



Tertiary Provider and International Bulletin

Thursday 19 August

COVID-19 Update

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Community transmission update and updated Alert Level 4 guidance for TEOs

There are now a number of community cases of COVID-19 in the Auckland region that have now been identified as the Delta variant and linked to the ongoing outbreak in New South Wales. Due to the greater risk associated with the Delta variant, these developments strongly reinforce the importance of adhering to the lockdown conditions.

We will update the alert level guidance for tertiary education organisations to reflect [current Alert Level 4](#) settings soon. In the meantime, please follow the guidelines below.

Tertiary provider site access

We have received a few queries regarding access to tertiary education facilities, especially to facilitate distance learning.

There is a process underway to enable tertiary staff to go on site for the purpose of **collating and sending educational resources** to their students who are otherwise unable to access resources remotely. This could include undertaking contactless deliveries to those students or arrange for couriers to undertake those deliveries. More information will be provided about this tomorrow.

Any tertiary staff undertaking deliveries will be required wear a face covering and keep physically distanced from others (two metres). There must also be no physical contact between staff and the person receiving the educational resources. Students are not permitted to pick-up educational resources from TEOs.

Other key points to note on site access, reflecting the [COVID-19 Public Health Response \(Alert Level Requirements\) Order \(No 9\) 2021](#), are:

- All tertiary educational facilities must be closed, with the exception of necessary student accommodation, and those are deemed 'essential services'.



- Very limited site access is allowed for the following purposes only (and providers do not need to apply for permission to access sites in these circumstances):
 - **Caring for animals** is allowed.
 - **Maintenance and management of facilities and ICT infrastructure** is allowed if the task is essential to operations, and there is no way to complete the task remotely. Examples include: maintaining IT servers and IT equipment critical to delivering distance education, securing the site, removing fire hazards, or essential contractors in the event of damage at a tertiary organisation.
 - **Limited scientific services** are designated as essential (e.g. significant research facilities, including animal facilities, clinical trials, and infrastructure that requires constant attention (for example, samples, collections, and storage facilities), that are important to New Zealand). Tertiary providers may only continue research if it is allowed under Schedule 2 of the current health order.
- Where site access is permitted, a minimum number of staff should be onsite for a minimum amount of time, contact tracing systems must be in place, and physical distancing requirements must be maintained at all times. If there is more than one staff member on site, staff must wear a face covering.
- Any site access outside of the above purposes will require an exemption from the Director-General of Health. The threshold for access outside of the approved purposes above is extremely high. Tertiary education organisations that consider that they need to access sites for reasons other than those provided above should contact the TEC to discuss this. Please email customerservice@tec.govt.nz, with the subject heading “site access enquiry”, or get in touch with your Relationship Manager.

Mandatory requirement for face coverings

[Face coverings are now mandatory](#) when visiting essential businesses and services that are open in Alert Level 4 (e.g., pharmacy, supermarket, health services). It is also a requirement for staff to wear a mask. There is an exemption in place for children under 12 and those with physical or mental disabilities, who are not required to wear a mask.

COVID-19 vaccination information

The COVID-19 vaccination programme has resumed. With vaccination sites operating under Alert Level 4 conditions, capacity will be reduced due to physical distancing requirements and other safety measures. The reduced capacity means there may be some appointments that may need to be postponed. You will be contacted by your DHB, or healthcare provider if this applies to you.

- Detailed advice on COVID-19 vaccination is available from the Ministry of Health, which can be accessed [here](#).
- The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has advice on COVID-19 vaccination and employment [here](#).

For students: Hardship support is available

You will continue to get your regular Student Allowance and Student Loan living costs payments if you're still enrolled and studying.

Talk to your education provider about your course, and any questions or concerns you have about being able to continue to study.

Answers to questions about Student Allowance and living cost payments can be found on StudyLink's website studylink.govt.nz. StudyLink can also help over the phone and through MyStudyLink in most cases.

Student hardship



If you need extra help during this time you can find information about emergency assistance on StudyLink's website <https://www.studylink.govt.nz/in-study/urgent-costs/index.html>.

Hardship Fund for Learners

The Hardship Fund for Learners was extended earlier this year and continues to be available for the 2021 calendar year. This is a limited fund intended to provide temporary financial assistance for learners who are facing barriers to continuing their study or training because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund can also be used to support learners who are experiencing technology-related financial challenges. The fund will also be accessible to Transitional Industry Training Organisations. The Tertiary Education Commission is currently working through a process to facilitate this and will provide updates on the TEC website [here](#).

Most domestic learners are eligible to receive support through this Fund, however due to full allocation there is limited accessibility of funding available and access to the hardship fund may not be guaranteed.

If you are experiencing hardship, we encourage you contact your provider directly and talk about the support you require.

Student Hardship for International Learners

There is also support available for International students which is available below:

- Our website has info for international students which is available until 30 August - <https://www.education.govt.nz/news/emergency-benefit-international-students/>
- WINZ info here - <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/covid-19/temporary-visa-holders.html>

Stress counselling and support

Emergencies are usually unexpected, sudden, and overwhelming. It's natural to feel emotionally and physically drained. You're not alone in this and you don't need to cope on your own. Friends and family members not affected by the event can help you cope.

You can get more help and information from:

- your education provider
- your GP or local community health centre
- Youthline at [0800 376 633](tel:0800376633) or www.youthline.co.nz
- [Need to Talk](#) by calling or texting [1737](tel:1737)

In an emergency always call [111](tel:111).

Draft Policy Statement: High value international education consultation

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we have decided to **delay the Auckland workshops** and will now hold **all workshops online** for the *Draft policy statement: High-value international education*. Virtual session dates and times are:

- 23 August | 10.00 - 11.30am - Christchurch
- 24 August | 10.00 - 11.30am - Wellington
- 27 August | 1:00 – 2:30pm - Auckland
- 27 August | 3:00 – 4:30pm - Auckland

We remain very interested in your feedback as this will help us define what 'high value' means for international education going forward. Your views will help inform the final policy statement which will give



a clear steer on the direction for international education as we rebuild and deliver on the longer-term goals outlined in the International Education Strategy.

If you would like to attend, you can register [here](#).

Advice for people who live in, or visited Auckland or the Coromandel Peninsula

With new cases announced in the latest update, the number of locations of interest have continued to grow. For those in the Auckland and Coromandel Peninsula regions – and those who have visited these regions in the last few weeks – we encourage you to continue to check the Ministry of Health’s locations of interest page to find out if you might have been exposed to COVID-19. It is also critical that people moving around in public spaces during Alert Level 4 frequently check the locations of interest page. This includes essential workers checking locations of interest where they may have worked in or have visited. If you were potentially exposed, follow the guidance for the particular location of interest, which is on the same page:

[COVID-19: Contact tracing locations of interest | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

The Ministry of Health continues to remind everyone to please remain vigilant and stick to the basics:

- If you’re sick, stay home. Do not go to work or school. Do not socialise.
- If you have cold, flu or COVID-19 symptoms, call your doctor or Healthline on 0800 358 5453 and get advice about getting tested.
- If you have been told to self-isolate, you legally must do so immediately.

Things change quickly so stay up to date by following the links 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>

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

For resources in Te Reo Māori, visit <https://covid19.govt.nz/updates-and-resources/translations/te-reo-maori/>

For information to support Pacific communities, visit <https://www.facebook.com/MinistryforPacificPeoples/>

For resources in [sign language and easy read formats](#).

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>

Advice for international students in NZ <https://naumainz.studyinnewzealand.govt.nz/help-and-advice/healthcare/the-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know>

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

