

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

30 October 2020

Dear staff and students

UPDATE: COVID-19

Last weekend, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal announced that he was concerned with the increase in infections in our province. Premier Sihle Zikalala said that if people did not change their behaviour and start taking the pandemic seriously, then a return to a hard lockdown was “not off the cards.” The Premier’s words of caution are extremely valid and a second wave of infections could be more serious and deadlier than the first peak in July. Therefore, we urge you to continue to follow the public health guidelines and prevent the further spread of the virus in South Africa. Globally, more than 45.4 million people have now been infected – this was 42 million, seven days ago. Yesterday, South Africa confirmed 2056 new infections. Last night, our country was 37th in the world for new daily infections and 9th in the world for total recoveries. Unfortunately, 53 people passed on in South Africa yesterday, from COVID-19 related conditions. So please, let us work together and fight this disease. 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 this week:

Total number of people infected:	109
Total number of staff (positive):	50
Total number of students (positive)	59
Total number of recoveries:	105 (56 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 (this week)
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 pray for the safe return to good health for the two members of the DUT community who are currently fighting this disease.

Look after your mental health

The COVID-19 pandemic has had physical and mental effects on a number of 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 DUT 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. 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. Please call the tollfree Higher Health national hotline on 0800 36 36 36 or SMS 43336.

To avoid congestion and delays at our campus entrances, please ensure that you always complete the **HealthCheck** online screening form **before** arriving on 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 the **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 then 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/>

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 very strong possibility of an increase in the rate of infections. The DUT community must continue to take the COVID-19 pandemic very seriously. For this reason, we want to remind you that 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.

Thank you for your continued efforts in helping to prevent the further spread of the disease. We realise that the virus has had a major impact in our world - but we cannot lower our guard. Please remain alert and do everything within your power to stay safe, to wear your mask, to wash your hands and to save lives...

Sincerely

DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INYUNGEZI YASETHIKWINI YEZODUCHWEPHECHE