

Issued: 8 September 2020

RE: Virtual Graduation 2020

Dear fellow students,

The SRC has learnt with great shock of the virtual graduation ceremony that was supposedly held by Rhodes University. We are deeply disappointed by the fact that students who worked extremely hard and were waiting for this moment all year long were not even notified of the ceremony via email. Graduation is an extremely important moment for every graduate, especially those graduates who are the first in their families to obtain a tertiary qualification and for those who were graduating for the first time.

The SRC is disappointed that graduates and the SRC were not notified that the university intended to publicise the virtual graduation today. As much as we understand that operations are different now due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we firmly believe that graduates should have been at least notified of such an important event well in advance. It would have been courteous of the university to inform the graduands of the progress of their plans with regards to the graduation ceremony in addition to issuing a formal invitation with a set date.

The SRC would like to put it on record that the SRC President was requested to send a two-minute video about three months ago with a congratulatory message to the graduates, and to date, details of the virtual graduation have not been communicated to the SRC.

The SRC demands the following from the university management:

1. A public apology to all students, graduands, their families, guardians and funders for not notifying us of the virtual graduation ceremony and for publicizing the video without our knowledge.

2. Set a specific date for the virtual graduation ceremony, promote it accordingly, and publicize a live stream of the event on all social media platforms.

Although the virtual graduation video was enjoyable, we believe that the lack of promotion ahead of the event did not uphold the seriousness and the formality of a graduation ceremony. We truly hope the university will take immediate action to do right by the Class of 2020.

Yours in leadership

Rhodes SRC

