

Sacap sets students and educators up for continued education

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Since the pre-lockdown closure of its four physical campuses in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban, [Sacap \(the South African College of Applied Psychology\)](#) has now migrated all teaching and learning to its well-established online platform. Although Sacap never experienced any actual cases of Covid-19 on its campuses, the decision was taken to suspend face-to-face classes, work-integrated learning, practicums and internships in the interests of joining the country's efforts to flatten the curve.



Since the announcement declaring Covid-19 a national disaster, Sacap has focused on training more than 100 educators, who had previously only taught face-to-face, how to master online teaching.

“At first, there was quite a lot of anxiety,” says Sacap’s Deputy Dean, Dr Jaclyn Lotter. “It’s been an intensive two weeks that has yielded amazing results. Educators quickly became excited at the potential, and then became really appreciative of learning new teaching skills. We have used a wide range of digital technologies, including Moodle and Zoom, to be able to host both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, such as webinars and discussion forums for our students. WhatsApp support groups have been created and we have educators from our online campus, leading peer-mentoring groups for our educators who have never taught online. In addition we have created virtual playgrounds for teachers to test their skills.”

In order to fully support the migration of 1,429 on-campus students to the online learning environment, Sacap has also rolled out a data provision project for the lockdown period to ensure that all students have the means to log in and attend their classes.

“Our priority is the academic progress and the development of all of our students,” says Sacap Managing Director, Zerina Royeppen. “In times of crisis, continuity is incredibly helpful. We do appreciate and are sensitive to the personal and academic challenges that both our online and face-to-face students will be experiencing as a result of Covid-19, particularly

during the lockdown. We believe it is in the best interests of our students for Sacap to resume teaching and learning, whilst providing our students with the necessary level of support and understanding especially in key stress areas such as assessments.”

Lotter adds: “There’s been great support from our regulators who have affirmed the steps we have taken to keep teaching and learning on track during these unprecedented times. We want all students, including those who are coming on board for Term 2 to be assured that quality teaching and learning continues. At this point, teaching and learning will take place on the online platform, but will resume on the physical campuses as soon as it is safe to do so.”

As part of Sacap’s preparation for the continuation of Term 1 on Monday, 30 March, the online systems have been successfully upgraded; the E-Library has been enhanced and the students’ services department has been fully trained to support students over the coming weeks.

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