

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

01 December 2021

Dear staff and students

CLOSURE OF THE DUT INDUMISO CAMPUS IN THE MIDLANDS

At 03:00 this morning, a group of approximately 50 protestors from a political student organisation went on a violent rampage on the Indumiso campus in Pietermaritzburg. They also burnt a vehicle as they tried to disrupt campus operations.

Therefore, in the interests of safety and security for our staff and students on the Indumiso campus, we have decided to temporarily close the Indumiso campus with immediate effect. This will be until further notice. All staff and students should vacate the Indumiso campus immediately.

Please note that teaching and learning on the Indumiso campus, as is the case for all DUT campuses, will continue online.

If this temporary closure of the Indumiso campus does not allow the violence to abate by midday today, then we will have no other option but to implement stricter controls, including the closure of the student residences on the Indumiso campus.

The violent and criminal behaviour this morning was related to the issue of forcing the University to automatically absorb all Higher Certificate (HC) students into Diploma programmes. As we have consistently informed the HC students and the SRC since March this year and then, most recently, reiterated at a meeting with the SRC two weeks ago, DUT cannot automatically absorb students from one qualification into the next. Selection must be made in line with the legislated prescripts of the Higher Education Act.

The University strongly condemns the violent behaviour witnessed this morning. We remind the political student organisations at DUT that South Africa is still battling with a COVID-19 pandemic, so we urge them to please act responsibly and to abide by the relevant public health and safety protocols.

In conclusion, we will continue to closely monitor the situation before implementing any further steps to protect the lives of our staff and students and to secure university property. Rest assured, the investigation into the violence has already commenced and the South African Police Service, together with DUT Protection Services, have started gathering the evidence and will be taking appropriate action against those who broke the law and/or violated university rules/policies.

The remaining six campuses are unaffected by this decision to temporarily close the Indumiso campus.

Sincerely

DUT Management team

