Bulletin – Tertiary Providers

7th May, 2020

COVID-19 Update

Today, the Government has outlined what Alert Level 2 will look like. A decision about whether New Zealand will move to Alert Level 2 will be made by Cabinet on Monday 11 May. The Prime Minister has said that the move to Alert Level 2 would occur with 48 hours’ notice. [Information about the four level alert system is here.](https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-system/)

To enable you to begin planning, under Alert level 2, all on-site activities at tertiary education facilities can resume, such as classes, lectures, labs, workshops, tutorials, noho, and meetings.

However, TEO’s must maintain their ability to deliver courses remotely, and should be in a position to transition to fully remote learning (if required).

Tertiary education staff are no longer restricted to interacting face-to-face with one group of students. However, strict public health control measures should be in place.

Specific **public health control measures for TEOs** to be put in place are:

* Contact tracing information should be collected and retained that identifies which students, staff (and any other visitors) have been in each ‘controlled learning space’ or ‘other controlled environment’ and at what time. A ‘controlled learning space’ may be a lecture theatre, a lab, a classroom, etc., while ‘other controlled environments’ may be a building or an outdoor site with perimeter control.
* Physical distancing of two metres should be maintained where people do not know each other and where contact tracing measures are not in place. In areas designated ‘controlled learning spaces’ or ‘other controlled environments’, where contact tracing and strict hygiene practices are in place, people should be encouraged and enabled to maintain physical distancing of one metre, where possible.
* Students and staff should remain at home if they are sick, have any COVID-19 symptoms, are in isolation, or are awaiting COVID-19 test results.
* Hand sanitiser should be available at entry to classrooms, lecture theatres etc., and students and staff should ensure they are regularly washing and drying their hands.
* Disinfect and clean all TEO facilities regularly, with a particular focus on any surfaces or items that are likely to come into frequent contact with different students. For example, desks, door handles, keyboards, workshop tools, etc. that multiple people are likely to touch should be disinfected as often as is practical.
* On-campuses businesses such as gyms, pharmacies, cafes, restaurant, etc. must operate in accordance with the public health control measures that apply to that type of business.
* Residential accommodation is a type of ‘other controlled environment’, and TEOs should therefore ensure robust contact tracing information is collected on all those who enter the premises (including any guests of residents). Strict hygiene and cleaning protocols should also be in place.
* There is no specific size limit for education-related gatherings (lectures, classes, etc.) though TEOs should manage the capacity of all spaces (including lecture theatres) to ensure there is enough room for students and staff to maintain appropriate physical distancing (ideally one metre, where possible). This may mean that some larger lectures continue to be delivered online for some students.
* Large gatherings that are not directly education-related, such as speaking events open to the public, cultural events, social events, etc. should be limited to a maximum of 100 and must follow public health control measures that apply to gatherings.
* Social events with external visitors are not allowed within residential accommodation.  Hostels, halls and other residential accommodation may have social events involving people who are resident in that accommodation, but need to exercise restraint over the size and scale of these.  Students in residential accommodation may have a small number of family or close friends as visitors within accommodation, but TEOs need to ensure this is managed so as not to result in large gatherings taking place.
* Workplace-based learning should be managed within the specific public health control measures that apply to that type of workplace.
* Close-contact courses such as training for hair dressers, beauty salons, physiotherapists, etc., should operate in accordance with the public health control measures that apply to that occupation. This applies whether the training is conducted in the workplace, or on-site at a tertiary facility.
* PPE is not required or recommended as necessary in any educational facility by the Public Health Service, except for in research facilities (where this would normal be required) and during other activities where PPE is specified as a public health control measure (such as for some close-contact work/training).

For more detail about what these public health measures mean for TEOs, along with more detailed FAQs, visit [public health control measures for TEO's at Alert Level 2](https://education.govt.nz/covid-19/advice-for-tertiary-providerswhare-wananga/public-health-requirements-for-tertiary-education-organisations-at-alert-level-2).

To ensure we maintain the gains of Alert Levels 3 and 4, TEOs are asked to ensure the above measures are maintained at all their facilities/campuses. However, TEOs are not responsible for managing or monitoring activities of staff and students outside these facilities/campuses.

Upon advice from the local medical officer of health, any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close on an individual or group basis, for as long as directed by that medical officer of health.

However, this does not mean that the entire institution would necessarily need to close. The extent of the required closures will depend on the nature of the COVID-19 case, and may be limited to a single building or group of buildings, as required to ensure the risk of infection is managed. The decision on this should be made by the TEO in consultation with medical officer of health.

**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 (novel coronavirus), including health advice and travel restrictions visit the All-of-Government website <https://www.govt.nz/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/>

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