

NMMU responding to concerns

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ISSUES around fees, governance, unfair labour practices and decolonising the higher education sector are still being grappled with by university management at NMMU.

This was announced yesterday at a media briefing hosted by top management at the university.

Acting NMMU vice-chancellor Dr Sibongile Muthwa said the university was still dealing with issues raised by students and that the institution was responding in different ways to various concerns.

“We can control some, others we cannot . . . we can only respond to those we are capable of,” she said.

At an emergency council meeting in November, NMMU’s council and senior management resolved a number of matters including the scrapping of outsourced staff and services as well as implementing

debt relief and assisting the “missing middle” – students not poor enough for government assistance yet not wealthy enough to afford fees – to gain university entrance.

Muthwa said several concessions had been made, with a focus on social justice and widening student access.

Last week, The Herald reported on staff concerns and grievances partly brought about by #FeesMustFall.

Staff claimed that a growing workload and additional pressure were adding to anxiety and stress in the academic sector.

Muthwa said yesterday: “We are doing our best to control what we can . . . [also] engaging with staff.”

Executive finance director Mike



SIBONGILE MUTHWA

Monaghan said NMMU was still grappling with sustainability.

The institution was looking at the academic programme to see which programmes were financially and academically viable.

Acting deputy vice-chancellor (institutional support) Lebogang Hashatse said the major concern was to offer post-school educa-

tion.

NMMU chose to allow more access to deserving students, but “this doesn’t mean we are overloading”.

Planning office management information director Dr Charles Shepard said there was still room for improvement.

There was a need to maintain quality of education.