

Extract from the Directions on a National Framework and Criteria for the Management of the 2021 Academic Year in Public and Private Higher Education Institutions

Issued by the Department of Higher Education and Training in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No.57 Of 2002): 29 March 2021. Click [here](#) to read the full document.

2. Background and principles

2.9 Because of unique circumstances at each institution (locational and spatial arrangements, local lockdown restrictions, capacity issues, actual and variable numbers of students, etc.), a one - size-fits -all approach is not feasible. Therefore, each institution must work out its own management plan for the 2021 academic year based on its context within the adjusted national lockdown rules framework, which may be adjusted from time to time.

4. Institutional Plans

4.5.2 As a principle, restrictions on the size of gatherings (including all classes and events) within indoor venues and outdoor venues must be managed within the terms of the Regulations published by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs from time to time. However, in terms of this direction, and where practically possible, each institution must determine the area of floor space in square metres of each venue and determine the number of students and employees that may be inside the venue, subject to a stipulated limitation of the floor space and subject to strict adherence to all health protocols and social distancing measures. Should the National Risk Alert Level Regulations applicable at the time, allow for utilising more than 50% of the floor space, institutions must follow the Regulations. This means that all universities will need to carefully manage face to face contact activities and continue using blended and remote teaching and learning methodologies, until these restrictions are lifted completely.

4.5.9. Management of in- person examinations and assessments needs to be done with specific consideration to health and safety protocols. Higher Health has published protocols in this regard and these must be adhered to at all times. Emphasis needs to be on ensuring:

- a) Engineering controls: what can be done to the exam environment to reduce transmission, such as ensuring adequate cross ventilation and sufficient space in the venue.
- b) Administrative controls: what can be arranged to reduce transmission, such as COVID-19 screening, hand hygiene, cough etiquette and surface cleaning, disinfection, including environmental cleaning between each exam.

4.5.10. Further, the Higher Health protocol details preparation of the exam centre before, during and after the exam. In cases where physical attendance at an examination is necessary and large venues with good ventilation are available, the maximum number of individuals in the venue may be relaxed, provided that:

- a) There is at least a 1.5m distance between each examination table;
- b) All windows and doors remain open throughout;
- c) All students and staff in the venue wear masks at all times;
- d) Hand sanitisers are available on entry into the venue and that all individuals entering the venue are screened;
- e) Not more than 50% of the venue capacity is exceeded;
- f) After the exam, the invigilator should transport boxes of scripts to a designated secure storage site for quarantine overnight. The scripts can be sent to examiners for marking after a minimum of 12 hours.