

TERTIARY EDUCATION SETTINGS CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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This fact sheet is for all Victorian tertiary education providers, including Learn Locals, TAFEs, registered training organisations and universities (collectively “training providers”).

The information in this document is current as of the date of publication.

Tertiary education providers should familiarise themselves with [Victoria’s Roadmap](#), and continue to monitor information as it becomes available via the [Department of Health \(DH\)](#) website. Please refer to the latest information at www.coronavirus.com.au to ensure the most accurate advice.

Can staff members and students attend training providers’ premises?

In line with the [Open Premises Order](#), training providers in Victoria may deliver training and assessment in person on site if staff and students meet the requirements outlined below. There are no density limits in place.

Students

Students may only attend a training organisation to participate in learning and assessment if they can verify they are:

- fully vaccinated; or
- under the age of 18 or medically exempt from vaccination; or
- undertaking secondary school subjects; or
- required to participate in hands-on, skills-based learning/assessments which cannot be conducted remotely.

Apprentices, trainees and/or students conducting work placements at a [Specified Facility](#) must be fully vaccinated and adhere to the relevant [Orders](#).

To the extent possible, all training providers should continue to ensure that students who are unable to attend onsite have access to digital and remote learning classrooms and materials to enable learning from home.

Staff members

In line with the [COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination \(General Workers\) Order](#), all higher education workers (paid or voluntary) must provide evidence to their employer that they are fully vaccinated or have a valid medical exemption to work onsite.

Other requirements

All staff, students and other site visitors must continue to check-in each visit using the [QR code system](#).

Should training providers choose to impose tighter restrictions, they must seek independent legal advice.

Do we have to retain a copy of a person’s vaccination status?

Where a training provider is required to collect, record and hold vaccination

information of a staff member or student attending the site, a copy of the evidence does not need to be held by the operator. Instead, the training provider must keep a record of having sighted the appropriate [evidence](#).

A record should include:

- the name of the worker or individual accessing the site;
- their vaccination status;
- their vaccine appointment booking (if relevant);
- who sighted the evidence;
- the date the evidence was sighted; and
- the type of evidence sighted (e.g. COVID-19 vaccine digital certificate).

Training providers may wish to use this [COVID-19 Vaccination Status Register \(Workers\) template](#) to record the information.

Staff

Training providers must collect, record and hold vaccination information of all staff in line with the [Mandatory Vaccination \(General Workers\) Order](#).

Students

Training providers may implement a system (for example, as part of enrolment) where a student can provide evidence once only that they are fully vaccinated (or exempt) to the operator, who is then required to retain a record of vaccination information in line with the [Open Premises Order](#).

Alternatively, students may show evidence they are fully vaccinated each time they enter the site.

Other patrons

All other visitors and patrons attending onsite will need to show evidence they are fully vaccinated (or exempt) each time they enter the premises.

How can someone show evidence of vaccination or exemption?

Evidence of a person's vaccination can include:

- their [COVID-19 digital certificate](#) which shows proof of their COVID-19 vaccinations that they can add to a digital wallet
- their [immunisation history statement](#) which lists their COVID-19 vaccinations and all other vaccinations
- a [foreign vaccination certificate](#) if a person was vaccinated in another country
- an [Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption form](#) that is completed and signed by a medical practitioner.

Those who produced a medical certificate or signed letter from a GP as evidence prior to 12 November 2021 will need to reverify their exemption using the [Australian Immunisation Register immunisation medical exemption form](#)

For more information on proof of vaccinations, visit: [Services Australia](#)

Further general information can be found by visiting: [Information for workers required to be vaccinated](#).

To support your organisation communicate the requirement to verify vaccination status, many signs and posters are available [here](#).

A student had COVID-19 and is not yet fully vaccinated. Can they attend the site?

There is no requirement to delay vaccination following recovery from the COVID-19 infection.

Students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, but are not fully vaccinated, are eligible for a time-limited medical exemption issued by a relevant medical practitioner and registered through the Australian Immunisation Register. This time-limit should cover sufficient time to access vaccination and book their vaccine appointment accordingly. This would ensure that these individuals are not disadvantaged in attending onsite.

Are face masks required for training and/or assessment?

Masks are not required to be worn by training provider staff or students, except in [high-risk settings](#) such as hospitals or care facilities, meat processing, or public hospitality venues.

However, we recommend wearing a mask if you can't physically distance, or if you are with people who may be vulnerable to COVID-19.

What happens if there is a diagnosed person onsite?

A person diagnosed with COVID-19 must:

- notify their employer and/or training provider of their positive diagnosis; and
- not resume onsite attendance for any reason until the conclusion of their required self-isolation period as detailed in the [Quarantine, Isolation and Testing Order](#).

If you are advised that a person with COVID-19 attended an indoor space of your premises during their infectious period, you must take reasonable steps to notify relevant employees, students, or other patrons that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 if they were onsite at the time of the diagnosed person.

Exposed persons

If these persons confirm they were in the same indoor space at the time of the diagnosed person, they are considered an exposed person.

The training provider must advise exposed persons to:

- self-quarantine immediately from the time they were notified of exposure to a diagnosed person; and
- complete a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test within 24 hours of being notified; and
- notify the provider of their test results.

The training provider must then record and store:

- a list of persons notified that they may have been an exposed person; and
- the PCR test result of each person.

Refer to [this checklist](#) for a simple guide on action required by anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or by anyone exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

When can an exposed person or close contact resume attendance onsite?

Exposed person

An exposed person who:

- was exposed to a diagnosed person onsite; and
- is not residing at the same premises as a diagnosed person who is self-isolating,

may resume onsite attendance at a training provider after acquiring a negative PCR test result following notification that they were an exposed person.

It is strongly recommended that a workplace/education contact undertakes a [rapid antigen test \(RAT\)](#) for 5 days following their negative PRC result before

attending onsite each day. RAT kits are issued to workplace and education contacts at PCR testing centres during their initial test.

It is at the training provider's discretion to verify the result of any RAT taken by a workplace or education contact and permit attendance onsite thereafter.

Close contact

A close contact is someone who:

- lives with a person with a case of COVID-19; or
- has spent more than four hours with them in a house, accommodation, or care facility; or
- was present at an outbreak as declared by the Chief Health Officer or other authorised person.

A close contact must notify their worksite and/or training provider of their status.

Close contacts who are fully vaccinated must self-quarantine for 7 days following exposure, or for 14 days if not fully vaccinated.

Close contacts are not permitted to return onsite until their self-quarantine period concludes and they receive a negative PCR test result.

However, during their self-quarantine period, a close contact may attend a training provider's premises to sit any exam relating to their senior secondary certificate.

Which QR Code should be used?

[QR Codes](#) represent a specific physical site. Training providers with multiple buildings may find benefit in having a different QR code for each building. Assuring check-in via a QR Code is the

responsibility of the operator of the site or organiser of the venue.

For example, when visiting a construction apprentice at their workplace, training provider staff and students must each check-in using the QR Code for that specific workplace (e.g. the construction site).

However, if your organisation is hiring a venue to facilitate training, your organisation is responsible for assuring check-in at that venue.

What are the requirements of a COVIDSafe Plan?

A [COVIDSafe Plan](#) for your workplace must demonstrate:

- your actions to help prevent the introduction of COVID-19 to your workplace
- the type of face mask or personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your workforce
- how you will prepare for, and respond to, a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in your workplace
- how you will meet all the requirements set out by the Victorian Government, noting some organisations must meet industry-specific requirements.

COVIDSafe Plans should be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with current public health advice. An organisation must have a COVIDSafe Plan in place for each worksite.

USEFUL LINKS

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/victorias-roadmap>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/how-we-work-current-restrictions>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/book-your-vaccine-appointment>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/face-masks-when-wear-face-mask>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/information-workers-required-be-vaccinated>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/rapid-antigen-self-tests>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/information-cross-border-communities>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/qr-codes-and-digital-record-keeping-contact-tracing>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/mental-health-hygiene-and-wellbeing-tafe>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/tafe-training-providers-apprentices-and-trainees>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/education-and-training-sector-guidance#frequently-asked-questions>
<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/signs-posters-and-templates>
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/getting-help-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-vaccinations/what-types-proof-there-are/covid-19-digital-certificate-proof>
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/getting-help-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-vaccinations/what-types-proof-there-are/immunisation-history-statement-proof>
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/covid-19/pandemic-order-register>
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/pandemic-open-premises-order-2021-no-1.pdf>
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/pandemic-covid-19-mandatory-vaccination-general-workers-order%202021-no-1.pdf>
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/pandemic-covid-19-mandatory-vaccination-specified-facilities-order-2021-no-1.pdf>
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/pandemic-quarantine-isolation-and-testing-order-2021-no-1.pdf>
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/health-service-planning-covid-19>
<https://www.passports.gov.au/guidance-foreign-vaccination-certificates>
<https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/aboutus/Pages/covid-19info.aspx>
<https://www.asqa.gov.au/covid-19>
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/Pages/coronavirus-advice-tafe.aspx>
<https://www.business.vic.gov.au/business-information/covid-19-business-information>

For further enquiries or support relating to apprenticeships, please email:
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