



**TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION**

**Mahatma Gandhi Institute**  
**Third Cycle Quality Audit Report (2019)**

**Themes:**

- I. Creativity & Community Outreach**
- II. Curriculum Development**

August 2019

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*Réduit*

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

**Table of Contents**

List of Acronyms .....	3
1.0 Overview of the Audit .....	4
1.1 Background .....	4
1.2 Composition of the Third Cycle Quality Audit Panel .....	5
1.3 Terms of Reference of the Auditors .....	6
1.4 The Audit Process .....	7
1.5 The Scope of the Audit.....	10
1.6 Audit Findings.....	11
1.6.1 MGI / RTI Council.....	11
1.6.2 MGI's Mission Statement .....	11
1.6.3 MGI's Vision .....	11
1.6.4 MGI's Five Schools .....	12
1.6.5 Quality Assurance .....	12
2.0 Commendations of the Third Cycle Quality Audit Report.....	13
3.0 Recommendations of the Third Cycle Quality Audit .....	14
4.0 Follow up on the Progress of the Recommendations of the Second Cycle Quality Audit .....	17
4.1 Governance & Strategic Planning .....	18
4.2 Quality Assurance .....	19
4.3 Infrastructure .....	21
4.4 Staff Development & Research Plan.....	22
4.5 Student Support .....	23
5.0 Institutional Quality Overview .....	24
5.1 Strategic Posture & Governance .....	24
5.2 Quality Assurance .....	28
5.3 Budgeting and Financing.....	30
5.4 Infrastructure .....	31
5.5 Staff Development & Research Plan.....	38
5.5.1 Research Plan.....	38
5.5.2 Staff Development .....	39
5.6 Student Support .....	41
5.6.1 Examination and Admission Unit .....	42
5.6.2 Counselling Unit .....	42
5.6.3 Student Welfare and Needs.....	43
5.6.4 Internationalisation Strategy .....	44
5.6.5 Industry Connections .....	44
5.6.6 Alumni .....	46
5.7 Theme 1 of the Third Cycle Quality Audit – Community Outreach and Creativity .....	46
5.8 Theme 2 of the Third Cycle Quality Audit – Curriculum Development.....	52
5.8.1 Programme Design and Approval.....	54
5.8.2 Graduate Profile .....	55
5.8.3 Programme Monitoring.....	56
5.8.4 Student Feedback Questionnaire.....	57
5.8.5 Programme Review .....	57
6.0 Conclusion.....	59

**List of Acronyms**

1. TEC – Tertiary Education Commission
2. MoEHRTESR – Ministry of Education Human Resources Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
3. TEIs – Tertiary Education Institutions
4. MGI – Mahatma Gandhi Institute
5. SER – Self Evaluation Report
6. RTI – Rabindranath Tagore Institute
7. UoM – University of Mauritius
8. MIE – Mauritius Institute of Education
9. MIS – Management Information System
10. MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
11. ACC – Academic Coordination Committee
12. QA – Quality Assurance
13. LMS – Library Management System
14. LCCS – Learner Centred Credit System
15. ECTS – European Credit Transfer System
16. IT – Information Technology
17. CPD – Continuous Programme Development
18. PMS – Performance Management System
19. KPIs – Key Performance Indicators
20. WBL – Work Based Learning
21. SWEP – Student Work Experience Programme
22. HEIs – Higher Education Institutions
23. SFQ – Student Feedback Questionnaire

## 1.0 Overview of the Audit

### 1.1 Background

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) is the regulatory body falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Education & Human Resources, Tertiary Education & Scientific Research (MoEHR/TECSR). The Commission, by virtue of its Act, has been inter alia assigned the responsibility to promote and maintain high quality standards in post-secondary education through an appropriate mechanism. The Commission has as mission to position Mauritius as a world class knowledge hub and the gateway for post-secondary education and the responsibility to ensure that students benefit from a rich educational experience in tertiary education institutions.

The Framework for Quality Assurance of the TEC has been developed with a view to instil confidence of the public and other stakeholders on the quality of educational provisions and academic standards that are being maintained in the sector. In order to implement its framework, TEC sets out to:

- i. Assist the institutions in putting in place their specific quality assurance systems;
- ii. Prepare institutions to undertake their self-assessment;
- iii. Undertake external quality audit of the institutions; and
- iv. Carry out quality assessment exercises.

As per internationally established practices in Mauritius, publicly funded Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) are required to undergo external verification of their institutional quality assurance systems. In this context, Quality Audits are widely used as a verification process, the emphasis being on continuous improvement as well as accountability. The *Quality Audit Handbook (2010)* of the TEC provides the criteria and guidelines necessary to assist institutions in preparing for the quality audit exercise.

Indeed, the purpose of the quality audit is to assess the strength of the quality culture and the actions undertaken by the institution to ensure continuous improvement. Audits are also concerned with the existence, effectiveness and efficiency of the quality processes in place at the institution to achieve its objectives and produce the desired outcomes.

This report of the Third Cycle Quality Audit of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) is published by the TEC, further to a cyclical institutional audit carried out at the institution. For the purpose of this report, quotations and references are cited from the Self Evaluation Report (SER).

## 1.2 Composition of the Third Cycle Quality Audit Panel

The composition of the Audit Panel is as follows:

1. Chairperson  
Professor Anandhavelli Naidoo  
Deputy Director – Academic Department  
University of Pretoria  
South Africa
2. Member  
Dr Vishnu Nanda Magare  
Pro-Vice Chancellor  
SNDT Women’s University  
India
3. Member  
Professor Kumud Sharma  
Professor and Officiating Director  
Directorate of Hindi Medium Implementation  
University of Delhi  
India
4. Member  
Dr (Mrs) Shashi Bala Dookun  
Radio Production Manager  
Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation  
Mauritius
5. Member  
Mrs Noshmee Baguant  
A/ Quality Assurance & Accreditation Officer  
Tertiary Education Commission  
Mauritius
- Secretary to the Audit Panel  
Mrs Kavina Rambhunjun  
Programme Officer  
Tertiary Education Commission  
Mauritius

### **1.3 Terms of Reference of the Auditors**

- 1) To make a commitment to act as a quality auditor for the institution identified as per the schedule worked out and participate in the pre-audit workshop and the audit;
- 2) To act within the scope as approved by the TEC Board in the *Quality Audit Handbook (2010)*;
- 3) To evaluate as part of its scope the progress made by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute in addressing the recommendations of the second cycle quality audit;
- 4) To be objective at all times, ensuring that they are non-judgemental in their approach; that they are aware of possible personal bias;
- 5) To observe confidentiality;
- 6) To give full support to the Chairperson;
- 7) To work as a team, ensuring that members are working in harmony with a view to accomplishing a fact-finding mission grounded on the Self-Evaluation Report;
- 8) To identify good practice as well as unhealthy practice and make necessary recommendations;
- 9) To ensure that there is agreement among the members on the conclusions of the panel; and
- 10) To co-operate fully in getting the audit report ready within two months of the audit by writing the specific observations made and checking with the Tertiary Education Commission's Secretariat to see that the report is a true reflection of the panel's findings.

## 1.4 The Audit Process

Two Quality Audit Cycles had been conducted by the TEC from 2008 to 2014 as follows:

- 1) The purpose of the First Cycle Quality Audit of the MGI undertaken in 2008 had been to:
  - (a) Assess the strength of the quality culture;
  - (b) Determine the commitment to continuous improvement;
  - (c) Appraise the systems in place to determine academic standards;
  - (d) Evaluate the systems in place to ensure that measures taken to maintain and enhance quality were appropriate and effective; and
  - (e) Establish whether the institution was embracing the concept of fitness for purpose as well as fitness of purpose.
  
- 2) The Second Cycle Quality Audit of the MGI was undertaken in 2014. Evidencing the implementation of the recommendations of the first cycle audit and emphasis on the two themes “Teaching and Learning” and “Research and Culture” had been the scope of the second cycle audit.

The Audit Panel was appointed by the TEC to undertake the Third Cycle Quality Audit. Having gathered information, views and analyses from the five Schools of the MGI, the Head of the Centre for Quality Assurance of the MGI submitted MGI’s Self Evaluation Report to the Commission on 1 March 2019 and same was circulated to the Audit Panel members for their views and comments, and for additional information that might be required prior to the Quality Audit exercise. During a pre-audit meeting at MGI, which was held on 8 August 2019, MGI was informed of the programme of work of the Audit and of necessary arrangements for the duration the audit. Additional information requested by the Panel and the interview schedule were also discussed with representatives of MGI for the smooth running of the audit. In the same meeting, MGI has been offered the opportunity to clarify grey areas around the conduct of the audit.

The first meeting of the Panel was held on 26 August 2019 at the TEC to examine the information submitted by MGI, to agree on questions to be used as performance indicators to allow the Panel members to form a judgement on the functioning of the institution and to finalise its programme of work for the Audit exercise. The Audit exercise started on 27 August 2019 and ended on 30 August 2019. Due to the diverse nature of certain group of interviewees, the Audit Panel split into 3 subgroups on 27 August 2019 for interview sessions with the Heads of Departments and into 2 groups on 29 August 2019 for interview sessions with first year to final year students on both part time and full-time diploma, degree and postgraduate qualifications.



The Audit Panel has been particularly appreciative of the MGI to have embraced the below two themes for the audit, which provide an insight on the core activities of the MGI and is crucial in enabling the institution to attain its vision and mission:

- 1) Creativity and Community Outreach; and
- 2) Curriculum Development.

During the four days of the Quality Audit exercise, the Panel has considered the two themes in relation to the strategic goals of MGI which include:

- Goal 1 – to achieve excellence in teaching and learning through innovation;
- Goal 2 – to broaden access and to enhance student experience and employability;
- Goal 3 – to become a Centre of Excellence for Research and Creativity;
- Goal 4 – to continue to play a lead role in the promotion of culture and further strengthen community outreach.
- Goal 5 – Enabling environment.

In all, the Audit Panel spoke with around 194 people in some 33 interview sessions including:

- 1) MGI / RTI Council Members
- 2) Director-General
- 3) Director (MGI)
- 4) Head, Centre for Quality Assurance
- 5) Heads of Schools
- 6) Members of the Academic Board
- 7) Head of Departments
- 8) Head Finance
- 9) Registrar
- 10) IT Administrator
- 11) Internal Auditor
- 12) Marketing Unit
- 13) Lead of Distance Delivery
- 14) Members of Central Quality Assurance Committee
- 15) Head Librarian
- 16) Junior Library Staff
- 17) Lecturers from each School
- 18) Alumni
- 19) Chair and Members Research and Publication Committee
- 20) Chair of Senate of University of Mauritius (UoM)
- 21) Head Quality Assurance of the University of Mauritius

- 22) Director Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE)
- 23) Head Quality Assurance, MIE
- 24) Representatives of companies where students are sent for placement
- 25) First year to final year students – part time and full-time students (Diploma, Degree & PG)
- 26) Student Representatives
- 27) Staff Union (one from each union) members
- 28) Administration/Support staff from Human Resource Department
- 29) Counselling Unit
- 30) Exams Unit
- 31) Admission Unit
- 32) Staff/Support Staff (including staff working on the MIS)

Open sessions were also available on 27, 28 and 29 August 2019 for any member of the MGI to meet with the Audit Panel. Some staff members of the MGI took advantage of this opportunity to meet with the Panel. A call back session was held on 30 August 2019. A campus tour was also effected by the Panel whereby the classrooms, Art Gallery, Folk Museum of Indian Immigration, Archives, Library, and Centre for Quality Assurance and Language Resource Centre have been visited.

This Report of the Third Cycle Quality Audit relates to the current situation prevailing at the time of the Audit exercise which started on 27 August 2019 and ended on 30 August 2019 and does not take account of any changes that may have occurred subsequently. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Audit Panel based on the SER provided by the MGI, supplementary documents requested as well as facts, evidences and information gathered through interviews, discussions and observations during the Quality Audit exercise. While every attempt has been made to reach a comprehensive understanding of the institution's quality arrangement within the scope of the audit, this Report does not identify every aspect of Quality Assurance, its effectiveness or shortcomings. This Report contains a summary of the Quality Audit findings along with a set of commendations and a set of recommendations.

It is expected that the MGI will use the findings to strengthen its quality management systems with the objective of facilitating quality improvement in all spheres. The decision about the way this is done is the prerogative of MGI. It is expected that the MGI submits an improvement plan based on the Third Cycle Quality Audit Report.

TEC expresses its appreciation and thanks to the MGI for the cooperative manner in which it has participated and provided additional information/documents to the Audit Panel during the Audit.

## **1.5 The Scope of the Audit**

The Third Cycle Quality Audit of the MGI encompasses the two themes “Curriculum Development” and “Community Outreach and Creativity” and at the same time evolves around the implementation of the recommendations of the Second Cycle Quality Audit.

The audit considered the areas of enhancement in relation to quality and the progress made by the institution in meeting the recommendations of the previous audit report. Furthermore, the quality audit was required to:

- assess the institution’s performance against its objectives and external references and assess its performance and outcomes in relation to national and international academic standards;
- establish whether the institution is embracing the concept of fitness for purpose as well as fitness of purpose through fulfilling its mission and achieving its objectives in an efficient and effective manner and demonstrating relevance of its undertakings;
- determine in conjunction with other mechanisms, the promotion and enhancement of high quality in teaching and learning;
- ensure that the awards and qualifications meet national expectations in terms of academic standards and quality; and
- evaluate the systems in place to ensure that measures taken to maintain and enhance quality are appropriate and effective; and assess the strength of quality culture.

## 1.6 Audit Findings

The MGI has been functioning for forty-seven years. MGI continues to play a prime role in the academic and cultural landscape of the country.

### 1.6.1 MGI / RTI Council

The MGI/RTI Council was re-constituted in November 2015 and as stipulated in the MGI (Amendment) Act 2002, the Council has the following mandates:

- Is responsible for the management and administration of the revenue and property of both Institutes;
- Has general control over the conduct of affairs of both Institutes and takes such measures as it thinks fit to achieve the objects of both Institutes; and
- Takes such measures as it thinks fit to achieve the objects of both Institutes.

### 1.6.2 MGI's Mission Statement

MGI's mission statement has four aspects, viz.,

- To provide quality education by modernising teaching and learning in all Schools;
- To produce high quality research, cultural performances and artistic works;
- To continue to preserve, promote and disseminate cultural traditions and heritage; and
- To continue to promote responsible citizenship inspired by Gandhian principles and values.

### 1.6.3 MGI's Vision

While MGI's responsibilities cover secondary and tertiary education, this audit focuses on aspects of tertiary education only. MGI has a mandate to promote Indian Studies, Performing Arts, Fine Arts, Mauritian and Area Studies as well as Chinese and Indological Studies. All degree and post graduate programmes are offered in collaboration with the University of Mauritius (UoM) while Teacher Education programmes are offered in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE). The qualifications are awarded by UoM and MIE respectively. The consequence of this collaboration is that MGI is not considered to be a degree awarding institution, thus preventing MGI from achieving its vision

*“To become an internationally recognised degree-awarding institution,  
excelling in education, research, arts and culture.”*

### **1.6.4 MGI's Five Schools**

The objects of MGI are to establish, as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, a Centre of Studies of Indian Culture and Traditions and to promote education and culture generally through its five Schools namely:

- The School of Indian Studies
- The School of Performing Arts
- The School of Fine Arts
- The School of Indological Studies
- The School of Mauritian and Area Studies

In context with the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education, the School of Indian Studies and School of Performing Arts review the primary curriculum, write textbook based on the National Curriculum Framework, and are involved in the review, design and development of syllabi.

At the time of the Second Cycle Quality Audit held in 2014, there were 571 students registered in the five Schools through which the MGI contributes to the artistic and intellectual life of Mauritian society. During this Audit, there are 561 post-secondary students registered with the MGI. The Chair of the MGI / RTI Council showed concern about this drop in the number of registered students, but the Panel did not feel that this reduction of ten students was cause for concern.

The Audit Panel took note that currently there are 109 academics (71 employed on a full-time basis and 38 on part time basis). 49% of the full-time academics have PhDs. MGI also has 35 support staff in service.

MGI considers curriculum development as central to the quality and relevance of the programmes offered at MGI, with community outreach addressing the cultural needs of the Mauritian nation through creative activity.

### **1.6.5 Quality Assurance**

The Centre for Quality Assurance was entrusted with the responsibility to follow up on the recommendations of the Second Cycle Audit and to prepare the SER for the third cycle. The personnel comprise a rotational Head, an Administrative Officer, an Office Supervisor, a Clerical Officer and a Word Processing Operator employed on permanent basis. The Central Quality Assurance Committee and the Quality Coordination Assurance Committee provide the Centre with assistance on quality issues.

**2.0 Commendations of the Third Cycle Quality Audit Report**

Commendation 1 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for the development of its strategic plan as its goals are in line with that of the Mauritius Government’s Vision 2030. .... 26

Commendation 2 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for responding efficiently and for orienting its focus on the research needs of the MGI and of doctoral students..... 38

Commendation 3 – The Audit Panel commends the MGI’s academics for the fact that alumni hold teaching staff in high respect with appreciation for their commitment in various disciplines and support extended to support whenever required..... 46

Commendation 4 – The Audit Panel commends the MGI for its rich calendar of creative activities to mark special occasions thus bringing to the public opportunities for valuable cultural experience..... 48

Commendation 5 – The MGI is commended that the Five Schools of the MGI namely School of Indian Studies, School of Fine Arts, School of Performing Arts, School of Indological Studies and School of Mauritian & Area Studies aim to achieve 'teaching for creativity' which implies that lecturers of these schools are discharging their responsibility in highlighting the creative abilities of the students. .... 48

Commendation 6 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for its involvement in several cultural activities within the community which are recognised as a source to provide valuable academic cultural experience to mark special occasions. .... 52

Commendation 7 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for ensuring that its curriculum reflects aspects of ‘creativity’ as well as the philosophy of Indian culture which is in line with the objective of the institution. .... 53

Commendation 8 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for proactively using stakeholders, (industry collaborations), to improve its market intelligence for the identification of new programmes and areas of study and review of the curriculum and existing programmes. .... 55

Commendation 9 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for its initiative in seeking regular students’ feedback and for involving its Centre for Quality Assurance in the process, as students feedback acts as a most powerful single moderator which helps MGI to be better informed about teaching and learning experiences of students to help them enhance achievement..... 57

Commendation 10 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for deploying a major part of its human resources to prepare textbooks and review the curriculum of the primary and secondary level with the intent that the desired learning outcomes in line with the Government’s Strategy framework in context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education is achieved. .... 58

### 3.0 Recommendations of the Third Cycle Quality Audit

- Recommendation 1 – It is recommended that the MGI develop an inclusive approach to improve institutional ownership with a view to foster trust and engage productivity across all levels at the MGI by:.....27
- (a) Attempting to improve the internal line of communication (between management and staff), so that all concerned staff become aware of the progress of on-going projects as well as of other important issues; and.....27
  - (b) Consider the use of appropriate means of communication, to enhance communication with students, staff and stakeholders to foster inclusiveness on its campus. ....27
- Recommendation 2 – It is recommended that the MGI (along with the MGI/RTI Council) robustly pursue the reasons for delays in enabling MGI to achieve degree awarding status and to meticulously monitor progress towards MGI attaining degree awarding status. ....28
- Recommendation 3 – It is recommended that the MGI (along with the MGI/RTI Council) pursue the formal Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Mauritius such that the responsibilities of each party are clearly outlined. ....28
- Recommendation 4 – It is recommended that a Head for the Centre of Quality Assurance and additional support staff for the Centre of Quality Assurance are appointed on a permanent basis. The position of the Head needs to be filled by a candidate who has experience in the field of quality assurance and who will perpetually ensure that MGI’s QA Framework and accountability mechanisms are working soundly in line with international practices. ....30
- Recommendation 5 –It is recommended that MGI proactively engage with the MoEHR/TEQR to develop a comprehensive higher education financial and budgeting model that is geared to the short- and long-term financial stability and which, in particular, is geared to include MGI’s quality culture in terms of academic, cultural, artistic and research provision. ....31
- Recommendation 6 – It is recommended that the MGI develop its own Management Information System (MIS) – (compatible with the MIS of the University of Mauritius, if required) – as the creation of a joint local, wide or virtual electronic platform / hub will help to support the different layers of management, academic and other Units of the MGI Community in the capturing, processing, storage and retrieval of students’ data / information.....31
- Recommendation 7 – It is recommended that the management team of MGI ensure that all lectures are allocated venues on an official MGI timetable. ....32
- Recommendation 8 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that IT infrastructure sustains internet connectivity with the appropriate strength and enhanced capacity on account of development of e-content and its effective delivery. ....33
- Recommendation 9 – It is recommended that the MGI develop a strategic plan for its library that includes the impact of technological advancements, future growth, continuous quality review initiatives, improvement plans, procurement plans, study areas with good connectivity and ensure that these plans are aligned with the needs of the MGI Community. ....34

Recommendation 10 – It is recommended that the MGI expedite the matter of seeking the approval of relevant parties such that MGI may implement the Teaching and Learning Framework for the benefit of students and academics. ....35

Recommendation 11 – It is recommended that the MGI strategically develop a Unit for Delivery of Distance Education established with a properly documented project plan, identification of an Executive Leader and efficient IT infrastructure and resources. ....37

Recommendation 12 – It is recommended that the MGI appoint a professional and experienced marketing team to focus on: .....38

(a) Recruiting students on short courses and Certificate programmes; .....38

(b) Attracting sponsors in various fields;.....38

(c) Advertising community outreach activities to the public.....38

Recommendation 13 – It is recommended that the MGI co-ordinate with staff of the Human Resource Department and Heads of Schools and to finalise a comprehensive staff development plan which can be used in decisions related to:.....40

(a) The development of a workload policy which accounts for the specialisation of discipline; .....40

(b) Promotion (transparent criteria for promotion of staff) .....40

(c) The transparent and timely filling of vacancies. ....40

Recommendation 14 – It is recommended that the MGI establish a protocol for complaints resolution which clearly defines the procedures and response timelines that students should expect. ....43

Recommendation 15 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that greater exposure to the world outside MGI be given to students particularly those from the Schools of Performing Arts & Fine Arts to enable them to enrich their knowledge of Arts, Culture and trend in the art world and provide them with more opportunities to practise the acquired creative knowledge and skills professionally.....44

Recommendation 16 – It is recommended that the MGI proactively pursue and introduce: .....46

(a) Education-related experience with proper evaluation to safeguard that inefficiencies are avoided, and productivity is improved such that students make the most and acquire required critical skills and competencies from effective placements; .....46

(b) An integrated and multifaceted career strategy for its students starting with the process of employment creation as part of students’ first engagement with the MGI and to conclude with students moving seamlessly into the work arena; .....46

Recommendation 17 – Just like its ‘teaching for creativity’ approach for learners’ empowerment, it is recommended that the MGI proactively pursue the approach of ‘teaching creatively’ by using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and effective. This will avoid the possibility of creeping polarisation which may be possible if academics take up one position or the other as students’ abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere where academics’ creative abilities are properly engaged. ....48



- Recommendation 18 – It is recommended that the MGI incorporate creative activities such as script writing, dialogue and copy writing as well as technological knowledge, skills and other tools which are, for instance, relevant for advertising related activities, in the list of existing activities of the School of Indian Studies to boost further the skills of students such that they are prepared as employable assets.....48
- Recommendation 19 – It is recommended that the MGI create a forum and dynamically encourage the participation of management, academics, non-academics, students, parents, alumni, local and international artists, policy makers, industry stakeholders, researchers involved in research related to the disciplines offered by MGI such that creativity strategies are devised which are in line not only with the strategic plan of the MGI but which are also aligned to the strategies of the Government of Mauritius.....48
- Recommendation 20 – It is recommended that the MGI strive towards a creative mix of talents and experiences and to dynamically encourage the participation of management, academics, non-academics, students, parents, alumni, local and international artists, policy makers, industry stakeholders, providing common fora for researchers involved in research related to the disciplines offered by MGI such that these fora enhance conditions favourable to creativity strategies in line not only with the strategic plan of the MGI but which are also aligned to the strategies of the Government of Mauritius.....50
- Recommendation 21 – It is recommended that the MGI feasibly extend knowledge co-creation through dialogue with diverse stakeholders with a view to enhance community outreach and creativity, to forge pathways for students to experiential and dedicated lifelong learning...52
- Recommendation 22 – It is recommended that the MGI consolidate its Department of Curriculum Development and develop and acquire internal capability in the form of Curriculum Development Specialists to assist in providing the relevant expertise and to brace its institutional educational intelligence.....55
- Recommendation 23 – It is recommended that the MGI develop a graduate profile document which considers the desired graduates attributes that its programmes must have to be responsive to students’ regional and national needs. ....55
- Recommendation 24 – It is recommended that the MGI firmly schedule programme reviews which will drive a major curriculum reform in all programmes thus instilling a pathway for the MGI to streamline and integrate programmes aligned to its vision and strategic intent.....57
- Recommendation 25 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that the deployment of a major part of its human resources towards the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education Programme does not overpower the *raison d’être* of the Tertiary Sector of the MGI. The MGI is reminded that it is crucial that the MGI is clear about what must be taught and what should be learned based on reasonable expectations of time and resources for the best interest of post-secondary students.....58
- Recommendation 26 – It is recommended that the MGI enhance its programme design and content and curriculum development and review through increased and sustainable collaborations with industry and employers. ....58

#### **4.0 Follow up on the Progress of the Recommendations of the Second Cycle Quality Audit**

The Second Cycle Quality Audit Report of the MGI, (referred to as the QA Report (2014) of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI)), contained 17 Recommendations which MGI was required to address during the period 2014-2019. However, based on MGI's SER 2019 and the findings during the Third Cycle Quality Audit 2019, the Panel noted that not all the recommendations have been comprehensively addressed. Besides recommendations which required high level policy decisions, attempts to address other recommendations appeared to have been made in silos through ad-hoc measures taken by individual departments. As a result, there was limited evidence to support the claims made in the SER 2019 about the progress or institutional improvement made at MGI further to the recommendations of the QA Report 2014.

The Audit Panel formed the view that the serious failure to implement the recommendations is attributed to some important institutional weaknesses which the MGI has cumulated over the last five years. These pertain mostly to a significant dearth in the core quality assurance functions of the MGI characterised by lack of permanent staff in the Quality Assurance Division and by an organisational culture of cumbersome and highly bureaucratic institutional processes, with limited evidence of monitoring and quality improvement. Consequently, the implementation of the recommendations of the QA report 2014 lacked an overarching institutional arrangement which would have provided the MGI with a platform to evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken. This raised serious concerns, among Panel members, about the fitness for purpose of the Quality Assurance framework at the MGI.

Since the SER 2019 contained limited analytical data and reflection to support the claims on progress made on several recommendations, this section will provide a macro-assessment of the progress made by the MGI in this regard.

#### 4.1 Governance & Strategic Planning

KEY: Recommendations (1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 11, 16) in Blue has been Implemented  
 Recommendations (2, 5, 15) in Red has not yet been Implemented  
 Recommendations in Green (3, 8, 9, 10, 17) has been Partially Implemented

- ✓ *Recommendation 1 – The MGI ratify its Strategic Plan and ensure it includes strategic priorities, targets and institutional performance indicators.*

The Panel took note that new goals within the strategic plan for the period 2015 – 2019 together with a new vision and mission have been spelt out by the MGI. The strategic plan focuses on:

- (a) Achieving excellence in teaching and learning through innovations;
- (b) Broadening access and enhancing student experience and employability;
- (c) Becoming a Centre of excellence for research and creativity;
- (d) Continuing to play a lead role in the promotion of culture and further strengthening community outreach; and
- (e) Providing the necessary enablers for a conducive working environment

The MGI / RTI Council approved the Strategic Plan on 24 June 2016 and the five Schools, while working on their respective projects stand guided by the goals and objectives of the 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan.

- ✓ *Recommendation 2 - That the Council continue to represent the needs of MGI to government with specific reference to changing the Act to include degree granting status and reflect its diploma and certificate granting status.*

- The Panel noted that since 2013, MGI has been requesting the MoEHRTESSR to make necessary amendments to the MGI Act such that MGI:
  - a) May hold independent examinations and have powers to include the awarding of degrees and post-graduate degrees;
  - b) May be granted the powers to award and confer degrees, post-graduate certificates/diplomas/degrees, MPhil and PhD awards, honorary degree and other academic distinctions under such conditions and in such manner as it may determine.

Reminders have been sent. In a letter dated 25 July 2016 the MoEHRTESSR replied to the effect that “request pertaining to amendments to be made to the MGI Act & RTI Act is under consideration by the MoEHRTESSR, in the wake of the Higher Education Bill, which is now being prepared.”

- ✓ ***Recommendation 3 – That the Council pursue formal Memoranda of Understanding with the University of Mauritius and the Mauritius Institute of Education that clearly outline the responsibilities of each party.***

- The Panel noted that Recommendation 3 has been partially implemented. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) has been finalised. A copy of the MoU duly signed by authorised representatives of the MGI and the MIE (in May 2019) has been submitted to the Panel.

The MoU with the University of Mauritius (UoM) has not yet been finalised. A draft copy has been submitted. The Panel has been notified that MGI / RTI Council met on 29 May 2019 to discuss this issue. The Panel took note that the MoU with the UoM comprises certain financial implications. The Panel formed the view that MGI is in a quandary regarding the MOU. If the MGI Act has been amended to confer degree awarding status to MGI then there would not be any need for an MoU with the University.

- ✓ ***Recommendation 7 – That MGI review its committee structure, membership and terms of reference with a view to:***

- (i) *reducing the total number of committees;*
- (ii) *ensuring appropriate and adequate representation from academics and students; and*
- (iii) *streamlining the flow of information across all levels of the institution.*

- The Panel noted that management of MGI reviewed and merged the structure of three committees to form one committee – the Academic Board. The Academic Board meets 12 times on average per year. A student representative has also been included on the Academic Board since October 2018.

## **4.2 Quality Assurance**

- ✓ ***Recommendation 4 - That MGI strengthen its quality assurance system to include systematic collection and monitoring of data, feedback of results to the MGI community and the development of action plans for improvement.***

- Recommendation 4 has been implemented as in 2014, a Centre for Quality Assurance has been established to ensure compliance and implementation of the following:
  - a) New regulations of University of Mauritius regarding programmes of studies;
  - b) Implementation of recommendations made by External Examiners;

- c) Implementation of measures emanating from observations and feedback from students;
- d) Application of policy decisions of the Academic Board and Council;
- e) Vetting of all new and modified programmes of studies prior to approval of the Academic Board.

The value of a Quality Assurance unit requires institutional memory and continuity. However, the Panel took note that The Centre for Quality Assurance is staffed by a Head who has been appointed on a rotational basis for two years together with four three administrative staff appointed on permanent basis.

✓ ***Recommendation 6 – That MGI document its policies and procedures in a quality manual and regularly monitor and report on their consistent application.***

- The Panel took note that this recommendation has been implemented. A Quality Assurance Handbook for students has been produced since November 2015 containing useful information regarding admissions, examinations, credit system, student support services, guidelines for dissertations/projects is available on the MGI/RTI website.

✓ ***Recommendation 13 – That the MGI as a matter of priority collect, monitor and use student feedback from degree students.***

- The Panel noted that procedures have been set by the Centre for Quality Assurance for collecting and monitoring of all Programme of Studies and Student Feedback. New programmes are vetted by the Centre for Quality Assurance before approval by the Academic Board, Board of Studies, Faculty Board and Senate of UoM for degree and masters' programme of studies.

As per the Quality Assurance Handbook for Students, feedback for programmes of studies is collected via the Programme Evaluation Form. Students' feedback for all programmes of studies run in collaboration with UoM are processed on-line.

Student feedback questionnaires are distributed, collected and monitored by respective Programme Coordinators through Academic Heads and an overall report is submitted to the Centre for Quality Assurance for consideration.

### 4.3 Infrastructure

- ✓ ***Recommendation 5 – That MGI establish a management information system to support its academic units and administrative staff in planning, decision-making and quality assurance processes.***
  - The Panel took note that Recommendation 5 has not been implemented due to lack of fund. The MGI has made a request for the MIS to be included in the 2018 / 2019 Capital Budget Estimates.
- ✓ ***Recommendation 8 – That MGI develop a space utilisation plan and maintenance schedule.***
  - The Panel took note that Recommendation 8 is still under process. A team led by the Internal Auditor carried out a space audit in the Tertiary Schools for rationalising office space. Funds have been allocated and the consultants will soon start preparing the scope of works, technical specifications, drawings/plans, schematic drawings, bills of quantities for preparation of bidding documents for contractors to start the extension works for the School of Indian Studies and the School of Fine Arts.
- ✓ ***Recommendation 9 - That MGI develop a comprehensive Teaching and Learning Framework that documents:***
  - (i) *approaches to teaching and learning (e.g. problem solving, critical thinking, student engagement, library resources including e-resources, independent learning skills);*
  - (ii) *delivery models (e.g. blended, distance, technology-enhanced);*
  - (iii) *assessment and moderation guidelines; and*
  - (iv) *staff development for Teaching and Learning.*
  - The Panel took note that a draft has been worked out in terms of the implementation of Recommendation 9 and the matter will be taken up by the Academic Board soon.
- ✓ ***Recommendation 10 – That MGI support its strategic direction in distance delivery with:***
  - (i) *a documented project plan;*
  - (ii) *identification of an executive leader;*
  - (iii) *adequate resourcing for IT infrastructure and instructional design; and*
  - (iv) *a Change Management Plan; and*
  - (v) *a Marketing Plan.*

The Panel took note that initiatives have been taken for the implementation of Recommendation 10. However, some areas such as (ii), (iii) and (v) need to be further developed.

#### 4.4 Staff Development & Research Plan

- ✓ *Recommendation 11 – That MGI review its Research Plan and ensure it identifies research priorities, guidelines for the quality and quantity of research outputs, appropriate targets along with procedures for monitoring at the level of the institution.*

- The Panel took note that the new Terms of Reference of the Research & Publication Committee have been approved on 19 August 2016 by the Council of the MGI. On 31 May 2017, the Council has approved the setting up of a Sub-Committee of the Research and Publications to work on the Research Policy for MGI. A draft Research Policy was produced by the Sub-Committee.

A workshop for ‘Enhancing Research at the MGI’ was held, followed by a working session on the report, for all the sessions of the workshops, to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the MGI in terms of Research activities and to consolidate the recommendations made during the workshop. The recommendations have been approved by the MGI & RTI Council and its implementation will be discussed at the next Research and Publications Committee.

- ✓ *Recommendation 12 – That MGI establish a set of principles and procedures for the identification of research supervisors including minimum qualifications, research profile and evidence of training in research supervision.*

- The Panel took note that Recommendation 12 is an exercise which is done annually. An updated list of Academics who meet the requirements to supervise PhD students is sent to University of Mauritius together with their areas of specialisation.

- ✓ *Recommendation 15 – That the MGI implement a robust, tailored performance management system for all tertiary staff including Key Performance Indicators and, where appropriate, targets.*

- The Panel took note that Recommendation 15 will be implemented on a pilot basis following the approval of all the appropriate authorities and stakeholders.

- ✓ ***Recommendation 16 – That MGI develop a staff development and improvement plan that includes formal induction, mentoring, succession planning and leadership training for Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments.***

- The Panel took note that a formal induction has been held recently for new recruits whereby the latter have been given an overview on MGI’s mission, vision, goals and objectives, on their conditions of employment, and on rules and regulations. The new recruits have also been given the opportunity to introduce themselves.

The Panel noted with concern that this recommendation is still at a stage whereby not all staff are aware of this plan or of its progress. Staff development is the prerogative of all staff and not just new recruits.

- ✓ ***Recommendation 17 – That MGI strengthen its HR capacity to ensure timely filling of vacancies, leave approvals, approvals of schemes of service and support for the performance management system and staff induction.***

- The Panel took note that Recommendation 17 has been partly implemented. This is so as the filling of vacancies depends on the fund’s allocation from the MoEHRTESSR. However, MGI has acquired a new Human Resource Software for timely computation of staff benefits such as leaves, passage benefits. The Human Resource Management Information System is being used in parallel for payroll purposes. In order to fill vacancies timeously the co-operation of the Heads of Schools is required to identify the vacancies in good time.

#### **4.5 Student Support**

- ✓ ***Recommendation 14 – That MGI continue to support and develop its students by:***
  - (i) ***including student representatives on the Academic Coordination Committee and the MGI Board of Studies;***
  - (ii) ***nominating a staff liaison officer to work with the Student Union.***

- The Panel noted that recommendation 14 has been implemented. A student from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Mauritius and a liaison officer have been nominated.



## **5.0 Institutional Quality Overview**

### **5.1 Strategic Posture & Governance**

The Mahatma Gandhi Institute was set up by an Act of Parliament which was passed on 23 December 1970 as a joint initiative of the Governments of India and Mauritius as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. The MGI is operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research. The Institute was initially set up as a Centre of Studies of Indian Culture and Traditions and has since expanded from a secondary education provider to tertiary education provider affiliated to the University of Mauritius and the Mauritius Institute of Education. The MGI Act 1970 was consequently repealed by the MGI Act 1982 and further amended in 2002 to include the Rabindranath Tagore Institute (RTI) such that the MGI and the RTI now function under one Council, one Chairman and one Director-General. It is pointed out that the scope of this audit encompasses the tertiary education activities of the MGI only.

By broadening its scope, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute is well settled on its path to cater for the growing educational, academic and cultural demands of the country and to contribute to the regional role of Mauritius. Currently the MGI is operating five Schools. MGI aims for the education system to be transformed to deliver the next generation of leaders with deep skills by ensuring that all Mauritians have access to quality education and that the curriculum equips Mauritians with the knowledge and skills required by the economy. It is seeking to be a leading educational and cultural institution and to become a degree awarding body. MGI's aspiration to provide high quality education, in modern ways and produce high quality research, cultural performances and artistic works in Indian Studies, Performing Arts, Fine Arts, Indological Studies, Chinese studies and Mauritian & Area Studies is passionately supported and maintained by the MGI Community.

The MGI has a positive public profile in arts and culture and it continuously aims to make significant contribution to the cultural life of Mauritius. By broadening access, tapping into non-conventional pools of students, using e-learning methods, internationalising offers, developing useful partnerships, identifying opportunities in the fields of the creative and cultural industries, including entertainment, environment and cultural tourism, and contributing to initiatives with respect to quality of life, encompassing both individual and collective well-being, MGI aims for a transformed education system to deliver the next generation of leaders with deep skills, to ensure that all Mauritians have access to quality education and that the curriculum equips Mauritians with the knowledge and skills required by the economy.

Reconstituted in November 2015, the MGI/RTI Council is responsible for the management and administration of revenue and properties of both MGI and RTI. The Council also has general control over the conduct of the affairs of both institutes and takes such measures as it thinks fit to achieve the objects of both institutes. The Panel noted that the members of the Council are conversant with their roles, functions and responsibilities. Generally, the Audit Panel noted that the Council is abreast of the challenges facing the MGI and that the Council is working synchronously with the MGI Management with a view to achieve the Vision and the Mission of the MGI.

The Council appoints such committees as may be necessary to assist it in the performance of its duties under this Act. The Council has set up the following committees:

- Special Appointments Committee
- Appointments Committee I
- Appointments Committee II
- Finance Committee
- Staff Committee
- Disciplinary Committee
- Audit Committee
- Anti-Corruption Committee

The Panel also noted that the MGI has merged three Committees (as per *Recommendation 7* of the QA 2014) as listed below to form the Academic Board with the approval of the MGI / RTI Council:

- Academic Coordination Committee (ACC);
- Admissions Committee; and
- Prizes & Awards Committee.

The Academic Board is the highest body responsible for assuring academic quality and ensuring academic integrity and high standards in teaching, learning and research, in affiliation with the institution's management team. The Academic Board also aims to provide academics with a voice about decisions that directly affect them and the teaching-learning environment all the while providing an important platform for student involvement in academic decision making. The Audit Panel is appreciative that the MGI statutes an open board structure whereby a students' representative from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the UoM may observe the proceedings of the Academic Board.

However, the Panel hope that the Academic Board is receptive of the student voice and that the student representation on the Academic Board is effective. The Panel was also of the view that it might be more constructive if the student representative is from the MGI Community.

Furthermore, the Panel took note that MGI has conscientiously implemented *Recommendation 1* of the Second Cycle Quality Audit. MGI has already started working on its Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. The Institute has always been active in the academic and cultural landscape of the country and now wishes to strengthen its objectives by internationalising the MGI thus broadening its areas of specialisation without diluting or diverging from its core objects. The Council has already approved that MGI appoints a Consultant to re-engineer this plan. Thus, by linking educational, research, cultural and service-related activities by being responsive to the international requirements and challenges, MGI is demonstrating its endeavour and commitment to continue to operate in line with the Government's Vision.

**Commendation 1 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for the development of its strategic plan as its goals are in line with that of the Mauritius Government's Vision 2030.**

Nevertheless, it is imperative to ensure that reform initiatives are not pursued recklessly. Indeed, management style, staff capability, risk management culture, and political instability are some of the factors which may hinder strategic decisions that contribute to the achievement of an organisation's overall corporate objectives. A formal university-wide planning which considers not only staff buy-in, but also stakeholders buy-in may help to create the engagement and willingness to go the extra mile to eliminate strategic, compliance, financial, operational, and knowledge management risks.

The Panel is of the opinion that a formal university-wide planning may not be well-established in the MGI Community as a lack of progress regarding numerous recommendations of the Second Cycle Quality Audit (QA) has been noted. Out of 17 recommendations, 9 have been implemented. The interviews were used to determine the status of the QA Report 2014 recommendations as well as the views of the participants in terms of the two themes of the Third Cycle Quality Audit. The Panel noted with concern that some of the Second Cycle QA recommendations are in such an early stage that staff are not even aware of their progress. This is true of the Teaching and Learning Framework (Recommendation 9), Staff Development and Improvement Plan (Recommendation 16) and the establishment of a Management Information System (MIS) (Recommendation 5).

The Panel also took note that the main channels of communication between the MGI and its students are relatively unclear. The Panel heard from interviewees that the style and content of communications could be improved. Interviewees thought the interactions between MGI, and its students are inadequate, and the underlying style, tone and bureaucratic nature of communications is perceived as not being student friendly.

The Panel is of the view that more instant and interactive methods should be employed to make a two-way communication channel, to reach out to students and to enhance students' engagement and inclusiveness thus gaining students' trust and making them feel supported and part of the MGI's Community.

While strategic directions provide an ambitious roadmap for the coming years, the Panel is of the view that implementation of strategies, research and capital expenditure turn around finances and a firm resolve to engage the MGI Community, particularly staff involved in the process. Hence, MGI is urged to consider measures for improving communication, enhancing trust among staff, students, university stakeholders and the broader Mauritian Community to provide for future sustainability and an institutional approach to development and growth of the MGI.

**Recommendation 1 – It is recommended that the MGI develop an inclusive approach to improve institutional ownership with a view to foster trust and engage productivity across all levels at the MGI by:**

- (a) Attempting to improve the internal line of communication (between management and staff), so that all concerned staff become aware of the progress of on-going projects as well as of other important issues; and**
- (b) Consider the use of appropriate means of communication, to enhance communication with students, staff and stakeholders to foster inclusiveness on its campus.**

Generally strategic management focuses on the vision, mission and the achievement of higher levels of performance that focus on weighing up and balancing opportunities and constraints from the environment with internal capabilities, with the aim of enhancing public value. Hence, MGI's determination to continue to represent its need to have the MGI Act amended to include degree – Awarding status is justified.

The implementation of *Recommendation 2* of the second QA report, appears not to be within the control of the MGI. The last formal communication with the Ministry of Education was in 2017 and since then there have been informal conversations on the matter. Furthermore, the members of Council appear to be unclear as to why MGI cannot attain degree-awarding status while institutions that have been established after MGI have achieved this status. The lack of degree-awarding status was brought up in the various top and middle management interview sessions and was identified as a risk to MGI. The interviewees felt that this situation diminished MGI's strategic positioning in the higher education community and the Mauritian community in general.

**Recommendation 2 – It is recommended that the MGI (along with the MGI/RTI Council) robustly pursue the reasons for delays in enabling MGI to achieve degree awarding status and to meticulously monitor progress towards MGI attaining degree awarding status.**

Nevertheless, *Recommendation 3* of the second QA report, has been partly achieved. While the MoU with the MIE has been finalised and duly signed by authorised representatives of the MGI and MIE, the MoU with the UoM is being held at a standstill point. The Panel is of the view that MGI together with the MGI/RTI Council and the representatives of the UoM need to discuss and finalise this matter. It appears that in the event the MGI acquires the degree-awarding status, the MoU will have to be reviewed. However, any stance taken must be in the best interest of students.

**Recommendation 3 – It is recommended that the MGI (along with the MGI/RTI Council) pursue the formal Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Mauritius such that the responsibilities of each party are clearly outlined.**

The Audit Panel is of the view that the MGI has a vital role. Academic policies and practices must be aligned to the new strategic directions and continuously strengthened and coherently implemented across MGI. This is even more important in view of the changing tertiary education landscape and the fluctuation noted in student enrolment, making it vital to identify and monitor academic risks continuously. Hence, the Panel urges the MGI to proactively increase and strengthen academic leadership to ensure academics are informed, prepared and equipped to embrace up-to-date academic management good practice, geared to achieve its Vision.

## **5.2 Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance is seen as any systematic process used to determine if a product or service meets quality standards. Quality education involves the development and delivery of excellent programmes to students for them to succeed.

Following *Recommendation 4* of the QA Report 2014, the Quality Assurance Unit was upgraded to a Centre in July 2014. The Centre for Quality Assurance has established a set of procedures and a checklist for all departments to comply with. Regular meetings are held with Heads of Schools to monitor progress on implementation of:

- (a) New regulations of University of Mauritius regarding programmes of studies;
- (b) Implementation of recommendations made by External Examiners;
- (c) Implementation of measures emanating from observations and feedback from students;

- (d) Application of policy decisions of Academic Board and Council;
- (e) Vetting of all new and modified programmes of studies prior to approval of the Academic Board.

The Centre for Quality Assurance is responsible for collecting and monitoring of all Programmes of Studies and Student Feedback as per *Recommendation 13* of the Second Cycle QA Report. A procedure exists, and all new programmes are vetted by the Centre for Quality Assurance before being approved at the level of Academic Board, Board of Studies, Faculty Board and Senate of UoM for degree and masters' programmes of study.

Student feedback is processed on-line for all programmes of studies run in collaboration with University of Mauritius. The questionnaires are distributed, collected and monitored by respective Programme Co-ordinators through Academic Heads and an overall report is submitted to the Centre for Quality Assurance for consideration. As per *Recommendation 6* of the QA report 2014, a Quality Assurance Handbook for students has also been produced in 2015 and is available on the MGI/RTI website.

The Centre for Quality Assurance is staffed by a Head who has been appointed on a rotational basis for two years together with an Administrative Officer, an Office Supervisor, a Clerical Officer and a Word Processing Officer employed on permanent basis. The value of a Quality Assurance unit requires institutional memory and continuity. Hence, a further concern noted by the Audit Panel is that the present arrangements in the Centre for Quality Assurance. The Division may be operating below par due to it not being appropriately staffed and equipped to manage the institution's quality assurance framework. The Audit Panel is of the view that to support the MGI's strategic goals, the structure and current staffing mode, roles, responsibilities, capacity and competencies must be reviewed.

To ensure continuity, MGI must be more assertive in ensuring that the Quality Assurance Office is held accountable for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency, with a view to drive the quality outputs and improvement agenda going forward. The fundamentals of quality monitoring must be systematically actualised to drive quality enhancement and its embeddedness in the academic and research projects, as well as in the administrative and professional areas of the University. The Head of Schools must be trained and equipped to work together with the Centre of Quality Assurance such that as a team, they become more functional and retail the academic and research quality agenda is pursued.

Quality Assurance would benefit MGI when it is results-driven and when there is an accountability mechanism which is explicit, which is strengthened as and when required and for which all individuals across the MGI Community are exclusively held answerable. To promote quality, MGI must embed a culture of quality and improvement across its campus as part of daily activities and same is only possible when MGI undertakes a major reform to integrate permanent human resources to promote, strengthen and ensure the implementation of institution-wide quality assurance processes which will lead to quality-focused performance.

**Recommendation 4 – It recommended that a Head for the Centre of Quality Assurance and additional support staff for the Centre of Quality Assurance are appointed on a permanent basis. The position of the Head needs to be filled by a candidate who has experience in the field of quality assurance and who will perpetually ensure that MGI’s QA Framework and accountability mechanisms are working soundly in line with international practices.**

### **5.3 Budgeting and Financing**

Despite the allocation of grants from the MoEHRTESSR and revenue collection from registration and course fees, from hiring of venues and other sources, the Audit Panel noted that the MGI has witnessed persistent financial deficit for the 18 months period (1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017) and for the 12 months period (1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018). This deficit has made it difficult for the MGI to maintain / upgrade its physical infrastructure, IT infrastructure as well as retain / hire the required level of human resources needed to maintain and support quality higher education.

In addition, the MGI must take a new approach to creating and sustaining revenue generation which not only will build engagement with new opportunities but will also allow MGI to move away from its dependency on the subsidy mentality. The MGI, as an important step to achieve its strategic goals, must move beyond the “deficit” mindset totally reliant on government funding by assisting staff, students and other stakeholders to build on opportunities and possibilities with a frame of reference that is entrepreneurial and innovative.

Hence, the MGI is urged to identify opportunities for procuring consulting revenues, generate alumni resources, stimulate internal growth and incorporate a commercial pricing capability. For this purpose, it is essential that the MGI has a formal university-wide plan together with the necessary monitoring structures to manage its performance and to ensure its financial sustainability. Regular communication by senior management to staff and students on decisions related to the budget and finance remains important.



**Recommendation 5 – It is recommended that the MGI proactively engage with the MoEHRTESR to develop a comprehensive higher education financial and budgeting model that is geared to the short- and long-term financial stability and which, in particular, is geared to include MGI’s quality culture in terms of academic, cultural, artistic and research provision.**

#### **5.4 Infrastructure**

The Panel noted with concern that *Recommendation 5* of the Second Cycle Quality Audit has not been implemented due to a lack of fund. Since 2015, MGI has been using the MIS of the UoM – UoM’s Student Information System for Tertiary Education – to manage student data. The Student Information System provides the capabilities for documenting grades, transcripts, results of students’ tests and other assessment scores, building student schedules, tracking student attendance and managing other student-related data.

However, following interviews with academics, the Panel found that the UoM’s Student Information System is used by MGI’s academics to record the grades of diplomas and degrees students, while for certificate courses, the MGI uses the Pastel Package. The Panel was informed that the Student Information System software has been installed on only one workstation which requires staff to queue to enter the results of students. This is a major cause of frustration for the academics.

Reliable data is necessary for sound decision making. MGI has a collaborative (shared) environment comprising many players such as policy makers, academics and students. This certainly demands the exchange and sharing of vital information in the execution of duties, policy direction and further to furnish data and information to guide in decision making and to yield valuable statistics, for instance, on student enrolment, course schedules, admissions, examinations, and provision of exam results. As MGI does not have its own MIS, data cannot be tracked over any specific period due to a lack of dashboards.

**Recommendation 6 – It is recommended that the MGI develop its own Management Information System (MIS) – (compatible with the MIS of the University of Mauritius, if required) – as the creation of a joint local, wide or virtual electronic platform / hub will help to support the different layers of management, academic and other Units of the MGI Community in the capturing, processing, storage and retrieval of students’ data / information.**



Another major issue which was repeatedly mentioned by interviewees is the problem of space. *Recommendation 8* of the Second Cycle Quality Audit Report which stipulated that the MGI develop a space utilisation plan and maintenance schedule has been initiated in a phased manner. One of the goals of MGI is to provide an enabling environment. An enabling environment will support the delivery of a curriculum. However, in the interviews remarks of the various Schools indicated that there was still dissatisfaction regarding the availability of space. In addition, staff would like to have rooms for specialisation and have not been afforded this request due to a lack of space and funding. They remain uncertain as to how and when they will benefit from the forthcoming construction. In addition, students indicated that some lectures are not officially allocated venues resulting in students and lecturers walking around the campus to secure venues for their lectures.

The Panel took note of the planned construction of two buildings soon. The MGI informed the Panel that meetings have been held to develop a better space utilization plan. A team led by the Internal Auditor carried out a space audit in the Tertiary Schools. Concurrently, a significant allocation of the capital grant received from Government has been used for consultancy services for the construction of two buildings for the School of Indian Studies and the School of Fine Arts. The Panel understood that consultants have been appointed and they will begin preparing the scope of works, technical specifications, drawings/plans, schematic drawings, bills of quantities for preparation of bidding documents for contractors to start the extension works.

Quality education can only be delivered in an enabling environment but unfortunately, the panel determined that there has not been any major improvement in terms of the availability of space since the last audit. The panel suggest that ample attention is given to the space utilisation development and improvement plan and to a sustained renovation agenda. During a guided tour of the Campus, the Panel noted that the Auditorium is being renovated. Simultaneously, the MGI must continue to upgrade all other work rooms and offices, technological equipment and facilities with a view to provide staff the zest to deliver the best programmes possible. Indeed, by reorganising its facilities, MGI will provide students with conducive and comfortable study areas, including common spaces for group study which will commensurate with the MGI's academics-learners expectation of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Post-Secondary Education provider. This will enable students to benefit from a quality learning experience which will positively impact on MGI 's reputation and future growth plans.

**Recommendation 7 – It is recommended that the management team of MGI ensure that all lectures are allocated venues on an official MGI timetable.**

The panel were concerned and think that it will be opportune if MGI's teaching and learning is aligned with more up-to-date technology-induced and highly productive methods to allow staff to effectively and efficiently perform their work and at the same time increase students' critical thinking skills as well as their creativity. More emphasis can be put on the use of technology, such as increased utilisation of the Moodle platform and Google Classroom, interactive technology, multi-media, online learning, as well as the use of more online, hybrid or blended modes of delivery.

**Recommendation 8 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that IT infrastructure sustains internet connectivity with the appropriate strength and enhanced capacity on account of development of e-content and its effective delivery.**

The Mahatma Gandhi Institute Library was set up in 1975 to support teaching and learning, curriculum development and research by providing access to resources and services to satisfy the information needs of academic staff, students and staff of the Institute. In order to provide larger accessibility and to enhance wider dissemination of information, the (Public cum Academic) Library also provides services to the members of the public (above 18) who are interested in the fields of specialisation of the Library.

In 2014, the MGI Library was established as a Specialised Library of Language and Culture. The MGI Library collection is special and unique in Mauritius in terms of languages and subject areas which includes specialised sections on various disciplines including Tagore Studies, Dramatic Arts, Yoga & Meditation, Music, Anthropology, Film Production, Fiction and Non-Fiction, Gandhiana Collection, Spirituality and Literature among others.

Since 2017, the Library has set up a *Médiathèque* Space where users can have access to audio-visual and digital contents on different types of media (CDs, DVDs, tapes, slides, CD-ROMs, etc). The *Médiathèque* has equipment for onsite viewing and listening of audio-visual materials and programmes. Computer stations are also available to library users for searching the Internet, consulting e-mails, as well as office work.

The Panel heard from interviewees and observed that the library requires urgent attention in terms of strategic acquisitions viz new publication titles and online resources. Interviewees' complaints dealt mainly with the library's inability to cater for many programmes which are on offer as texts are outdated or incomplete and access to online journals is limited. The Panel also noted that the interviewees consider that though setting up a new system initially requires a substantial amount of money and resources for installations, hosting and maintenance, MGI needs to implement a Library Management System (LMS) which can be used to trace desired books electronically without going through shelves, to facilitate the lending process by keeping records of items lent and borrowers' information, support administrative tasks such as inventory and data processing and reinforces users' loyalty and satisfaction as it provides fast and reliable library services. Interviewees believed that a technology- enhanced library will mean more work in less time, operational costs and manual effort thus allowing library personnel to concentrate on facility strategies to better accommodate the modern needs of their students' increasingly social approach to learning and studying.

The Panel is of the view that the library is the heart of any institution academic project and MGI must ensure that any conceptualisation and refurbishment plans include physical arrangements and the impact of electronic resources in line with the ever-changing needs of users. Most libraries are good at surviving, but a modern resourced and refurbished library thrives to provide a successful academic experience for all students and staff and become a critical national knowledge resource responding to the needs of the local community as well.

Indeed, opening its library to the public shows MGI's community outreach effort. However, this may be further developed and not restricted to the physical walls of the library. Consideration may be given to opportunities for partnering with local schools and businesses, for roving reference on campus and local community.

**Recommendation 9 – It is recommended that the MGI develop a strategic plan for its library that includes the impact of technological advancements, future growth, continuous quality review initiatives, improvement plans, procurement plans, study areas with good connectivity and ensure that these plans are aligned with the needs of the MGI Community.**

In terms of sports facilities, the Panel was informed that MGI has not invested in well-resourced and diverse activities which students may make optimum use. It was reported to the Panel that students interested in sport activities are welcomed to use the sporting facilities of the UoM. However, this arrangement is not convenient. The Panel is of the view that it would be important to understand the reasons for this lack on MGI's part and that MGI provide facilities to encourage widespread participation in sports activities as a healthy and socially beneficial practice.

The Panel heard from interviewees about the ways in which the MGI accommodates persons with disabilities. It has been noted that recently a ramp has been constructed. Nevertheless, the MGI is encouraged to continue to make the special effort required to make the building and infrastructure increasingly conducive to people with disabilities as well as to formalise protocols, and conduct workshops to sensitise and train its administrative and academic staff to respectfully assist and support those with disabilities.

The Panel observed that *Recommendation 9* of the Second Cycle Quality Audit laid emphasis on the MGI to developing a Comprehensive Teaching and Learning Framework in terms of:

- 1) Teaching and Learning Approaches; and
- 2) Delivery Models.

The SER states that on this count necessary steps have been taken and a Draft Teaching and Learning Framework has been prepared and the same would be presented to Academic Board of MGI shortly. This Framework is required to be approved finally by the Senate of University of Mauritius through its Teaching and Research Committee.

The Panel recognises the dynamism of academics in giving their best to the cause of teaching and research despite limited resources and various constraints. The Panel is of the opinion that a Teaching and Learning Framework will help academics to align learning goals with classroom activities that integrate lectures with discussion, active learning, self-reflection and class assessment into learning. A Teaching and Learning Framework will provide diverse approaches that help students form knowledge structures that are accurately and meaningfully organised. The MGI must consider ensuring the provision of a broad range of innovative teaching methods as well as contemporary assessment modes in order to embed the desired employability skills with a view to improve students' work readiness.

**Recommendation 10 – It is recommended that the MGI expedite the matter of seeking the approval of relevant parties such that MGI may implement the Teaching and Learning Framework for the benefit of students and academics.**

In addition, many interviewees raised concern about the lack of student participation and engagement in learning for several reasons such as their lack of independence and maturity, coming from a Mauritian secondary school approach to learning and mechanisms to monitor class attendance, and which consequently makes teaching by academics more challenging. The Panel was informed that the focus of teaching and learning has shifted from the traditional Credit System to that of a Learner-Centred Credit System (LCCS) which is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The Panel was informed that the UoM has adopted the LCCS as well. The LCCS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer, based on the principle of transparency of the learning, teaching and assessment processes. Students will be credited for time spent on each module and academic efforts put in. Academics have been very enthusiastic with the forthcoming adoption of the LCCS as they think that the system encourages creative thinking and independent learning which prepares students for work mobility. The interviewees believed though learning will be facilitated by academics, it will be self-directed requiring greater analytical and critical thinking from students.

The Panel is of the view that in spirit of continuous improvement, MGI must consider a mechanism to evaluate teaching to ensure quality and consistency in the delivery of programmes, evaluate and hold staff accountable for poor performance. The Panel is of the view that considering the changing profile and needs of students, the LCCS may be an appropriate mechanism to promote student-oriented types of learning and to foster students' exposure to real-life cases and help them to become independent learners.

However, the Panel feel that MGI must find ways to ensure a smooth transition from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. MGI must consistently monitor student participation and trigger interventions when required. MGI must ensure that the new system engages both academics and students all the while ensuring that teaching facilities and equipment are enough to address the challenges of enhancing student participation to provide students increased opportunities to open and develop their own insights and reason-based opinions. Interviewees highlighted that to refrain from the decline in soft skills among students who fail to properly articulate what they learn, the MGI Community is encouraged to communicate in the language most relevant to the subject that the student is learning. MGI considers this as part of the academic literacy for students.

Furthermore, the Panel took note that the *Recommendation 10* of the QA Report 2014 has been partially implemented. To date, neither do the MGI have an Executive Leader nor a project plan for Distance Education. The Panel has been informed that the focus has been shifted from the development of Distance Education to the preparation of textbooks based on the National Curriculum Framework in the context of the nine-year Continuous Basic Education programme. However, the Panel noted that there appears to be growing activity in the area of distance education. The IT Department in collaboration with the Language Resource Centre have during the period 2015/2016 implemented online platforms for the uploading of Introductory Courses in Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Sanskrit, Modern Chinese and Bhojpuri.

The Panel was informed that lessons are prepared and hosted on individual Moodle E-Learning environments. Instructional design methods were applied to ten (10) lessons delivered in each language. A total of two hundred (200) students had registered for lessons in these languages. An average of thirty-five (35) students were actively participating in each Moodle Platform. The maximum number of students were present for Hindi, Modern Chinese and Sanskrit courses. The courses were taught for the period September 2016 to March 2017. Registration of students and creation of Logins and passwords to access the Moodle Platforms were completed by Language Resource Centre and IT Department with an administrative fee of Rs 1,000/- per participant. Individual Logins were provided to Academics to deliver online courses.

However, the Panel was informed that MGI is planning to shift from the Moodle Platform with which they have had some issues. For instance, Moodle is not fully developed to cope with all sort of projects and when more students access the platform, the system becomes slower. For this reason, the MGI is shifting to the Google Classroom such that students and faculty may collaborate seamlessly across departments, disciplines. MGI staff will work more efficiently and effectively, thus helping students to be more productive. The Panel was informed that with the G Suite for Education, MGI will have virtual reality technology, with which students and faculty can co-create immersive experiences for deeper exploration and learning.

**Recommendation 11 – It is recommended that the MGI strategically develop a Unit for Delivery of Distance Education established with a properly documented project plan, identification of an Executive Leader and efficient IT infrastructure and resources.**

In addition, the Panel noted that the MGI has set up a Marketing Unit in 2018. However, the team does not currently have a proper leader or a marketing plan to increase the visibility of the MGI and to market its courses to new horizon. As a result, MGI is passive to important risks viz the dynamic student market comprising increased student competition, changing students' profiles as well as the need to diversify the portfolio of programmes. Since the MGI was unable to provide the Panel with any market or other research to explain the fluctuation in students' enrolment since the period 2013/2014, the Panel encourages the MGI to make efforts to better understand the student enrolment dynamics and risks to better plan and market its courses, be it through Career & Education Fairs or through the Social Media.

Furthermore, short courses provided by the MGI are available to the Community. Hence, students already enrolled on these short courses may be encouraged to register for Certificate Courses if they are eligible and study further at MGI. Continuous training sessions by international or local experts could be extended to students. The Marketing Department must be able to authenticate MGI's need for workshops, brainstorming sessions and seminars such that MGI may be able to meet expected goals and achieve excellence for a brighter future.

**Recommendation 12 – It is recommended that the MGI appoint a professional and experienced marketing team to focus on:**

- (a) Recruiting students on short courses and Certificate programmes;**
- (b) Attracting sponsors in various fields;**
- (c) Advertising community outreach activities to the public.**

## **5.5 Staff Development & Research Plan**

### **5.5.1 Research Plan**

As per the SER 2019, both *Recommendations 11 and 12* – (QA Report 2014) – have been implemented. Based on what the Panel heard from interviewees, the Panel noted that the focus of the MGI has been on the development of a research-engaged institution. MGI has accurate processes to streamline doctoral progression and improve the research experience of doctoral students. Lecturers are involved in the supervision and evaluation of MPhil and PhD research projects both at national and international levels. The Panel also noted that all Academics are thoroughly encouraged to complete their PhDs and to engage in research and publication to respond efficiently to the research needs of MGI. The Panel noted that MGI supports academics financially to help them in their research engagement. Sabbatical are also granted for this purpose.

However, some complaints were heard regarding MGI's policy to finance and support only those academics who have been appointed for more than 3 years at the MGI, in their research endeavour. Concerns were raised regarding this policy which is viewed as unreasonably unfair leading to frustration of academics. Hence, the Panel urges the MGI to deploy appropriate control and accountability mechanisms to ensure staff development activities are well supported and not unduly penalised due to unreasonable long delays in the various stages of their journey as this determines to a large extent the research ambition of the MGI as mentioned in its Mission and Vision.

**Commendation 2 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for responding efficiently and for orienting its focus on the research needs of the MGI and of doctoral students.**



## 5.5.2 Staff Development

The Panel noted with concern that there are several human resource issues that need to be addressed urgently as follows:

### 1) The Conflation of Roles of the Academic Staff

While, on one hand the research agenda is being highlighted as a priority, academics are at the same time required to review the primary and secondary school curriculum and prepare textbooks based on the National Curriculum Framework in the context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education, and to design and develop the syllabus and write textbooks in Indian Music and Dance for Grade 7, 8 and 9. The Panel noted that the writing of textbooks by the academics of the MGI contributes directly to national efforts in promoting Indian Languages and culture in Mauritius. Nevertheless, there were several complaints regarding the workload of academics.

The panel is of the view that in the Higher Education arena, textbook writing is not seen as a requirement for academics and not equivalent to research publications. Hence, Management is urged to take a decision as to which activity is necessary for the staff to include in their workload as academics. Each School of the MGI has its own uniqueness in term of its specialisation. So, workloads should be developed around these.

### 2) Promotion Criteria for Academic Staff

There seems to be a problem with transparency of the promotion criteria for academic staff. New staff are aggrieved about the three year period that they have to serve before they are entitled to the benefits of sabbatical to improve their qualifications while staff who have been at MGI for a long period believe that they are overlooked for promotion in favour of newer staff.

### 3) Inopportune Filling of Vacancies

Moreover, students are dissatisfied about vacancies for lecturers not being filled timeously. Students mentioned that they were not afforded the options of choosing electives due to vacancies not being filled. The Audit Panel is of the view that the quality and morale of staff is key to the performance of any organisation. For this to happen, staff must feel included and valued. The Panel noted that MGI fosters an organisational culture which is value-based, ethical, healthy and vibrant. However, MGI must proactively work to foster a strong sense of belonging and encourage participation with a view to motivate and engage staff in taking ownership, enhance productivity and promote the Core Values of the MGI. A comprehensive staff development plan that indicates promotion requirements and includes the essential components of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) will foster MGI with one of the elements required to move further towards its goals and objectives.



The most valuable resource in any organisation is the Human Resource exhibited by each employee's skill set, knowledge and experience. Human resources are the lifeblood of any organisation and a well-planned staff development programme can help staff hone their skills, re-establish relationships with their co-staff and management and ignite new interest in projects and goals of the MGI.

The Panel observed that the MGI has *Recommendation 16* of the Second Cycle Quality Audit has been implemented. However, from what was heard from interviewees, the Panel noted that various staff are not aware of any staff development plan apart from the formal induction recently given to new recruits to give them an overview of MGI, to make them aware of the MGI's objectives, vision and mission, and to give them a brief on their conditions of employment and their fundamental rights at the MGI, on the rules and regulations that they should abide by and what is expected from them during their employment at the MGI.

**Recommendation 13 – It is recommended that the MGI co-ordinate with staff of the Human Resource Department and Heads of Schools and to finalise a comprehensive staff development plan which can be used in decisions related to:**

- (a) The development of a workload policy which accounts for the specialisation of discipline;**
- (b) Promotion (transparent criteria for promotion of staff)**
- (c) The transparent and timely filling of vacancies.**

#### **4) Performance Management System (PMS)**

Performance Management is a key enabler in driving operational excellence in any organisation. Based on the feedback gathered, the Panel noted that *Recommendation 15* of the Second QA Report – Performance Management Systems – will be implemented on a pilot basis. It was proposed that the Performance Appraisal Forms of the MGI be adapted based on those of the Ministry and that the system would be implemented on a pilot basis in the first instance, after getting the approval of all the authorities and stakeholders concerned. Training sessions will be held for staff members in order to facilitate the process of implementing the system.

The Panel is of the view that the introduction of an employee-based appraisal and incentive scheme is meant to enhance staff engagement. Performance management system will help MGI set the deciding factor for employee's promotion, salary increment and transfer of staff by identifying performers, non-performers or under-performer employees in the organisation. The PMS will not only help MGI to build accountability/recognition of performance but also to develop a high-performance management culture whereby staff will not feel discriminated and unduly penalised through lengthy and bureaucratic processes or because of what staff feels to be unfair promotion practices.

The Panel urges the MGI to clearly define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) based on the core objectives of the MGI, that will be used in the Performance Management process for the various levels of employees of the MGI as an the effective communication channel to inform employees about their goals, job responsibilities, key deliverables and performance standards. MGI will be able to continuously measure these milestones and give an indication that that MGI is heading in the right direction to align its overall organisational goals (which is linked with each activity performed by each department and employee) followed through departmental goal and individual goals. As a yardstick to measure the achievements of the MGI Community, the PMS will be effective to evaluate the performance gaps, thus providing a platform to identify training needs, set new targets, design departmental needs and set employees' career progression requirements to maintain sound health and performance at the MGI.

Indeed, employees of any organisation are considered as an asset and the PMS will provide the MGI with a platform to discuss, develop and design the individual and department goals thorough discussion among Management team, Head of Schools and their subordinates to ensure utmost utilisation of assets. In addition, the Panel noted that on various occasions, interviewees have complained about the inopportune filling of vacancies which have led to lots of hindrances. The Panel acknowledge the fact that Recommendation 17 of the Second Cycle QA stipulating the filling of vacancies depend on funds allocation from the MoEHRTESR and suggest that the MGI unwaveringly and proactively engage with the Ministry to develop a financial and budgeting model that is geared to fulfil MGI's needs for talent development, succession planning and knowledge mobilisation and employees' career development (the pathway which is multi-pronged and nurtured rather than left to chance) requirements. This will create some *esprit de corps* which will help MGI Community to enhance its strategic value and be professionally recognised for its customer-centric and service-excellence driven attributes.

## **5.6 Student Support**

The Panel noted that Recommendation 14 of the Second Cycle QA has been implemented. The student who represents the students of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Mauritius is present on the MGI's Academic Board for all matters regarding students. One Administrative Officer has been designated to act as Liaison Officer between the MGI and the Student Union for matters and complaints regarding the welfare of students.

### **5.6.1 Examination and Admission Unit**

Student support is an important pillar in the student life cycle and is key to student welfare. The Panel noted that the MGI has an Examination and Admission Unit vested with the responsibilities for students' admissions, examination matters and maintenance of student progress records. The Panel took note from the SER 2019 that question papers are typed by a Confidential Secretary and input of marks in the SIS by the Examiners are done in a secured place provided by the Examination Section. The Panel was informed that the recruitment process, starting from the advertisement (which is approved by MGI) to the student screening process is done at the UoM based on the academic credentials of the applicants.

However, the Panel heard from interviewees that these services are not properly digitalised for better efficiency at the MGI. The Panel encourages the MGI to make efforts to understand the student enrolment dynamics to better plan and market student enrolments. The Panel is also of the view that MGI must establish a student screening mechanism to facilitate the recruitment of the right calibre of students in view of the unique range of disciplines offered at the MGI, thus ensuring that the programmes suit the students' interest and potential. The Audit Panel urge the MGI to budget and cater for more resources to its Examination Unit to improve infrastructure as well as to modernise processes

### **5.6.2 Counselling Unit**

The MGI has a Counselling Unit to advocate students' well-being, guide and support students especially when it comes to dealing with academic, personal, parental and social pressures. However, it appears to the Panel, that only the minimal counselling service and pastoral care are given to students. From what the Panel heard, it appears that over the years, major resources have been invested in improving the academic components of the institution. The Panel urges the MGI to reorient some of its resources to cater for enough counselling and pastoral care services in line with the need of the millennial student.

The Panel took note that students have never felt any interpersonal influences, pressures and stresses or any serious challenges such as racial/gender discrimination, depression, anorexia, family problems or bullying or any type of harassment. The Panel appreciated that the students and staff feel secure in the premises of the MGI and that they acknowledge and recognise that these risks exist. Hence, the Panel urges the MGI to create awareness and to design security strategies for such issues which may ignite any time. The Panel is of the view that the MGI Community, staff and students, must be sensitised about the need to ensure that there is a respectful and inclusive campus environment. Academics have an important role in identifying students at risk and guiding them to promote the wellbeing of the MGI Community at large.

### 5.6.3 Student Welfare and Needs

Furthermore, the Panel noted that apart from the student union, there is no such office such as the Student Welfare Office which may endeavour to improve student life on campus or review the mandate and scope of student welfare at the MGI. Concerns were raised during interviews regarding many issues currently faced by the Student Union mostly pertaining to minimal consultation/communication between Management and the Union on various student-related matters and that there is a lack of induction and training provided to newly elected student union representatives. Interviewees felt that there is no one to drive the MGI's student welfare agenda. Students tend to rely heavily on the Student Union for help rather than approach the MGI itself. MGI is called upon to ensure that the student voice is heard concerning all major academic and non-academic decisions that may impact on the student experience.

The Panel felt that this is contrary to what staff, who appeared to be highly committed to the cause of students, have said during interview sessions. The Panel formed the view that due to the absence of appropriate institutional support and bureaucratic nature of the students' services; students are discouraged to highlight problems and engage with the MGI for improvement of their student life. The Panel feels that student experience is a priority and MGI must make students (one of the main stakeholders) feel welcomed and included in the MGI Community. The Panel urges the MGI to develop and demonstrate a more proactive approach to support and improve the student campus experience even more so as there is no evident protocol in place for students' complaints.

**Recommendation 14 – It is recommended that the MGI establish a protocol for complaints resolution which clearly defines the procedures and response timelines that students should expect.**

The Audit Panel noted that students expressed the view that MGI's students undergo induction at the UoM and on the same day are brought at the MGI for a shorter span of time. Students feel that the orientation prior to the start of their programmes, does not track the needs of students. The Panel is of the view that the Centre for Quality Assurance must have the needs of students on the radar. MGI must have a mechanism to understand student needs, including the drivers of student choice to study at MGI. The Panel also noted from what have been said during interviews that although, generally, lecturers assist struggling students, the MGI does not have any formal structure/arrangement to assist academically low performing students. The Panel urges the MGI to develop a student success policy to identify students at-risk of failing, keeping them engaged, and helping them achieve the desired learning outcomes and careers.

### 5.6.4 Internationalisation Strategy

In addition, during the audit visit, it was emphasised to the Audit Panel that the MGI's vision is to strengthen its internationalisation strategy, by diversifying its efforts to position itself as a regional leader in tertiary education. The Panel appreciated the fact that MGI envisages to attract international students on its campus. The MGI is encouraged to explore potential markets in the region and to develop clear strategies with well-defined KPIs, time frames and lines of accountability. The Panel suggested that MGI ensures that its internationalisation strategy warrant that international students who will be hosted by MGI, benefit from adequate support for integration in the Mauritian Society to ensure their academic success as well as their safety and wellbeing for the duration of their studies.

### 5.6.5 Industry Connections

The MGI provides its students with opportunities to interact with the corporate world and industry via and work-based learning (WBL) opportunities. For instance, students from the School of Indian Studies follow the Students Work Experience Programme (SWEP). The objective of the programme is primarily to assist students to gain meaningful exposure to the world of work, thereby linking academic training to help enhance their interpersonal skills, but also specific to the world of MGI, students such as those from the School of Performing Arts and Fine Arts require extensive creative experience to expand their art form and the horizon of their creativity and expression. These programmes are designed to complement the theoretical knowledge acquired by the students in the academic environment in the respective establishments of their discipline. The Panel was informed that MGI cater for students of Fine Arts to be provided the required work experience at the MGI itself.

**Recommendation 15 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that greater exposure to the world outside MGI be given to students particularly those from the Schools of Performing Arts & Fine Arts to enable them to enrich their knowledge of Arts, Culture and trend in the art world and provide them with more opportunities to practise the acquired creative knowledge and skills professionally.**

However, though feedback received by the Panel from industry interviewees highlighted that the level of graduates and the quality of education is well appreciated, the interviewees also highlighted that they think that sufficient resources are not deployed for the development of other skills such as communication, research, teamwork, and experiential learning required for their professional development. The focus appears to be on providing work experience to guide students in making the right career choices and unfortunately, we are called to often hear criticism from employers that, while students may be *ready to graduate*, they are not yet *ready to work*.

The Audit Panel is of the view that the MGI may not be deploying enough resources to enhance its collaboration with the industry and to enhance the employability skills of its students. The Panel noted that the potential for MGI-industry collaborations have not been fully developed, as it appears that though work-based learning is an important component of the MGI student experience, it is largely limited to organising student placements. However, this is constrained in terms of establishing and nurturing relations with industry due to a lack of resources.

From what the Panel heard, industry representatives highlighted the need to increase student exposure in the actual industry environment through longer placement periods, and through motivating students to be more involved in industry-based projects. Mention was made of the availability of many research projects which could be taken up by students. The Panel is of the view that the MGI must find ways to ensure effective placement programmes through soliciting a higher level of engagement from students and staff. Placements are opportunities to upgrade other skills, by being connected to the practical world of work as well as to increase opportunities to secure employment. The Panel noted that not all programmes have a placement component. The Audit Panel is of the view that the MGI review its strategy and approach towards partnerships to explore ways in which all students could be exposed to the workplace.

Based on the above, the Audit Panel is of the view that the MGI must implement a mechanism to track students on placement and to ensure that all students have a minimum of one placement during their studies. The MGI is requested to work with the industry to develop programmes such that all students have education-related experience in the world of professional work, embedding evaluation within this process to safeguard that inefficiencies are avoided, and productivity is improved. The MGI is also called to ensure that students make the most and acquire required critical skills and competencies from those placements. In this respect, it is important that the MGI, in the first instance, measure the impact and effectiveness of internship programmes. The MGI must ensure that to continuously improve the experience students are getting during placements, onsite supervisors who shadow interns must be well-trained and well-versed in their roles to be able to better evaluate intern competencies. Common goals must be set up with the industry prior to the start of any placement. The Panel also took note from the SER 2019 of the fact that limited employment opportunities are available for graduates of certain programmes of studies and that somewhere there is a mismatch between some programmes of studies and market demand resulting in low student to staff ratio for some programmes of studies. The Panel urges the MGI to review the demand for such programmes where there are limited employment opportunities. The MGI is urged to implement an integrated and multifaceted career strategy for its students starting with the process of employment creation as part of students' first engagement with the MGI and to conclude with students moving seamlessly into the work arena.

The Audit Panel suggest that MGI forge its relationship with the industry well beyond the need for placement, not only to ensure that interns develop the right skills and knowledge required to be employable, but also for the MGI to develop programmes for which there is a market demand, such that students are not penalised by being left unemployed after their studies. The MGI is requested as part of social and economic responsiveness, to develop a new approach to creating work and career capabilities that will equip students for emerging economies and professional roles.

**Recommendation 16 – It is recommended that the MGI proactively pursue and introduce:**

- (a) Education-related experience with proper evaluation to safeguard that inefficiencies are avoided, and productivity is improved such that students make the most and acquire required critical skills and competencies from effective placements;**
- (b) An integrated and multifaceted career strategy for its students starting with the process of employment creation as part of students’ first engagement with the MGI and to conclude with students moving seamlessly into the work arena;**

### **5.6.6 Alumni**

The Audit Panel noted that alumni are also currently employed at the MGI. The Panel is of the view that MGI deploy its resources to bring together alumni to facilitate MGI’s engagement with the community and industry. In fact, the Panel feels that MGI must network with the industry and alumni partnerships and develop new strategies as well as draw benefit from their involvement in programme reviews and development of new programmes for which there is a market demand.

**Commendation 3 – The Audit Panel commends the MGI’s academics for the fact that alumni hold teaching staff in high respect with appreciation for their commitment in various disciplines and support extended to support whenever required.**

### **5.7 Theme 1 of the Third Cycle Quality Audit – Community Outreach and Creativity**

Creativity Education is an essential aspect of teaching and learning that is influencing worldwide educational policy and teacher practice and is shaping the possibilities of 21st-century learners. Education plays a key role and is one of the fundamental factors of the economic development of our country. The Mauritian system aims at sensitizing our children at a very young age to become good and responsible citizens and our government provides free education to its citizens from pre-primary to tertiary levels thus allowing everyone to have equal right to education.



MGI is playing an important role in the cultural landscape of Mauritius. With the objective of promoting Indian culture MGI has a mandate to promote Indian studies, Performing Arts, Fine Arts, Mauritian and Area Studies, and Indological studies. Indeed, creativity is an integral part of the curriculum of all the schools in this institution, especially the school of Fine Arts and Performing Arts. The Panel is of the view that at the MGI, 'Creativity' is cultivated in the classrooms.

MGI as stipulated in the SER 2019 is committed to and aims at producing high quality cultural performances and artistic works together promoting and disseminating cultural traditions and heritage. While encouraging the youth in particular to discover and explore the literary, philosophical and historical heritage of Mauritius, with the numerous awards in the above fields in recognition of the huge efforts from the Institute. Indeed, at the MGI, creativity is at the core of its existence. The 'Creativity' attribute, which is representative of MGI's existence and uniqueness, helps MGI in addressing the academic, career and personal dimensions of student development. Teaching for creativity is embedded in MGI's forms of teaching that are intended to develop students own creative thinking / behaviour. Students are encouraged to plan for, manage and reflect their own learning and development, but most importantly to gain deeper insights into themselves as individuals, as learners and achievers to help them develop personal knowledge that they can use to communicate and demonstrate their abilities and achievements to others. This valuing of personally constructed knowledge of self, recognises that self-identity and self-expression are important in higher education learning at the MGI.

The Panel took note of the fact that MGI is the only Post-Secondary Educational Institution in Mauritius attempting to systematize creativity in the HE curriculum. Indeed, creativity contains a set of interconnected activities, experiences and relationships which require the student to think ahead, decide what to do, analyse tasks, identify goals, create strategies to achieve objectives and do/produce things with greater self-awareness, self-observing and recording, making self-judgements to evidence the process and results of their learning.

The Creativity process involves communication, interaction and relationships with tutors, peers and co-students within which the student's creativity is utilised, recognised and further developed. Higher Education is about helping students develop their potential and prepare for a lifetime of learning, problem working, changing and coping with change and by helping students to understand and develop their unique creativities MGI is serving an important and worthwhile educational goal. The Panel is appreciative of the fact that within the complexity and richness of the higher education and concomitant wider life experience, MGI has committed itself to offer students with considerable opportunity for individual creativity based on the comprehensive and shared understandings, and collaboration of academics.



**Commendation 4 – The Audit Panel commends the MGI for its rich calendar of creative activities to mark special occasions thus bringing to the public opportunities for valuable cultural experience.**

**Commendation 5 – The MGI is commended that the Five Schools of the MGI namely School of Indian Studies, School of Fine Arts, School of Performing Arts, School of Indological Studies and School of Mauritian & Area Studies aim to achieve 'teaching for creativity' which implies that lecturers of these schools are discharging their responsibility in highlighting the creative abilities of the students.**

**Recommendation 17 – Just like its 'teaching for creativity' approach for learners' empowerment, it is recommended that the MGI proactively pursue the approach of 'teaching creatively' by using imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and effective. This will avoid the possibility of creeping polarisation which may be possible if academics take up one position or the other as students' abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere where academics' creative abilities are properly engaged.**

**Recommendation 18 – It is recommended that the MGI incorporate creative activities such as script writing, dialogue and copy writing as well as technological knowledge, skills and other tools which are, for instance, relevant for advertising related activities, in the list of existing activities of the School of Indian Studies to boost further the skills of students such that they are prepared as employable assets.**

**Recommendation 19 – It is recommended that the MGI create a forum and dynamically encourage the participation of management, academics, non-academics, students, parents, alumni, local and international artists, policy makers, industry stakeholders, researchers involved in research related to the disciplines offered by MGI such that creativity strategies are devised which are in line not only with the strategic plan of the MGI but which are also aligned to the strategies of the Government of Mauritius.**

The Panel noted that ‘Ragapriya’ which is an English medium programme being broadcast, covers all performing arts disciplines. Although the Panel is of the view that the MGI is on the right track in the field of creativity after having the opportunity to appreciate a music and dance performance given by artistes of the MGI on Wednesday 28 August 2019, there is room for improvement. Likewise, the Panel noted that while there is good progress in some languages, like Hindi, there is still need for good planning, progress and systematic implementation of the right strategies for other Asian languages such as Urdu, Telugu and Marathi. For instance, the Panel noted that programme through Media such as Srijan exists only for the Hindi language. MGI is urged to work out with concerned parties and to come up with similar programmes for other languages as well. Furthermore, the MGI should not only encourage but should also facilitate research, writing and publication in the field of creativity. By hiring the right resource persons / professionals for the right discipline, MGI will be able to enhance not only the quality but also the creativity involved in the different discipline to reach excellence.

In addition, the Panel is of the view that Indo-Mauritian cultural awareness, conferences and competitions should be organised for all languages taught at the MGI. In fact, the Panel urges the MGI to target academics and their respective students for enhanced involvement and empowerment in the diversification process of other languages to involve debates, talk shows, elocutions, quizzes which may be broadcasted and or even uploaded on social media for the benefits of the Mauritian Community and the world at large with the option to acquire the audience’s opinion, views, complaints and recommendations for continual progress. Continuous training sessions, workshops, seminars, brainstorming sessions and guest lectures by local / foreign experts, should be organised and extended to the MGI Community and if possible to interested members of the public for messaging specific ideas of the MGI and to better communicate the goals and benefits of programmes offered. Finally, the Panel feels that in the ‘*esprit de proximité*’, the language teaching and learning process with highly effective resources should be extended to different communities to build a culture-based commitment and to develop synergies.

Creativity has been identified as a factor for adequately addressing challenges caused by changes as well as a major driving force towards knowledge creation and social and economic advancement through the development of a knowledge society. The MGI consciously work towards creativity, yet relatively little attention has been paid on how creativity can be enhanced. The Panel is of the view that creativity will not thrive in MGI or for that matter in any sector, higher education or others, without the intentional and determined efforts of all the stakeholders of the institution, itself and of external stakeholders. Linked to MGI’s current and past projects, creativity is embedded in MGI’s culture. Hence, the engagement and joint efforts of MGI’s stakeholders, diverse higher education institutions, Government and other external partners involved in the combination of arts and other disciplines, will undeniably provide a favourable network for tackling a multi-faceted topic like creativity and to formulate operational recommendations regarding a change process to foster and enhance creativity encompassing all spheres of disciplines offered by MGI.

The project outcomes strongly support the notion that the participation of representatives from very diverse HEIs in the four networks, and especially the combination of the arts and other disciplines, provided a highly favourable framework for tackling a multifaceted topic like creativity. The Panel is aware that funding from the Ministry may prove to be a most inopportune factor and the MGI is reminded that if the MGI has the collaboration of the relevant authority, then MGI may make a strong case that can be advanced to the Ministry emphasising that creativity activities will benefit the mission of the MGI in terms of education, research or service to society and provide mutual advantages not only for both but for the community at large.

**Recommendation 20 – It is recommended that the MGI strive towards a creative mix of talents and experiences and to dynamically encourage the participation of management, academics, non-academics, students, parents, alumni, local and international artists, policy makers, industry stakeholders, providing common fora for researchers involved in research related to the disciplines offered by MGI such that these fora enhance conditions favourable to creativity strategies in line not only with the strategic plan of the MGI but which are also aligned to the strategies of the Government of Mauritius.**

Indeed, creativity needs to be balanced with outreach and engagement to set the stage for virtuous knowledge creation. Regarding community outreach, the Panel took note that the MGI has established a long and rich track record by systematically addressing the cultural needs of the Mauritian Community at the local, regional and international levels. Community outreach has been mainly through creative activity, involving staff and students.

The Panel was informed that although all the five schools are involved in Community Outreach and Creativity projects, the School of Performing Arts, School of Indological Studies, School of Indian Studies and the School of Mauritian & Area Studies are more involved in Community Outreach programmes, whereas the School of Fine Arts is more concerned with the theme creativity. Thiruvalluvar Day, Marathi Day, Eid Festival, Chinese Spring Festival, Sanskrit Day, Divali Show, Salon de Mai are some of the cultural programmes organised by the Institute as part of its community outreach. The Panel took note that the MGI follows a specific set of procedures to approve and hold different outreach programmes. Following the approval of the Council and of the Cultural Advisory Committee and based on proposals submitted to Management, the respective Department prepares for the programmes.

However, the Panel is of the view that ‘Community Outreach’ is not only in terms of programmes that MGI offers to the Community. In fact, Community outreach is a two-way traffic and it acts as a gate which must be visibly and systematically extended to acquire the involvement and engagement of diverse partners and stakeholders of the MGI to foster ‘Creativity’. Community Outreach is the essential feature by which MGI must network with and engage with the wider external world, signalling an invitation to existing and potential new partners an invitation to cooperate to create a new paradigm in the development of the institutional mission of the MGI.

The Panel observed that the mission and the vision of the MGI indicate that though the MGI is maturing in an increasingly competitive arena where students tend to choose academic programmes over cultural programmes offered by the MGI, yet it would be totally true to allege that the MGI is evolving in a self-interested climate (as most Higher Education Institutions - HEIs) revolving around research, cultural performances, traditions and heritage, artistic works and its hard struggle to become an internationally recognised degree awarding institution. Indeed, MGI may have devised strategies and effective ways of developing, transmitting and applying knowledge for the public good through alternate pathways to engage in active collaboration with other universities and external stakeholders to achieve widespread improvements for the Community at large must be contemplated.

As a matter of fact, community engagement is not a philanthropic activity but one of reciprocity that acquiesces and respects that knowledge exists both within the institution and the community at large. Hence, the Panel is of the view that MGI must absolutely aim to mobilise, combine and complement its own knowledge and collaborate with community and industry experiences. The latter have an in-depth focus of all those areas that are of profound and massive importance of our real daily lives which need to be addressed and included in the development of sound and fully strategic programmes based on community-university engagement that will undeniably add greater colour and richness to MGI’s existing teaching and research programmes, as well as provide tangible benefits to its local communities.

Virtuous knowledge sharing is closely connected with the idea of engagement, a paradigm referred to as a genuine interchange and two-way communication process, which the relationship and network of MGI Community and its external stakeholders should be intrinsic. Also, the Panel is of the view that in this network, MGI’s major asset is students and it is for their benefit that MGI must seek partnerships with its local communities. Students, by their very presence in the MGI’s community, add to its attractiveness and vibrancy; and the presence of a critical mass of young talent will entail favourable economic consequences for MGI and for the Mauritian Community.

Indeed, MGI's students' extramural activities (cultural activities, social outreach programmes) is seen as part of the overall network of virtuous knowledge sharing. Nevertheless, these creative and community outreach activities swivel around a set of questions which will make MGI think how students' involvement regarding MGI's relations regarding external stakeholders and the local communities may be strengthened. For instance, are students sufficiently independent in their activities, do they get the necessary support for their activities (organisational, financial), are they encouraged to prepare their theses on topics of local relevance? How active is the academic staff in their contribution to outreach activities? The Panel heard that students request for the mounting of cultural programmes have been rejected. Yet MGI is known for its active participation in cultural gatherings and students were unable to understand why they have not been given the "*feu vert*".

**Commendation 6 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for its involvement in several cultural activities within the community which are recognised as a source to provide valuable academic cultural experience to mark special occasions.**

**Recommendation 21 – It is recommended that the MGI feasibly extend knowledge co-creation through dialogue with diverse stakeholders with a view to enhance community outreach and creativity, to forge pathways for students to experiential and dedicated lifelong learning.**

## **5.8 Theme 2 of the Third Cycle Quality Audit – Curriculum Development**

It has become a truism that higher education transitioning from an era of information scarcity to one of information abundance, is facing a wide array of disruptive forces that are bringing changes to the operational models of institutions, as well as to the ways that instruction and other services are delivered to students. Each institution— with its distinct history, culture, and brand—will have to wrestle individually to come up with institution-specific solutions. This is most true for MGI, as well which after almost 50 years of existence is faced with the growing need to respond to a changing environment and a changing student profile, in a positive and learner centred way. This may be done through the development of quality curriculum. Most importantly, the terms “curriculum” and “education”, are interrelated and inseparable in practice. Therefore, designing an appropriate curriculum is considered a foundation stone for high quality programs and services, regardless of the type of educational programs and institution.

Indeed, the MGI have in place structures for consultation with stakeholders, including representatives of industry, other parastatal bodies, social and cultural organisations and other academic institutions, in order to identify new niches for programme development and curriculum review at Tertiary level. The Panel took note that MGI considers Curriculum Development as central to the quality and relevance of the programmes of studies offered by the Schools of the MGI. It is committed in the following:

- 1) Development of appropriate curricula for the teaching/learning of Asian languages (Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and Modern Chinese languages) at primary, secondary and tertiary levels;
- 2) Conception of the relevant curriculum for teaching/learning of areas related to Mauritian Studies, Fine Arts and Performing Arts, Indian Philosophy, Sanskrit and Bhojpuri;
- 3) Teacher readiness for the teaching/learning of Asian languages development of the curriculum for Asian languages; and
- 4) Preparation of teaching/learning materials.

The Panel noted that at the MGI the issue of curriculum development is scrutinised at three levels, namely:

- 1) Planning level including conception of the programme, the aims and objectives, the design, validation and approval, the programme organization amongst others;
- 2) Implementation level including selection of themes and topics, the teaching outcomes, the teaching/learning methods and resources, collaborative provisions, industrial links and students support; and
- 3) Evaluation level including the assessment modes and procedures, output and quality control, validation processes, amongst others.

**Commendation 7 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for ensuring that its curriculum reflects aspects of ‘creativity’ as well as the philosophy of Indian culture which is in line with the objective of the institution.**

### 5.8.1 Programme Design and Approval

Apart from steps followed to approve different programmes of MGI in collaboration with UoM, the Panel noted that though the MGI has a Department of Curriculum Development, the SER 2019 does not bear any information about the Curriculum development procedures emanating from that Office. Moreover, the Panel has been able to grasp limited information, if any, regarding any formalised quality assurance guidelines for programme development or on how the MGI identifies the need for new programme of studies. Management, Heads of Departments and academic staff have important functions to ensure that programmes are productive, sustainable and innovative. The Panel understands that Programmes are developed by academics at departmental/unit or board levels. The Panel wishes to point out to the MGI that the curricular cycle of curriculum development comprises four stages namely, programme needs assessment, programme design, programme implementation and programme outcome.

In addition, factors such as the institution/Government strategy, training needs analysis, international trends, industry needs, the list of indicative priority fields of study from the Tertiary Education Commission, and the employability rates in the field need to be considered in any programme design. The Panel pointed out that approaches to programme design must be well documented and consistent across all Schools/Departments. This will help MGI to evaluate a timeframe for the processing of different stages of its programme design for better efficiency. MGI must also ensure that training needs analysis are conducted in a harmonised manner and that feedback from external stakeholders is used to inform the programme outcomes.

The Panel is particularly concerned by the fact that the SER has identified a lack of training, especially in the field of curriculum development. Academics are of the view that most of them have majored in literature, but no one is knowledgeable in linguistics and curriculum design. The Centre for Quality Assurance is responsible for collecting and monitoring all Programme of Studies and Student Feedback. The Panel took note that procedures exist, and all new programmes are vetted by the Centre for Quality Assurance before being approved at the level of Academic Board, Board of Studies, Faculty Board and Senate of UoM for degree and masters programme of studies.



However, the Panel is of the view that to improve MGI's education capacity and impact in areas such as teaching, assessment, curriculum development, it is advisable that MGI build its education intelligence and develop or acquire internal capability in the form of one or more curriculum development specialists, and a teaching and learning specialist to assist the MGI to develop capacity regarding new trends in programme design including curriculum, teaching, assessment and academic experience. The Panel observed that there is no structured and consistent approach regarding benchmarking of curriculum development processes. Hence, the MGI is urged to consider establishing benchmarking protocols to assess its programmes and processes, across all areas of MGI's operations, at both academic and administrative levels.

**Commendation 8 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for proactively using stakeholders, (industry collaborations), to improve its market intelligence for the identification of new programmes and areas of study and review of the curriculum and existing programmes.**

**Recommendation 22 – It is recommended that the MGI consolidate its Department of Curriculum Development and develop and acquire internal capability in the form of Curriculum Development Specialists to assist in providing the relevant expertise and to brace its institutional educational intelligence.**

### **5.8.2 Graduate Profile**

The Panel also took note that the MGI does not currently have a documented institutional graduate profile. In fact, the SER 2019 lacks information regarding the different ways in which faculties have attempted to embed graduate profile requirements in their curricula or on whom the responsibility to ensure the implementation of graduate profiles in programmes is vested. The Panel is of the view that a graduate profile document is crucial in informing curriculum design as it outlines the various knowledge, skills (critical, problem-solving, communication amongst others) and competences graduates are expected to develop by the end of their studies. The finalisation and approval of such a document will help inform the development, management and review of programmes.

**Recommendation 23 – It is recommended that the MGI develop a graduate profile document which considers the desired graduates attributes that its programmes must have to be responsive to students' regional and national needs.**



### 5.8.3 Programme Monitoring

The Panel took note that moderation of question papers is done through established procedures of the Moderation Committee. Programme monitoring is conducted through an external examiner system. The MGI has developed collaboration with Universities in India, and External Examiners are appointed from there, due to the specificity of the disciplines offered at the MGI. The Panel heard from the interviewees that question papers are prepared by the respective academic, staff member and moderated at the Departmental level. However, final year papers for degree programmes are sent abroad to External Examiners for final vetting and approval. The marks are approved at department level and then the corrected examination scripts and the dissertations (Year III) are sent to the External Examiners for vetting. External Examiners submit a report to the MGI comprising their views about the correction and moderation of papers and dissertations. The Panel was informed that normally, external examiners agree with the mode of correction based on the mark scheme proposed. Subsequently, the External Examiners' reports are discussed at the level of the department concerned and necessary action is taken accordingly.

Based on the above, the MGI is urged to ensure that established procedures are in place to address recommendations made in External Examiner reports and that Departments revert to the External Examiners to report on how actions have been taken. The Panel was concerned by the fact that despite the aim to achieve excellence in Teaching and Learning through innovation, implementation of norms and standards and rigorous quality assurance mechanism to ensure the relevance of the curriculum through regular review, the role of the Centre for Quality Assurance to capture the above is more or less opaque. In fact, the Centre for Quality Assurance must have monitored the implementation of the external examiners report within an assigned timeframe further to which the former directs feedback to relevant committees for any further actions to be taken.

The Panel took note from the SER 2019 that External Examiners have commended the programmes of study of the Hindi Studies Department and have found them to be of international standard. Nevertheless, they have also pointed out that linguistic backgrounds of students should be reinforced, and more practical-based elements should form part of the teaching and learning process. The Panel observed that the MGI is to a large extent dependent on External Examiners to assess and benchmark MGI's programmes and assessment and is of the view that the MGI must switch from its reliance on the external examiner system as the sole programme review mechanism, which inhibits other forms of innovation and improvement in programme monitoring and evaluation, in favour of new and less expensive strategies. The Audit Panel noted the various international collaborations that MGI have and advise that the MGI seek a benchmarking strategy for its curriculum and programmes through its strategic partnerships to develop a targeted external examining system which would focus on academic standards and quality.

### 5.8.4 Student Feedback Questionnaire

The Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) is another mechanism used to monitor the delivery of programmes. SFQs are distributed at the end of the semester to all students. The Panel was informed that all registered students are requested to fill in a feedback questionnaire for each module after each academic year – semester. At degree level students fill in the Online Feedback Questionnaire. SFQs are distributed, collected and monitored by respective Programme Coordinators through Academic Heads. The respective academic staff take note of the comments and of the contents in the questionnaire, taking actions as and when necessary and an overall report is submitted to the Centre for Quality Assurance for consideration. The Panel encourages the MGI to employ techniques such as the systematic collection of feedback during the last five minutes of each class thus providing students with an effective channel of communication to give their views. An institution wide mechanism to obtain regular feedback from various stakeholders (employed graduates, alumni and employers) may be employed at the MGI for reviews and continuous improvements of programmes.

**Commendation 9 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for its initiative in seeking regular students’ feedback and for involving its Centre for Quality Assurance in the process, as students feedback acts as a most powerful single moderator which helps MGI to be better informed about teaching and learning experiences of students to help them enhance achievement.**

### 5.8.5 Programme Review

The Audit Panel received conflicting feedback from interviewees on the frequency of programme reviews which according to interviewees must be at least once every cycle, but which varies depending on the duration of the programmes. The Panel want to remind the MGI that it is the responsibility of the MGI to ensure that all its programmes are of quality and up to-date with current trends. Hence the MGI is urged to implement a consistent schedule of review across all Departments and to make use of industry, alumni partnerships, graduates/employer surveys and external examiners and other networks to draw benefit from their involvement and engagement in programme reviews content and areas for improvement. The MGI is further advised to adopt the measures and procedures that apply for programmes’ review by the UoM as the MGI is affiliated to the University.

**Recommendation 24 – It is recommended that the MGI firmly schedule programme reviews which will drive a major curriculum reform in all programmes thus instilling a pathway for the MGI to streamline and integrate programmes aligned to its vision and strategic intent.**

In addition to what was heard from interviewees, the Audit Panel gathered that much of the resources of MGI are pooled to review the primary and secondary curriculum (Grade 1 to 9) and to prepare textbooks based on the National Curriculum Framework in the context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education. It has been observed that the academics of the MGI consider these activities entrusted to them by the MoEHRTESR as a matter of pride and trust in their capabilities as the writing of textbooks and the review of the curriculum for the primary and secondary levels, are viewed as MGI's direct contribution and national efforts in promoting Indian Languages in the Mauritian society.

**Commendation 10 – The Audit Panel commends MGI for deploying a major part of its human resources to prepare textbooks and review the curriculum of the primary and secondary level with the intent that the desired learning outcomes in line with the Government's Strategy framework in context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education is achieved.**

**Recommendation 25 – It is recommended that the MGI ensure that the deployment of a major part of its human resources towards the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education Programme does not overpower the *raison d'être* of the Tertiary Sector of the MGI. The MGI is reminded that it is crucial that the MGI is clear about what must be taught and what should be learned based on reasonable expectations of time and resources for the best interest of post-secondary students.**

In addition to what have been pinpointed in the 'Industry Connections' from section 5.6 – Student Support of this report, the Panel noted that some industry representatives highlighted that they have never been approached to contribute by offering input and suggestions with regard to programme design and content (topics of relevance), programme / curriculum review or to deliver guest lectures at the MGI.

**Recommendation 26 – It is recommended that the MGI enhance its programme design and content and curriculum development and review through increased and sustainable collaborations with industry and employers.**

## 6.0 Conclusion

The MGI has been commended numerous times for its uniqueness in the disciplines it offers. It can be said that the MGI revolves around the world of performance, nurturing of creative talents with practical aspects of art management, self-promotion, expression and this diversity must be complemented with engagement, outreach activities, creativity, and cooperation first and foremost of the MGI Community and secondly of stakeholders on the local level and beyond. Relations with external partners will expose MGI to expertise not found within its walls and prevent isolation and self-reference and will be aimed towards co-creation of knowledge through a two-way communication process to the mutual benefit of all partners.

In addition rather than being grounded in the past, MGI must proactively look towards the future in all its activities to strive towards *being one step ahead* of the times by going beyond established knowledge, questioning time-honoured ideas and trying not only to solve current problems but also be proactive in identifying issues of future relevance. In keeping with this forward-looking orientation, MGI must work together with its Centre for Quality Assurance towards the development of internal quality processes and mechanisms to support its strategic agenda and strengthen the *raison d'être* of the MGI by placing enhancement and MGI's capacity to change at the heart of the evaluation process.

The MGI is urged to explore the concept of a learning organisation for management and governance structures and to complement same ethical and cultural concerns in order to create a favourable milieu for the MGI Community.

Moreover, MGI must encourage students' participation in voluntary projects, support industry professionals in the creative process, or organise dance or workshops, short-term or freelance contracts and collaborations with other artists, as an on-the-job training which will generate opportunities and create an open exchange with industry professionals. Also, skills gained will build the stamina, confidence, teamwork, time management, analytical, critical and research skills and the ability to take and develop with constructive criticism. MGI must encourage its students to remain open-minded and self-aware to make the most of their individual talents. Also, MGI must ensure that its human potential comprising students and staff are provided with institutional structures and cultures to balance stability with flexibility and are provided with the safeguards necessary to encourage risk-taking such that the MGI Community is well equipped to contribute towards shaping the future as well as to address the insecurity and uncertainty this entails.

Higher education and other sectors of society have long existed in separate spheres. Consequently, to create mutual knowledge, external partners must be invited to cooperate with MGI on matters of common interest, leading to mutual benefits and in keeping with its academic values and missions. Indeed, regional, national and global development supported by higher education has moved to the foreground implying a mission shift, a change of paradigm whereby it is imperative to turn threats into opportunities to create new synergies for the enhancement of all concerned parties.