



Australian Government
Department of Health

Deputy Chief Medical Officer

Ms Catriona Jackson
Chief Executive
Universities Australia
GPO Box 1142
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Ms Jackson,

Re: COVID-19 - University students from countries or regions outside mainland China arriving in Australia

I am writing to provide an update on a group of university students who will shortly be able to travel to Australia to begin their studies.

Any students who have travelled to other countries from mainland China to see out the 14-day travel exclusion period, and who have had no recent contact with people with COVID-19 (formerly known as the novel coronavirus infection), will be welcomed to Australia. Students who have spent more than 14 days in another country after leaving mainland China do not require quarantine, as long as they have not had contact with a confirmed case.

This is timely news for universities and the Australian Government is very pleased that these students will be able to commence or continue their studies on campus.

The Australian Government believes the risk that these students will develop COVID-19 is low, however we do ask universities and the students themselves to be vigilant and cautious to ensure their safety, and the safety of all students and staff.

Universities are asked to alert their student clinics about this cohort of students. We advise health professionals to consider student travel history closely for patients with symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

Any students who have travelled to or through Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand should be tested if they have these symptoms. This is consistent with advice from the Communicable Diseases Network Australia.

Students arriving on campus should be urged to report any new or persisting respiratory symptoms as quickly as possible. Universities can reassure students that anyone who does develop COVID-19 will be cared for in an Australian hospital.

My colleagues and I continue to recognise the impact on the education sector of the steps being taken to protect the Australian population from COVID-19.

Recommendations are not made lightly and we will continue to make proportionate decisions based on the latest information and solid medical advice.

It is important to note these measures have been very successful to date with only 15 cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in Australia and all of these directly associated with travellers from Hubei Province of China.

Please note, the following arrangements do remain in place:

- Australia will deny entry to anyone who has left or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days, with the exception of Australian citizens, permanent residents, and immediate family members of Australian citizens and permanent residents including spouses, minor dependants and legal guardians.
- Australian citizens who have left or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days must isolate themselves for 14 days from the date of leaving mainland China.
- People who have had close contact with a proven cases of novel coronavirus must isolate themselves for 14 days from the date of last contact.

For further information on COVID-19, please go to:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-resources>

Yours sincerely



Professor Paul Kelly
Deputy Chief Medical Officer
18 February 2020