

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

23 October 2020

Dear staff and students

UPDATE: COVID-19

As we reported last week, a number of countries including Ireland, parts of the UK, France and Spain, amongst others, are experiencing a second wave of infections and they have gone into lockdown mode.. The DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team urges you to continue to follow the public health guidelines to prevent the further spread of the virus in South Africa. Globally, more than 42 million people have now been infected – this was 39.2 million seven days ago. That is an increase of more than 2.8 million new infections. Yesterday, South Africa confirmed 2156 new infections. Our country was 31st in the world for new daily infections and 8th in the world for total recoveries last night. Unfortunately, 102 people passed on from COVID-19 related conditions in South Africa yesterday. So please, do not lower your guard! You must continue to wear a mask, practice social and physical distancing, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, use a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser and please, regularly disinfect frequently touched surface areas.

Here are the latest COVID-19 statistics for DUT: UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INVUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE

Total number of people infected:	108
Total number of staff (positive):	50
Total number of students (positive)	58
Total number of recoveries:	104 (55 students and 49 staff)
Total number of active infections:	2
Total number of deaths:	2 (1 student and 1 staff)
Total number of new infections:	1
Number of new infections (staff):	0 (this week)
Number of new infections (students):	1 (this week)
Location of new infections: (DBN)	1
Location of new infections: (PMB)	0
Has contact tracing commenced:	Yes
Has physical disinfection commenced:	Yes

We hope and pray for the safe return to good health for the two members of the DUT community who are currently fighting this disease.

On Wednesday, Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize highlighted his concern related to the recent spike in coronavirus cases in South Africa. The Minister confirmed that there was an increase of 9.1% in new cases for the week under review and a 10.7% increase in the previous 14 days. Therefore, taking the Minister's warnings into account, the DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team pleads with all members of our DUT community to exercise added caution in the light of the upsurge in positive patients in South Africa. Please follow the public health guidelines.

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 candice@dut.ac.za or Thokozani on thokozanis1@dut.ac.za for online counselling. You can also call 031 373 2266 in Durban or 033 845 8900/8828 in the Midlands.
2. Students should also visit this webpage on the DUT website for more information on Student Counselling and Health: https://www.dut.ac.za/support_services/student_services_and_development/student_counselling_and_health/
3. If you are a **staff** member, please feel free to email Samantha on rajcooms@dut.ac.za for counselling on various platforms. You can also call 031 373 2025 or email 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 you always complete the **HealthCheck** online screening form **before** leaving your place of residence to go to campus. There are three ways for you to access the online 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#

You can only proceed to enter campus when you have received a **green light** after completing the online form.

Show your device, permit and student/staff card to campus security at the entrance gate and you will be given access to the campus. Please remember that the HealthCheck online form must be completed for each daily visit/attendance on campus.

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 on Alert Level 1 in the “State of Disaster” there is still a strong possibility of an increased rate of infections. The DUT community must continue to take the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. For this reason, the following rules still 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 and avoid large groups.
- 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, even if you are using a mask.

In conclusion, we have a shared responsibility to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in our country. So please, wear your mask, wash your hands and save lives...

Sincerely,

DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team
