beginning on or after 1 January 2022)**

IPSAS 42 prescribe the accounting and disclosure for social benefits. The objective of this standard is to improve the relevance, faithful representativeness and comparability of the information that a reporting entity provides in its financial statements about social benefits as defined in this standard. The information provided should help users of the financial statements

and general purpose financial reports to assess:

- (i) The nature of such social benefits provided by the entity;
- (ii) The key features of the operation of those social benefit schemes; and
- (iii) The impact of such social benefits provided on the entity's financial performance, financial position and cash flows.

## 4. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies of OU are as follows:

### 4.1 Property, Plant and Equipment

#### (a) Land and Buildings

Government provides the land and buildings, which OU, along with other institutions, are occupying at Le Réduit and Curepipe. The land and buildings have not been accounted for in the Financial Statements.

#### (b) Impairment

Property, Plant and Equipment are stated at cost or revalued amount less accumulated depreciation and any recognised impairment losses.

At each balance sheet date, OU reviews the carrying amount of its tangible assets to determine whether there is an indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss and the carrying amount of the asset is reduced to its recoverable amount.

If the recoverable amount of an asset or cash-generating unit is estimated to be less than its carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset or cash-generating unit is reduced to its recoverable amount. An impairment loss is recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Performance, unless the relevant asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease.

#### (c) Revaluation

The fleet of vehicles has been revalued as at 30 June 2017 and the revaluation surplus has been transferred to the Statement of Changes in Net Assets/Equity. OU will revalue its fleet of vehicles every 3 years.

For the financial year ending 30 June 2020, depreciation was based on the expected remaining useful economic life of the motor vehicles.

Excess depreciation, i.e, difference in depreciation computed on the revalued amount and the original carrying amount was transferred from the revaluation reserve during the financial year ended 30 June 2020. This is shown in the Statement of Changes in Net Assets/Equity.

#### (d) Capitalisation Policy

Tangible assets with a total contract value below the Rs 5,000 threshold are expensed in the Statement of Financial Performance during the year of acquisition.

#### (e) Depreciation Charges

Depreciation is charged so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets, other than land and properties under construction, over their estimated useful lives using the straight-line method as follows:-

	No. of Years
Audio-Visual Equipment	1 to 15
Computer Equipment	2 to 7
Furniture and Fittings, Driveway and Parking area	10

Office Equipment	5 to 10
Motor Vehicles	3 to 7
Printing and Graphics Equipment	5 to 20
Tools	5

**(f) Disposal**

Depreciation is fully charged in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an item of plant and equipment is determined as the difference between the net sales proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset and is recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance.

**(g) Subsequent Costs**

The cost of replacing part of an item of Property, Plant and Equipment is recognised in the carrying amount of the item if it is probable that the future economic benefits will flow to OU and its cost can be measured reliably. The costs of the day-to-day servicing of property, plant and equipment are recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance as incurred.

**(h) Lease**

There is no lease agreement and no payment for the occupation of the land and buildings by OU.

**4.2 Intangible Assets**

Intangible assets are recognised only if:

- (a) it is probable that future economic benefits that are attributable to the assets will flow to the enterprise; and
- (b) the cost of the assets can be measured reliably.

Programme development costs and license fees for course materials are recognised as intangible assets and amortised using the straight-line basis over the projected life of the course/programme or the accreditation period, whichever is greater, but in either case no longer than five years.

License fees paid for rights of pre-recorded programmes and computer software that are not considered to form an integral part of any hardware equipment are recognised as intangible assets and their costs are amortised using the straight-line basis.

Intangible assets are amortised so as to write off the cost of intangibles over their estimated useful lives using the straight-line method as follows:-

	<b>No. of Years</b>
Rights	5
Production Software	1 to 10
Computer Software	5 to 7
Programme Development	5

**4.3 Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprise bank balances and cash in hand.

**4.4 Inventories**

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost (determined on a first-in-first-out basis) or net realisable value. Cost includes all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing the inventories to their present location and condition. Net realisable value represents the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in selling.

**4.5 Provisions and Contingent Liabilities**

A provision is recognised when OU has a present obligation as a result of a past event; when it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential will be

required to settle the obligation; and when a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Provisions are reviewed at the end of each financial period to determine the current best estimate.

Other commitments which do not meet the recognition criteria for liabilities are disclosed in the notes to the Financial Statements as contingent liabilities when their existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events which are not wholly within the control of OU.

## 4.6 Retirement and Other Benefit Obligations

### 4.6.1 Employee Entitlements

Employees' entitlements to salaries, pension costs, and other benefits are recognised when they are earned.

#### Sick Leave Benefits

As per the conditions of service prescribed in the *PRB Report* and conditions of service, employees are allowed to accumulate sick leaves not taken at the end of each calendar year up to a maximum of 110 days, in a sick leave bank. The balance of bank sick leave is valued at the end of the financial year and is recognised as long-term payables. Beyond this ceiling of 110 days, officers are refunded part of the annual entitlement of sick leaves not taken at the end of every calendar year and this is expensed to the Statement of Financial Performance. Following the *Finance Act 2020*, no refund will be effected for sick leave and the bank sick leave will be increased accordingly. Provision has been made for bank sick leave up to a maximum of 126 days.

#### Passage Benefits

A provision is made for the estimated liability for passage benefits. The passage benefits for each eligible staff is valued at year end. The annual increase in passage benefits entitlement is expensed to the Statement of Financial Performance.

Based on past experience and payment trends, an amount has been transferred from long-term liabilities to short-term liabilities to provide for any forthcoming payments of passage benefits in the next financial year.

#### Vacation Leave Benefits

In line with the *PRB Report* and conditions of service, a provision is made for the estimated liability for encashment of vacation leave. The amount for accumulated vacation leave for each staff is valued at year end. Short-term benefit includes provision for vacation leave entitlements for officers who may proceed on early retirement. The increase/decrease in vacation leave during the year is charged to the Statement of Financial Performance.

### 4.6.2 Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Provision for retirement pension benefits is made under the *Statutory Bodies Pension Funds Act of 1978* as amended.

For employees who were in the public service at 31 December 2012, the scheme is a defined benefit plan and its assets are managed by SICOM Ltd. The cost of providing the benefits is actuarially determined using the projected unit credit method.

IPSAS 25 pertaining to pension benefits has been repealed and a new standard on pensions, IPSAS 39 is effective for annual financial statements covering periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018. There have been significant changes to the pension benefit disclosures and these changes being applicable as from 1 July 2018 has major impact on the accounting disclosures and reporting for the financial year 2018/2019 onwards.

The main areas of changes are as follows:

#### **Statement of Financial Position**

Currently, IPSAS permit public sector entities to defer the recognition of certain actuarial gains and losses arising from defined benefit plans (the “corridor approach”). IPSAS 39 removed the “corridor approach”. This means that the actuarial gains and losses should be recognised immediately in the Statement of Financial Position. The remeasurements are recognised in Net Assets/Equity in the period in which they occur. A surplus is recognised as a net defined benefit asset and a deficit as a net defined liability.

#### **Statement of Financial Performance**

As regards the Statement of Financial Performance, the two items (interest cost and expected return) will be replaced by a single item: the “Net Interest Expense/Revenue”. For this purpose, the assumption for the discount rate and the expected rate of return on plan assets will be the same.

#### **Other Changes:**

- (i) More disclosures in terms of description of risk exposure, plan amendments and actuarial assumptions used.
- (ii) Sensitivity analysis, i.e. the effect of a change in each major actuarial assumption on the Defined Benefit Obligation.
- (iii) IPSAS 39 makes explicit the mortality assumptions used to determine the defined benefit obligation is the best estimate of the mortality plan members both during and after employment.

#### **4.6.3 State Plan and Defined Contribution Plans**

For employees appointed for the first time in the service from 1 January 2013 onwards, Government has set up a Public Sector Defined Contribution Plan, managed by SICOM Ltd. The defined contribution plan is a post-employment benefit plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a fund. OU will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to the Public Sector Defined Contribution Plan, the National Pension Scheme, the Family Protection Scheme and the National Savings Fund are expensed in the same financial year.

#### **4.6.4 Car Loans**

Car loans are disbursed to OU by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research on applications by eligible employees as part of their conditions of service. The loans are executed by way of a registered agreement between OU and the employees. The car loans which bear an interest rate of 4% per annum are repayable monthly over a period of five or seven years. The balances of principal amounts are shown as short-term and long-term loans. Corresponding carrying amounts are shown under receivables.

### **4.7 Revenue Recognition**

Revenue comprises mainly government grants, course fees and sales of goods and services.

#### **4.7.1 Government Grants**

Grants are recognised as revenue to the extent that all conditions attached to the grant are satisfied. All government grants received are therefore recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance in the year of receipt.

#### **4.7.2 Course Fees**

OU is a provider of learning and knowledge through a diversity of means, with emphasis on Open and Distance Learning programmes. Fees for these programmes are collected on a semester basis and recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance in the same period of instruction.

#### 4.7.3 *Sale of Goods and Services*

Sale of goods and services is recognised when the goods and services have been delivered or performed and accepted by the clients and are billable after taking into consideration revenue waived for work done for governmental institutions.

#### 4.8 **Expenses**

Expenses are charged to the accounts on an accrual basis.

#### 4.9 **Risk Management Policies**

A description of the various risks to which the Board is exposed to, is shown below together with the approach adopted by Management to control and mitigate those risks. Except where stated elsewhere, the carrying amounts of OU's financial assets and financial liabilities approximate their fair values.

##### **Currency Risk**

Currency risk arises from purchase of goods, services and receipts of revenue which are denominated in foreign currencies are negotiated at prevailing exchange rates.

##### **Operational Risk**

Operational risk, which is inherent in all organisations' activities, is the risk of financial loss instability arising from failures in internal controls, operational processes or the system that supports them. It is recognised that such risks can never be entirely eliminated and the costs of controls in minimising these risks may outweigh the potential benefits.

##### **Financial Risk**

Except for cash held at bank in current accounts, OU does not have any investment in term deposits nor any loan commitments. Hence, it is not exposed to interest rate risk.

OU's credit risk is primarily attributable to its receivables. Management reviews all outstanding amounts at year end to determine doubtful receivables.

OU does not have significant liquidity risk. All funds come from learners and the Government. Forecast cash requirements are closely monitored to meet liquidity requirements.

##### **Legal Risk**

Legal risk is the risk that business activities of the Board have unintended or unexpected legal consequences. The Board identifies and manages legal risks through legal advice from the State Law Office on all its day-to-day dealings.

#### 4.10 **Taxation**

No provision has been made in the Financial Statements for income tax and value added tax, on the basis that OU is exempted.

#### 4.11 **Foreign Currency Transactions**

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated to Mauritian rupee at the exchange rate ruling at the date of transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the exchange rate ruling at balance sheet date. Exchange differences arising on settlement are recognised in surplus or deficit.

#### 4.12 **Comparative Figures**

When an accounting policy is changed with retrospective effect, comparative figures are restated in accordance with the new policy.



	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>5. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Cash at bank	172,130,245	72,544,679
Cash in hand	45,316	359,553
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,175,561</b>	<b>72,904,232</b>

The Open University has no undrawn borrowing facilities.

<b>6. RECEIVABLES AND PREPAYMENTS</b>		
Course fees due	15,105,567	15,549,707
Works commissioned by clients	353,161	2,047,400
Affiliation fees prepaid	385,433	1,226,663
Other prepayments	1,619,095	1,163,375
Car Loans (Note 8)	4,076,256	3,915,191
Sundry Debtors	10,900,973	6,516,777
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,440,485</b>	<b>30,419,113</b>

<b>7. INVENTORIES</b>		
	<b>Carrying Amount at 30-Jun 2020</b>	<b>Carrying Amount at 30 June 2019</b>
	<b>Rs</b>	<b>Rs</b>
Materials and supplies	2,649,146	2,067,177
Finished goods	430,200	471,704
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,079,346</b>	<b>2,538,881</b>

<b>8. RECEIVABLES CAR LOANS</b>		
Movement in car loans were as follows:		
Amount due as at 01 July	16,195,885	14,554,402
Loans released to staff	1,800,000	5,828,760
Loans refunded by staff	(4,714,372)	(4,187,277)
<b>Amount due as at 30 June</b>	<b>13,281,513</b>	<b>16,195,885</b>
Deduct: Amount falling due within one year	(4,076,256)	(3,915,191)
<b>Amount falling due after one year</b>	<b>9,205,257</b>	<b>12,280,694</b>

## 9. NON-CURRENT ASSETS - PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT

	PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT		FURNITURE & FITTINGS, OFFICE EQUIPMENT, DRIVEWAY & PARKING SURFACE		MOTOR VEHICLES		COMPUTER EQUIPMENT		TOTAL	
	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019
Reporting Period										
Opening Carrying Amount	107,141,577	97,136,117	56,262,337	53,524,494	2,921,350	1,800,000	23,538,111	21,662,041	189,863,375	174,122,652
Additions	6,384,829	10,005,460	2,277,286	3,231,350	-	1,121,350	2,173,712	1,876,070	10,835,827	16,234,230
Disposals	-	-	(493,507)	(493,507)	(115,000)	-	-	-	(115,000)	(493,507)
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Carrying Amount	113,526,406	107,141,577	58,539,623	56,262,337	2,806,350	2,921,350	25,711,823	23,538,111	200,584,202	189,863,375
Opening Accumulated Depreciation	(90,449,639)	(86,204,872)	(42,887,962)	(39,287,127)	(1,072,959)	(481,844)	(18,928,978)	(16,528,110)	(153,339,538)	(142,501,953)
Depreciation for the period	(5,129,736)	(4,244,767)	(3,705,008)	(4,053,746)	(440,850)	(429,449)	(2,365,816)	(2,400,868)	(11,641,410)	(11,128,830)
Transfer from Revaluation Reserve	-	-	-	-	(150,265)	(161,666)	-	-	(150,265)	(161,666)
Prior year adjustment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	452,911	114,999	-	-	-	114,999	452,911
Closing Accumulated Depreciation	(95,579,375)	(90,449,639)	(46,592,970)	(42,887,962)	(1,549,075)	(1,072,959)	(21,294,794)	(18,928,978)	(165,016,214)	(153,339,538)
<b>Net Carrying Amount</b>	<b>17,947,031</b>	<b>16,691,938</b>	<b>11,946,653</b>	<b>13,374,375</b>	<b>1,257,275</b>	<b>1,848,391</b>	<b>4,417,029</b>	<b>4,609,133</b>	<b>35,567,988</b>	<b>36,523,837</b>

## 10. NON-CURRENT ASSETS - INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	RIGHTS		PRODUCTION SOFTWARE		COMPUTER SOFTWARE		PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT		TOTAL	
	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019	30 June 2020	30 June 2019
Reporting Period										
Opening Carrying Amount	1,438,984	616,135	883,342	883,342	5,732,321	5,171,321	43,158,177	38,522,738	51,212,824	45,193,536
Additions	-	822,849	-	-	991,000	561,000	1,811,329	4,635,439	2,802,329	6,019,288
Prior year adjustment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Carrying Amount	1,438,984	1,438,984	883,342	883,342	6,723,321	5,732,321	44,969,506	43,158,177	54,015,153	51,212,824
Opening Accumulated Amortisation	(779,029)	(590,800)	(883,319)	(868,722)	(5,221,973)	(5,059,474)	(32,737,305)	(26,337,143)	(39,621,626)	(32,856,139)
Amortisation for the period	(166,238)	(188,229)	-	(14,597)	(351,899)	(162,499)	(4,921,841)	(6,400,162)	(5,439,978)	(6,765,487)
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Accumulated Amortisation	(945,267)	(779,029)	(883,319)	(883,319)	(5,573,872)	(5,221,973)	(37,659,146)	(32,737,305)	(45,061,604)	(39,621,626)
<b>Net Carrying Amount</b>	<b>493,717</b>	<b>659,955</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1,149,449</b>	<b>510,348</b>	<b>7,310,360</b>	<b>10,420,872</b>	<b>8,953,549</b>	<b>11,591,198</b>

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>11. PAYABLES</b>		
Course fees prepaid	7,080,625	11,407,335
Accrued expenditure	18,458,227	11,558,359
Course Fees to be refunded	3,000	125,959
Sundry creditors and prepayments	820,487	1,949,547
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,362,339</b>	<b>25,041,200</b>

## 12. CAR LOANS

These represent car loans granted by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research to staff of OU. Long-term loans represent the non-current portion of car loans.

Breakdown of the loans were as follows:

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
Total car loans	13,281,513	16,195,885
Less amount falling due within one year	(4,076,256)	(3,915,191)
<b>Amount due after one year</b>	<b>9,205,257</b>	<b>12,280,694</b>

## 13. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Employee benefits represent sick leaves, vacation leaves and passage benefits accrued by staff and payable either on retirement or on resignation.

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>Short-term:</b>		
Sick leave benefits	1,300,000	5,000,000
Passage benefits	4,000,000	5,000,000
Vacation leave benefits	700,000	1,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,000,000</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>
<b>Long-term:</b>		
Sick leave benefits	29,500,000	25,000,000
Passage benefits	7,102,530	5,102,408
Vacation leave benefits	27,300,000	24,724,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,902,530</b>	<b>54,826,408</b>

## 14. PENSION OBLIGATION

The actuarial valuation of the Open University of Mauritius Staff Pension Fund managed by SICOM Ltd as at 30 June 2020, is reported as follows:

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>Amounts recognised in Statement of Financial Position at:</b>		
Defined benefit obligation	490,502,884	414,616,569
Fair value of plan assets	(255,254,052)	(247,001,456)
<b>Liability recognised in the Statement of Financial Position at end of year</b>	<b><u>235,248,832</u></b>	<b><u>167,615,113</u></b>
<b>Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance:</b>		
Service cost:		
Current service cost	11,609,283	9,373,765
Past service cost	0	0
(Employee contributions)	(3,869,826)	(3,843,642)
Fund Expenses	307,918	224,715
Net Interest expense/(revenue)	6,135,561	10,745,546
<b>Amount charged in Statement of Financial Performance</b>	<b><u>14,182,936</u></b>	<b><u>16,500,384</u></b>
<b>Remeasurement:</b>		
Liability (gain)/loss	70,971,429	(8,915,807)
Assets (gain)/loss	(10,104,451)	4,281,882
Net Assets/ Equity (NAE)	60,866,978	(4,633,925)
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>75,049,914</u></b>	<b><u>11,866,459</u></b>
<b>Movements in liability recognised in the Statement of Financial Position:</b>		
At start of year	167,615,113	163,113,898
Amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance (Contributions paid by employer)	14,182,936 (7,416,195)	16,500,384 (7,365,244)
Amount recognised in NAE	60,866,978	(4,633,925)
At end of year	<b><u>235,248,832</u></b>	<b><u>167,615,113</u></b>
The plan is a defined benefit arrangement for the employees and it is wholly funded. The assets of the funded plan are held independently and administered by The State Insurance Company of Mauritius Ltd.		
<b>Reconciliation of the present value of defined benefit obligation</b>		
Present value of obligation at start of period	414,616,569	405,927,865
Current service cost	11,609,283	9,373,765
Interest cost	14,718,888	26,182,347
(Benefits paid)	(21,413,285)	(17,951,601)
Liability (gain)/loss	70,971,429	(8,915,807)
Present value of obligation at end of period	<b><u>490,502,884</u></b>	<b><u>414,616,569</u></b>
<b>Reconciliation of fair value of plan assets</b>		
Fair value of plan assets at start of period	247,001,456	242,813,967
Expected return on plan assets	8,583,327	15,436,801
Employer contributions	7,416,195	7,365,244
Employee contributions	3,869,826	3,843,642
(Benefits paid + other outgo)	(21,721,203)	(18,176,316)
Asset gain/(loss)	10,104,451	(4,281,882)
Fair value of plan assets at end of period	<b><u>255,254,052</u></b>	<b><u>247,001,456</u></b>

**Distribution of plan assets at end of period**

<i>Percentage of assets at end of year</i>	<b>30-Jun-20 (%)</b>	<b>30-Jun-19 (%)</b>
Government securities and cash	61.7%	58.7%
Loans	3.0%	3.4%
Local equities	10.1%	13.1%
Overseas bonds and equities	24.6%	24.2%
Property	0.6%	0.6%
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

**Additional disclosure on assets issued or used by the reporting entity**

<i>Percentage of assets at end of year</i>	<b>30-Jun-20 (%)</b>	<b>30-Jun-19 (%)</b>
Assets held in the entity's own financial instruments	-	-
Property occupied by the entity	-	-
Other assets used by the entity	-	-

**Components of the amount recognised in NAE**

Year	<b>30-Jun 2020</b>	<b>30-Jun 2019</b>
Currency	<b>Rs</b>	<b>Rs</b>
Asset experience gain/(loss) during the period	(4,281,882)	(4,281,882)
Liability experience gain/(loss) during the period	<u>8,915,807</u>	<u>8,915,807</u>
	4,633,925	4,633,925

Year

**2020/2021**

Expected employer contributions

**Rs 7,435,874****(Estimate to be reviewed by the Open University of Mauritius)**

Weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation

13 years

(Calculated as a % change in PV of liabilities for a 1% change in discount rate)

**Actuarial Valuation Method**

The cost of providing the benefits is determined by the Projected Unit method.

**Actuarial Assumptions**

The principal assumptions used for the purpose of the actuarial valuation were as follows:

	<b>30-Jun-20</b>	<b>30-Jun-19</b>
Discount rate	3.55%	6.45%
Expected rate of return on plan assets	3.55%	6.45%
Future salary increases	2.40%	4.00%
Future pension increases	140.00%	3.00%
Mortality before retirement	A 6770 Ultimate Tables	
Mortality in retirement	PA (90) Tables rated down by 2 years	
Retirement age	As per schedule II in the Statutory Bodies Pension	

The discount rate is determined by reference to market yields on bonds.

## **Sensitivity Analysis of Assumptions Used for the Determination of Defined Benefit Obligation**

Significant actuarial assumptions for determination of the defined benefit obligation are discount rate, expected salary increase and mortality. The sensitivity analysis below has been determined based reasonably on possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period.

### (i) Discount rate

If the discount rate would be 100 basis points (one percent) higher (lower), the defined benefit obligation would decrease by Rs 58.0M (increase by Rs 71.2M) if all other assumptions were held unchanged.

### (ii) Salary growth

If the expected salary growth would increase (decrease) by 1%, the defined benefit obligation would increase by Rs 25.8M (decrease by Rs 22.9M) if all assumptions were held unchanged.

### (iii) Life expectancy

If life expectancy would increase (decrease) by one year, the defined benefit obligation would increase by Rs 15.4M (decrease by Rs 15.5M) if all assumptions were held unchanged.

In reality one might expect interrelationships between the assumptions, especially between discount rate and expected salary increases, given that both depend to a certain extent on inflation rates. The analysis above abstracts from these interdependences between the assumptions.

## **Pension Risks**

The Pension plan is exposed to actuarial risk such as: investment risk, interest rate risk, longevity risk and salary risk. The risk relating to death in service benefits is re-insured.

The Open University of Mauritius pension fund is a defined benefit fund where the pension benefits are based on final pensionable salary at time of retirement and are payable as long as the pensioner survives. These pensions are also adjusted annually to reflect inflation.

The valuation results are therefore based on assumptions of future investment income, salary increases, pension increases and longevity. The results are very sensitive to the assumptions made and will be true only if the assumptions made are borne out in practice. In practice the actual experience may deviate from the assumptions made and have an impact on the financial position of the Fund. Hence, there is a need for further regular valuations.

Given that the uncertainties surrounding salary increases, pension increases and longevity of the pensioners, there are risks as to whether the assets of the fund together with future contributions and investment returns thereon shall be sufficient for the fund to meet these obligations.

The following are the main risks that exist:

### (i) Investment Performance

The actual investment return achieved on the assets held could be lower/higher than assumed in the valuation exercise. A decrease in the real returns compared to salary increases will generate future deficit and require increases in rates of contributions and vice versa.

### (ii) Salary increases

The salary increases could be higher or lower than that assumed. In case of high salary increases relative to investment returns, this would decrease the real return, creating future deficit and hence require further annual contributions.

### (iii) Pension increases and Life Expectancy

In the same manner, post-retirement pension increases have a significant impact on the liabilities of the fund. The higher the increases compared to the return on the assets backing the liabilities, the higher the impact on the pension costs. In addition, the risk is magnified by the impact of improving mortality rates among pensioners. The longer the pensioners live, the higher the pension costs.

(iv) Financial capacity of sponsor

The sponsor (employer) may face unforeseen financial difficulties and be unable to pay contributions or fund for deficits when required.

(v) Legislation and regulation

There may be changes in legislation and regulation governing Pension Funds that might adversely affect the Fund, for example the introduction or increase of taxation, government fees and minimum benefits.

## 15. REVENUE

### 15.1 Revenue from Exchange Transactions

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>15.1.1 Breakdown:</b>		
Course fees (See notes below)	106,440,901	112,308,437
Refund of fees under Free Tertiary Education Scheme (See notes below)	152,403,964	51,968,267
Sale of services	16,926,929	17,497,170
Sale of goods	48,675	82,275
UTM Collaboration	1,116,484	1,043,031
Miscellaneous Revenue	-	51,261
Gain on Disposal of Non-Current Asset	42,999	-
Gain on Exchange	44,086	1,251
<b>Total</b>	<b>277,024,038</b>	<b>182,951,692</b>

#### 15.1.2 Course fees - Scholarship and Discounts

**15.1.2.1** OU sponsored its academic and key personnel to read for PhD in-house course. The whole tuition fees receivable, amounting to **Rs 933,400** were waived under this policy during the year ended 30 June 2020.

**15.1.2.2** A twenty percent fee discount was granted to OU's staff who enrolled for the University's courses. The additional fee applicable for payments by instalments was also waived for this category of learners. An amount of **Rs 64,810** was granted as discount under this policy during the year ended 30 June 2020.

### 15.2 Revenue from Non-Exchange Transactions

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>Breakdown:</b>		
Government Recurrent Grant	18,086,000	25,000,000
Capital Grant	11,272,635	14,670,925
National Savings Fund refund	1,001,108	859,522
Insurance Compensation	55,020	54,348
Research Grant	-	320,500
	<b>30,414,763</b>	<b>40,905,295</b>

## 16. STAFF COSTS

	30-Jun 2020 Rs	30-Jun 2019 Rs
<b>16.1 Breakdown of Staff Costs:</b>		
Basic Salary	78,059,146	75,806,165
Salary Compensation	2,141,457	1,297,172
Interim Allowance	1,094,230	-
Overtime	4,420,647	5,365,309
Acting and other Allowances	2,145,290	2,284,717
Gratuity	437,040	232,720
Chairman & Board/Committees Fees	1,264,901	1,143,820
End-of-Year Bonus	6,428,446	6,163,798
Passage Benefits	3,316,516	3,235,537
Pension cost - Defined benefit plan	14,182,936	16,500,384
Contributions - Public Sector Defined Contribution Plan	1,513,547	1,056,662
Contributions - NPF & FPS	701,892	694,621
Contributions - National Savings Fund	1,007,947	859,532
Extra Assistance	4,708,543	5,102,722
Sick Leave	4,310,957	6,858,646
Vacation Leave	2,258,341	999,089
Uniforms Allowance	102,530	119,401
Travelling and Transport	8,812,542	8,885,398
Medical Scheme	680,000	693,600
Insurance Compensation	55,020	54,348
	<b>137,641,928</b>	<b>137,353,641</b>

## 17. OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES

### 17.1 Breakdown of Operating Expenses:

Academic Expenses	33,792,287	35,587,195
Programme Production	4,002,312	2,960,814
Resource Centre	694,312	1,307,123
Marketing	3,347,290	2,725,141
Training and Staff Development	1,346,062	319,435
Research	647,380	673,400
Insurance	277,661	265,977
Security Services	1,520,567	981,467
Postage & Office Stationery	1,391,852	1,946,430
Telephone, Electricity and Water	4,802,978	5,276,725
Mission Expenses	572,529	583,961
Institutional Links and Membership fees	615,835	609,752
Legal and Professional Charges	163,250	642,055
Motor Vehicle Running Expenses	899,618	1,103,111
Repairs and Maintenance	6,077,633	5,665,334
Hospitality	335,100	319,254
General Expenses	515,383	130,520
Publicity, Advertisement and Recruitment Expenses	231,775	343,723
Setting up of Overseas Study Centre	-	14,813
Loss on disposal of assets	-	40,596
Loss on exchange	14,418	29,160
Quality Assurance	1,468,614	174,745
Collaboration with other Universities	3,681,828	2,609,071
<b>Total</b>	<b>66,398,684</b>	<b>64,309,802</b>

### 17.2 Included in Operating Expenses are:

Cost of inventories expensed	<b>10,530,640</b>	<b>8,531,733</b>
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## 18. BUDGET

### 18.1 Budget Reconciliation

The budget and the accounting bases differ. The Financial Statements are prepared on the accrual basis using a classification based on the nature of expenses in the Statement of Financial Performance.

A reconciliation of the actual amounts on a comparable basis as presented in the Statement of Comparison of Budget and Actual Amounts with the actual amounts in the Statement of Financial Performance is presented below.

<b>Budget Reconciliation</b>	<b>Year Ended 30 June 2020 Rs</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
<b>Actual Revenue as per Statement of Comparison of Budgets and Actual Amounts</b>	<b>301,907,114</b>
Movement in Course fees	3,908,086
Movement in Operating revenue	1,623,601
<b>Total Revenue as per Statement of Financial Performance</b>	<b>307,438,801</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Actual Expenditure as per Statement of Comparison of Budgets and Actual Amounts</b>	<b>201,921,410</b>
Commitment for the year and other adjustments	17,891,535
Commitment of last year	(11,053,216)
Inventories as at 01 July 2019	2,538,881
Inventories as at 30 June 2020	(3,079,346)
Depreciation & Amortisation	17,081,388
Increase in Sick Leave	3,316,516
Increase in Passage Benefit	1,228,041
Increase in Vacation Leave	2,258,341
Increase in Pension	6,766,741
Movement in Pension Obligation	(2,368,399)
Other Prepayments	(1,619,095)
Additions to PPE and Intangible assets	(12,175,797)
Programme Development	(1,585,000)
<b>Expenditure as per Statement of Financial Performance</b>	<b>221,122,000</b>

### 18.2 Explanations on Difference between the Original and Final Budgets

The budget for Financial Year 2019/20 was approved by OU Board on 1 August 2019. The Revised Budget was worked out, taking into consideration the actual results for the six-month period ended 31 December 2019 and the estimated expenditure for the remaining six months of the financial year. The Revised Budget for the Financial Year 2019/20 was approved by OU Board on 25 June 2020 and also takes into consideration the re-allocations carried out during the Financial Year 2019/20. The most significant differences are as follows:

- 18.2.1 Recurrent Grant** - In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, Government took the decision to freeze the recruitment exercise and hence Government Recurrent Grant was reduced.
- 18.2.2 Course Fees** - OU claimed an Administrative fee for undergraduate programmes. Fees receivable under the "Free Tertiary Education Scheme" was reduced in line with enrolment trends.

- 18.2.3 Acquisition of Motor Vehicles** - Following the approval of the OU Board and clearance from HEC, OU transferred Rs 3M to the Capital Budget with a view to finance the purchase of two vehicles.
- 18.2.4 Personal Emoluments** - Following issues relating to scheme of services, recruitment exercise could not be carried out. Based on recruitment trend, the Budget for Staff costs was reviewed downwards.
- 18.2.5 Cost of Running Office** - The budgetary provision for operating expenditure were reviewed based on actual results and re-allocations carried out during the Financial Year 2019/20. There have been significant delays in the processing of claims for academic expenses. This led to major savings on various cost elements.
- 18.2.6 Rental of Building** - Tender exercise carried out for the rental of building for delivery of courses was unsuccessful.
- 18.2.7 Feasibility for construction of a new building** - OU has been allocated land at the New Education Hub at Côte D'Or. OU has not yet signed the lease agreement with Landscape Mauritius Ltd. The feasibility study has been kept in abeyance accordingly.

## 18.3 Explanations on Difference between the Final Budget and Actual Amounts

- 18.3.1 Course Fees** - Course fees received from learners increased significantly as compared to estimates. Course fees increased by nearly 58% as compared to the previous financial year.
- 18.3.2 Capital Grant** - Following the Covid-19 pandemic, procurement activities were delayed and claims for refund of Capital Grant were sent in June 2020.
- 18.3.3 Personal Emoluments** - Filling of some vacancies did not materialise and this led to savings under this item. Also, in the wake of Covid-19, recruitment exercise has been frozen following Government decision.
- 18.3.4 Academic Expenses** - Following the Covid-19 pandemic, activities were interrupted and this caused delays in the processing of payments to tutors and examiners. The backlog of payments was accrued in the accounts.

## 19. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING DATE

There was no event after the reporting date.

## 20. EMPLOYEE DISCLOSURE

As at 30 June 2020, OU had 182 employees on permanent and pensionable establishment.

## 21. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The Management of OU is carried out by key personnel including the Director-General, Heads of division and section and other senior staff who are responsible for managing the activities of the University. The aggregate remuneration of **Rs 30,830,162** was provided to key management personnel for the reporting period as follows:

	30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Rs	Rs
Director-General	3,161,736	3,010,273
Heads of division/section	9,584,408	10,674,674
Other senior staff	18,084,018	15,396,974
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,830,162</b>	<b>29,081,921</b>

## 22. OTHER REMUNERATION AND COMPENSATION TO KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

During the reporting period, fees totalling **Rs 234,100** for tutoring services were paid to key personnel as follows:

	30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Rs	Rs
Senior Management staff	<b>234,100</b>	<b>235,600</b>

Figures for other remuneration are included in **Note 21**.

## 23. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REMUNERATION

	30-Jun 2020	30-Jun 2019
	Rs	Rs
Chairperson fees	538,001	358,715
Other Board Directors' fees	149,775	241,331
<b>Total</b>	<b>687,776</b>	<b>600,046</b>

## 24. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

For the purpose of these Financial Statements, parties which are considered to be related to OU are other government ministries, public bodies and departments, mostly represented on the OU Board, if they have the ability, directly or indirectly to control OU or exercise significant influence over the financial and operating decision making or vice versa. Related party transactions were generally carried out at commercial terms and conditions.

OU produced audio-visual and printed materials and services at concessionary terms to government ministries and departments. During the financial year 2019/2020, a total amount of **Rs 23,842** was waived on sale of goods and services in accordance with the prevailing pricing policy.

Eligible employees are granted duty free facilities and/or loans for the purchase of a car as prescribed in the *Pay Research Bureau Report*. The details, amounts granted and balances under these loans are given at notes 4.6.4 and 7. There are no other loans to key management personnel or to other categories of staff.

During the financial year 2019/2020, one officer of OU were seconded to the Mauritius National Assembly to assist in the implementation and monitoring of the 'Live Broadcasting of the proceeding of the House Project'. As per practice in the civil service, they were remunerated by OU during the period of secondment.

## EXTRACT FROM OPEN UNIVERSITY ACT NO. 2 OF 2010

### 5. Functions of Open University

The Open University shall have such functions as are necessary to attain its objects most effectively and shall, in particular –

- (a) act as the national focal point for open and distance learning;
- (b) set standards for the provision of open and distance learning;
- (c) provide education and training through a diversity of means in such branches of knowledge, vocations and professions as the Open University may determine from time to time;
- (d) enter into affiliation with other institutions, local and overseas, which would assist in attaining any of the objects of the Open University;
- (e) co-operate with any local or overseas institution which has objects which are wholly or partly similar to its own;
- (f) provide consultancy and professional services, especially in open and distance learning;
- (g) plan and prescribe courses of study for degrees, diplomas or certificates through open and distance learning, with the collaboration of local and overseas providers of education and training;
- (h) hold examinations and grant degrees, including honorary degrees, diplomas, certificates or other academic awards, acting on its own or jointly with any other education and training institution;
- (i) accept examinations and periods of study of students at other universities or places of learning as equivalent to appropriate examinations and periods of study in the Open University and withdraw such acceptance at any time;
- (j) institute professorships, lectureships, tutorships and other academic positions necessary for imparting instruction, for preparing educational material or for conducting other academic activities, including supervision, designing and delivery of courses and evaluation of the work done by learners and appoint persons to such positions;
- (k) institute and award fellowships, scholarships, prizes and such other awards for recognition of merit as it thinks fit;
- (l) set up and maintain Regional Centres within this region of the world for the purpose of coordinating and supervising the work of regional study centres in the region and for performing such other functions as may be conferred on them by the Academic Council;
- (m) set up, maintain and recognise study centres, telecentres and practice centres for the purpose of advising, counselling, tutoring, obtaining practical experience or rendering any other assistance required by learners;

- (n) provide for the preparation, reception and distribution of instructional materials through differentiated media, including terrestrial, satellite, video, radio, print, web or compact disc media and others;
- (o) make provision for research and development in educational technology, instructional design, learner support and related matters;
- (p) provide, control and maintain discipline among the learners and academic and general staff and lay down the conditions of service of such staff, including their codes of conduct;
- (q) determine standards and specify conditions for the admission of learners to programmes of study at the Open University, which may include recognition of prior learning, experience, examination, evaluation and any other method of testing;
- (r) link up with Governmental and inter-governmental institutions and the private sector to support an enabling environment for the provision of education and training at certificate, diploma, graduate, post-graduate and research levels;
- (s) create partnerships with key institutions worldwide to deliver programmes of open and distance learning.

**EXTRACT FROM OPEN UNIVERSITY ACT NO. 2 OF 2010****6. Powers of Open University**

The Open University shall have such powers as are necessary to attain its objects and discharge its functions most effectively and may, in particular –

- (a) receive donations and gifts, contract loans, and lease, acquire, hold, maintain and dispose of any property, movable or immovable, including trust and Government property;
- (b) demand and receive such fees and charges as may be charged for courses of study, research and practical training and for admission to the examinations for degrees, diplomas and other academic qualifications;
- (c) co-operate with other universities and institutions of higher learning, professional bodies and organisations, both locally and from overseas, for such purposes as it considers necessary, including credit transfers and the award of joint degrees;
- (d) subject to the Public Procurement Act, enter into such contract or other arrangement as may be necessary;
- (e) subject to any other enactment, establish such broadcasting facility as may be required to enable the Open University to perform its functions;
- (f) appoint, on contract or otherwise, visiting professors, consultants, fellows, scholars, artists, course writers and other persons from within and outside Mauritius who may contribute to the advancement of the objects of the Open University;
- (g) do such other act as may be necessary for attaining any of its objects and carrying out its functions.



Open University  
of Mauritius



# CODE OF ETHICS

18 October 2017



## Vision of the Open University

The vision of OU is to be one of the best Open Universities in the world.

## Mission of the Open University

The mission of OU is to use technology and flexible mode of teaching to serve society, transform lives, and make high-quality education, lifelong learning, and training accessible to everyone while promoting excellence in research.

## Our Values

The Values of the Open University are:

- **Openness, Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Excellence**
- **Engagement and**
- **Integrity**

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Ethics is a written set of guidelines issued by the Open University, to its employees and stakeholders to help them conduct their actions in accordance with its primary values and ethical standards.

The Open University of Mauritius is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct in all its activities. The OU community has the responsibility to act ethically and in accordance with this Code of Ethics.

Since its establishment in July 2012, OU has recognised and acted upon the importance of ethical values that have been embedded in the University regulations. *The Open University Act* encompasses well-established ethical policies and procedures relating to our core activities of delivery and assessment of open distance learning courses (Academic), Research, Fundraising and Finance.

### 2. THE CODE OF ETHICS STRUCTURE

The code describes the ethical conduct grounded in OU's core activities.

The OU Board has an overarching responsibility to keep this code under review. However, for each of the core areas, detailed ethical matters and processes, including the detailed consideration of ethical cases, rest with the University's Ethics Committee.

### 3. SCOPE

The code outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all members of the University Staff. It is intended to help and guide staff of OU to conform to the highest professional standards and work ethics. The Code should be read in conjunction with OU Act, policies and procedures. It requires compliance by all members of OU Staff. These include the following categories:

Academic and Non-Academic staff members who are employed by OU under regular or other employment contracts. It excludes the Code of Conduct of Learners.

This code sets the standard of professional conduct expected from each member of staff.

### 4. AIM

Code of Ethics are fundamental to OU values. The primary purpose of the Code of Ethics is to maintain a professional and safe environment in which the OU community can work and learn to promote a culture of fair and ethical behaviour while ensuring that the University meets its obligations.

### 5. STANDARDS OF INTEGRITY

OU staff members must maintain high standards of integrity by upholding fundamental values that include respect for the rights, differences and dignity of others, honesty and integrity in all dealings, accountability for actions and conduct in the workplace and compliance with the University regulations.

### 6. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

All staff must:

- 6.1 maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise or professional field;

- 6.2 exercise their best professional and ethical judgement as well as carry out their duties and functions with integrity and objectivity;
- 6.3 act diligently, ethically and conscientiously;
- 6.4 act fairly and reasonably, and treat students, staff, visitors of the University as well as members of the public with respect, impartiality, courtesy and sensitivity;
- 6.5 avoid conflicts of interest;
- 6.6 maintain a co-operative and collaborative approach to working relationships; and
- 6.7 comply with existing rules and regulations, policies of the University and professional codes of conduct and practice, including in relation to: the conduct of research; confidentiality and privacy of information; equal opportunity; health and safety policies and practices; efficient and effective use of University resources including information communication and technology resources; and protection of the University's interests in intellectual property arising from its teaching and research;
- 6.8 ensure that their personal appearance, dress and presentation are clean, tidy and appropriate for their work role;
- 6.9 not consume alcoholic drinks and smoke on Open University premises;
- 6.10 not accept gifts; and
- 6.11 never disclose any information related to the University without the consent of the Director-General.

## 7. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University strives to maintain the highest standards in all its teaching and research. Staff members must not conduct themselves in ways that may undermine the academic standards of its awards or the integrity and dissemination of its investigations. Examples of inappropriate conduct and breaches of Academic Integrity include but are not limited to the following:

- 7.1 granting undue favours to students;
- 7.2 receiving undue favours from students in exchange for academic favours;
- 7.3 disclosing personal information related to staff or students without their consent;
- 7.4 violation of University policies related to research and academic honesty including those guiding the conduct of tutorials, examinations and assessment; and
- 7.5 engaging in plagiarism evidenced in published or unpublished research manuscripts.

## 8. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

In the performance of their official duties, all employees of OU have access to confidential information or other confidential documents. They shall ensure that confidential information to which they may have access are not disclosed. Employees must not disclose any information

gained by them as a result of their employment to any unauthorised person or to the public, orally or in writing, without the prior approval, in writing, of the Director-General. An employee authorised to report an information shall ensure that it is being done without causing prejudice to the organisation.

No officer shall have access to records relating to him, or in any circumstances, take copies of either minutes or correspondence contained in such records or else they may be liable to disciplinary action. They shall not, in any case whatsoever, misuse such information for their private interests.

OU employees shall be bound by, and shall continue to observe their duty of confidentiality after they leave the service.

OU employees are not allowed to keep photocopies of any document and file of OU with them at office or at their residence without any prior approval in writing of the Director-General.

Members of staff are not allowed to talk about OU to the press or in any gathering including workshops, conferences and congress without the approval in writing of the Director-General.

### 9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest is defined as “A situation in which an individual’s financial, professional or other personal considerations may directly or indirectly affect, or have the appearance of affecting, his or her professional judgement in exercising any official duty or responsibility.”

Employees of the University and other community members shall conduct themselves in an honest and fair manner and shall not make any personal use or gain from University property or knowledge gained from their position.

Whenever necessary, they should declare their interest in writing to the Director-General.

### 10. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All staff must comply with the intellectual property regulations as specified in the OU General Rules.

### 11. USE OF UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

11.1 All OU resources must be utilised for business purposes only and may not be used for personal gain or use. These include all office equipment, telephone and resources at the disposal of staff.

11.2 OU members have an obligation to act in the best interest and not let outside activities or interests interfere with their duties.

### 12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Open University recognises that its employees are its most valuable resources and it shall therefore ensure that all its employees are treated fairly, with respect, dignity and equity. At the Open University, we strive to ensure that equal opportunity is a reality; that our faculty, staff, and students can work and study in an environment free of unlawful harassment and discrimination.

The University discourages discrimination and harassment and provides equal opportunities for all its members, irrespective of their race, religion, gender, and any other characteristic protected by law.

### 13. WORKPLACE SAFETY

The Open University has an obligation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2006* to provide a safe and healthy working environment. OU Officers have an obligation to take steps to protect their own health and safety and that of their colleagues, students and visitors.

OU Employees must observe risk management, health safety, security and personal protective equipment procedures and requirements. They must identify and report hazards promptly and supervisors must ensure risks are eliminated or controlled in line with Health and Safety policy of Open University.

### 14. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

OU employees should not, without written approval of the Director-General, provide any information to the news media or social media, publish any information, or make public statements relating to the policies, activities, processes and documents of the Open University.

### 15. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

All Members of the OU Staff are accountable for their actions, and as members of the University community, are collectively responsible for upholding professional standards of behaviour. They must conduct their duties in compliance with the University Rules & Regulations and Policies.

### 16. ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee deals with all reports, complaints, problems and matters arising from this Code of Ethics within the Open University of Mauritius. The Ethics Committee will ensure that this code is kept updated and provide advice on all matters pertaining to the code. The exact role, powers and members of the Ethics Committee will be defined by the University Board.

This Code of Ethics and the matter contained herein are neither a contract of employment nor a guarantee of continuing policy. This code may be amended or supplemented from time to time, with or without notice, by the Ethics Committee.

**OPEN UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS – CODE OF ETHICS  
EMPLOYEES COMMITMENT FORM**

I,....., holding the post of .....  
at the Open University of Mauritius, confirm having read and understood the Code of Ethics of the Open University of Mauritius. I hereby undertake to commit to uphold the values of personal integrity and fairness while complying to all the provisions stated in this Code. I will maintain the highest ethical standards in all my actions.

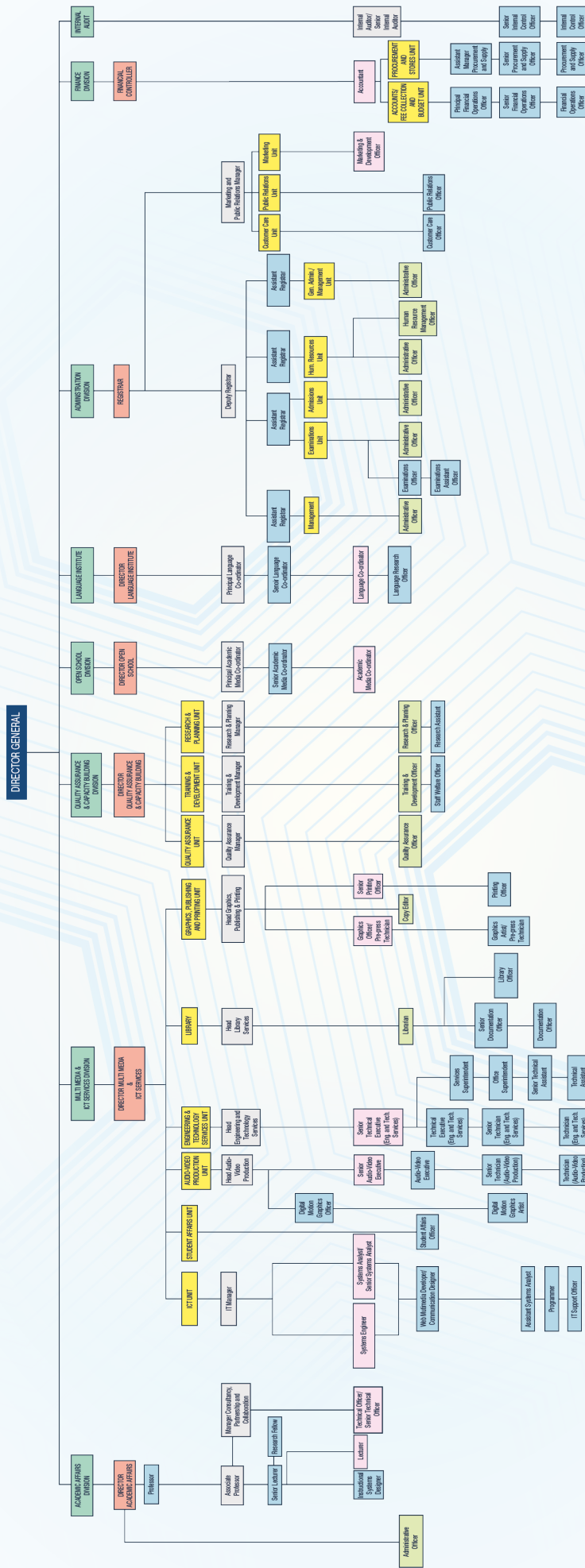
.....  
Date

.....  
Signature

**ANNEX 4**

**ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS**

ORGANISATION CHART AS AT 30 JUNE 2020



**SUPPORT STAFF AND STAFF IN NEW GRADES**

Higher Executive Officer, Office Management Assistant, Confidential Secretary, Management Support Officer, Assistant Financial Operations Officer, Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer, Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer (Personal), Assistant Documentation Officer, Assistant Printing Officer, Clerk/Word Processing Operator, Receptionist/Telephone Operator, Senior Handy Worker/Tradesman (Skilled), Senior/Head Office Attendant, Handy Worker/Tradesman (Skilled), Driver/Office Attendant, Office Attendant, Security Guard, General Worker (Personal). As the schemes of service of several posts are being reviewed, respective posts will be included in the Organisational Chart as and when required in due course.

This organisation chart will evolve with the following changes:

1. Procurement section will go under Management Unit.
2. Research, Consultancy and Innovation Centre to go under AAD.
3. Engineering Unit will take on board recent changes in scheme of service of staff concerned.
4. Student Affairs Unit should appear in the organisation chart under the AAD.
5. The Administrative Division will take on board future changes in the administrative cadre.