

Dear Colleagues

We trust that you are healthy and keeping well.

The following message has been sent to students and is being shared for your information. Please note that you can access all Wits' COVID-19 news, information and updates at www.wits.ac.za/covid19.

Enjoy the weekend!

MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM

Dear Students

We hope that you are all in good health.

As you know, Wits will commence with emergency remote online teaching and learning from Monday, 20 April 2020. Whilst many students are looking forward to starting the second teaching block, we understand that many of you may feel uncertain and anxious about learning online. We would like to reassure you that we are on hand to support you as we embark on this different learning journey together.

A phased approach to online learning

The academic programme will be introduced in phases over the next few weeks, so that you have time to adjust to the new learning environment. All lectures will be available on our learning management systems and can be downloaded at any time. If you are still waiting for your mobile computing device to be delivered or your data to be connected, do not despair – you can access your lectures and other resources from Sakai or Moodle as soon as you are connected. Whilst we will be resolute in our efforts to recover the lost elements of the 2020 academic year, we remain committed to you, our students who are an integral part of the Wits community.

Tests and assignments

No assignments or tests will fall due or be scheduled until the 4th of May 2020. These measures will ensure that students are not academically disadvantaged in any way.

Mobile Computing Devices dispatched

We are cognisant of the digital and related learning inequalities in our society and we are doing our best to ensure that we address your needs. Hundreds of mobile computing devices have been pre-loaded with the requisite software and have already been dispatched. Staff are working through this weekend to ensure that the remaining devices are pre-loaded and dispatched, so that they reach students on Monday or during the course of next week.

Zero-rated sites

Wits has negotiated with telecommunications service providers to have learning and

library sites zero-rated so that you can access them at no cost to users. You may require R1 of data to be loaded before you access these sites:

<https://www.wits.ac.za/mywits/zero-rated-data-to-students-and-applicants/>. (P.S. Zero-rating means that you are not charged when you access these sites.)

Access to data

The University has signed a contract with MTN to provide 30 gigabytes of data (10GB Anytime and 20GB Night Express) at no cost to you (Wits students) for one month, to kick-start your online learning journey. **It is imperative for your mobile number to be updated on the student self-service portal if you wish to make use of this service, as these numbers will be provided to MTN.**

Help is a click away

Please direct academic enquiries to your respective faculty as follows:

Commerce, Law and Management:

Undergraduate: Danie.Deklerk@wits.ac.za

Postgraduate: Deeksha.Bhana@wits.ac.za

Engineering and the Built Environment: Anne.Fitchett@wits.ac.za

Humanities:

Undergraduate: Heila.Jordaan@wits.ac.za

Postgraduate: Hugo.Canham@wits.ac.za

Health Sciences: Henda.VanDerWalt@wits.ac.za or Morne.Greyling@wits.ac.za

Science: SSSC.Science@wits.ac.za

ICT Helpdesk: Send an email to ithelp@wits.ac.za or log a query via <https://witshelp-ism.saasiteu.com> or visit www.wits.ac.za/mywits for details.

Let's walk this journey together

Our academics and professional, administrative and support staff have worked tirelessly over the past few weeks to prepare to go online. We have galvanised our resources to support you over the next few months and your success is our priority. We accept that this is a new learning experience and that there may be some challenges, but we are on hand to solve them together. Please feel free to [share suggestions](#) on how we can improve emergency remote online teaching and learning over the next days, weeks and months.

Look after yourself and keep healthy and safe.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM
17 APRIL 2020

