

Wednesday 29 April 2020

Dear staff and students

While the campuses feel quiet, there is a distinct sense of activity as Semester 1 continues. Even in the last week, we have introduced some fresh initiatives and I can provide updates on our other activities.

Short courses

As part of our rapid response to changing conditions, ACU is developing [Opportunity Unlimited](#), a suite of short courses and micro-credentials to help Australians impacted by the COVID-19 crisis to upskill or retrain, and to support people and services as they transition to new ways of working.

With additional backing from the Federal Government's relief package, the new courses will aim to build key skills in a wide range of areas, starting with teaching and education, IT, public health, and sports science.

More details about these will be available on the ACU website by the end of this week.

Student hardship fund

We have launched a Student Urgent Relief Fund to give immediate support to students in need due to the effects of the pandemic.

Made possible through a combination of ACU funding and philanthropic gifts, the fund is available for students who may be facing hardship.

The university is matching donated funds dollar-for-dollar, doubling the impact of contributions from ACU staff, alumni and donor community.

We have also released three times as many Creating Opportunity Scholarships this month increasing the amount from 20 last year to 60 this year to also address the urgent needs of students. These are valued at \$4,000.

Students can find out how to apply [here](#) and staff wishing to donate can do so [here](#).

Placements and practicums

The Executive Deans and I are regularly engaged with our providers and at all levels of government in each state and territory to secure as many placements as we can during this time. We remain committed to ensuring all our students will meet the necessary

requirements so you can graduate and register for professional practice, if this is a requirement of your degree.

For education students, the Victorian Government has confirmed its support for placements in Semester 2 and we are hoping to have an update from the NSW Government shortly.

Many placements are still occurring, so please make sure you monitor your university email account for information and updates specific to your program.

Delayed Semester 1 lab classes will resume for Faculty of Health Sciences students before Semester 2.

If you have any further questions regarding these matters, please contact your lecturer-in-charge or your local placement office.

Vaccinations

There is currently no vaccination against COVID-19. However, the annual flu vaccination reduces the severity and risk of contracting influenza, which could make you more susceptible to COVID-19.

ACU offers an annual flu vaccination program to help maintain the health and wellbeing of our staff.

Vaccination clinics facilitated by Vitality Works are available on campus or staff can receive a voucher that can be redeemed at hundreds of chemists/pharmacies across Australia. Further information about our staff vaccination program can be found [here](#).

While this program is only available for staff, we encourage students to find out the best vaccination for them and contact their health provider for information on how and when to get vaccinated. The Australian Government Department of Health National Immunisation Program is provided free for those most at risk from influenza and its complications. Further details can be found [here](#).

Finally, a reminder that the [FAQs](#) are constantly being updated; please check there for the most current information.

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Greg Craven

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