

PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO STAFF COVID-19 WELLBEING CONCERNS

The health, safety and wellbeing of our University community is of paramount importance. As we endeavour to continue delivering our core teaching and research and maintaining essential University operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential we have a protocol for managing and supporting staff wellbeing in response to COVID-19, including if necessary, contact tracing.

The University continues to follow the advice issued by the Department of Health and SA Health regarding prevention of the spread of the virus. We will adapt our advice as that of the health authorities and Federal and State Governments changes. By following the guidelines to reduce the rate and risk of spreading COVID-19 we aim to provide as safe as possible an environment for our University community.

In support of this, the University has developed a set of principles and an approach for managing its response to staff who are impacted by COVID-19, including confirmed cases of staff contracting the virus.

Principles

In order to meet its commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of our University community the University is committed to:

1. Ensuring the health and wellbeing of its staff, students and the broader community through measures designed to minimise the risk and rate of spreading COVID-19;
2. Maintaining the confidentiality of information in relation to staff in accordance with the University's Privacy Policy;
3. Ensuring that no staff members experience discrimination or disadvantage as a result of being exposed to, or contracting, COVID-19;
4. Being flexible in its approach to supporting staff on an individual basis wherever possible; and
5. Supporting the efforts of the public health agencies through appropriate data sharing.

Initiating the protocol

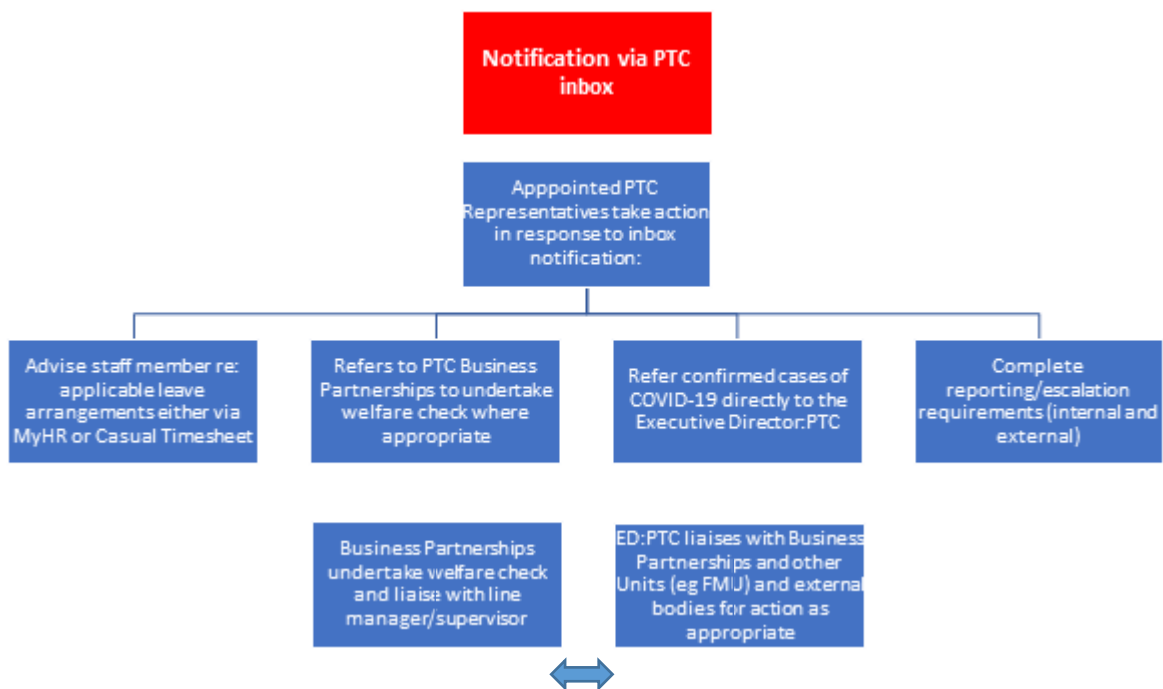
In the context of the advice and guidelines provided by the Federal and State Government, the following scenarios will initiate this protocol, determining the approach for responding to and supporting staff:

1. Staff travelling/returning from **overseas** or **interstate** and required to self-isolate (**self-isolate**);
2. Staff who have had close contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 case (**close contact**);
3. A staff member confirmed as having contracted COVID-19 (**confirmed case**); and
4. A staff member feeling generally unwell (**unwell**).

Required Responses

People, Talent and Culture have established an approach that uses a central triage point; the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox. This will be the repository for notifications from staff, their line managers, members of the PTC Business Partnerships team or the PTC Safety and Wellbeing team, enabling a consistent approach and ensuring appropriate communications and support can be provided.

In summary the approach requires:



Potential transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace

In the event a staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19 whilst working on UniSA premises and has been in contact with other people on campus or related to UniSA work or study in the preceding 14 calendar days, the staff member, their line manager/ supervisor or PTC team member notified should report this to the ptc@unisa.edu.au and the line manager/supervisor and/or the PTC staff member notified should also lodge a report via the University's Online '[Hazard and Incident Reporting System](#)' as follows:

1. <Create a New Report>
2. <Type of Report> from the dropdown box select, "**Event**" and then complete each section
3. Selecting "**Event**" provides the ability to record the names of any other individuals that may have been exposed to the confirmed case.

Please remember we will make every effort to maintain the **confidentiality of information** relating to staff in accordance with the [University's Privacy Policy](#).

Staff Leave Arrangements

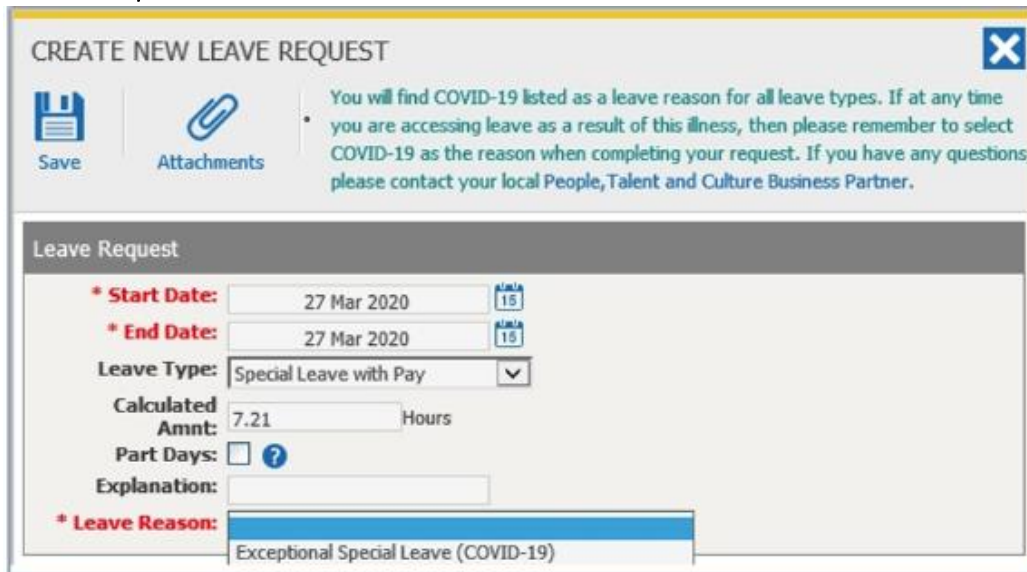
The University has introduced exceptional special leave with pay as a once only discretionary benefit to support staff who are impacted by COVID-19 in the following circumstances:

Continuing and Fixed Term Staff

For **continuing or fixed term staff** required to self-isolate due to COVID-19, and who are not able to carry out their duties working from home during this time, exceptional special leave with pay will be provided to cover up to 14 calendar days for the self-isolation period. In the event a staff member is confirmed as having COVID-19 during the self-isolation period, they will be required to access personal leave or other accrued leave entitlements should their personal leave be exhausted, to commence from the date they are advised by their medical practitioner as having COVID-19. Part time staff members will be paid exceptional special leave in these circumstance for the ordinary hours they would have worked in that 14-calendar day period.

In response to a notification to the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox, staff will be referred to the [myUNISA](#) staff portal to record their leave. In recording leave they will be required to state the reason for the leave as “COVID-19” in the myUNISA staff portal system as demonstrated in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Leave request in relation to COVID-19.



CREATE NEW LEAVE REQUEST

You will find COVID-19 listed as a leave reason for all leave types. If at any time you are accessing leave as a result of this illness, then please remember to select COVID-19 as the reason when completing your request. If you have any questions, please contact your local People, Talent and Culture Business Partner.

Save Attachments

Leave Request

* **Start Date:** 27 Mar 2020

* **End Date:** 27 Mar 2020

Leave Type: Special Leave with Pay

Calculated Amnt: 7.21 Hours

Part Days:

Explanation:

* **Leave Reason:** Exceptional Special Leave (COVID-19)

Casual Staff

For **casual staff**, if their projected contracted work is cancelled by the University due to COVID-19; or is unable to be performed because the casual staff member:

- has been directed to self-isolate or been tested and awaiting results and can't work from home;
 - has been confirmed as having contracted COVID-19;
 - Is self-isolating as a result of caring for a member of their household who has COVID-19;
- or

- d. has a medical certificate/diagnosed medical condition/risk profile requiring them to be absent from the workplace because of COVID19-related risks,

the casual staff member will be paid for the projected contracted hours they would have worked over the next 14 calendar day period by submitting a timesheet. In submitting their timesheet, the casual administration system will prompt the staff member to notify their supervisor that they are eligible for the exceptional leave with pay for that timesheet period.

Advice to Staff reporting COVID-19 Wellbeing Concerns

In the event a staff member advises that they are feeling unwell:

- Confirm if the staff member is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, e.g. fever, persistent dry cough and/or headache. If they are, advise them to self-isolate and to follow the advice below.
- If they are unsure, then they should check the [SA Health](#) and [Department of Health](#) websites for further information.
- If they are not symptomatic for COVID-19, they should apply for **personal leave** as they would in any other circumstances in which they are unable to work due to sickness and refrain from resuming working until they are well/cleared to continue working by their medical practitioner.
- If they subsequently develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 they should be advised to self-isolate and follow this advice;

Seeing a doctor:

It is important that you contact your doctor before making an appointment to prevent the potential spread of the virus. If you have symptoms you may be directed to a Covid-19 Clinic or a telehealth/phone consultation with your doctor.

The UniSA Medical Clinic is able to offer telehealth and phone consultations for staff who have previously been seen at the clinic during the last 12 months. Please phone **1300 172 996** or select the “**telehealth & phone**” appointment type to book online at <https://www.unisamedical.com.au/>.

If you have not been seen at the UniSA Clinic within the last 12 months, then please contact your GP as many general practices are also offering the same phone and telehealth services.

Testing for Covid-19

The criteria for testing have changed and people are now encouraged to seek medical advice and get tested if they have any of the following symptoms:

- ✓ fever OR chills (with no alternative illness that explains these symptoms)
- ✓ cough
- ✓ sore throat
- ✓ runny nose
- ✓ shortness of breath
- ✓ loss of taste and smell.

As information changes regularly please go to the [SA Health website](#) for the most up to date information on testing protocols and health advice on what to do if you are tested.

If you need to self-isolate, you can record your absence through the myUNISA portal. The University has made available an additional special leave with pay as a one off discretionary benefit for staff needing to self-isolate awaiting test results of as a result of COVID-19 isolation requirements. If you are subsequently confirmed as having contracted COVID-19 you will need to transfer to personal leave from the point it is confirmed to you that you have contracted the virus.

In the event a staff member has travelled/returned to South Australia from overseas or interstate:

- Their line manager/supervisor should confirm;
 - where they travelled from/via
 - The date of their arrival back into South Australia and
 - Whether, and where, they have been self-isolating since arrival; and
 - if they have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. *

**if they are unsure then they should check the [SA Health](#) and [Department of Health](#) websites for further information.*

The staff member will need to self-isolate immediately and their details should be emailed to the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox. They should be advised to follow the guidelines for [self-isolation](#) and call their medical provider if they start to develop any fever or respiratory symptoms.

As outlined above, staff can access the exceptional special leave with pay discretionary benefit via the myUNISA portal whilst self-isolating.

If the staff member has, or subsequently develops, symptoms whilst self-isolating, they should follow the advice regarding testing above and, if confirmed as having contracted COVID-19, they will need to transfer to personal leave from the point they receive confirmation of their test result.

In the event a staff member has been in indirect contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19:

The staff member will need to self-isolate immediately and their details should be emailed to the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox. They should be advised to follow the guidelines for [self-isolation](#) and call their medical provider if they start to develop any fever or respiratory symptoms following the guidance above.

Staff can access the exceptional special leave with pay discretionary benefit via the myUNISA portal whilst self-isolating.

If the staff member has, or subsequently develops, symptoms whilst self-isolating, they should follow the advice regarding testing and if confirmed as having contracted COVID-19 they will need to transfer to personal leave from the point they receive confirmation of their test result.

In the event a staff member has been in direct contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19:

The staff member will need to self-isolate immediately and their details should be emailed to the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox. They should be advised to follow the guidelines for [self-isolation](#) and call their medical provider if they start to develop any fever or respiratory symptoms.

As outlined above, staff can access the exceptional special leave with pay discretionary benefit via the myUNISA portal whilst self-isolating.

If the staff member has, or subsequently develops, symptoms whilst self-isolating, they should follow the advice regarding testing above and, if confirmed as having contracted COVID-19, they will need to transfer to personal leave from the point they receive confirmation of their test result.

In the event a staff member advises they have been confirmed as having contracted COVID-19:

The staff member will need to self-isolate immediately if they have not already done so. Their line manager/supervisor will need to confirm;

- Their name and position
- The date of confirmation of a positive result for COVID-19
- The date at which they commenced self-isolation (if this has occurred); and
- Their current location/circumstances.

If available, these details should be emailed to the ptc@unisa.edu.au.

PTC will then activate a welfare check directly with the individual to ensure that the appropriate advice and support can be provided to the staff member and other reporting requirements/actions are completed and. In the meantime, they should be advised to follow the advice of their treating medical practitioner and, where appropriate, ensure they follow the guidelines for [self-isolation](#).

Staff will need to access their personal leave in these circumstances and in the event their personal leave balance becomes insufficient to cover their absence, alternative leave types can be accessed.

Part time staff will be paid exceptional special leave in these circumstance for the ordinary hours they would have worked in that 14-calendar day period.

The University will stay in regular contact with the staff member and ensure the appropriate communications with health authorities.

V2.0 28 July 2020

History of amendments

Version	Date	Author	Amendments
1.0	30 March 2020	Ms Jane Booth, Executive Director; People, Talent and Culture	First published
2.0	28 July 2020	Ms Jane Booth, Executive Director; People, Talent and Culture	Updated <i>Testing for Covid-19</i> to reflect current practice