Resources:

FSE COVID Safe Laboratory and Field Teaching Plan Session 2 2022

The General MQ COVID Information page listed above contains a number of FAQ’s that should be read in conjunction with this document.

1. General principles:
   1.1. All staff and students must practice COVID Safe behaviours
   1.2. While room capacity limits do not apply, we aim to maintain social distancing in our teaching wherever possible and apply risk control measures to minimise risk.
   1.3. Automatic hand sanitiser dispensers are stationed in the vicinity of all teaching spaces for staff and student use.
   1.4. Antibacterial wipes will be available in teaching spaces.
   1.5. Masks must be worn by all staff and students upon entering FSE teaching laboratories (but ‘recommended’, not ‘required’ in all computer labs).
   1.6. Face mask exemptions must follow NSW Health guidelines. Single use face masks will be available in all teaching spaces and supplied as necessary for staff or students who do not have their own.
   1.7. For practical classes with a normal duration >1.5 hours, the class must end a minimum of fifteen minutes before the scheduled start of the next class in the room to allow for cleaning of surfaces and dispersion of students.
   1.8. For activities where MQ equipment is used by staff and students during a class (e.g. tabletops, benches, computer keyboard, glassware or measurement equipment), students will clean touch surfaces of the equipment at the start and end of their use, and sanitise hands after completion. At the discretion of the School and depending on the circumstance, this cleaning may be performed with either disposable gloves on or with correct hand washing after completion.
   1.9. Disposal of wipes and used masks should be into general waste.
   1.10. Students and staff should not enter the building where a class is to be held until the designated class start time to give ample time for the cleaning and evacuation of a space by previous classes.
   1.11. Students should not congregate in internal corridors. This message should be reiterated to all students through class communications.
2. **Teaching laboratories, including computer labs, non-chemical labs, chemical labs etc.**

2.1. These rooms are managed by the custodian school with support through the Technical Operations team and will need to have the sanitising wipes or other cleaning agents, hand sanitiser, gloves, masks etc. available. If any of this is missing, then staff should notify the School Operations Manager or local Technical Operations staff directly and immediately.

2.2. If the room has two doors, then the school should designate and clearly label one as the entrance, the other as the exit, to maintain social distancing as best as possible.

2.3. When students are lining up to enter the room, staff should remind students of social distancing requirements.

2.4. To avoid a press through the door when students are leaving a class a staff member may, at their discretion, instruct students to leave in batches (e.g. first one row of students then another).

2.5. The rooms may or may not allow for social distancing, depending on the layout and usage as determined by the school.

2.6. Students should bring their own mask. Single use face masks will be available in teaching laboratories and supplied as necessary for staff or students who do not have their own. (Note; face masks are not a requirement in computer labs, though staff and students can choose to wear masks.)

2.7. Where possible allow airing or natural ventilation of the room between classes.

2.8. Consideration should be given to student movement during class to limit close contact. If reasonable, students should remain at their bench or desk throughout a class. In active learning or practical classes consider setting out the furniture as physically distanced pods. Assign pods to workgroups with no rotation of students between groups and use of the same desk or bench throughout.

2.9. Touch surfaces of any MQ equipment used by staff and students during the class must be cleaned both before and after usage by each individual. This will typically occur at the start and finish of each class but may be more frequent for communal equipment (e.g. spectrometer). At the discretion of the school and depending on the circumstance, this cleaning may be performed with either disposable gloves on or with correct hand washing after completion.

2.10. Where items or equipment (e.g. rock samples or delicate equipment) cannot be reasonably cleaned between handling by individuals, then gloves must be worn or correct and thorough hand washing/sanitising, by all staff and students while before and after handling the item / equipment.

2.11. Use of paper lab books and worksheets should be avoided if possible and instead electronic versions used. Where students use paper lab books or worksheets, access to these should be controlled by staff so as to minimise handling. Gloves, or correct and thorough hand washing/sanitising, should be used by staff before and after distribution and marking etc.

2.12. Daily cleaning of the room will be based on BAU practices, with the addition of cleaning of equipment and surfaces as directed by teaching staff at the commencement and conclusion of each class. Schools should roster daily cleaning of common touch surfaces (e.g. equipment, benches, etc.)

3. **Coursework fieldtrips**

Travel for any overnight fieldwork requires the development and approval of a COVID safe plan for that activity through the off campus travel plan and form that is submitted online here. Up to date resources for COVID safe planning of coursework fieldtrips can be found here. Please consult your fieldwork manager in the first instance for help completing a plan.
Considerations

3.1. Hand sanitiser and alcohol wipes are to be made available throughout the trip.
3.2. Masks should be worn within vehicles when carpooling is taking place.
3.3. Where possible, students should be organised into groups and all activities conducted within these groups throughout the entirety of the field trip.
3.4. Sharing of equipment and resources between groups should be avoided, if unavoidable all equipment needs to be sanitised before sharing between groups using alcohol wipes.
3.5. Where accommodation is required students should book single bedroom accommodation (e.g. motel or separate bedroom in a cabin) with their own bathroom and kitchen facilities. Share lodgings should only be with other students within a work group.
3.6. Reduce contact with the public and public spaces as much as possible. If entering an establishment (e.g. supermarket) the COVIDSafe plan of that establishment is to be followed.
3.7. Food and supplies should be sourced in a single shopping trip where possible or brought from home. Self-catering, takeaway, delivery or room-service is permitted. Dine-in meals and attendance at restaurants, cafés, hotels, clubs are to be avoided.

4. Class and student management considerations:
4.1. For both students and staff, the situation continues to present challenges to the learning environment; staff should maintain a calm and empathetic approach to dealing with issues that arise and should encourage this in the students when they are interacting with their peers.
4.2. As per NSW Health guidelines, staff and students who show any signs of COVID symptoms should not attend the university or fieldwork. Anyone experiencing respiratory symptoms, a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms you should get tested for COVID-19, as per NSW Health guidelines. If you would like to speak with someone about your symptoms, call your doctor or contact the National Coronavirus hotline on 1800 020 080.
4.3. Do not come to campus if: you are unwell; if you have been advised to take a COVID-19 test; are awaiting the results of a test; or have been instructed to isolate by New South Wales Health.

5. Guidance for managing COVID scenarios
Note: Up to date MQ guidance can be found at the General MQ COVID information page: https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs

5.1. If a student tests positive
- They must not attend class or the field and isolate per NSW Health guidelines. If they are in the field, they will need to isolate at their fieldwork accommodation or return home immediately to isolate.
- If they have attended campus in the 48 hrs prior to their positive test, they must provide advice to FSE and the unit convenor as detailed here: Keeping our Campus Safe
- Positive cases cannot return to class until all NSW Health testing and isolation requirements have been met and the case is no longer displaying symptoms.
- Personal health information will be maintained securely and managed in accordance with the University’s privacy and work health and safety obligations (see the University’s Privacy Policy and Privacy-Management-Plan). If a student identifies themselves as a Vulnerable Person and contacts staff or a school with questions, then they should be directed to contact the Faculty Student Centre at 9850 6001 for assistance. See MQ COVID Safe information.
5.2. If a student has flu-like symptoms

- It is expected they follow NSW Health advice, observe the University’s COVIDSafe policies and procedures, and that they do not attend campus or the field.
- If they suffer from a condition that presents with similar symptoms, they should inform their teacher/convenor.
- If a student is displaying unexplained symptoms in class or in the field, staff can ask them to leave and get tested.

5.3. If a student is a household or close contact (for the current definition of contact see https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/management/people-exposed-to-covid)

- If they do not have symptoms they do not need to isolate and can attend or the field.
- If they develop symptoms they must self-isolate, get tested, and not return to class or the field until they meet the NSW Health household and close contact guidelines.
- They must follow the advice in line with their risk classification as detailed on the MQ COVID FAQ page under point 3. What do I do if I am told I am a contact of someone who has tested positive to COVID-19?

6. Additional advice to unit convenors, lecturers, and tutors

6.1. Teaching staff are empowered by the University to make decisions around COVID management based on their knowledge of the guidelines and their best judgement.

6.2. If a student appears unwell in a class, then they should be asked to leave the campus immediately. Frame the conversation very much around the safety of the ill student and the safety of their fellow students.

6.2.1. Ask them to leave and to get a RAT or PCR test (see COVID Safe behaviours for further information).

6.2.2. Notify the Unit Convener and School Manager to ensure there is a follow-up a few days later to see how they are feeling and the results of the COVID test.

6.3. If a student refuses to leave the class, then they should be informed that they will be in breach of the Student Code of Conduct and will be referred to the University Discipline Committee. If they still refuse to leave, then the staff member should contact security to assist on 9850 9999. If this occurs, then the staff member should notify the Unit Convener and their School Manager.

6.4. In the event of any threatening behaviour of any sort, the staff member should contact Campus Security immediately on 9850 9999. Once the situation is managed, they should file an incident report through the ROAR system.
Start of session / room setup checklists:

Computer lab setup checklist:
- If relevant, entrance and exit doors are marked?
- Hand sanitiser is stocked at appropriate level?
- If sink available, is supply of soap present?
- Supply of cleaning product and paper towel (or wipes) for computer and bench touch surfaces is present?
- General waste bin for collection of cleaning materials, used masks and gloves is present?

Dry lab setup checklist:
- If relevant, entrance and exit doors are marked?
- Hand sanitiser and facemasks are stocked at appropriate level?
- If sink available, is supply of soap present?
- If no sink available, supply of gloves for students to use when cleaning is present?
- Supply of cleaning product and paper towel (or wipes) for equipment, bench, and all touch surfaces is present?
- General waste bin for collection of cleaning materials, used masks and gloves is present?

Wet lab / clinic setup checklist (assumes presence of sink for handwashing):
- If relevant, entrance and exit doors are marked?
- Hand sanitiser and facemasks are stocked at appropriate level?
- Is supply of soap and hand towels present at sink?
- Supply of cleaning product and paper towel (or wipes) for equipment, bench, and all touch surfaces is present?
- General waste bin for collection of cleaning materials, used masks and gloves is present and identified from other waste streams?

Per-class checklists:

Teaching / computer / laboratory room teaching checklist:
- Hand sanitiser and facemasks (where required) are stocked at appropriate level?
- Furniture arrangement looks correct / undisturbed?
- Staff to clean prep areas and staff equipment as required
- If possible, meet students at the door to remind of distancing
- If reasonable, check for sick students before they enter and manage
- Ask students to enter, place belongings in correct location and begin initial clean procedure
- If student appears sick in class, ask to leave and maintain related records
- Once class is complete, manage students through cleaning procedure
- At the end of the class, manage orderly departure through exit door
- Staff depart and close room to exclude students
Suggested messaging to students via iLearn and at beginning of classes

This unit involves on-campus learning activities which will be delivered in accordance with a COVID Safe plan. You are expected to attend campus for these activities unless:

- the Public Health Orders and/or University advice changes
- you have COVID, or any symptoms of COVID

COVIDSafe protocols:

- **If you are sick, stay at home!** There will opportunities to make up the work later in the session.
- **Maintain 1.5 m social distancing** while you queue, enter, and exit the classroom.
- **Sanitise your hands** before entering the lab, using the automatic dispensers in the hallway outside the labs.
- **Wear a face mask at all times while in FSE teaching laboratories.** Please learn to correctly put on your face mask. It must cover both your nose and your mouth.
- **Take note of any additional PPE required** (gloves, safety glasses and lab coats).
- **At the beginning and end of your class: use a disinfectant wipe** to wipe down your lab book, bench, and high-touch areas such as your computer and equipment.
- **Hand sanitiser and alcohol wipes will be available** at stations around the lab for you to use throughout the lab as needed.
- **You will find up to date information on Macquarie University’s response to COVID-19 and your requirements** here: [https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs](https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs)

Anyone who doesn't follow these rules or comes to class sick will be asked to leave.