



## **Media Statement**

**10 May 2020**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University to award qualifications to graduands and diplomates virtually over a period of three days.**

South Africa and the world are battling COVID-19 which is threatening to fundamentally change our lives and the future of humanity. The national disaster declared by the President of the Republic, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa and lockdown regulations released by government are meant to curb infections and flatten the curve. These interventions were necessary to save our individual and collective health in the face of a pandemic caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19).

After considering the attendant implications of COVID-19 on the university business as a whole including the academic activities, the Executive Committee of Senate (acting on behalf of Senate) took a decision that the University should proceed with the conferment and awarding of Degrees and Diplomas to graduands and diplomates who have fulfilled the requirements of their specific qualifications on 11-13 May 2020, at the virtual graduation ceremonies.

SMU Chancellor Designate Dr Zweli Mkhize who is also minister of health will confer the qualifications to all candidates who qualified online.

“We wish to congratulate all those who will be awarded their qualifications. The university will at a later stage hold normal graduations ceremonies once the situation in the country permits to afford our students and their families an opportunity to fully celebrate the achievements”, said Dr Eric Pule SMU spokesperson.

All qualifying candidates will graduate in absentia, and those who need their certificates on an urgent basis, will begin to receive copies of those from Friday, 22 May 2020. The original certificates will only be released or collected when the situation in the country and University has returned to normal.

The virtual graduations ceremonies will be held as follows:

- 11 May 2020 - School of Science and Technology
- 12 May 2020 – School of Health Care Sciences; and School of Pharmacy
- 13 May 2020 – School of Oral Health Sciences; and School of Medicine

Time: 10am

“I am glad that the Executive Committee of Senate has decided to release, liberate and free our graduates through these virtual graduation ceremonies. It was the right decision to make under the circumstances,” said SMU Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof O Ayo-Yusuf.

To be part of the graduations proceedings, please visit our website on [www.smu.ac.za](http://www.smu.ac.za) and click on the 2020 SMU virtual graduations link to witness this historic events over a period of three days.

**Issued by the Marketing & Communication**

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