Federation University FAQ – Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Updated 2 March 2020

ADVICE FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

Purpose
These FAQs and key points articulate Federation University Australia’s position and response to the outbreak of coronavirus COVID-19 and will be used as a basis to prepare a range of communications for staff, students and media, including website content, messages and social media posts. This document will be updated in line with new advice from the relevant authorities, including the Australian Government’s Department of Health, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Border Force, and the World Health Organisation.

The Australian Government has different travel requirements for foreign nationals – for instance, students and staff who are on study or work visas – rather than Australian citizens and permanent residents. These requirements are outlined below.

If you are a student at any of our on-shore or off-shore partner providers, including Academies Australasia Polytechnic (AAP), Australian Technical and Management College (ATMC), Melbourne Institute of Technology (MIT), or the International Institute of Business and Information Technology (IIBIT), this advice is provided for information purposes and you should follow the local advice at your institution.

Today’s changes
As of 2 March 2020 we have updated:

- Travel bans for foreign nationals travelling through mainland China have been increased by a week from Saturday, meaning all non-Australian residents – including tourists and students travelling from China – will not be able to enter Australia until at least 7 March.
- Foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) who are in Iran on or after 1 March, 2020, will not be allowed to enter Australia for 14 days, from the time they have left or transited through Iran.
- More information can be found on the Border Force website www.abf.gov.au
What is the coronavirus / COVID-19?

There is a new coronavirus strain, first reported in the Hubei Province of China. The coronavirus can spread from person-to-person. There have been cases of coronavirus reported in some other countries, including Australia.

Coronaviruses are a large and diverse family of viruses that can cause mild to severe illness in humans. Coronavirus has been named COVID-19 by the World Health Organisation.

In this document, we will use the word “coronavirus” to refer to COVID-19.

What are the symptoms of coronavirus?

Symptoms include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, and shortness of breath. Difficulty in breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show after a person has been infected.
**Government travel advice**

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) travel recommendation is do not travel to China or Iran due to the increased risk of contracting coronavirus.

In addition, travel restrictions have been imposed by the Chinese government across China and these may be extended at short notice without warning.

**On 29 February 2020, the Australian Government, extended existing travel restrictions to include Iran. All travel restrictions will be reviewed again before 6 March, 2020.**

The Australian Government considers the following countries to be at higher risk for COVID-19:

- China
- Iran
- Italy
- South Korea.

If you are returning from these countries, you need to monitor your health for 14 days. If you are returning from mainland China or Iran you should self-isolate for 14 days.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has raised the level of advice for:

- Italy (several regions, including Lombardia and Veneto)
- Iran
- Japan
- South Korea (Daegu and Cheongdo)
- Mongolia.

This travel advice is being reviewed by DFAT regularly and will be updated you when it changes. Australians travelling overseas are encouraged to regularly review the Smartraveller website.

In line with this recommendation the university will not be approve any international travel for staff and students at this time.
What do I do if I have travelled through mainland China or Iran?

- Any foreign nationals, travelling through mainland China or Iran to Australia will not be allowed entry into Australia.
- This advice will be reviewed by the Australian Government on or before 6 March, 2020.
- With this in mind, we recommend that any staff or students in this situation delay their travel until after 7 March, 2020.

We will welcome back any staff and students in this situation, as soon as they are able to come back to Australia.

What do I do if I suspect I may have coronavirus?

Staff and students with symptoms should not attend Federation University until they are assessed by their primary care provider. The primary care provider will liaise with the public health authorities to determine when it is safe for them to return to university or vocational education.

If you develop mild symptoms:
- Isolate yourself from other people.
- Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
  - If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.
- Call a doctor or hospital and tell them your recent travel history, and
- When you get to the doctor’s clinic or hospital, tell them again of your recent travel history.

If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty in breathing:
- Call 000 and ask for an ambulance immediately and notify the officers of your recent travel history.
Students and staff complying with these guidelines will not be penalised for non-attendance.

What do I do if a family member or someone I live with has travelled through China or Iran and is required to self-isolate?

If a family member or someone you live with has travelled through China or Iran and is required to self-isolate at home, we recommend that you also self-isolate for 14 days.

You should also follow the above guidelines if you develop symptoms of coronavirus while in isolation.

What do I do if a family member or someone I live with has coronavirus?

If a family member or someone you live with has coronavirus, you must also self-isolate for 14 days, in line with public health guidelines.

You should also follow the above guidelines if you develop symptoms of coronavirus while in isolation.

How do I reduce the risk of contracting coronavirus?

The easiest way to protect yourself is to pay attention to good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with a tissue, or cough into your elbow, dispose of the tissue into a bin and then wash your hands Afterwards. Wash your hands regularly, after using the toilet and before eating.

If you have concerns about your health, please see your doctor.

While travelling anywhere overseas and upon returning home, it is important to practice hygiene and self-protection measures for acute respiratory infections by:

- Regularly washing hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub and avoid touching your face and mouth after touching surfaces.
- Covering your mouth while coughing or sneezing with a tissue or flexed elbow, and
- Avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illnesses such as coughing and sneezing.

**Do I need to wear a facemask?**

Health authorities do not recommend facemasks for use by members of the public for the prevention of infections like coronavirus.

However, if you suspect you have been exposed to someone with coronavirus or are showing symptoms, you may be advised by your health practitioner to wear a mask to limit spread of the virus.

**I am a student and I am feeling concerned about coronavirus?**

Any student or staff member that may have been to mainland China after 1 February 2020 or in Iran after 1 March, will have been required to serve the Australian Government’s 14 day self-isolation requirements, and following that will be allowed to return to their normal daily lives, including being present on campus.

If you are feeling anxious or distressed, students can talk with a Federation University counsellor. Make an appointment by calling (Ballarat and Wimmera) (03) 5327 9470, (Berwick and Churchill) (03) 5122 6425. Alternatively, call (03) 5122 6425 to arrange a phone appointment.

**I live in student accommodation and have recently travelled in China or believe I may have been exposed to coronavirus. What should I do?**

Contact FedLiving immediately. If you believe you are developing symptoms of coronavirus you should seek medical attention and phone ahead to the GP or hospital so appropriate infection control precautions can be undertaken.
Federation University will take direction from the local medical authorities and will follow the established coronavirus reporting framework. This may include isolating and transporting any patients with symptoms to a medical facility.

I plan to live in a Federation University residence, what actions are in place to address my concerns about coronavirus?

FedLiving will be in contact with all students arriving at residences in order to understand their individual circumstances and recent travel history. If there are any concerns regarding a student being exposed to coronavirus, public health contacts will be made, and the situation managed according to medical advice.

What does isolate in your home mean?

People who must be isolated should not attend public places, in particular work, school, childcare or public areas of university and higher education campuses for example attending lectures.

Only people who usually reside in their home or other place of residence should be permitted on the premises. Do not allow visitors into the home or residence.

There is no need to wear masks in the home or residence. Where possible, get others such as friends or family, who are not required to be isolated to get food or other necessities for you.

Will there be any changes to Federation University or TAFE classes?

At this stage, regular classes and activities are planned to continue as normal.

Students are asked to self-exclude from classes or activities if they feel unwell or are experiencing symptoms.

They will not be penalised.
I am impacted by coronavirus what should I do? For example:

- What do I do if I cannot make it to campus in time for the commencement of classes?
- I can’t get a visa to travel, should I defer this semester?

There are a number of options. Support may be offered in terms of special consideration, later starting dates or deferral of your studies for impacted students.

Students who are unable to attend classes due to the impacts of coronavirus are asked to call Student HQ to discuss their individual circumstances.

Will coronavirus affect Federation University exams?

At present all Federation University exams will continue as scheduled.

As this is an evolving situation, if any exams need to be deferred, students will be provided a minimum of 14 calendar days’ prior notice before the date of their rescheduled exam.

If you require Special Consideration or a deferred examination as a result of contracting or being exposed to coronavirus please follow the University or TAFE process for special consideration and deferred examinations.

Federation University Staff

Staff are expected to undertake regular duties unless they have:

- travelled through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020; or
- travelled through Iran after March 1, 2020
- been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus

In these instances you must isolate yourself for 14 days after leaving China or Iran, or 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case.
If staff members feel stressed or anxious about the situation, please discuss your personal health circumstances with a medical professional, and if required discuss with your supervisor.

Staff attending classes will be asked to self-exclude from classes if they feel unwell or are experiencing symptoms. They will not be penalised.

Staff unable to come to work because of these guidelines may be eligible for isolation leave entitlements as per the EBA. For more information about how to access this leave contact your line manager or HR Business Partner.

**Key Contacts**

**Student HQ**
**Phone:** 1800 FED UNI (1800 333 864) Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm (AEST)
**Email:** info@federation.edu.au
**Outside Australia:** +61 3 53279018

FedLiving
**Email:** fedliving@federation.edu.au

FedLiving, Ballarat
**Phone:** +61 3 5327 9480

FedLiving, Gippsland
**Phone:** +61 3 5122 6236

FedLiving, Berwick
**Phone:** +61 3 5122 6071

**Residential after-hours support**
**Phone:** 1800 333 732 (residential students only)
You can access up-to-date information about coronavirus though the links below:

- **Smartraveller travel advice**
  www.smartraveller.gov.au

- **Department of Health update**
  www.health.gov.au

- **Q&A on coronaviruses, World Health Organisation**
  www.who.int

- **Victorian Department of Health and Human Services**
  www.dhhs.vic.gov.au

- **Australian Border Force travel restrictions advice**
  www.abf.gov.au