

Communication to staff on learning and teaching arrangements and policy settings 2022

Kia ora koutou,

The Vice-Chancellor has repeatedly commented on the remarkable resilience and effort of staff and students during this extended lockdown. As we move towards the end of the year it is recognised that it is increasingly difficult for staff and students to cope with continued uncertainty. While some measure of uncertainty must remain, the policy settings outlined below are intended to provide clear parameters for learning and teaching with the flexibility to vary arrangements where required.

As noted in the Vice-Chancellor's All-staff email on 8 November, the University has put in place an Implementation Taskforce to oversee and manage the University's transition to the COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF, also known as the traffic light system). Detailed plans for this transition, and for management of the University's vaccine policy, are being developed. As further details are confirmed for Summer School and Quarter 1 (when the University is planning for the 'Red' setting of the CPF and the vaccine policy will have taken effect) students and staff will be updated.

Policy settings for learning, teaching delivery and assessment in 2022 have been discussed with senior leaders, Associate Deans, and AUSA, and endorsed by PDDC. These are summarised below.

To enact these policy settings an Omnibus Amendment Statute has been drafted for Senate endorsement and Council approval in December. The Statute provides for interim emergency variation to select University regulations and policies and sets in place the necessary delegations of authority for decision making.

General learning and teaching policy settings for all of 2022

On-campus delivery

As government requirements and/or University rules permit:

- All timetabled activities that are scheduled to be delivered in person, as set out in the delivery mode section of the Digital Course Outline (DCO), must be available to students in person, including lectures.
- All students (except those approved to be studying remotely or required to be isolating at home) will be expected to attend any required on-campus teaching and assessment activities.

Note: Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) will be authorised to vary these requirements in exceptional or emergency circumstances.

- The default release for lecture recordings will be 24 hours.
- From 4 January 2022, when the University's vaccine policy starts, all staff and students who are on campus or involved in face-to-face University-managed activities must be vaccinated and have a valid *My Vaccine Pass*. This requirement will apply at all 'traffic light' levels.
- From 24 November 2021, all new staff including Permanent, Fixed Term, Non-Advertised Fixed Term, GTA, TA or Casual employees must be fully vaccinated.

Enrolment in courses offered online

- Students who are not eligible to come on campus will be offered the same choices of courses/programmes that are available for offshore students. Courses/programmes that are *not* offered to offshore students will also be unavailable to students who are not eligible to come on campus.
- For 2022, Stage 1 courses do not need to include 50% secure/invigilated assessment.
- If required by COVID-19-related restrictions or circumstances, substantive change to assessment (task type, weighting, earlier due date) may be approved:
 - before the start of the course and before the add/drop deadline, by the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching).
 - after the add/drop deadline, by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education).

All changes to assessment must be advised to students as soon as possible through Canvas and must also be updated in the DCO.

Examinations

- Examinations will be delivered in the prescribed examination period and time limited. The default will be that exams are digital, remote, open-book, and non-invigilated.
- Where Course Directors are considering changes to assessment regimes (which might include shifting weighting away from examination) these changes should be updated for students in Canvas and the course DCO.
- Exemptions may apply where government requirements and/or University rules permit, as follows:
 - for on-campus delivery for practical, clinical and performance examinations (Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) approval required).
 - for the use of invigilation in individual examinations (other than those approved to be delivered on campus) Course Directors may apply to the Director, Learning and Teaching. Courses which are approved for invigilation may require in-person attendance on campus or digital invigilation.

Notes:

- *Criteria will apply and will be published shortly.*
- *A request for applications for exemptions for Summer School, Semester 1 and Quarter 1 will go out after criteria are finalised. Exemptions, where agreed, will be finalised and advised to students before the start of each teaching period.*

Tests

- Tests are not *required* to be conducted under "examination" (invigilated) conditions. With an understanding of the central support needs that may be required, Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) will be authorised to decide requests for digital or in-person invigilation (where this is possible).
- Where invigilation arrangements are approved, students must be advised as soon as possible, and this should be before the course starts.

Note: An online option must be prepared for planned in-person tests as a backup in case government or University requirements change.

Student support provisions

- The eligibility grade for an aegrotat will be reduced from “clear pass” (C+) to “pass” (C) or above.
Note – the University is working to develop a set of principles and guidelines to ensure more consistency of rules around extensions for coursework.
- Late deletions may be offered again in 2022 in emergency or exceptional circumstances. The Director of Student Academic Services will be authorised to approve late deletions for nominated groups of students.
- Some flexibility around postgraduate research extensions will continue in 2022.

Teaching in a “Red” setting

- At the ‘Red’ level, as well as the requirement that all staff and students must be fully vaccinated for on campus activities or University-managed face-to-face teaching activities, there will also be a requirement for 1 metre distancing, but without a limitation on numbers. This will mean that many of our timetabled activities will not be able to fit all students in-person at a session, to manage the distancing requirement and room capacity on campus (typically rooms will have only 50% of the normal capacity). Large-scale re-timetabling of activities into larger spaces will not be possible. Course Directors will work with Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) in their faculties to determine how to deal with these challenges for their courses, and will publish this information to students through Canvas.
 - For lectures in large courses where there may be capacity issues, a live-streaming option will be offered. For Summer School and Quarter 1 courses, where required, the University will provision some overflow spaces for live streaming.
 - Labs, tutorials, or other learning activities that are assessed and require attendance must be managed at the course level to ensure students may attend while meeting distancing requirements. One solution is to divide students into groups and alternate online and on-campus delivery. Other solutions may be adopted.
 - Teaching staff will not be required to enforce lecture room limits or vaccination status, and support will be made available for this when teaching begins.

Teaching in “Orange” or “Green” settings

Our requirements under the COVID-19 Protection Framework, including what will apply at Orange and Green levels, are still being clarified, and similarly the University’s response to these are being developed. More information about how these matters will be managed will be available as soon as possible. The guidance above is accurate as of the 25 November 2021.