

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

08 July 2022

Dear staff and students

UPDATE ON DUT OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR SECOND SEMESTER 2022

Earlier this morning, members of the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the Senate Executive Committee (Senex) met to discuss key operational issues ahead of the second semester.

RESUMPTION OF FULL CONTACT TEACHING AND LEARNING AND REVISION OF THE DUT COVID-19 GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS

The joint EMC-Senex meeting received a proposal from the DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team and the Academic Executive Management (AEM) regarding the impact of government's recent announcement about rescinding some key elements of the COVID-19 mandates and protocols in South Africa, except for those that remain under the Department of Health's mandate.

Please note the decisions detailed below:

- **Resumption of full contact teaching and learning, research and innovation, and in addition all support and administrative services functions of the University from the beginning of the second semester, scheduled to start on 18 July 2022.** *This means that all students are expected to engage in contact academic activities, subject to some aspects of blended learning that will be guided by the framework, measures and criteria that will be developed.*
- **Retention of some aspects of the blended approach to teaching and learning:** *The intention is supported, subject to AEM producing a clear framework, measures and criteria for the use of blended learning, including approvals thereof where deemed necessary. Once a framework is developed and approved, then this resolution will be further considered.*

- **Recommendation to Council to suspend DUT's Council-approved Three Choices Vaccination Policy.** *Given the fact that Council is not in session and has just had a meeting recently, this recommendation will be made to the Executive Committee of Council within the shortest possible period.*

- **As the result of full-contact teaching and learning, research, innovation and engagement from the second semester, all staff from the academic, support and administration sectors at DUT must physically return to campus from 18 July 2022:** *The DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team will meet to modify the guidelines including matters related to comorbidities and this will be shared with all staff.*

Staff and students who want to continue wearing a face mask on campus are encouraged to do so. Whilst the related public health mandates and restrictions have been relaxed, EMC-Senex would like to encourage all members of the DUT community to employ the necessary precautions since the coronavirus remains active in South Africa. Students and staff are urged to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and people over 50 years of age must consider having their latest booster vaccine as soon as possible. If you have any queries, please email: covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za.

Staff members who have not yet uploaded their vaccine certificates must urgently submit their certificates using this link: [Vaccination Certificate Upload Link](#).



WiFi UPGRADE PROJECT, DATA PROVISION & MiFi DEVICES

- **WiFi upgrade:** *EMC-Senex noted the progress of the WiFi project as tabled by the Chief Information Officer. To date, 99% of the upgrade project has been accomplished and the full completion of the WiFi upgrade will be done by 15 July 2022. Currently, 298 out of the 300 Cisco WiFi access points have been installed on our campuses in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. An online form will be created and the link to the online form will be published. Those experiencing WiFi issues will be required to submit their WiFi issue via the online form and a network technician will be dispatched to assist.*
- **Regarding data provision which was implemented during the Lockdown Alert Levels during the National State of Disaster:** *It must be remembered that the University never provided data to students and all staff pre-COVID-19. It only began to do so following the online learning that was introduced during the pandemic. As a result of the physical return to teaching and learning, research, innovation and engagement, and support and*

administrative services functions from 18 July 2022, the provision of data will be discontinued. In cases where the relevant regulations provide concessions for those who are at further risk of infection due to a medically declared condition and those who may be expected to provide online lectures in accordance with the framework to be produced, data provision will then be considered on the merits of each case.

- **Disposition of the Mi-Fi devices provisioned to staff:** With all staff returning to campus from 18 July 2022, MiFi devices that were loaned to staff during the lockdown will need to be returned to the ICTS Department. The Chief Information Officer will share a communiqué advising all staff on the process that needs to be followed when returning the MiFi device.

DUT IN-PERSON CELEBRATORY GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Following the relaxation of the COVID-19 guidelines and protocols as announced by the Minister of Health, all graduates attending the physical, in-person DUT graduation ceremonies starting next Monday will now have an increased allocation of guest tickets.

Graduates will be allowed to bring a **maximum of four guests** to the graduation ceremony.

2023 TERM DATES AND SKELETAL ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The 2023 academic calendar was approved by EMC-Senex. The 2023 academic calendar will be published by the Registrar's Office. We remind all staff and students to only access official university announcements via DUT PinBoard (staff email system) and DUT4life (student email accounts).

CONCLUSION

EMC-Senex reminds all members of the DUT community to please get fully vaccinated. This includes the required booster vaccinations. The vaccine is one of the best ways to beat the virus and we still have a responsibility to ensure that we prevent and limit the spread of COVID-19 in South Africa. Increasing our vaccinated population on campus is important as we return for the second semester. It remains the only scientifically determined risk mitigation strategy.

We congratulate all DUT graduates who will be walking the graduation stage in Durban and the Midlands during the upcoming in-person, physical celebratory graduation ceremonies. DUT is proud of their achievements and we also acknowledge our members of staff, who played such a valuable role in supporting and guiding our graduates.

Finally, we would like to wish all students and staff a safe and successful second semester.

Sincerely

DUT Management Team

