

5 August 2021 1.02pm

All staff email from Professor David G. Lloyd, Vice-Chancellor and President

Dear Colleagues,

I want to thank you for your continued dedication and cooperation over the past few weeks as we have transitioned in and out of lockdown and at the same time welcomed our new and returning students for semester two. It seems advanced juggling is a skill we are destined to continue to develop.

I appreciate that we haven't always been able to give everyone as much notice about changes to our operations as we would like, or to provide you with the levels of fine-grained detail and clarity that cover off on how best to approach every aspect of University business – inclusive, instructive, one size fits all reactive communication has proven quite challenging in an organization this large and complex, given the ever evolving landscape in which we are operating.

Managing our way through these times requires flexibility, the application of local area best judgements and great collegiality. That is being demonstrated time and again across our institution. As I have said before, we've got this.

Further to the communication from the Provost, Professor Allan Evans, while he was acting for me last week, I would like to outline the state of play for the next period from Monday 9 August.

First, the University is open for business.

Lectures will remain online, and, wherever possible, tutorials, practicals and workshops will be delivered face-to-face, in line with the applicable COVID protocols.

As the University is open and we are providing our services to the student body, our research and industry partners and to members of the public, we have an obligation and responsibility to present for work on campus, to both support each other, but also to deliver those services to our various partners and students.

Where a staff member has an agreed work from home arrangement with their manager – which has been agreed in the context of the current level of community restrictions and on-campus activity – where necessary, this may continue, having regard to the best arrangements for ongoing delivery of service, team connection and workplace connectivity.

Clearly, until such time as there is a sufficient level of community vaccination, we will find ourselves in a situation wherein we can expect ongoing variable restrictions as outbreaks are dealt with.

Regrettably, we will need to be prepared to move to different working arrangements at short notice during this period.

Consequently, we need to adopt additional and more strategic local area responses to how we organise ourselves as staff members in our teams to ensure the best continuity of our services.

This means that we will all need to recognise that arrangements in one area may well be different than in another as both individual personal circumstances and local area work requirements differ across the university, and managing those arrangements will vary depending on prevailing external conditions.

What doesn't vary is our stated desire to adopt increasingly flexible working arrangements for the future and in support of this, I want to flag our intent to enable more 'mobile' working solutions through the strategic replacement of desktops with laptops in a timely fashion – which will also make it much easier for everyone to flex in difficult times. This initiative will be coordinated by ISTS across the university and in consultation with local area senior managers.

I want to reiterate the requirements for mask wearing on campus under the current health guidelines. Masks should be worn in public spaces. Masks should be worn in situations where there is engagement with the public and masks should be worn where prescribed social distancing cannot be maintained. Masks are *recommended* in office work situations but are not *required* – I ask you to simply use your best judgement taking into account your own health situation, that of your colleagues, and ability to appropriately socially distance.

Lastly, I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage you to get vaccinated against COVID19. I'm fortunate to have had double jab, and do appreciate the challenges of supply and demand, but please do make the effort. There is no better protection for you, those you love and wider society than to be vaccinated. The science is sound, the upside is real and the benefits will be shared by us all.

Please monitor the website for communications and updates to FAQs as we get information to hand.

Do please continue to look after yourselves, your colleagues and significant others.

Best regards,