

Subject: Coronavirus Update
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Coronavirus Update

Wednesday 22 September 2021

Dear colleagues,

The Victorian Government has announced that lockdown restrictions will be lifted in Ballarat from 11.59pm on Wednesday 22 September.

Our Ballarat campus will reopen on Tuesday 28 September under the same regional Victorian restrictions as our Gippsland and Wimmera campuses, which remain open for up to 25 per cent of staff and approved student activity.

This means there is limited on-campus activity and learning will remain remote except for practicals and laboratory classes for certain groups of students in accordance with the Victorian Government [COVIDSafe Settings](#). Please read the detailed advice for regional Victorian campuses below.

Lockdown restrictions are unchanged for Melbourne and our **Berwick Campus remains closed**, aside from limited authorised activity for staff and students with an approved work or study permit, as per the current arrangements.

Brisbane Campus remains open and is unaffected by the Victorian restrictions.

Regional Victoria restrictions and impact on Ballarat, Gippsland and Wimmera operations

- **Higher education, TAFE and HDR studies continue online, aside from limited practical on-campus activities, aligned to the authorised worker list.**
 - Staff and students will be contacted directly if applicable to them. HDR candidates should continue working from home and seek guidance from their supervisory team and/or their School HDR coordinator.
 - Authorised worker / student permits are required for staff and students travelling from or to Melbourne metropolitan areas for authorised work or study (permit application process below). Permits are not required for staff and students living and working or studying in regional Victoria.

- Placements in regional Victoria for regional residents only depend on workplace arrangements for employers. All onsite placements involving Melbourne metropolitan area residents or businesses located in metro Melbourne are by permit only, aligned to the authorised worker list.
- **25 per cent of regional Victorian office staff can return to regional campuses.** Deans and Directors will start discussions with professional, academic and general staff on who can return, with priority given to staff who cannot effectively perform their job from home or whose work is essential for supporting students on campus.
- **VCAL and Ballarat Tech School** – resume on campus from Tuesday 28 September.
- **Libraries, retail, hospitality, fitness centres, pools and community sport** – reopen but with limits in place.
- **Childcare** – open for regional Victorian children
- **Childcare workers and school teachers COVID test requirements** – any childcare workers and school teachers (or students in these placements), who travel from Melbourne metro areas to regional Victoria to work, must get twice-weekly PCR tests, as well as authorised work permits. The Victorian Government has also announced that all Victorian childcare workers and school teachers **must be fully vaccinated by 29 November**. Students and staff who fall under this requirement will be contacted directly about this in coming weeks.

You can find full information on restrictions at www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au or www.covid19.qld.gov.au. We highly recommend that you also check the full list of Victorian exposure sites regularly at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/exposure-sites.

Federation COVID-19 hotline details

- Please let us know immediately if you are confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 by calling our hotline on **(03) 5122 6300** (8:30am to 5:00pm). After hours, if you return a positive COVID-19 test, please contact our emergency phone number 1800 333 732 so we can put in place cleaning and isolation measures.

Check public exposure sites daily

The list of COVID-19 public exposure sites in Victoria is expected to grow as contact tracers work with people who have tested positive.

We highly recommend that you check the full list of Victorian exposure sites each day at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/exposure-sites.

Brisbane staff can find information at covid-19.qld.gov.au [Contract tracing \(exposure sites\)](#).

Health and wellbeing support

We strongly encourage you to look at the [Health and wellbeing](#) page if you need some extra support or even just a mental break through the day.

You can also find links to the Employee Assistance Program, which offers staff access to free, confidential counselling services 24/7. You can access support via the link above, or phone 1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327) or 03 8681 2444. HDR students who are also staff should refer to [counselling services](#) instead.

Vaccination

We strongly encourage staff and students to get the COVID-19 vaccination as the best way to protect themselves, their loved ones and their communities from the virus. You can book a vaccination through a state government run clinic or via your GP or pharmacist. For links to vaccination information visit:

- In Victoria '[Book your vaccine appointment](#)'
- In Queensland '[Protect yourself and others](#)'.

Stay safe and stay well.

On behalf of the COVID-19 Transition Control Group

