**SRC Memorandum of demands**We, as students of NMMU, after engaging in mass meetings on both 19 and 20 September 2016, will only present if the following rules of engagement are agreed to, and thereafter demands of the student body will be presented;   
  
1 Rules of engagement  
  
A. the AVC must commit, both verbally and in writing, that no student will be subjected to any form of victimization for being involved in the shutdown.

NMMU upholds the South African Constitution as well as other laws that govern the country. We are therefore enjoined in the freedoms and corresponding responsibilities enshrined in these laws. Our policies make provision for peaceful protest and all staff and students participating in such protests are protected from discrimination and victimisation. In a similar vein, mechanisms also exist to deal with any infringement of the law and/or NMMU policy.

While NMMU respects the right to protest peacefully, equally, we wish to emphasise that those who do not choose to participate have the right to continue with their studies. That is the essence of democracy. Continued disruptions have wide-ranging implications for academic activities and University operations that will impact negatively on all students.

B. the University must commit to making up for lost academic time and the students must be given a chance to prepare for their missed assignments and tests.

NMMU recognises that, due to the recent disruptions to academic activities, contingencies need to be put in place to catch up lost teaching time and to accommodate tests that had to be postponed and due dates for assignments. The Executive Deans of each faculty are exploring ways on how best to address this in the interests of all students. This includes engaging faculty management committees to share information and give direction in this regard. There are obviously practical challenges to how much can be caught up this year if the forced closure of campuses and disruption of services continues. We therefore strongly urge the leadership of all student formations to assist Management in ensuring that academic activities can resume on Tuesday, 27 September 2016.

c. THE AVC must liaise with the Chairperson of Council call for an urgent Council meeting to engage on this memorandum of students and action steps thereof.

The AVC will inform the Chair of Council of the request. However, the prerogative to call such a meeting rests with the Chairperson of Council and Council and not the AVC.

D. The VC must commit to respond to these demands within 24 hours to all immediate demands and seven days (inclusive of the weekend) for all other demands.  
This has been attended to through Management’s general statement and the responses contained herein.

2. Demands by the student body are as follows:

Immediate  
A. the University must publically declare its position on the fees moratorium, further declare what is to happen in terms of Fees at NMMU for those outside of 0 EFC and "missing middle".

Our understanding of the Minister’s announcement is that this is an interim measure for 2017 that will not impact negatively on the poor and “missing middle” students.Government will make up the difference of up to 8% for such students through a grant to all universities.

A forecast of the impact of a 0% increase for all students at NMMU is that it will result in a deficit of R383 million by 2019. To this end, it will be irresponsible of NMMU not to take advantage of the government’s proposal to raise fees by not more than 8% for those who can afford to pay fees, since this will ensure the continued provision of quality higher education and sustainability of the university.

In highly unequal societies, like South Africa, research has shown that free higher education for all will proportionally benefit the privileged more than the poor. We therefore do not support free higher education for those who can afford to pay fees.

NMMU has been actively involved in advocating for fee-free higher education for the poor and we will continue to use all available platforms to lobby for this.

B. ALL Students who incurred debt this year must be cleared.

University management, encourage students to register through down payment exemption knowing quite well that the majority of those students would not be able to pay for their tuition for the 2016 academic year.

As pointed out in our general statement, in 2016, NMMU out of its own volition assisted those who qualified for 2015 debt relief – academically deserving and financially needy students – giving these students the opportunity to return to the University to continue their studies. To date, the accumulated fees debt for NMMU is R198m (as at 31 August 2016).

We wish to reiterate our commitment to broadening access to higher education for academically deserving poor and “missing middle” students. However, the demand for a complete debt write off, including NSFAS loans, is new and requires further engagement by a number of stakeholders. It will be grossly irresponsible for Management to accede to this request, as the present financial position of the University does not make this possible without a significant injection of further funding.

We are committed to engage with the student community and other stakeholders to continue to openly and collectively explore ways of widening access for academically deserving, financially needy students.  
  
The University thus has a responsibility to ensure that these students are not entrapped in poverty and debt but are able to return to University by clearing their debts and allowing them to register for 2017.  
Again, please refer to the statement regarding NMMU’s debt relief initiative and the present financial status of NMMU. A multi-stakeholder Financial Aid Task Team, with significant student representation, was established in 2016 to tackle such challenges and find mutually-beneficial, sustainable solutions. This Task Team will continue to actively engage with the issues raised above to seek sustainable solutions.

C. There must be free registration for the poor students and those that fall in the missing middle for the 2017 academic year.  
  
Subsequently, the University must commit to applications for debt relief and registration exemption being open before the end of the examination period to allow for appeals to take place.

As shared in the general statement, University management is committed to seeking solutions and has established a number of task teams to this effect. The Financial Aid Task Team functions to continue to try to find solutions amenable to all parties while exercising caution to ensure that the financial sustainability of the University is not compromised.

D. The University must further commit to ensuring that there is funding for students who are in the 0EFC and missing middle categories. This must assist with food and book allowances which must be paid on time.

Again, the relevant stakeholders represented on the Financial Aid Task Team can work together to pave the way forward around this particular demand.

E. The university must commit to ensuring that they will fund BTech students. All BTech students are phased out.

Management is aware of the particular funding challenges confronting B Tech students. We propose that this be carefully considered by the Financial Aid Task Team.

F. The APS points must not be increased as this is exclusionary to poor students and without proper consultation with students.

NMMU has a strong ethos of “access for success”. We do this through ongoing research into student progress. As a result, seven programmes in the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences (BES) increased their Admissions Point Score (APS) for 2017 after following due process. This process is a lengthy one. The request to change the above, for example, began in 2014 and was approved by various committees right up to the NMMU Council, prior to the #FeesMustFall in 2015.

Applicants who do not meet the APS and/or subject requirements could qualify for admission through access testing. There is a testing band linked to the APS for those who do not meet the direct admissions requirement. Those applicants who fall in the testing band are invited to be tested and considered for admission based on their school and these test results.

More than half of NMMU’s registered first-time entering students enter via this alternative access route each year. On further reflection, changing both the APS and the testing band could have the unintended consequence of limiting access. Consequently, for the 2017 intake, we have put a process in motion to obtain permission from the relevant University committees to revert back to the 2016 APS testing band for these seven programmes.

If there are other concerns in this regard, or if more information is needed, Management is committed to engaging with students further. Furthermore, appeals from affected individual applicants can be lodged with Admissions for the Admissions Committee to consider.

G. An urgent general student and staff meeting needs to be called to address issues of frozen posts; racist lecturers and a comprehensive update on progress made with insourcing.

Aninstitution-wide sustainability intervention is already underway as part of a larger transformation driveand includes intervention to:

* Enhance the strategic and financial viability of our academic programmes.
* Develop the next generation of academics and diversify the demographic profile of the academy.
* Continue engaging with curriculum renewal and transformation.
* Review organisational structures to ensure fitness-for-purpose.
* Remodel business operations, including the reintegrated services.

Furthermore, management will shortly be convening a multi-stakeholder sustainability imbizo to openly engage with students and staff regarding the university’s financial position. The overarching aim of this imbizo will be to create shared understanding of the tough choices that will need to be made for the long-term sustainability of NMMU.

Management will also be calling a number of meetings with staff from all domains of the University to explain the present financial status anddevelop co-created interventions to secure the long-term sustainability of the University.

Intermediate  
H. A R60.6m residence must be built to accommodate students on campus. This, due to high exploitation of our students at off-campus residences. The university must give tImelines on the construction of this residence.

NMMU innovatively uses funding allocated to it to achieve its strategic priorities to the benefit of students. For example, we have used the funding allocated by government for student housing to leverage additional loan funding to significantly increase the number of places available in on-campus student accommodation in Port Elizabeth and George.

I. Cooking facilities must be built in ALL on campus residences to help the poor students who cannot afford to buy from cafeterias.

Management proposes that the more detailed, specific operational issues, such as the one outlined above, be addressed through multi-stakeholder task teams similar to those established in 2016 for outsourcing and financial aid.

We appeal to students to assist us by participating actively in these task teams and ensuring continuity of representation so that we can develop joint solutions as a matter of urgency within mutually agreeable deadlines.

J. Down South (Madibaz) workers must be insourced into the university as they have faced exploitation by the owners of Madibaz.

Management proposes that thisissue be discussed within the Reintegration Task Team.

All immediate demands must be responded to in a mass meeting to all students at midday tomorrow at the Kraal and all intermediate demands must be responded to in a communique within seven days.

Management wishes to reiterate that continued disruptions have wide-ranging implications that impact negatively on the academic activities and operations of the University. A continued shutdown could result in:

* The academic programme being compromised to the extent that we will reach a point where the academic calendar for the year will have to be significantly adjusted, and possibly extended into 2017.
* The possible postponement of the summer graduation along with the possibility that some of our final-year students cannot graduate in 2017.
* The University operations being severely compromised, including processing applications for admission to academic programmes for 2017, as well as the financial support for qualifying students.

As such, Management strongly urges that we return to normal operations from Tuesday, 27 September 2016. Any outstanding issues in the petitions can be addressed jointly with the aim of concluding them within agreed timeframes, while academic activities continue.

Depending on the students’ response, and based on Management’s assessment of the situation on the ground, the University may be compelled to implement drastic measures going forward, including possibly suspending lectures until we can guarantee the safety of all our students and staff.