



Coronavirus Update

TUESDAY 2 JUNE, 2020

Dear colleagues

This is an important update for staff on the staged transition to on-campus operations. It outlines the actions Federation is planning and implementing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for the next three months.

Easing of restrictions

The Victorian Government is now implementing its [plan to ease restrictions in Victoria](#), which includes allowing gatherings of up to 20 people in your home (including your own household) and outdoors but with 1.5m physical distancing, holiday travel within Australia, a staged return to primary and secondary schools, restricted reopening of cafes, restaurants, pools and outdoor gyms, and testing for people with even the mildest symptoms.

Despite the gradual easing of restrictions, the Victorian Government advice is clear: **if you can work from home, you must work from home**. This reduces the potential for COVID-19 to be spread in workplaces and on public transport.

For our staff and students in Brisbane, the [roadmap to ease restrictions in Queensland](#) includes gatherings of up to 20 visitors in your home or outdoors, unlimited travel and overnight stays allowed, the restricted reopening of pools, cafes and restaurants, and a staged return to school for primary and secondary students.

Oversight of COVID-19 university operations

Federation University has established a decision-making body, the 'COVID-19 Transition Control Group', to ensure our pathway forward to on-campus operations is safe and follows government health and safety requirements.

The COVID-19 Transition Control Group oversees two workstreams:

- **Academic Workstream** – chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) working directly with Deans and school leadership to identify the order of priority for students gradually transitioning to on-campus activities, and to determine how we continue with online and blended educational delivery
- **Corporate Workstream** – chaired by the Director of Human Resources working

with leaders of our professional service areas, such as HR, Facilities, ITS, Health Risk and Safety, and Corporate Communications, to determine which professional and general staff are needed to be on campus to support our students' transition.

Our first priority is giving students who need to attend campus to complete practical work and research, the opportunity to do so.

Timetable for transition to on-campus operations

The current State government advice is clear: anyone who can work from home, must work from home, until the end of June and likely beyond.

The university will move through the transition to campus methodically and in blocks of time to ensure that we can adapt to government and occupational health and safety requirements.

Moving carefully allows us to apply any lessons we learn on the journey to on-campus operations, so we can pause and adapt to minimise any potential risk or exposure to COVID-19.

First block – 1 June to 17 July

The first block in the transition plan is 1 June to 17 July, which brings us to the mid-year break. Deans and school leaders are identifying cohorts of students who need to attend campus for defined activities before 17 July.

However, these student cohorts are being further managed on a weekly basis, to determine which defined activities will occur each week. This will minimise the number of activities, staff and students on campus at any one time.

Students who are returning in this first block include:

- students who need to complete practicals and labs in order to undertake placements
- research students who need to finish off projects, and
- some postgraduate students needing to complete a short laboratory project to complete their degrees.

Any staff and students being invited to attend activities on campus will be contacted directly. Those staff members will receive an email with the *Induction – transitioning back to campus module* and must also complete the [return to campus form](#).

Second block – 17 July to mid-August

This covers the start of semester two on Monday 27 July.

Semester two will continue with online delivery of our courses, but with the gradual reintroduction of small classes (10 – 15 students), practicals and labs.

How we continue in semester two will follow government health and safety advice at the time, so the precautions we take now will have a major impact on the ongoing lifting of restrictions.

Deans and school leaders will start work in the coming weeks to review their student cohorts to determine who should be on campus.

Plans for on campus activities beyond mid-August will be announced following the meeting of the Control Group on 14 July.

Facilities reopening

Cafes and food outlets continue to provide takeaway food at Mt Helen (10:00am – 1:00pm) and Gippsland (10:00am – 1:30pm) but Berwick remains closed for the time being.

Library services and activities are being fully delivered via online channels. There are some [on-campus learning spaces](#) at our campuses, where students can use university computers and Wi-Fi, but bookings are essential as numbers are limited.

The UniSports pool at Mt Helen will reopen to members and the community on Monday 1 June from 7:00am, but pre-bookings through the '[FedMoves](#)' app are essential. The gym will remain closed until 22 June, with memberships suspended.

In accordance with the Victorian Government and Life Saving Victoria guidelines, the following conditions will apply:

- A maximum of 20 swimmers are allowed in the pool area at one time
- A maximum of three swimmers per lane
- Social distancing of 1.5 metres must be maintained at all times
- Change rooms and showers facilities will be unavailable
- Toilets are available on the pool deck
- Appropriate swimming attire is to be worn
- If you are unwell, please do not visit the centre.

COVIDSafe Plan

In accordance with the Commonwealth government's [3-step framework for a COVIDSafe Australia](#), Federation University has developed its own [COVIDSafe Plan](#). This plan is based on guidelines from Universities Australia and directives from the federal and state governments.

All Deans and Directors have now received this. It outlines comprehensive information about the requirements that apply now and until further notice to any university activity conducted on campus or face-to-face. Please read this document if you would like further information.

The safety of our staff and students is paramount. Across all campuses we are conducting concentrated deep cleaning, increased touch-point cleaning, and we are increasing the availability of cleaning supplies and hand sanitisers.

If you must attend campus

There are only a limited number of staff who are currently approved to be on campus.

If you believe you have a particular need to be on campus, this must be discussed with your Dean or Director who will forward the request to the recruitment and resources committee for approval. If you need to visit campus for a one-off activity, you must notify Security so appropriate touch-point cleaning can be conducted after you leave. Call Security on:

- Ballarat campuses - 5327 6333

- Berwick Campus - 5122 8555
- Gippsland Campus - 5122 6662
- Wimmera Campus - 5382 0560 or 0417 820 560

Accessing staff support

HR support

COVID-19 hotline – (03) 5122 6300 between 8.30am–5.00pm to speak to HR about questions related to working arrangements due to the pandemic.

Manager Support Line – (03) 5327 9530 from 8.30am – 5.00pm or email manager.hrsupport@federation.edu.au for advice on the changed working conditions.

ITS support

Off campus - (03) 5327 9999 between 8.30am–5.00pm weekdays or use the online service portal.

On campus – for onsite assistance call 8888 or use the online service portal.

The ITS team has also established a [page with ITS advice for staff and students](#) on working from home. Please check this page regularly for answers to common IT issues.

Updates on Federation's COVID-19 response

Please check our [COVID-19 webpage](#) for regular updates and advice for staff and students. This includes HR toolkits and forms.

On behalf of the COVID-19 Transition Control Group

