

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

09 April 2021

Dear staff and students

UPDATE FROM THE DUT COVID-19 RESPONSE TASK TEAM

As the 2021 academic year progresses, we all need to take responsibility for our own behaviour. The reality is that we must continue working together to keep DUT free of COVID-19. You must remember that any person can be infected with COVID-19 and some people who are infected, may not develop symptoms. Even if you experience no symptoms, you can still spread this highly infectious disease. You could infect your mother, your granny, your partner, your friend, in fact any number of people who you love and care about.

While COVID-19 might not seriously affect some people, for others, catching COVID-19 is a matter of life and death. Now is the time to act in accordance with the true spirit of Ubuntu: let us care for each other by taking all possible precautions to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

Here is the latest on COVID-19 statistics for the DUT community:

TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIVE CASES:	244
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF WHO TESTED POSITIVE:	129
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO TESTED POSITIVE:	115
NUMBER OF NEW CASES TO REPORT:	0
NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Students):	0
NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Staff):	0
LOCATION OF NEW CASES:	Durban 0 & PMB 0
NUMBER OF RECOVERIES:	234 (112 students & 122 staff)
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS:	10 (7 staff & 3 students)
TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE CASES:	0 (0 staff & 0 students)
CONTACT TRACING COMMENCED FOR NEW CASES:	No new cases
DISINFECTION OF AREAS FOR NEW CASES:	No new cases

We would like to share the following DUT resources, guidelines and important announcements which are related to COVID-19:

Students, please watch this video

All students are encouraged to watch the following video from Higher Health, an organisation that promotes health and wellness at tertiary educational institutions. The video covers important issues about your health and wellness, including relationships, mental health, gender-based violence, COVID-19 and more. You can access the video via the following links:

<http://higherhealth.ac.za/programmes/peer-to-peer-education/> or <https://youtu.be/6j79l6F3F2w>.

Actions to take if you visit the campus: DUT's daily COVID-19 protocol

Please be aware that only those students and staff members who have been invited to come onto campus, and who have a valid entry permit, will be granted access to campus.

I. Before arriving on campus:

Please complete the **HealthCheck COVID-19 online form** every day, **before** leaving your place of residence. This online form is to screen for symptoms of COVID-19 and this process helps to prevent the disease from spreading. Please be completely honest in your responses to the questions before attempting to gain access to campus.

You can access the HealthCheck form in three ways:

- Dial HealthCheck on *134*832*2# (This is a free call).
- Go to: <https://healthcheck.higherhealth.ac.za>
- Add 0600 110 000 - <https://wa.me/27600110000?text=hi> to your WhatsApp to contacts.

If you get an **orange light** or a **red light**, please do not proceed to campus. Instead, please call the COVID-19 Hotline on 031 373 3760 or 031 373 2223 or email covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za for advice on what to do. Please also keep your Head of Department, lecturer or Residence Advisor informed. If you get a **green light** on HealthCheck, **wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, put on a mask** covering your nose, mouth and chin and then leave your place of residence.

2. When you reach the campus entrance, please:


- Allow the Security Officer to take your temperature. A higher than usual body temperature can be an indicator of fever, and fever can be a symptom of COVID-19.
- Show your student card, your entry permit, and your HealthCheck result to the Security Officer.
- Sanitise your hands at the entrance.
- Keep a minimum distance of 1.5 metres away from other people in order to minimise transmission of COVID-19. This is one of the most effective measures that you can take to prevent becoming infected or infecting others.
- Remember, anyone can have COVID-19, and some people don't develop symptoms.
- Please avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, hugging, kissing or any close contact with other people. Avoiding close contact like this can significantly reduce the transmission of COVID-19.
- DUT has a **#NoMaskNoEntry** policy: No entry will be granted to any person not wearing a mask which is securely covering the nose, mouth and chin.

Mandatory: DUT's COVID-19 guidelines and precautions

By taking the following precautions, you could save lives: your own life and the lives of others. These precautions are compulsory at DUT:

Please do the following:

- **Keep your distance** – remain a minimum of 1.5 metres away from any other person at all times on campus and in public.
- **Wear a mask** – wear a mask that covers your nose, mouth and chin at all times on campus and in public.
- **Clean your hands** – sanitise your hands on entering campus and continue to clean your hands regularly throughout the day. Don't touch your face with unwashed hands.
- **Sanitise/clean** -- clean/sanitise frequently touched surfaces.




Please avoid:

- Avoid spaces that are **C**losed, **C**rowded or involve **C**lose contact.
- Avoid crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where people spend long periods of time close together. The virus spreads easily in these environments, so taking precautions is essential.
- Try to avoid gatherings, especially large ones.

Failure by a student or staff member on DUT premises to:

- Wear a mask that is securely covering the nose, mouth and chin;
- Maintain a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between themselves and any other individual; or
- Sanitise their hands at entrances to campuses and venues,
may result in disciplinary and/or criminal action, which could result in a fine, suspension, expulsion and/or a criminal record.



If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive, please do the following:

- If you suspect you may be positive for COVID-19, or if you develop symptoms, please contact the DUT Clinics for assessment as you may need to leave campus immediately.
- The DUT Clinics can be contacted on **031 373 2223** (Durban), **033 845 8913/8966** (Indumiso) or **033 845 8811/8812** (Riverside) during office hours. They will advise you on what to do next.
- If you live in residence, please inform your Residence Advisor immediately. They will advise you accordingly. Please also inform your Head of Department or Lecturer.
- Sometimes people with COVID-19 develop severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or high fever. In this case, please call the DUT Clinic as detailed above, during office hours, or contact **0600 123 456** (via WhatsApp).
- **National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Hotline** on **0800 029 999**; or the **COVID-19 National Call Centre** on **012 337 1997** for advice on what steps to take next.
- If you do get tested, please send your COVID-19 test results to your Head of Department or Lecturer for forwarding to the COVID-19 hotline on covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za.

- If you test positive, you will be asked to list other DUT members with whom you have been in contact over the previous seven days and what DUT venues you have occupied. This is to ensure that close contacts self-isolate, and that venues are disinfected.
- No negative test is required for returning to campus after the 10-day quarantine period has elapsed.

How to find mental health care support

Many people are finding the COVID-19 pandemic overwhelmingly stressful, in addition to the usual stresses of everyday life. If you feel you need support to help you manage anxiety, depression, social or study problems, GBV and many other situations you might be finding difficult, please make use of the following services. They are strictly confidential.

Speak to a DUT Psychologist

- Students can make a booking for online counselling by emailing Counsbookingdbn@dut.ac.za. Otherwise, please call **031 373 2266** in Durban or **033 845 8900 / 845 8828** in the Midlands during office hours.
- Staff may contact the **Employee Wellness Programme** for counselling and support by emailing ewp@dut.ac.za, or call **031 373 2025 / 373 2873** during office hours.

Online resources

https://www.dut.ac.za/support_services/student_services_and_development/student_counselling_and_health/ for more information on Student Counselling and Health.

Tollfree, 24-hour mental health support

There is **24-hour, tollfree** mental health assistance available if you need it. Please call the **Higher Health national hotline** on **0800 36 36 36** or **SMS 43336**.

Where to find more information on COVID-19

- Visit the DUT COVID-19 webpage at <https://www.dut.ac.za/coronavirus/> for COVID-19 information and resources.

- Contact the DUT COVID-19 Hotline on covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za or 031 373 3760 / 373 2223 during office hours.
- After hours, staff and students may contact 0600 123 456 (via WhatsApp); or the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Hotline on 0800 029 999; or telephone the COVID-19 National Call Centre on 012 337 1997.

Please note that everyone needs a permit to enter campus. Only those staff members and students with valid permits are allowed entry onto DUT campuses. Permits are issued by the Heads of Department.

Finally, we remind you to constantly be on guard. Many people are experiencing Covid fatigue. We realise that the pandemic has been with us for more than a year. We have had to endure multiple restrictions and the virus has disrupted our lives. However, the public health guidelines which have been published are in place for a reason and the COVID-19 protocols must be strictly and consistently followed. Our health and safety depends on it and the wellbeing of our family and friends is at stake. We have a combined responsibility to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 and to avoid a third wave of the disease in our country.

Sincerely,

DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
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