



Coronavirus response - Federation University Australia

Wednesday 21 July 2021

Dear Student,

Yesterday the Victorian Government announced the extension of the current lockdown rules for a further seven days until midnight Tuesday 27 July.

Major changes have also been introduced to red zone interstate travel permits.

While the number of positive COVID-19 cases continue to be low in Victoria, there are now more than 250 public exposure sites and 18,000 close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases, with around a third of these close contacts living in regional Victoria. While in Queensland, there has been one new positive case, but no new restrictions have been introduced.

For Federation University and Federation TAFE this means:

- In accordance with restrictions, our campuses in Ballarat, Berwick, Gippsland and the Wimmera remain closed until Wednesday 28 July
- All higher education classes return to remote learning until Monday 2 August
- TAFE continues remote learning until Wednesday 28 July, based on government advice
- Staff continue to work from home
- HDR candidates continue to work from home – seek guidance from their supervisory team and/or their School HDR coordinator where necessary
- Brisbane Campus remains open and is unaffected by the Victorian restrictions.

The lockdown restrictions largely remain unchanged including the five reasons to leave your home, 5km travel limit, face masks indoors and outdoors, and no visitors or outdoor public gatherings allowed. You can also find the full details or at www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Impact on Semester 2 HE commencement in VIC

We had been looking forward to making a strong, safe start on campus in Semester 2 to welcome you back – and we will continue this as soon as restrictions allow.

As soon as restrictions begin to lift, we will push forward with this return to campus, with the backing of our COVIDSafe Plan to make sure our campuses continue to be open, safe places for all. We know you are looking forward to having all the experiences of university life so we want to make sure we create an experience on campus where you can form friendships and collaborate in learning face-to-face. Until then, we appreciate your patience and we hope this will only be required for a short period of time.

New public exposure sites in VIC and QLD – check each day

It is important to check the list of COVID-19 public exposures sites so that we can keep each other safe, and making sure we get tested and isolate if we have been at a location where there is a proven risk of catching COVID-19. We highly recommend that you check the full list of Victorian exposure sites each day at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/exposure-sites.

There are also new exposure sites in QLD, NSW or SA, so if you have recently returned from holiday interstate, we strongly encourage you to review the lists in those states, go to: QLD exposure sites at www.covid19.qld.gov.au; in NSW at www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19; and in SA at www.covid-19.sa.gov.au.

Major change to permit requirements returning from NSW

The Victorian Government has announced that from 11:59 pm, Tuesday 20 July there is a temporary pause on issuing [Red Zone Permits](#) – pending a further review in a fortnight. Victorian residents in red zones, currently in NSW, will require an exemption to enter Victoria – and these will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Further information can be found in the [Victorian Premier's statement](#). While we do not believe this will affect many students, if this does impact you, please contact your school or TAFE teaching team to discuss your options for remote learning until you can return to Victoria.

Student support services are available

We know that many students are struggling with lockdown and we want to remind you that we are here to help if you need it.

The [Current students page](#) has links to a range of resources including counselling, academic support, personal support and resources to help you study online – but we hope this will be a short lockdown so the impact on Semester 2 will be limited.

If you are feeling anxious or distressed, you can talk with a Federation University counsellor free of charge, via phone or online - [make an appointment](#). If you experience mental health challenges outside of business hours, we have a special crisis line operating in the evening, on weekends and public holidays, call 1300 758 109 (in Australia) and SMS +61 480 089 177 and request a call back (if overseas).

Key advice to students

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** (8:30 am to 5:00 pm). 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.

Remote learning arrangements for HE and TAFE

- Higher education and TAFE return to remote learning until Wednesday 28 July.
- Academic staff will work with their students to make alternative arrangements for on-campus classes, including moving to online or rescheduling.
- Students are being asked to check their course Moodle site for arrangements.
- TAFE students studying courses that are not in Moodle are being contacted directly by TAFE.
- HDR candidates should return to working from home and seek guidance from their supervisory team and/or their School HDR coordinator where necessary.

Placements

- The university will work with students and placement providers to make alternative arrangements where possible, including working from home if your placement allows.
- Students in health and early childhood disciplines will be able to attend placements as these are deemed essential services.

We are hopeful that the number of positive COVID-19 cases in Victoria continues to reduce and we can continue our return to campus for Semester 2, with COVIDSafe measures in place, but as always we will be guided by the government advice.

We have been through this before and we'll make it through again! Stay safe.

On behalf of the COVID-19 Transition Control Group



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