

# SMART GUIDELINES for students



**STUDENT** FUNDANI CHED  
**LEARNING UNIT**

At the centre of your academic development



Cape  
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# REMOTE LEARNING

In a bid to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and lower the chances of students contracting the Corona virus, the university has considered remote teaching and learning as the best option. This arrangement has been put in place as a temporary measure. We realise that moving online and studying at home is new and may create doubts and fears for some. This form of flexible learning requires your active participation to be successful in your studies. You will need to be self-motivated and engaged, and most importantly, you will need a plan. This guide will help you create your plan for success

## Requirements for Remote Learning

You must have a computer, Tablet, Ipad, Smartphone at home with internet access and access to your CPUT email account. If you do not have access to a reliable computer or reliable internet, please advise your lecturer of this immediately.

# SMART TIPS

## for Remote Learning

### TIP 1

#### Have a schedule and manage your time wisely.

Keep a weekly calendar, read the course syllabus and enter all due dates in your calendar, along with reminders for the due dates.

Commit to studying or participating in your online class every day during the week. Besides attending your online classes, you will need a three-hour study time planner with few breaks in between. Each break must not be longer than 15 minutes.

Prioritise your work. You need to ask yourself:

- What due dates are coming up first? What information is the most important for me to learn first?
- What assignments are worth the most points?

**Make a smart decision about how to best spend your time.**

### TIP 2

#### Stay organized and be thorough.

**Prepare as if you have to teach the information you are learning.** Organize information by creating charts, outlines, study guides, flashcards, concept maps and chapter maps. Create practice exams to evaluate your mastery of the material.

**Use the “What”, “How”, “Who” and “Why” question markers to build your own mock test or exam question paper.** You can also use these questions when reading to ensure you internalise the material.

**Survey the exam paper before starting and budget your time.** Before a quiz or exam, write down formulas or other information you may need. Survey the exam before starting and budget your time. Begin with the easiest test questions and work your way to the harder ones.

**Expect memory blocks.** Often the information will come back to you if you move on to other questions. Try to relate the material you are reading to real-life situations (scenarios) as this will help you to understand it better, and this will enable you to get some clues when you need to retrieve the material.

## TIP 3

### Remain engaged throughout the whole course.

**Preview and review for every lesson**, attend in person/virtual class sessions and take active notes.

**Write down** the date, title of the lesson, key words/concepts, definitions/descriptions and the summaries.

**Analyze all returned quizzes and tests** as well as any lecturer/facilitator's feedback and develop a plan for improvement. This makes remain in control of your learning.

**Work on feedback** immediately when you receive it. Do not be discouraged. Develop a plan on how you going to action it so as to improve your reading or writing strategy.

**Make use of office hours** on a regular basis and ask questions to lecturer/facilitators and/or peers if necessary.

## TIP 4

### Take care of yourself.

**Look inward for motivation.** You have an amazing inner strength and sheer potential. Remembering the goal you are working toward will help you as you work through the challenges of being a student.

**Stay healthy** by getting adequate rest, nutrition and exercise. Drink a lot of clean water during your studies, as this gives your body strength and resilience.

**Use positive self-talk** to reduce anxiety. Schedule time to take care of yourself and spend time with your friends and family.

**Keep a growth mindset.** Your success has as much to do with your effort as it has to do with your ability. Monitor your self-talk and stay positive.

## TIP 5

### Know where to turn for help and manage your time wisely.

**Stay connected** to your lecturers and fellow students. Find ways to keep in touch by using the discussion forums in Blackboard or via email. Remember to include your student number and course code in all communication with your lecturer.

**Download the Blackboard App** for mobile access to course content.

CPUT offers many academic services to support student success, including academic development, mathematics and science support, contact the Student Learning Unit at Fundani for more support.

If you have any form of disability, you can request assistance from Disability Unit.

If you feeling overwhelmed and you need to talk to someone contact the Counselling Unit.

# SMART TIPS

## Getting started with online courses

### TIP 1

#### Prepare yourself for learning.

**Familiarise yourself** with the CPUT technology such as Blackboard (BB) and troubleshoot problems.

Download the BB App via Google Play or Appstore.

Minimise distractions from technology and other people.

Gather what you will need before starting, including course materials, notebook, charger, water, and snacks.

### TIP 2

#### Take notes to stay focused and engaged.

**Make sure that you take notes**, with as much detail as possible as if you were going to share them with someone who missed class.

**Decide the format for your notes:** Paper? iPad? Annotating a PowerPoint? As well as the style of note taking.

**Review your notes** within 24 hours to organise and check the accuracy of your summaries.

**Check if date and title of the lesson are jotted down.** Make sure key concepts are defined and that your summaries capture the essence of the day's lesson.

### TIP 3

#### Actively participate in class.

**Use focused attention** as if you were in class in-person.

**Ask questions during class** (in Chat or by voicing your questions, depending on your lecturer's preference) or write them down and email after class.

**Preview the content before class** and develop questions that you think will be answered during the class. Then during class, listen for the answers. You may pose a question to the lecturer or facilitators if you feel it has not been addressed.

**TIP  
4**

**Dig deeper into recorded lectures and readings.**

**Preview the lecture** or reading to get the big picture of the lesson.

**Go through the lecture/reading again**, this time take notes by writing out broad topics followed by supporting details of the topic and examples of concepts or problems/key issues.

**After each section, pause to write a brief summary of the section** and questions you have about the content. Go a step further and think of potential exam questions, then put the questions together to create your own practice test.

**TIP  
5**

**Stay in touch with your lecturer and classmates through the use of discussion boards or email. It is a great place to invite classmates to form a study group.**

**Attend online office hours** for clarification questions.

Allow at least 48 hours for lecturer/tutor to respond to emails.

# SMART TIPS

## Online study groups

Social distancing doesn't mean social isolation!  
But studying together online might be a challenge.  
Here are some tips to overcome the potential challenges:

### TIP 1

#### Get your group together.

Meet with 3-5 classmates who want to successfully participate in online learning.

Email your classmates on Blackboard to invite them to start a group.

Schedule recurring Zoom/BB Collaborate meetings and set reminders.

**Gather what you will need before starting, including course materials, notebook, pen or pencil, charger, water and snacks.**

### TIP 2

#### Agree on a study session format.

Discuss your group goals. Your goals must be aligned with the learning outcomes.

Decide how you will approach each study session (e.g., review study guide from course, use study questions in your textbook, or tutorials provided by your lecturer).

Discuss your group goals. Your goals must be aligned with the module's learning outcomes.

### TIP 3

#### Show up prepared.

Be familiar with course material before study session.

Identify difficult topics or questions you have about the content.

**Preview the content before class** and develop questions that you think will need answers during the class. Then during class, listen for the answers. You may pose a question to the lecturer or facilitator if you feel your question has not been addressed.

**TIP  
4**

**Stay organized and focused.**

This can be challenging, especially when they are your friends!

Identify a group leader to identify goals for each session and keep the study session moving toward those goals.

Assign a group member to monitor your commitment; keeps members on track; and ensures discipline is maintained at all times.

**TIP  
5**

**Take short breaks at scheduled intervals.**

Minimise distractions – put your phone on Do not Disturb/ Downtime and minimize irrelevant tabs and apps.

**TIP  
6**

**Review, review, review.**

Do a quick wrap-up at the end of the study session to recap.

Allow the last 10-15 minutes of the review session to address your progress toward your goals.

Take note of questions the group has for your lecturer, Teaching Assistant or Tutor.

# SMART TIPS

## Getting help from your lecturer

This may be a confusing time for everyone. But you can make the most out of it if you work together. It's ok to ask questions!

### TIP 1

#### Start with the Study Guide.

Even with recent changes, the study guide is still the best place to start, but also **check Blackboard for announcements** or your email for new versions or updates.

### TIP 2

#### Do your research.

**Before asking questions** of your lecturer, tutor or Teaching Assistant, go through your course material to try to find answers.

**Take notes** as you search so you can keep track of where you looked for help.

**Use outside reliable sources** (other textbooks, help videos like Khan Academy, etc.) for additional explanations.

### TIP 3

#### Ask questions respectfully.

When communicating with your lecturer, tutor, teaching assistant or fellow students, **always be respectful, courteous and polite**. Here are a few netiquette rules to observe:

**Be respectful** of others' views.

**Only share relevant experiences.**

**Build on discussions.**

**Write in clear full sentences**, do not use texting acronyms, not everyone will understand.

**Keep tone polite and conversational.**

**Remember, the current situation is very stressful.** We are all learning how to work remotely together, so we are able to learn from each other.

## TIP 4

### Be clear and specific.

**Make specific and short subject lines** to emails.

**Keep emails brief and easy to read.** If you have multiple questions, consider using a bulleted list or requesting an online meeting to ask your questions.

**Remember to include an actual question,** not just statements. Be clear about what you need.

**Always include your student number, the course and course number** when communicating with your lecturer. Your lecturer will receive many emails and you do not want your email to get lost. Alternatively communicate with your lecturer via blackboard.

## TIP 5

### Don't wait too long

**Start your assignments as soon as you get them** so you can ask questions well before the deadline.

**Allow at least 48 hours for professors to respond** to emails before following up.

## RELEVANT CONTACT DETAILS

### Student Learning Unit

Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development:

#### Mrs Jean Collins

Bellville

 collinsj@cput.ac.za

#### Ms Onele Tshaka

Cape Town Campus

 tshakao@cput.ac.za

# STUDENT LEARNING UNIT

The Student Learning Unit (SLU) key responsibilities are to provide academic support to students at CPUT

## Academic Literacy

- Facilitating academic literacies interventions in the faculties
- Facilitating workshops on “reading in the disciplines” for students and lecturers
- Engaging teaching and learning coordinators and curriculum officers
- Engaging “new” lecturers through the Teacher Development Programme (TDP).

## Mathematics Support

- Assist lecturers with mathematics

research and diagnostic support

- Mathematics Team Teaching

## Tutor development

- Provide trained tutors to assist lecturers with the facilitation of tutorials to undergraduate students

## Teaching Assistant Programme

- Teaching Assistants support lecturers by coordinating tutorial programmes, developing materials and providing general academic support to lecturers in faculties

## How we operate?

**Consultations**  
(one-on-one and group) and workshops

**10 week**  
academic literacy programme

**Discipline specific**  
support

**Research development**  
(proposal/report writing, etc)

## Writing Centre

- A liminal space where students go to access academic literacies and mathematics support
- Serves as a computer laboratory where lab assistants help the students with their academic needs.
- Learning facilitators and academic literacies lecturers provide reading and writing related support
- Mathematics learning facilitators and support lecturers assist students with the understanding of mathematics.

## Strategic Literacies

- Managing time effectively
- Developing effective study skills
- Decode/Understand the topic
- Paraphrasing and referencing

## Teaching Assistant Programme

- Facilitates the professional development of teaching assistants at a discipline-specific level
- Teaching Assistants assists and support a lecturer/ senior lecturer/head of programme/head of department
- Teaching Assistant works under the guidance of a lecturer/ senior lecturer/ head of programme/head of department to assist and support the lecturer to implement programmes and classes for that could include those requiring detailed and specialist knowledge in particular areas
- Teaching Assistant assists in the whole planning cycle and the management/ preparation of teaching and learning.

## Academic Literacies Development

### Academic literacies development aims to:

- Provide dialogic feedback on students' writing
- Empower students to engage critically with genres and content knowledge
- Capacitate students with research writing skills (i.e. proposal writing and argumentation)
- Enhance students' ability to develop proper paragraphs
- Mediate primary discourse (home) and secondary discourse (school/university)

## Peer Tutor Development

### Peer tutor development is an instructional strategy that focuses on student partnerships:

- Provide assistance to students within and across disciplines through academic support
- Offers an opportunity for students to teach and learn from each other
- Provide academic support to near peers.

## Mathematics Support/ Development

### This programme performs the following functions:

- Supporting student learning in mathematics
- Teaching and learning materials to enhance the understanding of mathematics
- Develop online mathematics learning material

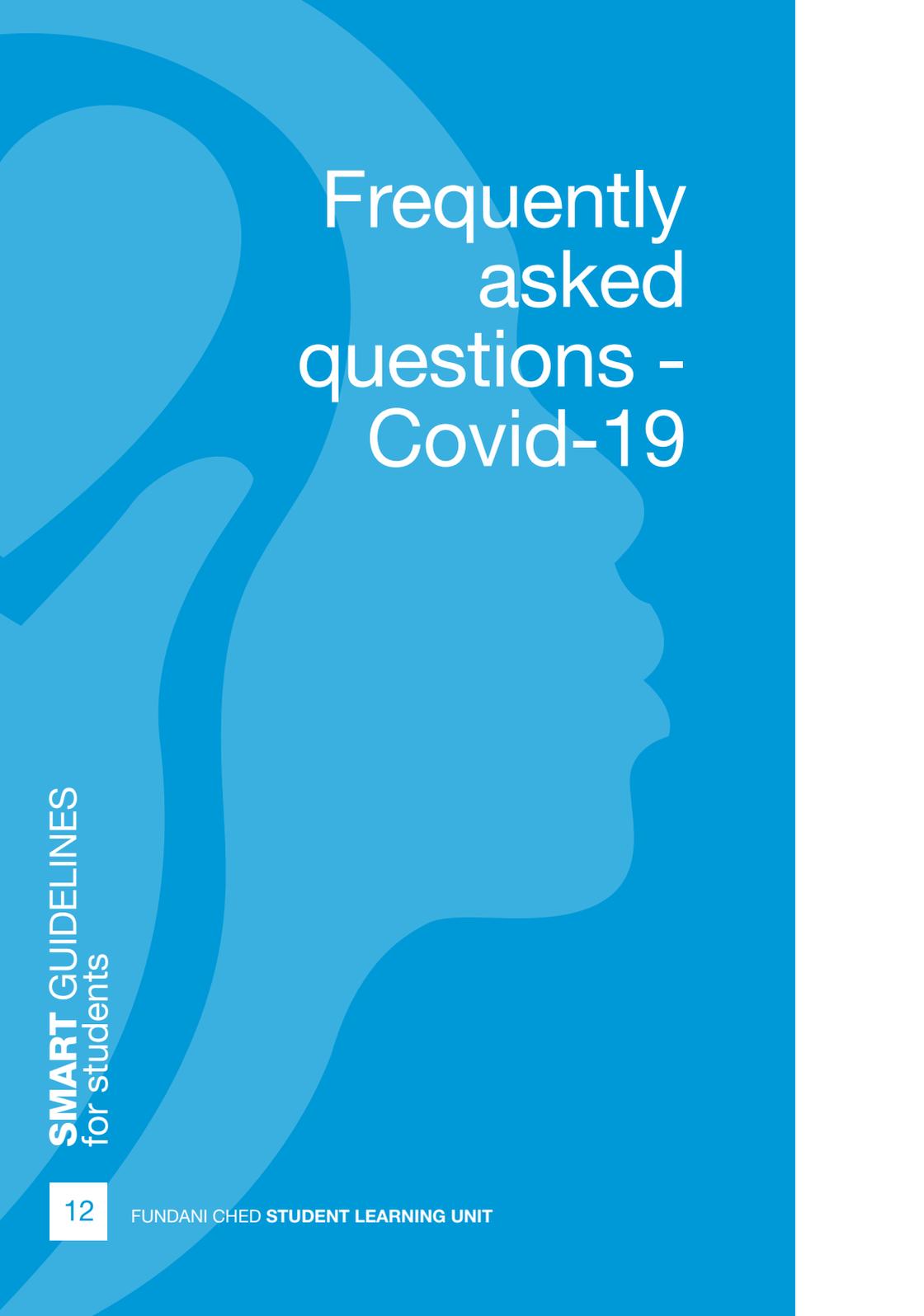
- Undertake research on mathematics teaching.

### Mathematics Support encompasses:

- Individual consultation
- Group consultation
- Self- study

### How to access our services

- Students have to book an appointment 24 working hours (3 days) in advance
- Lecturers and students can request workshops on specific topics
- Lecturers and students can contact the administrators for tutor training and teaching assistant training enrolment



# Frequently asked questions - Covid-19

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FUNDANI CHED STUDENT LEARNING UNIT

## ACADEMIC SURVIVAL KIT (ASK)

As the CPUT transitions to remote learning, supporting student success remains a priority. This FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) is intended to help students and staff access the academic support offered at the FUNDANI Student Learning Unit, as we transition to remote teaching and learning. As part of our effort to support you, anywhere, anytime, anyplace.

### Student Learning Support during COVID-19

#### Student Learning Unit on Blackboard and Blog

The Student Learning Unit has a Blackboard page. You can now register on this page to learn more about the work we do. We have updated our blog with all the relevant information.

#### What Academic Literacy Services are available during COVID-19?

All Academic Literacy programmes at Fundani: Student Learning are operating remotely during COVID-19 lockdown as of 1 June 2020. One on One; Group Consultations and Writing support are all being offered via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. Assignments may be submitted through Blackboard Assignment submission. Please self-enrol at Student Learning Unit on Blackboard. It is where you will find relevant information with regards to the academic support and how to access the Fundani/Writing Centre services. A BB Student Guide has been developed to help you navigate Blackboard.

#### I am studying for a Diploma/Advanced Diploma. Which Academic Literacy Services are available to me?

If you are a Diploma/Advanced Diploma student in need of an online consultation either as an individual or a group for writing in coursework, a CV, an important letter, a personal statement, or you need to submit an assignment, you have two options:

1. For online consultation, the Academic Literacy Sector offers online sessions via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 16:00 pm (depends on availability) To book a session please complete the online booking consultation form. For more information please contact Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.
2. If you an individual or a group and you need to submit an assignment requiring written feedback, this can be done via Blackboard. Please self-enrol at 2020\_SLU Student Learning Unit on Blackboard. Once enrolled, click on Academic Literacy - Assignment Submission. Submit the assignment under Individual Assignment or submit a Group Assignment.

## Student Learning Support during COVID-19

I heard that Fundani/ Writing Centre is offering a 10 weeks programme.

What does it entail?

Who is legible to do it?

What is the procedure for enrolment in it?

Ideally, the 10 weeks programme is an Academic Literacy programme which is offered over a period of 10 weeks (once a week for 6 months). It covers a number of important topics to assist students to acquire the requisite literacies, so as to function confidently and smart in their disciplines/courses. Topics covered are:

- What is academic literacy? (the science of writing in the academy),
- Topic analysis (decoding the language of the question)
- Study Skills (effective study methods, surface vs deep learners)
- Time Management (reviews and planners)
- Essay writing (stages of writing and essential features of academic essays)
- Paragraph formation (principles of argumentation)
- Referencing (in-text and end-of-text referencing)
- Report writing (lab and technical reports)
- Argumentative essay (newly added item for second year students)

Both the lecturer and student or a group of students can make a request for a 10 week programme. One is free to choose any topic from the list provided or suggest a relevant topic to assist students to succeed in their studies. Our aim is to empower students to be self-directed and self-regulated critical learners.

1. To enrol for the 10 week programme please contact Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.
2. You will be linked up with the Academic Literacy lecturers who will discuss and facilitate the chosen topic(s). What is crucial is that the topic must be tailored to suite your academic needs.

I am studying for a Diploma/ Advanced Diploma. Which Mathematics and Science Support Services are available to me?

If you are a **Diploma/Advanced Diploma student** in need of an **online consultation** either as an **individual or a group** for **Mathematics** and or other **Science Support** (depending on availability), you have two options:

1. If you are looking for mathematics support **an online consultation**, the Mathematics Sector offers online sessions via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 16:00 pm. To book a session please complete the online booking consultation form. For more information please contact Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.
2. If you are an individual or a group and you need to submit an assignment requiring written feedback, this can be done via Blackboard. Please self-enrol at 2020\_SLU Student Learning Unit on Blackboard. Once enrolled, click on Mathematics & Science- Assignment Submission. Submit the assignment under Individual Assignment or submit a Group Assignment.
3. Videos explaining certain mathematics topics & links of tutorial sessions on BB.

## Student Learning Support during COVID-19

I would like to become an online tutor, will training be available online?

**Yes, but there are several requirements before you can become a tutor. The following applies:**

1. A supervising lecturer has to recommend you to be eligible for tutor training.
2. Your lecturer will need to complete the tutor training enrolment form.
3. Student who are in the 2nd year of study and above are eligible.
4. You need to have obtained at least 60% pass to qualify.
5. You have to be a registered student – proof of registration is required.
6. You would need to have internet access to offer online tutor support.
7. You will need to complete the tutor training online.
8. Your lecturer will have to enrol you for tutor training. These forms can be requested from Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.
9. Your lecturer who has appointed you will have to give your authorisation to provide academic peer support remotely.
10. You will have to submit weekly reports to your lecturer to Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka

When will tutor training take place?

**Tutor training will continue through online remote learning.**

1. Tutor training is scheduled to take place online over two days.
2. A tutor training schedule will be sent to lecturers, broadcast via Newsflash and be announced via Blackboard – watch these spaces.
3. Tutor training will take place via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
4. At this stage tutor training will take place online – you will require access to a device and data to participate in training.
5. You will find more information about Tutor Training here

I would like to become an online teaching assistant, will training be available online?

**Yes, training will be offered online, but there are several qualifying criteria such as:**

1. Only Student at BTech; Masters or PhD/ DTech levels are eligible.
2. You have to be a registered student (proof of qualification required).
3. Students will have to complete TA training which will be offered online.
4. Students will need to have access to the internet.
5. Be authorised to work remotely by the lecturer and submit weekly reports.

## Student Learning Support during COVID-19

I am an **international student**. Which Student Learning Unit Services can I use?

1. If you are an international student and you still reside in the Time Zone in South Africa (GMT+2) you are welcome to use any of the Student Learning Unit's services as described above, based on your specific support needs.
2. If you are an international student whose time zone is more than a few hours different from Time Zone in South Africa (GMT+2) you are encouraged to submit your assignment online for written feedback--unless you are able to attend a Blackboard collaborate session during the hours of 9:00am -16:00pm.

I am a student with an **unreliable internet connection**. What are my options?

1. Students who do not have a reliable internet connection will be sent a printed Academic Survival Kit (ASK) with the necessary support materials to assist with remote learning.
2. If there are any further support that is required this will be reviewed on a case-by case basis.
3. Please feel free to contact Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.

## Student Learning Unit (SLU) Operational Hours

When is the SLU open?

SLU Staff are available Monday - Friday, 9:00 am – 16:00 pm (depending on availability).

1. The Assignment submissions: 5 days per week.
2. Submissions are assigned to consultants during working days, except public holidays and during the recess periods.
3. Feedback can be expected 3-5 days after date of submission, dependent on the volume of work.
4. Please ensure that your assignments are submitted well in advance of your subjects lecturer's submission date.
5. The assignments are to be submitted to Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka.

## Additional Information

I am a student who needs proof that I visited the Writing Centre. How can I do that?

1. Fundani/Writing Centre will provide a “digital consultation confirmation” upon request following your completed consultation.
2. Just ask your consultant. If you forget to ask the consultant, e-mail from Jean Collins or Onele Tshaka for assistance.

Who should I contact if I have questions about the Student Learning Unit?

For questions about Student Learning Unit please feel free to contact:

**Mrs Jean Collins**

 collinsj@cput.ac.za

**Ms Onele Tshaka**

 tshakao@cput.ac.za

I am an academic staff member, who should I contact about supporting my class?

Please contact the relevant staff member at the Student learning unit with regards to the support you need for your students.

We are here to help you.

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