



April 17th, 2020

Update to recent COVID-19 developments

Hello!

I hope this finds you all very well and happy in your bubbles and having adapted to the online learning that saw our April term get underway last week. The academic staff have been highly impressed by the overall attitude, capability and good intent to continue your learning pathway over the past week. The sub-conscious learnings generated when we are required to absorb and adapt to unforeseen circumstances are often as valuable as formal taught study content. In terms of your character, think resilience, tenacity & determination.

As we draw towards the end of the initial four week lock down period, we wanted to be in touch to answer some common queries and keep you up to date with our plans moving forward.

 **Alert Levels:** We are keeping a close watch on the daily briefings and more specifically how this information specifically impacts the tertiary education sector. We have continuity plans in place for a raft of outcomes on Monday when the government has indicated they will release details regarding the current alert level and if we can expect for this to be changed. At this stage, we do not see the move from Alert level 4 down to Alert level 3 as having a major impact on the way we are currently running day to day learning and operations. The outline of expectations at level 3 for education are as follows: *tertiary education facilities open for limited activities involving small groups (up to 10 people), and with distance learning provision for others* while the general summary for the movement of people is *stay at home, other than for essential personal movement, and going to work/school. Stay in extended bubble, which can now include close family or caregivers.*

The movement of our student body back into Queenstown, into hall of residence and onto campus is not validated at Level 3. We expect this to happen at Alert Level 2

 **Online Classroom Delivery:** The academic team will continue to deliver your theoretical classroom content via the methods utilised over the past fortnight. Please continue to engage and make the most of the opportunity to continue with your learning. We also encourage you to be proactive in looking for support if you feel you need it – your tutors, programme leader and myself in student services are all available as and when required.

 **Practical Classes:** We are very aware that the practical learning components of both diploma courses do not transfer into the online learning space. The academic director is evaluating how these are best rolled-out over the duration of your course dependent upon the continued impact of the COVID-19 situation. You will be updated regarding this area of learning when we have a clearer vision of when we can return to on-campus learning. QRC is well networked and connected to industry

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which will help us to ensure that these essential areas of learning will be delivered in some format as per your schedule of learning albeit with slightly altered timings.

 **Accommodation:** Relief packages were implemented for both QRC & Shotover Lodge as we entered in to the first confirmed 4 weeks of lockdown. As they currently stand, these will expire on Wednesday 22nd April, when lockdown is due to finish, however we will be revisiting this issue and exploring how we best support our students moving forward. We will again be in a better place to make these decisions following the government's announcement on Monday 20th April. Please remember as a full-time student who is continuing with their course of study you are entitled to all the normal Studylink payments.

 **Keeping Connected:** Perhaps one of the most important things you can do while remaining in these bubbles is keeping the connect going with your friends, peers and wider student community. The student council is working hard to facilitate this, and I encourage you to get involved. Check out www.instagram.com/qrclockdown/

 **Keeping Positive:** It is very important to know you are not alone right now. Across the country a million students have transitioned to online learning with a raft of both success and stresses! The disappointment and frustration at having plans changed are universal and there is a need to accept and re-frame this change which is beyond your control rather than allow it to steer you off course. If however there are times when the situation becomes challenging beyond your means of coping there is help. Some great online resources include: www.allright.org.nz/campaigns/getting-through-together & www.thelowdown.co.nz. I am also available to discuss any concerns as is Kirsty, programme leader so please do not hesitate to be in touch.

We hope this information is helpful to you but as always, if you feel we have missed anything pertinent then just be in touch and we will work to get answers for you. Please share information with parents & whanau as we appreciate they like to stay informed at times like this. We will also be updating the COVID dedicated section of the website as new and relevant information comes to hand.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lynsey Bullock'.

Lynsey Bullock
Student Services Manager