

Guidelines on Class Resumption for Higher Education

Institutions in Macao

For the purpose of coordinating the schedules for class resumption, the higher education institutions in Macao may refer to these guidelines when making relevant arrangements. Before resuming any teaching activities, the institutions are required to inform the Higher Education Bureau of their plans for class resumption (such as, the preventative measures on campus, specific dates and approaches of class resumption, and special rules about student attendance, absence and assessment for this semester). Also, the faculty members and the students should be notified of the said arrangements no less than 14 days in advance.

Approaches of class resumption

The institutions may arrange classes to be resumed orderly in an approach that is appropriate to the actual circumstance. For instance, classes may be resumed all together or by batches.

Initially, classes for different years and different subjects should be scheduled at different times if possible, in order to avoid drawing in crowds of students at the same time on the same floor of a teaching building;

Arrangements prior to class resumption

On preparing for class resumption and teaching arrangements

- 1.1 According to the professional advice of the Health Bureau, higher education institutions may only resume classes on the condition that the virus outbreak is under control in Macao and in the neighbouring places;
- 1.2 The faculty members and students who return to Macao are

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required to declare their health in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Health Bureau and relevant authorities and to comply with the latest quarantine measures enacted by the SAR government upon people returning to Macao. Designated persons shall also undertake the compulsory medical assessment or a 14-day medical observation (isolation at home or at a designated place).

For details and updates, stay tuned to the announcements and guidelines released on the special webpage against epidemics of the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre, in particular *Prevent Novel Coronavirus Infection–Advice to Higher Education Institutions and Students* and *Prevent Novel Coronavirus Infection–Operational Advice for Higher Education Institutions after Class Resumption*. The link of the special webpage against epidemics is:

<https://www.ssm.gov.mo/apps1/PreventCOVID-19/ch.aspx#clg17458>

- 1.3 The institutions are to decide on the date of class resumption based on their own circumstances. Afterward, the faculty members and students who are not in Macao should be informed of the said dates as soon as possible so that they can arrange their transport back to Macao in good time;
- 1.4 The institutions should be well-informed of the numbers of faculty members and students who can resume class; the routes and means of transport to be taken by the faculty members and students to return to Macao, among other information;
- 1.5 After returning to Macao and class resumption, faculty members and students should avoid cross-border movement. They are also required to comply with the relevant instructions and requirements of the Health Bureau and immigration departments;
- 1.6 Prior to class resumption, the institutions are required to further confirm the attendance and absence of faculty members and

students, thus adjusting teaching arrangements and resources as appropriate;

- 1.7 Where it is confirmed that the attendance of faculty members and students for certain courses will not be satisfactory after class resumption, the institutions should implement other suitable measures to enable students to continue to learn;
- 1.8 For students who have been in quarantine (self-isolation or admitted for isolation), those who are under treatment or have recovered, and those who cannot return to Macao at the moment, they should be provided with alternative arrangements for class resumption and their special needs should also be met;
- 1.9 Where a student has a justifiable reason for not being able to resume class, or in the events of force majeure, their institution should exercise its discretion in dealing with their absence in line with its internal regime. It may also consider providing suitable learning support (such as continuing with the education modes adopted during class suspension) to the student to facilitate their study;
- 1.10 The institutions may consider providing students learning materials in advance and adjusting as appropriate the schedule for theory and practice in the curriculum. Meanwhile, it is necessary to consider the interface between the teaching arrangements during class suspension and those after resuming class, in order to ensure the continuity and consistency of learning.

The studies undertaken by students during class suspension per the guidance of the institutions should be counted towards the study load (including the equivalence of face-to-face contact hours) as required by the relevant subject. The said studies should also be taken into consideration in the assessment of that subject.

Where a student is exceeding the upper limit of the study period of their programme, the institution may consider granting to them an extension of no more than one academic year depending on

their application;

- 1.11 Where it is necessary to adjust the examination arrangements which have been announced, the institutions should plan so and announce their schedules as early as possible. Where necessary, alternative methods of assessment may also be considered. It is recommended that oral defences and project presentations be organised in spacious venues, with restrictions to the number of audiences depending on the capacity of the venues;
- 1.12 The institutions should assess the safety of the ongoing internships undertaken by students, in order to determine whether the internships need to be terminated or suspended, or can be continued. The internship hours which has not been fulfilled due to its termination may be made up during the study period.

Regarding the internship of final-year students, the institutions should recognise the completed hours of internships, and may consider using case study, report or other effective ways to make up the remaining hours or the internships which have not begun. Where the programmes of the final-year students involve professional accreditation, the institutions should discuss with accreditation bodies for feasible solutions as alternatives to internship.

- 1.13 To keep students informed about the arrangements on class resumption and the points to note, the institutions should have the channels of consultation to answer students' enquiries in a timely manner.

On facilities and amenities

- 2.1 The institutions should prepare the classrooms in accordance with the advice of the Health Bureau by putting the seats further apart. This measure also applies to the subjects involving laboratory operations. Where necessary, the institutions should also consider

further splitting the classes temporarily;

- 2.2 The institutions are required to guarantee good hygiene and proper supplies on campus and in dormitories. Where resources are available, certain locations (especially crowded places), main entrances and exits, classrooms, and common areas in dormitories shall have appropriate supplies (such as thermometers, hand sanitisers and a fair number of masks). The institutions should have measures in place to make sure that faculty members and students have taken the precautions for personal protection (such as wearing masks) prior to entering the campus as per the guidelines of the Health Bureau. They should also ensure that faculty members who have frequent contact with people have proper personal protective equipment;
- 2.3 The institutions should formulate and timely update their own user guides of campus facilities (such as libraries, computer rooms, laboratories, and sport facilities in times of infection prevention (The guides ought to cover health guidelines, the availability of campus facilities, among other information). Faculty members and students should be made aware of such instruments;
- 2.4 The institutions should set up workgroups on infection prevention to deal with emergencies and keep relevant departments informed about the outbreaks on campus in a timely manner;
- 2.5 In the course of epidemic prevention, the institutions should formulate a special regime on the public access to the campus (and campus facilities) and publicise them in a timely manner;
- 2.6 A well-ventilated and spacious venue shall be chosen where it is necessary to administer a test or an exam after class resumption. Also, examination arrangements shall be catered for the students who cannot attend in person (such as students who are still in quarantine and who cannot return to Macao).

Arrangements after class resumption

On supporting faculty members and students

- 3.1 Persons affected by the outbreak may encounter emotional, physical and mental issues. They shall be given special attention and the access to proper counselling services. Meanwhile, effective measures shall be taken to protect students from being bullied and strengthen promotion of moral education;
- 3.2 A system should be established to keep informed of the health status and movement of faculty members and students, and be updated timely;
- 3.3 Contingency measures should be in place, especially about centrally disseminating information to ensure that faculty members and students receive timely updates from the institutions;
- 3.4 Under exceptional circumstances after class resumption, especially where a faculty member or a student is a confirmed or suspected case of the novel coronavirus, their institution and their classes need to be suspended completely or partially. The Health Bureau and the Higher Education Bureau should be notified of the incidence as early as possible. Any faculty member or student with close contact with the said person is also required to follow the quarantine measures issued by the Health Bureau;
- 3.5 Where a suspected case is tested negative, the institution may resume class after conducting a safety assessment. During the class suspension caused by the suspected case, the institution may provide, as appropriate, other supplementary teaching and learning means to enable students to continue their studies.
- 3.6 In view of the current regulations on health protection, the institutions should advise faculty members and students to avoid cross-border movement, especially not to make frequent visits to places with ongoing outbreaks. The institutions should provide

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them assistance as appropriate;

- 3.7 The institutions are required to properly handle requests and applications made by students for absence, deferral or withdrawal of studies and those by faculty members for absence, resignation or job transfer. In an effort for the institutions to centrally disseminate all information, clear follow-up and handling procedures should be formulated and the personnel be made aware timely. Where a situation involves a request for refund or leave compensation, the institutions are required to set out clear rules, follow up and handle accordingly;
- 3.8 The institutions should properly follow up with the move-in, move-out and change requests of housing for faculty members and students who reside in dormitories.

On internal and external activities

- 4.1 For the time being, the institutions should not undertake internal nor external group activities, particularly those involving frequent personal contacts. They shall stay vigilant of any outbreak on campus;
- 4.2 As per the guidelines of the Health Bureau, all major sports events and competitions should be suspended. Individual training should replace group or pair training;
- 4.3 Where it is necessary to carry out other types of group activities under special circumstances, the institution must conduct a risk assessment before the activities; keep updated about the latest outbreaks and the health status of the participants; and also attach importance to the compatibility of the venue and number of participants.

At the same time, a contingency mechanism needs to be established to handle suspected cases arising during or after the group activity.

In the course of the group activity, all participants should be supplied with appropriate protection measures, such as thermometers, a fair number of masks and hand sanitisers.

Other

The institutions are required to establish a centralised mechanism to disseminate information. Through their designated channels, the institutions may communicate with faculty members and students in a timely manner. The mechanism can also avoid confusion of information which might lead to fears or panic over the situation.

Higher Education Bureau

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