

## GRS Covid-19 Update August 12, 2020

### Kia ora Graduate Students

I very recently communicated with you regarding how fortunate we are in Aotearoa to be relatively free from the disruption that this pandemic is wreaking internationally. Last night's late announcement that Auckland must re-enter level 3 was an abrupt reminder that such disruption insists on asserting its presence on our lives. At the GRS, we know this impacts on you as a graduate student, in particular those who are currently immersed in the research process. Please know that the dedicated team at GRS will be in regular (at least weekly) contact with you as we determine updated information of direct relevance to you. At this stage, alert level 3 is until midnight this Friday 14 August, but may extend for a further period.

### Here is what we can tell you for now:

- Campuses are closed for the remainder of this week
- There is no teaching online or on-campus up to and including 14 August
- Staff will be working from home until further notice
- From Monday 17 August, if we are to continue in Alert Level 3 or 4, classes will move to online wherever possible. Practical work will be rescheduled later in the year

### Decisions to follow:

- We are seeking clarification from government officials to confirm the situation for university operations during Alert Level 2 to be ready for that should it eventuate, and more information on this will be provided as soon as available
- Detailed information about access to labs will be confirmed by Friday 14 August

### AUTEC Guidance during COVID-19 for those with current AUTEC ethics approval

Ethics Approvals and research activity involving physical proximity

AUTEC reminds researchers that data collection involving physical proximity may occur only as long as researchers and participants are complying with the public health guidelines for the level applicable in their area. These include limiting the size of gatherings, maintaining physical distancing, wearing face masks, and collecting sufficient information to enable quick and accurate contact tracing.

AUTEC encourages researchers to consult with their managers, supervisors or teams, and the AUTEC Secretariat if necessary, to develop protocols that are in line with Ministry of Health guidelines, and appropriate for their specific research project. If these protocols are different than those approved by AUTEC, researchers will need to seek an amendment to their approval using the EA2 form which can be found [here](#).

Researchers are also encouraged to consider carefully the safety of their participants and themselves, particularly when [people in an at-risk category](#) are involved.

All research at this time must be conducted in accordance with the Ministry of Health's guidelines which may be found [here](#). Drop In and Advisory support details for ethics processes are [here](#)

**The Graduate Research School will be in touch with you soon.**

**Be safe, stay well, and look after yourselves and those close to you.**

**Nigel Harris**

**Acting Dean, Graduate Research School**