

Frequently Asked Questions about coronavirus

This information is for Ara students and is current as at Monday 10 February 2020.



Q. How big is the risk of coronavirus in Christchurch?

A. The risk of an outbreak in New Zealand is still deemed by authorities to be very low. There have been no cases of coronavirus in New Zealand and no deaths in New Zealand. [This information from the Ministry of Health](#) is very helpful and is regularly updated. Maintaining good personal hygiene, such as handwashing, is the best form of protection.

Q. How much impact is the situation having on Ara?

A. Our Coronavirus Management Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, continues to meet every 48 hours and is coordinating our response.

We've got a handful of colleagues who travelled to China and have self-isolated where appropriate, with most going to join teams on campus this week. All of these colleagues are well.

We have been getting in touch with all students who have potential to be impacted through aspects such as border controls and are working with under 100 students who may need late starts or to begin by distance.

Q. What should I be looking out for if I'm worried I might have coronavirus?

A. The Ministry of Health has released [this information](#) about symptoms and what to do if you are concerned. In summary, they advise that symptoms include fever, coughing and difficulty breathing.

Healthline has set up a dedicated 0800 number for health-related calls about coronavirus. The number is 0800 358 5453 or for international SIMs 0064 9 358 5453. People calling this number will be able to talk with a member of the National Telehealth Service and interpreters will be on hand. The number is staffed by nurses, paramedics and health advisors.

Q. What does self-isolation actually mean?

A. The Ministry of Health has released [this information](#) about self-isolation. The recommendation for self-isolation is for 14 days for anyone who was in Mainland China prior to 2 February. The timing for the 14 days begins from the day you left China.

Self-isolation means avoiding situation where you may come in close contact with others (face to face contact closer than 1 metre for more than 15 minutes), such as social gatherings, work, school, child care/pre-school centres, university, faith-based gatherings, healthcare facilities, sports gatherings, restaurants, and all public gatherings.

Q. It is correct that anyone coming to New Zealand from Hong Kong does not have to self-isolate?

A. Yes, that is correct.

Q. If other students in my class who have been in mainland China over the break should I be asking them to do something different, such as self-isolation?

A. There is no need to ask other students to self-isolate. Students should contact the Health Centre if they have any concerns.

We've asked students to be in touch with Ara if they were in mainland China over the break and many have already made contact with us. Our Health Centre team are keeping in touch with a small number of students have contacted us, including some who have chosen to self-isolate.

Q. If a student self isolates for 14 days, do they need to come to our Health Centre or see a medical professional to be checked before attending class?

A. Our Health Centre team is in touch with students and these individuals are very aware of the signs and symptoms to look for. There is no need for anyone to be checked by the Health Centre before coming to class or to an Ara campus.

Q. I have a question about potential impact on my study. Who do we direct these questions to?

A. The International Team are speaking with students about any impact on their study. Any students with questions or concerns should contact this team, ideally by emailing intadvisor@ara.ac.nz. A number of questions related to studies are covered below in this FAQ document.

Q. If I don't not have a visa yet can I transfer my study to the next semester or year?

A. The International Team are best to answer student questions about visa status and any impact on course options. The best way to contact them is by emailing intadvisors@ara.ac.nz.

Q. What's the latest date I can still enrol for February 2020 intake if the travel ban from China is lifted soon?

A. Ara is exploring options for a small number of students who are delayed in arriving in NZ due to the coronavirus. Please contact us by emailing intadvisors@ara.ac.nz if you have not done so already. Heads of Department will review the enrolments of each of their affected students and be able to advise the latest enrolment day for February 2020 intake for each of the affected students.

Q. Because of the travel ban from China I cannot travel to New Zealand. Can I continue to study online as part of the Feb 2020 intake?

A. Some of our Ara courses may be available to be delivered on Moodle. Heads of Department will review the enrolments of each of their affected students and we will then advise each student who this may apply to if they can continue to study online.

Q. If the courses I need to enrol in are not available in July 2020 intake, what are my options? Will the departments consider run a special July intake for these students who have been affected by the travel restriction?

A. As above, Heads of Department will need to review the situation in their own area and make a decision. This will be communicated directly with students who it might apply to.

Q. My current student visa is valid until March 2021 or beyond. If I choose to defer my re-enrolment to July 2020, can I use my current student visa to travel back to NZ in July 2020 or do I need to apply for a new student visa in China before I return back to NZ in July 2020?

A. This is something that Immigration NZ is looking at, and we will only be able to answer once it has been decided and communicated with us.

Q. If I choose to defer my enrolment to the next intake, my current IELTS will expire before the commence of the next available intake. Will I need to resit IELTS?

A. We are waiting for NZQA to provide clarity around this question so we can't answer it at this point.

Q. I have not paid my fees yet or applied for my visa. Do I still do this?

A. Students should hold off from paying for fees at this stage. As soon as INZ Beijing office is open, we will advise the students to pay for fees and proceed to their student visa application.

Q. Where can I get more information?

A. We will continue to email updates to students as more information is available. We publish all information on [myAra](https://myara.ac.nz) and make everything available on our Ara website – www.ara.ac.nz. New information is being confirmed and shared regularly, so we expect to provide two or three updates each week.