

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

14 April 2021

Dear staff and students

The academic programme for first time enrolling (FTEN) students commenced on Monday, 12 April 2021, and we wish our first year students a safe and successful 2021.

We understand that FTEN students would be unfamiliar with our online learning system. Some of them may have registered too late to have attended the orientation programme and be introduced to the system. Please use the following particulars to get assistance. A recording of the student orientation as well as 'how to' videos may be accessed through <https://www.dut.ac.za/orientation-2021/>.

The Student Support and Development Unit (SSDU) offers an array of services on academic, psycho-social and academic support. For the SSDU please contact Mr Mzwandile Khumalo: MzwandileK@dut.ac.za (Durban campuses) and Mr Thembinkosi Kalanga: thembinkosik@dut.ac.za (Midlands campuses).

For Technology for Learning (TFL), the telephone contact number is 031 373 3120, or WhatsApp 078 280 3802. The links to all of the SSDU platforms to assist students will be sent via the DUT4life student email system. Students may also request assistance from DUT ORIENTATION HELPERS via WhatsApp on 082 489 8953.

Our returning students started with their academic programme on 29 March 2021 and we also take this opportunity to wish them success and good health in the year ahead.

As you know, we took the decision to close our five Durban campuses last Wednesday, following the violent protests outside Steve Biko campus. However, online functions and activities of the University, including online teaching and learning and unassisted off-campus online registration have successfully continued as planned. Our residences also remained opened during this time.

Yesterday, members of the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the Senate Executive Committee (Senex) met to discuss the business continuity on campus. We would like to share the following important announcements with you.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY ON CAMPUS

Whilst our five Durban campuses were closed mainly for students, many of our staff who provide essential and other critical services remained at their workstations.

The University recognises that there is a need for on-campus practical and laboratory sessions for students, as integral parts of their specific programmes. However, this will be done in a phased manner. To this end, a reprioritised list of practical and laboratory sessions will be produced by Faculties/Departments as part of this phased approach. The reprioritisation will focus mainly on those practical and laboratory sessions mandated by professional bodies/councils and cannot be delayed any longer. Sessions that are not mandatory and can be delayed a little more must be delayed.

Within the next 48 hours, students registered for those reprioritised sessions will be invited by their Faculties/Departments. They will be provided with specific access via our permit system to attend on-campus sessions in accordance with our Covid-19 protocols. This means students may be invited in groups on different days. As a result, if you do not receive any invite for a particular session, you must wait your turn. No uninvited students will be granted access.

The University reiterates that this will be a phased process for invited students only to attend practical and laboratory sessions. We need to caution that this does not mean a general reopening of our five Durban campuses; which will remain closed to the rest of the students as a result of last week's invasion and violence.

It is also important to note that the online academic programme will still continue for all students. Under the complex security, health and safety circumstances we face, both staff and students must gear themselves for online learning becoming the normal medium of learning.

The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) provides training programmes for staff and students on the institutional online learning platforms. Further information on the MOODLE and MS TEAMS training programmes is available from Ms Cebokazi Luthuli: Cebokazix@dut.ac.za. Please use the following particulars to get assistance: tlzsupport@dut.ac.za will be able to assist with TLZ Moodle and mstsupport@dut.ac.za for assistance with MS Teams Support. More information on the eLearning Unit can be found on the website <https://elearning.dut.ac.za>.

Invited students who will attend practicals and laboratory sessions must use the **HealthCheck** online screening form before arriving on campus and they must also securely wear a face mask at all times. DUT adopts a no mask no entry rule. The same applies to all staff.

You can access the **HealthCheck** online 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.

REMOTE ONLINE REGISTRATION

Remote online registration will be open until this Friday, 16 April 2021. We urge all first time entering (FTEN) applicants with firm offers to complete their remote, online registration before the deadline. https://www.dut.ac.za/student_portal/student_registration/. The University will contact those applicants who are on the waiting list. If you are part of this category of applicants you will be called and you will be given further instructions. There will be no mask to mask, on-campus, online registration assistance. As previously stated, no walk-ins will be accepted nor attended to.

The University reminds all first time (FTEN) applicants who may be experiencing challenges related to online registration to please report them to Student Admissions via WhatsApp, using one of these numbers:

- 0834451282
- 0834460459
- 0834541495
- 0834543477
- 0834516751
- 0834413766

CONCLUSION

We remind all staff and students that our country is still grappling with the coronavirus pandemic. South Africa remains in a “State of Disaster” and we all need to consistently abide by the public health guidelines. So please, wear your mask, wash your hands regularly with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, observe and respect social and physical distancing guidelines, stay a minimum of 1.5 metres away from the person next to you and avoid gathering in groups.

Sincerely,

DUT Management team