

# Universities Shake Feathers Right - Education

---

**R** [republikein.com.na/nuus/universiteite-skud-hul-vere-reg2020-07-23](https://republikein.com.na/nuus/universiteite-skud-hul-vere-reg2020-07-23)



Kristien Kruger - Representatives of various tertiary institutions were speaking at the Covid-19 communication center in the capital last week to discuss their readiness for reopening on 3 August.

All universities received a letter from the ministry setting out Covid-19 prescriptions. According to the registrar of the International University of Management (IUM), Mr. Aquilinus Nashilundo, the regulations are similar to those for schools and include "distance markers, disinfection points, masks and access to water."

Although most Namibian universities follow an approach where students return in phases, each has followed a unique strategy regarding which groups when to start.

The director of academic affairs at the University of Namibia (Unam), prof. Erica Maas, said not all Unam students will return to campus next month.

"At Unam, only 50% of students will be allowed to return so that we can maintain social distance. Students will also not move between classes," said Maas.

The Namibian University of Science and Technology (Nust) sent a letter to their students and staff on 16 July. The letter explains how this institution's academic calendar has changed.

Senior students at Nust who obtain their degrees at the end of the year, students who have to attend practical sessions, master's students and PhD students are already back. Those who do not have access to online tuition will be part of this group on August 3rd.

"We will continue where we left off before phase 1 restriction so that no one is harmed. This group's first semester will end on 2 October and they will then register with the rest of the students on 12 October for the second semester," reads the letter.

They aim to complete the second semester, and the 2020 academic year, by March 2021 and complete 2021's academic year as usual again in December 2021.

According to the letter, newcomers will be able to register with the institution in March 2021.

The director of student services at Nust, dr. Donovan Zealand, said they had operational procedures in case one of the students or staff contracted Covid-19.

According to Maas, Unam already had an effective online distance learning platform before the outbreak of Covid-19 and this platform will serve as plan-B if students have to study online again in the future.

## Resources

The director of distance education at Unam, dr. Maggy Beukes-Amiss, said Unam has a hyperconfigured infrastructure in place.

"This is software that helps to handle the capacity of online teaching. It will especially help with data recovery and security," said Beukes-Amiss.

This software is available for any settings and can be requested from Unam.

According to the Namibian Student Financial Aid Fund (NSFAF)'s director of marketing and communications, Mr. Percy Tjihare, laptops and internet sticks will be made available to students so that more students have access to online tuition.

"The Telecom internet sticks provide 10G internet data monthly. The sticks and laptops are available to all Namibian students," said Tjihare.

Students will apparently soon be able to apply for this online on NSFAF's website.

– kristien@republikein.com.na