

# Northlink College launches "The Link Show"- livestream

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Northlink College recently launched its first online talk show called "**The Link Show**", broadcasted live via the college's social media channels, Facebook and YouTube. The show launched in collaboration with Nickay Productions and was broadcast and streamed live every Thursday at midday during August. This provided Northlink with the opportunity to utilise this platform to celebrate TVET Month as per the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) annual calendar.



*The Link Show* formed part of the college's new adaptive strategy "Excelling in the new normal", which delineate college staff and students' resilience amidst the most challenging health crisis facing the world in our lifetime, the Covid-19 pandemic. Presenters, Rhoda Stoffels-Hoffmeester (Director: Nickay Productions) and Dugald Pieterse (co-host) facilitated informative sessions, thus creating a link between the college and its current and potential stakeholders.

The show highlighted frequently asked questions, relating to the college's diverse course offerings, student support services, student health, safety and course funding (NSFAS), application process and much more. Among those featured were the college alumni, business partners participating in the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Programme, lectures in the various study fields, programme managers, officers as well as the college's professional nurse. All these participants shared valuable

insights about their areas of speciality within the college which was well received by the audience, who were also able to engage live via Facebook.

The TVET Month concept was launched in 2014, by the Deputy Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Buti Manamela who declared August as TVET Month. The purpose of TVET month is to reposition TVET colleges in the minds of prospective students who still regard TVET college programmes as inferior to that of a university. Hence, the entire month of August is dedicated to advocating career pathing opportunities available in public TVET colleges. Under normal circumstances, Northlink would celebrate this annual event by rallying together all its seven campuses, in a hive of activities to strengthen the college's message. Such a message would be designed to target the students, youth and adults aspiring to study at Northlink College. However, this year was different, owing to the prevailing Covid-19 challenges. As it is known, with the pandemic came travel restrictions among other challenges, leading to new ways of doing things. The government risk-adjusted strategy in response to the pandemic saw Northlink College embrace a virtual presence and adopting virtual channels. The adoption of the online platforms meant that the college's message could reach its target audience of current and prospective students in their comfort zones, requiring less logistical resources, at a fraction of the normal travelling cost.

Reviewing the participation levels to **The Link Show**, one can substantively argue that the show was indeed a resounding success. Since the talk show came on air, the viewers and subscribers to the college's virtual channels have increased significantly. This included the increment in the frequency of questions that are received on the college's WhatsApp channel, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. A week after the last episode, college staff continue to receive enquiries from current and prospective students who need further assistance on application due dates, course entry requirements, and registration. The college's hard-working staff have, since the inception of the show, been inundated with queries from interested individuals seeking more information on the college offering and course fees. These queries include questions

emanating from daily work-ins from parents and prospective students.

With Covid-19 protocols strictly enforced, including mandatory masking, screening and sanitisation, in all of the college campuses, walk-ins are assisted in a compliant and safe environment.

As part of the college's student-focused programmes, it also celebrated Women's Month and rolled out a gender-based violence (GBV) awareness campaign, assisting women to hone self-defence skills. TVET month (August) coincide with the month dedicated to women in South Africa, which marks the triumph of women on 9 August 1956 and the continued fight against women's inequality and ill-treatment. As is the norm, this year the college was once again involved in programmes aimed at improving women's lives. True to form and the college's transformative agenda, **The Link Show** had a majority of women academics being interviewed and other entrepreneurs (college alumni), who now run successful businesses.

As a progressive institution, Northlink College also dedicates much of its time to research and seeking integrated and innovative ways of engaging students. This is so that the college can provide an environment that is interactive and responsive to student's current needs.

Should you wish to be part of the Northlink College community, and you want to first enquire about the college offerings for yourself or your child, please visit our website at <https://www.northlink.co.za/> or call us on (021) 970 9000.

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