

Griffith COVID Safe Plan

Ongoing Safe Campuses

This document directs and supports University activity on campus with COVID-19 outbreak prevention and management plans. It is for implementation by all Griffith University staff and students.

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Response to COVID-19

This document has been developed to provide the essential requirements and standards for Griffith University in response to COVID-19. It specifically refers to the required shared responsibilities of returning to campus. The document is applicable to all Griffith University staff and students.

This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The University will continue to collaborate, share information, and review plans with local health officials to help protect the community, including those with special health needs.

This document has been prepared based on the most up to date and relevant information contained in the following:

- QLD Chief Health Officer public health directions
 - o <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/legislation/cho-public-health-directions-under-expanded-public-health-act-powers>
 - o This includes directions around:
 - o Border restrictions
 - o Going out, travel, recreation and gathering in QLD
 - o Business, activities and undertakings
- QLD Government – QLD Health COVID-19 webpage
 - o <https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/>
- QLD Government Road Map to Easing Restrictions
 - o <https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions>
- QLD Government COVID Testing Guidelines
 - o <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/stay-informed/testing-and-fever-clinics>
- QLD Government High Risk and Vulnerable People
 - o <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/advice-for-people-at-risk-of-coronavirus-covid-19>
- QLD Government WoG Pandemic Plan dated March 2020
 - o https://www.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/124585/FINAL-QLD-WoG-Pandemic-Plan.pdf
- Griffith University COVID information
 - o <https://www.griffith.edu.au/coronavirus>

Revision History			
Version	Date	Reason/Changes	Endorsed by:
1.0	05/08/2020		Recovery Planning (Sprint) Team
2.0	12/08/2020	Amendments	Recovery Planning (Sprint) Team
3.0	01/04/2021	Ongoing Considerations for Safe Campuses – “COVID Normal”	CMT
4.0	25/05/2021	Minor Amendments	CWG

1.0 Legal Framework

It is the responsibility of Griffith University to identify and comply with relevant legislation and regulations. The University must fulfil its legal responsibilities in relation to infection control by adopting standard and transmission-based precautions as directed by QLD public health authorities. COVID -19 is a notifiable condition under the Australian National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS).

The University must also fulfil its legal responsibilities in relation to work health and safety as prescribed by the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)¹. The University will achieve this by adopting clear Health and Safety requirements in relation to hazard management to identify the hazards, assess their risks and implement effective control measures to prevent illness occurring to any individual staff and students while conducting University activities.

COVID-19 contracted due to University's business or undertaking is a notifiable incident to Comcare as our regulator.

2.0 Failure to Comply

Griffith University has clear aspirations and mutual expectations of its staff and students as they work together to achieve the University's Mission. Such expectations include professional standards of behaviour such as acting with care and diligence, and in a safe manner. Expectations are drawn from the University's policies and procedures which are accessible [HERE](#).

All staff and students must comply with the University COVID-19 protocols within this document to ensure that workplaces remain safe environments. If staff or students are unsure of any of the protocols contained within this document, they should seek clarification from their supervisor (staff member or HDR candidate) or Student Connect in Student Life (other students). Student connect will refer to the appropriate officer depending on the issue. Clarification of any technical aspect(s) of health and safety should be referred to the Health Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Links to the Staff Code of Conduct and Student Charter are below:

- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Charter](#)

If you are unable to follow directions in this document:

- University staff and HDR candidates should inform their supervisor/manager, who will then advise the Dean (Academic) (If the staff member is based in one of the four academic Groups), the Director, Institute for Glycomics, or the Professional Area Director (if the staff member is based in Corporate Services, central administration, or other element).
- Students, other than HDR candidates, should inform Student Connect in Student Life.

¹ Section 19 of the Act details the primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk to a workers health and safety is managed. *Section 17 Management of risks* requires the elimination of risks as the first option and, where this is not reasonably practicable, to minimise the risks as far as is reasonably practicable. Reasonably practicable is defined in the Act under section 18 as taking into account numerous relevant factors such as: likelihood, degree of harm, knowledge of the risk, availability and suitability of controls and cost. The other key legislative consideration is the duty to consult; this needs to be demonstrated but there are numerous ways to achieve this.

3.0 “COVID Normal” Definition

“COVID Normal” refers to the implementation of a COVID Safe Campuses for all University personnel and operations, and a recognition that COVID is an ongoing risk to the University. It will focus on ensuring we continue to follow QLD Government COVID-19 safe guidelines and directions to support the health and safety of staff and students, whilst seeking all opportunities to continue with University business.

The University will continue to adhere to all QLD Health and QLD Government directions. Updated directions will always take priority over this plan.

4.0 Understanding COVID-19

4.1 Recognising COVID-19

COVID-19 is a contagious viral infection that generally causes respiratory illness in humans. Presentation can range from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe illness with potentially life-threatening complications, including pneumonia. COVID-19 is spread by contact with respiratory secretions and fomites.

4.2 People at risk of complications from COVID-19

People at the greatest risk of severe illness with COVID-19 can be found at the associated link but generally include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples and people in remote communities, especially >50 years old.
- Age > 65 years.
- Those with underlying serious chronic disorders including metabolic disease.
- People in aged care facilities or group residential settings.
- People who are immunocompromised.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Deans, Director, Institute for Glycomics and Professional Area Directors

The primary responsibility of managing prevention of COVID-19 outbreaks lies with Deans (Academic), Director of the Institute for Glycomics, and Professional Area Directors across Griffith, within their responsibilities of oversight for their operating areas. Each Dean, the Director of Glycomics, Professional Area Director, ultimately supported by the University Executive are required to:

- Confirm that Health and Safety Protocols for COVID-19 are planned for, implemented, and followed.
- Consult and report to Workplace Health and Safety Committees (at Group and Division level to the University H&S Committee) on the impacts of COVID compliance.
- Ensure that the consequences of non-compliance to COVID-19 protocols are enforced, and that staff and students are aware of their obligations under the:
 - o [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
 - o [Student Charter](#)
- Where possible Deans, the Director and Professional Area Directors are to ensure any potential or confirmed incidents are reported via GSafe for case management. A reporting

protocol from GSafe is in place to notify the relevant authorities including Queensland Health and University Executive Group.

- Maintaining records of key decisions regarding activities that may pose a COVID risk.
- Maintain records of critical activities and staff that may need to access campus under QLD Government restrictions.

5.2 Individual Staff/Students

Every individual is responsible for maintaining their own health and safety, and that of their colleagues across the University. Each individual is required to:

- Comply with QLD government testing requirements
- If a staff member or student is unwell, they must not attend campus or must leave campus and go home. COVID testing is strongly advised. Staff and students who are unwell should not attend campus until fully recovered or cleared by medical professionals.
- Ensure compliance social distancing and hygiene is maintained.
- Comply with the contact tracing requirements of the University.

Staff who identify as at risk or vulnerable to complications from COVID-19 should discuss their on-going work arrangements with their direct supervisor. We encourage staff (and students) who identify as vulnerable or at risk to continue to work from home in the immediate future. In the first instance please use the working anywhere anytime guidelines. However, for more detailed support, there are provisions for reasonable adjustments for staff with a health condition. Staff should speak to their manager or supervisor in the first instance. Support and advice is also available from the People and Wellbeing Team.

5.3 Support Responsibilities of the University

The University has the overall responsibility to provide a safe workplace for staff and students. Executive Group maintains the responsibility for COVID-19 management and liaison with Queensland Health. To support the return to learning & teaching and research the University will:

- Ensure Health, Hygiene and Sanitation arrangements are in place.
- Ensure cleaning contractors are briefed on COVID-19 cleaning requirements.

6.0 Managing COVID-19



6.1 Screening of Griffith University Research Staff and Students

Students and staff must continue to adhere to testing requirements for COVID-19 In accordance with QLD Health guidelines.

7.0 Standards of Precautions

If these standards are not already in place, they need to be implemented immediately and considered minimum, mandatory standards. Each activity should consider the requirement to

conduct a COVID-19 exposure Risk Assessment in GSafe for submission to Deans, the Director or Professional Area Director if required. If these standard precautions cannot be satisfied, the proposed activity should not proceed.

7.1 Restriction to Campus and Activities

In line with paragraphs 2.2 and 3.2, staff and students at [high risk](#) for COVID-19 complications are encouraged to self-identify so the University can work with them to ensure they are not put at risk.

The University acknowledges that the COVID-19 situation can change at any time. To ensure a swift and structured response to possible future outbreaks the Health and Safety Committee have worked with the expert advisory panel to determine our response to varying levels of risk. The COVID-19 [Response Matrix](#), is available and will be reviewed periodically by University management.

In a significant COVID event where specific new restrictions are implemented by QLD Health and the QLD Government; additional guidance may be communicated by University Leadership to give clarity on the impact to Campuses and University business.

7.2 Hygiene measures

All personnel are encouraged to follow the QLD Government information on [how to protect yourself and others](#). A summary is below.

- Wash your hands regularly for 20 to 30 seconds; and especially after touching communal surfaces e.g., door handles and taps.
- If soap and water is not available, use a hand sanitiser. Hand sanitiser does not replace washing your hands after using the bathroom.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or coughing into your elbow.
- Dispose of used tissues into a bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

7.3 Social (Physical) distancing

Social distancing means separating staff and students from each other and other people as much as possible in all places.

In accordance with current [QLD Government Restrictions on Business, Activities and Undertaking Directions \(No. 8\)](#) Griffith University:

- Must ensure there is no more than 1 person per 2 square meters indoors settings EXCEPT in smaller education and teaching sessions such as:
 - o Group seminars
 - o Tutorials
 - o Practicals and laboratory-based learnings
 - o Vocational training sessions
- Is not required to collect or keep contact information about all guests and staff for contact tracing purposes.

- Businesses, activities, and undertakings such as cafes or sporting-based activities conducted at universities or other educational institutions must comply with the applicable requirements under this Direction.
- Research and Student Experience activities that can be considered education sessions, are also not subject to the one person per 4 square metres rule.
- Physical distancing (Maintain physical distancing – 1.5m between each person) should be observed wherever possible.

7.4 Visitors and Communal Activities

Under Safe Campus guidelines for Griffith University, visitors are permitted on campus without approval. While on campus, it is the expectation of visitors that they will comply with the University's COVID Safe Plan, maintain physical distancing, and remain on campus for the minimum time possible.

7.5 Guidance to Staff

With staff on campus, Leaders and Managers should consider arrangements which optimise the health, safety and wellbeing of staff. Insofar as is reasonably practicable, staff working in an office environment should maintain social distancing and adhere to safe work practices at all times.

Staff who normally occupy a single-occupancy office will work under these business as usual conditions. In areas where staff work in open plan, with multiple occupants, Leaders and Managers should consider operational conditions which minimise the possibility of community transmission e.g., maintain compliance with the 1 person per 2m² rule.

7.6 Signage

Signage must be installed at all entrances, points of egress around the building and in communal areas outlining requirements for social distancing, hygiene, and self-isolation protocols which outline staff and students' responsibilities and the current restrictions in place.

7.6 Mask Wearing

In accordance with current Queensland Health guidelines, it is always encouraged that masks be worn when social distancing is not an option. [Mandatory face masks | Health and wellbeing | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

8.0 COVID-19 Case and Outbreak Management

8.1 Response to a Suspected Case of COVID-19 on Campus

Note: Confirmation of a COVID-19 case will come to the individual from Queensland Health.

To support Griffith University's community's safety, staff who test positive for COVID-19 are required to inform their immediate supervisor what the situation is, and what advice you may already have been given by Queensland Health, GP, health professional, school or other. Managers are to lodge an incident in GSafe or contact the People Support Team on 07 373 54011.

The University has developed a comprehensive process which detail the steps to be taken by staff, students, managers, and supervisors in the event of potential exposure to COVID-19 or a diagnosis.

REFER:

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/staff/coronavirus/advice-for-staff>

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/staff/coronavirus>

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/coronavirus/information-for-students>

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/coronavirus/coronavirus-information-for-researchers>

8.2 Notification – QLD Department of Health and Comcare

Queensland Health will inform us of anyone testing positive for COVID-19. This is a provision in our existing workflows. In all cases, a GSafe incident report will need to be lodged and case managed by the [Health and Safety Team](#) in liaison with Queensland Health.

The Public Health Unit (PHU) will assist with advice and guidance on appropriate follow-on actions. Deans, the Director (Glycomics) and Professional Area Director must be prepared to provide the following information to the PHU:

- Information on the details of the facility (e.g., location and operations).
- date of onset of illness.
- total number of staff that work in the facility and in the affected area.
- total number of staff and students in the facility and in the affected area.

The PHU will advise and assist with the following:

- confirming the presence of an outbreak
- identifying the control measures that need to be in place.

8.3 Contact Tracing

QLD Health services use contact tracing to find people who may have been exposed to an infectious disease. There are two types of ‘contacts’ – close contacts and casual contacts. Health services give advice to both of these contact types on what they need to do.

Close contacts are those that are likely to be at a higher risk of being infected. ‘Close contact’ is defined as any person with the following exposure to a suspect, confirmed or probable case during the case’s infectious period, without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE):

- direct contact with the body fluids or the laboratory specimens of a case.
- face-to-face contact in any setting within two metres of a case for 15 minutes or more.
- having been in a closed environment (e.g. a classroom or lab) within 2 metres of a case for 15 minutes or more.

Casual contacts are persons with exposure to the case who does not meet the criteria for a close contact.

To support contact tracing the University is strongly recommending that all staff and students download and register the Federal Government [COVIDSafe Application](#). The COVIDSafe app helps find close contacts of COVID-19 cases and also assists state and territory health officials to quickly contact people who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

In addition, the University will be utilising the Check In QLD application for dine in food outlets, and strongly encourage all staff and students to download and utilise the app.

9.0 Cleaning and PPE

9.1 Cleaning

- Individuals are responsible for their own workstation and wiping down common areas (e.g., Staff Kitchens, resource rooms and MFDs) before and after use.
- Hand sanitiser is to be available across campuses.
- Disinfectant spray and wipes are to be provided for students to wipe down common / shared equipment.

9.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

QLD Health provides a [comprehensive list of PPE guidelines](#). A summary is below:

- Follow official health advice based on the level of risk.
- In a setting where Griffith University staff or students may be in contact with COVID-19 patients, or patients undergoing testing for COVID-19, adherence to site specific PPE procedures must be maintained (e.g., for those working in a hospital facility).
- Wear a mask when appropriate.
- Utilise disposable PPE in laboratory-based learning or practicals.

10.0 General protocols

10.1 Vehicle Operation

Queensland Health guidelines are limited on advice regarding travel in a car with someone from outside your household. Travelling in a car is not directly regulated in the Chief Health Officer's directions on public gatherings. Griffith University therefore permits vehicle, in line with existing vehicle procedures and processes.

Good hygiene practice advises that you should follow these guidelines to protect yourself from viruses *in a vehicle*:

- Stay home if you are feeling unwell.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 to 30 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitiser.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue or your inner elbow and wash your hands afterwards.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Practice physical distancing by separating yourself by 1.5 metres from other people when practicable.
- Clean surfaces with detergent/disinfectant wipes when available if droplets are spread (such as sneezing or coughing) so that the potential spread of infection can be minimised.

10.2 Travel

The University continues to operate within the [Queensland Government's restrictions](#) and [Federal Government international travel advice](#).

10.2.1 Travel – Domestic

The Queensland Government regularly has restrictions in place regarding travel into the state. Up to date border restrictions can be found [here](#).

All University travel will require approval based on normal approval processes. The University's [Travel Policy](#) outlines the conditions under which staff may travel on University business.

10.2.2 Travel – International

International travel will be based on the directive of the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#).

At the time of approval of this document, no applications for international travel will be approved, as Currently Australian citizens and permanent residents cannot leave Australia due to COVID-19 restrictions, unless they have an exemption.

International travel requires approval from the COO for Professional Staff or the DVC Research for Academic Staff (or the Vice Chancellor and President).

10.3 Event management of on and off campus Griffith University events - NEW

Under the Ongoing Safe Campuses Plan, Academic Groups, Centres, and other University elements should consider the resumption of on or off campus events for the purposes of student recruitment, student retention and success, and research and engagement.

Formal approval is required from the relevant Group Dean Academic, Professional Area Director or the Director, Institute for Glycomics.

Event Organisers are required to complete and adhere to [CHO Direction on Movement and Gathering](#). In all event contexts, event staff must facilitate practices which support appropriate [protection measures](#) are in place.

The Event Organiser must be able to demonstrate how physical distancing strategies will be implemented and monitored in accordance with the requirements above.

For further information in respect of physical distancing strategies REFER to APPENDIX 3, [Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland](#), ATTACHMENT B, Sub-section 1.2.2 *Physical Distancing Strategies*.

10.4 Fire Alarms and building evacuations

If there is a Fire Alarm, the standard protocols must be followed.

11.0 Accessing support

In all emergency situations dial 000.

Staff and Students can access support 24/7 via the Griffith University staff counselling service or Griffith Mental Wellbeing Support Line (Students). Details of these services are provided below:

Staff

The Griffith University staff counselling and coaching program is a confidential wellbeing resource available for all employees and their immediate family. The services are delivered by an external provider, Benestar.

Phone: 1300 360 364

Book online at: <https://www.benestar.com/>

Students

The Griffith Mental Wellbeing Support Line provides immediate relief from emotional distress, explores coping strategies for current problems or a crisis, opens pathways to find longer-term solutions and manages safety concerns.

Phone: 1300 785 442

Text: 0488 884 146