

Dear Dr Zulu

The unions note your response below.

Regulations require the employer to consult with staff on COVID-19 related matters and the most recent communication to staff was issued without clarification to the unions that their concerns have indeed been addressed. The unions are not aware that these have been, other than your informing us that they have been "considered by management".

The unions acknowledge that the employer has the right to say when, how and from where their staff are required to work in accordance with their conditions of service. However, this right comes with obligations on the part of the employer and the unions view management's communication to be lacking on how these will be addressed.

The unions have thus resolved to inform their members not to return to campus until such time as the unions' concerns have been addressed and issues resolved. This will include the health and readiness assessment. The unions assume this will all be provided in the meeting you mention will take place on Monday, so that the unions can advise their members accordingly.

Issued collectively by NEHAWU, NTEU, UKSU

From: Pascal Sipehelele Zulu

Sent: Monday, 24 January 2022 10:49

To: Uksu Union <Uksu@ukzn.ac.za>; Nonhlanhla Kunene <Kunenen7@ukzn.ac.za>; UKSU-Exec-UKZN <UKSU-Exec-UKZN@ukzn.ac.za>; Muthulisi Siwela <Siwelam@ukzn.ac.za>; Thandi Sibisi <SibisiT@ukzn.ac.za>; Gareth Amery <Ameryg1@ukzn.ac.za>

Cc: Samkelisiwe Pearl Makhathini <MakhathiniS1@ukzn.ac.za>; Nana Poku <Poku@ukzn.ac.za>; DVC Research <DVCResearch@ukzn.ac.za>

Subject: RE: Draft Communique Return to Campus

Good Day;

Thank you very much for the feedback.

Some if not all of your comments/input have been considered by management in preparation of staff return. This morning we had a management meeting to deal with the University state of readiness. I will be sharing a comprehensive report to the Staff Return Committee on Monday next week.

Regards;
S Zulu

From: Uksu Union <Uksu@ukzn.ac.za>

Sent: Sunday, 23 January 2022 21:23

To: Pascal Sipehelele Zulu <ZuluP2@ukzn.ac.za>; Nonhlanhla Kunene <Kunenen7@ukzn.ac.za>; UKSU-Exec-UKZN <UKSU-Exec-UKZN@ukzn.ac.za>; Muthulisi Siwela <Siwelam@ukzn.ac.za>; Thandi Sibisi <SibisiT@ukzn.ac.za>; Gareth Amery <Ameryg1@ukzn.ac.za>

Cc: Samkelisiwe Pearl Makhathini <MakhathiniS1@ukzn.ac.za>; Nana Poku <Poku@ukzn.ac.za>; DVC Research <DVCResearch@ukzn.ac.za>

Subject: RE: Draft Communique Return to Campus

Dear Dr Zulu

Thank you, firstly, for providing the communique-in-draft and for inviting our observations. Per your statement last week, it follows that we cannot offer any revisionary commentary. However, we do observe that there are elements of the operationalization of this plan-for-action that remain indistinct. We anticipate that you have considered this and we trust you are intending regular and necessarily frequent follow-up communiques?

For example, we expect that the University has commissioned the necessary occupational hygiene assessment to certify the suitability of the provisions the Colleges and Divisions have made to contain the biohazard?

Further, that there will be clarity in respect of what may be considered ambiguous timelines, with respect to College leadership exercising the necessary restrained urgency, to achieve a coordinated return of almost 5000 personnel?

We anticipate also, that academic personnel will raise questions in respect of impact on workload planning, decisions in respect of which were made late 2021, and that DVC Songca anticipates this and has prepared responses articulating the University's policy position, beyond that anticipated in his communique last Friday morning?

However inconvenient these opacities may prove to attend to, they can be dealt with but crucially, your communique has avoided the issue of mandatory vaccination. Regarding vaccination to be an exercise in self-care – an advisable precaution as you phrase it – obscures the associated decisions in respect of reasonable accommodation of personnel for whom vaccination is prohibited. There are in fact, some cases where individual risk factors do qualify as exemption criteria for on-campus presence and activities. We expect then that you have taken this into consideration? And that you have planned the necessary panel of experts to sit in deliberation of the appropriate course of action, and necessary (reasonable) accommodation of such cases?

Again, thank you for making the communique-in-draft available, even if it was disseminated at such short notice and without contemplating the value we could have added to the decision process which led to tomorrow's statement-of-position.

Regards

Gill Manion for NEHAWU, NTEU, UKSU