

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

16 April 2021

Dear Staff and Students

Earlier this week, KwaZulu-Natal entered the spotlight for all the wrong reasons. As of Wednesday, our province had recorded the highest number of COVID-19 infections in the country. This should act as a stark reminder to us as the DUT community that COVID-19 has not disappeared - and that we must remain 100% vigilant and 100% compliant with the guidelines, when it comes to this pandemic. The warning signs have been raised and it is up to us to prevent a third wave of infections.

The reality is that COVID-19 is here to stay for a while. How long, we do not know. However, what is clear after more than a year of living with the pandemic, is that we need to get used to working, studying and living in a way that protects us against contracting the illness and importantly, from spreading it to those who might be more vulnerable to serious disease or death. The DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team, therefore, once again urges all members of the DUT community to exercise extra restraint by avoiding ALL gatherings, as well as strictly complying with the preventive measures. We all need to do everything we can to prevent a deadlier third wave of the pandemic.

Here is the latest on COVID-19 statistics for the DUT community:

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| TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIVE CASES: | 244 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF WHO TESTED POSITIVE: | 129 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO TESTED POSITIVE: | 115 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES TO REPORT: | 0 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Students): | 0 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES (Staff): | 0 |
| LOCATION OF NEW CASES: | Durban 0 & PMB 0 |
| NUMBER OF RECOVERIES: | 234 (112 students & 122 staff) |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS: | 10 (7 staff & 3 students) |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE CASES: | 0 (0 staff & 0 students) |
| CONTACT TRACING COMMENCED FOR NEW CASES: | No new cases |
| DISINFECTION OF AREAS FOR NEW CASES: | No new cases |

Thankfully, we have had **no new reported cases** within the DUT community for the last month. Please continue to maintain your vigilance and **thank you for abiding by the public health guidelines.**

Yesterday, Thursday 15 April 2021, at a joint Universities South Africa (USAf), Higher Health and Department of Health webinar for all Vice-Chancellors in the country, it was confirmed that the Covid Vaccination Programme (CVP) remains on track and that it will be rolled-out in phases, with adjusted timelines. The Deputy Director-General for the National Department of Health Dr Anban Pillay also reassured the University sector that all staff and students will be catered for. Several presentations from the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) stressed the urgent need for South Africans to maintain all of the Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPI's) such as social distancing, wearing of masks, hand hygiene and sanitising – to reduce the impact of the third wave of coronavirus infections.

Adoption of Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)

The DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team has expanded its *Terms of Reference* to incorporate the principles and interventions of the Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) campaign social compact as entered into by the South African Union of Students (SAUS), Universities South Africa (USAf) and Higher Health. The campaign aims to heighten awareness and prevention of COVID-19 by encouraging appropriate behaviour change, co-operation and capacitation of all sectors of the DUT community.

Decontamination and cleaning

Please note that after last week's incidents, the Sports Centre on the Steve Biko campus in Durban has been thoroughly decontaminated and sanitised to ensure the safety of all students and staff.



How to properly wear a mask

- Before leaving your place of residence, wash/sanitise your hands thoroughly.
- Check your mask for holes or tears.
- Put on your mask using the ear elastics or head ties. Avoid touching the mask itself.
- Make sure that the mask securely covers your nose, mouth and chin.
- Wash/sanitise your hands once more.
- You may now safely leave home.
- Wash or sanitise your hands throughout the day.
- Change your mask if it gets dirty or wet.
- When you return to your place of residence, clean your hands and remove the mask using the loops or ties.
- Single use disposable masks should be safely placed in the rubbish bin after use.
- Reusable fabric masks must be thoroughly washed in hot, soapy water.
- Wash your hands after touching your mask.

Please avoid

- Avoid face masks with valves. These can actually increase the chances of spreading COVID-19.
- Do not share masks with others.
- When talking to someone, do not pull your mask down or take it off.
- Avoid touching your mask while wearing it. If you do touch it, wash/sanitise your hands thoroughly.
- Avoid gatherings, crowds, close contact with others and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Do not lower your mask to your neck or under your chin.

DUT's compulsory COVID-19 guidelines and precautions

Please do the following:

- **Keep your distance** – please remain a minimum of 1.5 metres away from any other person at all times on campus, in residence and in public.
- **Wear a mask** – please wear a mask that covers your nose, mouth and chin at all times on campus, in residence and in public.
- **Clean your hands** – please sanitise your hands when entering campus and continue to clean your hands regularly throughout the day. Don't touch your face with unwashed hands.
- **Sanitise/clean** – please clean/sanitise frequently-touched surfaces.

Failure by a student or staff member on DUT premises to:

- Wear a mask covering the nose, mouth and chin;
- Maintain a distance of 1.5 metres between themselves and any other individual; or
- Sanitise their hands at entrances to campuses and venues...

may result in disciplinary and/or criminal action, which could result in a fine, suspension, expulsion and/or a criminal record.

What to do - when you come to campus: DUT's daily COVID-19 protocol

Please be aware that only those students and staff members who have been invited to come onto campus, and who have a valid entry permit, will be granted access to campus. No 'walk-in' registration is permitted.

I. Before coming to campus:

Please complete the HealthCheck COVID-19 online screening form every day **before** leaving your place of residence. This online form is to check for symptoms of COVID-19 and helps to prevent the disease from spreading. Please be completely honest in your responses to the questions before attempting to gain access to campus.

You can access the HealthCheck 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).

If you get an **orange light** or a **red light**, please do not proceed to campus. Instead, please call the COVID-19 Hotline on 031 373 3760 or 031 373 2223 or email covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za for advice on what to do. Please also keep your Head of Department, lecturer or Residence Advisor informed.

If you get a **green light** on HealthCheck, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, put on a mask covering your nose, mouth and chin, and proceed to campus.

2. When you reach the campus entrance, please:

- Allow the Security Officer to take your temperature. A higher than usual body temperature can be an indicator of fever, and fever can be a symptom of COVID-19.
- Show your student card, your entry permit, and your HealthCheck result to the Security Officer.
- Sanitise your hands at the entrance.

- Keep at least 1.5 metres away from other people to minimise transmission of COVID-19. This is one of the most effective measures you can take to prevent becoming infected or infecting others. Remember, anyone can have COVID-19, and some people don't develop symptoms.
- Please avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, hugging, kissing or any close contact with others. Avoiding close contact like this can significantly reduce transmission of COVID-19.
- DUT has a **#NoMaskNoEntry** policy which means that no entry will be granted to a person not wearing a mask securely covering the nose, mouth and chin.

How to get help if you have COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19

- If you suspect that you may be COVID-19 positive, or if you develop related symptoms, please contact the **DUT Student Health Clinic** via **WhatsApp** on **067 370 4482** during office hours for medical advice from a professional nurse. If you live in residence, please inform your Residence Advisor immediately for advice. Please also inform your Head of Department or lecturer as soon as possible.
- If you develop severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or high fever, please call the DUT Clinics as detailed above, during office hours on weekdays please call 0600 123 456 (via WhatsApp)
- The **National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Hotline** on **0800 029 999**; or telephone the **COVID-19 National Call Centre** on **012 337 1997** for assistance.
- If you are tested, please send your COVID-19 test results to your Head of Department or lecturer for forwarding to the COVID-19 hotline on covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za. If you have had COVID-19 and you have quarantined for 10 days, no negative test is required for you to return to campus.

Where to find further information and advice on COVID-19

- Visit the DUT COVID-19 webpage at <https://www.dut.ac.za/coronavirus/> for further information.
- For enquiries and advice on COVID-19, please email covid-enquiries@dut.ac.za or telephone the DUT COVID-19 Task Team's hotline during office hours on 031 373 3760 or 031 373 2223.
- After hours, staff and students may contact 0600 123 456 (via WhatsApp); or the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) Hotline on 0800 029 999; or telephone the COVID-19 National Call Centre on 012 337 1997. For free, **24-hour mental health support** and advice, please call the Higher Health, toll-free hotline on **0800 36 36 36** or **SMS 43336**.

We are entering an important phase in the fight to reduce a third wave of infections. We are reliant on you to work with us to save lives and to protect the health and wellbeing of our colleagues, family, friends and loved ones. So please, respect and abide by the COVID-19 guidelines and published protocols. Mask up and wash up. Avoid groups and observe social distancing. Take the threat of COVID-19 seriously and always do your best to protect the DUT community.

Sincerely,

DUT COVID-19 Response Task Team



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
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