



## Bulletin – Tertiary Provider and International Bulletin

19<sup>th</sup> August, 2020

### COVID-19 UPDATE

#### Technology Access Fund for Learners

Applications for the Technology Access Fund for Learners (TAFL) have been re-opened following recent changes in COVID-19 alert levels. TAFL, managed by Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), aims to help tertiary education organisations (TEOs) support learners to continue to access tertiary education and training disrupted by COVID-19. For more information about the TAFL and how to apply, please visit the [TEC website](#).

#### Applications for ESOL Provision by English language schools now open

The government announced in July the \$1.5 million fund for English language schools to help increase demand for English language training. The funding will also help with upskilling and improving the employability of migrants and dependents of New Zealand citizens and residents.

The PTE ESOL Provision Fund, managed by the Tertiary Education Commission, is part of a long-term recovery plan for the international education sector. To apply, visit [PTE ESOL Provision Fund](#).

The government also announced \$10 million for Private Training Establishments (PTEs) to maintain a foundation of PTEs for the recovery phase. Applications for PTE targeted assistance funding should be open in the coming weeks. We will contact you with more details closer to the time.

#### Students in tertiary accommodation

Ensuring the welfare of students who are in tertiary accommodation such as hostels, halls of residence, self-contained flats, etc. is critical at all times regardless of the Alert Level.

##### Tertiary accommodation under Alert Level 3

Those tertiary accommodation facilities operating under Alert Level 3 (i.e. those that are within the Auckland region) should:

- remain open and in a position to provide appropriate support to allow students to self-isolate,



- ensure physical distancing and exclusive 'bubbles' are maintained at all times, in line with broader government guidelines,
- ensure strict contact tracing measures are in place, including the placement of NZ COVID Tracer QR code posters at or near main entrances.

Student service, such as counselling and health services should continue to operate, with consultations delivered online or over the phone where possible. Where virtual, non-contact consultations are not possible (e.g. during a critical incident), face-to-face consultations are allowed.

Currently, travel into, out of, or through Auckland is restricted to limited circumstances. Students who are currently in tertiary accommodation in the Auckland Region, are unlikely to be able to leave Auckland, including during the university holidays. There are some limited circumstances that do allow people to leave the Auckland region, however it is likely this will only apply to students who are temporarily in Auckland and need to travel back to their primary home or residence outside of Auckland. More information is available on the [COVID19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website.

Students should be reminded that they are able to leave their tertiary accommodation under the same restrictions that apply to those living at home/in rentals (i.e. only for 'essential personal movement' within the region).

#### Tertiary accommodation under Alert Level 2

Those tertiary accommodation facilities operating under Alert Level 2 (i.e. those outside of the Auckland region) should:

- ensure strict contact tracing measures are in place, including the placement of NZ COVID Tracer QR code posters at or near main entrances,
- ensure there are no social events with external visitors.

There are currently no restrictions on personal movement of students living in tertiary accommodation outside of the Auckland region, though border restrictions around the Auckland remain tight.

#### **What happens if there is a confirmed case linked to a tertiary provider?**

If there is a confirmed or probable case linked with a tertiary education or accommodation facility, the provider will be advised of this by the Medical Officer of Health or their local public health authority.

If a tertiary provider becomes aware of a case associated with their education or accommodation facility and they haven't yet received notification from health authorities, they should immediately contact [Gillian Dudgeon](#) or [Sandra Ramsay](#) at the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and their local public health unit ([Public health unit contacts](#))

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

#### **Clarification on terms, including the difference between a close contact and casual contact?**

1. **Confirmed case:** Someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 after returning a positive lab test.
2. **Probable case:** Regardless of any test result, someone is considered by the public health service to have COVID-19 if their symptoms and clinical history indicate their illness is more likely to be COVID-19 than anything else.



3. **Close contact:** Close contacts are those that are likely to be at a higher risk of being infected. In other words someone who has been physically near to a person with COVID-19 for enough time to put them at increased risk of catching the illness. Close contacts will be required to self-isolate and will need to monitor for symptoms.
4. **Casual contact:** The technical definition is “any person with exposure to the case who does not meet the criteria for a close contact”. For example someone who attended the same venue as a person confirmed with COVID, but isn’t considered a close contact. Casual contacts do not need to self-isolate but as we all are asked to do, will need to monitor for symptoms and get tested if recommended to do so.
5. **Household contacts:** Anyone living in the same household as a case e.g. immediate and extended family members (including children in shared care arrangements), boarders, flatmates, visitors.

The Ministry of Health has further information on their [website](#) about contact tracing.

### **Information for international students offshore – accommodation and other commitments**

International students who are currently offshore may be asking how best to manage accommodation commitments and selling/storing vehicles and other possessions.

Students should talk to their landlord or accommodation provider about their options. More information is available at <https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/> (including COVID-specific information). If they have a fixed term rental contract, they may be able to apply to the Tenancy Tribunal to end the lease early if necessary. If a student is living in student accommodation, they should also check what provisions their accommodation contract includes for leaving before the end of the contract.

If students want to move out of their accommodation, they will likely need to arrange packing up their belongings and selling items / moving them to storage. They may be able to find a friend to help with this, or they could contact a professional moving company. Students should contact their landlord or accommodation provider about arranging access to the property.

The Auckland Region remains at Alert Level 3 and the remainder of New Zealand remains at Alert Level 2. Under Alert Level 3, it is still possible to move accommodation, under certain conditions (e.g. from one property to another, within the same Alert Level zone). Only moving companies can assist with moving (<https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/about-tenancy-services/news/coronavirus-covid-19-what-landlords-and-tenants-need-to-know/>).

Under Alert Level 3, it is still possible to sell goods, so long as the transaction is contactless (i.e. there is no physical contact between the buyer and seller, and everyone maintains a two metre distance). Sites such as Trade Me have detailed advice about how to make sales safely (<https://help.trademe.co.nz/hc/en-us/articles/360041115552-COVID-19-changes-FAQ>).

Under Alert Levels 1 and 2, it is possible to sell goods / move accommodation (with appropriate safety measures where necessary).

For information and advice on dealing with vehicles, see <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicles/buying-and-selling-a-vehicle/selling-a-vehicle/>. Transfer of vehicle ownership can be done online. It may also be possible to ask a friend who is in New Zealand to help sell a vehicle. Students could also consider contacting a used car dealer for advice.



If students wish to ship possessions home, they should be encouraged to consider looking for different quotes, as services may vary considerably (e.g. door-to-door, port-to-port, payment on volume or weight). Some education providers may have existing relationships where students receive discounted rates – please check with your education provider’s international office or student organisation for more information. Alternatively, there are various storage options available for students’ possessions, and many companies will be able to provide online quotes and some also arrange packing / moving. Moving companies can still operate at Alert Level 3 (so long as they do so safely). Clothing and household items may be able to be donated to local charities (who may also be able to collect) where appropriate.

## **Support for international students in hardship**

International students facing financial hardship may be eligible to apply for assistance through the Visitor Care Manaaki Manuhiri programme. This programme delivers in-kind assistance to help international visitors in New Zealand meet basic needs, such as food and accommodation. The Red Cross has developed a series of resources, including translations and frequently asked questions, specifically for international students - please promote this fund to your international students. More information and the marketing assets available in nine languages are available on the [website](#) and in this [stakeholder dropbox](#). Here are the resources in English to share:

- [International student FAQs](#) (*translations coming soon*)
- [General poster](#) | [student](#)
- [Eligibility poster](#) | [student](#)
- [Support poster](#)
- [Applicant FAQs](#)
- [Social media posts](#) | [student](#)

## **International student fees, withdrawals and refunds**

International students with questions about fees, withdrawals and refunds should check their enrolment documentation and contact their education provider in the first instance. Information specific to private training establishment students is available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/student-fee-protection/student-withdrawals-refunds/>.

If students are not satisfied with the outcome, they should contact NZQA (<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/make-a-complaint/make-a-complaint-about-a-provider/>) and iStudent Complaints (<https://www.istudent.org.nz/contact-us>).



**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 information 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>

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

