

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

03 January 2021

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear staff and students

It has been a tragic start to the new year for so many. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to infect thousands of people in our country on a daily basis and sadly, the fatality rate is also increasing. The University conveys its most sincere condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. We pray for your strength and comfort during these challenging times.

Earlier this morning, we received the very sad news that one of our colleagues, Professor Thengani Ngwenya had passed on. Professor Ngwenya was the Director of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) at DUT. He had a 30 year career in higher education in South Africa. Our sympathies are extended to the Ngwenya family at this difficult time and we also pass on our condolences to his colleagues at CELT.

As you know, President Ramaphosa announced last week that South Africa has returned to Lockdown Level 3 in the State of Disaster. This move was intended to flatten the curve and to limit the further spread of the disease. As a result, we remind you that it is **compulsory for you to wear a mask** when you leave your place of residence or venture out into a public space. Wearing a mask is the responsible thing to do. Please ensure that your mask covers both your nose and your mouth. Secondly, we must reiterate the importance of social and physical distancing. Do not gather in groups. Stay at least 1.5 metres apart and avoid shaking hands and/or hugging another person. It is also essential that you maintain good hand hygiene at all times. Wash your hands regularly, for a minimum of 20 seconds, with water and soap. Please also use a hand sanitizer (70% alcohol content) and clean frequently touched surface areas.

Tomorrow (Monday, 04 January 2021), the DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team will be meeting to review and assess our plans. We will need to adjust our plans to reflect the recently imposed Lockdown Level 3 restrictions. The Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the Senate Executive Committee (Senex) will be meeting on Wednesday to finalise the plans for Lockdown Level 3. Following the joint EMC/Senex meeting, we will update you via the DUT PinBoard (staff email system) and DUT4life (student email system). We will also publish a university statement on the DUT website.

To conclude, we remind our colleagues who are returning to campus this week to please follow the public health protocols that remain in place. All returning staff must use the daily **HealthCheck** screening form. There are three ways for you to access the online form **before** you arrive on campus:

1. <https://healthcheck.higherhealth.ac.za>
2. WhatsApp to contacts: 0600 110 000 / <https://wa.me/27600110000?text=hi>
3. Dial HealthCheck tollfree on *134*832*2#

Please do everything in your ability to stay safe, wear your mask, observe physical distancing and wash your hands regularly. We must work together to stop the spread of the disease and to save more lives!

Sincerely

DUT Communications Team



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