



Thursday 28 October 2021

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School (GGS),

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) – Update #54 as at 6.30pm on Thursday 28 October

It is wonderful that all our students have now enjoyed experiences of on-site learning in Term 4 following the staggered return of students and staff at our Toorak Campus, whilst our Year 12 students have successfully commenced their final examinations. We are also uplifted by the ongoing advances in vaccination rates across Victoria and the further easing of restrictions on Victoria's [Roadmap to Deliver the National Plan](#). We understand that the State will reach its 80 per cent double dose vaccination target ahead of schedule and restrictions will ease across Victoria from **6.00pm on Friday 29 October**:

- masks will no longer be required to be worn outdoors on any of our campuses, unless where spatial distancing cannot be achieved;
- travel between Melbourne and regional Victoria will be allowed; and
- all year levels at Toorak Campus will return to on-site learning full-time from Wednesday 3 November (following the Melbourne Cup Public Holiday on Tuesday 2 November).

As ever, we will continue to take a highly precautionary approach based on the latest and best medical advice. We actively review our COVIDSafe protocols in consultation with our Senior Medical Officer, Professor Fergus Cameron, to reflect our unique, predominantly residential context.

Leave Arrangements at Corio Campus

We will continue to carefully manage weekend exeat/leave restrictions at our Corio Campus, with a particular focus on safeguarding the integrity of the VCE and IB examination period. Given the high number of COVID-19 cases in the broader community, weekend exeat will only be permitted for Middle School boarding students at this stage. We acknowledge the disappointment that accompanies such restrictions and will continue to review weekend exeat/leave for Senior School boarding students ahead of next weekend (November 6-7). Such decisions are considered deeply and are only reached after balancing the competing risks and priorities. Head of Campus, Steven Church, has published further detail about this on [Hive](#).

Overseas Students Update

While we have been able to celebrate the reunion of some of our interstate students and families this week, we acknowledge the challenges and complexities our overseas families continue to face, both those families located overseas, and those who have made significant sacrifices to remain in Australia during the pandemic. Our thoughts continue to be with you.

We are pleased to confirm that an exemption has been announced for eligible Year 11 overseas students (those students on a student visa) to return to Australia to commence Year 12 in 2022. There was an extensive and complex consultation process involved with this exemption mechanism, at all levels of government, and it was significantly challenged by issues such as ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks, subsequent lockdowns and reduction in international arrival caps. The School continues to be involved in a Cross-Sectoral Working Group with members of the International Division of the Department of Education and Training, and government and non-government schools to advocate for the return of all overseas students.

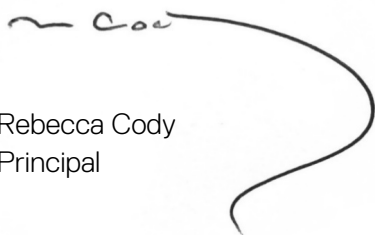
We have communicated with eligible Year 11 students regarding the availability of the exemption and will communicate with current Year 10 students in due course, recognising that those students are not eligible to apply for the exemption until January 2022.

We are also aware of recent announcements regarding quarantine requirements and international student arrivals, and that the above process may subsequently be reviewed. We will share any further information as it becomes available.

Thank you

We remain optimistic that the State continues to move purposefully towards managing the next phase of the pandemic. Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Cody', followed by a large, sweeping flourish that extends to the right and then curves back down.

Rebecca Cody
Principal