

Coronavirus Update

Monday, 10 January 2022

Dear colleagues,

We would like to clarify the working from home arrangements that were outlined in the Coronavirus Update sent to staff on Tuesday 4 January.

The update stated:

From today, Tuesday 4 January, only staff involved in supporting the student experience are required to work on campus, at the request of their Dean or Director. Your Dean or Director will confirm your working arrangements with you.

There has been some confusion among staff about what this means in practice.

We would like to make very clear that there are **no current government restrictions on attending the workplace and no restrictions on teaching and learning activities.**

Our childcare, hospitality, health and fitness facilities and student accommodation services all remain open. Scheduled higher education and TAFE teaching activities are still taking place and we are not shifting to online learning.

The only current Victorian Government advice about working from home is that “Victorians are encouraged to work from home if possible” and that [adult education facilities are open.](#)

This is not a government restriction requiring work or study from home. The government has been very clear that as a community we have shifted to ‘Living with COVID’.

‘Living with COVID’ puts more decision-making responsibility on individuals in our private lives (will I go to Christmas lunch indoors with 20 people?) and on organisations regarding how we work.

As an employer, we recognise that at this time of year some jobs can be performed at home without impacting the student experience or the planning required to support the student experience.

We are allowing those staff to work from home in the lead up to the start of the higher education semester one in late February, when all staff will be required to work back on campus.

This will be unique to each business area and there is no blanket rule for all staff.

Therefore, it is up to your Dean or Director to decide if your work can be performed at home without it impacting the student experience or planning for this. Your Dean or Director will confirm your working arrangements with you.

For example, you may have a job that is not student facing but your Dean or Director needs you to collaborate with colleagues in person and requires you to attend campus. There is no government restriction to prevent this and it is at the discretion of your Dean or Director.

Staff who want to return to working on campus can do so but should seek approval from their Dean or Director first as some business areas may begin rostering staff attendance on campus to ensure business continuity if team members become ill and need to isolate.

We have a responsibility to provide high quality education and services to our students and communities. As an organisation, we need to shift our thinking to 2022 and 'Living with COVID' so that we can do this.

That means unless government advice states otherwise, decisions around staff working arrangements and business continuity planning will be made at an individual level by Deans and Directors and will be communicated to staff by their Deans and Directors.

What are the current restrictions for our campuses?

The only restrictions that currently apply to Federation University and TAFE campuses are:

- Masks must be worn indoors
- Density limit of one person per 2 square metres in hospitality venues
- All staff must be vaccinated or have a valid exemption to attend campus
- All students must be vaccinated or have a valid exemption to attend campus from January 24

Federation COVID-19 hotline details

As a community, we are now living with COVID and as an employer, we will not necessarily be notified by health authorities if a staff member or student has tested positive to COVID-19.

We require staff and students to 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 (PCR or rapid antigen test), please contact our emergency phone number 1800 333 732 so we can put in place contact tracing, cleaning and isolation measures.

Further advice to staff

Five basic principles for working on campus

1. If you feel unwell – don't come to campus. If you have symptoms similar to COVID-19 you must get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible and self-isolate in line with government advice.
2. You must be vaccinated to protect yourself and others and have provided proof of vaccination status
3. You must comply with any directives regarding wearing a face mask, currently only required when indoors on campus.
4. QR code scanning is mandatory at all universities and TAFEs.
5. Facilities are in place for all students, staff and visitors to frequently wash or sanitise their hands and clean communal spaces, with increased campus cleaning is in place.

Stay safe and stay well.

On behalf of the COVID-19 Transition Control Group

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