

Teaching and learning in the new norm

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Online learning has fantastic benefits for learners and educators. **On 5 October** each year, we celebrate World Teachers Day. Being an education provider ourselves, we witness the sweat and tears that teaching staff invest in their students daily. The passion for empowering and the vision to see students succeed beyond the classroom is what our educators strive for.



Mfundo Radebe is a seasoned and passionate educator at IIE Rosebank College. He is a dedicated and bubbly individual who believes in using traditional and new age teaching methods to get through the curriculum. His love for life influences how he prepares his students for the world of work. Mfundo outlines his journey below.

How have you adapted to online lecturing?

I am a young lecturer who has been using Blackboard as a teaching and learning resource over the years. I use RC Learn to upload PowerPoint slides, videos, and to attend to student queries. IIE Rosebank College uses RC Learn, a Blackboard based Learning Management System, to teach, engage and collaborate with students.

How do you keep students engaged?

It is essential to keep classes short; fifty minutes is enough time to engage with students online. To keep students engaged, I use a combination of PowerPoint slides, case studies and videos.

I believe in young minds taking control and ownership of their studies. I allow students to make their voice heard by asking for their feedback on the learning experience and content. Feedback is excellent to enhance teaching and to find the most relevant resources for students.

What has been the biggest challenge with online lecturing?

Class attendance can be a challenge due to limited infrastructure in some areas and the cost of data. Students may not have smartphones, computers, or laptops, making it challenging to complete assessments on time or attend classes online. These resources are available on all campuses under normal circumstances. Reach becomes an issue; when you have an anomaly such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where all teaching and learning is online. To overcome this, RC Learn has an option for students to download the content while online and use while offline.

What opportunities does online learning provide students?

Online learning is preparing our students for the new world of work or entrepreneurship. If you look at the communications and marketing industry, particularly public relations, journalism and advertising, digital resources are the norm when executing briefs for clients. We believe that Online learning and some traditional methods are a recipe for success.

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