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3 April 2020

Dear IIE VC Student

**Gearing up to take Teaching and Learning Online: An Update**

We have prepared this letter to expand on the plans outlined in the latest communication (letter\_14301) from Dr Felicity Coughlan, Director of The Independent Institute of Education. While teaching and learning officially only resumes on the 15<sup>th</sup> April, we can use this time to set you up for the online learning experience. Take special note of the below as it explains our expectations of you, which is critical to your success. It also provides detail on assessment strategy, due dates and an overview of what online learning will entail.



**1. Getting ready for Online Learning**

VCLearn is going to be your “campus” until the situation changes. Therefore, make sure the following is in place as soon as possible.

Step 1: Check that you can access VCLearn

- Do you remember your password? If no, click [here](#), to reset. Please note passwords take up to 24 hours to reset. Use your VConnect email as the username.
- Do you know how to access the VCLearn site? If no, click [here](#).

If you continue to have difficulties, please contact VC Assist [here](#). Log your query, and you will receive a response from your campus Customer Relations Officers who are waiting to assist you.

Step 2: Complete the short learning programme (SLP) - How to be an online student? To access this programme, click [here](#). You will have to enter your username and password. The link to the SLP appears on your VCLearn Home page.



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## 2. What does Online Learning entail?

We have taken the critical components of face-2-face lectures and designed an online learning experience in the following manner:

- The lecturer’s explanation of key components during face-2-face-lectures will now take the form of a series of short videos, recorded by your lecturer, per learning unit.
- These videos will guide you to complete various activities.
- Your lecturer will be analysing your responses to the activities, to gauge your level of understanding and if further support is needed, action will be taken.
- Finally, the opportunity to ask questions and clarify concepts with your lecturers in the classroom is also a critical component of your learning. In the online learning environment, this will be achieved through scheduled “live” Question and Answer sessions with the lecturer which will take place on the VCLearn Discussion board during your revised timetabled lecture slots.

All of the above is clearly outlined in a document called “**lesson plan for online learning**”. These lesson plans will be uploaded onto VCLearn by your lecturers in the “more resources” folder for each learning unit. You will receive a notification via your VConnect email once the documents are uploaded by your lecturers. A screenshot of a lesson plan appears below:

Learning outcomes will appear here.	Textbook reference	Topics of recorded videos in Blackboard Collaborate	VCLearn Activities <i>To be completed before the relevant Q&amp;A session.</i>	Other Activities <i>To be completed before the relevant Q&amp;A session.</i>	Live Q&A sessions with the lecturer
<p>tests in South Africa <i>By the end of this section you should be able to:</i> LO1: Argue the reasons for the statutory control of tests in SA; LO2: Discuss the fair and ethical use of tests; LO3: Describe the various constituents in the assessment process;</p>	<p><b>Chapter 8</b> <i>You are required to read and summarise this chapter.</i></p>	<p><b>Slides</b> These slides focus on the content in <b>LO1,2,3</b></p> <p><b>Recording 1</b> This recording talks students through the slides for Theme 1 <b>LO1,2,3</b> <a href="http://shorturl.at/kuCK4">shorturl.at/kuCK4</a></p> <p><b>Recording 3 for live session – Assignment 3</b> Students should watch this recording prior to the live session on 23/04 in order to prepare. <a href="http://shorturl.at/oxGH1">shorturl.at/oxGH1</a></p>	<p><b>Activity 3.1.1</b> In this activity you are required to read the given scenario and respond to the question in the thread. <b>(LO1,2)</b></p> <p><i>Student Feedback: Students will comment on their peers answers and the lecturer will provide final comment.</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1: Audio Recording</b> Upload an audio recording of yourself as if you were presenting to SAFM on the topic of the control and use of psych assessments in SA. See instructions. <b>(LO1,2,3)</b></p> <p><i>Student Feedback: A memo will be provided as feedback once the recording has been uploaded.</i></p>	<p><b>Wednesday 16/04</b> 8h30 – 9h30 A live Q&amp;A session focusing on LO 1,2,3 and feedback on the tasks and activities.</p> <p><b>Thursday 17/04</b> 8h00 – 9h00</p> <p>Discussion Board based Q &amp; A for LO4</p>
<p>Theme 2: Administering psychological tests <i>By the end of this section you should be able to:</i> LO4: Critically discuss the steps prior, during and after the assessment.</p>	<p><b>Chapter 9</b> <i>You are required to read and summarise this chapter.</i></p>	<p><b>Slides</b> These slides focus on <b>LO4</b></p> <p><b>Recording 2</b> This recording covers the steps during the assessment phase <b>LO4</b> <a href="http://shorturl.at/djFP3">shorturl.at/djFP3</a></p>	<p><b>Activity 3.2.1</b> A short journal post discussing the linguistic considerations prior to the psychological assessment. <b>(LO4)</b></p> <p><i>Student Feedback: Lecturer will provide individual comments</i></p>	<p><b>Task 2: Report</b> A report of all necessary steps in the preparation prior to the assessment. <b>(LO4)</b></p> <p><i>Student Feedback: Lecturer will provide a “checklist”</i></p>	<p><b>Dates and times of “live” Question and Answer sessions will be indicated here.</b></p>

The recorded videos available for each learning outcome will be indicated here.

Activities to be completed will be indicated here.



### 3. Access to Internet and Data Options

We are aware that data is a concern for some of our students. We are working on a plan to support our students' online engagement. More detail on this will be communicated to you on Monday 6 April 2020. This communication will also provide guidelines on how to engage with the learning requirements in a "data-savvy" manner.

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### 4. Access to Library Support

If you need any Librarian/Information Specialist support, please log a request [here](#) to set up some time to connect with the Librarian/Information Specialist online, or simply to ask a library-related question. The Librarian/Information Specialist will get back to you. The library website can be accessed [here](#).

Our Librarians/Information Specialists can offer you support with the following:

Research support:

- Electronic journals
- Various databases
- eBook databases

Study and educational support:

- Information literacy sessions:
  - Referencing and plagiarism sessions
  - Safe Assign assistance sessions
  - Online database training services
- Information retrieval and reference interview services
- Academic writing tips and writing pointers
- Access to past papers on the IIE Library web page



### 5. Expected release of the revised Academic Calendar and your revised Timetable

- Due to changes with the academic calendar, there will be changes to your timetables. Revised timetables will be available for you to access via the student portal by Tuesday 14 April 2020.
  - Please familiarise yourself with your new lecture schedule so that you know when to meet your lecturer and classmates online for the Discussion board Q&A sessions.
  - To access your student portal click [here](#). You will use the same VCLearn username and password.
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## 6. Update on the Programme Assessment Schedule

### Assignments

All assignments remain in place, but your submission dates have been extended by at least 3 weeks to accommodate the period during which we were not teaching you.

The revised Programme Assessment Schedule (PAS) for assignments due in the period 18 March to 14 April 2020 will be available on the student portal close of business Friday, 3 April 2020. (Click [here](#) to access the student portal)

The deadline for submission is midnight on each submission day to reduce the pressure on the system. You will be required to upload your assignments online via Safe-Assign. Click [here](#) for a video demonstrating how to do this.

### Integrated curriculum engagement (ICE)

ICE requirements are unchanged – your lecturers will communicate ICE tasks and their due dates. Don't be surprised if you get ICE tasks during the lockdown period; some lecturers may want to get a head start on the learning and use this time efficiently.

### Tests and Summative Exams will now become Take-home assessments

- The take home assessment will be released on the student portal with instructions 5 days prior to the due date for submission on VCLearn. You are given 5 days to complete these assessments and the date that appears on your PAS is the final date for submission. There are some modules which may have a shorter timeframe; these will be communicated where applicable.
- You can access the Student Portal [here](#). You will use the same VCLearn username and password.
- You will need to consult the relevant sources of information and ensure that you reference your work.
- The online submission procedure is the same as the online submission of assignments.

You will receive a revised Programme Assessment Schedule (PAS) by 14 April 2020.



## 7. Closing remarks from the Managing Director, IIE VC

Our priority is to ensure that your studies continue and that your learning experience is an enriched one where you remain in contact with your lecturers and fellow students. We appreciate that for some students this transition may feel daunting. Please be assured that our academic and support staff are ready to help you at every turn where you may need them.

Today marks our achievement of week 1 in lockdown as a country. We will continue in lockdown with the aim to flatten the curve and allow the Government the opportunity to gear for future medical support that may be needed. The impact on many people is real and difficult. Our hope is that all IIE Varsity College students and staff families are adjusting during this time and are able to enjoy some quality family time.

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We trust that you have found this letter informative and please do not hesitate to contact your campus via VC Assist should you have any questions. We hope that you enjoy the weekend ahead and look forward to engaging with you online next week.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Wiseman  
Managing Director

Margie Boosey  
Academic Manager