



## 2022 Academic Year

What you need to know:  
Part 2

### Dear Students

In my previous letter I let you know about our plans for the #2022AY.

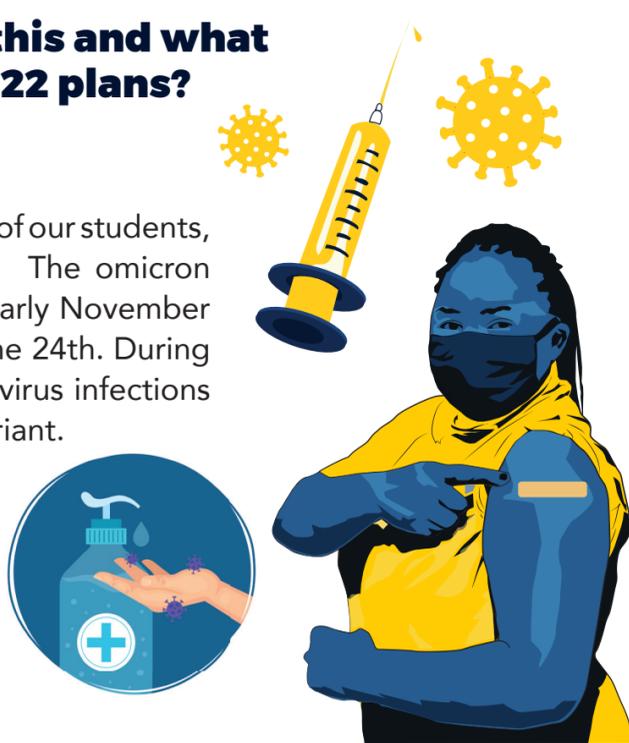
However, these plans need to evolve with developments related to the coronavirus pandemic. This week we learnt that the 4th wave of the coronavirus is about to start and that our South African scientists discovered the **omicron coronavirus variant**.

### How should we respond to this and what will the impact be on our 2022 plans?

#### Omicron variant and 4th wave

We always prioritise the health and safety of our students, staff, and the Mandela Uni community. The omicron variant of the coronavirus appeared in early November but was only identified and named on the 24th. During the past two weeks, most of the coronavirus infections in Gauteng are linked to the omicron variant.

In addition, there has been a rapid rise in infections, and the likelihood of Gauteng entering the 4th wave is very high. We **all need to be vigilant** and should do everything possible to avoid getting the virus.



#### What should we do?

Other than masking up, sanitising your hands often, and practising social distancing, **the most important way to protect yourself, your family and friends from COVID-19, and to slow down the pace and severity of the 4th wave, is to be vaccinated.**

As you know, we advocate that students and staff should take up the opportunity soonest to get **vaccinated**. This is even more essential now that the new variant has appeared and because the number of people who are infected with the virus is rapidly rising. It is in your best interests to get vaccinated now.

#### Consult

<https://www.mandela.ac.za/News-and-Events/Coronavirus-Information/Vaccine-rollout>  
for more information and conversations about vaccines

### How will the 4th Wave and the Omicron variant impact on our 2022 plans?

There is a possibility that by the time we start the #2022AY we could still be navigating our way through the 4th wave with the omicron strain of the virus remaining dominant.

As vaccinations are the best protection against the virus and significantly contribute to fostering a safer campus environment for all, we will constantly monitor and verify the vaccination status of students and staff in 2022.

#### Vaccination certificate

To assess our students' vaccination status, **students will be asked to upload their vaccination certificate at registration.**

#### Vaccination at registration

Mobile vaccination opportunities will be available at registration venues.

In terms of the impact on learning and teaching in 2022, we will be **agile and adaptable during the peak of the 4th and subsequent waves**. We will shift all learning online, if needs be, until the national regulations and our own assessment makes it safe to resume M2M academic activities. During this time, we will provide safe access to our computer labs for students who do not have a laptop so that they can participate in online learning and assessments.

### In closing

We will regularly update you about any adjustments to learning delivery at the start of the first term. Our dates for the **orientation of first-year students** and the **start of the academic year on 14 February 2022** remain as is. We might just adjust the mix of online and mask-to-mask academic activities until we are through the peak of the 4th wave.

#### IN THE MEANTIME:



Professor Cheryl Foxcroft, DVC: Learning and Teaching

#SaveLives as we #SaveTheAcademicYear

