

1 October 2021 3.08pm

All staff email from Professor Allan Evans, Acting Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues

As we complete another successful round of graduations, I would once again like to thank all academic and professional staff for their outstanding efforts over the past two years to ensure the multiple impacts of COVID-19 disruptions on student progress were kept to a minimum. Those who were able to attend the ceremonies would have left with a strong feeling of pride.

We have also worked extremely hard these past two years to ensure our own safety and that of our colleagues and our students, and I also want to thank everyone again for their cooperation, collegiality and dedication in continuing to provide high quality services and support during these challenging times. The compliance with social distancing and mask use has been exceptional – with our ongoing commitment fully on display at each and every graduation ceremony.

While South Australia has, so far, avoided many of the longer-term COVID-19 restrictions, there is no guarantee that our situation will remain trouble-free in the coming months. Until we reach the appropriate vaccination targets, any outbreaks in South Australia may lead to temporary restrictions, including our ability to attend campus. And when the virus does move through our community, as I believe it inevitably will, we will be challenged in much the same way that Victoria and NSW are currently being challenged.

You are no doubt aware that some universities interstate have recently mandated vaccination for people attending their campuses. While UniSA has not, at this point, mandated COVID-19 vaccination for staff and students, I cannot guarantee that vaccination will not become mandatory for UniSA campus attendance, at least for a period of time, over coming months.

Indeed, COVID-19 vaccination has already been mandated for students who need to attend certain placement sites, particularly health services, as part of their studies. This is no different to the requirements that have been in place for some time around vaccination against other serious diseases.

Accordingly, students in health have been informed that lack of vaccination may impair their progress through their degrees as we may not be able to secure appropriate health placement for their studies. UniSA relies a great deal on our industry partners and it is their prerogative to request students be vaccinated before attending their premises or engaging with their staff, clients and customers.

For your own protection, and for the protection of your colleagues, our students, and those who for medical reasons are unable to be vaccinated, I would like to encourage you to make COVID-19 vaccination a priority if you have not done so already. As a university, I believe we have an obligation to lead the way and ensure we adhere to the best possible scientific and medical advice which signals, quite clearly, that the best way of minimizing the individual and community impacts of COVID-19 is to become double vaccinated.

On the University's [COVID website](#) you will also find a range of information and resources about, for example, the availability of leave for the purposes of getting a vaccination.

Thank you.