

Update on COVID-19 Outbreak (11 March 2020) and Work Arrangements

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:56 PM

Dear Members of HKUST,

With rapid spread of COVID-19 around the globe, a growing number of cities and countries have been under attack. Numerous overseas universities have been taking necessary steps including to have all classes going online, evacuation of campus student halls and enhanced health and safety arrangements. Here at home, we continue to be vigilant, monitoring the development around campus closely while supporting our missions and activities as appropriate and feasible.

In view of the current status, we are reconfirming and/or introducing the following measures:

1. **Until further notice, all classes will continue to be offered online.** If and when feasible, we may consider certain smaller classes or those requiring laboratory sessions to switch to mixed mode including online and face-to-face instructions. Being mindful of public health concerns, any such decisions will need to be taken carefully by thorough consideration of implications to health risks.
2. **Effective immediately, all university-supported travels to destinations outside of Hong Kong are suspended until further notice.** We also strongly caution members to consider prudently before taking personal trips, keeping in view the outbound travel alerts (<https://www.sb.gov.hk/eng/ota/>) and requirements of taking at least 14-day quarantine if one comes to Hong Kong from various places for which the Department of Health of the Hong Kong SAR government have issued quarantine orders (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html>).
3. **We will continue to monitor, clean up and sanitize facilities, halls, laboratories and offices on campus.** We know that some students are renting off-campus flats and apartments with a high density of occupants. If students living in those places have health concerns, please contact HSEO for advice (safety@ust.hk), and we will do our best to support.
4. **All departments and offices will continue to take progressive actions to resume normal services and operations.** All Directors, team leads, and those of the ranks of Band 7 and above should be in office on a regular basis. Each department/office should submit a staffing rotation plan for VP/Dean approval, indicating the workload status over the last month with reasonable level of details. By a separate email, HSEO will update and announce guidelines with clarity regarding appropriate working and social distances between members. Again, we discourage any social gatherings of more than 10 people.
5. **Indoor sports facilities will be opened on a restricted basis but changing rooms will remain closed.** Please refer to the DSTO web site (<https://sao.ust.hk/eng/detail.php?catid=14&sid=116&tid=220>) for more information. The use of outdoor sports facilities for contact group sports such as basketball and soccer remains prohibited. DSTO staff will ask any violators of this policy to stop immediately and will escalate any refusal to cooperate to security and/or senior management for assistance.
6. **The Conference Lodge will only be used for on-campus self-quarantine in exceptional circumstances on a chargeable basis.** It is our desire to not have students undergoing self-quarantine to share rooms and living facilities to minimize cross-infection.
7. Any member of the University who has travelled to or from any of the areas covered by the Government's travel advice should notify their department or supervisor immediately and take

necessary follow up actions as requested by the University. **Violating these guidelines may result in disciplinary action.**

Thank you again for your continued understanding and cooperation. Let's coordinate and take appropriate preventive moves.

Wei Shyy, President

Lionel Ni, Provost

Mark Hodgson, Vice-President for Administration and Business