

Friday, 22 February 2019

**JOINT STATEMENT BY MANAGEMENT AND THE SRC ON THE
OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2019**

The delegation of Management met with the SRC on Wednesday, 20 February 2019 to discuss the progress made on the demands made by students and resumption of academic program in Durban Campuses. The meeting was also attended by the National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) staff in order to present progress made on the funding of students as well as challenges they are experiencing which are causing some delays.

There were 1443 students who were blocked for registration that both the Financial Aid at DUT and the NSFAS had to resolve. The meeting noted the following progress made:

Number of students unblocked	683
Number of students funded by Funda/Seta/ NGOs	187- checking funding status presently
Number of students poor results & >5 year of study(max.)	341
Number of students still awaiting NSFAS funding decision	232
TOTAL	1443

The meeting agreed that 341 students with poor performance cannot be funded and will have to make arrangements by signing the acknowledgment of debt (AOD). Both DUT and NSFAS are working tirelessly to resolve the remaining 419 cases (187 + 232).

The meeting noted that 29 513 students had registered as it sat. At least 7 656 were first years and 21 587 were returning students. As agreed on the meeting held on Monday, 18 February 2019, the university was going to issue an RFP to invite service providers to bid for provision of beds with the intention to close down Baltimore and Hertine Court residences against the backdrop of unsatisfactory conditions at these two buildings. This process will be completed by the end of March. Joint visits by management and SRC representatives to residences that the SRC complained about are continuing for inspection.

It was against this background that management asked the SRC in Durban to allow for resumption of academic programme. Members of the SRC present at the meeting requested to go consult with colleagues who could not make it to the meeting. Management acceded to this request. The meeting was adjourned and resumed yesterday at 16H00. Part of the issues that the SRC had to discuss and report back on was the planned Orientation Program for First Years on Saturday, 23 February 2019 as well as Management proposal of joint statements by Management and the SRC.

ON RESUMPTION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The SRC agreed that classes should start on Monday but attached a condition. A condition is that students who are waiting appeal decisions and currently staying at Baltimore residence should temporarily be allocated to their old/existing residences until finalization of the appeal process. Management agreed to this condition subject to Student Housing Department confirming that the spaces still exist. Students whose appeals will be unsuccessful will be given 48 hours to vacate the rooms. The Dean of Students, working closely with Student Housing and the SRC will deal with the

details of this interim arrangement. Further, the meeting agreed that students who are waiting for appeal decisions should be allowed to attend classes until their cases are finalized or 15 March 2019, whichever comes first.

This group may include students who have passed the minimum number of modules in the previous year of study but are still blocked due to NSFAS pending decisions. An exception can be made on individual cases provided there is sound explanation why a student will not have registered by this date.

ON ORIENTATION PROGRAM

The SRC argued against the idea of Orientation Day being on Saturday. Rather, they argue that it should be during the week. The meeting referred the matter to the preparatory committee for further discussion. The SRC has its representative in the preparatory committee. However, the meeting noted that Faculties and Departments have their own decentralised First Years' Orientation activities and that these will be allowed to continue.

ON JOINT STATEMENTS

The parties mutually agreed that joint statements will be released on high level matters (of dispute) that have impact on the normal business of the university.

ON COURT INTERDICT


The SRC requested management to explain the meaning and implications of the Court Interdict served against various respondents. Management explained that the court interdict is only temporary and seeks to protect the rights of others who may not want to participate in protests. All mentioned individuals and organisations still reserve their right to protest but must observe the conditions mentioned in the interdict. The SRC retains its full rights to function in accordance with its Constitution and the DUT Statute. They have a right to appeal to the interim interdict should they wish.

CONCLUSION

The parties agreed to work closely together to resolve all issues that can be attended to in the long term. The meeting further noted that some aspects of student housing cannot be resolved immediately. They will need Management and the leadership of students to work closely together to be addressed. Students will regularly be updated on the progress being made on a number of areas that affect their wellbeing. Where necessary, management will communicate with students direct through appropriate structures.


Dr David Mohale

Management Representative


22/02/2019

Mr Phumlani Sithole

SRC Deputy Secretary-General


22/02/2019