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## **UCT gears up for the 2019 academic year**

Preparations for the 2019 academic year are underway at the University of Cape Town (UCT) ahead of classes set to officially resume on 11 February. For first years, registration and orientation started on 21 January and is continuing until 8 February. Parents orientation took place on 26 and 28 January.

UCT Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, commented: "UCT is a vibrant community of multicultural staff and students from across South Africa, Africa and the world. Each of our first years has something special to contribute to this university, and I want to make sure that they all feel at home on our campuses. Our programme, the First-Year Experience, is just one of many things we have in place to make that happen."

The First Year Experience (FYE) helps students negotiate the transition from school to university, and make use of the many resources available to achieve their full potential. FYE works alongside faculties to improve student learning.

At the parents orientation, Professor Phakeng addressed the audience on some of the services offered at UCT. These include services offered through Student Wellness Services ([which offers, among others, mental health support services](#)); the Office for Inclusivity and Change ([whose services include support for students with disabilities and for sexual assault survivors](#)) and the UCT Food Security Programme ([which was launched in 2018 to address the issue of student hunger](#)).

The university received 62 740 undergraduate applications from approximately 32 000 applicants, and only 4 200 first-year students can be enrolled. Due to capacity issues, unfortunately some applicants were unsuccessful because the programmes had reached full capacity.

UCT Deputy Registrar, Karen Van Heerden, said: "For the first time this year, we are offering an online registration piloting 'programme' for first-years in two undergraduate programmes in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment and the Faculty of Health Sciences. The online registration introduced in 2018 for postgraduates is continuing, as well as remote registration for selected undergraduate and postgraduate students."

As has been the case in preceding years, UCT received more applications for accommodation than the available rooms. For 2019, the university received 16 000 applications for 6 700 available spaces on campus for new and returning students.

The university made 4 500 housing offers to first-time entering undergraduates. All first-year students with accommodation offers have been placed in residences. Students who arrive without an accommodation offer are assisted with off-campus accommodation through the university's Off-Campus Student Accommodation Services (OCSAS).

UCT's off campus accommodation meets a similar standard to on campus accommodation for all students, including safety and security, and is close in proximity to UCT's Jammie Shuttle bus route. The bus service is free for anyone with a valid staff or student card.

UCT has increased accommodation capacity by signing leases with three private residences, which has added approximately 800 beds. Work has begun on a new residence that is being built, and the scheduled completion time is February 2020.

[Read more on Campus Life 2019](#)

**ENDS**

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