

22 April, 2.38pm

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

Dear Colleagues,

At the end of March, I emailed you to let you know that the COVID-19 situation had escalated to a point where all staff who could, should work from home. We suspended face to face teaching and moved online.

In the almost four weeks since then (which sometimes feels like four months!) we have shown our collective resilience and ingenuity by embracing the challenge of moving our teaching, research and services online. I thank you all for your efforts.

It's been an incredible effort and I'm enormously proud of what we have achieved together – including launching a \$10m student hardship fund to help our most vulnerable students.

(And then there was that little thing of launching a whole new academic structure in the middle of all of that.)

Now, it's time to look at what's next.

Academic Board met earlier this week and has consulted with students and staff on significant decisions about our teaching, assessment and grading. I wanted to provide you with a summary of the key information.

Full details are provided in a series of student and staff FAQs available via the [COVID-19 website](#). Allan Evans and Marie Wilson, in collaboration with the Executive Deans and relevant professional units, will also communicate directly with academic staff and students this week to provide additional detail, including specific information on adjustments to assessment and grading.

Teaching

We had previously announced that we would suspend face-to-face teaching, at least until April 27 – while keeping the University open. Again, I want to acknowledge the huge amount of dedication that went into delivering that transformation. Many staff have worked to bring learning that has previously been done face-to-face - in studios, laboratories and practicals - into a virtual environment. This has been an outstanding effort. Even Hamish Blake dropped in to several UniSA tutorials, much to the delight of our students and the envy of their friends!

We have now determined that we will continue to **deliver all lectures and tutorials online until the end of SP2 – July 4, 2020.**

Not all of our teaching activities, however, can be transformed for online delivery. So, where we are not able to deliver laboratory classes, practicals and studios online, and ensuring that it is safe to do so, we will begin to return to some face-to-face delivery from next week (starting April 27).

Of course, this will be done with appropriate distancing and health protocols in place. Individual course coordinators will need to communicate with their students about arrangements for these aspects of their courses. Where we cannot deliver these classes, or where students cannot attend classes, we will plan for alternative classes at some future time later in the year.

Examinations

Bringing together hundreds of students in traditional examination venues is problematic in the current climate, so we will not be offering invigilated examinations for SP2 and SP3 courses in the usual format. While alternative assessment arrangements may be appropriate for some courses, we are aware that for a large number of courses, end-of-semester examinations will be necessary. Therefore, we will be moving to examination through *learnonline*, allowing students to complete their exams at home or at a suitable university venue. Further details on the planning for these examinations will be provided over coming days.

This will mean that our academic staff will need to prepare examination papers taking into consideration “take home” conditions. The Teaching Innovation Unit will be available to advise staff in designing appropriate assessment activities.

We’ll be allowing one extra hour, above the existing examination time, for students to complete their exams, in acknowledgement of the varied circumstances.

In limited instances where a Course Coordinator believes that only an invigilated examination at a university venue is appropriate for a course, permission to postpone the examination to later in the year will be required. Again, details on obtaining exemption will be provided shortly

Grading

Academic Board also considered a series of measures to ensure our assessment and grading practices make appropriate allowances for the disruption to learning and student success caused by COVID-19. These include:

- Students who pass their course may request a non-graded pass that does not impact their GPA; and
- Students who fail a course may request an F1 or F2 grade be changed to a Withdraw Not Fail.

With this set of actions, we are preparing ourselves for the next phase of what we all hope will be a structured return to more normal teaching and learning arrangements in the second half of the year.

Last Friday, I referred in my [blog](#) to us outrunning, just like Indiana Jones, the rolling boulder in Raiders of the Lost Ark. I think the analogy stands – we’re keeping a step ahead of the necessary arrangements and I thank you again for all your hard work, dedication and collegiality.