



## **Statement from the Centre for Educational Testing for Access & Placement (CETAP)**

23 March 2020

The spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in China and other parts of the world these past few months has caused the World Health Organization (WHO) to announce the situation as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). President Cyril Ramaphosa declared it a national disaster in South Africa on 15 March 2020. CETAP is taking the threat of infection in our community extremely seriously.

As part of our strategy to manage this situation, CETAP has taken the proactive step to shift the testing calendar by 2 weeks. The National Benchmark Tests (NBT) registration will commence on the 1st April 2020 and the first NBT session will now take place on the 30th May 2020. We have also included additional dates in our test calendar. However, as things stand, we are monitoring the outbreak of the COVID-19 and the directives from the Government regarding the return of learners to schools and in doing so we may have to consider the implications for the NBT testing schedule. If the outbreak continues to escalate, we will have no alternative but to further postpone the NBT to a later date in 2020. In some cases, we will be adding more venues so that students can write in a comfortable/hygienic space of less than 100 students per venue. This could also mean further changes to test dates and venues. A communique in this regard will be sent to all learners intending to write the NBT and to the institutions of higher education. The current situation of COVID-19 is taken very seriously and we do not wish to compromise the health of our learners or staff. We also seek support from the schools and institutions in providing the extra venues that may be required.

The NBT has support in place to assist learners if they are unable to write due to ill health or if they fall ill during a test session. If individual learners are unable to attend the NBT session after they have registered because they are ill or have to self-isolate they should contact the NBT Helpdesk either by email [nbt@uct.ac.za](mailto:nbt@uct.ac.za) or call 021-650-3523 (providing supporting documentation) and they will be assisted in rescheduling their test at no additional fee.

This process is designed to ensure that learners who may be affected by these exceptional circumstances - such as illness or a family emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak- still receive the necessary support and assistance from the NBT office and Helpdesk. CETAP is working with reduced staffing during this time in line with the University of Cape Town management directives, however we will strive to continue our levels of service. Please do be patient if you experience a slight delay in receiving a response.

We urge ALL learners who are unwell or who display flu like symptoms NOT to write until they have been through self-isolation or a quarantine period of 14 days.

We are all in this together and will fight this pandemic. I appreciate your understanding and will keep you updated

Thank you

Naziema Jappie  
Director  
CETAP