



Coronavirus Update

MONDAY 13 JULY, 2020

Dear colleagues

The COVID-19 Transition Control Group is pleased to be able to share with you today Federation University Australia's proposed *Three-stage plan for a safe start on campus*.

COVID-19 impact

The growth in locally acquired COVID-19 cases and community transmission across metropolitan Melbourne has caused Federation University and all Victorian universities to pause and adapt their plans to transition to on campus activities. While many of our campuses are in regional Victoria, the actions we all take to limit our movement outside of our homes and locales, has a collective impact on limiting the spread of COVID-19.

While the Transition Control Group had initially hoped to see the gradual return of more staff and students to campus at the start of semester two, this plan has since been adjusted to take into account local conditions and the latest Victorian Government advice.

Brisbane staff, please note that we are working through the plan for our Queensland campus and expect to share this with you soon.

Three-stage plan for a safe start on campus

Federation University Australia can now share with you our proposed *Three-stage plan for a safe start on campus*.

We are currently in stage one of the plan and present the proposed stage two and three plans for feedback from staff. This plan is being reviewed regularly. Feedback can be submitted until COB Friday 24 July 2020 to feedback@federation.edu.au

The attached document provides an overview of the principles and approach for our transition to on campus activities, and the extended detailed timeline, that we know our staff are keen to understand.

Stage one – current until mid-semester two

Stage one is characterised by working from home, online study, limited practical and skills-based teaching activity in certain disciplines on campus and limited research laboratory work based on Transition Control Group approval of activities following detailed risk assessment.

It is vital that the risk mitigation activities identified in these risk assessments are implemented to keep all staff and students safe.

Stage two – not before 19 September 2020

We hope to start bringing back larger numbers of students in small group classes within a mixed model of online and on campus study, with progressively more staff on campus to support these operations. Many staff will continue to work from home, in particular staff in corporate and administrative roles, where there is not direct engagement with students. Research involving field work and access to archival material will resume in line with government advice on travel and the safe operation of library resources.

Stage three – not before 4 January 2021

We hope to bring back the majority of our staff and students to on campus activities but in a blended model of online and on campus study across all of our disciplines, and improved options for working from home or rostering staff where needed. Research involving human subjects in face-to-face activities that cannot be carried out using remote platforms might resume depending on prevailing conditions.

Your health and wellbeing

The extended timeline will come as a relief to some staff, while others may be struggling with working from home and may need support to deal with a longer timeline for the transition to campus.

Ultimately, we had hoped to bring people back progressively sooner than outlined in the three-stage plan but with Victoria currently implementing greater restrictions, we must ensure our actions are in step with government actions.

As a reminder, Human Resources has compiled a comprehensive range of [health and wellbeing programs and online resources](#) to assist you through this challenging time, including:

- Mental health and mindfulness
- Exercise and movement, and
- Resources for families.

HR has also provided a range of [Toolkits](#) to help you navigate the options while working from home and a full list of [COVID-19 support for staff](#) resources.

You can also find out more via our [Coronavirus Response webpage](#) including direct links to the latest government advice on public health and current restrictions.

Please save these links to your favourites so you can easily access the help and information you need.

Professional Development

Now may also be a good time to speak to your manager or supervisor about undertaking some [professional development programs in ELMO](#). If you have not completed these

already, please take the time to also review the following modules via ELMO:

- Building blocks for working virtually
- Mindfulness and wellbeing for peak performance
- Building resilience – skills to thrive at work.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Please remember that if you are struggling with working from home or anxious about the COVID-19 pandemic, we offer free access to independent short-term counselling through our [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) for work or personal issues.

Counselling appointments can be made with Converge by phoning **1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327)** or **03 8681 2444**. They can also be booked online by going to convergeinternational.com.au and selecting [MAKE AN EAP BOOKING](#).

Please stay safe and check in on each other as we continue to adjust our lives to deal with our journey through the COVID-19 pandemic.

On behalf of the COVID-19 Transition Control Group

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