Safe return to campus
Guide for students
July 2020
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Foreword

We are very pleased to have started our gradual shift back to our campuses and look forward to welcoming you on your return over the next few months. Many experiences will feel new and different as we embark on a careful, staged resumption of campus activities. This will present all of us with ongoing challenges. We thank you for your patience, common sense, and professionalism in adapting to our new ways of learning and working.

Since the first UNSW student tested positive for COVID-19 on 27 January - becoming only the fourth reported case in NSW - all students and staff have seen their working and learning environments utterly upended. Because of this early case, and the measures put in place to effectively respond to it, UNSW came to experience the virus - and its potential consequences - a little earlier than other organisations and the rest of Australia.

It has been an all-consuming aspect of the University’s operations - and is likely to remain a dominant theme for the rest of 2020, and the next few years. Our response has not been perfect, but we have been quick to learn and have adjusted systems, policies and processes rapidly and as required.

We will continue this proactive approach to managing the implications of COVID-19 and critically, take a cautious and steady approach to our return, always with the safety of the UNSW community as our overriding priority. Our individual campuses each have a unique context so the journey of return will be different for each but, the overriding principle of a cautious, staged approach, ensuring the safety of all will be the same.

Just as general community life is responding with new regulations, students, staff and visitors will need to follow new rules on campus to promote hygiene and personal and community safety. There are also exciting new opportunities we have experienced in the past few months that we want to see maintained, wherever possible. This guide has been developed to help you navigate the changes we have put in place - and how we would encourage you to behave on campus to keep you, your loved ones and the general community safe.

Thank you again for your ongoing patience and co-operation.

Best wishes

Professor Ian Jacobs  
President and Vice- Chancellor

Professor Anne Simmons  
Provost
Our approach

Since the first positive COVID-19 case was detected on campus in late January 2020, the University’s response has moved through three phases:

1. **Medical** response to manage suspected and positive cases in our community

2. **Academic and continuity** response as travel restrictions were implemented

3. **Recovery response** as the Government eases restrictions in line with the three-stage plan announced on 8 May 2020.

This guide lays out basic principles, practices and guidelines to help students currently learning remotely to return to our campuses in Sydney and Canberra. Our plans and policies will be updated as new information becomes available.

Guiding principles

1. The **safety** of our students, staff and campus partners is of paramount importance.

2. We will **adhere to Government advice** and work in collaboration with the higher education sector and relevant agencies to develop our plan.

3. We are **phasing a return to campus**, starting with those who require campus facilities for their studies.

4. **UNSW guidelines** will be **delivered and managed locally** through UNSW’s designated Local Recovery Teams.

5. **Planning needs to be flexible** and we need to be able to revert – in part or full – should local outbreaks occur, ensuring business continuity.

Our expectations of you

It is important we work together as a community to continue to limit the spread of COVID-19, particularly as we have many high-risk groups on campus. This collective effort is only ensured if all students fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.
Estimated timetable

UNSW’s Senior Leadership Team has agreed the following timetable for the return of students and staff to our campuses:

**UNSW Sydney**
- **May – June 2020**
  - Return of campus-dependent research community
  - Return of campus-dependent staff
  - Partial re-opening of library - essential visits
- **July – August 2020**
  - Return of student-facing staff and remaining researchers
- **September – November 2020**
  - Full re-opening of library and campus amenities
  - Return of onshore students on-campus activity
  - Return of all other staff
- **Future**
  - Return of offshore students
  - Recomencement of large events

**UNSW Canberra**
- **July – October 2020**
  - Plan for fully online teaching S2
  - Return of campus activities and some non-campus dependent staff on a case by case basis
- **November 2020 – February 2021**
  - Return of onshore and offshore students in preparation for S1, 2021
  - Plan delivery of teaching online first
- **March 2021 – July 2021**
  - Plan delivery of teaching online first

Prior to your return to campus we encourage all students to read this ‘Safe Return to Campus’ guide in full and become familiar with the behaviours that will be expected of you. Further information and resources on our Safe Return to Campus is on our COVID-19 website.

Phased return

Return to full campus activity and learning will be gradual. While some campus amenities will begin to reopen during July and August, all learning will continue to be online throughout Term 2. While lectures will also continue to be online only throughout Term 3, we are planning for some tutorials and practicals to be scheduled on-campus from the beginning of Term 3. More information will be made available to students in due course.

Keeping in touch

Please update your contact and emergency contact details in myUNSW. You should also continue to read UNSW emails on COVID-19 to keep up to date with changing circumstances.

We have curated a range of COVID-19 material for students on the UNSW COVID–19 website.
Health and safety

There has been an outstanding effort in working together to reduce the number of infections through community transmission. Our everyday practices have helped 'flatten the curve' and these actions need to continue in the months to come. The guidelines in this section are designed to protect you, your friends and family, and the wider UNSW community from harm.

The COVIDSafe App

The Australian Government has created the COVIDSafe mobile phone app to help find close contacts of people who have tested positive to the virus and reduce its spread. This means you'll be contacted more quickly if you are at risk. This reduces the chances of you passing the virus to your family, friends and people in the UNSW community.

Downloading the app is voluntary. However, we encourage all UNSW students to do this to help us manage any COVID-19 outbreak on campus and keep our community safe. You can learn more about the app here.

The COVIDSafe app is available for iPhone users to download here and Android users here.

Keeping a COVID-diary

Another helpful way to keep track of your contacts is to keep a daily diary of your movements and the people you have had contact with, where practical. This will help us with contact tracing if you or a member of the UNSW community becomes infected.

Monitoring for symptoms

It is your responsibility to check if you have symptoms of COVID-19 before you come to campus each day. If you have any symptoms, even very mild, you MUST NOT come to campus; instead you should self-isolate at home and seek medical advice.

If you fall ill while on campus, you should leave your class or study area immediately, avoid contact with others and seek medical advice – you can contact the UNSW Health Service.

The main symptoms to look out for are fever, cough, shortness of breath and sore/scratchy throat.

Other symptoms include loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting and loss of appetite.

Testing is fast and free and you do not need a Medicare card or insurance. For the latest information on COVID-19 symptoms and testing visit the NSW Health website or the ACT Government health website.
**Being tested for COVID-19**

**NSW**

NSW Health recommends that everyone, even those with very mild COVID-like symptoms, or even mild symptoms of upper respiratory infection, should get tested. You can make an appointment for a COVID-19 test at the UNSW Health Service or you can find a COVID-19 testing centre near you [here](#). It is fast and free. To speak with someone about your symptoms, [call your doctor](#) or the 24-hour National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080.

For the latest information on COVID-19 symptoms and testing visit the [NSW Health website](#).

**ACT**

In the ACT, you can get tested for COVID-19 if you have the following symptoms:

- Fever of 37.5 degrees or greater (or recent history of fever such as chills or night sweats); or
- Respiratory infection (such as shortness of breath, cough, or sore throat).

In addition, people who have sudden onset of loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite may be eligible for COVID-19 testing, after assessment by a health professional. For the latest information on COVID-19 symptoms and testing in the ACT visit the [ACT Government Health website](#).

If you have been tested - whether in NSW or the ACT - remain at home while awaiting the results. If you are well enough you should continue to study from home. If you are feeling worried about your health or study please contact the Nucleus: Student Hub who can find you the support you need.

Please also notify us by contacting the Nucleus: Student Hub if:

- You have been identified as a close contact of a known case.
- You have been tested and have recently returned from overseas or a known hotspot.

**Testing positive for the virus**

If you test positive for COVID-19, please don't panic. We are here to help. Firstly, you must continue to self-isolate at home, and very importantly we need to know straight away if you have tested positive. If you test positive you should complete and submit [this form](#). This information will enable us to limit any contagion event on campus and support NSW Health with their contact tracing. We will not share this information with anyone else.

**Exposure to someone else who has tested positive**

If you have had direct contact with someone who has tested positive to the virus and have been directed to self-isolate by health authorities or by the University, you must NOT come to campus.

If you live in UNSW student accommodation you must tell your accommodation provider if you have had direct contact with someone that has tested positive.

**What happens if COVID-19 impacts my studies?**

If your health, the need to get tested for COVID-19 or self-isolate impacts your studies and assessments, you may be eligible to apply for [Special Consideration](#).

You should discuss options with your teacher or supervisor in the first instance.

If you are required to self-isolate you may only return to campus after 14 days self-isolation and when NSW Health confirms you can.
Physical distancing

Physical distancing is one of the best defences against the spread of COVID-19. You must always observe the physical distancing rules. At the beginning of July these were 1.5 metres between people (or one person per four square metres indoors). Current Government advice is on the Department of Health website. To generally comply you should:

- Observe distancing measures
- Do NOT gather in groups
- Avoid physical greetings such as handshakes, hugs and kisses
- Avoid crowded areas
- Use tap and go instead of cash

Physical distancing in your classroom, lab or study area

Limits on how many people can be in a lab or study area will be set in line with Government guidelines, please follow the guidance for each area.

When to wear a face mask

We strongly encourage all students and staff to follow the advice of NSW Health in relation to the wearing of face masks to help keep each other safe.

The UNSW community draws people from disparate communities and a wide geography, which is what makes us special. It also means we need to be extra vigilant and respectful - while on and off campus - to ensure our UNSW campuses remain safe and COVID-free places and to also protect the communities in which we live.

NSW Health strongly recommends wearing a face mask in the following situations:

- If it is hard to maintain 1.5 metres of physical distance from others
- On public transport
- In supermarkets and shops
- In places of worship
- In indoor venues with a higher risk of transmission, where practical
- If working in cafes, restaurants pubs and clubs and other venues with a higher risk of transmission.
- In hotspots i.e. areas of high community transmission
- When visiting or caring for a vulnerable person, including elderly relatives.

You should also wear a mask if you:

- Have symptoms and are in the same room as another person
- Are in self-isolation and in the same room as another person
- Are getting tested for COVID-19, seeking medical advice or entering a health care facility.

People in higher risk groups are strongly encouraged to wear masks in all social circumstances.

The use of a face mask is not a substitute for staying home if you are sick or required to isolate, getting tested, physical distancing and ensuring personal hygiene measures such as regular hand-washing and sneezing and coughing into your elbow or a tissue.

We encourage you to always have a reusable cloth mask with you on campus, in addition to hand sanitiser and wipes, to use as needed.

NSW Health provides useful instructions on how to make an appropriate cloth mask here.

Getting to and from campus

Read the advice of Transport NSW or Transport Canberra on the safe use of public transport during this time. A range of useful information and tools are also available on Transport NSW’s ‘COVIDSafe Travel Choices’ website.

You should also consider other options such as walking or cycling to campus.

More information on your travel options to our Kensington and Paddington campuses can be found here.

The UNSW Shuttle Bus between Kensington and Paddington campuses continues to run but is currently on a reduced schedule. Passengers are asked to respect physical distancing measures that are in place on the bus.

Hand hygiene

Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds – especially after being in a public space or touching your face or coughing/sneezing. We recommend you bring hand sanitiser with you to campus for times when you can’t access handwashing facilities.

Respiratory hygiene

Remember the health advice: use a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of it immediately and then wash your hands. Or cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
Looking after your space

If you are using a lab or library study space, please use the cleaning products provided to wipe down equipment, desks and computers before and after use. We also ask that students take personal responsibility and recommend you keep wipes and sanitiser on you for use in other areas.

Using restrooms

Please ensure you comply with physical distancing measures while using restrooms. Wash your hands using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Using lifts

You must ensure, as far as you reasonably can, to maintain physical distancing in lifts and lift waiting areas. Please give priority to people who are less mobile or with a disability. Avoid touching the lift buttons with exposed fingers/hands. Wash your hands at the next available opportunity. Please use the stairs where possible.

Using co-curricular areas

Physical distancing applies to leisure areas. You should always practise good food safety when preparing food, especially in communal areas. Wash your hands before, during and after food preparation and between handling raw and cooked food.

Some shared facilities may remain closed for a period. Campus lounges and retailers will reopen gradually as guidelines allow and students and staff return to campus.

Meetings

Meeting in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. For the foreseeable future, you should continue to convene virtual meetings with friends and group projects on Microsoft Teams, Zoom or by telephone.

If you do need to have small meetings please observe physical distancing rules, meet in a well-ventilated area, or consider meeting outdoors, and have hand sanitiser available. You should wash your hands before and after the meeting and wipe down surfaces after meetings.

Events

At this stage, all non-essential face-to-face University events are cancelled until the end of 2020. Any event deemed ‘essential’ must comply with Government guidelines or ACT Government guidelines on numbers at gatherings.
## Safe return to campus – a summary

Below you will find a summary of expected campus behaviours to help keep the UNSW community, our family and friends safe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In advance</th>
<th>Arrival and departure</th>
<th>In the classroom/lab</th>
<th>In other spaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read this guide. If you are a student researcher returning in Phase 2, check any ‘Safe Return to Campus’ training requirements with your Supervisor.</td>
<td>On public transport – try to avoid ‘rush hours’ and wear a face mask. Consider walking or cycling.</td>
<td>Wipe down your workspace when you arrive and depart</td>
<td>Observe room occupancy limits, physical distancing and health and safety measures in all indoor and outdoor areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare to keep a record of contacts made, either through the CovidSafe App or a diary or other means</td>
<td>Don’t congregate in groups – particularly at entrances and exits to buildings</td>
<td>Avoid face to face meetings unless essential - continue to use virtual alternatives</td>
<td>Be aware of changed density rules in cafes and shared spaces on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for COVID-19 symptoms daily. Do not come to campus if you are unwell, even with mild symptoms</td>
<td>Avoid touching door knobs and lift buttons with exposed hands</td>
<td>Observe room occupancy limits, physical distancing and health and safety measures</td>
<td>Wipe down communal workspaces and kitchen prep areas before and after use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Observe distancing measures  
2. Wear a mask if you cannot physically distance  
3. Practice good hand & respiratory hygiene  
4. Consider downloading the COVIDSafe app & keep it running
Additional information for use of labs

Safe occupancy of laboratories, workshops and clinics is covered by a separate process. A return to campus plan will be developed for each area or facility, including modified protocols and rostering where required. Please consult your Teacher or Supervisor in the first instance.
Travel and fieldwork

Domestic travel
UNSW has updated its travel policy for students and staff travelling on official business. Domestic travel is now allowed but only if the proposed travel:

- Complies with current Federal and State/Territory (for NSW residents) or ACT (for ACT residents) travel guidelines
- Is funded from restricted funds or paid from an external source
- Includes plans to comply with an appropriate COVIDSafe plan while in transit and at each destination
- Has been approved by the relevant Head of School or Director.

For more information and updates on UNSW travel guidance, visit the UNSW COVID-19 website.

Fieldwork
Fieldwork will require a specific plan to be developed and approved. Please consult your Teacher or Supervisor in the first instance.

Overseas travel
UNSW follows Australian Government advice on overseas travel. The most up-to-date information is on the smartraveller.gov.au website. You are expected to adhere to this advice. Any loosening of restrictions on overseas travel is likely to include a need to self-isolate on both the outbound and return trips. It is not anticipated that UNSW will allow students to travel overseas on research for the rest of 2020.
Security on our campuses

While our safety is championed by the campus security team, compliance with health and physical distancing measures is everyone’s responsibility. Security (at UNSW Canberra this will be the Essential Services Support Team - ESST) will monitor whether students and staff across campuses are following the physical distancing protocols outlined in this document.

They will have authority to record and report any students who fail to respond to instructions and guidance provided and refer matters to disciplinary units.

If we need to lock down areas

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case being notified, UNSW Local Recovery Teams will assist Public Health in notifying possible contacts. This may involve asking students and staff to self-quarantine and leave a work or study area to allow proper cleaning etc.

Concerns over lack of compliance on campus

We are confident that students and staff across UNSW will support the measures we have put in place to look after your health and the health of our community. If you have any concerns about lack of compliance by others you can discuss your concerns with the Nucleus Student Hub, your teacher or supervisor.

Your wellbeing

We know that this has been a difficult time – not just for UNSW but for Australia and the global community.

The Wellbeing Team at UNSW has curated a range of health and wellbeing resources to help you including links to counselling services, mental health advice, tips on staying active and more. Visit the ‘mind hub’ on our website for more details. More health information related to COVID-19 is also available here and more information on mental health support and advice during COVID-19 is here.

Student life, online

Social distancing does not equal social isolation! We want you to stay connected and keep an active student life. UNSW Student Life Online is a virtual drop-in centre for confidential support; virtual connections with other students; looking after your health and wellbeing and having fun, even in a time of physical distancing.
International students

We are working with the Australian, NSW and ACT governments, alongside other universities, on a plan to start returning international students to Australia. Additional information and guidance for those international students returning, or coming to Australia for the first time, will be provided in due course.
Resources and links

UNSW COVID-19 information
UNSW COVID-19 website
UNSW Canberra COVID-19 website

Health and Wellbeing:
UNSW Health Service
UNSW Health Service COVID-19 information
Australian Government's [healthdirect website](https://healthdirect.gov.au) or 1800 022 222
UNSW wellbeing information
UNSW Student Life Online

Travel and Transport
Australian Government [Smart Traveller](https://smarttraveller.gov.au) website
[International SOS](https://www.internationalsos.com)
NSW Government [Travel and Transport advice](https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au)
Thank you

Thank you for your ongoing patience and co-operation during this difficult time. You have all shown incredible resilience, adapting to change quickly to ensure a continuation of your studies and the important research work of the University. Our return to campus brings new challenges but by working together we will ensure that we help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep our UNSW community safe.

Merlin Crossley
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic

Rorden Wilkinson
Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience