

Dear Student

I hope that you are in good health and have managed your studies well in spite of the challenges brought about by the COVID 19 (C19) pandemic and subsequent national lockdown. On the 24 May 2020, President Ramaphosa announced that the country would shift to Level 3 lockdown as of the 1 June, and Minister Nzimande subsequently announced a phased approach for the return of students and staff to tertiary institutions, depending on the particular circumstances of each institution.

Hence, it is with pleasure that I am able to inform you that the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute (EATI) will open its doors for contact learning on the 17 June 2020. We have had to ensure several discussions with staff and other entities before making this decision. As always our focus has been on completing the 2020 academic year, while complying with the relevant national regulations applicable during the lockdown levels.

To this end, we were able, at very short notice, to put together a blend of distance and online learning since the 18 March 2020. Each student responded differently to the challenges posed by this new approach to learning. It required a fast change of focus and application for both students and lecturers across the various academic institutions in our country. However, I hope your return to campus and contact lectures will consolidate what you have been studying off campus and prepare you for assessments to complete semester one, in preparation for semester two and the final examinations.

To this end, let me remind you that the President emphasised the return to allowed activities must be strictly controlled to ensure that the integration of staff and students is in compliance with the national regulations. In the case of academic institutions, there should be a focus on final year students. Like all other institutions, EATI will have to follow strict health and hygiene requirements, while ensuring the appropriate social distancing practices. Consequently, I appeal to you to abide by the norms and practices that will be explained to you at a later stage in a separate communication. In order for the EATI community to engage in a successful learning environment, we will all have to ensure that we practice hygiene, social distancing and respect in a way that we can deal with this virus as far as possible. It will have to be a case of 'Each one for each other' by frequently sanitising and keeping our distances from each other – in the lecture halls, transport, administrative offices and very importantly, in the hostels. At a later stage, my office will distribute the codes of discipline and the protocols to be followed by each student.

Now for the most important information relating to the return to classes, there will be three different groups rotating.

Group 1: 17 June to 18 July for Winter School (lectures, practicals and revision) and Examinations to be complete Semester 1

Higher Education and Training (HET):

- Bachelor of Agriculture third years
- Higher Certificate second years
- Diploma second years
- All Equine Studies students

Group 2: 22 July to 21 August for Winter School (lectures, practicals and revision) and Examinations to be complete Semester 1

Higher Education and Training:

- Bachelor of Agriculture first and second years
- Diploma first years
- Diploma in Cellar Technology

Group 3: 29 June to 18 July for block lectures. NOTE that these dates are subject to change pending lockdown regulations.

Agricultural Skills and Development (ASD):

- Learnership students

Note the following:

- Students who are waiting for their return date will continue with distance and online learning.
- Students who cannot return to campus during this rotation period for personal reasons can continue through online learning with prior arrangements via relevant heads of faculties.
- There will be changes in hostel placements which will be communicated via the hostel administration.
- Permits will be issued to students and persons transporting students. These permits will be sent electronically via the student administration office.
- The detailed year plan will be made available on return to campus, as is the details for semester two and the final examination.
- Measures will be put in place to mitigate the risk of exposure to the virus when returning to campus and the hostel, which are in line with health and safety protocols.
- A rebate on hostel fees will be made. Arrangements with regard to credit on hostel fees and the relaxation of payment will be facilitated. Enquiries can be directed to study@elsenburg.com

Depending on the national circumstances, the situation can change at any time, and we will communicate those changes as the situation requires.

I look forward to welcoming you back at the special assembly on 17 June 2020.



Hayley Rodkin

Principal: Elsenburg Agricultural and Training Institute

29 May 2020