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2 July 2020

Dear Students

REVISED ACADEMIC CALENDARS AND ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE FOR 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

Since the commencement of the nationwide lockdown in March, all on-campus activities were suspended due to the health and safety risks associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic required alternative plans for students to continue with their studies and Damelin responded by directing students to the online learning platform *myClass*, which is accessible through the student portal, as part of Damelin's remote teaching and learning, called *Go!Digital,* response as previously communicated to students.

With the partial re-opening and phased-in approach of the return of some students to campus as regulated by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology under lockdown level 3; we are now in a position to provide students with revised provisional academic calendars and associated amendments to the assessment structure and timelines for assignments and examinations (or assessments).

Since all on-campus activities were suspended, all students have had to adapt to the remote teaching and learning activities, including participating in online virtual classes in MS Teams and accessing additional materials and resources in *myClass*.

It has been a challenging time for students to adjust to the new study arrangements and many students have done this so well. Yet, as some students needed more time adjusting to studying online in *myClass* and as some students who have gone online quite late, Damelin postponed the submission of assignments and holding examinations for this semester. This will ensure that all students will have fair opportunity and equal access to the resources needed to complete their assignments and examinations.

With the planned return of limited on-campus activities and the phased-in return for certain students permitted by the national Regulations, please find below the amendments to the planned semesters, assessment structure and weightings which will be affected to maintain the integrity of our 2020 Academic Year.

I wish to stress that our virtual classes continue for all students. Where a group of students are permitted to return to campus for limited on-campus classes, the combination of virtual classes in *myClass* and some face-to-face or contact classes on campus will form what is called the 'blended learning' model for the months ahead.

The phasing-in of the rest of the students to campus will happen according to guidelines we receive from the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology. Damelin will advise those students when to return to campus.

For the students who are not returning to campus in July as listed below, the timetable of virtual classes and remote teaching and learning continues as per the calendar and assessment dates. Further changes to the type and timing of assignment submissions and examinations for these students may be required.

REVISED PROVISIONAL ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Semester	Group of students		Virtual Classes Start	On-Campus Classes resume	Formative Assessments		Virtual and On-Campus Classes end	**Exam start date
	FT	PT			**Test start date	Assignment		
1	(1) Final Year Students – Exit level and FET		11 May 2020	06 July 2020	27 July 2020	03 August 2020	21 August 2020	24 Aug – 04 Sept 2020
1	(2) Students who require equipment, Practicals and Software		11 May 2020	13 July 2020	17 August 2020	24 August 2020	11 September 2020	14 Sept – 25 Sept 2020
1	(2) 1st and 2nd year students	(2) 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students	11 May 2020	*TBC	17 August 2020	24 August 2020	11 September 2020	14 Sept - 25 Sept 2020
2	(1) Final Year Students - Exit level and FET	(1) Final Year Students - Exit level and FET	14 Sept 2020	14 Sept 2020	26 October 2020	02 November 2020	27 November 2020	02 December 2020
2	(2) Other Students - Non exit level	(2) Other Students - Non exit level	28 Sept 2020	*TBC	09 November 2020	16 November 2020	11 December 2020	Revision and Exam Jan 2021

Please Note:
*These dates for the resumption of on-campus classes will depend on the change to regulations regarding the possible return of 1st and 2nd year Full Time and 1st, 2nd and 3rd year Part Time students to campus when announced by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology.
**New Assessment timetables will be issued for the tests and the examinations and will be published in *myClass.*

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ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

- **Higher Education and Training (HET)**

The nature and weighting (or allocation of overall marks between the tests, assignments and examinations) for assessments forms an integral part of the student learning and assessment journey. The shift to remote or online teaching and learning under lockdown and the blended learning approach ahead requires Damelin to adapt some assessments and the assessment weightings (or percentages allocated to the overall marks).

This rebalance is meant to assist and ease pressure on all returning students, while still maintaining academic quality and standards, and providing students with adequate time to complete their tests and assignments and receive timely feedback to improve their learning of the module materials.
The breakdown is for all HET modules as approved by the Damelin Academic Board and Senate, and is as follows:

Previous HET Assessment Structure		**NEW REVISED HET Assessment Structure**	
Assessment	**Weighting**	**Assessment**	**Weighting**
Individual Assignment	10%	Individual Assignment	20%
Test	20%	Test	20%
Group Assignment	10%	Online MCQs	10%
Final Examination	60%	Final Examination*	50%

*All students will be given the opportunity to write the final examination.

- **Further Education and Training (FET)**

The FET structure will remain the same for all full qualifications and Skills Programmes which are extracted from these full qualifications. The following assessments are required to be completed as per the Academic Calendar:

- Test
- Examination
- Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) – this must be completed prior to the start of the examinations for the semester.

- **Institute of Certified Bookkeepers (ICB)**

ICB on-campus classes will commence during the week beginning the 06 July 2020. The ICB examinations are scheduled for August 2020 for those students who have completed the course work. Should a student be eligible to write the ICB examinations, he or she is required to confirm the dates of the examinations with their campus by the 07 July 2020.

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- **Short Learning Programmes (SLPs)**

Short Learning Programme on-campus classes will commence during the week of the 06 July 2020. As SLPs are scheduled by each campus. The examination dates will be provided to students when they return to class.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

The following principles will guide all assessment of students to ensure academic standards and quality, including Damelin's adherence to fair and equal opportunity for students in alignment with the revised academic calendar.

- **Online Assessments and Assignments**
    - All students who have not been able to complete online assessments during the lockdown period will be given the opportunity to complete all Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs) by the 31 July 2020 for Group (1). Group (2) will be given until 21 August 2020 to complete the MCQs.
    - Students will be given the opportunity to complete the online assessments on campus, as per the schedule per group, while maintaining all the mandatory social distancing protocols.
    - Students must complete all 2020 Semester 1 assignments and submit them by midnight 03 August 2020 for Group (1) and by midnight on 24 August 2020 for Group (2). Assignments must only be submitted online on *myClass*.

- **Tests and Examinations**
    - Tests and examinations will be written or held as per the revised Academic Calendar. The revised Assessment Timetables will be issued upon students' return to campus, which will take into consideration social distancing protocols.

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Damelin would like to thank its students and those who support them at home for their dedication and courage to continue their learning during these challenging times. Damelin remains committed and resolved to providing all its students with a quality education and service.

The above changes provide students with clarity on the remainder of the 2020 Academic Year, and Damelin looks forward to our students doing well as a result of the collective commitment of students and staff.

Please check the Damelin website from time to time for any further official communications to students. Should you require assistance to clarify the information provided in this letter, please contact your campus General Manager or Academic Manager (see Addendum A for Campus contact details).

Kind Regards

Dr Marietjie Pienaar
Dean: Academic Operations

Valerie John
National Academic Operations Manager

Addendum A

Damelin Campus	General Manager (GM)	GM Email Address	Academic Manager (AM)	AM Email Address
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