



Bulletin – Tertiary Providers

25th March, 2020

COVID-19 Update

Students (domestic and international) unable to return home

- Under Alert Level 4, no travel will be permitted for domestic students from midnight Friday 27th March and some international students will also be affected due to lack of flights home.
- We are aware that a few countries might look to repatriate their citizens by making special flights.
- We are seeking urgent advice on this and will provide an update as soon as possible.
- Students (including international students) may have to remain in residential accommodation. Providing services to these students so that they can self-isolate is an essential service. This includes on-campus medical services, catering, pastoral care and other services.
- Residential facilities must support remaining students to self-isolate and must strictly enforce personal distancing and hygiene requirements, in accordance with [MOH guidelines](#).
- You should maintain close contact with international students to ensure that they have access to suitable accommodation and are supported to deal with visa issues, travel insurance, and other essential arrangements.
- Students with expiring visas with an expiry date of 1st April 2020 or earlier and who are unable to leave New Zealand must apply on-line for a new visa. An interim visa will be issued.
- Students with expiring visas with an expiry date of 2 April to 9 July 2020 inclusive who are in New Zealand on 2 April 2020 will have their visas extended to 25 September 2020. Confirmation of extensions will be emailed to all visa holders.

To keep updated on travel restrictions and visa information visit

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/covid-19/coronavirus-update-inz-response>

International Students under 18

- Students under 18 must remain in suitable accommodation under the supervision of appropriate caregivers **who have been subject to a full safety check including Police vetting.**
- If there is a need to urgently Police vet a new homestay provider, NZ Police are able to process vetting requests urgently to ensure that Police checking requirements for 'safe accommodation' are met. This service should only be used for genuinely urgent applications affected by the withdrawal of homestay families due to health concerns.
- You can submit the request via this link <https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/businesses-and-organisations/vetting> as per the usual process, entering 'HOMESTAY URGENT' into the 'Agency Reference' field of the online vetting request form. These police vets are likely to be processed within 1-2 working days.

If you have specific questions about pastoral care, please call NZQA's Code team on 0800 697 296 or code.enquiries@nzqa.govt.nz

How can we help?

For providers requiring pastoral care guidance for international students, you should contact the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (on 0800 697 296 or code.enquiries@nzqa.govt.nz) for advice.

Please keep the Ministry of Education informed of any issues with international students which you may not be able to manage, particularly where students are having issues with accommodation. You can contact us at code.enquiries@nzqa.govt.nz

What do I do if there is a confirmed case in a tertiary setting?

- If a person is confirmed as a case of COVID-19 in shared accommodation the provider will need to take a leading role in supporting them to access support and to communicate with the whānau to keep them informed.
- The person who has been identified as a confirmed case should self-isolate in accordance with [MOH guidelines](#). Reach out to them to enquire about their situation and supply information on how to access health services. Any support should be provided remotely where possible e.g. through online channels or phone calls.
- These are some good things to ask:
 - Where is the person staying? Are there any concerns about preventing the spread of the virus?
 - Are they in contact with whānau and other support networks? Do they have someone who can care for them?
 - Do they have access to food or groceries (either online or if someone can get them)?
 - What support do they have in place and do they know about additional support that is available to them?
 - Who else are they staying with? Are they self-isolating (as close contacts)?
 - How will they continue to stay in touch with their provider? Who is the key contact person? How frequently will that person be checking in?
- Providers should immediately contact Gillian Dudgeon at the Tertiary Education Commission Gillian.Dudgeon@tec.govt.nz or Sandra.Ramsay@tec.govt.nz or; Eve McMahon at the New Zealand Qualifications Authority Eve.McMahon@nzqa.govt.nz (0227 509 7980) to alert her to a confirmed case. The purpose of this initial communication is, to find out what support the provider will need and advise them where they can go for this – the Ministries of Health or Education – and to advise a future point of contact regarding the confirmed case.
- Providers should communicate with others in the shared accommodation about what is expected from them, and should offer wellbeing support.
- Other students staying in the accommodation may be considered close or casual contacts and asked to isolate, or given information about what to do if they become unwell. Providers should remain in regular contact with these students to ensure that they have access to food, supplies and support for the mental health and wellbeing.

- The Regional Medical Officer of Health will advise whether additional steps may be needed – for example extra cleaning, additional PPE for essential staff. They will also advise whether it is safe for students to continue to use communal areas.

We recommend that providers issue a statement to their community to notify other staff and students of the confirmed case. It is important to support the wellbeing of all students, staff, and member of the wider education community at this time.

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/>

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