



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INVUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

5 May 2020

Dear staff and students

UPDATE ON UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS

Our campuses and residences remain closed during Level 4 of the national lockdown, as South Africa still remains in a State of National Disaster. Whilst President Ramaphosa announced the easing of the lockdown level, there must be no easing in the fight against Covid-19. We are still facing a very serious pandemic that has infected thousands of people in our country and an outbreak that has tragically claimed an increasing number of lives. We would like to convey our deepest condolences to those who have sadly lost their loved ones.

We are working diligently to ensure that we return to safe and efficient operational levels once our campus reopens. As a result, we would like to update you on some important matters.

1. Testing and Screening

We have liaised with the Department of Health and DUT will be establishing Covid-19 screening and testing facilities in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. This will commence once the campus reopens for the phased-in return of staff and students.

2. DUT Solidarity Fund

Our University launched the Covid-19 Solidarity Fund (*Committed and Compassionate, Caring and Supporting*) two weeks ago. We are extremely grateful for the funds that have already been donated. To date, 60 pledges have been received and we are most thankful for the generous support.

The DUT Solidarity Fund will support members of the DUT community, especially our students, who are most vulnerable and have been negatively affected by the current Covid-19 pandemic. **Commitment** and **compassion** are two of our DUT values and principles that the DUT Covid-19 Solidarity Fund is aimed at demonstrating. In line with the President's Solidarity Fund, its aim is to provide **care** and **support** to the most vulnerable in our DUT community.

Please visit the DUT website www.dut.ac.za to donate to our fund. We truly appreciate your kind and generous support. Remember, every cent that you donate, will go towards the fund and ultimately, benefit those in the University community who have had their lives disrupted due to Covid-19.

3. Student contact details & survey

DUT urges all NSFAS funded students to please ensure that they have provided their latest contact details to NSFAS. In particular, students must make sure that they have provided NSFAS with their correct cell phone number and email address.

All non-NSFAS funded students must ensure that they have provided their latest contact details to Student Services. This will include cell phone and email contact details.

The University is also grateful to the 17323 students who positively responded to the survey on devices and data. Your feedback will help the University to plan for multimodal and remote learning in the weeks ahead.

4. Amended teaching and learning plan

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning and her team, which includes the six Executive Deans and members of the faculties, are currently finalising the plan for remote, multimodal teaching and learning. This plan will be taking into account the recommendations from the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the Department of Health. Once approved, the University will share the relevant details with you, via the official DUT platforms:

- DUT PinBoard (staff email system)
- DUT4life (student email system)
- DUT Covid-19 webpage <https://www.dut.ac.za/coronavirus/>

5. Leave guidelines

The University thanks all staff who applied for leave during the past six weeks of the national lockdown. Thank you for abiding by the initial leave guidelines. Later this week, we will be consulting with colleagues from the unions, before approaching the EXCO of Council, to finalize the Level 4 leave guidelines. The Senior Director: Human Resources, will circulate the guidelines to all staff, after the EXCO of Council have made a decision.

6. Compulsory face masks

The revised national guidelines for the State of Disaster has made it compulsory to use a face mask. The Department of Health has recommended the use of cloth, face masks. Therefore, we would like to advise you of the following:

- Only use a clean, cloth face mask, one that has been washed and ironed.
- Wash/sanitize your hands before putting on the face mask or taking it off.
- The face mask should fit comfortably, completely covering the area of your face from the nose to your chin.
- Only touch the string or elastic band at the back of the face mask when you place it on your face to use, or when you are removing it.
- Please do not touch the front of the mask.
- If you have to touch the outside of your mask at any point, please remember to wash/sanitize your hands after touching the front of your face mask.
- Please wash your cloth face mask daily in warm water with soap/detergent, then dry and iron before use.
- Do not share your face mask with other people.
- If you are using a single use face mask, please remember to dispose of it after use.

Whilst our campus operations have been disrupted due to the Covid-19 outbreak, a number of our colleagues have been working remotely, through the lockdown. DUT appreciates the time and energy that colleagues have invested into the continuation of important areas of the University business.

We urge all staff and students to adhere to the guidelines of the national lockdown. Please take the necessary precautions to protect yourself from the coronavirus.

- **Wash your hands often!**
- Wash your hands properly and often with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based (70%) sanitiser.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when you cough, sneeze or yawn. Place used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.

▪ **How to wash your hands properly**

The purpose of hand-washing is to eliminate all traces of the virus on your hands, and a quick scrub and a rinse will not do this. Follow the 5-step process below for effective handwashing:

1. Wet hands under running water;
2. Apply enough soap to cover your wet hands;
3. Scrub all surfaces of your hands – including the back of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails – for at least 20 seconds [*sing 'Happy Birthday' to yourself twice!*]
4. Rinse thoroughly under running water; and
5. Dry your hands with a clean cloth or a single-use paper towel.

If you have them, please consider wearing rubber/latex gloves when cleaning surfaces, clothing or bedding. Wash the gloves while still wearing them, and then clean your hands after you take them off. Some gloves are single use – these should be safely disposed, after you have used them.

We will update you before the end of next week on matters related to staff leave, the virtual graduation ceremony and the amended academic programme. In the meantime, please remember to stay home, stay safe and save lives...



Sincerely

DUT Management Team