

Dear members

Yesterday it came to UKSU's attention that some staff have been instructed to reverse the previous directive of 20 Jan 2021 to withdraw all students who failed in 2020. This instruction required staff to reverse all that they had done earlier and taken a substantial time to do so. It was also not sent out as a notice. At the time the UKSU Executive was in a meeting with NEHAWU and NTEU preparing for the Monday meeting with management. It was agreed to send the below follow up message - there has not yet been a response.

Regards
UKSU Executive

Dear Dr Zulu

We hope this email finds you safe and well during these challenging times.

Further to my email on 23 Jan 2021, we would like to bring some additional concerns to your attention and ask that you escalate them to the DVC T&L URGENTLY. Moreover, as this concerns the ability of staff to comply with contradictory and rushed directives / policies, we imagine that you might be concerned also.

Yesterday it came to our attention that some staff have been instructed to reverse the previous directive of 20 Jan 2021 to be actioned by 29 Jan 2021 (today) to withdraw all students who failed in 2020. While this is, in principle is a good thing, we have the following concerns:

1) The deadline to finalize marks for semester 2 2020 has not changed. Hence, staff who worked overtime to implement one process now have just one day to reverse this process. This is likely to be impossible, as it involves redoing much work that normally takes many days.

2) We are concerned about a lack of clarity about this reversal; unlike the original advertised withdrawal process, there has been no UKZN wide announcement of the reversal, yet some line managers are implementing this.

3) When staff at various levels flagged the potential problems with the withdrawal, they were either ignored, or simply told to obey an instruction. The lack of consideration of the considerable experience of staff on the ground in favour of an authoritarian top-down management structure is both concerning in itself and also the source of many problems, of which this most recent is just one example. We would hope that UKZN management structures would make a concerted effort to live up to their own REACHt principles.

4) We note that we have yet to be favoured with a response from the DVC T&L.

5) The University must ensure it implements an effective process to deal with whatever has been identified as a problem and then remains with this process and does not, just a few days later, reverse this and issue different instructions that require the reversal of the work previously instructed.

Regards
Gareth Amery

OBO NEHAWU-NTEU-UKSU