



**UNIVERSITY OF
SEYCHELLES**
Knowledge hub of the Indian Ocean

University of Seychelles' plan to respond to the COVID -19 current situation.

ERPP 01 – Tuesday 17th March, 2020

1. Introduction

On Sunday 15th March 2020, the Vice Chancellor chose to close down the University for one week as of 16th to 20th March, 2020 following information that one of its students was among some other school children on board that EK705 flight on 11th March, 2020 which consisted of a passenger who had tested positive for COVID-19. Due to the fact that the Department of Education and the Public Health Authority had taken decision to close primary and secondary schools on the ground that school children on board that flight who were at school on 12th and 13th March, might have been in contact with other students and teachers within their schools, the VC felt that a similar measure was justifiable for UniSey.

Following closure of the University, the VC summoned a core team which met on Monday 16th March from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm to work on an Emergency Response & Preparedness Plan (ERPP) specific to the current situation.

Below is a summary of the outcomes of the meetings and some specific decisions taken to facilitate business of the University.

2. Summary of decisions taken

2.1. Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan

The team approved the outlines of the overall Emergency Response & Preparedness Plan from which this specific plan was devised. The main plan will be made available to staff in 3 weeks' time however, the plan specific to COVID-19 is now being shared with all staff and students.

2.2. Emergency Management Committee

The VC nominated a committee to manage the current situation and the members are as follows:

- Justin Valentin Chairperson
- Luciana Lagrenade Vice Chairperson
- Joelle Perreau
- Bernard Monnaie
- Helda Ransoni
- Christine Pejakovic
- Dolivette Chang Ko
- Beryl Camille
- Karine Ernesta
- Bijay George
- Melina Josephine

2.3. Communication to staff and students

2.3.1. Staff are advised that official and authoritative communiqué from the Emergency Management Committee will be disseminated through Dolivette, the Director of Marketing.

2.3.2. Staff should relate directly to their line manager for ease of communication

2.4. Period of closure of the University

2.4.1. The University will be closed for two weeks initially from 16th March to 27th March inclusive. The closing period will be assessed on Friday 20th and 27th March.

2.4.2. This closing period is not a break and should be treated as a full working period.

2.4.3. Staff should be available to answer telephone from colleagues and should check their emails regularly throughout the day.

2.4.4. Staff who are finding difficulty to work from home may use any of the two campuses but they should inform Christine, the Director for Campus Development & Infrastructure via text 2602276 or email. Under such circumstances, the staff should be able to manage their own matters.

2.5. Managing teaching and learning

- 2.5.1. It is the responsibility of the Deans to take control of the teaching and learning matters within their faculty to ensure that as much as possible students are not severely affected within this period.
- 2.5.2. All lecturers should make it their responsibility to devise a logical and practical teaching and learning plan. All plans must be communicated to and approved by the Dean who in turn will inform the committee.
- 2.5.3. All students must have been given a study plan from their lecturers by Wednesday 18th March (4 p.m.).
- 2.5.4. No student should be called in for lectures during this closing period.
- 2.5.5. The IT services is making Microsoft Office 365 available as an alternative platform to facilitate teaching and learning during this closing period. Staff who require training may contact IT services on its@unisey.ac.sc

2.6. International Examination

- 2.6.1. The University of Seychelles is in contact with the University of London with regard to the examinations which will happen in May. All recognised teaching centres have been asked to give details of the impact of COVID -19 on teaching and learning. UniSey, through the VC's office, has already sent a first report.
- 2.6.2. The Assessment Section will liaise with other partners during this week.

2.7. Financial Implications

- 2.7.1. The University has agreed to give each full time lecturer a monthly allowance of SR500 to cover the cost of internet. Associate lecturers may claim SR300 for that purpose. All claims should reach the Finance Department by the 10th April 2020.
- 2.7.2. Other non-teaching staff whose duties require the use of internet from home are eligible for a SR300 monthly allowance which shall be approved by their respective line manager.
- 2.7.3. All line managers are required to send their monetary requirements to Helda for an emergency budget for this period.

2.8. Additional measures

- 2.8.1. In view of national immigration control, the University has suspended all inbound and outbound exchange programmes which were scheduled for the period March – May 2020. This cancellation applies to all international associate lecturers on any programme.
- 2.8.2. No staff are allowed to attend overseas mission until further notice.
- 2.8.3. All foreign recruitments must be put on hold and lecturers awaiting to come to work in Seychelles must be advised to postpone their trip.

3. Conclusion

The state of COVID -19 is unpredictable. We require the support and understanding of everyone to ensure that as much as possible we continue to offer quality services and teaching to our students. We need to support one another in this challenging moment. It is also our responsibility to see how best we can turn this difficult period into opportunity for the growth of the University. Bon Courage and stay safe!!