



Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Faculties
Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL)
Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU)
Cooperative Education Unit (CEU)
Programme Development Unit (PDU)
Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)
Library

FROM: Dr Andrew Niikondo
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic

DATE: 24 April 2020

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR NUST MIGRATION TO REMOTE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

In response to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted the continuation of teaching and learning, which compelled staff and students to work and study from home, the University will resume with teaching, learning and assessment as soon as possible.

NUST has been integrating technology in teaching and learning since 2006, with the effective implementation that started after the development of the eLearning policy in 2009. Since then, the usage of eLearning at the University has grown significantly, and all courses offered have an online course shell in MyNUST, the University's Learning Management System (LMS).

To curb the disruption of the academic activities as the core mandate of the University, several consultations with key internal and external stakeholders were initiated, whereafter it was agreed that it is important to resume the teaching and learning using the existing online/virtual technologies available at NUST and devise realistic solutions for students without computers and internet access.

This is indeed a challenging time for the University community, hence my plea to you all that we implement the continuation of teaching and learning successfully through the use of open and distance learning methodologies as our only option during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, several existing support strategies were modified and enhanced through my Office as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic (DVC:A), the Deans, Associate Deans: Teaching and Learning, the Quality Assurance Unit (QA), the Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU), the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL), the Programme Development Unit (PDU), the Cooperative Education Unit (CEU) and the Library, who contributed extensively to the development of the following guidelines, including web presence strategies that were approved by Senate in 2013.

The following components to ensure the successful roll-out of remote teaching and learning at NUST provide a framework to guide faculty and students.

Guidelines on Online Course Development and Training:

To ensure sound implementation of these guidelines in the remote teaching and learning of all courses, TLU and COLL finalised a revised shortened version of an “Orientation on Online Teaching and Learning Course” for lecturers and students respectively. This Course will ensure concise and simplified information for immediate implementation.

The following aspects of remote teaching, learning and assessment are covered in this [guideline](#):

1. Familiarise students to eLearning
2. Course outline
3. Lecturer’s information and contact details
4. Announcement (news forum)
5. Course resources
6. Online learning process
7. Assessment and Feedback
8. Course evaluation

Quality Assurance Remote Instruction Checklist:

Remaining committed to the provision of teaching, learning, assessment and student support services of a high standard amid a worldwide pandemic, is a daunting task. Therefore, NUST adopted the [international quality assurance \(QA\) standards](#) for remote teaching, learning and assessment (Quality Matters, 2020) for its interim migration to remote instruction.

Assessment Strategy:

The key to attaining an NQF aligned and -registered qualification is the demonstration of the knowledge and skills acquired by the student through whatever learning process has been applied. It is however critical that the validity and reliability of assessment be assured and that all learning outcomes of the respective courses are achieved.

To gain the teaching and learning time lost during the lockdown period, the Academic Planning Committee agreed to change the summative assessment of exam-based courses to continuous assessment (CASS). CASS is focused on a period of learning and therefore assess only that which was covered during a certain period. For example, if the assessment is an assignment on the topics covered in the first few weeks and not the entire final assessment, the assessment validity is seen as low. This means the weighting of the assignment should be allocated differently, i.e. those assessments towards the end of the semester covering a broader topic of the course should have a higher weighting allocation. The existing NUST regulations on the appropriate weighting allocation for CASS courses will thus apply to ensure quality assessment and appropriate calculation criteria prevails.

Clarification:

Face-to-face teaching vs Remote Teaching conditions:

NUST has opted to cancel all face-to-face classes, including practical tutorials in labs and other learning experiences, and have mandated that faculty make use of remote teaching conditions. [Remote teaching](#) through open and distance learning methodologies include online (synchronise and asynchronous), print, USB preloaded with course content, etc., as possible options to reach the varied profile of the NUST student community. The availability of USBs and printed course content is subject to the availability of such funding.

Study mode:

Of importance to note is that students will remain in the current mode of study (full-time, part-time, distance education) that they are registered for, however, remote means are employed to reach students and give both faculty and students access to continue with teaching and learning. The change is therefore in the mode of accessing the learning resources and engagement techniques between lecturers and students that will be done remotely.

Support:

The NUST management realises that not all lecturers are equipped to deliver remote teaching and therefore several support measures were introduced.

Training Videos provided by TLU

The Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU) has developed a series of [training videos](#) that is available on the MyNUST platform and provides a comprehensive guide on how to navigate and populate the online course content in Moodle. The platform is user friendly and following the “Frequently Asked Questions” section, staff may change their login details, add participants and set up their course without TLU assistance. TLU will make further training sessions and webinars available during the week of 30 April 2020, based on a needs analysis conducted within Faculties.

Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL)

COLL will assist TLU:

- By allocating one [Instructional Designer](#) to each Faculty to assist with capacity building and training in the restructuring of course content using technology-enhanced teaching and learning and online pedagogy;
- With the training of faculty on how to produce multi-media (videos, PPT with voice-over, etc); select appropriate tools and technologies for effective delivery of online content; the sequence of content, learning outcomes and the development of online assessments;
- With guidance to faculty on the uploading of online content; and
- With the uploading of study material content packs on flash drives (USBs) and the distribution of these USBs through the 10 COLL Regional Centres across the country to reach students in remote areas. The availability of USBs and printed course content is subject to the availability of such funding. The Associate Deans: Teaching and Learning will communicate regular feedback on the progress regarding funding available for this option to all faculty

Library support for staff:

In line with the NUST COVID-19 measures, the [Library and Information Services](#) have put measures in place to ensure optimal service delivery, while providing for your information needs.

Financial support for staff:

Academic staff members use different ways to access the Internet, i.e. ADSL lines, Wingle (a device that plugs into a USB port and becomes a Wi-Fi hotspot), Wi-Fi routers, pocket Wi-Fi, mobile data, etc. Providers such as MTC, Telecom Namibia, Paratus and MTN can provide more information.

Some staff members have already run out of data, which hampers their productivity and can, therefore, not work effectively from home. The academic staff and administrative staff that is directly responsible for the

remote teaching and learning of students will be subsidised by NUST with a refund of N\$250 once-off allowance in May 2020 as approved by EXCO on 21 April 2020 to purchase internet data or to upgrade to better Wi-Fi packages. This allowance will be reviewed monthly, pending the availability of the necessary funds, the long-term national response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the health and safety of NUST staff members and students.

ICT Helpdesk and Services:

Considering the University's lockdown that commenced, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) is committed to supporting NUST staff members throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The [ICT Helpdesk](#) is equipped to operate remotely and telephonically. The team will operate as usual from Monday to Friday, 07h30 – 16h30. The ICT Helpdesk's contact details are as follows:

Telephone: +264 61 207 2484

Cell + WhatsApp: +264 81 249 7885

E-mail: icthelpdesk@nust.na

We are aware that you are currently not operating in an ideal situation, hence my appreciation and acknowledgement of the challenging circumstances of balancing family and work responsibilities in the context of the lockdown.

I am therefore particularly grateful for your continued commitment and dedication to deal with the limitations that have been put on higher education by the COVID-19 pandemic. I am confident in the strengths that staff bring to this challenge, our capacity for innovation and creativity, as well as our commitment to our students. Let us continue to take hands to support each other through this hazard with the necessary collegiality and determination.

Thank you for your hard work and the long hours you have already invested in making this semester a success.

Stay safe.

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