



Media Release

10 March 2020

APAC and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In delivering on its responsibilities under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 APAC engages with a wide range of stakeholders including board and committee members, members of accreditation teams and staff and students at higher education providers. In undertaking its work APAC staff and accreditation teams visit those higher education providers and the services that provide the workplace-based training of Australia's psychology workforce.

The spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and the enactment of the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus place additional responsibilities on the people and institutions with whom the APAC works closely. APAC is taking considered action to minimise the impact of its work on health systems and to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of APAC staff and stakeholders.

Attendance at APAC meetings

- For meetings at external venues, APAC will confirm with the venue that they have taken reasonably practicable steps, including implementing Australian Government coronavirus guidelines, to protect APAC attendees, so far as they are able
- Any APAC stakeholders and staff who do not feel comfortable travelling for APAC purposes (either domestically or internationally) at this time should not do so and APAC will make alternative arrangements
- We ask any APAC stakeholders and staff who have travelled internationally within 14 days of any planned APAC travel to make a self-assessment of their health and of the appropriateness of the travel, and to subsequently advise APAC of the international travel undertaken and their assessment.

APAC's contingency plan is to arrange meetings as virtual meetings (either wholly or in part).

APAC Accreditation activities

APAC is responsible for assessing, through its accreditation processes, whether or not psychology programs meet the approved accreditation standards and to report to the Psychology Board of Australia on the accreditation outcomes following that assessment.

APAC will work with higher education providers to minimise the impact of its accreditation site visits and meetings on health and other services. APAC uses a number of accreditation tools, including site visits, meetings and gathering of evidence through submissions, reports and surveys. APAC will consider how to best use these accreditation tools, particularly when engaging with providers who are preparing for an accreditation cycle assessment. If you have questions or concerns about this please contact the APAC accreditation section to discuss them.



Impact of coronavirus on higher education providers

APAC recognises that higher education providers may also need to review their practices for assuring the safety of staff and students and the quality of education and training during this time. APAC asks that providers of accredited programs advise it of any proposed significant or material changes to their practices and proposed alternate mechanisms to ensure the quality of education, training and supervision, and wellbeing of staff and students. APAC does not need providers to advise it of all minor changes, but of any change that is likely to fit the APAC definition of a material change, including a material change to the resources available to support delivery of the program, or to teaching settings.

For further information please contact the APAC CEO, Michael Carpenter, on 0407 147 590.