

Subject: WITS COVID-19 UPDATE 27 – FINAL YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS RETURN TO CAMPUS

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From: Buhle Zuma on behalf of VCO News

To: VCO News

WITS COVID-19 UPDATE 27 – FINAL YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS RETURN TO CAMPUS

Dear Colleagues and Students

We trust that you are in good health and keeping well.

Following the directive issued by the Minister of Higher Education and Training on 30 April 2020, final year medical students will return to Wits on Monday, 11 May 2020. This will require a limited opening of the Wits Junction Residence Complex and the Faculty of Health Sciences building, as well as the clinical training platform in various hospitals.

The University has prepared for the return of 314 medical students in their final year of the MBBCh and GEMP programmes. 91 students from this group will be housed in the Wits Junction on a self-catering basis.

An additional 142 medical students on the Mandela Castro programme will also be returning to continue their clinical training in hospitals. These students will be housed, as usual, in the Witwaters Building and at various hospitals.

We have implemented the following safety measures in compliance with all regulations and protocols, and with the advice of experts:

Residences and related facilities, offices and teaching venues have been decontaminated, including surfaces, equipment and ventilation systems. This has been confirmed by Wits' Occupational Health and Safety Director and his team.

Sanitisers have been installed at all entry points, as well as at the entrances of all buildings.

Buses have been decontaminated and screens have been installed to separate bus drivers from students. Bus drivers have been instructed to ensure that buses are no more than two thirds full when transporting students to hospitals, in line with transport regulations. Physical distancing must be maintained on buses and masks must be worn at all times.

All students and employees will be expected to complete a confidential screening questionnaire every day (via an app) before being allowed onto campus, in line with national protocols. Temperature screening may be undertaken at the gates if this becomes necessary for any reason.

Staff and students will be issued with the proper Personal Protective Equipment, including the appropriate masks for medical students. At least two cloth masks will be issued to all other staff and students, who will be responsible for ensuring that they wear a newly-washed mask every day. It is compulsory to wear masks at all times when in open spaces, whilst using University transport and in clinical settings.

Physical distancing and good hand hygiene (preferably by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds at a time and drying properly) is compulsory.

In order to ensure our collective wellbeing, students and staff members are required to adhere to the stringent measures outlined above and to report immediately any violations of protocol to the Office of the Dean of Health Sciences via david.gray@wits.ac.za. Anyone who does not adhere to these requirements may be escorted off the premises by Campus Protection Services.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to our returning students, and to all Wits' staff members who have meticulously prepared for the return of this cohort, and who will continue to support them in the months ahead. These include in particular staff members from the following departments: Student Affairs; Services; PIMD; ICT; Protection Services; OHS&E; Finance; Faculty of Health Sciences staff, and other supporting units.

Remember to wear your masks and to practice physical distancing and good hand hygiene.

Keep healthy and safe!

SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM

8 MAY 2020