



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA - UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

**Find out more about UCT's approach
to COVID-19 on the UCT website**



17 April 2020

UCT's further plans for continuing academic year: setting the record straight

The University of Cape Town has noted some confusion in the media and on social media, resulting from a claim that all students will return to campus on 1 September 2020. This is not correct and we wish to clarify as follows:

- The university is hard at work to ensure that the 2020 academic year will be concluded successfully despite the enormous challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- UCT is rolling out an online academic calendar with a reworked academic programme and additional support for students. The alternate academic calendar and remote teaching framework were approved by the Senate Executive Committee earlier this week.
- The second term will start online on 20 April with an orientation week lasting until 25 April. Classes will then start online on 28 April.
- The approved framework focuses on equitable learning experiences for all students, and on preventing the reinforcement or an increase in existing inequalities.
- The university conducted a survey to determine students' available resources for remote learning. Of the 90.4% students who had completed the survey by 15 April, 89.5% have access to a laptop/desktop, while 1.3% had no device. UCT has arranged for door-to-door delivery of the laptops to eligible students. A further 91.4% of the students have internet access. The university is investigating how it can further support the 8.6% students without internet access, in addition to other measures already put in place, such as an agreement with Cell C and Telkom [to zero-rate access to certain UCT websites](#).
- There is ongoing planning and work to assist students with any complexities they may face in terms of online learning.

- UCT's current planning also includes the possibility of pushing the start of the next academic year to March 2021 to allow for the successful conclusion of the academic year 2020.
- All these decisions have taken into account the need to ensure the integrity, quality and standards of UCT degrees for students, the general public and all relevant accreditation agencies.

In terms of UCT's plan on returning to on-campus operations:

- The interpretation that all students will return to campus on 1 September 2020 is incorrect.
- UCT is currently estimating that remote teaching will continue in the second and third terms.
- Any decisions regarding how the UCT campuses will reopen will be wholly aligned with national government directives and will be announced by the Vice-Chancellor.
- The return to campus of staff or students will only be done once the government has given a directive and all risks have been assessed and mitigated. The Vice-Chancellor will make further announcements.

[Read the full communication by Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Associate Professor Lis Lange.](#)

ENDS

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