



## Weekly Bulletin – Tertiary Providers

17<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

### Critical need to know and action

- COVID-19 update and planning ahead
- [New information on the Ministry of Education’s website regarding;](#)
  - Latest advice on mass gatherings
  - Self-isolation procedures and accommodation
  - Attendance requirements, study deferrals and blended learning

### **COVID-19 Update - Three new cases**

**Three new confirmed cases were announced this weekend, taking the total confirmed cases for New Zealand to eight. We are advised these cases are not connected to any staff or students in a tertiary education setting.**

### **Prime Minister’s announcement**

On 14 March the Prime Minister announced new and strong protective measures to keep individuals, families and communities safe and healthy. The measures came into effect from 1am on March 16 2020.

- Travel restrictions remain in place for people arriving from or who have been in mainland China and Iran over the prior 14 days (Category 1A)
- In addition, all travellers coming from all parts of the world, except parts of the Pacific, will be required to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival in New Zealand. This also includes Australia and French Polynesia. This self-isolation requirement applies to New Zealand citizens, permanent residents and their families (Category 1B)
- All travellers coming from the following parts of the Pacific will be required to self-isolate if they show symptoms, within 14 days of arrival. This includes all Pacific Islands Forum members (except French Polynesia, category 1b), Associate Member Tokelau, and Observer Wallis and Futuna. (Category 2).

Those in New Zealand thinking about traveling overseas, should avoid all non-essential travel at this time.

The new restrictions will be reviewed on Tuesday 31 March and then every 14 days after that date. There are no restrictions on freight and goods, they will continue to come in.

### **Advice on mass gatherings – Essential and non-essential**

The Prime Minister announced on the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 clear advice regarding mass gatherings. In summary, all **essential gatherings** such as **tertiary institutions, parliament, schools, preschools, and work should continue.**

**Non-essential** gatherings should be cancelled if the gathering involves more than 500 people in an indoor **or** outdoor setting. A more detailed framework for gatherings will be released later in the week.

### **Examples of how this advice is relevant to tertiary institutions**

- We encourage you to develop blended and online learning options, e.g. videoing lectures. Lectures and large classes can still go ahead, however providers should put due safeguards in place (e.g. ability to track and trace, social distancing where possible)
- Tutorials and small classes involving smaller numbers of students could continue in person. The usual health precautions should be taken - remind students and staff that basic hygiene measures are the most important way to stop the spread of infections.
- For those learners in workplaces, tertiary providers should contact employers to discuss guidelines and support arrangements.
- Sports tournaments should be cancelled if they involve more than 500 competitors and/or spectators.
- Providers could consider whether it is safe for student unions to remain fully open. It may be appropriate to suspend some services.
- Shows and concerts with more than 500 attendees should be cancelled.
- Other events such as open days and job fairs should be postponed.
- Large public lectures and community events should be cancelled.
- Some larger societies should consider postponing events or limiting attendee numbers.

### **COVID-19 Pandemic Planning**

While these measures will support the slowing of COVID-19 in New Zealand, it is unrealistic to expect they will prevent further cases. We are working on advice on the protocols should there be a COVID-19 case in a tertiary setting.

You have all communicated that you have fully activated your pandemic plans. It would be helpful if you could provide specific information for where you need more help or information. Your contact points for these are TEC for TEIs and ITOs and NZQA for PTEs

Meanwhile, if you have concerns or are aware of problems being raised by students, we encourage you to continue to raise these with the relevant agencies, as listed below.

For health advice, please refer to the Ministry of Health's website.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

To keep updated on travel restrictions and visa information visit <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/coronavirus-update-inz-response>

For additional advice for tertiary providers/whare wananga visit the Ministry of Education website <http://www.education.govt.nz/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-3/>

For Cross-agency information about novel COVID-19 (novel coronavirus), including health advice and travel restrictions visit the All-of-Government website <https://www.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/>