



Coronavirus Update

TUESDAY 16 JUNE, 2020

Dear colleagues

The following update from the COVID-19 Transition Control Group provides important information for staff on the staged transition to on-campus operations. This is designed to ensure that our pathway forward to on-campus operations is safe and in line with government health and safety requirements.

Latest Victorian Government announcements

The Victorian Government yesterday confirmed that further restrictions would be eased from 22 June because of the progress made in suppressing COVID-19 across the state. The eased restrictions include the reopening of libraries and community centres to up to 50 people, gyms and indoor sports centres to up to 20 people, up to 50 seated patrons at cafes and restaurants, and the return of local sporting competition.

But the message was clear, working from home continues where possible.

Before you come onto campus

The first and most important rule is do not come onto campus if you are sick.

There are only a few circumstances where you should be on campus:

- Your Dean or Director has consulted with you about transitioning back to support a specific activity for our students
- You are approved by the Recruitment and Resources Committee to do your work on campus, or
- A one-off visit to pick something up from your office/do some printing etc.

If you are transitioning to campus for more than just a one-off activity, you must complete the training module *COVID-19 Induction – transitioning back to campus* which will be emailed to you directly and the [Transition to campus form](#).

This information is crucial as we will progressively have more people on campus, to ensure you know how to protect yourself and others. We must also be assured that we have the appropriate university resources and procedures in place to protect you. It is also critical that we know who is on campus on any date. These induction activities should only take around 20 – 30 minutes to complete. We are closely monitoring who is

completing the module and will work with any areas that need support in getting staff up to speed.

If your return to campus is a one-off event, you must notify Security so that 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.

Please also consider downloading the [COVIDSafe app](#), which speeds up contact tracing of people exposed to COVID-19. COVIDSafe recognises other devices with the app installed and is Bluetooth enabled. When the app recognises another user, it notes the date, time, distance and duration of the contact and the other user's reference code. The app does not connect your location. You can find more detailed information about [how it works here](#).

Supporting staff in high risk categories

There are a small number of staff who through no fault of their own, are at greater risk of more serious illness from COVID-19 than the general population. Safe Work Australia identifies these groups as follows:

- People 65 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 70 years and older
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions, and
- People with compromised immune systems.

We are working with Deans, Directors and individual staff members to identify those people in these groups, and to undertake individual risk assessments about their involvement in on-campus operations, to make sure we protect their health and safety.

If you have any concerns about your own health, please speak to your Dean or Director as a starting point or please contact the HR hotline (details below).

Groups on campus this week

In line with advice from the Victorian Government, the majority of our staff must continue to work from home. Your Deans and Directors will consult with you before any consideration is given to whether or not you need to come onto campus. This ensures that you are involved in risk assessment and prevention.

A number of students, researchers and staff have been informed directly that they are approved to work on campus on specific practical and research work.

Disciplines such as health, nursing and research at Gippsland will be involved in on-campus activities this week.

TAFE

TAFE is providing an example of how to effectively continue with face-to-face teaching while meeting physical distancing requirements. Limited face-to-face teaching has continued since late April for courses that are critical to local industries and employment including plumbing, electrical, carpentry, automotive, bakery training, cookery, engineering and construction. As the university plans operations for semester two, it will be looking at how TAFE has managed its on-campus operations and aligned these with government health and safety recommendations.

Federation College and the Ballarat Tech School are returning this fortnight, in line with all primary and secondary school students going back to school. Our prisons programs at Langi Kal Kal and Hopkins Correctional Centre have also resumed.

Timetabling for Semester 2

Work is underway by the Transition Control Group's Academic Workstream to start planning for greater numbers of students and staff to return to campus in Semester 2.

It is important to stress that online teaching and working from home for many staff will continue to be a feature of our work in Semester 2. We have learned much about online teaching in the last few months and it is important that we use the lessons learned to move towards a more flexible and blended form of teaching in the future. This new model will involve a greater degree of online delivery together with predominantly small group classes on campus – capturing the best of online and face-to-face teaching. This move will begin in Semester 2 as we transition more students to small group teaching on campus but keep online teaching in place to replace large scale lectures and classes.

In Semester 2 we are considering the following principles:

- Identifying certain student groups to undertake more on-campus learning such as first year and international students
- Other student groups will remain predominantly in online teaching mode, but with the gradual re-introduction of more on-campus teaching during Semester 2.
- Ensuring that class sizes are small and comply with social distancing restrictions
- Allowing sufficient time for cleaning between room changeover to ensure good hygiene
- Relatively less frequent attendance on campus for staff and students
- Resumption of most research activities.

As plans for Semester 2 are finalised, they will form part of our 14 July update on how we progressively transition students and staff in Semester 2.

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 updated content and answers to common IT issues.

Read Federation University's [COVIDSafe Plan](#) here.

[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

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