COVID-19 Key Facts

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue, and shortness of breath. The effect of the virus infection can range from a mild illness like a common cold to more severe disease. Most people (about 80 per cent) will recover easily, but people with underlying medical conditions (such as heart or lung disease causing pneumonia and severe acute respiratory syndrome) and the elderly would be at risk of more severe disease if infected. (Source: https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov)

The virus is most likely spread through close contact with an infectious person with COVID-19, or the droplets from their coughs and sneezes. The best way to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses includes staying home if you are unwell and frequently cleaning hands by using alcohol-based hand rub (70% v/v Isopropyl Alcohol) or soap and water.

If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, current practice is that Queensland Health would activate its standard risk response protocols, which may include contacting those who may have been in close contact with the person, and provide advice of next steps. Other non-close contact with an infected person would be considered low risk and these people would be advised accordingly.

Definitions for Close Contact and Casual Contact (Source: CDNA National Guidelines for Public Health Units version 1.17, pg. 11)

**Close contact** is defined as:
- greater than 15 minutes face-to-face contact in any setting with a **confirmed case** including the 24-hour period before the onset of symptoms
- sharing of a closed space (such as small offices) with a **confirmed case** for a prolonged period (e.g. more than 2 hours) including the 24-hour period before the onset of symptoms

**Casual contact** is defined as:
- Casual contact is defined as any person having less than 15 minutes face-to-face contact with a symptomatic confirmed case in any setting, or sharing a closed space with a symptomatic confirmed case for less than 2 hours.

Responses to Frequently Asked Questions for staff/contractors are updated regularly online.

General employee concerns

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<tr>
<th>Employee Query</th>
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<th>Manager Considerations/Responsibilities</th>
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| (1) I am afraid of contracting COVID19. I don’t feel comfortable: | • Refer to key facts about COVID-19 available here, encourage employees to be informed of facts.  
  • Under the guidance of Government, we are continuing to operate as usual, so staff are required to continue to meet their day-to-day work commitments.  
  • The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is paramount, and we understand many students and staff may be feeling quite anxious. Please be assured, UQ continues to follow Government advice and protocols.  
  • All staff and students should practice healthy hygiene habits in line with government advice, including frequent handwashing, avoid shaking hands, and staying at home if unwell. | • Direct employee to COVID-19 webpage for further information  
  • Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support  
  • Direct employee to key government support lines if more information required:  
    Coronavirus Health Information Line  
    Call this line if you are seeking information on novel coronavirus. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.  
    • 1800 020 080  
    • View contact  
    healthdirect hotline  
    Call this number to speak to a registered nurse about your health concerns. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
    • 1800 022 222  
    • https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/  
    • View contact |
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| (2) Am I allowed to work from home? | • Under the guidance of Government, we are continuing to operate as usual so staff are required to continue to meet their day-to-day work commitments.  
• The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is paramount, and we will continue to follow Government advice and protocols and alert you to any changes.  
• All staff and students should practice healthy hygiene habits in line with government advice, including frequent handwashing and staying at home if unwell.  
• The University’s incident management team is monitoring developments closely and programs of work are underway to ensure UQ can respond appropriately and effectively to changes. | • Direct employee to COVID-19 webpage for further information.  
• Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support.  
• Review with HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner to determine if alternative work arrangements should / are able to be considered.  
• Currently, to be considered for a working from home arrangement as a result of COVID-19; employees will need to:  
  o Have been formally directed to self-isolate as per question 5 below (OR)  
  o Seek medical advice and provide UQ with a medical certificate about fitness to attend the workplace, which is sufficiently detailed to the satisfaction of the University. |
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| (3) I'm immunocompromised and I would prefer to work from home/elsewhere. (OR) I'm pregnant and I would prefer to work from home/elsewhere. | • Decisions should be based on a risk assessment considering advice from your medical practitioner with respect to your specific condition and role, taking precautions regarding healthy hygiene practices, avoid sharing items such as keyboards, pens, staplers, mouse etc or wipe down with antibacterial wipes if needed.  
• I understand certain medical conditions may make some individuals more vulnerable. If you are concerned, you will need to seek medical advice and provide us with a medical certificate providing details about your fitness to attend work.  
• Once I have this, I will speak to our HR representative and come back to you with a response.  
• All staff and students should practice healthy hygiene habits in line with government advice, including frequent handwashing and staying at home if unwell. | • Aim to understand the individual’s concerns in more detail.  
• Speak with HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner on available options  
• Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support  
• Currently, to be considered for a working from home arrangement as a result of COVID-19 employees will need to:  
  o Have been formally directly to self-isolate as per question 5 below (OR)  
  o Seek medical advice and provide us with a medical certificate about fitness to attend the workplace, which is sufficiently detailed to the satisfaction of the University. |

**Facts: Australian Government Department of Health**

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly. From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

- people with compromised immune systems (e.g. cancer)  
- elderly people  
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people  
- people with diagnosed chronic medical conditions  
- very young children and babies*  
- people in group residential settings  
- people in detention facilities.
*At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.
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| (4) I am concerned that people I care and have responsibility for, could be at risk because I work at UQ. | • All our students and staff who join us on campus following recent travel are required to comply with Federal Government restrictions and will have been granted access to Australia by the Government after meeting these restrictions.  
• Decisions should be based on a risk assessment considering advice from your medical practitioner with respect to your specific condition and role, taking precautions regarding healthy hygiene practices, avoid sharing items such as keyboards, pens, staplers, mouse etc or wiping down with antibacterial wipes if needed.  
• If you remain concerned, I will liaise with our HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner to obtain further advice.  
• All staff and students should practice healthy hygiene habits in line with government advice, including frequent handwashing and staying at home if unwell. | • Aim to understand the individual’s concerns in more detail.  
• Speak with HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner on available options (e.g. carers leave)  
• Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support |

**Facts: Australian Government Department of Health**

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly. From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

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- people in group residential settings
- people in detention facilities.

*At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children, relative to the broader population.
**Employee has been directed to self-isolate**

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| (5) I have been directed to self-isolate. What do I need to do? | • Can I confirm if you have received written direction to self-isolate from:  
  o Queensland Health (written quarantine order)  
  o medical professional (OR)  
  o government travel advice  
  • [If yes] I will inform our HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner and work with you about next steps.  
  • [If not] Written direction to self-isolate can only be provided by Queensland Health, a medical practitioner or as a result of a government travel restriction therefore:  
    o Under the current guidance of Government, we are continuing to operate as usual, so staff are required to continue to meet their day-to-day work commitments.  
    o The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is paramount, and we will continue to follow Government advice and protocols and alert you to any changes. | • Advise HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner as soon as possible.  
• Request a copy of the written direction notice (e.g. written quarantine order from Queensland Health).  
• In some circumstances, we may require appropriately clear medical confirmation that a person who was ill is now fully recovered and able to undertake full duties.  
• At present, Queensland Health are providing the instruction to self-isolate. If this changes, we will update this information.  
• Australians travelling overseas are encouraged to regularly review the Smartraveller website and subscribe for updates.  
• To minimise unnecessary stress and maintain employee confidentiality, supervisors should not broadly communicate to others that an employee is being tested / has been in contact with a confirmed case; HOWEVER, supervisors should use their judgement in advising team members who work closely with the staff member who has been in contact with a confirmed case, (e.g. they may see cleaning being done or have to take on additional duties).  
• As always, if supervisors have other team members presenting symptoms, please ask them to go home, seek medical advice and have them keep their supervisor informed. |

This is not the same as someone who wishes to voluntarily ‘self-isolate’:  
- as a result of recent travel (regardless of country)  
- because they feel unwell

Refer to responses in section ‘Employee Sickness’.
### Employee Sickness

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| (6) I have cold or flu symptoms. What should I do?  | **If employee is at work:**  
• If you are unwell please go home and follow the normal University personal leave provisions.  
• If you have been in close contact with a confirmed case, or returned from moderate risk areas within the last 14 days you must immediately call your usual GP or go to UQ Health Care (but call ahead before presenting to the practice) and provide them with your symptoms and travel history prior to attending in person.  
**If employee is unwell and at home:**  
• If you are unwell please follow the normal university personal leave provisions.  
Any members of the UQ community who are in Australia and showing symptoms should contact their General Practitioner (doctor) or a health professional, so that any appropriate precautionary measures can be taken regarding treatment. **You must** phone ahead, explaining your symptoms and travel history, rather than attending in person.  
• As an alternative to your usual GP or if you don’t have one, UQ Health Care can be contacted for appointments. St Lucia: (07) 3365 6210 | • Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue, and shortness of breath.  
• Follow up with employee and agree on check in plan for absence period.  
• Employee applies for sick leave through MyAurion as per normal personal leave provisions per below.  
• In some circumstances, we may require appropriately clear medical confirmation that a person who was ill is now fully recovered and able to undertake full duties.  
**Personal Leave provisions include:**  
**Personal (sick) leave**  
Employees are entitled to personal (sick) leave if they are not fit for work because of an illness or injury affecting them. Commencing from the first day of employment, employees accrue personal leave and accumulate 10 days of (cumulative) leave after each 12 months of full time service. Part time staff accrue leave on a pro-rata basis. Casual staff are entitled to unpaid personal (sick) leave.  
**Staff member responsibilities**  
Employees should notify their supervisor and apply for leave as soon as practicable. A medical certificate or statutory declaration will be required for personal (sick and carer’s) leave if it is taken for more than 3 days consecutively or otherwise in some specific circumstances. |
Out-of-hours care can be obtained by telephoning your local medical practice and finding out after hours alternatives or by ringing Health Direct Hot Line on 1800 022 222. Anyone contemplating attending a hospital emergency department should contact the hospital first for instructions.

To keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should practice good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes and washing your hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. You should also wear face protection, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

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<th>If employee is at work:</th>
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<td>• If you are unwell please go home and follow the normal University personal leave provisions. If you have been in close contact with a confirmed case, or returned from the moderate risk areas within the last 14 days, you must immediately call your usual GP or the UQ Health Care and provide them with your symptoms and travel history prior to attending in person.</td>
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(7) What should I do if I am showing symptoms of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) or have been in close contact with a confirmed case?

- Notify HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue, and shortness of breath.
- Follow up with employee and agree on check in plan for absence period.
- In some circumstances, we may require appropriately clear medical confirmation that a person who was ill is now fully recovered and able to undertake full duties.
- Employee applies for sick leave through MyAurion as per normal personal leave provisions per below

**Personal Leave provisions include:**

**Personal (sick) leave**
Employees are entitled to personal (sick) leave if they are not fit for work because of an illness or injury affecting them. Commencing from the first day of employment, employees...
precautionary measures can be taken regarding treatment. **You must** phone ahead, explaining your symptoms and travel history, rather than attending in person.

As an alternative to your usual GP or if you don’t have one, UQ Health Care can be contacted for appointments. St Lucia: (07) 3365 6210

Out-of-hours care can be obtained by telephoning your local medical practice and finding out after hour’s alternatives or by ringing Health Direct Hot Line on 1800 022 222. Anyone contemplating attending a hospital emergency department should contact the hospital first for instructions.

To keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should practice good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes and washing your hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. You should also clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

accrue personal leave and accumulate 10 days of (cumulative) leave after each 12 months of full-time service. Part time staff accrue leave on a pro-rata basis. Casual staff are entitled to unpaid personal (sick) leave.

**Staff member responsibilities**

Employees should notify their supervisor and apply for leave as soon as practicable. A medical certificate or statutory declaration will be required for personal (sick and carer’s) leave if it is taken for more than 3 days consecutively or otherwise in some specific circumstances.
### Other queries

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| (8) I want to change location to a different building/campus to reduce my risk of potential exposure. (If the staff member is immunocompromised or pregnant refer to question 3 above.) | • All our students and staff who join us on campus following recent travel are required to comply with Federal Government restrictions and will have been granted access to Australia by the Government after meeting these restrictions.  
• Under the current guidance of Government, we are continuing to operate as usual so staff are required to continue to meet their day-to-day work commitments.  
• The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is paramount, and we are continuing to follow Government advice and protocols and will alert you to any changes.  
• All staff and students should practice healthy hygiene habits in line with government advice, including frequent handwashing, avoid shaking hands, and staying at home if unwell. | • Direct employee to COVID-19 webpage for further information  
• Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support  
• Review with [HR Relationship Manager/Business Partner](mailto:HR_Relationship_Manager@university.edu) representative to determine if alternative work arrangements should be considered. |
### Manager queries

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| (9) I have a staff member being tested for COVID-19, what should I do? | • Notify AskHR (+61 (07) 3365 2623)
• Remind employee of our confidential EAP service should they require further support
• To minimise unnecessary stress and maintain employee confidentiality, you should not communicate to other members in your team that the employee is being tested.
• If a negative test result is confirmed, the staff member can return to work once they receive confirmation by their treating medical practitioner that they are allowed to return to work and if they do not present any symptoms.
• If a positive test result is confirmed, current practice is that Queensland Health will contact UQ Health, Safety & Wellness directly who will begin appropriate protocols and advise on appropriate communication approach.
• If you have other team members presenting symptoms please ask them to seek medical advice and have them keep you informed. |

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| (10) A student who interacts with my staff members is being tested for COVID-19, what should I do? | • Notify Student Services (+ 61 (07) 3365 1704 or toll free (within Australia): 1800 512 391)
• Remind student they can reach out to Student Services if they should require further support
• To minimise unnecessary stress and maintain student confidentiality, you should not communicate to other members in your team/other students that the student is being tested.
• If a negative test result is confirmed, the student return to campus once they receive confirmation by their treating medical practitioner that they are allowed to resume their studies and if they do not present any symptoms.
• If a positive test result is confirmed, current practice is that Queensland Health will contact UQ Health, Safety & Wellness directly who will begin appropriate protocols and advise on appropriate communication approach.
• If you have students or team members presenting symptoms please ask them to seek medical advice and have them keep you informed. |