

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE....



Beloved students!

Life as we knew it, changed overnight when COVID-19 arrived, and no nation or industry has been spared. The invisible enemy quickly altered the way we communicate and engage with one another. With Higher Education as one of the casualties of the pandemic, the virus has forced us as a country, to pause and consider that amongst other things; our education system is in need of a huge makeover!

Following the nation-wide lockdown brought on by the prevalence of the COVID-19, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has been doing all it can to put plans in place to save and complete the 2020 academic year. Sectoral collaboration will be crucial in this regard, while still allowing for institutional differences.

DHET has strongly emphasised the adoption of the principle of 'NO STUDENT TO GET LEFT BEHIND', when considering how to best facilitate online learning. To this end, ORBIT College has and continues to do its best to ensure that students do not get left behind academically during these trying times. Some of the measures that we have implemented include previous question papers and their memoranda as well as other tutorials that have been uploaded on the College website. The website is zero rated and students are therefore able to access it without incurring data costs.

In addition to this, the amazing support and commitment by the College lecturing staff, has seen Lecturers develop educational videos which are currently being broadcast on GauTV (channel 265 on DSTV) every Monday to Friday between 6:30 – 7: 30. These videos are also available for viewing via the College and DHET websites. Our sincere appreciation goes out to these participating lecturers, who have been very enthusiastic in responding to this call to assist our students. The College has also been making use of other e-media platforms such as our social media pages and the Student i-Enabler to share information with students and other stakeholders. We'd like to urge you to continue staying in touch with us through these platforms.

Dear students, allow me to echo the words of President Cyril Ramaphosa when he said "We shall recover. We shall overcome. We shall prosper"! I know it might not seem that way at the moment but; this too shall pass, and we will meet again soon!

Mr Dika Mokoena
ORBIT College Principal

HOW WILL THE COLLEGE MANAGE COVID 19 AT THE SITES?

COVID 19 has forced all of us to start thinking and doing things differently. Although this might be a daunting experience for most of us, it has also opened up opportunities to review and adjust our daily ways of going about life.

The Management team of ORBIT TVET College has been strategically working behind the scenes for the past number of weeks in an effort to plan properly so that the safety of our students and staff is not compromised in any way upon our return to classes and to work.

A College COVID 19 steering committee as well as COVID 19 Campus steering committees have been established to co-ordinate the implementation of all COVID 19 related activities.

The COVID 19 Management Plan that has been developed for ORBIT College is fully aligned to the safety and health regulations set out by the Department of Health and the Department of Higher Education Science and Technology.

Once the plan has been finalized, it will be communicated to all stakeholders via the different social media platforms of the College.

HOW WILL THE COLLEGE ASSIST ME WITH PPES?

PPE = Personal Protective Equipment

These include face masks, sanitizers, gloves etc.

Masks

The wearing of facial masks is not a choice. It is mandatory!

The masks that have to be worn must adhere to specific requirements as prescribed by the Department of Health. The College will be providing all staff and students with at least two face masks upon their return to the College.

Hand sanitizers

Mounted hand sanitisers have been installed at all sites, sufficient to cater for the number of staff and students that are accommodated by each site. In addition to these, manual sanitizing will also be done by designated staff/volunteers upon entering the College premises and upon entering the classroom.

Hygienic wipes and soap in bathrooms

All ablution facilities will be furnished with the necessary hygienic accessories.

Deep-cleansing of all facilities across sites

Service providers responsible for the deep-cleansing of all College facilities have been appointed and the process is currently underway.

Student residences at Mankwe Campus will also comply with COVID 19 health and safety regulations, including daily screening of all residents

WILL I BE SCREENED AND TESTED WHEN I RETURN TO THE COLLEGE?

Yes. All students, staff and service providers who enter College grounds will be screened on a daily basis by trained staff and volunteers.

ORBIT College has opted for the following ways of screening:

In addition to the above, all students are kindly requested to download the digital self-screening tool “Healthcheck” that was developed by Higher Health by clicking on the following link:

<http://healthcheck.higherhealth.ac.za>

Alternatively, you can also use the Whatsapp line 0600110000 and USSD line *134*832*2# to do self-screening through the “Healthcheck” digital self-screening tool.

You will be required to screen yourself every day BEFORE you come to the College. The result of your screening will be checked at the College upon entry after which the screening process will be concluded by an additional process run at the College. The self-screening tool will assist greatly in managing the screening processes so that no-one’s health and safety is compromised by unnecessary long queues.

When you arrive at the Campus, you will be informed of the additional screening option (besides the self-screening option) to be utilized by your Campus, i.e. mass screening, residence screening and/or classroom screening.

Should you show symptoms of COVID 19, you will be referred for testing and subsequent linkage to care at health facilities for these purposes. Sick bays and isolation areas will be made available at each site to accommodate students and staff who have to be supported in this regard.

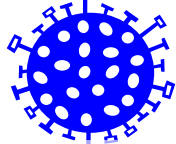
WHEN WILL I HAVE TO RETURN TO CLASS?

During his last address, the Minister of Higher Education Science and Technology, Dr Nzimande, indicated that students will start returning to classes, under the regulations of national lockdown level 3 when it commences on 01 June 2020.

Return by students will be based on a staggered approach, provided that the College has adhered to all COVID 19 readiness regulations as required by the Department of Health.

A tentative academic calendar has been drawn up pending any new announcements on the different levels of the lockdown by the President:

TENTATIVE 2020 ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR TVET COLLEGES



NATED Trimester (ENGINEERING) students

N6 & N3: 10 June 2020

N5 & N2: 15 June 2020

N4 & N1: 22 June 2020

NATED Semester (BUSINESS STUDIES) students

N6: 25 June 2020

N5: 29 June 2020

N4: 06 July 2020

NC(V) STUDENTS

Level 4: 13 July 2020

Level 3: 20 July 2020

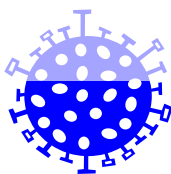
Level 2: 27 July 2020

Although level 3 of the national lockdown has been announced by the President, the reality remains that certain districts of provinces may revert back to level 4 or even level 5, should the spread of the virus demand such. Should this happen, a campus-based approach will be applied where colleges are affected by different lockdown levels. This means that campuses located in districts that remain in Level 4 will remain closed and students will be supported using multi-modal remote learning approaches. Each of these colleges will therefore develop a detailed remote learning support plan and share it with students as well as post it on the College website.

WHAT CHANGES CAN I EXPECT IN THE CLASSROOM?

Students can expect that it will not be business as usual upon their return to the classroom. COVID 19 regulations have compelled campus management teams to make adjustments to class group sizes, time tables, conducting of ICASS assessments etc.

Management wishes to assure our students that whatever changes have been made so far, were done in the best interest of students and staff, in an effort to guarantee their safety and well-being.



1. Class groups will not consist of more than 20 students
2. Where the timetable and subjects allow, students will remain in classes with lecturers moving between classes
3. Not all students will return to class simultaneously. A staggered approach will be used instead, with Trimester 1 students returning to classes first. After two weeks Semester 1 students will return to class, with NCV joining them after another two weeks
4. NCV timetable will be adjusted to accommodate specific programmes on specific days
5. Breaks will be scheduled at different times to minimize mass social interaction

MULTI-MODAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

Learning materials that have been developed by TVET Colleges (such as ORBIT College) for TV broadcasts are shared on www.dhet.gov.za. Additional learning material has also been developed for radio broadcast purposes. These initiatives will continue beyond the return of students to campuses.

Students who will not have returned to campuses in June and July will also be supported remotely until they return to campus according to the phase-in process.

ORBIT College lecturers are using the Student i-Enabler to load learning material such as PowerPoint presentations, working documents for their class groups. The Student i-Enabler can be accessed via the College website by using your Student number and PIN.

These initiatives are further supported through WhatsApp groups set up by lecturers.

#BeASportAndComply

IN THE MEANTIME...



Keep clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Keep washing your hands often with soap for 20 seconds



Keep a physical distance of 1.5m from others



Keep your mask on in public always



Keep yourself at home if you are sick



Keep away if you cough or sneeze and cough and sneeze into your elbow

WE NEED TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH THIS VIRUS. IT WILL REQUIRE A MIND SET CHANGE FROM ALL OF US.

For COVID-19 online resources and news portal:

<https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>

For college circulated communication regarding COVID-19 visit the college website page at:

http://www.orbitcollege.co.za/page_coronavirus.html

For frequent COVID-19 updates, contact the COVID-19 Whatsapp line on:

0600 123 456

Designated College e-mail addressed for reporting of College COVID 19 cases and to require information on COVID 19

covid19@orbitcollege.co.za

