



21 April 2020

Dear NUST Staff and Students

RE: NUST MIGRATION TO ONLINE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

In response to the complications presented by the novel coronavirus on educational activities, the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation (MHETI), Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi, advised us to move our teaching and learning online, in a letter dated 15 April 2020. As such, this note serves to announce that NUST is adopting a remote approach to teaching, learning and assessment, and all face-to-face classes are cancelled until further notice. **The eLearning roll-out will commence on Tuesday 5 May 2020, and online teaching will commence on Monday 11 May 2020.**

During the week of 5 - 10 May 2020, students will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with material on the University Learning Management System and to ensure that they are enrolled for all their courses on Moodle, in preparation for remote classes set to resume on the 11th of May.

As we all appreciate the challenges with online education in our context, it is important for us to work with realistic expectations and do our best to support students affected by COVID-19 measures. The University Management is aware that some academics and students may lack the necessary training and skills needed for quality learning online, but we recognise the support that the Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU) has made available in this regard. The unit has developed and uploaded a series of training videos for both staff and students and will also provide more specialised training during the week of 5 May.

Before commencing their remote learning, students will be assisted through an "Orientation of Online Learning Course" to improve their competence in using the Moodle platform, MyNUST. However, we remain cognizant of the challenges our students face in terms of access to high-speed internet, basic requisite technologies and the skills to use our online platform but we continue to explore various options to work through these challenges. **For instance, the Institution will make study materials available through other media such as study packs that will be distributed with the assistance of the NUST regional centres under the supervision of COLL.** We are also aware that each student has unique challenges regarding their living, learning and health conditions during this crisis, hence our call for realistic expectations.

In addition, a group of staff members has been constituted to identify short, medium and longer-term solutions and the way forward regarding online learning through the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic (DVCA), along with staff from the academic community, including key internal Centres and Units. We will also continue to work with the MHETI and other stakeholders to identify solutions.

Our responses are consistent with similar decisions made by several of our peer institutions in Namibia and further afield. The campus will remain closed until further notice and limited operations will continue with appropriate measures to protect the health of our students and staff. The University is also working closely with external stakeholders to resolve access issues that students and staff may have in accessing online material.

The office of the DVCA will send you updates via the official NUST communication platforms regularly. You will also continue to receive COLL or Unit-specific information from the relevant Departments. If

you have any specific questions or concerns, you are encouraged to communicate with the contacts identified by your respective Deans.

We assure you that our students' success is a key priority at NUST. We are doing our best to ensure that remote learning is as obstacle-free as possible. We wish to emphasise that NUST is committed to ensuring that all our students complete their academic year successfully and on time.

Thank you for your commitment thus far and please ensure you and your loved ones stay safe.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. du Toit', written in a cursive style.

Morné du Toit
Acting Vice-Chancellor

Mdt/cj