



Kia ora

Today's update focuses on the initial response to exams, tests and assessments, and impacts as a result of the latest Alert Level 4 change.

Earlier this year we confirmed that exams and invigilated tests in Semester Two would be held online. This was to give our students and staff clarity and predictability in their preparations, and to ensure that alert level changes do not disadvantage some students over others. The current lockdown is exactly the sort of situation this approach was designed for.

In this context, we have considered carefully the implications for assessments that are scheduled for the week commencing Monday 23 August. Our approach aims to balance the health and well-being of students as they readjust to studying from home and the issues that we know some may be experiencing - such as access to an appropriate study space, study materials, technology, and secure internet - with the need to maintain their learning and minimise disruption to their studies.

With around 11,000 students with an assessment scheduled or due next week, of which around 6,000 are tests, the need for clarity and certainty for our students and staff is paramount. A range of options were explored with the faculty Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching, and Academic), Academic Services, Campus Life, Academic Quality Office, PGSA and AUSA. After careful consideration of the advice received from a range of views, I would like to share with you the decisions we have made.

Tests

- Tests (ordinarily held under invigilated conditions) and quizzes due in the week beginning Monday 23 August will continue as scheduled.
- Wherever possible, tests normally requiring access to special equipment, e.g. printers, special paper etc., will be amended so that students with limited access are not disadvantaged in lockdown. Any exceptions will be advised to affected students directly together with arrangements for those students unable to access special equipment.
- If you are unable to sit your test or your performance has been significantly impaired by circumstances outside of your control, please submit a [compassionate consideration application form](#).

Coursework assessments

- Coursework assessments due between Sunday 22 August and Sunday 29 August will be given a blanket extension of seven days from the current due date. For example, if an assessment is due at 5pm on Tuesday 24 August, it will now be due at 5pm on Tuesday 31 August.
- Practical forms of in-course assessments (e.g. performance, oral presentations) due this week may need to be rescheduled to the first week following the mid-semester break. In some instances, an alternative form of assessment may be required due to Alert Level 4 restrictions.
- When finalised, Course Directors will be asked to communicate these arrangements (and how they apply to their course) to students through Canvas announcements. Regular student communication channels will also be used.

We are confident this approach will take some of the pressure off our students next week, while still supporting them to maintain their studies, and allow them to take a much-needed break during the mid-semester break. I am also acutely aware of the impact of making changes to tests and other assessment activities on our staff. This has also been taken into account as we have stepped through these decision points.

Pop-up testing

Good news! The pop-up testing centre I mentioned in my update yesterday is active today on site, serving our students currently in isolation in the Whitaker Block and Waipārūrū Hall. We expect all 400+ students in isolation to have been tested by the end of today.

Locations of interest

We continue to work closely with the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) to identify locations on campus attended by the student who tested positive on Friday. The list of locations, including those on our campuses, is available on the [Ministry of Health website](#), and is updated regularly. It is important to note that the location of interest in the Kate Edger Information Commons refers only to the East Wing (Symonds Street side) and does not affect the University Health & Counselling Service.

A reminder that if you have been to one of these locations in the time period specified, it is essential (and legally required) that you self-isolate and contact Healthline on 0800 358 5453 for advice on getting tested.

If you're concerned that you might have been in either close or casual contact with a suspected Covid-19 case and are wondering what to do, you should also contact Healthline on 0800 358 5453 and follow their instructions.

Mauri ora

Professor Dawn Freshwater
Vice-Chancellor

