



# Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

## Information for universities, higher education and vocational education facilities

### ***An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in late December 2019.***

On 1 February 2020, the Australian Government updated advice for people who have recently returned to Australia from mainland China based on the latest and best medical advice.

## Can students attend your university, higher education or vocational education facility?

In the following scenarios students **can not** attend your university, higher education or vocational education facility:

- If students have travelled from Hubei Province within the past 14 days, they must isolate themselves until 14 days have elapsed after leaving Hubei Province.
- If students have left, or transited through, mainland China **on or after 1 February 2020** they must isolate themselves until 14 days after leaving China.
- If students have been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, they must isolate themselves for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case.

In the following scenarios students **can** attend your university, higher education or vocational education facility:

- Students who have travelled from other provinces of mainland China (and have not been in Hubei province) who arrived prior to 1 February 2020.
- Students who have only been to Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan.

By way of example,

- if someone left the city of Wuhan in Hubei Province on 22 January 2020 he/she is required to isolate until 6 February 2020.
- if someone left Shanghai on 28 January 2020 and comes to Australia via another country on 3 February 2020, he/she would **not be required** to isolate (as he/she left China **before** 1 February 2020).
- If someone left Beijing on 3 February 2020 and arrived in Australia the same day, he/she **would** be required to isolate for 14 days, until 17 February 2020.

If students develop symptoms (listed below) within 14 days of leaving anywhere in mainland China or within 14 days of last contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, they should arrange to see their usual doctor for urgent assessment. Students should telephone the health clinic or hospital before arriving and tell them of their travel history or that they have been in contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus. The doctor will liaise with Public Health authorities to manage their care. Students must then remain isolated either in their home or a healthcare setting until Public Health authorities inform them that it is safe for them to return to usual activities.

## What does isolate in your home mean?

People who must be isolated should not attend public places, in particular work, school, childcare or public areas of university, higher education and vocational education campuses for example attending lectures. Only people who usually reside in their home or other place of residence should be permitted on the premises. Do not allow visitors into the home or residence. There is no need to wear masks in the home or residence. Where possible, get others such as friends or family, who are not required to be isolated to get food or other necessities for you.

If the university, higher education or vocational education facilities semester has commenced, the person affected should notify their lecturer or tutor of their circumstance to determine whether alternate arrangements for remote learning can be temporarily put in place. University, higher education and vocational education administrators should review what mechanisms for remote learning they have in place that could be adapted to accommodate people in this circumstance keeping in mind the isolation period, provided the person remains well, is a maximum of 14 days. If people affected must leave the home or residence, such as to seek medical care, they are instructed to wear a surgical mask if they have one.

## What is this virus?

Coronaviruses can make humans and animals sick. Some coronaviruses can cause illness similar to the common cold and others can cause more serious diseases, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

The virus seen in mainland China is called 'novel' because it is new. It has not been detected before this outbreak. Most people currently infected live in, or have travelled to mainland China. There have been some cases of 2019-nCoV reported in other countries. It is likely that the virus originally came from an animal, and there is now evidence that it can spread from person-to-person.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

## What if I have a student or staff member who is sick within 14 days of being in mainland China, or in contact with a confirmed case of 2019-nCoV?

If a student/staff member develops mild symptoms, they must:

- isolate themselves in a single room away from others and seek an urgent medical review
- when possible, isolate themselves at home while waiting for results of the assessment
- call a doctor or hospital ahead of time and tell them they may have novel coronavirus infection
- tell the doctor's clinic or hospital again when they arrive that they may have novel coronavirus infection.

If the student/staff has severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath:

- call **000** and request an ambulance
- inform the paramedics that the student/staff may have novel coronavirus infection.

Staff and students should be excluded from attending the university, higher education and vocational education facility until they are assessed by their primary care provider. The primary care provider will liaise with the public health authorities to determine when it is safe for them to return to university, higher education and vocational education facilities.

## How can we help prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses. Encourage all students and staff to:

- wash their hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet
- avoid contact with others (including touching, kissing, hugging, and other intimate contact)
- cough and sneeze into their elbow.

## Where can I get more information?

Visit the Australian Government Department of Health homepage at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

Contact your state or territory public health agency:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA call 08 9328 0553