

COVID19 Update for Dickson College 3 April 2020

Dear Students and families,

Welcome to the end of week 9. The purpose of today's communication is to outline arrangements for students for next week and to foreshadow any changes ahead of the planned online learning program for term 2. As you would be aware the staff at DC have made a commitment to the continuity of learning for students' and this week, we have ramped up our online learning presence significantly. I would like to thank my staff, who have simply been amazing during this time, working incredibly hard to keep students connected with school and engaged in meaningful work.

This week has allowed us to trial a range of digital tools with students and the engagement so far has been very positive. We have however, learnt many new things this week and we will be adjusting the timetable for online learning for term 2. We have discovered that students and teachers (many of which are working from home) are needing more flexibility to get their work done. I will update you on what this looks like with greater clarity next week, but for now here are the things you need to know.

Week 10 - Monday 6 April is last day for online classes this term

On Monday teachers will set new work or assessment for students to complete where appropriate. As mentioned in previous updates, the College had already planned for pupil free days Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of week 10 to allow for internal moderation and the completion of our new Mid Semester reports, which we will be endeavouring to do next week so we can have these out to families during week one of next term.

Mid Semester Reports and Parent Teacher Evening

Reports capturing formative assessment and feedback to students so that they can improve their work will be sent out to students and families during week 1 of next term. This is later than we expected but the staff do not want to abandon this work as it allows them to flag potential issues and offer strategies for improvement for students, while there is still time left in the semester for students to make adjustments. We will be adding some additional fields to capture how well each student has been adjusting and engaging in the online learning environment.

Parent Teacher night set down for Thursday of week 1 term 2, will not go ahead. We are working on a solution for this, and it will be after Mid Semester Reports have been distributed.

Learning for Term 2 will be online

As mentioned above and by the ACT Minister of Education, teachers all over the ACT system are preparing for learning to be online from the beginning of term 2. It would be great to see students back at school for the beginning of term 2, but no one is anticipating this and to ensure successful

outcomes for students next term, we need all our students engaged and participating in our online learning program.

Assessment and participation requirements for online learning

Normally students are required to attend at least 90% of their scheduled classes and complete at least 70% of their assessment to successfully complete a unit. Even though the ACT BSSS policy allows for additional flexibility beyond physical attendance for measurement of participation, most Colleges use attendance as the main measure of participation. In the current situation where the learning program is online, the college will be gauging participation by measuring student engagement in the activities that teachers are setting on an ongoing basis. We learnt this week that things are different when students and staff are working from home. I must stress however, how important it is for students to engage in ongoing course work online, as students will complete units or not complete units on this basis.

Where students require special consideration for assessment or participation, they need to contact their year coordinator. This is our normal process but obviously we will be sensitive to those impacted directly by COVID19. **To summarise, students need to complete assignments by the due date and participate in their online learning program. If there is a reason for an extension or non-participation, students need to contact their year coordinator.**

Advice on class changes is to stay in current options for this semester, don't change

Normally at this time of the year students may elect to change their courses for term 2. I am discouraging student against changing courses or classes at this point unless it is necessary. A semester unit offers more flexibility of assessment for students and teachers than a term unit does, and students could inadvertently end up with more assessment to do if they switch now. **Students should contact their Year coordinator if they anticipate a problem with their study program due to the current situation.**

Please stay up to date with the latest information on COVID-19 by visiting the [ACT Health](#), the [Australian Government Department of Health](#) , [ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies \(BSSS\)](#) , and the [Dickson College](#) websites and [Dickson College Facebook page](#).

I am aware of the volume of communication going out to students and families right now. So, we will only be communicating via this means if there is a change or there is something we need you to action. All other information will be placed under 'Latest News' on our website.

Please take care and watch out for our update next week about term 2.

Regards

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