



2 May 2020

Dear NUST Staff and Students

Re: STAGE 2 OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

In terms of the statement by His Excellency the President Dr. Hage G. Geingob on 30 April 2020 (see attached), Namibia will move from Stage 1 of restrictions to Stage 2 on Tuesday 5 May 2020. Stage 2 will be a gradual re-opening of the country under strict precautions. Stage 2 will be in force for a period of 28 days, subject to changes in the national situation. The State of Emergency declared on 17 March 2020 will remain in force for a period of six months and may be extended.

This has necessitated the University to consider the implications of the stage change on the University's operations.

Furthermore, in terms of the **"Guidelines for Stage 2 under State of Emergency"** (See attached), in Stage 2, everyone will be required to adhere to the following COVID-19 prevention guidelines:

- Continue social distancing protocols of at least 1.5 meters between persons, to minimise the potential spread of the disease within communities.
- The public is required to wear facemasks (as defined in the Regulations) when using both private and public transport, shopping, outdoor group exercise and at the workplace.
- Increase hygiene intervention (e.g. public hand washing utilities and consumables) including installation of sanitizer equipment within public and work places.
- Increase cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces including public transport and all public assets, to twice a week (municipal buses, play park equipment, shared water access points, public restrooms etc.).
- Disseminate the public health communication campaign.
- Anyone with symptoms of a dry cough, high fever and shortness of breath should call the Toll-Free Number **0800-100-100** or **911** or consult a health facility or community health worker to be advised on what to do.
- The public is encouraged to stay at home and limit movement. We call on personal responsibility to complement government action.
- Employers are encouraged to allow employees in vulnerable categories, as defined in the Regulations, to continue working from home as far as feasible.
- Businesses are required to keep a clientele log to assist with contact tracing.
- The public is urged to cooperate with the authorities in maintaining the health of the population.

I want to assure you that NUST Management is monitoring this situation closely and is doing everything to protect our employees and students. Your health, safety and well-being are our top priority.

Consequently, the following will apply from 5 May 2020:

Students

Students are not allowed back on campus and face-to-face lectures will not be resumed during Stage 2. The roll-out of remote learning will proceed as previously communicated. Hostels will remain closed. Students are encouraged to stay in contact with their lecturers and raise administrative enquiries through electronic means. This arrangement will remain in place until further notice.

For those students who recently completed their programme, more details in terms of the collection of certificates will follow.

Staff expected to return on Tuesday 5 May 2020

The following staff are expected to return to work on Tuesday 5 May 2020. This will be to ensure readiness, and to plan for the implementation of the relevant protocols, when other staff return on Thursday 7 May 2020.

- Executive Management and their Secretaries;
- All Directors and Deputy Directors and their Secretaries;
- All Deans, Associate Deans and Heads of Departments (HOD) and their Secretaries; and
- Faculty/Departmental critical staff as identified and communicated to by each Dean/Director.

Staff reporting to the office need to follow all the health and safety protocols that will be communicated by HR (including HSE) and Facilities.

Any staff members in these categories experiencing difficulty to report back on this date, especially in terms of their health, need to be in contact with their line manager to make arrangements by 5 May 2020.

Academic staff

Academic staff who have the necessary infrastructure, conducive environment and appropriate connectivity to adequately support the roll out of the remote learning plan from home, can continue to work from home in consultation with their HOD. There needs to be a clear agreement between the line manager and employee regarding the expected outputs. This arrangement will remain in place until further notice.

Those Academic staff who cannot work from home due to limitations in any of the above factors, are expected to report to the office on **Thursday 7 May 2020**. Staff reporting to the office need to follow all the health and safety protocols that will be communicated by HR (including HSE) and Facilities.

Any staff member in this category experiencing difficulty to report back on this date, especially in terms of their health, needs to be in contact with their line manager to make arrangements by 5 May 2020.

Administrative staff

All remaining Administrative staff are expected to return to the office on **Thursday 7 May 2020**.

Staff reporting to the office need to follow all the health and safety protocols that will be communicated by HR (including HSE) and Facilities.

Any staff member in this category experiencing difficulty to report back on this date, especially in terms of their health, needs to be in contact with their line manager to make arrangements by 5 May 2020.

Vulnerable employees

Any staff member falling in any vulnerable categories, as defined in the Regulations, should continue working from home as far as feasible. Such employees need to report to their line manager and HR by 5 May 2020 for the necessary arrangements to be made and recorded. There needs to be a clear agreement between the line manager and employee regarding the expected outputs. This arrangement will remain in place until further notice.

Visitors

Further information regarding protocols for visitors to campus will be shared as soon as possible. All visitors will be expected to follow the health and safety protocols of the University or as communicated.

Service delivery to the public

Physical service delivery to the public and students will initially be restricted until details of delivery protocols are approved by the relevant EXCO members in line with the University health and safety protocols. Once in place, further communication will follow to the public and students through our social media channels.

Family responsibilities

I am conscious and sensitive to the fact that many of you have increased family responsibilities as day care and schools remain closed during this time. I encourage you to discuss this with your line manager and HR to find a workable arrangement by 5 May 2020.

Meetings

Meetings should continue to be held in virtual format as far as feasible. Only small physical meetings (10 or less attendees) will be allowed where absolutely necessary, following the health and safety protocols of the University and appropriate social distancing. This arrangement will remain in place until further notice.

I know you may be anxious about the current developments, but I encourage you to remain calm yet vigilant, and exercise patience as we work through the many issues associated with this situation. We are all in this together, and we will all do our best to find the most appropriate solutions to the challenges. Should you have any concerns you are encouraged to raise these through your line manager who can escalate them to HR if required.

This is a difficult time, but remember that NUST is a resilient and caring community. We take on big challenges every day, and we use facts and science to guide our actions. Stay calm and informed. Take care of yourself, your families and your communities.

Remember to limit your movement, wash your hands regularly and immediately report any symptoms associated with the virus to **0800 100 100**. Otherwise stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. du Toit', with a stylized circular flourish at the end.

Morné du Toit
Acting Vice-Chancellor

Mdt/cj