



University of Fort Hare
**EXECUTIVE
COMMUNICATION**

PROF SAKHELA BUHLUNGU
VICE-CHANCELLOR and PRINCIPAL



30 June 2020

Dear Staff and Students

UPDATE ON UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES

Return to Campus Plans

As we are planning the return to campus of the next cohort of staff and the first cohort of students, we are operating in a climate of rising infections and a provincial healthcare system severely under strain. We have also seen widely reported school closures as a result of Covid-19 infections. Given this context, a key part of our preparation for the next phase of the partial return to campus is the finalisation of a risk assessment and risk mitigation exercise, which we plan to complete by the end of this week.

Last week saw the return to campus of our senior management and management-level staff. From Friday, 26 June 2020, SRC members also started returning to campus.

Management, representatives from organised labour as well as SRC representatives will conduct an inspection of our campuses during the course of this week.

The next cohort of staff will be invited back to campus and issued with permits once the risk assessment has been completed. An update will follow next week.

Only after this group of staff has returned will the first cohort of students be issued with their permits.

Data for students

Students who have provided us with a number for the cellular device on which their data should be loaded and who use Telkom, Vodacom or Cell C as service providers have received their data. We are engaging with MTN to ensure the swift activation of data for students who use this service provider and who have provided us with a cellular number onto which data should be uploaded.

Student laptops

The expected delivery date of the first batch of student laptops is the last week of July.

Student and staff support

We know that this is a time of great anxiety, for our students, as well as for staff. We are taking all steps we can to ensure that staff and students who return are protected as far as possible, and to counter feelings of isolation and anxiety experienced by staff working from home and students studying remotely.

For additional support, students should follow the Student Counselling Unit's Facebook page (Student Counselling Unit – Fort Hare University). It is managed by a psychologist on a daily basis. The platform allows for psychologists to participate in live chats and offer one-on-one assistance via private online sessions.

Staff can access staff support services through our Wellness Unit in Human Resources. Please contact Ms Mandisa Tyanti (mtyanti@ufh.ac.za).

UFH Covid-19 information

Please remember to visit our dedicated Covid-19 web page (<https://www.ufh.ac.za/covid19/>) where you will find our standard operating procedures as well as crucial information about Covid-19 and efforts to curb its spread.

Sincerely

Professor Sakhela Buhlungu
Vice-Chancellor and Principal