



THE UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR

To: Staff

Covid-19 Thursday 26 March 2020

National Developments in the last 24 hours have included a media conference given by Hon Bryan Kramer, Police Minister. He gave details of restrictions which began yesterday on public transport of all types travelling across provincial boundaries. PMVs and taxis will continue to operate as normal in towns and cities. In addition to this, the NCD-Central Province border has now been closed which will impact movement of people between the two provinces as a number of our staff have experienced.

In the University, today has been a quieter day on campus for the Covid-19 Emergency Management Committee and essential staff as they are all working on the actions which were agreed at yesterday's meeting. In particular, progress is being made on the extended provision of WiFi at the key locations on-campus and more details will be available tomorrow. In the longer term, this will be extended to the residential area.

You will have noticed increased security at the entrance to the University. Students have been reminded that the government has required all students to stay on campus and, if they choose to leave, they will not be able to return, at least during the 14-day lockdown period. The University will not be able to provide support while they are off-campus. Students who wish to leave will need to sign a Campus Exit form. Similarly, please exercise caution and care when you are venturing out into the public area during this period of lock down.

For staff wishing to come to work during this lock down period, we are working on a permit system so that only staff who have an official University permit will be permitted to drive onto campus. Further, all passengers driven by permit holders will need to produce a staff or student ID card to be admitted to the campus. In the absence of such IDs, the passengers will not be allowed to enter the academic campus premises.

In other student-related issues we are currently seeking to stop the practice of 'double-bunking'. Students found permitting or engaging in unauthorized occupation of student accommodation will be referred to the Student Disciplinary Committee. Penalties for misdemeanors committed during the emergency period will be severe. Also, the Zero Tolerance policy on the possession, use and sale of alcohol, illegal drugs and betel nut by students AND staff is being rigorously enforced.

On a brighter note, the Pro Vice Chancellors and I have been visiting various parts of the campus and talking to a number of you to find out how things are. It has been so encouraging to find the vast majority of students taking a very positive attitude to the current lockdown. The best of the spirit of Papua New Guineans is being shown and I congratulate, in this message, all those staff who are seeking to make a positive contribution to student life at this difficult time.

Please find attached is also a letter from Fr Jan Czuba, Secretary of the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST), encouraging all of us (although addressed to the students) on limiting the spread of the coronavirus in our settings. Please read and practice the suggested actions, if you are not already practicing them

Please stay safe, stay healthy and stay positive!

And the daily repeat of a very important message...Please make sure you...

- ...activate your UPNG email account if you have not already done so – this is the means by which the University will stay in touch with you.
- ...practise social distancing by keeping at least 1.5 metres between you other people.
- ...wash your hands as often as possible and use hand sanitiser when it is available.
- ...cough or sneeze into your bent elbow – not into your hands
- ...avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- ...try to avoid social gatherings and crowded place

The University is taking steps to make sure that Environmental Hygiene is practised to ensure the health and safety of those remaining on campus.

Professor Frank Griffin
Vice Chancellor

26 March 2020





**DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**
Office of the Secretary

March 26, 2020

TO ALL STUDENTS

As the Bible says: ***"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."*** (Deuteronomy 31:6)

**SUBJECT: LIMITING SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IN
EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS**

My Dear Students,

We want you to know that our Minister Hon. Nick Kuman, MP and the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, are working with the National Health Department and other Government Agencies on prevention and management in the event an outbreak of COVID - 19 in our country. However, you can help our country, your University or College's efforts to minimize the spread of illness. The best steps you can take are the same ones that help prevent other respiratory illnesses like the flu. This includes all students, staff, and families being vigilant in:

- ⊗ Washing your hands often with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds
- ⊗ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- ⊗ Staying at home or dormitory away from others if you are sick
- ⊗ Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- ⊗ Cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces, especially "high touch" ones like doorknobs, counters, light switches, or remotes
- ⊗ Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throwing the tissue in the trash and washing your hand
- ⊗ Do not bring your friends students or come to their rooms if you have cold or flu-like symptoms (elevated temperature, fever, cough, shortness of breath).

Education settings can help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by reminding everyone of the public health advice.

The DHERST has established a dedicated helpline numbers for educational settings which we forwarded to all Higher Education Institution's administration.

We thank you for your continued support and cooperation during this unprecedented time. Further information will be forthcoming as we receive it.

Students, please stay safe and continue to prioritize the health, safety and wellness of yourself and those around you. As now is the time to prepare for COVID-19. Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference. Action now will help protect all of us by practicing proper hygiene and hand-washing behavior.

If you require additional information, you can contact the **hotline numbers +(675) 71960813 or +(675) 019** for the latest information for Papua New Guinea and comply with any additional screening measures put in place by the Papua New Guinea authorities.

No one can save us from COVID-19 but ourselves. We must do what is right to protect ourselves and those around us. Let us start right now by taking the sensible precautions to prevent the spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus.

Students 'be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of challenging times, for the LORD your God is with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you'.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fr Jan Czuba', written over a vertical line that extends from the text below.

Professor Fr Jan Czuba
Secretary

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