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UCT planning return of students to residences

READ: [Full message by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng.](#)

DOWNLOAD: [Audio version by UCT spokesperson, Elijah Moholola.](#)

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is planning for the return of students to university accommodation now that the fire that affected large parts of the Rondebosch campus on Sunday, 18 April is under control.

The fire resulted in the emergency evacuation of approximately 4 000 students. UCT has established a cross-divisional task team to coordinate the process of returning the students.

The first task has been to assess the condition of the campus in terms of health and safety. This process is underway.

UCT Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng said: "Once we have cleaned the residences approved in terms of occupational health and safety, the task team will provide and coordinate transport back to university residences for all students in emergency accommodation. We will make alternative arrangements for those residences deemed unsafe due to fire damage.

"We anticipate that we will be able to get students back into university accommodation on Thursday, 22 April, barring unforeseen issues. Our priority is the safety and health of every student, and to create the conditions necessary for a full return to the university's academic programme as soon as possible."

Phakeng said the UCT leadership was deeply appreciative of the role played by the Students' Representative Council (SRC) and so many of the university staff in ensuring that the evacuation was completed safely. A small number of students were treated for smoke inhalation, and UCT's Student Wellness Service is continuing to provide support where this is required.

“We have fortunately been able to provide emergency accommodation for all affected students. Generous donations from across the country have provided for a steady supply of provisions, which have been distributed to our students. As with any emergency evacuation of this nature, there have been logistical challenges that we have worked hard to address. I am particularly grateful to the SRC for their close assistance in meeting these challenges.”

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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