



NAPTOSA

National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa

Report on the Stakeholder meeting with the Minister of Higher Education and Training regarding the action plan on the COVID-19 state of disaster

17 March 2020

Introduction

NAPTOSA was represented by the TVET Colleges Portfolio Committee Chairperson Mr M Stoltz.

Input by a representative from the NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NICD) was given on the scientific research on the COVID-19 virus and the phases of progression that are expected.

We are currently in the Containment Phase. The focus is to try and contain the infection of individuals that were infected during travel. This phase is expected to last 3 months. Depending how well it is contained will determine the urgency and methodology of the next stage which will be the Social and Communal infections stage. Research shows that during this stage every infected person infects two others. Infection rates thus increase exponentially.

Containment in the Post School Academic Sector

The most effective way to contain the virus from spreading is by social distancing. In this regard the President has already declared a National Disaster with certain restrictions put in place.

In adherence to these restrictions it was decided to have an early recess for all post school academic institutions from **18 March 2020 to 15 April 2020**.

This includes Universities, TVET colleges and CET centres, both public and private.

This is NOT A SHUT DOWN, but merely bringing the recess forward to mitigate the risk of exposure. Therefore, as per any recess, only students and academic staff will be on recess and support staff will not be affected.

During this recess time, the management of Institutions and stakeholders are expected to evaluate the situation and put contingency plans in place and, if it is deemed necessary, to change the mode of curriculum delivery after this break. This could entail the use of technology and distance learning.

The Report 191 Engineering Examinations will be postponed to after 15 April 2020 and the Directorate Examinations will draft a new timetable. This might influence the rest of the academic year.

Setting up of a Task Team

As a matter of urgency, a Task Team for TVET colleges will be set up comprising all stake holders to discuss and decide on actions to mitigate challenges that might arise. This Task Team will report to and be guided by the National Task Team

Conclusion

The Minister requested all citizens to work together and assist in the efforts to contain this disaster. The Government also sees the deliberate misinformation and false news with regards to COVID-19 in a very serious light.

Lecturers are urged to be proactive as no one is certain of how the virus will spread. We must plan with the worst-case scenario in mind but believing that we will beat the crisis before it deepens.

B L Manuel

Executive Director