

**E-mail dated 28 August 2020 to all students by Prof Stan du Plessis, ICBC Chair:  
LEVEL 2 ARRANGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS**

28 August 2020



Die Afrikaanse weergawe van hierdie boodskap sal binnekort op die US se COVID-19-webblad beskikbaar wees.

## **Level 2 arrangements and other important matters**

Dear Student

Since Stellenbosch University (SU) last communicated to students at the start of the second semester of 2020, the country has moved to level 2 of the COVID-19 risk adjustment. Although Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, addressed the media earlier this week, universities are awaiting further directions from the Department of Higher Education and Training. In the meantime, we would like to share important information with our students.

### **Level 2 arrangements**

Two aspects highlighted by the Minister were that universities could implement level 2 guidelines in accordance with their planning and academic programme, and that the return of students to campuses would remain a 'staggered process'.

- SU will honour its undertaking to continue to offer all those modules identified by faculties for online teaching and learning at the end of the first semester, via the SUNLearn platform for the rest of the academic year. The aim was to enable students to cancel accommodation for the rest of 2020 if they could complete all modules online. This arrangement also applies to first-year modules.
- Although level 2 guidelines stipulate that government will allow an additional third (up to a maximum of 66%) of SU students to return to campus, there are also other regulations and restrictions that must be taken into account, including the size of academic venues to offer lectures amidst compulsory social distancing and available accommodation in residences without exceeding the prescribed maximum.

**It therefore is extremely important to note that no student may return to campus without an invitation from SU. Form 3A certificates still need to be issued to**

**returning students before they can travel to campuses.**

### **Assessments and religious responsibilities**

In the second semester of 2020, the following arrangements will apply:

- Should an A2 or A3 assessment for a module fall on any day of the week (Monday – Saturday) with religious significance, SU will try not to schedule the other assessment for the relevant module on the same day. However, where this is not possible, we ask students' understanding for when concessions unfortunately are not practically feasible for SU.
- When students choose not to take an A1 assessment on any day, they will have to make use of an adequate number of other assessment opportunities to obtain a valid performance mark. If the A2 or A3 opportunity inevitably also falls on a day with religious significance, we ask students' understanding that further concessions based on religious responsibilities unfortunately are not practically feasible for SU.
- In exceptional cases where the assessments of different modules fall into the same time slot, the relevant departments and/or the examination office will arrange with the student to write the two assessments back-to-back on the same day.

### **A4 exams for 2020**

In the **student communiqué of 3 July 2020** it was announced that an additional assessment opportunity (A4) will be available in January 2021 for all **first semester and some year modules**. Please refer back to the communiqué for important information.

The University will not be in a position, however, to offer a set of A4 exams for **semester 2 modules**. Institutional structures, staff and students have gained substantial experience in emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment (ERTLA) during the second term of the year which can now be applied with confidence in the second semester. Hurdles to online teaching and learning have been removed and students who have indicated that they cannot function effectively from home, were given the opportunity to return to campuses for the rest of the year. Reports from faculties indicate that students have adapted well to the new modality after the first semester.

Faculties will be implementing various forms of additional support during the second semester, including online tutors, flexible assessments, module mentor programmes and tutor programmes in departments, additional online lecturer assistants, more consultation time and an increase in synchronous teaching activities for more real time learning and student engagement. Some faculties have also increased psychological support, and the **services from CSCD** remain available for help.

All students who are still experiencing challenges that may hamper the successful completion of their academic year, should urgently make contact with their lecturers or academic departments, or consult the **COVID-19 webpage** for various forms of support.

### **Student levies**

In May this year SU announced a number of payment relief measures including that no levies would be charged for parking, societies, sport clubs and residences and PSO activities until there was more certainty about the usage.

With changes in the risk adjustment levels more activities have resumed and others will resume shortly. The Institutional Committee for Business Continuity (ICBC) has now given approval for levy charges to be added to student accounts in September as approved by the societies, sport clubs, residences and PSO wards.

### **Events and booking of venues**

Events and booking of venues at Stellenbosch University came to an end under lockdown and the earlier risk adjustment levels, but under level 2 we may once again organise small conferences and events, and accept venue bookings.

The ICBC has approved the opening of venues/hosting of small face-to-face conferences and meetings. Each proposed face-to-face event will be assessed on its merits and against strict criteria, including institutional importance of the event and the readiness of the venue to ensure compliance with national regulations and the safety of all concerned. The criteria, application process and additional information will be updated on the [COVID-19 webpage](#) next week.

### **Academic transcripts**

All students who require academic transcripts should send enquiries and requests to [records@sun.ac.za](mailto:records@sun.ac.za)

### **Mandatory adherence to health and safety protocols**

Students in residences and in private accommodation are urged to strictly adhere to health and safety guidelines and protocols. The Minister emphasised that universities should not become complacent. An increase in infections is possible due to more students and staff on campuses and more movement. Unfortunately there have been media reports of universities abroad where social gatherings off-campus resulted in high infection rates among campus communities.

Please continue to act responsibly – practice social distancing, wear face masks, do the Higher Health daily health check before entering campus facilities, adhere to curfew times and avoid large social gatherings. It is our shared responsibility to keep each other safe.

Please also remember to consult the [COVID-19 webpage](#) regularly for updated information.

Prof Stan du Plessis  
Chair: Institutional Committee for Business Continuity