

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

02 October 2020

Dear staff and students

UPDATE: COVID-19

The DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team would like to remind you to please remain alert and to follow the public health guidelines to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus. Globally, more than 34.5 million people have been infected and sadly, more than a million people have passed on. On a positive note, over 25.6 million people have recovered from the disease. Yesterday, South Africa confirmed 1745 new cases. The country is now 28th in the world for new daily cases. Unfortunately, 132 people passed on yesterday from COVID-19 related conditions. So please, do not lower your guard and you must continue to wear your mask, practice social and physical distancing, wash your hands regularly with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, use a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser and disinfect frequently touched surface areas.

At DUT, we have had one new reported case this week. Here are the latest COVID-19 statistics for DUT:

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Total number of cases: | 105 |
| Total number of staff (positive): | 50 |
| Total number of students (positive) | 55 |
| Total number of recoveries: | 102 (54 students and 48 staff) |
| Total number of active cases: | 1 |
| Total number of deaths: | 2 (1 student and 1 staff) |
| Number of new cases this week: | 1 |
| Number of new cases (staff): | 1 |
| Number of new cases (students): | 0 |
| Location of new cases: DBN | 1 |
| Location of new cases: PMB | 0 |

Has contact tracing commenced for new cases: Yes

Has disinfection of areas commenced for new cases: Yes

Look after your mental health

The COVID-19 pandemic has had physical and mental effects on people. If you are experiencing depression, anxiety or any other emotional difficulties, please reach out for assistance. Free, compassionate counselling and support is available to both staff and students as follows:

1. If you are a **student** and need mental health support, please contact Candice on candicel@dut.ac.za or Thokozani on thokozanis1@dut.ac.za for online counselling. Or call 031 373 2266 in Durban or 033 845 8900/8828 in the Midlands.
2. Students can also visit this webpage for more information on Student Counselling and Health at https://www.dut.ac.za/support_services/student_services_and_development/student_counselling_and_health/
3. If you are a **staff** member, please contact Samantha on rajcooms@dut.ac.za for counselling on various platforms. Or contact 031 373 2025 or NobantuB@dut.ac.za for assistance.
4. Mental health support is available 24 hours a day to both students and staff. Call the tollfree Higher Health national hotline on 0800 36 36 36 or SMS 43336.

To avoid congestion and delays at the entrances to campus, please ensure that:

1. You are eligible to be on campus. You should have been invited to return.
2. If you have not already done so, please urgently proceed to Protection Services (security) on the Ritson campus to have your student or staff card upgraded to allow for compatibility with the new entry system.
3. Please always complete the **HealthCheck** online screening form **before** leaving your place of residence to go to campus. There are three ways to access the form:
 - a. <https://healthcheck.higherhealth.ac.za>
 - b. WhatsApp to contacts: 0600 110 000 / <https://wa.me/27600110000?text=hi>
 - c. Dial in to HealthCheck tollfree on *134*832*2#

Only if you receive a **green light** may you proceed to campus. Show your device, permit and student/staff card to campus security at the entrance gate and you will be given entry. HealthCheck must be completed every day.

You can view the DUT COVID-19 webpage by clicking on this link: <https://www.dut.ac.za/coronavirus/>

The DUT COVID-19 Information Booklet is also available online:

<https://www.dut.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/COVID-19-Information-Booklet-07-09-2020.pdf>

COVID-19 protocols are still in place at DUT

Although South Africa is currently in Lockdown Level 1 and many restrictions have eased in the “State of Disaster” there is still a strong possibility of a second wave of infections. DUT continues to take the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. For this reason, the following rules continue to apply:

- Always wear a mask on campus and in communal areas in residence.
- Please keep a minimum of 1.5 metres away from other people at all times.
- Thoroughly wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with water and soap.
- Sanitise frequently touched surface areas.
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Sneeze, cough or yawn into your bent elbow or use a tissue that you immediately, safely dispose of and then, remember to wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, or use a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

If any staff member fails to declare their symptoms or status, or returns to campus during their isolation period, or refuses to comply with DUT's rules regarding the compulsory wearing of face masks, social distancing, hand hygiene etc, they should be reported to the Director of Employee Relations and Compliance, Mr Mxolisi Msomi, on the email msomim@dut.ac.za. Failure to adhere to the public health guidelines could result in disciplinary action.

If any student fails to declare their symptoms or status, or returns to campus during their isolation period, or refuses to comply with DUT's rules regarding the compulsory wearing of face masks, social distancing, hand hygiene etc, they should be reported to the Dean of Students, Dr Maditsane Nkonoane, on the email maditsanen@dut.ac.za. Failure to adhere to the public health guidelines could result in disciplinary action. Students are reminded that alcohol is not permitted to be brought onto campus or into residences; or consumed on campus or in residence. Smoking on campus and in residence is strictly prohibited.

Remember, we have a joint responsibility to limit and prevent the further spread of COVID-19. We remind you to remain extremely careful and to remember that the virus is still active in our country.

Sincerely

DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team