

COVID -19 - Frequent Asked Questions

Confirmation of enrolment (CoE) & remote study

➤ **Does online & remote learning have any consequences for my visa or CoE?**

No. The online/remote learning arrangement is temporary during the Coronavirus crisis only. This is not a permanent delivery mode for international students. The change in course delivery from face-to-face to digital and remote delivery will not affect compliance with your visa conditions or your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

➤ **Do I need to change my CoE if I plan to study digitally & remotely from overseas?**

No, you don't need to change your enrolment. However, if you decide to travel home, you may not be able to return to Australia when face-to-face learning resumes if current travel restrictions are still in place.

➤ **How do I extend my CoE?**

We will work with you to find the best study plan for your course. If we need to revise plans, we will provide you with a new electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) that contains your revised study dates.

➤ **How is my study progress/attendance being monitored when I am in Australia and study online?**

Student attendance will be monitored through login duration, attendance in live session and completion of activities during offline session (as applicable in each class).

Student progress will be monitored by the usual method: successfully completion of assessment task.

➤ **During my online learning, how to I receive support if I have technical issues?**

You can use your current user name and password to access Moodle. Session times and link to access live teaching sessions are to be sent by your course trainers and also available in each course on Moodle.

You can access IT/ technical help by sending email to: Jamie.wang@gbca.edu.au;

➤ **If I'm studying remotely, can I do it in my home country instead of staying in Australia?**

Yes, you can study remotely and digitally in your home country. However, please note that classes will be delivered and start on Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT). As such, you will need to consider the time difference in your home country to ensure that you are present and ready to commence the class at the right time.

Please note, that we currently do not know how long we will be delivering classes this way. You will need to consider this as and when we transition back to face-to-face class delivery to ensure you are able to travel back to Australia in time, including if any travel restrictions are still in place.

➤ **Does remote learning have any impact on gaining an Australian qualification?**

No. As mentioned above, remote learning is a temporary solution only. If you remain enrolled with GBCA, and the assessment requirements of the course allow it, your location and the mode of delivery is not an impediment to achieving an Australian qualification. GBCA will ensure that assessment and quality standards are maintained.

➤ **I'd like to apply for deferral of suspension of my study due to the pandemic. How can I do that?**

If you haven't started your study with us, but would like to defer your enrolment to future intake due to the outbreak of Covid-19, please fill out [SA043a Student deferral suspension cancellation application form](#) which is available on <https://gbca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SA043a-Student-deferral-cancellation-application-form.pdf> and send it to Studentsupport@gbca.edu.au attaching with any evidence that support your reason of deferral.

If you already started your study with us, but severely affected by the pandemic and unable to return to Australia, and having difficulties in commencing online study, please fill out [SA043b Student leave suspension application form](#) which is available on <https://gbca.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SA043b-Student-leave-suspension-application-form.pdf> and send it to Studentsupport@gbca.edu.au attaching with any evidence that support your reason of suspension.

If you defer or suspend your study, GBCA is required to notify the Department of Home Affairs. You may be able to remain in Australia or travel overseas if you have deferred or suspended your course for compassionate and compelling reasons and remain enrolled. More information is available on the [Department of Home Affairs](#) website.

If you have been unable to return to Australia to continue your studies, you may need to suspend your study. This will not affect your visa status. If you require time to complete your studies, beyond the visa expiry, you will need to apply for a new student visa and will require a new Confirmation of Enrolment.

Your visa, travel & insurance

➤ **What will happen to my student visa if I defer my studies?**

If you are applying for deferment or leave of absence for 6 to 12 months due to the coronavirus travel ban, your CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment) can be extended.

The CoE extension can then be used to apply for a visa extension which you can obtain via the Department of Home Affairs.

Apply using the [CoE extension form](#).

➤ **Is there any change to my visa work rights?**

No, you can continue to work a maximum of 40 hours every fortnight. You may even be able to work more hours depending on your employment.

[Supermarkets](#) and [aged care facilities](#) have temporarily been given authorisation to offer more hours to international students working in these occupations.

Support & finances

➤ **Where can I get support in the current situation?**

Our Training and Support team can assist you with support services for your welfare and wellbeing and help you find access to other local support services. Please contact the team via studentsupport@gbca.edu.au

For any enquires about payment plan, fee, etc, please contact finance team via financesupport@gbca.edu.au

Health and Wellbeing

➤ **What are the symptoms of coronavirus?**

The most common coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms reported are:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties, breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness.

Many people who contract coronavirus (COVID-19) will suffer only mild symptoms. Elderly people and those with pre-existing medical conditions may experience more severe symptoms.

➤ **Who is most at risk of coronavirus?**

There are three groups in the community who are most at risk of coronavirus (COVID-19).

- **Overseas travellers and close contacts**

If you have recently travelled overseas or have had close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) you are at the highest risk of infection.

- **Elderly or have pre-existing medical conditions**

Many people will suffer only mild symptoms; however, early indications are that the elderly are more at risk of experiencing severe symptoms.

People with underlying illnesses that make them more vulnerable to respiratory disease, including those with diabetes, chronic lung disease, kidney failure and people with suppressed immune systems are also at a higher risk of serious disease.

➤ **I am feeling unwell, what should I do?**

If you are in any of the most at [risk categories](#) and begin to feel unwell and develop a fever or shortness of breath, a cough or respiratory illness either during your period of isolation (self-quarantine), or in the 14 days since arriving home from international travel, you should seek immediate medical attention.

Call ahead to your GP or emergency department and mention your overseas travel before you arrive at the doctor's office so they can prepare appropriate infection control measures.

If you have serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, call 000 and ask for an ambulance and tell the operator your recent travel history.

➤ **Where are the coronavirus assessment centres?**

Assessment centres have been established at a number of Victorian hospitals. You don't need to call ahead (unless stated otherwise below) if you attend one of the following clinics:

Metropolitan health services

- Alfred Hospital
- Austin Hospital
- Box Hill Hospital - Eastern Health
- Casey Hospital - Monash Health
- Dandenong Hospital - Monash Health
- Frankston Hospital - Peninsula Health
- Monash Medical Centre, Clayton - Monash Health
- Northern Hospital
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Royal Melbourne Hospital - Melbourne Health
- St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne
- Sunshine Hospital - Western Health

➤ **How does coronavirus spread?**

Health authorities around the world believe the virus is spread from **close contact** with an infected person, mostly through face-to-face or between members of the same household. People may also pick up the virus from surfaces contaminated by a person with the infection.

The virus is spread by people with symptoms when they cough or sneeze. That's why the best way to protect others is to practice good personal hygiene.

➤ **How do you define 'close contact'?**

'Close contact' means having face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)– or alternatively sharing a closed space with them for more than two hours.

Close contact can happen in many ways, but examples include:

- living in the same household or household-like setting (for example, a boarding school or hostel)

- direct contact with the body fluids or laboratory specimens of a confirmed case
- being in the same room or office for two hours or more
- face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes in some other setting such as in a car or a lift or sitting next to them on public transport.

➤ **How can I reduce my risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection?**

- Keep a full arm-span (about 1.5 metres) between yourself and other people where possible
- Wash hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the tissue
- If you don't have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow
- Continue healthy habits: don't smoke, exercise, drink water, get plenty of sleep
- Buy an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60 per cent alcohol
- Stay at home if you feel sick, and undertake physical distancing as outlined in the section below.

➤ **Does the coronavirus survive on surfaces?**

Studies suggest that coronavirus (COVID-19) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions such as the type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment.

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with a common household disinfectant to kill the virus.

In general, to avoid contact with the virus, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water often. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

➤ **What is the difference between coronavirus and the flu?**

The first symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and influenza infections are often very similar.

They both cause fever and similar respiratory symptoms, which can then range from mild through to severe disease, and sometimes can be fatal.

Both viruses are also transmitted in the same way, by coughing or sneezing, or by contact with hands, surfaces or objects contaminated with the virus. You can reduce the risk of both infections with good hand hygiene, good cough etiquette and good household cleaning.

The speed of transmission is an important difference between the two viruses. The time from infection to appearance of symptoms (the incubation period) for influenza is shorter than that for coronavirus. This means that influenza can spread faster than coronavirus.

While the range of symptoms for the two viruses is similar, the proportion of people who develop severe disease appears to be higher for coronavirus.

International evidence consistently shows that most people have mild symptoms. While evidence varies from country to country, it is currently estimated that around 15% of people will experience severe infections and 5% will become critically ill. The proportions of severe and critical coronavirus infections are higher than for influenza infections.

➤ **What is the treatment for coronavirus?**

There are currently no vaccines that protect against coronavirus (COVID-19).

While there is no specific pharmaceutical treatments for coronavirus, early diagnosis and general supportive care are important.

There are no current recommendations to treat patients with mild or moderate COVID-19 illness, or their close contacts, with hydroxychloroquine or anti-viral agents.

Treatment of COVID-19 with antivirals is considered experimental and should only be considered within the context of controlled interventional trials.

Most of the time, symptoms will resolve on their own. People who have serious disease with complications can be cared for in hospital.

➤ **How do we know people who have had coronavirus are no longer infectious?**

People with a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection stay in quarantine until they are no longer experiencing symptoms of coronavirus infection.

Before they are released from quarantine, their doctor or specialist care team assesses they are no longer infectious.

Once they are discharged they have a follow up assessment by the medical team to make sure they remain well.

➤ **What are some of the way to achieve physical distancing?**

Physical distancing involves changing your social habits to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus. While effective, physical distancing cannot eliminate risk of transmission entirely and is not appropriate in many circumstances.

You could practice physical distancing going to and from work, including on public transport, and at work or social gatherings. For example, things you can do include:

- keeping a full arm-span (about 1.5 metres) between yourself and other people where possible
- avoiding crowds and mass gatherings where it is difficult to keep the appropriate distance away from others
- avoiding small gatherings in enclosed spaces, for example non-essential business meetings
- avoiding shaking hands, hugging, or kissing other people
- avoiding visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, or people with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical treatment.

Self-quarantine

➤ What can't I do during self-quarantine?

If you are required to self-quarantine, the following rules apply:

- you must not attend work, school, childcare or university
- you must not go to other public places such as restaurants, cinemas or shopping centres
- you must not use public transport or taxis
- you must not allow visitors into your home - only those who usually live in the household should be in the home
- you must stay in a different room to other people as much as possible.

➤ What if I start feeling unwell during self-quarantine?

If you start to feel unwell – and especially if you develop any with any of the typical symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) during self-quarantine, you should either:

- call the dedicated coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week) for advice

- call ahead to your GP and mention your overseas travel before you arrive at the doctor's office so they can prepare appropriate infection control measures.

If you have serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, call 000 and ask for an ambulance.

➤ **How should I prepare for self-quarantine?**

Everyone should take steps to prepare for the possibility of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria in the coming weeks or months.

Make a plan on how you and your family or roommates would have to manage if you needed to stay at home for 2 to 3 weeks.

There are certain supplies you may need if you are in quarantine at home. These include things like non-perishable food items, soap, toilet paper, tissues, feminine care products, nappies and pet food.

Ensure you have enough prescriptions of essential medicines if you need to stay home.

➤ **What do I do at the end of 14 days self-quarantine?**

The process for coming out of self-quarantine differs depending on why you went into self-quarantine in the first place.

- **If you are a returning traveller from overseas**

If, at the end of 14 days, you remain well, you have passed the time limit beyond which you would have fallen ill after being exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19). You can cease quarantine. You do not require a medical certificate to enable you to return to other activities. In the absence of symptoms, note there is no medical test available to predict whether you will become unwell.

- **If you self-quarantined after coming into contact with a confirmed or suspected case of coronavirus (COVID-19)**

If, at the end of 14 days, you remain well, you have passed the time limit beyond which you would have fallen ill after being exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19). You can cease self-quarantine. No medical certificate is required to enable you to return to other activities.

- **If you were a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)**

You cannot end isolation until you meet the relevant requirements. To find out more, call the dedicated coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week).

- **If you are feeling unwell**

If, at the end of 14 days, you are unwell with respiratory symptoms, you must stay in self-quarantine. Call the dedicated coronavirus hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week) to find out what you should do next.

➤ **What if I am sharing a house with someone who is in self-quarantine?**

There are different reasons for people to be in self-quarantine, and so if you are sharing a house with someone in this situation, the obligations on you will differ.

- **If the person is well but has come into close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus**

If the person you live with is in self-quarantine as a precaution and follows all the required steps for self-quarantine, nobody else in the house is required to self-quarantine.

- **If the person is well but has a suspected case of coronavirus**

If the person you live with is in self-quarantine because it is suspected they may have coronavirus, there is no need for others in the house to self-quarantine unless the person becomes a confirmed case. At that point, all people in the household are regarded as having had close contact and are required to self-quarantine.

- **If the person is unwell and has a confirmed case of coronavirus**

If the person you live with is in isolation because it is suspected they may have contracted coronavirus, there is no need for others in the house to self-quarantine unless the person becomes a confirmed case. At that point, all people in the household are required to self-quarantine.

Coping with feelings of anxiety

➤ **Stay connected**

While you are in a period of self-quarantine, make sure you reach out to the people you trust, like friends, family, neighbours and workmates via phone, e-mail, Facetime, Facebook video, WhatsApp video or other online services.

Share how you feel and try linking with people who are in a similar situation as you. If possible, join an online forum, social media group or other online community to support others and yourself.

➤ **Set up healthy daily routines**

A regular routine will help you feel happier and less bored. Your routine should include maintaining regular mealtimes, eating a healthy and balanced diet, getting enough sleep and keeping physically active around the house. Avoid excessive use of alcohol.

If you continue to work during self-quarantine, try to stick to your normal work times. If you have spare time, consider doing tasks that give you a sense of achievement.

If you smoke, consider quitting or at least reducing your smoking during this time, particularly if you are recovering from coronavirus.

➤ **Stay active**

Physical activity is a proven way to reduce the effects of stress. Look for online content that could help you exercise, do yoga or learn a new healthy pastime.

➤ **Stay informed**

It is normal to want to stay informed, and there are many sources of information about coronavirus in the media. Remember that too much exposure during quarantine, especially to confronting news content, could be harmful to your mental wellbeing. Set limits on the amount of time you spend watching or reading news or social media commentary.

➤ **Can I go outside during self-quarantine?**

It's OK to go out into the backyard of your house or onto the balcony of your apartment or hotel room during self-quarantine, in fact it can help you feel calm and relaxed to get some sun and fresh air. Always observe the recommended physical distancing requirements from the people around you in the home, and wear a surgical mask if you have one.

➤ **Can I receive deliveries during self-quarantine?**

Yes, although you should maintain appropriate physical distancing from the delivery person and they should not enter your home. They should leave your delivery outside your door. Consider making payment for the delivery online in advance or using a contactless payment method to minimise the chances of physical contact. Avoid paying by cash.

Mass gatherings

➤ **Which mass gatherings are banned?**

To limit the spread of coronavirus, the Chief Health Officer has directed that the following types of gatherings must not take place:

- a gathering of 500 or more people in a single undivided **outdoor** space at the same time.
- a gathering of 100 or more people in a single undivided **indoor** space at the same time.

If you need help to understand this direction, call the Coronavirus hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week).

➤ **What kinds of events or venues does this include?**

The definition of mass gathering is broad. It can include, but is not limited to:

- concerts
- festivals
- fairs
- religious services
- private or corporate functions
- club events
- conventions.

If you are unsure if your planned event or gathering is included in the ban, call the Coronavirus hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week).

It is strongly recommended that in any enclosed space there should be on average no more than one person per four square metres of floor space.

➤ **What types of mass gatherings are exempt?**

A mass gathering does not include essential gatherings or venues of the following kinds:

- airports
- public transport, including public transport vehicles, stations, platforms and stops
- medical or health service facilities
- emergency services facilities
- disability or aged care facilities

- prisons, correctional facilities, youth justice centres or other place of custody
- courts and tribunals
- Parliament
- food markets, supermarkets, grocery stores, retail stores and shopping centres
- office buildings, factories and construction sites
- schools, universities, educational institutions or childcare facilities – except for activities that are deemed not necessary for the normal business of the facility. This means that events, for example, such as school assemblies, parent-teacher evenings and school sports events involving a mass gathering as defined above should not take place.
- hotels or motels
- places where 500 or more persons may be present for the purposes of transiting through the place – example of these places include Federation Square and the Bourke street mall
- any other gathering which is exempted from this direction by the Chief Health Officer.

The above information can also be find via Department of Health and Human Services Victoria
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>