



Interim Vice-Chancellor
Molotlegi Street, Ga-Rankuwa, 0208
Telephone: 012 521 4112 | **Fax:** 012 560 0274
Email: chris.debeer@smu.ac.za/erica.ehlers@smu.ac.za
PO BOX 203, MEDUNSA, 0204

PRESS RELEASE

STATUS AT SMU (11 OCTOBER 2016)

It is common cause that the University was closed on Monday 10 October 2016 to demonstrate our collective institutional commitment to and support of the campaign to achieve free quality education for the poor as soon as possible. The decision was taken after consultation with the Chairperson of the Council and with the support of the academic leadership, the student leadership and labour. The University also indicated its intention to resume normal activities on Tuesday 11 October 2016.

Both students and staff expressed their concern regarding the loss of academic time during the past two weeks and the negative impact thereof on the University's ability to meet accreditation prescripts and to complete the 2016 academic programme in good time.

Unfortunately, a small group of students decided to blockade the main entrance to the University and other access routes in breach of a court order. After refusal of repeated requests to the small group of students by the security and police to refrain from these activities, the police were left with no other option but to act in accordance with the court interdict. Regrettably, about eight students were reportedly arrested. In addition to the police's intervention, the University has decided to also act in accordance with its internal procedures in an effort to stabilise the institution.

The management wishes to place on record that it has repeatedly engaged the student body including this particular group of students on the respective demands related to internal matters and responded comprehensively to those demands. As far as the national campaign for free education is concerned, we believe the University has shown its support for this campaign over time and by closing the University on Monday 10th October, 2016 in solidarity therewith.

The management therefore see no reason for the obstructive activities which occurred on the morning of Tuesday 11th October 2016.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the management remain committed to engaging student representatives on any of the above matters and on finding a way forward. The University remains committed to working with stakeholders with a view to concluding the 2016 academic year without further interruptions and in the interest of the broader student community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris de Beer'.

PROF CHRIS DE BEER
INTERIM VICE-CHANCELLOR
DATE: 11 OCTOBER 2016 (For further information contact Mr Matlala at cell 0828892533)