

REINVENTING SOUND: FIVE YEARS AND COUNTING



The Namibia University of Science and Technology's radio station, *Nust FM*, celebrated its fifth birthday last Friday, with students and personalities sharing clips to congratulate the platform.

Nust FM was launched five years ago with the aim to become a communication medium between the university and its student body. The station has grown tremendously over the years, becoming popular not just to students, but extending across the campus and on social media. "Our greatest highlight continues to be the support we receive from our stakeholders, inclusive of our listeners, partners and the

Nust body at large," said station manager Delila Katanga. *Nust FM* has grown into a media platform that addresses issues affecting students from an angle of objectivity and entertains and informs its listeners with daily programmes and vibrant radio personalities.

Currently, the radio station has five shows that run from 7:30 until 16:00 on its website nust.na, hosted by 10 presenters. "*Nust FM* is a family of divergent individuals with exuberant personalities and strong influential identities coming together to build and realise a united vision," added Katanga.

❖ New academic calendar for NUST

Academic year to end in 2021

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) has announced that the 2020 academic year will run into 2021, with continuous assessment forming the basis of the final mark, and no examinations this year.

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The first semester of 2020, which started on 10 February, will end in October, and the second semester, scheduled to begin on 19 October, will end on 12 March 2021, according to the new calendar.

Due to health and safety guidelines that need to be complied with, students are expected to return to campus in small numbers according to categories identified by the institution "to ensure equity in access to education" for all students. This was confirmed by the university's deputy director of communication, Jordaania Andima.

These categories include students who are expected to graduate in November 2020 and those who have compulsory practical lab sessions to attend as part of their course



Students of the Namibia University of Science and Technology. PHOTO JUSTICIA SHIPENA

content, which could not all be offered online. Students who could not cope with Remote Teaching and Learning Assessment (RTLTA) due to lack of devices and internet connectivity, as well as masters and PhD students, also form part of the different categories.

Over 3 000 students who had no access to data and devices will have eight weeks of face-to-face classes after the conclusion of RTLTA, and will

be expected to return to campus on 3 August for classes. After completing their first semester on 2 October, they will start together with the rest of the student cohort on 12 October with second-semester registration.

The university had to realign its calendar to ensure quality service is delivered to students, as not all of them could be allowed to return to campus at the same time. As RTLTA is still ongoing, lecturers will thus

need more time to teach the different categories of students once RTLTA has concluded, according to Andima. "Once all these categories are catered for and the corresponding assessments are concluded, the faculty officers can then finalise the students' academic records and do their necessary promotion to determine which students qualify to graduate. All these processes require time to be efficiently completed," added Andima.

"The plan is therefore to again catch up during the course of 2021 and revert to normal to conclude the 2021 academic year as usual during December 2021."

This new arrangement allows for a new intake of students to happen in March 2021. This follows discussions between the ministry and the institution, said Andima, where it was confirmed that "the NSCCO and NSSCH results are projected to be released towards the end of January or early February 2021."

Instead of sitting for examinations, the university will administer "Continuous Diversified Assessment during both semesters, instead of allocating a separate three-week period to write examinations which we cannot afford under the already tight timeline of the academic calendar."

Some of the assessments, accord-

ing to Andima, will be administered face to face "under controlled conditions".

"NUST has quality standards and rules and regulations in place to ensure the authenticity of continuous assessment."

There will also be supplementary assessments during the scheduled time as agreed between the lecturer and the students. "This can happen throughout the semester or at the end of the semester."

Many students took to social media to share their dismay about the overlap of the academic year into 2021, including former SRC president Marvelous Shilongo, who shared concerns about students wishing to continue their studies at other institutions, who may not be able to as they would not be done with their second semester at NUST.